

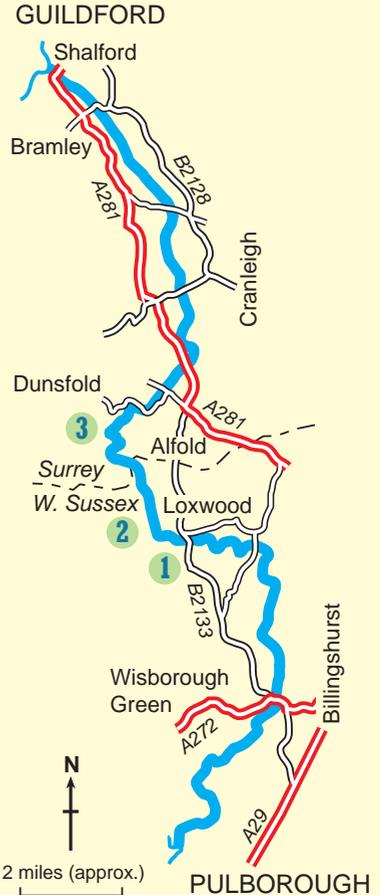


WEY-SOUTH

The Magazine of the
Wey & Arun Canal Trust
Issue 209 February 2025

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Front cover:
Barnsill Bridge on a sunny winter's day.
Photo by Keith Lyall

Photo credits:
Photos in this issue were taken by 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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News headlines

Three dates for your diary

Our Spring Meeting will be on Saturday 26th April 2025 at Loxwood North Hall, Guildford Road, Loxwood, RH14 0SF, starting at 2.30pm, with a guided walk in the morning – see page 8.

The Poddle, our annual sponsored walk to raise funds, takes place on Sunday 1st June, starting at North Hall, Loxwood from 9.30 am. The route will include Bonfire Hanger and the Dunsfold summit pound. Further details on page 20 and our website.

The Arun Boat Rally for paddlers from Pulborough to Pallingham will be held on Sunday June 29th – once again, see our website for more.

Tickner's Crossing

Our stalled Tickner's Crossing project received some good news as we were going to print, with confirmation from Thames Water on a required water main diversion. See page 6.



Your views count

See page 17 for details of a survey we hope you will complete, to guide how the Trust communicates with its members.

Bridges, Locks – and Gates

Simon Gates, to be precise. See page 12 to learn about his role in putting the management of our physical assets on a planned basis, with preventative maintenance to keep them in good order. This gives us focus while we're between major projects.

Rooks Hill: the news is – no news!

We had hoped by now to have received the Planning Permission from Waverley Borough Council for the extension of the restored section at Birtley south to Rooks Hill. This will include rebuilding Fanesbridge Lock, one of only two locks between Bramley and the canal's summit, and the nearby bridge. We are still waiting for the Council planners to assess reports submitted last year regarding the presence and protection of bats and badgers. See page 6.

Wey-South goes back to the future

You will see advertisements in this edition. This is not an innovation, as Wey-South used to carry advertising in its earliest days. We hope it's a 'win-win' that defrays our production costs and benefits the advertisers with your custom. If you have a product or service you would like to advertise to our 3,000 or so readers then please email weysouth@weyarun.org.uk for information.

Annual General Meeting

On Saturday 19th October at a well-filled Alfold Village Hall, members dealt with formalities for 2023 and learned more about current projects and future plans. Interim Chairman Margaret Darvill noted that 2023 had seen the completion of the restoration of 2km of canal at Dunsfold. We were waiting expectantly for Waverley Borough Council to grant planning permission for the Rooks Hill project south of Birtley. The repair and replacement of pumping equipment and the work to stop leaks at Long Meadow would result in the return in 2025 of the full 5km of our navigable central section for our tripboats, centred on Loxwood.

Praising all our volunteers, she made special mention of Lyn Nash, now retired, for her running of the Loxwood Canal Centre and was pleased to announce that her predecessor as chairman Sally Schupke had been appointed as one of our Vice-Presidents.

Julian Morgan summarised our finances for 2023. Income at £680,000 was 31% up on 2022, but this did not fully cover expenditure on maintenance, restoration and land purchase. As a result, our bank balance was down by £15,000 over the year, but our 'tangible assets' had increased by £65,000. The year 2024 to date had seen broadly similar income but lower outgoings, resulting in funds having increased in the year to date by £187,000. A major source of income in 2023 had been a donation of £230,000 from the M.J.Camp Charitable Foundation, from which a further £220,000 has been received in 2024.

Julian went on to report the activities of our trading subsidiary. Profits arising from boat trips and sale of merchandise in 2023 (which boost our income) were slightly up on 2022, and 2024 was likely to be even better. Julian noted however that trading turnover and profit in recent years were substantially lower than they had been in the previous decade. Water supply remained a limiting factor for our boat trip operation, but the expected return to full navigability of our central section next year was welcome. Given restricted water and volunteer resources, profitable private boat trips were being targeted in preference to public ones.



(Julian is the Finance Director of our trading company. He had not been expecting to be speaking on the main accounts of our charity, having stood down as its Finance Director at the end of January 2024. However, his successor had decided not to continue. Julian is therefore helping with Finance pending a fresh appointment: an appeal was made for a volunteer to step forward - see page 20.)

Julian's management services to the Trust, including as its previous Finance Director, were recognised by his being awarded the John East Trophy, whilst Martin Smithers received in absentia the Jack King Cup (also known as the 'Eager Beaver award') for significant personal endeavour.

Bill Nicholson gave a detailed report on the Bonfire Hanger towpath restoration. The possibility of reinstating the dams (see Wey-South 208) so as once again to restore the cosmetic appearance of a canal in water through Bonfire Hanger was being considered (see page 31). Margaret summarised progress on our priority projects. Tony Ford explained that the Bramley Link had had to take a back seat. It was doubtful that the plans as submitted to Guildford Borough Council could be implemented – land ownership was one issue. The planning application for this is being withdrawn and fresh plans including a revised route will be needed (see page 7). There was better news on another stalled project, the re-routed canal crossing at Tickner’s Heath, where we were now preparing to commission construction work. This will be very expensive, and funds will be sought and appealed for.

Devil’s Hole Lock bridge repairs

This bridge was rebuilt in 1982-3 as a project sponsored by the Manpower Services Commission, a now-defunct government agency set up to co-ordinate employment and training services in the UK. It was one of the first major restoration projects in the Loxwood area. Its parapets were found to be in danger of failing.



Our EWG team first addressed the weak northern parapet by inserting stainless steel anchors set in epoxy resin into horizontal mortar joints at every fourth course of the weak north-side brick parapet. The brick capping was removed, a damp -proof course laid and the capping bricks replaced. This will prevent moisture penetrating the brickwork below.

The southern parapet was in worse condition. It had cracked and the brick faces had broken off. The only option was for EWG to demolish the parapet, in readiness for rebuilding early in 2025.

This action results from the survey work now being undertaken on the canal, which is discussed in depth on page 12 of this edition.

Priority Projects Update

Our four priority areas announced last year remain our focus for 2025.

South of Bramley

Planning permission for restoration at Rooks Hill, first applied for in 2021, has still not been received. Following somewhat belated recommendations from statutory consultee Surrey Wildlife Trust, Waverley Borough Council requested further data on the presence of badgers and bats in the area to be restored – and steps to ensure that they would not be adversely affected. Surveys were carried out for us by JWK Wildlife Surveys and submitted last December. They identified mitigations that would avoid harm to these species. We believe that the Council remains favourably inclined to our application. In anticipation of final approval in early 2025, we have set up Strategy and Implementation groups, ready to make a quick start and discharge our planning conditions. The restoration will take several years. We hope to start in 2025 with the rebuilding of the bridge which will carry the Greensand Way (a long-distance path) over the canal, replacing the current causeway.

