



WEY & ARUN

ROOKS HILL
EDITION

The Magazine of the
Wey & Arun Canal Trust
Issue 210 June 2025

Contents

3	News headlines	
4	Spring Meeting	
	A full hall and an upbeat mood	
6	Rooks Hill	1
	Finally this major project can start	
12	Meet the volunteer at Rooks Hill - Nigel Yarwood	
14	Priority projects update	
14	Loxwood area	2
15	Tickner's Heath Crossing	3
16	Rye Farm	4
18	Meet the volunteer at Rye Farm - Richard Meinertzhagen	
19	A new model in our Canal Centre	
20	Summer Card now available	
	The latest in a long series	
21	Results of our membership survey	
22	Loxwood boat trips	
	Mothering Sunday launches the new season	
23	Moths on the canal	
24	Some of our yesterdays	
	Revisiting the news from past years	
26	Walking the canal	
	From Gun's Mouth to Rooks Hill	
30	Restoration & Maintenance News	
32	Our Annual Meeting	
	18th October at Shalford	
34	Register	
	We remember pioneer member Angus Mackintosh	
35	Membership report	

Front cover:

The south end of the in-water section of canal at Rooks Hill, looking north towards Birtley Bridge 1 which is just visible in the distance.

Photo by Keith Lyall

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GUILDFORD

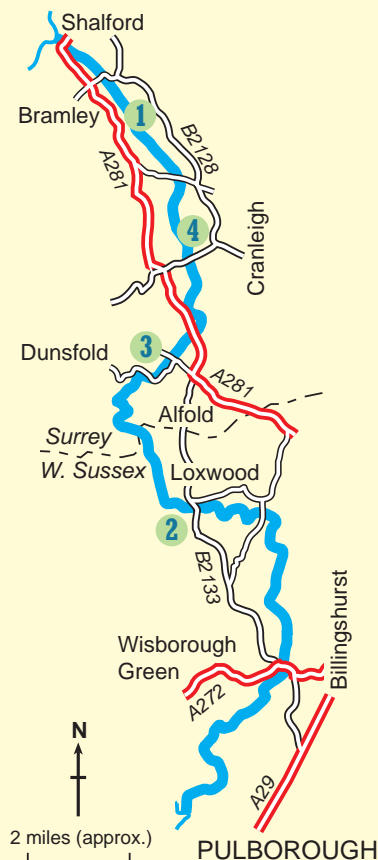


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Photos in this issue were taken by Stephen Batey, Keith Lyall, Julian Morgan, Gordon Powell, Trevor Lewis, Robin Gardner, Jonathan Copeland

Wey-South

The Magazine of

The Wey & Arun Canal Trust

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Issue 210 June 2025

Wey-South 210

News headlines

Rooks Hill – approved and started

We have finally received planning permission for this major project to extend the canal south from Birtley - see page 6 onwards. We are preparing to start work on site. We've launched an appeal for £200,000 to fund the first stage, including building a new bridge to carry the Greensand Way across the future canal route - see back cover.



Your canal needs you!

We badly need more back-office volunteers. Expertise in several technical and administrative areas will be welcome, but there's training and help. Lots can be done 'working from home'. Do you have a few hours to spare? See Giles Eyre's call for help on page 4.

Good progress on two other major projects

With the completion of water main relaying by Thames Water, work is resuming at Tickner's Heath Crossing where we are preparing to divert the canal under a new bridge we are commissioning for Dunsfold Road (p15).

Work is well advanced at Rye Farm, Elmbridge (p16) where we are building a new towpath and bridleway, for the existing path to become Rye Farm's private driveway.

Filling the 'Devil's Hole'

An unexpected sinkhole at Devil's Hole Lock has been promptly filled, using Keymer tile clay kindly donated by Wienerberger (see page 31).

Leaky lock licked

Baldwin's Knob Lock was found to be leaking water through its chamber walls. It was closed, drained and has now been repointed to make it watertight (see page 30).

Dunsfold Park - Update

Dunsfold Aerodrome, adjoining the canal, was featured in *The Times* on Saturday 26th April. As Dunsfold Park, there is planning permission for 2,600 new homes to be built - one of the largest brownfield sites in the country. But has it been mothballed by the landowner Trinity College, Cambridge? Yes, according to a local County Councillor.

The canal runs alongside the site, and we were looking forward to the development creating up to 2km of public canal access. A delay or a stop to the development would therefore be disappointing.

Dates for your diary

The Arun Boat Rally for paddlers from Pulborough to Pallingham will be held on Sunday June 29th – see our website for further details.

This year's Annual Meeting will take place at Shalford Village Hall on Saturday October 18th at 2.30 pm – see page 32.

Spring Meeting



On Saturday 26th April, members filled Loxwood North Hall – and its car park – to learn of recent progress and important plans. Interim chairman Margaret Darvill began by noting that our finances were healthy, although this was due in part to a dip in restoration expenditure and also to two members of staff having left. This was about to change: one staff member was being replaced, work was starting at Rooks Hill and would be resumed at Tickner's Heath.

Volunteering

Giles Eyre told the meeting that volunteers were the heart blood of our efforts. Over 30,000 hours of voluntary work were recorded in 2024. There was a particular need for back-office help. Expertise, experience, or just interest was sought in many areas including IT, finance, health and safety, volunteer co-ordination, commercial matters, operating the Canal Centre and education (particularly 'special needs'). Any new volunteers would be supported by staff or other volunteers. Much of this could be (but needn't be) 'work from home', and tasks could be fitted to a volunteer's availability. The 'volunteering' section of the website is the place to express an interest - or contact any director.

Giles reminded members that financial support was always welcome, in the shape of donations and legacies.

Rooks Hill

Bill Nicholson launched this major project to extend the usable canal from the Birtley section to Rooks Hill, now that planning permission had finally been granted. Adding to the scheme details elsewhere in this issue, Bill said that we first have ten immediate planning conditions to comply with, including tree protection measures. Phase 1 (to be started this year) is then to excavate to build the new but traditionally-styled Rooks Hill Bridge, in brick-faced concrete, together with its ramps, 100 isolated metres of canal and an overflow. The outflow of a nearby culvert under the canal has to be repaired. The bridge abutments will be built in two 'lifts'. The canal sides there will be reinforced with interlocking Legato® concrete blocks and stone-filled gabions.

Summer 2026 will see the start of Phase 2, the new canal cut from the Birtley section to the new bridge. Where possible we will reuse excavated soil, particularly to build up the canal's east bank where it will run along the side of a slope and be the basis for a 3m-wide towpath – a 'permissive path' for public use, extending the existing path from Birtley. Starting the rebuilding of Fanesbridge Lock will have to wait until at least 2028, as part of the related plan for Rushett Farm to Run Common.

There is no car access from the A281 for visitors. If you want to view work in progress, the best place to park is in the layby between the canal and the Downsway Link / Wey-South Path on Run Common Road. It is then just over 1km to walk north along the Path to where the Greensand Way near the site crosses the old railway line on a bridge, with steps up. Alternatively, it is about 3km along the same path from Birtley (see the Walk article in this issue).

Phase 1 alone will cost £286,000 (of which building the bridge is £120,000). £86,000 for this is already in hand – so we are launching an appeal to raise £200,000, from members' kind donations (aided by fortuitous legacies) and from grants by public bodies and private charities.

Tickner's Heath

Tony Ford explained the imminent revival of this project, which had had to be paused for Utilities work. For details, see elsewhere in this issue. The project to deviate the course of the canal will be the second length of new canal that we build, hard on the heels of Rooks Hill.

Membership subscriptions and Rooks Hill funding

Gordon Powell updated progress on other Priority Projects (also reported elsewhere). He then advised the meeting of increases to subscriptions, which have been held for many years. From October, single membership is to increase from £15 a year to £20, and joint membership from £20 to £25 a year. However, the old rates will remain available to members who choose not to receive *Wey-South* in print. Life membership will increase by £100 each to £400 single / £500 joint.

Membership, which had peaked in 2011 at 3011, had declined slightly over the years by 6.5%. We need more younger new members, more corporate members and better involvement with local communities. The question was how to do this and Gordon sought ideas from the audience. Improving our online communications to reach out beyond our membership base is key.

Gordon announced an appeal target of £200,000 to complete the first phase of the Rooks Hill project (see the back cover). We will also be targeting grants for phase two, especially from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which developers pay to local councils when planning permission is granted.



Rooks Hill - on the starting blocks

There was no ceremony. On Saturday 29th March 2025, our volunteers started work at Rooks Hill, to extend the restored Birtley section 650 metres south. We had no automatic right to rebuild the canal. As with any project, we had to acquire the land, and no owner is compelled to sell to us. Then we had to get planning permission. This physical beginning of a major long-term project for us comes after the end of years of our own 'planning' with a small 'p' and local authority 'Planning' with a large one.

