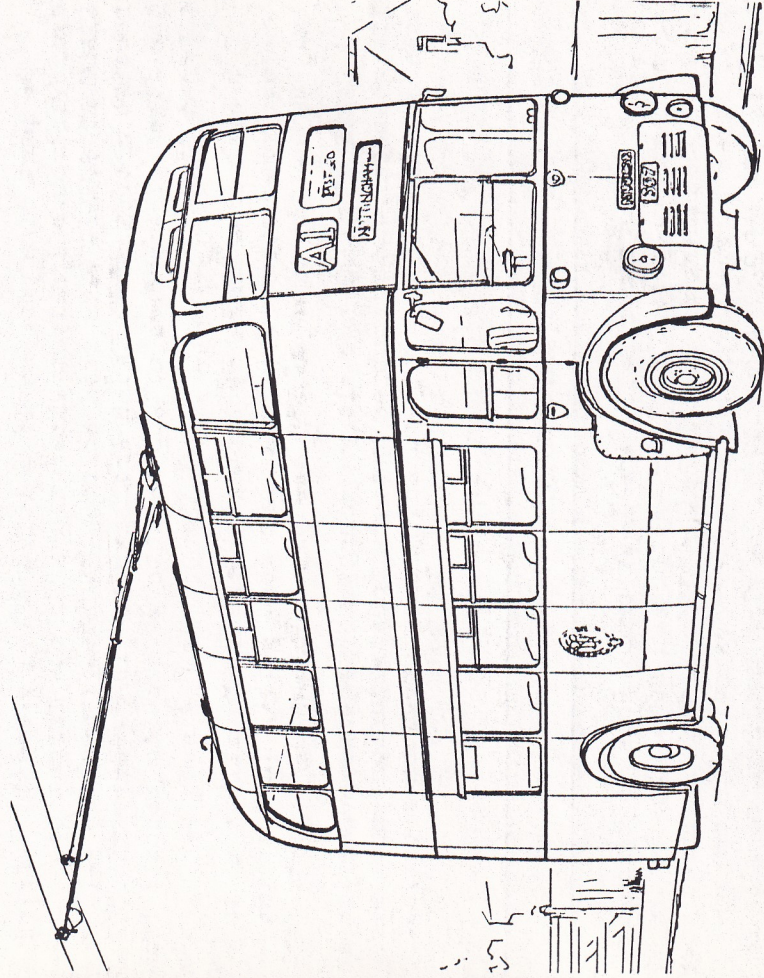

SANDTOFT SCENE

No. 9

April 1989



The Sandtoft Transport Centre Magazine

As mentioned in the last edition of SANDTOFT SCENE, Chris Oliver has stepped down from the post of Joint Editor to concentrate on the Company's financial affairs. However, I am still in the 'ot seat, and welcome back Jim Sambrooks to write the 'Scene at Sandtoft' column. This is still the most important feature of the magazine and Jim will be able to provide us with a much improved supply of news.

The excellent line drawings that appear on the front of the magazine and elsewhere are kindly provided by Bob Ashton. Copyright exists on these, and we greatly appreciate Bob's permission to use them.

As part of a process of continued improvement, I have again introduced slight alterations to the format of SANDTOFT SCENE. With this edition, Sandtoft members will receive a copy of 'British Trolleybuses in Preservation', the first of a series of supplements we hope to produce from time to time.

I must also thank my brother, Derek, who allows us to use his photocopier for less than cost price. This is the only way we can keep within our tight financial budget.

SANDTOFT SCENE has always sought to provide a service to its readers. And of course readers' contributions have made this service all the better. So, please, keep them coming!

FOCUS ON ... NOTTS & DERBY 357

NU238 was numerically the last trolleybus to be delivered to the operator, in 1949. Withdrawn some time before final abandonment on 28th February 1953 and transferred four days later to Bradford, she re-entered service in her new home as 774 on 22nd April 1953. Leaving Bradford service on 31st October 1963, she was subsequently stored, and purchased for preservation in August 1967, being transferred to Plumtree, where she was repainted in her old livery. 357 was moved to Sandtoft in December 1974 and was for many years regularly featured on Sandtoft's publicity material.

Scene at sandtoft

The Lindholme Working Party continued its good work during the latter part of 1988. Jobs included grass cutting in the car park and around the railway track, pruning of trees on the trolleybus route and tidying of the site in preparation for the Sandta Special. Several signs have been erected, a door has been installed in tram body no. 1, the box van has been repaired under the sink and the caravan sink etc has been removed. Not previously recorded is the news that a permanent electric light and power supply has been installed in the caravan. The steel waist moulding on Doncaster 33 has been cleaned of rust and painted in primer.

Doncaster 375 was thoroughly cleaned as on 14th November she was parked on display in Printing Office St, Doncaster. This event was organised by Dennis Pype with kind assistance from S.Y.T. and generated much public interest, and goodwill publicity for both D.O.L.R.S. and Sandtoft. The day was captured on video, and a full report appears in 'Fleetlines'.

