

SANDTOFT SCENE



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**THE TROLLEYBUS MUSEUM
AT SANDTOFT'S MAGAZINE**



The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft

SANDTOFT TRANSPORT CENTRE LIMITED

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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/ emails will be forwarded to the appropriate person. A SAE for a reply is always appreciated.

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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:

Following its extensive renovation, Bournemouth 297 moves forward to break the tape at its launch into service at the 2007 Southern Weekend **Photo: R.N. Ashton**

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



One of the many things I go on about at the Museum is the mis-interpretation of rules we have never heard about and the problems that this causes to a lot of volunteers at Sandtoft. I consider it is up to the Board to ensure appropriate rules of conduct are in place - and made available - that will prevent the dissatisfaction and disagreements we have witnessed in the past. I am pleased, therefore, to see that the Traffic Office, over the last few Sandtoft Scenes, are supplying guidance on the conduct of bus drivers and conductors and also, that in this edition, Francis Whitehead has broached a very often misinterpreted subject - the Health and Safety at Work Act. His article on our way forward in this respect is well worth reading.

We have not heard about Plumtree in *The Route to Sandtoft* feature over the last few editions of *Sandtoft Scene*. In fact when we left it, Steve had explained that he intended to take a break from the goings-on at Plumtree as he felt they were heading for disaster, but during his absence the collection began to grow - so was he right to give it up? His story continues in this edition.

And finally, please note that the closing date for any articles for the next edition of *Sandtoft Scene* is **31 August 2007**.

STAFFING THE 'GATHERING

The 'Gathering this year will need to be different as we are having to use different areas of land for vehicle displays and car parking. As a result, we will need a lot of extra staff to make it all work.

Please let Aiden Proctor or Steve Harrison know if you can lend a hand for a couple of hours (or more) on the day - **SUNDAY, 29 JULY**. Aiden and Steve can be contacted by email (see page 2); alternatively, call 01724 711846 and leave a message, or send a fax to the same number. If all else fails, you could contact Chris Proctor (see page 8 for details).

Aiden, Steve and Chris look forward to hearing from you!

AROUND THE BOARD

..... from Bruce Lake, Company Secretary:

2007's Volunteers' Day took place on 9 June. We took a different approach this time, and deliberately focussed our advertising to encourage local people to attend. Whilst all Sandtoft members are appreciated - including the "armchair" ones who support us from afar - we recognise that someone living in, say, Brighton, cannot be realistically expected to assist "on the ground" on a regular basis. This approach drew about the same number of attendees as previous years - perhaps slightly down, and proved very successful.

The face of the Museum is gradually changing and an area we have been

keen to develop has been that of administration. Our efforts in this area have often been hampered by the lack of people with the time and skills to do it. Our core of "active" members is more "hands-on", wanting to restore or maintain vehicles, look after the site, or run our open days. Just as important is the ability to promote ourselves as a modern museum that is going places! For example, we need, in the next 15 months, to have re-submitted our Museum's Registration. It took some time to make the first application, and the conditions for retaining it are now more arduous. We need to accession all our key exhibits in order to demonstrate that we are "sustainable" and that the Museum has a long-term future. We need to be able to apply for grants, and doing anything major in this respect is definitely a trial! As I like to say, you eventually get used to jumping through all the hoops they set up for you - then they set fire to them! Certainly it is not as simple as filling in a form - you have to provide a mountain of back-up information as well.

Against this background, we have been trying to recruit volunteers who have a skill in this field, or at least an interest that can be developed. Gratifyingly, at least three of the attendees were interested, and one other had a background in Health and Safety - another administrative task we are having to take much more notice of. There were others who wanted to try out being tour guides - yet another area that needed reinforcements, so that was beneficial. The remainder wanted to try conducting, with only two asking to try vehicle work.

As usual, we split up into teams and went off to do the morning programme of tasks before returning for a buffet lunch. The afternoon was spent on the attendees' alternative tasks. Maidstone 72 performed as the operational trolleybus for conductor training, and before I knew it, a group were accessioning the items in the bike shop! Thanks must go to all who attended, including existing Sandtoft members who came along to be Group Leaders. Interestingly, the furthest anyone had travelled was from Bradford, (most being much closer), and this undoubtedly led to the response "All of us" when I asked who in the group were likely to return to help on future days. So, perhaps a smaller number of new faces, but I am anticipating that the retention rate this year will be much higher. I hope that existing volunteers will give them a big welcome when they re-appear, and that they settle in to their new roles very easily.

..... from Francis Whitehead, Financial Director:

The lack of news from me last time, both updating you about our development fund-raising effort and financial items generally came about as a result of many different factors: the copy date for *Sandtoft Scene* was hard on the heels of the end of our financial year - always a busy time for the FD, and this year exacerbated by the fact that in my role as Development Director (the role extends well beyond physical site development) I had embarked on an urgent project reviewing and up-grading our Health and Safety arrangements (more on that later). In addition, our expansion plans had hit a boulder and on top of all that, *Sandtoft Scene* wouldn't fit into the scheduled 24 pages - it even had to be pruned so as to fit into 28 pages.

So, what is happening regarding the Museum's expansion and our development fund-raising? It has all become rather complex. The boulder we hit in late February was our farmer friend announcing that he perceived an increase in land values and he wanted considerably more per acre for the land we want than had previously been agreed. In explanation, land in the area around Sandtoft is currently the subject of a planning review by the local authority, hence the farmer's view. This review is at an early stage and we will be taking the opportunity to ensure that our voice is heard by the council so that our Museum and its needs are considered and accommodated in the resultant Local Plan, but it does mean that land acquisition to enlarge our premises may prove to be somewhat more protracted than we would like if the farmer decides to wait for the outcome of the planning review. Nevertheless, we are continuing to press for an agreement to purchase at the earliest opportunity, and happily, we are able to continue to use this land on open days as and when we need to.

The whole business is very fluid, and needless to say, this has presented us with a severe problem financially and we have had to revise our fund-raising target upwards. It is ironic that on top of what I have to report has been a very satisfactory fund-raising effort, we have received two very interesting financial proposals from members.

Those of you who have been to Sandtoft in the past 18 months cannot have failed to notice that the landscape to the north (i.e. the motorway end) of the Museum has changed with the construction of a substantial earth embankment around the old airfield concrete dispersal areas: this area is now leased and occupied by a company who handles imported cars. The embankments form part of the security measures for this operation and are actually on part of the land that forms phase 1 of our expansion plans. We have therefore had to accept that the phase 1 land area will reduce in size and a recent survey of what we could use indicates that **we now have sufficient funds in place** to actually purchase this reduced area!! Fantastic!!

As I said at the start of this piece, it is all rather complex, so having sufficient funds does not mean we can stop fundraising. As can be seen from the "thermometer" on the back page, a significant amount of the funds are as a result of owners paying for their vehicles accommodation in advance and the resultant loss of income in the next few years needs to be made up. There are also a few loans that will need to be paid back. And, of course, we need funds to enable the new land to be fenced and then developed with roads, buildings, hardstandings, overhead, landscaping etc., not to mention acquiring the phase 2 land - crucial for our long-term future.

