

## Editorial

Had I arranged my life better and been able to get to the Autumn meeting rather than swanning off to Hour house across the Channel, I could have applauded the fact that a generous response to the appeal for dredging the canal cut at Gun's Mouth Island means that it could be possible, if the final amount can be raised, that the work could start early next year.

The Halloween boat trips were, by all accounts, a great success, and pave the way for an equally successful winter on the canal with the Santa and New Year cruises.

It rather goes against my Scrooge-like grain to be thinking of Christmas as early as 1 November, but the annual WACT Christmas dinner, on 7 December, is fast approaching, and this will be followed a few weeks later by the equally traditional Workers' Lunch. Geoff Perks is organising this once again, and he has a new venue which looks very convenient and highly promising. Advance details are in this newsletter, and full information should follow next time.

*Bill*

## Thursday & Sunday Group - Southland and Northwards

During October at Southland lock the last two copings were cast, the inspection chamber for the back pump at the top sill completed, more bollards put on the copings, further work on the training walls at the top of the lock carried out and more back filling added behind the coping on the lock off-side.

Peter Reeve brought his small digger to dig the trench in the towpath alongside Paddock Wood for the electricity cable. Previously the ground was so hard that it was virtually impossible to hand dig and the cable had been put in on a temporary basis. Now, with the position for the back pump firmly established, the 'green electricity box' was moved to its final position. Peter's digger certainly found it hard enough to dig the trench and we were all surprised, despite the recent wet weather, how dry the ground was at the bottom of the trench. With this task done, this side of the lock can be brought up to height and the towpath surface dressed.

In November we will finish off the fitting of the bollards, fit the bridges on the lock gates and work on the training walls at the top of the lock to bring them up to coping level. Similarly at the bottom of the lock work will continue on the training walls. Behind the Onslow Arms there are the safety ladders and the safety rope to be put in.

On the back pump front, after difficulties were found with the installation at Devil's Hole Lock, it has been decided to move the pump at DHL to Southland and order a replacement pump for DHL. At both locations the pump chamber floor is to be raised and the chamber reconfigured. At DHL the pump chamber work will require the pound to be empty and November is a good time for this.

The completion of the sale of Paddock Wood is scheduled to take place in November and we look forward to meeting the new landowners. The present owners have been very good supporters by allowing us access through the property and we wish them well in the future.

**Join us:** The Thursday & Sunday Group generally meets at 09:30 at Southland; if you need directions please ring 07717 855340 for latest info.

*Eric Walker*

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## Winston Harwood Group

Excessively wet, wet weather had made getting cars across the one mile of fields at Lordings impossible, so on to Drungewick.

Drungewick needed a stop-plank shelter, to make planks last a lot longer. Charles joined our group with one brilliantly fabricated and ready to assemble (not his first, there's another at home). This will become an interesting feature for our boat tourists and walkers. Wait until you see the roof..

At the same time we had to remove three large heavy mooring bollards from alongside the lock and re-position the bench-seat to enable Peter's large tractor with mower to cut more grass in that area. We will donate the bollards to the Basingstoke Canal, where David and Chris also volunteer. Great idea!

The stop-planks will now be 'stickered' (stickers are wooden horizontal spacers) Wind dried wood lasts longer. So now you are up-to-date.

*Tony Clear (for David Junkison)*

## The Mrs Bucket Group - keeping up appearances on Mondays

October saw us redeeming our promise to clear the slipways at Drungewick of reeds although it took us longer than we anticipated. We continued to maintain our regular sites, although with the onset of autumn, the vegetation has not been growing so much. We have also started on clearing the ditch in the overflow car park at Loxwood.

We have been asked to undertake some clearance work at Lordings flood lock and south towards Harsfold bridge/causeway.

Forward dates for our 'outings' are 5 November, 19 November, 3 December and 17 December.

Depending upon a survey by our leader, it is also possible we could start our winter tidy-up in Sidney Wood before Christmas.

*Nick Wood*

## Hedgelaying Group

Buongiorno all. As I write this, October is nearly over, with one more meeting to go. We have now had two trips back to last years' hedge but due to the group being down to two on both occasions, we only managed another 90m of trimming, making a total of 180m. We have another 160m to go.

Our last trip on 3 October was dull and gloomy, but no wet stuff. What is normally a very quiet section with only two or three souls walking by went mad with a total of 33 walkers. It's nice to see so many people enjoying the canal and its environs.

Well, that was brief, wasn't it?

