



THE WENDOVER ARM TRUST WORKING PARTY NEWS

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February 2015

Good News

At the Council Meeting on 21st January 2015 Chris Sargeant was elected Chairman of the Trust and Clive Wilson was elected Treasurer to the Trust (he will take over from me as from 5th April 2015, the end of the financial year). Now I will be able to concentrate on Restoration again having had several years as acting Chairman and 14 months as Acting Treasurer.

January and February Working Parties

Despite national forecasts of appalling weather in January this did not come to pass and we continued with the lining through Bridge 4A. We were also able to continue with excavation for continuing the pipe capping in Stage 3 and clear an area for tipping the spoil in Stage 4 between Whitehouses and Bridge 4. The annual trimming of the towpath hedge on the towpath side at Little Tring was also completed.

Relining to Bridge 4A was completed at the February working party despite the setback of having a dumper break down after having unloaded 2 cubic metres of concrete and about to return for the second 2 cubic metres from the ready-mix lorry. This breakdown on Wednesday morning also trapped an excavator so things came to a complete halt. Fortunately Hardings, our ready-mix supplier, was able to deliver the second 2 cubic metres to another customer but it took Wednesday mid-day until Friday morning to get the dumper operational (although the engine could not be turned off from 7am when it was partially repaired until it was loaded onto the lorry later in the day for return to Morgans, the plant supplier). Our thanks to those who extended their working week to the Friday to enable the concreting to be completed; also to Hardings and Morgans for pulling out all the stops to enable this to happen.

Excavation of the bed ready for pipe capping continued with the spoil being tipped in Stage 4.

March and April Working Parties

In March, weather permitting; the bund with a Bentomat core will be completed in the narrows of Bridge 4A.

Excavation for pipe capping can now commence bearing in mind that once this starts to cross the canal bed from the towpath side to the offside, access towards Bridge 4A will be cut off. Once pipe capping crosses the bed there will be major excavation works as the pipeline runs under the high offside bank and a 45 degree bank will have to be formed for safety reasons.

Working Party Organisation

As I am no longer able to play an active part in running working parties, Ray Orth is now on his own in organising and running working parties and this is a problem if Ray is sick or away on holiday. Furthermore, Ray, on his own admission, is not getting any younger and needs help. I am very pleased to say that Tony Bardwell has agreed to assist him in this task and I ask you all to support Tony in his new role.

One thing that has been a continual sore that I have written about before is the whole question of manning working parties. We still get too few volunteers some days and too many other days. This year we are embarking on a long run of pipe capping and little else. The excavation work requires a team of, say, six including two excavator drivers and one or two dumper drivers. Those not driving will be trimming out the final excavation and fixing the screed boards, DPM and reinforcement mesh and helping with the ready-mix pours when we need two to shovel and two to screed off.

So, to finalise, I ask volunteers to nominate the days they are coming such that there are six on site every day and not turn up unannounced to find there is no work for them.

Site Accommodation

Following my intention published in last June's newsletter to provide a cabin at Whitehouses, the proposal caused some dissent and the WAT Council referred the matter back to the Restoration Committee. I felt that the fairest way of determining the views of volunteers was to write to you all individually and the result of this was a majority support for the proposal. I had intended to finalise matters at the January Council meeting but could not attend due to illness but am pleased to tell you that the proposal was endorsed by the Council at their February meeting.

Tony Bardwell has offered to project manage installing the cabin and some of you will no doubt hear from him in due course.

Under the same heading we were fortunate in that Peter Bird had a Portaloo left by travellers on his land and gave it to the Trust. John Reynolds was able to arrange for MTL0os of Chesham to transport it to Little Tring and service it. It did need a new pump that Ray Orth arranged and this has now been fitted and he has given it a good clean up.

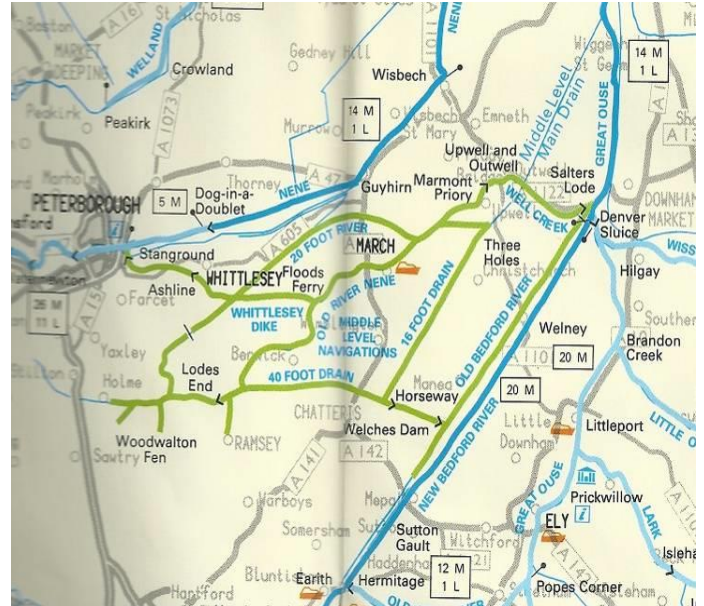
At present it is located by the car park at Little Tring but would be of more practical use during working parties if it were at Whitehouses. I am suggesting that it is fitted with the necessary equipment to lift it onto a dumper, transport it to Whitehouses on the first day of a working party and bring it back to Little Tring on the last day of a working party.

