

Friends of York Walls



Newsletter – Issue 3 December 2012

Welcome to the Friends of York Walls newsletter. It is now a year since our last newsletter, so this new issue is long overdue. However, we have not been idle and many of our activities have been well publicised and reported on our website at <http://yorkwalls.org.uk> on [Facebook](#) and on [Twitter](#).

For those of you who are new readers - The Friends of York Walls (FOYW) is a voluntary non-profit making group. The group aims to help promote manage and develop York's Walls and Defences (including the Bar Walls, St Mary's Abbey, Clifford's Tower and The Castle) for the benefit of local residents and visitors. We organise and undertake practical work and organise public events in co-operation with the City of York Council and other like-minded groups or individuals. We seek to establish York Walls as a major worldwide attraction, one that the residents of York can take pride in, and residents and visitors can enjoy to the full.



For more information please see our website at: -

<http://yorkwalls.org.uk> or Email: info@yorkwalls.org.uk

So this is Newsletter Issue 3, and a lot has been going on since the last newsletter was published in December 2011.

The Friends of York Walls have no income other than from donations and fund raising activities. We have no actual assets as the York Walls are in the care of and maintained by the City of York Council (CYC). CYC are fully supportive of our aims and objectives and are helping us to achieve these. We have formed a UK Charity the 'York Walls Charitable Trust' to administer our activities. We have an ongoing major fund raising activity to re-open one of the disused towers along the York Walls.

The Friends of York Walls have organised a number of events over the past year and have helped to establish new traditions and activities on and around the walls. We continue in our efforts to reopen Fishergate Postern Tower and are still actively seeking funding to achieve this aim. We have achieved quite a lot in 2012. Our activities have been featured on our website, Facebook and Twitter, and sometimes in the local press and local on-line magazines. The following will serve as a reminder of our major activities and achievements during 2012.



Fishergate Postern Tower

One of the biggest ongoing objectives of the Friends of York Walls is to re-open Fishergate Postern Tower for community use. FOYW have the full support of City of York Council in this venture and negotiations for the use of the tower for community use are still progressing. FOYW are working in close partnership with CYC, English Heritage and others to bring Fishergate Postern Tower into community use.



The tower was built between 1504 and 1507 in place of an earlier structure known as Talken Tower - after Robert de-Talken who was a Lord Mayor of York. The tower is situated at the end of Piccadilly, opposite the Weatherspoon's "The Postern Gate" on the corner of Fishergate and Piccadilly. It has 4 stories, which are linked by a narrow spiral staircase. The tiled roof was added in 1740. It was last used as an Artists studio.

Major funding is still being sought to refurbish the 500 year old tower and give it a new lease of life as a visitor centre and small cafe. The City of York Council has been asked to provide funding to complete repair work, which is essential for any funding bids. CYC have allocated £20,000 from their capital contingency fund to help carry out repair work to the tower. At the present time we are still waiting for this work to be scheduled.

The first Fishergate Postern Tower "Public Open Days" took place on Saturday 28th & Sunday 29th January 2012, as part of the York Residents Festival Weekend. Visitors enjoyed a free talk and an inspection tour including a brief history of the tower before hearing about the plans for its development. This was probably the first time the tower had seen so many visitors for hundreds of years !

During the June to September summer months the tower was opened at weekends by a dedicated and enthusiastic team of volunteers. Visitors to the tower were given a conducted tour and a brief history talk. We thank all our volunteers who helped to support the summer opening of the tower and hope to achieve even more opening hours during the 2013 season.

Fishergate Postern Tower – "Sponsor a Stone"

Friends of York Walls are continuing to work towards the refurbishment and ultimate re-opening of Fishergate Postern Tower. One of the ways we are seeking to raise funds towards this project is by inviting the general public and local businesses to "Sponsor a Stone". This major fund raising activity was officially launched on Tuesday 17th January 2012 when The Lord Mayor of York, Councilor David Horton, patron of the Friends of York Walls, was presented with a certificate of ownership of the first stone at Fishergate Postern Tower from Friends chairman Keith Myers and watched by fellow friends.

Over the year 200 stones have been sponsored and this has raised over £4,600 from the Sponsor a Stone initiative! We would like to thank each and every one of our donors to date, along with all those people who have made a standard donation.

If you wish to contribute then please look at the website [Sponsor a Stone page](#) where you can fill in an online application form, follow the links to view the current state of the [Sponsored Stones grid](#) or read entries in the online [Sponsors Book](#).



