

Editorial

Although it is only the beginning of December, this is the last edition of WPN for 2014 so I will join with all the other contributors by wishing our readers all the best for this month's festivities, and thanking all the volunteer workers, from WACT's own groups and the visiting parties, for their efforts over the year.

We have a full issue, so that's all from me.

Bill

The Mrs Bucket Group - keeping up appearances on Mondays

During November the group removed, repaired and replaced the sign at Run Common (the posts had rotted). At Loxwood we cleared the verge and ditch along the canal side of the path in the overflow car park all the way towards Brewhurst lock, plus the ditch which takes the surplus water into the river Lox.

We met Roger Richards on site at Devil's Hole lock to discuss the installation of a picnic table and seats. It has been decided to instal this as soon as we can, probably when the ground conditions are suitable.

As planned, at our second meeting, working with Ian Burton, we planted about 30 plants on the canal bank on the north side of the road at Tickner's for screening, removed a lot of barbed wire from around the stream below the canal and cleared the culvert which runs under the road. Four members also visited the Number 1 culvert in Sidney Wood and cleared all the debris which was covering the 'entrance' grill.



John E and Nansi fixing the notice at Run Common (Digby Ridge)

We are planning to undertake our winter tidy up in Sidney Wood during December and January. Progress will obviously be dependant on the weather! After that, if all goes well, we are intending to have a go at clearing the towpath between Harsfold causeway and south to the 90 degree turn in the canal (our normal boundary/limit when we are working north from Haybarn Swing Bridge).

Mrs Bucket wishes all our navy colleagues a very happy Christmas.

Nick Wood

Hedgelaying Team

Festive greetings to one and all from the Team. The team has been working hard, but, I finally managed to get everyone's attention so that we could get on with coppicing, preparation and laying. November 11 and 18 saw off the preparation and laying on the offside at Brewhurst Lock. The last few yards of the hedge needs a few years' growth before laying.

Our attention has now turned to the towpath side from the toe of the lock, where the seating is, to the mill and weir footpath. There isn't much to lay but I thought that the bank there had a good variety of wild flowers (a small red campion flowering on Tuesday 25 November!) and so to keep the bank clear of brambles whilst creating a hedge at the top of the bank would create an interesting micro climate on the cleared bank. We are transplanting natural regeneration off the side to the top of the bank. Zero cost folks. The field side of the bank will be left a wild tangle thus giving a layer of habitats here. I have seen red-backed shrikes here, heard nightingales, most of the owls and of course the area is still good for glow worms even after the upheaval on this stretch of the canal.

Well, we have had warm, sunny weather and the opposite, of grey, very wet days this month so who knows what we will get for the next few Tuesdays before Christmas.

A quick rant from me for the end of this year. Why do people grow non-native species for hedges, i.e. Leylandii and Laurel? Why cut every bit of grass to within an inch of its life i.e. particularly common land at the edge of the road? Why do they then put bits of white stone and bits of wood along the edge of the road on this land that *they do not own*? All this in the countryside? Thousands of houses going up on Green Field Sites? Does this have any bearing on the canal? you may ask. Well, it was a rural canal but for how much longer?

Answers on a postcard to Mrs Trellis at her usual address. I'm sorry, I haven't a clue! But, Happy Festivities to you all.

Future gatherings of the clan will remain on Tuesdays for the time being.

Keith Nichols

Thursday and Sunday Group - Southland and Northwards

The Devil's Hole pound filled rapidly following the recent heavy rain. The 'monk' is working satisfactorily and the by-wash pipes round Southland Lock worked well too. The purpose of the by-wash is to reduce the water level in winter above the lock so that the land drains are not submerged, causing them to silt up during the wet season. The next thing in that regard is to put in a stopper plate so that the water in the Southland Pound can be brought up to summer level. When building Devil's Hole Lock we put two yellow pipes under the towpath to divert the water from the works. These are at about winter water level and the structure to lift the water level to summer water level is the next task. Protecting the bank with riprap to stop it being damaged by the winter overflow water through the pipes has also to be done.

Work at Gennets Bridge Lock is still on hold. The application for an EPSM licence to Natural England was bounced a second time, again asking for more information. We have sought help from the Canal & River Trust where the Montgomery Canal has been going through exactly the same hassle. Through contacts in the House of Lords we now hope to get a visit from Natural England, a year after it was originally requested, with the hope that a licence will be granted and work can start next July.

The linear park aspects of the Wey & Arun that I have worked on since 1990, were vindicated when it was reported that three kingfishers were seen, at the same time, on the canal in Loxwood. While working on the canal I have only twice seen this schedule 2 bird, fleetingly on both occasions.

Repairs and modification to Gennets Pound Sluice and Barberry Bridge are now continuing.

