

Sandtoft Scene

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NEWS & VIEWS FROM
The Trolleybus Museum
AT SANDTOFT



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Contributions & comments (for publication or otherwise) are always welcomed by the Editor. We reserve the right to alter or amend text to suit the style of Sandtoft Scene or the content of a particular edition. The content of individual items and articles represent the opinions of the individual contributors: they are not necessarily the opinions or policies of The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft, the Company, its Directors or its members.

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Front Cover Picture

Huddersfield 631 shines out into the darkness at our Twilight event (HC)

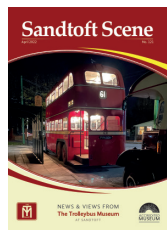
Photography

Photographs in this issue have been kindly provided by: Ian Brown, Dave Chick, Toby Cowan, Helen Cross, Paul Morfitt, Bob Ashton.

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A Message from the Editor

I'm writing this message just after the opening weekend of our 2022 season, where we commemorated the 50th anniversary of the closure of the Bradford trolleybus system.

It's just the beginning of an exciting season of events, with the May Bank Holiday also celebrating Bradford vehicles. John Francis shares his memories of Bradford Trolleybuses on page 22.

Mid May will see the opening of our new exhibition, Trolleybuses of the Humber, which will feature the trolleybus systems of Grimsby, Cleethorpes and Hull.

And at the end of July we look forward to the return of our premier event, the Sandtoft Gathering with visiting vehicles, a transport flea market, live music and a real ale tent.

Later this summer we will welcome a variety of 999 vehicles, displays, and dramatic fire and rescue demonstrations for popular Blues and Twos weekend, and the August Bank Holiday will commemorate the 60th anniversary of the closure of London's Trolleybus system.

You'll also see changes on the museum site with our new depot under construction, and works underway to prepare the ground for our new railway.

We look forward to seeing you at the museum again very soon - let's hope that the weather is as fair every opening day this season!

2021 AGM

Despite the restrictions imposed due to Covid-19, our Chairman Ian Wilson was able to report several achievements from the past year, like the installation of broadband on the museum site, and others have been reported in earlier issues of Sandtoft Scene.

The AGM resolved to accept the Annual Report, along with the Financial Reports for 2019/20 and 2020/21 (available in the Members' Area of the Sandtoft website), and the appointment of David Procter as Independent Examiner/Auditor of the Company.

Elections for the Company Secretary and Honorary Treasurer posts and for four Ordinary Directors produced the following result:

Candidate	Votes Cast	
Chas Allen	37	ELECTED
Mark Boulton	40	ELECTED
Dave Chick	46	ELECTED
Tony Ferris	6	
David Hanchett	31	
Kieran Proctor	12	
John Whiphram	6	
Ian Wilson	43	ELECTED

Francis Terry was elected unopposed for the Secretary's post and John Francis similarly for the post of Treasurer and Director of Finance. Stewart David's term of office was not due for renewal and he therefore continues in office. The assignment of roles to the newly elected Board members is shown on page 4.

The Resolution for the sale of Bradford 846 was defeated by 33 votes to 17, and the Resolution to donate Bradford 845 and 847 to Keighley Bus Museum Trust was defeated by 34 votes to 16. The AGM also voted 52 – 2 in favour of a rise in subscription rates with effect from 1 February 2022, details shown overleaf.

News from the Board

Compiled by Francis Terry and Dave Chick

New Subscription Rates

From 1 February 2022, the annual rate for ordinary members is £21 (or £19 for those joining through BTS, DO&LRS or BTA). The rate for each additional ordinary member, including those joining through one of the three contributing societies, who are resident at the same address ("Family Members") and not receiving a separate copy of Sandtoft Scene is fixed at £13. The one-off subscription for ongoing (or "life") membership is fixed at £525.

And the good news – a new monthly Newsletter for members! In September last year, the museum's development plans were announced via a special joint BTS/Sandtoft electronic Newsletter. The success of this initiative, in keeping members better informed, has led the Board to introduce the Newsletter on a monthly basis. **Edited by Paul Dicken, it will be distributed FREE to all members who provide their email address (if they haven't already) to the Membership Secretary, Hazel Allen.** Her address is membership@sandtoft.org and you can also opt out of the Newsletter circulation at any time by giving notice to Hazel.

Directors' Responsibilities

Chairman & Engineering Director *Ian Wilson*
• Chairing Meetings • Vehicle testing • Site security
• Museum-owned vehicle management

Director & Chief Operating Officer *Stewart David*
• Co-ordination of Museum and Company activities • Control of open days and events • HR management • Customer Complaints

Director & Company Secretary *Francis Terry*
Company Secretary • Charities Commission and Companies House Requirements • Museum status and accreditation
• Sandtoft District Railway

Development Director *Dave Chick*
Fundraising • Managing and delivering development • Grant Applications • Archiving • Exhibitions and displays

Commercial Director *Chas Allen*
Website & email • Publicity & Public Relations • Event planning
• TDE & Private party bookings • Retail • Sandtoft Scene

Facilities Director & Site Manager *Mark Boulton*
Company premises & infrastructure maintenance • Office Admin
• Community relations • Educational & School Activities

Financial Director *John Francis*
Financial Management • Grant Applications
• Membership • Insurance

Platinum Jubilee

As everyone knows, 2022 is the 70th anniversary of the Queen's accession to the throne. Sandtoft will be marking the occasion in various ways, including special decorations for London Transport 1348, shortly to be unveiled for the season's operations. The Board has also agreed that the museum should participate in the Queen's Green Canopy project, which is a national tree-planting initiative. Everyone, including voluntary and community groups, charities, corporate organisations and public bodies, is encouraged to play a part in enhancing the environment by planting trees between March and October.

The museum site has large areas of open land that could be landscaped and tree planting forms an important complementary part of laying out the Sandtoft District Railway. It will enhance the amenity value of our land and potentially help drainage of the site. Francis Terry has offered to donate a quantity of shrubs and trees to start the ball rolling. Every tree we plant will be registered nationally on the Green Canopy database. Further trees may come from a grant of saplings by the Woodland Trust.

