

**Issue 73:
June 2012**



London WRG News

Editors Note:

Apologies for lateness of this issue of LWRG news—I now truly understand what Ed went through when he was editor and him and Suzie got married. Its amazing how much of your life a single day can take over. However, as with the last issue I think its worth the wait!

Below are the dig dates for the second half of 2012 as they stand. As usual LWRG socials will be at the Star Tavern in Belgravia two Tuesdays before each dig.

London WRG's half AGM is coming up soon* so please have a think about anything that would be worth discussion. For example: **Where should we be going next year? Who should be nominated for a LWRG award come the end of the year?** If you can't make the AGM please contact Tim Lewis with any thoughts or ideas.

As usual my thanks to Nigel for proof reading, Tim for printing and everyone else for sending in contributions and putting photos on public websites for me to hi-jack!

Helena Rosiecka

(Cover image: David Miller
Image below : Tim Lewis)

(Actually I am so late in producing this its happened already! - Hel)

Date	Site	Leader
7/8 th July	Basingstoke Canal	David Miller
28/29 th July	North Walsham and Dilham Canal	Gary Summers
18/19 th August	Wey and Arun Canal	Pete Fleming
8/9 th September	Lichfield Canal	Tracy Howarth (with WRG NW/KESCRG)
29/30 th September	Cotswold Canals: Inglesham	Tim Lewis
20/21 st October	Somersetshire Coal Canal	Sophie Smith
10/11 th November	WRG Reunion: Hereford and Gloucester Canal	WRG Head Office
1/2 nd December	Xmas party dig: Uttoxeter Canal	(With KESCRG)



14/15TH JANUARY 2012 (INGLESHAM)

A Wintery Weekend at Inglesham

Happily, wintery only describes the weather and not the mood. The former is rapidly negated by the presence of a good bonfire, and it serves to heighten the latter also.

The latter is furthermore improved with a trip to the local hostelry, and so it was no surprise to find everyone happily ensconced in The George when Martin and I arrived in the van. The hall was locked and Sleepy Dave was trudging up the road... Thankfully unloading the van didn't need that many people (which was lucky, Helena was really fretting over her two missing volunteers) and so we did eventually get everything unpacked and joined the rest of the group.

Arriving back at Kempford Village Hall a couple of hours later, all set for a relatively early night, we found Moose, Maria and the dogs waiting for us – cue more drink, conversation, toast and a decidedly later night than intended by some.

After a hearty breakfast, Saturday morning saw the first trek off to Inglesham. This was for me the first chance to see all the work that has been done since I last saw the site at the beginning of the first summer camp in 2011 (the tales of which have already been related by RAF Martin in 'Inglesey or Eisesham?' in Navvies) – and how it has changed!!! All that was left was the last 100m of scrub bashing and a large number of tree stumps to be tinfored out.

Knowing the trials and tribulations of the tinforing, I'll start with the scrub bashing. We all know that scrub bashing is only effective with the perfect 'small, controlled' fire, and I have to hand it to Moose, I've never seen anyone make their fire so small and controlled so quickly – but he had to, the bashers were working fast enough that he'd hardly had time to get the first fire going when it needed moving! It was astounding to look up the bed first thing in the

morning and see everyone attacking a wall of scrub, and then to walk up and have a look by the end of the day and find there was actually a bend in the canal and they'd disappeared around it...

Whilst this was progressing, three tinfor crews were working their way along behind (well technically two, one was tied up with Tim and his chainsaw removing a large tree from the ditch). Progress came to a rather abrupt halt before lunch in the case of my group – I managed to thread the cable into a loop within the tinfor and failed to notice until a good two feet had become irreversibly coiled – cue two hours of brute force, ignorance, a tiny bit of ingenuity and eventually we were able to continue (although unthread the tinfor at your peril).



Happily the other crew had no such issues and so between us we did clear most of the smaller stumps from the first 150-200m of the bed above the lock.

Jon Pontefract had brought a small excavator to site, and spent some time digging

around tree roots (I'd normally say 'playing' but those tree roots looked decidedly unfriendly) to remove stumps and free the biggie up for an all-out assault on Sunday. The trailer used to bring the excavator was used to transport several loads of logs over to CCT's depot, and that (I think) brings the work on Saturday to a close.

