

# Sandtoft Scene

January 2013  
No. 88



**News and Views from  
The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft**



**Sandtoft Transport Centre Limited**  
The Trolleybus Museum, Belton Road, Sandtoft,  
Doncaster, North Lincolnshire, DN8 5SX.

Registered in England No.1747475

Registered Charity No.514382

**Give As You Earn Reference:** 000495640

**HM Revenue & Customs Giving Through Self Assessment Return Reference:** RAQ90NG

**Information Line:** 01724 711391

**Fax/ Messages:** 01724 711846

**Website:** [www.sandtoft.org](http://www.sandtoft.org)

**e-mail:** [trolleybusmuseum@sandtoft.org](mailto:trolleybusmuseum@sandtoft.org)

**Directors:**

Chairman & Engineering Director	Graham P. Bilbé	<a href="mailto:grahambilbe@sandtoft.org">grahambilbe@sandtoft.org</a>
Company Secretary	C. Bruce Lake	<a href="mailto:brucelake@sandtoft.org">brucelake@sandtoft.org</a>
Managing Director	Steven J. Harrison	<a href="mailto:steveharrison@sandtoft.org">steveharrison@sandtoft.org</a>
Financial Director (& Development)	Francis R. Whitehead	<a href="mailto:fwhitehead@sandtoft.org">fwhitehead@sandtoft.org</a>
Director	Nicholas G. Broxholme	<a href="mailto:nickbroxholme@sandtoft.org">nickbroxholme@sandtoft.org</a>
Operations Director	Ian H. Wilson	<a href="mailto:ianwilson@sandtoft.org">ianwilson@sandtoft.org</a>
Facilities Director	Anthony G. Ferris	<a href="mailto:tonyferris@sandtoft.org">tonyferris@sandtoft.org</a>
Director (& Retail Services)	Christopher N. Proctor	<a href="mailto:sales@sandtoft.org">sales@sandtoft.org</a>

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.

© Sandtoft Transport Centre Limited, The Trolleybus Museum, Belton Road, Sandtoft, Doncaster, North Lincolnshire, DN8 5SX.

**Sandtoft Scene Editor:**

John Stainforth 25 Old Kennels Lane, Winchester, SO22 4JP.  
**e-mail** [scene@sandtoft.org](mailto:scene@sandtoft.org)

Typesetting and Layout by John Stainforth & Francis Whitehead.

Contributions & 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:** Stanley King saying a few words in front of Britain's Last Trolleybus (Bradford 844), pictured with Graham Bilbé at the Museum's British Trolleybus Centenary event on 26 June 2011. *Photo: Norman Shepherd*

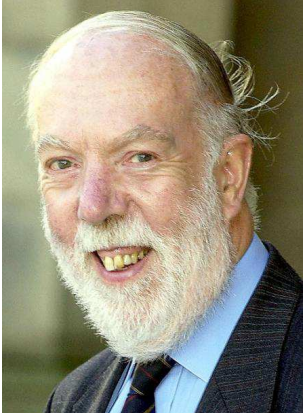
Our Vision Statement is

**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.

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

We are very sorry to record that John Stanley King, the President of The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft, died on 7 October 2012 after a short illness.



It is a real tragedy that “Our Stanley” has been taken from us, for his good grace, keen sense of humour and youthful enthusiasm totally belied his eighty years. Stanley was truly a man of the people, playing an active part in the village life of Heaton from a young boy and later coming to serve the City of Bradford for many years, always with honour. To us at Sandtoft he was a shining beacon of all that was good: a lifelong enthusiast dedicated to the trolleybus cause, Stanley seemed to know just what to say and to whom, always with his gentle humour. Despite achieving the heights of civic office, he was never aloof and always found time for a chat with anybody working on site. His recollections of pre-war trolleybus days were ever sharp and undoubtedly seeing the progress on Bradford 562 gave him great pleasure. What a shame that he will not see it finished.

As a committed Christian he had often declared himself very content with his life, and, despite never marrying or having children of his own, he clearly had a major influence on his sister’s children after they moved back into the family home in Heaton. But, apart from his family and political achievements, he had contributed greatly to the preservation movement in helping to rescue and restore Bradford tram 104 (and arranging for it to run outside Thornbury Works!) and later had a hand in saving many of Bradford’s trolleybus fleet. More recently, he had brought a set of interior light fittings for 562, and had been helping Andy Feather rebuild Austin tower wagon 033: he was never averse to rolling up his sleeves and “getting on wi’t’ job”. With his natural modesty, he always professed not to understand why we had invited him to be our President, but he accepted the position as a very great honour. To me, it always seemed the other way round: it was a great privilege for us to have **him** as our President ! In many ways I feel he was like a “favourite uncle” to all of us and he will be fondly remembered for a very long time.

Stanley’s part in Sandtoft must be properly commemorated and the Board will be considering carefully how best to achieve this, bearing in mind our proposals for new display buildings in the next 2-3 years. One project he had been working on in recent months was for Bradford 515 (the world’s oldest surviving trolleybus) to be released to us from Bradford Industrial Museum, and personally I feel that it would be appropriate for it to be restored in his memory and housed in the “J. Stanley King Building”. May he Rest in Peace.

*Graham Bilbé*

*An appreciation of Stanley’s life and work appears on page 22.*

**Please note: News deadline for the next Sandtoft Scene is 10 March 2013**

## RECENT RUNNING DAYS

London Weekend - 25-27 August

Stewart David et al.

2012 marked the 50th anniversary of the closure of the London trolleybus system in May 1962, so it was very fitting that the Museum held a London Transport themed event. We already have London 1812 as part of the resident fleet and this was supplemented by the kind loan by the London Trolleybus Preservation Society of London 260, a 1936 AEC with Metro-Cammell body, normally resident at the East Anglia Transport Museum. The event also saw the launch of London 1348 into passenger service at the Museum following its earlier visit in May to Carlton Colville as part of their "London 50" event. 1348 is a 1939 Leyland and has been the subject of a major restoration project since its arrival at the Museum from Ireland in July 2010.

Over the three-day bank holiday event, the three London Transport trolleybuses in service were supplemented by the arrival of some LT motorbuses, the first being RF366, brought up from Marlow on the preceding Friday by Richard Bilbé. It had suffered a blown-out front tyre on the M18 and finally arrived on site at around 6.00pm on a low-loader recovery vehicle ! Our engineering team changed over the tyre later that evening.

On Saturday the trolleybus service was operated by Londons 260 and 1812, along with Huddersfield 631 in its Jubilee livery. RF366 ran the Isle Tour and also duplicated some of the trolleybus journeys. A fair number of visitors attended and 334 passengers were carried - quite impressive for a Saturday. Meanwhile, last minute preparations were being made to 1348 in the workshop for its big day.



1348 appears fresh from the workshop on test on Sunday morning ...



...and soon encounters a visiting London taxi-cab

*Photos: Barry Coward*

At around 9.00am on Sunday morning, an immaculate-looking 1348 emerged from the workshop to be earth leakage tested and test-driven in preparation for the special launch at 2.00pm. The trolleybus service commenced at 11.00am and soon became very busy indeed, with 260, 631 and 1812 carrying good loads and RM1449 (a day visitor from Sheffield) joining-in with the three service trolleybuses. Just before 11.20am the RF provided a lovely surprise to passengers waiting at Doncaster Interchange for the free bus service: over 30 of them travelled to Sandtoft on board this little gem.

*Right:* A busy scene with London 1348, 1812 and RT3323

*Below:* Centrepiece and star of the show, London 1348 with gleaming paintwork and period advertisements carries a full load in Sandtoft Square

*Photos:*  
Barry Coward



*Below left:* 1936-vintage visitor London 260 on loan from Carlton Colville

*Below right:* In livery almost matching the "true" Londoners at the event, this 1949 Eastern Counties Bristol K5G, fleet no.LKH133, was initially delivered to London Transport to help out with the capital's acute vehicle shortage



Just before 2.00pm, 1348 came forward to the line-up, alongside 260, 1812 and four motorbuses: RF366, RM1449, resident RT3323 and a visiting 1949 Eastern Counties Bristol K5G (LKH133) which had originally operated in London. After a short speech from our Chairman, Graham Bilbé, 1348 took its first trip since 1961 as a fully-commissioned vehicle. It was joined in simultaneous operation for the next 15 minutes by the six other vehicles, much to the delight of a very large crowd of visitors. After the Museum had closed to visitors, a group of trolleybus drivers from the East Anglia Transport Museum were given the opportunity to have a drive of 260 and 631 under the supervision of our instructors, which was very greatly appreciated. Almost a thousand passenger journeys were made on our service trolleybuses on the launch day, making it our busiest operating day in 2012 apart from 'Gathering Sunday'.

Monday's operations followed the previous day's format, although the visitor numbers were not as large. Another London visitor was RML2313, which joined the three LT trolleybuses in service for a couple of hours.



Londoners galore ! The ceremonial line-up on Bank Holiday Monday featured RF, RT and RML motorbuses, with trolleybuses from the C2, K2 and Q1 classes *Photo: Stewart David*

Overall, this event was a very great success and clearly well worth all the effort put in by many people, much of it behind the scenes. A big "Thank You" goes to all the vehicle owners who kindly gave us permission to use their buses, to our traffic and engineering teams who worked very hard to deliver a first class service throughout the three days, and to Brian Maguire and his restoration team for the really superb job they have achieved with 1348 in a relatively short time. For more photographs visit [www.sandtoft.org/members](http://www.sandtoft.org/members).

