

Turkeith – dry-stone walls and an historic garden

By Charmian Brent, DSWAA Committee member



Above: part of the garden's dry-stone perimeter wall at Turkeith. Below: a glimpse of the 1865 homestead from William Guildfoyle's sublime garden

On a blustery day at the beginning of April, a 40-strong contingent of DSWAA members and their friends congregated at Turkeith, a 2000-hectare working sheep station in Victoria's Western District, nestled near the foot of Mount Gellibrand, an extinct volcano between Winchelsea and Colac, north of the Princes Highway. We were warmly welcomed by Tim and Mary-Ann Holt, the current owners, who have been there about two years.

Turkeith is a homestead, woolshed, stables and hut built from local bluestone in 1865 for Felix and Annie Armytage – earlier the land had been part of the larger Mount Hesse station until subdivided in 1861. The Armytage family lived at Turkeith until 1890 when the property then passed in to the hands of the Urquhart family whose descendants occupied the house and farm for the next 110 years until the Holts took over.

Although Turkeith is home to a great range of original and contemporary dry-stone walls, what makes it a very special place is its garden, designed for the Ramsay family in 1903–04 by William Robert Guilfoyle, Director of the Royal Botanic





Members of the DSWAA and friends gather under a magnificent English oak (Quercus robur) for a barbecue lunch prior to a tour of Turkeith

Gardens in Melbourne. Guilfoyle envisaged a flowing garden with large sweeps of lawn, picturesque views and winding pathways lined with interesting and exotic shrubberies. Magnificent oaks, elms, pines, palms, cypresses and gums are the original plantings but many species have been added in recent years including magnolias, sycamores, hawthorns and fruit trees. Under these trees are a wide range of shrubs, hardy perennials, bulbs and drought-tolerant plants (aloes, succulents and cacti) that can thrive in the thin volcanic soil. All Guilfoyle's beds are asymmetrical or arabesque in shape allowing plants of different heights and foliage to be used throughout the bed that can be viewed from all angles. The garden, kept up to scratch over the years by the hard work of the owners and with much-needed help from the Australian Garden History Society's 'working bees' in the mid-1980s and mid-1990s, continues to be admired today as one of the great landscape and horticultural achievements in Australia.

The dry-stone walls at Turkeith date back to the 1850s when they were used for stock management purposes. They were extended up until the 1920s and include general

fencing, sheepfolds, sheep dips, walling in the woolshed precinct and structures in the vicinity of farm dams. Happily. Guilfoyle's garden design also incorporated dry-stone walling around the perimeter of the garden, where there have been beautiful recent additions. Most notable of this recent work is the wall at the farm entrance which presented a challenge, as it is curvilinear and located in an area of softer basaltic clays. The work of master waller David Long, special care was taken to select foundation stones (from Kyneton in Victoria) to adequately distribute the loading over the underlying clay and the property name has been worked into a specially-sawn bluestone slab.

Many thanks are due to Tim and Mary-Ann Holt for guiding us so tirelessly around their beautiful property and sharing their endless fountain of knowledge about it with us. Thanks are also due to Andrew and Karin Miller for putting on such lovely food and to Allan Willingham for his most enlightening talk about Western District architecture.



Above: dry-stone wall passes through a stony rise. Below: inside the woolshed



Above: outbuildings include a bluestone bakery. Below: the new entrance wall



Above: aloes overhang a dry-stone wall. Below left: drifts of naked ladies (Amaryllis belladonna) surround the original tennis court



