

SANDTOFT SCENE

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THE JOURNAL OF
SANDTOFT TRANSPORT CENTRE LIMITED



Sandtoft Transport Centre Limited
THE MUSEUM OF THE TROLLEYBUS

A Company Limited by Guarantee

Registered in England No.1747475 Registered Charity No.514382

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

We reserve the right to alter or amend text to suit the style of *Sandtoft Scene* or the content of a particular edition. The content of individual items and articles 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.

COVER PICTURE:

A resplendent London no.1812 turns in Sandtoft Square on the afternoon of 28 May 2001, shortly after it had been launched back into service. See page 12 for an account of the day

Photograph by Francis Whitehead

Our Vision Statement:

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

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

Yet again, apologies for the late appearance of the 'Scene, and once again, regrettably no copy equals no 'Scene. It is as simple as that. My job as editor is not to write the 'Scene but to select what is included in each issue, so if 'Scene 52 is to make an appearance before Christmas with more than a collection of my holiday photos then we really do need your article or contribution of information. This edition has become the size it is only after much chasing and effort. Just an idea to think about - have you seen any new trolleybus book or video? Did you like it - yes/no? Then tell us all about it through the pages of the 'Scene. Thanks to the wonders of modern technology you can now even send an article to me by e-mail at sandtoft.scene@talk21.com please.

The 'Gathering was once again hectic but successful. I am sure I speak for all the membership when I say a special "thank you" to those who worked so hard to make the 'Gathering happen in the first instance, who prepared the Museum, and who then did a myriad of jobs on the day, to make it such a success. A similar thanks goes to those who stayed behind and put the trolleybuses away and cleaned up all the mess afterwards. I spent part of the day working as the dispatcher for the trolleybuses, I would like to publicly thank those sterling members of the Traffic Department who seemed to appear just at the right time to enable the trolleys to run a continuous service despite the fact it meant many of them had to work full 'buses in the blistering heat with only minimal rest times. Thank You. Cedric the cespit monster also made his annual eve-of-'Gathering appearance - this year he was heard snorting in the gents' toilets in the early hours of 'Gathering Sunday morning.

Dave Shepherd

APPOINTMENT OF A PRESIDENT

The Board is glad to announce that in February this year, Mr. M.J.C. Dare agreed to become the President of Sandtoft Transport Centre Limited, a position provided for in the Articles of Association when the Company was first formed, but never filled before. We are very pleased with this appointment, as Mike brings his enthusiasm, expertise and long association with the Museum and trolleybus preservation in general to the Company to further the development and running of the Museum. The Company's Articles of Association outline the general rules relating to the position of President, viz.:

- ◆ The appointment is for a period of 5 years, after which it can be renewed
- ◆ The holder is entitled to attend Board Meetings and may take the Chair, both at Board Meetings and at General Meetings of the Company

◆ The holder has no voting powers at Board Meetings and, as is the case for Directors, shall declare an interest and if so required, shall withdraw if any clash of interests arises in the Board's discussions and debates.

The President's role is an honorary one: he is regarded as an ambassador for the Museum, who can liaise as necessary with senior personnel and officials of outside organisations to promote the Museum and trolleybuses in general, and assist in any negotiations, for example during grant applications and in funding partnership arrangements.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2001

This take place at Sandtoft on Saturday 24 November 2001 commencing at 2.30 p.m. The formal notice convening this meeting accompanies 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 issues and explore ideas relating to the Company and the Museum, so come and have your say.

The Trolleyshop will be open for business for a short time (remember, Christmas present buying time will be upon us by then), and as happened last year, those attending the meeting will get a "money off" voucher for a hot drink: can't be bad!

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Membership Secretary, David Needham, reminds those who join "direct" that unless they provide a SAE with their subscription renewals, there will be a delay in sending them their membership card as it will wait until Sandtoft Scene is next posted. (Those who join through one of the Contributing Societies should receive their membership card from that society.)

Membership renewals have been very good this year, so thank you all for your continued support.

Thank you also to the many who have completed Gift Aid Declarations to enable us to recover tax paid on their subscriptions and donations. For those who have not already done so, please find and fill in that Gift Aid Declaration Form and send it to the Museum address. If you have mis-laid your form, please ask for a replacement, pick one up from the Trolleyshop or download one from our website (www.sandtoft.org.uk). Gift Aid costs you nothing, yet gives the Museum an extra 28% of your subscription and/or donations, so don't let that man, Brown, have that cash - Sandtoft needs it!

YORKSHIRE DAY this year is on Sunday 21 October. Always worth a visit and organised by DO&LRS, it will feature the usual Yorkshire-

oriented attractions. For further details either look at the Sandtoft website, www.sandtoft.org.uk, call the information line on 01724 711391 or write to the Museum enclosing a SAE.

SANTA DAYS 2001

These will be SUNDAY, 9 DECEMBER and SUNDAY, 16 DECEMBER and opening times will be 12.00 noon - 4.00 p.m. Father Christmas has been booked, so we need some willing helpers in the weeks leading up to, and on, these dates, to prepare and run what are fun events.

TROLLEYDAYS IN 2002

Please put these dates in your 2002 diary:

Easter Trolleydays
Sunday 31 March
Monday 1 April
Sunday 5 May
Monday 6 May
Sunday 2 June
Monday 3 June
Sunday 30 June
Sunday 8 July

May Day Bank Holiday Weekend Trolleydays

Spring Bank Holiday Weekend Trolleydays

June Trolleyday:

July Trolleyday

Sandtoft Gathering 2001 Preview

Sandtoft Gathering 2001

August Trolleyday

August Bank Holiday Weekend -

Featuring **European Weekend**

Six Wheel Sunday

St Leger Rally (formerly *Yorkshire Day*)

Santa Days during December

Sunday 28 July

Sunday 11 August

Sunday 25 August

Monday 26 August

Sunday 15 September

Sunday 20 October

Sundays to be advised

Whilst these events are based on this year's open day dates, details for each of the days are still being worked out and it is possible that one or two further dates will be added. Information as to any further dates and when the free Doncaster bus service will operate will appear next time and will, of course, be posted on the website.

Arrangements can be made for schools' visits and private party visits on these or on other days. Chris Proctor should be contacted for fuller details.

It is a full programme (perhaps not as full as some might like, though), and can only work satisfactorily if members volunteer to help. Please plan it out now and make that effort to attend at least one or two of them to assist, letting Chris Proctor know (contact him at the Museum address or by e-mail - enquiries@sandtoft.org.uk).of your intentions in advance - he wants to produce a rota of helpers for the 2002 days.

