

A scenic view of a wooden observation tower and boardwalk in a lush forest. The tower is elevated on brick pillars and has a wooden railing. A group of people is standing on the boardwalk that leads to the tower. The foreground shows a small waterfall cascading over rocks into a pool of water. The background is filled with tall trees and dense foliage.

WEY-SOUTH

Quarterly Magazine of the
Wey & Arun Canal Trust

Issue 196 September/October/November 2021



Students help out

Students from St Catherine's School in Bramley lent a hand to get the canal towpath at Birtley in shape before the school term came to a close.

The Year 11 girls cut back vegetation and cleared invasive weeds ahead of the members' guided walk at the site on the morning of the Trust's Annual Meeting.

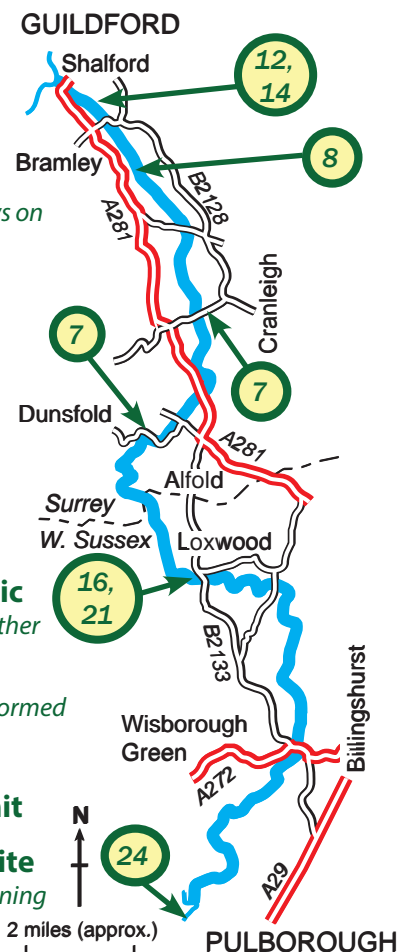
With exams finished, the activity week provided a chance for the pupils to leave the classroom behind, help their local community and learn more about the canal on their doorstep.

The students also got to grips with pulling Himalayan Balsam, an invasive non-native weed that can smother other indigenous plants. July was the perfect month to pull the balsam, before the plant had a chance to set seed.



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Shalford (Northern) Office (Boat trips, Administration, Accounts and Publicity). Visitors by appointment only.
01483 505566 (support@weyandarun.co.uk)
Bridge End, Somerswey, Shalford, Guildford GU4 8EQ

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

Trust website:
www.weyandarun.co.uk
Facebook: weyandaruncanal
Twitter: @weyandarun

Front cover: The new Shalford Information Point in Hunt Nature Park, seen from the boardwalk on 17th August.

A year of frustrations and achievements

It had been quite some time since members could meet in “normal” circumstances, so those attending this year’s Annual Meeting at Billingshurst Community Hall on Saturday 31st July were keen to catch up with friends and hear how the Trust had fared over the past year.

Proceedings began with a moment’s reflection on those the Trust has lost over the past year, in particular Peter Beresford, Kevin Crawley, Mike Anderson, Brian Crossley and Tony Tyrrell.

Chairman Sally Schupke then delivered her report, describing the past year as a “frustrating one” as lockdowns hampered restoration work and boat trip operations, but she praised members and directors for their unwavering support and enthusiasm even when times got tough.

“For everyone, last year was very much a stop-start bumpy year and particularly frustrating for our working party volunteers who had to stop meeting under the Government Covid regulations, and also the boat crews who saw the boats lying idle,” Sally said. “But despite all these frustrations the Trust has done a lot better than most, thanks to the continuing

support of our members and a number of legacies.

“During the lockdowns we managed to keep going thanks to our staff, joined lately by our apprentice Adam Rayner. We were able to keep projects going and undertake maintenance tasks along the whole length of the canal from Shalford through to Pallingham.”

Fundraising events did take a hit, Sally pointed out, with both the annual sponsored walk and boat trips having to be cancelled and then running with only a fraction of the normal number of passengers.

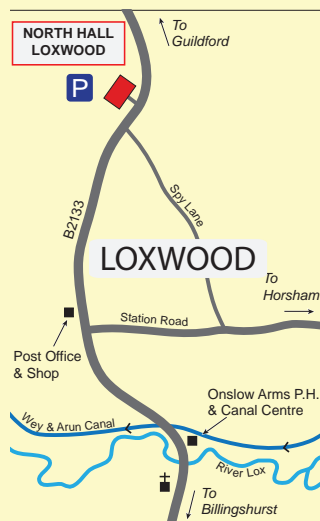
Throughout the lockdowns the board of directors continued to meet by Zoom, as did the Restoration/Maintenance Group. Sally added that the period provided the opportunity to look at our policies and catch up with admin. “In this connection a huge thank you to Geoff Boote for scanning so much of our archives. However, there is still a large gap in our admin support. It was with great sorrow that we learnt of the death of Tony Tyrrell, our Hon. Secretary, and we have not been able to find a replacement so this is

Autumn Meeting at Loxwood North Hall - Saturday 23rd October, 2.30pm

The Autumn Meeting this year will be held at Loxwood North Hall, Guildford Road, Loxwood RH14 0SF.

As in recent years this will not be a General Meeting of the Trust, so there will be no formal business transacted. The session will focus on updates from projects for the future and those currently underway. The meeting will give members a chance to chat to the Trust directors and project managers and ask questions.

At the time of writing we do not expect a limit on the number attending the meeting, so advance registration will not be needed. Please keep an eye on our website for any possible changes.



just one of the roles that remains vacant. We do have a very small pool of volunteers able to help behind the scenes (hero awards to John Tovell, our membership secretary, Tom Crawshaw, webmaster, and Lyn Nash, our Canal Centre manager), but we recognise that as the Trust grows so too does our need for back-office help."

One bright spot was how popular the towpaths have become. "It was great to see the towpaths being used so much and a big increase in paddleboarders and canoeists – our licence income rose from £400 in 2019 to £2,000 in 2020."

Sally concluded by thanking all those who make a contribution to the Trust's work. "Traditionally the directors don't get thanked for their efforts during the year, but I would like to make an exception here and say how much I appreciate their support and help during a challenging year. And I extend this appreciation to all our members, volunteers in whatever capacity, our staff, donors and the landowners and neighbours who support us. "It was a memorable year – and sadly not for the right reasons."

Guided walk proves a hit

The Make A Day of It event before the Annual Meeting took in the canal at Birtley and the latest sections to come under Trust ownership, Rooks Hill and Fanesbridge. The guided walks showed members the new Birtley Bridge and the progress on the circular walk that will connect with the Downs Link.

Photographs by Richard Shenton and Dave Verrall.



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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.

All communications and copy either by post to:

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

Or e-mail to:

weysouth@weyandarun.co.uk

Address changes, non-delivery, etc: please notify the Membership Secretary at the address above or e-mail to:
membership@weyandarun.co.uk

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

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Finances: Trust in good shape despite setbacks

If we were to look at 2020 purely financially we would be smiling, reported finance director Julian Morgan at the meeting. But, of course, 2020 was much more than finances and Covid still had a negative impact on many areas of the Trust's work. Despite the pandemic, income was slightly up on the year before and spending in line with the year before, he said, with the positive picture largely down to legacies and grants.

