

## Dates for Your Diary

- **Museum Garden**  
**Tours:** every Sunday 1-2pm. FREE, no need to book. Meet inside Museum Street Gates.
- **National Mills**  
**Weekend:** 9-10th May, Castle Museum (Raindale Mill and Castle Kitchen). Free with entry.
- **Fossils Roadshow:** 13th June, Museums Gardens



## A Huge Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who helped out January—March. The visitor numbers are as follows:

**York Castle Museum: 27099**

**Yorkshire Museum: 24429**

**Observatory: 2146**

**Raindale Mill: 2363**

**Yorkshire Museum Library: 634**

The total number of hours contributed by **all** of our volunteers, both public facing and behind-the-scenes is an amazing **3505!**

A huge THANK YOU!

# IN THE LOOP

ISSUE 15

MAY 2015

## Welcome to the May Edition

I can't believe it is May already, this year seems to be flying past! There have been lots of exciting things happening in the last few months, including our Stargazing evenings, and we finally have a date for the Art Gallery to reopen! These are just two of the events highlighted in this edition.

A huge thank you to everyone who has contributed their time this year, we are always in awe when we look at the final monthly numbers; they are a great testament to your commitment to the programme.

There are lots of great things happening in the next few months to look forward to, including our Fossils Roadshow in June and the opening of a new exhibition at York Castle Museum, which is based around the Battle of Waterloo. Summer is also fast approaching, and we will be busy organising more coffee mornings and catch up sessions for the coming months.



York Castle Museum



Yorkshire Museum



York St Marys

## Art Gallery Opening Date

New commissions, Old Masters and more than 2,000 ceramic works will feature in York Art Gallery's new displays of designated collections when it reopens on Yorkshire Day (August 1 2015).

The gallery's collection of Italian Old Masters will be displayed alongside substantial new research in The Madsen Gallery (previously called the Main Gallery). This will be complimented by loans from major public collections.

An exhibition curated and created by Mark Hearld will be shown in the Upper North Gallery, while works by David Hockney, Stanley Spencer, Paul

Nash and L.S Lowry will feature in the Burton Gallery.

The launch of the Centre of Ceramic Art (CoCA) will showcase more than 2,000 works including a 17 metre long Wall of Pots which will be displayed by colour to create a rainbow effect. There will be a major new commission by renowned ceramist Clare Twomey.

The reopening of the gallery will see an increase of eleven full time jobs. The exhibitions will make use of the 60 per cent more exhibition space created by the £8 million development of the gallery.

# York Museums Trust

# Solar Eclipse

Almost 300 people enjoyed the view with us in the Museum gardens on Friday 20th March, either by looking at the projection from the telescope in the Observatory, or using some home made pin hole cameras.

A couple of lucky people managed to get their hands on some eclipse glasses, and were kind enough to let us have a peek, which was amazing! Our own 150 year old telescope was also providing a beautifully clear image as it tracked the whole event from start to finish.

Huge thanks to Team Observatory, Alan Bollington, Stuart Ogilvy, Rob Wake, and Chris Valkoinen. It was a great way to end our stargazing programme.

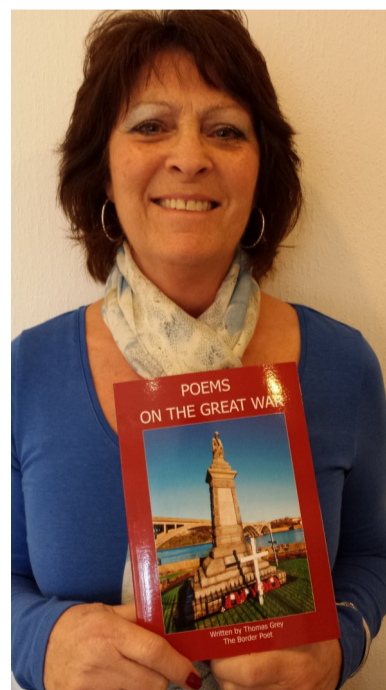


# WW1 Poetry

Suzy Brown joined the History Team as a volunteer 15 months ago to transcribe two diaries that had been written in Pitman's shorthand during the First World War. Nearly 7 years ago Suzy, by chance, met a local historian when she was in Berwick researching her great grandfather, Thomas Grey, known as the Border Poet. She had kept in touch with him, and last autumn he approached her to ask if she would be interested in bringing Thomas Grey back into the limelight as "Berwick's War Poet". Berwick is celebrating 900 years of its history this year and during a weekend in April there is to be a First World War exhibition.

Thomas was the son of a miner born in 1863 in a small mining village called Shoreswood near Berwick. He wrote hundreds of poems during the first quarter of 1900 which were published in the local newspaper, almost fortnightly. He only had one publication of poems in 1906 entitled "Musings on the Footplate". It was always a matter of regret to her great grandfather that another volume of his poems was never published because the cost was always more than he could face due to his failing

health and its financial implications. He died in 1928.



So last autumn she embarked on self-publishing a book of a selection of 85 poems, written between 1914-1918. The book took 3 and a half months from start to finish. She found the whole process very rewarding and is delighted that nearly 90 years later she is making his dream come true by bringing Thomas Grey, the Border Poet, back into the homes of poetry lovers everywhere.

