

COBHAM BUS MUSEUM

NEWSLETTER



No. 2

SEPTEMBER 1993

THE LONDON BUS PRESERVATION TRUST

COBHAM BUS MUSEUM

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Please send all magazine contributions and advertisements to the Editor. Views expressed with this magazine are not necessarily those of the Editor and Committee.

When contacting the Committee, please enclose an S.A.E. if a reply is required. If phoning, please do so during sociable hours as our respective families may not share our enthusiasm for all things red and green.

The deadline for material to be included in the next issue is November 1st. All contributions are welcomed.

FRONT COVER: FORMING A QUEUE - Q83 and Q55 make a fine sight at Finsbury Park in August 1992

EDITORIAL

So who said we wouldn't make it to the second issue!? I'm pleased to say that at our present rate of growth, issue number 3 could well be in hard-back form, such is the enthusiasm for our efforts so far. Firstly, then, a big thank-you to all who have extended a vote of support for the magazine. And yes, it is now a magazine, as the cover suggests; the word 'newsletter' seems somewhat inadequate to describe a 30+ page publication – don't you agree?

Of course, I can only maintain this standard if you, the members, provide me with material, so I do need features, reports, news items and especially photographs for future inclusion. In general, it seems to be largely the same old faces coming up trumps, so please, let's see some fresh names in print!

And so it's on to business. Hold tight please for another (at times) hard hitting editorial designed to get you thinking and writing. Indeed, I would ask that you re-read my editorial in issue 1, just to re-affirm our aims and intentions.

Surely the best news is that we have had our largest quarterly influx of new members for many years, and amongst the new names are some notable additions to our ranks. Phil Roderick has bravely rescued RF512, the last red RF to run in service for LT. (see photo elsewhere). Geoff Rixon needs no introduction; he is the proud owner of RM254, the concours condition Routemaster kept at Twickenham Garage. Geoff has promised a feature on this vehicle for the next issue, along with handy tips on how not to convert your bus from double to single deck! Vic Chivers is restoring unmodified coach RF41 and will be contributing a quiz in the next issue. He in turn has recruited his close friend Richard Herridge, who owns unmodified coach RF26, which he has restored to a very high standard. Alan Bond has already helped by providing information for the new Cobham Guide, and his extensive computerised records mean that he can trace complete histories of many LT vehicles. David Heath is the enthusiastic MoT man at Surrey County Council's Merrow Depot, and is always delighted to do a Class 5 test on a preserved bus. In fact, his father used to drive Q types in service, so he is especially interested in testing 'Ketchup' Cottrell's Q83. John Marshall owns RFW14, one of possibly only two still in the United Kingdom.

You will notice that most of our new members have been recruited by other members, a trend I wish to see continued. If you need application forms, send Win Wickens an s.a.e. and mark your name on the bottom of

the forms so we can put your name in print when you recruit a new member. We will also soon be advertising Cobham in selected publications, with a view to further increasing our membership.

Elsewhere, if things have gone to plan, you should find a nice shiny copy of the new Cobham Guide in your envelope, further proof of your Chairman's commitment to the development of the Trust. This publication will be sold to the public as a fund-raiser for future projects, and will help make trips to the museum more interesting for visitors.

On the events front, we've had the excellent LT60 at Staines organised by the ever efficient RT/RF register, only the weather taking the edge off an otherwise super day. Southend, on the other hand, was blessed with scorching weather, although I found that this event rather lacked character. Luton Transport Festival clashed with Southsea. I chose the former and joined another dozen LT vehicles for a pleasant day.

Our social evening at the Red Lion, Waterloo on June 19th attracted a fair crowd, but sadly few new faces. It nevertheless proved an enjoyable evening with the Chairman holding a slide show and quiz (of course, I was too young to know any of the answers!). The ever wonderful Bromley Pageant on June 27th enjoyed its usual fantastic weather and a record crowd of 38,000. A handful of buses attended, with Geoff Rixon's RM254 taking the honours and Roger West's RF486 as a runner-up. I particularly enjoyed Southampton, not least because of the scenic drive down in rapid convoy with Michael Dean, in his ex-Royal Blue Bristol, with Stephen Morris, the esteemed editor of Buses magazine, on board. He took much interest in RF534 and has promised me a feature in due course. This rally also enjoyed good weather, and the fine setting attracted a superb cross-section of vehicles, although when the prize winners were announced there was something of an upset when the LT category was won by a newly refurbished Routemaster entered by London United! The organisers have since agreed to provide separate categories in future for PSV and preserved vehicles.