"The Trust goes through cycles of spending and saving, and this year we are in the second year of a spending phase where we are spending more than we have coming in. While for normal companies this would be bad news, for the Trust it is positive as it shows we are spending our money on restoring and maintaining the canal we love.

Julian explained that this can't go on for ever. "However, we have enough money for this

spending period to go on for three years at least and continue with the projects we have committed to, a happy position to be in."

The picture at W&A Enterprises Ltd, the trading arm whose job is to run the boat operation and merchandise sales, was not so rosy. Thanks to Covid, boat trip revenue was down 82% on the previous year and despite strong mail order demand, merchandise sales fell by 27%.

The result was that the company made a loss, mainly attributable to essential boat repairs to *Zachariah Keppel*, repairs that had been committed to before the pandemic.

However, parent company support means that the trading company is financially secure and there is confidence that over time the investment in boat repairs will lead to a return to profitable trading – albeit gradual due to Covid 19 restrictions seen in the first half in 2021.

Recognition for Trust stalwarts

The first awards for two years were made at the meeting. Sally Schupke presented the John East Cup, awarding it to Tony Ford (right) in recognition of "a huge amount of work that has taken place first at Compasses Bridge, then the slipway, Tickner's Heath and all of the Summit section".

John Reynolds handed the Jack King Trophy to David Arnold (far right), skipper and boat maintenance leader. "This cup goes to somebody who I think is typical of the kind of person that we at the Trust really like: somebody who takes on a role, puts a group together, gets on and does the job. Not only does this person have the practical side, but he does a lot of the paperwork too."



Photographs by Stephen Batey and Gill Davies.



Plenty of action on the Summit Level

"There's quite a bit going on at the Summit," said Tony Ford in a typical understatement as he outlined the ongoing projects and plans for this part of the canal.

There are two areas where work is taking place – Rye Farm and Tickner's Crossing – and three in the planning and development stage: Elmbridge Road, Tickner's Heath Stage 2 and the A281 Fastbridge crossing.

At Tickner's Heath the footbridge was installed in June and the timber parapets, rails and decking are in place. "We have a snag in that we are still stuck in permissions and legal agreements and so on with the County Council and Thames Water, so our ability to start on the main road crossing is hampered at the moment. So plan B is to start excavation on the north side to make the connection back to the existing canal on the Dunsfold Park side and allow construction of training walls.

Rye Farm, which is north of Elmbridge Road, is a significant length – 350m - and has seen a recent change of ownership. "The new owner

actually approached us to ask what we are doing with the canal there, with the upshot that members of the Midweek Working Party were out clearing a very overgrown stretch and a planning application is being prepared for a towpath and diversion of a bridleway that currently runs over the owner's land."

At Elmbridge a planning application was submitted in October 2020 for highways improvements and a new canal bridge to be built and funded by Surrey County Council. However, we are still waiting for a decision.

Tony described Fastbridge as one of the more ambitious projects to be contemplated at the moment, involving switching the A281 to a new alignment and enabled by Dunsfold Park's new link and roundabout. "We have done some highway design and some surveys, but we are pausing due to uncertainty over Dunsfold Park's future plans".

In the meantime, discussions are ongoing with Highways England over possible grant funding for this work.



With the steel frame in and the steel pipe which will eventually take the water main installed, volunteers could get on with the decking. A visiting KESCRG working party kicked the job off, installing the first of the supporting planks.



Photographs by Stephen Davis and Julian Nowell.



The oak decking comes from those trees removed last year to make way for the canal. It has been specially treated to make it safe for horse riders. The timber that is not suitable for decking will be reused elsewhere as fence posts and rails.



Part 2 of Tickner's Heath Road Crossing Project

Tony said that the Trust wasn't able to include the second part of the crossing in the original application because of two matters. One was the overhead power lines from the forest track from Sidney Wood, now being overcome by paying UK Power Networks to put the lines in the ground, "for a relatively modest fee".

The other constraint was how to deal with the water level on the west side of Dunsfold Road. "We would like to see the original water level carried right through past Dunsfold Park, through the new crossing to the other side of Dunsfold Road. The net result is that we will have to put in a temporary dam a short distance beyond the crossing.

"A planning application is being prepared along with an application for Common Land Consent."

Birtley and beyond

This is the beginning of an exciting phase of restoration, said Bill Nicholson, project manager at Birtley.

The project, located near Bramley, is made up of two phases (Birtley Bridge 1 and Birtley Bridge 2) and links with the Rooks Hill and Rushett Common plans (both of which are the subject of current planning applications) which will provide a 2km length of canal in total.

The Birtley story began in October 2019 when work began on constructing the first of two lift bridges. The summer of 2019 saw the base structure of the first bridge completed.

Bill explained that although planning permission has been granted for restoration here, Nigel Yarwood is currently working with Surrey County Council to get a design approved in principle for lifting bridges, which will be used for Birtley Bridge 1 and 2.

While a design is being finalised it was decided to fit a temporary deck to the Birtley Bridge 1, and after several working parties created the deck in October 2020, it was installed in June.

Its fabrication was “a bit of a challenge”, Bill admitted, as the deck uses timber previously utilised during Drungewick Lock repairs. Cutting timbers to size and bolting them together like a giant Lego kit was time-consuming, as was lining up the large timbers, not to mention getting the deck into place on the canal.

However, the volunteers managed the task and it is hoped that by mid-October the Trust will be able to open the site to the public for a circular walk “and in the medium term will be able to have canoes and paddleboards on it”.

“Add in the Rooks Hill development, and the stretch will provide a real benefit to local people,” Bill said.



Birtley Bridge 1 now has a temporary deck, allowing the Trust to open the section to walkers with a circular trail. The deck will be replaced when detailed plans for the two lifting bridges are complete.





Volunteers get to see the finished Shalford Information Point

The Shalford Information Point had been one of those 'stop-start' projects, but the wheelchair-accessible information centre, boardwalk and viewing platform at the Hunt Nature Park in Shalford was finally completed this summer and proudly shown off to Trust volunteers on 17th August.

Building work started last October when contractors installed the piling for the prefabricated building, but work had to be timed according to the resident wildlife's hibernation and dormancy periods and was affected by two lockdowns, preventing volunteers from accessing the site until June.

Contractors and volunteers first had to create the nine concrete pillars the centre sits on, designed specially to cope with the flooding that can occur here, before contractor Rayners of Godalming could piece together the cedar structure. In tandem, contractor Maydencroft began erecting the boardwalk and viewing platform that leads from the information point and across Cranleigh Waters. The path and platform are made from toxin-free industrial recycled plastic, which is not only sustainable but rivals wood, concrete and steel in strength, durability and robustness. Importantly, the recycled plastic is resistant to water, rot and rust, making it maintenance-free.

The Shalford Information Point will play a key role in informing the public about the



canal's history and the Trust's restoration achievements, as well as plans for Bramley and the northern end of the canal. It is hoped to offer guided walks from the information point as well as educational visits for schools.

The project was considerably helped by a legacy from David Hodgkinson who sadly died in July 2020. He was a civil engineer by training who lived in Kent and became involved in local canal schemes. He was Chairman of IWA's Kent & East Sussex branch until he emigrated to Florida in 2005. From a distance he took a close interest in our canal and his family kindly decided to donate part of his legacy to the new information point. We are extremely grateful for a contribution of nearly £15,000.

Volunteer Brian King qualifies for a hero award for his work as Project Manager for the construction of the Information Point.

