

Sandtoft Scene

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No. 78



News and Views from
The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft



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Contributions and comments (for publication or otherwise) are always welcomed by the Editor.

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 The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft, the Company, its Directors or its members.

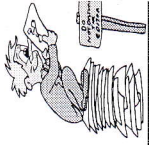
FRONT COVER PICTURE: Lord Stoddart of Swindon, President and Custodian Trustee of the British Trolleybus Society, is seen with Graham Bilbé (left) as he launches Cardiff 203 back into service on 30 May 2010 following extensive renovation *Photo: David Needham*

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



Producing *Sandtoft Scene* four times a year is getting very time consuming, both for myself and Francis Whitehead, who does the typesetting and printing, and we end up with the magazine being very late, as with the last two issues.

When I first agreed to edit *'Scene'* it was produced three times a year, but as so many had been missed, I have attempted to issue it quarterly.

Many, many years ago, the atmosphere and power struggles at the Museum were very bad - so much so that my wife and I were no longer enjoying visiting the Museum to work on our buses. With this in mind, we stopped going for some 18 months and during that time found other interests and hobbies, which we still have and which encroach on my time to do the magazine. I'm pleased to say that in my mind, visiting the Museum is now once again a very enjoyable experience, with most of the dictatorial element gone and a more positive people-attitude prevalent.

Bearing this in mind, it is my intention to ask the Board if we can revert back to the three issues per year policy for *Sandtoft Scene*. It may be that the Board will wish to continue with four issues and if that is the case, may require someone to take over the editorship. If you are interested, then I would suggest that you let a Board member know so that your offer of help can be taken into account when they consider my request.

Back to this edition of *Sandtoft Scene*: *The Road to Sandtoft* this time takes a different direction - Bruce Lake purchased a Renault PR100 motorbus, and it was simply driven from the operator to Sandtoft so the journey, as it was a local bus, did not take long. But, that was the start of a long road to get it serviceable. Bruce explains the trials and tribulations of buying an old bus in the first of a two-part feature.

DIRECTORS' SPOT

..... from Graham Bilbé, Chairman:

David Needham has written in his editorial this issue about his wish to reduce his workload, and suggests that *Sandtoft Scene* could revert to three issues annually as a means to achieve this. All of the Board of Directors fully appreciate the time and effort that David has put into *'Scene'* since taking it on, and the magnificent job he has done in regularising the publication, rationalising the content, and chivvying authors (including Directors!) to put pen to paper! Nonetheless, the Board, overall, feel that we would like to maintain quarterly publication if at all possible, so we are keen to look at ways of achieving this. It could be by having a "guest editor" once a year, by having a second editor so that each produce alternate issues, or several other possible combinations, provided that some form of continuity is maintained. I believe that Francis is keen to remain as "production editor", although the rather tedious task of printing off all the copies and/ or then assembling them

and mailing out could conceivably be done elsewhere, for example, at Sandtoft itself, now that our big colour printer is available. (Francis already has more than enough to do for Sandtoft behind the scenes - no pun intended - so it would be good to have a small working party once a quarter to do the mail-out.) If you feel you could help in either of these aspects, please let David, Francis or myself know and we can discuss the best way forward. Do you still want four issues per year, or would you be happy with three? Very appropriately (as I write this in Wimbledon fortnight!), the ball is in your court!

Last issue, Brian Maguire wrote about the conditions in which some Museum vehicles are being stored at the farm in Thorpe, north-east of Doncaster, to which I need to respond. This site was "commissioned" in the run-up to the Reading event in 2006, so amazingly has already been in use by us for over four years - although only ever intended to be short-term. I have made a point of visiting at least once each year in the meantime, and following various concerns expressed, I visited earlier this year, in the company of Tim Stubbs (who particularly wished to assess the state of Rotherham 44). Whilst I have to admit that the storage is not ideal - the accommodation is now shared with a steel fabrications workshop, which creates a lot of dirt and dust - the actual damage caused is not so bad as Brian's letter implies. One small sliding window has been broken on the Grimsby RT at some stage, and two on Bradford 846. I believe that one of the latter happened before the vehicles were relocated to a different shed at the farm to the one we first occupied. Two 'tween decks panels on the RT seem to have received minor "dings", whilst the lower panels are merely dirty. Naturally, we are taking up these issues with the farmer and the fabrications business, with a view to suitable compensation, although our position has not been strengthened by the depositing there (by a former TM@S member) of two Dennis Dominators which did not have Board approval and were effectively abandoned most inconveniently.

Suffice it to say, the Museum is still under considerable pressure to accommodate yet more vehicles, and so until our own new building can be put up, we have been actively pursuing other options for temporary vehicle storage, about which I hope more can be confirmed next issue. Once this is available it is the Board's full intention to retrieve the five vehicles "officially" stored at Thorpe to closer and more convenient storage.

Looking at other matters, the plan to realign the kerbs and install the "Lichfield" cast iron bus shelter outside the Regal cinema were unfortunately thwarted last winter by the weather and other factors. However, I'm pleased to report that the "Sheffield Boys" have agreed to clean up the parts of the shelter and prime them ready for installation later this year. This is a lovely period-piece and will add nicely to our street scene, as well as providing some cover for waiting passengers. Thanks, lads, for agreeing to get started on this project!

Finally, I am delighted to report a considerable increase in membership of the Museum in the last year or two, so if you have recently joined us - WELCOME. I hope you will wish to support The Trolleybus Museum for many years, and that, whenever possible, we shall see you "on site" and helping out where you

can. Remember, in any voluntary organisation, the more effort you can put in, the more pleasure and fulfilment you will achieve, so we look forward to working with you!

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

Well, the season is truly underway now and the 'Gathering is fast approaching. Visitor numbers have been dropping at 'Gathering over the past few years: arguably, this is because we have so much on the rest of the year that people have more of a choice of which event to attend. However, for 2010, I want to reverse this trend and improve upon our 2009 admissions figure for 'Gathering. Therefore, more effort has gone into publicity this year for the event, including radio advertising to go out during the week before. We have also produced some promotional posters, which have been distributed to shops and the like in the local area.

