

Sandtoft Scene

October 2010
No. 79



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News and Views from
The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft

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FRONT COVER PICTURE: Ruby Duke.....going to the Teddy Bears' Picnic at the end of June. (Ruby is the granddaughter of Cheryll Crowther from our Tea Trolley Café. The bicycle is part of our collection in our Sunbeam Cycle Shop) *Photo: Judith Martindale*

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



The *Road to Sandtoft* feature continues, this time with Bruce Lake explaining the trials and tribulations of buying an old bus - his ex-Hornsby Renault PR100 motorbus in fact. In the last episode, we left the story with the Renault having been sent away for major chassis welding repairs and with Bruce anxious to drive it on the road as he had just passed his PCV test. As you will see from this second instalment, he finds it was not going to be that easy.

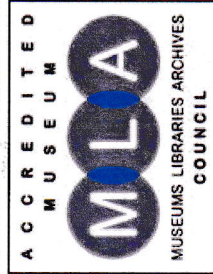
I'm always very appreciative of the time taken by contributors to *Sandtoft Scene*. In this issue we have another towing experience from Mick Leak, using the Huddersfield AEC Mandator tower wagon, A9, (which visited our Museum during the 6-Wheel Weekend in August, when no.541 was launched.).

I would also like to thank new member Juan Varela, who lives in Buenos Aires, for his interesting critique of his TDE day.

The World-Wide Weekend, for me, turned out to be one of those weekends that will remain with me forever. Perhaps the most prominent vision will be when Bruce Lake threw caution to one side and, in torrential rain, started to wash down two trolleybuses. He even used the hose pipe, just to add to the already "waterfall" effect from the "buses. It just shows how dedicated people are to the prosperity of our Museum.

DIRECTORS' SPOT

..... from Graham Bilbé, Chairman:



We are sure that all our members will be delighted to learn that we have attained the prestigious **FULL ACCREDITATION** status from MLA!

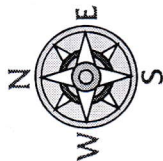
This has been achieved after a hard couple of years of background work by Museum personnel, and our achievement here is so much the better as many museums only manage partial accreditation at the first attempt.

Being Accredited is effectively the next step up from the "Registered Museum" status that we achieved about five years ago (but not as simple as that, because registration is being discontinued and replaced with accreditation, and some museums have opted to not bother as so much work is necessary). In terms of furthering the Museum's standing within the heritage movement, this is a significant advance and hearty thanks are due to all involved in preparing the mountains of documentation needed. It is never easy to single out people, but here, particular thanks must go to Adrian Dennison for his meticulous efforts in getting to understand accreditation requirements, and listing all and then cataloguing as appropriate our Museum objects. Thanks go, also, to Bruce Lake who has unmercifully badgered Board members for

input and co-ordinated the whole business. **Well Done, All!** We are also most grateful to Susan Hopkinson, Jaane Rowehl and Robin McDermott, our external "museum professionals" who have given us much help, guidance and encouragement along the way.

Café receives highest accolade

I would also like to thank and congratulate our wonderful "Trolley Dollies" for achieving a 4-star rating for our café in this year's assessment - with an indication that "we wuz robbed" last year as the assessment took place whilst the Museum - and therefore the café - was closed, and we were only awarded three stars as a result! We always knew that our café is one of the best! A special "thank you" to Cheryll, Judy, Gill and all the team that make our café such an (officially-recognised!) delight to eat in!



THE ROUTE TO SANDTOFT

The Trials and Tribulations of Buying an Old Bus - PART 2
HORNSBY TRAVEL OF SCUNTHORPE F100 AKB Bruce Lake

I got "100" back from Wilson's a fair while after I had passed (June 2008) my PCV test. With Jim Sambrooks, I inspected the work and found some bits of the dozens of areas we had marked up that they had missed. 100 went back (sort of "under guarantee"!). It finally returned to the Museum with all the welding done, in late summer - at great expense as you can imagine. As soon as I got it back, the starter system, which had been giving trouble, packed up. Indeed, Wilson's had been starting it on occasions by bridging power across to the starter motor pull-in solenoid. Several visits to Sandtoft failed to even find the starter solenoid that I knew must be there somewhere, as the driver's push-button is a low-current device and, of course, the starter motor is high-current. I finally had to call Hornsby's and ask where it was. They couldn't quite remember but pointed me in the right direction and I found a completely unseen connection box near the back wheels with the solenoid in it. Steve Harrison was able to provide a new 24v solenoid from one of his suppliers, so I got that fitted and the bus started properly again!

Then the brake lights failed. Fiddling with the wires had no effect: by now I was getting familiar with the wiring scheme, although it didn't help. I realised that the activating switch for the brake lights was a pressure switch in a dedicated air cabinet on the side of the bus. I had been in there before, and had hastily replaced the lid, for it was a can of worms! The ER100 trolleybus has a very similar arrangement and Ian Metcalf had spent many happy (?) hours removing, repairing and replacing air valves on that. I had to take the bull by the horns again and investigate. I was concerned to find that several of the pressure switches had wires missing from them, and further investigation revealed that the terminals on their tops had just rotted away: I had to solder the wires to next to nothing on the tops of the valves. Not a good solution, but without spare parts I had no choice. The brake lights worked again! As did a couple of cab indicator lights that had also previously stopped working.

I also had to tackle the bodywork. Some of the welding had been very close to

the body panels, so Wilson's had needed to bend the latter out of the way to be able to do the welding. I bent and folded panels back as best I could and re-riveted a number of areas, finishing it all off with a bit of Marseille blue paint! The rest of the blue band around the bottom will eventually be "Marseille-blued" instead of "Hornsby-blued" as they are nearly the same colour anyway.

Meanwhile, one day the windscreen wipers suddenly went bang! Not an electrical bang in the motor, but a mechanical stress bang. Investigation revealed that the wiper motor was centrally placed and drove the two wipers through eccentrics, one in each direction. The driver's side one had broken away from its weld at the end of the spindle. This was going to be awkward, as there was no way to get welding tackle into the confined space between the windscreen and the blind box; neither would the wiper motor come out. Northern Counties must have built the bus round it! Fortunately, dab-hand Ian Metcalf worked out how the eccentric assembly could be removed from the end of the motor spindle. A bit of welding re-attached the arm to the spindle and that was that. Except it wasn't. On reassembling the wiper linkages, we discovered that the driver's side wiper was extremely stiff. Now we knew why it had broken in the first place. Examination showed that the shaft through the front of the bus which drove the wipers had seized into its sleeve which passed through the front, so driving the wipers was actually turning the whole sleeve... OK, dismantle the wipers and free it off. Not so! Despite being able to get at both ends of the sleeve/shaft arrangement, no amount of penetrating oil would release it - not even Dave Shepherd's mega-super-duper "this'll-shift-anything" very-expensive-special-penetrating-solution had any effect. Neither would it come out of the bus to work on it on a bench - again, Northern Counties had built the bus around the arrangement. I had to make a decision, and that was to grease the sleeve and allow it to continue turning in the bus (but more freely than it had been). Of course, the wiper splines had become worn, so refitting them wasn't straightforward either, but much work with a fine file got it back together.

So that should conclude the wiper saga. You would think so wouldn't you? But no, the linkage from motor to wiper inside the bus has a plastic "socket" fitting to suit a ball on each eccentric. One end's socket had lost some of its locating "teeth", so that it didn't grip on the ball properly. So, after two wiper, it fell apart. This was either because of the original failure, or because we had tried to refit it a number of times. Either way it wasn't going to work again. Get another one then. Simple! Far from it. Armed with the chassis/VIN number, I began ringing bus, coach and truck suppliers to get a replacement. No-one, and I mean no-one I contacted, could get their system to recognise my number. They even contacted France with it and got the same reply!! I visited dealers with my faulty arm and started saying that any arm with the same sort of socket arrangement on the ends would do - surely! Renault trucks still used the same arrangement. I didn't care what length it was, I would either cut it down, or remove the sockets and put them into mine. No joy! I was studying the arm and wondering how to repair the socket when one of my places (JDS

Trucks) rang back. "We've got something like what you described", they said. A trip to Manchester in rush-hour traffic (tip - don't try it!) meant I arrived after the place had closed. Fortunately the guy waited for me. He showed me the arm he had found in the stores. I was disappointed to find that it wasn't the same geometry, but I might be able to get it to fit with quite a bit of surgery. It was £25. I was dubious. Just then a mechanic walked in and took an interest. "I've just thrown one of them into the scrap bin", he said. "You can have it if you want". This sounded better! He grovelled in the scrap bin and fished it out, complete with the drive arrangement with the balls on, which enabled us to check that both theirs and mine fitted on the same balls. They did! I checked why he'd thrown it out (you're getting ahead of me here aren't you?) It was because you can't buy the separate parts any more; Renault insist that you buy a whole assembly - motor, arms, linkages etc., so he had replaced the whole lot on a truck because of one faulty part and chucked the rest of the old stuff. "Here, you can take the motor and rest of it if you want". So I did. The salvaged arm was even better than the new one as its geometry was closer to what I needed, so I only had to cut it and shorten it and bolt it back together - Geoff Welburn's useful stock of small bolts and drill and taps coming to the rescue on that one.

