



WENDOVER ARM NEWS

Newsletter of the Wendover Arm Trust



*Issue 2017/4
Winter 2017*

*Price £1 where sold
Free to members*

Another Grand Day Out

Following the success of our first trip out along the Wendover Arm from Cow Roast we took both of Paul's boats (Victoria and Albert) with 14 guests out on September 13 from Cow Roast through the Tring cutting and along the Arm to the winding hole. Those who were physically able then went on a ramble with Ray Orth to the restoration workings before returning to the boats for a well-deserved lunch.

Weather? Not as good as for the May trip, sunshine and showers were the order of the day.

Ray and David did the skippering and Michael, Greta and Chris did the galley-slave bit (and many thanks to them.)



All aboard that's coming aboard! Photo: Ed

Gloria Langridge writes:

Many thanks to you and all concerned for a marvellous day out yesterday.

Ray did a sterling job at the tiller (I hope that's what it's called!) and the catering was excellent! When I told my granddaughter, Eleanor, she said she was quite jealous - lunch on the canal!! So, can we express our interest for the next trip, please?

John Lovelock writes:

It was a REALLY Grand Day Out! However first thing I thought we might need to check the shipping forecast! Firstly may I thank you for your organisation of this event. I know the amount of planning and administration that is behind the scenes from my work as Secretary of our village Historical Society. It was a real pleasure to attend an event that I had not organised!

Secondly please pass on my thanks to the WAT crew on Victoria - Chris Sargeant and Ray Orth and it was also a pleasure to meet David Page and Michael Wright

We plan to repeat the trips in 2018 and are taking expressions of interest/bookings for 2018, contact Katherine, the Membership Secretary membership@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk or ☎07547 181857

Each trip will be for a maximum of eight people and you can invite your friends, family or neighbours to come along. They will be mid-week trips probably in May and September with a whole day to cruise the Tring Cutting and the Wendover Arm, lunch included for a price probably similar to the £30 charge in 2017.

At the restoration site Photo: Ed



A pause on bridge 4a Photo: Ed



2018 trips



Sorry, that's yer lot, come again next year? Photo: Ed

Your contacts on the Trust

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Cover Picture:

The plaque dedicated to the restorers with Bob Wheal presenting it to those restorers present at the AGM.

Picture: Ed

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**Copy deadline for the spring 2018
issue 22 February**

Chairman's column

As you know, CRT and ourselves have been preparing submission of our Stage 2 Lottery funding bid. This entails much detailed investigation of all aspects of the project including all engineering, environmental and community engagement aspects.

Whilst most of these have been completed satisfactorily, an in-filled section of the canal at Little Tring thought to contain innocuous domestic waste has been found to contain noxious material which would need to be removed to a specially licensed area at great expense including a hefty landfill tax rather than be disposed of locally. In the light of this costs have become well above the level of funding originally sought.

Discussions with CRT have identified possible ways forward but it would not be possible to thoroughly develop and cost these and still meet the current bid submission timetable.

After discussion with HLF we have agreed to withdraw the present bid and re-present once satisfactory strategies have been fully developed and costed to overcome the problem.

Much of the work done to date will still be relevant and not need to be repeated and a stronger end product is likely to emerge in the longer run.

I would like to thank you all for your support to date and trust you will continue to help us complete the job.

The agreed statement by CRT and ourselves is as follows:



The Canal & River Trust and the Wendover Arm Trust are postponing their Heritage Lottery Fund bid towards the cost of restoring a further 2.7km of the Wendover Arm to navigation.

In working up their bid, the partners identified substantial costs beyond the available funding, largely due to the need to remove contaminated material in the canal - previously assumed to be domestic rubbish - to a landfill site.

Whilst the two organisations have been working exceptionally hard to overcome these challenges, and at the same time reduce costs, it has become apparent that these cannot be fully resolved before the Lottery deadline of March 2018.

Consequently, the partners have decided to withdraw the existing bid and concentrate on solving these challenges so that a fresh submission for funding could be submitted in due course.

There is currently a serious water shortage situation affecting the Wendover Arm and the whole Tring Summit of the Grand Union due to two issues:

- a) Water from Wendover is not getting through to Drayton Beauchamp and the pipe due to reed and vegetation growth – this is not currently scheduled to be cut by CRT until January – as a result local reservoirs are becoming depleted.
- b) Crucial pumps at Tringford pumping

station have failed meaning little water can be delivered to the Tring Summit and restrictions on use of the Marsworth Flight have been introduced.

CRT are urgently addressing these issues as I write.

It has been a busy year and much has been achieved with your help and support – thank you all and I wish you compliments of the season and to seeing you in 2018.

Chris Sargeant

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From the Editor



As you will read in the Chairman's Column, this month's news is the disappointing one that we've had to withdraw our HLF bid pending further consideration. That bald statement is all the Trust will say until we can announce the way forward.

In the meantime 'the way forward' is to continue the restoration towards Little Tring with the funds we have and can generate, using (mainly) volunteer labour.

I haven't been able to find space for the Wendover Arm timeline in this issue (next issue I promise!) nor any snippets from the archives but I have given you a festive recipe as a compensation.

There's also a job advert; we are looking for someone to manage the content of our website. If you have the skills, and not many are needed, then volunteer, your help will be greatly appreciated.

Happy Christmas and New Year, David

AGM 18 OCTOBER 2017—REPORT

The minutes of the 27th Annual General Meeting held on 19th October 2016. were approved as a correct record.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 28th Annual General Meeting. He began by asking all present to join with him in sending good wishes to our restoration director Roger Leishman and his wife Margaret who were unable to be with us this evening for the first time in 20 years.

