

SANDTOFT SCENE

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TRANSPORT CENTRE



Sandtoft Transport Centre Limited

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Contributions and comments (for publication or otherwise) are always welcomed by the Editor.

COVER PICTURE:

A linesman seen hard at work re-aligning the curve in the trolleybus overhead at the front (south) end of the Museum during the week before 'Gathering '98.

Photo: Bob Ashton

The Company has a Vision Statement that summarises the Museum's *raison d'être* in one sentence:

To be nationally acknowledged as the Museum of the Trolleybus and to entertain, educate and give excellent value and service to our visitors.

This Vision Statement portrays exactly why Sandtoft exists and how Sandtoft should be run. All considerations, decisions, directives processes and actions of the Directors and the Members must be focused to meet this end.

1998 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Enclosed with this edition is the formal notice of, and agenda for, the Annual General Meeting of the Company, to be held at Sandtoft on 21 November 1998 at Sandtoft, together with the minutes of last year's AGM.

As before, the AGM will follow a strict format as indicated in the agenda, and will be followed by an informal open forum, when questions, criticism and suggestions can be considered, praise given and discussions can take place. These forums (or should it be fora?) can be extremely useful and informative and are an ideal way of putting your point of view to the Board and to other members. It is your Company and your Museum, so all contributions to the discussions will be welcome.

Now that we have our hot drinks machine, we will be able to offer everyone at the AGM and the forum a hot drink (at a special reduced price if both the Shop Manager and the Financial Director agree!)

THE DULUX COMMUNITY PAINT PROJECT AWARD

Earlier this year, Ken Hulks entered Sandtoft into the 'Dulux Community Paint Project' competition. This is a scheme whereby paint worth up to a total of £180,000 is given nation-wide to worthy projects in the community.

Well, Sandtoft was deemed worthy enough as we won first prize in the heritage section of the competition - over £1,000-worth of paint and a cheque for £100! This means that we have all the paint that we estimated we needed as part of the project submitted for the restoration of our 1898 ex- Huddersfield steam tram shelter and the two ex-Sheffield tram bodies; as reported below, the restoration and painting project is now well underway.

In the event of there being some paint left over, we will use it to repaint some traction poles or the section feeder boxes as these are now beginning to look rather shabby.

It is particularly pleasing to win, as it is the first time that we have ever entered such a competition. Well done, Ken for putting the entry together and submitting it!

THE NEW DEAL LABOUR SCHEME

One of the Labour Government's new policies has been the creation of the *New Deal* scheme. This is where adults are not simply allowed to just claim the dole: they now have to apply for placements in order to secure training and possible Vocational Qualifications.

It is very pleasing to be able to announce that the Museum has signed up to receive the services of the scheme, and, indeed, since early August we have had six trainees helping to maintain and develop the Museum.

Their first project has been the restoration of the Huddersfield Tram Shelter. The work to the exterior was completed in just under a month: all the side panels of the shelter have been stripped and replaced with new wood; the shelter has also received a fresh coat of paint and indeed looks very smart. The restoration of the interior is due to start by the end of September, this will include varnishing the ceiling, and replacing certain parts of the floor which have rotted - hardly surprising for a 99 year old timber structure! It is hoped that this building will become an area for children to use during school visits.

HEALTH & SAFETY.

During July Sandtoft officially passed its Health and Safety inspection with flying colours. The inspector, from North Lincolnshire Council, was impressed with the competent management and the way in which the Board approached and carried out its policies. He was particularly impressed with the "Do Not Move - Man Working" signs which are displayed on vehicles when positioned over the pit in the workshop: thanks for this innovation must go to a certain Mainline - sorry First Mainline - employee, who suggested the signs after a recent inspection at their Doncaster premises.

Now we have crossed this first hurdle, it is important that we do not become complacent about Health and Safety: it needs to be continuously developed and regularly reviewed. We are always liable to spot checks and in two years time we will once again have to go through the same rigorous inspection. The inspector reminded us that every single piece of legislation he could think of applied to us because of the wide range of activities that we carry out at the Museum! Well done everyone. Let's keep the pressure on to improve further our systems and stick to our safety rules.

MUSEUM REPORT (from Bob Ashton and Martin Hulks)

When we originally collated this Museum Report, we imagined there would not be much to write, but Sandtoft never sleeps, not even in balmy August!

Axholme Stores.

~~Work started~~ in late June in preparing the building for use as a display area: this included the tidying out of the building and storage elsewhere of the wood that could not be used immediately as part of a display. It is hoped that the building will be opened as a temporary display area by the Santa Special open day. All the display cases have received a coat of paint and are now waiting for glass to be fitted, although the rear of the display cases may be covered with wood as this would add a further wall for use in the display.

The British Trolleybus Society have agreed to partner the Museum in preparing and installing a permanent trolleybus exhibition in the Axholme Stores. It is hoped that much of this, and the transfer of the Trolleyshop into the Axholme Stores, can be in place for next season, but there is a long way to go yet!

