

Ripon Museums

The Yorkshire Law and Order Museums



The Courthouse, Workhouse and Prison & Police Museums

Museums gain local and national awards



Recognition for the Trust's work in education has come from the grant of a Sandford Award for Heritage Education. These prestigious awards are given by the Heritage Education Trust as a mark of quality. The Trust was one of only four recipients in the region this year.

The judges noted "The three museums offer visitors the opportunity to gain insights into aspects of Victorian social history through the power of original buildings themselves and the variety of approaches offered to investigate life in the workhouse, courthouse and prison. A remarkably dedicated and energetic team of people are behind these busy museums which are committed to keeping a sprit of enquiry and enjoyment alive."

Margaret Bushell, our Education Officer, receives the 2008 Sandford Award on behalf of the Trust from the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry, KBE, President of the National Trust for Scotland, at Hampton Court Palace on 24 November.

Ripon Civic Society have honoured the Trust with the grant of the first ever John Whitehead Award.

Named in memory of Dr John Whitehead MBE who was both our founder and president and a former secretary and chairman of the Civic Society, the award celebrates the work of the Trust in the life of the city of Ripon.

A handsome silver cup is ours (for the year!) and will be on display at the Prison & Police Museum for the 2009 season.



The Civic Society has also made a generous contribution to our Workhouse appeal.

What a year!

2008 must go down as our most eventful year yet:

The AGM in March heard of the Stage 1 approval from the Heritage Lottery Fund of our bid for grant to expand and refurbish the Workhouse. (See page 2). Our speaker and Trust patron Lady Graham entertains the meeting with tales of the work to restore Norton Conyers.



Expansion of the Trust's work took a major step forward with the signing of a 35-year lease at the Workhouse including acquisition of the former kitchen garden now under restoration (see page 2)



We are on target for a most successful year of trading. Visitor numbers and income are up. As yet, the credit crunch has not bitten!

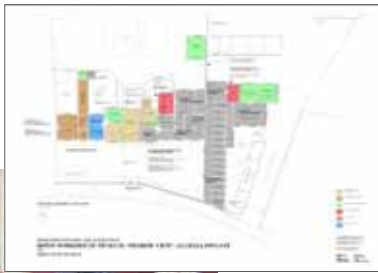


Fundraising at Littlethorpe Hall

“A perfect summer’s evening”. That was the verdict of those at our event at Littlethorpe Hall in July. Hosted by Trust Patron Lady Graham, the guests were entertained by the Trinity Quartet whilst enjoying the wonderful gardens.



Later, in the nearby former chapel, they heard of our plans for enlarging and upgrading the workhouse museum and were (gently!) encouraged to contribute.



Our Treasurer David Thelwall outlines the cost of our plans. Outside, it’s a dog’s life.



Detailed planning for Lottery bid

In March we learnt the wonderful news that the Heritage Lottery Fund were supporting in principle our bid to expand and refurbish the Workhouse Museum.



Anthony Chadwick reviews proposals with the Trust’s Architect, John Witherick (helped by a little liquid refreshment!).

In a Stage I Award, over £800,000 was earmarked by HLF for grant towards our £1 million project. Providing that we can meet a number of strict requirements, The Trust is hopeful that the grant award will be confirmed by HLF by the end of the year.

The Project Team under our Senior Curator Anthony Chadwick has been hard at work all year to work up the scheme. HLF have released a small part of the award to enable this development work but much has been done on a voluntary or speculative basis by the team of Trust members and consultants. Key to the success of the process has been the appointment of Philip Mitchell as our Project Manager. Philip has experience of large scale projects and has been invaluable in guiding us along. We are very appreciative of the time he has given so freely to this important task.

Ripon Local Studies Research Centre to open in January 2009

The west wing of Sharow View gatehouse is now the new home of the RLSRC. We extend a warm welcome to our new tenants and look forward to working with them to promote understanding and enjoyment of the rich heritage of the city.



Tony and Sue help Director Mick Stanley prepare the building.

Community event at Sharow View

In August we joined in the event organised by Ripon Council for Voluntary Service which helped raise awareness of the importance of the workhouse complex.



Hornblower George Pickles with Drene and Roy Brooks at the table-top sale.

Workhouse Historic Garden comes back to life

Ambitious plans to bring back the former kitchen garden at the workhouse have taken a dramatic leap forward this year. With the lease signed in the summer and nearly all of the £100,000 needed to transform the derelict site promised in grants, the Garden Group under the chairmanship of Mandy Whitehead have begun to make the project happen. Experienced horticulturalist Ray Blyth has been taken on as a part-time garden co-ordinator for a year and is encouraging volunteers to help research, plan and carry out some of the restoration. Contractors will perform the heavy tasks including laying new paths, removing some trees and repairing the retaining wall. Once the structure of the garden is complete planting can begin, using varieties appropriate to the late Victorian era—so no King Edwards! More volunteers welcome—contact Ray on Ripon 689289.



Paul Blyth uncovers an historic path; Ray explains the site’s history

Cream teas at Norton Conyers in June

Yes, it's the Trinity Quartet again, this time in the unusual surroundings of the orangery at Norton Conyers where they made sweet music for those enjoying tea and cakes. Sir James and Lady Graham once again kindly gave us free run of their enchanting walled garden, with all contributions from visitors that day going towards Trust funds.