Review of the Sandtoft Fleet

Many of the vehicles at Sandtoft are owned by individuals, but the museum itself directly owns 19 trolleybuses in various states of restoration (or some might say decay). The Board recently decided to undertake a curatorial review of the Sandtoft fleet by appointing a Collections Review Panel to assess the heritage significance of each vehicle. How distinctive or important is each vehicle in the development of the trolleybus? What are the significant features in terms of technical development, construction method, mode of operation etc. The results of the Panel's review will provide a basis for deciding on priorities for restoration, repair, storage or possible disposal.

The Panel members are: Tim Stubbs, Dave Hall, Bob Rowe and Mark Boulton. David Pearson has agreed to attend the Panel as an external adviser, and Francis Terry will act as Secretary/Facilitator. The review is being run in parallel with an overhaul of the museum's Collections Management Policy, which the Board has recently commissioned.

New Appointments

Following a recruitment exercise among members, some new faces join the Sandtoft management team:

Safety Support Manager *Allan McCorquodale*
Membership Secretary *Hazel Allen*
Shop Manager *Jess Boulton*

But we still need a **Café Team Leader** – applications please to Stewart David at sdavid@sandtoft.org

Sandtoft District Railway

Planning permission for erecting the engine shed and station is being sought. Meanwhile clearance of vegetation and derelict fencing from the path of the line has started. A major obstacle to progress is the pile of traction poles by the old staff car-park, which needs urgently to be relocated: the railway will cross the ditch next to Burntwood at this point. The route has been marked out and landscape planting has begun.

The planting scheme forms part of the museum's contribution to the Queen's Green Canopy project and was inaugurated by Liz Denton from Museum Development Yorkshire at an informal ceremony on 10 February. Liz planted a magnolia tree at the north-west corner of the Sandtoft site, at the extremity of the railway route.



Legacies and Bequests

It's a sensitive subject, but legacies and bequests are an important source of funds for developments at the museum. If you are drawing up a will, or thinking of revising your existing one, please bear this in mind. The Secretary, Francis Terry (secretary@sandtoft.org) can put you in touch with solicitors who would gladly give advice on drafting a will with the appropriate clauses.

Keighley in Motion

Keighley's transport festival will be running at various venues across the town on Thursday 2 June (Spring Bank Holiday) and Friday 3 June (Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday). The Trolleybus Museum's Cedes-Stoll replica will be paying its first visit to its "home town" and will be on display in Keighley College car park along with a range of trolleybuses and motor buses that operated

in Keighley between 1913 and 1973. It is expected that our Keighley No. 0 will be displayed alongside Keighley No. 5, the Straker-Squire double-decker second generation trolleybus that was delivered in 1924, the same year that the UK's first Cedes-Stoll trolleybus (by then renumbered 50) was withdrawn. The Trolleybus Museum will have an information desk and sales stand at the event, so please come along and say, "Hello!"

At other venues there will be vintage motor cars and motor bikes, model railway layouts, steam and heritage diesel train operation on the Keighley and Worth Valley railway, boats at Stockbridge Wharf and there will be a fly-past by a Spitfire from the Battle of Britain Historic Flight.

Joint Working Group

Having agreed a development plan based on the STCL/British Trolleybus Society Joint Working Group's recommendations, the company and the Society have recently developed a new structure and remit for the JWG.

The emphasis has changed, from recommending ways that the aspirations in the original remit could be achieved to helping to progress the individual elements of the report. The JWG will bring forward proposals for delivering the agreed development plan and ensuring its consistency with the STCL Forward Plan. Where project managers have been appointed, the JWG will provide oversight so that there is co-ordination in the delivery of the projects.

JWG membership has previously only come from the two landowning bodies (STCL and BTS). The other two Contributing Societies (DO&LRS and the BTA) are important stakeholders in the Museum's future and both groups have accepted invitations to participate in the revamped JWG. The STCL Board and the BTS Committee will continue to agree and set the high-level objectives and make all decisions.

Composition of the Joint Working Group

- STCL nominees:** Dave Chick (JWG Chair), Helen Cross, Kieran Proctor
- Bradford Trolleybus Association nominee:** Gary Wilkinson
- British Trolleybus Society nominees:** Graham Bilbé, Francis Whitehead
- Doncaster Omnibus & Light Railway Society nominee:** Eric Moy

August Additional Opening

At the moment the Museum only opens to the public on about 30 days every year. To be able to fund our ambitious development plans we must build up the number of days that we are open, partly to increase revenue but also so that the Museum is eligible to apply for larger external grant funding, some of which is only available museums that are open for 100+ days every year.

As a first step, we are planning to open the Museum every day Monday– Friday 22 – 26 August ahead of the planned opening over the bank holiday weekend 27 – 29 August. Whilst weekday opening will be on a reduced scale, it is dependent on sufficient staff being available so if you can help please email Stewart David (sdavid@sandtoft.org). The lessons we learn from this experiment will help to inform our offer in subsequent years.



Help us to Name the New Depot

A new building is going up at the museum right now and it is our first new depot to be built since the 1970s. It has been suggested that the building should be named after one of our benefactors. There are many people who have contributed their hard work and their money to make our museum what it is and the Board wants make sure that significant people from our history are properly acknowledged and that our members are involved in the process. We would love to hear from our members with your thoughts on who the North Depot should be named after and why they deserve that honour. Please write to the Company Secretary Francis Terry by email at secretary@sandtoft.org or by post to the Museum's premises.

Trolleybuses of the Humber

Work on the exhibition is progressing well but the opening date has been put back to 14 May, mainly because the spread of the Omicron variant delayed the oral history project team recording in Grimsby. A benefit of delaying the opening is that it will no longer clash with the launch of the Toy Museum. A very successful oral history day was held in Hull's Carnegie Heritage Centre on 9 December.

The Centre is a grade II listed building which was originally one of many libraries across the country to be funded by the industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. It is run by volunteers and they made our oral history team very welcome, even putting on a small exhibition about Hull's trolleybuses for the event. We had some useful publicity on Phil White's show on BBC Radio Humberside to promote the project.

Dave Hall conducted the interviews while Ashley Bruce filmed them and Dave Chick held the microphone boom in place. One of the nine interviewees preferred to be recorded rather than filmed. These interviews will form part of the exhibition.