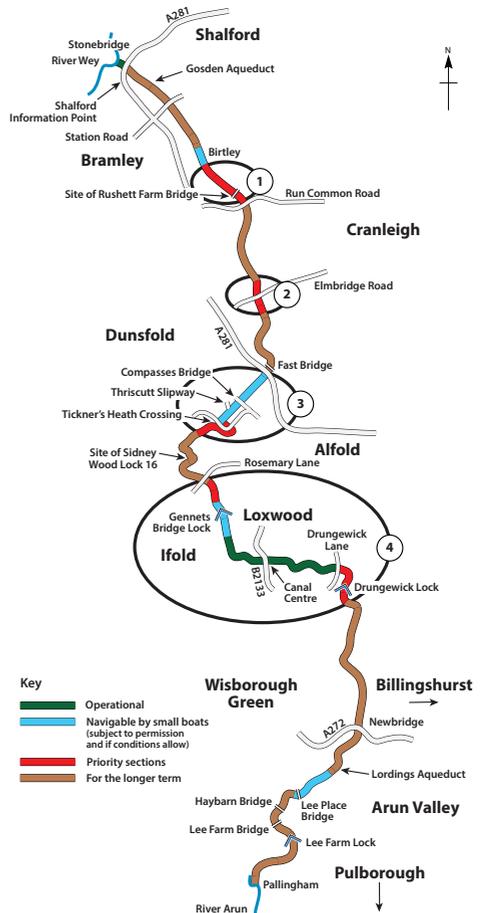
Further south, work to resubmit the planning application for the Rushett Farm section is also well advanced. The updated plan does not impinge on the Downs Link path (the trackbed of the former Guildford – Horsham railway and the rock on which the first application foundered) and it deviates less from the original canal route thanks to some positive landowner discussions that we are working to finalise.

Cranleigh

South of Elmbridge Road, a new section of footpath has been constructed to allow access from Elmbridge Village across the canal to link up with a footpath into Cranleigh. Otherwise, progress has been limited. Surrey County Council is committed in principle to replacing the narrow Elmbridge Road crossing, in the process restoring a navigable-height clearance for the canal below – but there is no firm timescale for this. Immediately to the north, at Rye Farm (following the granting of planning permission last year), work to create a discrete towpath has not started, as legal agreements with the landowner are not yet finalised.

Dunsfold

Good news – we have finally received dates from Thames Water to divert a water main onto the side of the already constructed footbridge. Discussions continue with Surrey Highways however on design approvals for the temporary road, so uncertainty remains on how quickly we can restart construction. Work on the tender to appoint a contractor is well advanced and our volunteers will be completing some tasks in the next few months to finish our work on the temporary road and some other jobs, ready to hand over the site to the appointed contractor.



Loxwood

South of Loxwood, the Long Meadow section (from Drungewick Lane to the restored and repaired Drungewick Lock) has refilled after the completion of leak repair work. Vegetation that sprang up in the drained canal bed has been cleared. This half-mile section of canal is now looking good. However, before we open up for boats and paddlers, we need to complete the Phase 2 pumping project with replacement pumps and new pump control units at each end of the pound, up at Baldwin's Knob Lock and down at Drungewick Lock. Preparatory work by our volunteers is nearing completion and we will soon commission a contractor to complete the installation. Finally, an inspection of Drungewick Lock is required, to confirm that it is in a fit state to maintain water levels. Only then will we remove the stop planks and reopen the navigation.

As reported elsewhere in this issue, some further work on a problematic short section of the Bonfire Hanger towpath is being scheduled for the spring. While the majority of the work completed to transform this section has held up well, some remedial work is required to fix a muddy area either side of the sluice above Gennets Bridge Lock.

Next steps for the Bramley Link

Tony Ford explains

After many years of investigation and design, in 2020 the Trust submitted to Guildford Borough Council the planning application for the Bramley Link between the River Wey at Guns Mouth and Gosden Aqueduct. Despite extensive prior consultations, the application attracted a number of significant objections and adverse comments.

The 2020 scheme was inspired, in that it utilised a section of the Cranleigh Waters river, a tributary of the River Wey. However, it had an Achilles heel, as at several locations it required the narrowing and realignment of the Downs Link long distance path that uses the trackbed of the former Guildford – Horsham railway. The principal objections to the planning application related to those changes to the Downs Link.

For the past couple of years, a small group of directors has been refining the design of the scheme in an effort to overcome those objections. But we have been fighting against the tide, as in that time the Downs Link has become more popular and, as we found to our cost with the Rushett Farm application, is considered sacrosanct by those wishing to see the restoration of some form of railway link between Horsham and Guildford. Our amendments to the 2020 design have reduced this impact but, we think, not sufficiently to guarantee a successful outcome to the planning process.

We have therefore decided to change tack. Instead, we will investigate a revised route between the A281 and Gosden. This route more closely follows the original canal line and largely avoids any interface with the Downs Link. However, a major factor will be dealing with how such a route affects flood risk within this part of the Cranleigh Waters catchment. Proving a satisfactory flood risk was an important factor in the design of the 2020 scheme.

As this revised route will differ significantly from the 2020 scheme, we thought it prudent to withdraw the present application, in anticipation of submitting a fresh application in due course. That however is likely to be several years hence, as we will need to complete some substantial investigations into flood risk, ecological impacts and various other matters.

As has been announced, our focus has now moved to four projects that have a better prospect of funding and delivery – at Rooks Hill, Cranleigh, Tickner's and Bonfire Hanger. Progress on these is reported elsewhere in this issue and, indeed, the Bonfire Hanger towpath project has been completed.

Spring Meeting

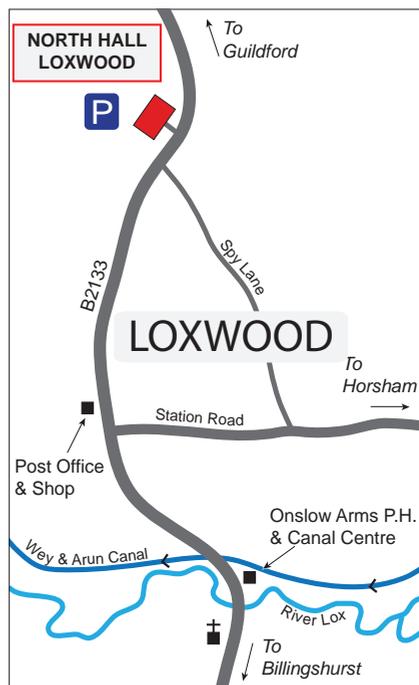
Our Spring Meeting is on Saturday 26th April 2025 at Loxwood North Hall, Guildford Road, Loxwood, RH14 0SF, starting at 2.30pm.

All members are welcome for a series of updates and presentations. Publications and other items will be available to buy. There will be a refreshment break and the meeting will finish by 5pm at the latest.

A members walk is also to be organised for those who would like to make a day of it. The morning walk is likely to be starting at Birtley and walking to Rushett Farm but landowner permissions and the route were still being finalised as we went to press. An event will be set up on our website with details of the walk and the meeting point by the end of February. If you are unable to register online, please email us at support@weyarun.org.uk

How to get to Loxwood North Hall

Loxwood North Hall is on the B2133 at the north end of the village - see map - and has a large car park.



Santa boat trips

Trying to run public boat trips in December and January always seems a bit eccentric and can be challenging. In 2024/5 we didn't have to cope with ice and snow, but high winds and water supply caused a few anxious moments.



The first scheduled weekend of Santa trips was 7/8 December. The weather forecast suggested winds of up to 50mph but we were reluctant to cancel and disappoint customers. We took extra operational precautions and the trips operated as planned.

The next hurdle was low water levels below Brewhurst Lock, caused by water being lost through Baldwin's Knob Lock (BKL). The stop planks went in at BKL and the levels recovered, but unusually the two midweek trips on 17 and 19 December went northwards through Loxwood Lock. Santa normally appears from his grotto at Brewhurst Lock, so for these trips he hid in *Wiggonholt's* engine room and made a surprise entry at Loxwood Lock. On 19 December the weather was marvellously sunny and the boat made a fine sight between the lock and Devil's Hole Winding Hole.

