the Dry Stone Walls association of Australia inc.

The Flag Stone

Issue No. 13, May 2008

Patron: Sir James Gobbo ABN 31 721 856 687 Newsletter Editor: Charmian Brent

A 'Stone Soiree' at Wuurong, Camperdown, Vic.

by Charmian Brent, DSWAA Committee member and newsletter editor

Louise Manifold gave an insightful account of her trip to Rajasthan, illustrated with beautiful photographs of dry stone walls and splendid palaces and buildings

Host John Menzies piped us all in to dinner in traditional Scottish style

Danny Spooner entertained with his usual great flair and we all sang along with gusto

A glass of sherry under the pergola: Andrew Miller (centre) with Patricia and Roy Varley

Sandra stalwartly collects the cash

The delicious food was served buffet-style

On the evening of Saturday, 16 February 2008 more than 65 Dry Stone Walls Association (DSWAA) members and their friends gathered at 'Wuurong' the house of John and Carolyn Menzies, just outside Camperdown, overlooking the lake. It was a beautiful warm evening where the countryside was bathed in a golden summer glow, and the proceedings kicked off with everybody sipping a convivial glass of sherry out under the vines on the pergola, or perched on top of the surroundinng dry stone walls.

Old friends greeted each other with great enthusiasm, catching up on each others' travels and family events and discussing the various DSWAA experiences they had shared together in the past year. We were summoned to dinner by the haunting sounds of the bagpipes played beautifully by our host John Menzies, who had 'warmed up' in the paddock quite a long way off and had gradually approached the cottage/diningroom. DSWAA President Jim Holdsworth welcomed all those present and set the scene for a most convivial evening. The food was splendid and plentiful,so we all helped ourselves and tucked in to smoked salmon or prawns, followed by roast meats, roasted vegetables and salads, downing several glasses of wine along the way.

During the course of the evening, presentations were given by DSWAA members about their overseas trips where dry stone walls had featured extensively. Tim Lowe spoke of his travels in Newfoundland where there are walls at Grate's Cove many centuries old (see *Flag Stone,* No. 12); Andrew Miller described his time in Ballarat's sister city in East Timor where walls abound (see page 8); while Louise Manifold fascinated us with pictures of walls, palaces and buildings in Rajasthan, especially around Johdpur. John Menzies showed us stunning walls surrounding fabulous horsestuds in the Bluegrass area of Kentucky in the USA and Raelene Marshall described the beautiful old walls of Mallorca and Menorca in the Balearic Islands (see page 10).

Then came the thrilling part of the evening when Danny Spooner entertained us with some wonderful folk songs, encouraging us to sing along to 'Rain' and other memorable tunes. He even managed to include an amusing Pam Ayres poem about 'Dry Stone Walling', that made us all laugh.

By this stage the delicious desserts of yoghurt pannacotta or chocolate indulgence were being served and raffle tickets were being snapped up very quickly so that in fact we ran out of tickets. Needless to say, the drawing of the raffle that followed was a nail-biting affair with great cries of joy from the winners as they ran up to collect their prizes from Jim, accompanied by much applause and shouts of 'rigged' from the crowd. The winning hampers positively groaned under the weight of the goodies they contained – from wine, jam, olive oil and honey to chocolate, fruit and other delicious treats. The second prize was a night's accommodation for two at The Mill in Camperdown.

The evening drew to a close when Jim Holdsworth thanked all those who had worked so hard to make the evening a success: from our hosts John and Carolyn Menzies for the superb venue (the ceiling originally came from the Gentleman's Club in Camperdown) with its dry stone walls and spectacular views across the Western District; to Raelene for her painstaking planning so that everything on the day ran as smoothly as clockwork; to catering co-ordinator Kate Woodward; raffle co-ordinator Josie Black; ticket co-ordinator Sandra Fitzgerald; table decorations, June Barling; and technical expert Andrew Miller.

We say it every time, but all DSWAA gatherings are occasions to remember with great pleasure and we look forward to the next time that we can congregate and celebrate our special interest in dry stone walls together.

