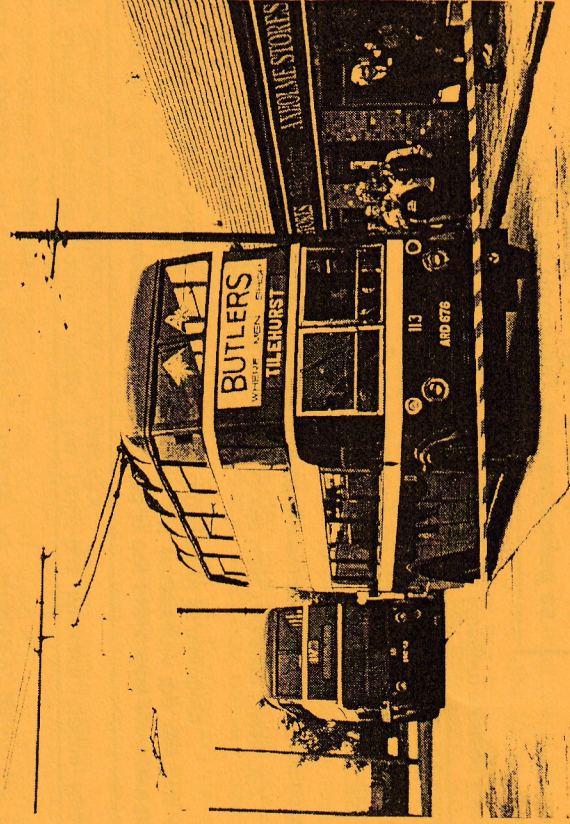


SANDTOFT SCENE

ISSUE No.45

SUMMER 1999



THE JOURNAL OF SANDTOFT
TRANSPORT CENTRE



Sandtoft Transport Centre Limited

A Company Limited by Guarantee

Registered in England No. 1747475 Registered Charity No. 514382

Registered Office:

The Trolleybus Museum, Belton Road, Sandtoft, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN8 5SX.

Telephone Information Line:

01724 711391

Payphone number:

01724 711846

Directors:

- Chairman (& Development)
- Secretary (& Membership)
- Managing Director (& Safety, Infrastructure & Maintenance)
- Financial Director
- Operations (& Shop)
- Publicity (& Miniature Railway & Lecture Theatre)
- Vehicles & Workshop
- Francis R. Whitehead
- Robert P. Shepherdson
- Kenneth Hulks
- Alan J. Piatt
- Christopher N. Proctor
- Robert N. Ashton
- James Sambrooks
- Brian D. Maguire

Correspondence should be addressed to the Director responsible for the relevant area of operation, or to the Managing Director. As necessary, letters will be forwarded to the appropriate person.

© Sandtoft Transport Centre Limited, The Trolleybus Museum, Belton Road, Sandtoft, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN8 5SX

The content of individual items and articles printed in this publication represent the opinions of the individual contributors: they are not necessarily the opinions or policies of Sandtoft Transport Centre Limited, its Directors or its members

Sandtoft Scene Editor:

D.A. Shepherd 14 Westend Gardens Pollington, Goole East Yorkshire DN14 0EZ
Contributions and comments (for publication or otherwise) are always welcomed by the Editor.

COVER PICTURE: Reading no.113, looking resplendent, is driven through a ribbon by Lord Stoddart of Swindon during the ceremony on Sunday, 30 May 1999, to launch no.113 back into service.

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.

EDITORIAL

My apologies for the late arrival of this edition but yet again the age-old problem of late copy has thwarted attempts to get the 'Scene' back on schedule. Many thanks to this time's contributors, new and old.