The Trolleybus Museum is now on Facebook: follow the link from our website, www.sandtoft.org, to "Like Us" to become a fan. We will be using this channel to engage with both staff and customers to share news, snippets and updates.

It has been agreed that undercover vehicle maintenance and storage rates will increase from 1 January 2011. Vehicle owners will be contacted with further details in due course.

The Board will also be proposing a modest increase to membership subscriptions at the AGM in November. Subscriptions (and vehicle rates) were held during the recession and a small increase is being suggested in-line with inflation. Life Membership, introduced in 2008 has had a good take-up but we are aware that our members are getting older, so consideration is being given to introducing a Senior Life Membership. Your comments and thoughts on this subject are welcomed.

The Sunday of the mid-May weekend saw the arrival of the Border Motor Club - with about 90 classic cars on display for a short period whilst their drivers stopped for lunch. We would like to do more of this sort of thing on our open days, so if anyone has any suggestions, please contact me.

Next year, 2011, marks the 100th anniversary of Britain's first trolleybus service. 2011 is planned to be a big year at The Museum, with several vehicles planned to visit on loan. We also have a fairly busy calendar of events planned. I am pleased to be able to announce the open days dates for 2011, so mark these in your diary now:

9/ 10 April	23/ 24/ 25 April	30 April & 1/ 2 May
14/ 15 May	28/ 29/ 30 May	11/ 12 June
25/ 26 June	9/ 10 July	30/ 31 July
13/ 14 August	27/ 28/ 29 August	17/ 18 September
1/ 2 October	16 October	13 November
10/ 11 December		

An increase in admission charges is expected next year.

Finally, plans for 2012 are progressing - watch this space!



THE ROUTE TO SANDTOFT

The Trials and Tribulations of Buying an Old Bus - PART 1 HORNSBY TRAVEL OF SCUNTHORPE F100 AKB Bruce Lake

It all goes back to 2006. In May of that year, the Museum acquired Marseille 202, a Renault ER100 trolleybus. It was in a disappointing condition in that many of its trim parts had been removed, and in particular, its rubber wheel arches which are unique to this design, were missing. The hunt was on for spares! Not long after 202 arrived, someone realised that Hornsby Travel of Scunthorpe had run two PR100 motorbuses, which are the diesel equivalent of the ER100 trolleybuses, and would therefore have similar parts fitted. Hornsby only had one left, having scrapped the other one when the gearbox failed and they wanted to dispose of the remaining one, it being some 18 years old at that time.

Brian Maguire and myself arranged to go and have a look at it in late summer 2006, to see if it could become a donor of spare parts for the trolleybus. Initial viewing at Hornsby's storage premises was fairly positive until it was realised that although the bus had been manufactured by Renault, the bodywork had been added by Northern Counties. Apparently, Renault shipped chassis to the UK complete with front end, back end and driver's cab, and Northern Counties built the rest. This meant that no body parts were going to be any use for the trolleybus, except the rubber wheel arches which happened to be the same - presumably supplied by Renault. Naturally, there were no trolleybus electrics on it either, and the design of the low-voltage electrics such as cab switches had been updated during the eighties so they were useless to us as well - the bus was actually designated a PR100:2. There were probably some air valves that would be the same, but that was about it.

We were naturally somewhat disappointed, but Hornsby proceeded to tell us that this had been a demonstrator, and that Renault had tried to break into the British market with their advanced design including air suspension and auto-



"100" at Doncaster Interchange

Photo: Bruce Lake

in Southampton. Hornsby bought this one in 1991 for around £53,500. I have subsequently found out that the three at Luton were two-door, and the two Hornsbys had been different in various ways, not least the power train, so that the failed gearbox on the one would hopefully mean that the other may not fail that way! Furthermore, the three at Luton had probably been scrapped, so the bus we were looking at was now unique in Britain, and the only right-hand drive PR100 left in the northern hemisphere (many RHD units were sold to Australia so there are still quite a number operating there, and of course there are still many LHD versions at work in France and other places). Suddenly, it seemed like a good idea to have a PR100 motorbus at the Museum to complement the ER100 trolleybus. Hornsby didn't want much for it, a few hundred pounds and it would be ours! Not only that, it was still in test for a few months.

At this time I was seriously considering taking my PCV test, so it seemed that a working motorbus would provide me with a platform (!) to practice on without pestering other people to borrow their buses. I therefore agreed to buy it. This proved to be my first and most costly mistake!

It took many months to take possession. Whilst in Hornsby service, it had been given the cherished registration number of WUK 155 - a number that meant something to Hornsby and had been passed from bus to bus for many years. They wanted to keep it: I had no problem with this, especially as I discovered that they would return it to F100 AKB, its original registration number, as that seemed to be a better fit to a PR100 and could, indeed, be worth more than the bus! However, for some reason, the DVLA thought Hornsby were trying to pull a fast one by switching the registration number of an untaxed vehicle, and demanded that they present it for inspection. This took some time, so it was December 2006 before Ian Wilson was able to drive F100 AKB from Scunthorpe and deposit it at Sandtoft. This was the worst time really, as it would now have to winter outside and, of course, doing any work in the cold and wet of a winter at Sandtoft isn't very pleasant.

Unfortunately, service buses are tested to Class 6, and if you have a Class 6, you also need to have the correct (expensive) road tax, and the correct (expensive) insurance to go with it. Most people therefore test preserved motorbuses to Class 5 which reduces the cost considerably. Being only 18 years old (that's the bus, not me), I could not, of course, get free road tax. Anyway, no problem I thought, it is in test now so it should sail through. I enlisted Jim Sambrooks to do a preliminary test at Sandtoft to see what needed putting right - there's always something on a bus of that age. I should note that this took some doing: Jim doesn't normally touch things which are "foreign" - me pointing out that it carried Northern Counties bodywork didn't help much, the chassis was still foreign! Worse still, all the bolts were metric and Jim doesn't do metric!

