

Sandtoft Scene

January 2012
No. 84



ACCREDITED
MUSEUM

News and Views from
The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft





Sandtoft Transport Centre Limited
The Trolleybus Museum, Belton Road, Sandtoft,
Doncaster, North Lincolnshire, DN8 5SX
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Correspondence should be addressed to the Director responsible for the relevant area of operation, or to the Managing Director. As necessary, letters/ emails will be forwarded to the appropriate person. A SAE for a reply is always appreciated.

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Sandtoft Scene Editor:

Position currently vacant Pending the appointment of a new editor, correspondence should be sent to Francis Whitehead (contact details above)

Typesetting and Layout by Francis Whitehead.

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.

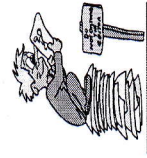
FRONT COVER PICTURE: Rotherham 37, followed by the Rotherham Bedford tower wagon FET 185 on the 2011 St. Leger Rally day - probably the first time the two vehicles have been together since the Rotherham system's abandonment *Photo: John Zebede*

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.

SANDTOFT SCENE EDITOR



The Board is sorry to report that David Needham has decided to step down as editor of Sandtoft Scene with immediate effect.

David took over as editor back in June 2005 with edition number 58 and straight away set about improving coverage of up-to-date news and regular events by establishing four firm press dates per year. David also quickly set a new standard for what he saw the magazine should contain, planning ahead the layout and basic content (as far as that is possible) with a balanced mix of current affairs and "magazine" type items - many of the latter from different authors, but fitting particular column themes such as "The Road to Sandtoft" and "At the Bus Stop". The result is a magazine to be proud of, a magazine full of interest that members look forward to receiving. The directors all thank David for the tremendous amount of time and effort he has put in to developing and regularly producing Sandtoft Scene over the past 6½ years. Likewise, thank you to you, the members and readers, for supporting David with your valued contributions.

This edition has been prepared by me as "Guest Editor", kindly assisted by John Stainforth, from items already in hand, along with other material provided by members - all forwarded by David - and items specifically solicited. Behind the scenes (as it were, no pun intended), discussions have been taking place as to how we replace David. I am pleased to say that one member has shown interest and is considering whether he is able to make a long-term commitment to the job, so I can but hope..... In all seriousness, this is an important and demanding, time-consuming job, so if anyone believes they could help (perhaps as part of a team), then please let me know - contact details are on page 2. Meanwhile, please continue - or start - sending your contributions and comments in (to me for the time being), because without copy, we cannot have a magazine. The editor's job is to edit, not write!

A happy New Year, everyone, 2012 promises to be an exciting (and challenging) year for us at Sandtoft. Enjoy your read of Sandtoft Scene no.84!

Francis Whitehead

COMMENT

It was interesting to listen to the various views put forward at the Members' Forum that followed on from the AGM in November. Some 45 members attended the AGM and for information for those who were not there, a variety of topics was brought up during the course of the Forum, ranging from the need to eradicate the step - a serious trip hazard - to the threshold of the main entrance to the café, through expanding and developing the Museum (or not) and our vehicle collection, particularly that there are so many unrestored examples. This latter discussion, with resources in mind, questioned the number of vehicles we have, whether we need them all, whether we need any more, whether our visitors care about the niceties and differences between them and whether we will see them all restored in our lifetimes. All very valid points, and

it is not out of place that we should consider these issues in looking at the way forward and the future for our Museum.

Quite obviously, as a "place to visit", we are going to attract every sort of visitor and have little or no control over their actual interest in the place. Nonetheless, we are (mostly) glad to welcome them all. Our Vision Statement (it is always printed on page 2) states we should ".... entertain, educate and give excellent value and service to our visitors". Surely, we do just that (or attempt to) - feedback from visitors certainly indicate that, but equally, we do sometimes overhear comments like "Let's go on the green one now". Clearly we get people who have no interest in our *raison d'être* and who are just having a "g'zout". Yes, we strive to ".... entertain our visitors", but really, are we a theme park?

NO! First and foremost, we are operating a *museum*, an accredited museum and an educational charity, a living museum demonstrating the trolleybus. With the minimum amount of compromise to accommodate legislation and safety and visitor needs, we must strive to be correct and authentic in our approach to present and operate the trolleybuses. Even if some of our visitors don't care about the niceties and differences between our trolleybus exhibits, but want instead to ride on a red one, a blue one a yellow one, a green one and a polka dot striped one, it matters that we do care, so (at different levels) we can educate as well as entertain.

And, what of that (to some) tat in the back of the depot, or out-stationed in rented sheds? Will it ever get restored? It has to be said that the tat has diminished in recent years as vehicles have been renovated, but there are a lot still to do. It has to be borne in mind that some 'buses are privately-owned, so it is down to the owners to sort them out: there must be many reasons - time and money amongst them - why they remain unrestored. The Museum does encourage vehicles to be restored and can offer help by putting owners in touch with others who might be able to assist. There are also many Museum-owned vehicles: slowly, these are getting restored, but it has to depend on suitably capable and enthusiastic volunteers - and available funds - to do this: London 1348, RT 3323 and Bradford 562 are the current TM@S vehicles being worked on (with Johannesburg 589 being rebuilt as well, away from the Museum); Derby 172 needs to have some remedial work before it gets too bad, as does Reading 144, and Nottingham 466 and St. Helens 387 are in need of completing. We must get all these finished before we embark on anything else. The important point is that at least these vehicles continue to exist and are thus available to be restored: scrapping them would mean they will be lost for ever.

Francis Whitehead

THE 2011 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Around 45 members attended the AGM on 12 November 2011. The main points of note are that Francis Whitehead was re-elected unopposed as Financial Director and Chris Proctor and Tony Ferris were re-elected (also unopposed) as Ordinary Directors. The proposal to increase membership subscriptions with effect from 1 April 2012 was narrowly defeated, seemingly because of the £1 differential of proposed increases between members joining

the Company through a Contributing Society (£2.00 increase) and those joining direct (£1.00 increase).

Discussions at the members' forum that followed on from the AGM produced a suggestion that a review be made of the vehicle exhibits at the Museum with a view to rationalise "the collection" (which, of course, includes vehicles owned by individuals and groups, as well as the Museum itself): the object would be to reduce the accommodation necessary (and hence the space required and the cost) to house "the collection". Possible ways and alternatives to develop the Museum with or without acquiring additional land were put forward: the general view was that at least some additional land was required and in a straw poll at the end of the meeting more members were in favour of acquiring all the land currently being offered to us by Whites Farms Limited than buying just some of it. In view of the many possibilities for development, it has since been decided to cost various elements of development to enable the options to be more realistically considered.



THE ROUTE TO SANDTOFT BLACK ROD' KNOCKS ON THE DOORS - OF SANDTOFT!

"Black Rod"
PART 4 ** - Close encounters of the positive kind.....

