

COBHAM BUS MUSEUM MAGAZINE

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The Journal of the London Bus Preservation Trust Ltd

THE LONDON BUS PRESERVATION TRUST LIMITED

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Telephone communications can be made through the museum at weekends.

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Another year has past and another begins to unfold, a quarter gone already by the time you read this. Museum progress has been slower than we might have liked, but setbacks only serve to throw up new challenges and I am sure that our new management are more than up to it.

I had hoped that this issue would be RM-free, sadly (!) a few have crept in, but two follow-up items by David Bosher and Colin Read supply ample compensation. I have tried a little experiment with these articles inasmuch as the photos are grouped either within the text, or separately. I would appreciate some feedback (not to be published) on preferences, if any. Drop me a line or e-mail. Apart from the usual contributions on museum and vehicle progress, we have a tale from the Emerald Isle, featuring a splendid RTL, and John Hinson has been out of the gates again.

As recorded elsewhere, John Bedford has decided to step down from his long-standing role as secretary. His depth of knowledge on Trust matters will be hard to match, but I am sure that his successor will soon bring valuable attributes of his own – welcome Chris.

Finally, I have had my own bit of upheaval, as East London Coaches, which I have run from the start 16 years ago has closed. The buses, including the last Northern Counties bodied Volvo Olympians in East London, along with the coaches have all be sold. RML 2665 went as well, to a new home in Bath, with Ensignbus. For a look at ELC's history, visit <http://kfcpics.fotopic.net> we did have some interesting vehicles in our time. Fortunately, everyone still has a job.

So new challenges all round this year!

Cover pictures.

Rooting through some pictures for another publication, I came across the cover pictures from a few years ago.

Keeping to the wintery theme, on the front, we have North Street's RM1346, pictured in Ongar in December 1976 at the Cripsey Avenue stand. The BL behind has arrived via a side turning, the RM having reversed, and is on type training duties prior to ousting RMs.

RT heydays are recalled on the back cover as RT 4779 turns out of Parliament Street on 3rd December 1976

From the cab,.....all change....

Change is inevitable and although we are all involved in a hobby that is essentially concerned with leaving things as they were, there has to be a degree of realism.

I say this because our traditional opening event of the year “The Open Day” has a new venue and with it come other changes.

The reason for the change is that the Wisley site that we have used in recent years was sold just before Christmas 2006. As may be expected, the sale of the site took a long time (moving house is bad enough) and effectively all negotiations were frozen until the final signature. As soon as the new managing agents were in place and ready to talk (early January 2007) we started the ball rolling. But ...there was a risk that negotiations would take too long, and equally time was running out to liaise with other interested parties involved in running the Wisley operation (eg Police, Highways Agency etc).

We had to look for alternatives. We could not afford to run without an opening event for 2007. It is, after all, our main fund raising event of the year.

Alan Heasman a member of the Open Day Committee investigated the Longcross site and, along with Sebastian Marshall, secured us a great alternative venue

With Longcross secure, it was decided to go for a one-site event, i.e. concentrate all our available resources at Longcross without the added complication of trying to open the Redhill Museum premises. Although this will be a disappointment in some respects, it will make some of the other “Cobham” events throughout the year that centre on the Museum premises even more appealing.

The Longcross site will provide some new features not the least of which will be the opportunity to see buses (and London Taxis I suspect) on a test track that has a strong linkage with London Transport as the proving grounds for RM1 and RM2 so many, many, years ago.

So please, make sure you aim to come along and, even better, if you are able to volunteer to help at Longcross get in touch with Alan or any of the Trust officers as soon as possible please.

Turning to the move to Brooklands, the current position is that we have ended our contract with the first would-be purchaser. It is the view of the Council of Management (COM) that we could actually obtain more for the site than had been agreed previously. In addition, a revised look at the proposed costings indicate

that to be prudent we need to ensure that we have additional funding to make the long term very secure. This will also give us potential funds to restore some of the projects that are dormant. We are currently talking to a number of interested parties to ensure that the best possible deal is obtained for the Trust and its members. We will not embark on any proposition that does not meet all the criteria for a secure future.

Another change is that John Bedford has decided to stand down as Secretary after a long stint approaching 30 years on the team running the museum day to day. I, like many other Committee and Council members that have gone before, have benefited from John's wise counsel. I am sure that many members will want to wish John a lot more time to enjoy his passion without the increasing pressures that arise from running a fully-fledged Museum. Equally, I am pleased to welcome Chris Wheble to the role of Secretary and I hope everyone will give him their support, as I know 2007 will be a challenging year.

In any organisation, communications can be improved. There never will be a perfect solution. This magazine plays a major part but inevitably, it is not a newspaper – production, compiling, editing means that it takes time and the “news” element can be out of date. The Council has been keen to widen the scope of the communications. More work has been done on the website (thanks to Nick Abbott) and Norman Evans has come forward to trial an email newsletter. As I write, the final details are being finalised, but I hope we can issue the first issue soon after Members' Day (if nothing else we need to collect the email addresses for those members wishing to receive the newsletter!).

In addition, David Kinnear and I held a couple of briefing sessions with the volunteers more actively involved in the day-to-day operation of the Museum. The sessions were held, conveniently, “in the Redhill Road canteen” just before Christmas. These seemed to go down well with good exchanges of views and we plan to hold further sessions during 2007 to supplement the Members' Day and the AGM.

I hope to see many members at Open Day but in the meantime if you need to get in touch or express a view please do so.

Peter Duplock
Chair of LBPT

Need to know something / heard a rumour – good or otherwise? Contact me:
peteraduplock@ .com. Tel: 01444 127 or 07730 192

Major items recently before (most ongoing) by the Council of Management (COM) – February 2007.

Items / projects.

- Brooklands – consideration of revised and further offers for Redhill Road site. More detailed work on funding.
- Possible acquisitions – a trio of horse buses are amongst those being considered.
- Replacement site for Wisley
- Progress on STL 441
- Progress on external funding for exhibit restoration
- Co-option of new Secretary
- Plans for AGM
- Review of the Structure of The Council of Management

This list is not exhaustive! Further information can be obtained from the appropriate Council Members,

Planned LBPT Council of Management meetings for remainder of 2007 are currently scheduled as follows:

17 March 2007
21 April 2007
30 May 2007
27 June 2007
25 July 2007
29 August 2007
29 September 2007
27 October 2007
1 December 2007

These dates are subject to change to meet LBPT business needs and extra meetings may be scheduled for urgent matters.

TOYFAIR REPORT

Once again our annual visit to the Toy Fair, held at Excel in Docklands at the end of January, provided an opportunity to preview numerous die cast models which should be available during 2007.

EFE:

On the Gilbow Holding stand, Frank & Brenda Joyce had the preproduction castings for the 1:76 scale RT models in both pre-war (2RT2) and post-war guises. These were very impressive. Also displayed were the attractive new range of EFE trucks plus tantalising resin castings of the forthcoming RLH and 1:24 scale Metrobus.

CORGI:

There appeared to be no new castings within the OOC range for London related buses. A model of RTW4 (due for release in January) was displayed, together with some 1:76 scale Trackside models. Of interest was the London Transport service vehicle set comprising of a Morris LD, Ford Transit van, Bedford HA van & Ford Anglia van. This set should be available in the second half of 2007 selling at around £16.

The Mettoy tinfoil Routemaster models, with clockwork mechanism, front wheel steering and operating bell, did not send our pulses racing – perhaps more suited to the nostalgic tinfoil toy lover.

The 1:50 scale RT and RTL models, from the Buses in Britain collection, were on show and included the green liveried RT with ‘Sights & Sounds’ features. Hopefully these were early preproduction samples as the headlights on all three appeared both oversized and out of alignment. The RTL version, allegedly due for release in June 2007, replicates the Trust’s RTL139 which should prove popular with many of our members. Likely prices are £50 for the standard model and £80 for the ‘with features’ model.

