



# WEY-SOUTH

**Quarterly Magazine of the  
Wey & Arun Canal Trust**

**Issue 188 September/October/November 2019**



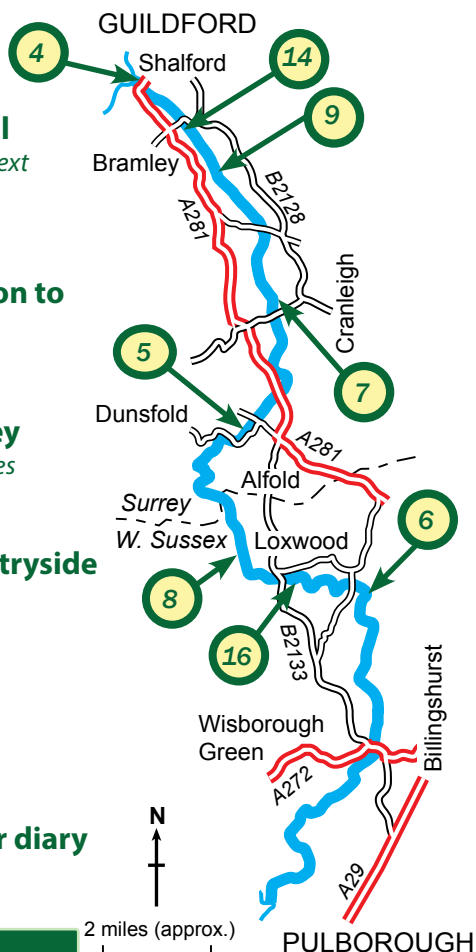
***The events team was out in force over the summer, bringing the Mobile Display Vehicle to public events ranging from local fêtes to the Cranleigh Show and the final Wings & Wheels. They provide an ideal opportunity to raise the profile of the Trust and its work, and this year the beautiful photobooth painted by member Diana Briault proved hard to resist.***





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**Loxwood Office (All Boat Trip Enquiries)**

**Mon-Fri 9.30am-1.30pm**

**01403 752403 ([office@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:office@weyandarun.co.uk))**

**The Granary, Flitchfold Farm, Vicarage Hill,  
Loxwood, Billingshurst RH14 0RH**

**Shalford (Northern) Office (Administration, Accounts  
and Publicity). Visitors by appointment only.**

**01483 505566 ([support@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:support@weyandarun.co.uk))**

**Bridge End, Somerswey, Shalford, Guildford GU4 8EQ**

**Wey-South team:**  
*Sue Batey (proofreader), Gill Davies,  
David Jessop (proofreader),  
Julian Morgan, Bill Thomson  
(Working Party Roundup)*

**Trust website:**  
[www.weyandarun.co.uk](http://www.weyandarun.co.uk)  
**Facebook:** [weyandaruncanal](https://www.facebook.com/weyandaruncanal)  
**Twitter:** @weyandarun

**Front cover: Birtley Bridge takes shape thanks to three weeks  
of Summer Canal Camps (photograph by Julian Morgan).**

# Notice of Autumn Meeting at Shalford

## 19th October, 2.30pm

The Autumn Meeting this year will be held at Shalford Village Hall, on Kings Road in Shalford GU4 8JE, on Saturday 19th October at 2.30pm.

Recent Autumn Meetings have had a less formal structure than the Annual Meeting, with positive feedback, so this year's will again focus on brief updates from projects for the future and those currently underway.

The meeting will give members a chance not only to meet up with old friends, but also chat to the Trust directors and project managers and ask questions either formally after presentations, or informally during the refreshment break.

The provisional agenda is:

1. Chairman's welcome
2. Our financial position
3. Updates on current restoration projects
4. IWA National Trailboat Festival
5. Archive footage of past restoration activity

## Directions

### By car

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

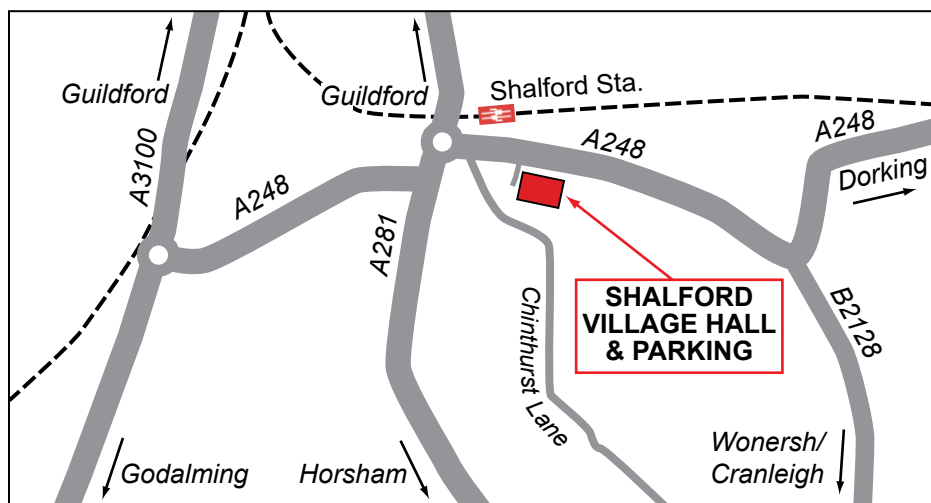
With the village centre behind you, the village hall is on the right. There are about 50 parking spaces at the hall itself. If these spaces run out, you should be able to park along Chinthurst Lane, the road running across the village green.

### By train/bus

Shalford station is on the Reading-Guildford-Redhill/Gatwick line.

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

We aim to finish by 5pm.





***The procession of decorated boats is a highlight of any IWA National Trailboat Festival.***

## IWA National Trailboat Festival comes to the Wey & Arun

**T**he Trust is to host the IWA National Trailboat Festival, one of the highlights of the boating calendar, in 2020.

The three-day event will take place on the Summit Level at Alfold/Dunsfold over the bank holiday weekend of May 23-25.

Trailboats from across the UK are expected to attend the festival, with a full programme of entertainment planned for all ages to attract both boaters and non-boaters. Attractions will include music, refreshments, demonstrations and competitions, plus an award ceremony and decorated boat parade.

