

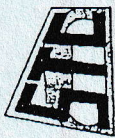
SANDTOFT SCENE

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SANDTOFT TRANSPORT CENTRE LIMITED



Sandtoft Transport Centre Limited

A Company Limited by Guarantee

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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
Francis R. Whitehead
John H. Heighway

Managing Director (& Safety, Infrastructure, Maintenance)
Kenneth Hulks
Alan J. Piatt

Financial Director Operations (& Shop)
Christopher N. Proctor

Publicity (& Miniature Railway,

Ritz Theatre)
Vehicles (& Workshop)
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. A SAE for a reply is always appreciated.

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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:

The Nottingham line up in Sandtoft Square on Sandtoft Gathering '99 afternoon with David and Bernice Needham's AEC Regent no.137 and BUT trolleybus no.506 flanking a couple of visiting current Nottingham buses.

Photo: R.N. 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:

The twentieth century has witnessed the rise and fall of the British trolleybus; as we approach the twenty-first century I feel it would be an interesting and useful exercise to compile, and publish in the millennium edition of *Sandtoft Scene* what would essentially be an audit of this mode of transport. To achieve this I need your help: firstly how many trolleybuses were actually built for each system and of course what was the grand total for the whole of the country. Secondly how many have actually survived to see the next century, and further, where are they now? A tremendous task no doubt but surely we, as a preservation movement, are up to the challenge, because, let's face it, it is highly unlikely anybody else will do it for us. I do not expect any one individual to have all the answers but if we pool our individual parts we should be able to achieve something approaching the whole. Please send any information you have to me to be collated into a history of our hobby for the next edition.

I recently visited Beamish again, after an absence of eight years and had the opportunity to again take a close look at their ex-Newcastle trolleybus: a considerable amount of work has been done since last time I saw it, such that it is beginning to look like new - a tribute to those who have carried out the work. I did also note what appeared to be new arc chutes in the contactor panel: I wonder where they got them from and are there any more, as some of those on our Ex-Huddersfield no.631 are beginning to show their age. The ex-Keighley Straker-Clough single decker does not appear to have moved since last time I saw it; however, the axles are now in the workshop, so work is at least under way.

Finally, as I was spending some time reading through *Buses* by Alan Thomas I was struck by some photographs on page 98: these could have been external and internal shots of a motor bus version of Aachen no.22, which is described as having a Büssing chassis with an extra axle fitted by the bodybuilder, Aero of Essen. The Sandtoft fleet list credits Aachen no.22's body builders as Ludewig - any suggestions anyone?

Dave Shepherd

1999 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This take place at Sandtoft on Saturday 20 November 1999 commencing at 2.30 p.m. The formal notice convening this meeting accompany this edition of *Sandtoft Scene* (by law, adult members only are permitted to take part in this meeting). As in previous years, once the formal business of the AGM has been completed, there will be an Open Forum for members (including juniors) to discuss matters: the board of directors have a small number of topics they would like to explore with the membership, so come and have your say.

TROLLEYBUS TESTING

Jim Sambrooks Rolling Stock Director

Further to the request last time for trolleybus testers, I am pleased to report that Graham Bibbé offered his services for the bodywork and mechanical section and after training was appointed on Saturday 24 July 1999.

Personally I can't think of anybody better for the job. Graham has been involved at Sandtoft from the very early days. He has worked with me, testing vehicles and rectifying faults, since the early days and thus has a good knowledge of what is required. His experience is more than that, though, as in October/ November 1989, he spent four weeks in Porto, Portugal, working (on a voluntary basis) with electric street traction in the workshops of the city's operator, STCP, experiencing 3 weeks with their tramcars and one week with their trolleybuses, which at that time included a fleet of B.U.T.'s as well as Lancia single and double deckers, the latter now represented at Sandtoft by no.140.

Anyway, back to Graham's recent Sandtoft training. The main vehicle used was Doncaster no.375, which, having seen many years service at the Museum, has stood awaiting repairs for the last few years. It has now reached the stage of needing overhaul rather than repair: During the training exercise with Graham, no.375 failed on 31 items - and that is without air, brake or electrical inspections. I am sure vehicle owners will find Graham very capable and fair in this job, maintaining the very high standards achieved so far in the unlikely event of any dispute of Graham's judgement, the vehicle should not be operated until it has been re-inspected by myself.

