



YORK MINSTER FUND

York Minster Fund Christmas Newsletter

Christmas Issue 2023

WELCOME TO THE YMF CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER



As we look forward to another Christmas at the Minster, it feels as though we are entering a period of change. At the end of November, the Minster welcomes graduating students whose time in the city is drawing to a close, while Advent signals the end of one liturgical year and the start of the next.

This newsletter sees other endings and also some beginnings. We mark the end of an era as we say goodbye to our Chairman, Richard Shaw, who is retiring after 10 years with the Fund.

As you will read, Richard has been instrumental in the development of our Centre of Excellence, which continues to take shape across the Minster Precinct. At the same time, we meet some of our new apprentices as they begin life at the Minster, and we also welcome two new Trustees, Ashley Mason and Suzannah Farnell. Advent is also a period of looking forward: to the arrival of the Christ Child at Christmas, and to January and the start of a new year. We also have news of an exciting exhibition planned for 2024.

York Minster Fund's work is only made possible through the generosity of our supporters. May I take this opportunity to thank you for your help this year and to wish you a peaceful and happy Christmas. May the New Year bring joy to all.



NEIL SANDERSON
Director of York Minster Fund

THE FRIENDS OF YORK MINSTER



In early September, we were delighted to take the Trustee Board of The Friends of York Minster on a tour of the two sites for the new Centre of Excellence for Heritage Craft Skills and Estate Management. Trustees were able to see at first hand the many benefits the new facilities will create for local, national and international craftspeople and trainees. The Board has now awarded £70,000 towards our fundraising campaign. This exceptionally generous grant will support the costs of one of the six accommodation rooms at the Centre. These rooms will enable the Minster's first year apprentices and some second years to have an affordable base on site.

Julia Charlton-Weedy, Chair of The Friends of York Minster, said: *"The Friends of York Minster are delighted to support the Centre of Excellence. The apprentices who train here will, in the fullness of time, contribute directly to our objects of beautifying and sustaining the Minster".*

Neil Sanderson, Director of York Minster Fund said: *"We are thrilled to have such significant funding from The Friends of York Minster and are very grateful for their support. Ensuring that the Minster's new apprentices can live affordably on site, whilst learning from our experienced heritage crafts team and skills practitioners from around the world, is at the heart of our new Centre's work. We look forward to welcoming the Friends to the completed Centre in early 2025".*



BEST PRACTICE AT NEW CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE



As we move towards the opening of our new Centre of Excellence for Heritage Craft Skills and Estate Management in 2024, our Research and Development team are hard at work ensuring that the equipment and facilities meet the highest standards of employee welfare, health and safety and best practice. This will include new, much more flexible bankers for both our resident and visiting stonemasons, to ensure much greater ease of movement and more comfortable working. Our gardening team will also have their own area in the new Centre, so they can easily dry equipment and wet kit, ensuring they stay warm and comfortable.

We are also keen to ensure that the considerable amount of dust created by stonemasonry across the Centre is reduced and removed. We are exploring innovative technology including silica dust monitors and a water wall to help reduce and remove dust particles safely. We are delighted to have the support of Pinnacle Conservation towards this vital area of our work. The Company have recently pledged their support towards a cutting-edge water recycling system which will allow the whole workshop to be washed down once a week with stone dust carefully filtered out.

Alex McCallion, Director of Works and Precinct said: *"We greatly appreciate Pinnacle's exceptional generosity in supporting our new Centre of Excellence in this way. Continued employee safety and dust reduction is a statutory priority for our new facilities and we are delighted to work with Pinnacle to help us towards continued excellence within this important area of H&S"*.

Adam Hickey from Pinnacle Conservation said: *"It's an honour to help play a small part in the realisation of the Centre of Excellence, a truly transformational hub for the sustainability of heritage skills, something that we are particularly passionate about. The support for the water wall, utilising recycled water, is close to our hearts as we know first-hand the intricacies and importance of managing dust generated by the manipulation of stone. We hope this will help advance heritage skills in a safe and sustainable way."*

WELCOME TO OUR NEW YMF TRUSTEES

COUNCILLOR ASHLEY MASON JP



Ashley joined York Minster Fund in summer 2023. His background has been in the health and events sector. He currently works for St Peter's School alongside running a small boutique events business, Noble Happenings, with his wife Danielle. Ashley has a palpable passion for York and its unique institutions. He has been a City Councillor since 2015 and served as Sheriff from 2021-22. He has been a York Minster Fund Patron for several years and possesses significant charity experience, having served on and chaired many trustee boards and fundraising committees. Ashley said *"I am excited to be joining YMF at such a key time, with innovative world-leading projects like the Centre of Excellence underway. I hope to bring my many years of experience in charity fundraising and events together, alongside my strategic governance skills, to help the Fund to continue its successful work. I love York and our Minster and am very proud to be a part of sustaining its future for years to come."*

SUZANNAH FARNELL



"Many years ago, I performed in the Minster once a year with my school choir. I remember what a privilege it felt to be able to sing in such a magnificent building. Fast forward 30 years and I have been asked to become a Trustee of York Minster Fund. Becoming a Trustee means that I will play a small part in ensuring the future of this historic building, which feels like an honour and a great responsibility. It is also an incredibly exciting time to become involved, as the stonemasons embrace innovative technology and the Centre of Excellence becomes a reality. I am looking forward to working alongside and contributing to the talented team of people who work endlessly to keep the Minster alive and preserved for future generations."



