

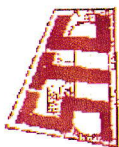
SANDTOFT SCENE

ISSUE No.52

FEBRUARY 2002



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

Registered Office:

The Trolleybus Museum Belton Road Sandtoft, Doncaster North Lincolnshire DN8 5SX

Telephone: Information Line: 01724 711391 Payphone: 01724 711846

Website: www.sandtoft.org.uk e-mail: enquiries@sandtoft.org.uk

Directors:

Chairman (& Safety) Steven J. Harrison steveharrison@sandtoft.org.uk
Secretary C. Bruce Lake brucelake@sandtoft.org.uk

Financial Director (&

Publicity & Development) Francis R. Whitehead fwhitehead@sandtoft.org.uk

Operations (& Shop) Christopher N. Proctor chrisproctor@sandtoft.org.uk

Infrastructure & Maintenance Brian D. Maguire brianmaguire@sandtoft.org.uk

Public Relations & Liaison Graham P. Bilbé grahambilbe@sandtoft.org.uk

Director Ian Wilson ianwilson@sandtoft.org.uk

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.

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

Sandtoft Scene Editor:

D.A. Shepherd 14 Westend Gardens Pollington, Goole East Yorkshire DN14 0EZ

e-mail sandtoft.scene@sandtoft.org.uk

Typesetting and Layout by Francis Whitehead.
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:

Bournemouth no.99 stands on static display in Sandtoft Square during last September's Six-Wheel Sunday. Its traction motor has now been removed for overhaul, so no.99 may soon be a runner again!

Photograph by Brian Maguire

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

Firstly, on behalf of all involved in the production of *Sandtoft Scene*, let me wish you all a very happy new year and say a special "thank you" to all those who have contributed to this, the first 'Scene' of 2002.

Great news on the preservation front, with the announcement just before publication of the last issue, of the arrival at Sandtoft of an extremely rare (and as yet, still precisely unidentified) Bradford single deck trolleybus. This vehicle is now protected the best we can against the worst of the North Lincolnshire winter weather.

Those who have recently visited our website may have been surprised to learn that lightning can, on occasions, strike twice: the discovery of Hastings no.57, built into the structure of a bungalow, is a major find. Its existence was unknown in the preservation movement and poses the question "are there any more to be found?" Thanks to a few dedicated enthusiasts, no.57 should be joining the Sandtoft collection very shortly (see page 7 for the story so far)

On a much lighter note, the Santa Days at Sandtoft went well with a noticeable increase in children visiting Santa in his grotto. The face painting also provided a welcome addition to the festivities. Santa has asked me to thank all those who worked so hard to make his visit possible this Christmas. I learned the hard way on the second day that children take notice of far smaller details than we realise: after the visitors had all left the Museum, we were all relaxing over a well-earned cuppa in the box van when a member's young son, who had been to see Santa that afternoon, came in and asked me why I was wearing Santa's shoes!! Oops!! (He accepted the explanation that I had lent my shoes to Santa whilst his wet snow boots were dried out.)

Dave Shepherd

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2001

This duly took place at Sandtoft on Saturday 24 November 2001. The meeting marked the retirement from the Board of Directors of Jim Sambrooks after many years service. Jim, who was Managing Director for two periods in latter years, has solidly seen the Company through thick and thin and his point of view will be missed at Board meetings. Jim will be continuing with his work as vehicles tester, an interest and duty close to his heart where he has consistently demanded high standards, making our Museum the leader in this field. A vote of thanks to Jim for all his work was passed by the meeting.

Jim's departure from the Board has resulted in a new Director being elected. Three valid nominations had been received for the two Ordinary

Director vacancies (Steve Harrison was retiring by rotation and seeking re-election) and the result of the ensuing ballot was:

Steve Harrison	25 votes	(elected)
John Heighway	14 votes	
Ian Wilson	23 votes	(elected)

There were no other nominations for the position of Financial; Director and therefore Francis Whitehead was re-elected unopposed.

Any member who would like a copy of the audited abbreviated accounts of the Company for 2000/1 as presented at the AGM should send their request (SAE please) to the Museum address.

A useful informal discussion took place during the Open Forum after the formal business of the AGM had finished, with the result that a number of ideas will be considered by the Board in the coming months.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Members are reminded that Company membership falls due for renewal on 1 April (1 May for those joining via the Bradford Trolleybus Association). All concerned will be receiving their renewal notices shortly, either from the Contributing Society they join through, or from our Membership Secretary, David Needham. The subscription rate again remains unchanged. We hope you will all support the Museum in the coming year by renewing your subs early (and if you have not already signed a Gift Aid Declaration form for us, please do so – they are available in the Trolleyshop, from our website www.sandtoft.org.uk or by writing to the Museum and enables us to recover, as additional income, the tax paid on your subs and any donations to the Museum.)