This year's Sandta Special was also voted a success by our visitors, and broke even financially. S.Y.T. loaned Doncaster 188 to operate the station service. Once again, the Sandtoft christmas party was most enjoyable, in spite of the fact there was no Bob Ashton- produced video of the year's events this time. A selection of videos and films was shown, and drinks and a buffet was laid on.

And now ... over to Jim Sambrooks.

Hello! its me again writing this column after many years absence - from the column that is, not from Sandtoft. Despite the mild weather during January, site work has been minimal. The absence of the Lindholme Working Party for two weeks did not help the situation but I am pleased to report that the 'Lads from Lindholme' are back and working well. We welcome Steve and Dave as the latest team of trustees under the supervision of our own Dennis Patterson-Pype. The main jobs undertaken by the party during January include complete redecoration of the Trolleyshop interior, a start on the similar treatment of the Lecture Theatre, pruning of trees and the cleaning of the entire gutter along the depot front.

The hazardous traffic island just inside the main gate has been removed, not by the Directors and Associates of

'Destructions Inc' who speedily demolished the last misplaced bollard way back in the early 1970s, but by a team of volunteers led by Thomas Bond. This, coupled with the pruning of trees on the opposite side of the road should make entry and exit with buses a much safer operation.

Vehicle work has seen the upper deck ceiling of Cleethorpes 54 stripped of fifty years of paint, mainly by L.W.P. The vehicle's owners have started to remove the rear dome and with any luck they will know more about it than I do and fill in this section. (This year's project is the reframing of the back end. The rear dome was badly dented in 1968 when 54 was in collision with a ship, and is being removed for possible repair. Is any of our readers a panel beater who likes a challenge? - Ed.) I well remember when this vehicle was towed on to site by Green Tree George: the vehicle was an absolute wreck, rotten to the core. I also remember the number of people who said that nothing would ever be done to restore it. Progress such as this is always a pleasure to see. There, that's got me well in with the Editor for my first submission.

York Pullman 64 has gone to Barnsley; not Boulder Bridge Lane, but Yorkshire Traction's paint shops for a complete exterior repaint. York Pullman 66 is still resident at Sandtoft. Bradford 735 continues to receive regular visits from Robin Kitson and Tom Fisher who have recently been employed making and fitting access hatch panels. A visit from Nobby Clark and Richard Bilbe one Sunday afternoon saw the delivery of a considerable amount of spare parts for the Reading Commer tower wagon, CDP583.

Of the Felix/Sheffield group vehicles, Doncaster Leyland Royal Tiger Cub 55 has seen much attention of late, mainly to its bodywork with repairs to the front stepwell and the completion of exterior repainting. A coat of yellow primer has been applied below roof level and the lamps are now being refitted. Sheffield J.O.C. Atlantean 1357 has had its lower deck lining panels re-covered with new blue leather-cloth and has received some attention from the group's paint department in the lower deck.

Vehicle restoration work also dominates February's news. A new arrival is 'Vera', a foreign single-deck trolleybus from Limoges. No. 5 is quite a fascinating little thing in very good condition, dual doors behind front and

rear axle but on the wrong side of course, 14 seats and 48 standing. Painted off-white and red, Vera was built in 1943 but is of remarkably modern appearance with curved front and set-back front axle.

Apart from unloading a quantity of spares the first attention was a good wash down by the Lindholme working party. Owned by S.T.C. Secretary Martin Nimmo, Vera arrived on 11th February with trolleygear removed from the roof to allow for shipment but it is hoped to refit this soon. The name Vera comes from a badge on the front which actually says VETRA but the T isn't instantly visible.

It was suspended-towed to Sandtoft by a superb Leyland Landtrain wrecker, driven by Martin Gibbons. (An article on the tow should appear in a future edition of SANDTOFT SCENE - Ed.) To me, the wrecker was of far more interest than the bus. The Landtrain didn't go away unladen, a sad loss to the museum is Lincolnshire FS5G 2537, taken by its owner Bill Stanifroth nearer his home to a farm near Birmingham. It will be remembered that 2537 was the first preserved bus to run the free shuttle service between Sandtoft and Doncaster Railway Station on Trolleydays. It ran the service for the first four years before being withdrawn for restoration. It also has the distinction of being the only bus stolen from the museum and sold for scrap, I'll never forget collecting it from the scrapman at Barnsley in deep snow.

Other vehicle work has seen all the maroon panels on Felix 41 rubbed down ready for repaint, further repairs to both stepwells on Doncaster 55 and the interior of Sheffield J.O.C. 1357. Doncaster Daimler CVD6 112 'Tarburner' has had its nearside front wing repaired and partly refitted.

Trolleybuses in the news are Bradfords 735 having its front wheelarches stripped for renewal and 834 having its cab stripped to replace some rotten panels inside. Hopefully both will be back in service later this season. A restart has been made on the restoration of London 1201.

Site work has seen Bob Ashton refurbishing the interior of the lecture theatre with the assistance of the Lindholme working party, who have done much of the repainting. The L.W.P. have also painted very clear 'No Smoking' signs on all the front pillars of the depot, and have helped Bob's wife, Pat, to tend the gardens by the lecture theatre.

