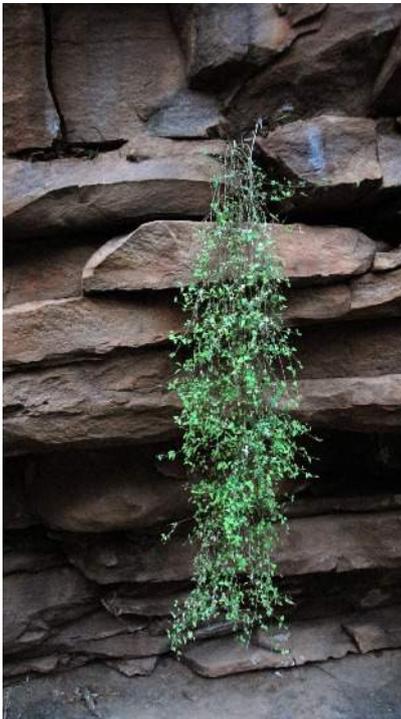


## Strange times indeed – Jim Kilsby (President DSWAA)

### Walls and plants



**W**ell, what strange times we are living in. Let's hope that times improve soon and we can get through this in the best possible way. There are lots of uncertainties, but we do know that dry stone walls will be there long after this has passed.

As you are aware, the DSWAA has had to adjust our arrangements as well. We had to postpone our Field Trip in South Australia at the last minute which was a great shame. Bruce Munday and Jim Holdsworth had done a great job organising an extremely interesting event. Once we find a new suitable date we will advise accordingly. It will be one not to miss.



This Flagstone is another cracker edition and I am sure you will all enjoy reading the various stories. Thank you to all people who have contributed content and enabled this publication to remain a key part of our Association's culture.

I have also just issued an e-news to inform all members about new arrangements for our AGM to be held as a group telephone conference on 27 June 2020. Nominations for the President and General Committee members are requested by midnight on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2020 and I invite all members of the Association to consider nominating for a position if you can. Diversity of experience and opinion are always valued, so if you have some time then please nominate.

With that, I announce that I will not be standing for the role of President for the next year. My family, farm and work to promote the Kyneton Dry Stone Walling Centre are demanding more of my limited time. I wish the next President and members of the next committee all the best as they inject new leadership and fresh energy to meet the objectives of the association.

I have served on the committee and then president for a few years now and really enjoyed my discussions with the general membership and key people within the Association. There is no doubt that I have the bug and look forward to supporting the Association through Kyneton Dry Stone Walling Centre. It has been great to get to know many of our members and I have always appreciated your counsel, passion and commitment; I thank you for allowing me to serve you on the committee.

Kind regards

Jim

### This issue

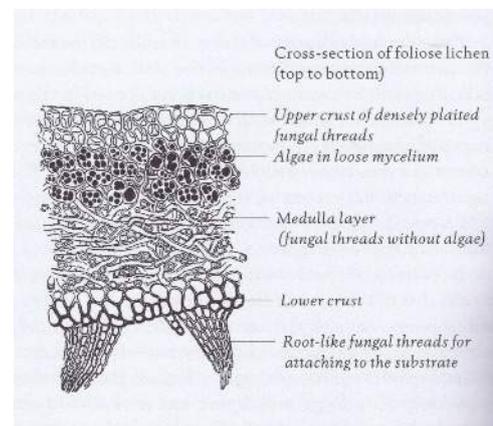
Walls & plants  
Moving a wall  
Quarrymen  
Batter frames  
Sigiriya (Lion Rock)  
Double-arch bridge  
Super-Cayrou  
Duddon iron furnace  
Sheep folds  
Book review

## Dry stone walls and plants – Bruce Munday



‘In the beginning there is stone. The wall is bare, cool and without life. This is not the place where we would expect lavish, thriving vegetation to occur. Only tenacious, specially equipped pioneers take root in this inhospitable terrain. Algae and bacteria do not need soil to thrive; they can endure heat and arid conditions and receive sufficient nourishment from whatever the wind or an occasional rain shower brings along. The nutrients produced by algae and bacteria gradually accumulate with the dust blown in and deposit themselves on the irregular stone surfaces. Should the climatic conditions be suitable, lichens – the symbiosis of alga and fungus – form in a slow process.’

So says Franziska Witschi in *Dry Stone Walls – Fundamentals, Construction, Significance* (see TFS #47)



‘Lichens cling to the stone with root-like threads. As a result, small stone fragments break off, which collect in cracks in the wall. Mixed with dead pieces of lichen, a simple soil develops, although this is still not humus. The next settlers sprout as mosses ... [which] in turn collect dust and fine soil and hold back rainwater. The ratio of dead organic material increases. The gentle weathering of the wall takes its course and the first humus develops with small cushions of moss ... ‘

Eventually sufficient soil and humus accumulate to support small fungi, ferns and then flowering plants. These events happen slowly, subtly and are easily overlooked. But the effect is pleasant and might be sought after in landscaping, were we not in such a hurry to see the result in our lifetime. Almost as a substitute we introduce plants to walls, integrating them not into the stone but into the wall space where we feel they will enhance one another. This is where dry stone is so ‘right’ – can you imagine mortar!

## Dry stone walls and plants *cont.*



**D**ry stone walls such as these roadside walls in Derbyshire (*above*) and Cumbria (*left*) immediately suggest landscaping potential. The harmony between stone and plants, between form and function can be compelling.

