



BRANCH NEWS

AUGUST 2012

Produced by Sean

MEETINGS

As we have a meeting coming up I thought I ought to jog everyone's memory, the last one was attended by me and two supporters, no members whatsoever which could be described as a little disappointing. We are trying a new venue for this meeting. Based on the notion that if no-one's going to turn up we might as well try almost anywhere that might give 'outsiders' an opportunity to attend. So its off to the Pensychnant Conservation Centre on Monday 24th September. Starting at 7.30pm sharp there will be a talk - "From the Pyramids to the Wailing Wall: The stone structures of the North Wales Slate Industry." So turn up from about 7pm if you want a chat and tea/coffee. Apologies to those of you who saw the presentation the winter before last in Llanberis, but then that's literally only one or two....

To find Pensychnant SH752770 (OS Landranger Map 115)....

Travelling **WEST** on A55 take the Conwy turn (Junction 18) and follow signs for Conwy. Go past the castle and follow the sign for town centre. Go past Conwy Visitors Centre on the left, take the 2nd left into Upper Gate Street and proceed up the hill for about 2.5 miles towards the Sychnant Pass. Pensychnant entrance is on the right after Sychnant Pass House Hotel. If you go over the brow of the pass, between high walls, you have gone too far.

Travelling **EAST** on A55 take the sign for Penmaenmawr (Junction 16). Go into Penmaenmawr and take the right fork by the Mountain View pub opposite the main terrace of shops towards the Sychnant Pass. Follow the road for about 2.5 miles. As you come over the brow of the pass between the walls pass a National Park car park on your right and then

take the next turning on the left into Pensychnant. If you get to the Sychnant Pass House Hotel you have gone too far.

Travelling from the South you can take back roads from Gyffin to the Sychnant pass, the entrance to Pensychnant is on the right just after the Sychnant Pass Hotel



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This year's AGM will be held as usual in the Foelas Arms, Pentrefoelas. 7th November starting at 7.00pm. It will include the showing of the DVD "L'Obra d'un gegant" – the work of a giant – a look at walling on Mallorca. English Language version (with a few sub-titles in places).

DSWA have produced a wall calendar for 2013, £5 a go or thereabouts, these are available from me or at the Branch meeting or AGM. Or by mail from DSWA (£6.50).

MEMBERSHIP

Membership was due in April, but as there's been no Stonechat we've delayed reminding people. Stonechat 26 is now imminent so this cannot continue! A membership form is attached for you to renew either your membership or supporter status. Please remember that in order to be a member you have to belong to DSWA of GB too – if you have not already paid DSWA of GB we need this from you. The delayed Stonechat no.26, part of the 2011-12 membership, will be with you all within a month (when its back from the printers and I'm around long enough to collect and mail it), with a final reminder. As you should be aware (from "Ar y wal" and the website www.dswales.org.uk) the lack of Stonechats has been partly due to production of two booklets (dealt with later). The 2012-3 subscription will include Stonechats 27 & 28 plus mailing of a copy of each of these booklets rather than 3 Stonechats.

A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE SUMMER TO DATE

TRAINING & FOOD

Training has been a bit hit and miss this year, courses have been cancelled due to lack of numbers and in one case a lack of instructor. Another course arranged specifically for the Snowdonia Society was bursting at the seams and needed two instructors. Advertising has been a huge problem as the local papers are not printing very much at all about them, traditionally this has been our main source of participants.

We have managed to run tasters at both Pen y Pass and Moel Famau and cancelled at both too. The Snowdonia Society course saw us return to Pensychnant for the first time since the 24 hour, round the clock, walling Marathon and subsequent courses in the 90s. A great time seems to have been had by all, despite the weather, thanks to Colin and Iolo's enthusiasm. So we have thus far managed to train 27 individuals for a total of 41 trainee days.



a Society at Pensychnant

Sadly no branch members have attended any course for practice this year – and this includes the two weekend events where we have entertained Otley and Yorkshire Dales, and Cheshire branches. We have managed a total of 26.5 participant trainee days of which 21.5 are members from other branches and I did 4.5 of the rest. The missing 0.5 being Colin at the Aberystwyth get together at the beginning of the year.

