

DSWA Dorset News

December 2022

Wall Art at Tyneham



Seven Branch members gather at Tyneham on Sunday 27 November to clear the farmyard site of autumn debris, and to replace stones scattered around the yard into their correct piles. The last time we were at Tyneham was October 2021 so a great deal of mess has accumulated. At the end of the day we think it will be fun to create our own piece of wall art so from left to right are Adrian, representing ‘foundations’, Phyllis as ‘hearting’, Merrie as ‘random walling stone’, Wendy as ‘through stones’, me as ‘cheek ends’, and Dave as ‘coping’.



It is a very messy site when we arrive. Peter soon collects leaf mould for his allotment, Merrie chops down overhanging branches, and the rest of us begin sweeping, raking, and shifting stone.

Merrie brings mince pies to get us in the mood for winter festivities.

Of course, none of us realises how cold and icy it will become during the next couple of weeks when the steep track to Tyneham will become more of a ski slope than a vehicle track.

It's still warm enough at the end of November to enjoy this day of mopping up debris at the Branch's HQ and getting the site ready for training wallers to take the level 1 and 2 qualifications we expect to run in 2023.



Dave takes himself off to a quiet corner to repair the 'ordnance' walls vandalised over the months by visitors. Why people feel the need to remove stones from these walls and throw them over the site is rather depressing. Unfortunately, Tyneham is no longer looked after as it once was because the MOD don't seem to value it as a site of historical interest and importance.



Our final task is to sort the scattered stones into appropriately labelled piles before posing for our Wall Art photo.

Dave has restored the 'sea wall' with its stone 'waves' to its former glory.



Before it gets dark I suggest a walk to Worbarrow Bay because I want to photograph the Alan-Williams gun turret which sits on a grassy bank there. Admittedly, it looks like a rusting bouy or even a bomb – and to one child peering closely, it was definitely a Christmas decoration.

The turret was accessible through a shaft dug into the ground. According to the manufacturer (Rustproof Metal Windows Company in Saltney, Chester), four men could dig the position out and erect the turret ready for firing in two hours and remove it completely in thirty minutes. It cost about £125 in 1940, equivalent to about £5000 today. (Illustration: Neil Rogers)

The turret was large enough for two soldiers for whom there were folding seats inside.



The turret could be rotated through a full 360 degrees and the photo left, which I took inside an Allan-Williams gun turret on Studland, shows the handle used to pull the turret around on its metal wheel cut into a groove.

It was designed for a machine gun to be fired either through the front loophole which was further protected by shutters, or through the circular opening in the roof in a light anti-aircraft role. According to the manufacturer, it was suitable for Vickers, Bren, Hotchkiss or Lewis machine guns in either a ground

defence or anti-aircraft role, or a Boys anti-tank rifle or rifle grenade for ground defence. Only about 200 of these turrets were manufactured but it is estimated that only about thirty remain.

Crack Lane, 3-4 December

It's a rather chilly weekend at Crack Lane when Ian and I arrive before 9 am. The objective is to complete as much as possible of the section we began last month and to begin a new section. Ian sets up the pins for the new section which he and I have dug out ready for foundations. There's a slight curve on this stint to take us into the next one.





We work hard on foundations while Phyllis, Tim and Mary get the existing section to height, and Dave works his magic with rubble topping.

And by mid-afternoon, we have laid a first course.



Meanwhile, at the other end of the field, Peter contemplates his ‘special project’. Since the last photos in November’s newsletter, we have built a lunky and I have begun tying into the existing mossy wall which Peter has named the ‘Honey Monster’. Now, he plans to put some more stone onto his conserved tumbledown heap – sorry, special project – so that I can wall across it.



I return on 13 December. It is bitterly cold and I have to scrape ice off the stones to see what I’m doing but in fact it is looking good. We haven’t seen evidence of animals using the lunky yet, but it is certainly large enough for foxes and badgers. I did hear a Sika deer calling in the woods, but it will jump this wall if it wants to get across.



By the end of the weekend of 3-4 December we’ve done an impressive amount of wall and the Branch will be back here in the New Year.

Peter, Merrie and I will be at Crack Lane working on the ‘special project, Honey Monster’ section just before Christmas so watch this space ...

Crack Lane, 22 December



Peter, Merrie and I return to Crack Lane to work on Peter's special project and the Honey Monster. The day is pleasantly warm, and we almost get to height.

Early in the New Year we hope to rubble top the section next to the Honey Monster and complete the stint to the right of the lunky.