Renowned landscaper Ellis 'Rocky' Stones first came to the notice of legendary Edna Walling in 1935 when he built for her a dry stone wall. She then gave him a free hand to create walls, outcrops, pools and paths in her gardens at some of Melbourne's finest homes.

Fast forward to 2013 when the Best in Show at the Chelsea Flower Show was a creation that included a dry stone wall and steps by David Long and Alistair Tune.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> See p6 this issue

## Dry stone walls and plants *cont.*



Some plants belong with dry stone walls - on them, in them or beside them. Walls enhance the natural look, provide a platform, can be formal or informal, and as retaining walls they drain well



# Dry stone walls and plants *cont.*



- Plants and walls are not always a good mix. Clockwise from top left:
- Well-head with elm growing inside
  - Walls at Waterfall Gully (SA) being torn apart by ivy
  - Prickly pear pushing over gateway (Sardinia)
  - Trees grow, walls don't (Yorkshire)
  - Fallen eucalypt limbs (an Oz issue!)
  - Moreton Bay fig surface roots (could be a feature!)
  - Leaving room for root growth near mature oak
  - Hawthorn root-plate lifting wall (Cumbria)



## Taking a wall to a plant show — *David Long*



Needless to say, creating a landscape installation for the Chelsea Flower Show doesn't happen on the morning of the event. In October 2012, Philip Johnson (designer), Steve Webber and I were in Scotland setting out the basic skeleton of the whole exhibit. Framed around large sandstone rocks at a huge stone-yard in Castlecary, halfway between Glasgow and Edinburgh, this was some six months out from the 2013 event. In an extraordinary segue, stone from the very source quarry (Drumhead) had been used in 1830 for the life-size sculpture of Robbie Burns (and his dog) displayed at the Camperdown public park until vandalised in 2009.



A key feature of the installation was to be a ten-metre-long winding dry stone wall. Anyone who has built one will know that you cannot knock that up in a couple of days, let alone in such a confined space, with all the other design and construction features going on all around.

So because the time line on arrival in London would be very tight we decided to build the wall first in Scotland. Local dry stone waller Callum Gray and I then built this wall at the stone yard at Castlecary (I had carried over in my luggage a floorplan for the wall that had been laid out beforehand at Philip Johnson's office in Melbourne). I'll never forget that it was freezing cold in the stone-yard and raining almost every day, but we just had to get that wall built, knowing that once done we would pull it all down!

We finished the wall to the design specifications and then took it down in numbered sections, bagging these sections into 14 'bulker-bags'. These, along with all the other large rocks for the 'landscape' were then shipped off to London on a flat-bed truck (lorry!).

Back in London it was largely left to Alistair Tune and Callum to reassemble the wall while the other landscape features were being arranged around them. At this stage

we all had multiple tasks across the site, but I was largely responsible for the winding dry stone steps and building a rock escarpment with gorge, waterfalls and creek.



*Putting the wall back together again*

The Landscape Architects Network later described it as 'without doubt an amazing feat of design, engineering and construction'. There can only be one Best in Show and winning it at Chelsea really was a highlight.

*David Long has been landscape gardening since 1973, specialising in stonework. Winner of the 2007 Lorne Sculpture Biennale and recipient of a Fellowship with International Specialized Skills Institute, he still dines out on being part of the Chelsea 2013 winning team.*

## The life of a quarryman – Bruce Munday

The DSWAA field trip in SA, originally planned for April but now 'penciled in' for November, will include a slate quarry at Willunga and many dry stone features built from its output. While the world closed down for the COVID-19 I did a little research into the history of slate quarrying, not at Willunga, but in UK where many of our quarrymen learned their trade.

Sir John Burgoyne's *Rudimentary Treatise on the Blasting and Quarrying of Stone for Building and other Purposes* (1849, p82) describes in detail the laborious and often dangerous work of winning stone for structures that we now admire. Dealing with slate he describes:

'... the most convenient method of quarrying to be by detaching the masses of slate vertically from the face of a trench or a gullet. The cutting of this gullet into the side of the slate mountain is, therefore, the first operation in the working of the quarry. As the trench proceeds and the height of the surface above becomes greater than convenient (say 40 feet), a second trench is commenced above the other, and similarly carried onward into the mountain until the height above reaches a similar quantity, when a third trench is commenced, and so on. In the upper part of the quarry the slates are removed with crowbars; but the slates become harder as they are lower from the surface and require gunpowder to detach the

main masses. The miners engaged in drilling the holes for the powder are suspended by ropes from the upper parts of the rock and are liable to many severe accidents.'

William Rollinson in *Life and Tradition in the Lake District* (1974, pp152-3) describes the other perils regularly faced



by slate quarrymen, not least being the transport of the slate from the quarry face to the dressing sheds, usually down a very steep descent. Quoting one James Clarke in 1787: 'The slate is laid upon a barrow, which is called a trail barrow; it has two inclining handles or stangs between which the man is placed, going, like a horse, before the weight, and has

nothing more to do than keep it in the tract and prevent it from running too fast. Those who are dextrous will not sometimes set a foot on the ground for ten or twelve yards [9 or 11 m] together; but the barrow will often run away with an unskillful person.' A quarryman would make seven or eight such journeys per day, each with a quarter of a ton of slate. The trip down (all going well)



would take only a few minutes, but the return trip with the empty barrow was a half-hour slog up the very steep scree-littered hill.