The official opening of the Shalford Information Point will be held at 2.30pm on Saturday 18th September. For full details, see www.weyandarun.co.uk.



The Hunt Nature Park – a quiet success story

Softly, softly is the Canal Trust's approach to the Shalford/Bramley area which is the single greatest challenge for the overall canal restoration. In many areas the restoration is 'just' (that J-word again) a series of engineering projects, with a few reluctant landowners to persuade along the way. But between Shalford and Bramley the canal route has partly disappeared into gardens and a housing estate. Clearly we need a new route and that is a lot more than 'just' engineering. Protecting and improving the natural environment has to be at the heart of our approach.

The Cranleigh Waters is a tributary of the River Wey that runs close to the canal route. Just like the canal, it is a 'green corridor'. Using the Cranleigh Waters as part of a future canal route is an obvious scheme. Although the river is generally placid, it drains a huge area of land around Cranleigh and that means it can flood quickly. The section of river between the A281 Guildford-Horsham road and Tannery Lane on the edge of Bramley had its route adjusted when the Guildford-Horsham railway was built in the 1860s but otherwise has stayed largely undisturbed. The railway is now a well used footpath and cycleway.

The Canal Trust acquired both banks of the river in this section from Surrey County Council, with a commitment to make it into a nature park. Our vision became reality when we received a legacy from Ed & Doris Hunt, who wanted to support an environmental project.

The Hunt Park area was neglected, dark and overgrown when the Canal Trust took it on. Working to a scheme developed by professional ecologists, we have made vast improvements. Yes, we have removed many trees to bring in more light, but this was mainly to control the growth of fast-spreading trees such as alder, and we have planted large numbers of native species to replace them. We want the public to enjoy the park, but also in a



controlled way that protects the wide variety of habitats found there.

The viewing platform opened in 2015 gives a great view of the river and the veteran oak trees opposite. The footpath laid by volunteers along the river bank is a more rewarding route than the busy cycle track. And now we have the new Information Point, on stilts above the flood level, with its boardwalk leading to the edge of the wetlands beyond. An objective for the near future is to desilt the shallow ponds and maintain a higher groundwater level in the park, so that the wetlands stay wet for longer in dry summers.

There was great excitement when we spotted white-legged damselflies in the park. According to the British Dragonfly Society, they are "uncommon, but locally abundant". They are certainly abundant in Hunt Park. Large Skipper butterflies are not uncommon (and not large either) but they have also



Clockwise from top left: Comma butterfly; Peacock butterfly; White-legged damselfly; Large Skipper butterfly; Roesel's bush cricket.

colonised the park, along with Peacock and Comma butterflies. The Comma has become a symbol for the park – there is one place where they are nearly always seen. There have been plenty of day-flying moths this year - a Silver-ground Carpet moth was one of the most spectacular. Dragonflies are there as well, along with small creatures like the truly odd-looking Roesel's bush cricket. All this is evidence our work is going in the right direction.

Maintenance of Hunt Park doesn't 'just happen' – for hard work on the ground we are grateful especially to Hunt Park Manager Ian Joyce, with help from our Midweek Working Party, and to Ian's predecessor Mike Hobbs.

Julian Morgan



Poddle returns after a year off

The sponsored walk made its return in June, with a good turnout and favourable weather.

Walkers set off from a socially distanced check-in at North Hall in Loxwood and took a route that featured canal, open countryside and woodland for the 12-mile trail.

A pre-packed lunch bag replaced the usual buffet, but the wide open space of Plaistow village green and the spacious Winterton Hall provided the ideal setting for walkers to spread out.

All credit must go to the organiser Margaret Darvill and helpers, route planner and Last Man Chris Tavener, waymarkers Jim Nunn and Mark Feeney, along with all those who volunteered and served food. The Poddle raised an impressive £10,000 which was gratefully received after a year of limited fundraising.

Thank you to all those members who took part or donated. The next Poddle will take place on June 12th 2022.





The Puddle sponsored walk took in the best of the West Sussex and Surrey border countryside. Save the date for next year's walk: Sunday June 12th.



Photo competition attracts a bumper crop of entries

The Trust launched a Photography Competition earlier in the year, open to members and non-members, with the winning entries getting the chance to appear in the 2022 Calendar. The number and quality of photographs submitted was incredibly high and selecting just 13 images a daunting task for Canal Centre Manager Lyn Nash (pictured centre), Canal Centre volunteer Steve Whyley (far right) and Instagram account manager Charley Nash.

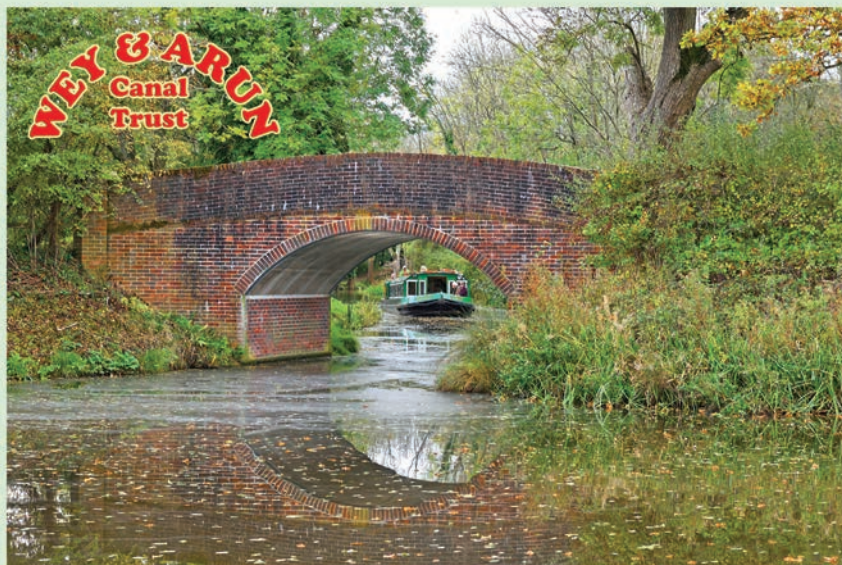
Images ranged from stunning scenic shots to wildlife and architecture, and the public enjoying all that the canal has to offer.

While only 13 images could be used in the main Calendar, the runners-up may



be used in future publicity and posters as the standard of entries was so high.

The 2022 Calendar is now on sale at our Loxwood Canal Centre and online via our website.



The Wey & Arun Canal Trust 2022 Calendar

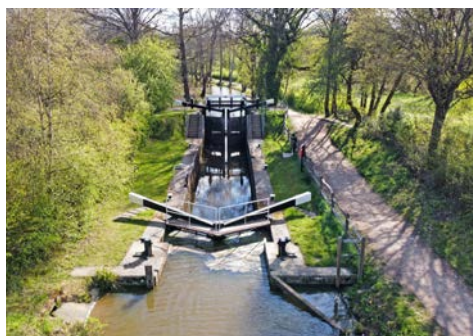
Front cover: Wiggonholt approaching Brewhurst Lane Bridge, by Anthony Bell.



January: The site of Birtley Bridge, Julian Morgan.



February: Tripboats at Loxwood in the snow, Ann Smith.



March: Looking down at Brewhurst Lock, Simon Clark.



April: Rain on the canal near Brewhurst Lane Bridge, Daniel Whiteman.



May: Pallingham Quay Bridge on the Arun Navigation, Geoff Conway.



June: Something on the towpath? Kim Topping.



