



WEY-SOUFFE

Quarterly Magazine of the
Wey & Arun Canal Trust

Issue 202 March | April | May 2023

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

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The Wey-South team always welcomes articles and pictures for possible use in the magazine.

Issue 202
March/April/May 2023

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Front cover: The canal north of Run Common Road, near Cranleigh. It is unusual to see so much water here (Bill Nicholson).

NEWS

Sally Schupke MBE

The email that dropped into our Chairman Sally's box sometime in December was just so obviously spam. It apparently came from a suspicious organisation (The Cabinet Office) and asked Sally to fill in a form confirming that she was willing to be nominated as a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE). So where was the request for bank details for the inevitable admin fee? Surprisingly there wasn't one.

Sally was sworn to secrecy but apparently the King signed off on the award and the news leaked out around New Year's Eve. Officially Sally has been recognised for "services to the community in Shalford", where she has served two terms as churchwarden at St Mary's and served as captain of the bellringers for many years. But we feel that her work as Canal Trust Chairman since 2009 must have influenced the decision.

A few other members with distinguished service have been honoured in the past. They include John Wood (MBE, Hon. Secretary for over 20 years) and Eric Walker (MBE, tireless leader of what we now call the Eric Walker Group). Jim Phillips (Hon. Treasurer for many years) was awarded the OBE for his service in the Royal Navy.

Sally is not one for big celebrations - a modest drink in the bell tower at the first practice of 2023 was about the limit. However a trip to Buckingham Palace is now scheduled for April.



Discount on private trips

Unlike some organisations, we can't offer a lot of valuable benefits. But what we can offer are boat trips - it's surprising how many members have never experienced a boat trip on the canal.

A private boat trip on the Loxwood section of the canal can be a great way to celebrate a special occasion, or a fun outing for your group or society. We provide the boat and the crew and we can also help with refreshments. If you as a member book a private trip then you will receive a member's discount on the standard price. To find out more or to book, the best way is to use the enquiry form on our website (mention that you are a member under "Other Information", or you can contact support@weyandarun.co.uk).

John Thorp

We are very pleased to announce that John Thorp (pictured right) is taking up the important post of Hon. Secretary. This key job has been vacant since the death of Tony Tyrrell, although we are really grateful to Peter Winter for stepping in as Assistant Secretary. Peter will continue in this job.

John was born and brought up in Guildford and worked in the Guildford branch of his family's bookselling business. After the business closed in 2003 he joined Guildford Borough Council where he took on the task of managing the borough's utility accounts.

John joined the Midweek Working Party around 2006 although at that stage he was only able to turn up for working parties about once a month when he had saved up enough flexitime. He remembers doing major clearance work on several stretches of the canal where now there is activity or plans are moving forward. Over the years he has had the opportunity to see and work on most stretches of the canal.



John Thorp at work on the canal

Gill Davies

It was sad news when Gill told us that she had decided to take up a new job at the start of 2023. Over 4½ years, Gill applied a great deal of skill, energy and enthusiasm to the Press & Publications role. She took the trouble to visit working parties and contributed her time as a volunteer when our Mobile Display Vehicle attended events. Gill took the main role in producing Wey-South magazine, as well as working with TV, radio and press contacts to spread our message.

Gill lives close to the canal in Rudgwick so we hope we will still see her on the towpath from time to time. Just before Christmas we said a formal farewell at the Loxwood Canal Centre and presented Gill with a drawing of Devil's Hole Lock by local artist John Russell-Hayes.



Julian Morgan presents Gill Davies with a drawing of Devil's Hole Lock

50th anniversary

This year sees the 50th anniversary of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust which was formed on 5 February 1973, replacing the Society founded in 1970. We will be marking this occasion with a small boats event at Loxwood on the morning of our Annual Meeting (22 April) and the 50th Puddle (sponsored walk - 4 June). The Puddle will be around Petworth, the home of the 3rd Earl of Egremont who was the driving force behind the building of the Wey & Arun Junction Canal. (See page 16 for a history of the Puddle itself).

Our proposed new constitution/articles

The year 2023 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust (“The Trust”). When it was originally set up, the founders arranged for it to be incorporated as a Limited Company and for it to be registered as a Charity. Because it was, and of course remains, a voluntary charitable organisation it was, as is normal, incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee.

As such a company its constitution comprised its Memorandum and Articles of Association which were adopted by the founding members and officially registered with both the Registrar of Companies and the Charity Commission.

The Memorandum and Articles of Association have served the Trust well during the last fifty years although it has been necessary, from time to time, to make several detailed changes. However, as is well known, much has changed in those fifty years, including changes in Company Law and in Charity Law, let alone the arrival of the electronic, digital age. When the Trust was established, nobody anticipated the internet, email, smart phones and the like. And the problems caused by the recent pandemic highlighted the fact that the Trust’s Memorandum and Articles of Association were ‘showing their age.’

Thus in 2021 the Directors of the Trust, who are also the Trustees, decided that it was time for the Memorandum and Articles to be looked at to see how they could be revised to bring them up to date. The Directors also considered that it was appropriate to look at the Trust’s purposes, which are set out in the Memorandum of Association, to see how well they reflected the nature and extent of the Trust’s activities, as a charity, fifty years on.

Because of changes in Company Law, what were originally called the Memorandum and Articles of a company, and which comprised two separate legal documents, are now simplified as simply its Articles.

In their work to look at the need to update the Trust’s constitution, the Directors took the Charity Commission’s Model Articles as the basis for considering a redraft reflecting, as those Model Articles do, good practice in the charitable field. Thus, through a number of drafts, the Directors reached a consensus on the need for the Trust to bring itself up to date and adopt new, modern Articles, tailor made for the Trust and its activities. In doing so the Directors did not seek to make any radical changes to the way in which the Trust works, or to its expressed aims, but merely to modernise a somewhat antiquated structure which does not, for example, properly provide for today’s digital age.

The draft of the proposed new Articles was then submitted to, and has been approved by, the Charity Commission, to the extent that such approval is required under Charity Law.

The Directors therefore offer for the consideration of the members the proposed draft of the Trust’s new Articles. It is intended to present the draft for approval and adoption at the Trust’s AGM in 2023.

Have your say

The Directors are keen that members have every opportunity to review what is proposed and invite any views that members may have. They will be happy to provide whatever clarification or explanation is requested.

Notes, which are intended to assist in members’ understanding of the new Articles and to highlight areas where more important changes are proposed, are now available on the Trust’s website via ‘Latest News’ together with the proposed new Articles.

Any communications concerning these proposals should be by email to support@weyandarun.co.uk with the subject heading ‘New Articles’ or by post to WACT, Surrey Office, Bridge End, Somerswey, Shalford, Guildford GU4 8EQ.

Notice of Annual Meeting

The 50th Annual General Meeting of the Wey and Arun Canal Trust will take place at Cranleigh Village Hall, Village Way, Cranleigh GU6 8AF on Saturday 22nd April 2023 at 2.30pm. The agenda will be as follows:

1. Apologies for absence (see note 1 below).
2. To receive and adopt the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 23rd April 2022 (see note 2 below).
3. To receive the Chairman's report.
4. To adopt the Accounts and Balance Sheet for the year ending 31st December 2022, together with the Directors' and Independent Examiner's Reports (see note 3 below).
5. To appoint the Independent Examiners for 2023 and to authorise the Council of Management to determine their remuneration.
6. Election of Directors:
 - a. Margaret Darvill, Alan Johnson and Tony Coles, in accordance with Article 42 of the Trust's Articles of Association and John Thorp who was appointed by the Council of Management in the course of the last year under Article 38, retire and are eligible for re-election.
 - b. Candidates nominated in accordance with section 45 of the Trust's Articles of Association (see note 4 below).
7. To receive a Report from W&A Enterprises Ltd.
8. To approve the changes to the Trust's Memorandum and Articles of Association (see note 5 below)
9. To transact any other business proper to an Annual General Meeting.
10. Date of next meeting – date and venue to be confirmed.
11. Close of formal meeting.

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

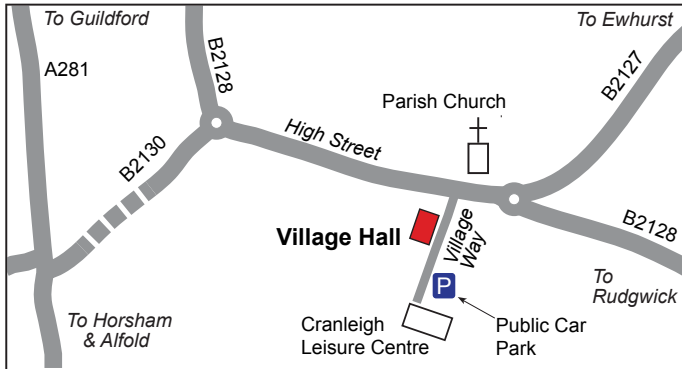
After the break there will be a number of presentations on projects and restoration history.

