

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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FRONT COVER PICTURE:

Marseille 202 was launched back into service during the St. Leger Rally event on 14 October 2007. See page 12 for an update on getting no.202 running

Photo: Tim Stubbs

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

A happy new year to all. Well, as the festive time begins to fade and as the weather improves, our minds will once again start to think about the coming trolleybus operating season. Aiden Proctor has supplied us with the programme for 2008 and I know he will keep us updated on any changes. The season starts early this year with a Trolley weekend and the Morris Minor Rally on 22 & 23 March. Another exciting event will be the Trolleybus Extravaganza on 3 & 4 May, I am sure we will need plenty of help that weekend so if you can assist, please contact the Museum.



AROUND THE BOARD

..... from Steve Harrison, Chairman:

Well, a very happy New Year to you all, and I trust a good festive season was had by all.

The new season will be upon us sooner than we expect this year due to the early Easter. I've noticed Easter eggs are on sale already! The wheels keep turning, the seasons come around and around and we have more to do each year. This year will be exceptionally difficult. None of us get any younger and more and more legislation is thrown at us to add to the manic turmoil we already have in our heads. Operations, health and safety, fire precautions, the environment, the smoking ban, plans for this, plans for that, schedules, timetables, compliance checks, and not forgetting the things we have as our prized assets need maintaining, batteries charging, oil, water, and whatever. And let's not forget, amongst all this, to switch on their operating circuits! (Mind you, there's a schedule for that!) Sometimes, I feel like Homer Simpson - "The more I learn means some old stuff gets pushed out of my brain". It does seem at times that we spend more time putting in place things to be able to run the Museum than we do actually running it. But we can't alter that, can we? So, stiff British upper lip: let's get on with it.

Our main problem this year will be securing and making functional the car parking arrangements. The park-and-ride that operated so well last year might not be as available as it might not be possible to use Sandtoft Tiles' land if development plans there come to fruition. Our land purchase deal continues to cause us headaches, but we are continuing to pursue the matter. We are putting huge effort into making that field user-friendly for our car parking and we are also working to make other areas of the site safer.

A volunteers' day will be held again this year and I hope many people will come forward. We need your friends, neighbours and anybody capable or prepared to offer their labours, however small or limited and in whatever capacity. We need you to urge others to come and join us.

We have a full calendar again and we are set for a good year - without (we hope) the absurd weather conditions we experienced in 2007. So, let's clear

our fuddled minds and get stuck in, work together as one and enjoy ourselves as we toil. After all, we are known as the Friendly Museum.

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

The AGM in November was well-attended and Francis Whitehead, Graham Bilbé and Aiden Proctor were duly re-elected as directors: Tony Ferris had been put forward for a position as Ordinary Director as well, but was not successful in the ballot. The meeting agreed to the increase in membership subscriptions and, after much discussion, for Westgate to be sold as and when the Board consider it right to do so. As was made clear during the AGM, there are currently no plans to part with Westgate.

I am sure you will all join me in wishing Tony Ferris well following his recent illness. Tony has been a very active, hard-working member of our site team and we look forward to him being able to resume at least some less arduous tasks. Meanwhile, he has been reported pottering around on site and (no doubt) drinking tea with the others from the site team and the workshop.

..... from **Aiden Proctor, Commercial Director:**

Firstly I'd like to wish all our members a "Happy New Year". I hope everybody has a great year and that our Museum continues to grow. However, before I go on too much about 2008 I'd like to tell you a little about 2007.

We all know about the terrible weather we suffered and the consequences but 2007 was not the disaster you may think. Visitor numbers for 2007 totalled 4600 - 26.4% less than 2006. Numbers for the 'Gathering day were approximately 75% less than 2006, with the result that after the 'Gathering Weekend our visitor numbers were 50% down on the equivalent time in 2006. On a like for like basis the events after 'Gathering (i.e. August onwards) were actually 11.7% up on the equivalent period for 2006.

Since the admission fees were increased from Easter 2007 it has meant that financially (excluding 'Gathering of course) we are no worse off than 2006. Turnover from the shop and café is down but not by as much as the visitor numbers which means we are actually generating more income per customer than in 2006. Therefore there are many positives we can take from last year and I hope we can take them forward into this year. I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank all those who helped in any way towards operating and maintaining the Museum and the vehicles during 2007 and I hope to see you again this year.



Some of the visiting fire & rescue vehicles at the Blue's & Two's 2007



and a demonstration by ambulance personnel in Sandtoft Square Photos: Nick Broxholme

A GLIMPSE AT SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF 2007



▲ East Midlands Weekend (August Bank Holiday)



▲ Six Wheel Weekend All photos this page: Bruce Lake

Looking forward now at 2008, we have another packed year ahead. Easter comes early this year so we have included an additional open weekend in April to keep us going. A new event for 2008 will be the Trolleybus Extravaganza Weekend. This will be on 3/ 4/ 5 May and we intend to operate as many of our serviceable trolleybuses as we can. This will be a great opportunity to ride on many different vehicles and to see many trolleybuses of all shapes, sizes and colour in service. In July we will be commemorating 40 years (to the day) since the closure of the Huddersfield trolleybus system and the successful Blue's & Two's Weekend returns, this time in August. European Weekend will be held on the August Bank Holiday weekend, the Leger Rally retains its usual spot in October and the 'Gathering will be the usual last Sunday in July - this year it is 27 July.

As I write this we are preparing to send our 2008 colour brochure to the printers. This year we plan to double our print run as we have joined up with a distribution company to circulate our leaflets. However you can still help to spread the word so why not take a handful to your local shop, post office or even your place of work. Leaflets will be available from the Museum (when printed!) or you can contact me to arrange delivery.

Thank you to everybody who got involved in the Logo Competition. We've had a wide range of excellent suggestions and ideas and we will be sitting down to consider the entries very shortly.

Once again thank you for your involvement and I look forward to seeing you during 2008.

THE ROUTE TO SANDTOFT

Steve Collins

PLUMTREE - PART 7 A Force to be Reckoned With

1967, and Plumtree was about to have an influx of vehicles which, even now, forms a pretty impressive list. In September the nearby trolleybus system at Derby was due to close, and the East Midlands Transport Society as it now called itself, was determined to save a representation of the vehicles that were still in service.