At Baldwins Knob Lock, the pointing has been completed and there has been a significant improvement, but there is still leakage through the wall, when the lock is more than half full of water. By leaving the bottom gates open in winter two things happen. First there is no leakage through the walls, which causes erosion behind the wall evidenced by the unevenness of the ground on the off side, which may be a trip hazard. Secondly the pound above could be set to a winter water level, still suitable for boats, but more able to take the rapid rises of canal level when the River Lox and its tributaries flood into the canal. The canal banks are generally 300mm (12in) above maximum water level. Christmas 2013 saw the canal south of Brewhurst about 6ft over its normal level, which was extreme. Hence the work to lift the towpath south of Brewhurst Lane to give about 600mm (2ft) clearance will continue when the ground is dry next year. Related to this is the need to keep the culverts under the canal (and there are two at Brewhurst) clear of debris and blockages that can cause flooding. At BKL there is still leakage through the lock wall that is hoped to address in March next year.

The Thursday & Sunday Group meets at 09:30. Because the work is taking the group to a number of different sites, our current practice is to email a work briefing form before the working day. Please email Eric Walker if you want to get on that circulation list.

Eric Walker

Tickner's Heath Depot

Pleased say that we have had a rather quiet month. Mick Jones and Francis Wellerd managed to complete the two canal side noticeboards and showing a desire to travel immediately volunteered to so site them, (you know the definition of a volunteer - answers to yours truly on the back of a tenner).

Ken Bacon and Richard Powell, not to be

Name	Group/Project	Tel	e-mail
WACT Office	General enquiries	01403 752403	office@weyandarun.co.uk
David Daniels	Visiting working parties	01483 505566 Mon-Thurs 8.30-12.30pm	support@weyandarun.co.uk
Michael Bates	Health & Safety Officer	07786 323515	michael_bates@weyandarun.co.uk
Eric Walker	Loxwood Projects	07717 855340	tsg@weyandarun.co.uk
Ray Pick	MidWeek Working Party	01483 272443	anne.pick@btinternet.com
John Empringham	Monday Group	01483 562657	mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk
Kev Baker	Loxwood Link	02380 861074	loxwoodlink@weyandarun.co.uk
John Smith	Tickner's Depot	01903 235790	depot@weyandarun.co.uk
Tony Clear	Winston Group (Lordings)	01903 774 301	winstongroup@weyandarun.co.uk
Keith Nichols	Hedge laying	01403 753882	hedging@weyandarun.co.uk
Bill Nicholson	Northern working parties	01844 343 369	bill@nwpg.org.uk
Bill Thomson	Working Party News	01903 744767	bill_thomson@weyandarun.co.uk

outdone in the woodworking department, then produced, at quick notice, two signboards, again for use on the canalside. Yours truly got in on the act and turned his hand to varnishing the board to be used as a thermometer for the Compasses Bridge appeal.

The two Davids - that's Kersley and Robson - had a trip to the Cactus Farm at Ashington and removed the paper mountain to the skips at Loxwood.

In between we have managed to fit in a few mechanical tasks. One was the repair of one of the Monday Group's mowers. It was found that the throttle lever bracket had snapped, but with the team's usual ingenuity, the kit was soon fixed. After a service it assisted in reducing the height of the grass around the depot. Ken Bacon managed to get the brushcutter he has donated running, so we now have a healthy stock of them.

We have also been kept busy ensuring that Dave Evans has what he needs for the preparatory work for the Compass Bridge project.

Sad to say though, that after a lot of hard work put in in previous months it was found that the Hydrovane compressor was hors de combat. But in this instance it would not rise again, so it was decided to split it from its 16hp engine. Now we have to figure out what to do with this excellent power unit, suggestions anyone.

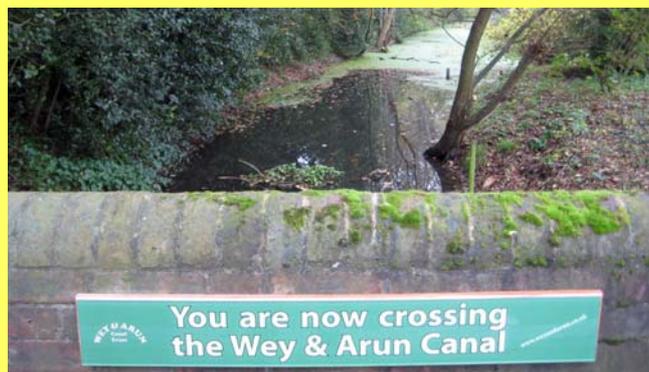
Well I guess that about it for this month's report. All the best for the festive season.

John Smith

Mid Week Working Party

Unfortunately the recent wet weather disrupted the MWWP planned November work. For the first Wednesday of the month, we hoped to have one more visit to Pallingham, but this was cancelled due to the River Arun bursting its banks and preventing us from gaining access to the canal. Further work at Pallingham will now have to wait until next summer. Fortunately, we did have other work on the same day at one of our regular sites, Run Common, where we cleared vegetation from the canal banks.

