

Sandtoft Scene

April 2014
No. 93



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



Sandtoft Transport Centre Limited
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FRONT COVER PICTURE: Trainee driver Richard Jackson receives another lesson at the wheel of South Shields 204 (Story on Page 16) *Photo: Mike Johnson*

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 EDITOR



A glance at some of the articles in this issue should make it clear that even during the winter season the work never stops. As well as improving and tidying the site, much has been going on behind the scenes in the general area of management and planning, together with vital steps to strengthen our volunteer base. Our 2014 publicity leaflet has been designed, printed and is now being distributed, and we

are enclosing a copy with this issue in the hope that some of you will spread the word by passing it on. We are also putting more effort into using the internet to get our message to visitors. Special thanks are due to Dave Chick for taking on the task of regularly updating the Museum's *Facebook* page and we will also try harder in future to keep the news page current on the main website.

Our move to professional printing of 'Scene seems to have gone smoothly and the end-result has been well received - your positive comments are appreciated. Less obvious to readers is the fact that the transition has required significant changes to the IT methods we use to create *Sandtoft Scene* - thanks go to Francis Whitehead for his technical support during this change-over, especially with the cover and the graphics.

LATEST ON THE LAND PURCHASE

With every one of the past five issues of *Sandtoft Scene* we have been predicting that the acquisition of the additional land is very close to being a reality. The delays seem to have been endless but the latest status is now very promising indeed. Some of these obstacles have been down to tedious issues identified during the pre-contract processes, such as the ownership of the roadside ditch and the need to extinguish leased shooting rights over the plot we are buying. The major delays, however, have been due to several changes in the current landowner's related plans for developing the adjoining areas of land, resulting in numerous alterations to the boundaries and area of the plot available to us. Clearly these factors have been beyond our control, but we now believe that things have finally settled down. Despite the frustration caused by these delays, the upside is that we (the BTS and the Museum) should now be jointly purchasing a larger area of land than we were originally offered, giving us significantly better options for the way we develop it.

NEW MEMBERS

We extend a warm welcome to:

Mr Graham Smith (Wallsend)

Mr C Booth (Seaton, Devon)

Mr C Woodburn (Huddersfield)

Mr M J Blissett (Beverley)

Please note: News deadline for the next *Sandtoft Scene* is 3 June 2014

NEWS ROUND-UP

Site Work

With the opportunity to catch up with essential maintenance during the “closed season”, many jobs have recently been completed. The roadway surfaces which have continued to deteriorate have once again required attention. After removing many fragments of broken concrete, Tony Ferris and his team have been busy mixing concrete, filling in the potholes and reforming the surface. All the worst holes have now been dealt with and this should make for a smoother ride for our trolleybus passengers, with fewer bumps in Sandtoft Square and towards the entrance.



Judy Martindale and Gill Ferris - too busy with their planting to notice the camera

Photo: Andy Thornton

Our volunteer gardeners have also been busy, with much clearing-up ready for new growth and planting. A special project for 2014 as part of the World War I commemorations is the creation of a poppy bed. Work on constructing and preparing the frame is already underway and, when creosoted and filled with compost, this will be planted with Flanders poppy seeds.



Daffodils and primulas adding colour and beauty to the springtime scene

Photo: Andy Thornton



Above: The old hedge by the workshop has been removed, giving a different view of the Nottingham Ransomes, Simms & Jefferies D6 type chassis

Photo: Andy Thornton

Right: A new post and rail fence has been erected to replace the hedge that has been removed, making the area look far neater than before

Photo: David Lovegrove



The exceptionally mild winter has been helpful in many ways, but everything that grows is now needing attention, especially the grass areas, making it necessary to begin the regular grass cutting several weeks earlier than usual this spring.

Safety

A meeting of the Health and Safety team took place on 22 February. Several items for immediate attention were discussed, all of which should by now have been dealt with. Improvements are required to the outside lighting, which was identified as insufficient at the trolleybus boarding point and in the car park, particularly during twilight events. Indoors, additional lights are needed inside the *Regal* Cinema, as the route to the light switches at the back of the room is poorly lit. The five first aid boxes located in key areas of the Museum are now receiving regular inspections with items replaced or topped-up as necessary.

Last year we established a procedure for fire evacuations and a successful practice took place. Volunteer workers should know what to do and where to assemble if an evacuation is called. We are required to carry out at least two fire drills every 12 months, so another one should have happened by the time you read this news.

The Museum has now commissioned a fire detection and alarm system, following a recommendation from the Fire Officer that this would be of benefit to protect our collection. This is being installed in phases and key staff will be trained in its operation. The alarm system will also be linked to the overhead to protect it in case of attempted theft.

During the next few weeks we expect to distribute a revised edition of the *Handbook for Volunteers*, which, together with a new booklet entitled *Traffic Department Operations Guide*, contains a great deal of important information and safety guidance for people working at the Museum.

Work indoors

The green Sheffield tram body (used for tourist leaflet distribution) has been tidied-up and cleaned, with new shelving added for extra leaflets. The Skegness building has also been prepared ready for the new season and, among many other tasks, John Whipham has replaced a number of cracked tiles in *The Tea Trolley* café. Another improvement has been the installation and commissioning by Steve Harrison of a new overhead projector in the *Regal* Cinema.



Spring cleaning in *The Tea Trolley* café: Cherryll Crowther ensures that no trace of grease or grime remains underneath the microwave oven

Photo: Andy Thornton

Security

An initial CCTV installation has been in place for several months and this has enabled us to assess the requirements for a comprehensive system that provides a view of all areas of the site. This is primarily to protect ourselves from metal theft, which remains a very serious risk for the Museum. All the CCTV cameras

are now operational and no-one can get anywhere inside the boundaries without being detected and recorded.

Publicity

The Museum's 2014 publicity leaflet is now available and is being distributed with the help of several volunteers and by our contractor, Take One Media Limited. Please contact Tony Ferris if you know of places displaying tourism leaflets (e.g. hotels, visitor attractions) within 50-60 miles of Sandtoft that are not already being supplied, and feel encouraged to take a batch of leaflets and deliver them yourself - again contacting Tony so that he can coordinate these efforts. Tony recently participated in the annual regional tourist literature exchange held in Thirsk, offloading 2,200 of our leaflets and bringing back other attractions' leaflets for our display shelves in the green tram and in Reception. Tony also attended the North Lincolnshire Great Attractions Fair in March to help publicise the Museum and to encourage local coach operators to bring their tour groups.

Sometimes we are lucky enough to get some spontaneous free publicity, and this happened on 13 March on the Georgey Spanswick show on BBC Radio Sheffield, which is also broadcast on several other BBC local radio stations in the evening. Georgey was chatting with the news presenter, who said that he regularly visits the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft with his son. He described it as "A fantastic day out" and said that you could ride on "some lovely vehicles".

The Workshop

The Board is delighted to report that Jim Sambrooks has agreed to take on the role of Workshop Superintendent, as part of a reorganisation of workshop responsibilities. Jim is a bus mechanic by trade and has been involved with the Museum since its earliest days, He ran the workshop for 30 years before standing down 12 years ago, and is a very experienced tester and vehicle examiner. Ian Metcalfe is resuming his engineering duties in a gradual way as his recovery progresses, and Jim's new gang also includes Kieran Proctor (who has been preparing and repairing vehicles from a very early age) and Adam Shiels - a newcomer to the Museum and a qualified bus mechanic working in Doncaster.

The Tea Trolley Café

The Board is now considering a further enlargement of *The Tea Trolley Café*, to be achieved by creating an opening at the back of the Axholme Stores (adjacent to the simulator) and building an extension into the central grass area. The size and form of this extension is still to be determined.

NEWS FROM OTHER MUSEUMS

East Kent Trolleybus Group: Jeff White reports "Work continues on building a workshop/ stores for the trolleybus project with materials donated from the Port of Dover (and in their colour scheme) and we will be moving Bradford 704 (alias "Barney") into position alongside. When the weather improves we intend to empty all the spares out of 704 and catalogue them prior to placing them in the newly-erected stores. Then begins the task of refitting all the windows. We have decided to cosmetically restore 704 as a first stage, just to get it "looking pretty", and then begin the complete restoration when funds allow.