Trev Haysom, our client, brought edible gifts for the Branch wallers and a cheque for £400 for the Branch. Last year he and his wife, Susie, gifted £300 to the Branch.



They are clearly delighted with our work reconstructing this very old and very long wall.

Portesham community wall, 26 November



A well-deserved glass of bubbly to celebrate the completion of the Portesham wall at Goose Hill. Well done to all the regular Branch wallers who have worked at this site and to all the stalwart volunteers. Perhaps some of them will be encouraged to join the Branch.

Winters Lane, 5 December



Another (almost) completed project. Sally, Mary and Tim have rebuilt this section over the past few months and there's just a final small section to rebuild before we say farewell to this AONB site. However, I'm sure that Sally will soon

find another week-day walling project.

Ham Hill

Geoff reports that ‘We have made a start restoring the final ~50m gap in the wall. The original wall was rather narrow. So, we are digging out and resetting the foundation stones to give the rebuild a wider, stronger base. Also, some lighter work tidying up the existing wall-ends that we will be building into.

We have had an enquiry from another Somerset-based support group, Discovery, as to whether they can join us on Ham Hill. For more information about this organisation see:

<https://discovery-uk.org/>

Ham Hill Country Park is applying for significant National Lottery funding, to include a new visitor centre and further dry stone wall restoration. I was invited to talk to National Lottery representatives, to help demonstrate volunteer/community engagement. I'll keep the Branch updated of any developments.

Last Wednesday, we were delighted to find that, in our absence, the Ham Hill Rangers and Friends of Ham Hill volunteers had moved a set of cope stones to exactly where we needed them. Also, they cleared a large section of derelict wall (our project for 2023) of bramble and bracken. This has revealed considerable half-buried stone that should enable much of the restoration. These volunteers, and others, should benefit from the Rural Skills Hub Experience Days funding.’



Upcoming events



To keep up with Branch events please visit our website: <https://dorsetdswa.org.uk/events/> and get the dates in your diary.

Thanks to Geoff for keeping the website up to date and relevant.

This photo, of the Green Man of Wilkswood, features in the 2023 DSWA calendar. Calendars and other nice things are available from the DSWA website (<https://www.dswa.org.uk/sundry/>)

Branch reps meeting, 15 December

As usual, I represented Dorset at our most recent meeting in which twelve Branches took part. The topic for this meeting was 'What do you want to see at a Members' Weekend?'

The points made during the meeting were:

1. Some branch members would like the opportunity to see / experience walling in different styles or with different types of stone to that with which they are most familiar.
2. If any walling is included in the weekend, it would be better if participants could do as much or as little as they wished. Anyone could have a go.
3. It should be made clear if the weekend is to be a 'Wallers Only' event in a similar manner to the Reeth Wallathon, or whether partners will be invited. It is possible to combine both, with events organised for the non-wallers.
4. Professional Members would probably not be interested to do any walling at a meeting, or to attend a weekend where walling was a major part (expressed by professionals at the meeting).
5. There was a strong view that the weekend should mainly be a social event. A number of Branches already organize social events with dinners or barbecues.
6. Crooklands was mentioned as having examples of different wall styles from around the country, as are the Millennium Walls built at the Stone Centre near Wirksworth, Derbyshire.
7. At previous Members' Weekends, the AGM was held on day one and a Trustees' meeting on day two. There is no need for these to take place on a Members' Weekend. The formal AGM at previous Members' Weekends, while a legal necessity, was felt to be dull, boring, and too long.
8. The AGM could be held via Zoom and should be slick and as brief as possible. Assuming there are 40 + participants, there should be rules for the meeting such as using the 'Reactions' button to indicate a proposed contribution from an individual, and a 'secretary' to monitor those reactions and advise the Chair.
9. Previous Members' Weekends have been held in March when the weather is unreliable. Perhaps a summer meeting might be more amenable to achieve a good turnout.

If you have any comments on these issues, please contact me initially and I will pass them on.

Langton Herring, 26 November & 17 December



A clean and tidy Sally setting off from home to the walling site in the field directly opposite her house. We always like her to be there first as she's the only one who has the knack of opening the farm gate.

In November, we welcomed Gill, a Derbyshire waller, who joined us for the first time, but we hope she'll be back for more!

I haven't been to Langton Herring since mid-November, so we have a dearth of photos showing the progress of the wall. This photo (bottom) from Sally shows how it is being curved around the trunk of a very old tree.