*(Editor's note: A special mention also goes to Francis Whitehead, both for organising the London Weekend at Sandtoft and for some very successful collaboration during this year's London trolleybus events elsewhere.)*

## **Blues and Twos Weekend - 15-16 September**

**Stewart David**

This ever-popular event attracted a large crowd of visitors, who were treated to various displays involving police, fire and ambulance vehicles. This year they

were supplemented by other visiting American police and FBI vehicles. To ensure that the event ran smoothly and safely on both days, a safety briefing was held in the *Regal Cinema* for all the visiting Blues and Twos staff and our traffic and engineering managers. Trolleybuses in service included London 260, South Shields 204, Bradford 746 and Manchester 1344, which were all kept busy carrying impressive passenger loadings.

On the Sunday, around 50 visiting emergency service and support vehicles were in attendance, making the cavalcade around the Museum site almost continuous and taking over 20 minutes to introduce all the different vehicles. This proved to be an enjoyable, entertaining and very professionally-organised event and we look forward to welcoming the B&T team again next August.

### **Rotherham Centenary Weekend – 29-30 September Dave Chick et al.**

Rotherham 37 was naturally chosen for service on both days, and performed very well. Saturday's highlight was an illustrated lecture by Tim Stubbs, covering briefly the history of Rotherham trolleybuses and telling the story of the rescue and restoration of Rotherham 73. A sizable audience filled the *Regal* and Tim's talk was very well received. Among those present was Stanley King, making what sadly turned out to be his final visit to the Museum. Rotherham single-decker FET611 was re-created for the event in the form of a splendid commemorative cake, which was sliced-up and sold in *The Tea Trolley Café* in aid of 37's preservation.



Above: Almost too good to eat ? Rotherham's centenary celebration cake before the slicing

*Photo: Mike Johnson*

Left: Cake creator Cherryll Crowther joins Rotherham Trolleybus Group Chairman Tim Stubbs to make the first cut, supported by event organiser Mike Johnson

*Photo: Judy Martindale*

In keeping with Rotherham's long tradition of single-deckers, Liège 425 was also running on both days, and was accompanied by Huddersfield 631, with London 1348 in service on the Sunday. Saturday's weather was very good and visitor numbers were high, but forecasts of appalling weather for the following day had clearly discouraged many Sunday visitors.



Sharing the road again: Rotherham 37 alongside Sheffield Leyland Atlantean 1357

*Photo: Mike Johnson*

## St. Leger Rally - 14 October

**Jim Sambrooks et al.**

An excellent selection of visiting vehicles came together for the event, which, as usual, was organised by DO&LRS. Trolleybuses in service on the day included Huddersfield 631, Bradford 746 and Londons 260 and 1348, accompanied by a varied selection of classic cars running amongst our service vehicles. In addition to the buses, the rally included an interesting range of commercials and cars, of which perhaps the most popular was an adult-sized version of Noddy's car, based on a Fiat 126 and entered by A. Johnson of Lincoln.



Armed with his clipboard, Ian Wilson supervises the departure of East Kent CFN 121 (a 1947 Park Royal bodied Dennis Lancet) and Huddersfield 472 (a 1966 Daimler CVG6LX/ East Lancs.) on tours of the Isle of Axholme

*Photo: Jim Sambrooks*

A fine pair of vintage Austins showing the extremes of their production...

(left) a tiny Austin Seven, and (right) an Austin Twelve

*Photo: Graham Bilbé*





The taxi from Toyland mingles with other icons from the 1950s - but where's PC Plod ?

*Photo: Jim Sambrooks*



The event was a great success once again, with sponsorship by Stagecoach, to whom we extend our grateful thanks. White's Farms kindly allowed us to use part of their land at Sandtoft. Thanks also go to Aeroventure, the South Yorkshire Aircraft Museum in Doncaster, who provide the starting point for the rally where refreshments and toilets are available for entrants. We thank all the volunteers who made the event happen, the vehicle owners and the visitors for attending.

## Twilight Running Day - 18 November

**Mike Johnson**

After an informative Saturday AGM, driving to Sandtoft in the Autumn Sunday sunshine made for a promising day. The three trolleybuses with suitable lighting for twilight running - Bradford 792, London 260 and Huddersfield 619 - were soon out and earth-leakage tested. Meanwhile, the *Pelham*, *Regal* and prefab were made ready and the Trolley Dollies were busy preparing and cooking, with bacon smells wafting around Sandtoft Square.



London 260 making a final appearance on Twilight Running Day before returning to Carlton Colville. Above: in Sandtoft Square with Bradford 792 next in line and Huddersfield 619 turning behind

*Photo: John Stainforth*

*Right: 260 in the early evening as dusk falls*

*Photo: Bruce Lake*



Steadily, the visitors came, and it was both surprising and rewarding to see the increase in numbers during the day. Dave Shepherd's depot tour was very well patronised, The *Tea Trolley Café* seemed busy and both Isle of Axholme trips

(with Doncaster 55) had good loads. The *Pelham*, *Regal* and prefab saw many people and all the trolleybuses ran well, although 792 suffered a low battery towards the end of service. Despite being chilly, the sun shone and trolleybuses ran about every ten minutes quite well-loaded. The visitors were an interesting and communicative crowd, some of whom had come from Northampton having had their interest aroused by Sandtoft's appearance in the *Antiques Road Trip*. In all aspects, a brilliant day, and we even welcomed a newly-qualified conductor, Richard Jackson.

## **NEWS ROUND-UP**

*(Compiled from notes supplied by Bruce Lake)*

**Sandtoft on TV:** 'Scene 86 contained an article about the filming in May of a visit to Sandtoft as part of BBC2's *Antiques Road Trip*. Although several hours of filming were reduced to a bare four minutes in the programme broadcast on 3 October, the results really did justice to the Museum and to our volunteers. Bruce covered all the essentials very well during the interview sequences, and it was a nice touch when antiques expert David Barby, whilst riding on board Reading 144, said that "this is going to be the transport of the future". Although David sadly died only a few weeks after the filming, we can look forward to repeat showings of the programme providing further welcome publicity.

**The Tea Trolley Café:** Andy Thornton's upholstery skills continue to be applied to good effect and the refurbished seats are looking very smart indeed. Visitors will also have noticed the new "Hovis" sign on the outside of the end wall.

**The Museum's artefacts:** As part of meeting the criteria for Accreditation, we have catalogued the vast majority of our artefacts at the Museum and created a database of them. Adrian Dennison has been the key figure in this work and now has the title of "Archivist", and will be updating the database over the next few months to bring everything into line with new requirements coming into force later this year. We receive enquiries from researchers more frequently these days, and this database is a great help with establishing the existence or whereabouts of particular items in our collection.

**Museum site works:** The new lawn mower has been in regular service during the 2012 season and has much improved the ease of maintenance (and resulting appearance) of the grass areas. Improvements have been made to the street furniture in the Museum, and, thanks to Len Smith, the bollards are now illuminating. As many of the traction poles are now looking neglected, a programme of pole painting will take place in the coming months.

**Winter Working Parties:** We are again appealing for extra volunteers to help prepare the site for the new season. Working party weekends have been scheduled for 23/24 February and 9/10 March, and Bruce Lake will e-mail members with details of the jobs to be done. To receive these messages and any updates in case of last-minute changes due to bad weather, please make sure that you have joined our e-mail ring. To do this, simply send a blank e-mail to [members-subscribe@sandtoft.org](mailto:members-subscribe@sandtoft.org).

## VEHICLE REPORTS

**The Hastings Guy:** In his article *Sandtoft's Secret - The Hastings Guy* in 'Scene 87, Robin Symons explained the complexity of identifying the ex-Hastings Guy at Sandtoft, given the absence of any visible fleet number or chassis number on the remains of the vehicle. In response to Robin's appeal, our member John Pollard (who lives in Chelmsford, not far from where the trolleybus resided for many years) has been investigating records of the vehicle's owner and its locations in Essex. This has provided evidence that the trolleybus in question is most probably no.46. The research continues and we hope to include a full report in the next issue of *Sandtoft Scene*.

**Wellington 82**, our latest acquisition, arrived at Felixstowe on 19 December on board the container ship *MSC Eva*. The long voyage from New Zealand began on 20 October, with a change of vessel in Melbourne and again in Singapore. After a short period of temporary storage in East Anglia, 82 will go to Thamesdown Transport for bodywork repairs, repainting and seat re-trimming before moving on to the Museum for electrical and mechanical refurbishment. Photographs will appear in the next issue of 'Scene.

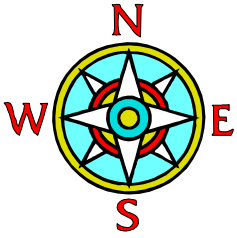
## THE 2012 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Around 47 members attended the AGM on 17 November 2012 and heard a comprehensive review of the year's activities, achievements and events from Chairman Graham Bilbé. This was followed by Francis Whitehead's report as Financial Director, whose informative presentation included charts showing the growth in income, membership and visitor numbers over the past ten years. For the financial year ending 31 January 2012, the latest accounts recorded significant increases over the previous year's income from admissions, catering and *Trolleyshop* sales. Overall membership stands at around 460, with a steady net growth of approximately 20 members per year. During the years 2009-11 annual visitor numbers were averaging around 5,600, but the total for 2012 is expected to be lower.

