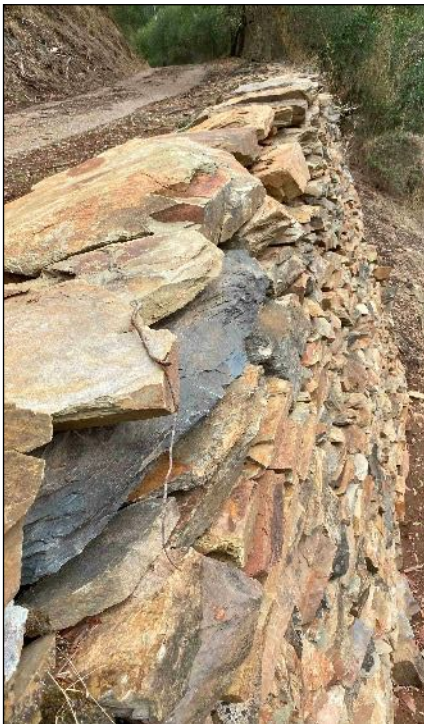


Birthday edition



Dry stone retaining wall on steep slope, Brownhill Creek

This issue

Muddy boots
Buninyong batter
Walls in art
DSWAA behind the scenes
Brownhill creek
Imagine the past
Dry stone tourist
Building an egg
Dry stone congress
Book review

When a small voluntary organisation continues to exist for 21 years, you know it's doing something right and that a determined group of volunteers has made it happen. With the Association's 21st birthday approaching, we've been reflecting on everything it's achieved and its future aspirations.

It's quite something that since 2002 there have been twenty AGMs, all the meetings in between, more than 30 field trips, numerous lunches, dinners, conferences and expositions, plentiful projects and 57 editions of the Flagstone!

Many of the people who established the DSWAA or worked hard to develop it, are still involved today - testament to their passion for dry stone walling, our diverse community and our commitment to Australia's dry stone heritage.

It's a year since I took over the Presidency of the DSWAA. During this time, it's been my pleasure to work with the committee to better understand the Association's objectives and how they might be accomplished. This June, we're commencing a strategic development process and have appointed a new temporary Administrative Assistant to help us with this process: Kathryn Hennig – welcome!

Various exciting advances are afoot within our heritage projects and we'll continue to strengthen our focus in this area, but we also hope to broaden our community engagement nationally and further support the recognition of the trade of dry stone walling in Australia. We'll have more to say on all of this during a brief presentation at our celebration event on Saturday 3 June at the Centre for Rare and Forgotten Trades in Ballarat. We'll also have a walling demonstration, the AGM and an interesting little 'field trip with a mission' leading to a warm pub, so I hope you'll be able to join us in celebrating 21 years of the Dry Stone Walls Association of Australia.

In closing, I'd like to take this opportunity as DSWAA President and as a friend, to say a huge Australian thank you to Alison Shaw, the heart, soul and administrator of the DSWA UK. After 20 years of coordinating the Association and making it appear as if there was a vast team at work in the Crooklands office, Alison has decided to break out of that office and pursue her many personal interests, full time.

I'm sure I speak for many wallers and enthusiasts in the UK and across the world when I say that Alison has been the biggest supporter of our endeavours, assisting on all fronts with the utmost professionalism and thoughtfulness. Her diligence, warmth and organisational skills will no doubt be missed beyond expectation, but on behalf of the DSWAA and all our members I'd like to wish Alison all the very best for the future.

Emma

Muddy boots, curious cows and walled landscapes

Jim Holdsworth (DSWAA committee)



On the ninth of April 2005 the Association conducted a field trip. It involved visits to three rural properties in the Camperdown area of western Victoria, Australia's epicentre of ancient volcanic activity and rich in basalt stones and walls built of them. About 40 members came along. If my calculations are correct, that was the first of thirty-five such field trips over the following years that members and friends have ventured forth by car convoy, by bus or on foot to admire, discuss and photograph the rich diversity of dry stone walls and structures across South Australia, Tasmania, New South Wales and Victoria.

We've climbed through barbed wire fences, we've tramped across boggy paddocks, we've endured hot sun, driving rain and chilling winds to indulge an interest that outsiders might find incomprehensible and unrewarding. We've seen remote and beautiful dry stone sculptures near ancient stone fish traps and reconstructed stone shelters on the lands of the Gunditjmarra; we've walked along the Great North Road near Wiseman's Ferry to see the stone craftsmanship of convict road builders in the 1810s; we've discovered a stone sheep dip hidden by overgrowth near Hadspen and we've viewed the 67 km long Camels Hump wall as it disappears over the distant horizon from the Clare valley.

On many occasions our field trips have included boxed lunches under gum trees or concluded with dinners in shearing sheds, pubs and draughty meeting halls. We've listened to stories by indigenous people with timeless links to country, geologists with eye-opening explana-

tions; we've heard from artists who see dry stone structures in a different light to us; we've listened to expert wallers explain the how and why of their craft; we've listened while historians explain the role of walls in the early days of European settlement; we've met so many farm owners and heard how walls hinder grass fires, or get damaged by kangaroos or errant motor vehicles, or fall into disrepair but are too costly to repair, or are simply practical and valued assets to their property.

On every field trip there's a sense of camaraderie, of joy at getting out and about with an intent that only this



Muddy boots (cont.)



curious interest in dry stone walls can justify. This interest allows us the privilege of going onto private properties to view the labours of colonial wallers and learn why a Yorkshireman builds differently to a Cornishman. We admire impressive walls built in a vain attempt to stem the spread of rabbits, or decorative walls of artistic genius, as well as retaining walls, dry stone culverts, lunky holes and sturdy wall-ends, stock yards and shepherds' windbreaks, consumption dykes more than a metre wide at the base and too high to see over, composite walls, post-and-rail walls, single walls, double walls, walls perhaps built by Chinese on their way to the goldfields and walls disappearing as the march of suburbia swallows all vestiges.

The work of professional wallers is a continuing theme;



whether responding to Wally Carline's broad North Country accent as he discourages us from placing a poorly-selected stone to repair a roadside wall, or admiring

the tag-team of Alistair Tune and David Long co-operating on a demo wall, or appreciating the elegance of *The Knot* dry stone sculpture masterminded by Geoff Duggan atop a hill at the Australian Botanic Garden at Mount Annan, or learning of the client's wishes for an engaging wall by Emma Knowles beside a Buninyong playground. People who love putting one stone on two and two stones on one are in demand as the profession enjoys a well-deserved resurgence and more people seek training and certification.

Whether ancient or aged or recent, whether functional



or artistic or whimsical, whether skilled or amateur, whether lost in the bush or proudly alongside a country road, dry stone walls and structures tell many and different stories.

