



LONDON BUS MUSEUM MAGAZINE



The journal of the London Bus Preservation Trust, Cobham Hall, Brooklands

Issue 31

Spring 2019

£4 to non-Members

Contacting the Museum

Telephone

01932 837994. The phone is manned by the duty volunteers during opening hours but please bear in mind that most of the officers work from home, so it may be a question of passing a message on. Contact by e-mail (see below) will usually bring a quicker response.

E-mail

Please use the General Enquiries e-mail form on the Museum's website.

Post

The Museum's postal address is:

London Bus Museum
Cobham Hall
Brooklands Road
WEYBRIDGE KT13 0QS

Please note that this address cannot be used for visits in person, which should be via the main entrance.

Museum on the Web

Website: www.londonbusmuseum.com

Twitter: @londonbusmuseum

Facebook: www.facebook.com/LondonBusMuseum

Charity number: 1053383

Co. Reg: 1061762

Trustees & Officers of the London Bus Preservation Trust Ltd:

Honorary Positions

Hon President: Sir Peter Hendy, CBE (Chair, Network Rail)

Hon Vice-Presidents: Chris Heaps & Guy Marriott

Museum Mentor: Gary Wragg (former Curator, Milestones Living History Museum)

Trustees & Directors (Members of the Council of Management)

Chairman: Leon Daniels, OBE

Vice-Chairman: Roger Stagg

Bus Operations Director: Peter Brown

Curatorial Director: Brian Jones

Education Director: Bob Bailey

Health & Safety Director: Owen Wright

Human Resources Director: Steve Edmonds

Marketing Director: Deryck Fill

Operations Director: Gerry Job

Rolling Stock Director: Roger Stagg

Treasurer: Peter Osborn

Non-executive Directors: Simon Douglas Lane & Graham Smith

Hon Secretary (Member of the Council of Management): Peter Larkham

Officers

Bus Operations Co-ordinator: Bob Ansell

Curatorial Manager: Raymond Thorn

Commercial Manager: John Cattermole

Education Officer: Bob Bailey

Engineering Manager: Andy Baxter

E-News Editor: Ian Jackson

Events Committee Chairman: Gerry Job

Events Manager: Deryck Fill

Finance Officer: Mike Dolton

Fundraisers (Donated Items): Melvin Phillips & Bob Bailey

Information Officer: Graham Smith

IT Manager: Giffard Hazle

Magazine Editor: Michael Baker

Magazine IT Editor: John Norman

Museum Displays: Tony Lewis

Members' Trips Organiser: Adrian Palmer

Publicity Distribution Officer: Colin Read

Talks Co-ordinator: Paul Raven-Hill

Transport Managers: Bob Ansell & Alan Eggleton

Web-site & Social Networking Manager: Ian Jackson

Workshop Manager: Owen Wright

London Bus Museum Ltd

Managing Director: Gerry Job

Directors: Stephen Bigg (non-executive), (Shop manager - vacant)

Company Secretary: Peter Larkham

The Registered Office of both companies is:

Cobham Hall, Brooklands Road, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 0QS

Contents

From the Editor	2
Leyland Fanfare	3-4
Born by bus or borne by bus!	5-8
Buses and Trains (Part I)	9-10
Reminiscences of RTs in North West Kent	11-14
Membership and Volunteering	14
London's Unsung Waterway (Part I)	15-16
From the Workshop	16
The Leyland Trojan Link	17
Letters and Members' Excursions	18

FRONT COVER PICTURE

Five come from Victoria - an RTL scrum in front of the newly-restored Victoria Station frontage
(Peter Zabek)



The views expressed in this magazine are those of the individual contributors. They are not necessarily the views of the London Bus Preservation Trust Ltd, its Trustees, Directors or Officers, London Bus Museum Ltd, its Directors or the Editor.

ITEMS FOR THE MAGAZINE

Please send contributions for the magazine to the Editor at michaelhcbaker@londonbusmuseum.com, or by post to the Museum at the address opposite.

**LAST COPY DATE FOR THE
SUMMER 2019 EDITION
15TH MAY 2019**

From the Editor

I'm writing this on a cold winter evening, "When else?" you are probably thinking, dear Readers? After all, last copy date is 15th February. I'm not too keen on cold weather, it was minus three last night but at the same time I've checked and the title of this edition is definitely "Spring" and that's a nice reminder that the days are already opening out. I've seen quite a lot of daffodils poking their heads above the parapet in the last few days, the granddaughter's best friend has just become an aunty, - Hello, Rio! - and the England cricket team is off to the West Indies.

In this edition we commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Leyland version of the RT into service and, although the RTL doesn't seem to have been as popular with drivers as its AEC companion and did not last as long in service in London, the fact that there were 1631 of them means that they formed a very substantial sector of the fleet, a total almost greater than the complete fleet of most provincial companies. A number have been preserved and this issue commemorates the run of half a dozen of them back in November last year, returning to some of their old haunts, when a good time was had by all. Looking



back through my files I came across this picture of RTL68 which I took back around 1980 in Merton. Apart from the very first, RTL501, it was only at the last round of overhauls that any RTLs acquired roof box bodies, both bodies and chassis being due for disposal in the not too distant future. When I looked up the subsequent history I could not find it listed under RTLs



**Camberwell's
RTL747
outside
Thornton
Heath garage
(MHCb)**



RTLs 1621 and 1625 in storage at Reigate when new (MHCb)

preserved in this country. Somewhat saddened, for roofbox RTLs were always rather rare, especially those with JXN registrations, I assumed it must have met its end in one of those fierce winter white outs for which the Merton area is notorious. However further research revealed the glad tidings that RTL68 is very much still in the land of the living, if rather too far for a day excursion from Brooklands, having taken itself off for an extended holiday in New Zealand.

Personally I always thought the RTL a rather exotic type, living in a part of the London Transport empire dominated by the RT, although RTLs from Camberwell on short workings of the 59A did terminate on the forecourt of Thornton Heath (TH) garage, which I could just about see if I squinted out the back upstairs window and looked between the houses in Whitehall Road, whilst 59As going the whole way to or from Addiscombe, actually passed the top of our road. I used to wonder why any bus route would terminate at Addiscombe, it seemed a nothing sort of place, rather like the 'Near Willesden Junction,' the terminus of our local 630 trolleybus route. But then I reflected that Addiscombe is where the almost successful Tony Hancock film, *The Rebel* (care to send us some details, Colin?), was filmed and Addiscombiens now have their trams once again, unlike we Thornton Heath Ponders, so glasshouses and stones and all that...

Leyland Fanfare

By Peter Osborn

No, not the pretty Weymann-bodied coach, but a celebration to mark 50 years since the RTLs last ran in London Transport service. Following TransportFest's line-up of Leylands of all descriptions, six RTLs toured London on Saturday 24 November 2018 to remember 20 years of RTL operation in the capital (16 June 1948 to 29 November 1968).



RTL139 approaching Clapham Junction (MHCB)

With thanks to Go-Ahead London, the first four buses met at Stockwell garage, which opened in April 1952 with an allocation comprising solely RTLs. All four had spent part of their lives at SWV, although only two saw service there, our RTL139 and RTL1163, which had come all the way from Devon to share the day. Stockwell operated route 2 until 1986, shared with Cricklewood garage in the days when the route ran from Crystal Palace to North Finchley.



