

Editorial

It's great to see the contractors' work is finished at Gennets Bridge Lock, and that volunteer working parties are now able to get to work. Alongside the professional work at Compasses, it seems that the day when various sections will join up to provide a long navigable canal is, although still far off, creeping gradually nearer.

WACT has recently concluded a lease agreement on a section of canal at Tanglewood Farm, in the Shalford/Bramley area, an important milestone for our restoration plans in the area.

Bill

The Mrs Bucket Group (keeping up appearances on Mondays)

We spent our two September meetings keeping up appearances at our regular sites and once again mowed the permissive path at Drungewick and attended to the lock. The vegetation seems to grow and grow! It looks as if we shall need another outing at 'our regulars' in October before winter and we are also planning a visit to Malham lock. Then it will be our winter work in Sidney Wood including possibly the relaying of the towpath by lock 16 if the material and heavy gear can be organised. JE is on the case!

Incidentally two ladies, walking their dogs at Haybarn, were very complimentary about the work done at Pallingham. We couldn't claim the credit of course, but gave it to MWWP.

It was disappointing to hear that vandals had smashed the leaflet box at Rowner lock, although the laminated card was found undamaged in the grass nearby. A replacement box is being arranged.

Nick Wood

Visiting Groups

NWPG at Compasses Bridge 12 -13

September: One of those weekends when a lot of work was done but it was difficult to see the results at the end of it!

The main two tasks were the road access to the new bridge and building a dam. After rejecting the offer of £6K to buy a water dam (as used at Ham Mill on the Cotswolds) it was decided to revert to the tried and tested method of filling the canal with clay. The dam was needed now to facilitate removal of a large pile of clay created by Thornes on the south side of the bridge and to move it to construct a dam just north of the landing stage. Once complete this section between the dam and bridge will be dredged by contractors and prepared ready for removal of the causeway next spring and construction of gabion retaining walls. After a whole weekend of tipping spoil, the dam is about 50% complete and awaits more spoil from the bridge.

The other main job was to continue preparations for the road linking onto the new bridge. We cleared around and removed an old fence and started to concrete in posts for the new one. More spoil was carefully taken from the road area - carefully because it's riddled with services; the spoil going into the dam. Other jobs completed included further tidying and re-profiling of the banks down below the Burnsite; disposing of rubbish from the same site and making some timber profiles for bricklaying hopefully later in the year. We were assisted in all these tasks by the use of the Thorne's plant and at least 12 willing volunteers on each day..

Bill Nicholson

Tickner's Heath Depot

Great news - we at the depot managed to find some actual work to do, albeit in and around the depot, so at least we earned our wages(?) this month.

Finally this month we managed to give a second coat to the workshop doors. Hopefully we managed to match, as closely as we could, the WACT colour scheme.

Whilst inspecting the buildings we noticed that one of the walls had a rather alarming gap in it. So the team, ever keen to increase their skill levels, set about with drill and various pieces of ironmongery left lying around the depot to at least prevent the gap getting any wider. It's a good job that we had a fair selection of SDS drills available as the job would have been a darn sight harder



Drungewick Lock after the Monday Group's efforts on 21 September (Roger Wilson)

without them. We have now ensured that at least one part of the depot buildings will not collapse around our ears.

At the request of our chum and honorary team member Dan O, we set about checking out two of our petrol mixers. One burst into life virtually as soon as we pulled it over, but of course we were not as lucky with other. After a bit of research on the internet we managed to obtain a gasket set for the carb. After fitting this, and with a slight cough and splutter, it too burst into life. So at least we have fulfilled our usefulness (no comments please).

With the return of our language expert we immediately set him to work on clearing the jungle along our boundary fence. During his labours he uncovered some of the long lost WACT treasures, namely pieces of old lock furniture. He will now have to spend the next few weeks/months finding somewhere where they will not get covered in vegetation.

Well that's about it for this month, keep smiling
John Smith

Lordings Group

The group, also/formerly known as the Winston Harwood Group, has been busy throughout the summer season. Grass-cutting has been well done by Richard and any strimming by me, from the waterwheel winding hole to Winston's bridge (as I like to call it) Plus of course bramble and weed control to improve visibility of the canal section and make it easier for our regular walkers.

Sad to report, the waterwheel has only been running on days when we were working, plus it needs adjusting regularly. Our engineers need to investigate further (a partial re-think necessary?)

On a lighter note, two climbing roses, vigorous growing and vandal resistant, have been planted close to Rose Arch Bridge and have established well despite the spring and summer drought. The Trust now has a signwriter, and the handrails should be less attractive to vandals than the previous hanging signs, which disappeared.

Tony Clear



Fencing work by the Summit Group

Summit (Northern) Working Party

This group, meeting on the third Saturday of the month, continued the work left at the end of the previous NWPG weekend. Our now regular band of six volunteers spent the day finishing the fence alongside the new access to the bridge (see photos above).

Other work included more hole digging to find services, with some success in finding a BT cable (we think) that BT had assured us was not there. More expense no doubt to divert but not perhaps as expensive as digging it up with a machine.