The festival aims to raise the profile of the canal and its current restoration projects, and takes place near the spot where the Wey & Arun Junction Canal was officially opened on the 28th September 1816 by the 3rd Earl of Egremont.

Boats will launch from the Thruscott Slipway, which was built by Trust volunteers and opened last year.

Talking about the 2020 festival, Wey & Arun Canal Trust chairman Sally Schupke said: "We are thrilled to be hosting the IWA Trailboat Festival on the Wey & Arun Canal next year. We can't wait to see the canal filled with boats and the Thruscott Slipway in use."

If you would like to book a trailboat or help in organising the event in any way, please email [support@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:support@weyandarun.co.uk).

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.

**All communications and copy either by post to:**

Wey-South, Wey & Arun Canal Trust  
Bridge End, Somerswey  
Shalford, Guildford  
Surrey  
GU4 8EQ

**Or e-mail to:**

[weysouth@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:weysouth@weyandarun.co.uk)

**Address changes, non-delivery, etc:** please notify the Membership Secretary at the address above or e-mail to:

[membership@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:membership@weyandarun.co.uk)

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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 188**

**September/October/  
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## Specialists get to work at Drungewick Lock

Work to stabilise the structure at Drungewick Lock has reached the stage where specialist company Platipus Anchoring Systems can begin trials of its ground anchor system.

Trust volunteers have emptied the lock and cleared the debris built up using an excavator with a long reach jib - not an easy task given the small space in which to work.

With the lock empty wooden props have been installed, allowing the contractor to take core samples of the west stone wall to ascertain whether there are any problematic voids that will need filling.

The company will also install three ground anchors in the area beyond the west wall. The trial will not only gauge whether the anchors will be a successful solution, but also tell us how many will be needed.

It is hoped a decision will be made in the next few weeks on whether to continue with the ground anchors.

**Top: The wooden props are in.**

**Right: New stop planks had to be fitted and a new cill cast to prevent flow into the lock.**

**Below: The lock cleared and empty.**







***The original canal will be replaced with a diversion alongside the Downs Link.***

## Rushett Common development takes shape

The Trust has taken significant steps forward in plans to recreate a 650-metre length of canal between Run Common and Rushett Common (midway between Bramley and Cranleigh in Surrey).

Earlier this summer two public consultations were held, with a generally favourable response. Waverley Borough Council has also concluded there is no need to carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment for the development, paving the way for the Trust to seek planning permission.

Some of the original canal over this section has long since been filled in and is now in private ownership, so the plan is to replace the stretch by taking the canal alongside the Downs Link path which runs along the old railway route that once connected Horsham and Guildford. The Downs Link is popular with cyclists and walkers and the canal plans will not affect the cycleway and footpath. In fact, the Trust believes the scheme will enhance the Downs Link and encourage more people to use it, so making better use of this valuable asset.

Project manager Gary Courtinadage said: "The advantage of using the Downs Link is that we can take the canal beneath two existing bridges, thus avoiding the expense and difficulty of building new bridges which would otherwise be needed to carry a road and a bridleway over the canal."

The Trust is now finalising the planning of new tree and shrub planting, which will be carried out both before and after construction. The scheme will involve planting 4,500 British native trees and shrubs in 31 different copses.

Gary added: "A consultant is also preparing a landscaping plan to ensure we can make best use of the development in terms of opening up views of the surrounding countryside from the canal and towpath."

Arrangements have been made to create a temporary diversion of the Downs Link path during construction. Arrangements have also been made for providing access to the site and locating construction facilities. The Trust's plans are subject to successful discussions with landowners and our local authorities.



## Local firm gets stuck in

A team from pharmaceutical firm Sanofi swapped desks for a day in the Sussex countryside to help out the Trust.

Some 38 employees from Sanofi's Guildford office headed to Southland Lock near Loxwood in June to carry out maintenance jobs as part of the firm's commitment to volunteering with local charities. It was the second year running the team had visited the canal to lend their support.

Teams had to do battle with heavy clay to dig out the bank in preparation for a new stairway down to the canal, install a gate with fence posts to the side of the lock, and sand and paint the balance boards, paddle mechanism and handrails of the lock itself. Volunteers also helped clear overgrown areas of the towpath.





## Waterway Recovery Group Summer Camps a success

For several years the Trust has benefited from visiting working parties dedicating their time to restoration projects, but this year we were fortunate to have visitors spend three consecutive weeks helping out during July.

Teams of up to 18 people a week resided at Kirdford Village Hall and set off for Birtley, near Bramley, from Sunday to Saturday, with the specific goal of preparing the foundations of the first bridge to be built here.

The working holidays attracted volunteers of all ages and experience, from Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award students, to those looking to increase their skills in construction, and returning Canal Camp enthusiasts from restoration groups KESCRG and Newbury Working Party Group.

The group also included different nationalities, thanks in part to the Waterway Recovery Group's links with European volunteer organisation Rempart.

The concentrated effort meant real progress was made, as the photos over the next few pages show. Volunteers used more than five and half tonnes of reinforced steel, 7,000 ties and poured more than 22 cubic metres of concrete.



***Trust volunteers prepared the site ahead of the camps.***



***Experienced hands led those keen to get restoration experience through the steel fixing process.***



***The steel frame came together in time for a concrete pour at the end of the week.***

## Week two

*With the concrete poured it was time to complete the blocklaying and shuttering. The second week was led by Rob Nicholson, who designed the bridge.*







## Week three

*Volunteers were forced to work early in the mornings to avoid the soaring temperatures in week three, which was led by KESCRG's Stephen Davis. By the end of the week the wing walls were connected and the bridge's butterfly shape can be seen.*





## Spotlight on a Trust member

### The secret to canal camp success

There can't have been many teenagers whose delinquency involved sneaking out of school to undertake canal restoration, but while other boys his age may have been fixated on football or rugby, Bill Nicholson's passion was waterway renovation, and even boarding school wasn't going to stop that.

Decades on and Bill's enthusiasm remains, and as founder of the Newbury Working Party Group (NWPG) Bill has been integral in organising volunteers to attend numerous weekend camps for Wey & Arun Canal Trust projects, most recently to prepare the site at Birtley and to lead the first of the Waterway Recovery Group Summer Canal Camps building the first lift bridge.

It's probably no surprise that Bill has found himself among those spearheading the Wey & Arun Canal Trust's latest project, having a litany of previous successful canal restoration projects under his belt, clocking up restoration on 10 different canals.

