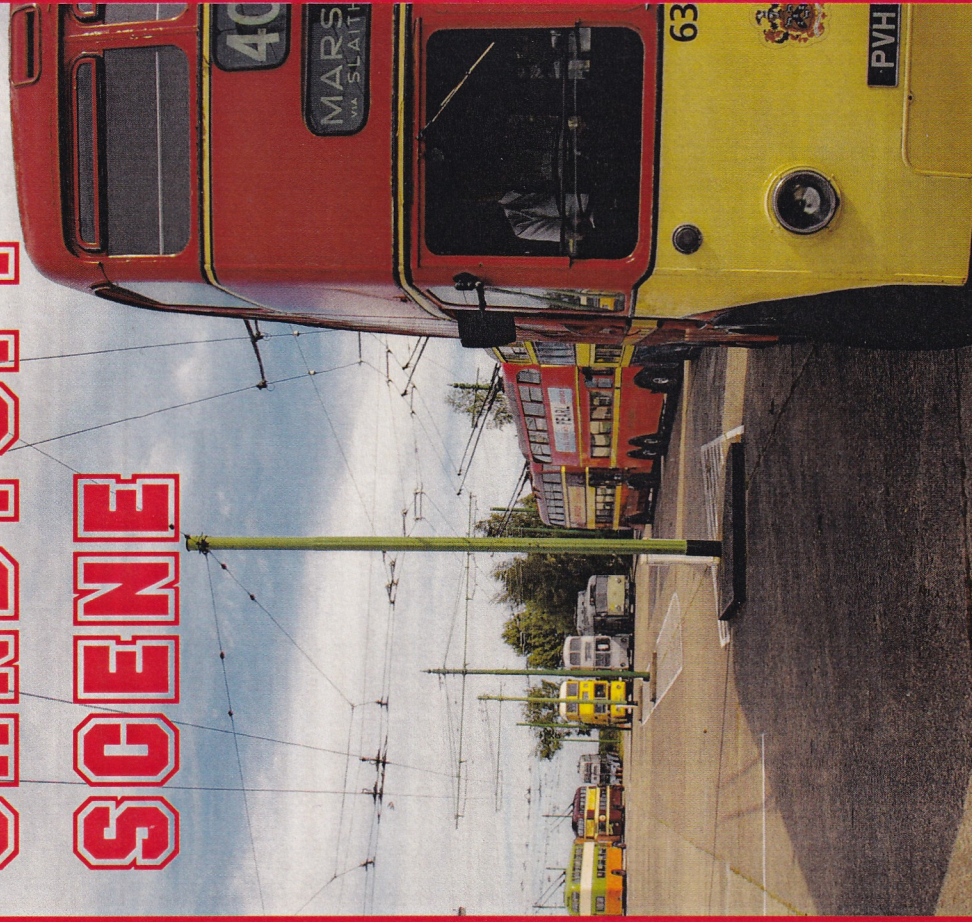


SANDTOFT SCENE



NUMBER 70

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THE TROLLEYBUS MUSEUM
AT SANDTOFT'S MAGAZINE



The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft

SANDTOFT TRANSPORT CENTRE LIMITED

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Give As You Earn Reference: 000495640

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Correspondence should be addressed to the Director responsible for the relevant area of operation, or to the Managing Director. As necessary, letters/ emails will be forwarded to the appropriate person. A SAE for a reply is always appreciated.

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We reserve the right to alter or amend text to suit the style of *Sandtoft Scene* or the content of a particular edition. The content of individual items and articles represent the opinions of the individual contributors: they are not necessarily the opinions or policies of Sandtoft Transport Centre Limited, its Directors or its members.

FRONT COVER PICTURE:

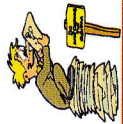
Spring Bank Holiday weekend saw all the operational trolleybuses from the British Trolleybus Society's "fleet" (together with the late Mike Dare's Reading no.144) running and other trolleybuses from their collection on display *Photo: Dave Shepherd*

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



On 25 April 2008, a number of Sandtoft directors and managers were invited guests at the National Tramway Museum at Crich. Coinciding with the end of Bruce Lake's placement at Crich, an opportunity was offered for them to take a look behind the scenes, particularly the very well organised engineering department. This was followed by a look around the museum and collection of tramcars and memorabilia. There was also the chance for everyone to drive a tram. The photograph shows 1936-built Liverpool no.869 being driven by our Chairman, Graham Bilbé. Our thanks go to John Shawcross, Crich's director with responsibility for engineering, and all the people at Crich for their patience, time and consideration during this visit.



In this edition, our *Route to Sandtoft* again returns to Plumtree: the year is 1970 and we learn about the first 'bus in their collection that makes the journey to what is now North Lincolnshire. Also we have an article from Mr. Sambrooks Senior that was originally published in the DO&LRS magazine *Fleetlines* many years ago. My thanks go to Jim Sambrooks for reviewing the text and letting us use it in *Sandtoft Scene*.

Doug Barrow continues his DVD and book reviews, this time it is the Huddersfield Trolleybus DVD and the book *Trams and Trolleybuses in Doncaster*.

And finally, I don't have anything to print under the heading of *At the Bus Stop*, and no reports on any of the open days. I am always looking for reports on open days and any interesting information that can be shared with the Museum members. A lot of members must have their own story about our hobby, so why not jot the details down and give, send or email them to me.

David Needham

AROUND THE BOARD

..... from **Graham Bilbé, Chairman and Engineering Director:**

Well, after the mad rush around Easter to get the land deal concluded, you'd think things would quieten down, wouldn't you ? But, at Sandtoft there's always plenty to do, although the results aren't always immediately obvious !

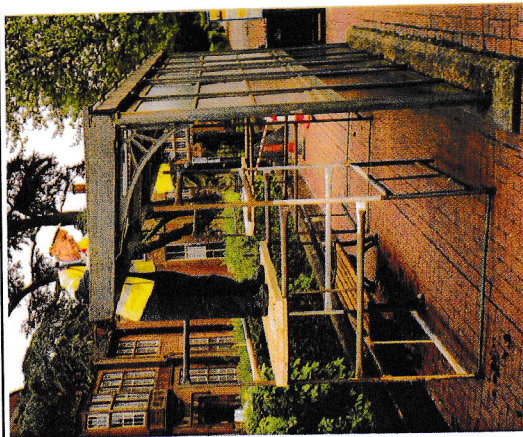
One little project that some of us embarked on recently was responding to an offer of a splendid cast iron bus shelter, almost certainly dating from the 1930s, and possibly even earlier. Lichfield City Council had decided that it was time to replace it with something more up-to-date, but, recognising its venerability, Councillor Tony Thompson, through the City Council's Outside

Services Officer, Jane Clement, tried desperately for some weeks to find a museum to rescue it. Surprisingly, all of the museums around Birmingham turned it down, and it was the Birmingham & Midland Motor Omnibus Trust at Wythall who alerted us (interestingly, on 1 April....). Seeing photos of it in-situ in The Priory, right in the centre of Lichfield, it looked so "right" and "at home" there; it seemed a shame to uproot it, but needs must!