Thanks to a hard day on site and a fabulous meal from Martin L in the evening, along with the presentation of the London WRG awards*, the visit to the pub was severely depleted and many decided that perhaps an earlier night was no bad thing.

Sunday was, primarily, more of the same. Congratulations to the scrub bashing crew who managed to get through the last section and reach the end of the 300m above the lock (though I would dispute their claim that they had finished, the last 20m or so was definitely not as clear as their previous efforts).

The large tirtor moved to do battle with one of the larger stumps** above the head of the lock, with Pete (and his mattock), Dave (and his axe, later his broken axe) and the Hawk giving the tirtor a hand.



Meanwhile, the smaller tirtors were continuing upstream, with only a small pit stop each for a broken shear pin...

With all the work completed and light rapidly running out is was back to the hall for the usual pack up and clean, and another weekend drew to a close.

A big thanks to Helena for organising, locals RAF Martin & Jon Pontefract, Martin for a stupendous supper (and also putting up with me in the van) and the large number (26?) who turned up – you all made my first London WRG dig*** a very enjoyable one and I'll be back (so you have been warned!)

*To those physically present, Mr Summers had to wait until Helena's wedding to get his. (Hel)

**At that point officially the largest stump John Hawkins had ever tirtored—however it has since been surpassed by other Inglesham stumps. (Hel)

***I was, actually, at Chesterfield in September, but I'm practically a local there...

George Rogers
(Images: Alan lines)

This issues star picture is once again by Mr Tim Lewis—looking down the Thames from Inglesham.



LONDON WRG AGM (6TH FEBRUARY 2012)

Present:

Alan Lines, David Miller, Ed Walker, Ellie Mathieson, George 'Bungle' Eycot, Helena Howarth (Secretariat), Martin Danks, Martin Ludgate, Melanie Parker, Paul Ireson, Pete Fleming, Rachel Errington, Roy Sutton, and Tim Lewis (Chair).

Apologies:

Adrian Crow, Dave 'Moose' Hearnden, Maria Hearnden, Sophie Smith

Dig Dates:

- The current dig, and hence the location of the AGM was moved to Inglesham at short notice due to the cold weather being unsuitable for concreting. The group thanked Eddie Jones and the rest of KESCRG for letting us join them at such short notice. It was suggested that the 9/10th June date, currently without a site, be offered to the Mon and Brec.
- The following two digs are at the C&B (Adrian Crow to lead) and the Somersetshire Coal (Sophie to lead). Dave Miller can no-longer lead the Chichester weekend on 31st March/1st April. Helena Howarth offered to lead but is attending a Hen Party that weekend so can't.
- Chesterfield has not yet confirmed if they have work for us on the 19/20th May weekend.
- Dave Miller offered to lead the Sussex Ouse weekend on 7/8th June.
- Gary Summers is leading the 28/29th July weekend on the North Walsham and Dilham. Pete Fleming offered to lead the following dig on the 18/19th August. Martin Ludgate suggested that the Wey and Arun has work for us.
- Tracy Howarth is running the three-group dig on the Lichfield on 8/9th September.
- The next two digs are at Inglesham on 29/30th September (lead by Tim Lewis) and Somersetshire Coal on 20/21st October (led by Sophie Smith). There is currently no location for the WRG reunion weekend on 10/11th November.
- Ellie Mathieson reported that KESCRG agreed at their AGM that it is LWrg's turn to run the joint Christmas party dig on 1/2nd December. This was agreed. Tim Lewis suggested the Uttoxeter.
- Tim noted that group members need to book for all WRG events via Head Office or the IWA website.

Cavalcade at Little Venice:

- LWrg agreed to fundraise at this event on 5-7th May via the tombola again. Martin Ludgate, Lesley McFayden, Paul Ireson, Rachel Errington, Tim Lewis and Ed Walkers parents have all offered to help run this. Tim Lewis noted that the sign is a bit worse for wear and a new one is needed.
- The theme for the decorated boats is unknown but it was proposed that the Fulbourne be entered in this as usual.
- It was also suggested that Fulbourne be entered for illuminated boats but this would require someone to take the project forward. There will also be the normal LWrg BBQ by Fulbourne on the Sunday night and a LWrg dinner on Saturday evening.