Working Party Diary		
Every Sunday and Thursday	Mainly construction work	Contact Eric Walker for details
Usually first & third Mondays of the month	'Mrs Bucket' - Keeping Up Appearances	Details from John Empringham
Every Wednesday	Mid-Week Working Party	Details from Margaret Darvill
Every Wednesday (plus Thursday and Sunday as required)	Loxwood Link Maintenance	Check with Kev Baker
Every Wednesday	Maintenance sessions at Tickner's Heath Depot	Contact John Smith/Ken Bacon
Tuesdays or Fridays	Work in Lording's area	Contact Tony Clear for details
Various Tuesdays	Hedge Laying	Contact Keith Nichols
Third Saturday of the month	Summit level	Contact Dave Evans
24 October	Autumn Meeting	See latest <i>Wey-South</i>

It's good to welcome new volunteers to the canal who have not been regular members of either visiting groups or one of the other Trust working parties. We can take more! Next time out is Saturday 19 October.

Bill Nicholson

Mid-Week Working Party

MWWP has been very busy this last six weeks. We have been clearing the canal bed at Pallingham and we can see nearly all the way from Pallingham Bridge to Cook's Bridge.

Unfortunately there is a slight bend in the canal and we still have a couple of weeks work to complete our task for this year. We have had very good numbers for most weeks but we have had two weeks where it has rained virtually the whole day and there have been very few of us. Who blames volunteers for not turning up in that wet weather.

A few select members cleared half the canal bank at Compasses Bridge to enable wild flowers to be planted next year. MWWP spent some time cutting back reeds earlier in the year and spraying of reeds has subsequently taken place at Drungewick to prevent us having to do this job so often.

Margaret Darvill

Hedgelaying Team

On Saturday 13 June a small party of the team demonstrated laying part of a hedge at North Hall at the Loxwood Village Fete. We thus reminded the locals of the WACT presence in the area. Over another couple of days half of this hedge was completed and tidied up. The remaining half will be finished on the day of the 2016 Fete.

Greetings everybody for the beginning of the 2015/16 Hedgelaying Season. Or is it? I seem to have drawn a blank for hedgelaying alongside the canal so far this year. This is because, for the two



Hedgelaying group 'Spot the Hedge' boat trip

sections I was considering, permissions have not yet been forthcoming. So all I have come up with is the following:

- 1 There may be some tree planting to do between November and March but there are no definite plans yet.
 - 2 There is a probable start to a tree nursery in the area where we will need to move natural regeneration in unwanted areas, to the nursery.
 - 3 Lay a hedge for one of the team, which is off line, plus associated coppicing for materials.
 - 4 Coppicing to regenerate a small coppice.
- And that is it...*

To celebrate? the 13th anniversary of the formation of the Hedgelaying Group a 'Spot the Hedge Cruise' was organised for 15 September. This was open to all past and present HLG members. The light morning rain stopped and a small contingent of layers and their partners set off with the boat crew for Southland on a sunny, mild afternoon. A 'small repast' was taken at Southland, which was enjoyed by all on board (thanks Penny). We then managed to get as far as Baldwins before having to turn back. A very pleasant four hours indeed.

Keith Nichols

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Margaret Darvill	MidWeek Working Party	01483 894606	margaret_darvill@weyandarun.co.uk
John Empringham	Monday Group	01483 562657	mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk
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Bill Nicholson	Northern working parties	01844 343 369	bill@nwpg.org.uk
Dave Evans	Summit working party		compasses@weyandarun.co.uk
Bill Thomson	Working Party News	01903 744767	bill_thomson@weyandarun.co.uk

Thursday and Sunday Group

At Gennets Bridge Lock the contractors finished the rest of their work and removed the last of their equipment on 25 September. One of their final tasks was to get some of the WACT kit into the lock, thus saving us many hours of manhandling it in. It is now up to the volunteers to finish the lock construction.

The first job is to clear up the site and then back fill behind the walls where the contractor had the shuttering.

The towpath work from Brewhurst Lane to Birch Copse was completed and some towpath work done on the Gennets Farm stretch of the BY 809. Repairs to the haul road (also BY633/1) into the site were carried out before it gets too wet.

The Thursday and Sunday Group meets at 09:30. The TUG has a work briefing form emailed out before the working day. Please email Eric Walker if you want to get on that circulation list.

Eric Walker

News briefs

Hunt Park: Don't forget the formal opening of the Hunt Park viewing platform on 24 October, at midday, before the Trust Autumn Meeting. All are welcome to go along, particularly if you haven't visited this site before.

Battery Recycling: Eric Walker reminds us that the Trust can still make money from recycling scrap batteries. Please drop them off on a work day at Gennets Bridge Lock, leave them under the stairs at the Loxwood Office, or John Smith can receive them, by arrangement, at Tickner's Heath Depot.

Grow Your Tenner 2015: The very successful 'Grow your tenner' matched funding scheme, which has worked so well for WACT in the past, is starting again this month. See the Trust website for how you can contribute.:

www.weyandarun.co.uk/latestnews.php?id=%2076

Thursday & Sunday Group Pictures:

Below, 'Flying High' the 3 tonne excavator on its way out of the lock well above the trees.

Above right: 'Kit ready to go' showing the excavator and other items on the lorry ready to go. Incidentally the lorry cost £135K and this was its first trip out.

Below right: The crane on site, giving some idea of the size of the crane relative to the lock.

(pictures from Eric Walker)

