



# THE WENDOVER ARM TRUST WORKING PARTY NEWS

ISSUE 104

August 2014

Please accept my apologies for the delay in publishing this issue of the Working Party News but Margaret and I (and our two greyhounds) have spent five weeks cruising followed by nearly a week in the Peak District and I am only now catching up on things.

There were three things that stood out on our cruise, firstly the good weather – four weeks of really hot weather – followed by the downside, the dreadful state of the locks through Leicester and Loughborough and then the dangers from 90% of cyclists on the towpath who were reckless and did not slow down or give proper warning of their approach. One even told us the towpath was for cyclists and not for dogs and walkers – we pay a boat licence, he pays nothing!

## July and August Working Parties

During the weekend of the July working party we were able to install the Brooman family's bench seat placed in memory of John Brooman, our late Treasurer and regular volunteer dumper driver.

John's sons, Richard and Edward joined our working party to lay the concrete base and fix the bench seat in memory of their father. The Trust's volunteers provided the base as their contribution to the memorial.



**IN MEMORY OF JOHN BROOMAN**

Roger Leishman

The family's choice of words for the plaque is most apt for John's work as the Trust Treasurer. I greatly miss his collaboration on the restoration accounts that we compiled together since restoration commenced in 1997.



The target of completing the profiling of banks, lining them with Bentomat, laying the concrete blocks and coir rolls on both banks up to Bridge 4A was achieved bar short gaps adjacent to the bridge where a transition from normal banks to bridge narrows is required.



**TARGET ACHIEVED**

Roger Leishman

Apart from the excellent work by our own volunteers we also have to thank KESCRG who put in a valiant effort on the Saturday of their weekend visit in August to lay the concrete blocks and coir rolls. I am told that, as bad weather was forecast for the Sunday, they worked like beavers very late on the Saturday to ensure that the work was completed.

As already mentioned, KESCRG worked over the weekend following the August working party and finished all the brickwork etc. they could at Whitehouses pending CRT completing their work on the water control mechanisms. It is to be hoped that CRT will complete their work by Easter 2015 so that KESCRG can make a date for around May to complete their brickwork.

We are all very impressed with the quality of KESCRG's work and are very grateful for their contribution to the restoration of the Wendover Arm.



Roger Leishman

These notice boards were designed and procured by Ray Orth, the first is at Bridge 4 at the entrance to the footpath, the second, that explains the water control operations of the future, is at the viewing area at Whitehouses.

Finally we have to thank Mike Wright and his grandson who spent two days cutting back the vegetation, mainly nettles, that were overhanging the new path. Many thanks to you both.



**WHITEHOUSES AUGUST 2014**

Roger Leishman

This shows the work completed by KESCRG to date. The brickwork is not complete at the far end pending CRT building a manhole adjacent to the old settling tank but you can see the weir and collecting channel in front as well as the new piers that will support the metal safety grid that will cover the tank and enable the public to view the water control in operation.

KESCRG also erected two information boards for the nature trail/footpath leading to Whitehouses.



Roger Leishman

**THE NEWLY CLEARED PATH**



## **A look forward to 2015 onwards**

Given that the weather is reasonable for the rest of 2014 we look forward to completing the lining for about 10 metres past Bridge 4A and a bund under the bridge ready for re-watering in the Spring. If we have the rainfall of early 2014 again there should be no shortage of water!

This brings me to the matter of the 2015 January, February and March working parties. If the weather is extreme again serious consideration will have to be given as to whether to cancel one or more of these dates as pipe capping is the next step and could be very difficult in wet weather as the work is at the lowest point of the canal bed and hence quickly under water. We might be in a position to work on the channels through the present bunds ready for re-watering as a 'hospital' job.

2015 will be spent pipe capping from the manhole just east of Bridge 4A towards Whitehouses. The first 100 or more metres from the manhole involve the 18" underground pipe crossing from the towpath side to the offside where it is well under the present bank. This will involve cutting into the bank several metres and, for safety, leaving a 45 degree slope back from the edge of the pipe capping trench.