Signing-In sheets:

- In his absence Helena Howarth put forward Nigel Lee's requested that LWrg start having signing-in sheets on every dig. This is because it would be needed for insurance purposes on any digs he brought his chainsaw and it would be better to make it the norm so that people are less likely to forget. He also offered to be in charge of keeping these sheets.
- The group agreed this proposal. Martin Ludgate also noted that it may help keep the LWrg address list for the circulation of LWrg News up-to-date.

Sandwich boards:

- In their absence Helena Howarth reported on Sophie Smith and Frank Waller's plans for sandwich boards. Frank Wallder proposed getting boards that hold a lot of detail about the canals and projects that we work on. He would maintain this board and come on digs where we were working on a used towpath. He would then talk to passers-by about the work.
- Sophie Smith is working on more basic boards that give just the basic details of who we are and what we do in general for use on sites with less passing traffic/weekends. Frank Wallder cannot attend.
- The group agreed both proposals and it was suggested that LWrg's promotional material be updated.

LWrg website:

Tim congratulated the Hearnden's on their work on the website. The group then discussed the proposals for further improvements. It was agreed to:

- Reinstate the back series of LWrg news
- Mention a 'voluntary contribution' towards van fuel up to a maximum of £10
- Keep the LWrg mailing list of the front-page
- Link to the gallery on the right as well as Tim's page (signposting clearly that this is an individual's gallery rather than part of the main site)
- No postal address is needed for the contacts page as anyone looking is already on the internet
- Put Tim Lewis's mobile number and the **London@wrg.org.uk** on the next dig page every time as not all members are happy with their personal contact details being on the internet
- Change the pictures on the front page to bricklaying, scrub bashing and a machine.
- It was also noted that the LWrg Facebook page is in danger of dying due to lack of activity. All group members were encouraged to sign up to the group and post comments.

Any Other Business

- Martin Ludgate reported that the treasurer says we have plenty of money
- Tim Lewis presented Paul Ireson with the Driving and Bricklaying awards for 2011.

Post Meeting Note: All actions resulting from this AGM were noted and posted on the London WRG facebook group; the only ones left undone as at publication of these minutes are:

Sophie S: Prepare wording for LWRG sandwich boards by tool painting
Helena R: Update LWRG promotional material
Frank W: Take forward plans regarding detailed information boards

4/5TH FEBRUARY
2012 (INGLESHAM)

OR

NOT THE MON
AND BREC!!

THURSDAY - Here are some early weekend warnings of traffic movement.

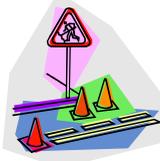


Weather warning - Due to weather conditions KESCRG are diverted from Basingstoke to Inglesham. LWRG are also being diverted from Mon & Brec to Inglesham

FRIDAY - Afternoon



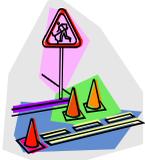
Rail Warning - Due to a gas leak at Totton there are delays to WRGies from the Southampton direction.



Road Warning - Hammersmith Flyover is restricted to cars only, therefore, no WRG Vans permitted.



Visual Warning - WRGies sometimes do not recognise each other and can be easily distracted.



Road Warning - Wandsworth High Street is causing delays on Chelsea Embankment but Hammersmith Flyover is suffering minor delays.

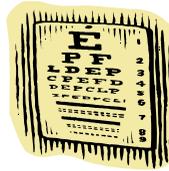


Text Alert - Southampton based Wrgie has missed connecting train to Reading and will be delayed by 1 hour.

Therefore, the London crew invaded Tesco's for alcohol & snacks.



Travel Warning - Reading Station re-development means that parking for vans are up to ¼ mile away.



Visual Warning - Females in yellow Hi-Viz jackets and carrying rucksacks on a Friday Night are probably WRGies waiting for a lift.

Finally we arrived at the accommodation which was crowded and each person had to find a slot to bunk down in before disappearing down to the George.



Personal Warning - Remember to take torch to pub so you can find your bed when you return as the lights will be out in the accommodation.

Saturday

A glorious breakfast cooked by Eli is followed by the mass sandwich making and departure to site in the three WRG vans parked outside.



Eddie Warning -

Please remember that you are working at Inglesham and not at Eisey

Due to this the first van arriving on site did not have the codes to go through the gates until the second vehicle arrived.