Four participants, RTLs 1163, 453, 554, 139, ready to depart from Stockwell Garage (Peter Larkham)

The four set out along route 2 as far as Victoria, where they were joined by RTL1076 and some of the buses

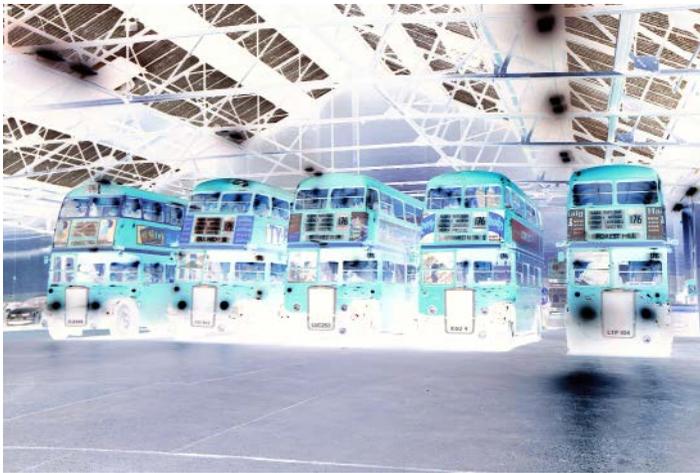
temporarily took on the guise of route 25 (Victoria to Becontree Heath in RTL days). Some fancy manoeuvring brought all five buses in front of the newly restored station frontage for the benefit of members and photographers who had joined the trip (see the front cover of this magazine).

Reverting to route 2, we continued via Park Lane and Swiss Cottage to Golders Green, where we regrouped and transferred to Willesden-operated route 226, one of the two routes operated with RTLs by Willesden on the last day of RTL service, 29 November 1968. Willesden is now owned by Metroline, current operators of the 226, although now from Willesden Junction - we passed a number of their single-deckers (reminiscent of earlier times when the route was operated by Q-types). On the way, we passed Cricklewood, where RTL453 had been the last roofbox RTL in service in London, lasting on route 142 to 25 October 1968, outlasting all others in our band of six (six? - read on).



RTL453, a Willesden bus in a former life (but not then with a roofbox body) in Pennine Drive on the 'other' last day route, the 226 (Nick Agnew)

Metroline kindly provided space in Willesden garage for photographs and a meal break. It was here that RTL service ended when RTL543 ran in as the last bus on the 176 on Friday 29 November 1968. By all accounts, it was raining that day, something we were spared today. So it was along route 176 that we set out next, taking us down Willesden Lane, Kilburn High Road and Euston Road to pause at the top of Gower Street. A quick change to route 25 blinds and we all turned left at New Oxford Street, to take up another well-known RTL route as far as Bow garage. Two of our buses had worked route 25, the museum's RTL139 from West Ham and Metro-Cammell bodied RTL554 from BW itself.



Willesden Garage: ready for the run-out on the 176
(Tom Drake)

In Holborn, we realised that we had been joined by a sixth RTL. Emerging somewhat uncertainly blinking in the daylight was RTL I 105, the second RTL to have been brought back from Abegweit Tours on Prince Edward Island by Roger Wright and making its debut since the mass return in 2010. Teething problems at Aldgate earlier had delayed the bus joining the group, so we were delighted to see it join its 'Canadian' sister RTL I 076.



RTL I 105 joined the run on route 25, ably piloted by Roger Wright, who knows the route well
(Peter Osborn)

Reprising the successful visit to Bow garage by RTL I 39 last summer, Stagecoach London welcomed us to Bow for a brief pause before we tackled the Blackwall Tunnel. Route 108 was worked by RTLs first from Athol Street then by Poplar garage, starting from Bromley-by-Bow High Street just across from Bow garage. Earlier home to the 'tunnel' STLs (RIP, STL I 871), the route can now only be operated southbound by double-deckers as, in widening the original tunnel, the headroom was reduced, so the 108 is now home to single-deckers.

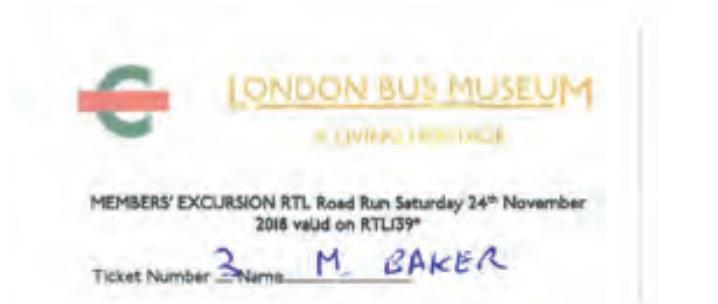
The 108 has been shortened from its old destination of Crystal Palace to Lewisham, our destination too, via the old route of Blackwall Lane and Woolwich Road, not the Dome. At Lewisham we wound the blinds to our last route of the day, but the first to have an RTL allocation in 1948, route 21. This took us to Borough Station, where

we decided to end the day rather than attempt to navigate the City roadworks and closed streets.



Metro-Cammell bodied RTL554 leads RTL I 163 south from the Blackwall Tunnel
(David Bowker)

The Museum is delighted that the event made the cover of Buses magazine in January, and would like to thank all the owners and crews who participated, and Go-Ahead, Metroline and Stagecoach for their hospitality. 2019 sees another anniversary, this time the RTs....



'Christmas is coming' or 'The snapper snapped'. The Trust's photographer-in-chief Peter Zabek relaxes on the platform
(Peter Osborn)

Born by bus or borne by bus!

By Rev John Lines, OBE



Tram 178 heading south on route 33 to West Norwood with an RT on the 38 following behind, probably in Essex Road (Collection)

I entered this wonderful place called earth before the Second World War in a road in an area of Croydon known as Thornton Heath. I really cannot recall my Father at all in those days of war as he was away fighting for the vast majority of it. Buses, trams and trolleybuses sort of grew with me as my Mother and I settled in a place called West Norwood. My earliest memories of buses are my Mother and I travelling on route 2 on a LT class bus when the conductor ordered us off to the shelter as a bombing raid was going on. A bomb fell quite close and literally blew an old gentleman across the road; he got up and said that he wanted to cross the road anyway! My love affair with London buses probably started when my Mother was taking me to my Grandmother's in Chorleywood in Hertfordshire. That meant a route 2 bus to Victoria, often a LT class vehicle and sometimes an STL type, and there I first saw the real love of my life, a London Transport Utility Guy, although to be honest I am not sure that I realised it was a Guy! I recall that it was all-over grey painted and a tinkling noise came from underneath as it ticked over. Only many years later did I learn that it

was from the clutch toggles. Anyway, back to the Chorleywood saga, from Victoria we would catch an STL class bus to Baker Street, board a train pulled by one of the Sarah Siddons type locomotives which took us as far as Rickmansworth or Ricky to the locals, where a LMS steam engine would take over. Next stop for the train was Chorleywood where my Mother and I would alight, leave the station and walk down a slope to a little bus stand at the bottom where a

T class London Transport bus awaited us and would take us to the Swillet where my Grandmother lived. I am sure that sometimes it may have been a Q class but cannot quite recall that with certainty. Thanks to Museums and enthusiasts saving vehicles we could actually recreate that journey today - I wonder what it would cost?