Two trolleybuses from Derby had already been acquired for preservation: Mike Dare (the person responsible for all this) and the Reading Transport Society had started the ball rolling in 1965 with Weymann-bodied utility no.172, the Plumtree group had followed suit with Park Royal-bodied "relaxed" utility no.175 in 1966, and now in 1967, the final roll of the dice was to result in the arrival at Plumtree of Brush-bodied no.215, Willowbrook-bodied no.224, and Roe-bodied no.237. All these were Sunbeam 2-axle vehicles, all Derby's Guys and Daimlers, sadly, having been disposed of before the preservation movement began.

237 is worthy of a special word, because it had only entered service in March 1960, thus making it the newest trolleybus ever to be at Plumtree. A new recruit to the Plumtree membership was The Engineer, who was actually Derby Corporation's Chief Engineer, and he was able to organise all of this. He was even able to arrange towing, using Derby tower wagon no.2, and apart



Plumtree is filling up! Photo by Colin Barker - his eldest son (who is now the National Express Group UK Business Unit Director for their buses and coaches) is standing in front of Manchester 1250.

for a snag when 237 decided to part company with the tow-bar, everything went well. 224 was now the property of Ted White, whilst 237 belonged to Tom Bowden.

215 was owned by a member of a new organisation - the Notts. & Derbys. group, and they threw in their all at Plumtree by also bringing Mansfield & District Weymann-bodied AEC Regent II no.126, and Midland General 175, a Weymann-bodied AEC Regal III which had begun life as Mansfield & District no.9, passing to Midland General in 1958.

The small Nottinghamshire municipal undertaking at West Bridgford supplied two Daimler CWA6 utility buses to the collection. The first was Brush-bodied GNN 410, new as no.25 in April 1945: this was owned by The Teacher, whilst the second was Duple-bodied CCX 777, new in July 1945 as Huddersfield Corporation's 217, passing to West Bridgford in April 1955 as their no.24, and this was owned by The Student, who also owned Derby 175.

Thanks to The Engineer, buses began going to rallies, all in the name of the EMTS, and all this helped give them a good name. One chap brought two Bedford OBs, three buses came from the Huddersfield area, a Foden arrived from Garelochhead in Scotland, Derby Daimler 27 joined the collection.... it just goes on and on!

Last time I mentioned The Pain, Plumtree's resident nuisance, who had the disarming ability of being able to annoy even the most laid-back individuals. He had acquired a rancid Bedford OWB from a Derby contractor, and messed about with it until the engine failed, following which he lost interest. In a pattern that would be repeated over and over again he then went after BTB 928 a pre-war Leyland single-decker formerly in the Lytham St Annes fleet. This vehicle had no seats, and led to Tom Bowden christening it "The Lytham Standee"

upon its arrival at Plumtree. These two vehicles were the lucky ones, the OWB was taken over by a member of the Derby Tram Group, who were looking after Derby tram no.1 at Plumtree (though he too would later abandon it). After The Standee broke down, somebody with ability took it over, and although it left the site, it does still exist.

JV 8699, a Guy Arab utility with a Park Royal body was acquired from Grimsby Cleethorpes to use as a workhorse on site. This had been no.72 in the Grimsby fleet, being converted to a tree lopper and re-numbered 5 AUX before it went to Plumtree. When it wasn't needed for shunting, The Pain used to love driving it up and down the site, often running it out of diesel - much to the annoyance of The Engineer, who then had to bleed the system. On one occasion he ran it out of diesel at the bottom of the drive, at an angle that made it impossible to get any other vehicles in or out, I shudder to think what Mike Dare would have made of him!

The engine on West Bridgford 25 mysteriously failed, much to The Teacher's annoyance, and he was convinced that The Pain was responsible, though he always denied it. The Engineer spent two consecutive Saturdays working on 25's engine, and just before it got dark he had it running again. On his way back to Derby he rang The Teacher, and told him 25 was repaired and was up and running, though it needed to be treated gently for a few weeks. At about 9 o'clock the next morning The Teacher arrived on site, only to find that The Pain had beaten him to it, and had been driving 25 up and down, during which time the engine had seized. The bus never ran again.

To say that The Teacher was somewhat miffed is an understatement. He told me this story about fifteen years after the event, and he was furious even then. He could not understand how The Pain had even known that 25 had been repaired, as he had not been on site while The Engineer was working on it, and nobody would admit to telling him. That The Pain was responsible is not in doubt, as he was still trying to restart the engine when The Teacher arrived. He disappeared from Plumtree not long afterwards.

A brief mention of The Pain's later career within the preservation movement is, I think, in order. After he left Plumtree he acquired KAL 506, an ex-Barton Leyland PS1, from the Hoveringham Sand and Gravel Company who had been using it as a works bus. He obtained this for the sum of 1/- (5p in today's Mickey Mouse money), and The Teacher seemed to think he must have spun them a yarn about it going to Plumtree, as The Pain had a plentiful supply of EMTS headed notepaper. Whatever the truth about how he obtained it, what he did with it is not in question, he sold it to a breaker named Bishton for £60. After the departure of the Hoveringham PS1, The Pain's next project was a dustcart from Burton-on-Trent Corporation. My view is that this was much more in keeping with his image as a dyed-in-the-wool idiot, and he made a big impression when he went to collect it. The good men at the dustcart depot were apparently very pleased that one of their own was going for preservation, they had serviced the thing, and filled the fuel tank to show the new owner their appreciation. The dustcart was the kind that I always refer to as the "chip

shop range" type, with curved sliding lids, and the good men had loaded a quantity of spare parts (including some extra lids) into the meticulously cleaned rubbish compartment.

The Pain was beside himself when he saw his new acquisition, and showed his delight by leaping into the cab and pressing and pulling everything in sight. Among all the knobs, levers and buttons was, of course, the control that operated the tipping mechanism, so that all the items he had been given were immediately disgorged onto the depot floor. Shrugging that off, he then started the engine, and with the natural ability of the truly stupid, managed to jam the gearbox, so that the vehicle wouldn't move. I heard a most graphic description of a fitter sprawled half in, and half out of the cab, hitting a chisel with a lump hammer, and continually saying "How the **** has he managed this?" He didn't know The Pain, you see: the answer is, of course, "very easily".