Anyway, after some persuasion, the initial diagnosis was favourable. There were a few minor problems, but either Jim sorted them out (mechanical) - although he did have to wash his hands after touching any metric spanners! or I did (electrical). We booked a test for the spring of 2007, which was done in

Rotherham. Jim drove it down there, confident that he'd found all the problems and rectified them - there was a good chance that 100 (as I was calling it now - it didn't actually carry a fleet number) would pass. The tester looked sceptical as Jim drove it in. "Don't see many of these", he said. We said that it was very unlikely that he had ever seen ANY of these! He got on with the job and was soon tapping away with his hammer underneath. He quickly called us to go and have a look. "This is going to fail straight away", he informed us, "the chassis is rotten", proceeding to put his hammer through various bits of it. I should explain that the chassis of a PR100 (like the trolleybus) is really a "space frame" made up of hundreds of lengths of 1 1/2" square and 1 1/2"x2" tubes welded together. There are no large chassis beams as on most British buses. This sort of design is seen as lighter, easier to construct, and easier to make to suit the various bits and pieces you need to attach to a chassis. They are very strong - but only if the various parts haven't rotted away! We aborted the test with the tester's agreement and didn't have to pay as he had only just started. We made the dejected trip back to Sandtoft with the tester's words ringing in our ears - "drive carefully - it's dangerous like that!"

Unfortunately the chassis was going to need a lot of work, and welding is not one of my skills; furthermore, the number of people I know who can weld I can count on the fingers of one thumb. Ian Metcalf had a look, but concluded that it was going to be too difficult and didn't really have the right equipment at the time. Eventually I had to concede that I was going to have to pay a professional to do this, so I arranged with Wilsons across the road at Sandtoft to do it when they weren't particularly busy. This ought to keep the costs down, and Wilsons are pretty good with us anyway. The advantage was that it could be taken across the road with ease.

It was to be many more months before it actually went though, due to one thing and another. In particular the reversing lights stopped working, and I couldn't trace the fault. Hornsby had given me the manuals, but the electrical diagram didn't match the bus. The worst problem was that the diagram's cables were colour-coded, whereas the bus had all white wires with numbers on them! This didn't help at all, and I eventually had to run new cables from the reversing lights to the switches at the front. The lack of regular movement meant the batteries kept going flat, and it seemed that every time I went to work on it, something else had stopped functioning. Eventually Wilsons agreed to take it (in January 2008), but, of course, it was now standing outside in *their* yard and I couldn't do anything on it either.

Jim and I had marked the various rotten bits of chassis with yellow paint, and I had procured some lengths of steel in various sections for the repair work. Wilsons started to cut out bits of frame and replace them. Of course, as soon as they got started, they seemed to get very busy - some new contracts had come in. 100 languished in their yard for an eternity, it seemed. Every now and again there would be a bit of progress, but I despaired at the snail's pace - indeed, several snails overtook it during this time.

Meanwhile, I had been investigating obtaining my PCV. The idea of driving

preserved buses for practice evaporated, although I had a few goes on short trips with Ian Wilson. This improved my confidence that I could do it, but I could not find a local training centre: Leeds was the nearest to Huddersfield, but Howard Spencer's experience of them had been poor, and that was a long way away. Further research found one at Mansfield, but that is even further, until I realised that I could stay at Crich and work part of the day, then commute the few miles to Mansfield from there (avid readers will remember I had done 3 months at Crich on a course, so had use of their accommodation). Thus I booked the week's course and passed out (first time!) in early June 2008. This provided me with the impetus to push Wilsons for completion of 100, as now I was authorised to take it on the road.

ON TOW

REMINISCENCES

This second article concerns Liège 425's move to Sandtoft. It is hard to believe that it is probably a third of a century (or more) since this vehicle arrived at the Museum. Certain aspects, like dates, and exact details, have been enveloped by the mists of time (or poor memory) but there are still key incidents that contribute to this story of a seventy-plus mile tow that turned into something of a nightmare!

To begin, we must look back at the embryonic Yorkshire Dales Railway at Embsay, near Skipton. The society of the same name had been formed in 1969 to save a portion of the Ilkley to Skipton line and they took possession of Embsay Station, yard and a length of track bed (with some track) and started to amass a collection of industrial tank locos and other items of rolling stock. Eventually they were able to operate a push-pull ride which, with the passage of time (and gigantic effort) has led to the line being extended back to Bolton Abbey Station - with an award-winning replica of the original Midland Station building - giving the line a real purpose.

Anyway, nearly forty years ago, the railway was keen to raise funds and welcomed paying guests - like Teesside 2, Liège 425, Bradford 792 and (I think) a Southdown Leyland PD2 - certainly a double-decker with a pre-select gearbox! The three trolleybuses belonged - and I stand to be corrected here - to members of the West Riding Transport Society: maybe the motorbus did so too. The vehicles were in the open, but were safe from vandals and presented a neat, if incongruous, appearance in what was fast becoming a busy car park for the railway's fund-raising events. A decision by the railway to really concentrate their efforts on the development of the line hastened the transfer of the three trolleybuses.

I cannot remember in what order the three vehicles left the site (on different days, of course) but I remember getting roped in to steer 425: the towing vehicle was the Sharp & Griffith's Guy six-wheeler - in the capable hands of Fred - with me, as already mentioned, and David Mitchell in his own vehicle acting as shotgun. The route had been planned thus: Embsay to Skipton, thence to Keighley, down the Aire Valley to Saltaire, on to Bradford and from there on to the M62. Ferrybridge meant a trip down the A1 and on to Doncaster



Mick Leak's memory can't be that bad ! This is Liège 425 at Emsay in the company of a RUF Southdown East Lancs bodied Leyland PD2/12 (actually no.793 of 1956 - is it still about ?). No.425 was towed to Sandtoft on 5 September 1973 *Photo: RDH Symons*

and the, then usual (and then only) route via the A18 to the *Green Tree* and then down the "bumpy" road for four miles to the Museum.

