

Working Party News

For WACT Volunteers
October 2008

Editorial Comment (*Wendy Andrews*)

This edition's most important contribution is from our Health & Safety Officer, Michael Bates. Please read and take note of his report about the asbestos issue and also respond to his request for personal information if you are, or are planning to be, an active Working Party Member. I'm sure you'll agree that Personal Accident Insurance is vital these days. Please join me in thanking both Michael and Jeremy Watts for all the work that they are doing to obtain insurance on your behalf.

On a lighter note, there's news of the Christmas lunch and an idea for a Christmas present

Membership (*Wendy Andrews*)

Most of you are members of the Trust. For those who aren't, we are grateful to you for your hands-on help but please consider joining. The subscription is modest and membership numbers are a powerful indication of our support. Contact the WACT office for an application form or download it from the website:

<http://www.weyandarun.co.uk/membership>

Like turkeys, we are all looking forward to Christmas but not to the chore of Christmas shopping - a year's membership would be a generous gift to that friend or relative who already has everything.....

Christmas Lunch (*Geoff Perks*)

The annual Christmas Lunch is to take place on Monday 15th December at the Three Compasses. Last year we had to turn a couple of people away due to space limitations and so, while a party of up to 36 can still be accommodated in one room, this year it has been arranged that if the attendance exceeds 36 we can split the group. In this event 30 people would sit in the principal room with the balance, up to a maximum of 20, in the pub's usual dining room. So, in total, up to 50 of us could attend. Details of the menu, price etc are awaited and it is hoped to send you all of these, and a booking form, with the November WPN.

Hedge Laying Group (*Keith Nichols*)

Hedging Team Become Barbers! A little off the side and a bit off the top sir?

Yes, hedge trimming started on Wednesday 24th September at Harsfold. Four of us trimmed 235m of the layed hedge, leaving 160m to finish; we also strimmed a 2m swathe along the whole length. The weather was kind for the most part being quite warm with only two brief periods of moistness. No walkers though so it was very quiet!

Sunday saw two of us trim between Brewhurst Lock and Bridge. The trimmings were removed from site. Was this the final day of Summer? The sun brought many walkers out and we made time to wave at the merry boat-trippers.

Thursday 2nd October should see us finish at Harsfold, weather permitting. Have you seen the forecast?? Then onto Baldwins Lock and the Drungewick Aqueduct area.

That's all folks. Cheers, Keith

This season's dates are: October - Thursday 2nd, Friday 10th, (Thursday 16th), Monday 20th, Tuesday 28th
November - Wednesday 5th, (Sunday 9th), (Thursday 13th), (Sunday 16th), Friday 21st
December - Monday 1st, Tuesday 9th, (Sunday 14th), Wednesday 17th

Winston Harwood Group (*Ron Chamberlain for David Junkison*)

The group has spent all of September doing various jobs at Lordings.

The brickwork on the lock floor is now almost completed and we should soon to be in a position to start mixing the puddled clay with the Bentonite powder and laying the Bentonite sheeting to finally stop the leaks and complete the job that Winston had set his heart on.

The kissing gate near the launch ramp has had a makeover. It is now standing upright and has been braced to stop the barbed wire pulling it at a tipsy angle.

The water wheel is working well and it will soon be possible to start filling the lock as soon as the aforementioned leaks have been plugged.

So much now depends on the weather and having access to the site.

That's all till next month!

Monday Working Party (*Nick Wood for John Empringham*)

Three meetings in September for us. We have completed the repainting of Haybarn Swing Bridge. It now looks a 'real treat'. Incidentally, as part of our normal twice monthly visit, we always open the bridge to canal traffic to ensure it works. Well you never know, a boat might come along! We also had a day down at Lordings at the request of David Junkison mowing and strimming the sides of the flood lock and other parts of the site, together with raking and tidying up after the recent floods. In addition, Three Compasses Bridge area has also received special attention in preparation for the summit level small boat rally on 5th October.

We meet next on 6th and 20th October, so join us if you can!

Mid Week Working Party (*Richard Watson for Peter Jackman*)

We're pretty much done with the clearance work at Tannery Lane Bridge and the surveyors have marked out the boundary line which now needs fencing. I understand the landowner is happy with a simple post and wire fence and is keen for it to be erected as soon as possible. Just a pity it wasn't a job we could do during the nesting season.

