



YDSWG AGM

Saturday 29th October 2022

1. Attendees and absentees

Present. J Pridmore, S Wright, G Brown, E Hopkins, C Bailey, B, Meggan Jefferey, Steve Bostock
Derek Garbutt, Paula Gittings, M Booth, J Garwell, A Bailey, C Bailey

Apologies. K Ledger, Dennis Garbutt, S Vestry, S Crane, Brain Wood, G Selby

2. Minutes of the 2020 AGM

These were reviewed by the Chairman. Meggan Jefferey proposed and Dick Laidler seconded these were accurate.

3. Matters arising

There were no matter arising and the minutes were unanimously passed.

4. PRESIDENTS COMMENTS

Bill Cowling congratulated the Guild on their continued progress. He commented on the build ant the GYS and wished the Guild success on their charity conversion

5. CHAIRMAN & COURSE COORDINATORS REPORT

Course demand remains very high, and we often see people asking to get onto already sold-out courses. What is constantly surprising is the fact that we are seeing fairly high numbers of people travelling the length and breadth of the country to attend courses. One course in the year saw two people from Bristol, one from Exeter and one from the Home Counties. Altogether, this past season has seen nine courses take place, starting in April and concluding in October, more than one a month.

The first course, as always took place at Fountains Abbey, where a weak wall was repaired, and another wall running down a slope was reinstated after it had collapsed. It is always enjoyable to work on such an historic site and to work on walls that are ancient, and it seems we often turn up stone in the wall that came from when the abbey itself was partly taken down.

We then moved onto Pen View, in Thoraby, for our traditional visit to work at Cliff Bailey's place. As ever, a very warm welcome and hospitality from Cliff and Audrey. This also marked the last occasion, (perhaps?) that Cliff will instruct at, more of which later. Also worth noting was the sight of Steve Bostock trying out some Pilates moves as shown in the picture here. He was very flexible, in an 'old' waller kind of way and I took the pic before he'd realised!

Then onto Homefield, Steve Bostock's farm, and another successful and positive course was held. Pictures of this and all the courses are on our website.

Yate House, in Padside, hosted by Andy and Sue, in June was the next course. As ever, this course was well attended, and we were very well treated by our hosts. The stone here is often very big and lumpy, but as we demonstrate on our courses, and as one of our number often says "it came out of the wall, it'll go back in..."

The first of two stops at Cropper Fold Farm in July was another large course in terms of numbers attending. Some of our course venues can cope with larger numbers of participants, up to twenty, and this is one such place. Meggan and Jim are our genial hosts here, and Meggan of course is one of our instructors, so she usually gets to play at home.

Low Belford Farm was the next stop, hosted by the lovely Craig and Kate. Much work to do at this venue and a good stretch of wall was reinstated. Trees in the wall line can be a complicating factor at this site, but that can also mean that participants get to work on more complex wall features to get around this problem.

The next course took place at a new venue, Burniston Farm, near Scarborough. Despite a couple of issues with directions to the walling site, an extremely successful course was held. Again, another site with some (very) large stones to get in place. Our hosts, Elaine and David were very welcoming and hospitable. The reports from course participants (and instructors) were glowing in their praise for the venue. We look forward to visiting Burniston Farm many times in the future. The only issue was that the course took place over the August Bank Holiday weekend, limiting options for overnight stays. This will be addressed for next year.

Bolton Castle, to sort out some of Steve Bostock's walls, was the next venue in the first half of September. Our visit coincided with the annual mediaeval music fair at the Castle, which led to a few confusing encounters as people arrived for our course and the music fair! After gathering our participants together we set off a short distance down the lane to repair three sections of wall, in a very lovely part of the Dales. Ed, on instructing duty that day also found a stone with an unusual form - we all thought it looked like a prehistoric pterosaur - or maybe we just let our imagination get the better of us?

Our last course of the year, a return trip to Cropper Fold Farm was very successful, despite a couple of no-shows. Around 14m of wall was dug out and brought back up to height, in a very full weekend.

Practice meets

Practice meets were held on nine occasions over the year, from April to November. Some of them were held at course venues, while others were held at Long Liberty Farm, the Wolds Workshop in York and West Bolton Farm, Carperby. Whilst some of these were well enough attended, some were not. A discussion about this took place at a recent Trustee meeting, and actions have now been taken, in an attempt to improve attendance.

Charitable status

As I write this, the application for conversion to become a charity is being considered by the Charities Commission. This process could take several months.

The conversion to a charitable body has been agreed, as it is a better fit for the organisation of the Guild and aligns with the aims and objectives much more closely.

