

**AGM FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2021**  
**SATURDAY 26 MARCH 2022**  
**10AM TO 1PM**  
**ST OSWALD'S CHURCH HALL, MAIN STREET FULFORD**

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2021**

I begin my first chairman's report with summary of our background as a society which is quoted from our newsletter. I think it expresses accurately what we did to get started and how we have managed to continue:

**“What A Lot Has Happened Since June 2011** when Gavin Thomas and Louise Wheatley first met to discuss a local history group. They arranged a series of promotional meetings which attracted a group of volunteers who willingly came forward to form a steering committee. This rapidly became a formal committee, ably chaired by Bob Cook, who was instrumental in drawing up our constitution which meant we could apply for insurance, a bank account and, subsequently, for grant aid. Our monthly meetings started in January 2012 and by 2013 we were a formally recognised local history society. John Hurd took over as chair and guided us through an amazing year of talks, walking tours and visits. When John became ill in 2014, Chris Rainger stepped forward and his energy and ideas inspired new activities such as the exhibition in Fishergate Postern Tower, walking trail leaflets, a series of conferences and our participation in the University of York's Festival of Ideas.”

**IMPACT OF COVID-19 AND STAYING IN TOUCH**

By 2020 we were well on our way to another exciting and varied programme of events when Covid-19 struck, and we had to abandon all plans for more than a year. This is so well expressed by Chris Rainger that I quote his Chairman's Report for 2020

“We had no idea how long the Covid-19 lockdown would last, so the Steering Committee began meeting regularly via Skype and Zoom. This kept the Society ticking over and staying positive through grim times by planning for the future. With much of normal life held in suspension, members had more time for new research and digging out those projects they had ‘always meant to get round to doing someday’! The Steering Committee decided to roll-over membership to the end of 2021 and send out regular email circulars to keep in touch with members. We hope these were helpful and interesting”

To try and connect with all our members, past and present, we sent out **Christmas greetings** in 2020 and 2021 with a personal note and other information which has been very well received. A **newsletter**, prepared for the AGM in spring 2020 was sent out by email; but is now updated with the events of 2020 and 2021 and this will be available at the AGM on 26 March 2022.

**THANK YOU AND REQUEST TO JOIN THE COMMITTEE**

At this point I have to thank EVERYONE who had been involved with FFH in any way, but in particular those who have served on the steering committee, researched topics, given talks, helped at the meetings, created displays, maintained the archives and remained friendly and positive during lockdown and much more. Our events really do require team effort AND if you would like to join the committee or do some research or give a talk or organise a display. PLEASE LET US KNOW! Our AGM is a chance for YOU to step forward to help but also for you to NOMINATE SOMEONE to join the committee OR to elect as CHAIRMAN.

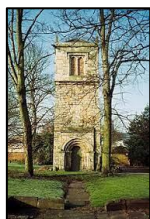
## REVIEW OF EVENTS 2021:

In 2021 we began a tentative re-start of activities by holding some outdoor events:



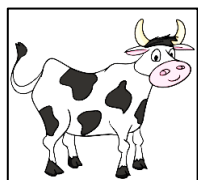
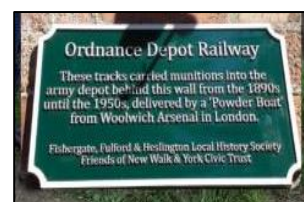
On **Tuesday 15 June** we met at 6pm at the Heslington East Campus where we were met by archaeologist, Steve Roskams. He gave an enjoyable and informative tour around the site and noted its array of archaeological finds.

The **York Festival of Ideas** was a creative effort this year with a variety of activities during **8 to 20 June**. Chris Rainger posted ideas for talks and walks on our website. In 2022 we will host an event on THE FULFORD GRANGE ESTATE.



Shortly afterwards on **Saturday 19 June** at 10am we gathered in St Lawrence's churchyard for a guided walk led by Martin Marsh who showed us the Norman tower, the outline of the old church, the tomb of the Riggs children who drowned in the Ouse; and the garden of the Alms Houses

On **Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> July** at 4pm we met on the New Walk for the unveiling of the Ordnance Railway Information Plaque. The tracks were uncovered by the latest inundation of mud; there were civic dignitaries in attendance and Andrew Scott, gave a short history of the railway. A thoroughly enjoyable occasion.



Another evening walk was held on **Tuesday 20 July** when we met Al Oswald at the 'kissing gate' at the bottom of Green Dykes Lane. He took us around Walmgate Stray and pointed out many features of the landscape which showed a rich history of use for grazing livestock and carrying out military exercises.

