

Working Party News

For WACT Volunteers

January 2010

Editorial Comment (*Wendy Andrews*)

Happy New Year to You All!

Thank you to the group leaders for this month's contributions. The wintry weather has put paid to some of their activities but it didn't curb the Santa Cruises which were as successful as ever. The WAEL team is looking for help with the forthcoming Easter Cruises and (would you believe it already!) next Christmas's Santa event. Please get in touch with Dusty Miller on 01444 811687 or dusty.combers@tiscali.co.uk if you'd like to get involved.

Navvies Christmas Lunch (*Geoff Perks*)

This year 28 people sat down to the customary spread at the Three Compasses and, I believe, enjoyed the occasion very much. During the meal all of those present were invited to record their preferred venues for such a gathering next year, and over 50% voted for the 2010 event to be at the same venue - so it will be arranged accordingly in due course.

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

The end of the year has been rather patchy because of the weather. However the group managed to work back at Rowner Lock at the beginning of December to get rid of more bracken and weeds and it is looking quite tidy there now. Then the weather got wetter so we retreated to Tickners Heath to do a bit more work for John but of course when working inside the buildings at this time of year it gets dark early so it restricts what can be done but we did a little. For the third week of the month we were able to return to Rowner to continue with a final bonfire for the year. Owing to other things to do on the 24th we gave it a bit of a skip.

What we will do on the last day of the month has yet to be decided so watch this space with bated breath. See you in 2010. Happy New Year.

Mid Week Working Party (*Peter Jackman*)

Support from the team makes leading this group really worthwhile and I thank them all; even in the current weather conditions we still turn out in double figures.

The ditch clearance between Loxwood Lock and Devils Hole has been a much harder job than it first looked; however it is now finished and I hope it was worth the effort. Work still needs to be done from Southland back down to Devils Hole when access improves.

Our pre-Christmas work saw Run Common cut and cleared, sincere thanks to the land owner for her hospitality.

On taking a walk on the other side of Run Common Road I found a monster ash tree that had fallen across the canal and was obstructing the public footpath. With permission from the land owner and support from the SCC RoW officer we got permission to clear the tree - rain stopped play so work is ongoing. There is also another fallen tree across the canal and the towpath in the area for which we have land owner permission to clear but it is NOT on the public footpath. I ask readers who might visit this area to stick to the sign posted footpath and NOT to walk along the old tow path; it is private property and our only permission is to cut and clear the fallen tree.

(Note from ed: Why not buy the latest version of Wey South Path which clearly defines footpaths along the route of the canal - available from the office on 01403 752403)

All the Best for the New Year, 2010, to the biggest and best group - the MWWP!

Thursday/Sunday Group (*Eric Walker*)

Work progresses at Devils Hole. All but three of the copings are cast. A start has been made putting in the quoins, bollards, and ground paddles. Pulling in the electricity cable was a major job completed one Sunday. As you will appreciate the sun sets at about 4 o'clock at this time of year. Well, that day was a long one, running on with a couple of torches and the light of the digger until nearly 7 o'clock. The concern was that the cable might have attracted the ner' do wells. Another Sunday saw it pulled into the kiosks at each end which just leaves the support over the bridge at DHL to be done in the New Year.

The construction of the winding hole has continued to be on hold. The strategy now is to clear the silt in Loxwood pound so as to be able to get back to the winding hole.

Occasional extra meetings on Tuesdays have restarted and are being led by Mike Biles (01043 256265)

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

As hoped the Group met on 7th December down at Haybarn, continuing with the work there, but we were rained off by lunchtime. Quite a bit more work remains to be done. Any assistance which the MWWP can give us to finish the job in January/February will be appreciated.

At our final meeting of the year we tidied up around Barnsill Bridge, baled out the boats and turned them upside down on railway sleepers as requested by Peter Wilding. We also started clearing the ditch beyond the car park at Loxwood. We meet again on 4th and 18th January, weather permitting!!

Happy New Year to Everyone from Mrs Bucket.

Tickners Heath Depot (*John Smith*)

Happy New Year!

Due to various reasons, the bad weather being one of them, there has not been much activity at Tickners in December but anyone who has ventured there will no doubt have noticed that one of the landmarks is missing - yes, the Wasp has finally been transported to the area that she was designed and bought for i.e. the canal. Last month, thanks to the efforts of Peter Foulger and Dave Kersley, the old girl first suffered the indignity of having her bottom scraped whilst being transferred to Peter's trailer, then having her first real bath for ages by being immersed in water at the slipway, mind you she didn't enter without a fight. Her exit has now given us a bit more space, which no doubt won't be vacant for long.

Ken Bacon continues to exercise his carpentry skills and his head for heights in boarding up the engine shed. Good on you Ken!

The area to the rear of the engine shed has also been cleared thanks to the efforts of Dave Junkison's team one Thursday. They managed to uncover and move the various items of old lock ironmongery, now all we have to do is decide what to do with the various racks and cogs etc of past years - 'Antiques Road Show' anyone?

Anyone visiting Tickners should be aware that due to the recent inclement weather the doors of the Nissans etc have expanded which makes them rather difficult to open and close. Care should be taken when closing them so that they do not jam up; it is possible to lock the door with the padlocks by not fully closing the doors.

I think that's it for now.

Working Party Diary for January/February/March

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	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	Contact Keith Nichols

Working Party Directory

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