

The background of the cover is a photograph of a canal. In the foreground, there are green leaves and branches. The canal water is calm, reflecting the sky and the surrounding greenery. In the middle ground, there is a bridge with several arches. Behind the bridge, there is a fence and more trees. The sky is blue with some clouds.

# WEY & ARUN

Quarterly Magazine of the  
Wey & Arun Canal Trust

Issue 179 June/July/August 2017





***Above: Spot the crew! Steve Harmes (in yellow) and Derek Heath (in green) have seen the Easter Bunny before.***

***Below: Spectacular displays of bluebells have been a feature of the canal banks this spring - here close to the Thriscutt Slipway site on the Summit Level.***



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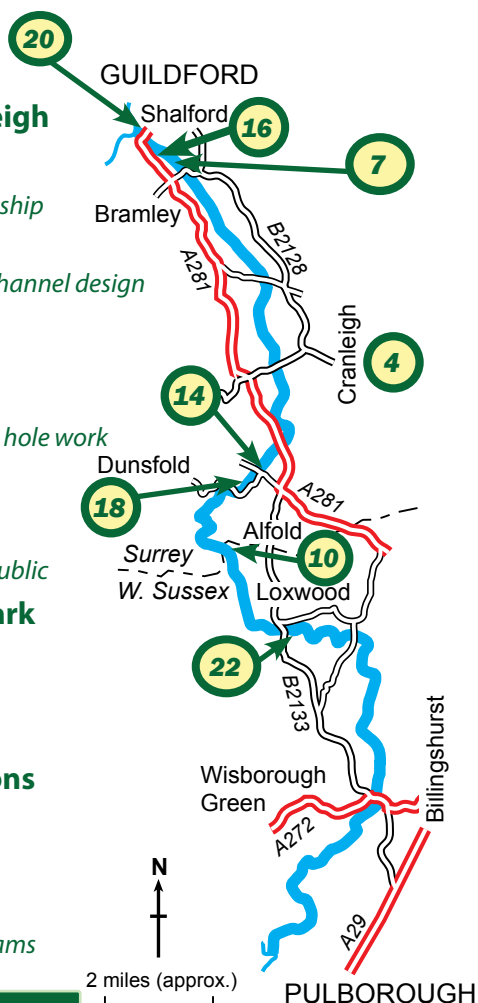
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**Front cover: Now (mainly) Canal Trust property - the downstream face of Gosden Aqueduct is visible thanks to vegetation clearance by the Midweek Working Party.**

## Our 2017 Annual Meeting at Cranleigh

Positive, upbeat and businesslike is the way we prefer our meetings in the Canal Trust. The meeting at Cranleigh on April 29th followed the recommended recipe. Deviating slightly from recent practice (and also because

Reviewing progress on our three key sites, Sally said that in 2017 we can look forward to completion of the Thriscutt Slipway (not far from Compasses Bridge) and, optimistically, having all permissions in place for a start



***Cranleigh Village Hall during the refreshment break.  
(All pictures on these pages by Stephen Batey)***

she had a heavy cold), Chairman Sally Schupke opted to give her full report in writing and only to highlight some of the key points.

The hot news was the announcement that, since the start of 2017, the Trust has acquired some significant sections of canal route. The highlight of the previous year had undoubtedly been the October 2016 Bicentenary weekend, with the Official Opening of Compasses Bridge by Dame Penelope Keith. Six months later, work on the bridge site was approaching completion, with the viewing platform now open to the public.

on a new canal crossing at Tickner's Heath. Also, Gennets Bridge Lock should be substantially complete by the end of the year. Demonstrating substantial progress in the north, Philip Oliver had the latest plans for Phase 1 of the Bramley Link (River Wey to Gosden Aqueduct) on display in the hall.

Although the three key sites (Shalford/Bramley, Dunsfold/Alfold and Loxwood/Ifold) continue to be our focus, we are also exploring other opportunities with the help of some newly recruited engineers and project managers, including Brian King, Gary Courtcnadge and Nigel Yarwood.



Reporting on the financial position, Julian Morgan said that two years of heavy spending had depleted Trust reserves. There was probably enough in the coffers to fund 2017 plans, but members should be prepared for a major fundraising appeal to advance our ambitious plans for 2018 and beyond.

James Field, Chairman of our trading company, W&A Enterprises Ltd (WAEL), was happy to announce some excellent results for 2016. However, James warned that a dry summer could reduce the number of possible boat trips. A shortage of trained boat crew was also putting pressure on the operation.



**Tony Ford with the John East Trophy.**

The refreshment break gave plenty of opportunities for 'networking' and face-to-face updates. After the break, there was a showing of extracts from the professionally made DVD of the Bicentenary weekend (some copies are still available). Tony Ford reviewed prospects for the canal's Summit Level and members were able to see the Lordings area from an unusual angle - from a drone hovering over this showpiece site.

Finally there were the cups for outstanding achievement in the last year. For the John East Trophy, who else could it be but Tony Ford and his team? The Jack King Cup went to Derek Wright for making online boat trip bookings a reality. This had been a dream for many years, but too often put into the 'too difficult' box. Online bookings have been a huge success and Derek has now added a self-service crew rostering system to his portfolio.



**Sally Schupke, Derek Wright and the Jack King Cup.**

The Quarterly Magazine of

## **The Wey & Arun Canal Trust**

Registered Charity no. CC265331

The aim of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust is the preservation and restoration of the former inland waterway route between the Rivers Wey and Arun, with a view to reopening this to navigation.

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If at all possible please e-mail copy by attachment in Microsoft Word format. Typed copy is also acceptable. Photos are always welcome – prints or hi-res digital please.

**Issue 179**

**June/July/August 2017**

# Trust News

## We are now landowners

Alongside our achievements in canal restoration, we can celebrate a huge breakthrough in the first part of 2017. For the first time, the Trust now owns significant sections of land on and near the canal route. Up to now our land acquisitions have been limited to small pieces of land that were essential to restoration projects (for example a narrow strip along the north bank opposite the Loxwood Canal Centre).

a significant section of canal in the Alfold and Ifold area.