My work as a coach driver takes me to many places: recently I had the opportunity to accompany a party visiting the Royal Armouries in Leeds. I presented myself at the reception desk and was immediately presented with a complimentary admission ticket and a meal voucher. I was suitably impressed by the layout of the building which has obviously been purpose built. The six-storey high hall-of-steel built within the main staircase is quite something - just imagine looking up inside a circular wall some thirty-foot in diameter, lined with knives, swords and pieces of armour. There were staff in abundance, all dressed in the style of a knight's squire and therefore easily identifiable. They also ran a timetable series of events throughout the day. Although there was very little "hands-on" for visitors to do, there was a considerable number of video screens with short shows about the various weapons and their use in history. Also there were computer terminals running short interactive quizzes. One of the most interesting things I found as a member of a museum was the detail paid to the restoration and preservation work: do you know how to tell the difference between steel items found in a river and those found buried in soil? Or the problems caused by humidity when preserving composite items such as a metal gun in a fabric lined wooden case? Overall, there were many good ideas which we could adapt for our use and it was a thoroughly enjoyable day out. There was even something for the public transport enthusiast - a "Concord" stage coach, which had been brought to Britain by Buffalo Bill when his Wild West Show visited this country and part of an exhibition dedicated to Buffalo Bill. By the way, that grotesque mask on the direction signs really does exist: it was part of a suit of armour presented to the King and the face on the visor is supposed to be a caricature of the giver.

Dave Shepherd

SANDTOFT GATHERING'99

Yes, 'Gathering '99 is rapidly approaching and take particular note that although it is the last weekend of July, it is early this year - **25 July**. Details for both the Saturday preview day and the 'Gathering itself were included last time in *Sandtoft Scene*.

A reminder to those who are planning to camp or caravan at Sandtoft over the weekend - space is severely limited this year, but you are welcome to set up on a camp site nearby - contact Mr. Buxton on 01724 710513 A.S.A.P. for details and to book.

With it being the central event to our 30th Anniversary celebrations, there is a lot to do in the lead up to the weekend - even more than usual,

so every little bit of help is urgently needed to make it the success we need it to be: 'Gathering is our big day and more than ever this year, we need to maximise the profit we make on the day. So, **PLEASE**, your help - and bring someone else with you to also help ! Make yourself known to Ken Hulks, or his team, and they will allocate tasks to suit both you and us. It all promises to be a good, enjoyable weekend -we look forward to seeing you.

30TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR TROLLEYDAYS

Dates of Trolleydays etc. yet to come this year are:

- 24 July (Saturday) Sandtoft Gathering '99 Preview (see page 3 for fuller details))
- 25 July (Sunday) Sandtoft Gathering '99 (see page 3 for fuller details))
- 30 July - 1 August & 4 August (Friday, Saturday*, Sunday, Wednesday) Trolleydays (provided to coincide with the 1999 F.I.C.C. International Caravan Rally at the Lincolnshire Show Ground) * Saturday also coincides with Epworth Entertains)
- 1 August (Sunday) Trolleyday
- 11 August (Wednesday) Special Railway Day
- 15 August (Sunday) Trolleyday
- 18 August (Wednesday) Special Railway Day
- 29/30 August (Sunday and Monday) August Bank Holiday European Weekend
- 5 September (Saturday) Trolleyday (provided to coincide with Epworth Entertains)
- 26 September (Sunday) Trolleyday
- 24 October (Sunday) Yorkshire Day
- 11 December (Sunday) Santa Special
- 19 December (Sunday) Santa Special

Please remember, the free Doncaster bus service will only operate on certain of these dates, so check by calling our Telephone Information Line (01724 711391), or look at our Web Site <http://freespace.virgin.net/neil.worthington/sandtoft98.htm>.

All these events need your assistance to make them a success, and help of all sorts really is required before, during and after the Museum opening times. The more of us that turn up to help, the more fun it is for everyone, workers and visitors alike.

VEHICLE BADGE COLLECTION GIFT

An extensive collection of vehicle badges has been generously donated to the Museum by Mr. Henry Riley of Burringham. Some of you may be aware that Henry is not in the best of health: the board send him and his wife their thanks and best wishes at this difficult time.

A start has already been made under the guidance of Ken Hulks and

Bob Ashton on cataloguing the collection, with the aim of displaying the badges to their best advantage at Sandtoft. It is hoped to have an official handover in the near future if Henry is well enough to attend.

VEHICLE INSPECTORS REQUIRED

In connection with a review by the board and development of the inspection and testing of vehicles for operation at the Museum, the directors would like to make up a team of vehicle inspectors. As at present, the "split" of disciplines between electrical and mechanical inspections will continue. In particular, mechanical/bodywork inspectors are needed (although, of course, we could use more electrical inspectors).