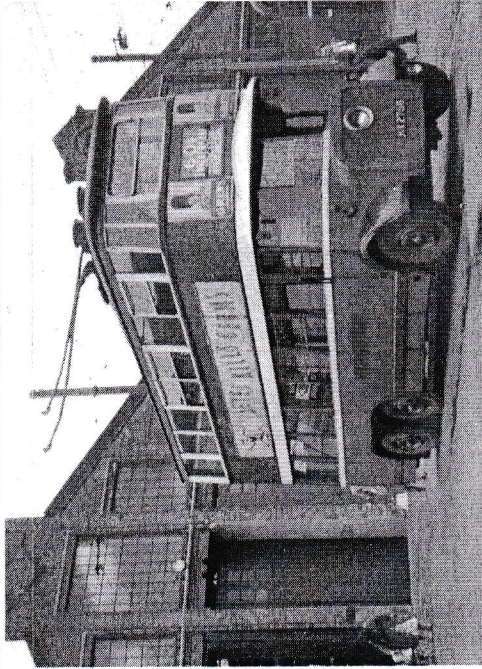
At spring 1962, the Nottingham Trolleybus Group (NTG) had been in existence for a few months. Originally formed to try and halt the abandonment of the Nottingham system, the Group was increasingly turning its attention to preservation. A list of suitable vehicles had been drawn up - initially all from the Nottingham area with the exception of a Rotherham single deck Daimler/ East Lancs. that had been included to represent the ex-Hastings single deckers purchased by Nottingham during VW2. At this stage, there was little knowledge of other organisations' activities and the only regular information medium was via *Buses Illustrated* (BI). Following tours to Ashton/Manchester, the NTG had decided to try and preserve a Manchester Crossley "Dominion" and an Ashton Crossley "Empire" as being representative of the north-west. Interest in these vehicles had prompted a desire to create a working national trolleybus museum. There were considerable problems: firstly, ongoing attempts to locate storage for a single vehicle had proved fruitless. More importantly, there was no money! Attempts to raise cash by operating a series of tours had proved a financial disaster. The cost of hiring trolleybuses and coaches for visits to Hull and Manchester had exceeded £40.00. This seems trivial now, but when you are earning approximately £12.00 per week, it was a lot of money. At this stage, the *active* members - around 6-8 - paid the outstanding amounts with, as I remember, the Librarian digging deep into his pockets. Our ever-optimistic Chairman had put forward a plan to borrow the money - rather frowned upon in the 1960s - and this had caused a number of members to leave quite suddenly! A further problem was the sudden withdrawal of Nottingham 466, the last remaining Brush-bodied Karrier

** CORRECTION: An error crept into the "Route to Sandtoft" heading in the October 2011 issue: that chapter of Black Rod's account should have been numbered 3, not 4.

W and a definite "want" on the list of preservation candidates. The sad fact was that 466 had received attention to its back end in June 1961 and was taken out of service following an accident to its rear nearside. With money having been spent, it was hoped that 466 would be repaired to provide us with more "breathing space". Obviously, Nottingham City Transport (NCT) considered 466's future carefully, but due to the first trolleybus service scheduled to be converted (it was thought in a couple of months), the vehicle was deposited in Manvers Street Yard where withdrawn vehicles were stored prior to disposal. A letter was sent to Ben England, General Manager of NCT. A business-like, but cordial, reply was received advising us that tender documents would be sent in due course and that the likely scrap value would be in the region of £120.00. I don't know what we had expected, but £120.00 was a small fortune then!

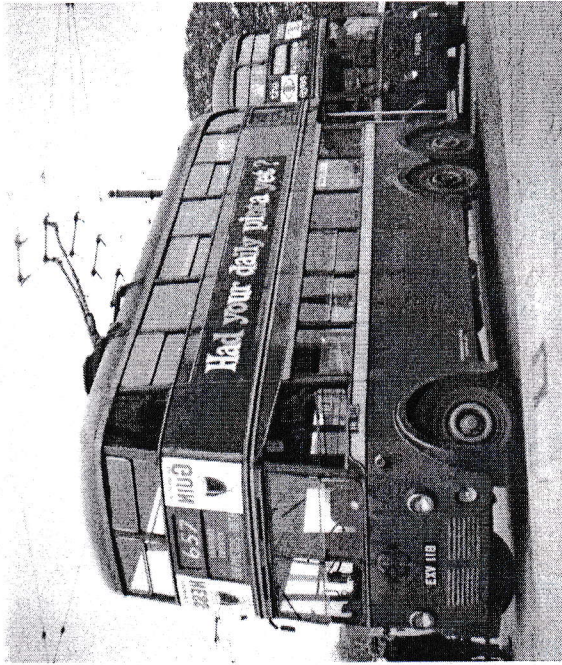
During this period, I began to believe if we were to create a national trolleybus museum, that it would be beneficial to offer the general public more attractions. May I explain that the museum intention for the NTG was to run the vehicles for the general public and not merely for our own amusement. We did not see virtue in keeping the vehicles for posterity and then locking them away in a big shed. Of course, operational vehicles could also create a revenue stream that would surely be required to maintain them for posterity. I therefore thought that one of our "country houses", already open to the public might favour a silent service through its grounds - maybe to transport people from the car-park to the house etc. Although many letters were sent, I'm sorry to say that none of the aristocracy of the day wished to have traction poles erected in their tree-lined driveways!

The programme of tours continued - but the next one was to have a real impact and would eventually change my thinking towards preservation. The Chairman, to his credit, had suggested that we write to London Transport requesting use of the "Diddler" for a tour on the final Sunday of operation - 6 May 1962. The choice of vehicle was refused, but we could hire a normal service trolleybus if we so wished. This offer was gladly accepted and the NTG, I believe, was one of only two societies permitted to have tours on this day. If any reader has knowledge of more, I would be pleased to find out. Within a short time of the LT confirmation of the tour, I received a letter from Mr. W.G. Akerman: nobody in Nottingham had heard of him. However, he was extremely well known by London enthusiasts, being known affectionately as "Trolley Wally" and I'm sure that some *Sandtoft Scene* readers of more "mature" years will have clear memories of him. Sadly, he passed away, somewhat prematurely, in January 1981. He had operated a vigorous one-man campaign against tramway abandonment, subsequently turning his attention to trolleybuses when they also became condemned. His knowledge of the London system appeared encyclopaedic. Wally asked if he could assist in suggesting the route, and since I had no route map of the system at that time, I gladly accepted. In our ignorance, we thought that the last stages of the abandonment would merely be a small remnant of the system. The trip would last 2 - 3 hours at most. When I received a very brief itinerary from Wally, it seemed to



London "Diddler" no.1 stands in front of Fulwell depot on 6 May 1962

Photo: "Black Rod"



London 1118 (an "all-Leyland" K1 class trolleybus), with the 6 May 1962 NTG tour trolleybus, no.1464, (a MCCW chassisless L3 class vehicle) behind

Photo: "Black Rod"

confirm these findings. We arranged to meet the trolleybus and Wally at Hammersmith around 2.00pm with an anticipated departure home from London at 6.00pm. Upon explaining this to Wally, he looked stunned. "I doubt if we shall be back by 10.00pm" he informed us! Of course, hindsight is 20/20 vision and I should have realised that with an operating fleet still totalling over 120 trolleybuses (about the same size as Nottingham at that time!) the "remnant" was more extensive than most other systems at their zenith! There would be a substantial route mileage to travel. This tour, using L3 no.1464, was well-supported, and possibly for the first time, I started to comprehend that there were rather more trolleybus enthusiasts and other "groups" than we

had previously been aware of. This also proved to be the first time that I encountered a certain Mr. Mike Dare ! I spent some time with Mike on the tour and, I believe, a real accord was reached. Now, I do not want the *Sandtoft Scene* readership to think "here we go again - old Black Rod reckons he was real big buddies with Mike Dare now !" No, this was not the case, but a spirit of co-operation was started that had two immediate "positives". Firstly, the NTG dismissed any idea of saving one of the Nottingham Weymann-bodied Karrier W trolleybuses, since it was found out that Mike was intending to try and preserve one of the Derby examples. Secondly, we agreed to organise a joint NTG/RTS tour of Walsall. The London tour itself did not conclude until about 9.30pm. There was no M1 motorway all the way, so the journey back took several hours. Consequently, we did not arrive back into Nottingham until the early hours of 7 May, with many of the contingency having missed their last buses, thus having to then walk home ! Your writer lived 8 miles from the city and faced a 2-hour hike, arriving home almost in time to set off for work ! Incidentally, although the London tour was extremely well patronised, it merely broke even. This was due in part to the far larger hire cost charged by LT and a more expensive coach hire charge. Although the quote was £22-0s.-0d., the charge was (understandably) increased due to the next-day arrival time.

