

Working Party News

for WACT volunteers - April 2010

Hello and welcome

It is with great regret that we have to report that Wendy Andrews feels unable to carry on with her WACT duties, one of which was of course this newsletter.

I was very pleased to be asked by Jim Phillips if I would be prepared to take over this part of Wendy's portfolio - pleased because I was involved closely with WACT working parties from the late 1970s through the 1980s. That seems both so recent, in my memories, but also such a long time ago, particularly with reference to how much has been achieved in the last 20 years. Yes, it really is that long.

I last looked after the WPN in conjunction with the late Keith Ellis. In those days we certainly never took ourselves too seriously, perhaps because the project seemed comparatively daunting. But events have proved that complete restoration of the canal really is possible. The clincher is, of course, the Loxwood road crossing which we were told back then was just too difficult for volunteers to achieve. And now that is a reality, anything is possible. Nevertheless we have to remember that our volunteers work for their own pleasure as much as anything else, so I hope we can maintain the same light-heartedness that we all enjoyed at the outset of the Wey-South Project.

This month of course we take another step towards completion with the opening of Devils Hole Lock, and the launch of an appeal for Southland (see the current *Wey-South* bulletin).

We are a little short of reports in this issue; the new regime has not really got under way yet so you are forgiven. I have taken the opportunity to change the presentation slightly, including the use of pictures, which I hope you will like.

My last duty here is to thank Wendy for the previous issues of WPN. Restoration Manager Turlough Bamber pays tribute to her in this issue - I can only endorse his words.

Bill Thomson



Working Party Diary		
Every Sunday and Thursday	Mainly construction work	Contact Eric Walker for details
Usually first & third Mondays of the month	'Mrs Bucket' - Keeping Up Appearances	Details from John Empringham
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 Wednesday	Maintenance sessions at Tickner's Heath Depot	Contact John Smith
Every Thursday	Winston Harwood Group	Contact Tony Clear for details
Varying dates in the winter months	Hedge Laying	Contact Keith Nichols
Saturday 17th April	Reopening of Devils Hole Lock	see March <i>Wey-South</i>
Saturday 24th April	WACT AGM at Billingshurst Village Hall starting at 14.00	see March <i>Wey-South</i>
Sunday 30th May	Small Boat Rally at Loxwood	

Loxwood Link

Jim Phillips tells us that Peter Foulger has been working with dredger Hornet and dumb barge Wasp to keep the line open at Drungewick, and Turlough Bamber has a £1500 grant for professional sawyers to cut dead wood.

Loxwood project report

The gales and rain continued in March, the month was both in and out like a lion.

With a big effort the training walls at the top of the lock were built and the back pump connection also at the top of the lock was made. The back fill behind the wall could then be done and the fence on the lock off side completed.

It is worth mentioning the effort of clearing the lock of silt. Our 13-tonne digger lifted a ¾t digger into the lock and out again at the end of the work. Our machine lowered in a bucket, which the little machine filled with the silt.

Necessarily there were two stalwart volunteers moving the slop that the small digger could not get out.

The lock gates were delivered on 16 March, and were lifted in by a 20t digger from Verrall. Fitting the gates was completed by the following Thursday afternoon. With all the digger work on the edge of the lock done, the fences could be completed on that side and the area prepared for the turf.

At the end of the month the pump arrived from Italy and was readied for installation. On the last day of the month the turf for the lock arrived to be laid by Winston's Group. Also on that day the MWWP came on site and did a good day tidying up, thanks to both groups.

A start was made constructing the wharf at DHL but time was overtaking us if we were going to flood up the pound! So it is re-



Working on the DHL pump chamber

scheduled to be completed sometime at the end of the year when the water level is low enough to allow us to get in.

Extra meetings over Easter are being held, give Eric Walker a call on 07717 855340 to see what is happening.