We have acquired all these sections at either no cost or for a nominal price, although we have had to pay legal fees. Owning sections of the canal in strategic areas is a massive benefit for us; for the first time we can talk to other landowners as neighbours with a long-term interest in the area, rather than as tenants or outsiders. We have other negotiations in progress that could expand our holdings



***For the Annual Meeting, our Mobile Display Vehicle was on a highly visible site outside Cranleigh Village Hall. Peter Marchi and Dave Verrall are in attendance. (Julian Nowell)***

After a very long legal process, we finally signed the documents to acquire the Hunt Nature Park site in Shalford from Surrey County Council. Thanks to another generous transfer from a local landowner, we also own most of Gosden Aqueduct between Shalford and Bramley. Further south, Waverley Borough Council has transferred ownership of the Whitley Manor Railway Bridge site, near Cranleigh, to us. Our latest acquisition, again thanks to extremely generous landowners, is

further. Land ownership of course comes with responsibilities as well as rights, but we believe we are right to seize these opportunities when they become available.

## Finances

Recognising that we have not succeeded in identifying a volunteer to act as Treasurer, the Trust's Board has named John Talbot and Julian Morgan as Joint Financial Directors. Our

former Treasurer Jim Phillips used to handle nearly all aspects of savings, receipts, bill payments, Gift Aid and VAT, to name just some of the most important matters. Nowadays we are sharing these responsibilities among a larger group.

Reporting to the Trust's Annual Meeting, Julian Morgan highlighted the following points:

In 2016, the Trust had income of £455,000 and spent £647,000, meaning that we took £192,000 from our reserves. It is good news that we have been able to spend money on the restoration of the canal, rather than leaving it in the bank. However, to fulfil our ambitious plans for 2018 and beyond, we will need to replenish our reserves.

Looking at our position very broadly, if our income and spending for 2017 is in line with expectations we will be able to finance the work that we have already planned for this year, but there will be little left over for next year's objectives.

As soon as we have obtained planning permission for the new Tickner's Heath Crossing (we hope before the end of 2017), we expect to launch a fundraising appeal for the construction cost. We estimate that the total cost of this project will be £600,000. This is not the only large spending proposal in the pipeline; we hope it will not be long before we are ready to spend serious money on the first phase of the Bramley Link project.

We now have a fairly smooth system in place for day-to-day finance administration. Our Independent Examiner recognised that our books are in good shape by reducing his fees for 2016. For 2017, we would like to recruit more help into the finance team so that we can reduce the amount of management time that is currently being taken up with routine activities.

## Grants and Donations

**W**e have been exceptionally fortunate to receive some significant contributions to our funds in the first months of 2017.

- Thames Water has given us £12,000 towards the design of a flood relief channel for the Bramley Link (more on this below).
- Guildford Borough Council and iGas provided grants totalling £5,125 towards the proposed Shalford Visitor Centre.
- A member gave £37,500 towards the Bramley Link project.
- Jean Gibbs, widow of Colin Gibbs, the founder of the Midweek Working Party, left us a legacy of £10,000.
- Another member made a donation of £10,000.
- A long-term sponsor agreed to meet the cost of the 2016 Bicentenary celebrations (just over £4,000).

We are often overwhelmed by the wonderful generosity shown by our members, supporters and sponsors. Frequently we wonder exactly how we will afford such impossible sums for the next project; at moments like these an unexpected cheque in the post can be an enormous relief.

## Thames Water supports Bramley Link

**T**he Trust is delighted to announce a substantial grant (£12,000) from Thames Water. This follows a visit from Thames Water officials in late 2016, hosted by Richard Stephens, Sally Schupke and Sandy Henney, including a site visit to Shalford/Bramley and a boat trip from Loxwood. The Thames Water grant will fund engineering studies to optimise the design of a flood relief channel near Gosden Aqueduct.

The proposed flood relief channel will help maintain public access to the Downs Link Path, the Wey-South Path and Gosden Meadow, through reducing the threat of flooding from the Cranleigh Waters river overflowing during periods of heavy rain. The channel will bypass Gosden Aqueduct on the canal, which presents a barrier to flood flows in Cranleigh Waters. In significant events, floodwater overtops the Downs Link Path, and the path



becomes impassable as water flows across it and back into the river downstream of Gosden Weir. The flow also exerts significant stress on Gosden Aqueduct which is one of only a few remaining examples of double-width aqueducts in England, and results in erosion damage to this historic structure.

The flood relief channel will also incorporate a fish pass which will enable fish and other aquatic life in the Cranleigh Waters to migrate up and down the river unhindered. Currently this is not possible because of a weir just downstream of Gosden Aqueduct. The introduction of the fish pass will result in a significant improvement to the ecological classification of the Cranleigh Waters under the EU Water Framework Directive.



***Above: The Midweek Working Party recently cleared vegetation from the downstream face of Gosden Aqueduct, where the canal crossed the Cranleigh Waters between Shalford and Bramley. Frequent flooding in this area has caused severe damage and removed most of the facing bricks. Some substantial trees have grown into the structure. One of the aqueduct arches can just be seen at the bottom right of the picture. (Janet Phillips).***

***Below: The upstream face of Gosden Aqueduct during WRG Forestry work in 2014. This side of the aqueduct is more presentable but vulnerable to damage from flood-borne debris. One of our members claims to have boated through the arches as a small boy - please don't try this one yourself.***





## Boat Group News

A few figures sum up an excellent boating season in 2016:

- The Boat Group carried 11,700 passengers on 502 boat trips.
- We ran 192 'turn up and go' public trips, 74 special public trips (for example, Christmas and Easter) and 236 private (charter) trips.
- Each of our three boats ran roughly equal numbers of charter trips; our narrowboat *Zachariah Keppel* was the most popular for charters.
- We did all this with 22 skippers, 66 boat crew and 30 cabin crew.
- We raised almost £60,000 for the restoration of the canal.