Notes:

1. Apologies for absence should be sent to the Northern Office (support@weyandarun.co.uk) before the start of the meeting.
2. Copies of the previous (2022) Minutes will be available at the meeting.
3. Copies of the Report and Accounts will be available at the meeting. If you would like a copy in advance, please contact the Northern Office (support@weyandarun.co.uk).
4. The Trust warmly welcomes new candidates for election as Directors. The formal requirements are:
 - a. A paid-up member of the Trust must propose your election in writing (and you must agree to the proposal).
 - b. The proposal must reach the Northern Office (support@weyandarun.co.uk) at least 14 clear days before the meeting – that is, by 7th April 2023 (the Northern Office has a proposal form although you are not obliged to use it).
5. An explanatory note together with the draft Articles can be viewed on the Trust's website at <https://weyarun.org.uk/new-articles>. Anyone requiring a paper version may request one by email to support@weyandarun.co.uk with the subject heading 'New Articles' or by post to WACT, Surrey Office, Bridge End, Somerswey, Shalford, Guildford GU4 8EQ.

How to get there:

The Village Hall is in Village Way, just south of the High Street. If you are coming from the Guildford/Elmbridge/Shamley Green direction, Village Way is the turning on the right immediately after passing the post office (on the left). If you are coming from the Ewhurst/Rudgwick direction, Village Way is the turning on the left just after passing the Library (also on your left). There is a large pay & display car park in Village Way, just beyond the Village Hall. Cranleigh has frequent bus services from Guildford and Horsham.



Your chance to be involved with our Annual Report and Accounts

Currently we don't put a copy of our formal Report & Accounts on every seat at the Annual Meeting. Of course, the board thoroughly reviews the document before approving it (normally only a few days before the Annual Meeting). To put a copy on every seat would be about 2,000 sheets of paper and we know that nearly all of these will go in the recycling bin after the meeting. We normally print about 20-30 copies and make them available at the meeting. We also send an electronic copy before the meeting to anyone who requests one.

Draft Report available

The board is keen that members who wish to do so can thoroughly scrutinise the Report before the meeting. This year we will be happy to make draft copies available, probably by the end of March. Please contact the Northern Office (details on opposite page).

About ourselves - Wey-South

It won't take you long to realise this issue of Wey-South looks a bit different from the one before. It has been on our 'to do' list for a while to modernise the magazine's appearance. It was a shock to realise the format had been in use, with only minor tweaks, since 2012. We are very grateful to volunteer Jonathan Copeland for a huge amount of help with the redesign. The work is not finished yet and your comments are welcome.

With the departure of Gill Davies, this issue has been largely put together by a temporary volunteer team. While we do intend to use some paid staff time on the magazine, offers of volunteer help would be very welcome. If you could be an occasional reporter, or photographer, or particularly if you have any experience with publication layout, please get in touch. (Details on page 2).

Opening up the northern canal

The canal south of Bramley has seen plenty of activity in the last 3-4 years and is set to see much more. In terms of planning applications:

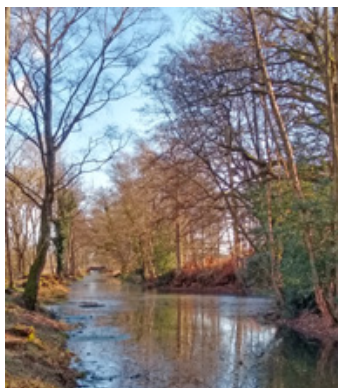
1. On the northernmost (Birtley) section we obtained permission in early 2019 to build a lifting bridge (Birtley Bridge 1) and improve the towpath. Then at the end of 2020 we gained permission for a second lifting bridge (Birtley Bridge 2). Bridge 1 is complete but with a temporary fixed deck. Bridge 2 is our main active construction site on the canal at present.
2. The next section south (Rooks Hill/Fanesbridge) is partially infilled and a planning application for restoration is with Waverley Borough Council.
3. The next section south (Rushett Common) saw a planning application refused in early 2022. We are now working towards a revised application.

In this issue:

- Bill Nicholson and friends go for a walk along the whole length from Birtley to Rushett Common
- We report on construction progress at Birtley Bridge 2
- We focus on the circular walk we have created at Birtley
- Tony Ford gives our latest thinking on the Rushett Common section.

A Winter walk

In recent years the Newbury Working Party Group (NWPG) have organised a New Year walk along the canal. This year we headed to the northern end to look at the work being carried out and planned for the canal south of Bramley.



Looking south towards Birtley Bridge 1 with the winding hole on the right

Birtley Bridge 2

From the Red Lion at Shamley Green it was a short hop east across the Cranleigh Waters to the Wey & Arun Canal at Birtley. Here construction work is underway to install a lifting bridge (Birtley Bridge 2) on the site of a former swing bridge recently revealed by the removal of the earth causeway. The view was limited as the EWG team had wrapped up much of their work in black plastic to protect it from frost and rain over the holiday. The newly profiled canal north was a clear change to its clogged and overgrown appearance last summer.

The Birtley towpath

The canal south of the bridge is in water and remains so throughout the year. This section has been progressively cleared over the past three years opening vistas up and down the canal. The 3-metre wide track makes for easy walking and forms part of a circular route involving the canal towpath and the Downs Link Path. En route we passed a newly installed milestone.

Halfway between the two proposed lifting bridges there is a causeway which provides the original farm access across the canal to land east of the Downs Link. This will be removed once the permanent lift bridge, Birtley Bridge 1, has been installed to enable farm vehicles access to this otherwise landlocked area.

Birtley Bridge 1

The next feature on our walk is Birtley Bridge 1. Perhaps unique in the restoration so far, it is the only new bridge on a site where there wasn't one historically. This will change when the Tickner's Cossing is completed. The brick substructure here was built during a summer of intensive volunteer work (2019) by Waterway Recovery Group Canal camps as well as the Trust's own volunteer teams.

The temporary bridge deck is made of timbers which were used to support the walls at Drungewick Lock during repairs there, pre pandemic. These were repurposed by the NWPG into a bridge to create the first permissive footpath circuit. The next stage will be to replace the temporary structure with a permanent steel deck, lifting towers and mechanisms similar to that at Bridge 2 to the north.



The team illustrates the proposed canal route in the Rooks Hill section

Rooks Hill section

About 100 metres south of Bridge 1 the canal ends abruptly, the line having been filled in many years ago. This is known as the Rooks Hill section. The good news is that an alternative 300m long route across the field has been acquired by the Canal Trust. Further, a planning application has been submitted to excavate a new canal and to build a new lock bridge and 3-metre wide access path. We hope that we will receive a positive decision on this application before the summer.

The southern end of the infilled section is crossed by a bridleway that runs from the A281 to Shamley Green. This will have to cross the canal but this time there is room to construct a brick arched bridge. This is

included in the planning application along with a winding hole and mooring bay. Heading into woodland, the original canal bed quickly crosses a culverted stream.

Remnants of Fanesbridge Lock

The culvert will almost certainly require repair work at the same time that the canal banks are built back up. We are now into another newly acquired section of canal which includes the site of Fanesbridge Lock. Remarkably, this is only the second lock down from the summit at Elmbridge but it is only evident by a rise in ground level. An excavation carried out in 2019 failed to find any evidence of the former brick lock. This is perhaps surprising given the extensive remains found at Birtley Bridge 2. A new lock is proposed together with backpumping – to be a concrete structure clad in bricks.

On to Hazel Wood and Rushetts

Above the lock there is a short cleared section of dry canal bed. This was now on the third and last section of the walk and covers the length where another deviation of the canal route is necessary to bypass land in private residential ownership. From here to Run Common Bridge was the length of proposed canal refused planning permission in 2022. (See Tony Ford's article - page 12 - for a full update on our position.) A short hop through the woods took us back onto the Downs Link and up to the bridge that takes Hazel Wood Lane across the old railway. Taking the lane east back towards Shamley Green we could see the old line of the canal running south towards Run Common – holding water after such a wet holiday period.

That brought us to the end of our winter exploration. We all agreed that when opened this will be an interesting and attractive section of canal with great potential for use by walkers, paddleboarders and canoeists with the long term use by boats from the main

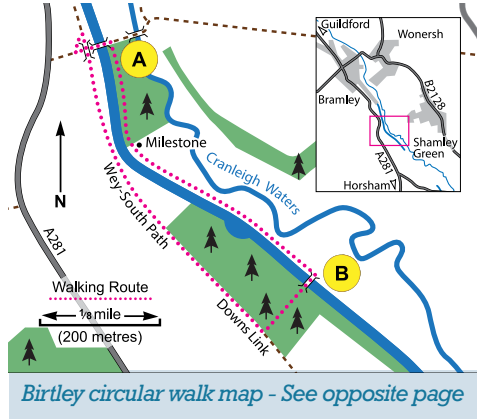
Continued overleaf

A Winter walk *continued*

system the ultimate objective. It will cost money to achieve. Further funds will be required to complete the two lift bridges, excavate and line the new sections of canal, plus building a fixed bridge and new lock. However, it can be achieved in bite-sized chunks as the funds become available – whether by direct donations or sponsorship in kind.