He said that you will have seen from our Annual Report and regular Work News that the restoration work continues – having completed pipe capping to Bridge 4 our dedicated volunteers led by Ray Orth are now lining from bridge 4a and approaching Whitehouses.

The year to April has been dominated by our Lottery funding bid. Having passed stage 1 of our application, preparation for stage 2 submission is now well advanced. This had involved much detailed investigation of every aspect of the project including environmental, ecological, access and conservation studies and we were indebted to CRT for the immense amount of time and resources they have devoted to this task. He said he would give an update on the position of the lottery application after the formal business of the AGM.

The work of the Trust was only possible, he said, by virtue of those who enthusiastically give their time and expertise to help in so many ways in order to fund and support our volunteers working on site – those who help with our events, fund-raising, publicity, newsletters, financial control and so

many more, huge thanks to you all.

This year we also acknowledge and thank Reverend Elizabeth Moxley vicar of Drayton Beauchamp Church for allowing use of the churchyard for our open days and to Bob Woodman for permitting use of the adjacent field for parking on these occasions. Elizabeth is leaving Drayton Beauchamp and Bob Woodman has moved. We look forward to working with their successors in the future.

Also new this year have been two very successful events at the newly refurbished Tringford Pumping Station in conjunction with CRT. We were delighted to welcome *nbRoger* back to the Arm after 80 years – *Roger* was built at the boatyard where Heygates now stands. Special thanks to our Jenny Brice our events coordinator who worked tirelessly with many colleagues to make all these things happen – Thank you all.

Our Tidy Fridays team led by John Reynolds is now well established and helping to keep our patch clean and tidy.

Thanks are also due to Tring Lions for their sponsorship of much need new signage around Little Tring bridge area to guide walkers back to the towpath and also most recently for a contribution towards a new brush-cutter for our Tidy Fridays Group.

In conclusion he thanked all fellow Council Members for their support during the year and most importantly of all to all our members who help our cause directly or indirectly.

The Treasurer stated that the Chairman's

report highlighted the straightforward nature of what we do, that is to restore a canal and raise money to enable that to happen. The accounts of an organisation reflect what it does and together with the facts that we do not employ anyone and that we own no buildings or property leads to a fairly simple set of accounts.

He said the best way to see what had been happening during the year was to look at the notes to the accounts that refer to where money is raised and to what it is spent on.

He noted that income was down although it was felt that this was not a year-on-year trend. He remarked that it was important to keep ourselves in the public eye, after all no one will leave us a legacy if they have not heard of us. Giving people opportunities to donate by attending and running events was also important.

The 'stand out' difference in the accounts was the increase in restoration expenditure from approximately £40,000 to £60,000. An increase of more than this was expected together with the start of spending on the HLF bid in what the treasurer described last year as 'more dynamic activity' This hadn't really happened.

He finished by saying that next year more dynamism would be apparent as it is currently occurring.

Two questions were raised from the floor;

The first from **Peter Bird** referred to the examiner's statement that appears to say that certain criteria have not been met. The **Treasurer** replied that it did not refer to any accounting errors and that the same words appear every year.

(note: The independent examiner has confirmed that the set of words used is as laid down in relevant standards. He also agrees that it is ambiguous.)

The second question from **Beryl Hunter** referred to the current year's 'dynamism', to which the **Treasurer** replied that a substantial amount of money had been received and that the designated fund, which contains virtually all the Trust's monies, was due to be spent over next few years and that the spend had already started.

Council of Management Reports These reports were accepted.

Report of Independent Examiner
This was accepted.

Appointment of External Examiner
Ashby's Chartered Accountants, Morton House, 9 Beacon Court, Pitstone Green Business Park, Pitstone LU7 9GY were re-appointed as Independent Examiners.

Election of Members of the Council
There were two nominees for re-election to Council:

Nigel Williams
Katherine Deaney

There were two members of the Council who resigned:

Jenny Brice
Charlie Carrington
(who continues as the Health & Safety Officer)

The remaining Council Members were not due for re-election and had indicated their willingness to continue:

Marion Birch
Roger Leishman

Ray Orth
David Page
John Rowe
Chris Sargeant
Bob Wheal
Clive Wilson

Although no election was necessary as there were fewer than 20 nominations, the Chairman requested a vote of confidence in the Council, which was carried.

In addition:

Jenny Brice continues as the IWA representative and Vicky Martin as the CRT representative.

The meeting closed at 7.50pm and the 51 members present tucked into stew with dumplings (it was delicious and I went back for 'seconds', as did many others, *Ed.*) This was followed by the 100 Club Draw (results reported elsewhere) and the raffle that raised over £200.

Our principal guest was Peter Walker, Senior Project Engineer for CRT. He has been looking after CRT's response to HS2 and its proposed routes and provided us with an update on his negotiations with them to ensure the routes chosen had as little adverse impact on the canal infrastructure as possible. He emphasised that these were not battles between CRT and HS2 (the irresistible force *vs* the immovable object) but reasonable and structured discussions to try to overcome problems. Although much of his very interesting talk was concerned with the onward routes from Birmingham he did refer to the local concern about HS2 affecting adversely the quantity of water being fed into the canal by remarking that HS2 will need to make good any deficiency.

CLUB 100

Autumn draw

This was made at the AGM and there were 203 subscribers, down six from the summer draw and ten adrift from 2016's record number.

The prizes winners were:

1st	Rodney Evans	£243.60
2nd	Colin Parlett	£101.50
3rd	Marion Birch	£40.60

Marion continues with her luck in the autumn draw having got the third prize in the autumn 2016 draw too.