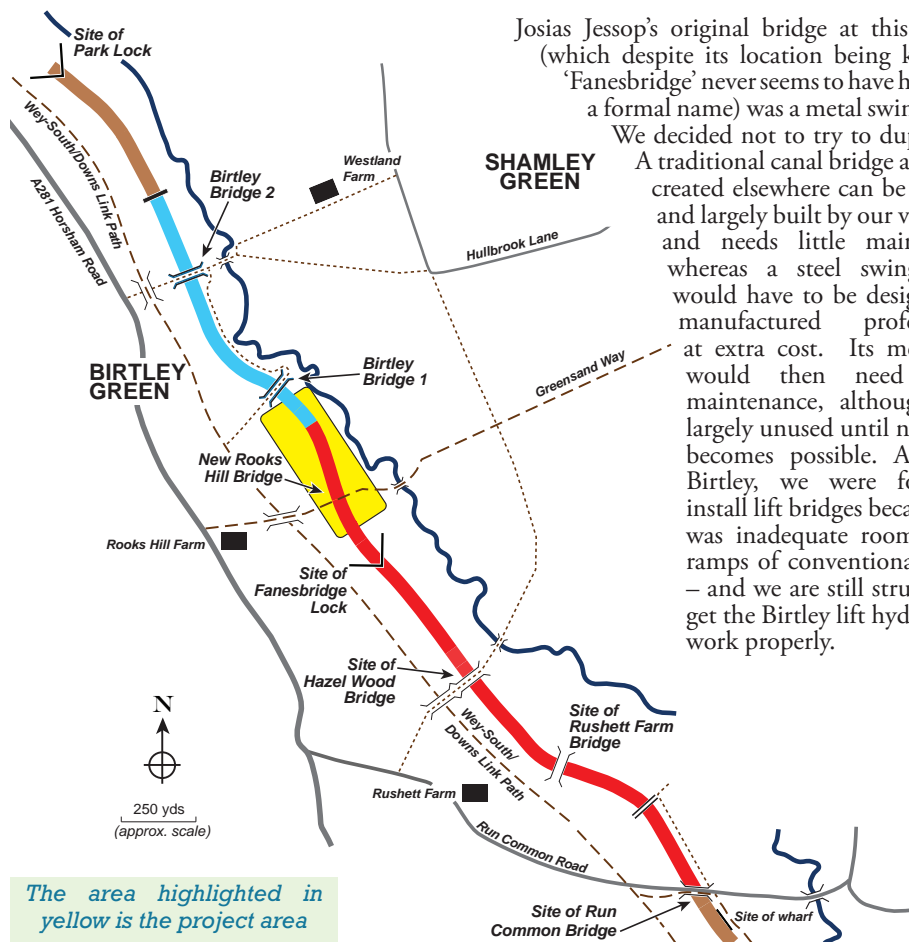
We had made a good start by being able to acquire the land from Birtley as far as the old Fanesbridge Lock site on favourable terms from the supportive landowner. Rooks Hill Farm has then helped with providing access to the worksite and safe stabling for our heavy machinery.

A four-part project

The first of four parts to this project is to build a new Rooks Hill Bridge for the Greensand Way footpath and bridleway. It will be a traditional canal bridge in appearance, albeit a modern concrete structure concealed behind brickwork. Technically, it will be similar to the recently-built Gennets Bridge – indeed, the same formwork will be used to create its arch.

Josias Jessop's original bridge at this location (which despite its location being known as 'Fanesbridge' never seems to have had that as a formal name) was a metal swing bridge. We decided not to try to duplicate it.

A traditional canal bridge as we have created elsewhere can be designed and largely built by our volunteers and needs little maintenance, whereas a steel swing bridge would have to be designed and manufactured professionally at extra cost. Its mechanism would then need regular maintenance, although being largely unused until navigation becomes possible. At nearby Birtley, we were forced to install lift bridges because there was inadequate room for the ramps of conventional bridges – and we are still struggling to get the Birtley lift hydraulics to work properly.



The area highlighted in yellow is the project area

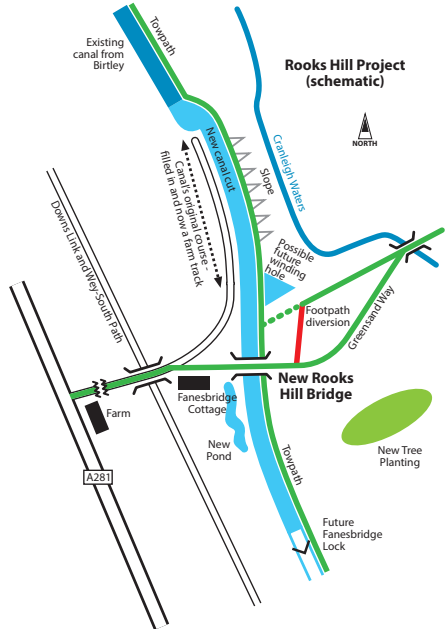
Rooks Hill - continued

The deck, with rails, of the original Rooks Hill swing bridge still exists - one of only a few Jessop structures to survive. 'Repurposed' to take the Greensand Way over the Cranleigh Waters stream, a short distance to the east of the new bridge's location, it is now a fixture, with an extra pillar in the stream bed as support.

The bridleway at the old bridge's location is level, showing no sign of its past. The new bridge will be constructed without impeding walkers and riders on the Greensand Way.

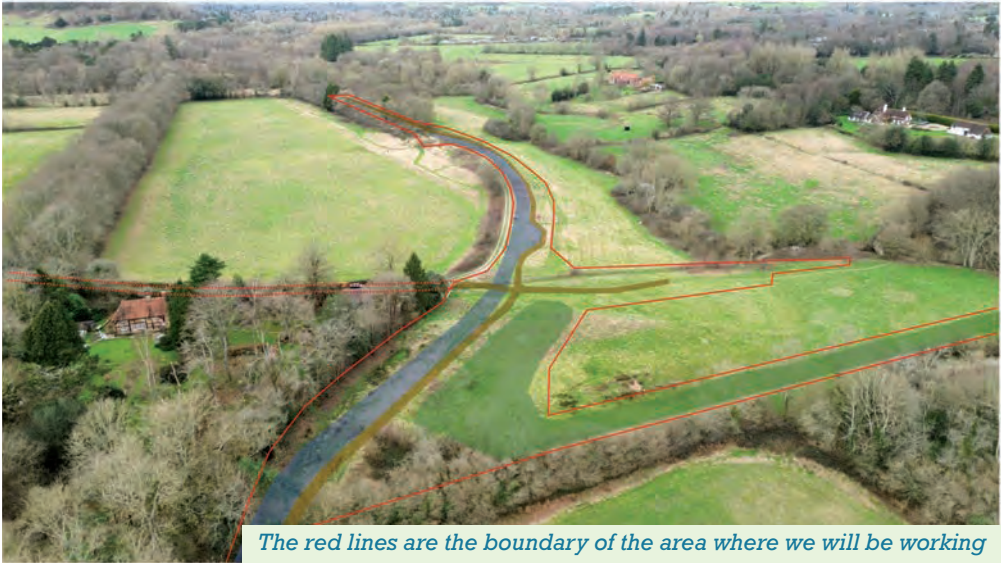
When the new bridge is completed, the second stage will be to extend the canal cut from the restored section at Birtley to the new bridge. The original canal bed lies under what is now a farm track, which would then have had to have been duplicated for the landowner. Given also the cost and difficulty of excavation and disposal, the ingenious solution is to leave the track with the original canal beneath it in situ and to make a fresh cut in virgin soil along the track's east side. This will be along a contour of the Cranleigh Waters valley (over which it will have attractive views). Building it along the slope means that the east bank will need to be built up, but this can be done largely with the soil excavated to form the new canal bed. The towpath, extended from Birtley, will run along the canal's eastern edge. The canal's eastern bank will be supported with wooden or recycled-plastic piles, back-filled with coir rolls as we do elsewhere on the canal.

No new water supply will be needed, as the Birtley section we are extending fills naturally from hidden springs. Near the new bridge, we have permission for a winding hole, but this will not be implemented at this stage.



The Tuesday team at the site compound they have just set up

Rooks Hill - continued



The red lines are the boundary of the area where we will be working

As we are deviating from the canal's original cut, this will be the first length of new canal we have created in over fifty years of restoration.

Next, the new cut and towpath will be continued a short distance from the new Rooks Hill Bridge to the foot of the location of Fanesbridge Lock. We have planning permission to rebuild the lock, but it will not be part of this project – instead, that will wait until we are able to restore the canal beyond it to the south. We will however be able to continue the towpath south, which has removed the need – and the cost – of creating a separate pedestrian link up from Fanesbridge Lock site to the Downs Link/Wey-South Path.

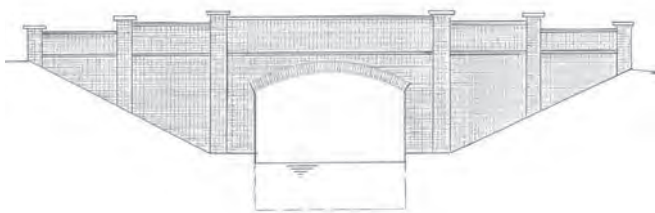
The new bridge lies at the parting (or joining) of two rights of way. Technically, the Greensand Way is the bridleway whose alignment will (with a small adjustment) match that of the bridge which will carry it across the canal. Functionally however the active route is the footpath from whose straight line the bridleway diverges between the canal bridge and the Cranleigh Waters bridge. The western end of the footpath is to be diverted south for a short distance to take it to the eastern end of the canal bridge.

