



# WENDOVER ARM NEWS

*Newsletter of the Wendover Arm Trust*



*Issue 2019/1  
Spring 2019*

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## Your contacts on the Trust

<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Chris Sargeant</b> chairman@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk
<b>Vice-Chairman</b>	<b>Marion Birch</b> marionbirch@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk
<b>Hon. Secretary</b>	<b>John Rowe</b> honsec@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Clive Wilson</b> treasurer@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk
<b>Restoration Director</b>	<b>Roger Leishman</b> restoration@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk
<b>Assistant Restoration Director</b>	<b>Tony Bardwell</b> restoration2@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk
<b>Events Director</b>	<b>vacant</b> events@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk
<b>Funding Director</b>	<b>vacant</b> funding@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	<b>Katherine Deaney</b> membership@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk
<b>Publications Director</b>	<b>vacant</b>
<b>Publicity Director</b>	<b>Nigel Williams</b> publicity@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk
<b>Sales Director</b>	<b>Bob Wheal</b> sales@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk
<b>Webmaster</b>	<b>Clive Johnson</b> webmaster@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk
<b>General Members</b>	<b>vacant</b>
<b>Minutes Secretary and IWA Nominee</b>	<b>Jenny Brice</b> jenny@johnbrice.co.uk
<b>CRT Representative</b>	<b>vacant</b>

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Cover Picture: 'See Amidst the Winter Snow, Restoration Works Shall Still On-go'  
Picture by Tony Bardwell

**Copy deadline for the next issue  
19 May**

## From the Editor

Well, yes, it's me again, thought you'd got rid of me hadn't you? But, as there's been a stunning response to the advert for a new Editor (NIL) Council has prevailed on me to do one more issue to keep you informed of what's going on to give it more time to find a volunteer.

There are 'irons in the fire' but if no one can be persuaded to come forward then the thought is that the Trust will revert to the procedure followed during the previous *interregnum*; that is to prepare a short bulletin to let members know what's going on in the Trust, events and restoration progress and to continue this until a new Editor takes up his or her duties. We would put this onto the members-only section of the Trust's website and send hard copies only to those who have not given us an e-mail address. We do need to appoint a new Editor if for no other reason than we need to keep faith with our advertisers who give us the financial support to produce a professionally printed Newsletter.

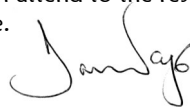
Following the success of the 2017 and 2018 'Grand Days Out' we've booked one of Paul's boats again for 30th April and you'll find details on p23. The trip is for Trust members but as long as one of your party is a member then we'll welcome friends and family as it help us to demonstrate the joys of canal boating (yes, even in the pouring rain!) and shows people what we are doing to restore and protect our environment.

Although we've planned another Restoration Open Day in July, now

that spring is here I'd urge you to take a walk along the towpath and have a look at the progress of the restoration. Go along during one of the Work Party weeks (see p10 for dates) and see the team at work, chat with them too and perhaps be enthused enough to volunteer your services. But, if you can't manage a date before the Restoration Open Day then note that we are laying on a mini-bus from Little Tring to Drayton Beuachamp so you don't have to walk the distance twice. Further in the future we are looking to get another Pumping Station Open Day in mid-September but this is dependent on completion the works there.

From the days when we were at Drayton Beauchamp when Little Tring seemed a distant goal, with the restoration now approaching Bridge 4 the sound of lapping water all the way along the cut is starting to seem possible within a reasonable time span – as long as we can solve the problem of 'The Tip'. Read the Restoration news and see the pictures on pp8-12 to gauge the progress; we've got another aerial shot that shows in pictures (easier than words!) what we are achieving.

Finally, as Chris says in his Chairman's column, we're also going to need a Membership Secretary. Katherine has done an excellent job since taking over from Barry Martin in 2008 and now needs relief so she can attend to the rest of her (very busy) life.



## Chairman's column

Spring is always an inspiring season – new thoughts, new ideas and new challenges plus rebirth of all that grows after the winter.

Our volunteers have made excellent progress through the winter and are now past Whitehouses and heading speedily towards bridge 4 – thank you all and well done!

The Wendover Arm is looking very smart after the autumn reed cutting when over 40 tons of vegetation were removed from the canal to allow water from the source to flow freely once more. Without this necessary removal, the vegetation gradually blocks the waterway causing potential flooding and starves the supply of water to the summit level, its *raison d'être*. Our thanks to CRT and their contractor for a job well done.

In earlier issues you will recall we outlined some thoughts towards how to deal with the tip infill at Little Tring or possibly to by-pass it. I would like to emphasise our preference is firmly to stick to restoring the original line of the canal *i.e.* through the tip with the by-pass option only as a last resort if that is not possible. In order to resolve the issue we have commissioned a detailed study into the tip's contents to find out exactly what is in there and therefore how it can be dealt with. Sampling is starting in March with results of lab analysis a few weeks later. We are grateful to a long term supporter of the trust who is kindly funding this exercise.

Whilst in investigative mood we are also having a camera survey carried out on



part of the old underbed pipe from bridge 4 towards Tringford pumping station to determine its condition and whether it should be capped, filled to prevent collapse, left as a possible land drain or just abandoned. Decisions will be made in conjunction with CRT once results are to hand.