Dates left for this year, weather permitting, are:

**November** - Tues 06, Wed 14, Thurs 22, Fri 30

**December** - Mon 10, Tues 18

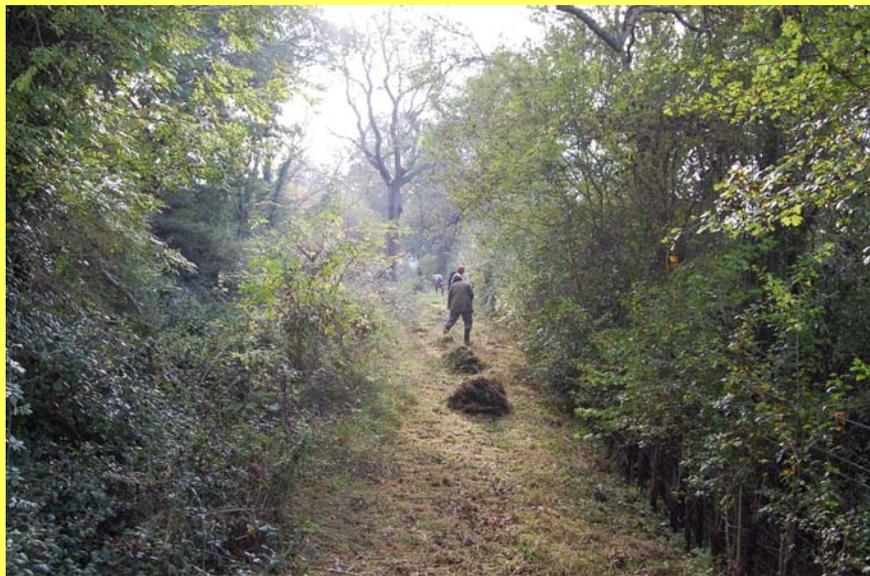
Nighty-night all.

*Keith Nichols Tel: 01403 753882; Mob: 07817 798865*

## Mid Week Working Party

Again a short interruption in our correspondence from within the Mid Week Working Party (not to be confused with the "Midweek Working Party" featuring in Wey-South, whoever they may be). Needless to say we're still very busy, and have rather been throwing ourselves about a bit over the length and breadth of this glorious canal of ours.

Working Party Diary		
Usually first & third Mondays of the month	'Mrs Bucket' - Keeping Up Appearances	Details from John Empringham
Every Wednesday	Mid-Week Working Party	Check with Ray Pick for confirmation of venue
Every Wednesday Thursday & Sunday as required	Loxwood Link Maintenance	Check with Kev Baker
Every Wednesday	Maintenance sessions at Tickner's Heath Depot	Contact John Smith/Ken Bacon
Every Thursday	Winston Harwood Group	Contact Tony Clear for details
Thursday and Sunday	Eric Walker's Group (construction)	Contact Eric Walker for details
7 December	WACT Christmas Dinner	See the current <i>Wey-South</i>
14 January	Workers' Lunch	Contact Geoff Perks 01403 262855



**Mid Week Working Party at Haybarn**

Having got things between Compasses and Farnhurst to a reasonable degree of preparedness for the 'Surrey' boat trips in September, the team have continued their thrust towards Fast Bridge (A281). The towpath (southern) bank was tidied up and, having obtained permission from the land-owners, attention turned to the offside bank and in clearing a margin of 2m or so along the whole length. Bushes and scrub, and overhanging and semi-submerged trees cut back, bramble thickets cleared and the usual trail of bonfires.

Attention was then turned to clearing the thick weed growth that covers the canal surface over this length - having tried to kayak along here in the past, it was a bit like paddling over carpet! The back-breaking work of scooping this stuff out, armed with kebs and rakes was tackled both from the banks and also from the workboat. If only we could find a market for this stuff! (as fertiliser, maybe). Anyway, most of the water surface is now clear which should make things much better for the Small Boats Rally. Unfortunately, the recent dredging work has still left a bar of material, just to the west of the removed island, obstructing the passage of anything larger.

The group has also been clearing the area adjacent to the 'Burn Site' at Dunsfold Park

towards Tickner's Heath. Trees and scrub have been cut back and removed from the area mooted for the future canal arm and boathouse.

Moving on (much) further south, the group is currently conducting a major campaign to clear the canal banks and margins over an extensive length from the Harsfold Bridge dam down towards Lee Farm Lock. This area has now become heavily overgrown and beyond the scope of visiting upkeep groups. The towpath between Harsfold and Haybarn bridges has already been cleared and work is currently underway in the vicinity of Lee Farm Lock and Bridge.

*Peter Lander (for Ray Pick)*

## **'Wiggonholt' - help wanted**

Help is needed with the re-painting of *Wiggonholt*. The boat was put into service four years ago and is now showing signs of the hard work it has undertaken. The plan is to start work after the Maritime & Coastguard Agency has completed the out-of-water inspection. This is due in early November and we would use the rest of the month to rub down and repaint. The boat has to be back in service by the end of the month, so as to cover the Santa trips.