Planning permission – took several years

The planning approval process began in October 2020. A necessary first step for a major project, prior to the lodging of a planning application, is first to ask the local planning authority – in our case, Waverley Borough Council – whether a full Environmental Impact Assessment will be needed, should the project have substantial cumulative environmental implications. Waverley decided that it was not necessary in this case: there would be environmental issues with the plan, but none of them was sufficiently significant. Tony Ford then lodged our formal application for planning permission in June 2021. The government target for deciding major planning applications is 26 weeks. With the actual approval decision emerging in February 2025, it has taken seven times longer. The Waverley Council Planning website for our application records more than a hundred documents – our application papers, which underwent several modifications over those years: 17 objections (a relatively small number); 22 letters of support (refreshingly high for a planning application), and reports and recommendations from statutory consultees.

Rooks Hill - continued

The only objections to emerge from those consultees were from the Ramblers Association and the Surrey Countryside Access Forum, who were both concerned about our original proposal to modify the Downs Link/Wey-South Path for better access; we then dropped that part of our plans.



Elevation of new Rooks Hill Bridge - Nigel Yarwood's design

One concern was the impact of our proposals on Fanesbridge Cottage, a Grade 2 listed building close to the canal and bridge location. Originally, we had proposed a provision for moorings on the canal's west side nearby and the Cottage's owners had objected. We replaced this with a plan for a wildlife pond between the canal and the Cottage, to the satisfaction of its owners.

We were expecting approval last year, but consultee Surrey Wildlife Trust raised late issues in July 2024 regarding habitats, largely on the grounds that considerable time had passed since original surveys that had been made for the original application, and these needed refreshing. We commissioned further reports which identified either no need for action or specific mitigations.



Erecting tree protection, required before work can start

Finally, planning approval was granted. It includes requirements for tree protection, landscape and woodland management and bat mitigation. Existing surveys regarding hazel dormice and great crested newts are time-limited (to October 2026) and so may need to be repeated by then.

The Council's assessment of the application notes that the limited tree-felling needed would be more than offset by our plans to plant over 1,000 new native species trees, and that we will enhance existing hedgerows (as well as creating more). Over all, our proposals will 'significantly enhance the landscape and biodiversity along the canal'.

Scheme design

Every metre of the canal and every structure has to be designed. Our team includes Richard Meinerzhagen – he features elsewhere in this issue in our Rye Farm article – and bridge engineering specialist Nigel Yarwood, a volunteer whom we 'meet' in more detail below. Nigel writes:

'I became involved in Rooks Hill fairly early on in 2021. My first job was to 'scheme up' the new bridge design and obtain Technical Approval from Surrey County Council, which is the authority for bridleways and footpaths – both of which will be carried by the bridge. I then prepared the detail design and drawings and arranged for them to be independently checked by Tony Gee and Partners.

Rooks Hill - continued



The canal route, just south of the new bridge site

‘The realignment of the canal has resulted in some changes to the earthworks profile between the canal and the river and in conjunction with David Beadman I have carried out a stability assessment of the area. In particular, there is an original culvert under the canal to the south of the location of the new bridge, flowing from west to east. Care was required to configure the eastern slope that covers it and to design the new headwall where it emerges.

‘We spent the rather extended planning application period looking at various options and costs for forming the banks of the canal and we have now developed a “soft bank” detail which we hope to use over a substantial section of the new cut. We also need a short sheet piled section at the northern connection and a reinforced concrete wall in the southern section to provide sufficient width around the bend between the bridge and the southern boundary at Fanesbridge Lock. Other sections also require a vertical edge and we are hoping to configure this using mass concrete Legato® blocks with stone filled gabions above.

‘The team is developing the detailed construction sequence which is heavily influenced by the large amount of excavation required to cut the new canal. It should be possible to reuse a good proportion of this in the reconfigured earthworks but we are yet to find out how easy it is to lay and compact the clay.’



New canal route looking north, where we will create the new canal channel

Rooks Hill - continued



Dry canal bed looking north towards new bridge location from Fanesbridge Lock site



View south from Birtley Bridge 1 towards Rooks Hill which is at the far end of this shot

Rooks Hill - meet volunteer Nigel Yarwood

What is your background?

I am a retired Civil/Structural Engineer. I have worked for consulting engineers Tony Gee and Partners, based in Cobham and Esher, more or less all my professional life, joining Tony Gee when he set up the practice in 1975. I became a partner in 1981 and Executive Director in charge of the rail sector when the practice became a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) in 2006, until my retirement in 2013. I have always been a “hands on” designer and continued to do this in conjunction with my management roles. I have been involved in the design of bridges of various shapes and sizes as well as buildings, earthworks and foundations. One of the main strands of the more specialist work at Tony Gee was the design of complex temporary works and developing construction methodology. This was especially useful working on the railways where we needed to develop procedures for weekend bridge replacements. Railways, like canals, also have problems with failing embankments and cuttings and I spent some time developing risk models as well as new methods for earthworks stabilisation. I am a Fellow of the Institution of Civil and Structural Engineers, both in a retired capacity and also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.



Prior to the Wey & Arun, were you a canal person?

We have had occasional holidays on canal boats around the country and I came across canals in a professional capacity, particularly where they crossed or were crossed by railways. This meant that we were dealing with old infrastructure crossing even older infrastructure, which presented some interesting challenges.

How and when did you first come across the canal?

In 1995, Tony Gee and Partners LLP were approached by the Canal Trust to design the aqueduct at Drungewick. I was the Partner responsible for the project. The design was done by my colleague Martin Allnutt, who also now does some volunteering work for us, helping with technical design work. We were then commissioned to design the road bridge at Loxwood in 2007.

How did you start volunteering here?

After I retired, I believe the Canal Trust contacted Tony Gee and Partners to enquire about further design work and one of my ex-colleagues generously suggested that I might do the work as a volunteer. They put Tony Ford in touch with me and I was quite keen to keep my hand in doing a certain amount of design work as it was in many ways similar to the kind of work we had been doing on the railways.

What have you done, and are now doing, as a volunteer?

I saw the main advantage of me volunteering as being that I could, where possible, produce

engineering designs for the Trust and avoid the need to engage consulting engineers. I was also able to negotiate the technical approval process that is required for any structures that interface with highways or public footpaths and bridleways. I have also extended this to obtaining planning permission for bridges and dealing with the procurement and management of external contractors.

The first structure that I designed was the new bridge at Lee Place (Harsfold) which was completed in 2020. I then took on the design of the two lifting bridges at Birtley which presented technical challenges both in obtaining approval and overcoming poor ground conditions. I did all the civil and structural design and drawings and also the mechanical design with the help of external consultants. I then managed the contract for the supply and installation of the two bridges.

There are also a few more bridges in the pipeline waiting for technical approval and planning - at Tickner's and Lee Farm just south of Haybarn Bridge.

I am also in the process of creating a more formal engineering management system for us along with improved data on the existing infrastructure which we are building on the SharePoint platform. This is quite a long haul and there are others involved, such as Philip Medlicott who is developing the Geographical Information System and Simon Gates who is working his way through the Asset Register. This is very much a work in progress.

What are your other interests?

In my youth I enjoyed mountaineering, rock climbing and potholing but now my sporting ambitions are very much more modest. I enjoy cycling, jogging and walking over the Surrey Hills. I indulge in an activity known as “hashing” which is also known as ‘a drinking club with a running problem’. This gets me out on the Surrey Hills every Monday night whatever the weather.

I get a lot of pleasure making models and it is a good form of relaxation. I promised myself that when I retired I would build a model railway. However this has stalled at about 75% completion as I have become more involved with the canal.

I also sing tenor in the Octavians, a small acappella chamber choir in Woking, performing four to five concerts a year.

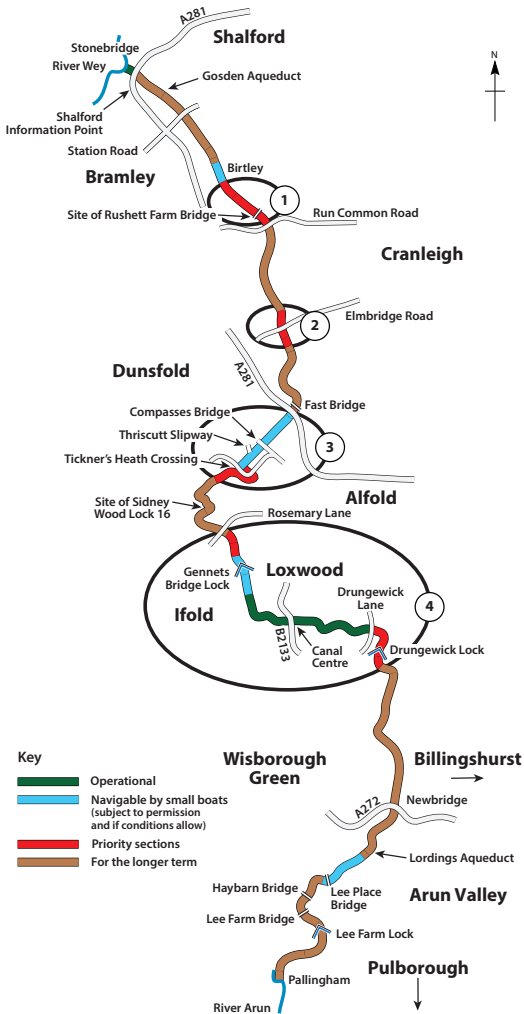
I live with my wife, a retired teacher, in West Byfleet which is a little way north of the canal, and with the current traffic it does take a little while to get to the various sites. I moved into my current house in 1982 and added bits on as my family grew. Although the Basingstoke Canal is only a short distance from home, I am more interested in the bigger project challenges that we have on the Wey & Arun.