SANDTOFT GATHERING 2002

Despite statements and rumours to the contrary, **THERE WILL BE** a

'Gathering in 2002 ! The bad news is that Brian Maguire has decided not to be the organiser, so the good news is that someone else can be. So come along you good people, we need a volunteer or two (or more) to do the honours....

MUSEUM NEWS

Brian Maguire & Francis Whitehead

General:

There have been several notable happenings at the Museum over the past few months. The most significant event (in May) was the re-entry into service of two British Trolleybus Society vehicles, Glasgow no.TB78 and London no.1812. Both were officially handed over to traffic on Spring Bank Holiday Monday, at 2.30pm. Frantic action on no.1812, especially, had seen the many tasks required to complete her for service all checked out, and the mechanical inspection also carried out. The low voltage wiring problems on no.TB78 were overcome, and special guest, Gavin Booth (editor of *Classic Bus*), following short speeches, drove first no.TB78 and then no.1812 through a tape. After a trip with invited guests, both trolleybuses entered normal service. A personal account of the day's events appears on page 12.

Another important, but very different event was the exchange of Huddersfield no.619, with Bradford no.844 (on 19 May), for a period of three months. No.619 went to the Keighley Bus Museum and visited its home town over the weekend of 11/ 12 August (see page 18 for an account of its "holiday"), whilst no.844 (which has been at Sandtoft before, many years ago, and which more recently operated at Bradford's now defunct Transperience before passing to Keighley Bus Museum) came to enable it to operate under power again. After testing (on 24 June), no.844 ran on several Trolleydays and at the 'Gathering.

A new wall was built during July at the back of the footpath that runs south from the old Trolleyshop towards the front of the Museum, and another, this time low, wall built in front of that building and around its garden. The wall to the footpath incorporates the railings that were acquired many years ago: the brickwork was professionally done and the railings were put in place by a working party of members. The end result is excellent. It now remains to paint the railings and to relocate a traction pole and the associated feeder boxes.

July and August was a fairly quiet time for restoration as the main amount of time was taken up with the 'Gathering preparations. All the spare traction motors which have lain for years in the main depot have been placed on individual pallets and lifted, using a hired forklift truck (skillfully operated by Rob Cleary, who has a forklift operator's "ticket") onto racks in the old generator house: the whole operation took over two weeks to complete, but the end result is so much better.

Much of the fleet was removed from the depot for the big day – including South Shields no.204: I cannot remember when no.204 was last out in the open, but out she was, and many a photo taken of the event. No.204 is the latest of the British Trolleybus Society's fleet to be attacked for a full restoration.: she is the subject of an appeal for funds (as would be expected) and should be a sight for sore eyes when completed. A Karrer E4 (the only one) with a Weymann body, dating from 1936, she is unusual in that, like London United no.1 (the Diddler) the motor is over the front axle. Work to the roof was started earlier this year, and thanks to a donation received at the 'Gathering, work can resume very soon.

Trolleybuses fit for service for the 'Gathering were, Bradford nos.792 and 844, Glasgow no.TB78 , London no.1812, Huddersfield no.631, SYPTE no.2450, Reading no.113, Derby no.172, and Limoges no.5.

The 'Gathering itself went very well, although we could have done with a lot more helpers, of course, on the day (one comment heard was that there were a lot of members there, but only a few appeared to have offered their services, which, if it is true, is a shame: some helpers put in some long hours and would have welcomed even a short break). The day was good and sunny, the beer tent – provided not by CAMRA this year but by this year by the Brown Cow Brewery at Selby – had just enough beer to see the afternoon through, the trolleybuses all ran well loaded, with little or no problem (one de-wirement this year), Andy Feather set himself up on top of the tower wagon to do some (minor) overhead work, which added to the trolleybus atmosphere, the flea market seemed to be as busy as ever, the number of vehicles in the rally appeared to be down somewhat on what we were expecting, there was no brass band this year and instead we had a jazz band to entertain the visitors – an innovation that seems to have gone down well. For the record, the Dare Progress Cup for the project that had made the most progress went to the BTS for no.1812's restoration and the overall winner of "Best Vehicle" in the rally was won by West Hartlepool no.91, a 1975 Bristol RE with ECW coachwork. And most important, the day was a success financially. Thank you everyone that did help in any way : we look forward to another, just as successful, if not better, 'Gathering in 2002.

With the 'Gathering over, the Preston towing wagon was placed in the workshop and the panels removed to see why the body was leaning forward by about 2". The framing was straightened, and treated with preservative, new timber fitted in places (where the mushrooms were growing !) whilst some rewiring has taken place. Many further overdue repairs are to be carried out, such as the injectors and a leaking fuel tank. Rotten top timbers also need replacing and the rear end made generally more safe for operators and towing crews. Very little has been

done to this fine, reliable and sturdy Leyland PD2 workhorse since it arrived at Sandtoft in 1983, and it is a credit to its construction and its conversion by Preston Corporation that it has lasted so well. Assistance is needed to complete this very necessary work, following which BCK 939 should last us a good few more years !

The area to the back of the depot has been cleared up, the motors are stored away, the caravans gone, and the Felix sleeper bus is temporarily behind the box van. The old railway container is available if any railway group is interested, and when it has gone, the Felix bus will be fitted in opposite the Reading sleeper bus.

The clear up has also involved the demolition of "Fort Knox", the old brick and concrete building that was the only structure on the premises when it was bought by Mike Dare back in 1969. "Fort Knox," (which, incidentally, had an old Ordnance Survey Benchmark on it, indicating that the ground around Sandtoft was just 11.11 feet above sea level) dated back to the old airfield days: its reinforced concrete roof was always cracked, and it leaked, but it was a solid building with a steel door, so we used it as a secure store shed from Day One. Over the years its condition deteriorated and it was not considered worthwhile to do anything but demolish it when re-planning the layout to the rear of the museum site.

Finally, just before *Sandtoft Scene* went to press, a "new" trolleybus arrived at the Museum (on Wednesday, 12 September). Well, it is not actually new, rather it is new to preservation. It is the ex-Bradford 1929 single deck 2-axle English Electric that once "lived" at nearby Eastoft. The exact identity of the vehicle remains unknown, but it is from the 561-571 batch. It has been very generously donated to the Museum by Mr. Andy Thornton of Ealand, West Yorkshire. A short feature on the vehicle appears on page 22.