The Boat Group's catering team was delighted to retain its 5-star ('very good')



***James Field, Chairman of our trading company, reports to the Annual Meeting. (Rob Searle)***



***Wendy Hill. (Dave Verrall)***

Food Hygiene rating in a recent inspection by a senior Environmental Health Officer from Chichester District Council. Congratulations to Wendy Hill and her colleagues. You can check ratings online at <http://ratings.food.gov.uk>.

In 2017, our passengers will benefit from a great deal of refurbishment work to the tripboats over the winter. *Zachariah Keppel* looks much brighter inside, thanks to a new light-coloured ceiling.

Preparing for the new season, skippers and crew attended a training and briefing session at Loxwood North Hall on 18th March. Everyone who skippers or crews a public boat trip must attend one of these sessions. For the last few seasons, crews have had to form teams and rehearse how they would handle a specific emergency scenario during a boat trip.

## Membership Recruitment Campaign

Inside this issue of *Wey-South* you will find a Trust membership leaflet. We would be delighted if you could wave this in front of friends, relatives, colleagues or anyone you happen to meet who might like to become a member. People who don't know the Trust at all are usually amazed at the size of our membership (currently just under 3,000), but we need to keep this number rising to demonstrate that we have strong and growing support.

To give you a little incentive to recruit some new members:

- New members who join at the Loxwood Canal Centre can claim a free standard boat trip (subject to a few straightforward conditions). Boat trips run on every Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holiday Monday until the end of October.
- If you recruit a new member this year, please let us know his or her name ([membership@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:membership@weyandarun.co.uk)) and we will put your name into a draw to win a gift token.

## Gennets Bridge Lock



***On 8th April, Alan Dougharty, of Accredited Plant Training (from Adversane), kindly gave a day to training five members of the Thursday and Sunday Group (TSG) on the safe use of tracked excavators over 10 tonnes. All the trainees successfully passed their assessment.***

***Above: Seen across the bed of the canal north of Gennets Bridge Lock, one of the trainees is moving a pile of earth with the excavator.***

***Below: At lunch (left to right) Alan Dougharty, Geoff Thomas, Eric Walker, Chris Elphick, Danilo Ostacchini, Robin Gardner.***







***Some recent pictures from Gennets Bridge.  
Clockwise from top left: installing a lock  
ladder, the north bridge wall, building  
up the south bridge wall, a view of the  
bridge from the south side. (Pictures by  
Julian Morgan and Geoff Thomas)***







***This year's Easter Bunny trips ran in mixed weather but passenger numbers were well up from 2016. (Pictures by Julian Morgan and Dave Verrall)***





***Cllr Gordon Jackson (left), Mayor of Guildford, presents a certificate to our Hon. Secretary Tony Tyrrell at a ceremony at Guildford Guildhall on 15th March.***

## Volunteer Opportunities

At one time we organised two or three Small Boat Rallies per year, giving canoeists and other portable craft owners the chance to explore less visited parts of the canal. These were always enjoyable events and great publicity opportunities. The main reason that we organise fewer rallies these days is that we are short of resources to organise them, especially after we sadly lost John Taylor-Cram last year. We are now looking for a **Rally Organiser**. The work is not especially onerous; it mainly involves sorting out insurance, access, parking and boat launching arrangements. On the day of the rally, the organiser should be present to welcome boaters, co-ordinate helpers and generally make sure everything goes smoothly. Generally, though, boaters are fairly self-reliant and do not need a great deal of handholding.

We are always looking for more help with **Fundraising**. You may think that asking people for money is not your kind of work, but in fact you could help with fundraising in a much more shy and retiring way. For example, we would like to put more effort into researching funding opportunities and filling in application forms with mainly routine

factual information. We would like to pull together the existing materials that we have used to win major grants into a 'fundraising kit' that makes future applications quicker and easier. We would like to improve our diary system, so that if a potential funder says "Sorry, applications are closed for this year, but you can apply again in March 2018", we can ensure that we are ready to meet the deadline.

If you have a flair for **Catering**, we would be very pleased to add you to our list for helping with special events such as opening ceremonies and entertainment for our key sponsors and donors.

If you enjoy getting out and about and sharing your enthusiasm for our canal with others, perhaps you would consider joining our roster of **Mobile Display Vehicle Assistants**. The job mainly involves representing the Canal Trust at a wide variety of events, such as fairs, shows and Farmers' Markets and answering questions from the public.

To chat over any of our opportunities, please contact Sally Schupke (sas@weyandarun.co.uk, 01483 503029).



## Compasses Bridge



***Above: On 29th April, our Annual Meeting Day, Tony Ford shows members over the viewing platform at Compasses Bridge.***

***Below: in mid-March volunteers are hard at work on the steps and landscaping the slope.***







***Above: During the working week between 13th and 18th March, volunteers reinstated the ramp down from road level to the towpath and landing stage at Compasses Bridge. Peter Jewell is operating a remote-controlled compactor (the orange-coloured machine); this is much more efficient and, more importantly, safer than having a driver aboard a machine on a slope with a significant drop on one side.***

***Below: This 2012 picture shows the original ramp under construction with the Compasses causeway in the background. In the foreground, construction of the landing stage has started.***



## Long hedge planted in Hunt Nature Park

The Trust recently acquired the Hunt Nature Park site in Shalford from Surrey County Council. One of the conditions was that we should install a boundary fence or hedge between the park and the land used by the two schools to the south.



In keeping with the natural character of the park, we were very pleased that the final decision was to plant a hedge, even though this meant much more work for our volunteer team.

Working to dates planned to coincide with school holidays, we took delivery of 1,500 native hedging trees (blackthorn and hawthorn), along with guards to protect the young plants from rabbits. The Midweek Working Party then put in several exhausting sessions to complete an impressive line stretching into the far distance.

The Trust has removed a number of diseased and overgrown trees in the Hunt Nature Park, mainly to let in more light and protect the river from blockages. More forestry work is likely in the future as well (but not in the birdnesting season, of course, unless it is an emergency). However, we have planted far more new trees than we have felled.