For your sponsorship you can choose a specific and identifiable external stone, or stones, on an outside face of Fishergate Postern Tower, York, UK. You will be issued with a certificate to record your stones label and your donation. Stone locations and their availability are identified on the web page on the [Sponsored Stones grid](#). Stones are allocated according to availability and only issued once. Sponsors names, together with an optional messages, can be entered into a "Book of Sponsors" which can be viewed on the website and will eventually be on display within the tower itself.

This is a unique opportunity to contribute towards a project to restore one of York's ancient monuments to public use. By sponsoring a stone or stones you contribute towards the Fishergate Postern Tower restoration work. Your sponsorship can be for yourself, is ideal as a gift for someone, or for a significant event or person in your life. The scheme can be used to observe a special occasion such as a birthday, a christening, a wedding, as a memorial or simply to convey a message.

Sponsorship is also being sought from local Businesses and Corporations whose names will be recorded in a "Book of Business Sponsors" and also credited in suitable Friends of York Walls literature, and eventually in a tower display. We are also looking for business sponsors for our FOYW printed material.

100th Stone Presentation and “Thank You” to Mayor David Horton

In one of his last official duties of 2012, the outgoing Lord Mayor of York, Councilor David Horton, presented a commemorative certificate to Philip Noble to celebrate the sponsoring of the 100th stone of Fishergate Postern Tower. An afternoon tea and a tour of the Mansion House accompanied this event. Councilor Horton was thanked for all he had done as the patron of The Friends of York Walls in his year in office.



Walks, Talks and Tours



In November 2011 English Heritage had announced that Clifford's Tower would be closed on weekdays during the winter season. In response the Friends of York Walls negotiated to provide limited weekday openings. For the 2012 winter season FOYW volunteers provided guided tours of Clifford's Tower on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Throughout the year the Friends of York Walls have continued to provide visiting groups with walks, talks and tours. On 1st August we met up with the 'Yorkshire Ridings Society' when they read 'Proclamations' at each of the bars in York as part of the Declaration of Yorkshire Integrity. This is an annual event and ending up in Parliament Street. In early September a visiting walking group from Cumbria were given an afternoon guided tour of the walls and visited the inside of Fishergate Postern Tower.

The Bars and Walls of York are the finest and most complete of any town in England. At two miles the walls are the longest in the UK and are one of York's top free visitor attractions. Over a million people take a walk through 1900 years of history on York's city walls. Built in Roman times, they have been added to and rebuilt over time and now have parts from across the centuries.

As you walk the walls and look at the bars would you like to know more about their history and the changes that have taken place over the centuries? The Friends of York Walls can provide walking guides for small or larger groups, as well as talks and presentations to individuals or groups.

A “walls walk” around the full circuit will take approximately two hours with just a few stops for talking. However a more comprehensive “walk and talk” can take considerably longer depending on the number of stops and the requirements of the group.



The Lord Mayors Inspection in March

About forty children from Copmanthorpe Primary School called on the Lord Mayor on Monday 12th March and ask him to 'Inspect the Walls'. The event was first held in March 2011 and it returned this year with a slightly different timetable.

The children escorted the Mayor and Civic Party to Bootham Bar. The Civic Party then walked onto the Walls to inspect them. The Mayor was presented with a scroll at 'Robin Hood Tower' by Keith Myers, Chairman of Friends of York Walls who thanked him for being their Patron. The Civic Party alighted from the Walls at Monk Bar and walked up Lord Mayors Walk, which was lined with 300 local school children who waved daffodils that they had made. The Mayor presented a scroll of thanks to each of the children from Copmanthorpe School who had escorted him back to the Mansion House.



The Queens Visit to York – Maundy Thursday 5th April



Her Majesty The Queen was given the time-honored Monarch's welcome to the City of York at Micklegate Bar, in a medieval atmosphere conjured up by traditional musicians and musketeers. She met the Lord Mayor David Horton and the town clerk, Kersten England, who read out a proclamation of welcome.

The Friends of York Walls "awarded" HM Queen Elizabeth her own FPT stone (45K) to commemorate her visit to York on Thursday April 5th 2012. The Queen was visiting York as part of the 800th Anniversary of achieving City status and to distribute the Maundy Money at the Minster.

St Georges Day Parade

Friends of York Walls and others staged a costumed parade on St. George's Day on Monday 23rd April 2012. St George and the Dragon set off from Fishergate Postern Tower at 6pm and walked to the Eye of York, via Clifford's Tower. At the Eye of York the Dragon was fatally wounded, and a Marauding Scotsman was captured. The parade then returned to Fishergate Postern Tower where the wounded dragon was caged. This has become an annual event which we hope to perform each year.