Thanks to a superb contribution from volunteers, including our two Santas (ignore that children, it's obviously a typo), elves, catering supremos, skippers and crew, plus our canal maintenance teams, we ran a total of 18 Santa trips across 9 days and carried just under 500 passengers.

Boxing Day had dull weather but we ran two well-supported trips with mince pies and mulled wine for adults.

2025 trips

The New Year's Day weather forecast was truly awful, so with only a handful of booked passengers we decided to cancel the planned trips.

This means the first scheduled public trips of 2025 are on Mothering Sunday 30 March, with cream tea trips in the afternoon.



Adam Rayner leaves



Adam says farewell at a Christmas party

Adam Rayner joined us in early 2021 (at the age of 19) as our first apprentice. We believe we were the first independent canal trust to take on an apprentice in the UK, and when Adam's apprenticeship ended in late 2022 (with a Distinction certificate) we were happy to offer him a job as a permanent team member. Adam has been immensely valuable to us and has learned a vast range of practical skills that are essential for canal restoration and maintenance jobs. One of Adam's main roles was to support the work of our volunteer teams and visiting groups – this has been a great help in making their work easier and more efficient. As the average age of our volunteers shows no signs of decreasing, Adam's youthful energy and enthusiasm have been much appreciated and we were sorry when he tendered his resignation in November. We wish Adam all the best with whatever he chooses to do next in his career.

Telehandler training for Zoe and Mark

Our apprentice Zoe Mallam and Depot Manager Mark Feeny completed a training course in December to become qualified operators of our Telehandler. This machine is used regularly for loading and unloading materials.

One of the tasks they had to perform was to place and retrieve a $\frac{3}{4}$ -ton container of stone blocks 30 feet up a scaffold tower. It's really very difficult, but as can be seen in the photo, Zoe shows how it is done.



*Clockwise from right:
Zoe tackles the scaffold tower test.
In the cab of our own machine.
Lunch break near Lordings.*



Our canal system on YouTube

The October AGM was shown a new YouTube video of our canal in the ‘Court above the Cut’ series by canal vlogger Stephen Court. Describing us as ‘the Canal to defeat Napoleon’ he takes us from the Loxwood section up to Rosemary Lane with a mixture of ground-based and drone photography, telling the canal’s story and enthusing about our restoration.



There are YouTube videos of the wider network of ‘Egremont’ waterways. The last of them to be built (and the first to fail) was the Portsmouth and Arundel Canal. In ‘The Waterway of Woe’, Andrew Gibson gives an excellent summary of the many plans to connect London with Portsmouth by canal, including our own. He then looks in more detail at the partly restored Chichester Ship Canal, currently isolated, but with plans for restoration of two miles of the Portsmouth and Arundel Canal off which it is a spur, to the sea lock at Salterns on Chichester Harbour which survives to this day to serve tide-free moorings on a short remnant of the canal.

The route of the section through Portsmouth itself – the Portsea Canal - is traced in Bob Moore’s ‘Pastfinder’ series. With the major exception of the walls of the large sea lock into Langstone Harbour, little has survived, with much of the alignment turned into railway.

Further coverage of the Portsmouth and Arundel Canal, from the Arun to Salterns, is from Paul and Rebecca Whitewick. (A previous video about our own canal from the Whitewicks, despite positive and interesting content, was somewhat let down by being titled ‘The Pointless Canal’.)



A HIDDEN GEM ON THE WEY

Set within the picturesque Surrey countryside with direct access onto the River Wey, Pyrford Marina is perfectly placed for cruising this beautiful part of the world. With premium facilities and capacity for narrowboats, widebeams and small cruisers, Pyrford Marina is the ideal base for exploration afloat.

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Bringing structure to managing our structures

Detecting issues requiring attention such as Devil's Hole Lock Bridge is one of the remits of volunteer Simon Gates, a retired Chartered Civil Engineer. Simon brings us his expertise as a former Asset Management Director with what is now the Wessex Region of Network Rail and then from helping create the Metro and tram system in Doha, Qatar. Simon started volunteering with our EWG team, driving a dumper for the road laying at Northlands, and still works with the team. His professional skills were soon sought for the wider role of asset management of our structures such as bridges, locks and aqueducts.

These are generally previous restorations, some of which are beginning to show their age. Unavoidably, work has taken place over half a century where the opportunity arose and when the funding was available. What was done was not always fully documented and the knowledge of those who did it fades. We have tended to address issues with restored structures as they arise. Simon's task is to move us from a reactive to a proactive way of working, identifying priority tasks for the near future and planning for the longer term. We will improve the process of documenting what has been done.



Simon Gates barrowing mortar

We then have to care for the new works such as the Canal Centre, the Hunt Park Viewing Platform and the canoe landing stages. We also need to regularise access to, and plans for, the restored structures that lie on private land. As with so much of what we do, this requires the positive support of the landowners concerned.

Simon wants a 'light-touch' process, reflecting the fact that our structures are mainly simple in civil engineering terms. We have only a small permanent staff and what we can do without the cost of calling in contractors depends on the skill sets and the enthusiasm of the available volunteers. As a baseline for an asset management plan to be delivered this year, Simon is in the process of examining all of our structures. Detecting shorter-term issues requires ongoing monitoring by our lengthsmen who may need to be more sure of what they should be alert to.



A datum plate

Simon has access to several ways we can monitor structures. A small amount of seasonal movement is normal, as a structure 'breathes'. We must be able to detect abnormal deviation. Most familiar to canal walkers will be the datum plates found on bridges which detect structural movement, as was the case at Devil's Hole Lock Bridge. Other instrumentation can check electronically for movement at and between lock walls and parapets.

Simon lives in Southwater near Horsham with wife Suzanne. They have three adult children and (to date) one grandchild. Simon is an enthusiastic cyclist and motorcyclist and also helps out as 'roadie' for the West Sussex Philharmonic Choir in Horsham which Suzanne chairs. They belong to the local Harley-Davidson Chapter in Guildford and regularly go on European tours by motorcycle.

Can you help our speakers spread the message?

We have a team of speakers who are eager to talk to local groups about the history and restoration of the canal. Do you belong to or know of any that could be interested to hear the Wey & Arun story? Over the last seven years, we have given talks to about 150 organisations. A small donation is appreciated, but ‘many a mickle makes a muckle’ – our talks have added over £10,000 to our funds.

As an example, there’s a local Women’s Institute which asks its members to suggest topics for talks, which are then voted on. A Trust member belonging to that ‘WI’ put forward our canal – and that topic received the most votes! There’s clearly a receptive audience for our message.

We have delivered talks to a wide variety of local groups including Women’s Institute branches, Probus (retired professionals), Parish Councils, Local History clubs, Industrial Archaeology groups, Gardening clubs and even members of an MG Owners Club. Our speakers will focus on different canal topics depending on the group and their interests. Some talks focus more on the history of the canal and others on our work and restoration projects.

Booking a speaker is easy. A group’s talks organiser will find everything on a simple form on our website – see Request a Speaker | Restoring London's Lost Route to the Sea. John Dodwell, our ‘Voluntary Organiser of Voluntary Speakers’, will be happy to discuss this further if needed – contact him at: john.dodwell@weyaron.org.uk

John would also be interested to hear from you if you would like to find out about becoming a Trust speaker yourself.



Loxwood tree planting

I am writing this in December when there is not much colourful wildlife around the canal, so it seemed a good idea to look at a tree planting project. Our work on the canal inevitably means removing some trees (and sadly a lot of ash which grew up in many places along the canal and then suffered from ash dieback) but we have always planted many more than we have taken out.



The Grand Opening of May 2009 - an aerial view of the woodland to be

The area between Loxwood High Street and the Onslow Arms changed radically with the lowering of the canal and the building of the new bridge /tunnel. From 1996 up to the middle of 2006 there was a winding hole (boat turning place) very close to the road next to the Onslow Arms and the canal level was not far below the road. In 2006 the canal was drained and the winding hole became history as its site turned into a muddy ramp – a procession of heavy plant drove down the ramp to start lowering the level of the canal bed.

