

Edmonton (Canada) 189 **(unregistered)**



Chassis:	General Motors (GM) HR150G
Chassis No:	
Motor:	Bown Boveri Canada
Bodywork:	GM B41D
Length:	40ft
Width:	8ft 6in
Body Number:	
Unladen Weight:	
Entered Service:	1981
Withdrawn:	2009
Owner:	The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft

BRIEF HISTORY

Trolleybus service in Edmonton started on 24 September 1939, with route 5 operating from 101 St/Jasper Ave to 95 St/111 Ave. By the end of October of that year, service had started on another route running to 99 St/Whyte Ave via the Low Level Bridge. In Edmonton, trolleybuses were often referred to simply as "trolleys". The initial fleet had British-made AEC chassis.

In 1981/1982 Edmonton bought 100 new trolleys from General Motors (Canada). Electrical equipment was supplied by Brown Boveri & Company (BBC) and they were the only examples built with the GM "New Look" body (which unofficially also became known as the "Fishbowl"), whereas more than 44,000 motor buses were built to this design. Reputedly GM were reluctant to advertise that they built electric vehicles and these trolleys were badged as BBCs - how times have changed!

By 1990 Edmonton had such a surplus of trolleys that they were able to loan 40 of the BBCs to the Toronto Transit Commission whilst it decided the future of its own system. 189 was one of these, carrying the TTC fleet number 9189 until its return to Edmonton in December 1993. The Edmonton fleet was roughly double the operational requirements so for many years buses alternated between being in service or in store. By the end of 2008 only 49 "Fishbowls" survived.

In 2007, a low-floor model of trolleybus was leased from Coast Mountain Bus Company, Vancouver's bus operating company, for a one-year period, for testing of possible benefits of low-floor trolleybuses over hybrid diesel buses. On 18 June 2008, the city council voted 7 to

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6 in favour of phasing out the trolleybus system in 2009 and 2010. However, faced with a projected \$35 million deficit in 2009 the city council decided in April that year that the trolleybus service would be discontinued much sooner and it closed very suddenly on 2 May 2009.

189 was purchased by the Museum for a "Loonie" (one Canadian Dollar). When the bus arrived and the interior was given a thorough clean, a dollar coin was found - unexpectedly off-setting the cost of purchase.

Unlike our "traditional" British trolleybuses 189 has thyristor control requiring a different driving technique whilst its accelerator pedal is in the normal position on the right, again unlike British trolleys which have the power pedal on the left. The bus is also wider and longer than any of our other exhibits and as it has a long wheelbase with short front and rear overhangs, manoeuvring in Sandtoft Square is a precision task. Surprisingly for a North American vehicle of the period it does not have power-assisted steering. However it does have a very efficient heating system designed to cope with Canadian winters. Unfortunately we can't use the heaters at Sandtoft as the current drawn is more than enough to fire our electrically-operated frog, which has caught out a few drivers!

The vehicle can be viewed at the Museum, but is suffering from a number of electrical and air brake problems so is not currently operational.