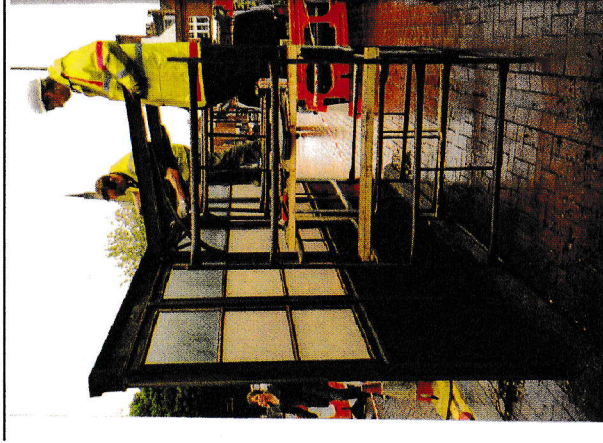
After a preliminary "recoé" by Tim Stubbs, who forwarded some excellent detail photographs so that we could consider the project in more detail, we decided to go ahead and we agreed arrangements with the city council. With insurance arranged, Francis Whitehead, my brother Richard, and myself set off in "me van" for Staffordshire on Thursday evening, 15 May, arriving in time to examine the shelter in detail before the light went, find a chippy, and move on to our Travelodge for the night. We also just managed to squeeze in a couple of pints at the local while we discussed the plan of attack for the morning!

On the Friday we arrived on site about 8.45am to find that, as promised, the council's contractor, McCarthy Bros., had already coned off the area round the shelter for us (and as the day wore on, they called round a couple of times to see how things were progressing: maybe they thought they'd have to clear up after a load of "failed amateurs", but, then, they wouldn't have known they were dealing with a gang already highly experienced in Traction Pole Extraction!) We set up some tower scaffolding and quickly removed the wired glass roof panels, all of which were cracked to a greater or lesser degree - these would need to be replaced for Sandtoft use in any case. We then took out the sub-frame which supported the glasses, then attacked the bolts holding on the main roof frame (which had already been given a good dose of easing squirt, of course...)

Jane Clement dropped by to see that all was going to plan and the work was interrupted a couple of times for press photographers (tipped off by Jane), and to be interviewed with Councillor Tony Thompson, who seemed delighted that the old shelter was going to a good home; Jane has subsequently sent us the press cuttings!



All photos: Graham Bilbé



Having lifted off the roof frame, we then set to remove the lovely, but rather delicate, cast iron support brackets - one had an existing crack, but I'm pleased to say that we got them all off intact. Perhaps the heaviest part was next, lifting down the 6" channel section that runs along the top of the six uprights - this is HEAVY! Finally, for our part, we then had to loosen (a time-consuming exercise!) and slide upwards and out, the five window panels so that they could be safely stowed for transport. When McCarthy Bros returned just before 5pm, all that was left to do, as had been planned, was for them to break out the concrete around the six uprights and five lower panels (all cast iron). We were just sweeping up when they arrived - I think they were suitably impressed with our handiwork (and done on time too!). McCarthy Bros loaded away the parts we had dismantled to their yard to await collection and completed the "demolition" (that turned out to be a very hard, reinforced concrete slab) on the following Monday.

As we worked, many passers-by stopped to talk to us and all were sorry to see their old shelter going, but pleased it was to have a future at a museum. One lady told us that it had been there at least 55 years, whilst another chap was adamant that it was installed by Walsall Corporation when their Walsall - Lichfield bus service was commenced, so it could even have a tentative trolleybus connection! Of course, it will take a little while to clean up all the parts ready for re-erection, but the site team at Sandtoft were very enthusiastic about it when they saw the pictures (slightly less so when they felt the weight when it arrived at Sandtoft on 20 June!)

A big thank-you to Tim Stubbs for the advance work, McCarthy Bros. for their sympathetic help and for storing the bits until transport to Sandtoft became available, A. E. Wilson (Transport) Ltd. for fetching the "kit of parts" for us, and, of course, to Lichfield City Council for their kind donation.

At the June Board Meeting I agreed to chair the Health and Safety Working Group to progress the review of our risk assessments, and it is hoped that a preliminary meeting of the key players can be held before the end of July. One real benefit for us out of Bruce Lake's HLF-funded sojourn at the National Tramway Museum at Crich is a set of their workshop risk assessments, which will be a great help in reviewing and upgrading our own. Progress has been slow on the forthcoming Traffic Department H&S guide, and the publication of



Sandtoft Scene

this will now almost certainly accompany an update of the general Staff Handbook. If you haven't received a Staff Handbook yet and would like one, please see Stewart David (on site most running days) or contact Francis Whitehead. These are intended primarily for those working at the Museum, but any Sandtoft member is entitled to one.

One important item that has developed since the Staff Handbook was produced (April 2007) is site security, particularly in relation to Gefco's compound behind our premises. They have 24-hour security presence, and generally their staff help keep an eye on our site too - a real benefit to us. So, if you happen to arrive at the Museum at an odd time and are challenged by Gefco's security staff, PLEASE be civil to them, be prepared to explain your "business" at the Museum and produce your membership card (or some other identification). Remember, with so many metal thieves around at the moment, Gefco's men are providing us with a valuable service, and it's in our interests to keep them "on side". Thank you for your co-operation.

What else must I tell you about? Ah! The BTS weekend at the end of May... This all seemed to go off rather well, with the BTS fleet to the fore, and including special runs of Aachen 22 for members on the Saturday and Sunday evenings. Dave Hall put together an interesting presentation on the history of the BTS - all those wonderful tours in the '60s, which, sadly, I was just too young to be involved in! Sunday saw the "main events" - the unveiling of Maria Theresa Harvey's splendid oil painting portrait of Mike Dare, commissioned by the BTS as part of their memorial to Mike. The BTS committee asked Maria to include Beryl Dare in the painting, and Reading 113 in the background - the trolleybus that started it all, and the other half of the brilliant team that were always "Mike and Beryl"! I'm sure Mike would have been first to agree that he couldn't have done half of what he did without the wholehearted support of dear Beryl. It was a great pleasure to have her present for the unveiling, which was kindly performed by Sandtoft President J. Stanley King. (The portrait is hung in the Pelham Building which should now be open for visitors on a regular basis - do make a point of having a look, Maria has done a splendid job!) After the unveiling, the whole group present were invited to take a ride on Reading 144, probably Mike's favourite trolleybus, before the official party proceeded to "christen" Sandtoft's own memorial to Mike - a substantial, circular, 8-seater picnic table on the café patio, which I am sure Mike would have thoroughly approved of. After being served with the "Inaugural Tea" the formal group quickly moved inside to avoid the strong, cold winds which unfortunately were prevalent all weekend! The evening was rounded off with a very fine carvery dinner at the *John Bull* at Thorne, where it was noted that most of our café ladies seemed to be letting their hair down, and a good time was had by all. Best of all was the sing-song on the bus on the way back to Sandtoft!

On this occasion thanks are due to the Heighway family, who kindly provided the table plaque, Martin and Maria Harvey for the painting, Dave Hall for a superb display of photos of Mike Dare in all different guises (on view inside

main reception), DO&LRS for kindly providing, and Chas Allen for driving, Doncaster 22 to go to the dinner.

One more thing to tell you about - the weekend 21/ 22 June saw the inauguration of our very own "Charity Shop"! For the time being, this is in with Becky Harrison's Ice Cream Parlour (the new entrance building) but will have to be re-sited next season. The idea is that we all have items we don't want, but which are too good to throw away, and often say "I'll give that to a charity shop". Well, WE'RE a charity, so why not donate those things to Sandtoft and let us sell them? We are looking for clean, presentable items of "bric-a-brac", CDs, DVDs, general books, jig-saw puzzles or other items of interest (- not clothes or electrical goods, please!) With the items donated on the first weekend, over £20 was taken, and it's all proceeds to the Museum... so next time you're visiting, see if you can find a few items to donate, and look in the shop - you might find something you would like as well! (At worst, Becky could sell you an ice cream, which can't be all bad!)

Finally, wearing my Chairman's hat, I would like to congratulate wholeheartedly all the members of DO&LRS on their 50th anniversary which is being celebrated the weekend before 'Gathering.