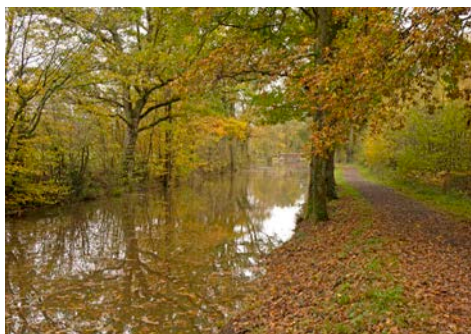
July: Looking towards Brewhurst Lock, Anne Tickner.



August: Marbled White butterfly at Brewhurst Lock, Dave Verrall.



September: Paddleboarding towards Brewhurst Lock, Elizabeth Rainsley.



October: Looking south towards Gennets Bridge Lock, Julian Morgan.



November: Canoe Rally on the Summit Section near Dunsfold Aerodrome, Julian Nowell.



December: Santa Cruise at Brewhurst Lock, Julian Nowell.

Boat trips



A gradual return to normality

It was (almost) business as usual this summer with a busy programme of boat trips.

Passenger numbers were restricted even when lockdown ended, reducing revenue, but sales were steady from June for public trips on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays, despite a disappointing start to the summer weather-wise.

Private trips resumed and the special Cream Tea Cruises were a sell-out, with extra cruises added to meet demand. A Folk Music Cruise and Pimm's and Prom with a Picnic also went well.

Summer holiday fun for kids came in the shape of a Spell-cial Wizards and Wizardry Cruise, complete with our very own Wizard Crumblebore.



Alan Johnson looks at the changes the Compasses area at the Summit has seen, from the opening of the Wey & Arun Junction Canal, WWII and to today's role as a gateway to Dunsfold Park

Charting the changes at Compasses

Despite its fame as the site of the feast which accompanied the opening of the Wey & Arun Junction Canal in 1816 and having the busy Dunsfold Park as a neighbour, the recently refurbished Three Compasses pub still radiates the quiet charm of a traditional rural inn. This could well be because construction of the World War II airfield that is now Dunsfold Park severed this section of the Horsham-Guildford turnpike road, truncating the stretch northbound from Alfold Crossways to a cul-de-sac ending at the 'back door' of the aerodrome.

When the canal builders dug the long, straight stretch of the summit pound that later became the airfield's south-east boundary they had to provide a bridge to carry the long-established lane across the canal. Inconveniently the lane crossed the canal obliquely. Elsewhere on the British waterways a technique of erecting spiralling brick or stonework courses had been developed to cope with skew crossings of canals. Perhaps because this technique exceeded the skills of local builders, the form of the original Compasses Bridge was a simple rectangular vault, forcing the canal channel to be kinked twice in order to pass through the bridge hole.

This awkward arrangement is indicated in old OS maps (see opposite) and cannot have been popular with bargees.

By 1872 all traffic on the Junction Canal had ceased and the Compasses section of the summit pound became a waterlogged ditch, a character encountered by Hambledon resident, journalist and author Eric Parker (1870-1955) when preparing his first book on the local countryside: *Highways and Byways in Surrey* (1908). Almost 40 years later in his Surrey volume of the County Books Series he

wrote of revisiting the area, and the shock of its transformation:

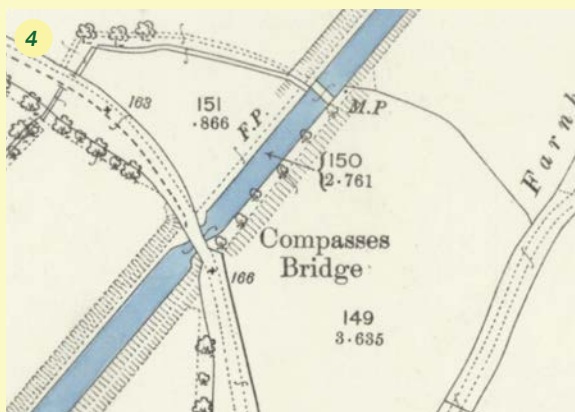
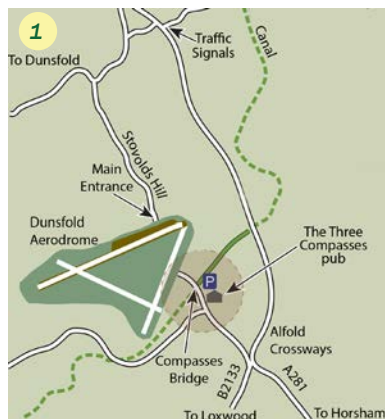
'Years ago I set out to walk from Baynards Station...by Alfold and Dunsfold to Milford...it was my first sight of the Fold Country, that corner of the county lying deepest in oak woods and primroses. Years later I passed by some of those roads and lanes again....some had vanished.... the Fold Country was an aerodrome.

"Oak woods had been uprooted, engines of steel had torn out by the roots cottages and fields of corn....if I listened for a nightingale, drone of bombers drowned other sounds.... on that 31st of May I drove towards roads which I thought I should know and could use again... I was blocked... suddenly I was in silence and in a cold wind that blew over a plain I had never seen before... the woods had gone. The lane had come to an end... here at my feet were buttercups and moon-daisies; there in the mid-distance were the huge noses of steel machines lifting into the sky, monstrous waiting insects ... There in front of me was the bridge over what remained of the Wey Canal."

In 1908 Eric Parker had correctly identified the dry bed of the Wey & Arun Junction Canal in Sidney Wood and it's a fair guess that the 'bridge' he saw at the threshold of the airfield was the causeway which WACT removed in 2016 in order to build the new bridge.

For five years we have admired the new and award-winning Compasses Bridge. It is pretty certain that the inn and the bridge which share a name will witness yet more changes to their setting in the years to come.

Alan Johnson
Technical Liaison Officer



1. The site of Compasses Bridge and pub.

2. The canal was blocked by a causeway, probably in the 1930s.

3. It is here the Wey & Arun Junction Canal was officially opened by the 3rd Earl of Egremont. It is thought he personally invested the modern equivalent of about £20m in the canal.

4. How the area looked in an early map.

5. The new Compasses Bridge was officially opened in 2016.





Arun Rally demonstrates navigation rights

The River Arun Rally, the annual gathering of small craft organised by the Trust, went ahead as planned on 27th June this year.

Although numbers were lower than anticipated given a forecast of torrential rain, dozens of canoeists, paddleboarders and kayakers turned out to help ensure that when restoration of the Wey & Arun Canal is complete, there will be no reason that boats cannot venture from the canal into the River Arun. Thankfully, the rain kept away and provided good conditions for paddling.

The event organisers not only had to navigate Covid regulations this year, but restoration works to Swan Bridge in Pulborough restricted



the landing sites and parking available. Thanks go to Trust volunteers and the 1st Pulborough & West Chiltington Sea Scouts for helping to marshal and organise car parking.

Local paddlers and enthusiasts from canoe clubs from across the South East made a colourful sight as they launched with the aim of reaching Pallingham Farm Bridge, the normal limit of the tides on the Arun.

‘Pointless canal’ video seen by thousands

The Wey & Arun Canal was the star of a recent hit YouTube video, named *The Pointless Canal - The Story of the Wey & Arun*, produced by YouTubers Paul and Rebecca Whitewick.

