

DSWA Dorset News

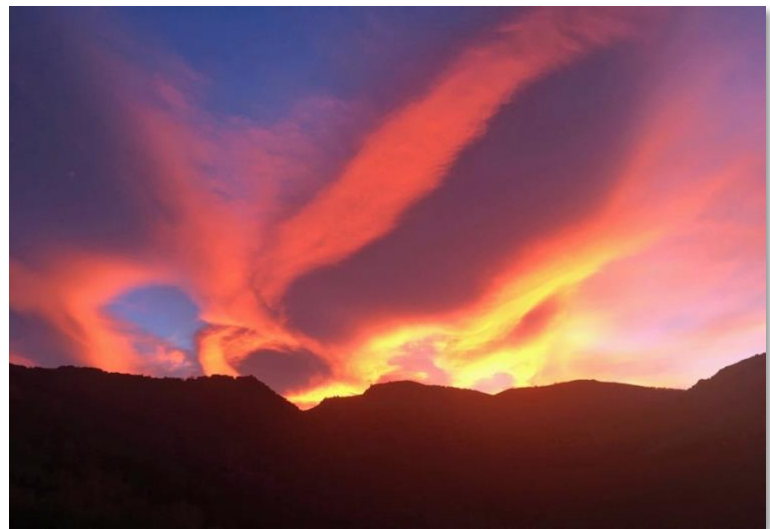
December 2021



‘Chill December brings the sleet, blazing fire and Christmas treat.’ I’m sitting down to begin this newsletter during the week leading up to Christmas. For the past couple of years I have missed my walking trips in the mountains of southern Spain although my friends who live there keep me up to date with images throughout the seasons. I love dramatic skies and two pictures taken this winter stand out for me. The photo on the left was taken as dawn rose over one of the small Alpujarran

villages. This cloud formation looks to me like an amazing three-dimensional butterfly. You could be forgiven if you imagined the photo on the right was of a blazing forest fire, but it’s a sunset over the mountains. I think of it as a Spanish aurora. Photos: Anne Hunt.

In this month’s newsletter, as well as the usual news of branch walling activities, we have a prize quiz which might keep you busy for an hour or so over your blazing fire and Christmas treat!



Came Down, 4-5 December



We return to Came Down on a bitterly cold and blustery day. This is a very exposed site high on the ridgeway overlooking the sea, but at least the sun is shining. Mary, Phyllis and Adrian set out to finish the section of wall that they began at the beginning of November...

... while Tim and I complete and cope the section next to the cheek end. The wall isn't very high and some of the copes, which are huge, seem somewhat out of keeping with the building stones. This isn't the most attractive wall that we've rebuilt but at least it's now standing upright rather than being slumped across the landscape.



And there's no shortage of hearting. Many of the old stones crumble at they are taken off the wall.

We like to see Tush (right). He doesn't join us very often as he lives in Hay on Wye. Always a fashion icon, we love his matching hat and gloves, and two-tone denim jeans. Not quite as cool as ripped jeans but undoubtedly a lot warmer.





By the end of the weekend, a further section of wall has been taken down and foundations laid. And so, we say farewell to Came Down for this year but no doubt it will be even chillier when we return in January. Something to look forward to!

If you haven't been out with us for a while and need a bit of practice, Came Down is the ideal starter wall – no more than eight courses, a single lift and on site parking. You'll have no trouble getting a mortgage on this wall!

Winter's Lane, 10 December

A sunny Friday morning at this retaining wall, minus anyone from the NHS Mental Health team who have only been out three times since we prepared this site in October. Rather disappointing. Sally, Tim and I have built most of the wall and it is looking very nice. When I arrived early this morning, a small family group of Sika deer were running across the field, trailing their long shadows. The field did look magical in the early winter sunlight. Unfortunately, the effect was somewhat spoiled by the sound of Portesham recycling centre echoing across the landscape.



Until Covid struck I used to be involved in the annual Purbeck deer census carried out by the National Trust in late October. My patrol area is Langton West Wood, Wilkswood and the Wilderness. We start at 7 am when the woodland is dark and usually misty. Even if you can't always spot a deer (they are always watching you though), you can identify a Sika stag by its piercing

whistle (listen here: <https://newforestguide.uk/biodiversity/new-forest-deer/sika-deer/>), and a hind by its high-pitched scream. We usually ‘hunt’ for deer in pairs but if you are on your own, the sounds can be eerily spooky.

But back to Winter’s Lane! Sally and Tim attend to the back of the wall as well as the front. Fortunately, there is an abundance of large filler stone and a sack full of earth.