While **Club 100** won't get the big sums we need, it's an easy way for you to contribute to the costs of restoration with regular small donations with the possibility of winning prizes!

Club 100 is a members only draw

A £15 subscription buys you four chances to win in a given year. About 50% of the income is redistributed as prizes.

To join

Contact Katherine our Membership Secretary for an application form, complete it and send it to her. Then hey presto you'll be in the next four draws.

Katherine's contact details are:

✉ membership @wendoverarmtrust.co.uk

☎07547 18185

GRAND DRAW 2017



THE WINNERS!

The list of winning ticket numbers and recipients of the prizes are shown below but thanks to your generosity the real winner is the Trust which, due to the unstinting efforts of our Promoter, Michael Wright and his wife, Greta, netted £4401.

The Promoter writes:

Thanks first to all the Trustees whose donations have covered the cost of the cash prizes.

The Draw itself went smoothly and Gerald Wilkins, Mayor of Tring, drew the ten winning tickets. He was presented with a porcelain WAT mug and a bottle of wine on completion of the draw. Many prizes were for local addresses. Several prizes however were declined, but the week's holiday sponsored by James Griffin of Wyvern Shipping was excitedly accepted.

There are a considerable amount of Grand Draw tickets still available. They are not very useful now, unless there is a demand for 'souvenirs' and they do make very useful notelets!

Michael Wright.

Prize

- 1st: Week on a Canal Boat**
- 2nd: A Day Boat Hire for up to 10 people**
- 3rd: Virgin Experience, visit The Shard (for two)**
- 4th: £100 Cash**
- 5th: £50 Cash**
- 6th: Swan Chocolate Fountain**
- 7th: £25 Garden Centre Voucher**
- 8th: £20 Cash**
- 9th: Lady's Fashion Necklace**
- 10th: Two Cushions**

Ticket number and winner

- 07053 S & J Lovelock
- 04148 J Webster
- 23666 Mr J L Norton
- 06996 Miss H Biggs
- 03614 Mr Gascoigne
- 24582 Mr A Greenwood
- 10374 Mrs M S Heritage
- 00048 Mr Sowley
- 01456 Mrs A Statham
- 09080 Mr B Campbell-Bar & Mrs Burkle

Julian Webster, second-prize winner writes:

David, I was fortunate to win a day out on the canal sponsored by Narrowboatdayhire.com. Having arranged a carer for my wife I was able to take my two daughters, grandchildren and dog on a cruise. The weather was brilliant and we sat outside for lunch at the Grand Junction Arms. We went down the Arm, quite an experience for me as a non-boating walker. The photo attached (see p 19) was taken at the end. This might be of interest.

Cheers, Julian.

RESTORATION NEWS

Adapted from Roger Leishman's restoration group's newsletters and other sources

August 2017

As well as getting ourselves ready for the hordes expected to come and view operations at the Open Day at the beginning of September the main task this month was to prepare a stock of cut Bentomat® ready for installation. We were running short and as cutting can only be done when the weather is dry it was important to stock up before the onset of the autumn storms. In two days we managed to cut sufficient to line 80m of canal and this will be enough to see us through until spring next year and get us to within 20-30m of Whitehouses.

Despite interference from the weather over the remainder of the work party we were able to continue with profiling, lining and blocking and completed a further 15metres of lining, all apart from back filling to be done at the start of September's work party. This entailed the dropping of 3 lengths of bank lining on both banks, the laying and concreting of approx. 50 hollow blocks and the laying of approx. 750 solid blocks.

September 2017

Entertaining the visitors took up the Sunday of the work party and you can read more about that in the Restoration Open Day article.

10metres of banking on both sides were profiled, lined, blocked and backfilled. and a further 10 metres of banking, again on both sides, fully profiled. This will enable lining etc. to commence at the very start of the October work party

without any delay caused by having to wait for the profiling to be completed.

October 2017

The October work party again went very well and 10m of banking on both sides were profiled, lined, blocked and backfilled.

As we did in September we also fully profiled more banking on both sides (15m) so that we could start lining at the beginning of the next work party without any delay caused by having to wait for the profiling to be completed. This is a practice we propose to continue as it will speed up the rate of completion of the restoration.

November 2017

The November work party again went very well, in spite of the rather more in the way of wet weather, with 15metres of banking on both sides profiled, lined, blocked and backfilled. and again another 15+ metres of banking, again on both sides, fully profiled in readiness for December.

The only down side of the week was that we had yet another theft of diesel from our machines. Ray Orth is working with the police but there is very little they can do. The amount of diesel taken, about £30 worth, also puts it very low down on the list of priorities. We are looking at ways of making the security of the machines more robust and not simply relying on locked filler caps which are simply broken apart. As

you can imagine, apart from the cost, this creates additional aggravation and work on top of that involved with restoration.

Whitehouses

The design of the pseudo weir and wing walls has been completed and is at present being costed. No firm date for this work has been agreed although a date of April / May next year has been suggested, but attempts are being made to bring this forward to avoid clashing with WAT's work that should have reached Whitehouses about that time.

Operation floodwatch

CRT has revived the WAT's 2008 idea, at the time vetoed by BW, of gradually raising stop planks at Drayton Beauchamp Bridge so as to monitor the effect of raised water level back to Wendover. CRT is pursuing this project but have asked WAT if it can assist with manpower to help them. Roger Leishman asked for a volunteer through the Work Party Newsletter but has had no offers of help. So we are throwing it open to all members. If you are willing to take this task on please get in touch with Roger as soon as possible

Work Party Dates

The next three months' work parties are:

Friday 5 to Thursday 11 January

Friday 2 to Thursday 8 February

Friday 2 to Thursday 8 March

Work parties at this time of year are always subject to the weather but, if clement then we will be continuing the profiling and lining back towards

Whitehouses.