West Norwood was served by a good number of bus routes in those days, the 2, 3, 68, 195 and at Crown Point the 49 and 137, how I loved imagining some of the exotic places they were going to! Chalk Farm conjured up so many thoughts, but how disappointed I was when in the Metropolitan Police I used to ride my issue Triumph motorcycle through it! Crystal Palace was quite near and I really enjoyed a trip down Anerley Hill on a 654 trolleybus, especially when the roads were wet! At Crystal Palace Parade I could get on bus routes 108 and 227 plus some of the previously mentioned routes. I well recall some green D class Utilities turning up on route 49 from Merton Garage and, in due time, I am sure that some of the Bristol's loaned from BTC fleets were there as well.



LT216 on route 68 to Chalk Farm

(Collection)



STL on Festival of Britain duties

(Collection)

In West Norwood there were two shrines that I was a regular visitor to, firstly the tram depot alongside the LCC Fire Station in Norwood Road which kindly supplied a seat at the entrance so I could watch the 33, 48 and 78 route trams going in and out, plus, joy of joys to me, the odd service vehicles. I seem to recall that during the Festival of Britain in 1951 a number of buses were parked on the land beside the tram depot. On one tram trip I turned all the seats upstairs back as I was getting off, trouble was the conductor saw me and smacked me across the knuckles with his ticket rack and told me to go and put them back. Not only did I have sore knuckles, but had to walk back as the tram had travelled a couple of stops as I served my punishment! Just up the road, a mile

or so from the tram depot was the London Transport Norwood Bus Garage (N). Another place I had to visit although they did not provide a seat outside to view their offerings, mainly LT and STL classes in those days!

I was very fortunate in that an 'N' bus driver lived just a few doors away from me and took me into the garage to view some of the vehicles. Mind you, I think I drove the inside staff mad playing the bulb horn on a RL garage sweeper. One day while I was there a very strange green half open back lorry arrived, I later found out it was a converted 'T' class single decker, but it was loaded with bus engines, some very shiny and obviously either new or overhauled and some very dirty and just out of vehicles.

My Primary school moved its buildings further into London and I had to catch either the 49 or 137 to get to school, thus travelling on a



Olympian L180 inside Norwood Garage in 1980 with a trainer RMC in red livery in the far distance (MHCB)



B type trolleybus from Carshalton Depot heads towards Selhurst Road on its way to Crystal Palace with a c1935 Ford 8 saloon heading the procession, an RT bringing up the rear, c 1958 (Collection)

variety of London Transport vehicles of that era. When I passed the dreaded eleven plus exam and went to Grammar School I started using the 195 bus route which, if my memory serves me right, did not last too long in South London. By this time my Father was getting established in his profession and we moved to South Norwood and I was able to travel to school by the 68 or 196 bus routes. Other routes locally were the 12, which seemed to go everywhere in London, and the 75. Other local routes were the 159 at Thornton Heath Clock and the 133 which ran along Melfort Road. I had the great joy of the 654 trolleybus

route running through South Norwood High Street which was my favoured ride to Croydon, although my parents suggested that the 68 bus stop was nearer. What a treat to drive over Goat House bridge on a 654 trolleybus and look down on the Norwood railway yard, often with steam engines standing there waiting for their next task! The 154 and 157 bus routes appeared when the 654 trolleybuses vanished, almost a crime to my mind in those days; they certainly had a lot of life left in them. When I reached Croydon I had the pleasure of seeing green London Transport STLs and, joy of joys, some of the wonderful Feltham trams. Leeds Corporation got a real bargain when they purchased those beautiful vehicles! Off the subject of London Transport for a minute to recall that the County Borough of Croydon, as they were then, had, I think, two half cab Leyland single-deck buses which were always kept in first class condition. Sadly I don't think either of them survived. Then came the all conquering RF, RLH, RT, RTL, RTW family of vehicles and, although I loved those vehicles, I really missed some of the old favourites that they condemned to the scrapyards. Little did I realise then that I would see that whole family of vehicles eventually be sold off and purchased by so many other operators. Trips to AI in Scotland,



A retired ex London G prepared to donate spare parts

(Collection)

Barton Omnibus, Red Rover and Stevenson's of Spath were all as a result of the sales of those wonderful vehicles. Then, of course, were the scrapyards trips to Birds at Stratford-upon-Avon and Long Marston, Wombwell Diesels but the best of all, for me at least, was a trip to L W Vass of Ampthill in Bedfordshire where, amongst a number of former London Transport vehicles were two vehicles well worthy of visit! Yes, you have guessed right, they had two London Guy 'G' class buses in pretty appalling states but they still yielded up a goodly number of spares for my beloved G 351.

I had joined the PSV Circle and got very friendly with Frances West, Norman Rayfield, Brian Moore and Maurice Bateman, and started driving around with them spotting and photographing sold London buses. At the same time London Transport had started to dispose of RT family vehicles and around South London were a number of coach and bus companies owned by various members of the Margo family, Bexleyheath Transport, Margo's of Croydon, Margo's of South London and Margo's of Penge. Two of the Margo's fleets shared a yard in Nursery Road, Thornton Heath and had a very varied fleet of double-deck buses from various BTC and Corporation fleets. The company in Penge tended to follow suit and eventually they all started to buy ex-London Transport RT family vehicles. One RT had an altercation with a low bridge and received the front dome of a former Aldershot and District Dennis. I would hazard a guess at it being the only part East Lancs-bodied RT! The South London Margo purchased a number of RTLs which were kept in LT red with the fleet name of South London Transport whilst Isadore Margo Penge purchased a couple of RTWs. Longer trips saw us going up to Yorkshire to the vehicles of Sammy Ledgard's fleet when West Yorkshire took it over, so sad to see all those RTs standing



RT2211 awaits departure from Norwood Junction

(MHCB)



Burton Corporation Guy number 29

(Collection)

forlorn and unwanted. Some years earlier in Bradford we had seen the Corporation and Sammy's RTs standing together. Both fleets kept their RTs in very good condition. Frances was a member of the 2RT2 group and a phone call from him one day probably changed my life forever,



Model of ST277 on route 133

(Grenville Williams)

'You have a good knowledge of London buses' he said 'Why don't you buy one?' I well recall my answer, 'I don't want an AEC or a Leyland, I want a Guy.' In my mind I thought all the London G class Utility Guys had long gone! You can imagine my surprise when he said that Burton Corporation were still running ex London Transport Guys, in 1966 if you please! The saga of my acquisition of Burton Corporation number 70, better known as London Transport G 351 out of Upton Park

(U) is probably pretty well known to most readers, so I will not send you to sleep again!

