

CROSSTRAITS

SANDTOFT SCENE

INSIDE
IN GREAT
ABOUT
PLANS!



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THE TROLLEYBUS MUSEUM
AT SANDTOFT'S MAGAZINE



The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft

SANDTOFT TRANSPORT CENTRE LIMITED

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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:

J. Stanley King is welcomed as our new President by Bruce Lake, our Company Secretary, at Sandtoft on 16 March 2008 in front of (what else ?) a Bradford trolleybus (actually, no. 746). See report on page 4

Photo: Aiden Proctor

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



Much has happened at the Museum in these early months of the year, amongst many things, we have a new President Mr Stanley King F.S.A., who has been a regular visitor to the Museum over many years. I would like to extend a very warm welcome to him from myself and also from the members of the Trolleybus Museum. He is a very respected figure within the public transport arena and will be a big asset to us as we continue to develop our Museum. I do hope that in the future, I can persuade him to write a few articles for Sandtoft Scene.

Also congratulations to Graham Bilbé on taking over the rôle as the Museum's Chairman. He explains how this came about and also has some long awaited good news to relay in his Chairman's report.

In the centre pages of the magazine, Francis Whitehead identifies the makeup of the Board and the various Directors' main responsibilities: at long last we get to see who does what and who is responsible for actions that are taken it is long overdue.

The new running season, thanks to Easter being early this year, has started in a very colourful way as shown in the following photographs. My thanks go to David Shepherd for sending them to me.



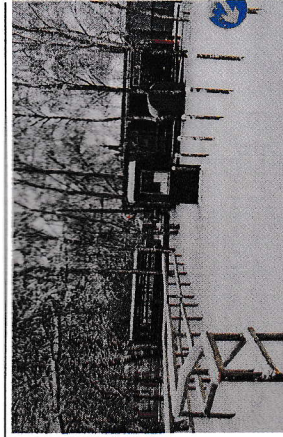
Deep and crisp and even was not exactly what we had in mind when planning our Easter running days. This is Easter Sunday morning 2008, with Newcastle 501, Bradford 746 and Reading 144, all having been used the day before, lined up, waiting to be earth-leakage tested for the Sunday running
Photo: Dave Shepherd



Axholme Stores, first thing on Easter Day. The roadway in front of the building was to be used for displaying the Morris Minor rally.



Looking across our central grass car parking area: as Easter Sunday went on, we had to give up parking here and put visitors' cars on the roadway in front of the Axholme Stores.



The newly-completed entrance arrangements to the car park (and described by Steve Harrison on page 8) are obscured by the snow



Reading 144 has been brought from its overnight parking spot for its earth leakage test, which we do each day a trolleybus is run.

All photos this page: Dave Shepherd

AN INTRODUCTION TO OUR NEW PRESIDENT

J STANLEY KING, F.S.A.

Stanley is a Bradfordian by birth and upbringing, but one-quarter of a "Lincolnshire Yellowbelly", as befits the incoming President of a Lincolnshire museum. He learned to drive trams at the age of twelve and, illicitly, put theory into practice on the streets of Bradford in 1950.

However, having been born on a tram route, conveyed to school by bus (diesel and occasionally petrol) and then to work by trolleybus, he concluded that for urban transport in medium-sized towns and cities the trolleybus has no equal.

His first glimpse of a trolleybus occurred at the tender age of 2½, and, by a stroke of good luck, the vehicle in question was Bradford's avant-garde AEC/EEC "Q", which left him with a lifetime's enthusiasm for progressive change and evolutionary development. This led, at the age of 9, to a personal guided tour of the Corporation's tram, bus and trolleybus repair works by the Assistant Rolling Stock Engineer, Mr. Ronald Edgley Cox. Thus, the Trolleybus Museums' first and third Presidents became acquainted while trolleybuses were firmly in the ascendant.

A close colleague of Bradford's post-war trolleybus transport manager Mr C.T. Humpidge (1951-1961), Stanley was well placed to criticise and oppose the

illogicality and flawed rationale of the post-1961 abandonment policy, a battle which nine years later led to his election to City Council as a member (and subsequently Deputy Chairman) of the Passenger Transport Committee. Regrettably, this was too late for a change of policy, but he ensured that the trolleybuses received a fitting funeral, and that a vehicle should be preserved in the city's Industrial Museum.

In 1985 he became leader of the Conservative group on the newly-formed West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority, ultimately serving as Chairman in 2004/ 5 and 2006/ 7, and alternating as Deputy Chairman in 2005/ 6 and from 2007 to his retirement in May this year.

Following the failure of the PTA/ PTE bid for a Leeds Supertram, Stanley proposed and accompanied study visits to Holland, Germany, Switzerland and France which resulted in the formal adoption of modern, continental-style trolleybuses (officially designated NGT – New Generation Transport) as the preferred option for a Supertram substitute. The outcome depends on Department for Transport consent at a future date, but as a sound, professional business case has been formulated, Stanley can step down in the knowledge that genuinely sustainable environmentally-friendly public transport is back on the agenda.

AROUND THE BOARD

.... from Graham Bilbé, Chairman:

When the Board asked me to take on the rôle of Chairman in January, I must admit that I accepted with certain reservations, not least the fact that I'm already Chairman of both the British Trolleybus Society, and my local branch of the Hornby Railway Collectors: you can have too much of a good thing!

Still, I reasoned, provided that I was only being asked to chair the meetings (which I would hope to attend anyway) it wouldn't make much difference. My concerns about possible conflict between the Sandtoft and the BTS positions were quickly dismissed by my colleagues on the Board since both organisations are charities with such closely-aligned aims. So, it was agreed that Steve Harrison moved over to become Managing Director whilst I took on the Chairman position.

However, nothing had quite prepared me for the rapid turn of events that followed, which have culminated in us securing, at last, the first parcel of land towards our ultimate development plan outlined in *Sandtøft Scene* four years ago!

After the Sunday March Board Meeting, (when, incidentally, we were delighted to be joined by Stanley King, our new President, and Susan Hopkinson, our curatorial advisor from North Lincolnshire Council's Normanby Hall), a further meeting had been arranged with Nick White of White Farms, in the hope of progressing our land purchase. Although the meeting didn't feel to go too well at the time, some plain speaking on both sides perhaps helped to clarify exactly what we wanted: two days later, Nick unexpectedly returned, offering



to sell us 1.2 acres, basically as per our original drawing proposed almost exactly four years ago, but slightly reduced and realigned along its northern boundary. Initially Nick contacted Steve, but as I was at the Museum all week (checking the overhead), he came to see me. By the end of Wednesday he had returned with a plan drawn out by his land agents showing the exact measurements, which we duly set out on the ground. Due to changes in taxation from the new tax year, Whites were keen to do the deal before 5 April: a quick call to our solicitor in Reading confirmed that this would (just!) still be possible, and so the deal was put in train.....

Although the rate per acre being asked was rather higher than we would have liked, I was strongly of the view that we shouldn't let this opportunity pass - especially as we could muster practically all the funds required. Fortunately,

“Contracts were duly exchanged on schedule on 4 April, with completion taking place on 2 May.”

the rest of the Board agreed with me! On 28 April Nick White called me (I was home by then), actually to advise that he would be on holiday for a few days and that his solicitor had been given powers to complete the deal; but his call gave me one last chance to improve on the package. I'm pleased to say that I persuaded him to provide the fencing to the new boundaries for us as part of the contract - this will save us a lot of money and hassle, and is a significant and much-appreciated gesture by Whites. Contracts were duly exchanged on schedule on 4 April, with completion taking place on 2 May. So we now have a further 1.2 acres to work with!