As you will see elsewhere in this newsletter we have a full season of events coming up and look forward to seeing you on these occasions.

We need help in filling two key positions *i.e.* Membership Secretary and Newsletter Editor – both roles can be done at home and just require basic computer knowledge and a few hours per week – please do get in touch if you think you can help or for more information – contact details below.

Thank you

*Chris Sargeant*

***Able to do either of the roles above? Then contact me by email on:***

chairman@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk

***Or phone 07547 181857, leave a message and I'll get back to you***

## WENDOVER – WALKING FOR WELL-BEING

Most people are aware that a brisk walk can help build stamina, burn excess calories and make your heart healthier. But did you know that the potential benefits stretch well beyond that? The Mental Health charity, Mind, states that:

*One in four people in Britain experience mental health problems each year, but spending time outdoors can reduce the risk of depression by 30%.*

It makes sense when you think about it. All those expressions about 'blowing the cobwebs away' start to ring true. So why not take the opportunity of this early spring weather to give your well-being a boost and get down to the canal to see the latest progress with the restoration.

We've included a link below (1) to a walk around the reservoirs from the Royal Geographical Society's *Discovering Britain* series where you will find a map and a very comprehensive guide that includes lots of information about the canals, including the restoration work on the Arm. The walk around all four reservoirs is almost six-miles long which may be too much for some, but you can shorten it quite considerably by parking in the

reservoir car park at Wilstone Green, walking round Wilstone reservoir, up to the canal and back again.

Feel like some refreshment after your exertions? Then we'd encourage you to stop off at:

**The Half Moon** pub (link 2 below.) This is in the centre of Wilstone village on Tring Road and is open daily from midday.

**PE Mead & Sons Farm Shop** (Mon-Sat 0830-1700, Sun 0930-1630) and the **Puddingstone Distillery** (Fri-Sat 0930-1700) are in Wilstone Green, just a short distance from the reservoir car park (links 3 and 4 below).

These are all supporters of Wendover Arm Trust's work, so we're keen to help them too.

If you are starting the walk from Startops End, then don't forget **Bluebells Tea Rooms** and **The Anglers Retreat** pub both adjacent the car park.

Enjoy your visit!

. . .and finally, the Trust is preparing its own booklet of walks featuring the Arm that should be available around the end of the year.

(1) <https://www.discoveringbritain.org/activities/east-of-england/walks/tring-reservoirs.html>.

(2) <https://whatpub.com/pubs/MCH/949/half-moon-wilstone>.

(3) <http://pemeadandsons.co.uk>

(4) <https://puddingstonedistillery.com>

### IN BRIEF:

The Trust's Publicity Director, Nigel Williams, is going on the Inland Waterways International (IWI) River Lot tour in June this year and has promised an article about the trip in a future Newsletter. This year's tour is fully booked but if you think you might like to go on the 2020 tour then express interest to:

David Edwards-May, IWI's President at [dem@transmanche.net](mailto:dem@transmanche.net)



## Membership Update

Little to report in this issue except to record that we say goodbye to four more members:

### Denise Laxton

who's been a member for eighteen years and was one of the stalwarts of the Festivals in years past.

### Judith Aldridge,

### Steven Davis and Ruth Davis

who've all been members since 2012.

We are sorry to see them all go.

## Electronic Newsletter

Some of our members have already chosen to save the Trust money, by opting to receive this newsletter in electronic form.

Please don't worry if you don't have access to the internet, or prefer the printed word; if so, we remain happy to communicate with you by post.

But if you would like to go electronic then send an email to:

[membership@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk](mailto:membership@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk)

The newsletter is 'posted' on a members-only page of the website, and you'll be



told when a new copy is available and where to find it.

## CLUB 100

### Winter Draw

There were 197 numbers in the Winter Draw, an increase of 12 over the previous draw and the prize winners were:

1st	Beryl Martin	£236.40
2nd	Graham Watts	£98.50
3rd	Ann Davison	£39.40

To remind you, **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.

All you have to do is to contact the Membership Secretary and she will send you the subscription form, or, if you haven't junked it or lost it, complete and return the form sent with the Winter 2018 Newsletter.

Do this and, hey presto, you'll be in the next four draws, and, as the pointy finger says, you have to be in it to win it.

A few more responses from you and we can once again get the number of participants above the 200 mark.

# RESTORATION NEWS

Adapted from restoration reports, newsletters and other sources

The scene on the front cover of this newsletter may seem a bit chilly for a spring Newsletter but it's to remind everyone that we do work through the winter and this has been a Goldilocks one not too cold, not too snowy and not too wet although there was the one spell of snow that affected the February Work Party; also Tony reports on the usual crop of fallings-over in the mud at the work face but mud can be an occupational hazard even during the summer season!

The relatively clement weather has thus enabled the restoration team to make good progress, much better than in some recent winters. We are now 60 metres beyond the Whitehouses culvert wall with both sides lined and with 50 metres of bed lining laid and backfilled. There is 60 metres to go to get to the Wendover end of the Bridge 4 mooring wall and then 70 metres of single-sided bank lining to get to Bridge 4.