At the garden entrance succulents thrive in the dry volcanic soil



The sun dial is hewn from Mount Gellibrand granite



Sweeping lawns are interspersed with beds of contrasting foliage



Areas of paving in the garden and by the stables have recently been unearthed

Capturing dry-stone walls on postcards

By Andrew Miller, Secretary DSWAA



Shepherds' huts in Mont-Dore region of France

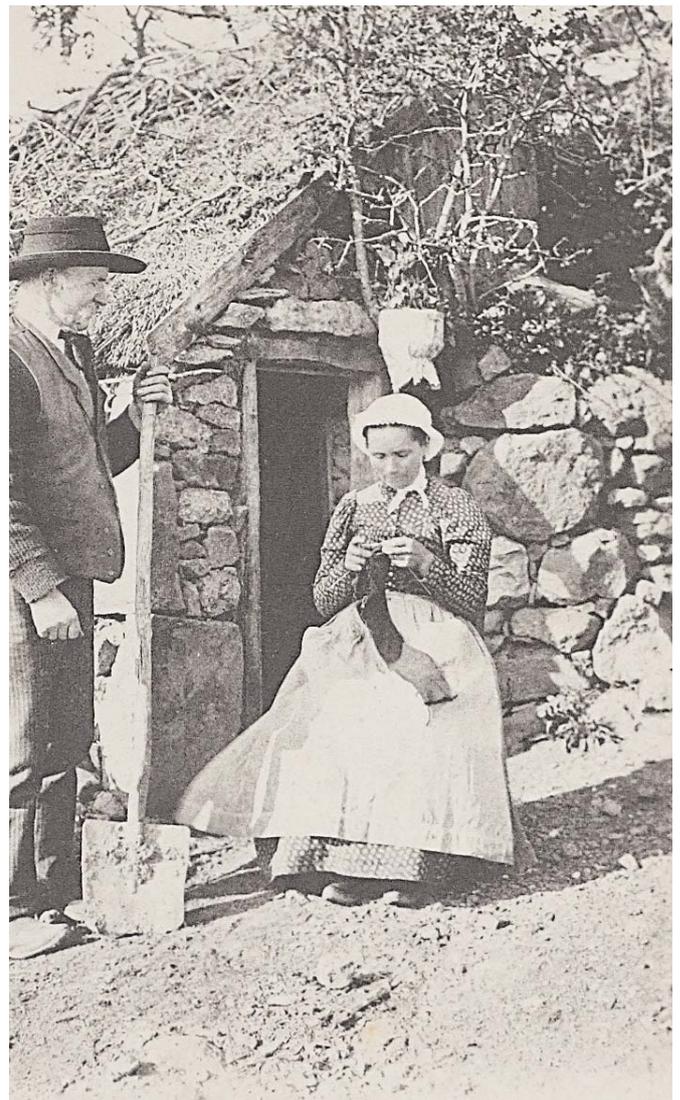
You may recall in Issues 28 and 29 of the *Flag Stone*, I have written about dry stone walls being captured in photo images and the wonderful library of images that the DSWAA is amassing. In general, these images have been assembled from the DSWAA field trips and the travels of our members and friends.

Images on old postcards have always caught my attention. The interest was probably sparked when I came across some of these important heritage items via an old family album. They were First World War postcards sent home to family from France. The fine detail in many of those postcard images is so sharp, contrasting with how little detail was able to be conveyed in the 'news home' on the reverse, clearly for military security reasons.

Well, here is a story that some may consider a little idiosyncratic! The sharp detail in the First World War postcard images inspired me to search for early images of the use of dry stone. My story here presents the outcome of a search for dry stone images from the postcard stalls in some flea markets in France.

It became a small passion. Fortunately Karin was patient! The first postcard of a dry stone wall, well there was my shriek of excitement! *Voilà!* It was like gold – then one keeps digging deeper in the albums and boxes and the French stall owner is perplexed, 'Why is this man so crazy about images of "*murs en pierre sèche*" (dry stone walls)'? Karin explains on my behalf and the stall holder gives a typically nonchalant French shrug. 'C'est la vie', I think to myself! (That's life!)

The search was fruitful. I share with you here some of the postcard images of early French life (*circa* early 1900s) with dry stone structures clearly forming part of the village and farming landscape. In the next issue of the *Flag Stone*, I will share my collection of images of dry stone walls in the early Australian landscape.



Dry-stone dwelling, Auvergne, France



Milk carrier beside dry-stone walls, Murat



Dry stone walls near village houses, Auvergne, France



Farm activity adjacent to dry-stone walls, Auvergne, France



IRDES. — Types des Pyrénées. — LL.
Man from the Pyrenees beside a dry-stone wall



Dry-stone walls near ramparts at Cuiseaux, France

A Scottish dry-stone waller in Australia

By Duncan Haddow – Scottish dry-stone waller



Dykers in Dunning, Scotland. UK

When I arrived in Australia four years ago I was hoping to find some work using my dry-stone walling skills. However I quickly discovered that there was not much evidence of dry-stone work and most of what I did find was badly built and falling down. It was when I noticed the mailboxes on a country road that I understood a bit more. As I drove past big farms and little weatherboard cabins I saw mailboxes made from oil drums, 10-gallon containers, old gas bottles, everything except a shop-bought postbox. It dawned on me then that Aussie battlers knew how to ‘make do and mend’ as my grandmother would have said. Much like the Scots attitude (anyone from Fife here?) it makes no sense to pay someone to do what you might be able to do yourself. My conclusion at the time was that nobody was going to be paying me to build dry-stone walls.