We have trolleybus testing standards at Sandtoft we can be proud of. They are attainable, contrary to what we have been accused of in the past. They are, in fact, similar to the standards demanded by most trolleybus operators when the vehicles were in service all those years ago now - witness the fact that a dozen trolleybuses are "in test" at the time of writing.

Perhaps a word here as to why I started testing vehicles in the first place. This was not because I didn't want to see trolleybuses run, as some have suggested, quite the opposite, in fact. Read on! Way back in the early days of the Museum the practice was to pull a trolleybus out of the depot, put up the booms and see if it would run: if it did, it would enter service. This didn't seem a good system to me, fearing that if a bad accident was to occur, Ministry inspectors would come in and, if the vehicle was found to be seriously faulty, the Museum could be closed down or at least prevented from operating trolleybuses - which would defeat the main aim from the start of the Museum.

Very basic inspections began to take place, even before we had a workshop: the only way to inspect the underside of a vehicle was to crawl underneath it, on one's back (fortunately I was much slimmer then). Inspection sheets were introduced in the late 1970's along with full electrical inspections and standards have continued to rise since. Discs (of a similar size to road fund tax discs) were introduced and displayed in the driver's cab to confirm to traffic staff (and visitors) that the vehicle had passed its test, and test certificates came later. Now, inspection sheets and test certificates are held in the Museum office and a disc displayed on the vehicle.

Heaven forbid that a major incident should occur with one of our

Sandtoft Scene

operational trolley's, but if one did, isn't it reassuring to know that the vehicle would be cleared of blame and the Museum's future would be safe?

30TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR TROLLEYDAYS

Dates of the remaining Trolleydays this year are:

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 Yorkshire Day. Up to date information about these days is available on our Telephone Information Line (01724 711391), or look at our Web Site <http://freespace.virgin.net/neil.worthington/sandtoft98.htm>.

All three events, but particularly the Santa days, need your assistance to make them a success (see item below about preparing for Santa), and help of all sorts [on the Santa days, we could do with some elves and fairies (who are you calling a fairy?), but no goblins or witches please] 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.

Preparing For Santa

Getting ready for the *Santa Special* days is quite demanding, but the days themselves are very rewarding in terms of seeing the reactions of our child visitors, and, of course, visitor numbers and the general festive atmosphere at the Museum.

This year, we desperately need someone - or better still, a team of folk (small folk??) - to construct the grotto for Santa, and generally decorate the Museum. Previous experience is not necessary, so if you have never built a grotto before, it doesn't matter. Please, please, please could you help?

Contact Bob Ashton in the first instance. He can tell you what has been done on previous occasions, point you in the right direction and give advice if required.

TROLLEYDAYS IN 2000

Dates of next year's Trolleydays will appear next time; details are still being worked on, but broadly, the dates will follow the pattern of this year.

If you have any ideas, or are prepared to organise a theme day as suggested in the last edition, please let Bob Ashton know.

HYGIENE TRAINING SESSIONS FOR CATERING

We are looking into the possibilities of arranging for members to go on hygiene training courses for catering. It would be a pre-requisite for us to have such trained staff should we decide to provide even the simplest of catering ourselves rather than contract out our catering, as is done at the present time. We believe that everyone who already assists in any way with running our open days should try to attend, to give the Museum a good base from which it could expand into its own catering.

It is expected that the course would be a full day (weekday) possibly in Scunthorpe. Please contact Ken Hulks at the Museum if you could attend.

And in connection with this, is anyone out there prepared to head up, or become part of, a team to undertake catering on a rota basis on Trolleydays and 'Gathering days'? Please contact Ken Hulks if you are.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Our membership Secretary, Rob Shepherdson, reports that as at the end of September 1999, membership totalled 223, consisting of 2 Honorary, 194 Adult, 16 Family and 11 Junior members.

Of these, 42 joined Sandtoft as "direct" members and the balance through the Contributing Societies, 15 via the Bradford Trolleybus Association, 98 via the British Trolleybus Society, 43 via the Doncaster Omnibus and Light Railway Society and 25 via the Sandtoft Miniature Railway.