Help will be required with these twin projects, so if you can help at all, please contact Ken Hulks on (01302) 364330. MH

Ritz Theatre

Restoration of the exterior of the *Ritz* Theatre has also been started by *New Deal*: this has included the re-panelling of certain areas of coving which we discovered were rotten. It is hoped that this re-panelling will give the *Ritz* a further few years in use as a public area, although the building is obviously becoming life expired.

Not many further developments have taken place on the interior of the building as part of the conversion to the *Ritz*, as most of our time has been taken by preparing the documentation and the museum for its Health & Safety inspection. Some further Film Review publications have been obtained from which illustrations can be taken. The latest publication obtained from a stall at the Lincolnshire Steam Fair includes Barbara Windsor as she appeared in "Carry on Camping". Sorry but the famous bra scene will not grace the walls of the *Ritz* - or will it?

For the European Weekend a selection of one hundred slides were put together for a special "Around Europe" slide programme. This slide show featured music

of the relevant countries of the trolleybus systems shown. Recorded music of a Wurlitzer organ accompanied the last three slides, showing the Renault trolleybus from Nancy during its demonstration run at Blackpool in 1983.

The *Ritz* Theatre has been somewhat under-staffed on the open days this year due to demands for staffing of the attractions in other parts of the museum. The shortage of staff was such that on both days of the European Weekend the *Ritz* was only staffed by one person - myself - who then had to frequently help on the railway, regrettably resulting in several slide shows being cancelled. Fortunately a teacher stepped forward for half an hour on the Monday and operated the projectors for the "Around Europe" presentation.

The "Welcome to Sandtoft" slide show is an important part of the information service given to visitors on their arrival. This slide show gives a brief history of the trolleybus (including the new developments in Liverpool), and is a guide to the facilities and attractions for the day's events. I am very grateful to Steve Gill who for many years has presented the "How a Trolleybus Works" slide show and talk, which he always tries to fit this in between his trolleybus and Isle of Axholme Tour duties. If you have not seen this presentation by Steve then I highly recommend that you make a special point of attending. Steve's style of humour and excellent quality of presentation cannot be copied. We still require further volunteers for the *Ritz* to remain fully operational on the open days.

The *Ritz's* organ has remained silent on many of the open days this year, including the European Weekend due to Martin Hulks' other commitments this year. If any members could step forward to play this unique organ please contact Martin or myself, we would be delighted to hear from you.

The *New Deal* team have made a start to continue the restoration and repainting of the *Ritz* Theatre's exterior, some decaying woodwork on the building also being replaced. At the same time the many layers of paint are being stripped from the ex- GPO telephone box next to the *Ritz* Theatre. It is hoped that the plastic windows will be replaced by glass to bring it back to its 1950/60's appearance. The 1980-vandalised appearance of the phone box will then be merely part of its history. RNA

Publicity (1)

The main operating season is now drawing to a close - well almost. At the time of preparing this report (11.9.98) there are still three officially advertised open days left: that includes our *Santa Special* on the 20 December. Invitations to book spaces in 1999 tourist publications are now coming in thick and fast. A review of these and other forms of advertising media, including some of the new Ian Allan publications (e.g. *Preserved Buses*, etc) is now essential. We have had a feature in the September issue of *Old Glory*, but we must aim to be featured with more articles about Sandtoft in this type of publication.

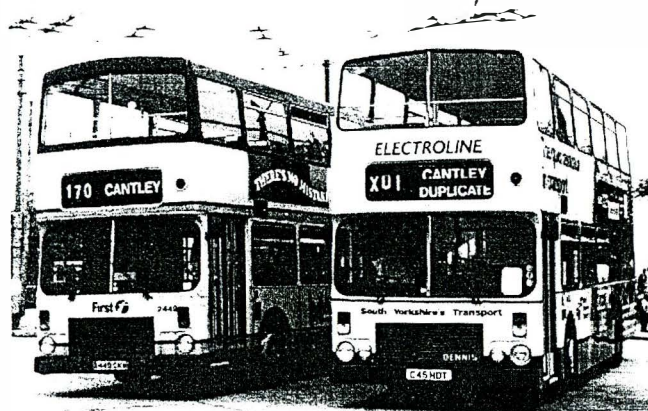
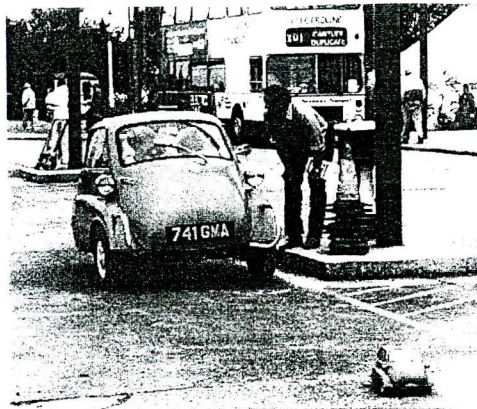
The local newspapers are still well worth advertising in, as they have given us some marvellous photo coverage, often with a full page feature. Several have featured colour photographs on their front pages. If these were charged at advertising rates they would cost us a considerable sum! As a result the museum is attracting a good attendance of visitors from the North Lincolnshire and South Yorkshire areas. Our museum is certainly gaining ground as a major tourist and educational attraction. We are now regular attendees of the meetings for the Epworth Business Tourism Forum Working Group, which has been set up by North Lincolnshire Council. This is further promoting the museum and the facilities we presently offer, and which we hope to expand on in the future. The



THROUGH BOB ASHTON'S VIEWFINDER

Top Left: Pole planting in progress (July 1998)

Top Right: 'Gathering '98 and the visiting blue bubble car with its remote-controlled companion disrupts the trolleybus service.