Since that time I have discovered far more about Australians and their habits. For a start I have now seen some very well built dry-stone walls, in Victoria and in New South Wales. There are in fact some excellent wallers working in places like the Blue Mountains and Byronshire. The other thing I discovered was that there is fondness in the folk memory of some Australians for all things Scottish, Irish or just old. There are shops that sell old hand tools and antique kitchenware, there are popular highland gatherings, pipe bands and Irish dancers. I also know now that there are in fact plenty of Australians who are happy to spend money on their gardens and who have a preference for natural materials and artisan craftsmanship.

Although a lot of people (not just in Australia) like to have a go at laying stones without mortar the results are often disappointing. Their retaining walls sag and wash away in rainstorms; their dry stone wall looks unsteady or starts to crumble away. The important thing to realise is that this is not due to the properties of dry-stone building. What is lacking here is a proper understanding of the principles of the craft. These basic principles are not complicated and can be learned by anyone but require a good teacher and practical instruction.

There are numerous reasons why dry stone technique is relevant and even essential in Australia today. There are the old walls built by the farmers in the past which should be preserved; there is the need to be less reliant on cement due to its high energy costs and to find alternative building techniques; there is the beauty of the stone and artistry of the craft; there is the ecological benefit of having dry stone walls in terms of habitat and biodiversity; and there is the satisfaction of building something which can be practical, beautiful and lasting.

Whatever the reason for your interest in this ancient technique I would urge you to get along to a course and get the hands on experience that is so essential. We ran a course inland a little from Coffs Harbour the last weekend in April. It was a two-day practical course with a Friday evening talk to introduce the principles and give a background to the dry-stone walling tradition. I look forward to meeting some of you at future courses at: Celtic Mists, 600 Tallawudjah Creek Road, Glenreagh, NSW. Tel. 04223 870 705 or 0407 664 906.

In the July workshop, my father Norman Haddow, master waller visiting from Scotland, will be sharing his skills.

Sad loss of Gaye Wuchatsch

By Charmian Brent, DSWAA Committee member, from a eulogy written by Rob Wuchatsch



Gaye Wuchatsch



Gaye Wuchatsch and Linda Mason looking at dry-stone walls in the Stony Rises on a wet day

We shall all miss Gaye with her lovely smile and soft, gentle, caring ways and it was with heavy hearts that we bade her farewell at Thomastown Lutheran Church on 28 April 2014 after she lost her battle with recurring breast cancer. Gaye, with husband Rob, were inaugural members and had been closely involved with the DSWAA over the years, taking on various roles both on the Committee, as the Membership Officer and the person responsible for the Archives. DSWAA members have had many a happy Committee meeting at the Stony Rises Homestead where Gaye waited on us all as if we were royalty. Her warmth and generosity of spirit touched everybody that she came into contact with and it was always good to be in her company.

Gaye was the first child of Valentine James and Marjorie Lohse (née Muston) and was born in South Melbourne on 7 August 1943. Eventually, the family moved to Ballarat, where Val was Ballarat Brewery architect and Marj a primary school teacher. Gaye and younger sister Ruth enjoyed a happy childhood there. In 1964, Gaye, after studies at Ballarat Teachers College (interrupted by a horrendous car crash which she survived and recovered from through sheer determination of spirit) graduated, then spent the next 46 years teaching, a career she loved. She married architect Bruce Caldwell in 1969 and in 1972 they spent a wonderful year touring Europe. On her return to Australia, Gaye taught at Blackburn North, Koonung Heights and Park Orchards and then took time off to have four children – Tim (1975), Matthew (1977), Chris (1978) and Louise (1980).

In 1981, Gaye, Bruce and the children moved to a new home in Donvale on a one-acre block. When Louise was six months old, Gaye resumed teaching at Park Orchards where she rose to become Acting then later Deputy Principal. After brief periods at Birrallee, Jells Park and Templestowe (Deputy Principal), Gaye taught at Laburnum from 1994–2005. In

1982 she had obtained her Graduate Diploma in Educational Administration and in 1989 commenced studies for a Master's Degree but later deferred.

Gaye had many interests, including gardening, craftwork, historic houses, antiques and local and family history. She was a keen member of the Doncaster-Templestowe Historical Society and Port Phillip Pioneers, particularly after her separation from Bruce in 1998. It was through her interest in her German ancestry that she met Robert Wuchatsch in 1999 and on 16 August 2003 they were married in the historic Lutheran church at Westgarthtown.