MUSEUM NEWS

Martin Hulks

Axholme Stores
It was pleasing to announce that the whole of the exhibition area in Axholme Stores was fully operational and open to the public by early May. However, because of the need to get the building fully operational as quickly as possible, a number of fittings were left unfinished, so in the coming months and during the "closed" season it is our aim to fully complete the tasks which are outstanding.

During September the ceiling of the exhibition end of the building was painted. It turned out to be a difficult task because we had to negotiate the displays already in place: it took three days to complete and involved many hair-raising moments whilst trying to lie on the roof of a showcase, balance, and use a paint roller, all at the same time!

During the two weeks prior to the September Trolleyday, the floor and walls in Axholme Stores have been painted: the floor soaked up two coats and it is anticipated that a third will be added later. As well as the painting, there has also been an amount of building work taking place: this has included the construction of a small plinth for one of the R. Edgley Cox windows, the building of a display window area and lighting for the photographic display in W.J. Evans and an enclosed storage area on top. At the rear of this new window display unit there will be two new showcases -, one of which will feature a display commemorating those who served at RAF Sandtoft.

The shop window displays themselves have also seen an amount of re-organisation, which has included the adding of prices to the items on display in the windows, which adds a new dimension to the exhibitions.

During July 1999, the Doncaster Co-operative store closed down and in connection with this, we ran an appeal in the local Doncaster papers requesting items for display. The Doncaster Co-operative has also become the theme of our displays and so each shop window has a display board in it telling visitors about the displays and how they would have looked in a department store during the 1960's. Also, an extra display of period artefacts has been added in the area around the trolleybus simulator; the display was the work of new member Bev Spratt, and believe me, her displays certainly give Bob's a run for their money (only joking!)

We do have a number of further projects planned for Axholme Stores which will include the re-varnishing of the showcases and the creation of a garage-type scene of the 1950/60's: this will include the petrol pumps which used to stand outside the workshop and these are currently being restored by *New Deal*. The walls in Axholme Stores are also to be adorned with the enamel signs which are currently on display all over the Museum. It is important that these signs are take out of the reach of the elements as soon as possible, as many are suffering from severe rust damage.

Donations

Following several appeals in the local press, the display department is now over run with donated items and we simply haven't any more room left to store them. Whilst we are grateful for any donations, we please ask that from now on, any member who wishes to donate something, particularly if it is anything approaching large, contacts either myself or Bob Ashton first.

Ritz Theatre

During this year we have been trialing a scheme inside the Ritz whereby we only allow visitors into the auditorium 15 minutes before a slide show. This has become necessary because in the past a member of staff was required to watch over the displays, and frequently there was simply not a member of staff available to do it. The new system allows a more careful watch to be cast over our valuable displays!

I must also take this opportunity to congratulate Stewart Lamming on his fine organ playing, which we became aware of when he entertained visitors during August at the Ritz's theatre organ - I shall have to watch him, or else I'll be out of a job!! The organ in the Ritz has clocked up quite a record this year as it has been played 278 time for visitors, accompanied 21 silent films and played the National Anthem 32 times - no wonder my fingers ache!

Huddersfield Tram Shelter

The tram shelter has proved extremely popular this year on our schools' days, being absolutely ideal for the children to enjoy their lunch in.

It also proved popular during 'Gathering, when several visitors commented on how neat and tidy the building is and how ideally located it is because parents could sit and watch their children in the adjacent play area.

As well as the tram shelter's duties on open days, the building has also come in useful as a meeting room: two or three board meetings have been held there this year and several council tourism forum meetings have been held in it, it being an ideal size and location for meetings during the summer.

The tram shelter also proved useful on the Tuesday after the 'Gathering when it was used as a "base" when Stephen Morris and Gavin Booth, of Ian Allan Limited, visited the Museum to research for a trolleybus-based Head to Head (Trolleyhead to trolleyhead?) feature for *Classic Bus*. This is due for publication in November (so order your copy now from Chris Proctor at the Trolleyshop or from the BTS (c/o Mike Dare). More details

about the visit will appear next time, but meanwhile very many thanks are due to Beryl Dare and Pat Heighway, who put on some splendid catering for our visitors, to Jim Sambrooks and Rob Cleary, who ensured the trolleybuses were available and who instructed Stephen and Gavin in the art of trolleybus driving and, of course, to Mike Dare, who organised the whole affair and oversaw everything.