In the meantime, we've been working down at the southern end, clearing the towpath side between Toat Bridge and Cook's Bridge. Our first day there nearly misfired when after getting a good fire going we spotted the owner hanging washing out. This site hasn't seen much activity for some years so there's a lot of work there which could keep us busy for a week or two more and I'm hoping the owner has decided not to do her washing on Wednesdays. Unfortunately it's not on any public right of way so no one other than the landowner will get to see the results of our labour but it's a very pleasant site to work at and it means some of us don't have to drive so far. It's easily close enough for me to cycle there but I had trouble balancing the brushcutter on the handlebars.

Another item on our list is a fallen tree at Elmbridge which needs removing and the canal bank repaired.

Health and Safety (*Michael Bates*)

Status of Asbestos at Tickner's Heath.

1. The asbestos survey has been completed, and the contractor has been directed to clear the Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) that are loose and pose a potential health threat through the release of chrysotile fibres (white asbestos) to the atmosphere, with subsequent ingestion and the risk of contracting asbestosis or mesothelioma. There is no danger to volunteers unless the ACMs are disturbed.
2. As well as the obvious ACMs in the form of sheeting, downpipes, guttering and soffit boards there is also chrysotile in the sprayed coatings to the inside of some of our huts, which are in poor condition and flaking off in places. It is the intention that a contractor should seal this flaking paintwork, so that it no longer poses a threat. After that Trust volunteers will increase the size of the racking barriers between the storage racks and the inside of the buildings so that there is less risk of plant, machinery, scaffolding poles and other items coming into contact with the sealed coat and damaging its integrity.
3. No ACMs should be handled or worked upon. If there is a requirement to mend a leak in a roof, or drill through a wall to put up a shelf or socket, the appropriate safe systems of work should be followed, which are available from Michael Bates.
4. The open Dutch barn remains Out of Bounds, and discussions with Dunsfold Park to deal with the parlous state of the barn are fruitfully ongoing. In the meantime no one should approach this area or handle any loose material.
5. If anyone has any queries about their personal safety at Tickner's Heath they should get in touch with Michael Bates.

Insurance

I mentioned in my piece in the June/July issue of WPN that we were looking at obtaining some better insurance cover for all our volunteers, whatever they may do for the Trust. Much interest has been expressed, but brokers need more detail than we can provide from our existing records. **SO IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE INSURED FOR PERSONAL ACCIDENT AS WELL AS FOR THE NECESSARY PUBLIC LIABILITY WHICH THE TRUST ALREADY COVERS PLEASE RETURN THE ATTACHED FORM TO ME.**

Either send it by slow post to M G Bates at the office (address on Page 3 of WeySouth) or by email to michael.g.bates@btinternet.com . I regret that I will not be able to engage in discussion over particular details of your individual requirements, but we will put together a composite list of volunteers and what they do so that we can approach brokers with sufficient detail to gain what we hope will be advantageous quotes. Individual names WILL NOT be revealed. If you carry out more than one activity (such as ZK crew and MWWP) please list them all, together with all the relevant qualifications you may have that are still in date, or have no end date. These include those such as First Aid, Chainsaw/Brushcutter certificates, 250 ton crane driver, and professional diving qualifications (but not PADI or BSAC). Some volunteers may be reluctant to reveal their dates of birth, but this information will only be held by me, and not revealed unless I am required to do so by law.

Whilst the insurers need not hold individual names they will expect the party (i.e. WACT) to hold accurate records, so in the event of a claim we can show that the individual had given the necessary truthful information. I will report progress in the next edition of WPN. Thank you for your help.

Loxwood Link Maintenance Unit (*Peter Wilding*)

With the retirement of Andrew Black after 5 years I now have no helpers to maintain the canal at Loxwood and desperately need replacements. The work is mainly 'fine weather gardening' - motor mowing and low level tree trimming using the workboat to maintain a clear navigation - plus occasional other DIY jobs such as painting locks. The advertised weekly Wednesday is not a rigid commitment and even once or twice a month would be a great help. There is no point in restoring a canal if we are not going to maintain it so if you can help to keep the jungle at bay please phone me on 01483 422519.

Thursday/Sunday Group (*Eric Walker*)

August was a quiet month but whatever happened in September went in a flash. A couple of days were spent attempting to fit, without success, the stop planks at Baldwins Knob Lock. We are now ready for another try on Sunday 5th October.

