

SANDTOFT SCENE



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

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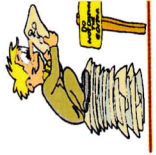
FRONT COVER PICTURE: Edmonton 189, our General Motors of Canada trolleybus of 1981 arrived at Sandtoft on 29 October 2009. It is due to be launched into service during the 17/ 18 April Trolleyday Weekend
Photo: David Needham

Our Vision Statement is

To be nationally acknowledged as the Museum of the Trolleybus and to entertain, educate and give excellent value and service to our visitors.

and portrays exactly why The Museum exists and how the Company and The Museum should be run. All considerations, decisions, directives, policies, processes and actions of the Directors and the Members must be focused to meet this end.

EDITOR'S VIEW



May I apologise for the delay in completing Sandtoft Scene no.76: this has been caused by various commitments both with myself and Francis Whitehead. However, may I belatedly take this opportunity of wishing you all a very Happy and Prosperous New Year

Unfortunately, over the past few months, we have lost three members who helped at the Museum. Firstly, Beryl Dare, wife of the late Mike Dare, the founder of our Museum: we intend to include tributes to Beryl in the next edition of Sandtoft Scene. Secondly, Peter Swift, who, to my mind could turn his hand to do many things: he had very strong views on many subjects and it seemed impossible to change them – he was always right as far as he was concerned! And finally, Caroline Priestly, who was a very talented artist and had repainted the signs on the Axholme Stores and was well know to all the café staff where she helped on many occasions.

In the Route to Sandtoft we again return to Plumtree and Steve Collins continues to explain the slow, and what by then had become the inevitable closure of the Plumtree Museum.

Mick Leak has done some reminiscing about towing of trolleybuses. As Bradford 746 celebrated its 60th year in 2009, it is fitting that Mick starts with an article about a towing expedition he was involved in with this splendid vehicle.



Caroline Priestly

PETER SWIFT 1939 – 2009

From Mick Leak

Sadly, we have to report the passing of Peter Swift, who died during the evening of 26 September 2009 and I, personally, was shocked to learn of his death - particularly as we had had a long conversation on the telephone less than two week earlier.



Peter Swift

Peter was a personal friend, our friendship going back well over twenty-five years. He retired to Blackpool and often said I would have been better off on the Fyde Coast rather than the west of Ireland! As usual, we begged to differ. You either got on with Peter, or you didn't! Like many of us, he held strong views (like 703's return to "fleet" livery) but we never fell out. There was always a logical thread to his views even if you did not agree with him! Peter's father worked on the railway at Blackpool

and Peter spent part of his working life in public transport - driving for County Motors, Moseley's (coach dealer) and taxi driving in Harrogate, to name but a few aspects. He had many colourful anecdotes of coaches without brakes, a strong contempt for the railways but, what always came to the fore was his resourcefulness in difficult situations. He started his own light haulage business (which was his last enterprise before retiring) and had many tales to tell of late trains when he was scheduled to collect bulk newspapers during the early hours of the morning. His, perhaps, was an insight into the nationalised industry's failings. "No wonder", he said, "the railways lost this and most other business". He was right perhaps in his own way and I could never convince him that railways had served the country well in the past but were now a victim of changed circumstances. He had many strings to his bow but the common denominator was always one of working hard and not letting people down. Peter often burnt the candle at both ends and, to some extent this had an effect on his health in later years.

He had many contacts in the world of business and if he couldn't do it, he knew a man who could! If you had a problem, Peter could sort it out - be it tyres, traction motor repairs, plastic coating grab rails, spare parts - you name it. He had a practical knowledge and ability to exchange favours - almost as a conjuring trick - which helped many of us out of difficult situations. Of course, there was always the danger of Peter taking charge of your project and the situation needed careful handling if you were not to lose his invaluable contributions.

He was also very forthright in his opinions - "Glen Tramway? But it doesn't go anywhere!" "Mick's Rickety Railway" he used to say. Or on Blackpool's new tram fleet that's coming "Well, the one behind can only run as fast as the one in front!" In his own way he was absolutely right. He also had a sense of humour, of course, and I knew (as he certainly did) that he was able to touch a raw nerve on the sensitive subject of the Glen Tramway!

As a taster to retirement, Peter purchased a few acres of land outside York and a few of us enjoyed his hospitality there. He had various plans for the land but, perhaps for him, the rural idyll was not to be his destiny. Returning to his childhood town, he purchased a nice flat where he continued to provide hospitality to his many visitors and renewed acquaintanceships with people in the town. He enjoyed the "cut and thrust" of this busy seaside resort and occasionally got involved in helping out friends in their retail and wholesale businesses.

Peter had health problems which led to him having an operation to improve his blood circulation, but, deep down, he felt that something wasn't quite right, although outwardly, he said that the "op" had made a new man of him. It did extend his life, but he still had concerns: indeed, prior to his death, he was waiting for some test results.

How I'll miss our Saturday morning conversations discussing the state of the economy on both sides of the Irish Sea, sad that he was unable to come across and visit us, and selfishly, mourning the loss of a friend without being able to pay my last respects.

and from Brian Maguire

it was with sadness that I read about Peter's passing, a message from Geoff Welburn alerting me to it previously.

It took me back about twenty years, to when Peter lived in Bradford, and was a "regular" at Sandtoft. In the early days, he often came to my home for tea, and christened my wife "Mrs. Chips". He put in a lot of work on the Preston tow truck, removing the cherry picker that was once on the back, and the water tank, fitting a ladder for roof access, and super-strong towing equipment. This never failed up to when the Preston was dismantled for spares last year.

He was always around for testing sessions each spring, and was very good at the heavier work involved in preservation - tyre fitting and springs etc. Peter was also a good friend of Geoff Griffiths, who also stayed at my home when he visited Sandtoft. Together, they got the Cardiff trolleybus (203) into service, and followed it to the Black Country Living Museum on its visits there. Later on, Peter stepped in to help Tom Lister complete Bradford 735 to get it ready for the BCLM event, then moved on to getting Bradford 703 running. He never completed 703 as he moved to Blackpool, and his friend from Reiford, Alan Bird, also moved away. I never saw him again, but have many a fond memory of Peter in those early days. God bless him.

DIRECTORS' SPOT

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

2009 AGM OVERVIEW

Graham Bilbé, our Chairman, was away in Australia and New Zealand at the time of the AGM, so our President, Stanley King, chaired the meeting. Graham had provided a video report on the past year, beamed (upside down, of course) directly onto our video wall in the Lecture Theatre. He may provide details in due course of his trip to the other side of the world, where he visited several tram and trolleybus systems and museums.

It was reported that we now have 380 members, which includes six people who have taken up the new Life Membership. The low number of junior members was a concern. Visitor numbers were rising, particularly this year, which was certainly good news, and it was noted that the café takings were now exceeding those of the shop.

There were no new nominations for Board posts, so the current incumbents were re-elected as they were prepared to stand again, these being Francis Whitehead (Financial Director), and Steve Harrison and Ian Wilson (Ordinary Directors).

A Special Resolution was placed before the meeting, to increase the allowed number of members from 450. This restriction was initially placed on us by the Charity Commission when the Company was first formed, and is to do with creditors knowing how much the Company could be worth (i.e. up to £450, as members are obliged to contribute £1 each in the event of the winding up of the Company). The Charity Commission had been consulted about making an increase and had raised no objections and the resolution to increase the number of allowed members to 2,000 was duly carried by the meeting.

..... from **Tony Ferris, Facilities Director:**
SECURITY

The Board has agreed that site security is to be improved. We have a lot of items which have great value that need protecting. To this end there are two initial changes to be made:

1. The main office is to have much more limited access, whilst a new key pad is to be fitted to the traffic office with a number of the regularly-used keys available from there. The traffic office key code, and a list of the keys will be issued in due course to those who need to use them. As now, in emergencies, the telephone in the red phone box adjacent to the Lecture Theatre can be used for 999 calls.
2. The locks on the two outside gates, i.e. the main gate and the staff car park gate, are to be changed on 5 April 2010 and will require new keys to be issued. Therefore, will all members who currently have a gate key please write to me at the Museum saying that they have a key, the reason(s) why, and whether they want to be considered for a new replacement. Please mark your envelope "Gate Key" and make sure it arrives by 8 March. Applications received after this date may be delayed. Remember, the locks are to be changed during the course of 5 April 2010 - the reason for this date being two-fold: the Easter weekend is 2-5 April and we don't want volunteers not being able to get in on the first days of the season !!! Secondly, members can exchange their keys over the weekend and they can then go away with their new key ready for their next visit, obviating the need for us to post a lot out. New keys will only be supplied to those the Board consider suitably qualify for having one and the Board will deliberate on this well before the changeover. Keys will only be issued to those who are current, paid-up members and if an old key is not currently held, a £10.00 deposit will be required. After the lock change, please return your old key to me as soon as possible.