Christmas walling word search

F	X	C	O	B	E	E	R	Z	K	M	W	S	V	A	E	S	L	B	A
O	S	N	M	I	A	T	Y	I	O	W	A	L	L	P	I	N	S	E	N
B	I	L	T	R	W	R	O	C	R	L	L	M	Z	I	U	B	T	M	P
T	K	Q	U	C	P	Z	V	E	U	K	C	G	F	D	S	A	O	I	M
B	A	W	C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	C	A	R	O	L	C	E	I
O	D	T	A	B	B	X	A	Y	Q	R	N	I	M	Z	P	O	K	E	M
F	E	H	G	L	O	B	N	H	J	K	O	C	W	E	U	R	I	I	N
N	E	R	E	A	L	I	T	O	W	O	W	B	K	C	R	O	N	D	Z
G	R	O	Z	C	S	I	A	V	B	N	M	Y	T	W	B	C	G	C	R
F	T	U	V	K	T	X	N	Z	W	Q	U	I	N	Z	E	C	F	H	Y
B	D	G	O	P	E	C	V	G	I	N	Y	T	A	P	C	O	I	A	Z
Y	K	H	C	O	R	J	K	E	H	O	P	B	I	S	K	P	L	M	Z
D	Q	S	F	P	T	Y	N	E	H	A	M	E	M	U	M	V	L	P	R
R	I	T	S	L	B	U	R	D	S	T	M	X	Z	A	A	M	E	A	Y
B	D	O	X	A	U	P	Q	H	T	N	O	M	T	I	R	B	R	G	E
U	P	N	N	R	C	K	Q	U	A	V	O	T	E	W	B	P	O	N	C
V	I	E	X	W	Q	U	R	L	W	M	O	I	D	R	L	R	O	E	L
T	U	O	B	A	U	K	Y	X	K	C	H	M	T	O	E	E	Y	S	S
Z	S	F	G	K	E	L	C	J	K	I	W	I	E	A	B	S	Q	Y	P
R	B	D	R	Y	S	T	O	N	E	W	A	L	L	Z	D	E	F	G	H
K	H	W	E	I	O	I	P	L	S	M	K	A	R	L	P	N	O	V	E
X	R	E	W	I	N	T	E	R	S	L	A	N	E	D	F	T	U	F	I
K	D	R	E	W	A	P	Z	C	K	J	I	N	O	B	K	E	P	O	M
W	Y	R	Q	U	A	T	I	N	G	H	K	C	Q	T	U	P	T	L	F

There are no prizes for finding all these words in the grid above, but it's guaranteed to waste time when you should be attending to guests / washing up / playing with kids / grandchildren / going for a walk / cleaning and sharpening your walling tools (delete as appropriate) ...

Bar

Beer

Birch

Black Poplar

Bolster

Champagne

Christmas Carol

Cope

Drystone Wall

Foundations

Gin

Ham Hill

Mattock

Mince Pie

Present

Purbeck Marble

Rum

Santa

Sika Deer

Snow

Stocking Filler

Through Stone

Turkey

Tyneham

Walling Hammer

Wall Pins

Winters Lane

Christmas Quiz

Have you been paying attention to the news this year? Of course, you have; it's been a messy old year for politics, scandals, Royal happenings and famous deaths. Test your memory with this contemporary quiz. There's also some general knowledge Trivia. Answers in next month's newsletter.

In 2022, who said:

1. Them's the breaks.
2. I know that we will deliver, we will deliver, we will deliver.
3. Dear, oh dear.
4. Excessive consumption of alcohol is not appropriate in a professional workplace.
5. For God's sake, this man cannot remain in power.
6. I could be wrong, but Hitler also had Jewish blood.
7. The British people deserve to know which party is serious about stopping the invasion on our southern coast.
8. *Dio, Patria e Famiglia non è uno slogan politico ma il più bel manifesto d'amore.*
9. The jury's still out.
10. *Nous aussi on t'emmerde.*

Royal icing on the cake:

1. For her Platinum Jubilee, Queen Elizabeth was filmed taking a sandwich out of her handbag. Who was her guest for tea at the time?
2. In July to whom did Queen Elizabeth award the George Cross in a ceremony at Windsor Castle?
3. Gaston Browne, the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, declared: 'I should say we aspire at some point to become a republic.' Which royal couple was visiting at the time?
4. In June, the Duchess of Cornwall and Sir Tony Blair were installed at Windsor as what?
5. Which royal duchess said in a magazine interview that she had been told by a South African actor: 'When you married into this family, we rejoiced in the streets the same we did when Mandela was freed from prison'?