I have two married daughters and five grandchildren. My elder daughter lives just around the corner with her husband and three children. She is a keen runner and we often have three generations on the Monday night hash during school holidays.

A plea from Nigel

In 1813, Josias Jessop designed our canal using paper, pencil, crayons and a ruler. In 2025, I am still doing the same. This has served me well all my working life and it is fine for doing structural arrangements and details. However, it is very inefficient when combining survey information with canal layout plans. Is anyone with Computer Aided Design (CAD) skills interested in volunteering to help out with producing drawings? If so, please contact me at: nigel.yarwood@weyjarun.org.uk

Priority projects update



Of our four priority areas, Rooks Hill, Rye Farm at Cranleigh and Tickner's Heath Crossing at Dunsfold each have their own detailed articles in this issue. The priorities for the **Loxwood** area were:

Replacing the pumps and control equipment following the vandalism incident: This is now nearly complete. Each location requires collaborative working over several months. For instance, work began at Baldwin's Knob Lock in August 2024 and ended in April 2025, involving at various times the Northern Working Party, the Newbury Working Party Group, the Thursday Group and outside contractors.

Laying the Bonfire Hanger towpath and brideway: This was largely finished last year - we have just a short stretch to relay.

Reopening Long Meadow from Drungewick Lane Canal Bridge to Drungewick Lock. Dredging and vegetation clearance is complete. However, despite substantial attention to leaks as reported previously in *Wey-South*, we are still losing water there, so stop planks remain in position at Drungewick Aqueduct while investigations continue. Work also continues to fell trees killed by Ash dieback.

Other important tasks in the Loxwood area arose of their own accord and were addressed, as described elsewhere in Restoration and Maintenance News. As a result, and subject to having sufficient water, we have been able to run trips from Loxwood, with operational locks available in each direction.

New volunteers – we set out our stall

We ran three volunteer information days in March, organized by Bill Nicholson, for potential volunteers to find out more about our work, to chat with existing volunteers – and to dive in. The first day at our Dunsfold Depot was followed by two more at the Loxwood Canal Centre. Bill reports that we signed up a good number of new volunteers for the Canal Centre, IT, the Boat Group and for several work groups. Welcome to these new members! A big thank you to the Depot, Mobile Display Vehicle and Canal Centre teams for their support and to all the volunteers who attended. If you or someone you know would like to volunteer with us, please email us at: volunteering@weyarun.org.uk.

Tickner's Heath Crossing

As reported in *Wey-South* issue 206 (March 2024), we are rejoining two lengths of canal that were severed many years ago when the Dunsfold Road bridge was replaced with a flat causeway. The bends in this busy road preclude the replacement of the causeway by a new navigable-height bridge at the same position. The solution is therefore to leave the causeway untouched and to reroute the canal from the east beneath the road at a more easterly location where there are adequate sightlines for a new road bridge. A new length of canal under the new bridge, already partly created, will be extended to rejoin the original canal immediately west of the causeway.

Given the poor provision for pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists on the road, we had already created a new path along the north side of the road in 2021. This includes a completed 'non-motorised user' bridge over what will become the new length of canal. We will next build the new canal bridge on the road.

Work was suspended in 2022 because a start could not be made on the new bridge until Thames Water rerouted (at our expense) a water main running along Dunsfold Road up onto the 'non-motorised user' bridge. This is nearing completion, with stop valves in the relaid pipe.

This Stage 1 of the project will include a temporary road diversion around the site of the new bridge.

Stage 2 will then be completion of the new cut to restore through navigation. It will be crossed by a new arched bridge to carry the track from the road into Sidney Wood.

Tony Ford reported to the Spring Meeting that design approval for the bridge is in progress with the highway authority, Surrey County Council. The related legal agreements have been prepared. Our working parties will complete the temporary road diversion this summer, ready for its use when the new bridge construction starts.

The planning application for Stage 2 was submitted to Waverley Borough Council in 2022. As with the Rooks Hill application, this is a prolonged process involving detailed reports and resulting conditions regarding ecology and biodiversity. Stage 1 work can resume while Stage 2 approval is awaited.



The new stop valve at one end of the new water main carried by our footbridge in the background

Rye Farm - new towpath takes shape

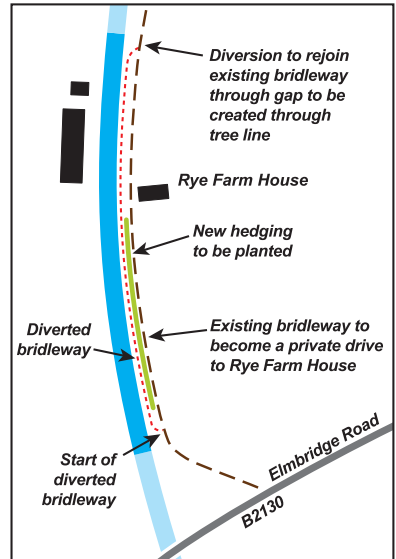
Work at Rye Farm has now started after the completion of legal agreements following the granting last year of planning permission. The project (see *Wey-South* issue 207, June 2024) is to create, in two phases, a new 3m-wide towpath and public brideway for 370m within the canal's footprint, allowing the current track to become the private driveway for Rye Farm House. With finite width available, it has been achieved partly by narrowing the canal there, while of course leaving sufficient room for the passage of any future wide-beam boat.

Engineering solutions have moved on since our last report. Instead of building the new towpath over rock-filled gabions, the towpath's edge is now being laid over a row of individual concrete-filled bags (as used by builders' merchants to deliver minerals to sites) – see details below. Inboard of them is a further row of similar bags filled with crushed concrete. The double row of bags is then backfilled to the path's inner edge and covered with a 'Geogrid' membrane on which the towpath's surface is edged with concrete-filled sandbags and overlaid with top-soil.

The towpath production line

Previously, concrete had to come pre-mixed in a rotating-barrel truck, ready for pouring. You ordered a specific volume of a specific mix and you then had to pour it into formwork shuttering with steel 'rebar' reinforcement. Too little or too much could both cause problems. We have moved on. Local concrete supplier Axtell's 'Mix Truck' has separate compartments, for dry mortar, dry aggregate and water respectively. The operator uses the onboard computer to select an exact mix for the job concerned, and precise quantities of components are mixed as they leave the truck. It's called 'volumetric concrete'.

Our volunteer Richard Meinertzhagen, featured on page 18, has devised an ingenious way to take efficient advantage of this relatively new technology. At our work compound is close to the canal, a row of empty bags is hung on scaffold poles resting on stands, and each is then filled in turn from the Mix Truck with dry mix concrete. When the bags are full and resting on the ground, the supports are collapsed and removed. Each filled bag is then transported the short distance to the canal's edge and lowered onto the dredged canal bed. A scaffold tube is driven through each bag, to locate it firmly and to allow canal water to enter and complete the setting process. Work can progress quickly. The scaffolding frame is reassembled and fresh bags attached, for a fresh batch from the same truck. Typically, 10 linear metres of filled bags can be laid each day.



Work has also been helped by Shamley Green's Guildford Tipper Hire (GTH), supplier of a large amount of the other materials for the project, including the bagged crushed concrete. 'GTH have been very generous by reducing their material rates to us. Their manager Richard Claydon is a keen follower of our activities', notes Dennis Gillen.

*Left : The towpath. Bagging the concrete.
Below : The EWG Team on site*



Future issues at Rye Farm

Very soon, the canal at Rye Farm will have been cosmetically restored. It is located at the northern end of the summit pound that will stretch back to Sidney Wood, once the small matter of the Fastbridge A281 causeway can be resolved. There is however another impediment to navigation – the Elmbridge B2130 causeway, which blocks the navigation immediately south of Rye Farm. As the road is not wide enough for two vehicles to pass, Surrey County Council is committed to replacing it with a full-width canal crossing under which there will be sufficient width for a boat to pass – but not necessarily adequate headroom.

The problem of lack of navigable height will be the same as we had for the rebuilding of the main road bridge at Loxwood. The solution could also be the same – if you can't raise the bridge, you have to lower the canal. So, just as we deepened the canal up from Brewhurst Lock to get under Loxwood Bridge and regained the level by inserting the new Loxwood Lock, we may also need to build a new level-lowering lock south of any new Elmbridge Bridge, to become the new northern limit of the summit pound. The new pound under the new bridge and past Rye Farm, 1km from the road to Rowly Lock (currently the north end of the summit pound) would then be deepened. That may then mean that the engineering of the towpath now being created at Rye Farm will have to be revisited.

Rye Farm - meet volunteer Richard Meinerzhagen

What's your background?

My whole career has been in the building construction industry, starting in 1966 as a trainee with Y J Lovell in Horsham with an emphasis on Purchasing which at the time was a relatively new discipline. I was articled for 5 years, which included day release and two evening classes each week at Crawley College, eventually gaining HNC in Construction. Fast forward over a number of company moves, I took on wider commercial administrative roles including estimating and budgetary control. This including general contracting, timber frame construction, speculative housing, design and build projects, de-construction and specialist roofing works.

