

# Sandtoft Scene

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## Front Cover Picture

Reading 113 (the one that started it all) and Reading 193 (the first trolleybus on site in November 1969) in service during the 50th Anniversary weekend. (PM)

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A small part of the line-up from the 50th anniversary celebration event. (DH)

1969 **50** 2019  
*Anniversary*



# Welcome

## A Message from the Editors

It is with considerable pride that the editorial team report on the events of our 50th Anniversary year. It is turning out to be a truly memorable one.

As promised in our last issue, the **Cedex Stoll trolleybus** was unveiled [twice] in front of a large number of spectators. Special guests included - on the Saturday - Leon Daniels, formerly Transport for London's Managing Director for Surface Transport. He reported that the huge smile on his face, spotted on his arrival, did not disappear until long after he had left the Museum! Secondly Cllr Peter Corkindale, Mayor of Keighley who clearly enjoyed the occasion, and has been speaking very warmly of his visit to our Museum back in his home town ever since. He includes the story of a horse. Yes, a horse at The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft.

Our **Gathering Weekend** had mixed weather, but the rain stayed away for the special day. We fielded a full and varied complement of trolleybuses, which did not break down or de-wire. Our booking team did a sterling job, as a wide variety of visiting vehicles graced the event, and there was an increase in the number of sales stands occupying the depot.

After a short break, the preserved fire engines, ambulances and their teams of enthusiasts returned to make sure that our **Blues and Twos**

**Event** was not short of a siren or two and hundreds of gallons of water ended up being pumped out of nozzles to great effect as one would expect. The highlight of each day was the rescue demonstration, when casualties had to be cut from their cars, as the roof was peeled back in front of a satisfyingly large audience. Thanks are due to Tony Ferris, his team, and the crews for a truly memorable weekend.

Our **50th Anniversary Event** was always going to be a bit of a tall order. Could we really field more operating vehicles than at our 40th celebration? Well actually we did. Graham Bilbé and his team worked very long hours, without beauty sleep, with a rollercoaster ride of successes and setbacks... but mostly the former. We fielded a stunning number of well-groomed trolleybuses and in the end, it was only the time it took to shunt the vehicles that limited the record number of runners over the weekend to twenty.

So in conclusion, we are having a truly memorable year and we really hope that you have enjoyed the wonderful atmosphere that is pervading the Museum during this very special time. So lots of thanks go out to all our hard working volunteers, and our many visitors who are making the magic happen. Thank you so much. And it is not over yet!

# News from the Boardroom

Compiled by Jason Spencer – Company Secretary, with contributions from Francis Whitehead and Graham Bilbé

2019, so far, has been a mixture of changes, challenges and successes for our directors, department managers and volunteers. The effect of the first two has certainly been a degree of concern, frustration, needs for learning and much hard work, whilst the successes just make everyone's efforts worthwhile with lots of "feel good" factor sloshing around.

Overwhelmingly, the changes have centred on our personnel. Health issues have affected, amongst others, three key figures in our organisation: Tony Ferris, our director in charge of the Museum site and Chris Proctor, our shop manager, have both undergone major surgery and we are pleased to report that both are recovering and making good progress. We wish them both well. Graham Bilbé's wife, Tina, has also had intense medical treatment this year from which, thankfully, she is now recovering well and this has reduced Graham's input into the Museum. In different ways, the absence or reduced presence of the three has affected how our Museum functions as different people implement alternative arrangements. The, sometimes, steep learning curves or uncertainties

over communications, and the extra workload for some has certainly hindered progress in some quarters. The experiences have demonstrated the importance to the Museum of teamwork, the need to document established methods and "tricks of the trade" for carrying out all the vital museum jobs, and the advantage of having many volunteers familiar with or trained to cover differing tasks.

If that wasn't enough, as reported last time, Joanna Hanchett has taken on the job of Membership Secretary. This in addition to having taken on managing our café where she is supported by a team that includes Helen Cross (and on some busy days like 'Gathering, Helen's sisters), Mark Boulton, John Whipham, Mike Spilling, Susie Stubbs, Francis Whitehead and, latterly, Tony Ferris. Returning to the membership task, it does appear that a small number of members that renewed their subscription early this year may not have received their membership card. If this includes you and your card still hasn't arrived, please contact Joanna ([membership@sandtoft.org](mailto:membership@sandtoft.org)) with details of when and how you renewed etc. and she will get one to you.



Getting a Bournemouth line-up just right (IB)

## Health and Safety

Continuing on the subject of changes, It is good to report that David Hanchett, who is Health and Safety Director, has made vast inroads into the Museum's H+S structure and system.

David has that role because legislation requires it and he is there not only to meet the Company's legal obligations and the requirements of our insurers but to protect volunteers and visitors from injury - or worse. Put simply, David (along with the rest of the Board) is there to help, not hinder, and needs to have everyone's co-operation to make sure we do things safely and properly without going over the top with precautions and restrictions and paperwork (although we do need a degree of record keeping to demonstrate, should that ever be required of us, our commitment to a safe environment within our organisation).

If you see something that you think is wrong or a hazard, either tell the relevant director or manager or tell David; of course, if it is an immediate danger, tell whoever might be at risk or may be putting others at risk. It is always best to rationally discuss issues so that a safe, sensible and acceptable way forward can be achieved.

At the start of the season, many volunteers took part in a fire training session led by Stan Collins and Alan McCorquodale, we hope to good effect and that a good understanding of how to use fire extinguishers was achieved. With assistance from Alan, our fire risk assessment has been reviewed and updated; during July, our fire extinguishers were serviced and David has now upgraded our records so that these important assets can be better managed.

Also, on an ongoing basis under a contract, a specialist equipment inspector visits the Museum to inspect and certify various bits of kit such as the compressor, jacks, safety harnesses, lanyards, cherry picker and tower wagon.

## New Boundary Fence

One success that started off as a challenge was the fencing around all the land that we purchased from TA White and Sons. Many members may have been aware that back in 2008 when we purchased 1.2 acres from Whites, part of the deal was that Whites would fence the boundary with the exception of the stretch along the Burntwood premises (which, of course at that stage was not owned by the BTS). For all sorts of reasons, this did not happen, so when we came to buy the further 1.5 acres last October, it was part of that contract that those 2008 commitments (more accurately, an equivalent length along the new boundary) would be honoured and that the Museum would fence the rest of the TM@S-Whites boundary, all within an agreed timeframe.

It quickly became evident that we should join forces with Whites to select the right fence for us and get it put up. After we (TM@S) had obtained some wildly varying quotations from fencing contractors, Patrick White suggested that it might be beneficial to buy the materials and engage some experienced fence erectors to do the construction work. In brief, a great deal of time was expended to-ing and fro-ing between suppliers, Patrick White, Francis Whitehead (leading the negotiations for TM@S) and the rest of the Board to identify an acceptable design of fence and get the price and delivery arrangements agreed. Indeed, undertaking the work this way resulted in a massive saving on the quotations previously received from contractors, so the time spent proved well worthwhile for both parties. As we had commissioned a professional survey of our new land to "bolt on" to the survey done in late January 2018 of the rest of the Museum and Burntwood, it was logical that the surveyor should peg out the line of the boundary whilst on site (mid-February 2019) doing the topographical survey.

Work on digging the first post holes commenced on 27 March but Whites then queried the pegged-out fence line and stopped the work whilst checks were made. It was not until 20 June that work re-commenced and, with Nick White closely overseeing progress, we witnessed a very speedy and well-finished job: we have ended up with a quality fence! Work was finally completed on Sunday, 30 June, the last section involving positioning a wide gate that accesses White's land for our future use on our bigger open days such as 'Gatherings'. So, after much heartache, one of 2019's successes!



## Our Other Successes

The Board is proud of other successes this year, all of which have either already been reported in detail last time, or are covered elsewhere in this issue of Sandtoft Scene - the wonderful Toy Museum (courtesy of Graham Bilbé), the Cedex replica and the associated wide-ranging publicity (project managed by Dave Chick), Sandtoft Gathering 2019 (a real triumph with input by many, particularly a convalescing Tony Ferris), and our 50th Anniversary Gala Weekend and dinner (3 days that will be talked about for many years to come, inspired by Graham Bilbé and vigorously supported by so many enthusiastic volunteers).

**Thank you to everyone who has had input into 2019's activities at the Trolleybus Museum!**

## Human Resources

Stewart David has been busy with his task of managing our personnel resources. He now has a good understanding of who can do what on open days and continues to draw up the staffing rosters for each Trolleyday - a frustrating and unenviable job as he wrestles on occasions with getting enough suitable staff together.

Stewart has also set about ensuring that all new volunteers get induction training, and any other necessary training, and that our personnel records are brought up to date.

For open days, he has arranged that all regular volunteers have been provided with a corporate issue name badge, and that other job badges are available for issue on each open day. With old stocks now used up, a further supply of Company ties is to be ordered.

## 2019 AGM

Members should receive with this edition of Sandtoft Scene the formal notice of this year's Annual General Meeting, which will be held at the Museum on Sunday, 17 November 2019 commencing at 1.30pm.

The Directors are seeking approval for an increase in membership subscriptions. Subscriptions last increased on 1 April 2014: since then the cost of servicing members has increased significantly.

The method of producing and distributing Sandtoft Scene has changed and in so doing has reduced the amount of work put in by volunteers, whilst the hidden cost to the Museum of providing members with free entry to the Museum on Trolleydays has also increased - admission charges rose in 2016 and are due to increase again in 2020. The Museum now owns more vehicles and these need to be housed and maintained whilst a restoration programme has to be funded.

