

### Editorial

Did you catch Channel 4's 'Great Canal Journeys' on 25 October? Timothy West and Prunella Scales explored London's Lost Route to the Sea, which of course included the Wey & Arun Canal.

There was a lot of ground to cover in the hour so there was so much more that could have been included, but the bit they did travel looked positively idyllic and was a great advertisement for our project. It should still be available on catch-up. Personally, I was pleased that the oft-forgotten River Arun was included.

Volunteer work is now well under way at Gennet's Bridge Lock (see Eric's report) and the contractors are making good progress at Compasses, which, we are told, now resembles a bridge rather than the previous EU concrete mountain. With the formal opening of the Hunt Park platform (complete with 10-piece jolly band, just for the opening, not a permanent feature) London's Lost Route is getting ever closer to being found.

*Bill*

### The Mrs Bucket Group (keeping up appearances on Mondays)

Most of us navvies have heard of 'Sod's law'; why is it that we have a lovely sunny week followed by a Monday when the group is out and it absolutely tips down with rain all day? That was us on 5 October. However not to be deterred, 10 of us saw to some of our regular sites, cut a new path around the lock 16 winding hole in Sidney Wood at the request of Brian King and made our second visit of the year to Malham lock. We all got a bit damp!

However we had better weather on 19 October when we concentrated on Loxwood, mowing the lock, cutting the overflow car park, the ditch and the bank, plus visits to the Drungewick aqueduct site, DHL and Southland locks.

Now for our winter job in Sidney Wood in November and December!

*Nick Wood*

### Visiting Groups - WRG BITM

This was a dig with a difference, unless you count uncovering a buried lock as revealing some industrial archaeology!

There used to be an iron bridge over the Wey & Arun at Whipley Manor which carried the Guildford to Horsham railway in the pre-Beeching days, and it had been thought that there was none



**Compasses Bridge, looking towards Dunsfold Park, showing the newly-poured concrete deck; the raised reinforcing marks the position of the parapets. (WACT picture - more at WACT website)**

of the bridge left when it was dismantled. WACT was quite surprised when BITM uncovered some large bits of iron when clearing the bridge track last year, and was excited enough to ask us back on 17/18 October to dig a trench so Richard Smart, their engineer, could get an idea of what was actually still there.

The trench was to be nearly 25m long, 1m deep and nearly 1m wide, and we uncovered all the base of the bridge in that section, huge lumps of iron, which was exciting for us too. One of the obvious problems in digging our trench was large roots. An information board will be erected shortly to give information on the dig to visitors

*Bill Nicholson (edited from BITM's own report)*

### Lordings Group

For anybody who may have the impression that nothing has been happening to the Lordings section - I would like to correct that now. Anyone who has visited the area would realise that regular maintenance has been taking place. The winding hole by the waterwheel has a mown base and trimmed sides, as the waterwheel has only been running for short periods due to technical problems.

The rose for Rose Arch Bridge has established with a 'growing time' loss (the nursery supplied one not true to name which had to be replaced)

We have a serious leak problem each side of the overflow which is between Winston's bridge and Rose Arch even though the level is well down. The clay was too dry and hard during the dry summer to fix it. This bit of canal is only topped up when the river is above the norm. All the water can be heard and seen as it gets back to the river (by the overflow)

We are going to need some extra members to get clay from our clay store (by the tool vault) and get a low-load trailer and smallish tractor and move clay up to near the overflow, followed by ramming it into place.

*Tony Clear*

## Visiting Groups - London WRG

About 10 volunteers from LWRG made their second visit of the year to Compasses Bridge on 24/25 October (see pictures, right).