In the Lake District and Yorkshire quarrymen, like dry stone wallers, often lived during the week in small huts on the fellside, going home on Saturday night until the Monday morning. They worked 7am until 5.30pm, communicated with 'head office' by carrier pigeon, and in the 1830s earned up to 3/6 per day at the top of their range.

Useful slate was discovered at Willunga in 1840 and rapidly became a significant industry. There were initially four major slate quarries at Willunga: Delabole and Bangor (both named after quarries in Cornwall where many of the quarrymen had learned their skills), Bastian's and Martin's. Only the last of these is still operating, as it has almost continuously from 1842. Many of the quarrymen and their families lived around the quarries, Delabole developing into a small village with its own church, recently superbly restored.



## The batter frame – Geoff Duggan (DSWAA committee)



**B**atter is the inward lean on the face of a dry stone wall. This angle or lean on the face can vary from region to region, because of local styles and traditions or stone type. I have seen and built walls with as little as a 1-in-10 batter to as much as a 1-in-4. Generally speaking, the squarer your stone the less batter, or the more rounded your stone the greater your batter. Having a suitable batter on a dry stone wall is one of the basic principles in wall construction. Imagine the capital letter “A”. This is what a dry stone wall looks like in cross section. It is actually two walls leaning against each other and filled in the middle. In the case of a retaining wall, it is built leaning into or against the embankment, rather like the capital letter “A” in italics with little or no reverse batter on the embankment side.

A batter frame, or “A frame”, is the pattern used during dry stone construction to anchor a string line to. The string line from the inside of the frame guides the builder to build a straight wall of uniform height, while also guiding the inward batter of the wall as it increases in height.

There are many variations on batter frames, at its most simple form it can be a just straight section of timber like a tomato stake hammered into the ground on the appropriate batter angle. More complex batter frames can be made using rigid timber structures or steel rods. Different types of batter frames include some with two steel rods clamped with timber across the top and secured with bolts and butterfly nuts to ensure they don’t move apart during construction. This adjustable type (*below left*) is fairly quick and easy to set up where the waller may build a number of walls with different dimensions. Others can include two pieces of timber for the batter frame with a top and bottom rail and a diagonal brace to keep it rigid (*below centre*). This type can be useful where a steel rod may be difficult to hammer into the ground, but is limited to use only at the end of a wall. Below (*right*) is a batter frame for a retaining wall using clamped steel rods.



## The batter frame *cont.*

If using metal rods, I prefer to use 16mm deformed bar as it is easier to attach a binder hitch (*see TFS #47*) when attaching the string line, as it does not slip easily on the ridged surface. I use these bars mainly for when building retaining walls as I don't need to worry too much about the straightness of the back face especially when building into an embankment. Another addition I have not seen others do is to create a flattened "s" shape at the top of these bars. This provides a larger area to hammer the bars into the ground and also provides a surface to hit them back out of the ground after the wall is completed. It also eliminates a safety hazard by not leaving a sharp metal end of the rod exposed to workers nearby.



For free standing walls I prefer timber batter frames. I use old decking timber with cross braces secured with "wood tek" screws. These timber frames are then anchored to star pickets driven into the ground and also secured by wood tek screws. I find these frames very robust and they can stay in place while building the wall to full height passing through the frame as the inside of the frame defines the shape of the wall. The surface of the timber is also handy to mark on heights for things like through stones or different levels within the wall construction process.

If I need a lot of frames for longer walls or curved walls I can mass-produce these simply by creating a template to give me the correct width and batter. To create a template (*below left*), I use a piece of plywood, work out the dimensions of the wall and draw the cross section on to the ply. I then attach three timber battens to this ply with tek screws and then locate my individual frame timbers against these battens (*below right*) to get the correct cross section of the wall without any further measuring. Timbers should be fixed at each intersection with two screws to ensure the frame stays rigid. It is quite quick and easy to put a number of frames together like this for larger jobs and using a level on the bottom cross rail ensures that all frames are setup correctly with an even batter on both sides.



# The elaborate dry stone structures of Sigiriya

Jim Holdsworth (DSWAA Committee)

Rising out of the vast green plains and stands of tropical trees of central Sri Lanka is Sigiriya (Lion Rock).



Sigiriya is touted as one of Sri Lanka's foremost visitor attractions and today draws hordes of locals and foreigners because of its sheer size and lengthy history. In the fifth century AD King Kassapa selected the summit of this massive monolith as the extraordinary location for his new royal palace.

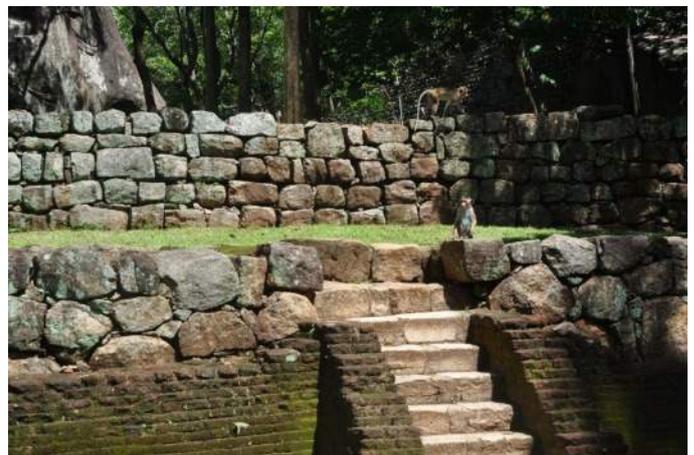
Sigiriya is about 200 metres high and visible from far afield, adding to the sense of anticipation as one approaches along roads through fields and forests. The climb to the top, along rickety steel walkways and staircases bolted to the side of the Rock, is a challenging highlight of a visit to Sigiriya. But it is the vast gardens and pools on the flatter ground at the base of the Rock and the stone-sided terraces on its flanks that are of contrasting interest to the Rock itself.