When the work was finished in early 2009 we had a path sloping down from the road to the towpath, with a triangle of land between the path and the canal. For the official opening in 2009 we neatly turfed this triangle and it stayed like that until April 2010 when pupils, teachers and parents from Thomas A Becket School in Worthing planted young trees grown at their school tree nursery. The project was supervised by our Conservation Advisor Ian Burton who chose the trees to showcase a range of native species, mainly deciduous ones although there are one or two hollies.

14 years on, we can see that the work was clearly a success. Roughly in the middle a birch tree has grown to a respectable height and it is surrounded by other trees and bushes. A quick tour with our Conservation Director John Reynolds picked out, among others, some fairly rare black poplars, hazel, field maple, hawthorn and blackthorn. All of these have a benefit to local wildlife as a place for shelter or egg laying, or as a food source. It has been an eventful 30 or so years for this small area but we have definitely improved it.

Julian Morgan



Tree planting in April 2010



My, how you've grown! Winter 2024

Bonfire Hanger opening ceremony



The Mayor cuts the tape

At 10:00 on Saturday 19th October 2024, the rain clouds dispersed in perfect time for 26 dignitaries, Board members and volunteers to attend a sunny opening ceremony for the restored Bonfire Hanger towpath near Gennets Bridge Lock. Both Alfold Parish Council and Waverley Borough District Council had generously donated much of the project's cost from their shares of the Community Infrastructure Levy (which is paid to local authorities by developers large and small when receiving planning permissions). Present therefore were Chris Britton and Martin Richardson from Alfold Parish Council, and the ceremonial ribbon was cut by the civic head of Waverley, the Worshipful the Mayor Cllr John Ward.

The Bonfire Hanger section of the canal passes through Oakhurst Farm, whose owners Nigel and Fiona Gibbons, already generous canal benefactors, donated a seat which was also unveiled – and not just any seat. Nigel was for many years a trustee of Sustrans, the charity for making it easier for everyone to walk, wheel and cycle, including the encouragement of sculptures and installations to enhance footpaths and bridleways. This inspired him to do the same for the Bonfire Hanger towpath by seeking from local farming colleagues a piece of farm machinery suitable for conversion to a canal bench.



The ideal gift came from Chris and Sue Covey of Alfold in the form of a tractor-drawn trailer hay mower made in the 1940s by Bamfords Ltd of Uttoxeter – now JCB. The model 7RTC mower, without its mowing arm, was cleaned and painted. Fallen oak timber from the farm was cut, planed and fitted to struts welded onto the mower to form the seat. Much of the work was done by brothers Luke (15) and Jake (12) Coventry, whose father works at Oakhurst Farm. The finishing touch is a painting by Luke, fixed to the bench on a plaque donated by local firm Rudgwick Metals.

A chance to tell us what you think

Are we giving you what you want to read? Our Editorial Team would like to know what supporters of the canal think of Wey-South Magazine, and our communications in general, and how we might serve you better.

As a reader of this publication, we are keen to hear from you how well we are doing in communicating our work, and whether we are providing articles that are of interest to our members.

We have created an on-line survey for which we can email you a link. A link will also be included in our monthly e-newsletter (and if you don't already receive it, sign up for it on our website). There will also be a link on our website. Look for a news article about this survey on the Home page.

Alternatively if you're happy to manually type this URL into your browser it will take you straight there - on your computer, phone or tablet.



<https://forms.office.com/e/C2kV90AKnb>

If you have difficulty accessing the survey online please email us at weysouth@weyarun.org.uk and we will send you a link directly.

We cannot identify you from your answers and completing the survey should take less than a minute but if you prefer not to take part yet have some ideas or feedback you would like to share, please email us at that same address with your responses to these three questions.

- 1 What type of articles interest you most?
- 2 Can you suggest different content we should include?
- 3 What other suggestions or feedback do you have for our communications team?

Responses are needed by 31st March 2025, and thank you for your help.

Christmas Raffle winners

We are very grateful to everyone who bought tickets for our 'Christmas Draw' (drawn on 21st January). We sold 3,594 tickets at £1 each, of which 72% were bought online – a slightly higher proportion than last year - and a saving in bank charges for us. Many of our generous supporters added donations to their purchases - and we were very grateful for the several donations by people who didn't buy tickets. A successful year and, to repeat, our hearty thanks.

The Christmas Draw Results are as follows:

- 1st Prize : £200 – Mr Simon Pollard
- 2nd Prize : £100 – Mr Malcolm Drage
- 3rd Prize : £75 – Miss Chris Pugh
- 4th Prize : £50 M&S Voucher – Mr William Stephens
- 5th Prize : £40 – Mr A Chetwyn
- 6th Prize : £30 – Karen & Fred Barnes
- 7th Prize : £25 M&S Voucher – Mr John Bull

Some of our Yesterdays

The *Wey-South* team continue our occasional series, this time looking back at our reporting from 50, 30 and 10 years ago.

Issue 13, February 1975

Two initiatives that remain very relevant today were announced.

Readers were introduced to the Wey-South Path:

WALKING ALONG THE CANAL - 'THE WEY-SOUTH PATH'.

We have on a number of occasions stressed that one cannot walk along the full length of the towpath of the Wey & Arun Canal. Largely through historical accident only certain sections of the towpath have been defined as public rights of way.

However, both Surrey and West Sussex have a large and legally defined network of public footpaths and bridleways. By using paths in this network a route has been devised which will enable those interested in prospecting our terrain to walk from one end of the Canal to the other without generally deviating very far from the old water-course.

We have called this route "The Wey-South Path" and we have produced a comprehensive 13 page booklet with strip maps as a guide to walking it. Copies can be obtained (price 15p) by sending a stamped and addressed foolscap envelope (at least 9"x4")

The Technical Group announced a new policy for the canal's water supply:

"It is proposed to pump back all the water transferred from the upper to the lower level by boats passing through locks. This method, which is known as 'back-pumping', is able to provide for as much traffic through the locks as the pump capacity allows since the lockage water is reused over and over again. Back pumping is being increasingly used on other waterways to cope with the increase in leisure boating. The locks will be designed to minimise the volume of water to be pumped."

Page 20

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Roy Broadhead **Boat news** ■

Zachariah Keppel completes proving trails

THE WACT TRIP BOAT IS LOOKING GOOD, ACCORDING TO ROY BROADHEAD, THOUGH THE LATEST OFFICIAL REQUIREMENTS ARE PROVING ONEROUS.

Since my last report the *Zachariah Keppel* has undergone extensive proving trials on the canal at Drungewick and it was pleasing to discover that she is living up to expectations in terms of reliability and ease of handling. The outstanding minor fitting-out jobs are complete and the boat now has handsome wooden tables between each set of facing seats and a serviceable toilet/cleaning compartment. The exterior has also been dramatically improved by the addition of the name '*Zachariah Keppel*' in colourful and very professional looking lettering on each bow courtesy of Angela Smith with assistance from her husband. Although the worst of this winter's weather is probably still to come, our system of window boards and guttering seems to be remarkably weather-proof and only occasional pumping of the bilge is required. Another important job which has been going on is the training and familiarisation of volunteer crew members who will be

agreed to act as coordinator of crewing arrangements; Don's 'phone number is 01903

From January 1995 :

Testing Zachariah Keppel.

Eagle eyed readers will spot a typo in the headline.

The current Wey-South team do their best to avoid such howlers by having two volunteer proofreaders who check our tekst must throughly

Issue 89, January 1995

Chaloner Chute reported on the trials of Zachariah Keppel, still a mainstay of our fleet

"Since my last report the *Zachariah Keppel* has undergone extensive proving trials on the canal at Drungewick and it was pleasing to discover that she is living up to expectations in terms of reliability and ease of handling. The outstanding minor fitting-out jobs are complete and the boat now has handsome wooden tables between each set of facing

seats and a serviceable toilet/ cleaning compartment. The exterior has also been dramatically improved by the addition of the name 'Zachariah Keppel' in colourful and very professional looking lettering on each bow courtesy of Angela Smith with assistance from her husband. Although the worst of this winter's weather is probably still to come, our system of window boards and guttering seems to be remarkably weatherproof and only occasional pumping of the bilge is required.