Assurances had been given that 425 was ready to go and only needed coupling up and tailboards fitting. The prop shaft had been disconnected too. It was teatime, and the hope was that we would make it to Sandtoft in daylight (or be fairly near before darkness fell). First job was to get the towbar on - a couple of bolts or pins you might think - but this was Snag Number One and nearly cancelled the tow for that evening. As you are all aware, 425 is of forward control layout, so the front axle is set well back from the front of the vehicle. The swan-neck towbar was not long enough to reach the axle and clear the vehicle's front end using the standard axle-mounted clamp. As Fred had been unaware of 425, he hadn't made any special preparations other than those associated with the many trolleybus tows he had been involved in over the previous few years. If he had known, I am sure he would have risen to the challenge.

As luck (what luck ?) would have it, there were two "pig tail" towing eyes - one on each chassis member end and it was decided to fix the towbar on to one of these. This was accomplished using a D-shackle through the "eye" and the closing pin through the bar. Fred asked if there were any more likely problems and we passed on the assurances we had been given ! So, off we set in the direction of Skipton. As we started to pick up speed, I became aware of some rather loud bangs and bumps. Snag Number Two.

Yes, the prop-shaft had been disconnected, but from the motor ! It was still connected to the differential and was performing a very energetic flailing motion between the road and the saloon floor. Luckily I managed to attract

Fred's attention before we reached the Ilkley - Skipton main road and we pulled up just before the junction. Fortunately, Fred was able to get underneath to disconnect the shaft properly but this unexpected task wasted us yet more daylight hours. Anyway, off we went on our journey which was without any real incident until leaving Doncaster town centre.

Time had overtaken us, and darkness held sway (apart from the street lamps) as we realised we still had a few miles to go. In fact, we were very late (well after midnight), and the kind souls who were waiting at Sandtoft to greet us had departed for the comforts of their bedclothes ! However, one returning soul (and I think it was Jim Sambrooks) flagged us down near International Harvesters to wish us well and to say the gate was open for us. Having exchanged a few early morning pleasantries, it was back to our task.

Snag Number Three: as the lorry set off again, the pigtail ring snapped ! No worry. (Oh yes, there was...). We could use the other one - which we did - realising that this was our last towing point. Gingerly, we set off again, proceeding to the *Green Tree* ready for (with hindsight) snapped tow eye number two and Snag Number Four ! By now, the mist was hugging the ground and reflecting the lorry's headlights as we stood, helpless and very tired, on the road to Sandtoft. I cannot remember if it was a chain or wire rope that was used as a last resort - but I do remember Fred removing the rear lens covers on his lights to illuminate the back of the lorry for me - so closely were we coupled together. This last four miles was very nerve-wracking, as we proceeded ever so cautiously down the "bumpy" road. We got there - at about 2.00am I think - not wishing ever to repeat such a task again.

But, as I will recount next time, we're gluttons for punishment in Yorkshire !

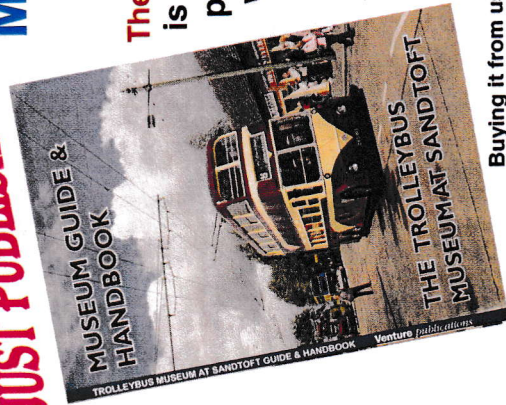
JUST PUBLISHED!

MUSEUM GUIDE & HANDBOOK

The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft is pleased to announce the publication of a new handbook with commentary on all the main vehicle exhibits

We have worked closely with Venture Publications to produce this long-awaited guide and it is available from the **Trolleyshop**

at the **SPECIAL PRICE of £6.95** (Cover price £7.95)



Buying it from us maximises our profit !!

VIEWS OF RUNNING DAYS - 2010



Easter and the Trolley Dollies get ready for a very busy time. Everything was sold out



One of the Easter flower arrangements

Easter weather, and the Museum is ready for visitors to arrive
Easter photographs: David Needham



The Sunday of Spring Bank Holiday Weekend, with Lord and Lady Stoddart in front of Cardiff 203 after its launch



203 approaches the interlaced frog, a style of frog that was common on the Cardiff system
Spring Bank Holiday photographs: Graham Bilbé



Reading 113 passes "William" - out for the first time on his new wheels. Both of these vehicles resided together at Smith's Coaches in Fleeding for several years in the late 1960s - it is great to see them together again, and looking in better shape than they did then !



Three Bradfords and three Huddersfields line up at the West Yorkshire event on 12/ 13 June: unfortunately 746 has been temporarily withdrawn pending some repair work, but 541 has recently been passed out and is scheduled to be launched at the August Bank Holiday weekend (Sunday 29th August, 2pm)
Photos: Stewart David



We need a caption for this ... (no expletives, please !)
Photo: Graham Bilbé



The "new" display of tractors outside the Graham Bilbé workshop
Photo: Graham Bilbé

NEWS BULLETIN

A number of unexpected costs just at the end of the winter - a period of little income - has caused a few headaches. One of these was the need to replace our cherry picker, as the old one required over £1,000 spending on it, which was seen as uneconomic, given that we had already spent a fair bit on it and we could foresee yet more needs on it cropping up. So, we now have a reconditioned, newer Ford Transit-based cherry picker.