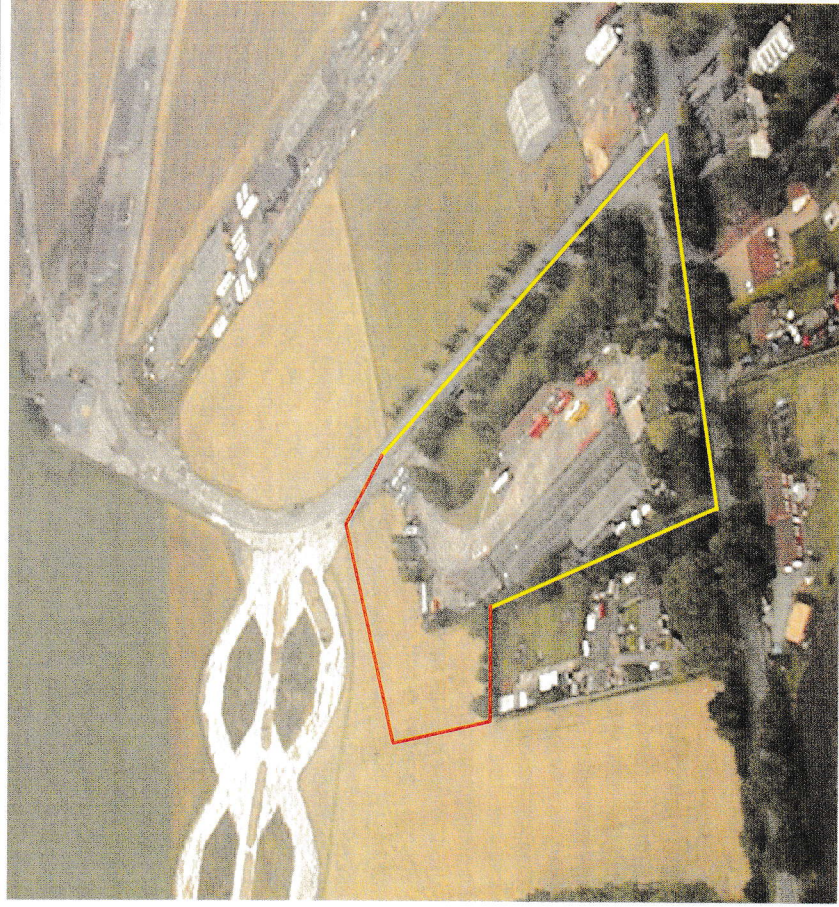
This is, of course, a fantastic achievement! An extension to our site has been talked about for as long as I can remember, and in serious discussions with White's for at least four years.....

But the achievement is not mine (I just happened to be in the right place at the right time) but that of you, the members and vehicle owners who have all contributed enormously to our expansion and development appeal over the last four years. In recent weeks we have received a very significant donation from a member, which proved crucial to clinching the deal, so a big THANK-YOU to that member! The British Trolleybus Society have also made a donation of £2,000 to help us close the funding gap, and this is greatly appreciated. Nonetheless, without all the advance vehicle payments, individual donations and legacies, admissions, shop and café proceeds, Gift Aid tax claims and general hard work, we couldn't have done this, so a huge **THANKS!** to everyone who has helped in any way!

So, what now? In the short term we will need to use a lot of this area for visitor car parking, but the longer-term plan is that it will accommodate the long-awaited exhibition hall and part of the trolleybus running line extension, once funds are available to purchase further land on the west side of the next-door bungalow, *Burntwood*.

The new land needs a fair amount of work to level, stabilise and seed it - even

as car park - so it will see limited use this season. However, it is the Board's intention to have it properly prepared for 2009, and Nick White has kindly offered to assist with this, including ongoing use of White's access road for the time being. Ultimately, though, as I've already said, we want to extend our running line across this new land and beyond, to a new car park area adjacent to Belton Road on the west side of the bungalow. To do this will require even more funds, but once the land is secured, we may well be able to win grant funding for the development work. We've proved that we can buy one bit - now let's press on and raise the dosh for "Stage 2", which Whites have already "earmarked" for us! I'm sure Francis will be writing up details of a new target for this very shortly, so watch this space for a renewed appeal - and please help if you can.



The yellow lines superimposed on this 2002 aerial view looking north-east show the Museum's original boundaries, whilst the red lines show the approximate boundaries of the newly-acquired land. The proposed stage 2 ground is to the west, lining up with the northern side of the new land and stretching to the road. Recent visitors to the Museum will realise how much our surroundings have changed in the past few years! *Photo: Bruce Lake*

..... from **Steve Harrison, Managing Director:**

Following a review, and subsequent changes to the Board structure at the end of January, I have stepped down as Chairman (Graham Bilbé has taken up that rôle) to become Managing Director. My brief is to improve the co-ordination of the various facets of running the Museum.

"My brief is to improve the co-ordination of the various facets of running the Museum"

There has been a lot of work put in by many members over the years and much has been achieved. I aim to apply my practical and commercial skills so as to reinforce the links between departments and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the tasks undertaken.

It has been evident to me for some time now that we need to prioritise the jobs we have outstanding, particularly those in the public areas: it is also very clear to me that as a result of us undertaking some bigish projects over the years that have stretched our resources, the basic fabric of virtually everything you look at is, in one way or another, requiring attention, it all having suffered from a combination of the ravages of the punishing North Lincolnshire elements and unwitting neglect.

Having taken on this new responsibility, Easter showed itself as a crunch-point for getting the first round of essential jobs completed: the Museum HAD to open on time and we were effectively without a car park ! Our intention to revert to using the land next to our new admission building had been seriously frustrated by various factors and consequently just wasn't going to happen; regularly using the Sandtoft Tiles land as in 2007 was neither a possibility nor desirable. So we decided that we would just have to make the best use of our own areas and upgrade the entrance arrangements for visitors. By guiding visitors' cars from our main gate and onto the central grass area by means of new road markings and signs, re-locating the pay booth onto the grass area, hard-coring this "receiving" area and removing many old protruding tree stumps on the perimeter of the centre grass, thereby providing an additional width for parking, we considered that for most open days we could cope - particularly if we also marshalled the cars into the parking spaces. Getting people to pay as they enter the Museum neatly removes a problem we had been having with non-payers. With the unanimous agreement of Board members for the measures, the run-up to Easter was quite hectic ! We have also incorporated a pedestrian walkway to the pay-booth for visitors arriving on buses and coaches.

Another milestone has been the removal of the big eyesore adjacent to the bus station - that big mound of spoil has gone and the hole in the ground has been prepared for concreting. By the time you read this, it should have been done, leaving a small traffic island to be constructed to aid drainage in the area and to protect a traction pole (the one with the frog-pull) that is in the middle of a big area of concrete.

Other tasks that have been completed include, as already mentioned, grinding out those annoying stumps left after felling trees around the centre grass (and elsewhere), dismantling for re-use elsewhere the timber framework erected

adjacent to the workshop frontage and making that area good, and expanding and improving the staff car park near the box wagon.

I would request all working members to use the staff car park on running days and not the public one so as to leave as much room as possible for visitors. The gates to the staff car park have been re-hung, making them much easier to open and close, and the padlock has been changed so that the main gate key also works in this padlock; the entrance has been stoned-up, the ground cleared and levelled and a new fence erected around the enlarged area. So please, no excuses for not using it !

At this point, may I thank everyone who has joined in to get all these (and other) jobs done. We have organised a number of working parties to blitz the necessary work and these have proved most successful, not only in getting the tasks completed, but also in boosting the hitherto flagging morale on site. I know that one or two helpers have travelled considerable distances, so a big thank you also for that. Working parties will continue to be called for in the coming months in between running days.

Perhaps the biggest criticism by visitors to our Museum recently has been the general untidiness and "uncared for" look of the place. This has also been to the fore in an independent report we had carried out last year. We have sorted the more obvious problem areas and to address the remainder, I now intend to tackle different sections of the grounds in turn, starting with the public areas and progressing to "behind the scenes". I think we are all a little untidy at times (me included) and we must recognise that our visitors notice these little (and sometimes big) details. So, watch your e-mails - you will be called upon ! (members who want to help and to know what is going on and when, but who are not yet on our e-mailing list should contact us with a blank email to members-subscribe@sandtoft.org).

Observation of Health and Safety requirements remains an issue and is a big concern: at the AGM in November, I asked those present if anyone thought that H&S didn't apply to Sandtoft or that members were exempt from having to "do" H&S. Nobody said they did, yet we still see breaches of even basic requirements and ignoring of advice given (and it is practical advice) by a professional Health and Safety advisor. **WE MUST GET IT RIGHT.** Quite simply, every job should be risk assessed: if it hasn't, or the risks identified

haven't been addressed (be it altered method of working, use of different equipment and/ or additional personnel, training/ instruction or use of appropriate personal protective equipment), then the job should not go ahead until those matters have been sorted. No "ifs". No "buts". No excuses. **WE MUST GET IT RIGHT.** There will be risk assessment training sessions at the forthcoming

HEALTH & SAFETY:
"No 'ifs'
No 'buts'
No excuses.
WE MUST GET IT
RIGHT"

Volunteers Day on Sunday, 1 June and you are urged to come along to this most valuable training. Meanwhile, if you are in any doubt about health and safety issues, please contact me for advice.

On a lighter note, temporary use is being made of the new admission building. Until such time as it can be commissioned for its intended purpose, my daughter, Becky, has offered to run a sweet/ pop/ ice cream parlour in there and it does seem to make sense for the time being at least. Give it a try! It should boost our catering opportunities if nothing else.

As you will have read already, we have actually managed to buy that land we wanted! Now, after so much discussion, negotiation, moving of boundaries, changes and heartache, we know exactly what is what with it. We can now consider in detail our requirements and how we shall be developing our newly-enlarged Museum premises.

We must not lose sight, though, of the fact that the original museum area required much attention. Our trusty band of site workers are hard pushed to keep up with just the flora and fauna on it during the summer, so working parties will need to continue as we face our new future.