Sigiriya and the stones that were used for the terraces and retaining walls is red gneiss. A geologist would tell us that gneiss is a common and widely distributed type of metamorphic rock formed by high temperature and high-pressure metamorphic processes acting on formations composed of igneous or sedimentary rocks. Clearly a durable material!

One's pedestrian approach to Sigiriya is via a 500 metre-long path, first across a wide moat and then between reflecting pools. The layout here is reminiscent of axial Versailles, although showing signs of decay and age. Having progressed through this formality we arrive at the first of several terrace gardens comprising the logically named Boulder Gardens, a striking contrast to the symmetry of the Water Gardens. The path at this point now meanders through large boulders, under stone arches and up flights of stone steps, visitors seductively lured towards Sigiriya looming ever closer and more dominant.

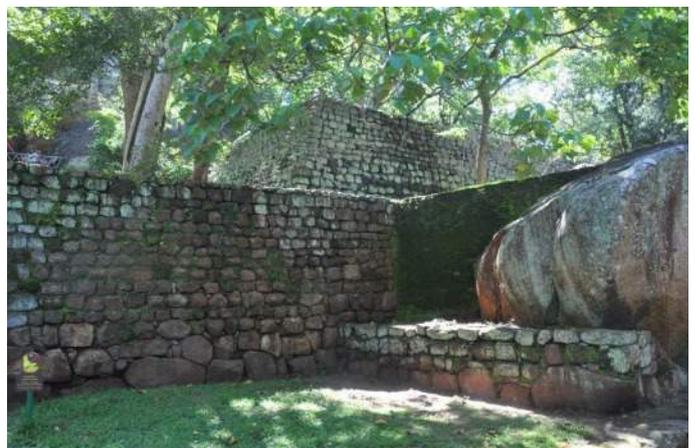
Soon the paved paths and broad terraces give way to the first of the steel staircases. Once above the treeline, we survey the vastness of Sigiriya's prospect and it becomes evident why this strategically located outcrop of rock was so attractive to King Kassapa.

While the views to distant mountains are impressive, it is the more intimate spaces at the foot of the Rock that hold as much fascination and intrigue. Having clambered down the numerous stairs we traverse paths across grassed terraces and down flights of stone steps while looking around at imposing dry stone retaining walls which define courtyards and vistas.



The extent of dry stone walling is too much to fully comprehend; one vista inviting the explorer to move on, up, down or across; dodging cheeky monkeys or trinket sellers and welcoming the shade of banyan trees whose aerial roots cling to the stone walls.

The enduring memory of a visit to Sigiriya is the vision of King Kassapa in selecting this site over 1400 years ago. That vision is still enjoyed today, not only in the view from the top but also through the endeavours of workers who built the massive dry stone walls that give the com-



# Let's build a bridge – Gavin Rose



In 2012 I participated in the *Festival of Stone* – at the time an annual event in Canada organised by prominent waller John Shaw-Rimington. There dry stone walling enthusiasts gathered from across Canada, the USA and the British Isles to share their interest and build various dry stone structures. I had first met John at a stone convention in Mallorca, Spain, where he told me about the dry stone bridges he builds and invited me to come to Canada for his next bridge project. I ended up travelling to Canada several times to work with John on various projects and all up was involved in building five dry stone bridges with him. The last one I worked on was to be the centre piece of the festival in 2012 - a double arched structure spanning a (then dry) drainage on a private estate near Montreal in Quebec.

The walling festival went over four days in October but a lot of preparation work was needed first. This included laying the huge concrete block footings (in a crisscross pattern, 2.5 m deep in the ground and up in 3.5 x 3.5 m columns, to within 250 mm below grade), construction of the stone abutments and middle pier, placement of the timber centering, shaping the stones and sorting them. The voussoirs and coping stones were dressed on banker tables by masons using hand sets and points. The voussoirs were then laid out on the ground as they would be in the arch barrel, with stones of the same thickness matched up and then laid in courses as you would when building a wall.