He became a member of the junior division of the Kennet & Avon Canal Trust as a young boy, getting involved seriously in 1974 when he worked on Bath Lock. On leaving uni the opportunity to do more presented itself. "I began work in Reading and needed something to do outside of that - I was becoming quite fanatical about canals by then - so set up my own volunteer restoration group with the aim of getting a volunteer project on the Kennet & Avon Canal," Bill recalls.

So in 1981, when he was just 24, he formed the Newbury Working Party Group - called that because he was living in Newbury at the time. Without social media he found recruits



***Bill encouraging volunteers at one of the taster days held earlier in the year.***

by getting people to put posters on office noticeboards, and garnered a band of like-minded enthusiasts.

It wasn't as easy as he had anticipated. Volunteers weren't met with open arms as they are today, and there was resistance from trade unions and British Waterways, the then navigation authority for the majority of canals.

"The exercise worked to a point in that the first big project we had was to build footbridges at Caen Hill (29 locks and we built footbridges for about 22). It was a mammoth undertaking but they are still here to this day so we have left an immediate legacy," he says.

In parallel, Bill and the group also went to help out on the Basingstoke Canal, not only moving that canal's restoration forward but proving that volunteer help makes a positive difference.

And so it is that the Wey & Arun Canal Trust has benefitted from input from NWPG and other visiting working party groups over the years. Under Bill's Dig Deep scheme (where visiting groups guarantee a canal trust a certain number of volunteer days in return for a dedicated project to work on) Bignor Bridge and Haybarn Bridge were completed.



**Bill has thrown his weight behind the Birtley project.**

Bill is convinced of the value of visiting groups and canal camps such as this year's three-week long summer camp. "Camps won't work unless you do it residentially. That way we create a community, and that ups productivity."

And knowing how to put together the right blend of team members is equally important. Bill says: "You've got people who are happy to lead small groups and that's critical. You may have good overall leadership but it only works on site when you've got team leaders who can work together to achieve."

"I go home from these camps with a glow for about five days thinking 'Wow, we've done that!' and I show other people and they can't believe it either."

This year's summer camp is particularly special for Bill, as his son Robert designed the bridge they are working on and led the second week's camp.

"Robert, who is 30 this year, started restoring canals when he was 14. I tried to keep him away as it was my hobby and I didn't want him getting in on my hobby, but it was like a red rag to a bull," he jokes.

"Now he is a senior civil engineer I asked him to design the lift bridge. He's spent hours of his own time after work and late in the evenings drawing up the instructions. We hope it will be a template for other bridges, and if we can show we can build one in a year then even better."

Bill has no intention of letting up himself, though, and is still working part time – with work fitting in around canal restoration, of course.

"If you don't push yourself you don't get anywhere," he says. "My aim is to see as much canal restored as I can before I go. My life is driven by canals and the energy it provides drives me to do other things."

## The Poddle 2019

*Walkers were treated to views of the stunning Surrey Hills for the Wey & Arun Canal Trust's 47th annual sponsored walk earlier this month.*

*Part of the route took the 120 walkers through the Trust's newly developed section at Birtley, with special permission from the neighbouring landowner allowing walkers access to the next canal section as well.*

*The 12-mile route began and ended in Bramley, with lunch and afternoon tea provided by Trust volunteers.*

*Proceeds are expected to hit £10,000 and will go towards funding repairs to Drungewick Lock.*

*Chairman Sally Schupke paid tribute to all those who helped with the event for their hard work, particularly Poddle organiser Margaret Darvill. "I'd like to thank Margaret, along with all the helpers both on the day and those involved in preparing for the walk, for their time and effort in putting the event together. Those who took part said how much they enjoyed the event and the beauty of the area."*







*The varied terrain of this year's route made it particularly enjoyable. From the canalside start at Birtley (this page, top) to the open countryside of Albury Heath (right) and Tannery Lane Bridge (left), there was plenty to see. The picturesque St Michael's Church at Farley Green (above) made the perfect lunch stop.*



*Photographs by Julian Morgan and Julian Nowell*

## Boat trip updates

*This time last year we were lamenting the lack of rainfall that caused a curtailment of boat trips. Summer 2019 has proved to be more of a mixed bag though, with searing temperatures, torrential rain and high winds creating their own challenges for boat crew and Loxwood section maintenance teams.*

*It's been a packed season of trips, keeping the boat teams busy. At present there are 66 accredited boat crew and 22 accredited skippers, with several more volunteers nearing the completion of their training.*

*This year's special evening trips proved a success, with warm temperatures allowing passengers to make the most of the longer summer days. Charters were also in demand, from clubs such as a local ukelele band, to birthday parties.*

*The management team are currently looking at next year's schedule, with the view to offering new experiences and reducing the less popular cruises.*

**Top and right: The Basingstoke Canal Society enjoyed a change of scenery.**



Photograph by Roger Cansdale.





***Top: Cream tea trips were given an added ingredient when boat crew dressed in period costume. Middle: A charter trip hit the right note with this ukelele group. Bottom: The Solstice cruise was blessed with fine weather, with the special events volunteers getting into the spirit of the evening.***





## Robin Higgs OBE, 1930 – 2019



Longstanding members will be sad to see the name of Robin Higgs in the list of recently deceased members. Robin was an early member of WACT – number 66 – joining when it was the W&A Canal Society in 1971.

Before this he had already set to work on restoration of the Basingstoke Canal, becoming chairman (and later vice-president) of the Surrey & Hampshire Canal Society several years before the grand reopening of that canal in 1991.

Even this heavy responsibility failed to deter Robin from taking on more; he developed a

similarly active interest in restoration of the Mid-Hants Railway (Watercress Line) also becoming chairman of the Mid-Hants Railway Preservation Society. Robin's unflinching dedication to volunteer-led projects was crowned by the award of the OBE in 2003.

He was a loyal attendee at Trust AGMs and Autumn Meetings and a constant source of encouragement. He was also the driving force in proposing and chairing meetings of the Southern Canals Association which brings together waterway restoration societies and trusts across southern Britain in a valuable forum for networking and knowledge sharing.

At his funeral in July the mourners overflowed the church. His wisdom, enthusiasm and characteristic broad grin will be sorely missed.