In November 2005, through John Menzies of the DSWAA, Gaye and Rob heard about an 11-acre property with dry-stone walls in the Stony Rises at Pirron Yallock, between Colac and Camperdown. They bought it, taking up residence in January 2006 and Gaye had found her dream home – the Stony Rises Homestead – an 1860s stone house with a rusty roof, open fireplace, large garden with lots of roses and enough land for her dogs, chooks and Red Poll cattle. Once settled, she threw herself into the local community, joining the Stonyford CFA and Market Committee, Colac VIEW Group and the committees of the Camperdown Historical Society and Camperdown Garden Club. She twice opened the garden at Stony Rises Homestead for fund-raising purposes – in 2007 for the Alvie school where she taught from 2006–10, and in 2011 towards the restoration of the historic Robbie Burns statue at Camperdown.

Gaye was devoted to her children and her greatest joy was seeing them mature into fine adults, marry and present her with grandchildren, of whom there are four. She will be sorely missed by all who knew her but will live on in our memories through her enthusiasm for life, her kindness and her wonderful smile. Eric Collyer, family friend and organist summed it up neatly when he said, 'You couldn't help but love Gaye'.

President's Message



Jim Holdsworth

Greetings

More than 40 members and friends attended our recent field trip to the 'Turkeith' homestead and garden last month. The report in this issue will be of interest to those who attended and, I expect, will generate a little envy in those who weren't there. 'Turkeith' is one of many wonderful rural properties that tell of the 'squattocracy' that opened up and grazed the vast volcanic plains of western Victoria. The solid bluestone homestead and its outbuildings echo the extraordinary wealth that came to this area when Australia truly rode on the sheep's back, days when fine wool was shipped to England where it brought 'a pound a pound'. That sort of price can only be dreamt about today.

The ships that sailed from Victorian ports came back laden with iron ballast; iron that was recast into the decorative lacework that adorns the facades of our Victorian-era terraces and grand homes.

Today, in many more ways than one, are we the beneficiaries of those pioneers who turned rich soils, well-bred sheep and hard work into one of the two great periods of prosperity for Victoria. The other, of course, was gold and again, our streets are flanked by the great public and private buildings that gold paid for and which also enabled marvellous 'Smellborn' to transform itself into Marvellous Melbourne of the 1880s.

Through every step of the way, and signalling the evolution of farming and gold mining, are the dry-stone walls and structures that remain today, whether stretching across the rolling hills of western Victoria or hidden in old gold prospecting areas such as Walhalla, Guildford and many other boom-and-bust settlements.

Our program of future field trips includes a weekend in the goldmining area of Adelong, near Tumut in New South Wales, to be scheduled in the coming Spring.

We hope those of you who missed 'Turkeith' can attend this field trip. Details will be available in due course.

Our next field trip is to an area rich in early farming, on Melbourne's northern outskirts, on Sunday, 20 July. The Shire of Whittlesea, in conjunction with the DSWAA, is hosting a day tour to explore the geology of the area and the patterns of land use over time. We'll visit examples of traditional as well as more recent walls and structures and learn how the land influenced the way of life for early pioneers. When details are circulated, do respond to book your place for this significant trip.

Following the Whittlesea tour, on the Sunday evening, there will be our Annual General Meeting

(AGM) and the election of office bearers for the next two years, followed by our Biennial Dinner and the John Collier Address by Architect and illustrator John Nicholson. The AGM and Dinner will be held at the *North Fitzroy Star Hotel*, the same venue as our 2012 Dinner. I encourage you to keep Sunday, 20 July, both day and evening, free for another memorable occasion (see advance notice on page 12).

This year, as in every second year, all office bearer and committee positions are declared vacant and every position is to be filled. The back page of this issue lists all current committee members.

I would like you to consider nominating for a position on the 2014–16 Committee of the DSWAA. Our Secretary will be announcing details of the nomination process soon.

As always, any voluntary organisation needs some new blood and new ideas to keep it fresh and able to serve its members, as well as the wider constituency that we have as described in our 'Vision' (see below), effectively. Even if all current committee members re-nominate, there is room for new faces.

If you consider nominating for a committee position and would like to discuss taking an active role on the Committee with me, I would be pleased to hear from you for a chat. I would particularly like to see more committee members from beyond Victoria as we strive to become a truly national organisation.

**Best wishes,
Jim Holdsworth**

'The Association's vision is that dry-stone walls and dry-stone structures are widely accepted for their unique place in the history, culture and economy of the nation and for the legacy they represent, that governments and the wider community recognise the importance of significant dry-stone structures built by indigenous peoples, European explorers, early settlers and modern craftspeople as valued artifacts of our national identity, that this acceptance and recognition is manifested by appropriate statutory protection and landowner and community respect and celebration, and that the craft of dry-stone walling grows as a modern reinforcement of the contribution that dry stone walls and structures have made to the culture of Australia.'