OBITUARY

It is with sadness that we record the death, in November 2001, of member Rose Hawjksworth. Rose was an active supporter of the Museum and the SMR: her tombola stall on Trolleydays for the SMR was a huge success and she will be sadly missed. We send our condolences to her family, including Pat, Bob, Ron and Wendy.

TROLLEYDAYS IN 2002

For those of you that did not have a 2002 diary when the last *Sandtoft Scene* was published, please put these dates in your diary now, and you others, please check your entries - there are a couple of corrections and we have added themes to some of the days.

Easter Weekend featuring 30 th Anniversary	Sunday	31 March	*
of Last Trolleybus in Bradford	Monday	1 April	*
May Day Bank Holiday Weekend	Sunday	5 May	
Trolleydays:	Monday	6 May	*

Spring & HM The Queen's Golden Jubilee Sunday 2 June
Bank Holiday Weekend: Monday 3 June
Trolleydays Tuesday 4 June
June Trolleyday with a Maidstone theme Sunday 30 June
July Trolleyday: Sunday 8 July

Sandtoft Gathering 2002 Preview Saturday 27 July
Sandtoft Gathering 2002 Sunday 28 July
August Trolleyday: Sunday 11 August
August Bank Holiday Weekend - Sunday 25 August
Featuring European Weekend Monday 26 August
Six Wheel Sunday Sunday 15 September
St Leger Rally: Sunday 20 October
Santa Days during December
Sundays to be advised

* = Free Bus service from Doncaster Bus (South) and Railway Stations
Bus departs Doncaster South Bus Station (stand B2) 1.30pm and Doncaster Rail Station 1.35pm, return bus departs Sandtoft at 4.30pm (Journey time approximately 30minutes). Additional services will operate for 'Gathering'.

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.

We repeat from last time that this is a full programme and can only work satisfactorily if members volunteer to help. Please decide now to 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 e-mail enquiries@sandtoft.org.uk).your intentions in advance - he is producing a rota of helpers for the 2002 days and they are getting near now.

30TH ANNIVERSARY OF BRADFORD TROLLEYBUS CLOSURE

To mark this important anniversary, the Easter weekend at Sandtoft (i.e. Sunday and Monday, 31 March/ 1 April - our first Trolleydays of 2002) will be an all-Bradford occasion. We hope that as many as SIX Bradford trolleybuses will be operating and those that do not work will be on display. The Keighley Bus Museum Trust will be bringing no.844 (Bradford's Last Trolleybus) back to Sandtoft and will also be bringing some Bradford motorbuses along, including 82 (the tin-front AEC Regent III that used to be the Reading Area Group's "Regency Hotel" sleeping bus at Sandtoft), 220 (an AEC Regent V) and 309 (a Leyland Titan). It is hoped that Bradford motorbuses will operate the Doncaster free bus service and the Isle Tours that weekend. In partnership with the Bradford Trolleybus Association an exhibition featuring Bradford trolleybuses will be unveiled and both days will feature a Bradford trolleybus slide show in the Ritz Lecture Theatre.

This will all need additional help, so please come and assist – the exhibition needs to be assembled and vehicles got ready. There are still a few weekends to do this in, and of course, there is the Friday and Saturday of the Easter weekend when much of the final work will need to be done. Let Chris Proctor, Bruce Lake or Brian Maguire (at the Museum) know you are willing, or alternatively, contact Mick Leak at the Shipley Glen Tramway in Bradford.

H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH II'S GOLDEN JUBILEE

In years gone by it was common for our towns and cities to mark such occasions by decorating a tram or bus or trolleybus. One such town was Maidstone, so to continue the tradition we are planning to decorate no.72 and run it during Trolleydays this year, starting at the beginning of June – the Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend.

We are pleased to record that the Maidstone no.72 Appeal has raised sufficient cash to enable the traction motor to be overhauled and already some other restoration work has been undertaken inside the trolleybus. Much more money is still needed, so the fundraising continues (contributions can be sent to the Museum address). The opportunity presented by the Golden Jubilee to push the 72 project forward and gain additional publicity for both the fund and our Museum is irresistible.

Whilst plans are well in hand, practical help with preparing and decorating no.72 would be welcomed. Contact Brian Maguire or Francis Whitehead at the Museum address.

As an extra attraction, the 30 June Trolleyday is planned to have a Maidstone theme, with no.56 also (hopefully) running in service and visiting motorbuses from the Maidstone and Kent area. Kent member, David Franks is planning to run a coach from Maidstone that day, bringing "locals" (probably including retired Maidstone Corporation employees) to see their old trolleybuses in action.