Olympic Torch Relay – June



The Olympic torch visited York's famous historic walls, as part of the 2012 London Olympics build up, on day 31 of the Olympic Torch Trail on the leg from Hull to York. The torch was taken onto the walls from Micklegate Bar to Lendal Bridge and then through the streets of York and on to The Racecourse for the evening celebration.

Picture from BBC News UK - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-18503873>

Red Tower Fair - 7th July

The Red Tower Fair on 7th July was blessed with a rare event this summer, a warm and sunny day. Friends of York Walls in association with the local residents provided stalls, games, entertainment, activities and refreshments. A good afternoon was had by all.



Lord Mayor's entertainment and "walls walk" – 14th July 2012



On Saturday 14th July 2012 The Friends of York Walls escorted the Lord Mayor of York Councillor Keith Hyman, and Mrs Karen Hyman the Lady Mayoress, on a walk along some of York's historic walls. The civic party was first entertained by the York Concert Band on the front lawns of The Kings Mansion before setting off on a "walls walk" through the Museum Gardens to Lendal Bridge and the start of the city walls. There they were entertained by a busker and given tea and biscuits courtesy of the Cedar Court Hotel. More buskers entertained the walking party at Micklegate Bar and then at the Bitchdaughter Tower where the party was given wine and biscuits. The walls walk finished at Fishergate Postern Tower when the civic party sponsored a stone

and climbed the spiral staircase to view the upper floors. Throughout the event collections were taken in aid of "The Lord Mayors Charities". The money raised (£130.00) went to the SAFA charity, one of the Lord Mayors charities.

Tofts Fair - 21st July



On Saturday 21st July the Friends of York Walls held a Tofts Fair around Lower Priory Street, just inside the walls near to the Victoria Bar. With help from the local Residents Association and the support of the City of York Council, this was part of the City's 800th Charter Year celebrations. Raffle Ticket Winners were:- Ticket No.18 - Child's Cycle Sponsored by Halfords; Ticket No 33 - a FTP Stone; Ticket No 57 - Doggy Throw Ball; Ticket Nos 27 & 54 - Wine; Ticket No 51 – Gift Set. All tickets were drawn by the Lord Mayor Keith Hyman.

The Friends of York Walls are keen to join with all local residents in celebrating the walls that meander past their streets and back gardens. The Walls in York are England's longest and most complete, and visitors from all over the world come to walk on them. The Friends of York Walls are keen to promote our wonderful heritage for the good of local residents and visitors alike.

Information Stalls and Fairs

At the Dragon Boat Races on Saturday 22nd September the Friends of York Walls had an "information and sponsor-a-stone" stall along The Dame Judi Dench Walk next to the River Ouse. The annual Dragon Boat Races organised by the York Rotary had been postponed from earlier in the year due to high river levels.

FOYW also had information stalls at many other events during the year including Tesco Askham Bar, a "volunteering open day" for new students at York University, and at the 'Visit York' event at The Racecourse.



York Walls – A Chinese MA post-graduate’s viewpoint

In October the Friends of York Walls welcomed Nana Zheng a Chinese post-graduate who has studied for an MA in Cultural Heritage Management at The University of York. Nana has completed a dissertation on “The history of the management of York city walls since the 19th century”. She is very enthusiastic about York’s Walls and during her stay in York she will be helping The Friends of York Walls to raise public awareness of our wonderful heritage, to promote “Sponsor a Stone”, to raise funds for the re-opening of Fishergate Postern Tower, and to find sponsors for FOYW publications and production costs.

Nana’s story, in her own words, can be read [here](#) on the website.

FOYW Visited Chester – Tuesday 16th Oct 2012

A group from The Friends of York Walls had a wonderful day out on a visit to the walled city of Chester on Tuesday October 16th 2012. FOYW have formed links with some members of the Chester Renaissance Group and a day visit to Chester was organised with their help. They entertained us with a guided walk & talk around the walls, including entry into many places the normal public currently don’t have access to.

The coach departed from York at 9.30am and after a wet drive via the M62 the sun came out and we arrived at Chester in time for lunch and a short look around the city center.

Chester Renaissance have recently been spending over £2M on major restoration work around their City Walls and have included many innovative improvements to make the walls a major tourist attraction. The result of the work should be an inspiration for York and to FOYW – if only we could get some of the same European Grant money!

We walked the walls in an anticlockwise direction and looked in many of the restored towers not presently open to the public.