Kath Beeken with the team of volunteers serving tea and home-made cakes.



A rose by any other name..... Jill Wilkinson and Harry Corps enjoy the scent of summer.



Croquet players Penny and Mary Hartley in a Victorian 'Spot the Ball' photo

Events..events.....

Our enthusiastic volunteers have been out and about all year to spread news of the Ripon Museums, to share the enjoyment with others and to raise funds for our work. Here is a selection of some of the action.



Stalls on the Market Square and stirring the memories of older people at the Step Out Club.



Musical Monuments—an event in November for children of all abilities—recreated life at the workhouse. Thanks to NYBEP for support on this.



Photo courtesy of Ripon Gazette

Police clock restored

The Charge Office Clock was replaced in the Prison & Police Museum in September following its refurbishment by Robert Hannam, a trained horologist and a life member of the Trust.



We are grateful to Robert for this most generous act.



Robert Hannam presents the restored clock to volunteer guide John Ingram for reinstallation in reception.

And thanks too to Neil Porter for coming to the aid of a leaking Tardis, with repairs carried out at no cost to the Trust.

New tourist signing

The Trust has helped to secure funding through the Ripon City Partnership for an additional brown-and-white tourist sign.



Sited on the B 6265 approaching Ripon from the A1, the sign is helping to promote the city's cultural attractions. Tourism is vitally important to the economy of the Ripon area and we work actively with the Ripon Ring consortium of local attractions to raise the profile of the area through joint marketing and other initiatives. Further signing is needed if Ripon is to realize its full potential and the Trust will continue to push for this as funding allows.

We were pleased to be invited in October to meet students at Ripon Grammar School to be interviewed for a project on marketing the city. They learnt of our role in the local cultural life of Ripon.

Gift aid swells Income

This year we have made great efforts to increase our income through the use of the Gift Aid Scheme whereby charities can receive income from government returning some of the tax paid by donors.



Gift aid is already collected in respect of income from membership (a timely reminder that subs are due in the New Year) but this year we have introduced a new version of the popular Three-in-One tickets which gives those taking part the benefit of their tickets lasting a whole year. The result has been dramatic with most visitors agreeing to Gift Aid and we have claimed several thousands pounds from HM Treasury—always a delight!

Thanks to all our volunteer guides who have coped with the added paperwork—we hope you will agree it has been very much worth it. We intend to continue to benefit in future years.

An apology

It has been a long while since the last edition of Decree. Space limitation has meant that several stories have had to be omitted this time. We will try to bring out the next edition a little quicker!

Presenting the Yorkshire Law & Order Museums:

Prison & Police Museum
Workhouse Museum
Courthouse Museum

Registered Charity 512913

Coming Up

Please note these dates:

December 13: Christmas Day at the Workhouse 11.00 am to 4.00 pm

A living history day featuring costumed actors in and around the Workhouse with handbell ringers, singers and a reading of the eponymous poem. Refreshments available. All arranged by our Manager Penny Hartley and Kate Vigurs from the Museums, Libraries & Archives Council for Yorkshire. Please come along and enjoy this free event supported by MLA Yorkshire.

February 14: Courthouse and Prison & Police Museums reopen daily

With the Workhouse expected to be closed for refurbishment until the summer, we are opening the Courthouse and P&P Museums earlier in 2009 in time for the February half-term. Tell your friends!

Goodbye Jim

In June we said goodbye to James Michell. Serving as Secretary to the Trust, "Gentleman Jim" provided invaluable service to the Trust, often behind the scenes and seemingly unnoticed. We benefited from his experience, advice and dry wit and were very sad to see him go as he and his wife Gill moved south to Dorset. We wish them well in their new home.



At the 2008 AGM Vice President Ralph Lindley presents retiring Secretary Jim Michell with a memento of his time with the Trust.

Dr John Whitehead MBE

Our founder John Whitehead was remembered at a memorial service at the Cathedral in April following his death aged 90.



As his obituary in the Guardian noted:

A modest and gracious man, John combined intellect and vision with a vigorously practical approach; he was as at ease building display cases as explaining a detailed point about the Poor Law.

Publicity—a never-ending story

Our energetic Publicity Officer Jill Wilkinson continues to wring the most from an inevitably small budget, always on the look out for cost-effective ways to promote the museums to a wider audience.



Local newspaper stories and library displays keep us in the public eye whilst

advertises in local, regional and national publications reach a wider audience. All this has contributed to a healthy year for the Trust.

Thank you

A big thank you to all who have given so much of their time this year in so many ways. Do come back in 2009!

Ripon Museum Trust

The Workhouse Museum

Allhallowgate, Ripon,

North Yorks HG4 1LE

Phone: 01765 690799

Email: info@riponmuseums.co.uk

Website: www.riponmuseums.co.uk

For more information on the Trust including museum opening times and for booking school or group visits or to find out more about joining our volunteers as guides, researchers or to help with the care of buildings and collections please contact Penny Hartley, Museums Manager, at the address on the left.

We are a friendly group: come and join us!