SLIDE SHOW - MAIDSTONE TRAMS & TROLLEYBUSES

To be presented by David Hatt on Saturday, 2 March 2002 commencing 1.45pm (scheduled to end at 5.00pm) at the Museum of Kent Life, Cobtree, near Maidstone, Kent and organised to raise funds for the restoration of Maidstone no.72.

Admission by pre-booked ticket, price £2.50 (includes admission to the museum and light refreshments during the interval) from 20 Farleigh Court, Farleigh Lane, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 9BG. Please make cheques payable to "Maidstone 72 Restoration Fund" and enclose SAE. (full details of venue location will be sent with tickets).

Space is limited - so book early to avoid disappointment

SANDTOFT GATHERING 2002

Preparations are beginning to be made, but we still need some help in the organising department.

OUR LATEST FIND – HASTINGS NO.57

My telephone was kept warm recently with calls about an unknown trolleybus which had been found in the middle of nowhere – well, near Chelmsford actually.

Situated on a farm outside Stock, a builder had started to demolish an old bungalow, only to find a bus in the middle. At first it was assumed that it was a City Coach Company six-wheeler: but it was, after some investigation, found to be a Hastings single decker. The number was not known until later.

My first visit was by the invitation of Tim Stubbs, who owns Rotherham no.74, and we met at the station and travelled down to view the beast. We soon found that, as is so often the case, all parts that were valuable as scrap had been removed – presumably before it had been converted to a caravan. With it duly photographed, we left, after having left our names with the lady who owned the farm (and after she had kindly given us a cup of tea).

Fully expecting the Hastings Trolleybus Restoration Group to go and get it, I did not expect to hear anything more, but a telephone call from Ian Castro saying the Group would not be able to handle another vehicle spurred me into action. A telephone call and a letter to the owner revealed that no-one had contacted him and he was thinking of disposal by other means..... A swift round of calls to the other members of the Sandtoft Board produced agreement to it being acquired, so the owner was left in no doubt that we were interested.

A further visit to Essex was made – this time with Keith Farrow (and my other half) - to meet with the owner; we moved some cladding panels to check things out and in so doing, we managed to uncover the rear fleet number to prove its pedigree. A further achievement was that all the wheel nuts we could get at were loosened. We made plans on making the trolleybus ready for removal.

On 24 January we went down with a hired van full of equipment and some serviceable wheels. We soon realised that we had chosen what must have been the worst weekend of the winter – it just did not stop raining. Not to be defeated by a little dampness, we persevered and managed to swap all six wheels, fit a steering box and board up the windows. It is great that we have such a good team of people to do such jobs and given the conditions it is a credit to them all – I had with me Sam Maguire, Keith Farrow, Ian and Janet Metcalfe, Tom Bowden and Steve Collins – that we did what we did. We all got a good soaking but

the fire never went out – well done, Steve (but then try keeping him away when there are things to burn !).

With the field well waterlogged, if not awash, and after consulting with the owner, Peter Carter, he stated that he is to lay a hard roadway in soon. It was agreed that once this was done – in about three weeks – we could return for the actual recovery, an operation that should be straightforward, but who knows ?? We thus returned home again, pleased with our efforts so far.

No.57 is a Guy BTX, registration number DY 5584, new in 1929. It has a Ransomes, Sims and Jeffries central-entrance body once seating 32. It had a 60hp motor and Rees Returbo electrical equipment. Records show that it was sold to Derby in 1942 to become no.170, but it never entered service there – something we are researching. It was sold in June 1946 to J.B. Huxley of Wrexham and (by then as a living van) was purchased by a Mr. Readins from a location at Boreham Airfield (Essex) in either 1952 or 1954. He moved it to Stock and lived in it with his wife until 2001, when she died and he moved to the Croydon area. It is intended to try to trace him to find out some more...

For some good views of no.57, look at the Hastings Trolleybus Restoration Group's website within www.1066.net. Better still, come to Sandtoft to see it for yourself !

MUSEUM NEWS

General:

16 September saw the first Six-wheel Sunday staged as a "theme" for a Trolleyday. Whilst, perhaps, not as many six-wheelers were available to operate as we would have liked, many were out and on display around the Museum. The weather was fine and a larger number of visitors than normal seemed to be about. We will be repeating the idea again this year (15 September), when we hope it will be even more of a success.

