

Sandtoft Scene

October 2016
No. 103



**News and Views from
The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft**

Registered Charity No.514382

Give As You Earn Reference: 000495640

HM Revenue & Customs Giving Through Self Assessment Return Reference: RAQ90NG

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FRONT COVER PICTURE: After the cutting of the tape and the official launch, passengers make their way to board Wellington 82 for its first journey in service on 'Gathering Preview Saturday

Photo: Bob Ashton

Our Vision Statement is

**To be nationally acknowledged as the Museum of the
Trolleybus and to entertain, educate and give excellent value
and service to our visitors**

and portrays exactly why The Museum exists and how the Company and The Museum should be run. All considerations, decisions, directives, policies, processes and actions of the Directors and the Members must be focused to meet this end.



FROM THE EDITOR

This is very much a time of mixed emotions, as we have been experiencing both sadnesses and successes in recent months. In early July we lost one of our most reliable and popular volunteers, David Croft, who has contributed enormously to the smooth running of our open days over many years. We are also very sorry to report the death of John Shellard, who had been working steadily on the restoration of the Museum's London RT. They will be greatly missed and we have tributes to both of them on page 7.

There have also been two very positive highlights. First was the completion of the restoration work on Wellington 82 (page 12), enabling its launch into passenger-carrying service during 'Gathering weekend. Then came 'Gathering Day itself - and what an event it turned out to be this year! Not surprisingly, our newly-launched New Zealand trolleybus proved extremely popular with the visitors on both days, and performed very well. The 'Gathering really did pull in the crowds, with over 1,100 visitors attending, together with around 140 rally vehicles - something of a record for recent years. With these increased numbers, the overall scale of activity was larger than last year, and even with 55 volunteers rostered for duty, the whole workforce was stretched to capacity. Nevertheless, we managed to cope and our visitors all seemed pleased with the event, although by the end of the day some of our workers were feeling pretty shattered. No complaints, however, and a large turnout of both visitors and vehicles is a very good problem to have. Full report and photos: page 15.

We would like to thank everyone who helped with organising, managing and staffing this year's 'Gathering, and making it such an overwhelming success. Because so many were involved we are not mentioning any names or singling-out any groups for special mention, but great credit is due to everyone who contributed to what proved once again to be a brilliant team effort.

NEW MEMBERS

We extend a warm welcome to:

Mr D Asquith (Poulton-le-Fylde)	Miss J Meadowcroft (Doncaster)	Mr M Stevens (Alfreton)
Mr R Barnes (Gainsborough)	Mr P Morris (Epworth)	Mr D Stevens (Alfreton)
Hattie Blaydes (Doncaster)	Miss J Morris (Epworth)	Charlotte Stevens,
Mr M Caswell (Doncaster)	Mr P Roberts (Leicester)	Lewis Stevens and
Mrs P Caswell (Doncaster)	Mr D Ross (Crowle)	Nathan Stevens
Mr S Kerry (Tonbridge)	Mr P Spencer (Nottingham)	(Kirkby in Ashfield)
Victoria Leung (Derby)	Mr J Spencer (Nottingham)	Mr G Willetts (Harborne)
Mr W Lovell (Newbury)	Mr I Stenton (Hong Kong)	Mrs J Willetts (Harborne)

Please note: News deadline for the next Sandtoft Scene is 5 December 2016

RECENT RUNNING DAYS

Spring Bank Holiday Weekend: 28-30 May

Richard Jackson

"When's the next trolley to the City?"

For our Big City Weekend, the trolleybus services were provided by representatives from five UK cities. From England we had London 1348, Manchester 1344, and Derby 172. The Welsh representative was Cardiff 203, and of course for Scotland we had Glasgow TB78. Admittedly, in the days of trolleybuses, Derby wasn't a city, so I'm afraid there is a bit of historical licence there. Unfortunately during the Monday morning leak-test, Cardiff 203 gave a high reading of 7.0mA (our pass limit is 3.0mA). Despite Bruce Lake's best efforts, we needed to seek a replacement, and Derby 172 came to our rescue.

On all three days we arranged a line-up of the "Big City Trolleys" in the centre of Sandtoft Square. This provided a welcome opportunity for photographers and enthusiasts alike to gain a unique snap of trolleybuses which are not normally paired together. Following these line-ups, we then began the busiest running session I have ever been involved in, with four vehicles simultaneously in operation. For our visitors, this provided a rare chance to experience what a busy city would have been like, with multiple silent vehicles constantly passing by.

Elsewhere in the Museum, our Isle of Axholme tours were as popular as ever, and on the Monday we even needed to bring an extra motorbus into service to cope with demand. I'm sure all aboard the tours were kept entertained by Steve Gill's and Tony Ferris' commentary of the local area. Overall, a successful weekend with good staff attendance, sunny skies and impressive visitor numbers. We also gained several new members.

On Day Two of our Big City Weekend the line-up was slightly different: Glasgow TB78, Cardiff 203, London 1348, Manchester 1344 and Bradford 746 - three of which are seen here

Photo: Dave Chick



Worldwide Weekend: 11-12 June

This weekend saw Limoges 5 and Marseille 202 in service, accompanied by Glasgow TB78, London 1348 and Derby 172. The main highlight of the event was, of course, the introduction of Wellington 82 to our visitors, running several journeys in demonstration mode.

This was the culmination of a very long-term project and a final burst of last-minute activity, as already explained in our article "Wellington 82 has arrived" in 'Scene no.102'.



Above: Wellington 82 with Bruce Lake, John Shearman, Ian Metcalfe and Francis Whitehead, all of whom had played a role in bringing the project to fruition

Photo: Don Mower



Left: Limoges 5 in service during the Saturday afternoon

Photo: Janet Stainforth

Nottingham Weekend: 25-26 June

This event was staged to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the cessation of trolleybus operation in Nottingham. Trolleybuses 506 and 493 were in passenger service throughout the weekend supported by Derby 172. In addition, Nottingham 466 and NCT Tower Wagon 802 were out on display and some visiting Nottingham area vehicles were there over the weekend. On the Saturday we linked-up with the 1940s-themed event taking place in Haxey by providing a free shuttle-bus service between Haxey and Sandtoft.

This proved to be another very successful and enjoyable themed event, with new volunteers recruited, impressive numbers of visitors, especially on the Sunday, with visiting vehicles in attendance.

Nottingham's 137, 493 and 506 lined up in glorious sunshine

Photo: David Hanchett



Left: Visiting London Transport RTL 1323 alongside South Yorkshire 2450

Photo: David Hanchett



Below: Doncaster 55, seen here in Haxey, was one of two buses providing the service between the Museum and the 1940s event

Photo: Bob Ashton



David Needham (second from right), the owner of Nottingham 137 and 506, sharing memories of trolleybus days in Nottingham with Mike Johnson, Richard Jackson and Ian Brown

Photo: courtesy Mike Johnson



OBITUARIES

We are sorry to have to record the deaths of two of the Museum's volunteer workers. News came too late for our July edition, which had already been printed.

John Shellard died on 7 July following a period of illness. John was a member from 2004 and played a significant role in the restoration of museum-owned London RT3323 and other museum projects. Our sincerest condolences go to all John's family and friends.

Graham Bilbé writes

John Shellard was, for several years, one of the "Wednesday Gang", in particular assisting with the restoration of the RT, which included providing much of the funding as it progressed. Many of our weekend "operating" volunteers probably never met him, and indeed it was some time before I encountered him myself during a working week about ten years ago. It took a while for me to get to know John, but as soon as we got the chance for a bit of a chat, we discovered our mutual backgrounds in Local Government work, and a mutual respect quickly developed. Prior to his retirement, John had been a social worker in Sheffield - which must have been quite a challenging occupation - but by birth he was a true Londoner; hence his love of the RT type. This was something else we discovered that we shared, as I used to take my little brother up to Streatham High Road in the early 1970s to ride RTs, which by then were getting pretty elderly but were still very characterful.

