

Editorial

More sad news to end 2018 - we learned of the passing in December of John Markwick, who has often been credited as the Trust's founder.

John's interest dated back to 1968 when he first began to consider the possibility of canoeing the former canal which he had seen marked on maps. He contacted various people, including Sussex River Authority, the local councils and Paul Vine, author of *London's Lost Route to the Sea*. Discovering that several others had expressed an interest in the canal, including John East, a WSCC Councillor, he arranged a meeting in 1970 to establish the Wey & Arun Canal Society, with John East as Chairman and John Markwick as Secretary and Treasurer. The rest, as the saying goes is history. Those wishing to read the full story - this is, by necessity, a very brief summary - are referred to John Wood's excellent history of the *Wey-South Project*.

This issue of *WPN* carries details and booking form for the 2019 Navvies Lunch. Organiser Di Miles tells us that just after making the initial arrangements, the proposed venue went into administration so she was faced with the task of finding an alternative at short notice. So all volunteer workers and partners are invited to the new venue of Cranleigh Golf Club.

Bill

Mrs Bucket Group - Keeping Up Appearances on Mondays

As mentioned in the last *WPN*, we needed to spend another day clearing the towpath embankment between Baldwin's Knob lock and Barnshill Bridge. So that job is now done to Kev's satisfaction. On the 10th we started clearance work on the common land at Tickners Heath (north of the road) at the request of Tony Ford. A small group of three volunteers was detached to Sidney Wood to clear culverts 1 & 3 (culvert 2 was taken out of use a long time ago) following the autumn leaf fall. No 3 was particularly bad and took a lot of effort to get the water running freely through it again.

We worked at Loxwood at our last meeting in December (only three this month) cutting back the hedge on the non-towpath side of the lock and, working under the direction of Kev, we started to cut back the vegetation on the non-canal side of the towpath between Loxwood and Devils Hole locks to facilitate tracing the leak in the canal in the new year. We adjourned early to the Onslow for a Christmas drink and lunch. Very enjoyable!

Now to look forward to 2019 after a successful 2018, having undertaken more volunteer hours than in the previous year. Looks like an early visit to Sidney Wood is on the cards.

Nick Wood

Tickner's Heath Depot

Happy New Year one and all. This report will be short and sweet you will be relieved to know, as the team at the depot have only managed a few odd jobs around the depot, this, whilst trying not to get in the way of the hard graft being put in by the Eric Walker Group who are slowly managing to transform Tickner's into something more suitable for the 21st century.

The last few months of the year saw us trying to change the old 'elf and safety nightmare which was the reed cutter boat into a workboat for use on the canal, but greater minds than ours thought it not worth the effort, so instead we concentrated our efforts into lightening the beast so our tame scrappy could load it onto his lorry. Hopefully we have succeeded!

We did manage to repair one of the wheel barrows which I had conveniently tried to ignore. Instead of the usual pneumatic tyre we fitted a solid one which hopefully will mean that it will survive the ravages of towpath blackthorn. Personally, I think that wheel barrows with solid tyres are the way forward.

One final thing, it seems that one of our generators (a Honda 1Kw) has disappeared from our workshop at the depot. At present this was the only one we had which can power the depot's electrical tools. If anyone knows of its whereabouts would they please contact me. Many thanks, and all the best

John Smith

Summit Working Party and Visiting Groups

With the shorter days and wetter weather the team has concentrated on those tasks best suited to the conditions.

At Birtley, we have spent two Saturdays cutting and clearing trees along both banks of the canal in support of the good work being carried out by MWWP. On both occasions it rained heavily. Learning our lesson, on the second visit we took the NWPG gazebo to site to provide some shelter whilst having lunch. Clearance along the west bank has been carried out to enable us to erect the new boundary fence when conditions dry out enough for Stephen Darvill to bring down his tractor and post thumper. There is plenty more clearance and fencing to do to take us through until the spring.

The big news here is that the Trust is now the owner of about 900m of canal! Also for Birtley, the planning application for the proposed lift bridge was submitted just before Christmas. We wait for it to be validated. It is our intention that access and preparatory works will continue during the spring and early summer to enable work to start on the bridge in July. Three weeks of WRG Camps have



Summit Group in action clearing the road crossing site at Tickner's Heath - Bill Nicholson, who provided the pictures, remarks on the excellent turnout: 12 volunteers, when only five were expected.

been agreed and will run sequentially during the month.

The team has not been inactive on the Summit either. Two days have been spent clearing the understorey and road vision splays in the area around the proposed location for the Tickner's Crossing. This is needed to allow the ground investigation team to get in and do their work. We can now say that preliminary work on this major project has now started. Working next to the road, on each visit we have to close off one carriageway by

setting up temporary traffic lights, cones and road signs etc. Whilst this is a task that adds about an hour to the job each time, we have a system that seems to run smoothly such that we have made good progress over the three days that we have been there so far.

The Trust's chipper has been invaluable both here and at Birtley in our progress. How did we manage without it?