From this year, the stall spaces for 'Gathering are being sold via the internet. This reduces our workload and gives traders the opportunity of seeing on-line what spaces are available and allows them to choose, book and pay for their space accordingly. On the day, traders should know where their stall will be, which should reduce, or even eliminate, the number of disputes that arise and have had to be resolved by our lip-biting volunteer marshal....

The first two TDE (Trolleybus Driving Experience) days of 2010 have taken place. They were as successful as last year's. All this year's spaces have already been booked, so next year's will be selling soon ! As with the 'Gathering stalls, TDEs are being sold via our website.



At the TDE on 14 June, Bruce Lake presented our first overseas TDE participant, Juan Carlos, from Buenos Aires, Argentina, with his successful completion Certificate - the smiles say it all! We hope that Juan Carlos's visit may pre-empt some group bookings by South American trolleybus enthusiasts in the future.

Photo: Graham Bilbé

Our VAQAS (Visitor Quality Assurance Scheme) accreditation fell due recently, and the assessor visited us at the mid-May weekend. We passed once again ! Obviously there were a number of minor problems pointed out to us, and we await their final report to see what we can do to remove these problems.

The new hedge (along our old northern boundary) is growing well, and the hard-standing mentioned last time has been completed. Some of the spaces on this still need to be signed as being for disabled visitors only. Quite a few of the pot-holes in the roadways have been filled, making for a smoother surface for our trolleybuses. The traffic island at the road end of Sandtoft Square has been re-aligned to allow more room for larger vehicles to make the approach there.

The museum site has been generally spruced up, with the gardeners turning out in force again now the weather has improved. Meanwhile, the road signs have been repainted, which makes a huge difference to the look of the Museum.

Siting working members' caravans on the new land has proved successful, but caravan owners, please note there is a 3-week limit to parking any caravan

there: this is mainly to make sure we don't fall foul of planning regulations - long-term caravan storage or use there would require specific planning consent, which we do not have.



This spring has seen at least two little families brought up in the Sandtoft workshop ! Here, Mrs. Blackbird sits on her nest in the nuts and bolts storage rack - less than two weeks later, three little wide-open beaks were poking out, demanding food. Meanwhile, but slightly later hatching, up in the roof was another nest, this time swallows (or swifts ?), which also appear to like our depot to nest in ! The birds seem to have been particularly noisy this year

Photo: Graham Bilbé

Museum Expansion

Various ideas have been put forward in respect of our next major expansion. A new building which would be part exhibition space and part storage for operational trolleybuses has been proposed. There are a number of issues with this, and the cost is also a problem. Acquisition of further land is also an option. A special meeting of the Board will try to decide what the best way forward for the Museum might be so that we can develop the scheme and apply for the relevant grants, and raise funds from other sources as well. Bruce Lake has had an initial meeting with the MLA's fundraising expert, and the MLA generally are happy to help us and our fundraising people, to get the best out of any grants applications.

Meanwhile, buildings locally are being looked at with a view to renting some space so that we can put more vehicles under cover, including trolleybuses new to us, and those we hope to borrow for next year's Trolleybus Centenary celebrations.

TROLLEYBUS ANNIVERSARIES

Compiled by Geoff Welburn
July to September

Systems Opened

95 years since Mexborough & Swinton opened on 31 August 1915

85 years since Ashton-under-Lyne opened on 26 August 1925

85 years since Oldham opened on 26 August 1925

80 years since South Lancashire opened on 3 August 1930

80 years since Pontypridd opened on 18 September 1930

Systems Closed

90 years since Stockport closed on 11 September 1920

85 years since Aberdare closed on 1 July 1925

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS

TRAFFIC OFFICE Revised Structure

With effect from Easter the traffic department structure changed. Positions, personnel and responsibilities are now as follows:

from Stewart David

Departmental Manager (Stewart David)

Responsibilities: Lead role in department and link to the Board via Ian Wilson (Operations Director); lead H&S rôle for traffic operations; management of driving licence audit and driver authorisation process (which includes all driving of Museum-controlled vehicles); senior duty traffic manager on open days; production of traffic operating plans for major events; management of traffic department training and liaison with Museum's Training Co-ordinator; liaison with engineering and electrical personnel in relation to service trolleybuses; management and supervision of vehicle cleaning for open days.

Assistant Departmental Manager (Dave Shepherd)

Responsibilities: Reports to, supports and deputises for the Departmental Manager; conductor induction and final assessment processes; management of ticket machines; routine replenishment and annual audit of Museum site first aid kits

Administration Support: (Mike Johnson)

Responsibilities: Reports to (Assistant) Departmental Manager; general traffic administration tasks; production of reporting forms and waybills; assisting with ticket preparation for operating days.

Reserve Duty Traffic Managers: (Chas Allen and Peter Crisp)

Responsibilities: Report to (Assistant) Departmental Manager; provide cover for duty traffic manager

Trolley Vehicle Driver Training Personnel:

Graham Bilbé Instructor/ Examiner UK and Overseas Vehicles
Bruce Lake Instructor UK and Overseas Vehicles
Chris Proctor Instructor UK and Overseas Vehicles
Dave Shepherd Instructor UK and Overseas Vehicles
Peter Crisp Instructor UK Vehicles

'Gathering 2010

This year's premier event will be held over the weekend of 24 & 25 July. As usual we will need plenty of assistance to prepare vehicles in the days before the main event. If you can spare a few hours on the preceding Thursday, Friday or Saturday please phone the Museum on 01724 711846 and leave your name and turn up as available.

We will also need plenty of staff to deliver (hopefully) the best 'Gathering in recent years ! Again, please phone the Museum on 01724 711846 and leave your name, so we can organise duties for you - and remember to turn up in good time - the gates open at 10.00am, but many duties start well before that !