"Another important job which has been going on is the training and familiarisation of volunteer crew members who will be needed to operate the boat when - Dept of Transport permitting - full scale fare paying trips start next season. About 15 people have so far turned up to be trained and this number will make it possible to start commercial operations in due course but more volunteers are needed and are invited to contact myself, Chaloner Chute or Don Gibson who has kindly agreed to act as coordinator of crewing arrangements.

"The Department of Transport has recently clamped down hard on all types of passenger carrying vessels, largely as a consequence of the well publicised Marchioness disaster....."

Issue 170, March 2015

There was good news about the plans to replace the Compasses causeway at Dunsfold with a navigable-height bridge. "The approvals for Compasses Bridge took a significant step forward in January with consent being granted by the Secretary of State for us to undertake works on the small area of common land that is close to the existing causeway...the final piece of the land jigsaw that we have had to assemble in order to be able to realign the existing road onto the new bridge.

"Separately, our planning application to Waverley has completed its public consultation stage and is due to be considered by the Borough's planning committee. Negotiations are underway with local firms (to select our contractor to build the main structure of the bridge) and with the County Council (for the legal paperwork that we need in order to do work on the public highway). Our target date for the start on site remains at April this year.

"In the meantime, working parties led by Dave Evans have progressed rapidly to create our construction compound on a former aircraft hardstanding in close proximity to the bridge site. We are very grateful to Dunsfold Park for making this area available to us. It will be used by our contractors and also by our volunteer working parties throughout the planned 18-month construction period for the project."

Also in this edition the full value of the legacy gift from the estate of Peggy Gledhill was confirmed to be £633,732.



Your charity needs you!

Some of the most important work to keep restoration of the Wey & Arun running is carried out in the 'back room'. Apart from the knowledge that you are doing something vital for our project, we offer the support of others with a similar interest.

Could you lend a little of your time to support us by taking on a financial or health & safety role on our Board? We are dedicated to restoring our canal and need your support and expertise to make it happen.

Financial

We have two long-term part-time employees and a volunteer managing the day-to-day finances. However, we need a director to:

- Oversee income and expenditure.
- Ensure our funds are managed effectively.
- Present management accounts to the Board.
- Assist in preparing annual accounts (liaising with our independent examiner).

If you have any accounting experience, this role should be straightforward. It's flexible enough to suit those working part-time or who are busy in retirement.

If you're interested or would like more information, we'd love to hear from you!

Health & Safety – Record Keeping

We employ a Health & Safety Consultant to provide support generally and to carry out periodic visits to working parties and work sites. Health & Safety is important for all of our working parties whose leaders are all familiar with drafting and using risk assessments and method statements and the provision of guidance to their volunteers. To support the working party leaders and keep them up-to-date, and to help ensure that all volunteers benefit from best practice, and to support us in the maintenance of necessary record keeping, we are looking for someone with some working experience of H&S to support us in this role. If that could be you, and you have a few hours a week to offer, please make contact.

Poddle 2025

Our annual fundraising walk that we call The Poddle will take place this year on Sunday 1st June. The route is still being finalised, but will include walking along the canal at Bonfire Hanger and the 2km stretch of canal inside Dunsfold Park. The Poddle will start and finish at North Hall Loxwood (start time is 9:30am -10:30) and the lunch stop will be at Alfold Village Hall.

Registration for the Poddle will be via our website from early March where sponsorship forms will be available for download. If you are unable to download a form from the website, please email support@weyarun.org.uk and we will send one to you.

Arun Boat Rally 2025

We will be holding this year's River Arun Small Boat Rally from Pulborough to Pallingham on Sunday June 29th, launching from Pulborough at 16:00 and from Stopham at 16:30. Registration details and further information are available on our website: entry is free, though donations will be welcome.

Relax with family and friends on a private cruise through beautiful West Sussex

We run exclusive crewed boat trips along the Wey & Arun canal for family celebrations, groups and parties.

Members can claim a 10% discount

Choose your boat :

For larger groups, there's Wiggonholt (with an access lift) or Zachariah Keppel. For a more intimate trip, Josias Jessop carries up to nine. 'Bring your own', or we can organise catering.

Further details and enquiry form on our website

www.weyarun.org.uk

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Walking in Sidney Wood

from Tickner's Heath Road to Rosemary Lane

The Sidney Wood section of the canal is one of the most attractive lengths and well worth exploring. The canal route winds through woodland that can be truly spectacular in autumn. It is not possible to follow the towpath on public rights of way throughout – there are two places where a diversion is needed.

The canal distance between Tickner's Heath Road (the Alfold-Dunsfold road) and Rosemary Lane in Alfold is almost exactly two miles. Today's walking route is slightly longer. Going southwards from Tickner's Heath Road, the first 1½ miles of canal are part of the 5-mile Summit Level whose northern end is at Lock 17 (Rowly) north of Elmbridge Road in Cranleigh. The Sidney Wood flight of nine locks starts at Lock 16. Locks 16 to 13 were north of Rosemary Lane and 12 to 8 were south of the road (12 to 9 were in the Bonfire Hanger section where we have recently done extensive work). The lock flight extended over 1¼ miles and the distance between the locks was typically one furlong (220 yards), but sometimes a little more.



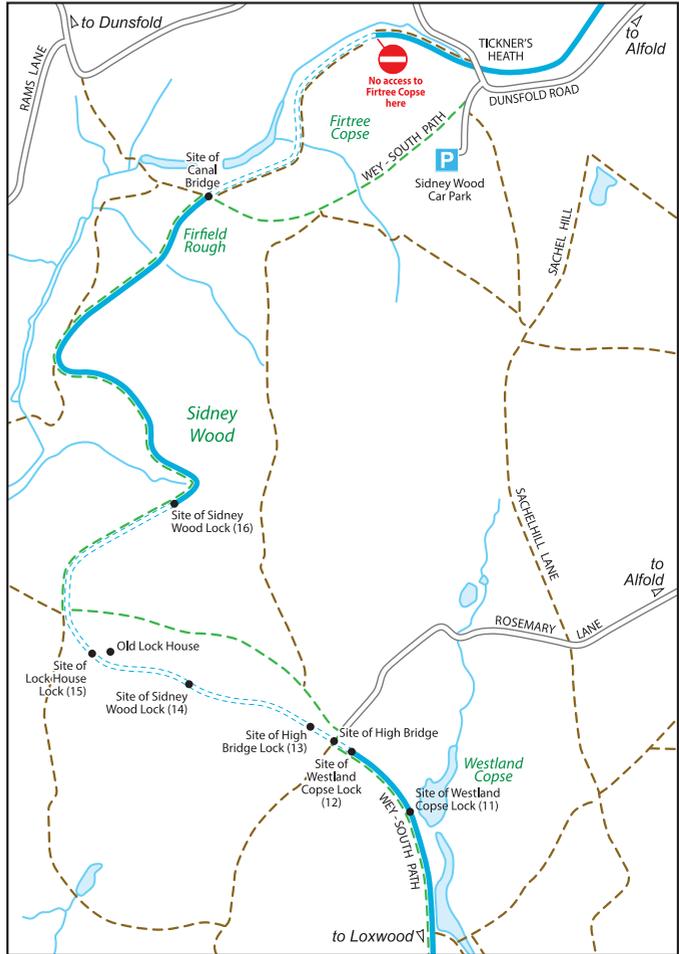
Tickner's Heath Road originally crossed the canal on a humpbacked bridge; now it is a causeway close to water level. Restoring navigable height is not feasible, so our new Tickner's Heath Crossing will go under the road slightly further to the north. If you are driving to explore Sidney Wood, the easiest place to park is the Forestry Commission's Sidney Wood car park, reached by a bumpy track from the road (if coming from the Alfold direction turn left at the bend just before the road crosses the canal).