It is your Museum and I hope you are with me in wanting to make it a truly professional outfit, a joy to work at and a joy for the public who visit us.

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

Where should I start? The "closed" season has been far from quiet with a huge, if not unprecedented, amount of activity going on behind the scenes over the winter, not to mention the physical preparation of the Museum for 2008 and beyond. And meanwhile, the financial wheels carry on turning relentlessly.

Quite amazingly, our turnover (admittedly including internal cost transfers) during 2007 was only 1.8% down on that for 2006 (which itself was a record year by a long way for various "one-off" reasons), - and we had a poor middle part of the year visitor-wise due to the appalling weather conditions! The unavoidable cancellation of the 'Gathering lost us around £9,000 which we sorely needed to help our expansion plans: hopefully, this year's 'Gathering will not suffer as a consequence. Part (but not all) of the reason for the continued high turnover was several more vehicle owners paying five-years' worth of their vehicle maintenance contributions in advance: a total of 14 vehicles have now joined this scheme, thereby helping considerably to build up funds to buy and develop that adjoining land.

We have also now received another Gift Aid payment (over £2,800 this time) from HM Revenue and Customs. John Zebedee has worked very hard to get our Gift Aid claim process off the ground, so our thanks go to John for all his efforts. On the subject of Gift Aid, there are still a lot of you who have not yet signed a Gift Aid declaration. It will cost you nothing and we can get an extra 28% of whatever you give (and have given) us, including subscriptions. Our generous Chancellor of the Exchequer has agreed to maintain the tax repayment rate at 28% despite the basic rate of income tax coming down this tax year, so PLEASE help us take advantage of this generosity and get your Gift Aid declaration signed and sent to us - I'm sure you will agree, it is very rare to be able to get something out of the Government! A Gift Aid form is on the reverse of "direct" member subscription renewal forms, and can also be downloaded from our website - or we can send you one in the post, just ask!

So to 2008. An independent report we commissioned in the second half of last year highlighted very many weaknesses in how we present our Museum. This report, coupled with some matters raised through Health and Safety risk assessments, has shown that we need to tidy up our Museum somewhat, both visually and practically. We have also had to make some decisions as to how to operate the Museum on running days in the light of not now being able to use the old airfield concrete areas as we have done previously, and use our own land to the full instead. Hence 2008 is to be a year of consolidation, tidying the place up, re-organising, and completing many unfinished projects. The budget for the year reflects this, with more money being allocated to improving our "estate".

Against this, of course, is the absolutely fantastic news that we have now purchased that elusive land (or at least, the land for phase 1 of our long-term plans). It makes our Museum 30% bigger than it was!

It was in the Spring 2004 edition of *Sandtoft Scene* that we announced our long-term plans for expanding and developing our Museum, and launched our major appeal for funds. The timescale envisaged then has slipped significantly because we were anticipating Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) assistance that in the event proved to be more difficult to achieve than we were led to believe, not helped by changes in HLF policy and requirements (which have altered again recently, mainly because of the Olympics). We, by ourselves, have spent 4 years raising the necessary cash for that land, achieving it not only by donations, many of them extremely generous, but also by sheer hard work to make our Museum and its open days inviting and profitable, and to effect the purchase, by "borrowing" cash from within our accounts that is actually there for other purposes (e.g. spending on specific vehicle restoration projects).

Clearly, it has to be a priority to repay this "borrowed" money. Equally, we now need to look to plan in detail and develop our newly-acquired land: in the short term, part of it will need to become our car park but even that will require money to prepare and then maintain. What I am saying is that our expansion and development appeal efforts have to redouble. I truly hope that this landmark achievement assures you that we CAN realise our goals and inspires more of you to dig deep and help us further on our way. We need to maintain and improve our income stream. I have no doubts that our enthusiastic and energetic staff on open days will continue to strive to make visitors' experience at our Museum enjoyable:

the spend per visitor has visibly gone up, so we need to keep that trend going and the general improvements projected during 2008 should assist with this.

I urge you all, therefore, to keep supporting our expansion and development appeal. Very many thanks to those who have contributed, or are making regular donations; your support is much appreciated. The money given

"2008 is to be a year of consolidation"

"I truly hope that this landmark achievement assures you that we CAN realise our goals and inspires more of you to dig deep to help us further on our way"

or raised for this appeal is "ring fenced" and will not be spent on anything except repaying those "borrowed" funds, further land purchase and development. We have a long way to go yet to pay for and effectively use our new land, so it would be good if many more of you could make affordable regular monthly donations via standing order to this appeal to help make our dreams come true. If you can help in this way, or with "one-off" single-payments, please contact me via the Museum address or by email (see page 2).

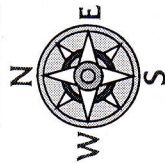
Further thoughts on improving income are to seek commercial sponsorship (e.g. for events or projects or vehicle restoration etc.) in terms of either money or goods/ services, and for paid advertising in the magazine and event programmes (particularly the 'Gathering Programme'). Any other ideas or suggestions for fund raising would be most welcome and myself or Aiden Proctor would be pleased to hear from you or discuss your ideas.

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

Work on our new logo continues with the competition entries having been narrowed down to two strong concepts. We are currently developing the ideas and hope to reveal the new logo soon.

On Sunday 1 June we will once again be holding a Volunteers Day. This is your opportunity to come along and get involved. There is a wide range of tasks undertaken at the Trolleybus Museum and I'm sure there is something for everyone. No matter what your age, skills or talent, we welcome you to get involved. The day starts with tea and coffee (an important part of our working culture!) from 10.00am with a short briefing and introduction session at 10.30, before we get underway at 11.00am. Lunch is also provided, free of charge, to all our new volunteers on the day. Advance booking is requested in order for us to plan the catering and to best allocate resources. Booking can be done on site or via email to aidenproctor@sandtoft.org. Whether you are an aspiring trolleybus conductor; a dab hand with a paintbrush; a whizz on a computer or enjoy doing the gardening, we would like to welcome you to our team.

YOU CAN NOW RECEIVE THE LATEST TROLLEYBUS MUSEUM NEWS AS AND WHEN IT HAPPENS BY JOINING THE TROLLEYBUS MUSEUM MEMBERS EMAIL LIST. SIMPLY SEND A BLANK EMAIL TO MEMBERS-SUBSCRIBE@SANDTOFT.ORG AND YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE ADDED TO THE LIST.



THE ROUTE TO SANDTOFT **THE PRESERVATION OF MAIDSTONE 72 AND 56** **Malcolm Coates**

The news which broke in April 1964 that Maidstone was to abandon its trolleybus system came as a great surprise, if not shock, to many enthusiasts. Kent's county town had long been considered a safe home for electric traction, especially when one considers the purchase of second-hand vehicles in 1959, the route extension of 1963 and the town centre re-routing of 1964.

For myself, it wasn't until after the final ceremonial run in April 1967 that the abandonment finally hit home. No longer would I see those faithful golden ochre and cream vehicles glide up and down the Tonbridge Road. No longer would I see the movement of the overhead wires which always heralded the arrival of a trolleybus. It was with great reluctance that I boarded a replacement Fiesta Blue Leyland Atlantean, as prior to abandonment, one could always let one pass and wait for a trolleybus instead!

In those days I used to walk past the transport depot in Tonbridge Road on the way to work. On the Monday following abandonment, all the trolleybuses were still there, but as the week progressed, their numbers dwindled until, by the end of the week, there was but one left. This, of course, was number 72 which the Borough Council had agreed to retain. For nearly 2 years the vehicle stood at the far end of the depot and could be seen sometimes at peak hours when most of the replacement Atlanteans were in service. In January 1969 the Maidstone Corporation Transport Department moved to new premises in Armstrong Road and 72 was the last vehicle to leave the old tram depot (on 5 January).

For some years I heard little about the trolleybus until I saw it on one occasion cocooned in a large plastic sheet at an open day at the Armstrong Road Depot. The next time I saw it was in 197,7 but I certainly didn't expect to see it from a train window, parked in the open at a council depot in Harrietsham! As I was working away from Maidstone at the time and only in the area because of an interview, I had no idea why it was there. I was very glad to hear some months later that 72 had gone to a museum and that its future seemed safe.

It was only some years later that I learned that the vehicle's future had actually been seriously in doubt. Allegedly, it had been turned out of the Armstrong Road Depot by the then Transport Manager, Alan Price, because of lack of space. Thankfully, an enthusiast, David Hatt, happened to be in the right place at the right time and was able to witness what was going on. With the help of the late Councillor Kenneth Graham, an approach was made to Sandtoft Transport Centre and, after protracted discussions, the outcome was that 72 was moved to the museum premises later in 1977 on long-term loan from Maidstone Borough Council.