OYD were our guests at Plas Derwen, Corwen again continuing the project on the orchard wall. Numbers (both them and us) were down on last year and the wall's getting higher so a much smaller length was achieved this year, although productivity was the same. That's not really the point, we had a great time again, with much socialising – pub meal in Carrog and a BBQ on the Saturday – with the event shelter proving a life saver through the weekend given the weather.



This year we had a change of venue for the Cheshire Branch as we introduced them to the delights of our one time training and competition site, Blaen y Nant, where we were repairing a very old milking pen.

The arrival of the campers at ByN was inauspicious given the state of the monsoon at the time. One look and the 3 camping, headed chez moi and 'camped' in the DSWA office (spare room) and on the living room floor instead.

Friday evening was

spent having a meal in the Bryn Tyrch, a definite improvement on the previous year's communal meal in Wynnstay Arms, Llanrhaedr y m. This year everyone got a meal, they were all hot, and served at the same time. Who'd have thought?

The weather improved for the Saturday although there was a look of alarm on everyone's faces as they saw the proposed project – the pen is essentially a north welsh single skin wall with some impressive boulders. There was a plan B, but it wasn't needed as everyone mucked in and were surprised by what could be achieved. Saturday evening and another barbecue, shock horror this time I wasn't the only Branch member as Colin (and wife) joined us. By just after midday Sunday we had about half the pen restored and packed up just before it started to rain. For once the gods were smiling. Hopefully Cheshire have not been put off and will return to finish the job next year. It's just a shame there were no Branch members to help (and learn) with this rare form of walling. There is still an opportunity to sign up for our single skin seminar t pen y pass. This has been changed to 27th October, details on website or contact Sean.



ace



inished wall makes a good seat!

DISPLAYS



the Greenfield Valley

We've done quite well at attending events this summer, due in no small part to the enthusiasm for Craig, who appears to have come out of hibernation since his retirement from the chair! Craig and Paul attended the Denbigh and Flint Countryside day held at Greenfield valley Museum in May. A good family day out we had limited footfall, perhaps need to look into ways of involving children more, such as the wall Jigsaw the South Wales Branch had for the Royal welsh Agricultural Society Spring Fair a two day event which I attended to launch "CodiCloddiau". Over 100 copies went to the public as well as supplies to various organisations such as FUW/NFU and CLA.



Many thanks to Brian for all the hard work and the South Wales Branch in setting up the weekend.

The South Wales branch once again represented the DSWA at the Royal Welsh Show, Colin and Ray (Guthrie) helped out



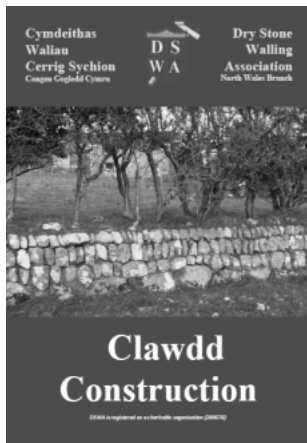
w at RWAS Spring Festival

for a day, Alan Jones did a couple. Again many thanks to Brian for his efforts. As for ourselves we really ought to be doing more to help out at this showcase event.

Craig ably assisted by Richard also attended the Eryrys Tractor event and the Denbigh and Flint show (where Colin joined in). The latter was a particularly good day with a steady flow and considerable interest in training... time will tell, we even managed to sell a few booklets.