One or two other room locks are also being changed: those who need access will be advised and provided with new keys.

DUTY ROISTERING

With effect from the 2010 "season", I shall be organising the staffing rosters for open days. Will everyone who is available for various duties please notify me, if possible by email. I will then provide you with a schedule with the 2010 open days and duties so that you can complete it showing which days and duties you would like to do. My contact details are:

Telephone: Home - 01427 873278 Mobile - 07876 653541

e-mail - tonyferris@sandtoftf.org



THE ROUTE TO SANDTOFT

PLUMTREE - PART 11

Steve Collins

Stagnation

Late 1971, and Plumtree was showing distinct signs of decline: most of the trolleybuses had gone to Sandtoft, and many of the better motorbuses had also gone. Some were in store at Derby

Corporation's depot, and others were in the famous "Arch" in Huddersfield; Derby tramcar no.1 had gone to the Tramway Museum's storage facility at Clay Cross.

The only person who seemed to be doing anything on site was Grimsby John, and he was acquiring vehicles with a determination which was quite surprising in the circumstances. Since his arrival the previous year, Grimsby John had purchased Nottingham tower wagon no.802. He followed this by taking on the Grimsby Guy workhorse, in which several people had had shares. His next acquisition was Nottingham 200 (previously West Bridgford 31), and this is possibly unique as it was purchased by accident. Due to confusion over numbers, he made an offer for a vehicle that was in full running order, but gave the wrong fleet number, which was a bus that was a stripped non-runner. Because his price was based on the fact that the vehicle he wanted was complete, he out-bid the breakers for the scrapper - bad luck really.

Next he discovered that Hollis of Queensferry, a coach operator, was selling some of their more choice vehicles on the open market. Grimsby John bought three, a remarkably rancid 170-series pre-war Dennis Lancet, which had a decaying body which appeared to be held together with rust and dirt, a rather nice Bedford WLB, which had previously operated for an independent coach company named Teas, Biscuits, Minerals and Crisps, and a respectable looking Bedford OWB which had started life with the Shropshire independent, Whittle of Highley. He later obtained what was destined to be the last "exhibit" at Plumtree, an AEC Regent III driver-training bus which had originated with Doncaster Corporation.

As well as all this vehicular activity, he also acquired a stack of old telegraph poles from somewhere, and had them erected to use as traction poles. He then began stringing span wires between them using Nottingham 802, but never progressed any further. I shall make no comment whatsoever, except to say that Tom Bowden and I had no interest in all this - we had other things to occupy us. So too, had the motorbus men: they had taken on the tenancy of a railway goods shed at Snarestone in Leicestershire, and began to collect all their vehicles there. A word on Snarestone is, I think, in order, as they openly admit they made a bad choice.

Snarestone shed had some interesting qualities: it was a typical railway building, about twice the size of the one at Plumtree, with a doorway large enough to allow access for double deckers. The roof was virtually all glass, but this was not ordinary glass, it had two very special properties - it somehow managed to shut out all the daylight, while at the same time letting in all the rain. When you combine this latter feature with the fact that the shed had a soil floor, what these people had rented was, in the words of Steve Blood (the well-known Derby preservationist), a roofed swamp.

As if the conditions in the shed weren't bad enough, an old bat, who took an instant dislike to the motorbus men, and complained about them at every opportunity, occupied the station house. All it took was for a car to drive past her home, and she was on the phone to the railways, protesting at their

continual invasions of her privacy, and ongoing bad behaviour. The future didn't look very bright.

Some attempts to improve the conditions were made: some brave (or possibly insane) souls actually climbed onto the roof, and risked not only evisceration on shards of broken glass, but also a headlong plunge into the mire below. They fastened some empty plastic fertilizer bags over the worst areas, and retreated thinking they had done everything they could. The following week they returned, and as they neared the site, someone commented that somebody had been scattering plastic bags in the fields and hedgerows. Sharestone was marked down as a lost cause after that.

The Teacher severed his links with Plumtree in a variety of ways. He originally had three vehicles on site - Nottingham trolleybus 578, West Bridgford Daimler 25, and the Tilling Stevens single decker, formerly with a showman. He had off-loaded 578 onto The Chairman at the end of 1970, and at about the same time the body on the Tilling began to collapse. Whatever held up the body aft of the rear wheels gave up the ghost, so that it sagged until it was resting on the ground: this led Tom Bowden to christen it "The Fast Back Tilling". The Teacher organised somebody to help him break the rest of the body up, or more correctly, somebody broke the body up and The Teacher supervised him doing it. He then found a shed at Sutton-in-Ashfield, and the chassis plus selected bits of the body went there. Steve Blood was also involved with Sutton, and he related the following story: one day Roy Marshall, the respected enthusiast, photographer, and former manager, visited the shed. He stood looking at the Tilling chassis and the heap of body fragments next to it, and said "What's he going to do about seats?"



Nottingham 200 at Plumtree Photo: Steve Collins collection

engine, for an AEC with one, in the form of Nottingham 200. Grimsby John agreed, and so 200 made its final journey to Hartwood Finance at Blacker Hill near Barnsley, and The Teacher leaves the story.

Tom and I dragged Rotherham 74 out of the quarry at Braithwell in 1972, which is, of course, a yarn for another day, and it was mid-1973 before we next went up to Plumtree for a snoop round. Apart from neglect, there was no

evidence of any real change since I had last been there nearly two years previously. Derby tower wagon no.2 had been left there, minus engine, and could only be described as derelict. No.2 had been used by "The Engineer" to tow Derby trolleybuses to Plumtree five years earlier, and I later discovered that he had bought it for its engine, which he had fitted to GNU 750, the Blue Bus Daimler COG5.

There had been an outbreak of graffiti about 1971, and nobody had bothered to clean any of it off. Whoever the author of the graffiti was, he must have had a very limited vocabulary, as none of the words had more than three letters. The Grimsby Guy workhorse had the word "Bob" scrawled on it, and Grimsby John flew into a rage when he saw it. I could understand him being annoyed, but he really was furious - an odd way to behave when you consider that the Guy had no windows, no seats, no staircase, a large square hole cut in the roof, and a knackered engine - so why be so upset because a young lad wrote his name on it? Nottingham 466 had a rude, three-letter word which rhymes with socks and is often preceded by the word "chicken" written across the front, and that was still there two years later. Ignoring the graffiti, we were more concerned about the state 466 had been allowed to get into: most of the windows were broken, and the nearside of the cab had gone. For some reason, large square holes had been cut in a lot of the seat backs, and the rot in the framework was spreading. We decided to go and see The Chairman about this, and see if we could do something about it.

I had not seen The Chairman for two years, and what I found shocked me. He was a broken man; he was carrying all the expense of Plumtree, and I just don't know how he was doing it. We explained why we were there, and his



Nottingham 466 - safe at last

Photo: Steve Collins

attitude was simple, "if you think you can do something with four double six" (he always called it that), "take it". Mike Dare was contacted, and he was equally direct. "Get it to Sandtoft, and put it straight undercover" was all he said. Green Tree George was approached regarding towing, and so in July 1973, obsolete Karrier trolleybus no.466, the vehicle Plumtree had been set up to accommodate, left for Sandtoft, looking far more obsolete than when it had arrived. That night, for the first time in eleven years, it was safe and out of the elements. Not only that, but it marked a subtle change in Mike's thinking. He had always said he didn't want "wrecks" at Sandtoft, and wreck was really the only word anybody could use to describe 466. What made him change his mind? I think he knew Plumtree was all his fault, and he was trying to make amends. Whatever the reason, it saved 466.

With 466 secure, Tom and I carried on with our plans to try to save a pre-war Nottingham trolleybus in the shape of 367. This poor old lady had languished at Sid Leverton's garage in Lincolnshire since about 1954. We had kept an eye on it since 1971, and had tried to lever it out of him on several occasions, but he wouldn't say yes or no. Early in 1974 he did at last allow us to clear all his junk out of it, but he still procrastinated. At about the same time, Tom decided to buy Nottingham 161, an AEC Regent III motorbus, and one day in the summer of 1974, we used it to take a load of wooden props over to 367. Sid's attitude changed after that. I think he realised we were serious about 367, and not just wasting his time. Nottingham 367 made the journey to Sandtoft in September 1974.