For some ten years the trolleybus was a regular runner at the museum, giving rides to the public, apart, that is, from a short period when its resistance banks had to be sent away for rebuilding. In 1981 it was specially decorated with flags and bunting to celebrate the Royal Wedding of HRH Prince Charles and Princess Diana, and again in 1987, this time more elaborately, with appropriately-worded boards and coloured lights to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of its preservation. A coach party from Maidstone travelled to Sandtoft especially to see the decorated vehicle but, alas, were unable to enjoy a ride, since Sandtoft's diesel generator (the source of traction power at the time) had broken down! This same generator somehow managed to produce an excess of electricity shortly afterwards with the result that 72 became "live". As a consequence, the vehicle was withdrawn from use and

moved, to languish in the rear of the depot. Sadly too, it was used as a storage bus, with unwanted seats being dumped in the lower deck.

An attempt was made by a *New Deal* team in the late 1990s to commence restoration of the upper deck, but since the attempt was near-disastrous, the work was thankfully halted. At about the same time, I met David Hatt, quite by chance, on the upper deck of a bus at a trolleybus weekend at the East Anglia Transport Museum. We both agreed that 72 was in urgent need of attention. Following discussions with Francis Whitehead, the Maidstone 72 Restoration Fund was launched in September 2000. Since then a considerable amount of fund raising has taken place. We have been in the advantageous position of having a regular stall at the Maidstone Toy Fairs at no cost to ourselves and similarly at a number of local and national bus rallies. A series of specially-designed Christmas cards by local artist, Brian Cannell, and later, the transport DVD *No Trolleys to Loose* have, in particular, helped to swell funds.

In 2002, with restoration being undertaken by Brian Maguire partially complete (a traction motor overhaul, re-cabling and restoration of the upper saloon), 72 was decorated to mark HM Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee. A temporary livery was applied to the vehicle, with golden lower panels and purple wings - the official Jubilee colours. Boards with appropriate vinyl lettering were fixed to the vehicle between decks with coloured lights top and bottom, and flags, large and small, and red, white, blue and gold bunting gave the vehicle a festive appearance. Brian's efforts did not go unnoticed and 72 was invited to Normanby Hall near Scunthorpe where, on 31 July, the HM the Queen and HRH the Duke of Edinburgh were in attendance for the day as part of the Golden Jubilee tour: quite an honour! We were fortunate in having the expertise of John Bannister who towed 72 to and from Scunthorpe with great care and professionalism.

It was decided to take advantage of 72's decorated state, and use the vehicle for the annual Santa Special weekend in December 2002. During very foggy weather in November, Francis Whitehead replaced the Jubilee vinyls with appropriately worded ones for Christmas. At that time, only 72's upper saloon had been restored and so visitors to the Museum were only permitted upstairs, as had been the case when a coach party from Maidstone visited the Museum earlier in the year. During the following year the lower deck was restored and the vehicle again used in December 2003 as its decorations were still in situ. Restoration of the exterior commenced in 2004 with the stripping down of the temporary livery, but because the work started later than anticipated, there was some anxiety at one stage as to whether the vehicle would be ready for a journey to its home town in May, for the Transport Centenary celebrations. Thanks to the efforts of Brian Maguire and Peter Price the deadline was met, even though the Golden Shred advertisements on the front upper panels were affixed by a friend of Brian's only at the eleventh hour!

72 left Sandtoft for Maidstone on 26 May 2004 looking resplendent and it certainly turned the heads of more than a few motorists! The journey was without incident and we were met by a "welcome-party" of local press, radio

and TV reporters at the Running Horse lay-by which is approximately a mile from Maidstone town centre. The convoy accompanied 72 for the last part of the journey to Armstrong Road Depot where it was garaged for the next three months, courtesy of Arriva, standing in the same spot as it had done many years previously! 72 participated in several local rallies and, of course, the Centenary Run on 14 July, where it was "star of the show"! Neil Yates Recovery, a local firm, undertook the tow to and from Sandtoft and all the local journeys with great care and professionalism, for which we were extremely grateful.

When the trip to Maidstone was being planned several years previously, some local councillors were surprised to discover that 72 was still owned by the Borough Council! A lot of protracted negotiations took place until finally, for the princely sum of £1.00, 72's ownership was transferred to Sandtoft Transport Centre Limited, late in 2006. In a sense, this was a fitting conclusion to a busy and memorable chapter in the vehicle's history.

Continued on page 18

DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

At a Board meeting on 27 January 2008 (the first one since the AGM in November) the structure of the Board and the responsibilities of individual directors were reviewed. As a result, Steve Harrison agreed to step down as Chairman to become Managing Director - a position we have not had for several years now - and Graham Bilbé agreed to become Chairman as well as taking on the new rôle of Engineering Director.

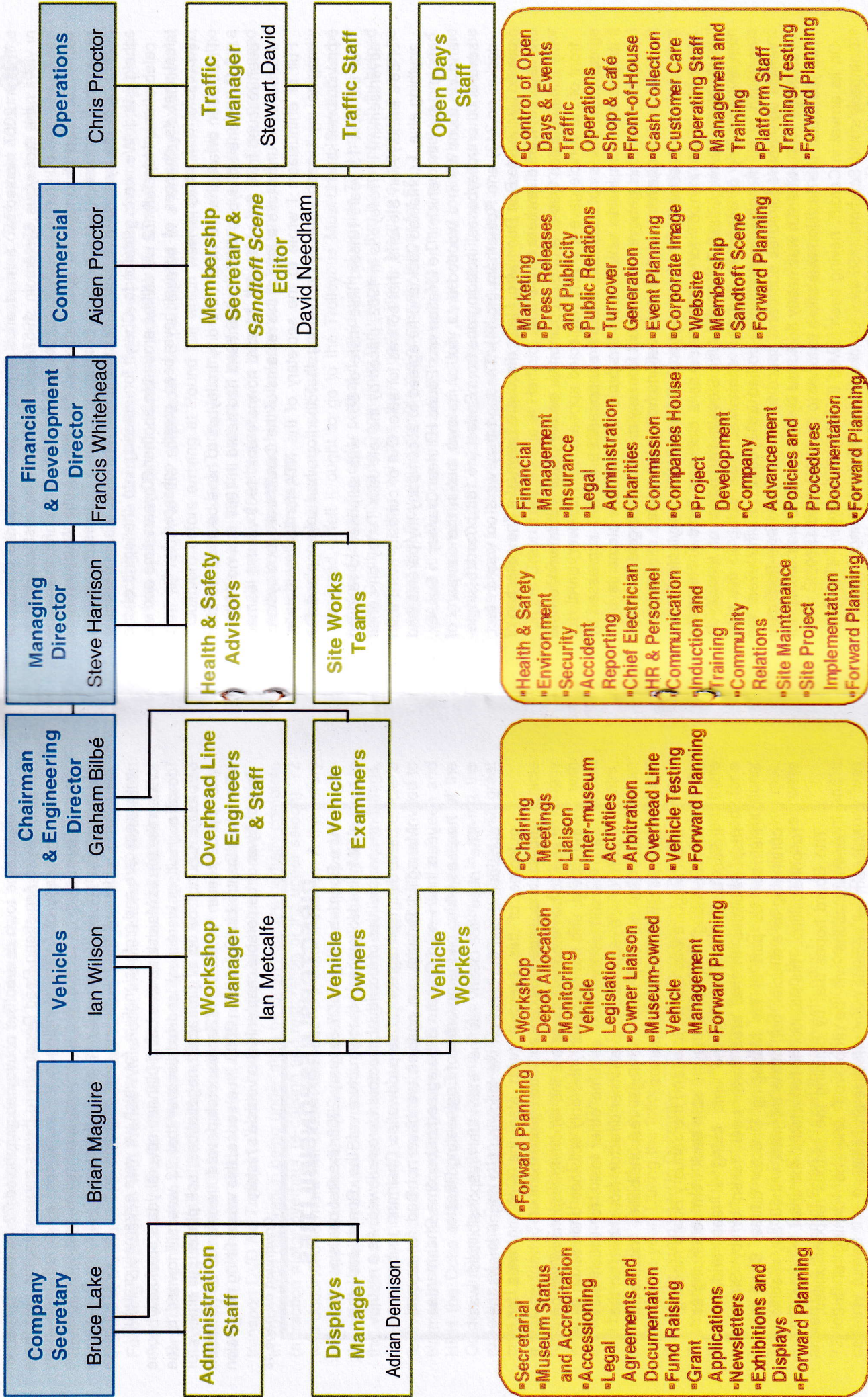
The need to clearly define individual responsibilities was considered and the chart on the following two pages shows the outcome of this exercise (with also the reporting lines for individual managers, officers and other "team members"). It should be noted that these are the *reporting responsibilities* on the Board, and not necessarily the only activities undertaken by each person as they may assume other tasks for which they report, or are responsible, to another director. Not shown on the chart are the corporate and legal responsibilities incumbent upon all directors of all companies.