So, a big **THANK YOU** to all who have helped us get this far - donors, vehicle owners, open day workers and visitors included - and, please, keep the momentum going.

Last year's turnover hit a record high, exceeding 2005-6 by around 50%! This exceptional result occurred as a result of the fund-raising effort and advance vehicle storage, vehicle restoration projects and a series of very good open

days with high visitor numbers. The current financial year is not expected to achieve the same level of income. We have, however, now received from HM Revenue and Customs the first of what will be a number of payments from Gift Aid tax reclaims: thanks to sterling work by John Zebedee we received just over £3,200 in respect of the 2000-1 financial year. Subsequent years should be even better! *We do need many more members to sign Gift Aid declarations*, and in the coming weeks and months, John will be writing to those of you who haven't yet signed.

Other ways of helping us raise money include **Give As You Earn** (whereby donations are made pre-tax from your pay-packet by your employer's payroll department - our reference number is 000495640 and you should contact your payroll for details of how to join the scheme) and **Giving Through the Self Assessment Tax Return** (whereby tax repayments due to you from HM Revenue and Customs are diverted to us - our reference number for this is RAQ90NG and you should contact HMR&C or your accountant for details). Don't forget also that used computer/photocopier ink or toner cartridges are worth money to us: quantity is important, so if you can persuade your employer to give you their spent cartridges to add to your own, and you get them to Sandtoft (or to Graham Bilbé in Reading) we can get cash for them.

The Board has undertaken the biennial review of the costs of maintaining/keeping vehicles at Sandtoft, Westgate and Thorpe, and have agreed to increase them generally in line with inflation, allied with how our rates compare with similar organisations (as has been the policy for many years now). Most of the new rates will be applied as from January 2008, with owners being formally notified shortly. The current rates will continue to be applied to vehicles that have already been paid for "up front" and those rates will run until those "up front" payments have run their course.

Let me now attempt to set out how we want to develop our Health and Safety arrangements. Please don't groan and switch off, because we have quite a challenge in front of us to get it right.

We have to bring together many different factors: first and foremost, the directors have a legal responsibility to provide a safe environment for everyone who works at or visits its premises. The main legislation is the Health and Safety at Work Act, which has an increasing number of associated legislative Regulations and Orders that address matters in greater detail; we, at Sandtoft, also need to meet various requirements of the Transport and Works Acts and Road Traffic Acts.

It is very important for everyone to understand that the legislation applies to organisations whether they have paid employees or are entirely run and serviced (as we are) by volunteer workers; equally, the legislation applies whether the Museum is open to the public or not, and there is absolutely no difference in the eyes of the law between members and non-members - we are all human beings.

Perhaps, as "amateurs" in a potentially very dangerous environment (just consider how many high-risk activities we have all the time at the Museum - it is a construction site, we are a public transport operator, we have road traffic,

many of our vehicles are almost silent and our visitors may be unsuspecting of this, we have children around, we have non-professional people driving "big" vehicles, we have live DC electrical apparatus in vast quantities, we have workshop facilities including a pit, we often work at height or alone, we have partially-dismantled or poor-condition vehicles around - the list is seemingly endless), perhaps we are more aware of the dangers, but conversely we may be blissfully ignorant of hazards we are causing or are next to. For many, working at the Museum is a welcome "break" from their work environment which may involve tight H&S compliance and so any over-severe infliction of H&S whilst working at Sandtoft could reduce their enthusiasm for volunteering. We are trying to give a 1950/60s "period" feel to the Museum, so 21st century H&S notices, barriers and the like in the "period" areas could be considered intrusive and are not necessarily aesthetically appropriate.

I hope you will all agree that safety is of utmost importance. We have a good safety track record, but we cannot move forward on that basis: it would take only one easily-made mistake to cause an injury - or worse - and jeopardise the future of not only our museum, but other like operations. Safety needs to be an integral part of how we all operate at Sandtoft and be second nature.

We are developing a new Health and Safety Policy document and undertaking a number of risk assessments for the premises as a whole and our "standard" operations; we are also developing and documenting a number of procedures that will need to be followed so as to ensure that certain essential H&S-related issues are properly dealt with by workers/ volunteers. It is hoped that these set procedures can be kept to a minimum and it is the intention that all existing workers/ volunteers are given a H&S briefing to familiarise them with the H&S arrangements and that new volunteers receive a short induction to similarly brief them. Training will be given for, amongst other things, undertaking risk assessments and evacuation procedure. It is the intention to have a place in the Traffic Office dedicated to H&S: the site's Accident Book is already kept in the Traffic Office (and, incidentally, must be used to record any injury - however small - sustained on Company premises) and this new facility will hold the H&S Policy document and procedures for reference by volunteers, forms (e.g. risk assessment, accident and de-irritation forms) for use as necessary, and completed H&S records including risk assessments.

..... **from Chris Proctor Operations Director:**

This year, there is an availability chart in the Traffic Office for you to put your names down for helping at future events. This chart, together with other means of communication from staff members, is being used to draw up the rosters for each running day. It will be each staff member's responsibility to check this at the start of each event, although members with email can receive a copy of this in advance if they so wish (and ask me!). The general idea is that you let me know when you are coming and I will do my best to include you on the roster: you then check what job (and times) you have been allocated when you turn up on the day.

So, if you haven't already done so, please complete the availability chart for as

many events in advance as you are able (and remember, we need lots of extra help for this year's 'Gathering). Staff should normally try to arrive on site by 10am. I will, of course, endeavour to let people know if an earlier start is required.

You can contact me preferably by email at operations@sandtoft.org or text me on 07901 844804 (I'd rather you didn't call me on this number, as I can't always answer it when I'm at work). If neither of these options is open to you, you could try calling me at home in an evening on 01302 887664. The more notice you can give, the better chance I will have of rostering you for the job you want on the date you want. Oh, and remember, please also let me know if you would like to train to do any other job at Sandtoft and I will do my best to arrange it for you.

..... **from Graham Bilbé, Public Relations & Liaison Director:**

I'm not sure if he was trying to put me off the idea, but Bruce Lake called me earlier this year to advise me that he reckoned we might have over 30 vehicles to test this year, if we were to run all that we hoped to! Well, that's a pretty ambitious target and, perhaps inevitably, one or two might not come to pass - at least not this season, but even so the total by year end is likely to be a record.....

Easter was comfortably covered using vehicles still "in ticket" from last year: the first real demand was for European Weekend in early May. Limoges 5 (Vera) and Porto 140 both passed with flying colours, although the paintwork on the latter is beginning to look rather shabby, especially the upper deck ceiling. Any offers to help with tidying up this fine vehicle would be greatly appreciated - 140 is always popular with our visitors as it gives such a smooth ride! 140 popped a fuse on the Monday afternoon, but this has since been resolved by Ian Metcalfe: the good news is that with York Pullman 64's departure to the LVVS at Lincoln, 140 has at last reclaimed its space in the depot, having "stood aside" to permit Newcastle 501's original 3-month loan. Liege 425 also had an intermediate test, but is not scheduled to operate again this year. However, 425 may well put in an appearance for a German party visit on 24 June, along with Aachen 22 which has been specially requested, (though regrettably not available for public operation pending a body overhaul).