Bruce Lake was re-elected unopposed as Company Secretary, and a ballot was then held for three Ordinary Directors. Two vacancies were due to existing directors retiring by rotation and the third arose from the resignation of Chas Allen last May. Four candidates stood for the three vacancies and received votes as follows: Ian Wilson (37), Steve Harrison (33), Nick Broxholme (32) and Barry Coward (18). The first three were declared elected. By a large majority, the members present also approved the re-appointment of Stephen Kerry as Company Auditor.

If any member would like a copy of the 2011-12 year end accounts, please contact Francis Whitehead (contact details on page 2).

Future development of the Museum was the main subject of the discussion forum that followed the formal AGM. Graham outlined the proposals now agreed with the BTS for additional land and buildings to be funded partly by the Museum and partly by the BTS, as described on Page 18.



## THE ROUTE TO SANDTOFT

### BLACK ROD KNOCKS ON THE DOORS - OF SANDTOFT !

“Black Rod”

### PART 6: A Trolleybus in the Garden and the Formation of the NTA

*All photos by the Author*

Other than the conversion of Nottingham City Transport (NCT) trolleybus service 45 late in 1962, the year had proved successful overall for the Nottingham Trolleybus Group (NTG), of which I was still “Hon. Sec.”; Nottingham 466 had been purchased by taking out a loan that was, admittedly, financially crippling us. Our treasurer, The Librarian, had issued all participants with a payment record sheet on which the £1 per week contributions could be recorded. However, 466 was at least parked rent-free on a farm, albeit on a temporary basis. Whilst we had enjoyed a comprehensive programme of trolleybus tours, many of these had not been profitable. It was therefore decided not to arrange a full programme for the year (as had happened in 1962) but to offer fewer, more selective locations.



Doncaster 375 & 393 in St. Sepulchre Gate on 24 February 1963, where three sets of parallel wiring were in place with no frogs to enable transfer between them. 375 is on a Doncaster Omnibus & Light Railway Society tour and later became Doncaster's last trolleybus. 393 had been Mexborough & Swinton no.1 with Brush single-deck body replaced by the Roe bodywork as depicted. Withdrawn days after this photograph, 393's Roe body was transferred to an “elderly” Leyland PD2/1 chassis dating from 1947 and renumbered 94. The significance of the photograph is that both motorbus 94 and trolleybus 375 are currently resident at Sandtoft

Since we had now made contact with other groups, including the Reading Transport Society (RTS), it was hoped that further co-operation might lead to every organisation enjoying better subscribed tours. Some discussions had informally taken place with Mike Dare regarding a national trolleybus museum. This “national” concept had influenced some of our tramway-minded friends to split from the NTG, although there remained an amicable relationship with these members. Loss of this support had been compensated for by attracting new membership, especially with the publicity surrounding preservation of 466 and the seemingly imminent demise of the Nottingham system. Fear for its future had been greatly exacerbated by the appointment of Mr. John Wake as

General Manager of NCT following the retirement of Ben England during December 1962. Mr. Wake had presided over the demise of the St. Helens trolleybuses in 1958 and, it was rumoured, had been instrumental in persuading previously pro-trolleybus Bradford to commence abandonment of trolleybuses. Not exactly a trolleybus man, then ! Stanley King, the notable historian and champion of the trolleybus "cause" in Bradford, had commented: "With the Transport Committee decision and Mr. Wake at the helm, I doubt that there will be any trolleybuses left in Nottingham within 18 months".

The Chairman had secured a site at Giltbrook complete with a shop, which was intended to be stocked with transport related books, models etc. Despite being situated next to the main Nottingham to Ripley road, it is a sobering thought on progress that the possibility of vandalism to 466 was not a strong consideration back in 1963. However, measurements soon revealed that the driveway on which it was proposed to park 466 would neither be quite long enough or wide enough to accommodate the trolleybus. Work parties were organised to extend the drive and this was soon accomplished to provide a neat parking space. The Chairman started to clear out the shop in readiness for occupation. We were sufficiently confident to organise the tow by Proctor's Garage from Gunthorpe to Giltbrook early on the morning of Sunday 13 January 1963, when there would be little or no other traffic.

The tow was uneventful but upon arrival at Giltbrook and being reversed on the drive, it was obvious that 466 would overhang the pavement by some 3 inches. A working party was standing by for such an eventuality and work commenced. 466 was parked on the side of the road whilst this work was quickly carried out, when virtually the first vehicle of the morning appeared: a Morris "1000" which overtook the tow truck and the trolleybus and then stopped. The occupant proved to be a police inspector who donned his cap and cane, walked back to us and barked "Move it!" In no way was 466 causing any sort of obstruction, but the policeman ignored our appeals for a few extra minutes. He walked to the tow truck driver and said: "Move it or I'll book you". Our driver had no choice but to beckon me back to 466 and say "Where shall we go ?" At the time, our garden at Gunthorpe, next to the farm where 466 had previously been stored, had a section at the bottom that was uncultivated. It was a long garden with a high hedge in the middle so the trolleybus could not be seen from the house. A hurried phone call to my father obtained permission for 466 to park there. The return journey to Gunthorpe was made and 466 took up residence at "The Elms".

I now had a trolleybus in my (or rather my parents') back garden. The NTG also had an invoice for a massive £30 for the abortive double tow. Coming on top of the usual £1 per week required to repay the loan for 466, this was a severe financial blow. The prospect of the potential revenue-generating shop was also abandoned following this debacle. It was back to the "tried and semi-trusted" method of raising money by organising trolleybus tours, and a trip to Wolverhampton was organised on 22 January to arrange a tour on 24 March 1963. A further tour in Nottingham was planned for 26 May 1963.

Having given Mr. Wake time to “settle in” to his new job, it was agreed that an opportunity be taken to make an appointment with him and introduce the NTG. Of course, it was dear old Black Rod who was “volunteered”. Since it was myself who had sent a “Welcome to Nottingham” letter to him on behalf of the NTG, it seemed logical that I should attend. The meeting was set up and I duly turned up at his office. Mr. Wake was extremely welcoming, courteous and seemed genuinely sympathetic to our aims. He was also predictably and understandably very businesslike. The message came across strongly that if we could organise a co-ordinated approach to NCT, then he would try and provide as much assistance as possible. What he did not want was to be bombarded with correspondence from different people wanting souvenirs, information or complete vehicles. It was, I believe, an understandable approach. This was all duly reported back to the NTG.

---



Taken some nine months before the original NTA meeting, Derby 224 is in Kedleston Road at Allestree Lane terminus on 3 June 1962. Derby remained a sizable system and was considered “safe” at that time. However, the decision to abandon the system was announced publicly on 27 July 1963. 224 is now resident in the East Anglia Transport Museum at Carlton Colville

At the beginning of 1963, as well as our local Nottingham difficulties with 466, activities were now taking place nationally. Possibly the start was a letter in *Buses Illustrated (BI)* of January 1963 from Mike Dare and headed “Preservation of Trolleybuses”. The letter explained that the RTS was hoping to purchase Bournemouth 212, South Shields 204 and a Reading motorbus. Support was requested for the RTS, which was described as a group of mainly trolleybus enthusiasts. At the same time, I had received a newsletter (no. 2 dated January 1963) from the previously unknown (to NTG members) Cardiff Transport Society. The editor, Malcolm Gylee, had reported that the RTS had contacted him regarding duplication of news from other systems. Mr. Gylee outlined ideas of his own, which basically proposed a national society. The time appeared ripe for some action to rationalise the various trolleybus preservation groups. I cannot remember exactly who set up the first meeting, but my recollection is that it was at the instigation of the NTG. (I am happy to stand corrected on this point). Derby was chosen as the meeting place, being a central location with good rail connections. All known groups were invited to attend an initial discussion on 10 March 1963. I do not remember all participants, but they certainly included The Chairman and myself from Nottingham, Mike Dare (Reading), Tony Belton (London), David E. Smith

---

(Wolverhampton) and Malcolm Gylee (Cardiff). I seem to remember Les Flint from Doncaster and contingents from Bradford and Huddersfield also being present.



Derby 237 at Shelton Lock terminus, Chellaston Road, on 19 February 1967. The terminal loop still exists virtually unchanged but is not used by any bus services. Rescued for preservation, 237 was initially at Plumtree, then moved to Sandtoft in March 1971. Later it was operational at the Black Country Living Museum and is now at Carlton Colville. The slim young man on the right is Steve Collins, whose series of articles prompted your author's own diatribe !

The concept was as Mike Dare, The Chairman and myself had discussed in Walsall some months previously. A national “umbrella” organisation would be set up to oversee a co-ordinated approach to trolleybus preservation and co-operation between the different groups. A national operating site would be located to which all would contribute. Another necessary “shared” expense was a towing vehicle. Individual groups would carry on as before with certain vehicles retained locally. Great debate ensued as to naming the new venture and several names were suggested. When “National Trolleybus Association” was suggested, Tony Belton commented: “NTA – that’s easy to remember !” and I seem to remember that, as a consequence of Tony’s reaction, the name was adopted. I really thought that Mike Dare would be “volunteered”, but, to my surprise, I became the first General Secretary, with The Chairman becoming the first Chairman of the NTA. Area Secretaries were also appointed with Mike Dare, Malcolm Gylee, Tony Belton and David Smith representing their various locations. At that time, other than *BI*, the *RTS News Sheet* was the only source of information regarding trolleybuses. It started to carry the note “A Member of the National Trolleybus Association” beneath the title from May 1963 (Vol.2 No. 21) and its trolleybus news section also became the NTA news sheet. The Chairman and I set about trying to locate an appropriate national museum site. Of course, we needed this in any event for 466, still residing in the back garden at Gunthorpe and about to cause a couple of “domestics” with my parents.

