



Autumn Newsletter 2013



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- Chairman's Chat, a review of the year
- Useful hints and tips
- Yorkshire Dales National Park Volunteers
- Dry Stone Walling in Ontario, Canada



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Cover photography credits

Front cover: Seat at the Great Yorkshire Show

Above: Garbutt Farm, Cold Kirby

Back cover: Practice meet at The Bivouac, Ilton

Welcome

Dear Member,

This is now the second booklet the Guild have produced and we hope you will enjoy reading through it. We are always looking for new and interesting things to add so if you have any unusual or interesting articles or photographs please send them into us and we will include them in our next edition. We can also add them to the website with your permission.

We continue to develop our website with the help of Euan Raffel. You will notice some new links in the menu giving details of the Annual Competition and the various accreditations the Guild offer.

Don't forget that as well as our great website we also have a Facebook page where you can get information and reminders about future events and see pictures of recent



Guild activity. You can also add comments and ask questions about the Guild or walling in general.

If you have any suggestions on how we can improve the way we run the Guild then please feel free to contact either me or Sarah to put them forward.

I do hope you will enjoy this new format.

John Pridmore
Chairman

Chairman's Chat

I can't believe another year has passed and I am writing the review for 2013. It has been another busy year with plenty of activity and a few new things to report on.

Firstly the formal stuff. The Guild AGM takes place on Saturday November 9th at Thirsk Town Hall. Your attendance and input into this meeting would be greatly appreciated, as it allows an opportunity to air and discuss any new ideas or ways the Guild can further improve how it functions. We are always open to suggestions and great ideas! Refreshments will be provided after the event (*please email the Secretary or call by 6th November to confirm what you would like, either pork pie or vegetarian quiche, contact details at the end of the booklet*) which is a great time to catch up with other wallers on what they have been up to all summer. New members are most welcome to come along and seek advice or help from more experienced wallers who will be attending.

Great news regarding our search for a new course co-ordinator. Les Maxwell has kindly volunteered to look after the role and is now nearing the end of his first year. I would like to thank Les for all his efforts this year in setting up and running our successful course program. We also think we have found a replacement for Woody as Treasurer, hopefully by the AGM we will be able to officially transfer over those duties. Once again thanks to Woody for 'counting the beans' for many years.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to all the new members who have joined us this year either as direct entry or from one of our many courses. I do hope you will continue your membership into 2014 and take the opportunity to attend some of the events we have planned for next year. Unfortunately membership numbers are down on last year so your continued support is very much appreciated.

We have managed to maintain the number of courses held this year to six and they have all been well attended. Once again positive feedback has been received from all those taking part. We do hope all those of you who attended the courses had an enjoyable weekend and will hopefully want to continue to practice their newly acquired skills at one of our practice meets in the future.



Demonstrations at shows are a great way for the Guild to promote itself and the craft and once again formed a big part of the Guild's activity throughout the year. We were meant to attend Bishop Burton College again however some confusion over the requirements of the build resulted in us having to cancel. However on the following day we attended the Duncombe Park show and despite being given a load of stone that could be best described as field clearance, the team on the day did a marvellous job of putting it together as you can see in the picture alongside.



The Countryside Days educational event was then followed by The Great Yorkshire Show, which unlike 2012 was blessed with some decent weather. This year the Guild built a two tiered seat next to the brown gate

entrance which stood up to a fairly heavyweight test on the final day as you can see below. Many thanks to all those who had an input into the construction over the three days and to Dave Purvis for his planning.

Masham show was another well attended event and whilst the Guild would have liked to continue the wall it had previously started the lack of new stone resulted in a take down and rebuild of the existing wall.



A new show for the Guild this year was Ripley Show on the edge of Harrogate which was again well attended. The show season will end on 19th & 20th October with the Countryside Live event at the Great Yorkshire Showground. Pictures of these events can be seen on our website ydswg.co.uk so please go

and have a look if you haven't seen them already.

The walling competition was unfortunately cancelled this year due to lack of entries. Hopefully we can generate some more interest next year. On a brief note of self praise I entered and won the amateur class of the DSWA Otley branch competition in September. Have to move up to the pro category next year so I will enjoy my moment of glory.

The mainstay of the Guild's activities are the practice meets held throughout

the year. The aim in 2013 was to start at a new venue at Garbutt Farm on the top of Sutton Bank however the extended cold spell and snow meant we had to cancel (if you intend to come to any of these events and the weather looks like it could affect the event please keep an eye on the website, Facebook or just contact me). Things did get going with our April visit to Carperby where a small team led by Dave Leedale made a nice job of a wall end. The first of our sponsored events came next at Bingley but unfortunately the weather was not conducive to DRY stone walling with non stop rain falling for most of the day. This meant the first outing for the Guild gazebos which were erected over the stretch of wall to keep some of the rain off. Well done to Jon Ramsey and Mike Trewick who both passed their basic walling test despite the difficult conditions and thanks to Meggan for the kind hospitality.