It's a real achievement for any voluntary organisation to survive half-a-century, and I know from my BTS involvement just how much hard work goes into funding and keeping a large fleet of vehicles up together. I see from their magazine, *Fleetlines*, that plans are in hand to see Doncaster 375 restored - our most local trolleybus, and a very regular performer back in the '70s and '80s, 375 has waited in the wings for long enough. If you could make a donation towards this very worthy project, please don't hesitate to contact Chris or Aiden Proctor (see page 2 for contact details, or at the Museum on operating weekends). Let's all help them get this project off the ground. Long live DO&LRS!

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

As the season progresses work continues apace, and our site team have worked wonders. As a result, we have had many compliments from visitors about the improvement to the appearance of the Museum, which is very encouraging.

"...we have had many compliments from visitors about the improvement to the appearance of the Museum"

Much more still has to be done though, but meanwhile, a big thank you to all who have helped get us this far.

The filling-in of the "hole" opposite the workshop has, at last, been completed and the area is now available for use. Indeed, it is now an ideal pick-up/ drop-off point for some motorbus journeys, but it's not (as yet!) wired for trolleybuses. An area adjacent to the box-van, is to be used as a builders yard and all such materials will be stored there, out of public view. We could do with some help to move the construction materials that are currently around the Hastings Guy!

As part of the general clear-up, and in line with our policy to ultimately get all our trolleybuses undercover, Bradford 562 has now been moved into the depot: this will better facilitate its staged restoration. The Post Office van (ER2) and the Huddersfield pole crane are now parked adjacent to the workshop road, along with the modern roadsweeper (which we have discovered, has a seized wheel) Now that I have the wiring diagrams for the sweeper, I can, hopefully, get it operational.

The area presently receiving attention is the "D" at the road end of the centre grass and the nature walk through the trees. The pathway through the area is being widened and edged with timber prior to being surfaced with stone chippings such that wheelchairs can negotiate the route more easily, whilst retaining a rustic feel. The nature trail (or should it be trial?) is featured in our publicity leaflet and we intend to bring it back to a manageable condition. Tony Stevenson has provided, and Gill Ferris has planted, various plants, but unfortunately the pesky rabbits have taken a particular liking to the Jerusalem Artichokes!

In the children's play area, deterioration of the climbing frame and the unavailability of replacement parts has meant that we have had to completely remove it. The gap is being filled with a new picnic table for parents to sit at and watch over their offspring. What is left of the old climbing frame is to be used to construct a pagoda along the nature trail.

As well as general tidying and sweeping, grass cutting and weeding by the dedicated ground staff, various items have been painted: we have dealt with the new entrance building door and started on the toilet block exterior, having also spruced up the interior of the gents. An equally glamorous job has been the clearing of blocked drains and soakaways around the Museum.

The flashing to the chimney of the Pelham building has been professionally done whilst the kitchen area is being kitted out and the water supply will be installed shortly. The final touches to the electrics should be completed in the next few weeks, as will a fire alarm system.

A working party has seen to the completion of the temporary entrance fencing posts and rails, and signs have been installed as necessary to guide visitors and comply with health and safety requirements. The staff car park fence will be completed very soon with a lockable gate to allow passage through to the garden area when necessary.

The Spring Bank Holiday weekend was largely given over to the British Trolleybus Society to organise, and Graham has written up an account of it elsewhere. Over that weekend, Dave Hodgson, a new member from the Isle of Man (a friend of John Zebede and a former electrician) at last managed to repair the gents' shower unit, and also the gents' hand dryer which has been intermittently faulty for a couple of years, or so. He spent a lot of time, but eventually corrected the faults, including re-tiling part of the wall. A big thank you, Dave, for doing all that!

With a view to the future, some of our works team visited Skegness to look at a possible "New Building" that has been offered to the Museum by Mr. Gordon

Hawkins. We were suitably impressed and think it is a gift that should be seriously considered. Whilst we may not need all of the building as it stands, bits we could use appear to be in a good state and could be re-erected quite easily. (It is a modern flat-roofed, system-built single storey structure that could be re-built in a variety of layouts.) The Board are considering various ideas for where modules could be used, including an indoor play area for children (near the rear gate) and an enlarged facility to replace the very 'tired' stores prefab.

Arrangements for the 'Gathering are essentially now in place: a good range of stalls have booked to go in the depot building, but because we are currently rather short of space to park a lot of vehicles from the depot, undercover space for stalls will be limited with the Pelham building being used for stalls as well. There will also be, amongst other attractions, the beer tent, organ, jazz band, games and a steam roller.

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

Plans are on-going for our new land: Graham Bilbé is pursuing the new boundary fencing, which will require the earth bund to be removed. It is hoped that some of this, if suitable, can be used to raise a low area adjacent to the workshop road, with suitable land drainage also installed. Certainly, the initial use for part of the land will be for visitor car parking. So, to achieve that, we need to fill and level the existing surface and prepare it for re-seeding, with the aim of getting the surface at least up to the standard of the centre grass and such that we can use our present grass cutting machinery. We are investigating whether a reinforcing mesh could be incorporated to prevent vehicles rutting it - or worse still, getting stuck - during poor weather conditions. This surface preparation needs to be carried out in good time for it to be ready to use next year.

Of course, this preparation work will not be cheap! We actually used most of our financial resources to acquire the land, so we are now trying to build our reserves back up. Since March, spending has been very closely monitored and will continue to be, as we work towards even basic development of our extra territory while continuing to improve (and run) the Museum. We were delighted to receive another significant donation to our development fund recently but we still need more! A one-off donation, or

modest monthly payments will all help us towards our long-term dream of an extended trolleybus line, exhibition hall, proper car park... If you can possibly help, please contact me (details on page 2).

Following an initial report to the Board, we have set up a small working party to prepare the Company for VAT registration. Our turnover is steadily approaching the threshold for registering, and as we expand, it is inevitable that the time will come and we need to be ready! Do you have expert knowledge that might be helpful to us in this project? If so, please contact either myself or Aiden Proctor.

"A one-off donation, or modest monthly payments will all help us towards our long-term dream of an extended trolleybus line"

It goes without saying that I am eagerly looking forward to 'Gathering. We really do need it to be a success after last year's flooding disaster, as more than ever we need the income it generates to fund our Museum. Please, if you can, come along and support this greatest event of our calendar – even if only to patronise the beer tent!

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

Staff Roster 2008: I would just like to thank those members who have returned their 2008 roster forms. It is a great benefit to have the advance knowledge of people's availability so that we can plan our events more effectively. So, if you have not yet done so, please send in your form as soon as possible. It is particularly important at this time that you let us know your availability for the Sandtoft Gathering. I appreciate that some staff members cannot commit themselves too far in advance, therefore the roster sheets in the traffic office will remain for you to sign up as and when you are there. You can also contact me at anytime if you find you can make it at short notice or if you find you have to cancel. I would prefer contact by email at operations@sandtoft.org or text me on 07500 703398. I'd rather you didn't call me on this number, as I can't always answer it when I'm at work. If neither of these options is open to you, you could try calling me at home in an evening on 01302 887664. The more notice you can give, the better chance I will have of rostering you for the job you want on the date you want. Oh, and remember, please also let me know if you would like to train to do any other job at Sandtoft and I will do my best to arrange it for you.

I would also like to make mention here of the key personnel, present on open days, who are responsible for ensuring these events run as smoothly as possible:

The Event Coordinator: On most open days, this will be the Operations Director, or one of the other directors, whose duties will be to ensure that all attractions are open and adequately staffed, and to be responsible for all aspects of our interface with the public. For some themed or other events, other persons may take on their organisation, and coordinate activities on the day.

