

Sandtoft Scene

September 2021

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NEWS & VIEWS FROM
The Trolleybus Museum
AT SANDTOFT



Sandtoft Scene

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Front Cover Picture

Manchester 1344 in service during the late May bank holiday, with Cedes-Stoll replica and Nottingham 506 on display in the background (PM).

Photography

Photographs in this issue have been kindly provided by: Bob Ashton, Tony Belton, Graham Bilbe, Ian Brown, Paul Morfitt, Darren Sentance, Andy Thornton, Keith Weir.

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It's good to be back!

After 18 months enforced hiatus due to the pandemic, we were delighted to reopen our doors to the public at the end of May. Visitor numbers have been steadily increasing, as our luck has been holding against the vagaries of British weather.

You'll see features in this edition of our first two open days, and looking forward there is an exciting schedule of events in the coming months, including the BTS 60th anniversary celebration at the end of August, Models weekend in September, the Isle of Axholme Rally in October, and the season closing Twilight evening running day in November.

As restrictions have lifted we have been able to relax some of the precautions put in place to prevent transmission of Covid. However, we are continuing with some protocols to keep us all safe - for example we will continue to ask visitors and staff (unless exempt) to mask up indoors and when riding on vehicles, and the plastic screens which have been installed in the Reception and other facilities on site will remain in place. The Board are keeping these measures under constant review - check our website and Facebook page for details.



News from the *Virtual* Boardroom

Covid-19 & the 2021 Season

On May we were able to reopen our doors to visitors once again. Although visitor attendance figures were down when compared to a usual Bank Holiday weekend, we were pleased to see a good number of volunteers and visitors onsite at long last.

The additional safety precautions we put in place due to the pandemic seemed to work well and subject to some minor tweaks will remain in place until more Government guidance is available on the next stage in moving out of lockdown.

There was a huge amount of time and effort needed to get the site and vehicles, attractions and visitor facilities ready for reopening and as usual our team of volunteers did a great job. A huge vote of thanks goes out to everyone involved.

2020 AGM

Unfortunately, the Government's decision to delay the next stage in the roadmap out of lockdown prevented us from holding the delayed AGM in June.

Due to this delay and commitments over the summer the earliest date on which we could hold a meeting would be September. Bearing that in mind Board has now decided the most pragmatic approach is not to attempt to arrange a delayed 2020 AGM.

The 2021 AGM is due to take place on 21 November 2021 at the Reindeer Inn, Sandtoft.

Broadband/Security Project Update

In the last edition of Scene we reported on a project to get broadband on site to facilitate a new security system, replace our tills and card readers and replace our fire alert system. This project has now been completed and Museums Development Yorkshire has awarded us with a grant to help out with the cost of new tills. We are grateful to John Francis for progressing this.

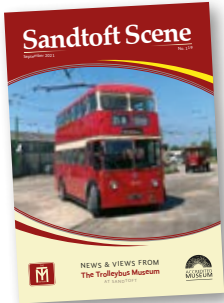
We are not yet able to offer free Wi-Fi access on site but any volunteers who use the Broadband access when onsite must remember to comply with the requirements set out in our IT Policy. A copy of the Policy is available in the Members Area of our website. If you do not currently have access to the Members area please contact Chas Allen and he will set you up. You can email Chas using callen@sandtoft.org

Annual Accounts

We have recently had a query from a Member about why all Members do not automatically receive a paper copy of the Annual Accounts. For several years, due to the costs involved in printing and posting out copies to around 500 Members, the approach has been to provide an electronic copy in the Members Area on the website, send out a paper copy on request and make paper copies available at the AGM. When the 2020/21 accounts are finalised later this year the Board intends to follow the same approach but where we hold an email address for you they will be sent as a pdf attachment. If you don't think we have an up-to-date email address for you please contact our membership secretary using membership@sandtoft.org to update our records.

Following publication a paper copy of the accounts will be available for inspection on the Museum site.

Museum Logo



You may have noticed that in March the Board agreed a subtle change to the logo that we use on the publicity, policies and correspondence produced by the Museum.

When you visit us on an open day don't forget to visit our refurbished shop where you can now buy items with our new branding on them to take home and use to promote our unique Museum to friends and family. The Board is grateful to our Trolleyshop manager Mark Boulton for his work on improving the shop.