Around the Museum

As many members will have seen, *New Deaf's* mess hut was moved to its new location adjacent to the workshop road just before the 'Gathering. This has meant that the burning bin has ceased to exist, and a lean-to is to be constructed in its place for additional storage.

New Deal have also started work on painting a new zebra crossing outside the toilet block, linking that building with the footpath on the other side (i.e. *Axholme Stores* side) of the roadway. When this crossing has been completed, the crossing at the other end of Sandtoft Square, outside the Trolleyshop is to be repainted.

Much concrete roadway repair work has also been taking place in various locations around the Museum. It has certainly tidied up what was becoming an eyesore and has helped to ensure smoother trolleybus rides. The entrance to the Museum has also benefited from being repaired and asphalted and, although some kerb stones need to be re-installed, it has significantly improved the look of the entrance to the Museum.

SANDTOFT MINIATURE RAILWAY UPDATE

Bob Ashton

I would like to first of all apologise via *Sandtoft Scene* to all the SMR members for the delay in producing the latest *Platform 2* newsletter, this is due to the recent very busy time I have had with the *Sandtoft Gathering '99* event, the FICC Rally events, STCL publicity and the developments in the *Axholme Stores*. Like *Sandtoft Scene*, *Platform 2* needs articles from its members - please get them rolling in.

The railway too has had a very busy year so far, certainly the busiest ever. The railway has seen three visiting locomotives so far this year, for the *Gathering* new SMR member Keith Bunting and his friend brought over from Scunthorpe Steel Works the *Royal Scot* steam locomotive. We also had two visiting electric locomotives of contrasting sizes. For the very successful Wednesday Special Railway Days an 0-4-0 electric locomotive from York was operated on the SMR tracks.

The most spectacular electric locomotive was the American-type engine with four articulated coaches that appeared on the Sunday of the *European Weekend*. Previous to the visit to Sandtoft the locomotive had been operating in France pulling up to sixteen coaches. With its superb power and air braking system the locomotive demonstrated some tremendous acceleration and braking capabilities. The SMR members also worked very hard to keep the visitors from the FICC International Caravan Rally at Lincoln entertained. August proved to be perhaps one of the busiest times that the railway has ever seen outside a 'Gathering event.

New member Keith Bunting has worked hard on the maintenance of the locomotives and the track. With sufficient funds now building up, Keith has suggested that the railway is at a stage where the first track renewal could commence later this year - track that would see the railway operational for the next 10 years or more. If the climate at the Museum is right I am sure that the members of the SMR committee will be pleased to give the go ahead for this work to take place. After the STCL AGM the working days on the railway will be announced out of which we hope the track renewal work can be started.

SANDTOFT GATHERING '99 - THE CLIMAX OF OUR 30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

Martin Hulks

As with every year, the planning of this year's 'Gathering began in January, with the first meeting of the 'Gathering Committee - Ken and Martin Hulks, Bob Ashton, Stephen Hobbs, and Ian and Alison Wilson.

Work on the programme started in mid-March; its production takes up the majority of the time prior to the 'Gathering, particularly selecting and scanning the photographs and writing up the vehicle entries. This year we had 124 vehicle entries, around 3% up on 1998. Thanks must go to John Thimbleby who distributes most of the 'Gathering vehicle entry forms - he must be doing something right!

Time was moving on, when, with only a couple of weeks to go, information for entrants and entrant numbers were sent out - a task that took Ken Hulks and wife Jean five hours to complete.

The programme was also nearing completion and a week before the day, it went off to be printed: luckily, the printers happened to be located equidistant between my and Bob Ashton's house, as several times we had to visit them in order to update or change sections.

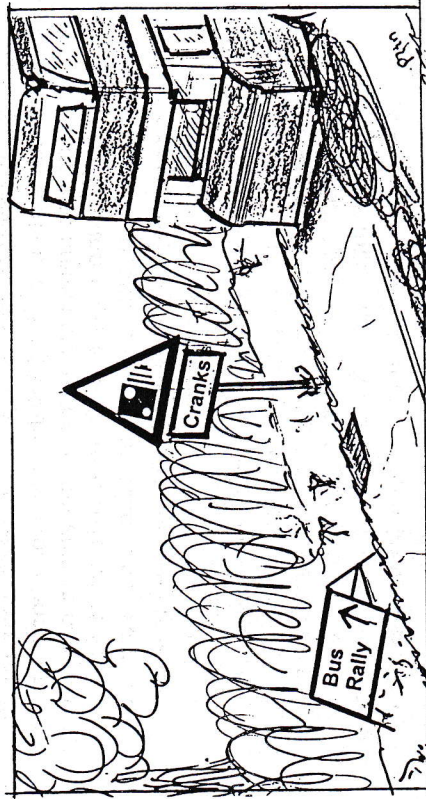
Unfortunately, 'Gathering this year fell very early, and, being a schoolboy, I did not break up from school until the Friday before the big day, so time that week was divided between school and Sandtoft; fortunately, I have very understanding teachers.....

