

VOICE OF THE MOORS

NYMA - PROTECTING THE NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS
FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS



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CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

COVID-19

There is growing optimism about emergence from the worst of the Covid pandemic. Provided people are sensible and don't regard a vaccination as a passport to full normality, we can begin to look forward to the rest of 2021 with more confidence, since the combined effects of the lockdown restrictions and the remarkable vaccination programme appear to be significantly reducing transmission of the virus. Despite the Covid restrictions, NYMA continues to function more or less normally although we rely on digital technology. Our meetings continue to be conducted remotely as they were through most of 2020. At present no group walks or other events are allowed but, if there are no setbacks, then the government's roadmap indicates that a 30-person limit for outdoor groups can be brought in by 17th May – so we are planning the first NYMA walk on May 22nd.'

NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

The National Park Authority (NPA) is seeking the views of people who live or work in the Moors, as well as those who visit it for recreation, in order to shape a new Management Plan. The views expressed will help to form a consensus on what we want the future to look like in the park. This includes farming, housing, tourism, transport, business, nature conservation and heritage. What is the future for the varied landscapes of the moors, the dales, the coast and the villages? If you want to contribute you can do so on the National Park website at <https://www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/looking-after/new-management-plan>.

Wildlife, biodiversity, accessibility, and living and working landscapes are all on the agenda for the new Plan, which will cover the next twenty years. The last Plan was adopted in 2012 and updated in 2016, so the new one will have to take account of some significant changes, including recovery from the Covid pandemic and what that means in terms of local businesses, tourism and visitor numbers. Other issues include the changes to land management brought about by Brexit and our departure from the Common Agricultural Policy, while addressing climate change becomes increasingly urgent, as changing weather patterns affect landscapes and wildlife and we consider how a reduction in carbon emissions can be achieved.

The Management Plan is 'the overarching strategy document that will set out a vision for the future of the National Park along with a set of agreed objectives to drive delivery of this vision over the next 20 years or so.' To help develop it the NPA is seeking a shared vision, and at NYMA we are pleased to be included as partners on one of the three working groups. We will be examining:

- *Living and Working Landscapes* – looking at prosperous local economies, moorland management, digital connectivity and the historic built environment.

We also expect to feed into the two other groups, which are looking at:

- *Leading Nature Recovery* – focusing on climate change, conservation and enhancement of the National Park's landscape, wildlife and biodiversity.
- *Landscapes for All* – looking at how we can make the National Park more accessible and enjoyable for as many people as possible.

Baled heather after cutting instead of burning



Photos © Tom Chadwick

Photos © Janet Cochrane

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CHANGE

Developing the Management Plan is also an opportunity to look at more radical solutions to some of the problems which face the National Park. Issues which have emerged since the last Plan was adopted include awareness of the environmental damage caused by rotational heather burning, which was condemned by the Committee on Climate Change in a 2020 report; but rotational burning is seen by some moorland managers as the best way of providing habitat for grouse. Maybe there is an opportunity to look at rewilding in some parts of the park to create fresh habitat for wildlife and improved biodiversity. Accessibility must rate as one of the most important elements of the Plan, and highlights the need for an integrated public transport network which - within the period covered by the Plan - will need to be electrically driven.

Government legislation including the Agriculture Act 2020 and the much-delayed Environment Bill will also play an important part. The implementation of the Environmental Land Management (ELM) scheme, seen as the cornerstone of the new agricultural policy, is likely to create landscape-scale changes. It is important that these changes are in keeping with the first statutory purpose of National Parks: *'to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and heritage'*. This is particularly important for Tier 3 ELM schemes, which include 'Landscape Scale and Land-Use change projects' such as large-scale afforestation and peatland management aimed at meeting ambitious environmental commitments, and to some extent Tier 2 schemes which aim to achieve local environmental outcomes through collaboration between farmers, foresters and other land managers.

FORESTRY MANAGEMENT CHANGES AT BOTTON VILLAGE

At a more local scale, we are sad to learn that Alan Ayers, who for many years was in charge of forestry management at Botton

Village, has left. We feel that the loss of Alan, who has such a wealth of experience in managing forestry work at the head of Danby Dale, is the result of a questionable change by the decision-makers at Botton Village. We would like to thank Alan for his help and generosity over many years in providing us with advice and practical help with our biodiversity site Corbett's Copse, above Castleton. Many of the trees we have planted are of local provenance and have been donated by Alan from his tree nursery. Alan was also involved with the Juniper Regeneration Project, a joint project between NYMA and the National Park which ran between 2000 and 2010. Some of the Juniper trees we planted also came from his nursery, where they were grown from cuttings. We wish Alan and his wife Gaynor all the very best for the future.

ANNUAL "FROGFEST"

A brief wintry episode in the second week of February gave us snow and overnight temperatures down to -6.5°C on the night of the 12th. By the end of the month the temperature was up to 13°C, a very swift change. At the time of writing, in early March, it is almost time for the return of the European common frog *Rana temporaria* to Botton Pond, at the head of Danby Dale. The arrival of the frogs from their winter hibernation has been monitored for the last twenty years (except for 2001, the year of the Foot and Mouth Disease epidemic). Amazingly, the frogs arrive each year within a two-week period from the beginning of March, with just two exceptions to this when in 2011 and 2012 they arrived in the last two days of February. No cause can be identified which would explain this deviation from the regularity of the annual 'Frogfest'!

TOM CHADWICK

VIOLETS

MOST PEOPLE I'm sure recognise the violet as a sign of spring, small, delicate, beautiful, which together with the pansies makes up the family Violaceae. Small, low-growing perennial plants, violets have a flower composed of five irregular petals, the central lower one with a spur, and they are coloured blue/purple/mauve with generally heart-shaped leaves.

The species most likely to be encountered locally is the Common Dog violet, *Viola riviniana*, which occupies a wide range of habitats: woods, moors, banks and verges on acid and alkaline soils, so it is the most widely distributed.

The similar Hairy violet, *V. hirta*, grows on more open, short, alkaline grasslands while the Early or Wood violet *V. reichenbachiana* also prefers more alkaline soils, but in light shade in older woods and hedges. The Sweet violet *V. odorata*, which is (as the name suggests) the only scented one, also prefers richer alkaline soils of verges and hedge banks, tolerating light shade. It is only occasionally found in our area and is the only violet that may have white flowers, or very unusually red ones. It may cover largish areas where it does occur as it can propagate by rooting runners from the parent plant.

The Marsh violet *V. palustris* is fairly widespread in wet acidic sites such as bogs, wet flushes and alder carrs but can often be hidden by taller surrounding vegetation. Unlike other viola species it has rounded rather than heart-shaped leaves. Only the Field pansy *V. arvensis* is commonly found, an annual of arable and disturbed land, but it is decreasing due to modern farming practices.

More precise classification can be found from the small variations in spur shape and colour, sepal and leaf shapes in any good flora or field guide.

Although violets flower in spring, the Sweet violet first - sometimes as early as February, but most by March, with welcoming flowers and nectar for early insects - seed is rarely set. Most of the viable seed they do produce is actually from later closed or cleistogamous flowers, hidden under the leaves. These are more or less petal-less and self-fertilising, rarely opening but producing egg-shaped fruit full of seed.

The Sweet violet has another unusual twist. Once the sweet scent is smelled, the nose cannot detect it a second time as an aroma compound, ionone, is produced by the plant which dulls the sense of smell for a while; Shakespeare's Hamlet refers to this. Nobody has discovered why.



Viola riviniana



Viola riviniana hybridised with *V. reichenbachiana*

In magic and mythology violets seemed always to have had a dual character; the shy, modest, shrinking violet of innocence and humility but also the flower of Venus and Aphrodite, seductive and a symbol of fertility and passionate love. The time between waking and sleeping when the mind wanders between the two states was known as violet time.

Violets have long been a part of our history and heritage, mentioned by Pliny, Virgil and Shakespeare. They have been reported as being used for health and beauty products as well as for food and drink by the Romans, Ancient Britons and Anglo Saxons, continuing on into medieval, Tudor and Victorian times. The Sweet violet's scented flowers were used by the Romans to make wine, and were later crystallised as sweetmeats or decorations, made into syrup, milk puddings and jellies and vinegars, or just eaten in salads. Cosmetically they have a long history as perfumes, especially in Victorian times and in China, but also in pot pourri, skin cleansing waters, creams and foot-baths. Ancient Britons believed they enhanced female beauty.

We may not be surprised that Sweet violets have been used widely in food and cosmetics, but the leaves and flowers of all violets have been important medicinally from early history too. One of the oldest and most recommended uses was as a cancer cure - specifically to treat tumours with poultices, salves and lotions to reduce the size and inflammation, with teas used internally. In fact, they were employed against a wide range of skin problems or 'eruptions', such as boils, acne, abscesses, pimples, swollen glands and eczema; but most importantly for malignant growths.

Another interesting use was their soothing and calming properties for headaches (especially hangovers), frayed nerves, restlessness, anger and insomnia. The soothing and antiseptic properties made it helpful for coughs, bronchitis and other lung and breathing disorders. However, care was needed as in excess it acted as a laxative and purgative, particularly the roots and the seeds.