One of the Centre's regular visitors has donated an artwork she created which tells an interesting story involving a trolleybus that was caught up in the final bombing raid on Hull towards the end of the Second World War.

My thanks to Liz Shepherd and the team at Carnegie for facilitating such a successful and enjoyable day.

Digital Cultural Compass

The Board has also signed up to this initiative from the Dept for Culture, Media and Sport and the National Heritage Lottery Fund; we have had to benchmark our current digital status in all areas of our organisation and set targets for progress over the next 12 months.

Whilst the immediate benefit is that it helps identify the key areas for us to concentrate on in our development, its adoption should increase our chances of success with funding applications to the NHLF.

Heritage Compass

The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft has been accepted as a participant on the Heritage Compass Business Support Programme, which has been designed to invigorate the heritage sector across England and is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. Heritage Compass is supporting the sector to develop essential skills in business planning, audience development, leadership and change management, with the aim of creating a better connected, informed and resilient heritage landscape across England. A range of training, mentoring and peer learning is provided, helping organisations to develop a clear business plan, a developed income strategy and the tools and knowledge to respond to their specific needs and challenges.

Now it's... BACK-A-BUS!

Yes, you can sponsor an 'orphan' trolleybus from the Sandtoft Collection for just £10 per month.

We have 19 trolleys belonging directly to the museum, for which we need generous 'backers' to help us build up funds for restoring them. The Board has decided in principle to launch the Back-a-Bus scheme, enabling members to choose a favourite trolleybus and pay toward restoration by cheque or standing order monthly, quarterly or annually. To register your interest and nominate your chosen trolley, drop a line to the Secretary at secretary@sandtoft.org Full details will follow. Here are a few deserving cases, just to start you thinking:



Porto 140

The 50 Lancias with Dalfa bodies supplied to the Portuguese operator in 1967 were the last double-deck trolleybuses built for service in Europe. Withdrawn in May 1996, 140 came to the Museum that July. Funds are badly needed to rectify an electrical fault and have the vehicle repainted.

Bradford 562

One of a batch of 11 trolleybuses with English Electric chassis, bodies and electrical equipment supplied in 1929. They were the last new single-deck trolleybuses purchased by Bradford. After withdrawal in January 1945 it served as a caravan at Eastoft until 1989. A really historic item!

Maidstone 72

Built in 1947, it has a wartime-design Sunbeam W4 chassis but the body by Northern Coachbuilders is a post-war design. In 1967 No. 72 was used as Maidstone's last trolleybus. A popular choice for the Museum's Trolleybus Driving Experience days. Again, a gem that needs your help.

Nottingham 466

Built to "Relaxed Utility" standard, it entered service on 1 July 1945. Withdrawn in 1962, it became the second privately-preserved British trolleybus, arriving at Sandtoft in 1973 in poor condition. Much restoration work was carried out by the late Steve Collins. Help us make this his memorial!

Please note: This new scheme is designed to run in parallel with our existing Custodianship scheme, which provides for members to take care of a chosen trolleybus by cleaning, maintaining and undertaking minor repairs. No financial contribution is required for custodianship. There is a long list of trolleybuses that would benefit from having a custodian, so please apply to Francis Terry at secretary@sandtoft.org

John Zebedee Remembered

We are sorry to record the passing on 26 November 2021 of Sandtfoft volunteer and BTS member John Zebedee, following a lengthy battle with cancer.

John was a popular member of the Traffic team, as both a driver and a conductor. He also supported the Museum in the task of claiming Gift Aid for many years.

John was born in 1950 and brought up in Lyndhurst, close enough to the Bournemouth system of which he retained many memories. He moved to Reading, later Witham then Crawley, having a career in insurance. John retired in 2003 when diagnosed with cancer and given a prognosis of 5 years. In the end, he managed a further 13 years thanks in part to various medical trials he was offered.

John was a keen and active supporter with financial and physical assistance at many enthusiast bodies in the trolleybus, tram, bus and railway fields. Along with his time at Sandtfoft, he drove or conducted trolleybuses at Carlton Colville, and in the winter he attended track laying gangs on Volks Electric Railway at Brighton, to name just a few. Several trolleybuses, including Mexborough & Swinton 34 and Bournemouth 301 received valuable financial support from John.

Despite his health taking a sudden turn for the worse in late August 2021, John was still keen to visit Sandtfoft over the Bank Holiday and then to see the progress on Rotherham 73, though it was clear that he was in considerable pain and discomfort. Thereafter John was first hospitalised at Redhill, before moving to a care home near to his son and family in Reading. John was a giver rather than a taker; his friendship and help will be sorely missed by those who knew him.

At John's funeral on 15 December 2021 there was affectionate laughter when the Celebrant described him as having been "loud". You certainly knew when John was in the vicinity and we cannot think of him without remembering his booming laugh. He was always there for friends who were in need. John's positive approach to life was inspirational. When visited in hospital in October he said that he felt lucky to have enjoyed many good years since his cancer diagnosis 18 years ago.

John also talked at length about the development plan for Sandtfoft, which he was very enthusiastic about although he knew that he would not be able to visit again. Even then, John was sitting up in bed uploading to Flickr the photos he had taken on his last visit to Sandtfoft. He was proud of the fact that he had more trolleybus photographs on Flickr than anyone else.

We were privileged to have known John. We send condolences to John's family.

With thanks to Alan Murray and Dave Chick.



A Wet Weekend

Paul Morfitt recalls the penultimate open weekend of 2021...