Disposal of Westgate and North Depot Update

The sale of Westgate completed on 4 June. The Board now has sufficient funds in place to progress the construction of the North Depot without impacting on the general fund. Before starting work on the building the Board is exploring the use of a slightly different building design and establishing whether this will require additional permissions from the local planning authority.

COP 26 - Dundee Museum of Transport

In the last edition of Scene we mentioned that Wellington 82 would be making a trip to Dundee as part of the COP 26 conference. Due to a change of plans by the event organisers W82 will now be staying at Sandtoft.

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS



We are currently seeking enthusiastic volunteers to fill the following positions at the Museum.

Catering Assistants

Working to our Catering Manager this role supports the effective delivery of our catering activities on public open days and occasional private events. Retail experience is an advantage but not essential as full training can be provided.

Fundraising Manager

Working to and supporting our Financial Director this new and important role will be responsible for managing and developing our fundraising activities to support future and current projects at, or for, the Museum. Much of this activity can be undertaken away from the museum site and good communication and administration skills and experience would be an advantage.

If you would like to know more about either of these volunteering roles please contact Stewart David, HR Director, for further information.

Open Days are here again!

*By Helen Cross
Photos by
Paul Morfitt
and Keith Weir.*





A small section of the many members of Lincolnshire Louth Motor Club's Classic Section displayed on Sunday May 30th, at the first public opening of the museum.



After eighteen months, it was heartening to see visitors return to the Museum at the end of May.

Although site work has been allowed since 12 April, a considerable working party onsite in the week prior ensured the significant progress made since our enforced closure was accelerated, including the engineering staff checking the roadworthiness of the trolleybuses which were due to be used: London 1344, Manchester 1344, Bournemouth 297 and Bradford 746. More detail on the weekday workers' progress can be found in Jim Sambrooks' separate report.

On Saturday the museum doors opened for members only – the rationale being that we would be able to test our covid protocols and ensure we could keep the public, and our staff, safe. All visitors are given a leaflet with details of the precautions we are taking, and staff are briefed before every open day.

Changes include new Perspex screens at reception, in the café and shop, and one way systems in some of our buildings where passages are tight. A new payment system has been introduced so that card payments can be taken at every till, and there are hand sanitizing points around the museum.

On Sunday, our doors opened even wider as we welcomed the general public back to the museum - we also enjoyed a visit from the Lincolnshire Louth Motor Club who provided a display of classic cars on the centre grass. The weekend was well attended but not hectic, which meant that there was plenty of space for visitors and no need to queue.

I can even report that the sun graced us with regular appearances on this first open weekend, a trend that I hope will continue for the rest of this special opening season!



Sandtoft Cinema Manager

by Dave Hall

Some years ago, it became was becoming obvious that a number of enthusiasts' negatives and slides were being lost once they had passed away, either thrown away by family members not knowing their worth or have just disappeared into a black hole. I was determined to change that and for over 10 years now I have had the co-operation of many enthusiasts who have allowed me to scan their collections.

I had two aims in mind. One was to provide a collection that would be useful for those intending to publish books, especially Trolleybooks, and also the British Trolleybus Society (BTS) monthly journal Trolleybus. The other was to be able to present film shows at Sandtoft as an additional attraction.

Once scanned, the copyright remains with the owner and is not passed around to other people to use without their permission. I am very strict on this as I have the trust of those who have lent me their collections. Some enthusiasts have donated their collections to the BTS.

Over the last few years I have presented a number of film shows in The Regal Cinema at Sandtoft, including the history of Sandtoft

and digital film shows of various systems where an anniversary of their demise came up.

Earlier this year the Sandtoft Board appointed me to the post of Cinema Manager. A new computer was purchased as the old one could not cope with the sort of presentations I wished to do.

Since Sandtoft reopened in May, I have compiled digital film shows of 20 UK trolleybus systems, with still much work to do to be able to cover them all. Ideally, I would also like to show cine films too, but I only have 3 systems covered. My aim is to eventually provide a variety of different themes such as how a trolleybus works, the history of Sandtoft, the history of trolleybus preservation generally as well as the film shows of the different systems in the UK.



If you have any cine film you would be happy for me to copy and show at Sandtoft, I would be delighted to hear from you. I can be contacted at:

wiltshireman@aol.com or write to me at
9 Hanover Court, Fieldfare, Swindon, SN3 5BG.