Finally, in order to survive, the Museum needs to encourage younger members, so the Board has decided to hold the Sandtoft Juniors subscription rate at £12.00 p.a. for at least the coming year, which currently represents a very small annual contribution (under 30p) from each paying member to help subsidise holding down the Sandtoft Juniors rate. The Directors consider the new rates represent very good value and recommend the proposal be agreed.

As is customary, following the formal business of the AGM, there will be the members' forum, an informal discussion when members are encouraged to voice their thoughts on how the Museum is operating, how it could be improved, and plans for its overall development.

It is planned that the Trolleyshop will be open before the AGM.

## Northern Museums Volunteer Pass Scheme 2019-2021 (Also known as the "Pink Pass")

This scheme, arranged by Museum Development Yorkshire, is an extension of a previous scheme that we have taken part in. In brief, volunteers (not non-volunteering members though!) at museums registered for the scheme may use a special pass to visit other museums in the scheme and receive concessions specific to that museum (it might be free or discounted admission, concessionary rates in the café or shop and so on) and anyone considering using the passes we hold should visit [www.museumdevelopmentyorkshire.org.uk/resource-category/northern-museums-volunteer-pass/](http://www.museumdevelopmentyorkshire.org.uk/resource-category/northern-museums-volunteer-pass/) to ascertain what museums are registered and what concessions are available.

*If you would like to use the pass, please contact Stewart David via [stewartdavid@sandtoft.org](mailto:stewartdavid@sandtoft.org)*

## A Trackless for Sandtoft...

by Norman Stainthorpe

I recently came across this picture of a model 'trackless' trolley on the cover of 'The Model Engineer', vol. 101 No. 2513, July 21 1949. The model, completed by Mr Eric Thornton of Bradford is of the first 'Trackless Tramcar' in regular service in Britain, built for Bradford Corporation in 1911 by the Rail-less Electric Traction Co.

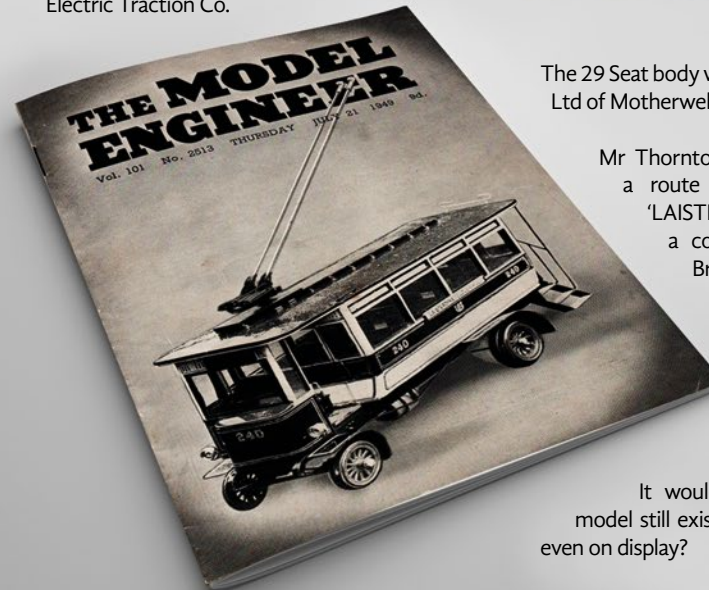


The 29 Seat body was supplied by Hurst, Nelson & Co. Ltd of Motherwell.

Mr Thornton's model is numbered 240 with a route board on the sides displaying 'LAISTERDYKE DUDLEY HILL' above a coat of arms, presumably that of Bradford.

The article states that the model was placed on public view in the Cartwright Memorial Hall, Lister Park, Bradford.

It would be interesting to know if the model still exists, and it is stored somewhere, or even on display?





A line up of all things Bournemouth in the true Sandtoft tradition was arranged for mid afternoon each day. 301 and 99 had to be towed into place before posing with 297. The model MS2 makes a fascinating comparison! (PM)

# Bournemouth PAGEANT

by Dave Hall

The Bournemouth system, which was very popular amongst trolleybus enthusiasts, operated for the last time on Sunday 20 April 1969. It was a day I remember so well, the lasting memory of that day being the long line up of trolleybuses on the hill leading down to the pier, full to capacity with members of the public, enthusiasts and of course the civic dignitaries on the last trolleybus, 301, awaiting their departure time back to Mallard Road depot. I was therefore pleased when I realised that Sandtoft was organising a Bournemouth Pageant to mark the 50th anniversary of the closure of the system over the Spring Bank Holiday, 25-27 May 2019.

Planning started early in the year. There are three resident Bournemouth trolleybuses at Sandtoft. No.297, a Sunbeam MF2B built in 1962 was the only one that was "in ticket" to operate at that time. Sister vehicle No.301 was last operated under power at the Trolleybuses Galore event at the Black Country Living Museum in 1990 along with No.297, so testing needed to be carried out before being passed fit for service. Although No.99, a 1935 Sunbeam MS2, was not likely to run in service, due to requiring major attention to its bodywork, it was hoped it could make demonstration runs, subject to a problem with its front resistance bank being cured: accordingly, the unit was taken by Bob Ashton to West Bromwich for refurbishment on 12 February 2019.

The National Trolleybus Association agreed to loan No.202, a Park Royal bodied Sunbeam MS2 dating

from 1935 which had been converted to an open-top trolleybus in 1958. However, when the arrangements were being made for it to be brought to Sandtoft, a condition was made that it had to be transported by a low-loader understandable given the length of the journey and the age of No.202. It also transpired that for operational reasons at the East Anglia Transport Museum, it would only be available for the bank holiday weekend. Subsequent quotes for haulage worked out far too expensive to be viable and sadly the plan was dropped.

A further disappointment was that the restoration of No.299, another trolleybus from the 1962 batch of Sunbeam MF2Bs, and owned by Keith Baynton, would not be completed by the Pageant weekend, so No.299 couldn't attend.

The engineering team at Sandtoft worked hard from late April onwards to prepare No.301. It was first tested on bank holiday Monday 6 May, after the Museum had closed to the public. All seemed well at that time. On Tuesday 21 May it was again tested but an electrical problem involving notch four first manifested as a minor issue as it was completing an otherwise very successful inspection run. During a static control box test on the Thursday seeking to clear the problem, the same fault appeared but this time far more seriously.

Keith Baynton brought along some reconditioned control box contactor coils and a complete replacement contactor from sister 299 hoping that repairs could be carried out on Saturday morning. However, on closer review the visible local damage to some of the control box wiring combined with the chances of hidden wiring damage led to the conclusion that without some serious remedial work, more catastrophic and potentially dangerous damage was likely if any attempt was made to operate no.301 under power, so this ruled it out of operating over the weekend.

The resistance bank for No.99 was returned in the week leading up to the Pageant but further electrical complications were found that, despite the best efforts of the engineering team, ruled out No.99 operating as well. This left No.297 as the only Bournemouth trolleybus that could operate, meaning it wasn't going to be much of a pageant after all! Oh well!

The first day of the "Pageant", Saturday 25 May, saw No.297 operate alongside Reading BUT No.144, dating from 1949 (which was almost in reverse Bournemouth livery!), making a return to passenger service following its external repaint and visit to Reading last year. Nottingham 506 was also operated, in memory of the late David Needham, who owned the vehicle and who had worked tirelessly for Sandtoft as Membership Secretary for many years before he sadly passed away on 13 May 2019. Bradford 746, another BUT dating from 1949 also appeared in service later in the day, replacing No.144 following the failure of its lower deck bells.

A working model of a Bournemouth MS2 trolleybus, with bodywork built from scratch onto a mobility scooter by Keith Burbidge, a retired Bournemouth Transport bus/ coach driver, was brought up from the town by its owner for the weekend too and proved very popular with visitors, attracting amazing attention also on our Facebook page afterwards.

There were other attractions for visitors to enjoy. Graham Bilbé had set up a fantastic toy museum in



A rather unusual attraction appeared over the weekend in the form of a large model Bournemouth Sunbeam MS2. The body was built from scratch and mounted on a mobility scooter, so it moved under its own power. It was built by Keith Burbidge, a retired Bournemouth Transport bus/coach driver. (PM)

the Pelham Building which included toy trains, buses and trolleybuses as well as books and games and even a John Bull printing outfit (which I had as a child!). This was the first operating day the toy museum was open to the public and proved very popular.

I presented a digital photo show in the Regal Cinema featuring the Bournemouth trolleybus system. This was followed by some amazing vintage ciné film of both Bournemouth's trams and trolleybuses taken in 1934 together with a short film of Hastings trolleybuses in 1933. In the afternoon, a line-up of Bournemouth 99, 297 and 301 together with the model MS2 made for a delightful photo opportunity.

The following two days followed in much the same way although South Shields 204 and Reading 181 joined the operational vehicles on Monday. The Sandtoft Café did a roaring trade each day and kept the visitors well fed and watered as usual.

Two former Bournemouth trolleybus crew members came to Sandtoft over the weekend. John Gilmour and Michael Cope worked together in trolleybus days and John had come from Australia for the Pageant!

Despite the disappointment of only one Bournemouth trolleybus operating, most people seemed to enjoy the weekend. There was an interesting selection of trolleybuses in service. It was just a shame that the enormous effort by the Sandtoft engineering team of Graham Bilbé, Bruce Lake and Ian Metcalfe, together with Keith Baynton (who supplied parts from his own 299), Martin Judge and Keith Hopkinson could not be rewarded by getting Nos.99 and 301 to operate.