June Barling's table decorations were a joy to behold and lasted long after the event

Catching up with old friends under the pergola was fun

The assembled gathering was certainly in a mood to enjoy themselves

The winner of the raffle's first prize took on a special glow of pleasure as DSWAA President Jim Holdsworth (right) congratulates him

Community Stone Walling Projects

by George A. Gunn, Master Drystone Waller, International Award Winner, based in Northern Scotland

The first training course I attended was when I was the trainee of a master craftsman in 1983. I worked as a forestry contractor, planting trees and deer fencing. There was a gap in contracts and the local waller needed a hand, so I gave it a try, not really knowing what I was in for.

His first question was 'long back or short?' ' Eh ? ' I said. It seems that long back, short legs is a recipe for disaster in a waller. That's me then.

The next question was 'Have you got haemmorhoids?' 'Eh ??' again from me.

'You soon will have at this game' he says. 'Its all the heavy lifting of granite boulders, and the old Scottish dykers went blind with the blood pressure on their optic nerves.'

Twenty-five years of walling later with all types of stone and I am neither walking like a half-shut knife, unable to sit down, nor blind !

So don't be put off walling by old wives' tales – walling is a safe, enjoyable and relaxing activity if properly supervised. All that concentration on fitting the stones together completely banishes those day-to-day worries and hassles to the far corners of your brain-box, leaving you in a slightly tired but pleasantly relaxed frame of mind, with the bonus of having created something beautiful out of stone along with like-minded individuals.

I have run courses in the UK, USA and Australia, and believe me, people are the same the world over, with the same training needs and the same hopes and concerns for their community projects.

All have overcome their initial lack of confidence, and have gained skills and a deeper understanding of what is one of the world's oldest trades, as well as having built a nice stone feature to be proud of!

To run a successful project you need a DSWA or DSWAA trainer, who will give you a list of things you will need such as tools, stone, security/safety fencing, safetywear and also information about any underground service cables near the surface.

Your instructor will have seen the stone beforehand, or a photograph, and talked to the supplier.

This will enable the instructor to decide if the stone is suitable for the projected design – if not, they might need to change it somewhat to accommodate the stone.

On the first day's building, they will also ensure through drawing sketches of the project that everyone knows exactly what they are building .

They will also decide whether the number of volunteers is sufficient to complete the project in the time available.

A method I often use is to design something with an indefinite length, like an ' L- shaped seat and keep building the longest side on the last day until lunchtime, then start building the end and tidy up. The seat is as long as stone, skill and time allows.

A great boost for volunteers is provided if the project leaders supply lots of drinks (but no alcohol until the job's done and dusted!!) and good soup/sandwiches .

Also constantly reassuring them if they are doing well, and polite, quiet correction and support if they're not !

With good direction, there is something for everyone to do which is within their capabilities, from setting big foundation stones to filling the inside of the wall and moving stone – all are essential parts of a good operation and all are an equally valued part of a successful community stonework project.

Happy Building Folks !

George

HIE seat

Magic circle chair with tulips

Lunchtime while building a seat at Sandwood

President's Message

Jim Holdsworth

Greetings!

It's time to elect a new Committee!

The DSWAA held its first elections for office bearers and committee members in June 2004 and the executive group which was formed at that time was re-elected in 2006 for two years. Now, all office bearer positions, together with four of the six committee positions, become vacant at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) to be held on Saturday, 14 June 2008.

The current Committee has been both active and effective in undertaking a range of events, activities and actions that help achieve the DSWAA's broad objectives.

The members of the DSWAA and the future of dry stone walls in general will continue to be well served if those committee members decide to stand for re-election. However, new people, with new ideas and a fresh perspective, are what enable voluntary associations to grow and thrive.

Soon, you will be notified of the arrangements for the AGM and how you can put your name, or the name of another member, forward to join the Committee or take one of the executive positions.