The photograph below shows the wall at the end of the day. We won’t be walling here until after the New Year. It might be difficult to hold back completing this section of wall if the NHS group stays away but there is always another section to prepare.





Peter positions the pins; I attach the lines ...



Meanwhile, Mary and Phyllis find another section of wall that requires a little TLC. Yes, it really is St Nicholas perched on top of Phyllis's head.



Renscombe, 18-19 December

A cold, misty weekend and we start to rebuild the collapsed section of wall that we began clearing when we were last here a month ago. We think Santa Sally might be searching for her helper elves under these weird-shaped stones.



... and we start laying the foundations.



As the day wears on the car park begins to fill as a few hardy families venture out for a coastal walk, and a couple of dogs sniff out our lunch spot as we settle down in a sheltered spot.

By the end of the weekend, Mary and Phyllis have completed their wall ...



... and this is how far we got on the roadside rebuild. Again, it's farewell to Renscombe this year.

Poetry Corner

Once upon a time, in the BC era, there were pantos at Christmas in towns and villages across the land. But will there be dames, Dandinis, ugly sisters, glass slippers and bramble-covered castles this year? We sent our own poetess, Mary Civil, to find out and she returned with this sad tale.

Snow White

Tis the season of the pantomime. Oh no it's not, you cry!
It won't be happening this year and here's the reason why.
You can't perform Snow White because it breaks the rule of six.
For seven dwarves and Snow White are too many in the mix.

So which ones could they jettison? Sneezy drives them all insane
But he's got a new inhaler and hopes he'll never sneeze again.
Perhaps it could be Sleepy. He wouldn't notice or be missed
If they left him home a-snoozing whilst the Prince and Snow White kissed.

The Wicked Queen is jealous and hideous to boot
How could she tempt poor Snow White with her nasty poisoned fruit?
Or what about old Grumpy? He's really not much fun.
If he can't just grin and bear it, perhaps he should be the one.

And Bashful might prefer it. He's really rather shy.
And Happy will be happy whoever he is by.
That just leaves Doc and Dopey. Whatever can we say.
Doc seems to be essential, Dopey just gets in the way.



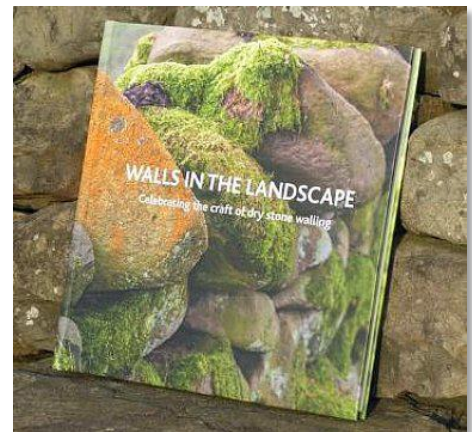
Doc is really busy holding up the NHS
And Dopey just can't help it, it's the way he is I guess.
The eponymous Miss White would find it very hard to choose.
Whichever way you look at it there's someone who will lose.

So that's the point I'm making, they are a band of eight
You can't split them up or leave two out, that shouldn't be their fate.
So no pantomime at Christmas, we'll stay indoors at home - (oh no we won't!)
And read Dickens by the fireside, dream of less hard times to come.

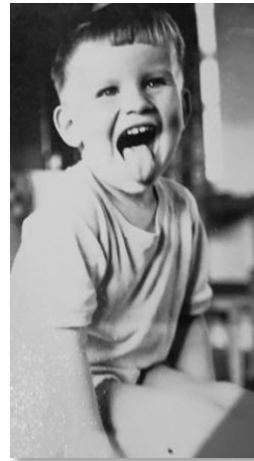


Christmas Quiz

This year I thought you'd enjoy the challenge of a picture quiz. So, I asked a few branch members to send me a childhood photo and I'm challenging you to match the kids to the adults. There will be a prize – a copy of *Walls in the Landscape*. This is a beautiful book celebrating dry stone structures throughout Britain. The competition will close on New Year's Eve. The names of all who email me the correct matches will be put into a draw and someone not connected with DSWA will make the selection. I will allow one incorrect answer because the competition will also be open to those who submitted a photo – and clearly, they will recognise themselves!



A – left
B – centre
C – right



D – left
E – centre
F – right



G – left
H – centre
I – right

And here are the same kids as adults ...