Unfortunately, once the "RT team" had diverted its efforts onto London 1348 in 2010, combined with a deterioration in his health, John's visits became rather less frequent. However, he and I had occasional chats on the phone or email exchanges, in which I assured him that it was the Board's full intention to finish the RT. This remains so - and we even got to discuss the possible launch for it. I suggested inviting Cliff Richard to come and sing "Summer Holiday", which he related to his wife and then went off into peals of laughter! John always enjoyed a good laugh. He said his wife loved that prospect and had launched into singing and dancing around the kitchen, which had really tickled him! In truth, I doubt we shall be able to persuade the real Cliff to come and sing for us, but I remain determined that we **shall** finish the RT properly, and if I have anything to do with it, it will carry a modest plaque recording John's significant contribution, so he will not be forgotten.

Thank you, John, may you rest in peace.

David Croft was always a very popular member of our traffic staff. He had been very ill for two months when he died on 7 July, aged 70. David had volunteered at the Museum for many years and will be greatly missed by his colleagues and by the public. In addition to his work at the Museum, David wrote a variety of books about transport, three of which covered his favourite municipal system in Bradford, where he lived and worked for most of his life.



David's funeral was held there on 27 July, with many friends

attending from the groups he supported, including over 20 from the Trolleybus Museum. David had no surviving family members, but was held in great regard by his many friends and colleagues. He was a librarian by profession, and had worked for Bradford City Libraries until he retired in 2003, having been in charge of the local history section in the central library before heading up the local libraries in Eccleshill and later Wyke.

Although always a quiet, unassuming and private person, David was actively involved in several organisations, most notably the Bradford Historical and Antiquarian Society, of which he was the librarian. In 2012, he had also been its president - a role previously held by the late Stanley King. His tireless work there showed what a conscientious and very efficient man he was, and despite his quiet personality, he would oversee talks and chair meetings with great authority and knowledge.

In a tribute read at David's funeral, Don Akrigg, Branch Chairman of the Omnibus Society, said that he first met David in the early 1970s, when monthly meetings were held at the City Transport offices. He added that David was a member of the Fylde Tramways Society, London Omnibus Traction Society, Keighley & Worth Valley Railway and more besides. In 1973 he had set up a national society compiling fleet lists of local council vehicles. David enjoyed being out and about making regular visits to towns and cities in West Yorkshire and further afield where he would note the buses he saw and collect timetables for later study. He was also a great supporter of coach holidays and spent many weeks at seaside resorts around the UK - he will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

From Stewart David

I first met David when he started to attend the Museum as a visitor in around 2003. He displayed a great interest in Bradford BUT trolleybus 746, not surprisingly as he came from Bradford. In 2004 David joined the Museum as a member and very soon became a regular volunteer in the Traffic Department as a conductor. David very rarely missed any open day event and in 2009 when I was seeking potential co-owners for Bradford 746, David was the first to very enthusiastically approach me. Later, in 2011, and along with Mike Johnson, David took on the role of inducting and training aspiring conductors. David also helped with some administrative tasks in the Traffic Office, re-writing and updating some of our training material. In 2012 I created the new role of Duty Inspector to help facilitate traffic operations at the sharp end: David seemed a natural choice for this position with his calm and steady approach, very neat and tidy paperwork and regular Museum attendance. More recently, David had been enthusiastically assisting with the expanding number of private party visits we have been undertaking.

To conclude, David was, in my view, a model volunteer and clearly a very popular and respected member of the Traffic team, it was a real pleasure to have known, worked with and managed such a committed individual. He will be sadly missed by all his friends and colleagues.

The Trolleybus Museum's tribute at David's funeral was written by Chas Allen, and this is reproduced next

From Chas Allen

Having had a life-long interest in trolleybuses, David had occasionally visited the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft, becoming a member in 2004 and subsequently a volunteer in 2006. This was when I first met him, as I also volunteered around the same time, and we were trained as conductors together. This was, and still is, an important job at the Museum as many of our younger visitors haven't ridden on any sort of bus before, especially ones with open platforms, so their safety is the conductor's primary role.



A light-hearted moment during Twilight Saturday last October, with the Museum's own "Little and Large": David Croft and Rob Whitehead, once one of David's conductor trainees

Photo: Paul Colegate

Whilst I subsequently became a trolleybus driver, David was happy where he was and, over time, his role expanded to include conductor trainer and examiner, tasks which were shared with Mike Johnson. The system was that if Mike trained a conductor, David would examine the trainee and vice versa. It worked quite well. Subsequently Mike and David also took on the task of duty inspector, with responsibility for writing up the dreaded "green board" on which all trolleybus movements and crews are recorded.

We get asked a lot of questions about trolleybuses, and some can be very specific enquiries - for example, about a particular town's routes. If the late Stanley King wasn't available, David was the "go to" person whenever there was an obscure question about the Bradford trolleybus system, and his book *Bradford Transport* is still on sale in the Museum bookshop.

In 2008 David and I, along with David Verity, were invited by Stewart David to become co-owners of former Bradford trolleybus number 746. This bus was one of Bradford's last new trolleys - all subsequent purchases were secondhand - and I don't think any of us had to

think too hard about this opportunity, perhaps David least of all! It was only afterwards that he told me his father had been a joiner but he, himself, wasn't any good at practical tasks, so he wouldn't be much help with any jobs that might need doing. However, he did as much as he could by contributing financially to 746's upkeep and to basic jobs like keeping it clean and tidy.

Little nuggets of personal information like that were rare: David was an intensely private person. I also knew that he'd been a librarian before retirement and that his last living relative was his mother, who passed away around 2007. And that was about it. I didn't know much about his other interests, which he seemed content to keep totally separate. For example, we only found out that he was a member of the Bradford Historical and Antiquarian Society when two of its other

members happened to visit Sandtoft. They seemed as surprised to see him there as he was to see them. During one visit to him in hospital during his final illness he divulged that he'd been at university in Liverpool, but again this had come about through a connection to buses - it was around the time the city got its first rear-engined buses and he described how badly they had been driven!

David has been described to me as a perfect gentleman. He certainly was; he had a good sense of humour and although mild-mannered, possessed a steely determination and assertiveness - as I found to my cost once when he didn't agree with a proposal I'd made.

He was also very dependable and reliable. It was his reliability that alerted us to his illness. He had told us he would be at our 1940's event on 7 May. When he didn't appear and we were unable to contact him, I tracked him down with the assistance of West Yorkshire Police to Bradford Royal Infirmary: he had been admitted during the night. He either didn't realise how seriously ill he was, or was making light of it. In view of subsequent events, I think he was aware of his situation but didn't want us to be overly concerned for him.

I last saw him about 12 days before he died. By then the tracheotomy tube had been removed and he was able to speak again. The first thing he said was to ask after Hazel, my wife. This was typical of him: after everything he'd gone through, the first thing he did was to ask about someone else. Mentally he was fully alert. I brought him up to date on events at Sandtoft and in the world in general. We even briefly discussed the EU referendum - our first ever conversation about politics - and thankfully we were of similar views! He seemed well on the road to recovery; it was therefore a terrible shock to hear of his passing. We at the Museum have lost a valued friend and member of staff. I shall miss him.