In the late afternoon on **Thursday 5 August** (the Feast Day of St Oswald) we met at the Lych Gate of old St Oswald's Church to visit the YAT archaeology taking place to find the old Well House. It is always fascinating to look into trial trenches and the finds trays and look forward to the report.



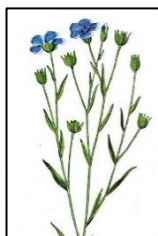
The Fulford Show on Bank Holiday **Monday 30 August** was on the field in a pavilion and attracted a lot of attention thanks to our many binders of information.

Our first indoor meeting took place on **Saturday 18 September** in St Oswald's Church Hall, when Judy Nicholson and Barbara King gave an illustrated talk about the various houses, families and institutions in the southern corner of Fulford abutting on Naburn. The hospital, asylum and POW camp were only part of the history of the area.



We held our long delayed AGMs for 2019 and 2020 on **Saturday 16 October** in Heslington Church. After the business meeting, we had a talk by Rob Shorland-Ball about Leatham's Hungate Flour Mill and the innovation of 'Hungarian milling'.

Our final event for the year was held on **Saturday 20 November**, again in Heslington Church, when Dr Mark McFedridge gave a history of the Retreat and his personal perspective as a consultant psychologist. He was joined by two former participants in his programme, and they gave articulate and moving accounts of their experiences.



Sadly, concerns about Covid-19 variants caused us to cancel the December social event as well as the first meeting in 2022. This was to be on Flax, from field to fabric; with a focus on the flax mills in Walmgate and bleaching grounds in Heslington. It will be rescheduled.

We could NOT have done any of this without the energy and vision of our former chair, Chris Rainger who was instrumental in launching our 2021 programme. He worked behind the scenes with the support of the steering committee and the assistance of a few members to:

1. Set up an investigation of Well House by York Archaeological Trust
2. Find and hire a calligrapher to restore the “beautiful calligraphy by Harry Harvey on the original plaque at old St Oswald’s Church.
3. Apply and receive a Ward Grant for the making of the Ordnance Railway Plaque and to liaise with the Friends of the New Walk to assist in the costs of installation.
4. Submit a paper to the Minster Precinct consultation to promote a monument to Alcuin as part of their improvement project
5. Provide information for the Civic Trust study of Tower House
6. Provide information and support for the celebration of Fulford Primary School’s 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary
7. Submit comments about the proposed Ordnance Lane Development

## **RESEARCH, WEBSITE AND OTHER PROJECTS TO DATE**

In his Chairman’s Report for 2020, Chris drew attention to the various research projects carried out during lockdown for future talks, booklets and articles for the website. These warrant another mention:

- Judy Nicholson and Barbara King researched and published booklets on The Saddle Inn, Fulford Park House and Fulford Field House which have been so well received by those who asked for the research and those who purchased the booklets out of interest.
- Judy and Barbara also dived deep into the history of the families and building in the Water Fulford and Naburn area for their talk on the many uses of the Naburn Hospital site (Asylum, Maternity Hospital and POW camp are just the tip of the iceberg).
- Alan Francis continues his research into the lost village of Water Fulford and the elusive John and Ellis Key’s (possibly absentee lords of the manor of Fulford).
- Chris Rainger continued investigating the development of the Fulford Grange Estate and researching the Ordnance Railway on New Walk.
- Chris also has continued to update the website with an amazing array of information and to monitor how many people look at it and at which topics.
- Bob Hale and Trish Thornton continued their research into Fishergate House.
- Bob Hale and Margaret Scott were one of a dedicated team that transcribed and published a rare account book recording the building of what is now the Merchant Adventurers Hall in Fossgate. They will give a talk about this in the near future.
- Charles Patmore researched the gardens of Heslington Hall.
- Van Wilson wrote articles for the website on the history of the Rialto and Fishergate Glassworks.
- I have been down many byways in researching the Ellis family who built Fulford Field House, but whose background was the making of Livery Lace (tapes and bands used to ornament cloths and finish the upholstery in coaches and carriages). A talk will be given in the future because it is a story of rags to riches.

**WE HAVE DONE SO MUCH IN OUR 10 YEARS AS A SOCIETY:** exhibitions, conferences, monthly meetings, walking tours, visits, social gatherings and shared meals and so much more. The amazing array of events is the focus of the talk after the AGM business meeting. Chris Rainger has collated the top ten events in a survey of the Committee and I am so looking forward to what various members have selected as their favourites.

Again, I simply thank everyone for their support, encouragement and good will.

Louise Wheatley, Chairman, 1 February 2022