The intention is for the Museum to have a selection of "authorised" inspectors who can work to an agreed common standard, based on the MoT Class 6 vehicle test (Class 5 for non-passenger carrying, demonstration-only duties). At present only trolley vehicles (for which the test is adapted) are involved, but it is probable that other vehicles not otherwise tested (and taxed) for use on the road will be added. Obviously, we would prefer people who are familiar with the working bits (and bodywork) of heavy vehicles, but other keen volunteers would not be excluded. Regular attendance at Sandtoft, whilst desirable, is not vital, but we need people we can depend on and who will attend when they say they will !

Approval of candidates as "authorised" will depend on their general suitability - knowledge, experience, training, application and formal qualifications are all relevant - whilst suitable training and guidance will be arranged.

If you would like to help with either the mechanical/bodywork side or the electrical side, please contact Jim Sambrooks or our Secretary, John Heighway initially: both can be contacted via the Museum address.

READING No.113 LAUNCH

Following a complete refurbishment of Reading trolleybus no.113, a special ceremony was held at Sandtoft over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend to celebrate its return to service (see article on page 14). We were privileged to have Lord Stoddart of Swindon, Vice-President and Custodian Trustee of the British Trolleybus Society as our Guest of Honour. Lord Stoddart is a long time supporter of the trolleybus as an efficient means of urban transport and played an important role in the fight, back in the mid 1960's, to keep Reading's trolleybuses.

A good crowd gathered to witness the ceremony; after short speeches by our Chairman, Francis Whitehead, and BTS Chairman, Mike Dare, Lord Stoddart expressed his admiration, not only for the work carried out on no.113, but also for the work and progress carried out at Sandtoft over its thirty year existence.

The official party were then joined by members and visitors on board

no.113 for its first journey in service for many years under Sandtoft wires.

The vehicle is a most welcome addition to our service fleet and sincere thanks are due to each and every one of those who have been instrumental in seeing the project come to fruition.

Later in the day Graham Bibbé gave two extremely interesting film shows with footage of Reading no.113 on its last day in service (in 1961) and London no.1812's epic journey back from Spain in 1977.

BRITAIN'S LATEST 'THEME' ATTRACTION?

Do you recoil in horror when you hear the word "theme" in connection with "theme" parks, "theme" pubs or in the latest trend of television DIY programmes, "theme" homes? You do? Never mind, please read on!

You may like to know, therefore, that "theme" days may be coming to a Transport Museum not a million miles from Sandtoft! A possibility being considered by the board is to hold a number of such days next year as a way of celebrating the new millennium. We already have what might be described as "theme" days - European Day, Yorkshire Day and Santa Day - so we really are in the forefront of such developments, aren't we?

It is hoped that this idea can be extended with perhaps a Bournemouth Day (see news about Bournemouth no.202), a Nottingham Day, a Reading Day, a Bradford Day or even a London Day (when no.1812's rebuilding is complete). Vehicles, both trolleybuses and motorbuses, could be invited from other museums or individual owners to recreate, albeit in a small way, a "flavour" of those systems in their heyday.

The board welcomes any suggestions and ideas you may have and would be interested to hear your views on this and any other ways we could mark the start of the 21st century. It would also appreciate your help in getting such an idea off the ground with the aim of injecting renewed variety and impetus into the Sandtoft programme.

VEHICLE NEWS

A busy Spring has seen a lot going on with the fleet:

Bradford 706: The floor in the lower saloon has been painted, some seat frames welded, a fire extinguisher fitted, wheels painted, gantry fixed down, trolleyheads repaired, and some other chassis jobs completed. New brake hoses are also in place.

Bradford no.792: In the last edition, we welcomed no 792 back to the operational fleet: amongst the jobs carried out before it was passed as fit to operate was the fitting of new bearings and the rebuilding of the brake shaft. New (authentic) legal and other lettering have also been applied (similar lettering has now been applied to nos. 703, 706 and 834).

Cleethorpes no.54: Work on the brakes, plus further work on the cab floor and electrical wiring is taking place.