There are many interesting projects for the new Committee to pursue during the coming two years. These include a 'gateway' project for the Princes Highway in the famous Stony Rises, an enhanced web site, a national directory of practising wallers, the publication of a brochure or booklet about dry stone walls in Australia, and the task of expanding the DSWAA's recognition among local and State governments, wall owners and the wider community.

Beyond the DSWAA's early home in Victoria, it is most pleasing to see active groups in Tasmania and South Australia. I hope that a similar group will soon be established in New South Wales. The opportunities and needs for the recognition, protection and celebration of the heritage of dry stone walls require a body like this DSWAA to raise the profile and awareness of dry stone walls in those States.

One fascinating area for future research is that of dry stone construction of many types by indigenous Australians, some of which is contemporary, but much of which surely pre-dates European settlement.

I thank Sir James Gobbo for being the DSWAA's patron. His interest in heritage and specialist skills can assist us in achieving our goals, particularly in increasing the number of trained wallers. This is a growing need as more people want their existing walls repaired or new ones built.

The DSWAA has had a steady growth in membership, as well as in its range of activities and the regard in which it is held in many sectors of the community with which we interact.

As this two-year term for me as your President draws to its end, I publicly thank our Secretary Raelene Marshall, Vice-President Andrew Miller, Treasurer Brad Purvis and the retiring Committee Members, Josie, Geoff, Louise and Cathy for their initiative, commitment, enthusiasm and friendship.

As well as the elected Committee, there are many others who come to our committee meetings and form our Working Group. They add new perspectives and value to the deliberations of your Committee, and their individual contributions are much appreciated. Dry stone walls speak silently and evocatively to us from their settings across our landscapes, but they need human advocates and enthusiasts to ensure their celebration and survival.

I encourage you to consider joining the Committee in June and participating in our meetings and helping to give the DSWAA new drive and direction. If you would like to talk to me about taking an active role in the DSWAA, please do so via the contact details on the back page of this newsletter.

Jim Holdsworth

Contributions for *The Flag Stone* invited

Pictures of unusual walls/damaged walls
Dry stone wall-related literature
Any item of interest to members of DSWAA
News from overseas
Deadline for the September 2008 issue is 14 August 2008

All material to: chabrent@bigpond.net.au

Some websites you may like to visit

www.rbgsyd.gov.au
www.pierreseche.net
www.stonefoundation.org
www.dswac.ca

VICTORIA: dry stone walls gateway in the Stony Rises

DSWAA Committee Member Josie Black OAM

From left: Josie Black; DSWAA President Jim Holdsworth; Mayor Ruth Gstrein of Corangamite Shire and Cr Chris Smith, Mayor of Colac-Otway Shire

At the 13 April Committee meeting of the DSWAA held at the Stony Rises Homestead we were pleased to welcome Mayor Ruth Gstrein of Corangamite Shire and Cr Chris Smith Mayor of Colac-Otway Shire. They had accepted our invitation to discuss a joint project between the two Shires which would result in a gateway to the network of dry stone walls in the Stony Rises in south-west Victoria.

Both mayors expressed enthusiasm and support for the proposal and undertook to progress the project through their respective Council officers. The first step will be to begin discussions with VicRoads and to scope the project. This would give us an estimate of the coast of such a project. Local government would then allocate funds in the 2009–10 budget and seek external funding from other sources.

The Stony Rises in south-west Victoria has the most extensive and important network of dry stone walls in the country and we believe that a roadside information facility on the Princes Highway, strategically placed near the boundary of the two shires would do much to inform locals as well as travellers of the rich heritage and accomplished skills displayed in the dry stone walls.

The Stony Rises also falls within the boundaries of Kanawinka, Australia's first Geopark and the proposed United Nation Education and Scientific Organisation (UNESCO) Global Geopark.

The proposal was conceived by DSWAA member John Menzies and developed through discussions with Rob Wuchatsch and Josie Black. We see this project developing in partnership between the Colac Otway Shire, Corangamite Shire as well as the DSWAA and Corangamite Arts.

