

Editorial

Unfortunately, as I understand it, the upcoming issue of *Wey-South* ran out of space so could only include a much-shortened report of the July work camp - so the full version appears in this issue of *WPN* instead.

The Passenger Environment & Safety Team (PEST), after their great fanfare in the last issue, have nothing to report this time. That's because the lack of rainfall caused all boat operations to be suspended, so PEST, being boat-based, had to take a holiday.

Bill

Mrs Bucket Group - Keeping Up Appearances on Mondays

Three outings in August as members do 'other things' on the late summer bank holiday!

We started the month with visits to Hunt Park, Run Common, Compasses Bridge, Gennets Bridge lock (mowing the lock side and watering the scrubs and trees) and, at the request of Kev Baker and Dave Evans, we cut back the hedge and strimmed the towpath between Barnshill Bridge and Baldwins Knob lock.

Again at the request of the Rangers, on our second outing we cleared the towpath and cut back the hedge for about half a mile from Drungewick slipway towards Barnshill Bridge.

On our third day out we tidied up Lordings lock and moved on to the flood lock, which was in a sorry state. We cut the vegetation on both sides of the towpath up to the existing hedge line and down the sides of the canal up to Winston's bridge. We also recovered sleepers which had been removed from the weir and placed them across the weir walls. The photo shows the extent of the vegetation growth. After finishing there we found time to visit Newbridge, Loxwood and Devils Hole Lock.

Nick Wood

Hedgelaying Group

Did you all miss me? Yes? Well, you are rotten shots then. I'm planning for the team to re-convene on 18 and 25 September. These dates will be the start of coppicing at Slinfold.

When we have enough material or have finished in the coppice, the group will go back down to Haybarn. We may not have enough material i.e. 300 stakes and 300 binders, to finish the last 150 yards but we'll do what we can before going into a different coppice for more material.

Hopefully we'll finish at Haybarn sometime around Christmas. Yes, I said it ***** Christmas!

Well anyway, after Haybarn the group will move back to the Gennets/Rosemary Lane section and restart laying there with, of course, more coppicing for more material.



Monday Group starting work at Lordings on 20th August (Martin Burgess)

Well that's it for planning so what could possibly go wrong? Answers on a postcard to Mrs Trellis (The Soothsayer) Wales.

Keith Nichols

Eric Walker Group

The group is still spending virtually all its time working on the refurbishment of Tickner's Depot. We have, since the last report, appointed a contractor to install mains electricity from the nearby sub-station to the site (with our volunteers excavating and backfilling the cable trench to save money) and we will install the cabling from the main cable termination box to the new workshop and all the Nissen storage sheds. This can't come too soon as the generator that John and his team have relied on for years is currently out of commission, proving difficult to repair.

We continue to clear all the old redundant machinery ready for the scrap man to collect. We have come across a few items, however, that could be of interest to 'collectors/renovators' and these we will advertise on eBay.

Work continues on refurbishing the large Nissen hut, with strengthening the end gable wall to make it structurally sound and we will be installing new high level uPVC windows, ("freebies" acquired by one of our volunteers). To ensure the building is well insulated, waterproof and to encapsulate the asbestos cement roof sheeting, we will engage a specialist contractor to spray the the complete internal roof sheeting with polyurethane foam. The renovation of the outside surface of the sheeting, however, is not such an easy task as it is covered with delaminating bitumen paint and moss! Removal of this has to be done without disturbing the surface of the asbestos cement sheeting, before re-coating.

We have uncovered a 'mountain' of concrete and general rubble under thick weeds and brambles and we will turn this into usable hardcore with a hired concrete crusher. Finally we need to restore the considerable amount of scaffolding stored at the depot, most of which is currently housed in a timber clad and framed shed, which appears structurally unstable. One of our volunteers has kindly donated some plastisol coated profiled metal sheets and aluminium Z purlins, the kind that are used to clad warehouse buildings. We are, therefore, building a scaffold framework which we will roof and clad with

these sheets for use as future scaffold storage.

We still have a considerable amount of scrap timber, which we now cannot burn. Any volunteer/member who would like some, please come to Tickner's depot any Thursday with appropriate transport, i.e. trailer/van/pick-up and we will gladly help you to load up.

Dennis Gillen

July Wey & Arun WRG/NWPG Camp

This was one of the first camps of the main season, so the first task was to drive north to Tom's farm where Waterway Recovery Group's Mike Palmer had kindly prepared a WRG van and camp kit ready to drive straight off to Kirdford Village Hall in deepest West Sussex. A good hall for a summer camp, it can comfortably accommodate about 20 volunteers. With the benefit of the WACT portable shower unit on the front car park and the WRG and NWPG gazebos on a newly paved area down the side of the hall, we were well prepared for the hot weather that was forecast. We were to eat all our meals al fresco.

This won't be the first camp report to major on the weather - as I now know, there have been camps in the past that proved hotter still! Temperatures on our two work sites were never below 25 and often up at 28 degrees C - especially at the slipway site where there are few trees and little natural breeze.

The 2018 Camps Brochure had indicated that the work was to be a combination of towpath laying and visitor centre construction at the northern end of the canal. As is often the case in planning camps nine months before they are due to take place, it is difficult to guarantee that all the necessary permissions are going to be in place and/or that other priorities are not going to arise in the meantime. That was true here. WACT had set a date for the opening of the slipway on the summit as well as having instigated a programme of improvement works to their showpiece navigable length of canal at Loxwood. Our camp was to work on both sites with the originally planned work now postponed to the WRG autumn camp in October.