Calling Former Trolleybus Staff!

by Dave Hall

Back in 2017 I visited some former Reading Corporation Transport drivers/conductors, engineering staff and an overhead linesman, to record their memories of working with trolleybuses. The aim was to get an idea of the different aspects of life working with them, such as a booking on procedure, the shifts worked, a typical day as well as many wonderful stories of life in general working with trolleybuses.

These recordings are now safely stored in the Reading Museum collection and will also be shared with Sandtoft so that people can listen to them.

What I would like to do now is record more trolleybus crews and engineering staff from other UK systems in much the same way as I did in Reading.

Do you know any former staff that would be prepared to be interviewed for this project? If so, please contact me at **wiltshireman@aol.com** or write to me at **9 Hanover Court, Fieldfare, Swindon, SN3 5BG.**



At Last! We're Back Again

by Eric Challoner. photos by Ian Brown, Graham Bilbe and Andy Thornton

After being out of action since 3rd November 2019 we are now truly back again! Finally, we are doing what we all love; putting our wonderful trolleybuses back in action to entertain visitors, enthusiasts and members alike. Are we enjoying it once more, you bet we are!



During the pandemic many of us have been getting more and more frustrated at not being able to partake in the running of our museum; something that gives us all so much pleasure. It has been a tough time not just for the Museum, but for many of our members too. This was not helped by the false start last summer when we could have opened but for the lack of volunteers able to assist. This because many of our number had to self-isolate for health reasons. But enough of this negativity!



There was of course, the odd hiccup to contend with, including one overhead frog that threw a brief 'wobbly' and the bell on Doncaster trolleybus 375 that could not decide whether to work or not. Fortunately, two of the conductors had whistles to hand and these were used in lieu of bell signals for a short time until the wiring terminal problem could be solved, but at the end of the day, that is half the fun! These elderly vehicles keep us on our toes, and in a strange way that is what makes us love them so much, with all their characteristic eccentricities.

Our second public opening weekend was held over Saturday 19th and Sunday 20th June. Of course, it will take time for numbers to swell as visitors steadily begin to venture out once more, but there can be no doubt that the second weekend was a great success. Everyone appeared to enjoy themselves and even the rain held off, deigning to come down only overnight on the Saturday, to the relief of all.



At twelve-noon on the Sunday, there was a special trip around the circuit by two trolleybuses to commemorate the first trackless vehicle service



in the country, starting at the same time, some 110 years earlier by the Leeds and Bradford authorities; the jury is still out to this day on just which system was the very first to operate. The vehicles used for the special trip were the Cedex-Stoll replica and Bradford 746.

To enhance the event, three other Bradford trolleys, 706, 792 and 834 – not currently in service – were parked out on the grass for visitors and enthusiast alike to enjoy. Service trolleybuses over the two days were Bradford 746, London 1348, Doncaster 375 and Bournemouth 297. They were joined at certain times during the Sunday by two visiting preserved motorbuses; London Transport Routemaster RML 2645 and a former Devon General Bristol VR double decker, in a later livery to the well-known deep crimson version that we are used to seeing.

The popular Isle of Axholme tours also returned to operation during the weekend and considering that we have only just started up again, they appeared reasonably well patronised. All in all, the weekend was very successful with an upbeat atmosphere and smiles all round. What else could you ask for!

Our June open weekend saw a special visit from former trolleybus driver Paul Coulman, who drove in Doncaster from 1959, where he also met his wife Valerie, who worked as a clippie.

Mr Coulman brought along his daughter, granddaughters, grandson-in-law, and great grandchildren to visit the Trolleybus Museum, and enjoyed a ride on Doncaster 375.



Early Days at Sandtoft

by Jean Flint

With thanks to Jim Sambrooks and Mike Hirst for providing this reproduction article, and Bob Ashton for "skulking around with a camera" so long ago!



Jim says: Newer members may not know that Sandtoft Scene wasn't published until 1987, prior to that "Scene at Sandtoft" was published in the magazines of the contributing Societies. I believe that current Sandtoft members will enjoy reading the article by Jean Flint which accompanies this message and was first published in Fleet lines, the magazine of the Doncaster Omnibus & Light Railway Society in December 1985. Jean was the widow of Les Flint, Chairman and founder member of DO&LRS and a very active member at Sandtoft from the earliest days.

