

DSWA Dorset News

September 2021



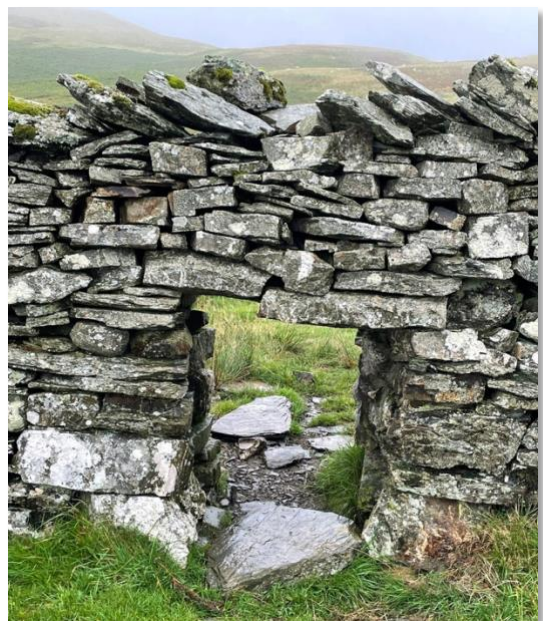
‘Warm September brings the fruit, Sportsmen then begin to shoot.’ Not sure about the shooting as it rather goes against the wallers’ creed but there’s certainly plenty of free food in the hedges. Yesterday, I happened to be walling next to a large blackberry bush on South Purbeck. The occasional ‘fruit stop’ from walling made the wet and blustery day a lot more enjoyable. I think we’ve now seen an end to the particularly warm and sunny month of September. This month the branch has achieved a great deal so you’ll be able to enjoy another full newsletter. Unfortunately, we’re still only seeing a regular group of about six wallers out on branch weekends. Now that summer holidays are over perhaps

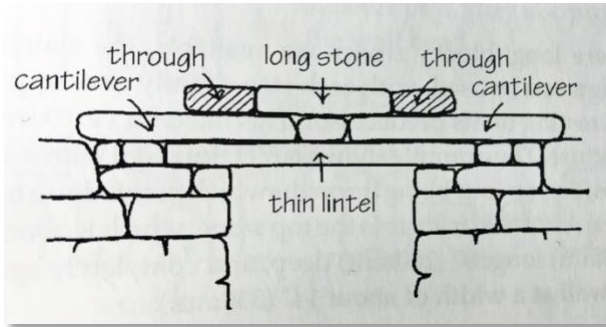
some of you might be inspired by the autumn cool to join us at the lovely locations we’ve lined up for the rest of the year.

Sheep creep on Sale Fell, Cumbria

My good friends, Mike and Jill, sent me this photograph of a sheep creep (aka a lunky) seen on Sale Fell, at the northern end of Bassenthwaite Lake, about eight miles from Keswick.

You’ll see that the lintel has snapped in half. A common reason why lintels fail is that they aren’t long enough to bind well into the wall on either side and may be too thin to bear the weight of the wall above. An ideal lintel should be at least 100 mm (4 inches) thick.





There are various ways of strengthening a lintel. This method uses cantilever lintels whereby further long stones are used to bridge from the main body of the wall over the lintel. The cantilever lintels should be anchored into the wall by at least half their length. If possible, they should meet in the middle, but if not, use a suitable stone to fill the gap. Another long stone can then be placed on top to further dissipate the forces. You will need

to place through stones at the first opportunity to counteract the fact that traced stones are used on top of each other.

Level 1 success for David Roddie

Congratulations to David for passing his initial walling qualification on 25 September. As readers will be aware we were unable to run a test day at Tyneham because we didn't have enough candidates. David took his exam in the Cotswolds under the umbrella of the SWEDSWA branch.

This is a photograph of David's exam wall. Very well done.



Tyneham, 4 September



We returned to Tyneham to complete the curved farmyard wall. The farmyard had been given some TLC since our last visit as the rangers had cut the grass and generally tidied the site – just as well because the visitor numbers are still very high.

We listen to Peter as he gives us advice on placing the lines correctly to achieve an even height on our sloping ground.

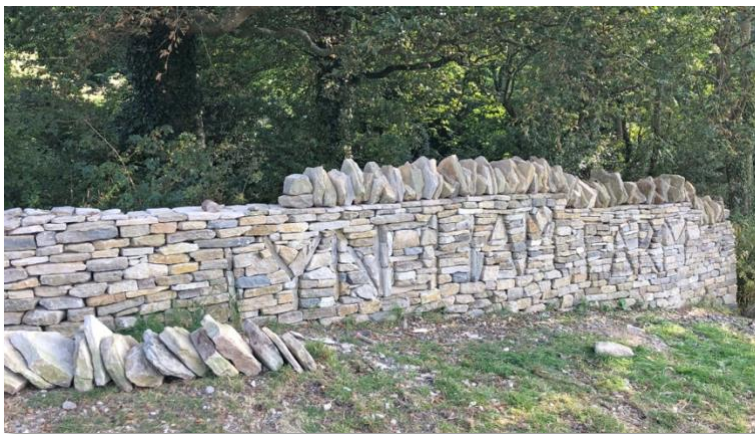


We have a new stone delivery, so the first task is to empty the bags and barrow the contents to the wall. Phyllis is good at this!



A few hours work and the wall is looking good.

Sally and Phyllis begin coping from the cheek end.



By the end of the day the wall has been partially coped but the entire wall is now up to height. Unfortunately, no one was available to go to Tyneham the following day, so we'll finish coping on our next visit. The rangers tell us that our wall receives many admiring comments.

Renscombe, 11 September

Another hot sunny day working on this car park wall, which has become very overgrown with vegetation since our last visit. I clear the worst of it when I arrive. but Phyllis, David and Mary remove the rest as they wall.

