

# COBHAM BUS MUSEUM

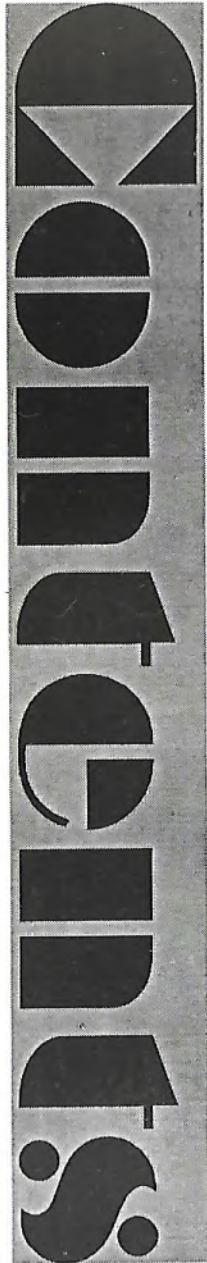
## MAGAZINE



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Front Cover

Photo. Rod Lucas

Bringing back memories of earlier floods, the River Mole at Leatherhead washes the underside of RT3139 in 1968.

## Editorial

Bill Cottrell

At the moment the committee is looking to the future of the museum and the collection. There is a 7-year plan being developed. To progress the plan we have to start from a series of 'What if?' scenarios. So, what if we continue as we are at present? We are working on several vehicles and within the constraints of the money we can raise; we are doing quite well. But what about the environment we are working in? Yes, we have put considerable resource into the vehicles lately and only a cosmetic improvement to the building, but we only have a limited supply of labour. Whereas members are keen to work on the vehicles, they are not as keen to work on the building. This is understandable; we are brought together by our interest in old buses, not old buildings. So the committee has to take the wider view and look at our surroundings, The structure of the premises is sound but the roof will need serious work on it eventually. Ideally the roof material (asbestos sheeting) needs to be replaced with an insulated covering and this becomes a financial burden beyond our normal income. So what if we apply for a grants, possibly a lottery grant? But hang on a minute, forget the building, bus preservation doesn't stop with the Routemaster, what about more modern vehicles for the collection? Metrobuses and Titans are being scrapped wholesale, shouldn't we go after one of those? After all, the Titan is considered by some to be the last London design, surely this is an historic bus we must have a example of? What if we are offered a significant vehicle for the collection? At present, we have no space available. So while we are seeking a grant to repair the roof, what if we seek a grant for an extension while we are at it? Where to put it? No problem, on the road side, we could get another lane and a half of buses down there, 9 or 10 extra spaces. Fine, but what about manoeuvring and marshalling room? Lets go for broke and put a road way from the car park, over the gully round to the south of the building. But what about parking cars for visitors and members? Well yes, that does present a problem. Idea! What if we buy the piece of land between the existing fence and the A245? Problem solved! We are on our way.

But not quite, we haven't considered improvements for visitor access and showing off the minor exhibits, toilets and catering facilities to enable the disabled, What if we built a new facility by the entrance for this? Problem solved!

Not a bad shopping list, how much does that come to? A million or two probably. Assuming we had the money, got the planning permission, persuaded third parties to sell their land, there it is, a 7-year plan. But what if we just sold up and started afresh with a clean sheet?

Its not easy being a committee member, is it?



The recent wet weather caused flooding in Redhill Road for several weeks due to the gully for the overflow from the lake becoming blocked. Once the water reached higher than kerb level, it flowed into the woods opposite the museum.

## Chairman's Report

Peter Plummer

The Christmas lunch was a packed house and was a fitting way to conclude a very successful year. A wrapped gift donated by John Clarke to our mechanical team contained a replacement chassis bracket for one 'mislaid' during the overhaul of G351. The members owe John Clarke thanks for his efforts to trace the vital part required.

Recent committee meetings have emphasised the consideration of wide issues far beyond that of rebuilding buses. The condition of the building that houses the collection, museum development and the application of grants, presentation of the collection to the visiting public, internal disciplines taking in health and safety to name a few. Action on these issues of paramount importance involves an enormous amount of thought, careful implementation and the will to maintain them once in place.

Many items will involve commitment of funds in considerable amounts, which may seem a dilemma to some when funding vehicle restoration or expansion of the Trust's collection should a candidate become available.

It is important to maintain a careful balance of each so that major opportunities are not lost to the charity forever. As it stands, volunteers as trustees make judgements and decisions which maybe outside their expertise but nonetheless necessary if we are to compete in the leisure market and survive.

All this requires team effort way beyond a nine-person committee and we are fortunate to have most of the skills and enthusiasm necessary but we are entering a more professional phase.

Meanwhile, progress on vehicles continues very well. My team has nearly completed the major structural work on the upper deck nearside of RT2775. Within the next few weeks the bus will be turned around to enable the final corrosion problems on the offside upper deck to be dealt with. Following that, the vehicle will be in assembly mode.

Roger Stagg has assembled a team to explore the weak pillars on STL441 and everyone is pleasantly surprised how localised the problems are.

The mechanical team continues with T504's engine and fuel pump and rectifying weak rear springs on STL2377.

702b, the Bedford mobile canteen tractor unit is progressing toward its completion and repaint this year.

More bright-work trims have been sourced to enable P3 to be completed externally and the coach is still active in its driver-training role.

The recent very wet months have brought flooding to local areas such as Brooklands famous clubhouse, but we have been fortunate in that only the road between our two gates in Redhill Road was affected but there has been no damage to Trust property.

### Treasurers & Membership Report

Mike Nash

One might expect the last quarter to have been quieter for your writer as regards Trust input. No such luck! However, my long struggle with processing a four year Deed of Covenant claim was concluded during December with a resultant 46 page document being submitted to the Inland Revenue. My considerable time has since been repaid with the receipt of a cheque in the Trusts favour to the tune of £2837. Not surprisingly, this has greatly assisted our financial situation and now you can see why I keep banging on about members filling in their Gift Aid Certificates (250 members have already). It really will make a difference to Cobham's future progress. No apologies then for including the following again!

#### IMPORTANT REMINDER!

If you haven't done so already, **PLEASE** remember to sign and return today the Gift Aid Certificate you received with the last issue. This simple form replaces the old (and complicated) Deed of Covenant system and should be completed by ANY member who pays Income Tax. By following the brief instructions the Trust can then claim a worthwhile tax concession (currently 22%) on ALL the payments you make to Cobham after 6/4/2000. It really is as easy as that, so we need every eligible member to complete and return their form, especially those who previously signed a Deed of Covenant.

If you pay tax there is no reason why you can't perform this simple task for Cobham's long term benefit. There are absolutely no catches and it will make a great difference to the membership income. Our records indicate that more than 400 members are eligible (which means at least £1320 a year), so please, if you care about Cobham get that form in the post to me!

Membership currently stands at a healthy 596 with only nine outstanding as at 18/1/01.

We warmly welcome the following new members and hope to see you at the museum soon:-

871	Graham Bartlett	Wembley	
872	David Roberts	Woking	
873	Keith Ashford	Maidstone	
874	Richard Stiles	Pinner	
875	Richard Green	Rugby	
876	Martin Hellawell	Stroud	KMc
877	David Ralph	Crawley	GS76
878	Calum MacLennan	Nottingham	JB

Recruited by: JB – John Bedford

KMc – Kevin McGowan

# M

arch 11th

## Members' Day

All members are cordially invited to visit the museum on the above date. Most of the committee will be present to meet you. Come and see progress with Trust buses and discuss the future. Opportunity to ride and photograph any bus you wish providing it is roadworthy. Slide show in the afternoon showing how many of the Trust collection came to be saved. Tea and coffee freely available

## Open Day 2001

Simon Douglas Lane  
Open Day 2001 sub-committee

I missed the last deadline for the Newsletter by a whisker so my report covers two sub committee meetings.

At the meeting on 9th January I reported that all our suppliers, the Brooklands Agents and the Police had been contacted and also the AA for sign provision to alert them with a further reminder of the day and our needs. The display theme at Cobham would be Route 77 with vehicles from the 50's to the latest PVL class: there would be a photo run at 3.00pm.

First the meeting held on 1st November 2000. A new site plan for Brooklands was tabled and discussed and again our efforts are directed towards minimising the loss of revenue. The Brooklands site had operated on 2000 with 14 less volunteers than needed and again the cry goes up for the membership to respond to Keith Roses' annual call for help. We hope that the Cobham model for 2001 will be the Guy, with 351 models being available. If needed Radio Control would be available to assist bus turning up Redhill Road and help timetable maintenance. Other business overtaken by the meeting on 9th January to which I will now turn.

The Bus Service has been rethought by Steve to allow for the heavy loadings from and to Weybridge Station at certain parts of the day. Hence the routes this year are: -

Route 9: Brooklands to Cobham Bus Museum.  
Route 27: Brooklands to Cobham via Weybridge Station.  
Route 72: Cobham to Brooklands via Weybridge Station.  
Route 283: Brooklands to Cobham Village (not the Museum, extended to Stoke D'Abernon Station).

Apart from the 283, vehicles will interwork the other three services. The selling of tickets to ride will take place at the Museum and Brooklands only, releasing our scarce volunteers for other duties and all the routes will pass through the Revenue Control arrangements at Brooklands.

On stalls, the mark outs will be repainted at the Museum and there will be information points at the Museum, Brooklands and Weybridge Station. The membership level was reported as 600 which means that we are asking for 12% of you to offer as volunteers, remembering that we have outside help from London United, Mid Hants, North Kent and other regular and much appreciated assistance. Section Heads reported their volunteer needs as 85, although 100 are needed to allow for no shows and illness. Stallholder volunteers have a 7.30am start!

More volunteers also means that the duty hours can also be shortened.

On publicity we are introducing the A5 local flyer and poster again and would be taking our message round on a suitable vehicle a couple of weekends before the event.

We haven't forgotten tree lopping in Redhill Road, and we shall meet for our last Open Day Sub Committee in this particular cycle on 22nd February.

My thanks as always to the sub committee for all their hard work and we hope that we will be blessed with good weather on 8th April.

### Conductor's Course

There has been a very keen response to the appeal for conductors. The people who have written in will be contacted in the near future to arrange tuition (when the weather warms up a bit). We will be dealing with different ticket machines, waybills, customer care (as in, 'I know it says Cobham Village on the front, but it says India on the tyres and we don't go there either.') etc. We are looking to be in a position to staff buses on all our running days from our own resources, not only the 462, but events such as the Woking Running Day.

## Open Day 2001

Keith Rose, Volunteer Co-ordinator

Well, with Christmas well out of the way, a look at the calendar tells me that spring is around the corner - although watching the news on TV, the end of the World is a distinct possibility! So, what will you be up to on the weekend of 7/8th April? Mowing the lawn, digging the flowerbed, clearing out the garage, spring-cleaning? The possibilities are endless and also boring! So why not do something interesting for a change and meet some nice people with similar interests, and feast your eyes on banquet of preserved buses from all parts of our Island - God save the English Channel, (have you ever thought that all those poor home owners who have endured weeks of flooding this winter could have been saved all that inconvenience by letting the flood water find its own level - down the Channel Tunnel.... along with French beef!) I had better change the subject, before I begin to sound like one of the characters from a Charles Dickens book (Scrooge, Uria Heap and Mr. Macawber always remind me of the management of British Leyland when they closed down the AEC. factory!)