South of Tickner's Heath Road you can walk along a short section of canal which we maintain. On the opposite bank there is a winding hole (boat turning place) next to Cobden's Farm, where there was a wharf, although this is not shown on the tithe map of around 1845. This section of canal is normally in water at wetter times of the year. After about 250 yards there is a causeway, which you can cross, although historically the towpath was on the west bank all the way to Loxwood and beyond. However there is no public right of way along the canal beyond here.

To continue your exploration, return towards the car park, but just off Tickner's Heath

Road take the right-hand track marked Sedgehurst until you see signs on the right to Fir Tree Copse which is a Surrey Wildlife Trust reserve open to the public. A permissive path within the reserve runs along the east bank of the canal. You will see that the canal here was built on a slope which will mean challenges for any future restoration. Following the path southwards you reach a causeway (the site of a canal bridge) and crossing the canal route you rejoin the original towpath and enter Sidney Wood itself.

From here it is just under a mile to the site of Lock 16, via two very sharp bends as the canal route follows the contour line. Just after the second bend there was another winding hole next to the lock. Nothing remains of the lock itself but the difference in ground level shows clearly where it was. The footpath continues for another 300 yards or so to reach a farm track. It is not possible to follow the canal route on the other side of this track – the site of Lock 15 is a short distance ahead, next to the Old Lock House which was the



Wey & Arun Junction Canal's main workshop, but this is all strictly private land. *Cont'd overleaf*





From here you have to turn left (there was no original canal bridge here) and follow the Wey-South Path along wide forest tracks, away from the canal route and the sites of Locks 13 & 14, to reach the site of High Bridge on Rosemary Lane. Here if you wish you can cross the canal (look north to see the canal bed in the grounds of Sydney Lodge) and continue southwards on the towpath through Bonfire Hanger towards Loxwood.

The route of the canal through Sidney Wood is anything but straight. If you left your car at the Sidney Wood car park, you can return by a much more direct path to the east of the canal route. This route is described in the Sidney Wood circular walk on our website. By the way, both spellings (Sidney and Sydney) are in use. To WACT it has always been “Sidney Wood”, which is also the spelling used by the Forestry Commission. The various properties are “Sydney”, though.



Plane silly ?

The 1813 Act of Parliament for our canal quite naturally specified the construction of locks to handle changes in levels, and that of course was what happened. However, it also included a power to replace the provision of locks with one or more ‘inclined planes’. As this never happened, was it ever a realistic possibility in the first place?

An inclined plane is literally a slope. On a canal, it is a slope from one pound to another, with rail tracks from top to bottom, up and down which a boat can be engine-hauled by cables. The much later Foxton inclined plane (1900) in Leicestershire was a widebeam alternative for an existing flight of ten narrowbeam locks in two ‘staircases’, rising (or falling) 23m (75ft). Taking only 12 minutes to traverse, it saved considerable time, congestion, water and effort. On the other hand, its stationary steam engine had to be fed with coal (the cost of which contributed to it being doomed to only eleven years in service).



The Hay inclined plane
Photo © Graham Hogg (cc-by-sa/2.0)

The Foxton inclined plane was the first (and last) on the English canal system capable of taking barges and narrowboats. At the time of our canal’s building, a few inclined planes for smaller vessels were already in use, of which the best-known is the Hay plane taking the Shropshire Canal down to the River Severn at Coalport to supply coal, iron ore and limestone to the burgeoning industry at nearby Coalbrookdale. This was an integrated system using standardised box-shaped tub boats, each 20ft long with a load capacity of 5 tons. These could be horse-drawn along the canal in trains of up to twenty at a time.

Twin rail tracks ran up the plane’s 350 yards, over a hump and down into the canal, where each tub would be individually floated onto a wheeled cradle and attached to a cable by which a steam engine pulled the tub out and onto the hump, where it was attached to another cable to descend the incline on one track, partly counterbalanced by a rising empty tub on the other track.

Could that ever have worked on our canal? Almost certainly not. Tub boats were ideal for minerals traffic, and indeed coal represented half of our canal’s tonnage carried. But they would be too short for timber, the next largest cargo. Unlike the steep banks of the River Severn, there was no place on the authorised route of our heavily-locked central section with a sufficiently steep change in land levels to permit an inclined plane to replace several locks over a short distance. The standardised short tub boats were kept level on their rise and descent by sitting on cradles with larger-diameter rail wheels on the downhill side. That could never have succeeded for the variety of much-longer barges on our canal. (The solution at Foxton many years later would be a transverse arrangement with boats remaining afloat in travelling water-filled caissons, requiring a much wider slope. This was probably beyond what was feasible in 1813.) So we must assume that our Act’s provision for using inclined planes (and also rollers) was purely a reassuring precaution for legislators and investors – a few words inserted at no risk or expense.

The building of our canal – and the builders

The story of our canal (continued)

The Act authorising the building of the Wey & Arun Junction Canal received its Royal Assent on 1st April 1813. Only now could the Company formed by the Act start to operate. Its prospective shareholders gathered on 9th May to choose a Management Committee which met later that month, electing Lord Egremont as chairman of the Company, with its administration in the hands of Guildford solicitor John Smallpeice (who remained as the Company's Clerk until 1837, being succeeded by his son Haydon, who saw the position out right to the canal's closure in 1871).

It was hoped to open the canal in 1815. The Company's capital, authorised by the Act, was £90,500 in 905 shares of £100 each, with the power to increase it to £100,000, either by a further call on the shareholders or by borrowing against the security of the canal. Each £100 would be payable in ten quarterly instalments of £10.

Compensation agreements for compulsory purchase of land and for loss of value of adjoining land and buildings began with offers by the Company. When there was no agreement with a landowner concerned, the first stage of dispute resolution was an adjudication by a body of Commissioners comprising any and every landowner with an estate worth at least £3,000 and resident within 10 miles of the canal. Unsurprisingly, those local property owners were sympathetic to their own kind, and compensation paid out exceeded budget. (A decision of the Commissioners could be



Fast Bridge

appealed to a Jury appointed by the Sheriff of Surrey or of Sussex, depending on the location of the land in question. Indeed, either the Company or the Landowner could bypass the Commissioners and take the issue straight to a Jury – but apparently in practice a Jury was rarely resorted to.) The extra time needed for the settling of compensation did not prevent work starting on the land concerned.

The Act gave the Company a degree of flexibility over the exact route of the canal, to allow for the real-world conditions it could not be sure of until it came into possession, and for pacifying the landowners it had to compensate. *'The Company of Proprietors in making the said Canal shall not deviate more than One Hundred Yards from the Line or Course thereof described in the said Maps Maps or Plans'* – and then only with the consent of the landowner concerned. The Act also permitted the company to abstract water from any source within 2,000 yards of the canal.

Apart from the Earl and John Smallpeice, the principal individuals involved in the design and construction of the canal (and whose names now grace our boats) were:

Zachariah Keppel(I), the contractor who began the building of the canal, employing the 'navvies' to carry out the work. In those days before steam-powered machinery was available, this was manual labour using picks, shovels, barrows and horsedrawn carts for excavating the canal bed. Skilled artisans then took over – masons to build the locks and other structures, and carpenters and ironsmiths to complete the lock furniture.

May Upton, civil engineer, was the clerk of works, supervising Keppel's work. Upton was clearly a protégé of the Earl, being the son of his Lordship's estate surveyor at Petworth. He was also a talented cricketer. Only 21 years old when appointed, he fully justified the Earl's trust when Keppel, on a fixed-price contract and having underestimated the task, went bankrupt in 1814.

Upton took over the direct running of the building programme. He was faced with the perennial issues of the construction industry – unexpected problems below ground in the shape of sandy subsoil at the Dunsfold summit level cutting; bad weather; and labour unrest over pay. To take only two years to build a canal had been a courageous ambition, and to deliver it within only three years was a substantial achievement.

Upton stayed as the canal's superintendent for two years after it opened.

Josias Jessop had planned the canal's route, designed all its structures and had helped with the gaining of its Act of Parliament. His main task was finished and he was now busy on other projects including the design of the western branch of the Montgomeryshire Canal. Nevertheless, he visited the Wey & Arun project during its construction several times from his Derbyshire home and answered postal requests for advice from Upton.