The Saturday before the 'Gathering arrived and it really was action stations for everyone. The Saturday itself was actually an open day and upon arriving at Sandtoft there seemed to me to be a favourable number of visitors. The 'Gathering Committee proposes to repeat this Saturday opening again next year. I always like the Saturday better because there is so much action going on on site and everyone gets involved in helping. This year we had decided to move the trailer (used for prize giving, and for the band in case of rain) to the other side of the grass area compared with previous years in order to maximise the area available for the brass band. The trailer arrived at two o'clock and then came the job of transferring thirty chairs and two tables up onto its floor - sweat just poured off Nick Broxholme and myself!

The beer tent opened from 12 noon to do a steady trade. Quite a number of people arrived on the bus which was provided for visitors from Doncaster.

The usual 'Gathering cleaning and sweeping was well under way in the Ritz, Axholme Stores and the toilets; the depot had been cleared of many vehicles earlier in the week to the usual locations on the old airfield, and was already swept out in preparation for the sales stalls on the morrow. The engineering team had excelled themselves by having no fewer than twelve trolleybuses passed as fit for service, and of course, they were all cleaned inside and out - congratulations to all concerned for such a magnificent turn out of so many immaculate trolleybuses.

As Saturday began to draw to a close, and the 'Gathering loomed ever nearer; just one major job to do - set out the temporary road signs on the approach roads to the Museum. Thanks must go to John Bell for joining with myself and Francis Whitehead to do this job using his rather "cute" little Weymann-bodied Albion Nimbus. You would think setting out signs would be easy, but in fact you do rather take your life into your hands as crossing the A18 with a road sign, stake and hammer is not for the weak hearted. Anyway, we returned to Sandtoft in one piece just as the daylight



was starting to give way to darkness. I must say that those illuminated Axholme Stores shop windows did look rather magical at dusk. The evening session in the beer tent was in full swing and so it was decided to switch on the public address system on the trailer to provide some musical entertainment, which seemed to go down well. At the rear of the Trolleyshop, a barbecue had been set up and was beginning to go well. During the week previous, there had been a problem with one of the advertisers in the 'Gathering Programme, and so at the eleventh hour, Jean Hulks had to dash off into Doncaster to photocopy the advertisement and we were then up until midnight putting 650 inserts into the programmes. As in previous years, a night time trolleybus was operated, but Bradford no. 746 bowed out after sparks showered from underneath it - it was agreed not to use another trolleybus, so the journey was abandoned - at least an attempt had been made.

At midnight, I decided to relax a little before turning in for the night by

playing the Ritz organ: to my surprise, when I turned round I found I had an audience of five people, who, it turned out, had travelled from Southend to experience their first 'Gathering.

I awoke the next morning at 7.00 a.m. and looked out of the window - it truly was the calm before the storm. By 8.00 a.m. the first stall holder had arrived and was setting up, soon to be joined by more: each year the 'Gathering stalls are organised by Andy Fieldsend, and once again, thanks go to him for very ably carrying out this task.