I recall as a teenager (so naive I use to send my girlfriend a get well soon card, *every month!*) in the late fifties, when every bus, and almost every other vehicle on the road was built in Britain. Oops! This is all getting a bit too political.

So, what do we do next I hear you all cry? Simple, just fill in the pre-addressed postcard included with this edition of Bill's Bible, and post it advising your preferences and/or skills, and if you are available on the Saturday and/or Sunday, or if the post box is a long way off and its raining and you can't find your umbrella, you can send me a e-mail, if your offspring has blackmailed you into buying a PC for Christmas.

Please remember that it's your open day, and it does not run by itself! Its success

(Like last year) means a big boost to much needed Museum funds, and that more volunteers means even less time spent on duty for everyone, and a reminder that its up to all of us to ensure that this year, OD2001 is success, (OD2001 means Open Day 2001, Not Oh Dear 2000 volunteered and only 1 turned up!)

In anticipation of seeing our postman arriving looking like Santa, with a big sack of mail with piles of volunteer cards (not more bills), may I take this opportunity to thank you all in advance, and look forward to seeing many of you again at Cobham and Brooklands for OD2001.

To contact me:

Phone: 01784 225 Monday to Friday 9.00 - 17.00  
01276 302 Evenings - home (CBM at weekends)

Fax: 01784 379

Email: keithrose.org or keith@ .co.uk

## G351 - Thank You

Roger Stagg

A unilateral thank-you to all those members who have so far made donations to the G351 fund. Pressure on my time in preparing our grant application for the vehicle, picking up the loose ends on STL2377, starting work on STL441, continual maintenance of RT2043, committee duties, a house and family has not left time for individual thank you letters which I would have preferred to send. Thank you again for those received and in advance for those which I am sure will be winging their way through the post.

### Quiz Time

**The only metal framed Chiswick built double-decker was STL2477 the so-called "Meccano bus" - true or false?**

The Weymann and Park Royal bodied STLs were steel framed but not built in Chiswick. The popular myth of RT1 being a steel framed bus is now disproved, although it does feature a lot of steel components and in particular steel channel section waist rails. The RT2s were of similar construction but like RT1 all of the main structural components were of steel flitch plates set into ash members. The subsequent members of the RT class were steel framed but none were built by Chiswick itself.

The answer is **true** - Chiswick did build a fully steel-framed double-decker. Can you identify it? If you think you know the answer drop me a note. The first correct answer will receive a prize of £10, which I shall donate on your behalf to the G351 fund. Come on then you budding Blackers, Glaziers and Curtises - uncover some history. The answer will be published in the next magazine.

## REVIEWS

LONDON TRAMWAY TWILIGHT 1949-1952,  
Robert J Harley; published by Capital Transport at £18.95  
Available from the Cobham shop.  
Reviewed by Phill Cruise.

A lavishly illustrated hardback book 9x10 inches with 128 pages this is a serious work, which will give plenty of reading pleasure. The text does, to paraphrase a well-known TV ad, say exactly what it says on the cover. Included in this are chapters about the cars themselves, including works vehicles, route details and allocations at January 1st 1950 prior to the first post war abandonment and histories of the final four years.

The illustrations cover all the types in service post-war and include a handful of rare colour shots; one of which is a very atmospheric shot of an HR2 on the Embankment reserved track one winter evening. The illustrations show tramcars very much in their everyday surroundings with a wealth of background detail and not 'cut out', as can often be the case. The infrastructure of the system with the many essential workmen who were needed to keep things going is described and illustrated too. There is even an appendix of tram stop photographs. This is one of those books that you feel has been written by someone who really knows their stuff and includes contemporary comments from people who used and worked on the trams too. An interesting informative volume written with the authority of an expert.

### TROLLEYBUSES IN OUTER NORTH LONDON

A Pictorial Survey.

Published by The London Trolleybus Preservation Society at £16  
Reviewed by Phill Cruise.

This large format soft cover book follows the style of its fellows in the series. There are 168 pages of photographs with informative captions mostly from the post war years. The centre eight pages are in colour and most pages have two pictures on them. The cover shot shows LTPS' own trolley K2 1201 when running at its final depot, Stamford Hill.



A map in the back of the book shows the area covered, including the inner North London part from a previous edition. The routes from Stamford Hill, Wood Green, Edmonton and Highgate are the ones featured. The main type of trolley was the all Leyland K1, 2 and 3 with H1s at Wood Green until 1960. The vehicles from Highgate were a very mixed bunch, but in later days were mainly L1, 2 and 3s.

K types were always my own particular favourite and I

spent many happy bus spotting hours on the routes featured in this book, so I received it with great pleasure. Some of the superbly kept Wood Green K1s went on to be London's last trolleys, together with some of the much travelled L3s from Highgate to Isleworth and Fulwell respectively. There are hardly any diesel vehicles shown, so this is strictly a book for trolleybus fans. The wiring gets well featured too and so does the backdrop, a London now sadly only a happy memory. Well worth looking out for. The photographs will not disappoint.

### GLORY DAYS GREEN LINE

Kevin McCormack; published by Ian Allan at £15.99.

Available at the Cobham shop and reviewed by Phill Cruise.

The latest in the 'Glory Days' series covers the history of the Green Line service from its inception in 1930 right up to the present time. The real glory days were probably the pre-war LPTB years and the post-war LTE era, up to the very early sixties when the decline in public transport use really set in.

The format follows previous practice with a colour centre section with large illustrations and informative captions which is sandwiched between a concise historical text giving a complete

history of the Green Line services, illustrated with monochrome photographs. There are ninety-five pages altogether and the whole thing is brought right up to date to include the latest Arriva services. Preserved vehicles, including Cobham's own are shown in the colour section with some before and after preservation views. A list of all the vehicles mentioned or pictured would be too tedious but the earliest are of 7T7s and the latest of DAFs and Leyland Tigers. Among the more unusual vehicles in between are a double deck LT1137 and a Dennis Dominator/East Lancs.

The hardback book is in the usual Ian Allan landscape format for these 'Glory Days' volumes and can be highly recommended for all followers of LT and its descendants.

#### UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT

Paul Moss. Published by Capital Transport in association with the LT Museum at £30. Reviewed by Phill Cruise.

If you are only interested in buses stop reading now. This very large book is devoted entirely to the design of Underground trains. Many books have been published over the years that have dealt with the technical and operating departments of the LT rail network and the rolling stock used. This one deals with the design of Underground rolling stock bodies from the early 1900s to the present day and looks to the future. The chronological work is only concerned with the companies of the London Electric Railway and the Underground Group that was the nucleus for the LPTB in 1933. The Metropolitan Railway is not featured until it becomes part of the LT network and all its designs of saloon and slam door stock are not covered. There are 224 pages lavishly illustrated in colour and black and white. The people behind the designs are noted, names that will be familiar to many. Even the seating moquette is featured in colour and I found this section brought back many memories. Some designs including the gold lozenge pattern were found on the buses. Naturally the superb 1938 surface and tube stock are well covered. Interestingly many designs that were tried and forgotten are resurrected again when a new generation takes over proving that indeed nothing is really new. The size of the book is impressive over 9x11 inches with hard covers and all those pages. It's not cheap but it is very comprehensive and if you are one of the many who like all forms of London's Transport you will like this.

## Letters

*From J.C. Broderick Esq.*

Dear Sir,

Can I ask members through the magazine if any of them know the whereabouts of GS52 and RF551(NLE551)?

These were formerly owned by Graham Smith who also owned RT3775 most of us know that the bus normally works the East Grinstead - Kingscote service for the Bluebell Railway.

Graham Smith is interested to know the owners of the GS and RF and whether they are still runners. He thinks he sold the RF to a Mr. George of Cheltenham, but that was a while ago.

Any information or photos would be greatly appreciated. Please send them to the address below for onward transmission,

J. C Broderick,  
French Gardens,  
Cobham,  
Surrey KT11 2AJ

*From Andy Dougall*

Dear Friends,

What a wonderful day out November 5th 'Tenner For The Guy' was. We really enjoyed our selves, what a great start to the fund. My main point for this letter is about John Rawlins letter (page 22 issue 30). Would it be such a bad thing if the bus museum were to move?

1. This could be a golden opportunity for people who don't drive and find it either expensive or difficult to get to, not everyone who attends rallies is fortunate to be in work.

2. If the museum were to re-locate to say Kingston or Hampton for example, just maybe volunteers would be easier to find? I for one would love to work on our bus fleet, but can't get to Cobham by public transport easily in the week or at all on a Sunday.

3. Finally, even if the museum did move I can see no problem with the name we have. Cobham Bus Museum is the name we are known under, so if the museum were to move, if handled properly with a lot of careful thought it could be advantageous to us all.

Andy Dougall,  
Slough SL1 3LQ



## Status of Trust Vehicles January 2001

Paul Morris  
(Engineering Manager)

RM3 is being prepared for class 6 MOT test. It has been inspected and has had a brake accumulator replaced. Work on repairing two seats is also ongoing.

D142 is serviceable. We are trying to re-instate the charging system and have found that some of the wiring needs replacement.

SMS369 is unfit due to a defective charging system, investigation in progress.

STL2377 is awaiting the return of rear rebuilt road springs and fuel pump. Parts due end of January. Soon after, work will take place to put back the original style off-rear corner mouldings.

RTL139 is serviceable, but requires a set of batteries.

T504 is waiting for the fuel pump to be returned from overhaul, due imminently.

STL441 is having urgent major body repairs undertaken.

332W has had the rear of its bodywork replaced and is serviceable once again.

1096F requires welding, brake and steering work to be undertaken.

ST922 requires investigation into engine noise and exhaust replacement.

702B Bedford tractor unit is being prepared for painting

G351 is now mechanically complete whilst the bodywork is being assessed prior to rebuilding.

RT2775, see the chairman's report for details of progress.

STL2093 and canteen trailer, awaiting decision.

P3, T31, TD95 and GS34 are serviceable, with D142, SMS369, RM3, STL2377, RTL139, T504 and towbus 332W scheduled to be fit soon. Although routine maintenance and repairs are ongoing we have a good selection of vehicles available this year.

## RF512 Springs Back into Life

Chris Wills

When I bought RF512 on 28th. February 1999, I took photographs of the interior and exterior as a record of what condition 512 was in before work started. My first task was to remove all the bits and pieces from inside the bus that had accumulated over the years and give her a jolly good clean up. Having got through nearly 20 years of grime etc., her general condition was not as bad as first impressions gave. I then took photographs of the internal transfers and original L.T adverts (still in place), although past their best by now, so that I would know where to put the replacements when the bus got painted. However one factor came to light and that was, that she wasn't as complete as she was supposed to be. Without batteries I was unable to start her and check that she actually went, as again I was assured that 512 was a runner. I set myself a target to get 512 back on the road by RF50 in 2001 and at that time thought it quite achievable, but am now beginning to wonder.