One last important use of violet plants is not for us humans but for various fritillary butterflies who rely on them for protection of their eggs and food for the emerging caterpillars.

A well-known plant with a long history - remaining beautiful yet mysterious and so welcome in early spring.

ANNE PRESS

NESTING BIRDS

SPRING is sprung, and the grass is definitely riz! I also know where 'the boidies' is – my garden is full of them. It's a springtime nonsense rhyme we all know, even though no-one knows who wrote it.

The nesting season is well under way, with most species of garden birds seeking nesting sites, searching for building materials, and building nests - though in the case of Wood Pigeons, they probably never stopped. Pigeons have the advantage of being able to feed their young on crop milk, so don't have to rely on suitable food being available.

The 'Bird Nesting Season' is officially February to August, according to Natural England, and it is recommended that any hedge or tree work is done outside this period. Nesting does start before and extend beyond this period, but the busiest time for most breeding birds is March to July.

A recent study by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) shows that many species are breeding up to a month earlier than in the 1960s, in response to climate change. Spring has been getting ever warmer, with leaves appearing ever earlier. Logically, insects that feed on foliage follow suit, and as most garden birds depend on them to feed their young, they too have brought forward their laying dates, but they can only do this slowly.

Single brood species such as Great Tits are laying some 11 days earlier than 40 years ago, and Blue Tits have shown similar trends. Species which make several breeding attempts, such as Blackbirds, Robins and House Sparrows, are also nesting earlier but are less likely to be seriously affected if they get it wrong.

Climate change affects species in different ways, some coping better than others, causing the ecosystem to become unbalanced. This can lead to chicks needing feeding when the insects they eat are not around in sufficient numbers, which is what happened last year when most invertebrates reacted to unseasonal warmth and emerged early; something birds cannot do. One result was a low survival rate of chicks of some species, for example Blue and Great Tits, whose numbers were noticeably down last summer.

As for the nests themselves, Blackbirds, Robins and Song Thrushes build them in the 'classic design' – neat cups of woven grasses and small twigs, camouflaged with moss and lined with



Robin collecting food for its young



Wren with nesting material

mud. Chaffinches nest in tree forks and use cobwebs to stick them in place. They flit around fences and window-frames collecting them. Spiders are of great importance to birds in spring as food for adults and chicks, and their webs are an essential component of many nests.

Long-tailed Tits make the most intricate and delicate of all our garden birds' nests – which they couldn't do without spiders. They spend three weeks creating them: first a cup and dome of moss stuck together with cobwebs, then lichen on the outside for camouflage, and finally a lining of feathers for insulation. Studies have shown that they can use up to 2,000 feathers, flying some 600 miles whilst collecting them!

All this nest-building requires much time and energy, so providing suitable material can help. You can leave nesting material out for birds in many ways: try stuffing it into a peanut or suet feeder, leaving it in piles around the garden or hanging it from trees. Avoid using any material whose source you are not sure of, or anything that has been treated with pesticides or fertilisers, and don't use pet hair after flea or worm treatments. Moss raked from your lawn is good as long as you have not treated it first, and so is cut dried grass. Put out only pure natural fibres, cut into short lengths to avoid entanglement, and never plastics, as they can harm both birds and the environment.

House Martins, Song Thrushes and Blackbirds use mud for their nests, so a small, wet, muddy patch in your garden may make it easier for them if it has been dry.

Not only will you be helping 'your' birds, but you will have a chance to see them better as they collect the material. I've seen Tits spending hours pulling away at balls of sheep's wool I collected from a farm fence and put in a wire frame.

MIKE GRAY

If you find the lives of our garden birds to be of interest, and would like to join in and count the feathered occupants of your garden, please contact me or visit the BTO Garden BirdWatch website (www.bto.org/gbw). If you know of an organisation no more than 30 miles from York which would like a talk on garden birds call: **Mike Gray 07596 366342** or gbwmike@gmail.com.



YORKSHIRE BEAVER RELEASE TRIAL



Keldy top pond in 2020



Male beaver on release day

TWO YEARS AGO, in April 2019, the North York Moors saw two Eurasian Beavers (*Castor fiber*) released into an enclosure in Cropton Forest as part of a 5-year trial. The beavers came from Tayside, in Scotland, and the project is licensed by Natural England and led by Forestry England, with additional funding from Forest Holidays, North Yorkshire County Council and – indirectly – from Anglo-American (owners of the Woodsmith Mine) through funds agreed with the National Park as a condition of developing the mine. The beavers are monitored closely with 12 trail cameras to capture their behaviours and monitor their health and wellbeing. The cameras have picked up some amazing footage of the beavers, along with a whole range of other wildlife.

THE BEAVERS' NEW HOME

The securely fenced enclosure, situated in the River Seven catchment above Sinnington, is just over 10 hectares in size. It includes 824m of beck and two former ornamental fishponds dating from the late 1800s. The beck's waters rise and fall very rapidly here and it was part of the 'Slowing the Flow' project which started in 2007 and which used artificial woody dams to reduce peak flow during storm events in an effort to reduce flooding in Pickering and Sinnington.

The old fishponds were shaded, overgrown, and silted up, the top pond held little water, and a large area of the bottom pond was dominated by willow scrub. A lot of the woodland in the enclosure consists of conifers planted close to the riverbanks, which limits the diversity of the riparian corridor. Other habitat includes more open birch and mixed pine and beech woodland.

The main aim of the trial is to monitor the way that the beavers interact with the artificial woody structures in the beck, consisting of one large timber bund (dam) and 3 smaller dams. If the beavers will adopt and maintain these on our behalf it would considerably reduce maintenance costs.

Other aims of the project include assessing the additional amount of water retained by structures that the beavers build,

and how their engineering impacts the way that water moves through the site. The beavers' impact on biodiversity within the enclosure and their effect on rhododendron is also being studied. It is hoped that further into the project the potential for ecotourism can be investigated.

Considerable monitoring of the site was undertaken before the beavers' release in order to understand what was already there. Exeter University is monitoring the watercourses and undertaking bi-annual aerial drone imagery, Leeds University has been involved in laser scanning to assess topographical changes, and Teesside University has undertaken aquatic vegetation surveys and botanical transects – they hope to do other surveys as the project progresses. Meanwhile, Hull University has secured funding for research connected to the release, and amongst other aspects has several students using footage captured on the site to study beaver behaviour.

Over 40 volunteers are helping to monitor the biodiversity changes within the enclosure due to the presence of the beavers. This included pre-release surveys of the plants, bats, small mammals, otter, amphibians and reptiles, mosses and liverworts, butterflies, dragonflies, flies and fungi in order to create an invaluable baseline of information on site biodiversity. This will be compared against the results of periodic monitoring throughout the five years of the trial.

ECOSYSTEM ENGINEERS

After they arrived, the two beavers quickly made the site home and began to demonstrate what fantastic ecosystem engineers these creatures are. They set to work straight away plugging the leaks in the top pond and the water levels subsequently increased by over a metre. This temporarily reduced the water levels in the bottom pond, and the beavers then dug into the silt to construct an astonishing canal 40m long by 50cm wide and 50cm deep to connect the two ponds. The beavers then blocked the outflow channel at the bottom pond which raised the water levels there by approximately 1 metre, submerging their channel. Beavers move much more efficiently in water than on the land – they are

perfectly designed for a semi-aquatic lifestyle with their paddle tail, webbed feet, thick insulating fur coat and see-through eyelid which allows vision underwater. They feel less threatened from predation when in the water, so this canal was to aid safe travel between the ponds. Although beavers have no natural predators in the UK, this is an inbuilt instinct.

Their work resulted in a record number of amphibians in the ponds just a year later. Before the beavers were released just six clumps of spawn were recorded, while in 2020 the amount of spawn was uncountable. Because of the number of frogs and toads over 12 herons were regularly seen fishing around the pond, and both otters and tawny owls were caught on camera feasting on the amphibians. Teal and Mandarin have been spotted on the site for the first time too because of the increased water levels.

Beavers are completely herbivorous, feeding on aquatic plants, grasses and shrubs during the summer months, with woody plants making up most of their diet in winter. Their large front teeth never stop growing - and are naturally reinforced with iron to enable them to fell trees with ease. The Cropton beavers have coppiced many of the trees overhanging the pond, opening it up to more light. They have concentrated on the smaller birch, willow, hazel, rowan, and sycamore but have also taken out several larger trees (30-40cm in diameter). They do not seem to favour alder and this has mainly been left. The increase in light has seen foxgloves and other plants appearing along the pond banks, which were formerly quite sparse of vegetation due to the amount of shade. The willow trees are already coppicing back up with abundant shoots - a future resource for the beavers. Interestingly, many of the stems were 'pleached' (left attached) and fell into the water, meaning that the shoots that grow will be much more accessible to the beavers in the future - was this accident or planning?