Following the departure of the dustcart to Podder Motor Spares, The Pain had had enough of engines that seized and gearboxes that jammed, and so he decided to go for something that wouldn't do either. What he came up with was a thing called a barn engine which he installed in his garden shed, so that he could start it up, as and when the fancy took him. Possibly after sitting in the gloom watching the thing chugging away to itself for hours on end, with no appreciable benefit, the enjoyment of operating barn engines began to pall. Whatever the reason, he decided to spice things up by incorporating a milking machine into the system, with the liveliest results. Now, the thing didn't just chug, it clanked and rattled as well. "Much better" he thought. He may have had his faults, but one thing you could never say about The Pain, was that he was selfish: he believed in sharing his good fortune with others, and so he would start his engine late at night, so that his neighbours could enjoy it just as much as he did.

A few months ago I actually saw The Pain on the local East Midlands News. The television companies should really think long and hard about doing things like that at a time when children could be watching, but that's the way things are nowadays. Reading between the lines, it would appear that the milking machine has fallen from favour, as The Pain is now a member of The Friends of Cromford Canal. He was doing all the talking of course, while a gang of lads were clearing clumps of thorns and brambles. My view is that the Cromford Canal should choose its friends more carefully in future, I wonder, can a canal be sold for scrap?

But back at Plumtree things were still cracking on at a good rate, new vehicles were arriving and The Engineer had obtained a couple of traction poles from Derby. These were erected at the top of the drive near the station buildings, and at least one had a good bright light affixed. To get them into position he used the Grimsby Guy; he slung the things down the side, and somehow managed to get them into the holes and pull them upright. He also scrounged a stack of bracket arms and these were cut down, and turned into fence posts to make the site more secure.

During a trip to Grimsby on Barton 816, The Chairman had made an

astounding discovery. In a scrap yard on Armstrong Street were at least two Grimsby-Cleethorpes trolleybuses. Now, this was a turn-up for the books: how on earth had Plumtree lasted so long without a Grimsby-Cleethorpes trolleybus? Something must be done, and Tom Bowden was the obvious person to do it. Tom was duly despatched to Grimsby, with instructions to secure one, if not both, and get them to Plumtree where they obviously belonged. Tom did manage to save number 154, a 1937 AEC, and some years ago I wrote a full account of the trials and tribulations that he endured to do it. Ye editor has scrounged a copy of my original article from somewhere, and I will revise it to be published in a future issue of *Sandtoft Scene*. All I will say is that when 154 arrived at Plumtree, it had no windows, and part of the back end was missing, having been guillotined by a chunk of trowler. Over the next few years 154 became the target of many unkind jokes and insults, but it is still around, and it didn't look too bad the last time I saw it.....

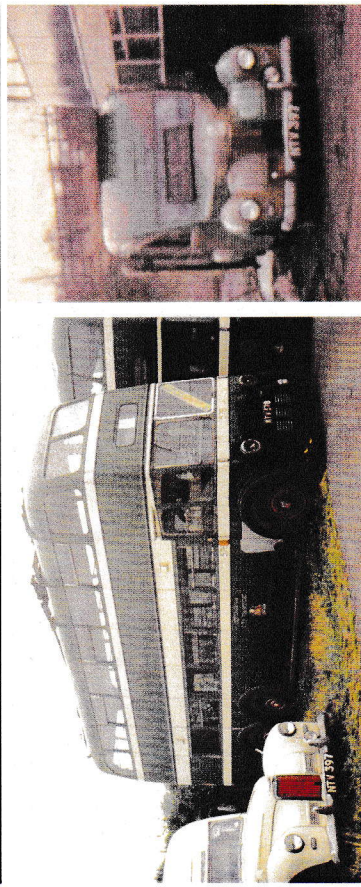
Other arrivals were Midland General 117, an A E C Regent III with Weymann body that The Chairman thought made a good companion for Notts. & Derbys. 357, which had now been repainted into Midland General blue, a darker colour than the Bradford blue it sported when it came to Plumtree. Steve Blood, the well-known Derby preservationist, had acquired MPP 747, a Yeates-bodied Dennis Lancel III coach, which had started life with Dell of Chesham, Buckinghamshire: Steve had obtained it from Haley and Weller, a fireworks manufacturer who had used it for staff transport.

Another A E C Regent III, was West Bridgford 21: this carried a Willowbrook lowbridge body and dated from 1954. In September 1968, the West Bridgford undertaking had passed to Nottingham City Transport, and number 21 had become Nottingham 199, though it never carried Nottingham livery. It had only operated for Nottingham until December 1968, because due to the fact that it had a crash gearbox, the City drivers could not drive it. The last surviving SOS FEDD type had also arrived on site: this dated from 1936 and had operated for Trent Motor Traction as no.1011. The chassis designation stands for Front Entrance Double Decker, and it carried bodywork by Metro Cammell. Following sale by Trent in 1949, it had become a hen house on a farm at Dalbury Lees in Derbyshire. When it was first discovered it had no engine or front axle. The Engineer had sorted an axle from somewhere, and he was working on the FEDD, which occupied the fourth place in the goods shed alongside Notts. & Derbys. 357, Barton 816, and Derby Tram no.1.

There had been losses of course. All the Huddersfield-based vehicles had gone, and so had the Notts. & Derbys. group, who had taken their vehicles (including Derby 215) to Clay Cross, the storage facility of the Tramway Museum Society. Ashton Crossley Empire trolleybus no.80 had also left for Carlton Colville. The Crossley body on Ashton 80 was found to be in very poor condition, unlike the similar one on Manchester 1250, which is built like a tank. This must be an example of one being built to a price, and one to a specification. Other items of transport interest that had arrived in recent months were the bottom deck of Nottingham tram no.67, which had been used at the now

defunct Colwick Pleasure Park. This was one of The Teacher's projects, and when it was delivered to the site, the haulage company who moved it left it across the door of the goods shed, which meant that they had to come back and move it again. The body of a Birmingham horse bus had been discovered on an allotment at Colwick, and Ted White had been pressurised into acquiring it. Actually it wasn't a horse bus body at all, what it actually was is a story for another day.

An old Nottingham ambulance registered NTV 397 had also been found somewhere, and The Chairman had immediately wanted it for his Second World War tableaux. The fact that it was a 1951 model was dismissed as unimportant, Tom Bowden was given the honour of buying it, and the vendor kindly offered to drive it to Plumtree. The ambulance arrived under its own power, but oddly once the engine had been switched off, it never ran again. This didn't stop The Chairman painting it in green and brown camouflage markings though.