The Cobham Bus-B-Que was a complete success as you will read in John Gray's report and that busy weekend was completed with a well attended Kentish Vehicle Rally at Sevenoaks which boasted a large Cobham contingent. Indeed, six buses went there in convoy, including Ian Barrett's 738J which you can read about elsewhere in this issue.

The season is far from over, as you will see in Diary Dates. I draw your special attention to the 'Repaint Weekend' where everyone, especially resident members, is requested to lend a hand to make the museum building look

fresher. It's also a good opportunity to socialise!

Now we come to the more serious matters, the first of which concerns vehicles which belong to resident members. I believe that in a museum such as ours, we need to make changes to achieve a better standard of presentation. At present, too much space is occupied by several vehicles which appear neglected and have received no attention for a long time. Apart from anything else, these vehicles occupy space which could be better utilised by exhibits of more appeal to visitors. After all, ours is supposed to be a working museum, but with so many static or derelict buses on display, we have perhaps created the image of a run-down organisation which has lost its sense of direction and is stumbling from one season to the next. To be honest, previous committees should have tackled the problem years ago, but as you know, we appear to have had a hard core of long standing committee members who have resisted progress and outvoted those with genuine interests in the Trust's future. Not any longer!

Resident members benefit from much lower rents than are available anywhere else, and enjoy the facilities and security into the bargain. They should, in turn, reciprocate by contributing more towards the upkeep of the museum, project vehicles and indeed the continual improvement of their own buses. The committee is looking into ways of ensuring this happens in the future and it will be interesting to see who turns up at the Repaint Weekend for a start.

One of the other problems we have experienced is that on some weekends, the museum is virtually deserted. Indeed, on several occasions, committee members have commented that they have spent practically the whole day working in solitude. I find it especially curious, but perhaps to be expected, that some of the most vociferous 'anti-change' voices heard at February's EGM have not set foot in the museum since. Personally, I don't care if I never see most of them again!

It is vital that our membership comprises genuine enthusiasts and a responsive committee dedicated to securing the long term future of Cobham as a museum, rather than those whose principal concern is 'what's in it for me?'. That said, it is also notable that a number of those who failed to gain re-election to the committee have been less than active since – one wonders quite what they thought they were going to achieve anyway.

But I digress. Imagine how lively Cobham would be if all our exhibits were being regularly worked on and improved at weekends. Please remember to pay the museum a visit some time, even if just to say hello! If you don't

own a bus, why not lend a hand with one of the museum's project vehicles? If you own a bus but don't keep it at Cobham, you can always bring it and make use of our facilities. A phone call in advance to Bill would of course be helpful.

Enough of this serious stuff and on with the show. There is plenty to read in this issue, though I have decided to defer my article on RF534 for now, partly because, with Dave Jones's feature on RF672 appearing in this issue, I might be accused of RF overkill! Still, wherever I go everyone seems to talk with so much affection about RFs and they have truly earned the title 'Everyone's Favourite Bus'. Rest assured that they will feature prominently in future issues.

I look forward to receiving your features, news and photographs very soon – keep up the good work.

Mike Nash

APPLICATION TO THE CHARITY COMMISSION – CURRENT SITUATION

The first paragraph of the following was circulated as an insert to the June 1993 newsletter. The second part deals with subsequent events.

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A meeting took place on at 3pm, Tuesday 1st June 1993 at the offices of the Transport Trust in Grosvenor Place, London, between the officers of the London Bus Preservation Trust (Mr. Peter Plummer; Mr. John Bedford; Mr. Bill Cottrell) and the Directors of the London Bus Preservation Group Ltd (Mr. Alan Cross; Mr. Tony Peters; Mr. Julian Bowden), the company holding the Trust's assets, together with their respective legal representatives. Mr. David Hurley fourth director of LBPG Ltd. was unable to attend.

A healthy dialogue ensued and I am pleased to conclude that our first meeting on this crucial issue was conducted in a very constructive and gentlemanly manner.

