

## Editorial

Quite a short newsletter again this time. That's not to say there has been nothing going on - with the recent camp, among other work, there has been plenty of progress. I would prefer to think that the organisers have been too busy taking advantage of the decent weather to sit at their keyboards for a long time. We're never sure whether such great weather as we had in July is a good thing or a bad thing. On the one hand, lack of rain allows work to carry on uninterrupted. While on the other hand, without water falling from the skies you can almost see the water levels in the canal drop.

WACT was pleased to take home the Best Non-Commercial Stand award from the IWA National Waterways Festival at Watford in July, particularly as it was accompanied by a cheque for £100. Informed sources say that Richard Emsley's narrowboat-shaped 'mouseboat' in front of the MDV was the catalyst - it proved irresistible to children.

More good news is that two of WACT's planning applications have been approved by the relevant district councils. Chichester DC has approved plans for a swing bridge across the canal north of Southland Lock, while Guildford BC passed the plans for upgrading of the riverside path in Shalford, work on which was started by the recent NWP/WRG camp and will be continued by the WACT camp.

The Gennets Bridge Lock fund has now passed the £100,000 milestone, only another £50,000 or so to go before the first stage of construction can begin. And then we will be raising money for the swing bridge mentioned above.

Here, in Aylesbury, the canal just down the road from us has seen a total lack of traffic, due to a collapsed lock between the town and the junction with the Grand Union Canal. I mention it to show that the national system still has plenty of problems, even after the transfer to the recently-formed Canal & River Trust; in this case the CRT was saddled with the cost of craning out about 20 boats and moving them to the main line of the canal on the other side of the blockage, plus the rebuilding of the lock, which is taking far longer than at first thought. We need Eric and his team up here I think. But meanwhile, the local authority has been building a new marina-style mooring to be used by the boats that currently sit in the basin in the town centre. The idea is to encourage visiting boaters to use the town basin and spend money in the town - a new Waitrose adjacent to the basin will give them plenty of chance to indulge themselves. That serves as a reminder of why we restore canals. It's not for our own gratification - it has an economic justification as well. But as Waitrose arrives, we are leaving. If all goes to plan, in a few weeks we will be moving back to Sussex.

*Bill*

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

Our two meetings in July have been confined to 'keeping up appearances' on our regular sites, all of which have been visited. With all the sun and rain it is amazing how quickly nature takes over. There is no doubt that regular visits are essential to prevent an uncared for appearance arising at these locations.

Apart from our 'normal work', we are planning to undertake some clearance of the towpath between Lee Farm Bridge/causeway and Lee Farm lock once we have permission. We have identified the need to replace some of the towpath retaining boards in Sidney Wood and we need to continue with the maintenance of the common land at Tickner's. All this hopefully in the autumn when growing slows down.

If there is anyone out there who would like to join our jolly band, we meet again on 5 August and 19 August. Contact John Empringham for site details etc.

*Nick Wood*



**Southland begins to look like a fully functional lock, as the housing for the back pump nears completion in July (Dave Verrall )**

## Summer Camp

You needed to be a bit of a visionary to see this project as canal restoration or waterway recovery. Perhaps WRG should be renamed to the Waterway Creation Group. However, we spent a valuable week creating what will hopefully become a valued amenity for the local people of Shalford and Bramley. The canal will follow later and part of our new path will form the towpath along a section of the Cranleigh waters river that could be used for the navigation.

The team worked really hard to complete about 200m (out of a total length of 400m) of the 1.2m wide footpath, the whole of the zig zag ramp up to the cycleway at the northern end and the gabion abutments for a footpath bridge at the southern end. As usual the logistics were complex. We had to get 10-ton lorries to reverse off the A281 into a newly built compound to deliver Type 1 limestone, this then had to be loaded into two tonne dumpers for transport to the 'park' where new temporary access ramps had to be built down from the Sustrans cycleway. We had initial questions as to whether the cycleway bridge over the river would withstand our regular traversing - however, it seemed no worse for wear at the end of the week.

Building a footpath badly is easy. Building one neatly requires careful levelling, measuring, edging and rolling. We were fortunate therefore to have the services of JJ (Price) from Eric's team who had spent two weeks last year on the Montgomery Canal doing just what we needed at Shalford. He and his team of hard working and willing DoE volunteers stuck to their task for the whole week without complaint (with a bit of dumper and roller driving thrown in for light relief) and the result looks very good. Even on the section we've part completed there's more Type 1 and dust to apply in the forthcoming WACT camp.

Last year the weather on our camp was terrible and we hardly ventured out of doors after work. This year it was back to the real pleasures of a canal camp - returning to the hall after a hot exhausting day's work, grabbing a cold beer from the fridge and relaxing into a folding camp chair in the evening sunshine whilst awaiting a hot shower and the excellent food of our camp cook Sue. We also played rounders (with some creditable performances from some surprising people), took a trip on the canal and thrashed the locals in The Forresters pub quiz.

