

A photograph of a man and a woman standing outdoors. The man, on the left, is wearing a green and brown checkered jacket over a light blue shirt. The woman, on the right, has short blonde hair and is wearing a black blazer over a black top with large red and white floral patterns. They are both smiling and looking at each other. In the background, there are trees and a string of red, white, and blue bunting. At the top of the image, the words 'WEY-SOUTH' are written in a large, green, stylized font with a yellow outline, arched over the couple.

# WEY-SOUTH

Quarterly Magazine of the  
Wey & Arun Canal Trust

Issue 189 December 2019/January/February 2020



**September's Wey-South reported on member Peter Jewell's chance to tell the Queen about the Trust's work. This time it was director Margaret Darvill and chairman Sally Schupke who showed off our restoration successes to HRH The Earl of Wessex. The royal visit to Birtley was part of a Surrey Hills Enterprises initiative.**

**Margaret said His Royal Highness seemed very interested in learning about the canal. "He asked when it was built and where it ran from and to and said he thought it was a tremendous project and such a worthwhile volunteer effort."**

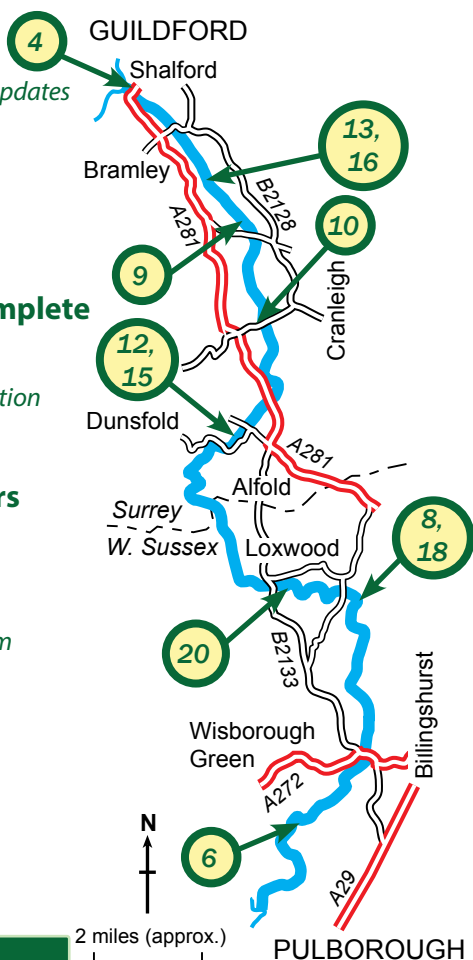


**It felt well into autumn as newly qualified skipper Tom Close piloted Wiggonholt on the last public boat trip of the season into Devil's Hole Lock.**



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**Front cover: HRH The Earl of Wessex with Trust Director and  
 Midweek Working Party Leader Margaret Darvill.**



***Shalford Village Hall begins to fill up for this year's Autumn Meeting.***

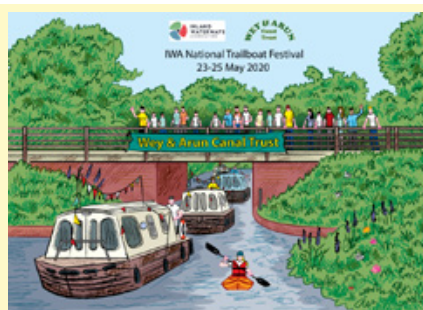
## Members brought up to date with restoration plans

There was no shortage of news to bring to the members who came along to the Autumn Meeting held in Shalford in October, with updates on ongoing projects to impart and some ambitious plans for the future to unveil.

Sally Schupke, who revealed she was in her 11th year as Chairman, highlighted the benefit the Trust gains from the many visiting working parties that have helped accelerate restoration progress over the past year. "They are most welcome and I thank them very much," she said.

The weekend of the Autumn Meeting coincided with a week-long visit from WRG Forestry (see page 15), and more visits from NWPG and WRG Bit in the Middle (BiTM) were expected in coming weeks, playing a key role in supplementing the work of our own committed volunteers.

The good news continued with a reported increase in publicity for the Trust and a successful consultation for the Elmbridge Road project in Cranleigh, with a good turnout from interested residents and a positive response to plans. For more on the project, see page 10.



### **A date not to be missed**

***Sally revealed a postcard designed specially to mark the IWA National Trailboat Festival which takes place at the Summit next year.***

***The festival is being held on the Bank Holiday weekend of 23-25 May 2020 and promises to be a colourful event with fun for all the family. Boating enthusiasts get the chance to experience a canal that is being restored and spectators will be entertained with stalls, music and activities. The postcard has been designed by member Julian Nowell and drawn by Oliver Lake.***

## The Money Section

**J**oint finance director Julian Morgan outlined the Trust's financial position in a presentation that he described as "generally upbeat but with a few notes of caution".

Although the Trust's general financial position is good, our income is characterised by peaks and troughs, with the peaks coming from grants and legacies.

This year's income was slightly down due to fewer large legacies, Julian reported, but the good news is that income without grants and legacies was up, due to the efforts of members, and he thanked all those who supported the recent Birtley and Harsfold Bridge appeals. "Before this year, we hadn't launched an appeal since 2015 with a last push for Compasses Bridge," he recalled.

Julian said the Trust had received a great contribution this year from the Boat Group, "who have all worked extremely hard".

"The situation wasn't easy at the beginning of the year, but we had a fairly good season, bouncing back from the poor weather of last year, and have seen a good result with boat income up."



***Julian Morgan painted a positive financial picture.***

With the figures looking positive, Julian was happy to say spending was up too, outstripping income thanks to acquisitions of land and equipment.

"Unlike in a normal company, for us it's good news when we spend more than our income, because it means we are spending money on the canal we love and want to restore."

However, he added that the Trust's future plans were ambitious and that funds available at the moment would only just cover current committed projects. "You'll never hear me saying we've got too much money. We need as much as we can get our hands on."

The Quarterly Magazine of

## The Wey & Arun Canal Trust

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

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

**Issue 189**

**December 2019/January/  
February 2020**



***The compound and bridleway diversion are in place, but the construction work unearthed the original bridge's foundations.***



## Harsfold Bridge update

**H**on. Secretary Tony Tyrrell gave an update on the work at Harsfold, near Wisborough Green. Work on the site began earlier in the summer as soon as the farmer had finished harvesting, creating a window of opportunity for the Eric Walker Group (EWG) to get the site up and running.

The first task, Tony said, was to establish a base and welfare compound. The second priority was to divert the existing bridleway, which needs to be accessible throughout the construction.

The team built a new pathway "to a very high standard", helped by the acquisition of a new (secondhand) eight-tonne digger to replace the defunct digger they used to use.

Then came the dig - which unexpectedly revealed the foundations of the original bridge. Tony reported that given the time constraints of the build there was not a lot of time to do a full excavation project. "The team will be photographing and recording detail records for our archives," he reassured members.