Bradford 792 just had it poles swapped (PM)

# Yorkshire Weekend



A report by Paul Morfitt

Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 June saw our Yorkshire themed trolleybus weekend, plus a visit on the Sunday from our friends at the East Yorkshire Thoroughbred Car Club. As ever it was a pleasure to have them come and join us for the day. Our vehicles in use were Bradford 746 & 792, Doncaster 375 and on the Sunday we had Huddersfield 619 join in too. Rotherham 37 was out on display, sadly it still had a couple of outstanding jobs left to do before its test.



Yorkshire line up Huddersfield 619, Bradford 792, Doncaster 375 and Bradford 792 (PM)

The weekend saw us thin on the ground for staff especially on the traffic side. The Saturday saw only mainly myself on the back platform with help from Ian Brown in-between his driving trips along with Stewart David. The Sunday was a little better as Nathan Duffy was here too so we took it in turns for each trip, later in the day Mike Johnson joined us too so we could rest our feet for a while. Up front we had Stewart again along with Chas Allen and again later in the day Bruce Lake and Richard Jackson joined us. The Saturday was a quiet day though, in fact when the Isle tour went out, there were only us volunteers left on site - only 18 service trips were made with only 97 tickets issued, thankfully the Sunday was much better with 455 tickets issued!

On the Sunday as well as the many beautiful vintage classic cars that came to see us, we had the added bonus of the Bradford tower wagon in action, something we do not see very often. Before we opened the line crew replaced a few spacers just passed the main power supply cables, this was done quickly. Then the crew moved onto the back straight to cut down a fair few

tree branches so a start could be made on installing a special set of wires for the Cedes Stoll trolleybus so we can see it on demo as it would have been "back in the day". While the tower wagon was parked on the back straight, a couple of trips had to change the poles from the inner wires to the outer in order to pass by.

This was just how it would have been in the trolleybus days so it was good to see and nice to be a part of. As always when the bamboo poles come out, it is very entertaining for our visitors too!

So despite the very quiet Saturday, the weekend ran smoothly and was enjoyable. Having spoken with many of our visitors, it was clear from feedback on the Sunday that an added attraction was really popular. We must try to add something on any open day so that we have much more for our visitors to see and do; I think the Saturday proved that our visitor numbers can be very low just relying on the

trolleybuses. If anyone has any ideas about what else we can bring to the museum to give our visitors more to experience around all things electric then please drop us a line!



Bradford vehicles doing their thing (PM)



# Cedes Stoll Launch Weekend

*Paul Morfitt's take on events*

Our open weekend on the last two days of June proved to be a hot one, Europe was enjoying a heat wave and it was the UK's turn to catch the tail end of it. Late on the Saturday afternoon temperatures were reaching nearly 30 degrees: I don't think I have seen Bruce eat so many ice creams in one day!

Saturday's activities started off with our usual briefing in the café which included a run through of the special events by Dave Chick who has played a huge part in the Cedes replica project. Once we all knew what the score was for the day, we began operations with South Shields 204, London 1348 and Bournemouth 297. These vehicles were chosen to represent a 25-year (or so) time scale from the Cedes to the last trolleybuses built: the selection

proved to be popular. Also for the Saturday we had a new trainee conductor, Jason Spencer, and he was paired up with Patrick Wilkinson for the day and did extremely well indeed. We were well staffed up on the traffic side which was far different to our previous open weekend – very welcome as we could all take it easy in the day's heat!

Just after 12:30, the "official" launch took place on the back straight with the Cedes replica: a small section of dummy Stoll overhead had been installed so that a demonstration could be given as to how the "trolley" worked on this, then revolutionary, form of public transport. Cameras were clicking away as Graham pulled away with the trolley running alongside - it has to be said, a rather impressive sight (no, I don't mean Graham!).

Once this was done, a speech was given by both Graham and Dave Chick, the team involved in the building of the replica were all introduced to us. The launch was by the former Managing Director of Surface Transport at Transport for London (TfL), Leon Daniels, followed by the first "passenger" trip around the Museum with the team onboard. Once completed, our visitors could then enjoy a ride too, all of which enjoyed the experience. Trolleybus services resumed and seeing all 4 vehicles running side by side was a sight to behold, something very different indeed!



*Saturday Launch Line Up (PM)*

Despite all of this and with the temperature still rising, the highlight of the day for me came after closing time! At 4:30pm Graham took me for my driving test in London 1348. After various circuits and questions he shook my hand and said "Well done, you have passed your test", so as you can imagine, being chuffed was an understatement!

Sunday started off the same as Saturday with a refresh briefing for the day's events from Dave. Slightly different times were in place for a second launch due to us having a visit from the Lord and Lady Mayor of Keighley late in the afternoon. We also had another special visitor - Molly the horse: Molly was there to re-enact the days in the town when the trolley became detached from the trackless (as they were called) and ran down the steep hill to the depot and a "lad on a horse" would pull it back up to the stranded trackless. Also during the morning briefing, Graham announced to everyone that I had passed my test and he presented me with my permit and badge. Services started as normal at 10:30: we had a vehicle change in that Bradford 746 came out in exchange for London 1348. My first trip behind the wheel was in 746, Stewart David came along in the cab too, just to ensure I was OK with things; thankfully, no mishaps and his nerves were still good. Next I took 204 around, this time Chas Allen tagged along, again all went well.

I have to say at this point that a HUGE thanks must go to both Chas and Stewart, for they both gave up two full Saturdays to do driver training with myself and Bradley (from our engineering team). Chas coming all the way from his home in Settle just to do this for us. Thank you both, it truly has meant a great deal to



*Keithley motor bus struggling to keep up with Bradford 746 (PM)*



*London 1348 and West Ham Cedes Replica (PM)*

me; indeed. I cannot thank you enough for helping me become a "motorman".

Our trolleybuses were soon filling up nicely, a busier day than the Saturday was soon taking shape. Just after lunch our trainee conductor Jason was given his test by Mike Johnson and he, too, was passed out ready to join the team. Just after 1pm, the second launch of the Cedes took place with the Mayor of Keighley, followed by Molly the horse pulling the trolley back up the "hill"! The Mayor then took the vehicle for a trip around the circuit before our visitors hopped onboard too. Services soon started again, we also had a single deck motorbus from Keighley in use for a couple of trips. This went down well with our visitors and looked really good alongside Bradford 746 as these at some point would have passed each other in service back in the glory days.

A busy afternoon followed: thankfully the heat was nowhere near as bad as the previous day. I was in my element behind the wheel as well as still conducting (as that is still the better of the two jobs) but I wanted to make full use of getting used to the controls of each vehicle in use.

So another cracking weekend, hot weather, a healthy number of visitors, a new conductor, a new driver, a Lord Mayor and a horse called Molly. What more could we have asked for at our little paradise in Lincolnshire!

Bruce suggests ice cream!



# Cedes Stoll Launch *Dave Chick's report...*

Our replica of a 1911 Cedes-Stoll trolleybus with EH Bayley bodywork was launched at the end of June, following a lot of hard work to make sure that the weekend was a success. The two-day event reflected the fact that the original vehicle first ran on demonstration in West Ham in September 1912 and then spent its operational life in Keighley from 1913 until 1924.

For the launch it was important that we were able to show a trolley running on overhead line for the first time in the UK since Cedes-Stoll operation ended in Keighley in 1926. Andy Feather managed to locate and purchase some suitable running line at the Bradford Industrial Museum. On 16 June he did some of the preparatory work along the back straight at Sandtoft and following an appeal to members during the week he returned the following Sunday with Norman Hinchliffe, when a good turnout of volunteers put in 12 hours' hard work putting up the necessary short bracket arms, then attaching the Stoll-type hangers which Andy had made, before erecting the running line.

Despite the time and effort that was put in it wasn't quite completed when daylight (and energy!) ran out. However, with a little additional work by Graham Bilbé a few days later enough running line was available in time for the weekend. Andy has since returned and completed the line.

From midweek onwards volunteers arrived to continue the preparations, with Roger Clark in particular getting Burntwood ready to receive our guests from the Czech Republic.

That's TV Humber had arranged to visit on the Thursday to record an item for that evening's news programme. Graham and I waited at the gate to greet the reporter, Rebecca, and discovered that a number of employees from a neighbouring company were gathered at the fence to take a look at the Cedes!

Just as Rebecca was setting up to interview Graham and me, Steve, who has been painting all the Museum's traction poles, turned up to paint the pole right next to where the Cedes was parked for filming! Fortunately he was able to get on with a different pole.

On Friday eight members of the Czech team that built the Cedes arrived, six having flown to Manchester and continued by train to Doncaster where they were collected by Stewart David and Roger Clark, with the other two arriving by car later that evening.

The Cedes West Ham launch day arrived. There was great activity on Saturday morning and the 10 o'clock team briefing was much more detailed than usual because of the complexities of the day's plans.

The Cedes was on display on the back straight with its trolley posed on the overhead, ready for visitors to see and photograph it. When the original vehicle was demonstrated in West Ham in September 1912 the windows had been removed, for reasons which we have not been able to discover, so we had hoped that the weather would be good enough to make it possible to emulate that pioneering operation. Fortunately, it was a very warm and dry day. Part of the specification for the replica was that it should have an easily removable front cowl, as this was not present on the vehicle until it went to Keighley.