Southern Weekend at Whitsun had an ambitious target of 10 vehicles to operate - 5 Reading's as per last year's event, two Bournemouth's (99 and 297), the two Maidstone's, and London 1812... Well, Reading 193's replacement motor flange arrived only two days before the event, not leaving sufficient time to prepare the rest of the vehicle, so 193 was taken off the list at an early stage (but at last she is again driveable!). Reading 174's seats were borderline last year but a season's use has taken its toll with a lot of 'tired' stitching parting company, so regrettably 174 had to be taken off the roster too (re-covering of the seats is being put in hand). Other than that, all of the eight others put in a showing at some point over the weekend, though the whole operation was hindered by poor weather. Bournemouth 99 only made a single public run on the Monday, after several repairs to a very frail section of

resistance bank: for this and other reasons, she is now withdrawn from use, pending attention to this, a brake overhaul, and investigation of some body movement around the gantry fixings. The BTS will be preparing a repair schedule for this as funds permit, and it is intended that when next entering service she'll have had a fresh coat of paint, and the glass louvers fitted, in addition to the other work needed.

Of course, Bournemouth 297 was officially launched into service the same weekend, following a major overhaul and repair to the roof damage sustained en-route to "a do" in the Czech Republic in 1999. The work has been mainly undertaken by Peter Price on a contract basis, with some assistance from Sandtoft staff, and really looks superb. She's a great credit to all involved, including the owners (Bournemouth Passenger Transport Association) and the sponsors, Shamrock Buses. 297 is a welcome addition to the operational fleet, and will hopefully be joined by the BPTA's BUT, no 212 (ex-246) as soon as space can be made available to accommodate it.

The main forthcoming event, vehicle-wise, is East Midlands Weekend, when it is *hoped* that several vehicles will be run that haven't seen service for some years: in particular, Nottingham 493 and hopefully 506, together with Derby 172 and 224. Andy Thornton has been busily beavering away rewiring 493 in the back of the shed, and we sincerely hope his efforts will be rewarded by meeting the target date! 506 will be given a preliminary test imminently; Derby 172 has been in use until quite recently so shouldn't present too many problems, whilst 224 is to come to us for a short-term exchange with Carlton Colville, with London 1812 making the "opposite" visit for their London Event in September. This will only be a short-term exchange, so members are encouraged to visit these events for this rare opportunity. 224 was, of course, a Sandtoft resident back in the '70s, but so far as I am aware has never run in service at Sandtoft before. 1812, we hope, will be the star of EATM's show, and an excellent ambassador for Sandtoft.

Meanwhile of course, the regular tests continue to keep our "substantive" trolleybus fleet available for service. The workshop team, led by Ian Metcalfe, has also been busy on our essential works vehicles, including renovating the International tractor for shunting duties - just in time as it turned out, as the poor old Nuffield's steering has finally given up. Don't panic, Ian Wilson's on the Case... (- a little pun for *knowledgeable tractorphiles!*) The International has a wide range of speeds, delightful power steering, and a roof! Ian has also invented a very neat tow-bar carrier, but the one drawback at present is the height of the coupling, which means extra care has to be taken to avoid damage to towing hatch panels. Ian M is looking into this problem and may well have resolved it by the time you read this. In his "spare time" the old engine has been taken out of "The Preston" for a full assessment, but we've recently been offered a spare one which might just see the old gal back running sooner than we thought. The good thing with "The Preston" for towing - although it's relatively hard work - is that the steering geometry is essentially similar to that of the trolleybuses. However, the International tractor is much better in

confined spaces; overall, it wouldn't do any harm to have them both available ! If you're thinking of coming to see a particular vehicle in operation, it's always a good idea to phone the Museum, or check the website, for latest information on availability before travelling long distances. Even better, if you can come and lend a hand preparing vehicles prior to our events - especially the major ones - you'll be up on the latest info, AND you can help to make it happen !

OBITUARY

LEN HEAD: 4 December 1933 - 7 April 2007

It is with particular sadness that we report the death, at the age of 73, of Leonard Godfrey Head.

In April 1961, a letter was published in the *Reading Standard* from the late Mike Dare asking if there was anyone interested in helping to preserve one of the pre-war Reading trolleybuses that were shortly to be replaced by new trolleybuses: Len was the first to respond and was one of the 14 who subsequently met and formed the Reading Transport Society. Consequently, Len became Member No.1, a unique status that he was, quietly, quite tickled about. Len was a member of the Society's committee for many years and during his 45+ years as a Society member, as the "father" of the Society, he was often consulted for his thoughts or opinions on various thorny subjects.

Apart from National Service in the RAF, Len lived in Reading all his life and was interested in transport from an early age, remembering Reading's trams (and they disappeared in 1939) and observing the growth (and later, the run-down and abandonment) of the town's trolleybus system, but it didn't stop there as he also watched the local bus operators, clearly knew virtually the whole BR network (for whom he worked) and was a relatively early enthusiast to travel the Continent to explore, photograph and ride tram, trolleybus and rail installations - many of them in non-touristy locations.

He was a quiet, neat and tidy, unassuming, almost shy, man with a wonderful sense of humour, who fastidiously looked after whatever he owned. He was a keen supporter of the trolleybus, and was a stalwart supporter of the trolleybus museum project at Sandtoft from early days but was not that frequent a visitor: he was hugely impressed with many of the Museum's restoration projects - Reading 113, of course, and London 1812 as well - and wanted to see the Museum expand onto a bigger site. Len, who was a regular sponsor of our ex-Hastings Guy trolleybus, had many other interests including local Reading history, organ music, philately and ornithology, was a member of a considerable number of clubs and societies and also supported several very worthy charities, foremost of which was the RNLI.

Len, who had not been in the best of health since Christmas 2005, is survived by a couple of distant cousins. The BTS have lost a knowledgeable and well-respected figure in Len, and Sandtoft, a good friend.

Francis Whitehead

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

28 July 2007
29 July 2007

Gathering Preview Trolleyday

Sandtoft Gathering 2007 (TROLLEYDAY ONLY)

- 11 - 12 August 2007 Trolleydays with 1940/ 50s theme.
- 25 - 27 August 2007 East Midlands Weekend
- 8 - 9 September 2007 Trolleydays
- 22- 23 September 2007 Six Wheeler Weekend
- 14 October 2007 St Leger Historic Vehicle Rally
- 11 November 2007 Trolleyday featuring twilight trolleybus services
- 8 - 9 December 2007 Santa Weekend - visit Santa with the kids !

NOTE: the free bus service from **Doncaster** will operate from Doncaster Interchange, Bay C5 on ~~28 July~~, **29 July, 27 August and 14 October only**, departing Doncaster Interchange at 12.30pm, returning from Sandtoft at 4.00 pm (journey time is approx. 30 minutes). On ~~29 July (Gathering Day) the service will operate every 1/2 hour, 10.30am to 4.30pm, with the last return journey from Sandtoft at 6.00pm, & on 14 October (St. Leger Rally Day) there will be additional services at 11.30am from Doncaster & 5.00pm from Sandtoft.~~

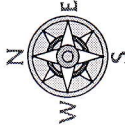
AND NOW YOU CAN TRAVEL BY BUS TO SANDTOFT ON A

SATURDAY

OUR NEW FREE BUS SERVICE OPERATES ON ALL SATURDAY OPEN DAY EVENTS AND LINKS WITH THE COMMERCIALY-OPERATED SERVICE BETWEEN DONCASTER AND EPWORTH

Simply catch the 11.00am 291 Isle Coaches service from Doncaster Interchange (Stand A2), to **Epworth Rectory**. Then transfer to our free bus to arrive at the Museum at 12.00 noon. The return journey leaves Sandtoft at 4.10pm, connecting at Epworth with the 399 service to Doncaster, arriving there at 5.35pm.