Whilst my father had been tolerant of a trolleybus in the garden, my step-mother was rather less so. She had organised a “wine and cheese” party (remember those ?) with the local “gentry”, no doubt to support a local charity. She had arranged for a reporter from the local *Newark Advertiser* newspaper to cover this event. Somebody (not me) let it slip that we did not have fairies at the bottom of our garden, but a trolleybus. The reporter became very excited and insisted on being shown the vehicle. He summoned a photographer and

an article headed "Next Stop Unknown", complete with picture of yours truly and 466, appeared in the paper on 15 May 1963 and provided some welcome publicity. The "wine & cheese" party, unfortunately, did not fare so well, being restricted to a couple of lines. As one can imagine, this did not exactly endear the large green electric vehicle resident in the garden to my step-mother !

One day, when arriving home, my father presented me with a letter and demanded: "What are you going to do about this ?" This letter, from the local council, asked when planning permission had been granted for the "new outbuilding" at the bottom of our garden ! They were sending somebody around to discuss the issue. Whilst not knowing anything about Town and Country Planning Regulations, I was reliably informed that if the "outbuilding" was mobile, then it would not require planning permission. Of course, 466 did not have traction batteries. Luckily, when the trolleybus was parked in the garden, it had been positioned towards one side of the garden. I dug a small "roadway" for a few feet in front of 466's wheels so the trolleybus could "freewheel". I managed to take a day from work on the date scheduled for the council officer's visit. The council "suit" duly arrived: a dapper little chap who spread his paperwork on our dining table. "Let me take some measurements" he said. On hearing that he was about to measure a trolleybus he was genuinely taken aback. I explained that trolleybuses could actually manoeuvre off wires by means of their traction batteries. I did not explain that 466 did not have such batteries. We went to the bottom of the garden. "Just ring the bell like a conductor when I get into the cab", I suggested. The "suit" was delighted and when he heard the cab door close he rang the bell. Admittedly with my heart in my mouth, I released the handbrake and 466 obligingly rolled forward for a few feet. The "suit" was satisfied. We returned to the dining table but a puzzled expression crossed his face. Then he smiled. "I think we will have to regard it as a caravan," he said, "then you do not need planning permission". In the space of one hour, 466 had turned from a new outbuilding into a caravan in the eyes of our local council ! It often crossed my cynical mind that one of the local "wine and cheese brigade" might have contacted the council. In fashionable Gunthorpe during 1963 it was just "not the done thing" to have trolleybuses in one's garden.

During March 1963 we learned that our former NTG tramway friends had purchased the truck of a former Blackpool illuminated tram - the "Gondola" - constructed in this guise from a 1901 passenger tram. They were also trying to purchase a suitable body from Nottingham tram 67, then located at Colwick Pleasure Park near Nottingham. They had appropriately called themselves the "Nottingham 67 Group" and produced a tasteful prospectus featuring a photograph of 67 in service passing Theatre Square. As I have previously mentioned, the "Gondola" would later impact on the NTG.

Although I had opened dealings with Wolverhampton Corporation regarding the NTG tour on 24 March 1963, the itinerary went out in the name of the NTG treasurer, The Librarian. This stated that one of the few experimental green-liveried trolleybuses would be used. This had been asked for in my original



request and confirmation was received. However, upon our arrival in Railway Street, Wolverhampton, we found that 439 was waiting for us as our tour vehicle. It had been very recently repainted in the normal fleet livery and our crew explained that no trolleybus remained in the short-lived green. Naturally, when the tour set off, the third trolleybus observed was no.471 - you've guessed it - in the experimental green livery ! A memorable part of the tour was the negotiation of Stubbs Road under human motive power aided by gravity. This section had been wired until July 1962, being virtually unused by service trolleybuses for many years but retained as an emergency link between the Penn Road services and the terminus at Penn Fields. With the anticipated abandonment of these routes, and to assist in construction of a new ring road, the wires had been removed.



Wolverhampton 439 on the NTG tour of 24 March 1963 receives a hefty push on the link along Stubbs Road. The wires had gone - but since when has this deterred enthusiasts ?

Despite the body being marginally over three years old, and just having been repainted, 439 was only destined to last for another four years, being towed away for scrap on 5 March 1967 - the last day of Wolverhampton's trolleybuses

Wolverhampton 433 (with 616 in the background) both operating a tour on 19 May 1963 - this time for the Wolverhampton Trolleybus Group. The scene is the Lea Road terminus of Service 4 to Penn Fields a few weeks before conversion on 4 June. 433 now operates at the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley and 616 is displayed at the BaMMOT Museum at Wythall



The hire cost for the Wolverhampton tour was £5 and, due no doubt to our new tie-up with the NTA, this tour was well supported. Therefore, thankfully, a profit was made enabling us to pay off further loan payments. Everything seemed to be going well - but the next months would see many changes.

*To be continued*

# **MAKING SANDTOFT THE TROLLEYBUS MUSEUM**

**– Our Extension Project takes off !**

**Graham Bilbé, Chairman**

When the Sandtoft site was first acquired back in 1969, it was envisaged that it should ultimately become much bigger: there were dreams of trolleybuses operating away down the “runways” of the old airfield. As neighbouring areas of land have increasingly become developed, and with our own funding remaining stretched, the harsh reality had to be accepted that those dreams just weren’t going to happen. About ten years ago, an alternative scheme was put forward, looking at what nearby land remained available: in particular, the plot to the west and north of *Burntwood*, our neighbour’s bungalow, seemed to “tick a lot of the boxes”, but was still really beyond our financial reach. Just after I became Chairman, some five years ago, we had the opportunity - and enough funds in hand, thanks to some very generous donations - to buy the first 1.2 acres needed to embark on this scheme. Since then, we have been saving up for the next area, and I am pleased to say that we are now in the happy position of being ready to buy another acre ! However, much better than that, with help from our long-standing supporters, the British Trolleybus Society, we can at last secure the whole additional site for future development! The proposals were outlined in some detail at the post-AGM forum in November, and for the benefit of all, we set them out here.

The Board’s rationale for taking this momentous step to secure the long-term viability of THE Trolleybus Museum is based on several key points, many of which have been policy for several years. In no specific order, these are:

- To accommodate all Museum “collection” vehicles under cover on the Company’s own premises at the earliest opportunity to eliminate paying rent monies to third parties
- To secure any additional land required to develop the Museum in the future, whilst it remains available, including adequately fencing the boundaries
- To review which vehicles currently part of the Museum’s “collection” might be surplus to requirements with a view to disposing of them to appropriate museums, groups or individuals (in accordance with policy)
- To provide additional and suitable (i.e. secure, dry and ideally, accessible) accommodation to house several very significant exhibits currently being offered to the Museum, which will be major attractions in their own right
- To continue to improve the Museum’s overall “offer” to its visitors, upgrading events, facilities and site appearance, including the long-term aim to improve trolleybus display facilities, both operationally and in co-ordinated exhibitions
- To work towards making the Museum “easy to run”, most particularly on open days, with staff deployed efficiently and such that the Museum can open when necessary with a minimum of staff without detracting from the “visitor experience”
- To have a fully-independent site, no longer dependent on the goodwill of adjacent landowner(s) for major events
- To house the whole vehicle collection in smaller unit buildings than at present, primarily to significantly reduce the fire risk to the collection, and in

secure and weather-proof modern (low-maintenance) buildings

- To programme replacement of the present (life-expired) main depot with one or more suitable, modern buildings, attractive in appearance, and allowing major exhibitions to be staged at the heart of the Museum
- To dispose of Westgate once alternative on-site space is available
- To steadily reduce dependency on vehicle owners' contributions to maintain and improve the Museum, it being recognised that an increasing proportion of vehicular exhibits will transfer to TM@S ownership as time goes on

The very neat proposal now in front of us is that we (TM@S) will purchase one acre of land adjoining the area purchased in 2008 and the BTS, using Beryl Dare's legacy, will purchase the remaining area (1.5 acres), this including frontage to Belton Road. The entire boundary will then be securely fenced. Further, the BTS will construct a single-span building capable of comfortably housing 12-14 'buses (the BTS "fleet" consists of 13 'buses plus the horse-drawn tower wagon) at a position to be agreed on their 1.5 acres site, accessed initially from a road built from our workshop road. The BTS will lease their land and building to the Museum for a peppercorn rent, at the same time ceasing to make any further storage payments to TM@S for their vehicle collection. The entire enlarged museum premises will be managed day-to-day by TM@S, with a joint TM@S-BTS panel overseeing development policy, planning etc.

The plans do not stop there, though, as it is the Board's intention for TM@S to construct a second new building, again capable of housing 12-14 vehicles. We do, however need to urgently raise funds to do this and now appeal for donations so that this second building can be built sooner rather than later.

Bearing in mind our Accredited Museum status, the new accommodation will be multi-purpose, to the highest standards that are affordable in terms of environmental control and ease and cost of maintenance. At the same time, there will be no visible boundary between the TM@S and the BTS land and the BTS "fleet" will not necessarily be housed in the BTS-owned building - what vehicles are kept where will continue to depend on TM@S's operational requirements. The additional accommodation will enable our out-stationed vehicles to return to our own premises and those such as Wellington 82 and Johannesburg 589 - and some other important and exciting potential acquisitions - to be adequately accommodated. The intention of both parties is for a totally seamless and integrated museum operation, building on the success to date of our existing Museum, developing it in manageable stages to quality standards.