The Duty Traffic Officer has prime responsibility for the operation of the trolleybus service and is responsible for organisation of traffic staff on the day and the coordination of all vehicle movements. Therefore it is important for reasons of safety and insurance, and to ensure the smooth running of the event, that no vehicles are moved anywhere within the trolleybus operating area without the Duty Traffic Officer's permission.

The Duty Engineer is responsible for any corrective actions that need to be implemented, in order that the event can continue to operate safely and as efficiently as possible. So if something breaks down, goes wrong, or becomes unsafe, or you see anything that you consider needs attention, then the duty engineer is the person to contact.

The members of staff fulfilling the above positions on each day will be shown on that day's roster sheet. Please always ensure you know who these three personnel are.

I would like to make one final point regarding pedestrian crossings etc. We

have gone to the trouble of providing clearly-marked crossings and safe walkways around the Museum. In order to encourage our visitors to use these: I would like to see all staff setting an example by using them rather than crossing at other places, or walking on the road areas.

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

Well, after we all took a breather and a sigh of relief after the land purchase it has been back to work. As well as the day-to-day business I am also busy forward planning and I'm pleased to say I am already formulating plans for 2009. Of course we mustn't forget that we have this season to run first.

Open Days 2008: In addition to the advertised schedule, our November Twilight Day will take on a Reading theme as we commemorate 40 years since the end of Reading's trolleybuses. As well as operating Reading trolleybuses, Reading Transport Limited intend to bring up one of their brand new bio-ethanol powered double-deckers, which should create an interesting contrast of Reading buses past and present.

Plans are being made to hold a free evening for local people to come and see what we do. This will be on the Saturday evening of a weekend event, so that everything is in place already: all it will need is a number of staff prepared to stay on for a while. This should happen over the Model Weekend of 13 & 14 September, so can you help? We are to deliver something like 1,000 letters to people of Sandtoft and Belton to see what sort of response we get. It is felt that the involvement of local people is important, especially with our expansion plans (we don't want any planning objections), and we may get some more volunteers out of it too.

Open Days 2009: I can reveal now, the open days next year will be:

11, 12 & 13 April;	2, 3 & 4 May,	23, 24 & 25 May,
13, & 14 June,	27 & 28 June,	11 & 12 July,
25 & 26 July,	8 & 9 August,	29, 30 & 31 August,
12 & 13 September,	26 & 27 September,	18 October,
15 November,	12 & 13 December.	

Next year marks the 40th anniversary of our Museum being founded. We plan to mark this significant milestone with a special event over the Spring Bank Holiday of 23, 24 & 25 May. Plans are already taking shape but I envisage something similar to this year's Extravaganza Weekend, which was a huge success. Once again I'd like us to operate as many trolleybuses as possible, but in order to make it a success we need as many staff involved as possible. Therefore, get the date in your diary now, **23, 24 & 25 May 2009**. Don't forget, of course, the 'Gathering will also go ahead on 25 & 26 July 2009, so you should add that to the diary too!

As part of the plans, I would like to have a display telling the story of the Museum over the last 40 years. Therefore, I'd like to hear from anybody who may have old photographs, films or stories covering our developments in the last four decades.

I am considering a complete overhaul of our main advertising leaflet. To do this we need lots of good-quality photographs. That doesn't just include

pictures of buses, but also of people enjoying themselves at the Museum. Anybody with any suitable photographs or design suggestions please get in touch. Membership: Following requests from members, I am pleased to say that we plan to introduce a Life Membership option shortly. Recognising that some of our members may not feel that life membership is viable, we are also considering offering a 10-year membership option. Initial prices are likely to be £375 for Life Membership and £135 for 10-year Membership. These changes in the membership structure will require approval by way of a special resolution at the AGM, so I am keen to hear any thoughts or suggestions before then. I would like to add though that standard membership subscriptions will not increase this year.

Company Logo: The concept has been agreed and the final design is almost complete but it is unlikely to be unveiled until at least the end of this season. eBay for Charity You can now support The Trolleybus Museum whilst using online auction site eBay.

eBay for Charity is an easy way for buyers and sellers on eBay.co.uk to support their favourite charities. Buyers can shop for items knowing they're supporting a good cause, be it an everyday bargain or a special auction. Sellers, whether they're individuals or businesses, can donate a percentage from any sale to a charity of their choice and add Gift Aid to their donations. In addition, all eBay for Charity items will qualify for a fee credit on basic insertion and final value fees equal to the percentage donated. So, next time you're planning a sale on eBay don't forget you can support the Trolleybus Museum at the same time - it is all set up for you to do so! For more information about eBay For Charity please visit <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/ebayforcharity/>.

OBITUARY

BILL FAWCETT: Early this Spring we lost another of our regular members, Bill Fawcett, who passed away after a long illness. Bill was one of the un-sung heroes who came out and did the little jobs which people only notice when they are no longer done. One of his favourites was to weed between the paving slabs, all the way round the Museum. A friend of the late Tony Peart, Bill would come out and assist Tony fill his bus with diesel after a rally when he knew Tony could no longer manage to do it himself. An ex-lorry driver, Bill had a dry, and sometimes wicked, sense of humour, something I shall miss. He was a product of one of our Volunteers Days and was a "regular" until his illness held him back. A lover of days out, his last trip was to Sandtoft, with one of his two sons. Latterly, I would occasionally see him walking his dogs near my home. At a memorable funeral service in Scunthorpe, attended by myself, John Crossley, Ian and Janet Metcalfe, plus Mike Hurst, we learned what a caring family man he was.

In a world of coincidence, the chaplain who took the service came from Doncaster, and was the very same one who originally bought the RT which is now undergoing restoration at the Museum!

Our thoughts go out to Bill's wife and the boys. Farewell Old Friend, we shall miss you.
Brian Maguire



THE ROUTE TO SANDTOFT

PLUMTREE – PART 8

(With all accompanying photographs from Steve Collins' collection)

Steve Collins

The Arrival of Bad News

In about October 1969, I was ambling through the centre of Nottingham when, who should I see but Black Rod, the former secretary of the Nottingham Trolleybus Group. The last time I had had any contact with him was over two years earlier when we had gone to the closure of the Wolverhampton trolleybus system together. Now, if I had known what was to come, I would have crossed the road, dodged into a shop, or become fascinated by the designs on the manhole covers, but obviously, me being me, and being stupid, I did none of those things but greeted him as one does a long lost friend.

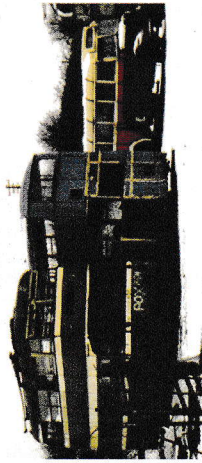
I had always considered that out of all the people I had met at Plumtree, Black Rod had always seemed to have the most common sense, so I was genuinely pleased to see him. We exchanged pleasantries, and I told him where I was working, and suggested that if he ever had the time, he could call in for a brew and a natter. At this time I was the manager of a shop which sold a wide range of cakes, pies, pasties and other delights, all guaranteed to attract a healthy young male during his lunch hour (I even made my own pork dripping. I can feel you beginning to salivate as I type). True to his word, Black Rod turned up a week or so later, and this became a regular thing over the next few months.

During these meetings, obviously the subject of Plumtree cropped up. Neither of us had been there for some time, so we decided to go out there one day during the week to see what was going on. We chose a Thursday, just before Christmas, probably not the best time to see the countryside. We arrived in mid-afternoon; no one else was there, so we were undisturbed as we walked along the line of buses.