There's lots more to see and appreciate. When's the next field trip?

Muddy boots (cont.)



Muddy boots (cont.)



Buninyong batter– construction complete

Emma Knowles



Readers may remember the January edition (*TFS #56*) tale of the treacherous start to the construction of a 27 metre feature wall in Buninyong. Beset by weeks of rain which turned the site into a quagmire and the quarry into a no-go zone, this whimsical installation had a challenging start. Every element from site preparation to stone delivery to the installation of three 2 metre high monoliths became a major undertaking, requiring a marine engineering approach!

The build ended up taking six weeks in total; it was hugely challenging but as usual, immensely satisfying. It's always great to do a private commission in a public place. The commissioner wanted the wall to be full of quirky features to be enjoyed by the children and visitors to De Souza Park playground, as well as her own family. I've had the pleasure of receiving many photos of little people finding all the carvings and peering through the portholes to the fairy garden inside.



Buninyong batter (cont.)



Many of the features involved intricate and specialised walling and carving techniques. The three portholes were constructed using bespoke formers and trammels, which had to be prepared in halves to enable the insertion of ironwork features, required to confine the guard dogs.

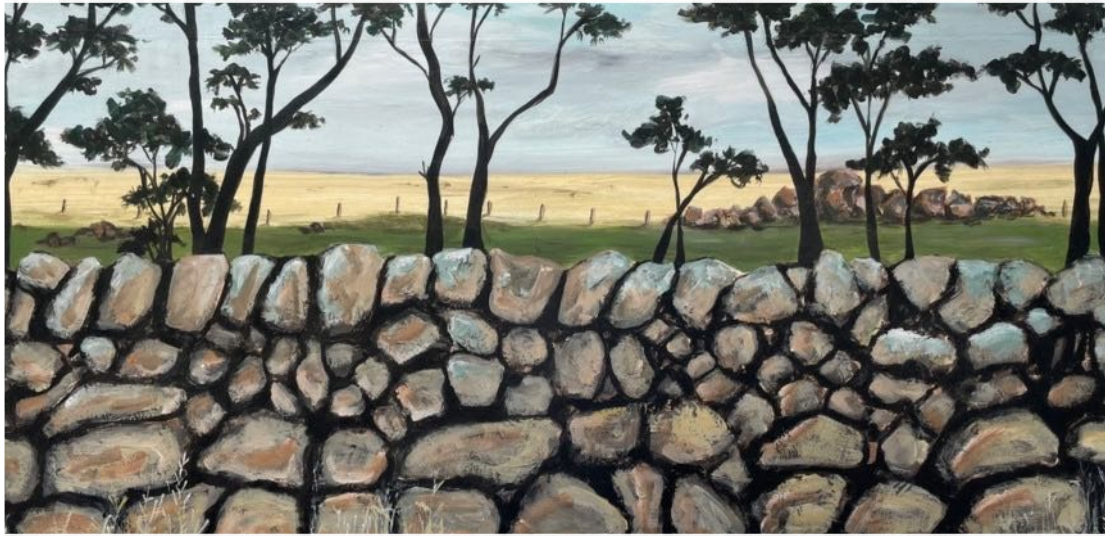
The top of the wall is wavy rather than flat, a nod to the design of the house, creating a real softness to the wall. Scattered along the wall are several fairy-related carvings, adding further interest and novelty. The wall also incorporates pedestrian and vehicular entrance gates, requiring the construction of multiple cheekends.

With my ever-positive offsider, Jack McCallum from Yorkshire, we found ourselves tested in every way during this commission, but emerged unscathed, full of satisfaction at having overcome many unusual walling challenges, made many friends and left behind a quirky, solid construction to be enjoyed by many generations to come.

Creating walls which are as much works of art as functional structures is one of the things I love about walling in Australia. In general, the core business for wallers in northern Europe is predominantly the restoration of agricultural walls. Here, restoration occurs on a much smaller scale and in general, dry stone enthusiasts are more inclined to commission unique designs and features, newly built with traditional methods. So much variety for wallers to get their teeth into.



Dry stone walls captured in art *Andrew Miller & Kristin Munday*



Landscape paintings depict all aspects of natural and built landscapes. Dry stone walls when they appear in art have always caught my attention and I will share some of this art with readers over the next few editions of *The Flag Stone*.

The painting above is by Rachel Peters from South West Victoria who has exhibited widely across the State. Rachel enjoys a variety of styles using acrylic paint. Her paintings reflect the local environment including coastal and hinterland landscapes, celebrating the natural world and people's interaction with it.

Rachel has cleverly presented a dry stone wall prominently in the foreground of this work, capturing the structural elements, shapes of the individual stones and the grey-green of the lichen. Beyond the wall are the typical landscape elements of the South West including a timber plantation, heaped stone and the distant dry grass plains.

I pass this artwork on my wall every day and enjoy all of its landscape elements especially the dry stone wall.



Walls make good subjects. This was painted by Kristin Munday with our eldest son (2nd from right) on a wall on our property (c. 1980)



Kurtonitj sculpture; part of Regional Arts Victoria's Fresh and Salty

When, as a foundation Committee Member of the DSWAA, I was asked to contribute to this 21st birthday history issue I realised much of my personal background story has been told previously in past issues.

However, this is not just my story but a story about a collective passion, about all the generous people who gave of their time, effort, input and expertise to help make it all happen. Many have become lifelong friends. Twenty one years later, like the foundation stones in a wall we all owe so much to them. Too many to name here, but they know who they are and if the stones could talk, I'm sure I could hear them whispering. Thank You.

Behind every story is an untold back story. In this case it is a journey of happenstance and serendipity that until now has possibly been slightly under reported. In particular along with other pre-internet-days aspects, this one involves the history and stories of a strong indigenous connection to the dry stone craft.

In South West Victoria we have evidence of the Gunditj-mara people who constructed walls on pastoral land and fish traps in the Lake Condah waters of the Budj Bim area. It is also believed that they may have contributed to the design of the complexly designed Bessiebelle sheep wash in the area. In New South Wales and known as Baiame's Ngunnhu the [Brewarrina fish traps](#) are series

of complicated structures built in weirs and pens of schist on a rock bar in the river. So, especially in this our referendum year of 'The Voice', it seems timely to talk more about this particular aspect of the story. But more about it later. Let us begin with a back story first. It was in the mid to late 1980s and well before ultimate formation of the DSWAA, that I became 'hooked' on dry stone walls, their history and the preservation of the craft. The walls I discovered on that day were more by good luck than good management. Out on the backroads of Campdown in Kalora the walls on either side of the road were vastly different. Each waller had chosen a different size stone, different coping stones and style and yet the geology and the landscape were the same. Why was this so? Long before we put Public Art on street corners wallers were building art in the landscape. The environment was their museum or gallery and entry was free.

