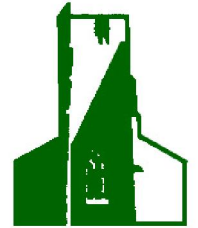


Priority Press

Volume 1



Head-lines

Welcome to this first Priority Press which aims to keep you up to date with all the events and happenings at the Priory over the last twelve months.

Many of you who visited us last year will have met our new Head of Centre, Jim Gleave, who has taken over from Roger Hopper. Jim and his wife, Sarah, left their social work and teaching jobs in Nottingham and moved here last Easter. They are settling into a slower pace of life and have made many improvements to the décor of the bungalow. Unfortunately, their arrival coincided with the laying-off of the staff due to foot and mouth! Thankfully we managed to re-open at the end of April and were able to adapt the programme so groups could come throughout the summer and although it came close at times foot and mouth never arrived at the Priory or surrounding farms.

By November we were getting back to normal and we held a commissioning service for Jim led by the Bishop of Knaresborough. Our patrons, the Lord Lieutenant of North Yorkshire and the Mayor of Richmond were able to join us in seeing some excellent drama about the history of the Priory which was presented for us by the Rev. Shirley Griffiths and children from her Parish in the Cowtons. Since then the Priory has been a hive of activity due in part to a large number of students (over 200) from Darlington College of Technology. This was a new contact for us with a different programme and objectives. The last groups for the year came and went, followed almost immediately by the builders who have been in occupancy ever since.

All in all 2001 has been a challenging year not just for the Priory but also for local businesses and farms and despite this we have been very fortunate in many ways. We are eagerly looking forward to what this New Year will bring and to seeing you all again.



Happy New Year from all at the Priory

What's new in 2002

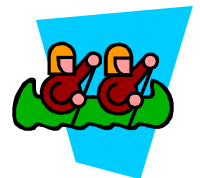
The last 12 months have certainly been busy, here's what you can expect for 2002.

Beck Scrambling

A junior version of gorge walking! Splash and scramble in a beck not far from the Priory.

Watersports at Ellerton Lake

A great new venue for open canoeing and raft building, plenty of car parking and changing rooms on site.



Orienteering

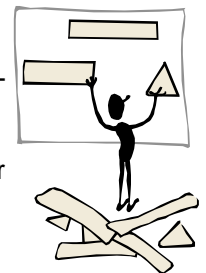
New courses for all levels, new teaching games and challenges, still more to come.

Junior Mountain Biking

We can now get bikes small enough for Y5 & 6 and have designed a session concentrating more on skills and technique than miles and miles of hills.

Building Development

The builders are currently at work and will soon complete improvements to Margaretha (the balcony dormitory). Planning permission has been approved for an extension to the kitchen replacing the Portakabin.



Foot and Mouth

Thank you for your support and understanding throughout these difficult times. Due to your willingness to compromise and be flexible we were able to reopen the centre after six weeks. Thank you to all the staff who were laid off but all returned back to their jobs. Thank you to all the groups who visited the Priory during the autumn and winter months, helping us to make up some of the massive amount of lost income.

Thank You !

You can visit our website at www.marrickpriory.co.uk

Building Developments

The winter and spring months are usually the time when much of the maintenance work is done at the Priory. Decorating is a 'favourite' job with gardening and equipment checking coming in close second and third. However, this year has been slightly different owing to the extended season we experienced in 2001, the early arrival of groups in 2002, and the presence of a team of builders. All in all this meant that there was slightly more than a month in which to do the work we would normally spend three months doing but we are almost there and you are sure to notice the difference when you arrive.

By far and away the biggest change has been the new spiral staircase, this leads from the refectory up into the balcony dormitory and will primarily act as a fire escape route. In line with current fire safety advice screens and windows have also been fitted to the balcony to completely seal off this area in the event of a fire downstairs. We are very pleased with the work so far, though it will take some time to get used to the new building plan. There has also been work done to the fire alarms to take into account the latest building work.



The new Spiral Staircase

That's not the end of the work though, the office has been redecorated (not before time too) and improvements have been made in the garage and equipment store so we should be able to store things more efficiently.

Future plans include, an extension to the kitchen which would replace the Portakabin and improvements to the downstairs dormitory. Planning permission has been granted and the fundraising has begun. It is hoped that this work will enhance the existing washing-up facilities, add an area for groups to make their own drinks and create an en-suite bathroom for the downstairs dormitory which could be used by those with disabilities.

Courses in 2002

We are running the following courses at the Priory during 2002. That everyone is welcome to come and join us on.

February

- 11th Basic Food Hygiene
- 15th-17th OTC Mountain Bike Leader (Level 2 training & assessment)
- 15th-17th Mainstream Canoeing weekend - just for fun!

August

- 2nd-4th Rug Making

Autumn

- First Aid (We can organise a course to take place at the Priory)

November

- 29th-1st OTC Mountain Bike Leader (Level 2 training & assessment)

If you are interested in any of these courses and would like more information, contact the office by email or telephone.

Staff News

We now have a volunteer instructor, Pablo who has previously worked at another outdoor centre and hails from near Whitby. You may also have met Tracy who works part-time in the kitchen, when she isn't running Dales-bread her bakery business. Also Jim O and Jon are leaving to take up new jobs in Devon and Hertfordshire respectively. Clare and Dan are getting married this summer (though not to each other) and Clare will be leaving to work in the Peak District after her marriage. We wish them all the best for the future.

Web Wonders

After a meeting with a design company in Leeds, plans are afoot to redesign the Priory's website. There are many suggestions but still time (and space) for more. The address will remain the same (www.marrickpriory.co.uk) but we hope that there will be more useful content for our visitors. All suggestions are welcome and can be emailed to us at the office. It is hoped that the bulk of the work will be completed within the next few months.

Catering

Please feel free to phone our housekeeper, Shirley, to discuss any specific dietary requirements such as nut allergies, gluten free diets etc.

Birthdays

If a member of your group is celebrating their birthday during your stay at the Priory, we are happy to provide a 'surprise' birthday cake. A little prior notice of this would be much appreciated.



A Polite Reminder



Please could we remind group leaders to send their pink forms into the office no later than two weeks before your visit. The information on them is very important with regard to catering and programming. Thank you.

Getting in touch

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