Gathering Stones...



Above and below right: dry-stone walls in Ranthambore National Park, India



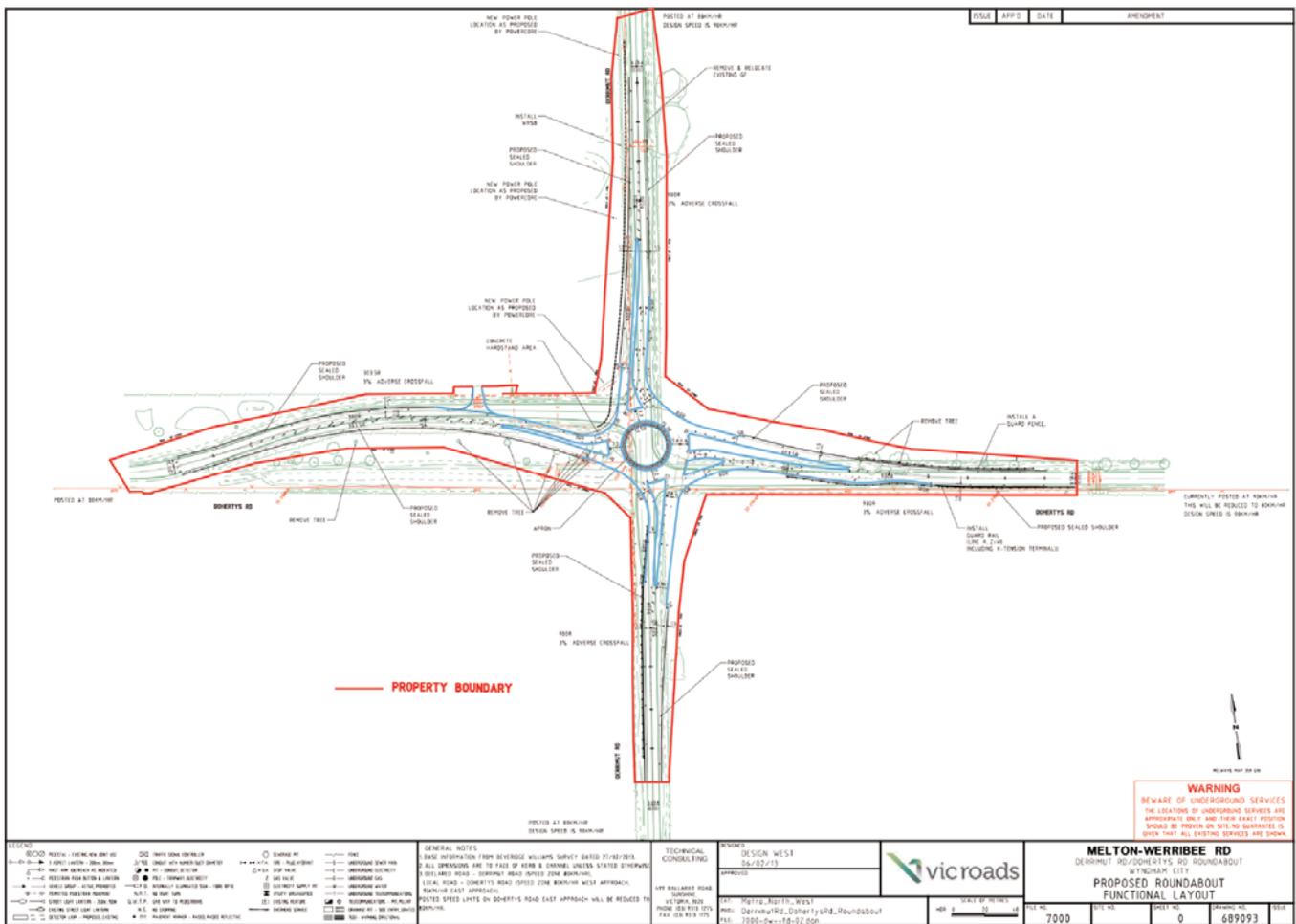
Above: Qutub complex, Delhi, India

Below: wall built from stolen temple fragments



Roundabouts and existing walls: what's involved

By Charmian Brent, DSWAA Committee member



Narrative of a road design process

Consider this: Wyndham City Council is proposing to construct a roundabout at the intersection of Derrimut Road and Dohertys Road, Tarneit and this will impact considerably on existing dry-stone walls that define the boundaries of the properties adjacent to the intersection. Should the walls be bulldozed willy nilly in the name of progress or should they be considered for their heritage value and be rebuilt in a proper, approved fashion if they need to be moved for this project to proceed?