From Mike Johnson

I always knew him as Dave Croft, and he was quite happy with this informality. Dave's knowledge of transport was extensive, particularly about the system in Bradford, even having a part share in Bradford 746 at the Trolleybus Museum.

He would only offer his transport knowledge at appropriate moments of conversation: timetables being social history documents, the need to preserve the variety of municipal destination blind termini and "proper" buses.

Always thoroughly dependable, reliable and supportive, Dave was a perfect partner when we "job shared" our roles as Duty Inspectors. I always knew where



Taking a short break from platform duties during the North-west weekend in 2012, David Croft (left) enjoys a cuppa with Mark Holmes and Mike Johnson on the platform of Ashton 87

Photo: John Whipham

he was and we communicated frequently, both whilst volunteering and privately by phone.

He was almost totally predictable with his routine from arrival in the staff car park: earth-leakage testing, conducting, training or testing of prospective conductors, his attention to paperwork with the infamous green board or statistics in the traffic office and joining many colleagues in "slump corner" at the Green Tree.

A greatly missed colleague.

From Richard Jackson

Whilst reflecting upon the sad news of our recently passed colleague and friend, I remember how instrumental he was throughout my time at the Trolleybus Museum. David was one of my Duty Inspectors, and as such, he offered invaluable support and encouragement, especially during the early months of my conducting career, and was a key motivator in persuading the Museum to allow me to commence driver training. Without the encouragement and friendship he willingly offered, my time at the Museum would have been very different.

Forever in our memories.

VEHICLE REPORTS

*Compiled with information supplied by Mike Johnson,
Francis Whitehead and Bob Ashton*

Rotherham 37: Following the efforts of the RTG working party ('Scene 101) to remove the old near-side linoleum in 37's upper deck, work resumed in July with the fitting of replacement flooring. All of the near-side floor is now re-covered, and the steel tread-strips have been refitted. Meanwhile, whilst the seat cushions are removed, they are being re-upholstered with new leather. The results (*right*) look very good indeed.

Photo: John Stainforth



London 1348 required attention to its rear brakes a few months ago: Jim Sambrooks (*left*) and Ian Metcalfe (*below*) carried out





the necessary repairs. Despite the old drum and rim being cleaned down and repainted, a follow-on job in July to fit a brand new tyre (left) onto it proved impossible, therefore a replacement drum had to be found and fitted. 1348 has also had its paper advertisements replaced with newly-made vinyl copies.

Photos: Bob Ashton

Further vehicle reports have been held over until the next 'Scene' - Ed.

WELLINGTON 82 JOINS THE RUNNERS

Bruce Lake and Francis Whitehead

In *Sandtoft Scene* no.102 we chronicled the activities leading up to Wellington 82's initial trips in demonstration mode during the Worldwide Weekend. We now bring the story up to date, culminating in 82's launch into service on 'Gathering Preview Saturday.



Bruce Lake adjusting the switches in the rear door interlock mechanism

Photo: Tim Stubbs

After 82's outings in early June, we were able to compile a snagging list of outstanding tasks and problems that remained or had shown up during its brief operation. The biggest problem was the rear door safety interlock system, which had only worked if someone leaned on the doors during operation. Doing this physically prevents the switches from coming open, thereby cutting power to the control circuits resulting in the trolleybus grinding to a halt. Further adjustments had been made that weekend which significantly improved the situation.

Not a great deal of work was done on 82 during the intervening weeks, but during the few days prior to the 'Gathering the nut-rings were fitted to the front wheels, the trolley booms were painted black - as the original set had been - and a couple more vinyls were applied, whilst the small curtain to the driver's bulkhead, kindly procured by Pat and Bob Ashton, was shortened by Louise Whitehead and re-



Wellington 82 - complete with nut-rings - parked during a short break during pre-service testing

Photo: Bruce Lake

fitted. During a very wet pre-Gathering Friday, the interior was tidied up and cleaned out, and the remaining engineering tasks were done to complete 82's first annual test. After a few minor pieces of work, 82 was finally declared fit and ready for passenger service.

For the most part of the weekend, 82 ran in service without problems and, thanks to skilful handling by its drivers, our visitors were unaware that the problem with the rear door cut-out had again manifested itself and had not been totally resolved. It would seem that, when fully loaded with 'Gathering passengers, the extra weight made the vehicle tilt slightly to the right whilst turning on the left-hand bends, and this extra tilting resulted in the rear doors opening very slightly - thereby tripping out the control circuit again. As soon as the trolleybus slowed down, the switch would reconnect and 82 would accelerate again. Further diagnosis will be required to verify that this was actually the cause of the cutting-out, which didn't happen at all on the right-hand bends. Then finally, we need to fix this delicate mechanism once and for all!

Now truly integrated with the rest of the running fleet, Wellington 82 about to leave Sandtoft Square with a full load on 'Gathering Day. Next-but-one in line is Bradford 746, another - but somewhat different-looking - British-built BUT trolleybus

Photo: Bob Ashton



NEWS ROUND-UP

Publicity

We have been fortunate in receiving free publicity for the Museum from two very different sources recently.

The Channel 4 programme "Shipping Wars" featured the return of Athens 5088 from Sandtoft to the East Anglia Transport Museum last autumn. The coverage of the process consisted of short instalments of the story spread over several broadcasts during the week of 6-10 June. It described the tendering process for the haulage contract and the practical stages of loading, transporting and unloading 5088 on its journey home. The film-makers managed to catch a (relatively innocuous) grounding of the lower rear of 5088 during the process of getting it onto the haulier's low-loader, but otherwise the event was recorded as being smooth and uneventful. There were interviews - albeit brief ones - with Bruce Lake in which he gave a good account of the preservation of 5088 and of the Trolleybus Museum.

More recently, the August issue of *Buses* magazine contained a two-page spread about trolleybuses in which the Museum featured heavily. The first article covered the anniversary event in Nottingham on 4 July with Nottingham 506 on display, and the second provided substantial coverage of the restoration and launch of Wellington 82. The timing was particularly good, announcing in advance to a wide readership the 'Gathering Preview' event. The acquisition of Bournemouths 297 and 301 also received a mention. Thanks are due to Francis Whitehead for organising this piece of helpful publicity.

Private Parties

Private visits to the Museum have increased substantially this season. On 7 June we hosted the Markington Friendship Society from Harrogate, with London 1348 in service throughout the day. Another successful private visit took place on 17 June, with a group from Stone Hill School in Doncaster. Then, on 13 August, we had a party of 40 organised by the railway tour operator Inside Track, with three trolleybuses and a motorbus in service. *The Trolleyshop* and *Tea Trolley Café* were both open and did very well. These events provide another useful income stream, as well as spreading knowledge of our mission to a wider audience.

The Markington Group with 1348 and Stone Hill School group with 792 Photos: Stewart David



SANDTOFT GATHERING 2016

Richard Jackson and John Stainforth

This year's 'Gathering was surely a memorable one - and memorable for all the right kind of reasons! As is always the case with our biggest event of the year, its success is largely due to the enormous amount of planning and preparation that goes in beforehand. Sometimes factors totally outside our control come into play: last year it was heavy rain on the Sunday afternoon, but this year's event was blessed with perfect weather on both days. We were, however, faced with one major uncertainty which did not get resolved until three days before the event: the location of the car parking. Prolonged negotiations with our neighbouring landowner finally resulted in their "Figure of Eight" area being made available to us, which meant that for this year's 'Gathering Day we did not need to take up Chris Morley's kind offer of his field on the other side of Belton Road. This came as a great relief to the organisers, avoiding the logistical complexities of staffing two admission areas and enabling us to manage the marshalling of cars and the safety of pedestrians with fewer volunteers in total.