The next bund in the Bridge 4 throat may well be stop planks not a soil bund. This is a change from what had been planned: if you cast your mind back to previous restoration news items the plan had been to install a soil bund just to the Wendover side of the mooring wall so that we could continue to exit the workings to put spoil on the Herts County Council tip site. The change of plan is because we are now bed-lining and back-filling as we go along rather than talking spoil away and 'parking' it for future use. This makes more effective

use of our time but does mean that when we come to complete the front apron at Whitehouses we'll need to lay 'bog boards' over the bed to prevent its being totally churned up by the construction traffic.

We are grateful to Brian Goldsmith for the aerial view taken just a few days ago and an annotated version appears on p11.

## December 2018

A bit wet at times but between the downpours we were able to complete the lining at Whitehouses so Stage 3 is now complete except for the concrete apron in front of the culvert wall. A start was made on Stage 4 lining with three bank mats and blocking to the Little Tring side of Whitehouses.

A major task this month, masterminded by Bob Barry, was improvement of the car park and work area at Little Tring. Owing to the conflict between car and plant movements this was turning into a quagmire every time it rained, vehicles were getting stuck (as well as covered with mud!) and it was becoming a safety issue.

The plan was to segregate car parking from plant movements and to provide a hard surface. To that end the parking area was widened by a metre and provided with its own gate. Mud was scraped off to the original rubble level then back-filled with hard core and rolled flat. The diesel store was moved and improved so that delivery vehicles and plant needing



refuelling didn't have to go through the car park area.

As you can see from the photo gallery on page 12 it's a great improvement over the mud and Bob has further improvements planned.

## January 2019

We'd like to revert to wheeled dumpers whenever the ground conditions permit as they are less costly to hire so, with the help of John Reynolds and from Terry Cavander of the Buckingham Canal Society we held a training and certification session on wheeled dumpers. Not that this detracted significantly from the restoration work and a further 10 metres on the towpath side and 15 metres on the offside were fully lined and now both sides are 'in step'.

We exposed the abutment walls of the former swing bridge 4 as CRT Heritage is keen to preserve them as the bridge was part of an old road. It's clear that the abutments would not be stable or watertight so if they are to be preserved then they'll have to be rebuilt, we hope by an outside volunteer group.

## February 2019

As you will see from the front cover picture we had a snowy start to the restoration week.

Further on the old swing bridge: we excavated down the side of the brickwork to the chalk foundation level and a visitor from IWA who's helping us with possible restoration took away information to assemble a restoration proposal. Also Bucks Archaeology Group has revisited to try to determine where the pivot

block would have been,

More bulk excavation and we had to move the steps down to the bed once again (it's becoming a habit!); 15 metres more bank was lined and we now have 80 metres to go to the mooring wall. The concrete mixer was damaged during the month, Eddy Evans has since repaired this but it's a very care-worn object and we may need to think of a replacement – anyone got a second-hand petrol/diesel mixer that they like to donate? The only advantage of the current mixer is that it's so grotty that no one in their right mind would want to steal it.

Consideration is being given to what to do once we are beyond Bridge 4 and the first stage of this is the old pipeline. Do we have to cap it (time consuming and expensive), can we leave it as a land drain or can we fill it with aerated concrete? CRT is concerned that if it's left as a land drain then the new lining could float-off if the water table rose too far and, to that end, we've installed a couple of vertical pipes about 2 metres into the ground on the offside to monitor the water table, no water has been spotted yet. In April a CCTV examination and wash-out of the pipeline is proposed and from the results of both we will know exactly its route and condition and may be able to agree with CRT the way forward as far as the cart track at Little Tring.

## March 2019

You may recall this was storm Freya month and we had our share of its rain and hail. Despite this we made good progress completing 15 metres of banking on both sides and laying and

backfilling 45 metres of bed lining. We are now 60 metres to the Little Tring side of Whitehouses with about 60 metres of double-sided and 60 metres of single-sided lining to go to reach bridge 4.

### **The Tip at Little Tring:**

during the work party we took many samples of the infill material for analysis by a landfill specialist. This will provide us with professional advice as to what we can and cannot do with the tip material and will help Council formulate a plan for joining up the water, i.e. can we excavate the tip at a reasonable cost or is the by-pass necessary. The Trust is indebted to a benefactor who has agreed to fund the cost of this exercise.

**The next bund:** The plan has been revised and the next bund possibly will now be stop-planks in the throat of Bridge 4 rather than the previously used soil bunds. The reasons for moving it 60 metres further on are firstly that the spoil tip is full and secondly we are starting the landscaping of the offside area between Bridge 4 and Whitehouses which had been the route for the dump trucks of spoil – you can see the track (the muddy lane alongside the workings) in the aerial picture on p11.

Even with our being able to slot in stop planks there's still good deal of preparatory work to be done after the bank lining is complete before we can flood the area and, of course, the works at Whitehouses in front of the culvert wall have to be completed.

## **WORK PARTY SCHEDULES**

All work parties run from Friday through to the following Thursday:

**5 April to 11 April**

**3 May to 9 May**

**31 May to 6 June**

**5 July to 11 July**

The work will be to continue lining of stage 4 towards Bridge 4.