Nearby, the Miniature Railway group has been building a loading ramp to allow easier access for loading their engines on to trailers.

Electric hand driers, kindly donated to the museum, have been installed in the ladies and gents toilets by Barry Marshall of the Sheffield Transport Group.

Sandtoft has two items of workshop equipment surplus to requirements. One is a Stanley metal lathe, the other is a very old pillar drill originally made for Alfred Herbert Ltd of Coventry. The drill in particular may be of interest to an industrial museum. Interested parties should contact me c/o Sandtoft Transport Centre, Sandtoft, nr Epworth, H'side. Away from site, members have been busy lifting traction poles out of the ground in Reading. My last information was that 22 poles were out and ready to bring to Sandtoft as soon as suitable transport can be arranged.

Finally, the following conversation between a woman, obviously an ex-conductress, and two men, was heard in a pub in Nottingham recently. The word 'trolleybus' drew your correspondent's attention.

Woman: "I used to hate them when they came off the wires, you had to get a great big pole out from under the bus, it went the full length of the bus you know, and it weren't half heavy".

1st man: "It would be heavy, it wouldn't have been made of fibreglass in them days".

2nd man: "What would it have been made of?"

1st man: "Well ... steel".

One would imagine a steel retriever pole would be heavy, but would question its insulation value!

P.S.

● CONTRIBUTIONS WERE RECEIVED FROM BOB ASHTON, ROGER CLARK, STEVE LAST, MARTIN NIMMO, KIRSTIN OLIVER, TONY PEART, DENNIS PYPE, JIM SAMBROOKS, BILL STANFORTH AND FRANCIS WHITEHEAD. SANDTOFT SCENE No. 10 IS DUE OUT AT THE END OF JUNE.

● SANDTOFT HAS FOR SALE 23 COPIES OF 'BATTLER', THE MAGAZINE OF THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN TRANSPORT MUSEUM. THESE RANGE FROM OCTOBER 1976 TO MARCH 1980. THESE ARE YOURS FOR JUST £1 THE LOT FROM CHRIS OLIVER, S.T.C. POSTAL SALES, 70 PICKWICK AVE, CHELMSFORD, CM1 4UR.

PLEASE SPONSOR A TRACTION POLE

The Museum's first traction poles came from Walsall way back in the early 1970's. To help pay for them, members sponsored them at £5 each.

For some time now, we have urgently needed more traction poles, and recently the opportunity arose to acquire around 40 poles from Reading (full story next issue). What better way to help pay for these new acquisitions than to revive the idea of sponsoring a pole?

Unfortunately, inflation over the years has taken its toll and around £5 will not now cover the cost of a pole. Instead, we suggest that £30 per pole is a reasonable sum. (If they were to be purchased new, the cost would be well into three figures each).

It is hoped that a board, with the names of pole sponsors of the 1970's, and now the 1980's can be produced, and form part of the proposed permanent exhibition at Sandtoft.

Send your £30 now (please make cheques payable to Sandtoft Transport Centre Ltd) to:

Chris Oliver,
Financial Director, S.T.C. Ltd,
70 Pickwick Avenue,
Chelmsford, CM1 4UR.

Your contribution will be greatly appreciated. (F.R.W.)