It is hoped the bridge will be completed within a year, but as the area is prone to flooding and the group have to work around the farmer's needs, it's a tight schedule. "The team are up to it, though," joked Tony.





*The arrival of the first load of concrete meant the team could prepare the formwork for the north bridge support abutment.*





***Positive results were seen from tests of Platipus ground anchors (right)***

## Drungewick Lock update

**D**runge Wick Lock had created a lot of head scratching as to the best way to deal with the lock wall movement, Tony Tyrrell explained. The problem itself had been made more difficult by the very restricted area in which the EWG had to work.

However, Tony was pleased to report that after removing the adjacent hedge and draining the lock, the Trust was able to move forward with testing Platipus ground anchors supplied by a specialist firm.

To make the area safe to work in, wooden bracing was installed by the EWG, which meant the experts could get to work testing the anchors to determine their effect and the number needed.

The contractors also drilled through the lock wall to see if there were any voids that would need filling.

With positive results, the company has now been given the go-ahead to draw up designs for the number of anchors that will be needed to rectify the problem. "All being well the lock should be in operation for the new season," Tony said.

The Sussex Weald clay and blockwork sandstone held in place by lime mortar, not cement, were responsible for the lock wall's movement, the members were told.

The life of the anchors should be 50-100 years, he reported, with one of the benefits of using a specialist company being that they provided a guarantee.



## Run Common and Rushett Common update

Gary Courtin provided the background to the proposed development of a section of canal between Rushett Common and Run Common, between Cranleigh and Bramley, when a solution was struck upon during a visit to the site with Tony Ford.

"The canal in this section has long been filled in and is almost invisible. To restore it we would have had to build bridges to take the track over the canal, but Tony Ford had a Eureka moment. He suggested that rather than actually restore the canal over the original line, wouldn't it be a good idea to run the canal down the line of the Downs Link and pass it under the two existing Victorian arch bridges."

Extensive discussions with stakeholders followed, with drawings produced and many surveys undertaken, Gary said. The restored canal will be wide enough to carry a large

and small boat side-by-side in most parts, and the 3m towpath will double up as the Downs Link bridleway.

The development will include an accommodation bridge for tractors to pass over, which will be built by Trust volunteers.

Access to the site will be at the entrance to Hazelwood Lane and a new access road will run the length of construction site. As this is common land in the ownership of Waverley Borough Council, the Trust has to seek Common Land Consent. Two public consultations have been held and it is hoped planning permission can be submitted before the end of this year.



## Tickner's Depot update

***Tony Tyrrell gave his thanks to EWG, who he said had done an amazing amount of work to the depot at Tickner's.***

***"I know some people have questioned why we have spent money on Tickner's, but if you had been over there 18 months ago it really did do Steptoe proud. We didn't have the kit, the conditions were awful, and so we had to do something about it."***

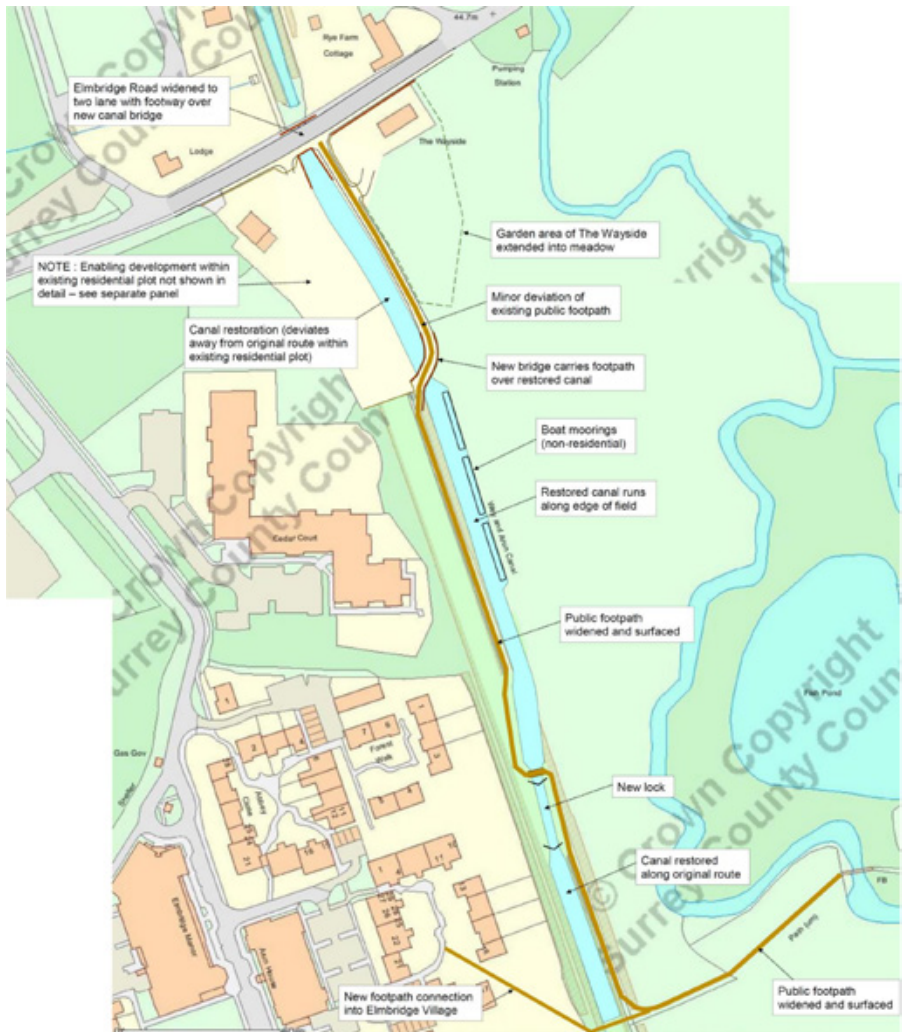
***As a result the site at the Dunsfold Aerodrome has been transformed. Electricity has been provided, alongside secure storage, unwanted materials removed and the depot now presents a much more professional image.***

***The old scaffold store has been removed and the workshop building repaired, with double-glazed windows supplied and fitted. "The whole building has been cleaned and spruced up," Tony said. Providing electricity to the site, though, has been "a saga", taking almost two***



***and half years and "umpteenth meetings" with UK Power Networks and Southern Electric arguing over who owned the substation. "Dunsfold Park were extremely supportive in allowing us to dig the line to put the cable in and finally after 18 months the cable lead was in. It took another 12 months to get Southern Electric to sell us the electricity, though."***

***Now the site boasts a kitted out welfare unit, a fully secure oil store, and neatly stacked scaffolding. Security has also been beefed up. "I think it's every penny well spent," Tony summed up.***



## Plans for Elmbridge Road revealed

**T**ony Ford revealed exciting plans for Elmbridge Road in Cranleigh. Elmbridge Road is the single-lane road that runs into Cranleigh from the A281 and the point at which the road rises in the middle is where the canal crosses underneath.