**Alan Johnson**



***Hunt Nature Park in Shalford now boasts an interpretation board thanks to a legacy from the late Keith Jarred. His brother Alan (pictured), along with family and friends, attended the unveiling. Keith had become a great supporter of the canal on his return to the UK after living and working in Africa. Alan said: "Other than the wide expanses of Africa, the Wey & Arun Canal was Keith's favourite place."***

**Word of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust's work has reached the ears of royalty thanks to member Peter Jewell. Peter's volunteering work with the Trust was recognised at his employer Sainsbury's at its 150th birthday event in London earlier this year. Some 35 selected Sainsbury's workers who had served their local communities were invited to attend, and Peter got a chance to tell the Queen about the Trust's aim to restore the Wey & Arun Canal. "She did seem genuinely interested," said Peter.**



## Rodney saddles up for Harsfold Bridge appeal

**E**WG volunteer Rodney Morrison has completed an epic sponsored bike ride, raising more than £400 for the Harsfold Bridge Appeal.

Rodney set himself the challenge of cycling the Downs Link path from Guildford (Artington) to Shoreham and back in one go – a mere 75 miles and nine hours in the saddle, and the first time he would have cycled the whole trail in one go.

"I trained for about 10 weeks including two trips to Devon to cycle the Tarka Trail of 62 miles, but the Downs Link was a much rougher surface and as the day neared, the challenge became ever more daunting," Rodney said.

With his two daughters meeting him at various points with drinks and energy bars, he set off at 7.45am, reaching the halfway point at Shoreham at 12.30, cooling off with a quick dip.

The return journey was more eventful, however. "Just one mile in I heard a loud bang and thought a burst tyre had brought it all to an end. However, looking down I found that having refilled my water bottle with fizzy



***A jubilant Rodney at the end of his ride.***

Lucozade, the speed bumps on the Shoreham Airport perimeter road had shaken this up so much that the top had burst off."

Rodney reached Artington unscathed at 18.40, just under the 11 hour mark.

He added: "I felt good the next day, but on the second day I have to confess that the legs were a bit wobbly, and working at Drungewick Lock with the EWG gang I managed to fall flat on my face at one point."

## Paul Ashley Laurence Vine (1927-2019)

### Julian Morgan takes a look at PAL Vine's life and work

Our Vice-President Paul Vine, who sadly left us in April this year, was born in 1927, a mere 56 years after the official abandonment of the canal.

He must still have been at school (Charterhouse, near Godalming) when, in his own words, he “stumbled upon the Wey & Arun in the heart of Sidney Wood” and began to research its history – this was 1943, when a few people who had experienced the canal in its active days were still alive.

Paul was inspired by Donald Maxwell's exploration of the 'ghost' waterway in Sidney Wood, published in *Unknown Surrey* in 1924. Paul sometimes claimed to have 'rediscovered' the Wey & Arun Canal; this might be a slight exaggeration, but it is certainly thanks to him we know so much about its history.

After Charterhouse, Paul served in the army as a Lieutenant and graduated from Lincoln College, Oxford, with a degree in medieval and modern languages. He won a Blue as a member of the university athletics team, specialising in hurdling. It was in the 6pm race at Iffley Road, Oxford, on 6th May



1954 that Roger Bannister became the first person to run a mile in under four minutes. Paul claimed to have finished before Roger Bannister and this was true – in a way – as records show the 5.50pm event was the 120 yards hurdles, in which PAL Vine came in... last. Paul himself still holds the British 220 yards hurdles record set up at the White City, in the AAA Championships of 1955.

But it is not his athletic prowess we will remember him for, but his masterwork, *London's Lost Route to the Sea – an historical account of the inland navigations which linked the Thames to the English Channel (LLRTTS)*.

The book first appeared in 1965 and was the result of more than 20 years of research. The publication was such a success that a second edition followed only 10 months after the first. There

were to be three more editions in the next 30 years. He wrote other *London's Lost Route* books (Midhurst, Basingstoke and Portsmouth) but the publication of *LLRTTS* was surely one of the key events leading to the formation of the Wey & Arun Canal Society (later Trust) in 1970.

During most of the time that he was writing *LLRTTS*, Paul worked for the Automobile Association. In 1971 his career took a new direction when he became an advisor to the Ethiopian Tourist Organisation, beginning a series of overseas jobs including roles with the Foreign & Commonwealth Office. One of Paul's longest assignments - 10 years - was in Barbados, where he met his wife Kay.

Despite his travels he clearly took a close interest in the canal restoration project. One of the first mentions of Paul Vine in *Wey-South* is in 1975, when he hurdled the four





**Paul with fellow dignitaries at Brewhurst Mill (1998).**

miles between Godalming and Guildford as part of the 3rd sponsored walk.

I first met Paul in 2005 at the opening of Haybarn Swing Bridge; he had just returned from a consultancy assignment in Latin America – he was a fluent Spanish speaker – and was as charming as ever.

He accepted the role of Vice-President of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust in 1983 and continued for the rest of his life. However, it is wrong to think that he wholeheartedly supported the Trust's aim of restoring the whole route to navigation, at least in the early days. In 1975, he told a landowner "I would be sorry to see any changes destroy

the charming overgrown reaches at Birtley or below Dunsfold Aerodrome".

Writing in *LLRTTS* in 1986, he was sad to note the disappearance of canal remnants such as Drungewick Aqueduct and urged the Trust

to concentrate on the section between Loxwood and Pallingham, with a boating centre at Newbridge.

He was a VIP guest at the opening of the Loxwood crossing in 2009 and the last event that we know he attended was the opening of Southland Lock in 2014.

Starting in the 1980s, and drawing on the materials collected for the *Lost Route*

books, Paul produced a series of local albums such as *West Sussex Waterways*. These tell the story of the canals and rivers in a more accessible way than the full-length books and include an extraordinary selection of photographs, drawings and maps. He made his home at Pulborough, close to the River Arun. Sadly, serious flooding marred his final years and led to the loss of some precious books and archive materials.

The service sheet produced for Paul's funeral points to the highlights of his life; in the main photo he is seated behind his desk and on it sit his favourite Panama hat and a copy of the 5th edition of *LLRTTS*. The final hymn was 'I vow to thee, my country'. Mourners were invited to donate to the Wey & Arun Canal Trust. He was truly one of our 'founding fathers'.