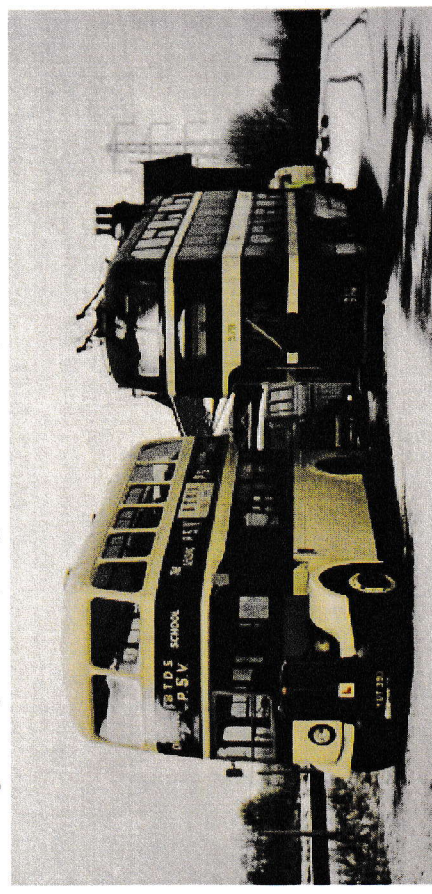
Our pleasure at rescuing 367, which was boosted when we helped with the salvage of Mexborough 34 two weeks later, soon evaporated when, in late November, Tom received a message from The Chairman. The tenancy at Plumtree was being terminated at the end of the year: if we wanted anything else from there, we had a month to do it.

Tom went to see The Chairman, to sort out various matters, including the ownership of Notts. & Derbys. trolleybus 357. Tom already owned half the vehicle in partnership with The Chairman, so this was resolved to Tom's benefit (on this occasion a gas stove did not feature in the transaction). An agreement was concluded over the future of Midland General 117, an AEC Regent III non-runner which The Chairman also owned. Also discussed was the future of Nottingham 578, Tom saying he would see if he could find somebody to take that as well. The Chairman's other vehicle, Barton 816, a 1936 Leyland TD4 had already been sold to The Engineer from Derby, and had gone to Snaresstone.

Our next port of call was Grimsby John: he owned eight vehicles at Plumtree, so he was happy to join forces with us, to see what we could salvage from the wreckage. We thought the time was now right to put an idea we had been toying with for some time on the table: Grimsby John owned West Bridgford 25, the utility Daimler CWA6 which had a Brush body very similar to the one on Nottingham 466, and we suggested that we should buy it from him to use for body parts during 466's reconstruction. He dithered a bit at first, but we



West Bridgford 25 (at Sandtoft, alongside Rotherham 74) Photo: Steve Collins collection



Doncaster 122 with Nottingham 578 at Plumtree Photo: Steve Collins collection

made him a very fair offer, which he accepted.

Some of the Doncaster lads also contacted Grimsby John regarding his former Doncaster AEC Regent III, which had been used as a tuition vehicle in Nottingham before he bought it, and that left for Sandtoft very quickly. That was Doncaster 122, and was owned at Sandtoft by Tony Peart. Tony had been looking for another vehicle for some time, and when he discovered 122

sported a very rare Snocem covered ceiling, he knew that his search was over. We mobilised what forces we could, and one Saturday went to Plumtree in Nottingham 161 to work out exactly what we were going to do, and make some initial preparations. The site looked basically how it had done eighteen months earlier when 466 had left. A scrap man had been called in to break up the ex-Trent FEDD, but all he had done was tip it over, and cut out the chassis, leaving what was left of the body on its side. We began shunting using 161, and after we had been at it for a couple of hours, a chap from the station master's old house came out to see us.

The station house had been rented out to help provide income, and the family who lived there were holding a wedding reception for their daughter on the very afternoon we decided to start sorting out. The man couldn't believe it. I heard him say "There's been no activity up here for months, then the one day we have a bit of a do, all this happens". We explained what we were up to, and he seemed quite happy, in fact he started bringing food from their buffet out for us, and the guests started to come and watch all the fun. The best part was during a break, while we were polishing off dishes of trifle, two bridesmaids came over and had their photograph taken in front of 161. Those people wouldn't forget that wedding in a hurry!

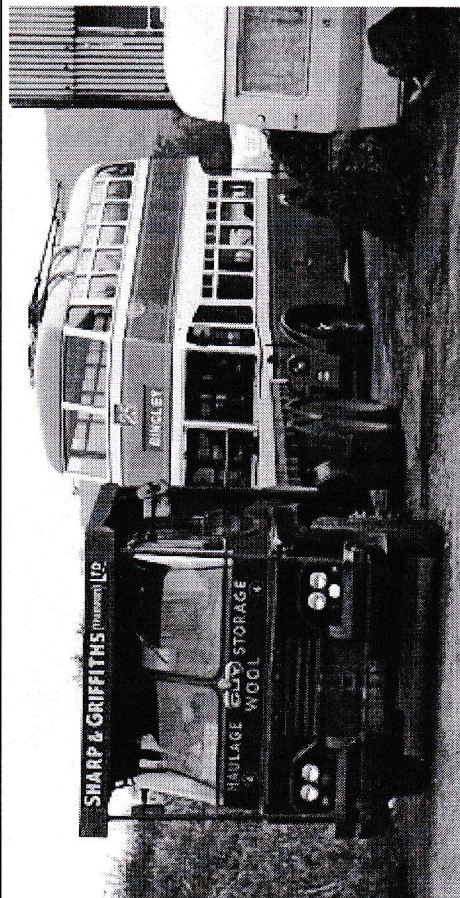
So with Green Tree George contracted to provide all the necessary towing, and Christmas rapidly approaching, it was time for the final curtain call. The Great Sack of Plumtree was about to begin.

ON TOW

REMINISCENCES

The article on Mexborough 34's arrival at Sandtoft suggested I forget about that. Dates and times are my let-down but your editor suggested I forget about that

Mick Leak



746 being towed by the Guy about to enter into Sharp & Griffiths' yard at Baildon. This was not the Sunday in question but rather over a year previously when returning from Halifax after its exterior repaint by H.C.P.T

Photo: J Copland for David Mitchell

problem and place on record the bits I do remember! I suppose I should start with Bradford 746 (it took up a lot of my spare time in one way or another!). At least, it did until David Mitchell offered the vehicle (on loan) to the West Yorkshire P.T.E. for a future museum project.

Before its return to Bradford, 746 had suffered a few electrical problems - like a failed compressor, burnt-out contactor solenoid, etc. I think David had visions of the timber framed vehicle becoming a heap of charcoal on the depot floor due to an electrical fire. Whatever the reason, the time arrived for 746's departure from Sandtoft. For me, it was a sad day, but it was coming back to Bradford and that offered some consolation. The date was 22 March 1975, which I think was a Sunday.

In those days, before the completion of the M62, it was usual (certainly between Bradford and Sandtoft), to travel via Doncaster and up the A1 to Garforth, head for Leeds and thence to Bradford. We were lucky (or so we thought) in being able to access the fairly new stretch of the M62 at Ferrybridge. I was steering the trolleybus, Fred Strauss (Sharp & Griffiths' chief mechanic) was driving the towing vehicle and David Mitchell was support in his car.

I should mention that the towing vehicle was a six-wheel Guy flat-bed lorry which used to draw a trailer and had been relegated to a recovery vehicle in case anything happened to the rest of the wool haulage fleet. Sharp & Griffiths were based at Baildon, Hollins Hill - not too far from Harry Ramsden's fish & chip shop. The company also had a thriving garage and car sales business in those days. Cars taken in part-exchange were often seconded to the car hire business which, at one time, numbered over a hundred in the fleet.

Anyway, back to our journey! Everything had been checked for being secure and working: towing clamp, bar, marker lights, "Long Vehicle" and "On Tow" signs etc. The day was fine and dry and progress was reasonable - 30 or so miles per hour - and getting better on the A1. We reached Ferrybridge and joined the M62. We hadn't gone too far (we were approaching the bridge over the Castleford - Pontefract road when I espied a police car in the mirror: with blue lights winking, he pulled past us, only to signal to Fred to pull over. Wherever Fred went, I always thought it reasonable to follow, so we drew onto the hard shoulder. David pulled up behind the trolleybus. Judging by the constable's stance it seemed as though we had committed some heinous crime, but quite what I didn't know. I got down from the cab, and so did Fred, as the PC made his way to the back of 746. An equally bewildered David Mitchell joined us as we began to wonder what was going on!

The policeman proceeded to examine every aspect of the convoy - determined to find something wrong because he thought something was wrong. He did not know what was wrong and eventually called his superior at Pontefract police station. So we ended up an even longer train of vehicles parked at the side of the motorway. Nothing was found to be wrong and even the PC's sergeant muttered to me that he wouldn't have stopped us in his patch, but, unfortunately, his subordinate had done so and was convinced we had

transgressed ! He instructed us to continue our journey and advised Fred that his constable would be in touch on the Tuesday. So off we went, relieved for the time being, but wondering what was on the cards.