These proposals safeguard the interests of both parties and go a very long way to meeting your Board's key aims as itemised above. The staged developments include:

- (i) a new visitors' entrance from Belton Road onto the BTS land and leading to a re-located car park and visitor reception building
- (ii) a new roadway, ultimately wired to be a trolleybus route, to run around the perimeter of the new area and join up with our existing roadways

- (iii) an area capable of being used to display visiting heavy vehicles, such as at 'Gathering and St. Leger Rally; and
- (iv) longer-term, a third vehicle building to allow a staged re-development of our existing depot building, probably as a visually-pleasing exhibition hall, right in the centre of the Museum

The speed at which all this can become a reality will essentially be determined by the rate at which we can raise funds - the necessary land will be "ours", so money will be the **only** major factor in being able to achieve our aims - it may take more time or less time, but at least it really **can** all happen !

It should be added that both the local planners and our museum professional advisors have been consulted: the planning officers can see little or no problem with our proposals, whilst our advisors - Susan Hopkinson (curatorial advisor), Liz Denton (our Museum Development Officer) and Dieter Hopkin (another MDO) are delighted, if not excited, that we are able to develop the Museum to such an extent and they are offering their full support in helping us make the right decisions. It is clear also that important council members also support our plans, whilst our neighbour at *Burntwood* prefers our plans to the other option of having some massive warehousing right next door to them: we will be consulting with neighbours across the road in the coming weeks.

In the meantime, of course, we must not neglect our visitors and the needs, improvement and maintenance of our existing site; the show must go on ! We have a number of small projects to progress – such as progressively painting the traction poles, improving the trolleybus loading facilities, extending the café, servicing those depot doors.... the list goes on !

No doubt this will raise many questions, so maybe we can answer a few:

***Is all this a "fait accompli" ?*** The decision to purchase the land is now being implemented: we received strong backing for both the land purchase and general direction at the post-AGM forum on 17 November 2012, with unanimous support in a show of hands of the members present. For their part, the BTS membership unanimously endorsed the proposal at their EGM on 7 December 2012. Once the land is acquired, the BTS would like to have their building up and commissioned as soon as practicable, in order to bring an early end to their ongoing payments for vehicle storage and thus get a return (albeit invisible) on their investment. Similarly, TM@S is anxious to rapidly eliminate outgoings to third parties for rented 'bus storage.

Detail is very much open for discussion. The overall concept has been extensively discussed and agreed but the precise location, size and shape of the new buildings have not yet been decided, nor has the re-development of the existing depot. The legal elements of the proposals, whilst we know what we want, also have to be formally drafted and agreed. Much work is still required to turn the overall concept into a detailed plan. This is YOUR Museum, and we will, of course, be pleased to receive your suggestions, proposals and any constructive criticism.

***How is it going to be funded?*** Between BTS and TM@S, we already have the cash to complete the land purchase, fencing, and constructing the BTS

depot building - which is great news. Bringing back vehicles from rented storage will stop around £10,000 p.a. leaving the Museum's bank account, but BTS will cease paying TM@S around £8,000 p.a. for vehicle accommodation once their building is commissioned. So, there is no doubt that TM@S will have to work hard to raise money to construct their buildings, the roadways and the rest - which is why we need your help ! We are looking at all sorts of ways and opportunities and are particularly grateful to Barry Coward for agreeing to assist. Sandtoft has always developed "organically", at a pace that its members and volunteers are comfortable with, but we do need to step up that pace so that we can see the benefit of all this new investment. The coming months should see a number of initiatives launched. [Meanwhile, if you are able to make a donation, please do so ! Cheques, payable to "Sandtoft Transport Centre Limited", should be sent to Francis Whitehead at the Museum address. Donations qualify for Gift Aid if you pay UK income tax.](#)

***How will the BTS involvement work ?*** The BTS has been involved with Sandtoft from the outset, it is one of our Contributing Societies as set out in our Articles of Association, and its trolleybuses are based at TM@S. Like us, the BTS is a registered charity, but, instead of being a company limited by guarantee as we are, it is a trust, with not only a committee, but also five custodian trustees who oversee the legal aspects of the Society's operation. The proposed partnership, which the TM@S Board and the two management levels of the BTS all see as good for the future of both organisations, will be properly set up legally to protect both parties' interests. This will minimise the risk of short-sighted or impetuous actions and provide a safeguard in the event of any catastrophic happening. The BTS-owned land and building will be leased to TM@S, with TM@S undertaking the overall management of the complete museum site. A joint TM@S-BTS panel will be formed, principally to discuss and agree the planning, development and maintenance aspects of the Museum - which is only right as some of that development and maintenance will relate to BTS property, albeit leased to TM@S.

***How can I help to make this amazing project a reality ?***

- [Make a donation !](#) Better still, with a **regular** standing order: 100 members donating say, £10 per month, with Gift Aid, would make a huge difference !
- [Come and help with regular working parties:](#) apart from maintenance, there'll be plenty to do in building the new roads, parking areas, etc. on the enlarged site. Very little skill is needed for much of this work - just a willingness to put in some graft and **Make Things Happen !**

## **TROLLEYBUS ANNIVERSARIES**

**January to March 2013**

**Compiled by Geoff Welburn**

### Systems Opened

- 100 years since Stockport opened on 10 March 1913
- 75 years since Manchester opened on 1 March 1938
- 75 years since Belfast opened on 28 March 1938

### Systems Closed

- 75 years since Chesterfield closed on 24 March 1938

## A PROPER BRADFORDIAN

**John Stanley King, FSA**

**compiled by John Stainforth**

Stanley King was born in Bradford in 1932, in the parish of Heaton, where several generations of his family had lived previously. He came from a modest background and his grandfather had been a tram driver. Stanley won a scholarship to Bradford Grammar School, where he did well and continued his studies until he was 18, when he was offered a place to study languages at the University of St. Andrews. National Service intervened, however, and after two years with the RAF, he decided instead to find employment and took up a job in the offices of Salt's Mill in Saltaire, where he worked until the mill closed in 1986.

Stanley's interest in transport began at a very early age and one of his earliest recollections was seeing the newly-delivered cream-coloured AEC "Q" trolleybus, no.633. He became a fervent enthusiast of trams and trolleybuses and he chronicled the final years of Bradford's tramways which closed in 1950. Realising that none of the trams were saved for the future, Stanley and his friend John Pitts decided to rescue the body of Bradford's official last tram, no.104, which had found a second life as a scoreboard at Odsal Stadium. Strongly encouraged by General Manager Chaceley Humpidge, they returned 104 to the workshops at Thornbury, where restoration took place over five years, culminating in an open day in July 1958 to re-launch the tram, with public operation on the remaining stretch of track between Leeds Road and the workshops.

Stanley and other special guests on board Bradford tramcar 104 at the Bradford Industrial Museum. The event was a reunion in 2008 to mark the 50th anniversary of the completion of 104's restoration and return to operation under power

*Photo: "Telegraph & Argus"*



As a historian, Stanley carried out much original research and over the years he authored seven books and countless articles. His first book, published in 1964, told the story of Keighley Corporation Transport, which, like Bradford, had operated one of the pioneer trolleybus systems. His interest in the system led him to rescue Keighley trolleybus no.5, which had survived in retirement as a caravan near Grassington for almost 40 years and now resides at Keighley Bus Museum.

Being an ardent supporter of trolleybuses in his native city, he took a strong stance against their abandonment on four routes during 1962/63, campaigning via the columns of the local paper and using well-reasoned financial projections to try and persuade the management and the City Council of the error of their approach. Sadly, this became a lost cause in a difficult political climate, but a change of management shortly afterwards, combined with a longer-term view of the system's value for money, resulted in a further nine years' lease of life for Bradford's trolleybuses.

With so active an interest in municipal transport and local affairs, he decided to stand for the City Council in 1970 and was elected to represent Heaton Ward, which he continued to do until retiring from the Council in 2008. In Heaton, he led a local campaign against house building on "green belt" land and later founded the Heaton Township Association. His book "Heaton - the Best Place of All" was published in 2001 and records in detail the history and development of the community. Stanley brought his understanding of transport to the work of the Council's Transport Executive Group, and he was determined that if Bradford's trolleybus system could not be saved, then at least it should be "given a good funeral". The closure ceremony in 1972 was, indeed, a memorable event, and in his speech as deputy convenor, Stanley did an outstanding job of reflecting the contribution that trolleybuses had made to the city over 61 years. He had also been busy writing again, and his second book *Transport of Delight* was published by the NTA to coincide with the Bradford closure.

When the City established its Industrial Museum in the former Moorside Mills, Stanley's influence ensured that transport history was well represented alongside that of the textile industry. The transport display hall houses Bradford tram 104 and trolleybus 737, and many other artefacts (including the body of trolleybus 515) are in storage there, together with a large collection of equipment, photographs and documents relating to trolleybuses. Stanley's involvement with the museum has naturally continued over the years and he spent a great deal of time there working as a volunteer.