SUNSTAR:

A very impressive 1:24 scale replica of RT113 was on show, overshadowing the range of SunStar’s Routemasters which were sited nearby. There may well be a big demand for this model, a brand new casting, which will retail

at just under £150. It is rumoured that the RT113 model, due for release in October 2007, will be issued on an allocation basis. If the wholesalers' demands exceed the supplies then their quota will be cut back resulting in the retailers being unable to fulfil their customers' requirements. Please let me know if you hope to purchase one of the RT113 models, and I will do my very best to secure one for you. In view of its rather expensive price tag I would appreciate a deposit of £50 to accompany your order.

OTHER BRANDS:

The John Ayrey stand had a wide range of Britbus and Creative Master Northcord models. Regretfully the Britbus models of London Country's 'AN', the Leyland Atlantean, were completely sold out. A series of Base Toys comprising of dropside, tipper, tanker, box van & flatbed trucks caught our attention together with a range of small vans from Oxford Diecast. These models are reasonably priced and are ideal for model railway layouts set in the 1960's era.

CHANGE OF ANNUAL BUS & COACH GATHERING VENUE

You will have read within other sections of this magazine that our annual Bus & Coach Gathering, on Sunday 1st April 2007, will now be held at the Longcross Test Track site and that the Museum site will not be open. All of the Cobham Retail Outlets will be sited at Longcross and comprise the 'Shop' offering its wide range of bus related products (including the sought after Special Event models), a section selling the pre-owned die-cast models from The Massive Model Collection plus our second hand magazine and book stall.

A big "THANK YOU" to fellow member Tim Bubb who responded to my request in Issue 53 for the loan of a gazebo. Tim has kindly donated a gazebo to the Trust, and this will be utilised as part of Cobham's retail outlets at the Longcross site where we will be able to raise funds by selling the 'pre-owned' publications.

At time of writing, there has been no response to my plea for 'Bookstall Volunteers' that appeared in Issue 53. Are there any Bookstall Managers out there?

EFE FUND RAISING SPECIAL EVENT MODELS

This year the Trust has requested EFE to produce two fund raising models to be available on 1st April 2007. The 2007 Cobham Special will be a RML 2700, a model of the vehicle currently owned by Cobham member David Aldridge. This model will be on route 207A to Chelsea with “Cobham 2007” side advertisements. Our second model will replicate the Trust’s very own RMC 1461. This Routemaster coach, in Green Line livery, will be depicted on route 715 from Hertford showing Guildford as its final destination.

Please note: there will be no facility for the trade, members or non-members to ‘Reserve’ models prior to the Longcross Event.

The Special Event models will be on sale in the Marquee at the Longcross site

Priority to purchase models will be given to the members and visitors attending the annual Bus & Coach Gathering at Longcross on Sunday 1st April 2007. Purchases will be restricted to a maximum of two of each model per person.

There will be special arrangements made for volunteer members who, being engaged in duties during or prior to the event, are unable to access the Longcross Marquee.

For folk who can’t attend:

Please send a prepaid stamped addressed envelope together with a note of your membership number and details of which models you hope to purchase, to:

A F Hale, 15 The Fairway, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 9BB.

If, after the event, models are available I’ll send an order form in the prepaid envelope.

If, after the event, models aren’t available, I’ll send a letter of condolence.

Special attention will be given to infirm or disabled members who are unable to attend.

Members will take priority over non-members for all ‘prepaid envelopes’ received prior to the Longcross Event day. Thereafter all orders will be on a first come first served basis.

Potential customers will be given a week to respond, before the next batch of invitations to purchase is sent out.

MEMBERS DAY – 11 MARCH 2007

Please remember to bring your wallet or chequebook when you attend our Members' Day on Sunday 11th March 2007. In addition to the Cobham Shop plying its wares, there still remain a number of models available, now at bargain prices, from 'The Massive Die-cast Collection'. These models were acquired by the Trust to raise funds to help for restore and preserve our worthy fleet.

ALL CHANGE.....!

What was Cobham Open Day has now become the Cobham Bus and Coach Gathering 2007 on 1st April at the Vehicle Testing Site at Longcross (Chobham): once again your Open Day Sub Committee wrestles with a change of venue at the last moment through no fault of ours and my thanks to the Sub Committee, Main Committee, Directors, Trustees and Uncle Tom Cobley and all for coming to the rescue and finding a site so that we can hold our curtain-raiser to the rally season. It's on one site only(**NOTHING AT THE MUSEUM**) but there will be notices at Weybridge Station and on the Museum gates giving information and directions on how to get to Longcross and luckily, the advertising has been able to mention the new location and arrangements. This really is the time for the members to come to the aid of the party as it were, so return your volunteer cards, come to the members day at the Museum on 11th March, and remember, if you volunteer, you save yourself £10:00 on the entrance fee. I cannot tell you how it will go or what will happen: all I ask is that you support all of us as never before as we do what we can to produce a memorable day in new surroundings.....and of course decent weather please!

Simon Douglas Lane

(Open Day/Cobham Bus and Coach Gathering 2007 Sub Committee Chairman!)

Dear David ,

In LGCS days there were, except for a short period, no garage codes. When they were introduced is not certain possibly latish 1933 to the two Romford garages i.e. RF, North Street and RE, London Road. When CS realised that they had clashing, three country codes were changed: Watford, High Street, WG became WA ; High Wycombe HW became HE and Amersham AM became MA. When? Uncertain, mid-'34 plus?

The new garage at Hertford opened Jananary '34 and the two garages at nearby Ware closed i.e. WE, Ware, Park Street ex Peoples and Ware, Town Hall, WR. Due to complaints of indecency Windsor, WC became WR Photos. As far as I know, there are no photos of Wycombe HW , only one printed in the mag of an AM, Amersham bus .There are a few Watford WG's and quite a few of Windsor WC's. Also I know of one photo of Ware, WE and none of Ware, WR.

For a short while some country garages at least painted the code onto the mud-guards.

Brian Bunker , mem no 674

P.S. Page 15 there were no open-top LT's .

Dear Dave

I found Graham Smith's article about William Henry Cook was most fascinating. Being someone involved with the preservation of taxicabs and being also a working cab driver I had, somehow, failed to make the connection between the Dennis and W H Cook & Son, cab proprietors. I can add to the story that Cook's had the honour of operating the first prototype 3-door Austin FX3 taxi, JXN 841, in 1948 but they are probably best remembered for their petrol/gas conversions of Austin FX4 cabs in the late 1960's. Petrol cabs then had to have an emergency fuel cut-off tap, as did petrol buses of course. On the FX4 this was situated on the nearside wing behind the front wheel and the gas cab could be identified by having two such taps. The costs of running a cab on gas was about two-thirds of that on petrol (the 2.2 petrol did about 18mpg), so the Government did what it does best again and raised tax on LPG. So that was the end of the gas cab until Livingstone and his low-emissions came along.

I have a 1971 quote from Managing Director Vernon Cook, "We regret that any excessive duty would kill off the project and with it the end of hopes for a cleaner city". Plus ca change.

Keith White

Dear David,

Please thank Peter Gomm for pointing out some errors in "Furthest North West". My apologies: route 313 should indeed have read 368.

The 'phone No. is of course, ABBey 1234 -not to be confused with the famous 'WHItchall 1212, Scotland Yard'. (Although by 1956, London Transport's chairman did use 'phone No. ABBey 5600).

Finally, I wrongly assumed route 352 started from Tring Bus Garage, as in later years -sorry.

Kindest Regards,

Frank Everett.