It rained on 21 October. Buckets come to mind, let alone cats and dogs. Which was a great pity because, as in previous years, a lot of effort had been put into arranging events for Yorkshire Day. A fair selection of visiting Yorkshire motorbuses turned up, their owners determined to enjoy the day. The cavalades went on as planned and the trolleybus service was provided by Huddersfield no.631; Bradford no.792 was also scheduled to run, but the wet weather appears to have got into the electrics somewhere, meaning that it failed its earth leakage test. All in all, rather disappointing for all concerned and a stark contract to Yorkshire Day 2000, when dry weather prevailed. As for 21 October 2001 - it rained.

The Bradford no.844 - Huddersfield no.619 exchange came to an end, as planned, on 1 September with the vehicles moving back to their

respective homes.

As we were coming up to renewal time, and after looking around at prices and what was available, we have changed our website host (the provider of the service) – it is slightly cheaper ! Our website address, www.sandtoft.org.uk is unchanged. There are no noticeable differences for visitors, although we have taken the opportunity to "tidy up". Perhaps the most obvious change for us is the much cleaner-looking provision of email facilities for our directors, officers and main functions via our web address rather than the "hotch potch" of different individuals' addresses via different providers. Aiden Proctor has started on enhancing our site: one intention is to provide more information about each of our vehicle exhibits. There is a lot we could do and ideas for the site are always welcome.

A number of bushes and shrubs have been moved near the main entrance to improve vision.

The railway track is slowly creeping forward: it is now almost at the car park entrance crossing; it would proceed faster if more folk could help !

The old Trolleyshop building has seen quite a bit of attention recently and the work is ongoing: *New Deal* is to sponsor and source an external repaint whilst our members are busy working on the inside: new interior walls have been constructed and Steve Gill has plastered two of the rooms so created; he is due to have finished the rest by the time this is published. They will then need to be decorated (volunteers please) so that we can have a 1950's prefab "home", suitably furnished (we have furniture "in stock"), during the coming summer.

New Deal are also busy making some new railings to completed the "park" wall-mounted railings south of the prefab bungalow. The railings are being painted by *New Deal* and following that, they are due to manufacture some matching gates.

The old railway container that houses electrical stores, and which has been slowly disintegrating is to be disposed of to the Keighley and Worth Railway for restoration.

A lot has happened and is to happen. We hope that reading all this, the vehicle news below and the plans for the future will inspire more people to assist. Expertise is not necessarily required (admittedly it could help!): what we want is willing people to work together for the good of, and to enjoy, the Museum. Please, come and lend a hand

Vehicle News:

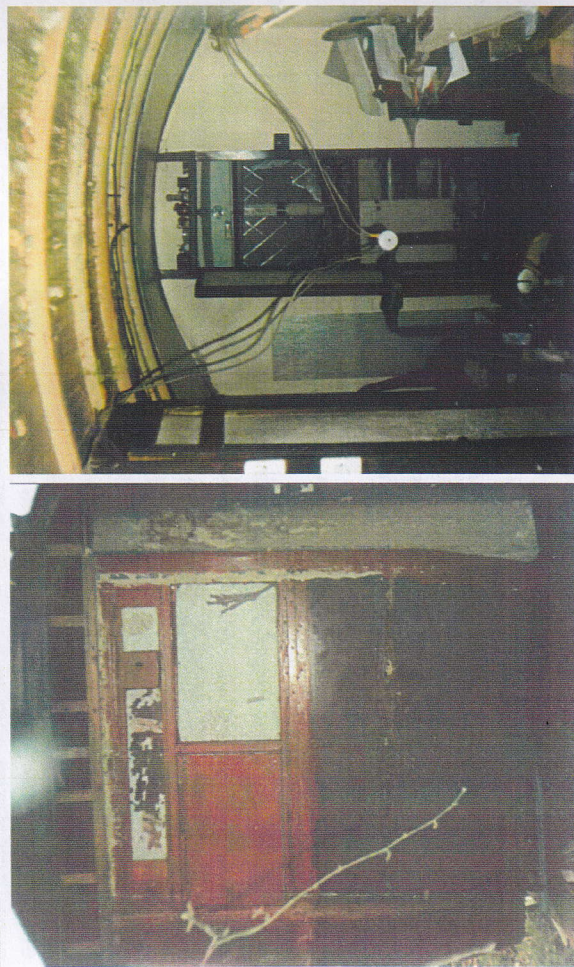
Bournemouth no.99 has had its traction motor removed (on 24 January) in readiness for its refurbishment.

Bradford no.703: Work started in the early autumn on repainting the exterior, but bad weather has stopped play.

1929

GUY

BTX



SANDTOFT'S LATEST ACQUISITIONS

Top Left: Is there really a trolleybus in there ?