Gosden Aqueduct

The canal opened on 29th September 1816, (the 'year without a summer' because of a volcanic eruption in Indonesia that caused severe climate abnormalities), coming in at a total cost of £103,000, a relatively modest overspend, albeit one for which the shareholders had to dig deeper into their pockets. 18 ½ miles long, it has 23 locks, of which the southernmost six have stone-built chambers, the rest built in local brick. Via seven of those locks, it rises 48 feet from the Wey to the five-mile summit and falls 126 feet via 16 locks to the Arun Navigation. Other structures included the Gosden and Drungewick aqueducts, and the building of other aqueducts was avoided by diversions of the course of the River Arun.

What survives of the original Wey & Arun Junction Canal?

The canal was sold off in parcels after its abandonment and closure, and a century elapsed before restoration started. Much of the canal bed has survived. An original building, designer unknown, is the much changed and extended Sidney Wood Lock House that served as the Company's workshop. Under rebuilt parapets, the structures of Fast Bridge and Farnhurst Bridge are Jessop's originals, as are the invert (bottoms) and some of the walls of seven locks. Much of his Gosden Aqueduct survives (see pictures of each).



Farnhurst Bridge on a winter's day, one of the few surviving original Jessop structures

Meet the volunteer - John Robson

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How did you first come across the Wey & Arun Canal?

I moved to West Sussex, at Ford near Littlehampton, over thirty years ago and came across the canal on a family outing to the Loxwood area about twenty years ago.

Why and when did you start volunteering with us?

I'm ex-Royal Navy (as a Marine Engineer Artificer) and through the Navy had gotten into sailing. With three sons however, family commitments got in the way but I'd hoped to get back to sailing once I retired. Sadly a serious accident shortly before then put paid to that idea.

Having time on my hands and looking around for other 'boating' activities I remembered the canal and volunteered my services in 2019, initially manning the Canal Centre.

What is your role now?

I still man the Canal Centre every other weekend, partly as shopkeeper but also providing information to visitors, sometimes only a handful but often more, especially when scheduled trips are running. I've since taken on a couple of

admin roles that I can carry out from home, one in helping to record stock levels and Canal Centre sales for accounting purposes, but mainly now the management of private boat trips.

What is a 'private boat trip'?

Our scheduled trips are for the general public (and members, of course) where customers can book online via our website, or even (subject to space availability) turn up on the day.

Private trips on the other hand, or charters as they are also known, are in addition to the scheduled trips and are when a group of people have one of the boats for their exclusive use, wherever possible on a date and at a time of their choosing.

What sorts of groups take our trips?

They can be family events – birthdays, anniversaries and suchlike; community groups such as Women's Institutes, Probus Clubs and other organisations; and 'corporate' customers – a day out for employees. We are also a 'destination' for coach companies. Sometimes, the trip organiser is a member, but we're happy to take bookings from anyone.

How does the system work?

Our website has a 'boat trip' banner, where a dropdown menu takes you to a questionnaire. Once completed, it is automatically forwarded to me, and I make contact with the enquirer, by phone and/or by email, to discuss specific requirements and give costs etc. As the website says, we can offer whichever of our boats is most suitable.

Wiggonholt, our large electric boat, offers flexibility for seating and table arrangements. It has an access lift for wheelchairs and mobility impaired passengers, and a toilet.

Next down in size is narrowboat *Zachariah Keppel* (named after the first canal contractor), which has recently been fully refurbished and also has a toilet.

Josias Jessop (named after our canal's original engineer) is a 25ft steel narrow boat carrying up to 9 passengers, with the stern deck being used as an observation area.

How long is a trip?

It can be from one to four hours, although 90 minutes or two hours are the most common choices. The reopening of the Long Meadow section at Drungewick will increase flexibility.

Is catering included?

Not automatically, but we can arrange cream teas on board via the Onslow Arms. We're happy for people to bring their own.

How much does a private trip cost?

It will depend on numbers, trip duration and the time of year (we have low and high season rates) but at full capacity, in most cases, it should not exceed £20 per person at current prices; Cream Teas are currently an extra £9 per head.

Which way do trips set off from Loxwood?

Unless the customer has asked for a specific direction the decision is left to our Boat Operations Manager depending on water levels and lock availability. Typically, heading 'downhill' to Brewhurst and Baldwin's Knob is popular.

What happens once you have handled the booking?

I pass the package on, via our IT system, for the detailed arrangements for the day to be made, including of course crewing. The nominated skipper will then generally contact the customer, a few days before the date, to confirm any last-minute details.

Does the income from trips help us?

Very much so. The boat trips (and the sales by the Canal Centre) come under our trading subsidiary company, which donates its profits to our funds. I'm told that trip income is around the amount we receive in member subscriptions, and income from private trips forms an increasing proportion of total boat revenue.

What are your other interests?

I have recently taken up touring in a camper van. I have been to Worcestershire, Wales and the West Country. One recent trip included the Kennet & Avon Canal's Caen Hill flight. I bought my first van in February 2024, only for it to be written off by storm damage in April. I now have another!



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 listadmin@weyandarun.co.uk to receive an electronic version. Working Party News lists the contacts for each team.

A new pump chamber at Baldwin's Knob Lock

We are not replacing our vandalised pumps 'like-for-like'. The replacement systems are significantly more robust. The new installation of a back-pump chamber at Baldwin's Knob Lock last autumn included a 'Dragon's Mouth' concrete water inlet structure which had been designed and cast in-house, and two large proprietary sewer rings. A 13-tonne digger had to be hired in for the work.

The work was carried out by the Newbury Working Party Group over ten days, The Trust is also grateful for the assistance of Michael, the manager of Drungewick Hill Farm, who not only made possible the access to the site for the digger but also made a number of runs with his tractor and trailer taking the sewer rings, the Dragon's Mouth inlet and a hired trench box and more to the site.



The top ring being guided into place by Pete Turville (NWPG)

Forestry Work

Three other visiting working parties were also busy around Baldwin's Knob. The Waterway Recovery Group Forestry Team, assisted by the Kent & East Sussex Restoration Group and the London Waterway Recovery Group, spent eight days felling dead ash trees on the offside bank between Brewhurst Bridge and Baldwin's Knob Lock. The trees were felled into the field, the brushwood disposed of and the larger sections cut up into discs. These were loaded into a tub and taken down the canal to Drungewick Slipway where they were offloaded by the Northern Working Party into crane bags, for onward transport to Tickner's Depot for splitting and storage.

Upgrades at the Depot

The Northern Working Party has lowered the three-bay open-sided scaffolding-pole store and fitted a proper roof to it. Two of the bays are for log storage, the third for aggregates and materials.



Saturday Group

This new Group cut its teeth at the Depot by preparing the site of a new concreted vehicle and trailer storage area, for orderly parking and a mud-free environment for cleaning.

If you have spare time on Saturdays, Jack Walker can keep you busy – contact him at jack.walker@weyarun.org.uk

Bonfire Hanger - dams revived, towpath revisited

As suggested in the last edition of Wey-South, all three of the dams in the bed of the canal at Bonfire Hanger, previously breached to address unforeseen flooding issues, have been restored, albeit to a lower height and with temporary stop weirs. This is to establish more accurately the actual range of natural flow of water down this section, from rainfall and from run-off. Each weir consists of wooden planks attached to the brick walls of the previously used structures. The planks were sealed with clay and the whole arrangement was then covered in plastic, with the front edges being secured with sand.

A 250m section of the restored towpath had been laid in wet conditions, and with stone with a high clay content. Mud has been scraped from the surface as a temporary measure until further work can take place in the spring.



Fitting temporary stop weirs

Restoration and Maintenance News (contd)

Reeds and weeds - we have the technology

The first job for the dredger, tug and tub, following repairs to them, is clearance of vegetation in the canal near Birch Copse and north of Drungewick Slipway, where reed growth had nearly closed the navigation, despite a good water level.