To volunteer contact Tony Bardwell:

[restoration2@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk](mailto:restoration2@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk)

## **TIDY FRIDAYS**

The dates for the next four months are

**12 April, 10 May, 7 June, 12 July**

To volunteer contact John Reynolds in advance on:

007787355515 or [scubajr4@gmail.com](mailto:scubajr4@gmail.com)

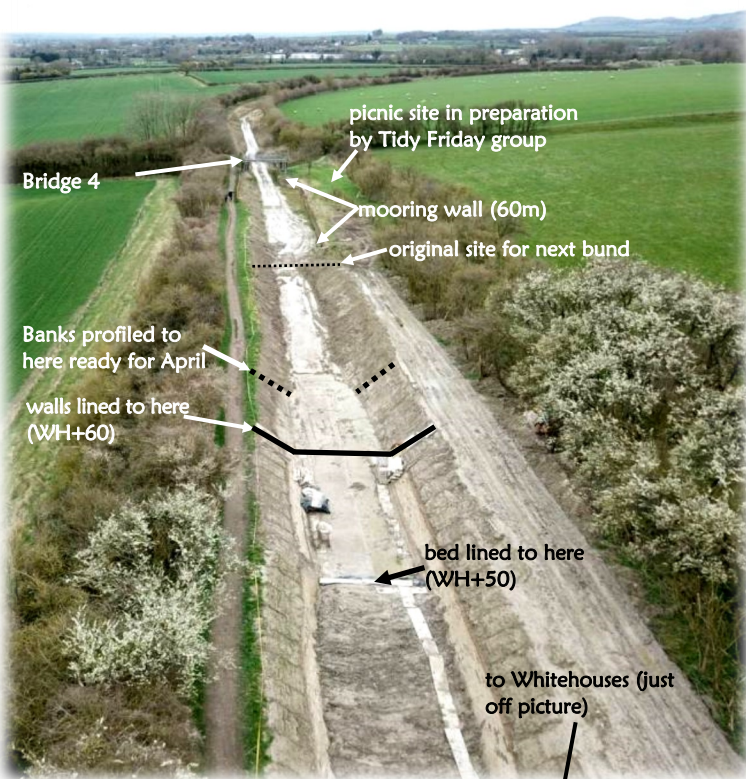
Meet at 9am at Little Tring, bring a picnic lunch, finish at 2pm. The work, although manual is not strenuous and would suit those who wish they could help with the restoration but feel they don't quite have the strength to do that work.

The region of the canal that we are currently restoring has the potential to become a picnic/wild life/nature trail and information centre. This is especially the case for the area that was the Whitehouses Pumping station.

We are asking for volunteers interested in forestry/gardening/landscaping work rather than the heavy-duty restoration work in the main canal. If we can get enough people, we can either 'upsize' the Tidy Friday group or start a Landscaping Group.

The stalwarts of the group have been working through the winter to remove

*(Continued on page 15)*



Bridge 4

picnic site in preparation  
by Tidy Friday group

mooring wall (60m)

original site for next bund

Banks profiled to  
here ready for April

walls lined to here  
(WH+60)

bed lined to here  
(WH+50)

to Whitehouses (just  
off picture)

Aerial view of restoration progress  
20 March 2019

Picture: Brian Goldsmith



Laying and filling bed blocks (9"  
hollow concrete) March 19

Picture: Stephen Bonser



Laying lining on the bed just beyond Whitehouses March 19

Picture: Tony Bardwell,



## LITTLE TRING CAR-PARK REMEDIATION WORK



(left) In the beginning there was the mud . . .



(above) And the mud was separated from the land with crushed concrete and . . .



(left) MOT type I was added and rolled to make the rough places plane and . . .

We saw that it was good and rested from our labours!

*(With many apologies to the books of Genesis and Isaiah)*

Right:  
From the Tidy Friday Group, snowdrops at  
Whitehouses, the first sign of on-coming spring  
Photo: Jenny Brice

Below:  
A study in concentration, our Webmaster,  
suitably wrapped up against the cold on the  
excavator, Jan 19

Photo: Stephen Bonser



Below:  
One of the water-level inspection pipes  
installed in February (see p9)

Photo: Ed



# WAT SHOPFRONT – SUPPORT, CELEBRATE, REMEMBER

from the Sales Director

As a walker along the Arm you will have noticed the two footbridges adorned with name plaques.

At first plaques were bought mainly by Trust members wanting to support the restoration work. Generally plaques showed just a single name. As the numbers grew other subjects appeared, including, sadly, memorials to deceased relatives and even pets. One or two marked happier events such as a golden wedding or a child's birth.

To widen their appeal to more non-WAT members plaque types have now been extended. There are now a total of six versions, in two sizes and three colours:

**BLACK** for general support,



WENDOVER ARM TRUST

**GREEN** to show celebration,



CELEBRATED!

**PURPLE** for a commemoration.



IN LOVING MEMORY

Sizes remain as before, for mounting on the bridge walkways (as above) or supports:



Why would I want to buy a celebration plaque? Well, imagine for example the excitement of planning a wedding. The preparation, expectation, the build-up. Then comes the big day. A blur of tradition, family, occasion, festivity, all over seemingly in a flash. Afterwards, photographs help to remind us of the day, but over time memories become overlaid with normal life and day to day events.