I first became aware of Sandtoft in the early part of 1969, when Les began behaving slightly more oddly than usual. He kept driving out to the edge of Lincolnshire and stopping on an anonymous road beside the remains of a World War II airfield. We'd sit in the car and he'd peer intently to the north. After several moments' scrutiny, the conversation would go as follows:

Les would say, **"Doesn't look as though they'll ever start a trolleybus museum on there, does it?"**

Me, **"No."**

Les, **"There's supposed to be going to be one"**

Me, **"Is there?"**

Les, **"Mmm, - chap called Mick Dare, got some trolleybuses in the chapel at Belton."**

Me, **"Mmm."**

Then we'd drive away. We did this for several weeks, until one day we thought we saw some post-holes for an Atcost type building. The next time we went there was a frame... And the next time Les went there was 1) a building 2) Graham Rhodes and 3) Bradford 410. Les drove me out post-haste to view these, altogether remarkable phenomena. Graham was driving 410 along the front of the depot and leaned out to speak to us before going on to park up. He was small, neat and

short haired and I remember saying to Les that he wouldn't be travelling on public roads with Graham as it was (and still is) illegal for 17 year olds to drive buses. Graham finally did convince me that he was actually 22, but he practically had to produce his birth certificate.

So began the first year at Sandtoft. It would be impossible for most present day visitors, and some workers to imagine the general appearance of the site in 1969/70 (though there are some photos). There was a small concrete apron in front of the depot, partly covered in top soil. We (i.e. Les, me, Graham, Fred Ivey from London, Dick Goodall of Notts and Derby and Robert Ashton) started to shovel it away at weekends, and discovered... more concrete! So we shovelled some more and that's how we discovered the present day entrance to the site.

Mind you we hadn't found it the day Pete Goddard's intrepid mum first drove him down for a look and, since we promised him a lift back to town, she set off home. The technique was to pick a bit of grass verge you fancied and try to get on to it from the (then) lower level of the airfield. Her rather nice yellow Triumph insisted on straddling the slope and making helpless noises. I still treasure the memory of Pete, Robert, Les Dick and Graham lifting it bodily and dumping it on to the road, where it began to behave like a proper



Triumph again and disappeared rapidly. Mrs Goddard was extremely kind in those very early days and used to arrive with numerous flasks of tea and not a little sympathy for our self-inflicted plight.

Probably the best of several good summers which I personally enjoyed at Sandtoft was the one when we planted the poles for the first small running circle. I'm not quite into the technical details of pole planting, but the antics that summer were hilarious. Especially in retrospect without the presence of the perennial Sandtoft wind. I think someone had dug a few intended pole holes the previous summer on the back straight, furthest away from the depot. These promptly filled to the brim with water and were abandoned! So, one summer Sunday, LF and his merry men (and resigned women) dug an exploratory hole intended to house the first pole, which was scheduled to be ceremonially "planted" a fortnight or so later by Mr. Edgely-Cox, who at that time presided over

Walsall's real trolleybus system. The pole-planting ceremony was going to be precisely like a Royal tree planting, only the Queen shovels earth on these occasions and Mr. Edgely-Cox had kindly agreed to shovel concrete instead for Sandtoft. So we dug our hole and retired to the box wagon, where everybody had coffee and / or a fag and then, suitably refreshed, we trooped back to view our handiwork... and it was only half full of water. I seem to remember some semi-serious discussion about the state of the tide at Goole. Certainly the water table at Sandtoft seems a little high at times. Unless, as somebody else suggested, the fact that there was no loo at Sandtoft had any bearing on the matter.

Actually, planting a pole requires a pole auger, which is rather like a large corkscrew, and a team of men who slot a horizontal rod into the top of it and then, carefully grasping the rod, they tread round in a circle, a bit like oxen working an Egyptian irrigation

wheel. Invariably there were choral incantations like “keep it straight” “shove” “a bit further” and finally and triumphantly “Right, Raise it!” To raise it, one of the pole-gang fixed the crane hook into the auger top and bawled “Right”. This was the cue for me, Jane Roberts, Sue Penny or any other devoted (and slightly daft?) female to wind the winch on the crane and bring out a neat core of earth, which we then swung aside and dumped on the grass. That was women’s lib, that was!