ASTON MANOR ROAD TRANSPORT MUSEUM

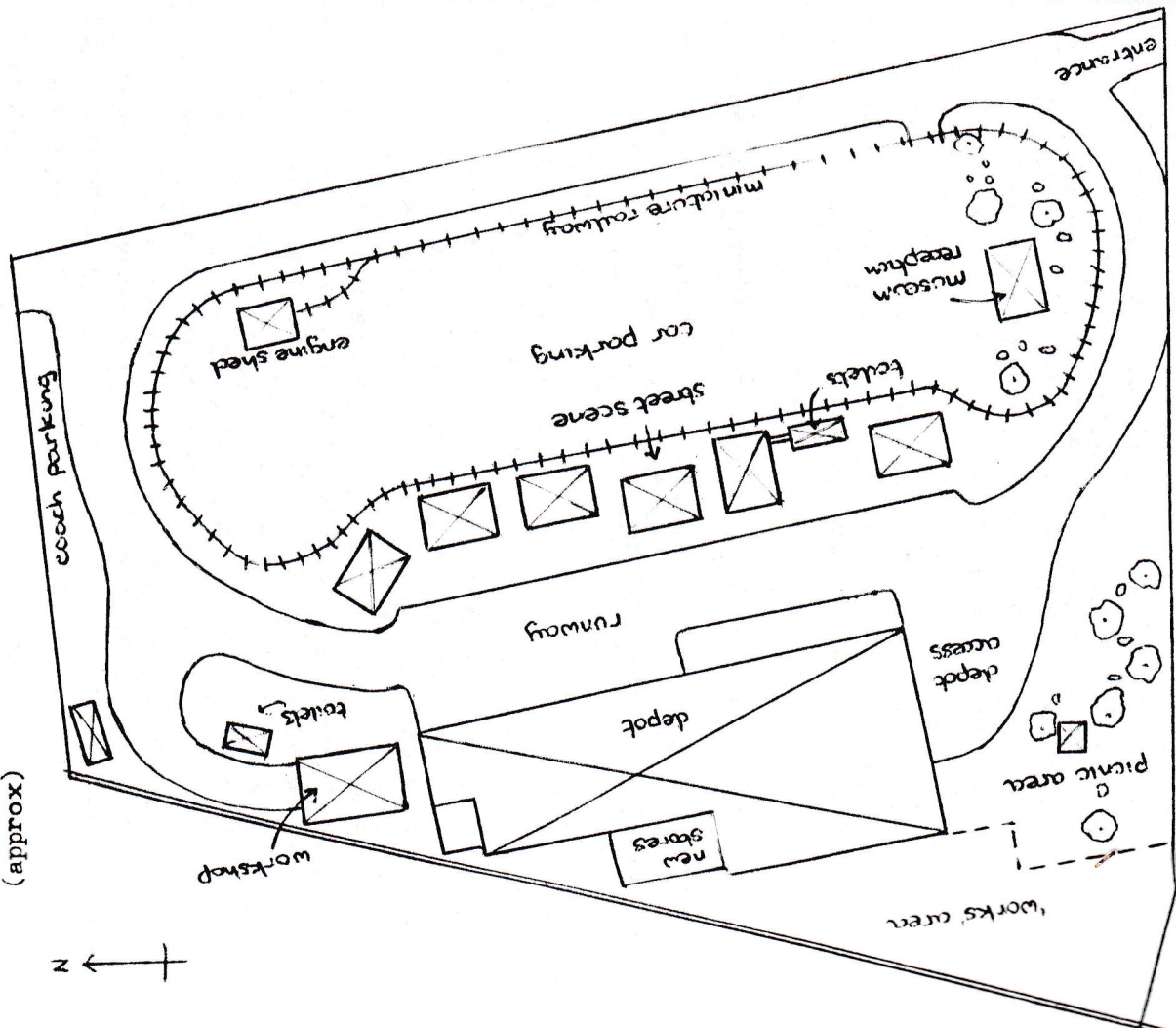
BILL STANFORTH

Recent arrivals at the Aston Manor Road Transport Museum in Birmingham include RM506 donated by the West Midlands Probation Service, and Daimler Fleetline XON41J on loan from West Midlands Travel. Museum members have also been involved in the rescue of the complete double-deck body of Birmingham 208, a Guy six-wheeler of 1926. This was discovered as part of a house near Stourport and required a major demolition exercise to extract it. Needless to say the

... continued on page 15.

SANDTOFT TRANSPORT CENTRE - FUTURE PLAN OF THE SITE

scale 1:1000
(approx)



A HISTORY OF R.A.F. SANDTOFT

MOST READERS WILL KNOW THAT SANDTOFT TRANSPORT CENTRE IS LOCATED ON PART OF THE FORMER R.A.F. SANDTOFT. OUR SITE, WHICH IS OF NEARLY 4 ACRES, CONSISTS OF HALF OF A SECTION OF PERIMETER RUNWAY, AND A SERVICE RUNWAY TO AND FROM A LARGE HANGAR BASE. STEVE LAST DISCOVERED THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE AIRFIELD.

Sandtoft was a very poor choice for a bomber airfield and should never have been built in these surroundings, near the Isle of Axholme. This somewhat desolate site was selected and, being just inside the western boundaries of Lincolnshire, was an exception as it was construed to house a training unit. The airfield was situated to the south of the A18 road with the River Torne and the South Engine Drain as the eastern boundary and the North Idle Drain and minor road as the western.

Sandtoft, after which the airfield was named, was a small hamlet on the western edge of the airfield and it was this area which housed the technical buildings. The airfield conformed to the standard late-war design in having three paved runways, the main one being 5,940 ft long and the two subsidiaries 4,950 ft and 4,290ft. These were encircled with a perimeter track.

Sandtoft opened in February 1944 in No. 1 Group, Bomber Command, as a satellite for No. 11 Base, Lindholme. The first arrivals were the Halifax bombers of 1667 Heavy Conversion Unit which moved in from Faldingworth on February 20, and this proved to be the only resident unit at Sandtoft. The HCU was straight into action but their first few weeks proved to be their worst for they had six major crashes.

The first was on March 7th when H alifax EB 184 piloted by Sergeant C.A. Street collided with HR657 (of 1662 HCU) while on bombing practice; EB184 went out of control and crashed just north of Gainsborough at Craiselound, near Haxey, Lincolnshire. The aircraft burst into flames and the crew of eight were killed. HR657, which was on a cross-country exercise, broke up in the air after the collision and burnt; all seven crew were killed.

Two days later Halifax DJ998 with Pilot Officer S. Burton as 1st pilot and Pilot Officer E.J. Patterson (NZ) as pupil 2nd pilot, was on circuit and landings when suddenly the aircraft yawed to port and entered a spin. This was probably due to engine failure and the crew had no chance to escape, all eight being killed. The third major crash of the month came on the 19th. Pilot Officer J. Hetherington in Halifax EB149 had just completed a cross-country exercise and was on a three-engine approach when the aircraft under-shot and struck a pylon. Four crew were killed and three injured.