Doncaster no.33 has been repaired following head gasket trouble.

Doncaster no.375: The interior lower saloon has been stripped out and work is progressing on its restoration.

Huddersfield 619: The lower rear framing and panel has been changed and the retriever pole holder repaired; four new panels have been fitted and paint stripping completed. No.619 is now primed and sports undercoat. The dynamos have been fitted and the traction motor wired up.

Huddersfield no.631: Two new tyres have been fitted, as have replacement bulbs to rear lights. The track rod has been repaired and there have been a number of small jobs carried out prior to testing.

London no.1812: Refurbishment work continues, with some rotten flooring replaced, new upper deck ceiling panels and beading fitted and completed up to the line of the rear bulkhead, the new brown leatherscloth delivered and some already fixed in place on the side panels upstairs, and the re-painted seat frames about to be fitted upstairs. The "top of stairs" area has been cleared ready for a new stair case to be constructed. The front destination box is being rebuilt. A new towing bracket has been fitted.

Maidstone no.56: The brake linkages have been reamed out, sleeved and reassembled. Amongst the other various jobs carried out in order that no.56 could be tested (for service at the 'Gathering - fingers crossed) are new hoses fitted to the brakes, repairs to the platform, repairs to the night blinds, the front panels (properly) repainted, external lettering applied (for emergency exit etc.) and a grease all round.

Maidstone no.72: The upper saloon seats, lights and polished wood trims have all been removed and the ceiling sanded for a repaint.

Nottingham no.506: There is a small problem on the hand brake, but otherwise has been passed fit for service.

Porto no.140: The brake air cylinder was found to be holed and has now been removed, repaired and refitted; to make no.140 serviceable again.

Reading no.113: The full certificate for operational duties was eventually issued on the morning of 30 May, following the carrying out of a large number of odd jobs (the sort of things you would expect after over 38 years out of service!) and "finishing off" jobs after its extensive refurbishment. Probably the major task amongst these was replacing the king pin bearings, which were found to be seized.

No.113 has been completely re-cabled both on the traction side and on the low voltage side: a full set of new traction batteries has been fitted. An adapted prop-shaft has had to be made up (the original has been lost since no.113 was originally bought back in 1961, when it was minus its traction motor, it being retained by Reading Corporation for use in their new Sunbeams) and a towing bracket for the front axle has been fabricated. No.113 has been re-varnished as a finishing off of its re-paint

and is now in pristine condition.

Reading no.181: New legal lettering has been applied and a start made on cleaning up the interior as a preparation to getting no.181 operational again. Four new tyres and a fire extinguisher have been fitted.

Rotherham no.74: - Two new window sections have been made; the front brakes are being assembled.

Schaffhausen no.207: with the agreement of its owners, the Bournemouh Passenger Transport Association Limited, no.207 is due to have its roof repainted to alleviate the effects of the Sandtoft weather.

And news of two other trolleybuses:

Bournemouh no.202: An enquiry has been received from the Trolleybus Museum Company with a view to their pre-war Sunbeam MS2 open top trolleybus no.202 (a younger sister to the BTS's no 99 which is restored to pre-war livery and which was re-numbered as no.212 in the 1950's) visiting Sandtoft next year. The suggestion has been warmly welcomed by the board - and obviously suitable temporary undercover accommodation will be arranged for its stay!

Bournemouh no.297: The Bournemouh Passenger Transport Association's 1962 Sunbeam MF2B, no.297, which we reported last time as being due to go off to the Czech Republic, very sadly suffered serious accident damage whilst en route in Europe in early June (it left Bournemouh on 6 June). No.297 therefore returned to Bournemouh without further ado.

The BPTA advise us that extensive professional repairs to the bodywork have already commenced, and that, once completed, no.297 is expected to be transferred to the Black Country Museum for final electrical repairs and to be re-commissioned before the end of the year. The possibility of no.297 then continuing with its visit to Czech is apparently not entirely ruled out.

WANTED

Rotherham no.37 requires either a new owner who can spend time and money on it to bring it "up to scratch", or sponsors who are prepared to do likewise in conjunction with the present owner.

