

SANDTOFT SCENE

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THE JOURNAL OF
THE TROLLEYBUS MUSEUM
AT SANDTOFT



The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft

SANDTOFT TRANSPORT CENTRE LIMITED

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 Operations Director. As necessary, letters will be forwarded to the appropriate person. A SAE for a reply is always appreciated.

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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.

FRONT COVER PICTURE:

Porto no.140 negotiates roadworks at Sandtoft during Schools Week (June 2003): the corner by the back gate is being re-modelled to accommodate a café building and a new junction to link into the proposed overhead extension.

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.

MUSEUM REGISTRATION

We are very proud to announce that our Museum has been awarded Registered Museum status by Resource (The Council for Museums Archives and Libraries).

The Museum Registration Scheme, established in 1988, sets standards for the operation of museums throughout the UK. The Scheme, which is voluntary, is open to all museums and galleries with a long-term commitment to quality in public service.

In gaining this prestigious status, we have demonstrated that we achieve approved standards in museum management, collection care and public service, we are a suitable home for collections which are part of the nation's common heritage and we are worthy to receive support from public sources.

After a false start a couple of years ago, and under the persevering stewardship of David Lovegrove, we prepared our application during most of last year, eventually submitting it to Yorkshire Museums, Libraries and Archives Council at Leeds in November. We have had much help, encouragement and support from Adam Smith of Normanby Hall - our appointed North Lincolnshire Council curatorial advisor, Robin McDermott - the Museums Officer for YMLAC and Bernard Jones from Sheffield Bus Museum, who saw SBM through the same process last year. We heard on 19 February that our application had been successful and that we had been awarded Full Registration.

At a Board meeting on 1 March, Chairman Steve Harrison congratulated all those who had made the new status possible. Adam Smith said he was very pleased with the result after all the hard work by David Lovegrove particularly, and that this was a major milestone, especially as we had achieved Full Registration status at the first attempt.

So, what does this mean to us and where do we go from here?

It is recognition by Resource, the national museum co-ordinating body,, of our enthusiasm, efforts and achievements (we are advised that something in excess of 180 museums throughout the UK are now part of the Registration Scheme - and that includes, of course, national institutions such as the Science Museum, Natural History Museum and Imperial War Museum, not that we claim to even start approaching their standing). Our new status should now allow us to be well placed to make the grant applications that will be so necessary for us to develop our Museum in the ways we have in mind. It will also serve to help us

"professionalise" our operations and set ourselves targets. At the same time, there is a lot of work to be done to maintain our status, notably, we have to complete the task of logging all our exhibits and we also have to find ways of improving the storage conditions for our exhibits and artefacts.

Thank you and well done everyone who has contributed in whatever way to getting us this far!

SANDTOFT SCENE

We mentioned in the last edition that we had lost the printing facilities that we have used for many years now to produce *Sandtoft Scene*. We are pleased to report that the problem has now been solved by our very recent purchase (June) of a colour laser printer. This is the first edition to roll off the new (well, actually it is second-hand) printer. The printer, which is linked to a computer, makes us self-sufficient in producing printed matter and should assist us in many ways apart from printing *Sandtoft Scene*. Many thanks to Chris Whitehead for his assistance in locating and setting up this equipment.

We now need to solve the problem of getting copy to the Editor. A part reason *Sandtoft Scene* is so late in appearing this time is that precisely nothing was sent to him: the content has, literally, been begged and scraped together from all over the place so as to put together a presentable (and surprisingly large) journal. (Another part-cause of late publication was, of course, our temporary lack of printing facilities.) Please, please, please, can we have regular reports and contributions so that *Sandtoft Scene* can be more readily compiled and hence can appear on a more regular basis.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2002

This took place as scheduled on Saturday 23 November 2002. The directors who retired by rotation and who were standing for re-election, Bruce Lake (as Secretary), Graham Bilbé and Brian Maguire were all re-elected unopposed, whilst the Special Resolution to alter the subscription rates was passed.

If any member would like a copy of the Company's accounts for 2001/2, as accepted by the meeting, they should write to the Museum address, enclosing a SAE.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Most membership subscriptions became due for renewal on 1 April (1 May for those joining through the Bradford Trolleybus Association). Renewal notices should have been received by now, either from the relevant Contributing Society membership officer or from Sandtoft's Membership Secretary, David Needham (for those joining "direct"). If you have not yet received your renewal notice, please contact David

Needham (at the Museum address).

We look forward to your continued support for the coming year, and ask you to encourage others who are not members to join us. We need all the support we can muster!

2003 TROLLEYBAYS

We are well into the 2003 season, but a reminder of our Trolleyday dates for the rest of the year will not go amiss. Operations Director, Chris Proctor, has been in contact with many of the regular helpers and he has sorted out rotas; if you have not responded but are available to help, or if you have not been contacted, but would like to help, please contact Chris now at the Museum address or by email (see page 2).

July Trolleyday (35TH ANNIVERSARY OF HUDDERSFIELD'S LAST TROLLEYBUS) *
Sunday 13 July *
Sandtoft Gathering 2003 Preview *
Sandtoft Gathering 2003 *
August Trolleyday: *
August Bank Holiday Weekend - *
Featuring EUROPEAN WEEKEND *
Six Wheel Sunday *
St Leger Rally *
November Trolleyday (35TH ANNIVERSARY OF READING'S LAST TROLLEYBUS) *
Sunday 2 November *
Santa Days *
Saturday 13 December *
& Sunday 14 December *

* = Free Bus service from Doncaster Bus (South) and Railway Stations (Note: If you are going to attend to help on Trolleydays and require an earlier lift from Doncaster, let Chris Proctor know well in advance).