The book is called "Poems on the Great War" and can be bought from the Castle Museum's book shop. Don't forget your 25% volunteer discount!

## YAG Digitisation Project

When I heard about the need for volunteers to help with the digitisation of the archives associated with the gallery's collection it immediately caught my attention and to my surprise as an old codger, I was accepted. Myself and Neil, of whom more later, together with our wonderful 'boss', Collections Facilitator for Art, Fiona Green are tasked with digitising archival material associated with the Ceramic collection so that they will eventually be available for academic study or general interest.

Digitisation requires the photographing of the letters and correspondence between the artists and collectors including the draughts of letters where they exist and not excluding envelopes which might perhaps, give future researchers vital clues regarding accurate dating etc. In 1990 Sarah Riddick in association with York City Council and the Art Gallery published, 'Pioneer Studio Pottery: The Milner-White Collection' which exemplifies in print form, what we are recording digitally with one significant exception. Ms Riddick's book was only available to those who purchased it whereas digitised archives will be freely accessible to all.



The work is painstakingly time consuming relieved at times by the contents of some of the extraordinary and sometimes humorous details revealed by artist's letters to for example, the collector, W.A. Ismay. After being photographed, the images are digitised and given a unique pre determined number.

My colleague, Neil is a professional potter and has an encyclopaedic knowledge of fellow potters and their methodologies and I have learnt an awful lot of a genre of art of which I previously knew very little. I now wait with keen anticipation seeing some of the ceramic art I have been peripherally associated with on display in the new gallery.

My colleague, Neil is a professional potter and has an encyclopaedic

Rodney Anness

## Richard III: Man & Myth

The myths and distorted truths that have shaped modern perceptions of Richard III are compared to the historical facts, in the new exhibition at the Yorkshire Museum.

*Richard III: Man and Myth* uses the museum's nationally significant collections and loans from across Yorkshire to consider the life, times and legacy of the much maligned monarch.

The exhibition opened following the reburial of Richard's remains at Leicester Cathedral on March 26.

Natalie McCaul, Curator of Archaeology, said: "King Richard III's reign only lasted three years but he has probably received more attention than any other British monarch. A number of accounts written after Richard's death portrayed him as a tyrannical murderer. Yet for many, especially in Yorkshire, the image of a fair, benevolent figure, much maligned, endures.

"In this new exhibition we will look at the perception of

him today and whether much of this is based on facts or myth. Using treasures from our own collections and loans from across the county, we hope people will come and form their own opinions on Richard, his relationship with York and his short reign as king."

*External loans for the exhibition include:*

- A skeleton from the Battle of Towton in 1461, which led to the crowning of Richard III's brother, Edward IV, as the first Yorkist King.
- Shakespeare's first folio, which includes his play Richard III, on loan from Brotherton Library.
- Loaned documents from the City of York Council Archives revealing fascinating information about Richard's relationship with York, such as the first gift the city gave to Richard, when he was only 16 years old, a list of his friends and allies, how the city prepared for his visit and how they reacted to his death.
- Weaponry from the period on loan from York Castle Museum.

*The exhibition is part of the city of York's programme of events to mark the re-interment of Richard III.*

## Volunteer Role Opportunities

### Raindale Mill



We are looking for eager volunteers to open the Mill and get the fantastic water wheel turning! We already have a small team of volunteers who come in to help out but we can do more. We would love to get the Mill open as much as possible this year!

### Castle Kitchen



Have you been inspired by the Great British Bake Off? Why not join our Castle Kitchen team where we demonstrate traditional recipes. Currently, we are linking into the WW1 Exhibition and have been making trench cake and Anzac biscuits.

### Riverside Gardens

The garden around Raindale Mill was created in early 2012 to provide wildlife friendly planting that enhanced the Mill and Castle walls. We are looking for volunteers to join our small gardening team and help keep the area tidy.

### Interested?

**If you would like to register your interest in any of these projects, please contact Amy Lang on 01904 650329 or at [amy.lang@ymt.org.uk](mailto:amy.lang@ymt.org.uk).**

## Visit York Award Finalist



York Castle Museum has been short-listed for the Visitor Experience of the Year award at this year's [Visit York Tourism Awards](#), while Thomas Jacobs, who volunteers with us when he is not working as a keyholder at the Castle, has been short-listed in the Outstanding Customer Care category.

Winners will be announced at a prestigious Black Tie awards ceremony on 3 June in the Grand Station Hall of the National Railway Museum, compered by breakfast show hosts Gayle Lofthouse and Ben Fry from Minster FM radio station.

The Visit York Tourism Awards celebrate individuals and companies who offer that extra special service and experience for York's 6.7 million visitors. Now in their 18th year, these awards recognise excellence in the city's tourism sector. The event is expected to be attended by five hundred tourism businesses, as well as the Right Honourable Lord Mayor of York.



### Contributions

If there is anything you would like to see included in this newsletter, or you would like to be the next profile in our 'Volunteer Spotlight' (or write an article) then please email Amy Lang on [amy.lang@ymt.org.uk](mailto:amy.lang@ymt.org.uk). Any suggestions welcome!