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A further meeting took place on Tuesday 20th July between David Morgan, the solicitor retained to act on behalf of the Trust, and the three committee officers of the Trust. The purpose of the meeting was to consider the wording

of the draft Memorandum and Articles of Association of the London Bus Preservation Group Limited (these documents had originally been lodged with the Charity Commission in 1989 by the Group's Auditors), and to make proposals for revision where considered appropriate, so that the document in its revised form could be recommended by the committee of the Trust to its members, for acceptance.

It cannot be emphasised too strongly that until the fundamental issues related to this are resolved, progress on the development of the Trust along the lines discussed at the Annual General Meeting cannot proceed as planned. During the meeting with the solicitor, the officers were advised that they should not enter into any new contracts or place orders requiring major expenditure of funds on the assets not in the Trust's possession – although expenditure on routine maintenance and small items could continue as before. This means that the commencement of new projects – such as the building extension and vehicle restoration bay, or planned improvements to the reception area and display area on the balcony – will be delayed.

I am, in my capacity as the newly elected chairman of the Trust, concerned that morale is being lowered by these delays and that progress on new projects will not now gather momentum under the direction of the new committee, as was intended. In consequence, we are losing time and that time is lost to us forever. It is the preservation movement and Cobham Bus Museum which will be the ultimate losers.

In addition, we have unavoidably incurred the cost of legal representation. This money would have better been directed to vehicle restoration or much-needed improvements to the building. A stop has been put on the Trust's application for museum registration under the national scheme being administered by the Area Museums Service until the matter of ownership of the buildings and vehicles is properly resolved.

It is therefore of paramount importance to us that the current negotiations between the Charity Commission and the respective solicitors are brought to an acceptable solution quickly. Members should appreciate that the initiative in this must come from the Directors of the London Bus Preservation Group Limited and their legal representatives.

Peter Plummer

THE BUILDING

Repaint Weekend

A work party weekend is planned for Saturday/Sunday 23/24th October, to repaint and weatherproof the outside of the building. All volunteers will be welcome but resident members are urged to attend this big task. Free fish and chip supper for all assisting.

Fire and Security Precautions

Concern was expressed at the EGM concerning fire and security precautions at the museum. A survey has recently been carried out by a consultant and the committee will be studying the recommendations and options.

Bill Cottrell

SPARES

The spares offers in the previous newsletter remains current. Any problems with spares or of a technical nature – call Bill Cottrell on the number listed.

Bill Cottrell

MESSAGE TO MEMBERS

Some members of the committee have received requests from various organisations and individuals, asking for Trust vehicles to be made available for display at gatherings or theme shows such as the World War II Rally at Southsea in 1994. I regret that the committee is unable to give its approval to these requests until the assets are re-united with the Trust. At the moment, the use of Trust vehicles is the responsibility of the directors of LBPG Ltd., and I would therefore ask members to bear this in mind before making requests to the Trust committee or advising other organisations to write to us.

Peter Plummer

FROM THE SECRETARY

Extraordinary General Meeting, 19th June 1993

An EGM to approve the draft accounts for the year ending 31st December 1992 took place at the Red Lion. The formal business of the meeting was followed by a social organised by Peter Plummer. There was an informal discussion with members and a review of progress in implementing the proposals outlined to members at the Annual General Meeting on 27 February. A copy of the Treasurer's report to the EGM is enclosed. If you were unable to attend and would like a complete copy of the audited draft accounts (these having been approved at the meeting), please write to the Secretary at Cobham and a copy will be sent to you.

Open Day 1994

At its meeting of 31 July, the committee discussed plans for the 1994 Open Day. A number of options were considered, but the members were unanimous in their view that there was no case for a radical departure from the existing formula, which has evolved successfully over the years and has consistently produced a good financial return. With the rapid increase in the number of rallies and displays being staged elsewhere during the summer, the committee recognises the need to be vigilant and maintain a good standard of presentation at Cobham. However, at present, there is no indication that public interest in the event is declining or that visitor numbers are falling. For this reason, the intention for 1994 is to make only minor changes to improve the running of the event if circumstances demand it. The date is Sunday 10th April 1994.

Brooklands Museum Trust

A meeting took place recently at Brooklands Museum at which arrangements for their Festival of Transport were discussed. The opportunity was taken to enquire about the likelihood of organising a joint venture with them in 1994 - probably after the Open Day at Cobham.