From 1990 I was self-employed, offering these services linked into project management. Towards the end of my main career I was involved in historic building restoration, notably Ardingly College, and Portsmouth Cathedral where we employed all the traditional methods of construction, namely masonry / brick repairs, elaborate lead detailing, roof tiling, metalwork and stained glass restoration. This is one area of work which I wished had started many years earlier. All in all, a wide experience across the construction industry.



How did the canal enter your life?

My only prior experience of anything linked to canals was narrowboating on a teenage holiday on the Thames with a group of friends. Probably, I did not fully appreciate the experience at the time. My first awareness of the Wey & Arun Canal was a conversation in the early 70s I overheard with work colleagues who were about to volunteer on one of our canal restoration projects.

I remained aware of the Wey & Arun Canal for many years. When I retired, it seemed the ideal opportunity to get involved. With a little encouragement from my wife Jean, I joined the EWG Team during the construction of the last year of Gennets Bridge and Lock. Initially I kept my head down and undertook any labouring and formwork construction but then I offered support to the then new Group leader Dennis Gillen. I helped organise the depot building improvements, the Lee Farm (Harsfold) Bridge project (completed during Covid lockdown) and the extensive repairs to Drungewick Lock plus many other smaller schemes.

What are you involved with now?

The current project at Rye Farm, of course, the first phase being the diversion of approx. 190m of bridleway away from the adjoining landowner's property onto a new towpath constructed within the canal profile. We are hindered by the canal being full of decomposing sludge which is at least 700mm deep. It's not the easiest of undertakings but it is now well under way.

I also had an early involvement with Rooks Hill on the budgetary front and assisting in conjunction with the group and design team to establish the most economic build methods for the key stages. At this time the focus has been on the bridge and optimising the new canal cut which will incorporate

the soft bank and towpath, where quite a novel approach has been taken and we first need to undertake a trial section. If proved successful, this could be used for at least 300m of canal edge.

In due course the design of the new Fanesbridge Lock needs to be finalised, together with a spillway which has localised ground and support issues including the proximity of trees.

What are your other interests?

I'm not a sporting individual but I do enjoy undertaking any practical activities. We have been fortunate enough to have self-built two of our homes. I really enjoy competitive endurance Go Karting and do this at any opportunity. Jean and I enjoy visiting National Trust properties and walking in the countryside or by the sea. I also like to support Southwater Bowls Club where Jean is a very active member.

Jean and I have lived in Southwater for some 13 years, and before this in Horsham. We have three grown-up children and nine grandchildren ranging from 9 to 22 years old.



When next you visit our Canal Centre at Loxwood, you will find a new attraction on display, in the form of a canal diorama, donated to us by its creator, Patrick Pead. Six feet long by a foot wide, it shows, in intricate detail (OO gauge), two narrowboats on a canal with open lock gates, passing a street scene. The model has had a prolonged gestation, having originally represented the (real) Seaton Tramway in Devon at the (fictional) village of St Bee's. In the event, Seaton Tramway lacked the space to display it, so Patrick took three months to rebuild it from tramway to canal scene and offered it to us.

Central to the model is a friary with beehives, from which the friars take the honey to make mead for the nearby 'Wheelwrights Inn' – hence the village name. Patrick used and adapted some bought-in boats, figures and buildings, but created many of them himself. A push-button activates lighting and a peal of bells from the model's church tower.

Fragile and delicate, it might not have remained pristine for long. A Perspex cover was clearly needed. Serendipitously, the model was seen by Bill and Sue Dyson who run Dyson King Architectural Ironmongers in Chichester. They were visiting the canal on the Mother's Day Cream Tea boat trip. Bill and Sue have kindly had a cover made (by Super Signs Chichester Ltd) which they have donated to us to make the diorama complete.

We thank Patrick, Bill and Sue for their generosity,

Below - the complete model



Lake's canal



A new 'summer' card is now on sale at the Canal Centre and our website. As with our Christmas cards, it's the work of artist Oliver Lake, who bases his designs on photos taken by his uncle, Canal Centre volunteer Julian Nowell. Oliver has been producing cards for us since 2018.



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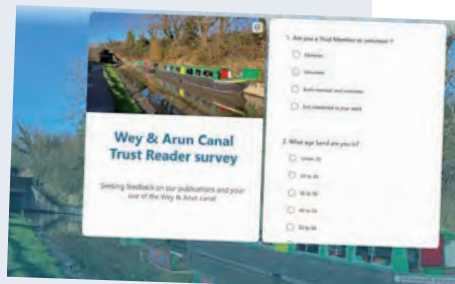
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Survey results

In our February edition we asked if you would complete a survey, seeking your views on this magazine and our communications in general. We received a substantial response, and want to thank you for taking part, and for your many ideas and suggestions.

Overall feedback was positive, and we have learned a great deal, especially about the profile of our readers, why those of you who can visit the canal do so, and what interests you. Future editions will be influenced by your views.




It was also very useful to see which of our media reach the most people. The printed *Wey-South* magazine is still the favoured read for many, but our monthly eNewsletter is catching up fast. If you haven't already subscribed then please do so, via our website. You'll hear what's going on much quicker that way, especially now that *Wey-South* magazine is produced at four-monthly intervals. We should add though that there were calls for us to use a wider range of media, especially social media, and this is something we will be working on. There is no doubt that our readership is very largely in the over 60s age bracket, and if we are to attract younger members and volunteers, vital for our future, we need to use the channels they see.

Some said that articles by a wider range of people would be good, and we heartily concur. We always appreciate contributions, letters or articles so if you have something you think would be of interest please do get in touch. support@weyarun.org.uk will always reach us.

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Loxwood boat trips



What a boat trip we had early March! It was only a simple trip in *Wiggonholt* to Brewhurst Lane Bridge, but as soon as we went into Brewhurst Lock we had a crew member in the water in the corner of the lock. Luckily they were quickly rescued but then on the return journey the boat's steering failed and we had to evacuate passengers to the towpath. Disaster? Well, not quite as this was just the pre-season 'live' training that all crew and skippers have to do nowadays to meet the requirements of our regulator, the Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA).

One major change that our trainers covered in the briefing was our new boat booking and administration system. We owe huge thanks to Derek Wright who first brought our boat operation into the 21st century with online booking for customers and self-rostering for skippers and crew, who can go online and volunteer for trips. These were just the most visible aspects of a powerful system that handled

most aspects of our boat operation. But in the IT world things never stand still and over the winter a new system developed by volunteer Tom Crawshaw went live.

Tom's target was for the new system to handle all trips in the 2025 season, starting with Mothering Sunday on 30 March. I think I had the doubtful honour of being the first to self-roster on the new system when I put my name down as skipper, as Tom had asked me to do. And yes, skipper, crew and booked passengers all turned up on the day – very conscientiously even Tom was there and came on the first trip to see how things really work. Getting to this point was a huge achievement – first of all by Tom but also by the team of back-office users who told Tom what the system needed to do – Ken Broomfield, Lyn Nash, Steve Prebble, John Robson and Sally Schupke.

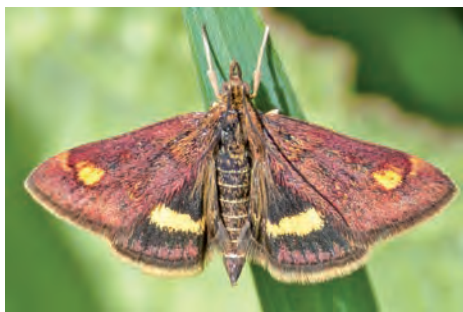
We searched all over for a system that could meet our needs 'off-the-shelf', or with a minimum of software development. There are many systems out there that could handle the trip booking piece, and some that can deal with rostering of staff or volunteers. But we found nothing that could efficiently integrate these elements. Our new system is based on open-source (so free) software, CiviCRM, that we are already using on our website, for example to handle online donations and membership records.

I'm writing this in late April, with four days of Easter trips completed, along with a sprinkling of private trips and the first public trips. For Easter the weather could have been better but Tina Jenner kindly added value as our Easter Bunny and the boat decorations looked great. Trips went in both directions from the Canal Centre to even out demands on the water supply, which has been affected by the repairs to Devil's Hole and Baldwin's Knob Locks. As usual we are praying for a good mixture of rain and sunshine so that we can have a long, profitable and enjoyable summer season.

Julian Morgan



Pretty fluttering insect – is it a butterfly?



From top : Mint moth, Lime Hawk moth, Elephant Hawk Moth. Below : Brindled Beauty. Right : Cinnabar moth



I'm writing in late April and that means the butterfly season is well underway. But every flash of coloured insect wings might not be a butterfly. Especially if you're around the canal it could be a damselfly, or it could be a moth. There are about 60 species of butterfly in the UK, but many are very rare. In Sussex or Surrey you might spot 15-20 relatively common types in your garden or the countryside. But the variety of moths is huge – up to 2,500 species in the UK – and many of them are really spectacular. The snag is that you won't easily spot most of them because they only fly at night.