Ideally we would like to add some colour to the hull, but that depends on time and what is practicable, in terms of help and weather.

If you can help, please contact Derek Heath (01403 218870) and register your willingness. We will then work out when the work can start, which, of course, is weather dependant.

I urge you all to come and help. *Wiggonholt* is a huge asset to the Wey & Arun project, but will not be a good advert if it is not kept in good condition.

With best wishes to you all.

*Dusty Miller*

## Loxwood Link Maintenance

The maintenance gang has been concentrating on boats recently. We successfully managed to remove the dredger from the water, which was not an easy job - I went in and got very wet. She was placed up on the slipway ready for Peter to pressure wash the hull.

We hope to get her painted ASAP, but of course time and work have to be juggled, whilst also being mindful that Wiggonholt too will soon need to come out of the water.

The next job will probably be the workboats. I think - after the aquatic activities slipping the dredger - that it is essential that while each workboat is out of the water for maintenance that we need to install some form of ladder at some point on each boat, as it is very difficult to get back on board from 5ft depth of water, especially when its wet or cold. Simple bars welded on would be good enough. Thankfully I had Dave Verrall working with me and between us we worked out a way for me to get back on board but it highlights the fact that *Wasp* is not an easy boat to get back onto.

Not to be deterred, we went on to clear the overgrown sloe bushes on the off side of the canal, from the slipway up through the section with reeds growing, taking out a full boat load of growth. Time didn't permit emptying the boat, so that had to wait for another day. Anyway, being cold and wet the warmth of the van's heater was too attractive.

*Kev Baker*

## Workers' Lunch

Arrangements are in hand for this event to be held on Monday 14 January 2013 at the Foxbridge Golf Club. This is situated about two miles from the *Onslow Arms* and should be convenient for just about all W&A workers. Full details of the menu and price (initial indications are that this could be lower than for the last few years) will be published in the next issue of *WPN*, including directions to the venue, so please make a note of the date in that nice new diary.

*Geoff Perks.*

## Tickner's Heath Depot

This month has seen the team once again adding another string to its bow, as it were, and taking to the water, well almost, we managed to get as far as the slipway. The idea was to help out Peter Foulger with some repairs to the dredger. The main area of concern was the bilge pumps which didn't seem to be doing what they should, so quite rightly Peter was unwilling to put the beast back into the water until he had four operational pumps. After preliminary work by Colin Durbridge it was found that at least one pump needed replacing and another was less than reliable, so Francis Wellerd and Mick Jones set about to replacing them, but first had to cut off the bolts securing one of the deck plates to allow access to the forward pump. After two visits they managed to make sense of the wiring and got the pumps working. In the meantime Ken Bacon and Richard Powell turned their attention to making new doors for the driving cab and the engine compartment. These are now ready and will hopefully be fitted when the team returns to the slipway in November to hopefully cure the numerous leaks in the dredger superstructure. These need the team's extensive skills with glass fibre and brush.

We have at last managed to get the Green Goddess (6in pump) to the canal for a pumping trial. After initial problems, the old girl managed to shift quite a bit of water. But there is still a problem involving having to change the fuel filter at regular intervals, so further investigation is needed before she can be seen as totally reliable.

Earlier last month, the team set about moving all the pump hoses to the large (Richard's) shed. This now means that all the pumps and their associated hoses are in the same place, which hopefully is more convenient to anyone wanting them.

Well, I think that's about it for this month, all the best.

*John Smith*

## 'Grow Your Tenner' Campaign

As we mentioned last month, if you feel generous enough to support the Trust with a donation of up to £10, then the charity website [localgiving.com](http://localgiving.com) will match your donation until their allocation of £500,000 has gone. Please go to [www.localgiving.com/charity/wact](http://www.localgiving.com/charity/wact) and click on one of the "Donate" buttons. If you are a UK taxpayer then your matched £10 donation will be worth £21.53 to the Trust. If you are even more generous and would like to give more than £10, or make a regular monthly contribution, then it will help the Trust most if you donate directly; please contact the Treasurer ([treas@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:treas@weyandarun.co.uk)).

As we go to press, we learn that the scheme is still running with only just over one third of the £500,000 match fund used up. So far WACT has claimed more than 1% of the matching funds that have been given out. There is no restriction that we know of on the number of £10 donations that anyone can make. We are aware of one member who has given one every day since the scheme started.

The link on the left-hand side of WACT's home page ([www.weyandarun.co.uk](http://www.weyandarun.co.uk)) goes direct to the [localgiving.com](http://localgiving.com) page.

*Julian Morgan*