The evidence of neglect was everywhere: Derby 175, in which I had expended so much effort in 1966, was first in the line, furthest from the road. It was standing with a front wheel missing, looking sorry for itself. We walked down the side, round the back, and onto the platform. "This just gets worse and worse" said Black Rod, shaking his head. None of the vehicles looked well cared for, though with hindsight, this was the middle of winter, and they were all kept out of doors, so to be fair, we were probably being over critical.

Nottingham 466 was showing more and more signs of rot on the framework and Manchester 1250 was losing a lot of paint from the upper deck. Derby 237 had had its nearside windscreen broken and a large part of the bodywork on the ex-Lincolnshire steam bus had disappeared. New arrivals were all motorbuses - one I had never seen before was a very old, strange-looking single decker which looked as if a showman

Continued on page 16



was a very old, strange-looking single decker which looked as if a showman

PHOTOVIEW OF TWO RECENT EVENTS

Spring Bank Holiday Weekend (24-26 May 2008), with a British Trolleybus Society flavour



Top, left to right: Photos: David Hall

- South Shields 204 passes the newly-concreted area adjacent to the bus station
- Saturday evening and Dave Shepherd helps Graham Bilbé (note the clean boiler suit) with the Bar-B-Q
- The inaugural use of the Picnic Table which is Sandtoft's memorial to Mike Dare
- Aachen 22 on a demonstration run



Left

- An impressive line-up of some of the BTS fleet

Photo: Dave Chick

Volunteers Day (1 June 2008)



Work, Work, Rest and "Play" during the Volunteers Day

Photos by Tim Stubbbs



THE ROUTE TO SANDTOFT – Plumtree Part 8 (continued from page 13)
had used it. I later found out that this was an ex Eastern Counties Tilling Stevens, but it was obviously well past its Sell By date.

Nottingham 493 was looking very shabby, but otherwise still intact. It was obvious it had not received any attention for some time. Black Rod still owned 493, so really this was his fault, but I didn't think that at the time. I got the distinct impression that the emphasis in the collection had swung away from trolleybuses as we both commented how jaded they all looked. The only thing that raised our spirits was when Black Rod made some caustic comments about Cleethorpes 54 - he seemed to find the lack of back end highly amusing.



I left the site feeling very depressed, Black Rod's comments about the Cleethorpes not withstanding. As we headed back to Nottingham, he asked me if I knew that the Cardiff trolleybus system was due to close in January. He said he was going, and asked if I would like to join him. It sounded like a good idea, so I accepted.

The Cardiff closure was, to be honest, a bit of a shambles, but I enjoyed it. It never stopped raining, and there were very few trolleybuses running, I spent most of the Saturday riding on 220. For some reason there was a gap in the overhead, and a tower wagon had to be used to tow the trolleybuses past it. The strangest thing I saw was that they were using five or six baby elephants to push trolleybuses into the depot, odd behaviour really, unless it's a Welsh thing we English don't understand.

So on the Sunday, Cardiff's trolleybuses passed into history. This left only Tees-side, Bradford and Walsall (now part of the newly-formed West Midlands PTE). I remember Black Rod saying he thought they would all be gone within two years, and in this he was not far off the truth.

It must have been the neglect at Plumtree, combined with the trip to Cardiff, that combined to reawaken my enthusiasm, because the next time I saw Black Rod, I asked him outright if there was anywhere we could take 493 to ensure that something from the Nottingham system survived. "There is this new site at a place called Sandtoft, near Doncaster" he said, "Mike Dare from Reading has got something to do with it, the NTA are involved, and so are several other groups. There must be about 10 trolleybuses there already, and more are on the way. I've got time for Mike Dare", he added.

"I've got time for Mike Dare", that's what he said. It was the highest compliment I ever heard Black Rod pay to anybody.

We talked about it for a while longer, and I offered to write to Mike Dare to find out what the score was at Sandtoft, and if there would be a place available for 493. Mike replied to say he would be delighted to see 493 at Sandtoft. He sent

me a load of information, including a copy of *Trolleybus*, the magazine of the (then) Reading Transport Society, and also a membership form - in case I would like to join.

The next time I saw Black Rod, I showed him the things Mike had sent me, and I said we should go for it and move 493 as soon as possible. Black Rod began to back-peddle a bit at this, and eventually came out with it: he didn't want the expense. "I've got a house to run" he said. This knocked me back I can tell you: my enthusiasm was returning in full force, and I wanted to get stuck in and do something. After a bit more discussion we came to what I thought was the obvious answer. I would take on 493 and deal with the whole thing. Black Rod was happy to agree.

So there it is, after nearly four years without any pressure or worries, I happily jumped straight back into the maelstrom, and threw in my lot with Mike Dare, a person I didn't even know. Looking back I still find it hard to believe. Was I born stupid? I didn't know then, and I still don't, 35 years later.

One Sunday towards the end of January saw me walking up the drive at Plumtree, loaded with polish, rags and other useful items, with the intention of giving 493 a good bottoming. One of the first people I saw was Tom Bowden, and I thought it best to come straight to the point and put all the cards on the table. He was not pleased with what I told him. I could see his point: he had put a lot of effort into Plumtree, far more than I then realised, and here was an oak from the past who turned up out of the blue with the intention of splitting up the collection. As other people turned up, the news spread round the site that a malignant being had arrived and was aboard 493 applying polish to the seats.

Considering that this was January, there was a surprising amount of activity that day, mainly, I must say, from the motorbus men. One of them actually came onto 493 while I was in mid rub, and introduced himself with the remark "Polish? Something this vehicle hasn't seen for a long time". He seemed quite happy to accept me at face value, and said he could remember me going round with my notebook collecting money for Derby 175 back in 1966, though I confessed that I couldn't remember him at all.

This became a regular thing after that: all through February and into March, my Sundays were spent at Plumtree, and I began to feel that the initial chill from Tom had begun to thaw. He didn't want 493 to leave, but the fact that I was actually working on a trolleybus impressed him. I had been correct in my assumption that the trolleybuses were not getting much attention: there were ten of them on that site, and only about three people were even slightly interested.

But that wasn't my problem. I was determined that I was not going to be sidetracked. My sole concern was getting 493 up to Sandtoft, and here I had hit a major snag. One of my natural abilities is to time things badly. I often tell people how good I am at missing buses; I have a diploma in it, or rather I would have if one existed. This trait soon became apparent when I tried to arrange towing for 493. I rang Barton Transport to discuss what I thought would be a simple matter, and they were not at all surprised at the thought of towing a trolleybus to somewhere near Doncaster. Things like that were all in

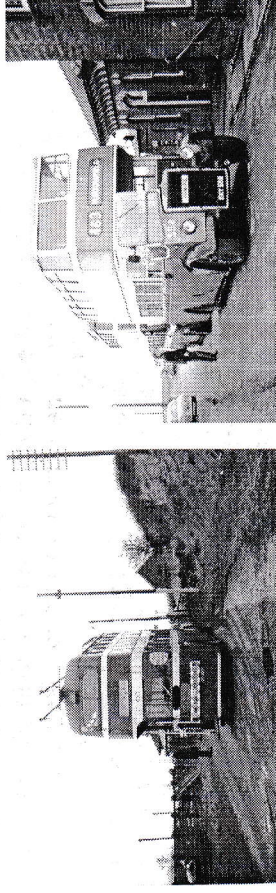
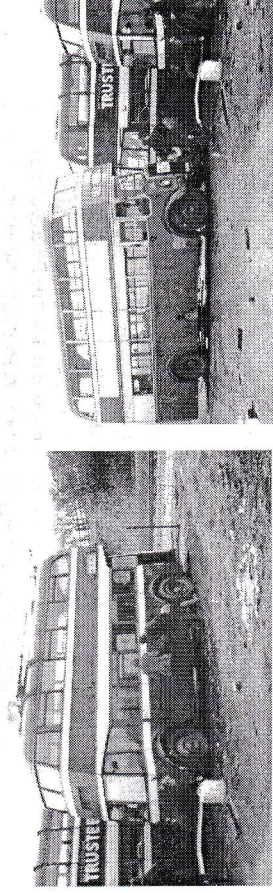
a day's work to them. This was the real Barton Transport of course, not the Dinky Toy firm that uses the name today. I gave them all the details and they said they would call me back. They were as good as their word, but the news wasn't. They couldn't do it. They ran their towing vehicles on trade plates, and on 1 January 1970 the law regarding the use of trade plates had changed: they could no longer be used to do jobs for hire or reward. The short of it was I could no longer hire them to tow 493, and reward them for doing it. I was about three weeks too late.