Memories and Accuracy

Brian Reynolds

My interest in London Buses started during my early schooldays, in the late 'forties. I still have mental pictures of double-deck LT5 on the local 138 route. Far from looking old-fashioned I thought that they looked rather dramatic. Then, one day, I saw my first RT (actually it was probably an RTW). Devoid of adverts, its paintwork gleaming in the sunlight, it looked most impressive, almost futuristic by comparison with its predecessors. I feel passionate about the preservation of all vehicles upto and including the Routemaster — or as many of us would call them — proper buses - and saddened at the sight of pictures of buses awaiting their demise in scrapyards. Surely, somebody could have stepped in and rescued those that were roadworthy even if it was just to use as a school bus! It is beyond my comprehension that the last surviving 'tunnel' STL was restored in the 'sixties, only to be broken up a few years later.

When buses are restored, I think that is important that an accurate livery from the chosen period is used and not a combination of liveries. For example, STL2377 is pictured on the cover of our Summer magazine displaying a mixture of pre—war and wartime liveries — i.e. the white mudguard flashes and covered headlamps were a wartime requirement but by then it is unlikely that any buses would have sported a silver roof! Presumably because buses would have been much too obvious from the air, London Transport wasted very little time after the declaration of war in painting all the roofs brown - it wasn't just a design fad!

I have read that the ‘heritage’ Routemasters were ‘restored to their original liveries’. So why do they look so odd? Well, in his wisdom, somebody has decided to paint the aluminium opening window surrounds red —which I’m quite sure they never were! Furthermore, why haven’t they removed the ugly advert frames, which were fitted to buses much later? In the fifties, some adverts were still being painted on. Do you remember ‘McDougall’s Flour’ ‘Crawford’s Cream Crackers’ and ‘Ben Truman’? I often think that someone should produce a book of those early adverts, as they were so much more memorable and comprehensible than those of today!

Vintage buses are often hired out for television and film productions, but why is it that they nearly always get the wrong buses for the period? A recent drama series called ‘Jericho’ had ‘Cobham buses’ in every episode; in fact, one episode included scenes inside a bus garage. In a ‘behind the scenes’ documentary, the production team boasted of their efforts to ensure that everything was true to period

- the stories were set in 1958. Why then did they keep showing us shots of STL2377 in pre-war livery? In fact, of the various buses shown, only the RTL was true to period! And why did they keep showing a specially created clip depicting white roofed green buses in Piccadilly Circus? In the often repeated ‘Goodnight Mr Tom’ set in the early forties we are treated to several shots of a post-war RT. Okay, there aren’t many surviving 2RT2s around, but it would have been better not to include any bus shots at all, if they couldn’t get an authentic one. Perhaps the biggest dangers occurred in a drama entitled ‘The Rising Storm’, which was about Winston Churchill in the years leading up to the war. In this we were shown several clips of 1950s RTs crossing London Bridge, their roofs painted white!! I could be wrong but if my memory serves me correctly there was a brief shot of an STL, but sporting a brown roof. - Not in 1938 it wasn’t

Please note, before you rush for your pens, I have explained the heritage RM situation to Brian. I might add that I was recently persuaded to loan a pair of LT cap badges to a production company filming “The Blitz” in Poland. They wanted authentic uniforms. I didn’t notice the cap badges, but the only London buses to appear were RMs. Dave Jones

First let me apologise for the lack of report last time around, this was due to moving house and the birth of my daughter! So as you can imagine I was preoccupied with other things and progress was rather negligible, plus I completely forgot the deadline, not aided of course by the lack of computer access through the fault of our broadband supplier and of course the computer decided to do it's own little trick of throwing its toys out of its pram and grind to a halt completely. Oh the joys of modern technology!

Anyway things have picked up again and we're moving forward. A couple of new felt sealing rings have been made for the front wheels, which have been duly painted and, after careful selection of inner bearing assemblies, have now been permanently fitted.

The rear wheels are currently awaiting their final coats of paint while they assist with the setting up of the brakes. The brake irons were re-lined last year and are now fitted with their new return springs. Hopefully the brakes and rear wheels will be fitted & fully adjusted in the very near future.

I have manufactured a new fan belt adjuster and fan belt pulley. These items, along with the fully overhauled water impeller unit, are able to bring us ever closer to the re-assembly of the engine, which is now only being held up by the making of the new rubber O ring which sits between the two cylinder barrels. Again hopefully, the engine should be assembled over the next few months.

The steering wheel has been sent away to be re-covered in genuine celluloid and should be back around April sometime.

The fuel tank is being made courtesy of Dave Allwood and the petrol tank assembly and seat, that made a brief trial appearance for last year's open day is currently back with Dereck Robey for final tweaking.

I am currently working on building up the patterns for the numerous items that need to be cast up in Aluminium. These include Radiator top tank & sides, the water branch and the bonnet surround.

So as you can see much is progressing and all being well later in the year we might possibly have a running chassis!

As always a big thanks to all those that continue to donate and the usual plea for others to join in! The donations really are making a big difference.

One last thing, I'm looking for someone to do the background research on NS174 and try to put a comprehensive history together for her. If you're interested, do please contact me at: freewheeler_uk@ com or by phone on: 07950 125

Vehicle Updates

Richard Hussey

RMC 1461 – A complete new exhaust system has been fitted along with new accumulators and a new hydraulic brake pump.

STL 2377 – The engine was removed to allow access to the rear engine cross member which was cracked, this was then welded by a specialist. While the engine was out the opportunity was taken to ascertain where its rather serious oil leak was coming from. This turned out to be multiple leaks! Measures were taken to improve the leaks but to completely solve the problem the engine will need to be stripped apart. It was therefore decided to put the engine back and to address the rebuild as and when time would allow. Thanks to Graham Bartlett, John Rawlins and Mark Winston for their assistance.

RT 2775 – Steady progress has been made. The gearbox has been dropped out ready for overhaul and the new lower deck ceiling has been cut and trail fitted.

1096F – Graham Bartlett has fitted a new oil pressure switch and performed an oil and filter change. The defective clutch master cylinder has also been overhauled.

SMS 369 – The gearbox pressure valve diaphragm was split and leaking air. This has now been replaced, many thanks to Don Allmey for locating one.

M6 – Various small jobs have been carried out on the lower deck floor to allow for the new treadmaster to be laid and portions of the front step have been replaced where they were rotten. The correct rear light units have also been sourced and fitted. Many thanks to Nick Abbot, Graham

Bartlett, Phil Cruise, Alan Heaseman, Dave Kriesler and John Rawlins for all their efforts.

RTL 139 – A set of new rear tyres have been acquired and await fitting.

G351 – A new set of rear tyres also awaits.

Cobham Web Site

Michael Wickham

As some of you will have noticed, some changes have been made to the web site. A "Frequently Asked Questions" page has been incorporated and includes answers to most of the enquiries that were previously emailed to cobhambuseum@aol.com. That email address has now been closed and replaced with a number of specific contact points in the FAQs. Enquiries sent to those contacts will be automatically forwarded to the Officer concerned. Although the FAQs are primarily directed at non-member visitors to the site, members may also find them useful. As a result of the introduction of the FAQs and contact details, the 'guestbook' facility has been withdrawn as it was attracting some inappropriate comments.

A further enhancement to the web site is planned in the form of a 'members-only' section. This will provide the membership with exclusive material not available to the general public such as news and developments, details of events to be attended by our vehicles, a technical forum etc. More details will be given as soon as available. In the meantime, members are most welcome to give suggestions in this regard and these should be emailed to Michael Wickham on mpf.wickham@btinternet.com

Corrections

Thanks for the latest bumper edition of the magazine, just received. Could you please include a correction in the next edition - the 'Travels with a Leyland' article on page 25 was written and submitted by Peter Osborn, not by me. Peter and Roland Graves were the drivers for the day. Only the photographs are mine. Steve Whitelegg

The photo on page 20 of the Dennis and the RMC was on the occasion of the Dorking Heritage weekend (photo dated 9 Sep) and not the Dorking Running Day on 3 Sep. Colin Read

A light hearted look at LT vehicle preservation.