There are a few moths that fly by day. The brightly-coloured Cinnabar moth and the minute Mint moth are often seen around the canal. Moths and butterflies are close relatives but butterflies have distinctive club-ended antennae. Moths can't resist a bright light. I use a light trap – essentially a light bulb on top of a black box. Inside the box I put egg boxes and the moths will nestle comfortably on the undersides of the boxes. Early in the morning the moths are generally comatose and easy to photograph. As the day warms up they fly away. All my moth spotting has been within a few metres of the canal. Species vary widely according to the time of year – you can get a good idea of what to expect from the website "What's flying tonight".

Moths generally got their English names in the 18th century or earlier. Some of them seem bizarre to us now, such as "Common footman" or "Hebrew character". Among the most spectacular you can expect to spot are the hawk moths whose wingspan can be more than 5cm (2in). The Elephant hawk moth is the most spectacular, with its pink and green colours. The Poplar and Lime hawk moths have more subtle colouring. However dull the moth appears at first, a close-up photo can reveal amazing intricate patterns that I find quite fascinating.

Julian Morgan



Some of our Yesterdays

The Wey-South team continue our occasional series, this time looking back at our reporting from 10, 25 and 50 years ago.

Issue 170, February 2015

Ten years ago *Wey-South* carried a tribute to Peter Flatter, a Vice-President and Life Member who had died in November 2014.

Through the Wiggonholt Association, which he co-founded, Peter became a significant supporter of our canal. The following is an extract from our 2015 tribute :



“Peter was born in Vienna in 1925. His family was Jewish and in 1938, fearing for his safety, his mother sent him to the UK to live with his father, who had remarried. Peter never saw his mother again; although she managed to escape from Austria into Italy, she was arrested in December 1943, sent to Auschwitz and became a victim of the Nazis. For a long time, Peter found the subject of his early life too painful to discuss. Eventually, though, he wrote a book, *My Mother Was Viennese*, which was published in 2011.

In wartime Britain, Peter was evacuated to Cornwall. In 1947 he became a British subject. He trained as a mechanical engineer. By the age of 21, he had started his own tool company in Wales and this prospered; his fluency in German greatly helped with foreign business. He became Chairman and Managing Director of the company which, at his retirement, had 500 employees.

Peter was always grateful to Britain. In 2012 he said: “I am proud to be British and feel very privileged to be able to give something back to the country that has given me safety, freedom and the opportunity to succeed in life.”

He was passionately interested in countryside and environmental causes. With some like-minded supporters, he founded the Wiggonholt Association, whose mission was the protection of the Sussex countryside and the natural environment in general. Through this Association, Peter decided to make a generous donation to our new electric boat, which became *Wiggonholt*. The boat and Peter played a starring role in the official opening of the Loxwood High Street Crossing in May 2009.



This plaque in memory of Peter Flatter is on the wall of the Canal Centre

Peter was also involved with Greenpower, a charity that advanced education in sustainable engineering. Their headquarters building at Fontwell, near Chichester, was a showcase for low-energy buildings and Peter became convinced that a similar building, on a smaller scale, was the right solution for what became the Loxwood Canal Centre. With Peter's generous financial and practical support, the Centre opened officially in 2012.”

As Isaac Newton supposedly said ‘We stand on the shoulders of Giants’. Our organisation’s achievements of the last fifty years are staggering, but they represent the effort of numerous individuals, some of whom, such as Peter, are no longer with us. The Wey-South team is determined that their efforts should not be forgotten.

Issue 110, April to June 2000

Twenty-five years ago *Wey-South* reported on the new milestones on the Wey & Arun

“MILESTONES ON THE WEY & ARUN

In the 1813 Act authorising the building of the Wey & Arun Junction Canal it was provided that the Company was to erect milestones at half-mile intervals along the 18½ miles of the new waterway. While, unfortunately, none of the original milestones has survived the 128 years since the Junction Canal closed in 1871, the Wey & Arun Canal Trust's restoration of the canal is now being assisted by funds raised through the sponsored establishment of new milestones. These are being placed both along the Junction Canal and also the 4½ miles of the Arun Navigation, which together are now known as the Wey & Arun Canal - or “London's Lost Route to the Sea”.



Winston Harwood devised a moulding system to create these new milestones on demand, and to date 15 have been put in place. Each bears a dedication requested by the sponsor, with any funding above the direct costs of the milestone going towards the restoration as a whole [...]. In due course [...] it is intended to extend the milestones right along the 23 miles of the Wey & Arun so that eventually there should be 47 milestones - allowing for one at each end of the waterway.”

As of 2025 this exercise has neared completion, but is still not quite there, and it is even possible that one or two of the older ones are missing. New milestones installed in the last few years, made by Graham Baird and team, are at: Gun's Mouth (Wey 0, Arun 23), Birtley (W2½, A20½), Haybarn north (W20½/A2½), Haybarn south (W21/A2) and Lee Farm Lock (W21½/A½).

Issue 13, February 1975

An awful lot has been achieved over our fifty years, with very many projects completed. You can't please everyone though, and the writer of the letter below would still be frustrated. It's impossible to know whether this was a real enquiry or simply a wind-up, but either way it remains amusing - fifty years on!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Pangbourne.

Dear Sir,

I am particularly interested in the state of the Wey & Arun Canal. Please could you send me all possible information. I am interested because I propose to use it in 1976 to reach the South Coast on our yacht. We live in Reading and need a quick route to the South Coast.

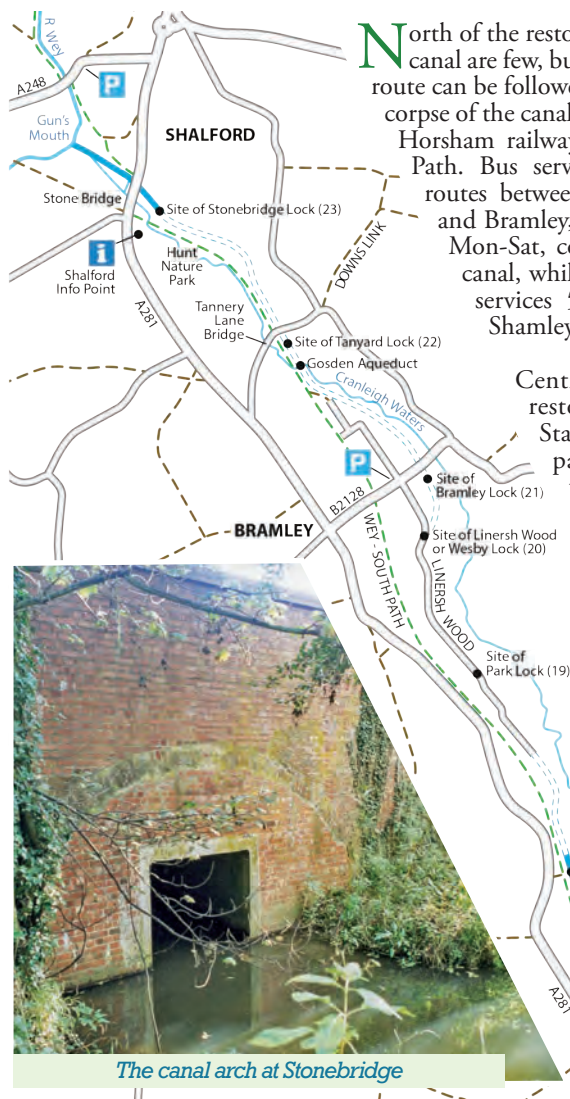
Yours sincerely,

(name withheld by Editor)

(There is, clearly, no time to lose - Ed.)

Gun's Mouth to Rooks Hill

Park, ride & walk the northern section



North of the restored Birtley section, remains of the original canal are few, but interesting walks are possible. The canal's route can be followed (and diverted from) by tramping on the corpse of the canal's nemesis – the trackbed of the Guildford-Horsham railway, now the Downs Link and Wey-South Path. Bus services may be helpful. There are several routes between Guildford and Cranleigh via Shalford and Bramley, from where the two-hourly Compass 24, Mon-Sat, continues on the A281 to the west of the canal, while to its east the more frequent Stagecoach services 53 and 63 run daily via Wonersh and Shamley Green on the B2128.

Centrally, Bramley offers parking at the restored railway station on (naturally) Station Road. To the north, there is informal parking on the A248 Broadford Road on the west side of Broadford Bridge over the River Wey Godalming Navigation, from where you can walk a short distance down the river's towpath to see The Gun's Mouth, the junction between the River Wey and the Wey & Arun Canal route. This is the best view of the junction you will get from a public right of way. The canal builders decided to use the first 400m or so of the Cranleigh Waters river – today the National Trust uses this section for boat moorings.

On the east of Broadford Bridge, a good place to start exploring the northern end is Broadford Business Park, just

The canal arch at Stonebridge



The Gun's Mouth

Wey-South 210



Moorings at Gun's Mouth, seen from Stonebridge



Tannery Lane canal bridge



Some of the buildings of Somersbury Tannery, next to the canal route

off the A248 (GU4 8EP). Car parking is usually available on the approach road to the business park, near what was the Parrot pub. The public footpath (and the Wey-South Path) runs initially along the river bank, accessible from the bridge or the Business Park. You will go past the Gunpowder Store and the wharfinger's cottages that are memories of when Stonebridge Wharf was busy with commercial boat traffic. The path goes through woodland alongside the boat moorings. At the A281, where the artificial canal cut began, you can still see the arch of the original canal bridge, converted to a culvert around 1972 when the main road was upgraded to make it less vulnerable to flooding. On the other side of the A281 the canal route survives but is in private gardens along Somerswey. So cross the A281, go over the Cranleigh Waters on the 1970s concrete bridge and take the railway path past our Hunt Park Information Point, opened in 2021. There's also parking in a somewhat insalubrious layby opposite where Trunley Heath Road joins the A281.