As usual, the car park is packed and then a large van turns up with 'Jimmy's Iced Coffee' emblazoned on the side. Apparently, it isn't popular with car drivers because of its size and the fact that the driver allegedly makes a dangerous manoeuvre. One person is heard to say, 'I won't be drinking Jimmy's iced coffee any time soon.' We usually ignore car park altercations and carry on walling.



Late in the afternoon, when 'Jimmy's' driver returns from his walk, he offers us free cans of iced coffee which comes in two flavours, latte and mocha. Of course, we jump at the offer as by that time we are really sweltering in the heat. So, here's a photo of Jimmy's Iced Coffee among the stones.

I can recommend the mocha – it is delicious. See what you're missing when you don't come walling.

Renscombe, 18-19 September

The following weekend Sally begins to tie in the new wall with the existing one ...





... and with Tim's input the wall begins to rise.



And this is how it looked by the end of the weekend. Almost up to height and the cheek end completed. We should finish this section of wall at our next visit which leaves another fallen section to restore. This is just visible at the upper left corner of the photograph. The good thing about working at this site out of season is the presence of fewer cars. Unless the weekend is fine which is clearly better for us. Well, it is a car park after all ...

Course for novice wallers at Corton Down, 25-26 September

This was our final course for the year and we had twelve very keen participants.

The instructors were Jed, here seen casting a magic spell over the site ...



... and Dave, dressed as My Favourite Martian. As ever, Phyllis and I were their faithful assistants, while Wendy started the stone rolling with her welcoming words.

And so, in two groups on separate sections of wall, the stripping out begins. Don't let short-sleeved tee shirts fool you – Saturday wasn't warm. It was misty, windy, damp and drizzly, contrary to the weather forecast. But our intrepid novice wallers set to with a will, and we soon established a friendly rivalry between the two groups.



Mattocks, bars, buckets and spades make quick work of the strenuous task of tidying up the trench. But wouldn't it be nice if the sun came out?

Meanwhile, Phyllis and I begin to barrow 'new' stone from a pile a few metres from our site. We spend a lot of time doing this.

On Jed's team, the first foundation stones are laid by the only lady waller on the course – a countryside ranger from West Sussex.



With the foundations laid, the first course goes up.

Dave's team get ahead and the race between the two groups is on.



Stone changes hand at speed but one issue that is raised is the need for knee pads. This is a particularly stony site. One of the participants suggests that knee pads or a kneeling pad should be included in the list of suitable 'clothing' sent to potential participants.



But what's going on here? Jed calls time out for his team, and they enjoy a 10-minute Tai chi session. All agree that the stretching and relaxation is enjoyable and helpful. Maybe this is something that we should incorporate into all our courses.



After their Tai chi break, Jed's team wall with renewed vigour (left) and Dave's group come up to height.





Nevertheless, both teams are equally matched and finish coping at the same time.



Team Dave with their completed wall. A very happy group.



Team Jed, delighted with their achievement. Very well done to all participants. We got positive feedback too!

Celebrating freedom concert at Swanage Bandstand, 18 September



This concert in the recently refurbished bandstand was a wonderful event on one of the warmest afternoons in the month. The concert was in support of the Trevor Chadwick Memorial Trust.

Trevor Chadwick (1907-1979) was a Swanage school teacher who assisted in the rescue of 669 children from Prague in 1939, both before and after the Czech capital was occupied by German forces on 15th March that year. You can read more about Chadwick's life and work at:

<https://trevorchadwick.uk>



A group of us attended the concert to hear our very own Peter Curtis play in both the Swanage Town Band and the excellent Salamanda Swing Band. Peter plays alto saxophone – he's in the middle of this photo. It was a truly memorable afternoon. You can learn more about the Salamanda Swing Band at: <https://www.salamandaswingband.co.uk>

Cheek ends in Cumbria



This one (left) is in Wasdale in the western part of the Lake District National Park. The River Irt flows through the valley and a large part of the valley floor is occupied by Wastwater, the deepest lake in England.



The cheek end at right can be seen at Rannerdale Knotts, a fell rising from the Buttermere Valley.

These photos are courtesy of my loyal friends, Jill and Mike, whose regular walks take in many lovely dry stone features.

Readers of this newsletter tell me they appreciate seeing such images from Britain and around the world so please keep a lookout for dry stone walls and other structures. I'll always feature them in the newsletter.



National Trust slopy wall

For the past few weeks I have been building a slopy wall on South Purbeck alongside two National Trust volunteers to whom I have taught the technique. The Dorset DSWA branch already has a half-completed slopy wall a couple of fields along from this one but building has been held up by a shortage of appropriate stone. We are waiting for the National

Trust walling ranger to arrange this but he is currently on holiday in Spain where he has a house which he has been unable to visit for two years.

However, I was given permission to take down this crumbling slopy wall and rebuild it. The photo above shows the side built by two people who had never done this type of walling before, and that on the right is the side I rebuilt. Not that I've done much slopy walling either. I think I've been out on three

previous occasion. Once you get going, it takes no longer to build on a diagonal than it does to build straight courses but your brain has to take a sideways lurch.



DSWA calendars 2022



I have a number of calendars to sell for £5.00 which is a special price to members. If you buy them from the DSWA they cost £7.00. However, they are only available to Dorset members who I see out and about. I don't post them.

Please let me know if you would like me to reserve you a calendar. I have already sold 12 and will request more from head office if I know that I can sell them.

They are really very nice this year. August's photograph of a slopy wall at Durlston Country Park was taken by Sally.

Well, fellow wallers, I hope you enjoy reading September's newsletter.

I look forward to seeing you on a wall very soon.

Carole Reeves