GOODBYE *Richard Shaw*



Richard says: “After ten years at YMF, seven of which as Chairman, my time to move on has arrived.

As an engineer who has spent his entire career in the manufacturing industry, being exposed to the heritage sector initially came as a shock; the costs involved in the perpetual challenge of maintaining the Minster were staggering. Rather than looking simply for ways to raise ever more money, I applied my engineering skills to look at whether we could operate more productively, i.e. “get more bang for our buck”.

With the support of the Trustees, and a very generous donor, we commissioned a Research and Development project. The aim was to benchmark the Minster against other organisations doing similar tasks to ourselves, in both the commercial and heritage worlds, and to look at how we could integrate new technologies and practices with our world-class heritage skills. We recruited Laura Cotter, a remarkable engineer, to work with the stonemasons and glaziers, comprehend their problems, and find opportunities for improvement from around the world.

By embracing new technology whilst preserving our heritage skills, I believed we could not only secure the future for our Stoneyard but, in addition, we could provide new opportunities for our craftspeople and new streams of revenue for the Minster.

As part of this research, we have built relationships with institutions all over the world, from Christchurch Cathedral in New Zealand to the Carmelite Monks in Wyoming, and we are beginning to embrace technologies, such as 3D CAD, 5 Axis Machining, digital scanning and photogrammetry. The Minster even has its own survey drone!

The outcome has been remarkable, culminating in the development of the Centre of Excellence for Heritage Skills and Estate Management.

Over the next year, with the support of our generous donors, the development of the Centre will involve the refurbishment of the old Stoneyard into a new Technology Hub, whilst a new Heritage Quad will be built in the Deanery Garden – a place where traditional skills will be nurtured and maintained. The Quad will also incorporate accommodation for our apprentices, ensuring a place to live for our trainees of the future. This project involves significant investment; in excess of £9m. However, by improving the productivity of our works team, their future will be secured, alongside the skills we all cherish, and which will be needed at the Minster for decades to come.

Now it is my time to stand aside and, in doing so, I give my thanks for the support and encouragement I have received from my fellow Trustees, both past and present: Chris Legard, my remarkable Deputy Chair, Antonia Consett, who so ably chairs the Finance Committee; all those who worked on the Events Committee; the members of the YMF office team who work so hard in the background; and Neil Sanderson, our CEO, who has been a pleasure to work alongside. Lastly, I wish my successor, Nick Lane Fox, the very best for the continuing journey.”

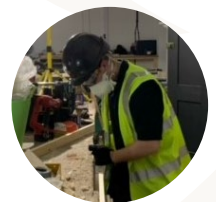
INTRODUCING OUR YMF SUPPORTED APPRENTICES

DANIEL MAGILL APPRENTICE GARDENER



I've always been a fond visitor of the Minster and the surrounding area. I've marvelled at the compost area and have enjoyed attempting to identify the trees looking down from the city walls. Seeing into the Dean's Garden had me contemplating a role within this industry, so when a job came up there, it was the perfect opportunity. I'm very grateful to be allowed to work here and to follow in the footsteps of many gardeners from hundreds of years before. Everyone I've met at the Minster are fantastic people who have taught me a lot, even in the few weeks that I've been here. I'm very pleased to be learning Horticulture alongside this wonderful team.

WILLIAM DIXON APPRENTICE JOINER



I am happy to be working at York Minster as I can enhance my skills and learn from some of the best craftspeople in the UK. It is also an amazing opportunity and an honour to be working for York Minster. I have thoroughly enjoyed my first month in the joinery department and am looking forward to what the future brings in my apprenticeship.



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SIR ANTHONY CRAGG SCULPTURES AT YORK MINSTER

In 2024 York Minster will host a breathtaking new exhibition of the work of the internationally renowned sculptor Sir Anthony Cragg.

Sir Anthony Cragg was born in Britain in 1949 and moved to Germany in 1977 where he has lived ever since. He first came to critical attention in the late 1970s and was the youngest participant in the Queen's Silver Jubilee Sculpture Exhibition in London in 1977, showing alongside many sculptors including Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth. Cragg was soon the leading light of his generation, closely associated with the 'New British Sculptors', including Richard Deacon, Anish Kapoor, Antony Gormley and Bill Woodrow. Cragg has gone on to become one of the most important international sculptors of the early twenty-first century, showing across the world – from China to North and South America.

One of his most significant glass sculptures, *Fields of Heaven*, made in Siena, will be displayed in the Chapter House. This large, multipartite work, comprising many translucent, sandblasted glass vessels, connects compellingly with the historic stained glass windows.

Two further large bronze sculptures will be installed in Dean's Park, highlighting his preoccupation with 'stacks' and 'stacking' - with geology, rock formations and stratified sedimentation of land.

The exhibition will open in May 2024, check Minster website nearer the time.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Please check the York Minster website for further details and to reconfirm timings: www.yorkminster.org

*Exhibition in the Minster:
Light, Glass & Stone,
Conserving the St Cuthbert Window
runs to 31st December 2024*

*Christmas Tree Festival:
York Minster, Saturday 2nd Dec 2023
–Friday 5th Jan 2024 inclusive*

*Carol concerts:
7th and 8th December 2023*

*Nine Lessons and Carols:
Saturday 23rd December and
Sunday 24th December 2023 at 4pm*

*Sir Anthony Cragg Sculpture Exhibition:
May 2024, check website for details*



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