A principal advantage for us would be access to the main runway as this would facilitate vehicle movement on a scale which is not possible with the traditional bus and coach gathering at App's Court. (the mind boggles - JB)

At the time of writing, the discussions are continuing.

Building Improvements

I am pleased to report a positive start to the building improvement programme. On Sunday 29th August, the portable gantry was moved to the Byfleet Road end and repainting of the external walls commenced. Our thanks to Malcolm Lewis, Peter Plummer, Brian and Alan Hine and Andrew Hayward and Julie for their energetic attack on the accumulated dirt and moss deposits with wire brushes and Sandtex paint, which has produced a dramatic improvement.

Insurance of privately owned vehicles garaged at the museum

This explanatory note is being included for the benefit of the owners of privately-owned vehicles.

Our insurers have reminded us that the fire insurance policy held by the Trust covers only Trust-owned vehicles on the premises. A list of these and their respective values has been lodged with them. If you occupy a space at Cobham, you should check the terms of your insurance policy to confirm that you are covered for 'off the road' risks. Most owner's policies include cover when the vehicle is garaged in safe accommodation, but you should verify that the terms of your policy provide you with adequate cover.

If you have no insurance (eg because the vehicle is being rebuilt), you are advised to negotiate cover whilst it is in store. If you require any advice, I will try to obtain guidance on your behalf.

John Bedford

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Since the notice in newsletter no. 1, no objections were received for the issue of a membership list with full residential postal addresses, and vehicles owned, if any. It is hoped to have a list ready to be sent out to members with magazine no. 3.

Peter Plummer

APPEAL FOR HELP - RF41

Does anyone have photographs or information about the history of this vehicle?

Please telephone Vic Chivers on 0279- 309

WE WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO
WELCOME THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS AND LOOK
FORWARD TO THEIR FUTURE SUPPORT

Craig Willis	Gainsborough, Lincs	GS76	
Robert Bradley	Beddington, Surrey		
Andrew King	West Ewell, Surrey		
Phil Roderick	Norwich	RF512	MN
John Marshall	London	RTW467	WW
		RFW14	
Geoff Rixon	East Molesey, Surrey	RM254	
John Philipson	Biggin Hill, Kent	FS27	WW
Alan Brown	Romford, Essex	RCL	WW
Paula Smee	Kingston, Surrey		IB
Stephen Strong	West Ewell, Surrey		IB
Richard Herridge	Henfield, West Sussex	RF26	VC
John Hale-Heighway	Preston, Lancs	RF463	MG
Trevor Ryall	West Molesey, Surrey		MN
Vic Chivers	Harlow, Essex	RF41	MN
Leon Daniels	Bishop's Stortford, Herts	RTW467	
Mark Baker	Addlestone, Surrey		MN
Alan Bond	Slough, Bucks		MN
Jo Lister	Weybridge, Surrey		MN
David Heath	Bordon, Hants		MN

In the right-hand column are the initials of the members who have recruited these above. WW-Win Wickens; MN-Mike Nash; IB-Ian Barrett; MG-Martin Gibbons; VC-Vic Chivers. Spare application forms can be obtained from Win, so please try your hardest to recruit some new members as this will help the LBPG to go from strength to strength.

APOLOGIES

It would appear that we omitted to include Member Colin Brown's name from the list of volunteers in the Open Day preparation. I wondered what the blur was, assisting Donald Allmey - it was you hard at work! Many thanks, Colin!

Peter Plummer

IMPRESSION OF NATIONAL GREENWAYS

Malcolm Lewis

Seeing that I had been credited in the last magazine for 'borrowing' a National Greenway (re-bodied Leyland National), I was prompted to write. Although I had asked management for permission to borrow the prototype almost a month before, I had actually asked the wrong person, so had to settle for a production Greenway (one of six newly delivered to Addlestone Garage) and then it was signed out by a lower management person who consequently had to drive the Greenway to App's Court because neither he nor I were sure about insurance cover.

However, I got my turn a week later when the Greenways were put into regular service on the 116 and 117 LT routes operated by the garage. I have been driving on these routes for over six months now. Addlestone 'inherited' the motley Tellings Golden Miller (TGM) fleet of Leyland Nationals, some of which are rather the worse for wear, with worn suspension. One is nicknamed the 'boneshaker' because it crashes over the slightest bump. But there are some good ones, and in my view, these are better than the Greenways.