*[Photo on p20 reproduced by kind permission of Kay Vine.]*



**Paul Vine seen with Peter Foulger at the official opening of the Loxwood High Street Canal Crossing (2009).**



## Wildlife on the canal

**T**he length of the canal is a haven for wildlife, but in the Trust's Hunt Nature Park at Shalford a riverside path and viewing platform provide the ideal places to spot the many species living alongside the canal.

It has been a good summer for damselflies and butterflies in the park. In June, Julian Morgan photographed a rare White-legged damselfly. Roe deer are often seen there too, along with many different species of birds.

In July I had a pleasant walk from Loxwood to Drungewick. I saw many butterflies, damselflies and dragonflies in the warm sunshine. One of my favourites is the demoiselle. Banded demoiselles are seen along the canal as they prefer still water, and only the males are banded. Beautiful demoiselles are seen along rivers as they prefer flowing water.

You may have read in news about the abundance of Painted Lady butterflies seen in the UK this summer. They have also been seen along the canal. Some of the butterflies and dragonflies can still be seen during the early



autumn months, while the canal hedgerows have plentiful insects and berries for the birds.

Photos and seasonal wildlife information can be found on our website at [www.weyarun.org.uk/wildlife](http://www.weyarun.org.uk/wildlife).

**Dave Verrall**  
**[dv@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:dv@weyandarun.co.uk)**





***Clockwise from top left: Julian Morgan was lucky to photograph this rare White-legged damselfly; a male Banded demoiselle; Painted Lady butterflies were a common sight; Roe Deer are frequent visitors to Hunt Nature Park; a female Banded demoiselle.***

## Working Party Roundup

There has been a lot of volunteer activity to report on, not least the camps, which have done the lion's share of the work in preparation for the first of two lift bridges at Birtley. One missing group is the hedgelayers who, due to the nature of the work, take summer months off.

We are indeed fortunate to be able to call on visiting volunteers to supplement our own, not inconsiderable, workforce. This enables substantial projects to be undertaken. Although there are still considerable lengths which are yet to see any attention it seems that every week comes a bit closer to joining all the work sites together and making the through route from the River Wey to the sea a reality.

That's not to say the Trust hasn't spread its work over many places in the past. I recall that 30 years or so ago we came under criticism, probably with justification, for the opportunistic way in which we worked on odd piecemeal stretches and structures – in fact, anywhere we could get permission. Many of these were away from public view, so did little to visibly further the cause and, of course, once worked on any site needs to be maintained, creating yet more work. So the emphasis on getting a proper navigable piece of canal was a most welcome shift in policy. Those early projects – like Rowner and Malham Locks, Pallingham Bridge, Lock 17 to name but three – nevertheless proved invaluable in setting the scene for what was to follow, even if several of them have been all but forgotten now.

The vast amount of work can be hard to keep up with, but the *Working Party News* email newsletter will help. WPN can be sent straight to your inbox at the beginning of each month, you can view the current issue and back issues on the Trust website, or if you prefer paper copies these are sent out by the office. Just email [listadmin@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:listadmin@weyandarun.co.uk) to get on the mailing list, or send a supply of stamped addressed envelopes to the WACT office.

**Bill Thomson**



### Monday Group

May, June and July were busy for 'keeping up appearances' by the Mrs Bucket Group, on 11 Mondays, writes Nick Wood.

All of the regular sites were visited as well as making our first visit of the year in May to Malham Lock on the 'unrestored' section (a second visit will be made in the autumn).

We replaced eight fence posts on the towpath between the common land north of Tickner's Heath and Dunsfold Park and re-tensioned the wires, then cleared the permissive towpath from Drungewick Lane Bridge to the lock and around the winding hole below the lock.

Despite our visit to Lordings in April (see last *Wey-South*), the growth required our presence again, so in June we spent another full day cutting back the waist-high vegetation.

Frequently we are asked to undertake tasks outside our normal remit and during July we cleared and widened the towpath between Barnsill Bridge and Drungewick and mowed Brewhurst and Baldwin's Knob Locks. Another enjoyable three months working in the sunshine (mostly).

**Contact John Empringham, 01483 562657.  
[mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk)**





***The Monday 'keeping up appearances' group lived up to their name by making a tidy job of improving the towpath at Drungewick (far left), and clearing at Lordings.***

had been cut up by an outside contractor. We tried to improve the view over the river by removing alders and birch that had self-seeded, and pulled out a lot of Himalayan balsam. At Pallingham we cleared areas in preparation for the compound for the repair of Pallingham Bridge.

July saw the group split up again. Some spent three weeks at Sheep Wash, a farm bordering the River Arun. Just before the Arun Boat Rally a small group went up the Arun and found it was badly blocked by a huge willow. Although the root and end of the trunk is still there, the river is now clear. At the beginning of the month we spent a day at Pallingham Quay, pulling out trunks that had become rooted. There is still more to do.

The navigable section from Loxwood to Southland was our next task. We spent three weeks clearing the towpath side using the *May Upton* workboat. Our last outing was to Rooks Hill and Rushett Common, where we pulled out roots, cut back the regrowth on the alder trees and cleared the long grass so it is now possible to see the canal and the location of Fanesbridge Lock.

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

## Midweek Working Party

In May the group was mainly split up over several sites. A small group finished pulling out the willows north of Birtley Bridge. We hope this will not be a job that will be repeated there as it is very soggy underfoot, probably due to natural springs coming out of the Downs Link bank. Others pulled out branches and brushwood that had accumulated at Gosden Aqueduct, in preparation for the brickie replacing the loose and missing bricks. This was a goodwill gesture as the water is really the responsibility of the Environment Agency.

The group did some more clearance between Haybarn and Harsfold, enabling the public to see a longer stretch of the canal. The group also spent time clearing areas in Hunt Park, exposing the site of the proposed lock and visitor centre as well as pulling Himalayan balsam and clearing brambles. Giant hogweed on the Loxwood section has also been sprayed.

In June MWWP alternated between Hunt Park and Pallingham. We cleared a substantial amount of brushwood from near the fence with the A281 where a tree had fallen over the fence and the root ball and part of the tree

## Northern and Summit Working Party (including summer camps)

A couple of months of really intense activity by the Northern Working Party at Birtley culminated in three weeks of non-stop Waterway Recovery Group canal camps – believed to be the longest continuous run of volunteer work on the Wey & Arun.