At that time, I was managing Arts and Culture for the City of Keilor and in the process of developing the Overnewton Gatehouse and site as an Arts Centre for a growing local arts community. Dry stone walls were not only a feature of the entranceway to the Overnewton pastoral estate but also boundary walls that even today still overlook the area's market gardens. During the development of the Centre my interest in dry stone walls, their history and the preservation of the craft continued to grow.

DSWAA, a journey (cont)



Bessie Bell sheep wash

Symbolic of the early settlement history it was important that the landscaping of the site reflected that era. The final design features a replicated sculptural wall on the boundary together with a sculptural dry stone 'word' mound built by Tim Jones and Queen Elizabeth scholarship recipient waller, Nathan Perkins. Thanks to Nathan, his knowledge of Andrew Miller's contribution to the 1995 Corangamite Arts Council's Report and Nathan's fluro map marking of the Camperdown area's walls, I was able to spend many more photography weekends in pursuit of and learning about the wide range of styles of walls and copes in the area.

The next decades were to take strange, different, challenging paths to what ultimately culminated in the formation of the DSWAA in Ballarat in July 2002. However, and only with hindsight, I realise the times were right.

The early 1990s had seen the then Kennett Government restructure local government in Victoria. Compulsory competitive tendering meant that Community Cultural Development (CCD) through the arts became almost redundant. Seen as welfare, creative programs and projects became marginalised, undervalued and community cohesion was almost lost in the overall tendering processes. This thinking was philosophically contrary to my beliefs for the role of the arts in community.

Fortuitously, but unknowingly at that time, the 'dry stone ducks' had begun to line up! The Overnewton development had recently been completed and I was in the very early stages of working with Parks Victoria to establish a dry stone sculpture park in their nearby Brimbank Park, also home to dry stone walls that had fortunately survived the Parks Vic. handover.

Also, at that time the Australia Council had recently announced a Professional Development grants program for

arts workers in the CCD field.

In 1995 I was fortunate enough to spend six months working in Cumbria at Grizedale, a working forest and home to a famous Sculpture Park that boasts Andy Goldsworthy's world-renowned dry stone walls sculpture *Taking a Wall for a Walk*. Further stories of my experiences there can be sourced in past [Flagstone issues](#).

The [Lake District](#) is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and England's largest National Park. Completely devoid of brash signage it is home to spectacular landscapes, picturesque villages and beautifully constructed walls that hug the sides of the labyrinth of winding lanes. Driving to work each day I became determined to return home and take advantage of the old Keilor (then Brimbank) Council's redundancy package to try to protect Australia's dry stone walls for future generations.

In 1999 and again in 2000 destiny for walls was on our side by way of two Visions of Australia grants programs. The earlier Stage 1 grant was to develop a Touring Exhibition and Stage 2 was to produce and tour it. Visions of Australia is a regional exhibition touring program that supports audience access to Australian arts and cultural material, with a particular focus on tours to regional and remote Australia.

Auspiced by Melbourne's Living Museum of the West my particular proposal was titled *The Shaping of the Australian Cultural Landscape*. How our European migrants adapted the dry stone skills of their homelands to survive in a new and harsh terrain. Ultimately titled *A Stone Upon A Stone* the exhibition can be found on the [DSWAA's website](#). It consists of twenty-four (ASUAS) narrative panels. Twelve tell the story and others represent municipalities that participated.

During a five-month feasibility study we had managed to gain support for the venture with 'dry stone' municipalities and regional councils in Victoria. However, a major condition of the funding was that the exhibition must tour to one State outside the State of origin. For two very timely reasons luck was again on our side.

In the days of communicating by Fax I still recall the machine kicking in with a copy of a magazine article sent by a friend about a study landscape architect Warwick Mayne Wilson had undertaken for the Shire of Kiama in New South Wales. A call to Warwick, then a meeting with him in Melbourne resulted in me to presenting the proposal to the Kiama Council's Dry Stone Walls group as part of his [report on his study](#). Our very own waller Geoff Duggan was in the crowd and Kiama became the missing link in the application puzzle.

DSWAA, a journey (cont.)



Indigenous ranger with eel net, Lake Condah

It's hard to believe now, but all that has been discussed so far was either before GPS mapping in cars and or in the very early days of mobile phones. Therefore there were significant gaps in our knowledge of in both SA, WA and Tasmania and still likely elsewhere.

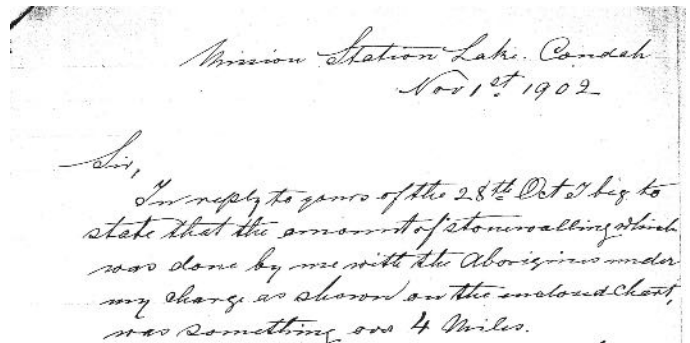
Significantly too, the internet was in its infancy and activity really only began to explode in 2000, when Google became the client search engine for one of the Web's most popular sites. As far as discovering any indigenous connection to the craft, that was also problematic. Missing in those early pre-internet days, was the knowledge and awareness of indigenous cultures use and building of dry stone structures at the Lake Condah Mission and surrounds and sophisticated fish trapping aquaculture systems at both Lake Condah and Brewarrina in NSW.

The next chapter in this narrative would cause many sleepless nights grappling with what was uncovered that could no longer sit comfortably within the original wording of the grant application. Vis a vis 'The funding was about how European migrants adapted the dry stone skills of their homelands to survive in a new and harsh terrain.' This was because relatively early in the Stage 1 devolvement phase of the exhibition narrative, historian Dr Carlotta Kellaway (dec.) had also uncovered clear [evidence](#) of the Gunditjmara people from the Lake Condah Mission having [connections](#) with the craft.

As discussed earlier my professional background is in the Arts not in historical research. So, there I was confronted with an ethical issue that needed to be resolved. Although in principle I guess it would have been easy to ignore it, ethically it was critical that we did not. Fortunately, and with what we know now that decision was correct. In the early days that knowledge influenced the inclusion of an Indigenous Portfolio as one among those the DSWAA established. It further enriched our ideals and goals and enabled us to forge strong and reciprocal

working relationships that eventuated in both Dr Timothy Hubbard and I playing an active role in the working group that supported the Gunditjmara's United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage listing bid.