The study and classification of dry-stone walls depends on a number of variables: the size, texture, shape, composition, density of the material available, the purpose for which the wall is built (barrier to contain sheep and cattle or exclude vermin [rabbits]); the ethnic origins of the waller (English, Irish, Scottish, Welsh, Swiss Italian, Chinese, etc.) and the local/regional influences that existed within the waller's country of origin – designs vary between districts and countries.

So, while some current walls in Australia may look a little tired or scrappy, their style of construction may make them quite rare.

The Shire of Melton has conducted a detailed inventory of its dry-stone walls; has Wyndham City done the same and where does it stand in relation to dry-stone walls?

As it happens, Wyndham City Council has the following condition listed in its draft planning permit condition in relation to dry-stone walls present at the site for the roundabout construction.

Prior to the commencement of works, a plan for the re-provision of the Study Area must be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Responsible Authority. The plan should include (but not be limited to) details of the following:

- (i) Overall means of restoration
- (ii) Location of the restored wall(s) on all sides of the junction
- (iii) The reconstruction/building on a new alignment of a sufficient amount of the walls so as to retain the historical landscape character of the area
- (iv) Confirmation that the replacement wall(s) would be of a traditional form, comprising dry stone walls built reusing the existing stone
- (v) Confirmation the works will be endorsed and will then form part of this permit.

The provision which would enable Wyndham City Council to impose these conditions on the works is Clause 52.37 of the Wyndham Planning Scheme. This 'Post Offices and Dry Stone Walls' provision is optional – some municipalities, especially urban fringe municipalities where development is taking place, such as Wyndham, have opted in to it. It is open ended, and gives councils the opportunity to make a case-by-case assessment of the impact of proposed works on pre-1940 dry-stone walls, and to create conditions if they think these are warranted. So you see, building a new roundabout



The walls above are on legs of a proposed roundabout and would need to be moved and rebuilt

that impinges on existing dry-stone walls is quite a complicated matter.

In most cases it would be advantageous for a council or applicant proposing road works that involve dry-stone walls to have a heritage assessment of the structure and history of affected walls prepared prior to any recommendation, especially regarding reconstruction. In the Wyndham case, the walls appear to be visually prominent and on a main intersection, which is probably sufficient reason to rebuild them in this area. But the risk is that we end up with many walls reconstructed without regard to a heritage template, or 'mock historicism' in the landscape. Apart from the most obvious (to us) non-historical walls such as those which use concrete and non-local stones, in a few years it might not be clear to locals in a newly-urbanised area which restored walls are really original, and which have been 'reconstructed' in the early twenty-first century by local landscapers. And perhaps also having walls of less historical significance being preserved, but more historically significant (although perhaps less visually prepossessing) walls, lost.

What is good from a DSWAA perspective is it means that Australia's built heritage is always being taken into consideration and efforts are being made to preserve it.

As Alistair Tune, one of Victoria's leading master wallers puts it: 'You could replace a post-and-wire fence three or four times in the life of what these stone walls have stood so far. Over the years, stone walling hasn't changed at all – the technique's well over 300–400 years old – perhaps even older.'

The effort that went into building these walls 100–150 years ago is part of our history and these walls are a legacy of the people that built them – their hard work. I'd hate to see it die out. These walls are too valuable to leave them in disrepair, so to be able to fix them and stand back and say that you've repaired the wall is a good thing.'

These sentiments were further endorsed by the late Josie Black, a founder member of the DSWAA, who said, 'Dry-stone walling is an international phenomenon. Australian walls, compared to the European walls, tend to be bigger. They tend to be taller, thicker and deeper. From that perspective, our walls are quite remarkable. Some of them are two metres high and sometimes over a metre wide. We're very proud of them.'

Making sure that dry-stone walls are treated with respect when road works and improvements are proposed is of paramount importance and is part of the DSWAA's *raison d'être*.

Learning walling in South Australia

By Bruce Munday, DSWAA Committee member, SA

The third DSWAA workshop in South Australia was held again at Rosebank, an historic grazing property in the Adelaide Hills. As before, this workshop was run over a weekend and conducted by renowned waller Ian (Wally) Carline.

Twelve months ago, we began building from scratch a paddock wall with a gateway. This was extended by the second workshopers and has now stretched further to an impressive 40 metres. Participants learn the importance of good ground preparation, interlocking stonework supported with snug hearting, avoidance of running joints and the constraint of the stringline and batter. Aside from its obvious strength, a most satisfying aspect of this wall is that it does not look as if it was built by a committee, let alone three committees. That must say something about the quality of instruction and the ability to follow same.