To volunteer contact Ray Orth:

☞restoration2@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk

Tidy Fridays

Tring Lions have donated funds to help us to purchase a new brushcutter and we thanks them most gratefully. The picture shown (p13) is of John Reynolds gleefully demonstrating his new toy!

Anyway, Tidy Fridays continue during the winter (again, if the weather allows it) and the schedule of dates is:

Friday 12 January

Friday 9 February

Friday 9 March

If you'd like to help the group it would be delighted to have your help. The hours are 9am at Little Tring, bring a picnic lunch and finish at 2pm. The work, although manual is not strenuous and would suit those who wish they could help with the restoration but feel they don't quite have the strength to do that work.

John Reynolds is the organiser, contact him in advance on:

☎07787355515 or

☞scubajr4@gmail.com

Water water not anywhere — nor any drop for boats

(with apologies to the Rime of the Ancient Mariner)

As mentioned in the Chairman's column in this issue, reed and weed growth in the Arm is causing a back-up of water towards Wendover with the risk of flooding there. No water is getting into the reservoirs and no water is getting into the restored

sections; the result as you will see from the pictures is that they are drying out. Interesting that the line before the well known saying in the rime is *'water water everywhere and all the boards did shrink'* – if we don't keep water in the restored sections the lining will dry out, with who knows what consequence.

Another Restoration!

Our Restoration Director, Roger Leishman, has been waiting for a hip replacement for sometime. News is that he has just had his

new hip fitted and, although still early days, is progressing well. Our best wishes go to him for a speedy restoration to full mobility.

. . . And a Retirement

James Clifton, CRT's Enterprise Manager who has been leading our HLF bid on behalf of CRT has announced that he is taking phased retirement and will bow out finally on 20 July. We shall be sad to see him go but remind him that the hard work begins on 21 July!

HS2 AND HALTON CAMP

HS2:

Wendover Parish Council arranged a public meeting early in October with senior representatives of HS2, their contractors and community funders. Of interest to the Trust, in answer to the question, *'The hydrologists seem to have picked the driest year to do tests, what happens if there is a lot of excess water? What happens if the SSSI and canal dries up?'* was the statement, *'Any excess water would be pumped back to where it came from.'* This does gel with Peter Walker's assurance to us to a similar question at the AGM.

Halton Camp:

Wendover News reports, 'A further threat to Wendover.' Aylesbury Vale

Local updates on their effects on the Wendover Arm

District Council (AVDC) has published the latest version of its Local Plan that includes the initial proposals for 1000 houses on the RAF campsite. The designated area is that currently occupied by the Station's buildings and nothing is proposed near the Arm. Naturally the inhabitants of Halton seem concerned as the village grows from 1000 to near 3,500 inhabitants but wider concern in the area is that with the pressure from Government to build homes, the Green Belt may be lifted and many more than 1000 houses will be built – and then the Arm may be affected.

Consultation on AVDC's plan is underway and can be viewed on AVDC's website at: www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk.

HELP WANTED AND HELP OFFERED

Our plea for help to maintain the trailer has been answered. John Pattle of P&S Marine in Croxley Green has volunteered an annual service. The Trust's grateful thanks go to John and additional thanks as well as he has for a long time been a major seller of Grand Draw tickets.

John's got a new toy! The brushcutter funded by Tring Lions. Photo: Chris Sargeant



RESTORATION PICTURES SEPTEMBER 2017

Below and right: two views of the final profiling of the banks prior to lining. The rough profiling was done some 12 months ago to allow consolidation. The difference between rough and final can be seen at the bottom of the right hand picture. Photos: Ed



It's time for a cuppa! Photo: Ed

Above: two pictures of the process of laying the base blocks on the side walls. You can see the 225mm blocks—the ones with the holes in them that are concreted into the base at 45° onto which the dense block are laid in a 12-high stack topped by coir rolls. Photos: Stephen Bonsor



AGM Pictures

Top Left: Chairman Chris begins the AGM proceedings

Bottom Left: Studying the financial report intently as our Treasurer explains what's happened over the past year.



Photos: Ed

Left:
Our principal guest-
Peter Walker,
National Infrastructure
Services Manager for
CRT talking about
HS2

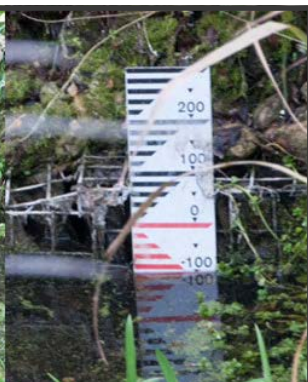
Yes, we have no water!

Chris Sargeant's pictures of the water shortage in the Arm near Drayton Beauchamp and the excess at Wendover

(see report p11)



The sump at Drayton Beauchamp on 13th November 2017



Bridge 4a and the cut almost devoid of water Nov 13th 2017



Wharf Rd Wendover towpath beginning to flood
Nov 13th 2017

Open days are now highly organised (somehow) and the outcome, whilst not always the same, has the desired effect. More interest and new members. With the Draw being made this year by Councillor Gerald Wilkins, the Mayor of Tring Town



Cllr Wilkins draws out the first winning number and, (inset), yes, we do put all four-and-an-quarter-thousand tickets into the drum. Photo:Ed

Council everything went to plan. The walks to the site were very popular and the Mayor walked to the Drayton Beauchamp bridge, (and back again) in my company, asking some very pertinent questions ! He, as a local lad, used to play in the bed of the canal and was astounded to hear of the progress. Even more astounded to be told that the plant was hired in on a monthly basis, all driven by volunteers, not contractors, and paid for by the Trust. What misconceptions about I wonder, but it was pleasing to know that the Town Council has an interest. All we have to do is keep getting 'the Mayor' and hence different members of the Council to visit on Open Days to spread the gospel.