The next event was the first of our visits to The Bivouac at Ilton. A large group of willing volunteers continued the section of wall that was started the previous year alongside the entrance road. One member, Colin Short, also built 2 wall ends under the guidance of a master waller (yours truly). This was in preparation for his advanced test in the future. If anyone is thinking of taking one of their guild qualifications and are not sure if they are up to the required



standard then this is a great way of having a go without the cost of the examination. If any member is interested in doing this it can be arranged at most practice meets, just contact either Sarah or myself to make the arrangements.

At the end of June another good turn out met at Long Liberty Farm opposite the wind turbines near Harrogate. We are now about three quarters of the way to completing what was previously a derelict wall with a good stock proof boundary. Next year's visit should prove a good challenge as we will need to build over a large boulder that can't be moved.



The end of July saw us at a new venue right on the top of Sutton Bank for a

sponsored build. This offered a great opportunity to work with thin, irregular limestone which although slow to put up does make a great looking wall.



Many thanks to members Peter and Kevin who travelled up from Kettering to help out.

We returned to Carperby on the first weekend in September for our sponsored build weekend. A good turnout on both days resulted in 3 derelict sections of wall being repaired, one next to a stream and the other on a

steep slope. Both days building were made even more enjoyable by the great teas provided by Jonathan & Annette.

As I write this review we still have 2 practice meets remaining so the season now stretches from March to November offering many opportunities for members to come along for an enjoyable day out. Any member is welcome to use the practice meets as an opportunity to take one of their walling certification tests and remember the basic test is free of charge and only involves repairing a small section of wall so why not give it a go next year.... what have you got to lose? All you need to do is book the test as early as possible with either Sarah or myself.

Finally as Christmas approaches why not consider giving a 2 day dry stone walling gift voucher as a present? In an effort to make our courses more competitive we have decided not to offer the handbook with the course and so have reduced the price to a very reasonable £99 for the 2 days. If you are interested these can be purchased on our website.



Many thanks to our kind sponsors Meggan Jeffery, Jonathan & Annette Langhorne and Sallie & Julian Lloyd, your support is greatly appreciated. Finally thanks to all members who have attended meets and helped out at shows this year.

John Pridmore
Chairman

The Stone Festival 2013

Set once again in the grounds of The Bowes Museum, The Stone Festival 2013 gave a higher profile to dry-stone walling than had the inaugural event in 2012. <http://stonefestival.wordpress.com>

An afternoon of talks on the 21st September looked at walling from unusual angles.

The first talk by archaeologist John Barber was a tremendously entertaining and in-depth look at ancient dry-stone towers and the engineering behind them. Looking at both the iron-age Brochs of Scotland and the earlier Nuraghe of Sardinia, John outlined the architectural advantages of building high without the use of mortars. His elaborate experiments in Caithness on broch construction/destruction revealed the “self-healing properties of dry stone work and the scope that that provided for the alterations that were often made during their active use”. More information on this can be found on the AOC website - www.tinyurl.com/1ydswwg13

The Sardinian Nuraghe had an engineering advantage over the brochs though thanks to their sophisticated use of corbelling to create the voids within the structures. This is one reason why the Nuraghe have fared so well. Architects take note - adopt dry stone construction and your building will go last millennia.

Out in the grounds of the Bowes Museum, sculptor Louise Plant responded to the setting and the stone (Cat Castle sandstone supplied by Dunhouse quarry) by carving an angular/faceted piece that I replied to by building a square pillar that was missing the occasional corner and which had sightlines running through it revealing the museum gates and the museum front.

The pieces will remain in the grounds of the museum until Spring 2014.

Ewan Allinson





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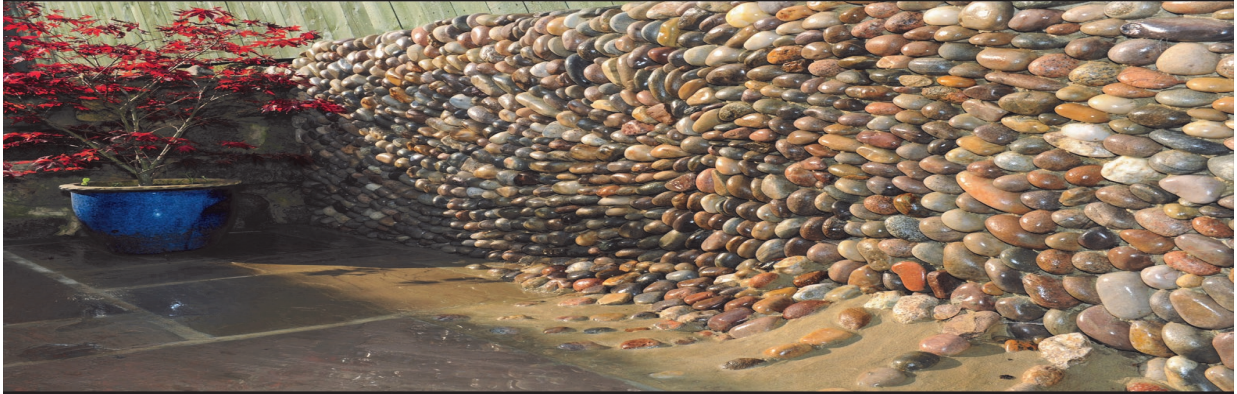
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Feature - The Art of Stone