On Trolleydays bus departs Doncaster South Bus Station (Bay E) 1.30pm and Doncaster Rail Station 1.35pm, return bus departs Sandtoft at 4.30pm (Journey time approximately 30minutes)

For Sandtoft Gathering 2003 buses depart Doncaster South Bus Station (Bay E) on the hour and at half past the hour (from 10.00 a.m. until 4.30 p.m.) and Doncaster Rail Station five minutes later. The return journeys from Sandtoft will commence at 11.00 a.m., with the last return journey departing Sandtoft at 6.00 p.m.

Opening Times:

Trolleydays: 11.00am. - 5.00 pm

Sandtoft Gathering 2003 Preview Day (26 July): 11.00am. - 10.00 pm

Sandtoft Gathering 2003 (27 July): 10.00am. - 6.00p.m.

Santa Days 2003: 11.00am - 4.00pm

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. Dates for 2004 will be fixed shortly: they will be posted on our website and will be featured in the next edition of *Sandtoft Scene*.

New this year on Trolleydays is "on site" motorbus operation, utilising some of the Museum's resident operational buses - a feature that has already proved popular with visitors. The well-established free Isle Tour continues as before.

Long-overdue improvements to our "image" to visitors on Trolleydays include the introduction of identification badges for front-line workers, all traffic (and other) staff wearing uniforms (jeans and tee shirts are not now permitted at all for duty platform staff) and visitors are provided with an information sheet when they arrive. The trolleybus and bus services are better organised - not only do they now operate to a timetable but they also call at bus stops at the new cycle "shop" and at the prefab bungalow. In addition, a board in the reception area of the Trolleyshop shows which vehicles are scheduled to operate. These simple improvements, together with new entrance signs (proclaiming "The Trolleybus Museum") and a new set of "finger" direction signs outside the *Ritz* lecture theatre have made an amazing difference as the Museum now looks and feels that much more professional.

SANDTOFT GATHERING 2003

As ever, the 'Gathering is to take place on the last Sunday of July - this year it being 27 July (open 10.00am to 6.00pm), with a pre-view day the day before (when the gates will be open from 11.00am. to 10.00pm, so there will be some scheduled evening trolleybus operation and the beer tent - run, as last year, by the *Wheatsheaf* at Belton, but this year with a real tent - will be open: what more do you want?).

'Gathering Weekend is the highlight of our season and is essential for our finances. It will broadly follow the successful formula developed over the years (and enhanced this year with fresh ideas!) - which means, of course, that we need all the help we can get to operate both days, including the preparations during the week running up to the 26/ 27th and the clearing up and putting away afterwards.

So, your help, please!! We have had complaints in recent years from those struggling to make things work that many members are coming to 'Gathering just to visit, whereas a mere hour's help from each of those visiting members would ease the pressure significantly. Your offers of assistance in advance to Brian Maguire or Chris Proctor at the Museum address, please, or by email (see page 2), but offers of assistance on the day(s) would also be most welcome.

FROM THE BOARD ROOM

Planning work on our proposed overhead extension continues. It has been agreed, subject to funding, to change the initial plans and make the

wiring double track throughout. We still have to stress that a lot of detail remains to be agreed with the farm before we can be certain the project can go ahead.

It has, reluctantly, been decided to stop any further work on the reconstruction of the miniature railway and put the project "on ice". Despite cash being made available and the efforts of Keith Bunting and Rachel Fox to get the work done (a short length of track was actually used by a train over the Jubilee Weekend), there, quite simply, has not been the very necessary backing and help from members and progress had consequently come almost to a halt. How it was to be regularly operated with no staff on the horizon was not clear to the Board. Before making the decision, the Board sought independent advice from the wider miniature railway fraternity. What track that had been laid has now been removed for safety reasons. The track bed will remain so that if in the future it is feasible to re-instate the railway, at least there will be a starting point. Thank you to Keith and Rachel - it is a great shame the railway could not be revived.

The uncertainty over whether our external caterers will turn up for a particular Trolleyday or not and the major let-down we suffered at last year's 'Gathering has resulted in the decision to do the catering ourselves. Under the guidance of Cheryl Crowther and under difficult conditions we have managed to reliably and successfully provide visitors with food and drinks since 'Gathering, operating last year from temporary facilities at the end of the Axholme Stores and so far this year, in the Trolleyshop. Until a permanent location is available, only limited pre-made/ pre-packed foodstuffs can be offered.

Tied in with the foregoing, rather than dismantle the stores prefab and just store its component parts as reported in the last edition of *Sandtoft Scene*, the Board has now agreed to re-construct it near the back gate and suitably improve it to form a café/ tea shop, which can also double up as a meeting room out of normal opening hours or a classroom during educational visits.

The condition of the yellow ex-Harlite Dodge 50 "cherry picker", WAL 198Y, has deteriorated to the point where it became uneconomical to restore it to working condition capable of being certificated for use as a lifting appliance. The Board has therefore been considering how best to provide access facilities for the many jobs that need to be carried out at a height. Health and safety considerations preclude the use of ladders in many instances, a tower scaffold is not always the solution, the portable single-height access staging (the wooden one used to gain access to the upper panels and windows of buses) has limited application on flat ground (It really ought to be only used inside the Workshop) and the tower wagons are not right for messy jobs like pole painting. A decision

was made to purchase a second hand, certificated "cherry picker" and to dispose of the ex-Harlite Dodge. The "new" vehicle is J202 SJW, an ex-BT diesel Ford Transit (for the technically-minded, it is fitted with a Spencer TSC TEL9 telescopic boom platform) Thanks are due to John Bannister for his assistance in finding it so quickly for us and for helping out with its delivery and to Arthur Wilson who has undertaken some running repairs.