VEHICLE REPORTS

Compiled from notes supplied by Bob Ashton, Bruce Lake, Jim Sambrooks, Geoff Welburn and Ian Wilson

Doncaster 375:

Restoration work resumed in February with more being done inside the lower saloon. Jim Sambrooks has given attention to the steering wheel and is currently working on the rear offside wheel to fix a problem with the brakes. Windows have been washed to remove the remains of the paint stripper and further growth of mould cleaned off the upstairs seats.



Above: Jim Sambrooks hard at work on the overhaul of 375's rear brakes

Left: An inspection of 375's upper deck in early March revealed mildew taking hold of the ceiling panel nearest to the camera, despite the work to remove it all 15 months previously

Photos: Bob Ashton

Bradford 846: Following the death last year of owner Joseph Yeomans, his executors are considering whether 846 should pass to the Museum. This would mean that we would own 845, 846 and 847, enabling a better decision to be made about the future of three essentially-identical vehicles.

Bradford 558: A new set of replacement batteries has been obtained and fitted, with thanks to Steve Harrison for supplying and delivering them. Two upstairs

windows have been reglazed with new rubbers fitted. The cab door is being rebuilt and will be fitted back into place shortly. Two battery floor hatches need to be replaced and are now being made. The downstairs floor is receiving attention with the fitting of steel floor grip strips around the rear longitudinal seats. Further work is being done on the interior wiring and a replacement "Simsight" illuminated rear number plate has been made.

Doncaster 33 has seen much work on its cooling system and is now being prepared for MoT test after many years off the road.

Doncaster 112 is currently receiving attention to its roofsticks: these were damaged when no.112 was still in service with Rossie Motors before entering preservation in 1971 !

Douglas 52 has returned from Westgate to our main Museum so that work can be carried out to make it roadworthy later on in the running season.

Plant and Equipment: The old large compressor in the workshop is going to be scrapped, having become badly corroded and no longer usable for inflating tyres. Repairing it would cost too much and our new portable compressor meets our needs much better. The cherry picker that we use for overhead work has been inspected and cleared for service again, following repairs to its hydraulic system.

LOCAL EVENTS

Many suggestions were made at the AGM last November about promoting the Museum to those living in the local area, as evidence suggests that very few of the people living nearby are aware of the Museum and what it does. We also appreciate that even if they are aware, it is often true that people rarely make the effort to visit those attractions near at hand, even though they may well seek out similar ones further afield and when they are away on holiday.

This year we are making serious efforts to increase our profile locally, by taking advantage of some of the major organised events in the area to make ourselves more visible and spread the word. This initiative is important not just as a means of attracting more visitors; targeting the local area has to be part of our quest to attract additional volunteers. We are very grateful to Jason and Brenda Bowers for investigating these possibilities and establishing good relationships with their organisers. Some of them seem very enthusiastic about having historic buses on show in addition to the regular displays of classic cars and tractors, so there are clearly mutual benefits to this type of collaboration.

Prospective events for our involvement include the Thorne World War Two event (10 & 11 May), Wroot Feast and Isle Car Show (12 July), Epworth Show (25 August) and the Festival of the Plough at Epworth (21 September). Depending on what can be arranged with the individual organisers, we will do our best to support these events by displaying one of the Museum's motorbuses. Doncaster 22 would obviously make an attractive ambassador, as would Douglas 52 and London RT3323 as soon as they are presentable and tested. These events will be excellent opportunities for publicity, provided, of course, that we are able to muster both a driver and support team for each of them.

VOLUNTEERS' PAGE

Recruitment activities

We are well aware that the expansion of the Museum is going to require many more volunteer workers and, as part of our recruitment efforts, Nick Broxholme and Tony Ferris recently attended a volunteering event at the Doncaster Mansion House. A wide range of organisations were there, all hoping to attract volunteers. The event was open to the public and was quite well supported, and they will be following up a number of enquiries about the Museum from individuals and organisations. Nick and Tony will be attending similar events around the catchment area of the Museum as and when they are advertised. Also, as Nick is regularly in contact with schools regarding school visits, he is asking for volunteers (teachers) to assist with the production of a "schools pack" for the Museum.

We have also received considerable assistance from Linda Brandish, an expert on volunteer acquisition and development, who has led some sessions on how best to recruit further volunteers. An important part of this is attracting volunteers with the specific skills we need, especially for particular tasks or projects.

Volunteer information

Under Nick Broxholme's leadership, we are making significant efforts to get our volunteer activities onto a more professional footing - something that becomes even more important as we grow our volunteer base. We realise that we need to do a better job of communicating with our existing volunteers - which is quite a challenge as we don't have a complete list of who they are !

Training is going to be very important, both for newcomers and for existing volunteers wishing to take on new roles, and identifying their training needs is an essential first step. To make this possible, we are in the process of asking all volunteers to complete a volunteer information form so that we know what skills they already have and what they may like to learn.

Linda Proctor is our volunteer training coordinator, and has taken responsibility for setting up the volunteer records. In addition to documenting individual skills, qualifications, training needs and training received, there are many benefits to doing this in a professional way: we will be able to contact and communicate with our volunteers more easily and it will help us satisfy two important Health & Safety requirements. First, we will have emergency contact details handy in the event of an accident or incident, and second, we will be able to provide volunteers with vital safety information in a more reliable fashion.

The Traffic Department already has much of this latter information for its drivers and conductors on file, but for all the other groups working at the Museum the information is scanty, to say the least !

If you have not received a volunteer information form already, Linda Proctor will be handing them out during our coming open days. Please do not see this as a chore, but rather an opportunity for the Museum to develop its volunteer base. Also, please be assured that any confidential information will be held securely and will meet with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

ROTHERHAM 73 RESTORATION UPDATE

Tim Stubbs

This project - last reported in 'Scene no.89 - moves forward steadily, and has recently passed another testing milestone, following the rebuilding of the electrical equipment. When no.73 was rescued, it had no traction motor and all the electrical components had been removed. It has taken many years to collect and reassemble a complete set of replacements, including a traction motor kindly presented by another enthusiast and a set of contactor equipment from Tom Bowden and Steve Collins, salvaged (quite appropriately) from an ex-Mexborough and Swinton trolleybus that later ran in Bradford. Second-hand resistance banks had to be renovated, along with a master controller, also from Bradford. The circuit breakers came from Sheffield Bus Museum and the other parts needed have been sourced from other restorers, or made from scratch.



An interior view taken last September showing new panelling and varnished woodwork. The seat frames are still to be fitted.



Work underway on the contactor cabinet, which is located under the back seat: a design feature to allow maximum space for seating at the front of the vehicle. *Photos: Mike Johnson*

Overall, the mechanical and electrical work is now virtually complete, thanks to the dedicated team of volunteer supporters who make up the weekly working parties. The re-engineered half-shafts are now installed and the brake actuators reassembled, using two original sets and four replacements.

Over the past two years, step-by-step testing has been performed on the circuits and electrical components as they have been systematically installed and connected-up. To test the operation of the electrical equipment, a convertor was used to turn mains power into 600v DC to operate the contactors, and a bank of batteries was fitted to supply traction power to the motor. With all the components



Richard Jackson takes the wheel and cautiously applies power during 73's first day of operation for sixty years *Photo: Mike Johnson*

in place and with encouraging results from previous testing, 73 was moved under power in mid-February. With the batteries connected and everything switched on, it was a very pleasing experience when this was accomplished successfully, with 73 slowly emerging from its garage. It was reassuring that all the electrical circuits operated correctly, and comforting to hear the contactors run through the notching sequence.

This was, of course, just another step in a long project on which much work still remains. Further work is needed on the roof to complete the installation re-engineered trolley gear, as explained in our previous report. And, with 73 mobile under power for the first time in 60 years, it was quite useful to be able turn it round for the next stage of restoration to start.