Further correspondence was exchanged with NCT regarding the purchase of 466: Mr. England kindly suggested that we should offer a sum that would be within our means, but not derisory. Following discussions with other NCT management with whom I had become friendly, the NTG agreed to offer £60.0s.0d. - the limit of which we could reasonably take out a loan. The usual courteous and helpful letter was received from Mr. England agreeing to submit the offer to the Transport Committee for their deliberation.

The programme of tours continued with the home Nottingham system being covered using 478 (a Karrier W/ Park Royal UH30/26R), itself a potential preservation candidate due to its recent thorough overhaul and repaint. This



Nottingham's Park Royal "utility" trolleybus no.478 during its 24 June 1962 tour of the system

Photo: "Black Rod"

tour, on 24 June 1962, attracted more interest, possibly due to the impending threat to the system. In fact 478 proved to be the last trolleybus to use Station Street - a link erected in the 1930s but never used in regular service. Although it had been several weeks since we had heard from Mr. England, we were heartened when two days before the tour, 466 was towed from its Manvers Street Yard, driven through the bus washer and parked in Stanhope Street, adjacent to Parliament Street depot (the departure point for the tour) for our inspection. As a consequence, we had anticipated a forthcoming response from NCT regarding 466's future. However, two days later it was returned to the yard with other demic motorbuses also awaiting their fate. Naturally, with this local tour there were also no added coach hire costs and I seem to remember that the tour actually turned in a profit !



Following premature withdrawal because of rear-end accident damage (look at that platform !). Nottingham 466 stands with doomed motorbuses in Manvers Street yard in June 1962

Photo: "Black Rod"

After our initial meeting in London and exchanging a few letters, the joint NTG/RTS (sadly the only one) tour of Walsall took place on 22 July 1962. I still have the itineraries from both groups: the RTS version printed in black font with the NTG featuring the usual purple lettering. This proved another memorable tour, enlivened by the presence of Mr. Ronald Edgley Cox and members of his pro-trolleybus management team. One of the engineering staff, clearly full of admiration for Mr. Cox, was heard to say that his boss was a "wonderful engineer" and "shrewd administrator" but was prone to be "a trifle experimental !" Readers of *Sandtoft Scene* might well remember the various rebuilds within the Walsall trolleybus fleet - the BTS's no.342 is a prime example. Mr. Cox's experiments with diesel-electric power in an ex-Cleethorpes trolleybus (no.873 in the Walsall fleet) during the late 1960s would now appear years ahead of its time, with various international vehicle manufacturers now pursuing this type of technology. I am no motorbus fan -

but who could also forget Walsall's "short length" Daimler Fleelines ? However, for me, one of the highlights was a section of the itinerary that stated "a brief halt will be made at Field Road/ Lichfield Road junction to see line of trolley vehicle route extension to Lower Farm Estate expected to be brought into operation in the autumn of this year". Traction poles were already in place, but there were also relatively new concrete lamp posts of the type then becoming common throughout the country. A member of our party, clearly from a system that envisaged replacing traction poles with concrete lamp standards, asked Mr. Cox "what will happen to the new lamp posts ?" Mr. Cox smiled and said "oh, those - we shall just simply take the concrete lamp posts down". There was then a short pause and he continued "there is no magic in planting trolleybus traction standards - all you need is the will to do it". These words have remained in my memory since that day and I always think of Ronald Edgley Cox whenever I visit progressive systems such as Arnhem or Salzburg, who clearly have "the will". How this contrasts with the UK, where abandonment of some trolleybus services (I think of Nottingham's route 45) that were converted to motorbuses for the sake of re-siting (possibly) 5 or 6 traction poles. The extension that we saw under construction subsequently opened to trolleybuses on 31 December 1962. The other highlight of this tour was to meet up with Mike Dare once again. We spent a considerable length of time together and found that there was much common ground in our thoughts regarding long-term trolleybus preservation. At that time, we both considered that there would need to be a national operational site so that the obvious costs of land, depots, erecting overhead and appropriate electrical supply equipment etc. could be shared between interested parties. Whilst most trolleybuses would be kept at the national site, we both thought that some examples could be kept by individual groups to facilitate restoration and foster local interest. Our only point of contention was the time frame. At that time, Mike appeared to believe that the trolleybus, as a mode of transportation, would last for some considerable time into the future. He pointed to recent developments with new vehicles in Bournemouth and his "home" system at Reading. The latter was also planning a further extension (to the Northumberland Avenue service - subsequently opened in January 1963) and Mike also referred to the buoyant Mr. Cox with his enthusiastic support for the trolleybus system on which we were riding. I was the cynic and thought that trolleybuses would have disappeared by 1975 (if only - we would have had an extra 3 years !). I reminded Mike that we had just witnessed perfectly good tramcars in Aberdeen, Sheffield, Glasgow, etc. broken up years before their anticipated life expectancy. They had simply "got in the way" of motorists. I thought that the growing number of road schemes, particularly city centre one-way schemes would mean that trolleybuses would soon be in the way and that they too would be swept away. Clearly, my opinion was based on Nottingham experience and Mike's was based on the situation in Reading. These conversations with Mike Dare in Walsall had a profound effect on me. The RTS already actually possessed a preserved trolleybus, so Mike could talk with knowledge and experience. His thoughts were to influence and confirm

my thoughts regarding long-term preservation. The Chairman was party to most of these conversations and agreed with the concept being discussed. He also agreed with Mike's more positive view of UK trolleybus operation declaring "Derby will not get rid of its trolleybuses in a hurry". The preservation views discussed contrasted severely with several of the NTG members who thought that a local transport museum was an attractive and viable proposition. Whilst based on trolleybuses, the collection might also include a tram and possibly motorbuses. Of course, they had not a vehicle to their name - yet ! Incidentally, the Walsall tour commenced at St. James' Square, Wolverhampton: no.352 (ex-Ipswich) conveyed us over the joint service 29 to Walsall. The vehicle had entered Walsall service on 25 or 26 June 1962 - i.e. only 4 weeks prior to our tour. Following an inspection of repainted trolleybuses at Birchills Depot, we transferred to "Goldfish Bowl" no.862 (thankfully still with us, and operational at Dudley) and were ultimately taken back to Wolverhampton. This provided the rare sight of a "Goldfish Bowl" under the joint service wiring and, arguably, the only time a trolleybus of this type actually visited St. James' Square.



Walsall "Goldfish Bowl" no.862, a Willowbrook-bodied Sunbeam F4A, with Wolverhampton's Park Royal-bodied Sunbeam W no.413 behind towards the end of the joint NTG - RTS tour on 22 July 1962
Photo: "Black Rod"

Of course, we still had not heard anything from NCT regarding our bid for 466. However, the last months of 1962 were to prove the most significant in the NTG's history up to that time.....

GIFT AID

..... from John Zebedee

I have just been working on two years' worth of claims to submit to HMR&C for a refund of tax paid on membership subscriptions and donations. These are for very significant amounts but these claims could be for much more if every member who is a UK tax payer was signed up for Gift Aid.

From the membership list, it is clear that there are still many who have not signed a Gift Aid declaration form. Completing the form is very straightforward.

It basically requires your full name and address, signature and the date. You are *not* required to give your tax reference, NI number or tax office.