It took about twelve weekends to plant the poles. The main gang was composed of DO&LRS members – Les, of course, plus Bob Ashton, Don and Sue Penny, John Law, Jim Sambrooks and a good many more whose names I can’t now recall. There were also, intermittently, members of the Mansfield group, mainly Dick Goodall, John Peck and Tim Moore. Naturally, a crowd like that doing an all day job needed feeding. The Catering Corps was generally Sue, Irene and me. We reckoned we could easily feed the five thousand – provided they’d have chips with everything! This suggestion was rapturously received and so, every weekend, Robert brought his decorating table and set it up outside the box wagon (he could spare it because he’d no time for decorating anyway) and there was our canteen with 2 or 3 camp stoves and chip pans. We had some combination of eggs beans, sausages, tomatoes and chips for at least 12 solid weekends – at the end of which time some of us were slightly more solid than we had been. I reckon Les and I both put on half a stone, which we didn’t lose until 1977, when we went on a diet before our silver wedding party.

We always had our Alsatian (oops – German Shepherd dog) Timber with us at Sandtoft. He was about 18 months old that summer and his hunting instincts were becoming developed. As several members of the pole planting team can personally testify, Timber became imbued with the idea that a crowd of people (i.e. 5 or 6) running in the same direction, or pushing a trolleybus, motorbus, tower wagon or winch, constituted a herd, and furthermore that it was his absolute duty to control this herd and prevent any member from straying or lagging. His technique was startlingly simple... he bit their bottoms – quite hard! Anyway I now, if never before, offer my thanks to all those lads who were scarred for life by our enthusiastic dog and who very kindly forgave him (and us). I wonder how they explained

the scars to later girlfriends and wives and whether they were ever believed?

Talking of bottoms, there was the day when we had to move several poles from one end of the back straight to the other. Poles are distinctly heavy. You can’t just tuck one under each arm, so imagine instead a line of people kneeling along the length of a pole and rolling it over and over, chasing it on hands and knees across the road. Imagine also Robert Ashton and John Law skulking about with camera behind the people doing the heavy work!

Another weekend one of our members drove the tower wagon all day. We pole planted and ate chips, sausages etc. in our, by then, standard fashion and at about 9pm we finished poles and food for that day. So our member drove the tower wagon off to put it away. He drove neatly off the back straight, turned right for the depot and accelerated away to a rising chorus of “Jack” (I think that may have been his name), “Jack, JACK!... OOH!” as the tower, which he had forgotten to lower, went slap-bang into Sandtoft’s simple span wire erected only the previous weekend by Andy Feather, Gerald Whitley & Co., of the Bradford group.

Keeping a wary eye open for a herding German Shepherd dog, we sprinted en masse after the wagon to view the scene. The wire looked... er... a little damaged. One end was still attached to a pole, but the other had come adrift and wrapped itself around the tower, and there were bits of broken insulators lying all around. The general opinion was that Andy & Co would probably not be “game for a laugh”. Consequently, we reasoned, somebody had better turn into an overhead linesman... quick, and Robert Ashton duly obliged. With the active help of one or two other DO&LRS members in the tower wagon and encouraging shouts “Haven’t you finished yet... its eleven o’clock?” from everybody else and assisted by continuous supplies of coffee he got the span-wire back where it belonged. It took until midnight and it possibly was not quite how its creators had left it, but at any rate, we escaped from being strung up from it next time we met the overhead line gang.

By the end of the season the poles for the first small running circle had been planted and activity slowed down for the winter, leaving me with some enduringly amusing memories.

Johannesburg 589



“...Give Us A Push!”

The October 1973 photograph, taken by Tony Belton on a Thursday afternoon (when nannies had an afternoon off) is of, of all trolleybuses, no.589 heading for central Johannesburg during a power supply interruption in a section of overhead: clearly, nothing stops nannies having their time off!

The long, long job to restore our Johannesburg trolleybus no.589 back to its former glory is progressing to a new and exciting phase. The chassis and mechanical components have been overhauled, many of its electrical units have been refurbished, the all-metal body structure that had seriously corroded away over the years has been a complex task requiring meticulous attention to authentically re-build it and now work has turned to the fitting out process incorporating scrupulous detail to “get it right”. We estimate that no.589’s restoration is now around 80% complete.