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

“Black Rod”

PART 9: Discord

All accompanying photographs by the Author

In mid-1964 the relationship between the National Trolleybus Association (Nottingham Group) (NTG) and its parent National Trolleybus Association (NTA) had reached a critical phase. The NTG had secured a storage site at Plumtree Station and three trolleybuses, all regarded as NTA schemes, were safely parked on site. Of these, Manchester 1250 had been purchased by the NTG Treasurer on the understanding that the money would be paid back to him. It was also thought that the wider national membership would contribute towards the site. This had not taken place and Nottingham enthusiasts were

endeavouring to pay back this amount. Changes in NTA policy regarding membership subscription and profits from trolleybus tours had restricted the income that could be generated by the NTG. At first, this had not impacted too severely, but, since rent was now needed for paying for the Plumtree site, the local Nottingham enthusiasts were having their finances stretched. The NTA, for some inexplicable reason, was unable or unwilling to provide any financial contribution towards these vehicles or their site. In fairness, their Newsletter did contain statements exhorting the membership to visit and assist with maintaining the vehicles at Plumtree. An occasional visitor would turn up but no regular help materialised other than the “usual crew”.

Another seemingly sensible and innocent decision would also become a “sleeper” that ultimately caused ructions. In July 1964, the NTA Newsletter no.7 advised members that a Mr. RS Cromwell of Ashstead would be preparing a report on future trolleybus acquisitions. Effectively, preservation of trolleybuses was put on hold until the “Cromwell Report” (as it became known) was complete.

Additional problems also started to manifest themselves within other areas of the NTA. The NTA (Wolverhampton & West Midlands Group) handed out a protest leaflet during a Reading tour on 20 September 1964. This was followed up immediately by a letter circulated to most NTA members detailing their grievances that centred on the choice of Wolverhampton trolleybuses for preservation, in particular the vehicle that should be selected for the Birmingham Science Museum. We in Nottingham, being on the periphery of this particular situation, were assured that the concerns raised by the Wolverhampton enthusiasts had been addressed to everyone’s satisfaction. At the time, therefore, NTG members did not realise the depth of feeling that this particular issue had caused within Wolverhampton enthusiasts. Only when we met the parties concerned did we realise the matter had not really been “amicably resolved” as we had been led to believe.

The main problem in Nottingham remained financial. The Nottingham system, amazingly, had not suffered any further abandonments since 1962. Clearly this



Derby 171 photographed on 28 January 1965 in St Peters Street on an outbound afternoon rush-hour service to Upper Dale Road and Cavendish. This Sunbeam/ Weymann utility was one of two such trolleybuses in the Derby fleet. Once it was established that Mike Dare intended to preserve one of them, the NTG withdrew their interest in this type of utility. No. 172 was chosen by Mike whilst 171 was scrapped



Derby 174 on 29 January 1965 following a dewirement at Allestree Lane terminus. A Derby Sunbeam W/ Park Royal utility was under consideration for preservation by the NTG but a similar Nottingham Karrier W/ Park Royal was also considered, due to its good condition after a late overhaul/ repaint. In the event, circumstance dictated that a Derby example should survive. 175 is in the Sandtoft collection but requires much attention to restore it to passenger service

would change dramatically in the near future and NTG members wished to ensure the survival of several examples. These would need payment and it was necessary to find out exactly the level of NTA commitment. According to the Chairman it would depend upon the outcome of the Cromwell Report. There was no financial assistance for Plumtree and no commitment to the site. For obvious reasons, the NTA - NTG relationship started to deteriorate. The Chairman also believed that the Cromwell Report would not contain several of the trolleybuses that had been on the NTG "hit list" for some years. He understandably became very disconsolate - rather untypical of the man. It was at this time when his somewhat "obsessive" attitude towards Plumtree started to develop. "It could make a good permanent site" he argued. However, the Librarian, myself and others dissuaded him from such thoughts. My own circumstances also changed with a promotion that meant a permanent base in Burton-upon-Trent. Whilst it was a fair distance, I started to commute from a flat in Nottingham. Consequently I was able to rejoin the NTG's activities on a regular basis. At this period it does seem that NTA "Head Office" was issuing edicts in a somewhat dictatorial fashion. Whilst I have no doubts of the efficiency and laudable attempts to promote a professional organisation, some of the references contained in their correspondence really would do credit to the Inland Revenue in their complexity ! Let us remember, dear reader, that all these exchanges were between supposed "friends" regarding their hobby.

Looking back, I suppose the actual "turning point" in NTA - NTG relationships was at the first AGM of the NTA, held in London on 6 December 1965. The Chairman, who was still NTA Chairman, decided not to attend since "there would be no point". The other Nottingham committee member also decided not to go. According to the report in NTA Newsletter no.11 dated January 1965, a Vice Chairman from Wolverhampton was elected. Our remaining Nottingham representative was replaced by another Wolverhampton member. Significantly, the resignation was also announced of committee members from Cardiff. One of

these was Mr. Malcolm Gylee, who had been one of the original proponents of forming the NTA. From this date on, relationships between the NTA and its Nottingham membership deteriorated further, although there was still some will to try and keep the contact alive. However, at one NTG meeting, our Treasurer, the level-headed Librarian said: "Gentlemen, we must sort out a plan B". He was, of course, correct. The loan on 466 was cleared by this time (or almost) and additionally, a fair amount had been paid back to him for the purchase of 1250. Consequently, our financial burden had been eased slightly. Discussions inevitably centred on the trolleybuses that, in our opinion, should be saved.

Clearly the Ashton Crossley "Empire" was high on the list as a two-axle companion to the already-saved 1250. A Rotherham Daimler would be sought and, since nearby Derby was now dismembering its trolleybus system, there would be a selection of appropriate types. Derby was not considered an urgent priority at this time since it had received new vehicles in 1960/ 61 and it was anticipated they would last for several years. The most immediate focus would need to be on Nottingham. At this time it was realised that the possibility existed to preserve each main type of utility-bodied trolleybus ever built. This included a Derby Weymann (to be preserved by the Reading Transport Society), a Brush (466) and a Roe (460) from Nottingham, and a Park Royal from either Derby or Nottingham. The latter choice was not indecision but based on the fact that Nottingham 478 had received a full overhaul in 1961, partially repainted in 1963, and for a Nottingham trolleybus was in good condition. The choice of 493 was made to represent the post-war two-axle fleet. It was typical but different, having several refinements due to its appearance at the 1948 Commercial Vehicle Show. This fact, it was considered, would be of interest to the general public when the vehicle was finally preserved.

At this time, it was anticipated that the utility fleet would be withdrawn first. It was reasonably considered that the post-war two-axle trolleybuses used on services 40 and 47 (due to some narrow streets and a sharp corner) would last until this route was converted. Despite the fact that three-axle trolleybuses now appeared regularly on these services there was compatibility with electrical equipment and, since many BUT 9641Ts were in a deplorable condition, there seemed no reason why later two-axle models should not survive longer. Lastly, much debate centred on a Nottingham BUT 9641T. Should a 7'-6"-wide trolleybus or an 8'-0"-wide model be saved ? It was considered that the differences between the two types were too insignificant - especially to "the man in the street" - to justify the expense of purchasing one of each. Although the narrower trolleybuses were more typical being 77 in total against 25 "eight footers", it was decided that one of the latter should be preserved as they were generally considered to be the "better" trolleybus. If the NTA should break up, it was considered that the NTG should still co-operate and maybe amalgamate with other organisations to set up a national operating trolleybus museum. With some murmurings to the contrary from the Chairman, it was decided that we should keep the Plumtree site as a storage facility until the potential high costs of a national site could be shared with others. A "safety net" of ideas had now been created should they be required.