In addition to their work on the ponds the beavers have built a large dam in the river which is now almost 2m tall. This has significantly raised water levels upstream to enable them to burrow into the banks and create an underwater entrance into their lodge, which they have constructed on the riverbank. They have since extended this dam across the floodplain, connected the pond and the river, and built up the bottom pond edge by 30cm along its whole 60m length to hold back even more water,



Beaver dam with Cath Bashforth for scale

significantly changing the way the water moves through the site. Now, water is forced out across the floodplain in periods of heavy rain instead of rushing down the river channel, resulting in a multi-braided watercourse which effectively slows the flow. Early results from Exeter University's monitoring show that the beavers' structures do indeed seem to be helping to reduce the peak of the water flow through the site, although it is still too early in the project to be conclusive.

A GROWING FAMILY

The beavers had two kits in 2019, which have both grown amazingly well and are assisting the adults with their habitat amendments. Footage captured in June 2020 showed two new arrivals, so now there are six beavers within the enclosure.

In nature, kits stay with the family group for at least two years and help to raise subsequent year's kits. Before the release, the enclosure was assessed as being suitable for 12-15 beavers due to the varied nature of the site and resources available, and this is being monitored annually. As the kits from 2019 grow we will be carefully watching the group dynamics to ascertain whether they will be able to stay together as a large extended family group (colony), with the original female and male being the dominant breeding pair, or whether they need to be relocated to another site. Covid restrictions prevented the trapping, sexing, and tagging of the 2019 kits, but once restrictions are eased we will be able to undertake this task (working with Scottish beaver consultant Roisin Campbell-Palmer). The sex of the kits will help to determine the feasibility of being able to retain them in the enclosure in the long term.

And as for the artificial structures the beavers were introduced to work on? As yet, the beavers have been swimming straight past them in order to concentrate on building their own. Perhaps that expresses their opinion of human abilities in dam-building! It is early days yet, and we look forward to bringing 'Voice' readers news of the colony as it develops in future years.

CATH BASHFORTH
Ecologist, Forestry England



Beaver sculpture

'REMARKS ON THE DILUVIUM'



Boulder clay in Bay with erratics on the beach below

IT IS 1826. Professor John Phillips, whose life and achievements we explored in 'Voice' last summer, has just published his *'Geology of Yorkshire. Part 1: The Yorkshire Coast'*. Following the extensive survey and recording of the county's rocks, the broad geology of the region is now delineated. Future studies by many practitioners will refine the details, change a few of the original strata names, and add to the overall picture, but the basics are now established, a tribute to Phillips and his nephew William Smith. There is, however, a problem – the diluvium.

Having described the solid rocks of the region, Phillips moves on to discuss the superficial deposits. In a section titled 'Remarks on the Diluvium' he carefully describes the origin of the many pebbles and boulders washed from the clay plastered along the coastline. Granites and slates from the Lake District, limestones and basalts from Durham and Northumberland, gneisses from Scotland and porphyries from Norway. He then goes on to say:

'To give a complete catalogue of all the varieties of pebbles which lie in this clay would be a work of great labour and little interest. Such comparisons are important only in proportion to the light they throw on the probable direction in which the waters moved, that transported them to their present localities Generally speaking, we may say the waters, which brought together the heterogeneous mass of diluvium which loads the coast of Yorkshire, flowed from various points of the compass between N. and W.'

The dictionary definition of the word diluvium is 'of a flood, especially of the Flood in Genesis' and herein lies the problem. Reading Phillips today, one gets the feeling that although he is describing the pebbles and boulders as originating from the results of a gigantic flood, he is not quite convinced. Could water really transport boulders weighing many tons all the way across the Pennines or from far away Scandinavia to end up on the Yorkshire coast?

Phillips was not alone in having doubts about the ability of water to move and deposit such huge amounts of material. Most geologists of the day were still striving to throw off the shackles of religious dogma. Even in the late 18th century the Church still maintained that the Earth was only 6,000 years old.

It was against this background that Phillips and his contemporaries had to battle in the light of the evidence they saw with their own eyes.

The suggestion that ice rather than water may have been responsible for much of the observed phenomena had been tentatively proposed for some decades, but it was a Swiss geologist, Louis Agassiz, who is credited with what became known as glacial theory. His seminal work *Études sur les Glaciers*, published in 1840, was to become a turning point in the explanation of glacial evidence but its final acceptance was delayed for several decades, largely due to the powerful opposition expressed by a giant of the then geological establishment, Sir Roderick Impey Murchison.

Murchison's credentials were impressive. Fellow of the Royal Society, President of the Geological Society, President of the Geographical Society, Director General of the Geological Survey, Baronet, KCB, and Doctor of Cambridge, Oxford and Dublin. Not a man to be trifled with! Murchison, like others in his day, had not been at ease with the idea of a 'Noachian Flood' and had supported the proposal by Charles Lyell that floating ice could have been the means by which material was distributed across the landscape.

Although he travelled widely both on the continent of Europe and in Russia and had examined glacial striations and erratics in the Alps, Murchison was still not willing to accept that glaciers, as opposed to floating ice, could move huge blocks over many miles. Only towards the end of his life did he somewhat reluctantly concede that Agassiz had been correct.

By the late 19th century there was virtually universal acceptance that glaciers had once covered huge areas of the northern hemisphere and that they had had a profound effect upon the landscape, from both a depositional and an erosional point of view. This enabled all those with an interest in interpreting the landscape to view it from a new perspective. Amongst many who did so was Percy Fry Kendall, who in the early years of the 20th century wrote his classic work on the glacial lake system of the North York Moors, also described in the Summer 2020 issue of 'Voice'.

ALAN STANIFORTH



Polished erratics from Robin Hood's Bay

MAGICAL MOORS MOMENTS NUMBER 5



Better soils of the valley floor benefit farming in Great Fryupdale



Tabular Hills (limestone) lying over sandstones above the old Saltersgate Inn

THINK you might call it a ‘light-bulb moment’ when Alan Staniforth, well known to ‘Voice’ readers, opened for me the door to the origins of the moorland scenery. Within an hour, a hidden story took on a fascinating reality.

Alan’s descriptions were clear and simple, emphasising why the North York Moors is an ideal place to get to grips with understanding the origins of landscapes and the part their evolution plays in the rural scene.

For example, I often wondered, when travelling across Blakey Ridge from Hutton-le-Hole to Castleton: why does arable farming suddenly give way to heather moorland below the Tabular Hills? Why, in the dales, does farmland stop below the top of the valley side? At the coast: what caused the concentric curves in the rock of Robin Hood’s Bay which so graphically define the shore at low tide? I had no idea.

Not for Alan an exposition of the dry text-book concepts of geological time, rather a reliance on a layer-cake, an orange, an onion, a lot of water and a bit of ice, plus a fair bit of pushing and shoving from the Earth’s crust. These popular analogies provided an easily remembered introduction not only to what lay beneath the surface, but also to the forces and processes that created and shaped it in the first place.

So what had cake, the orange, and the onion got to do with it? The cake represented three layers of rock types: at the bottom, liassic shales laid down as deposits under the sea; in the middle, sandstones formed from sediments in a huge river delta which replaced the sea as the relative levels of the land and water changed; and on top, more marine deposits when the sea again overwhelmed the land, resulting in a sequence of limestones.

In time the layers were bent, pushed up and sliced off by the sea, leaving the top layer of limestones – the Tabular Hills – eroding south like peeling the skin off an orange. The limestones give rise to good soils for arable farming. Not so that of the next layer down, the sandstones, on which mostly heather grows: the reason for the dramatic change in scenery at the foot of the Tabular Hills.

In the dales, shaped not by ice but by surface water action, erosion cuts into the lowest layer of our ‘cake’, again of marine origins. The relationship of the layers reflects the limit of the farmed land on the dale-sides and largely traces the line of springs at the ‘horizon’ between the poor sandstone soils above and the better soils below.

Over at the coast: “imagine the multiple layers of the ‘eroded dome’ (as it is technically described) which forms Robin Hood’s Bay as the top of an onion sliced at a shallow angle,” Alan suggested. “Cutting across the onion reveals many rings, just as the waves cut the layered rocks of different hardness,” he added. It is an image now indelibly etched on my mind whenever I look over the Bay from Ravenscar at low tide.

The inquisitive eye can spot something else from the cliff-top near the Raven Hall Hotel which tells of dynamic events at the end of the last Ice Age, proving that the ice was neither thick enough nor powerful enough to ride over the moors. Here, the limit of the farmland on the cliff-tops around the Bay traces where the ice once stood. Similarly, the Whitby to Middlesbrough road follows the limit of farmland, while inland the heather moor rises to the south.

In both places, the land-use echoes the point that retreating ice once reached before dropping boulder clay, on which farming eventually developed.

Of course, the history of the landscape is far more complex, but Alan’s enthusiastic interpretation awakened a much wider desire to understand the origins of the Moors and how its rocks and soils influence what we see and do today.

As to the question: “what does the future hold?” Alan quoted Sir Charles Lyell, an early 19th Century geologist. “The present is the key to the past,” adding “and so a clue to the future”. In practice, each drop of water, every grain of sand washed down continues the unending process, eroding the Tabular Hills, carving away the coast and deepening and broadening the dales as the streams head ever-rolling to the sea.

Thanks, Alan!