Vehicle News:

Bradford no.792 has been tested and passed out for another year's operation, and it now sports sign-written Stardrops and Central Garage advertisements.

Bradford no..703 is due to go in for a repaint shortly.

Bradford no.706 has had a thorough clean both inside and out.

Bradford no.844 (Bradford's Last Trolleybus) as noted above, was at Sandtoft from 19 May until 1 September, being passed as fit for service on 24 June and operated on a number of Trolleydays.

Cleethorpes no.54: rewiring work continues; it is also slowly being painted, and works to the brakes and resistors is progressing.

Derby no.172 has had a number of repairs carried out off site, including

to the rear of the chassis, to enable it to be passed for service again.

Glasgow no.TB78 was re-launched back into service on Spring Bank Holiday Monday (28 May) by Gavin Booth (editor of *Classic Bus*).

Huddersfield no.541 is seeing some more action: the rewiring is being continued, the resistor banks are being repaired prior to the cables being changed. The intention is to complete the framing to the vehicle on this visit, and possibly the panelling, if the finance can be found.

London no.1812 As reported above, no.1812 entered service at the Museum on 28 May 2001. Virtually all the outstanding restoration work was completed (just) by that date and the vehicle thoroughly cleaned inside and out for its day of glory. This work included (amongst a myriad of other bits and pieces) completing the re-upholstering of the seats and re-fitting them, completing the re-wiring, fitting the newly renovated compressor, fabricating and fitting a new rear registration number plate using as a pattern one that was retrieved in 1975 from Vigo, Spain (where some nine Q1's had lain, unused, since they had been exported in 1961) way back in 1974, completely top-coating the exterior and sign-writing the advertisements all round. A new wing has had to be made for the rear offside bogie as the original rubber one had disintegrated. Over a period, the mechanical side has been inspected and any necessary repairs and adjustments made.

A problem with the brakes that manifested itself just before its re-launch, but which could not be rectified in time, has now been sorted out: this problem, whereby the rear brakes were binding, meant that operation had to be restricted to occasional trips only, but no.1812 is now fully operational.

A number of detail jobs are outstanding and will be attended to as time goes on. Also to be done during the winter months is the complete replacement of the window-mounting rubbers.

Maidstone no.56: the splash-guards (under the trolleybase) have been replaced; and the front panels have been repainted (yet again). The wings are to be tidied up, and some dented panels attended to.

Nottingham no.46 (chassis) is being cleaned up ready for painting so that it can be better displayed.

Reading no.113 has had its broken spring rebuilt.

Rotherham no.37: work slowly progresses when time permits.

Rotherham no.74 is now owned by Tim Stubbs and left Sandtoft on a lowloader on 2 June 2001 for the long job of restoring it, hopefully to running condition. Good luck, and we look forward to progress reports (and its ultimate return), Tim !

South Shields no.204 New roofing timber has been delivered in

readiness for an extensive restoration project.

Teeside no.2: At the 'Gathering, Teeside no.2 changed hands: after a quarter of a century of being owned by Tony Hanson, she is now owned by Peter Price. Peter is keen to acquire a "Trolleybus Turning" sign for the rear of no.2 - one of the distinguishing items on the Teeside fleet. Work has started in earnest on the rewiring of 2, and the cab floor is also being removed.

AN APPEAL FROM THE RAILWAY

As you know we are trying to re-instate the miniature railway at Sandtoft, but at the moment, work has come to a halt. The reason we are writing this is to appeal to the membership of Sandtoft Transport Centre to come forward and lend a hand or two to help get the trains running again. We have now taken delivery of a new set of carriage bogies, so rolling stock construction should commence shortly.

MOST URGENTLY needed are people who can weld or who can cut steel using a hand-held grinder; also people who would like to get the track-bed looking nice and ready for use. No experience is necessary as we will be on hand to show you what to do.

If you would like to help in any way, please let Rachel Fox or Keith Bunting know at Sandtoft. Thanking you in anticipation, Rachel and Keith.

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

The September edition of *Old Glory* carries the first part of a nice article on the Bradford Trolleybus System entitled "First and Last: the Bradford Trolleys" by Robert Anderson. There are some good accompanying pictures of the Bradford system in operation including some pictures of vehicles which are now in preservation.

Editors verdict: well worth a read, can't wait for part two and can we have some more please.

The August/ September edition of *Classic Bus* carries a one-page report (by Gavin Booth), with two colour photographs, about the launch of Glasgow no.TB78 and London no.1812.

FROM THE BOARD ROOM:

There have been three Board meetings since publication of the last *Sandtoft Scene* - on 20 May, 1 July and on 1 September 2001, when, amongst other things, the following matters were considered and can be reported:

The development suggestion described by Brian Maguire on page 24 has been considered by the Board, when the ideas put forward were generally welcomed. The project would have far-reaching effects on the

Museum's appearance and operation, so the Board is anxious to look at all the implications and whys and wherefores of the proposals, including structure design and how other parts of the museum would be affected and how they also could be developed. The obvious question of funding has also to be investigated. Comments from the membership are welcomed - if we are to proceed, we need to get it right!

The various overseas trolleybuses that had been on offer to the Museum are, unfortunately, no longer available, each for different reasons. It must be said that only one - the pair of Riga, Latvia, Skoda 9Tr vehicles coupled in a "twin set" - had attracted any amount of funds, and then by no means enough to see the project through.

On a brighter note, the Board has reviewed the method of calculating the monies that are paid to trolleybus owners in return for the service use of those trolleybuses. It has been agreed that the payment will, with effect from the 2000 season, be £5.00 per day operated, plus £1.00 per passenger journey. This reflects the amount that any trolleybus is actually used (not taken into account up to now).

Looking forward to next year, it has been agreed in principle that Maitstone no.72 can be decorated for HM Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee, and run for non-passenger trips. This quite obviously depends on no.72 being repaired/overhauled both electrically and mechanically: there should be sufficient funds available from the 72 appeal to enable this to happen (but your donations are still required!), so help to get no.72 ready would be welcomed.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Roland Box (Editor - Trolleybus Magazine)
Congratulations on the 50th issue of *Sandtoft Scene* it is always a pleasure to read and usually contains some useful snippets of information that I can pass on to readers of *Trolleybus Magazine*.

I was particularly interested to see the news of three offers of overseas trolleybuses, although I think the reference to a Skoda 12Tr is incorrect - is it a 14Tr? I am intending to mention the appeal for donations in the July-August issue, if you are agreeable.