It is a difficult stretch of road and Surrey County Council has identified it as a priority project,

setting aside a good slice of Section 106 funding (developer contributions) from new housing going up in Cranleigh.

But the County Council doesn't have sufficient land to put in a two-way road so the Trust has been liaising with both the Council and the adjacent landowner in an effort to come to an arrangement. The aim is that an area of land will be released not only for the road, but also for the restoration of some 300m of canal south of the road and alongside Elmbridge Village.





***A public exhibition of plans was held in Cranleigh Village Hall in October and a feedback form available then and online generated a large amount of positive replies.***



***The line of the original towpath is preserved in the public right-of-way Footpath 393. For the first 20m this runs across the private garden of The Wayside. The one-way Elmbridge Road will be replaced with a wider two-way route and bridge.***

The Trust held a public consultation on the proposals earlier in October in Cranleigh with positive feedback, and the plan is to go for planning permission early in 2020.

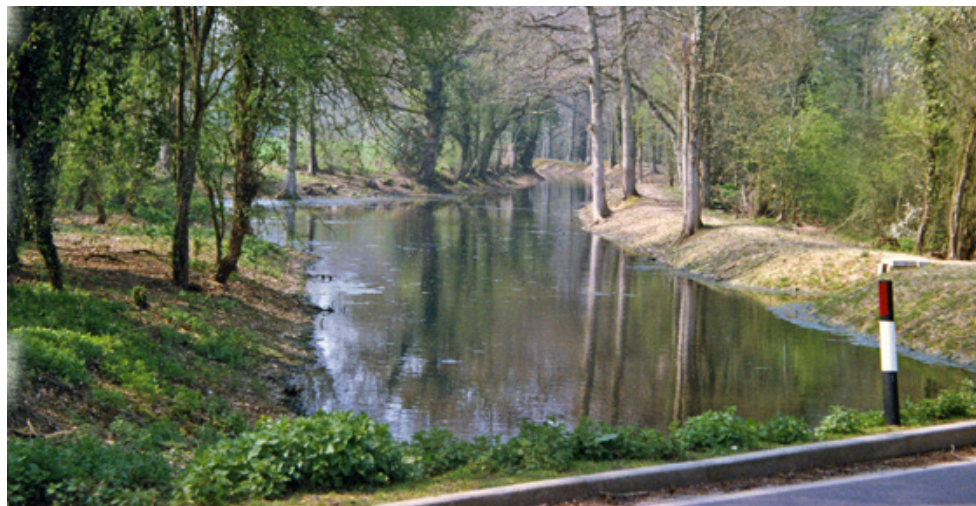
Tony warned that there were “plenty of banana skins on this route yet so it may not happen”, but if it does the first stage would be fencing, vegetation clearance and to provide new footpath links into Elmbridge Village (carried out by volunteers). The second stage would be the road widening and new canal bridge, funded by the County Council.

The crest of the road is to be raised by just under 1m, but sightlines for traffic will be met

and the whole appearance of the road will be changed and “opened up” from its present enclosed character.

The road will be widened to the south of the existing road. This will allow part of the new bridge and carriageway to be built alongside the existing road without interfering with the traffic flow.

More footpath enhancements would then be needed and finally the canal restoration work itself, including a new lock. Tony explained that the water level would have to be lowered by 2m for about a mile, which coincides with the drop that exists at the next lock along, Rowly Lock.



## Tickner's Heath



**T**ony Ford gave the latest news on the Tickner's Heath development at the Summit. The land transfer is complete, the area of field purchased for the canal diversion is hedged and fenced, and

a decision on planning is expected at the end of this year. That was the good news.

Then for the less positive. "We also needed to do an application for Common Land Consent to the Secretary of State. That was submitted in August 2019, but the decision isn't expected until August 2020 – no that isn't a misprint," Tony said.

"We are restricted now to works that are not on the common land. There is quite a bit we can get on with and that's what we're currently getting stuck into."

He set out a timetable for the project spanning the next few years. "We're hoping that over Spring/Summer 2020 we will construct the compound, temporary road and get ourselves ready for the consent when we can construct

the footbridge, which is the first piece of infrastructure to go in.

"Thames Water then need to carry out a water main diversion, then we can restart again in Spring to Autumn 2021 constructing the road bridge. That will have some professional contractor input but there is a large amount of work there for volunteer groups. Then it is not until 2022 that we can come in with the road bridge completed, remove the temporary road and dig out the canal diversion.

"This isn't a small job by any means."

### Desilting at the Summit

***After the first pass of the dredger, work has ceased while material dries out in piles on the canal bank, Tony explained.***

***While carrying out work it became clear a few modifications were needed to be made to the machine, as it wasn't quite fit for our particular way of operating it. It is currently moored at the slipway awaiting some remedial work and after that it will transit the whole way from Tickner's Heath to Fastbridge and back again to ensure the route is clear for the Trailboat Festival in May next year.***



October  
2019

January  
2019



## Birtley update

“Phenomenal” was how Margaret Darvill described the amount of work completed at Birtley, south of Bramley. Since buying the 900m stretch of abandoned canal in December 2018 the Trust and its volunteers have built an access route, cleared 600m of canal, put in fencing, built a culvert and completed the support for the first lift bridge.

She acknowledged the efforts of the three weeks of WRG summer camps, who she said worked incredibly hard, some in the scorching 34-degree heat.

“A huge amount of work has been done for this bridge, all done by volunteers and designed by volunteers, and it is nearly finished. All that’s needed is the deck for which we are currently getting costings,” she said.

The next step is to complete the design and submit planning permission for bridge number two. “Unfortunately, there is a gas main going down the causeway so the first thing we have to do is get the gas main removed,” she added.

Margaret said that the original plan had been to replicate the design for bridge number one, “but the ground conditions are not good enough and we’re going to have to pile and go a different way”.

She thanked all the volunteers who have helped to complete the bridge in less than 12 months. “It has been an incredible job from everybody,” she said.