Finding Carlotta at that time was a godsend. Not only did she manage to pull all the jigsaw pieces together but her forensic research skills managed to find just what was needed in the labyrinth of files in her research world. She brought together the history of early settlement when squatters put down roots and built the homesteads we know of today. She discovered evidence of them advertising for wallers in British newspapers when the shepherds left the land in droves to seek their fortune in the goldfields. With the generosity of farmers who shared their documents she searched the titles and their associated Lands Department files and unearthed the rich but sad and devastating stories and connections of the Gunditjmirring people of south west Victoria. Evidence of aborigines who built walls on the Dashper property, and letters from Rev Stale from the Mission to the Lands Department on behalf of John Dashper, urged them not to charge him for improvements to his land because the walls were built by aborigines under his supervision.



Wall on Dashper property

DSWAA, a journey (cont)

Her writings and research documents, both fascinating and informative, can be found in past issues of the Flagstone. Her detailed and comprehensive historical timelines can be found on the previously mentioned link to the two ASUAS Exhibition panels above. These tell the story of early settlement and provide an insight into the role the construction of dry stone walls has played in the shaping of the landscape. However here, and in the context of the indigenous story I urge readers to access her comprehensive and detailed article titled [Researching Dry Stone Walls: The Remarkable Serpentine and Blacks' Walls at Lake Condah](#), written way back in 2004.

In June 2011 Dr Timothy Hubbard and I presented a paper at the Budj Bim World Heritage Symposium held in Heywood in southwest Victoria. The event was an important component of Gunditjmiring's long-term aspiration towards preparing a case for a UNESCO World Heritage nomination and listing of their ancient landscape.

Held over four days, Gunditjamara elders and others facilitated a public program in which the archeological, geological, hydrological, historical and cultural values of the Budj Bim National Heritage Landscape were discussed. The days were stimulating, enlightening, challenging and above all exciting. The hydrology of Lake Condah and how Indigenous people exploited it by building stone fishing traps was explained in detail by presenters from a wide range of professional disciplines.

The Symposium's aim was to bring together people who could contribute stories, knowledge and science of the landscape to enhance the support of the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments and for subsequent consideration of UNESCO through the World Heritage List assessment process.

The UNESCO criteria for selection is challenging, rigorous and time consuming. To be included, sites must be of outstanding universal value and must meet at least one of ten selection criteria. In Gunditjmara's case the process took several years of dedication and determination to come to fruition.

So, in July 2019 at a meeting in Baku (Azerbaijan) following a decades-long campaign by the traditional owners and others, the South-West Victorian site Budj Bim became the first Australian Indigenous site to be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list exclusively for its Aboriginal values. A world wide tribute to a landscape they had cared for over thousands of years.

However, the indigenous component of the story is just one among the many back stories that make up the web of connections, events, experiences, site visits, work-

shops and municipal working groups, that through the development of the ASUAS exhibition, eventually led to the formation of the DSWAA. Tribute here must also be paid to the plethora of people and organisations behind the scenes, whose generosity and gifts of time and expertise made our DSWAA as we know it today.

Critical among these were the auspicing body Melbourne's Living Museum of the West, relevant local National Trust organisations, Heritage Victoria, Heritage NSW, Parks Victoria, regional local government arts departments, The Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney and Mt Annan and the relevant local government instrumentalities across Victoria and New South Wales.

What also cannot be underestimated here is the aforementioned contribution of the people from all walks of life, who either simply had an interest in, or a direct family connection with dry stone walls. The exhibition development process uncovered written and oral histories, old photographs, farming records and documents, press clippings, poetry and prose together with stories and documentation about migrant craftsmen with dry stone walling skills from Anglo Celtic and European backgrounds.

The farmers and the farming community were amazing. Nothing, but nothing, was too much trouble for them. They invited me into their homes and lifestyles, they shared their family histories, their collections of maps, artefacts and books and above all allowed me to traipse their land to take photographs of their magnificent dry stone structures.

The background to and touring component of the exhibition can be found on an internet site that was developed by my son in the very early days of the internet. While visually quite primitive now it can still be sourced through the National Library's [Trove site](#).

The individual Municipal Panels and the Narrative Panels which include Carlotta's historical time lines can be sourced on the DSWAA's more sophisticated website.

Of particular interest with regards to the formation of the DSWAA in this our twenty-first birthday year is the [recommendation on the panel](#) titled *A Stone Upon A Stone... A One Upon A Two; Dry Stone Walls the future*. Although it has not eventuated as suggested it is nevertheless a precursor to what we have today:

If this craft is to survive for future generations it is recommended that:

Representatives from peak National and State bodies such as The National Trust, State Heritage and Planning and Tourism Instrumentalities as well as Land-

DSWAA, a journey (cont)

care Conservation groups be encouraged to form a working party that would initiate the formation of a Dry Stone Walling Association of Australia modelled on the Dry Stone Walling Association of Great Britain. That one of these instrumentalities eventually manages the Association.

The exhibition touring calendar commenced in Whittlesea in April 2002 and eventually finished in 2004 after two additional shires, Lennox Head in NSW and Colac in Victoria were successful in receiving additional funds from the original funding body. In May 2002 and quite by chance I was filling some time Googling in the Wyndham Library whilst waiting for a friend. Bear in mind that this was the very early internet days and we knew little of what was happening overseas. So much to my surprise, but with some excitement I came across a call for abstracts to present at the Pierre Seche Congress in Visp Switzerland in the coming August.

Fortunately, my proposal was accepted. The auspicing body (Melbourne's Living Museum of the West) was successful in their application to the Ian Potter Cultural Foundation who granted the funding to enable me to attend. Also in attendance was another Aussie our waller David Long who had received a grant from the International Specialist Skills Institute.

Although there were few with English as their first language we were both able to establish international colleagues and networks that have stood us in good stead as far as the dry stone movement in Australia continues to grow. Given the ASUAS recommendation to form a Dry Stone Walling Association in Australia it seemed to make sense to try to make that happen prior to my departure. Not only would it give my presentation credibility among the peers but it would also put Australia and our desire to protect and preserve our walls on the international stage. To that end I met in Ballarat with Andrew Miller from Corangamite Arts to suggest we try to form an organisation before I left and in July a group of interested parties gathered together and agreed to do just that.

