RIPON CIVIC SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER
September 2023

CELEBRATE HERITAGE OPEN DAYS IN AND AROUND RIPON



HERITAGE OPEN DAYS this year are from 8 to 17 September. Ripon will once again be revealing its treasures as part of the national celebration of heritage sites and buildings. Civic Society members and friends will be working hard to make this a reality. Please come along and support these events and enjoy what Ripon has to offer.

■ *See next page for some of the highlights!*



OUR AGM IS ON 2 NOVEMBER - YOUR CHANCE TO HELP!

The Annual General Meeting of Ripon Civic Society will take place on Thursday 2 November. Please do come along to hear about what the Society has achieved in the past year, the challenges we face and the opportunities ahead. We also elect officers and committee members that day - and we need new faces! So if you would like to step forward, please let us know by e-mailing us at info@riponcivicsociety.org.uk

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Heritage Open Days highlights this year include

■ a celebration of the 250th anniversary of the Ripon Canal *(page 1, top)* at the Canal Basin with the nearby Ripon & District Light Railway opening its doors

■ the Gazebo *(page 1, bottom)* on Blossomgate which is opened only once a year with RCS help

■ guided walks looking at trees in the Spa area *(below)* and at some of the city's past industries



■ events at Fountains Abbey with free entry to the estate *(below)* on 16 September



■ Mary Magdalen's Chapel and churches at Sharow *(below)* and Grewelthorpe



All the information is available online at heritageopendays.org.uk by putting 'Ripon' in the search box.

LITTLETHORPE MANOR VISIT

In August, Society members visited the gardens of Littlethorpe Manor. David Hall, who organised the visit, reports:

'Summer excursions by Ripon Civic Society members have become something of a rarity in recent years and it was therefore with some trepidation that an outing to Littlethorpe Manor Gardens was recently organised. The response was truly gratifying however: 27 members of the Society and friends signed up to tour this local horticultural gem on Friday 18 August.

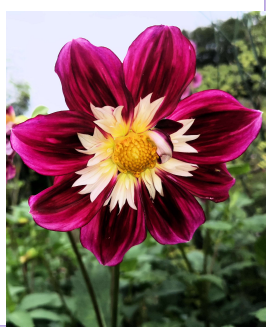


'Our guide for the afternoon was head gardener Eddie Harland, ably assisted by his wife, Michele. Having been in post since 1998 Eddie was well qualified to explain not only the history and development of the garden project but also to field knowledgeably the many questions from those attending about the diverse plantings and plant species. The two-hour meander through the eleven acres of diverse formal and parkland areas was both entertaining and, on occasions, breathtaking.

'The afternoon concluded with welcome refreshments and an opportunity to purchase a souvenir of the visit from the well-stocked selection of herbaceous plants on offer.

'Thanks are due both to the staff at Littlethorpe Manor for making us so welcome (and for arranging for the forecast rain to stay away) and to the members of RCS and their guests who helped make the visit such a success.'

We are very grateful, too, to David for his organisational skills!