With the year 2006 behind us, perhaps we should look back 40 years to 1966 when London Transport vehicle preservation was given a kick-start. Many Trust members might not be aware of the exploits that took place and the difficulties that existed in not just purchasing a vehicle but storing it somewhere safe. Two years after the formation of LOTS we all began to wake up by doing exactly the same thing as Phil Cruise was doing in the Autumn edition of the Cobham Magazine. The only difference being in those days we didn't have the Lottery or come to that, Cobham Bus Museum didn't exist. The London Transport Collection was housed in the former Clapham Bus Garage and administered by the British Transport Commission. Few understand the logic in its selection of vehicles. For me one of the obvious omissions is a 'bluebird' LT, one could ask the question why STL469? Not exactly a typical STL member of the class. But on the other hand at least someone had the forethought to put vehicles aside down through the years within LT and store them. Despite this, at least two of the collection were offered for disposal along

John Bell's Tunnel STL 1871 is seen at Aberfeldy Street, Poplar, amidst some typical east end terraced dwellings on the 108 stand with Poplar's RTL496 commencing its journey to Crystal Palace via the Blackwall Tunnel. The shot was taken way back in the 1960's when LOTS organised a tour of the routes operated by Athol Street Garage using the Blackwall and Rotherhithe Tunnels. Photo: Peter Jones



the way. TF77 being one to a member of staff at Chiswick Works, who for reasons of his own declined the offer, the second being CR14 which did escape the collection.

During the 1950s the thought of privately preserved buses was looked upon as being somewhat strange. Despite efforts to secure certain examples, almost all fell by the wayside. T31 was perhaps the most notable to survive having ended up at Chiswick Works in use as the CDS training vehicle fitted with an A173 7.7 engine. A consortium acquired the bus and parked it in the open under a tarpaulin only to dismantle the already fragile bodywork. I well remember Prince Marshall showing us some slides of the body being completely dismantled in a yard, which I think was at Belsize Park. Other failed attempts included bluebird' LT1 272 which survived with the Metropolitan Police in complete condition but ended up reduced to chassis and cab. The other notable attempt involved the survival of STL2674 and STL2679, these being the two unfrozen STLs with LGOC 60 seat bodies. I gather that parts from STL2674 went to the Vintage Passenger Vehicle Society in November 1957, whilst the remains were

Also way back in the 1960's, the scene is Jack Mulley's yard at Ixworth, when a visit was made to look at STL2377 with a view to its purchase. The journey was made in STL1871 which had also been operated by Mulleys Motorways. The excellent condition of the platform and staircase of STL2377 was quite remarkable, this was easily explained due to a 1959 rebuild by Thurgoods of Ware, however, the majority of the bodywork was by this time in need of major surgery and sported some quite wonderful toadstools Photo: Peter Jones



disposed of to North's at Leeds by June 1958. LT required £250 for the vehicle, which at that time was a substantial amount of money for the consortium that regrettably could not achieve that figure. The sister vehicle STL2679 had already had the body dismantled in December 1954 with the chassis re-used as a general freight lorry 1009J.

Craven's bodied RT1431 became the first post-war RT in private preservation purchased for the princely sum of £120 by LOTS on February 19th 1966. I can remember that cold winter day when I handed over the cheque in the Ardrossan office of Kerr & Linney. Only a few feet away, RT152 HLW139 stood out of use having suffered a cracked block. Last overhauled by LT in January 1957 it was sold out of service by February 1958 and still carried its original body No 1401! Others became inspired with the purchase, which led to Q83 being acquired, by Bill Cotfrell, Mike Beamish, Ian Sargent and Pete Nichols. Q83 was languishing at the AEC Depot at West Bromwich having been acquired by the depot manager, one Harry Pick. Prior to that, it had been operated by Sutton Coldfield Old Peoples' Welfare Committee who adorned it in an almost obscure bright orange and black livery. Anxious to see the Q preserved, it soon was acquired by the quartet and 40 years later has become part of the Cobham Collection.

You will have, of course, taken note of my opening sentence in this article, in which I refer to London Transport vehicle preservation rather than the tunnel vision expression 'bus preservation'. Well within weeks of Q83 joining the ranks of London 'vehicles' in preservation service vehicle 833J former STL159, JJ4376, had also joined those ranks. Its chassis was one of six selected by LT to be fitted with Auxiliary Breakdown Tender bodies by John Chalmers of Redhill in 1950. This example had been allocated to Hammersmith Trolleybus Depot but after closure was transferred to the Underground and the Signal Department at Lillie Bridge from whence it was withdrawn. This time a trio which included myself, Peter Jones and Graham Hurrell got together and approached the purchasing and supplies office at Chiswick Works to request the 'application to tender' documents.

It wasn't long before others jumped on the bandwagon when RTW467, the last to operate in service on route 95 from BN, joined the ranks followed by RTL453 fitted with a roof box RT10 body. RT329 was acquired by the late Tony Sheldon, this being the last RT3 to be owned by LT, having survived at that far flung outpost of LT at (TG) Tring garage as an Aldenham staff bus. TD95 also was also secured as was T792 and a strange Green Line RTL? Lurking in an open yard at Bolney was a Leyland Cub acquired by Alan Cross, a very rustic C94 which came from H Russell at Woodley, Nr Reading in January 1963. Inter Station C111 had survived with the London Fire Brigade



STL2377 spent many years parked in this position with other abandoned vehicles, to its nearside stands an ex-East Kent low bridge utility Guy Arab, still in East Kent livery. Behind the STL, a high bridge version, ex-Maidstone Corporation with a Harrington bodied Leyland Tiger PSI on its offside. Photo: David Bosher

being withdrawn in 1961, it too passed to Alan Cross in 1968. Both of these machines ‘were’ residents at Cobham with C94 passing to London’s Transport Museum.

Also around was “tunnel” STL1871, DLU240, latterly a shed-mate to STL2377 in the fleet of Jack Mulley, that amazing Suffolk gent at Ixworth, near Bury St Edmunds. Jack’s yard at Ixworth even for the 1960’s was a wonderful emporium of vehicles, which included many that were abandoned. His Mulley’s Motorways livery of bright orange and cream was carried by a fleet of Bedford OB’s Leyland PS1s with Harrington and Duple coachwork in remarkable condition. In years gone by he had operated numerous Gilfords, which he was extremely proud of. He kept two in the garage at Ixworth, the AS6 was a 14 seater which was his favorite, plus a DS6 which was acquired from the Danish Bacon Company, I think Jack used it as a service van and affectionately referred to it as the “bacon box”. Dumped in the yard amongst numerous utility Guy Arabs was of course STL2377, which although complete was in a very advanced state of decay complete with some wonderful toadstools under the back seat on the top deck. Regrettably STL1871 did not survive, despite being offered for sale and



T31 was of course the first privately preserved LT vehicle. The bus is seen on August 10th 1949 working route 213 from (A) Sutton Garage, a service normally the domain of LT scooters.
Photo: Alan Cross

suffered at the hands of a breaker. Who knows, the prospects of survival for STL1871 might have been better if the bus had been allowed to languish in the yard with 2377 for another decade.

Another great loss was STD90 DLU400, one of the famous Leyland TD4s associated with (AE) Hendon Garage. The bus ended up with Frank Smith of Long Itchington, Warwickshire being withdrawn by May 1960. Saved for preservation by Norman Day the same year. By August 1962, STD90 was sold for breaking having been damaged by vandals and reputed to be beyond repair? In the same month another survivor in the shape of STD78, although not preserved, the bus was owned by the Hamster's Operatic Society Theatre of East Ham and also met its fate having suffered vandalism, the Hamster's acquired RT89 as a replacement!