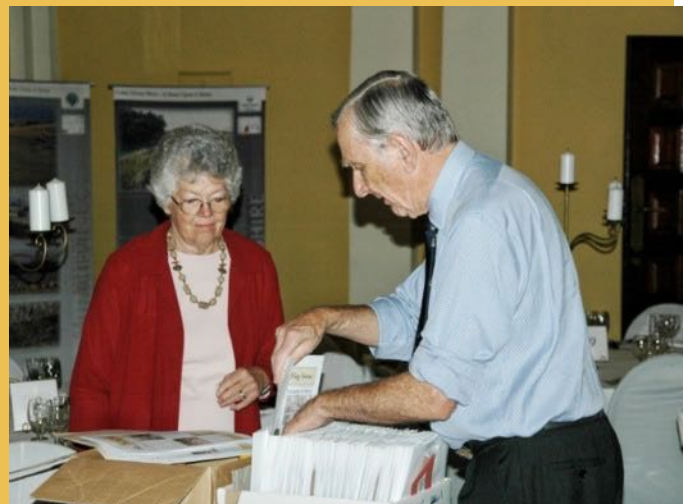
Anne Mulholland – a quiet hero

Prior to the formation of the DSWAA Anne's early introduction to dry stone walls and the craft of walling was during the research for Raelene Marshall's A Stone Upon A Stone Touring exhibition. Anne and her sister Marjorie Cuthbert were in the audience at a National Trust presentation in Williamstown and both became the driving force in the historical research and narrative preparation for the Hobsons Bay panel.

Although the DSWAA's archive was formally established in 2017 it was not a new initiative. The materials and documentation former Committee member Geoff Thomas acquired reflected the excellent work Anne had previously undertaken.

Both Anne and her husband Jim were quiet, reliable and enthusiastic members of the Association and in the early days their generosity as Committee Meeting and hosts in their Williamstown home was something looked forward to by all. Their contributions to the establishment and formative culture of the Association were much valued, cannot be underestimated and Anne remains fondly remembered by those who knew her.

Anne passed away February 2022.



Not scared of heights on Brownhill Creek Road



View from work site into valley (1920)

A factor influencing the South Australian Company to establish a settlement to the south of Adelaide was Brownhill Creek, seen as an essential source of water for the new community. Originally the Brownhill Creek area was known to the local Aborigines as Wirraparinga, or 'scrub and creek place'. The natural vegetation of the area was soon cleared by the early settlers for timber and to establish agricultural holdings on the banks of the creek.

Small market gardens were established on the lower sections of the valley while several quarries were also excavated, from the late 1850s to 1860s, for the good quality building stone. There was even Munday's quarry (no relation) but only poor quality stone was extracted, now marked by the relics of a crushing plant.

Nearing the top of Brownhill Creek the road narrows and is cut into the side of a steep embankment as it approaches the final house above the valley. Recently a section supported by an old slatey-shale retaining wall collapsed. [Jon Moore](#) and his team had the hair-raising task of rebuilding this wall and making the road accessible.



First step was to cut a bench into the side of the hill, wide enough to support the new wall and the wallers.

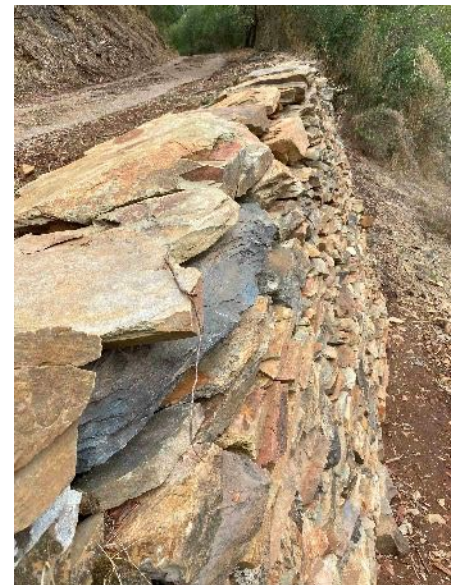
Then start the foundation using stone reclaimed from the collapsed wall

Brownhill Creek (cont.)



Not the easiest site for building a retaining wall but important that it be well done.

The result: a dry stone wall that looks great, is safe and will last.



Imagine the past



South Australia's History Festival occupies the month of May with hundreds of events across the state. The idea is to embrace experiences, explore the world of cultural material and storytelling and discover the values inherent in understanding the past. One event is Imagine the Past, held at the Hahndorf Academy. This is an interactive day of traditional crafts, skills and trades used in nineteenth century village life: weaving, wood turning, blacksmithing and of course dry stone walling.

Dry stone waller Jon Moore (DSWA-UK Level 2 certified) has contributed previously with a short length of wall and also with a cairn – both ephemeral pieces that were dismantled at the end of the day. This year he has built a beautiful dry stone seat which, quite rightly, will be a permanent feature.

Aaron Slater (DSWA-UK Level 1 certified) and Ant Kellow from Jon's team at JRM Stonework were part of the build. The seat is built from Carey Gully sandstone and is such a suitable feature for the Academy. The two-storey stone building in the main street of Hahndorf has an intriguing history and in 2012 it was gifted a superb granite sculpture, Angel of Hahndorf, created by Craig Medson. So a well built dry stone seat is a great fit.



The Hahndorf Academy dates back to 1857 when it was opened by Traugott Wilhelm Boehm as a private school to provide 'a sound and good English and German Education'. Over the next century it had many different tenants and served many different functions.

By the 1960s it was in a state of ruination resulting in a Demolition Order. However in 1966 Mr & Mrs Walter Wotzke came to the rescue, buying and then restoring the building. The Hahndorf Academy Galleries and German Folk Museum opened in 1967 by celebrating Sir Hans Heysen on his 90th birthday with an exhibition of his work, attracting some 2000 visitors.



In mid 2022 some friends floated the idea of a New Zealand holiday based around riding the Pou Herenga Tai - Twin Coast Cycle Trail. The trail is a cycling route in the North Island and runs from Opuia on the east coast to Horeke on the west following, for a large part, repurposed railway easements. Actually, to really go coast to coast requires a further 56 km on Highway 12 to Omapere. So what did I know about NZ? Enter edition 54 of *The Flag Stone* which featured an article by Richard Tufnell (*Walls in other countries*) on walls in Kerikeri, Northland New Zealand, a place we were to fly into near the start of the cycle trail. The Editor's note to this article drew attention to an earlier article by Stuart Read (*TFS #39 May 1017*): *Otuataua stone fields – precious, contested land* on DSWs near Auckland. Perhaps holiday could intersect with dry stone walls.

Remote Research

This age of on-line resources is incredible for researchers. Even a topic as niche as DSWs can be researched remotely with surprising success. The articles by Read and Tufnell provided the seeds from which New Zealand DSWs could be made visible. Like in Australia, the stories of NZ DSWs have many facets.