While the title may have raised a few eyebrows, at the time of writing more than 63,000 people had watched the pair’s footage of the canal and their story of the canal’s creation. Paul Whitewick offered his apologies for the title and acknowledged it was purely to attract viewers – and it certainly did that.

The duo travel around the UK in search of lost railways, canals, routes, tunnels, viaducts and heritage, films of which appear on their dedicated YouTube channel. For this video the Whitewicks begin their exploration at Tannery Lane in the northern end of the canal and travel south via Gosden Aqueduct, Whitley and Sidney Wood, where they then leapfrog to Lordings in the south, missing the restored section at Loxwood. The waterwheel,



YouTuber Paul Whitewick at Lordings.

aqueduct and lock at Lordings was of particular interest to Paul, who admitted his confusion over the course of river and canal, and promised to return to explore further.

You can find the video on YouTube by typing The Pointless Canal into your search engine.



Heroism on the canal

We all know our volunteers are heroes, but the EWG team working at Harsfold well and truly proved it when they came to the rescue of a distraught dog walker and her puppy.

Helen Boniface said Truman the dachshund had panicked when he got into the canal, swum to the opposite bank, and then struggled to get out. Despite calling for half an hour Truman wouldn’t swim back. Thankfully, volunteer Andy Slade (pictured) found a route to the other side of the canal and managed to carry Truman to safety. Helen said: “The team were so concerned and resourceful and I would like to let them know how grateful I am. No more water adventures for my puppy for a while!”

The tech wizards behind running the Trust's website

The Trust's website has taken on increasing importance over the past few years, to such an extent it is now invaluable for booking boat trips, organising events and selling merchandise.

Maintaining and updating it is the work of two volunteers – Tom Crawshaw and Derek Wright (also a skipper) – who between them keep the service going 24/7. The two carry out different roles, but both dedicate an immense amount of time and energy to what they do.



Tom Crawshaw

When did you get involved with the Trust's website?

I appear to have been involved with the Trust since 2007, initially just helping to maintain email distribution lists, but increasingly focusing on the website and databases for memberships, events, donations etc. Around 2014, I proposed that the Trust should move from using a "hand-crafted" website and numerous Excel spreadsheets and an Access database to a modern web system and a single web-based database for recording information about members and other contacts.

I selected an open-source (free) software package called Drupal/CiviCRM which is widely used by charities. My current role is mainly to manage and enhance this system to promote the Trust's work, and to manage all our communications with members and

customers, membership signups, donations and Gift Aid claims.

What drew you to the Trust in the first place?

Since university days I have been keen on canal restoration, and had an 18th century ancestor who was a promoter of the Ashby Canal, so canal water is in my blood. On retirement from my role as Director of Information Services at the University of Surrey, I was looking for worthwhile activities which could use my library and IT skills, and this fitted well alongside volunteering for Citizens Advice. Although I had done a fair bit of programming, this was never my main role, and I'd never taken on an entire website before, but I enjoy a challenge and learning new skills. The website uses a programming language called PHP, which was entirely new to me, so this was (and is) a constant challenge.

How have things changed over the years?

IT is always evolving, and anyone in this field has to be prepared to learn new programming languages and techniques just to keep up. Without the internet this would be almost impossible, but having chosen a system which is both widely used and supported by many developers keen to share their knowledge there is always help available.

Does it take up much of your time?

It varies, depending on what activities are taking place or planned. Updates for the

system are released regularly and these need installing, but events such as the recent Poddle need setting up on the website, and allowing for walkers to donate and to recruit sponsorship online took a bit of work. The goal is to enable other volunteers to be able to contribute to the website whenever possible, by uploading restoration photos, adding news items and maintaining boat trip information.

What do you get from the role?

It is very satisfying when I'm able to introduce a new feature which improves the usefulness of the website, for example by introducing online direct debit sign-up for new members (replacing a paper based system which required a lot of back-room effort).



Derek Wright

How did you first get involved?

I was asked to assist with testing an online shop for our canal merchandise some six years ago. This was being developed by a contractor who was in fact a largely non-technical middleman between me at WACT and his code writer. (I deduced that his code writer was probably a university student, and probably related to him.) The testing and debugging of this shop facility was very tedious as all messages were passed via the middleman and even a simple bug fix would take a week to get implemented.

When I was asked to write a specification for the same contractor to provide online ticket

sales I decided that I could probably write the code more easily than I could write down what I needed in words. And so it was that I became an embedded code writer.

What IT skills did you have when you took on the role?

As a Chartered electrical engineer with a first career in broadcasting R&D (I was part of the Ceefax development team in 1974), I have regularly used computers to assist my work using many different coding languages, now mostly obsolete. I didn't encounter PHP (the code we use) until 2015 and I am self-taught almost entirely via Google searches.

How has the website changed over those years?

The first online ticket sale was on 21 April 2016 and it was not very long before 50% of boat ticket sales were online. This year we have added a sophisticated gift voucher system. We also added Worldpay as an alternative payment channel to PayPal.

Behind the scenes an awful lot has changed as I have been evolving the processes of adding trips and editing trip details without requiring my own involvement, enabling skippers and crew to self roster, keeping crew records, automated printing out passenger lists. In the past six months I have been revamping and rationalising most of the code. At my age, I have to plan for my own demise as an ultimate certainty. The system needs to be able to run without my intervention. I don't think there are many people around who could code at the level I do and who are also old enough to be able to afford to do it on a voluntary basis. When I was at college the story was that computer programmers were burnt out by the age of 28. But I am now 76.

What do you get out of the role?

It has kept me amused during six lots of long winter evenings between boating seasons and more recently during the Covid lockdowns.

Working Party Roundup

Once again our working parties have been hard at work, sometimes sweating in the heat while at other times dodging the heavy showers.

There has been good progress on our restoration activities, but this is the time of year when dealing with vegetation is a real challenge. The efforts of MWWP, PEST and the Monday Group are really important in dealing with this, and as the Trust acquires access to more stretches of the canal the demand for their services will be on the rise.

It is good to know that the commitment of all our volunteers is appreciated, as many of the attendees at the Annual Meeting in Billingshurst commented.

Peter Winter

peter_winter@weyandarun.co.uk

Monday Group

We have been busy mowing, strimming and cutting back at many locations including Haybarn, where the bridge was swung open and cleaned underneath. The other sites visited were Drungewick Aqueduct and towpath down to the lock, Baldwin's Knob, Brewhurst (again), Loxwood and Devil's Hole Locks. We also 'kept up appearances' at Tickner's Heath causeway.

Several outings involved strimming, brush cutting and tidying up at Devil's Hole and Southland Locks, Loxwood, as well as Tickner's, the Drungewick Aqueduct site and clearing the permissive path from Drungewick Lane to the winding hole below the lock.

'Keeping Up Appearances' occurred at Run Common, Compasses, Gennets Bridge, Southland, Devil's Hole, Loxwood (including maintenance of the Canal Centre garden and an extensive litter pick), and Drungewick Aqueduct.

Nick Wood

mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk



The MWWP faced a tough task clearing trees out of the canal at Rye Farm, but managed some R&R at the Navvies Lunch.

Midweek Working Party

We have regularly had more than 30 volunteers out every week regardless of the weather, usually working as a number of separate groups.

The Northern group started on the Birtley stretch clearing the trees out of the canal and the 600 yards look much better. They then moved on to the next length which the Trust has just bought at Rooks Hill.

Much work has continued at Rye Farm where they have also been clearing the trees out of the canal. It is now a pleasure to walk down the bridleway.

