

Editorial

We were very sad to have lost two very long-standing and valued supporters of the Trust in Dave Kersley and Geoff Perks. Our condolences go out to their families.

There's another opportunity to make a donation to the Trust and see it doubled in value through the 'grow your tenner' campaign. The current round of funding started on 18 October and is still running. See www.localgiving.com/charity/wact.

Finally, WACT's engineers are never ones to rest on their laurels, and now that Compasses Bridge is open, plans are getting under way for the next major bridge, where the Tickner's Heath road crosses the canal. This will involve a lot of behind the scenes work, with surveying, costing, funding and getting the all-important permissions.

Baldwin's Knob Lock has new balance beams; these will be painted in Spring when the wood has acclimatised.

Bill

Thursday and Sunday Group

Our construction work at Gennets Bridge Lock (GBL) can be somewhat constrained by the weather. Fortunately we have continued to have, with one exception, good weather, which has enabled the work to continue in the dry. So, no excitement, just routine bricklaying, of the bottom training walls, within the lock and the lock facing bridge parapet.

The next major milestones are concreting the bottom training walls and putting in the back pump pipe, all in the next couple of weeks.

The concreting of the training walls will enable them to be back filled with clay. This is essential on the towpath side of the bridge, where the towpath has to be raised by a significant amount and the threshold of the bridge ramp needs to be supported. Even on the offside there is a void which needs filling and some support will be required.

The installation of the back pump pipe, at this time, is an essential to the placement of the bridge ramp on the offside.

So with the back-pump pipe in place and the clay backfill complete, the scaffolding can be re-erected, enabling the bricklaying of the downstream facing bridge parapet to be done.

The Thursday and Sunday Group normally meets at 09:30. Please email Eric Walker if you want to get on the email circulation list for details of when and where the TSG is working

Eric Walker



Gennets Bridge Lock bricklaying: soldier course (23 October)

Summit (Northern) Working Party

A short report this time as I haven't been down to Compasses since the frenetic and very successful opening weekend at the beginning of the month and am currently enjoying a 6 week sabbatical away from canal restoration! As most readers will know, we completed all the tasks that we felt that we could achieve in time for mid-day on 2nd. This included the facing brickwork for the entire bridge and back filling behind the 12m concrete wall extension on the Guildford side. In fact the most complete and presentable side of the bridge (apart from the top!), the south side, was the one that nobody could really see – hopefully the editor can include a photo. The most exciting part of the weekend was the announcement that the Trust is looking to extend the navigation at the Tickner's Crossing and that our team will be called into action sometime in 2018 to build not one, but maybe two bridges there if everything goes to plan.

There has been one Saturday working party since the opening during which I understand that brick laying on the extension wall was progressed. This won't be a quick job.

The joint KESCRG/LWRG Christmas Party weekend on 3 December will help progress as will our third Saturdays which are on 19 November and 17 December. There is plenty of other work to keep us busy including decamping from our compound. Weekend dates for visiting group work parties during 2017 are being put together. There won't be any week summer camps in 2017 but there may be some extended weekends during the early part of the summer – possibly at Shalford.

New members of our team are always welcome - details from me, or site manager Dave Evans.

Bill Nicholson

Mrs Bucket Group - Keeping Up Appearances on Mondays

At the time of writing it seemed likely that we would meet four times in October! At the request of Julian C we spent two outings clearing the vegetation on the towpath between Loxwood Lock and Devils Hole. Apart from about 70m already cleared near the winding hole at DHL (presumably by MWWP), we reckon we cleared 780m; it was a bit of an awkward job as the canal side bank is an earth mound to keep the water in, making the use of brushcutters and raking more time consuming than usual. It was good to receive much praise from passers-by.

Also by request from Julian, and in preparation for the replacement of all four balance beams at Baldwin's Knob Lock, we spent a day dismantling the fence, stacking the posts and crossbeams behind the stop plank shelter and removing the sponsored seat and plinth. We then erected the Heras fencing panels that were available and secured them together.

We were due to meet again on 31st October, with the intention of restoring Baldwins Knob fencing after replacement of the balance beams. Then again on the 7th and 21st November; back to our regular sites and if we can squeeze it in, an overdue visit to Malham Lock.