On-line resources reveal publications, images, localities and events, and often identify people with DS interests. Heritage NZ points to listed structures with DSW associations. Like Victoria, NZ seems to have DSWs associated

with heritage places rather than being listed in their own right. One example is Edmond's Ruins, the subject of Tufnell's article, a pioneering homestead surrounded by walled paddocks. Contemporary articles include concerns over disappearing walls in urban and peri-urban areas, heritage values and protection. NZ has a website called Past Papers which is a functional look-alike to Australia's Trove. In the historical newspaper literature there are random stories commending well-built walls still standing after many years, advertisements for wallers, misadventure as a result of jumping, climbing or crashing into DSWs and tragedies from collapsing DSW. Significant in the applications to study DSWs is Google Earth and Google Maps-Streetview. These are readily available, free to use and provide extraordinary remote identification of DS structures adjacent to public roads and sometimes beyond. Of course, it takes field work to gain a real appreciation of the DSWs that have been identified from 2500 km away.

The on-line trawling brought up two gems. Catherine Ballard has published two books on the DSWs on the north island and in an amazing coincidence covers in detail the areas near Whangarei and The Bay of Islands – holiday territory! As I have found so often, an interest in DSW is almost always associated with a great generosity of sharing knowledge and information and Catherine Ballard was no exception. Together with a Bay of Islands waller and stone carver Ian McDiamid, from Kerikeri, and

Dry stone tourist (cont.)



my remote research, I was pointed in the direction of walls in the Kerikeri and Whangarei areas.

Our cycling group landed at Kerikeri airport and on the transfer to Opuia was welcomed to the district by an almost-completed public art installation by Chris Booth featuring suspended stones – this was a sign.

While the principles of DS construction are ancient, these examples of new and old wall sections show a stylistic difference. The new wall is the familiar double skin wall, packed with hearting, a refined attention to a smooth face with even and consistent batter. The dimensions of the newly built wall follows those of the enclosure period in Great Britain of the 1800s. This is the modern standard and was reflected in other new walls during our travels.

On the other side of the gate opening stands an original wall. Compared to the modern wall, this has a very rough face, is wider at its base and having a more vertical batter, is wider at the top of the build. The height is roughly levelled with average sized stones but without a functional layer of copestones. Lengthwise, the faces are not precisely even but curves in and out while the substance of the wall proceeds in a consistent direction. Perhaps this is an original feature or maybe a result of 150 years standing.



New (left) and original wall sections (1110 Puketona Rd, Twin Coast Discovery Hwy; Scaleboard: 50cm)

New walls and old walls

As the DSWs start to appear on the road from Opuia to Kerikeri there is a property that has a gate opening bounded by a rebuilt section on left and an old section on right. Ballard 2021 writes 'the appearance of the wall will vary depending on the materials used but the basic system of constructing the wall will be the same. Walls built in Scotland, Cornwall, Croatia, Whangarei, Auckland or Bay of Islands using widely different types of stone, will display the same basic design even if they are called dykes as in Scotland. They may appear different but when their construction is analysed common basic principles will be evident.'

This style of build in old original walls was frequently seen in our travels. Ballard notes the prominence of the 'Dallys' in wall building. From as early as the 1860s up to the late 1940s many thousand migrants from the Dalmatian Coast south of Split made their way to New Zealand. In many areas they turned to walling and the style of the old walls perhaps follows a Central European or Northern Mediterranean tradition rather than a British one.

Dry stone tourist (cont.)

Tufnell described walls at Edmond's Ruins at Kerikeri Inlet. In a nearby road, Davis Strongman Place, substantial old walls form the front fences of private residences. A Strongman descendent lived in this road and described how the walls formed boundaries for the much larger properties of early settlement. Modern living forces the concession of driveways and modern cheek-ends which often follow the British tradition.



Original wall section, Davis Strongman Place, Kerikeri



Scale board: 50cm



Professionally built wall-end showing transition in style

From time to time in the Whangarei area, a new build could be seen away from the areas where old walls were prevalent. One such finely crafted wall was being built with just the coping to be placed. This wall featured an obvious footing which projected beyond the base of the build.



New wall awaiting the copes

Tall walls

It is often said that 'over dimensioned' walls are consumption walls constructed to consume and therefore remove a very liberal quantity of field stone from paddocks in the vicinity. In the areas travelled there must have been an astonishing amount of stone as substantial walls (of the order of 1200 x 1200 mm) were not uncommon. In the Whangarei area off Three Mile Bush Road there was a tall version.



Tall wall in a woodland

There were extensive runs of walls that were approximately 2 m in height and thought to date to the early agricultural estates in the area. These showed a general gradation of large stones at the bottom to smaller but still substantial stones at the top. The large stones at the base were 'cyclopean' and causes reflection on how much effort was expended building such structures.

Dry stone tourist (cont.)

Preservation in urban settings

We visited a couple of new subdivisions on Three Mile Bush Rd where both old walls and newly built walls have been preserved or incorporated into the subdivision plan. In the James Estate in Kamo reinstated walls feature alongside drains and footpaths.



Reinstated wall versus the urban setting (Kamo)



*Reinstated wall hard-up against a concrete footpath.
The wall was built after the footpath was laid (Kamo)*

Further out along the road another subdivision is taking shape with substantially original walls intact except for gaps created for roads and walkways. The gaps are at a minimum and wall ends are properly finished.



Gap allowing for path and road within the development (Scale-board: 50cm)



Original wall in the estate showing drain, smooth and un-restored wall end where the gap was made for the road.

The retention, restoration or reinstatement of walls is no accident. Whangarei District Council has policy on Historical Heritage which specifically identifies walls.

Dry stone walls of historic and amenity value located within volcanic areas on the fringe of Whangarei's urban area are not individually scheduled but are subject to blanket protection under the District Plan. The Plan objective states 'Dry stone walls of historic, cultural, amenity and landscape value to the community are maintained and protected throughout the district.' The policies under this objective which the District Council adjudicates are:

To protect dry stone walls of historical, cultural and amenity value to the community through:

1. Blanket protection of dry stone walls throughout the District.
2. Providing information and advice to the public, including Geographic Information Systems information on the location of protected dry stone walls.
3. Discouraging planting close to dry stone walls.
4. Encouraging proactive maintenance, for example repair of capping stones.
5. Recommending consultation with Heritage New Zealand where dry stone walls are estimated to have been constructed prior to 1900 or their age is in doubt.
6. Limiting works affecting existing dry stone walls, other than:
 - a. Repairs or maintenance in situ using traditional methods, design and materials.
 - b. Removal of up to 6 m length of wall for access purposes only, where no alternative access exists.

Dry stone tourist (cont.)



Ian McDiamid's Round Pyramid, private garden (Kerikeri)



Dry stone tank stand (Kamo). The evident concrete is lining the rusted tank!



