

NORTH WALES BRANCH REPORT

Good News! No you're not hallucinating and I'm not running a temperature. One of the advantages of having so few members is that phoning each of them is practicable and now our number have soared from 11 to around 18. Before we get too carried away with all this euphoria... of course every silver lining has a cloud, it's still less than two thirds what it was.

Last time we were about to welcome the Cheshire Branch, to Llanrahaedr ym mochnant, if we ever worked out how to find it let alone say it. At that point we still only had 11 members, more or less that many came from Cheshire and we rebuilt around 15 linear metres of wall. 15m. of wall might not sound a lot, but outside of training and competition actually building walls is not something we get up to very often. It was a thoroughly enjoyable weekend and you can read more about it in the Branch News section of www.dswales.org.uk, including the memorable evening out at a local hostelry, service which had to be seen to be believed.



Janet&Duncan (Cheshire) enraptured by Ray's (NWales) explanation



OYD@Corwen

A month or so later 7 hardy souls from the back of beyond, Otley and Yorkshire Dales I think they said it was, joined us for a weekend at Plas Derwen near Corwen, an Old Vicarage B&B. We built more wall, partly retaining, oh the headiness of it all. This was our first project on this site, and there's plenty more potential... Accommodation and food lain on in return for a weekend of work, any other branches interested? We hope to make this a regular occurrence. OYD are even threatening to come back, despite the idea of producing "I survived Sean Adcock" T shirts. They should try being Sean Adcock. Much flatter stone than Llanrahaedr-y-m (where we also hope to return, fancy a tent sauna and yurt living?) and a slab cope provided

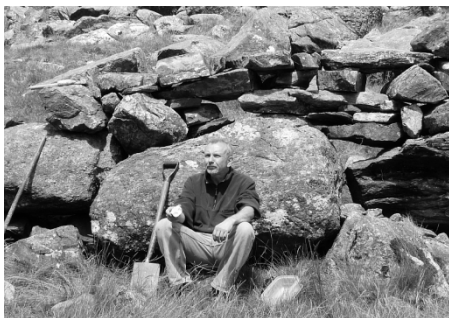
opportunities for learning and discussion. More on that can be found in "Stonechat 25", available from all good Branches...

Back to normal attendance for a single skin wall seminar – couldn't call it a course because we made it up as we went along – still 4 out of 11 is I suppose good, then 3 for our now annual slate quarry walk. Welsh single walls are very rare (this one is on one of our regular training sites) differ from Scottish ones in the stones are lain flat, and often create huge aerial lunkies out of slabs and sometimes involve balancing as much as building. As our treasurer described the experience "rules of normal walling are put to one side and imagination, trial and error and downright cheating come to the fore." We shall return, it's alongside a Youth Hostel, accommodation can be arranged, go on you too could survive...

Between the two events we actually saw 50% of the membership which is I suppose progress of sorts. Must go before this positivism becomes a habit... Oh yeah our competition was cancelled due to lack of support....

Sean Adcock

Photo of single wall if you feel so inclined



Bill concentrates on keeping the single stones in place.