For those not familiar with Gift Aid, it enables any registered charity to recover the tax you have already paid on the amount of your membership subscription or any donations given. It is worth noting that for Gift Aid purposes, even if you do not pay income tax, it is quite likely you will be paying tax on any interest from bank and building society accounts and the like, so you are still able to join the Gift Aid scheme. The amount we recover on monies we have received after 6 April 2011 falls to 25%, there having been a 3-year transitional period following the reduction in standard income tax rate in 2008. This amounts to a sizeable 11% reduction of what we can claim, so it is important we have as many members as possible included in our Gift Aid scheme.

A Gift Aid declaration form can be downloaded from the Museum website www.sandtoft.org or pick one up from the *Trolleyshop* when next at Sandtoft. If neither of these options is convenient, please e-mail johnzbedee@btinternet.com or write to John Zebedee, 16 Erskine Close, Bewbush, Crawley, RH11 8GL.

giftaid it

TROLLEYBUS ANNIVERSARIES

Compiled by Geoff Welburn
October 2011 to March 2012

Systems Opened

- 85 years since Grimsby opened on 3 October 1926
- 80 years since Notts. & Derbys. opened on 7 January 1932
- 80 years since Derby opened on 9 January 1932
- 75 years since South Shields opened on 12 October 1936
- 70 years since Cardiff opened on 1 March 1942

Systems Closed

- 85 years since Halifax closed on 24 October 1926
- 55 years since Pontypridd closed on 31 January 1957
- 45 years since Ashton-under-Lyne closed on 30 December 1966
- 45 years since Manchester closed on 30 December 1966
- 45 years since Wolverhampton closed on 5 March 1967
- 40 years since Bradford closed on 26 March 1972

RECENT RUNNING DAYS

St. Leger Rally - 16 October 2011

The St. Leger Day began well and with plenty of promising sunshine. After initial preparation for showing the film *Trolleybus Archives* in the Regal Cinema and the centenary photography display lighting in the Pelham building, talk began that in the vehicle procession would be the ex-Rotherham Corporation Bedford tower wagon, FET 195. My over-reaction led to much leg-pulling all day, but when the red tower wagon appeared at about noon, it was worth waiting for. Spick 'n' span, it was initially parked on the vehicle display area but soon re-appeared on the concrete in the operating oval.

Very quickly, it became the centre of attraction and had a continual group of visitors. Doug Miller, from the South Yorkshire Transport Museum, had spent the better part of ten years restoring it to this present excellent condition. Shortly afterwards, I met Bill Aston, visiting Sandtoft with his wife Joan, his niece and her husband. Bill has always enjoyed his visits and has given the Rotherham Trolleybus Group many fond memories and other stories of his driving Rotherham trackless up to 1965: he has recorded many of his exploits on a CD for the SYTM. Bill used to drive Rotherham 37 (FET 617) and on numerous occasions had to call upon the assistance of FET 195 whilst driving various single and double-decker tracklesses for Rotherham CTD. Upon seeing Bill, I remembered that I had promised to sit him back in the cab of 37 when he next visited Sandtoft.

Later, and almost never having enough time (the trolleybuses carried 699 passengers that day), I eventually found Bruce and Chas and they agreed to find time for a photo opportunity for both FET 195 and FET 617 to be together. Ian Wilson passed the comment, "I wonder how long it is since these two were side-by-side?" Together, these vehicles have chassis totalling about 120 years old! FET 195 would have assisted 37 when it was a single-decker trackless (i.e. until 1956). I well remember both vehicles in Rotherham town centre and travelled on FET 617, then as a single-decker!

Bill visited the tower wagon during the day and no doubt passed on some transport memories. During a slight lull and with help, I found a pair of steps,



Former driver Bill Aston back in the cab of Rotherham 37 Photo: Mike Johnson



Reunited after 45 years.....
...Rotherham 37 and the South Yorkshire Transport Museum's Rotherham tower wagon FET195.

Photo: Mike Johnson

with handles, for Bill to climb safely into the cab of 37. Bill was photographed by his niece from all angles, including through the open cab door and the sliding glass panel between the lower saloon and the driving cab. It was Bill's 82nd birthday and what a day he had!

This is one reason why we do what we enjoy! Much valuable information about our Rotherham Centenary was shared and, although nothing was set, some very useful contacts were made. It was an absolute joy to see both vehicles together and it is the social history, as well as the vehicles, which makes it all worthwhile. The enjoyment of routes (geography), timetables (arithmetic) and the simple electric circuits are all spin-offs. In fact, I wonder what it is that sparks off such an interest!



Another view of the two ex-Rotherham veterans
Photo: Mike Johnson



Essential supplies for the Tea Trolley Café on St. Leger Day - a gross (144) of large white baps! They arrived by 8.00am and a mass buttering session by our "Trolley Dollies" followed - bacon, anyone?

Photo: Mike Johnson

Santa Days - 10 & 11 December 2011

Unlike 2010, when our Santa weekend had to be cancelled because of deep snow, the 2011 event went well and visitors and staff alike had a good time. Perhaps not surprisingly, the Sunday was better attended than Saturday.



Conductor 550, Mike Johnson, welcomes Santa aboard Manchester 1344 on Santa Saturday

Both photos: Tim Stubbs



Sarah (Rudolph) Shepherd waits for the (Christmas?) bell on Santa's trolleybus

Tim Stubbs

NEWS ROUND-UP

Events: Overall we had a successful 2011 season, with visitor numbers slightly up on 2010, despite the poor economic climate which has impacted many other museums and visitor attractions. Our success was undoubtedly due to several prestigious events in the Trolleybus Centenary Year.

The last two events of the season also went very well. The Twilight event was well patronised, although we did have trouble finding suitable vehicles which would pass the earth leakage test! Fortunately, there was no such problem at the Santa weekend, with Manchester 1344 and Bradford 706 doing the honours for the last time this year. Following last year's cancelled Santa Weekend (you may recall the 18 inches of snow!) we were prepared for low visitor numbers, but in the event the attendance was very much as usual.

2011 has been a very arduous year, with an above-average number of trolleybuses to be tested within a tight timetable, more special events to organise and publicise, and bigger events to run, particularly with the Centenary Tours. The extra efforts left our volunteers feeling somewhat overworked as the year came to an end, but we really do feel that we managed to do the Centenary proud.

Accreditation: Readers may have noticed that the accreditation logo we display on the front cover (and our website) is different. The Museums, Libraries and Archive Council (MLA) has ceased to exist - part of the Government's rationalisation process. Many of the MLA's functions, including overseeing museum accreditation, have been taken on (in England) by Arts Council England (ACE), whose new logo we now adopt.



The accreditation standard for museums has been revised and certain additional and altered requirements introduced. Our prestigious accreditation runs until early 2014 before being due for renewal, so we need to make a start on preparing for that renewal. Anyone who is interested in helping with this should contact Bruce Lake (see page 2 for contact details).

Museum Site Works: All the replacement fencing and new gates have been completed and this looks and feels very good. The new gates at the north-east corner have been tested out several times at events and the various configurations have worked very well, avoiding the tedious job of removing and replacing the temporary fencing at the beginning and end of open days. Unfortunately, only a few weeks after its completion, our new fence was damaged when two vans crashed outside our main gate. Thankfully, this was an accident rather than another attempted break-in, but it did require repairs, and further "fortifications" are planned during the winter.

The Board agreed in October to purchase a larger lawn-mower to keep our increased expanses of grass under control and this has now been delivered. Extra lighting has also been agreed, to improve our security and assist staff finding their way about in the dark.

Working Party Weekends: We are appealing for extra volunteers to assist

with jobs on site during the winter season. One working party weekend has already been held and another is scheduled, the objective being to tackle some of the larger site jobs and make progress with tasks that the small number of "regulars" cannot manage without extra help. The list is long, and includes repairs to paving, hedge-cutting, fixing the trolleybus simulator, developing the children's play area and preparations for various painting jobs. Pieces of heavy equipment need moving to better storage and assistance is required with trolleybuses due for re-testing in the spring.