***Hard work over the winter season has seen our two smaller tripboats thoroughly repainted into smart house colours. The team led by Martin Smithers has also repositioned the tiller on Zachariah Keppel to make steering easier. Marine engineer Colin Jessup has kindly completed an extensive maintenance programme on Josias Jessop, aimed at improving the boat's reliability. JJ came to us from the River Thames; the engine is very powerful (you can't have too much power when the flood current is pulling you towards a weir), but on our canal it is destined to run mainly at idling speed, which has a tendency to clog up the works. The pictures show the boats on test runs. (Pictures by Dave Verrall)***





## Summit Level Update

The following is based on Tony Ford's presentation to the Annual Meeting.

### Compasses Bridge

Compasses Bridge is 'nearly there'. The main piece of outstanding work is to reinstate the ramp down to canal level on the airfield side of the bridge.

### Thriscutt Slipway

Volunteers have excavated and profiled the basic shape of the Thriscutt Slipway. Our target is to add the walls and surfacing during the summer, then connect the slipway to the canal cut in the last part of the year.



***Looking across the canal to the slipway as members walk the route on 29th April.***

### Tickner's Heath Crossing

We have a 'cunning plan' to remove the current blockage where the Alfold-Dunsfold road crosses the canal route at Tickner's Heath.

Reinstating a bridge on the original site would be almost impossible for a number of reasons, but we have mapped out a scheme for an alternative crossing. The next important step is a planning application.



***The Alfold-Dunsfold road currently blocks the canal at Tickner's Heath.***

### New landowners

There are new landowners on several parts of the Summit Level. We are doing everything possible to build a good relationship with them.



***Part of the 500-metre section where desilting is still needed.***

## Desilting

From Compasses Bridge to the Thriscutt Slipway is about 500 metres. This section needs desilting and this will be a substantial and difficult job. The main problem is finding somewhere to put an estimated 6,000 cubic metres of excavated material (a large tipper lorry can hold 12-15 cubic metres).



***Looking south/west from Compasses Bridge - another part of the silt mountain.***

## Dunsfold Park and Farnhurst/Fast Bridge

Dunsfold Park's plans for a large housing development (currently awaiting a Planning Inquiry) would have little effect on the canal between Tickner's Heath and Farnhurst Bridge. North of Farnhurst Bridge, there would be a canal basin, a new bridge over the canal and perhaps the opportunity to design a new crossing for the A281 at Fast Bridge.



***Farnhurst Bridge before restoration in the 1990s (archive picture - the volunteer had just slipped into the water).***

***2017 pictures on these pages by Stephen Batey and Julian Morgan.***



***Another view from the 29th April walk - between the slipway and Tickner's Heath.***



## Dashwood 150 - celebrate with us on 8th July

It was 12 o'clock on July 8th 1867 when Mr JB Dashwood started his voyage from the Thames to the Solent, at Weybridge. We plan to celebrate the 150th anniversary on Saturday July 8th 2017. Our celebration, hosted jointly by the National Trust River Wey Navigation and the Canal Trust, will take place between Weybridge and the start of the canal at The Gun's Mouth, Shalford. Boaters and spectators



***The junction of the River Thames and the River Wey - the entrance to the River Wey Navigation is through the trees in the centre of the picture.***

are very welcome (boaters please register at <https://weyarun.org.uk/drupal/dashwood>). There will be three key locations:

1. Thames Lock near Weybridge, the first lock on the River Wey Navigation.
2. Coxes Lock between Weybridge and Chertsey, about 1½ miles by water from the Thames.
3. The Gun's Mouth at Shalford, near Guildford - the start of the Wey & Arun Canal.

*Several of our friends ... came down to the river's banks to see us off, and having supplied us with cake and fruit, wished us 'Good speed'.*

We hope that some boats will navigate the whole distance (17½ miles), but if you prefer a shorter distance, then we

*We paddled up to the first lock on the Wey. Here we were called upon to pay a toll of five shillings [25p], which freed us up as far as Guildford.*

recommend the sections between the Thames and Coxes Mill (in the morning) and between Guildford and Shalford (in the afternoon).

Please feel free to wear your own interpretation of Victorian boating dress. Note: unless you are a member of British Canoeing, you need a licence to navigate the River Wey, which you can purchase at Thames Lock (please complete the application form available at <https://weyarun.org.uk/drupal/dashwood> or on the National Trust website).

The programme is:

**9.30 am:** Boaters launch at the north end of Thames Street, Weybridge (KT13 8LU). There is a small public car park (free) on the river bank and

a slipway next to the car park. **Important:** there is no public road access to Thames Lock



***Thames Lock at Weybridge.***



(KT13 8LG); if you are driving, please park at Thames Street and walk to Thames Lock (about 10 minutes).

**10.15am:** The lock-keeper will operate Thames Lock for small boats heading towards Coxes Lock. Refreshments available.



***Coxes Lock and Mill.***

**11am-1pm:** Refreshments available at Coxes Lock (KT15 2JY). There is free car parking here. This is an attractive location with an old mill

(now converted to housing), a weir and a large mill pond.

**1pm-4pm:** Shalford Mill (GU4 8BS), an 18th century watermill now owned by the National Trust, will be opened specially for the celebrations. (Normal entrance charges apply - £2.95 for adults, free for National Trust members). There is no parking at the mill; you should park at Shalford church (GU4 8BP) and walk the short distance to the mill.

**4pm:** Official opening ceremony for new canoe landing stages in the Gun's Mouth area. The landing stages have been funded by a grant from British Canoeing,

**4pm onwards:** Drinks served in the garden of the Northern Office at Bridge End, Somerswey (GU4 8EQ). **Important:** no parking in Somerswey - please use the lay-by at the junction of

the A281 and Trunley Heath Road or Broadford Park (GU4 8ED).



***Shalford Mill.***



***Newark Priory on the River Wey.***



***On 4th May, TSG volunteers installed a smart new historical information board next to the canal near the Onslow Arms at Loxwood. The board was kindly donated by the family of former TSG member Peter Burningham (inset), who died in 2015, and replaces the previous board on this site, which had become outdated. (Pictures by Martin Smithers and Dave Verrall)***





## Join us as a skipper or crew

The Boat Group is appealing for more skippers and boat crew to step forward from our membership.