A wet weekend was in store for our penultimate open weekend and, boy, did it rain! It was not long before we had to contend with two very large puddles at each end of the site. Visitor numbers were sadly low on both days, the Saturday being the better of the two days with 30 service trips being made by the two trolleybuses in action, Nottingham 506 & Huddersfield 631. By mid afternoon on the Saturday the rain had passed and made for a sunny afternoon and with the colour of the trees and the large puddles it made for a great photographic opportunity for both visitors and staff, the reflections of the water with the backdrop of the autumnal colours and blue skies made for some impressive shots. The Sunday saw heavier rain in the morning and again lead to large amounts of water all over the site, visitor parking having to be confined to Whites runway as the back field was far too waterlogged. Staff numbers were low on both days but more so on the Sunday with only one crew, 631 failed its leak test so we only operated 506 which made things easier for Driver Paul & Conductor Eric. We had a visiting motorbus in the form of Chesterfield Corporation Transport 266 which made a couple of service trips too but with a limited amount of visitors there were never many on board. As always in bad weather the cafe team earn their keep and did sterling work keeping the tea flowing and the bacon butties stocked up and with plenty of cake treats our visitors were well fed. One thing that is evident sadly is the condition of the back straight, the heavy rain this time has caused more pot holes near the main entrance with lots of rubble along the runway and this is a worry as we all know that rainwater has nowhere to go when it's heavy so the road surface is bound to get worse. Overall despite a quiet & wet weekend it was still enjoyable, only one more to go before the end of the 2021 season..... "Twilight"



The rain did provide lots of artistic opportunities for budding photographers

Twilight Running Event



On the 20th of November 2021, we held our annual Twilight running event which was very successful. Doncaster 375 made an appearance as well as Nottingham 506, Bradford 746, Huddersfield 631, the Cedes and finally Doncaster 22, which ran in service for the first time since the previous year. As it got darker, it was great to see the sparks shooting out from the booms as they crossed the frogs and the interior lights flickering on the trolleybuses. The battery powered lighting on the Nottingham became rather dim by the end of the day, which just shows how long they were running for. Doncaster 22 drove laps of the circuit which was very popular, filling the bus for at least three of the journeys.

How did I get involved at Sandtoft?

I had visited Sandtoft a few times prior to becoming a member and really enjoyed coming. After my uncle - who happens to be the next-door neighbour of Dave Stanfield, had mentioned to him that I was really interested in mechanics, he invited me to come for the day and on my first day I ended up removing the traction motor bolts from 706 with Jim Sambrooks. I was warned that I was going to get messy and indeed I did! Within two weeks of me first coming, I became a volunteer and spend most of my free Wednesdays and Fridays - school dependent - underneath a bus, covered in oil.

Toby Cowan



The Isle of Axholme Running Day and Rally

Kieran Proctor

Sunday 17 October 2021 saw the return of the Isle of Axholme Running Day and Rally, after its forced absence in 2020. With the Sandtoft Gathering missing from both the 2020 and '21 calendars, this event became the first opportunity that the owners of many preserved vehicles would have had to attend the museum for at least 2 years.

Luckily, despite some rain in the week leading up to the event, the weather held out on the day and made for a pleasant and rather busy day at the museum. There were over 50 visiting vehicles with buses, lorries and cars of various ages in attendance. These were also joined on the central grass area by a group of steam engines on display, which added quite an interesting added attraction for staff and visitors alike.

One of the main features of this event is the operation of a network of free bus services across the Isle of Axholme which, due to worries surrounding a

fuel shortage and the covid restrictions at the time (remember when these were all the rage..?), were slightly reduced compared to previous years. This being said, there were still plenty of buses and passengers taking a ride out to Epworth and Westwoodside or Thorne on our services.

These services were again operated with a mixture of buses, with those from our own collection being joined by everything from a Bedford OB to a Dennis Dart throughout the day.

The trolleybuses also saw a bumper day with heavy loads frequently setting off around the site. Doncaster 375 was joined by at least 4 other trolleybuses including the Cedes-Stoll, to help provide these trips.

All in all, it was a busy, enjoyable and successful day at the museum; so good, I might be tempted to attend again in 2022!



Working Weeks Report

Compiled by Graham Bible

Late Summer 2021



A recent view in the Toy Museum showing the recently-donated 00 gauge railway, and some of the 'cabinet exhibits' brought out for a run! Thanks to Len Smith for arranging donation of the layout (GB)

July this year marked 50 years since my first 'Working Week' at the museum, though of course there wasn't much there that long ago – indeed, my brother and I camped where the workshop is now! There was no available water on site, so we asked the nice people at the bungalow next door, who let us fill up water bottles, and also arranged for the milkman to leave us milk every other day by the museum gate (which at that time was where the small pedestrian gate now is near to the playground.) For ablution purposes we had to trot down the road to the Reindeer pub, which had an outside loo round the back...

So, 50 years on, times have changed and thankfully as we get older, some of us are lucky enough to have full use of the bungalow next door, though we are still known to go down to the pub now and then! I've managed several working weeks this year, the first in late May prior to our reopening, preparing vehicles

and the Toy Museum ready to welcome back visitors.

Next, leading up to what would have been the Gathering, several more days to service and test more of the trolleybus fleet, which due to the vacuum caused by Covid last year are all requiring 'Full' tests this year, to ensure that things haven't seized up in the long static period. For example, **Maidstone 72**, which has served valiantly on the TDE events over several years, was given considerable attention, but regrettably is still not signed off yet... apart from the regular oiling/greasing of moving parts, the wiper motor was stripped down, cleaned and rebuilt, and the negative circuit breaker adjusted as it would NOT trip out! Tyre pressures checked, roof gear serviced, but then it was found that the compressor kept blowing fuses, so this has now been taken off courtesy of Brad, and dispatched to Bradford Armature Co for overhaul, so 72 is still 'on the back burner'.

Naturally, the BTS 60th anniversary event at the August bank holiday weekend warranted a spurt of activity on the Society's fleet, which I will describe in more detail... first off, **Reading 113**, an essential vehicle to run as the one that started it all! Ian Metcalfe and I had done much of 113's test in July 2020, but found a problem with the air brake valve: on this vehicle it is mounted on the front of the air tank, with the shut-off valve at the rear end – together quite a heavy unit, but it all had to come off to get the brake valve off for overhaul. Ian Met did this last year, also servicing the compressor valves, and I managed to refit the tank assembly on the Saturday before the 2020 'un-gathering' all by myself, but didn't have a chance to test it until this year. Three things became apparent – 1) the air pressure came up much more quickly than before, (good!) 2) there was still a leak once the pressure got up (not so good) and 3) the brakes were still not as effective as they needed to be (seriously not good!). Fortunately we were able to resolve the latter two as the leak proved to be because the brake valve hadn't been fully tightened up onto the tank, and the other by adjusting the operating rod to open the valve a little more... Success!