To be continued

JOURNEY TO THE BLUNT END Part 2

Richard Jackson

*The trials and tribulations of a trainee driver and those charged with training him...
(Part 1 appeared in Sandtoft Scene no. 92)*

During the *Blues and Twos* weekend last year, I managed to get an opportunity behind the controls of Bradford 792. I had about twenty minutes of driving time, and I managed to blow the positive breaker in the cab trying to fire the automatic frog. As this was the first time I've done this, it was understandably a shock to myself. However, my instructor, Bruce, was, unfortunately, sitting directly underneath it when it went "bang", so - sorry Bruce - I've still got my "L"-plates on - my third apology so far !

Whilst on the subject of the automatic frog, this seems to be an endless source of frustration for our drivers. It is, at best, temperamental. I'm beginning to sense another apology coming. To activate the auto-frog you need to draw as much power as is safe to do whilst passing under the overhead skate. Judging when to do this can be difficult because of the variety of lengths of both our trolleybuses and their booms. Worse still, when this rather unreliable mechanism fails to activate, the driver then needs to stop evasively to allow his conductor to get off and operate it manually before actually passing the frog. This process can seem rather dramatic to the passengers as they experience a somewhat jolted ride. So, on to my apology: I have to admit that from the secluded comfort of the cab, and with my instructor saying "give the auto-frog a go", all concern for the wellbeing of my conductor was side-lined in favour of focusing on the frog. So, in the distance of approximately 20 yards, I did a rapid acceleration followed immediately by enthusiastic braking. Then, only after failing to activate the perpetually-problematic frog, does one hope that the conductor has managed to keep his balance ! I believe on this occasion my conductor was Mike Johnson - sorry, Mike !

I was becoming slightly proud of the fact that I had successfully managed to get in and out of all these trolleybuses and still maintain my dignity. There are certain drivers (no names... OK, Tony Ferris), who spend more time recovering from banging their head on various parts of the cab, than they do actually driving the buses. However, at the last September weekend, I unfortunately broke this cycle. I now have a slight fear of getting into TB78 after its compressor handle gave me a heck of a wallop on the head. During the same session, I also managed to break the 'bus ! It happened because we were doing reversing practice and spent about 40 minutes going back-and-forth over the same 100 yards of road. Methinks the 'bus got switched between forwards and reverse more times in those 40 minutes than it had done so far in the whole season. Anyway, the outcome was that the reversing handle became disconnected from the side of the master controller. Luckily I had Bruce with me and within a few minutes he was busy re-attaching the handle: fortunately it was only one screw that had worked loose.

I also learnt that there is only a certain amount of time one can spend practising turning in Sandtoft Square and navigating the various frogs to get onto the

turning loop. We were using Manchester 1344 - a lovely trolleybus to work on as a conductor (there: the owners can't hate me now for the following sentences). One of the drawbacks to turning trolleybuses is the side-effect of needing to go slowly. Doing this I was driving on only the first few notches of power, causing the resistors to get slightly hot. Bruce was keeping an eye on this, and eventually we had to call it a day because it was beginning to generate too much heat. Turning practice can therefore only be done in small amounts. I did notice that the instructor's main focus was on the care of the trolleybus - but don't worry, Bruce - my arms will probably recover from needing to haul seven tons of trolleybus around in circles for half an hour !

The above exercise did give me plenty of practice at judging distances. These are issues for fine-tuning at later training sessions, but it takes a bit of practice to get the trolleybus parallel to the kerb, and close enough for passengers to actually get on and off ! On the first couple of attempts at parking in the loading bay, I fear we could have squeezed another trolleybus into the gap. However, after two further attempts I did manage to get it right. As Chas showed me, the benefit of having the platform behind the rear wheels is that as you swing the front of the bus out, the back swings into the kerb. This is useful for ensuring that I park courteously.

I would also like to have a personal moan about the trolleybus I seemed to get allocated for reversing practice. Of all the trolleybuses we could have used, I ended up with TB78. Not only does it turn one's stomach inside-out, it also has the worst mirrors of all the 'buses I've driven so far (which isn't many; three at the time of writing). As a careful student, I did try to use the near-side mirror to help guide me, although what use this offered is certainly questionable. If the mirror is in the correct position, all you see is the indicator light sticking out of the side of the bus. Angle it slightly and you get either a lovely view of a Lincolnshire sky or an opportunity to admire the concrete of the road. However, let's look on the positive side: if I can learn to reverse with this trolleybus, then everything else should be easier ! So, thank you to the chaps at Crossley for manufacturing such a driver-focussed bus body. In addition, for those of us who are bordering on six feet tall, when sitting upright in the driver's seat, all you get is a lovely clear view of the windscreen-wiper motor rather than the road ahead. As I said at the start, these are the "interesting peculiarities" of our trolleybuses.

It's probably worth mentioning something about the overhead wires and "dead-sections". For the benefit of those new to trolleybuses, the wire nearer the kerb is the negative wire, and the wire furthest from the kerb is the positive wire. The level of voltage we are operating on is approximately 575v direct current. When attaching the booms ready for service, the negative boom should be connected to the overheads first, then the positive boom. This is a safety measure to ensure that no electricity can flow into the trolleybus until there is a safe route for it to exit. This is also the same logic for why the breakers in the cab need to be switched on in the same order.

At various places around the overhead network, there are insulators, or "dead-sections". These sections prevent current flowing between the wires on either

side of them, and dead-sections also isolate the wires at crossings. Whilst passing under them, the driver needs to ensure that no power is drawn. This is the reason why there are transverse white lines painted on the road around the Museum. As the front of the trolleybus passes over the line, the driver knows that the trolleyheads are passing through the dead-section, and thus he/ she needs to release the power pedal. This sounds simple, until you realise that there are many different lengths of trolleybuses and booms. So these cunning white lines are only an approximate indicator of where to “ease off” !

All bus drivers seem to have an ability to concoct infallible excuses: another talent that I am starting to develop. For instance, whilst trying to reverse TB78, Bruce asked me to navigate round the bend leaving roughly a bus width on the off-side. This I did almost perfectly. Well - I ought to admit I was using the newly-acquired “Little Red Bus” as the measuring tool for this exercise. Also, the look on Mike Johnson’s face said everything when I realised what angle I had ended-up pointing in ! Don’t panic, readers; that was only my first attempt.

As a final note, I gradually grow more fearful of my first solo trip with passengers. Although there is no initiation ceremony, there is a multitude of tricks which can be played on the new driver - as Alex Proctor found out. He had to endure, after he passed his test, what seemed like the entire Traffic Department sitting on the upper deck directly over the cab banging their feet in unison, to sound very similar to a dewirement ! Well, that trick has already been played, so what’s in store for me ? Also, Mr. Chris O’Hea, if it takes you more than one minute to cross the pedestrian crossing, I’m coming through anyway !

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Stewart David for allowing my training to get underway and develop at the rate it has. Without his support I would not have progressed. Also, my thanks go to both Bruce Lake and Chas Allen who have volunteered much of their free time at either end of the operating day to allow me to gain more experience. The amount of time and patience you both have given me is greatly appreciated. I ought to add that all the experiences described in this article are part of a learning curve. And despite getting in a few people’s way, I believe my learning so far has progressed reasonably free from disaster.

To be continued

TWILIGHT EVENING 2013

Held over from ‘Scene 92 due to lack of space, our Twilight photographic feature (opposite) records a busy evening with fine weather and four trolleybuses in service: South Shields 204, Bradford 792 and Huddersfields 541 and 619. Also taking part this time - and bringing nostalgic sound effects to the event - was Doncaster single-decker no.22, pictured in the line-ups. Appropriately, 541 showed “POSTAL” on its destination display, reminiscent of certain evening trolleybus journeys that carried a letter box. Meanwhile, 792 displayed “FOUR LANE ENDS”, typical of the late-night trips from Allerton to Duckworth Lane Depot, via the “depot only” wiring in Squire Lane.