After parking the first few vehicles, Eddie arrived with the van and KESCRG trailer so everyone was able to get onto site.



Padlock Warning –

ensure you have the ability to detach the trailer from the van.

Luckily Eddie showed his skill in van and trailer movement and then worked to find how to get a lock functional again.

Everyone selected their tools for scrub bashing and tiring while Digger used a small excavator on the stumps close to the lock.



Parking warning -

There is limited parking at In-glesham for WRG vans and the Pasty Wagon.



Fashion warning -

Mel arrived and proceeded to don further layers including ankle warmers.

Navigating the icy ground, each group selected their targets and proceeded to extract fuel for the fires.



Weather warning - A

late afternoon snow fall meant the driving back to accommodation was interesting on the narrow lanes.

After a filling evening meal, most people departed off to the George pub while the rest stayed in the accommodation.

Sunday

Another glorious breakfast cooked by Ellie.



Catering Warning - Ensure that the spoon for the beans is properly balanced or it could end up in the pot and be served to Alan.

On site, while the excavator continued to extract the larger stumps closer to the lock, the rest progressed to the far end of the site to clear the stumps and other available branches. Tim & Martin D produced a large controlled fire. The end of the day was highlighted by the attempt to remove a large branch hanging from another branch. After several attempts from various angles, it was left for a future weekend.

After all the kit had been sorted at both the site and accommodation. Everyone departed and with very little disruption meant that the drive into London via the M4 was very clear.

Paul Ireson

(Images: Tim Lewis)



25TH/26TH FEBRUARY 2012 (SOMERSETSHIRE COAL CANAL)

The end of February brought with it some unseasonable sunshine and London WRG's first visit of 2012 to the Somersetshire Coal Canal. We stayed at Dunkerton Parish Hall, which was warm and dry, with smart olive green panelling, dodgy electrics and a bulb-festooned portrait of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's coronation – in short, everything a WRGie needs. Except a shower. Or a barrel of cider – but shh, don't let me moan yet, we'll get onto that later.

In a feat that is worthy of a LWRG award (hint), Sophie and I pulled off The Most Dexterous Shop Procurement Ever by getting a taxi from Sainsbury's to The Castle pub in Bradford on Avon, where we left the shopping outside in the beer garden. Luckily our shopping was disturbed by neither man nor beast (we think) and when Martin came to collect us, we happily threw the bags in the back of the van and went on our merry way to Dunkerton.

In we settled and put up our beds under the watchful, dignified eye of Her Majesty -QE2 I mean- not Sophie, who promptly got us peeling vegetables for the morrow while I searched around in desperation for the barrel of cider we'd been promised by the locals as compensation for not having a pub. But could we find it? Not on your nelly. WRG without cider is like fish without chips, like a car without petrol, like... a tinfoil without Alan Lines.

But no. Twas but an imaginary barrel. Those who'd been clever enough to bring their own kicked back and relaxed (Martin Ludgate's no fool – he won't go anywhere without a box of Old Speckled Hen), and those who hadn't went to bed in a sober sluk (me).

After a bellyful of Paul Ireson's finest in the morning, Sophie put her coffee in the microwave to heat it and promptly blew the electrics. Woops. A call to the friendly

caretaker meant he was there in less than a minute and had it back on in a flash. Crisis averted! Phew. He even offered to get us more eggs. We all took a deep breath and looked forward to the crisis-free day ahead. Ahem.

I looked out of the window and saw Martin Danks in conversation with a Barbour jacketed Beagle owner. *"What be this?"* I asked myself in wonder. *"Perhaps he is handing out our food from the stash we left outside when it didn't fit in the fridge?"*

I gave Mr Danks a quizzical look as he re-entered the hall. *"Papers get delivered here and the locals come and pick them up."* He told me. *"I've been guessing who's Guardian and who's Telegraph and I've been right every time!"*

As we were about to leave, Helena came out to see if anyone had a coat hanger. That's not usual LWRG fare, I hear you think. Hmm, indeed. Well, here's the thing: Helena and Krzysiek were locking up the hall, and in a freak stroke of bad luck, the key whizzed off the ring, through the air and whistled through a tiny gap in the floorboards.