The vehicle, a 1950 Daimler CTE6 six-wheel trolleybus with 1956 Roe bodywork, is presently stored near Sandtoft and is structurally sound. Subject to the usual conditions, it needs to be moved from its present storage site, and could be transferred to, and stored at Sandtoft.

Initial enquiries to Brian Maguire, 64, High Street, Belton, Doncaster, DN9 1NR.

EXPERIMENTAL TROLLEYBUS OVERHEAD LINE

With the agreement of the board, Peter Price has installed a number of experimental overhead fittings on the lines along the "back straight".

Peter, who has undertaken much tram and trolleybus overhead line work, is trying to develop simple, efficient equipment, hopefully for use in future U.K. trolleybus installations.

MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES COMMISSION

The board is in the very early stages of preparing an application for registration with this body. This is no easy task and will involve a great amount of time-consuming, detailed work, such as cataloguing, referencing and describing absolutely every exhibit, however large or small, placing the information both on computer and hard copy (pen and paper to you and me!), in addition to bringing many other aspects of the Museum into line with certain standards as required by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

If the application is successful - and there is no reason to believe otherwise - then our eligibility for grants which would otherwise be unavailable, is greatly increased. This is not something which can be completed overnight: it is a long process, but one which is believed to be the right way forward if Sandtoft is to be regarded as a professional, high quality operation.

EDUCATION POLICY

Another initiative about to be undertaken by the board is the preparation of an Education Policy which will enable schools to become more aware of the educational possibilities on offer at Sandtoft. There is already a steady stream of school parties making visits, but this policy will be targeted more closely at the National Curriculum requirements for children in Key Stages 1 and 2 - i.e. children between the ages of 5 and 11. It will also require that we work more closely with teachers and schools to our mutual benefit. The aim will be to have at least one school party visit per week and to liaise with teachers, *New Deal* and possibly local business to improve the number, variety and quality of our exhibits. An added incentive is that it will allow us to be eligible to apply for yet another category of grants.....and who knows, it might just spark of a lifelong interest in some of these youngsters, which is just what we need to ensure a long-term future for Sandtoft.

SOCIAL SECRETARY

Yet another idea being floated by the board is that the post of Social Secretary be established to build up relationships between the various groups, societies and individuals at Sandtoft.

If there is anyone out there who thinks they would like to 'give it a go' or indeed have any better ideas, then please let us know.

IMAGE

A recent issue of the London Bus Preservation Trust's excellent *Cobham Bus Museum Magazine*, featured one particular item that focussed on the image of that organisation in the eyes of the outside world. Not unreasonably, parallels can be drawn between Cobham and Sandtoft in

this respect, and so, with acknowledgements to LBPT and reference to our Vision Statement (reproduced on page 2), readers might care to consider the following issues and perhaps contribute their own views.

- ◆ What are our objectives and how can we achieve them?
- ◆ Who and where is the potential market for visitors and future members, and
How can they be targeted effectively?
- ◆ What does the Museum offer to intending visitors, be they members or general public, and
What are their expectations?
- ◆ What perceptions do people have about the Museum?
- ◆ What role do we, or should we, have in the local community?
- ◆ Are our vehicles and exhibits described adequately, especially for those visitors who may not be knowledgeable enthusiasts?
- ◆ What are the needs of existing members?
- ◆ Are sufficient volunteers available to provide effective, safe, informed and courteous support on running days and other times when the Museum is open?
- ◆ What contacts do we have with other organisations and how can co-operation and co-ordination be increased?
- ◆ What are the benefits/ demands of Museums and Galleries Commission registration?

If you have any thoughts on the above, then please communicate them to the board c/o our Secretary, John Heighway.

SANDTOFT'S 'IMAGE'

"Image" has come to play an increasingly noticeable role in present day life and there are many links between this and some of the issues raised in the previous item. Whether we like it or not, if Sandtoft is to have a secure future, then we have to realise that we have to go beyond the "playing buses" stage and give the visitor the feeling that they have had good value for money - enough for them to want to come back again and again. Our Vision Statement addresses this point.

