

### Editorial

Many of the participants in the recent 'Poddle' sponsored walk viewed work at the new Compasses Bridge - see the Summit/Northern report below. A professional archaeologist has recorded the soon-to-be-removed remains on the south side. Still at Compasses, the 'Last Push' appeal is still open for donations - please give generously.

Compasses and the new slipway are the venues for the 2016 Summer Camp, which is about to get underway as this issue is prepared.

Finally, we are very pleased to note that Peter Foulger has been made a Vice-President of the Trust. With so many people putting so much into the project it is always hard to single out any individual, but Peter's contribution has been truly immense. For many years there was fervent opposition to the restoration of the canal in the Loxwood area. When Peter and his father bought the farmland that included the canal bed things changed almost overnight. Not only did Peter allow WACT to carry out restoration work, he was instrumental in getting a fully-navigable canal up and running, with all the major engineering work that entailed. The result is something we could only dream of before Peter arrived, and the navigable stretch continues to prosper and grow.

*Bill*

### Mrs Bucket Group - Keeping Up Appearances on Mondays

In last month's *WPN* I said 'we never seem to be short of work'. How true that is! At the first meeting in June, apart from our regular sites, not only did the Group return to Lordings to mow and trim the lock, but they also visited Brewhurst and Baldwins Knob locks on behalf of Mike Davison who was on holiday. A new noticeboard, relating to the special picnic seats and table at Devils Hole lock, was installed too. In all, on that day 7 volunteers worked 52 hours between them 'keeping up appearances' at 11 sites. Giant Hogweed was also discovered growing behind the paper skips in the overflow car park at Loxwood. This has been reported to Julian Cheek.

In discharge of a special request from the Northern Group now that the Aquadocks had become available, we spent two Mondays clearing around Gosden Aqueduct. On arrival for the 'first' session the level of vegetation obscured it from sight. It could only be seen from the edge of Cranleigh waters. In addition, only one of the four culverts was clear of debris. We set to and by the



*Gosden clearance by Monday Group: Top, before; middle two, during; bottom, after. (John Empringham)*



**Compasses Bridge: Part of the original offside abutment (right of centre, running in the top to bottom direction), looking north east (Dave Verrall)**

end of day one, with the aid of the Aquadocks, brought from Tickners by Dave K with the Trust's landrover and trailer and assembled into a 'raft', a second culvert had been cleared and the vegetation cut back on the top of the aqueduct. At the second meeting, as well as clearing the Bramley side bank, we removed an enormous pile of jammed debris blocking the remaining two culverts including a substantial tree. With the job completed all that remains to be done is to disassemble the Aquadock 'raft' and return it all to Tickner's.

At the time of writing it looks as if the Group will have been out on all four Mondays in June!

*Nick Wood*

## Tickner's Heath Depot

Well, another month of this glorious summer has been and gone and here at the depot life goes on much as it has done for most of the year.

We have given where we can support to the various working parties and work camps making sure that what items of equipment we have at the depot are available and useable. Mind you, our stocks are rapidly declining. Even items which

were confidently predicted to never see the light of day again have disappeared canal-side.

We have managed to repair a few of the items that have come our way, even without the help of our mechanical wizard, Francis Wellerd, who has ventured into the outer reaches of the English canal system. When last we heard, he was a bore on the Severn - sorry, that should be the other way round, I think?

Our future plans involve giving the wooden shed doors a good coating of preservative as some are showing their age. Of course, this all depends on the weather realising that at this time of year it should be sunny and warm.

So that's all for this month, rather short and sweet really. All the best

*John Smith*

## Thursday and Sunday Group

The Thursday and Sunday Group meets at 09:30. The TSG 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*

## Hedgelaying Team

Report by Anonymous -ELO. ELO All (Over The World). I was asked to write this report as Keith swore that the June report was definitely his last vis-à-vis the summer break.

So, without further ado, what were they doing in June?

They apparently worked on Friday 3, Sunday 5, Tuesday 7, Saturday 11, Tuesday 14, Tuesday 21 and Tuesday 28, the Saturday being Loxwood Village Fete.

The small team (if two is a team, is one half a team?) pre-Fete were a) coppicing for 70-plus stakes and binders, b) tree trimming and c) hedge adjustment, b) and c) being at North Hall. The day of the Fete went well with a good, positive response to the demonstrations from visitors. Over 30 tools that are or can be used for hedgelaying were laid out on a white sheet on a warm sunny day and this provided some extra interest.

## 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
Various Tuesdays	Hedge Laying	Contact Keith Nichols
Third Saturday of the month	Summit level	Contact Dave Evans
1st and 2nd October	Bicentenary celebrations	Look for details on website and in <i>Wey-South</i>

15 of the 30 yards were laid on that day with the final three Tuesdays being finishing off and tidying up. So that is that then.

May I say that the guys in the team have worked hard this last season, as always and are now doing other things like leading walks, passion plays, assisting their children, gardening catch-up, windmills, boat trips and report writing. So, here is the Headmasters' report for them:

A+ Bob: a little behind for his age but tries hard if he will stop windmilling.

D- Nick: trying, very trying, a little big for his boots, try bigger boots.

A Steve: willing and willing to help but needs help. Basically a good young lad.

B+ Dave Pi: his mind is not on the job, likes making boobs and drinking but could go far.