***Since the WRG camps ended in August the work at Birtley has continued apace thanks to weekend volunteer working parties and visits from NWPG. The brickwork and copings were finished, banks profiled and scaffolding removed in late October, leaving the bridge ready for its steel deck.***





## WRG Forestry

*The WRG Forestry team spent a week with the Wey & Arun Canal Trust at the end of October.*

*The volunteers worked across three sites*

*– Tickner's Heath, Drungewick and Birtley – during the course of their camp. With their specialist cherry picker, trained tree climbers and cutting experts they made short work of dealing with dead and diseased trees.*

*At Tickner's, the team set about cutting back overhanging branches on Dunsfold Road, while at Birtley canal views were opened up along the course of the new circular walk being created.*

*The Midweek Working Party also helped out with the clearance.*

*The removal of dead trees (mainly victims of ash dieback) at Drungewick that looked ugly and could have posed a safety risk opened up the view of some magnificent oak trees that are in excellent condition. New trees will be planted when the work repairing leaks in this area is complete.*



**Top: Members of the core tree cutting crew.**

**Below: At Tickner's Heath, the Forestry group removed overhanging branches along the route of the road.**



**Tickner's Heath**

## Birtley



*The heavy machinery came out to pull the felled dead trees to a clearing further along the towpath, where chainsaws could get to work.*



## Drungewick



***Top: WRG Forestry used the cherry picker to remove the dead or unhealthy trees that could have posed a danger. Below left: This photo from last year shows some of the affected trees along this section. Below right: A stunning and healthy oak can now be seen in its full glory.***



## Fish safety put first in canal draining project

When leaks at Drungewick necessitated draining a half-mile of canal, the Trust called on a local specialist environmental consultancy to ensure the 8,000-plus fish living there could be transported to safety.

A team from Aquamaintain used a process called electrofishing to catch the thousands of fish in a two-day operation at the end of September.

The Environment Agency approved method involves passing an electric current through the water, from a generator onboard a small boat. The field of electricity causes the fish to swim towards the positive charge and become momentarily stunned, allowing the fish catchers in the water to net them and transfer them within seconds into containers onboard the boat. From there they were moved to a tank of oxygenated water on the towpath, where they were then discharged into another part of the canal.

The process results in no lasting harm to the fish, which return to their natural state within minutes. Aquamaintain fisheries consultant Dave Hellard said the process was the most humane way possible to move the fish. "The fish recover quickly, and once in the oxygenated water tanks



***Top: The Aquamaintain team repatriated more than 8,000 fish in a half-mile section. Above: Land & Water are desilting before the leaks are plugged.***

quickly become pretty lively again," he said.

The process allowed the experts to assess the health of the fish, as well as look at the size and species. Pike, eels, bream, roach and carp were among the fish caught.

Once the fish were safe Loxwood Link maintenance manager Kev Baker set about draining the canal.

Contractor Land & Water started work in November desilting ahead of re-lining the stretch to stop the leaks.





**Harsfold Bridge in the making (below) and the finished model.**



**Those who attended recent public consultations and the Autumn Meeting would have seen the handiwork of the Trust's chief model maker (and Hon. Secretary) Tony Tyrrell. His scale models are painstakingly created from scratch, starting from a plywood base and with insulation foam, cardboard or expanded polystyrene to create contours and a covering of plaster of Paris bandages and lightweight filler to smooth edges.**

**Trees are all made from small branches and reindeer moss, treated with PVA glue to harden them up, while the leaves are dyed sawdust stuck to the moss using spray glue or hair spray.**

**Structures are generally balsa wood and painted using acrylic paints. In the case of the Elmbridge model the canal sides are steel piles so Tony used thin sheet (shim) steel, easily cut with scissors. And the canal itself? Thin layers of clear PVA glue.**

**Many hours go into their creation and they play an invaluable role in bringing the vision of any new project to life.**



## Boat Group updates

*Clear blue skies and sunshine marked the last of the scheduled weekend boat trips at the end of October, rounding off a successful season.*

*During September six members successfully completed the rigorous training needed to become licensed Boatmasters (skippers). Kevin Baker, Derek Wright, Ian James, Robin Charles, Tom Close and Ken Broomfield became the latest members to join the Trust's other 20 skippers.*

*All have completed many months' training in theory, legislation, mechanical knowledge, boat handling, lock work and safety procedures to earn their qualification in a process that ensures both the skipper and the Maritime & Coastguard Agency are fully confident in their skills. Well done to all involved.*

*Crew members John Lee, Tom Close and Colin Edwards at the last public boat trip until Christmas. Below: A cascade of water over Loxwood Lock caused by heavy rain created a dramatic scene.*







***Fanny pictured at her bench with fellow canal centre volunteers Lyn Nash and Dave Verrall.***



## Fanny Lines 1929-2019

**L**ongstanding Trust member Fanny Lines passed away in the summer, aged 90.

In her 43 years of membership Fanny had been a truly committed volunteer, even helping out in the Canal Centre in Loxwood just days before her death.

From joining working parties to manning a gazebo at local fetes (before the MDV), stuffing envelopes for *Wey-South*, to sitting on the Board of W&A Enterprises Ltd (our trading company) from 1997 to 2014, Berlin-born Fanny's passion for the Trust was indefatigable.

Dusty Miller, former Chairman of W&A Enterprises Ltd, who had known Fanny for 30 years, paid tribute to her energy, along with her foresight in seeing the direction of travel for the Trust. He said: "Fanny joined at the inception of the Trust in the mid-70s as trading manager, and quickly realised that this side of the Trust needed to be built up, and she ended up making good money by selling merchandise at a pop-up shop at events.

"She would take part in anything and everything, from jungle bashing to towpath clearing, and encourage others as well – she

was a persuasive lady." This persuasive manner sent many new volunteers the Trust's way – "we've been sent by Fanny" was the usual story.

When the Canal Centre opened Fanny turned her skills to manning the centre at Loxwood and became the first person to book a charter on *Wiggonholt*, to celebrate her 80th birthday.

Her life was full of doing the things she loved, singing in Bookham Choir for 40 years, politics (she was a former Surrey County councillor and stood in local elections as a Labour Party candidate) and wood carving. She was also a humanist, conducting 250 humanist funerals in her lifetime.

Her positive approach – "no negatives" – made her a quite a character, according to all those who knew her, with her no-nonsense approach illustrated by the fact she organised her own memorial bench last year, overlooking Southland winding hole. "I have donated it now rather than my family doing so in my memory later," she said at the time.

Chairman Sally Schupke said of Fanny: "A lot of us will have very happy memories of Fanny and appreciate the huge support she gave to the Trust. She was such a personality and will be missed by so many of us."



## The true art of hedgelaying

There's something quite mesmerising about the art of hedgelaying. Maybe it's the knowledge that it's a practice that has been going on for centuries. Perhaps it's the quiet seasonal rhythm of coppicing then laying, coppicing then laying; or could it be just the sheer pleasure on the eye of the straight lines and natural symmetry of a well-laid hedge.

The Wey & Arun Canal Trust hedgelaying team are back in action again after their summer break. It's a seasonal job, starting in October/November, "when there's not too much sap in the trees," and stopping in February/March when birds begin nesting, explains team leader Nick Baxter.

Their first task is coppicing woodland belonging to Peter Foulger. This traditional method of woodland management has benefits all round. "Coppicing opens up the area and lets in light," says Nick. The result is good for the ground flora – encouraging spring flowers and orchids to thrive. "It also regenerates the trees, and supplies us with hedgelaying material," he adds.

