

### Editorial

It may be the depths of winter, but that doesn't stop work going on at various sites along the canal. Even when the weather is too cold for bricklaying and concreting our working parties manage to keep mostly warm and continue with vital tasks.

*Bill*

### Summit (Northern) Working Party

During January we worked on two Saturdays and entertained a visit from NWPG over the weekend of 14/15 January. On only one of those days was it too cold to lay bricks - so cold in fact that we had to thaw buckets of ice in front of our site stove (very welcome this winter) in order to get enough water to concrete in some fence posts.

Much of our work has focussed on the pavements and the area around the Dunsfold Park security cabin and entrance gates, as well as general landscaping and security measures. We are nearly there with these 'top deck' works, with only a few more lengths of the security fence and some post and rail fencing to do. Back on the bridge itself Graham Hawkes and JJ have continued to lay bricks on the wing and retaining walls. The latter is almost complete and should be signed off by the end of February. The wing wall coping is nearly three quarters complete - this is by far the longest wall of the four - and it is looking really good. Our target is to have it done by the second week in March when we start work on building the footway ramp down from the bridge. This is a major task involving many tons of crushed concrete hardcore.

Dave Evans has posted the latest 'final' list of jobs awaiting completion in the site office. Although the list is quite long, it is beginning to look as though we might even meet our Easter target. Please see the next *Wey-South* for a more complete picture of our plans for the spring.

Meanwhile, Hunt Park has not been neglected. A small splinter group from NWPG spent the weekend dismantling the site compound and clearing the site. The hoarding has been taken to Tickner's Depot for use on a future project and the logs removed from site, to be offered for sale. With this and the ongoing efforts of MWWP the whole area is now looking very tidy.

Dates for February include the normal third Saturday (18th) plus additional Saturdays as and when volunteers are available (e.g. 4th). LWRG is paying another visit on 14/15th. I want to give advance notice that during the week of 13 to 18



**'Top Deck' work at Compasses (see left - pictures supplied by Bill Nicholson)**

March, we will be on site every day. That is Monday and Tuesday at Hunt Park and the rest of the week at Compasses. If you are able to help us during any of these dates please let either me or Dave Evans know. We always need and welcome help.

New members are always welcome to join our team - details from me, Bill Nicholson or site manager Dave Evans.

*Bill Nicholson*



**Two photos taken by Hannes Gysin of the fence work undertaken by the Monday group at Devil's Hole Lock on a January day during somewhat inclement weather**

### Mrs Bucket Group - Keeping Up Appearances on Mondays

January was a month of odd jobs and being unlucky with weather on Mondays!

We started in Sidney Wood by cutting back the branches overhanging the towpath and clearing culvert one (near Firtree copse) and at Tickner's removing rubbish which had accumulated at both ends of the culvert under the road (this was one of the many jobs that the late, and much missed, Dave Kersley used to do).

We reported in December WPN that three rotten posts on the non-towpath side at Devil's Hole Lock required replacing. That job was done in January although three posts turned out to be four.

We also cleared the brambles behind the fence and stabilised a fence post on the towpath side of the lock. A litter pick was undertaken between Loxwood and Brewhurst lock.

We meet again on 6th & 20th February. Work details from John Empringham if you would like to join us.

*Nick Wood*

### Thursday and Sunday Group

With the major concrete pour of the two bridge ramps and both top sill walls up to the top of the ground paddle sluices, just before Christmas, the 28-day cure period went 'just like that' and was over by 19th January. A couple of the volunteers went skiing and when they came back it was -6 deg C, too cold for bricklaying!

On the top sill, the actions were to break the ice and remove the shuttering and then backfill with clay behind most of the concrete walls just formed. With the intention to complete the offside wall first, the installation of the shuttering for that side was started and is progressing well.

At the lock bridge the location of the reinforcing between the parapet walls was checked and minor adjustments were carried out. Warmer weather will enable the parapet inside walls to be started and the string course on the southern wall. Above the string course and the concrete roadway, the brickwork is all stretchers, but as each layer is on a different radius the brick joints will have to be carefully worked out.