Trolleybuses scheduled to operate at 'Gathering include:

Bradford 706 Cardiff 203 Edmonton 189
Glasgow TB78 Huddersfield 619 London 1812 Maidstone 72
Reading 144

VEHICLES REPORTS

Bradford 562: Work recently on 562 has slowed down somewhat as efforts were concentrated on getting Cardiff 203 ready for its launce at the end of May, but

the accompanying photographs illustrate the progress that has been made to date.

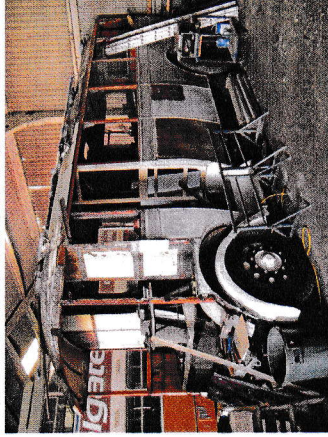


Photo: Graham Bilbé

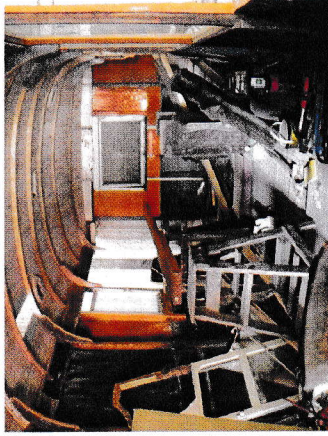


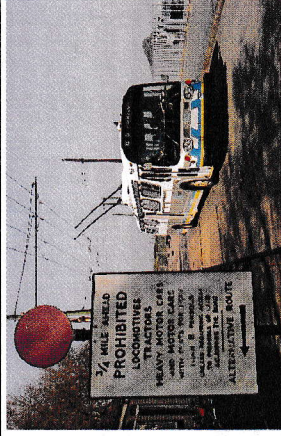
Photo: David Needham

Cardiff 203: Frantic efforts by a number of helpers during April and right up to the morning of 30 May meant that 203 was ready for its launch on 30 May. All sorts of outstanding jobs - body, inside and out, electrical work, painting and, of course, an intensive clean had to be done and hopefully a more detailed report on this will appear next time. A few jobs still have to be finished off in the next few weeks. Well done, team - a great credit to you, and a most fitting tribute to Geoff Griffiths and Mike Dare, in whose memory this restoration has been done.

Edmonton 189 (Report from Bruce Lake:) As described last time, 189 required a new part. This was ordered from Texas (yes, the one in the USA !) and it arrived 3 days later (cracking service, Grommit !). The part, a special wire-wound resistor, was fitted and 189 was again operational. Unfortunately, a couple of days later, it developed a completely different fault. Much midnight oil, head-scratching and effort eventually saw 189 operational once again. Thus it was duly launched into service on 17 April as planned. Since then, apart from one minor hitch, it has operated faultlessly, and has been a great attraction for the Museum, many enthusiasts making the trip specially to ride on it.



Bruce Lake, the "driving force" behind 189's acquisition, at the launch on 17 April 2010



189 about to power off along the "back straight" on its first day in service in the UK

Both photos: Clifford Stead

Huddersfield 541: Just about all the outstanding jobs have now been attended to and 541, having been "passed out", is scheduled to have its launch into service on Sunday, 29 August (2pm), during 6-Wheeler Weekend.

Nottingham 466: The traction motor has been overhauled and has now been returned to the Museum. It is intended to fit it back into 466 as soon as possible. Hopefully, this big step forward will enthuse members to help get 466's restoration completed so it can become another of our service trolleybuses in the not-too-distant future.

"William" (the ex-Reading Corporation Tramways horse-drawn tower wagon of 1902) now sports four new wheels. They were made in Romsey, Hampshire by GJ Garner & Son to the original patterns and very good they look, too; they were fitted by Graham Bilbé and Ian Metcalfe at the end of May. An assessment is now being made of how to go about the restoration of the rest of this venerable vehicle.

AT THE BUS STOP

A Working Model of a Foden Steam Bus

A one-third scale replica Foden steam bus attended our Spring Bank Holiday Weekend. It is owned and was made by Derick Bacon. The prototype steam bus for this wonderful model was scrapped many years ago, but was used by the Foden Brass Band in the 1930s.

It is a 4½ inch to the foot scale model, which makes it just over 1/3 full size. It is a coal-fired, steam-powered, double high pressure cylinder (140psi) engine with 3 speeds.

It took Derick 3½ years to build, using plans for a Foden lorry, but he decided to make it into a bus. The bus body is removable and it can be used as a flat bed lorry - in fact just like the original vehicle!

Derick says that he does attend a number of steam rallies, but may come back to Sandtoft again.

DEAR 'SCENE

Dear 'Scene

Today (30 May 2010), I made what will probably be my final visit to the Museum: with two incurable diseases, and having reached 81, my days out must be strictly limited.

My carer (who, coming from Aberdeen had never come across trolleybuses) waved to me from the upper deck of Maidstone 56, which I remember in its utility life when I did my six weeks (square bashing) in 1946.

The other memory triggered was to meet one of the restorers of Nottingham's Karrier E6, no.367, which I recall as a rusting store at a garage at Leverton near Spalding.

I miss the smile and friendly wave from the cab by Mike Dare, and shall always be thankful for his friendship over the best of decades.

David Kaye (Louth)

Dear 'Scene

It's good to learn that there's a chance the Museum might gain a Skoda 9Tr. Hey! But wouldn't two 9Trs be fun? Then we could have a coupled set running, as these trolleybuses so often ran in service - a pair of 9Trs and just one driver! Lord alone knows what the H&S boys would say! *Vincent Walsh (Bradford)*

Francis Whitehead replies: A few years ago, we were offered a coupled pair of 9Trs from Riga (Latvia), but the logistics and cost of getting these to the UK, and a lack of funding meant it didn't happen and the vehicles were scrapped. Being practical, we just do not have the space at Sandtoft to either house or operate a coupled set of 12 metre trolleybuses, interesting though the concept is. The Skoda 9Tr is an important marque and deserves to be represented in our collection. For this to become a reality, though, we do need donations to pay for it being transported to the Museum.