Above: Yes - It is ex-Hastings no.57

Far Left: No.57's rear elevation revealed, showing how protected it has been

Left: Interior view, as found, looking forwards

Bottom Left: The ex-Bradford English Electric arrives at Sandtoft

Below: The English Electric parked at Sandtoft

All photographs by Brian Maguire



1929

EE

TYPE A



Bradford no.758: January 2002 saw no.758 being worked on - the brakes, which had seized on have been freed, the near-side framing is being restored, and new window pans are to be made.

Bradford no.844 (Bradford's Last Trolleybus) as noted above, left Sandtoft for Keighley on 1 September but is due to come back to Sandtoft for the Easter weekend .to help commemorate its last run in Bradford 30 years ago.

Cleethorpes no.54: The chassis is being cleaned and further electrical work carried out.

Derby no.175 left Sandtoft on 30 October 2001 to go to Mike Dare's Westgate Trolleybus Museum in nearby Belton, where it will be stored.

Doncaster no.94: Also on 30 October, no.94 returned to Sandtoft from Westgate Trolleybus Museum, where it has been stored. Since then, some new lower deck rear panels have been fitted.

Huddersfield no.541: Huge progress has been made. During the autumn, wiring on the chassis was completely renewed, as was the battery box and the compressor wiring. No.541 was stood outside with lights ablaze and compressor purring away one Sunday whilst on test. The body now has panels, beading and windows in place and has also been primed and undercoated in red, giving a very pleasing look of completion - there is a lot remaining to do though, including completing the rewiring. During December the front destination box was partially refurbished, some leathercloth applied to upper deck side panels and beadings, some further electrical work done and further work in the cab. All the re-useable seat frames have now been repainted and are fixed in position; the rear emergency door is also back in place. The outstanding floor treads are cut and drilled ready to be fitted.

Limoges no..5: A mucky start to 2002 ! The chassis has been cleaned and painted - it took three weeks work by two people to relieve it of its foreign mud and rust. The leaking differential seal has been repaired and the resistor covers repaired and repainted. Chassis lubrication points have also been greased all round.

Maidstone no..72: as reported elsewhere in this edition, no.72 is scheduled to be decorated to celebrate H.M Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee. The decorations (including illuminations) will echo the decoration style adopted by Maidstone for various occasions in the past. Work reinstating and restoring the upper deck has been started: the ceiling has been repainted (it is now cream again in lieu of the white it carried as Maidstone's Last Trolleybus) and leathercloth-covered side panels tidied up; wooden trims have also been re-varnished and refitted. The platform area has been repaired, whilst a new windscreen wiper blade fitted. The traction motor was removed for overhaul (it has a major fault) on 23 January, being shipped to the specialist contractor at

Bradford the following week.

Porto no.140's ceiling has been rubbed down ready for repainting.

Preston Towing Vehicle BCK 939: More work on "the Preston" can be reported. The roof has been fully renovated - reportedly a complicated and fiddly task. The fuel filter has been cleaned for the first time in many a year. The front near-side wing has been repaired and fitted back on, and filled ready for painting.

Rotherham no.37: Work done during September and October includes a new top deck ceiling fitted and painted, window surrounds also painted and some broken glass replaced. New interior panels, also to the to the top deck were prepared and fitted and brown paintwork completed. By the end of 2001 the upper deck painting (including silver to the front panels) was completed; the seat frames have also been painted and the cushions re-fitted. That leaves just the floor to be tackled. Meanwhile in the lower deck, the old tyres stored in there have been removed, the ceiling sanded down and repainted, window pans prepared and painted, new panels made for below the windows, the front bulkhead panels and wheel arches painted silver, the floor painted and the newly restored seat frames fitted, along with the cushions. Brian comments "it is the first time I have ever seen seats in this vehicle !"

St. Helens no.387: It has been many years since a report on this vehicle has appeared. No.387 has stood in the rear of the shed for years without seeing much daylight. During this time the owners have not been in a position, for various personal reasons, to attend to the vehicle and no.387 has become a bit of a sorry sight. Sadly, items have been removed from the vehicle without the owners' knowledge or permission - these include several bell pushes, seat cushions, the horn push, and even the trolleyheads.

During September and October 2001, the upper and lower deck floors and platform area have been swept clean, with the accumulated rubbish removed, and vacuumed; the seats have all been washed clean and polished and are now back in good order; the lower deck ceiling has been washed and the years of mould removed, with the result that the lower deck now looks pretty good. All that is needed now are two seat cushions to replace the two that are missing and some bell pushes.

Future plans are to clean the upper deck ceiling, repaint the seat frames, re-varnish some of the interior wooden window surrounds on both decks, repair the platform and polish up the floors on both decks. Cleaning up the cab is also on the list. External work should commence in 2002. It is the intention to get no.387 up and running at Sandtoft again but it will take time.