A member (name and address supplied) writes:

On a recent visit to Crich after a gap of many years, one of the first things that struck me was the immaculate and consistent turnout of the crews with correct uniforms, clean shirts, ties and a generally tidy appearance. My companions (some of whom were not enthusiasts) and I were immediately struck by this and I heard several favourable comments.

There is no reason why this should not happen at Sandtoft. Crews in tee-shirts, jeans and trainers, however clean they are or comfortable they feel, may have been acceptable in the past but this is no longer the

case, especially as our range of visitors expands beyond simply the enthusiast fraternity.

Our approach to the general public and how we deal with them is of great importance. Organisations such as ours have to go that bit further these days: politeness costs us nothing and yet leaves a good impression, knowledge of the subject and of the Museum is important when acting as guide or conductor, or just answering visitors' queries, assisting passengers - particularly the less able-bodied - on and off vehicles, having patience and understanding at the end of a long day when answering yet more of the questions you've been asked many, many times before, crews being smartly dressed, or simply engaging visitors in conversation and showing an interest in them - all only small things, perhaps, but all contributing to the overall Sandtoft "experience".

We all have to make that special effort when the public are on site to make them feel welcome, and this can be assisted by plenty of clear information displayed with details of the day's programme, vehicles in service, times of operation, etc.

It is all a question of attitude: we must be seen to do better than others and to go that one step further. I believe we can all play our part in this.

SANDTOFT PRESS FEATURES

The Museum continues to attract good coverage in the local press, although, despite being supplied with press releases, the papers did seem to miss the point over the launch of no.113 ! The *Scunthorpe Evening Telegraph* of 1 June carried a colour posed photograph of Paul Shepherd hanging off Huddersfield no.631's platform, and the following day carried a 4-photograph feature (in colour again) showing eight year old visiting enthusiast Daniel Fox "taking down details and registration numbers" in front of Reading nos. 181 and 193, an action shot of Porto no 140 entering the lay-by in front of the Axholme Stores with John Heighway pulling the frog, your editor showing visitors around the depot, and Stuart Lamming with David Stubbings preparing a steam engine for service.- not a mention of no.113, but we shouldn't complain, as it is all good publicity for us !

The *Doncaster Evening Post* of 8 June carried a full page magazine style feature on shop window dummies, inspired by a press release from Bob Ashton about the Museum's shop window displays; nicely complementing the text, were a small photograph of no.113 (just described as "A Reading trolleybus" and a period photograph of the front of Doncaster AEC Regent V no.149 outside the Doncaster Co-op.

The 17 June edition of the *Axholme Herald* contained a pre-event article about the North Lincolnshire heritage event on 27 June.

The BTS managed to get some good pre-event coverage for the 113 launch in the local Reading papers, but as happened around Sandtoft, nothing seems to have appeared afterwards reporting on the event. The

major enthusiast magazines have been supplied with information on the 113 event, so we await results in that media with interest.

Perhaps the most widespread publicity, though, was the Museum featuring in a short slot on BBC Television's *Look North* regional programme. Their camera man filmed at Sandtoft in June, and from about 30 minutes' footage, 10-15 seconds appeared on the programme's 'Out and About' feature for the North Lincolnshire Heritage Week promotion: the steam engine on the Sandtoft Miniature Railway and views of, and from, Huddersfield 631 were seen.

It is really heartening to see our Museum featuring so much and so regularly in the papers serving the areas around Sandtoft, and now on TV: well done Bob - you are doing a super job, so keep it up! And anyone who perceives an opening for publicising the Museum is urged to contact Bob Ashton.

SANDTOFT MINIATURE RAILWAY

The operations of the railway have so far in 1999 been very successful, with a recorded increase of passengers up on average by 15%. On the down side the increasing use of the track and the steam locomotive means that the track renewal programme is something that will have to be brought forward. Excellent revenue has been made from the Tombola Stall which is helping to contribute to the funds for the maintenance costs of the railway. Soon Rose's Tombola Stall will be homeless when the new *Trolleyshop* opens for the 'Gathering' event. In view of the deferring of the board for a temporary cabin (which was to be part used by SMR) on the railway station for a museum office, the railway is going to lose a very valuable source of revenue.