Eric Walker

The Mrs Bucket group -

Keeping Up Appearances on Mondays

Three meetings in March; its all down to the calendar! Two outings saw the completion of the towpath clearance between Firtree Copse and lock 16 and of the culverts and spillway for another year. (We have yet to tackle the short section of the canal above lock 16, a chain saw is needed here).

As at 15th March Forest Enterprise had not cleared the fallen tree. Of course they may have done so by now). At our third session we planted 200 hazel plants at the south end of the Loxwood car park as screening for a local resident and burnt a considerable amount of winter debris.

In April we shall return to keeping up appearances our regular nine sites, which includes DHL; get the turf laid Eric for us to cut!!

Nick Wood

(on behalf of John Empringham)

Tickners Heath Depot

As you no doubt know I am at present laid up with a gammy leg so nothing to report from Tickners this month I'm afraid other than life proceeds as normal with Dave Kersley carrying out his supply tasks to all and sundry and with Ken Bacon continuing to take charge in my absence.

John F Smith

Wendy Andrews' resignation

This is a sad day for the Trust in losing another loyal & active colleague.

Wendy's input was very much Loxwood Village centred and did so much PR in the Village for us as a Trust. Her input at the Black Shed, the LOLG, the Property Alert, for a time the photo library, the VIP Summer Cruisers, always prepared to 'man' the office, if available, at short notice & not forgetting the Director/Trustee roles of WAEL & CoM. Most of my association with Wendy was obviously on the Restoration Group activities and meetings, with her minute taking & their distribution for starters. She also kept me up



Devils Hole Lock gates being installed

to date on many issues for which I have been grateful. Upon election to the Parish Council she had to walk a difficult tight rope especially over the current major issue.

Wendy served the Trust both behind the scenes and up front meeting people visiting us on the Tow Path or Black Shed. Several volunteers, of which I am aware, have come to us as enthusiastic volunteers from an initial contact with Wendy. She may not have got

her boots dirty but she certainly made her contribution in the restoration programme for which we are most grateful.

Wendy will be missed by so many in the Trust's activities: not just the Restoration group. She has a serving heart and we were the recipients of that input in many areas of the Trust's activities for several years.

Knowing Wendy as I do, she will always greet us with a smile and having moved on!

Thank you Wendy!

Turlough Bamber.

Hedge laying group

It never rains but it pours. Having recovered from a recent operation to remove a benign lump from my leg I have now dislocated my false, mechanical knee. I discharged myself from hospital to come home and wait for spare parts to be available. It seems I'll be 'off the case' until next winter season.

Keith Nichols

(dictated to Wendy Andrews, who, with all of us, sends a 'get well soon' message to Keith).

Winston Harwood group

Unfortunately Ron Chamberlain is unable to carry on with contributions on behalf of the Winston Harwood Group. He hopes a replacement can soon be arranged so that normal service can be resumed in the future, and sends his good wishes to all.

Health and safety

Nothing to report this month from Michael Bates.

Name	Group/Project	Tel	e-mail
WACT Office	General enquiries	01403 752 403	office@weyandarun.co.uk
Turlough Bamber	Restoration Manager	01483 421 305	restoration@weyandarun.co.uk
Michael Bates	Health & Safety Officer	07786 323515	michael.g.bates@btinternet.com
Eric Walker	Loxwood Projects	07717 855340	eric_walker@weyandarun.co.uk
Peter Jackman	MidWeek Working Party	01483 772132	a.m.saville@btinternet.com
John Empringham	Monday Group	01483 562657	john@empringham.com
Peter Wilding	Loxwood Link	01483 422519	peter_wilding@weyandarun.co.uk
John Smith	Tickner's Depot	01903 235790	john8216@btopenworld.com
Tony Clear	Winston's Group	01903 774 301	penny.clear@talktalk.net
Keith Nichols	Hedge laying	01403 753882	
Bill Nicholson	Visiting Groups	01844 343 369	bandsnicholson@tiscali.co.uk
Bill Thomson	Working Party News	01403 210347	bill_thomson@weyandarun.co.uk