In considering future trolleybus operation, the Board has agreed to install new overtaking and loading facilities on the "outer circle" outside the Workshop. The intention is that the new layout will allow vehicles to lay over between duties without de-polling and, once kerbing and paving has been constructed to form a new loading island, the overseas vehicles can load/unload passengers safely. At the same time, the feed to, and isolation of, the wiring to the Workshop road will be altered. It is hoped that the overhead alterations (the first for many years) will be completed by 'Gathering 2003, if nothing else, to demonstrate to visitors that the Museum continues to develop.

Representatives from the Museum attend the meetings of the National Association of Road Transport Museums (of which we are a member) to exchange information, discuss issues, share experiences and help resolve common concerns and problems that road transport museums have or anticipate. Much good comes from these meetings and NARTM has many "behind the scenes" projects on the go, one being a guide to the operation of free bus services: the Board has agreed that our bus services will follow the recommendations developed by NARTM.

SECURITY

In a general review of security, the main padlocks have been changed and new keys are being issued. If you are a key holder (and have not yet been issued with a new key) you should send your key back (to Steve Harrison at the Museum address) with a request for a new one.

USE OF THE WORKSHOP

Members wishing to use the Workshop are reminded that they need to book the required dates with either Jim Sambrooks or Ian Wilson. Please note that there may be occasions when the Museum will need to have priority over Workshop use, even if it has been pre-booked: we will try not to "pull rank", but on occasions, needs must. Workshop users are asked to make sure that they vacate the building in good time to allow following users to take it over.

NEW OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATION FOR WORKERS

An eight-berth, static mobile home type caravan has been acquired so that members can stay overnight at Sandtoft in relative comfort. Despite being cheap and second-hand, the 'van is in beautiful condition. Anyone

wanting to use the caravan (first come, first served) should contact either Brian Maguire (01427 872374) or Janet Metcalfe (0776 597 8919) A nominal charge of £3.00 per person per night is being charged to cover costs (bottled gas, electricity, maintenance etc.), you need to provide your own sleeping bag, food and drink and patrons are requested to keep the place clean and tidy – particularly when you leave.

NEW POSTCARDS

Two new postcards were added to the Trolleyshop's range at the end of last year – featuring London no.1812 and Bourmemouth no.99. Consideration is now being given to extending the series even more, so, if you have a good and interesting shot of a Sandtoft vehicle, why not put it forward for possible reproduction as a postcard? Chris Proctor is waiting to hear from you!

E-MAIL INFORMATION SERVICE

Consideration is being given to introducing an e-mail messaging service for members, whereby important or urgent Sandtoft information can be passed on. If anyone is interested in keeping in touch in this way, then send an e-mail to that effect to webmaster@sandtoft.org.uk. If there is sufficient take up, we can go ahead with this service; rest assured, your e-mail addresses will not be passed on to third parties.

SPONSORING OF MUSEUM-OWNED VEHICLES

Believe it or not, the Museum itself owns (or has on long-term loan) some 19 historic vehicles.

They are:

TROLLEYBUSES:

Aachen no.22	Hastings no.57	Nottingham no.466
Bradford no.562	Liège no.425	Porto no.140
Bradford no.743	Maidstone no.72	Rotherham no.44
Bradford no.845	Nottingham no.46 (chassis) SYPTE no.2450	
Derby no.175		

SERVICE VEHICLES:

Bradford Karrier tower wagon no.032 Post Office battery-driven van
Huddersfield Pole Crane Preston Leyland tow truck
Nottingham AEC tower wagon no.802 Sheffield Ransomes works platform truck

and they all need to be cared for - an issue now amplified by our Registered Museum status - and that costs money (and time, of course). For the past few years the Company has been able to spend a little cash on some of these vehicles, but it has not been a lot. Equally, a little money, intended for particular vehicles, has been coming in as donations from members.

The Board is now very keen to attract sponsorship for the Museum-

owned/ loaned vehicles. The BTS have operated a very successful vehicle sponsoring scheme, known as *SponsorTrolley*, for many years now and we must be careful not to draw supporters away from that BTS scheme.

In a nutshell, we would like members (and others) to regularly contribute (ideally by way of Gift Aid as it boosts giving by 28%) to one or more vehicles of their choice so that restoration and maintenance can duly take place on those vehicles. In the event of external grants becoming available for any vehicle restoration, these donations can be used as "match funding". With so many vehicles in our care, we could also do with some vehicle "guardians" to look after and work in a co-ordinated fashion on the vehicles.

How can we encourage you to support this worthy enterprise? If every member Gift Aided just £5 per month (and what is £5 these days?), just about ALL these vehicles could be restored within ten years !!

At present we have no name for Sandtoft's vehicle sponsoring scheme, so maybe we should offer a small prize to the person suggesting the name we adopt

Come on, be generous ! Please !! Start sending your cheques (payable to "Sandtoft Transport Centre Limited") now to Francis Whitehead at the Museum address, stating which vehicle you want to support. Standing orders to pay direct into Sandtoft's bank account can then be set up and Gift Aid forms signed (if they haven't already been sent in) so that kind Mr. Brown at 11 Downing Street can send us that extra 28%.

Francis would also like to hear from prospective "guardians". and hear your suggestions for a name for this scheme.