6. At the lying-in-state of Queen Elizabeth, the coffin was guarded by members of the Gentlemen at Arms, the Yeoman of the Guard and which other ceremonial unit of the Sovereign's Bodyguard, with eagle feathers in the caps?
7. At the state funeral for Queen Elizabeth at Westminster Abbey, Psalm 23, 'The Lord Is My Shepherd', was sung, as it had been at her wedding, to the tune known as what?
8. At the committal service for Queen Elizabeth in St George's Chapel, Windsor, the orb and sceptre were delivered into the hands of the Dean of Windsor by the Serjeant at Arms. Which red-coated officer of the royal household delivered the Imperial State Crown?
9. Misuzulu ka Zwelithini was crowned king of whom, in succession to King Goodwill?
10. Princess Märtha Louise, whose boyfriend says he is a shaman, relinquished her royal duties in which country, to focus on her alternative medicine business?

Water, water everywhere:

1. The Volga, the longest river in Europe, flows into which sea?
2. Which is the longest European river flowing into the Mediterranean?
3. The Rhine forms a border of Switzerland with Liechtenstein, Germany and which other country?
4. The 1,500-mile river Ural forms a border between Russia and which other country?
5. The 1,770-mile Danube flows through four capital cities: Bratislava, Vienna, Belgrade and which other?
6. The Romans called Italy's longest river the Padus. What is it called now?
7. Europe's fourth-longest river, the Dnieper or Dnipro, at about 1,368 miles, runs from Russia to Ukraine, through which other country?
8. The five rivers of the Greek underworld were the Acheron, Styx, Phlegethon, Cocytus and which other?
9. 'Mole digs her selfe a path, by working day and night / (According to her name, to shew her nature right) / And underneath the Earth, for three miles space doth creep,' wrote the 17th-century author of the 15,000-line *Poly-Olbion*, celebrating the topography of England. Who was he?
10. Which poet concluded his poem on the Tay Bridge Disaster of 1879 with the lines: 'For the stronger we our houses do build / The less chance we have of being killed.'?

What are the names behind the initials:

1. G.K. Chesterton
2. T.S. Eliot
3. J.M.W. Turner
4. P.J. Harvey
5. C.S. Lewis
6. W.S. Gilbert
7. T.E. Lawrence
8. J.K. Rowling
9. H.G. Wells
10. J.R.R. Tolkien

In Memoriam, deaths in 2022:

1. Who died aged 94, remembered as Virgil Tibbs?
2. Which travel writer got off her bike, aged 90?
3. Nine times a Derby winner, which jockey made it to the winners' enclosure for the last time aged 86?
4. Who was the last head of the Soviet Union, who died aged 91?
5. Name the inventor of the swingometer, who died aged 98.
6. Who sang 'You shake my nerves and you rattle my brain' and died aged 87?
7. Who brought viewers 25 years of 'Your starter for ten', from 1962 to 1987, and died aged 87?
8. Who 'like a bat out of hell' was gone when the morning came, aged 74?
9. Who was the single-name composer of the score to *Chariots of Fire* (1981) and died aged 79?
10. Who played Dot Cotton in *EastEnders* between 1985 and 2020 and died aged 95?

Well done Dorset!

Wallerers, that's December's news tied up. However, for those of you who like listening to Radio 4's 'More or Less' here are the Branch walling statistics for 2022:

We did a total of 143 walling days at 9 locations around the county.

A total of 23 Branch members contributed 409.5 walling days (271 ladies & 138.5 gents) – the .5 represents half days worked by individual wallers.

We ran 6 training courses at 2 locations, at which 11 Branch members instructed or assisted. They contributed 52 walling days (29 ladies & 23 gents).

We took part in 2 county shows – Sherborne Castle Show and the Melplash Show, in which 9 Branch members took part. They contributed 19 days (11 ladies & 8 gents)

The year's 'top four' Branch wallers – those who have been out the most are Sally (77.5 days); Mary (77 days); Phyllis (59 days) and Carole (51 days).

In addition, a number of Dorset members also wall with other branches and for other organisations including Eucan and the National Trust.

Have a Very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and, as ever, I welcome news and images from all members.

Carole Reeves

Christmas pud glitter ball seen in Selfridges, London. Photo: Chris