Barton's were very sympathetic and suggested several companies who might be able to help, but when I contacted them I got exactly the same result. I tried garages, haulage firms and even Camms (not a name to inspire confidence), but nobody wanted to know. In desperation I wrote to Mike Dare and asked him if he could suggest anything.

Easter 1970 fell at the end of March, and on Good Friday I arrived home from work at about six-thirty to find a letter waiting for me. It was from someone named John Moxon, of whom I had never heard, and he was writing from a place called Marsden, of which I had never heard, which was apparently near a place called Huddersfield of which I had heard, and had in fact, actually been to years earlier. The gist of it was that further to an urgent message from Francis Whitehead of the RTS, if I required towing facilities over the Easter holiday, ring Marsden 434 before seven o'clock Friday. Weren't phone numbers easy to remember in those days? I rang Marsden 434, explained who I was, and was told the towing crew would be available on the Sunday. Did he know where Plumtree was, I asked. He said he did, and that was it. End of story.

I was beginning to be impressed with the Sandtoft organisation when a problem in Nottingham could be resolved by a phone call from somebody in Reading to somebody in Huddersfield. Not at all bad, I thought.

Sunday arrived and there was I, sat at Plumtree awaiting I knew not who, driving I knew not what, when at the appointed time I heard the sound of an approaching engine, and a blue and cream Leyland-bodied double-decker hove into view. Bradford 558 had arrived! The driver, who I later discovered was named Walter, gave me a chirpy grin, and asked if I was me. I admitted I was, and told him I had not expected this - meaning 558. "What did you expect?" he asked. I said I didn't know, and pointed him in the direction of 493. This was my first meeting with the West Riding Transport Society, as a gang of some of the hairiest men I had ever seen emerged from 558. This was 1970, and the influence of Glam Rock had obviously reached Huddersfield before it made its mark on Nottingham. Hairy or not, they seemed to know what they were about: a tow bar was produced, 558's rear panel was removed to reveal a hidden towing eye, and a character who introduced himself as Norman, demanded to know if 493's prop-shaft was still connected. I hadn't a clue about this of course, and had no idea why he wanted to know, but I tried not to sound too surprised and said as far as I knew it was. "Soon see" he said, and promptly scuttled under the 'bus, which was standing over an interesting selection of puddles laced with mud.



Norman re-appeared having confirmed my statement, "Have to disconnect it" he said and, armed with a selection of spanners, vanished back under 493 to do just that. He soon re-appeared again "Diffs dripping oil, as all good diffs should" he said. The fact that he was dripping goo didn't seem to bother him in the least, to be honest I don't think he even noticed it. One thing I spotted while all this was happening was that one character, who was named Baz, was running his hands all over Nottingham 502's windows and making curious moaning noises. He carried on doing it until somebody went over and scraped him off. Curious, the traits old trolleybuses bring out in people.

So with Bradford 558 coupled to Nottingham 493, which now sported a sign fixed to its rear which read "WRTS - Trolleybus on Tow", we were ready for the off. I got into 493's cab and positioned myself on the near side wheel arch while Norman took to the driver's seat, and it was "Goodbye Plumtree - Sandtoft, here we come".

We were making a good pace up the M1 motorway when I began to feel an ominous clunking coming from the near side front wheel. Norman felt it too: he stood up, gripped the steering wheel with his legs, and using both hands to open the windscreen, bellowed something to one of the hairy men who was loitering on 558's platform. The chap couldn't tell what Norman shouted but he had sense enough to ring the bell, so that Walter pulled over on to the hard shoulder. The wheel nuts had started to work loose, some of them being near to coming off. Norman wasn't concerned, he just fetched a wheel brace and tightened them up again. Nothing seemed to bother him.

Apart from a break at Woodall Services, we reached Sandtoft without further incident. It was pitch dark when we got there, and how Norman could see anything going down the long road from the *Green Tree* beats me. 558 was a

slightly darker patch in a sea of universal blackness, but he wasn't worried. After 493 had been uncoupled and left at the end of the shed, someone told him that one of 558's wheel bearings was overheating. Without hesitation, he produced a large tin of grease, and proceeded to slop handfuls of grease into the offending place. He then wiped his hands on his trousers. "All in a days work, why worry?"

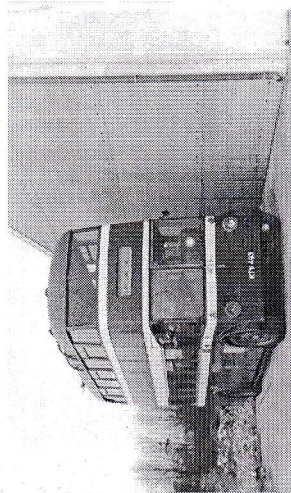
I must admit I have had some good days while involved with preservation, but that day on the motorway in the company of a Leyland PD2, a Trolleybus, and The Hairy Men of Huddersfield, was one of the best. At Spring Bank Holiday, they went down to Epsom with 558 and towed ex-Huddersfield 470, still lettered as a Gentlemen's Toilet, up to Sandtoft. That's style that is. Good lads, The Hairy Men of Huddersfield.

A few weeks later, Mike Dare told me that he very nearly turned me down when I first approached him regarding taking 493 to Sandtoft. He said the last time he had seen it, it was filthy, and stood in the mud with a wheel missing. He was worried in case 493 would act as a kind of Trojan Horse, and open the gates of Sandtoft to an influx of rough men from Nottingham who would introduce all manner of uncouth and undesirable practices. He was proud of Sandtoft and didn't want to see derelict trolleybuses stood on piles of bricks, or buses being broken up behind the shed. Mike did have some strange notions. I just don't know where he got ideas like that from.

As for Norman, he often turned up at Sandtoft over the years, usually working on the overhead. The last time I can actually remember seeing him must have been in about June 1980. He turned up in a Land Rover one day when Tom Bowden and I were breaking up Nottingham 251, a 1956 AEC Regent V. He saw what we were doing, came over, and offered to use his Land Rover to rip what was left of the body apart with chains. That saved us a lot of time and effort. He was alright was Norman, one of the best. (We broke up 251 for spares for other preserved vehicles, though there is no trace of it at Sandtoft now. We did it behind the shed, not far from where derelict Walsall trolleybus 864 is standing - on piles of bricks.)



493, on tow behind Bradford 558 at Woodhall Services on the M1 - March 1970



493 became the first trolleybus to be stored outside at Sandtoft and is seen here shortly after arrival next to the first 8-vehicle depot.

REMAINING RUNNING DAYS IN 2008

Gates open 11.00 – 17.00 unless stated otherwise. (NOTE: this corrects an error in the past two editions of Sandtoft Scene).