While being demonstrated in Greengate Street, West Ham, the original Cedes had the General Identification Mark A8DC affixed to the front. We now know that it must have carried the same mark at the rear and so a plate was placed in one of the rear windows.

Not long after we opened to the public we were joined by our guest of honour, Leon Daniels, OBE, Chairman of the London Bus Museum and formerly Transport for London's Managing Director, Surface Transport. Leon showed great interest in everything that was happening at the museum. Visiting the Toy Museum he was particularly taken by a toy Gibson ticket machine which he had never known about before.

Launching the Cedes, Leon said that having the replica built was a great thing for the Museum to have done. "Seeing it in the flesh is so much better than reading about it on the internet. You wouldn't understand quite how extraordinary this power collection system is unless you see it in real life."



Leon Daniels launches the "West Ham" Cedes. (DC)



The Mayor and Mayoress of Keighley stand beside the Cedes before Graham Bilbé takes it on its first passenger journey as a Keighley trackless. (DC)

Graham Bilbé drove the Cedes along the demonstration line before removing the trolley and giving up the driver's seat to Leon, who then drove the replica for its inaugural passenger journey at Sandtoft with our guests from the Czech Republic as the first passengers.

After this, visitors were able to experience what it was like to ride on a trolleybus before the First World War. The vehicle's solid tyres mean that passengers feel every bump in the road, but without the windows in there were few rattles and on a very hot day the cooling breeze created by the lack of windows was very welcome.

Later, in the Regal Cinema, visitors were able to see a short documentary film about the building of the replica, showing each stage of its creation. This was followed by a Q&A session with the Czech team which built it and Ashley Bruce who determined the dimensions and created the CAD images that were used by the builders. Rounding off this session we saw the 1912 Movietone newsreel of the original vehicle being demonstrated in West Ham.

Because of the day's London connection London 1348 was in service. The other service trolleybuses showed vehicle developments at 25-year interludes, with South Shields 204, which entered service 25 years after the West Ham trials, and Bournemouth 297, one of the last batch of trolleybuses to enter service in the UK 25 years after that.

With the last visitor gone and the many tasks which the team of volunteers has to carry out at the end of every Trolleyday completed a group of members enjoyed a fish and chip supper with our guests from the Czech Republic, sitting in Burntwood's front garden to enjoy the fine summer's evening.



Roger Clark had commissioned a special cake proclaiming “45 let přátelství” (45 years of friendship) to celebrate the occasion in August 1974 when he and I visited Czechoslovakia and met Jan Spousta for the first time. Without this friendship there would have been no Cedes project, because it was Jan who introduced me to Jirka and who also provided the link between the British and Czech parts of the project team.

There was a lot of preparatory work to do again on Sunday. The windows were put back in the Cedes and the Keighley cowl was placed on top of the front dashplate. These are deliberately very simple tasks so that we can easily display the replica in either form. The vehicle was then put back on display with the trolley up before visitors started to arrive. There was again an extended 10 o'clock briefing so that the volunteers who had not been present the previous day knew what to expect and those who had been understood what would be different about the day.

Keighley Bus Museum kindly brought a West Yorkshire Bristol LL5G which had operated in the Keighley area and it spent the day on display and occasionally supplementing the trolleybus service. 204 and 297 were again in service, but instead of 1348, Bradford 746 was used to represent the nearest trolleybus system to Keighley.

Sunday's guests of honour were the Keighley Town Mayor, Peter Corkindale, and Mayoress Mrs Susan Brown, who both wore their chains of office.

Launching the Cedes in its Keighley form, Peter commented that he was present for the inauguration just as his predecessor had been on 24 April 1913, when the original Cedes was used for the official inspection of the town's first trackless route. Peter told us that 100 years ago the original vehicle would have passed the end of his drive. He talked about Harry Webber's visit to London to see the West Ham trials and his recommendation of the system to Keighley council. Keighley was quite forward-thinking and saw the Cedes system as state-of-the-art and much better than the town's motor buses. Unlike Sandtoft, Keighley is all hills and the trolley could be temperamental. Only one set of wires was put up and a trolleybus on the way up the hill would meet one coming down so the trollers had to be swapped. On occasions a driver would let go and the trolley could travel up to a mile-and-a-half downhill, so the Council “employed a young lad on a horse who would grab it and take it back up again”.

As the Mayor finished his speech, the trolley started to “run away”. Because there are no gradients at Sandtoft this was achieved by Ian Metcalfe tying a piece of string to the trolley and running away with it!

From the far end of the back straight a horse and rider appeared and they retrieved the trolley and returned it to Graham Bilbé, who plugged it back in and drove the Cedes along the demonstration line. Thanks are due to Jess Boulton and Molly for recreating this aspect of Keighley's Cedes system. Keighley is the only place where this is known to have happened, and so this must have been the first time a horse and rider had collected a trolley and returned it to a trackless car since at least 1926. When I told Jess this during the practice run before opening she said, “Oh, no pressure then!”

The trolley was removed and Peter drove the replica for its first official journey as a Keighley trackless, with Susan Brown as the passenger. The same General Identification Mark had been used in Keighley for the 1913 inspection as had appeared on the vehicle for its demonstration in West Ham the previous year. Once it entered service it did not need registration plates, so the GIMs were removed and the Cedes entered Sandtoft service in its Keighley form.

Since the launch day I have discovered that The Tramway & Railway World edition published on 16 October 1913 included an article by Harry Webber about Keighley Corporation's first few months' experience with the Cedes, when it was the town's only trackless. The article includes a photo of the Cedes turning at Ingrow terminus that we had been unaware of. Mr Webber lists twelve “fairy tales” about the Cedes-Stoll system and says that he put all of them to the company and received satisfactory replies, although he quotes none of the responses. Fairy story no 4 is “Assuming the driver accidentally let go the collector on a hill, would it not run away down the wires before he could recover it?” I wonder how long it was after the arrival of more trolleybuses that Harry discovered that this wasn't a fairy story?

A line-up of all the service vehicles and the West Yorkshire Bristol preceded the film show and Q&A session. The replica then emulated the original vehicle, which had motor problems during its second week in service. Fortunately this was towards the end of the second day. The fault has since been rectified. Another attraction for the launch weekend only was a Gauge One railway layout in the Toy Museum. Gauge One was popular in the early 20th Century but its popularity declined after the First World War.

Every Cedes passenger was issued with a souvenir Bell Punch ticket. There were also several souvenirs

on sale; a very attractive special programme for the weekend with a period design partly based on the style of Trackless Trolley's promotional brochure and a certificate of ridership which could be signed by the conductor to certify that the purchaser had ridden on the Cedes during the launch weekend. These had both been designed by Ashley Bruce. A fridge magnet showing the Sandtoft Cedes and the Gmünd replica designed and produced in the Czech Republic will remain available and there may be a few A4 copies of the “birth certificate” left for sale. For the weekend all four items were available in a pack.



Ian Brown, Bruce Lake, Mark Boulton and Bob Ashton roll the running wire into place while behind them the cherry picker and (out of sight) the Bradford tower wagon are being used by Andy and Norman. (DC)

### Next Steps

The project is not yet complete. Coming soon is the new Cedes Museum, which will house the replica and include interpretation to tell its story. When funds have been raised a new road with powered overhead will be built permitting the Cedes to operate as a trolleybus. This will be the world's first new installation on the Cedes-Stoll principle since 1921. It is not the intention that the overhead on the back straight will ever be energised.

Bringing the project this far has been the result of a lot of work by many people, several of the most notable being seen in the photo of the line-up. I must also mention Graham Mitchell, who is an authority on all aspects of Keighley's local transport history and has been a great supporter of the project. Because he had a prior engagement Graham was only able to join us late in the day on the Sunday, but I was pleased that he was able to make it at all.

To close, here are some words from Leon Daniels after the event, “I had a most brilliant day ... The grin on my face was there for hours!” I hope that the same applied to many more of our visitors.



Some of the team gathered in front of the Sunday line-up. From the left, Jirka Kovář, Petr Růžička, František Albert, Markéta Padrtová, Dave Chick, Ashley Bruce, Petra Dušáková, Graham Bilbé and Jan Spousta. (BA)

# Sandtoft Gathering 2019

(Or Noah Cancels Cruise to Sandtoft)

By David Hanchett

After a lot of rainfall, we were cautiously optimistic about the weather for the biggest day of the Museum's year.

The caution was deserved. When a steady flow of visitors and several exhibit vehicles, including a beautiful former Hull Corporation AEC "tin front" Regent III, arrived on Preview Saturday, they found a site that was being treated to continuous rain pretty much all day. Luckily, the rate of rainfall that had been heavy to start with, decreased and most of the puddles soaked away through the recently cleared-out soakaways.

But one puddle that did not go away was actually inside the depot. It transpired that the outlet pipes into the ditch on the Museum/ Burntwood boundary (and a small catchpit that was discovered during exploration of the problem under a piece of sheet aluminium) serving the drains from downpipes inside the depot building had seriously silted up, hindering rainwater from going away during a severe downpour. With sales stands planned to be sited in the depot on 'Gathering Sunday, it had to be cleared. With flexible drain rods poised, Graham Bilbé and Ian Metcalf slaved away into the evening until the job was done.