On the 25th of the month Sergeant Pilot R.J.B. Cann was landing Halifax DG293 after port-outer engine failure when he undershot on landing and, as he swung to avoid a hangar, hit dispersed aircraft EB144. Fortunately the crew of seven were safe. Sergeant D.R. Harkin, pilot of DG305, failed to correct his Halifax as it swung on take-off and the undercarriage collapsed. He was again the pilot when, on the last day of March, DG307 swung to port on landing and the undercarriage collapsed. Only one was injured in each crash.

With March out of the way the HCU settled down to its training programme and April and May passed with very few problems. June heralded another bad month when, at 02.00 hrs on the first of the month, LL414 crashed out of control in a spiral dive at Glenisla, Angus, killing the eight crew. The aircraft, piloted by Pilot Officer L.L. Williams, was on night flying practice and the accident was probably caused by engine failure and poor weather conditions.

Halifax DG345 was on night flying training with instructor pilot Flying Officer F.H. Tritton and pupil Flying Officer C.D. Thieme when, at 01.01 hours on June 6, the aircraft swung on landing, hit EB914 and the undercarriage collapsed. Two days later Halifax LL459 dived out of control, hit the ground and disintegrated south of Howden Dyke Island, Yorkshire. The pilot, Pilot Officer R.L. Francis (Australia), had failed to gain control after stall while on cross-country. On June 26, DG395 crashed just after take-off, two miles east of Thorne, Yorkshire, and burnt, possibly after striking high tension cables. The pilot, Flying Officer G.N.L. Smyth and his five crew, were all killed. On June 30 the port tyre of Halifax DG338 burst on take-off, the aircraft swung and the starboard undercarriage

collapsed.

July continued with a spate of accidents and an unsolved mystery, even to this day. Halifax LL497, piloted by Flying Officer G.F. Hutchinson and with a crew of seven, went missing on July 2 while on night cross-country exercise and was never heard of again. A bad crash occurred three days later while Halifax DG414, with instructor pilot Flight Lieutenant B.E. McLaughlin and pupil Pilot Officer E. Barley was low flying on three engines. The pilot lost control from 200ft and the wingtip hit the top of some trees. The aircraft crashed and burst into flames, killing eight and injuring one. Six more were killed and two injured on July 25 when Halifax EB190 climbed to 400ft then dived into the ground on Hatfield Moor, Yorkshire.

It was said it was a good landing if one could walk away from it so, for instructor pilot Flying Officer G.G. Smith and his pupil, Pilot Officer C.R. Applewhite, it might have been just that when Halifax LK642 overshot on a bad landing, hit a cottage and crashed one mile north-east of the airfield. The crew of eight were injured but managed to walk away, albeit some were a little bent.

At 23.30 hours on October 10, Halifax LL501, piloted by Sergeant R.D. Christie, crashed into the side of the River Trent whilst descending to ascertain his position after a cross-country exercise. The aircraft hit the mudbank at the mouth of the river, fell into the water and sank. Five crew were missing and two injured.

Another run into trouble whilst on cross-country exercise was Halifax DK116 piloted by Pilot Officer G. Haddrell. At 22.00 hours on October 15 the port-inner engine caught fire at 12,000ft; the pilot was unable to stop or control the fire and three crew baled out. The aircraft crashed in flames on Capelstone Fell, Kielder, Northumberland. Three of the six crew were killed, including the pilot who probably remained at the controls because the rear-gunner had difficulty in getting out. Time has not eroded the crash and the remains can still be found amidst the trees on the Fell.

As 1944 progressed it became obvious that the demand for Halifax crews was decreasing so several of the conversion units converted on to Lancasters, 1667 HCU being one such

unit. It began to receive a few Lancasters during November and December 1944. During this period control of the station passed to the newly formed 7 Group, Bomber Command, on November 3 and Lindholme became No 71 Base.

The New Year saw more Lancasters arrive and there was a steady spate of accidents as the new crews mastered their charges. Sadly, two of the worst crashes were in April 1945 when the war was almost at an end. On April 5, Lancaster ND639, piloted by Pilot Officer J.E. Grayson, crashed into the ground at Crowle, Lincolnshire, at 02.58 hours while on exercise. The crew of seven were all killed. The other crash was on April 15 when Lancaster PB565 broke up and crashed out of control at Owston Ferry. From the eight-man crew five were killed and three missing.

With the war in Europe at an end the training at Sandtoft also came to an end and there was a run-down in the conversion programme. 1667 HCU remained here until November 10 1945 when it then disbanded and the station closed down. It never did justify its existence for the HCU could have been housed elsewhere, and with its departure the airfield was quickly abandoned by the Royal Air Force and most of its facilities were dismantled.