Name	Group/Project	Tel	e-mail
Julian Cheek	Maintenance coordination	01483 505566	<a href="mailto:julian_cheek@weyandarun.co.uk">julian_cheek@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Maurice Cranefield	Visiting working parties	01483 505566	<a href="mailto:Maurice_Cranefield@weyandarun.co.uk">Maurice_Cranefield@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
John Talbot	Health & Safety Director	01483 429918	<a href="mailto:jcst@weyandarun.co.uk">jcst@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Eric Walker	Gennets Bridge Lock	07717 855340	<a href="mailto:tsg@weyandarun.co.uk">tsg@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Margaret Darvill	Mid Week Working Party	01483 894606	<a href="mailto:margaret_darvill@weyandarun.co.uk">margaret_darvill@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
John Empringham	Monday Group	01483 562657	<a href="mailto:mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk">mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Kev Baker	Loxwood Link	01489 690241	<a href="mailto:loxwoodlink@weyandarun.co.uk">loxwoodlink@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
John Smith	Tickner's Depot	01903 235790	<a href="mailto:depot@weyandarun.co.uk">depot@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Keith Nichols	Hedge laying	01403 753882	<a href="mailto:hedging@weyandarun.co.uk">hedging@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Bill Nicholson	Northern working parties	01844 343 369	<a href="mailto:bill@nwpg.org.uk">bill@nwpg.org.uk</a>
Dave Evans	Summit working party		<a href="mailto:compasses@weyandarun.co.uk">compasses@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Bill Thomson	Working Party News	01903 744767	<a href="mailto:bill_thomson@weyandarun.co.uk">bill_thomson@weyandarun.co.uk</a>

Using one of the cabins as a workshop, two sets of coping mould tools were made and then set up on the top of the lock. The adverse weather gave the impetus to removing the centering from under the bridge. These pieces of shuttering are heavy and care had to be taken, but by working as a team they all came out relatively easily. Removing these meant that the Acrow props required to do the copings and top sill walls became available.

When Sally Schupke came at the end of January she commented on how dry it was underfoot: well, the reason for that was the ground was frozen. When it thaws, it's going to get very messy again.

The Thursday and Sunday Group normally meets at 09:30. Please email Eric Walker if you want to get on the email circulation list for details of when and where the TSG is working

*Eric Walker*

## Hedgelaying Group

**G**reetings all. With January 2017 nearly gone there are only 11 months until Christmas! Deep joy.

The first Tuesday of January was spent finishing off in the coppice, moving the remaining stakes and binders to Highbridge and tidying up. We had not only coppiced but also laid 27 yards of the southern hedge and 50 yards of the western hedge so both I and the landowner were pleased.

Tuesdays the 10th, 17th and 24th January were spent on the canal side working from Highbridge, Rosemary Lane towards Gennets. In those three days we almost completed the initial clearance of 170 yards-plus, and also laid 12 yards + 31 yards of hedge, i.e. 43 yards total.

I have split the hedge line into sections of varying lengths, which is why there are two points of laying at this time. The initial hedge line has grown out therefore there are a lot of largish trees. This means that these 51 yards will be as difficult to lay as a new stretch of 128 yards.

The total length of this hedge is about 450 yards so I wonder how much we will manage to lay by the end of the season. This is potentially problematical because we only have enough stakes and binders for about 250 yards. So, if laying goes



**Coppicing and hedge laying, pictures by Keith Nichols**

## 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	Details from Margaret Darvill
Every Wednesday (plus Thursday and Sunday as required)	Loxwood Link Maintenance	Check with Kev Baker
Every Wednesday	Maintenance sessions at Tickner's Heath Depot	Contact John Smith/Ken Bacon
Various Tuesdays	Hedge Laying	Contact Keith Nichols
Third Saturday of the month	Summit level	Contact Dave Evans

swiftly, we will need to go back into the coppice for more material.

On Tuesday 24th we had baked spuds and sat in wonderful warm sunshine eating them. A very peaceful lunch as it is a quiet area. We planned to be back there on the last Tuesday of January, i.e. the 31st.

I hope this finds you as it left me, whatever that means. Cheerio all.