IAN CARSTAIRS

THE DUKE OF BURGUNDY BUTTERFLY



Perching male Duke of Burgundy

THE 'DUKE OF BURGUNDY' (*Hamearis Lucina*), one of England's rarest butterflies, is found on the southern edge of the North York Moors.

This very small butterfly can be found from late April to early June in sheltered clearings where its foodplant - either cowslip or primrose - is present. The males boldly hold territories with spiralling displays and 'dog-fights' while waiting for females to arrive and mate. The lighter coloured females are less conspicuous, searching for primula plants on which they lay small numbers of creamy white eggs. These hatch in about two weeks and the caterpillars feed at night on the primula leaves, creating typical 'shot holes'. The caterpillars pupate after a few weeks in tussocky grassland litter and overwinter as pupae before emerging as adults the next spring.

The Duke of Burgundy was historically a butterfly of coppiced woodland where it would occupy new coppice clearings with primroses, moving on to fresh clearings as each site became overgrown. The decline in coppicing in the 20th century threatened its survival, while many of the chalk and limestone grasslands traditionally used for sheep-rearing - and where cowslips grew - were ploughed up for cereal crops. The butterfly then moved to colonise scrubby hillsides with cowslips which were too steep to plough. Its English strongholds are the chalk downlands of southern England, but it can also be found on the limestones of Cumbria/Morecambe Bay and on the Jurassic limestone Tabular Hills on the southern edge of the North York Moors.

AT HOME IN THE TABULAR HILLS

The Tabular hills extend for over thirty miles from Sutton Bank to Scarborough, but most Duke of Burgundy records come from just two widely separated areas: one near Pickering/Thornton le Dale, and the other north of Helmsley. These areas have deep valley systems and have been less affected by intensive farming and forestry than other parts of the Tabular Hills.

Underside of primula leaf with eggs, a recently emerged caterpillar and typical 'shot hole' leaf damage



In the Helmsley area the Duke of Burgundy appeared to be limited to two or three sites by about 1992, but intensive survey work (coordinated by Butterfly Conservation) identified fourteen new colonies there by 1999. It was recognised then that North Yorkshire had about 10 per

cent of the remaining national colonies of this rapidly declining butterfly. The sites were on unimproved and ungrazed limestone grassland which is subject to succession by hawthorn and hazel scrub and ash woodland. Despite a programme of intensive management by volunteer work groups and contractors to control the scrub, the butterfly declined from 2000 onwards: it was only recorded in six locations north of Helmsley in 2017. Fortunately, it has shown signs of recovery since then, being found at 12 locations in the hot summer of 2018, while peak counts of over 100 butterflies were made on one site in 2019 and another in 2020 (the highest ever records in Yorkshire).

The butterfly was recorded historically in a number of locations in the Pickering /Thornton le Dale area, including Gundale, Newtondale and the Ellerburn Bank Yorkshire Wildlife Trust reserve, but by 1995 it was only found in one rapidly growing conifer plantation in Newtondale. It appears to have survived here by colonizing areas of recently planted forestry and moving on as the area gets shaded out by growing trees (similar to the coppice cycle described above). It was found again in 2011 in a newly planted deciduous plantation nearby. Butterfly Conservation was able to get permission from the landowner - the Duchy of Lancaster - to establish a clearing, and have since created larger areas of new habitat by widening rides and establishing new areas of coppice, resulting in several interlinked Duke of Burgundy colonies in lower Newtondale. In 2019 single butterflies were found on two former sites up to three miles away and it was exciting to find evidence in 2020 that one of these sites is in a process of re-colonisation.

THE DUKE UNDER THREAT

You may be wondering why this small butterfly rejoices in such a grandiose title - but, sadly, there isn't a clear answer. It may have been named after an 18th century French aristocrat who took an interest in entomology. It was once known as the 'Duke of Burgundy Fritillary' on account of its bright red, yellow and white markings but was subsequently identified as being the only UK member of the Metalmark family rather than being a true Fritillary. Unfortunately, like its namesake, changing times are threatening its survival. Modern farming and forestry practices do not provide suitable habitat for this delightful butterfly, and its survival in North Yorkshire appears dependent on careful management of the sites where it is found, most of which are on private land. If you're interested in helping the survival of this beautiful butterfly, the Yorkshire Branch of Butterfly Conservation - www.yorkshirebutterflies.org.uk - welcomes volunteers to help manage and monitor its sites.

ROBERT PARKS

JOSEPH PILMORE

JOSEPH PILMORE, from the tiny Moors village of Fadmoor, was the first itinerant preacher appointed by John Wesley to North America, yet he had an unpromising start in life.

His mother Sarah Pilmore - born in Sleightholmedale - was in service at a local farm when she became pregnant in 1743. Fearing disgrace and poverty, her family tried to arrange a marriage to the man she named as the father, Joseph Foord of Fadmoor. Joseph was a surveyor on the Duncombe Estate, and later a water engineer who designed races to bring water down from springs high in the moors to areas in need of a supply. His family were Quakers and had a history of working corn mills, as at Hold Cauldron in Kirkdale.

As the named father of Sarah's expected child, Foord cited her in York Consistory Court (run by the Church) for defamation, but the Archbishop of York decided against him. And as a Quaker, Foord's action of 'walking disorderly' (in other words transgressing social norms) needed to be addressed. When Guisborough Quakers' monthly meeting was held at Castleton, the elders interviewed both Sarah and Joseph and found against him, and he was disowned by Kirkbymoorside Meeting House which he had attended. Nevertheless, he continued to live in the area, brazening out the gossip.

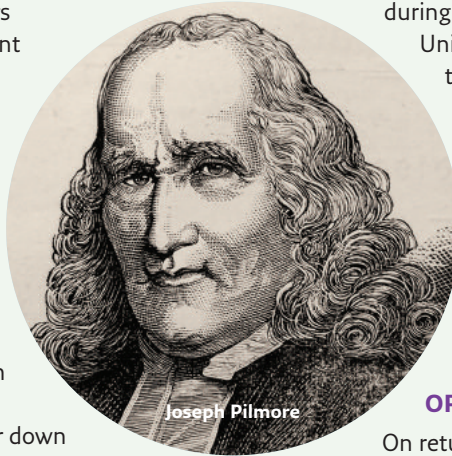
Meanwhile, Sarah and her child moved to live in Nunnington with Sarah's brother Francis. Time went on and in 1754 Sarah married William Sleightholme. The family lived at Waingate Farm, Fadmoor, where Joseph gained a half-brother, William.

At the age of 14 Joseph was a farm servant at Muscoates. It was probably near here, at Beadlam, that he first heard the fiery evangelical preacher Richard Conyers, whose living was at Helmsley. Was it Conyers' conviction that drew Joseph to him? Or that after his rocky start in life he needed certainty?

CONVERSION TO METHODISM

At 16 he heard John Wesley preach and converted to the Methodist view. He was taken up by Wesley to be educated at his Kingswood School in Bristol. What a change for the farm servant to experience four years' education in a place so distant from his native Yorkshire! After his schooling, he travelled the West Country and Wales as an itinerant preacher.

After some months of deliberation and a visit to his mother in Fadmoor, during which he preached in the surrounding villages, he accepted an invitation from Wesley to sail to America. According to Pilmore's journal, 'a sense of duty so affected my mind that I was made perfectly willing to forsake my kindred and native land with all that was most dear to me on earth'. Joseph settled in Philadelphia, also working in New York, and in November 1769 the young man preached the first sermon



during the service of dedication at St George's United Methodist Church, in Philadelphia (now the world's oldest Methodist church in continual use). He later moved towards ordination in the Anglican Church in America. At that time Methodism was still considered a society, part of the established church, rather than a separate denomination, and perhaps he was attracted by working in a settled parish rather than being itinerant.

ORDINATION IN NEW ENGLAND

On returning to England in 1774, however, he spent a decade working as a self-described 'Methodist itinerant' throughout the country. His mother Sarah died in 1778 and was buried at Gillamoore, so ties to his home country weakened. The end of the American War of Independence in 1783 encouraged him to return to New England, and in 1785 he was ordained into the new Protestant Episcopal church.

Joseph Foord made a brief visit to the new United States of America in 1786 and may have met his son and namesake there, though nothing is known of what transpired between the father who had condemned his son to insecurity and rejection and his son, by now a revered priest. Foord returned to Yorkshire and died in 1788. Joseph Pilmore continued to correspond with his half-brother William in Fadmoor, in 1812 writing that 'though the vast Atlantic rolls between us, I do not forget you'. He was over 80 when he died in 1825, and is buried in Philadelphia.

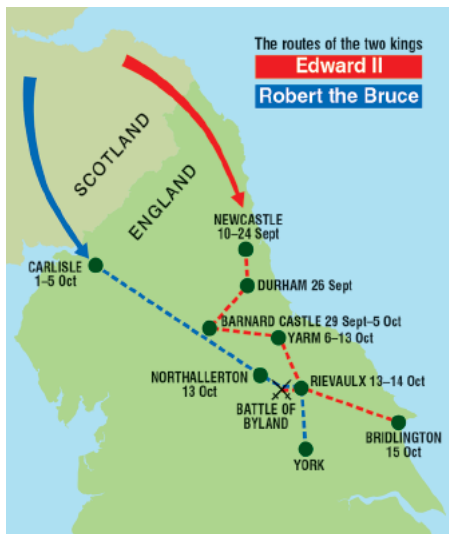
He was not forgotten in his home country. A meeting to commemorate the centenary of American Methodism was held in Fadmoor in 1866, after which a memorial chapel was built at Gillamoore (now part of the school).