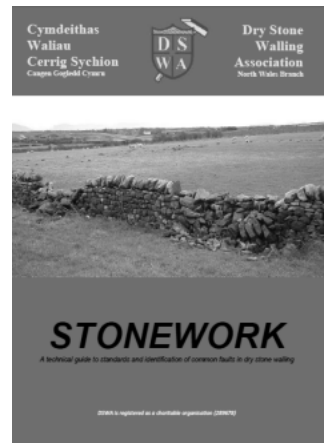
We really need to be present at more events, and at least one or two in the North West, but our ability to attend them comes down to the willingness of individuals to set up the stand and help out. So huge thanks to Craig and entourage and I shall cling to the almost forlorn hope that someone out there will put their hand up.

BOOKLETS



The Branch has just produced two booklets thanks to generous funding from the North Wales Trunk Road agency.

The 54 page bilingual *Codi Cloddiau/Clawdd Construction* is a step by step guide to the construction of the archetypal welsh cloddiau – stone faced earth banks found across much of the western coastal plain of Wales, but rare elsewhere in Britain. The booklet deals with the setting of stones in courses and set on end, a technique described as book-ending as the stones resemble books on a shelf. The booklet also contains a generic specification for this type of wall with cross references to relevant text. The booklet is available on-line as separate English and welsh pdf versions in the standards section of the website.



The second (34 page) booklet, *Stonework*, has been described as a “how not to” guide as it outlines common faults illustrated on a variety of stone types. It is hoped it will act as an aid to those wishing to improve their work as well as helping those who commission work from farmers to local authorities. Assessing the quality of workmanship can be problematic, even for the experienced as much of the strength of a wall is hidden in its innards. The booklet identifies many of the tell tale signs of poor craftsmanship. It is currently available only in English, although a welsh language version should be appearing on the website soon. If you can think of potential sponsors we might even be able to get the welsh version into print. We do hope to expand the range of Welsh Language leaflets (i.e. getting the current DSWA range translated and printed), and with any luck the Craftsman Scheme Booklet will appear in Welsh somewhere in 2013 as the committee have agreed that getting this translated would be a good use of what remains of the “Gareth Fund” as certification was very close to Gareth’s heart.

Both booklets can be obtained free at events/meetings, For those subscribing to Stonechat or Paying for membership a copy of each is included.

ALL WALES GET-TOGETHER

Following February’s successful get-together in Aberystwyth another is planned for 4/5 November – it is likely that this autumn spot will become the regular time for this event. We shall be copying last year’s format with a bit of building on the Saturday, pub meal on the Saturday Night and discussion on Saturday morning before wending our ways Sunday lunch-time. Some of us will be arriving on the Friday night. Accommodation should be around £30 ppn, or you can turn up on a daily basis. Bookings will need to be made by the end of September, please contact me if you are interested... even remotely – we really did have a great time in February, but the more the merrier!

PRESS

Press coverage has been more than a little disappointing, although its difficult to tell exactly as I have been sent precisely no cuttings by anyone, and only told of one piece in Daily Post – which I knew about. Once again the DP has been the only reliable outlet for articles with one or two very good ones. We have had an article published in the July Copy of “Network News” a magazine which is “an inspiring guide to events in North Wales”. This was a general article on walling and the Branch which you can find in the SNIPPETS section of the News section of the website.

It occurs to me that many of you probably belong to other groups with newsletters/magazines which might be willing to include something similar (or shorter). I am poised by the phone waiting for your suggestions.

Keeping track of press articles requires help, notifying (quickly) – or preferably sending anything you see... If I had a penny for every time someone sees something and just assumes I knew it was there, basically I have a slim chance of knowing if and when any paper is likely to print anything and some releases go to around 15 different papers/outlets. This year I have also tried phoning to place/check on articles – this is something I very much need help with. At the moment it has met with limited success, I have not had the time to fully follow it through. Wouldn't it be nice if someone who was reliable would offer to take a few hours out of a day every few weeks to take on this job.

