

## Editorial

The next major building project for the Wey & Arun Canal Trust is Gennets Bridge Lock (no. 8). As previously mentioned, a rebuilding appeal has been launched, with the aim to bring contractors on site to construct the concrete shell of the lock during the summer months, so that our volunteers can finish the job in similar fashion to Southland. The cost of employing the contractors, plus plant and materials, will be about £150,000. We understand that it will be necessary to make a decision on whether this can go ahead by May, and this will depend on where the rebuilding fund stands at the time. So please make a contribution, and please persuade wealthy friends, relatives, employers, potential sponsors, and anybody else who might help. Information and the appeal form can be found on the WACT website, at [www.weyandarun.co.uk](http://www.weyandarun.co.uk).

The work in the north is equally important, and we are pleased to report that the Surrey County Council has granted the Trust a licence to carry out work on the site of the proposed Hunt Park, which runs parallel to the original canal route between Shalford and the edge of Bramley village. This will give full employment to our working parties, both our own and visiting groups, including the WACT 2013 summer camp, which will be tasked with upgrading the riverside path.

A long-time supporter of the restoration is Alan Johnson, who as well as his day job as an architect for English Heritage has served as a director of the Trust for many years, and latterly has carried out the job of Technical Liaison Officer. As Alan has now retired from full-time work, he will be spending one day a week, starting this month, working as a volunteer at the Shalford office. His considerable experience of planning and heritage matters should prove particularly valuable. One of the first tasks on Alan's long job list will be to prepare and coordinate an approach to the Heritage Lottery Fund for help with the funding for the Shalford to Bramley section.

Finally, we have to remind readers that the photographic competition closing date is the end of February: full details at [www.weyandarun.co.uk/n130102.php](http://www.weyandarun.co.uk/n130102.php).



**Site of Gennets Bridge Lock - latest total for the restoration fund is about £5,500 so still some way to go...**

Bill

## Thursday & Sunday Group - Southland and Northwards

Work at Southland slowed down in January due to flooding and ice. With those out of the way, things can get moving again. The construction of fencing at the back of the lock has probably gone as far as it can for the time being until the bank at the back of the top end of lock is profiled and stable. The wing walls at the top of the lock have now been finished and back-filled.

At Southland Lock, Eddie Fairman and his team will continue with the work of constructing the training walls at the bottom of the lock, once we are able to get there. Pumping out the working area has to be done quickly if we are to be able to achieve a significant amount of work during the short daylight hours at this time of year.

Edward Stratton-Woodward and his team have fitted the ground paddles but could not bolt the jack-heads down due to the wet conditions. Consequent on making the copings higher (to give a generous cover to the back pump outlet pipe) both of the ground paddle connecting rods have been extended by about 100mm (4in). To get the best performance from the gate paddle, the connecting rod has been shortened. It has also been necessary to cut back the brickwork to accommodate the paddle when the gate is fully open. One other job at Southland will be to fit a deflector plate for the back pump outlet pipe. Edward's next job is to fit the walkways to the lock gates, both top and bottom. When they are done the team will go to Loxwood lock and fit top gate walkways there.

Brian Dunman and his team have been helping Dave Kersley to move some of our kit to Tickner's and with the improvement in ground conditions will return to constructing the training walls at the bottom of the lock (haul side) and, eventually, the steps up to the towpath.

Now that Nigel Lawrence is back from his South American holiday his team can put in the rest of the safety ladders and kit behind the Onslow Arms.

Meanwhile, Julian Cheek and his team have been marking out the area according to the lease we have from Forest Enterprises. In early February the Waterway Recovery Group Forestry Team (WRGFT) will be going to Sidney Wood to clear a silver birch thicket sufficient to enable the topographical survey, which has to be done before the end of the winter, to be carried out.

For Gennets Bridge Lock (GBL, lock number 8) survey work (levelling) is yet to be done. There is work to be done fitting a kissing gate supplied by WSCC and brickwork repairs to Barberry Bridge and its parapets. When it dries up, and the temperature reaches +10°C for a couple of windy weeks without rain, the access track to GBL will be put in. It will however, be in competition for resources with the DH pound clearance and the towpath there.