PLANNING MATTERS

PLANS FOR BUILDING AT STUDLEY ROYAL CANAL GATES ENTRANCE

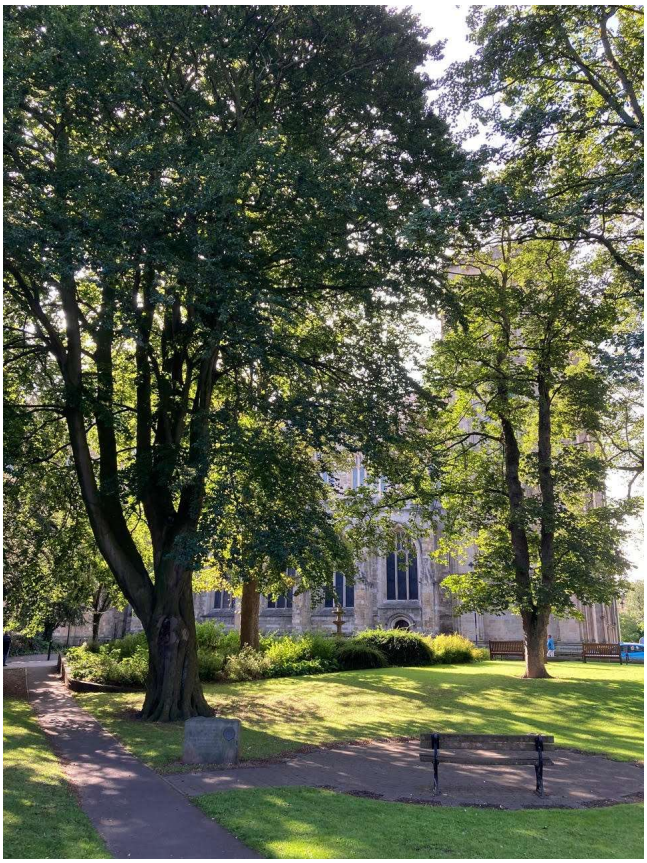


THE NATIONAL TRUST has put forward proposals for a new and more-accessible café, admission point and toilets at the Canal Gates entrance to the Studley Royal Water Garden. Named the Studley Revealed project, the changes will also see space for better interpretation of the water garden, so that visitors will fully understand the importance of the landscape.

The application envisages a new building *(artists impressions above and below)*, designed by architects Feilden Fowles, which would sit behind and beside the existing café building. It would contain a new café, with the current rooms being used for displays; a large open area would link the two. The design of the new structure is fitted with glass facing to lake and is landscaped against a screen of trees. It will have a lower profile than the existing building. The plan is for the new complex to sit inside the pay-for-entry part of the Studley Royal and Fountains Abbey site. Planning application has also been made for a kiosk in the Deer Park car park to cater for visitors - many of who are likely to be more local - who visit the park but do not wish to enter the pay zone. The restaurant and parking at the main visitor centre, at the other end of the site, will remain free for all to access.
Ripon Civic Society was one of the groups consulted as the plans were being formulated. The Committee will consider the plans carefully, and we will make our comments in due course.



RIPON CATHEDRAL PLANS



THE PLANNING APPLICATION for a new building on Minster Gardens to serve the needs of Ripon Cathedral is currently expected to go for decision by planners on North Yorkshire Council in October. Members will know that the Committee has lodged objections to the proposals for several reasons, outlined in our last Newsletter. We note that among the 394 documents relating to the planning application submitted to North Yorkshire Council is a locally-organised petition containing more than 1000 signatures objecting to the use of Minster Gardens and the loss of trees.

Separately we are also looking carefully at the possible transfer of ownership from North Yorkshire Council to the Chapter of Ripon Cathedral if planning permission is granted. We are, in particular, assessing the statements given by the then Harrogate Borough Council (now superseded by North Yorkshire Council) when we put in a Freedom of Information request in January of this year and comparing them with information subsequently received from North Yorkshire Council.

We shall report further in the next Newsletter.

SOME OTHER BUILDINGS



THE FORMER SPA HOTEL, now renamed The Ripon Inn, is scheduled to open in October. We look forward to seeing the changes wrought over the last couple of years to this important Ripon landmark.



THE SPA BATHS buildings continue to concern the Society; we have seen plans for their use, but at the time of writing there seems to be little progress. We will continue to press for a fast and acceptable solution to the use of these important structures.



GLITTERING PRIZES!

ANOTHER REMINDER that our prestigious DESIGN AWARDS will take place in April next year. We rely on all our members to tell us about new buildings, restoration of buildings, excellent examples craftsmanship or exemplary environmental works that we might consider. If you would like to suggest something for our consideration, please email *info@riponcivicsociety.org.uk*

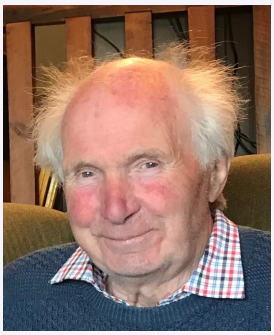
OUR PROGRAMME

Here's a reminder of the programme of talks and events from September this year to May 2024.