Nottingham ambulance with Nottingham 578 and 502

Photo: Graham Jelly

...and the ambulance in wartime livery !! Steve Collins Collection

The upper deck of Nottingham tram no.16 was found in a back garden at Nuthall, and to extract it, a crane had to be brought in to lift it over the house. Once at Plumtree, somebody decided that it had to be dismantled for its own good and stacked under a shed, which stood on brick pillars. I recall telling Black Rod about no.16, and he looked blank, said he couldn't remember seeing it, and asked where it was. I told him it was stacked under the Carpet Man's Shed, and he just collapsed with laughter.

Another person who collapsed with laughter, was Roger the Bodger. He was one of those peripheral characters who came and went at Plumtree. After an interval of several months, he re-appeared, and Tom Bowden was showing him round all the new exhibits. Roger the Bodger spotted an old dolly tub which contained an untidy collection of splintered wood, and had a little flip-up seat sitting on top of it. "What's that?" he asked. "The Cotgrave horse bus" replied Tom. Tom carried on walking, then realised he was in fact talking to himself, and looked round to see Roger doubled up, incapable of movement.

The Cotgrave horse bus had only a very short life as a preserved vehicle. Cotgrave was the place where it was found, and nobody knew what it actually was. Steve Blood, the well-known Derby preservationist, got fed up with barking his shins on it, and in a fit of pique, loaded it into his van, drove it out into the country, and threw it over a wall into a pub car park. I remember somebody telling this story to a group of people, including The Teacher, and he was, as they say, not amused. "Ah" he said, "that was MY horse bus, I wondered what had happened to it; I'll have to have a word with Steve about it".

So that brings the story up to the end of 1969, and events were happening that would have a profound effect on the East Midland Transport Society. Mike Dare had found a site at a place called Sandtoft, and as this site grew, the Plumtree site would decline, and slide towards its inevitable dissolution. It would be a while before anyone at Plumtree realised it. In fact, some of them would still not realise it when the place stood on the verge of collapse.

TROLLEYBUS ANNIVERSARIES

Compiled by Geoff Welburn

January to March

Systems Opened

95 years since Stockport opened on 10 March 1913

70 years since Manchester opened on 1 March 1938

70 years since Belfast opened on 28 March 1938

Systems Closed

70 years since Chesterfield closed on 24 March 1938

VEHICLES REPORTS

from Ian Wilson (unless credited otherwise)

Marseille 202: (report compiled with much input from Bruce Lake) No.202 arrived at Sandtoft in May 2006 (doesn't time fly ?), in a bit of a sorry state, having been stored in the open in Marseille for a couple of years. During this time it had also been cannibalised of some of its parts - most non-essential to its operation, but required for running in service all the same.

The remainder of 2006 was spent replacing many of the missing or damaged parts with ones we had either recovered from scrap vehicles in Marseille or had made, and also trying to get it to work.

The former items included handrails, mirrors, light fittings (both internal and external), seat grab handles, blinds, retriever ropes, wheel trims, roof fairings and resistor covers, step protective edges, bumper blocks, windscreen wiper rubbers, and some exterior trims.

On the operational side, we had to wait for a set of keys to be sent from France, and some special fuses to be obtained, and even then there were many difficulties in getting 202 running. The batteries were the first things to be replaced, which resulted in the diesel engine starting, but 202 stubbornly refused to run in electric mode for some months. The problems were eventually solved after poring over the circuit diagrams for many hours, and it was brilliant to get her running under power for the first time, although even

then much of the air system did not work. Stripping down and cleaning some of the valves resulted in more working - like the air-operated accelerator mechanism for the diesel engine, the front suspension, the doors and the pneumatic boom depressors (Marseille used driver-controlled de-wiring and re-wiring on some unwired sections of route). However, the rear suspension did not respond at all to our efforts.

During 2007, we learned of the decision to scrap some ER100 trolleybuses in St. Etienne, and this led to a foray over there days in June with a van, and three members spent a day and a half salvaging many parts. These included some rear air-bags, air valves and a compressor, in the hope that that some or all of these would be useful in restoring the rear suspension to working order. Parts also recovered from St. Etienne, and quickly fitted to 202, included the missing or poor-condition destination winders, air vent knobs, ceiling trims, handrail brackets (the horrible motorbus ones we had obtained in Marseille were replaced with the proper trolleybus ones), interior light covers, headlight trims, and a better rear bumper. Four rubber wheel arches were also fitted after struggling to devise a way of preparing and fixing them. Items still in stock include another rubber wheel arch, ceiling grab handles, a complete side blind box, spare booms and bases, another alternator, main MG set, compressor, resistors, contactors, electronic control boards and a multitude of low-tension electrical items: these should keep 202 running for the foreseeable future.

Further, more complex, jobs were undertaken on 202 - the two front air-valves were re-placed, stopping the remaining air leaks from there. Over the August Bank Holiday, Graham Bilbé sussed out how to re-attach the handrail strap-hangers and fitted all the ones obtained from St. Etienne, but best of all, the rear suspension has been fixed ! On the Saturday, Ian Metcalfe and Peter Rowell removed the rear wheels to gain access to the rear air-bags (shifting half a ton of Marseille dirt in the process !), and determined that one of them had collapsed so much that the upper flange was on the inside of the rubber bag, instead of where it should be - on the outside. They worked out how to remove the bag, and subsequent inspection on the bench revealed that it was unlikely to be repairable. However, by Sunday, after an awful lot of heavy and dirty work, Super-Mechanic (alias Ian Metcalfe) had fitted one of the replacements obtained from St. Etienne, run the air up and, lo and behold, the rear suspension came up ! Indeed, solving this must have cured a further air-leak,



Ian Metcalfe hard at work trying to locate an air leak at the front of 202
Photo: Bruce Lake

as all the other air systems started to work better as well !

So now 202 ran very smoothly (the suspension system on these Berliet-designed Renaults was ahead of its time, and gives an exceptionally smooth ride). This gave us the impetus to do the remaining work to make it fully operational and get it back into service. The side blind box was replaced with the one acquired from St. Etienne, as was the missing roof resistor cover, the fuel filler trim and some beading.

Two weeks before the St. Leger Rally, and with the bulk of the work done, it was realised that it could just be possible to re-launch 202 at that event. Thus it was tested and passed as fit for service and with Bruce Lake having no work commitments during those two weeks, after matching colours and obtaining paintwork from our supplier, he set about refreshing both the blue and the white but he did managed a creditable smartening-up of the flaked, damaged and generally shabby paint areas.