During the cleaning operation it was found that the electrical switches were stuck in various positions ranging from fully on to fully off, so I decided that they should be the first job as I didn't want to risk a short circuit when I eventually connected batteries. With all the switches removed from the cab for renovation, the opportunity was taken to remove the steering wheel and drivers seat to refurbish the cab at the same time. Initially work was very slow, as I was working on my own and only managed weekends with some parts being worked on at home in the evenings. Word soon got about that I had bought this bus and a friend of mine who was at a loose end at the time offered to come and help. I still didn't have any batteries at this time so we started working on the inside with William removing the seat frames. I removed some other fittings and reinstated the switches and drivers seat, the steering wheel was still away being recovered. John Clarke. It is now back and refitted to the bus and I am very pleased with the way it has turned out. While taking out the seats etc., we found a number of LT bus tickets of the Ultimate variety which was a little surprising as 512 had an electric Almex fitted to her for her final years at Kingston.

Two of these tickets were I/- tickets, one of which was found stuck in the corner of the used ticket box so unless London Transport used I/- tickets in decimal days, they must have been on the bus for over 28 years!

While this work was going on I was also doing as much research as was possible to try and fill in the many gaps in her history. I have now got a lot more info on her life although the 18 months or so that she was with Eynons of Trimsaron is still a time I need details. By this time I had managed to buy a set of batteries and could no longer make any excuses for not starting her. Once the batteries had been connected it was possible to check out the electrical side and we found that 80% of the electrics were working. The only things we haven't yet established if they work or not is the headlights, sidelights and indicators as these components are not as yet fitted to the bus. It was around this time that Charles joined me on a regular basis (every weekend) and he has a much better mechanical knowledge than me and came to the rescue by checking that everything had oil in it that needed it, and everything moved that should do. When the time came to actually start 512, Charles said "Don't let it fire straight away, turn it over a bit first", well 512 wasn't having any of this and fired almost immediately I touch the starter. "Turn it off" Charles shouted, so I did. After re-checking everything underneath, we re-started her and checked for diesel and water leaks and found quite a few, of which were dealt with. The air system was checked and everything appeared to work OK. The flag went up at 50psi (good), the tank blew off at 115psi (great), the door engine went in and out (wonderful) and the gearbox sounded as if it was working (cracked it). How wrong can you be? RF 512 tried to move forward, in all forward gears and still wanted to move forward when reverse was selected. Although we didn't actually dare move it as there is a pit with a very weak cover immediately in front of us and a coach in front of that, and we didn't know if the brakes worked. It soon became obvious that 512 was jammed in a forward gear, probably second and would need the attention of an expert.

As a member of the RF/RT Register, I contacted them and was given a couple of names to contact. Glynn Rees lived the closest to me and to where the bus is kept, so I decided to ask him for his help. Glynn agreed to come over and take a look which he did and spent some time trying to sort things out, however it ended up with the gearbox having to come out and go away to be

By now work on 512 was going ahead at a reasonably good pace with a working chassis being the top priority. The rear brakes were dismantled, cleaned, checked and reassembled and painted while the gearbox was away we decided that Easter 2000 would be the time that 512 moved under her own power properly. The gearbox was ready having been completely overhauled and the worn bands, seals and bushes replaced but the brakes were not back together again yet as we had come across a few unforeseen problems. We finished the brakes, refitted the gearbox, started the engine, built up the air, selected second gear, pedal operated and she went into gear, but with so much force that it felt that we had been bit from behind by a 10 ton truck doing 90 mph.

512 moved forward 15 feet and that was as far as we got. RF512 was once again jammed firmly in second gear, we couldn't go any further forward as we were blocked in and couldn't go backwards as we were stuck in 2nd gear. We contacted Glynn and arranged for him to come and assess the situation, and he spent a few hours trying to fix it in situ. Unfortunately the gearbox had to come out again go back to Glynn's. It was stripped down again and rebuilt, but there was nothing wrong with the box so the fault had to be with the bus itself.

Because the gears were being operated a lot more violently than one would normally expect, the air pressure was the most likely suspect. At this point the manual came out and we found that there was a built-in test point and that the pressure should have been 45 psi. Cobham Bus Museum was contacted and came to the rescue by lending me a pressure test gauge, which found the fault straight away. Instead of 45 psi. going into the gearbox, 90 psi. was being delivered hence the gear was going so violently that it was jamming immediately.

Removing the air-tank, cleaning and overhauling the valves still didn't cure the problem, so once again back to the manual which told us how to adjust the air pressure to the gearbox and with the use of the gauges we now have 46 psi. going to the gearbox which is working properly. During all these adjustments and checks, the air reservoir was pressurised using an external air compressor to save on fuel and also to prevent us having to work in a very smoky atmosphere. During these activities all the other air components were working correctly.

The door engine was not touched in any way at all it was very surprising to find that once we had reconnected everything the reducing valve on door engine circuit had decided to leak like a sieve and prevent the air tank from reaching more than 70 psi. As we don't have any doors on 512 to worry about yet, it was decided to blank off the door engine circuit and carry on with the gearbox testing.

The next task was to get 512 out of the barn so that we could give the box a proper test. This was no mean feat as we had RT3175 parked very close beside us, a pit (with very dodgy covers) in front of us with a coach parked in front of the pit and RF503 in front of the RT.

There was just enough room to squeeze up the middle between the coach and the RF, provided we could get straight enough after missing the pit, but RT3175 was preventing us from doing this. When the big day came, the shunting movements that were carried out would have been a credit to any railway marshalling yard let alone an LT night running shift.

First we had to get 512 as far up the middle as we could, then move 503 as close to 3175 as possible which actually gave us just enough room to squeeze 512 out of the shed. At one point there was as much as 1/2" clearance between 512 and the vehicles either side. Once 512 was outside it became obvious that the only way back in was to take 503 out and gently nudge 3175 back into the corner.

RT3175 is at the moment a non-runner and needed pushing. Firstly we tried pushing her without success. Then we tried with my 2.0 litre diesel Montego Estate which didn't want to know either. By this time we had driven 512 up and down the yard and tested the gearbox SUCCESSFULLY. A very large black cloud was looming and as both 503 and 512 are not exactly waterproof at the moment it was a race against time to get them both back undercover.

It was at this point that it was suggested that maybe 512 could push 3175 back a bit and this she did without any trouble at all, (on tick over in fact). Once 3175 was safely moved back a few feet there was enough room to get 512 back in missing the coach and pit, and then 503 back in her original place. Literally seconds after we had turned 503s engine off we witnessed the worst rain/hail shower I have known for years.

So although we didn't make the proposed Easter deadline, Saturday 27th. May 2000 was the day that RF512 moved under own power for the first time for at least ten years.

Ironically she is now back inside unable to go anywhere as the front is now up on railway sleepers while we give the front brakes the same treatment that the back ones got. But then that's what preservation is all about, isn't it?

## **RF 50 at Cobham**

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2001

Jim Andress

The event is all go and will take place on Monday, May 28<sup>th</sup> as previously indicated. Displays of RFs and related vehicles will be arranged within the museum grounds and appropriate buses and coaches will operate over selected routes in the area. These routes have all been checked out, and timings recorded to allow the timetables to be compiled.

The routes will be arranged to leave Cobham at 5-10 minute intervals and so timed that two routes will arrive at each of two destinations at about the same time, i.e. four routes and two destinations. Time will be allowed for riders to change routes for their return trip if they wish, and for crews to relax and take photos etc.

There will also be a circular route, operated by Private Hire RFs, and possibly one or two special vehicles, visiting the Wisley Royal Horticultural Society Gardens, which will make a pleasant diversion for family members less interested in the buses themselves.

As previously outlined we plan to have a social gathering at Cobham on the previous night, Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup> May, where those participants who so wish can meet their colleagues and relax prior to the next day's public event. Secure overnight parking / camping out will be available courtesy of Mike Nash and Cobham. This should be particular welcome by those travelling a long distance to the event.

The destination blind sets have been designed and details are with Geoff Hudspith.

The remaining principle requirement is YOU the RF owners, with your RFs. Please do all you can to get them there, it does not matter if they are not finished, are they ever? We know not everyone will want to run their RF in public service, but we need you for displays at Cobham, as many varieties as possible. We are compiling an up to date list of all known surviving RFs and related vehicles, and the present information suggests there could be as many as 131, of which 117 are true RFs, so we must be able to get more than 50.s Of course some are not in any fit state to go anywhere but if they can legally travel they will be welcome, even partly restored or as caravans, or display units. A commemorative programme is being prepared, for sale in advance of the event to all that are interested.

### Can you do this job?

Wanted, for the Museum,  
**a Health and Safety Co-ordinator.**

The Trust is committed to providing a safe environment for visitors and volunteers alike. We need a volunteer to look at the museum with this in mind, and to deal with matters arising from insurance reports etc. and to be aware of relevant current legislation in this area.

We are aware that this could be a full time job if taken to extreme but we need a common-sense approach given the resources and activities of the museum.

The final responsibility for Health and Safety will remain with the committee.

Speak, or write to John Bedford, (Secretary)  
Albany Court,  
38, Alexandra Grove,  
London N12 8NN

### RML898 to New Orleans in 1963

The following is an account of the official tour undertaken in 1963. The report was written by Colin Curtis and he has given his permission to use it in the following article. A copy of the report was given to Keith Rose, purveyor of fine tools and Trust open-day volunteer co-ordinator, by Keith Brakefield, the son of Ted Brakefield, a unit adjuster from Elmers End who along with Ron Eastwood, electrician at Loughton made up the crew of the bus for this adventure.



## **Report on Maison Blanche British Festival at New Orleans and Memphis, USA**

### **Introduction**

This report is an account of the British Festival organised by the New Orleans department Stores, Maison Blanche. This particular store having some four branches in New Orleans is part of the chain, New York City Stores. The dates involved were:

New Orleans Sunday, 22<sup>nd</sup> September to Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> October  
Memphis Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October to Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October  
It should be noted that the Memphis branch was known as Lowensteins.

### **Preparation**

The bus selected for the tour was RML898, which had been used on the San Francisco event the previous year, since when the bus had been in store at Finchley Garage. The bus was brought to Chiswick in August 1963, after repainting at Reigate garage and minor modifications were made to the vehicle in order to re-equip it for American right drive. In order to give the vehicle a greater maximum speed it was decided to change the differential ratio from 5.2:1 to 4.7:1. In order to compensate for the poorer performance at the lower speeds, it was decided to push the fuel pumpflow up to the smoke limit, i.e. 28 ml. Road tests indicated that the bottom end performance had been recovered with just a slight trace of smoke when the engine was cold. Eventually the bus was completed and was taken to Liverpool on 26<sup>th</sup> August to be garaged at Edge Lane Garage of Liverpool Corporation Passenger Transport to whom we were to be more than grateful by the time the tour was ended.

After being entertained to tea by the Chief Engineer, hotel booked for the night, transport was laid on to the hotel. An early start was made the next morning as the bus was required to be at the docks by 8.00 am. On arrival at Edge Lane Garage at 7.30 an escort was provided to get the vehicle to the docks. Upon arrival a situation was found that we were to be quite familiar with in all our dealings with dock authorities and shipping agents by the end of the tour.

The dock police were unable to give information as to loading, only where the boat, which was to carry the bus, might be found. The Superintendent of the Stevedores was eventually located and volunteered the information that he was not prepared to load the bus until 1.00 p.m. that day and then only if the wind dropped. Not dismayed, it was decided to prepare the bus for lifting at the point of loading, this being some way from the ship, which was the 'Grete Show', a Norwegian vessel on charter to Cunard. The point of loading was an exposed quay alongside which a floating crane was to be brought to pick up the bus and then travel upstream to the boat. By 9.30 am preparations were finished and it was decided to return to the city in order to have breakfast. A lunch date had been arranged with Mr. Frank Clayton A.G.M. of L.C.P.T., formerly of LT, and after lunch transport was arranged back to the docks in order to load the bus which was successfully completed by 2.30 pm. The return trip to London being made by train.