Gavin Rose (l) with BC waller Christopher Barclay

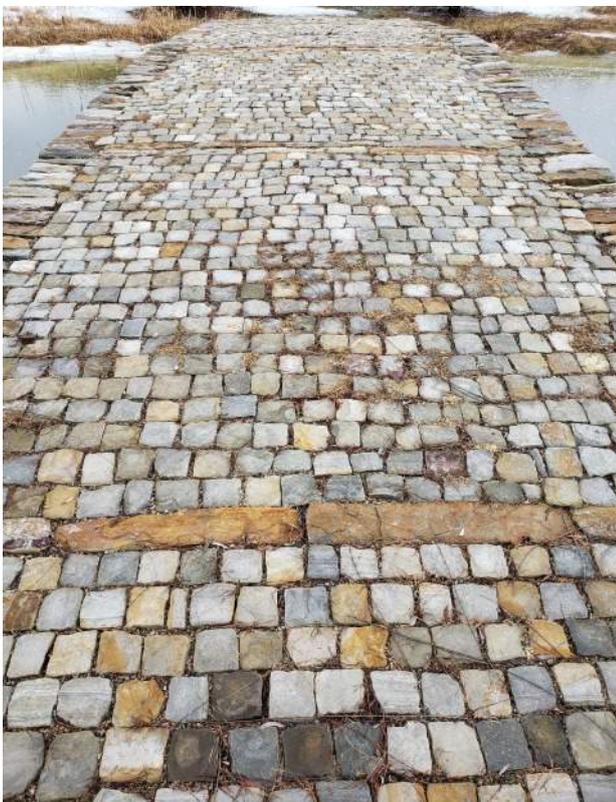


Foreground: first arch with voussoirs in place, background: centering for second arch before voussoirs laid

## Let's build a bridge *cont.*



With this preparation work done, it was a relatively quick process to lay the voussoirs on the centering to form the arch barrels (each of which spanned three metres) and then build the outer walls and lay the coping stones. As this bridge was to be used by heavy machinery, two internal walls were also built (rather than just filling between the two outer walls with hearting) to give it added strength. For the tread, a row of large stones were pitched a metre deep at either end of the bridge to act as anchors and smaller square stones (known as setts) were pitched over the rest of the tread, with single rows of larger and deeper stones pitched at intervals.



Setts completing the pavement

Upon the bridge's completion, a tractor was driven over it as a test of its structural integrity and a piper in full Highland regalia performed at the opening ceremony on the final day of the festival.



This was a very large project, with over 60 tonnes of stone (sandstone, limestone and some granite) used, and the bulk of the work done by about 25 workers over three days. I would particularly like to mention Irish author and master mason Patrick McAfee, who's leadership and guidance were invaluable to the successful and timely completion of this structure.

Sadly this was the last year that John organised his festival - a similar annual event is now held by the Dry Stone Walling Association of Canada.

The son of the estate owners, Chris Overing, is a walling enthusiast who had a documentary *Triumph of the Wall* made about him building a thousand-foot-long wall on the property. A trailer for it can be viewed on [YouTube](#). A montage of the bridge's construction is also on [YouTube](#).

For more on Gavin Rose see TFS #46 & # 47

# Super-Cayrou



Most readers would know of The Way of Saint James ([Camino de Santiago](#), the Pilgrim Route to Santiago de Compostella) and many will have walked at least sections of it. In 1998 UNESCO designated the Way of Saint James in France as a World Heritage Site including 71 buildings and 7 sections of pathways which bear witness to the physical and spiritual aspects of the pilgrimage.

[Super-Cayrou](#) is a multi-disciplinary project (architects, artists and craftspeople) at Pech Laglaire, in Gréalou (46), France to build dry stone shelter-art work as a tribute to the Occitan appellation of the heaps of stones that dot the landscape. The aim is to invent a vernacular heritage for the future, but also to offer the promise of nights

under the stars in the Causses du Quercy (the limestone plateau in the province of Quercy) on the Routes of Santiago de Compostela.

The refuge, which symbolises tents, reflects the special bond that the Gréalonois have with the site: the hunter who made it his hare observation post; the amateur ethno-botanist who knows all endemic plants; the breeder who leads his sheep to graze there; the lover of the panorama who comes to contemplate the horizon up to the central massif; and the pilgrims who will find their bivouac there. The construction was led by [professional](#) [waller Vincent Caussanel](#). Below are some shots of the build with many more [here](#).



## Duddon iron furnace restored – *Phil Clague*



*Duddon Iron Furnace restored to its former glory*

*The Flag Stone* introduced readers to the Duddon Iron Furnace 12 months ago (#45). Here Phil Clague gives a first-hand update on the impressive final restoration that almost concluded with a celebration – almost!

**D**uddon Iron Furnace lies near the mouth of the river Duddon, near Broughton in Furnace in the English Lake District. Built in 1736 and actively used until 1867, it is one of several blast furnaces in the area which used charcoal as their fuel source to produce cast iron. Locally occurring iron ore was used, and the finished iron was shipped to Chepstow or Bristol for making anchors, chains and ship's fittings.

The siting of Duddon Furnace was key to its successful operation. A source of iron ore nearby is obviously important, since the ore is heavy and difficult to transport. More important still is proximity to a good supply of charcoal because of the voracious appetite of this type of furnace for fuel. Duddon furnace required the charcoal produced from 10 acres (4 Ha) of woodland every week to keep it running. So great was this need that it was better to locate the furnace in a large wooded area and have the iron ore brought in than it was to locate nearer to the iron mines and bring in the charcoal, as might be expected. A source of flowing water on site was needed to power waterwheels to drive the bellows which blasted air into the furnace.

The whole site is built down a slope towards the river, with the stores at the top of the slope and the furnace at the bottom. This meant that iron ore and charcoal could be brought up to the stores by horse and then taken to the top of the furnace by wheel barrow along a relatively flat course. Everything is carefully located and laid out for maximum efficiency and best operation using only horse, man and water power, and with the sea and river for transport by sail.