The tripboats are an important part of our income and are becoming more popular each season. To meet the expected growth in business we need more skippers and boat crew. Training for boat crew is given in-house by the Director of Boat Operations and his Training team; and aspiring skippers, who require an MCA (Maritime and Coastguard Agency) licence, will be given all the help and advice they need to get their "ticket".

What's in it for me? Let one of our skippers, Steve Harmes, tell you why he volunteered:

"I have been a skipper on the Wey & Arun tripboats for eight years. I've always been interested in industrial history and I carry out work on canal restoration in other parts of the country with the Waterway Recovery Group. When I found out about the canal, and after going on one of the trips back in 2008, I enquired about ways to volunteer to help with the restoration. I started helping with the Thursday and Sunday Group (TSG) restoring locks and, at the time, starting the Loxwood road bridge and lock project. I soon found I was not able to give as much time as I would like and turned to the tripboats as an alternative.

"Having been on several canal boat holidays, including my first one in 1988 when I got engaged to my wife of now 26 years, I had some experience of boat driving but the training given by the excellent team on the Wey & Arun means that even someone with no boating experience can soon pick it up. The process for obtaining the MCA (Maritime and Coastguard Agency) licence, required to become a skipper, is very well supported

by the Wey & Arun training programme and having an interview with a qualified MCA captain is not as daunting as it sounds; they are mainly concerned with the safe operation of the boats which is well covered by the operations manual and the training given. I now commit to one day a month to tripboat skippering and another to boat cleaning, an important task which, somehow, I am now in charge of! Volunteering works well with my normal job as I do shift work as an engineer for Royal Mail and this gives me most weekends and some weekdays free.

"When skippering the boats, I really enjoy meeting the passengers, most of whom are very interested in the canal and what is happening with the restoration. Of course, driving the boat means I am out the back and the crew have more chance to talk to the passengers, I sometimes volunteer as crew so I can chat to people as well. I am always happy to allow passengers to have a go at steering the boat and usually find our younger guests are better at steering than the adults,

probably because they don't expect the boat to behave like a car.

"If you are thinking about volunteering to help us out please have a go, either as crew or skipper (or both) it's great fun and any time you can give, even if it's only one or two days a month like myself, will be very much appreciated."

For further information contact the Loxwood Office (details on page 3) and one of our Boat Group will be in touch.



**Steve Harmes**



***We are now putting the willow grown in the Hunt Nature Park osier bed to good use. Our hardworking Chairman has been on a willow-weaving course and the picture shows some of her products, with the raw material.***

## Working Party Roundup

Please forgive the personal slant in this piece, but I am writing this from the other side of the Channel, being reminded strongly of practical restoration work on the Wey & Arun Canal.

A section of stone wall at the house in Normandy, where we lived for some time and kept as a second home, was in serious need of repointing. Fortunately I felt able to have a go at doing the job. "I never knew you had those skills" was the standard comment. Well, ages ago I had been on a bricklaying course arranged by the Waterway Recovery Group, with Keith Ellis and Malcolm Saker, whom some of the longer-serving navvies will remember. We spent a couple of sessions being shown the basics at a council yard in Sutton, then got to try out what we had learnt on a proper job, namely one of the Deepcut Locks on the Basingstoke Canal.

I am talking about well over 30 years ago – our theme song, naturally, was 'Another Brick in the Wall' by Pink Floyd which was very popular then, and places us around 1979/80. There

were not many opportunities on our home canal for bricklayers then, though we did lay a few bricks at Lock 17. We had a second reason for signing up to the course, and that was to show the rest of the waterway restoration movement that we were serious. Many back then, which I am sorry to say included most of the WRG top brass, thought the Wey & Arun Canal was just a playtime project that stood virtually no chance of completion. How things change: I don't think it is exaggerating to say that we are now one of the leading national waterway restoration schemes.

The real point is that canal restoration relies on what you, the volunteers, put into it. But you can get a lot of personal benefits in return, among them a whole set of skills that you never thought you had, and maybe never expected to use again. The number and variety of working parties on this canal mean that there is something for everybody. You can follow their progress in these pages, or for a more immediate report why not sign up to *Working Party News*, our monthly e-mail newsletter, also available on the website. Or



you can have it posted in return for a supply of stamps sent to the Loxwood Office. We hope more may be tempted to come along and either practise the skills you already have, or learn new ones.

**Bill Thomson**

## Midweek Working Party

The Mid-Week Working Party, which turns out on Wednesdays to do clearance and maintenance, continues to attract good numbers of volunteers. On some recent days there have been 20 or more people on site, although poor weather can reduce the numbers by half. With so many workers, it has been possible to split the group between sites. Among the sites worked on have been Hunt Park, Gosden Aqueduct, Loxwood and the area around the Canal Centre, and, notably, Pallingham.

**Contact Margaret Darvill, 01483 894606, [margaret\\_darvill@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:margaret_darvill@weyandarun.co.uk)**

## Hedgelaying Group

Here follows an exclusive interview with Keith Nichols, Hedgelaying Group Leader extraordinaire, by Keith Nichols.

The team finished the 190 yards of laying at the site of Lock 11 (not far from High Bridge, Rosemary Lane) going south towards Gennets on 4th April. This was celebrated the following week by having a big bonfire of all the brushwood and cooking Baked Spuds par excellence.

This section of laying was started on 10th January 2017 and has taken a total of 13 days in mainly fair weather, in fact so good that we've been renamed by other groups who have had rather a lot of wet, 'The Good Weather Group'.

We have since moved to the lock side of Lock 10 as the amount of coppiced material we had left was just enough for laying the 30 yards or so of the lock

side and run up to it. This will leave a 200- yard run to connect Lock 10 to Lock 11's layed section. This is planned for the 2017/18 season with laying also being done north of Haybarn on the southern part of the canal.