Most satisfactorily, 202 did get to run in service at the St. Leger Rally on 14 October. Unfortunately, the batteries didn't last (French electrics draw quite a bit at 24 volts), so it needed a re-charge in the middle of the day. (Bruce has since narrowed this problem down to the charging alternator which will need replacing - it's a good job we had the foresight to obtain a replacement from St. Etienne !) Visitors to the event were very impressed with 202's performance, and we know also that the French enthusiast groups are extremely jealous that we have the only ER100 trolleybus in operation in "captivity" in the world !

As a consequence of Doncaster 122 leaving Sandtoft (see below), and with a bit of shuffling vehicles around, 202 has now gained a depot space.

Nottingham 493: (report from *Andy Thornton*) The last edition reported that 493 had successfully entered service over the August Bank Holiday weekend. Then and since, I have enjoyed seeing it doing what it was built for (carrying passengers) and, of course, done my bit of the driving and conducting. A few small snags have been addressed and plans laid for the next jobs.

Nottingham 506 & 137: (report from *David Needham*) The seat covers on both buses are, as can be expected, now showing signs of deterioration. 506's are by far in the better condition and it is hoped that some of the original covers will last a little longer so only the worst will need replacing. This is not the case with 137: all the seat covers are beyond repair and need to be replaced.

I decided that a bit of "do-it-yourself" was the only way out of a very expensive action, so, armed with an old seat, off I went to the local upholstery evening class. There were seven of us in the class: to start, we were all asked to identify our project. I was at the end of the line and the tutor started from the other end. First student held forth a chair, Queen Anne they say: a discussion took place on how the chair was held together and what was to be done to bring it back to "as new". Next in line had a Victorian something or other chair and the tutor again went over the finer points of Victorian upholstery technique. So one chair after another was produced and fully discussed.

Eventually it was my turn, with a swift action, I raised the back rest of a seat from 506: every eye was glued to the seat I was holding. No words were heard from the tutor, just a slight gasp. "It's from a bus," I said, "and I want to make up to 50 of them." At this stage I thought the tutor would show me to the door, but after the shock of what I had said had sunk in, she recovered and said that she had never done anything like the seat cover before, but if I was prepared to have a go, so was she. Several weeks later the first cover was finished and with the appropriate internal stuffing etc. it is now completed.

Bradford 558: (Report from *Geoff Welburn*) All outside interior panels have been temporarily fitted prior to covering in rexine. Stress panels in this area have been plated over. The upper saloon is being prepared for the rewiring of the interior lights.

Sheffield 754 failed its MoT due to an imbalance between the front brakes. The brakes have been dismantled and the fault traced to a seized adjuster mechanism. New parts have now been obtained and re-assembly will commence very soon.

Nuffield Tractor (WSY631): The steering, which had seriously failed (for the second time) has been repaired and the tractor is back in service.

International Harvester Tractor: the alternator was found to be defective and had to be replaced. However, shortly after this the radiator failed (disintegrated is probably the way to describe it) and thus our mainstay towing vehicle is out of use. The radiator has now been re-built off site and now back at Sandtoft, currently awaits re-fitting. As a result of all this, WSY631, the Nuffield Tractor is acting as our principle towing vehicle again.

Doncaster 122 has now left Sandtoft. Along with York Pullman 64, following Tony Peart's death it is now owned by the Lincolnshire Vintage Vehicle Society Limited and is housed at their premises in Lincoln.

Doncaster 94: Work on the braking system (to cure a vacuum leak - difficult to locate !) is continuing.

Doncaster 55: The work on 55's braking system has been successfully completed and it has passed its MoT test.

SYTE 2479: Both fuel tanks have been drained and removed to allow new retaining straps to be fitted. The opportunity was taken to clean up the chassis and the underside of the floor above the tanks. The tanks have now been refitted but still need the pipes etc. to be re-connected.

London RT3323: Major work has been carried out on the nearside framing. Whilst the opportunity existed, an order has been placed for new moquette so that when the time comes, the seats (acquired from various locations, including France !) can be re-trimmed.

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS

TRAFFIC OFFICE

End of Season Review: Good progress has been made with driver and conductor training, resulting in three trolleybus drivers, two conductors and one instructor being successfully trained.

from Stewart David

The driving licence and insurance audit process that was introduced at the start of the season has now signed-off and authorised some 35 Company members to drive vehicles on the Museum's insurance policy.

As part of our ongoing health and safety improvement activity an operations guide is being prepared, and should be available for issue to all traffic and workshop staff at the beginning of the new season.

The staff rostering system introduced by Chris Proctor has been generally successful, and we intend to carry on with this for the 2008 operating season. Chris can be contacted by email at operations@sandtoft.org, and myself at traffic@sandtoft.org. Please let us know of your intentions to attend for open days, as this greatly assists us with staffing plans, etc.

To conclude, there has been much good progress during 2007, and much more to continue with this season, and I thank all concerned for their efforts.

THE SUNBEAM CYCLE SHOP

The Sunbeam Cycle Shop was born about four or five years ago, when Geoff Warnes asked if he could put a few of his own old bicycles on display in the building that had been vacated by the miniature railway. The idea was agreed to and Geoff's bicycles began a new life as exhibits, alongside some of Steve Harrison's impressive collection of lawnmowers. Geoff acquired a counter and some display cases and a "shop" began to take shape.

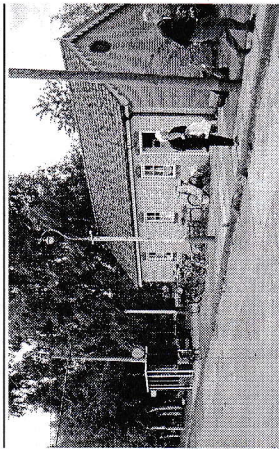


Photo: Nick Broxholme

I became involved when, after seeing an advertisement for Sandtoft, with the cycle shop listed as an attraction, I contacted Brian Maguire, told him I was the secretary of a club for people who like old cycles and asked if I could help out with the development of the cycle shop display. I was actually thinking that other members of the cycle club might become involved and want to put some of their surplus cycles or other items on display. Unfortunately that didn't happen "en-masse" so it was left to me to try and get things to display. Eventually, requests to club members and other people did pay off and bicycles and other artefacts began to arrive to boost the display.