In those days the members of the London Bus Preservation Group, as we were then, used to meet once a month in a public house in Victoria Street called the Albert. Sadly a large number of those early members are no longer with us, I think of Prince Marshall who saved so many London Transport vehicles, Alan and Don Allmey, Bill Cottrell, David Boshier, Bill Johnson to name but a few. I am sure if they could see what London Transport vehicles have survived into preservation these days they would realise just how much their early efforts are appreciated. I doubt if, even in our wildest dreams, many of us in that little group ever thought that so many London vehicles would be saved and that a place like Cobham would happen, yet alone Brooklands!

I think my wife would tell you that she did not realise that she was also marrying Guy Motors and Triumph Motorcycles when she married me. Indeed I think if ever divorce loomed on the horizon those two wonderful companies would probably be listed as co-respondents! To be serious, in a few words I have tried to explain my deep passion for buses, trolleybuses and trams, especially London Transport which, to my mind at least, was one of the finest

integrated transport systems in the world. Mind you, the ministry has sent me to places like Birmingham, Slough, Anguilla and Dover some of which had just a few buses I think, but in the West Midlands area Birmingham, Walsall and Wolverhampton had run Guy buses; indeed, their chassis were also built in that area. Regular performers in my time in Birmingham were the former London DMS type Daimlers. It always puzzled me how they ran perfectly up there, and other places where they ended up, but London could not make them work to their satisfaction! On reflection, I think I have had the privilege of living through some of the greatest days for buses in London especially, I doubt very much if we shall ever see vehicles in our great Capital City owned together with the tube trains by one operator. Dare I hope that we might see those silent servants called trolleybuses on our streets again? Or to get even more controversial how about trams which have only made it to Croydon so far!! In the meantime I shall leave you all as I go off to dream again!!!



The sole preserved Midland Red wartime era Guy Arab at the Wythall Museum. The body was much modified by Midland Red but is being restored back to its original condition. Virtually all Midland Red buses sported 'HA' (Smethwick) registrations. (MHCb)

Buses and Trains (Part I)

By James Stringer

My first encounters with bygone buses from the early days of London Transport and of course The London General Omnibus Company, was when, as a child, my Father took me up to Horse Guards Parade to see the buses reserved for preservation which were there to commemorate 100 years of the London Bus. The next time I saw them was at an HCVC rally held at the AEC works at Southall. And then in the late 1950s my Father and I went (by bus!) to Reigate bus garage where those



Learner RT3051 and STL2648, Reigate, 1951
(Grenville Williams)

same preserved buses plus a couple of trams were being stored until a permanent 'museum' could be found in which they could be properly displayed. An interesting aside with regard to paying your fare on the buses, my Father had a bus pass called 'a Sticky' as he worked for London Transport and, whenever he got on a bus with members of the family, he would just say "Sticky" and go upstairs to have a smoke. When the conductor came to collect the fares, the conductor, seeing 'the sticky' would make some excuse and move on to collect someone else's fare. This worried me as the conductor never did return, until one day my Father told me not to worry because that's the way it was!

I left school at the age of 16 and took up a Mechanical Engineering apprenticeship with, of course, London Transport.

In truth, as the time approached for me to leave school, I genuinely had not the vaguest idea as to what I wanted to do with the rest of my life, and it was left to my Father to arrange for me to attend an interview at Acton Works with a view of securing an apprenticeship in engineering. But least said about that interview the better as I can still see my Father sitting there in the apprentice supervisor's office with his head in his hands thinking Oh My God, will he ever get any of the questions right.

Well, I must have got some right because on 30th August 1959 I reported for my first day's work at the London

Underground's Apprentice Training Centre and was handed a clean pair of white overalls which as well as for protection were also intended to identify you as an 'apprentice' and could therefore be picked out should you be anywhere that apprentices should not be around the Works!

One of the first encounters with the bus side was when we were required to go over the bridge to the Chiswick Bus Works and obtain a Winter-wear jacket for when we were required to work outside during the colder weather. These were available from the second-hand uniform store where uniforms, handed back by bus drivers and conductors who failed to make the grade, were kept for re-issuing. I chose a conductor's jacket made from thick dark blue material with leather cuffs and griffin buttons. I wore that old jacket almost to death, and after gardening and house painting during the years that followed, sold it some 50 years later to a delighted bus enthusiast for about £30.

It was whilst over at Chiswick that I came across the scrap store, a virtual treasure trove of bus collectables (or it certainly would be today), and I was soon buying up bus stop flags and those old brass Pyrene fire extinguishers that were carried in the cabs of the buses, all for a few pennies a piece, which of course, I sold on for a small profit.



Also in Reigate at the time preserved trolley No.1, LT165, ST821, NS1995, S742 and K424
(Grenville Williams)

My next trip over the bridge was when 'as a treat' we were to experience what it was like to be on a bus when it went out of control. Yes, a ride on the skid patch. The bus was an old STL and we scrambled up the stairs to get to the front seats on the upper deck. "Oi, you lot, lower deck only" the driver informed us, so we all had to come down and sit quietly on the lower deck.

The driver did several laps of the well wetted skid patch and brought the bus to the point where we all thought it would topple over, but of course it never did, though I do believe a driver did manage it once.

Being driven on the skid patch was certainly an experience to remember and the bus was handled very expertly by one of the instructors who gave us good value

for money, had, of course, we been paying for the experience!!

The first year of the apprenticeship was spent in the training centre, getting used to the hand tools and then let loose on machinery such as lathes, milling machines, and a pillar drill.

One exercise was the fashioning of a one inch cube out of a piece of black mild steel. The only tools we were allowed to use were files, and the finished piece had to be accurate to one thousandth of an inch on all six sides. I bet the pile of rusting rejects is still there outside the apprentice supervisor's window!

This was followed a year later working out in the 'workshops', and then in the third and fourth years, six months at Neasden Power Station, six at Lifts & Escalators - where, standing on the roof of one of the lifts at Highgate Station, which has the deepest lift shaft on the Underground, the fitter dropped the lift to the bottom of the shaft with me just holding on to the cable! Finally I did a six month stint at the Depots before returning to the Apprentice centre for my fifth and final year. The depot I was assigned to was Neasden during what must have been one of the coldest winters on record and, even as a young lad with the protection of the warm bus conductor's jacket, I was always on the lookout for somewhere warm to spend the day. The warmest spot, for me turned out to be the steam shed where London Transport's elderly fleet of steam locomotives were lovingly being cared for and it was here that I was told of the scrapping programme which would see the three 'E' Class, one 'F' Class and the two Hunslet locos being cut up.