That gives you FOUR HOURS to spend at Sandtoft



THE ROUTE TO SANDTOFT

PLUMTREE - PART 6
Expansion

Steve Collins

July 1966: Nottingham's trolleybus system had closed, and I had off-loaded my preservation responsibilities to a student from Huddersfield who I had previously dismissed as having a one-track mind where buses were concerned. All he ever talked about was an ex-Huddersfield Daimler still in everyday service with the small Nottinghamshire municipal undertaking at West Bridgford, and the fact that he couldn't wait to prise the thing out of them. It had come as a shock, therefore, when he approached me and said he wanted to take on Derby 175, the 1945 Sunbeam utility trolleybus that I had been struggling to pay for since February. To be honest, I didn't understand his motives (and still don't), but that didn't matter, I was only 19, and the flesh pots of Nottingham seemed to hold more of an interest for me than old

trolleybuses. It's hard to put into words, but I recall feeling a certain urge, a kind of need that I can't explain (whatever this need was, I still don't know), but whatever it was, old trolleybuses didn't seem to satisfy it.

So with Plumtree behind me, I decided to embark on a brighter lifestyle that included wine, women and song, not that I remember doing much singing, come to think of it, but there you are.

An old saying is that as one door closes, another opens, and in the very same month that I left, another young, impressionable, youth was daft enough to allow himself to be sucked into the vortex. His name was Ted White, and I still see him regularly today. Ted had known Tom Bowden for some time: he was a steam railway enthusiast, who had met Tom on railway trips. He was a good, practical lad, a "man of his hands" who worked as a gas fitter. He always tended to take things at face value, had no commitments to any preserved vehicles, and knew nothing about all the arguments.

One thing that had been mentioned in the weeks before my departure had been the availability of a steam bus. Most people who know of the existence of steam buses would immediately think of something from the very early days of road transport, but there is no way they could imagine the creation that The Chairman had discovered. Possibly a drug addict, high on magic mushroom, might conjure up a nightmare world where such things existed, but nobody sane could ever envisage anything like this....

In the dim, dark days of the pre-war depression, when millions were out of work (a bit like the 1980s, but without Margaret Thatcher to cheer everybody up), Lincolnshire Road Car had acquired an operator called Skegness Motor Services. This was in 1934, and SMS were operating a, then typical, fleet of obsolete 1920s vehicles which included four Vulcans. These Vulcans had been retained by Lincolnshire, and had later been re-bodied with home-made toast-rack bodies which looked very dated even by 1930's standards. For the record, I will explain what a toast-rack is: basically, it is a single-decker with no sides, no centre gangway and wooden seats running the full width of the bus - a bit like the upper deck of a utility low-bridge bus. To compliment the home-made bodies, all four were fitted with Bedford engines and "O"-type radiators, the whole ensemble being completed with very tasteful canvas sheets which could be draped down the sides in bad weather.

These elegant vehicles were put into service on the Skegness sea-front, and ran from the Pier Head to the Clock Tower at a cost of tuppence. They performed this duty for over twenty years: I, myself, went on them as a child, Skegness always being popular with people from Nottingham. In 1958 Lincolnshire decided that the Vulcans were past their best, and decided to replace them with four second-hand Bedford OBs from a variety of sources, which were converted to toasttracks in a similar manner. The Vulcans were then sold, passing to a dealer named Prior at Yaxley, near Peterborough. As far as I know three of them were never seen again, but the fourth, FU 5946, turned up eight years later at Plumtree. Where it had been, and who had owned it between 1958 and 1966, I don't know, but when it re-appeared it had

changed somewhat. The petrol engine had gone - though the radiator grill was still there - but the most noticeable alteration was the fact that a traction engine boiler had been fitted, right in the middle of the body, where the seats should have been, leaving just two rows at the back of the bus. A chimney poked out through a hole in the middle of the roof, the result being best described as a mess.

You may think that this was an interesting modification, done by somebody very skilled in engineering, and to be fair, I suppose it was. My view, however, and the only way I can describe it, is that it was in the same league as a broken pencil - pointless. Now, none of this was my concern, I hasten to add, but it has its place in the story - and what other people do is up to them - so all I can do is explain what happened.

In typical Plumtree fashion, The Chairman took out a loan from a finance company to pay for the steam bus, which duly arrived on site where it was greeted with a mixture of interest and incredulity. Also in typical Plumtree fashion, once the vehicle was secured, nobody (including The Chairman) was able to pay anything, so someone had to be found to take on the loan. The kind of person he was looking for had to possess certain special qualities: he must have an interest in steam engines, be a practical man - a "man of his hands" you could say - preferably have no commitment to other preserved vehicles, and most important, have a job so that he had access to money. Now where could he find a person like that?

While all this was going on, another vehicle arrived: this was MRC 25, a Bedford OWB previously owned by a firm of contractors who operated in and around Derby. Ford & Weston ran quite a sizeable fleet of single deck buses for staff transport, and in the mid-sixties they were a common sight. They were painted green below the waist-rail with yellow window pillars and roof, and actually looked reasonably smart. At this time old OWBs and OBs were a very common sight, in use as mobile shops on housing estates all over Britain, and I could never get very enthusiastic about them.

The person who first acquired MRC 25, was one of the chaps who had agreed to pay in to Derby 175, and he had fallen at the first hurdle. He, too, possessed certain special qualities: God, in His wisdom, had given him the ability to irritate and annoy virtually everybody with whom he came into contact. He was so good at it that people have actually said to me "Don't mention his name in this house again". Nottingham Council's Head Librarian described him as "A most vulgar youth", and a local scrap dealer told somebody "Don't bring him in here, he's a nuisance". I shall refer to him as "The Pain".

When you consider that all Ford & Weston used MRC 25 for was to transport rough workmen to building sites, the fact that they disposed of it when they did should give you some idea of the state of the thing: if a bus is deemed no longer suitable to ferry builders around, it can't have a lot going for it. That nobody snapped it up to use as a mobile shop should tell you something: basically, it was past it. Just the thing for The Pain.

I can't say much about MRC 25: who owned it before Ford & Weston is unknown. My view is that it must have come from a government department, because OVBs date from 1942 - 1945, but the registration MRC dates from 1958. I don't know who built the body, but whoever it was, they would not have been proud to acknowledge it. The Chairman, however, was all for it. He was beginning to formulate ideas of staging second world war displays at Plumtree, and an OVB would be just the thing, especially if it could be painted all-over grey, with white wings, as if in the black-out.