Centre: Sisters? Mainline's no.2449 and the South Yorkshire P.T.E "Electroline" no.2450 met at Sandtoft at 'Gathering '98 for a photo-call. No.2450, although having the next chassis number to no.2449, is considerably different underneath to the Dennis Dominator motorbuses and not unsurprisingly took much longer to build. The opportunity to stage this photograph was too good to miss.



Bottom:

Schaffhausen no.207 about to leave Transperience for Sandtoft on 29.8.98. Built in the early '60's, no.207 is very sophisticated compared with UK trolleybuses of the same age.

next meeting of this group is being held at Sandtoft on the 16 September.

It is disappointing to note that very little reporting of Sandtoft's 1998 events has appeared in the Contributing Societies' magazines so far this year, whereas I have read and seen some excellent reports and photographic coverage of the *Trolleybuses Galore* event that took place at the Black Country museum. *RNA*

Operating Days

Whilst some of the July and August "Trolleybus Only" events were low in attendance of visitors (several times, possibly, due to appalling weather), *Sandtoft Gathering '98*, the two special railway days and the new European Weekend were very successful. These all featured well in the local papers with their photographers taking some excellent photographs.

Some details of 'Gathering '98 are described below by Rob Cleary. There was the usual feverish activity during the previous week, getting the depot cleared and the Museum site prepared generally for the anticipated vast influx of visitors. This year these activities were added to by the presence of Peter Price who was working under contract re-aligning the trolleybus overhead at the front (south end) of the Museum and along the "back straight". New traction poles had been erected to replace old ones that were becoming structurally unsound, whilst many old span wires had reached (well beyond) the end of their life, having been in-situ since the original erection of the overhead line in the early 1970's (some span wire was second-hand then, so it did not owe us anything). Peter was assisted by Graham Bilbé during the latter part of the week. The newly aligned overhead is a great improvement both visually and operationally: over the years it had slowly deteriorated and had been the scene of various dewirements. However, it is now a show-piece again.

The long-awaited hot drinks machine arrived and was (eventually) commissioned (it is in the Trolleyshop at the moment) in time for 'Gathering '98. The event itself, organised by Ken Hulks and sons, and like last year on one site with car parking just down the Belton Road in the industrial estate, went off sweetly, attracting a fair, but not record, number of visitors (and rally entrants) with very good weather conditions. Rob Cleary organised the trolleybus service, and Ian and Alison Wilson the motorbuses. Financially, 'Gathering '98 was also judged a success though still not achieving the results of three years ago. An inquest on the arrangements and the event has since been held to help improve next and subsequent years' 'Gatherings'. (and Ken, Peter Whitehead, amongst others, wonders what happened to the fish and chip van - it wasn't there!)

The European Weekend created a great deal of interest: it was well worth the efforts of all the members who made it possible for the four resident European trolleybuses to operate (the article by Rob Cleary gives further details). The appearance of Schaffhausen no.207 at the event was well worth the four hour wait at Transperience for the delayed S&H recovery team to arrive on what had been a very busy August Bank Holiday weekend Saturday for breakdowns for them. The reward was to see (for what I presume was the first time ever) no fewer than five European trolleybuses all lined up together, and, at various times operated, at a museum in Britain. Britain being a partner in Europe was excellently represented over the weekend by Mike Dare's Derby no.172. *RNA*

Publicity (2)

All these events were backed up with the usual advertising. However 'Gathering '98 had no fewer than **five** days of free publicity on the radio: BBC Radio Humberside gave the museum five 15-minute pre-recorded features in their

morning programme. The sounds of a trolleybus (yes a trolleybus does make a sound!), the miniature railway steam engine, and the *Ritz* Theatre organ were heard as well as interviews with Ken and Martin Hulks, Jim Sambrooks, Tony Peart, Rob Cleary and myself. There were a few thoughts of "Did I say that?" when the programmes went out over the air! Radio Humberside also ran a quiz for the listeners, (which was extremely easy to answer!) asking them to "name two towns or cities that once operated trolleybuses in the Humberside area". Many clues were given as to the answer. The prize was of a pair of tickets for 'Gathering '98. Adding up the air time including the quiz which featured several times during the morning programmes, we must have received about one and half hours of radio coverage. It was pleasing to find out how many of our visitors had heard our museum featured on Radio Humberside. A special "thank you" to BBC Radio Humberside for such an excellent feature and helping to promote 'Gathering '98 and the museum in general.