Please note that the walk took place under special arrangements and that until restoration is complete there is no public access to the canal route described except between the two Birtley Bridges.

Bill Nicholson



Birtley Bridges

Concrete pours and formwork have been the story of recent work at Birtley Bridge 2. The approach is to 'lift' the walls on the east and west sides of the new bridge in a series of stages. At each stage the team erects reinforcement, then the timber formwork, then the concrete can be poured.

Achieving a constant distance between the two sides of formwork when the concrete is poured has been a challenge. The solution has been to use specialised ties.

Concrete installation

As the site is literally behind Singh Concrete's plant, it made perfect sense to use the company to supply the concrete. We devised a scheme whereby the company could mix and then pump the concrete via a 70m long hose line from their plant directly into the bridge foundations.

For the first pour we were lucky to have one of the rare dry days in November. The pour was completed using "walkie-talkie" communication between the pump operator in the plant and the staff at the site. A second pour was scheduled for the next month but this fell right in the middle of December's cold snap, with daytime temperatures of freezing or just above, so sadly we had to postpone at the last minute.

The team wrapped up the structure to keep it clean over the Christmas break and the second pour went ahead in early January. At the time of writing, the next pour is scheduled in late February.



Birtley Circular Walk

Ever since we acquired the Birtley section of canal, south of Bramley in Surrey, we have wanted the public to be able to enjoy it. This is now possible thanks to the creation of a circular walk using the canal towpath in one direction and the Downs Link (the former Guildford-Horsham railway) in the other.

Full details of the walk and a map (see opposite page) are available on our website. The total distance is about 1.5km/1 mile.

Extending public access to other canal sections in the area is an important part of our future plans.



The path between the Downs Link and Birtley Bridge 1 (from the Downs Link end)

Looking north from Birtley Bridge 1 - Midweek Working Party members are improving the towpath

Birtley Bridge 1



What's next for Rushett Common?

We were naturally disappointed when, in January 2022, our planning application for Rushett Common to Run Common Road was refused by Waverley Borough Council after a protracted and frustrating planning process. However, in the best traditions of the Trust – “if at first you don't succeed ...”

That application sought to obtain permission for an alternative route for the canal to bypass the development at Hazel Wood which blocks the original canal line. We saw an opportunity to utilise the adjacent Downs Link corridor, which is some 18 metres wide, to not only host the new canal line, but to also provide an enhancement to the Downs Link long-distance path which is narrow, muddy and poorly drained.

No new transport link

The Downs Link corridor, owned by the local authority, is the former Guildford to Horsham railway line, which was abandoned as part of the “Beeching cuts”. Before preparing our application, we had sought confirmation from the local authorities that there was no realistic prospect of the railway line, or some other formal transport system such as tram or guided bus, being introduced to that corridor. They confirmed that several studies had determined that, notwithstanding the significant amount of development taking place in Cranleigh and at Dunsfold Park, there is no economic case for a new transport link. Instead the Downs Link should continue to be a long-distance recreational route for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders.

Refused application

However, the local Councillors in Waverley took the view that, despite this official recommendation, the introduction of the canal would permanently curtail the prospect of introducing a transport link and accordingly they refused the application, primarily on that basis.

Since then a small group of Trustees has been exploring how we might achieve our original objective of reinstating the canal

past the Hazel Wood development whilst not prejudicing that prospect of a future railway. A revised application is now being prepared, the principal element of which is the provision of a strip of land alongside the Downs Link corridor which will enable the corridor to be repositioned a short distance to the south of the existing whilst, importantly, maintaining continuity of that 18m wide corridor throughout the site. A portion of the existing corridor can then be released for the canal route.

New canal towpath

The revised proposals also take account of the fact that, particularly post-pandemic, the Downs Link path is destined to become a much more popular and well-used route, including as a commuting route given the increasing popularity of electric bikes. This in turn makes it less realistic for the Downs Link path to run alongside the canal, as the original application proposed, since that increased



The site of Hazel Wood Bridge seen from the south in 2016

use is likely to be somewhat incompatible with the “traditional” canal towpath - for walking, fishing and quiet enjoyment of the countryside. Accordingly, the revised application includes a new canal towpath which is separate from the Downs Link path.

Further information on the proposals will be published in *Wey-South* when the planning application has been submitted.

Tony Ford

Fundraising and communications

– are you hiding your talents?

The newly formed Fundraising and Communications team is aiming to enhance our communications beyond our current membership and raise new sources of income to ensure we can continue and if possible accelerate our restoration efforts.

Some of the key activities we have planned and underway are :

- Reviewing and updating the WACT website to communicate better about the work of the Trust
- Expanding our social media reach and presence on platforms used by a younger generation
- Developing fundraising campaigns and events to engage the local community
- Identifying and pursuing grant funding opportunities
- Engaging with local schools and businesses

We are lucky to have so many active volunteers in our various working groups but have struggled to get many people involved in activities such as Fundraising and Communications.

If you have any of the following skills or simply some time and energy to help out, I would love to hear from you. I'm sure there are many hidden talents amongst our volunteers and members.

- Writing articles for websites and publications
- Managing website content
- Social Media – building a following, creating videos
- Fundraising for another charity
- Organising events

Gordon Powell

Fundraising Coordinator

(and Northern Working Party Volunteer)
gordon_powell @weyandarun.co.uk

Brewhurst Lock - New Pump

Last year, we had to spend around £55,000 on unplanned repair work on the Loxwood section. First it was Baldwin's Knob Lock, where a new cill was needed, then to add to our problems the backpump at Brewhurst Lock failed and was found to be beyond repair. A temporary solution kept the lock open for boats, but just before Christmas two new permanent pumps were installed. Thanks to our Canal Maintenance Unit (CMU), the control equipment is housed in a smart wooden cabinet. Subject to finance, we would like to install similar equipment at the other locks on the operational section.

The pumps are under the concrete cover in the right foreground and the lower picture is a view inside the control cabinet



"Dear Diary"

The summer of 2022 was a difficult one for Loxwood boating. In the first part of the season, Baldwin's Knob Lock (BKL, the second lock south from the Canal Centre) was out of action for repairs. Longer trips had to head north to Southland Lock. When BKL work was finished, there was no chance to use it as there wasn't enough water to refill the section below the lock.

Let's summarise what happened after we could finally reopen the section south of BKL to Drungewick Slipway.

31 October 2022



Zachariah Keppel (ZK) moved to Drungewick (see left) and hauled up the slipway, ready for hull painting and 'out of water' inspection by the Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA). Huge relief as it would have been seriously embarrassing not to have the boat in place for the MCA.

4 November

MCA inspection day. ZK relaunched down the slipway and moved back to the Canal Centre. A bright day, so some good photo opportunities around BKL. At the Canal Centre, **Wiggonholt (WH)** does a very brief running trial for the MCA inspector.

3 December

Start of Santa Trips. Ambitiously, and trying to recover some revenue, we scheduled Santa on 11 days before Christmas, with two or three trips on each day.



7/12 - ZK reaches Drungewick as WH waits to return



7/12 - WH south of BKL

7 December

Special Invitation cruise for Milestone Club members, sponsors and donors. WH and ZK are both in use. The weather is great and the trips successfully reach Drungewick Slipway, giving a good view of recent forestry work around Barnsill Bridge. Midweek Working Party are in action clearing up. It's not ideal running these trips in the winter, but with a constant supply of hot drinks guests seemed to enjoy themselves. It's really notable that trees are rich with autumn colours so late in the year.

9 December

Another Special Invitation trip. Overnight the canal has frozen and **Josias Jessop** (JJ) has to be deployed on icebreaking. Progress is slow and to avoid a very long trip the boat turns back below BKL.

10 December

The bitterly cold weather continues (as low as -7°C some nights). As well as Santa Trips, we have a private trip booked on ZK. As JJ is in use as Santa's grotto, ZK gets the icebreaking duties. It's a squeeze, but ZK is just ready in time for the private trip. We got a lovely note of thanks from the hirers.



9/12 - WH at BKL

11/12 Martlets on Brewhurst Pound
& below - about to launch at Brewhurst Lock



11 December

More icebreaking and Martlets Kayak Club arrive for their annual Christmas outing. Most of the year they launch from Brighton beach. It's a colourful and dramatic sight as the paddlers explore the limits of the ice-broken section. Beyond this, the ice is at least an inch thick and impassable. Some snow falls as JJ is taken up through Brewhurst Lock.