Being a sentimental soul I questioned as to whether any of these old ladies had been earmarked for preservation and was told 'No!' It was then that I decided that something

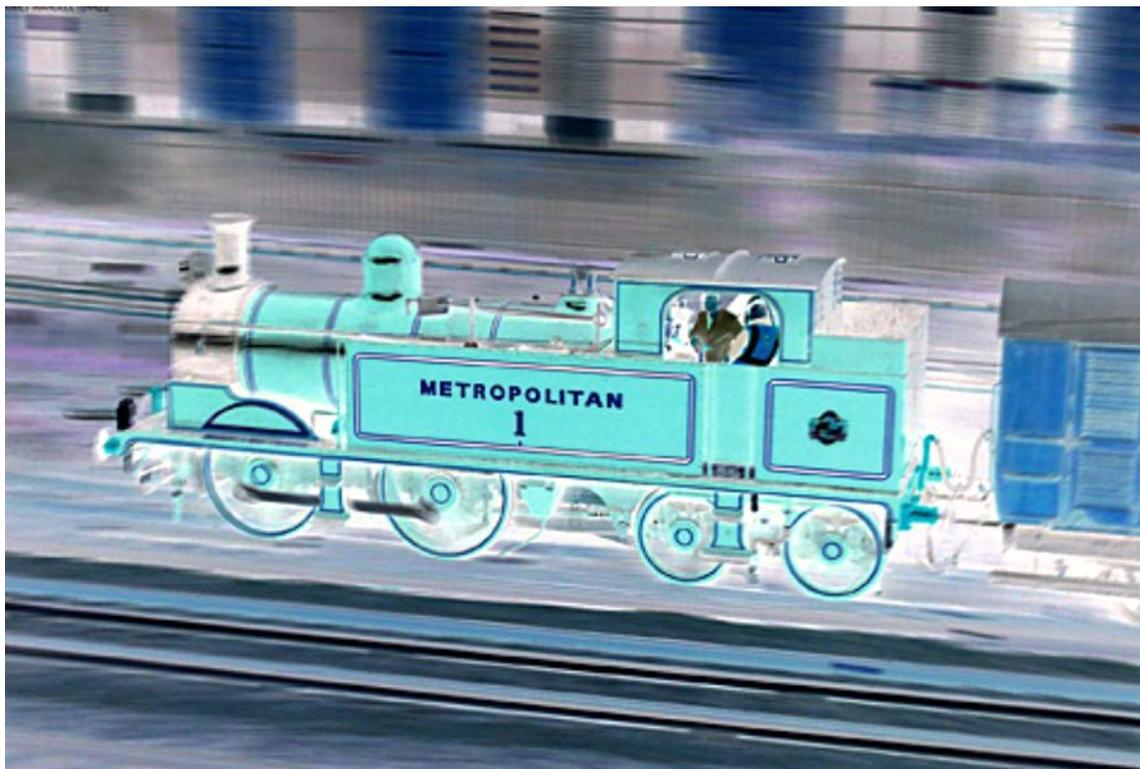


The Chiswick skid bus in RT days, RT2689

(MHCB)

should be done to save one, and with the help of the London Railway Preservation Society set up the Met Tank Appeal fund in an attempt to save L52, an 0-6-2 side tank locomotive built in 1901. On enquiry I was told that the locomotive could be purchased for £500, but it would have to be removed from the premises once purchased. The appeal raised over £1,000 but when I went to offer payment I was advised that because L52 had a cracked mainframe it could never be steamed again, but if I preferred, I could have L44 for £450 which did have a current boiler certificate and could therefore continue to be steamed to wherever I wanted to take it, and besides L44, was built at Neasden in 1898 and was originally Metropolitan Railway Locomotive No. 1.

The rest, as they say is history and, having spent something like a quarter of a million pounds from the Heritage Lottery Fund on a complete and thorough overhaul, Met No. 1 now enjoys a new lease of life in the care of the Quanton Railway Preservation Society and the London Transport Museum, allowing it to return several times to the metals on which she made many a trip in her long lifetime!



The 1898 0-4-4T 'E' Class 'Metropolitan No.1 en-route to Moorgate.

(Author)

Reminiscences of RTs in North West Kent

By Colin Fradd

Further to Phill Cruise's piece about his favourite bus (Winter 2018, page 11), I'm reminded of a chance conversation with Phill one day at the Museum about five years ago when we discovered that, not only did we both have childhood associations with the Belvedere/North Bexleyheath area during a common era, but that RT1065 had been a personal favourite for both of us. What sort of a coincidence is that....!

Although I'd been given a Brownie 127 camera as a present, childhood finances in those days didn't stretch very far - it took a week's pocket money to buy a 12-exposure roll of black and white film, and a further week's pocket money to have the 12 pictures processed, but I did manage to get a pictorial record of my cherished RT1065. Phill was very pleased when I was able to pass him a copy of my one and only photograph of said vehicle, shown here laying over at the old Sevenoaks bus station.



The photo that set off these reminiscences - Phill Cruise's (and my) old favourite RT1065 is laying over at the old Sevenoaks bus station before departing for Upper Belvedere, sometime in 1961. (Colin Fradd)

Having lived very close to the route of the 401 and 486 since 1953, it had been a source of great disappointment to me as a young boy that neither Dartford (DT) nor Swanley (SJ) garages had been allocated any roofbox RTs - always a great favourite for me personally - until the welcome arrival of RT 981 at SJ in December 1956. It disappeared during the summer of 1960 when it went off to Aldenham for overhaul, to be reincarnated elsewhere without its 'lighthouse', but (numerically at least) survived to become the penultimate RT in passenger service with London Country in 1978.

All was not lost, however, as RT981 was replaced at about the same time by RT977, freshly outshopped from Aldenham, followed in January 1961 by 3RT3-bodied RTs 1065 (JXN93) and RT2255 (KGU184) similarly fresh from overhaul. From 1959 to 1966, I travelled daily from home to school in Wilmington on route 401, getting off at Leyton Cross (in the days when it really was a cross until



Of only limited relevance to the story, but included for interest, is this shot of tree lopper 970], converted from Country Area STL1010, in the yard at Dartford Garage hemmed in by a number of RTs.

(Colin Fradd)

one of its arms was severed with the construction of the new A2 trunk road across Dartford Heath), and it added pleasure to the journey if it was on any of the three roofbox vehicles, and RT1065 in particular.

It was therefore with great sadness when, following a mass withdrawal of green roofbox RTs, all three

were taken out of service - RT977 in September 1963, followed two months later by RT2255, and finally RT1065 in January 1964. Although I can't confirm it from the records, I have a recollection of seeing at least one or two of them in the bus graveyard at Grays garage along with a large number of other roofbox RTs on a chance 'reccie' (by cycle and TT tunnel bus through Dartford Tunnel) with my school pal. (I shall never know whether the TT being restored by our Chairman, Leon Daniels, is one of those on which I made that sad journey.....!)

To my knowledge, Dartford garage never had any roofbox RTs allocated, although I do recall one very short spell when RT603 appeared very briefly. Detailed vehicle histories set out at Ian's Bus Stop confirm that 603 lived a very nomadic life at the end of the 1950s and the early 1960s, and that it was indeed sent to both Swanley and Dartford (amongst several other garages) for very short spells during the second half of 1959.

Living as I did in real 'red meets green' bus territory, operations at Bexleyheath didn't escape my attention. Trolleybus operations ceased at Bexleyheath Depot (BX) after 3rd March 1959 when trolleys were replaced by buses under Stage I of the trolleybus replacement programme. I had eagerly anticipated the arrival of a fleet of brand new Routemasters, so it was something of a let-down when a motley assortment of secondhand RTs turned up instead....! To add insult to injury, not one of the 40 or so vehicles was of the roofbox variety.