A permanent plaque in a prominent place remains a vivid reminder of the important event, and is on view to everyone who passes. What better way to record and mark one of the most significant dates in your life?

The same could be said for the birth of a child, that child's 18th or 21st, or similarly the arrival of a grandchild. In fact, birthdays, exam success, beating illness, starting a new business – there are many events worthy of celebration and sharing.

If buying a plaque to share your event is of interest, go take a look at the ones already in place near Whitehouses on the Arm.

More details including prices and ways to get your plaque erected can be found on the Trust's website:

[wendoverarmtrust.co.uk/bridge-plaques.html](http://wendoverarmtrust.co.uk/bridge-plaques.html)

or simply give me a call on 07860286155.

You'll be glad you did!

*Bob Wheal, WAT Plaques*

## WANT TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT THIS YEAR?



*Picture courtesy IWAWRG*

DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN/GRANDCHILDREN WHO LIKE DIGGING, MUD-PLUGGING, BUILDING THINGS OR SIMPLY GETTING TOTALLY FILTHY?

WANT TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT THIS YEAR WITH THEM AS AN ADVENTURE?

Then why not join one of the Waterways Recovery Group's (WRG) residential family camps. There's one coming to 'near you' in 2019 and this will be on the **WENDOVER ARM BETWEEN 25 AND 27 OCTOBER.**

The aim of the camps is to get parents, grandparents and children between the ages of 6 and 14 involved in canal restoration. The Wendover Arm Camp will cost £15 per person (for the whole weekend), and includes accommodation and meals. During the evening games and activities will be planned suitable for the whole family!

To book spaces and to find out more

tel: 01494 783543 x 610

e-mail: [enquiries@wrg.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@wrg.org.uk)

If interested but can't join the Wendover Arm camp, look on the WRG website to find out about others: [www.waterways.org.uk/wrg/canal\\_camps/family\\_volunteering/wendover\\_arm\\_canal\\_family\\_camp\\_fcw201903](http://www.waterways.org.uk/wrg/canal_camps/family_volunteering/wendover_arm_canal_family_camp_fcw201903)

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*(Restoration update, continued from page 10)*  
dead elder and shrubs; the area has been opened up so that we can get in diggers and dumpers to remove the tree roots and redistribute the earth to flatten the area. Some areas will need a layer of good top soil. Following that there will be a lot of grass seeding or turfing to be done. Once the restoration work has reached the mooring wall access for heavy equipment won't be possible and it'll be back to 'handraulic' work. There are plans in place to plant and nurture many new trees to replace the elder and

scrub over the whole area.

The work will move on to seeding and planting wild flowers and eventually local seating, information boards and low-level structures outlining the original positions of the Whitehouses buildings.

Plant and equipment used for the main restoration could be kept on site for two or three days after or before the main work party and landscaping volunteers can contribute as many or few hours as they wish. Interested? Then contact John Reynolds, see p10 for details.

### ENTHUSIASTIC BOATERS . . . OR CANOISTS OR PADDLE BOARDERS

#### Why not go for the IWA's Silver Propeller Challenge?

Simply visit and provide photographic evidence of your visit to at least twenty of the destinations on IWA's website - see [waterways.org.uk/silverpropeller](http://waterways.org.uk/silverpropeller) for the full list

You can easily tick off one by going to the navigation limit of the **Wendover Arm**

### A note to the Chairman from a well-wisher:

Good evening, Chris. I hope 2019 brings you better news about 'your' rubbish tip. I do so admire your Committee's gritted determination not to be put off so I've set up a £15/month standing order donation.

Best wishes  
(name and address supplied)

*Now that's a good idea for enhancing the Trust's funds, or you could subscribe the same in CLUB100 numbers and perhaps win something.  
Ed*

## WAT AGM

Maybe you think it's a bit early to be talking about the AGM in October but as we are now at the end of our financial year Council has set the date and venue for the 2019 AGM. Last year's tea-and-cakes event at Wilstone was seen as a success so we are going for the same format this year. So, afternoon meeting in Wilstone Village Hall with a speaker (tba), and tea and cakes put it in your diaries:

**AGM Wednesday 30 October at 2.30pm in Wilstone Village Hall**

. . . and you can always go to the Half Moon for lunch beforehand, Guy and Abi will welcome you, they do some great grub.

## GRAND DRAW 2018

A final round up on last year's draw. As you may remember the day-boat prize was returned and we held a silent auction for it and that took place on 19 January. Four bids were received and the winner was our member Robert Plampin with an exceedingly generous bid for which the Trust is most grateful.

Robert came on the second of our 'Grand Day's Out' thoroughly enjoyed himself and obviously wants to get out on the water yet again. We all hope he has glorious weather on the day he takes the boat out.

*Michael Wright*

### TALKS ABOUT THE WENDOVER ARM

**CLIVE JOHNSON** says: *Is your organisation looking for a speaker?*

I have recently taken over from Ray Orth in offering to speak to other organisations about the Wendover Arm. Typically the talk is just under an hour on the *History and Restoration of the Wendover Arm (of the Grand Union Canal)*, followed by a question-and-answer session. I recently spoke to South Bucks U3A and Cheddington History Society, and both groups seemed to enjoy it.