As this was going on, a very welcome barbeque next to the beer tent was being fired up, ready to serve some first-class burgers and sausages and fluffy bread baps, all cooked and served by a highly professional looking Mark Boulton, in pristine white coat and regulation white hat. Bruce Lake and yours truly,

along with conductor Rob Whitehead hungrily looked on whilst we kept the twilight trolleybus service running until after dark. What a splendid atmosphere our Museum has on such an evening as this. A clear sky after the rain, the smell of cooking sausages in the still air, the sight of silent trolleybuses gliding about the Museum with lights aglow, flashing at each "dead" section (time the overhead department had serious words with traffic about this? - ed), the gentle sound of pleasant conversation wafting from the beer tent, and the ghostly shape of the many photographers, lurking in the shadows to get just one more shot of a trolleybus at twilight.

Another issue that had to be sorted out last minute was the provision of a burger van for Sunday. Our long-standing trader had a mechanical problem with one of his vans, so could not attend. Friends of one of Tony Ferris's family were able to step in to save the day and a splendid job they did too. With a hygiene rating of five, as well.

So to 'Gathering Day: Paul Morfitt had had special 'Gathering Day Rider tickets printed and Francis Whitehead had, after some technical issues, produced a well-illustrated printed programme for the occasion. Graham Bilbé was up very early to manage the arrival of the sales stand holders, of whom there were slightly more than usual. The colourful, good natured banter between Tony Ferris and John Whipham could be heard coming from the gate, as they entertainingly marshalled the arriving exhibiting vehicles and their owners. This contrasting

with the sound of the fairground organ setting the party atmosphere from the other side of the site!

Joanna Hanchett had been up late into the preceding night preparing the café bill of fare. Her hard working team were kept extremely busy throughout the day: a visitor was heard to say "I hope it's Yorkshire Tea and none of your cheap stuff", to which the answer came readily in the affirmative, and was proven by showing the tin!

Unfortunately, two of the trolleybuses that had been scheduled to run had to be replaced with others: Bournemouth 297 and Reading 144 both failed their earth leakage tests, probably attributable to the wet weather leading up to the event. Nevertheless, a full field of tidy trolleybuses was available for the service.

Mark Boulton was busy again on 'Gathering day as he operated our hot drinks and snacks kiosk by our fully stocked shop. Several of our visitors commented that it was nice to be able to get a cup of tea without having to lengthen the café queue to do so.

There were no de-wirements, and no vehicle breakdowns and the overhead naturally behaved itself. In fact, there was nothing for Stewart David, the Traffic Manager, to do at all. Those that know him say that they saw him almost smile as he drove Nottingham 506 in service during the day. Records show that there were around ten percent more passenger journeys made on our trolleybuses this

'Gathering compared to last year, with just a slight rise in the number of miles travelled by the vehicles.

In conclusion, the recipe that produces a successful 'Gathering includes:

- A huge amount of work by a large, if shrinking, band of volunteers
- A well-prepared, tidy-looking Museum site, with all sorts of things in place - including acres of neatly-trimmed, healthy, happy grass
- A large number of emails and snail-mail trails behind the scenes, to say nothing of numerous telephone conversations
- A good number of loyal friends and many new ones who bring their fine, interesting vehicles to the event
- An exceptional number of vehicles running for the public, both trolleybuses on site, and motorbuses for the free Doncaster service and the Isle tours
- Good food and drink from the café, burger van, ice cream van and tea-bar and, ah yes, the real ale tent
- A carnival atmosphere, aided by sales stands and fairground organ
- A friendly band of volunteers, all working together as a team

All these things make the Museum's yearly extravaganza, the Sandtoft Gathering. Thanks to all who help. It is also gratifying if Noah is unable to bring his ark.



Bradford 792 and the crowds  
Gathering Sunday (PM)



# The Return of Blues and Twos

by Patrick Wilkinson

In August the ever popular Blues and Twos event made a return after a couple of years' break. Ambulances, police vehicles, but mostly fire engines filled the centre grass on both days - including on the Saturday an appliance from the RAF Fire Brigade Museum in Scunthorpe which subsequently held its annual open day on Sunday 22 September.

The visiting group staged demonstrations, each with an informative commentary, throughout the weekend. These included a building fire and a chemical spill which have been a staple of Blues and Twos events in years gone by. A new display for the Museum this year was a demonstration on how the fire brigade would go about cutting someone from a car in the event of a collision. An 04 plate Citroen C2

on its way to the scrap yard was utilised for the task and visitors and volunteers alike waited with baited breath as the drills and cutters made mincemeat of the little car. As some will remember, we had a real demonstration of this five years ago following a car accident on the main road outside the Museum. It was good on this occasion to be able to see what the fire brigade had to do in that situation with the knowledge that no-one was actually hurt!

Though visitor numbers weren't too high, this was unsurprising given the weekend was sandwiched between the 'Gathering and our 50th Anniversary Gala weekend. All in all it was very enjoyable for the visitors and staff and I look forward to next year's event.



Fire Service Preservation Group (IB)



Keeping an eye on things (IB)



# 1969 50 2019 Anniversary



**The late August bank holiday weekend saw an amazing three days of celebrations for the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft's 50th Anniversary. A wonderful time was had by all – truly a fitting way to mark this milestone. Over the next 8 pages we'll take a look at the events from various members' points of view, as well as lots of photographs of all the fun from the gala weekend.**



**The vehicles that operated over the course of the 50th Anniversary weekend were:**  
Bradford 746 and 792 | Doncaster 375 | Huddersfield 541, 619 and 631 | Keithley 0 (Cedes Stoll Replica)  
Limoges 5 | London 1348 | Nottingham 506 | Maidstone 72 | Manchester 1344  
Reading 113, 144, 181 and 193 | South Shields 204

**Demonstration running only:** Bournemouth 297 | Glasgow TB78 | Wellington 82

**Motorbuses:** Carris 255 | Doncaster 22 and 55 | Whippam 1 (ex Isle Coaches)



Well, what can I say but “WOW!!!” What a three days that was, over the August Bank Holiday weekend as we celebrated 50 years of the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft. The weather never let us down, it was extremely hot on all three days, visitors came fast and numerous - and as for trolleybuses, well have you ever seen so many...

The run-up to the weekend saw our teams working very hard in all areas of the Museum: Tony and John with their crew ensuing that the site looked tip-top (as it always does), the engineering team working flat out to get as many vehicles up and running so we could show off what we have in our collection, and Stewart working wonders with rosters so that we were staffed up in all areas of the weekend's operations. A huge “hats off” to these people for achieving all they did!

The first day of our 50th Birthday Bash, and right from the off, things were busy. Sixteen trolleybuses were leak-tested before opening, then, as soon as the gates were open our visitors soon jumped on board. Three trolleybuses were in service at any one time and then at hourly intervals, the engineering team would get another three ready for us to change over. Each time this was done we always had a three-axle 'bus in use along with two two-axle 'buses. This worked really well and was rather entertaining, not just for our visitors, but for us traffic staff too. This is something that had not been done before on such a big scale and is a credit to those working on the back field (in such heat) that this worked so well. We also had a VIP visit in the form of the Lord Lieutenant of Lincolnshire and his wife, who spent a good few hours with us.

The following two days, it was pretty much a repeat: leak testing done first thing, and then multiple change-overs during the day; Sunday was the busiest day visitor-wise, but Monday was not far off equalling it!

One of the highlights of the vehicles operating was the return of the first UK trolleybus to be preserved in the shape of Reading 113 on Friday afternoon. She arrived back, fresh from a full repaint complete with sign-written adverts all round and stunned us all on how good she looked. When she took to the circuit on Saturday afternoon, everyone was deeply impressed. No.113 is a fitting tribute not just to the Museum but to the late Mike Dare and his team who purchased the trolleybus in 1961, and from then on built up the trolleybus preservation movement that we have today!

For me, the highlight had to be finally getting behind the wheel of Reading 193: she had not run since last August at the Reading 50 weekend due to a failed de-wirement light/ buzzer. On the run-up to our Gala weekend, owner Graham Bilbé had been working hard to get this fixed, and on the Friday he had it working spot-on. Then, on Saturday when she took to the wires, it started to play up again: Stewart took her on her first run and sadly had a de-wirement on the corner near Reception. As the light/ buzzer was failing, no.193 was then taken out of service. However, on Sunday, Graham had another play and his trolleybus was put back into service. Both Stewart and Graham took her round on a couple of trips and then, to my HUGE surprise, Graham asked me if I would like to take her out... Well, like I was gunna say “NO!”... So, with a huge grin on my face, off I went and thankfully without incident. On the Monday I managed two service trips with her too, so yes, I was a very happy bunny. I along with Harvey had spent a great deal of time cleaning her up for last year's Reading event and did the same on the Friday for this one, this trolleybus means a lot to me - I have no idea why, it just does - so to finally get to take to the wheel was perfect!



So, I think we can all safely say “WOW” again. What a hell of a weekend: 148 service trips done with 2,538 tickets issued on board; a record-breaking 20 vehicles used on the final day, which in itself is just awesome. Every single person involved in delivering this weekend's events can give themselves a HUGE pat on the back. Everyone did an amazing job. I think we can safely say we did the Museum proud, we did our visitors proud, we did all those that are sadly no

longer with us proud and most of all, we did each other proud. This has been without doubt a huge undertaking to pull off: everyone played a huge part in that, EVERYONE. We may only be a relatively small team but we did it. I have only been a part of that team for a couple of years but I feel so proud to be, working with each and every one of you is an honour and a privilege! And on that note, who is up for the 100th then...?

### **An Insight into the Planning Behind the 50th Anniversary Gala Weekend**

Early in the year during discussions about Trolleydays for 2018, the Board of Directors endorsed a suggestion by Graham Bilbé that every effort should be made to exceed the number of trolleybuses (16) that had run at the 40th anniversary celebrations.