6. SECRETARY REPORT

Membership currently stands at 495 which is up again from the previous year at 374. The numbers are different to the usual comparisons we make as due to covid we have not removed any members that did not renew however as we have been running courses again the total membership is the highest its been in the Guilds history (one good thing to come out of the pandemic) This is made up of 15 honorary, 23 life and 216 paid members (which is down from 240 last year) and 241 that have not renewed since 2019. We made a decision not to remove any members again this year due to the knock-on effects of the pandemic. We will revert to our normal membership maintenance rules now so following the AGM all those that have not renewed will be removed from future communications and under GDPR rules their records will be deleted.

Our digital communications are the best way we communicate with our members and the public in general. The website is the main hub of activity providing the means for the public to buy courses, join the Guild and see what events we are running. We also have an Instagram page to again help promote what we do and a presence on Facebook. With the help of our technical expert Euan, we also have the ability to send bulk emails and you should have received the autumn newsletter by this method recently. With the ever-increasing cost of postage this is a great saving to the Guild. The plan is to use this more next year to promote our activities and try to get more support for practice meets.

Finally, it takes a lot of time and effort to keep the Guild running so I would also like to afford a special thank you to Paula, Graham and all trustees that have contributed to the running of the Guild. As we mentioned in the newsletter, we welcome anyone else looking to join the trustees and help in running the guild.

7. TREASURERS REPORT

This is the report for the 12 months ending September 30th 2022. This was probably our first what could be called normal trading year following the pandemic. I am pleased to report that the Guild has strengthened its financial position from last year, here are some highlights.

Course sales were very strong again over the last year with over £13,000 of income along with £360 of re-booking fees. Membership fees contributed over £1500 along with taster sessions which added 18 totalling £180

Costs were up on last year with increases in insurance, stripe fees and technical admin (however this does save us a fortune on postage and is way cheaper than an outside firm administering this so many thanks to Euan for the great work he does for us). Mileage payments were up however the committee have agreed a lower rate for future payments.

Overall for the year we have made a profit of £1599 just down slightly from last year but still increasing the overall net worth of the Guild up to £17553.

We are holding a stock of over 30 books which will be sold next year. We only make £4 per book but they are nice take aways for course attendees.

In summary the Guild has had another strong financial year and is well placed to move to Charitable status.

8. ADOPTION OF PROPOSED CHARITABLE CONSTITUTION

As I write this, the application for conversion to become a charity is being considered by the Charities Commission. This process could take several months.

The conversion to a charitable body has been agreed, as it is a better fit for the organisation of the Guild and aligns with the aims and objectives much more closely.

All instructors present agreed to the question on financial benefit

Trustees signed the required forms ready for submission

9. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN- Graham Brown was elected as Chairman

SECRETARY- Sarah Wright was elected as secretary

TREASURER- Paula Gittings was elected as Treasurer

VICE CHAIR- John Pridmore was elected as Vice Chairman

The above were proposed by Cliff Bailey and seconded by Derrick Garbutt . All attending voted in favour.

ELECTION OF CHARITY TRUSTEES

The following were elected as trustees of the Charity

Graham Brown

Sarah Wright

Paula Gittings

Dick Laidler

John Pridmore

James Garwell

All members were voted in 'in block' unanimously by all attending

10. AOB

GB proposed an increase in the cost of courses coupled with increasing the amount of expenses paid to instructors for the weekend. The new rate will per £120 for the course and the expenses will go from £320 to £350. These rates will come into effect on 1st January 2023. GB proposed the changes to the room and they were voted unanimously. Dave Leedale did note it may put some people off buying a course. The response was that the sales would be monitored however there were other external factors such as inflation that could also impact sales.

Derrick Garbutt asked about fuel costs being covered for attending events. GB said it would be discussed in the next trustees meeting.

Edgar Hopkin asked why Derrick Garbutt wasnta Master Waller. JP advised that the spec for the test was available and that Derrick was welcome to take the test any time he wanted to.

Derrick mentioned that the wall at the lower end of the Low Beford site was of poor quality. It was noted however there was nothing that could be done about it now.

Steve Bostock mentioned about quality and the varying skill levels of all the instructors. JP mentioned that they should maybe introduce a minimum standard for all instructors to attain. This will be discussed at the next trustees meeting.

Cliff Bailey has retired from instructing. As a mark of his service to the Guild GB presented him with a water colour painting. Cliff thanked everyone and vowed to keep supporting the guild as much as he is able to.

Meeting Closed at 16.40PM