The shortcomings of the Greenway are its extra body weight, which causes excessive body roll on the old National chassis, and a poor match of engine and gearbox. The reconditioned Cummings engine lacks power, probably because it is governed. If you're running late, it is preferable to have an original National.

The Greenway prototype I had intended to bring to the Open Day would have made an interesting comparison with the other Greenway on display from Walworth Garage. It has a more pleasing frontal appearance and a better Gardner engine, that does have power.

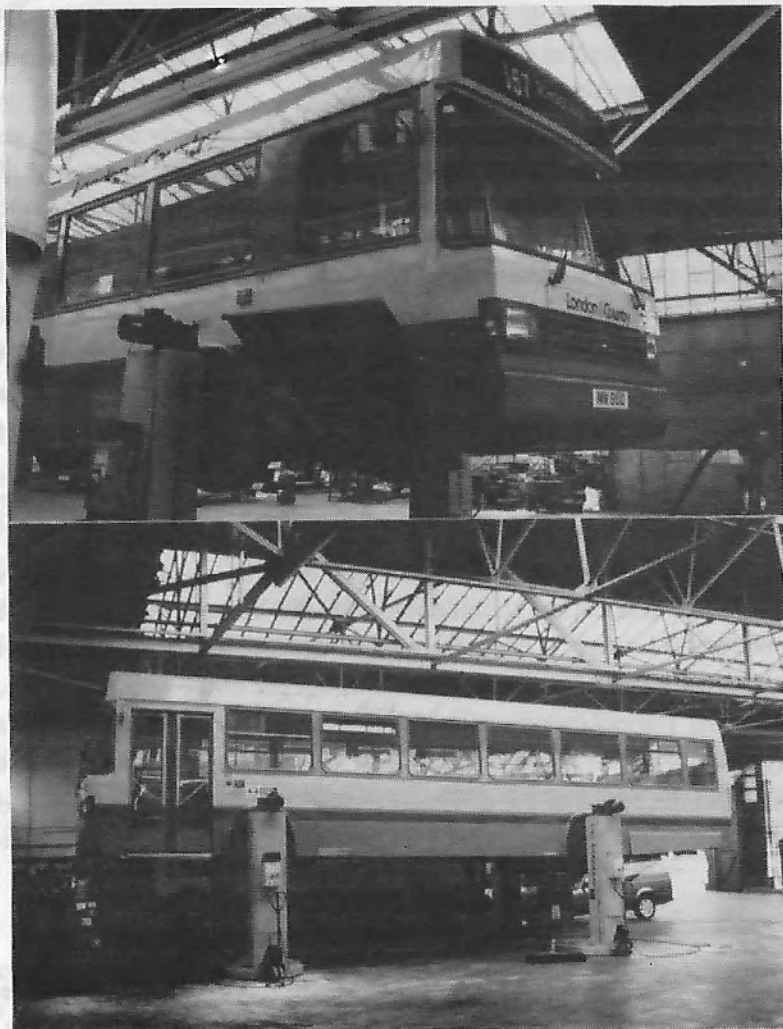
However, I should not overlook the passengers' point of view - they simply see the Greenway as a smart new bus with a lower step height.

It is all to the credit of the original Leyland National that it is being effectively re-bodied, almost like the old days when an old chassis would receive a new body.

NB Fellow member Mark 'Jock' Winston is also based at Addlestone Garage on the engineering side. A large proportion of the allocation of 95 buses there are Nationals, some of which have been at Addlestone from new. These in particular continue to give

good service and Mark says that SNB420 is the best one of all! I still think that early Nationals look crisp in design, especially when compared to their contemporaries from the early seventies. It is hard to believe that some are now over 20 years old, but with their noted strengths, I feel sure that quite a few will fall into the hands of preservationists in due course.

MN



Pictured above is one of several National Greenways at Addlestone Garage

EMERGENCY BREAKDOWN TENDER

AGX520/738J (ORIGINALLY STL169)

Ian Barrett

In the newsletter no. 1, I featured in 'Know your committee'. Now for the history of one of my vehicles. As I am only 27 years old and the 'J' is 60 this year, some of the information may not be entirely correct. For this, I apologise; if you know better, please let me know.

Originally built as STL169 in June 1933, it plied the streets of London for some years before being damaged by a bomb during the war. Fortunately, it was re-bodied and continued in service until 1949.