Guild member Johnny Clasper likes to have a different take on what can be done with stone and enjoys the challenge of blending art with tradition when it comes to dry stone walls.



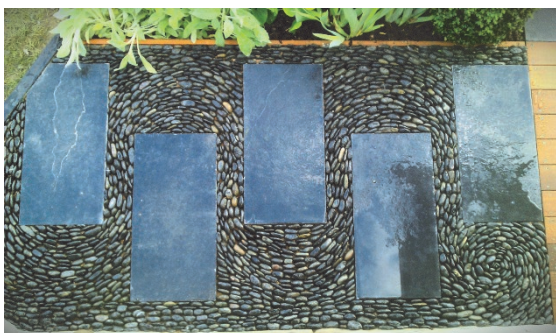
Johnny started off as a bricklayer in the construction industry but the prospect of just building straight lines & corners didn't satisfy him. "Bricklaying was a great grounding but I always felt I wanted to sculpt and build things that use different materials. I wanted to test my own skills and work with

natural curves that are more in tune with nature rather than square boxes."

Johnny then moved on to work with a stonemason picking up the necessary skills to work with varying types of stone. He then took the plunge and went to work for himself so he could then start to realise his passion for doing something different with stone.



Johnny is now building a great reputation for building walls and other stone constructions in a totally unique style, using spirals and making the stones flow almost creating optical illusions. "A lot of what I do is out of compulsion. An idea becomes a constant thought which is then something I know I just need to do. I have a real passion for working with stone and have studied many styles of stone masonry, extracting the best bits then putting my own mark on it. I gain inspiration from nature and the fluid lines and shapes I see every day". From here Johnny started experimenting with flow "If stone can be brought to life maybe it could become more fluidic and be made to flow like water would.



Any chance I got I would arrange pebbles or shard of stone to crate flowing illusions". The result of this can be seen in these pictures.

His designs and builds have won numerous Gold Medal awards at the Harrogate Flower shows. Even the bad weather (and we get plenty of that in

Yorkshire) doesn't stop Johnny's creative juices from flowing. He uses the time to create sculptures such as the scorpion you can see in the first picture. The scorpion was made from old roof slates that were bound for landfill. When asked what inspired him to build this Johnny replied "I had an image in my mind of an attacking



scorpion using old slate and polished black limestone. Against all the advice of my friends and my own self doubts I set about building it from the illusion in my mind. The end result proved to be an instant success and the door to the creative part of my mind blew wide open".

For the future Johnny wants to keep challenging himself and pushing the boundaries of what can be created out of stone. We have already engaged his skills in drawing up a design for a potential new feature at the Great Yorkshire Show for next year. We look forward to seeing more of your creations!



Tips to keep your spine and body healthy from
Dr Jason O'Connor at Advanced Health
Chiropractic Harrogate and Advanced Wellness
Chiropractic Ilkley

Ensure correct lifting technique - the back should be straight and the legs slightly apart with knees bent and the force taken up by the leg muscles. Avoid lifting whilst the trunk is rotated or weight too far from your body.

Maintain your Posture – Make sure you sit up straight, keep your shoulders back and chin level when seated at a desk and change position every 30 minutes.

Keep Active – this helps to keep the joints in your spine well lubricated, strengthens and tones your back muscles and can help with symptoms associated to arthritis.

Nutrition – eating plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables is important to keep your spine healthy. Eating green leafy vegetables and a variety of fruit gives your body the nutrition it needs to support your spine, but also helps to maintain a healthy weight.

Stay Hydrated –Your spine needs water not only to function, but also to heal itself. Water is a part of every bodily function, so maintaining your water intake is important – especially during hot weather and strenuous work. Discs are 90% water and therefore dehydration can cause nerve compression.

Equipment – always use the correct equipment, especially shoes. Ensuring your feet have the support they need is very important in maintaining your spinal health. Shoes that don't support your feet and can add to the instability in your spine causing you to work harder to support your structure.

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