LWRG being LWRG, there was no shortage of useful implements in the van. The gang were handed a hook and said they'd give it a go and would see us later at site. An unflappable Sophie rounded us up and got us going. On the way to site, while we admired the breath-taking scenery of the location and the specially made LWRG signposts, Sophie's phone buzzed. No luck with the hook, the key was still under the Dunkerton floorboards.

"Oh dear, I'm sorry to hear that," said Sophie. Actually it was less polite than this. The friendly caretaker's house was called again and his marginally less-friendly-than-last-time wife informed Sophie curtly that they were having a child's birthday party and key-losing WRGies were the last thing they needed.

The hapless bunch were tasked with not coming to site until they'd sorted it out. Meanwhile, the rest of us met the local team. Landowner Phil Honey couldn't do enough for us as I marvelled at the beauty



around us. Fourteen locks of the Somerset Coal Canal go through his land, the lucky chap. Snowdrops glistened in the spring sunshine. It was goergeous.

Local Patrick briefed us and described his team: *"Can't manage with 'em, can't manage without 'em."*

"Yeah, we've got a few of those!" said Sophie.

Work started on Lock 11, where we bashed scrub. We had to remove a wire fence along the top of the lock. Sophie decided that we shouldn't work in the lock chamber until all of the top was clear. Martin Ludgate, Val and I tried desperately to get a decent fire going so that when Tim turned up with German heavy metal heroes Rammstein still ringing in his ears (gig night before in O2), he wouldn't take the piss out of our bonfire ineptitude.

By tea break, with the bonfires roaring, we tucked into Sophie's delicious lemon cake and my very own banana and choc bread.

"We went to Midsomer Norton and we didn't get murdered!" announced Helena, bursting forth from the undergrowth in time for a cup of still-warm tea. Sophie miraculously didn't murder them either, as they had managed to get the key from the care-

taker and taken it to be cut. *"We got the keys cut in a laundrette!"* Helena said.

The rest of the day was spent clearing Lock 11. Local chainsaw man Richard turned up and used his expertise to clear some forestry. He also provided some very tasty orange and carrot cake that was consumed at afternoon tea break. *"Who made the cake?"* Asked the innocent, grateful WRGies.

"Richard's wife" said some hapless fool. Uh-oh. We were very promptly told that she was NOT his wife thank you very much and by the way, marriage was a mess and a trap and a fool's game. Whatever. Not-The-Wife's cake was delicious anyhow.

All this talk of matters of the heart got me, Nadine and Sophie talking about men. Colin was but feet away clearing scrub one-handed and being a great example of a strapping WRGie. Nadine took pity on us. *"Maybe WRG should have a dating agency"* she said.

"It does." said Sophie. *"It's called WRG."*

On the LWRGies worked, advising any passers-by of the dangers presented by the missing fence. A dog ran by. A sheep ran by. Yes, a sheep. At full gallop. We couldn't believe our eyes either, but like true LWRGies it would take more than a stray sheep to distract us from the task at hand, and on we went, bow saws sawing, loppers lopping and cleared Lock 11 by the end of the day.

On the way back to the van, we mused on the fate of the galloping sheep. *"Oh didn't you hear?"* said Helena. *"Chainsaw man talked the sheep down off a ledge. It was in distress and he calmed it down, slung it over his shoulder and got it back to the landowner."* Wonders on the Somersetshire Coal Canal really never cease.

That evening, after a tasty tea of Sophie's chicken and leek pie with all the trimmings, we all settled down for a chinwag and the talk came to WRGie nicknames. *"Not having a nickname is a sign of respect and admiration,"* mused Sophie. *"Look at Martin. He's Martin Ludgate, plain and simple."*

10TH/11TH MARCH 2012 (CHELMER AND BALCKWATER)

Day Two we split into two groups – Ian and Valerie worked with the local team to do the final touches of scrub bashing on the inclined plain while the rest of our group, including David and Richard bashed scrub at Lock 4, which was closer to what was the coal face (and now sits near the house). Local Patrick told us to go easy and clear ‘bit by bit’.

“Years ago”, he said, “when they cleared the ivy off Dunkerton Aqueduct, the locals all called up to complain – *“who’s gone and put a bloody great big Aqueduct there?”*” Brilliant. We set about scrub bashing with a vengeance but the trees facing the Aqueduct-fearing public just got a careful trim.