Whilst on the subject of STDs, the post-war version of 65 standard Leyland PD1s all found a new home in President Tito's Yugoslavia. It is possible that one of these, STD171, HLW100, still survives and is known to have been seen in the back of a depot parked alongside a tramcar both being put aside for preservation! However, bearing in mind that the hostilities of the Bosnian conflict, I should think that we British are not exactly popular locally having blown them apart during that conflict. If anything, we have more than likely clouded any diplo-

matic efforts of the bus returning to the UK, that's assuming we didn't blow it apart!

I can remember corresponding way back in 1963 with somebody called Petbow who seemed to have acquired RTC1, FXT272, the unsuccessful conversion from RT97 to the experimental Green Line coach, which had the involvement of Douglas Scott in its design. It had been latterly used by Vernons Industries as a staff bus. The result of my correspondence was to be told that the vehicle had been broken up 3 weeks prior to my letter! Perhaps it was just as well, after all is said and done what would I, a 15 year old, have done with it! I don't think I could have persuaded LI to re-acquire it.

We all have our own personal favourites which we would like to have seen saved for posterity, one of mine already mentioned must be the 14T12s which I can just about remember working from (HW) Southall and (UX) Uxbridge. Somehow the Weymann bodies looked much more at home on the AEC chassis rather than the 1TD1 Leyland PS1 chassis. Those melodic D124AX gearbox tones as they screamed up the hill on Ruislip Road into Greenford on route 211 will never be heard again. Every example was exported to Ceylon except T745, which collided with a loaded sand lorry in Greenford Avenue in October 1956 and was sold for breaking in April 1957.

Mike Beamish reminded me recently, by sending me some old news cuttings from the Middlesex County Times dated October 6th 1967, of the first rally I ever organised at the Greenford Golf Practice Centre Car Park in Rockware Avenue, Greenford close to the Rockware Glass Works and now the site of a retail park. The vehicles we had present included Ted Brakell's RT44, who originally only purchased it to store his ladders in for his decorating business. John Lines with his G351 in Burton livery. John Bell's EX5261 the Great Yarmouth utility Guy Arab, John also still owned STL1871, which did not appear due to its poor condition, which ran the risk of the body and chassis parting company when negotiating the next roundabout. New arrivals on the scene were Alan and Donald Allmey with T792 and RTL1323, LOTS with RT1431, Colin Stannard and a multitude of other owners with RTW467, Bob Jowett's Parisian Renault TN6A, which had only just come out of service. Another entrant was Bob York from Northampton with a small Albion SPLB 14 seater bus. The following year (1968) the event took place again only this time over two days! I even have a copy of the programme which sold for 1/6d! In addition to the vehicles which came to the 1967 event, this time we had Mike Dryhurst with FUF63, David Pring with RLH23, Mike Hebard with STL2692 and a certain Mr D Boughton from Ipswich, Suffolk with ex-STL1 470 (971 J) which was still being used by a group of 4 on caravan holidays (eat your heart out Phill Cruise). This time round, Ted Brakell had also brought along

RT191, whilst TD95 also joined in. Other PSV's included JG6809 an East Kent Dennis Lancet 1 dating from 1936 with a 1934 Park Royal body owned by the Kent Vehicle Preservation Society. A Bristol L5G ex-Eastern Counties and Elm's of Kenton entered by a Mr R.D.H. Symons of South Harrow? John Peck from Mansfield entered his Midland General AEC Regal III, KRR255. The BEA Silver Wing Social Club at Heathrow entered NLP642 and finally the Eastbourne Lion Preservation Group brought along JK8418 the Leyland Lion LT9 with a Leyland body.

Sorry Phil, we can all dream, but let's come down out of the clouds to the real world and look at what we have, unfortunately, due to people being people, lost in the way of valuable exhibits at Cobham. Going back in time, as I have in this article, I can see the importance of NS174 and just as I can see the importance of M6 but we still have a very comprehensive collection that now needs to be consolidated and secured with all of us working together as a team. A closer working relationship with other LT vehicle owners including LT museum, I am convinced that others also feel the same. The most important task ahead is to encourage youngsters to become involved with our activities and perhaps to make some provision for the privately owned vehicles that will be offered to the Trust. The burning question really is how to secure what we have now for the future!

The ex-East Kent low bridge utility Guy parked next to STLs 1871 & 2377 might have left Mulley's yard in the ownership of one Mick Palmer. Unfortunately, shortly after this photograph was taken the bus was taken on a test run with Mick returning the bus in a state of panic with oil and water spraying from the Gardner 5LW engine it having sustained a cracked block due to not being properly drained whilst in store. Needless to say it was hastily returned to the line-up of the abandoned vehicles. Also in the photograph is a somewhat younger John Warner inflating the nearside front tyre of STL2377. Photo:Peter Jones



By RTL to Belfast.

Ian Macbeth owner of RTL554, KGU4

The phone call came last April from my old school mate. ‘My daughter Catherine is getting married in July and we would love you to come along. Oh, and can you bring your bus!’ Yes, of course I can, great. However this was not just a bride to church job. Catherine was marrying a French lad and he was bringing a large family to Belfast. There would be over 200 miles of ferrying a full load around the province between the airport, hotel, register office, parents’ house and reception hotel as well as a ferry journey across the Strangford Loch and a scenic ride to keep the French happy.

However in April the bus was with Brian and Dave Simmons in Tilsworth having the bottom deck done and then a full repaint. So I spoke to them with the deadline, which they agreed to move heaven and earth to meet – and they did. Brian and Dave did a fabulous job and I picked up RTL 554 in late June gleaming as new and drove it to its home in York. It drove well but lost a bit of water. Stefan Torres, a well known preservationist in York looks after the bus and gave it a safety check before its 200 mile journey to Belfast. He found that the engine block was cracked. Don’t worry, he said, you should be OK for a run to Belfast if you take it easy and keep the radiator cap loose to avoid pressure build up. We’ll stitch the block when you get back. Fine, so loaded with gallons of spare water we set off for Belfast via the A1, A66 over the Pennines, Carlisle and Stranraer with a stopover in Castle Douglas. Do you remember the weather last July? It was hot and when we left York it was almost 30°C so I wasn’t looking forward to those long climbs over the Pennines. However after 8 hours on day one at just under 30 mph we reached Castle Douglas having lost only a couple of pints of water. We squeezed onto the HSS ferry from Stranraer next day to admiration from the older generation who all claimed to have ridden on identical vehicles in Glasgow or one of these ‘Routemasters’ in London recently.

After a day to recuperate, the serious bussing began, with a run to Aldergrove airport to meet the French who really loved the bus. Then back to Bangor and their hotel then dinner. The journey to the temporary farmyard home for the bus was in the dark - there is nothing more atmospheric than the lighting of a 50s bus.

The big day started with the wedding party’s hour long ride to Bangor for the ceremony in the Town Hall during which time a kindly inspector at the Translink bus station allowed us to pick up and drop off. Cake cutting and Champagne (orange juice for the poor old driver) was another hours drive away at the bride’s parents, then came a long a scenic ride along the length of Strangford Loch on a narrow country road. We managed a queue of over 100

cars by the end but there was just nowhere to pull over. The drivers' anger probably turned to delight when they realised what was delaying them! Arrival in Portaferry was followed by an overnight stay, fabulous meal and dance whilst RTL554 rested in a friendly coach operator's garage.