At Devils Hole Lock (DHL) the pound was emptied, the surveying done and the pound allowed to refill. The replacement back pump (you remember, the original one has been moved to Southland) will be on order soon.

Fundraising for GBL has got off to a rather slow start. But there is plenty that can be done; one aspect is book sales, looked after by Julian Morgan, who is always looking for interesting books to sell. Geoff Thomas is arranging for other goods to be sold on eBay so is looking for suitable donated items. Inkjet cartridge and mobile phone recycling, foreign coins or stamps and jewellery are all moving well. Please make sure that the items that you donate are assigned to GBL and, if applicable, gift-aided. By the way, did you know you can make a PayPal donations via our website?

Both Peter Reeve and Charles Barron have been incapacitated of recent times. We wish them both a speedy recovery.

**Join us:** The Thursday & Sunday Group generally meets at 09:30 at Southland; if you need directions please ring 07717 855340 for latest info.

*Eric Walker*

Working Party Diary		
Usually first & third Mondays of the month	'Mrs Bucket' - Keeping Up Appearances	Details from John Empringham
Every Wednesday	Mid-Week Working Party	Check with Ray Pick for confirmation of venue
Every Wednesday Thursday & Sunday as required	Loxwood Link Maintenance	Check with Kev Baker
Every Wednesday	Maintenance sessions at Tickner's Heath Depot	Contact John Smith/Ken Bacon
Every Thursday	Winston Harwood Group	Contact Tony Clear for details
Thursday and Sunday	Eric Walker's Group (construction)	Contact Eric Walker for details
10 March	Mothering Sunday cruises	Details from WACT office
27 April	WACT Annual General Meeting	Shalford Village Hall

## Mid Week Working Party

I don't believe it... Even *Working Party News* has started talking about a 'Midweek Working Party'. Who are they? Where do they hang out? Notwithstanding all this the, apparently now unsung, Mid Week Working Party (MWWP) has been quietly and calmly getting on with the business. Yes, we did have a couple of seasonal weeks off. (And yes, we did miss the deadline for *The January Workingparty News*).

But it's not all about hard graft and, thanks to the efforts of Geoff Perks of our number, an excellent and convivial 'Navvies Lunch' was held at Foxbridge Golf Club. We were well looked after and it was good to see colleagues past and present, and from across the whole gamut of our working parties.

Back to missions recently completed and in-hand, the team has been operating mainly towards the northern stretches. There's a bit too much water around down south! At Bramley we took on the clearance of trees partially obstructing the Cranleigh Waters just upstream of Gosden Aqueduct. A successful day with the tirfor even though it was very nearly at the cost of losing Ray's cherished and patented grappling iron. The now traditional pre-Christmas clean-up at Run Common was served with winter warming canapés this year courtesy of Di Miles. Then back to Gun's Mouth to clear up once again after the WRG tree gang, stripping off ivy from the felled boughs, and reducing and stacking them as handle-able logs. Brushwood was cut back and burnt, and the island was generally tidied up in readiness for more felling and clearance after Christmas.

The New Year has seen us tackling more clearance of the Hunt Park, between the cycle route and Cranleigh Waters, including the removal of boughs and other debris that had fallen across the water-course, especially around the cycleway bridge.

Clearance, again involving removal of trees lying across the course of the canal and associated streams, has also been carried out at in the Utworth / Holdhurst Farm area. The barges at Gun's Mouth have now been loaded with prepared logs by the use of ropes, for these to be moved down to Bridge End. The logs are on offer to any member who would like to take them in exchange for a donation. Please contact David Daniels on 01483 505566.

*Peter Lander (for Ray Pick)*

## The Mrs Bucket Group - keeping up appearances on Mondays

At our first outing in January we continued with our work in Sidney Wood but had to cancel our second meeting because of the inclement weather. This means that we have done three-quarters of a job, so we will be back in February to clear the section between the third causeway and lock 16. We shall be out, subject to the weather (!) on the 4 February and 18 February if anyone would like to join us.