With the warmer weather, the grass has grown at an incredible rate which has resulted in a great demand for the wheeled strimmer in many locations. At Hunt Park, the area was cleared and we helped building piers for the new Information Point together with putting in a new noticeboard.



The EWG have been hard at work constructing the weir at Harsfold and raising the height of the towpath, a feat requiring many truckloads of material.

Some of the group have been working at Alfold Road. This is not a part of the canal that is open to the public. However, it is good to work here while we have a landowner who is happy for us to tidy up.

We have now moved on to Northlands for the first time in nine years so there is a lot to do. The bank is very wet and we are clearing a 6ft-wide pathway so that we can clear the trees from the canal. We expect to be there for several weeks.

We did have one day off, enjoying ourselves at the Navvies Lunch. Our thanks go to Harvey and Frances Silverman who gave up their garden for 53 people from the working parties and their partners. This was the first time for many that they had seen other members and colleagues for over a year due to Covid restrictions. The weather was ideal for the event and everyone had a really good time.

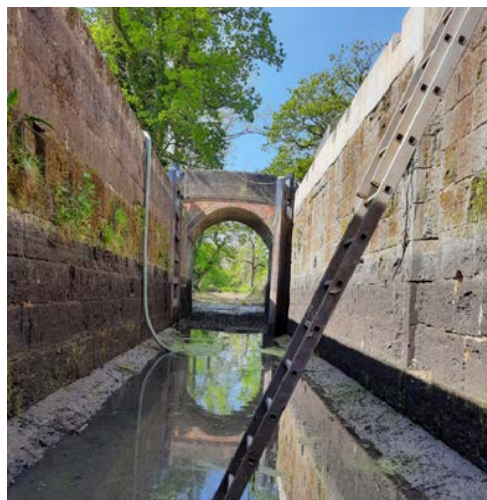
Margaret Darvill
margaret_darvill@weyandarun.co.uk

Eric Walker Group (EWG)

For the past few months, activity has been focused on repairs at Drungewick Lock and the construction of weir and towpath repairs at Lee Place (Harsfold).

At Drungewick Lock, work recommenced with filling the cavities created during the installation of the Platipus anchors and the walls were jetwashed in preparation for repointing with lime mortar, which was designed and developed by a Cornish company for use on waterway and harbour wall projects throughout the country. The repointing was eventually completed in the third week of June, and in the final week of that month, the group – along with the able assistance of Kev Baker's group – finished concreting the top cill Platipus anchor "pockets" and four new lock beam quadrants.

Kev's team also filled in the old pump chamber with concrete which we hope will resolve the leak around the stop plank channel. Finally



EWG teamed up with Kev Baker's volunteers to finish work at Drungewick Lock.

Kev's team returned to remove the scaffolding and formwork and tidied up the site. Job done!

Meanwhile at Lee Place (Harsfold) the structure of the weir was cast on top of the previously installed base. Two 450mm diameter pipes were incorporated to provide the outfall to the adjacent river. These were covered with soil to re-establish the towpath and the job was finished by the installation of safety barriers. A period of heavy rain occurred as the installation was being completed and the weir was soon doing its job.

Work in the area has continued to raise the level of the towpath with hardcore and crushed concrete to provide a sound base for future access from the bridge to the Big Bend towards Haybarn. This has been quite a significant task because over several extended stretches we have had to make up levels by in excess of half a metre. Several lorryloads of material had to be delivered each week.

Two mature ash trees with dieback which were in an unsafe condition next to the towpath had to be felled. We also re-profiled the west bank of the canal up to the new towpath level. The final task is to lay a "topping" layer of limestone to give a uniform and level appearance to the towpath.

Dennis Gillen
dennis_gillen@weyandarun.co.uk

Canal Maintenance Unit (CMU)

These past few months have been as busy as ever. Starting at Loxwood we have repaired the boat mooring stairs, fitted a new handrail and painted the parking lines outside the Canal Centre.

Moving on to Drungewick Lock, we moved water around to let EWG get on with the lock repairs, dug out the quadrants ready for concreting and repaired the back pump pipes with an excellent set of internal collars made by Don Mansfield to allow joining of two types of pipework as the original is obsolete. A few weeks later we teamed up with EWG again to complete the repairs, concrete the quadrants and make the lock ready for use.

We have spent quite a lot of time repairing damage along the Arun Navigation between Lee Farm and Lordings. First we had to find and refit the gates that had been taken off and thrown in the canal and the river. All were found and duly returned to their respective posts! Then we moved on to replacing the broken gate posts and fitting two new gates at Haybarn and Lordings before finally putting a new post in halfway along for the gate that separates the land of the two landowners.

At the Flood Lock we recovered and rehung the lockgates and gave the whole site a



The CMU rebuilt the fence and added a stile at the Big Bend near Harsfold.

good cleanup before moving on to the main Lordings Lock site where we also did a lot of tidying. Moving up to Gennets Bridge, the lock and towpath north were cut and tidied and the new noticeboard was installed. The old one is currently being refurbished for use elsewhere.

With the recent unsettled weather the growth rate of hedges, grass and weeds has been a bit of a problem. With other work parties stretched to breaking point dealing with the vegetation, the team was out with the mowers and brushcutter to assist!

In July, we ordered and placed some 15 tons of graded soil onto the towpath at Haybarn to cover the heavy bricks and stones underneath that we had placed the week before to reinforce the banks. With the assistance of some of the EWG team, the fence at the Big Bend was rebuilt and now has a field access gate (normally locked), a stile and a dog gate.

At the Depot low water pressure was traced to a burst pipe. This caused us a bit of headache as it was under four pallets of bricks which we had to move before excavating. However, they are now all sorted into types and restacked on fresh pallets ready for future use.

Kev Baker
kevin_baker@weyandarun.co.uk

Northern Working Party

It's all been about two bridges – big and small. The steel footbridge for the Tickner's Crossing was delivered to the site from its fabricators in Fareham. To describe it as a footbridge is a bit of a misnomer as it is large and quite wide enough to drive a car over should such be permitted. It is also slightly skewed and very long, making its installation a tricky job which was carefully overseen by Project and Site Managers, Tony and Dave. A little modification was necessary to the abutments to allow the water pipe casing to sit in the correct position.

Work continued on decking out of the footbridge at Tickner's Crossing. This is now about two-thirds complete and is looking very smart. Installation of the handrails has also commenced.

The reconstruction of the eastern brick abutments for the footbridge is also substantially complete with more to do on the western side. This work has been necessary to allow for the "as built" alignment of the water main attached to the footbridge that will replace the main that runs under the road at this location.

Because of the delays in obtaining the formal agreements from Thames Water and also Surrey County Council on highway matters, work on the main road bridge has had to be put back and it was decided to start work on the approach channel and training walls from the existing canal. We can anticipate some serious excavation work over the coming months – that will bring on the rain if anything does!

I mentioned two bridges. It has been seven months since NWPG (one of our visiting groups) completed the fabrication of the temporary wooden bridge for the Birtley section. All that time it has been sitting in the Tickner's Crossing yard getting in the way; weather and Covid preventing it moving. A three day NWPG working party was arranged in early June with volunteers staying (at their own expense I should add!) at The White Hart



The temporary deck at Birtley Bridge 1 is now complete.

in Cranleigh. The first day was spent preparing for the move with a decision taken to minimise the amount of dismantling given that almost every bolt and hole was bespoke!

