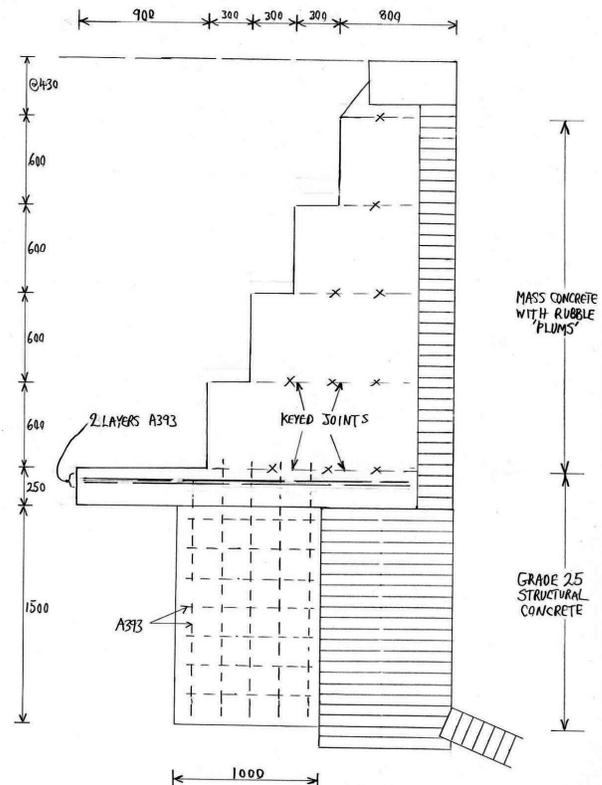


Work Planned for Isfield Lock in 2010

An outline plan of action is now in place as to the way forward in tackling the extensive restoration required for the west lock-chamber wall. This will involve raising the wall in 2-leaf brickwork and pouring concrete behind it, extending the concrete down below invert level as a nib and about 2 m back from the wall. It is planned to undertake this work in a minimum of three sections over at least three years, due to the workforce capacity needed to achieve it. Eight people will be needed on each occasion that we do a major concrete pour, probably three such occasions for each section. The estimated annual expenditure on each section of the west wall renovation is £1300. Alongside is a cross-section diagram of the new west wall – please don't ask me to explain as I really don't understand it all! You'll need to ask Paul or Roy Sutton, our "resident, tame (almost)" civil engineer who produced the drawing.



A site visit will be attempted in February to re-arrange the security fencing, enlarging the enclosed area for the additional materials storage that will be needed in 2010. This will mainly be for loose bulk ballast that will probably be tipped at the Plantation parking area and then transferred across the field to the lock site by dumper truck. Two or three more sections of Heras fencing may be required for this compound extension – if anyone knows where we can get some cheap (free?), please get in touch. It will also be imperative that passers-by on the public footpath are kept back beyond the arc of the digger jib when we are working on the west wall excavations.

The concrete mixer that we have been using over the last two seasons has now been "improved" so that it no longer stalls so easily when starting up or when a little overloaded. Paul Morris, our project manager for Isfield Lock, has also made second mixer available to us along with a 6 kVA generator that should be able to power both mixers at the same time.

Cost of Restoration so far

A question that often crops up when I'm chatting to passers-by at the Lock is "where does the money come from", closely followed by "how much does this all cost"? The first is easy to answer – our small but generous membership. The latter has always been more problematic, so I've asked our Treasurer and this is what she has been able to work out for the year just gone.

Sand / cement / lime / slabs etc.	£1,154
Timber	£82
Fixings (nails, screws etc.)	£66
Petrol (gennie) / diesel (transport) / gas (tea!)	£101
Resin, applicators etc. (for wall ties / bars)	£135
Site security (renew padlocks etc. after container break-in)	£34
Hand tools	£104
Power tools / bits / SDS chisels	£111
Grand total	£1,787

Past years saw expenditures of £1,802 in 2006, £1,941 in 2007 and £1,201 in 2008. The first two years saw significant expenditure on plant hire for the excavation of the lock (£315 and £473 respectively) whilst 2009's big cost was materials for the renovation of the east wall.

Paul Morris has done a rough estimation of what materials spend he thinks will be required for the west wall, where work is to start this Spring. A sum of £2,400 for bricks, £500 for mortar, £500 for back-course bricks and £1,200 for steelwork. That's £4,600 excluding the concrete pour and the costs of hiring in plant to do the excavation work, so an estimate of £1,300 a year spend over three years may yet be optimistic... Which brings me to my oft-repeated plea:

Restoration Appeal

The Sussex Ouse Restoration Trust will require funds and commitment equal and beyond that so far required in the work at Isfield to date, with the badly damaged west wall likely to provide many additional challenges to those so far met. This makes the appeal for funding and work-party volunteers for the tasks ahead of us even more important. If you can help in any way please contact our volunteer coordinator Ted Lintott, via e-mail at [tedl @talktalk.net](mailto:tedl@talktalk.net), or by telephone on 01444 414413, or Bob Draper (contact details at the bottom of this Newsletter). Some sort of sponsorship deal with a tool-hire company or building materials firm would be especially useful! Plus:

Dumpers-R-Us!

If you visited Isfield in 2006 or 2007 you will have seen an aged, green dumper around the site, restored to use by Paul Morris. But it has finally expired and would cost more to put right than it is really worth. Thus Paul has come up with the idea of obtaining a newer one for use on the west wall restoration / rebuild, of a bit larger capacity and hopefully more reliable than the old girl was (although she did rescue us from the July '07 floods!). To this end, we are launching a buy-a-share-in-a-dumper scheme.

The idea is that members can buy one or more shares in the dumper for £20 each, we record all those generous enough to do so and acknowledge them in coming Newsletters. As and when the time comes and we dispose of said machine, “investors” will have their share deposits refunded pro-rata depending upon how much we can get when we sell it on. It must of course be born in mind that it may be reduced to scrap before it can be sold on, so no return can be guaranteed at all! Alternatively, straight donations towards the purchase of a pre-owned dumper will also be gratefully received! If you’re interested at all, please contact me, details as ever at the bottom of the page.

Autumn Public Meeting

The Autumn 2009 Meeting of SORT took place on **Thursday 19th November**, in the Upper Room, Haywards Heath Methodist Church. Attendees at this joint meeting with Solent & Arun Branch and Kent & East Sussex Branch of the IWA were treated to a presentation of three historic waterway videos made by British Transport Films, one from each decade of the 50s, 60s and 70s. About 40 attendees really seemed to enjoy the evening and the venue was near-perfect, so I feel that we will be returning there for our next social meeting this year.

A Trip Boat for SORT?

I made a plea in our last Newsletter for someone to come forward as a volunteer to try and get a trip-boat operation up and running on the Ouse. Following on from this, I was contacted by Mike Berry, until very recently owner-operator of the trip boat operation on the River Rother running out of Northiam. Mike recently “retired” after selling that business and has expressed an interest in starting something up for us. Unfortunately, he couldn’t make our Committee meeting in early December but we hope to get him along to the next one to explore the possibilities with him.

The Trust Needs You!

SORT desperately needs more committee members! We are scraping along with the bare minimum to keep the Trust operational. If you can spare any time at all to help with the running of the Trust, please let us know via either Hazel Lintott (secretary@sxouse.org.uk or tel. 01444 414413) or Bob Draper (membership@sxouse.org.uk or tel. 01825 763857). Particular roles might be publicity, fundraising, ecology / environmental, membership, treasurer or you might fancy specifically taking on our current fight with the EA over Fletching Mill Weir! Whatever it might be, please let us know.