The good thing about hedging in these areas is that they are quiet (if I don't start up the chainsaw) so you get to see grey wagtails walking past, the red kite circling overhead, lots of buzzards, over the last week hearing four nightingales singing, the warblers – blackcaps and others, the redwings and fieldfares - and a bank vole has stuck his head out and looked at us. Now it's the turn of may blossom as the blackthorn has finished, crab apple and cherry have appeared and on the ground primroses and bluebells have early purple orchids showing in them. In fact at Lock 10 in a very small area we counted over 120 early purple orchids.

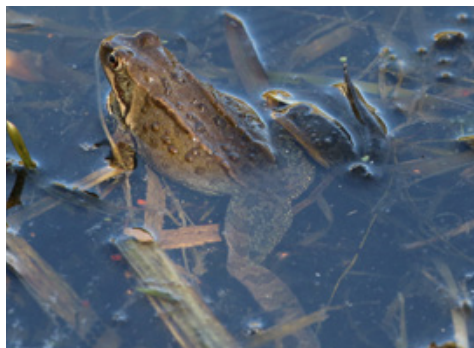
**Contact Keith Nichols, 01403 753882, [hedging@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:hedging@weyandarun.co.uk)**

## Thursday and Sunday Group

Through the winter, as the poem has it, "We'll weather the weather... like it or not." Actually this last winter was not too bad. Another problem was people taking holiday or even going into hospital, really...! Seriously, when the volunteers are on site they work very



***Pouring concrete for the copings at Gennets Bridge Lock. (Geoff Thomas)***



***One of many toads seen in the canal this spring - this one was at Shalford.***

hard and many extra days have been done this last quarter, meaning that we are nearly at the beginning of the end of this project.

The Thursday & Sunday Group has a number of teams each contributing to the progress. JJ Price and his support team have been putting in extra days and building the much admired bridge brick parapets. Geoff Thomas and Edward Stratton-Woodward are doing the brickwork within the lock. As they reach the top of the lock the copings can be cast.

The coping work starts with the shuttering by Len Hasler, Brian Whibley and George Mundy and when time allowed they also made the bottom training wall shuttering, which includes the back-pump chamber. The training wall concreting was done at the end of April. The lock coping team, John Reynolds, Martin Smithers and Chris Elphick, supplemented by Jason Falkner when shift work allows, are really cracking on and recently poured three copings in one day, though fair to say, two were small. About half of the lock copings have now been cast and the first bollards have been put in.

Martyn Baker and Richard Meinertzhagen, who have been

working getting the top sill walls ready, got the last concrete poured also at the end of April. That occasion was also notable for the delivery lorries breaking down on the GBL site, twice and having to go back to the depot for repairs, after making only a partial delivery or none.

In April, two things came together, the re-certification of the digger drivers and the need to start the Gennets Winding Hole (GWH), where the planning permit was due to run out in August this year. The practical section of the digger test includes digging a trench and backfilling it and the winding hole simply has to be dug out. Initially the trench for the electric cable around the winding hole site was excavated. Then the existing steel wire armoured cable (installed in August 2013) was dug out and put in the new trench. The topsoil was then scraped off the area leaving the clay subsoil. This produced a great heap of topsoil, which we can use for the site landscaping. The next stage will be to remove the clay, down to canal bed level. All this is getting the pound ready for boats, or do I romance?



***The site of the future Gennets Winding Hole. The white markers show where the fence and hedge will be. The black-topped posts mark where the top of the bank will be. Volunteers are removing the topsoil within this area. (Eric Walker)***



On the newt front, a partial relining of one of the ponds has been done. It being close to the top of the hill and no obvious water supply, the speculation was that it is fed from a sandy layer just below the surface, which was shown to be true. At the lock, frogs, toads and newts are returning to where they were born despite the amount of concrete we have put in, but then they have only one thing on their mind.

Just in time for the bird nesting season we got five bird boxes up near to GBL.

However some yellow wagtails have shown us they prefer to nest in one of our cabins as they did previously. They are no trouble really.

**Contact Eric Walker, 07717 855340,  
tsg@weyandarun.co.uk**

## Northern and Summit Working Party

Progress continues to be made at Compasses though completion dates pass with, guess what? – no completion! I shall abandon the concept as we have time. Nearly all the work has been at the top of the bridge and on finishing off the landscaping and access works. At the end of April NWPG made a



**Look - no scaffolding. Compasses Bridge (with water and safety ladder) in mid-May.**

three-day visit during which the retaining wall on the airfield side was finished and backfilled; the area between the bridge and main gate was paved. Towards the pub the road drain was concreted and the bollards sorted out so



**During the volunteer working week between 13th and 18th March, a small group took time off from Compasses Bridge to renew the two landing stages on the Cranleigh Waters in Shalford - on Gun's Mouth Island (above) and at Stonebridge (right). These will be needed for future work on the island.**



that they all fall in a line rather than staggering along the road edge! Installing these is no easy task as about 9 inches down you have to break through the old road surface. Looking at the site now, it's difficult to remember where the old road was.

Other work done included removing all the scaffolding from the canal (having completed the final short section of wall coping); more desilting of the canal back towards the dam; installing an escape ladder and drilling the final drainage holes in the bridge brickwork. It's good to see the grass coming up on the areas that we have soiled and seeded and we have continued with this work during the month.

It is always good to have new members of the team and we welcomed Brian Morgan for his first day of volunteering on the Bank Holiday. We hope that he enjoyed his day and comes back.

**Contact Bill Nicholson, 0779 1097773,  
bn@weyandarun.co.uk**

## Monday Group

Our two March meetings were spent in Sidney Wood undertaking our annual clearance of both sides of the canal. This year was not quite so overgrown as it was last year with the result that we made good progress, reaching just 100 yards short of the third causeway from Firtree Copse. This was helped by having a good number of volunteers. We again cleared culverts 1 & 3 (culvert 2, although filled in a long time ago, leaks) and closed the spill weir on the bend approaching lock 16. However, there is little water in the canal at present. It was most gratifying and motivating to be complimented on the work we do by passers-by on the towpath.