The railway path crosses the Cranleigh Waters again. Here in the trees to your left is the site of Stonebridge Lock (Lock 23). If you would like to see what remains of the canal route here (not much), stay on the railway path and look for some traces on the left, at the end of private gardens. It is a more pleasant walk, away from busy cycle traffic, to follow the riverside path along the Cranleigh Waters that our volunteers created. Past the viewing platform that we opened in 2015, the canal route emerges into fields – here the original route went round the base of the hill.

Soon you will go past a small business park on the left, where some of the original Somersbury Tannery buildings survive, to reach Tannery Lane. Before the railway was built in the 1860s, Tannery Lane crossed the canal on the hump-backed bridge that you can still see today. The railway builders needed to raise the road to a higher level so that it also crossed the railway. The blocked-up arch that you can see between the railway and canal was for a railway siding. If you go over the canal bridge and turn right you will be following the original canal towpath.



The east side of Gosden Aqueduct

Hidden in the undergrowth next to the path is the site of Tanyard Lock (Lock 22). We did a small-scale dig here in 2014 and found some remains, but as with most of the other brick-built locks the materials were reused after the canal closed.

When you come to one of our information boards you are at Gosden Aqueduct. Down a short path to the left you will be able to see the east side of the aqueduct with its four arches. Through the wooden fence on the other side of the path you may be able to spot the west side. The aqueduct was remarkably wide; we speculate this was to allow boats to wait above the lock.



Rather than following the railway path towards Bramley, keep left on the footpath that follows the canal

route towards the end of Eastwood Road. Here you will clearly see parts of the canal that are now in private gardens. If you follow Eastwood Road you will reach Station Road – turn left and then right and at the start of Stantons Wharf is Wharf Cottage, where the canal superintendent lived. From the road you may be able to see our blue plaque on the front of the house. Bramley Lock (Lock 21) was next to the cottage.



The canal at Birtley, looking south. Birtley Bridge 1 is just visible in the distance.



Nearby, you can explore the totally overbuilt canal route by going via Barton Road to Linersh Wood Road which was built more or less on top of the old canal as the village expanded. The sites of Linersh Wood (or Wesby's) Lock and Park Lock (Locks 20 and 19) were along this section. This is a cul-de-sac, so to go further south you will need to follow the railway path from the (fake) level crossing gates in Station Road. You will see nothing of the canal for the next 1.3km or so until eventually the route becomes visible as a line of trees at the south end of Linersh Wood. Soon the canal is at the foot of the old railway embankment and you have reached the Birtley section that we now own. You should go down from the railway path here, cross over Birtley Bridge 2 and follow the towpath south to Birtley Bridge 1. We opened both bridges in 2023.

You will need to cross the canal again at Birtley Bridge 1 and rejoin the railway route to Rooks Hill. At the first bridge over the railway, climb the steps on the right to cross the bridge and head left along the Greensand Way long-distance path. Past Fanesbridge Cottage you will come to the works at the start of our Rooks Hill project.

Fanesbridge Cottage is a listed building that dates from the 16th century.



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Restoration and Maintenance News

Ten teams of volunteers are out most weeks, restoring the canal and maintaining what we've restored. They're backed by the Tickner's Depot volunteers. Come and join us!

The full story of these efforts is recorded monthly in *Working Party News* – see under 'News' on our website – or send an email to support@weyarun.org.uk to receive an electronic version. Working Party News lists the contacts for each team.

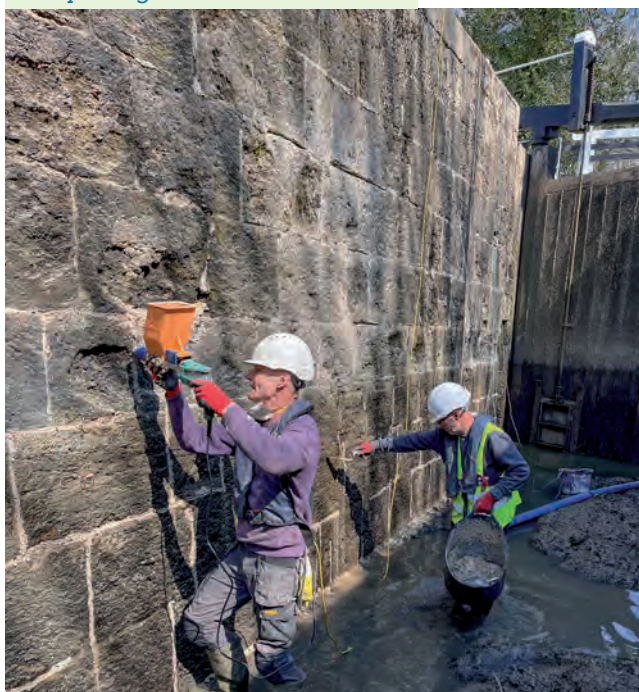


Repointing at Baldwin's Knob Lock

In the Loxwood area, there have been lock-related issues needing prompt attention. Until they were addressed, they limited the operation of boat trips on either side of the Canal Centre.

Baldwin's Knob Lock

The lock was clearly losing water when not being used. As the lower gates were visibly sound, the fault had to lie within the lock chamber. The Thursday Group fitted stop boards in the slots at either end and it was then pumped dry. The lock walls were jet-washed from scaffolding towers erected by the Northern Working Party, for a close inspection. With lichen, weeds and other debris removed, it was clear that the mortar joints of the stone sides of the lock chamber had deteriorated.



The Thursday Group, working initially from the lock's dry invert, raked out the lower-level joints. The gaps were repointed using a motorised mortar gun and a specialised mortar mix. The lower stop boards were removed, the chamber was refilled to its lower level and workboat *May Upton* was floated into the lock chamber to act as a platform for the upper levels to be addressed in the same way.

The Northern Working Party also used *May Upton* to repair a badly eroded section of the towpath bank below the lock. Posts and rails were installed in the water on what would be the bank's proper alignment. Coir rolls were laid behind them, for final filling of the void with aggregate and topsoil.



Devil's Hole Lock

Further 'upstream', a leak in the approach wall of Devil's Hole Lock had caused a sinkhole on the side near the top gates (see above). The water level in the upper pound fell, to expose a washed-out section at the base of the wall. Staff member Zoe and the Northern Working Party isolated the faulty spot with shuttering. The void was filled with concrete and finished off with clay and topsoil. The clay, normally used to make tiles, was kindly donated by Wienerberger Ltd.

Also at Devil's Hole Lock, the EWG Team has completely rebuilt the south parapet of the bridge - see last month's *Wey-South*. It required advanced bricklaying skills, as the wall is curved in two dimensions – laterally as well as vertically. To cope with natural seasonal expansion and contraction of the bridge in its clay subsoil, each fourth course has had to be reinforced with a stainless steel wire ladder layer.

Precise dredging

How do you remove layers of silt without going too deep and harming the canal's puddled clay bed? In what is described as a potential game-changer, we are now equipping our dredger with the iDig system which uses lasers, radio transmission between components and solar powered sensors fitted to the dredger boom to feed a coloured LED display to show the operator the precise distance, depth and angle of attack of the bucket, invisible below the surface.

Snakes in the grass

If you're in the Drungewick area this pile of reed cuttings is not a forgotten mess. Grass snakes, now a rare species, need somewhere to overwinter, and also the heat from rotting vegetation for their eggs to hatch. The Hedgelaying Team has given nature a helping hand by creating for them a 'hibernaculum' of reed cuttings, pictured right.

Dead reeds - or a 'hibernaculum' if you will



Annual Meeting

The 52nd Annual General Meeting of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust Ltd will take place at Shalford Village Hall on 18th October 2025 at 2.30pm.

The agenda will be as follows:

1. Apologies for absence (see note 1 below).
2. To receive and adopt the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 19th October 2024 (see note 2 below).
3. To receive the Chairman's report.
4. To receive the Accounts and Balance Sheet for the year ending 31st December 2024, together with the Directors' and Independent Examiner's Reports (see note 3 below).
5. To appoint the Independent Examiner for 2025 and to authorise the Board of Directors to determine their remuneration.
6. Election of Directors:-
 - a. Bill Nicholson, Julian Morgan and Margaret Darvill in accordance with Article 30 of the Trust's Articles of Association, retire and Bill Nicholson and Margaret Darvill are eligible for re-election. Gordon Powell who was appointed by the Board of Directors in the course of the last year under Article 33, retires and is eligible for election.
 - b. Candidates nominated in accordance with section 30 of the Trust's Articles of Association (see note 4 below).
7. To receive a Report from W&A Enterprises Ltd.
8. To transact any other business proper to an Annual General Meeting.
9. Date of next meeting – date and venue to be confirmed.
10. Close of formal meeting.

At this point the meeting will break for refreshments. You will have the opportunity to view our displays, project plans and sales stands and to talk with project and group managers.