A good turnout of around 15 members participated on 21/ 22 January and made impressive progress despite the weekend being windy and cold. Many potholes on the roadways were filled in and improvements made to the surface of Sandtoft Square. Most of the blocked soakaways around the museum have been cleared and the team attacked the overgrown hedging along the ditch behind the depot. Others tackled the new ground to the north end of the site, where moles have been very active: all the molehills were removed and piled up to make a mountain!

Bradford Karrier CK3 tower wagon no.034 (EKY 594), which had long been obstructing access beyond the staff car park, has finally been moved after Ian Metcalfe and Graham Bibé managed to free off its badly-seized brakes, and it is now ready to go into Whites' store. Another "utility" exhibit which has not moved for years also received attention - the ex-Teesside wire trailer, which was cleared of miscellaneous "stuff", dragged out from its moorings behind the depot and the brakes freed. It requires refurbishment, mostly preparation and a repaint, new steel panels and a new floor. This has been brought about because it is to be used shortly in connection with repairing/ reinstating the trolleybus overhead line at the Black Country Living Museum at Dudley. It is hoped that when the trailer returns to Sandtoft, it will be able to go undercover. The next working weekend will be 3 & 4 March. Bruce Lake has e-mailed those on the members' distribution list with a schedule of jobs and the tools needed. To see the details and receive updates and messages in case of last-minute changes due to bad weather, please make sure that you have joined our e-mail ring. To subscribe, simply send a blank e-mail to members@subscribe@sandtoft.org.

Site Security: As explained in the last issue of *Sandtoft Scene*, the security of the Museum is extremely important, especially as metal theft has become so widespread. We would like to thank the great majority of members who are now closing and locking the gate whilst they are on site. To those of you who haven't got used to doing this yet, please do so, as it is our first line of defence against theft. We know that it might be a nuisance, but it is very necessary to prevent loss of or damage to any of our precious exhibits. To improve security further, we are planning to extend our CCTV coverage and ensure that all our boundary fences are in place and in good condition.

As a further precaution against the theft of our single most valuable asset, we are now leaving the overhead live at all times. We will also be installing a detector system to activate an alarm or call-out when the power goes off, which would naturally occur should thieves cut down any overhead wire.

However, members must note that having the overhead permanently live requires additional safety measures when doing any work at high level or moving long metal objects (e.g. ladders) in the vicinity of the overhead. The "power on" lights at the prefab end of the depot will remind you that the overhead is live. Anyone intending to do work close to the overhead (e.g. on a bus roof outside, tree lopping, pole painting) will need to arrange to have the power turned off and the alarm disabled. Inconvenient this may be, but far less so than the inconvenience of having our overhead stolen.

AND FINALLY (IN THIS SECTION)

A dedication for our volunteers on Radio 2: On 22 October, a dedication, requested by Mike Johnson, was played on Radio 2's *Sounds of the sixties* programme for "... all the hard working volunteers who always listen in their cars on their way to the Trolleybus Museum at Sandcroft" (sic.). Graham Bibé received a specific mention as Chairman. The name "Sandtoft" was misquoted throughout the segment; the show was presented that day by Sir Tim Rice, as the normal presenter, Brian Mathew, was off sick. Mike advises that he wrote in to the BBC much earlier in the year, but as he did not specify a date for the dedication, it took some time to get to the top of the pile. (One member has since commented that the item was factually incorrect as he has never listened to Radio 2 on his way to Sandtoft, but maybe the dedication didn't extend as far as him, as he isn't a "hard working volunteer".....).

VEHICLES REPORTS

Bournemouth 297 remains at Sandtoft under the ownership of the BPTA. It is hoped that arrangements can be made for the seats, which are trimmed in leather and which have deteriorated seriously with renewed use, can be refurbished or replaced so that 297 can become a service trolleybus once more, operating at Sandtoft.

Bradford 562: a pair of new rear wings has been ordered from a specialist fabricator and should be ready for delivery by the end of February.

Bradford 711 (or, more accurately, the remains of its chassis), was eventually sent off for scrap on 10 October 2011, just about everything useful having been removed.

Bradford 758: work has been resumed, with attention being paid to the main front end structure.

London 1348: work continues to progress more or less to programme. A considerable amount of corroded steel body structure has been cut out and replaced with new and by mid-January, the bulk of this sort of work on the whole vehicle had been completed and new external panels and strapping fitted. Virtually all the broken or missing glass has been replaced (including windscreens), new internal panels have been fitted and, as appropriate, covered with "Rexine"-type material. Some replacement timber floor boards and battens have been made and fitted. Much of the cab has now been refurbished, driver's seat re-trimmed and fitted in place, electrical items cleaned and overhauled and electrical circuits tested. The traction motor brush-gear has been overhauled as well. Work has proceeded on the roof with



1348's newly upholstered driver's seat in place in a substantially-finished cab
Photo: John Crossley



One of several severely corroded upper deck stress panels that had to be replaced
Photo: John Crossley



New stress panels in place on the upper deck near side
Photo: John Crossley

the catwalk repaired and the trolleygear checked over and refurbished as necessary. Four new tyres have now been fitted to the rear bogie and the front tyres are waiting for the wheels to be shot-blasted and painted before being fitted. In addition, a tremendous amount of more detailed work all around 1348 has been dealt with by "Team 1348".

On 15 January 2012, the main HT circuitry, contactors, master controller, etc. were inspected and tested by Bruce Lake prior to then trying line voltage through the system. Perhaps not unsurprisingly, it has been concluded that the traction motor itself should be taken out and sent away for a complete overhaul and refurbishment: whilst it does work when tried under light load, there is much arcing, and even allowing for this being partly due to dirty contacts, it is a motor that has not been run for around 50 years and insulation will have broken down to some degree. There is too much at stake to not deal with it now and possibly have a failure at some inconvenient and embarrassing time in the future! Going on previous experience, this work could cost in the region of £3,500 - and would also involve replacing the bearings as a preventative measure.

A £1,000.00 order was placed in mid-November

2011 for enough "RT-pattern" moquette to re-trim the seats (this is in addition to some that was very generously donated to 1348 by an RT owner). Delivery of the new material is expected very soon and in anticipation, prices are being obtained to rebuild all the seats and re-cover them: the Dunlopillo foam used over sixty years ago when the seats were very likely last renovated has now just about disintegrated into dust, whilst some of the plywood involved is well beyond its "sell by" date. It is anticipated that the cost of all this will be around £4,800 (including leather edges to seat backs and squabs where appropriate). As reported elsewhere (see page 21), it is planned that 1348 will be going along with 1812, to East Anglia Transport Museum at Carlton Colville in early May for the commemoration of 50 years since the final abandonment of the London trolleybus system. Since 1348 first arrived at Sandtoft (July 2010), it has been hoped that it would be able to take part in this commemoration and a costed restoration plan to work towards this was mapped out: with less than three months to go, for 1348 to go to the ball is now distinctly likely - although it will, by no means, be finally finished. It is planned to finish off 1348 ready for its re-commissioning at Sandtoft at this year's August bank holiday weekend.

As related above, we need something like £10,000 to pay for the traction motor and seat refurbishments. Donations, however small, are always welcome. Please send your donation, made out to "Sandtoft Transport Centre Limited" to 1348 Restoration Fund, 8 Woods Terrace, Gainsborough, DN21 2RP. If you are a UK taxpayer do tell us that you wish your donation to be made by Gift Aid as this will enable us to reclaim a further 25% from HMR&C - which will be applied to 1348's fund.

You can also give via the 1348 blog, where up-to-date news of the restoration can be found - visit <http://1348.eavb.co.uk/>. We also have a "wants list" for missing parts on our blog.

