

# Working Party News

For WACT Volunteers

November 2009

## Editorial Comment (*Wendy Andrews*)

This month's edition is shorter than usual but no less informative. There's lots of good work in progress and lots more to be done as we head north from Devils Hole, not to mention winter maintenance at previously restored sites. It's good to see the teams working together and sharing resources.

## Mid Week Working Party (*Peter Jackman*)

With the number of volunteers increasing week by week we are well suited to our current work site which is from Loxwood right up to and including Southland. First we have a ditch to cut and clear to enable an inspection to be carried out for a possible leak in the tow path bank. We will then clear at Southland. With an adjacent badger sett to consider the lock will be rebuilt some 10m away from the original site. Work will be carefully monitored in this area and needs to be completed by November 30<sup>th</sup>. Then we will continue with general clearing on both banks. I recommend that boots or wellingtons are worn.

If anyone in the MWWP wants a change or even an extra day out John Empringham is seeking help clearing the weeds from the hedges to enable strimming at Hay Barn. Please get in touch with John. This is not intended as a split of MWWP members, just an opportunity to help the Monday group with a time consuming job.

## Thursday/Sunday Group (*Eric Walker*)

At Devils Hole work on the top cill has progressed. The connection of the ground paddle sluices, yet to be constructed, has proved particularly difficult and only by dogged determination was the removal of the concrete achieved. Well done chaps! Some more concrete blocks are being made on site as all those of the right size, previously made at Tickners, have been used up. There are also some special sizes and shapes to be made just to keep the team challenged.

The volunteers will continue to lay the ducting for the cable to get electricity to the lock. The construction of the winding hole has started and will continue in the coming month.

There are occasional extra meetings on a Tuesday, so if you would like to come on that day, please check on my mobile. Further Game Shoots are planned in the ox-bow by the landowner but for us that will only affect the digger work.

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

We are pleased to say that our leader is now fully recovered and has returned to his 'normal duties'.

At the request of David Junkison the group spent a day brush cutting, strimming and hedge cutting down at the Lordings Flood lock. There was a lot to do. Our leader takes up the tale..... 'we arrived without a single match between us. Undaunted and ever resourceful, Tim managed to get a lighted paper by using the cigar lighter in the car and not a Boy Scout insight! Thus Tim and Hannes achieved the seemingly impossible, how to light a bonfire in the pouring rain with only wet grass cuttings and no matches!'.....And that was not all. The rain had made extracting the cars from the site difficult and it was only with the help of pushing and shoving that Barry's vehicle finally made it to the top of the rise in the first field. Such is devotion to duty!!

Our second meeting of the month included 'tidy up' visits to Malham Lock and Bignor Bridge. A lot of time was spent clearing the lock cill of brambles and other vegetation. It is amazing how quickly the stuff grows.

We are very pleased to welcome Bernard Ashley and Jeanne Argent to the team.

Our next outings are on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of November if you would like to join us.

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

This month has seen the group split into different parties to work at various sites.

Dan and Tony have been most of their time at Lordings doing a variety of jobs from general maintenance to clearing and burning rubbish and bracken which was left after a visiting work party was unable to finish the job due to bad weather.

David and some of the others have been busy at Tickners Heath doing various jobs and helping John Smith.

They spent two weeks brushing the underside of Wasp and giving it a coat of paint. David said he spent a lot of time at the end of the day trying to get the rust particles out of his beard! But at least the task is completed.

The final week of the month we were all together working at Rowner Lock in an effort to try to contain the ever invasive brambles and bracken which we cleared earlier in the year and it looks as though we will be back doing that again later in the year.

That's all for this month; see you in November.

## **Tickners Heath Depot** (*John Smith*)

During October, thanks to the ministrations of David Junkison and his team, the underside of Wasp has now had a coat of black bitumen paint (apart from the area under the stands). This was very hard and fatiguing work because although the underside had the benefit of a power wash there was a lot of surface rust which had to be either chipped or wire brushed off mostly by hand – well done guys! As a break from the endless chipping and wire brushing they also applied their jungle clearance skills to a mass of flora around the depot – thanks once again fellahs.

Since no one claimed them, the kitchen units in the middle Nissan have been removed and dismantled. With Richard Pope's agreement the display panel storage has also been re-organised.

Whilst on the subject of the middle Nissan, there is a lot of camp equipment stored there, cutlery etc also 5 fridges. These items need an expert to run a jaundiced eye over them because I think some of them might be redundant.

Well that was short and sweet for this month (who said thank goodness for that?)

## **Hedge Laying Team** (*Ed for Keith*)

A reminder that Keith will not be working in November because he will be recuperating from an operation. I'm sure you all join me in wishing Keith a speedy recovery. Hopefully he will be back in action in December.

## **Navvies Christmas Lunch** (*Geoff Perks*)

If you're planning to come to the Christmas Lunch on December 14<sup>th</sup> please complete the attached form with your choice from the menu and return it to Geoff Perks (address on the form), along with a cheque for £21.00 per person.

## **Working Party Diary for November/December**

Usually first & third Mondays of the month	'Mrs Bucket' – Keeping Up Appearances	Details from John Empringham
Every Wednesday	Maintenance sessions at Tickner's Heath Depot	Contact John Smith
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
Varying dates in the winter months	Hedge Laying	See Keith's contribution above
Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December	Christmas Dinner in Arundel	Booking form and details in Wey South
Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Dinner in Bramley	Booking form and details in Wey South
Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> December	Navvies Christmas Lunch	See Geoff Perk's contribution above
December 12 <sup>th</sup> /13 <sup>th</sup> & 19 <sup>th</sup> to 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Santa Cruises at Loxwood	Booking essential through WACT office

## **Working Party Directory**

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