By 9.00 a.m. the miniature railway's locomotive was in full steam and completing the first trial and inspection runs. Likewise, the trolleybuses were being earth leakage tested in readiness for the day's work. The visiting Royal Scot and two electric locomotives arrived. At 9.30 a.m. the gates were opened to the first of the visitors, and as the car parking this year was on land adjacent to the Museum, it made the old airfield taxiways (once again kindly loaned to us by our farming neighbour, Andrew White) seem doubly busy. The farmer's entrance at this early stage, was made one-way inward, and any vehicles going out of the Museum had to use the Museum "back straight". Nick Broxholme faithfully manned the Museum gate during this early period, whilst the actual pay booths became busier and busier, at some stages almost not being able to cope with the influx. Thanks must go to the early shift there consisting of Pat Ashton, Geoff Warnes, David Fordham, Jenny Lamming and Roy Fawcett. The programme-selling team, consisting of the local cub pack, smartly turned out in their uniforms and headed by Arkela (is that how you spell it - the spell check suggests "Oracle" ?), reported for duty and immediately commenced sales - they all did a sterling job and deserve special thanks. The first bus arrived from Doncaster and was so packed that a duplicate (that is a relief to some of you) was provided Meanwhile, staff working at the entrance positions were plied with mugs of tea by Chris Whitehead - ta Chris for that, it was much appreciated by all.

The day was running smoothly and to plan, with the serious exception of the catering arrangements: it seems that the caterer, who was "new" to 'Gathering, despite being briefed on what to expect, had grossly underestimated demand, resulting all day in long queues whilst potatoes baked. On the strength of the 'Gathering Committee's expectations, the fish and chip man who has attended in previous years was not invited this year and the "sandwich lady" was also cancelled...Oooooops. As a result of all this, our own small-time facilities (hot and cold drinks and crisps, chocolate etc.) in the Trolleyshop struggled to cope with the demand, running out of tea capsules for the machine, and having to resort, after a lot of rushing around by Francis Whitehead, to the BTS mega tea pot and an urn of boiling water! Well before the afternoon had ended, there were no crisps or chocolate left. Rest assured, the matter will be better managed for future 'Gatherings.

A particular god-send this year was the newly-acquired wandering microphone, which can tap into the Museum's public address system from anywhere within a 500 yard radius. 1.30 p.m. approached, and it was time

to launch the Museum's 30th anniversary celebrations, using Reading trolleybus no.113. The proceedings commenced with yours truly giving a brief introductory speech, putting the event, and Sandtoft into context for the visitors; then Mike Dare took the microphone, and made a presentation to Henry Riley in recognition of his very kind and generous donation to the Museum of his car badge collection. Mike then continued by addressing the crowds about Sandtoft's history as a museum and its achievements. No.113 then drove through a ribbon whilst the Yorkshire Traction Brass Band played "Happy Birthday" and then "Congratulations".

During the afternoon we were pleased to assist the Nottingham Enthusiasts Group by organising a line up for them of Nottingham vehicles, both from the Museum (David and Bernice Needham's trolleybus no.506 and AEC motorbus no.137) and two present day Nottingham buses, one being brand new - thanks to Rob Cleary for interrupting the trolleybus service and helping to organise this with David Needham: apparently the Group were most impressed and one of them spoke over the P.A. to thank the Sandtoft staff for their help in making the day special for them.

At 3.45 p.m. the prizes were awarded, and this must be a first for Sandtoft Gathering as every single prize was collected! The judges worked particularly hard on an always difficult task - thank you all for your assistance. The main winners were:

Dare Progress Cup	Reading no.113
Sandtoft Award (for the best trolleybus in service that day)	Huddersfield no.631
Overall Concourse d'Elegance	JKY 478, an Austin Somerset

Finally, with six o'clock approaching, the event was coming to an end - another very busy 'Gathering'. Overall, the 'Gathering was a roaring success: everyone, staff, stall holders and visitors alike, seemed happy at the way it had gone and we made the profit that had been budgeted.

The 'Gathering Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who helped in any way with this year's event - the judges, the Cubs, members, friends and other hangers-on included.

On a personal basis, thanks to everyone who helped: I particularly single out (and sorry if anyone gets missed out!) Bob and Pat Ashton, Ian and Alison Wilson, Jim Sambrooks, Rob Cleary, the Proctor family, the Shepherd family, all the miniature railway staff, Mike and Beryl Dare (without their help, 'Gathering would not have been a success) all the traffic staff, Alan Platt, Francis Whitehead, and, of course, my own family, for thanks. Here's to the next one.....

SANDTOFT'S SECOND EUROPEAN WEEKEND BUILDS ON LAST YEAR'S SUCCESS

Graham Bilbé

Although a slightly lower-profile event than last year due to the enforced sidelining of two of them, the August Bank Holiday weekend this year again saw frenzied activity on our "foreign" vehicles.