MUSEUM NEWS

Brian Maguire & Francis Whitehead

The last time this feature appeared was early last year, so there is a lot to catch up with !

General:

There was the usual frantic build-up to the "new" opening season (i.e. 2002). It is always amazing how much pruning, grass cutting and general tidying up is required each year ! The first of the 2002 Trolleydays (Easter Sunday and Monday) were set to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Bradford trolleybus closure. No.844 arrived from Keighley behind Huddersfield tower wagon no.A9 on the Sunday before Easter (24 March) and was immediately ushered into the workshop for an inspection. In fact 2002 saw a record throughput of tested trolleybuses, with no fewer than 15 running in passenger service with one other just operating on demonstration during the course of the year; a handful of others ran on "closed" days on test.

May 2002 saw the main entrance gates replaced with new. This came

about because the old wrought iron gates kept fracturing due to their weight and their length (they were apparently two shorter gates welded together). They have now been "recycled": appropriately shortened, and renovated, they have been hung at the "back gate". An adjacent pedestrian gate has been installed and the fence tied in neatly to make that part of the Museum much more secure.

As well as paid advertisements, we have had quite good editorial coverage in recent months – nearly all in local papers or the enthusiast press, but the exception last September (13th) was a 4-photograph feature on page 33 of *The Sun* about our Hastings single decker, headed "House with fare old secret (It's a bus which 'hid' for 50 years)". We also had a "hit" in the London edition of the free *Metro* newspaper on 24 September, when, just over a month after it was sent out with a Press Announcement about European Weekend (i.e. 25-6 August), a photograph (in colour) of Liège no.425 appeared in their daily transport feature with a caption headed "She's still the belle – at 70": better late than never !! It is difficult to know when we get mentions in the press away from the immediate area of the Museum, so if you see anything, please let us know – or better still, send us a copy for our archives. Meanwhile, our website continues to develop. It now shows our trading name, The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft – and numerous other changes and improvements have been made to it

We said "farewell" to the *New Deal* team from Action for Employment during May 2002. During the years that *New Deal* has operated at Sandtoft they have been of great help at times, less so on occasions, but overall it has been a benefit to both ourselves and the lads so employed to have *New Deal*: it was a way of us helping our local community in North Lincolnshire. In the early days they had virtually a full time presence at Sandtoft, but more recently their time had reduced to 1½ - 2 days per week. Despite an ongoing dialogue with them on tasks they were to do, and progress being made, the standard of supervision and therefore work seriously deteriorated to the point where we could not see the point of continuing with the scheme.

Early in 2003 a new scheme (to us), SOVA, started on a trial basis: it is for young offenders required to do community work: they are supervised on a one to one basis by a voluntary worker. So far the work undertaken has been associated with gardening, pruning (during the winter season) and clearing. Both SOVA and ourselves are monitoring how the scheme is going.

The old railway container serving as an electrical store was emptied and the container collected by the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway. The old generator house (at the back of the workshop end of the main depot) has been cleared, fitted out with racking and has become the new store



A re-panelled and partially repainted Doncaster no.94 (fitted with a former trolleybus body) stands in Sandtoft Square early in the year



A rather damp Sandtoft Square sees London no. 1812 on a service journey and a resplendent Doncaster no.22 preparing for an outing..



Easter: David Needham and Brian Maguire get Bradford no.562 ready for visitors whilst, in the background, Janet and Ian Metcalfe set about some more work on no.845

through Graham Bibb's Viewfinder



Nos. 1812, 506 and 631 form a splendid "six wheeler" line up in Sandtoft Square on last September's Six Wheel Sunday.



It is anticipated that Liège no.425, owned by the Museum, will be carrying passengers at this year's European Weekend at the end of August. No.425 is Sandtoft's oldest working trolleybus



Linda Proctor does some shop window dressing prior to the 2002 season. Help is always needed with setting up displays and exhibitions etc.

for our electrical spares. It will also serve as a light (no pun intended!) workshop.

Meanwhile, the old stores building is being emptied, with items being sorted and stored in various new locations (some items will need to be moved a second time once other permanent facilities are ready). It is a slow old job, but steady progress is being made. Thanks to all who have been helping with this task.

The Box Van mess room had a new window and door frame fitted (the old one had rotted to the point of nearly falling out) and there is also now no risk whatsoever of scalding oneself whilst washing in the Box Van, as the old (cheap and second hand ??) and efficient water heater has been replaced on the advice of the Health and Safety Manager by a (pricy new) fancy and hopelessly useless water "heater" that barely raises the temperature of a trickle of water a few measly degrees - does it, Steve ?? (A similar water "heater" has been installed in the workshop.) A new worktop has been fitted whilst the old electric heater, deemed unsafe, has been removed. More recently (January 2003) the Box Van roof was re-felted.

A right hand drive AEC Regal from Lisbon (no.141) was at Sandtoft for a period during summer 2002 so that bodywork and a repaint could take place. It was not quite completed in time to be used for European Weekend but was located conveniently for photographers. It is anticipated that it will return to Sandtoft to take an active part in this year's European Weekend.

As long as we can remember it has been said that washing and cleaning out buses right in the path of people going to and from the toilet block, forcing them to negotiate vast puddles (even on a good, dry day) is a Bad Thing. Well, last May a Good Thing happened - by the simple removal of the tap on the outside wall of the toilet block and providing one at the corner of the workshop road instead, the bus wash area was moved, Why didn't we think of that before?