Since Plumtree had been started in 1963, the ground on which the buses stood had been costing £1 per week. In 1967, thanks to one Doctor Beeching, a shake-up of the railway network would bring this happy state of affairs to an abrupt end. The Railways Board began reviewing all their property, and bits of land yielding £52 per annum would no longer be tolerated. An inspector arrived at Plumtree, and his view was that the whole of the site, including the station building and house, a large goods shed, and two smaller sheds, would only be available as a single tenancy at £1500 a year. After a lot of soul-searching, The Chairman, agreed to take on the tenancy, but now everybody would have to pay a viable rent to keep vehicles on site. Doctor Beeching had derailed the gravy train.

But its an ill wind, as they say, and the availability of undercover storage in the form of the goods shed, would help to offset the increase in costs. The Derby Tram Group had been formed to preserve and restore Derby's very first electric tram, no.1, and they were in need of somewhere safe to store it, and complete its restoration. The leading light in the DTG was Alf Pitman, an affable cove who must have been about seventy at this time, and he actually had no.1 in his back garden (- shades of Nottingham 466 at Gunthorpe). No.1 must have been used as a shed or something similar, and exactly why they didn't want to take it to Crich, I don't know, but the Plumtree goods shed was where it turned up.

In order to accommodate a Derby tram, the goods shed had to be made ready. When first taken over, the shed contained a large wooden dock area, and it was obvious that this would have to go. The Teacher took charge of this, and to show just how serious he was, he donned his brown Supervisor's coat, and mobilised a gang of good men (and Ted White) to remove the offending docking. During this laborious and somewhat dangerous work, the good men hacked and wrenched, trying to avoid getting splinters in sensitive places, and avoid hurting their legs and feet on all the brick ends and junk that the dock's builders had cunningly hidden beneath it during its construction. As the feverish activity progressed, The Teacher and The Chairman did their bit by co-ordinating the destruction, and drinking tea on the upper deck of Barton 816. With the docking gone, the earth floor could be levelled, and tram track laid to accommodate no.1: this arrived, and gave The Chairman another idea - the goods shed would become the display area, where the finest vehicles (basically all the ones he owned) could be put on show. This caused a mini rebellion among some of the members. Tom Bowden and Ted White wanted

to use the goods shed for restoration work: silly ideas of that sort were quashed very quickly, though they did get one concession. The goods shed would hold four vehicles - the display area would contain the Derby tram, Barton 816, and a third vehicle which The Chairman was planning to acquire, whilst the fourth space would, for the time being, be for whatever vehicle was being worked on. Peace was restored even if the vehicles weren't.

One day a chap turned up on site and asked if there was anything he could do to help. He was given some menial task to perform, and surprisingly, came the following week, and the week after that. On his third visit, he was given a pot of paint and a brush, and pointed in the direction of the goods shed door; he was thus gainfully employed when The Chairman arrived, saw what he was doing, and developed all the symptoms of acute apoplexy. He gestured in the man's direction, and croaked "Who's set him on doing that?". Ted White said "I have. He said he wanted a job so I gave him one". "Don't you know who he is?" said the Chairman. "No idea" said Ted unabashed, "he's been before, seems a nice bloke". "He's the Chief Engineer at Derby Corporation Transport. He owns a Blue Bus Daimler COG5 coach, and he wants to bring it here." "Should have said then, shouldn't he" retorted Ted as his last word on the subject before returning to his steam bus.

Of all the vehicles ever to have been at Plumtree, GNU 750 is one of the finest. It is a Daimler COG5/40 with a Willowbrook C35F body dating from May 1939, when it was new to the famous Derbyshire company of Percy Jowitt Tailby & Harold George - better known as Blue Bus Services. It had been withdrawn from service in July 1965, after which it had passed to Colin Sheats, the Exeter preservationist, and from him to "The Engineer", who at first kept it at Derby's Ascot Drive depot, prior to moving it to Plumtree.

In July 1967, The Chairman's choice for the third vehicle to go into the goods shed display area became available. This was NNU 238, which had originally entered service in June 1949 as no.357 in the much-missed Notts. & Derbys. fleet. The Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire Traction Company had operated the longest trolleybus route in the country, from Nottingham to the Derbyshire town of Ripley, and the reason The Chairman wanted no.357, was because it reminded him of his courting days. 357 was numerically the last Notts. & Derbys. trolleybus, and is a typical BUT/ Weymann product of the period. Notts. & Derbys. had converted its route to motorbus operation in April 1953, all the vehicles being sold en-bloc to Bradford Corporation who re-numbered them, 357 becoming no.774. In its new guise, 774 ran in Bradford from April 1953 until final withdrawal in October 1963, after which it languished in the famous "Tin Shed" at Bradford's Thornbury depot until the Corporation decided they could do without it.

Apart from the addition of a couple of seats, 774 was the vehicle that was in the closest condition to its original incarnation, hence its selection. In order to get it to Plumtree, The Chairman had to get somebody to pay for it, so Tom Bowden and The Teacher were elected to perform this function, with The Teacher getting a gas stove in exchange for his contribution, and Tom getting

a half share in the 'bus. Other people put small amounts in to pay for the towing, for which Camm's Coaches (not a name to inspire confidence), were contracted.

You may recall I explained how Camm's had towed Nottingham 502 to Plumtree a year before, using a chain, which had caused Tom some concern. This time, Tom insisted that they use a tow bar, and after much muttering, they agreed. Apart from a rear wheel blow-out on the motorway (the vehicle was on single rear wheels at the time, which is not recommended), everything went well. Camm's, however, did not seem too happy about the way things had gone, and would never do any more jobs.

So the site at Plumtree had expanded, the Station Master had departed, the house was being rented out and generating income, and most important, the trolleybus system at Derby was about to close, and who could be a better person to have on board than Derby's Chief Engineer? Things were looking good.

TROLLEYBUS ANNIVERSARIES

Compiled by Geoff Welburn

July to September

Systems Opened

95 years since Dundee opened on 5 September 1912

70 years since Kingston-upon-Hull opened on 23 July 1937

80 years since St. Helens opened on 11 July 1927

Systems Closed

50 years since Darlington closed on 31 July 1957

40 years since Derby closed on 9 September 1967

VEHICLES REPORTS

Nottingham 493: (report from *Andy Thornton*) The last few months have been a period of toil, with little to show at the end! (a familiar tale!)

Mid-March saw some of the large wiring looms in the contactor cabinet given attention. During construction, the multitude of cables in the contactor cabinet were taped up into large and neat looms. Previously, I had taken great pains to avoid disturbing these, cutting back replaced cables as far as possible and taping the ends up to prevent unwanted temporary circuits being created. The result is a lot less clutter in the cabinet and slightly more room to work. Later efforts to replace some of the more difficult cables were not totally successful. Easter saw the brakes being worked on. A suspected leaking (air) brake seal turning out to be some associated steel auto-lube pipe that had seen better days. A new section was fitted during the first May Bank Holiday. Attention turned to the trolley gantry over the same weekend.

Efforts towards the goal of August Bank Holiday's East Midlands Weekend continue and at least the shopping list is getting slightly smaller.