Thankfully, relief was to come towards the end of 1959 when three roofbox RTs arrived resplendent from overhaul - 3RT8 bodied RT2813 (LYR983), and 3RT3 bodied RTs 2817 (MLL618) and 2895 (MLL642). These

were to last for several years until 2813 went back to Aldenham for overhaul in February 1964, followed at the end of that year by the complete withdrawal of 2871 and 2895 for sale and further service overseas.

Thereafter, moving on through my teenage years and into early adulthood, including three years away from home studying, other interests had taken over, and the bond with buses substantially weakened. However, news in the summer of 1971 that the majority of DT and SJ's RT allocations were shortly to be swept away through mass conversion of most of their routes to one-man operated SMs sent me on a mad photographic spree to record as many of the buses as I could. Sadly, and unbeknown to me at the time, the camera I'd been given as a 21st birthday present had developed a fault, resulting in severe overexposure of most of the photographs, hence such few usable records as I have are generally of mediocre quality. RTs on route 96 at Bexleyheath were also to be replaced by new DMSs a few months later, and I did manage to get a few photographs for posterity before they disappeared.



RT1021, still carrying a green waistband from its Green Line days, is at the Bexley Hospital stop heading for Belvedere Station on 1st July 1971, the penultimate day of regular crew-operation of the route from SJ. Opposite the stop, out of shot, was the Maypole Primary School where two young boys called Michael and Keith met back in the 1950s. Both did rather well their surnames were respectively Jagger and Richards....!
(Colin Fradd)

From 3rd July 1971, only the 477 at SJ and the 499 at DT were to remain crew-operated, the remaining routes being turned over to new single-deckers. During a succession of visits just before the changeover, and on the last day of full crew-operation (2nd July), I'd got chatty with one of the engineers at SJ, who offered me a full set of RT blinds, complete with rollers, to keep as mementoes. I was due to be getting married just three weeks later, and the flat my wife and I were buying had limited storage capacity, so I felt obliged to politely decline his kind offer. I did, however, accept a rear RT destination blind, which I still have in my possession today. Well, I was young then, and we all learn from our mistakes - if

only I'd known then what I know now. Hindsight can be a wonderful thing....!!



Following conversion of the main route to SM operation, there remained a few works journeys at peak hours on the 423 and its derivatives. RMC 1480 carried a number of all-over advertising liveries whilst at Dartford, and is seen here promoting the Invicta Co-op outside Dartford Garage, ready to run a 423B journey to Watchgate on 4th August 1974.
(Colin Fradd)

The few remaining RTs at both DT and SJ only lasted another year or two, when they were ousted by RMCs from Green Line services which, in the face of falling patronage and the drive to reduce costs, had been converted to RP operation, the redundant and luxuriously-equipped deckers being downgraded to local bus work. That said, RTs made a limited comeback later in the 70s when, in common with other LCBS sheds, DT and SJ were suffering a chronic vehicle shortage due to



A number of Massey-bodied Leyland PD2As were hired in to help cover the vehicle shortage at Dartford. Number 21 in the Maidstone fleet is running a 499, seen here descending East Hill through spring shadow towards Dartford town centre on 6th March 1976.
(Colin Fradd)

the notorious unreliability of newer buses, and a few RTs, along with anything else that was serviceable and could move, were drafted in to help out. Bizarrely, this included a number of Massey-bodied Leyland PD2s from Maidstone Corporation at Dartford, and some AEC Regent Vs hired in from Eastbourne Corporation, allocated to Swanley.



Along with the 499 from DT, Swanley's 477 remained RT-operated for a year or two after the OMO conversions of 1971. RT4099, immaculately turned out and with destination blinds neatly set, is seen in March 1972 laying over opposite the old Dartford Garage, itself now nothing more than a distant memory.....
(Colin Fradd)

Meanwhile, in red bus territory, the ranks of RTs across the network were being steadily eroded through the 1970s but, having been denied Routemasters to replace the trolleybuses back in 1959, Bexleyheath remained something of a no-go area for RMs for the better part of two decades. RTs ruled the roost on crew-operated routes until April 1970 when the 132 was converted to one-man operated (OMO) SM single-deckers, followed in November 1971 by the 96, converted straight to OMO with DMSs. A few years of respite followed, and it wasn't until May 1975 that the first incursions were made into the town by Routemasters, but even then only by virtue of a small Saturday allocation on the 89 from New Cross (NX). The first full-time operation of Routemasters in Bexleyheath came in May 1977 when the 229 was converted from RT to RM, at which time BX lost its allocation on the route, and the 229 was transferred in its entirety to Sidcup (SP).

The final blow for RT operations in Bexleyheath came on 22nd April 1978 when the 89 was converted to one-person operated (OPO) DMSs (yes, women were driving buses too by then!). From the same day, Plumstead's 122 was converted from RT to RM, hence 21st April 1978 was the day when RTs were finally expunged from Bexleyheath. Strangely, BX achieved the dubious privilege

of having been one of the very few garages never to operate Routemasters.



A number of AEC Regent Vs were similarly hired in from Eastbourne Corporation to help cover the 477. No. 49 in the Eastbourne fleet is seen scampering along Barn End Lane towards Hextable on its journey to Orpington Station on 1st June 1976.
(Colin Fradd)

Now the better part of half a century on, the main shed at Swanley still survives as a bus operational base, but the old Dartford garage in Westgate Road was totally swept away as part of town centre redevelopment in the 1980s. Bexleyheath still stands relatively unchanged as a fully operational garage in the hands of Go-Ahead London, although it had been closed for a period of time during the early years of tendering in the 1980s following mass tender losses in the area. It reopened later to



Route 229 was converted from RT to RM operation on 21st May 1977, at which point BX lost its allocation to Sidcup garage. RM8 spent most of its working life as an experimental vehicle at Chiswick Works, latterly being sent to Sidcup for normal service operation, and seen here at Bexleyheath Clock Tower on 8th April 1978. The route was converted to OPO DMS in September 1982. Clearly, illegal car parking isn't just a 21st century phenomenon....!
(Colin Fradd)



Back in red bus territory, RTs 3911 and 1760, both well-presented, stand outside BX garage in August 1971. RTs had just three months left to run on the 96, but RT operation of the 229 lived on until May 1977. (Colin Fradd)

accommodate the short-lived Bexleybus network, set up as a low-cost subsidiary of London Buses' Selkent operation, before being transferred to the newly-privatised London Central, itself subsequently taken over by Go-Ahead.

Thankfully, also living on is the aforementioned marriage of July 1971, and I thank my dear wife for managing to put up with the hobby eccentricities of this (now ageing) bus enthusiast and part-owner of a Country bus RF.....!). In conclusion, what had started out to be a one or two paragraph response accompanying a photo of Phill Cruise's favourite RT1065 has morphed into something of a feature article on personal reminiscences. For me, digging up slides which haven't seen the light of day for (literally!) decades has been a thoroughly enjoyable and enlightening experience, and I hope the results may be of interest to at least some of our readership.

Detailed date information on route changes has been sourced from Ian's Bus Stop, which I duly acknowledge with thanks.