11/12 - WH
and Santa trip
at Brewhurst
Lock



10/12 - WH on
Santa trip south
of Brewhurst
Lock





11/12 - Louise Osborne
Brewhurst, snow 11/12



11/12 - WH and Santa trip at
Brewhurst Lock
Martlets - unusual wildlife spotting
(below)



11/12 - Sally Schupke,
Julian Nowell, Rita Mount



11/12 - Brewhurst Lock
(Julian Nowell)

11/12 Martlets at Brewhurst Lock
(Julian Nowell)

11/12 - WH on Santa trip
approaching Brewhurst Lock

11/12 Martlets attack ice near
Loxwood High St Bridge





17/12 - JJ icebreaking at Brewhurst



17/12 - JJ icebreaking

12-16 December

Heroic efforts as John Reynolds and team break ice every day to make sure the next weekend's trips can run as scheduled.

17-18 December

The cold weather is due to end, but not just yet. Icebreaking is needed before each day's trips.

23 December

The last Santa trip. Thanks to huge efforts by volunteers, all trips have run as planned. Time for a couple of days off.

26 December

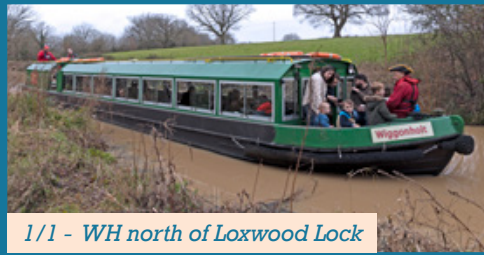
Two trips to Devil's Hole Lock for Boxing Day, with good passenger numbers and fair weather.



17/12 - JJ icebreaking on Brewhurst Pound

17/12 - Santa & Michael Skam





1/1 - WH north of Loxwood Lock

1 January 2023

Two more public trips to Devil's Hole Lock. The section north of Loxwood Lock is really looking different after the recent forestry work. Now there is an open field sloping down to the canal on the village side and it feels a bit like a park. After plenty of rain, the water is pouring over Loxwood Lock gates - if only we could bottle it for the summer.

7 January

JJ moves to Drungewick Slipway for repairs and making good the paintwork damage from the icebreaking.



1/1 - WH at Loxwood Lock (Louise Osborne & Colin Edwards)

14/1 - WH at Barnsill Bridge with forestry work in foreground



14 January

Another Special Invitation trip for those who couldn't make it before Christmas. The weather forecast is terrible - heavy rain - and it's not wrong. Water is gushing over BKL gates but WH makes the trip to Drungewick Slipway and back.





Pallingham Docks: a mystery yet to be solved

Much still remains to be uncovered about Pallingham Docks and their use. Giles Eyre looks at what we have learnt so far

Pallingham Docks lay a short distance above Pallingham Lock right at the southern end of the Wey & Arun Canal on the Arun Navigation (Pallingham to Newbridge). The docks originally consisted of two adjacent docks, one it appears significantly wider than the other, and a carpenter's workshop.

What's left today appears to indicate that they could be isolated from the canal and presumably drained into the adjacent stream and used as dry docks. A map of 1850 (Stopham Estate map - West Sussex Record Office 'Add MS 2049') is the first to show clearly the existence of Pallingham Docks. The docks are similarly represented on later maps including the Ordnance Survey for 1897 and 1911. A photo of 1886, shortly before the Arun Canal was abandoned and after it was last used for barges, shows the workshop but although the view is over the docks, the docks themselves are not visible. Sales particulars of

1911 make reference to a "Dock and Carpenter's shop" at this site.

Was it a dock or a wharf?

The purpose of having two docks is unclear. There were several points on the tidal River Arun where barges could be built and repaired, however in 1804 the Proprietors of the Arun Navigation had agreed that "a dock for repairing and building barges" should be erected on the Arun Canal at Pallingham (or Pitherington as it was also called). That this was to be a dock for such purposes is emphasised by the correction of the company minutes where the word "wharf" was deleted and replaced by "dock" and a reference to its purpose. This would certainly suggest that the purpose was not for loading or unloading vessels.

The site of the dockyard lies on private property although adjacent to a public right of way. Some stone work remains marking the entrances to the two docks, and there are slots for planks at the entrance, although these may be of a later date. The entrance to each dock is about 4.1 metres wide and the length is certainly sufficient for the largest size of barge believed to be in use on this canal and the Wey & Arun Junction Canal.



Clockwise from top left: the docks, originally two adjacent docks, are located on private land; the lock-keeper's cottage; Members were given a special tour ahead of last year's AGM; an OS map from OS 1879.



In his book *London's Lost Route to the Sea*, P A L Vine states that Pallingham Docks was the site at which many barges were built by the Stone family, some of whom occupied Pallingham Lock Cottage and who were also responsible for collecting tolls at the lock. The census records for 1841, 1851 and 1861 record James Stone, living at the lock cottage, as a barge builder and that in 1851 he employed two others, one of whom was John Stone, and 1861 three others, including John and his son Jesse Stone. In later records James had died and Ben Stone is recorded as a carpenter. Work was no longer available for John and Jesse Stone at Pallingham and they moved on to the River Wey Navigation where by 1871 John was lock keeper at Paper Court Lock, his son Joseph was a carpenter there, and Jesse was a carpenter at Worsfold.

In 1808 it was noted that "The barges [on the Arun] are three sorts: the largest carry 30 ton; the second size 25; the smallest 15 ton: the second are the best."

What do we know about the barges built at Pallingham?

From 1816, when the Arun Canal was connected to the Wey Navigation by the Wey & Arun Junction Canal, it is likely that many of the vessels used on these canals also worked the two rivers, Wey and Arun, and were a little under 70ft long and slightly less than 12ft wide. This size is generally reflected in the toll records which indicate that about 40 tons was a common load.

Carriage of goods from Pallingham in 1841-1842

Date	Bargeman	Tons	Goods	From	To
26th Nov 1841	Mann	2	Pales	Pallingham	Stonebridge
15th Dec 1841	J Barnard	19	Hoops	Pallingham	London
5th Jan 1842	Mann	11	Timber	Pallingham	Stonebridge
19th Feb 1842	J Stone	1 1/4	Plank	Pallingham	Dock
13th March 1842	J Warner	2 1/2	Kiln Lime	Houghton	*Pitherington
2nd April 1842	J Barnard	19	Hoops	Pallingham	London

**Pitherington was an alternative name for Pallingham at that time.*

As the tolls were taken at Pallingham lock, craft recorded as coming from Pallingham would almost certainly have loaded at Pallingham Quay before passing onto the canal, and that is reinforced by the only reference to 'Dock' recording planks being carried (on a raft) from Pallingham Quay to the Dock, where they were presumably used either in building or repairing barges, or in the carpenter's shop there. No load otherwise is recorded as being brought either to 'Pallingham' or 'Dock'. Barges heading south off the canal would not be expected to deliver goods to Pallingham Quay as this was a point of loading of timber.

Somewhat surprisingly the Arundel Register of Shipping 1824-1844 and 1844-1855 does not list a single barge built at Pallingham, although there are barges recorded as built at Pulborough, Stopham, Littlehampton and Arundel. From these registers it can be identified that some at least of the barges regularly trading between London and Arundel in this period – Arun, Norfolk and Union – were built at Arundel and measured up to 69ft 3½in x 11ft 6½in x 3ft 10in.

Was there a dry dock?

It was, and remains, common practice to build, or to carry out substantial work on the hull of a wooden barge on hardstanding, rather than in a dry dock, offering more space in which to handle the timbers. Yet there does not appear to have been sufficient space beside the canal for such hardstanding at Pallingham. The docks, however, would have been ideal for repair and maintenance work as a graving (dry) dock.

Confusingly, while identifying the presence of docks, the maps referred to named Pallingham Docks as Pallingham Quay. Pallingham Quay certainly existed nearby on the river Arun, as

indicated by the presence today of Pallingham Quay Farm. From Elizabethan times, timber was brought down to the river here from the Weald for onward shipment by barge to Arundel and Littlehampton.

Or was there a Quay?

Whether the docks were ever used as a quay for loading or unloading goods is unclear. The site lacked connection to any road and would not conveniently have served any significant community in the area.

Toll records for vessels passing through Pallingham Lock onto the Arun Canal (the River Arun was toll free) have survived only for 6 months in 1840/41. References to Pallingham in these records are relatively few (see table) and other toll records which survive make no reference to Pallingham at all.

It's clear that further work on the ground and in the archives is needed to clarify the purpose and importance of Pallingham Docks.

The search goes on.