All this work – and repatriating no.589 from South Africa in the first place – has been paid for entirely through kind donations from enthusiasts (many of whom are not TM@S members) and from businesses. In fact, incoming money to date (including associated Gift Aid tax reclaims and bank interest) is teetering on £300,000 - a staggering figure unequalled, we think, anywhere in trolleybus preservation.

What is so special about this trolleybus? Primarily, it is the only preserved representative in this country of the hundreds of double deck trolleybuses that were UK-designed and exported: as such, it tells that part of the story of the British trolleybus – a product of sound British engineering. But no.589 has other attributes. It spent over 26 years in service; it is one of the first BUT trolleybuses to be built (early 1948); its handsome MCCW body was provided in

kit form and assembled in Port Elizabeth by MCCW subsidiary, Bus Bodies (South Africa) Ltd. It was one of the replacements for Johannesburg’s pre-war AEC trolleybus order that was frustrated by WW2 and diverted to London Transport to become their SA3 class; no.589 is virtually identical to the SA3s.

Although work has been able to continue on no.589 throughout 2020, our fundraising has been badly hit by the Covid-19 pandemic so hasn’t kept pace as planned with the work. We know so well that money is tight for many because of the lockdowns, and most businesses, however sympathetic, have been badly affected and aren’t able to give money to charities at present. With getting no.589 finished now clearly in sight, we don’t want to stop the good work so please, **GIVE US A PUSH** and make a donation to help 589 on its way.

Whatever you can afford will be gladly welcomed and acknowledged. Cheques should be made payable to “The Johannesburg 589 Fund” and sent to Francis Whitehead at 31 Mount Pleasant, Hildenborough, Tonbridge, TN11 9JQ, you can email Francis at fwhitehead@sandtoft.org for bank details if you want to pay either a single or a monthly contribution direct into the dedicated Johannesburg 589 Fund bank account or you can hand cash over to Financial Director John Francis at the Museum on Trolleydays.

Go on, please **GIVE US A PUSH** and let’s see if we can join together to raise £25,000 for this exciting stage of no.589’s restoration! THANK YOU.

More Vehicle News

Compiled by **Francis Whitehead** with input from **Graham Bilbé**

General: In recent months, the Museum's team of trolleybus inspectors has been busy, effectively trying to catch up on the cycle of vehicle inspection, testing and servicing that was disrupted by Covid-19.

A few trolleybuses had been tested by Graham Bilbé, assisted by Ian Metcalfe, during a brief window of opportunity in July 2020 but now, 2021 sees all operational trolleybuses having to have a full test. The whole inspection and testing process includes the completion of record sheets and upon successful completion of inspections/ tests – and a certificate is issued before the trolleybus is handed over to the Traffic Department.

Bournemouth 297 Slight movement of the rear staircase was discovered during the Spring BH weekend: Graham Bilbé investigated and, with some rivets, made a short-term repair. The problem was a degree of corrosion and will need to have more permanent repairs. Unfortunately, a problem has now been identified with a window rubber and 297 is off the road awaiting its replacement.

Bournemouth 301 has received an external repaint and is currently about to have its window rubbers replaced. Hopefully, 301 (part of the BTS collection) will be back at the Museum in time for the August BH weekend.



Doncaster 375 has passed its full mechanical and electrical test and is thus part of the current operational fleet. A fine set of local sign-written advertisements, authentic to no.375, has been applied that adds a lot of extra character to this lovely trolleybus.

Huddersfield 631 Returned to service following its annual check at the beginning of July.

London 1812 Work is due to commence shortly on completely overhauling no.1812's mechanical components, its first such overhaul since late 1960 at London Transport's Fulwell Works only a few months before it was sold and exported to Spain to become Santander-Astillero no.8.

Maidstone 72 Mechanical and electrical checking has taken place. The hand brake has to be adjusted to make it more effective before no.72 can be finally passed for use. Amongst a number of other jobs that have been noted as requiring attention, a recurring intermittent problem with the bell failing needs to be investigated. No.72 is the mainstay for TDEs and represents TM@S on those occasions so must be in tip-top order for when TDEs can resume.