Brian Maguire was unable to attend the January Board meeting; he has, though requested that he step back from continuing as Infrastructure Director for the time being at least and his responsibilities in that area have been taken on by Steve Harrison as part of his Managing Director duties. Brian is continuing as a director, but, at the moment, without any specific responsibilities. This situation is reflected in the chart.

The Board hopes that by defining the various responsibilities, communications will be improved and the running of the Museum will become more effective and efficient.

The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft

DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES





The Preservation of Maidstone 72 and 56 (continued from page 15)
2007 marked two anniversaries. It was 40 years since the closure of the trolleybus system in 1967 when 72 was the last operational trolleybus and 60 years since 72 entered service in 1947. It was felt that some form of celebration was fitting and Cheryl Crowther at the Museum was commissioned to bake and decorate a celebration cake. The result was very pleasing to the eye with a replica of 72's front, and of course, also pleasing to the taste ! We were grateful to Cheryl for entering into the spirit of the celebrations. Hopefully 72 will still be around in another 60 years time and we feel that its chances of survival have been greatly enhanced by the very successful fund raising project.

I had been aware that 72 wasn't the only trolleybus to have been saved after the Maidstone trolleybus abandonment and had heard in 1967 that no.56 had been rescued from the scrapyard. I heard no more until 1969 when I learned that it was to undertake a tour of the remains of the Cardiff trolleybus system. Full of enthusiasm I wrote to the secretary of the NTA for further details: imagine my disappointment on hearing that the tour had taken place the previous weekend !

For the next 13 years I heard little more of 56. I was surprised to read an advertisement in *Trolleybus* in 1982, placed by the late Jack Turley on behalf of 56's owner, Alan Stevens, that 56 was for sale. Out of curiosity more than anything else, I contacted Jack and he agreed to accompany my parents and me to survey the vehicle. The location was Pound Hill near Crawley in Sussex, and we found 56 in a wooded area, not on its own, but in the company of several other trolleybuses, including one from Belfast (no.168), Cardiff (single-decker no.243) and Rotherham (no.44). The land they were on was, in fact, owned by the late Bert Dunn who, I later discovered, owned a fine collection of vintage vehicles elsewhere on the site.

My initial reaction was one of disappointment as the peeling paintwork on the front of the vehicle gave it a very neglected appearance. However, on closer inspection, it was not as bad as it had first appeared and I was impressed by its fine condition inside which had been protected from the elements by a platform door. This removed much doubt from my mind and I decided to make an offer to Alan Stevens - despite reservations from my parents ! 56 had been rescued from the scrapyard at Quarry Wood, Aylesford, near Maidstone back in 1967 for possible use as a clubroom for the Tunbridge Wells Model Railway. Jack Turley and Alan Stevens had ridden on the vehicle on the last day of operation and had earmarked it as being in the best condition of all the other operating re-bodied trolleybuses. In the event the vehicle was not required as such and space for it was found in a field near Tunbridge Wells where it was neatly enclosed by a fence. This was "home" for two years until the decision was taken to tow it to Cardiff in April 1969. On its arrival in Cardiff, having been towed there by the Maypine Trolleybus Company's red Scammell, 56 was checked over. Whilst nothing was found amiss, it was found to be sluggish in operation. On closer inspection it was

discovered that the top notch had been wired out and so, once it had been restored I understand that, "it went like a bomb !" This would account for the fact that all the re-bodied Sunbeams, viz. nos.54-58, were less than lively in operation than the rest of the Maidstone fleet. Apparently, when they were new in 1943/4, they were too fast when used in conjunction with the pre-war three-axled Ransomes and English Electric trolleybuses and so their power was reduced. I also understand that conductors experienced some difficulty in collecting all the fares because of the close proximity of some stopping places on the system and this modification made their life somewhat easier.

On its return to the south-east, 56 participated in a one-day exhibition at Guildford before arriving at Pound Hill which was to be "home" for the next thirteen years. Jack Turley told me that in the early days, his visits to the vehicle were regular and much care and attention was lavished on it by a small group of enthusiasts who shared the rent, but as time progressed enthusiasm waned and his visits lessened in frequency as he was dependent on others for transport.

Following my discovery that 56 was in much better condition than I originally imagined, I felt it ought to go to the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft to be restored to working order so that it could work alongside 72. I had heard about the South Humberside Community Industry team that had successfully helped to restore other vehicles there under Brian Maguire's leadership and he agreed that they would provide the necessary labour for 56.

Before it could come to Sandtoft, however, Mike Dare's approval was needed. He would not make a decision initially as he wanted to know more about the vehicle's condition. Following my assurance that it was in sound condition he was happy for it to become one of the Museum's collection.

Having agreed to purchase the vehicle, arrangements were made with George at the Green Tree Garage at Hatfield, near Sandtoft to tow it from Pound Hill to Sandtoft and the day previous Jack and I spent several hours preparing it for its journey north.

This was in October 1982 and the weather had been unusually wet. George arrived with a wrecker as planned and proceeded to hitch up to 56. However, it was not long before we realised that things were not going to be straight forward and despite considerable efforts to pull the vehicle out of its parking place, it just would not budge ! We thought that perhaps the handbrake had seized, but in fact this wasn't so: it was thick mud causing the wheels to spin round and round. Suddenly, to everyone's surprise, the jib on the towing vehicle sheered off ! George can't have been best pleased and we all wondered what would happen next. Jack Turley, Brian Maguire and others were there and, thankfully, so was another wrecker driver. I was advised to slip him a fiver whereupon he went and found another wrecker at great speed ! It was with much relief to us all when 56, with Steve Collins at the wheel, was finally pulled clear of the mire and off on its way to Sandtoft, leaves billowing from the roof !

During the next two and a half years 56 was restored by South Humberside Community Industry under the leadership of Brian Maguire. This included tracing

all the 1967 advertisements, stripping down the paintwork and repainting. Surprisingly few panels had to be replaced, although the wooden framework at the front was rotten and had to be replaced. One time-consuming task for myself was the cleaning of the blackened chrome sliding window-surrounds caused by the vehicle's lengthy exposure to the elements, but apart from that and the painting of the window rubbers, most of the remaining jobs were not too onerous. Little mechanical and electrical maintenance was necessary and all 56 required to get it going was a fuse ! I had hoped that it might be launched back into service at the 1984 'Gathering but had to wait a further year because of a number of small, outstanding items that required attention.

It was at the 1985 'Gathering that 56 gave its first passenger ride for 16 years and gained the "Best Service Trolleybus" award. All the hard work had been worth it after all ! Readers will remember that Maidstone's trolleybuses were replaced by Fiesta Blue Leyland Atlanteans and it was perhaps fitting that one of these very vehicles was present at the 1985 'Gathering in a similar blue livery of one of the local bus operators.

Since then, 56 has been a regular runner at the Museum and has had few major problems. As is often the case, problems do not always manifest themselves until vehicles have been back in service for some time. The most significant was the necessary rebuilding of the compressor which cost more to fix than the vehicle cost me to purchase !

Like 72, 56 has had an active retirement. Several visits have been made to the Black Country Living Museum at Dudley for their biennial rallies and I am told that it is a popular vehicle there, being very similar to the museum's resident Wolverhampton Sunbeam. Mention should be made of 56's return to its home town in 1994 to retrace the former system in celebration of the vehicle's 50th birthday and its participation in a rally at the Historic Dockyard at nearby Chatham for the 50th anniversary celebrations of VE Day the following year. Despite having survived the elements well for 13 years during its stay at Pound Hill, exposure has taken its toll and a number of window-rubbers leak in heavy rain. Black from the rubbers also cause unsightly streaks on the vehicle's exterior in wet weather and it is hoped to have the windows re-rubbered when finances permit. Hopefully, this will considerably improve the vehicle's long-term prospects and it will continue to be a runner at the Sandtoft Museum for a good many years yet.

When I wrote to Maidstone Corporation Transport Department early in 1967 and enquired of them the final day of trolleybus operation, I was sent a list of vehicles it would shortly have for disposal, inviting tenders for them. Having only commenced regular employment a few months previous, I was in no position financially to purchase a bus, and, in any case, where would one have stored one in those days ? I gave the matter little second thought, so perhaps was fortunate that the opportunity did not present itself for another 15 years when my circumstances were rather different. Had I been in a position to purchase in 1967, I might have had great difficulty in deciding which vehicle, so must be grateful that the choosing was done for me !