So what about the MoT test? Ah, yes, that small matter. I booked it in for a day in May 2009; now it had to go to the Ministry testing station at Carcroft. I set off with trepidation, but the guys there these days are quite friendly. They even reset my headlight beams for me while they were checking them. It costs twice as much as a car for a class 5 MoT, but you can't avoid it. There are two roads, and they operate like a production line, with queues of vehicles (mainly lorries) moving slowly through between the various test areas. There was a lot of tapping and banging (how much more chassis rot were they finding?), and "move this", "waggle that", "switch this on and off", etc. until you get to the end. It failed.

Not on the chassis though - which was a relief. There was an air leak, which I wasn't too worried about, but the biggest problems were a spring shackle with some slop in it and the brakes. The latter were not good enough and also unbalanced. Jim had warned me that this was the most difficult problem as we have no means of checking them. I went back and Jim did some adjusting. We were getting 80+ on the Tapley meter (trolleybuses need 45), so we figured that was enough. We also shimmed the spring shackle as we couldn't undo the nuts holding it on. I re-booked the test at half price (for a re-test within 10 days) and took it back. We'd sorted the air leak, so they only had to check the brakes and the spring. It was much better on the brakes, but it still failed on the front. Indeed, the shim had fallen out of the spring shackle as well, so it was back to the drawing board for that.

Jim said he didn't think he could do any more with the brakes. The Class 5 test is more arduous than a Class 6 (how stupid? - it is explained that a car, generally needing the class 5, has to balance its brakes much better as an imbalance could easily have it off the road, whereas a bus is unlikely to veer off as much due to its greater inertia). I rang Hornsby's. They said that yes,

they used to have trouble with the front brakes as various pins stiffened up over the months due mainly to the retarder doing most of the work, and they had to strip them down every couple of years. Of course, by now, 100 had been virtually idle for 3 years, so perhaps it wasn't surprising. I took a chance and asked if they would have a look at my brakes. Raymond Hornsby agreed to this, but I had to wait nearly a month for them to find a quiet slot. "I thought I'd gone back in time" the operations manager told me when he saw it arrive. "I remember painting that years ago!"

Anyway, they got the spring shackle bolts out and sorted that quite quickly. The brakes took a bit more time as the drums wouldn't come off without a fight - a very large sledgehammer and a lot of grunting was the only solution to that. "What's the difference between a car mechanic and a bus mechanic?" they asked. I didn't know. "The size of his hammer", was the answer! Gratifyingly, the side which was worst on the brake test was the worst for sticking so it was a case of getting the cylinders working properly and the pivot points lubricated. They tested it with their meter and pronounced it as good as it gets. They charged me an hourly rate, but it was worth it to get it done by those who had worked on it before. I booked it back in for yet another test - full price this time as you can only have one cheap re-test. It passed!

So that's it then? Well, not quite. What happens when you try to tax a relatively new bus when its last use was in service? They sell you a bus tax disk at the inflated rate. I realised too late that's what had happened. Apparently, it is very difficult to get it changed. You have to get your log-book changed from "BUS" to "PLG" (Private Light Goods), and that's difficult because it is actually a bus of course, and it's not 'light' either. Fortunately, Howard Spencer had been through this process and told me how to proceed. It involved queuing at a local DVLA (I went to Leeds) and persuading the clerk that you can do it. Howard had spent two long sessions at Leeds, one of 6 hours (!) and made lots of phone calls to Swansea to get his sorted. So I followed his instructions and turned up to find what seemed like a thousand apparent immigrants packing the office waiting for something or other. I was obviously facing a 6-hour wait. There is a ticket system, so you get a turn. It became evident that most of the people were waiting for something to be done rather than see a clerk, as I only had to wait about 20 minutes to get to a desk. "Oh, I don't think you can do that", was the response when I told the girl what I wanted to do. "Oh, yes you can" I responded. Then "Have you taken all the seats out?" "Of course not, it's still a bus." "I'll have to make enquiries." I gave her the spiel that Howard had given me. She disappeared for 5 minutes and then came back, "yes we can do that", she said; stamp, stamp, stamp, "here's your new tax disk." "Is that it?" I asked. "Yes, all done." So now I have a PLG disk at half the price! I even got a refund!

At this point I'd like to thank anyone who has helped with this (as it turned out) enormous task, whether in a large or small way. Without you, it might have been in a scrapyard by now.

So, that is (would you believe) a very condensed version of the difficulties facing you if you decide to buy a bus, and the hidden expense you'll suffer

over the years (did I mention the rent and diesel costs I have to pay on top of all this ?) Howard's story is even worse with his Dominators. However, 100 is a great drive. It has very smooth air suspension and nice, positive power steering. So now, suddenly, it is all worthwhile !

So, as of the time of writing, August 2009 - nearly three years after first setting eyes on it- 100 is on the road. I know what you're thinking - 'for how long ?' I know, so am I.

ON TOW

REMINISCENCES (No.3)

This particular story concerns Bradford 835 - which has had a somewhat peripatetic existence over the years - but not about its connection with Sandtoft (which it left on 26 May 1975). Also leaving Sandtoft that month was 844 - the "last trolleybus" - which had been acquired by the West Yorkshire PTE. Even professionals can get it wrong - as 844 suffered roof damage when it hit the low bridge outside Ackworth, en-route for Bradford. My story includes how we AVOIDED a low bridge with 835 - but I am jumping ahead a little here! Privately-owned, 835 passed on to some BTA members in the south and was taken to Woolwich Arsenal with the intention of creating a museum there. It was eventually returned to Bradford - once again under the care of its previous owner, Michael Bentley. It was intended to be part of the growing collection of vehicles that would be part of the West Yorkshire Transport Museum.



835 on the Ludlam Street depot's forecourt about to prepare for reversing inside
Photo: Mick Leak

Mention had been made of the Yorkshire Day at Crich and would the BTA, or the vehicle's owner, like to take 835 along ? Yes, was the answer from all concerned as we knuckled down to finishing off the "refurb". Another idea surfaced - was it possible to operate (using a skate) at the National Tramway Museum ? In case it was, I built a skate mechanism which could be bolted to a chassis cross member (and insulated from it) and feeding the negative return

from the trolleyhead via a heavy duty cable. Whilst all these preparations were carried out, there was no guarantee that we would be allowed to operate it, but just in case, we were prepared.

Our towing vehicle was the ex-Huddersfield AEC Mandator tower wagon, no.A9. This is a superb vehicle in its own right, but, as events turned out, not quite suitable for our marathon escapade. Anyway, they do say ignorance is bliss and we were blissfully unaware of what was to be another nightmare of a tow ! It was a Saturday morning, some twenty years or so ago when we set off for Crich. Alan Parsons and I were insured through the West Yorkshire Police for the purposes of towing and driving the museum's vehicles, member Keith Pickles drove the BTA's tramway van - the VW - and he was accompanied by Robin Kitson.

We headed for the M62 and then joined the M1 southbound. The AEC had a top speed of 28mph so progress was slow but there was every indication that we should arrive at Crich in the early afternoon. If my memory serves me correctly, we left the M1 at South Normanton (J28) and on to a dual-carriageway. We needed a break and were on the lookout for a lay-by so we could have a cuppa and a sandwich. We also wanted to make sure of the correct approach to Crich - there being some steep hills to climb. The Mandator's gearbox was of the crash type but manual dexterity, the correct use of the clutch and the deft control of the throttle usually led to a smooth transition from one gear to another. But on this occasion, despite trying to emulate Reginald Dixon on his mighty Wurlitzer, we had no sounds of any crashing gears or, more importantly, any movement !

We were (I think) on the A38 going away from Crich, so we needed to turn round. A useful roundabout beckoned but we were going nowhere ! We took the top off of the gearbox to find that a selector fork had broken. A closer look showed that it had been repaired before and it was that repair that had failed. With Alan at the controls, Keith in the trolleybus, I manipulated the gears into place using a large screwdriver. In bottom gear, we managed to circumnavigate the roundabout so that we were facing the correct way. Obviously we were in a cleft stick and something needed to be done. Keith nipped across the road to collect the van whilst I pondered the matter. I knew that it could be repaired (again) and as we were not too far from Crich and their excellent workshop facilities I reckoned that I could pull the offending selector out and we could nip to Crich and prevail of their good nature to effect the necessary repair. So, Alan and I set off for Crich and eventually, after a reasoned discussion, got the broken selector repaired. The weld stood up to the rigours of the crash box and as far as I know, still holds to this day.