This will be a major earth moving exercise and to keep the movement of spoil to a minimum will mean capping short lengths at a time so that, as capping progresses, spoil from the length being capped can be placed back over already completed capping. This will be slow progress but once past this length the pipe is no longer under the offside so we may be able to return to our best rate of progress, 40 metres of capping a month. We will also have to leave the Herts County Council tip area properly profiled and replace the boundary fence.

Bearing in mind the weather, laying the final cover over the manhole east of Bridge 4A will be delayed so that pumped water from our working area can be discharged into it.

Looking further ahead, Ray has suggested that, once the offside bank has settled behind the pipe capping, lining and pipe capping should be carried out alternately so as to break up the monotony of lining, in particular block laying. As we have to wait at least a

year for the spoil in the bank to settle we are of course looking at 2016!

## **Site Accommodation**

In the June issue I told you that we have been deliberating for some time over the provision of a cabin in the Whitehouses area for storing low value items such as hand tools and bags of cement/Bentonite granules. It would also provide shelter for volunteers in extreme weather conditions and can be equipped with the means to heat water for washing and tea/coffee making.

In my absence on holiday this was discussed at the July meeting of the WAT Council of Management and referred back to the WAT Restoration Committee for further discussion. I shall be writing to restoration volunteers on this subject as well as making proposals for future working party rosters.

## **General Notes**

We operate as a self-supervising group under CRT and all volunteers receive and sign for the Trust's Restoration Handbook that includes full Health and Safety requirements for the restoration works.

The handbook is the property of the Trust; if you leave the working parties for any reason, please return your Handbook to either Ray Orth or myself.

Hard hats for use at all times and high visibility jackets to be worn on sites with mobile plant in use are kept in the store at Tringford and must be drawn/returned there.

One first aid kit is kept in the store and one in the Nissan Cabstar and each qualified first-aider will have their own kit with him/her when on site.

Also available in the store at Tringford are ear defenders and goggles that must be worn when using strimmers, angle grinders, concrete breakers and the like. CRT will supply hard hats, gloves and footwear with reinforced toecaps on request.

We normally work from 9am to 5pm (or dark if earlier!). There are breaks for morning tea/coffee, packed lunch and afternoon tea/coffee. We take our own food and drink.

## DATES FOR WORKING PARTIES

So you can plan your diary ahead, the following are the dates of future working parties for the rest of 2014 and 2015:

| DATE  | WORKING AT | WORK TO BE DONE   |
|---|------------|---|
| <b>2014</b>                                     |            |   |
| Friday 5th September to Thursday 11th September | Stage 3    | Stage 3 lining.   |
| Friday 3rd October to Thursday 9th October      | Stage 3    | Stage 3 lining.   |
| Friday 31st October to Thursday 6th November    | Stage 3    | Stage 3 lining.   |
| Friday 5th December to Thursday 11th December   | Stage 3    | Progress permitting, build bund in Bridge 4A narrows.                                 |
| <b>2015</b>                                     |            |   |
| Friday 2nd January to Thursday 8th January      | Stage 3    | Complete any works required for re-watering to Bridge 4A – <b>weather permitting!</b> |
| Friday 6th February to Thursday 12th February   | Stage 3    | Pipe capping – <b>weather permitting!</b>   |
| Friday 6th March to Thursday 12th March         | Stage 3    | Pipe capping – <b>weather permitting</b>  |
| Friday 3rd April to Thursday 9th April          | Stage 3    | Pipe capping  |
| Friday 1st May to Thursday 7th May              | Stage 3    | Pipe capping  |
| Friday 5th June to Thursday 11th June           | Stage 3    | Pipe capping  |
| Friday 3rd July to Thursday 9th July            | Stage 3    | Pipe capping  |
| Friday 31st July to Thursday 6th August         | Stage 3    | Pipe capping  |
| Friday 4th September to Thursday 10th September | Stage 3    | Pipe capping  |
| Friday 2nd October to Thursday 8th October      | Stage 3    | Pipe capping  |
| Friday 6th November to Thursday 12th November   | Stage 3    | Pipe capping  |
| Friday 4th December to Thursday 10th December   | Stage 3    | Pipe capping  |

Roger Leishman, Restoration Director. 7 Hall Park, Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 2NU.  
 (Tel:01442 874536, e-mail [rwleishman@gmail.com](mailto:rwleishman@gmail.com))