We would like to thank Jane Hebblewhite and Magnus Theobald of Chester Renaissance for their time, their interesting talks and their guidance during a wonderful afternoon, and for giving us the opportunity to see the results of all the recent work on the Chester City Walls.



An Invitation – to share your photographs with us !

flickr® from YAHOO!



The Friends of York Walls invite you to share your photographs with us on our Flickr Group at <http://www.flickr.com/groups/friendsofyorkwalls/>

Images must be related to York's Defences - including the Bars, the Walls, St Mary's Abbey, Clifford's Tower and The Castle. Images related to Friends of York Walls events and activities are also acceptable.

You can view the existing “group pool” of images via the above link, and you are welcome to join the group to upload your own photographs. Normal Flickr account rules apply.

An update on some of our current and future events:-

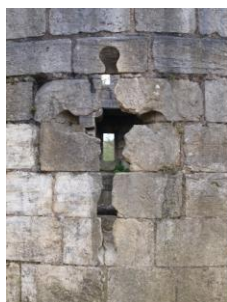
DAFFODIL BULB PLANTING volunteers were out on Saturday 24th November. They met at Fishergate Postern Tower with 1000's of bulbs to plant. More bulb planting sessions are planned ! You may also see "Community Pay Back" teams on the ramparts between Fishergate Postern Tower and Walmgate Bar planting our bulbs. £200 was donated by the Walmgate Ward towards the cost of these bulbs.



Are you aware of our **"POP UP CAFÉ"** events being held in the Guildhall? Come along and have a look at the Charity Stalls that will be there. Again watch the FOYW website, Facebook and Twitter for the dates and details of these events. Would you like to have a charity stall at one of these events ? Contact info@yorkwalls.org for details.

How about a **"UNIQUE CHRISTMAS PRESENT"** – 'Sponsor a Stone' for £20 and get a certificate to identify your stone, and your personalised message visible on our website and in the [Book of Sponsors](#). See [here](#) for details and on-line sponsoring.

Have you been following our series of **"MYSTERY PICTURES"** on our Facebook timeline and the website. Each week has features a new "mystery picture" and solution to the previous one. Check out our [Facebook](#) Timeline and the web pages at <http://yorkwalls.org.uk> for those pictures you have missed, and future entries.



Christmas and New Year Raffle

This year we are holding a Christmas and New Year Raffle. Raffle tickets are £1. each or £5 for a book of 5. (Well worth the money, if you win). Proceeds in support of the Friends of York Walls efforts to re-open Fishergate Postern Tower and to improve York's Walls for visitors and residents.

For details on how to buy your tickets contact a committee member or see the website announcements. The "Grand Draw" will take place on Monday 14th January 2013 at the St. Helen's Church concert.

We already have the following prizes for our Raffle:-

Holiday Inn, York - B&B at the Holiday Inn York (one night stay),
Kennedy's - A meal for 2 with house wine (food up to a set value),
Dean Court Hotel – Afternoon tea and cakes for two,
Visit York - A family pass from Visit York (covers various venues),
The York Wheel - A family pass on the York Wheel,
The Barbican – 2 x tickets to see the Panto at the Barbican, York,
Betty's Tea Rooms – tea and coffee !,
Richardson's of Woodthorpe – A Meat Voucher for £10,
FOYW - A private guided walk on the walls lead by a FOYW guide (max 8 people),
FOYW - A complementary stone at Fishergate Postern Tower (Worth £20),
Etc.....



We still need donations of more prizes – please help!

“East Meets West” Concert on Monday 14th January 2013



On January 14th 2013 we will be holding a fund raising concert “East Meets West” - an evening of music and dance. This event is being sponsored by M & S.

The concert will be held at St Helen’s Church, St Helen’s Square, York from 7:30pm to 9:30pm. The concert will feature musicians and dancers from the two universities – The University of York and York St John University. The program will feature Classical music, British folk music, Chinese traditional music, and include traditional Chinese dance and Morris dance. Tickets for adults cost £5.00, and for students/child cost £2.00. Light refreshment is included.

The venue seating capacity is limited so reserve your tickets in advance to avoid disappointment. Send an email with the subject “FOYW East meets West tickets” to sec@yorkwalls.org.uk. Please give your name, how many Student Tickets you want, and how many Adult Tickets you want. Collect and pay for your reserved tickets on the night at the venue – by 7.15pm please. Remaining unreserved tickets can also be bought on the door on the night, subject to availability.

Proceeds in support of the Friends of York Walls efforts to re-open Fishergate Postern Tower and to improve York’s Walls for visitors and residents.