Reading 193 Away from the Museum at Darren Sentence's premises, window rubbers have all been renewed and the exterior repainted. Sign-written advertisements are currently being applied by Wayne Westwood and a resplendent no.193 in the guise it had back in 1962 should be returning to the Museum in time for the August Bank Holiday weekend.



South Shields 204 A fault developed that, when notching up, causes the negative circuit breaker to blow out.

Walsall 872 At the time of writing, 872's inspection and test is part-completed. The master controller and contractors have been checked, cleaned and moving parts lubricated in an effort to resolve a problem with notches not disengaging: this is "work in progress" before applying line voltage and conducting test runs.

Weekday Workers Report

Compiled by **Jim Sambrooks**

After several months of lock down many members were keen to return to our Museum and get stuck into some work. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 12 – 14 May were designated as working days and were very well attended.

One of the main tasks was the clearing of the former chapel at Westgate, Belton before the completion of its sale in early June. The four vehicles housed there have been moved to our main site and a number of vehicles have been moved away for temporary storage.

Following an estimated seven years standing John Heighway's RM 529 was fitted with batteries and the engine soon burst into life filling the chapel with smoke but the Routemaster's very complicated nitrogen-hydraulic brakes were found to be in need of recharging with nitrogen and a specialist, Paul Hopes, had to be called in with the equipment to do the job. Once the brakes had been recharged RM529 was driven to Sandtoft for a full inspection in the workshop. It was then declared fit to be driven to its new home at Keighley Bus Museum. It arrived there on Wednesday 12 May.

With the RM safely in storage, Derby 175 was pulled forward for a basic inspection but Doncaster 112 had a seized front brake and put up quite a struggle. However, Mike Hirst and Paul Hegedus wouldn't be beaten and freed the offending item in the end.

Sunday 9 May saw 175, 159 and 112 moved to our museum site followed on Wednesday 12 by all of the associated spares that had accumulated in the chapel. Thanks are due to Rachael Petch who kindly offered the use of her van.

The keys to the building were handed over to the developers in early June.



At the Museum "Little Mike" Spilling has been painting the roof panels for the Lichfield bus shelter and these have been fitted by the bus shelter gang.

The shelter now carries an ex-Reading Corporation trolleybus stop flag. Mike is, at the time of writing, painting the oil pumps situated on the workshop road.

"Don't be a pain, sponsor a pane" was the slogan dreamt up to raise funds for glazing the front of the shelter, at £20 a time. Enough funds were raised in no time at all to provide all the glass needed to complete the frontal screens. Such was the success of this appeal that starting again with a fresh sheet each day of the bank holiday weekend was considered! We are indebted to the following who sponsored panes: Ian Wilson, Mark Boulton, Roy Fawcett, Chas Allen, Duncan Wedlock (Write Sign), David and Maureen Rogers, Mr & Mrs Petch, Graham Bilbe, Alan & David Cawkill, Stewart David, Len Smith, Ian Brown, Dave Stanfield, Andy Warnes and Jim Sambrooks.

Work has continued repairing the workshop doors and Tony Walsh and John Petch have resumed their work on the site electrics. The cover to the fire hydrant has had its paint removed and new paint applied. It was thought that the many layers of old paint included some from when the RAF occupied the site during World War 2.

Len Smith, Dave Blyth, Ron Rhodes and a new recruit to the site gang, our President Bob Rowe, have been busying themselves clearing weeds and overgrowth from the footpaths and roadways - and what a difference that has made to the appearance of the Museum. Many trees and bushes have been trimmed by John Whipham while Gerry Carroll maintains paintwork on the street furniture, road signs and the Belton bus shelter being recent recipients of his attention.

The prefab house has been refurbished by Gill Ferris, with Anne and Digby Scott. The team have also cleaned and redecorated the ladies and gents' toilets. John Whipham informed us that a tree that has been leaning for some time has fallen over. It has been removed and placed on the wood pile that serves as a hedgehog hotel. The cut-off redundant traction poles left over from the pole replacement programme have been laid along the front fence as an extra security measure.

Vehicles visiting the workshop have included motorbuses Doncaster 22 and 55 for pre MOT work, Doncaster trolleybus 375 for yearly inspection and servicing, along with Maidstone 72, Huddersfield 631, Walsall 872 and London 1348 for similar attention. The last being described as a dream to drive by the traffic crew after some tender loving care from Graham Bilbe and his team.