Above: Archive shot of Margaret Darvill and Chairman Sally Schupke on the day of Margaret's first Poddle as organiser (2014). Right: 2011 was memorable for being wet - the walk is usually blessed with fine weather.



The Poddle - a quick look over 50 years

The first and rather modest sponsored walk took place on July 22nd 1973 as a linear walk, starting at the Three Compasses at Alfold on the Summit and reaching Rowner Lock. According to a report in the 7th issue of *Wey-South* (the Bulletin of the newly inaugurated Wey & Arun Canal Trust) 16 people took part and it raised £50.85 for restoration funds.

The following year the walk was moved to May and Littlehampton to Amberley along the River Arun, some 10 miles. This time it was much more financially successful, raising £280.

20-mile route

In 1975 the organisers upped the ante with a 20-mile route from Godalming to Weybridge, and even offered the chance to sponsor a 'celebrity' walker and prizes. More than 160 people attended (only 115 finished, though). The challenge struck a chord as it raised £1,600. The celebrity may have been P A L Vine, author of London's Lost Route to the Sea, who was not only an accomplished writer but the then holder of the British and European 220 yards hurdles record. He ran

the four miles from Godalming to Guildford while another participant ran the 11 miles to Send.

The runners set a precedent as subsequent years also featured speedy participants who ran the entire course (any takers for 2023?).

By 1976 it was decided to make the event a circular walk – avoiding the cost of transporting walkers back to the start, which must have been quite a logistical headache for the organisers as well as costly.

400 walkers

In 1979 the walk was being dubbed 'Walkaway' and attracted 400 walkers, had 70 people helping with its organisation and raised an impressive £5000. The introduction of a real ale bar (which sold out) might have helped with the fundraising somewhat.

In 1984 the organisers may have been a little less flush with volunteers as they installed cardboard cutouts of marshals instead of the real thing along parts of the route, causing much hilarity.



The walk becomes the Poddle

It was in 1985 that the annual sponsored walk got its nickname The Poddle. According to *The Wey-South Project* the reason for the change of name was because it was thought that sponsored walks were regarded as a bit 'old hat'. "For some long time the word Poddle was thought to be an old Scottish word for plodding about the mud, but this is not so. Members of a sponsored walk committee [we live in hope!] came up with a variety of words, and Poddle was the one they thought best," the publication states.

At that time the IWA was hoping that all canal societies and trusts would each organise a sponsored walk, under the title IWALK, which would result in a worthwhile amount of funding towards their restoration work and the Trust was happy to oblige. Well-known dog food producer Pedigree supported the walk, offering a prize to the dog with the most sponsorship taking part and 'Douggie', a Scottie, raised £204 and received a year's supply of dog food.

Typical titles

The title was tweaked over subsequent years, taking on an alliterative theme - 1986 was the Peaslake Poddle, 1988 was the Puttenham



Left: Richard Smith and wife Vanessa have helped serve refreshments since about 1978. Above: The walk requires a lot of behind-the-scenes organisation, from walking the route to putting up signage. Here Chris Tavener (left) was the last man and Jim Nunn a waymarker.

Poddle, 1998 was the Surrey Stroll, 2004 was Legging It to Lordings and 2005 was the Amberley Amble – but today it fondly remains The Poddle.

Whatever its title, the success of the annual sponsored walk over its 50 years comes down to the hard work of the many people it takes to organise the event. Current organiser Margaret Darvill has been at the helm since 2014, helping to raise many tens of thousands of pounds in that time – an amazing feat.

2023's Petworth Poddle

To mark its 50th event the Poddle this year on Sunday June 4th fittingly starts and finishes in the grounds of Petworth House. The 12-mile event is open to everyone so get friends and family involved too – you don't have to do the full 12-miles as it can be split into two halves with transport back to your car if needed. Lunch and refreshments are provided.

A sponsor form and more details of this year's walk are included with this issue of *Wey-South*. If walking isn't for you then why not sponsor the Last Man or volunteer as a helper – just email margaret_darvill@weyandarun.co.uk for details.

Loxwood's Society of Dependants

In addition to being propitious for the enlargement of England's inland waterways network, the first four decades of the nineteenth century were also an era of social ferment, inspired partly by the social idealism underpinning the French Revolution, then intensified for working people by the privations resulting from the Napoleonic wars. Strict new laws imposed through fear of the revolutionary potential of an 'enemy within' and the support of the Anglican church – even the Wesleyan Methodists – for the harsh constraints on fraternisation of workers meant that urban and rural labourers and their families felt obliged to look elsewhere for spiritual and material comfort.

This position created opportunities for a range of Christian Protestant sects to offer satisfaction of these needs. An early entrant into the movement of 'new' non-conformity (The Society of Friends or 'Quakers' had existed since the seventeenth century) was the Primitive Methodists, splintering from the Wesleyans in 1810 to establish a widespread following quite quickly and become a powerful influence in many – largely, but not exclusively – urban working-class communities.

Charismatic Preacher

Contemplating the tranquillity of Loxwood today one might think that its context of rural West Sussex and south-west Surrey would be immune from such influence. Not so, for throughout the first half of the nineteenth century many of the newer rural settlements lacked an Anglican church as the main focus of the community. At that time Loxwood was one such place, served only by a chapel-of-ease manned by a curate. Hence there existed an opportunity for a charismatic preacher, also an effective organiser, to attract a following and build a congregation.

That person was John Sirgood (1821-1885) a south London shoemaker, who had been inspired by the energy of more than one south of England sect that had grown out of Methodism. Sirgood arrived in the Loxwood area around 1850 and seems to have practised

his itinerant mission across south London's rural hinterland only on Sundays because he continued his work as a shoemaker in Clapham or another south London suburb throughout the working week. He named his sect The Society of Dependants, known subsequently by those outside the faith by the unwelcome nickname 'Cokelers'.

Combination Stores

A large part of the attractiveness of the Society was social and economic as well as religious because the aim was not only to attract congregations for collective worship, but also to run retail shops on co-operative principles. Towards the end of the century, not only were there Cokelers' meeting houses in at least eight settlements in Surrey and Sussex but also retail 'Combination Stores'. From the



Loxwood, Cokelers Chapel, Jan 2023

founding of the Society, Loxwood was the principal location of the sect and was the last meeting-house to close, the final services in the chapel on Spy Lane being held in 1984. The chapel survives in good condition, in use today by the Emmanuel Fellowship.

Powerful Opposition

As the first purpose-made chapel, built by the congregation, it cannot be coincidental that its construction commenced around 1861, the year when this growing sect experienced the formal opposition of a powerful landowner and magistrate. This person was Henry Frederick

Napper J.P, of Laker's Lodge, Loxwood, who enlisted the support of other prominent local residents, including two Anglican clergymen from Alfold and Wisborough Green, to sign and send a formal notice to Sirgood requiring him to cease holding services in a rented house on Napper's land. Sirgood fought back, publishing a pamphlet Religious Intolerance in the Rural Districts of Sussex. Yet the threatened enforcement action did not follow: H.F. Napper was an old man who excused himself from not exacting the penalties threatened in the notice because of uncertainty over changes in the law and he died soon afterwards.

Anti Marriage

Accordingly the Society continued to flourish, establishing its enterprise of Combination Stores at Loxwood and four other locations. The mission of these shops was, as far as possible, to supply and sell necessities independent of the open-market exploitation of consumers by cheats and profiteers. This aim was assisted by growing produce for sale, providing work for some single men of the congregation, whilst the stores were staffed by single women who lived over the shop. These arrangements fitted Sirgood's world-view that the main commitment of members should be to serve Christ. He was critical of the dilution of mission he considered a consequence of marriage, a principle which naturally

contributed to shrinking congregations as the twentieth century advanced. By the inter-war years the Loxwood store had expanded its service to include a garage selling petrol and repairing vehicles. The multi-gabled element of the former stores is still the most prominent building in Loxwood High Street.

Sunday Ban ?



Above : Combination Stores, C 1910

Below :

Loxwood, Combination Stores site, Jan 2023



What remains to be discovered is whether the mission of the Cokelers was instrumental in causing the Wey & Arun Junction Canal Company to impose a ban on use of the waterway on Sundays (see Wey-South 201). Increasing religious piety characterised most of the nineteenth century, the most powerful campaign for a complete ban on Sunday work and commerce being run by the Lord's Day Observance Society founded in 1831. From 1855 to 1867 the canal company's chairman was

John Napper (1811-1880), nephew of H.F. Napper.

Alan Johnson

Technical Liaison Officer

*This article leans heavily on an excellent book: **Dependant Brethren of Sussex & Surrey (2021) by Roger J. Nash, which is on sale at our Loxwood Canal Centre.***

Tipping the scales – looking after the fish in the canal

Last summer's high temperatures and low rainfall weren't only bad news for our boat operation – they also put the many fish living in the canal in danger as oxygen levels dropped.