BRANCH OFFICERS

Chairman	Geraint Evans	07519 505295	
Vice Chairman	Iolo Jones	01286 870762	
Hon. Secretary	Sean Adcock	01286 871275	sean@stonewaller.freeseve.co.uk
Hon. Treasurer	Colin Brown	07738 853794	
Training	Paul Smyth	01766 513213	pasmyth@btinternet.com
Eastern rep	Craig Evans	01824 750650	

DIARY AND COMPLETED EVENTS

March 17/18	Welsh Branch Get Together/ Forum Aberystwyth
March 17	Taster day, Glandyfi, Machynlleth.
March 17	Evening talk "Zig-zagging across the USA". Walls and projects in North America. Aberystwyth venue tbc
March 24	DSWA of GB Branch Forum, Crooklands, Cumbria
April 16	Branch meeting. Foelas Arms, Pentrefoelas. 7.00pm. DVD "Preserving dry-stone walls of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal.
	By kind Permission Dry Stone Conservancy. Non members welcome
April 28	Taster day, Moel Famau, Mold
May 13	Stand at Greenfield Valley Open Day, Holywell
May 26	Taster day, Pen y Pass, Snowdon
May 27	Guided walk. Quarries of Cwm Orthin. Cwm Orthin, Conglog, Rhosydd, Wrysgan and Rhosydd Tramway.
	Non members welcome.
June 2/3	Training Course for Snowdonia Society, Penyschnant
June 15/17	Otley and Yorkshire Dales Branch @ Corwen
June 16	Barbecue, Plas Derwen, Corwen. 6.30pm onwards
June 16	Taster day, Plas Derwen, Corwen
June 17	Snowdonia Society Competition, Hafod y Llan, Beddgelert
June 30	Taster day, Moel Famau, Mold
July 6/8	Cheshire Branch on Tour, Blaen y Nant, Nant Ffrancon
July 7	Barbecue, Blaen y nant, Nant Ffrancon. 6.00pm onwards
July 13	Presentation "An Idiosyncratic Survey of The Walls Of Britain". OYD Branch, Leyburn Group, Leyburn
July 23-6	Royal Welsh Show demonstration (with South wales Branch)
July 28	Taster day, Pen y Pass, Snowdon
July 28	Single wall seminar, Pen y Pass, Snowdon
July 29	Stand at Eryrys Vintage gathering (Tractor Show)
August 4	Taster day, Pensychnant, Conwy
August 16	Stand at Denbigh and Flint Show.
September 1&2	Training Course, Moel Famau, Mold
September 7	Presentation "Another Idiosyncratic Survey", Stone Foundation, Asheville, North Carolina
September 24th	Presentation and Branch meeting, "From the Pyramids to the wailing wall: the stone structures of the North Wales Slate industry". Pensychnant, Conwy. 7pm for 7.30
September 29&30	Training Course Pen y Pass, Snowdon
October 27	Single wall seminar, Pen y Pass, Snowdon
November 3-4	All Wales get together, Aberystwyth
November 7	Film "L'Obra D'un Gegant" – The work of a Giant, walling on Mallorca & AGM. Foelas Arms Pentrefoelas. 7 pm for 7.30
November 26	Presentation "Inscriptions on the Landscape" Preston Natural History Society

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION April 2012/3

NAME

ADDRESS

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TELEPHONE

E MAIL

PLEASE TICK WHICH APPLY

	NATIONAL SUBSCRIPTION (£24)	<input type="checkbox"/>
BRANCH SUBSCRIPTION (£16)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Requires national subscription		
Includes Stonechat and booklets	ALREADY HAVE NATIONAL SUBSCRIPTION	<input type="checkbox"/>

BRANCH SUPPORTER	(Stonechat/Booklets)(£6)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	(Stonechat 2 copies only no booklets) (£4)	<input type="checkbox"/>

I ENCLOSE CHEQUE FOR

(Payable to North Wales Branch of GB DSWA)

Send to: Sean Adcock, 2 Bryn Eithin, Waen, Penisarwaun, Caernarfon, Gwynedd. LL55 3PW