After the break there will be presentations on current and future projects

Notes:

1. *Apologies for absence should be sent to the WACT Office (support@weyarun.org.uk) before the start of the meeting.*
2. *Copies of the previous (2024) Minutes will be available at the meeting. If you would like a copy in advance, please contact the WACT Office (support@weyarun.org.uk).*
3. *Copies of the Report and Accounts will be available at the meeting. If you would like a copy in advance, please contact the WACT Office (support@weyarun.org.uk).*

4. *The Trust warmly welcomes new candidates for election as Directors. The formal requirements are set out in Article 31. In summary:*
- a. A paid-up member of the Trust may propose in writing a candidate for election and the candidate must sign the proposal to indicate willingness to be appointed.*
 - b. The proposal must reach the WACT Office (support@weyarun.org.uk) at least 14 clear days before the meeting – that is, by 3rd October 2025 (the WACT Office has a proposal form although you are not obliged to use it).*
5. *All members have the right to appoint a proxy under section 324 of the Companies Act 2006 and Article 20 of the Trust's Articles of Association.*

As usual, there will be an event for members on the morning of the Annual Meeting. Further details will be released nearer the time on our website and in the monthly eNewsletter.

Directions

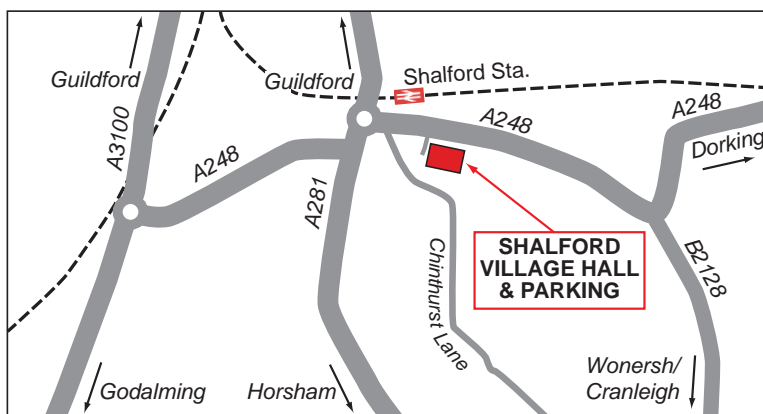
By car

Shalford Village Hall is just off the A248 (Kings Road), about 400 yards from the village green, railway station and roundabout, in the Dorking direction.

With the village centre behind you, the village hall is on the right. There are about 50 parking spaces at the hall itself. If these spaces run out, you should be able to park along Chinthurst Lane, the road running across the village green.

By train/bus

Shalford station is on the Reading-Guildford-Redhill/Gatwick line. There are frequent buses from Guildford and Cranleigh – ask for the railway station stop. If you are on a bus going to or from Chilworth/Dorking then the Christmas Hill stop is nearer to the hall.



Register

Angus (Aeneas) Mackintosh



*Angus
(Aeneas)
Mackintosh
kneeling on
right of picture
with Richard
Lamey on the
left, working
on the canal in
1976*

Members will be saddened to hear of the passing, in January 2025, of Angus Mackintosh – one of the true pioneers of the Wey & Arun Canal Society and Trust. The first mention of Angus in our records is in 1972 when he was helping to organise working parties on what was then the ‘Southern Section’ of the canal. From then on, Angus was a stalwart of working parties for the next 25 years, helping on numerous major projects including the planning of visiting work parties and WRG summer camps.

He often provided tools and equipment at his own expense and we were never quite sure what unusual item he might turn up with next! He helped to organise our first ‘workshop’ at Peter Longley’s home, where plant and machinery was repaired – and even lock gates for Rowner were reconstructed from old gates. A work punt built in 1982 was named *Aeneas* as a tribute to his work and was the first boat through the restored Rowner Lock in 1982.

Angus served on the Council of Management at various times from 1973 to 1998 and on the Southern Section Committee from 1973 onwards. He took over as Editor of *Wey-South* in 1973 and produced it – seemingly single-handedly – until 1981 and then again from 1988 to 1991. He will no doubt be best remembered for his authorship of ‘Wey-South Path’ – the walking guide to the canal which first appeared in 1975 and which, after numerous revamps and revisions, is still in print today. The fact that the route is marked on Ordnance Survey maps today is a fitting tribute to the time he devoted to the project.

In the early days, when we had to raise our money at jumble sales, he helped John and Joy Wood with the organisation of their sales from 1976 to 1982. Also on the fundraising side, he was a most valued member of the Poddle team – one particularly memorable walk was that of 1975 – a one-way walk from Godalming to Weybridge for which Angus organised buses to ferry walkers back to the start! He was also a member of the pre-walk group for the 1985 walk that came up with the name ‘Poddle’ for all subsequent walks.

On the publicity front, Angus designed, constructed and installed a series of interpretation boards for strategic points along the canal, from about 1987 onwards. He also arranged for a semi-permanent display at Amberley Museum in the early days. Importantly, in 1986 he prepared a paper ‘Securing the Route’ which probably determined our future direction in establishing relationships with landowners and local councils. A further paper, ‘After Alfold’, was designed to uplift flagging spirits after a disastrous public meeting in 1988.

Angus was always a very private person and rarely spoke of his life outside the canal. However, he was passionately interested in both transport and the countryside and somehow managed to devote time to his other interests at the Society of Sussex Downsmen, the Bluebell Railway and the

Amberley Museum. He was also a keen walker and we were privileged to be included amongst his friends over the last 50 years, having enjoyed numerous walking holidays and day walks together. When he found time to take a paid job, he was employed at various times by the Post Office, the Vehicle Inspectorate and as a bus and coach driver.

The 1980s saw several ‘canal marriages’ and as well as our own, Angus and Joanne were married in 1989 and lived happily in their delightful cottage in Pulborough. Angus’ health deteriorated in the 2000s but, in typical style, he was determined to ‘carry on to the end’. Today we have much to be grateful for in the years of Angus’ devotion to the cause and in the hard work that he put into every task he undertook.
David and Lyn Ball

Brief notes on former members

We were sorry to hear of the death of **Turlough Bamber**, who actually passed away in 2023 but we have only just learned of his death. Turlough was a professional civil engineer with vast practical experience. He served on our Board between 2006 and 2012 and held the job of Restoration Manager. His knowledge and enthusiasm were extremely valuable to us.

Membership report

18 new members have joined us in the last 4 months, taking our total membership to 2,787. We would like to extend a very warm welcome to the following new members.

<i>Tim Collingridge</i>	<i>Christine & George Crate</i>	<i>Simon Garvey</i>	<i>Anne Hitchman</i>
<i>Jane & Patrick Hurst</i>	<i>Penny & Hugh Hurst</i>	<i>Richard Scarisbrick</i>	<i>Belinda Hurst</i>
<i>Aaron Huykman</i>	<i>Kay & Stewart McGregor</i>	<i>Ric Laver</i>	<i>Patrick J Pead</i>
<i>Angela Scriven</i>	<i>Louise Whitfield</i>		

We have learned with regret of the death of:

<i>Jim Ratliff</i>	<i>Turlough Bamber</i>	<i>A J L M Mackintosh</i>	<i>Christine Evans</i>
<i>Maggie Ashworth</i>	<i>Sandra Raywood</i>	<i>Timothy Scriven</i>	<i>Marion Commins</i>
<i>Roger Amerena</i>	<i>David Rolfe</i>	<i>Kenelm Murray</i>	<i>Peter Burton</i>

The more members we have, the stronger our voice in discussions with local authorities and other stakeholders. Our membership numbers have declined slightly since the pandemic, so we would ask all our members to do what they can to spread the word about the canal and to encourage new recruits.

John Tovell
membership@weyarun.org.uk

Wey-South is the magazine of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust which is dedicated to restoring the former inland waterway route between the River Wey and the River Arun and to conserving and improving it for the benefit of everyone.

From 2025, Wey-South is published in the second week of February, June and October. Please submit copy by the end of December, April and August.

All communications and copy either by post to *Wey-South* at the Office, or by email to weysouth@weyarun.org.uk.

Address change, non-delivery, etc: please notify the Membership Secretary at the Office or email to membership@weyarun.org.uk.

Material published in *Wey-South* represents the views of the contributors and should not, unless specifically indicated, be assumed to be the policy of the Trust.

**The Office address (also for Boat Trips, Administration, Accounts and Publicity) is
The Wey & Arun Canal Trust, Bridge End, Somerswey, Shalford, Guildford GU4 8EQ
Email: support@weyarun.org.uk Tel: 01483 505566**

URGENT – £200,000 to complete Rooks Hill Phase 1 – please help!

Our members and supporters have a wonderful record of giving when these big projects come around, and we're sure this one will be no different.

We've made a strong start but.....

With £86,000 already in the bank, thanks to generous bequests, we are off to a flying start, but the cost including the bridge is £286,000. We will be building at pace - we need funds at pace. Will you help us raise the difference?

Remember, we are a charity so each £1 of your gift-aided contribution will be worth £1.25 to the Trust. Higher-rate tax-payers receive further tax relief.

Group donations welcome

Donations are also welcome from clubs and other bodies, public and private, that recognise the leisure and conservation benefits we are creating in the area.

To make your valuable contribution to our Rooks Hill appeal please go to:

weyarun.org.uk/backdrop/rooks-hill-appeal



Read all about this exciting new project on page 6 of this magazine