



# Yorkshire Dry Stone Walling Guild



## ***In this issue...***

- Chairman's Chat, a review of the year
- Indoor Walling
- Crimplehenge
- Hobbit House Part 2
- Member activity



# Contents

Welcome	3
Chairman's Chat	3
Indoor Walling	8
Crimplehenge	10
Hobbit Houses	12
Advanced Courses	15



Cover photography credits

Front cover: Crimplehenge

Above: November crew at Cropper Fold Farm (yes it really was November!)

Back cover: Course at Yate House, Braithwaite

## Welcome

Dear Member,

I have just counted back and realised this is now the fifth newsletter in this booklet style. It just seems like yesterday that the first one was published. 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.

I do hope you enjoy reading through this latest edition

*John Pridmore*  
*Chairman*

## Chairman's Chat

Every year when I start to write my review I always say I must make notes throughout the year and true to form I have made no notes whatsoever so here commences my annual test of memory.

First, the formal business. The Guild AGM takes place on Saturday November 12th at 3pm 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 if you are attending or call by 10th November to confirm what you would like, either pork pie or vegetarian quiche – contact details on back page) and it is a great opportunity to catch up with other wallers on what they have been up to this year. New members are most welcome to come along and seek advice or help from more experienced wallers who will be attending. I hope to see some of you there!

I am delighted to say we have many new members again this year mostly from our training courses, so I would like to extend a warm welcome to you all. I do hope you will continue your membership into 2016 and take the opportunity to attend some of the events we have planned for next year.

A significant milestone has been reached this year as our membership has broken through the 200 mark which is great news. We have grown slowly over the last few years and hope to continue in the years to come.

The Guild courses have been even more successful than the previous year with nearly 90 people attending between April and September. We managed to maintain the very competitive price of £99 for



the weekend which offers great value. People have travelled from all corners of the country to attend and on most occasions we have been lucky with the weather. I have just instructed on a course where one of the students came from the Channel Islands! We were at a new venue on the outskirts of Harrogate and we were well looked after by landowners Andy and Sue, with a good supply of bacon butties and cake all washed down with tea and coffee. The feedback from students has been very positive and I know from speaking to our instructors we have really enjoyed teaching all those attending. From some of



the pictures I have seen there have been some impressive walls built, especially bearing in mind this is the first time for most of those attending. As part of the course fee all students become members of the Guild until April next year and can attend all Guild events free of charge. I'm not sure when you will receive this but we still have a practice meet

at Cropper Fold Farm on 1st November so if you get chance, why not



come along for a fun day out? There are always experienced wallers on hand to answer any questions and help improve your skills.

Over the last year we have demonstrated at several shows and events which are a great way for the Guild to promote itself and the craft. The first show of the year was Springtime Live at the Harrogate Showground. This is always quite early in the year so we have the luxury of demonstrating indoors. That stand was very popular especially with the children who like to get stuck in helping to build (and sometimes destroy) the wall. The main thing is they show some interest and have fun. The next event was Duncombe Park Show at Helmsley which was a nice spring day on the North Yorkshire Moors. The team said it looked like the same batch of stone last year so I'm sure they had some great fun trying to piece the limestone cobbles together.



Duncombe Park was followed by the Great Yorkshire Show, where we started a project that will run over several shows. This year's build was a bench seat that is going to form part of a picnic area to the side of the forestry hut. The stone was supplied by F&R Jacksons



at Teesdale which is stone we are quite familiar with, having used it for other projects on the showground. The planning was done by committee members Dave Purvis and Graham Brown and the project involved using some stone flags that the

show had removed during the new hall build. The YAS were pleased with the result are we are already thinking what feature we can create next year. An added bonus was Guild member James Garwell also becoming an expert in how the showground's water pumping system works which was all run from the hut behind our build!

Ripley Show was held again in August and was another successful day with the weather staying fine. The show season will end on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> October with the Countryside Live event at the Great Yorkshire Showground. Pictures of these events can be seen on our website [ydswg.co.uk](http://ydswg.co.uk) so please go and have a look if you haven't seen them already.

The practice meets started earlier than usual with the Crimplehenge build. You can read all about the build in a separate feature within this issue. We then moved to our traditional early visit to Carperby in the spring and were blessed with a nice day and an enjoyable build.

We then moved to Cropper Fold Farm where 2 members, Ray Ellis and Sam Hird both successfully completed their basic certificates and two new members came along on a taster session. The picture above shows the team at work.



Garbutt Farm was the next venue working with thin reclaimed limestone. A good turnout extended the wall we have been building for several years. The weather stayed fair and everyone had an enjoyable day. The next practice meet was our annual visit to Long Liberty Farm working on the stretch of wall that has been ongoing for some years now. A good turnout again saw us getting nearer the end.



I would guess that next year we will be able to complete the length of wall which will be quite an achievement. We then moved onto West Bolton Farm for our sponsored weekend and were well looked after by our hosts.