Tom Burchill, a fellow club member, has access to a yard full of those open topped treasure troves known as skips and he came up with the wooden trellis that I used to make the barrier on the front of the raised floor area that is used for the indoor bicycle display. Geoff filled all the gaps and painted it green to match the existing floor colour.

As is often the case, once you get something set up, many people, when they visit, offer you items and the cycle shop is no exception! There is a steady trickle of items donated by visitors to the Museum and, to compliment the Sunbeam connection (the shop having been named with Sunbeam trolleybuses in mind), we now have six Sunbeam bicycles on display - 1939

and 1959 gent's roadsters, mid-1930s and 1950s lady's bicycles and two children's bicycles from the 1960s/1970s. Other interesting exhibits include a bicycle modified to enable the rider to sharpen knives on a grindstone mounted on the handlebars, (the bicycle can be mounted on a stand that raises the rear wheel off the ground and is then pedalled to drive the grindstone via a pulley on the rear wheel and a belt) and a bicycle whose owner used it to travel extensively in Germany in the 1930s, where he witnessed the upsurge of the Nazi party and Adolf Hitler. What a pity inanimate objects cannot talk!

Toys and other items often sold by cycle shops are also on display and one thing we would like is a 1950s period wooden-cased wireless, in working order, to listen to, to wile away the quieter moments. Any offers?

And so the Sunbeam Cycle Shop goes slowly from strength to strength. As mentioned in *Sandtoft Scene* no. 67, the shop is almost bursting at the seams, but, if you have something that you think may be of interest, please do not hesitate to bring it along and offer it: if it is suitable, we will find a space to put it. To add to the agricultural side of things, I have hung a Jalo Gardener on the wall. If you don't know what a Jalo Gardener is, ask Geoff Warnes - he knows all about them!

That nice Mr. Harrison keeps tempting us with the possibility of having some extra space sometime in the future. Now, if only we could find a new home for those lawnmowers, I've got just the right number of bicycles to go in their place. Only joking, Steve!

PARKED NEAR THE BUS STOP

The Jowett Javelin

Sandtoft is a great place to visit, where one can see the finest collection of trolleybuses in this country. There are not that many places where one can ride on a trolleybus: the last time I rode one elsewhere was three years ago on the public transport trolleybus system in Wellington, New Zealand where I took a round trip from the city centre to a suburban terminus on a single-decker. A smooth, quiet ride whisked us up the steep hills to superb views over the city and its harbour.

As a child I had the same smooth ride experience in the hilly areas of Bradford. I went to school by trolleybus on the Saltaire or Crossflats route. It is the nostalgia, this yearning for times past, that draws me back, time and again, to Sandtoft.

We all like a bargain don't we? Well, two for one seems a good deal! A double dose of nostalgia is what I get when I come to Sandtoft in my 1952 Jowett Javelin. Did you know they were produced by a Bradford company? As a boy, that is where I first set eyes on the Jowetts and I decided that eventually I would own one. They were just fantastic cars, way ahead of their time and unique in so many respects.

From 1906 (long before my time!) and continuing up to 1939, Jowetts developed their models, mostly with twin cylinders in a horizontal or "Boxer" engine configuration, based on the "light car" concept as also epitomised by Ford's model T and its successors. Remember that many early cars were built

for the wealthier clients, whereas Ford and Jowett (amongst others) produced simple, dependable, economical and relatively inexpensive cars to meet the needs of the many who had less to spend.

Then in 1939 came the Second World War: Jowett Cars Ltd were directed by the Government to cease car and light van production. The modern factory in Bradford was turned over to the war effort, producing a wide range of munitions, airframe and aero engine components. Rolls Royce Merlin engines for Spitfires were fitted with coolant pumps from Jowett. All during the war the Jowett 8hp flat twin engine continued in manufacture which, due to its reliability and light weight, was in demand by our forces, ideal for 4kw and 5kw portable generating sets and also water pumps for fire fighting.

As early as 1942, the directors realised that when the war ended, a large market would exist for new cars both in the UK and for export. A new designer was sought and the selected applicant, one Gerald Palmer, moved from MG at Cowley. He was installed in a small office at the Jowett factory and given a brief to design a completely new car.

Palmer developed advanced ideas which subsequently were formulated into the Javelin Saloon. Within the length of the car, Palmer wanted the maximum space to be available for the passengers and their luggage. He designed the 1500cc flat four cylinder engine. Being short, it took the least space, was well balanced and had excellent performance. He wanted to keep the weight down, have independent suspension with good road holding, and a new style of body moving ahead from pre-war cars.

Traditionally, Jowetts built their own bodies. However, in order to take advantage of modern pressing facilities, Briggs Motor Bodies with plants in Dagenham and Doncaster were chosen as the Javelin body builders. Bodies were delivered to Bradford daily on specially-designed articulated transporters, carrying six bodies.

Introduced in 1947, the Javelin was received with acclaim, being the first "all new" post-war car. A large number were earmarked for export, essential to the country's economy and in order to receive allocations of steel. Soon the car was seen in rallies and races. The 1949 works car entered and won the Monte Carlo Rally 1.5 litre class with a similar Javelin coming third. Later in the year, a Javelin works car won its class in the Belgian 24-hour race at Spa: running trouble-free at 65.5 mph, it covered nearly 1600 miles. The Javelin was the fastest touring car at Spa!

The exciting Jowett Javelin became a talking point in motoring circles. The car displayed levels of performance, comfort and economy which were unheard of from a 1.5 litre saloon.

Few cars are without their problems and the Javelin was no exception. With modifications to the crankshaft and other developments the engine was improved. In 1951, the specified gearbox hitherto built by the midlands-based firm Henry Meadows was phased out and substituted by a Jowett-built box. The company had successfully built gearboxes for around forty years but this one had teething troubles and it took time to achieve the required standard of

manufacture, thereby causing considerable disruption to production. Production was built-up again when the troubles were overcome and the 1952 models were very reliable. To demonstrate their reliability, following the Motor Show, three Javelins were taken to the Motor Industry Research Association (MIRA). On the test track, not yet officially open, they covered 40,000 miles trouble-free over several weeks of continuous running.

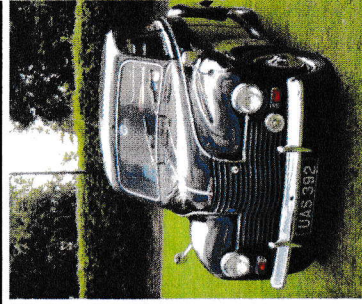
Time was, however, moving on and with sales not at the required level, the decision was taken in 1953 to cease production.