RUNNING DAYS 2008

(Gates open 10.00 – 17.00 unless stated otherwise)

Saturday 24 May	Spring Bank Holiday Trolleydays	
Sunday 25 May	featuring <i>British Trolleybus Society vehicles and</i>	
Monday 26 May	with special events for <i>BTS members "after hours"</i>	Bus
Saturday 7 June	Trolleydays	
Sunday 8 June		
Saturday 21 June	Trolleydays	
Sunday 22 June	exclusively featuring <i>BUT trolleybuses in service</i>	Bus
Saturday 12 July	Huddersfield Weekend	
Sunday 13 July	commemorating 40 years since the end of <i>Huddersfield trolleybuses</i>	Bus
Saturday 26 July	'Gathering Preview (open 11.00 to 22.00)	Bus
	with <i>Real Ale Beer Tent and twilight trolleybus services</i>	
Sunday 27 July	'Gathering 2008 (open 10.00 to 18.00)	Bus
	large selection of <i>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	a variety of <i>visiting emergency vehicles. Fire and Rescue displays and demonstrations throughout each day</i>	Bus
Saturday 23 August	European Weekend	
Sunday 24 August	featuring a selection of <i>continental trolleybuses in service</i>	Bus
Monday 25 August		
Saturday 13 September	Model Weekend	
Sunday 14 September	featuring <i>model trolleybuses, trams and trains and working layouts</i>	Bus
Saturday 27 September	Trolleydays	
Sunday 28 September	6-Wheeler Weekend	
Sunday 19 October	St. Leger Rally	Bus
	<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)	
	with <i>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>	

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. 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.

TROLLEYBUS ANNIVERSARIES

Compiled by Geoff Welburn

April to June

Systems Opened

- 80 years since Hastings opened on 1 April 1928
 - 80 years since Maidstone opened on 1 May 1928
 - 75 years since Bournemouth opened on 13 May 1933
- #### Systems Closed
- 55 years since Notts. and Derbys. closed on 25 April 1953
 - 50 years since St. Helens closed on 30 June 1958
 - 40 years since Belfast closed on 12 May 1968

A DOUBLE 40TH ANNIVERSARY

Doug Barrow. It's hard to believe that it is now 40 years ago since an unusual double event - the commissioning of the United Kingdom's last trolleybus route, and a system tour by a preserved trolleybus which used to operate on one of England's southernmost systems - occurred in the north-east. The system was on Teesside, one of England's smallest ones (yet one of the last remaining), and the preserved trolleybus was Brighton Hove & District no.6340, an AEC 661T, which was unusually operated by a Tilling Company as part of the jointly-operated (with Brighton Corporation) Brighton system which closed on 30 June 1961, the company part of the operation having ceased on 24 March 1959.

For many years the Teesside trolleybus operator ran two trolleybus routes - from North Ormesby (which became part of Middlesbrough County Borough in



Sunday, 31 March 1968, and watched by a small crowd of locals and enthusiasts, and carrying some invited guests, no.3 is about to break a tape (willingly held by some local youngsters!) to inaugurate the new trackless route extension - and Britain's last new trolleybus route - at Fabian Road, Grangetown. The tower wagon is ex-South Shields Corporation and had earlier that morning connected the feeder cables for the new extension and changed no.3's trolleyhead inserts
Photo: Doug Barrow

No.3's official first trip was turned short at Eston Market by a mixture of gravity and pushing to return to Grangetown instead of completing the newly-available journey to Normanby. With the countryside behind it, and an industrial area ahead, it heads along the new extension's wiring, through the still under-construction new housing estate

Seen on a test run on 30 March, followed by a TRTB Sunbeam, BH&D 6340 climbs away from the low-height bridge beneath the Bolckow Vaughan Private Railway at Bolckow Road (named after the one-time owners of the steel works - taken over by Dorman Long in 1929), Grangetown. Note the overhead under the bridge is slewed well to the left to give better clearance

With booms at full stretch, 6340 carefully negotiates the tight turning circle at North Ormesby terminus during its test run. There was a skate on the overhead to hold the traffic lights at red while a trolleybus undertook the turn, but it seems as if the skate wasn't working on this occasion because a car has been driven into the turning space

During the tour on Sunday, 31 March 1968, BH&D 6340 used as much of the system wiring as possible - including the east-to-south left-hand turn from the Grangetown direction and normally used at peak hours, at South Bank (Bennett's Corner) onto the wiring towards Normanby

All photos this page: Doug Barrow



1913), to Grange town and to Normanby (two residential areas to the east of Middlesbrough) - as well as various motorbus routes. The UK's last trolleybus route was an extension, via the suburb of Eston, to link the Grange town and Normanby termini and thus provide a direct link between these termini (as well as a trolleybus service for Eston) and making even more effective use of vehicles and crews on this busy little system.

The Tees-side Railless Traction Board (the hyphen was used by the Board) took over the system from the private sector and the first trolleybus operated in 1919: this municipal joint board was administered by Middlesbrough County Borough (one-third share) and the Eston Urban District Council (two-thirds share). I acknowledge this information contained in the excellent and recommended book *Tees-side Trolleybuses* by Stephen Lockwood and published by Middleton Press (obtainable from Sandtoft's *Trolleyshop*, price £14.95, post and packing £2.50 extra). This well-illustrated book relates the system's development and history, and has supplemented my own recollections and notes from when the system was operating.

There was a deadline for the route extension to become operational as the TRTB trolleybus and bus services were to be merged with those of Middlesbrough and Stockton Corporations as part of the new Teesside Municipal Transport (no hyphen) organisation which was being created with effect from 1 April 1968 - the date on which the new Teesside County Borough Council would take over the provision of the area's local government services. The TRTB opened the route extension, with one day left (!), on 31 March 1968 and I well remember being there to see it happen. In the event, the route extension lasted until 1971, when the trolleybus operation (a small part of the large TMT organisation) ceased. Brighton Hove & District 6340's tour of the trolleybus system also took place on the last day of the Tees-side Railless Traction Board's existence.

VEHICLES REPORTS

Bournemouth 297 will be returning to its home town shortly as its owners (Bournemouth Passenger Transport Association Limited) want to use it at an anniversary event later in the year. It may operate for the last time at the May Day weekend Extravaganza, but its use in passenger-carrying service depends on some seat squabs arriving to replace the defective ones it has on board at the moment. Alternatively, it may be used for demonstration runs only.

Cleethorpes 54: (report from *Andy Fieldsend*) 54 is now fully in its planned livery of dark blue with three light blue bands and light blue roof for the first time since about 1950. However, for the most part, this is only "intercoat" and the application of further coats of paint is continuing. There has been no progress on the long-planned electrical inspection.

St. Helens 387: (report from *Geoff Sandford*) Nothing much has been done to 387 over the winter months with the exception of new rear tyres being fitted, thanks to the Sandtoft team. Behind the scenes, fundraising from sales of the South Lancs. & St. Helens trolleybus DVD (see review page 31) have continued.

This year 387 is going "home" for a short break to her old depot. The Sandtoft Board have agreed to loan the vehicle to the North West Museum of Road Transport in Hall Street, St. Helens to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the closure of the system. 387 should be at St. Helens by the end of April at the latest and is scheduled to return to Sandtoft in October. The trolleybus will be on display in the museum throughout the stay and on Sunday, 29 June there is a special event from 11.00am to 4.00pm when two St. Helens motorbuses will be operating free rides to museum visitors along the Prescott/Rainhill circular. 30 June 1958 was the last day of service operation for the trolleybuses and no.387 will be the main attraction with maximum publicity being given in the press and on local radio and, hopefully, television as well. It will be the first time 387 has been "home" for 38 years!

The purpose of the visit is twofold, as it is intended to raise awareness in the town that 387 exists and the museum members (me !) will be attempting to raise more funds for 387's ongoing restoration. Here is a chance - and it could be your last - to photograph 387 in its home depot, so please do come along and visit. More information is on the North West Museum of Road Transport website, www.hallstreetdepot.com. The visit will also give me a chance to do more work on the platform area and I have been told some members may assist me to get 387 presentable for the main event. I wonder.....

Nottingham 493: (report from Andy Thornton) "Winter" is now my time off from the Museum. After getting wet and cold whilst seeing Santa, my next visit was in early March to inspect the work done last year (it is standing up well); and then clean the interior. Happily, 493 is available for service for the 2008 season. A lot of time has been put into planning and material lists/ purchase for future jobs. I will try to resist temptations to indulge in large-scale dismantling (for a while at least) but do not be surprised to see works being carried out on days that it is not in service!

Nottingham 506 & 137: (report from *David Needham*) Very little to report due to a very busy work load at home over the last few months which has meant that I have not been able to do any more to the seats. At least three seat covers need attention before 506 can run again in service at the Museum.

Bradford 558: (report from *Geoff Welburn*) Further work enabled the repairs to be completed on the upper deck floor. New aluminium beading has been fitted around the front destination and number box doors. The offside-front window pan has also been fitted, along with five exterior panels.