The buildings today are looked after by the Lake District National Park, and are in a remarkably good state of preservation. Two charcoal stores are intact, and pieces of charcoal can still sometimes be found wedged in the stonework of the walls. An accidental fire in the charcoal store when the furnace was operating has caused a curious melted coating on part of the charcoal store walls from what must have been immense heat.

The iron ore store is the only building with a roof, its internal walls still stained a deep red from the ore. The furnace and blasting arches are intact, as well as several other smaller buildings including an office, and a blacksmith's shop for making and repairing tools and parts on site. The office is directly above the Blacksmith's forge. It must have been nice and warm, but noisy!

Building style and technique varies through the site and it is clear that some buildings have been altered and

## Duddon iron furnace cont.

adapted during the working lifetime of the furnace. Some parts have been carefully built to a high standard using well placed stone and lime mortar, and with a great deal of skill. Of particular interest are the arches above many of the windows. Other areas seem to have been put up quickly with less care, and either built dry or possibly mortared to a poor standard so that the mortar has fallen out. It is not unusual to see pieces of timber and bits of iron slag and other scrap material built into the walls in some areas.

A first wave of consolidation work was carried out on the crumbling buildings in the 1980's. At that time the buildings were practically lost in the encroaching woodland and were rapidly deteriorating. The work was intended to arrest the decay of the buildings and to conserve them in as original condition as possible, and to make the site safe enough to be opened to the public.



*Charcoal store. Oak lintel replaced and wall above rebuilt.*



*The finished charcoal store wall, almost indistinguishable from the original work*

More recently during 2018, some minor movement of the stone work in a couple of locations led to queries about the general stability and safety of the structures. Concern over the possible fate of the buildings without some further conservation work, and the possible fate of visitors exploring beneath unstable masses of stone and above large drops led to the temporary closure of the site while expert advice and funding for repairs was sought.



During 2019 and early 2020 a grant from Historic England allowed two sets of specialist contractors to be employed. Input was also made by National Park staff and by an enthusiastic gang of volunteers. Closely following directions from a survey commissioned by Historic England, a considerable amount of work was carried out over several months. Great care was taken to use stone from the site or of an exact match, and traditional building and lime mortaring techniques were used to match the original work. All the exposed wall tops were made sound and weather proof by capping with stone and lime mortar, using a cherry picker to gain access (*see above*).

Several walls were re-pointed with lime mortar, and areas of unstable stone were taken down and rebuilt. Internal roof trusses in the iron store were replaced and a new fibreglass roof was put over the top of the furnace to keep out the weather. Public access was re-evaluated to meet modern safety standards whilst preserving the look and feel of the site. An old access bridge to the charging house was replaced and new and better wooden safety rails around drops were installed.

Work was finished in January 2020 and a grand opening scheduled for this April. However, developments with Covid-19 and the ensuing lockdown has put everything here on hold for now. The furnace is quiet, finished and waiting amongst the spring flowers and the green beauty of the Duddon Valley, but we are hopeful it can soon to be discovered, visited and enjoyed once more by the interested and the curious passers-by.

## Like sheep in a fold – Raelene Marshall (DSWAA committee)

During this strange time of human isolation, I find myself reminiscing about the 'enclosing role' of dry stone sheepfolds and pinfolds found dotting the fells and lowlands in the Cumbrian landscape of England's north.

Could this ancient stone upon a stone practice be considered as a metaphor for, or symbol of the situation in which we currently find ourselves? Folds, both circular and rectangular are specifically built to keep sheep in and the elements out. One way in. The same way out when and if it is safe to do so. People in and dangers out? One way in but how do we get out?

Pounds or pinfolds in villages were the medieval solution to quarantine sheep that had escaped from the higher uplands. Wayward sheep that had wandered lower down and caused a nuisance or destroyed crops were not released until their owner had paid a small fine.

Unlike folds lower down, sheepfolds high on the fells were primarily for shelter, not sheep management. These folds are sited where the snow struggles to settle or forms drifts on ridges or between gullies and rivers. Although many are rectangular, circular folds are recognised as especially good for deflecting and dispersing snow.

Importantly the third type of fold is the larger sheepfold found on otherwise unenclosed land. These folds have yet another purpose and are gathering pens. Even today folds in the north that are still intact are sometimes used for the annual round ups where sheep kept on open grazing land are eventually matched up to their rightful farmer owner. A special day is set aside annually.

In 1996, whilst living in Cumbria I was fortunate enough to be involved in one of these special days with a farmer, his extended family and their canny and talented blue heeler sheep dogs. A magic experience I'll never forget. Traditionally the day commences with the whole family meeting for a huge cooked breakfast followed by drop offs of a family member and a dog to all corners of the farm. The farmer's Irish accent command of 'go bye ye' was the cue for the dogs to corral and muster all the sheep to the common fold. On this occasion, I suspect I was given the farmer's favourite and most gifted dog. So, despite my unfamiliar accent, Drize-a Bone attire and the underfoot challenge of dense soft snow, the activity was safe and seamless and we both arrived at the common fold in plenty of time to meet and chat with the farmers and the extended families from the neighbouring farms.

In October 1995, I travelled the A66 west of Penrith with the internationally acclaimed artist Andy Goldsworthy and Steve Chettle, Cumbria County Council's Public Arts Officer to Redmire Farm in Mungrisedale. On that occa-

sion, we met with the owner farmer and two professionals from the nearby Newton Rigg Agricultural College. The discussion took place around the upcoming Sheepfolds Project, Cumbria year of the Visual Arts 1996.