Finally, the first part of the Trust's new dredging fleet, the tug, was delivered to the slipway before Christmas. The rest is due to arrive on 26th January after which we can start digging our way through in Compasses to Tickner's. Anyone interesting in joining a proposed dedicated dredging team should contact Dave Evans or myself. We would like it to be in operation for two days per week if possible.

Plenty of important and interesting work to do in 2019. Volunteers, existing and new, always welcome.

Bill Nicholson

Mid-Week Working Party

The last two months have seen the main group in only two places, Haybarn and Birtley. However there have been small groups hived off during that time.

Four of the group have been beavering away for three weeks with Alan Johnson on clearing the trunk on the Bramley side of Gosden Aqueduct. The trunk is now no longer. Two others have spent three weeks clearing both sides of the canal between the slipway and Compasses Bridge with their brushcutters. It is now ready for the silt to be placed onto the banks when the dredger arrives in the New Year.

Meanwhile the main part of the group has started work on cutting the hedge and clearing vegetation on the south side of the Swing bridge at Haybarn. This is a mammoth job and could do with mechanising but the towpath at present is not wide enough in places to take a tractor. We will be back there in the New Year to continue the job.

For the last six weeks we have been clearing the south side of Birtley Bridge of laurels and small alders and willows. Much of the woodland had not been touched for over twenty years has now been chipped or burnt. Now if you go down to the bridge you can see the canal in both directions. It is such a pretty part of the canal.

Margaret Darvill

Working Party Diary

Every Wednesday and Thursday	Mainly construction work	Details from Dennis Gillen/John Reynolds
Every Monday	'Mrs Bucket' - Keeping Up Appearances	Details from John Empringham
Every Wednesday	Mid-Week Working Party	Details from Margaret Darvill
Monday to Friday (as required)	Loxwood Link Maintenance	Check with Kev Baker
Every Wednesday	Maintenance sessions at Tickner's Heath Depot	Contact John Smith/Ken Bacon
Various Tuesdays (not in summer)	Hedge Laying	Contact tba
Third Saturday of the month	Summit level	Contact Dave Evans
First Friday of the month	PEST boat group	Contact Chris Jones/Peter Hyem

Navvies' Luncheon, 13th February 2019

The **2019 Navvies' Lunch** will be hosted by the MWWP on Wednesday 13th February 2019
at **Cranleigh Golf & Country Club**, Barhatch Lane, Cranleigh, GU6 7NG.
At 12.noon for 1.pm.

All past and present members of the Mid-Week Working Party (MWWP) and other navy groups,
and their partners, are cordially invited to attend.

Numbers will be limited and will only be accepted with a menu choice and cheque together,
and must be received by 1st February 2019 at the latest, by post only.

Any allergies must be discussed with Di as soon as possible, prior to booking, please.

Please make cheques payable to Mrs D.J.Miles and send ,with menu choice,to
8 Newlands, Buckingham Close, Guildford, GU1 1TR.
Home phone: 01483 575804

Cost: for any two courses, £20.50 Three courses, £23.50

Attendee Name: (Form for each attendee please)

E-mail address for confirmation of booking:

Menu Choice:

Starter:

Pea & Ham Soup, with French Toast
Prawns in Garlic Butter , served on Toasted Ciabatta
Chicken Liver Pate, served with Spicy Tomato Chutney & Toast

Main:

Chicken Supreme with Madeira Sauce , Creamed Potatoes
Beef & Ale Pie , New Potatoes
Salmon with Watercress Sauce, New Potatoes
All served with a selection of fresh vegetables

Dessert:

Fruit Crumble with Cream OR Custard
Baileys Cheesecake with Cream
Lemon Posset, with Shortbread biscuit

Tea or Coffee and Mints

Footnote: You will notice the blanks in the directory below for the Hedgelaying group, following the sad passing of Keith Nichols in November. We do hope the group's work can continue, but as we all know, Keith and his unique sense of humour is a very hard act to follow. Please do help us keep this traditional craft alive along the banks of the Wey & Arun Canal.

Name	Group/Project	Tel	e-mail
Julian Cheek	Maintenance coordination	01483 505566	julian_cheek@weyandarun.co.uk
Maurice Cranefield	Visiting working parties	01483 505566	Maurice_Cranefield@weyandarun.co.uk
John Talbot	Health & Safety Director	01483 429918	jcst@weyandarun.co.uk
Dennis Gillen	Eric Walker Group		dennis_gillen@weyandarun.co.uk
Margaret Darvill	Mid Week Working Party	01483 894606	margaret_darvill@weyandarun.co.uk
John Empringham	Monday Group	01483 562657	mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk
Kev Baker	Loxwood Link	07920 755957	kevin_baker@weyandarun.co.uk
John Smith	Tickner's Depot	01903 235790	depot@weyandarun.co.uk
To be appointed	Hedge laying		
Bill Nicholson	Northern working parties	01844 343 369	bill@nwpg.org.uk
Dave Evans	Summit working party		dave_evans@weyandarun.co.uk
Chris Jones	Boat group PEST	01403 752393	chrisryderjones@outlook.com
Bill Thomson	Working Party News	01903 744767	bill_thomson@weyandarun.co.uk