*Bill Nicholson*

## Thursday & Sunday Group - Southland and Northwards

The TSG continues to work at Southland Lock and the area to the north, including Gennets Bridge Lock (the next one up). We also help out with the more construction-focused work on the operating section at Loxwood when needed.

**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*

## Tickner's Heath Depot

This month has seen the team here at Tickner's for once having a relatively quiet time. We have once again helped out the maintenance unit with a spot of fault diagnosis on their Suzuki outboard. This was pastures new for most of us, as it involved stripping the beast down and having a look at the rotor which supplies cooling water to the engine. It was in fact a much easier task than was first thought and the beastie was soon up and running properly.

At long last we managed to sort out the amount of aluminium at the depot and our logistics expert duly ferried the lot down to Muddles' and came back with a rather pleasing sum for the Trust's coffers.

Name	Group/Project	Tel	e-mail
WACT Office	General enquiries	01403 752403	<a href="mailto:office@weyandarun.co.uk">office@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
David Daniels	Visiting working parties	01483 505566 Mon-Thurs 8.30-12.30pm	<a href="mailto:support@weyandarun.co.uk">support@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Michael Bates	Health & Safety Officer	07786 323515	<a href="mailto:michael_bates@weyandarun.co.uk">michael_bates@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Eric Walker	Loxwood Projects	07717 855340	<a href="mailto:tsg@weyandarun.co.uk">tsg@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Ray Pick	MidWeek Working Party	01483 272443	<a href="mailto:anne.pick@btinternet.com">anne.pick@btinternet.com</a>
John Empringham	Monday Group	01483 562657	<a href="mailto:mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk">mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Kev Baker	Loxwood Link	02380 861074	<a href="mailto:loxwoodlink@weyandarun.co.uk">loxwoodlink@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
John Smith	Tickner's Depot	01903 235790	<a href="mailto:depot@weyandarun.co.uk">depot@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
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Keith Nichols	Hedge laying	01403 753882	<a href="mailto:hedging@weyandarun.co.uk">hedging@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Bill Nicholson	Northern working parties	01844 343 369	<a href="mailto:bill@nwpg.org.uk">bill@nwpg.org.uk</a>
Bill Thomson	Working Party News	07777 668 928	<a href="mailto:bill_thomson@weyandarun.co.uk">bill_thomson@weyandarun.co.uk</a>



**Recent reprofiling at Loxwood - the bank will soon grass over and merge with its surroundings. Looking south towards Loxwood with the horse bridge at Loxwood lock just visible in the distance (Dave Verrall)**

Earlier in the month we saw the team helping out with equipment for the work camp at Hunt Park. Most of this was rather back-breaking labour, which makes one realise that we are perhaps not as young as we think we are.

Recently we have had a blitz on one of the sheds as space was needed to receive the five rolls of 'Bentonite' sheeting presently residing at Peter Foulger's farm. As each sheet is 5metres long and weighs in at a ton, it will prove quite an undertaking when they eventually arrive here at the depot.

Other than lending what technical advice we could to Peter Foulger about the hydraulics of a 7-ton excavator, that's about it for this month.

All the best.

*John Smith*

## Summer Party for MWWP

Somewhat later than in previous years, the Summer Cruise for members of the MWWP has now been arranged for Wednesday 2 October. *Wiggonholt* will depart from the landing stage behind the Onslow Arms at 10.00am (sharp) to cruise up to Devil's Hole and then back down to turn below Baldwin's Knob lock. The trip should take about two and a half hours, thus getting everybody back to Loxwood in time for lunch. All members, also previous members, of the MWWP and any other WACT workers are welcome to come along, with their partners, for this event.

After the cruise there will be a lunch for those who wish to attend at the Sir Roger Tichborne, hopefully starting about 1.15pm. The menu will be that which the pub is offering at that time, details of which will be advised early in that month to all those who have expressed interest in attending, so that the orders for food can be passed to the kitchen beforehand.

Obviously there may need to be some restriction of numbers, both *Wiggonholt* and the restaurant having only limited capacity, so it will have to be 'first come, first served'. However, if you wish to join the cruise and/or the lunch please advise Geoff Perks (tel: 01403 262855; email [geprap@talktalk.net](mailto:geprap@talktalk.net)) before Friday 20 September.

### Can you help?

**The EU would like to stop the use of red diesel on UK inland waterways craft, if you disagree with this motion please sign the petition at the link below.**

**<https://submissions.petitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/52421>**

### Working Party Diary

Every Sunday and Thursday	Mainly construction work	Contact Eric Walker for details
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 (plus Thursday and Sunday as required)	Loxwood Link Maintenance	Check with Kev Baker
Every Wednesday	Maintenance sessions at Tickner's Heath Depot	Contact John Smith/Ken Bacon
Tuesdays or Fridays	Winston Harwood Group	Contact Tony Clear for details
17 August	Summit Level boat trips	Contact WACT office for bookings
3 August to 10 August	WACT Summer Work Camp, at Shalford/Bramley, continuing work carried out by the WRG camp	For more details email <a href="mailto:georgewhitehead@tiscali.co.uk">georgewhitehead@tiscali.co.uk</a>