Those members who had come to assist with preparations during the Thursday and Friday found their efforts hampered by atrocious weather on both days, particularly on Friday. Despite this, many of our vehicles were successfully relocated from the depot to the rally field during those two days, and a fair amount of work was done to prepare vehicles for service. Some of the trolleybuses we were planning to run were scheduled for testing during the period just before the 'Gathering, but not all of them were passed. However, despite some last-minute substitutions and some just-in-time engineering work on London 1348 and Wellington 82, all seven that were finally selected to run during the weekend performed in service very successfully and without any technical problems.

With the turnout encouraged by excellent weather, our 2016 'Gathering weekend was almost certainly one of the busiest we have staged since the Museum opened. This year we saw an impressive number of visitors attending, and a big increase in the number of rally vehicles coming along to support the event.

Preview Saturday - 30 July

This was a very important day for us, with the official launch into passenger service of Wellington trolleybus no.82. During the morning, three trolleybuses were out and about: Nottingham 493, Bradford 746 and Huddersfield 619, with activities coming to a temporary halt shortly before 1:00pm. Then, with around 50 onlookers assembled for the occasion and to the music of "E Ihowa Atua", these three trolleybuses arrived in procession in Sandtoft Square, followed by Wellington 82. Museum Chairman Graham Bilbé welcomed the visitors and introduced 82, summarising its earlier history, its voyage back from New Zealand, and its recent restoration. He gave special thanks to the project's donors and to Francis Whitehead and Bruce Lake for their exceptional efforts in bringing it to a successful conclusion. After the cutting of the ceremonial tape, Graham introduced David Jukes, one of the contributing editors of *Bus & Coach*

Right:
David Jukes
and Graham
Bilbé at the
launching
ceremony

Photo:
Bob Ashton



Left: Conductor
Mark Holmes takes
charge on board
Wellington 82

Photo:
Bob Ashton

Below: A colourful
line-up in the rally
field, during the
evening sunshine
on Preview
Saturday

Photo:
John Stainforth



Preservation. David is well known to us, having written a very positive article in that magazine following last year's 'Gathering. This year he had been at the Museum for a few days beforehand, getting to know the volunteers and taking a keen interest in the preparations for the weekend. *(He had even done the sweeping and mopping-out work as part of getting 82 ready for service, and then went on to assist with rally parking on 'Gathering Day - Ed).* In his speech, David gave credit to everyone who had made this achievement possible, leading to the first operation in a British museum of a right-hand drive single-deck trolleybus.

Wellington 82 was then loaded up with passengers for its first public service journey, and then remained constantly in operation until the end of the day. Everyone there seemed eager to have a ride. With Bruce Lake at the wheel and Mark Holmes diligently on platform duty, 82 remained full to capacity for most of the afternoon, running faultlessly. According to our lucky colleague, Alex Proctor, who had been passed out to drive 82 that morning, it is a fantastically smooth vehicle, and definitely shows how silently a trolleybus can operate. Although Alex did have some difficult obstacles to contend with, you will be relieved to hear that our resident hedgehog that strayed into 82's path on the back-straight was soon safely hiding on the centre grass!

'Gathering Sunday - 31 July

'Gathering Day required, as always, an early start for all concerned. With the retail stalls arriving from about 7.30 and a constant stream of classic cars and buses filing in through the gates all morning, all hands were kept busy.

By opening time, we had arranged an impressive array of cars on our central grass area, show-casing the finest array of road vehicles from Rolls-Royce, Bentley, Daimler and Jaguar, amongst many others. Once the entertainment had been set-up and the beer tent erected, this area was completely full to capacity. In total we had over 140 visiting vehicles, compared with around 100 last year, and although this number has fluctuated over the years, this greatly exceeded that of all recent 'Gatherings. Many of their owners had made long journeys to be with us and support our event, and we are grateful to them all.

In the bus display area on the rally field, we had a magnificent ensemble of passenger carrying vehicles in a multitude of liveries from an array of eras: something for everyone. The day was filled with the distinctive sound of crash gear boxes being professionally handled and many bus crews finely dressed in authentic attire from a bygone age. Many companies had sent a representative vehicle, including First South Yorkshire who have also been of invaluable assistance in the restoration of Wellington 82.

Meanwhile, the trolleybus service was planned and operated with military precision. The service had been divided into three sections, with trolleybuses and crews rotating every three hours. This allowed visitors to see our fleet operating at its best, and experience the thrill of travelling on many more trolleybuses than on a normal operating day. With Chas Allen stationed as duty traffic manager for the day, he kept at least two trolleybuses moving around at any one time. This really ensures the museum comes alive, doing what we do best. In service from 10:00am until 1:00pm were Bradford 746, Huddersfield 619 and Nottingham 493.



SCENES AT SANDTOFT



- 1 Huddersfield 619 loading passengers
- 2 A variety of sales stalls in the depot
- 3 Crowds milling around as London 1348 departs full
- 4 Chesterfield 225 and Doncaster 33 providing the free bus services
- 5 Queueing for a ride on Wellington 82 by the "Lichfield" shelter - now fitted with window frames





6



7

GATHERING 2016

- 6** Two trolleybuses in service and three more taking a rest
- 7** Nottingham 493 passes the bicycle display
- 8** Table service outside the *Tea Trolley Café*
- 9** Ice cream for sale and tables to relax by the beer tent
- 10** A temporary disconnection for Huddersfield 619 - a rare event nowadays

Photos:

1-9: Bob Ashton

10: Jim Sambrooks



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2

A SMALL SELECTION OF



- 1 The oldest entry in the rally: a 1911 Stanley steam car
- 2 1939 Lanchester with a 1966 Wolseley Hornet
- 3 The central grass area choc-a-bloc with people and classic cars
- 4 A very sporty speciality car and a 1982 Bedford BT engineer's van
- 5 1959 Bedford Dormobile camper van



4



5



6



7

THE GATHERING'S VISITORS

6 Hull Corporation
1953 AEC Regent
and 1969 Atlantean

7 1966 York-West
Yorkshire Bristol
Lodekka

8 Classic and
modern buses in
the rally field

9 1977 Strathtay
Scottish Leyland
Leopard

10 1969 Ford Consul
and two rural gents
from an earlier age
who catch moles

Photos:

1,2,4,6-8: Bob Ashton

3,10: Jason Bowers

5,9 David Hanchett



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Then the operational fleet changed over, with Wellington 82, London 1348 and Bradford 792 in service. Finally, at 3:30pm, Manchester 1344, Bradford 746, and Huddersfield 619 entered service and ran for the rest of the event. Large numbers of passengers were carried throughout the day and London 1348 alone carried almost 500 people!

Something which seemed to catch the attention of enthusiasts was the choice of destination blinds on our two Bradford vehicles in service (746 and 792). This was to help us remember our colleague and friend, David Croft: the destinations were set to "25 - Nab Wood", the place where David's funeral had taken place a few days previously. David was a co-owner of 746, and so this seemed a fitting tribute to a dedicated and well-regarded colleague.

Elsewhere on site, the Isle of Axholme tours and Doncaster connection buses were kept busy, with our motorbus crews working constantly throughout the day and a team of three buses providing the connection to Doncaster every 30 minutes, as well as the Isle of Axholme tours. It was rewarding to see so many full buses arriving. and special thanks go to Isle Coaches and Stagecoach East Midlands for their complimentary loan of buses for use on the Doncaster service, allowing more of our "historic" fleet to be allocated to the Isle Tours.