Work on converting the old Trolleyshop prefab into a 1950's prefab "home" continued during 2002 with various rotten window frames being replaced, Steve Gill completing the plastering, the new rooms being wallpapered and painted, and then furnished. The project was completed and opened in time for the 'Gathering but an "official opening" has yet to be arranged. There has been much favourable comment on this new attraction. Well done to all who worked so hard to make it happen.

Having achieved that, thoughts were then turned to how best to use the railway shed, particularly in the light of having no railway for the time being. The idea of having a period cycle "shop", displaying not only the Museum's own small collection of bicycles but also other associated

paraphernalia from member Geoff Warnes' collection had been mooted some time before but had not proceeded because of a lack of somewhere to house it. The railway shed was seen as a solution to this problem and hence over last winter there has been much activity to fit the building out, including making it wheelchair-accessible, and decorate it in time for Easter and the 2003 "season". Part of the interior has been partitioned off to provide much-needed storage area and the rest is now Geoff's emporium displaying also our lawnmower collection. At the time of writing it is a "shop" with no name, but doubtless it will have one in the near future (any suggestions ????)

At the same time that the Box Wagon roof was re-felted, the *Ritz* lecture theatre's flat roof was also so treated. The fact that there was a leak was discovered in November 2002 during preparations for the AGM, when investigations indicated that it was beyond patching repairs. We just scraped by with it for Santa Weekend, but as leaks do not improve with age, it was decided to completely strip off the old and re-felt the entire roof, the work taking place during late January 2003, following which various water damaged areas had to be repaired, mostly in the information desk area.

It may be mundane, but maintenance of the various buildings is most essential. Various broken and cracked asbestos cement panels in the depot roof and walls have been replaced over a period, the gutters cleaned out, the pedestrian door to the workshop replaced and much repainting done. New doors have also been made and fitted to the cupboards in the tourist information tram. The cold snap in January 2003 resulted in burst pipes (again), one flooding the workshop pit: a considerable amount of work has now been done in an attempt to eliminate these annual problems.

The workshop is now a little less draughty following the fitting of plywood either side of the main doors. Also in the workshop, the fire extinguishers have been relocated to make them more accessible.

Although many members do come and lend a hand at the Museum, a lot of the work is done by just a few regulars: we are most grateful to all who do help and apologise for not mentioning names very often in *Sandtoft Scene* - we don't want to offend by inadvertently omitting the name of someone who has helped when others have been mentioned, and equally, not mentioning any names may make some think their efforts are not appreciated. By the same token, it is not fair to those who cannot, for whatever reason, get to Sandtoft regularly, to keep mentioning those who can. It is a no win situation!! It is good, though, to report that we have a number of newcomers as regular helpers at the Museum (and here we apologise to anyone we inadvertently omit!): Tony Ferris (from nearby Belton) ably lobs back (friendly?) insults as he

toils on all sorts of tasks, and Gerry Carroll travels from Hull at least once every week to skilfully wield a paintbrush on our behalf – the children's play area, some traction poles Porto no.140's ceiling (see below), some of *Axholme Stores'* window frames and doors and refreshing the road markings are amongst the many jobs he has tackled. Harry Brown from Dewsbury has been overhauling trolleyheads for us (amongst other things) one or two days a week and has now also trained to become a conductor. Stuart Smith from Snaith has been helping out in the shop and Colin Fletcher from Scunthorpe has been doing all sorts of odd jobs around the place, including work on Liège no.425.

The Santa Weekend in December 2002 was a real success. Santa's Grotto was put together in the *Ritz* during the days leading up to the event by a small team, and Maidstone no.72 made ready (see below). There was a steady trickle of visitors to see Santa on Saturday, following which a party was held for the staff. The Sunday proved to be somewhat busier, although Father Christmas could have coped with even more small visitors. Making a weekend of it certainly seems to have been a good idea and the same format is projected for this year. The decorations were down by Christmas because of fears of water damage from the leaking roof.

The ongoing project to re-organise the area behind the depot and the box van has taken a couple of steps forward recently: the space previously occupied by the railway container (mentioned above) that went to K&WVR and a caravan was filled in February 2003 by the newly acquired static living van (see page 8) – it actually arrived at the Museum in mid-January – being moved into place with work quickly completed to connect the water and electricity. Before it was moved into place, the opportunity was taken to prune back the boundary hedge and clean out the ditch – where does all that rubbish come from ??

More recently, and with the aid of a JCB, Peter Price has been sorting through our stock of traction poles to ascertain quite what poles we have, what their condition is and to re-stack them well off the ground.

Further stretches of footpath have been constructed adjacent to the roadway, in particular in the area of the cycle shop and its new bus stop. There was the usual frantic build-up to the "new" opening season (i.e. 2003)

.....but no-one has written that up for *Sandtoft Scene* yet.

Vehicle News:

Before detailing individual vehicles, it is worth noting that DO&LRS have taken over the ownership of the various vehicles that they originally had (going back in time) on "permanent" or long term loan from Doncaster Corporation.