June continued our preparations for construction of what will eventually be the



***At Birtley, teams carried out vital preparatory work prior to the Summer Working Camps in July. Alongside the bridge building a culvert portal had to be dismantled and rebuilt***

first of two bridges. The access road was finally completed (started last October) and two excavators working in sync removed the accumulated sludge from between the two dams. In the middle of the month the hole for the bridge base was excavated and surveyed to ensure it was dug to the correct depth.

The day before the WRG Camps began in July, the Newbury Working Party Group (NWPG) poured a binding layer of concrete into the hole to provide a clean working surface for the base steelwork. Dumpers were used to bring the dry readymix down from Birtley Courtyard to the site – a dry run in both senses for the main pour planned for the end of the first week's camp. The team also set up the welfare area tent, safety fences, noticeboards and a first-aid area.

The aim of the camps was to make substantial progress on the structure for Bridge 1, allowing all but the steel lifting parts to be in place by the end of October. The first week of the camp was run by NWPG.

On the first Saturday, Dave Evans and his local team sorted out a load of dry mix concrete at

the site while the visiting contingent unloaded the kit at Kirdford Village Hall, where the visitors were staying. As well as the seasoned NWPG regulars, we had representatives from Australia (via Scotland), New Zealand and France – the latter via the Rempart organisation which has links with WRG.

We divided into teams of varying sizes. The largest was the steel fixing gang. Their task was to prepare all the base steelwork and attached upright steels for the wing walls and main abutments, ready for a planned concrete pour on Friday morning. This would be the only critical target for all three camps as a delay into week two would seriously set back progress. Working to the detailed plans drawn up by volunteer engineer, NWPG and WRG member Rob Nicholson, the team enthusiastically set about stitching together the five tonnes of steel rods and mesh that had been brought to the site. The task was helped by the knowledge of new WACT volunteer engineers Keith Mapp and David Beadman who became regulars on site during all three weeks of camps.





***Volunteers were divided into teams, with each taking on different responsibilities***

The second largest team – the carpentry workshop – had the task of preparing the formwork shuttering for all three camps. A hired nail gun allowed it to fly off the production line. First, the long thin base slab shutters for week 1, second the pillar shutters for week 2 and finally the main wall shutters which were to be used for weeks 2 and 3.

Team 3 – logistics. Their big day was to be Friday morning when the ready-mix was due to arrive. Until then other jobs included the general supply run from Birtley Courtyard and replacing a stream crossing in the field to the west which enables us and the farmer to access the west side of the new bridge by machine should we need it.

Last, but not least – the culvert portal replacement team. This culvert takes the aforementioned stream under the canal embankment about 100m to the south of the bridge site. Like many such structures of about 200 years age, the entrance portal had fallen in and unless rebuilt was likely to lead to further collapse. The team skilfully dismantled the loose brickwork, constructed a suitable shutter

and restored the portal to a state not seen for years. A fine job.

All four teams beavered away through the week with the Friday target in mind. The two nine-tonne dumpers and the three-tonne machine helped immensely with the concrete deliveries. Amazingly, despite our early concerns at the planning stage at how long it would take to get the concrete over 1km to the site, everything went smoothly. The deliveries arrived just as those spreading and laying the concrete were ready for the next load, and the system of transferring the concrete from the dumpers into the hole using the 13-tonne digger worked well.

All the volunteers achieved so much and ensured that the following two weeks would be equally successful. Everyone enjoyed themselves and went home with a warm glow of satisfaction. I must, however, make special mention of Dave Evans who went beyond the call of duty in ensuring that all the plant, equipment, guidance and knowledge were in the right place and at the right time - not to mention the weeks of advance planning, site assembly and turning up at 6am on the Friday morning to make the final additions to the shuttering before the big pour. This was a great team effort, but one which would have come to nothing without Dave's input.

I won't steal the thunder of the other camps – reports of which will be found in the WRG magazine *Navvies* – other than to say that the work will continue at the site until the end of October, by which time we hope to have finished all the support structure and access ramps. Next year we hope to repeat the whole exercise at Bridge 2 – with the support of WRG, the northern WACT teams and visiting groups. If anyone would like to support the Trust's Birtley Bridges appeal we would certainly welcome some more funds – especially if we are to tackle the second bridge next summer. For details of how to give to the appeal go to: <https://weyarun.org.uk/restoration-appeals>.

**Contact Bill Nicholson, [bill@nwpg.org.uk](mailto:bill@nwpg.org.uk)**

## Tickner's Heath Depot

We have made the most of the good weather and the new facilities that the Eric Walker Group boys have provided for us.

First, we started by taking a critical look at all the tools taken from our old place of work. We discarded a multitude of duplicate spanners, screwdrivers, hammers and other bits and pieces, allowing us to find space in the new place and make it a working environment suitable for the Trust in the 21st century.

In between sorting out the new work space we got our teeth into some real work. We began in simple fashion, fitting a solid tyre to a donated wheelbarrow so punctures are a thing of the past. We have refurbished one of the Trust's trailers, sorting out the electrics and fitting a new floor. Strimmers and brushcutters were given the once over to ensure they were fit for purpose – a good thing too as the EWG made use of them almost immediately. We also looked over and serviced various other small items from the EWG group toolboxes.

The shower unit was examined prior to being used by the camps. After an inspection by one of the camps' resident gas certified experts it appeared that the gas regulator was of the wrong rating. This probably accounts for the problems associated with it over the years. A more powerful variant was obtained and fitted which seems to have done the trick.

During June we welcomed David Nott, a new recruit, and as he had some expertise in motor vehicle technology we teamed him up with Mick Jones to have a look at one of our old diesel generators. The machine that has had us head scratching for years burst into life.

The electrician has now finished wiring the workshop with a three-phase supply, so should the Trust be lucky enough to be donated the odd lathe or welding plant it can now be accommodated. Motion-sensitive external lighting will also help on some of the dark winter nights. We hope by the time *Wey-South* is published the supply company

will have got its act together and we will be basking in internal lighting and power.

Finally we once again have to thank Harwoods at Pulborough for helping us out when the Land Rover refused to start. One of their technicians jump-started the old girl, and took her away to fit a new battery. She has been running smoothly ever since.