From John Stainforth (co-owner of Bradford no.792)

I just wanted to send many thanks for the payment from Sandtoft for the use of our trolleybus.

It was a pleasant surprise to receive some revenue for last season's running. For us, it's just good to see our vehicle operating again these days - so any payment comes as a bonus. However, we have just had the "Stardrops" advertisement painted on the side (thanks to Brian

Maguire for some good signwriting), so your cheque came at a very appropriate moment towards the cost.

I do feel that some revenue from running days serves as an extra incentive to keep trolleys mobile and in good condition. We do appreciate the income and also the new formula that made it larger amount this time.

From: Will Shotton

Thank you very much once again for an excellent day out at the 'Gathering last Sunday. It was great to see the LT Q1 and the Glasgow trolleybus in all their glory.

My mate and I are from Darlington and it always saddens us to see the Bradford "HN" registered trolleybuses with their new bodies and no trace of the original fleet in existence. I believe one Darlington trolleybus was used as a towed mobile library in the early 'sixties and the council had a towed mobile workshop. The nearest we can get is CAJ 12, the ex- Teesside Railless Traction Board trolleybus, from a system I remember seeing on our way to Redcar. I did approach the owner of this vehicle with a view to possible purchase two years ago but he wasn't interested.

As GNER and ex-BR employees we utilized the free bus service from Donny and found that very convenient, as for the past four years we've always done the trip by car. I seem to remember two years ago the farmer deciding to harvest on the very day of the 'Gathering causing some discomfort to your visitors with dust and chaff blowing everywhere. Lo and behold he did the same this year - coincidence???

It is always good to get praise for efforts put in to entertain our visitors, so thanks Will for that. In actual fact we have a very good relationship with our neighbouring farmer (after all, we borrow his land every year for 'Gathering !) and on the day this year he was actually frantically cutting grass to enable us to have even more space for parking, as the car park was filling up so rapidly ! You will also be interested to know that Teesside no.2 now has a new owner and the vehicle is already being worked on.

A GLOW AS TB78 & 1812 RE-ENTER SERVICE

Francis Whitehead

28 May 2001: for me, the day was a coming together of dreams, perseverance, planning, effort, co-operation, hard work, waiting and memories. It was a complete coincidence that on 28 May, two trolleybuses that I had striven hard to rescue for preservation, and have supported financially and practically since they were acquired by the British Trolleybus Society, went back into service for Museum visitors.



Above: 28 May 2001: 1812 about to be driven through a tape by Gavin Booth to launch it back into service following its extensive restoration. TB78 had just been re-launched. (the crowd of visitors was behind the camera !)

Below: TB78 and 1812, after the launching ceremony, with 113, in service, approaching *Both photographs by Francis Whitehead*





Top Left: "Fort Knox" – now demolished

Bottom Left: Brian Maguire being interviewed for the NMTV programme



Top Right: 619 behind tower wagon A9 about to leave, 844 having just arrived

Bottom Right: A visiting Reading-registered Austin poses next to 113 (28 May)



The first of these trolleybuses, Glasgow no. TB78, I had seen for the first time exactly 34 years and 1 day previously, on my first visit to Glasgow, for the last day of trolleybus operation in that fine city. I was struck then by the character these good-looking vehicles had (they were only 9 years old). The (then) Reading Transport Society (now the BTS) were, at the time, collecting together a selection of trolleybuses for preservation: their attempt to secure one of Hull's "Coronation" class Sunbeams had failed (the tender to an unsympathetic undertaking was too low) so they set their sights on a Glasgow BUT. Following the Glasgow closure, and after much deliberation TB78 was selected, it being in the best condition and the most recent overhaul (the alternative candidate was TB123, the last trolleybus built for Glasgow and the last trolleybus to operate there, but no.123 was in a poor state of repair). However, despite some promised financial assistance from the Scottish Tramway Museum Society, it proved very difficult to raise sufficient funds from the RTS membership to purchase and tow the trolleybus south. In fact, immediately before tenders were due in, the project was on the point of collapse. Having been so impressed by the type, I decided to make up any deficit in the funds raised so far, and to then sponsor the vehicle at 2/6 per week. Once purchased, I was one of the towing crew that collected TB78 from Glasgow and took it to Westgate, and I was in the working party a few months later that moved the first trolleybuses – including TB78 - onto the Sandtoft site

Years later, after TB78 had had to be taken out of service at Sandtoft due to a deteriorating body structure, I joined the small working party of BTS members that commenced the bold task of renovation. A concentrated effort resulted in huge progress being made; it was most satisfying to see the results of all our hard work as we reconstructed first the offside and then the nearside of the lower deck. I remember taking my saloon car to Scunthorpe to collect some 8' x 4' sheets of steel, bringing the back lashed to ladders on the roof-rack!

Personal circumstances prevented me from being able to see the project through, but I still kept a close interest in progress, and doing what I could in the background. I also discussed TB78's progress with our friends in the Scottish Tramway and Transport Society and was pleasantly surprised when they very kindly gave the BTS a sizeable donation towards the restoration costs.

The story behind no.1812's return began with me, in the early 1970's, lamenting the fact that there was no London trolleybus at Sandtoft - in my view, a serious omission. At about the same time, I went on a trolleybus holiday to Spain: I knew that a number of Q1's had gone to London and ascertained quite what (on paper) was where. I used the holiday to reconnoitre what Q1's might be candidates for preservation,

concluding that obtaining one of the untouched examples at Vigo would be the best bet thereby avoiding a huge restoration job (.....!).

The detailed story of the sad failure to get no.1830 from Vigo has been related elsewhere, as has the follow-on story of the recovery of no.1812 from the Santander-Astillero undertaking. Yes, the Q1 project was of my making (and I have supported no.1812 financially since before its acquisition). BUT, it is only with the generosity and enthusiastic support of many, many people, both back in the 1970's and again, more recently, when the BTS decided the time had come to restore no.1812, that the project has been able to be completed - my personal thanks go out to the many who have helped the BTS and Sandtoft in any way with no.1812.

The BTS Committee met several times in the months and weeks leading up to 28 May to thrash out a lot of the detail about the final throws of no.1812's restoration and the double "launch" with TB78 into service. At Sandtoft, Brian Maguire slavishly put the finishing touches - fitting the rest of the seats, black lining-out, sign-written advertisements, transfers, destination blinds, light bulbs, the staircase handrail, trolleyheads, mechanical checks and adjustments, (Bruce Lake, with Steve Harrison and Sam Maguire did the electrical checking) - the list was seemingly endless - to no.1812. As the day drew near, I took on the task (with some help from Bruce Lake) of sending a press release to virtually every national newspaper, a good number of the papers in the Museum's catchment area and some in the London and Glasgow areas. I also advised radio and television (the only apparent response here was an e-mail from Terry Wogan - should I frame it?).