Glasgow TB78 saw a considerable amount of attention having been out of service for several years – a pity as this is a very colourful and attractive vehicle for our visitors. Roger Clark and Francis Whitehead reconstructed the rotten sections of the platform with occasional help from yours truly – now just waiting for the new nosings (edge rubbers) to be fitted. Francis's daughter Louise had also prepared a sample 3D printed plastic interior vent, as the old ones have badly distorted: with some very minor tweaks this looks like resolving this long-standing problem, especially as the grilles are a quite distinctive feature. Much work was also done on the booms and trolleybases, but TB78 also has a leaking nearside hub oilseal, which is intended to be dealt with shortly.

South Shields 204 and **Manchester 1344** had both been tested in the July week, and **Huddersfield 631** had been tested by Jim and Brad early in the season, partly because of its popularity for driver training. That still only gave us four for the BTS weekend, but thankfully Bernice Needham offered **Nottingham 506** to run, subject to testing, of course. To explain, 506 had passed to the BTS when the West Yorkshire Transport Circle was merged into it, but was later sold on to the Needhams for a nominal £1, on condition it would return to the BTS fold when the Needhams no longer required it. (It has now passed back to the BTS). Keith Hopkinson has kindly looked after 506 for some while and had already brought back the re-charged batteries for it, so the testing process was fairly straightforward. That made a very welcome 5th

vehicle to operate, with the non-runners parked out on display: I heard no complaints, but feel that most of our visitors, especially the enthusiasts, fully appreciate how difficult it has been to get back on top of the testing regime after an enforced break of nearly 2 years – they also realise how important it is for running vehicles to be properly inspected, for the safety of visitors and of course the longer-term survival of our unique vehicles in working order.

My 'end-of-September' working week was of a rather different character to usual: despite the fuel problems, the Monday was spent paying our last respects to BTA stalwart Robin Kitson, with his funeral at Nab Wood, Bradford. Tuesday saw a trip down to Suffolk to visit our colleagues at the Long Shop Museum (Garretts of Leiston) where volunteers are just starting restoration on **Ipswich 26**, in many ways similar to our own **Mexborough 34**. The visit was arranged by Dave Chick, and has provided some helpful links towards progressing this very significant project – BTS are busy raising funds for this if anyone would like to chip in!



Wednesday I was working mostly on the **Cedes replica (No.0)** with Ian Met, to resolve a problem with the hydraulic brakes (– not, of course, a feature of the original, but an add-on for modern-day safety), and also to resolve an issue with the hub-motor securing bolts, which had developed a tendency to work loose in service due largely to the combination of solid rubber tyres and Sandtoft's rather bumpy concrete surfaces. Spring washers had already been tried with limited success, now threadlock liquid has been applied as well. I should perhaps mention that our friends in Czech who built the vehicle for us were all ready to come back and resolve these teething problems in March last year when Covid put paid to their visit, so we have pressed on with the job ourselves. Consequently, No. 0 was not only available for the Bargain Hunt filming on 2nd October, but was actually operated in service on the 3rd, doing eight single journeys of the inner circle carrying an average of 6-8 passengers each time, who seemed to very much appreciate the experience!



Reading 193, view from the skylight...
 ("It's 1 o'clock and time for lunch...") (GB)

The other vehicle job achieved with help from my friends (Jim and Ian) was to re-fit the skylight glazing on **Reading 193** with new rubber seals. At the present time it has proved impossible to obtain the original 'double-glazing' type rubber, and the old one was leaking dreadfully, so the white (lower) perspex pane has now been refitted on its own, but should at least keep the wet out! Some time was spent in the Toy Museum, fitting up new window roller blinds, which look a lot neater and exclude the light better when closed – essential to stop exhibits fading. Some further planning was done regarding extending the Toy Museum into the 'front room' for next season, along with some other improvements... wait and see! But all-in-all, a very useful week, with grateful thanks to those that helped me along the way!

Sandtoft Working Parties 2022

Dave Chick

The working parties held in January, February and March were well-planned, very well supported and very productive, building on the work that is done by a large group every Wednesday. When the museum reopened on 26 March there were some noticeable changes for

our visitors to see, whilst there are other important developments that will only be seen by volunteers.

Behind the scenes, the stores building was cleared out and a new roof has been built. The stores are now much better organised and a small workshop area has been built.

The cladding has been removed from the Skegness building and when it is reclad it will present a much smarter image, ready for it to host the Trolleybuses of the Humber exhibition. Inside the building some



changes have already been made, including the removal of the old kitchen units.

The interior of the café has been painted and changes made to the display case between the café and the shop. In the shop, the many donations that have come in over the last couple of years have been sorted out and all the stock has been barcoded.

In the Pelham building the 1906 Room has been cleared out and the substantial work of extending the Toy Museum is in progress, ready for the official launch on 26 March. Also preparing for reopening, the Sunbeam Cycle Shop has seen a lot of activity.

The brown tram body now houses a 1980s display; this is the decade when the Electroline gave hope that new trolleybus systems would be opened in the UK.

The Sandtoft and BTS archivists have been working on sorting and cataloguing the documents, books and photographs owned by the two organisations.

With an application for planning permission imminent, preparatory work for the Sandtoft District Railway included marking out the line of route, removing some



of the obstacles and planting a new hedge to screen the northern terminus.

Work has been progressing on several vehicles and the batteries of the Cedex replica have been charged in preparation for the new season.

This is just the beginning. With the support of our members there will be many more improvements in the coming months.



Our Opening Weekend

After two years of disruption due to the pandemic it was wonderful to see many regulars - volunteers, enthusiasts and families - flooding into the museum as we opened our doors to the public for the first time in 2022.

We were joined on Saturday by Bargain Hunt's Thomas Forrester who officially opened our Toy Museum! The expanded exhibition features a huge range of toys and models, including working layouts. Keith Burbidge also brought his miniature Bournemouth tram and trolleybus - constructed around mobile scooters - and drove them around Sandtoft Square. In the afternoon, Thomas examined and valued a range of antiques and heirlooms for our visitors. Sadly no priceless antiques were discovered in the Museum's vintage stock!

The lifting of Covid restrictions saw our café and shop bustling as they returned to full operations, but the exceptional weather meant that visitors were able sit outside to enjoy the sunshine and the passing vehicles.

