

### Editorial

Fortunately the exceptionally dry summer came to a fairly brief end, but the heavens provided sufficient precipitation to allow boating to resume. As well as being able to resume with our major PR and fundraising effort, namely the public boat trips from Loxwood, our PEST group once again has something to occupy themselves in keeping our showpiece section attractive and safe..

Our 'second' navigable section came a stage further to realisation with the opening of the slipway at Dunsfold, known as the Thriscutt Slipway, named in honour of the family which provided financial support and enabled the slipway to be constructed. The event hosted several trailable or otherwise portable boats, as well as seeing the return to the canal of the repaired and converted former small trip boat, *John Smallpeice*.

London WRG put in a weekend's work with various finishing-off tasks, and we are very grateful for their help.

Don't forget the Autumn Meeting at Bramley on Saturday 20 October, starting at 2.30pm, where you can hear updates on the Trust's current projects. Full details are on the WACT website and in *Wey-South*.

*Bill*

### Mrs Bucket Group - Keeping Up Appearances on Mondays

Regular sites were on the menu for all our four Routings in September. Hunts Park, Tickner's Heath, Gennets Bridge, Southlands, Devils Hole, Loxwood, Drungewick aqueduct, Newbridge and Haybarn all received attention.

A lot of strimming, mowing and hedge trimming has taken place to contain the growth and to leave the sites looking tidy.

At Tickner's we opened up the path alongside the canal from the road to the gate at the end of the Common land. We received a full Health & Safety briefing from Dave Evans about working on the roadside to ensure we meet all the latest requirements, particularly involving signs etc.. Accordingly revised arrangements will apply when we are working at Run Common and Tickner's, the only sites where we work adjacent to traffic.

At Loxwood we cleared the ditch at the bottom of the bank in the overflow car park and at Haybarn we spent a considerable amount of time 'opening up' the towpath as far as the 90-degree turn in the canal.

In October, we hope to visit, inter alia, the Drungewick permissive path and Malham lock to ensure they are tidy before winter sets in.

*Nick Wood*

### Mid-Week Working Party

For the last two months we have had really good turnouts. Some of our group have been tidying up Gosden Aqueduct and cleaning up the old bricks whilst others have done a thorough clearance of Pallingham and the stretch of canal between Pallingham Bridge and Cooks Bridge. Thank you Chris Tavener for master minding this activity.

The rest of the last couple of months have been clearing South of Gennets Bridge Lock as far as the causeway. From the towpath you can now see the basin of the canal and the winding hole. It makes the walk along the towpath feel very different. We hope to continue to the landowner boundary and the do some work at Birtley.

Some members have helped Dave Evans with clearing the towpath at Loxwood using the new chipper.

*Margaret Darvill*

### Hedgelaying Group

Breaking News: Trump's Chinese Import Tariffs' Affect Hedgelaying Group Numbers. Yes folks, the Group reconvened on Tuesday 18 September - "FANFARE".

A group of Just One, me, therefore I'm with the Chinese. So I told myself what needed doing but I never listen to myself, therefore I didn't, so was I revolting like everyone says I am?

What a lovely day it was for coppicing, as it was the following Tuesday when I was finally joined by four of the group.

We had coppiced six hazel stools by the end of the day plus removed seven low and three dead oak boughs. What is more, all the debris had been burnt as well. Well it was a chilly start but then ended up a lovely warm, dry, sunny day.

I envisage us moving on down to Haybarn on the third Tuesday of October to start laying again, which would be nice.

Well, that's it from me for another month from, this time, a rather unusual office. St Richard's Hospital, Chichester, (but not dead yet).

*Keith Nichols*

### Eric Walker Group

The group has again spent almost all of its time continuing the refurbishment of Tickner's Depot. The general clearing of redundant materials and scrap has been ongoing with yet more skip changes. We have taken delivery of three new (second hand) metal storage containers and have created an area for them against the south western boundary fence. We will start to begin occupation of these in the next few weeks.

We have started to receive quotations for the removal of the asbestos roof sheeting to the existing



**Three images, and a fourth on page 3, showing what the Eric Walker Group has been up to at the Tickner's Heath depot (pictures by Dennis Gillen)**

workshop, scaffold shed and fuel store and are planning for this to be done in November. Work has started on the large Nissen shed that is going to be John Smith's group new workshop. The upper part of the south gable will be demolished and reconstructed in timber with two new windows.