Dave Evans had set them a number of tasks, the main one of which was to alter the drain outflow on the Fastbridge side of the current causeway. NWPG had started in an earlier dig to place an earth dam across

the canal around the position of the existing farm gate access from the airfield onto the towpath. Unfortunately the airfield drain still entered the canal in the section that we need to pump out and



**London WRG's October visit:**  
 (top) building a bund across the canal so that the water level can be lowered, plus new pipe;  
 (above) Martin with a trial panel of Flemish bond brickwork;  
 (left). excavations to find the water pipe, we have agreed with Thames Water that we can reduce costs if volunteers can prepare the trench.  
 Pictures from Sally Schupke

## 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	Details from Margaret Darvill
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	Work in Lording's area	Contact Tony Clear for details
Various Tuesdays	Hedge Laying	Contact Keith Nichols
Third Saturday of the month	Summit level	Contact Dave Evans

clear of silt prior to the removal of the causeway next spring. LWRG redirected this pipe to the north of the dam and completed further work on a new concrete-filled sand bag retaining wall and the dam itself. The section can now be drained and dredged.

Other jobs included further preparatory excavation work for the water main diversion, cutting up concrete blocks for work on the bridge deck once the contractors have finished there and building a sample panel of the proposed Flemish bonded brick facing wall for the bridge. Work on the latter should start soon after Christmas (weather permitting)

*Bill Nicholson*

## Tickner's Heath Depot

This month has seen us eagerly scurrying around the depot moving scrap and clearing what vegetation we could in preparation for the arrival of our new gates and fence. Dave Evans and his crew have worked like Trojans to clear vast areas of the depots scrub which has uncovered areas we never knew existed and it seems as though the depot has doubled in size, certainly down by the Dunsfold road.

At the request of our landlord Dave's crew have also put a more substantial fence along our northern border with Dunsfold Park. We are beginning to look really professional (please keep this to yourselves).

During the month we have also helped Sally Carter, least I hoped we helped, prepare for the grand unveiling of the Hunt Park Viewing Platform. One of our tasks was to make a support for the plaque noting the kind people who donated the funds for the Nature Park. Hopefully it does them justice.

We have also received a rather ancient Seagull outboard motor from Peter Hart, this has set us quite a challenge as all the threads are of a bygone age. For those in the know we mean

Whitworth threads and luckily we still have a few taps, dies and spanners from that era and the team is busy returning it to running order. Thanks to Peter - this has had the team really sweating and taxing their memories of days gone by.

So other than the odd service to generators that's about it for this month Keep smiling.

*John Smith*

## Thursday and Sunday Group

At Gnet's Bridge Lock (GBL) the work could now be considered as routine, as much of what we are doing is a repeat of the Southland work. Interestingly there are subtle variations and as each bridge is different, each lock is different too.

At GBL the bridge at the bottom end of the lock is determined by the steel arch. The minimum lock width requirement is 4.4m (14ft 5in) and to this the lock design added a constructional tolerance of 60mm, which the contractor used, in part. This and other variations in the 3D geometry of the end of the lock resulted in some head scratching. Hopefully it will come right in the end.

Next was the setting up of the quoins, another EW attempt to simplify the installation led to a lot of effort being required and "We will not use that method again!" One up, one to go as we go to press.

Backfilling behind the lock was helped by the contractor putting his 3t excavator on the top sill for the weekend before they left site. This enabled us to remove the bank between the lock and the canal and put it in between the lock and towpath. Any water from the canal at that end of the lock is now pumped out into the woods. At the bottom of the lock there is a similar arrangement, but there it pumps down the canal. The rest of the backfill for both sides of the lock came from the stockpile in the woods and that completed phase one of the backfill.

Name	Group/Project	Tel	e-mail
Julian Cheek	Maintenance coordination	01483 505566	<a href="mailto:julian_cheek@weyandarun.co.uk">julian_cheek@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
David Daniels / Northern Office	Visiting working parties	01483 505566 Mon-Thurs 8.30-12.30pm	<a href="mailto:support@weyandarun.co.uk">support@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Dave Evans	Health & Safety Officer		<a href="mailto:compasses@weyandarun.co.uk">compasses@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Eric Walker	Loxwood Projects	07717 855340	<a href="mailto:tsg@weyandarun.co.uk">tsg@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Margaret Darvill	Mid Week Working Party	01483 894606	<a href="mailto:margaret_darvill@weyandarun.co.uk">margaret_darvill@weyandarun.co.uk</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>
Tony Clear	Winston Group (Lordings)	01903 774 301	<a href="mailto:winstongroup@weyandarun.co.uk">winstongroup@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
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>
Dave Evans	Summit working party		<a href="mailto:compasses@weyandarun.co.uk">compasses@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Bill Thomson	Working Party News	01903 744767	<a href="mailto:bill_thomson@weyandarun.co.uk">bill_thomson@weyandarun.co.uk</a>