Left to right: Phyllis, Peter, Sally and Tim



Mary (left) : Geoff (centre) : Carole (right)



Wendy (left) : Merrie (right)

Christmas Day quiz for adults and bright kids

1. In which part of your body would you find the cruciate ligament?
2. What is the name of the main antagonist in the Shakespeare play Othello?
3. What element is denoted by the chemical symbol Sn in the periodic table?
4. What is the name of the 1976 film about the Watergate scandal, starring Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman?
5. How many of Henry VIII's wives were called Catherine?
6. What was the most popular girls name in the UK in 2019?
7. Which comedian was the second permanent host of Never Mind the Buzzcocks after Mark Lamarr?
8. Which popular video game franchise has released games with the subtitles World At War and Black Ops?

9. In what US State is the city Nashville?
10. Which rock band was founded by Trent Reznor in 1988?
11. What is the currency of Denmark?
12. Which Tennis Grand Slam is played on a clay surface?
13. In which European country would you find the Rijksmuseum?
14. How many films have Al Pacino and Robert De Niro appeared in together?
15. What was the old name for a Snickers bar before it changed in 1990?
16. Who was the head of state in Japan during the second world war?
17. What is the smallest planet in our solar system?
18. Who wrote the novels Gone Girl and Sharp Objects?
19. Which legendary surrealist artist is famous for painting melting clocks?
20. Which football club plays its home games at Loftus Road
21. Continental United States has 4 time zones, can you name them?
22. What was the Turkish city of Istanbul called before 1930?
23. From which US city do the band The Killers originate?
24. Name the Coffee shop in US sitcom Friends
25. How many human players are there on each side in a polo match?
26. In what year did Tony Blair become British Prime Minister?
27. How many times has England won the men's football World Cup?
28. What is the capital of New Zealand?
29. Street artist Banksy is originally associated with which British city?
30. From what grain is the Japanese spirit Sake made?

Christmas Day quiz for kids and dim adults

1. What do you call a baby cow?
2. How many tentacles do TWO octopuses have?
3. What do you call a baby dog?
4. Eagles, sparrows and goldfinches belong to which animal group?
5. What do you call the sharp white horns on either side of an elephant's trunk?
6. Dolphins, Killer Whales and sea lions belong to which animal group?
 - a) Fish
 - b) Mammals
7. What is the capital of England?
8. What is the capital of Spain?
9. Name three continents?
10. What is the biggest ocean in the world called?
11. What is the name of the tallest mountain in the world?
12. How many wives did Henry VIII have?
13. Name two of his wives?
14. Who was prime minister of the UK for most of the Second World War?
15. When was the Battle of Hastings?
16. What was the name of the woman who refused to give up her bus seat because of her race?
17. How many planets are there?
18. What orbits the earth?

19. What is the sun made from?
 - a) A solid
 - b) A liquid
 - c) A gas
20. Legs and arms are also known as what?
21. What part of the plant conducts photosynthesis?
22. What animal does beef come from?
23. What animal does ham from come?
24. What are the five main ingredients of a sponge cake?
25. What do you call a person who doesn't eat meat?
26. What do you call a person who doesn't eat any substance that comes from an animal - including meat, eggs and milk.

Answers to adult quiz

1. Knee
2. Iago
3. Tin
4. All the President's Men
5. 3
6. Olivia
7. Simon Amstell
8. Call of Duty
9. Tennessee
10. Nine Inch Nails
11. Krone
12. The French Open (Roland Garros)
13. Netherlands
14. Four (The Godfather Part 2, Heat, Righteous Kill, The Irishman)
15. Marathon
16. Emperor Hirohito
17. Mercury
18. Gillian Flynn
19. Salvador Dali
20. Queen's Park Rangers
21. Pacific, Mountain, Central, Eastern
22. Constantinople
23. Las Vegas
24. Central Perk
25. Four
26. 1997
27. Once (1966)
28. Wellington
29. Bristol
30. Rice

Answers to kids' quiz

1. Calf
2. 16 tentacles
3. Puppy
4. Bird
5. Tusks
6. Mammals
7. London
8. Madrid
9. Any three from: Africa, Antarctica, Asia, Australia/Oceania, Europe, North America, and South America
10. Pacific Ocean
11. Mount Everest
12. Six
13. Any two: Catherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour, Anne of Cleves, Catherine Howard and Catherine Parr
14. Winston Churchill
15. 1066
16. Rosa Parks
17. Eight
18. The moon
19. A gas
20. Limbs
21. Leaf
22. Cow
23. Pig
24. Butter, sugar, flour, eggs, baking powder
25. Vegetarian
26. Vegan

Fellow Wallers – that's December and another year of walling tied up and it just remains for me to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and healthy New Year. It would be great to see you on a wall in 2022.

Carole Reeves