By the end of the day, Lock 4 was transformed and the LWRGies were proud of their handiwork. We celebrated with roasted marshmallows, which Krzysiek ingeniously poked onto the teeth of a pitchfork and roasted simultaneously. I can vouch for them being utterly delicious and vow that the metal taste was very faint indeed.

Tim took a picture of me wearing my ‘Beware Otters!’ WRG shirt, which I am very proud of. That’s another story for another time but I am very proud to now have bonfire-induced burn holes in it. I think this might mean I’m a real LWRGie now. God help me.

**Rachel
Malham**

(Images:
David Miller)



Friday night I arrived quite late to find the others already sampling the delights on offer in the Blue Boar. Initially it appeared we had recruited a new couple and I was asked to expose my chest (I was wearing a WRG T shirt). It wasn’t until later, when they left, that Martin asked whether they were with us that it turned out they were just on a pub crawl and had got stuck talking to the nutters in the corner.

The conversation then returned to more usual topics such as Helena’s dissertation and there was speculation as to whether the website was still live and if it had by now gathered enough stats to justify a PhD. We were actually quite lucky that Helena was able to attend the dig as her usual taxi service wasn’t available (away playing with a noisy new toy), so she demonstrated her navigation skills and arrived via Manchester, Newport and Waterloo.

Saturday after breakfast cooked as often by Paul, having previously been instructed in the art of purging, we made our way to site, with Tim collecting Wendy on the way. Roy & Colin met us at Ulting gauging station where we would be starting work. I think initially Paul and Pete thought it must be the BCN as they promptly pulled a PC monitor out of the water. Roy then explained the task for the weekend, to scrub bash the tow path, clear the water’s edge and to widen the path so it can mowed to maintain it in future. The important thing was not to damage the baby cricket bats!

Most people selected one of the many trimmers and proceeded to set to work. Others cleared small trees and dragged materials to the bonfires we were allowed to have as we weren’t near any houses. Gordon arrived, sans the waders he usually wears on the C&B, and assisted local chainsaw Bob with larger trees.



Helena broke her strimmer several times and was proving to be expensive in terms of string so was converted to the brush cutting blade, whereas Caitriona was just drinking petrol.

Tea breaks and lunch happened, Adrian our leader admitted he didn't actually know when they normally were. We told him not to worry about this as we do know and we have no problems declaring them, previously having taken two morning breaks in one day on Moose's C&B dig.

In the afternoon work progressed along the tow path with further fires. Martin left site a little earlier than the rest of us to start work on the evening meal of Beef or Lamb lasagne with lots of garlic bread. Initially there was a problem with the cooker and I gather he was wondering what he could cook with the toaster, griddle and microwave. However he managed to achieve a satisfactory purge and all was OK. Pudding was Plume tart as we were staying at Plume school. After the meal Adrian & Caitriona retired to their room, I'm not sure what took place but when they returned they were both in wheel chairs. Fortunately they recovered sufficiently to accompany us on a return visit to the local hostelry. Sadly the inn was full so we sat outside in early March but were able to observe the local night life. There seemed to be an incompatibility problem between high heels and cobblestones, which may have been what prompted the Purple Fairy to speculate whether DM's would be acceptable footwear for THE wedding.

Sunday and as we had progress well along the tow path the tools were taken down

with the local Landy & trailer. Gordon in his Freelandr took the essential kit to site i.e. the burco and brew kit. More slash and burn with Paul as fire monitor, although at times he got a little too close, with Tim commenting on flaming groins. Lunchtime discussions included speculation as to where toasted testicles are considered a delicacy, plus feedback on Gordon's posting on bookface of his large Plume tart in a very small bowl. Comments included Jam on toast with tagliatelle, spare ribs, CSI and Irritable Bowl Syndrome, but Helena said she was happy for Martin to stick with tarts.

The weather was excellent so work continued with Helena wanting to complete a final 5m, which just happened to be a patch of the worse brambles and it was getting a long drag to the fire. Roy & Colin were extremely happy with the work achieved, I did suggest that perhaps we had built up a surplus credit and we could take it easy on our next visit. Sadly they didn't seem to see it this way. So we seem to have made a rod for our own backs and they'll expect the same or more next time.

Thanks to Adrian for leading, bar tea breaks, all in all an excellent weekend and Helena says I don't have to write another one of these for a very, very long time.