Michael Wright

Thank you for all your help which made the day a success. Even though the outlook was dull and the rain threatened, enough public came to make it a successful day. Each time I take a tour, we appear to have new members of the public attend. This is what we want, to publicise it around the community, it also gave Katherine the opportunity to sign up seven new members. Our takings for the day were just short of £770.

Chris Sargeant met the new residents at the rectory, who appear to be supportive of the Trust. This is why there was more red tape around the parking, we did not want to obstruct their view from the property. Hopefully these restoration days will be able to continue in the future.

Jenny Brice

Visitor numbers were down but seven members were recruited. I kept mentioning



No one's paying any attention to Ray as he tries to tell the visitors all about the restoration, they're all wondering what the dog's going to do next! Photo: Stephen Bonser

it over the PA and it seems to have had the right effect in increasing awareness. As a result the Trust has topped 700 members for the first time.

Katherine Deaney

CRT 2Arms on 2legs run 10 September

Once again WAT volunteered to provide water stations for the 10k and half-marathon runs. After the necessary safety briefing, how to retrieve someone who'd fallen into the water etc., your reporter was banished to the water station at Drayton Beauchamp along with Brian Bostock, Frances and Paul Deane and Jan Parkinson. for that place the safety briefing ought to have been how to recover someone who'd fallen into brambles!

Weather was not as brilliant as in 2016 and there were about double the number of runners this year. We set out our stall and waited and waited and waited for what seemed to be an age before the elite runners started to come through; notice from the pictures the various styles of picking up a drink.

Then it was the turn of the masses when we were continually replenishing the water cups then the stragglers who were only too glad to stop, drink and chat before continuing their weary way to Wendover.



It was noticeable how many more people than last year thanked us for providing water. And no one said 'how much further?'

ELITE RUNNERS' WATER GRABBING STYLES



There's the forward lunge



and the sideways curtsy



and the grab-it-from-behind technique



leading lady runner and looking happy about it

One pair of straggling girls, one obviously in difficulties stopped at the water point with the story that the one in difficulties had fallen over at mile 4, had hit her head had a bruised leg and arm which were painful but was determined to finish, whatever. They said their lateness was also due to having to fish a chap out of the canal who'd fallen in trying to get berries – a right d**k they said!



Sorry, it's water station not the end of the run. You've still nearly four miles to go

Lesser-known France – River Charente

by Jenny Brice

Even though we have the trail boat, we decided that towing across France when our language skills were non-existent was a no go so we hired an Horizon Cruiser from Le Boat, an ugly beast, but definitely a boat for non-boaters. The lounge/kitchen area had a high ceiling with a large fridge, oven and sink area, more like a modern apartment than a boat. The bow cabin was enormous. The cruiser had a large gunwale that was safe to walk around and a fly deck with a Bimini, these are great on yachts, but the designers forgot about the over-hanging branches when approaching the pontoons. We soon learned! The normal driving position was from the fly deck, where all the crew could reside in comfort, studying the guide book for approaching locks.

The heads and shower were spacious. The toilet was a revelation, just push a button and with a whoosh everything disappeared (it was based on the type you experience on ferries). Marvellous we thought but where did it go. Well being France straight through a macerator into the river. So even though the temperature reached the high 30s there was no swimming for us.

Lock mechanisms on the Charente are very different from British canals, no windlass but large wheels to rotate MANY times by pushing as you would a hula hoop. This moved along a chain which opened the gate. This chain stuck out from the lock, across roads, into private gardens definitely an H&S hazard. It had a small red danger



how to work a lock on the Charente

flag at the end, but I was not sure how an insurance claim would be decided if you extended this into a vehicle.

We started at Jarnac, a reasonably sized town with a supermarket – an essential on this holiday. If we had had any thoughts of eating out every night, they were soon dashed. We visited sleepy villages, where even the boulangerie had not opened as their holiday season had not started in June. But, the weather was hot, the evenings long and meals cooked on the fly deck griddle/BBQ were a relaxing affair accompanied by local wine or beer. We could not complain.

We headed downstream towards the estuary, fewer locks but more affected by the tide. Hire boats were not allowed passed St Savinien, but that was no problem. That part of the river towards Rochefort was flat, meandering and wide with silted up salt marshes. We spent a couple of nights at this pleasant small tourist town, which enabled us to take the train and spend a day at La Rochelle.

During our journey downstream, we spent a pleasant morning visiting one of the Cognac distilleries. This town has a rather dour and black look to all the

properties, this we found was the result of the alcoholic vapour always present, which produced a dark moss of microscopic mushroom growth.

This is known locally as The Angel's Share.

On our return upstream, we stopped midstream to

take photos of the chateau Saint-Brice with its riverside park and renaissance façade. Unfortunately, even with our name we did not get an invite. The château has one open day a year in September.

The river is crystal clear, with many large fish darting to and fro. At various moorings during the evening, we watched animals swimming along the bank, we found that they were coypu, a South American rodent. They're a pest in France as they cause damage to the river banks. Each evening we were entertained by the frogs on the lily pads, they were very loud and seemed to be calling from one side of the river to their mates on the opposite bank. But however hard we looked they seemed to be invisible.