Returning to the scene, we quickly reinstalled the selector and put the gearbox top and lever in position. Whilst we were completing the repair, we were joined by a police patrol car and the driver asked if everything was OK. We explained what had happened and that we needed to get to the Tramway Museum - did he know of a good route ? Yes no problem he said and directed us towards the A615. Now, our map showed a railway bridge crossing over before the

road joined the A6. We pointed out the bridge to the policeman who assured us that it wasn't a problem! So, saying thank you for his help, our convoy duly departed in the direction of Crich.

I was driving A9 and it wasn't too long before I saw the railway bridge. I think the maximum headroom was just over 14'0" ! Yes, the policeman was right - there were no problems with double decker buses but, we were quite a lot taller than a motorbus ! The A615, a normal road, was quite busy but I had to stop, of course. Alan had no choice too - especially as he was coupled to the AEC, but, as soon as he climbed out of the cab, he could see the problem.

So there we were, on a not-too-wide main road approaching a left-hand bend with a low bridge in the way. As always, problems seem to multiply when you are in difficulty. The road seemed to get busier (which it probably did not) and there was nowhere to turn round. It took one hour to turn our entourage around - with enough perspiration to drown in and sufficient expletives to keep a censor busy for a month ! But the miracle was that we did turn round against all odds.



A9 and 835 soon after their arrival at Crich Photo: Robin Kifson

We retraced our steps and eventually gained the A6 and headed in the Matlock direction. We nearly didn't make the ascent up to Crich village, as the steep hill, combined with some recent rain nearly defeated the balloon tyres' traction capabilities. It was the slowest crawl, in the lowest gear possible and still the wheels slipped. Eventually (at around 4.00pm) we made it and were directed through the wrought iron gates at the end of the tram track, to stand outside the Assembly Rooms. I suppose we breathed a sigh of relief that all our problems were over (or so we thought) so it was time to relax and take a look around. For many years, the BTA had attended the annual Extravaganza with their sales stand and we were therefore no strangers to the museum. However, Crich doesn't stand still so there were plenty of new developments to look at whilst we anticipated the possibility of operating 835 after the general public had departed.

In the next part I will conclude with a look at our journey home and yet another difficult situation !

TAKING THE TDE

I grew up in Buenos Aires, a city that fifty years ago had 40 tramway lines and 17 trolleybus lines. When trams were replaced by diesel buses, I took to traveling by trolleybus only (except, of course, when going to places they did not reach), until the system was closed in 1966, with the exception of line 314, which lasted until 1967.

The fleet was composed of Westram (with Wayne bodywork), Mercedes-Benz, MAN and Henschel trolleybuses. The MANs were my favorites for their superb design which, even today, could not be called old-fashioned.

Since there ceased to be conductors as from February 1963, I used to sit on the first right-side seat (the former conductor's seat), to watch everything the driver did and, looking through the windshield, I fancied I was doing the driving. Mentally, I gave indications to the driver (watch the overhead crossing, coast, accelerate, now brake, and so on !).

It was sad to accept the fact that I would never have any chance of actually driving such beauties. Fortunately, that "fact" proved to be wrong, for my application for the TDE at Sandtoft was accepted and so, on 14 June 2010, my dream would finally come true.

After being given clear explanations on driving techniques, having carefully studied the overhead and learned what to do (and why) and what not to do (and why), I felt pretty confident. I enjoyed rewiring the trolley-poles and acting as a conductor - I never would have thought the conductor's job to be so hard and with so many responsibilities. It was such a busy morning that it was nice then to relax and talk with my new friends - all the people at the Museum do their best to make you feel at ease - while enjoying a delicious lunch.

When the time came to do the driving, I thought for a moment I would never be able to control such a huge vehicle, but since I found no emergency exit I just had to jump into the cabin and try to make my best. Luckily Mr. Dave Shepherd and Mr. Bruce Lake, the instructors, were so calm and reassuring that I regained enough confidence to press the accelerator and practice with 2 four-wheelers. Finally, I did the full service with a smooth and fast six-wheeler, at the end of which I felt like a priest from a tiny village on his first visit to the Vatican ! Now, the certificate I have been awarded for successful completion of the TDE is hanging on a wall in my house, for my friends and relatives to know I have the privilege of being the first overseas TDE participant, thus holding the only such certificate outside Great Britain, of which I am quite proud. Believe me, no trolleybus lover should miss the TDE, for one thing is to love trolleybuses, ride them and watch them pass by, but to fully understand the technical side of the vehicles and the overhead, the driving techniques and the special cares the driver must take, and to actually be the driver, is quite a different and much more satisfactory matter. So, thank you very much Sandtoft ! I look forward to going back, and I am sure I will, come rain or come shine !!

RECENT RUNNING DAYS

541 visits the Windy City

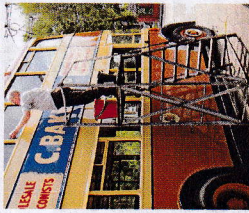
Bruce Lake

The launch of National Trolleybus Association (NTA) owned Huddersfield 541 has taken some time to happen. It was first planned for 2003, but all sorts of outstanding problems meant that it didn't happen, and then again in 2008 but the discovery of a broken main rear spring put paid to that. Once fixed (some time later), a string of minor faults seemed to take an age to remedy. In particular, the non-operation of the dewirement buzzer was a nuisance which took a while to sort out. Anyway, the testers at Sandtoft finally gave the NTA

'GATHERING 2010



Friday afternoon: the drain-cleaning contractor's vehicle and trailer after the septic tank (under the workshop road) had been emptied in readiness for the 'Gathering' Photo Doug Barrow



Malcolm Coates, busy working on Maidstone 72 during the Friday afternoon Photo Doug Barrow



Bruce Lake at the wheel of Edmonton 189 after leak testing on Saturday morning Photo Doug Barrow



Ian and Janet Metcalfe, erecting a gazebo on 'Gathering Saturday' Photo Doug Barrow



Sylvia Shepherd and Tina Bilbé, looking after a fund-raising stall Photo Doug Barrow



The beer tent was (as ever) a popular venue for many visitors Photo David Needham



Jason Bowers with the teddy bear name raffle on 'Gathering day' Photo Doug Barrow



The car park attendants worked hard all day to make sure enough visitor parking spaces were available Photo David Needham

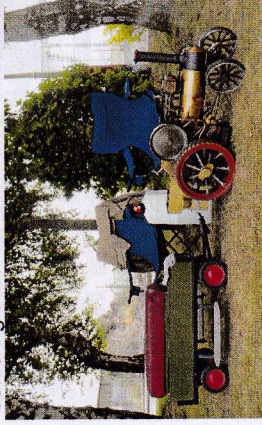


A trio from London on display - RT3323, newly-arrived 1348 and 1812, which had just had a serious dewirement Photo Doug Barrow

THROUGH THE VIEWFINDER



Edmonton 189 proved very popular on its 'Gathering debut' Photo Clifford Stead



This scale model traction engine was in-steam all day Photo David Needham



Some of the stalls in the depot Photo David Needham



A small selection of the many lawnmowers we have for display Photo David Needham



Part of the line-up of the visiting motor buses Photo David Needham



Vintage cars, displayed on our "new land" Photo David Needham

541 visits the Windy City (continued from page 11)

the go-ahead earlier this year to advertise the launch to its members, who naturally would need notice that the launch of one of their trolleybuses back into service was to take place; the date set was the Sunday of the 6-Wheeler Weekend at August Bank Holiday.

Credit is due to a few NTA members who turned up on the Friday to spruce up the trolleybus. Never, it seemed, has a trolleybus had so much attention lavished on it in such a short space of time - everything was washed, scrubbed, wiped, polished and generally buffed to a shine over the next couple of days. It really did gleam in the sunshine! At the same time, the opportunity was taken to finish a few "snagging" jobs which were taking the edge off the finished vehicle. These completed, along with the high gloss of the polished



Huddersfield 541 at its launch during the 6-Wheeler Weekend over August Bank Holiday Photo: Stewart David



A smart-looking 541 waits to take up service

Photo: Stewart David



Huddersfield tower wagon A9, borrowed from the Keighley Bus Museum Trust for the weekend, with 619, 541, 631 and the operating staff Photo: Chas Allan

panelwork, made 541 a very fine sight.

The scene was set for a great event, with the other two Huddersfield trolleybuses - 619 and 631 - rostered for use over the weekend. Launch day arrived. No, we didn't ship 541 to Chicago (the "Windy City"), but we might as well have done, as the Sunday produced winds of seemingly gale-force strength. This made the speeches rather unintelligible, as the microphone picked up more of the wind noise than speech, and the traditional tape to drive through almost ended up in Doncaster! Only sheltering the speakers in the lee of 541, and the pinning down of the tape by willing helpers avoided these problems. Anyway, once the speeches were over and 541 was driven forward through the tape (a much stronger version than usual!), the NTA's invited guests boarded for the initial run. 541 behaved very well and is very nice to drive. Once into public service, it, of course did a roaring trade for the rest of the afternoon.