South Yorkshire 2450 has regained its indoor space vacated by 872 (q.v.); whilst 2450 was outside with access to overhead power, we took the opportunity to investigate its electrical problems, but these are still unresolved, despite many days spent poring over electrical diagrams and extracting and testing various bits of circuitry.

Walsall 872: On 15 December 2011, 872 had new tyres fitted all round and, with the half shafts removed, on 20 December, was transferred to Thamesdown Transport (Swindon), where its seating is to be re-trimmed, its exterior partially re-panelled and then prepared and given a full exterior repaint. A considerable amount of work will then remain to be done, as the hydraulic braking system requires a complete refurbishment and the chassis needs to be cleaned and painted - reports suggest it is in a deplorable state, so no mean job! The vacated depot space has been re-possessed by South Yorkshire PTE 2450 (q.v.).

Bradford 558: All the external panelling and beading has now been completed. The only outside items requiring to be fitted are the driver's front windscreen, cab door, indicator glass and the nearside dog guard rail. A start has been made on overhauling the interior seat frames: all will require new brackets to secure the seat frame to the side of the bus. A number of frames

will require attention due to corrosion of the tube frames. Plans are in hand to purchase seat material for the downstairs, the seating upstairs having been renewed at some stage during 558's life, which involved an upstairs material colour change from brown to blue.

Doncaster 55 and Sheffield 1357 are both off the road with problems that need attention before they can resume service on Isle Tours next season.

Tractors: The International tractor is still unserviceable and has been "replaced" by the Nuffield for recent open day towing duties. As our tractors grow older, we are investigating a longer-term solution to towing and would be pleased to hear about any suitable tractor or towing tug coming available.

Rotherham 73 Restoration Progress

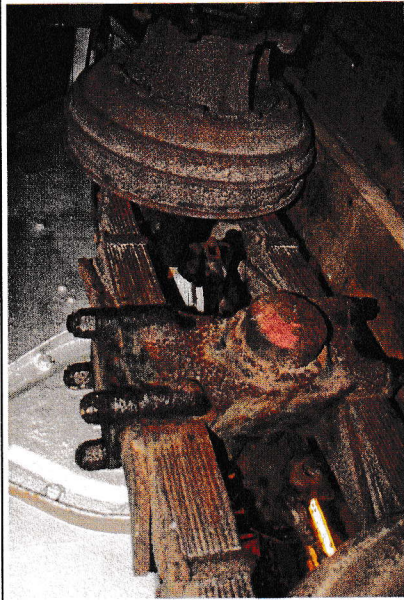
Tim Stubbs

Undergoing long-term restoration away from Sandtoft is Rotherham 73, a 1942 Sunbeam MS2c single-decker with East Lincs. bodywork.

One of the tasks recently tackled has been the mechanical overhaul of the rear bogie. Bearing in mind that the last time this bus turned a wheel in service was in 1954, some reasonably thorough checks were felt to be needed. The main springs, in particular, were pretty rusty and looked weak, and the rear brakes also deserved a careful check. One side was tackled at a time and after dismantling, reconditioning and re-assembly on the near-side, a repeat performance was undertaken on the off-side of the bogie. The whole bogie overhaul task occupied something in excess of 18 months.

The brake linings were found to be only slightly worn and as we are pretty sure that 73 was given an overhaul when it was re-built in 1950, there is every indication that it only had light use in service after that date. Springs needed an overhaul and each was fitted with 3 new leaves and the whole spring re-tensioned. New shackle bushes had to be made as they were a non-standard size, although the shackle pins were fit for re-use after cleaning. All the brake adjusters (there are several) were seized and had to be freed up.

The photos show the suspension components before, during and after overhaul. Removing the main nuts holding the springs in place called for a light touch from the "gas axe" – seen in the top photograph opposite.



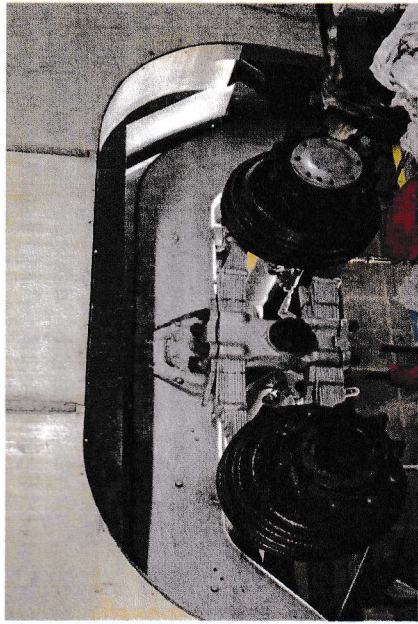
Rear suspension and brake components before overhaul

Photo: Tim Stubbs



Removing one of the main suspension nuts using a little warmth to speed the process

Photo: Tim Stubbs



The bogie components, overhaul nearing completion

Photo: Tim Stubbs

LONDON TROLLEYBUS 50

2012, as many members may have realised, marks the 50th anniversary of the final closure (on 8 May 1962) of the London trolleybus system; 2012 also marks the 60th anniversary (on 6 July 1952) of the final abandonment of London's trams. To mark these occasions, a number of events are being organised, perhaps the most significant ones being held at the East Anglia Transport Museum at Carlton Colville, near Lowestoft, Suffolk on the Sunday and Monday of the May Day bank holiday weekend (6 & 7 May), with the London Trolleybus Preservation Society (LTPS) arranging a ticket-only event on the anniversary day itself - Tuesday 8 May 2012. We, at Sandtoft, are proposing to re-commission trolleybus 1348 and motorbus RT3323 over the August bank holiday with due ceremony.

The Carlton Colville dates will see no fewer than **eight** of the nine preserved London trolleybuses assembled together and operating under power for the first (and most probably, last) time ever. "Diddler" no.1 and Q1, no.1768, will be

towed to EATM a few days before from the London Transport Museum (LTM) depot at Acton, whilst the BTS's 1812 and our 1348 will be going there - 1812 in mid-April and 1348 probably in early May - where they will join 796 (on long term loan to the LTPS from AMTUIR, in Paris), and LTPS-owned nos.260, 1201 and 1521, all of which are EATM exhibits. The LTM's pre-war AEC "Mercury" tower wagon, 89Q, will also be there (and, of course, tram 1858 is a Carlton Colville resident and should be out and operating as well).

There has been an unprecedented amount of co-operation between museums and trolleybus societies in recent months to make all this happen and to coordinate publicity. Apart from the LTPS negotiating earlier with AMTUIR for the 796 loan, the Friends of London Transport Museum, LTM itself, LTPS, EATM, BTS and ourselves have all joined in a series of meetings, kindly hosted by LTM, to discuss and co-ordinate the restoration of 796 and 1348, and plan the EATM/ LTPS events. One of the outcomes of these meetings is that TM@S will host a dedicated website, www.londonrolleybus50.com to publicise/ give information about all the events (we are told about) connected with the trolleybus and tram anniversaries and provide links to other relevant web-based information. This website should go online in the next couple of weeks. The concept of arranging something to mark this significant anniversary came from the LTPS and we have been very happy to help make it into what ought to be a very memorable few days. There is little doubt that the LTPS, with an overwhelming majority of its members being long-standing and knowledgeable London trolleybus enthusiasts and, of course, owners of no less than three preserved London trolleybuses and custodians of a further one, with their EATM colleagues, should host the central 50th anniversary events. That the actual anniversary day, 8 May, is a Tuesday (it was a Tuesday in 1962 as well) following a bank holiday should help swell the numbers who attend.