And Waingate Farm, Joseph's home with his mother and step-family, is still visited by Americans. So Joseph Pilmore, born with few prospects, grew to be revered in Philadelphia, USA, and is still remembered today.

LYNDA WIX



THE BATTLE OF BYLAND



Routes of the two kings to the battle



View from Roulston Scar north-east towards Northallerton

THE BATTLE OF BYLAND was a significant battle fought in 1322 during the Scottish Wars of Independence, between the forces of King Edward II of England and King Robert I ('the Bruce') of Scotland. The armies engaged within the bounds of the present-day North York Moors National Park, with the fiercest action taking place in the vicinity of the Sutton Bank Visitor Centre, where the modern A170 snakes its way up the steep flank of the Hambleton Hills.

THE ENGLISH RETREAT, THE SCOTS ADVANCE

King Edward had invaded Scotland in August 1322 but had been frustrated by the Scottish king's refusal to risk battle against a much larger force, and after some weeks he was forced to retire over the border, his vast army wasted by famine and disease. Throughout September Edward slowly retreated south, while hastily summoning fresh levies from the northern lords to reinforce his depleted army, and by 13th October he had established his headquarters at Rievaulx Abbey.

King Robert seized the opportunity to counter-attack. Crossing the border in early October, he laid waste the country around Carlisle before leading his army on a lightning march to Northallerton, just 15 miles from Edward at Rievaulx.

The speed of the Scots' advance caught Edward off guard, and it was only on the 13th that he discovered they were almost on top of him. He immediately ordered his field-commander, the Earl of Richmond, to post a strong advance guard along the escarpment of the Hambleton Hills, particularly at Sutton Bank where the medieval track climbed a narrow pass, so as to prevent the Scots gaining the high ground. This, he hoped, would buy him valuable time in order to organise the reinforcements which were coming in daily.

King Robert's aim was no less than to make a prisoner of King Edward in order to force the English to make peace. The Scots made a forced overnight march from Northallerton with the hope of catching the English unaware, but on the morning of the 14th the army arrived at the foot of Sutton Bank to find the heights defended by a strong and alert English force.

DAY OF THE BATTLE

Faced by this barrier, the Scottish king held a council of war with his two principal captains, Sir James Douglas and the Earl of Moray. They knew it would be difficult and costly to fight their way up the well-defended pass at Sutton Bank, which was precipitous and narrow, but they also realised that to detour to the south and east via Helmsley, avoiding the high ground, meant that any chance of capturing King Edward would be lost.

It was therefore decided that a frontal assault on the English position must be attempted, and Douglas and Moray led their men up the steep slope to engage the enemy. A fierce struggle ensued, with intense hand-to-hand fighting as the Scots inched their way upwards in the face of determined opposition. The English resistance was led by two renowned knights, Sir Thomas Uhtred and Sir Ralph Cobham, said to be the bravest in the land.

Seeing that the English were hard-pressed and occupied with repelling the Scottish frontal assault, King Robert detached a strong body of troops to circle round and ascend the precipitous slopes at a point hidden from the defenders by the protruding cliffs. They soon reached the high ground and began to form up in numbers on the English left flank. Two steep gullies on the southern flank of Roulston Scar - Boar's Gill and Hell Hole - are most likely to be the routes they used. Near the top of Hell Hole is a spot still known today as Scotch Corner, which is a strong clue that this is the site of the Scottish breakthrough.

According to one medieval chronicler, the Scots attacking up Sutton Bank had just managed to force their way to the top at the same time as their compatriots appeared on the English left flank. Suddenly, what had been a difficult position for the English had become an impossible one.

This was the critical moment of the battle. The resolve of those defending the pass was already wavering as the attackers forced their way up and out on to the plateau, with Cobham compelled to withdraw, although Uhtred - to his great renown - fought on until captured. With the enemy bearing down on their flank, the English broke and fled in disorder back towards their main force, which the Earl of Richmond was marshalling in the vicinity of Old Byland/Scawton.

The remainder of the Scottish army then ascended the pass and rapidly deployed on the plateau before advancing relentlessly on the main English army. At this point King Robert detached a body of 500 horsemen, under the command of his son-in-law Walter the Steward, with orders to ride swiftly to Rievaulx with the express intent to capture Edward.

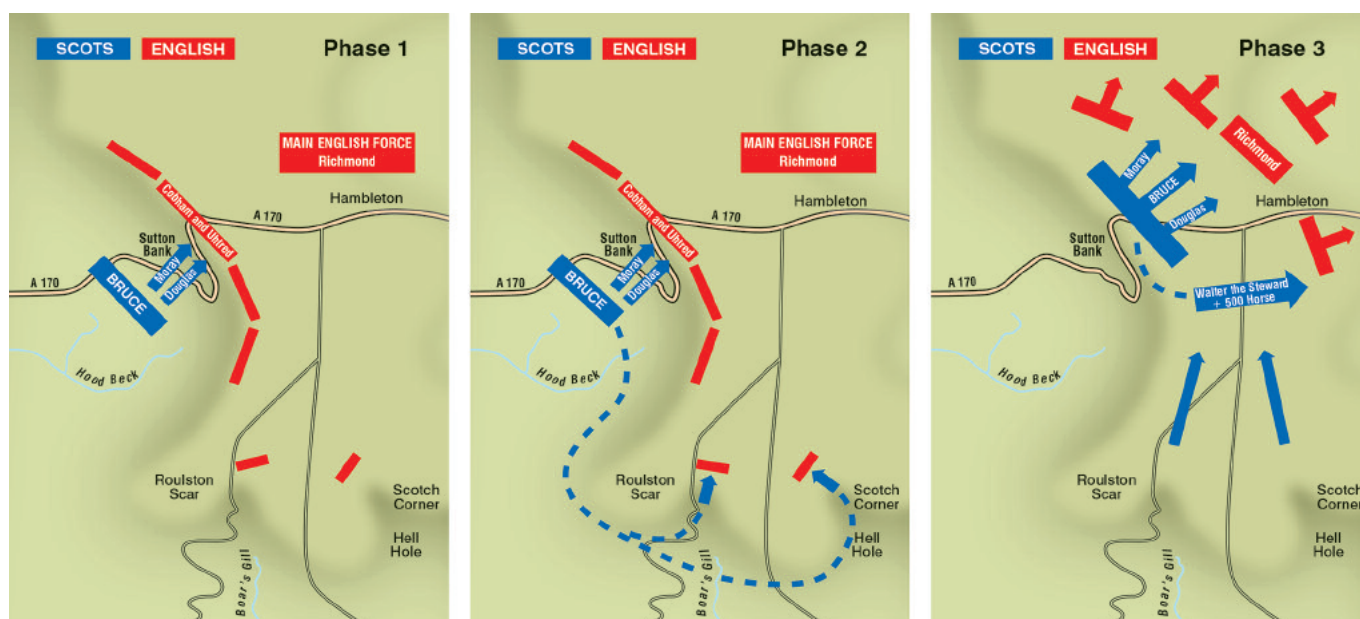
Richmond made a bold attempt to stand his ground, but his dispirited troops were soon overwhelmed by the well-disciplined and determined Scottish attack, and his army disintegrated in flight. Richmond himself was taken prisoner, together with many other high-ranking English who were held ransom for large sums. Meanwhile Edward had prudently retreated to Rievaulx, only to discover the Scottish horsemen were hot on his heels. He narrowly escaped capture by riding swiftly to Bridlington in search of a ship, but only after abandoning his treasure, baggage, and the Great Seal of England to the victorious Scots.

HOME WITH THE SPOILS OF WAR

After their victory no serious resistance to the Scots remained north of the Humber, apart from the garrison bottled up in York. Splitting into three divisions, the Scottish army ventured unopposed further into England than ever before. The East Riding was occupied as far as Beverley by a force under Moray, while another led by Douglas struck west through Airedale right up to Skipton and beyond. A third group under the command of the King himself pillaged the area of the Howardian Hills right up to the gates of York.

However, with neither the time nor the siege train required to reduce the city, the Scots contented themselves with taunting the garrison and carrying off everything of value from the surrounding country. Thereafter they made their way north again, re-grouping on the way, before crossing the border on 2nd November, rich with their spoils.

HARRY PEARSON
BATTLE OF BYLAND RESEARCHER



Phases of the Battle of Byland

700TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF BYLAND

OCTOBER 14TH 2022 sees the 700th anniversary of the Battle of Byland, and moves are under way to mark this landmark occasion. A commemorative event is planned for Saturday 15th October 2022 at the National Park's Sutton Bank Visitor Centre, which is literally yards from where the heaviest action of the battle was fought.