Bournemouth no.99: a massive amount of work has taken place to

prepare no.99 for its return to service. The traction motor has been completely overhauled and re-fitted: no.99 was re-cabled some time ago, so the electrical side is now completely new. The upper and lower saloons have been thoroughly cleaned, seat frames re-painted, together with other internal and platform painted areas, the varnished wooden trims removed for the rewiring exercise have been reinstated. Because of the amazing condition of much of the interior it was decided that this would be a conservation project: the few seats that needed re-trimming have been dealt with and the others have had their leather cleaned and fed. The cab has had much attention, refitting the wooden trims that had to be removed for the re-wiring, a general tidy up, a re-upholstered seat and a re-paint. After a mechanical check and electrical testing, a test run in July proved that no.99 was OK apart from its footbrakes. On this vehicle, the footbrake is a vacuum assisted hydraulic system, the vacuum being built up from the transmission. Whilst there was some braking effort, it was clearly down on what it should be and it took several "goes" to completely cure its problems – a combination of a vacuum leak, lack of use and years of dirt on the linkages. A complete set of new tyres have been fitted. It was eventually passed fit for service in late May 2003 ready for its launch back into service on the Sunday of Spring Bank Holiday weekend. Meanwhile, the exterior had been spruced up – a thorough clean and much touching up of paintwork before fleet numbers and gold "Bournemouth Corporation" legends, together with other lettering, were applied. Regrettably, the clock beat us, and the glass louvres that should be fitted above the windows on each deck, and which required frames to be designed and manufactured, could not be made ready in time for the launch, so these will be fitted at a later date. A fuller account of no.99's launch will appear next time.

Bradford no.562: The additional roof that was fitted when it was converted into a living van was removed during early 2002 to allow sealer to be applied: the wooden gantry was found to be still in-situ, as were the remains of the vents.

Bradford no.743: An initial inspection has been undertaken to assess the extent of the work that will be required to get it back running, the intention being that it be restored as a driver training trolleybus.

Bradford no.758: new window pans and top slider frames have now been manufactured and await fitting.

Bradford no.792 went to the Black Country Museum's 2002 trolleybus event, returning to Sandtoft on the afternoon of Sandtoft Gathering 2002 (perhaps not the best of timing !). After repairs to a seat and some minor bits and pieces, no.792 passed its annual inspection ready for service at Easter (2003).

Bradford no.844, which had been at Sandtoft since just before Easter 2002 (see above), returned back again to Keighley Bus Museum in September 2002 (as did Huddersfield tower wagon no.A9). We are grateful to KBM for loaning us these two vehicles for the 2002 season.

Cleethorpes no.54 has had its compressor and air tank removed for cleaning and painting, and the motor is reported to be on the cards for removal and overhaul soon. The front brakes have been overhauled and re-fitted.

Derby no.172 has had its cracked window replaced, so letting Nottingham no.466 regain its window which had been loaned to no.172. (that window is now fitted to no.466).

Doncaster no.22: was completed and MoT'd for the 2002 season, and has operated our free bus service on a number of occasions to the delight of many.

Doncaster no.94: work continued on no.94 to complete it externally and get the mechanical side fit. It passed its MoT test with no problems (much to the surprise of certain DO&LRS members !) and it took part in the Doncaster centenary celebrations (more on this in the next edition)

Hastings no.57(?): Much investigation has gone into trying to positively identify our Hastings single decker, but still no success. We will have to work harder ! The clutter inside has been cleared out as some of it was beginning to blow around the Museum.

Huddersfield no.541: There has been a concentrated effort to get no.541 towards completion. Major work this last winter has been to the interior. The top deck has seen all the floor laths and countless pieces of polished wood all fitted in place, the seats and frames fixed in place, and the leathercloth all finished.. The lower saloon is all back together: it was emptied of the multitude of parts for the vehicle, and one by one they have been restored and fitted back on the bus. New side panels have been made and fitted, floor repaired and painted, and again the polished wood completed. New handrails have had to be manufactured for the ceiling and seat backs, new seat frames made for the off-side, where the old ones were all rotten. New wing mirrors are in place, indicators have been manufactured and are fitted, the fog lamp is missing, but all other lights are working. The re-wire has continued apace. Chassis painting has seen the underside all cleaned, whilst the long job of getting the brakes dismantled has also taken place:: the rear brakes were all seized on and two jacks were required to remove the drums. The shoes were worn down to the rivets, and the drums scored, so all had to be dealt with by specialists: the shoes are so obscure that they have had to be shot blasted and reshod. The platform area is all completed, with the paint glossed and handrails fitted. The cab has been refurbished, to include new dashboard, new panels, a rebuilt contactor box and a re-

upholstered seat. The whole of the electrical side has now been renovated, entailing some extensive renewal work - for example, the motor brush assemblies were so rotted away that they had to be re-constructed.. A great many things have had to be manufactured for no.541, with many mechanical parts also having to be sourced, due to the extremely poor state of the vehicle before work began. The seats have yet to be re-upholstered. A new boom has been fitted and the roof area is complete, the glazing, external panelling and beading has been fitted and virtually all the paintwork has been finished.

It is anticipated that no.541 will be operated on demonstration at the Huddersfield Trolleyday on 13 July.

Huddersfield no.619: work on the interior has gone on all autumn and winter to put it back to its original state. The whole of the top deck has been stripped out, new side panels made and fitted, window frames painted in the original light brown colour, woodwork re-varnished, and the seat frames all painted, with the seats themselves, and the floor, thoroughly cleaned. The lower saloon has had its window surrounds painted and floor cleaned, the silver treads being repainted also. The cab has been painted and the driver's seat re-upholstered. The result is staggering - it has improved the interior no end ! (it is amazing to sum up so much work in such a few lines).

Liege no.425: Recent weeks has seen a lot of progress in getting the restoration completed. Much rotten steel has been replaced. The target is to get no.425 into service for this year's European Weekend.

London no.1812 visited Crich Tramway Village last June/ July to take part in the commemoration of 50 years since the final abandonment of London's trams. No.1812 was towed from Sandtoft to Crich on 27 June and returned on 8 July. Whilst at Crich it raised many favourable comments: it remained for most of the week on the forecourt to the depot complex, but on the Saturday and Sunday, Graham Bilbé moved it on battery power to a position outside the museum's *Red Lion* pub.

