

Newsletter:

April 2025

<https://www.beverleycivicsociety.com/>

**BEVERLEY
CIVIC
SOCIETY**

Founded 1961

Chairman's Remarks

The seasons move on and The Society does too with its range of activities and projects. Our next public talk is to be given by Kloskk Tryer which is her second instalment of photos and insights into 'Bygone Beverley'. As mentioned below remember this is on 3rd April, the first Thursday of the month not the second.

In addition to our fine Minster we have the glorious St Mary's to enjoy. A unique feature of English parish churches is the tradition of bell ringing, and on Saturday the 22nd of March, St Mary's hosted a round of the 'National Bell 12-bell Striking Contest Ringing' with six churches, including St Paul's and York cathedrals. The town resonated with that glorious sound throughout the day. Well done St Mary's to be one of only four churches nationally to host that round of this national competition with 26 churches participating.



Spring arrives in New Walk, Beverley -
photos Dick Lidwell



Photo reproduced from St Mary's website.

Of course St Mary's has a longstanding association with musicians over the centuries. Members may remember that when the church tower fell in 1520, the Northern Guild of Minstrels generously sponsored the repair of one of the pillars on the north side of the nave. To commemorate the gift, this pillar hosts five figures of Minstrels. Above the figures, writing on a small label stop marks the donation:

'Thys Pyllor Made the Maynstrylys' = 'This pillar [was] made [by] the Minstrels'.

On a totally different theme members may be aware that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England is consulting on new arrangements for the East Riding, including changes in Beverley and Woodmansey. Comments are to be made by 12th May. See: <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/east-riding-yorkshire>

Dick Lidwell

N.B.

Please note that the **next talk** will be on **3rd April**, not the usual 2nd Thursday of the month.

Lady Joan of Beverley

A recent trip to the British Library to see the exhibition, *Medieval Women: In Their Own Words*, reminded me of what is so easily forgotten. Medieval women were leaders, composers, healers and writers. The exhibition provided a fascinating insight into the different roles undertaken by medieval women and, of course, there is much that was never recorded or has been forgotten.

The exhibition was particularly interesting in highlighting the role of women in healing and medicine, with an understandable emphasis on fertility and childbirth, including a rather gruesome display of surgical instruments. There was also reference to women as rulers, including Eleanor of Aquitaine, Queen Margaret of Scotland, and perhaps the less well-known Melisende of Jerusalem.

Who might be described as the most notable medieval woman? I would choose Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179). She was a German Benedictine Abbess. She wrote poetry, composed extraordinary music, and was not above writing admonitory letters to the Pope when she felt his behaviour was out of line. Hildegard was to be declared one of the four female doctors of the Catholic church, another, Catherine of Siena was similarly both a mystic and influential in reform and advising the papacy.

These towering figures underline how the religious life in medieval Europe gave women an opportunity to display their erudition and creative talents in ways that were not so easy in the temporal world. So, in the exhibition were examples of manuscript painting, spiritual writing and embroidery that were undertaken in convents and religious houses.

Weaving and embroidery were seen as decorative arts and women played a key role in their production. The most famous piece of medieval embroidery, the Bayeux Tapestry, was probably made by English Religious working under the auspices of Otto of Bayeux, William the Conqueror's half-brother.

Imagine my immense pleasure when I came across, near the very end of the exhibition, an altar cloth, labelled 'Embroidered altar band, possibly Beverley (England) early 14th century'. This is the only known signed piece of English medieval embroidery, with the words 'Lady Joan of Beverley, a nun, made me'. The band for the altar was worked in silver gilt thread and coloured silks, and the inscription on it reads 'In the hour of our death, help us, Lord'.



Photo courtesy Lesley Blucke

The embroidery was lent to the exhibition by the Victoria and Albert Museum. On their website, considering the historical context of the item, they say that not only is this the only signed English embroidery from the Middle Ages, but that it is unique in its manufacture. Its simplicity and signature suggest it was the work of an amateur rather than the professional London workshops. The green silk edging possibly dates it to around 1319.

It was believed to have been created for a funeral pall, and the coat of arms on the cloth belong to Henry de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln who died in 1311 and William de Vescy who died in 1314, which would certainly match the likely date of the cloth.