I have now sent out in the last few days some new colour posters and more leaflets featuring the last three open days of 1998, to many museums and Tourist Information Centres (particularly those where trolleybuses once operated). The *Yorkshire Day* and *Santa Special* have the potential to draw enthusiasts and visitors to the museum and hopefully a few more features in the press. I contacted the local BBC and commercial TV stations about the last few major events, but regrettably we had no response or contact from them. On a Media Training course I attended earlier this year, the need to keep trying was strongly emphasised and this will most certainly be the case!

I would like to use colour much more in our publicity leaflets etc., but the cost of colour printing is still relatively high; as our local printer in Doncaster (who printed the 'Gathering '98 Programme) offers a very competitive price for colour photocopying, we are considering possibly producing much of our 1999 poster campaign in full colour.

I am now in the process of designing a leaflet for 1999 which I hope will return us back to an A4 double sided, three fold leaflet. I shall make enquiries about having these also printed in full colour, and alternatively a two colour version (as I was producing back in 1995). The cheaper black and white A5 format handbills have served us well, but are rather limiting: I hope to only use these for individual events such as 'Gathering, Yorkshire Day etc. in 1999.

The distribution of our leaflets is one that is there for everyone to help with. The Tourist Trambody (the signing-in point for visitors to the Museum) is always well stocked with STCL & SMR leaflets, so please help yourself to these to take to other museums you may be visiting. A STCL leaflet and a postcard view of a British trolleybus (plenty available in the Museum's Trolleyshop) can work wonders, especially when abroad. My Italian is not too great, but you can guess that packed away in the luggage on my 1997 visit to Naples was a good stock of STCL leaflets, and postcards of Nottingham no.506, for presenting to the trolleybus drivers and depôt staff: this proved to be useful to bridge the language barrier and when taking photographs. (They have also proved invaluable for helping to explain to the hotel staff and other visitors why one of their guests should be disappearing out at odd times with cameras, standing outside the hotel front photographing the trams and the trolleybuses going past the hotel! There were also some excellent on top views from the first floor dining room). (Photography tip for Naples :- Keep your cameras in at least three [inside each other] ordinary looking Italian supermarket type plastic shopping

bags, even to the extent of having a bunch of bananas placed to the top. Naples is very well known for its thieves, muggers and camera snatchers!).

Finally (1) our telephone Information Line went faulty a few days before the 'Gathering; this was eventually reported to BT (being a fault on their network). Unfortunately we have no way of telling when the line is faulty (as it has outgoing calls barred) other than by putting a test meter across the incoming telephone wires to detect the 50 volt BT line supply; we do not know how long the line was defective, or how many callers were unable to get the information they wanted - or even drew a wrong conclusion from their inability to get through. If members find that the line is out of order please let us know as quickly as possible by telephoning Martin on 01302 364330 or myself on 01302 842948 - or tell BT

RNA

1999

What of the events for 1999? These have to be finally agreed by the Board, and hence the next edition of *Sandtoft Scene* will contain full details of our 1999 events but in the light of this year's experiences, various details will no doubt be adopted, such as:

- ◆ A change of opening times at the museum to 12.00 noon - 5.00pm
- ◆ No more "Trolleybus Only" open days as in 1998 - instead these would become full *Trolleydays*, but reduced in number to two (11 July and 15 August)
- ◆ The free Doncaster bus service operated only on the Bank Holiday Mondays (May Day Bank Holiday excepted), and on 'Gathering weekend, Yorkshire Day only

The Provisional Operating Day programme is:

- 4/5 April (Easter Weekend Sunday and Monday)
- 3 May (May Day Monday only)
- 50/31 May (Spring Bank Holiday Weekend Sunday and Monday)
- 27 June (Sunday)
- 11 July (Sunday)
- 24 July (*Sandtoft Gathering Preview* Saturday)
- 25 July ('Gathering '99 Sunday - open 10.00am- 6.00pm)
- 15 August (Sunday)
- 11 August (Wednesday Special Railway Day open 12.00 noon - 4.00pm only)
- 18 August (Wednesday Special Railway Day open 12.00 noon - 4.00pm only)
- 29/30 August (August Bank Holiday Sunday and Monday European Weekend)
- 26 September (Sunday)
- 24 October (Yorkshire Day Sunday - open 11.00am-5.00pm)
- 19 December (Santa Special Sunday - open 11.00am-5.00pm)

Admission charges are yet to be fixed.

Regrettably the organiser of the popular SMR *Whit Gala Day* will not be able arrange for the event to take place in 1999, so if any other Contributing Society would like to have a go at organising an event for the Spring Bank Holiday Whitsun Weekend on the 30/31 May 1999, please let us know so that we can incorporate a name for this event in the 1999 publicity information.

The 'Gathering Preview day on Saturday 24 July, if given the go-ahead, re-introduces something tried out several years ago and may include evening

operation of the trolleybuses and railway.