+++++

Dear 'Scene

I just thought readers might like to know about two bits of footage on the internet featuring a 1/3-scale working model of a Reading trolleybus, dating from 1968. The first is at www.britishteamthe.com/record.php?id=2378 whilst the other, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p008lwzs>, was broadcast recently by BBC South.

Chris Morley (Reading)

I hope we can publish something about this fascinating model in a future edition of Sandtoft Scene - Ed.

REVIEWS



DVD – Transport in and Around Portsmouth

Published by Online Video

£18.00

(UK Postage £1.00)

Originally released as a VHS tape programme, and now available on DVD-R, this programme was published in 2003 to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the closure of Portsmouth's trolleybus system. As the title implies, the programme looks at the transport scene in and around Portsmouth over the years, and includes the area's trams, trolleybuses, motorbuses, the floating bridge, ferries and paddle steamers - plus a few sequences of railway interest, including the 4-COR electric multiple units which, for many years, served the Waterloo to Portsmouth route as well as working on other routes. Southsea's miniature railway is also covered.

Did you know that there were once three separate tramways within the Portsmouth area? All three tramways are featured, using archive photographs. In due course, the Corporation's tramway system gave way to trolleybuses. The Gosport & Fareham Omnibus Company (which used the "Provincial" fleetname, and had some very distinctive buses), Southdown Motor Services Limited and aspects of the Corporation's motorbus operations are featured - but a large part of the programme is devoted to the city's trolleybus system. Film sources are from both black-and-white and from colour material.

The trolleybus system's development is covered, with photographs and film from both pre-war and early post-war times onwards, and includes trolleybuses operating in the snow. Services 5/ 6 and 17/ 18 are covered in detail, though the other services are covered too. Walsall 864's September 1955 visit to Portsmouth is included (864 was demonstrated for Portsmouth Corporation, operating on a number of the local routes, and also for the General Managers who were attending the Municipal Passenger Transport Association's Annual Conference).

The gradual closure of the trolleybus system, with replacement by motorbuses, is covered and trolleybus 313 (now at Carlton Colville) is seen making the final run. After being acquired for preservation, 313 is seen again, this time operating on tour in Bournemouth (I was one of the many people who travelled on that tour), and in a separate sequence, a number of Portsmouth trolleybuses are seen - awaiting their fate - in a scrap yard.

With a running time of 85 minutes on this burnt DVD, there is a lot of historic material, and not just of transport aspects - material which, thankfully, has been recorded for posterity. Copies of the programme can be obtained from the *Trolleyshop*, or order it online at www.sandtoft.org.

Doug Barrow

DVD – Bournemouth Trolleybuses

Published by Independent Transport Videos

£18.00

(UK Postage £1.00)



As with the Portsmouth DVD programme reviewed above, published to commemorate the 40th anniversary of that trolleybus system's closure, this Bournemouth DVD programme commemorates another 40th anniversary and system closure; in Bournemouth's case, the closure took place on 20 April 1969. Bournemouth Corporation's Transport Department happily agreed to the operation of a number of preserved trolleybuses - some from the "home" fleet, and others from systems in other parts of Great Britain - under its overhead wiring and this gesture of support for the enthusiast and preservation movements was much appreciated by so many. Three of these preserved trolleybuses, all originating from the "home" fleet, appear in this programme and are seen on "farewell" tours; they were invited to take part in the system's closure too, and are seen among the many trolleybuses which took part in the ceremonial line-up by, and subsequent procession from, the Pier.

Many people filmed and/ or photographed the Bournemouth system over the years, and the work of one of the ciné enthusiasts - Alan B. Cross - during the system's final days in the Spring of 1969, and at the closure is featured in this programme. A variety of locations, and likewise operations, was used by Alan for his filming; older enthusiasts will recognise a number of familiar faces - fellow enthusiasts - as they looked 40 years ago (and for anyone who wonders if it's me in certain sequences, yes I'm one of these older enthusiasts and had dark hair then!) and some of these colleagues appear in the recently-taken material too.

The three preserved trolleybuses from the "home" fleet, and which took part in the closure, are numbers 202 (the open-top Sunbeam MS2), 212 (a fellow MS2,

but still with its roof, now restored as 99, and a resident at our Museum), and Weymann-bodied BUT no.246 (will this fine trolleybus run again one day, I wonder?). No.202 is seen in action at its current "home", the East Anglia Transport Museum at Carlton Colville, and nos.99 - still carrying some of the posters advertising Bournemouth entertainments in the 1960s - and newly-refurbished Sunbeam MF2B no.297 are seen in operation at Sandtoft with 297's appearance being the vehicle's launch after the extensive roof repair and restoration work which had been undertaken at Sandtoft.

At the conclusion of the ciné and video sequences, there are a number of still photographs of Bournemouth trolleybuses. It was good to see the photographs but I found the stills sequence a bit lengthy (and likewise some of the 297 feature), but that's a personal view and not a criticism of the programme nor of the people who made the DVD possible. "Well done" to Independent Transport Videos, a fairly recent name in the DVD publishing field, for producing a programme featuring British trolleybuses as they were in 1969 and today; hopefully they will produce some more of these programmes (the company has already published a number of programmes about other public transport, and the range can be viewed on the company's website www.dentours.com). With a running time of approximately 60 minutes, I happily recommend this pressed DVD, which is available from the *Trolleyshop*, and also online at www.sandtoft.org.

Doug Barrow

BOOK – A Trolleybus to the Punch Bowl

Written by Phillip J. Taylor

Published by Triangle Publishing

Price £32.00

(UK Postage & Packing £2.00)



The South Lancashire Transport Company Limited was one of the very few company-operated trolleybus systems in Britain. The company operated 3 routes - Atherton to St. Helens; Leigh to Bolton; and Atherton to Farnworth via Swinton - including joint operation with St. Helens Corporation on the route between Atherton and St. Helens. Readers of *Sandtoft Scene* may recall that I reviewed the DVD programme *Trolleybuses of South Lancashire and St. Helens*, (available through the *Trolleyshop*) for an earlier issue of the journal.

