

THE YORKSHIRE DRY STONE WALLING GUILD®

YDSWG Newsletter – February 2007

Welcome to 2007 with the YDSWG!

A particular welcome to all those of you who joined during the past year; many of you as a result of successfully completing one of our training courses. We do hope that you will be inspired to renew your membership and take part in some of this year's activities.

Please find enclosed with this Newsletter our **Programme for 2007** and a reminder that your Annual Subscription is due.

We had a good AGM in November and were delighted that our President Bill Cowling was able to be present. The following Committee was elected:-

Chair	Michael Booth
Company Secretary	Stuart Matthews
Treasurer and Guild Secretary	Brian Wood
Committee	Clifford Bailey
	Dave Purvis
	Dennis Garbutt
	John Pridmore
	Michael Rocher

After the formal and business part of the evening we had a good discussion on the format of both our Walling Competition and the next AGM, and I will say something more about both of these later on in this Newsletter.

I am sure that you will find our calendar of events and activities interesting and worth supporting. Your Committee have tried to create a balance of Show attendance and Practice Meets, both geographically and spread throughout the year.

Please remember that our Walling Meets present an excellent opportunity to practice walling in a relaxed atmosphere and to compare and hone your techniques and speed with members who will be either more or less skilled than you. Working with other wallers, and on stone that is perhaps different to what you are used to, is a great way to improve your skills.

If you are interested in supporting the Guild and promoting the craft of dry stone walling at any of the Shows then can I please ask you to wear a Guild polo shirt or sweatshirt [these can be obtained from Foxstitch in Thirsk –01845 526297] as doing this does make our presence appear more professional and coordinated.



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The walling year commences with the Instructors Day at Masham on Saturday march 31st. The objective of this is three fold:

1. To enable the Instructors who ran courses last year to debrief each other as to how things went; what was good and what was bad; and to agree what is best practice.
2. To enable any Guild Member who might wish to become an Instructor to come along and find out what is involved and establish whether they are equipped to instruct [note, Instructors receive £100 per day when delivering a Guild course]. If you are interested in becoming an Instructor can you, in the first instance, contact Woody our efficient Secretary.
3. Tidy up the wall that we have built over the years on the Masham Showground site. Some sections have become a little ragged and others were built during Training courses and did not get finished. We feel that it is important that any work that we do as the Guild is first class and a credit to quality craftsmen and women.

I would like to think that we could accomplish all the paperwork before lunch, and deal with the wall repairs afterwards.

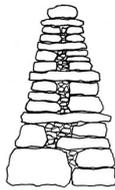
You will note that we have scheduled in certain dates for Training Courses. Several of these are being run for Askham Bryan College at the new Rural Business Park off York Road in Thirsk. Other Courses for our own enquiries are at Fountains Abbey and Thirsk. Additional ones can hopefully be arranged if there is sufficient demand and we have Instructors available.

The Guild is attempting to organise First Aid training for those Instructors not already qualified. If we can get this done at a reasonable cost the Guild will pick up the tab.

Your Committee is trying two new initiatives this year.

Firstly as the Walling Competition has been relatively poorly supported over the past few years [no disrespect to the winners!] we have decided to make it an **Open** Competition. This will involve publicising the event for anyone to take part. This should challenge Guild members to see how you stack up against the outside world!

Secondly we are going to hold the AGM on a Saturday afternoon and make it more of an interesting event that might appeal to our partners and finishing with a fish and chip supper at say 4.30pm. Arrangements are still being made so please watch this space!



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Wishing you all a happy, healthy and successful year.

And do please support us and enjoy yourselves again this year.

Michael Booth
February 2007