**Hedgelaying team - a nicely atmospheric shot from Keith Nichols of the coppicing at Devil's Hole (see right)**

There are currently several teams working at GBL. Now that the bricklayers have set out the initial position and appropriate levels for the walls, it is all go. On the top sill they are setting up the shuttering for that slab to be poured. The bridge foundations will be next, these extend from the lock wall or bridge abutments to the end of where the parapets will be. Because this is a WSCC highway bridge that work is monitored by the Council's "Proper Officer". And then there are the logistics of items from Tickner's (Thanks to John Smith for looking after it) and items in and out of the lock using the Hanix.

The target date for completing the bridge is 4 June 2016, a date determined by the legal agreement with WSCC.

The Thursday and Sunday Group meets at 09:30. The TSG has a work briefing form emailed out before the working day. Please email Eric Walker if you want to get on that circulation list.

*Eric Walker*

## Mid-Week Working Party

MWWP has had a very busy month. We completed clearing the base of the canal at Pallingham. We were very sad to leave this location as it is such a beautiful place, and numbers were high on at least two occasions with 23 people attending.

To prepare for the opening of the Hunt Park Viewing Platform, the group did sterling work in tidying the paths and strimming all the weeds. For the last two weeks the group has been clearing the channel at Gun's Mouth. This meant two people on a platform clearing branches and weeds and even fallen trees whilst others cleared the island. If you look from the bridge on the A281 you are now able to see the boats at the other end of the channel.

Our last visit was to clear the towpath between Southland Lock and Devil's Hole Lock for the beginning of the winter maintenance

*Margaret Darvill*

## Hedgelaying Team

A BIG HELLO from the Hedgelayers folks. After our summer break which seemed very short to me, and yes, we are just like teachers, undervalued but with long holidays. At least we don't have to put up with the little darlings though.

What have we done so far this 2015/16 season, I hear you ask. You didn't? Well I'll bore you anyway. So far we have spent two days coppicing in Devil's Hole in glorious weather. All the stools we cut last season, apart from six that a deer took a fancy to (or a rabbit on stilts) have 4ft-6ft regeneration. And Leylandii lovers say native trees don't grow quickly enough! This material, cut, is for a local hedgelayer's 60-yard hedge but we may have a canalside hedge to lay in the New Year. Legs crossed? Oh, I mean fingers.

Well, from a small cog in a lot of cogs, that is it for now.

*Keith Nichols*

## Summit (Northern) Working Party

Our Third Saturday gang having increased to eight, we were sent off to Tickner's Depot to carry out clearance and fencing works that the Trust is now required to put in place to meet the terms of its new lease for the site.

Robert Nicholson and his chainsaw made quick work of cutting back the hedgerow trees whilst the Trust's 6t digger ploughed its way through the years of bramble growth between the roadside hedge and the hardcore and steel storage areas. This revealed a much larger area than might at first be apparent and will mean that with some re-positioning of the existing storage the Trust will have a much larger area of land to work with. We managed to dispose of the debris along with, in error, one of Dave K's walkway boards (sorry Dave!).

Elsewhere the fencing team erected a new post and wire fence along the boundary with the airfield. Our next visit on 21 November will seek to complete much of this work which will include erection of new palisaded steel entrance gates and adjacent 25 metre fence. New members to this growing team are always welcome. See below for contact details.

*Bill Nicholson*

## News briefs

**Battery Recycling:** Eric Walker reminds us that the Trust can still make money from recycling scrap batteries, where to take them was mentioned in the last WPN.

**Grow Your Tenner 2015:** The 'Grow your tenner' matched funding scheme mentioned in the last WPN has now finished. The pot ran out after just 11 days. 23 three-month direct debits and 62 single gifts were pledged for WACT. With matched funding of up to £10 per gift, plus Gift Aid, the Compasses Bridge appeal will benefit by over £3,600 as a result.