*Keith Nichols*

## Tickner's Heath Depot

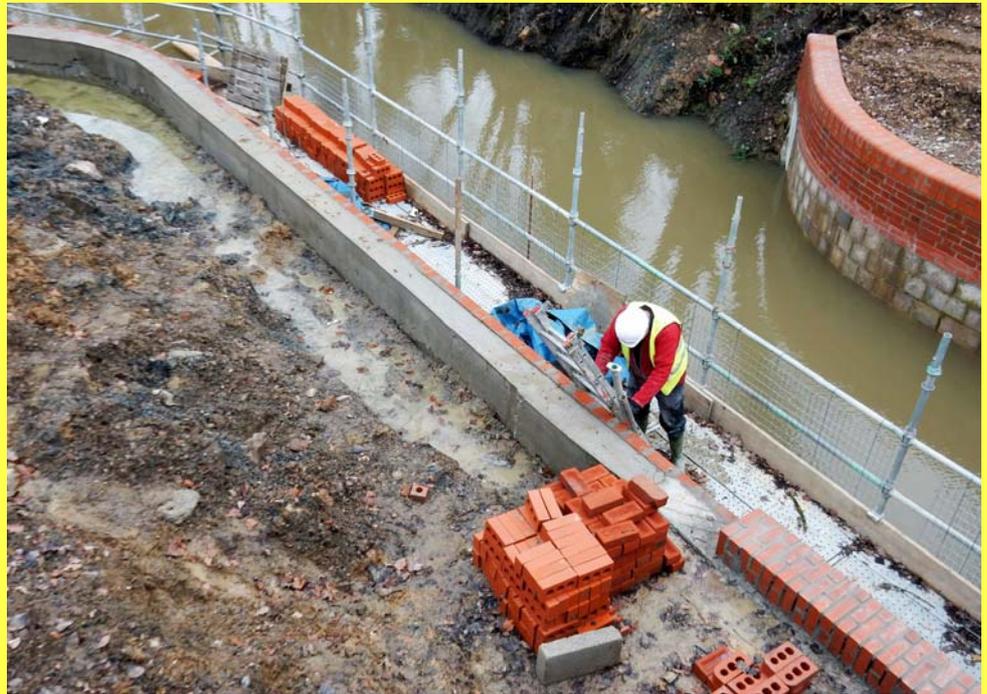
Well here we are again, yet another year has been and gone. Things at this remote corner of the Wey and Arun empire bumble on - sorry, that should be rumble on - as normal. All members of the depot team seem to have survived the festive season and returned after their brief respite bright eyed and bushy tailed, ready to cope with whatever 2017 has to throw at them.

January saw the team help prepare some of the equipment needed for a weekend camp which, among other things, saw the Hunt Park compound demolished. They must have put in quite an effort judging by the quantity of items returned to the depot. It makes a change for more items to return to the depot than those that went out, but no doubt over the period of time these items will slowly disappear elsewhere.

As we still had the *Wasp's* outboard we thought we would have a second look at it and give it a complete oil change. Unfortunately due to the temperature bordering on the minus we could only give it a short run in our test tank, but all seemed in order, so we await the call to take it back to the slipway for a more extensive test. I might add that after my own Yamaha experience I kept well away from the action, or maybe the team ensured I kept well away!

Having possession of the Landrover for a day we made a trip to the slipway and recovered the unused timber from the canoe landing stages. Some wag jokingly said the decking planks were quite light, I think he must have benefited from a Charles Atlas course as they seemed bit heavier to Mick Jones and me. Anyway they are now safely stored away at the depot awaiting the next phase of the canoe platforms project at the summit.

As you may know, we have quite a bit of surplus stock at the depot, including many items which have not seen the light of day for years. So during the month we managed to pass on one of the



**Even though Compasses Bridge has been officially reopened our volunteers are still being kept busy with finishing off at the Compasses site, such as completion of bricklaying (picture from Bill Nicholson)**

unused power mowers to another band of volunteers who keep the Findon Parish area neat and tidy, I hope it gives good service to this trusty bunch of hardworking public minded citizens, plus perhaps the return in the form of a small donation to the Trust.

I can now report that we have all but exhausted the stock of logs at the depot - well, three members of the Trust did. We still have a very small pile, and I mean small, only a dozen or so to be precise. They came to light when we started cleaning out one of the sheds that for many years has been a no-go area at the depot.

With the mention of tidying up so ends my missive for this month. All the best

*John Smith*

## Mid-Week Working Party

The MWWP has been very well attended this month with over 25 people on site most weeks. The month started with us completing work at Haybarn and clearing Lee Farm Lock. A few people then cut the hedge for the landowner to help make it easier to use his private airstrip. The canal and lock are now looking very good indeed.

We then moved to the northern end of the canal, namely to Hunt Park, where we have been clearing willows and alders in preparation for creation of the board walk and wetland area. Large numbers of trees which had already fallen have been cleared and the area is now looking much better, although there is still much to do. February was due to start with our annual lunch at Foxbridge Golf Club on the 1st, so this will leave us with only three working days during the month.

*Margaret Darvill*