Sunday morning and time for the next journey. This time we start by joining the tiny Strangford vehicle ferry. There is a fierce tide here and had the tide been low the bus would have grounded on the ramps but fortunately it was high tide (we'd checked that) but it was still close. Once across it was time to install my tree protection system on the top because of many low branches. This comprised an old duvet in a tarpaulin secured by elastic rope through the windows. Last stop was for a barbecue supper then another journey in the dark back to Bangor then back to the farm.

After a final rest day it was back to York with another overnight stop. The weather still held and not a drop of rain fell on the bus all week. Once back in York with the loss of only 6 pints of water, the bus was delivered to Stefan's garage for the engine block repairs. After 76 stitches on a split over 1 ft long Stefan dropped the next bombshell – the crankshaft pulley damper had disintegrated and the water pump had started to leak! By some miracle Stefan sourced a brand new crankshaft pulley quickly and the water pump was rebuilt. So now I hope RTL 554 is in good shape for its next wedding in Telford.

Find our more about RTL 554 on www.rtl554.org.uk However please note that my bus is NOT available for any private hire work.





*Photos - previous page,
Two icons together,
RTL 554 poses at
Stormont Castle.*

*Above - Definitely not
the Woolwich Ferry!
This one is in a much
prettier place,
Strangford.*

Left - the happy couple

2006 Christmas Lights Tour

Recorded by Peter Starks



RF 453 heads the line-up , followed by RT 1784, RT 2043, RF 636, RM 737 and two other RFs.

Further along, RTW 467 leads RM 216, RT 3491 and BL 95





“Underneath the arches, I dream my dreams away...” sang Flangan and Allen, little knowing that dreams would be of vintage buses with bucket-loads of atmosphere. RT 1784 to the fore, above, and RF 636, below, show the “tingsten effect” to the full.



(Following on from Confessions of a Bus Spotter- issue 53)

One subject that seems to have caught my attention during 1963 was the planned opening of the Dartford-Purfleet Tunnel, as it was known, together with the associated bus and coach services through it. A brand new Country Area service numbered 300 was introduced from Grays to Dartford via West Thurrock and the tunnel when it opened in November, and Green Line route 722 was extended to the Kentish town from Corbets Tey. An additional fare of 6d (2.5p) was levied to cover the cost of the toll. I well remember a 45mph thrash in RT606 along the southern approach road (now part of the M25/A282) as I made my first trip through the then single bore.

As is well known, the double-deck tunnel services, together with the special service for cyclists and pedestrians using the curious Thames Trader TTs all ceased, or were very much scaled down, after a few years due to lack of patronage. Surely a case of someone not doing their homework properly!

Moving on to 1965, I started work for an insurance company located in Moorgate, a location not without interest bus-wise, with all members of the RT-family on the doorstep and Aldgate bus and coach station only about fifteen minutes walk away. The office was on the north side of Finsbury Circus, which, although never served by any bus route, frequently saw empty buses during the early evening (RTWs included) probably waiting to get on the stand in Liverpool Street just round the corner. The south side of the Circus saw RTLs and later RTs on the 133. I was quite into sales of black white white photographs those days, many taken during the lunch break, which brought in a small income although, I don't think the results would win any prizes!

In May 1965 I joined the London Omnibus Traction Society, following a visit to the HCVC (now HCVS) Brighton Rally and became a regular attendee at their meetings, which in those days were held in a tiny church hall near the Bank of England. This soon became far too small for their needs and they later moved to Victoria Coach Station. After an earlier dalliance with the PSV Circle, I found that LOTS' London-only interests were much more what I was looking for and in fact my bus activities over the next few years were very much organised around LOTS trips and visits.

Later that month they organised a never-to-be repeated bus tour of the Thames Tunnels and associated areas, using preserved STL 1871, the sole-remaining 'Tunnel' bodied example. I recall that we traversed both Rotherhithe and

Blackwall Tunnels and at one of the terminals took on one or two normal passengers who thought the vehicle to be in service! The STL was used again on a visit to the hallowed portals of Aldenham Works in July, where, my diary tells me we saw RT, RM, RF, GS and RLH types undergoing overhaul as well as new XAs and RMLs.

A more ambitious LOTS trip took place that same month to Bird's Commercial Motors at Stratford-on-Avon. starting from Edgware station, again using the STL. Many RT-family vehicles and provincial buses were noted as well as the remains of at least one London trolleybus, in various states of decrepitude.

At the time LOTS were seriously considering the purchase of STL2377, then with Mulley's of Ixworth (Suffolk), but having had the vehicle inspected, it was finally agreed that restoration was beyond the Society's means and attention and accrued funds were diverted instead to the purchase of a Craven-bodied RT. The vehicle selected later that year was RT 1431 (now with Ensignbus) and remarkably both vehicles were, of course, to become associated with Cobham in later years. I gather that LOTS were also looking at purchasing former RTI7, which was offered for sale at just £30!

RT 1431 was duly purchased and collected in February 1966 from its former owners Al Services of Ardrossan, Ayrshire. Still retaining its blue, white and maroon livery, it was brought along to the LOTS meeting the following March and those in attendance were taken on a spin around Central London, with its regular driver John (Jack) Warner at the wheel. Later in the year, trips were arranged on the vehicle, one being to 1431's old haunts, including the former garages of Nunhead and Rye Lane (Peckham), where it was posed beside RM 1431 for photographs.

Work parties in the Craven were also organised, mainly up at the Valliant Direct (coach) depot at Harrow and gradually the vehicle lost its A1 livery in favour of LT red and cream. Bird's Commercial Motors was re-visited in April, this time using the Craven and it had a day out at the seaside in May for the HCVC Brighton rally, as a tender vehicle I believe. We visited the Bus Rally at Southend that same month. travelling on Super Coaches' former RTs 944 and 1080 as well as 1431.

1 May 1966 saw me boldly marshalling vehicles in Poynders Road, Clapham for that years HCVC Brighton Rally. This was in the days of the Museum of British Transport nearby, which I believe was used as the start. The following month I holidayed in Spain (SE coast), travelling on the long closed Salou-Reus

narrow gauge railway and one of the two former London QI trolleybuses (nos 1792/3) of the Tarragona-Reus system.

Another LOTS trip the following month was to Aylesbury (Red Rovers) and Charlton-on-Otmoor (Oxon), where we sampled former Craven RT1414 of the local independent operator. It coincided, I gather, with a certain England v West Germany football match!

The fledgling Carlton Colville transport museum was the subject of a weekend away with 1431 the following September and I recall we tried out the rather fine AEC Regent IIs of Lowestoft Corporation, where the driver and conductor swapped duties every couple of trips, and we were given a superb former c1938 Leicester .AEC Renown (CBC921) to play with in the museum grounds over the two days.

*The following pictures were sent by Colin to accompany his item, enjoy!
All photos by Colin, except where shown otherwise.*

Former Leicester Renown/Northern Counties 329 (CBC921) and younger cousin LOTS owned-RE 143 1 Canton Colvihle rally September 1966.





A quick lunchtime trip to Stratford caught RLH61 in the Broadway. 1969

RT10 bodied RTLI312 at Aldgate bus station c 1968





RTL86 at Crystal Palace on a 108 Lewisham short-working. c 1967

RTW363 on the 95 stand at Cannon Street 1966





Former RTW467 under new ownership emerging from Shepherds Bush garage 4 March 1967.

RT1431 in service on route 12. Peckham Rye c1949/50

Photo - J P Whiting





Preserved 'Tunnel' STL1 871 thought to be at Rotherhithe (82) terminus 15 May 1965

Former RT 14 14 of Charlton-on-Otmoor Services. June 1 1966 Both M J Haywood





Former London Q1 trolleybus 1792 of Tarragona-Reus system Tarragona, Spain June 1966

*C1 trolleybus 260 at Brighton HCVC rally, May 1966. That's a **younger** Fred Ivey (part-owner of the vehicle) far right (first noticed some forty years later!)*



Being hibernation time for preserved buses, I don't have a huge amount to write about happenings here in the UK. There have been two recent events worthy of mention, though.