Since its formation in 2002, DSWAA has done much to lift the profile and importance of dry stone walls in the country. Its active agenda has included numerous field days in south-west Victoria and elsewhere, skills workshops, publication of *The Flag Stone* and lobbying for the protection of dry stone walls.

Corangamite Arts led the revival of interest in dry stone walling in Victoria. It conducted a study of local walls in the 1990s and then published the popular and informative report *If These Walls Could Talk* (1995). In 1997, they established the Corangamite Dry Stone Walls Heritage Trail taking in 10 interpretation sites of the most significant walls in the district. In 1994, it initiated and, with the former Shire of Hampden, oversaw the construction of the stone gateway at the eastern entrance to Terang.

Obviously, such a project would need careful planning, research and the engagement of various stakeholders including VicRoads, the Department of Sustainability & Environment (DS&E), neighbouring farmers, landcare groups, historians, artists as well as the community generally. In the first instance, we suggest that a working group be formed with representation from both Councils, DSWAA and Corangamite Arts.

The working group could then be charged with drawing up a Project Brief which would identify stakeholders, explore suitable sites, articulate design requirements, identify partnerships, funding opportunities and management and sustainability of the site.

The DSWAA Committee is looking forward to working with the two Local Government Authorities, Corangamite Arts and other stakeholders in order to bring this exciting and important project to fruition.

Dry stone wall along the Princes Highway in the Stony Rises

TASMANIA: dry stone walls at the Deloraine Connector Reserve

by Andrew Garner, DSWAA member

Approaching Deloraine on the Bass Highway from the north, one can see interesting sections of old drystone wall partly hidden by plantings of deciduous and conifer trees. Although this area is crown land and the walls are clearly visible, they remain rarely visited and something of a mystery to most people: a curiosity glimpsed out of the corner of one's eye rushing along the highway.

The first section encountered is a 30 m-long, orange-coloured, curved basalt wall dwarfed by six massive radiata pines.

This wall is flat-topped, moderately battered and 4 ft high. Although carefully and neatly built (below), it lacks any coursing (that is, random), cover bands, cope stones or through-stones.

The neatness of the work indicates that it was built by someone used to working with stone, however, the

absence of key structural elements and the abundance of small wedges pushed into the face of the wall suggests a lack of formal training.

The second, main piece is a long straight section of basalt wall which is cut by the highway into two sections of 40 m and 120 m length. The total original length (pre-highway) would have been nearly 200 m.

This wall is worthy of note for the following reasons:

1. the design incorporates a line of prominent large stones at half-height (referred to here as the 'boulder-line') (above)
2. the stones in the 'boulder-line' are not through-stones, rather, large flat stones placed on edge(!)
3. the lower half of the wall below the 'boulder-line' has a standard batter; however, this changes to vertical at the boulder-line and above
4. two different builders have contributed to the walls here; the first did the bulk of the wall and incorporated the distinctive boulders, while the second did the recently repaired sections and added wall-ends in a more careful, subdued style (below)

This wall has a mixture of European deciduous trees (ash, poplar, hawthorn, prunus and willow) planted along its northern side. Several types of ornamental ivy compete with thick lichen on this shaded side, adding to the interest (see opposite above).

Two short sections of wall have collapsed in recent years: both at wall-ends. One collapse appears to have been caused by the proximity of a large poplar whose roots no doubt have pushed against the wall as it grew.

The other collapse is adjacent to the highway and has exposed the peculiar nature of the large stones used in the 'boulder line': (opposite).

Discussions with local landowners and members of the Deloraine Historical Society have only partially revealed the wall's history.

It is believed that the straight 'decorative' wall is the older of the two types of wall at this site and was built in the late 1920s by a Mr Tim Berry, the son of Mr John L. Berry, who then owned the 'Bowerbank' property.

The person responsible for building the younger curved wall under the pines and for repairing sections of the older straight wall remains in doubt, although it is possibly the work of a Mr Vic Cohen, who was a respected waller in the district in the 1950s and 1960s.