"The Preston (BCK 939): (report from *Geoff Welburn*) The former Museum tow truck passed briefly into Geoff Welburn's ownership during January, being purchased as a source of spares for Bradford 558.

During this period, as many items were removed as possible. Assistance was given by Ian Metcalfe to remove the more difficult parts. "The Preston" was collected by PVS of Barnsley on Wednesday, 19 March 2008, leaving the Museum at 11.10am. Part of the radiator, complete with the registration number will be retained. It is intended that this will be given to the Museum as reminder of all the work this vehicle did for Sandtoft.

Teesside 2 has gone to A Wilson's (the haulage company across the road from the Museum) to have some restoration work carried out. When this work is completed it will be moved on to a new home where restoration will continue. It is not anticipated that it will return to Sandtoft in the foreseeable future.

Doncaster 22: A new stainless steel exhaust pipe has been fitted and the silencer repaired.

Felix 41: The radiator has been removed for repair and refurbishment.

Sheffield 754: A new set of batteries has been fitted.

Bradford 034 (EKY 594 - the Karrier tower wagon): We have agreed a short-term loan with the South Yorkshire Bus Museum (based at Rotherham) of the gearwheel & pinion that operates the tower platform: this is to allow copies to be made to complete the restoration of SYBM's ex-Rotherham Bedford tower wagon which has a similar tower.

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS

TRAFFIC OFFICE

Please be reminded that all members who currently drive trolleybuses, motorbuses and/ or ancillary vehicles under the Company's fleet insurance policy, are required to produce their driving licence for audit by the Traffic Manager. Thanking you, in advance for your co-operation.

Forthcoming Events: We have two major events planned during May. Firstly the *Trolleybus Extravaganza* event over the May Day Bank Holiday weekend, where it is planned to operate the largest ever selection of trolleybuses ever run at the Museum - not all at the same time, though - and the British Trolleybus Society event to be held over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend, during which we hope to operate all the serviceable BTS-owned trolleybuses.

A lot of hard work is going to be required of staff to prepare for these events. If you can help in any way, please let me know:- traffic@sandtoft.org.

AT THE TRAM STOP

In the middle of 2006, Sandtoft received a mail-shot from Hampshire County Council in respect of a new scheme funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The latter had agreed that heritage skills in the museums sector were in decline and that they needed to be passed on so that they did not die out. They had therefore set up a scheme to match suitable museum personnel with appropriate museums so that staff could be trained or developed in skills which would be of use to them and their museum. Hampshire County Council had been appointed to administer the scheme, which had been dubbed IMATT, or skills in Industrial, Maritime, Aviation & Transport Technologies.

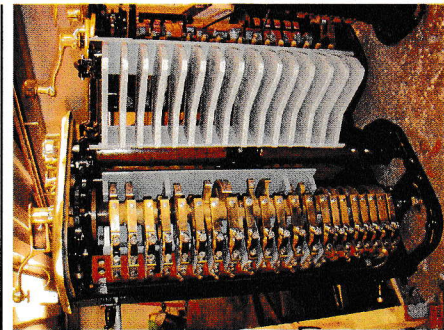
After some consideration, and the fact that I was not fully employed at the time, I decided to try an application. The funding was to be provided to the candidate as a tax-free bursary designed to defray the cost of living and working in their placement. The procedure was to assess the candidate to check suitability and then find a placement which would provide the appropriate training. I passed the first hurdle fairly quickly, and was then waiting for a suitable opening. This should have happened within a few

months, and suggestions were that this could involve some time at Bradford Industrial Museum (which sounded particularly convenient for me, based in Huddersfield). Placements were to be made in 3-month blocks, with a report at the end of each 3 months triggering a review to determine acceptance for a further period; the maximum allowed would be two years. Weeks came and went, and enquiries revealed little progress. Eventually I gave up asking and forgot about it.

Then, in the summer of 2007, I came across an advert for further candidates. I decided to establish contact again and see if there had been any developments. I was told that I was still on the books, but the Industrial Museum could not provide 3 months of continuous work, let alone the supervision and training that was required by the scheme. However, it was likely that Crich Tramway Museum would be coming on stream in the near future, and this could well be a suitable placement. I was disappointed that this would involve considerably more travelling than Bradford, of course, but as I was still only doing part-time work I decided to see how the proposal would pan out. I went for an interview at Crich in September: my declared interests were in expanding skills in DC traction, vehicle restoration and associated documentation. Crich decided that they could provide all these, and I was very impressed with the workshop facilities on site there and discovered that they had lodging facilities in the form of a house which would minimise the cost of being there. All three parties involved therefore agreed to go ahead, and my placement would commence sometime in the New Year, to coincide with the commissioning of the tram fleet for the 2008 season, while allowing time to assist in winter restoration projects.

I duly turned up on 21 January and at the time of writing I am just over two-thirds of the way through the agreed 3-month spell. Crich have a mix of paid staff and volunteers, which seems to work surprisingly well. Some staff work annualised hours, and so do two or three days per week in the off-season, but have to do 6-day weeks in the summer. This does not apply to the workshop - their staff do five days a week all year, with the occasional duties on a weekend being dealt with by days off in lieu. They have a permanent workshop manager, electrical fitter, mechanical fitter, joiner and painter. In addition, volunteers turn up on most days and, of course, have a mixture of skills, and they have to fit in to whatever is required to be done on their particular day. As you may know, Crich own all their vehicles, so the Board decide on what is to be restored or commissioned for operation and volunteers cannot do whatever happens to take their fancy.

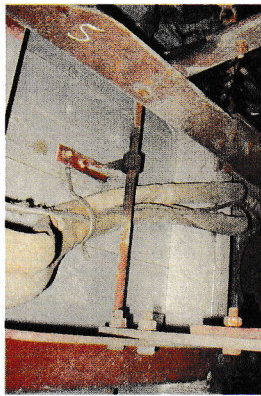
After induction to the dangers of the workshop - open pits, working on gantries, overhead crane, 600 volts, machine tools etc. - I soon settled in with the electrical chap. His job is to electrically commission trams at the start of the season as well as perform the regular six-working-day checks on trams as required, and in between fill in with larger restoration projects, breakdown repairs or other electrical work. After being shown commissioning, and reconditioning some circuit breakers for use on future restorations, it wasn't long before I



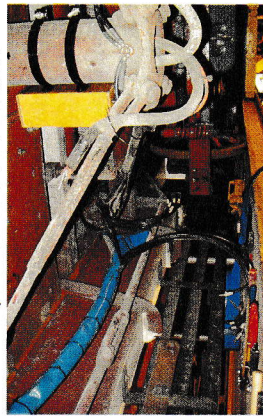
The B510 controller for Cardiff 131 after complete overhaul.

was given the larger project of completely overhauling one of the controllers to be fitted to Cardiff 131, a water carrier/ grinding car being rebuilt from the ground up. This was very useful, as it gave me considerable insight into how trams work, as an understanding of the electrical systems is required to be able to strip and rebuild a controller. It also provided me with the understanding of the fundamental differences between the electrics of a tram and a trolleybus. Later on it was planned I would be involved with the fitting of the controllers to the car, and wiring them up. However, that wouldn't be for a while, so they had another project in line for me. This was to completely rewire Blackpool open toast-rack 166, which had been cosmetically restored a few years ago, but now the old HT wiring had been condemned.

The filthy job of ripping out the old wiring harnesses was like wrestling with angry anacondas (I kid you not), but finally they lay dead on the ground at the side of 166. Tram wiring is complicated by the identical controllers at each end and the two or four motors (166 has two): this results in lots of cabling from end to end - the motors and the resistors have to have cables to both controllers. We had marked everything up before commencing the reptilian battles, so it was then a matter of making up new cables and threading them. Right? Well, no, actually. The techniques used when the original wiring was run are no longer acceptable. For example, connections requiring routing to both ends had a "T" joint in the cable part way along the tram - definitely not to be repeated. Therefore a number of junction boxes had to be designed and made to accommodate the connections. This also resulted in the cable routing being different while still performing the same action. At the time of writing, all the cables have been run, the resistors and motor connections made: it just needs the controllers refitting and wiring in -



Dreadful hessian-covered cable harnesses under Blackpool 166 before work started



New cable harnesses being installed under the centre of 166 - the cables running out of the harness are destined to be connected to the resistors just visible behind the trolley mast supporting spar via a new junction box

All photos this page: Bruce Lake



Toast-rack 166 with a trolley-load of cut-up cables in the fore Photo: Bruce Lake

here's hoping it all works when we come to test it!