It is worth noting that the same engine unit, slightly modified, was used in the Jowett Jupiter sports car. Success came in several races and rallies, the most remarkable being winning the class in the Le Mans 24 hour race three years in a row in 1951/2/3.

There are those who say that the Jowett Company "went bust". This is not true. The factory in Bradford was sold to International Harvester. They bought the premises, plant and an almost fully-staffed operation which was re-organised and changed over to produce their B250 tractors.

Jowett Cars Ltd, with its key management and staff, moved a few miles to premises at Howden Clough near Batley. As promised, here the firm continued to manufacture and supply necessary spares, and also to repair Jowetts. In 1955 the company was taken over by Blackburn Aircraft and continued the Jowett service until 1963. Much of the engineering capacity on the site was taken up in aero component manufacture.

Jowett Javelins are still very popular classics in New Zealand and Australia where, as here in the UK, strong and live clubs exist. I have been an active member and officer of the Jowett Car club since the early 1970's. Formed in 1923, the club is the oldest "one make" car club in the world and has a well-organised "by return" spares and technical support service based near Bradford which is run by volunteer members. The spares section has vast stocks and, in addition, commissions the casting and machining of new engine crankcases and other key items ensuring that Jowetts will run on well into the 21st century.



Photos: Keith Weir

In the photographs above, my 1952 Javelin is seen at a recent rally in Yorkshire. The car is run all year round except in bad weather and may often be seen on Lincolnshire's roads and at the trolleybus museum. *Sandtoft Scene* no.61 (April 2006) carried a photograph of my Jowett parked up at the bus stop near the *Tea Trolley* café and in front of three trolleybuses. The Bradford trolleybus carried the destination board "Sandtoft going home". It evokes memories of my life in Bradford - rather nice!

For the Javelin, the company's advertising line was:- "**Take a good look - when it passes you !**" I can recommend that.

DEAR 'SCENE

Dear 'Scene

I just wanted to tell you that I really enjoyed the day at Sandtoft and that I can't wait to return. I was impressed by the way in which everything was organised and ran smoothly while retaining a very friendly and informal atmosphere. The volunteers were all friendly and willing to share their knowledge. I was particularly impressed with the guide on the bus tour. He really knew all about the local area and thanked us all for coming because the museum depends on our support. I thought that was really nice. The others who served as conductors were also very welcoming and I really enjoyed the tour of the vehicle depot too.

I wish I could volunteer at the Museum, but it's such a long way from London that it would not be possible. I don't like to drive that far very often and, of course, petrol prices are ridiculously high these days. Keep up the good work and looking forward to seeing you all again soon.

James Morgan (London)

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Dear Scene

Trolleybus in the Press: I have been kindly sent by Rita Taylor (Dave Taylor's widow) a large press cutting taken from the *Bournemouth Echo* dated 13 November 2007.



Not one of the photographs referred to here ! Bournemouth 297 and 99 with London 1812 behind are seen during the Southern Weekend at the end of May 2007

Photo: Bruce Lake

and continued on page 23. The article makes reference to the British Trolleybus Society as owners of 99 and to the National Trolleybus Museum (and why not ?) at Sandtoft, as well as the BPTA as the owners of 297.

Three colour photographs appear, two on page 21, both showing 99 and 297 and a further photo on page 23 of 297. The photographs were taken on 27 May 2007, the Southern Weekend.

Apart from the slight inaccuracy about the title of the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft, the article is completely correct in its content, which makes a pleasant change for a local newspaper ! On behalf of the BTS and "Sandtoft", I extend our thanks to Keith Baynton for supplying this article to the *Bournemouth Echo*. A piece of excellent publicity John H Zebedee (Crawley)

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Dear Scene

I notice in *Sandtoft Scene* no.67 an article about the 40-50s weekend, featuring a photo of an Austin car. I have video featuring Cary Grant and Deborah Kerr, made in 1960 called *The Grass is Greener* It may be of interest to know that the car like the one in the photo is featured at the beginning and end of the film. The registration number of the featured car is JMG 372.

Paul and Janice Gammons (Owsten Ferry)

REVIEWS

DVD - The Passing of Pyewipe

Published by Online Video in co-operation with the Cleethorpes 54 Preservation Fund

£18.00

(Postage £1.00)



This year marks the 48th anniversary of the closure of the Grimsby and Cleethorpes trolleybus operations, and as readers of *Sandtoft Scene* will be aware, two of the former Grimsby-Cleethorpes system's trolleybuses are preserved at Sandtoft (both of them are from the Cleethorpes "side" of the operation - and one of them is no.54, which is presently undergoing restoration).

Looking at aspects of the transport scene in and around Grimsby, Cleethorpes and Immingham, the programme's title refers to the Pyewipe Depot of the former Grimsby & Immingham Electric Railway (British Railways' one electric tramway) which closed in July 1961. This railway, and the Grimsby and Cleethorpes trolleybus operations, were not far from Sandtoft.

There is interesting film of the Grimsby and Cleethorpes trolleybus operations, both in the time when the two undertakings (which inter-worked from early times) were under separate ownerships and administrations and when they were later combined into a joint undertaking. The footage includes some of Grimsby's centre-entrance vehicles, and of Cleethorpes trolleybuses in Walsall (following the closure of the joint system in June 1960 Walsall purchased six of the trolleybuses which had started life in the Cleethorpes fleet). The street

scenes, with a noticeable absence of cars, offer a marked contrast with today's situation.

The Grimsby & Immingham Electric Railway sequences, both street-running and on reserved track, portray the unique nature of this undertaking and the passenger figures quoted (likewise the range of departure times) are an interesting comparison with the present day. I was pleased to see, when I last visited Immingham (in 2005) that some of the large concrete traction poles seen in this programme were still in situ and wonder if this is still the case now; and how many people, apart from enthusiasts, realise what the purpose of these large pieces of concrete was?

Complementing the electric railway and trolleybus material, and to complete this look at some aspects of the local transport scene (plus long-gone local industries and buildings), are views of the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway and of the Humber Ferries.

Doug Barrow



BOOK - Trolleybus Memories: Wolverhampton

Written by Eric Challoner, and published by Ian

Allan Publishing

£14.99

(Postage £3.50)

Published in mid-2007, this A4-size book is the first in a welcome series of "Trolleybus Memories" (the second title, about the former Brighton system, has since been published and will be reviewed in the next issue of *Sandtoft Scene*).