Just before Christmas was the charity Christmas Lights Tour which I arrange annually. Despite a rival operation (which even copied our own defined routing) on the previous weekend, our tour was very successful. A dozen vehicles attended comprising 4 RFs, 3 RTs, 1 RTW, 2 RMs, 1 BL and an Alder Valley Leyland National. During the tour RF167 was sighted more than once - this was one I haven't seen for some years but I gather it may now belong to some Cobham members. Our collection for the Rainbow Children's Trust totalled a splendid £495.03 which makes the whole effort very worthwhile.

The other event we attended was a running day at St Albans in January. This may seem a funny time to do it, but it relates to a model railway exhibition on the weekend concerned which has been served by preserved buses for some years now. It was a nice excuse to take RF280 back onto her last stamping ground with LCBS. There were some interesting vehicles there - one that caught my eye was Brian Nash's MB641 which I don't remember having been on the road for many a year. It has clearly had a lot of work done on it, and I expect a coat of paint will be applied before too long.

It has been back to hibernation since then but I know I'm not the only one taking every opportunity to do a little work here and there on our vehicles over the winter with the 2007 rally season in sight. Certainly Claire Green's BL49 has joined us at our Northamptonshire barn for some further restoration - despite a nice coat of paint last year it is having refurbished seats fitted and the windows re-rubbered and is really turning into a gem of a vehicle. She tells me her group (known as the Central Road Services Group) have also acquired BL31 and BL81. They have LS297 for sale if of interest to anybody (contact via me) although it is probably fair to say that restoration would not be a five-minute task.

Other titbits I can offer mainly concern vehicles abroad. RM408 went out to Sri Lanka in December 2005 for post-Tsunami children's work. Natalie Bull, driver for the first month in Sri Lanka described it as a "great little beast though totally impractical for Sri Lanka."

RML 2397 was seen at Sunny Beach resort, Bulgaria in October 2006.

Three unidentified RMs in Argentina were seen in November from a passing train by the Canal railway depot, near Delta. The previous operator (Tren de la Costa) had apparently ceased trading and some have since been sold to a tour operator in Usuahia, the southernmost city in Argentina which is where the Antarctic cruises call. This firm already had RM317, but did not purchase all of the redundant vehicles owing to roof damage on some.

RT1332 has been purchased by Auto ABC (a Lithuanian driving school) but it isn't to be used for driving instruction! They have several vintage cars and plan to restore the bus to join them. They have quite a task ahead of them because the roof of the Saunders-built body has been flattened at window-top level for low bridges when in Germany, but they are so far undaunted

RM47 and RT2897 are still at Percy's Bus Stop & Restaurant, St Thomas, US Virgin Islands but both are now in generally poor condition and are not in use.

RM 1424 is now owned by Randy Young of Richmond, Ottawa, for conversion to mobile home but it isn't in the best good condition as racoons have also been using it as their home!

RT4284 rots gently away in some woods near Jeffersonville in Vermont, USA and as can be seen the roof has given up under the weight of annual heavy winter snow. This bus last saw service with the Riverside Amusement Park in Agawam, Massachusetts and how it came to be dumped here is not known. (Photo: Bob Martin)





In remarkably similar circumstances, RT4502 is also dying slowly in woodland at High Falls Park, in Chateaugay, Canada. This particular bus is, to me, a very sad sight as it wasn't an export straight from service but was once a fine preserved vehicle in Country Area colours here in the UK. It still carries its green radiator badge. (Photo: Maurice Bateman)

The RTs that went out to North America in the seventies once seemed to have the secret of eternal youth but many are now reaching the end of their useful lives. The majority seem to either serve a static function or be in exceedingly poor condition although there are some really fine exceptions to the rule. Quite a few seem to be gently rotting away and the weight of many winters' snow has caused several roofs to give up and cave in. A lot of the information I obtain from this column comes from some internet email groups (with permission) and I have collected a few photographs available from the groups which our editor may be able to find space for over coming issues. Anybody interested in joining these email groups will find them listed under "British-Buses-Abroad" at Yahoo groups on the web.

One RT (2192) in Canada was saved just in time from the scrapman by Phil Baugniet in North Lunenburg, Ontario - whilst in poor condition he has a long-term plan to restore it. Apparently the bus was seen heading east on Highway 401 in 2000 with a new owner but was pulled by the Ontario Provincial Police for not travelling fast enough. The bus then sat in a garage

yard in Ingleside, Ontario seemingly ignored and isolated but became a target for vandalism and the owner was never seen again. The bus continued to sit in the yard when in 2004 Phil thought that the bus would be an ideal handy play centre as an extension to a play structure on his farm. A deal could not be arranged as the garage did not own the bus. For several years the bus was a highlight for anybody visiting Ingleside but as predicted suffered from broken windows. A deal was eventually agreed just as RT 2192 was close to heading for the scrap yard. and on 6th July 2006 a tow truck was hired and the bus was carefully removed from the to Phil's farm.

New discoveries are still made, though. RTL1629 has been rediscovered after last being seen in 1969 and is now used as living accommodation at Lake in Wood Camping Resort, Narvon, Pennsylvania.

RM963 is being repatriated to the UK by Steve Bunda of the RMOOA. If I remember rightly this one was very nicely restored here in the UK before unexpectedly being exported to the states. It is interesting to ponder that the present value of Routemasters, particularly those in original condition, makes the shipping costs justifiable. Steve has also purchased some vehicles locally - RMA1 and RF636 have joined his other vehicles from the Cambridgeshire collection of Arthur Henderson.

That's all for now - keep the reports a-coming.

Many thanks to all contributors.

As always, contributions to this column are welcomed at:
The Shambles, Graham Road, Wealdstone, Middx. HA3 5RE
Email: john@ co.uk

ITEMS FOR THE MAGAZINE

Contributions in the way of photographs or articles are always welcome. Please send them to:

David Jones

■ Epping Close, Romford, Essex RM7 8BH
or e-mail to dsj672@ com

Text in Word, or any .doc format or typed, pictures in jpeg, slide or print.
Slides or photos will be returned.

Please ensure your name and address are on each item.

NEXT COPY DATE FRIDAY 4th MAY

NEW RESIN MODELS 2007/08

Tony Asquith advised me that there will not be any updates to his website until his return from Australia in the spring. Due to the untimely death of Tony Chad who maintained it for him. In the meantime details can be found on the new worldwide model buses website featured in this article.

The LBC have announced in their latest newsletter a range of new models over the coming months. No London models are planned for this year.

MACE1 Dennis Mace/BBW body,
ELC3 Dennis Dominator/East Lancs.
ELC8 Ribble White lady//East Lancs.
ROE7 AEC Regent 111 Roe lowbridge 1947/8
BMR3 AEC Bridgemaster 27 ft rear doors.
LEY27 Leyland PD2/12 Farrington body.
PRV26 AEC Regent v Park Royal highbridge M&D.
PRV28 Guy Arab IV Park Royal tin front East Kent FFN.
PRV29 Guy Arab 111 Park Royal East Kent FFN.
WIL 1 AEC Regent v Willowbrook 30' front entrance.
WIL3 Leyland Atlantean Willowbrook.
DPR1 Dennis Lancet Park Royal East Kent CFN re-issue.

You can pre-order now.

Proposed future re-issues as a result of the survey carried out two years ago include LT Mann Egerton and Weyman TDs. New masters are to be produced. As such no pre-orders until advised by the L.B.C.