It was exciting to welcome Bradford 844 to the museum on loan from our good friends at Keighley Bus Museum Trust. Following a thorough electrical and mechanical test in our workshop Bradford 844 was passed out for

passenger service operation and operated successfully under power for the first time in ten years.

Saturday, 26 March was the 50th anniversary of this vehicle performing the last run in Bradford back in March 1972. We commemorated this historic event at 2pm on Saturday when 844 ran again accompanied by the resident BCT Tower Wagon which also ran in the final parade 50 years ago. Joining 844 this weekend was Bradford 746 & London 1348.

On Sunday we were joined by a Bristol motorbus from Keighley Bus Museum Trust which brought a bus-load of enthusiasts to the site and ran a number of circuits around the museum for visitors alongside our trolleybuses.



In Search of the Last Trolleybus

John Francis

Friday 24th March 1972

Imagine a lovely warm bed at 4.10am on Friday 24 March 1972. An alarm clock is ringing and the occupant of the bed is thinking something quite unprintable.

Then he realises that today marks the end of civilisation as we know it. The end of Stage Carriage operation by trolleybuses anywhere in the UK. Quick wash, get dressed and exit the house at great speed – the destination being Duckworth Lane Depot, an ex-tram shed and soon to be an ex-trolleybus depot.

4.55 am saw me at Duckworth Lane Depot along with a few fellow enthusiasts who had also quit their beds in the middle of the night to 'celebrate' the closure of the last trolleybus system in Britain.

Trolleybus 843 descended Little Lane, having run the staff special and parked on the forecourt. Could this be the first trolleybus of the day – destination Springhead Road? However, a shunter emerged from the depot carrying a watering can. As trolleybuses don't require water it became clear that this service would be operated by a motorbus.

After the motorbus departed 713 was backed out of the depot, ostensibly also to run to Springhead Road. An unhelpful conductor refused to allow us to board so Dave Roberts and I sprinted to the top of Squire Lane where we were allowed to board. We paid our fare and settled in to our journey to Springhead Road where we sailed merrily on to Thornton terminus, giving us the pleasure of riding on the first Thornton trolleybus of the day.

On the inbound journey we spotted a trolleybus coming in the opposite direction and, risking life and limb, we sprinted across the road to board 706, running the first trolleybus service to Springhead Road. We stayed

on 706 for the return journey but only as far as Four Lane Ends where we disembarked. This was to lie in wait for a 'ghost' bus which had no timetabled arrival at Springhead Road, only a departure time.

After three-quarters of an hour the ambush proved successful and the mystery bus (703) was 'caught'. 703 departed Springhead Road at 6.51 bound for Thornbury. The Conductor, sensing our youthful enthusiasm allowed us to travel for free. On the return journey the Driver offered the hospitality of his cab, an offer taken up with alacrity.

Time for other important matters, breakfast and school. Double maths, history and English literature brought the time to 12.30 when I decided to forgo the delights of the school house football matches and, instead, pedalled furiously on a photographic extravaganza on Toller Lane, Leeds Road and Thornton Road.

Whilst photographing 703 a fellow enthusiast shouted details of the last Thornton to Thornbury journey so, having taken more sustenance I once more threw myself into the fray, boarding 712 for the last journey from Thornton to Thornbury and return to City. By this time many more enthusiasts were evident and 712 was fully loaded for the journey.

Having completed this trip we made for Duckworth Lane depot to await the emergence of the trolleys for their last stage carriage duties. The last out was 843, which entered service at 8.03 at the Odeon. We walked down a link road between Duckworth Lane and Thornton Road and boarded 843 bound for Thornton. Conductor 531 Ali joined in the fun, laughing, joking and forgetting to collect our fares. On reaching Thornton we disembarked and waited for the return journey to City on 712.



1117 Stewart, Conductor 531 Ali on the lower deck and a jolly, rather rotund conductor on the upper deck.

843 was full to overflowing, there being a BBC film crew on the lower deck. It was many years later that I discovered a video that shows me boarding and making my way to the upper deck. Only two stops were made on the journey to Thornton, one being to pick up my Father. At Thornton it became a real family affair as my Sister and her boyfriend joined us onboard.

Driver Stewart was very patient and allowed us time to disembark and take photographs. One of the photos accompanying this article shows my Father having a chat to Driver Stewart at Thornton Terminus.

The conductors collected fares for the return journey to Four Lane Ends and that was a non-stop run. A helpful chap at Four Lane Ends operated the frog, having been disturbed in his efforts to remove the 'Pull for Allerton' sign from the traction pole. Round the corner we went followed by a blinding flash under the dead section of the trailing frog. This was probably the first time that a fully-laden trolleybus made this turn, being an uphill left-hand turn. Having reversed far enough to gain enough momentum to coast through the dead section the journey continued.

A right hand turn into Squire Lane was uneventful until we reached the give-way at the top when driver Stewart was unable to engage 1st notch (Squire Lane being a very steep hill). He managed to get us away, turning right on to Duckworth Lane to make the final, sad, part of the journey back to depot. Our arrival at the depot was greeted by a barrage of exploding flash bulbs and we joined the photographers to witness the last public service trolleybus in the UK enter the depot.

Saturday 25th March 1972 was an uneventful day with 706 and 843 operating the tours. I noticed that the numbers in the cab which corresponded with the tour number on the tour tickets were 1 on the first bus and 2 on the second. As I was one of the first to book the last tour on the Sunday to ensure that I was on the last bus on the last tour I was somewhat upset. A conversation between me and my Father about the unfairness of the situation resulted in my Father (who worked for BCT) making a call and the next time I went out the buses were running in reverse order.

Back in the City we decided it would be prudent to join the queue for the last trolleybus. The time was 9.06 and we were about 7th in the queue. Various diesel buses came and went, as did 712 and 843. The queue grew and grew, the 'normal' passengers not knowing quite what to make of all these people queueing but seemingly not wishing to travel.