Douglas motorbus 52's brakes continue to cause Graham Rhodes some headaches - the hydraulic wheel cylinders were seized solid. Motorbus Bradford 558 improves steadily. Attention is being given to the cab area with regular visits from its owner, Geoff Welburn. Motorbus Doncaster 112's radiator and oil filter had to be removed to access the front axle for towing, Mike Hirst wasted no time in cleaning the front of its Daimler engine, he has managed to source an oil filter element and fitted new hoses to the radiator which he has cleaned and painted. Further work on Motorbus Doncaster 94 has seen all the lower deck seat frames painted and new floor coverings fitted before the seats were refitted.

Electroline 2450 improves steadily as more faults are found and rectified by Dave Longstaff and Richard Barnes. A burned-out contactor has been replaced by a new one found in Lincoln after searching the world for one.

Trojan Restoration Project

Geoff Croft



A team of volunteers have taken on a project to restore a Trojan Mini Motor and bicycle. The Trojan was manufactured in the early 1950's under licence in their Croydon factory. The particular combination was manufactured in 1950 and last road taxed in 1953.

The 49cc motor was originally designed by Vincent Piatti in 1946 as a power unit to drive portable lathes. The 2 stroke unit was then developed to deliver a direct drive to the rear wheel of the cycle, giving a top speed in excess of 24 mph and a fuel economy of up to 240 mpg - at today's cost about 2½p per mile.

Trojan made a number of commercial vehicles including a coach but the most famous of these was probably the Brooke Bond Tea van. The factory was taken over in the late 50's to supply Lambretta scooters which saw the demise of the Mini Motor.

Vincent Piatti carried on designing engines into his late 80's for many leading manufacturers. The Mini Motor was designed to fit to almost any bicycle including tandems, the manufacturers claiming it only took a half an hour to fit. The cycle and engine have been untouched for many years and have required a significant amount of restoration, but there is an active owners club which has meant that most of the required items are still available. This encourages us that it will soon but seen on site as a working model along with the original number plate to the front and rear NWE 394.

2021 OPENING DAYS

(PLEASE NOTE THESE ARE SUBJECT TO ALTERATION DUE TO CHANGES IN COVID-19 REGULATIONS)

Saturday 28 August
Sunday 29 August
Monday 30 August

FREE BUS

August Bank Holiday Weekend Trolleydays Plus
celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the British Trolleybus Society

Saturday 18 September
Sunday 19 September

FREE BUS

Model Weekend Trolleydays
with a variety of visiting model trolleybuses, trams and trains on display

Saturday 2 October
Sunday 3 October

Weekend Trolleydays

Sunday 17 October

FREE BUS

Trolleyday Plus - with Isle of Axholme Running Day & Rally presented by Doncaster Omnibus & Light Railway Society

Saturday 30 October
Sunday 31 October

Weekend Trolleydays

Saturday 20 November
(open 10.30am – 6.00pm)

Twilight & After Dark Trolleyday
with twilight & after dark trolleybus operation

BUS CONNECTIONS TO OR FROM DONCASTER:

FREE BUS indicates **FREE BUS** operates on these days, departing 11.30 am from Doncaster Interchange (Bay C6) to the Museum, with return at 3.30pm (journey approx. 40 mins). See website for details of extra journeys on Sandtoft Gathering and Isle of Axholme Running Day & Rally days.

From 3rd July on Saturdays we run a connecting service to Thorne:

Doncaster Interchange
Thorne Park Gates
Trolleybus Museum

Return Service

Trolleybus Museum
Thorne Park Gates
Doncaster Interchange

First South Yorkshire Service 87

1007
1054

Trolleybus Museum Free Bus

1100
1120

Trolleybus Museum Free Bus

1530
1550

First South Yorkshire Service 87

1556
1644

ADMISSION PRICES

Adult **£11.00** Senior (61+) **£9.00** Concessions **£7.00**
Family (2 Adults + up to 4 Concessions) **£34.00**

On days shown on dark red background: Adult **£13.00**
Senior (61+) **£11.00** Concessions **£7.50** Family **£38.50**

Admission gives unlimited visits within 12 months of issue (except for Sandtoft Gathering)



For full details, visit www.sandtoft.org