For our part, we face something of a challenge, as we have our own open days to run that weekend - our Six Wheel Weekend - which is anticipated to have its own (unrelated to the London anniversary) very special happening on the Saturday (details of this need to be finalised and will be published in the next *Sandtoft Scene*) as well as supporting our London trolleybuses at EATM. We urge our volunteers to agree between each other to ensure that our open days are all adequately staffed: the programme for each of Sunday and Monday at EATM will be similar - and it will be Tuesday, 8 May, that will be very different - and only open to pre-booked ticket holders. So, there should be adequate opportunity for "die-hard enthusiasts" Sandtoft volunteers to do both - volunteer at our Museum on at least one of those days (Sunday and Monday) and witness the special anniversary day on 8 May!

Because of the limited vehicle accommodation at EATM and the influx of four visiting trolleybuses and a tower wagon there, it has been agreed that we, at Sandtoft, take an EATM-based trolleybus in exchange for a short while. We already have Ashton 87 in exchange for Newcastle 501 being at EATM; 501 is due to return to us (and then, incidentally, go on back to Beamish) as part of the planned movements but the identity of the other trolleybus to come to us has not yet been decided. Both of our visitors from Carlton Colville should be

returned when 1348 and 1812 come back to us. For the record, it is planned that 1, 1768 and 89Q go back to London soon after 8 May, as they are required for a further commemoration event on the following Saturday (12 May).

The one London trolleybus that will *not* be at Carlton Colville is 1253, which is in LTM at Covent Garden: apart from the fact that LTM policy is to not disturb their museum exhibition, moving 1253 out - and subsequently back - at Covent Garden would be a major operation and disruption to the museum, involving moving many other exhibits (including a tramcar) out of the way so as to extract 1253. In addition, the gap left by the trolleybus not being there, even for a few days, would need to be filled with something suitable. Good as the idea might be to have all nine London trolleybuses together, it just could not be! It has to be said that it has always been questioned as to whether 1348 would be ready in time to attend the EATM events - and a supplementary question has been "how ready?" The answers have always been that every effort is being made to meet the beginning of May deadline with 1348 at least looking the part externally and, hopefully, able to run under power. Anything more than that - like being able/ fit to carry passengers - would be a bonus. As we go to press, this still seems to be the case - there is still a lot of work to do, but the team doing the work are as determined as ever! Thought by many to have only an outside chance of being ready, 1348 being at Carlton Colville, running, looking good and flying the Sandtoft flag will be a wonderful achievement and may even "steal the show" in many people's eyes! Once 1348 is back at Sandtoft, the finishing-off work will continue so that it will be ready for final testing and its re-commissioning at the end of August. We are now planning that weekend, wanting to make it a true gala occasion. Details will be published in due course.

Finally, there will be several special "souvenir shop" items available from our *Trolleyshop* as well as from BTS and LTPS stalls and the EATM shop. Details will be shown on the www.londonrolleybus50.com website and should also be listed in the next *Sandtoft Scene*.



'GATHERING 2012 DATE REMINDER

The date of Sandtoft Gathering 2012 has been brought forward by two weeks - to **Sunday, 15 July 2012** to avoid clashing with the opening of the Olympic Games (which could significantly deplete or visitor numbers). Please put this date into your diary now and pass the message on!

As ever, we will need plenty of volunteers to prepare for the day and staff it

Sandtoft Gathering will revert to the end of July weekend in 2013

DEAR 'SCENE

Dear 'Scene

Next June, for the Diamond Jubilee Weekend, there will be a Civic Heraldry Weekend at Sandtoft. I look forward to it with interest. I hope that at last, someone will be on hand to explain to me why Rotherham trolleybuses displayed two shields before the Second World War, and only one after. For them that have not noticed heretofore, have a look in Geoff Lumb's book *British Trolleybuses 1911-1972*. On page 78 and again on page 79, Guy BTXs with what seems to be a Viking longship, from the mast and spar of which hang two shields at jaunty angles. And again among the Sunbeams on page 117.

The post-war Daimlers, also in the book, seem to bear a much more conventional single shield and supporters, probably stags.

Vincent Walsh (Bradford)

+++++*****+++++

Dear 'Scene

I have just received both the July and October issues of Sandtoft Scene. They are a credit to the organisation and yourself for all your hard work in preparing them.

In response to Graham Bilbé's request in the July issue, we should certainly have the aspiration to make Sandtoft reach its full potential as a world-class heritage centre and take steps to secure the space to do so, even if it takes us a long time to get there. Joining in with other groups with an interest in heritage transport and local history is a route which other organisations have successfully pursued. Apart from any other considerations, those who support heritage commercial vehicles and cars seem to have deeper pockets!

Bringing in the local history/ heritage groups would widen the interest and support base and would bode well for grant aid applications. Some sort of learning/ training facility would also win us "brownie points" with grant funders.

My feeling is that we need to have some sort of sponsorship scheme so that donors could see a tangible use of their cash. There seem to be such schemes for particular trolleybuses, but run by separate groups (e.g. Johannesburg 589 and London 1348) rather than the Museum itself (unless I have misunderstood this).

However, on a different note, I was concerned to read in the October issue (page 21) that the Doncaster bus service is to be reduced next season. This report says that "they cost a lot in diesel and driving time for very little return", yet on page 18 (in Bruce Lake's report) it says that "the free Doncaster bus service was well patronised"! Thanks for passing on my comments on the bus service to Bruce, but it seems he has overlooked my suggestion of taking a collection to help defray the costs. *Graham Collett, Copmanthorpe, York*

Francis Whitehead replies: *Graham Collett makes an interesting observation about our fundraising: most donations go into our development fund, but if a donor wishes to support a particular project (e.g. a vehicle), I make sure it is allocated appropriately. I believe it important that donors know how their freely-given money is spent. Point taken, Graham, we need to "sharpen up our act" to improve people's perception of our fundraising activities! As for free bus service "collections", shame, but the law interprets this as "hire and reward", so we would need an operator's licence and all that goes with that!*

TALKING SHOP

The online shop at www.sandtoft.org/shop has recently been upgraded to offer a wider selection of the many books and DVDs that we currently stock. More will be added in the near future, along with selected models and souvenirs etc. Some of the more recent book titles available online are shown below. If you would like to purchase any of these, please go and take a look on the website and also browse the full selection now available. Buying from the Museum's online shop and, of course, the *Trolleyshop* itself, gives the profit to US, not to some massive high street or online organisation!

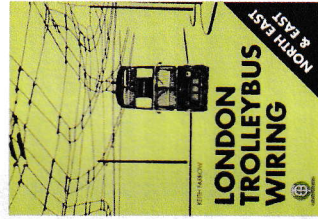


BRITISH TROLLEYBUS CENTENARY 1911-2011

Author: Alan Murray
Publisher: Trolleybooks
Cover: Softback
ISBN 978-0-904235-22-7

Price: £12.00

The year 2011 marked 100 years since the first trolleybus system opened for service in the UK. This book details the 100 years of UK trolleybus history



LONDON TROLLEYBUS WIRING - NORTH EAST AND EAST

Author: Keith Farrow
Publisher: Trolleybooks
Cover: Softback
ISBN 978-0-904235-21-0

Price: £17.50

A detailed guide to the overhead junctions, turning facilities, terminal arrangements and depot wiring layouts of North East and East London



TRACKLESS TO TROLLEYBUS - TROLLEYBUSES IN BRITAIN

Author: Stephen Lockwood
Publisher: Adam Gordon
Cover: Hardback
ISBN 978-1874422860

Price: £50.00

Published in the centenary year of the opening of Britain's first trolleybus operation, this book is a comprehensive survey of the British trolleybus. Lavishly illustrated using many previously unpublished photographs, almost every type of trolleybus that ran on the streets is depicted, including several one-offs and experimental vehicles. Following a historical survey and a non-technical description of how a trolleybus works, there is a review of every trolleybus system, including a detailed route diagram for each one

REVIEWS

DVD – Newcastle Trolleybuses
Published by Online Video
Running time: 85 minutes

£19.00

(UK Postage £1.00)

Available from the Online Trolleyshop www.sandtoft.org/shop/

Newcastle's trolleybus system was one I didn't visit. It closed some 45+ years ago and this DVD programme is the best way of seeing what the system was like.