As it happened, I was to be away on holiday on 28 May (there is a law about this sort of thing) but after much thought, and with the family's blessing, I decided to be at Sandtoft. Then the problem of getting there from the depths of Norfolk without a car. Fortunately, I discovered that David Brown was planning to go, and he kindly agreed to take me along as well. Thus it was that David, Paul Emmerson (a former Auckland trolleybus driver and now an Eastern Counties bus driver) and myself set off from just north of Norwich that Monday in time to reach the Museum mid-morning to discover a resplendent no.1812 blinking in the morning sun in Sandtoft Square.

Already there was quite a crowd about. I quickly learned from Graham Bibbé that, according to plan, both no.1812 and TB78 had been passed as fit and safe for service, although (possibly not surprisingly, since neither vehicle had run very much for a considerable time) both would require additional work to get them absolutely right. A photographer/reporter from the *Doncaster Free Press* appeared, wanting to take a couple of posed shots of key people with the two trolleybuses: Richard Bibbé brought TB78 out of the depot on battery power for this (and a fine

photograph duly appeared in the Doncaster papers along with a story based on my press release).

Reading no.113 took up service, and the visitors carried on coming in. The guest-of-honour, Gavin Booth arrived and was briefed on what he had to do and when by Mike Dare. At last, with TB78 and no.1812 in their designated positions for their launch, in front of the *Axholme Stores*, Mike introduced Gavin Booth to the now quite large multitude and after a few reminiscences about Glasgow trolleybuses and appreciative comments about its restoration, he entered the cab of TB78 and drove it forward through a white tape. Invited guests of the BTS and Sandtoft (including many supporters of the BTS's SponsorTrolley scheme, who sponsor the BTS fleet) boarded TB78 for an inaugural trip, driven by Graham Bilbé and conducted by John Heighway.

Then it was the turn of no.1812: a similar format was followed for this, with additional words from Sandtoft Chairman, Steve Harrison: no.1812 moved forward, with Gavin at the controls, to the sound of (what else?) the 1812 Overture. With Graham and John crewing it, the guests made the inaugural trip in no.1812 before the rest of the visitors were able to sample once again the delights of riding on a London Q1.

It was great to see so many beaming faces as, with the sun shining brilliantly, the two stars-of-the-day glided around, trolleyheads clattering as they passed through the frogs and crossings in the overhead. There were lots of friends and acquaintances about, several I had not seen for many a year: everyone seemed absolutely delighted at the spectacle of a London Q1 under Sandtoft's wires. Fred Ivey, who has been a marvellous and dedicated enthusiastic supporter of the 1812 project right from the start, appeared to be beside himself as he rode on it. I have to admit that despite having planned for this day for well over 27 years, and seen work progressing during the past 27, or so, months, I find it difficult, even now, to believe no.1812 is actually a working London trolleybus again!

All in all, I thought it was a tremendous day. To see so many people enjoying it with me somehow made all that striving worthwhile. I am certain it was not the effects of the strong, late May sun (and it wasn't alcohol), but I had a glow that day!

619' GOES ON HOLIDAY

Bruce Lake
Back at the 'Gathering of 2000, I was approached by representatives of the Keighley Bus Museum and the Kirklees Transport Group with a startling proposition: could we take a Huddersfield trolleybus to the Huddersfield Bus Parade and Transport Rally the following year?

After initially dismissing the idea as too much work, expense and risk, I looked again at our Huddersfield vehicles: no.631 was looking a bit

shabby, having had little attention for a number of years, but no.619 had just been repainted by Brian Maguire, and with Brian, the owners (myself, Steve Harrison and "the Versions" - Phil and Keith Jenkinson) had spent many hours sorting out the electrics and generally fixing the various mechanical and bodywork problems we found following her recovery from Transparency. After all, we had just put her back into service for this very 'Gathering! And very fine she looked too!

Several discussions later, and a promise of slow, steady towing, under cover accommodation by the Keighley Bus Museum and low costs, the idea had taken hold. It took many false starts, phone calls and meetings over the next few months, but gradually agreement was reached (this takes some doing with three groups involved!) Everyone would get something out of the proposed arrangement - the Kirklees Transport Group would get a Huddersfield trolleybus to run in their rally and it could be used for advance publicity for this, Keighley Bus Museum would get an extra attraction for their Open Days and take her to their local rally at Marley Fields, Sandtoft would get no.844 (Bradford and Britain's Last Trolleybus) in exchange to show and possibly run at the Museum, and we, no.619's owners, would have the immense pleasure and satisfaction of seeing no.619 back in her home town.

The plan gave us the spur to restore no.619's lower saloon, where the ravages of our Yorkshire weather, combined with the long-term outside storage and open platform, had conspired to make the leathercloth and plywood side panelling rot and crumble. New panels were covered with new leathercloth at home over the winter by myself and Cherryll, which, along with all the lower deck seat squabs and backs, made the house look more like an upholstery factory than anything else. We decided that our limited budget would not run to renewing all the seat leather as well. You cannot replace just some of the upholstery ((in my opinion it usually looks worse than leaving it alone), so the application of a needle and thread here and there, and liberal application of leather polish restored the seats to an acceptable finish - more than acceptable considering her 11-year intensive service and the protracted periods of outside storage. With some days off work, and Brian repainting the ceiling, we just managed to replace all the panels and seats in time for the 2001 running season. Now she was even more resplendent! This meant that the final green light could be given for the summer's excursion to take place.

And so, on 19 May 2001, the Keighley towing crew arrived at Sandtoft with no.844 behind their restored ex-Huddersfield AEC "Mandator" tower wagon, no.A9, to effect the agreed swap. The inbound tow had proved faultless and optimism grew that this project would actually work! Despite a broken towing bracket incurred on the return journey, no.619 was safely shedded at Keighley just after 10pm.

No.619 received some attention at Keighley by their staff, and we went over to apply even more leather polish to the seats, which by now were becoming more supple. The trip to Marley proved a success and no.619 was causing great interest at the Dalton Lane depot. Meanwhile, no.844 was receiving attention at Sandtoft: her under-cover storage and platform doors had resulted in a vehicle in a much better condition, and the number of faults found while testing were few. Thus, on the 24 June, no.844 was passed fit for service and ran at Sandtoft for the first time in many years, much to the interest and pleasure of our visitors. She proved a little difficult to drive, with very little gap between the first few notches, and attention to the master controller only marginally improved this. Nevertheless, she continued to give good service at the summer open days.