On Friday morning the bridge was lifted onto the large trailer and towed to the site via the Trust's newly acquired section of canal at Rooks Hill. Using the telehandler, Youngmans boards and rollers, the bridge was winched across. Friday afternoon and Saturday were spent fitting the deck planks, handrails and approach sections before the whole was given a coat of preservative.

Bill Nicholson
bill_nicholson@weyandarun.co.uk

Boat Maintenance

A concern for the maintenance team was the stability survey and subsequent run and drill test of *Zachariah Keppel* supervised by the MCA. Thankfully, the inclining and draught test was successfully completed together with a final run test and man overboard drill. Consequently, we have been granted our certificates and ZK is now licensed to carry 30 passengers and three crew. At last, she's earning the Trust some money again!

Since then, we have been working on smartening up *Josias Jessop* which has two charters of her own. She has been used extensively by the PEST group (a muddy business) and has suffered from rain, wind and falling leaves. She was finished by the end of May, smart as a new pin with much scrubbing of the deck, roof, saloon and sides, plus painting and also filled with fuel. One problem; there's a tiny shrew living on board which has proved impossible to catch.

After a charter the other day when I was skippering ZK, my enthusiastic crew tried to pull the forward door shut with the bottom bolts extended and as a consequence pulled off the closing handle and its surrounding woodwork. This exposed a great deal of rot and delamination that had affected the sheet behind it.

I took the whole thing home and, remembering my carpentry lessons at Collyer's School in the late 40s, set to work. I am glad to say the job is now completed. Another career beckons at 82!

Another activity was a complete exterior repaint of *Wiggonholt*, which is still ongoing in between carrying passengers.



ZK's hatch now looks a lot healthier thanks to David Arnold's handiwork.

Meanwhile, Brian Hewson has fitted and tested the new engine hours meter at the back of the panel in the engine room on ZK. The hooter button on WH was fixed as were the lashers for holding back the engine room doors on both WH and ZK. All hands have been loading extra chairs and tables for increased numbers of passengers per trip following 'Freedom Day'. Some if not all of the table tops in WH are very shabby, and I have started a programme of scraping, sanding, staining, and varnishing them, one at a time, at home.

Brian, being our new electrical expert, has been cleaning all the main battery terminals on WH. They were in a sorry state, and the outlet side port one was so corroded that a part of the top broke off. When he can get two clear days with WH, Brian has a plan to fix it. Such work is a bit beyond my pay grade.

David Arnold
david_arnold@weyandarun.co.uk

Boat Group PEST

The PEST team restarted working parties in April to continue the work of keeping the navigation clear for our trip boats to resume operations. Activities have focused on those



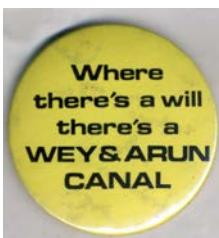
stretches to be used for both scheduled trips and charters, so much work has been between Devil's Hole and the Drungewick Aqueduct. The team cleared debris and floating vegetation from the water and cut back growth on the offside. The section now looks very tidy.

At Brewhurst we cleared around the entrance to the lock on both sides of the canal to give more space for the kayaks and paddleboards. The steps on the offside were opened up and even used by some paddleboarders at once; they much appreciated the extra facilities.

We normally use two boats, the smallest passenger boat *Josias Jessop* and the workboat *May Upton*. With JJ now spruced up for a new season of charters PEST has been warned off using her and spoiling her new-found good looks.

With John Reynolds' help we have looked at three existing W&A boats and it has been decided that *Wasp* is best suited to our work. She needs a little bit of work (ramp planking, work platform installation, general cleanout and fettling) but should be useable.

Chris Jones
chris_jones@weyandarun.co.uk



Wey & Arun Canal Trust Badges from the 1970s have found their way to eBay.

WACT badges - the next big fashion must-have?

Recently I came across some Wey & Arun Canal badges from the early days on eBay. As the prices were reasonable I added them to my collection. The slogans are really quite fun. It would be fascinating to know whether other Wey & Arun Canal badges were produced – perhaps someone has a collection in a forgotten drawer.

We went looking for references to badges in the archives and didn't find very much. It seems that in the 1970s badges were cheap and easy to produce and it was the fashion to wear them.

In John Wood's book *The Wey-South Project* you can read that in 1975 Peter Dragonetti produced a small round badge proclaiming 'I Sit on Committees' at a cost of 5p. In 1973 the Trust was offering 'I've Worked Wey-South' badges – again for 5p (plus 2½p for postage).

In 1982 Restoration Manager John Ward wrote "[A long list of volunteers] have earned themselves a Wey-South badge 'I've worked Wey-South in 82'. If you have worked on a Wey & Arun working party in 1982 (and can prove it), please send me an S.A.E. to receive your badge." This offer was repeated in 1983.

A piece by Bill Thomson early in 1983 suggests that badge-making was one of the Waterway Recovery Group's (WRG) fundraising sidelines. Bill wrote: "If you have an idea for a design or a slogan for a W&ACT badge, then get in touch - we will get WRG to do some, and see how they go on our Sales Stall." Perhaps our eBay examples date from this era. When we get round to setting up a WACT museum these badges might make nice exhibits.

Julian Morgan

Christmas Draw tickets now sold online too

For members who receive *Wey-South* by post, we have enclosed Christmas Draw raffle tickets with this issue. However, this year the raffle is also running online. All tickets will be entered into the same draw.

Entering via our website saves the Trust both manpower and money and can be done so easily at weyandrun.org.uk/raffle2021. Alternatively you can return the counterfoils with a cheque made payable to Wey & Arun Canal Trust in the usual way. The closing date for entries is January 18th 2022.

Heritage Open Day

Every September volunteers across England organise events to celebrate our history and culture and this year the Trust is taking part with a guided walk at Birtley.

The figure-of-eight walk on Sunday September 19th begins at 2.30pm and takes in the canal towpath and Downs Link Path (former Guildford–Horsham railway), starting from and returning to Birtley Courtyard (GU5 0LF) on the A281 at the south end of Bramley Village.

To book, go to the events section of our website, www.weyandrun.co.uk.

Depot volunteers wanted

Can you spare some time to help run the Trust's depot? We are looking for volunteers to help with the following tasks:

Servicing and repair of Trust equipment (unless professional services are needed) and other items (gates, fences etc.)

- Stock control: Keeping an awareness of what stocks of materials and equipment are at the depot or out with project teams and working parties
- Accepting deliveries of materials and equipment (returned from working parties or delivered by suppliers)
- Storage of materials and equipment in the correct locations
- Supervising despatch of materials and equipment
- Construction of small items (signs, small footbridges etc.)
- Other miscellaneous tasks such as tidying and maintenance of the depot and its facilities

If you are interested, please contact Ian Prior, the depot manager, at Ian_Prior@weyandarun.co.uk

Volunteer info days

Do you or someone you know want to find out more about volunteering with the Trust? Then come along to one of our open days. There's a job for everyone, whatever your skill.

● Thursday 23rd Sept, Sat 2nd Oct and Thursday 7th Oct at 11am at Shalford Information Point.

See our website for more details.

Membership Report

The Trust has benefitted from a post-lockdown boom in recruitment! Some 74 new members joined in the last quarter, taking our total membership to 2,924. We would like to extend a very warm welcome to the following new members.