Both operators were responsible for the overhead wiring within their respective areas but a reciprocal arrangement existed between SLT and the Corporation whereby trolleybuses which became defective in each other's territory would be attended by a local crew.

The author has compiled an excellent guide to, and history of, the SLT system with each of the three routes being covered - in turn, and on a journey basis - by a fine selection of photographs, accompanied by informative text and captions. The majority of the illustrations are in black-and-white but there are 20 colour photographs in a special section towards the back of the book, and the inclusion of extracts from SLT timetables is a useful addition to give the reader an idea of how the services were operated. Many of SLT's trolleybuses were of quite antique appearance (though others had been rebuilt) and there were some newer vehicles too. The maximum fleet strength was 71 vehicles, and the oldest one

was 28 years of age when the system closed on 31 August 1958. It is a pity that one of the trolleybuses survived into the preservation era, but was scrapped. Fortunately, this book, and the DVD programme, are fine reminders of this system; the book also includes a large, fold-out overhead wiring map inside the back cover.

With the system's proximity to the Leyland Motors works, it was no surprise that this manufacturer tried a number of trolleybuses under the SLT wiring, and the book includes a section entitled "Visitors on Trial" with photographs of various vehicles being tested - among them, the Leyland TBS1 Demonstrator, a Massey-bodied 3-axle double-decker which is believed to have been dismantled by Leyland at a later date, and the unique two-axle-steering double-decker which later became No. 1671 in the London fleet (a vehicle which I remember well, and travelled on a number of times, in the early 1950s).

Although SLT's last trolleybus operated on 31 August 1958 (the company became part of the Lancashire United operation at the stroke of midnight that day), no. 71, a 3-axle Weymann-bodied vehicle, became Lancashire United's first and last trolleybus the following day when it made a ceremonial run. A limited edition model of this trolleybus was produced as part of the Original Omnibus range (Model OM43708) in 2009 and examples may still be available in the *Trolleyshop*.

And the *Punch Bowl*? Atherton was the hub of the SLT system and the *Punch Bowl* Hotel - featured, with trolleybus 31 passing, and with the *Punch Bowl* Stores on the opposite side of the road, on the book's jacket - was situated at the junction (which the SLT trolleybus routes passed) where the town's Wigan Road, Leigh Road and Market Street met.

An excellent hardback book of 200 pages - which gives a comprehensive account of an operator whose name lives on with many trolleybus enthusiasts 52 years after the company ceased to exist - *A Trolleybus to the Punch Bowl* is a very useful addition to the bookshelf and is available from the *Trolleyshop*.

Doug Barrow

LONDON TROLLEYBUS 1348

On 1 July 2010, the last London trolleybus left un-restored, came home to England. 1348 has effectively been in store since withdrawal in 1961. In early January 1962 it was towed from London behind London Transport AEC lorry no.403W to Dover. Vic Chivers was the guy who towed it, and is still involved with preservation. The lorry broke down on the way, and East Kent's AEC Matorator towed both to Dover, and then the broken-down lorry back to London! 1348 went to the Transport Museum Society of Ireland, and was stored, initially in the open, but for the greater part (over 40 years), undercover. As with a lot of earlier vehicles saved, damage was inflicted by vandals, but this was mainly broken windows. If it hadn't been for TMSI, 1348 wouldn't exist today! Ten years ago, Brian Maguire went to see the trolleybus, and started to negotiate for it to be loaned to our Museum. At last, this has come to fruition and we, at Sandtoft, are to restore 1348 and use it - hopefully restoration will be completed in time for the 50th anniversary of the closure of London's trolleybus system (which is what all the 2012 hoo-ha is all about, isn't it??)

RUNNING DAYS IN 2010

Gates open 11.00 am to 5.00pm unless stated otherwise

Saturday 24 July	Bus Gathering Preview (open 11.00am to 10.00pm) With real ale beer tent and twilight trolleybus services
Sunday 25 July	Bus Gathering 2010 (open 10.00am to 6.00pm) Large selection of trolleybuses in service, visiting historic vehicles on display, transport bazaar, real ale beer tent, live music, craft stalls and more.
Saturday 14 August	Bus Blue's and Two's Weekend A variety of visiting emergency vehicles, fire & rescue displays & demonstrations throughout each day
Sunday 15 August	Bus
Saturday 28 August	Bus Six Wheeler Weekend
Sunday 29 August	Bus Featuring a variety of 6-wheel/ 3-axle trolleybuses & Huddersfield 541; launch into service (Sunday 2pm)
Monday 30 August	Bus
Saturday 18 September	Bus Model Weekend
Sunday 19 September	Bus Featuring model trolleybuses, trams and trains and working layouts
Saturday 2 October	Bus Worldwide Weekend
Sunday 3 October	Bus Featuring trolleybuses from around the world
Sunday 17 October	Bus St. Leger Rally St. Leger Historic Vehicle Rally starting from Doncaster Aircraft Museum, transport-related sales stands and parades of historic vehicles at Museum
Sunday 14 November	Bus Twilight Trolleys (open 11.00am to 6.00pm) Trolleybuses operating after dark
Saturday 11 December	Bus Santa Days (open 11.00am to 4.00pm)
Sunday 12 December	Bus Children can visit Santa

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).

1 3 4 8

is back from Ireland



London trolleybus 1348 leaves Liverpool Docks on the evening of Thursday, 1 July 2010 on its way to the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft, where complete restoration will take place



After an overnight stop at Ossett, 1348 arrived at Sandtoft on the morning of 2 July. Wheels had been borrowed from 1812 (seen chocked up in the background) for the journey from Dublin *Photographs by Graham Bilbé*