

Grimsby-Cleethorpes **159 (GFU 692)**



Chassis:	B.U.T. 9611T
Chassis No:	9611T131
Motor:	MetroVick MV209AY1, 95hp
Bodywork:	N.C.B. H28/26R
Length:	26ft
Width:	8ft
Body Number:	
Unladen Weight:	8t 13cwt 0qtr
Entered Service:	1950
Withdrawn:	28 February 1970
Owner:	Private

BRIEF HISTORY

Replacement of the Grimsby District Light Railway began in 1926, with the conversion into a trolleybus route of the branch tramway from Riby Square, Grimsby along Freeman Street, Grimsby. The second Grimsby trolleybus route, a replacement of the main tramway section between the Old Market Place in Grimsby and Kingsway in Cleethorpes, was not opened until November 1936.

The tramway, which had been taken over by the Cleethorpes Urban District Council in July 1936, continued to operate until mid-1937, with a reduced service between Riby Square and Cleethorpes. It closed on 17 July 1937, and the new Cleethorpes trolleybus system was inaugurated the next day, operating jointly with the Grimsby–Cleethorpes route, which was extended to Bathing Pool.

After the Second World War, Cleethorpes started renewing its fleet and 159 was the first of a batch of four BUT 9611T originally numbered 59-62. Operation of both trolleybus systems was transferred to the Grimsby Cleethorpes Transport Joint Committee in 1957 and the former Cleethorpes vehicles had 100 added to their fleet numbers. Closure of the GCT system came on 4 June 1960, when the batch was sold to Walsall Corporation, becoming Walsall numbers 874-877. They passed to West Midlands PTE in 1969 when it absorbed the Walsall undertaking, lasting in service until that system's closure in 1970.

Walsall had rebuilt three of the quartet (875-877, former GCT 160-162), lengthening them
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to 30 feet long and moving the entrance and stairs to be immediately behind the front axle. For some reason 874 was not rebuilt in this way and as it was in largely original condition was selected for preservation.

Northern Coachbuilders (NCB) was a small concern based in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. In the latter stages of the War they had had some success rebodding old and blitz-damaged buses; they also appeared to do well in the early postwar bus building boom, constructing on new chassis. By 1950 they had poached the head designer from Eastern Coachworks (ECW), by then under state ownership and with its sales restricted to state-owned operators, and he had re-designed the NCB product to closely resemble that of his former employers. Shortly after the Cleethorpes batch was built, NCB ran into financial difficulties and ceased trading. I59 therefore gives us a tantalising glimpse of what an ECW-bodied trolleybus may have looked like had the firm had the opportunity to build them.

The vehicle is stored at the Museum and may only be viewed with the assistance of a staff member.