Maidstone no.72 ran in its Golden Jubilee guise for the last time after the AGM, 23 November 2002 (it was dark by then). The following day, the vinyls were removed and a start made to fix new Christmas vinyls. The atmosphere at Sandtoft that day was so damp that the job had to be completed later. No.72 duly ran in service in its Christmas guise (it was also decorated inside with tinsel etc.) for the Santa Weekend, looking terrific, illuminated in the gloom of the December afternoons. It retains its decorations (it has not run this year in service - why ??) and is scheduled to be the Christmas trolleybus again this year before the exterior is restored ready for celebrations next summer to mark 100 years since Maidstone's electric trams started. Watch this space !

Nottingham no.367 saw the light of day for the first time in over 20

years at last year's 'Gathering when it was put on display alongside South Shields no.204.

Nottingham no.466 has had window frames, new panelling and new beading fitted and many of the windows have been re-glazed. The exterior has, to a large extent, been painted to its finishing gloss coat. It currently has no traction motor, but we have one in stock which will be checked out and, if necessary, will be re-furbished before it is fitted.

Porto no.140's lower deck ceiling was repainted and no.140 was back in service for the European Weekend.

Reading no.181 ran on test just before Six-wheel Sunday last year, but its brakes were found to not be up to standard and it was not able to operate on demonstration that day, although it was posed with its booms on the wires on the workshop road wiring for the day. Two of its wheels have been stripped of old paint and re-painted.

Rotherham no.37: Work continues, with the gantry now back in place and the trolley booms overhauled, ready to be re-fitted. The cat-walk timber has been renewed. No.37 has a set of working interior lights now, and the side lights and head lights are all in working order. Trouble with the indicators is being investigated. The platform area is being tackled: the boarding to the platform has been renewed, the bulkhead panels replaced, and painted, whilst the stairs are also receiving attention to complete that area of the vehicle. The intention is for no.37 to be at least operable for demonstration runs later this year (Six-wheel Sunday ??).

Schaffhausen no.207 left Sandtoft last June, initially to go to the Black Country Museum Trolleybus Fortnight event, and then to storage in the West Midlands.

MY (FIRST?) 30 YEARS AT SANDTOFT **EPISODE 2: 1972 - 76 (ISH)**

Graham Bilbé

The first instalment (*Sandtoft Scene* no.52) of my memoirs took us up to that memorable 'Gathering' of 1972, when "Uncle Ronnie" (Mr. R. Edgley-Cox) had driven the first official trolleybus under power. Well, if my memory serves me correctly, 1973 was "The year of the Pit"!

When the main depot had been extended from 8 to 20 vehicle capacity the builders, had also been commissioned to erect the 'bones' of a second-hand Dutch barn (originally used on a farm in East Bridgford) that was to become the Workshop. The task which Francis Whitehead undertook as our "Resident Civil Engineer", was to construct the maintenance pit, which would clearly be necessary for an operating museum. Though this project was "fraught with difficulties" I like to think that I helped!

At the time, Francis drove a Morris Minor van, VRD 340 J, which became a regular sight at Sandtoft and points en route from and to

Reading - usually with so much in the back that the front wheels were scarcely touching the ground! On one occasion, I think four bus wheels were squeezed in the back, with a couple of bags of cement laid in the middle for good measure, and the rear doors tied together with string to stop it all falling out (under rapid acceleration!) (*Nothing ever fell out - not even the floor FRW*) That poor old company van had never worked so hard and wore out three gearboxes over 4 or 5 years that it thrashed up to Sandtoft! and back. I s'pose it did some work for AA's as well, during the week.... (*it certainly did, but only light duty work! - FRW*)

Ah, yes - the pit!

Well, the first task was to set out carefully where the pit was to be, and arrange a local JCB to call in to dig out the hole. Unfortunately, Sandtoft being only a few feet above sea level, water was struck at only about three feet down, but the pit overall needed to be nearer 6 feet, allowing for the concrete base. A contractor's pump had to be hired, and the first job each morning was then to set the pump going, to slurp out the water into the ditch... from where I suspect most of it came back again, through the running sand. (Despite being in the middle of summer, the water table remained very high throughout.) The JCB also nearly wrenched out a 4" diameter water main that no-one knew was there (not even he water board!), but which crossed the line of the proposed pit at one end.

Eventually we had a hole (rather bigger than we had originally intended, because the sides kept falling in) but into which the Morris's most recent cargo of shuttering boards could be lowered, clamped together, and propped apart to give a relatively safe working area between, and provide formwork for the concrete. Behind this was inserted substantial amounts of steel reinforcing bars - large "U"-section pieces with lateral runners wired to them. After several days battling with the elements, the sides were at last ready to be concreted, and a load of "Readymix" was brought in and compacted into position with vibrating lances.

When the shuttering was eventually removed, one side had taken on a definite "bulge". We had run out of time in our allotted "holidays" - I had to return to my 'A' level studies (which I failed anyway!), so the "pit" remained unfinished - and full of water - for several months before finally being completed by a contractor. How much of our original efforts in extremely difficult ground conditions remains buried under the workshop I've never quite been sure: but as a regular user of the facility for many years, I have never yet known the completed pit to fill up with water since.

Outside, the local lads, again led by Les Flint, had substantially completed the traction pole erection around the circuit, and Andy Feather and Norman Hinchliffe had rigged up the complete inner circle

wiring, though there was still plenty more to do!