Saturday 12 July Sunday 13 July	Bus	Huddersfield Weekend commemorating 40 years since the end of Huddersfield trolleybuses
Saturday 26 July	Bus	'Gathering Preview (open 11.00 to 22.00) with Real Ale Beer Tent and twilight trolleybus services
Sunday 27 July	Bus	'Gathering 2008 (open 10.00 to 18.00) large selection of trolleybuses in service, visiting vehicles, transport bazaar, Real Ale Beer Tent, live music, craft stalls and more
Saturday 9 August Sunday 10 August	Bus	Blue's and Two's Weekend a variety of visiting emergency vehicles. Fire and Rescue displays and demonstrations throughout each day
Saturday 23 August Sunday 24 August Monday 25 August	Bus Bus Bus	European Weekend featuring a selection of continental trolleybuses in service
Saturday 13 September Sunday 14 September	Bus Bus	Model Weekend featuring model trolleybuses, trams and trains and working layouts
Saturday 27 September Sunday 28 September	Bus Bus	Trolleydays 6-Wheeler Weekend
Sunday 19 October	Bus	St. Leger Rally St. Leger Historic Vehicle Rally starting from Doncaster Aircraft. Transport-related sales stands and parades of historic vehicles at Museum
Sunday 16 November		Twilight Trolleys (open 11.00 to 18.00) with trolleybuses operating after dark
Saturday 13 December Sunday 14 December		Santa Days (open 11.00 to 16.00) children can visit Santa

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 40 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
July to September

Systems Opened

95 years since Ramsbottom opened on 14 August 1913

85 years since Ipswich opened on 2 September 1923
 80 years since Doncaster opened on 22 August 1928
Systems Closed

80 years since Leeds closed on 26 July 1928
 50 years since South Lincs. closed on 31 August 1958
 45 years since Ipswich closed on 23 August 1963
 40 years since Huddersfield closed on 13 July 1968



Huddersfield's Last Trolleybus:
 no.623 (a BUT of the same
 batch as 619) is seen at
 Moldgreen on 12 July 1968, the
 last evening of trolleybus
 operation in the town

Photo: Doug Barrow

VEHICLES REPORTS

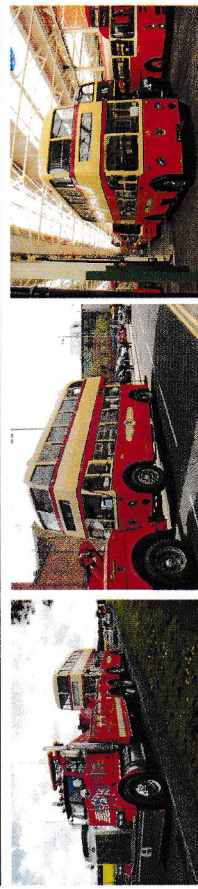
Cleethorpes 54: As reported last time, 54 is now wearing its planned livery of dark blue with three light blue bands and light blue roof, albeit mostly in undercoat or "intercoat" and continues to be prepared for further painting.

St. Helens 387: (report from Geoff Sandford) 387 arrived at its home depot on 29 April in the care of Bridge Garage of Ossett. There was a good turnout of onlookers to see the trolleybus return home.

387 also caused some heads to turn on the journey into St. Helens on a trolley-



This recent view of 54 makes an interesting comparison with the 1970 photograph of it on page 14
 Photo: David Needham



387's tow from Sandtoft: a short break at Haydock, on the A580 East Lincs. Road, before the last leg of the trip

Outside the North West Museum of Road Transport in Hall Street, St. Helens, 387's former depot

At home again and ready for the public

Photos: Geoff Sandford

bus route it actually never served - the 14-mile joint service with South Lancashire Transport to Atherton. No.387 passed through Haydock and Blackbrook to get to the North West Museum of Road Transport.

I am pleased to say more has been done on 387 than had been anticipated since it arrived, thanks to two helpers from the museum. The wheels have been re-painted and the new tyres blackened. The front and rear mudguards have also been re-painted. The cream panels above the lower deck windows have been T-cutted and 387 looks a lot better for that. Inside, the seats and all ceiling panels have been cleaned and made suitable for visitors to board and look around.

The offside compressor hatch has been re-hinged and put back in place after being loose for several years and at long last (after about 25 years of absence) 387 has had a fog lamp fitted, the original one having gone walkies. The wheel arch sides are currently receiving attention and one side has been stripped and primed already after applying Kurust to the steel area. The used ticket holder has been removed and the rear platform bulkhead is now being stripped of paint ready to also be treated with Kurust. This area is in a bad state with rust and at long last is being attended to properly. New side destination blind rollers have been fitted and a shortened version destination blind has been fitted.

A display case showing items of overhead equipment (borrowed with thanks from Sandtoft) will be put next to the trolleybus for visitors to look at. It is good to note that 387 has attracted a lot of interest from museum visitors: many have never, ever heard of a trolleybus, let alone seen one (and that includes museum volunteers who are puzzled by the note I left in the driver's cab window "NO WATER"!!!)

There is much more to do on 387 and now she is home, news will, hopefully, be more regular. Come and visit 387 whilst she is "at home" in her old depot - it may be your last opportunity to photograph the vehicle in its original surroundings - if you can't make it at a weekend, contact Geoff for a private visit mid-week and he can arrange it.

Nottingham 67: (report from Steve Collins, photos by David Needham)

Reframing of the lower saloon continues. On the nearside, all the horizontal and vertical wooden framework has been replaced. Metal fitch plates and stress panels have been made and fitted. The cab bulkhead pillar has also been replaced.

On the offside, all panels and pillars have been



removed and three new pillars temporarily fitted to ensure all body alignments are correct. New wheel arch woodwork is being fabricated for both sides of the vehicle. Steel wheel arch and inner panels have been carefully removed so that they can be used as patterns for new ones to be made.

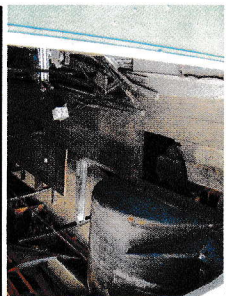
Nottingham 506: (report from David Needham) Seats are still the order of the day. As reported previously one new seat cover has been made and fitted. Three other seats have torn but time is not readily available for new complete covers to be made, so the damage has been repaired, which means the seats are now ready for re-fitting to 506.

Bradford 746: (report from Stewart David) Recently, 746 as had its chassis cleaned and repainted.

Nottingham 137: (report from David Needham) Unfortunately, 137's engine has not been started for over 18 months and so when we recently attempted to start her she refused to even engage the starter motor. Diagnosis showed that the starter push switch in the cab was not making a contact. The switch was removed and passed to Ian Metcalf who stripped it down and cleaned the contacts. After refitting the switch, the starter engaged and after a little coaxing from the battery charger, the AEC engine roared into life!

Bradford 558: (report from Geoff Welburn) A start has been made on repairing the downstairs nearside. By using parts obtained from "The Preston", a replacement body pillar has been fitted, along with a bolted steel section of floor cross member.

The nearside rear longitudinal seat has been removed, along with the associated wood floor and steel panels. This revealed an area requiring a lot of attention!



DEPARTMENTAL NEWS

TRAFFIC OFFICE

Vehicle Cleaning and Presentation

Unfortunately our usual high standard of vehicle presentation appears to have slipped badly recently. Our service trolleybuses and motorbuses are effectively our "family silver" and our visitors have a right to expect them to be turned out in a good and clean condition.

As a minimum standard, we must ensure that each vehicle that is to be used for service is fully swept out, the seats and ledges dusted and windows cleaned. I am fully aware that some traffic staff and other members regularly do their bit, and I can assure you that it is much appreciated. However, we do need much more assistance in this important task if we are to achieve our previous high level of presentation. Please help out if you can.