"Vera" - the Limoges Vetra (no.5), which blew out a starting resistance at the 1998 event, is still awaiting the repaired unit to return, appropriately from France. Unfortunately all efforts to chase progress in the run-up to the event were thwarted by the French propensity to go on holiday for the whole month of August.... Meanwhile, Liège no.425 is still undergoing its complete re-cabling, kindly sponsored by some visitors who were fascinated by her operation at last year's event! Both vehicles were parked up on display for the '99 European Weekend, along with London no.1812, still sporting the last vestiges of it's time as a Spanish trolleybus, about to be lost as restoration to London condition continues apace.

We had hoped to have at least one visiting foreign vehicle, but regrettably due to work commitments and other difficulties, none of those we had "earmarked" were able to make it this year, though we have already made overtures for next year's event. However, this left us free to concentrate efforts on our resident vehicles, with Porto no.140, Schaffhausen no.207 and Reading no.113 (representing Britain) operating the regular service, and Aachen no.22 making two special trips each afternoon on the outer circle only.

Saturday 28 August was spent preparing the vehicles, particularly the Schaffhausen "flying banana", which hadn't officially operated since last August. No.207 is so long that the workshop inspection has to be done in two halves, and to facilitate movements power was temporarily restored to the workshop road. As happened last year, an impressive number of people "mucked in" to make it happen, and eventually no.207 was duly passed fit (for a whole year this time) although there is an extensive list of advisory work to be looked at for the future. I was most impressed by the team of 'washerwomen' who descended on each of the vehicles in turn with mops, buckets and window cloths, and would have looked quite at home at Areosa depot in Porto! Many thanks to Rachel, Sam, Bernice and Jenny - you were a great inspiration: working together like this is great for Sandtoft, and it's so much fun!

Special arrangements were made for Aachen no.22, which clearly wasn't up to our full standards, but was considered to be fundamentally safe and capable of being operated on special runs, with passengers. The "Aachen" always provokes considerable interest from visitors, who were delighted to have the opportunity to ride on it. We explained that the vehicle wasn't up to our normal high standards, but that this would almost certainly be the last opportunity to travel on it before major restoration work was commenced (this is currently being investigated, and there may be exciting news on this before long....). The last run on Monday - fully loaded - concluded with spontaneous applause and grateful comments for the opportunity to ride on this unique vehicle. Maybe more sponsors will come forward as a result? Having driven no.22 on a number of occasions it was perhaps ironic that she drove better than ever before, thanks to Steve Harrison's small modification to the auto acceleration equipment.

Bob Ashton, meanwhile, had cleared out just about every carnival shop in Doncaster for European flags; they were suitably draped around Sandtoft

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Square, and he had produced on the computer an attractive printout for each of the vehicles on display or operating, giving details of the vehicle, with the country of origin and the national flag, all of which added a touch of colour and gaiety to the event.

On the miniature railway, appropriate headboards were carried by the locomotives, and the track gauge temporarily converted to 184 mm, instead of the usual 7 1/4". More continental flavour was added by the Welcome announcements, broadcast over the P.A. in English, German, French and Portuguese! By arrangement with Bob, I put on a "Continental Trolleybuses" slide show each afternoon: On the Sunday, the audience didn't seem too interested and I returned from changing the slide magazine to find only two remaining! Monday's audience were much more attentive, asking lots of questions, and enjoying some good trolleybus anecdotes: they particularly liked the one about the ex-London Q1 trolleybus on the Coruña-Carbello interurban line in Spain which de-wired on one of the long rural sections, kilometres from anywhere. Unfortunately both of the trolley heads were thrown off, and since no further progress was possible without them, the whole complement of crew and passengers disgorged into the adjoining field to look for them. On returning triumphantly to the vehicle, it was realised that three heads had been found!

Many thanks to everyone who joined in and helped in all manner of ways to make another great Sandtoft weekend. Hopefully with no.425 and "Vera" back in the running fleet, no.1812 restored, and better prospects of some visiting vehicles, European Weekend 2000 will be one to look forward to!

LETTER

From Bob Ashton (Director), Hatfield, Doncaster

I would like to thank the members who have made a very valuable contribution to the development of the Axholme Stores exhibition area and 50's/ 60's shop windows by either contributions by sheer hard physical effort or donation of items for the displays. Some marvellous effort by members Bev Spratt (& her friend Tracy), Martin Hulks and my wife Pat, armed with paint brushes, rollers and gallons of emulsion paint have transformed the walls and ceilings in this section of the Axholme Stores. My thanks also go to New Deal member Markus for helping with the construction work.