The railway's record of safety continues to be very satisfactory. No derailments of passenger carrying trains have been recorded in the SMR's files. The paperwork for maintenance and operations continues to grow: a need to simplify or at least reduce the size of some of the forms is under review. Presently there are ten A4 ring binder files for the operation of the railway and the railway shed. I am pleased to confirm that the public liability insurance has been increased to £5,000,000. There is a cover of £10,000,000 for members and contractors. All SMR members are covered for personal injury and loss of limbs etc.

Hopefully for the 'Gathering, several visiting locomotives will be operating. We have had the promise of a *Royal Scot* engine, and Harold Dyson's *Koppal* engine which has recently under gone several major modifications for this event. I have also been informed that there will be a visiting 'sit in' electric locomotive and carriages making an appearance.

The railway has featured in several model engineering type magazines and as a result we have noticed that many visitors are from various model and railway engineering groups.

Bob Ashton

RITZ THEATRE

The display of trolleybus fittings has been temporarily dismantled, being replaced by a display of household items relating to "Electricity in the Home" for the recent schools visits. The showing of the 16mm films has seen damage to the films on several occasions - it is easy to see why the use of video equipment soon saw the end of film projectors! However the use of 35mm slides in slide shows is still the most reliable format and is easy to adapt and alter, so I am sure so a long as we can obtain projector bulbs slide shows will remain the main feature for many more years.

Whilst the slide shows should continue to be a feature for many more years I am not sure whether the *Ritz* will survive the same amount of time. The main structure continues to be sound, but the window frames and some of the wood on the framework is beyond the usual wood filler patching up. Soon some major spending will have to be made. Estimates for this remedial work have been sought.

Bob Ashton

GARDENS

Both members from the Museum and *New Deal* have been working hard to keep pace with the more than usually good growing weather (warm and wet!). The lawn mowers and strimmers have struggled to keep running. The sit-on tractor mower has had to have a new inner tube and both the strimmers are presently in for repairs. As in previous years, certain areas of the Museum site are being allowed to grow wild so as to benefit the wild life. We are pleased to say that several young families of young mistle thrushes, grey wagtails, blackbirds etc. are now being brought up on the Museum site. The *New Deal* team have now constructed 10 bird boxes which have been located in the trees. Several pairs of blue tits have now successfully reared young families.

The front of the *Axholme Stores* has recently benefited from the donation by a local garden centre of five pots with a variety of very colourful flowers and plants. Three corners of the railway shed now sport hanging baskets. The flower border at the side of the present *Trolleyshop* was brightened up for the 113 event.

Bob Ashton

COINCIDENCES

A lot of things go on in and around Sandtoft, which never gets reported but may be of interest to members.

Brian Maguire

During this year's Open Days, we have met a visitor who passed his test on Derby no.172 and was amazed to see her in service at Sandtoft. He has since joined, as has another visitor (welcome, both of you!) who called last week, who passed his trolleybus driving test on Reading no.181, and his motorbus test on a Reading Crossley (was it the preserved one, no.85, which towed so many trolleybuses to Sandtoft?).

Another visitor, from Canada, one weekday, heard we had some trolleybuses from his native Huddersfield. It turns out that he was the

first passenger on no.541 when it was new ! Bob Ashton and I were able, (with help from a *New Deal* lad) to get no.631 out and give him a ride. Rob Cleary also, later, gave him a cab ride. After a slide show and picnic, plus a guided tour, he departed (almost in tears !) promising to bequeath his collection of books and models when the fateful day comes.

READING NO.113 RETURNS TO SERVICE

The Sandtoft Transport Centre played host to a significant event in the British Trolleybus Society's history on Sunday 30 May 1999, when Reading no.113 re-entered public service some 38½ years after its withdrawal.

As many of you may know, no.113, an AEC 661T with Park Royal 56-seat bodywork built in 1938, became the first trolleybus to be privately preserved in this country when the Reading Transport Society (now the BTS) purchased her from Reading Corporation in September 1961 - the start of the U.K. trolleybus preservation movement.