Thanks to well-organised reception arrangements, the Museum has certainly perfected the art of speedily getting our visitors inside. Although there was a continuous queue at reception for about two hours at opening time, nobody had to wait longer than three minutes! That is very impressive indeed; well done to all those volunteers involved. The only down-side of having large numbers of people arriving continuously is the job of processing Gift Aid on their admission fees. Collecting the required details from each visitor can be time consuming, but each year we find a faster way to do it. The additional effort is very worthwhile and results in considerable extra income for our funds.

In addition to all the buses, cars and commercial vehicles, our visitors were kept entertained by the nostalgic sounds of the fairground organ, and by the Gaslight Jazz Band, who played iconic tunes from yesteryear. So, with the sun shining, the beer tent doing a roaring trade, the ice-cream van cooling everyone down and the band adding perfect ambiance, the day was a hive of activity. Our membership total also climbed during the day, with our reception team enrolling many new members. We welcome all who joined, hope you enjoy our future events and thank you for supporting the Museum.

It was refreshing to see so many of our younger visitors taking a keen and enthusiastic interest in historic transport, especially the fleet of trolleybuses in service. During the morning I was assigned to drive Bradford 746, and it was pleasing to see so many youngsters peering through the open window between the cab and lower saloon. They all seemed to have questions, eager to know what all the controls do, and what the various buzzes, clicks and clacks mean. Even during such a demanding weekend, our staff are always happy to spend time explaining the unique characteristics of the trolleybuses. One day we hope that some of these youngsters will be interested enough to join us as workers, and become the future strength of the Museum as the older generation retires.

Incidentally, I did feel privileged to be driving 746, especially as it has just been fitted with two new tyres. Over the previous two open weekends, the entire Traffic Department had been monitored with all the scrutiny of an Ofsted inspection to ensure these new tyres were not being scuffed against kerb-edges. No pressure, though, even if one of 746's co-owners happens to be the Managing Director!

I must also mention the colossal effort made by many volunteers to keep the *Tea Trolley Café* operating smoothly. 'Gathering is the busiest day in our calendar: the café team was well prepared and the additional seating was definitely needed. Regular visitors would have noticed that even our Chairman had donned a pinny and pitched in with the washing up! These events are only possible because of the willingness of all our staff and their flexibility to do whatever duty is required to make the day a success.

Finally, as another 'Gathering closes and all the staff retire to various pubs or flop onto the sofa with a mug of tea, it just remains to say a massive "thank you" to all our visitors for their support, to the owners of all the visiting vehicles who travelled many miles to be there, and to all our staff for the many hours of work that went into running the event. Next year we'll do it all over again ...

A perspective from *The Tea Trolley*

Helen Cross

My first 'Gathering in the *Tea Trolley Café* started at around 8.30am with rolls to be sliced, sandwich fillings to be mixed and cakes to be iced. Before the official opening time of 10.00am there were hot drinks and breakfast rolls for volunteers. But when the doors opened... I knew we would be busy but the queue did



Photo: Bob Ashton

not subside until nearly 4.00pm! Luckily our friendly and patient visitors and exhibitors were happy to wait for freshly prepared food, and the 'Gathering weekend saw record takings for the new *Tea Trolley* crew. I even managed to get a ride on Bradford 746 towards the end of the day!

'Gathering Postscript

Stewart David

We are delighted to record one of the most successful 'Gatherings in several years, with high visitor numbers and rally entries dramatically exceeding those of the past few years. Rally entries were up by around 40%, and an impressive 2,523 passenger journeys were made on our service trolleybuses on 'Gathering Sunday - up by 30% on last year's total. A splendid effort was made by the whole Museum team to plan, manage and deliver such a successful event: well done to

all concerned!

The trolleybus service trips and passenger numbers for Preview Saturday were slightly down in comparison with 2015, but Sunday's crowds more than made up for it, with our trolleybuses running a record 112 trips.

In addition to our own workforce, we are indebted to many people and firms for making the 'Gathering a success. Special thanks go to T A White and Sons, for allowing us to use their land for access and car parking, and to Isle Coaches of Owston Ferry and Stagecoach East Midlands for the use of their vehicles for the Doncaster free bus service.

TRANSPORT TRUST AWARD FOR ROTHERHAM 73

Tim Stubbs

At the beginning of the year it was suggested the Rotherham Sunbeam trolleybus no.73 be entered for a Transport Trust award for restoration. Each year, the Transport Trust presents a series of awards to celebrate restoration excellence and commitment to the preservation of our unique transport heritage. These annual Restoration Awards were introduced specifically to assist preservation projects that are underway but not completed. Applicants need to show that some progress has already been made, that there is a clear and costed future plan and a realistic likelihood of completion.

Over the past 15 years, work has progressed steadily on what has amounted to a complete rebuild of Rotherham 73. It had lain almost derelict for 47 years, following its 12 years service with Rotherham Corporation. In the ensuing period a complete chassis overhaul has been undertaken, bodywork structure renewed and fitting of the complete range of electrical equipment, all of which was removed when the trolleybus was "sent for scrap" in 1954!

The restoration team has comprised six regular volunteers plus over thirty others who have helped with the project in one way or another. Over 7,000 hours have been contributed to undertake the work to date, which has included renewal of body frame stress panels, complete overhaul of the mechanical chassis parts, acquisition, overhaul and fitting of all the electrical control equipment, motor, differentials, wheels, tyres, seats, doors, windows and glazing. Also the manufacture of the gantry and trolley gear (from original drawings), roof walkways, resistor box, half-shafts and installation of new electrical wiring throughout. Every detail of the restoration has been meticulously documented in note and photographic form. At one point, one of



Rotherham 73 pauses between trips when under test using battery power

Photo: Tim Stubbs

the regular volunteers who has been with the project for many years privately thought it would never be completed!

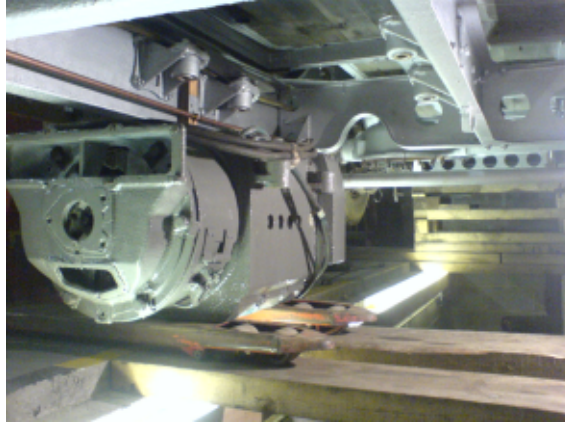
Now, within sight of the end, the idea of having the project assessed as part of the Transport Trust Award process seemed very attractive. The application form asked for a brief description of the project, a statement as to outstanding work needed, and an assessment of the cost of completing the remaining work. After submitting all details, I was contacted by the Transport Trust representative, Paul Brook. Eventually, after phone calls and diary searching, a suitable date was agreed for the inspection to take place. Paul explained he was on a fact finding mission, with over 50 entries to see. As he inspected the 'bus he took photographs and made extensive notes, studied the documentation of progress as it was explained how the many parts required had been obtained and, in several cases, made from scratch. The latter category included the detail of sourcing suitable half-shafts for the rear axle, and the complete construction of new trolley gear to the original design. The late Stanley King had discovered the existence of the trolley gear drawings.

After the visit by Paul Brook, there was an extended wait. He had said the competition would be significant and with such a variety of exhibits - everything from cars to railway carriages to steam lorries to buses - the Transport Trust's decision would be a tough one. Then one day in May, a letter arrived confirming we were to receive one of the top four awards for our efforts - the Ron Wilsdon Award for excellence in restoration.