By now, Sandtoft's own generator had been cobbled together using an AEC 9.6 litre engine coupled to an ex-Bradford trolleybus motor, duly modified by 'Trog' Moore and associates. It was on the back of an old Commer lorry, and for some years it lived in the end bay of the depot, and had to be dragged out and connected up for running. Seeing this again on movie film more recently, it left a lot to be desired in Health and Safety terms. But it worked!

Having always had a reasonable "mechanical sympathy", I quite often ended up tending the generator, topping up diesel, oil and water throughout running days. I think it was the 1975 or '76 'Gathering at which the head gasket blew early in the day, with the engine throwing oil and water everywhere! I ended up so smothered that there didn't seem much point taking shifts and getting someone else plastered with oil, so I nursed it all day, shutting down immediately after each trolley run. That old AEC still ticked over beautifully, and several bystanders commented - as they like to do - on how beautiful she sounded ticking over gently... I couldn't resist a snigger as I thought of the big whoosh of hot, oily water that would come out of the radiator as soon as I revved her up for "Power"! Bob Ashton took a rather classic photograph of me on Generator duty (I think on this notable occasion). But, the show went on, and we all survived. Kevin Oxlade, Phil (LV) Jenkinson and Mark Hamlin were also regular Genny attendants in those early years.

As a schoolboy, I was very grateful to Francis for the frequent transport from Reading in AA's van: on one occasion we were on site for a weekend in January, with snow on the ground. The only realistic place to kip in those conditions was the box wagon, which had a very effective high-level electric heater. We woke up about every hour through the night, put the heater on for 15 minutes until it got too hot, then slept a while until we were frozen again and put the heater back on. It seemed a very long night! In the morning (Sunday), Francis duly went off to Church, leaving me to sort out breakfast. As all the water pipes were frozen solid, it was a case of melting oodles of snow to boil some eggs in! We then tried to make tea using the same water, but I think it was so disgusting we ended up using it to attempt thawing the pipes!

The accommodation crisis for distant volunteers was solved soon after, through the good offices of Len Smith, our former site electrician with an endearing penchant for bellwire! His Auntie, Mrs Featherstone, had previously run a boarding house in King's Road, Doncaster, and although she wasn't up to running the full set up any longer, she could cope with a few of us for the occasional weekend. In particular she offered a fabulous evening meal, with lots of potatoes, veggies and Yorkshire pud, and as much tea as you could drink to wash it down. (On

one hot evening when, amongst others, Fred Ivey was staying with us, I recall us getting through five large pots of tea!) This was followed by traditional puddings - jam roly-poly and the like - and you would never leave her table hungry but there was method in her madness! She never liked her lodgers coming home the worse for drink, and after one of her dinners, the first pint was usually ok, but to get through a second was a real struggle! On one occasion we happened to notice a fancy hat sitting on top of the wardrobe. Inside it was a splendid label - which I can now confess to having "pinched" and put on my camera case - it said "MADE IN FOREIGN" !!

A further instalment next time. Perhaps.

2008 PROGRESS IN PICTURES



▲ New Sign, new (in 2002) Gates

Photo: Bruce Lake

▼ New (to us) "cherry picker"

Photo: Bruce Lake

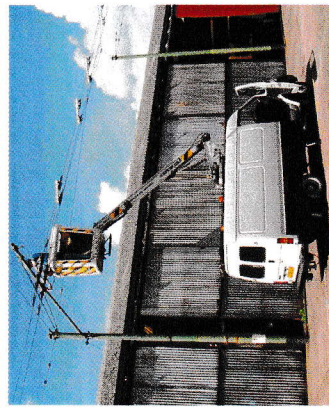


▲ Another new sign

Photo: Bruce Lake

▼ New works by back gate

Photo: Brian Maguire



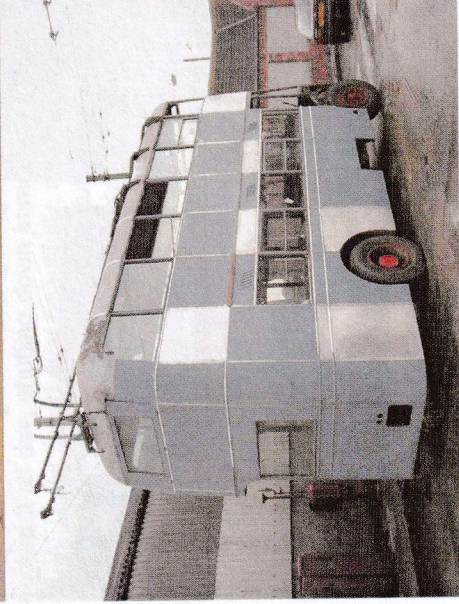
STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

Wednesday, 9 July 2003. In a test run at 6.20 pm, Huddersfield no.631 became the first trolleybus to use the new overtaking loop overhead adjacent to the workshop and referred to in "From the Board Room" on page 8.-



Lisbon AEC Regal no.141, dating from 1947, was at Sandtoft during last year to be re-panelled and re-painted. It is anticipated that it will visit us again for yhe 2003 European Weekend

Photo: Brian Maguire



The progress made at Sandtoft in the past year or two is exemplified by the progress made on sandtoft-owned Nottingham no.466, which has since been painted green again after how long ??

Photo: Bruce Lake



London no.1812 visited Crich last summer for the 50th anniversary of the London Tramway closure (July 1952). No. 1812 is seen being passed by E1R tramcar no. 1622I outside the Red Lion.

Photo: Graham Bilbé