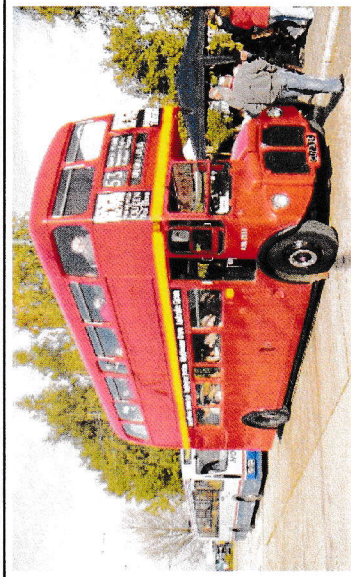
Now, the Guy, in its permanent rôle as a recovery vehicle - operating on trade plates - didn't need an MoT, but did need to be fit for the road. It had a couple of concrete beams bolted down as ballast, which really rendered it unfit for any other use, but Fred was taking no chances on the Monday morning. Anything that was suspect was fixed or tidied-up, although in truth, it was all quite legal on the Sunday. It wasn't until Tuesday evening that we learnt what had been going on. The over-zealous PC had spent a large part of Monday afternoon in Pontefract Library looking up Construction & Use Regulations regarding permanently-designated towing vehicles. Armed with information gained at the library, the policeman put in an appearance at the haulage yard.

Having looked at the trade plates, tyres, lights, brakes, bodywork, paintwork, towbar, etc, he pulled some notes from his pocket in an almost triumphal gesture. He stated, reading from his notes, that in order for this "so-called" recovery vehicle to comply with the use of the trade plates, the insurance and other exemptions, it had to have a means of lifting the vehicle being recovered ! Fred walked over to the lorry's tool box and pulled out a ten-ton jack. "But that's not a crane" protested the officer. "But will it lift this lorry or the bus off the ground ?" asked Fred - prepared to demonstrate certain principles of levitation. A defeated constable left for his home town, no doubt to receive a friendly word of advice once back at the station. As often the case, rights and wrongs are often a technicality. Who was right 35 years ago is a moot point !

RECENT RUNNING DAYS

ST. LEGER RALLY - 18 OCTOBER 2009

Jim Sambrooks
Despite being unable to join us on the day, Charlie Bullock, our 94-year-old member from Scarborough, spoke to the Air Ministry on our behalf. As usual, they were non-committal, but promised to see what they could do in response to his request for good weather for the event. For once, they were true to their word and we were rewarded with sunshine.



RML 2313 ready to set off on an Isle of Axholme tour

Photo: Tony Ferris

to display them all.

Stewart David describes the trolleybus operation in his report, but I can say that they seemed to be carrying healthy loads for most of the day. David Shepherd's walking tours of the vehicles in our depot also looked to be well attended.

A very popular attraction at all of our running days is the Isle of Axholme motor bus tour: three such tours ran on the day with journeys duplicated or even triplicated. Bruce Lake's "Tiddles", a MAN single decker of Stagecoach in orange Humber Fast Cat livery for services across the Humber Bridge, and Ken Thompson's 1947-built ex-East Kent Road Car Dennis Lancet were duplicated by a Routemaster and Doncaster 22 and 55; I'm not sure which was the "dupe", but they were "trip'd" (if trip'd is a word), by a Stagecoach three-axle Olympian.



Stagecoach's 3-axle Olympian



Guy Otter pantechicon

Cavalcades (shouldn't that be motorcades ?) were staged at various times during the afternoon with visiting vehicles encouraged to join the trolleybuses operating under the wires. It is always good to see the trolleybuses running with cars and buses of similar age, just as they did in service. Amongst the many interesting vehicles attending were the Guy Otter pantechicon in Silent Night livery (a regular attendant), a Bed-



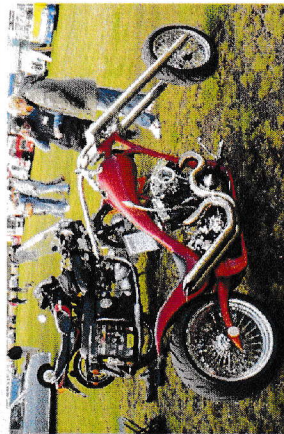
Motorcade

Photo this page: Tony Ferris

ford TK tractor unit whose brake release chirp was a delight to listen to (PTZEW) and Mike Hirst's London FX3 taxicab. Buses not previously mentioned included a Leyland Leopard/ Alexander Y-type in Strathray livery and a brand new Dennis Trident of Stagecoach, destined for Barnsley town service and yet to enter service. With so many cars to choose from, it is difficult to know which to mention, but the 1939 Austin 12, new to a vicar in Belfast, the 1958 Austin Nash Metropolitan in pink and white, the 1953 Standard Vanguard, the 1929 Lea Francis P-type and the Citroen 2 CV rebuilt by its owner into a three-wheeler, all caught the eye.

Sales stands in the depot and on the grass appeared to be doing brisk business and queues were often seen in our *Tea Trolley* café which had all but sold out by the end of the day. The ice cream stall did a roaring trade and audio visual presentations in the *Regal* cinema told the story of the trolleybus and the history of our Museum.

Altogether, a very enjoyable day with plenty to keep our visitors occupied. Many thanks to all who played a part, however large or small but especially to Charlie for his words with the Air Ministry as the rain held off until everything was put away and we were locking the gates to go home.



A STORY FROM THAT ST. LEGER RALLY DAY

The people whom I meet at the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft never cease to amaze me. I have been attending Sandtoft, enjoying the coffee cake or a bacon sandwich and just watching the work begin and seeing how it all worked. This has allowed me slowly to know many people and learn the Museum's complexities - such "café activities" have meant that I have enjoyed various chats and enjoyed listening to a number of stories, from both the public and staff.

Originally, a member of the public, then of TM@S, I am now training as a conductor. This last rôle, supervised by Sarah Shepherd, gave me another opportunity to talk to a couple of my passengers. Not only were they from the same town as me, but the same village, Wickersley in Rotherham. Bill, used to drive all the Rotherham "tracklesses", including the single-decker "73- type" like no.37, restored by Tim Stubbs, and the 1956 re-bodied Daimler double deckers being restored by Brian Maguire.

Not at all daunted by their first visit, Joan and Bill were very enthusiastic about TM@S. "Had we any Rotherham tracklesses?" As Dave Shepherd was beginning a depot tour, they joined him. They were overjoyed with their tour and the fact that 37 was there and was displaying "Wickersley 3": it really impressed them!

Time was agreed by Sarah, and found by me, to take Bill and his wife, Joan, over to the depot and, as I am a member of the Rotherham Trolleybus Group, we went on board. Naturally safety-conscious, we toured 37 and with the help and suggestions from Bruce, Tim and Brian, the Aldwarke Bus Museum is hoping to tape many of the stories that Bill and Joan told.

One of these stories was when Bill was driving a double-decker down Whinney Hill, Thrybergh, just as a power-cut, started! His skills and nerve were required, as there was a "stop" and a curve at the bottom of the hill. To add to his problems, both his booms de-wired as he descended the hill! Also, when he was returning to Rotherham with a day's last trackless from Wickersley, and travelling around the island at the Stag, in Rotherham, Bill brought most of the wires down. He was not a popular man with the overhead wiring crew!

Joan, was a clippie, and told stories of the various unofficial bell signals that she and her driver operated when the 'bus was full and she wanted him to go slowly, or she was tired and wanted an easy trip and so travel closely behind a trackless in front!

When Bill and Joan return to TM@S in 2010, as they plan to do, we intend to ensure that Bill is given some steps to help him climb into the cab of 37 and Joan is to try one of our ticket machines, not quite the bell punch type and ticket rack she used to use - it reminded me of what TM@S is all about!

I am in contact with Bill Rotherham 37 waits to take up service occasionally, and this



Photo: Mike Johnson

was his last message: "Thank you for the video pictures. They are a lovely memento of a great day out. The visit was an 80th birthday present from my daughter and both myself and my wife thoroughly enjoyed the day and we are already planning our next visit. We wish to thank all the staff of the Museum for their courtesy, friendliness and helpfulness, which helped to make the day so memorable."

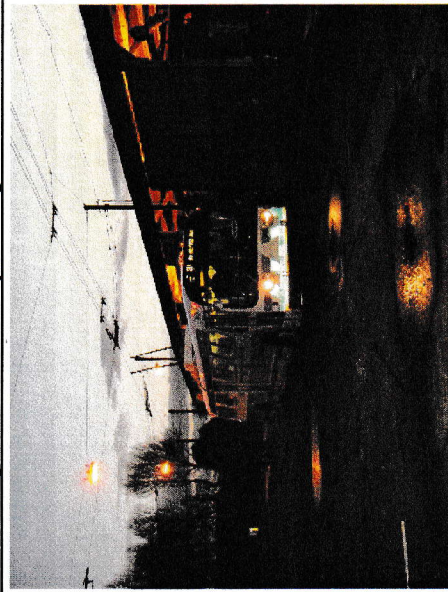
TWILIGHT RUNNING DAY

The Museum staged its annual Twilight Running day on Sunday, 15 November. A good crowd of visitors turned out to see our trolleybuses operating after dark: vehicles in service this year included Maidstone 56, Huddersfield 619 and Bradford 746. Both 56 and 619 have traction lighting, making them ideal candidates for this activity, and Bradford 746 was celebrating her 60th birthday, having been launched into passenger service

Stewart David

opening the, then new, trolleybus service no.30 to Bradford Moor on 1 December 1949, and was fittingly displaying that destination on her blinds for the occasion. David Mitchell, who saved both 746 and Weymann-bodied Bradford Corporation BUT no.758 for preservation also paid us a visit to mark the occasion.