A- Dave Pa: hard worker but a hot potato. Needs to cool off.

C Stuart: a poor sickly child but means well. Always making it to a beer festival. Needs to attend more.

Z- Keith: brains of an ant, cracks too many bad jokes, but promising when he grows up. Otherwise, away with the fairies.

Three cheers for the team: Hussar!, Hussar!, Hussar!

Signed by Anonymous Keith. Damn, Damn, Damn... oh, what a giveaway!

*Keith Nichols*

## Summit/Northern Working Parties

Our new motto must be "when in hole - keep digging!" Anyone who has visited Compasses Bridge recently will appreciate the amount of material that has been dug out of the site of the now former causeway in preparation for the two WRG/NWPG summer camps which are almost upon us.

Puddle walkers had the chance to inspect the excavation on 5 June from the specially constructed viewing platform (Northern WP specialise in these!) built by the Evans brothers under the new bridge.

Also in view is (soon to be 'was') the remains of the springing for the arch of the old bridge. Remains that were previously deemed by yours



**Our hedging group's efforts at North Hall, Loxwood, as demonstrated during Loxwood Fete (Keith Nichols)**

Name	Group/Project	Tel	e-mail
Julian Cheek	Maintenance coordination	01483 505566	<a href="mailto:julian_cheek@weyandarun.co.uk">julian_cheek@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Maurice Cranefield	Visiting working parties	01483 505566	<a href="mailto:Maurice_Cranefield@weyandarun.co.uk">Maurice_Cranefield@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Dave Evans	Health & Safety Officer		<a href="mailto:compasses@weyandarun.co.uk">compasses@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Eric Walker	Gennets Bridge Lock	07717 855340	<a href="mailto:tsg@weyandarun.co.uk">tsg@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Margaret Darvill	Mid Week Working Party	01483 894606	<a href="mailto:margaret_darvill@weyandarun.co.uk">margaret_darvill@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
John Empringham	Monday Group	01483 562657	<a href="mailto:mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk">mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Kev Baker	Loxwood Link	01489 690241	<a href="mailto:loxwoodlink@weyandarun.co.uk">loxwoodlink@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
John Smith	Tickner's Depot	01903 235790	<a href="mailto:depot@weyandarun.co.uk">depot@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Keith Nichols	Hedge laying	01403 753882	<a href="mailto:hedging@weyandarun.co.uk">hedging@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Bill Nicholson	Northern working parties	01844 343 369	<a href="mailto:bill@nwpg.org.uk">bill@nwpg.org.uk</a>
Dave Evans	Summit working party		<a href="mailto:compasses@weyandarun.co.uk">compasses@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Bill Thomson	Working Party News	01903 744767	<a href="mailto:bill_thomson@weyandarun.co.uk">bill_thomson@weyandarun.co.uk</a>

## Mid-Week Working Party

For the last two months the members of MWWP have spent most weeks at Fast Bridge. The landowner has very kindly lowered the water level so we are able to clear many more logs and branches from the canal bed. This part of the canal has not been cleared since 1991 so understandably there is a great deal to clear and we are making slow progress. Some of the group have replaced a bridge where the gas pipe goes over the canal so we are now able to work on both sides which makes life a great deal easier.

For one week we spent time at Run Common clearing all the long grass and tidying up the canal so it can be shown off

to people at the Open Gardens at the beginning of July.

*Margaret Darvill*

## Bicentenary merchandise

For sale in the Canal Centre and mail order via the Granary office or online:



Umbrella, dark green with yellow Logo. Steel stem with twin fluted ribs, wooden handle and windproof frame. £15.

Opal Bone China Mug with blue Bicentenary Logo. £6.



Welsh Slate Fridge Magnet, featuring a picture of *Wiggonholt* and Bicentenary dates. 62mm diameter. £2.10

Welsh Slate Coaster, featuring a picture of *Wiggonholt* and Bicentenary dates. 83mm diameter. £2.10



**Further image of the Monday Group's Gosden aqueduct clearance using the Aquadocks (John Empringham)**

truly and the Trust's Archaeologist not to exist following an exploratory dig in the rain in May.

Anyway we can't re-use it as it's in the wrong place relative to the new bridge and so will be broken up and used as a sub-base for the concrete slab to be poured early during the first camp. The plan is to cast a raft slab over the whole area onto which we will build the training wall cells.

In the middle of the month the Trust hosted the annual WRG Training weekend when about 30 volunteers from around the country descended on Dunsfold to learn the various skills necessary to successfully restore canals. The airfield provided an excellent and safe training ground and I understand that it was a successful weekend. It's good that WACT has been able to help our friends in WRG who are providing an increasing volunteer resource to the Trust as our projects expand and develop.

Back at the bridge, bricklaying has continued with the focus being on the southern training walls. The east side is now complete less the copings with the west wall almost there. It is planned that the remaining brickwork on the southern half of the bridge is finished during the first half of the first camp. This will enable the estimated 9 tons of scaffolding to be taken down and re-erected on the concrete slab. This will allow work on the northern bridge flank wall to commence.

20 volunteers are booked in for both weeks of camps so my next report should report some dramatic progress. Let's hope that the weather improves.

NB - Our normal third Saturday has been put back a week to 23 July to avoid a clash with the camps.

*Bill Nicholson*