On the penultimate trolleybus working, by 712, an Inspector suggested that the tail-enders should board 712 rather than be disappointed and many did so. There was also a motorbus provided for the more normal passengers. Finally 843 pulled up on the stand and was immediately 'assaulted' by hundreds of enthusiasts. 843 pulled away at 11.15 with a 3-man crew. Driver

Sunday 26th March 1972 marked the end of civilisation as I knew it. Two tours ran that day, 706 and 845 left Bradford at 9.30. I arrived in the City at about 10.00 where I found 842, 735, 711, 713, 843 and 712 already lined up. Enthusiasts were arriving in numbers, some on preserved motorbuses including an ex-Thames Valley single-deck Bristol and an ex-Southport Leyland PD2.

At 11.15 706 and 845 arrived back from the first tour and took their place at the back of the line-up. A mad rush to join the queue for 845 took place, however all tickets had been pre-booked. Between 11.30 and 11.53 the trolleybuses departed at regular intervals, 845 being the last.

A photo stop was held at Bell Dean Road followed by another at Thornton terminus, then to Four Lane Ends, Allerton Road, Squire Lane and Duckworth Lane. When passing the depot a bamboo pole was ceremonially lowered by a member of the depot staff.

The next photographic opportunity was on The Boulevard and as we were about to depart a breathless Mr. Francis (senior), who had been taking photographs at Thornton arrived to take some more. Our tour continued into City and out to Thornbury Depot, where another stop was made. The West Riding Trolleybus Society had a sales stand and display on 758 and the Transport Department had their own on 737. Various items were available for purchase including a commemorative envelope to be carried on 844, Britain's last trolleybus.

It was then back onto 845 where we were given a small packet of Bell-Punch tickets and the opportunity to buy a commemorative booklet. The final, sad, journey back to City was then made.

A quick lunch preceded a trip up to Thornbury Depot to photograph 844, suitably decorated and carrying a party of VIPs on the final journey by trolleybus on public roads. 844 arrived some 20 minutes late, during which time it had rained, hailed, snowed and blown a gale. Better news was the arrival of a friend who offered a lift in his car to photograph the last trip.



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 We hared around in the car, stopping and taking photographs, as 844 headed towards the City and followed the route of the earlier tours. And then dashed to Thornbury to await its final arrival. This it duly did, but had to work its way through the crowds to reach Thornbury Works. There were speeches, a formal switching off of the power followed by more speeches and photographs.

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 Later the power was switched back on to allow 758 and 737 to be moved into the Works and for the overhead crane in the Works.

.....
 We were then expelled into the harsh world of diesel buses, never again to be delightfully transported on public roads.

Andy McDougall

Contributed by John Stainforth

We are sorry to report that Andy McDougall died on 18 November aged 69, after being diagnosed earlier in the year with an incurable form of cancer.

Andy grew up in Bradford and, as a trolleybus enthusiast throughout his schooldays, he became committed to the idea of preserving one of the Bradford types that were disappearing during the run-down to the system's final closure. Having won a scholarship to read Engineering at Cambridge, he put his gap-year earnings towards the joint purchase of Bradford 792, which was handed over at Thornbury Depot in January 1972. When the system closed soon afterwards, Andy was at the meeting of local enthusiasts who formed the Bradford Trolleybus Association, and 792 moved to Sandtoft a year later under the umbrella of the extended BTA fleet.



Andy McDougall busy removing 792's handbrake cross-shaft in the Sandtoft workshop

His career in railway engineering (and later IT) took him to London and since then Hitchin has been his home town. Family life limited his involvement with Sandtoft for many years, but the mid-1990s saw an initiative to get 792 back into service after a long period of neglect, and this required hands-on efforts over a couple of years. Andy was always keen to do the practical work whenever possible, and he readily tackled all those difficult jobs down in the workshop pit and up on the trolleybus roof. More recently, he applied his electrical and metalwork skills to good effect during the rebuilding of 792's disintegrating resistance bank.

Andy's interests were very wide and during retirement he and Jill travelled extensively, making long trips round Asia, America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. He always returned with a vast collection of photographs, having taken in as many interesting railways, tramways and trolleybus systems as possible. As a long-term project, they embarked together on the practical challenges of converting and modernising the disused pub that gradually became their permanent home.

Although he could be scathing about Sandtoft's "tribal divisions" he was a major donor to the Museum's two land purchase appeals, and thanks to his generosity Aachen 22 was returned to indoor accommodation. He would willingly assist with any worthwhile projects, and had already made good progress with improving the electrical installation inside the Burntwood bungalow.

It was important to Andy that 792 should continue to keep running regularly in service and he was keen to get on with the next phase of maintenance and restoration to make this possible. He very much enjoyed his final trip to Sandtoft at the end of August, when he was still fit enough to extract the immovable front seat frame of 792 from its rusted moorings. The renovation of the leather seats continues, but sadly he will not be around to see the results of all the new upholstery.

Andy will be greatly missed by many people and our thoughts are with Jill and with all his family.

Vehicle & Site News

Compiled by Jim Sambrooks

Whilst the Museum has been closed over the winter, work to maintain our site and vehicles continues!



The wire trailer

The *ex-Teesside wire trailer* has received much attention from Mike Spilling; the chassis has been thoroughly stripped of paint and primed with red oxide, the body removed and taken to Wilson's Commercials for shot blasting, and the vehicle has moved to outside the workshop where it can be displayed properly. Mike has painted many of the old signs that have cluttered the site for many years and they have been fitted to the fence by John Petch.



A new roof for the Stores Building

As part of the *work on the stores building*, our stock of bus wheel dishes was removed and sorted with about three dozen wheels that were too badly corroded sent for scrap. We have a potential buyer for some of those remaining. The wheels have been promised undercover storage when the stores refurbishment is completed.

In the last few months there has been a bias towards getting things ready for the start of the season, *the café* has thus been the focus of a certain amount of (plumbing) attention, and has seen the replacement and installation of a new dishwasher, the repair of the waste plumbing in the kitchen area and, more recently, relocating and plumbing in the hot water boiler/urn. A lot of work has been carried out by our electrical engineer, Tony Walsh; rewiring items where necessary and PAT testing others.

Other tasks have included the *siting of a GPO post box* next to the cinema building, renovation of signage, while there are two projects still in progress, namely a *United Automobile Services Notice Board*, and the renovation of a (1952) *Raleigh Lenton Sports bike*, which will be fitted with a 50cc motor of similar vintage to friction-drive the rear wheel.