Coppicing used to be a part of the farming economy, but today it's put to our hedgelayers' advantage, providing the stakes and binders needed to provide structure for the growing hedge they'll later lay along the canal.

The Trust's team of eight male and female volunteers methodically cut the young growth of mainly hazel down to almost root level with their billhooks, looking for straight stakes of suitable length and width. The stakes they cut will be used vertically, with the thinner binders woven in between.

What's left is a "stool", the stump with short shoots that will be left to grow and turn into coppicing for the future. The stools are then covered in brushwood, protecting the young growth from the many resident deer.

Some 90 stakes and binders are required for Nick's needs, a 50m section at Brewhurst in Loxwood. Timing is important – the stakes and binders mustn't dry out or they become brittle and unworkable.

Nick himself comes from a background of countryside management and teaching and is keen to impart his knowledge. He's been hedgelaying since the 1970s so knows what he's talking about. He and some of the other team members also worked alongside the late Keith Nichols, who set up the hedgelaying team.

The hedge at Brewhurst is being laid in 'Southern Counties' style, Nick explains. According to the National Hedgelaying Society there are more than 30 different regional styles, developed to cope with the climate of an area,





***Opposite page: The hedge at Haybarn took three seasons to lay. Left: The cut hazel stakes and binders. Above: The team leader removes side shoots and branches using a billhook.***

different farming practices and the trees and shrubs that grow there. In our area the hedge is usually made of native species: hawthorn, field maple, ash and oak.

Once the hedgerow is seven years old it is ready for laying, a technique in which the hedgelayers cut away (pleaches) the stem towards ground level and arches it over at an angle of 60 degrees, encouraging new shoots to grow straight upwards. The "pleachers" are then weaved in and out of the stakes, with a stake every 21 inches.

What makes Southern Counties style different is the twiggy brush left on both sides of the hedge, preventing animals from nibbling the re-growth. The aim is to create a line for the eye to follow, with stakes in a row and the rolling

lines of binders in between. Even the tops of the stakes are cut with care, so they are all the same height and angle.

There's no denying it's a thing of beauty, and the team say that the passing public cannot help but stop and admire their work and ask about their craft. The newest member of the team Johnny was one such person. "I had just moved to the area and was walking at Haybarn when the team were out. I had always wanted to learn and here was my chance," he says.

Dave has been hedgelaying for 10 years, and for him being in the open air is a draw. "I like being out in the quiet of the countryside," he says.

Whatever their motivation, the team concur that there is a real satisfaction in keeping this ancient country craft going, as well as providing such an important haven for our wildlife and the environment.

**The hedgelaying team meet every Tuesday and new members are welcome. For more information, email [hedgelaying@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:hedgelaying@weyandarun.co.uk).**

## MDV events



*This year's programme of events for the Mobile Display Vehicle team ended on a high at the Surrey Hills Wood Fair in Cranleigh. This year the team offered a Drive a Digger experience, and it went down a storm with young visitors across two days in September.*

*Thanks to Dave Evans, who valiantly manned the arena, the Trust raised an impressive amount in donations and increased our profile even further. Winner Tools supported us by providing the digger.*



## Peter Beresford 1926 – 2019

**Former chairman Peter Foulger pays tribute to Peter Beresford, a founder of the Wey & Arun Canal Society, who died earlier this year**

Sadly Peter Beresford, a close friend of mine for many years, passed away in July of this year.

I first met Peter in 1975 when he gave a talk at a meeting of the Reading Branch of the Kennet & Avon Canal Trust. He obviously sold the proposed restoration of the Wey & Arun well as several of us joined on that evening to boost the membership. He was always a good speaker.

Peter was a founder member of the Wey & Arun Canal Society in 1971 and was its Secretary for two years. In 1975 he became Chairman of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust as it had now become, a post that lasted until 1997, a period of 22 years. This was a period of establishing the credibility of a group of people who believed passionately that the derelict canal should be restored. At the time there was another organisation called the Old Canal Association that actively resisted the efforts of the Trust.

In 1987 I met up with Peter again having moved to a farm in the area with a section of the W&A Canal running through the middle. We worked together on the Trust's Board for the next 10 years.

By 1997 the canal was restored from a small winding hole at Drungewick, where the slipway is today, to another small winding hole beside the main road close to the Onslow Arms. As John Wood and Peter Beresford were retiring after the same period of service to the W&A the management team arranged a surprise boat trip for them. John and Peter and their wives were invited to meet at Brewhurst

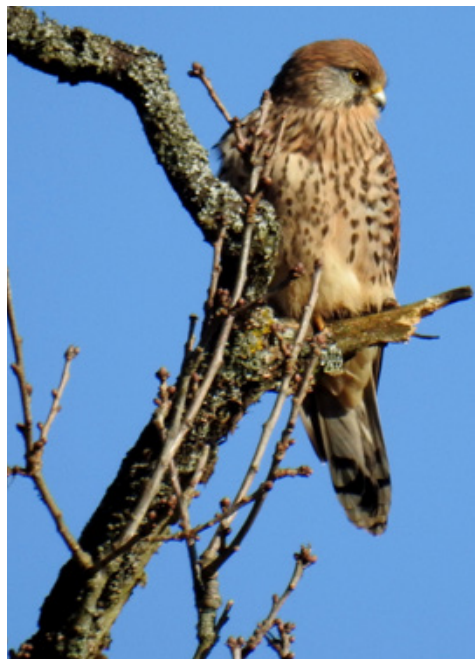


***Peter Beresford pictured in 1995  
at Lordings Flood Gates.***

Lock where *Zachariah Keppel* was waiting to make the first journey along this recently completed section of canal. Both were later made Vice-Presidents of the Trust.

Peter had a love of boats from an early age, he told me of joining the Royal Navy as a boy sailor and reaching the Far East in time for peace to be declared. He had shares in a narrow boat at least twice before I knew him. Later a company called OwnerShips sprang up and Peter thought it sounded a good idea so we each decided to purchase a share of the 60-foot narrowboat *Oberon*. We travelled to Stibbington near Peterborough to see *Oberon* being launched at the boatyard. Peter did the honours and had the job of smashing a bottle of bubbly over the bow. Surprisingly difficult!

After retiring from the W&A Canal Trust Peter moved to the south coast and used to come to visit to see progress on the canal. I remember a couple of his birthday parties being on Trust boats. Latterly I would travel down to see Peter and his first question was "How is the canal doing?". A good friend I truly miss.



## Winter wildlife on the canal

**R**ed Admiral and a few other species of butterfly hibernate during the colder months, but they are sometimes seen on sunny winter days.

The Treecreeper is a less common bird but it too can be spotted occasionally. They creep up and around a tree looking for insects. Another bird to look out for is the Jackdaw. During October I saw one enter a hole in an oak tree at Brewhurst. It then came out of the hole with some old nesting material.