Today, the two-storey control tower has been altered into a private dwelling without destroying its original fabric or shape, and it stands on the side of the minor road which now crosses the airfield. The adjacent fire tender shed and airfield landing light shed are in use as garages while the concrete hardstandings serve as tennis courts and driveways.

A few other buildings remain on the technical site and the old operations block still stands in the yard of an adjacent farm. A few domestic buildings and the overhead water tank remain on a site in the village. The runways have been removed, possibly to serve as hardcore for the M180 motorway that cuts across the northern tip of the airfield.

PHOTOSCENE

Doncaster 375 caused many heads to turn when it went on display in Doncaster town centre for a day last November. She has recently been prepared for service at Sandtoft and should be a regular performer on Trolleydays again this year.

BOARD REPORTS

Summary of Board Meeting held 19.11.88

Quotations had been sought for headed notepaper. Plans to sell one of the tram bodies had fallen through.

The Financial Director pointed out that the accounts could not be adopted at the A.G.M. as they contained mistakes. The Directors would recommend that the present auditors should not be re-adopted.

The Board decided to withdraw special resolutions i and iii, but resolution ii was acceptable to them.

Ms Oliver wanted written contracts between STCL and vehicle owners to be ready by January. The Board would always require a request from a vehicle owner to take a certain course of action, not a statement of what had already been done. The use of vehicles at Sandtoft for business purposes could not be encouraged.

The Board accepted the final report of the Future Planning sub-committee. Ms Oliver's resignation as an editor of SANDTOFT SCENE was accepted with thanks for what she had done. The Board accepted the Storage Fees document, considering it an incentive to vehicle owners to keep their vehicles serviceable.

A request was received from the EPTA to run Bournemouth 297 at the Gathering. Mr Gibbons would check the vehicle mechanically at Bournemouth, it would be checked electrically at Sandtoft.

Ms Oliver asked to change the Company's bank, or at least the branch. The Board agreed but a mandate must be secured.

The meeting was suspended, and reconvened after the A.G.M.

The new membership subscription rate would take effect from 1.1.89. Subscriptions from Juniors for SANDTOFT SCENE would be £1. They would be called 'Junior Friends of Sandtoft'.

Jim Sambrooks was appointed Engineering Director. Candidates for managerial posts were considered.

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Summary of Board Meeting held 14.1.89

The Company's Registered Office was

to be amended to 28, Old Steine, Brighton. "Sandta" had been successful, and M. & B. Dare were to be thanked for their efforts, as were R. & P. Ashton for their work on the Grotto. It was suggested that two Sandta days be held in 1989. Dates were fixed as 17/18 December.

It was confirmed that the prices of tickets for 1989 would be: Trolleydays - £1.20 (£1) adults, 60p (50p) children/OAP, £3 (£2.50) family car. Gathering - £2.50 adults, £1 children/OAP (1988 prices maintained). Schools Days: 60p per child. Group Rate (advance bookings only, not applicable to the Gathering) - less than 25 no reduction, 25-49 10% reduction, 50+ 15% reduction.

The museum could be on mains electricity by July and several items of expenditure were authorised. Several budgets were set. All orders should be signed and dated and copied to the F.D.

A Contributory Societies sub-committee would be set up "for the purpose of liaison between the Board and the Societies, and to discuss the present and future operation of the museum". One rep. would be nominated by each Society, with one named substitute permitted.

It was resolved that the following be invited to act as managers:
D. Brown - Marketing Manager (to include Publicity, Events, Staffing etc).
A. Thornton - Traffic Manager

A. Fieldsend - Vehicles & Exhibits Manager
J. Sambrooks - Site Engineer
(vacant) - Commercial Manager

The option of separating the Catering and Sales Managers' posts was reserved. A. Thornton would be invited to act as Chief Cashier on Trolleydays. M. Cartwright was to be invited to become Trolleybus Driving Instructor.

The RAC Norwich Classic Car Run would be taking place on 28th May. It was agreed that in response to the request of the organisers, the vehicles be permitted to visit the museum, although not more than 20-30 cars should be allowed on site at any one time.

A suggestion was made that Sandtoft Christmas cards be produced.

Francis Whitehead and Julia had had the metal door rollers made.

1988-1989 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Each Director now has his/her own defined responsibilities, listed below. Members are asked to refer all matters to the relevant Director. A number of Managers are presently being appointed, but names and full job descriptions are not yet to hand.

- PEETE GODDARD - Chairman
- Chair, Touring sub-committee
- MARTIN NIMMO - Company Secretary
- CHRIS OLLIVER - Financial Director
- BOB ASHTON - Director, outside working parties
Audio - visual supervisor
- MICHAEL BARRATT - Legal Affairs Director
- MARTIN GIBBONS - Site Development Director
- Chair, Depot Allocation sub-committee
- JIM SAMBROOKS - Engineering Director
- Chair, Gathering sub-committee
- Chair, Operations sub-committee

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or contact Brian Wharton at the Sandtoft Transport Centre.