The river became shallower as we ventured upstream, the weed became denser and the bow thruster became blocked. A call out to the boatyard produced an engineer within an hour who solved the problem and explained that the river was exceptionally shallow due to low rainfall during the winter. We did pass two ingenious machines constructed by the Waterways Services, one to clear the channel of weeds and the other to brush out the lock chambers which accumulate sand during the winter. As in the UK, we did not see these working.

Saint-Simon was an important boat building town in the seventeenth century, where the building and repair yards took up the whole of the left bank of the river. This activity continued till 1906 when, with the decline in river transport the construction of barges disappeared. A

guided route through the town highlights the sites associated with this trade.

Chateaufort-sur-Charente had a pretty mooring with an interesting town to walk around, plus the all-important supermarket within walking distance. Was it the bottled water that was so heavy, no, more likely the wine and beer supplies.

Throughout the fortnight, we moored for free on convenient pontoons, with water being available on enough occasions. Alongside the canal were fields of sweet corn, the trouble was we were too early in the season for the harvest. The river was often quite wide although we were now well upstream, and at some points we encountered water skiing.

Our furthest point of navigation possible was Angouleme the capital of this region, this town was of a considerable size standing 70 metres high above the river. This town was famous for paper making with many mills situated along the tributaries of the Charente. Luckily for us a bus ran from the town quay up into the centre of the town, where we were able to walk the ramparts with magnificent views over the surrounding countryside.

The weather had been extremely hot, so by starting early and having a siesta beneath a convenient tree at lunch time, we made good progress. The Charente proved to be a good choice, the scenery is not spectacular, but when seen from a gently gliding boat had an irresistible charm and is well worth a visit.



TRING RESERVOIR FESTIVAL 26-27 AUGUST

This festival was run by Tring Anglers in conjunction with CRT and supported by WAT, Herts Wildlife Trust and the IWA. It was not well advertised; even though the public came to the reservoir for their normal family walks they were not expecting to find fund-raising stalls.

The weather was glorious and the nail game really caught the children's attention. CRT had also organised for the Tringford Pumping Station to be open, with the free mini-bus to take visitors from Startops Car Park. WAT had provided two volunteers to help Keith Evans on the Saturday, but sadly there were few visitors.

The angling lessons were a great success and CRT had also provided free taster sessions in canoes, these were in demand

by adults as well. I had a great time drifting down to the lock, with my sister-in-law at the front and me at the rear. We did have a problem on occasions as our paddles were working in opposite directions, but never the less great fun.

Herts Wild Life Trust's volunteers also led two walks each day, around the reservoirs pointing out many interesting birds. Their gazebo also had activities for children on a wildlife theme.

This Startops area, is a victim of its own success, the car park fills quickly each morning, then the lay-bys, then parking all along the road. Most of the public expect to stay a few hours, firstly on a walk, and then maybe a coffee or ice-cream at Bluebells.

Jenny Brice

WINNINGS

Julian Webster, who won the second-prize in our Grand Draw (a day out on one of Paul Kerr's narrow-boats) sent us this picture to share with you. Julian is the one in the beany hat.

Thanks for this Julian, it's good to have feedback from members about their experiences. Hope you'll buy tickets again next year, you never know what you might win! - Ed



OUR THANKS

Many of you will have bought the luscious preserves from our stall at the Open Days may not know that many are prepared by Roger and Margaret Leishman's friend Sue Cook. She makes preserves on a large scale and then donates them to charities to raise funds.

Membership Update

New Members

The Trust extends a warm welcome to the following new members who have joined since the autumn Newsletter.

David Sidwell

from Tring

Stephen Bonser & Family

from Linslade

Huw & Sylvia Davies

from Leicester

Nicholas & Susana Hansell

from High Wycombe

Robert & Jo Bate

from High Wycombe

Mrs Graham & Carol Haines

from Wing

Thomas Cotton

from Prestwood

Christine Lucas

from Aston Clinton

Dave & Jennie Dove

from Amersham

Derald Barham

from Watford

Kim & Peter Clark

from Aylesbury

Thomas Paine & family

from Great Missenden

Howard Green

from St Albans

Merrenna French

from Wendover

Seven of the above memberships came from the Restoration Open Day in September. We welcome them all and wish them many happy

years of membership of the Trust.

Welcome Back!

Roy and Jacqui Barnaby

from Chelmsford, two of the original members of the Trust from 1989 have re-joined.

Farewells

Maggie Wareham

widow of Phil Wareham has resigned her membership. Sad to see her go as she and Phil were original members from 1989.

Obituaries

Sadly we report on the death of another of the original intake,

Clive Jenkins.

he joined with his wife, Pat, in 1989

We also record the passing of the following members:

Brian Patrick

from Luton, a member since 2004, his widow, Liz, is continuing her membership.

Joseph Johnson

from Tring

Robert Matthews

from Wigan

Life Membership

Did you know that the Trust offers Life membership in addition to annual renewals?

Life membership was introduced in

2012 after requests from a number of members. For a one off payment of £150 for single members and £250 for joint memberships.

Advantages of life membership to the Trust are that it receives the money now with gift aid (if applicable) and we can demonstrate to public bodies the depth of support we receive for the Wendover Arm canal and its restoration.

For members, it means you never have to worry about renewing your subscriptions ever again and your support is everlasting.

Converting to life membership is as easy as 1,2,3 . . .

1. Make the decision to do it
2. Contact Katherine
3. Arrange payment by cheque, BACS or credit / debit card

Oh! . . . and there is a number 4, and that's not to forget to cancel any standing orders you have in place, otherwise you could end up paying twice!