April saw three meetings, one extra! As our work in Sidney Wood was completed, apart from a very short stretch between the spill weir and lock 16, to which we will return, we

resumed clearance on our regular sites. We visited the Drungewick aqueduct site, Loxwood, Devil's Hole and Southland locks so they looked tidy for the Easter cruises. We also assisted Ian Burton by planting 20 rare black poplar saplings on the reverse bend in the canal between DHL and Southland. At our third outing we paid a visit to Haybarn where we trimmed the laid hedge north of the bridge and swung the swing bridge. We tidied at Newbridge and cut all the long grass at Tickner's. This brought all our regular sites, with the exception of Run Common, up to date. A visit to Run Common was scheduled for May.

**Contact John Empringham, 01483 562657,  
mondagroup@weyandarun.co.uk**

## Tickner's Heath Depot

During the last quarter, we had to bid adieu to our Chief Mechanic Francis Wellerd who swanned off into the sunset quite literally as he moved into the wild and woolly wastes of the West Country. He will be missed by all the team. The exception may be his jokes, but his expertise has been of great benefit to the Trust, perhaps more than most realise. Here at the depot he will always be remembered for the Wellerd method of starting an obstinate engine (pour a measured amount of fuel into



**Francis Wellerd in investigative mode. (John Smith)**



the plug hole). Try it, it works. All the best old chum we hope all goes well in your new home.

Miracle upon miracle - at long last more items are disappearing from the depot than have been arriving. Dan O from Eric's lot has helped reduce the pile of ageing equipment that has been slumbering at the depot for years. Plastic pipes have disappeared into his trailer along with other items of well-needed equipment. Also on one Wednesday he returned to the depot and collected a large proportion of the nonferrous scrap which has been in one of the sheds for some time. It took ages to sort at the scrapyards in Horsham; time well spent though, as it raised £501 for Trust funds.

At long last we managed to get the Land Rover to Harwoods for her long overdue service and MOT. The delay didn't seem to have harmed the old girl as she passed with flying colours and was returned to the depot in sparkling condition, mind you I did remark to the gent who delivered her that we preferred the muddy look to shiny.

On the technical side we have managed to do some work, brushcutters have been looked at and investigated for faults, parts stripped down and reassembled and proved to be working. Generators run to ensure they are generating, but we must admit to some failures, as during April we continued our efforts to get the Mariner outboard of the *May Upton* running and as you will see from the picture we had some success. After changing the impeller the beast ran a treat – once, that is, we managed to get it started. However, after consultation with the experts at the depot it was decided that it was far too difficult to get running to inflict on

volunteers at the sharp end, so it will remain at the depot and be used for spares.

Also during April one of the Trust's chainsaws was returned to the depot. We had originally given it to the MWWP but it refused to run properly and the experts at Honey Brothers estimated that it needed a new carburettor. As the saw was over 20 years old it was decided



***Mick Jones, Richard Powell and John Smith try to decide the best place for the outboard motor from May Upton.***

that this was too costly so we decided to have a look. We rummaged through our stock of used carbs but unfortunately we couldn't match the one on the saw, so even though we did get it running, as it would not 'tick over' it has been added our spare parts department.

As the annual Puddle is fast approaching, we took time in April to refurbish the 'Walkers in the Road' signs. Ken Bacon and David Robson set to with a will to repaint them. Unfortunately, my efforts to obtain a stencil for the signs came to nothing as the firm I found to supply said stencil promptly went bust, which rather highlights the amount of influence I have on areas outside of the Trust.

Well that's about it for this edition - all the best.

**Contact John Smith, 01903 235790,  
[depot@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:depot@weyandarun.co.uk)**

# Membership Report

We now have 2,963 members. Our main sources of new members are our website and the Canal Centre, where you can browse our stock of books and other items.

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to the following new members who have joined us over the last three months. We would also like to thank those of you who have offered to assist with our various volunteer activities.

Will Adshead	Mark & Kerri Hawkins	Julia & Peter Rozanski
Edward & Helen Berridge	Peter & Jennie Hill	Clive Seldon
Kenneth Broomfield	Robert Horn	Elizabeth Simmons
Brian & Claire Clarke	Charles Jenkins	Sheelagh Ward & Michael Huckstepp
Robert Cook	Barbara Johnson	Maurice & Christine Watts
Mel Cornwell	Tony Kneale	Roger & Sally Wilton
Steve Eade	Michael & Gillian McAloon	Lee Winter
Max Followell	Keith & Christine Newcombe	Greg Woodward
David Gaff	Rosemary Parsons	Christina Woolgar
Mark & Sara Groves	Ben Roberts & Lesley Vincent	Holly Worton & Agustin Gonzalez

We have learned with sadness of the death of:

Mr C Chapman	Mr M Dawes	Mr N Gilham
Mr K Hadden	Mr A Keene	Mr D Neilan

In addition to this magazine we also provide regular interim updates by e-mail. If you would like to receive these news e-mails then please let me know and I will arrange for you to be added to the distribution list.

**Alan Dyer, Membership Secretary**  
*(membership@weyandarun.co.uk)*

## Recycling

Our thanks go to John Talbot who has recently tackled the bureaucracy needed for us to claim paper recycling credits from West Sussex County Council. There was a hiatus in the process after John Taylor-Cram sadly died last year. The year's net income from this source is around £4,000, an extremely useful contribution. Please continue bringing your old newspapers to the skips in the Onslow Arms car park at Loxwood.

## Numbers Game

The Numbers Game makes a very useful contribution to Trust funds as well as giving subscribers a monthly chance to win £100. There are three winners every month and

members contribute £3 by standing order for each number they hold.

If you would like to join in, Timothy Lewis, the game's administrator, will be pleased to hear from you. Contact him via the Northern Office (details on page 3) for an application form.



## Dunsfold Park

In early March, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government "called in" Dunsfold Park's application for a development including 1,800 houses. This means that the application will now be



decided by the government, after a Local Inquiry, rather than by Waverley Borough Council. As reported in the last *Wey-South*, Waverley Council approved the application at a meeting in December 2016. The Inquiry is expected to take place in July 2017.

The Canal Trust follows Dunsfold Park developments with intense interest, but, as always, with a neutral view on whether further development at Dunsfold is a good thing.