Seeing three well-restored Huddersfield trolleybuses operating properly all together for the first time in preservation was a sight to behold, and the day became a "Huddersfield Event" for a time. This delighted the visiting enthusiasts and

public alike and made all the effort of finishing 541 off at last very worthwhile. The NTA has asked that 541 runs at every opportunity, so it will be rostered whenever practical.

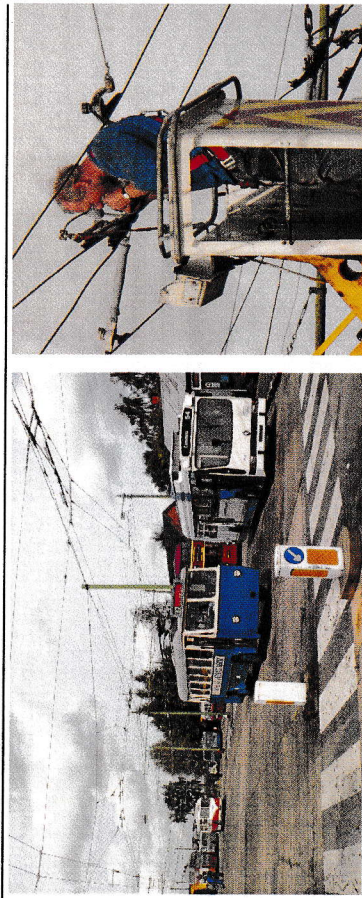
World-Wide Weekend Washout

Bruce Lake

Sandtoft's fleet of foreign trolleybuses has been very underused of late. A number of problems with them, coupled with the dislike of operating an odd foreign trolleybus amongst British ones, has meant that none have turned a wheel for some time. However, the arrival of Edmonton 189 from Canada late last year created a sudden upsurge in interest in them again, so the 2-3 October weekend this year was set aside for a World-Wide trolleybus event (a development of the European Weekends we used to have).

Unfortunately, all did not turn out as planned. First of all, we hadn't bargained on other major events happening at the same time. Blackpool decided to hold their 125th Anniversary and Salzburg had their 70th Anniversary at about the same time. It was felt that at least the Blackpool event may bring in a few overseas visitors who may stay and visit us as well. Apart from two or three German visitors that Mike Russell brought, I don't think that happened. We also had difficulties with some of the fleet: all were "out of test" and would need to be put through a "full test", which always reveals some problems requiring attention (and, true to form, they did). In particular, Porto 140 had failed some months ago with a pretty hefty "Bang!" that not only blew out the substation breaker, but also blew up some of the rectifiers which provide our DC supply from the AC grid. Not wishing to blow up more rectifiers (which are expensive), a softly-sofily approach was taken to its repair. However, even though the fundamental problem was diagnosed and fixed, 140 still stubbornly refused to move. Much head scratching and checking by anyone who could contribute did not solve the problem, and 140 had to sit out the event. The last effort was on the Friday before the World-Wide Weekend, which turned out to be the wettest day for some time, so activity was curtailed, the power turned off and we went home.

The Saturday morning arrived and the remainder of the foreign fleet were extracted from their slumbers in the depot - Limoges 5 ("Vera"), Liege 425 (the third oldest operating trolleybus in the world), Marseille 202, Edmonton 189 and Aachen 22 (to be run on demonstration only as it requires some renovation to run in service). Reading 144 was chosen to represent Britain, as someone had requested a Reading trolleybus to operate. The power was switched on in readiness for leak-testing all the trolleybuses. About a minute later the power went off again of its own accord. This was somewhat of a mystery as the main circuit breaker doesn't normally drop out like this! A check of the rectifier fuses revealed a hapless frog stuck across two of the lines, frazzled to a crisp. Ah! (or was it "Aaarghh!"?) This would be the problem! It is usually a rat that does this, but the effect is the same (the device isn't called the "rat-fryer" for nothing!). The frog was removed and the power turned back on. Bang!! - Circuit breaker out yet again. Hmmm - obviously more to this than met the eye. Further careful investigation by Bruce and



With old and new in the foreground, the "overseas" fleet is ready to go, but they have no power

Both photos David Needham

Our Engineering Director did not stop whilst trying to sort out the lack of power, so he took his lunch aloft with him

Graham, under Steve's instruction on the phone (on his way to a wedding !) suggested that the circuit breaker was not holding in properly. A lot of fiddling later saw the breaker back in. However, turning the main transformer on resulted in the breaker promptly dropping straight out again ! This suggested that there was actually a short somewhere, and the breaker was only doing its job. Attention turned to the feed out to the overhead. Roadside switches in green section boxes are there exactly for this reason - to isolate the overhead. With the switches out, the power stayed on, therefore the problem was somewhere in the overhead. Several people walked the circuit to try and find any problem - fallen tree branch, slack span wire touching running wires - that sort of thing. Nothing was obvious. Further checks with the switches revealed that the problem wasn't "to earth" but actually across the running lines. Meanwhile the public were drifting in as all this was going on. We were going to have to do something ! The first scheduled event on a Saturday is an Isle Tour to meet the Doncaster scheduled service in Epworth, setting off at 11:20, so visitors were encouraged to board that. When it returned, I decided to run Marseille 202 in diesel mode so that visitors could actually ride on a trolleybus, even if it wasn't electrically powered ! In and amongst I powered up my Hornsby PR100 as well, to run around the Museum as something else different to ride on, whilst extra Isle Tours were also operated.

Now, Sandtoft's overhead installation is quite a small affair by town system standards, and doesn't need separate sections, but to find the fault we were going to have to narrow down the problem. I identified a method of splitting it all into two. Graham set off with the cherry picker to take out the relevant supply cable links so that the outer circuit and Sandtoft Square were on one part, and the rest (the inner circuit except for Sandtoft Square) was another. Power back on again and Bang !! This is what I had hoped for, as it meant that the smallest part (the inner circuit along the back straight and round the ends) had the short in it. It was now a simple matter to supply the rest instead of the faulty part, and behold ! - the power stayed on with the outer circuit energised.

This meant that we could run outer circuits at least. The trolleybuses were hastily repositioned onto the outer circuit and service began - although it was 3 o'clock by now ! A convoy of trolleys all going the same way was not entirely satisfactory, but it was better than nothing. No-one complained - I think they were intrigued by all the activity with the power supply and the cherry picker ! Another quick adjustment and we could use the turning facilities in Sandtoft Square, so we could get unused trolleybuses outside the Axholme Stores while the outer circle was clear for use. We introduced a plan to bring all the foreign fleet into operation for the visitors at least for one run each. 189 set off and promptly stopped again. It wouldn't budge any further ! What else could go wrong ? Fortunately, a bit of fiddling got it going again. Meanwhile Aachen 22 did a demonstration run, much to the delight of remaining visitors.

The visitors went home, and myself, Graham and Andy Thornton set off with the cherry picker again to see if we could find the fault on the inner circle wiring. As it got dark we still hadn't found much after inspecting around three-quarters of it. The rest would have to wait until the morning.

Morning broke to the sound of a heavy beating noise on the roof of the caravan. It was raining ! Nose out of door - correction, it was actually tilting it down. The idea of going up in a cherry picker in these conditions was quickly abandoned, so Sunday saw service on outers again, but utilising layovers outside the Axholme Stores as described above. Electrically, the day was uneventful, BUT the rain got steadily heavier. By the time we opened, Sandtoft Square was flooded, as were the areas outside the entrance building and the front gate. Needless to say, leak-testing the trolleybuses revealed three severe failures. 144 was swapped for 181 as the latter had been inside and was likely to be OK on leakage. It was, so the operational trolleys turned out to be 202, 189 and 181.

The rain got heavier, and the public drifted in. I was surprised anyone at all turned up in those conditions, but they did - all 26 of them. Must have been the lowest turnout ever ! The rain got heavier. Trolleybus operations were kept slow as we didn't want a lot of water splashing into their electrics - we'd had enough of that already! The rain got worse. The back straight and Sandtoft Square now resembled swimming pools. I was just thinking "it can't get any worse than this", when it did - the rain was now like standing under a waterfall - something akin to Niagara Falls, I reckoned. The public all drifted off home and had all gone by 4pm so we put things away in the rain (did I mention it had rained all day ?).

At least the trolleybus service survived all day without incident - except the odd dewirement, and strange goings-on with the electric frog mechanism. Could anything else go wrong ? Well, YES, actually. The café staff were having their own problems - the newly installed dishwasher flooded the kitchen (twice !), and all their power went off as well. The latter meant panic-stations, as this included the fridges. Fortunately, the fault was quickly traced to the extractor fan switch, so on isolating that, the main power breaker could be reset. When Steve arrived, he fitted a new switch and all was well again.

So, the World-Wide Weekend was the most eventful event that I can remember. And we still hadn't found the fault on the inner circuit when we went home. I can only hope we have some more peaceful events for the rest of the year!