Harry Pearson, a member of the event planning group, is a keen historian and a NYMNP Volunteer Ranger. *"I have been researching the Battle of Byland for the past 5 years, ever since I retired to Yorkshire from Scotland, and I was surprised to discover there was nothing in place to commemorate it and no information available to the interested visitor. Byland was a very significant encounter during that period of conflict between England and Scotland in the early 14th century, yet it has largely been forgotten in modern times and little has been written about it, despite the existence of several reliable contemporary sources. I've spent countless hours walking the ground and comparing the topography with the description of events contained in the ancient chronicles, and there can be little doubt that the main fighting took place at Sutton Bank and around Roulston Scar. It*

is very exciting that the battle is at last going to achieve some recognition."

Plans are still at the early stage, but it is hoped to hold a themed event with medieval re-enactors, displays of 14th century arms and armour, archery demonstrations etc., as well as commemorating the event with permanent features such as a battlefield trail and battle interpretation features. Groups such as the Battlefields Trust and NYMA are lending their support, and approaches have also been made to the Royal Armouries and English Heritage.

Harry is keen to expand his research by tapping in to any local knowledge. *"I'd be very interested to hear from anyone with information about the battle. It is often the case that oral tradition can provide useful clues to historic events, be that folklore, family tales, or local legends. It's all valuable because there is often a genuine link to historic events."*

If you have any information that may be of interest to Harry, he can be contacted at hazpearson@yahoo.co.uk.



MAB BRADLEY AND FYLING HALL SCHOOL

IN THE WINTER ISSUE of 'Voice' we heard the fascinating story of 'the Little Squire' of Fylingdales, John Warren Barry. After he died in 1920 his home, Fyling Hall, was sold and in 1933 became the school still in existence today, standing on the hill overlooking Robin Hood's Bay. Its founder was Mabel Bradley, or Mab as she was known, who was an inspirational teacher and organiser. She had been deprived of her position as Headmistress of Whitby County School when she married the Headmaster, Dr Bill Bradley – at that time married women were not permitted to hold formal teaching appointments. However, her skill and personality were such that two of Mab's friends asked her to educate their sons, and in 1923 she began teaching at her own Abbey School in Whitby before relocating to Fyling Hall in 1933, setting up a co-educational establishment - unusual at the time. Conditions in the early days were basic, as Barry had never seen the need for mains electricity or water. The pupils helped to dig water-main trenches, earning a rebate of the installation cost by their efforts, and an old railway carriage in the garden served for a while as the senior boys' dormitory.

QUEEN MAB

An entry in the school website refers affectionately to Mab as 'Queen Mab' and tells us: "As an administrator, a facilitator, someone who made things possible, got things done, she appears to have been without equal. She recruited staff wherever she could, inspired them no less than she inspired her pupils, made them better teachers. Not all of them were that academically qualified but she was more interested in their power to impart knowledge than in their paper scrolls. She got on board one of Yorkshire's finest novelists, the great Leo Walmsley – as a woodwork teacher! She could not have done all this without having the 'happy and humorous outlook on life' that the keen-eyed Walmsley detected."

Walmsley did indeed teach 'building, carpentry, etc' at the school in the mid-1930s. With his wife Margaret and his young

family, he lived just up the hill from the school at Leith Rigg, and recognised the value of the Bradleys' methods of providing a sound education. In his book 'The Golden Waterwheel' he wrote:

"The mansion where the Little Squire had lived had been transformed into a private co-ed primary school, run on lines which more or less agreed with our own ideas of how children should be educated. The married principals, Bill and Mab, were both intellectuals with university degrees. They were not pedants however, and both had a happy, humorous outlook on life. Bill's chief interest was science, Mab's was literature and languages, yet they believed that handicraft, drawing and painting, music, dancing and play-acting were important in a school curriculum and that games [sports], while important, should not be regarded as a fetish."



THE WAR AND FYLING HALL

In the summer of 1940 Fyling Hall was requisitioned by the Army and the school was evacuated for the duration of the war to Inglewood Bank, north-east of Penrith, owned by a Cumberland family called Harrison. The pupils were 'packed into a bus with dogs, maids, some blankets and a picnic lunch' while the school ponies were ridden all the way to Cumberland by some of the children – a distance of well over 100 miles, which must have been quite an adventure. Bill Bradley remained behind to close down the School in readiness for army staff to occupy the building, but sadly whilst there he died of a heart attack, at the age of 75. With funeral transportation difficult to find at this stage of the war, Mab tried to borrow a farm cart from the nearby Low Farm to take his body to St Stephen's Church for burial, but the farmer was too superstitious to loan it for such a macabre purpose. Mab was later to marry the owner of Inglewood Bank, and a plaque at the school commemorates her as Mab Harrison.

Like so many houses taken over by the military, Fyling Hall suffered during the war. The Bradleys' daughter, Clare, reports how windows and doors were broken, Italian wrought-iron railings torn up, and beech woods felled. The lawns became

hayfields and sheep got into her father's beloved rose garden, devastating it and turning it into a wilderness.

INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

Following Mab's death in 1962 the school was run for thirty years by her daughter, by then Clare White - a car-parking space is still 'Reserved for Mrs White'. The pupils were encouraged to think for themselves, and their achievements extended beyond the purely academic; when in the 1960s the Beeching axe fell and the closure of the Whitby-Scarborough line, including Fyling Hall Station, was announced, a party of them walked all the way to York carrying placards protesting against the cuts which would affect them so much. Then in 2005 the students recreated the 1940 ride to Cumberland on the school's horses and ponies.

The Little Squire would no doubt have been surprised to see the splendid home his ancestor had built, where he lived most of his life alone apart from his servants, buzzing with children, fun and laughter.

JANE ELLIS

My thanks to John Jeakins, former teacher at the school, also to Nick Foggo of The Walmsley Society for the painting by J. Ulric Walmsley.



A MOORLAND PUB - HEART OF THE COMMUNITY



“ I T WOULD BE an understatement to say that the pub is the centre of the community. It has a dominoes team, quizzes and regular live music. It also helps support the Village Hall through a collection jar, sells the History Group publications and is a pick-up point for newspaper deliveries.”

An enthusiastic local resident, Jim Hall, describes the Moors Inn, at the heart of Appleton-le-Moors. At a time when so many rural pubs are closing or struggling – even before the pandemic – it is heart-warming to hear of an establishment which has offered essentially the same service for two and a half centuries.

The earliest recorded owner of the building was William Shepherd in 1712, but it was not until 1782 that a later owner – John Hixon – is first described as an inn-holder. Early in the 19th century David and Ann

Stonehouse were in residence, by that time offering guest accommodation as well as brewing beer. In 1821 the Stonehouses emigrated to Canada with nine of their children, at which time the deed of sale shows the inn as the 'George and Dragon'. By 1842 however it is referred to as the Oddfellows Arms; the name derives from a guild for workmen engaged in assorted trades not covered by any of the major guilds. Their meetings were often held in pubs, which they supported to the extent that they were sometimes renamed in their honour.

The name then remained until in 1981, when Donald and Ida Moore took ownership. They changed the name to the 'Moors Inn' at Ida's insistence because, she said, working in an Oddfellows pub was too much when she was already married to an odd fellow! When she died at over 90, the obituary of this redoubtable lady related that “she was known for her BMWs, fine clothes and jewellery, and meat pasties for which people were willing to pay £25. They were possibly the world's most expensive pasties.” (Malton Gazette & Herald, 23 May 1997)

The next owners, Janet and Mike Frank, ran the Inn as a destination gastro-pub for over 15 years. Then in 2014 Jonathan and Katie Sharp, farmers from near Hornsea, in

East Yorkshire, bought the Inn to diversify their business. Jonathan and Katie have thrown themselves into community life: for instance, in 2016 they supported a Medieval Weekend with a hog-roast and a special Appleton Ale brewed by Helmsley Brewery - as well as providing a location for the village's medieval stocks!

The last year has been incredibly tough for the Inn, as for all hospitality venues, but Katie and Jonathan are looking forward to welcoming guests back once they're allowed to re-open on May 17th. “We are great believers in the cultural importance of the 'traditional British pub' where everyone is welcome,” says Jonathan. “We hope we can carry the business forward so that the pub remains open for future generations.”

<https://www.moorsinn.co.uk/>

JIM HALL

Secretary, Appleton-le-Moors History Group



STANBROOK ABBEY - FIVE YEARS ON

Stanbrook Abbey in snow



I T WAS in 2015, just after the completion of the new abbey church and hospitality wing, that we last contributed to *Voice of the Moors*, so we owe readers an update, ‘five years on’. It has been a gently dynamic time on several fronts: architectural, wildlife and outreach, while our statue of St Benedict has been through some traumas

ARCHITECTURE: MATURING AND AWARDS

Most people find the prow shape of the abbey church striking, but back in 2015 some were less keen on the colour of the wooden exterior. At that time the green oak cladding was decidedly ‘orange’! But, quite rapidly, it lost the ‘garden shed’ look and over time has weathered to a rich silver-grey, which blends in well with the forest backdrop behind the abbey. We have also appreciated the wisdom of the architects (Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios) who, back in 2009, recommended deferring the wooden cladding of Phase One of the monastery until the completion of Phase Two (abbey church and hospitality area) in 2015; so now there is a seamless, evenly weathered façade.