St. Helens 387: (report from *Geoff Sandford*) A lot has happened on 387

during the past few weeks. The vehicle has returned after having the chassis shot-blasted and painted silver. Needless to say, on it's return all the interior was covered in rust and dirt. The motor has gone to Bradford for repair and overhaul and is expected to return to Sandtoft in June. The resistors were also removed and placed inside the vehicle. During the Spring Bank Holiday Weekend, I and my young grandson commenced the cleaning of the interior and during that weekend the upper and lower decks were cleaned except where the resistors are stored, and the platform. The cab was also cleaned (almost). Cleaning still has to be done to get the seats back to normal but the worst has been completed.

An original St. Helens trolleybus destination blind was fitted for the first time since 387 left Bradford. The blind has a history in itself in that it was removed from a 1938 St. Helens Leyland lowbridge double decker, no.304 (DJ 7431) whilst in a scrapyard as long ago as 1957 by one Stanley King. The irony is that Stanley, himself, happened to be walking past at the time it was being fitted into 387 and was delighted to see it in place!. What is even more remarkable is that Stanley had written the vehicle fleet number on the blind, the date and where it was when he removed it all those years ago - and it was still clearly visible on the blind at one end! This blind was given for 387 in 1972 by Stanley and has been missing for some 15 years or more in the Transport Museum in St. Helens. I knew it existed, but could never find it and after years of searching it was located at last in May of this year by a museum member, quite by accident, under the staircase of a St. Helens Regent MkV that is awaiting restoration. The blind would probably have been fitted in 304 after it was re-bodied in 1948, so now 387 can display trolleybus destinations it never actually ran to! The St. Helens number blinds also found have yet to be fitted.

On the Bank Holiday Sunday, 387 was towed into the workshop for a chassis inspection. It appears whilst looking good that some bits had not been shot blasted properly and dirt and grease were painted over in some areas. The main reason to have 387 in the workshop, though, was to inspect the chassis cross member that support the cab. It is bad news, in that it has to be replaced: it is not an expensive job, but it will be time-consuming as the cab floor and everything in it has to come out to get to it. The Sandtoft team are deciding the best way to go about his so a decision has yet to be made. A new retriever pole holder will have to be fitted as well as the old one did not survive the shot-blasting. There is also some small remedial works to be done underneath. The resistors were also inspected and both need a good clean: one has some of the porcelain insulators cracked and they will have to be replaced. All in all, progress has been made and my thanks go to all the team at Sandtoft for their efforts and to Stanley King for the blind.

Bradford 558: (report from *Geoff Welburn*) All the rotten timber from the floor and panel supports have now been removed. New angle supports, a curved panel above the platform and the side destination box have been ordered. Although it was never used, the side destination box formed part of the body structure. Two of the downstairs ceiling/ upstairs cross-floor supports have

been strengthened due to rust wastage. New wood fillets and a replacement body side pillar are now in place.

Doncaster 206 has now left Westgate and is undergoing restoration (as SYPTE 1206) at Rotherham. It is intended to re-paint it in SYPTE "coffee and cream" livery.

Doncaster 55: Considerable work has been carried out on the offside rear brake operating system that included fitting new bearings and seals and having the badly-worn actuating shaft welded and then turned down back to the correct diameter.

Grimsby-Cleethorpes 159 has now been moved to Westgate (into the space vacated by Doncaster 206).

York Pullman 64 left Sandtoft permanently on 21 May 2007 and is now housed at the Lincoln premises of the Lincolnshire Vintage Vehicle Society (to whom Tony Peart left it and Doncaster 122 in his will). No.122 remains at Sandtoft for the time being, but will also be going to the LVVS's museum.

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS

TRAFFIC OFFICE

The new trolleybus service running format was successfully introduced at Easter, with services operating from the new bus loading station.

The central loading island has still to be completed and it is intended that a new traffic office will be constructed adjacent to the workshop, enabling the whole operation to be effectively managed from one central location.

The driving licence audit and insurance information gathering has been progressing well and the Working Member Staff Handbook began distribution at Easter. A Traffic Department Operations Guide is in production and should be available to all Traffic and Workshop staff shortly.

Conductor and trolleybus driving training is progressing and any members who are interested in getting involved should contact Chris Proctor (see page 8) or myself (email stewart.david@ntlworld.co.uk) for further information.

NOTICE BOARD

THE NATIONAL SMOKING BAN

By the time you read this, the no-smoking law will be in force.

At Sandtoft, we have forbidden smoking in most of our buildings, and on our exhibit vehicles for some considerable time now. The new law requires all enclosed and partially-enclosed public places, workplaces and public and work vehicles to be smoke-free, meaning that even staff quarters at Sandtoft, bus shelters and service vehicles are now no-smoking areas.

The law imposes upon us the responsibility to prevent smoking in restricted places and proscribes the penalties both for defaulting smokers and ourselves if we fail to prevent smoking – the latter being as much as £2,500 Smoking is permitted in open-air areas (but not on open-top vehicles !) so if anyone is seen smoking in restricted areas, the requirements of the law should be politely pointed out and a request made for the offender to move outside to

smoke; any problems should be referred to a director, or (on open days) a relevant duty officer/ manager. If an offender persists, the law is on our side assuming we have taken all reasonable action to prevent the smoking.

The law also requires restricted areas to be appropriately signed. We have consulted with our local authority concerning this, and it has been agreed that in order to not have to display unauthentic (70mm minimum size international no-smoking pictogram) signs on our historic vehicles, we display appropriate signs at the various entrances to the Museum advising everyone entering that all buildings and vehicles on the premises are no-smoking areas. HOWEVER, any motorbus that is used for the free bus services will need to display these no-smoking signs, just like any current PCV: we have a supply of stickers, so if any motorbus owner hasn't already been supplied with signs, please contact Chris Proctor, Ian Wilson or Stewart David.

What is not clear from HM Government's smoke-free information booklet is whether the new law also applies to old Leylands and the like being started up in the depot.

One final point for any smokers remaining out there: how about giving up smoking and gift-aiding what you don't spend on cigarettes to us - both of us would be better off in the long run

AT THE BUS STOP

LYON 1704

*Martin Nimmo, with additional information supplied by John Zebedee and derived from **Le Trolleybus à Lyon** (published in 2001) gives a background to the Lyon Vétra-Berliet VBH85 trolleybuses (of which 1704 is one) and Lyon's route 6.*

Lyon is the third city of France, after Paris and Marseille, and stands at the confluence of the Rivers Rhône and Saône. Much of it is relatively flat, including the oldest part (between the two rivers), the Presqu'île. Although early trolleybus experiments were carried out by the engineer Charles Nithard in the nearby village of Charbonnières in 1901, the city opened its first trolleybus route in 1935, having previously had extensive horse and electric tramways (including the running of electric double-deckers!).

Tram route 6 was created in 1912, and in 1948 eighteen trolleybuses were first put into service on a route joining Guillotière (J Jaurès) with Croix Rousse (Montée de la Boucle). This was essentially the route when, in 1963, 21 brand-new Vétra-Berliet VBH85 trolleybuses were built and delivered especially for the route. Why "especially"? Because the line curves and loops up a steep hill with severe bends, some of it on narrow, one-way streets and scattered with traffic obstacles, requiring short (circa 9 metre) vehicles with relatively powerful motors. Alsthom TA505C compound 100hp motors were in the VBH85s and the vehicles had a turning circle of only 20 metres!