**Contact John Smith 01903 235790,  
depot@weyandarun.co.uk**

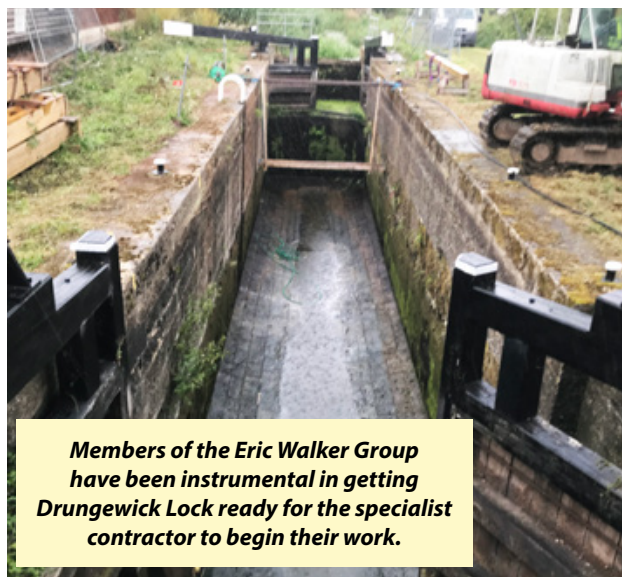
## Eric Walker Group

The group, which mostly concentrates on some of the heavier construction tasks, has continued through most of the past three months with the refurbishment of the Tickner's Heath Depot. This is now all but complete, just awaiting the electric meter installation by SSE. Once this has happened, the group will return for a final test of wiring, lights and appliances.

The group has also been helping with the leak investigations at Drungewick Lock. The necessary timber props were all fabricated, but the team ran into difficulties trying to drain the water from the lock due to the bottom stop planks not forming a proper seal. With help from Kevin Baker's maintenance team, new stop plank channels were installed at the southern end of the lock and the stop planks modified to fit. When replaced, the planks fortunately formed a good seal.

This enabled the team to begin removal of the substantial amount of silt and debris that has accumulated in the base of the lock. Temporary timber struts will then allow access by a specialist contractor to start drilling a series of investigation cores in the west stone wall of the lock. The same contractor plans to install three 'Platipus' ground anchors (kindly supplied free by Platipus Anchoring Systems Ltd) in the ground immediately behind the west wall. If this installation is satisfactory, then Platipus will design a full system to stabilise the wall. If the trial anchors are not successful, then it looks likely that Plan A - a concrete piled solution - will be revived.





***Members of the Eric Walker Group have been instrumental in getting Drungewick Lock ready for the specialist contractor to begin their work.***

Preparations are now getting under way at Harsfold Bridge where, following a meeting with the landowners, it has been agreed to establish two construction compounds. This is because access down the narrow 300m bridleway track to the future bridge location is extremely difficult for plant and delivery trucks. So there will be a main compound at the head of the track to store bulk materials, while the welfare cabin, generator and day-to-day small tools storage will be located in a secondary compound adjacent to the new bridge and diverted bridleway. At the time of writing, the EWG was refurbishing the welfare cabin, with the hope of making a start on site before the end of August.

**Contact Dennis Gillen,**  
[dennis\\_gillen@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:dennis_gillen@weyandarun.co.uk)

## Boat Group PEST

Since its formation in December 2017, the Boat Group PEST (Passengers' Environment Safety Team) has evolved into a group with eight regular members, five to six of whom work every other Friday.

Chris Jones writes that they keep the operational section of the canal clear of

obstructions that would inhibit the safe operation of the Trust's boats. In practice, this includes removing objects in the water and removing vegetation from the banks and overhead which could impede a skipper's view or endanger passengers aboard our boats.

The assistance of the Midweek Working Party in keeping the towpath side of the navigation in a safe and presentable condition is greatly appreciated. The PEST team focuses on the parts that our shoreside colleagues cannot reach.

During that past quarter we have worked on the entire

length of the canal currently in use (Southland Lock to the Drungewick Slipway) clearing outgrowth and removing obstructions from the water. Some specific tasks included:

- Creating clear views for skippers from Loxwood Lock to Southland Lock.
- Removing outgrowth between Loxwood Lock and Devil's Hole Lock.
- Removing outgrowth between Baldwin's Knob Lock and the Drungewick Slipway.
- Removing logs and 'floating islands' between Baldwin's Knob Lock and the Drungewick Slipway.
- Working with the Maintenance Manager on various clearances.

Given more manpower or, better still, mechanisation, between one and two metres of additional width could be reclaimed for the canal in many places.

**Peter Hyem, 01403 752393**  
[peter\\_hyem@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:peter_hyem@weyandarun.co.uk), or  
**Chris Jones, [chris\\_jones@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:chris_jones@weyandarun.co.uk)**

## Members' outing proves a memorable day out

As canal boat operators the Trust is used to dealing with the unexpected and, it seems, we are not alone, as this year's members' coach trip to the Great River Ouse in Bedford proved.

After an enjoyable morning in Bedford, members boarded the *John Bunyan* Community Boat at Priory Marina for a two-hour cruise. Lyn Nash writes: "On the return to the Marina we had to wait to enter Cardington Lock, there were several craft ahead of us. As we reached the top of the lock there was a load bang and the guillotine gate, which is electrically operated, would not open.

"Phone calls were made, and Mark (our coach driver and crew member) disappeared down the towpath. Apparently, a squirrel had chewed through a vital cable!"

The passengers were all returned safely, however, and everyone had an enjoyable trip. Many thanks to Mark Anderson for organising the event, which raised £413.

## Pop up shop spreads the word in Godalming

The Trust has been making good use of an empty retail unit in Godalming over the summer to raise awareness in this part of Surrey. Thanks to owner and member Chris Donn, volunteers have turned the unit into a pop up shop, selling merchandise and providing information about the Trust.



## Let's get festive

The bespoke Wey & Arun Canal Trust Christmas cards are on sale now.

The beautifully produced cards designed by Oliver Lake come in packs of five, priced at £5.

Also on sale is the 2020 Calendar which this year features stunning photography of canal wildlife and landscapes, priced at £8. Both are available to buy at the Canal Centre in Loxwood, or can be ordered online at [www.weyandarun.co.uk/shop](http://www.weyandarun.co.uk/shop).