In addition to the service trolleybuses in action, visitors were also treated to a brief demonstration-only run by our latest acquisition, Canadian single decker, Edmonton no.189, which our engineering team had been frantically working on for most of the day to remedy an electrical problem. Doncaster Corporation single-deck AEC no.22 also joined the trolleybuses "after dark" service, carrying several loads around the



Edmonton 89 on one of its first runs at Sandtoft - on Twilight Day, 15 November 2009
Photo: Stewart David



RT 3323 on a demonstration run
Photo: John Shellard

Museum. RT3323, which has been undergoing major restoration work at the Museum also briefly joined the demonstration runs, making an altogether very impressive display, and giving our visitors plenty to see, film and travel on.

NEWS BULLETIN

Commercial

Visitor numbers to the Museum are up generally this year, and ahead of budget, which is very encouraging.

The Trolleybus Driving Experience schedule has been completed. 16 people took part during 2009 and this has generated a significant new income stream for the Museum. Many glowing reports have been received from participants, who thought that the method of tuition was first-rate and gave them time to get their heads round what was required, putting them more at ease for driving what they saw as our valuable exhibits (quite right too!). There have been no accidents and, indeed, not even a dewirement on these days. All participants succeeded in doing some "service runs", just as we do on open days. Four dates have been set for 2010 (17 May, 14 June, 12 July and 20 September) with the possibility of adding more if required. (*Late news is that spaces on all these dates are now sold out!*)

We have had an enquiry from a tour operator in South America as to whether they could bring up to 20 people to one of our TDEs (yes - South America!). Despite the income this would generate, we are being very cautious as this would mean running a very intensive course, could involve some language problems and would stretch our tutor resources somewhat.

Updating the last edition of Sandtoft Scene's "News Bulletin", the Hull Access Improvement Group (HAIG), following their visit to the Museum, have now submitted their report. It contains a number of suggestions for site improvements which will enable partially-sighted, hard-of-hearing, the infirm or wheelchair users to get around the Museum more easily and participate more readily. These suggestions are being analysed and alterations will be made where possible in due course.

Again, following on from last edition's report, the Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme (VAQAS) representative duly did an assessment of our Museum and the report has also been received. We have, in fact, passed their Standard, and so can join many other attractions around the country (although only five in North Lincolnshire), and are able to display their Quality Assured Visitor Attraction logo. There were, of course, a number of recommendations made, and these are being taken up where possible.

Aiden Proctor continues to develop the website: he has introduced an experimental on-line shop facility. So far this is selling a few different DVDs to see how it goes. A small number have been sold already. The on-line shop is accessed from a link on the home page of www.sandtoft.org.

Aiden is also working on the 2010 brochure and is hoping to have it available earlier than usual this year. One feature which is planned to be included (partly as a suggestion by the VAQAS visit) is a 3-D map showing the facilities we

have and where to find them.

Museum Site

A budget has been prepared for the work planned to be done over the winter to improve the site or rectify various problems. Whilst the budget was agreed in Board, it will require the efforts of many people to complete all the jobs.

One essential job will be to delineate the new land from the original site so that we can use the field as a car park, and so stop visitors just wandering into the Museum area without paying as they can at the moment.

Steve Harrison has offered to sponsor a scheme to build protection for the lawn-mower display in the form of an "Agricultural Exhibition" as would have been done at shows. This will be a steel-framed arrangement covered with a strong canvas marquee cover so that it will look like a show tent. It will cover the area presently occupied by the lawn-mowers at the side of the cycle shop. This has been agreed, as the collection is viewed and appreciated by many visitors, and the exhibits need and deserve to be conserved and displayed better than they are at the moment.

Amongst a myriad of other jobs which have been done, the following are worthy of note:

- A new window unit has been fitted at Westgate as the original frame was rotten. An estimate is being prepared for the repainting of Westgate as it is getting somewhat shabby.
- The depot roof gutters were duly cleared - twenty wheelbarrow-loads of muck were removed!
- The Play Area has received some attention - the fence has been painted with preservative, and the play equipment has been checked and repainting is in progress.

It has been agreed that the stores prefab roof be replaced and work finished to make this building watertight. It is cheaper to do this refurbishment than to try and source an alternative substantial building.

It has also been agreed that we need help with some of our depot doors: many will know only too well that some won't open without a struggle, others flap about in the wind. This is mostly due to the age of the components, such as the suspended top track, the beams they are hung from and the door wheels. It is of concern that rectifying these is likely to be an expensive exercise, but quotes are to be sought.

Site projects for the winter include fitting out (ceiling, floor etc.) the "Skegness Hut" and the building of the play area inside. Some of the materials are already in stock. If we get that far, this will include moving the trolleybus simulator into the play area, thereby creating more space in the café.

It is planned to realign the kerbs outside the Lecture Theatre and put up the Lichfield bus shelter, which was given to us and dismantled by members in 2008.

Health and Safety

The sub-group has met again and made a number of recommendations on such topics as fire safety, site security, child protection, lone working, working

at height, training, and an emergency plan.

Hot working - please note that there are restrictions in our insurance policy on this: it obviously makes sense to ensure that no fires are unwittingly started due to careless use of welding or other hot equipment, and the smouldering of rags or timber after the worker has left. It is therefore our clear policy that no hot working should be undertaken within one hour (at least) of the worker concerned leaving the site of such work. Hot working includes: welding, brazing, soldering, grinding, fettling or any other activity that uses heat or generates sparks. Further, welding, brazing and the like must not be undertaken inside any building - including the workshop. This is an insurance requirement.

Training

Linda Proctor has been appointed as Training Co-ordinator. Linda will be trying to identify training needs and recommend or arrange necessary training. As part of this process, she will be keeping records of the training received by volunteers. The responses sent in by many members (thank you all for that!) will be collated as well, and added to that from new volunteers that we get. Linda's presence on site on most open days means that she will be able to talk to new volunteers, establish their background and possibly recommend what sort of work they might like to do. She has already developed a "new volunteers" form that will be filled in to provide a starting point when new people turn up.

A schedule of authorised drivers is being developed, to include trolleybuses (including the various individual overseas examples), motorbuses and ancillary vehicles. From this we will be able to easily tell which vehicles each driver has been trained for.

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS

TRAFFIC OFFICE

Traffic Staff Training Review

from Stewart David

We have certainly had a very busy 2009 with no less than seven new conductors successfully trained and passed-out and one new trolleybus driver too. The 2010 season promises to be even busier. Following a review of current Traffic Department training a new training management framework is to be introduced from Easter, formalising and improving the way training is planned and managed within the Traffic Department. Much of what it contains is, in fact, already being undertaken, but there is a clear need for better training needs planning and delivery.

The new framework is in three stages:

1. Conductor training
2. Trolleybus driver training, involving the standard UK 2 and 3-axle vehicles
3. Type training on the various overseas trolley vehicles in our operational fleet

We are also looking to formalise the platform guard rôle. Full details of the new process will be on display in the Traffic Office from Easter.

Vacancies - Reserve Duty Traffic Managers (Two Posts)

We are currently seeking a couple of volunteers, ideally existing trolleybus driving personnel, who would be prepared to receive training to cover the important operational rôle of Duty Traffic Manager in the absence of myself and/ or Dave Shepherd. Full details of what is required and a job description are available from myself at traffic@sandtoft.org or alternatively contact me at the Museum.

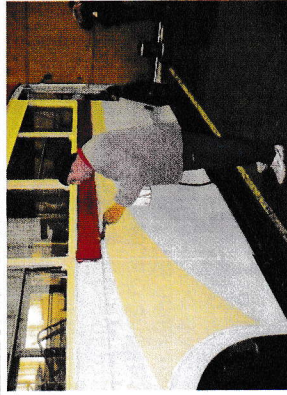
VEHICLES REPORTS

General: A few more vehicle owners have signed up to the Vehicle Owner's Agreement. As you may be aware, as an Accredited Museum we have to demonstrate that the Museum has a permanent range of vehicles to exhibit, something a "garage full of buses" cannot do. This has led to a list being produced of those who have not signed the Agreement. We would like to encourage all those owners to review this agreement and sign it, as it provides both themselves and the Museum with a structured accord on which to base future developments, whilst not tying the owner in to an inflexible arrangement - for example it does not mean that owners cannot remove their vehicles either on a temporary basis, or, with due warning, on a permanent basis.