Discussions had been taking place all spring about how to make the most of no.619's visit to West Yorkshire. It seemed a shame to have her as close as Keighley and then only return her to Huddersfield for one day (the rally). Eventually, all other grander ideas were ruled out, and the proposal to arrive on the Saturday before the rally was agreed. Accommodation was found for the night, and this had the benefit of an easier time on the Sunday preparing her for the 11 o'clock rally start.

In the event, Saturday, 11 August proved exceptional. The trusty towing crew arrived in town with their charge by mid-morning. Arrangements had been made to commandeer part of St. George's Square for displaying no.619. This all fell apart with the arrival of several coaches rostered to ply would-be train travellers to Leeds as trains weren't running there (again!). Plan B was hastily put into operation: no.619 was taken to Longroyd Bridge Depot, where the current owners had kindly cleared the forecourt to allow us to park her in the entrance (actually exit) to the depot and take photographs. Here we had an inkling of what the rest of the day would bring. About two minutes after we had arrived, a startled ex-trolleybus driver appeared, apparently quite dazed at having driven past the depot for the first time in several years and finding a trolleybus outside! He would prove to be the first of many. While a contingent returned to the Square to try and clear some space (actually quite a lot of space - imagine a 30' trolleybus hauled on a long tow bar attached to a Mandator), we set off up the Colne Valley as far as the Birks Well short working at Slaithwaite; this has a convenient turning circle (again, a 30' trolleybus and a Mandator need some space to turn round); some passers-by informed us that they thought it had once been used by trolleybuses.....

Later on, we finally found a use for modern technology, as my mobile phone advised me that there was now a space in St. George's Square. The convoy set off back to town, attracting more curious glances on the way. (You have to remember that anyone under 40 years old is very

unlikely to know what a trolleybus is, let alone recognise a Huddersfield double decker version, for the red and cream livery that is so familiar to us is only familiar to those Huddersfield residents over 30, hence the glimmers of recollection were reserved to the older end of the populace.)

The Square was duly reached: the car-clearing contingent had been very successful, removing sufficient infernal combustion machines from outside the Huddersfield Building Society to allow no.619 to park in almost the same spot that no.623 had set off from on its last journey some 33 years earlier. Here we were joined by no.472, one of the Kirklees Transport Group's vehicles, and although the bus had played its part in trolleybus replacement, it was nice to see the two together again. We had a great time for the next few hours. Steve brought his generator set-up, so we were able to illuminate no.619's interior traction lights, which made a grand sight on the rapidly darkening drizzly afternoon. LV brought a selection of photographs of trolleybuses in action in Huddersfield and had also prepared some leaflets about no.619 and the town's trolleybus system in general; Brian turned up and brought shots of no.619's restoration and many Sandtoft leaflets to give out. All were examined with relish by the general public and no.619 was admired by one and all. Most of the public who could remember the trolleybuses passed comments like "they shouldn't have taken them off" or "they ought to bring them back". Obviously all remembered them with affection.

What amazed us was the number of ex-corporation employees who turned up - there were painters, mechanics, linesmen, conductors, ringers-off, inspectors and drivers. The drivers in particular were very excited and most had to sit in the cab again, saying "I remember driving this one!". LV especially really enjoyed talking to them, so much so that he regretted not bringing a tape recorder. Nevertheless he must have added to his repertoire of stories that afternoon. It was a great advert for the following day's rally, particularly as the *Examiner* ran the story on the Friday, showing no.623 in the aforementioned spot, and they then showed no.619 in nearly the same place in Monday's edition. As the crowds drifted away, we packed up and no.619 was towed off to her local hotel for the night. We felt that it had been an excellent exercise, the only regret in hindsight was that we didn't make more of it.

Sunday dawned almost as darkly as Saturday had finished, and then it went downhill. The rain set in by lunchtime, and by the time the rally had finished in the late afternoon, the weather was nothing short of miserable. However, this didn't stop the crowds arriving in Greenhead Park to see the 100-and-odd exhibits, of which around 30% must have been buses. We felt we had played no small part in this, as the Saturday publicity and the news coverage of no.619's visit had been

very good. The parade was led by no.619 (behind no.A9 of course), and no.472 was now joined by the KBMT's no.473, so there was a nice convoy of Huddersfield vehicles through the middle of town. This was an opportunity to get more video and photographs of no.619 in more of its old haunts.

The Sunday afternoon was spent much as Saturday's – swapping stories with Huddersfield residents and corporation employees, and telling those who didn't know, what a trolleybus is. The mayor came and showed particular interest, as he had been a conductor and driver in his former life, although he hadn't actually driven trolleybuses. No.619 got judged with all the other vehicles, but we didn't take much notice of this: it just happened that Steve was around when the judges asked to look at the engine and have it started up! Quick-witted as ever, he switched on the generator and ran the compressor and clicked all the contactors in and out, saying "that's what it sounds like running". They went away duly impressed - so much so apparently, that we were awarded the trophy for the "Best Double Deck Bus"! That honour made all the effort that little bit more worthwhile. What really sticks in the mind, though, is the sight of no.619 on the streets of Huddersfield again – if you are involved with a trolleybus project, I can thoroughly recommend it!

Thanks to all those, too numerous to mention individually, involved in the project from all the groups concerned. They made it all happen!

More details about no.619's restoration and more photographs of her visit to Huddersfield can be seen at www.trolleybus.org.uk.

A RARE BEAST

What may well be the very last surviving UK trolleybus that was not in the hands of preservationists has arrived at Sandtoft, a donation from Mr. Andy Thornton, now of West Yorkshire, who lived and grew up in it with his parents and sister from when he was a baby, just after the war, until 1972.