“As the water warms up the oxygen levels fall, and of course there is less water to contain any oxygen,” explains John Reynolds, director of Conservation & Ecology. “Additionally, when the water levels are really low as seen last year, it's easier for fish predators such as herons, kingfishers and mink to catch their prey.”

John says that as well as trying to maintain water for boat trips we also try to maintain the water for wildlife, which means not letting levels get too low in any of the pounds.

“We help maintain oxygen levels by moving water through the locks and then back pumping which introduces air bubbles thus increasing oxygen - every little helps.”

Running the boats also helps by churning the water, but when the levels are too low the boats can stir the mud and silt which can block the fishes' gills. At the worst case the Environment Agency may be called in to do a fish catch and relocate the fish, as we have done when we have completely drained a section for maintenance.

Electrofishing

In September 2019 when we needed to drain the section between Drungewick slipway and Drungewick Lock a local specialist environmental consultancy was called in to ensure the 8,000-plus fish living there could be transported to safety. A team from Aquamaintain used electrofishing to catch the fish, a process that involves passing an electric current through the water, from a generator onboard a small boat.



Mick says fishing brings him closer to nature and he can see what others miss.

The electric field 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 onboard containers. From there they are moved to a tank of oxygenated water on the towpath and 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.

Loxwood Angling Society

The operation highlighted just how many fish can be found in the canal, something Mick Simms, chairman of the Loxwood Angling Society knows only too well. The society's members have permission to fish the stretch from Loxwood Lock to Southland Lock, about a mile of water, as well as the

Drungewick section from Drungewick Lock up to a point about 400 yards past Baldwin's Knob Lock, about one and a half miles.

“Fish do well in the canal”

Fish do well in the canal and breed well says Mick. “I have seen fry of roach, rudd and bream and have no reason to think the tench and crucian carp are not as prolific,” he adds.

While the club stock the canal – beginning in 2015 when first getting permission to fish – there are plenty of species that have found their way into the water by other means. “At Drungewick all the fish have got in there naturally from when the river floods. There are roach, rudd, bream, perch, pike and a few ghost carp. The carp were put in by someone cleaning out their pond we think.

It is illegal to move fish without a permit, and we informed the EA.

“At Loxwood there were already some small perch and pike in there, probably as spawn sticking to the legs of herons and moorhens and so on.”

Mick says the canal is a lovely spot to fish. “Being a local I learned to fish on the river by the footbridge over to Ifold. I like fishing for the closeness to nature and of course there is a bit of the hunter in all of us. Sitting there quietly in sensible clothes, no bright colours, the wildlife soon comes to accept our presence and we then get to see what a lot of other people miss. There is nothing like a Kingfisher landing on my rod and giving me the once over. It has happened more than once.”

To join the Loxwood Angling Society, email loxwooddas@gmail.com. The club fishes local rivers as well as the canal. Fees are Seniors £23; Ladies £15; Juniors £13; OAP £15. As well as membership of the society a rod licence from the Environment Agency is also required to fish the canal.

Fish species found in the canal at Loxwood

Roach One of the most common fish in the canal. It will grow in the canal to possibly 11lb, however 8oz would be more common.

Bronze bream Found in rivers, lakes, gravel pits and canals. A good sized specimen in our canal would be 3lbs.

Rudd The rudd is not quite as common as the roach. A colourful fish that feeds in the upper layers of the water. Rudd will grow to a similar size to roach.

Perch The perch is one of the predators found in the canal, feeding on small roach, rudd and aquatic insects and bugs. Perch in the canal will grow to around 1lb.



Pike The pike (pictured left), is the largest predator in the canal. Its main food is small fish. However larger specimens will take ducklings or baby moorhens in season. Pike can grow to more than 30lbs but the average size in the canal is 4lbs.

European Eel Found in most waters in Britain. eels in the canal will reach a weight of around 1-2lb. The eel is now becoming an endangered species. Elvers (baby eels) are hatched in the Sargasso Sea and make their way to Europe on the Gulf Stream to live in freshwater. They may live for up to 80 years before returning to the Sargasso to breed.

Crucian Carp A pretty fish, the crucian carp will grow to 1-2lbs in the canal.

Tench A very slimy fish, tench live on the bottom of the canal. A good sized tench in the canal would possibly get to 5lbs.

By Mick Simms

What's happening to trees at Loxwood?

The Trust is in the middle of the largest forestry project in its history, along the banks of the canal around Loxwood. On recent boat trips with members and supporters, tree work was very obvious and led to a lot of questions. We sat down with Operations Manager Dave Evans to find out the answers.

Why is this work needed?

We are not doing this by choice; it is essential to make sure that towpath and canal users stay safe. Ash dieback disease is the main culprit. An infected tree is much more likely to shed large branches or even fall down. There are a huge number of ash trees along the canal bank which are potentially dangerous

How did we plan the work?

We started with a professional tree survey that looked at some 600 trees and gave each one a priority for treatment. We needed to obtain a felling licence. Generally we work according to the priority order, but another factor is how easy it is to reach each site and the condition of other trees in the vicinity.

How much is this costing?

The first estimates for contractors to do the work were shockingly high – at least £100,000. We needed to reduce this cost by using our own workforce as far as possible – our staff, our own volunteers and visiting volunteers, mainly specialists from Waterway Recovery Group's Forestry team (WRG Forestry). The main costs are for hiring specialist equipment such as cherry pickers (aerial work platforms) which are essential as not all trees can be directly felled; however specialist training is required to do this.

Are there grants available?

Not really, although power company SSE has helped us by removing trees growing close to power lines.

What do we do with the wood – can we sell it?

This is probably the most frequently asked question. The largest tree trunks are stacked along the canal bank and we expect to sell these later in the year (buyer to collect), although they will not raise a large sum. We have turned some felled wood into logs for fuel, but this is very labour-intensive and not



*In the thick of it: our own digger and a hired cherry picker in action
(John Hawkins)*

viable as a large-scale fundraising scheme. The logs should also be dried before sale. We have our own self-propelled chipper; most of the chippings are distributed and left to rot down. We always leave some logs behind as 'eco-piles' for small animals and insects.

What is the programme?

In general, non-emergency forestry work can only be carried out outside the birdnesting season (so approximately from September to February). This season has seen intensive activity producing an estimated 300 tonnes of timber. Most of the work has been between Devil's Hole Lock and the area south of Barnsill Bridge. WRG Forestry will visit

for a further four days in mid-February. The main work planned for next year is between Loxwood Lock and Southland, and completing the area south of Barnsill.

Is there a positive side?

Definitely yes. We always aim to plant more trees than we fell. Often the trees we fell have become overgrown and are encroaching on the canal channel. Of course in the canal's operational days there would not have been any trees between the towpath and the canal. Felling work is changing the landscape but we think it is for the better, resulting in a lighter, more open canal for the benefit of some wildlife and also for people to enjoy.

Our digger removing logs north of Loxwood Lock (John Hawkins)



The dredger at Compasses with Farnhurst Bridge in the distance

And the latest on Summit desilting and the dredger

In our last issue we announced that contractors working on behalf of Dunsfold Park will work on desilting the canal section alongside the airfield. This is part of preparation work for the housing development project. The contractors will deploy much more and heavier equipment than our relatively small dredger and barges. In fact our dredger is in the way of the contractors and will have to be moved. Our dredger is currently (early February) at Compasses Bridge and the plan is to move it to the Loxwood section, provisionally in late March. It will be useful at Loxwood and our volunteer dredging team is looking forward to getting back to work. They were just getting into their stride at Dunsfold when sadly Covid intervened.

The dredger move will be a major operation involving large cranes. We hope to report on this and the contractors' work in our next issue.

Signs of spring to spot along the canal

After the cold and wet months of autumn and winter it's a relief to head into the warmth of spring and see the towpaths burst into life. When spring actually begins is up for debate though. Astronomical spring is marked by the equinox – when daylight and dark hours are equal in length; this year the equinox falls on 20th March. Then there's meteorological spring, which begins on 1st March. However, there may be another – more fluid – indicator of spring, one that's led by nature itself: the crescendo of birdsong at dawn, the burst of blossom and the buzz of the bumblebee.

The Dawn Chorus

Skylarks, song thrushes, robins and blackbirds can all be heard at the crack of dawn. They are just defending their territories and trying to attract a mate but it is a joyous sound.

Blossom & Spring Flowers

The hedge beside Brewhurst Lock is the perfect indicator of spring as it is where the first blackthorn blossom appears. The blossom emerges before its leaves start to show, setting it apart from hawthorn which blossoms later, after the leaves have emerged. Blackthorn usually flowers from March to June while hawthorn flowers from around April to June. You'll also be able to spot crab apple, wild cherry and elderflower along the canal.