Teeside no.2: new owner, Peter Price, has spent a lot of time working on his acquisition, the latest task being the removal of the traction motor

ready for refurbishment (Peter has designed and had built a device to take out/ put in traction motors: he reports that it works well !). Other work by Peter on no.2 includes the removal of the cab floor for it to be renewed, removal of the contactor box for overhaul and restoration, cleaning and feeding the leather seating and fitting a door on the platform to protect the interior more.

FROM THE BOARD ROOM:

The stores building is now in desperate need of major repairs, which has led the Board to consider its future and what options there may be for what is currently quite a tatty and a difficult to use area.

It has been agreed in principle that the prefab stores building should be dismantled and stored for further use elsewhere on the Museum (it is of identical construction to the old Trolleyshop), the main depot should be extended over the area currently occupied by the stores, providing covered space for the frail vehicles presently outside, and a new, purpose-built brick stores building be constructed adjacent to the depot extension.

The development should prove relatively inexpensive as much of the work is straightforward and could be undertaken by members. It is the Board's view that the benefits of the scheme are huge – four additional vehicles will be housed inside (itself an obvious advantage), thereby reducing the number of unsightly vehicles on full view to visitors, the stores will be better accommodated (so that everything can be accessed) and in the moving process can be sorted out, with the accumulated rubbish being disposed of, our precious stock of parts will be more secure, an under-used parcel of land will be developed and with the concrete sections of the old stores prefab, we will have available the basis for a future further development elsewhere on the Museum that will fit our desired 1950's image.

The depot extension would be a "lean-to", limiting it to use by single deckers, and the Board has it in mind to put in it the three "hulks" – i.e. Mexborough & Swinton no.34 (moved from elsewhere in the depot), the Bradford English Electric and Hastings no.57, together with the Bradford Karrier tower wagon: effectively one other vehicle would be brought in from outside.

In connection with the development plan outlined in the last edition of Sandtoft Scene, the Board have been considering further associated plans for the workshop end of the Museum.

BOOPS!

Various people have pointed out that the Preston towing vehicle is a PD1, not a PD2. Sorry about that – it is amazing we did not notice the error before we went to print.

THE DARLINGTONS

Tony Peart

Darlington was one of the few places that continued to use single-deck trolleybuses long after they had become obsolete elsewhere. It was wedded also to the central entrance lay-out even on its first post-war motor buses. Things changed in 1949, when six double-deck BUT's were delivered. They had 9611T type chassis, with English Electric type 410 120hp motors, generally considered the Rolls Royce of trolleybus chassis, and it was a pity that better bodies were not provided. Those fitted were by East Lancashire Coach Builders, seven feet six inches wide with 56 seats, but we must presume that the town's transport committee provided a specification with economy of construction rather than longevity as a primary consideration. Similar vehicles supplied to St Helens around that time exhibited the same symptoms of premature senility and, when they were eventually acquired by Bradford, had to be sent to Roe's Crossgates works for remedial attention.

Darlington's 68-73 (LHN 780-785) had but a short reign in County Durham and were sold to Doncaster Corporation Transport in 1952. For a time they were stored outside Leicester Avenue depot, where they looked very smart in their light blue and cream, still being virtually new. They were soon taken into the shops for attention and rather curiously appeared in a version of the traditional Doncaster livery that had last been used on the ancient Karrier Clough E6's that dated from the earliest days of Doncaster's trolleybus system. The main panels were in crimson lake and the window frames in white. Previously the three white bands that had been part of Doncaster's livery since the mid 1930's on the majority of double deckers had been varnished, thus becoming ivory, but on the "Darlingtons" the white areas were left as they were, giving a rather uncomfortable "staring" effect. One would have expected that Doncaster's newest trolleybuses would be used on a prestigious route, say Racecourse or Wheatley Hills, but they were surprisingly allocated to Bentley, for long the preserve of the town's most aged trolleybuses, where their power and magnificent riding qualities were undoubtedly wasted. Many of the town's roads had indifferent surfaces, but on the Bentley route they were atrocious and the use of these buses on these thoroughfares undoubtedly contributed to the rapid disintegration of the never very robust East Lancs bodies, despite the very superior suspension of the BUT 9611T chassis. Stanley King, in his splendid book on Bradford's trolleybuses, has recorded that in 1955 Doncaster's Transport department was already giving consideration to rebodilying the six "Darlingtons" – at six years old ! The scheme never came to fruition, but the new bodies would certainly have been by Roe and what exceptional vehicles would have resulted, a modernised version of Bradford 746. Though regrettable in one sense, the fact that the BUT's were not re-bodied at this stage meant that certain

circumstances were set in train that eventually led to the preservation of two of them in their later Bradford guise.