The 1999 European Weekend will hopefully feature at least one other visiting European mainland trolleybus and some other visiting "foreign" vehicles to help add to the atmosphere. Graham Bilbé would be pleased to hear from you with ideas and offers of help for this event: contact him via the Museum address.

As soon as the events and other details are confirmed, the editors of the various Contributing Societies' magazines will be notified.

And finally (2), I suggest below some possibilities for the New Year's Eve (31 December 1999) celebrations. So far we have had no notification, indication or recommendations of vehicles that might be visiting Sandtoft in the year 2000: this brings me to the point of how are we to celebrate the Millennium at Sandtoft? At this stage one thought I have had to bring us into 2000, is to have an evening of special celebrations for the New Year: 31 December 1999 could be a celebratory evening for all our members. It could be appropriate to close 1999 by operating Bradford no.845 - perhaps suitably decorated with illustrations of the development of the trolleybus and the museum [No.845 ran in an official capacity to commemorate the start of trolleybus operations (taking power from the overhead wires) at the *Sandtoft Gathering '72* event.) Then, at the hour of midnight, the South Yorkshire "Electroline" no.2450 could bring us into 2000 by driving through a "2000 Millennium" paper banner to symbolise the start of a new era for the museum and the trolleybus, (especially if the return of the trolleybus to public service in Great Britain receives the go-ahead at Liverpool). That is just a possible starter for suggestions for events; I am sure our members could come up with some excellent and constructive ideas with a willingness to make a contribution in the organising and running of any special Millennium events. Over to you for your ideas!
RNA

STCL-Owned Vehicles.

General It is hoped that we can undertake the restoration of a Sandtoft-owned trolleybus to working order in the near future. Not only would this allow the further restoration of the privately-owned trolleybuses that are normally stalwarts of the operating fleet, but it would also give the Museum a great boost. It has several trolleybuses that are not really far off being "workers" - we can try to make a budget available, so all it would need is some practical assistance (although some extra money would also help make it happen faster!) to progress this further.

Maidstone no.72: Before the *'Gathering no.72* was pulled out to inspect its electrical circuits: it was found that the problem with the vehicle lay in either the wiring to the booms or the wiring to the traction motor. Whilst no.72 was out its interior was also inspected and was found to be in quite good condition, although some seats will need recovering. The window frames were also found to be rusting, although this has hopefully been terminated by the application of some strong rust proofer. Following inspection of the vehicle it is estimated that a sum of around £2,000 will be required for its restoration. It is hoped that work on no.72 will commence this winter in some form.

Archen no.22 is now suffering from bulging bodywork as a result of its rusting frames. The supervisor of the *New Deal* trainees is a former professional welder and would like to have a go at restoring no.22's bodywork. Linseed oil has also been acquired in order to restore no.22's seats. A full interior repaint will also be required before the vehicle can run in passenger service, also some seats require recovering.

Liège no.425 We have now discovered that Liège 425 is the second oldest working trolleybus in the world (after the London United "Didler" no.1). It is hoped that sometime in the near future work will commence on the repairing of the bodywork, as inspection of the interior has shown that the wooden panelling is extremely rotten.

See also the reports on the European Weekend for information about nos.22 and 425.
MH

Sandtoft Miniature Railway

The railway has proven to be a very popular attraction again this year especially for the children. On the first of the two "Wednesday Specials" in August one young lad rode on nearly every train that afternoon, sadly there were tears as he was finally prised from his carriage seat! A "thank you" to all the SMR and STCL members who helped on these two very successful open days.

We are noticing an increasing number of railway enthusiasts visiting the museum to see the railway. The drivers of the trains have to be careful to watch out for them as they suddenly move out from behind trees, bushes or the various level crossings etc. to take photographs.

The highlight for the railway for this year's operating days was to be *'Gathering '98*, when there were three steam trains in operation. Looking back through the archive of SMR railway photographs, there have been other possible occasions in previous years when up to three steam engines have been in operation, but certainly not on the same scale of operations as 1998. The income for the railway has been enhanced by having a Tombola Stall, with all proceeds going to the Track Replacement Fund. The existing track which was relaid in 1996 is now wearing out a lot faster than was anticipated: it was hoped that the track would last for at least eight years (Up until 2001/2). The more popular the railway becomes the sooner the present rail will wear out. The latest estimated cost of new rail track (excluding new sleepers, screws etc) is in the region of £3,000 for aluminium rail and £4,000 for steel rail; I am prepared to donate the scrap value of the present rail towards the cost of the new rail, but if any Museum members can donate any items large or small suitable for the Tombola Stall please do not hesitate to see SMR member Rose Hawksworth or myself. (This is a plea from the heart as we can only do so much by way of donating money or goods) If we can obtain the new rail it has been agreed that the *New Deal* "Action for Employment" Team will help to construct and relay the new track. All we need are the materials!