Cardiff 203 (Report from Brian Maguire) The paint stripping has been completed and all has been sanded down and primed. Graham Bilbé and Ian Metcalfe removed the traction motor and it was sent away for overhaul. All the seats in the lower saloon have had the upholstery sent off to be fitted with new foam and moquette, with leather edging. All six wheels were removed and new tyres fitted, the repainted wheels were held back whilst the brakes were stripped down. This was not easy, as the back bogie held secrets ! The first off-side wheel had new shoes fitted at some time, but never adjusted up. The opposite side was so worn that the adjusters had gone over the point of no return, and someone had tried to remove the drum, and in so doing had split the drum's edge. The remaining two rear wheels had linings of less than one-eighth of an inch thick instead of the half inch of new ones (sorry, I don't do metric !!). The front drums were OK and were cleaned, re-fitted and all the brakes adjusted up, after, that is, all shoes had been re-lined.

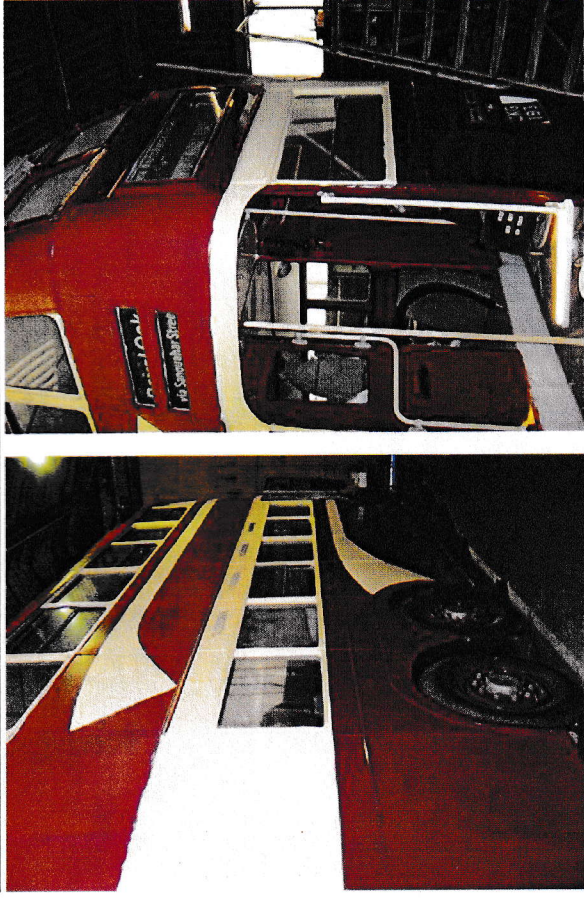
Inside, the lower saloon ceiling has returned to its original off-white colour, and the platform area has been treated to a repaint back to maroon (or, more correctly, crimson lake). This colour was matched with original paint found on the platform area in one or two places.

With the stripping to the off-side completed, a coat of primer showed up many small dents - and some not so small. The decision was made to re-panel the lower saloon, and fit new beading, as the old ones were not very straight. On



Brian Maguire at work on 203

Photo: David Needham



Photos: John Shellara

removing the panels, the usual problems with rotten timber were found and much timber had to be replaced. Once done, the new panels were cut to size, the rear of them coated in bituminous paint and the framework also treated the same. The two hatches were removed and tidied up before being fitted back on. The cab door has been removed, and the front panel, behind the wing, is off to facilitate the rebuild of the framing in that area.

Further interior work has seen the chromed fittings removed and taken to be re-coated - after we found the firm, as they had moved !

The outside panels have now been undercoated and 203 is beginning to demonstrate the splendour of her service livery.

The motor has been taken apart to find the fault, and two of the windings have touched, with the inevitable "bang". The cost of rewinding the motor is in the region of £5,000, but the work has now been completed and the motor is back in 203.

More cash is required to help complete 203 (it is being restored as a memorial to the late Geoff Griffiths and Mike Dare). Donations should not be sent to me, but to the BTS Treasurer, Roy Fawcett, at 57 Sutcliffe Avenue, Earley, Reading, RG6 7BD.

Edmonton 189: Following a 4-week-long, 5,000-plus mile journey the best part of the way across North America and across the Atlantic Ocean, no.189 arrived at Liverpool on 27 October 2009 and, following the completion of import formalities, was transferred to Sandtoft (on a low-loader) on 29 October, where we had some difficulties getting it unloaded without grounding.



Edmonton 189, with a crate of spares, arrives at Sandtoft after its long journey

Photo: Tony Ferris

Work on 189 since has resulted in a few problems being sorted out, such that it was able to run briefly at the end of the Twilight event on 15 November. Further work will take place over the winter so that the planned launch can take place over the 17/ 18 April Trolleyday Weekend.

Nottingham 466: The traction motor for this vehicle has been removed from the electrical store and has been sent away for refurbishment.

Bradford Tower Wagon 032 left the Museum last August for a short time to be worked on by Andy Feather and to be used as a pattern for the restoration of sister tower wagon 031.

The International Harvester tractor and the Ford Transit Cherry Picker have both had work carried out to their braking systems.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACQUISITIONS

An Arnheim Volvo: Discussions with the operator revealed that Connexion is now owned by a French company and is to be re-branded "Brenç". It has hitherto been at local discretion whether to donate vehicles to recognised groups, but now head office is apparently taking a stance that if these trolleybuses can be sold elsewhere for further service, then they should be. It is noted, however, that a small number need to be kept for the re-opened route 2 to Hoogkamp. We await further information on this one with interest.

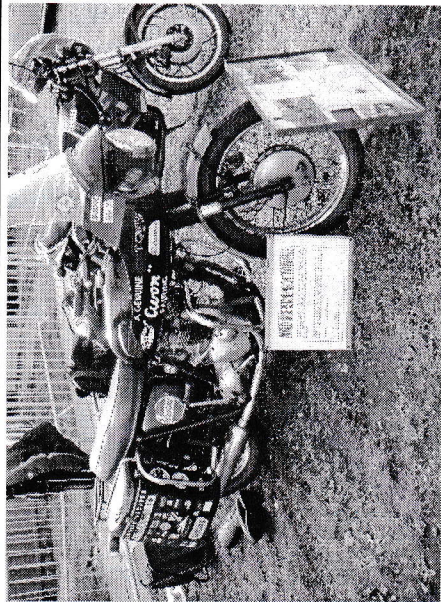
Wellington 82: Graham Bibbé examined 82 during his recent visit to New Zealand and has declared that it is worthy of preservation at our Museum. It is complete apart from some minor items which would be sourced and put on board. 82 now needs some transport, and hence funding. More news, and no doubt, some pictures will emerge from Graham in a future edition.

AT THE BUS STOP

A Triumph 650cc motorcycle

We had a visit from Mr Paul Pratt during the St. Leger Rally and he bought with him his 1966 Triumph 650cc motorbike with which, between 1969 and 1979, he made a legendary longest continuous solo motor cycle voyage in history - a 115,000 mile journey through some 48 countries. With the exception of the replacement of normal wear and tear items, the bike is basically original - testament to a well-made bike.

Paul is a native of Sheffield, and started motorcycling in 1945 on a 250cc New Imperial which cost ten pounds. In 1966 he was an electronic engineer at the Norwegian Technical University in Trondheim, but he had the dream of circumnavigating the world on a motorbike. This led him to purchase his new Triumph 650cc motorbike.



Paul Pratt's Triumph 650 at the St Leger Rally

Photo: David Needham

Some of the countries he visited during his historic journey on his Triumph motorbike included Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Austria, Holland, Belgium, Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, Gibraltar, Andorra, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Egypt, New Zealand, Australia, Mexico, Guatemala, Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, U.S.A., Canada, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macau, Thailand. Laos, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Philippines, Iran, Muscat, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Tunisia and Algeria (*I make that 70 !*). Newspapers and magazines worldwide covered his travels.

He has made over 100 television and radio appearances and delivered over 2,000 lectures while publishing about 250 articles in world-wide distribution magazines. In 1976, while staying in the Philippines, Paul published his first book, *World Understanding on Two Wheels*. At the conclusion of the outstanding Latin American ride, Paul was invited to the official reception given in honour of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and Prince Phillip's visit to Sao Paulo, Brazil in 1968.

Soon after Paul's arrival in Japan, in June 1970, the famous motorcycle was

placed on display in the British pavilion at the International Expo 70 held in Osaka. Paul has made a comprehensive photographic record of his achievements and is available to give lectures, illustrated with colour slides, relating to his extensive travels. These programmes are suitable for schools, colleges, clubs and other institutions. They cover Latin America, East Asia, the Indian sub-continent, Middle East and Europe. Presentations can be arranged to suit individual requirements, along with supplementary programmes - for example, "The Trans-Siberian Railway", "Steam Railways in South America and East Asia", "Motorcycle activities world-wide".