Tim Stubbs poses for the camera as he receives the Transport Trust award, on behalf of the team, from HRH Prince Michael of Kent at Brooklands on 6 June 2016

Photo: Peter Swift



Lifting the overhauled traction motor into position under the vehicle

Photo: Tim Stubbs

The award ceremony, on 6 June, took place at Brooklands Museum, near Weybridge in Surrey, the home of an extensive aircraft collection and the exhibits of the London Bus Preservation Society. Fifteen awards were presented in all by the Patron of the Transport Trust, Prince Michael of Kent. As the owner of no.73, I received the award on behalf of the restoration team. There were over 50 people present at the ceremony, comprising winners of the various awards, their supporters and

Members of the restoration team in the Sunbeam Café.

left-to-right: Tim Stubbs, Clive Walker, Nigel Tilly, Susie Stubbs, Peter Swift, Mike Johnson and Mike Dilai

Not only was this an appropriately-named café, but Brooklands was also very suitable venue for the event, with the London Bus Museum being the current home of BTS-owned London 1812



Transport Trust officials. After the formal part of the proceedings, Prince Michael of Kent inspected the display of photographs of the successful entrants, chatting with the restorers and asking many pertinent questions. He also approached the supporters asking what part they had played in the various projects, following which he took the wheel of a 1925 Dennis motorbus and drove it around Brooklands' site, exhibiting a competent display of vintage vehicle driving.

Now, as the final stages of the restoration of Rotherham 73 take place, plans are being made to decide the most appropriate location for display and a launch into public service.

POSTAL PROBLEMS WITH SANDTOFT SCENE

Over the past 18 months, a significant number of members have reported problems with the delivery of *Sandtoft Scene*, including empty or damaged envelopes or non-arrival of their magazine. We have tried hard to minimise these occurrences by sticking down both of the envelope flaps with tape, but despite these efforts, we received about half a dozen reports of the July issue arriving with the envelope split open along the edge. We are sorry that these problems continue to happen, and have contacted Royal Mail about them. Their reply, whilst apologetic, was a very standard one, implying that a certain amount of damage in the post is an inevitable consequence of increased mechanisation, which we simply have to accept as part of modern life.

Meanwhile, we are taking two more steps to try and mitigate these problems. First, we will be using slightly stronger envelopes for this (and future) issues. Second, we are looking to include the words "Sandtoft Scene" on the mailing labels, so that if you receive an empty envelope, you will at least know what it originally contained. We will, of course, send you a replacement copy. All we can ask is that you continue to let us know if your magazine does not arrive, or if you receive a damaged copy or an empty envelope (contact details: page 2). The easiest way to check whether 'Scene' has been mailed out is to look on our Facebook page (see page 2) or our Members' page: www.sandtoft.org/members.

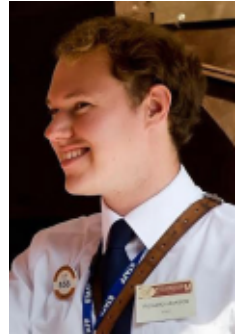
MANAGEMENT TOPICS

Commercial Support Manager role for Richard Jackson

For several years, the Museum has operated without a Commercial Director, which has meant the reallocation among other directors of various fragments of that broad area of responsibility. Inevitably, however, their existing workload pressures have limited the amount of time and attention available for some of the important activities in this area.

Since Stewart David's appointment as Managing Director at the beginning of 2016, he has put considerable effort into improving the focus on those activities needed to sustain and grow the business. To ensure the continuity of this initiative with the required level of management, Richard Jackson has now been appointed to the position of Commercial Support Manager, reporting to Stewart. Richard will concentrate on managing and developing the Trolleybus Driving Experience (TDE) programme, and organising private party visits to the Museum. Both of these are important generators of income for the Museum, and have the potential to bring in substantially more funds year-on-year to support our future growth and development.

Richard will be saying more about this initiative in a future 'Scene'. Meanwhile, we wish him well with the job and ask our volunteers to give Richard all possible support with this vital responsibility.



We still need a new editor!

As I explained in the April *Sandtoft Scene*, I will be standing down from the position of editor at the end of this year after five years in the "hot seat". In practice this means that the January 2017 edition will be my last, with most of the work on that one being required during November. I also appealed for anyone interested in taking on the role to come forward, but so far nobody has volunteered.

We are, nonetheless, very grateful for the offers of assistance with magazine editing that this request has generated, and I hope that my successor will be able to include those of you who have offered as part of a team effort. The work can certainly be divided-up into relatively independent areas - for example, compiling the reports of open days, or collecting and organising the "Vehicle Reports" section and news of restoration projects. Another topical example is the creation of the complete 'Gathering report (over 9 pages this time), which is quite a substantial task, especially when the photograph selections are included.

Time is now running out to operate a period of overlap in order to ensure a smooth handover, so we are appealing once again to consider whether you could take on the overall coordination, or else look after some individual areas of editorial responsibility. Please feel encouraged to talk to me directly, or contact Francis Whitehead (details on page 2) for more information.

John Stainforth

JOHANNESBURG 589

Francis Whitehead

This trolleybus was acquired by the Museum in 2009, when it was transported by sea from South Africa. Originally supplied to Johannesburg in 1948, it is a BUT 9641T with its chassis built in Britain and a 71-seat double-deck body built by an MCCW subsidiary in South Africa. It was one of a batch very similar to London Transport's SA3 class, and ran in service in Johannesburg for a remarkable 26 years. No.589 was withdrawn 1974 and the system there survived until 1986.

When I visited Johannesburg in 1973, the notorious apartheid régime was still in operation. Many of the trolleybus services had both European and non-European use trolleybuses inter-running on the same route, and had separate bus stops. I think that by then the vehicles mostly were dedicated to being either European or non-European vehicles. There was a very good headway on all the trolleybus routes and many of the routes were long and there was no hanging around! Despite the extensive size and number of adverts, the maroon and cream livery with a silver roof was most attractive. All in all, having recently witnessed the elimination of trolleybuses in the UK, it was a tonic to see such a magnificent and efficient trolleybus operation - and it exclusively utilised double deckers!

Since its arrival in the UK, no.589 has been in storage away from the Museum, and a significant amount of restoration has been carried out, with progress being recorded from time to time in *Sandtoft Scene*. The off-side of the body had been in a parlous state with severe corrosion affecting just about every structural component. Thanks to the efforts of Richard Bilbé, that side has been totally rebuilt, with new pillars being fitted, replacing the originals one by one. A set of new stress panels had also been made. After a long pause in activity, the project re-started and a large amount of structural work has been done in the cab area. Further, much of the electrical equipment from the cab has been taken out, refurbished and is now ready to be re-installed.

We are now pleased to report that 589's restoration is to be taken over by Ian



Johannesburg 589 in service in 1973 in the busy city centre on route 2 to Dunkeld. It was running a non-European only journey, as identified by the green fold-down boards above the nearside windscreen and forward of the rear platform - there was another one on the rear

Photo:
Francis Whitehead

Barrett under contract and the trolleybus is due to be transferred during late September or early October from its present accommodation in Reading to Ian's workshop near Dorking. The plan is for Ian Barrett and his associates to take the work through to completion, a task Ian estimates could take 30-36 months to achieve. Ian has a long pedigree of carrying out high quality bus restoration work including projects for the London Bus Museum, whilst his most recent major venture has been the total renovation for the Birmingham and Midland Motor Omnibus Trust (BaMMOT) of a 1931 petrol-engined Birmingham Corporation AEC Regent, no.486 (OV 4486), that has a very early metal-framed MCCW body. No.486 was in a very delicate state when taken to Ian! Like the Birmingham Regent, the restoration of no.589 is a massive task - but, of course, without the complications of a petrol engine and gearbox to deal with.