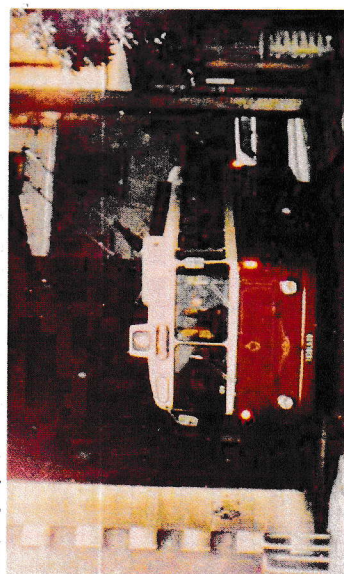
Vétra produced a new (and its last!) trolleybus, based on the Berliet PH bus chassis, for the purpose; outwardly somewhat similar to small numbers of trolleybuses supplied to Algiers, Geneva and (one) to Dijon, these were Lyon 451 to 471, built to carry 85 people - 22 seated passengers, a seated conductor



Bearing its original number, 470, 1704 is seen in 1985 (prior to its refurbishment) on the trolleybuses only right-of-way on route 6. All photos on this page by Martin Nimmo



Route 6 winds up the slopes of the Croix Rousse and gave unusual views of these sturdy work-horses. This shot was taken from the stairway near the Pouteau stop, about halfway up



In a snowstorm in December 1990, 1704 emerges from under the block of flats that straddles the downward (city-bound) one-way section of route 6

(positioned just forward of the rear door on the right-hand side, or French near-side), the driver and 61 standing passengers (hence Vétra-Berliet H 85). The 21, which entered service between June 1963 and March 1964 in Lyon's then standard red and cream livery, were all employed on a line which eventually ran as far as Montessuy Gutenberg, the present terminus of trolleybus route 13. The VBH85 at Sandtoft was originally no.470 and, numerically, was the penultimate vehicle in the batch; as such, it is surmised that it was built in 1964.

Between 1976 and 1979 they were rebuilt for "self-service" i.e. one man operation, but by 1982, some of the vehicles were showing their age, necessitating some withdrawals, and so route 6 was shortened to require fewer vehicles, running from Place Bellecour to Montessuy, and later, in December 1984, from Hôtel de Ville to Place Croix Rousse (this remains as the present service). Thus route 6 was reduced to a shuttle – the journey was timetabled at 12 minutes – though a frequent one (in 1990, there were nine journeys in each direction

Sandtoft Scene

in the hour following 7am).

The difficulty for the operator was that the route could never accommodate the normal-length ER100 vehicles found on all other routes; there were experiments with a specially shortened vehicle, but it just didn't "work". So the decision was taken to rebuild seven of the VBH85 vehicles for further service. This was no ordinary rebuilding, as they were completely stripped down, re-panelled and rewired, re-seated and equipped for one-man operation. The work was all done in Lyon's own workshops, using a significant number of ER100 parts, and the seven (nos. 465, 452, 457, 470, 469, 466 and 462) re-entered service at short intervals during 1984 and 1985 in a special antique OTL (Omnibus et Tramways de Lyon) livery of maroon and cream with gold lining-out, registered with number-plates for the first time and re-numbered 1701-1707 respectively.

In their final years these little trolleybuses achieved an iconic status, becoming as much part of the Croix Rousse area as the traboules (the extensive network of tunnels through buildings) that mark the old silk-weaving district, and the great staircases which connect the different levels where the slopes are too steep for roads. But all good things must come to an end, and from 1999 a new generation of midi-trolleybuses built by MAN-Kièpe gradually began to take over. The last VBH85s (nos.1704 and 1706) ran in service on 15 January 2000.

Of the seven vehicles, no fewer than four have been secured for preservation; 1704 by Sandtoft, 1705 by the Fondation Berliet, 1706 by AMITRAM (Lille) and 1707 by AMTUIR (Paris). Of these, the only one likely to be operated again in the foreseeable future is 1704. Although AMITRAM do not yet have the infrastructure to do so, they have the intention of running their three preserved trolleybuses; the Paris transport collection remains mothballed until museum premises can be found.

DVD REVIEW

No Trolleys to Aquarium

No *Trolleys to Aquarium* is a programme from Oniine Video about Brighton's tram and trolleybus systems.

£18.00 (Postage £1.00)

The Brighton trolleybus system wasn't as long-lived as some others - it closed in June 1961, a little over 20 years after it opened - and fortunately much of this interesting system was captured on film and the programme (it was originally issued on VHS tape to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the trolleybus system's closure) is now available in DVD-R format.

My endearing memory of the Brighton system dates back to the early 1950s when, on a coach trip from where I lived in Middlesex, I was very pleased to see that Brighton had trolleybuses and I well remember seeing then one registered FUF1 - the first time I had ever seen a trolleybus with a "1" registration plate. No.1 in the Corporation's fleet, FUF 1 was the first of the fleet to be delivered to the Depot (on 30 March 1939), took part in the system's official opening, and ironically also took part in the system's closing ceremony.

Electric traction came to Brighton in 1883 with the opening of Magnus Volk's Electric Railway on part of the seafront and some views of the railway over the years have been included in this programme; there are also a couple of photographs of the short-lived "Daddy Longlegs" sea-running mobile pier-like structure. Brighton's tram system opened a few years later (in 1901) and closed in 1939 and there was a period during 1939 when trams and trolleybuses operated alongside one another, albeit on different routes. The programme includes a few rare early colour slides as well as black-and-white views of the trams at work (and being burnt after their working lives were over).

A useful diagrammatic map shows the various trolleybus route proposals put forward separately by Hove Corporation, Brighton Corporation and the Brighton & Preston Omnibus Company, and photographs of the demonstration trolleybuses which were tried out in Hove (using the Cedex Stoll system of overhead) and Brighton (using the under-running current collection system which was adopted almost universally in the UK). In the event nothing came of these three early sets of proposals. There are also photographs (one of each) of the two demonstration trolleybuses - one from Portsmouth, and London Transport no. 61 (the only 3-axle trolleybus to operate in the town) - which visited Brighton and operated on a demonstration circuit in the late 1930s following the Council's decision to install a trolleybus system.

Winston Robinson took over as Brighton Corporation's General Manager with effect from 1 January 1939 and he oversaw the conversion from trams to trolleybuses. The ciné films he took at the time have, with his family's permission, been included in the programme and we are treated to scenes such as trolleybuses being bodied at the Weymann factory, some chassis being tested on a circuit at the local Crompton factory (Crompton was the supplier of the vehicles' electrical equipment) before being sent to Weymann for bodying, no.1 on the tilt test at London Transport's Chiswick Works and subsequently arriving at the Lewes Road Depot on 30 March 1939 for testing under the newly-erected overhead wiring. Continuing, Mr. Robinson's films also include the system's official opening ceremony, some wartime footage of tram track being removed, and colour views of one of the Corporation's trolleybuses decorated (complete with an angled ship's bow above the driver's cab!) during the week 7 - 14 February 1942 to publicise the town's "Warship Week" to raise funds towards the cost of a warship. And immediately after the war in Europe had ended, we see a trolleybus decorated to commemorate VE Day.