Stanley King seated at the controls of Bradford 737 at the Bradford Industrial Museum. His vision of electric tram and trolleybus operation in the grounds of the museum has still to be realised

*Photo: "Telegraph & Argus"*

Following local government reorganisation in 1974, transport became a county function, and when the County Council disappeared in 1986, Stanley became Bradford Council's representative on the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority. He held this role until 2007 and was, for two years, the PTA's Chairman. During this period he was very active in several initiatives to bring about a return of trams and trolleybuses in West Yorkshire - something which has taken a major step closer to reality with the recent funding approval of the scheme for New Generation Trolleybuses in Leeds.

During the 1990s, much of Stanley's extensive knowledge of Bradford's transport history was brought together and published in his three books covering, in turn, the Corporation's trolleybuses, motorbuses and tramways. These books now form the definitive works of reference on the subject. His most recent book, jointly-authored with Eric Thornton and published by the LRTA in 2004, was *Halifax Corporation Tramways*. In all Stanley's books, the research is impeccable, the history is presented in his very rich and readable style of writing, and both the vehicles and the routes are covered by a well-chosen selection of photographs and illustrations.

Trolleybuses always seemed to be a part of his DNA: he organised an annual enthusiasts' tour of the Bradford system from 1951 until its closure, and he became the Bradford Trolleybus Association's president soon after its formation in 1972. In 2008 he took on the role of President of the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft where his involvement has been very much appreciated.



Stanley in 2000 in his mayoral robes, with his sister, Barbara, as his official consort

Photo: "Telegraph & Argus"

Stanley was prominent in many walks of life besides transport. His unstinting service to the City Council was recognised in 2000 when he was elected as Lord Mayor, an experience he thoroughly enjoyed throughout his year of office. His contribution to the fields of transport and local history was acknowledged nationally in 2007 when Stanley was elected as a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. He clearly met the Society's criterion of "excelling in the knowledge of the antiquities and history of this and other nations".

His local community was always important to him and he was an active member of St. Barnabas' Church in Heaton, where he was baptised and confirmed and had sung in the choir all his life. Therefore it was fitting that his life should be commemorated at St. Barnabas', with the church packed to capacity and over 400 well-wishers gathered to give him a very



traditional send-off. He would certainly have appreciated this and been delighted that two of Bradford's preserved buses (82 and 220) were on display outside the church.

Stanley never married but was very much a man of his family, and during his mayoral year his sister, Barbara, served as Lady Mayoress. To Barbara and to his niece, Deborah, his nephews, Christopher and Stephen, and all his extended family, we offer our deep sympathy, whilst at the same time remembering with much gratitude someone consistently described by all who knew him as a true gentleman.

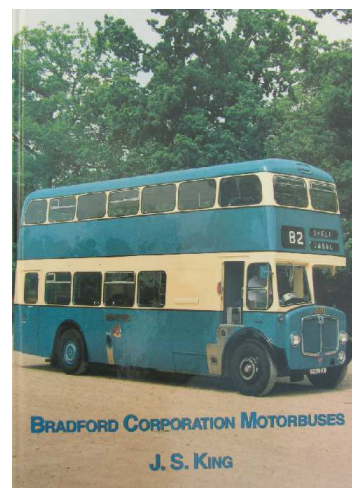
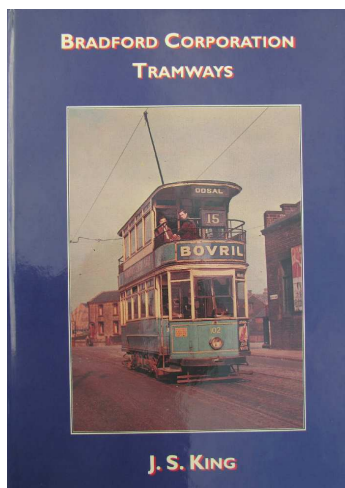


Returning to Heaton for Stanley's funeral was AEC Regent III no.82: a former "regular" to Heaton passengers in the 1950s/60s and now preserved by the Aire Valley Transport Group

*Photo: Graham Bilbé*

Also on display was Regent V no.220 from Keighley Bus Museum, pictured outside St. Barnabas' as people leave the church

*Photo: John Stainforth*



Stanley King's trilogy documenting Bradford's transport history forms an important part of his legacy.

## REMEMBERING STANLEY KING

### *From Geoff Welburn ...*

Stanley King was without any doubt the leading authority on all aspects of Bradford City Transport. Whatever tram, bus or trolleybus fleet number you asked Stanley about, he could, without any hesitation, give you all the details concerning that vehicle or any vehicle that carried the same fleet number. He also had interests in other fleets as well, particularly Halifax and Bournemouth. Whilst at Crich one year, Stanley was taught how to drive Liverpool 869, the 1936 bogie streamliner tram. He really appreciated the smooth ride and the rapid acceleration and braking of these fine trams. He was also an authority on the history of Bradford, giving talks to societies on his favourite city. Whenever Leeds was mentioned, he would say: "You mean that place they should tow out into the North Sea and sink !" Stanley was from an attractive area of Bradford called Heaton and after some research was able to secure the title of Lord of the Manor.

Stanley was a councillor for almost 40 years and served on numerous committees. He was a very generous man: his time and effort was selflessly given. Once a year, Stanley would spend a week at the Crich Tramway Museum, searching through unidentified archives, offering his help and advice at determining missing details. Every Monday, he would visit Bradford Industrial Museum and spend the day there searching through documents or photographs, adding useful information for the help of others. Whilst there, he also took it on himself to maintain the appearance of the tram and trolleybus exhibited there for others to enjoy.

Stanley was truly a gentleman, always having time to speak to anyone, and would always pass words of encouragement to fellow enthusiasts. What a very sad loss for us all. Thank you for all your hard work and for all the detailed information that you left with us. RIP.

### *From Brian Maguire ...*

My memories of Stanley go back to the Bradford Jubilee in 1971, when he had spruced-up 758 for the occasion. It was the last open-platform trolleybus in Britain and was also his favourite. As he was a VIP, I did not speak to him, but watched from the side-lines. Similarly at the closure, when he made one of his very meaningful speeches.

At Sandtoft, I used to see him on open days, and when he became our President, I was on the Board and got to know him better. Whilst I was working on 562, his close friend Geoff Welburn always kept him up to date on progress. Stanley turned up one open day with a set of lamp surrounds, trims, and a bell. We fitted the lights in place, wiring them to the mains, so they can be illuminated for the public when we are open. Stanley always came to look at progress, and was able to give advice on various details as he had ridden on these trolleybuses in service. He was restoring a blind for 562 which he had obtained from one of the class, and said he was having to re-instate two destinations which had been removed. Recent work has seen some seat bases fitted, with the intention of getting a photo of Stanley sitting inside 562.

As a surprise, I had been fitting the bell, so that he could be photographed ringing it at the AGM. Alas, this was not to be, but the completed bell was rung by my wife at the time of his funeral. Maybe he heard it up there !

### ***From Gerald Whiteley ...***

I met Stanley in 1970 after returning north to live. Over the years we have kept in touch and my respect for him has grown stronger. He was a mine of information, always willing to give but equally willing to take, so adding to his knowledge. Some well-known transport experts can be rather aloof, but not Stanley. He had time for everyone and was a true gentleman. We will miss you, Stanley King.

### ***From Chas Allen ...***

"J.S. King" - I knew the name long before I knew the man. It first became familiar to me in the late 1960s from reading *Buses Illustrated* and the books Stanley wrote or contributed to, or even just as photo credits in the work of others. Eventually I started volunteering at Sandtoft and got to meet him. I found that he was always courteous, genuinely interested in people and what was going on. He brought a vast amount of experience and wisdom to everything he was involved in, yet despite all his achievements there wasn't a trace of pretentiousness or superiority; just the opposite - he was always approachable. Earlier this year, he complimented me on a couple of short pieces I'd written for 'Scene. Coming from Stanley, that was praise indeed.

It's a great shame that he didn't live to see the fruits of perhaps his greatest achievement - securing funding for the re-introduction of trolleybuses into the UK - and his passing leaves a great void. The huge turnout at his funeral shows the regard in which he was held. I feel privileged to have known him.

### ***From Andy Feather ...***

In 1965 I joined the readership of *The Bradford Transport Review*, and in issue 35 an advert appeared for the annual trolleybus tour, inviting members interested in riding the system in trolleybus no.634 to send 5/6d (27½p) to a Mr. J.S. King in Heaton. Booking this tour was my first meeting with Stanley King, as, being a 14 year-old schoolboy, I walked the mile from my house to Heaton Road with the money. Thus began a lifelong friendship based on a mutual interest in Bradford's transport.

Stanley contributed many articles to the *Review* and he became the last surviving member of the Bradford Tramcar Fraternity. He was a keen historian, had a wealth of knowledge about the City, and in particular his beloved Heaton. In typical Stanley King humour, his book *Heaton - the Best Place of All* was published in 2001. This followed his year in office as Lord Mayor, when Rosemary and I were honoured to be invited to the investiture ceremony, one of many special occasions which he included us in.

Whilst Stanley was undoubtedly the expert on all aspects of Bradford's transport history, he had a particular interest in the overhead line workings and traction poles. This went into minute detail and he was able to give the origin and life history of the many varied poles that had come from other systems.