Whilst the bus was in preparation, all the crewmembers were vaccinated by the Board's doctor at Griffith House, an occasion which all will remember even if the effect was only noticed after 10 days. At this time none of the crewmembers could show any enthusiasm for the trip!

### **Departure and arrival in the USA**

On Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September the writer left for New York at 11.15 am. on a BOAC Boeing 707, Flight BA501. The plane was full and under such conditions, the seat comfort is not so good as railway travel. Whilst seats are individually adjustable to any angle, the fact they are in banks of three make it somewhat confined.

However, apart from this drawback, a first class lunch was served. After this, an invitation was received to go up to the cockpit where some 2 hours were spent listening to the radio messages, explanations of all the instruments and finally, afternoon tea. This was the best part of the trip. Even though the plane flew at a height of 32,000 ft it was possible to see the coastline of Newfoundland and Canada beneath.

Arrival at New York was 13.50 (New York time) and inspection by the Health Officer followed before any one was allowed to leave the plane.

Then followed customs, which for some reason was very searching. This did not give a good first impression. Having arrived at the BOAC terminal at Idlewild, now known as New York International Airport, steps had to be taken to get to the Eastern Airlines building. It soon became obvious that all the terminal buildings were connected by a circular bus service running every few minutes. A fare of 15 cents was charged, but passengers changing from one airline to another were entitled to a free transfer upon application.

### **New York to New Orleans**

The departure for New Orleans was at 18.00 on flight BA505 in a DC8 machine. Soon after leaving New York, clouds obscured the view and the plane started to rise and fall, due to air pockets. On several occasions the wings of the plane did not appear to be connected to the fuselage due to the relative movement between the two. Seat belts were kept fastened for most of the way. Fortunately the plane was very lightly loaded and one could eat in comfort, even though the coffee and the cup did their level best to part. Again the meal was first class, and could have been enjoyed more but for the weather. Arrival at New Orleans was made at 18.55 New Orleans time, which was 2 hours behind New York.

Emerging from the plane, it felt as if everything was on fire. Here the atmosphere temperature was 90f and humidity in the 80-90 figure. A limousine was taken to the Jung Hotel, some half an hour journey, and here the comfort of an air-conditioned room was appreciated, together with television (5 channels), radio, and telephone with separate bathroom etc. True comfort and better than most English hotels.

### **First Days in New Orleans**

After a good night's sleep an early exploration of New Orleans was undertaken. It was a pleasant surprise to see trams (sorry, streetcars!) as well as trolleybuses (trolley coach) and buses.

At 11.00 our sponsor (Mr. Herbert Kenny) came to the hotel and took the writer to his home for brunch (a light mid-day meal by English standards). After this, a tour of New Orleans was made in order to explore the possibilities of garaging the RML. It became evident that trees and telephone lines were going to present quite a problem.

The most suitable garage appeared to be that of the New Orleans Public Service Inc. at Canal Street. The route from the garage to the service meant travelling on the wrong side of a dual carriageway, but the police offered no objection. Indeed it was time to say that in all our travels, the co-operation of the police was of the highest order.

The route was then surveyed and certain modifications made in respect of terminal workings due to the prohibition of U turn at marked places. Proceedings were then terminated for the day and the writer returned to the hotel to read the Sunday paper (all five sections making one edition)

On Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September an appointment was kept at the store – Maison Blanche for 10.00am. On arrival at the store the reason for 10.00am was soon discovered, for the majority don't open until then. Most of the day was spent in the company of Mr. Kenny answering many queries that arose in connection with the British Festival. Here the extent of the Festival was revealed piece by piece and it was soon obvious that this was on the scale of a military operation. At the helm keeping perfect calm and control was Mr. New Orleans himself – Mr. Herbert A. Kenny. Help was given in the scout Shop section of Maison Blanche in identifying posters for the festival as well as seeing a good deal of the back stage in running a store the size of Selfridges.

The British Consul joined the party for lunch, whose guidance and help was to be appreciated later.

In the afternoon a visit was made to the shipping agents to make arrangements for unloading the bus, as it was believed that the Grete Shou had arrived at New Orleans, but due to adverse weather (not by English standards) it was not possible to unload before Wednesday. As the unloading was to be televised, forward arrangements were necessary and Thursday was decided upon at 8.15 a.m. This would also mean that the other two crew members would have arrived, which would be a help as unloading the bus was more than a one-handed job. Finally, a visit to the British consular office in order to register my arrival officially.

On Tuesday the first port of call was Maison Blanche where official arrangements were made with the New Orleans Public Service Inc. to garage the bus. A visit was made to the Canal Street garage in company with Mr. S. Gale the Assistant Superintendent who was an Englishman from the Walthamstow factory of AEC as it was in those days.

A firm friendship soon sprang up, not only with Mr. Gale, but also with all the staff. Nothing was too much trouble. Arrangements were made for a route survey on our behalf with a truck and a measuring stick because of low trees between the garage and the service route.

On Wednesday the two other members of the party arrived at New Orleans International Airport and were met by Mr. Kenny. The writer had the opportunity of seeing the effect of the 90F temperature on the newly arrived crew, A visit to and air-conditioned bar helped to restore the status quo. It was here that Mr. Kenny suggested it would be impossible to work in our uniforms and he made arrangements for new lightweight ones to be obtained.

On Thursday an early start was made for New Orleans dock to unload the bus. On descending the hold it was obvious that the bus had been broken into. It was observed that the hold was sprinkled with empty whisky bottles, but as the boat was known to be carrying this cargo, no comment was made. Before landing the vehicle on the quayside, the immigration officer made his inspection and pronounced a clean bill of health for the bus. Just as he walked away he pointed to some full whisky bottles wedged in the spare wheels and suggested it would be advisable to open at least one of them before customs inspected. It then became obvious what had happened, the undrunk whisky had been hidden in the bus. Fortunately, the customs appreciated the situation and no action was taken. The unloading ceremony was recorded for the newspapers and television and the bus left for Canal Street garage. Soon after the arrival there and unloading the spares etc., a request was received to take a telefilm of the bus proceeding along th Main Street of New Orleans, the equivalent of Oxford Street. After completing this mission and returning to garage a request was made for a television interview.

On Friday the 20<sup>th</sup> it had become known that we had brought the London bus and VIP treatment was accorded at the Hotel Jung. A tour of the hotel was arranged by the convention manager who from there on made it his business to see that everything was in order. It was from then on that we began to feel the warmth of American hospitality. In the evening the writer took part in a TV show for scouting, this being a regular weekly show. The informality of American TV was evident, it being almost unrehearsed and off the cuff.

At the suggestion of our sponsor we took a trip on the 'Voyageur' on the Mississippi touring the Bayou swamps which are the legendary hideouts of Jean Lafitte and his buccaneers in the early 1800's. Also part of our tour passed the base of Louisiana's fabulous oil industry.

### Service Operation in New Orleans

Sunday, 22<sup>nd</sup> September was the opening day of the British Festival and also the commencement of RML898 on service between New Orleans Hotel and the Delta, approximately 2 miles in length for the round trip. Prior to entering service, arrangements had been made to take a picture of the bus on board of the Mississippi ferry boats mainly at the request of the London transport Magazine. The bus was driven to the Jackson Avenue Ferry and taken across the river to Gretna (on the Algiers side of the Mississippi) and landed so it could be the right way round for unloading again at New Orleans.

A trial service trip was made to familiarise the crew with the route and service commenced at 12 noon. The number of people waiting that journeys was such, just enough to load and un-

load again. In all some 1200 people were carried



ried

and if it had not been that the bus was required for demonstration that evening outside Maison Blanche, service trips would have continued well into the evening. However, at 5.15 p.m. it was decided to call a halt as none of the crew had fed, and the bus returned to Canal Street garage of New Orleans Public Service.

A quick snack was taken and the bus swept out and was then driven to Maison Blanche to stand outside as an advert from 600 to 8,30pm. In addition the store was open for previewing the British goods on sale and the crowds could be likened to Regent Street at Christmas time. Most of this time was spent with the vehicle saloon lights on and as such it was necessary to keep the engine running since it soon became dark after 6.30pm there being little or no twilight. By about 9.15pm the bus was garaged once more and three tired, hungry and dirty crew returned to the Jung hotel for showers, meal and bed.

On the Monday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, HMS Ursa arrived at New Orleans from Bermuda as part of the celebrations and the bus was used to transport the Black Watch (who were also in New Orleans for the show) to the docks at 7.30am for a guard of honour. Immediately after this, the bus commenced service. The first one or two trips in the morning were light as life did not start until 10.00am, in fact very few shops open until then. Upon reflection a start at 11.00am might have been a little better. However, traffic picked up, reaching a peak during the lunch break. At 3.00 p.m. the bus was withdrawn to give the crew a break and enjoy a well-earned cup of tea at the bus garage. It was found that the bus had to be taken to the garage rather than leave it at the terminus since people were always wanting to look over it. A return start was made at 5.00 p.m. and throughout the bus was crowded. In order to ensure a finish by 7.00pm the queue had to be counted off. On occasions people arrived from distances up to 50 miles away to ride in the bus and many was the time that the last journey was followed by a special so that nobody should go away disappointed. Some nights, passengers were carried on garage journeys in order to get a ride. The pattern of the remaining days was much as above. On the Wednesday evening the crew were entertained by the senior staff of the New Orleans Public Service Inc at the famous Brennens restaurant. A visit to this famous eating house is a must for any visitor to New Orleans.

On Thursday evening, service finished at 5.00 PM and the bus was loaned to BOAC to carry some of the travel agents from Maison Blanche to the Hilton Hotel at the International Airport. As was typical of all our stay at New Orleans, the crew were invited as part and parcel of the whole festival.



Top: RT3458 awaits its fate at PVS Barnsley in July 2000  
Photo. William Montgomery.

Bottom: RF512 restoration underway, getting ready for RF50  
(See article page 17)  
Photo. Chris Wills.