Life members receive a commemorative certificate as a token thank you. All members receive the newsletter by post or email (on request). If you move house or change your email address, please inform Katherine so your record can be kept up to date.

And now for the small print:

Life membership continues indefinitely until the member passes away. Life memberships are not transferable and no refunds will be given.

Golden Giving

As you may know we have been using

our local Charity-giving organisation for on-line giving as it has had lower charges than other charity-giving platforms such as *Just Giving* and *Virgin Giving*, in other words the Trust gets more of your donation than with the others.

The even better news is that *Golden Giving* reduced its fees in November for processing donations, memberships, tickets and raffles, which means the Trust gets a bigger proportion of any monies you process through them. Just 2.1% is now taken by *Golden Giving*. If it's something on which Gift Aid can be recovered then unlike some other donation platforms *Golden Giving* makes no *Gift Aid* charge. With other platforms up to 7% is deducted from what a charity receives so you can see the benefit of *Golden Giving*.

You may think that even 2.1% is too much, but commercial organisations do have to make a profit. You can still pay directly by other methods to give the Trust 100% of your donation but some are laborious for the Membership Secretary to process.

Membership Secretary's Snail-mail

Katherine has moved, but only into temporary accommodation. Posting stuff to her, you can still use her 34 Anchor Lane address that you'll find on a lot of our leaflets/flyers as Royal Mail is forwarding correspondence to her. As always there's a BUT to it, which is that correspondence must bear her name. Should you send to her just addressed to 'the Membership Secretary' or 'Wendover Arm Trust' delivery will depend on the goodwill of the new owners of No. 34 and could be delayed.

Fund-Raising Update

We are delighted to have received a donation of £1000 from one of our original 1989 members. The donor wishes to remain anonymous but the Trust sends its most grateful thanks.

Restoration Open Day in September, as you will see from the report elsewhere, resulted in £720 net of expenses

We raised £311 at the AGM from the raffle and sales of goods.

A modest amount of £27 resulted from our attendance at BBOWT's 'My Wild Event day at College Lake and £37 came from sales at Tringford Open Day in September.

Meanwhile the funds accruing from Easyfundraising continue to mount and

at the time of going to press we have 63 supporters and have raised £1585. We make no apologies for reproducing again the instructions for Easyfundraising – it really is an easy and painless way to support the Trust as you shop on-line.

Psst...!
Raise **free donations** when you shop online!

- 1 **Visit:** www.easyfundraising.org.uk
- 2 **Support:** Wendover Arm Trust
- 3 **Shop & raise** with over 2,700 retailers including:

easyfundraising
.org.uk

Calling all boating buffs with spare time this winter to catch up on some reading from the past. We have the following magazines available free

Waterways World: Jan1990 – Dec 1993 inclusive

Narrowboat: Spring 2006 – Winter 2010 inclusive

Can be delivered in the local area.

Contact: Jenny Brice ☎01494 873298 ✉jenny@johnbrice.co.uk

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Grub-up! - the Editor's cookery column

Salmon Wellington

This is a lovely party dish that's a favourite with our family on Christmas Eve before we stagger off to midnight mass, returning in the wee small hours for mince pies and a glass or two of straight malt.

The recipe will serve 8

Ingredients:

2 x fillets of salmon total mass around 1kg (2.2lbs)
100g (4oz) mushrooms
50g (2oz) onion
25g (1oz) butter
175g (6oz) Brussels paté (or similar smooth paté)
60ml (4tbsp) double cream
1 x packet of puff pastry (need around 400g - 14oz)
1 egg
salt and pepper
Dill or fennel fronds.

Method:

Wipe the mushrooms and chop them finely. Skin and chop the onions finely.

Fry the onions and mushrooms in the butter until soft.

Mash the paté in a bowl. Stir in the cream, onions and mushrooms and season to taste.

Roll out the pastry to a rectangle about 35 x 40cm (12 x 14") Let it rest a few minutes as puff pastry relaxes, then touch-up the rolling to get the right size.

Remove the skin from the fish and place one fish fillet in the centre of the pastry with a couple of dill/fennel fronds on top.

Spread the paté, cream etc mixture on the fillet with more dill/fennel fronds on top with the other fillet on top to make a fish and paté sandwich.

Trim the pastry leaving a good 10cm (4") all round. Reserve the trimmings.

Beat the egg and brush round the edge of the pastry.

Fold the pastry over the fish and neatly wrap it up like a parcel.

Place the parcelled fish on a baking sheet with the sealed edges down.

Brush with beaten egg.

Roll the pastry trimmings into decorative fish shapes (or use your artistic imagination!), place on top of the parcel and brush with egg.

Bake at 220°C (425°F) – fan oven at 200°C –for about 25 minutes until the pastry is golden-brown and the fish cooked through.

Serve with parsleyed new potatoes, broccoli spears, carrots and peas.

To drink: Chablis or Pouilly Fuissé (oh, come on, it is Christmas!)

Notes: 1. If the fillets are triangular you may need to trim the fillets, using the trimmings on the other end to get a parcel that is roughly rectangular.
2. This recipe works equally well with cod or haddock, but omit the dill/fennel

HELP WANTED

EVENTS 2018

WAT hopes to attend the following events next year – this keeps the public up to date with our progress, raises funds for the restoration, obtains memberships and recruits volunteers.