Photos opposite: 1, 2, 3 and 6 - Bob Ashton; 4 and 5 - Graham Bilbé



MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

Report by John Stainforth, with thanks to Bruce Lake for additional input

The second of two workshops took place on Sunday 22 March, led by Dieter Hopkin of *Museum Development Yorkshire*, to help us prepare the groundwork for building the Museum's forward plan. These sessions provided an excellent forum for the Museum's directors to exchange ideas with several of its managers and leaders, under the structured guidance of a museum professional experienced in advising independent museums. During the first workshop, we also had the support of Liz Denton (our Museum Development Officer) and Susan Hopkinson (our curatorial advisor). The Skegness Building provided a very suitable venue for these meetings.

The theme of the first workshop held last December was "Establishing the Basics". It began with a piece of work to reach a consensus on a "Statement of Purpose" for the Museum. This puzzled some participants, who felt that we already have two adequate versions of it: a highly-visible and concise one in the form of the "Vision Statement" (on page 2) and a more explicit (but less well-known) 10-line version in the formal Company and Charity Commission documents. The latter paragraphs were written 30 years ago, and whilst these are still basically fit-for-purpose, a fresh view is needed to reflect the current realities and future aspirations. The specific objective was to construct an agreed set of words that can be used as a reference point for planning the future. This means that every item in the Museum's plans should tie in with a single agreed statement of our mission and goals.

During the course of the two workshops, Dieter led the group through a systematic analysis of the Museum's activities, using techniques familiar in management education. This approach helped everyone to focus on how the Museum fits into the environment and the wider community, and to think seriously about the constraints under which we operate. Working in small teams to generate ideas, and after some debate about prioritising the key points, we arrived at the following statement:



Dieter Hopkin reviews the teams' efforts at creating a "Statement of Purpose" for the Museum. Looking on are Francis Whitehead and Susan Hopkinson, with Liz Denton holding the flipchart

All photos: John Stainforth

“The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft is an independent working museum owned and run by a charitable organisation. It is entirely staffed by volunteer members who collect, preserve, restore and operate the world’s largest collection of historic trolleybuses and related material in a period setting, to provide enjoyment and to educate young and old about the role of this environmentally friendly form of public road transport in Britain and overseas.”

Several important topics came out of these deliberations, including the continuing acquisition of exhibits, the definition of what constitutes the “museum’s collection”, and what our goals for conservation and restoration should be. Clearly the Museum continues to collect interesting trolleybuses: four have joined the collection in the past five years, and acquiring a Skoda 9Tr from Crimea remains an objective, despite the current turmoil in that corner of the world !

In addition to the many vehicles, the Museum has built up an extensive collection of artefacts, archives and photographs, the true scale of which is probably only understood by archivist and curator Adrian Dennison. There are subtle distinctions (important to museum professionals) between the “accessioned collection” and the rest of the exhibits - the former contains around 300 items which we have a duty to conserve for posterity, whilst the much larger amount of non-accessioned material is not subject to the same criteria. This includes, for example, the window displays in the *Axholme Stores* and the contents of the 1950s Prefab, all of which form important elements of the “scene setting” for the period townscape much enjoyed by our visitors, whilst our collections of bicycles and lawnmowers serve to illustrate interesting features of the social history of the mid-20th century.

A further complexity (for our professional advisors, at least) is that a large proportion of the Museum’s vehicle exhibits are not actually owned by the Museum itself, but are placed in it by their individual owners or owning societies. From the visitor perspective, this distinction should be of little or no significance, but it does make a difference in terms of the Museum’s responsibilities for their care and conservation. In addition, the associated agreements and relationships require careful management - something returned to later on in the context of “stakeholders”.

In a later session the teams performed a “brainstorm” of everything that the Museum does, and - with the aid of dozens of “post-it” notes - organised those activities into broad categories that might be visualised as sub-businesses of the Museum’s overall operation. With Dieter’s encouragement, we made a first pass at defining these categories, which, after some improvement and rework, comprise something along these lines:

1. Developing and caring for the collection
2. Presenting/ interpreting the collection for the public
3. Looking after our visitors and users
4. Management of the site and infrastructure
5. Planning and projects
6. Board and governance

7. Volunteer management
8. Advocacy and communication (includes publicity and PR)
9. Membership services
10. Legal compliance and risk management

This breakdown should be helpful both with getting the right organisation structure in place and with understanding the financials (income, expenditure and profit) of the “sub-businesses” that we operate. An important question coming out of this was how much our volunteer labour is worth - not an easy thing to quantify, but afterwards estimated in the range of £120,000 to £200,000 a year - or the equivalent of 6-10 paid people working full time.

The agenda provided some light relief with a serious purpose, when the groups embarked on a “rich picture exercise”, creating (without speaking) sketches on flipcharts attempting to show (a) how we see the Museum, and (b) how we think outsiders see it.

Not surprisingly, this generated plenty of “off-the-wall” thinking, but the main revelation was how “visitor-conscious” we all seem to have become these days. Reassuringly, the image of an “anoraks’ playground” is now (almost completely) a thing of the past.

A discussion followed about the broad subject of “running the Museum as a business”. Whilst the each year’s financial results are normally excellent and the statistics for visitor numbers extremely detailed, there is an identified need for a better understanding of the overall management numbers and business numbers.

Our advisors feel that this requirement becomes more important as the scale of our enterprise continues to grow, and that we would benefit from focusing on the measurements for each segment of our business, for example: open day operations, the café, the shop, the restoration projects, the site infrastructure and our membership services. On the subject of business numbers, Graham Bilbé offered an interesting comparison in response to the Museum’s insurance bill increasing to around £6,000 per year – “... that’s £1 for every visitor coming in !”

The main theme of the second workshop was “Moving Forward”. One of its main purposes was to address the current blockages to progress, including “inertia” in the system, which seems, at times, to slow down the Museum’s ability to adapt and implement changes. As the Museum acquires more land and embarks on an



Some of the sketches to communicate “how we view ourselves” (But who on earth is the lady on the broomstick ?)

ambitious plan for expansion and development, concerns have been raised about the capacity of the existing volunteer staff (and management) to tackle something on this scale, which is well beyond normal working. Keeping the Museum running efficiently will have to continue whilst the development is going on, and one way of approaching this would be to assign the development responsibility to a project manager with proven project management skills.

Also in the category of “blockages to progress”, many of the participants felt that communications within the organisation were often far from adequate. As the editor of the members’ magazine, I have to ask myself whether that reflects failings on my part, but when specific examples are considered, these problems seem to be due more to conversations not taking place among those running the organisation and those responsible for making the open days a success. We should stress that these shortcomings rarely (if ever) affect our visitors, but they are nonetheless very frustrating for individual volunteers trying to do a good job. Our advisors have identified this area as a “fixable problem” and offered some practical suggestions to help. This subject has now been taken on board and Graham Bilbé has agreed to take ownership of the initiatives to improve upwards and downwards communications.

On the positive side, the recruitment and management of volunteers is an area where actions are already underway. Indeed, during a workshop run in parallel with this one, a small team has been creating a Volunteering Development Plan which aims to improve the recruitment, training and retention of good volunteers.