The second Wednesday was also rained off. However for the last two Wednesdays we were able to work at Loxwood. We worked from Brewhurst



Before and after photos at Elmbridge taken by Alan Jennings

Bridge to Birch Copse, clearing the towpath bank of vegetation that was overhanging the canal and encroaching on the towpath.

A small group of the MWWP also worked two Tuesdays at Elmbridge, where the landowner kindly allowed us to trim back overhanging growth thus enabling the Trust to emphasise to the passing public the proximity of the canal.

Dave Verrall, on behalf of Ray Pick

Compasses Bridge and Summit level

Work has started to establish the site compound and facilities at Dunsfold Park for the up-coming project to replace Compasses Bridge. Many thanks go to a small band of visiting workers from the NWPG.

The work carried on over a very wet and cold weekend, and included widening and laying hardcore for the access, installing the water

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

connection (Steve only got slightly wet!), large amounts of hoarding erected, and a bench made for the container (which will never fall apart!). A very professional looking site fence has resulted from these efforts, and the whole site looks good. Next time will be putting up the heavy compound gates - watch this space

Dave Evans

Winston Harwood Group

Having recently re-laid the paved path under Fast Bridge and 'your's truly' having cut back the ivy, we are expecting to be back at Lordings and the waterwheel as soon as possible (the problem, as ever, is the wetness of the fields we have to cross).

Our leader David Junkison, having been brilliant at organising and 'fixing up' between our Tuesday meets for many years, has retired. We wish him well.

The group, what with operations and ageing, is smaller now. Perhaps it should be renamed 'Lordings Winston Harwood Group'? (It is the 'Lordings' that we would like in the wording).

Tony Clear

Richard Watson has forwarded this 'farewell' submission from David Junkinson:

Our group ceased work as the 'Winston Harwood Group' in late October. We had continued with work at the Lordings site after Winston died in September 2005.

In the summer months while access was possible, we maintained the site at Lordings but did various projects on the canal elsewhere during the winter.

In September 2005 we completed the aqueduct at Lordings and in the following years we ran and maintained the waterwheel until it jammed in its wheel-pit in October 2009.

In the autumn of 2010 we dismantled the wheel. Tony Turnbull re-designed the waterwheel with a new axle and new spillways, as well as an improved way to support the bearings. The re-designed wheel was rebuilt in 2011 and reopened in September 2011.

It ran during the summer of 2011 but failed again that October. Major repairs were undertaken in the summer of 2013 and 2014 and the wheel now works well and can raise 500m³ (about two lock-fulls) in 24 hours.

The Trust must now decide when the wheel is to run and who is to maintain it. The new spillway design is not only very efficient but easier to maintain. Likewise the new axle design makes repair easier.

My thanks go to all current and past members of the group for all their hard work over the past nine years.

David Junkison

WACT Workers' Lunch - 21 January 2015

Further to last month's note on this subject, please find below all the relevant details of this event.

To be held at Foxbridge Golf Club on Wednesday 21 January 2015 at 12.30 for 1.00pm. The Club is reached by driving south from the Onslow Arms, Loxwood for almost 0.5 mile, turn right (signed to Foxbridge Golf Club) and keep ahead for almost 1.25 miles passing two turnings and the Oaktree Stores on your right to reach and take the first turning on your left (again signed to the Golf Club) for some 600 yards before turning left into the Club's large car park.

All WACT workers, including retired colleagues, are welcome - with or without their partners. However, space is not unlimited and a maximum of 65 people can enjoy the lunch in comfort. This is also about the limit for the capacity of the kitchen

The menu is set out below. Please complete the form and send it with your cheque to -

Geoff Perks, 61 Ashleigh Road, Horsham, RH12 2LE.

You may opt for either two or three courses, the respective prices (including the usual tip) are -

2 courses	£14.85
3 courses	£18.15

Geoff Perks

WACT Workers' Lunch Wednesday 21 January 2015 Booking Form

Name(s) Telephone

Please reserve a place for me/us at the WACT Workers' Lunch on Wednesday 21 January 2015. I have ticked my/our selections on the menu below and enclose a cheque for the appropriate amount made out to "G R E Perks".

STARTERS: Pea and Ham Soup - Moroccan Fishcakes on Dressed Leaves with Lime Aioli - Smoked Chicken Salad with Blue Cheese Dressing

MAINS: Shredded Lamb Shoulder on a bed of Mashed Potato - Confit Duck Leg and Bean Cassoulet - Lemon Sole and Prawn Roulade with Crushed New Potatoes.

All served with a selection of fresh vegetables.

DESSERTS: Chocolate Fondant with Vanilla Ice Cream -Spiced Plum Crumble and Custard - Cheese and Biscuit Selection

Coffee and Mints