I don't ask for expenses, but would be hoping for a donation to the Wendover Arm Trust. If you are involved with another organisation which might enjoy/benefit from such a talk, email me at [webmaster@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk](mailto:webmaster@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk). Please check that Ray hasn't already talked to your organisation recently – he spoke to many organisations over the last few years, and although I have updated his presentation, it will inevitably be somewhat similar.

### NEWS FROM OUR NEIGHBOURS

#### **BUCKINGHAM CANAL SOCIETY**

Restoration work continues apace on Bridge 1 at Cosgrove and all the concrete decking has now been laid. Water is now being let in slowly to the second section from Cosgrove and a careful watch for leaks will be kept; this is the first time this section's had water in it for 75 years. The Society reports the leakage rate on section 1 has decreased, presumably as the puddle rehydrates.

#### **BEDFORD & MILTON KEYNES WATERWAY TRUST**

At the end of 2018 water was admitted to the new Campbell Park Marina so the first few metres of the waterway are now in existence – the Trust is a bit miffed as no one told it of the date so no 'first drop of water' pictures. Dredging at the Bedford end will now allow the trip boat John Bunyan to reach Kempston Mill and planning permission for the landing stage there has been approved.

Congratulations from WAT to both organisations on their progress.

# A WENDOVER TIMELINE — PART 3: 1835-1856

An edited version of Barry Martin's archive notes on matters relating to the Wendover Arm

**1835:** Wilstone No2 reservoir proposed with a capacity of 78.4 million gallons (1400 locks full)

**1835:** New well being constructed at Tringford

**1835:** Mr Holland (Co<sup>v</sup> Surveyor) new heading from Wilstone No2 reservoir to the well at Tringford that would make the Wilstone (Whitehouses) engine redundant. He was paid £100 for his valuable and ingenious proposal

**1837:** GJCC decides to make Tringford the central pumping facility. Holland's ½ mile heading from Wilstone completed. Water is now raised by 60-75ft from Wilstone, 35-50ft from Startops End and 20-35ft from Tringford.

**1837:** Wilstone No3 reservoir proposed.

**1841:** The 1810 Marsworth engine is sold to the Coventry Canal company where it does duty at Hawksbury until WWII.

**1841:** Two engines at Whitehouses to be sold.

**1844 :** Serious failures of the York engine in 1843 repaired by January and new headings to improve pump performance.

**1844:** Leakage repairs completed.

**1850:** John Bushell\* was employed by Meads to build and repair their fleet of barges used to bring grain to the Mill at Gammel Tring.

\*Bushell's continued to build/repair boats at Gammel Wharf until the 1950s.)

**1851:** The second National Census in 1851 shows the population of Little Tring to be 11, including six children

**1855:** tests on the arm showed water loss of 25 locks-full (1.4 million gallons) per day

1835

**1836:** Wilstone No2 reservoir completed at a cost of £4652.10.0d

**1838:** A second engine (the 'York' engine) and two Cornish boilers installed at Tringford

**1839:** Wilstone No3 reservoir completed, capacity 145.6 million gallons (2600 locks-full.)

**1839:** Tringford pumps fail and have to be repaired

**1840:** Sir William Cubitt reports on the Tringford pumps' failure in 1839 as being due to the violent closing action of the clack (non-return) valve. A new patent valve is successfully installed

**1842:** The Wilstone (Whitehouses) pump building converted to a dwelling and houses William Woodhouse, engine driver\* at Tringford.

\*Engine Driver in this context means the operator of the beam engine, not of a railway locomotive.

**1849:** Johnathan Woodhouse, 74 years old, retires (he dies later in the year) and his son William takes over as Tringford Superintendent.

**1850:** Sir Anthony de Rothschild (second son of Nathan) purchases the Aston Clinton Estate for £26,000. Lady Louise declares it to be 'too small'!

**1856:** John Lake recommended asphalt lining instead of re-puddling as cost-effective way of stopping the leakage and suggested the cost would be £4750 vs £12500 for re-puddling.

**1856:** 29 October, Sir William Cubitt reported favourably on Lake's proposal and recommended it be done.

**1856:** A trial ¾ mile length of asphalt was put in between Little Tring Bridge and Wilstone Swing Bridge at a cost of £671.

1856

*The timeline is marked at approximately 5-year intervals*

## From the Archives

*Some time ago one of our members asked if we could run articles about various features of the arm, one of which was the effluent outfall near Gammel Bridge. Here for his (and others' benefit) is a reprint of John Savage's excellent 2003 article on the subject of . . .*

### **TRING SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS – A FEATURE OF THE ARM**

A familiar feature on the Wendover Arm is the outfall from the Tring Sewage Treatment Works (see photograph). The outfall is situated a few hundred yards east of Gammel Bridge.

Have you ever wondered what happens to the sewage before it goes into the Arm? My curiosity had certainly been aroused so, on behalf of the Trust, I invited myself along to investigate. Thames Water Utilities, who operate the site, kindly arranged a personal tour and I duly turned up to meet Ken Seabrook who took me round.

### **THE WORKS**

The plant is a modern one, to the east of Tringford Road; it replaced a former works on the other side of the road in stages about ten years ago. The old works used to discharge the treated effluent by gravity into Tringford Reservoir.