The programme opens with footage of two preserved trams - one each from the former Gateshead and Newcastle tram systems (which operated joint services in addition to their own "local" routes) - in action at the fine Beamish Museum. A little later in the programme, preserved Newcastle tram 102 is seen in action at the Tramway Museum, Crich. Early footage with the opening of Newcastle's tram system, has thankfully survived and the trams are seen on the 1 in 11 gradient. Other tramway scenes include the 1½-mile long Gosforth Park Light Railway in action, with views of its extensive embankment and cutting. Gateshead and Newcastle trams are seen sharing the track in Newcastle after the link across the River Tyne Bridge had been completed. It was also interesting to see horse-drawn omnibuses still in service - they were withdrawn in June 1931!

Trolleybus operation in Newcastle, the non-intrusive commentary mentions, was first considered in 1911 but it was not until the 1930s that Newcastle Corporation decided to seek powers to operate trolleybuses. The first trolleybus service commenced in October 1935 and photographs of the initial vehicles are seen. The programme continues with the development of the system, with trams (replaced in 1950) and trolleybuses (motorbuses too) seen in operation over the years. In addition, there is footage of the street scene - some black-and-white and more in colour. Seeing so many traditional local shops brought back many memories for me, and I also noticed the clean streets and often the absence of cars.

Other aspects featured in the programme include shipping on the Tyne, steam and electric trains crossing the Tyne Bridge, silver-liveried LNER Class A4 locomotive *Silver Fox* with a matching rake of coaches and electric locomotives which could operate on both third-rail and overhead-wire systems. There is a brief visit to Slatyford trolleybus depot and also the temporary tramway service for the Gateshead Garden Festival in 1990.

The decline of the trolleybus system is covered in detail, along with the last day operations. It was interesting to see most of the trolleybus reversers in operation (some of those reversers were quite lengthy, and needed extra care in operation!), and to see immediately after a trolleybus view in one sequence a Morris Minor car towing a caravan over the top of a hill whilst following that trolleybus!

An interesting and informative programme - with a running time of about 86 minutes - and an excellent reminder of how things used to be, this DVD programme complements the Trolleybooks' Newcastle book I reviewed for a previous issue of *Sandtoft Scene*.

Doug Barrow



BOOK - **London Trolleybus Chronology 1931 - 1962**
Written by *Mick Webber*
Published by *Ian Allan (1997)*
(Out of print)

With 2012 marking the 50th Anniversary of the closure of London's trolleybus system I thought it would be appropriate to make the first of this year's book reviews one concerning London trolleybuses. Mick Webber has presented his book in diary format to unfold the history of the trolleybus in London. He comments that although some other publications seem to refer to the trolleybus as a "curious hybrid" he considers the trolleybus as the natural progression of the tramcar and therefore an efficient form of transport in its own right.

In recalling his personal memories, he mentions his first trolleybus ride with his mum, when he was about 8 years old, on a route 696 service from Woolwich to Welling, and his impressions of the acceleration and quietness of the vehicle. Memories of other journeys are mentioned too, and Mick recalls a conversation with a driver at Stonebridge Park who chatted to him while taking a meal break. The driver took Mick's name and address, saying "When this is all over" (i.e. trolleybus operation) "I'll send you my cap badge" - and the driver kept his promise, a gesture which Mick remembers sincerely.

The book takes the reader through the London system's history, from the beginning (with London United) to the end. The author did not chronicle route histories or detail wiring layouts, as these have been dealt with in other publications. In addition to the history of London's trolleybus system, Mick has included chapters on depots and scrapping. The appendices include a fleet list by vehicle classes, fleet analysis by bodywork manufacturers, and documents incidents causing trolleybuses to be destroyed or re-bodied. An excellent, well-chosen, comprehensive collection of black-and-white photographs (including some of the system's service vehicles) accompanies the text - they brought back many memories for me! One photograph features former C1 class trolleybus no. 142 in service with the Georgetown Municipal Transport in Malaysia (five members of the C1 class were sold to Georgetown in May 1956).

Published in 1997, this book is no longer generally available, but copies can currently be bought from online suppliers or borrowed via the inter-library service. I'm happy to recommend this book.

Doug Barrow

MUSEUM ADMISSION CHARGES

After careful consideration, it has been concluded that we should be taking advantage of being able to claim Gift Aid tax repayments on visitor admission charges. Although once simple, the HMR&C rules on this are now complex, and are onerous, both at "front of house" and when it comes to making the tax reclaims. Nevertheless, many bigger museums and other tourist venues successfully operate Gift Aid on admissions schemes, and they do so by using bespoke electronic till systems. It is our intention to follow this lead: in order to comply with the HMR&C rules, we need to increase admission payments by at

least 10%. We were scheduled to review prices anyway for 2012, so consequently admission payments (inclusive of Gift Aid donations) for this season will be:

	"Standard" Trolleydays	"Premium" Trolleydays	Santa Days
Adult	£7.00	£9.00	£5.00
Senior (61+)	£6.00	£7.00	£5.00
Concession	£5.00	£6.00	£6.00 £4.00 Child visiting Santa Other Concessions
Family	£22.00	£28.00	Not Available

Special payments will be available for those attending all-weekend for the Diamond Jubilee and/or Sandtoft Gathering events. Company members are admitted free.

RUNNING DAYS IN 2012

Easter: Bradford 40 years since final abandonment event	Saturday ☐, Sunday & Monday	Free Bus
	7 - 9 April	
Manchester & Ashton-under-Lyne event	Saturday ☐ & Sunday 21 & 22 April	
May Day Bank Holiday Weekend:	Saturday ☐, Sunday & Monday	Free Bus
Six-wheel Weekend	5 - 7 May	
Weekend Trolleydays	Saturday ☐ & Sunday 19 & 20 May	
Diamond Jubilee Weekend:	Saturday ☐, Sunday & Monday	Free Bus
Civic Heraldry Weekend (celebrating the municipal heritage of British trolleybuses)	2 - 4 June	
Weekend Trolleydays	Saturday ☐ & Sunday 16 & 17 June	
Teddy Bears; Picnic	Saturday ☐ & Sunday	Free Bus
	30 June & 1 July	
Sandtoft Gathering 2012	Saturday ☐ & Sunday	Free Bus
	14 & 15 July	
Weekend Trolleydays	Saturday ☐ & Sunday 28 & 29 July	
World Wide weekend	Saturday ☐ & Sunday	Free Bus
	11 & 12 August	
Late Summer Bank Holiday Weekend:	Saturday ☐ Sunday & Monday	Free Bus
London Weekend	25 - 27 August	
Blues & Twos Weekend	Saturday ☐ & Sunday	Free Bus
	15 & 16 September	
Weekend Trolleydays	Saturday ☐ & Sunday	Free Bus
	29 & 30 September	
St. Leger Historic Vehicle Rally	Sunday Free Bus 14 October	
Twilight Trolleyday	Sunday 18 November	
Santa Weekend	Saturday ☐ & Sunday 8 & 9 December	

☐ denotes Isle Coaches service 291 11.00am departure from Doncaster Interchange Bay C5, 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)

Free Bus denotes FREE bus service from Doncaster Interchange direct to The Trolleybus Museum. Departs Interchange, Bay C6, at 12.00noon. Return departs Museum at 4.00pm. (journey time approximately 40 minutes)