Post press date note - the overhead problem was subsequently identified and rectified. Details will be given in the next edition.

NEWS BULLETIN

Financial and Development: It is pleasing to report that our cash-flow has improved somewhat over the summer, although this will happen during our operating season as naturally it is the time when most of our income is generated. The data loggers set up to monitor atmospheric conditions in our buildings have been working well, and Adrian Dennison has downloaded the first lot of data for perusal. Now that they are in use, we have been able to progress the associated grant, and this has now been received from MLA.

Over the past few years, we have been reviewing expenditure and examining ways of reducing our costs. After a false start, brought about by a contractual issue, we have now changed our electricity supplier. On the face of it, having done this, we should make some significant savings.

AS WINTER DRAWS ON ...

With the winter months looming, now is, perhaps, the time to urge members working at the Museum to be thrifty and thoughtful over the use of electricity. Boiling a kettle and having heating on in the box van whilst having a cuppa is not really the problem. Rather, it is not leaving that (and/or other) heating on for hours (sometimes overnight) when no-one is using the place where you can help. Likewise, turning unnecessary lights off will help minimise our electricity bill: our big depot lights consume a lot of energy and there is normally no need to have all of them on, particularly if working in just one area of the depot. We want you to keep warm (and see what you are doing) when working at the Museum in winter, but please consider carefully the use of expensive electricity.

Members at the Museum during the winter period are also asked to be aware that we need to take precautions to prevent frozen pipes and water fittings. Vulnerable pipes have been lagged, and when sub-zero temperatures are forecast, some water supplies will be turned off and, where possible, pipes drained down; many vulnerable areas have thermostatically-controlled frost heating. So, if you notice that lagging has come adrift, please either refit it or report it to Tony Ferris or Steve Harrison as soon as possible. If, in freezing temperatures, you are the last to leave the Museum, please turn off (and drain down, if appropriate) any water supplies that may have previously been turned on - or let Tony know they are on. And please don't be "helpful" by turning off those vital frost thermostated heaters - either at their switch-on point, or at the supply distributor box! **Your co-operation is appreciated.**

The idea of a firewall in the depot is again being considered, in conjunction with the possibility of converting the wooden door (north) end of the depot building into a more secure area. Practical suggestions for the construction of such a firewall need to be developed so as not to lose too much space where it is located. Once a clear idea has been formed it will be costed before any final decisions are made.

While on about the depot, it is worth stressing that nothing should be leaned up against vehicles in the depot. Such practice can cause damage, either by the pressure applied, or scratches to paintwork - and this can happen when the 'bus in question "bounces" on its suspension when someone boards it. Indeed, the depot is not for parts storage, and there are areas where all sorts of "junk" - useful or otherwise - has accumulated. We are making an effort to clear out this stuff - please don't add to it with any more!

Commercial: The Museum's fleet handbook (published in partnership with Venture Publications) appeared just before the 'Gathering. It has details of just about all the vehicle exhibits at the Museum, along with photographs. Thanks are due to all the contributors, but in particular Bob Rowe who committed a vast amount of time and effort to the project.

There was some confusion just prior to publication regarding the cover price. As a result, wrong prices were quoted in the last edition of *Sandtoft Scene* - the book's cover price is, in fact, £6.95, but it is available at the Museum's reception and the [Trolleyshop ONLY at a special price of just £6.00.](#)

If you cannot get to the Museum, the book (and other merchandise) is available via the Museum's website at www.sandtoft.org/shop/index.php. Buying the book from us (and via the British Trolleybus Society sales stall) maximises our profit from this venture.



It is good to report that in response to the appeal in the last edition of *Sandtoft Scene* for help in assembling and mailing out the magazine, John Stainforth has volunteered himself - and all things being equal, he should, indeed, have dealt with this edition! Many thanks to John, who has also volunteered to help David Needham with editing *Sandtoft Scene*; details still have to be worked out how this will work and members' views on the number of issues of the magazine that should be published per year will, no doubt be sought at the forthcoming forum meeting that follows the AGM on Saturday, 13 November.

A Flickr group page has been set up by member Clifford Stead to show off photographs of the Museum at www.flickr.com/groups/1395720@N24/. Unlike Facebook and similar, Flickr doesn't require you to register or sign on to view pages - you can search for anything without doing registering. If you do a general search for "trolleybus" rather than go to the group above, you will get thousands of photographs from all over the world! However, should you wish to add your own photos to the group, you will need to register and then join the Group. Clifford is to act as administrator so that only photos of the Museum end up on this group.

Unfortunately, several events this year have suffered from reduced visitor numbers, although this seems to be common to a lot of other museums and could be due to the combination of poor weather earlier this year and the ongoing reduction of the impact of the credit crunch, encouraging people to holiday abroad again. The Board is watching the situation closely: 2011, of course, sees the Centenary of British trolleybuses, and we have many events planned around that. It will be a case of careful marketing - and hopes that the weather will be kind to us on the weekends that matter to us!

Going against the flow, this year's 'Gathering was a big success: the weather was just right for the event - not too hot, and not raining! Visitor numbers were up, as were large vehicle entries, which is good to see. Income from the sale of stall space was also up, and was sold out. There was no fuss with stall holders this year about where stalls were placed, thanks to Aiden's new online booking system, which made it clear exactly where the stall space was located and what type of floor surface they had. Edmonton 189's debut 'Gathering was just amazing, with long, long queues for it and capacity loads on every trip! Indeed, it carried around 20% of all the passengers for the entire day! Cardiff 203 proved popular too in its new livery, operating at its first 'Gathering for many years.

The manning of certain tasks on open days has been a problem, some days seeing over-manning in some areas, whilst other jobs struggle to get done. We think we have now resolved this with revised rostering and are grateful to all of our "workers" who have helped this season to do some of the more "unglamorous" duties.

As Graham Bilbé mentioned elsewhere, our café had an unexpected visit from an environmental health inspector during one of our running days earlier in the year. Previously this had been done outside operating hours and so the inspector never saw the café operating. This had led to the award of 3 stars (or "Good") as further stars require viewing of the working environment, something the previous inspector wouldn't do (i.e. to work on a weekend!). Following this visit (at which the new inspector was very impressed), the café has now been awarded 4 stars ("Very Good") which is brilliant for a part-time volunteer-run café. The maximum (5 stars) is not awarded unless, for instance, "at risk" food is stored and cooked in advance and held in a hot counter, something we do not do as our Trolley Dollies make everything hot to order. Thus, our café has achieved the maximum rating that it can. Well done to all the café team!

Our experimental Teddy Bears' Picnic event went off very well, and the children who attended had a great time finding teddies, colouring teddy drawings and entering the competitions. Unfortunately, the visitor numbers were well down for the event, possibly because of the sweltering weather that weekend (far too hot for humans, let alone teddy bears!). We will probably be repeating the event and targeting our advertising better.

Open day workers will have seen a new member of the team, Richard Goddard, who sports a badge which says "Here to Help". This initiative was

prompted by Richard himself who thought it would be useful to provide someone who could help "lost" visitors, those with questions, or even those with criticisms. The Board agreed, and Richard has been performing this rôle on nearly every open day since. If anyone feels that they can do the same on the few days that Richard cannot make it, then please make this known. The volunteers page on the website has been updated from a simple appeal to a full page detailing some of the rôles which new volunteers can take on. We hope that this will provide the impetus to accelerate the numbers of new volunteers we have been getting recently.

Members may be aware that the Black Country Museum Transport Group has experienced some severe administrative problems, which has led to reorganisation of their operation and management structure. This regrettable state of affairs is obviously a concern for the trolleybus preservation movement as a whole: we have several good friends within BCMTG and at the Black Country Living Museum and whilst it is difficult for us to be of much practical help (we have our own operation to run), we are keeping a watching brief on developments and trust that BCMTG's important contribution to the cause of historic trams and trolleybuses, and BCLM, will be able to survive this upheaval.

Museum Site Works: The problem of the unattractive - nay, unsightly - back wall of the "Skegness Hut" was addressed by Steve Harrison and team on 'Gathering Friday and Saturday, and by the 'Gathering proper, it had been improved enormously.

More of the site has had a paintbrush waved at it - the site team have finished the repainting of the Prefab, whilst Len Smith is continuing to spruce up our street furniture after spending some time on the telephone box and the postage stamp dispenser (take a look at the gold lettering on the latter!).

Gardening work continues, and the Museum is looking pretty good now. In addition, a team of students from Nick Broxholme's school came along in late July as a planned school project and created a "bog garden" in the area near the main road, which adds to the diversity of plants there.

All the lawnmowers hitherto on display outside have been removed to off-site storage. Don't worry though, they will be back! After renovation and restoration, the good examples will return to a proper, organised display. Meanwhile a very nice example of a 1950s-design road-roller has been delivered in working and restored condition by our resident expert. We will be able to use this in earnest in the future, but essentially, it is an exhibit.

An extension to the end of the Axholme Stores building is being investigated, in order to expand the café and enhance the seating facilities.