Vehicle Accident Damage Reporting Process

We have experienced a couple of incidents recently involving vehicles and Museum infrastructure being damaged, yet nobody has completed a damage report. This is clearly unacceptable, and could lead to disciplinary

proceedings. All vehicle and Company property accident damage must always be reported, using an Accident Damage Report Form available from the Traffic Office. Once completed, forms should be returned to myself, or Steve Harrison, Managing Director.

Finally, if anyone has any constructive ideas on how to make the Traffic Department more effective, I would be delighted to hear from you. Email traffic@sandtoft.org or write to me at the Museum address. Thank you.

A PLEA TO ANY MEMBERS WORKING ON VEHICLES

Those members who work on vehicles on our roadway areas, please be careful about what you leave behind! Frequently, debris is left behind after work is done. This can be aluminium off-cuts, screws, nails, rivet shanks, rusty metal and so on. Left on the concrete, these can be picked up by our operating fleet as they go round the circuit. You will be aware that tyres are very expensive, and some types of tyre damage cannot be repaired, resulting in replacement being necessary. There have also been at least two occasions where car tyres have picked up debris, one in very recent weeks being a beading screw resulting in a puncture. Besides the possible damage, rubbish is unsightly and goes against our new-found tidiness!

Please sweep up thoroughly after you have been working

A similar situation can happen in the workshop, which is often left untidy or dirty. After you have used the facilities, you are required to return this area to a reasonably clean state, ready for the next person to use it. There is nothing worse than arriving to start work and finding the pit full of chassis dirt or the like, or equipment strewn about that has to be tidied away before you can even get a bus in.

Don't expect the site teams to keep the place clean for you
- make sure you clean up afterwards!

Thanks!

LIFE AT THE BOTTOM (OF THE STAIRS)

Jim Sambrooks Shr.

Floggers

On becoming a bus conductor in the early 'sixties, I soon had the nonsensical notion that buses were run primarily to carry passengers knocked out of me.

They were operated to provide bus crews with jobs; timetables were meant to be flouted in the interests of tea-drinking at the termini, and waiting for runners was a cardinal sin.

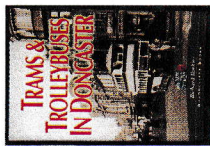
With a "flogger" for a driver, you could, by the end of the shift, be drunk on tea. A flogger's watch was always two minutes fast, he probably trained at Silverstone and, like time and tide, waited for no man (or woman or child, come to that). The driver renowned for having the fastest watch and the heaviest foot was one, Jacko. It got him the sack in the end.

When crewing with Jacko, making out the way-bill at the completion of a duty was simplicity itself, you had carried so few passengers the take was

negligible. Always right behind the bus in front, within towing distance sometimes, Jacko would have done a U-turn at the sight of a large queue at a bus stop. He met his Waterloo when he had the same journey three nights running: he caught the exodus from a bingo hall the first night, made certain he missed the crowd on the second, and on the third night, Jacko, ten minutes ahead of schedule, found an inspector waiting for him on the bingo stop.

Not only did Jacko learn that the big building he used to pass en-route was the Social Security office, he acquired an intimate knowledge of its function.

REVIEWS



BOOK – Trams & Trolleybuses in Doncaster

Written by Richard Buckley
Published by Whamcliffe Books
£9.99
(Postage £3.50)

Richard Buckley, the author of this publication, is a Yorkshireman by adoption with a life-long interest in transport.

Published in 2003, this informative card-covered book begins with an outline of Doncaster's history before recounting the respective stories of the town's tramway and, later, trolleybus systems. Some aspects of the working life of the Doncaster undertaking's employees are included, and the dismissal of a driver and conductor who, while in uniform, were seen eating fish and chips during a half-hour layover makes one think what today's unions' reactions to such an incident would be. The trolleybus driver who had a three week spell in hospital after a trolleyhead fell on him was luckier than he might have been! And the mention that the cab roofs of the initial 31 trolleybuses leaked comes as a surprise.

With an excellent selection of over 135 photographs, this 126-page book portrays the respective histories and operations of the tram and trolleybus systems. The illustrations include 2 of Geoff Warnes' photographs of Doncaster trolleybus no.362 in Rotherham (at that time Rotherham operated single-decker trolleybuses only) when the Doncaster vehicle was loaned so that the Rotherham undertaking could check clearances before deciding whether to use double-deck trolleybuses. Other photographs include a group of Doncaster Omnibus & Light Railway Society members posed with trolleybus 377 during a tour on the system's penultimate evening and some Last Day photographs featuring trolleybus 375 (now, of course, at Sandtoft).

An interesting and useful publication, it has supplied me with a lot of information about the former Doncaster tram and trolleybus systems and I look forward to seeing some of the author's other publications.

Copies of *Trams & Trolleybuses in Doncaster* can be obtained through the *Trolleyshop* at Sandtoft.

Doug Barrow



DVD – Huddersfield Trolleybuses

Published by Online Video
£18.00
(Postage £1.00)

As this issue of *Sandtoft Scene* coincides with the 40th Anniversary of the Huddersfield trolleybus system's closure it is appropriate to feature a review of Online Video's *Huddersfield Trolleybuses* programme in this issue.

Originally published in VHS format in 1995, the programme opens with some views of illuminated trolleybus no.623 - chosen to be the undertaking's Last Trolleybus - in operation during the system's final week.

Huddersfield was the first municipality in Britain to build and operate a tramway, and some views of the early trams lead on to latter-day views of the tramway system (which, at its maximum, had a fleet of 140 tramcars with the newest having been built in 1931). During the period 1933 to 1940 the tramway system was replaced by a trolleybus one and some reminders of the older times are shown - the Longroyd Bridge Depot, which was shared by trams and trolleybuses, a former tramway passengers shelter, and from trolleybus times, the indentation in the retaining wall at Birks Well, Slaithwaite, so that a turning loop could be provided.

The first trolleybus in Huddersfield ran on 4 December 1933, on the Almondbury route and some experimental trolleybuses (with chassis and bodies by various manufacturers) were operated prior to orders being placed for new vehicles. In the course of time some of the early Huddersfield trolleybuses were replaced by newer models, and the programme includes brief scenes of two former Huddersfield trolleybuses in service in Reading.

In 1949-50 the Huddersfield Ciné Club made a documentary about the work of the trolleybus system during the Second World War and this ciné material has been included in this programme.

Online's comprehensive record of the system has a running time of 1 hour 40 minutes. In addition to the many routes (some of which extended beyond the borough boundary) and vehicles - and the street scene - this record includes the use of coasting brakes on certain sections of routes which had steep hills, and tours of the system (including one tour where participants had to push the trolleybus, still under the wires, in the Great Northern Street area as the electrical supply to the overhead had been switched off although the wiring needed to be used!). And views of steam locomotives working freight trains under the wires, taking wagons to and from the Corporation Gas Works - an operation which continued until 1966 - provide another interesting aspect of the system's individuality.

I happily recommend this programme to enthusiasts and historians - and to those with a general interest, whether in the town itself or in how things used to be - and copies of the DVD can be obtained through the *Trolleyshop* at Sandtoft.

Doug Barrow



WEEKEND

(21 – 22 June 2008)



A.C.C. LEYLAND
TROLLEYBUSES

IMPORTANT !!

Dear Member,
Volunteers are needed to prepare vehicles on
Thursday and Friday, 24 and 25 July, ready for
Sandtoft Gathering 2008.

If you can help, please let me know.
Thanks,

Stewart David
Traffic Manager