

Thornton Rust Institute



Chair: Sue Duffield | Secretary: Karen Raven

Issue 2 | November 2024

Welcome to the second edition of the quarterly Thornton Rust Institute Management Committee newsletter. The last few weeks, as the clocks went back and the nights draw-in earlier each day, we have enjoyed a period of reflecting upon and celebrating the last 100 years of the Institute being the centre of our village community. We have also held our annual Remembrance ceremony, with another great turnout.

It has been truly humbling and brilliant to see so many villagers come to the Institute with their memories and enthusiasm to help us keep the Institute a central venue for our community spirit for generations to come, and we thank you all for your continued support with the events and activities we organise.

Rob Cromey-Hawke (Treasurer)

Dates for your diary

There's lots of things to look forward to in the coming weeks:

- **Skittles night, Saturday 16 November.** There's still an opportunity to indulge your competitive spirit and try out our beautiful hand-made wooden skittle alley. £10 per team, price includes wine and cheese. Arrive 6.30 pm for a 7.00 pm start.
- **A visit from our MP, Friday 22 November.** We are thrilled to let you know that our MP, Rishi Sunak, is planning to visit Thornton Rust on Friday 22 November to view the centenary exhibition. He is scheduled to be at the Institute mid- to late-morning. At the time of writing we are awaiting final confirmation of the timing of his visit so if you would like to meet Rishi please congregate at the Institute **from 10.30 am.**
- **Coffee morning, Saturday 14 December.** A chance to gather and enjoy the Institute in its Christmas get-up between 10.30 am and 12.30 pm. £3 per person. Tea, coffee and festive treats will be served and we'll be holding a raffle. Prize donations welcome!
- **New Year Party, evening of Saturday 4 January 2025.** Celebrate the turning of the year with a delicious cold buffet. £8 per person, booking essential. More details to follow.

Do continue to look out for event reminders and updates in the monthly Thornton Rust Bulletin and in the village WhatsApp group.

Thornton Rust Institute centenary celebrations

It was wonderful to see so many people at the centenary dinner at the end of October. The Institute was dressed to impress (thank you Paul Raven, Richard Loukota and Rob Cromey-Hawke for hanging the bunting and balloons) and there was a terrific buzz in the air as we wished the Institute a happy hundredth birthday. We followed the dinner with some open sessions in the Institute displaying photographs, maps and other information about the founding of the building and its role in village life over the last 100 years. We had 71 visitors over the four sessions including walkers, holiday-makers and people from nearby villages. Rob and Rachel Newall are working on a means of documenting and sharing all the exhibits so that villagers can enjoy looking at them in their own time. A huge heartfelt thank you goes to everyone who shared information, hosted, baked cakes and took the time to visit.

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Thoughts from the Letting Secretary

We have all enjoyed recent celebrations for the centenary anniversary of the Thornton Rust Institute, and I have had the privilege of serving the Institute for the past thirteen of those one hundred years as the letting secretary. It is no exaggeration to say that I have enjoyed every moment of it, giving me the opportunity to meet a wide diversity of organisations, groups and individuals, all wishing to come together to share in what the Institute can offer. We have heard of the improvements made, particularly during the time of Covid and the introduction of Wi-Fi contributing to the needs of the 21st Century. But in our quest for improvements, we must never lose sight of our aims in providing not only a focus for opportunity, recreation and comfort for the parishioners of Thornton Rust but also for those beyond the bounds of our parish. It is here, we can offer wonderful surrounding in the heart of Wensleydale, a chance to 'get away from it all'.

My thoughts often turn back to the days, one hundred years ago as I stroll around the hall late at night after a function, making sure everything is secure. All is quiet as I approach the storeroom, once the 'reading room' where gentlemen of the day would read the newspaper and a chance to catch up with current events, providing of course, they maintain the rules of the Institute. We hear of one such rule where women were openly discouraged if not banned from attending this reading room, I wonder what the conversation might have been. I doubt very much if it was following the fortunes of Clarence Birdseye, who in 1924 invented quick freezing methods, bringing frozen foods to many, or perhaps doing the crossword puzzle, first published by Simon Schuster in the same year. No, it was probably about Ramsay MacDonald forming the first albeit short-lived Labour government discussing many things not least equal voting rights for women, although it would be another four years before the 1928 Equal Franchise Act giving equal voting rights to women over the age of twenty-one came into force. Horrors! Is this the beginning of the end for this segregation in the Institute's meeting room? Well, the gentlemen of the day can take comfort, 1924 saw the first ever Kleenex Tissue introduced, so they can at least dry their eyes.

Thankfully, today all are welcome to enjoy what Thornton Rust Institute can offer, including those from the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, North Yorkshire County Council, the National Trust, the Circle Dance Group and many other regular interest groups. All this though does not just happen by chance, it is the efforts of a forward-thinking management team totally committed to support each other and to create a philosophy where we can say 'yes, we can do that for you.' So, whenever an occasion arises, consider what the Institute can do for you and help secure the future of Thornton Rust Institute for many more years to come.

Martyn Donno (Letting Secretary)

What else we've been working on

The autumn period was a busy one for the Institute Management Committee. As well as the centenary celebrations we have hosted a Quiz Night, Games Night and Remembrance coffee morning – all alongside the regular pickleball, badminton, circle dancing group and whist bookings. The Quiz Night was popular, as it always is; Games Night had a small but enthusiastic turnout and we're keen to try this again, adding chess to the mix. We're also considering investing in a table tennis table – do let us know if this would tempt you to come along.

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Paul Raven has been working very hard improving the area around the Institute. He's been laying slabs and gravel ready to install the new storage facilities for sandbags, and he'll soon be planting a beech hedge at the rear of the building to provide some screening.

Lastly, we're pleased to let you know we're going to create a Thornton Rust recipe booklet as suggested by Jean Prince. Please send Rachel Newall the recipe that you'd like featured (maximum of one per person please) by the end of January 2025. We'll look to launch the collection with some examples of the recipes at a coffee morning around Easter. Email Rachel at rs_newall@hotmail.com

Ideas for 2025

In the last newsletter we asked you to let us have your ideas for some different activities; we had six suggestions which the Committee recently discussed. We have agreed to further investigate holding a Fish & Chip Supper pop-up evening, and to explore hosting a craft 'dabble' day, where you can bring your own craft project to work on in a friendly social environment (plus tea and cake, of course!). We'll let you know more about these as we go.

As always, we'd love your feedback about what you'd like to hear about in this newsletter and other events and activities you'd like the Committee to arrange. Send your ideas to Rachel Newall at rs_newall@hotmail.com

And finally...

As we have a little extra space remaining, here's some photos from the centenary exhibition



Next issue: February 2025