Stanley had always wished to see a Bradford tramcar and trolleybus saved

and put on display for future generations, and after this had happened by 1975, Stanley's thoughts turned to having an outdoor miniature overhead wiring layout at the Industrial Museum. The fittings, poles and wire had been stored there and in the late 1970s, Stanley approached Norman Hinchliffe and myself to design and construct a small layout, as we had done at Sandtoft. Norman's skills as draughtsman and my four years learning with the Overhead Line Department were put to good use. We spent Thursday evenings during 1981 (I think) constructing the wiring using Metro tower wagon XKW832, which we borrowed from work. Stanley and John Pitts were the ground crew, helping to assemble, paint and prepare things for us.

---



Bradford tower wagon 032 poses outside Stanley's house in 2002. Andy Feather (right) had completed the restoration work at Keighley Bus Museum and 032 is seen here resplendent in Bradford blue before returning to Sandtoft

*Photo: courtesy Andy Feather*

---

It was Stanley's enjoyment of painting that brought us together again in what turned out to be his final chapter of trolleybus preservation. In 2002, I brought ex-BCT tower wagon 032 (XKW832) from Sandtoft to the Keighley Bus Museum in order to renew the tower slides, ropes and operating gear. Stanley helped with the paintwork which was a return to BCT blue from Metro green. When I decided to rebuild sister vehicle XKW833, Stanley again agreed to help with painting, which this time meant a train ride or a car drive to the new industrial unit that I had leased in Settle in 2007. For a time, it was a regular Friday event for Stanley to arrive, always complete with brown warehouse coat, and spend the day priming, undercoating, etc., as the rebuild went along. During this time we often talked of Stanley's other passions: singing, family holidays with his sister, nephews Chris and Stephen and their children. There was always an annual pilgrimage to Sandsend on the Yorkshire coast, and to Kirkby Lonsdale, "just over the border" in Cumbria.

We always got back to BCT though, and over the years most of the records I had managed to save from Thornbury Works and Forster Square offices were taken by Stanley to Moorside Mills. He always loved a tale and would be forever asking about the exploits and characters on the overhead line section. Some of these found their way into Stanley's books or the notes he gave to

---

people making films and documentaries. I still have his hand-written draft of the 1972 Bradford trolleybus closure brochure, meticulous in every detail - a true reflection of the man and his interests.

---



Stanley applying blue undercoat to the bonnet of Andy Feather's Bradford tower wagon 033 at the Keighley Bus Museum

*Photo: Norman Shepherd*

---

Stanley continued to come and paint 033 after it moved down to Keighley in 2011. His help was invaluable as it allowed me to progress other things quicker, and, as usual, he made friends with the people there.

The sudden shock of his death is only now hitting me as I write these notes. I am pleased to have known Stanley King and count him as a true friend. The transport world has lost the "Godfather of the Trolleybus".

### ***From John Stainforth ...***

My personal friendship with Stanley began in 1970, when, as a sixth-former, I invited him to give a talk to my school's transport society. After that we met up regularly to discuss trolleybus matters, mainly through my involvement in preparing *The Bradford Trolleybus System* for the West Riding Transport Society in 1971. Stanley's articles in the *Bradford Transport Review* formed an important source of material, and I spent hours working with him to complete the coverage of all the city's routes and their overhead wiring. He was always delighted to share his extensive knowledge, and he provided details of every known change to the overhead wiring since the system's inauguration in 1911.

Over the years after moving south I saw much less of Stanley, but whenever we met at Sandtoft, he would amaze me with answers to the most obscure of questions. In my last conversation with him, about two weeks before he died, he helped me with information for a paragraph about Thornbury Depot in the October 'Scene. In this role he will be so much missed, and sadly I am left with a long list of "Questions I wish I'd asked Stanley King" to which the answers will never be known. Thankfully, he recorded much of his knowledge in his seven published books, and these, together with his many articles and contributions, will serve to keep this wealth of information very much alive.

## LOCAL MP ADMIRES LONDON 1348

The Museum hosted a very special invitation-only event on a chilly Saturday 27 October when Andrew Percy, MP for Brigg and Goole, called in on a special Donors' Day arranged to thank the many people (well over 120) who had contributed both financially and practically to the restoration of London 1348. It was with much pleasure that our Chairman, Graham Bilbé, and directors Steve Harrison and Francis Whitehead welcomed our local MP, as well as North Lincolnshire Council Leader and Epworth resident Councillor Liz Redfern, Cabinet Member for Culture Councillor David Robinson and Lead Member for Sport and Leisure Councillor John Briggs.

Andrew Percy  
MP, Graham  
Bilbé and Brian  
Maguire at the  
presentation  
ceremony

*Photo: Barry  
Coward*



After a cup of tea and a sandwich, it did not take Andrew Percy long to find the children's play area ! He seemed very happy in the driving simulator, and later went on to present the 1348 restoration team with Certificates of Appreciation for their splendid work.

The Fred Ivey and Tony Belton photographic exhibition in the Pelham Building featuring London trolleybuses (set up ready for the August London event) had been enhanced by a small display about 1348's restoration, and visitors also



Before the VIPs arrived, an immaculately-restored London 1348 on duty on a sunny but bitingly cold and windy Saturday

*Photo: Barry Coward*



Mug of tea in hand, Andrew Percy tests his skill on the trolleybus driving simulator



Andrew Percy on the platform of London 1348, along with local council leader Liz Redfern and her two council colleagues. Conductor Chris O'Hea holds on tightly

*Photos: Graham Bilbé*

enjoyed a video in the *Regal* showing highlights of the restoration. Londoners 1348 and 260 provided trolleybus rides, whilst Doncaster 22 ran an Isle of Axholme tour. On board 1348, Andrew Percy declared this to be his first **proper** trolleybus ride, having previously only sampled a modern single-decker in Vancouver !

The event provided an excellent opportunity for the Museum to enhance its bonds with local museum organisations. Representing North Lincolnshire was Museums and Heritage Manager Susan Hopkinson, who is no stranger to Sandtoft as she attends our Board meetings as our curatorial advisor. Also present were two Museum Development Officers (MDOs) from Yorkshire Museums Trust - Liz Denton and Dieter Hopkin: Liz is "our" MDO and often visits both in her official capacity and as a visitor, whilst Dieter has expertise in transport museum needs and management and we have had initial consultations with him about our planned development. It is a rare occasion for all three museum officers to be in the same place at the same time, so it was opportune for Graham to discuss a date with them for a meeting to consider our future plans. Subsequently, on 19 November, they all returned for a very constructive meeting, and we can look forward to a lot of professional help from them as we plan our expansion and development.

The catering team provided a magnificent spread, and Steve Harrison, who had co-ordinated both the catering and reception arrangements, was able to strengthen our relationship with Crich Tramway Village, having made John

Markham particularly welcome. John had been an important contributor to the 1348 project early in the year when the trolleybus had refused to go and his electrical knowledge and skills were much needed.

Thanks are due to the 1348 project's fundraiser and project manager, Barry Coward, for he meticulously oversaw the project, and then masterminded this event, enlisting the support of the VIP visitors and ensuring good coverage of the day's event in the local press. Both the *Scunthorpe Telegraph* and *Epworth Bells* included an article about the MP's visit, providing valuable publicity for the Museum. The *Epworth Bells* reported Mr. Percy as saying "This was my first visit to the Sandtoft Museum despite driving past it countless times over the years. It really is well worth a visit and it is clear from meeting this dedicated band of volunteers that this really is a labour of love".

The day also saw Bob Ashton launch the Museum's next major restoration project, which will be Doncaster 375, owned by DO&LRS and the town's sole surviving trolleybus. The plan is to have 375 ready for December 2013, the 50th anniversary of the closure of the Doncaster trolleybus system.

During the afternoon a group of musicians added to the atmosphere of the event with a song written (in 1971) by Bradfordian Jim Jarratt entitled "The Trolleybus Lament" complete with a refrain: "The pull of a wayside handle, the hiss of a sliding door, a whine and we'd be rumbling along the road once more." The musicians, from Yorkshire and London, are keen to explore the idea of organising a folk event at Sandtoft next summer.



Receiving their certificates from Andrew Percy MP - above: Len Smith(left), Gerry Carroll (right), and below: John Crossley (left) and John Boddy (right) *Photos: Barry Coward*



This was a particularly memorable day for the restoration team, led by Brian Maguire and assisted primarily by John Crossley with several others contributing their time and skills. Brian writes: "I would just like to thank all those involved in helping to make this day such a success, especially to Francis and Graham for travelling up and staying over in the freezing weather, to Steve and the *Trolley Dollies* for working so hard, and to Barry for the arranging of all those important people. For me personally, it was good to have my family members there to witness my most proud moment: 1348 being finished in record time. Teamwork: that is what gets things done."

Visit [www.sandtoft.org/members](http://www.sandtoft.org/members) for more photographs and a link to "The Trolleybus Lament" video with scenes in Bradford, Sandtoft and Dudley.

*Editor's note: Readers should know that Andrew Percy MP was fulfilling a promise made in Parliament. "Hansard" records his maiden speech on 10 June 2010: "... The Isle of Axholme also houses the beautiful market town of Epworth, the birthplace of Charles and John Wesley, the founders of Methodism. It also has one of the world's largest trolleybus museums at Sandtoft. I confess that I have yet to visit it, but I will do so shortly. ..."* Sandtoft now has friends in both the House of Lords, Lord Stoddart of Swindon, and in the House of Commons, Andrew Percy, MP.