Primroses - so named as they are the first, or in Latin "prima rosea" to bloom each year - are coming to their best now.

Bumblebees

There are 24 species of bumblebee resident in Britain and in spring Queen bumblebees will be on the hunt for new places to start a colony, awakened from hibernation by rising temperatures.

Butterflies

The brimstone butterfly is one of the first insects to be seen on warm spring days as early as March. Males have buttery yellow wings with an orange spot while females' wings are whitish green with an orange spot. You can also see orange tip, peacock, small tortoiseshell, red admiral and comma butterflies.

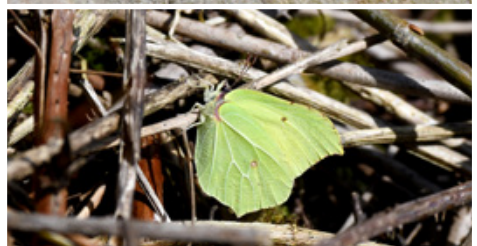
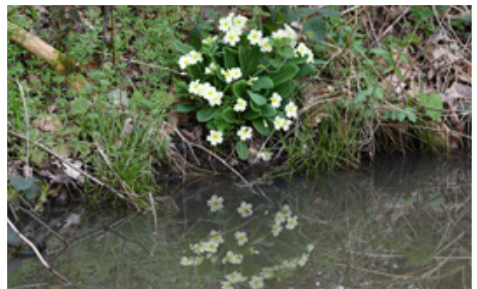




photo by Dave Verrall

Bluebells & how to photograph them

Spring brings one of the most stunning spectacles of the natural world – the vivid sea of blue of woodland full of bluebells. Wonderful as the sight is, capturing it on camera can prove elusive as photographs rarely do justice to the real thing. However, there are a few tips to getting a good shot:

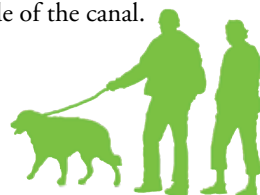
1. Photograph them at their peak. Bluebell season can be anything from mid April to the end of May depending on the weather.
2. The best conditions are when it's overcast and dull as it keeps the contrast down. However, don't rule out bright sunshine. Member and amateur photographer Julian Nowell prefers to pick a sunny day, "then sometimes the sun's rays come through the canopy, looking especially picturesque." A misty day can have a similar affect.
3. The best time of day to photograph is when the sun is low, either morning or evening.
4. Experiment with which position to photograph from. Shooting from low down can create dramatic shots with a close-up

of those nearest you, but bear in mind the background will be out of focus so consider your composition. Shooting at eye level means you can get in more of the scene but try to include features such as pathways or fallen trees to create a framework of interest.

5. Consider a polarising filter as it will help increase the saturation and contrast.

Where to spot bluebells

1. Great Wood, near Malham Lock, part of Circular Walk 7 in our *Wey-South Path* book, page 50.
2. Firtree Copse in Sidney Wood (managed by Surrey Wildlife Trust) at the north end of Sidney Wood not far from Tickner's Heath.
3. Brewhurst Bridge to Barnsill Bridge, mainly on the offside of the canal.



Working Party Roundup

November was the wettest month on record and the weather in December threw everything at us - wind, rain, snow and ice! This hampered activities, yet our working parties stuck to the tasks of keeping the canal in good condition and making progress on maintenance and restoration.

Peter Winter

EWG (Eric Walker Group)

See page 12 for a full update on EWG's work at Birtley.

Boat Maintenance

We completed the boat maintenance programme before the Santa trips began. On Zachariah Keppel, the MCA insisted that we weld up the freeing ports (that drain away rainwater) and fit pipes into a plastic tank below the waterline with an automatic pump. A new pump was added to the after bilge, as the old one was defunct.



Josias Jessop at Drungewick Slipway

Then came the cold snap and a couple of inches of ice which meant that we needed Josias Jessop to act as an icebreaker every day so that Wiggonholt could run her booked Santa Trips to the Brewhurst winding hole and back again.

In January, we steamed Josias Jessop down to the slip where we pulled her up and washed her off. Work commenced in early January, with JJ's hull being buffed off and pink

primer applied. We will continue as the weather warms up.

David Arnold

Canal Maintenance Unit

Most of November was spent at Brewhurst Lock building a concrete pad, brickwork, timber stud work and cladding for a new shelter to house the new backpump control gear. The pumps were installed in December.



The CMU team with the Brewhurst Lock footbridge

In January, with the help of the NWP Monday team, we laid a new concrete base around the pump chamber to make access to the pump easier for any future maintenance work.

In early February we installed the new footbridge for Brewhurst Lock, which had been pre-constructed at the depot. Work is also in progress to replace the top lock gate walkway at Baldwin's Knob Lock.

Ian Lower



The Monday Group enjoys lunch at Gennet Bridge Lock

Northern Working Party

November started with more tree felling near Loxwood Lock on the bank opposite

the towpath. With no vehicle access, this necessitated the setting up of a 'pull across' ferry, - see picture - using the Aquadock platform, to transport volunteers and equipment across the canal.

In the New Year we concentrated on the erection of a new fence bordering the canal at Elmbridge Village, Cranleigh. With limited vehicle access and storage facilities, it is a labour intensive job manhandling heavy materials and tools to the actual site.

Hedgelaying

The onset of winter is usually welcome as far as the Hedgelaying Team is concerned, as that means we can sharpen our billhooks and get out into the countryside to start sorting out wayward hedges.

Sadly, we cancelled two workdays during November but, amazingly, the Team has made



The curious double hedge at Drungewick

up for lost time and cut over 250 stakes and the same number of binders in readiness for laying the hedge at Drungewick slipway - a fantastic effort!

On the final work party before the Christmas break, we started work at Drungewick Slipway. This hedge is unusual, as it became evident when we cleared out the brambles that there is a parallel hedge along the top of the bank next to the slipway, and a lower, much longer hedge around the field boundary.

A highlight was the discovery of two young trees in the hedgeline with mistletoe, some even in berry (mistletoe has separate male and female plants). Initially, it was a puzzle as

there is no other mistletoe nearby. However, his widow Penny Line confirmed that Keith Nichols, our former leader, had tried to introduce mistletoe to various suitable receptor trees along the canal, so it looks like his efforts bore fruit here!

Nick Baxter



The pull-across ferry - see left

Mrs Bucket Group - Keeping Up Appearances on Mondays

November started off with a blitz on the Lee Place area, a well overdue visit. We concentrated around Haybarn swing bridge and along the towpath to the 90 degree turn in the canal. The hedge was trimmed on both sides, the landowner doing the field side as far as he was able and us cutting the sides and top as well as the towpath. The team returned to this area in January.

We made a brief visit to Drungewick and, although the road was flooded too deep for wellies, we managed to cut both sides of the canal. After a brief outing to Gennets we were able to return for a second time at the end of the month on a good day to complete the job and replace all the protectors around the hedge plants, as well as tidy up at Compasses and Tickner's with an extra strong team of 14 volunteers.

Nick Wood



MWWP tackle logs on the Loxwood towpath

Midweek Working Party

MWWP had a busy month in November. We began the month just south of Devil's Hole Lock on the offside. With the help of Dave and Adam we took down a number of ash trees.

The next three outings were spent at Lee Farm Causeway, clearing more ash trees and a copse, as well as cutting the hedge from Lee Farm Lock to Lee Place. It is looking lovely down there now. Whilst we were there, a small group helped Adam install a milestone. The last week we tidied up the Permissive Path at Birtley before it is reopened again. A small group continue to tidy up Hunt Park.

Work continued on the operational section, south of Baldwin's Knob Lock. We are clearing all the brambles and timber around the ash trees so that the large chainsaws can come in and cut down the trees with ash dieback. A further group spent time clearing alders and ash from the stretch at Birtley to Rooks Hill. The length is now looking much better and we have just the offside to clear.

Over 20 members were there for our annual visit to Run Common to clear the length of canal. Everyone enjoyed a cake made by the land owner with mulled wine and mince pies provided by a member. It was a fitting end to a successful year.

In December and January a small group spent two weeks cutting down the willows in the Hunt Park osier bed ready for the Trust to sell.

Margaret Darvill

Boat Group PEST

We helped the large team of Waterway Recovery Group and WACT volunteers removing and disposing of the dead ash trees along the banks of the navigable section of the canal.

At Devil's Hole Lock winding hole we cleared a passage through the undergrowth to allow waterfowl to move to and from the canal and the lagoon behind the winding hole.

December brought that curious mix of bright and cold weather to the canal. We had an excellent, sunny day on clearing above Loxwood Lock including around the 'chicane' between Devil's Hole and Southland locks.