DIECAST NEWS

The new casting from Britbus is of the Park royal bodied, dual door Leyland, AN68 in the service of the newly formed N.B.C. London Country (L.C.B.S.). Sporting the adopted livery of Lincoln green and yellow, with the flying wheel logo on the front panel. First issue is of AN2-01 fleet no. 65 registration JPL 165K on route 321 Uxbridge via Watford, Croxley and Rickmansworth.

Another finely detailed model from Britbus, only spoilt on my example by the silver paint used on the seat grab handles running onto the seats.

C.M.N.L ENVIRO 400

This is another stunning model from Creative Master. This one piece casting in Metroline livery, is based on TE681 one of batch of 28 10.1 metre Dennis Tridents with the Enviro 400 bodywork. Delivered to the company in the winter of 2005-2006. Metroline was the first company to place an order for these brand, newly designed vehicles. With its distinctive curved upper front window, protected and flanked by the two tree protectors makes it easily recognisable from other London vehicles.

My only criticism is that the wing mirror holders look too heavy.

These buses are mainly used on the high profile central London route 24 running between Hampstead Heath and Pimlico.

SUNSTAR 1/24 scale

Not coming as a complete surprise is the news of another RT model this time from Sunstar. The choice for the first model has created quite a stir among collectors. Based on RT113 the preserved example with its sloping cab front.

A pre production photo appeared on Gareth's web page in January www.britishmodelbuses.com

NEW CASTING H2920 RT113 FX288 a 1939 AEC Regent 111 approximate release date October.

H2912 RMC 1486 486CLT Greenline approximate release June

H2913 RM21 VLT21 The GLC years approximate release September.

H2914 RM2217 CUV 217C. Last Routemaster approximate release December.

News from Gareth Jones website

CHRIS CORNELL TRAMS

Well known in tram circles, for his scratch aid kits, for making 4mm scale models of trams. The kits include the main body parts to simplify building but require other parts such as wheels, controllers, and poles to make a complete model. Experience in assembling brass etched models is essential and is not for the novice modeller.

Chris is producing by popular demand an etched brass kit of the E3/HR2 London tram in 00 scale, the detail I have seen in the prototype is excellent. Release date to be announced.

Huggins Lane, Welham Green, Herts. AL9 7LJ 01707 2688466

WORLDWIDE MODEL BUSES WEBSITE

Together with Gareth Jones's web site, which offers up to date information on the die-cast scene, everything the collector needs can be found in these two sites. Managed by fellow Cobham member Tony Price, together with Donald Grant who manages the fotopic, and Peter Brookes who manages the Forum. The aim of this new website is to cover items not, or not easily, available elsewhere on the web. The worldwide model buses group consists of the website, a huge fotopic gallery, which also has a kits interest, and a very active discussion forum.

Other items of interest to the modeller are: model lists; model kits; model errors; book reviews; modelling tips; kit reviews and tips on photographing your models from Georg Hamel known for his excellent pictures on his own website.

Over time it is hoped this resource will become of increasing value to all modellers around the world. Well worth a regular visit to this expanding website. Photograph of the E.F.E.RLH resin mock by kind permission of Tony Price. To view further pictures of the E.F.E. The Metrobus. RLH and RT, log on to Worldwidemodelbuses.com.

L.B.R.T.

Announced in January, New transfers from London Bus Repaints and Transfers. Destinations screens for the RTW either corgi or L.B.C. model, also suitable for RT models. £1.00 per set

New route blinds for the release of the E.F.E RMC, and RCL, black and Yellow, these blind have been reprinted and include new routes. £1.25 per set

P.O. Hailsham. East Surrey. BN27 1WG. 01323 856

RADLEY MODELS

As well as the tube stock Radley Models now carry an extensive range of 4mm vehicles suitable for 00 gauge model railways.

Vehicles included are box vans, flat bed lorries with loads, mechanical horses, and British rail delivery vans.

You can view and order direct on his website www.radleymodels.co.uk

MBC NEWS

By the time you read this the Model Bus Company hope to release two London Transport single deck buses in resin complete with transfers.

One of them I know will prove very popular

MBC Decals Perranuthnoe, Penzance, TR20 9NR. 01736 982



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MEMBERS DAY 2007
is Sunday 11th March at Cobham Bus Museum.

Updates on restorations & CBM relocation, talks, opportunities to volunteer, bus rides, Qs & As, free refreshments, meet trustees and project leaders.

Please make a note in your diary.

ALL MEMBERS WELCOME.

(why not bring a friend as well?)

See you there?

Routemaster. The Last Eleven Months by John M Willis.
Published by John Willis at £9.99

A photographic record of routes 19, 14, 22, 13, 38 and 159 in their last few months and on the final day of each route is what this book is all about. The size is A5 with soft covers and 152 pages. The presentation is two or sometimes three colour photographs on each page with location details and dates. At the end of the book is an index of buses that appear and of the route that they served. Enthusiasts who like technically excellent photographs, which show perfectly posed vehicles, will find fault with the content, but those of us that like to see buses in the context of their surroundings in familiar locations that bring back happy Routemaster memories will not be disappointed. The last day of each route is shown together with a few guest vehicles including Cobham's STL and ST. For those of us fortunate to be there it is a fitting souvenir and a good £9.99s worth too.

DVD - The Runaway Bus
Starring Frankie Howard, Margaret Rutherford and Petula Clark.
Running time 77 minutes,
released by Pickwick Group Ltd.

Not a London Transport bus but one of those BOAC coaches that were immortalised by Dinky Toys in the 1950s. Frankie Howard in his first starring screen role is the driver, who is caught out by a typical 1950's pea souper when he is diverted from London Airport to another airport, with a coach load of passengers. The air hostess is played by Petula Clark and the passengers include Margaret Rutherford. In the boot of the coach is stolen gold bullion, which the police and robbers are both anxious to get hold of. A bit of nostalgia with plenty of period feel, shot of course in black and white.

LONDON TRANSPORT in the 1970s Michael H C Baker
Published by Ian Allan at £15.99.

The 1970s were a watershed in the fortunes or otherwise of LT. This latest volume in the, by now, well known series of books from Michael Baker and Ian Allan, reflects the many changes that took place in LT buses and trains and what had become London Country Bus Services Ltd. In his introduction Mr Baker states, "1 January 1970 marked the beginning of the end of London Transport

as we had known it". Never was a truer word etc. As in previous books this one gives an overview of the decade, split into 17 chapters, all generously illustrated, with many of the photos from the author. I don't as a rule check the text in microscopic detail for accuracy as I know some fellow Cobham members do, but my personal gripe as usual concerns the accuracy of some of the captions to the pictures. Two random examples this time concern the Underground ones. On page 49, the C77 stock has Hammersmith on the front so presumably it is H&C not a circle working. C77 if memory serves me was replacement stock for CO/CP on the District Edgware Road to Wimbledon branch. Above it, the so-called G stock on the East London Line is mixed Q Stock, with a Q23 (ex G stock) at the rear with two Q31/5 trailers and Q27 on the front. Such obvious errors take the gloss of what is otherwise a nice bit of personalised memory and hard fact, combined with a mix of new illustrations, packaged within glossy hard covers, to make a good read. Find a gap on the shelf for this one.

Revelers at this year's "Christmas Lunch", held at Silvermere, enjoyed the usual fine fair on offer, organised by Debbie Morris (many thanks). Alvin's mobile shop did brisk business and Tony Lewis' had this to say about the raffle,

"Many thanks to all members, ladies and guests who contributed generously to the raffle, in aid of the Restoration of the NS Body. The net amount raised was £214.

Thank you again for your enthusiastic support".





Shepherds Bush
Oxford Circus Whitehall
Elephant Camberwell
Peckham Forest Hill

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DULWICH PLOVER

You don't have to be a genius
to recognize genius

PALMERS

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