## NEW FROM OUR TROLLEYSHOP

To see the latest range of items in the *Trolleyshop*, check out the Museum's website at [www.sandtoft.org/shop](http://www.sandtoft.org/shop). Coinciding with the launch of the fundraising to restore Doncaster 375, two versions of a special very limited edition 1:76 scale Corgi model of 375 are now available from *The Trolleyshop*



and online. Doncaster's last trolleybus, 375 (CDT636), is a Karrier W4 with Roe body. The two variants of this model have different destinations: one shows **Hexthorpe** and the other **Wheatley Hills**.

Price: £30.70 plus postage £3.00 (UK). You can also buy both models as a pair and save on P&P costs.

## BRADFORD 704

For the past 17 years, Bradford 704 has been in the care of the Cardiff and South Wales Trolleybus Project. The group has carried out significant restoration work but much remains to be done, and they have reluctantly decided to concentrate the efforts of their limited volunteer force on their other two vehicles (Cardiff 243 and 262). Alternatives are now being considered for the future of 704, and ideally they would like it to pass to another group or individual able to continue the restoration. Other possibilities include dismantling 704 as a source of parts for other restorations, with the option of retaining the chassis and cab for display in a museum. If you are interested in taking responsibility for 704 or would like to contribute to the discussion about 704's future, please contact Keith Walker ([keith\\_walker49@hotmail.com](mailto:keith_walker49@hotmail.com)).

## DEAR 'SCENE

### *Dear 'Scene*

In reply to Neil Mansfield's questions in his "Dear 'Scene" letter in *Sandtoft Scene 87*, I hope the following is of some interest. I used to work for Manchester Corporation Transport and in the 1960s I lived with my parents at Thornley Park, Denton.

The 57 and 77 bus route was a jointly operated service between Manchester Corporation Transport and Salford City Transport. Manchester mostly used Leyland buses and Salford used Daimlers. The route had the same common ground over much of its length, but at each end it traversed a triangle of roads in a different direction. The 77 ran from Reddish (Bull's Head) to Irlams o'th' Height (Salford) whilst the 57 ran between Thornley Park and Swinton.

In Manchester (outbound to Salford) the services turned right off Deansgate onto King Street West (one way) and joined Bridge Street a little lower down. Manchester-bound, they returned to Deansgate along Bridge Street, then via Deansgate, St. Mary's Gate, Market Street (now pedestrianised) and through Piccadilly to travel along Hyde Road.

At the Thornley Park, the 57 went down Laburnum Road to Reddish Road where it turned right, to Reddish Bridge, and then left back onto Hyde Road. The 77 went the opposite way around the triangle from Reddish Bridge, passing the Bull's Head (terminal stop) and then going left up Laburnum Road to rejoin Hyde Road. The Thornley Park terminus of the 57 was on the directly opposite side of the road to the short working 210X trolleybus service. During the Suez crisis in 1956 the 57 and 77 were suspended during the day: Salford City Transport ran the service between Piccadilly and Salford off-peak, and Manchester substituted their half with a daytime trolleybus service to Thornley Park, additional to the normal 210 service.

Manchester operated all its share of the 57 and 77 service from Hyde Road Depot (also the trolleybuses) and Salford City Transport provided its share from Weaste Depot and Frederick Road Depot.

*Martin Ford (Glossop)*

+++++

### *Dear 'Scene*

In reply to Neil Mansfield in *Sandtoft Scene 87*, the routes 57/ 77 were joint Salford and Manchester routes. Their origin lay in the Salford tram routes to Swinton via the A6, and to Pendlebury via the A666. In 1926 these were connected to form a through joint route to Reddish, and the Swinton and Pendlebury termini connected via Station Road, Swinton, to form a circle at the western end.

By 1935, the plans for the closure of the tram system and the incessant demands of the Manchester Police to remove tram congestion from that city's streets combined to cause the removal of the trams to Swinton and Pendlebury, and their replacement by buses. The tram service ran in a truncated form to Irlams o'th' Height until 1944.

At some stage after World War II, the routes were again combined and run jointly to Reddish. The 57 ran to Swinton via the A6 and returned via Pendlebury and the A666. The 77 ran in the opposite, counter-clockwise, direction. By 1968 the 77 had been renumbered 56, and by the time the two municipalities were absorbed into the SELNEC organisation, both routes were again truncated in Manchester (Deansgate) because of congestion. The layover was in the side street mentioned by Mr. Mansfield, King Street West. The Salford buses would come from their Frederick Road Depot, and the Manchester ones presumably from Hyde Road.

*Geoff Wheat*

*Editor's Note: Neil's letter has certainly generated much interest in this subject, and I am grateful to Chas Allen for writing a comprehensive article about the 57 /77 routes and their trolleybus connections. This will appear in a future 'Scene.*

+++++



*Photo: Brian Maguire*

*Dear 'Scene*

It was with sadness that I learned that Charlie Bullock, a lifetime member of Sandtoft, had passed away. He had been such a character for so many years, although he was not a fan of trolleybuses. He was regularly brought to us on Yorkshire Days and St. Leger Days by Miles Cartwright (renamed by Charlie, on metrication, as "Kilometre Cartwright"). He also came to the 'Gatherings, until old age and ill-health curtailed his visits. My memories of him, and his tales, are many - like the day he retired from driving buses: he wore a pair of sunglasses and carried a white stick. Tapping the side of the bus, he asked his conductress to help him into the cab. He said: "I know the route like the back of me hand, just help me in !" An elderly passenger got off before he left ! He was pulled up by police later as he was hanging a false leg out of the window, and someone had reported him.

On a running day once, I was painting the seat frames for Nottingham 466, with Bernice, Sam and

Rachael, in the depths of the depot: he walked up very boldly and dropped his trousers, revealing some "Fred Flintstone" under-shorts. He announced that it was a treat for the ladies, as it was his birthday ! As he left, he said: "It is 2 o'clock and there may be a repeat performance at 3", but I do not think we were so treated.

Charlie, with his big horn, giving his commentaries on the passing vehicles, displayed his immense knowledge, something I, for one, will miss. If he carries on "upstairs" as he did down below, he will have the place in stitches. God bless you, Charlie, it was an honour to know you.

*Brian Maguire (Scunthorpe)*

# RUNNING DAYS IN 2013

(Open 11.00am - 5.00pm unless stated otherwise)

<b>Easter Weekend Trolleydays</b> <i>with an Easter egg hunt for the children</i>	Saturday, 30 March 🚍 Sunday, 31 March Monday, 1 April <b>Free Bus</b>
<b>Weekend Trolleydays</b>	Saturday, 13 April 🚍 Sunday, 14 April
<b>May Day Bank Holiday Weekend Trolleydays</b>	Saturday, 4 May 🚍 Sunday, 5 May Monday, 6 May <b>Free Bus</b>
<b>Spring Bank Holiday Weekend Trolleydays</b>	Saturday, 25 May 🚍 Sunday, 26 May Monday, 27 May <b>Free Bus</b>
<b>Weekend Trolleydays</b>	Saturday, 8 June 🚍 Sunday, 9 June
<b>Worldwide Weekend Trolleydays</b> <i>featuring our trolleybuses from overseas</i>	Saturday, 29 June 🚍 Sunday, 30 June <b>Free Bus</b>
<b>Weekend Trolleydays</b> <i>featuring a Teddy Bears' Picnic</i>	Saturday, 13 July 🚍 Sunday, 14 July
<b>'Gathering Saturday Trolleyday</b> - a preview of 'Gathering Day itself: twilight trolleybus operation & real ale beer tent	Saturday, 27 July 🚍 (Open 11.00am - 10.00pm)
<b>Sandtoft Gathering 2013</b> <i>with visiting historic vehicles, transport flea market, live music, real ale beer tent &amp; lots for the family to see &amp; do</i>	Sunday, 28 July <b>Free Bus</b> (Open 10.00am - 6.00pm)
<b>Blues &amp; Twos Weekend &amp; Trolleydays</b> <i>featuring dramatic emergency services displays</i>	Saturday, 10 August 🚍 Sunday, 11 August <b>Free Bus</b>
<b>Late Summer Bank Holiday Weekend Trolleydays</b> <i>presented by the British Trolleybus Society</i>	Saturday, 24 August 🚍 Sunday, 25 August Monday, 26 August <b>Free Bus</b>
<b>Model Weekend &amp; Trolleydays</b> <i>featuring model trolleybus, tram &amp; train displays</i>	Saturday, 7 September 🚍 Sunday, 8 September <b>Free Bus</b>
<b>European Trolleybus Day &amp; Weekend Trolleydays</b> <i>featuring modern trolleybus technology &amp; operation exhibitions</i>	Saturday, 21 September 🚍 Sunday, 22 September
<b>St. Leger Historic Vehicle Rally</b>	Sunday, 13 October <b>Free Bus</b>
<b>Twilight Trolleyday</b> <i>with twilight &amp; after-dark trolleybus operation</i>	Sunday, 17 November (Open 11.00am - 6.00pm)

🚍 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 (adjacent to railway station) direct to The Trolleybus Museum. Departs Interchange Bay C6, at 12.00noon. Return departs Museum at 4.00pm (journey time approx. 40 minutes)

**ADMISSION** (charges include a Gift Aid donation):

Adults £7.00 Seniors (61+) £6.00 Concessions £5.00 Family (2 Adults + up to 4 Concessions) £22.00

**On days shown on dark background:**

Adults £9.00 Seniors (61+) £7.50 Concessions £6.00 Family (2 Adults+ up to 4 Concessions) £28.00

**For full up-to-date details, visit [www.sandtoft.org](http://www.sandtoft.org)**