No.113 was stored in the Reading area for 10 years (many of them in the open air) before reaching Sandtoft in 1971. An amount of work had been carried out on no.113 whilst it was in Reading, but it was to be 26 years before

serious restoration was able to commence and that only came about due to the enormous generosity of Mike and Beryl Dare who very kindly offered to bolster the Society's funds to pay for the work to be carried out. Brian Maguire and his team commenced work in 1997 and have thoroughly renovated no.113 bodily, electrically and mechanically, retaining the 1961 "condition" or style of layout and livery that typified the appearance of this class of vehicle in Reading in the late 1950's and early 1960's.

With the bodywork restoration virtually complete, no.113 was towed to Reading in late October 1998 to commemorate in the town the 30th anniversary of the closure of the Reading trolleybus system. The general public there were clearly impressed with the way it looked and it gave the BTS much needed publicity. However, the ambition of Mike, Beryl and the BTS was to get no.113 back in passenger carrying service at Sandtoft in time for its 60th birthday. The target date of 30 May 1999 was set and much mechanical work (and, indeed, much finishing work)

had to be carried out on no.113 before the plan could come to fruition.

With all the tasks finally completed at the last minute, the big day arrived and a number of BTS members, many from Reading, turned up to witness no.113 being launched back into passenger carrying duties after a 38 year absence. Lord Stoddart of Swindon, who, as a member of Reading County Borough Council's Transport Committee, fought so hard to keep the trolleybuses in Reading in the 1960's, had kindly agreed to perform the ceremony.

At about 2.55 p.m. no.113 was driven by Geoff Griffiths on battery power from the workshop to a point just before the turnoff by the shops. The crowd were asked to gather round following which a short introductory speech was given by Sandtoft Chairman, Francis Whitehead. Mike Dare, who is the BTS's Chairman, then also gave a short speech. Lord Stoddart was then invited to talk, and spoke about his time on the Transport Committee in Reading, as well as congratulating those who were involved with the restoration of no.113. From his remarks he was clearly impressed with Sandtoft and its achievements. Lady Stoddart, who was also present, was then presented with a bouquet of flowers by Beryl Dare.

At 3.15 p.m. no.113's trolley poles were placed on the wires and Lord Stoddart then drove the vehicle through the white ribbon in the lay-by. All those in attendance were then invited to participate in no.113's first passenger run at Sandtoft following which it went into normal Sandtoft service along with Huddersfield no.631 and Porto no.140.

Finally, to cap an eventful day, no.113 performed a night-time run to the delight of those present. She really looked a picture with all her lights shining brightly - a sight I shall never forget. For those people that came up from Reading, including myself, this was a fantastic day and on behalf of the British Trolleybus Society I would like to thank the directors and staff of the Sandtoft Transport Centre for all their co-operation and hard work in making the event so enjoyable.

SANDTOFT SCENE

As mentioned in the Editorial, this edition is a little later in appearing than we had hoped, brought about by an unfortunate dearth of contributions by the required date.

The deadline for the Editor to receive contributions (address on page 2), for next time is 4 September 1999. We want your help in producing an interesting journal, so, please, articles, information, notes, photographs, drawings and the rest about the 'Gathering and other topics by that date.

The deadlines for editions into next year are:

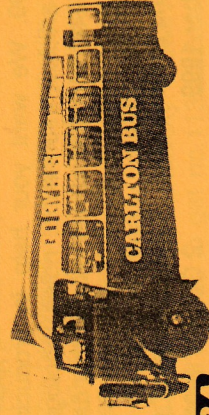
	Contributions to Editor by	"Latest posting" date
Autumn 1999	4 September 1999	2 October 1999
Winter 2000	4 December 1999	10 January 2000
Spring 2000	4 March 2000	3 April 2000

The Adams Tingle Group

Do you operate a bus or coach which is over 20 years of age and not used for hire or reward ?

Then this SPECIALLY NEGOTIATED insurance scheme may be of interest, providing

- Comprehensive cover
- Agreed value
- Discounts on extra vehicles
- Cover for temporary additional vehicles
- Fire and Theft cover for laid up vehicles
- Full passenger complement
- Exclusive discounts on drivers' household and motor insurances



Contact

Mike Beeby
3 Burystead Place,
Wellingborough.
NN8 1AH

Tel: 01933 276256
Fax: 01933 440114