



# Yorkshire Dry Stone Walling Guild



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Cover photography credits

Front cover: Cropper Fold Farm

Above: Advanced Course at Fountains Abbey

Back cover: The completed wall at Long Liberty Farm

## Welcome

Dear Member,

We are drawing to the close of another season of activity with The Guild. which means it's time for me to 'don' the thinking cap and try to remember what's happened through the year. You could help me out here! 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

I notice that I started last year's edition saying that I should take notes throughout the year so it's not such a test of memory when I come to write the review. The good news is I remembered to do just that... for April. After then I seem to have not been quite as diligent. I'll see if I can make it to May next year!! Anyway, here goes my annual memory test.

Firstly, the formal business. The Guild AGM takes place on Saturday November 11th at 3pm at Thirsk Town Hall. There is an agenda and voting form enclosed with this booklet. As a member, you are more than welcome to come along. We are always open to new ideas and suggestions on how the Guild can further improve how it functions. Refreshments will be provided after the event (*please email the Secretary if you are attending 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).

It is also a great opportunity 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. I hope to see some of you there!

2017 has been another successful year for the Guild. Our membership stands at over 200 and our finances are stable and in a good position. We have also had a record number of people attending our courses.

The Guild courses have been even more successful than last year with nearly 100 people attending between April and September. For another year we have managed to keep the cost at £99 for the weekend which is great



value for 2 days intensive tuition. Once again people have come from all parts of the country to take part. We have been lucky to hold the courses at venues where the students have rebuilt walls that are functional and used as part of the land for stock control. I have just instructed on a couple of courses and was really



pleased at the way everyone picked up the basics and ended up building great sections of wall. The feedback from students has been very positive and all our instructors have really enjoyed teaching all those attending. I am

pleased to advise that all the walls built by the students are still standing and am sure they will stand for many years to come.

All those attending courses automatically become members of the Guild until April next year and can attend all Guild events free of charge. You are welcome to come along to any remaining practice meets. All these events are attended by experienced wallers who are on hand to offer support and help to any members looking to brush up their skills. I also realised on the Yate House course that the boots I had worn all summer were no longer waterproof after a walk through grass with a heavy dew. Cue new boots!!

Once again, the Guild has been active at shows and events throughout the year. Shows give us a great platform to show and demonstrate the craft and also promote the great



courses we run. The first show of the year was Springtime Live at the Harrogate Showground. As we are quite early in the year we were in the new hall at the showground (which is great when the weather is not very pleasant) Once again the stand was very popular with young children keen to get their hands on small stone usually seeing how high they can pile them before they fall over. Whatever they end up doing 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 usual batch of stone was delivered for the team on the day to do their best with. They like a challenge and are used to working with the stone now. As usual there was a much interest from the show visitors who enjoyed watching the team work.

Duncombe Park was followed by The Great Yorkshire Show where we had a last minute change of plans. The revised project was to build a curved seat overlooking Crimple Valley. The team used stone that had been reclaimed from old walls and the new hall build. The Tuesday turned out to be a bit miserable



however the team soldiered on and made good progress. The next two days were far better and more enjoyable to work in. As usual there was a lot of interest from the public and the occasional 'expert' passing comment. Thanks to Graham Brown for organising and

re-organising the build. Once again, the YAS were very pleased with the finished result and now there is another permanent place for weary show goers to rest their legs. We attended Ripley Show again in August and the events will finish in October with our annual attendance at the Countryside Live event.

I suppose the practice meets really started last November with our final meet of the year at Cropper Fold Farm. The previous year saw temperatures around 17 degrees however looking back at the pictures



I don't see too many of the squad in tee shirts, more like the full winter gear. Despite the elements a good section was repaired. We then moved to our traditional early visit to Carperby in the spring which saw a good turnout on a decent day. Back to



Bingley at the end of April on another good spring day. It was nice to see Meggan joining in again! Also, congratulations to James Garwell who passed his basic exam on the day. The first practice meet at

Low Belford Farm saw a small group extend the wall that had been started on a course the previous year. The wall flew up after lunch as the clouds gathered and the team just managed to finish before the rain started (I think Dick & Graham were worried about getting their hair wet).

Long Liberty Farm near Harrogate followed where we finally reached the end of the wall we have been repairing for a number of years. It was quite satisfying to see it all finished!! Plenty more to go at so it will be nice to start a new section next year. Another new venue was at Thornton Le Dale on the North Yorkshire Moors where a small team repaired a section following a course last year.

Next, we were over to yet another new venue Thoralby near Leyburn where we were well looked after by long serving member and master waller Clifford Bailey. I hear the



was a BBQ laid on at the end of the build, very nice. (Note to self here, I shall have to schedule that one not to clash with my holiday next year). We then moved onto West Bolton Farm for our sponsored weekend and were well looked after by our hosts. As I am writing this we still have a meeting at The Bivouac and the final event at Cropper Fold Farm to come. For all new members, a reminder that these events are free as part of your Guild membership and are a great place to come along and improve your skills.