The exhibition is now closed, but if you would like to see this beautiful piece of probable Beverley history, it is on display in the V&A in the Medieval and Renaissance Room 9. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

Lesley Blucke

WALKING NEAR BECKSIDE - June 1984

The invitation to 'meet at the Gasworks' was irresistible:

An assorted group of shapes and sizes began to collect arriving from all points of the compass. Some came by car and others walked through the cool night air to the rendezvous. Holding an outdoor meeting!

We had decided at a previous meeting to involve ourselves in the WHOLE of Beverley and that we should personally investigate one of the oldest areas. Ron Horner, with his intimate knowledge of the Town was the automatic choice as guide to our small band.

The Beverley Gasworks lies in Figham Road and is now Thompson's Dairies. It has an imposing archway and was opened in 1824 at a time of great expansion and innovation. The Beck area was a centre of Commerce and thus a great contributor to the wealth of the town. After a long period as a residential centre in the 18th century, when many fine houses and public buildings were added, the early 19th century saw the foundation of Hodgson's Tannery (1812) and then the Crosskills opened a large iron foundry in 1825, the same year that the Queensgate Whiting Company was founded.

The mint plantations near Beckside used much of the casual labour, and the locks built in 1802 allowed the distinctive Humber Keels to link Beverley with the West Riding, a lifeline before the age of the railways. It is no wonder that the late Ken MacMahon described the Beck as 'Beverley's Hull'.

We crossed the main Hull Road to walk down Waterside Road between Paul's Mill and the petrol station. Milling was important in the early 19th century when there were five mills on the Westwood, two on Grovehill and two more (one by water) on Figham. Eventually we came to the concrete bridge sadly defaced by aerosol paint. The Beck was on our left and the youngest member of our party displayed his detailed knowledge of sticklebacks! The green algal growth was extensive due to the hot, dry summer and such 'blooms' used to be dispersed more easily when the lock gates opened regularly. (NB It cost £200 to 'cleanse' the Beck - in 1699!).

Following the waterside path towards Beverley past Crane Wharf, we noticed a double door in the wall of the Mill. This is surrounded by an archway of large stones at variance with the brickwork. One of our group had heard that this door originally guarded the jail in Register Square until it was demolished in the early 1880's, (being superseded by the Sessions House built in 1814). In those days materials were expensive and labour cheap - so there was much sensible 'recycling'.

We walked to the head of the Beck and continued round so that the water was now on our right hand side. An old postcard was produced to show the changes which have taken place in the area. The present 'Beckside Park' (shop) had a further building on the right. The 'new' part of Paul's Mill was not in existence but a wooden structure straddled the towpath. We noted the pleasant renovation of the Beckside houses to our left and followed our leader who had ducked to the left down a paved footpath. This is 'Jack Taylor Lane' and no one seems to know why it is so called. Over the field to our right was the Wireworks - an old and surviving industry.

When we eventually reached a road we found ourselves on Holme Church Lane with St. Nicholas' Church Hall on our right. Turning left towards the dark bulk of St. Nicholas' Church we admired the newly built brick town houses just beyond it, but turned down a paved cycle path to their left (where the name 'Mint' in Mintfield Road links with the distilleries that existed in Beckside in the mid-1800's) and walked

on until we approached the back corner of the old St. Nicholas' Infant School (built 1914) on St. Nicholas' Road.

We continued along the line made of, first Priory Lane, then Chantry Lane, towards the Minster and ascended the footbridge over the railway line to view the newly opened Friary Youth Hostel. To our left we noticed the efforts that our colleague Jim Low is making to renovate the house next to the Lord Nelson Inn and are pleased that the restoration will be in the hands of someone sympathetic to the conservation of Beverley.

It only remained to return to Chantry Lane and the level crossing on Flemingate, then walk the length of this road to continue past the Army Transport Museum, that valuable asset to Beverley, and back to our collecting point. We passed lanes such as. 'Spark Mill Lane' which lead to farms and passed Beckside (Minster) Infant's School (1847), now a business.

The sub-committee is attempting to find interested Beverlonians who will keep a 'watching brief' on their road or area and report back to the committee any developments or points of interest and to meet with the committee. Unfortunately our local contact on Beckside (Mr Mervyn King) could not join this tour. We found out much on our own. Why not try this walk yourself?