### **THE SEWAGE ARRIVES**

The works receives the sewage, all gravity fed, from Tring. It is an old sewer system so also takes most of the surface water (storm) drainage. This creates surges after heavy rain (it takes about 20 minutes from a downpour for it to hit

the works). To avoid the system being overwhelmed, the excess goes into huge circular storm tanks, to be held for treatment later. Being in a period of dry weather when I visited the storm tanks were empty.

### **THE SMELLY BIT**

Upon arrival, the raw sewage first goes through a coarse filter to remove rags and debris. The material removed goes through a machine which squeezes out the liquid before depositing the proceeds, which go to landfill, into a skip. How people manage to get so much of this stuff down their lavatories without blocking them or the drains beats me! This part of the process, as you can probably imagine, is seriously malodorous although Ken, many years in the trade, claimed not to be able to smell a thing!

### **THE PROCESS CONTINUES . . .**

From here the sewage flows into a well, contained in a pumping house. Floats in the well activate pumps, which raise the sewage into the main processing section, the oxidation ditch. This is an impressive long tank, sixteen feet deep and divided down the centre. Two powerful turbines circulate the sewage at high speed round this sort of 'race track' for up to 24 hours. The amazing thing is that although (apart from the rags mentioned earlier) the sewage is still 'complete' at this stage, it already smells sweet with just an almost perfumed aroma!

Whilst mentioning detergents, the

phosphates they contain have led to there being an unacceptably high level of these in the treated effluent. To overcome this a new plant is currently being installed which will introduce chemicals into the oxidation tank to neutralise the phosphates.

Anyway, back to the process. From the oxidation tank the sewage is pumped to a distribution chamber, which feeds three final settling tanks. These are circular, with the effluent fed into the centre. The solids settle out and the remaining clear liquid weirs over an outer rim – the finished product! These tanks are fitted with alarms which detect foreign substances, for example an oil spillage which has entered the drainage system.

## INTO THE WENDOVER ARM

The treated effluent flows from the final settlement tank into another well where floats operate the pumps which raise it into the Wendover Arm. It is regularly sampled for quality although Ken said he wouldn't actually drink it!

## ... APART FROM THE SOLIDS

That leaves the solids to deal with, properly described as activated sludge. This is returned to the oxidation ditch for another session and then, by now known as surplus activated sludge, it is ready for digestion, Tring, being a small works, does not digest its own sludge which is piped (by gravity) to a pumping station at Wilstone, for onward transmission to Aylesbury Sewage Works. Here it is digested in what is basically an accelerated composting process. The finished product is

spread on fields as fertiliser.

## THE EFFECT ON THE CANAL

The works discharge an average of 220,000 gallons of treated effluent per day into the Arm, for which British Waterways receives payment. Whilst, in the summer, the water is a useful extra supply for the Tring Summit, in the winter it has to be effectively disposed of. When the summit is full and there is little or no boat movement the pumping station at Little Tring does not operate but of course the sewage outfall does. To prevent the summit becoming over full (the top locks have no by-pass weirs), a by-pass channel had to be built when the new sewage works began discharging into the Arm. This channel connects the arm, just before Bulbourne Junction, with the main line below Marsworth Top Lock. If you ever wondered why this channel is there, you now know!

*Thanks are due to Thames Water Utilities at Swindon for arranging my visit and to Ken Seabrook for his patience in showing me round and answering my questions.*

JOHN SAVAGE

### News from our Neighbours

The **Aylesbury Canal Society** has published the 2019 edition of its **Laundrettes List**, an essential guide for boaters.

Cost £5 including p&p to UK addresses from:

- The Welcome Boat in Aylesbury Basin
- From IWA sales at [www.iwashop.com](http://www.iwashop.com)
- By post from IWA Sales, Island House, Moor Road, Chesham, HP5 1WA (cheques payable to IWA sales)

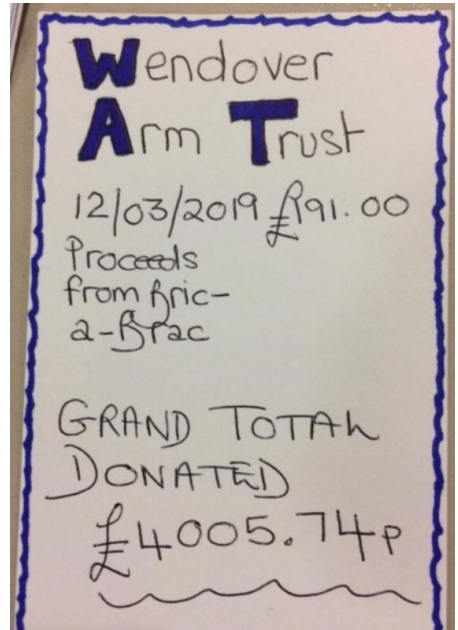
## Fund-Raising Update

A little note from Rose at Dunstable and District Boat Club to record their latest donation to WAT from sales on her on-going bric-a-brac stall at the Club.

The Trust is very grateful to her for running the stall and for the generosity of the Club members. Carry on the good work, Rose and the Club members, over the years you've paid for almost 10 metres of the restoration.