For more information regarding his lectures or books, you can contact him by e-mail: paulpratt@hotmail.com, by telephone 01246 825036 or by letter to Paul R. Pratt, F.R.G.S., 15, Brockley Avenue, Shuttlewood, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S44 6RB.

REVIEWS

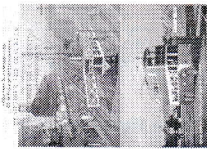
DVD - Remember the Trackless

The Trolleybuses of Mexborough & Swinton and Rotherham

Published by Online Video

£18.00

(UK Postage £1.00)



Another of Online Video's excellent and informative programmes about transport from yesteryear - and a rare opportunity to remember two former trolleybus systems in one programme, as the pair were linked with regard to overhead wiring and operations.

The two systems which are the subject of this programme (originally released several years ago in VHS format) are the company-owned Mexborough & Swinton one and the municipally-owned Rotherham one. The Mexborough & Swinton system closed 49 years ago and the Rotherham one closed 4 years later... so this DVD programme provides an excellent opportunity to look back and remember two contrasting, yet partly-joint, operations.

Opening with the early days of both systems' respective tramway operations, the programme takes the viewer through the developments of those systems and in the case of the Mexborough & Swinton tramway, the early decision to replace the Doultter surface-level contact stud method of power supply with overhead wires. In time, both operators decided to introduce trolleybuses to replace the trams - though for some while, Rotherham had to retain its joint tramway operation with Sheffield - and in doing so Mexborough & Swinton and Rotherham were among the early British trolleybus operators. Rotherham had another distinction - being the fourth operator in the country to introduce trolleybuses and the first one to operate outside the municipal boundary (with the opening of the route to Maltby).

Owing to the presence of several low bridges (one of which was particularly low!) the Mexborough & Swinton system always used single-decker trolleybuses, and although Rotherham also operated single-deckers for many

years the Corporation decided, in 1955, to introduce some double-decker trolleybuses by having new bodies built on the chassis of some of the single-deckers. Incidentally, although the M&S system was single-decker only, there was an occasion when a double-decker trolleybus operated on part of the system: Doncaster Corporation Garrett trolleybus no.1, bearing trade plates, was operated (on what appears to have been a demonstration run) when new and this unique working is featured in the programme.

Both trolleybus systems' operations and development are dealt with in detail, both with diagrams and film, and the joint services are mentioned too. The wartime and post-war fleet situation is addressed, and although none of the 6 Hastings Guy single-decker trolleybuses which were acquired by the M&S operation in 1942 is seen in operation there (the commentary mentions that only 3 of these vehicles actually entered M&S service), the type is shown operating in its home town, before the move northwards, to show what the vehicles looked like. The respective post-war fleet replacement programmes are covered, along with the introduction of a new green-and-cream livery (in place of the earlier red one) for the M&S vehicles and it is interesting to see a colour photograph of the one member of the pre-war fleet which survived in service long enough to receive the new colours.

With Rotherham Corporation's decision, mentioned above, to introduce some double-decker trolleybuses, Doncaster Corporation trolleybus no.362 was hired in June 1955 to test the height of the Rotherham wiring and is seen during the visit; some of the overhead wiring, it was found, needed to be raised by up to 2 feet to allow double-decker operation. The first of the re-bodied trolleybuses entered service in March 1956 (the bodies cost £2,736 each, an interesting contrast with today's prices), and in time many of the Rotherham single-decker trolleybuses which weren't re-bodied were sold for further service abroad: some sequences of some of these trolleybuses, in their new homes abroad, are included in the programme.

With the local authorities not taking up their respective options of purchasing the Mexborough & Swinton operations (in a similar way to the options given to local authorities in respect of tramway operations), and the increases in electricity and other costs, the way was clear for the Mexborough & Swinton company to replace their trolleybuses with motorbuses. This was achieved in two stages, and when the last M&S trolleybuses ran on 27 March 1961, there was a procession of several trolleybuses, headed by no.29 (which had been partly cut-down to open-top form), carrying the Rawmarsh Prize Band. The disposals of M&S trolleybuses - to Teesside for spares; and to Bradford for further operation are recorded, as are some earlier disposals to Doncaster (where they were re-bodied with new Roe bodies, which were later on then placed onto motorbus chassis as and when individual trolleybuses were withdrawn).

Trolleybus operation in Rotherham continued until the closure, without formal ceremony, on 2 October 1965. Fortunately Rotherham double-decker trolleybuses 37 and 44 live on in preservation as part of the Sandtoft fleet (and

no.44 is seen, briefly, in operation on enthusiast tours in Manchester and Wolverhampton); single-decker no.74, another member of the Sandtoft fleet, is undergoing restoration in the Midlands. Former Mexborough & Swinton trolleybus 34, dating from 1927, and the subject of an article in the previous issue of *Sandtoft Scene* has been preserved at Sandtoft for many years. No.34 is seen when it was in use in a field at Moorends, near Thorne, prior to being purchased for preservation and moved to Sandtoft.

I could say more about the programme, as there is so much information, including reminders which were still in existence (and may still be thus!) long after the closures, but space precludes writing more and I wouldn't wish to spoil readers' enjoyment of what's in the programme. With some rare early 8mm film included, many nostalgic views, plus an informative commentary, some colour footage, and a running time of 78 minutes, this DVD fills a gap in trolleybus history and is recommended both for those who knew either system and for those who didn't. *Remember the Trackless* is available from our *Trolleyshop* at Sandtoft - and now also our on-line shop at www.sandtoft.org.

Doug Barrow



DVD – Rewinding Reading's Transport History

Published by JJS Entertainment

£12.00

(UK Postage £1.00)

In May 2006 a special event was held, at Sandtoft, to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the commencement of trolleybus operation in Reading. This programme, produced by JJS Entertainment, concentrates mainly on the anniversary event but also covers other aspects such as the planning of the event and the work which was undertaken so that four former Reading trolleybuses - 113, 144, 174 and 181 - could operate during the event (and Reading 193 took part, too, as a static attraction but is seen, some time before the event, in action).

Two members of the JJS team took part in this programme: Syd Eade provided an informative, yet unobtrusive, commentary and James Race linked various aspects of the system's history and the programme (as well as interviewing Graham Bilbé, Chairman of The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft). The programme opens with a dedication to the late Mike Dare, founder of the Reading Transport Society - latterly known as the British Trolleybus Society - and of the early preservation operation which in time led to the establishment of The Trolleybus Museum.

Most of the filming was undertaken during the May 2006 weekend, when the five trolleybuses mentioned above were joined by six preserved Reading motorbuses (nos.3, 47, 52, 76, 98 and 258) and the preserved Reading (ex-London Transport) AEC tower wagon TXV 909; it was good to see, too, some cars of the time - and a couple of taxis - which attended the event. With some

of the Museum's fleet moved off-site for the weekend, there was ample room for a number of the former Reading Corporation visiting buses, and 193, to be parked in various locations and give the viewer a "feel" that it could be Reading and not North Lincolnshire. One scene which, for me, portrayed the time-capsule "feel" was when trolleybus 181 and motorbus 47 met on the bend by the entrance from the main road passing the Museum; with the "Slow, Major Road Ahead" sign there (and with the absence of passing traffic, and ignoring the closed entrance gate, which wasn't obtrusive) I paused the programme and thought it could be a 1950's scene and not May 2006.

In addition to seeing the trolleybuses in action, the visiting motorbuses are also seen at work... and the customary vehicle line-up (a Sandtoft event speciality and always popular with visitors), of all of the Reading vehicles taking part was quite a challenge to set up with the number of exhibits present! Mention is made of the four preserved trolleybuses which visited the Reading system, for enthusiast tours, during the system's latter days and two of these vehicles are seen, briefly, in clips from films taken at Carlton Colville. The recreation of Reading's last trolleybus operation (when 174, 181 and 144 took part in a formal and official final procession) was a fitting reminder of that ceremonial closure run back in November 1968 - and was the first time this had happened since that last day.

A "Bonus Material" section at the end of the programme features 144 on test runs, 181 undertaking some twilight running, and a collection of still scenes. The filming is good and most, if not all, was undertaken using a tripod; freeze-frames are steady, but the stills in the bonus section are slightly jerky though this doesn't detract from the programme.

An enjoyable souvenir of the Reading 70th Anniversary event, and good value at £13 (including p&p) from the Sandtoft *Trolleyshop* - and now also from our on-line shop at www.sandtoft.org.