Fetes, Festivals and Open Days

- 7 May: Aldbury Fete
- 19/20 May:
Rickmansworth Canal Festival
- 27 May: Wendover Celebrates
- 23 June: Tring Carnival
- 28 July: Linslade Canal Festival
- 23 September:
College Lake (BBOWT Event)
- TBA: Tringford Pumping Station

Restoration Open Days

- 3 June and 2 September

Educational Events

- School visit:
TBA during the Spring term

CRT events:

- 9 September: 2Arms on 2Legs

We cannot do this without new volunteer help during 2018. We have a great band already that joins us in different capacities e.g. helping at the gazebo, selling draw tickets, obtaining memberships – being tour guides and selling our small range of bespoke stock – but we need more.

Will you join us in 2018?

any help would be appreciated

Local IWA Branch Meetings

CHILTERN BRANCH

All meetings take place on Wednesdays at Little Chalfont Village Hall, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont HP8 4UD, starting at 8pm

24 January: Jane and Ian Ainsworth will tell us about the Trent-Severn Canal. . . now there's an intriguing thought, but it's the Canadian version!

28 February: Clive and Sue Fennell will talk to us about Ironbridge

28 March: the Branch AGM with ploughman's supper

MILTON KEYNES BRANCH

All meetings take place on Thursdays at Bletchley Royal British Legion, Melrose Avenue, Bletchley, MK3 6PU

18 January: Roger Butler will talk to us about the Wonder of the Waterways

15 February: the Branch AGM followed by a talk on the Fenland waterways by John Pomfret

15 March: Tim Armstrong will tell us about the Caledonian Canal

CHILTERN BRANCH AUTUMN WEEKEND AWAY 2018

Sadly the 2017 weekend had to be cancelled, for the first time in twenty-five years owing to lack of support.

This year, Colin is planning to take us back to the Wey and Arun and to have a day on the Bluebell line. It will be in late September and is expected to cost around £250 per person. More details in future issues. ALL welcome.

A Cardi for Christmas?

The problem with getting a Christmas-themed jumper as a gift is not the lurid colours, dodgy fit, or questionable quality, but rather the 'wear by' date is a bit short.

Come the Spring, no-one is going to set a fashion trend by sporting a Father Christmas/Reindeer/Bauble/Tinsel embellished cardi just as the clocks are ready to change again. Indeed, the usable span of your typical Christmas pullover is around that of a defrosted turkey on Christmas Eve. Far better to be seen over a longer period (in fact all year round) in an elegant, comfortable, high quality garment. One rather like a polo or sweat shirt from WAT, say. The merits are many.

The purchase of a WAT-branded shirt helps the Trust, and wearing it reminds the admiring onlooker that WAT exists and is worth supporting. On top of that, the quality and fit are superior, and the colour is attractive (especially if you like Burgundy). So, is it worth buying a WAT Polo Shirt at £12 or Sweat Shirt at £15, or even a T Shirt at £7.50, all excellent value (go and compare!)? No contest really. And now is the best time to buy, taking advantage of current prices. We have held costs steady for some time now but in the new year we will have to review and revise our pricing. So essentially, buy now, ready for Christmas and help the Trust.

What could be simpler? Look at the website for sales, or give me (Bob) a call on 01525 381614.

Merry Christmas

Or why not a bridge plaque?

The bridge plaques have now funded a good part of the cost of the bridges 4 and 4a but the Trust still welcomes more.

As you can see from the frontispiece of this issue we have now reached number plaque number 200, which Council resolved it would fund as a permanent token of thanks to the volunteers, present and past, who have done so much to restore the Arm for the benefit of future generations. No. 200 was recently affixed to one of the stanchions on Bridge 4.

You can have your own plaque there (or on bridge 4a) too. Donate for one to show support for the restoration, or to make a perfect birthday present for someone who has everything, or to commemorate a special anniversary or, for a commercial organisation, display your Company's sponsorship of our work.

All plaques are made from cast zinc with raised silver letters on a black background and:

£50 gets you a 225 x 20mm plate with up to 40 letters recessed into one of the steps on a bridge.

£150 gets you a 130 x 190mm plate fixed to one of the stanchions on a bridge and you can have up to 80 letters and a logo.

John Reynolds runs the scheme for us and if you get in touch with him by email at scubajr4@gmail.com or telephone the Trust on its general number 07547 181857 he'll get the process started.



WENDOVER ARM TRUST

President

Dr David Fletcher CBE

Vice President

Barry Martin

Patron

David Suchet CBE

Wendover Arm Trust, A Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered Charity No.801190. Its **AIMS** are:

To promote the restoration and maintenance of the Wendover Arm of the Grand Union Canal, (including all waterways, buildings, and related structures), to good and navigable order and to promote the fullest use of the waterway by water-borne traffic (subject to the regulations of The Canal and River Trust) and for local amenity, recreational and water related activities for the benefit of the public.

To restore, preserve, maintain and to educate the public in the history, use and associated wildlife, of canals and inland waterways generally and the Wendover Arm in particular.

General telephone number: 07547 181857 **Website:** www.wendoverarmtrust.co.uk

Registered Office: Island House, Moor Road, Chesham, Bucks HP5 1WA

Advertising Enquiries:

Contact either the Publications Director or the Publicity Director, (Email addresses on p3)

Or speak to the Newsletter Editor on 01494 863176

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SITUATIONS VACANT

WEBMASTER

The Trust is looking to find a volunteer to take over the day-to-day running of the Trust's website.

No knowledge of web coding is necessary and if you are familiar with word processing programs and picture management then you have the necessary qualifications.

The job involves taking content given to you by others and adding it to the website and is a job that can be done entirely from home.

For further details please contact Chris Sargeant
tel: 01494 775845



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