Thanks to Trevor Johnston, Charlie Crowden, Michael and Christopher Horn and the Great Western Tiers Information Centre for their advice.

Directory of dry stone wallers, compiled by the DSWAA

DSWAA Committee Member Josie Black OAM

The DSWAA has decided to compile a National Directory of dry stone wallers and to publish it on the website. This is a practical and helpful response to the many requests for information about wallers. Committee members Geoff Duggan, a master dry stone waller, and Josie Black have developed the Directory.

Dry stone walling in some parts of Australia is a fledgling industry and is undergoing a huge resurgence with dry stone walls becoming a much desired addition in the garden and landscaping industry. Dry stone walling techniques are also being used in garden feature work and also as a sculptural medium. In addition the traditional craft is used to mend and maintain the kilometres of walls on farms. This resurgence has resulted in a demand for the very few competent dry stone wallers hence the need for a directory.

At this point, the *Directory of Dry Stone Wallers* is not comprehensive as there are many competent dry stone wallers in Australia that we just don't know of yet. Each waller is to provide information on training completed and qualifications achieved from Australian Registered Training Providers or/and the Dry Stone Walling Association of Great Britain. Members of the DSWAA will be listed free of charge but non-members will be charged $60 for listing on the Directory. The DSWAA does not accredit or recommend wallers but merely provides information to the public about wallers. If you are a waller and wish your name to be added to this Directory, please contact Raelene Marshall, Geoff Duggan or Josie Black. Members who know of wallers are asked to pass on this opportunity for them to register.

In order to build up the Directory we will:

- use the website and the *Flag Stone* to invite wallers to register
- ask members to invite wallers to register
- contact training providers to pass on information to trainees/ students and instructors/teachers
- place an article or notice in *Owner Builder* magazine and others
- prepare a media release re the Directory and circulate where there are walls and wallers
- publish an interview with a waller who has registered
- contact Holmesglen TAFE Heritage Skills with the information re Directory
- contact the International Specialist Skills Institute with information re the Directory.

Dry Stone Walls In East Timor

by Andrew Miller, DSWAA Vice-President

Isn't it exciting to come across dry stone wall constructions in places where we might be least expecting them? So rewarding to pause and wonder about the wall, its age, and purpose. Who was the waller? What was his background? And the stone.....volcanic, sedimentary or metamorphic origins leading us to the natural history of the land on which the wall stands. During these brief periods of contemplation one gains a real 'sense of place' and a renewed understanding of the importance of dry stone walls to our landscape.

I have 'contemplated' many times (too many times, my family tells me!). More recently this occurred in East Timor when participating in an International Election Observer role for the parliamentary elections in that country, and a few months later setting the foundations for an Australian-volunteer placement in the Ainaro community, Ballarat's friendship district.

The Ballarat-Ainaro friendship is providing significant grass roots support in the rebuilding of the community following the devastation caused by departing Indonesians immediately after the 1999 vote for independence. The East Timorese are now fiercely proud of their independence and of how hard they had to fight for it.

Outside the capital Dili, and other larger towns, it is very much a subsistence lifestyle, however, some regions in the country have commercial crops such as rice and coffee.

Small family plots are prolific across the country. Corn, legumes and leafy vegetables along with fowls, goats, pigs and cattle produce barely sufficient for basic meals. It is therefore important that plantings are protected from stock damage and the domestic animals are contained; dry stone walls provided one form of fencing.

Style of walling varies considerably, from basic low constructions through to impressive well-constructed walls, some incorporating simple bamboo components which appeared to be more ornamental than functional. Single and double walls were common but had no copestones.

On Atauro, an island off Dili, recommended for its newly- established basic eco- tourism resort and wonderful diving opportunities, one of the hillside villages housed a proliferation of freestanding walls and retaining walls. The walls in the village separated adjacent family allotments and provided an effective way of terracing the environment around the dwellings.

All of the walls were purely functional and it seems were built by the East Timorese themselves over many years. There was no evidence that any of the walls were influenced by the period of Portuguese colonisation (1550–1975) nor from the period of Indonesian occupation (1975–99).