The architectural calibre of the building has been recognized by several awards, including, in 2010, a Civic Trust Award and a regional award from LABC (Local Authority Building Control) for the best community building.

Most recently, we were joint winners in the Celebration of Excellence UK Church Architecture Awards run by the National Churches Trust and the Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association (EASA). Covid-19 made it impossible for EASA to hold the annual competition in its usual format. Instead, there was an online vote from a shortlist of previous winners of this award between 2010 and 2019.

WILDLIFE

One of the most popular features of the landscape design of the new monastery has been the wildflower meadow which runs

along the east-facing approach to the abbey. Sown in 2015, by the next summer it was clothed in swathes of red campion and ox-eye daisies. Each year since has seen an increase in species diversity which in turn attracts waves of butterflies and bees throughout the growing season. So far, plants noted include: red campion, white campion, bladder campion, cowslip, ragged robin, lady’s bedstraw, feverfew, yarrow, ox-eye daisy, knapweed, pink and white clover, vetch, scabious, bugle, self-heal, mouse-ear and yellow rattle. As well as providing nectar and shelter for insects and improving the soil structure, the vegetation softens the angular lines of the main monastery building, making a welcoming approach to the front door.

Sadly, some of the silver birch trees planted in the meadow have suffered squirrel damage, but they were professionally pollarded in 2020 and we hope will thrive.

OUTREACH

Our six daily services in the abbey church are (in non-Covid times) open to the public and we have always been keen to engage with visitors, particularly those with an interest in green matters, in other ways too. There have been many enquiries about sustainability over the years from both groups and individuals.

In June 2016 we hosted a Study Day for local people guided by the well-known nature writer from the Thirsk area, Jonathan Tulloch. Lively talks and hands-on activities made us more aware of the beauties in the natural world all around us. Participants were encouraged to observe a square metre of the landscape for half an hour and then to write about it. Some evocative poems emerged which you can find on the Stanbrook website under ‘Study and Stillness’: <https://www.stanbrookabbey.org.uk/page-studyandstillness.html>

Then, in March 2019, we were delighted that our annual Study Day, attended by about fifty people, was led by Dr Rowan



Photo © Sr. Marian

Photo © Sr. Philippa

Williams who gave us two talks on 'The Theology of Creation'. One thought I recall from that day was that creation is not a process with an end product but rather an ongoing relationship between the absolute freedom of the Creator and the recipients of the gift of creation.

A SHIP WEATHERING STORMS - AND A STATUE WHICH DIDN'T!

Regrettably, since March 2020 we have been closed to visitors in order to shield our elderly, vulnerable sisters from Covid-19, but our mission to pray for all those suffering the effects of the pandemic, and those suffering in any other way, has intensified. We look forward to the day when we can re-open safely; meanwhile we have been heartened to learn that some people have found comfort in our simply being here, holding the world in our prayers. In that sense, the building itself becomes a symbol of hope for people and a sign of security in the landscape, like a sturdy ship anchored in troubled waters. The Benedictine way of life which we follow, founded by St Benedict of Nursia in the 6th century, has weathered many storms, wars, plagues and famines over the past fifteen hundred years, something which can give us all confidence and hope for the future.

To close, a post-script on the statue of St Benedict which featured in the 2015 article.

The statue travelled with us from our former abbey in Worcester where it was situated indoors. In the original design for the new monastery the statue had similarly been destined for an indoor location but proved out of scale inside, and so ended up in the open air. Of course, we realized that winters in North Yorkshire were colder than in Worcester and we took professional advice about the suitability of the stone for such an exposed site. But, somewhere along the line, the fact that the statue had been reinforced with metal rods had fallen out of the story. The resulting cracks after a couple of hard winters were only to be expected, and soon St Benedict had to be encased in a sort of sentry box for safety's sake!

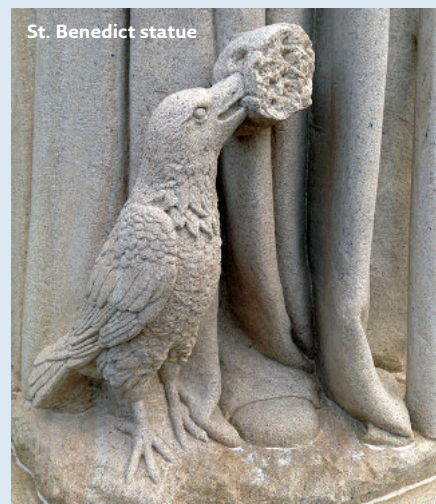


Photo © Sr. Julian

Expert advice suggested that it would be better to replace than repair the statue and, through the generosity of a kind benefactor, we commissioned a new statue which was installed on 11 July 2020, the Feast of St Benedict. Executed in a hard sandstone by Matthias Garn and team in their York studio, it is a faithful reproduction of the original and yet a completely new work of art with its own character and finely sculpted details, e.g. on the hands and beard and the wings of the raven. As in the original statue, St Benedict is pointing to the door of the abbey church in welcome.

Our hope is that our doors will soon once again be open. In the meantime, do visit us virtually at: www.stanbrookabbey.org.uk. And for the next five years? We still have the monastic library and guest house to complete as funds become available. Watch this space ...

SR LAURENTIA JOHNS OSB

Seeking Byland: Poems through the Seasons from Stanbrook Abbey, pub. Gracewing 2020, £10.00 plus p&p via the abbey; contact bookshop@stanbrookabbey.org.uk, tel: 01347 868927

YORKSHIRE HERITAGE GUARDIANS



THE YORKSHIRE SOCIETY, established in 1980, is a not-for-profit voluntary membership organisation that promotes 'everything good and worthwhile about' the historic three counties of Yorkshire.

The Society, which is strictly non-political, works to bring people of Yorkshire together, both figuratively and literally. It does so figuratively by offering its members and Yorkshire communities a collective voice, and literally by creating occasions and events that encourage our

members and the wider Yorkshire public to get together for business and pleasure. These occasions include annual Yorkshire Day (August 1st) celebrations, Yorkshire Awards for individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the life of the region, and a website and newsletter that promote news and events. A major new project in the Society's 40th anniversary year was to set up a network and directory of voluntary, Yorkshire-based conservation and cultural heritage groups, named Yorkshire Heritage Guardians.

'Heritage' is a somewhat overused word. Strictly speaking it means something that is handed down from one person or one generation to another, but it usually means what one generation values in terms of its natural beauty or cultural association and wishes to protect for generations to come.

Yorkshire Heritage Guardians are therefore a mutually supportive informal network of not-for-profit and charitable organisations, large and small. A Yorkshire Heritage e-bulletin to share Guardians' news and information is planned for Spring.

It's exciting news that NYMA has accepted an invitation to become one of the first regional Yorkshire Heritage Guardians, joined by another 15 or so regional environmental bodies, plus a growing number of local Heritage Guardians. For details log on to www.theyorkshiresociety.org. And if you are involved in any local amenity group that you feel meets the criteria for free inclusion in the Directory, please contact heritage@theyorkshiresociety.org for further information.

COLIN SPEAKMAN

THE ESK VALLEY LINE



Middlesbrough train arriving at Glaisdale



Battersby Station with its water crane

With a likely summer of ‘staycations’ ahead of us, there are real concerns that beauty spots and car-parks in our national parks are going to be crammed with visitors. So maybe it’s time to rediscover a greener way of enjoying the North York Moors by one of its glories – the 35-mile long Esk Valley Railway between Middlesbrough and Whitby.

The line is an amazing Victorian survivor, a perfectly preserved rural railway which provides car-free access to the heart of the National Park. It’s not the quickest way of travelling between Middlesbrough and Whitby – the X93 Arriva bus takes 70 minutes compared with 90 by train – but arguably the loveliest.

It wasn’t initially built as a passenger railway but as the Yorkshire & Cleveland Railway, opened in 1857, to carry ironstone from Stokesley to Picton where it would connect with the main Leeds-Northern line to Teesside. In 1858, now taken over by the North Eastern Railway, it extended eastwards to Battersby where from 1861 the Rosedale railway brought rich iron ores down the Rosedale Incline heading to the iron foundries of Middlesbrough. It continued eastwards to Kildale, finally reaching Grosmont on the Whitby-Pickering line in 1865. A freight branch from Battersby to Nunthorpe carried passengers from 1865, though even in 1910 most trains to Stockton continued via Picton. But by 1950 most trains for Middlesbrough were reversing, as now, at Battersby, and the Picton link closed in 1954.

The whole line almost closed in 1930 when a stone bridge near Glaisdale was swept away by floods, its replacement girder bridge suffering the same fate a year later.