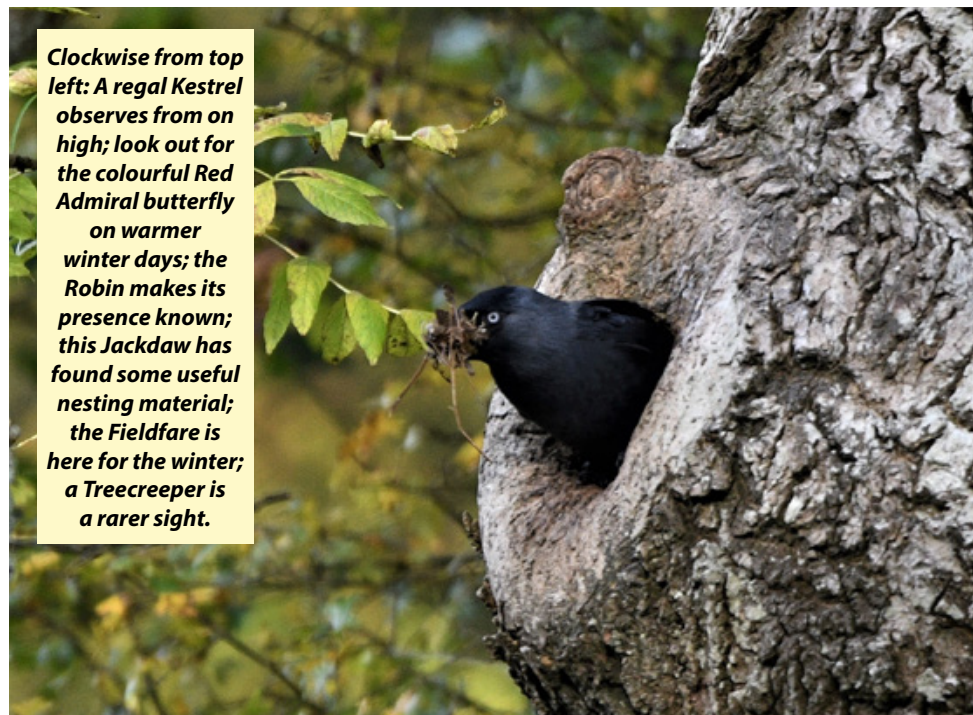
Birds of prey may be seen flying above the canal. Keep an eye out for Buzzards, Kestrels and Red Kites. During the winter months, many birds migrate to the UK, including Fieldfares and Redwings. As it is nearly Christmas I thought I would include a photo of a Robin singing near the Canal Centre.

**Dave Verrall**

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







***Clockwise from top left: A regal Kestrel observes from on high; look out for the colourful Red Admiral butterfly on warmer winter days; the Robin makes its presence known; this Jackdaw has found some useful nesting material; the Fieldfare is here for the winter; a Treecreeper is a rarer sight.***

## Champion volunteers take a break

**Two of the Trust's hardworking volunteers "hung up their boots" earlier this autumn, after carrying out sterling service for many years.**

### Derek Williams



**L**oyal working party member Derek Williams has retired from the Northern Working Party after many years of dedication. Derek attended the first NWPG-led Canal Camp in

1990 at Lee Farm Lock with his two sons, and has worked with the Wey & Arun Canal Trust ever since.

He has an impressive string of achievements under his belt, with projects including Lee Farm Lock, Bignor Bridge, Rowner and Malham Locks (second restoration!), Bonfire Hangar (weirs), Sidney Wood (weir and towpath), Haybarn Swing Bridge, Loxwood Lock, Brewhurst Lock (lowering and extension),

Hunt Park (footpath and viewing platform), Compasses Bridge and Thriscutt Slipway. His last volunteer work for the Trust was a working party in May on the Birtley Bridge project.

Bill Nicholson said Derek could turn his hand to any task. "In his time Derek has laid many bricks for us. He had amazing stamina - Dave Evans named him the 'Duracell Bunny'. He was always the first to volunteer to get stuck in with a spade, pick or shovel and put most of his younger team members to shame."

Recent spells of ill health have told him that, in his words, it is time to "hang up his boots".

Bill added: "Both the NWPG and the Northern Working Party will miss not only his hard graft but his kindness and interest in the lives and well-being of his colleague volunteers."

"After 29 years working with us, work parties won't be the same without Derek's company. A true stalwart."

### Bill Thomson

**R**eaders will know Bill Thomson as editor of *Working Party News*, and last month he handed over the reins to a new editor, Peter Winter.

Bill joined the Trust in 1978, after "feeling inspired by the view of Rowner Lock, across the field, with its (then) newly-installed top gates". He soon got roped into working parties, first on an overspill weir near Loves Bridge and subsequently on projects such as Malham Lock, Cook's Bridge, Lock 17 and many other sites.

Having always enjoyed writing, he took on the production of *Wey-South* and worked on WRG's magazine *Navvies*. This became a launchpad for his career in writing as he went on to join boating and yachting trade titles and later

became editor of *The Motor Ship*.

He edited *Wey-South* from 1980 to 1987, taking a break due to work commitments and travel abroad, then again from 1991 to 1999, when he took on *Working Party News*, which he describes as being back then "a somewhat irreverent antidote to the 'official' *Wey-South*".

Having reached his 70s Bill feels the time is right to let somebody better in touch with the canal's restoration, and with younger ideas, take over WPN, but he wishes the best of luck to all for "the inevitable continued growth and future success" in restoration.





## Working Party Round-up

As you would have read Bill Thomson has retired from producing *Working Party News*, and I have taken on the role. Bill did a remarkable job in producing *WPN* over many years and our thanks to him for his hard work.

I have long held an interest in the waterways, since my first boating experiences in the 1960s and my wife Hilary and I cruise regularly as part-owners of a shared narrowboat. I am a relative newcomer to the area having moved to Sussex in 2013 from the Chilterns, where I was a restoration volunteer with the Wendover Arm Trust. So, naturally, it didn't take long to make contact with the Wey & Arun Canal Trust and get involved, initially with the Midweek Working Party and then the Eric Walker Group.

When in the Chilterns, I was chairman of IWA Chiltern Branch and its Newsletter editor. On hearing of Bill's retirement, I thought I might be able to fill his shoes.

**Peter Winter**  
[peter\\_winter@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:peter_winter@weyandarun.co.uk)

### Monday Group

Bank Holiday meant that the group met on three occasions in August. Early in the month we spent a day at Drungewick widening the permissive path and clearing brambles down to the lock. The path was cut to six mower widths so it should be fine for the rest of the year.

After visiting Lordings in April and June we made a third visit in mid-August to cut the main part and hedges around the flood lock and main lock. We also strimmed the towpath from the bridge to the chain stile. However, on this occasion we were hampered by the weather; thunder, lightning, hail stones as well as heavy rain. Such is volunteering!