Membership and Volunteering

By Steve Edmonds

Membership

Forty-five individuals, couples, families and one Corporate were added to the membership of the Trust during 2018, boosting the total to 885. We launched the New Year with our popular Members' annual lunch attended by one hundred members with families and friends. This most enjoyable occasion was marked by the largest attendance and amount of funds ever raised.

Leon Daniels spoke to the progress that has been made thanks to our faithful band of volunteers and the future plans he sees for our Museum during the year ahead. He was particularly enthusiastic about the 2019 events at Brooklands expressing his excitement at the prospect of the Summer event when the whole of the Trust's collection will be on show in a special display of the Finishing Straight. Also the RT80 event at Barking that we are running jointly with Stagecoach.

Members' Day is on 17 March and, at the time of writing, I am looking forward to the launch of newly restored RF19 and the Canteen trailer. It is an ideal opportunity to catch up with Museum developments

and to meet up with friends and colleagues in a convivial atmosphere over a cuppa and hot cross bun. I hope as many of you as possible can attend what is always a fun event. No snow and ice this year please! Adrian Palmer will be presenting his usual crop of interesting Members' outings so please take advantage of these if any grab your attention. My thanks go to him in appreciation for all the work he puts in to provide a varied selection of events and places to visit.

Volunteering

I must start by expressing my sadness that Peter Larkham our Hon Secretary, is being compelled to stand down from the role owing to ongoing health issues. Peter took on the job from Chris Wheble quite soon after the move to Brooklands. He has been unstinting in his dedication and application to hard work on behalf of the Trust. He has consistently done all that has been asked of him and more. And he has performed to an exemplary level of quality and service. It has been an honour to have worked alongside him and I believe

we members all owe him a great debt of gratitude.

How we will replace him I really do not know. Succession planning is, to say the least, sparsely provided for, as it tends to be in all heritage transport Museums. Peter will formally stand down at the AGM on 13th July and in the meantime we shall need to find suitable cover for this vital role. This goes for the retail Shop Manager role too which remains unfilled after a number of appeals for help. I cannot believe that amongst our sizeable membership we do not have someone with the necessary skills and availability to fill this interesting and relatively straightforward post. We have achieved so much since we have been at Brooklands of which we can be justly proud. However, the next three to five years will see the Trust facing huge challenges to resource the wide range of activities back and front of house. We will need to recruit a significant amount of "new blood" if we are just to survive, let alone thrive. I hope to see as many of you as possible at Members' day and the AGM so that we can talk through the issues and tackle these challenges together.

London's Unsung Waterway (Part I)

By Colin Read

Have you ever heard of Wood Green Tunnel or a waterway in London that has no locks, is not tidal and where swimming or public boating is forbidden and which crosses over a motorway? Welcome to the New River, which is neither new nor a river!

I had heard of it before but had never explored it until last year following a most interesting visit to part of the long-disused southern portion some months ago. The New River is an artificial aqueduct designed to bring fresh water to London (Islington) from the River Lea (or Lee) from a point on the river east of Hertford. It was also fed by local springs including the Chadwell and Amwell.

It was the brainchild of Sir Hugh Myddelton, goldsmith and cloth maker etc (1560-1631), whose name appears (with variant spellings) in many road names etc adjacent to the course of the waterway, as does the name 'Amwell'. The New River Company was set up by one Edmund Colthurst and Hugh Myddelton to continue the works after the money ran out in 1602 after only two miles had been built.

Edward Wright (an engineer) was engaged and, whilst not a surveyor, achieved construction including various aqueducts over a number of rivers and streams in only five years. It was 20 miles as the crow flies from start to New River Head but some 38 miles in total following the meandering 100ft contour. It is on average 10ft wide and 3ft deep. There are no locks and a very slight current is normally visible along its length. It drops by five inches per mile. Islington received water from 1613. Over the years there have been a number of straightenings and diversions, and, in 1946, curtailment at Stoke Newington.

Though not transport in the strictest sense, there are a few transport connections to follow so do not be put off! To follow the river in geographical order from north to south, there is a Gauge House at its junction with the Lea,



New River Head Gauge House

(John Norman)



Rye Common Pumping Station

(John Norman)

which clearly is to do with gauging or controlling how much water is extracted. Heading south, it takes a sharp turn to the left and runs parallel to the main road, where is to be found the first of several pumping stations (Broadmead) although this one is now a Business Centre and evidently disused. It passes under the railway (Hertford East branch), surprisingly one of the very few places where it crosses a railway, whether or not by design I don't know. Along here (and elsewhere) there is a brick-sided side dock, with a ramp, which I assume is for maintenance boats and to facilitate access.

Beyond Ware, it parallels the A1170, passes Great Amwell and along a very pleasant stretch on an embankment beside Amwell Lane. Amwell Marsh Pumping Station is located here. The only boats I discovered were some small weed-cutting vessels here and there.

St Margarets and under the B181 are next, thence under the A414, paralleling the railway to Rye House station. On this stretch is located Rye Common Water Treatment Works and, further on, a seemingly-disused pumping station.

Close to Broxbourne station the river is on an embankment and this was the only stretch of the New River Walk (as it is called) I came across where cycling was permitted. It was in this area in the 1950s where there was a weak bridge over the New River (almost certainly Station Road, Broxbourne), which precluded heavier buses and resulted in a number of 2RT2s being repainted green for Country Area route 327 until the bridge was strengthened in 1957.

The use of cycles (not just cycling) is enforced by very narrow access gates to the Walk, which rather hampered my initial explorations in July. Future visits were on foot! Along certain of the northern stretches, local residents have made a feature of the river with landscaped gardens. Throughout, the river is protected by green-painted railings and crossed by distinctive low hump-backed footbridges of various designs, many of which were in

need of repainting. Although over 80% is accessible, the Walk is by no means continuous and there are a number of locations where one is diverted into side streets, especially at the southern end.

To continue, the New River roughly parallels the A10, A1170 and Lea Valley railway line to Cheshunt and Waltham Cross then crosses over the M25 just west of Junction 25 on a concrete aqueduct. One wonders how many of the vehicles thundering along the motorway realise that they are passing under a 17th C waterway! This is accessible on foot, the river as it crosses, being located in conduit under what is basically a wide roadway. It now enters the London Borough of Enfield.

It was just south of here that I made my first of several visits to the New River and discovered a remarkable weed-removal installation: an overhead crane which runs along a girder, lowers its grab, removes a chunk of weed and dumps it on terra firma before setting out for another load. It appeared to be automatic and triggered by weed build-up. Several other such installations were noted on subsequent visits and are quite fascinating to watch. It was just south of here that Thames Water proposed complete closure of the river, successfully defeated!

In Enfield, the New River was subjected to a severe shortening, the old course heading westward through White Webbs park and golf course, which appears to be



North of the M25 aqueduct

(John Norman)

still in water. There are very pleasant stretches of the old river-course in Enfield running to the west of the town (Chase Green Gardens), past the picturesquely-named Gentleman's Row, under Windmill Hill and through Town Park, where there are pleasant walks.

The present course runs parallel to Ladysmith Road and Carnarvon Avenue (Enfield) along the backs of houses visible at one point but with no public access. It runs along the north side of Southbury Road for a short way (close to Enfield Town station) then disappears southwards in a pipe for about a mile.