In Doncaster these buses were numbered 378 to 383 and when the Bentley route was abandoned - the first to go, largely because of operational difficulties that it engendered - the "Darlingtons" were used on the rest of the town's system. By now Tom Bamford was manager and though certainly pro-trolleybus, he was fanatical about economies that would provide a leaner and consistently profitable undertaking. Accordingly, the town's buses, whether electric or diesel, were painted in a much simplified livery, with one median white band. 378-383 had never looked smart in their first Doncaster scheme, but in the early version of the Bamford livery - they never got to wear the later cherry red version - they looked appallingly dowdy and down-at-heel, real "reach-me-downs". In any case Tom Bamford decided to standardise on the Roe-bodied Sunbeam/Karrier W, another economy, rendering the six BUT's redundant, and in 1959, at ten years old, they were snapped up by Bradford's ever resourceful manager, the brilliant Chaceley T Humpidge. 378 was dismantled for spares, largely to provide an extra EE 120 hp motor for Bradford's indigenous BUT's and the rest of the "Darlingtons", but the rest were given new front axles and eight feet wide East Lancs bodies to a greatly superior specification, entering service in 1962, numbered 831 - 835. They had forward entrances and 66 seats, fluorescent lighting and an undoubted elegant appearance. Stanley King has named them "Magic Carpets" and without doubt they were very fine vehicles in every respect. All of them were scheduled to work until the end of Bradford's enviable system, but 832 was involved in a collision which precipitated its demise in 1971, the rest working until July of that year. Very fortunately 834 and 835 were saved for preservation, and, under the care of Gerald Whiteley and associates, the former is kept at Sandtoft. In generally sound trim, it is nevertheless nearing the time when further restoration work will be required. The "Darlingtons" were certainly the best of Bradford's modern trolleybuses, i.e. those incorporating the latest refinements and specifications, and, to a greater extent than all the re-bodied Sunbeams and Karriers, the two survivors form a fitting memorial to one of the most far-sighted and progressive of all transport managers, Chaceley Thornton Humpidge.

MY 30 YEARS AT SANDTOFT (1971 - 2001)

Graham Bilbé
For several years I have thought I ought to write down some of my 'memoirs' - and the completion of 30 years of Sandtoft volunteering seems a good reason to start! A complete record would extend to far more than a *Sandtoft Scene* article, so this is just a first instalment - a full version might one day appear in my autobiography!

To keep it in perspective, I have prepared this account in chronological

order, so far as I can recall: I hope that this will bring back happy memories for some of you, and an insight to Sandtoft's background for our newer recruits.... We have all learned a lot through the years.

1971: My first visit was for "working Week" in July/August, with a fair-sized group from Reading: Facilities on site were very limited - the box van had just arrived, and electricity was installed to it during that week. Most of the party stayed in local guesthouses, but my elder brother and I, as impecunious schoolkids (aged 17 and 15 respectively) camped on site where the workshop now stands! Furthermore, we stayed on for the following week-and-a-half, whilst our family took their holidays (in Mablethorpe) and they collected us on the way back. We had to fetch water from the bungalow next door, who were very helpful, but for "No.2"s it was a trot down to the outside loo at the *Reindeer* - advance warning crucial! There was a limited amount we could really do on site, mostly cleaning of vehicles: at that time only the first 8-vehicle depot existed, so most were still outside. Once the rest of the Reading lot had gone home, Brian Maguire and his girlfriend helped entertain us in the evenings with slide shows etc. - I shall always bear the scars from riding in the back of his mini-van on the infamously-bumpy 'Wroot Road' at about 60mph! Our stay ended fairly ignominiously with the return of parents.... It only takes five minutes to get dirty at Sandtoft, so you can imagine what we were like after 2½ weeks! We were frog-marched off to discover the delights of Doncaster Public Baths - a wonderful and much-lamented institution - before heading home.

Despite this, I still managed to return in September, I think on a Mike Dare coach trip from Reading, for the first-ever Sandtoft Gathering. I'm pleased that I had the foresight to borrow my Dad's Standard 8 movie camera, and at least made some record of the event: a number of visiting vehicles included three traction engines; rides were given by Huddersfield 619, and later in the day, Reading 181, both under battery power (- yes, Steve Harrison was mucking about with batteries and electrical bits even then!) Both eventually had to be pushed home, but the highlight of the day was the official planting of the first traction pole, by Mr. Edgley Cox, no less, latterly manager of the Walsall system, and highly respected in the industry. It should be born in mind that Bradford was still operating trolleybuses at this time - just.