To support this, Linda Proctor is currently working on a set of role descriptions for volunteer workers



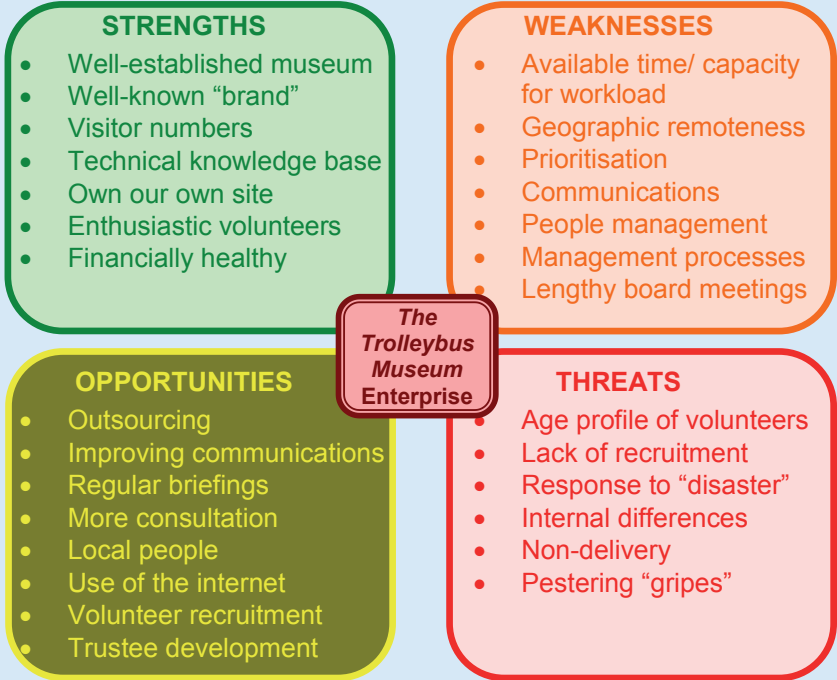
Adrian Dennison, Graham Bilbé and Dieter Hopkin exchange ideas during a coffee break

and setting up a framework for their induction and training. Over time, this will help with growing and managing our volunteer force - something that has not been well organised in the past, and an area that would benefit from greater direction and supervision to ensure that higher-priority items are tackled first. To put this in context, we are relatively well-staffed with drivers and conductors, but seriously short-handed in other areas, such as site work and vehicle cleaning.

Another avenue explored in depth was the large number of organisations and individuals with whom the Museum has to interact. In the jargon of the trade, these are collectively known as our “stakeholders” and, working together, the group identified around 50 of them. The list is too long to reproduce here, but includes our visitors, the contributing societies, vehicle exhibit owners, other transport interest groups and museums, and enthusiasts in the UK and

worldwide. We also interact with local councils, neighbouring landowners, numerous tourist organisations, media and publishers, our MDOs and organisations that may support us with grants. We apply to Arts Council England for accreditation, and have formal links with Companies House, the Charities Commission and HMR&C (for refund of gift aid). This extensive set of interactions means that our organisation requires clearly-identified contacts to communicate effectively with all of them.

Some helpful ideas came from analysing our enterprise using a so-called “SWOT matrix”:



With volunteers spread thinly and often under pressure to cope with the basic demands of running the Museum, we know that it is going to be difficult to take on additional work. There is clearly scope for more tasks to be assigned to contractors and specific opportunities for doing this must now be explored. We are already doing some of the right things - for example, the professional printing of *Sandtoft Scene* has been an obvious outsourcing opportunity, releasing time and capacity for other important work. But much remains to be done to address the weaknesses, opportunities and threats, in response to which Bruce Lake and Cherryll Crowther have offered to prepare an action plan.

Finally, with future strategy in mind, the group examined the external factors influencing the Museum: political, economic, environmental, social, legal and technological. Public funding is severely stretched, but volunteering is encouraged as part of the “Big Society” and there is scope to take advantage of

the high percentage of local unemployment. We have opportunities for exploiting the “eco-friendliness” of trolleybuses and we should be able to benefit from the revival of trolleybuses in Leeds. Whilst Sandtoft suffers from being a remote location with poor public transport, there are good motorway links, bringing a large potential audience within driving distance. However, the high cost of fuel costs does affect both volunteers and visitors, in an economy where disposable income for leisure can be very limited. This means that we also need to consider price sensitivity carefully when we set our entrance fees, membership rates and café prices.

This analysis sets the scene for the work needed to create an up-to-date version of the Museum’s five-year plan, which will form an important input to the Museum’s application for reaccreditation, and represents a substantial task for the coming months. In addition to building a plan that is realistic and achievable, we were also encouraged to put in place an annual review cycle for keeping the plan up to date. This is seen as an element of gradually moving from a “reactive” mode of management to a more “proactive” one that involves more effort on prioritisation and less on “fire-fighting” of current issues - not an easy change to make but one that should be achievable over time, and which will bring longer-term benefits. With this in mind, a specific recommendation was to schedule a period of consolidation as soon as the additional land has been acquired.

We are very grateful to Dieter and his colleagues for their time and encouragement with this important activity. Sometimes the experience has been uncomfortable, but overall, these workshops have injected a good dose of self-analysis and helped us to grasp the “bigger picture” as we develop our view of the way forward.

FOOTNOTE: As an immediate example putting some of this guidance into practice, we are already prioritising the repairs and restoration of the Museum-owned vehicles. Having a priority list will ensure that volunteers know which ones should be worked on and what work is necessary. This will provide us with better control over which vehicles are completed or made operational, enabling us to apply our limited resources in a more strategic way and to improve our planning both for open days and for launching restored trolleybuses into service.

NOTTINGHAM 367 UPDATE

John Whipham

No.67 joined the Nottingham fleet in 1934, making it one of the earliest surviving British trolleybuses. Later it became no.367 and following retirement, spent 24 years in use as a farm building in Lincolnshire before finally moving to the Museum in 1974. Restoration has been a very long term project, carried out by Steve Collins, assisted over the years by David Franks and others, and - since 2009 - with very substantial help from John Whipham. 'Scene last recorded the achievements in July 2012 and this report brings the story up to date.

Steady progress on 367 has seen the lower saloon virtually completed apart from the offside windows. During the interior work, a remarkable proportion of the original wooden ceiling panelling and coving has been retained and restored, with new pieces of woodwork crafted and fitted where the originals were rotten or

beyond repair. The interior has been very thoroughly cleaned out, seat covers have been repaired and seat frame supports cleaned. Then, to make space for further work, many seats and fittings were put into storage. This enabled work to begin on the floor of the lower deck, which has now been panelled-over with hardboard to help with the tiling, as only thin cork tiles could be obtained. New edging strips were made and drilled, ready to be fitted at a later date.

The seats over the rear wheel arches were carefully measured, the wood for the benches cut, assembled and bolted in place at the top and bottom. Next, the seat bases and backrests with their clips were made. The framework has been fitted to the inner walls and fastened in. Work is well underway on the lower deck windows: first, the sliders were screwed into position in the pillars, then the glass

Now approaching completion, the lower saloon is unrecognisable when compared with a year ago. The new flooring is in place, the ceiling panels are beautifully restored, and the renovated windows steadily taking shape

Photo: David Lovegrove



An interior view showing the new steel and timber structure round the rear wheel arches, with the woodwork for the bench seats already in place

Photo: Andy Thornton



A close-up of the newly-varnished window frames in the lower saloon, showing the refitted glazing and panelling above and below the windows

Photo: Andy Thornton



367's reconstructed staircase

Photo: Andy Thornton

was fixed into the lower half of the sliders. Three top-half sliders were found to be in reasonable condition and, after applying a bit of "TLC", these were made to work with only slight modification. On the nearside, all except one of the full-depth side windows are now also in place.

The staircase had been rebuilt in 2011 using parts of its original structure, whilst the rear platform and its supporting framework required complete renewal. Also fitted was the renovated rear bulkhead, approximately six feet square and very heavy, but the team managed to slot it into place with a bit of persuasion. This was bolted to the platform which was also bolted to the chassis at this point then the corner brackets refitted. Some of these were the originals, cleaned up and some were new brackets specially made.



As the focus of attention moves to the upper deck, the ceiling panels and coving are fully exposed to assess how much of the original can be retained and which pieces require replacement

Photo: Andy Thornton

Upstairs, work has been done on the rear upper bulkhead, which is curved. Paint has been stripped off the rear dome, and also off those upper deck coverings that are good enough to retain. The wooden beads above three ceiling panels were cleaned and found good enough to sand, whilst the rest of the ceiling panels will have to be stripped out, together with the covings on the front half of the upper deck. Efforts on the driver's cab had previously involved a great deal of



Left: Pictured in mid-2013 before the removal of all the rotten framework at the front of the upper deck, John Whipham is busy renovating one of 367's panels

Photo: Jason Bowers

Below: Trial fitting of a partially repaired front wheel arch *Photo: Andy Thornton*



dismantling and stripping-down, with the remainder being cleaned and painted green as a starting-point for its reconstruction. This began with the cab floor which was also strengthened with front support brackets. A new front panel was made and fitted, then Steve tackled the challenge of making the new cab frame. The cab door had been partly refurbished and now just requires glazing. One of the control boxes and the dashboard gauge box have been refitted, both of these being original and needing only minor repair. The destination number boxes have been made for the front and the rear, the front one being the more complicated as it is part of the main structure of the front of the vehicle.