Remember ... the rendezvous is the GASWORKS

R M Kirby

20mph Trial



A trial of 20mph (32.2 km/h) zones is to be introduced to Hedon. East Riding of Yorkshire Council said the reduction of speed limits in some roads in Hedon was "following an increasing number of requests for 20mph speed limits in residential areas".

ERYC Councillor Steve Gallant said it was about "making the town safer". Sentiments that the Civic Society supports wholeheartedly.

"We will be collecting data on vehicle speeds, traffic volumes and accident rates, as well as seeking the views of residents" the ERYC spokesperson said.

"The feedback and evidence will help determine the effectiveness."

The Civic Society hopes that ERYC make the results of this trial available to the public and push ahead with a similar scheme in Beverley.

Mike Farrimond

‘A Short Introduction to Vines and Wine Making at Laurel Vines’

Ian started by giving a brief history of vineyards and wine making in Britain.

Vineyards are having a resurgence in Britain, having disappeared for centuries. During the 3rd and 4th centuries Romans grew vines near York and as far North as Hadrian's Wall, and throughout the rest of England. During the Middle Ages Monasteries started growing vineyards, which was the first resurgence, but the wine was probably poor quality! It is only in recent years that British vineyards have expanded to the extent we see today.

Ian started Laurel Vines vineyard at Aike initially as a hobby in 2011. Ian is an industrial electronics engineer, running his own business, but when an opportunity arose to purchase the farm next door to the family home in Aike, soil testing showed that the land had perfect soil for growing vines, having Cretaceous chalk base and being uncontaminated by pesticides, having previously been used for livestock. Ian and his wife Ann bought the farm and decided to try growing vines.

Choosing the right vines for a cool climate is critical, mostly Austrian/German types which exist in similar conditions to the UK. American vines were introduced to Europe in the 19th century but that also introduced Phylloxera, an insect pest. By the 1890's this disease had killed nearly all European vines, though the American vines were unaffected. Since then, European species are grown on American root stock, so protecting the vine. After preparing the land, 2,000 vines were hand planted at Aike.

Vines are planted in April or May to protect from frost and it is 3 years before the first harvest of grapes. Laurel Vines had their first harvest in 2013 and produced 600 bottles in 2014. Ian sold all 600 bottles to two local restaurants. He stated this seemed like a good idea at the time but regretted it later as it left them nothing to sell!

The site at Aike runs North/South to protect from the weather, though in 2021 they lost 90% of the vines over six hours due to the infamous late frost. Harvest takes place in September - October, occasionally as late as November and volunteers help with harvesting (in return for food and wine!). Winter pruning starts in December and ends in March – vines are creepers and by nature grow along the ground, so they have to be trained to grow vertically and bear the most fruit. The aim is for each vine to have two 'bows' each to maximise the yield.

Laurel Vines now have machinery to help with pruning, which was initially done manually. After five years more vines were planted, and in 2017 Champagne varieties (Pinot, Chardonnay) were added to enable sparkling wine production. The vineyard now has 15,000 vines, with plans to add a further 20-30,000. Currently 16-20,000 bottles of wine are produced annually, with plans to increase to 30,000 in the next two years.

Over the years the distance between the vine rows has altered, starting at 1750mm but mostly now at 2000mm. The idea is to create a microclimate between the rows to enhance the process of 'veraison', where the grapes change colour as they ripen, and the sugars rise (black grapes start green and turn red). There has been much debate about the optimum distance between rows and often the ease of access for machinery between the rows is a deciding factor. But much has to do with the value of the land – in the Champagne growing areas in France it is only 1,000mm as the land value is incredibly high!

Disease and pest control is a constant concern, with wasps, slugs and mildew causing problems, and occasionally deer and birds. At Laurel Vines each row of vines has a Rosebush at the end, as they will show any onset of Mildew before the vines are affected and give enough time to react before it attacks

the vines themselves. Laurel Vines encourages wildlife and bird variety and three years ago they started using 'worm tea' as a natural pesticide to reduce harsh chemical use. This vineyard is unusual in that it controls all processes on site from harvesting to bottling rather than using wineries as most now do. (There are 221 wineries serving over 1,000 vineyards currently). There is only four hours from picking to when the grapes are put in the tanks to help reduce oxygen uptake and create quality wine.