DATES TO NOTE

- SAT 29TH APRIL - DOLRS meeting, Three Horse Shoes, Town End, 8pm. Presentation by Mick Fowler. All welcome.
- SUN 30TH APRIL - Trolleyday, noon to 6pm
- MON 1ST MAY - Trolleyday
- SAT 27TH MAY - DOLRS meeting, 8pm, All welcome. Please confirm venue.
- SUN 28TH MAY - Trolleyday
- MON 29TH MAY - Trolleyday
- SAT 24TH JUNE - DOLRS meeting, 8pm, All welcome. Please confirm venue.
- SUN 25TH JUNE - Trolleyday
- MON 26TH JUNE - Sandtoft Schools Day. Volunteers always required for this important and enjoyable event.

Aston Manor (continued) ...

search is now on for a suitable chassis.

An open day is to be held at the museum on Sunday 9 July (12 noon to 5pm) and will co-incide with a vintage vehicle rally in the grounds of neighbouring Aston Hall. The rally will feature vehicles built or operated in Birmingham and will be linked to the museum by a vintage bus service. The museum is located in the old Witton tram depot which is currently being fully renovated to house the collection of buses, commercial vehicles and trams.

...rotaredo tnepuedepui ue jo GreatT
 (8) 3747RH, (6) 433MDT - JASON Throbb, (5) OTV137 - Nott-
 langhewg 137, (7) 433MDT - JASON Throbb, (5) OTV137 - Nott-
 TV93333 - Nottingham 367, (4) *p. 19) : (1) ENP78, (2) KXU769, (3)
 Auewsu

Boxwagon cookery

PIZZA (by Kirstin Oliver)

- 1 small onion, chopped
- 6oz grated cheese
- 3 rashers bacon rinded and chopped
- 2 tbs. tomato ketchup
- salt and pepper
- 8oz self raising flour
- 2oz margarine
- 1 pint milk

Light oven Gas 6 or 200c. Grease a baking tray. Sieve flour into a mixing bowl. Rub fat into flour until it looks like fine breadcrumbs. Add half the milk and mix with a knife. Add the rest slowly until you have a soft dough. Knead dough lightly on a floured table until smooth. Roll out to a 10" circle and place on baking tray. Spread pizza base with tomato puree. Put onion and bacon on, sprinkle with seasoning and top with cheese. Bake for 20-25 mins until base is golden brown and topping golden and bubbly. Serve cold with salad or hot with a vegetable.

THIS ARTICLE, SENT IN BY ROGER CLARK, ORIGINALLY APPEARED IN 'CYCLING WORLD'. IT CAPTURES THE CHARACTER OF THE ISLE OF AXHOLME, ON WHICH SANDTOFT IS SITUATED, VERY WELL.

The Isle of Axholme which sprawls along the west bank of the River Trent is fen-like in character and like the Fens of South Lincolnshire it has some charming villages. The area had been drained by Cornelius Vermuyden who later achieved fame by the draining of the low lying Cambridgeshire area surrounding The Wash.

The area is outside my normal day ride range but taking advantage of South Yorkshires cheap rail fares for senior citizens, I was in Doncaster shortly after 10am. Much of the heavy traffic which formerly used the A18 now pours along the M18 but even so, the road through Wheatley Industrial Estate has little to commend it. By the time I got to Dunsville, I was glad to turn off on to a byroad to Hatfield Woodhouse and was quickly on to a straight open road across Hatfield Chase. At Goodcop, I crossed the county boundary into South Humberside.

Just beyond Sandtoft, the junction of five roads, I turned into the entrance of the Sandtoft Transport Centre. Here on a former aerodrome is Britain's largest collection of trolleybuses and motorbuses. On 'Trolleydays' (usually Bank Holidays and some Sundays in the summer) the trolleybuses provide rides round a circuit. It was not an open day but I did meet one of the enthusiasts, Andrew Fieldsend from Chelmsford. He was busily engaged restoring a trolleybus which began life at Cleethorpes in 1937 and until 1958 operated on a regular service between there and Grimsby.

The Centre houses no less than fifty trolleybuses, seven of which are currently in running order and including one from Liege in Belgium and another from Aachen in West Germany. There are twenty motorbuses and some ancilliary vehicles such as tower wagons used for repairing and carrying out maintenance to overhead wires. There is a miniature steam railway which carries passengers. It is an interesting place and would be an ideal objective for a cycle ride for families with children.

As I resumed my ride eastwards, a small cabin plane was taking off from an air strip on my right whilst way above it, a high speed RAF plane screeched across the sky. How I detest the noise they make especially when I am enjoying a leisurely potter along country lanes.

As I turned through Belton, whose 15th century church has some interesting gargoyles, I spotted the Saucy Sandwich Cafe which is open every day including Sundays and which is now listed in the Cyclists Touring Club Refreshment Guide. To the south of the village alongside the A161 is an attractive picnic site.

My objective however - and the reason for my ride this way - was Epworth where cyclists Duncan and Anne Ward have established a cycle repair business and tea rooms. Duncan's shop is well stocked with new cycles, accessories and spares. In the adjoining cafe, Anne has devised a menu with a wide variety of light meals. What better service could there be for cyclists passing this way?