Richard Thomas

(Images: Tim Lewis)



21ST/22ND APRIL 2012 (BCN)

It was good to return to the BCN for our clean up after last year's sojourn to the Grand Union Canal! But there was something missing, what was it you may enquire?

All the usual faces were there, the organization had been done to a "t, the grub was fab, the accommodation was excellent, and with the usual cold water to wash yourself down, so what was missing? SCRAP. That's what.

Our hosts (BW) had only arranged dredging of bridge holes prior to our event, with the added interest of the local "scrap merchant" population who have also been busy dragging the cut since steel prices have gone through the roof, we were faced with a pretty quiet weekends cut dipping.

It comes to something when the highlight of Sunday morning was viewing a Krypton Factor puzzle team effort in retrieving a Y shaped sodden log (half sunk, half floating) from the Wyrley and Essington Canal, not a trolley or a bike I agree but big enough to sink or damage a fibre glass cruiser. Well done to Mike, Martin and Richard and the Lady helper from Walsall. There were some trolleys and bikes, some even serviceable enough to ride back to the accommodation on (eh Martin!), but I did have to ask my merry band of dippers several times "if you

can't smile, grimace!!" Some people blamed their grappling hook for sorry results, swapped it and still got nothing (you know who you are Paul Shaw).

My thanks to the volunteers crewing workboats from BCNS and Coombeswood Canal Trust, who regularly miss lunch and start before and finish after us grappers, they do a great Job. The usual suspects from BW were there as well, thank you to them.

Thanks to Aileen, Moose and Maria for their work, to the drivers and to Dave Pearson local IWA Chairman who I know had been very busy in the build-up to the event, even if he didn't get dirty.

So it was an enjoyable weekend, please BW/ IWA somewhere new next year please! And to the feral youth and residents of the West Midlands, please don't stone the visitors, please stop your speeding motorbikes on towing paths, please deposit your mattresses' at the local recycling centre and no fighting in the pubs please, we are gentle folk!!!

Chris Morgan

(Images:
Alan
Lines)



19/20TH MAY 2012 (CHESTERFIELD)

Following the previous weeks of rainfall during the announced drought, it was still unsure which site we would be working on. But with a period of drying weather days before the dig, the decision by the local canal society was for us to work on the Staveley Town Lock site.

With the Hub accommodation still being in use when the early arrivals turned up, they went for a trip up the hill to the pub. But luckily within half an hour of the vans arrival the accommodation was available and everyone spread themselves out.

Saturday – a beautiful & filling breakfast was provided in the next door cafe by Dawn and Emily. After sandwich making the local coordinator Geraint gave us the job to be done at the lock as the original bridge job was unavailable for the weekend. After setting up the Burco and doing some early prep work, the lorry containing the cement bags turned up but it did not contain the lintels which were also supposed to be included. After a discussion and several phone calls a local garden centre was asked to send some lintels.

We finished off the prep work to enable access to do the work and when the garden centre lorry arrived the lintels were unloaded and cut to size. While one group started to build up the end wall to the chamber, the other group started to lay the lintels over the outflow chambers. After finishing the town side chamber it was discovered that we did not have enough to finish the other side so using all the remaining lintels to fill in as much as possible the group had their lunch. After discussions the group

went back to the Hub to work on the bank opposite the accommodation as it had recently suffered a failure due to the heavy rainfall. This left the other group to continue on the bricklaying.

The evening meal was a barbeque although most people ate the meal indoors - thanks to the BBQ chef Pete.

Sunday - Following another breakfast provided by the cafe the two groups split back to their previous afternoon tasks, so while the Hub team continued to dig out the footings in the bank to enable the locals to build reinforcement wall for the bank. The lock group went to build up the chambers walls up to the height required for the lintels. A quick note from the Hub team (Do not allow the leader to take all the brew kit to his site).

Despite having the plans in front of them, the lock group could not decide which way the lintels were due to lay so had to collect the local to give them advice. It was decided that they should be on edge to make the laying of the next 5 courses easier to match from both above the lintels and the walls. When returning the local the leader also took half the lunch and cakes but neglected to return some of the biscuits and snacks still with the brew kit.