Where the dredger can't go, a Truxor can. This Swedish multi-purpose amphibious vehicle is equally at home on land, on water and in the boggy bits between. It has been used as a weed cutter and harvester to clear the canal bed and tidy the banks around Lordings, and between Brewhurst and Drungewick.



New buckets on trial at the Lordings Waterwheel

At Lordings, the flow of the Arun powers the reconstructed waterwheel which can hoist river water up into the canal. Can it supply more water? An experiment is being carried out with the installation on the wheel by the Thursday Group of eight new prototype stainless steel buckets.

Register

Peter Longley

We were saddened to learn of the recent death at the age of 97 of our former Vice-President Peter Longley OBE DL FCIQB FRSA.

In June 1971 Peter joined the Wey & Arun Canal Society, later the Wey & Arun Canal Trust from February 1973. He worked on restoration of the structures of Rowner and Malham Locks and was involved in the early stages of work at Loxwood.

He will be remembered by many for his pioneering work as joint author of the initial Restoration Survey for the canal. This was published in 1973 and set out in detail the challenges and opportunities involved in the restoration of London's Lost Route to the Sea. It was updated in 1986 and a supplementary volume of engineering details was added by Winston Harwood in 1995.

His tireless work on canal matters resulted in an invitation to join the Council of Management (now the Board) and subsequently he became one of our Vice-Presidents.

Peter was born in 1927 into a family of builders and after initial training in the industry he joined James Longley and Co Ltd of Crawley. The firm had been established in 1863 and Peter was the fourth generation of Longleys to lead the company, becoming managing director in 1969 and subsequently chairman of the Longley Group. During his era Longley's was responsible for such landmark buildings as Surrey and Sussex Universities, The Brighton Centre, and several racecourse grandstands as well as Debenhams department stores.

Other interests included his involvement in the early phases of development of the Weald and Downland Museum and the Amberley Industrial Museum. His championing of all aspects of conservation was a defining feature of his life and he managed to combine this with a down-to-earth approach to running a major construction company. His wise counsel will be greatly missed.



Drungewick Aqueduct opening (31 May 2003) :- L to R Sir Malcolm Marshall, Paul Vine, John Wood, Peter Foulger, Peter Longley, Peter Beresford

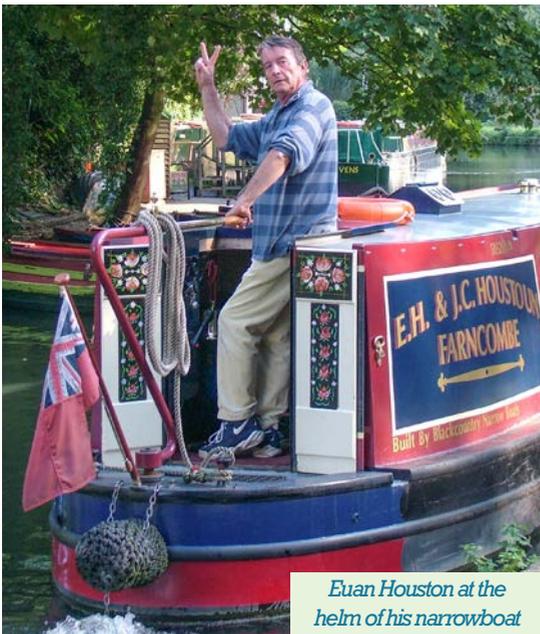
Colonel Euan Henry Houstoun OBE

We have learned of the death of Colonel Euan Houstoun OBE, a member from Shalford. He and his wife Joanna were very helpful to us by making their very smart narrowboat *Trincomalee II* available to us on several occasions on the River Wey/Godalming Navigation, including in the boat procession from Gun's Mouth to Dapdune Wharf in Guildford for our bicentenary in 2016, reenacting the opening day of the W&A Junction Canal.

An obituary for Euan Houstoun appeared in *The Times* on 17th December 2024.

Brief notes on former members

We were sorry to hear of the deaths of ...



Euan Houstoun at the
helm of his narrowboat

Dr Marjorie Semmens who became our first Archivist in 1982 and served for nearly 20 years.

David Junkison who was a key member of Winston Harwood's group working in the Arun Valley and became leader of the group for several years after Winston's death in 2005.

Timothy West

Timothy West, the loved and respected actor who died in November 2024, was not a member but he was well known as a great supporter of waterways causes and helped us on a few occasions, including a presentation to our 2000th member on the River Wey during a break in rehearsals at the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre in Guildford (2005). This was another event for which Euan & Joanna Houstoun lent us their narrowboat.

Television viewers will recall that Timothy West and his wife Prunella Scales spent a full day on our canal in 2015 filming an episode of 'Great Canal Journeys'.



Timothy West presented an award
to our 2000th member in 2005

Membership report

With the change in the publication schedule for Wey-South, it is 5 months since the last membership report. 47 new members have joined us in this period, taking our total membership to 2,817.

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to the following new members. .

<i>Sue Barrow</i>	<i>Michael Brown</i>	<i>Colin Byrne</i>	<i>Edward Couzens-Lake</i>
<i>Richard Crew</i>	<i>Angus & Kate Denny</i>	<i>Alan & Alison Dormon</i>	<i>Spencer Fox-Gillingham</i>
<i>David & Jane Franklin</i>	<i>Richard Frick</i>	<i>Jan & Jools Graham</i>	<i>Ailsa & Robert Guidi</i>
<i>Alastair Holmes</i>	<i>Kelly & Matthew Howell</i>	<i>Penny Jonas</i>	<i>Huw & Margaret Hallybone</i>
<i>Fraser MacDonald</i>	<i>Hugh Marshall</i>	<i>Peter McKeag</i>	<i>Andrew McManus</i>
<i>Clive Oliver</i>	<i>Julie & Russell Orgill</i>	<i>William Pedder</i>	<i>Sheila & Steve Pegg</i>
<i>Sarah Povey</i>	<i>Emma & Josh Raper</i>	<i>Jane Robinson</i>	<i>Dawn & Nigel Robinson</i>
<i>Michael Saunders</i>	<i>Jane & John Vening</i>	<i>Jack Walker</i>	<i>Callum Whelan</i>
<i>Mary Winton</i>	<i>Ralph Wood</i>	<i>Rachel Graham</i>	

We have learned with regret of the death of:

<i>Christopher David Gibson (of Hornby, Lancs)</i>	<i>David Junkison</i>	<i>Richard Gaze</i>
<i>Marjorie Semmens</i>	<i>Margaret Harvey</i>	<i>Euan Houstoun</i>
<i>Peter Longley</i>	<i>J.S. Knightley</i>	<i>Pim Sierks</i>
<i>Philip Midwinter</i>	<i>Raymond Skelhorn</i>	<i>Dennis Clark</i>

For members currently paying by cheque, please can you consider changing to payment by direct debit? It would help reduce our administrative costs and effort. To set up a direct debit, you do need to have internet access. When we send you your annual renewal reminder by email, you simply click on the link for the direct debit option and follow the instructions.

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.

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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.

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Email: support@weyarun.org.uk Tel: 01483 505566**

Could you give more to your canal?

Our member subscriptions produce only 6% of our annual income (2022 figures). For every £1.00 we received from subscriptions, we were blessed with donations and legacies of £6.50 – which accounted however for only 42% of our total income. By comparison, some well-known charities get up to 60% of their total income from legacies alone. Could you give more? Here's how.

Give more each month, and/or give a lump sum

As you are supporting a registered charity, income tax-payers can choose to 'GiftAid' additional contributions, which means that for every £1.00 you are giving, we can claim a further £0.25 from HMRC – and you can still reclaim any higher-rate tax element. Our 'Thank You' for this is membership of our Milestone Club, which includes invitations to some free cruises on our tripboats.

And, of course, please support our occasional appeals for specific projects.

Make a gift to the Trust in your will

Our website tells you how to 'Leave a Legacy', either in a new will or as a codicil to an existing will. Gifts in wills to charities like us are favourably treated for Inheritance Tax purposes.

For further details go to : [Support the Trust / Donate on our website.](#)