The progress on the exterior of the lower saloon is also very encouraging, with new green paint applied to the framework and the structure almost ready for fitting the lower deck panels

Photo: David Lovegrove



Of course, there is still a very large amount of work to be done, but we hope to have all the framework back together in time for the vehicle's 80th birthday in August, and to have 367 on display outside the depot for the event. This is an ambitious goal, but it will be well worth the effort. We are grateful for the many donations received for this project, some coming from America, Australia and around Europe, and many thanks are due to the "Teddy Bear" team for their time and energy with raising funds.

NO TROLLEYS BEYOND PICCADILLY Part 2 Chas Allen

(Part 1 appeared in Sandtoft Scene no.91)

Throughout the 1960s, traffic congestion in Manchester's central area increased and the 57/ 77 routes were particularly affected by using Deansgate. The services were becoming unreliable; the resulting lost mileage led to disputes between the two operators over revenue apportionment and the joint service was split on 1 April 1968. The terminus of the Salford end became Piccadilly, the Manchester service starting from Exchange (i.e. Deansgate).

The overlap across the city was useful but both operators kept the 57/ 77 route numbers which could be very confusing to strangers. Eventually, Manchester renumbered its 57 to 204, with alternate journeys extended to Dane Bank (as service 205), replacing the one-bus 159 service that had acted as a feeder to the 210. The 77 became the 206 but was reduced to peak-hour only. The city

terminus of the 204/ 205/ 206 was later moved to Victoria Station when the Arndale Centre was built.

In 1953, Albert Neal, Manchester's General Manager, had presented a report to his Transport Committee about the future of the trolleybus system. As well as other cross-city routes, the joint routes with Salford were amongst several potential conversions to trolleybus, but the problem of traffic congestion in Market Street and potential police objections were cited as drawbacks. SCT had got rid of its trams in 1947, had never considered running trolleybuses, and had just completed, between 1946 and 1952, the total replacement of its motorbus fleet. Strangely, what it might have thought about the inclusion of the 57 and 77 was not considered an issue, which suggests that these were never serious proposals. Amongst the report's recommendations, which were accepted, was the ordering of 62 new BUT trolleybuses for delivery that same year, of which the BTS's no.1344 is the sole survivor. Also recommended was that the future of individual trolleybus routes be considered on their merits. The die was cast and abandonment started two years later: the replacements for the abandoned Moston trolleybus routes in the north were linked across the city with existing motorbus services on the south side. Further, by 1958, Ashton Corporation had turned against the trolleybus as well.

About a mile and a half beyond Thornley Park, along the 210 route, lies the centre of Denton. Here, at a junction known as Crown Point, the joint MCTD/ Ashton 217 trolleybus route from Ashton to Haughton Green crossed the 210 at right-angles. In the late-1950s, Manchester Corporation acquired a large parcel



MCTD Crossley Dominion trolleybus 1241 on a 210x peak short-working to Denton leads two Crossley DD42 motorbuses outside Hyde Road Depot. The second DD42 appears to be working a peak extra on the 57. The depot's unique 5-sided clock can be seen in the background. The "oilers" are in the all-red livery; only one of the post-war Crossley trolleybuses received this livery (1203, after a rear end shunt in December 1961). *Photo: M Dryhurst*

Dominion 1242 stands on the Thornley Park turning circle in the entrance to Kingsdale Road on an enthusiasts' tour. The 57 terminus is on the opposite side of Hyde Road. During the Suez crisis the Dominions replaced the Manchester end of the 57 by working an all-day 210x service to this point - the only time they saw full-day service, normally being confined to peak hour and Saturday duties

Photo: RF Mack



of land at Haughton Green to build a council estate, and the operators came to the conclusion that providing a trolleybus service for the new estate to the city was not feasible. Although a comparatively small amount of new wiring would be required in the estate itself (less than a mile of double track wiring), it was felt that direct services to the city would be needed and these weren't practicable over the existing trolleybus routes. This was a bit of a red herring - at Crown Point only a left-hand turnout from the 217 to the 210 wires was missing - but more importantly, the direct services, when they did start, were peak-hour only, limited stop operations. The limited stop services were the successors of the protectionist express buses of the 1920s, offering longer-distance passengers faster journey times, so these of necessity had to be motorbus worked, and to use their introduction as an excuse to convert the 217 to motorbus (which took place in 1960) was rather weak.

In the event, it was over 10 years after the demise of the 217 trolleybuses that SELNEC finally gave Haughton Green its all-day, all-stops service to the city, when the 204 service was extended along Hyde Road to Crown Point, along the former 217 route to Two Trees Lane, then through the no-longer-new council estate to Haughton Green terminus. By that time, the people who had been moved to "The Green" were shifting their allegiance away from the city and increasing numbers were finding employment in the local area; larger numbers were doing their shopping in Denton, Hyde and Ashton rather than Manchester; and more and more were getting cars.

The old terraced housing along Hyde Road had also largely been cleared and replaced by lower-density council estates which adversely affected the economics of all the Hyde Road services, so the extended 204 has probably never reached the potential it might once have done. Amongst the many changes that followed the deregulation of the bus industry in late-1986, the 204 was further extended to Hyde, replacing the former SHMD 155 route, and later was cut back from Victoria Station to Piccadilly in the city, thus removing the last vestige of the cross-city facility after 40 years. In this form it survives today, still operated (albeit by Stagecoach) from Hyde Road Garage.

Following the split, the Salford end of the 57/ 77 was more stable until deregulation. On its inception in 1968, SELNEC had introduced a new route numbering system and the 77 became the more logical 56. The 77 service number was then applied to the former Manchester 25 route which ran from Fallowfield (Platt Lane) in the south of the city to Newton Heath in the north. At Fallowfield this shared the terminus and about a mile of common route with the former 213 trolleybus service, and (with its closely associated 76 sister) was an extremely busy service: both had featured in Albert Neal's list of potential future trolleybus routes and would have been ideally suited to trolleybuses. This 77 route was subsequently extended to Moston (Gardener's Arms), which had been the terminus of the erstwhile Moston trolleybuses. Upon deregulation, the 77 was further extended to follow the former Rochdale Road trolleybus route to the city, incorporating the northern end of the trolleybus-replacement 112/ 113 routes. The wheel was turning full circle.

The new networks introduced at deregulation had drastic effects on the south, north and west of the Greater Manchester conurbation: The remaining former joint Manchester and Salford routes, the 95/ 96, were split in the city centre (as were all the cross-town routes) and Frederick Road Garage closed - its services were dispersed to the Queens Road



Salford 407 was one of 195 similar Daimler CVG6 with MCCW H54R bodies delivered in 1950-1. Salford started operation on the 57/ 77 with these buses and they were only displaced in 1962 by Salford's next delivery of new buses. No.407 is in Piccadilly heading towards Swinton before the introduction of the one-way system, but has lost its original silver roof, which dates the photo to the mid-fifties

Photo: RF Mack

(Manchester), Bolton, Atherton and Wigan Depots of Greater Manchester Buses. Queens Road, being closest to the city, retained some former Salford services more or less as they had been immediately prior to deregulation, but the 56/ 57 weren't amongst them: these were incorporated into longer-distance routes from the satellite towns they were operated from.

On top of all this upheaval, in the years after deregulation, Manchester City Council pursued an anti-bus policy, gradually pushing buses out of the city centre by forcing them to terminate on its periphery close to the point of entry. In doing this, it strangely met no opposition from Greater Manchester PTA or the PTE.