But greater challenges were to come in the 1960s when the Beeching Plan proposed closure of all three surviving rail routes into Whitby, including the coastal route from Scarborough via Robin Hood’s Bay and the main line to York via Malton (which has survived from Pickering as the North York Moors Railway). The Esk Valley line only survived because a public inquiry suggested there would be “grave hardship” faced by local communities in Esk Valley if the line closed. Before any further attempts to close the line could be made, attitudes to railways in Britain had changed – and the Esk Valley with its 14 intermediate stations survived. Not only that, but since then

two new stations have been added: for Middlesbrough commuters at Gypsy Lane in 1974, and James Cook to serve the region’s hospital in 2014.

The survival of the Esk Valley line provides an amazing, if under-appreciated, railway heritage experience – among the many lovely structures are bridges, viaducts and cuttings as the single-track line meanders through the valley, crossing and recrossing the Esk river and reversing at Battersby Junction. Beautifully preserved North Eastern Railway rural stations date from the 1860s, for instance at Battersby the water crane can still be seen: from this, the arm would swing out to top up the water in steam engine tanks. Thanks to the Esk Valley Railway Development Company the stations are looked after by a network of community volunteers. As a Community Rail Partnership, the EVRDC works closely with Northern to help promote the line and secure service improvements, including the recent introduction of extra early morning and evening trains, regular music trains with live performers, and a wonderful monthly Forget-Me-Not train to support people with dementia.

One huge advantage of using the train is that it facilitates linear walks, a refreshing change from circular walks from the car. The Esk Valley Way is a 35-mile waymarked route linking Castleton Moor and intermediate stations to Whitby by attractive paths linking villages along the valley. Details, plus current timetables, events and self-guided walks including a new series of themed ‘Land of Iron’ walks from stations, can be accessed from the EVRDC website – <http://www.eskvalleyrailway.co.uk/>.

On a more serious note, EVRDC takes North Yorkshire County Council to task with its hard-hitting report ‘Where’s the Plan?’ which accuses NYCC of wasting a major improvement grant of £4.5 million (from Sirius Minerals) on what they describe as a ‘Victorian Age’ manual token signalling system, rather than a state of the art, cab-based digital system as used on similar lines in Scotland. Hopefully common sense and agreement will prevail. In the meantime, the railway – rightly dubbed “one of the prettiest in England” – runs several trains daily and offers a wonderful time-travel trip through the heart of the North York Moors National Park.

A
GREENER
WAY
TO ENJOY
THE
NATIONAL
PARK

COLIN SPEAKMAN



SKYLARKS

Hello younger readers.

In our past Spring issues we have looked at flowers and mammals, such as rabbits and lambs. This time we will look at a group of animals called amphibians.

Amphibians are a group of animals who are happy in water and out of water.

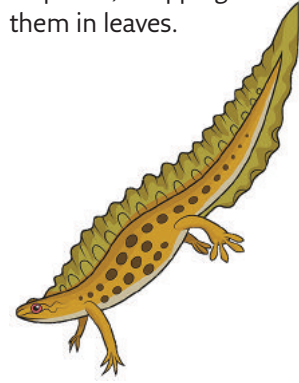
Their lives start in water where they breathe with gills, then they develop limbs and their lungs develop so that they adapt to live on land.

Amphibians are cold blooded and get cold in winter and hot in summer. In winter they need to hibernate to keep warm.



They come out of hibernation when it is warm enough and some lay spawn in clusters in ponds and slow-moving streams and rivers. This is usually about February or March in North Yorkshire.

Others, like this creature below, lay their eggs later, around April and May. They lay their eggs individually in ponds, wrapping them in leaves.



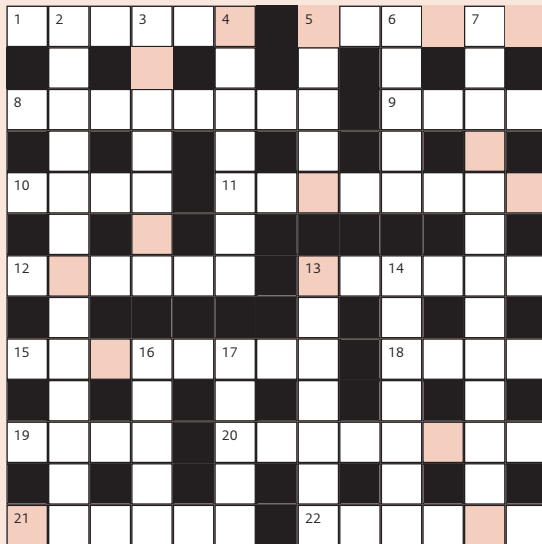
Using this information can you complete the gapped answers of three examples of amphibians?

F _ _ _ _ T _ _ _ _ N _ _ _ _

Find out more about different types of amphibians and their life-cycles.

Newt © <https://creazilla.com/nodes/4891-smooth-newt> © clipart / Frogspawn - Cal Moore

CROSSWORD 92 by AMANUENSIS



ACROSS

- 1 Complain about the famous whisky? (6)
- 5 Make eyes at the French seafood (6)
- 8 Holds it all together (8)
- 9 Was cheeky but regretted it one hears (4)
- 10 Time for fruit (4)
- 11 Curtsy to produce a weapon? (4,1,3)
- 12 Guides the cattle (6)
- 13 Heavenly aviators (6)
- 15 A clue is 13 across (8)
- 18 You won't find anything here (4)
- 19 Short day (4)
- 20 Plant at the top of a Greek column (8)
- 21 Little Albert goes with gentleman into recess (6)
- 22 Daughters of your mother and father's other children (6)

DOWN

- 2 Provokes anger on the farm (3,3,2,1,4)
- 3 Always comes with strings attached (7)
- 4 Mischievous gamines are perplexing (7)
- 5 A type of 2 across (5)
- 6 Roman goes crazy for lady (5)
- 7 She is always out of work? (4,2,7)
- 13 Decline to vote for the blood group with bad mark (7)
- 14 Got a vet to dance (7)
- 16 For roping in young woman with nothing on (5)
- 17 Pompously speak at zero speed (5)

Take the letters from the coloured squares and rearrange in the boxes to solve the anagram:

Clue: An old well-worn route 'dead-straight' over the moorland from east to west or vice-versa! (3,4,4,4)

Answers on back cover

NYMA NEWS

It's been a quiet few months for NYMA but behind the scenes we're working away to support the National Park.

In January the first applications arrived for our new 'rolling' conservation award scheme, and at our Council meeting we agreed to make grants to two projects. Both are designed to enhance accessibility to the park, in different areas and to different user-groups.

One grant is going to support Moorsbus in their long-running efforts to improve access to the park and reduce the use of motor transport. The money will help install raised kerbs at bus-stops at the Moors Centre, Danby, so that wheel-chair users can more easily benefit from the service (further contributions come from the Bruce Wake Trust and the National Park).

The other award is for a wider bridge to replace the current footbridge across a beck on a new recreational trail along the disused railway track running eastwards from Helmsley. A group of volunteers is busy clearing the route, which eventually is planned to become part of an off-road network for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders. This part of the route passes through the Duncombe Estate, whose owners have kindly agreed to allow use of the old railway line.

If you're involved in (or know of) any deserving projects which could win an award, please get in touch!

We're looking forward to being able to run guided walks and other events again. Everyone on the mailing list for walks has already heard from Walks Coordinator Heather Mather that the first one will be on Saturday May 22nd (as long as we're still permitted to do so). Just let us know if you'd like to join the mailing list on secretary@nyma.org.uk.

Photos © Roger Hillman



Footbridge at Spittle Beck, Helmsley, and new path created by volunteers

CROSSWORD ANSWERS (see page 19)

THE LYKE WAKE WALK

Anagram

gavotte, 16. lasso, 17. orate
5. whelk, 6. Norma, 7. lady of leisure, 13. abstain, 14.
2. red rag to a bull, 3. ukulele, 4. enigmas,

Down

1. grouse/Crouse, 5. Winkie, 8. adhesive, 9. rude, 10.
date, 11. make a bow, 12. steers,
13. angels, 15. balloons, 18. void, 19. Tues,
20. acanthus, 21. alcove, 22. nices

Across

STAMP OF APPROVAL



An attractive set of ten first-class postage stamps was issued at the start of 2021 to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the first of the UK's 15 National Parks to be declared, the Peak District in Derbyshire. The colourful stamps feature breath-taking scenery and showcase the natural beauty of ten of these precious

Photo © NYM / Freebrough Hill stamp

and protected areas.

Our own area is represented by a glorious image of frosted heather moorland with Freebrough Hill in the background. This evocative photo was taken by photographer Jonathan Pritchard who ventured out early on a freezing December morning in 2020 to capture his image.

Heather (*Caluna vulgaris*) is, of course, synonymous with the North York Moors National Park and a fitting motif for the stamp. The distinctively domed Freebrough Hill, standing north of Castleton at an elevation of just 821 feet, was shaped during the last Ice Age by the colossal forces of glacial erosion. Although a natural feature, over the centuries this small but prominent hill has generated many fanciful myths and legends. It continues to be viewed as an enigmatic landmark by the many people who pass it along the busy A171 Guisborough to Whitby road.

The stamps are available from post offices or can be ordered online.

AINSLEY

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NYMA - PROTECTING THE NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

www.nyma.org.uk

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The North Yorkshire Moors Association is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Registration no. 1169240