Our last workday in 2022 was a chilly one. With the canal at Loxwood frozen over and Santa Cruises imminent, the morning was spent breaking ice between Loxwood and Brewhurst locks. We certainly worked up an appetite for the PEST Christmas Lunch which followed at The Onslow Arms.

Chris Jones



PEST and May Upton at the 'chicane'

Odd Job Group

We are a fairly new group, formed from a small number of volunteers who previously met on an ad-hoc basis to complete the refurbishment of Lordings Waterwheel. We now meet every Thursday.

We currently have a project to tidy and organise the WACT Depot at Dunsfold and we are about to start a major reorganisation of the Depot yards. We welcome any new volunteers that would like to join us.

Brian King

Membership Report

11 new members joined us in the last quarter and our membership now stands at 2,877. We would like to extend a very warm welcome to the following new members.

Chris Harnan
Simon Roberts
Keith Wing

Ken & Pat Leyland
John & Lilly Sullivan

Lexi Powell
Carol South

Caroline Roberts
Nick Westby

We have learned with regret of the death of:

Bernard Smith
Glen Mardell

Ann Chandler
Philip Quick

Rob Helliwell

Noel Donnelly

Peter Bennett

In the last few months, we have seen a noticeable fall in the number of new members joining the Trust and an increase in the number of members not renewing. Perhaps this is due to the economic situation that the country finds itself in. We would ask our members to stick with us if at all possible. And if you have any friends or contacts who are not already members, perhaps you could persuade them to join.

John Tovell

membership@weyandarun.co.uk

Christmas draw winners

We are very grateful to everyone who bought tickets for our 'Christmas Draw' (drawn on 24th January). We sold 3,568 tickets at £1 each, of which 44% were bought online. Our generous supporters added an amazing £1,765 in donations to their purchases - on most of these we will claim Gift Aid, so the total proceeds will be well over £5,500. As usual, sponsors very kindly donated the prizes and paid for ticket printing, so our costs are minimal. The lucky winners were as follows:

1st prize - £200 cash – Weaver, Pulborough

2nd prize - £100 cash – Everett, Harpenden

3rd prize - £75 cash – Jefferies, Littlehampton

4th prize - £50 M&S voucher – Bertram, Kessingland, Suffolk

5th prize - £40 cash – Tisdall, Woodmancote

6th prize - £30 cash – Hyem, Alfold Bars

7th prize - £25 M&S voucher – Furmston, Ifold

Numbers Game winners - it could be you

November

First prize (£100) number 9, second prize (£30) 4, third prize (£10) 172

December

First prize (£100) number 20, second prize (£30) 90, third prize (£10) 91

January

First prize (£100) number 18, second prize (£30) 174, third prize (£10) 7

You could be among the lucky winners by taking part in the monthly Numbers Game. To join or to add more numbers, please email support@weyandarun.co.uk, or call 01483 505566.



A wonderful view of the canal at Loxwood, courtesy of David Watling who launched his DJI drone next to the Canal Centre on December 17 2022

Where, when, how?

- ◆ The start is at Battery House, Petworth House, North Street Petworth GU28 0DP. Recommended parking is at Petworth Main Town car park GU28 0DX which is free on Sundays. The entrance to this car park is off Market Square - you will need to approach via the one-way system and follow the car park signs. To reach Battery House, walk past the parish church on North Street to the Cowyard pedestrian entrance to Petworth Park. Go through the entrance and keep right along the wall to Battery House.
- ◆ Arrive between 9am and 10:30 to check in and receive your Route Guide and start walking the whole route, or only the morning route. If you only wish to walk in the morning, we will provide transport from the lunch stop back to the start .
- ◆ If you wish to walk only in the afternoon, come to Lurgashall Village Hall, Greengates GU28 9ES. Lurgashall is north-west of Petworth and most easily approached via the A283 towards Godalming and Guildford. From the A283, follow Blind Lane to Lurgashall. Just past the village green, turn left into Mill Lane and the Village Hall will be on your left at the junction with Greengates. Arrive between 12 and 1.30pm to check in, have lunch if you wish, and receive your Route Guide. We will provide transport from the finish back to Lurgashall.

The Wey & Arun Canal Trust, which is working hard to restore 23 miles of navigable waterway linking the River Arun at Pallingham to the River Wey at Shalford, organises a sponsored walk each year. This is the Trust's most important fundraising event and makes a vital contribution to pushing the restoration effort forward.

This year's Poddle is on Sunday 4th June. We are going to walk from Battery House, Petworth House to Lurgashall Village Hall where lunch will be provided, and then back to Battery House in the afternoon. For those who would prefer a shorter walk you can choose to walk in the morning or afternoon only. Morning and afternoon refreshment stops will be provided.

The 3rd Earl of Egremont, George O'Brien Wyndham (1751-1837) owned Petworth House and was the main promoter of the Wey & Arun Junction Canal, built between 1813 and 1816. Using his personal fortune, he invested heavily in local waterways to benefit the region's economy. This year's walk uses a route similar to the Petworth Poddle of 1985 - this was the first time the name 'Poddle' was used for the sponsored walk.

From the Battery House in the historic setting of Petworth House, the walk passes through the delightful landscape of the Deer Park and the farmland of the Leconfield estate to the lovely rural village of Lurgashall for lunch. In the afternoon the walk continues through glorious countryside, passing the charming hamlet of Upperton and returning through the Deer Park, with its impressive lake, to enjoy tea and cake at the Battery House.

Did you know we offer 50/50 sponsorship? If you enter as a 'Team' and raise more than £200 sponsorship (minimum £25 each) we are happy to split funds equally with another charity or organisation of your choosing. If you or your organisation wish to take part as a team please complete individual sponsor forms as usual but please also contact the organiser, or look on the Trust's web site for a 'group' form.

If walking isn't for you, why not

- ◆ Sponsor the Last Man?
- ◆ Make cakes for the walkers?
- ◆ Help on the day as a marshal or at a refreshment point?

Please contact the Poddle co-ordinator for more information or to offer assistance - all help is greatly appreciated.

PODDLE CO-ORDINATOR

Margaret Darvill ☎07813 312278

✉margaret_darvill@weyandarun.co.uk

For more details of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust and its aims, contact the Trust's office.

✉support@weyandarun.co.uk

☎01483 505566



You are invited to take part in

The Wey & Arun Canal Trust's 50th Annual Poddle Sunday 4th June 2023



Petworth House

(photo by Donar Reiskoffer, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported licence)

What is it?

The 2023 Poddle is a 12-mile sponsored walk around Petworth, raising money towards the restoration of the Wey & Arun Canal.

Who can do it?

Almost anyone, with the exception of the very young, infirm and pushchairs as the walk has some stiles. Dogs are welcome especially if sponsored!

What do I need to do?

Register at weyandarun.org.uk/poddle.

Complete the sponsor form overleaf and raise as much money as you can – minimum £25 please (lunch is provided) then just turn up and walk.

Wey & Arun Canal Trust Annual Poddle Sponsorship & Gift Aid Declaration Form

Please hand in this Sponsor Form - it will be given back to you at the finish when you check out.

Please sponsor me to walk the 2023 "Poddle" on Sunday 4th June 2023 in aid of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust.
(name of walker - CAPITALS PLEASE)

We, who have given our names and addresses below and have ticked the box headed "Gift Aid? ", want the charity named above to reclaim tax on the donation detailed below, given on the date shown. We understand that each of us must have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for the current tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for the current tax year.

Surname (CAPITALS PLEASE)	First Name (CAPITALS PLEASE)	Home Address (essential for Gift Aid)	Postcode (essential for Gift Aid)	Amount £	Date Paid	Gift Aid? (✓)
Remember: Full name + Home address + Postcode + (✓) = <i>giftaid it</i>				£		

(To be completed before arrival - IN CAPITALS PLEASE)

Walker's Details

Full Name

Address

..... Postcode

E-mail address

Gift Aid

Please ensure that if any of the above donations are to be Gift Aided by you or a donor that you / they are a taxpayer, aware of your / their commitments, and that you / they have recorded the first line of their address and their postcode and ticked the Gift Aid box. By doing this their donation increases by 25%, i.e. 25p for every pound. If all are able to do this it will mean that the total amount raised is increased by 25%.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Please tick here if you are a member of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust

Please collect your sponsor money as soon as possible and transfer to:

Sort code 20-35-35, account number 50961949
Barclays Bank, account name "Wey & Arun Canal Trust Ltd" - please add "Poddle" and your name as a reference.

Alternatively please send a cheque payable to "The Wey & Arun Canal Trust" to: The Treasurer, Wey & Arun Canal Trust, Bridge End, Somerswey, Shalford, Guildford, GU4 8EQ

If you have more sponsors, please download a form from weyarun.org.uk/poddle (or continue on separate sheets of paper).

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Walker Number: _____