Museum Expansion Plans: A "way forward" meeting has been held, at which various alternatives for expansion were examined. These will be followed up and costed in order to select the most useful and viable options. Some of these plans will be open for discussion at the forum meeting after the AGM on 13 November and details will be published in a future edition of *Sandtoft Scene*.

TROLLEYBUS ANNIVERSARIES

Compiled by Geoff Welburn
October to December

Systems Opened

90 years since York opened on 22 December 1920
85 years since Southend-on-Sea opened on 16 October 1925
75 years since Newcastle opened on 1 October 1935

Systems Closed

45 years since Rotherham closed on 20 October 1965
40 years since Walsall closed on 3 October 1970

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS

TRAFFIC OFFICE

The 'Gathering

from Stewart David

The depot was cleared of vehicles on the Thursday before the 'Gathering, though not as many were needed to be towed to the display area on Whites Farms Limited's "figure of eight" as in previous years. The trolleybuses selected for service over the weekend were parked up at the top end of Sandtoft Square and over the course of the Friday, were washed and cleaned by a pre-arranged team who worked their way through nearly all nine vehicles by early evening! Huddersfield 619 was then leak-tested and used for some driver training.

On Saturday morning the final couple of trolleybuses were washed and cleaned and ready for service by late morning. Passenger numbers started to build up throughout the course of the day, but were notably down on the number carried on the previous year's 'Gathering Preview Saturday. Services were suspended for around 30 minutes in mid-afternoon due to a circuit breaker in the power house burning out. Our engineering and electrical team soon had things up and running again and we continued with services until just after 6pm, when all the service trolleybuses for the following day were earth-leakage tested successfully, apart, that is, from Huddersfield 619, which failed and was exchanged for sister vehicle 631. The twilight trolleybus service ran until 10pm and was enjoyed by many visitors and staff alike.

On Sunday morning, stall-holders started arriving shortly after 7am and final checks were made to the service trolleybuses, Maidstone 72 being withdrawn and substituted with Reading 113 due to bell failure. The final service line-up was Bradford 706, Cardiff 203, Derby 172, Edmonton 189, Glasgow TB78, Huddersfield 631, London 1812 and Reading 113 and 144. The trolleybus and motorbus services commenced at 10am and, after a somewhat slow start, rapidly became very busy indeed: trolleybuses were operated in groups of three for two-hour running stints, changing over at 12 noon, 2pm and 4pm. At around 1pm, London 1812 suffered a quite spectacular de-wirement on the outer circle adjacent to the back gate, twisting the negative trolleyhead and forcing the vehicle to be withdrawn from service and towed away, to spend the rest of the day on display with London 1348 and RT 3323. Reading 144 was brought into service early to substitute for the loss of 1812. As expected,

Edmonton 189 proved very popular indeed on its 'Gathering début, with a (probably) record queue forming: almost 400 passengers travelled on it between 2 and 4pm! Fortunately, I had rostered an extra conductor for 189. At 5pm services switched to inner circle runs only to allow stall-holders to pack up and vacate the depot. We had one final drama at around 5.15pm, when clouds of smoke began to pour from beneath Reading 113 as its compressor motor overheated and burned out, the bus being quickly cleared of passengers and isolated from the overhead lines - another tow-off job for the engineering team!

Over the course of the 'Gathering weekend we carried a grand total of 2,286 passengers and completed 139 service trips (48 trips with 334 passengers on Saturday, and 91 trips and 1,852 passengers on Sunday).

I would like to thank all our traffic team for working so hard to deliver an intensive service, all those who helped wash, clean and generally prepare vehicles on the Friday and Saturday, our engineering & electrical people who kept the show "on the road", the vehicle owners for the use of their vehicles and those who stayed behind to return the vehicles to the depot.

Safety & Training

A revised set of operational safety instructions covering the important subject of trolleybus driver training has been issued to all our current instructors. These set out the conditions under which driver training should be undertaken at the Museum. A laminated copy is displayed in the traffic office. Work is being progressed to split the present final assessment process into two distinct sections, with the overall aim of making the "test" more relevant to the environment in which our trolley vehicle drivers are required to operate. It is hoped to introduce this new element from the start of next year's operating season.

Conductor training and induction has also recently been reviewed and revised: Dave Shepherd will undertake the initial induction of candidates, and this will involve basic traffic H&S, paperwork, dress standards, etc. On-vehicle training will be undertaken by Sarah Shepherd, who will be assisted on occasion by Mike Johnson. The final assessment will then be carried out by Dave Shepherd. The trolley vehicle platform guard rôle is to be formalised too, with a brief job description published, outlining the safety and operational requirements for this task.

We are also seeking volunteers from existing trolley vehicle drivers for further training (Stage 3 training) to familiarise and qualify them for driving our collection of overseas trolleybuses (each of which have differing controls and therefore require different techniques to drive): if you are interested, please contact myself or Dave Shepherd to arrange this training.

I am pleased to report that the presentational condition of our vehicles has significantly improved over the past couple of seasons, and we have received some very positive feedback from visitors too. However this has only been made possible by the extremely hard work put in by a very small number of our people. Whether or not you are a member of the traffic staff, if you can spare a few hours on the day before a running weekend to assist, or can be at

the Museum earlier on operating days to help prepare service trolleybuses, it would be very greatly appreciated - many hands make light work, as they say !

New vehicles join the operational fleet

Thanks to the sterling efforts of our restoration and engineering teams, Cardiff 203 and, more recently, Huddersfield 541 have now joined our ever-expanding operational fleet of trolley vehicles: both these splendid vehicles are a real asset to us and we look forward to them operating at the Museum on a regular basis.

VEHICLES REPORTS

Johannesburg 589: further donations totalling some £11,250 have recently been received towards 589's restoration. Two 5-figure sums have now been presented to date, so thanks for the contributions to this trolleybus. 589 has its own website showing its history, progress with restoration (this is being done in Reading) and accepting donations at: www.johannesburg589.com.

London 1348: As reported last time, no.1348 arrived at Sandtoft on 1 July 2010. Barry Coward is now fundraising in earnest for this vehicle. He has already received some sizeable donations, and has "irons in the fire" for much larger ones. Hopefully, some of these will materialise over time. Meanwhile, if you wish to donate to this project you can do so - read more about it and watch a slideshow of it arriving at Sandtoft at www.sandtoft.org/exhibits/1348/index.php. It certainly created a lot of interest whilst it was on show at the 'Gathering'!

Manchester 1344: This fine trolleybus has been confirmed as being the property of the British Trolleybus Society, so it may well grace the Museum in the not-too-distant future. The BTS want to re-upholster and repaint it before it returns to Sandtoft - and service !

Nottingham 367 (Report from Steve Collins): The recent good weather has led to a surge in activity on 367. Dave Franks has made the journey up from Kent three times in one month and has spent several days at the Museum on each occasion. What is left of the driver's cab has been the main focus of attention, and has revealed quite a few unsuspected problems and intricacies in the construction.

The front panel on 367 which contained the headlights was removed years ago to enable the vehicle to be suspended-towed to Sandtoft and has never been put back on: behind this panel was a large, and what appeared to be solid, metal plate, upon which everything visible to the driver, instruments, wiring for the lights, air pipes for the windscreen wipers, etc., were fitted. On the near-side, a substantial metal frame, which had originally been part of the contactor cabinet, extended at right angles from the bulkhead across the full width of the cab, and was attached to the metal plate by two shaped steel sections. It had always been assumed that all this metalwork was in good condition and would only need to be cleaned up prior to re-installation of electrical items and other fittings, as everything that was clearly visible showed nothing more unpleasant than a thin patina of rust, which could soon be ground off and treated.

The truth of the matter is that, following removal of what was left of the said

instruments, wiring for the lights, air pipes for the windscreen wipers, etc., a closer inspection of the metalwork revealed that what had at first appeared to be a solid metal plate was in fact a piece of plywood, which formed the filling in a sandwich of two thin steel sheets. Also the two shaped steel sections which ran behind the plate were found to be rusted through and beyond redemption.



John Whipham hard at work on 367

Photo David Needham



The old and new front steel sheet

Photo David Needham

A revision of plans led to all this having to be dismantled, which, in turn, revealed that the plate was also rusted through where the steel sections had been bolted to it: it is reasonable to assume that all this rot had been caused by rainwater getting in through the broken windcreens while the vehicle was parked at Quadring (in Lincolnshire) all those years ago. Surprisingly, virtually all the bolts which held all this metalwork together came undone without much trouble: thanks are due to Brian Maguire and John Crossley for supplying the necessary tools to deal with all this. At the same time, the opportunity was taken to remove all the "Dexion"-type angle iron, bolted to the cab by Tom Bowden to strengthen the structure prior to 367 being moved to Sandtoft, and, if anything, this was more difficult to undo than the metal framework !