As we sit on the towpath having our elevenses or during our lunch break, we put the world to rights! One of the issues, often mentioned, is the timescale of bringing restored locks into use. For example Loxwood new lock was opened in May 2009 but was not effectively in use for navigation until around April 2012 owing to the problems with the pound above the lock. DHL was opened in April 2010 but is not yet in use because the pound above the lock is not navigable. Eric and his splendid team have just about completed Southland lock, so how long will it be before both locks are in use?

Should we not be giving greater priority to dredging pounds to ensure those restored locks are brought into use a lot more quickly?

*Nick Wood*

## Hedgelaying Group

Since my last report we have worked two days in January with a third being cancelled due to the cold, white, wet stuff. The group has now finished the laying at Baldwins leaving some tidying up and, of course, "the traditional bonfire with spuds & bacon" so hopefully, weather permitting and decent staffing levels, we should be away from the lock side at the days end of Tuesday 29 January. The forecast is not good though so it may be early February.

We will then hopefully move on to finish off around the offside at Drungewick Slipway/Heavy Plant Crossing, which is dependent on availability of coppice material i.e. stakes and binders. There is also a requirement for hedge trimming in that area due to the very wet conditions of the past year making it impossible for the tractor and flail to operate.

And so, without further ado, future dates are likely to be:

<b>February</b>	Wed 06, Fri 22
<b>March</b>	Mon 04, Tues 12, Wed 20, Thurs 28

Saluté.

*Keith Nichols Tel: 01403 753882; Mob: 07817 798865*



## Tickner's Heath Depot

No doubt like a lot of the working parties the team has been rather hampered during January by the weather which resulted in our not being able to make our way to the slipway to finish the repairs to the dredger.

However at last the clouds parted and we were able to complete most of the work, including fitting a new throttle cable to the old girl and hopefully the new glass fibre repairs will stem the ingress of moisture into the cabins. All that now remains is to replace the doors to the engine compartment which we hope to complete early in February.

As some of you know, the Green Goddess (or 6in pump) had a rather eventful time over Christmas which resulted in the team having to slightly rearrange the electrics, starting with the battery leads, which led to the installation of a master switch. Hopefully, once the battery is refitted, we will be able to give the beast a trial run to see if she can still shift water.

Taking advantage of a day when we were not able to return to the slipway we turned our attention to the outboards stored at the depot. These were given a full service and workout in our dip tank and with one exception proved to be in running order. All that remains is for one of them to be attached to a punt to see if it is powerful enough, and the miscreant repaired.

Other than the technical stuff, the team have been helping Dave recover some of the old scaffolding planks dumped at the airfield burn site. So far we, with the help of Eric's crew, have recovered 60 or so which are now residing in Richard's shed waiting for Eric to use on his next project. Also we have been cleaning the 'Kwikstage' boarding which has come back from Southland, a rather messy job but thank goodness for Dave's power wash.

Well other than sorting out equipment for the weekend camps that's it for this month. All the best.

*John Smith*

## Northern Working Party

NWP has met once since my last report, managing to avoid both snow and floods. The two temporary landing stages at Bridge End and on Gun's Mouth Island are now complete and decked out. The work punts had obviously spent some time resting on the Bridge End one during the floods, so we have now installed timber fenders and more scaffold poles to prevent boats from getting on top or stuck underneath. We'll see if they work. On the island more logs were cut up and moved ready for transporting to the mainland.

We meet again on 2nd of both February and March for more of the same. Please contact me by e-mail if you plan to come. (see below).

*Bill Nicholson*

## Our mole on the towpath reports...

Peter Foulger and Derek Heath had an exciting time salvaging *Wasp*, which was secured alongside *Hornet*. As the canal level rose in heavy rain, the water overlapped the bank at Drungewick. Then as the water-level fell again, *Wasp* developed a list to starboard until the gunwhale was under water. Consequently she sank, with the Green Goddess on board. PF & DH, with Peter's teleporter and a tractor managed the salvage, but the very soggy ground meant it was all rather touch-and-go as far as stability was concerned. As John Smith mentions, Green Goddess is going back to the depot for some TLC by the Tickners Heath technical wizards after her involuntary ducking. A bit undignified for her, the old dear, as she should be in the warm and dry in the Science Museum.

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