Plans for 2013

Over the next year we hope to secure funding for Fishergate Postern Tower, and see some activity towards repairs and refurbishment. We are progressing slowly with the acquiring of the FPT lease from CYC, but we will get there one day !



Plans to open the tower to the public at weekends and even longer are being formulated. **The Tower will be open over the York Residents Weekend on 26th/27th of January.** Opening times will be from 10am to 4pm, on each of the two days, Saturday and Sunday. We will need guides, and helpers and would be grateful if anyone can give a 2 hour stint during theses times?

If you are interested in helping at the tower, or with any other guiding around the walls, at the Guildhall, etc., then please get in touch.

The annual events we have established over the past few years will again feature in our 2013 calendar. Don’t forget to follow us on our website at <http://yorkwalls.org.uk> and “like us” and “follow us” on [Facebook](#) and on [Twitter](#) for all the latest info.

If you would like to get involved with any of our activities, help us with fund raising, or just want to give us your feedback then please get in touch via Email: info@yorkwalls.org.uk or the website: <http://yorkwalls.org.uk>

If you do not have internet access then please contact our Membership Secretary John or Chris Dowell on 01904 337308.

If you are not already a member of The Friends of York Walls then please consider supporting and joining us – **it’s FREE !** – but any donation would be gratefully received.

And finally, a message from our Chairman –

“It has been a very busy year for the committee with the Fishergate Postern Tower “Sponsor a Stone” launch, the Lord Mayors Inspection involving hundreds of local school children, the St Georges Day re-enactment, two residents fairs, a Band Concert and Mayoral procession, and much more.



Special thanks have to go to Chris and John Dowell for opening Fishergate Postern Tower just about every weekend this summer – and proving to us all that there is great interest in the Tower by the general public, and visitors to our wonderful city. I would also like to thank Alan Fleming for all his work setting up Sponsor a Stone, website input and photography; Simon Mattam for “Walks and Talks” around Clifford’s Tower and his work on the Sponsor a Stone Certificates and memory book; and Richard Strouhair for web site design and support.

Plans are getting closer to being submitted to the Council for the planning permission necessary for the use we want to put Fishergate Postern Tower to, and I would like to thank Glen McGowan for his work.

We continue to work with the City of York Council and other stakeholders to promote The Walls and the City, and I thank the Council Officers, Staff and Councillors for their support.

We have established a Charity, the 'York Walls Charitable Trust' to take over the asset of the Tower and I would like to thank Sue Galloway and Lindsay Clarke who agreed to become trustees.

As you can see the committee and volunteers have had a busy year and I haven't even mentioned the “Pop Up Cafes” in the Guildhall, daffodil bulb planting, talks, walks, information stalls, residents meetings, Twitter, Facebook and numerous leaflet designs and printing!

All of this from a committed team and volunteers..... Thank You.

May I wish you all a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous and Healthy New Year.”

Keith Myers, Chairman



Newsletter compiled and edited by Alan Fleming, December 2012.

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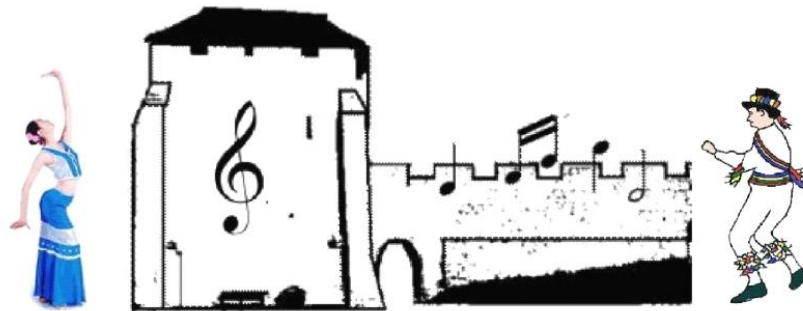


A Charitable concert for Friends of York Walls
EAST MEETS WEST

7:30 - 9:30 pm 14th January, 2013

St Helen's Church, St Helens Square

With light refreshment



A concert bringing together

- Music talents from 2 **Universities in York - UoY & York St John**
- **Traditional British & Exotic Styles**

For the upkeep and opening up of

Fishergate Postern Tower and other sections of
York Walls

The longest surviving medieval town walls in the UK.

Buy tickets

Adult: £5 / Student: £2

No need to book, just pay on the door;

Alternatively, you can reserve tickets via:

Phone: 01904337308

Email: sec@yorkwalls.org.uk

<http://yorkwalls.org.uk/>