The railway has members of many ages, but a special mention of appreciation goes to Rita Matthews from Doncaster who is in her early eighties (that is as near as I am prepared to reveal Rita's age). Rita very patiently staffs the railway ticket office on most of the open days - and in all weathers too.

Congratulations goes to one of the lady SMR members, Rachel Fox who qualified for driving the steam engine in passenger service in time for *'Gathering '98*; Rachel is the first lady member to qualify as a driver of both steam and electric trains at Sandtoft. Not only can you now see Rachel driving the steam and electric engines in passenger service, but her dedication is such that she helps prepare and steam the engine at the beginning of the day and then cleans out the soot and debris from the boiler and the firebox at the end of an operating day. Another newly "passed out" driver for both steam and electric locomotives is Gordon Clayton. Gordon is a member of the *New Deal* team at Sandtoft. I must also thank Terry Everett the *New Deal* supervisor for allowing

Gordon to follow his remarkable enthusiasm and dedication to maintain and drive the steam engine whilst also taking an active part in the general maintenance of the railway.

The SMR would like to thank Mick Leak for his assistance in the preparation of the railway's risk assessment documentation. This documentation was one of the requirements for the inspection by the North Lincolnshire Health & Safety officer who visited Sandtoft in August. Even the wheel barrow is listed in this documentation (as is the one at the Shipley Glen Tramway)!

As yet the SMR does not have a black station cat: most preserved railways seem to have a cat - usually black - but as yet there is not one looking after the SMR stations, so there is no risk assessment for having a cat. There should be a risk assessment for the visiting cat at the offices of the *Epworth Bells* newspaper. The cat that visits their office attacked me without warning as it does many of their customers. That cat should have a risk assessment of 3-4. (3 = medium to high risk, 4 = near possible fatality) - and not to the cat either! (all potential future Publicity Persons - beware of the *Epworth Bells*'s office!).

Further signalling and warning lights were fitted to the circuit in time for 'Gathering '98. We apologise to the members of CAMRA for the tone warning device which on the afternoon of 'Gathering '98 must have heard it sounding off very frequently. Needless to say the crossing warning device worked very efficiently and stopped people crossing the railway tracks when a train was approaching. These warning lights and tone alarms have been installed to give an advanced indication for photographers of an approaching train, both at the car park crossing and the pedestrian crossing opposite the toilets. RNA

As with last year the August Wednesday open days proved to be a real success with over 170 visitors coming through the gates. The first Wednesday proved to be a real hit, possibly helped by the beautiful weather, and a good day was enjoyed by all. The second Wednesday was a little grey, but there was still a respectable number of visitors; there was also the opportunity that day to sample a ride on a trolleybus - thanks for this go to Rob Cleary and Phil Godber, and also to Mick Leak (for the use of Bradford no.746). Thanks for making the Wednesdays a success are also due to Bob Ashton, Ken Hulks, Stephen Hobbs, Julian Shepard (for help with the bus service), Rachel Fox, Geoff Warnes, Rose Hawksworth, Gordon and DO&LRS. (for letting SMR use no.33). As a result of the two Wednesday open days we received some excellent advertising from the local press. MH

Small Exhibits Recently Loaned Or Donated

One of the two very unusual Atcost British Anzani Lawnrider lawn mowers donated by Graham Bilbé, is now under restoration by two of the members Gordon and Gary from the *New Deal* team. The engine was removed for cleaning and testing. After a little hesitation, the engine firmly secured in the workshop vice, was successfully started. After repainting and fitting back together we will then hope to add it to display of stationary engines and other vintage gardening equipment.

I would like to thank Tony Peart for the donation of a sewing machine which is now on display in the Dorothy's shop window. Pat and Pat's mother, Rose, have also loaned some materials and items for this display. If you want to know the time at Sandtoft do not ask a policeman: you only have to visit the clock display. Bob Whittington spent many hours wiring up the huge clock in the

display window in time for 'Gathering '98. Bob has kindly loaned the clock for this display (which is controlled by the master clock in the square) from the former Wheatley Hills Secondary School for Boys, Doncaster (the school's original opening name). Thanks to Andy Thornton for donating many pots, pans, DIY tools and other items of household interest, which will be included in a future Hardware Display.

Something else to be displayed in the near future is the donation of a professional reel to reel tape recorder by Ian and Allison Wilson. Members of the public have also donated items recently too. We have received a donation from a Ted Gettings of Sheffield of photographic equipment, which included two Russian Zenith cameras. This type of camera was once famous for its low price and excellent quality of photographs. I suspect many a trolleybus slide or photograph was taken in the 1960's and 1970's with this type of camera. Some of my black and white negative FP4 films of Derby and Nottingham trolleybuses were taken in 1966 using a similar Zenith camera. I remember having a problem with the further distance: you had to stand back using the f2, 55mm lens (the average standard lens being 49mm), but I have to admit the photographs were needle sharp. I would like to thank the many other members who in the past have donated items for display in the windows of the Sheffield 419 trambody, the Theatre and the Axholme Stores, please keep them coming in. RNA