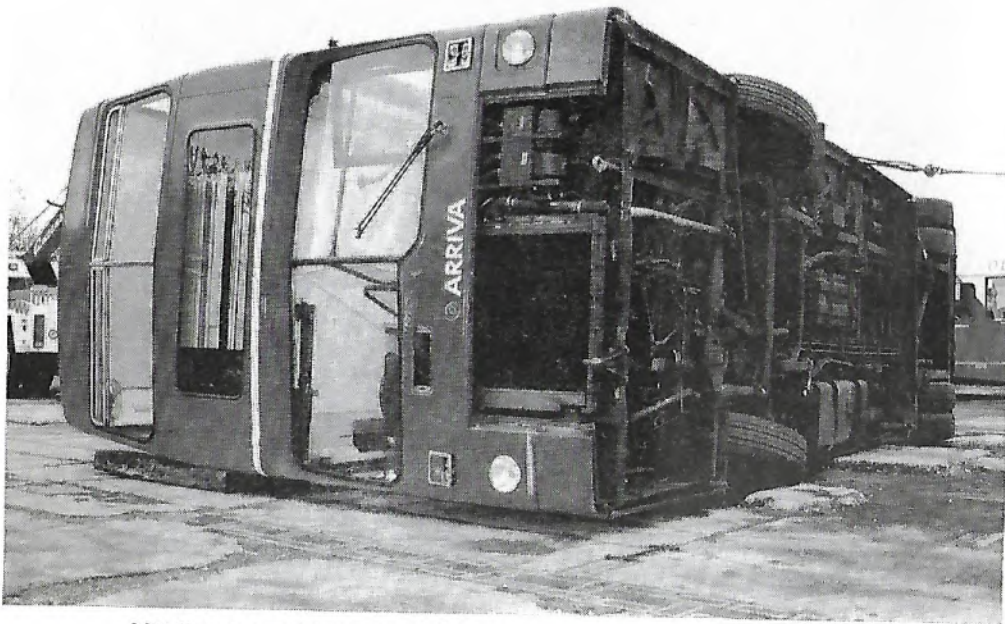
Top: Jim Andress looks forward to seeing you on 28th May for RF50. RF366 basks in the sun at Wroughton last July.  
 Photo Mike Nash  
 Bottom: Reigate is the latest garage to fall to the developers. At least the roof, which has a preservation order on it, will serve as a memorial to its past.  
 Photo. Rod Lucas



Top: Former BLs 38, 67, 47, 73, 94, 17 and 46 arrive at Portsmouth Docks from Jersey in November 2000.  
 Bottom: RT1896, one of 17 buses repatriated by Mike Nash from Jersey, was being converted to front entrance.  
 Photos. Mike Nash



A streetcar named Desire meets a bus you could call Desirable  
in New Orleans in September 1963.  
(Desire is a suburb of New Orleans and a streetcar terminus.)



M850 was used by Queen's Motors to demonstrate the ease that a bus can be righted the modern way using air-bags. The occasion was the launch of the G351 appeal on November 5th.  
Photos. Mike Nash



Top: The prototype 'National Greenway', seen here in 1992 operating from Addlestone garage, has been acquired by Mike Nash for preservation. It will operate on the 'Open-day' service.  
Bottom: Seen here in the guise of 'Local Motion' when seen in October 2000, it has already regained its L & C livery  
Photos. Mike Nash



RMA9 is one of the few RMAs remaining in PSV service. It has recently passed to MacTours of Edinburgh to be open-topped. Seen here before 'Taking the High Road' in the guise of promotional vehicle.  
Photo. Mike Nash

After returning the agents safely back to the store, a party had been arranged at the Playboy Club followed by dinner at Brennans with representatives from Maison Blanche, officers of HMS Ursa, Black Watch, British Consul, etc. Whilst walking home in the early hours of the morning one mystery was explained as to why the streets were always wet in the morning – all roads are washed nightly.

Traffic again built up towards the weekend. After Sunday evening's service a visit was made to an English family where we were treated to a real English beef stew. Normal service was run during the next week from 10.00.am. to 3.00 pm. and 5.00pm. to 7.00pm. The crew were entertained on the Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November by the Equipment Engineer (akin to our Rolling Stock Engineer) and his wife at the Plantation Restaurant. This had been formerly a bungalow house on a cotton plantation.

On Saturday 5<sup>th</sup>, the last journey was run along Canal Street, police having been used during the day to control the crowds, completing in all 620 miles in service.

On Monday the bus was given the once over. Brakes were adjusted, batteries checked and in general given a spring clean; Through the kindness of New Orleans Public the bus was given a soap wash external, a task which the crew would not have relished in the temperature and humidity. The bus was then loaded and the necessary adverts altered ready for Memphis.

### **New Orleans to Memphis**

An early start was made. Breakfast at 6.00 am., the bus collected from the garage and loaded with our personal gear and away at 7.30 am. By the kindness of the Heavy Specialised Carriers, a route had been mapped out for us in order to avoid bridges etc. It should be added that all lorries passing through each state have to stop and be weighed. If overweight or oversize a special permit has to be obtained before the start of the journey. As the London bus was 9 in higher than the maximum American lorry such permits had already been obtained. However, at the checking stations, which were more like customs stations, more interest was taken in the bus than the permit. This made one realise that America is made up of 51 states and not one whole country.

STATE OF LOUISIANA  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
DIVISION OF STATE POLICE  
BATON ROUGE

OVERWEIGHT-OVERSIZE HAULING PERMIT

PERMIT

FEE \$1.00

CHECK # 051209  
(Check or Money Order No.)

Permit No. 15548 HQ

BP

Date SEPT. 3, 1963

Escort Fee Paid NONE

PERMISSION is hereby given

Name LONDON TRANSPORT

City LONDON State ENGLAND

To move or haul DOUBLE DECK BUS

From NEW ORLEANS, LA.

To LA. & MISS. STATE LINE

Truck \_\_\_\_\_ Trailer \_\_\_\_\_

License No. NO LICENSE REQUIRED No. \_\_\_\_\_

Over Highway No. US 61 & 51

Permit Valid: 7 day of Oct. 1963 at 6 (AM) (M)

Permit Expires: 5 day of Oct. 1963 at 6 (AM) (PM)

PERMIT ISSUED FOR

Gross Weight 32,000 lbs. Front End Overhang \_\_\_\_\_ Overall Width \_\_\_\_\_ ft. in.

Overall Height 14 ft. 6 Rear End Overhang \_\_\_\_\_ Overall Length \_\_\_\_\_ ft. in.

PERMIT ISSUED SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING RESTRICTIONS

1.  Flagman required on truck.
2.  Red flags displayed on load.
3.  Pilot car ahead.  Pilot car in rear.
4.  Daylight hours only. No movement if vision obscured by fog or inclement weather.
5.  Reasonable speed; not over 50 mph.
6.  Blade of machine to be removed in transit.
7.  No Saturday, Sunday or holiday movement.
8. Bond posted for  \$1500  \$2500  \$5000  Annual
9.  Equipment shall be equipped with a pole trailer.
10.  Special restrictions.

No. Axles \_\_\_\_\_ Spacing: Axles 1-2 \_\_\_\_\_ ft. in.; Axles 2-3 \_\_\_\_\_ ft. in.; Axles 3-4 \_\_\_\_\_ ft. in.; Axles 4-5 \_\_\_\_\_ ft. in.; Axles 5-6 \_\_\_\_\_ ft. in.; Axles 6-7 \_\_\_\_\_ ft. in.

REMARKS THIS BUS OWNED BY LONDON TRANSPORT CO. OF LONDON, ENGLAND

This special permit must be carried with the vehicle using same and must be available at all times for inspection by proper authorities. This permit is subject to revocation or cancellation at any time. The applicant assumes responsibility for and obligates himself to pay for any damages caused to highways, roads, bridges, structures or any other state-owned property while using this permit. Issuance of this permit is not assurance or warranty by the State or the Department of Highways that the highways, roads, bridges and structures are capable of carrying the vehicle and load for which this permit is issued; nor shall its issuance estop the State or said Department from any claim which may arise for damage to its property, applicant hereby accepting this permit at his own risk. The applicant agrees to hold harmless the State of Louisiana, the Department of Highways and its duly appointed agents and employees against any action for personal injury or property damage sustained by reason of the exercise of this permit. The applicant, when required, shall furnish a bond with a good and solvent surety to protect the State of Louisiana, the Department of Highways and all political corporations and sub-divisions of the State from any liability, responsibility or damage resulting from the use of this permit. When required in this permit the vehicle and load for which the permit is issued shall be accompanied by a proper escort, state police or otherwise, all at the expense of the user; and such other conditions or requirements as are herein imposed by the Director of Highways shall be complied with.

This permit is issued pursuant to Act No. 596 of 1950, which is made part hereof by reference and of which act applicant takes cognizance.

Applicant certifies that the information supplied by him contained in his application for this permit is correct; that he made the application to induce the issuance of the permit; that he fully understands all the provisions and requirements thereof and of said Act 596 of 1950; and that he accepts all conditions and assumes all of the obligations imposed thereby.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
DIVISION OF STATE POLICE

Note. As the bus was already painted all-over red, the requirement to carry red flags was waived!

Another matter which had to be taken care of was that whilst passing through the State of Mississippi, one had to purchase sufficient fuel in that state for the journey, otherwise a charge was made equivalent to the tax on the fuel used in travelling across that state. Thus when purchasing diesel fuel, an invoice had to be obtained which was stamped at the checking station.

It soon became obvious that whilst the route was ideally suited to American lorries, difficulty was experienced with overhanging trees. The lorries or trucks brush past them, but the bus had to make detours on the road to prevent damaging the roof. For state highways the roads were a little disappointing, much of it being one lane in each direction. The total width was about 17ft. and with American trucks doing a good 60mph one had to be wide-awake at all times. In the main. American truck drivers were very good and always gave way. Even though the gross weight of these vehicles was much higher than British standards, no queues ever formed behind them ascending hills. Part of the journey was on a new Interstate Highway just built, but this was only two carriageways in each direction. Bridges were 14'6" so every one had to be taken at a crawl. Apparently this mistake has been realised and later bridges are to be higher. Some 410 miles was covered in the one-day from New Orleans to Memphis, the last 70 miles being in total darkness. Upon arrival on the outskirts of Memphis we were unable to get in touch with our contact and arranged to garage the bus at a local Esso garage and put up at a motel. This course was decided upon as Memphis had rather a lot of low bridges and it was considered not prudent to try and find the local bus garage at that time of night.

First Days in Memphis.

On Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October our host came and met us at the Howard Johnson Motel and took our gear to the Chisca Hotel, whilst his secretary escorted the bus to the garage of the Memphis Transit authority, a locally owned organisation. It was similar in arrangement to that of New Orleans originally having been taken over within the last few years. As such it had to pay its own way and fares were higher, the flat fare being 18 cents instead of 10 cents. A free local down town shopping services was operated. The bus was unloaded and got ready for service in the afternoon.

On the Friday the sponsoring store (Lowensteins) was visited in order to determine the programme to be worked. Much time was wasted and eventually the route was covered by car. In the afternoon, the other crewmembers walked over the route, which was a little more complicated than at New Orleans. Originally it was intended that the bus was to run on Saturday from 10.00am. till 5.00pm. for advertising purposes, but this was cancelled and replaced by 1.00 pm. to 3.00pm working for picture and television purposes.

#### **Service Operation in Memphis.**

On the Sunday, service was operated from 11.30am to 3.30pm. and the bus was then parked outside the store until 7.30pm. Special invited guests were then taken from the store to an up town restaurant and picked up again at 10.00pm. and transported to the store again. By the time the bus was finally garaged it was nearly 11.30pm. It was that Maison Blanche came to our rescue, Mr. Kenny arriving to take us to a party at a hotel where we joined BOAC, British Consul from New Orleans and their staff who had come from Maison Blanche in New Orleans. The absence of staff from Lowensteins was noticeable.

On Monday at breakfast a call was received that the bus was required as soon as possible. Every endeavour was made to comply with these requests and the bus was at Lowensteins before 9.00am. Service was operated on what was the Down Town free Service until 3.00pm. When the bus was parked until 5.30pm. for display purposes.

Two days had gone and there was no sign of a conductress and it didn't appear as if any were forthcoming. Representations were made and eventually a former GI bride was engaged who fitted in perfectly. It was obvious from the number of passengers carried that the advertising of the British Festival in Memphis was not nearly so effective as in New Orleans.