When the Museum first acquired 589, the Board tasked a small band of dedicated enthusiasts - "The 589 Group" - to oversee, fund-raise for and manage no.589 on its behalf. Whilst planning the restoration, the Group has borne in mind not only aesthetic authenticity, but also structural authenticity, as far as this is practicable. This philosophy has been incorporated into the formal agreement with like-minded Ian Barrett. Regular monitoring and planning meetings between Ian and the 589 Group will take place to enable smooth progress to be made with the work, to accommodate our specific input when appropriate for specialist HT electrical work, and to ensure that our fund-raising keeps pace with the work as it happens.

We have a number of members who are contributing monthly to "The Johannesburg 589 Fund", so a big "thank you" to them for their ongoing support. We have also secured some very generous 4-figure and 5-figure donations from supporters of no.589, some of whom are not even members of the Museum! A very big "thank you" to these kind donors. Whilst we have enough funding in place (circa. £100,000) to pay for a year's work, it doesn't take much mathematical ability to work out that we do urgently need further donations, big and small, to see 589 completed and up and running at Sandtoft. Please contact Francis Whitehead (see page 2) if you can help.

Activity on 589 recently has centred on getting it into a fit state to be moved to Dorking. A replacement nearside front corner body pillar has been fabricated and fitted into place to complete the lower section of the cab structure; the driver's seat and steering wheel, removed to give access to cab structure and electrical equipment, have been re-fitted (they will need to come out again at some point!), and the top and bottom decks have been temporarily bolted together on the off-side - a permanent fix here requires replacement of part of the tongued and grooved upper deck floor, as it is effectively clamped between the two decks (a result of the two saloons having originally been constructed separately). Some temporary brackets have been made up and fitted to reinforce the connection of the two decks on the near-side. The rear bogie wheel bearings have been checked, the half shafts removed and loose parts either taken off the vehicle for separate transportation to Dorking or secured so that nothing might fall off en-route!

CHANCE ENCOUNTERS

Tim Stubbs

Meeting folk at Sandtoft is always an enjoyable experience and between trips there is often the chance to engage in interesting conversations. One couple recently on site obviously had connections with Maidstone, could remember trolleybuses running there, and asked whether we have a vehicle from Maidstone. On conveying the answer, they set out into the depot to see if they could locate the said trolleybus. I also mentioned to them that the owner, Malcolm Coates, was at Sandtoft that day and I would attempt to arrange an introduction.



Now, as is well known, it is easy to lose people at the Museum! There must be at least seven different routes from the Box Van to the Workshop, not to mention the Pelham, café, reception and the tram body. So although I had seen Malcolm earlier, and had a conversation with him about a possible repaint to his trolleybus, I was quite unable to locate him when needed! Driving duties beckoned, the visitors went about their business, and I set off around the circuit, meanwhile keeping my eyes open to see if Malcolm was still on site.

Malcolm Coates with Mrs Beswick

Photo: Tim Stubbs

It was some time later when I spotted Malcolm in conversation with another member at the front of the depot, near the earth leakage test unit. My attempts to catch his eye, whilst driving past, proved completely unsuccessful. Eventually my circuits ended and I dived out of the cab to inform him of the presence of interested visitors from Maidstone. I asked Malcolm to promise to stay put while I tried to locate them. Now as I mentioned, it is easy to lose people at Sandtoft ...

It did have a happy ending. Some minutes later I discovered the couple taking refreshments at the tables outside the *Tea Trolley Café*. Introductions were made and it turned out that they were from the same part of Maidstone as Malcolm, he knew her father, they attended the same church.... Chance encounters!

ANOTHER REMARKABLE ENCOUNTER Robin Symons

During the 'Gathering preparations, a gentleman arrived at the Museum and introduced himself as Nick Hanson. He proved to have a surprising association with what is now thought most probably to be Hastings 46. He had once lived next door to Mr and Mrs Reddin, when they lived in the trolleybus near Ingatestone. He was able to confirm the spelling of their surname and that David Reddin had once been a Japanese prisoner-of-war, forced to work on the infamous Burma Railway. The history of no.46 and the investigative work to identify the vehicle and its residents were covered in articles in *Sandtoft Scene* nos. 87 and 90. We have forwarded him a copy of these in case he can remember any other useful details about the vehicle. It's a small world, isn't it?

506 RETURNS TO NOTTINGHAM

Nottingham 506 returned home on 4 July to take part in Nottingham City Transport's 2016 Heritage Day, commemorating 50 years since the closure of the trolleybus system. 506 was displayed in Old Market Square with three local preserved buses and a modern Scania which had been repainted in Nottingham City Transport livery. Many people took a great interest in our trolleybus, including quite a few who had worked for NCT in trolleybus days. One of them was a gentleman who had been employed by Brush when the company was building the bodies for 102 of the City's BUTs, including no.506.

Our membership secretary David Needham, the owner of 506, was there for the occasion. He well remembers Nottingham's trolleybuses in daily operation, but can it really be 50 years since 506 became Nottingham's last trolleybus on 1 July 1966?



An early start to a long and interesting day: 506 leaves the Museum at 6:30am on a suspended tow to Nottingham. By the end of the day, 506 had returned to Sandtoft

Photo: Stewart David

Many of the people looking round the vehicles parked in Old Market Square had never seen a trolleybus before. Also on display beside 506 were South Notts 129, West Bridgford 21 and Nottingham City Transport 540 – one of the very first Leyland Atlantean AN68s purchased by NCT in the early-1970s

Photo: David Needham



The 200-foot high dome of the baroque revival Council House building provides an impressive backdrop for Nottingham 506

Photo: Dave Chick



One of NCT's modern Scania's, no.676, repainted in the livery of the trolleybus era and featuring a reproduction of the "Last Trolleybus" commemorative lettering originally applied to 506. No.676 attended the 'Gathering four weeks later

Photo: David Needham

DEAR 'SCENE

Dear 'Scene

Andy Thornton's letter (*Sandtoft Scene* no.102) struck a chord with me, as I am responsible for publicity distribution for the London Bus Museum, near Weybridge, temporary custodians of your splendid London Q1 trolleybus no.1812. I am pleased to report that the vehicle receives a lot of attention from our visitors, even if many do not recognise it for what it is or do not even know what a trolleybus is - such is the passing of time! Sandtoft was one of the first museums to which I supplied our publicity material some four years ago. Your reciprocal supplies of leaflets are very welcome and are prominently on display. Incidentally, our next gathering (Transportfest) is on Sunday 23 October, to which members and others are, of course, welcome.

Colin Read, Croydon

Dear 'Scene

Can I congratulate you and thank you for a superb day at Sandtoft for the Trolleybus Driving Experience? To all concerned a huge thanks for your time and patience. From getting it all ready and putting it away afterwards, to the food and the way in which you engaged everybody to make it a special day, it was faultless.

It was all I had hoped it would be and more. Please pass on sincere thanks to everyone and especially to Robin Symons and David Hanchett, who were magnificent as trainer and crew. As if it wasn't exciting enough, I was enthralled just talking to you all and learning more about the whole experience and workings of trolleys.

Best regards and much thanks for such a special and memorable day.

Nigel Leahy, Poole

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Dear 'Scene

On Sunday 12 May, I made an 80-mile round trip to Sandtoft for the Worldwide Weekend event. I did think, though, that I had turned up on the wrong day, as there were mainly British trolleybuses running, along with just one French vehicle - Limoges no.5 ("Vera"), later alternating with Marseille 202. So where was the worldwide theme? No Edmonton 189 and no Liège 425 running. The latter was stuck at the back of the depot along with Porto 140. If they were inoperable, couldn't they at least have been brought out for visitors to see?