- **7 September:** Tony Hunt, YAA Mapping - A lost manor house at Hutton Conyers and other discoveries
- **8-17 September**: Heritage Open Days (*see pages 1 and 2*)
- **5 October**: Vicky Grindrod, Skell Valley Project Archivist - 'Digging deep in the archives'. The Vyner archive of correspondence and ephemera pertaining to John Aislabie and the Studley Estate
- **2 November**: AGM and brief talk on Ripon Historic Town map
- **7 December**: Paula Ware, MAP Archaeology Ltd. - 'A Tale of Three Chariots' - the Pocklington Bronze Age Burial Site excavation
- **4 January 2024**: Colin Slator - 50 Years of High Batts Nature Reserve
- **1 February**: Terry Williams - The History and Development of the Leeds to Ripon Railway Line
- **7 March**: Neil Redfern, Executive Director of the Council for British Archaeology - 'Thornborough Henges - a recent gift to the Nation'
- **4 April**: Design Awards Evening
- **2 May**: Mick Stanley - 'Ripon in Stone'

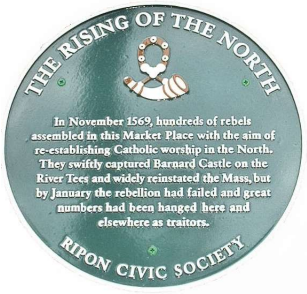
All our talks take place at the Workhouse Museum, Allhallowgate, Ripon HG4 1LE, starting at 7.30pm; tea, coffee and biscuits from 7.00pm. Everyone is welcome; non-members pay £3.00.

RODNEY SMITH



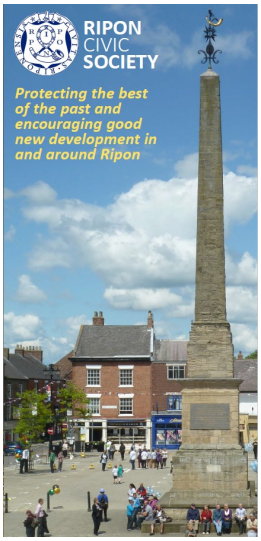
We were very sorry to learn of the death in July of Rodney Smith, husband of Moira, long-time Secretary and stalwart of Ripon Civic Society. He was 81. Several members of the Society were privileged to attend his funeral in Harrogate and then his 'Wake' at High Skelding, where he and Moira had lived for many years. We send our sympathy to Moira and her family.

WHAT ABOUT THE GREEN PLAQUES?



IT'S A WHILE since we put up a new example of our famed green plaques that relate the history of the city and its buildings. At least one new one is in the offing - we'll bring the news once it's finalised - but, as with most things, the price has been increasing steeply. So your Co-Chairmen visited the offices of Leeds Civic Trust to hear about an alternative supplier they had found for theirs. The saving, though not great, will be at least worthwhile, so, although the next plaque may look the same, it should have helped to save us some of our funds!

NEW MEMBERSHIP LEAFLET PUBLISHED



We have a new leaflet that encourages people to join the Society. We hope it will have a wide circulation - and you can help!

If you know someone who would like to know more - or whom you think might be interested - please give them a leaflet and encourage them to sign up! The new leaflets will be available at our meetings, or by e-mailing info@riponcivcsociety.org.uk

RIPON CIVIC SOCIETY
www.riponcivicsociety.org.uk
info@riponcivicsociety.org.uk
Registered Charity No: 517434

THIS YEAR'S COMMITTEE
President - Nigel Rawlinson
Co-Chairmen - Richard Taylor and David Winpenny
Treasurer - Paul Jackson
Membership - Alison Brayshaw
Planning Lead - Rachel Wigginton
Website, Talks & Visits, Design Awards - David Hall
Military Heritage - Jane Furse
Heritage Open Days - Andrew Curtis
Skell Valley Project, Ripon ReViewed, Ripon Together - Mandy Whitehead
Communications - David Winpenny
Newsletters and External Relations - Richard Taylor and David Winpenny