On Thursday, late shopping night, the bus was required until 8.30pm. By Friday, arrangements were being made for the return of the vehicle to New Orleans to load on to a boat for England. It was then suddenly transpired that the boat was leaving New Orleans on the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> October (Saturday) and that the next available boat was 7th November. Representation was made to the store about finishing early but this they refused to agree.

Investigation showed that the boat was sailing to Houston in Texas before returning to Liverpool and, provided we could reach Houston by Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> October, all would be well. As all the lifting gear had been left at New Orleans it was arranged that the bus would commence its return trip to New Orleans on the Saturday after lunch and reach New Orleans Sunday in time to load up with the lifting gear and leave for Houston early on Monday. Discussion with the store authorities brought an agreement that provided the bus was available earlier on the Saturday, they would release it at noon. Service operation continued on the understanding that the last trip would end on Saturday at 12.00 noon.

However, when it came to it the store refused to honour the agreement possibly because trade was beginning to pick up. This meant it would be impossible to get away on Saturday other than travelling during the night, which our permit did not cover. It was then decided that the bus would have to travel direct to Houston, some 610 miles and get the lifting gear from New Orleans to Houston by other means. Some 290 service miles were covered in Memphis when service ceased at 3.00pm. The bus was then driven to the garage and loaded for the return trip.

#### **Memphis to Houston**

Immediately the change of plan became known it was necessary to obtain Hauling Permits for an oversize vehicle. These, apart from the restriction of not using during the night, are not normally available at weekends. This was overcome in Tennessee and Arkansas without any bother, but the Lone Star State of Texas would not play ball. In any case no offices would be open over the weekend to issue permits anyway. Also as third party insurance is not compulsory in the USA the State of Texas required an insurance indemnity and that could not be obtained over the weekend.

In the evening a phone call was received that, in view of possible complication, Mr. Kenny of Maison Blanche was flying to Memphis with our lifting gear and would travel with the bus on its way from Memphis to Houston.

At 4.00am. we arose and packed our bags, a quick cup of coffee and on our way before 5.00am. The hotel had packed breakfast for us and this was eaten as and when one member of the crew was free.

Again the state authorities had provided a route, but it was still considered advisable to always have one of the crew upstairs at the front of the bus. Arrangements were made so that the two hours shifts were done, driving two hours, watching two hours sleeping two hours. The journey was uneventful through Arkansas and trouble started at the border of Texas at Texarkana. After a lot of difficulty in finding the tourist centre, and making a diversion across a railway line to avoid a 13'9" bridge, contact was made. A point blank refusal to issue permit or bond was the result on arrival.

Fortunately Mr. Kenny had seen fit to arrange for the British consul at New Orleans to provide us with official papers which did the trick. Arrangements were made with an insurance official to open up his office and issue the necessary insurance bond. As this was some distance from the tourist board, a haulage contractor who was present at the time offered us the use of his own car. The insurance official who had been in England during the war said that it was a pleasure to do this for us. Finally, on production of the bond the permit was issued but over an hour had been wasted. A route had been mapped out but doubt was expressed whether the bus could be got to Houston because of bridge height. However, it was decided to press on.

Good progress was made and it was surprising how little traffic was met on the roads for a weekend. After three hours driving in the pitch black and covering 462 miles, it was decided to call a halt. The town of Nagadoches had been reached and the crew spent the night at a motel. Again another early start was made the next morning with Houston in mind. Houston docks were finally reached about 10.00.am, being some 610 miles in total from Memphis.

Eventually the ship's berth was found. We had come to be used to the lack of knowledge of the shipping authorities as to what was happening in their own docks, not only American. The boat MV Mahout was on its maiden voyage for the Brocklebank line and had some difficulty in obtaining a berth. As a result, the bus would not be required for loading until Tuesday or Wednesday. Apparently the press in Houston heard of the arrival of the bus and a reporter appeared. As a result of an article in the local paper, it gave rise to the somewhat sarcastic report in The Times about there being only one No. 11 bus and the impossibility of covering 400 miles in one day.

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that London Transport double deck omnibus, Registration No. WLT 898, is official property; the London bus is proceeding from New Orleans, Louisiana, to Memphis, Tennessee, in connection with the "British Festival" to be held at Lowenstein's Department Store October 12-19 inclusive; the London bus will then return to New Orleans, Louisiana, for shipment to the United Kingdom.

Her Britannic Majesty's Government would appreciate any courtesies and assistance extended in connection with the journey of the London bus from New Orleans to Memphis and return.



*J. F. Ford*

J.F. Ford,  
Her Britannic Majesty's  
Consul-General.

British Consulate-General,  
Suite 1501, 225 Baronne Street,  
New Orleans, Louisiana, 70112.

October 4, 1963.

### **Loading at Houston**

Since our stay at Houston was to be longer than expected, Mr. Kenny hired a Chevrolet car for our use. Rooms were booked at the Continental Hotel, a most modern building. At the suggestion of the first officer of the Mahout, a return visit was made to see what progress had been made about loading. It was then we were informed that the bus could be loaded the next morning at 7.00am. In anticipation of this, seats were booked on the plane from Houston to New Orleans for the Tuesday evening at 5.00pm making the usual allowance for docks at 7.00am loading would probably mean 12 noon. After dinner with Mr. Kenny, we drove him to the airport and returned to bed.

The next morning an early start was made and the docks reached by 7.00am. Imagine our surprise to find the stevedores waiting to load the bus. After a few headaches with the winch gear on the boat stripping and allowing the spreaders and pulley to drop on the roof, the bus was finally loaded and a great weight was off our minds. Coffee with the first officer, then we returned to Houston to advance our flight to the early afternoon.

### **Last Night in New Orleans**

Flying by Boeing 707 New Orleans was reached soon after 3.00pm. and we safely booked in to the Jung Hotel again. Farewell visits were made to the bus Garage, Maison Blanche, etc. In the morning we boarded the 707 to New York where we were to spend two days as the guest of Maison Blanche at the New York Hilton.

### **New York**

Whilst in New York by courtesy of BOAC we were treated to a Gray Line Bus tour of the city including the U.N.O. building. Opportunity was taken to sample the New York Underground which appeared somewhat dirtier than London, gave an almost continuous and fast service throughout the night and day.

When the time came to board the plane at New York at 10.00pm. three tired members of RML898 were looking forward to home. All agreed that it was a wonderful experience that they wouldn't have missed and were very appreciative of being chosen for such a trip.

### **RML898**

The bus was unloaded at Liverpool on 25<sup>th</sup> November, having covered 2375 miles since leaving London, returning an average of 9.0 mpg. Apart from difficulty with the fuel pump governor, the bus behaved very well in a climate of 90F. and humidity of 90%. In New Orleans some 300 journeys operated and it is estimated that approximately 18,000 passengers were carried on a mileage of 620.

In Memphis some 150 journeys were operated carrying some 6000 passengers. The bus was well received by the local public. Many could not believe that it was a standard vehicle with upholstered seats. Comments were received on the good workmanship in its manufacture. The engineering comments on the design were good in that the engine and transmission were separate and not composite as on the American general Motors design, which is almost universal in the states. The only disadvantage was the absence of air conditioning which is a must in that part of the country and in this regard compared unfavourably with the latest GM bus.

The LT bus compared extremely favourably with American Buses in that engine noise was almost non-existent when moving away from rest. With the new Marples noise figures, all American buses would be off the road! With the two stage/lock up converter a fuel consumption of 6.0 mpg was returned which would not be acceptable in England. In general the writer came away with the view that the London bus had a lot to show the Americans, which was quite a comfort.

In conclusion the three members of the crew would like to place on record their grateful thanks for being given such a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and for being able to meet such wonderful people. It renewed our faith in that perhaps Britain was not such a second rate nation as is often said. It was an honour to have waved the British flag in the Deep South.



## Luxembourg City – 2001

R R Stagg

The year 2000 marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the tour of Europe by three London Transport RTs. The tour included the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg where the photographs of the RTs standing on the bridge in front of the cathedral and in front of the 1914-18 War Memorial were taken and grace one section of Ken Blacker's bible on the RT. The tours were to publicise the forthcoming Festival of Britain in 1951 (perhaps our fathers agreed that numbers ending in a '1' are an anniversary not those ending in a '0').

It would have been nice to have been able to return three RTs to Luxembourg after 50 years but the only survivor of the three, 1702, has been languished in a corner of the Dome, in a position felt by many to have done little or nothing to display what it stood for. It seemed a good idea therefore to perhaps return to Luxembourg 51 years after the event in 2001 and perhaps to recreate the photographs that were taken at that time. Having taken that possibility up with George Feltz, Cobham Member, Routemaster owner and perhaps most importantly Director of the City of Luxembourg Transport Department, he would be extremely interested to see any preserved buses in Luxembourg but most importantly on 5 May 2001 when the Luxembourg City Transport will celebrate its 75th anniversary. The event will undoubtedly be a long weekend, probably Thursday to Monday. Are you interested? If you wish to consider bringing a vehicle then anything in preservation will be welcome particularly AECs as Luxembourg City ran a fleet of AEC buses.

This will be a tour with buses thrown in rather than an anoraks holiday. Contact me if interested.

## Early Memories

Phill Cruise

One of the topics of conversation that inevitably comes around at Cobham relates to peoples' earliest transport focussed memories. With a large element of the volunteer workforce in their forties and fifties it is the two decades after the war that feature most prominently.

One of my earliest memories is of travelling by tram between Abbey Wood and Woolwich on the top deck after masking a big fuss in order to do so. I vividly remember the wooden planked ceiling, which given that this was very late in LT tramway days would have suggested that the car was probably an ex East or West Ham car, as the E3s and HR2s had more modern top decks. My grandparents lived in Upper Belvedere and at one time we lived on the Fleet Estate at Dartford, both termini for the 486 bus which was then mainly RT operated, I think. Dartford operated a lot of the green variety of the type of STL that we have just resurrected at Cobham and this was taken for granted by me as the basic type of 'green' bus. One day on the way home from 'nanas' as the 486 turned off East Hill in Dartford up Park Road where there was a cafe on the corner, I looked out of the window and at the stop in East Hill something caught my attention. This green bus had a front entrance. something I had never seen before, so it stuck in my memory till many years later, when as an enthusiast I found out that this kind of STL was the true country area bus. In the fifties as a result of the Festival of Britain there was a special bus service that ran from Sloane Square, Chelsea Bridge Road to Battersea Pleasure Gardens, as they were known then. The service would have been the 137A, I suppose, probably worked by Norwood Garage. My memory of this again concerns STLs lined up in Chelsea Bridge Road one day, with one still in the red and white livery with the oxide roof. There were probably RTs or RTLs as well, but true to the embryonic enthusiast that I was becoming I wanted to travel on the war time liveried STL and I got my way too. This was the last time that I can remember seeing one and certainly travelling on it. Early memories of Green Lines seem to be of 10T10s which until the boxy RFs came on the scene were accepted as the 'usual'.