Over the last 14 years Laurel Vines has been transformed. They have won several awards and employ staff trained at the only viticulture course in the UK at Plumpton near Brighton. Covid had an impact as most retail closed, and Rebekah started their online business which remains very successful. In 2020 the 'Hairy Bikers' visited the vineyard and showcased Yorkshire winemaking which has aided success. Since this date they have opened the visitor centre and host many events there, due to customer requests to visit.

Ian is now the Chair of WineGB's regional group. Since 2015 there has been an explosion in vineyards and winemaking:-

- ◆ 2015 there were 435 vineyards in Britain, today there are 1030.
- ◆ Since 2015 there are now 30 vineyards in the North, some in Scotland and a new one being created in Inverness!
- ◆ In 2021 the Yorkshire Wine Trail was established. There are seven vineyards in Yorkshire today. A new Wine Trail is planned for the East Midlands.
- ◆ Vineyards are the fastest growing sector in Agriculture.

Laurel Vines now host several events, picnics, tours, social groups (running, dog walking etc.) and even 'Heard it on the grapevine' with a neighbouring farm, including a safari with Highland Cattle! There followed many questions including 'what's better for wine, cork or screwcap?' Ian reported they use cork – since the TCA organism which causes wine to be 'corked' has now been almost eradicated from cork. New corks ensure wine can keep for longer unopened, which can be 3, 5 and even 10 years. Screwcap wine will not keep for long and is meant for immediate consumption. There were questions about climate change, Ian reported there has been a 1.1 degree change in temperature since the vineyard opened, but it's the volatility of the climate that causes most issues. Ian made reference to '10, 10, 24' which is a rainfall of 10mm, a 10 degree Celsius change of temperature in 24 hours – which can be dangerous for vineyards especially for mildew. He reported that pests remain an issue, deer have caused problems recently by eating the buds from vines, but this is under control. Finally he was asked about further expansion plans and Ian reported they have access to a further seven hectares of land to develop, though as previously used for crops, would likely take longer to raise to the correct soil standard.

There followed an opportunity to taste and purchase the wines, enjoyed by many.



Of Interest to Our Members

Wednesday 2nd April

The Millers Tale

Marcus Ramshaw

7.30-9.00pm Upstairs Room in the Monks Walk

Free with Donations to the Minster

Tuesday 15th April

Hull Local History Group.

Chris Ketchell Memorial Lecture- The Hull Raids on the Lincolnshire Pirates

Helen Good

1.00pm Hull Minster

Donations to the Minster appreciated

Tuesday 8th April

Hedon and District Local History Society

Sunk Island to Trent Falls: Walking the East Riding Coast, Part 3

Sally George

2pm Hedon Methodist Church

£5.00 per visitor

Parking and disabled access

Wednesday 30th April

Pocklington History Society

The distinguished York painter, William Etty

Tom Etty

7.30 pm Court House, George Street, Pocklington

£3.00

Monday 14th April

The Façade Ensemble

Stabat Mater-A sequence of Music marking the anniversaries of Italian Composers Berio, Scarlatti, Nono and Clementi

7.30pm St Mary's Church, Beverley

Wednesday 30th April

Is Easter still allowed? Protestants and Catholics in Beverley 1575-1662

Marcus Ramshaw

7.00pm-9.00pm Beverley Minster nave

Donations to the Minster appreciated



New Paths Music Festival:

Members are reminded that the 2025 Spring New Paths Music Festival takes place from 2nd to 6th April.

For information about events, locations and tickets, please go to

www.newpathsmusic.com

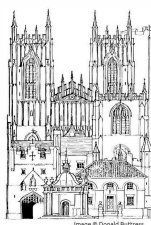
or visit Beverley TIC at the Champney Treasure House (01482 391672)

Beverley Civic Society Event

*A talk by Kloskk Tyrer -
Photographs of Bygone Beverley Part II*



7.30pm, Thursday 3 April 2025
St Mary's Church, Beverley
Non-members are welcome £5



DISCLAIMER

The Beverley and District Civic Society assumes no responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions in the content of this Newsletter.