The other project has been the restoration of a damaged wall – a skill many farmers are seeking, having discovered that ‘just putting the stones back’ is not as simple as it might seem.

The subject is a remarkable stone ‘cross’, built many years ago to provide shelter for deer. Standing a metre and a half high with coping stones weighing up to 80 kg, four five-metre arms protected the animals against wind from any quarter.

Unfortunately, three of the arms were damaged by bulls some years ago. Our challenge has been to restore these, the most difficult being of course the last. Wally showed us how to maintain the original style while improving the structural integrity, particularly with the cheek end linked with hefty through stones and ties back into the wall.

The next workshop in this series will be on the weekend of 11–12 October 2014. Contact Bruce Munday for details.



Working on the cross – a shelter for deer against the wind



Working on the cross that had been damaged by bulls



A through stone for the cheek end



Getting started on the new wall



Adding to the wall built by the first two workshops



Satisfied wallers



The result of three workshops

Spirals, stones and survival

By Raelene Marshall, DSWAA member



Nuraghe, Sardinia

In the small rural village of Baunei high in the mountainous Sardinian landscape, dry-stone aficionados from across Europe, Africa, Asia, the United Kingdom and four Australians gathered together in late September 2012 to discuss the topic 'Dry Stone between Nature, History and Culture'. The Congress, held every two years in a European country, was facilitated by the Société Scientifique Internationale pour l'étude pluridisciplinaire de la Pierre Sèche [SPS] and hosted by the Province of Ogliastra in collaboration with two other provinces of Ilbono and Talana. The program included lectures, exhibitions and workshops, together with three half-day visits to sites of the territory. People from France, Italy, Africa, Corsica, Cyprus, Great Britain, Switzerland and Greece presented enthralling papers that described a wide range of vernacular dry-stone styles and the cultural landscapes and lifestyles of their particular makers and inhabitants.

What is it about stones that draws us to collect them, wear them, dig them, play with them, study them, carve them, build with them and admire them as inherent elements of the landscapes they form? Perennial questions that precipitated several unrelated events that began in 1999 when Visions of Australia funded me to develop and tour an exhibition that aimed to tell the early-settlement story of the history of dry-stone walls in the making of the Australian landscape. It began a longtime journey that motivated me to suggest the formation of a group, which in July 2002, became the known as the Dry Stone Walls Association of Australia (DSWAA). The same journey that had led me to this beautiful Italian island dotted with thousands of ancient spiral dry-stone structures known as 'nuraghe'. Sardinia is a place of mouthwatering food, where blues skies, white sandy beaches and mountains blend together to offer breathtaking views as far as the eye can see.

The landscape is mountainous and challenging. Its rocks date from the Palaeozoic era. Due to long erosion processes, the island's highlands are formed of granite, schist, trachyte,

basalt, sandstone dolomite and limestone. The terrain is extremely dry and relatively inaccessible so the site visits to the ancient Nuraghe gave us a wonderful insight into what might have confronted the early inhabitants in their day-to-day efforts to survive. European audiences at these dry-stone Congress events are fascinated by Australia, Australians and the uniqueness of our landscape. In this case, my paper about the spiral fish-trapping systems of the Ngemba people of Brewarrina in New South Wales and the Gunditjmarra people of south-west Victoria, with their sophisticated aquaculture system for farming eels and their use of stone for art, tools and rituals, provoked a great deal of interest among an audience with a genuine desire to learn more.

Derived from the prehistoric Sardinian root 'nur' which means both 'hollow' and 'heap', the 'nuraghe' interior comprises a complex plan of chambers, winding staircases, dead-end corridors, concealed rooms with trap doors, and a variety of niches and compartments. Many stand up to three stories high with magnificently corbelled domes one on top of the other, while some have subsidiary towers attached to the main keep. Built more than 3,000 years ago, by virtue of their excellent design and construction the 'nuraghe' have withstood both the depredations of weather and of humans. Today, they continue to intrigue us, inviting us to explore them in an effort to uncover their magic and mystery.

I have long been fascinated by and drawn to questioning why and how cultures from all over the world place a stone upon a stone, using universally understood shapes of the line, circle serpent and spiral. Stones to keep things in. Stones to keep things out. Believed to be fortresses but perhaps dwellings or storehouses, the spiral 'nuraghe', along with many other such ancient structures, impress with the size of the stones used and the thought processes and ingenuity of their makers. How were the stones moved, how in those ancient times were the usually hard basalt stones cut and



Fishtrap, Lake Condah, Victoria

dressed by artisans with no metal tools harder than copper or bronze?