I even had a Wells Brimtoy tinplate which was later superseded by an RF type model. I wish I had them now and my RT that stopped, rang its bell and started again. I've still got the Trolleybus though. Living in the country area the normal colour for buses was green and red was the colour of Trolleybuses. Those at Bexleyheath were familiar for a long time even after moving to London as the grandparents on one side of the family continued to live in Upper Belvedere and Bexleyheath and Erith were the local shopping centres. The first part of the Erith Corporation Tramways had been abandoned before WW1 but most of the overhead supporting poles remained in place until Erith was redeveloped (ruined) in the 1960s. The 99 and 122A travelled down Pier Road to get to the High Street and then to the terminus outside the Price of Wales pub. At the top of Pier Road was Wheatley Arms where some nice shots of 698 trolleys were taken. I don't remember being able to tell the short wheelbase B2s that were left from the others, but in my young mind there were three sorts of trolleys. These were the ones with straight rain shields, ones with curved shields over the front upper deck and those with sliding windows instead of the usual ones. My last memory of one of these, which was probably a Weymann rebodied D2, was on the 696 in Dartford near the Princes Road short turn.

When I moved to Fulham the local bus routes had all fallen to the post war standard types, many of them being RT or RTW, this being before the large scale RTL for RT swaps of a few years later that saw Leylands almost supreme in West London. One significant outpost of nearly pre-war operation was at Putney, with the Bridge and Chelverton Road running RT2s. I liked these stylish buses with the unusual indicators and nice rorty engines and travelled on them quite a lot on the 14. I can remember being in the lower saloon and knowing that this wasn't one of the usual boring buses. They didn't have bell cords, so the adults had to search the ceiling for a suitable bell push. I can remember going to the zoo on one with 'other' granddad who worked on the Underground. This trip was unusual in that by this time RTWs were the usual fare. Granddad was a signals engineer who by this time was usually based at Earls Court and I once was taken on a visit to the signal cabin there, which is a hazy memory.

A little clearer is the memory of being taken in the sidings at Parsons Green to go in the cab of one of the new 'silver' trains. In other words the unpainted R stock. Many years later I was quite choked to have a cab ride through Parsons Green on the R Stock farewell tour, but that was an R38 not a 49.

I cannot remember any of the wartime vehicles, but the last variety of Sutton Daimlers with Park Royal bodies and full blind boxes, which only ever had restricted displays, sometimes strayed on to the 93s on a Sunday at the end. I can remember travelling back from the Windmill on Wimbledon Common one Sunday in 1953 behind one. I drew it in my school diary the next day. Some years later in an essay at secondary school I wrote about RT608 on the 406 going off the clock (60), I think by the side of Epsom Race Course. The teacher neatly crossed out 60 and replaced it with 30. Little did he know about country RTs. Another early Underground memory is standing at Earls Court and hardly believing it when a train of H stock came in and moved off probably on the Olympia shuttle. How to impress the tourists!

TDs of both post war kinds were familiar at Kingston as were a small contingent of the Mann Egerton Ts still in green livery. There were also Cravens bodied RTs around probably from Norbiton. The reduced blind displays and cream upper deck windows seemed to vanish around the same time as the RT2s and by the late fifties and clearer memories there wasn't so much worth remembering any way.



The auction of the RF Manuals for the Guy Fund  
made £45.00

The successful bidders were John Stanley and  
Keith Rose,

Thank-you for your contributions.

## STD s and other Animals Reminiscences of the Thirties and Fifties

Rufus Isaacs

It must have been during the last months of the London General Omnibus Co Ltd and about the time that I first went to secondary school that my parents informed me one day that we were shortly to be moving to Golders Green, I was delighted at this news. My life-long love affair with London buses (sometimes, admittedly, more of a love/hate affair) had began some years before and I was aware that Golders Green was the home of one of London's biggest and busiest bus stations - probably the biggest and busiest after Victoria (there weren't that many purpose-built bus stations in London then, anyway) and to learn that I was to live within walking distance of such a paradise. Well, it was like telling a young cricket enthusiast that he was going to live next door to Lord's.

No fewer than eleven bus routes served Golders Green at that time, the early nineteen-thirties, and as every route terminated there with the exception of one, the 526, and a few journeys on the 2 and 13 which ran on to North Finchley and Hendon respectively. There was a constant flow of buses into and out of the bus station all day long. To give an example of the density of traffic, nearly one bus per minute poured out of the terminus into the main artery to the West End, Finchley Road, on three routes 2, 13 and 48. (This latter long forgotten route ran through to Blackheath, traversing the West End along what is now recognisable as the 176 routing from Oxford Circus to Elephant & Castle; it was an early casualty of the war). As well as the buses there were two tram routes along the main road and no fewer than ten Green Line coaches every hour, all of which called in at the bus station, on routes H1/2 (Luton/Dunstable - East Grinstead), K1/2 (Hitchin/Baldock - Dorking) and T (terminating from Watford). Those were exciting days for a young bus enthusiast. The setting up of the LPTB and the wholesale renumbering of routes (our 104 became 240, 110 became 210, 526 was to be 26 and 608 was 58) kept me on my toes, literally, and then came the replacement of the trams with trolleybus routes 645 and 660 (and very briefly 651).

But one thing that changed hardly at all during the decade was the mix of vehicle types. A few NSs managed to chug around for a time, but then we had only LTs, STs and STLs with single deck LTs and Ts. Soon the STLs became by far the most predominant type and one became accustomed to noticing subtle changes in the appearance of later models of this mark as improvements were introduced by designers and builders.

But nothing prepared me for the shock when one day in, I believe, early 1937, I was travelling down Station Road, Hendon, when coming towards me I saw a convoy of perhaps half a dozen or so buses which at first glance I took to be yet another variant of the STL, all brand new, devoid of blinds, advertisements or other disfigurements and glinting in the sunshine (yes, we had sunshine in those days). Looking at the bonnet of one to see what number had now been reached I was, as one says nowadays, gobsmacked; here was a completely new type designator, STD, which I had certainly never heard of, and these first examples were on their way to take up residence at what was to be the home of the entire output of 100, Hendon (AE) garage, for most of their lives. It must be remembered that no enthusiast's publications, at least none that I had heard of - existed in those days so when route or allocation changes occurred or new types were introduced these came as a complete surprised to the uninitiated.

The STD virtually took over routes 13, 113 & 183 for much of the next 15 years or so, including of course the war period, only the 13 deigning to share its allocation with some foreigners from Cricklewood (W) garage, so they were always a prominent feature in Golders Green bus yard and whilst not denying the splendour of the later RT and RM families for me the STD will always be "my bus" and when I see the fine work that is carried out at Cobham and elsewhere in preserving vintage vehicles, I nearly weep that not one example of this original batch of 100 STDs was saved. Externally the sharp curvature of the bottom of the windscreen and of course the Leyland radiator were distinguishing features whilst as a passenger the clean, straight lines of the bulkhead windows in front gave a neat and tidy appearance which combined with comfortable seating and a quiet and seemingly effortless engine sound suggested a really efficient and reliable vehicle. And so it was - I cannot recall ever seeing

Two further tranches of STDs were to appear, one during and one after the war. The latter showed a distinct family resemblance and made a brave effort to emulate the originals but they were kept well away on the other side of London and somehow, in my opinion, were just slightly inferior, whilst the least said about the very utilitarian wartime stock the better.

Came the forties and I had to go and win the war for my King and Country (as did a few others of course) and when I managed to get a few days leave and return home my three top priorities were always a hot bath, my mother's cooking and a ride on an STD.

The war over I used the 13 for getting to work (and more importantly for getting home again), as I had previously done for going to school, and the 183 for visiting friends, so my relationship with the STD blossomed.

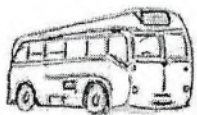
Many aspects of London bus travel have altered vastly since those days and most of these have either been experienced by the present generation or at least are well chronicled, but one difference which is always impressed on my mind is something which has not in fact changed though its cause has: that is the painfully slow speed of travel. To day this is simply accepted as the result of the horrendous traffic snarl ups which are endemic almost throughout the system and at most times of day. Fifty years ago traffic was only sufficient to upset bus schedules at a few black spots in what we now know as 'zone one' and then only in the peak periods (Oxford Street at Christmas was always a nightmare). But while to-day scheduled timings for most routes are varied from hour to hour and from day to day, in an attempt to allow for varying road conditions, and where possible more layover time is given at terminals, back in the fifties there was one standard timing for all journeys on each route (it was even quoted in the bus map route listing) and this was invariably greatly in excess of what was needed, whilst stand time at the terminals was minimal. Inspectors would have been on duty at all main terminals and often at strategic points along the route (where otherwise there may have been an "automatic inspector" which was a red-painted box on stilts by the roadside containing a clock, into which the conductor had to punch his time-sheet - I wonder if any of those boxes were saved?). A reprimand awaited any crew which reached its terminal or check point much too

The inevitable result of all this was that most bus trips were trials of patience for the passengers, and probably for the drivers as well; for example from Golders Green to Harrow-on-the-Hill Station on the 183 was timed for 39 minutes, any time, any day; on a Sunday morning 29 minutes would have been adequate. It may not be an exaggeration to say that, just at a time when people wanted to travel more and car ownership was still very low, a speedy, efficient bus network could have attracted a lot of extra business - and it could have been run more economically with fewer buses; but the chance was lost, perhaps for ever.

Forty years on I still occasionally find myself at Golders Green bus station and I am convinced that there are times, when the moon is full and the wind is in the right direction, that the ghost of an STD can be seen either on the 13 or 183 stand (there is no pub within half a mile of Golders Green, by the way) and maybe in time to come there will appear there the ghost of a small boy who surely should have had something better to do with his spare time, disdainfully comparing today's meagre collection of gaudy coloured single deckers and geriatric RMLs with yesterday's cornucopia of STLs, STs. LTs and of course STDs. Dumbing down indeed!

Until further notice, please direct  
postal sales for the shop to :-  
Mr. Alvin Hale,  
The Fairway,  
Farnham,  
Surrey. GU9 9BB

Phone 01252 962 (Home)  
01252 972 (Work)



## London Buses in Miniature

A.J. Purssey



### RTC Models

The latest release from RTC Models is a model of a Leyland TS 7T with a Heaver body, as re-built in 1947 and operated by the City Bus Company. This kit compliments their earlier kit of the Leyland GNU with four wheel steering.

Strictly speaking not London Transport as the City Motor Omnibus Company had to relinquish its London Bus routes to LPTB in 1934, it did however retain its Southend London service until 1981, latterly as Eastern National Route 251, now ceased. A lot of filming was done at the depot in Lordship Lane, Wood Green, for the television series 'On the Buses'. The Eastern National sign over the garage became Luxton & District and two buses would be adorned with Luxton & District fleet names. Anyone who lived in North and East London will remember this company with their distinctive coaches painted in tan and cream livery going from Wood Green, Tottenham, Gants Hill, Romford and onto Southend.

RTC have also released a 10.2M version of Dennis Dart Marshall Capitol either available in single or dual door. The kits come with rubber tyres and moulded screens. These kits are ideal for the beginner and are to the usual high standard expected from this manufacturer.

They also announce that due to poor returns on modern kits that they will only be concentrating on older types of vehicles. As a result RTC are to release in March 2001 the first of three versions of the LT Class double-decker's, later versions with enclosed staircase. Like the STL Class there were many variations mainly in the front blind displays. They will be most welcome in many collections as the Varney LT165 version has long since disappeared from the model shelves.

If you are a regular customer of RTC Models, you would have received the RTC News issue 19 last November. In it was a copy of a letter to David Eden from Roger Stagg on modifications to the General and Lean back STL kits. Roger has also furnished David with details of paint schemes, which will be published in his next newsletter.