Many thanks to all those who have looked after us at events providing bacon butties, cakes and cups of tea. They are lovely and really appreciated. Finally, thanks to all members who have attended meets and helped out at shows this year.

*John Pridmore*

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## Salem Creek Bridge Project

Just a short note from across the pond as to what I have been up to this year in the dry stone walling realm, here in Canada.

This project was a one of the most interesting dry stone wall activities that were available this year. Under the watchful and ever critical eye of John Shaw Rimmington a merry band of 8/9 wallers gathered in the middle of, a very wet, June for this two week adventure.







The project was to guild a dry stone bridge across Salem Creek with an over water span of about 8 feet and an overall length of about 30 feet for the bridge.

Salem creek is located near Brighton, Ontario and is a fast-flowing creek that varies in depth from one foot to four feet, as we discovered to our detriment, when the torrential rain hit. The bridge is located on private

property and replaces an old wooden planked bridge.

The group split up into teams and worked on different aspects of the project such as building the foundation in the creek, shaping the 'voussoirs', setting the wooden form or false work in place and preparing the massive Springer stones that determine the arc of the bridge from the foundation.

Everyone got the opportunity to work on all the facets of the project as the days progressed. A great learning and skill development opportunity.



The weather did not cooperate and we were hit with a number of downpours which afforded me the chance to teach everyone what 'silin down' meant. Also, to remind me of the benefits of my



old Barbour that spends its life in the car boot.

Progress was steady and towards the end of the first week we had begun to place voussoirs on either side of the form.

Friday, the rain was indeed silin down to the point that we could not work, so we took a road trip and visited some other dry stone bridges that John had built

in the area close by. However, upon returning to the worksite we found that one corner of the foundation had washed out due to the now raging creek. A bit of a low for the end of the first week. John and some folks worked over the weekend to repair and reinforce the foundation and Monday morning we were back at it replacing the voussoirs that had to be taken off for the repair. It also afforded the opportunity to tweak the design by changing the orientation of one of the massive Springer stones.

The pace of the work picked up as we were running about a half day behind schedule.

The big moment arrived around 15:30 on the Wednesday as it was time to drop out the form from under the bridge stonework. I could say it was a little tense but in all honesty, having seen it come together I was convinced we had a success on our hands and we did.

With the form floated out and the opportunity to see the makings of a real bridge the work rate and energy increased. The focus was then on the parapet walls of the bridge and the sourcing and shaping of the copes.



John then announced that as well as adding gravel to the path over the bridge we could cobble it. So then began the job of making the few hundred cobbles to set into the gravel to make a nice walkway over the bridge. A great way to use up the remaining stone.

So, what did I get out of this activity; some improved skills I hope, an understanding of dry stone bridge construction, a sharp reminder of what bloody hard work feels like, many good laughs with the crew and a huge amount of job satisfaction.

Not to forget Cliff, Woody, Keith, Steve and Dennis who got me hooked on dry stone walling for their patience and encouragement.

Granite boulder wall repair next month.

Cheers,

*John AKA 'That Yorkshire bloke from Canada'*



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## Yorkshire Dales Walling Group

Long serving Guild member Dick Laidler puts his walling skills to use in helping to keep the walls in the Yorkshire Dales in a good state of repair (well some of them). Over the years Dick has built a team of seven volunteers, including two ladies who turn out in all weathers to repair and maintain walls in the National Park area. The group normally meet up on a fortnightly basis to work on mini projects assigned by the park rangers. Occasionally they also turn out for 'emergency' repairs where a section of wall might need immediate attention.

To follow are a selection of pictures of some of the work done by Dick and his team.

The two below are work done along a Bridleway near Grinton in Swaledale. This has now been named the Swale Trail. On this trail they have carried out many repairs to fallen walls



In March this year they got an invite to visit Tom Lord who had a small farm at Stainforth in the southern dales. Tom had a lot of very ancient walls on his farm. At the end of a very good day they saw a limestone wall which had collapsed. Tom explained that it had been blown down by Storm Doris and over a pint in a local pub they decided to return and rebuild the wall as a thank you for a good day.

The following pictures were from a job near the village of

Caldbergh in Coverdale. The local ranger had to install a new field gate but the wall to one side had totally collapsed so they were given the task of rebuilding it together with an adjacent squeeze stile. The cheek end was some 10ft high.



## [YDSWG Advanced Courses](#)

The Guild have held several advanced courses throughout the

year. These have been for 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. This year we have built another arch, a corner, a curved wall and a wall end. Those attending have really enjoyed the day and have left with the knowledge of how to build the feature and also improve the quality of their walling. If anyone is interested please check out the website or contact the Course Co-ordinator Graham Brown.



## YDSWG Financial Position

I am pleased to confirm that the Guild is in a healthy financial position. A summary of the 2016/17 accounts to 30th September is listed below. If you would like to see the full set please request them from the Secretary

### Summary

|                 |            |
|-----------------|------------|
| Opening balance | £6,449.19  |
| Money in        | £13,875.80 |
| Money out       | £12,512.34 |
| Surplus         | £1,363.46  |
| Total           | £7,812.65  |
| Closing balance | £7,812.65  |



## Contact details

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