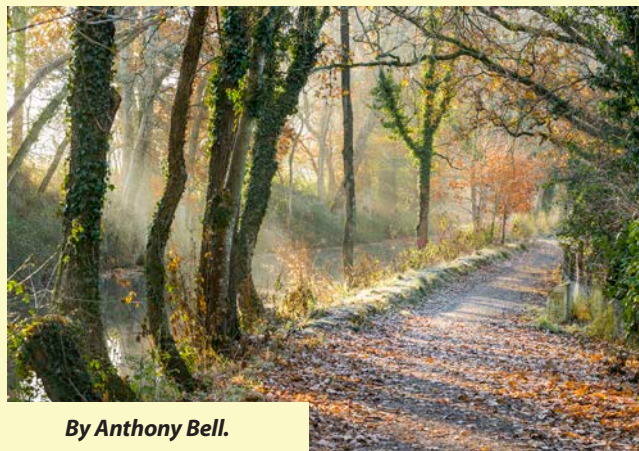
Garry Brooks	Bob & Liz Brown	Michelle Brown	Jade & James Cation
Angela Conway	Alisa & Richard Court	Philip Cox	Norman & Rosslyn Doney
Elizabeth & Michael Edwards	David Fordham	Paul Franklin	Liz & Martin Gardiner
Patricia Goode	Sarah & Tim Hall	Pauline Hammett	Janice Hannington
Amanda & Chris Hewitt	Brian & Valerie Hewson	Keith Hollingdale	Nicola Hooper
Catherine & Christopher Jarratt	Elfed & Karina Jarvis	Juliet Jones	Gary Judd
Tim Knox	Chris Lund	David Marshall	Alistair & Carolyn McBain
Louise McKane	Adrienne McSweeney	Charley Nash	Chris & Francesca Nelson
Jeff Newbold	Louise Osborne	Leonie Pearce	Christine & David Raggett
Jon & Sam Rapley	Brian Sampford	Carolyn Saunders	Elizabeth & Ian Sica
John & Margit Squires	Amanda & Paul Street	Lesley & Mick Vigar	Richard Watson
Martina & Nigel Watson	John & Suzanne White	Rita White	Howard Wilder
Chris Windebanks	Keith & Valerie Woods	Andrew & Mary-Louise Whalley	

We have learned with regret of the death of:

Tony Pannell	Brenda Cox	Mrs I. Paddock	Martin Burkhill-Prior
Frank & Kate Warren	William Tayler	Bill Rodgers	Roger Saunders
Mrs D.E. Healey			

For members currently paying by cheque, please can you consider changing to payment by standing order or direct debit? It would help reduce our administrative costs and effort.

John Tovell
membership@weyandarun.co.uk



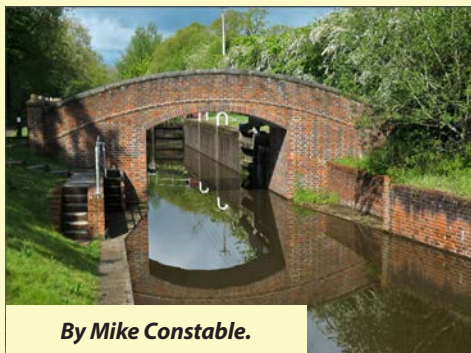
By Anthony Bell.



By Rebecca Krebs.



By Ben Burchell.

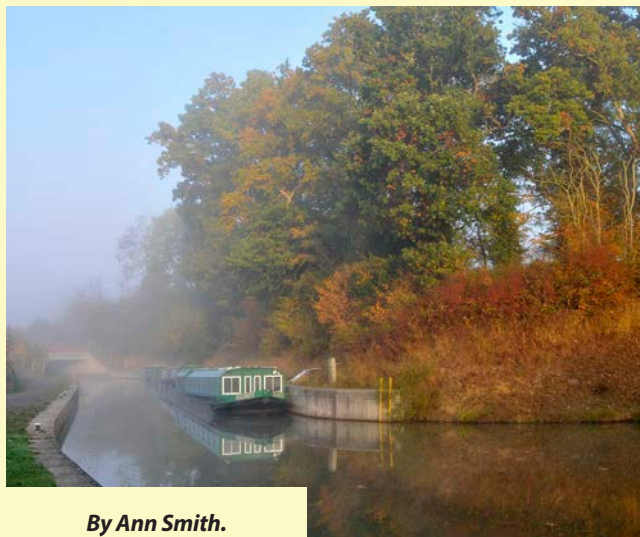


By Mike Constable.



By Ethan Brown, age 10.

The Trust's photography competition produced many great entrants. Here are just a few that narrowly missed out on a full-page appearance in our 2022 calendar.



By Ann Smith.

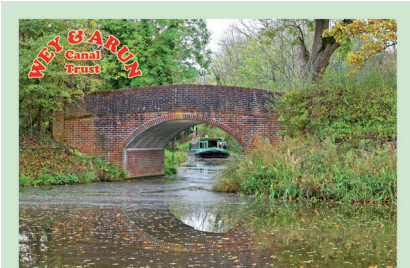
The Wey & Arun 2021 Christmas Card and 2022 Calendar are now on sale



- ★ A5 size card with envelope
- ★ The inside of the card reads "Season's Greetings"
- ★ Picture on front of card is by Oliver Lake
- ★ Price: £5 per pack of five
- ★ Postage for up to two packs: £2.50



Back of card



The Wey & Arun Canal Trust 2022 Calendar

- ★ Large (A4 size) wall calendar
- ★ Features pictures chosen from entries in the 2021 photo competition
- ★ One page for each month with a large box for each date
- ★ Limited edition - order yours now to avoid disappointment
- ★ Supplied with envelope for posting
- ★ Price: £8, Postage for up to three calendars: £3



- On sale at the Loxwood Canal Centre, (01403 753999), canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk). Open Friday, Saturday & Sunday 11am-3pm, until the end of December.
- Or visit the Trust's website and buy online:- www.weyandarun.co.uk.
- Or to order by telephone please contact the Loxwood Canal Centre, details as above.
- Or to order by post please use the form below.
- The cards & calendar will be on sale at the Autumn Meeting at Loxwood North Hall on Oct 23rd



To: Wey & Arun Canal Trust, The Granary, Flitchfold Farm, Loxwood RH14 0RH

Please supply Packs of Christmas Cards at £5 per pack (&/or) 2022 Calendars at £8 each

Name:-

Address:-

.....

Telephone:-

Email:-

- Please add £3 postage for up to three calendars and £2.50 postage for up to two packs of cards.
- For a combination of cards and calendars or extras please contact the Loxwood Canal Centre to confirm postage.
- Cheques payable to: W&A Enterprises Ltd.
- For card payment contact the Loxwood Canal Centre.

Christmas Raffle 2021



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WEY & ARUN
Canal Trust
Registered Charity No. 265331

CHRISTMAS DRAW 2021

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

*The draw will take place on Tuesday 25th January 2022
at the Northern Office, Bridge End, Somerswey, Shalford GU4 8EQ*

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

For members who receive Wey-South by post, we have enclosed Christmas Draw raffle tickets with this issue. Of course this isn't possible for electronic subscribers. However, this year the raffle is also running online. All tickets will be entered into the same draw.

Entering via our website saves the Trust both manpower and money and can be done so easily at weyandrun.org.uk/raffle2021. The closing date for entries is January 18th 2022. If you would like to buy paper raffle tickets, please contact the Northern Office (northernoffice@weyandrun.co.uk, 01483 505566).

The closing date for buying tickets is 18th January 2022.