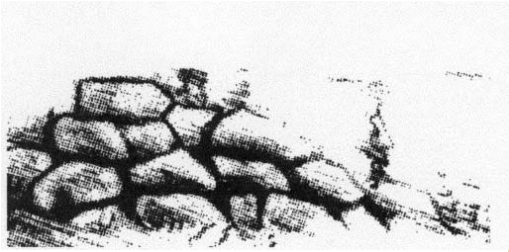
So, keep your eyes peeled when travelling through new landscapes!

Walls, Makili village, island of Atauro, East Timor

Wall, reminiscent of Australian landscapes, island of Atauro, East Timor

Walls, Ainaro district, Ballarat's friendship district, East Timor

Wall meets the sea, island of Atauro, East Timor



Gathering Stones...

International Green Apple Award 2006 for the Built Environment and Architectural Heritage'

Our friend and Master Waller George Gunn in Scotland (see article on page 2) won this award for his 'Wavy Wall' in Thurso in Caithness.

Master waller George Gunn's prize-winning 'Wavy Wall' in Thurso, Caithness, Scotland

Strange connections

Could it be that we have spread the DSWAA word so well that we have finally become the hot topic of conversation in such unusual places as hairdressing salons? Alistair Tune has recently completed this beautiful wall in a domestic setting in Brunswick. Raelene's hairdresser being the catalyst to bring one of her other clients to the DSWAA via this rather circuitous route! The owners are delighted.

Alastair Tune built this lovely wall in an inner city Brunswick garden in Melbourne

DSWAA event and meeting calendar dates

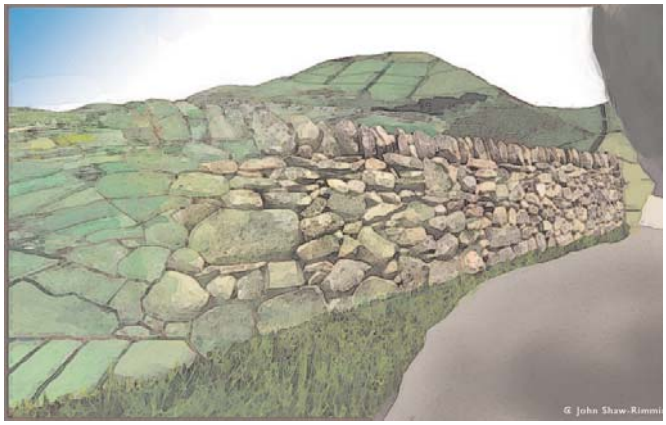
- Annual General Meeting. The DSWAA's 2008 AGM and election of office bearers for the two years to 2010 will be held on 14 June in Ballarat at 4.00 p.m. The meeting will be followed by an informal gathering at a local hotel. We hope you can join us. Venue details will be available mid-May, you will be advised when they are confirmed or feel free to contact the Secretary Raelene Marshall on 0418 523 900.
- August 16 [activity yet to be decided]
- October 11 and 12 [South Australia]

Walls, Makili village, island of Atauro, East Timor

Wall near Makili village, island of Atauro, East Timor

The Rain in Spain

by Raelene Marshall, DSWAA Secretary and Committee Member



'Wall there is to see', a painting by John Shaw Rimmington from Canada's DSWA

Apart from one Gaudi-filled day in Barcelona, when the heavens opened and cried a thousand tears, the rest of my time in Spain was spent with the warm autumn sun smiling gently and benevolently upon those of us attending the week-long 2007 Stone Symposium in Deià, and those few of us who were privileged to undertake a tour of the ancient megaliths on the island of Menorca.

Aha! Spain, the land of my ancestors. How does one even begin to describe this place of spirit, creativity and culture that so magnetically draws you to explore the intricate layers that lie hidden beneath its beguiling façade? A world of cultural and emotional experiences; the everyday theatre of the streets and laneways; the majesty and intricacy of the art and the architecture; the vistas and panoramas; the smells and tastes of the legendary Spanish food; and of course for me, the magic and warmth of stone in all its facets and manifestations.

