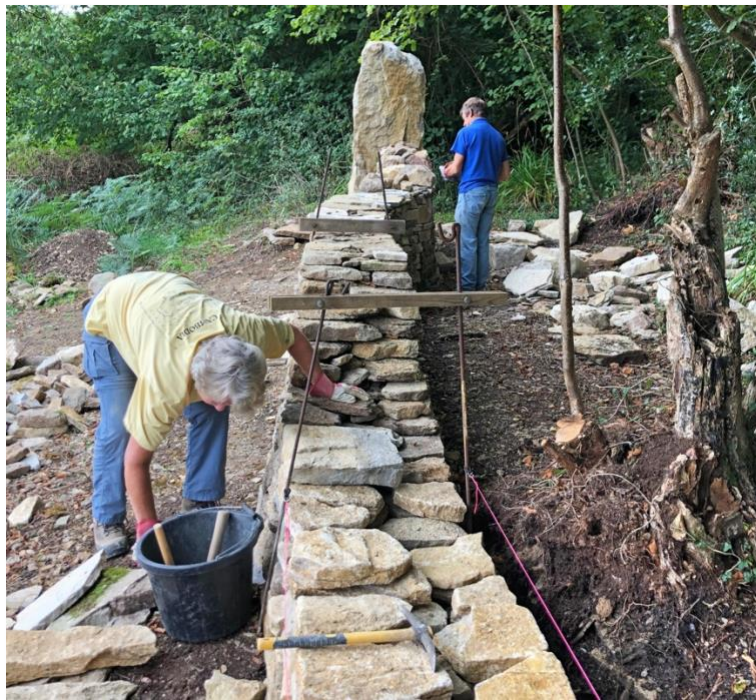


DSWA Dorset News

September 2022

Crack Lane, 3-4 September



We're at Crack Lane to begin the autumn season and the weather remains warm and sunny. Mary continues the section she was previously building while Dave opts to do the rubble topping. He has his own technique of locking in the stones which is time consuming but looks very good.



Meanwhile, Phyllis and I get down and dirty taking down the next section of wall and preparing a foundation trench. There is so much brush and bramble to clear that we really need to get this removed before we can go much further.



The foundation stones are in and we start building this new stint.



Dave completes his rubble top and by the end of the weekend we've made substantial progress on the wall. It's a nice sight for walkers entering the field to access the footpath to Talbot Woods.

Dave explores the site beyond the stile and standing stone, and reckons there's about 30 metres of wall to be restored. There's so much scrub that what remains of the wall is totally invisible.



Crack Lane clearance

The Branch is due to return to this site on 17 September. A week beforehand, the client, Trev Haysom; his son Mark, and I, clear the site of all vegetation. The men ride a digger and I use saws, loppers, rakes and elbow grease to cut down overhanging branches and pile everything into a heap away from the wall ready to burn.





We can now see the full extent of the wall between the section being built by the Branch and that being built by Peter and myself.

Crack Lane, 17 September



This will be our final visit to the site for the month so the goal is to complete what we've begun (as far as possible) rather than prepare a new stint. We've had a delivery of ten tonnes of stone – of varying quality – that is, unsorted and scooped off the quarry floor. But it is stone and we are able to get a fair amount built in a single day.



This is how we leave the wall at the end of day as the sun is going down behind the oak trees in Talbot Woods.

Farewell to Queen Elizabeth



The Branch observed a period of mourning and cancelled walling at Came Down over the weekend of 10-11 September (photo: BBC). As many of you will know, Prince Charles is patron of the Dry Stone Walling Association although whether this will remain the case now that he is King Charles III is not yet clear.

My sister laid flowers near Buckingham Palace and took this photograph of the queue (nothing as long as that to see the Queen lying in state), and the flowers.



Photos Chris.

Corton Down, 16 September



some of walls built by the participants on our course in July.

Wendy and Sally begin to tidy the site by separating building stone from hearting. I clear the ground of nettles and brambles, while Mary, Peter and Phyllis take down the walls. This is very disappointing and the first time we've had to take such drastic action. We notice that some of the power lines have been removed from the National Grid pylons prior to their being expunged from the landscape.

A few of us meet at Corton Down on this sunny Friday, marred somewhat by a cold northerly wind, to clear the site in readiness for the trainees' course on the weekend of 24-25 September. We have been told that it's not possible to have a stone delivery in time for the course, so we reluctantly decide to take down





Phyllis throws hearting onto a heap. Coping stones have been stacked behind.

By lunchtime the site looks very neat and tidy. We reckon it's the neatest course site we've ever produced!

The following day, Phyllis receives a text stating that we will be getting a stone delivery before the course after all ...