It's a message to put to others, think of the ways that you can support the Trust other than by continually having to put your hands in your pockets.

And when you do need to open your wallet/flash your credit card etc. DON'T forget Easyfundraising. It's a painless way to donate to the Trust through Companies' commitment to Corporate giving. It costs YOU nothing at all and the instructions are:



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

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

   John Lewis

**easyfundraising**  
org.uk

As we go to press there are 64 of our members who use the scheme and who have donated a total of £2288. Thanks to them all.



# HELP WANTED

## EVENTS 2019

WAT plans to attend the following events during the year to keep the public up to date with our progress, raise awareness and fund the restoration, obtain memberships and recruit volunteers.

### Fetes, Festivals and Open Days

- 6 May Aldbury Fete**  
this is one of our regulars and always a good day
- 29 June Wendover Junior School PTA**  
A new event for WAT
- 29 June Tring Carnival**  
One of our regulars and again always a good day for the Trust
- 7 July Restoration Open Day at Drayton Beauchamp**
- 27 July Linslade Canal Festival**
- 14 Sept Aylesbury Waterside Festival**
- 14 or 15 Sept Open Day at Whitehouses and Tringford** (if possible)

### WRG Family Camp

**25-27 October WRG Family Camp**  
see article on p14. Mostly organised and run by IWA'S WRG but assistance from WAT members will be welcome.

We have a great band of volunteers already that joins us in different capacities, but we need more in 2019. You needn't be an expert on the Arm, just willing to help do various tasks, perhaps for just an hour or so.

### Will you join us in 2019?

*any help would be appreciated*

Contact Jenny at [jenny@johnbrice.co.uk](mailto:jenny@johnbrice.co.uk)

## Local IWA Branch Meetings

### CHILTERN BRANCH

8pm at Little Chalfont Village Hall, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont HP8 4UD

#### 24 Apr 19

The River Nene and the Fenland Waterways, a talk by John Pomfret

### MILTON KEYNES BRANCH

at Bletchley Royal British Legion, Melrose Avenue, Bletchley MK3 6PU

#### 25 April 19

The Manchester Ship Canal, a talk by Richard Thomas

### CHILTERN BRANCH AUTUMN WEEK-END AWAY 20-22 SEPTEMBER

This year our annual charabanc trip is to the Shropshire Union and the Ironbridge Gorge museums.

Friday will see us at Norbury Junction for a three-hour escorted cruise on the canal with a fish-and-chip lunch during the cruise. On Saturday 21 we'll go to the Montgomery Canal to view the progress of their restoration with lunch included at the Queen's Head Inn. On the Sunday we have a full-day in the Ironbridge Gorge museums with guided tours in the morning and a free afternoon in the Blists Hill Victorian Town.

Cost? £285pp for dinner, bed and breakfast sharing double or twin-bedded room in the Telford Hotel and Golf Resort. The single supplement is £65.

Interested? You don't have to be an IWA member to take part. Contact Colin Bird at [ccb@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:ccb@tiscali.co.uk) or ☎ 01932 248178 for more details.



## 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](http://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 Publications Manager on 01494 863176

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## **SITUATIONS VACANT**

### **NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

The Trust is seeking an Editor for the Newsletter as the present Editor is stepping back to concentrate on other publications that are vital to the image of the Trust.

#### **The job entails:**

- ◆ Gathering news stories and pictures, editing them and laying-out text and pictures to produce four issues each year.
- ◆ Producing a print-ready PDF document.

(Arrangements for printing, distribution and stock-holding will be made by others as will management of advertising.)

Applicants would benefit from having some knowledge of publication layout principles and typography and the ability to use computer setting applications, no one setting application is mandated.

Please apply to the Chairman. For further information please feel free to speak to the current Editor.

# 2019 and Even More Grand Days Out!

The date is booked



The boat is booked

The grub is being organised

All we need NOW is for **YOU** to book your place

The date for the first boat trip this year is **TUESDAY 30 APRIL**.

We will depart Cow Roast at 10am cruise through the Tring Cutting to the end of the Wendover Arm. At the winding hole we'll stop for those who would like to go on a guided walk and see the restoration team's work. Then a buffet lunch on-board and cruise back to Cow Roast arriving about 4.30pm.

There will be plenty of opportunity for you to 'have a go' under our helmsman's expert tuition – or just relax and enjoy the trip (about nine miles in total)

The cost is £30 per person including morning coffee, lunch, soft drinks and afternoon tea.

You can book your friends and family in too.

Contact Katherine, Membership Secretary to book:

☎ 07547 181857    ✉ [membership@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk](mailto:membership@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk)

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# Wendover Arm Trust

in association with  
St Mary the Virgin, Drayton Beauchamp

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## RESTORATION OPEN DAY

**Sunday 7th July 2019, 12.30 to 4pm**

- Guided tours of the canal restoration site (30 min walk)
- See our volunteers at work
- Teas and cakes for sale
- Talk and video presentation in Church
- Canoes/paddleboards on restored section
- FREE parking at St. Mary's Church, Drayton Beauchamp  
HP22 5LS
- FREE ENTRANCE - donations welcome



[www.wendoverarmtrust.co.uk](http://www.wendoverarmtrust.co.uk)