The proposed Sheepfolds project would become Cumbria County Council's major countywide sculpture project. It began in January 1996 and continued until its official conclusion in April 2003, having achieved forty-eight folds in total. Andy's original idea was to use old Ordnance Survey maps to locate the remains of one hundred sheepfolds and rebuild them in such a way that they contained a piece of sculpture. Conceptually this enabled him to connect directly with farming tradition and Cumbria's history, whilst at the same time as each design emerged to be able to invigorate them with a new energy by incorporating his unique sculptural response.



In principle, rather than constructing new sheepfolds Andy was committed to working with existing folds either in various states of disrepair or in some cases those that had disappeared altogether but were clearly indicated on the old maps. Steve Chettle was particularly focused on ensuring that Andy's wishes to ensure the integrity of this remnant aspect was adhered to.

Of particular fascination to me was the day Steve, his 'old maps' and I visited the breathtakingly beautiful Haweswater Dam area. Haweswater is a reservoir built in the valley of Mardale. In 1929 Parliament had passed an Act giving the Manchester Corporation permission to build a reservoir to supply water for the urban conurbations of north-west England. The construction of this controversial dam meant that despite much public outcry the farming villages of Measand and Mardale Green were flooded, lost and the population forced to move.

## Like sheep in a fold *cont.*

All the farms and houses of the villages were pulled down. The Mardale church was demolished, graveyard coffins were removed and buried elsewhere and ancient sheepfolds abandoned. At times of drought, when the water level is low people return to see what is left of the old villages. The timing for the Sheepfold project was perfect, the waters were down and remnant folds marked on the old Ordnance Maps were clearly visible. I'm still not sure who was more excited, Steve or me.

Projects like this never come to fruition without vision commitment and the support of key individuals and organisations. Among these were Community and Parish Town Councils, professional organisations, Cumbria's six district councils, the National Trust, the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authorities, Prism Arts, Cumbria Arts in Education, Newton Rigg College, Cumbria Public Art, Craven District Council, and the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust.

Mentioned previously (TFS #41), the 1996 Sheepfold project commenced with the two Mungrisedale Redmire Farm folds: Redmire Farm Fold and Field Boulder Fold. So even in those early stages Andy and his wallers Steve Allen and Joe Smith had a breadth of skills and resources on which to draw.



Redmire farm is owned by Newton Rigg Agricultural College. I can still remember rumbling over several cattle grids and being fascinated and in awe that the none of the discussion group involved had any qualms at all about spending the public purse to construct a sculpture or two in such a remote and somewhat difficult-to-reach location. Surely would never have happened here in Australia! Even today the signage is quite difficult to find yet the fame of the folds is recognised worldwide.

Andy's approach to Field Boulder Fold was to recreate this old fold on its original site and then build the second Redmire Farm Fold nearby and a little to the east. Each sheepfold is sited so that people will happen across the old fold first, with the hope that it will act as a way-marker to the new one.

On Redmire the idea he liked most was of a fold surrounded by a large pile of stones made up from several large piles in the area pulled and gathered from fields as they were ploughed and drained. His aim was to show the structure that lay within the piles and the pattern to things that at first sight often appear random and although unconnected within that randomness lies the structure of a wall.

For Andy Goldsworthy it is like the landscape itself, that although 'at first site appears haphazard nevertheless contains strong and powerful rhythms within'. This mirrors the practicality of the farmer using what is ploughed from the land to make what appears from a distance to be a pile of stones, but on approaching reveals a fold.

To keep sheep in and dangers out.

### Book References

Andy Goldsworthy (1996) *Sheepfolds* Michael Hue-Williams Fine Art

Andy Goldsworthy (2007) *Enclosure* Thames and Hudson



This dry stone wall is being repaired as a Covid 19 exercise by Sophie Agullo on her property in Drome, France.

Sophie describes their house as 'built on foundations from the 14th Century.' Located 8 km from Montelimar and 2 km

from Ardeche, the village's mediaeval era stone houses and Romanesque churches and chapels have incomparable charm. The garden is on a rather steep slope and the elders built "restanques", most likely to be able to grow a vegetable garden.

# Book review - Andrew Miller (DSWAA committee)



**Title:** *The Rock is My Home (Le rocher est ma demeure (Fr), Der Fels ist mein Haus (Ger))*

**Publisher:** WEMA, Zurich, Switzerland (1976)<sup>1</sup>

**Text:** in three languages: German, French and English.

The Clunes Booktown Festival, in Central Victoria, is always a wonderful environment for the bibliophile to lose oneself! Having had long association and love for structures in dry stone format, I could not resist purchasing *The Rock is My Home* at the 2019 Festival!

The book is a fabulous collection of images (monochrome) of stone structures on the Aran Islands (Ireland, *below*), the Southern Grisons (Switzerland) and the Valleys of the Ticino (Switzerland).



L: Dry stone walls on Inisheer form an amazing mosaic.