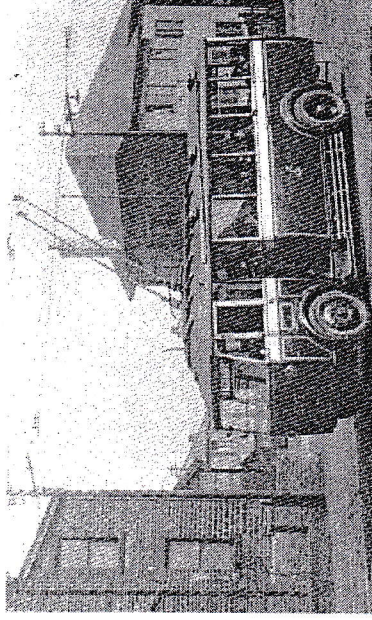
The exact identity of the vehicle is still not known. What we do know is that it is one of a batch of eleven English Electric Type A 2-axle single-deckers ordered by Bradford in March 1929, delivered between November 1929 and early January 1930, and numbered 561-571 (registration nos. KW 6051 – 6061); powered by English Electric type DK 121 60hp motors, they had English Electric 34seat bodies with their entrance just behind the front wheels. The eleven (which were delivered at much the same time as a batch of three-axle, English Electric Type E11 double-deck trolleybuses with "protruding" cabs ordered to convert the Allerton tramway to trolleybus operation), were used for a variety of duties during their 16-17 years of service in the city. Another point of interest is that they were always fitted with trolleywheels (Mr R. Edgley

Cox had instituted a conversion to carbon insert trolleyheads following a successful experiment in 1942).

They were withdrawn from service in late 1945/ early 1946 (being replaced by Bradford's famous Karrier W4 "DKY"s" - then carrying "relaxed" utility bodies) and sold to various dealers. It is likely that the running gear (traction motor, differential etc.) was removed before Mr. Thornton's father purchased the trolleybus we now have in 1946 from a dealer in Leeds. He converted it to living accommodation (three rooms) and sited it in Eastoft, near Crowle, and not that far from Sandtoft (incidentally, the erstwhile Isle of Axholme Joint Railway had a station at Eastoft).

When it was finished with as a home, the vehicle was put to further use, this time as a meeting room for the village - apparently the Parish Council regularly used its facilities! It was whilst it was being so used (it was painted a light grey colour) that our attention was drawn to it: various members "kept an eye" on it, even reporting a repaint (grey again) at one stage. Then it disappeared (around 1991?), being traced to Elland, near Halifax, where it was reported that it was to be preserved as a living van.

No more was heard of it (by me, at least, although there is no doubt that enthusiasts still monitored the situation) until an email arrived on 2 August 2001 via the Museum's website, offering it to the Museum for restoration. I made contact with Mr. Thornton, Bruce Lake (our West Yorkshire representative) and Brian Maguire subsequently arranged to inspect the vehicle and measure it to assess transport requirements before a lowloader was arranged for it to be moved to Sandtoft. As recorded elsewhere in this edition, it duly arrived, without incident, at the Museum on Wednesday, 12 September 2001.



Bradford no.567, seen when around one year old, passing Five Lane Ends Hotel on the way to Saltaire.

Photo: BCT

We are delighted to have this trolleybus: it fills a "gap" in the story of the development of the British trolleybus (there are no other English Electric trolleybuses in the UK) and although only around 18 months younger than Mexborough and Swinton no.34, its design is significantly more

"modern". The chassis is essentially a Leyland PLSC1 "Lion", so it should prove possible to source missing components. The body is in remarkably sound condition: whilst many body parts have long since disappeared because of its conversion, there are a lot of "bits" that have survived that will provide patterns when restoration does take place. There is even a complete seat and frame from the saloon, with original moquette, although this is only on loan from Mr. Thornton. Although it is currently on "new" wheels, we have the originals and now require a set of 8.25 x 24 tyres and tubes - can anyone help? (we actually need two sets as the Mexborough and Swinton Garrett was shod with the same size tyres).

As I said, we do not yet know what number the trolleybus is (that is unique in trolleybus preservation), but hopefully we will be able to find out, particularly if we can locate the chassis number (no trace seems to exist of identification either inside or outside on the bodywork). We will do what research we can: we know what vehicle from the batch was sold where, and Bradford trolleybus historian, J Stanley King, believes it is not no. 570 or no.571. We will let you know when we find out.....

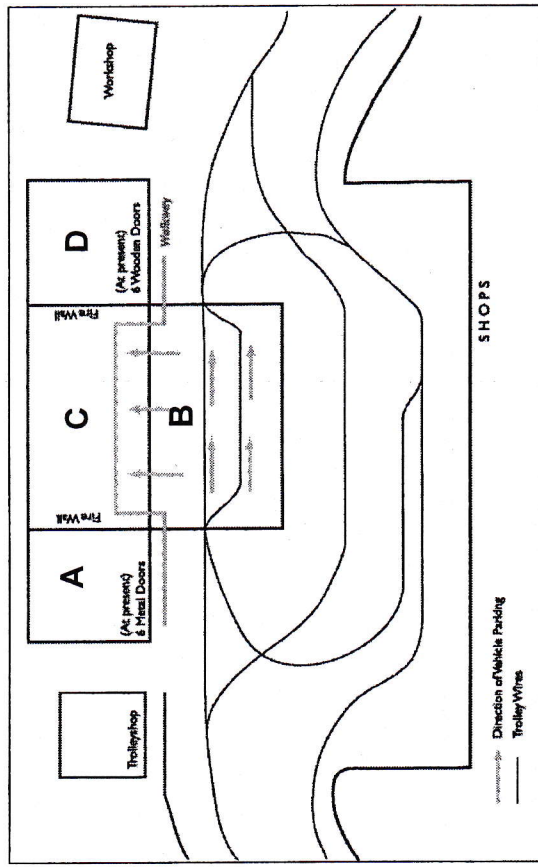
SANDTOFT - A WAY FORWARD?

Brian Maguire
I have recently been casting a critical eye over the Museum site to see where the grounds could be used to a greater effect than their present usage. During this time I have spoken to a few members of what could be changed, and what we are short of. The obvious one was more undercover accommodation. I wanted to look further than this; I feel that Sandtoft is not a proper museum, in that it does not display any vehicles, except the few in "rammel corner", for the visitors to view.

So I have come up with the accompanying plan of a possible solution to the problems. They are purely my thoughts, and I would be pleased to hear of any comments, good or bad, to improve it.

The depot could be sectioned into four areas, labelled A B C D. These would be for defined uses - D would house the trolleybuses with battery power on the front row for ease of driving out to the overhead; B would give us two lanes of running shed, with the C area holding three rows of vehicles as at present, but with the front row moved out ten feet, (or three metres for the benefit of Jim!) and turned round 180 degrees. This would enable a footpath between the first and second rows to allow visitors to stroll between two rows of presentable vehicles. The A B and D sections would be separated by fire walls with small personnel doors for access; the floor would need to be levelled, and we could still move vehicles from section to section when required. Assuming the 'Gathering continues in its present form, the areas A B and D would provide enough area for sales stands, and we would not need to get so many of the fleet out - or put them away afterwards.