For our third August outing we visited six of our regular sites at Compasses Bridge, Loxwood and Drungewick, and in September we tidied the towpath from the Canal Centre at Loxwood to 200 yards beyond Brewhurst



**Malham Lock before (top) and after the 'Keeping Up Appearances' treatment.**

Lock. We also revisited Drungewick, giving further attention to the permissive towpath and strimming around the lock. We continued to 'keep up appearances' at Loxwood, Devil's Hole, Southland and Gennets Bridge Locks, as well as visiting Compasses where we located an old electricity cable and restored the bicycle racks under the supervision of Dave Evans.

We reckon to programme two visits to Malham Lock each year, so having been there in May we were on site again in September, tidying up before winter sets in.

Tickner's also received our attention and at the end of the month we worked at Haybarn and cleared the towpath to the 90-degree turn in the canal, as well as attending to Newbridge.

October saw a return to Loxwood where we cleared all the ditches and trimmed the hedges in the car park. We also tidied the towpath from the Canal Centre to Brewhurst Lock and beyond



again. Run Common received a visit as well, to cut the grass and clear up all the rubbish dropped by the public.

With a good turnout of volunteers, including two new members, we spent a day in October at Haybarn cutting the top and side of 500 metres of hedge and widening the towpath from the swing bridge northwards. There remains another 150 metres to go to the 90-degree turn in the canal, but that will be a November task.

At the end of the month we cleared up the yard at Drungewick Lock following the work by the WRG Forestry Group and started to clear all around the winding hole below the lock, including the spillway. There is more to do here so we intend to return in November.

**Nick Wood**  
**[mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk)**

## Midweek Working Party

In the past three months MWWP has covered the length of the canal, from Hunt Park to Pallingham with places in between.

We began in August, with the help of Dave Evans, chipping tree logs that had been taken down in preparation for the second Birtley Bridge. It is now possible

to get a clear view down to the bend. At the same time some of the group trimmed the banks going northwards.

For the second week torrential rain meant a lower turnout, but some of those present spent the day clearing Rowly Lock; they were very excited to find part of a ram pump. The rest of the group cleared near Farnhurst Bridge, until midday when film crews with a helicopter asked us to stop the bonfire smoke. We completed the task at the end of October in beautiful sunshine.

We had a week clearing the canal bed at Rushett and Rooks Hill Farm. The canal bed at Rooks Hill Farm is now in water so it's not easy to see what we have done. We then moved on to Hunt Park, primarily to clear up fallen branches, but also to tidy the area. Himalayan Balsam was also pulled, but at least one piece was left as we found an Elephant Hawk Moth caterpillar chomping its way through the leaves. We also trimmed the footpath from Eastwood Road to Tannery Lane and cleared around the noticeboard near Gosden Aqueduct.

Our next four weeks were spent trimming the canal bed from Pallingham Bridge to Cook's Bridge and pulling out more rooted branches from the quay area. It is now clear from Cook's Bridge to Pallingham Bridge. We then moved on to Birtley where we have tidied up the towpath and canal side of





***The view to the bridge and lock at Rowly is now much clearer and the area lighter.***

brushwood and small trees. We had a week in the middle away from Birtley at Tickner's Heath, clearing long grass ready for the field to be used for the new bridge construction.

**Margaret Darvill**  
***margaret\_darvill@weyandarun.co.uk***

## **Tickner's Heath Depot**

In the last days of August it finally happened, due to the hard work put in by Dennis Gillen and the lads of the EWG, plus a lot of persistent harassing of the electricity company by Julian Cheek, we at the depot can now rival Blackpool. Yes, we now have power at Tickner's.

Having power is such an advantage and we can now turn our hand to almost anything. At present most of our efforts are directed to producing 10 parking signs for the IWA National Trailboat Festival that the Trust is hosting in May. It may seem a long way off, but when we have just one day a week at the depot dates have a habit of creeping up on you.

Prior to the request for signs we have been busy sorting through items which have kindly been donated to the Trust. Unfortunately, some items have had to be consigned to the skip, but others can be used as spare parts and added to the Trust's stock. Punctures have been repaired and our small electrical

items have been given the once over to ensure we comply with H&S regulations.

We have also managed to give the shower unit a hosing down and carried out some minor maintenance so that it's usable for those who attend the camps. It should also give a better impression of the Trust when away from the confines of the depot.

**John Smith**  
***depot@weyandarun.co.uk***

## **Northern and Summit Working Party**

Since the three weeks of WRG summer camps we have continued our work at Birtley Bridge to the point where the base structure is complete and the site substantially cleared of plant and equipment.

In addition, the adjacent banks have been profiled, using the clay material excavated from the canal that was used as a dam to keep water out of our excavation. For the record we started work on 6th July and finished on 29th October – yes, in the same year!

Looking ahead, there are a number of projects that are demanding the NWP's attention. The first is to remove all the temporary road sheets leading from Birtley Courtyard to the canal and take them back to Tickner's for use elsewhere. After that, work will include setting up a site



*Zachariah Keppel undergoing its annual inspection at Drungewick Slipway.*

compound and access for the new bridge at Tickner's Heath.

There will be work at the Thriscutt Slipway to ready the site for the IWA National Trailboat Festival in May and, not forgetting Birtley, we hope to erect the lifting part of the first bridge once the design has been finalised and the steels ordered and fabricated.

Also at Birtley, we are progressing a planning application for another lifting structure, which will be on the site of the existing bridgeway crossing of the canal. The good news here is that the site is much closer to our main compound and access at Birtley Courtyard. The bad news is that there is a gas main running through it which will have to be diverted. It will also need piled foundations due to the poor ground conditions. We will start on this bridge once funds are available and volunteers have the time as our main priority commitment is to the Tickner's Crossing.

NWP welcomes all volunteers. If you would like to join our regular third Saturday of the month team then please contact me.

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

## Boat Maintenance

The team have been preparing for the annual survey, with *Wiggonholt* up on the slipway at Drungewick and *Zachariah Keppel* following. Ian James, our chief engineer, struggled to draw the *Wiggonholt* propeller shaft for its survey, but when he did finally get it out it looked in good condition. (The Maritime and Coastguard Agency inspector passed *Wiggonholt* and the boat was returned to its berth at the Canal Centre. ZK however needs some work before it can be passed fit for next season).

**David Arnold**

**[David\\_arnold@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:David_arnold@weyandarun.co.uk)**

## Eric Walker Group

### Drungewick Lock

The coring of the west wall and the three trial Platipus anchors have been completed. The results of the anchor installation have been assessed and a preliminary design drawn up. A meeting with Platipus Anchor Systems and its installation contractor is planned and following this it is hoped that Platipus will be able to underwrite





***The EWG team are making good progress on the bridge at Harsfold.***

the design with a performance guarantee and issue a quotation. Prior to the ground anchor installation the group need to construct a reinforced concrete capping beam along the full length of the west wall.