Nick Wood



Bank clearance undertaken by the Monday Group between Loxwood & Devils Hole locks on 17 October (Roger Wilson)

Hedgelaying Group

Greetings one and all, minus three. Suddenly there is a spate of funerals, all of whom I will miss. Dave Kersley, Geoff Perks and, from the village, Keith White.

Well you may have noticed that there was no missive from me in October WPN and yes, it is a lame excuse, but the group had not done anything when WPN went to press. We have now.

October has been productive on the coppicing front. We spent the first two days close to the canal producing 170 stakes and 100 binders. We then moved to a TOP SECRET location in Sussex that was nowhere near Slinfold, to work on a new coppice as the material there was so straight in comparison to the first site. We have spent three days (plus two with just me) and produced another 200 stakes and binders even though the group has been small. So to date then, we are not even half way to the required number of 850 stakes and binders. As with all WACT projects, time and weather do not consult with us mere mortals.

We shall just 'carry on regardless' with Sid James, Hattie Jacques, Barbara Windsor et al.

And with that or even with this; I shall say 'That's Shallot'.

Keith Nichols

Tickner's Heath Depot

My apologies for missing the deadline for last month's issue but I had only just returned from holiday when I heard the devastating news that David Kersley had passed away.

As you can appreciate, the news knocked us at the depot sideways as we always thought Dave would go on forever. He seemed to have been a fixture of the Wey and Arun Canal for so many years. He joined the old Wey and Arun Society in 1972 and had worked as a volunteer in so many areas even before the Trust was formed. His passing has left quite a hole in the day to day running of the Trust. It will take a long time to find a replacement (if ever) who will willingly put

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Eric Walker	Gennets Bridge Lock	07717 855340	tsg@weyandarun.co.uk
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John Empringham	Monday Group	01483 562657	mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk
Kev Baker	Loxwood Link	01489 690241	loxwoodlink@weyandarun.co.uk
John Smith	Tickner's Depot	01903 235790	depot@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
Dave Evans	Summit working party		compasses@weyandarun.co.uk
Bill Thomson	Working Party News	01903 744767	bill_thomson@weyandarun.co.uk



New Compasses Bridge (see Summit report. p1)

in as many hours as Dave did, nearly seven days a week sometimes and 52 weeks a year come rain or shine. Extraordinary really when you consider the debilitating medical conditions he suffered from. I think the only member of the team who could match Dave for strength and stamina was Mick Jones - my back has never been the same after trying to keep up with him when unloading bags of cement at the depot.

So most of this month has been spent trying to complete jobs that Dave started, our tribute will be to complete the repairs to an old diesel mixer that Dave spent hours restoring. Even if it never gets used, it will stand as a tribute to him.

At last the tree surgeons have been to the depot and rectified the potentially dangerous branches overhanging the property. They have done a good job and it's amazing how much light now enters the depot. So all are now welcome to visit us without the worry of the odd branch falling out of the skies.

One minor headache has been the Landrover, we received notification that it need an MOT so a bit of chasing round had to be undertaken. With the assistance of Harwoods we managed to get it tested. The only trouble is, we cannot find the vehicle documentation. The search continues.

I hope the working parties will be understanding and realise that it will take a bit of time to sort out cover for the many and varied tasks that Dave undertook for the Trust.

Oh yes, that reminds me, if anyone who has a wood burner would like some logs, we have quite a pile in one of the sheds and would only be too happy to see it disappear. You can always call in at the depot on a Wednesday or give me a call to arrange a convenient time.

Well that's about it for this month, all the best

John Smith

Mid-Week Working Party

This month we have had wonderful weather for our working party days with the result we have had a large number of volunteers turning up every week even when half the group went to Dave Kersley's funeral.

We have completed clearing the stretch from Cook's Bridge to just the other side of Pallingham Bridge. It is now looking like the base of a canal and as a group, we are very pleased to see the results.

We now have moved on to clear the non-public footpath side at Haybarn. There is a huge amount of work because neither side has been cleared for many years. With ecology in mind we are trying to clear 10 to 15 yards of brambles and then leave five yards. It does mean it looks a bit odd at this time of year, however by the Spring there will be plenty of greenery for the birds to nest or to use for signalling to each other. The group had great fun in checking the swing bridge was still working well and to their amazement it was.

Margaret Darvill



MWWP proving that the swing bridge still operates (Nick Houston)

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
Various Tuesdays	Hedge Laying	Contact Keith Nichols
Third Saturday of the month	Summit level	Contact Dave Evans