When this is completed we will be employing a specialist company to spray the complete internal roof surface of the asbestos sheeting with polyurethane sprayed foam, which will encapsulate the asbestos and provide a waterproof and insulating surface.

We have almost completed erecting the new scaffold store and this will accommodate all the scaffolding currently stored in various parts of the depot. Also underway is the building of a new 'kiosk' to accommodate the termination/switch boxes of the electricity main cable when it is installed by the specialist contractor we have engaged and is planned for early November.

*Dennis Gillen*

### Boat Group PEST

With water back in the canal and the resumption of boat operations, the PEST team have been able to take the work-boats up to Southland Lock and carry out some much-needed cutting back of encroaching vegetation along the banks of the navigation and around the Southland Lock winding hole.

To the south, dangling brambles and similar growth that had the potential to injure passengers and crew have been removed. Currently the team is turning its attention to the navigation below Baldwin's Knob Lock, initially removing obstructions from the water and cutting back vegetation towards the Slipway.

In the weeks ahead the team will be seeking to improve the navigation down to Drungewick Lock. This part of the canal has been somewhat neglected due to the suspension of boat trips following the closure of Drungewick Lock.

Anyone wishing join the working party should contact:

Leader: Peter Hyem at 01403752393,  
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 or Chris Jones at 07745793243,  
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*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 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

## Northern (Summit) Working Party

The team has spent about two days per week at the slipway during the month with the target opening date approaching. On the first weekend we had a visit from London WRG who tackled the essential (but not popular!) job of installing a land drain along the base of Mount Dave from whence water has been running all summer - despite the drought. They also extended the side walls to the slipway, erected fences and assisted in the launch of the *John Smallpeice* back into the canal. This was the first use of our structure by a large boat (the Chairman's canoe not counted).

We are most grateful for the assistance we receive from visiting groups whose contribution boosts both our output and morale. On the subject of water in the wrong place we have had to and to stop the site turning into a quagmire when wet.

Other jobs have included the construction of a concrete gully across the access road to catch yet more water run off; installation of gates and fences; landscaping and completion of the wharf ready for the silt barges to tie to. Graham Hawkes has built us a brick plinth to house the plaque marking the generosity of the Thriscutt family and the hard work of the Summit Team. As I write the final tasks are underway including bank protection on the north side of the slipway and completion of the wharf area. It all looks rather fine and should look even better on 30th September when the Mayor of Waverley was due to declare the slipway and wharf open for use.

What next for the Summit Team? Well no rest for them, as during the second half of October, with support from NWPG, we are off to Birtley to work on a new towpath and to erect fencing along the boundaries of an area that will be in the Trust's ownership in due course. The work here will keep the team (and visiting groups) busy though to this time next year.

After that (and possibly in tandem with Birtley) we will be gearing up for a start on Tickner's Crossing. No shortage of work and we would welcome both regular and new volunteers to these exciting projects. If you spare us some time please drop me an e-mail or phone call (see below).

*Bill Nicholson*



**'John Smallpeice' at Tickner's (Dennis Gillen)**

## Tickner's Heath Depot

Short and sweet this month as it's that time of year when members of the crew need a break from the hustle and bustle which is life at the depot.

More redundant pumps, generators and other small items of equipment which have been hiding in the odd corners of the depot have been given the once-over. Those that do not pass the depot's rigorous and exacting standards have been deposited in the resident skip.

The white container otherwise known as the 'Atlantic Conveyor' has now had all the miscellaneous junk, sorry equipment, removed. Anything obviously useable has been moved to another container, so all that remains are items which we have been assured by interested parties will be of some future use. The container should now be light enough to move, should there be a need to do so.

We have once again been the beneficiaries of a donation of a couple of brushcutters. Unfortunately one didn't want to start - even with best efforts of 'Goliath' Keet, so it had to be deposited into where? Yes, you guessed it, the skip. The other performed well and now is part of the depot's reserve stock.

All the best

*John Smith*

**The next edition of WPN will be the 300th - does anybody have any memories, old pictures, or similar to mark this special occasion? Thanks - Bill**

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