## **Harsfold Bridge**

The two site compounds have been built in locations as agreed by the landowner. One is at the top of the access track/bridleway and the other for the welfare facilities is next to the bridge construction area. The site of the welfare facilities had to be carefully selected and prepared as the area is prone to flooding.

Several lorry-loads of crushed stone were needed for the bridleway diversion. This and the Wey South Path diversion have been completed and are in use by the public and horse riders.

The foundation for the bridge north abutment has been constructed and the concrete abutment should be completed in November.

***Dennis Gillen***

***dennis\_gillen@weyandarun.co.uk***

## **PEST**

Since our formation in December 2017 the Boat Group Passengers' Environment Safety Team (PEST) has evolved into a group with eight regular members with five to six members working every other Friday. We aim to keep the operational section of the canal clear of

obstructions that would inhibit the safe passage of our passengers, crew and boats, and try to focus on the parts our working party 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. Tasks have included:

- Creating clear views for skippers from Loxwood Lock to Southland Lock
- Removing outgrowth between Loxwood Lock and Devil's Hole Lock
- Clearing growth from the offside bank between the Canal Centre and Brewhurst Lock
- Removing outgrowth between Baldwin's Knob Lock and Drungewick Slipway
- Removing logs and 'floating islands' between Baldwin's Knob Lock and Drungewick Slipway
- Clearing growth obscuring mooring posts and landing stages

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, peter\_hyem@weyandarun.co.uk,  
or chris\_jones@weyandarun.co.uk***

## Administrator position available

The Trust's board has reviewed the routine operational jobs that volunteers are handling in the back office and concluded that extra help is needed to ensure continuity if some key individuals became unavailable. The intention is to recruit one or more staff on a part-time paid basis.

The ideal candidate will be a very organised person, capable of working on his/her own initiative, with some basic bookkeeping experience and up-to-date experience using office IT systems. To discuss the position further, please contact the Northern Office on support@weyandarun.co.uk.

## Volunteer stuffers needed

The Trust is proud of the volunteer effort that allows us to distribute *Wey-South* at a very economical cost, but the team would value some extra recruits to the 'stuffing' team who put the copies into envelopes.

This usually takes place in the middle of March, June, September and December at Shalford. There are also some areas where we are looking for new or extra hand deliverers, to keep postage costs down. The main gaps are in Pulborough, Guildford, Washington, Coldwaltham, Ashington, Thakeham, Watersfield, Fittleworth and Bury. Please contact support@weyandarun.co.uk if you think you can help.

## Crowdfunding site set up for Birtley Bridges

The Trust has embarked on a crowdfunding campaign to raise funds for its latest project at Birtley, near Bramley in Surrey.



Crowdfunding is an alternative and increasingly popular way to raise money and the Trust has chosen one of the UK's biggest platforms, Crowdfunder, as its partner.

Investors receive rewards in return for their donations – a £20 donation gets the investor a year's membership, while donations of more than £500 qualify for a private half-day boat charter on the restored section of the canal at Loxwood in West Sussex for a party of up to 48 people.

The campaign aims to raise money for materials and equipment to complete two lift bridges at Birtley and allow the creation of a picturesque canalside walk in that stretch of canal that joins the Downs Link path and offers views of Cranleigh Waters.

To find out more, go to **[www.crowdfunder.co.uk/birtley-bridges](http://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/birtley-bridges)**. Please help us by letting friends and family know of the campaign.

## Dates for your diary

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

**Thursday 26th December \***

**Wednesday 1st January 2020 \***

**Saturday 25th April 2020**

**Saturday 23rd to Monday 25th May 2020**

**Santa Cruises at 11am, 12noon, 2pm and 3pm.**

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

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

**Annual Meeting at Cranleigh Village Hall (2.30pm) with events for members in the morning.**

**IWA National Trailboat Festival. E-mail 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.**





## Get organised for 2020 with our wildlife calendar

It's not too late to order your 2020 calendar. This year's features stunning shots of the flora and fauna photographed along the canal, and some landscapes.

Priced at £8, the high-quality A4 calendar makes a great gift. Order online at [www.weyandrun.org.uk/shop](http://www.weyandrun.org.uk/shop), or call 01403 752403.

## Membership Report

Our membership stands at 2,927. We would like to extend a very warm welcome to the following new members.

Charles & Susan Alcock  
Lucy Blakeman  
Adrian & Amanda Butter  
Jean Coleman  
Peter Corcoran  
Michael Elgie  
Brian Ferris  
Rose Hargrave  
Chris Holyoak  
Claire & Ian Leah  
Chris & Jan Nottage  
George & Jill Smith  
Melanie & Sam Stenlake  
Brian & Christine Tullett  
Anne & John Weller  
Patricia & Peter Wise

David Alwin  
Anne & Robert Bogin  
Melanie & Peter Cambridge  
Chris Copas  
Jane Deutsch  
James & Sarah Ellis  
Christopher & Ella Groves  
Alan Harlow  
Jill & Robert Jackson  
Jane & Richard Mant  
Maqi Phan  
Paul Thomas Smith  
Frances & Nate Tauzer  
Dawn & Graham Turnwell  
John Wickens

Peter Barton  
Daniel Bond  
Dominic Cleal  
Bridget & Richard De La Haye  
Claire & Colin Edwards  
Jacky & Peter Evans  
David Hamill  
John Hawkins  
Kevin & Lesley Law  
Pauline McLynn-Titchener  
Stephen Prebble  
Bernard Snell  
David Thomas  
Pip Weitz  
Jon & Shellie Wild

We have learned with regret of the death of:

Kim Owen  
Richard Williams

Bridget Pierce  
John F Gollledge

Edward Ravenhall  
Fanny Lines

For those members who pay by standing order, please remember to adjust your standing order to the new rates if you have not already done so. That is £15 for individual and £20 for joint members.

## Feeling lucky?

A top prize of £200 is up for grabs in this year's Christmas raffle, along with five runners-up prizes of cash or vouchers.

The draw makes an important contribution to our fundraising activity and tickets can be bought up until January 14.

Tickets were enclosed with your September magazine. If you would like more tickets, please call 01483 505566 or e-mail [northernoffice@weyandrun.co.uk](mailto:northernoffice@weyandrun.co.uk).

The regular Numbers Game also provides a chance to support the Trust and win a monthly prize of £100.

There are three winners every month and members contribute £3 by standing order for each number they hold. If you would like to join please e-mail [northernoffice@weyandrun.co.uk](mailto:northernoffice@weyandrun.co.uk) for an application form.

**John Tovell**

**[Membership@weyandrun.co.uk](mailto:Membership@weyandrun.co.uk)**



***The new Birtley Bridge and working party volunteers played a starring role in the IWA's latest safety video when it was filmed at the site recently. A camera crew spent the day capturing footage for the Restoration Hub safety video CDM: No Excuses, which is now on the IWA's YouTube channel. We're sure they couldn't have picked a more photogenic cast.***