On withdrawal, it was converted into an emergency breakdown tender (towing lorry) by Chalmers of Redhill, and entered the LT service fleet in January 1950 as 738J. In addition to assisting with breakdowns, the vehicle was also used for towing a large percentage of withdrawn trolleybuses to scrapyards around London.

During the mid-1950s, the original petrol engine and pre-select gearbox was removed and replaced with a diesel unit and crash gearbox, as it retains at present.

In February 1971, after a service life of 38 years, 738J was withdrawn from service – not a bad innings; how many vehicles these days will stand such a test of time? It was then stored at Stonebridge Park awaiting disposal, until sold for £75 to a group of enthusiasts including Colin Wickens, David Boshier and Peter Jones. (David Boshier already owned 833J.) An agreement was made to store 738J in the Leyland compound at Aldenham. After that, early in 1972, it was the first vehicle to move into the new premises of the London Bus Preservation Group at Redhill Road, Cobham. Does that seem familiar?

The group of owners at that time consisted of seven members, but time goes by, and situations change, and three members dropped out. Things continued for some time, but eventually it was sold to John Huxford and David Good in 1978 as a non-runner. Some repairs were carried out and it was rallied later that year.

During the early 1980s, it had a body lift and complete chassis overhaul, including new king pins, shackle pins, clutch and brake linings. The prop-shaft and other brake parts were rebuilt.

After all that work, it was taken to one rally before disaster struck. The

shed in which it was housed with another four vehicles suffered what every preservationist fears – an arson attack. Miraculously, it was the only vehicle to survive, all the others being irreparable. Restoration was started at 'Travelers Yard' and went well. As before, situations changed, so the 'J' was sold on for further preservation and a lot of the timber bodywork damaged by the fire was replaced.

Eventually, changing circumstances resulted in 738J finding its way to the back of its storage shed. With the help of John Huxford, one of the previous owners, and Gordon Lamming, a deal was agreed, and so I picked it up on Saturday 15th February 1992, with the help of Epsom Coaches.

Unfortunately, I was made redundant later that same year. Although my circumstances have changed and I am now self-employed, I do not intend to part with 738J; I have always wanted a pre-war half-cab vehicle to go with UMP227, one of my other vehicles.

738J attended the AEC Rally at Nottingham earlier this year, where it received the 'runner-up' award for vehicles with a pre-war PSV chassis.



Scorched but safe, 738J lives to fight another day



738J as seen at several events during 1993

THE CONTINUING SAGA OF RF672

Dave Jones

Some of our members – sorry, I'll read that again – some of our long established members will recall that many years ago, Leon Daniels published, in two parts, an interview with the owners of RF672. This was in the halcyon days of 1979, when there was only a minute amount of red tape for preservationists to become ensnared with, and the newly sprayed paint on RF672 was fresh and gleaming. Much has happened since then – well, life would be dull if it didn't, and I have been asked to bring the story up to date. So here goes. . .

But first – history. RF672 was delivered new to East Grinstead garage in September 1953, did the rounds of the country area garages and received three overhauls of the kind which completely lose a bus's identity. In fact, we have reason to believe that the bus is RF599, or the body and chassis were in 1953. Anyway, 672 was last recorded in service working from Staines garage, whence it was moved to Hertford upon withdrawal. There is a possibility that it was used at HG, but in March 1972 it was sold to Continental Pioneer of Richmond. It was used briefly on route 235 and any other work for which it may have been suitable until its CoF expired in August, after which 672 was sold for preservation. After four years of half-hearted work, Paul Morris and Dave Simmons bought out the other owners and aimed for their target – to achieve an 'as new' look for the bus.

During its service career, at least 35 modifications were made to the bus and others of the class, which Paul and Dave set out to undo. The full list is given on the bus display board and includes obvious jobs such as replacing the luggage rack by two seats (donated by RF466), replacing the driver's emergency window by a sliding one (using parts from an RT and one of CP's other RFs) and replacing the green bell cord. Considerable research went into establishing what had to be done or undone, and given that neither Paul nor Dave was old enough to drive the bus, the thoroughness of the end result is a credit to both. Whilst all this was going on, RF644 was acquired and used as a source of spares, at the same time becoming a workshop-cum-mess-room in the open yard at Richmond.