An eerie similarity exists between the spiral design of the ancient Sardinian Nuraghe and the Kurtonitj dry-stone sculpture built in the Budj Bim National Heritage landscape near Lake Condah in south-west Victoria as part of Regional Arts Victoria's 2007 Fresh and Salty Project. Influenced by the design of the Gunditjmara peoples' ancient fish trapping systems, contemporaneously the work reflects humankind's innate affinity with and understanding of the power and use of the spiral. Despite the tyranny of time and distance it also brings together, both practically and metaphorically, two otherwise unrelated and unconnected ancient cultures. A stone upon a stone.

In Sicily, rural stone constructions known as 'muragghio' are signs of old agricultural traditions of the Ragusan territory. Here the warm limestone colour contrasts magically with the blue of the sea and the green of the cultivated lands. Representing a typology of artefacts, the spiral structures use dry-stone building methods common to prehistoric or protohistoric buildings of

major historical and architectural importance. Distinctive watchtowers on farms in the shape of a truncated cone, the 'muragghio' sit directly on the ground, or on terraces lying on a higher level. Characterised by hard, mostly helix-shaped local limestone ramps, the monumental dimensions this vernacular architecture assumes are conveyed visually by the flat surfaces, often mostly quadrilateral-based podiums, terraces of circular concentric planes with decreasing diameters which raise the structure towards the sky.

The origins of cultures working with stone to aid agriculture and survival are well known. Over time practices are likely refined in an effort to reach special geometrical and technological building solutions, which often find their archetypal models in the cabin, houses or the natural cave. No more evidenced today than at Lake Condah, where remnant structures that once housed permanent stone-house systems dating back thousands of years, demonstrate a large, settled Aboriginal community systematically using the abundance of stone to build houses and fish traps for farming and smoking eels for food and trade.



Muragghi, Sicily

July Field Trip Annual General Meeting and Biennial Dinner

20 July 2014

**1. City of Whittlesea Heritage Program
(10.00 am – 4.00 pm)**

**Geological and built landscapes on
Melbourne's northern fringe, with a special
focus on dry-stone walls.**

**2. Annual General Meeting, North Fitzroy
Star Hotel (6.00 pm)**

**3. Biennial Dinner, North Fitzroy Star Hotel
(7.00–10.00 pm)**

**The John Collier Address will be presented
by John Nicholson, architect and outstanding
artist, especially noted for his artwork
depicting dry-stone walls in Italy and Australia.**

More details from DSWAA Secretary in June

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 2014 issue is
20 August 2014

All material to: chabrent@bigpond.net.au

Some websites you may like to visit

www.budjbim.com/tours.html

www.astoneuponastone.com

www.rbg Syd.gov.au

www.pierreseche.net

www.stonefoundation.org

www.dswac.ca

Who's Who in the DSWAA

President

Jim Holdsworth
0417 648 218 jim@planningcollaborative.com.au

Vice-President

Vacant

Secretary

Andrew Miller enquiries@dswaa.org.au
0408 139 553 aksdmiller@bigpond.com.au

Accountant

Brad Purvis brad@yarragroup.com.au

Treasurer

Vacant

Membership

Sue Jones sirius.associates@westnet.com.au

Editor Newsletter

Charmian Brent chabrent@bigpond.net.au

Website Co-ordinator

Simon Badway aubads@gmail.com

Committee Members

Bruce Munday bruce.m42@bigpond.com

Allan Willingham alberti@ozemail.com.au

New members

Please complete (or photocopy) and post to:
DSWAA Membership, Secretary, PO Box 185, Ballarat,
Vic 3353

Payment: monies can be deposited in the DSWAA'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)	\$50.00
Individual (voting rights)	\$30.00 (1 year) \$80 (3 years)
Corporate (voting rights)	\$80.00
Family (voting rights)	\$50.00
* Paying by: Cheque enc. •	Bank deposit •

Name

Address

Telephone

Mobile

Email

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

Contributors: photographs and drawings

page	1–	Lyn Allison, Charmian Brent
page	2	Lyn Allison, Charmian Brent
page	3	Charmian Brent, Mim Hennerfeld, Andrew Miller
pages–	4–5	Unknown – sourced from French fleamarkets
page	6	Duncan Haddow
page	7	Rob Wuchatsch
page	9	Charles Evans
pages	10–11	Nataraj Kandi/VicRoads
pages	12–13	Bruce Munday
pages	14–15	Raelene Marshall