Wellington 82 was brought out to do a few circuits, but only briefly. Couldn't the same thing have been done with any of the other overseas trolleybuses that were not able to perform passenger-carrying duties? If not, couldn't the booms at least have been put up on the workshop wiring to help make it look as if they were part of the proceedings? All in all, a very disappointing day, and if you are going to have a themed day, surely every effort should be made to make use of all the relevant vehicle assets for the public to enjoy?

Gerry Carroll, Hull

Stewart David, Traffic Department Manager, replies:

The reason that so few overseas vehicles were in operation during the recent Worldwide event is very simple: Limoges 5 (Vera) and Marseille 202 were the



Participants and crew members at the Trolleybus Driving Experience held on 31 May *Photo: Stewart David*

only ones serviceable. Most of our “foreign” fleet are out of service at present for a variety of reasons, and even those two trolleybuses - whilst confirmed safe and suitable for operation - are both awaiting the attention of our engineering team.

The Worldwide Weekend is not just a foreign running weekend and trolleybuses from the UK are just as much a part of the event, so we had London 1348 representing England and Glasgow TB78 representing Scotland. In addition, of course, Wellington 82 was operating in demonstration mode on both days.

Graham Bilbé, Engineering Director, adds:

We are sorry if our correspondent felt he had a wasted journey, but we do endeavour to post details of what will be running on the Museum’s Facebook page a few days before the event. This should help prospective visitors to decide whether to make the trip, and on that particular weekend we ran all the trolleybuses that we had “offered” - plus one more!

Members will no doubt be aware of the storage difficulties we have had over the past year since we lost the use of Whites’ shed. Consequently three of our “foreigners” have been outside for many months, and this has not helped the perennial electronic problems with 189, which would have been running to supplement the two French vehicles.

Edmonton 189 and Aachen 22 were both outside for photography, though admittedly not on the wires. Whilst it would have been nice to put Porto 140 and Liège 425 out on display as well, they would have required cleaning to make them presentable. Our limited resources for trolleybus shunting and cleaning were primarily occupied in completing and safety-checking Wellington 82, which was the main star of the event. We also felt that over previous years, visitors have had many opportunities to see, and ride on, both 140 (in use 1996 – 2009) and 425 (in use 2005 – 2014). Unfortunately both have electrical problems preventing their operation at present, though we do hope to start work on extracting 425’s motor shortly, and carrying out further investigation on 140 to resolve the contactor problem.

On the “plus” side, Glasgow TB78 was put into service on the Saturday in response to a specific request from a visitor. Also out and about was Derby 172, which was not originally scheduled to run, but moved out of the depot to extract TB78, and then left outside ready for the Driving Experience event on Monday. Judging from comments received on the day, both these vehicles were much appreciated by the visitors. They had a significant advantage in already being clean from recent operation, whilst Limoges 5 had to be cleaned in haste on Saturday morning. Because we were very short of traffic staff during the Worldwide Weekend, this job fell to the engineering team, who should have been pressing on with preparing two Nottingham trolleybuses for service during the next running weekend. Preparing vehicles for service can often be a problem, and any additional help from members to clean vehicles for display would be much appreciated - please contact Stewart David if you are able to assist!

At Sandtoft, we have always tried hard to operate a broad range of our vehicles, and inevitably over the years, different ones come to the “top of the pile” whilst others fall out of use. Sometimes these have significant defects to resolve, whilst

for others there simply isn't the time, or the need, to test all of them for service every year.

The National Tramway Museum at Crich has a policy whereby trams are "laid aside" after so many years of operation, to undergo a "general revision" before they are run again. Of course circumstances there are rather different in that their trams run much greater mileages than our trolleybuses, and more complicated work may be required during overhaul - for example turning wheel flanges. However, they do have a fine exhibition hall in which out-of-use but otherwise presentable vehicles can be displayed. This policy allows those on static display - and those in service - to be rotated from time to time. When we eventually have an exhibition hall ourselves, I hope we shall be able to do the same, but with our present facilities, vehicles stored in the depot for a few months need at least a wash down before being put out on display.

At the end of the day, no museum similar to ours can keep all of their vehicles serviceable all of the time, and at Sandtoft, our priorities for vehicle testing are largely dictated by forthcoming events - hence Nottingham 493 and 506 were being prepared for the Nottingham 50th anniversary event.

Finally, a question: which of our trolleybuses would members most like to see "up and running" again? Your thoughts and comments would be welcome, though I'm not making any promises!

Editor's footnote: Graham makes the point that during the Worldwide Weekend we actually ran all those vehicles that we advertised in advance as being planned to run. Having said that, we are well aware that a small proportion of our members do not currently have the internet and email facilities needed to make full use of the Museum's communications. All we can do is suggest that members without internet access contact a friend who does have access, to check what we are planning to run on an open day before making a long journey and ending-up disappointed.

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Dear 'Scene

Please can you pass on my thanks to all at the Museum for making me so welcome at this year's 'Gathering while I sought to find out for *Bus & Coach Preservation* magazine what takes place behind the scenes to make it happen (and not minding my disappearing for yet more photography or taking time out for drafting another article).

It was a most enjoyable and rewarding long weekend; the staff are a great bunch to work and spend time with - I was not left out from the banter, behind which I noticed there exists a great deal of mutual respect. I remain amazed at everyone's stamina, particularly those far senior to me in age who were still on their feet and working hard while I could feel myself wilting on the Sunday.

Thank you for asking me to launch Wellington 82: it really was a great pleasure to do so (but, Graham, can you please find a better place to ask me next time?).

With kind regards,

David Jukes, Contributing Editor, Bus & Coach Preservation


2016 AGM REMINDER

This year's Annual General Meeting will be held at the Museum on **Sunday 13 November** at 1:30 pm. The agenda is enclosed with this issue. After the formal business meeting there will be an open forum for discussion of topics of interest to members.

REMAINING RUNNING DAYS IN 2016

Open 11.00am - 5.00pm unless stated otherwise

Weekend Trolleydays	Saturday 1 October  Sunday 2 October
Isle of Axholme Running Day and Rally	Sunday 16 October Free Bus
<p><i>Presented by</i></p>  <p>DO&LRS Doncaster Omnibus & Light Railway Society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ A series of FREE vintage bus services to destinations in the Isle of Axholme ♦ Hourly FREE bus service to and from Thorne North Station ♦ Vintage vehicle display and cavalcades 	
Twilight & After Dark Trolleyday <i>with twilight & after-dark trolleybus operation</i>	Saturday 12 November  (Open 11.00am - 7.00pm)

 denotes Isle Coaches service 291 11.00am departure from Doncaster Interchange Bay C5, connects with free Museum bus at Epworth. Return at 4.10pm to connect at Epworth with Isle Coaches service 399 to Doncaster (where it arrives 5.35pm)

Free Bus denotes **FREE** bus service from Doncaster Interchange (adjacent to railway station) direct to The Trolleybus Museum. Departs Interchange, Bay C6, at 11.00am and 12.00noon. Return departs Museum at 4.05pm and 5.00pm. (journey time approximately 40 minutes)

ADMISSION (charges include a Gift Aid donation):

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

Isle of Axholme Running Day and Rally:

Adult £10.00 Senior (61+) £8.50 Concession £6.50
Family (2 Adults + up to 4 Concessions) £29.50

For full up-to-date details, visit www.sandtoft.org