After a short session after lunch the lock team finished a level course leaving the locals to finish off the last couple of courses and coping stone level. When returning to the Hub it was seen that the Hub team had lowered the bank down to the solid level of the lock wall and back several foot. Another great day's work by the group. The day ended with the testing of the rail outside the Hub by the entire group leaning on it.

Paul Ireson

A while ago Sophie asked LWRG for a lighthearted question someone might ask who knows the boating lifestyle. Responses included:

- Toilet: Cassette or tank?
- Stern: Traditional, Semi Traditional or weird cruiser type?
- Windows: Square or portholes?

But what sort of question would you ask a WRGie?

- Bollards: Square or round? (Suggestions to the LWRG facebook group!)

26TH/27TH MAY 2012 (TOOL PAINTING)

LWRG's annual tool painting session occurred as usual at Moose and Maria's. A small but perfectly formed group made it that sunny day to sand down and repaint the tools in LWRG red and white stripes with varying degrees of artistic talent. Helena for instance proved that the non-drip paint would drip quite effectively if enough was used.

Sophie also raised the tone of the day by arriving with a ball gown. However she did not attempt to paint tools in it to the rest of the gangs disappointment. Whilst painting

occurred Maria dashed around town buying various supplies such as a replacement tool box for the cutlery and new (matching!) plastic plates and bowls!

In the evening we all went out for curry and were joined by Martin who had dropped off the tools earlier before vanishing to another engagement. Afterwards we were entertained by deciding whose cat was scarier — Helen's or Moose's.

In order to give a flavour of the varied things painted that day many tools are hidden in the grid below!! Some extra words have also slipped in accidentally—for example we did not paint the grass (except accidentally) or any members of KESCRG!

T	R	E	N	C	H	I	N	G	S	P	A	D	E	T	S	L	W	O	B
A	E	X	A	D	N	A	H	R	R	A	B	G	N	I	K	C	E	R	W
R	M	H	M	R	S	L	A	U	E	S	O	T	O	R	O	H	P	M	H
M	M	F	P	E	P	E	R	B	V	A	N	O	B	F	O	I	L	A	E
A	A	E	I	L	R	W	D	B	I	C	K	S	U	O	H	S	A	P	E
C	H	L	C	L	U	O	H	I	R	K	E	S	C	R	G	E	S	S	L
R	E	L	K	E	N	R	A	N	D	T	R	R	K	E	N	L	T	C	B
A	G	I	M	E	I	T	T	G	T	R	T	A	E	T	I	L	E	A	A
K	D	N	A	S	N	G	T	M	S	U	R	E	T	S	L	E	R	F	R
E	E	G	T	L	G	N	O	A	O	C	H	H	T	A	P	S	E	F	R
P	L	A	T	E	S	I	O	T	P	H	C	S	R	O	P	I	R	O	O
M	S	X	O	W	A	H	L	T	L	N	E	O	T	A	H	S	L	W	
A	P	E	C	O	W	S	B	O	I	E	E	G	W	L	R	C	H	D	A
F	O	R	K	R	T	I	A	P	E	V	R	D	E	O	G	R	A	S	S
P	O	I	N	T	I	N	G	T	R	O	W	E	L	P	I	E	W	P	W
O	N	B	I	K	N	I	S	E	S	H	A	H	T	P	N	T	K	A	O
K	S	C	F	C	O	F	R	G	E	S	R	A	K	E	G	S	M	N	B
R	E	U	E	I	D	I	G	G	I	N	G	F	O	R	K	L	I	N	E
U	S	P	I	R	I	T	L	E	V	E	L	A	L	S	Y	O	K	E	B
B	S	S	U	B	K	C	O	T	T	A	M	G	N	I	B	B	U	R	G



Above: Its not all work and no play - LWRG dress up for a Yorkshire/Polish wedding!

Who to contact:

London WRG Chairman:

Tim Lewis
5 Herongate Road, Wansted, London, E12 5EJ
london@wrg.org.uk
078 0251 8094



Enquiries:

Martin Ludgate or Lesley McFayden
35 Sylvester Road, London, SE22 9PB
martin.ludgate@wrg.org.uk

London WRG News Editor

Helena Rosiecka
43 Celandine Avenue, Locks Heath,
Hampshire, SO31 6WY
hmhowarth@hotmail.com
079 8180 6336



(Images: Tim Lewis, Alan Lines and Christian Howarth)