From the Workshop

By Roger Stagg

To allow more magazine space for interesting content, this quarter's report will be brief. This is the class 6 MoT season so mechanical efforts are concentrated mainly on MoT preparations. Re-engined RF395 has completed its run in period with the only problem being a water leak from an unknown source. Water has a habit of appearing in a place remote from where it starts. At last a small hole in an insulated cab heater pipe has been identified as the culprit. A repaired radiator has been produced for the



RF 19 with undercoat

(MHCB)



Tillings ST, the original aluminium bottom tank having rotted through.

Both the canteen trailer and RF19 are in their final stages of restoration and, by the time this issue goes to print, the RF should be back in Cobham Hall sporting an as-delivered finish. The only change from original has been the decision to use trafficator ears rather than the semaphore arms fitted as new. This coach will be in PSV use and the positioning of the semaphore arms is not conducive to use alongside the 21st Century cyclist. Dismantling of DI42 in preparation for its rehabilitation has commenced and, excluding the canopy, most of NS174's bodywork is complete with current moves towards seat manufacture.

The Leyland Trojan Link

By David Hambleton

I've been asked to write a few lines to explain why there were Trojan vehicles at the Leyland themed Transportfest event last October.

In 1914 Leslie Hounsfield founded Trojan Ltd as a general engineering company. The previous year he had completed a prototype car using his own design of two-stroke engine. However his fledgling company, employing just a handful of workers, was not in a position to take forward Hounsfield's desires for car production. The outbreak of war also put such ideas on the back burner as Trojan Ltd was instructed to manufacture gauges for the war effort. By the end of the war Trojan had grown considerably and had moved to new premises in Vicarage Road, Croydon. Car development had continued in the background with a couple more prototype vehicles being produced and put under vigorous testing by Hounsfield's family and friends. However, to put the cars into production was still just a dream as it required large premises and workforce, and considerable investment.



Trojan 1913 Prototype Car now in the Trojan Museum Trust's Collection

In 1922 Trojan started negotiations with Leyland who had recently taken over the huge factory building at Ham, near Kingston upon Thames. Leyland had taken on this factory from Sopwith who had used it to manufacture planes during the war. Leyland were using part of the factory to rebuild its own G Type WD lorries which it was steadily retrieving from the government.

But this left a lot of spare floor space. By early 1922 agreement had been reached and Leyland began manufacturing Trojan cars, then vans, on a simple royalty scheme. There were initial teething problems limiting the number of vehicles produced in 1922 but by 1923 production was in full swing with levels peaking at 90 vehicles a week.



Inside the Leyland Ham Factory

Leyland continued to manufacture all of Trojan's vehicles until, with falling sales, an amicable separation was negotiated, finally taking effect at the end of 1929. By this time Leyland had produced around 17,000 Trojan vehicles. Trojan had now grown considerably and had bought a 7 acre factory site in Purley Way, Croydon, and so were now in a position to take on vehicle production themselves. All Leyland-made Trojans have a Trojan badge on the front but a Leyland chassis plate on the dashboard. Leyland now converted the space at their Ham factory to manufacture the Leyland Cub, lorries and buses, with production starting in 1931.

Leyland, until its car making days of the 1970s, is often remembered for the production of just one type of car, the Leyland Eight, but they only completed 14 of these cars, whereas they made 17,000 Trojan vehicles with a good proportion of these being cars. Therefore they were a major car manufacturer from the earliest days.

I hope that this solves the mystery of the Trojans at Transportfest. If you would like more information on Trojan's long history, only ceasing to exist in 2013, then do please visit the Trojan Museum Trust's website at: www.trojanmuseumtrust.org



Trojan vans for Royal Mail

Letters

You never know who will walk in to Cobham Hall.

Back in September 2018, on a fairly quiet, nondescript mid-morning, we were brought smartly to attention at the reception desk in Cobham Hall, by the arrival, in full uniform, of Wing Commander Liz Hutchison, an Air Traffic Control Officer now based in the Ministry of Defence in London. Liz asked if we could help out with an event she was planning to hold at Brooklands Museum. The event in question was a Battle of Britain dinner and, because 2018 is the RAF's 100th Anniversary, Liz wanted to do something a bit special and was interested in the use of one of our vehicles. The dinner was for the military personnel working around London, and their partners, who live in West Byfleet and she asked us if the London Bus Museum could transport the guests to the venue, in some style, on one of our Routemasters.

It took all of ten seconds for us to decide that we could oblige and that the vehicle of choice would be one of our many film stars, RML3. With a little further subsequent discussion, it was decided that this event would fall under the remit of 'Community Events' and we were thereby able to offer the Routemaster's services pro bono.

Fast-forward about a month to around 6.15 p.m. on Saturday 13th October 2018. Under the control of our own elder statesman, Tony Wild, the trusty Leyland prototype arrived at West Byfleet to pick up some forty-plus revellers for a majestic thirty-minute sun-down trip to Brooklands, picking up a few more passengers at one of the bus stops en route.

The photo (by Liz Hutchison) shows the MoD guests with our crew Tony and his partner, Kate, outside the newly commissioned Brooklands Aircraft Factory. A lovely moment linking the threads of The Royal Air

Force, Brooklands Flying History and the Weymann factory at Addlestone which built RML3's bodywork and which, during the second world war, worked in close liaison with the Vickers Factory at nearby Brooklands.

Since I first became involved with LBM, I have maintained that London Buses are great levellers and that a simple thing like a ride on a London bus can put a smile on everyone's face. This photo is the proof of that assertion.

Writing to us after the event, Liz Hutchison commented, "The evening was a great success and the guests said it was all the more special due to their stylish arrival. All three of the Armed Services, (Army, Navy and Royal Air Force) were represented at the dinner, and the senior RAF guest was Air Commodore Steve Thornber, CBE.

Our huge thanks to the London Bus Museum from MoD West Byfleet!" And I will reciprocate here by thanking Liz and the MoD for their unsolicited donation to LBM as well



as the framed and engraved copy of this photograph. Hopefully, there will be a celebration for 101 years of the RAF. We're ready.

Bob Ansell

I don't know if I'm too late for my contribution but here it is anyway. I have a particular affection for RT3114 because it carried a GB plate long after its visit to, I believe, Sweden in 1952.

For all its time allocated to Sidcup Garage I often travelled on it to school and during this time it carried commemorative plaques on both upper and lower decks relating to the overseas visit.

My one regret was not obtaining one or both plaques when the bus was withdrawn from Poplar Garage in April 1975.

John Crittenden

Members' Excursions

Sunday 12th May - HCVS, Brighton

For more information and booking, please contact

Adrian Palmer, 46 Heathside, Weybridge, KT13 9YL. Email akpalmer@

or, in extreme call 07774

871



RT1702 and RF395 at Bromley North Station during the running day on 9th December 2018

(Peter Larkham)



Considerable changes have recently come about affecting the number of bus routes serving Oxford Street, although the reductions have been less than was once proposed. This photo dates from the time when Routemasters were still prevalent in the late 1990s. (MHCb)