So, with the "Dexion" consigned to the scrap heap, and more of the cab accessible, several floorboards were removed, as was the driver's seat and frame to facilitate restoration. Between the seat and frame an impressive collection of rusty nails and stones were found: how they got there is anyone's guess ! No money though. Shame, that !

Over the August Bank Holiday weekend, while Dave Franks cleaned and painted everything that is good enough to retain, new member John Whipham, from Scunthorpe, busied himself removing filth from the cab floor prior to turning his attention to the front axle, wheels and brakes. 367 last ran in service in March 1950, so it is not beyond the realms of credibility that the last time anybody did any kind of servicing on the front wheels would probably have been in 1949. In view of this, it goes without saying that the area to which John turned his attention was, to put it mildly, very dirty. A fairer description would be that it wasn't just dirt, it was oily, greasy caked on, stubborn, ground in, hard to get at, dirt-infested dirt - the worst kind possible !

For two days, John scraped, probed, chipped and prodded, and not only revealed parts of 367 unseen for sixty years, but somehow managed to

transfer a large proportion of the residue onto his face and clothes. The end result has to be seen to be believed; much of his handiwork makes it look as if it was only assembled yesterday - a stunning transformation.

Despite having been bent double for two days, and liberally splattered with thick black sludge, John went round the Museum site on the Monday evening, emptying all the litter bins, and collecting up all the rubbish, ready for the dustmen on Tuesday morning. It makes one feel humble doesn't it?

The most noticeable achievement is Dave's handiwork on the bulkhead: the full width below the windows is now sporting a new coat of green paint - eye-catching is the only way to describe it. It makes poor old 367 look loved again. What we need now is a mild winter so that we don't lose the momentum.

Bradford 558 (report from Geoff Welburn): Lower saloon ceiling panels have been replaced, reconditioned cleaners light switches fitted and wiring for the downstairs saloon has been renewed. The area above the half-cab engine compartment has been panelled over and the near-side mirror is back in place. Valances and moulding around the front and either side of the cab have been refitted after being stripped and primed, side panels above the near-side windows have been fitted and the replacement offside front mudguard is in place.

AT THE BUS STOP

DONCASTER 22

Jim Sambrooks
(DO&LRS Chairman and Vehicles Officer)

22 is an AEC Regal Mk.III with Roe bodywork built in 1953 - quite late for its style. Doncaster was already operating an AEC Regal Mk.IV with underfloor engine when three half-cab AEC Regal Mk.IIIs (of which 22 was one) were ordered. They were built with wooden roofs covered with canvas. This, again, was an old style for the time: the Rotherham trolleybuses re-bodied at about this time had a similar arrangement, but the earlier Doncaster ones (no.375, along with motorbus 94, which carries one of these ex-trolleybus bodies are, of course, at Sandtoft) had aluminium-panelled roofs. It is my theory that Roe offered the bodies to the old style at a lower price than the newer design, but it is only my theory.

Anyway, when DO&LRS acquired 22 in 1973, the canvas cover had already been patched by the Corporation and we have been patching it further ever since: every time it went out in the rain, passengers had to use their umbrellas - inside the bus! We would patch it again and it would then leak somewhere else. Things came to a head in November 2009, when I took 22 to Lincoln in heavy, persistent rain, for the LVVS open day. Not only was it raining in through various lamp fittings, but dripping down the back of my neck in the cab. That was it! Something *had* to be done.

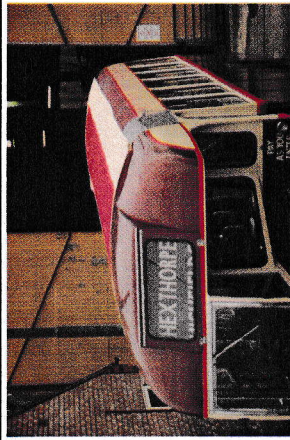
22 was kept roadworthy until the end of Sandtoft's season, then Christmas and New Year got in the way. So, it was mid-January before work started to remove the old canvas, but not before new material had been sourced: enquiries of a firm in Leeds that supply the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway seemed very promising; they quoted for 18oz canvas, 24" wide, sold from the roll. "We haven't gone metric yet," explained the man, "but we sell it by the

metre." I explained that I haven't gone metric either: I only know two metric measurements - the thou and the hundredweight. Unfortunately, 24" was their maximum, and we needed 36". A phone call to John Shawcross at Crich resolved the problem. They had an off-cut 4'6" x 24'0": this was just what we needed and John's offer to donate the fabric couldn't be refused. Mick Crabtree kindly delivered it to Sandtoft.

Our next problem was that the canvas on 22 was held down by miles of beading, secured by about a gross of screws on each side, it was decided to re-seal the covering panel beading at the same time (even more screws!). These screws had been in place for 56 years and were intent on staying put. Many had to be rived out or chiselled off. Some wood rot was found above the entrance "porch" and the only steel panel on the bus was covering this rot and was, itself, rotten. With all beading and old canvas removed, the wooden frame repaired and a new panel fitted and 18SWG aluminium in place, it was time to fit the new canvas cover. Undercoat was applied to the roof and whilst the paint was still wet, the canvas was laid and the new cover undercoated, stretching and pinning it as we proceeded.



Close-up of the repair to the "porch" with outer panel and rotten wood removed, awaiting fitting new wood and new panel
Photo: Jim Sambrooks



The new panel over the "porch" is in place and new canvas is tacked down and awaiting beading and trimming
Photo: Jim Sambrooks

I was determined that 22 would be roadworthy by Easter, but bad weather stopped play for much of January: deep snow closed Sandtoft Road on one occasion and there isn't any heat in our workshop! Brian Maguire kindly donated new beading from his stockpile and measurements taken from the originals proved that screw holes were randomly placed, not equal distances apart, making it difficult to avoid the old screw holes in the wood. A jig was made and new beading drilled. Then it was fitting time: using the recommended "Tiger" sealant, we were advised to warm this before trying to squeeze it from the tubes, but even after warming, the goo proved difficult to extract - to the extent that one tube collapsed under the pressure! On returning tubes to the supplier, a fault was identified and the tubes exchanged. It was like icing a cake using the new tubes!

As the weeks progressed, Easter came and went and 22's MoT expiry date loomed. Fortunately, one day, three others were working on the roof, allowing

me the opportunity to go underneath and prepare it for test, servicing it at the same time.

Eventually, with all the beading in place, primed and undercoated (the canvas had been undercoated at every visit), it was decided that the roof was waterproof enough and an MoT test was booked. Test passed, 22 was entered for the 1950s event at Crich in late June. This was attended with the roof painted but the "porch" yet to be finished. The step lamp was re-fitted before the 'Gathering, leaving only painting to complete the job.

My thanks to all who contributed to the repair, but especially to Mike Hirst, who carried out much of the work and conveyed myself to and from Sandtoft on many occasions to assist.

DEAR 'SCENE

Dear gentlemen

How nice of you to have sent me July's issue of *Sandtoft Scene* ! It came as an unexpected and beautiful surprise last Saturday, and the moment I saw the envelope, I knew it was a letter from the dear people of Sandtoft, whom I regard as my friends and long to see again as soon as possible.

You can imagine I immediately read it through, and am still showing it to everyone I come across, to show them what the Museum is about, what a unique collection of vehicles there are and - last but not least - to boast about my condition of "first overseas TDE participant", of which I'm pretty proud.

The magazine is as well done as everything else in Sandtoft. I can well imagine what a hard work it must be to edit and distribute it, but the results are worth those efforts. It's got a lot of information and I've enjoyed reading it.

Please send my respects to Mr. Bruce Lake and to my other instructor, whose name I'm sorry not to be able to recall right now, whom I wish to thank again for their friendliness and for their willingness to share with me their knowledge on trolleybus driving techniques.

Best wishes.

Juan Carlos Varela (Buenos Aires)

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Dear 'Scene

In my view, reducing publication of *Sandtoft Scene* to three editions per year is perfectly sensible and quite adequate. It would at a stroke reduce production and postage costs by 25%, and, of course, similarly the workload of those who put together the final product and mail it out to members. I would suggest that the first edition be published in late March in time for Easter and the start of the new operating season, the second in early July in mid-season and in time for 'Gathering and the final edition in late October with the notice for the AGM in mid-November.

I also think it is high time we had an e-version too, as the vast majority of our members are now online. This would enable members to opt out of receiving the hard copy through the mail if they wish and present a further savings opportunity.

Stewart David (Reading)

Dear 'Scene

What a great 'Gathering we have had. The weather was just about perfect and the attendance was very good. I want to give a huge thank you to everyone who mucked in and did many things that they do not normally do - like car parking, gate etc. This meant the day ran smoothly and everyone seemed to have a good time. Thanks again
Tony Ferris, Facilities Director (Belton)

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Dear 'Scene

Congratulations to all concerned in the production of the *Museum Guide and Handbook*. I particularly liked the picture on page 8 of the first pole being planted by R. Edgley Cox who is seen next to the pole almost with his back to the camera. To the left in the picture and to the fore is the late Les Flint, who led the team that actually planted the pole the previous day and went on to plant many more poles as the site (for that's all it was then) progressed towards becoming the museum we see today.