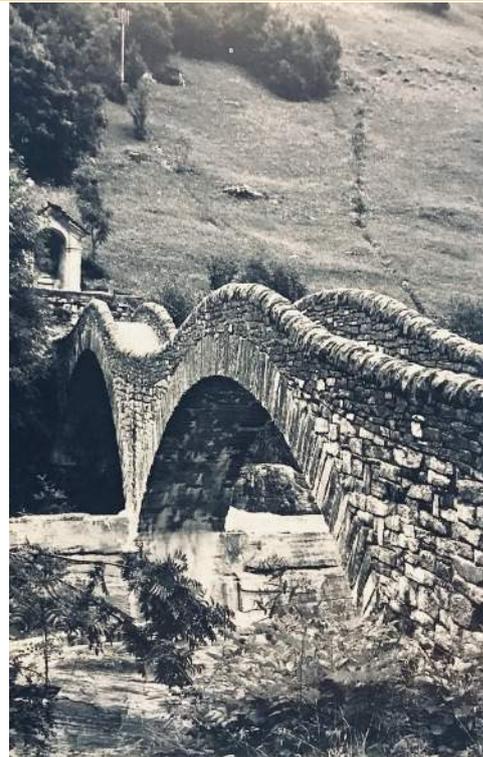
R: Stables and walls; life and work of inhabitants determining the architecture and wall alignments

The structures featured in the book, many of which are in dry stone format, bear witness to the subtle adaptation to the environments where they are situated.

Author and architect Werner Blaser articulates so well the attempts to preserve primitive houses, outbuildings and other structures in rural landscapes in Europe. Blaser writes 'these primitive structures are gems of architecture' and 'what is at stake is not merely the individual building which can be saved by a preservation order but rather the appearance of whole villages'.

One such structure featured is twin-arched Roman bridge at Verzasca Valley in Switzerland. Coped dry stone walls line each side of the roadway across the bridge. On the hillside beyond the bridge there appears to be the remnants of the foundation stones of a dry stone wall. Remnants of walls are often very important markers of earlier settlements and property boundaries and wherever possible should be left in place.

<sup>1</sup> *The Rock is My Home* is still available via second hand book web sites, however prices appear to indicate it has become a collectors item since my lucky purchase. The book is a gem in terms of its text and images.



Werner worked on this project for ten years (1965-1975). He conveys the beauty which comes from such elementary and basic architecture. It has been suggested how 'urgent it is that these humble structures are conserved, in a world which can sometimes be overwhelmed by ugliness'.

Werner claims he is not a photographer but says 'I have eyes and I can see'. A huge understatement! He also uses words in a way that is almost poetry to the soul! Let me share one example:

*'...in the non-architecture of the (early) stone structure.....commonsense still lies hidden.....stone architecture reveals a new direction and opens up for us a new dimension: nature and life as a harmoniously related whole.'*

Werner displays his architectural pedigree with sketch plans for several of the dwellings and villages.



A "trullo" built of local material, nestling in the Swiss landscape near the Italian border

## Editor's page

A fortnight ago I was staring forlornly at a blank page. Now I have 21 pages of what I hope readers will find interesting. Of course I'm indebted to those worthy souls who have sent me articles (and put up with my pedantic/opinionated editing). Also to people who have responded to my queries and my search for info – you are always wonderful.

In March 2015 I offered to edit this journal following the untimely passing of Charmian Brent. The thinking was that I would churn out a couple of these in the familiar format until DSWAA found a proper editor.

Five years and fifteen issues later I feel as if I'm still 'filling in'. It is high time we reviewed the content, format and delivery of this journal (it is not a newsletter!) and found a fresh editor. I'm sure that DSWAA would welcome readers' feedback on these matters.

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AS Jim Kilsby has noted, we hope to run the postponed SA field trip later this year. I'm confident that it will be an excellent event and well worth the travel. Remember, SA is the safest place on earth. Spring could be a very busy time of the year with all the normal events competing with much that has been postponed from Autumn.



*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.*

*Our goals are:*

- *That governments and the wider community recognise the significance of dry-stone structures built by indigenous peoples, European explorers, early settlers and modern craftspeople as valued artefacts of our national identity.*
- *That this acceptance is manifested by appropriate statutory protection and landowner and community respect and celebration.*
- *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.*

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## Membership

### Annual membership fee

Corporate \$80; Professional \$50

Single \$30 (\$80 for 3 years)

Family \$50 (\$130 for 3 years)

**Cheque:** DSWAA Inc. and posted to DSWAA Membership, 87 Esplanade West, Port Melbourne 3207; **or**

**Bank Deposit** at any branch of the ANZ Bank **or EFT:** BSB 013 373, Ac. no. 4997 47356

**\*Clearly indicate membership identity of payer\***

### New members

Complete the online membership form on our [website](#): Alternatively email or post name, address, phone number/s, and area of interest (eg waller, farmer, heritage, etc) to the membership secretary (above).

### Renewals

Annual fees are due May 31 after the first full year of membership. We send renewal notices prior to this.

P 1, 2	K Munday	<b>Photos</b>
P 3	B Munday, D Long	
P 4	G Duggan (top), B&K Munday	
P 5	B Munday (1-4), L Allison 5, J Moore 6, A Garner 7, P Clague 8	
P 6	D Long	
P 7	SA State Library, B Munday	
P 8, 9	G Duggan, J Moore (Bottom rt p8)	
P 10	J Holdsworth	
P 11	S Young (top), C Barclay	
P 12	C Barclay (tl, br), G Rose (tr), S Young (bl)	
P 13	Vincent Caussanel	
P14, 15	P Clague	
P 17	S Agulo	