A new, old stock, silencer box for *Doncaster 33* has been acquired from Carl Ireland of Hull, collected by Dave Longstaff, also of Hull and delivered to Sandtoft. Custom Pipes of Doncaster made new down and tail pipes in stainless steel. The whole has been fitted to the bus.

The long term problem with the vacuum brakes on *Doncaster 94* has finally been solved by Mike Hirst and good readings recorded on the Tapley decelerometer. The O/S front wing has been permanently fitted after modifications to its mounting brackets. Two new tyres have been fitted to the front wheels and a set of rear wheels are being prepared for new tyres which are on order at the time of writing. The nearside rear hub oil seal was found to be leaking, a new seal has been fitted with help from Toby Cowan.

Work has continued around the cab area and fuel filler neck for *Doncaster 112*. Further beading has been fitted to the offside rear. Although this doesn't seem a lot it has taken many hours of work and team co-ordinator, Mike Hirst thanks Steve Gregory, Neil Wasmuth, John Petch and Dave Stanfield but not necessarily in that order.



Members visit to the Keighley Bus Museum

Report by Bob Ashton

A good early start with blue skies and sunshine greeted our 20 members as Doncaster 22 Motorbus had been prepared for a trip to the Keighley Bus Museum. The museum was celebrating the 50 years since Britain's Last Trolleybus operation in Great Britain.

With all members on board 22 made its journey to Bradford with Mark Boulton at the controls. Having negotiated the ins and outs of the Bradford streets the former Saltaire tram/trolleybus depot was a welcome sight. Soon Keighley was in view and so were the smouldering remains of the Dalton Mills famous as a location for the TV programmes *Peaky Blinders* and *Downton Abbey*.

22 was parked up in with several other visiting vehicles in Worth Bridge Road. A short walk to the museum - stepping over the fire department's hose pipe - Stewart David gathered the members together at the museum entrance. Issued with tickets we made good use of the welfare facilities and with a welcome cuppa and for some a devious bacon butty. Suitably refreshed we then had a good look around the resident vehicles and visiting cars etc.

At 12.30pm 22 was on the move again passing the former Keighley trolleybus depot on an arranged visit to the Museum of Rail Travel at Ingrow. After a very impressive 9 point turning by Eric Moy members made their way into the museum containing many railway carriages, lamps, signs and other railway memorabilia.

Soon it was time to return to the Bus Museum - time for another cuppa and baked potatoes, and some last photographs of the exhibits. Before long we were on the M62 to returning back at Sandtoft with David Hanchett in the cab.

Without doubt thanks must go to the Keighley Bus Museum for the invitation; to the drivers: Mark Boulton, Eric Moy, and David Hanchett; the members of DOLRS for preparing Doncaster 22; and Stewart David for organising the visit. A great day out with an excellent chance to see and photograph Bradford Trolleybus 844 in the sunshine before its trip over to the Sandtoft for the season.

OPEN DAYS FOR 2022

PLEASE NOTE: THE MUSEUM IS ONLY OPEN ON THE DATES SHOWN BELOW

Saturday 16 April
 Sunday 17 April
 Monday 18 April

FREE BUS

Easter Weekend Trolleydays

Saturday 30 April
 Sunday 1 May
 Monday 2 May

FREE BUS

Bradford Weekend *A commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the closure of the last British trolleybus system, with visiting vehicles*

Saturday 14 May
 Sunday 15 May

Weekend Trolleydays *Opening of our new exhibition: "Trolleybuses of the Humber"*

Saturday 28 May
 Sunday 29 May

Diesels Weekend *featuring the motorbuses in the collection*

Saturday 18 June
 Sunday 19 June

FREE BUS

Weekend Trolleydays *The East Yorkshire Thoroughbred Car Club will visit on the Sunday*

Saturday 9 July
 Sunday 10 July

Weekend Trolleydays

Saturday 30 July
 (open 10.30am – 10pm)

'Gathering Saturday Trolleyday *Preview of 'Gathering Day itself: twilight trolleybus operation, BBQ & real ale beer tent*

Sunday 31 July
 (open 10am – 6pm)

FREE BUS

Sandtoft Gathering '22 *with visiting historic vehicles, transport flea market, live music, real ale beer tent and lots for the family to see and do*

Saturday 13 August
 Sunday 14 August

Blues & Twos Weekend Trolleydays *with visiting retired 999 vehicles, dramatic emergency services displays and demonstrations*

Saturday 27 August
 Sunday 28 August
 Monday 29 August

FREE BUS

London Trolleybus Weekend *Commemorating the 60th anniversary of London's last trolleybus*

Saturday 17 September
 Sunday 18 September

Models Weekend *featuring working layouts*

Saturday 1 October
 Sunday 2 October

Weekend Trolleydays *with visiting EasternBloc cars (Sunday only)*

Sunday 16 October

FREE BUS

Isle of Axholme Running Day & Rally *presented by Doncaster Omnibus & Light Railway Society*

Saturday 29 October
 Sunday 30 October

Weekend Trolleydays

Saturday 19 November
 (open 10.30am – 6pm)

Twilight & After Dark Trolleyday *with twilight and after-dark trolleybus operation*

DONCASTER BUS CONNECTIONS

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. On Saturdays we run a connecting service to Thorne. Please check the Travel South Yorkshire website before travelling, as First service 87 may change:

	First South Yorkshire Service 87	Trolleybus Museum Free Bus
Doncaster Interchange	1007	
Thorne Park Gates	1054	1100
Trolleybus Museum		1120
Return Service	Trolleybus Museum Free Bus	First South Yorkshire Service 87
Trolleybus Museum	1530	
Thorne Park Gates	1550	1556
Doncaster Interchange		1644



www.sandtoft.org

Admission prices on days shown with a red background:

Adults £13 | Seniors (61+) £11.00 | Concs £7.50 | Family (2 Adults + up to 2 Concs) £37
 Seniors + Family (2 Seniors + up to 2 Concs) £33

Admission prices on other days:

Adults £11 | Seniors (61+) £9 | Concs £7 | Family (2 Adults + up to 2 Concs) £32 |
 Seniors + Family (2 Seniors + up to 2 Concs) £28