Tram Bodies no.419 & no.422

~~This brings us to the two tram bodies: both no.419 and no.422 have recently received attention from the *New Deal* team. Both roofs (outside) have been cleaned and treated to a new coat of bitumen - essential to survive the Sandtoft winters!. No.419 (the one in the picnic area) has also received a coat of Dulux Weathershield paint (from the Dulux award) to its exterior, whilst no.422 (used as the Tourist Information Centre) is to be re-panelled prior to being repainted: this will include the replacement of much of the original wooden paneling with new Marine Plywood. (but the purists need not worry because the old wood is being saved just in case a very rich preservationist should wish to rebuild the remnants into a double deck tram once again!) A new door is also being constructed at the rear of the tram body, as the present door is rotting badly. It is hoped to remove and restore (for display in the Axholme Stores), the earth leakage tester, which presently forms part of the tourist leaflet rack in no.442. This will then involve the *New Deal* team in extending the present shelving and possibly adding an extra row of shelves. RNA & MH~~

The Gardens And Wildlife

~~Several of our members have now been trained to use the recently acquired tractor mower. Phil Godber and Rob Cleary have been the first to use the lawn sweeper and the grass box which came with the tractor-mower. The use of these accessories saves many hours of having to rake up the grass cuttings. The *New Deal* team have made a start at their gardening list, which has included the removal of the weeds and surplus plants from the boarder next to the *Ritz*.~~

This year with the damp humid conditions we have seen far more dragonflies than usual in the last few weeks. It appears that some of the swallows which are often seen flying low over the grass in the main car parking area, have been gathering earlier than previous years on the trolleybus wires this season. Our resident owls have been very vocal just recently. Often one of them can be seen at dusk on the depot roof next to the workshop surveying for its supper as well

as screeching out its cry of territorial area. Phil and Rob witnessed and certainly heard a battle going on between a tawny owl and a white owl one night near the Staff Box Wagon. The resident robins including the new generation are now taking up their winter territories and their typical song unique to autumn and winter - "this is my territory all other Robins keep away" song can now be heard.

Already the autumn colours are fast appearing at the Museum as I close my report.

RNA

TRAFFIC REPORT (from Rob Cleary)

Or "On The Trolleybuses"

It was not until after I had put myself forward for the position of Traffic Manager that I realised 'Gathering '98 was so imminent: rumours of this driving me to the demon drink, and of me being spotted on regular occasions in the Reindeer are greatly exaggerated.

After the build up to 'Gathering '98, the event itself was, for me, quite a pleasant experience - an experience made easier and more enjoyable by the people who turned up to drive and conduct, and who I hope also enjoyed themselves as much as I did, even though they were working hard all day.

The trolleybuses used were:

Derby no.172	Huddersfield no.631	Nottingham no.506
Bradford no.746	Bradford no.834	Porto no.140

all of which were turned out spic and span - a credit to their owners and the other good folk who cleaned and prepared them.

We kicked the trolleybus service off with Derby no.172, Huddersfield no.631 and Bradford no.746, swapping with the other trolleybuses over the day. In particular, Derby no.172 did sterling work with several long stints in service over the event.

Each trolleybus journey consisted of four "circuits" of the museum, normally two in each direction, but restricted to the "inner circle" early on and late in the proceedings when access to the depot building was required by flea market stall holders patronage of the trolleybuses was very good, with most journeys having substantial loadings: this year, there was only one conductor per trolleybus (previous years have seen two, as occasionally happened in real life), and at times he or she struggled to collect all the fares during the trip, prompting the driver to do an extra circuit! As a trolleybus completed its journey, pulling into the loading bay siding outside *Dorothy's* shop and the *Ritz*, so a loaded trolleybus started a journey, thus providing a continuous service with an approximate 5-7 minute headway.

The only glitches in the trolleybus service were an unprovoked attack by a blue "bubble car" and its remote controlled companion, which although greatly appreciated by the public caused an impromptu halt to the trolleybus service, and the fact that when I rostered two "large" trolleybuses to run at the same time, the overhead power supply breaker kept tripping out (it subsequently turned out that one of the trolleybus actually had its brakes binding and this exacerbated the problem).

The drivers and conductors for the event were as follows:

Drivers

Graham Bilbé	Miles Cartwright	Rob Cleary
Janet Daintree	Mike Dare	Phil Godber
Sylvia. Shepherd	Andy Thornton	Francis Whitehead

Conductors

Graham Bilbé	Rob Cleary	Janet Daintree
Dave Shepherd	Andy Thornton	John Whitehead
Peter Whitehead		

I would like to thank the crews for their help and enthusiasm throughout the day and I look forward to working with them in the not-too-distant future. I would like to point out that there were no dewirements at all during the day - which I think was good going on the drivers' part (even if it denied the visitors some unscheduled entertainment) and a reflection of the improvements that have been made to the trolleybus overhead. It is also good to note that Peter Whitehead cashed in record fare takings of £134 odd - he thought it had been a busy shift!

