



THE YORKSHIRE DRY STONE WALLING GUILD®

YDSWG Newsletter – Autumn 2010

This Newsletter is being sent out with the Notice of our AGM on Saturday November 13th 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. Refreshments will be provided after the event 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.

Another summer seems to have flown by (I must be getting old) and the nights are quickly drawing in. Those regular wallers will be breaking out the winter clothes again, although some might argue they were needed during parts of the summer.

It has been another busy year in the Guild and here is a summary of the events that have taken place

First though, 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. We hope we have stimulated enough of an interest in this magnificent craft to persuade you to join us for another year when the renewal forms come round in the spring next year.

Membership currently stands at 185 which is only 2 less than at the same time last year and has been subject to the usual turnover generated through membership via our training courses. At £7.50 per year for adult and £2.50 for junior it still offers great value compared with many other clubs and societies!!

Training courses have again been a success with a total of 59 students being given an insight into the skill of walling. Despite the current economic climate this is a record which shows not only what great value these courses provide but also what a great job all our instructors do. They are very enjoyable weekends for both students and instructors and we look forward to continuing them next year.

This year we were lucky enough to be able to hold 3 courses at Fountains Abbey building a permanent enclosure round a new plant sales area outside the Visitor Centre shop. The courses were a great success so thanks to all involved, in particular to Clifford Bailey who acted as the continuity instructor over the 3 weekends.

There are photos and a short YouTube video of the work on the website ydswg.co.uk so why not take a look. Believe it or not a total of 75 tonnes of stone was delivered to enable this wall to be built. We are always looking to introduce new venues to hold our training courses and this year we have held one at Beckwithshaw CC. Next year we hope to be able to return to Masham to continue building the wall constructed during the Steam Rallies. If you know of a site that might be suitable (a covered building and toilets are two of the



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main criteria) please let either me or another member of the committee know about it.

The Guild again demonstrated at several shows throughout the year. Unfortunately 2010 was the last Steam Rally on the current site at Masham; however as mentioned above we hope to continue this build through our training courses. The Great Yorkshire Show provided a new challenge to build a 'Love Seat' on the president's lawn. Our thanks go to Bill Cowling and the Yorkshire Agricultural Society for making it possible. The result can be seen on the web site.

The Guild also attended shows at Scorton and Duncombe Park as well as supporting the educational events at the Great Yorkshire Showground.

Unfortunately the annual walling competition had to be cancelled this year due to lack of support. Apologies to those of who had entered and were not able to perform. It may have been an accident in timing, but if anyone has any suggestions that could improve the attendance please contact us or bring them along to the AGM for discussion.

The Guild held several practice meets during the summer including two new venues at Sykeside Cowling and off Pennypot Lane opposite the wind farm serving Harrogate.

These were arranged further to the west of the county to accommodate the spread of our membership. The meet at Cowling was well attended and once we had scaled the hill to reach the site (oxygen may be required by our previous chairman next year) it proved to be an enjoyable build, made even better by the provision of bacon butties by the owner Chris Sheryn.

The build at Pennypot was also well attended and provided a challenging 'random build' with the stone available. This was a great learning opportunity for those who have never used that type of stone before and a good test for the more experienced wallers. Thanks to Mr & Mrs Sheryn and the Ryder family for providing the venues and we hope to return again in 2011.

The sponsored build was as usual held at West Bolton Farm, Carperby and again many thanks to all those attending and to our hosts Mr & Mrs Langhorn for their generous support and hospitality.

All the practice meets provide a great opportunity to work with different stone and pick up tips from the more experienced wallers on the day. We can also use the meets to test individuals who wish to take Guild examinations or if required practice ready to take an examination. Those interested in taking either their basic, advanced or master tests please contact a member of the committee to make the necessary arrangements.

Finally many thanks must go to all those of who have helped out and given freely of their time to Guild events throughout the year. We could not function as an organisation without this generous help to promote and support the craft at the various shows and events.



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My thanks as usual go to the Committee for wise guidance, and to Woody for the tremendous effort made in the role of secretary and treasurer.

The good news (from Woody's point of view at least!) is that we have a volunteer to take some of the workload away from him next year. This does mean that my phone will ring more and the postman will need to go into training, as the help will be coming from my better half Sarah.

Woody will still retain some of the current role; in particular the training and financial elements and this separation of training function from Guild business will be achieved using different e-mail addresses on the website later this year.

Thank you to all our members for your continued support, without which the organisation wouldn't exist and I wish you all well over the winter months and look forward to meeting up with some of you, either at the AGM or at one of the events during 2011

John Pridmore
October 2010