Thus the Salford routes were cut back to a terminus in Cannon Street, whilst services from the east, including the 204, turned at Piccadilly. Any cross-city journeys had to be completed on foot or by using the subsidised Centreline route, the timetable and route of which were controlled by the PTE. The cross-town facility provided by the 57/ 77 and their like vanished completely; Piccadilly Bus Station - never an architectural gem - was replaced by a series of on-street shelters and with the closure of the Arndale Bus Station (as a result of the IRA bomb) Manchester became the city without a proper bus station, a situation only remedied in the new millennium. Needless to say, all this was a significant deterrent to off-peak passengers and satellite towns like Stockport benefited as a result. Ironic therefore that Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), as successor to GMPTA, is now asking for government money to re-establish cross-city services, having been previously complicit in their total destruction.



Manchester Leyland PD2/12 no.3351 in Piccadilly heading for Thornley Park. One of a batch of 40 delivered in 1953 which displaced the Crossleys from the 57/ 77 and provided MCTD's all-day allocation until the mid-60s

Photo: CE Allen

There are important lessons to be learned from this story, which has features common to many other places, especially those that ran trolleybuses. The best known example is London, where trolleybuses weren't allowed in the City, and the Metropolitan Police laid down other restrictions. It is generally acknowledged that preventing trolleybuses penetrating further into Manchester city centre, in particular the use of Market Street, stunted development of the Manchester network. And, whilst deregulation is often cited as working against passengers' interests, as we have seen, the most serious of the detrimental decisions affecting the Manchester routes were actually made by public or quasi-autonomous public organisations. Of course, there were other factors affecting trolleybuses and their diesel brethren everywhere - parochialism, short-termism, poor land-use planning and a lack of an integrated transport policy (mostly the responsibility of elected bodies) and a failure to react to the threat of private motoring: trolleybuses were often done away with for the flimsiest of reasons. Leeds may be the turning point in the trolleybus story, but having worked in both the public and private sectors, I have serious doubts about local control of bus services. It isn't always the panacea it's made out to be and I hope the same mistakes aren't repeated. That is the purpose of studying history.

TROLLEYBUS ANNIVERSARIES

January to June 2014

Compiled by Geoff Welburn

Systems Opened

- 100 years since Aberdare opened on 15 January 1914
- 90 years since West Hartlepool opened on 28 February 1924
- 75 years since Brighton Corporation opened on 1 May 1939
- 65 years since Glasgow opened on 3 April 1949

Systems Closed

- 55 years since Brighton, Hove & District closed on 24 March 1959
- 55 years since Hastings closed on 31 May 1959
- 50 years since South Shields closed on 29 April 1964
- 45 years since Bournemouth closed on 20 April 1969

Remembering Doncaster's Last Trolleybus

Doncaster's last trolleybus ran just over 50 years ago on 14 December 1963. Although there were no official commemorations, this did not deter some of those who remembered from organising a cake, mince pies and a non-alcoholic toast to 375 and the event in 1963 - enjoyed on the anniversary day by those gathered in the Box Van.



Photos: John Whipham and Bob Ashton



The die-cast model of Doncaster 375 (above left) makes an excellent anniversary memento - and is still available from *The Trolleyshop - ed.*

TROLLEYS ON THE WEB

Go to www.sandtoft.org/members for links to the following items:

1. **“Glasgow Memories” - films of trolleys and trams in old Glasgow:** This YouTube video from Ron Windward includes a 1966 film of trolleybuses running between Gorbals and the City Centre.
2. **“The Trolley-bus and Shavarsh Karapetyan”:** These archive pages record an extraordinary incident that happened in 1976 in Armenia. In a tragic accident in the capital city Yerevan, a trolleybus containing 92 passengers toppled off a bridge into Yerevan Lake, possibly after the driver suffered a heart attack. By pure coincidence a champion swimmer was on the spot and single-handedly rescued many of the passengers trapped inside it. A picture shows the trolleybus being hauled out of the water later on.
3. **A trolleybus relic in Belfast:** A “Geograph” image of a surviving (but very rusty) traction pole in Belfast, where the last trolleybuses ran in 1968. (*With thanks to Jason Bowers for sending this one*).
4. **“World’s worst drivers” video clip:** This recent footage from somewhere in Russia shows a broken-down car being unofficially attached to the back of a trolleybus, in an attempt to get it started. The trolleybus moves away but the tow-rope soon comes adrift, with the car ending up in a collision with the back of another one just before the police arrive !

DEAR 'SCENE

Dear 'Scene

I would like to thank everyone for their “get well” wishes after my car accident last November. As you can see from the photograph I am a very lucky man, but sadly I have to say goodbye to my beloved Nissan V6 - a great car, so “RIP Maximal!”

Ian Metcalfe, Crowle











Dear 'Scene


This old neglected former 1950s holiday chalet rests abandoned and tired on the land of Burton Constable Hall near Hull. This curiosity could become a restoration project at Sandtoft, to be re-sited perhaps in the conservation area of the central grass area. Such a period chalet might even fit in with a “garden in bloom” idea and we could make further enquiries if there is sufficient interest.

Jason Bowers, Hatfield

RUNNING DAYS IN 2014

(Open 11.00am - 5.00pm unless stated otherwise)

Easter Weekend Trolleydays <i>with an Easter egg hunt for the children</i>	Saturday, 19 April  Sunday, 20 April Monday, 21 April Free Bus
May Day Bank Holiday Weekend Trolleydays <i>Presented jointly by the British Trolleybus Society, Bradford Trolleybus Association and Doncaster Omnibus & Light Railway Society</i>	Saturday, 3 May  Sunday, 4 May Monday, 5 May Free Bus
Spring Bank Holiday Weekend Trolleydays <i>celebrating the centenary of Chas. H. Roe – the Leeds bus body builder with a range of visiting Roe-bodied vehicles on display</i>	Saturday, 24 May  Sunday, 25 May Monday, 26 May Free Bus
Weekend Trolleydays <i>and diesel bus demonstrations and rides</i>	Saturday, 7 June  Sunday, 8 June Free Bus
Worldwide Weekend Trolleydays <i>featuring our trolleybuses from overseas</i>	Saturday, 21 June  Sunday, 22 June Free Bus
Weekend Trolleydays <i>featuring a Teddy Bears' Picnic</i>	Saturday, 5 July  Sunday, 6 July
'Gathering Saturday Trolleyday - a preview of 'Gathering Day itself: twilight trolleybus operation & real ale beer tent	Saturday, 26 July  (Open 11.00am - 10.00pm)
Sandtoft Gathering 2014 <i>with visiting historic vehicles, transport flea market, live music, real ale beer tent & lots for the family to see & do</i>	Sunday, 27 July Free Bus (Open 10.00am - 6.00pm)
Weekend Trolleydays <i>featuring Nottingham's trolleybuses</i>	Saturday, 9 August  Sunday, 10 August
Blues & Twos Weekend & Trolleydays <i>late summer bank holiday weekend featuring dramatic emergency services displays and demonstrations</i>	Saturday, 23 August  Sunday, 24 August Monday, 25 August Free Bus
Model Weekend & Trolleydays <i>featuring model trolleybus, tram & train displays</i>	Saturday, 6 September  Sunday, 7 September
European Trolleybus Day & Weekend Trolleydays <i>featuring modern trolleybus technology & operation exhibitions</i>	Saturday, 20 September  Sunday, 21 September Free Bus
St. Leger Historic Vehicle Rally	Sunday, 5 October Free Bus
Twilight Trolleyday <i>with twilight & after-dark trolleybus operation; advance order fish 'n chips</i>	Saturday, 25 October  (Open 11.00am - 9.00pm)
End of Season Trolleyday & twilight running (finishes at 6.00pm)	Sunday, 26 October

 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 approximately 40 minutes)

ADMISSION (charges include a Gift Aid donation):

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

On days shown on red background:

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

For full up-to-date details, visit www.sandtoft.org