Approaching Deià on the island of Mallorca by road from Palma, one rounds the headland at Sa Pedrissa to be greeted by the first view of the village. With the towering mountains of the 'Serra de Tramuntana' as its backdrop, the village sits on a hill that extends to the valley below with a system of open irrigation channels that date back to Moorish era of the tenth to thirteenth centuries.

Since the early twentieth century, Deià has been a haven for artists, musicians and writers and many of them have made their permanent homes in and around the village. Built long before the days of town-planning, one gets a real sense that the people just got it right. Limited to local materials they built houses of stone that even today sit perfectly in the surrounding landscape of terraces that give the area a unique quality and agricultural richness.

The crystal clear waters and gentle sea breezes of the Mediterranean below were a perfect panoramic foil for the Stone Foundation's seventh annual gathering and the first to take place outside the USA. Held at one of the former residences of Archduke Luis Salvador of Austria, the venue is now a museum which displays important paintings and Phoenician, Greek and Roman Hispano-Arabic pottery.

By the time we all assembled in the Archduke's residence on 24 September the place was already abuzz with excitement and anticipation. The week prior, thirty-six participants from America, Canada and Europe had already been involved in a workshop that had successfully restored a long and curved retaining wall nearby. Facilitated by six Mallorquin mason-instructors from the Stonemasonry School Artifex Balear, whose twinkle-eyed Spanish Director Miguel Ramis had a most awe inspiring rags to riches tale to tell about the evolution of this unique and inspiring institute. Located in an ancient disused building complex in Valldemossa, Miguel's brainchild is today a highly regarded authority and educational haven for the recovery of the masonry art and architectural and cultural heritage.

The endless 'stone' chatter sessions over meal breaks also provided me with a wonderful chance to put faces to names and long-time contacts from across the world. Among the presenters were the Stone Foundation's renowned founder Tomas Lipps, Patrick McAfee from Ireland and author of Stone Buildings and Irish Stone Walls and John Shaw Rimmington, our DSWA counterpart from Canada.

Walls near Deia on the island of Mallorca

For me a self-confessed 'creative process junkie' there is absolutely no doubt that John's paper about the power of creativity to transform, inspire and heal was my favourite of the Symposium. With his permission I'd like to share the following excerpt.

> 'Being creative is the highest form of human fulfillment. Not procreation, recreation or wrecking creation. Other activities and endeavours cannot achieve the same level of satisfaction.
> No amount of shopping, entertainment, competitiveness, or commitment to selflessness or selfishness will secure the sense of pleasure and purpose that comes with being involved in a creative act, no matter how brief.
> We are all supposed to be creative. There are many ways to be creative, but stone provides the rawest potential for a human being to explore. Stone exists in abundance as the silent, (collective or

reductional) unformed, motionless partner for the expression of that inner artist in many of us.

There is bond between us and stones. They are more human than we think. We have more of an affinity with them than we openly acknowledge. We come to stone as a sort of blank canvas to create on and potent a mass of possibilities to build on or with them. They are the basic building blocks for our creative survival.

Stones are always ready for us to be creative. They are a fruit that is always in season. They offer, hold out for us, the possibility of taking part in the "creative inevitable". They possess the randomness that inspires new ideas. Stones work together well. They work surprisingly well in a dry stone wall.'

Another highlight was the presentation by Phillipe Alvaro from the Consell de Mallorca who have undertaken a comprehensive dry stone wall study, the outcomes of which are now bearing the fruits of their endeavours. In order to facilitate their dry stone conservation they have now restored constructions such as retaining walls, dry stone paths and other ethnological elements. At all times their aim has been to ensure compatibility with sustainable and local development, and, much to their delight, the restoration of the public paths has also markedly increased hiking interest and tourism in the area.