As lifting by an excavator with strops leaves little headroom it will probably be necessary to use the ready-mix loading bay for loading and unloading. Once the Portaloo is back at Little Tring, MTL0os will be able to service it as required.

The way ahead with Restoration

Recently there has been growing concern over our ability to keep our restoration going purely on a volunteer basis. We are looking at the possibility of using contract assistance with some of the work.

Project Hereward



At the working party on Saturday 7th February we had a visit from five members of the Project Hereward group intent on restoring the Horseways Channel in the fens led by their Chairman, Roger Sexton. You can see in the map above that this channel links the 40ft and 16ft drains with the Old Bedford River with a lock at each end.

If you are a member of IWA there is a letter "More on Welches Dam Lock" on page 45 of the Spring 2015 issue of Waterways that outlines the problem in more detail. It seems that the Environment Agency, who is presently responsible for this waterway, is not being very co-operative!

The channel is about 2½ miles long and leaks. The group had heard about our expertise in lining a leaking canal and asked to come and visit our work to learn all about what they are faced with. Despite an overcast day it was dry and we trust that we gave them all the information they require.

Restoration Handbook

I am very aware that I am behind in issuing new volunteers with their copies of the Restoration handbook, partly due to my wearing three hats for the Trust during the last year.

John Reynolds has very kindly offered to take over the task of issuing the manual. Before he issues new versions Ray Orth and I are going to update the present version where necessary so please be patient.

Volunteer labour

The table below shows the value of volunteer labour up to the end of 2014.

Balloon Flight Trip Offer

In the 2014 Grand Draw I was fortunate to win the Virgin Balloon Trip prize. I offered this £155 face value flight to anyone willing to pay me £100 for the voucher in December and I am pleased to say it sold almost immediately and we are hoping the purchaser will write his trip up for the Wendover Arm News. The £100 has now been donated to the Trust + Gift Aid, a total of £125.

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 trimmers, 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.

	HOURS	TOTAL HOURS	VALUE £	TOTAL VALUE £	TOTAL VALUE @ 2½% p.a. INFLATION
1996	1,016.50	1,016.50	8,132	8,132	8,132
1997	997.50	2,014.00	7,980	16,112	16,515
1998	2,696.00	4,710.00	43,174	59,286	62,287
1999	3,550.50	8,260.50	30,799	90,085	97,012
2000	4,239.90	8,479.90	36,865	126,950	140,129
2001	5,021.50	13,501.40	40,132	167,082	189,038
2002	5,560.00	19,061.40	44,480	211,562	245,347
2003	6,721.50	25,782.90	53,772	265,334	315,399
2004	6,647.75	32,430.65	55,366	320,700	390,742
2005	3,784.50	36,215.15	37,437	358,137	447,264
2006	4,179.50	40,394.65	35,326	393,463	503,665
2007	5,463.00	45,857.65	43,704	437,167	573,601
2008	4,342.00	50,199.65	34,736	471,903	634,657
2009	5,285.00	55,484.65	42,280	514,183	708,807
2010	5,262.00	60,746.65	42,036	556,219	766,754
2011	5,799.50	66,545.15	46,396	602,615	872,766
2012	5,694.50	72,239.65	45,556	648,171	962,213
2013	5,451.00	77,690.65	43,608	691,779	1,052,623
2014	3,596.00	81,286.65	28,772	695,375	1,123,813

To have passed the £1m mark and more is quite a milestone in our restoration and pays tribute to the dedication of our valiant band of restoration volunteers.

Joyce Smith continues to give us great support in compiling these records from our daily site sheets, for some 19 years now!

Joyce also supplies CRT with details of our volunteer effort that go into the overall volunteer statistics published by CRT. Yet again, many thanks again Joyce.

Some of our readers will already have seen this aerial photograph on the web site that was taken from a drone above Bridge 4A but I am including it for all to see. I feel that it is a very appropriate picture as it illustrates the length of canal in Phase II that still remains to be restored; from Bridge 4A to the winding hole at Little Tring, 1,300 metres or 1,408 yards in old money. It also illustrates how a contour canal has to wind its way along a fixed level – in the case of the Wendover Arm, all the way from Wendover to Bulbourne Junction.



WORKING PARTIES

So you can plan your diary ahead, the following are the dates of future working parties in 2015:

DATE	WORKING AT	WORK TO BE DONE
2015		
Friday 6 th March to Thursday 12 th March	Stage 3	Build bund in Bridge 4A narrows and continue with excavation for Stage 3 pipe capping.
Friday 10 th April to Thursday 16 th April	Stage 3	Stage 3 pipe capping if bund is completed at Bridge 4A. This cannot start in earnest until the bund is installed as the first pipe capping will cut off access to Bridge 4A as it crosses the canal bed.
Friday 1 st May to Thursday 7 th May	Stage 3	Stage 3 pipe capping.
Friday 5 th June to Thursday 11 th June Sunday 7 th will be a Restoration Open Day	Stage 3	Stage 3 pipe capping.
Friday 3 rd July to Thursday 9 th July	Stage 3	Stage 3 pipe capping.
Friday 31 st July to Thursday 6 th August	Stage 3	Stage 3 pipe capping.
Friday 4 th September to Thursday 10 th September Sunday 6 th will be a Restoration Open Day	Stage 3	Stage 3 pipe capping.
Friday 2 nd October to Thursday 8 th October	Stage 3	Stage 3 pipe capping.
Friday 6 th November to Thursday 12 th November	Stage 3	Stage 3 pipe capping.
Friday 4 th December to Thursday 10 th December	Stage 3	Stage 3 pipe capping.

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