The concept inspired Rob Whitehead to work out how this could be achieved, given the restricted space around the Museum's “circuit” that, frustratingly, makes it possible to only have around 8 or 9 trolleybuses easily available for use on a Trolleyday, and the rating of the power supply that limits trolleybuses being driven to three - and certainly no more than four without the likelihood of the supply's circuit breaker blowing out, an undesirable event especially on a busy day (hence, ‘Gatherings generally have three sets of three trolleybuses in use during the course of the day). Rob's solution was to park the operable trolleybuses, herringbone, on the land north of (i.e. behind) the Memorial Garden and have a dedicated 3-man towing team and tractor. This would allow each trolleybus in turn to be hitched up to the tractor, towed around to the workshop road wiring, unhitched, have its towing hatch fitted, booms put up, a fire extinguisher placed in its cab and (in liaison with the duty traffic manager) driven around the outer circuit to be earth leakage tested and then around the loop to take up service. Following this, the trolleybus to come off service would be driven to the workshop “lay-by” to then be decommissioned by the towing crew and tractored around to the herringbone line-up on the field, possibly even parking it the other way round to those awaiting use. All this would confine the potentially hazardous towing operation to a smallish area that could be well supervised to keep

spectators away from danger and, aided by two-way radio contact, would mesh in with normal trolleybus running.

Graham developed this into making the Museum's entire vehicle collection (excluding, of course, those away from the vicinity) as accessible as possible to visitors over the 50th Anniversary Gala Weekend. With public parking planned to be on White's land anyway, this would mean that, with a few exceptions, the non-running trolleybuses (along with motorbuses and tower wagons, etc.) would be displayed on what would be the display field, the residual vehicles that were impractical to move could be viewable in the depot and that Westgate would be opened up so that the four seldom-seen vehicles currently stored there could be viewed en-route during Isle Tours that weekend. In an effort to make traffic operations flow unimpeded, an idea to establish a second earth leakage test (ELT) point along the workshop road to obviate the need to inconveniently stop service-bound trolleybuses near the prefab for two or three minutes to ELT them was investigated but proved to be technically problematical due to its distance from the power supply feed point, so was dropped. As a result, trolleybuses to be run had to go through the ELT procedure each day before the Museum opened and taken back to the field.

A late refinement to the plan was that the operable three-axled trolleybuses would all be parked before and after their turn in service on concrete areas, thereby removing the possibility of unduly cutting up the grass in the field when making tight turns. In the event, the super weather meant that some intense use of grassed areas by heavy vehicles and tractors did little to spoil the grass.



# Sandtoft's Gala Weekend

*A report from Dave Chick*

"Wouldn't Mike Dare have been proud?" I heard this comment many times from many people over the three days of the Trolleybus Museum at 50 Gala Weekend and I'm sure that had the Museum's founder still been with us his heart would indeed have swelled with pride.

The ambitious concept for the event was to showcase the Museum's collection by operating as many trolleybuses as possible and having the others easily accessible for visitors to see and photograph. The teamwork involved in executing the plans resulted in what was, in my opinion, the best-presented and most enjoyable event in the Trolleybus Museum's fifty-year history.

The physical preparations for the Gala started more than a week ahead, with a good-sized group of volunteers on site every day. The depot was emptied apart from those vehicles which it would have been difficult or unwise to move: Mexborough & Swinton 34, Bradford 562, Nottingham 367, Bradford Karrier tower wagon 034 and Reading horse-drawn tower wagon "William". All the vehicles that were not going to be used in service were carefully parked on the field so that they could be seen and photographed. Service vehicles were either placed in position on Sandtoft Square, the back straight, or on the south side of the field so that they could be easily towed out for service. The large fleet of vehicles scheduled for service was cleaned externally and internally and most also had their tyres blacked, which helped to give them a particularly smart appearance.

It should also be mentioned that the work of the "Parks & Gardens Department" has created a very well cared-for appearance across the site, which produces a favourable impression for visitors.

More than thirty volunteers were present on the Wednesday, which is always a busy day as the ever-expanding Wednesday Gang is on site. On this day we were visited by Jonathan Welch from Bus & Coach Weekly and the resulting article is expected to appear towards the end of this year.

On Friday, Ashley Blackman and his partner Kirstie visited at the invitation of the British Trolleybus Society. The BTS has commissioned Ashley to prepare a restoration project report on Mexborough & Swinton 34, the 1927 Garrett which is the only surviving complete Mexborough & Swinton trolleybus. Much more fundraising will be required, but the Society has already received some generous donations from its members and from the Rotherham Trolleybus Group and Ashley's report will help the BTS to plan the work needed to restore Sandtoft's oldest trolleybus.

At about midday Reading 113 arrived back on site having been painted by Darren Sentance. 113 looks magnificent, partly because of the quality of Darren's work and partly because of the authentic advertisements, which were signwritten by Darren's colleague Wayne Westwood following research by Dave Hall. The BTS has funded the repaint using a legacy from Colin Enticknap, who spent his last few years in Kent but originally came from Reading and was a regular visitor to Sandtoft.

It was particularly apt that 113 was restored in time for the Gala weekend because it was the first trolleybus to be privately preserved thanks to Mike Dare's initiative which directly led to the founding of the Reading Transport Society (now the BTS) and indirectly to the establishment of the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft.

Final preparations started early on Saturday. Every trolleybus has to be electrically tested on every day that it is used. As it was planned to operate a large number of trolleybuses each one had to be moved into position and tested, an operation that took about ninety minutes in total. Signs were put out on Belton Road and Whites' gate was opened, the Regal cinema was set up ready for the presentations, the toy museum's displays were set up, the cycle shop was prepared, the prefab opened and its music switched on, reception was set up and the café team got ready for the influx of volunteers to grab hot drinks in time for the 10 o'clock briefing and for visitors to start ordering refreshments from 10.30.

With most of the field being used to display the vehicle collection a barrier had been erected to form a parking area outside reception for visitors with disabilities, which was accessed using the new gates between the Museum's car park and TA White & Sons' land. Whites kindly made some of their land available for visitor parking.

By 10.30 there was a queue of cars waiting and our parking stewards opened the gates to let them in. After all the planning and all the hard preparatory work the team of volunteers was ready to give the public a memorable day out.

The trolleybus service started and then at regular intervals throughout the day one of the trolleybuses would be taken out of service and a vehicle waiting on the field would be brought round as a substitute. Today and on both subsequent Trolleydays, 17 different trolleybuses operated in service, beating the record of 16 which had been set at the 40th anniversary event in 2009.

Doncaster 55, the 1967 Roe-bodied Leyland Royal Tiger Cub, looked superb when it arrived back on Saturday morning after it also had been repainted by Darren Sentance.

The Isle of Axholme Tour was operated by a variety of vehicles over the three days: Doncaster 55 and

the ex-Grey-Green Isle Coaches Volvo Citybus, with 1953 AEC Regal III/Roe Doncaster 22 as a back-up for some tours, and visiting Chesterfield 225, a Leyland PD2 with Weymann body, being used on Monday.

Continuing the theme of making the collection accessible to visitors, for this event only the Isle Tour called in at the Westgate outbase, where volunteers were on hand to open the main doors and talk to visitors. The former chapel was purchased by Mike Dare in 1967 and led to the discovery of the Sandtoft site.

In the Regal Cinema, Dave Hall gave regular presentations about the history of the Museum, demonstrating to visitors the amount of progress that has been made over the years and the hard work involved. The Toy Museum provided visitors with an opportunity to see Hornby Dublo Three-Rail trains running. Two of the Museum's support societies, BTS and DO&LRS, had sales stands in the depot. The Tea Trolley Café was busy all day and on a very hot day was probably the hottest place in the Museum. At the other end of the building, the shop did a roaring trade in ice creams all weekend! Thanks are due to the volunteers who went out to restock the café and the shop when supplies ran low.

In fact, everywhere was busy and it was a delight to see so much activity, with trolleybuses passing by, the Cedes replica supplementing the main service, an occasional bus operating on the circuit or leaving on an Isle tour, trolleybuses being towed to the field, replacements being towed to the Square, people looking at all the different attractions and everywhere filming or taking photos or just looking at the various aspects of transport heritage the Museum has to offer. There was also a VIP visit, with the Lord-Lieutenant for Lincolnshire, Toby Dennis, and his wife, Sarah, being shown round.

Saturday was also a memorable day for volunteer Mark Boulton, who purchased Felix 40 ("Dinky Villa"), from DO&LRS. The AEC Reliance/Roe Dalesman has spent many years configured as a camper van but since the Gala Mark has made a start on the long task of restoring it to its former glory as a touring coach.

After the Museum closed for the day, Dave Hall gave a special showing of his presentation of the Museum's history, slightly extended to incorporate additional views of people who are no longer with us. This was very well-attended and much appreciated

by volunteers who had not had time to see it during opening hours.

On Sunday morning the process started all over again. There had been a high attendance the previous day so we wondered whether numbers would be lower, but a long line of cars built up before 10.30, suggesting that it would be another good day, and by the end of the day attendance had been almost 50% higher than on Saturday.

We were visited by Derek Rayner, Old Glory magazine's Technical Advisor, who had come to see the Cedex replica because he had not been available for its launch at the end of June. He told me that because OG had already covered the launch he would not be able to publish another article. However, by the end of the day Derek was so impressed with the Trolleybus Gala that he had decided that he had to cover it in Old Glory!