Following the usual and necessary safety talks and briefing and our first Saturday welcome barbecue, the camp split into two groups on Sunday morning and were to stay that way all week. The smaller group headed off to the slipway site at Dunsfold where the main task was to dig out all the soft (but

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



Summer camp - pictures by Bill Nicholson

rapidly hardening) clay around the new slipway and wharf and to replace it with hardcore and a finished surface. Work on the slipway has been ongoing since being started at last year's WRG autumn camp and the Trust has set an opening date of 30th September, almost exactly one year on.

Team 1 led by Steve 'Pugwash' Saunders with shipmates Sam Doe, Tony Unseld and Michael Kendra took the workboat 'MV Dave' (known to the Trust as *May Upton*) and spent the week replacing the timber wallings on the walls, both under the road bridge (nicely shaded) and along the main wharf

This was essentially a team of plant drivers with Pete Bunker and Adrian Sturgess taking turns in operating the Trust's 13 and 6 ton diggers and Duncan Robetshaw and Ian Rutledge sharing out the 9 and 5 ton dumpers and the ride-on roller. The hot dusty work continued all week - fortunately the team had the benefit of Camp Dave's well established site welfare and other facilities and including a fridge and fan to cool off in between bursts of plant driving.

Mention of Camp Dave reminds that the camp (and all other physical volunteer activities on the canal) are now masterminded by Dave (KJD) Evans. KJD, now full time with WACT, had the onerous job of preparing all the task plans for the camp which have to be agreed in advance with IWA insurers before any work takes place on site. As a camp with a number of small teams carrying out multiple tasks this was a considerable volume of paperwork. Having completed the exercise we considered that it would be unreasonable to expect a volunteer to do it alone. Maybe it is only Canal Trusts and Societies with access to paid staff that are going to be able to run camps in the future - or those with very dedicated volunteers?

The larger section of the camp was based at Loxwood and centred on and around the New Lock and wharf close to the Onslow Arms and Canal Centre. The tasks all related to the aforementioned improvements and came under the supervision of 'KevDave' Baker, the WACT ranger for the Sussex section.

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Bill Thomson	Working Party News	01903 744767	bill_thomson@weyandarun.co.uk



Using the auger at Loxwood (Bill Nicholson)

(exposed). Drilling, grinding and gluing were the order of the day as well as holding the vessel in position whilst these operations were being undertaken. By the end of the camp just over half of the required length had been completed - about 75m in total.

At the lock, a second team set about replacing all four of the lock gate quadrants as the originals had either sunk or were slightly out of ideal position for the boat crews' feet. Led by Graham Hawkes our (very tolerant) assistant camp leader, this was physically the hardest job on the camp as each new quadrant hole had to be dug through the rock hard dried Wealden Clay with only limited machine access and assistance. There was also the additional problem of the plans not matching with the expectations of either KevDave or the boat crews who continued to operate boat trips through the lock whilst work was on going. Unfazed and having rebuilt one of the quadrants twice, all four were completed by the end of the week.

Team 3 had the job of constructing the lock tail steps. These were originally made from plywood and, like the walings, had experienced over 10 years of use. This was more of a case of Build and Design - Mike Fellows and Dave Rumble knew what the end result needed to be and the maximum depth and height of each step. There was already a retaining wall to the correct height so having dug out behind it, the target length was set out and construction began. After that it really was a case of "step by step". Later in the week Pete Turville and new recruit Willy Field used their two days on the camp to build the remaining steps up to the towpath with the whole job completed on the Friday and ready for use by the trip boat crews.

There were two other jobs at the lock. One was to dig out and jack up the electric metal cabin at the lockside, used to house the back pump electrics, so that it was once more on the level. The other was to reposition the lockside rustic fence closer to the lock allowing for the lock to be more securely gated off from the towpath/road access adjacent.

Having experienced the hard clay on the quadrant job, KJD had sourced a new auger attachment for the hired 3 ton digger. The job was started and finished (apart from fitting the gates) in one day with Rob Nicholson, Derek Williams and Malcolm Hawkes taking the lead roles.

I have mentioned a large number of the team but as with most camps there are the others who don't take a lead role but do the leg work of digging, mixing and barrowing. The two Rogers 'Aussie' Wishart, returning for his second camp on the W & A and WACT regular 'Cranleigh' Roger Beazer; also Steve Melling and John Barnes who mixed most of the concrete for the quadrants. Back at base the unflappable Sue Webster kept us well fed with her excellent and much appreciated cuisine. It is safe to say that everyone worked tirelessly all week.

It wasn't all about work - we attended the Half Moon pub quiz where against some expectations our teams came in 2nd, 3rd and 4th just missing out on the Gourmet meal for four which was won by the inevitable professional quiz team. Instead of the promised boat trip which had to be cancelled due to what water available being reserved for paid up charters, we enjoyed a pleasant evening walk up from Loxwood to the recently completed Gennets Bridge Lock and finishing off for a pint in The Sir Roger Tichbourne. I forget who won the skittles match but as usual it was keenly contested.

We made significant progress at the slipway. This means the target opening date (30th Sept 2018) is now looking achievable.

We completed all the improvement work at Loxwood New Lock and much of the timber walings. Thanks to all the teams who made it an enjoyable and successful week - we hope to see many of the same team back for the WRG Autumn camp during October half term where the plan is to start the towpath works on a new section of canal at Birtley. But then plans

Bill Nicholson



Replacement of timber walings along the wall at Loxwood (Bill Nicholson)