And with the 75th Anniversary of the opening of Reading's trolleybus system occurring in 2011, I hope that this event will be repeated then (perhaps on a larger scale, too, as hopefully trolleybus 193, and the ongoing-restoration preserved Reading motorbuses mentioned in the programme but absent from the 2006 event, will be able to take part). Cue for a DVD programme, in due course, of the 75th Anniversary celebrations!

Doug Barrow

BOOK – Kingston-upon-Hull Trolleybuses

Written by Malcolm Wells

Published by Trolleybooks

Cover Price £20.00

(UK Postage & Packing £2.00)



Kingston upon Hull, more popularly known as "Hull", came into existence in the year 1299 when the settlement of Wyke assumed the new title following the granting of a charter by King Edward I. Perhaps best known as a busy port, though it has other claims to fame - in sport, politics and for the

municipally-owned public telephone system, to name but three examples - the town (later to become a city) saw its first dock constructed during 1774-78 and by 1914 nine other docks had opened.

The first move towards tramway operation was in 1871 when a Major T.J. Holland (acting for a London-based syndicate) applied for a Provisional Order to construct tramways along the city's principal roads. The draft Order was obtained in 1872 and approved five of the six proposed routes, but construction was slow and it wasn't until 1877 that the last of the five routes was completed; all were operated as horse tramways. A steam tram service on another route, and promoted by a different company, was opened in 1899.

The Hull Tramways Order 1896 authorised the Corporation to take over and operate the horse tramways, and in 1897 the decision was taken to electrify; the Corporation subsequently purchased the steam tramway. Electric tramway operation was inaugurated on 5 July 1899, and as the years passed, the tramway system grew. An unusual feature of Hull's tramways (which were of standard gauge) was the use of centre-grooved rails.

In 1908-09, the possible provision of some form of alternative service, instead of a proposed tramway, along Cleveland Street was examined and the possibilities considered included petrol buses and a horse-drawn omnibus service - and "trackless trolleys" had also been investigated. However, "trackless trolleys" (or trolleybuses) didn't come to Hull until many years later. In March 1929, the Tramways Committee accepted the General Manager's recommendation that visits be made to Doncaster and Rotherham to inspect the respective trolleybus systems, and as a result of these visits, moves were made in Hull to operate trolleybuses on existing motorbus routes where it would be economically expedient to do so. Draft proposals were approved by the Ministry of Transport and permission was given for procuring vehicles and equipment, and orders were placed for 12 Guy BTX three-axle trolleybuses... but following many objections locally, and after a poll of electors, the proposals were rejected; the tentative order for twelve Guy BTX trolleybuses was changed to one for twelve Guy three-axle motorbuses, and although a further attempt to introduce trolleybuses was made in 1930 it was unsuccessful. However, during 1935-36 thoughts again turned to trolleybuses and at a special meeting of the Council in November 1935, support for trolleybus operation was emphatic (being passed by 59 votes for to 1 against); it was necessary to put the proposal before the statutory public meeting - which took place on 13 December 1935 - Friday the 13th! - and after the presentation and discussions, a vote was taken which resulted in 332 votes in favour and 18 against. The time for a trolleybus system in Hull had now arrived!

Malcolm Wells' excellent 136-page, soft-bound A4-size book details the creation, development and operation of the trolleybus system, the wartime hire of Leyland trolleybuses nos.1-4 to Pontypridd (the book includes a photograph of no.3 in service in Pontypridd), and in due course, the Hull system's route conversions to motorbus operation with the system's closure during the late evening of Saturday 31 October 1964 (101 was the last trolleybus, with no.116

leading as the duplicate, and the system passed with little ceremony). Trolleybus operation in Hull lasted for 27 years, and none of the trolleybuses (not even the quite modern Earl Trolley Retriever-fitted Sunbeam MF2B models, with their platform-doored front entrance and centre exit) were purchased by other systems - nor were any preserved.

A very well-researched and informative book with an excellent selection of photographs (mainly black-and-white, but many in colour) and drawings, and comprehensive appendices covering in detail, among others, subjects such as the fleet's history and disposal, livery and vehicle types, destination blinds, overhead wiring, services, fares, and statistics; a detailed fold-out map of the overhead wiring with the changes which were made over the years is included. I congratulate Malcolm on both an excellent publication and having recorded for posterity the detailed history of Hull's trolleybus system, as well as part of the city's tramway history and operations.

At the time of preparing this review, only a few copies of the book remained unsold (whether in the Sandtoft Trolleyshop or with the publishers, Trolleybooks) - so if you would like to obtain a copy, do so as soon as possible. If you aren't able to purchase a copy new, some used copies might, in time, become available via specialist booksellers... and it is possible to borrow a copy through the Inter-library lending service. **Doug Barrow**

VOLUNTEERING

The Museum has a constant need for more volunteers to carry out all sorts of tasks during open days (especially), and also at other times - we can even give you training to help you do something "different". Contact Tony Ferris, Facilities Director (see page 6 for his contact details) - or any of the other directors.

RUNNING DAYS IN 2010

Gates open 11.00 am to 5.00pm unless stated otherwise

Saturday 3 April	Bus	Easter Trolleydays
Sunday 4 April	Bus	
Monday 5 April	Bus	
Saturday 17 April	Bus	Mid-April Trolleydays
Sunday 18 April		Featuring the launch of Edmonton 189 into service
Saturday 1 May	Bus	Extravaganza Weekend
Sunday 2 May	Bus	with up to 12 trolleybuses in service each day
Monday 3 May	Bus	
Saturday 15 May	Bus	Mid-May Trolleydays
Sunday 16 May		
Saturday 29 May	Bus	Spring Bank Holiday Weekend Trolleydays
Sunday 30 May	Bus	Featuring the launch of Cardiff 203 back into service
Monday 31 May	Bus	
Saturday 12 June	Bus	West Yorkshire Weekend
Sunday 13 June	Bus	Featuring trolleybuses from Bradford & Huddersfield
Saturday 26 June	Bus	Teddy Bears' Picnic
Sunday 27 June		Featuring games and activities plus children bringing a teddy bear get free entry!

Saturday 10 July	Bus	Vintage Bicycle Weekend
Sunday 11 July		<i>Featuring a selection of vintage bicycles</i>
Saturday 24 July	Bus	Gathering Preview (open 11.00am to 10.00pm) <i>With real ale beer tent and twilight trolleybus services</i>
Sunday 25 July	Bus	Gathering 2010 (open 10.00am to 6.00pm) <i>Large selection of trolleybuses in service, visiting historic vehicles on display, transport bazaar, real ale beer tent, live music, craft stalls and more.</i>
Saturday 14 August	Bus	Blue's and Two's Weekend
Sunday 15 August	Bus	<i>A variety of visiting emergency vehicles, fire & rescue displays & demonstrations throughout each day</i>
Saturday 28 August	Bus	Six Wheeler Weekend
Sunday 29 August	Bus	<i>Featuring a variety of 6-wheel/ 3-axle trolleybuses</i>
Monday 30 August	Bus	
Saturday 18 September	Bus	Model Weekend
Sunday 19 September	Bus	<i>Featuring model trolleybuses, trams and trains and working layouts</i>
Saturday 2 October	Bus	Worldwide Weekend
Sunday 3 October	Bus	<i>Featuring trolleybuses from around the world</i>
Sunday 17 October	Bus	St. Leger Rally <i>St. Leger Historic Vehicle Rally starting from Doncaster Aircraft Museum, transport-related sales stands and parades of historic vehicles at Museum</i>
Sunday 14 November		Twilight Trolleys (open 11.00am to 6.00pm) <i>Trolleybuses operating after dark</i>
Saturday 11 December		Santa Days (open 11.00am to 4.00pm)
Sunday 12 December		<i>Children can visit Santa</i>

Key to Bus Services and Links

Bus denotes Isle Coaches service 291 11.00am departure from Doncaster Interchange connects with free Museum bus at Epworth. Return at 4.10pm to connect at Epworth with Isle Coaches service 399 to Doncaster (where it arrives 5.35pm)

Bus denotes FREE bus service from Doncaster Interchange direct to The Trolleybus Museum. Departs Interchange, Bay C5, at 12.00noon. Return departs Museum at 4.00pm (journey time approximately 40 minutes)

Admission Charges (for non members - members are admitted free)
Adults £5.00 Seniors (60+) £4.00 Concessions £3.00 Family (2 Adults + up to 4 Concessions) £15.00
On days shown on dark red background:

Adults £7.00 Seniors (60+) £5.00 Concessions £4.00 Family (2 Adults+up to 4 Concessions) £20.00

On Santa Days (shown on blue background):

Adults £4.00 Children visiting Santa £5.00 Seniors & Concessions (& Children not visiting Santa) £3.00

Note: Seniors are defined as Adults over 60 and may be requested to provide proof (e.g. national bus pass). Concessions are defined as Children aged 5-15 inclusive, **Persons who are Registered Disabled** and their Carers and **NUS members** (Categories shown in blue may be requested to provide proof).