The programme explains the operating arrangements with regard to joint operation and revenue-pooling with the Brighton, Hove & District Omnibus Company (a Tilling Group company), which owned and operated virtually identical trolleybuses to the Corporation's. The various routes are covered and the special arrangements for race days are mentioned (one of the routes crossed Brighton Racecourse), and the system's closure is also recorded. The trolleybuses are the stars of the programme, but there is also much else of interest - buses, coaches, other vehicles, and fashions too - in the street scenes and the programme also looks at some of the railway services which

served Brighton (including the famous "Brighton Belle" Pullman trains).

Two Brighton trolleybuses were sold to Maidstone and there is a brief view of one of them (no.51) on a tour in Kent's county town. One of the three trolleybuses sold to the Bournemouth system is seen in a brief sequence in Gervis Place and The Square area of its new home. The two trolleybuses which were sold to Bradford are seen at work there; one was withdrawn after a fairly short while in service, and the other one survived until it was involved in an accident (the programme includes footage of this accident-damaged trolleybus being towed away prior to being sold for scrap).

Preserved BH&D trolleybus no.6340 is also seen, briefly, on part of a unique tour in Teesside (with the reviewer's Hillman Imp car following 6340!) before the Grangetown Square section of route and the tight turning circle at North Ormesby were discontinued.

With a running time of over 80 minutes, some in black-and-white and much in colour, this programme will bring back memories for those who remember the Brighton trolleybus system (and a time when civic pride was evident in public transport) and those who weren't able to visit the system will see how Brighton used to be when cars were in a minority and public transport was the means of travel for so many.

Doug Barrow

No Trolleys to Aquarium can be purchased from the *Trolleyshop at Sandtoft* or ordered by post (add £1.00 for p&p). Orders sent by post should be addressed to *Chris Proctor at the Museum address (see page 2)*. Please make cheques payable to *Sandtoft Transport Centre Limited* and allow 14 days for delivery.

NEWS FROM OTHER MUSEUMS

Carlton Colville

A successful, well-attended launch of Portsmouth 313 (a BUT 9611T with a Burlingham body, built in 1951) took place on Saturday 28 April and it has been operating on several days since then. So far for this season, 313, London 260 and Manchester 1344 have been the main workhorses, with Bournemouth 202 making appearances on sunny Sundays! Some trial runs took place before the season got underway with Athens 5088, the immaculate ZIU restored in Athens and shipped to England for operation at Carlton Colville. It is hoped to have this vehicle in passenger service later in the year. The usual drying out of motors and certifying vehicles for service took place in March and April. The next restoration project is to be Ashton 87 (a BUT 9612T with Bond bodywork, built in 1956). The interiors of all three London Trolleybuses (260, 1201 and 1521) are being restored and should be finished in time for Trolleybus Weekend in September. Bournemouth 286 is awaiting a repair and new window rubbers - hopefully it won't be too long before this popular vehicle is back in service. Hastings 34 returned to Ellough from St. Leonards, near Hastings, earlier in the year, awaiting its turn to be restored.

Away from trolleybuses, an added attraction for this year is the opening of the Fleggburgh Building, housing commercial vehicles. Whilst London 1858 and

Amsterdam 474 are providing the tram service, with Blackpool 159 still over the pit awaiting the return of its trucks. When the pit is free, Blackpool Marton Vambac 11 will be checked over and returned to service. Restoration on Lowestoft 14 continues. Construction of the long-awaited back road project is due to start when the museum closes at the end of the season which will enable many peoples' dream of a circular trolleybus route to come true. A new taxi rank will be included and developments on the narrow gauge railway (the East Suffolk Light Railway), such as the new station building and the recent relaying of track make these exciting times at Carlton Colville.

SANDTOFT'S MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT APPEAL

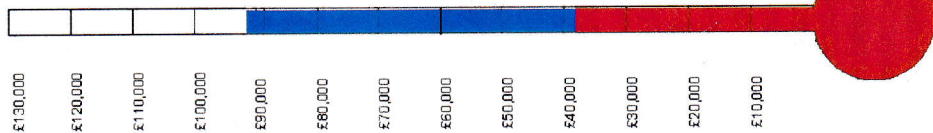
A big THANK YOU to everyone who has contributed to our development appeal so far.

The "thermometer" to the right shows how our appeal was doing as at the end of June 2007. The red area indicates the funds we have accumulated, adding together the fund-raising effort, bank interest, Gift Aid tax repayments and the surpluses from the last few financial years' general trading, whilst the blue indicates payments received "up front" for vehicle maintenance together with confirmed loan offers that we will take up as soon as we need to. Meanwhile, of course, the cash is continuing to earn interest.

In view of the unfortunate problems we have encountered (described on page 5) with the intended purchase of the land we want, we have had to revise our target for this round of fund-raising.

We really, really do need to achieve *and exceed* the £130,000 target figure so that we can be in a position to move on from just buying that phase 1 land. We need to make it a secure and integral part of our Museum, and we also need to be able to concentrate on acquiring that phase 2 land. Many people have dug deep into their pockets to get us this far – it would be good if their efforts could inspire others to do likewise! Donations, big and small, are required to help us meet the shortfall, so, if you haven't already, please give generously so that we are ready with the cash as soon as we can finalise our negotiations. Quite a few members are making regular monthly donations to the fund, enabling it to grow steadily, and more contributions like that would be very welcome.

Francis Whitehead, FINANCIAL DIRECTOR



SANDTOFT GATHERING 2007

The concreted areas used in the past for 'Gathering are not available this year and following the atrocious weather in the area in recent weeks, the ground at Sandtoft and the adjacent field we were offered for 'Gathering remain completely water-logged, with very little prospect of improvement in the next two weeks or even longer.

The Board of Directors has concluded that it is impractical for this year's 'Gathering to go ahead and it is therefore, very regrettably,

CANCELLED

(i.e. the rally, flea market and other visiting attractions)

It is hoped that Saturday and Sunday, 28 and 29 July can be operated as just "normal" 11.00am - 5.00pm Trolleydays. This has to depend on the co-operation and generosity of local businesses in allowing us to use their hard-standings for car parking, and this could be relatively restricted.

We will put out road signs directing traffic to the parking areas and will provide a "Park & Ride" bus service between the car parking and the Museum. Please note that we are not able to accommodate any visiting buses or historic vehicles at the Museum.

Our new Saturday free bus connection at Epworth (see July's *Sandtoft Scene* page 11) will operate on 28 July, whilst on Sunday 29 July only one free bus journey will now run - the normal Sunday 12.30pm journey from Doncaster Interchange (Bay C5), returning at 4.30pm from Sandtoft.

Clearly we will be needing some assistance to make these arrangements work, so if you are able to help on either day, please get in touch with Chris Proctor, Aiden Proctor or Steve Harrison (see page 2 of *Sandtoft Scene* for email addresses, or page 8 for details of how to contact Chris).

This is a major blow for us and we need your support, but under the circumstances, with so much outside our control, we recommend that before you set off for Sandtoft for either day that you first check the website www.sandtoft.org or call the 24-hour Information Line 01724 711391 for up-to-date information.