## Pallingham Bridge

Graham Baird writes: I was interested to see the photograph (in the March 2017 *Wey-South*) of repairs to Pallingham Bridge. This work was actually undertaken by bricklayer

apprentices seconded from the contractor James Longley and Co. (which accounts for the seemingly young ages of the 'volunteers'). The arrangement had been made through Peter Longley who was an active member of the Trust and later became a Vice-President.

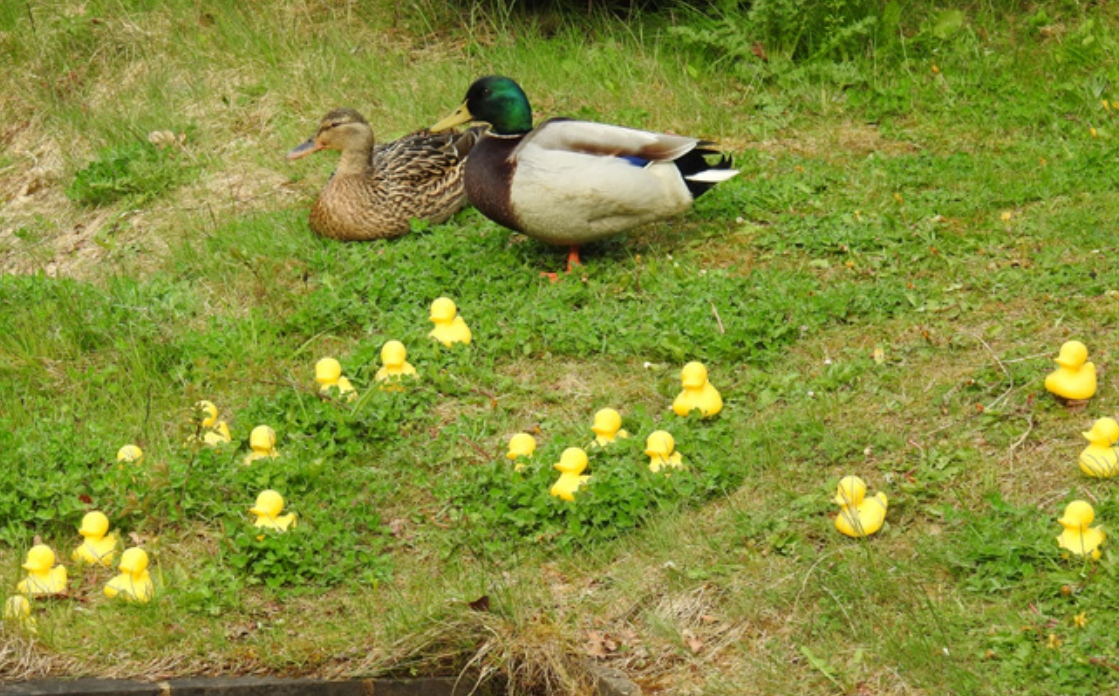
My small contribution to the work was the design of the temporary shoring to support the bridge whilst work was carried out.

## Correction

Peter Foulger tells us that he and his wife Beryl, whose passing we reported in the last issue of *Wey-South*, were in fact married for 61 years, not 51 as we mistakenly stated.

## Dates for your Diary

<b>Wednesday 14th June</b>	<b>* Cream Tea Voyage at 2.15pm.</b>
<b>Sunday 18th June</b>	<b>* Dad's Bacon Butty Brunch trips at 9.45am and 12 noon.</b>
<b>Friday 23rd June</b>	<b>* Midsummer Supper Cruise at 7.30pm.</b>
<b>Wednesday 28th June</b>	<b>* Cream Tea Voyages at 2.15pm and 4.30pm.</b>
<b>Saturday 1st July</b>	<b>Coach Outing to Stratford River &amp; Canal Festival, organised by Mark Anderson – markwanderson@hotmail.co.uk, 0771 874 6667.</b>
<b>Friday 7th July</b>	<b>* Pimm's &amp; Posh Ploughman's Cruise at 7.30pm.</b>
<b>Saturday 8th July</b>	<b>Celebrations for 150th anniversary of the start of JB Dashwood's journey from the Thames to the Solent – details on page 20.</b>
<b>Tuesday 18th July</b>	<b>* Cream Tea Voyages at 2.15pm and 4.30pm.</b>
<b>Friday 21st July</b>	<b>* Pimm's &amp; Picnic Cruise at 7.30pm.</b>
<b>Thursday 27th July</b>	<b>* Pirates &amp; Princesses Adventures at 11am and 2pm.</b>
<b>Friday 4th August</b>	<b>* Pimm's &amp; Posh Ploughman's Cruise at 7.30pm.</b>
<b>Tuesday 8th August</b>	<b>* Cream Tea Voyage at 2.15pm.</b>
<b>Wednesday 9th August</b>	<b>* Pirates &amp; Princesses Adventures at 11am and 2pm.</b>
<b>Friday 18th August</b>	<b>* Quiz &amp; Nibbles Cruise at 6.30pm.</b>
<b>Thursday 24th August</b>	<b>* Pirates &amp; Princesses Adventures at 11am and 2pm.</b>
<b>Wednesday 6th September</b>	<b>* Cream Tea Voyage at 2.15pm.</b>
<b>Saturday 9th September</b>	<b>Guildford's Treadwheel Crane will be open for visitors, staffed by Canal Trust volunteers, from 11am to 3pm as part of Heritage Open Days. 2.15pm - guided circular canal walk from Shamley Green.</b>
<b>Sunday 10th September</b>	<b>Guided canal walk from Shalford to Bramley, starting at 2.30pm.</b>
<b>Saturday 28th October</b>	<b>Autumn Meeting (EGM) at 2.30pm in Pulborough Village Hall (Arun Hall).</b>
<b>* For all boat trip information please contact the Loxwood Office (details on page 3). Bookings can be made with the office or online at weyarun.org.uk/trips. Booking is essential for all Special boat trips.</b>	



***Wildlife of all kinds flocked to Brewhurst Lock around the Easter weekend (Pictures by Dave Verrall and Julian Morgan).***

