

## **SOUTH WALES BRANCH REPORT**

March 17th 2012 was the first meeting for the South & North Wales branches, a weekend in Aberystwyth. We did a few hours walling at Glandyfi Castle on the Saturday before heading out to watch Wales V France for the Grand Slam. After the victory celebrations we went to a local pub for a very enjoyable meal, a few drinks and a slide show presentation of a recent trip to the United States by Sean Adcock.

On the Sunday we had a meeting where everything from branch level to national level was discussed. Margaret Hicks brought some good ideas and suggestions for getting involved with local colleges. A list of colleges in the South and North was given to Margaret so she could make contact and then hand over to branch level if needed. This was cautiously supported as it cannot be at the detriment of the branches.

A big topic was that of bilingualism, in having leaflets in Welsh & English quite a bit of time was spent on this topic we'll have to see how it progresses.

The Jason Hoffman Proposals regarding the professional member was discussed at length. The view of the members was quite clear, stating that Sean was to go to the trustees meeting and absolutely oppose any watering down of the craftsman scheme, as no member should be promoted above their current certificate, unless they achieve the next level of certification. It was also felt that the cost to the professional member of £60 represented good value for money as it was effectively a £36 upgrade from an open member, although there could obviously be some form of tweaking to the register. The meeting ended at lunch time and a date has been set for the next get-together.

April 14-15 we held training & members weekend which was well attended by trainees and members, people came from as far as Malvern, Worcestershire and Fulham, London a good weekend was had by all and the feedback after the training was great with some saying they are going to join the DSWA. The members took on the task of rebuilding a water pen under the guidance of Martyn Jones & Toby Small it was at the entrance to a farm and farmer David Manning was very pleased with the work the branch did.

A member's day on May 6<sup>th</sup> was held to rebuild a small section of wall at Cregrina Church at Hundred House. five members turned up to carry out this small project the repair took about five hours and the local community were absolutely delighted with the end result we were very well looked after by the people of the village who provided a wonderful buffet we also got very good coverage with the local media.

In mid May the branch had a stand at the Smallholders Show at Builth Wells we were joined by Sean Adcock who used the show to launch the new Clawdd construction leaflet (which is excellent) we built a milk churn feature, a small demonstration wall and had a walling jigsaw for children to try and complete which proved very successful. The show was held for two days and was very well attended and once again we had a lot of interest in our stand.

Founder member Phil Clark gave a talk at the end of May on dry stone walls and geology about a dozen people turned up and listened intently as Phil gave a very good talk, although only two branch members were there Phil & myself

In late June a training and members weekend was held and very well attended by trainees in unpleasant weather on the Saturday, but the weather was much improved on the Sunday a good section of wall was completed and the feedback was very good once again so we must be doing something right.

The Royal Welsh Show July 23-27<sup>th</sup> is next and we need members to help out on the stand, so all are welcome.