A useful one-page introduction to the town's history helps set the scene for the subsequent chapters, which take the reader from the coming of the trolleybus through the system's development, operations and the eventual run-down and the March 1967 closure. The various routes are dealt with numerically, complemented by a two-page full-system diagram with the overhead layout plus details of the routing arrangements in the town centre.

An excellent and comprehensive selection of photographs, a large number of them in colour, with informative captions, take the reader on a tour of the system and there are also photographic sections on depots and on wiring and electrical equipment. Walsall trolleybuses on the joint route 29 appear, as does Walsall 870 on a tour using part of the Wolverhampton system's wiring. Wolverhampton trolleybus 471, one of six painted in an experimental dark green livery, appears in a colour photograph - and other liveries featured (in addition to Walsall's blue) include the red-and-cream of Huddersfield 541 on its famous May 1966 tour (the first time an enthusiast group had operated a preserved trolleybus on a different system) and the blue-and-cream of Rotherham 44 on the last day of the Wolverhampton system's operation. Another preserved trolleybus seen in operation on the system's last day is Wolverhampton 654.

Appendices include the system's services (starting and finishing dates), tickets, overhead equipment, depot plans and fleet lists for trolleybuses & service vehicles.

This excellent 112-page card-covered book, with over 190 photographs, is very good value at £14.99 and a useful addition to the library of titles on trolleybus systems.

Doug Barrow

Both The Passing of Pyewipe and Trolleybus Memories: Wolverhampton are available from the Trolleyshop at Sandtoft and can be ordered by post (remember, p&p is extra). 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

Black Country Museum

from Keith Hopkinson
The operation over the Christmas period 20/ 21/ 22 December saw an intensive service being operated using Derby 237, Belfast 246 and Bradford 735, with Walsall 862 in reserve just in case. Many hundreds of happy but cold visitors were conveyed, all much appreciative of the lift up the hill at the closure each night. By the time the buses were checked over, swept out and tucked in for the night, the midnight hour was soon passed but a good time was had by all.

Work to the buses at this time of year revolves around keeping them clean, batteries charged up, bulbs replaced, etc.

Belfast 246 now operates on batteries as well as the overhead. A suitable change-over handle from former Derby 207 (which shared the same type of battery system) was rediscovered in my spares pile, and with a decent set of batteries, motion is now possible.

Walsall 862 will have its hydraulic brake system re-charged with gas in the early part of the new year.

Teesside T291: Work continues on the upper deck. The flooring is now covered in new lino, and the aluminium cover strips screwed into position. If a new pair of knees are available anywhere, please let me know! The destination box opening hatch hinge was removed, un-seized from the aluminium paint/ rust/ muck that had gathered in it over the past 40-odd years, and awaits attachment to the hatch as soon as the interior of the destination box is painted in white.

BUS SERVICES TO AND FROM SANDTOFT

A FREE bus connects with the 11.00am 291 Isle Coaches service from Doncaster Interchange (Stand A2), at **Epworth Rectory** each **SATURDAY RUNNING DAY**, (returning to Epworth at 4.00pm to connect with service 399 which then arrives at Doncaster at 5.35pm).

A FREE bus service will operate from Doncaster Interchange, (Bay C5) departing at 12.30 p.m. **ONLY** on those days marked **Bus** on the schedule on the back page. The return trip departs Sandtoft at 4.00 p.m. (journey time approximately 30 minutes).

For Sandtoft Gathering day (27 July 2008), the Doncaster service will operate half-hourly between 10.00 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. from Doncaster Interchange (Bay C5) with the last return trip from Sandtoft at 6.00 p.m.

RUNNING DAYS 2008

(Gates open 10.00 – 17.00 unless stated otherwise)

Saturday 22 March		Easter Trolleydays
Sunday 23 March		<i>with Morris Minor Rally on Easter Sunday</i>
Monday 24 March	Bus	
Saturday 12 April		Trolleydays
Sunday 13 April		
Saturday 3 May		Trolleybus Extraganza Weekend
Sunday 4 May		<i>featuring the LARGEST SELECTION OF</i>
Monday 5 May	Bus	TROLLEYBUSES WE HAVE EVER OPERATED
Saturday 24 May		Spring Bank Holiday Trolleydays
Sunday 25 May		<i>featuring British Trolleybus Society vehicles and</i>
Monday 26 May	Bus	<i>with special events for BTS members "after hours"</i>
Saturday 7 June		Trolleydays
Sunday 8 June		
Saturday 21 June		Trolleydays
Sunday 22 June	Bus	<i>exclusively featuring BUT trolleybuses in service</i>
Saturday 12 July		Huddersfield Weekend
Sunday 13 July	Bus	<i>commemorating 40 years since the end of Huddersfield trolleybuses</i>
Saturday 26 July	Bus	'Gathering Preview (open 11.00 to 22.00) <i>with Real Ale Beer Tent and twilight trolleybus services</i>
Sunday 27 July	Bus	'Gathering 2008 (open 10.00 to 18.00) <i>large selection of trolleybuses in service, visiting vehicles, transport bazaar, Real Ale Beer Tent, live music, craft stalls and more</i>
Saturday 9 August		Blue's and Two's Weekend
Sunday 10 August	Bus	<i>a variety of visiting emergency vehicles. Fire and Rescue displays and demonstrations throughout each day</i>
Saturday 23 August		European Weekend
Sunday 24 August		<i>featuring a selection of continental trolleybuses in service</i>
Monday 25 August	Bus	
Saturday 13 September		Model Weekend
Sunday 14 September	Bus	<i>featuring model trolleybuses, trams and trains and working layouts</i>
Saturday 27 September		Trolleydays
Sunday 28 September		6-Wheeler Weekend
Sunday 19 October	Bus	St. Leger Rally <i>St. Leger Historic Vehicle Rally starting from Doncaster Aircraft. Transport-related sales stands and parades of historic vehicles at Museum</i>
Sunday 16 November		Twilight Trolleys (open 11.00 to 18.00) <i>with trolleybuses operating after dark</i>
Saturday 13 December		Santa Days (open 11.00 to 16.00)
Sunday 14 December		<i>children can visit Santa</i>

FREE bus from/ to Doncaster runs ONLY on days marked **Bus**. (see page 23 for details)