Zimbabwe sculptures



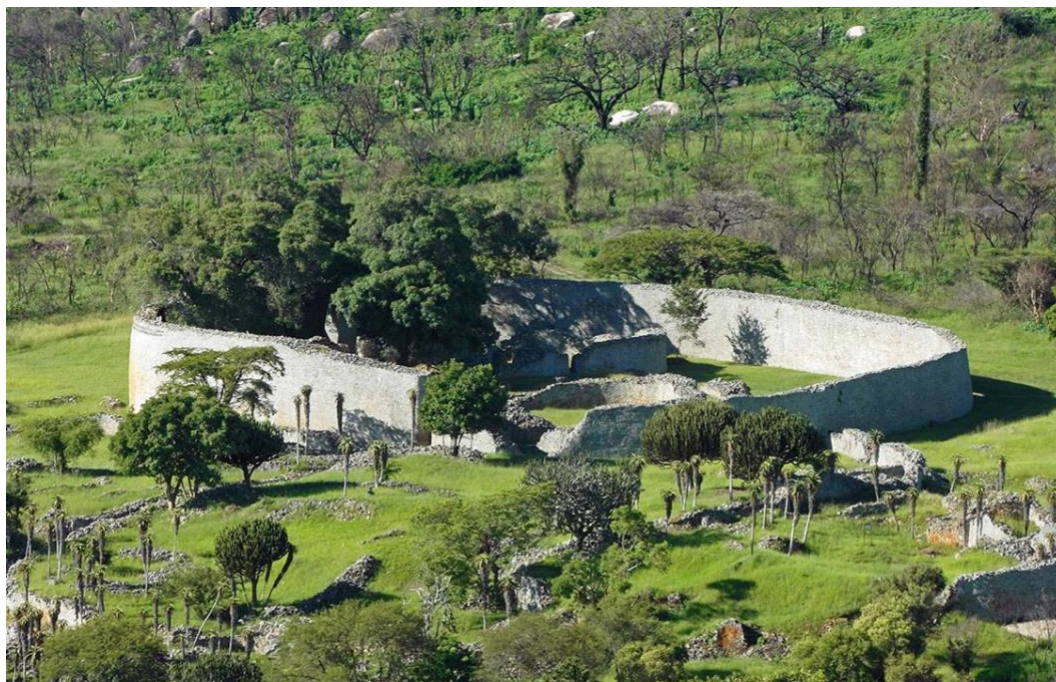
Sally recently visited the Sculpture Park in Farnham, Surrey (<https://www.thesculpturepark.com>) where, in 2018, there was an exhibition of remarkable stone sculptures from Zimbabwe.



The park still features some of these organic artworks (the one left photographed by Sally), and that got me thinking about the 'Great

Zimbabwe' dry stone medieval city (below). It was built in the south-eastern hills near the town of Masvingo between the 11th and 15th centuries. The Waller & Dyker ran a couple of features on the 'Great Zimbabwe' which are

well worth reading (Spring and Winter 2021).





Entrance Portal
(above left) and
Inner Hall
(above right).

How the city might have looked when it was inhabited although this illustration is fanciful rather than accurate because the site has an area of 2.8 square miles and possibly housed 10,000 people at its peak.

All images from the World Pilgrimage Guide: Great Zimbabwe Ruins
(https://sacredsites.com/africa/zimbabwe/great_zimbabwe_ruins.html)

Corton course 24-25 September

Moving the Tardis ...

Our first task early on Saturday morning was to shift this monster to the site where it should have been delivered, i.e. not covering the entrance to the walling site. Phyllis is accustomed to pushing Portaloos.

Seventeen trainees were divided into two teams with Peter and Geoff as instructors, ably assisted by me and Phyllis. The weather was fine – always a good omen – and we had a delivery of stone at the eleventh hour.



Team Peter (above) and Team Geoff (right) dismantle their walls in superfast time ...



... and the clothing layers come off as the activity warms up. Happy wallers at work.

Peter sets up pins and lines ...





Size isn't everything, as Geoff demonstrates when choosing a foundation stone.

... and the first foundations are laid.



Are you sure that's the right stone? Trainees soon become experts at selecting foundations.



Fantastic foundations and a lesson in hearting (left). Both teams (below) complete excellent first courses.





Early Sunday morning and I capture this sunrise shot of Geoff on the wall with three buckets. Should it be on the DSWA calendar? Answers on a postcard please.



... while Geoff helps his team achieve a commendable first lift.

Peter recaps on Health and Safety ...



It's always good to have ladies on our courses. There are far more men than women in the Branch but it's the ladies who come out regularly, and in all weathers!



Mid-afternoon and the teams are well into the second lift. The walls are coming up fast. And don't they look good?



And before you know it, the copes go on.



End of the day, great walls and satisfied wallers - well, we received positive feedback. Always a relief. For more photos of the course see our Flickr site:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/192778251@N07/albums/72177720302431983>



Meanwhile, further down the wall, Branch members spend a pleasant and productive weekend completing three sections. Tim, Wendy, Sally and Rob are joined by our newest member, Frances, who brought us the most divine ginger cake. There's nothing wallers like better than cake. Welcome and thank you Francis.



Sally, Rob, Tim and Frances keep up with the trainees and cope their wall.

Waller's - that's September's news wrapped up, and we'll also be wrapping up in extra layers as autumn bites. We've already noticed the chilly mornings and late afternoons, the strong breezes and darker evenings. But every season has its own beauty especially in the countryside where the changing quality of light and colour plays over the walls.

A reminder that our AGM is on Saturday 15 October at Portesham Village Hall, followed afterwards by lunch at the King's Arms. This will be paid for by the DSWA to thank you for all your support and work over the last year. Phyllis sent out an email on 19 September but if you have mislaid it and would like to attend, please contact her as soon as possible – warrenphyllis@rocketmail.com

As ever, I welcome news and images from all members but until next month, enjoy the autumn weather and your walling.

Carole Reeves