You can also take the basic or advanced waller certificates at practice meets, all you need to do is book in with the Secretary beforehand

and remember the basic test is free to take and all you need to do is rebuild a small section of wall. Full details of all the tests can be found on the website.

Finally, as Christmas approaches why not consider giving a 2 day dry stone walling gift voucher as a present? The price of £99 has been held for 2017 and these can be easily purchased through the website.



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

*John Pridmore*

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## Indoor Walling, the future?

Around this time last year I received a call out of the blue from a country outfitters called Cordings. They were planning to open a store on Parliament Street in Harrogate (their only other store



is in Piccadilly, London) and thought it might be a good idea to have a wall in their shop window. I visited the shop when the refit had just started and assessed the position and size of the wall. The issue we had was the floor was suspended on joists so additional bracing

was required to ensure there was sufficient strength to hold the weight of the stone (and the Chairman!).



With the floor strengthened I started to collect stone from our training site at Fountains, probably just over a ton all carried in large plastic buckets. With enough stone on site I started the build, taking great care not to send any stone chips flying through the front window of the shop (it's a curved glass front so not cheap to replace).



Because of the location the wall had to be built by eye without frames or lines. The wall



went together well with a corner being built, then the wall tapering down in line with the staircase. The wall was topped off and the finishing touch was a brass Yorkshire Dry Stone Walling Guild plaque fixed to the last top stone at the bottom of the stairs.

Cordings were very pleased with the finished job and kindly donated £250 to the guild. The shop refit has been completed and the store has been open for nearly a year now. If you are in Harrogate why not take a peek through the window. Hopefully it will still be standing!



## YDSWG Crimplehenge Project

The Yorkshire Agricultural Society asked the Guild if they had any ideas for a feature build on the site of the old first tee of what used to be Crimple Valley Golf Course. Several thinking caps were 'donned' to try and come up with something unique but also practical. Johnny Clasper along with Dave Purvis and Graham



Brown were the driving force behind the idea generation and project management of the idea. On previous trips down into the wooded area near the viaduct Johnny had noticed some large stones that had been there for years just gathering moss.



This sparked an idea to create some form of stone

circle seating area using the big stones as the framework of the design and so Crimplehenge was born. The serious lifting gear was provided by the YAS and the stones were retrieved from the wood and transported to the site. Johnny took charge of the initial placement of the





'henge' stones to create a rather eerie monument at the site. This was not the end of the feature stone gathering though. During a build last year at Long Liberty Farm a large square stone had been unearthed and was just sat in a field.

Not one to miss an opportunity Johnny could see a place for this feature stone so it was secured and transported to the site.



With the feature stones now in place work squads were organised to come along and build the wall between the stones and create a seating area within the circle. Volunteers also

came along from the YAS and the Hookstone and Stonefall action Group. The stone was shipped in from a derelict wall on the Showground and the structure started to take shape. Even after a whole weekend the build didn't get completed so a return squad was organised to come along and finish off.



With the wall completed it didn't take long for some dodgy Druids to turn up for an opening ceremony.



## Hobbit Houses - part 2

For those of you who can remember last year's newsletter Keith Ledger and Johnny Clasper were commissioned to build some Hobbit Houses at the Sutton Bank Visitor Centre. Well that was just part one and this year they were back for part 2 (no not the Desolation of Smaug for those film buffs). Luckily this time the weather was a bit kinder and they didn't have to bail out before starting work every day. When I asked Keith how he got on building uphill and downhill curves he said he left all the 'wonky' stuff to Johnny.

Here are some pictures of the phase 2 build however if you are ever passing on the top of Sutton Bank why not pop in and have a look.







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## What have our members been up to

What I would like to do is dedicate a couple of pages to any unusual work done by our members or any interesting pictures you may have taken. Just send them in to [contactus@ydswg.co.uk](mailto:contactus@ydswg.co.uk) with a brief description and the best ones will go into the newsletter.



The structure above was built by Johnny Clasper at the entrance to a housing estate in Leicester. It combines natural stone with the bricks used in the houses.



Keith Ledgers' Harris Hawk 'Bomber' poses in front of a wall built by Keith using a giant stone slab as a seat (did you lift that in on your own?)

## YDSWG Advanced Courses

The Guild are looking to run some advanced courses in 2017. These will be aimed at people who have been walling for a couple of years and are looking to further improve their skill and the quality of their work. To qualify you must have been a Guild member for over 12 months and be a competent waller. We held a pilot 1-day course earlier this year where 3 wallers under the instruction of Master Waller Steve Bostock built an arch at our Fountains Abbey training site. We may also run courses on building such features as wall ends, step styles and many others. The remaining details are being finalised so if you are interested keep an eye on the website for the dates and course content.



## YDSWG Financial Position

I am pleased to confirm that the Guild is in a healthy financial position. A summary of the 2015/16 accounts to 30th September is listed below. If you would like to see the full accounts please request them from the Secretary.

Expenditure (£11759.36)

Income £12396.65

Surplus £637.29

Guild Funds £6449.29





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