It is expected that the running shed would be constructed of steel and brick, with wooden doors each end, and two on the long side to access the static display. No set measurements have been worked out yet, but I would expect the openings to be 20 feet wide.



As can be seen, the running wires would be swung over to form a two-way road outside the shop fronts, leaving an area of concrete for displaying, or standing vehicles on.

It is true that Sandtoft Square would disappear under this scheme, but I think the benefits far outweigh the loss of this facility. It would also lose the terrible view of 22 uninterrupted depot doors, most of which will never work properly! Hopefully, this scheme would attract some grant funding from somewhere, but if not, it would not be that expensive to do. It would certainly take us into the future with a museum to be proud of!

There is a long way to go, even if this was accepted tomorrow, so please send me your thoughts, alterations or complaints; any comments (if constructive) will be welcome. Along with running down the "runways", this could really put us on the map, and we could open regularly with very few staff, just as we do now.

My thanks to Brian for this suggestion. Members' comments, suggestions, amendments or other ideas for inclusion in the 'Scene' would be appreciated. Please don't let this idea die in the water. Ed.

FILMING AT SANDTOFT WITH NMTV

Graham Bilbé

For some of us, 11th November 2000 was certainly a Remembrance day with a difference, as we spent the day at Sandtoft filming for a documentary TV series, *Former Glory*.

The day dawned as I drove up the M1, a typical grey November day - not ideal for filming or trying to make the place look jolly, but fortunately modern camera equipment copes well with low light conditions. I was met by Brian Maguire with the customary cuppa, and Bruce Lake was also there fairly early. While we sipped our tea, we considered what the film crew might want to do, which vehicles to use, and so on. We'd just decided to put the mains power on when the film crew arrived, so after brief introductions in Sandtoft Square, and showing them Huddersfield 619 we all headed off to the box wagon for another cup of tea - (cheers, Brian!) and a more detailed planning session.

They explained that the half-hour programme was to be in three parts: about 10-12 minutes on the National Tramway Museum at Crich; a 5-6 minute section about Mike Sutcliffe's personal collection of ancient Leylands, and the remaining 10-12 minutes about Sandtoft. It soon became clear that this was a programme about the people who run such museums, and why they do it, so the absence of 'Jo Public' at the time was an advantage.

They were quite happy to use no.619, which is big, and red, and 3-axled and impressive! (and was conveniently out already). At this point the film crew of four - presenter Ian Clayton, cameraman, sound technician and director - outnumbered STC staff, so it was an easy decision to interview Bruce first, on the lower deck of no.619. This was particularly appropriate, being from his home town, so I drove her around the inner circle while he recounted childhood memories, and how he became interested in trolleys. Having started in the November gloom, I went round to put the interior lights on: apart from making it look more jolly, the crew were delighted when we pointed out that they would flicker under the dead sections, being fed from the traction circuit. It all adds a little atmosphere!

With Bruce's interview successfully 'in the can', we then discussed what they would like to do next, and we suggested that at least one other vehicle should be shown, or viewers would think we've only got one that works! For convenience, having battery power, Reading no.113 was selected, (although at the time awaiting body repairs to its unfortunate rear end accident - this can't be seen in the film!) I had asked the director if any of them would like to have a drive - under supervision, of course - and she delightedly asked if presenter Ian could do so on camera! It transpired that in all the museums they had visited, no-one had offered him the chance to go 'hands-on' before, so it offered a new dimension to the programme.

No less than four of us duly crammed into the cab of no.113, which is unusually well-suited for the purpose! She has a meter box to the outside of the driver, on which the instructor can perch (rather as you

have to when training on half-cab buses!), leaving room for camera and sound operatives on the nearside. It also has remarkably good mirrors for its age (1939), and a very effective handbrake, which fortunately wasn't needed. So, taking a deep breath, I proceeded to explain the controls to Ian and the camera. Once we'd finished that, with a sheepish grin he gingerly pressed the power pedal, and successfully completed a circuit without incident, camera running throughout! He breathed a big sigh of relief, while the sound and camera crew excitedly remarked that the whole take was brilliant, entirely natural, and couldn't possibly be improved upon if we did it again..... maybe they couldn't face another trip crammed in the corner, but it did all feel right at the time, and looks good on the programme. Yes, it was all for real - it really WAS the first time he'd ever driven a trolleybus, and he did quite well, too..... We did suggest that he might like to come back and train to be a regular driver!

There was just time before lunch to interview Brian, as an active vehicle restorer, appropriately in front of London no.1812, which he was working on at the time. He explained how long it can take to get vehicles back together, and how he's never been that bothered about driving them - he gets his "buzz" from just seeing them go round full of passengers, and thinking "I made that possible!"

True to form, Steve Harrison arrived in time to join us for lunch at the Reindeer, and was subsequently interviewed on the upper deck of no.631, explaining about the overhead and electrical aspects of trolleybuses. The last shots filmed were of me briefly explaining no.113's significance in preservation and inviting Ian Clayton to have a drive (which bit we'd already filmed, of course!) and the "signoff" shot where he invites viewers to watch again next week for the next show in the series.

So far, the programme has only appeared on satellite channels, but we understand it will appear on terrestrial TV before long. Some "transport" programmes come out very patronising, but we felt this was a genuine attempt to talk to people with an interest in transport and give them a fair chance to explain the appeal of restoring and operating old vehicles like ours. It looks quite an interesting series, so watch out for it.... Sandtoft comes out quite well, I feel, with Bruce's interview, then Brian's, and finishing with the driving session. Funnily enough, Steve doesn't appear at all in the finished programme: we can only surmise that once they'd bleeped out all the expletives, there wasn't enough left to use!

SEPS!

The photos of Yorkshire Day on the inside centre spread were actually taken by Andy Warnes, not me and should therefore be credited to him. It's my fault for not informing Francis Whitehead of this. *Aiden Proctor*



Just before the single-decker went away for restoration, the three ex-Rotherham trolleybuses, (L to R) nos.44, 74 and 37 pose together in Sandtoft Square

Photo: Brian Maguire



Huddersfield no.619, with Kirklees Transport Group's motorbus no. 472 behind, stands in St. George's Square, Huddersfield, on Saturday 11 August 2001

Photo : Bruce Lake