Later in the day David Jukes arrived with his wife, Grace, and so the event will be covered in Bus & Coach Preservation magazine also, no doubt.

In my capacity as Chairman of the British Trolleybus Society I was delighted to receive a donation of £500 to help to return the last trolleybus to enter service in the UK, Bournemouth 301, to working order. Keith Baynton made the presentation on behalf of Jay Thornton and Jonathan Hawkins, organisers of the Bournemouth Bus Rally. Over the last few years they have donated to local Bournemouth charities through the Yellow Buses carbon stoppers scheme but this year felt that it seemed far more appropriate to donate a sum to the preservation of Bournemouth's official last trolleybus. They also wish to thank all the kind people who donated to their crowdfunding campaign.

The event to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the last trolleybus took place at the annual Bournemouth Bus Rally on 9 June at Kings Park, Bournemouth with over 50 vehicles in attendance. Find them at: [facebook.com/busrally](https://www.facebook.com/busrally).

Towards the end of the day an exotic vehicle arrived in the form of Carris 255, a left-hand drive Weymann-bodied AEC Regent III built in 1954 for Companhia Carris de Ferro de Lisboa, the operating company in Lisbon, Portugal, which has been in preservation since being withdrawn in 1983. Its interior was restored at Sandtoft several years ago.



*Seen in the Family Room during the VIP visit on Saturday are (left to right) Francis Whitehead, Patrick Wilkinson (who organised the visit), Toby Dennis (Lord-Lieutenant for Lincolnshire), Bob Rowe, David Hanchett, Bruce Lake, Graham Bilbé and Sarah Dennis. (DC)*

On Sunday evening the Museum's anniversary dinner was held just down the road at the Reindeer, where a total of 73 members and friends enjoyed an excellent meal. It was a very enjoyable occasion, with guests including several people who have been involved with the organisation for fifty years as well as some new volunteers who it is hoped will keep things going for the next 50! The guest of honour for the evening was Alan White of TA White & Sons.

In his after-dinner speech Museum Chairman Graham Bilbé recalled significant moments from the Museum's history, including the first operation of trolleybuses under overhead and the first operation from mains power, as well as the Reading event in 1978 when 113 ran for the first time in 17 years. He also thanked Alan White for the considerable assistance provided by White's for many years, particularly in allowing their land to be used without charge for larger events such as the Gala and for Sandtoft Gathering.

Graham then introduced the Museum's President, Bob Rowe, who paid tribute to the volunteers who are responsible for the Museum's success and to those who have made significant contributions in the past but are no longer with us. On behalf of the Board of Directors, Bob surprised two volunteers by presenting them with awards for outstanding service. Jim Sambrooks first visited the Museum site soon after it was purchased and then came back as one of the first volunteers. He moved to the area and over the last fifty years has made a significant contribution to the running and development of the Museum in a number of different roles, including several years as a Board member and now as Workshop Superintendent.

Finance and Development Director Francis Whitehead has been a member of the Board or the management committee for all but seven of the last fifty years and has project managed or played a leading role in many major projects.

After this Cherryll Crowther brought out the cake she had baked to commemorate the event and it was cut up and served to anyone who still had room!

This was a very special evening, helped by the quality of the food and the service, which drew many complimentary remarks. Thanks are due to Mel and her team at the Reindeer for their hard work and for making everyone feel so welcome.

On Monday we did it all over again! This time, in addition to running 17 different trolleybuses, another three ran on demonstration. The Carris Regent III was on show all day and operated a few circuits in service. We had again started the day by thinking that it could be quiet, having had so many visitors over the previous two days and with competition from the Epworth Show just down the road, but the number of visitors was only a little short of the previous day's total.

The trolleybuses in service every day were: Bradford 746 and 792, Doncaster 375, Huddersfield 541, 619 and 631, Limoges 5, London 1348, Maidstone 72, Manchester 1344, Nottingham 506, Reading 113, 144, 181 and 193, South Shields 204 and the Cedex. The three trolleybuses which operated demonstration runs on Monday were: Bournemouth 297, Glasgow TB78 and Wellington 82. 297 had similarly operated on Sunday.

Trolleybus ridership increased every day, with 47 service trips and 637 passenger journeys recorded on Saturday, 45 service trips and 859 passenger journeys on Sunday, then 1,042 passenger journeys on 56 service trips on Monday.

Over the three days we received more than 750 visitors. Almost 50 volunteers helped to provide our visitors with a memorable day out and several more were involved in the preparation.

This event has done a great deal to raise the Museum's profile and reputation. Very many visitors told us how much they had enjoyed themselves and social media has been awash with photos of the event and positive comments. Here are a couple of typical examples, quoted by permission:

***"You should all be very proud of what you achieved this weekend. Not only a hugely impressive turnout of vehicles running, but the displays were brilliant - great that most things were easy to view and photograph! Some bigger organisations could probably take some pointers from you guys! Thanks for a superb and well organised event."*** Andrew Waddington

***"Although it was over 20 years since my last visit I felt immediately at home thanks to the friendly staff. The collection is a credit to all involved, not to mention all the hard work that obviously went in to staging the weekend."*** Alan Robson

Everyone who had any involvement in planning, preparing or running the weekend's events should feel proud of their achievement. The Museum's second half-century has started in great style!



*Bob Rowe presents awards to Jim Sambrooks. (DC)*

*Cherryll Crowther with the 50th anniversary cake. (DC)*

*Carris 255 in service on Sunday. (DC)*



# Sandtoft at Fifty

*A Personal Perspective from John Francis*

I cannot claim to have been at Sandtoft exactly 50 years ago, but it wasn't very long after that the West Riding Transport Society brought its first trolleybus to Sandtoft and that's when I started to come every Sunday with the W.R.T.S 'Working Parties'.

I grew up in Bradford, was enthusiastic about cars, then lorries and finally buses and trolleybuses in particular. By the time I left junior school at 11 I was a diehard trolleybus enthusiast.

The late Dave Roberts and I were picked up at Chester Street Bus Station in Bradford in a variety of vehicles over the years and were happy to carry out whatever work we were asked to do. When the WRTS brought Nottingham 506 it needed a lot of work and for a while it was my project. All the windows had been broken by vandals whilst it was stored at Ingrow on the Worth Valley Railway. New glass had been bought but it needed to be fitted. I fitted all the windows on the upper and lower saloons, a mammoth task.

I was there when Edgley Cox planted the first traction pole, when the first trolleybus ran under power (I recently unearthed the ticket for that momentous occasion). I was at the first Gathering, for which I still have the programme, and many other firsts.

I was a regular and committed member of the working parties until 1974 when I went off to Polytechnic to get a degree.

Between 1974 and 2018 I was a sporadic visitor, getting to as many of the Gatherings as I could, but moving about the country following my career was less than conducive to visiting.

Whilst surfing the internet early last year I discovered that it was possible to have a Trolleybus Driving Experience so that was my birthday present for 2018 and to say I was excited is an understatement. I wasn't quite sure what to expect but was sure that my time behind the wheel would be quite limited based on other experiences I have attended. Not so, I had more than sufficient driving time to satisfy me and I'm not easily satisfied.

For the last 9 years of my working life I was a professional off-road Driving Instructor and have had a lot of training on how to teach. Richard Jackson is an excellent instructor and, like me, has very high standards. The other members of the TDE team were also great.

Whilst in the cab I said to Richard that I expected that they were 'stowed out' with volunteers and was surprised when he replied that they often struggled. Well, that was it. In April of this year I passed out as Conductor and am absolutely loving every minute of it. Next year I hope to qualify as a Driver, but if I do I will still want to conduct as well.

I have been surprised by the number of people who I knew in the old days who still regularly attend and am looking forward to meeting more who, I understand, still visit.

Returning to Sandtoft as a regular and committed volunteer in its 50th year seems quite fitting and I am proud to, once again, be part of it.

# Vehicle Preservation Reports

Contributors: Graham Bilbe, David Hanchett, Keith Hopkinson, Jim Sambrooks, Geoff Welburn and Francis Whitehead

## Trolleybuses

### Cleethorpes 54

Andy Fieldsend has finished painting the light blue gloss and has made a start on painting the advert panels. Some test running occurred before the 50th Anniversary Gala Weekend but unfortunately a serious air leak from the nearside brake cylinder prevented getting anywhere near a satisfactory brake result: it appears a new leather seal may be needed - not difficult, but the necessary parts were not to hand; this, combined with the lack of a horn at present prevented no.54 from being demonstrated - a great pity, given all the work done on no.54 by Andy over a significant part of the past 50 years!

### Derby 175 and Grimsby Cleethorpes 159

Visitors to the Museum over the 50th Anniversary Gala Weekend were able to see these vehicles, as the chapel at Westgate was open for a rare opportunity to view the vehicles stored there.

### Glasgow TB78

TB78 made a demonstration run at the 50th Anniversary Gala Weekend, the first time under the wires for a while. The rear platform requires some rotten wood and perished rubber "nosing" to be replaced before passenger service can be considered. It is also intended to try and resolve the suspension lubrication problems before returning it to service. 3D printing is being investigated as an option to procure some new interior vent grilles.

### Keighley 0 (the Cedex replica)

Some problems have been experienced with some of the many 5mm diameter machine screws that hold the two halves of the hub motors together working loose - there are 18 of these to each wheel. Locking washers have been fitted behind them to try to resolve this. The endeavour appears to have worked with the front wheels but not satisfactorily with the rear ones, which are subjected to much greater loading due to the rear overhang. Other methods are being considered to resolve this issue in the longer term; in the meantime, regular checking is taking place whilst we await the detailed construction drawings from the Czech Republic. The controller handle has also

required some lubrication to prevent binding, but in other respects, no.0 performs remarkably well.