Epworth is a quiet village with some attractive Georgian houses lining its main street. It is best known as the one-time home of the Wesleys. Samuel Wesley was vicar here over 250 years ago and is buried in the churchyard. His sons, John and Charles, were born in the Old Rectory which is now a Wesley museum. It is open daily also on Sunday afternoons. It was John who founded the Methodist movement much as we know it today. He was known as the Travelling Preacher and on the 17th Century Market Cross is a plaque marking the spot where he often preached. The Methodist church in the village has almost become a shrine to his memory and frequently has visitors from abroad. Brother Charles was a prolific writer of hymns, being responsible for around 6000 - many of them popular today. It was whilst I was at Epworth that I learned that 1988 is the 200th anniversary of his death.

In my early cycling years, I frequently visited Owston Ferry on the east bank of the River Trent, the main objective being the popular cottage tea rooms which catered for cyclists in the 1930's. It was some time since my wheels had turned this way but I found that little had changed. The ferry which once took pedestrians and cyclists across to the Lincolnshire bank has long since ceased to operate, in fact

there is not a trace of the landing stage on either bank. The entrance to the church is through a stone arch and in the porch is an unusual memorial to servicemen from the village who had lost their lives in the two world wars. Photographs of the men are displayed in large frames, truly a more personal reminder than a name chiselled into a block of stone.

Ordnance Survey mark the site of a castle behind the church but there is nothing to see although there have been some roman finds in the vicinity. There is however a wide view southwards. I turned west on a byroad which twisted through the hamlet of East Lound.

This easy ride brought me into Haxey, capital of the Isle of Axholme. It is situated in open country and as a result, the tower of the 15th century church which is 100ft high, can be seen for miles around. In the village are stumps of several ancient crosses, one of them outside the church. An ancient Haxey custom which dates back to the 13th century is known as throwing the Hood. It takes place annually on 6th January. It is a violent game, something akin to rugby and the annual Shrovetide Football Game held at Ashbourne. Another feature about Haxey is that farming is still carried out in strips like the feudal system at Laxton in Nottinghamshire.

The direct way back to Doncaster would have been along the B1396 but instead, just past the church at Haxey, I turned on to a narrow byroad which took me through open fields from which I descended to a pond where ducks were enjoying the warm spring sunshine. It was a day to linger and I too enjoyed the peace of the spot.

As I approached the sprawling village of Wroot, I paused at the church where John Wesley was once curate. It is in a poor state and seems to have fallen into disuse, in sharp contrast to the Methodist church at Epworth.

Back at Doncaster, as I waited for my train, my mind wandered over the happenings of the day: the relatively easy ride, the places I had seen, the folk I had talked to and not least, the memories of rides long ago. It was less than eight hours since I had left Doncaster but I seemed to have covered so much in such a short time and for so little expense.

junior scene

OVER THE YEARS, SOME UNUSUAL VEHICLES HAVE BEEN ENTERED FOR SANDTOFT GATHERINGS BY SOME UNUSUAL PEOPLE. YOU CAN FIND THE ANSWERS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN THE SANDTOFT GATHERING PROGRAMMES.

- (1). Which vehicle was used as an eyesore and mobile tone-lowering unit before being restored? (1978)
- (2). WHICH VEHICLE WAS NEW TO THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE FOR CARRYING LIQUID SENNAPODS FOR THE REGULAR ARMY? (1979)
- (3). Which trolleybus (now resident at Sandtoft) was, when discovered, full of the most wonderful assortment of obsolete tractor parts, old magazines, fan belts and chains in buckets of oil? (1980)
- (4). WHO ENTERED WHY947 ON BEHALF OF THE ROAST BEEF OF OLD ENGLAND REAL DRIPPING APPRECIATION GROUP? (1983)
- (5). Which vehicle (also resident at Sandtoft) was used as a wind-break and mould growing unit? (1984)
- (6). WHO CONSIDERED THAT ITS SCABBY, BLISTERED PAINT-WORK, CHIPPED, OPAQUE WINDOWS, TOTAL LACK OF INTERIOR FITTINGS AND COMFORTS, AND CORRUPT, SICKLY ODOUR MADE 401JVO AN IDEAL PRESENT FOR HIS WIFE? (1984)
- (7). Which was the last bus to remain in Doncaster C.T. hoochy-coochy purple-stripe livery? (1985)
- (8). WHICH VEHICLE WAS RESTORED BY MARIGOLD, PREFAB SPROUT, GAYLORD AND THE MILKY BAR KID? (1986)
- (9). Why did J. Throob enter XAC691H (Austin 8cwt tat conveyance) for the 1987 Gathering? (1987)
- (10). WHICH TYPE OF VEHICLE IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE BRICKWOOD E. HONKINGWATER TROPHY, DONATED BY THE DIRECTORS AND ASSOCIATES OF DESTRUCTIONS INC? (1988)

SELLING POINT

Some programmes from 1980, 1984, 1987 and 1988 are still available. These can be obtained from Chris Oliver, S.T.C. Postal Sales, 70 Pickwick Avenue, Chelmsford price 30p each.