***The 2020 Calendar makes a perfect Christmas gift.***

## Social media guru wanted

We are seeking a social media marketing pro to lend a hand in building our social media presence.

Please contact [gill\\_davies@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:gill_davies@weyandarun.co.uk) if you think you can help.

## Bridge appeals update

The appeals to raise funds for the building of bridges at Birtley in the north and Harsfold in the south are still open.

So far our generous members and supporters have contributed over £26,000 to the appeals. You can add to this magnificent total by donating online at <https://weyarun.org.uk/restoration-appeals>. Donations can also be made by cheque, payable to Wey & Arun Canal Trust, and sent to Bridge End, Somerswey, Shalford, Guildford, GU4 8EQ. Please mark them either Harsfold Appeal or Birtley Appeal.



## Membership Report

Our membership stands at 2,895. We would like to extend a very warm welcome to the following new members:

David & Jeannine Faithfull  
Mark & Sarah Beard  
Graham Kelly  
Philip & Clare Ridsdill-Smith  
Wendy Hall  
June & Graham Davey  
Michael Dyer  
Paul & Dot Withers  
Clare Pinner  
Gary Hogsdon  
John Copping  
Peter Evans  
Sam & Fiona Mettam

David & Jeannifer Lewin  
John & Janice Smyth  
Charlotte Nash  
Ray & Barbara Greateorex  
Denise & Paul Boyes  
Wendy Smith  
John Robson  
Robert & Cynthia Bird  
Rosemary White  
Gill & Tony Linturn  
Richard Stoten  
Joanne Sorrel  
Andrew & Clare Pinner

Lesley & Jonathan Barker  
Stephen Turner  
Patrick & Valerie Barrett  
Martin & Susan Kent  
Robert & Timothy Lloyd-Davies  
Thomas & Joan Collins  
David & Heike Nott  
Carolyn Laycock  
Alan & Marilyn Gill  
Martin Ranger  
Kathleen & John Scutt  
Sharon & Michael Sansom  
Robert Stevens

We have learned with regret of the death of:

Jean Crossley  
Margaret Williams  
Alan Chisholm

Robin Higgs  
Arthur Wickens

Mr & Mrs R G Williams  
Charles Walker

For information about how we use your personal data, see our privacy policy at [www.weyarun.org.uk/privacy-policy](http://www.weyarun.org.uk/privacy-policy). If you would like to receive a PDF version of our magazine in future and help keep our costs down, then please e-mail me.

**John Tovell**

***Membership@weyandarun.co.uk***

## Dates for your diary

**Saturday 19th October**

***Autumn Meeting at Shalford Village Hall, 2.30pm.***

**Sunday 8th, Sunday 15th,  
Saturday 21st, Sunday 22nd and  
Monday 23rd December \***

***Santa Cruises at 11am, 12noon and 2pm.***

**Thursday 26th December \***

***Boxing Day Cruises at 11am, 12.15 and 2.15pm.***

**Wednesday 1st January 2020 \***

***New Year's Day Cruises at 11am, 12.15 and 2pm.***

**Saturday 23rd to Monday  
25th May**

***IWA National Trailboat Festival. Email support@weyandarun.co.uk for information on taking part or volunteering.***

**\* 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](http://weyarun.org.uk/trips). Booking is essential for all special trips and recommended for Boxing Day/New Year's Day trips.**





***It's a messy business draining a lock.  
Some 1½ft of silt had to be removed from  
Drungewick Lock, unearthing an ancient  
wheelbarrow frame among other debris.***

## Christmas Raffle 2019



**Wey & Arun**  
Canal Trust  
Registered Charity No. 265331

**00001**

**CHRISTMAS DRAW 2019**

**First Prize: £200**  
**Second Prize: £100**  
**Third Prize: £75**  
**Fourth Prize: Marks & Spencer token for £50**  
**Fifth Prize: £40, Sixth Prize: £30**

*The draw will take place on Tuesday 21st January 2020  
at the Northern Office, Bridge End, Somerswey, Shalford GU4 8EQ*

Promoter: Sally Schupke, Bridge End, Somerswey, Shalford, Surrey GU4 8EQ  
Registered under The Gambling Act 2005 with Guildford Borough Council. Licence No. SL134  
Printed by [www.raffleticketsdirect.co.uk](http://www.raffleticketsdirect.co.uk)

For members who receive *Wey-South* by post, we enclosed raffle tickets with this issue. Of course this isn't possible for electronic subscribers. If you would like to buy raffle tickets, please contact the Northern Office ([northernoffice@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:northernoffice@weyandarun.co.uk), 01483 505566).

The closing date for buying tickets is 14th January 2020.

# The Wey & Arun 2020 Calendar is now on sale



The Wey & Arun Canal Trust 2020 Calendar



Male Banded Demoiselle

by Dave Verra

August 2020

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

August Bank Holiday

Wey & Arun Canal Trust

www.weyandarun.co.uk

- ★ Large (A4 size) wall calendar
- ★ Features wildlife and seasonal landscapes along the Wey & Arun Canal
- ★ Printed on high-quality paper
- ★ One page for each month with a large box for each date
- ★ Limited edition - order yours now to avoid disappointment
- ★ Supplied with envelope for posting

⇒ On sale at the Loxwood Canal Centre (01403 753999, [canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk), Open Tuesday to Sunday 11am-4pm [3pm on Wednesday], until the end of October).

⇒ Or visit the Trust's website, and buy online: [www.weyandarun.org.uk/shop](http://www.weyandarun.org.uk/shop)

⇒ Or to order by post please contact the Loxwood Office (01403 752403, [office@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:office@weyandarun.co.uk), Mon-Fri 9.30am-1.30pm) or use the order slip below.

**Price: £8.00**

To: Wey & Arun Canal Trust, The Granary, Flitchfold Farm, Loxwood RH14 0RH  
Please supply \_\_\_\_ Wey & Arun Canal Trust 2020 Calendars at £8.00 each.

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Telephone: ..... E-mail: .....

Please add £3.00 postage for up to 3 calendars - for more than 3, contact the Granary office to confirm postage).

Please make cheques payable to W&A Enterprises Ltd (for card payment, contact the Loxwood Office or Canal Centre).