### London Transport 1348

Two new 11.00x 20.00 tyres have been fitted as the previous ones have suffered from "three-axle-itus" - the inevitable tyre scrubbing wear that three axle vehicles experience when performing sharp turns such as those in Sandtoft Square.

### Mexborough & Swinton 34

With the depot almost clear of vehicles, Mexborough & Swinton 34 was available to photograph for the first time in some while at the 50th Anniversary Gala Weekend.

### Nottingham 493

No.493 was on display in the workshop during the 50th Anniversary Gala Weekend to show how/ where we maintain vehicles. The plan was to test no.493 before the weekend but time ran out.

### Nottingham 506

Replacement tyres have been fitted to the front axle and the carbon stains removed from the rear of this fine trolleybus. These stains are caused by carbon dust from the trolleyheads accumulating on the rear dome and panelling below. Indeed, a deep clean of the vehicle has taken place inside and out. On the Saturday of the 50th Anniversary Gala Weekend, a flat rear near-side tyre occurred: sterling efforts by Graham Bilbé saw the tube replaced before breakfast on Sunday morning for fault free running for the rest of the weekend.

### Reading 113

No.113 arrived back from a re-paint at around midday on the day before the 50th Anniversary Gala Weekend: the engineering team quickly leapt into action, re-fitting half-shafts, untying booms, checking oil levels, and doing a brake test to ensure it could enter service on the Saturday. Despite changing a seal to the compressor shut-off valve last year, there is still an air leak, although sufficient pressure is maintained to operate the brakes efficiently and this allowed the resplendent no.113 to run on all three of the Gala days. It is planned to try and cure the leak in time for the 2 & 3 November Reading themed Trolleydays.



View on the roof of one of the corroded vent units after part removal (DS)



A newly-fabricated replacement roof vent (DS)



Sharon Taylor hard at work rubbing down no.113's old paintwork (DS)

No.113 had been towed from Sandtoft to Darren Sentance's Penistone premises for a long-awaited repaint on Monday, 15 July. Ian Metcalfe had prepared it for the tow by taking out the half-shafts and tying down the trolleybooms. Darren quickly identified that one reason that no.113 leaks is that the roof-mounted vents had corroded to the point that three out of the four needed to be replaced and one could be weld-repaired; fortunately, a car restoration firm operates from an adjacent unit to Darren and fabricated replacements and effected repairs. A cracked window on the nearside upper deck has also been replaced.

The BTS had already agreed to re-vamp no.113's advertisements and reinstate the advertisements that the trolleybus had carried in 1961 when the Society had bought it. Darren was able to introduce the BTS to a signwriter, Wayne Westwood. This was good news, as Reading Corporation had always had signwritten advertisements as opposed to paper ones (vinyls hadn't been invented in those days!), so everything was falling into place in a most satisfactory fashion! BTS archivist, Dave Hall did the necessary research to feed Francis Whitehead (who was co-ordinating work) with photographs and colour details for all the required advertisements, whilst Francis dug around on the internet to find artwork origination for such as the CWS badge and the Clarks (the shoe manufacturer) brand style before a complete detailed schedule of the requirements was compiled and sent to Darren (who had agreed to paint the background colours) and Wayne (to prepare his full-scale artwork). The last bit of the jigsaw was transfers: Mike Russell, who looks after the collection of Reading transfers on behalf of all the owners of preserved Reading 'buses, managed to find all that were required for no.113 (but not before the bottom of the big box containing the transfers had disintegrated and deposited the contents all over the floor - reportedly, it took Mike 36 hours to sort out the mess and collate them all into types and numerical order ...).

The preparation of no.113's exterior by Darren and partner, Sharon Taylor, and the painting all went well, as did the signwriting, albeit the latter meant burning the midnight oils to get it all done in time to return no.113 to Sandtoft for the Gala Weekend. The platform and staircase area, and some maroon in the cab, have also been freshened up with a quick preparation and gloss. We will leave you to judge how good a job has been done overall - everyone we have spoken to are well pleased ... nay, delighted, but Darren keeps spotting bits he would like to correct. There's no pleasing some people!

### Reading 174

174 is currently out of service having developed a serious leak from the rear end of the forward differential. Jim Sambrooks and crew have been at work to fix this but had to call in help from "the heavyweights" at Steve's Commercials after Jim had broken both ends of a 3/16" Whitworth combination spanner just trying to undo the prop shaft bolts and failing to budge the flange nut aft of the forward differential. Steve managed to slacken the offending flange nut with a torque multiplying spanner. At first it was thought that the felt sealing ring would adjust enough to stop the leak, but it was found to be too badly worn and another will have to be sourced. At the time of writing, the search for a replacement was still on; if successful, it is expected that no.174 will be serviceable again, hopefully in time for the 2 & 3 November Reading themed Trolleydays.

### Rotherham 37

Attempts have been made to rectify a hand brake efficiency problem, but more radical work appears to be necessary to achieve the required result. Other jobs have been carried out in preparation for no.37's "MoT" test but unfortunately, time precluded the vital hand brake repairs being tackled in time for this fine trolleybus to be available to operate over the 50th Anniversary Gala Weekend.

### South Yorkshire 2450

The painstaking work on this vehicle has now moved from principally electronic to electrical in nature. It has been found that the uppermost motor brush springs (at least) have rusted through so these have been replaced, and due to various other components in the way, it is extremely difficult to access the other brush mountings and it is now being contemplated that the traction motor will need to be taken out - such are the problems of it being a prototype design. The vehicle has been thoroughly cleaned.



A view through the top inspection panel of the traction motor casing on South Yorkshire 2450. What remains of the commutator brush springs can be clearly seen.

### Wellington 82

No.82 ran on demonstration only at the 50th Anniversary Gala Weekend. It was prevented from running in service as the door opening/ closing control buttons in the cab are defective; the engineering team are considering how best to solve this problem.

## Motorbuses

### Bradford 558

The interior advert holder brackets and the saloon light bezels were all removed because of their condition. All 20 bezels have been cleaned and repaired, along with the 32 advert holder brackets which have now been sanded down. Their removal enabled the ceilings to be prepared and painted more conveniently. A source of blue material for covering the interior side panels is underway. All the dark wood trims around the windows have been removed and are being rubbed down and repaired before re-varnishing at home.

### Doncaster 22

Usage of engine oil is still causing some concern following an engine rebuild. The vehicle has managed to attend a few local rallies. It ran in service on all three days of the 50th Anniversary Gala Weekend.

### Doncaster 33

An operator in Nottinghamshire is now working for DO&LRS on the vehicle's engine problems.

### Doncaster 55

The fuel system has had a lot of attention and a replacement water pump has been fitted. The vehicle has been to Penistone for Darren Sentance to prepare and repaint the exterior. As to be expected, it now looks resplendent in its new red/ purple/ white paintwork.

### Doncaster 94

The bonnet has been refitted, the fuel system problem has been rectified such that it is now running on fuel from the new tank. The brake atmospheric valve has seen much adjustment from Mike Hirst: as a result, the vacuum leak appears to have stopped, but further work to the brakes is still required.

### Doncaster 112

Visitors to the Museum over the 50th Anniversary Gala Weekend were able to see this vehicle in the chapel at Westgate, where it is stored.

### Felix Motors 41

This 1960 AEC Reliance with Roe DP41F bodywork and an AEC 470 (7.75 litre) engine has been purchased from the Felix Preservation Society by Mark Boulton. Mark is expecting to move his acquisition to undercover accommodation for it to be worked on, but hopes the finished product can return to the Trolleybus Museum in the future. No doubt, Mark will be providing Sandtoft Scene with progress reports as time goes on.

### Douglas 52

This Museum-owned utility Daimler makes a welcome return to these pages: its original preservation owner, Graham Rhodes, has started work on the body, initially cleaning it, but once the bus is moved to a more accessible place in the depot, a full inspection will take place. Plans are also afoot with Mike Hirst to get the engine running and the braking system fully overhauled.

### London RT3323

The air unloader valve has been stripped, cleaned and refitted by John Petch; it now builds up air properly. The bus has benefited from a good clean internally.



# 50 Anniversary

1969 2019



## RUNNING DAYS IN 2019

Open 10.30am - 4.30pm unless stated otherwise

### Weekend Trolleydays

*remembering past autumns in Reading*

Saturday 2 November

Sunday 3 November



### Twilight & After Dark Trolleyday

*- with twilight & after-dark trolleybus operation*

Saturday 16 November

Open 10.30am - 6.00pm



denotes Isle Coaches service 291 11.00am departure from Doncaster Interchange Bay C5, connects with free Museum bus at Epworth. Return at 4.20pm to connect at Epworth with Isle Coaches service 399 to Doncaster (where it is timetabled to arrive at 5.45pm).

### 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). **NOTE:** Additional journeys will run on Sandtoft Gathering Day (Sunday, 28 July) & on Isle of Axholme Running & Rally Day (20 October) - visit [www.sandtoft.org](http://www.sandtoft.org) for times

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

Adult £8.00 Senior (61+) £7.00 Concession £6.00 Family (2 Adults + up to 4 Concessions) £25.50

**On days shown on dark red background:** Adult £10.00 Senior (61+) £8.50 Concession £6.50 Family £29.50



For full details, visit [www.sandtoft.org](http://www.sandtoft.org)