The 'alternate' days provided us with an opportunity to explore the island via a labyrinth of dry stone wall-hugged roads to the various villages, towns and beaches. The walls on the island are quite unique. Built of warm sandstone in a herringbone style and juxtaposed against the blue Spanish skies they sit so comfortably in the landscape it's sometimes hard to believe that they are indeed an impost of man's endeavour.

By contrast to the high security of the ancient Greek sites, similar Spanish 'treasures' remain refreshingly and excitingly accessible. Just a twenty-minute beach walk from Son Baulo one literally almost stumbles across the Son Real Necropolis a prehistoric burial ground which dates back to the Iron Age. As we wove our way through the maze of over one hundred underground tombs it was almost impossible to absorb, that here juxtaposed against the same Mediterranean waves of ancient times we were happily exploring nave shaped chambers and square and circular talaiots from the Talaiotic age that were used from that period until Roman times. Such a privilege. Such a responsibility.

Son Real Necropolis

Modern-day stone sculpture on Mallorca

The old saying goes, 'time and tide wait for no man'. Sitting quietly in the wings en route to the Necropolis are a delightful series of modern day stone sculptures. Framed by the timelessness of the blue sky and the lapping waters of the Mediterranean, they rest like silent sentinels, markers in life's journey built by today's civilisation to capture and remind us of our mortality and our immortality.

The medieval seaside village of Alcúdia on the other side of the island was to be our departure point to catch the Ferry to the megalithic adventures that lay ahead for us on Menorca. In vast contrast to Deià, Alcúdia's walled city with its winding and narrow streets, buildings of great architectural interest, Renaissance windows, entrance halls with semicircular arches and Gothic staircases maintain the characteristic elements of those impressive styles of long ago.

The historical patrimony of Menorca is inexhaustible and holds fascinating secrets of this most important of European islands converted into a real open air museum. Indeed it is hard to believe that there is anywhere left in the world where one can so seamlessly escape into and really begin to feel and understand the lifestyles of ancient civilisations.

An insight into the source and abundance of the stone on this island was provided by a visit to S'Hostal an abandoned sandstone quarry of momentous proportions on the outskirts of Ciutadella. The sandstone is permeable and of different hardness and colour and the quarry face and floor, a breathtaking palette of residual machinery textures, markings and colorings, were converted in 1994 by Líthica a cultural association constituted with the main objective

The abandoned stone quarry at S'Hostal

Megalith, Menorca

of preserving, restoring and rehabilitating the sandstone quarries. Today the space is a majestic amphitheatre that includes a botanic garden dedicated to the production of autochthonous plants, an outdoor sculpture park and a venue that also houses different cultural events and activities organised by the Consell de Menorca.

A tourism secret, Menorca preserves all of the magic its Talaiotic settlers created so very many centuries ago. Its mystery: inherent, inert and intuitive is found in its stones, in its megalithic constructions and fortresses so spontaneously capable of captivating the minds and hearts of whoever approaches them.

Warm sandstone walls of Menorca

In a time warp bubble and metaphorically 'leaving no stone unturned' we wandered uninhibited in the 'streets' and into 'buildings' in places such as the Torre d'en Gaumés, the largest prehistoric village to be found in the Balearic Islands. We wondered, we explored, we questioned but above all we were in total awe of these ancient civilisations so technically attuned to, and aesthetically in tune with, stone in all its emotive and creative manifestations.

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Please complete (or photocopy) and **either** email to OR post to DSWAA Membership c/o Rob Wuchatsch,
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Payment: monies can be deposited in the Association's bank account 013 274 4997 47356 at any ANZ Bank **or** send a cheque payable to: The Dry Stone Walls Association of Australia Inc. at the above address.
(*Please indicate payment method below.)

The Dry Stone Walls Association of Australia Inc.
No. A004473S. ABN 31 721 856 687
Application for Membership

Professional (voting rights)	$40.00
Individual (voting rights)	$25.00
Corporate (voting rights)	$80.00
Family (voting rights)	$40.00

* Paying by: Cheque enc.• Bank deposit •

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Area of interest, for example, farmer, heritage, etc.

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