Over Les's right shoulder we can see Colin Entiknap who has attended every 'Gathering (there can't be many of us that have achieved that - in fact I would like to hear from anybody else that has). Also in the picture is Kevin Oxlade, one-time owner of Reading 193, Alan Parsons from Bradford and Andy Feather (next to the pole crane on the far right); Andy was responsible for assembly of the overhead line.

We did have some fun planting poles in those early days. We were out most Saturdays and Sundays, using a hand-wound auger and a hand-wound crane. No wonder we've all got back problems now! Les would eye up the pole and decide if it had enough rake (backward lean to allow the weight of the overhead to pull it upright), whilst his wife, Jean, led the team of ladies that kept us supplied with hot drinks from thermos flasks (as there was no electricity or running water on site) and their Alsatian dog, Timba, kept us all in check.

Sadly, Les died in 1983, but I'm sure he would be proud of the Museum that has grown from those early days. His widow is President of DO&LRS and keeps in touch, visits us occasionally at Sandtoft and has asked me to pass on her appreciation of the guide book and the people who today maintain and operate the Museum that she and her late husband helped to build. She particularly mentions the café ladies who she says do a marvelous job - and I agree!

One thing the book brings to light is those awful modern bollards that now litter the Museum's street scene and are totally out of keeping with the 1950s or 60s image we aim to portray.

Once again my congratulations on an excellent publication.

Jim Sambrooks (Doncaster)

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Dear 'Scene

We have now completed editing a one-hour DVD of the two day Sandtoft Gathering. It is excellent quality and up to the usual standards that Jonathan achieved with *Building Our Dream* DVD. We are hoping to make some money for Sandtoft with it, probably not a fortune, but anything helps. Could you

mention it in *Sandtoft Scene* as being available from Syd Eade, 274 Raglan Street, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 2LB for £4.99 plus £1.00 postage and packing. That should provide around £2 profit per DVD for Sandtoft at no outlay from themselves. It is a "burnt" DVD-R which should play on all DVD players. It includes the quiet Saturday runs as well as after-dark shots. I have also contacted Graham Bilbé with a view to giving those that worked hard to make the event a success complimentary copies as our contribution to the event. It is a great memento of the weekend to have, even if it doesn't raise hundreds of pounds!

Syd Eade & James Race (*Lowestoft*)

NEW IN THE TROLLEYSHOP

There are at least two new additions to the range of items in the Sandtoft *Trolleyshop* - they are a pocket booklet about modern-day types of bus and a new DVD about our Museum.

Doug Barrow

KNOW YOUR BUSES



James Race, a member of the JJS Entertainment filming team which has produced some DVD programmes about the Sandtoft museum, has published a pocket-size booklet featuring - in colour - 44 bus types which are a sample of those one is likely to see on Britain's roads. If, like me, you know the iconic Routemaster and the not-so-iconic Leyland National (both are featured), but don't recognise many of today's modern vehicles, this booklet could be of help, as a variety of chassis and body combinations are illustrated with, opposite the respective photographs, information about that vehicle type. The book is now available, price £4.95, in the *Trolleyshop* and if you are ordering a copy by post please add £0.75 for UK postage and packing.

SANDTOFT GATHERING 2010

Following-on from the *Building Our Dream* and the other DVD programmes I've reviewed, for *Sandtoft Scene* recently, JJS Entertainment has now produced a DVD about the 2010 Sandtoft Gathering weekend. Filmed on both days of the event, all of the vehicles which were in traffic that weekend are featured - as is an under-the-wires trip on the recently-delivered Edmonton trolleybus as it tours the Museum's circuit.

Having observed, both from the cab and whilst driving Derby 172 (with its wartime masked headlights), the Saturday evening's twilight trolleybus service being filmed, I wondered what the resulting product would be like - and I'm pleased to say that the various sequences have come out very well. Using 3 trolleybuses equipped with traction-powered lighting, with the vehicles' lighting (blue interior bulbs in 172's case, as a recreation of a wartime precaution) going out when the trolleyheads passed under insulators in the wiring layout, was a good idea and brought back memories of times past when those happenings were an everyday experience of trolleybus travel in the dark on many systems.

The quality of the filming on this DVD is very good. With freeze-frames staying clear, and a running time of 58 minutes, this DVD-R programme (burnt, as

opposed to pressed) is a fine record of the 'Gathering 2010' weekend. The price is just £4.99, and if you're unable to get to the Museum you can buy a copy of this programme by adding £1.00 for UK postage and packing to your order.

REVIEWS

DVD - South Shields Trolleybuses

Published by Online Video

£18.00

(UK Postage £1.00)

The South Shields trolleybus system wasn't a large one like that in nearby Newcastle, but it was a busy operation, serving a large town of contrasts - a town, at the mouth of the River Tyne, with a market, housing estates, the Tyne Dock industrial area and shipyards, a seaside resort atmosphere by the Pier Head and beach and, to the south, at Marsden, a grotto (with a turning loop on the cliff top).

Trolleybus operation in South Shields commenced on 12 October 1936 and it wasn't long before the trolleybus system reached places which weren't served by the former tramway operation. Most of the trolleybuses were Karriers (no. 204 is, of course, preserved, and operational, at Sandtoft) but the fleet also included an AEC and three English Electrics from Bradford, a Thornycroft from Bournemouth, four Karriers from Pontypridd, and 8 Sunbeams from St. Helens with very similar East Lancashire bodies to the St. Helens BUT, no.387 (once no.799 in Bradford's fleet) at Sandtoft.

This DVD-R (burnt disc) programme follows the growth of the trolleybus system and its everyday operations, as well as its eventual demise, and includes footage of an enthusiast tour of the system. Sadly, the system closed, without ceremony, on 29 April 1964.

A useful record, much of it in colour, of the trolleybus system, this programme features South Shields as it was in the 1950s and 1960s. The programme also includes the local ferry boat *Northumbrian*, the Harton Electric Railway and the Whitburn Colliery Railway.

Copies of the programme can be obtained from the *Trolleyshop*, or order it online at www.sandtoft.org.

Doug Barrow

BOOK - The Karrier and Sunbeam Trolleybuses of Ipswich

- A brief history of the vehicles delivered 1944-1950
Written by Mike Abbott

Published by The Ipswich Transport Museum

Price £4.00

(UK Postage & Packing £1.00)

The Ipswich Transport Museum publishes a range of "soft back" booklets on local transport history and allied subjects, and this booklet is the latest addition to the series.

This very readable A5-size booklet relates the story of these trolleybuses - and some motorbuses, too, which were used either for route extensions off the main trolleybus routes or, in later years as the trolleybus system contracted in size, trolleybus replacement.

Beginning with the situation in the early 1940s, when some of the system's early trolleybuses were still in service, the story continues with the order for the first utility-bodied trolleybuses and the constraints of wartime production, and the reader is taken through the processes followed in those difficult times and likewise with later orders for trolleybuses of this type. With the end of hostilities, there was, in due course, a return to pre-war standards and new trolleybuses were ordered with a higher-specification finish than their wartime counterparts.

It is interesting to read of the problems with individual vehicles (whether wartime ones or the post-war variants) in addition to aspects of the system's operations, and it is fortunate that Ipswich Corporation Transport donated its records and correspondence to the Ipswich Transport Museum as these items have been very useful in the preparation of a number of articles including this booklet.

The contraction of the trolleybus system, and the subsequent disposal of the vehicles, is covered and happily pioneer Railless no.2 (of 1928) and the final Sunbeam (no.126) dating from 1950 are preserved in the museum; no.126 is also seen, in a colour photograph on the booklet's rear cover, in operation at Sandtoft in May 1982. One of the eight trolleybuses which Ipswich Corporation sold to Walsall Corporation in 1962, no.126 is the only survivor of that batch and was numbered 347 in the Walsall fleet - and was held back when Walsall sold its sister vehicles for scrap; 347 was sold to the then Ipswich Transport Preservation Group on 22 May 1970 and taken back to Ipswich for restoration and preservation.

An interesting selection of photographs and a 3-page vehicle summary accompany the informative text, and this 48-page booklet is a fine addition to the collection of trolleybus system histories. Obtainable through the Sandtoft *Trolleyshop*, or order it online at www.sandtoft.org.

Doug Barrow

RUNNING DAYS IN 2011

The dates when the Museum will be open during 2011 - the centenary year of trolleybus operation in Great Britain (and the 50h anniversary of the founding of the British Trolleybus Society) - have now been fixed, so put them in your diary. Details of events are still being worked on and should be published in time for the next issue of *Sandtoft Scene*: suffice it to say that because of the significant anniversaries in 2011, some memorable events are being planned and we will be seeing some visiting trolleybuses at our Museum.

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