Returning to the subject of cycling the Twin Coasts Trail. Surely these public works which use giant stone retaining walls to stabilise steep slopes could be improved structurally and aesthetically with proper dry stone walling technique. And as this page shows, the use of dry stone is not just a utilitarian. Along the way we saw many interesting applications of DS that illustrated the versatility of the medium.

Retaining wall, Twin Coast Trail (near Okaihau)

Bibliography

Architecture Now – Legacy with stone

Catherine Ballard 2010 Stone Wall Country – Dry Stone Walls of the Whangarei District. Catherine Ballard Publisher.

Catherine Ballard 2021 Stone Wall Country – The Dry Stone Walls of the Bay of Islands and Kaikohe Catherine Ballard Publisher.

Catherine Ballard 2023 Stone Wall Country blog: <https://stonewallcountry.wordpress.com>

Challis, A J Edmond's ruins, Kerikeri Inlet, Bay of Islands: The stone structure and the artefact assemblage. Science & Research Series No.68, Department of Conservation, Wellington, NZ. Accessed 17/09/2022.

Dalmations <https://teara.govt.nz/en/map/262/origin-of-dalmatians-emigrating-to-new-zealand-before-1949>

Edmonds, E 2016 Volcanic walls disappearing around Auckland Auckland and Northland News, webpage

O2 Landscapes – Drystone walls of Glenbervie

Trends – Respecting history (Maungarei Stonefields Reserve feature)

Whangarei District Council Historical Heritage Accessed 27Apr2023 -

<https://www.wdc.govt.nz/files/assets/public/documents/services/property/planning/district-plan/operative/pt2/historical-heritage.pdf>



There are quite a few 'eggs' scattered about the landscape; the most notable would be Andy Goldsworthy's *Strangler Cairn* at Conondale (Qld) and his slate cairn on Herring Island (Melbourne), while the ephemeral cairn built by Jeremy Macintosh (Cooper Pedy) has shown there is no limit to where these 'eggs' might be laid. I got the idea for mine, built in the Aldinga Arts-Eco Village (SA), from a spheroid built by Geoff Duggan, who did one butting onto a typically beautiful dry-stone wall (see *TFS #54 May 2022*). Geoff was good enough to pass on to me his design. The following is not a set of instructions on how to build a structure such as this, it is simply a record of how I went about mine.

This built structure is about 1.6 m high, diameter 1.6 m at the widest point and sits on a 1 m diameter base. The trick with something like this is to have stones like segments of a pie, reaching as far as possible into the axis and fitting as snugly and evenly as possible so that adjacent stones can be well covered by a stone on the next course. If I was to build another I would saw the stone triangles – using only a hammer is very time consuming and wastes a lot of stone, at least for an amateur.



As with my 'henge' (*TFS #51 May 2021*), the idea was not mine nor the execution as good as the inspiration. However, it was built just from field stone with all its limitations and used up the last of the stone I had brought with me from the farm some five years ago. I was down to the dregs. But I still had a few monolith rocks similar to those I had used at the henge. So that was the start.



I had three stones that worked somewhat as throughs although I'm not really sure that they contributed much. I left them protruding as features. More important was to ensure that sufficient stones reached in over the fulcrum.

Building an egg (cont.)

The basic principles are similar to a double-skin wall: cover all joints; length into the wall; and pack the hearting good and tight. The lower courses form a cantilever, which must be well supported with weight as close as possible to the axis – that is, as far as possible behind the fulcrum. As the structure rises and widens it is essential to have very good coverage, both radially and circumferentially. I used several through-stones (from axis to circumference) but these are only effective if their centre of gravity is well behind the fulcrum, which might not be the case if they are tapered.

An elliptical cutout template and a stringline from the axis kept the lower courses 'honest'. Above about the sixth course I used electrical conduit and the stringline to describe a fair curve and a constant radius. The top few courses were set by eye and using the radial stringline.

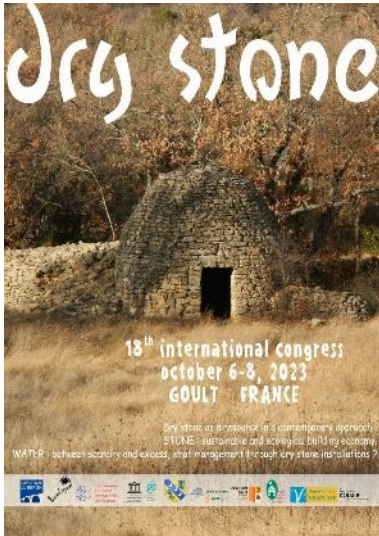
Beyond mid-height the cantilever decreases and eventually is not an issue for further courses. Indeed, the centre of mass moves closer to the axis. However, as each course recedes toward the axis, so does the coverage it offers to the course below, so we must keep selecting stone that goes as far as possible into the structure. This would be even more of an issue for a spheroid, which has a relatively flat top.

The top three stones are circular 'washers' located on the axial rebar.



The large stone emerging from (or is it entering?) the structure speaks to the 5 monoliths some 20 metres away on the other side of the track. They are part of 'the family' now represented here and elsewhere in the Arts-Eco Village.

18th international congress on dry stone



The commune of Goult and the International Society for the Multidisciplinary Study of Dry stone (SPS) are very pleased to host the 18th International Congress on Dry stone.

Held every two years on the application of a different host country* each time, this event has already been organized once in Switzerland (2002), England (2010), Morocco (2014), France (1998), several times in Greece (1992, 2004, 2016), Italy (1987, 1996, 2008, 2012) and Spain (1990, 1994, 2000, 2018).

The 18th International Congress on Dry stone will be held at **Goult (Vaucluse, France) on 2-8 October 2023**.

Its main theme will be dry stone as a resource in a contemporary approach:

- **STONE:** sustainable and ecological building economy.
- **WATER:** between scarcity and excess, what management through dry stone installations?

It is organized into 3 parts:

1. 4 days of participatory construction of walls from October 3 to 5
2. 2 days of congress on October 6 and 7, 2023
3. One day of visits on Sunday October 8.

The art of dry stone construction: know-how and techniques is on the List of:

- o Intangible cultural heritage in France since 2010
- o UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity since 2018 which includes Cyprus, Croatia, Spain, France, Greece, Italy, Slovenia, Switzerland + soon Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Ireland, Luxembourg.

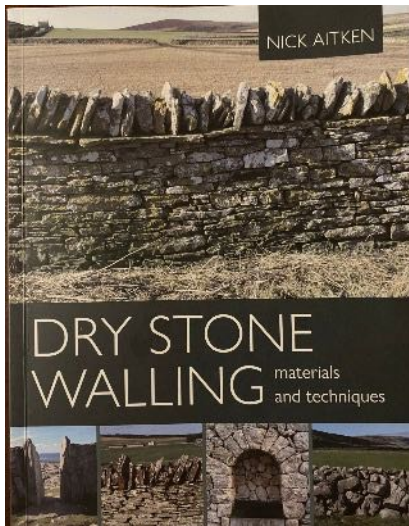
The European Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe has been promoting Dry stone in the landscape, ancestral and innovative for sustainable territories since 2019.