In between, I have been commissioning trams - the controllers are, of course, new to me, but the circuit breakers and traction lighting are familiar - as well as sorting out some electrical failures. I am also gathering together copies of all the appropriate risk assessments and other documentation so that we may use them in preparing/upgrading Sandtoft's documentation - it's always easier if you have a starting point, rather than trying to dream it all up from scratch. I have also been passed to drive under workshop supervision - all workshop staff have to be able to go and recover broken-down trams if necessary. In addition, I am being trained in the theories of DC traction for both trams and trolleybuses - which requires me to dredge up my long-buried knowledge of DC motors, inductance, arcs, coils and magnetic principles.... All in all, the placement has been very successful - Crich will have had three months work out of me, I will have learned much about electrical restoration and Sandtoft will gain a step change in risk assessment, amongst other documentation, from a similar operation which is ahead of us.

The scheme is still going, and is looking for further candidates to keep the funding flowing. If you would like to investigate your eligibility and would consider applying for a similar placement, then take a look at <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/museum/fmatt.htm>.

My thanks go to the Crich Workshop Team, who had to figure out how to offer such a placement, took a gamble that it could be done, and have made it work very successfully.

Be aware that you will need to be a worker or volunteer at an operational museum (like Sandtoft), require training in a suitable discipline or disciplines (which don't have to be technical), and also be prepared to devote at least three months solid to doing it, possibly away from home if the placement isn't nearby. If you can, the benefits can be substantial to yourself, Sandtoft and the museum movement in general.

NEWS FROM OTHER MUSEUMS

Carlton Colville

from David Lawrence

Work has taken place over the winter on the new "back road" extension. The road surface is in place and overhead wiring is now being erected. The extension will, when completed, have trolleybus operation in both directions and include a lay-by which will be very useful at event weekends. It will allow a vehicle change-over to be completed more quickly in comparison to the current method using the lay-by opposite the trolleybus depot.

In terms of vehicle restoration, it has been rather quiet with most efforts going into site infrastructure and the new back road. Work will soon start on Ashton 87. A repaint of, and the replacement of window rubbers on Bourne mouth 286 should take place during the season. The vehicles ready for use at the start of the 2008 season are Maidstone 52, Manchester 1344, London 1521 and Bourne mouth 202. A European vehicle will hopefully be in operation too - probably Solingen 1, which is always very popular with visitors.

Elsewhere around the site, routine maintenance work has been taking place on the tram fleet and restoration work continues on Great Yarmouth Corporation AEC Reliance/ Pennine no.85.

Black Country Museum

from Keith Hopkinson
The operation of trolleybuses has continued throughout the year and is proving very popular with the visiting public.

Yet again, the time of year has arrived for annual recertification of vehicles, and the team have been crawling all over and under each one in turn, to make sure they comply to the standards required, both electrically and mechanically. One or two things have manifested themselves which will need rectification, and these problems will be dealt with on an ongoing basis.

Wolverhampton 433: Work on the renewal of the platform woodwork and rubber edging continues, and a new centre pole has been fabricated. Along with some handrails and steering wheels from other vehicles, it now needs to be sent off for re-covering in suitable material to comply with regulations.

Teesside T291: Work continues on the upper deck interior: it is now at the stage where the little "bits and bobs" are being dealt with, but sometimes these can be more time-consuming than is imagined!

REVIEWS



BOOK – Double-Deck Trolleybuses of The World Beyond The British Isles

Written by *Brian Patton*

Published by *Adam Gordon*

£16.00

(Postage £3.50)

Did you know that a total of 861 double-decker trolleybuses have operated beyond the British Isles?

Although I was aware of double-decker trolleybus operation in parts of the former Commonwealth (Australia, Malaya, South Africa and Ceylon [now Sri Lanka]) - and more recently the trolleybus which was demonstrated in Hong Kong - the only other double-decker trolleybus operations which came to mind were the several Spanish systems using former London Transport Q1s and the Lancia trolleybuses in the Porto (Portugal) fleet. In Germany, four systems (Aachen, Hildesheim, Osnabrück and Wuppertal) operated distinctive 1½-deckers which weren't double-deckers of the "traditional" type but had a double-decker section at the rear of the vehicle.

I was interested to discover, from this well-researched book that 12 double-decker trolleybuses had operated in Moscow and to see photographs of them. The prototype was an AEC 664T model (with a British-made body) which arrived at Severnyi - Moscow's northern river port - on 6 July 1937. Following the AEC vehicle's successful operation (an AEC 664T single-decker had also been acquired and is featured in one of the book's photographs) an order was placed locally for 11 similar trolleybuses with Russian chassis and bodies (the trolleybuses were classified Jatb-3, and the final vehicle was delivered in October 1939). The last three Jatb-3's were withdrawn in 1953 (the AEC double-decker had been withdrawn in 1948), and one of the Russian-made trolleybuses survived until 1960 as a depot store.

Other surprises in the book were a documented mention of a possible purchase of some London Q1s for Bangkok (Thailand), a double-deck tractor-trailer unit which operated in the former East Berlin between 1955 and 1972, and 5 double-decker Henschel trolleybuses operated in Harburg (part of Hamburg) from 1953 to 1956. The 5 Harburg vehicles were sold to Erfurt, in the then DDR (or East Germany), working there - in single-deck configuration - from 1957 until the Erfurt system was abandoned in 1975. Germany's 1½-deckers are also featured in the book, and there are internal and external views of Aachen 22 in preservation at Sandtoft (the external view shows no.22 posed alongside Doncaster 375).

There are over 170 black-and-white photographs in this A4-size 96-page book, including Porto 140 in operation at Sandtoft, and ex-London 1812 in service in Santander as Santander-Astillero no.8 and, after returning to England, on display at Sandtoft before being restored to London condition. Five colour photographs (one on the front cover and four on the back cover) complement the excellent selection of black-and-white photographs and the very informative text.

This fine book is a limited edition of 700 copies (and is the companion to a limited-edition book about double-decker tramcars) published around two years ago and is already difficult to find. The *Trolleyshop* at Sandtoft has currently sold out and is trying to locate a further supply of them. I am happy to recommend the book to readers of *Sandttoft Scene*, but do check if the *Trolleyshop* can supply you first before looking elsewhere for your copy.

Doug Barrow



DVD – Trolleybuses of South Lancashire and St. Helens

Published by *Online Video in co-operation with the St. Helens Trolleybus & Transport Society*

£18.00

(Postage £1.00)

As 2008 marks the 50th anniversary of the South Lancashire and the St. Helens trolleybus operations closing, this issue of *Sandttoft Scene* is the appropriate one to review this interesting DVD programme. The St. Helens (municipally-operated) system closed on 30 June 1958, whilst the South

Lancashire (company-operated) system closed on 31 August. The South Lancashire Transport Company Limited ceased to exist at midnight on 31 August 1958, and when the ceremonial SLT Last Trolleybus ran the following day (motorbuses had taken over the services) it was the only occasion on which the Company's successor - Lancashire United Transport - ever operated a trolleybus.

This DVD programme records the extant reminders of the two operators' existence (one building on the site of the former power station in St. Helens, and several sub-stations) then introduces the only remaining St. Helens trolleybus (no.387, one of several sold to Bradford for further operation when the St. Helens system closed) in operation at Sandtoft in the Museum's earlier days; sadly no SLT trolleybuses survived into the preservation era.

Although the St. Helens Corporation services operated within the borough boundary, corporation trolleybuses could be seen as far east as Atherton, as the 14-mile route between St. Helens and Atherton was jointly operated by the two undertakings (SLT having running powers into St. Helens). The SLT routes served industrial South Lancashire with termini in Bolton, Farnworth and Leigh. The development of these two systems, starting with the corporation one, is explained by useful maps, diagrams and photographs plus cine film, and details of the vehicles in both fleets. It is interesting to note the use of lowbridge-bodied trolleybuses on some early corporation routes which had to pass under low railway bridges (later trolleybus builds included highbridge-bodied vehicles). Four of the SLT trolleybuses were owned by Bolton Corporation, and they were returned to that Corporation when the Bolton route ceased trolleybus operation.

Two of several trolleybuses tested under the SLT's overhead in the years up to 1957 - thanks to the close proximity of the system to the Leyland factory - are seen: one of these was destined for Colombo, and the other was the unique twin-steering trolleybus (no.1671 in the London Transport fleet).

The first St. Helens Corporation trolleybus route closure took place in 1952, and in 1955 the South Lancashire Transport Company announced plans to close its 35 miles network.

Some of the ciné film is in black-and-white but much is in colour, and the programme provides a valuable record of these two systems, whilst also showing the towns and street scenes. It is an excellent companion to the books *St. Helens Trolleybuses* (about the corporation's system) and *A Trolleybus to the Punch Bowl* (the SLT system), and all three are available through the *Trolleyshop* at Sandtoft.

Doug Barrow

And finally **SANDTOFT GATHERING 2008**

YES, 'Gathering is less than three months away! Plans are well in hand for this year's event on 27 July and, of course, it needs you, the members, to come along and staff it. **Just a couple of hours would help!** Please volunteer your services **NOW** by contacting Chris Proctor (details page 2)