Any information of this nature is most welcome to the modeling fraternity.

Kits currently available from RTC Models:

Kit no 38 Leyland TS 7T Heaver £26.95,

Kit no 37 10.2M Dennis Dart Marshall £25.95

RTC Models

Rosslyn Crescent.

Harrow.

Middlesex.

HA1 2RZ

Postage £1.50 per kit, Orders over £30.00 post Free  
(UK Only)

### Little Bus Company

Updated Information

The RLH is not due until mid 2001 the price approx £27.00. The 1/50<sup>th</sup> RF will not now appear until about July 2001 due to some production modifications. A further LT kit is being produced next year but details will not be announced until nearer the time, possibly 'Showbus'.

On the transfer side, some new adverts for sides, fronts and rear should be available soon. These are of various time periods suitable for RT and RM types.

### Paints

A lot of modellers use Humbrol Paints on their kits. But if like me you have difficulty matching colours. I go for the ready-made colours by the Little Bus Company.

They stock Cherry Paints in 14ml tins at £1.70 per tin, including postage. They stock all London Transport colours including: C164 Central Red, C165 Chiswick Cream, C168 LT Lincoln Green, C169 LT Trim Light Green and C170 London Country Green.

**NEW ARRIVALS** C238 Green Line Dark Green, C239 Green Line Light Green, C230 City Brown.

Please send SAE with all orders and enquires:

All cheques payable: Little Bus Company

Queenswood Avenue.

Hutton. Brentwood.

Essex. CM13 1HU

### **Pirate Models**

John Gay of Pirate Models has asked me to apologise to his many customers who are waiting for his latest releases RT97, RTC1, RT 97 Modified.

John's pattern maker lives in France and had made all the patterns for the kits, and together with the etchings were posted to John, who should have received them in early October. But unfortunately they have not arrived.

This news has devastated John, for not only, losing three kits, the package also contained modifications to other models as well. John's three versions of the Tilling STL patterns are being collected by hand and should be in production in February.

### **North Kent Vehicle Preservation Group**

Presents

A Slide Show

Buses Over The Past 30 Years

Wednesday 7th March at 8 pm.

Borough Green Village Hall  
High street, Borough Green, Kent

3 minutes walk from Borough green rail station

Arriva bus 308 from Gravesend or Sevenoaks

Light refreshments

More information from  
Roland Graves  
01732 634

### **Beyond the gates**

John Hinson

Well, we finally managed to attend a couple of rallies for the 2000 season, which gave us the chance to meet up with some old friends and also make a few new ones.

Our first event was an informal event organised by the AEC Society at the Chiltern Open Air Museum at Chalfont St Giles on the 17th September. At first we wondered if this was a members-only event as publicity was very low-key, but eventually we found the details (with a thank-you to Mike Dawes) and entered an RF. Then, as the date drew nearer, we began to wonder about how it would be affected by the temporary fuel crisis - would the rally be cancelled, would any vehicles attend, would the Museum even be open? We decided to risk it, and were pleased to find plenty of other vehicles there, AEC and otherwise. There weren't too many enthusiasts around, but sometimes that makes an event far friendlier for the owners.

There was a good selection of London vehicles there. I noticed RT935 now sports some Outspan Orange posters on the front to add flavour - I always think RTs look undressed without adverts. Routemaster-wise, a slightly tired looking RMA55 was present - although I didn't meet the owner(s) I heard a couple of people mention that it had recently changed hands so I look forward to monitoring progress and wish them well with the project. Graham Lunn's RM2116 was present as always (I don't know how you manage it Graham!) and from his sales stall I was able to stock up on 12v 21w indicator bulbs.

Our RF280 was parked next to the ever-immaculate RF168, which I have subsequently learnt has been purchased by Keith Rose to compliment his Craven RT and Routemaster. This vehicle was allocated to Staines garage for several years which makes it of special interest to Keith as that is his local area.

There were some splendid lorries at the event too, although most fall outside the remit of this article. However, two ex-LT vehicles were of interest to me. 1078Q (TXV909) was an ex-London Transport AEC Mercury tower wagon that was once used to maintain the trolleybus network. After LT had finished with it, the vehicle was used by Reading Corporation for the same purpose.

It is now preserved in Reading colours but of course the registration number gives away its origins. Another former LT service vehicle present, although less lorry-like, was 971J (ex STL1470) which was once a Cobham resident. When I last saw it at Cobham it was only partially restored and not looking terribly exciting (I recall being amused at seeing it being manoeuvred without radiator, with fan spinning at the front making it look more like an aeroplane!). It is a real treat to see this rare vehicle now splendidly restored in the dull khaki-green carried by some of the vehicle fleet.

All in all, this was a most enjoyable event; hosted in a delightful museum site which itself justified the visit. One visit definitely not to be missed there was the preserved Victorian loos!

Our second rally was more mainstream, Canvey Island on 8th October. This is traditionally a bit damp and miserable, but not so this year - a damp start turned into a generally bright and sunny October day. It was a touch fresh atop the two open-toppers we rode on between the rally site and the museum, but that is understandable for October.

We didn't get a chance to talk to everybody we wanted to, but we certainly saw quite a few familiar vehicles. Alan Brown's RCL2233 looked as nice as ever, as did RT113. Another old friend seen in fine fettle was RM737, dressed for work on route 140 on which I remember seeing it frequently when we first moved in to Wealdstone all those years ago. Amongst the others present were RM1993 in Southampton livery and RM44 wearing Reading colours.

I was interested to see RT3143, which I haven't seen around for a while although that isn't to say it hasn't been given our recent abstention from rallies recently!

Another really splendid RT was present in the form of John Herting's Green Line RT3228. This was accompanied by T792, looking equally smart, which I hear now also belongs to John.

On the single-deck front we saw RF213 which is now in new hands. For several years this was rallied in London Country pale green with white band, but it has now reverted to traditional Green Line livery and very nice it looks, too. Also present was red RF406, which I suspect is also with a new owner - it used to belong to a farmer in Buckinghamshire who rarely rallied it.

On the more modern front we saw AN121 and DMS132, which are both regular rally attendees.

Down at the museum at Canvey, we noticed great progress with which great parallel can be drawn with Cobham. I guess in both cases the driving force is charitable/museum status but we noticed that the museum there is much cleaner, tidier and smarter than when we last visited a few years ago. Apart from the sales stalls inside, access was allowed to take a closer look at the vehicles behind them, which was useful. Inside the workshops (the only area not accessible, but visible through windows) was RM1138 undergoing a very thorough restoration. But perhaps the most interesting ex-London vehicle at the museum was service vehicle 1283F (581 EYU), a Thames Trader lorry in smart



red London livery complete with illuminated "LT Urgent" sign on the cab roof. Of course, the Canvey Island museum has no specific London interest or connections, and the majority of vehicles there belong to Essex operators. There are many interesting and fascinating vehicles amongst them.

As many of you will know, we store some of our vehicles in a yard near High Wycombe just around the corner from Ward Jones' premises. Many interesting preserved and operational vehicles can be seen there whilst undergoing servicing or repair, but normally I wouldn't report on these here.

However one interesting vehicle seen there during October is certainly worthy of mention. It was GS54 - not in London green livery, and not preserved. This is a caravan, and kept in very tidy condition. It is immaculately smart in blue with black wings, and there is not a blemish or dent to be seen. Internally, it is most homely with wood-panelled walls and cast-iron stove. The last notes I have on this vehicle refer to an owner in Dorset, but I have no idea where the vehicle normally resides these days. I understand it belongs to a lady who, when travelling, tows her equally immaculate Morris 1000 Traveller behind.

The Lights Tour raised £467.45 from the sixteen vehicles present and absent friends for the Rainbow Childrens Trust. Vehicles present ranged from DMS's to an Austin FX4 taxi, and it was a particular pleasure to have Donald's BEA present, a type that has never attended before.

Thank-you to all for contributions small or large for this episode of 'Beyond the Gates'. If you have any interesting sightings or information, do drop me a line at:

"The Shambles", Graham Road,  
Wealdstone, Middx. HA3 5RE, or email me at  
shambles@ .com.



Tree-logger 971J in Cobham days

### Sunday 11th March

Members' day at Cobham (details page 7)

### Sunday 8th April

The big one!  
Open day and bus gathering at Brooklands Runway

Another big event!

### Monday 28th May

RF50 at Cobham Bus Museum, to celebrate the half-century of this durable and popular bus, lots of RF's on lots of routes. Be there, or be somewhere else.

### Sunday 1st July

GS Day at Cobham.  
GS1, 2, 32, 34 and 62 in attendance.  
Free service to Effingham and Stoke D'Abernon,

### Sunday 22nd July

its RML40 at Cobham, to celebrate the continuity in service of London's best-ever bus

### Sunday 5th August

London Bus Nostalgia Day

### Monday 27th August

Woking Classic Car Event, loads of services linked to the museum

### Sunday 16th September

Family Day

### Sunday 28th September,

Rear-engine Running Day



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EFE	26202	Guy Arab Colchester	£13.50
EFE	26306	Guy Arab Southdown	£17.50
EFE	26401	Daimler Midland Red	£17.50
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Corgi	41902	Southdown PD3 rt 31	£17.50
Corgi	41909	Southdown PD3 rt 139	£17.50
Corgi	42001	Southdown PD3 o/top	£17.50
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### East Grinstead Running Day

**Sunday 22nd April**

Free rides on routes of the 50's and 60's

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473 with RP

424 with RT and XF

428 with RF and RLH

434 with RF and T

485 with SNB, GS and RF

494 with GS and RF

708 with RT and RF

Based at King Street car park, East Grinstead

### Hertford and Ware Classic Bus Running Day Sunday 3rd June

Former London Transport routes

around Hertford and Stevenage

### Dorking Running Day

**Sunday 2nd September**

Former LT and LCBS routes.

### Amersham Running Day

**Sunday 7th October**

*For more details of the above, send a large sae to, Country Bus Rallies, Hampton Way, East Grinstead. RH19 4SG Single programme £4 All three programmes £10*

### Staines, Bus of Yesteryear

**Sunday 12th August**

Details to follow.

OTHER EVENTS 2000

## OFFICERS

### Chairman

Peter Plummer, Northdown Road, Longfield,  
Kent DA3 7QN

### Secretary

John Bedford, Albany Court, 38, Alexandra  
Grove, London N12 8NN

### Treasurer and Membership Secretary

Mike Nash, Stroudwater Park, St. Georges  
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## COMMITTEE

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Offham, Kent ME19 5NE

## CONTACTING THE COMMITTEE

If you wish to contact any member of the committee,  
please do so by letter. Urgent telephone communica-  
tions can be made through:-

Bill Cottrell 020 8240 (answerphone)

Paul Morris 020 8394.

or the museum at week-ends on 01932 868665

Items for the magazine to Bill Cottrell (editor) details  
above or e-mail [bill@freeserve.co.uk](mailto:bill@freeserve.co.uk)

Trust webpage <http://www.lbpt.org>

**Next copy date April 10th 2001.**

Cobham Bus Museum, Redhill Road, Cobham,  
Surrey. KT11 1EF

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Millennium  
Dome  
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RT1702 was a Millennium Dome exhibit.  
Seen here amongst the throngs in July 2000.



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We are pleased to say that the three London Transport buses shown on the right (photographed at the time of the New York Civic Ceremony) are fitted with



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