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Bernice and David Needham, whose Nottingham no.506 won 'Gathering '98's "Best Trolleybus in Service" award. No.506 is a splendid vehicle, and Bernice and David have beavered away for many an hour on it. Well done!

I look forward to my next 'Gathering as Traffic Manager and hope that it will run as smoothly as my first!

European Weekend

With this event being organised and run by Graham Bilbé, I had very little to do as Traffic Manager. Notwithstanding that, I would like to comment on this event for several reasons, the main reason being that I enjoyed myself so much.

It was an event that had some of the ingredients that have recently become associated with Sandtoft "running days" missing: there were no arguments about who had done what to who and no snide comments or backbiting. Instead, everyone just got stuck into the work that needed to be done - to get the museum ready for its visitors, and to get the trolleybuses ready for passenger service or demonstration runs.

All in all, a lot of effort went into the weekend to make it a success - and a true success it appears to have been. Teamwork enabled all four of Sandtoft's "foreign" trolleybuses to operate under power - Limoges no.5 (Vera) and Porto no.140 in passenger-carrying service, Aachen no.22 and Liège no.425 on demonstration-only runs. This was all the more remarkable in that only Porto no.140 was serviceable a month earlier at 'Gathering '98. Vera was defective with a loose steering box, No.22 has had various unsolved problems and has recently suffered from some abuse in that the rearmost doors and operating mechanism have been damaged somehow, whilst no.425 (dating from 1932 and virtually untouched since it left service in Belgium in 1966) has not operated under power for so long that no-one can remember the event! Steve Harrison saw that all this was resolved that needed to be resolved, and Jim Sambrooks inspected the vehicles and saw fit to issue operating certificates (albeit a short term conditional certificate in the case of Liège no.425).

The icing on the cake (if it needed it) was the appearance of Schaffhausen no.207. This vehicle had previously been resident at Transperience in Bradford, but had to be removed from there by the end of August. During the early planning of the European Weekend, Francis Whitehead had been in contact with no.207's owners - the Bournemouth Passenger Transport Association - about no.207 attending, and whilst there was agreement in principle, details were not settled at that stage. The requirement for no.207 to leave Transperience by 29 August and other problems experienced by the BPTA enabled Sandtoft to both help the BPTA and benefit from a visiting vehicle: Ken Hulks arranged the

necessary towing, and no.207 arrived at Sandtoft on 29 August, whereupon it was inspected and tested, one tyre was re-cut, and Jim Sambrooks issued a limited operating certificate for it to take up passenger-carrying duties.

And so there were five. Graham Bilbé had produced a special information sheet for visitors, the weather was good (particularly for a Bank Holiday weekend), and visitors poured in. The photo calls when all five trolleybuses lined up - joined later by Derby no.172 representing Britain - were appreciated and were quite colourful. It was just as it should be and a morale-boosting event. It all goes to prove that Sandtoft can still do it.

By way of a helpful hint for owners of 'buses that are due for repaints, rather than pay a lot of money for someone to paint it, just cook up a large tray of bacon butties and approach Bernice Needham with the said tray of butties in one hand and a paint brush in the other and then stand back and watch the results: fuelled with bacon butties and supplied with painting materials, Bernice gives Brian Maguire a run for his money! [This I observed whilst Bernice was helping Brian with some exterior restoration of the paintwork on the Liège trolleybus - Yes, Brian was actually working on a "foreign" vehicle, such was the inspiration of the European Weekend - (In fact the whisper around Sandtoft is that Bernice and Sam - Brian's better half - are going into partnership to run in competition against Brian so if I was him I would be tempted to look for another career - their rates are better!)]

Thanks, Graham for arranging a superb event, and thanks everyone for joining in and helping: next year it will be even better!

SANDTOFT SCENE

Pressure of space (and the non-appearance of certain contributions on time) mean that some aspects of activities at the Museum have not received full coverage: It is hoped that the next edition will bring us all up to date.

All contributions are welcome, but please get items to the Editor in good time to help him keep you all in touch with what is going on or projected.

	<u>Contributions to Editor by</u>	<u>"Latest posting" date</u>
Winter 1998/9	5 December 1998	10 January 1999
Spring 1999	7 March 1999	4 April 1999

STOP PRESS: A significant amount of useful equipment and artefacts have been purchased by the Museum at the Transperience dispersal auction on 24 September. Details will be given in the next edition of *Sandtoft Scene*.

REMAINING 1998 EVENTS	
Sunday 18 October	Yorkshire Day
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ All the usual attractions, with ★ Only Yorkshire Trolleybuses in service (subject to availability) ★ Visiting Vehicles with a Yorkshire Bias ★ Twilight Vehicle Cavalcade ★ Kenco Coffee 	
Sunday 20 December	Santa Special Day
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ All the usual Attractions, plus ★ Presents for the Children from Father Christmas ★ Heated Trolleybuses in Service! (subject to availability) ★ Kenco Coffee and Mince Pies 	
Please come and help at either or both events & join in the fun!!	