I would also like to thank Mike and Beryl Dare for the donation of children's books which will be eventually used in a children's toy window. Andy Fieldsend has just returned a restored London Transport bus stop sign which has now been included in the display showcase that has the London Transport chassisless trolleybus model. I must add that this showcase has a temporary display which is awaiting a promised BTS trolleybus display, as are some of the now painted walls.

Many of the members who have visited the Museum will have seen the ladies' fashion window (Dorothy's) which, with much searching through the charity shops in Doncaster, has enabled us to put a display which is proving to be of great interest to the visitors (of all ages!) especially since

we have put the 1960's pounds shillings and pence price labels on the dresses etc. With the aid of 1960's newspapers and magazines more prices will appear on the items in the shop window displays. It is hoped to change the items in the fashion windows on a regular basis: to do this once again the charity shops will be a great source, but our members Tony Peart, Dave Shepherd and Ken Hulks have kindly donated items for these displays. I would also like to thank Graham Bilbé, who never fails to bring something along when he visits the Museum. Future window displays planned are furnishing fabrics, knitting wool, hardware and children's toys, to mention but a few. So, please keep these items coming in, but due to limited storage facilities at Sandtoft, they must represent the late 50's and 60's, we can just about extend this to the early 1970's - the period of time when the Cardiff, Walsall, Teesside and Bradford trolleybus systems closed. If the items you are able to donate are large e.g. a three piece suite please contact us first to see if we have available storage space prior to or after being displayed.

I must add that the opportunity to move forward in the Axholme Stores would not be possible without the superb efforts of David Stubbins and the SMR's new member Keith Bunting who have kept the miniature railway maintained and in good operational order whilst I have spent most of my time in the Axholme Stores.

VEHICLE NEWS

The very latest information:

Glasgow no.TB78 returned to Sandtoft from Fifield (Berkshire) behind Reading Transport's tow truck on Sunday 3 October 1999. The extensive body restoration is completed, the chassis has been overhauled and a complete external repaint is now scheduled for next Spring. We look forward to welcoming a resplendent no.TB78, which was always popular with our visitors in days past in its attractive green, cream and orange livery, back into service later in 2000.

London no.1812: Work continues apace, with the construction of the staircase now well in hand, new brown leathercloth applied to the interior, seats acquired and ready to be re-upholstered (kindly donated by our friends in the London Trolleybus Preservation Society at Carlton Coleville) and numerous other jobs completed. Attention is now turning to the underneath.

The British Trolleybus Society, owners of no.1812, are renewing their appeal for donations towards no.1812's restoration costs: the appeal has already attracted some sizeable donations, and much money has also been reclaimed from Inland Revenue for tax paid on Gift Aid donations (one off donations of £250 and over are eligible for tax refunds to the BTS). The BTS Treasurer, Roy Fawcett, would be pleased to receive your donation, large or small, to this worthy cause. Write to Roy at 57, Sutcliffe Avenue, Earley, Reading, Berkshire, RG6 7JN.

Reading no.193, owned by Graham and Richard Bilbé, left Sandtoft for Fifield on Sunday 3 October 1999 to enable restoration to take place nearer

their home. The tow was undertaken by Reading Transport as a return tow following Glasgow no.TB78's return to Sandtoft.

Rotherham no.37. Following the appeal in the last edition, Brian Maguire reports that a small group has been formed to sponsor no.37: the board has agreed to the vehicle returning to Sandtoft (subject to some real progress being made with sprucing it up)

SANDTOFT SCENE

The next edition will be the Millennium issue. It would be good to make this a bumper edition, with a review of trolleybus operation and preservation so far..... This requires help from you all, so what about it?

The Editor is ready to receive contributions (address on page 2), so please, everyone, get writing.

The deadlines for editions into next year are:

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

CHASSISGRAM

Can you find the various chassis types and name the manufacturer?
Solution next time.

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

As the next edition is not due until next century (millennium, even), can we be the first to wish all our readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Peaceful New Year/ Century/ Millennium. We look forward to seeing you all during 2000.