

Editorial

We were very sorry to learn of the death in early April of P.A.L. (Paul) Vine, whose book *London's Lost Route to the Sea*, first published in 1965, probably did more than anything else to spark interest in restoring the Wey and Arun canal. He was a vice-president of the Trust.

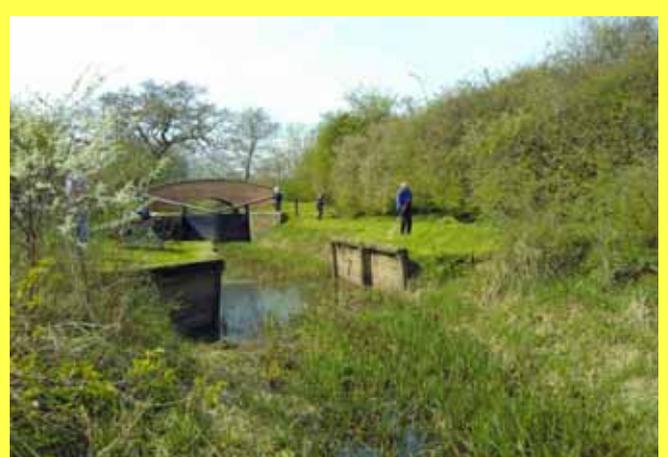
On a happier note, we have received help from Southern Water volunteers, planting at Tickner's Heath, while an IWA report has praised WACT's efforts in creating a vital public amenity even though full restoration is still a long way ahead - we are now an example to other projects. A far cry from the 1970s when projects like ours were viewed almost as a waste of resources. It seems our vision was right all along.

Bill

Mrs Bucket Group - Keeping Up Appearances on Mondays

It may have been Easter Bank Holiday but the commitment of Monday Group to canal maintenance and keeping up appearances resulted in five meetings in April (helped by the calendar I have to say).

With the growing season now with us regular visits to our normal sites have become imperative. Hence Drungewick aqueduct, Loxwood, Devils Hole lock, Southland lock, Tickner's, Three Compasses bridge and Hunt Park all received attention during the month, some on more than one occasion.



Monday group at Lording's flood lock (Roger Wilson)



Lording's slipway (Martin Burgess)



Lording's weir (Roger Wilson)



Monday group work at Lording's towpath (Martin Burgess)

On the 15th, 11 of us spent a very productive day down at Lording's clearing the flood lock, 'digging out' the slipway, mowing around the lock and repairing the towpath edging above the lock (see picture). Time allowed us to mow the towpath from the flood lock to the Harsfold bridge site as well. It appears that the water level in the pound above the flood lock to the river has been reduced by the removal of the planks in the flood lock weir (see picture). Water was flowing steadily out through the pipe. The heavy planks forming the weir have '- disappeared'. If they were there the water level would be almost at the height of the cross piece in the

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picture. If it is intended to have a canoe type outing there in the future the weir will need new planks.

We tidied up and mowed the Gennet's Bridge lock area and the towpath up as far as the spill weir in preparation for the canoeing/paddle boarding event on AGM day at the request of Chairman Sally. Finally at Tony Ford's request, we cleared the boundary fence of vegetation between the common land north of the road at Tickner's and Dunsfold Park.

Hopefully May will see us return to Malham Lock which is overdue a visit.

Nick Wood

Hedgelaying Group

We have completed this season's hedgelaying with our final section alongside Brewhurst Lock finished in time for the start of Easter boat trips - not an easy task as most of it involved left handed laying, and we only have one left-handed hedgelayer, who is now recuperating.

This section had been laid originally around 10 - 12 years ago, but based on right-handed layers, so we have reversed the hedge, with the hedge now pointing upstream, and, hopefully, it will respond over the next few years with lots of growth.



Hedgelaying group at work

In the last few weeks, signs of spring appeared with cowslips in abundance - mainly thanks to Keith Nichols, who propagated these and planted them out.

Next hedgelaying season will start around the end of October and will continue through until March/April. Anyone who wants to learn the skill is very welcome, especially if you are left-handed, as we have another 100m of hedge to lay at Brewhurst, before moving elsewhere.

Nick Baxter

Mid-Week Working Party

The group started the month doing the annual clearance of Rooks Hill Farm and Rushetts. There was considerable growth of willows and brambles.

While we were there Penny Bridger very kindly gave the group a talk on how to use the defibrillator which we carry with us to site. The group did not finish clearing all the brambles at Rooks Hill so we went back two weeks later. We then cleared some of the overgrown hedge between Southland and Hill Croft. It is looking much tidier there.

The following week we split between four people working with Dave Evans at Compasses clearing branches so that the dredger can easily get through the channel without hitting their faces, and the others tidying up the rest of Rooks Hill and Birtley, south of the bridge. The last week of the month we spent clearing willows north of Birtley. The Tirfor definitely came into its own.

Margaret Darvill

PEST Boat Group

Recent work involved the team continuing to clear the navigation south of Brewhurst Lock down to Baldwins Knob Lock. The workboat *May Upton* took two full loads of vegetation and floating debris back to our burn sites.

Anyone wishing join the working party should contact Peter Hyem (phone 01403 752393, e-mail peter@barscorner1.plus.com) or Chris Jones (phone 07745 793243, e-mail chrisryderjones@outlook.com) or just join us at 09:00 at the Canal Centre on the first Friday of each month.

Chris Jones

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 Nick Baxter
Third Saturday of the month	Summit level	Contact Dave Evans
First Friday of the month	PEST boat group	Contact Chris Jones/Peter Hyem



**The 'Green Goddess' in her pomp
(Francis Wellerd)**



**Richard Powell with the 'old girl' stripped down
ready for her final journey (Mick Jones)**

Tickner's Heath Depot

By the time you read this April will have been and gone, leaving us looking forward to the long balmy days of summer. Here at the depot we are still trying to bring some semblance of order to our new work space. We have painted the walls a delicate shade of magnolia which, to be fair, has made the place a lot lighter. Our chums from the Eric Walker Group installed a water supply along with a sink and waste pipe, which means we can now wash our hands in relative comfort. All we now await is for the great day to arrive when the electricity supply company give us a meter so that power can be coupled up to the depot. We live in hope.

One of the projects that we were asked to undertake during the month was to reduce the weight of the old six-inch pump we had lovingly named the 'Green Goddess', so that the scrappy could lift her onto his wagon. It seemed a shame as members of the team, Francis Wellerd and Peter Andrews amongst others had slaved hard and long to restore the old girl so that she could be used at the canal side, but as she had become rather unreliable and had not been seriously used for some years, she had to go. We must have managed the task as she has since disappeared.

I am afraid that I must report that our Land Rover has once again had to have the benefit of the skills of the experts from Harwood's. One Wednesday in the month it was found that the beastie had no power at all, not even a glimmer from the battery. Mick Jones put a meter across the battery and only found a reading of 7 volts, which seemed to indicate that it was past its best. Luckily the team at Pulborough again came up trumps and after a quick application of a jump starter off it went and it now resides at Harwood's garage and we await the call to collect the beast.

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

John Smith

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