The Association's vision is that dry stone walls and dry stone structures (dsw&dss) are widely accepted for their unique place in the history, and culture of the nation and for the legacy they represent.

Our goals are:

- *To inform and educate the nation about the cultural significance of dry stone walls and structures (dsw&dss) in Australia and their associations and meanings for past, present and future generations.*
- *To document dsw&dss and draw on historical records in order to encourage appreciation, conservation, maintenance, repair and interpretation of those of cultural significance.*
- *To establish disciplines and certification systems that can contribute to the care and construction of dsw&dss.*
- *To assist in ensuring that new construction, demolition, intrusions and other changes do not adversely affect the cultural significance of dsw&dss and that modern uses of them are compatible.*
- *To respect Indigenous heritage places and cultural values, and, in particular, to assist in the conservation of those associated with dsw&dss.*



Nick Aitken is a Scottish dry-stane dyker, Master Craftsman and instructor, now retired in Northwest USA. I met Nick in 2012 at a walling festival on Inis Oirr in Galway Bay. I'm sure of the date because the event was a birthday present from my adult children. One of the features of the



festival was a cooperative wall-build involving amateurs (like me) and pros, all overseen by Nick.

Retiring from arranging stones, Nick has found time to arrange his accumulated skills and experience in this excellent new book.

Coming in at almost 200 pages with full colour photos, this generous book has an index, glossary, bibliography, useful websites and connection to international organisations (such as DSWAA) to do with walling.

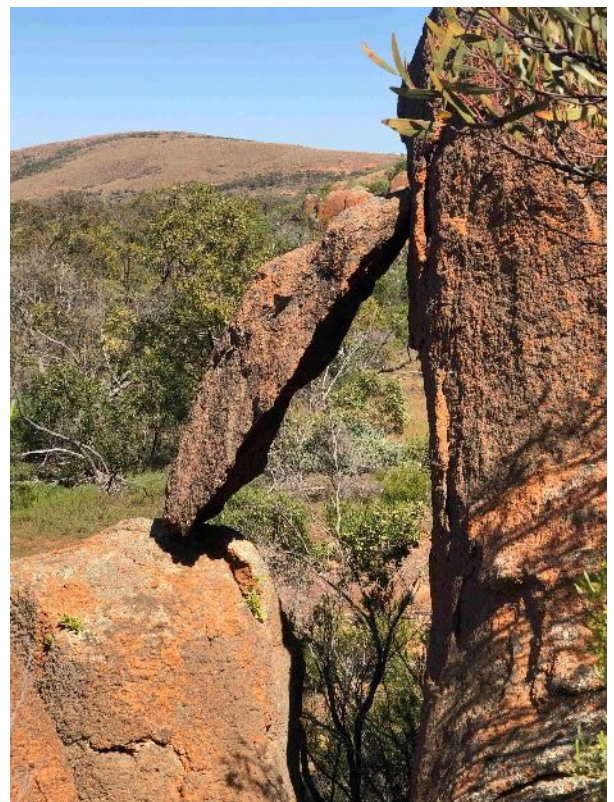
Between its covers Nick takes us through:

- A brief history of dry stone walls
- Different stone, and where to get it (in a general sense)
- Guides to the components and construction of walls
- Features such as corners, curves, slopes, openings and arches
- Repairing gaps and building retaining walls
- Some modern structures.

The photos are well chosen with very descriptive captions illustrating clearly the point being made. An aspect that really impressed me was the attention to faults in walls. Not just the bleeding obvious such as running joints, but also the more subtle problems such as face stones and slap-dash hearting. Unfortunately the handful of sketches do not meet the same graphic standard as the photos.

A chapter on repairing old dry stone walls is something not often found in books on walling, but welcome here. I was surprised to read that when stripping out a damaged wall 'watch out for glass and hypodermic needles'! The author goes on to explain that shepherds would often inoculate lambs in the field and stuff the empty bottle and syringe in a gap in the wall.

Anyone interested in dry stone walls will find gold in these pages. The price in Australia is about \$53 plus postage.



Letters to Editor

Chinaman's Well

Following a piece on Chinaman's Well in Issue 56 of *The Flag Stone*, DSWAA member Chris Payne writes:

It is intriguing, I don't have answers [to the question around Chinese origin of the well] but make some observations and queries.

Stone is rarely quarried from a purely horizontal plain, it's almost always worked from a vertical face. Could the two circular features illustrated be in fact abortive attempts to drive other well shafts?

I haven't seen a similar lidded well; it would call for a skilled mason and a small team of workers. I take it that it is on the route that the Chinese diggers would have taken to the goldfields. Perhaps we could find a Chinese working with vernacular heritage to give an opinion

Michael Williams has also written: I have contacted a number of people working in heritage in China and also in the villages from which the gold-seekers came. No one so far has seen a well anything like it but this is worth pursuing further. Ultimately, I think this is the key point – how to find a comparable style of well? Or do we conclude it is unique in the world of wells?

Elsewhere Michael has written: All this is not to say that the Chinese walkers did not dig their own wells – given the large numbers in their groups this is in fact probable – but there is nothing to suggest which ones nor that any of those that remain today are in any recognisable 'Chinese' style. In fact, wells dug by Chinese market gardeners, who were from the same region of China as the walkers if not the same people, in subsequent years were generally noted as 'shallow rectangular wells' and certainly not any are recorded as elaborate round stone built in a beehive or stone capped style.

Letters always welcome



Who's who in DSWAA

President: Emma Knowles emma@stoneofarc.com

V Pres: Timothy Hubbard
timothyh@oldstandrews.com.au

Secretary: Stuart Read enquiries@dswaa.org.au

Treasurer: Bruce Munday bruce.m42@bigpond.com

Membership: Lyn Allison lynallison4@gmail.com

The Flag Stone Editor: Bruce Munday

0417 895 249 bruce.m42@bigpond.com

Committee Members:

Andrew Garner andezrockman@gmail.com

Jim Holdsworth jim@planningcollaborative.com.au

Raelene Marshall raelenemar@optusnet.com.au

Admin assist: Kathryn Hennig admin@dswaa.org.au

Membership

Annual membership fee

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

Couple \$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.

Photos

Page	
1	B Munday
2-5	Various DSWAA committee members
6-7	E Knowles
8	A Miller, K Munday
9-11	R Marshall
13-15	B Munday
16-20	L Atkins
21-22	B Munday
24	B Munday