With Thornes having finished at the Loxwood Canal Bridge we did some tidying up. Thank you to David Kersley who got the rubbish to Tickners and then disposed it safely and correctly. One of the things required by the new boat is an electricity supply. Putting the (cable) pulling chamber in the north west corner of the bridge was a challenge. It took days to put the chamber in; well actually, finding the duct Thornes had put in took most of the time. Again it was David who found his way to Gatwick to get the rising chamber elements and the lid. Draw rope was put in the ducts across the road. This time it was David Ball to the rescue who dived into his van and pulled out lots of drain rods with the comment 'Don't ask where these have been'!

Another item for the new boat is a water supply. Well, it will be useful for the contractors but by the time it gets put in the need by the contractors will be very much diminished. The location for the meter has been agreed, the cheque to Southern Water has been paid; all we have to do is put in the pipe. With the preparations for the electricity supply completed we will establish a standpipe and put in a pipe two feet underground from it to the location of the meter. It will then be up to Southern Water to install the meter. At some time in the next month or so the water pipe will be put in a trench to where ZK is usually moored.

There are a number of jobs to be done around the Loxwood bridge. However by the end of October it may be that access to Devils Hole lock will be possible to enable the location of materials down there ready for that project to start. Busy times ahead!

Recycling (*John Wood*)

CAN YOU HELP?

We now have another regular supply of unwanted paper, mainly catalogues & flyers that have to be collected from an address in East Worthing and taken to our Aylesford paper skip at Loxwood. As we are now receiving £87 per tonne for paper, it is a very worthwhile form of fundraising. We should make £5,000 this year. If you can help please let me know.

Due to a large increase in the weekly amount of old newspapers and magazines collected in the Lancing and Worthing areas, there is an urgent need to find a suitable site for a skip to be located in either Lancing or Worthing, and for which Aylesford Newsprint have said they will provide. Such a site ideally should have a concrete or similar hard base and sufficient space for the skip emptying lorry to manoeuvre. If you can think of such a site and are willing to make the necessary enquiries from the landowner, please let John Wood know on 01903 753099. Many thanks

Restoration Manager (*Turlough Bamber*)

APPEAL FOR WORKING PARTY LEADERS

It is good to see the restoration programme moving at the pace it has over these last few years.

If we are to continue at the current rate of progress we need volunteers to develop into Working Party Leaders. Last Spring Peter Jackman wanted to stand down but as there was no one in his group agreeable to take over, he very kindly agreed to continue. Peter Wilding is now on his own, maintaining the current operational section. He needs a couple of volunteers to work with him and to be trained up for managing the operational section. David Junkison is low on numbers. He has a full programme of work for this winter at Rowner Lock and clearing north from the Northlands Lifting Bridge.

We need more Volunteers to be trained in spraying the Giant Hog Weed. I am in contact with the Environment Agency on this matter to see how we can get assistance from them in its control. It is essential that we have more input at the Tickners Heath Depot to maintain our Plant and Equipment in preparation for the heavier work next summer.

I ask you to think about it over the coming month get in touch when I return from my holiday in late October. It is a matter of "Your Canal needs You!" I hope you will respond.

All the best and thank you for all you do towards the restoration of our Canal!

Working Party Diary for October/November/December

Usually first & third Mondays of the month	'Mrs Bucket' – Keeping Up Appearances	Details from John Empringham
Most Tuesday mornings	Maintenance sessions at Tickner's Heath Depot	tba
Every Wednesday	Mid-Week Working Party	Check with Peter Jackman or Alison Saville for confirmation of venue
Every Wednesday	Loxwood Link Maintenance	Contact Peter Wilding
Every Thursday & Sunday	Mainly construction work. Meet at the Onslow Arms, 09.30	Contact Eric Walker for details
Every Thursday	Winston Harwood Group	Contact Ron Chamberlain or Tony Clear for details
Some Saturdays	Conservation and Maintenance	Contact David Jessop for latest plans
Varying dates in the winter months	Hedge Laying	See Keith Nichols' piece for this season's dates
October 25 th	Autumn Meeting Alfold Village Hall	More details in Wey South
December 4 th	Christmas Dinner Arundel	More details from Tim Jolly 01403267408 tim_jolly@weyandarun.co.uk
December 12 th	Christmas Dinner Bramley	More details from Emma Williams 01483 890515
December 15 th	Christmas Lunch for Working Party Volunteers	Contact Geoff Perks 01403 262855

Working Party Directory

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Peter Jackman	MidWeek Working Party	01483 772132	a.m.saville@btinternet.com
John Empringham	'Mrs Bucket'	01483 562657	john@empringham.com
Peter Wilding	Loxwood Link	01483 422519	peter_wilding@weyandarun.co.uk
tba	Tickner's Depot		
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