1972: The local lads had made great strides in erecting traction poles through the winter, led by the late Les Flint, and by the '72 Gathering, the first length of overhead was up along the front of the depot. This was to be the momentous first run under power! Current was to be provided by the Notts. and Derbys. Transport Society's ex-Elliotts of York Scammell towing tractor (DKY 462), which had been fitted with a generator on the back, driven through a shaft and belt drive. A test run was carried out late the previous evening, using Bradford no.835, after a

day's hard labour breaking rubble for the floor of the depot extension. Those on site gathered for this momentous occasion: to say that the atmosphere was "electric" is almost an understatement. To a lad of 16, still grieving for the Reading trolleys that we had lost four years previously, this was utterly fantastic! As the Scammell was revved up, no.835's lights blinked on, and looked an absolute picture. We all piled on, and the cacophony of that old Scammell's drive belts screaming into the night against the roar of its Gardner 6LW as no.835 took power for the first time at Sandtoft, and combined with the hearty cheers of all on board, just had to be experienced. Even now, it makes the hairs on my arms stand on end just thinking about it! For the first time, enthusiasts had operated a trolleybus purely through their own efforts. We ran back and forth several times that night, until, sadly, the drive shaft broke and put an end to proceedings. 'Trog' Moore - custodian of the Scammell - spent all day Sunday getting it welded up, while no.619 ran again on battery power giving rides. The first public operation eventually took place (using Bradford no.845, which was then just about fresh out of service) at about 5.20pm, again with Mr. Edgley Cox doing the honours, but it was nothing on the night before!!

Well, that's enough excitement for now. I'll try to pen more for next time!

ANOTHER ONE SAVED

This story probably goes back to 1994 or 1995 when I was contacted by somebody from Wickersley Showground. They had an old bus converted to a ladies' toilet which they no longer needed. Did Sandtoft want it? We didn't but the offer was passed on to our good friends at the Epworth Showground via our contact Dave Hayes. They were pleased to take on the vehicle for continued lavatorial use.

Early in 2001, Dave contacted me, as the vehicle was now surplus to their requirements and again did we want it? Once again we didn't, but I arranged to advertise it in the appropriate places on their behalf.

Having seen and photographed the vehicle soon after it was installed at Epworth, I realised what a rare beast it was - a Bedford SB with Yeates body, a very early "Riviera" model which would have been the height of luxury and the pride of somebody's fleet when new in the 1950's.

Letters were sent, along with a photograph to the Bedford SB Register, the British Bus Preservation Group and the Historic Commercial Vehicle Club. Tony Peart also contacted other organisations. I heard nothing for the next three months; I didn't expect to, as interested parties were advised to contact Dave Hayes direct and it took this long for the photo and offer to appear in the HCVC magazines *Historic Commercial News*. On the day that magazine was published, I received a phone call from Bill Stanifroth, that well-known collector of rammel and tat, and former STCL director, now a resident in Hollywood (the one near Birmingham,

England!). Bill wanted to know if the vehicle was still available and what was its condition? I couldn't answer either question, so Bill contacted Dave Hayes, who told him that it was still there but that it was due to be cut up immediately. A deal was struck over the phone and Bill is now the proud (or not so proud) owner of this magnificent, engineless, seatless, (even the lavatory seats have been removed) hulk that was once was the pride of somebody's fleet.

Don't panic, it isn't coming to Sandtoft.



The heights of luxury - the Riviera ladies toilet, seen at Epworth Showground, and surreptitiously photographed by Jim Sambrooks in 1995.

Bill has now found out more about his acquisition: it was new in 1954 to Ribblesdale of Blackburn as its no.55 (registration no. ECB 687) and seating 38. After about two years, it was sold and passed through a succession of different owners until 1967, when it went to Wickersley Showground. Epworth took it over in 1995 and Bill remarks that it is now stored undercover for the first time in at least 34 years!!

T-AZZLE

Part of the Sandtoft scene for well over a decade, Brian's dog

Tazzle, died in early January; Brian only found out at Christmas that she was suffering from cancer. From 1989, when she was rescued from the kennels at Bawtry, wherever Brian went, personable Tazzle was nearby, an extra pair of eyes and ears for him and always giving a friendly welcome to every type of visitor, be they human or canine - one salesman, met by Tazzle, would ask "Where is he then?", to be led to Brian, whilst she could play with even the shiest of dogs; she would regularly share lunch with Tony Peart (his, not hers). Missed, particularly by Brian and family, Tazzle is buried where she had spent so much time and had so many friends - at Sandtoft.



6-WHEEL SUNDAY 2001



Huddersfield no.619 passes stable-mate no.631 in Sandtoft Square on Six-Wheel Sunday, 16 September 2001

Photo: Brian Maguire



A gleaming Reading no.181 is seen here on static display - will it be a runner for this year's Six-Wheel Sunday (to be held on 15 September 2002) ?

Photo : Brian Maguire