During 1976, I became involved with a group which eventually purchased RF503 and sold it after some troublesome months in favour of RF392. During my period of involvement with 503, I became acquainted with Paul and Dave and when 503 went, so did I, to 672, the owners' aims being more akin to my own. A great amount of work was done at Pioneer's with the three of us

spending many evenings after work and all weekends at Richmond. Apart from the body restoration, the engine donated by RF644 was totally rebuilt and installed in January 1978. It has performed very well since, especially as the pump and injectors were set to AEC standards and not the wimpish LT ones.

Shortly before the bus reached the stage described in Leon's article, we bought RF533 from Pioneer's and took every useful part off, including some panels which were better than those on 672. The rest of the bus is safely stored and the chassis, body-frame and back axle went northwards to the scrapman.

Once finished externally, we all went pot hunting on the rally trail and did very well, thank you very much. Some work was done after we started rallying, such as replacement of all the lino and the fitting of new window rubbers and glass as well as repainting the ceiling. After two years of very concentrated rallying, I met the young lady who became my wife, whilst Paul met his future bride the following year. Dave Simmons left us in 1980 to pursue interests elsewhere.

It was while we were getting to know the young ladies better in Blackpool in September 1981 that the biggest setback to 672's career occurred. During the night a gale-force wind dumped considerable quantities of sand on a large area of the town; in fact, 672 was almost yellow. The consequence of this was that the paintwork started to look shabby mainly because during rubbing down, some of the primer had been taken off the edges of the steel beading and, with the penetration of salty sand, it eventually began to rust. The paintwork lasted just long enough to enable 672 to participate in our weddings, mine in 1982 and Paul's in Leeds in 1983.

Eventually, we could no longer keep on touching-in paintwork and at the end of the 1984 season the spray paint experiment came to an end as we invested heavily in Nitromors and set to work to strip the bottom half. Paul completed the partial re-paint in the June of '85, at which time we decided that the window surrounds should be the next items for a paint job – they're still waiting!

Later that year we had another major problem en route to the Bristol Rally when the oil seal on the fuel pump drive blew and covered the underneath and back of the bus with oil. Luckily, we were staying with another RF owner who allowed us to raid one of his laid-up buses for a replacement. This did not prove straightforward and some anxious hours were spent trying to solve problems of bits which did not want to be moved from where they were.

Nevertheless, the job was completed and the cause turned out to be a shim wrongly positioned so that the oilway to the gears was constricted. We wondered how the bus had run for as long as it had.

Since then, we have only had a persistent winter oil seepage from the nearside hub gland to deal with; the hubs are now greased. A more serious problem of unloader and safety valve failure brought us to a halt when returning from Detling two years ago.

The underneath of the wheel-arches have been stripped and repainted but are still awaiting a final coat of varnish. Paul has now prepared a long list of items for attention as 21 years in preservation have taken their toll. One part which has never been touched is the ceiling area around the fare table and door valve because Paul could not obtain the correct transfers first time round. Some of the dark green rexine has grown mildew due to the strange atmospheric conditions in Cobham and will need to be replaced. The step-well area needs stripping and repainting and – to cries of 'not original' – there are now three coats of paint on the rear interior wheel-arches.

We will soon have to decide to have a year off to catch up with the backlog. It should have been this year but the tenth AEC rally put paid to that – well, once you've got the tax disc, it's a shame not to use it. In the meantime we are slowly installing – horror of horrors – a tachograph, so that we can carry a few more passengers. Mind you, you'll have to look hard to see where the tacho is.

So here we are, still enjoying rallying 672 and looking forward to its 40th birthday celebrations later this year.

Out of the mouths of babes!

One day at the end of August, my four-year-old daughter was playing with her roadway set and contemplating a large plastic RT (the type which has been around for donkey's years). Out of the blue, she mused, 'I suppose that when Nellie grows up, she'll have a top deck too.'

(Nellie is RF672 – DJ)



RFs everywhere as 672 stands resplendent at the RF40 event at Staines, May 1991



And a year later, at Golder's Green Station, in August 1992

COUCH POTATOES' GUIDE – continued

Bill Cottrell

POOL OF LONDON (Black and white, made in 1951)

A lovely period film showing how the crew of a ship, berthed in the Pool of London, spent their weekend leave. There are steam tugs, cranes and much wharf-side activity showing how London's docklands really was (between strikes), with not a container to be seen anywhere.

E1 tram 599 on route 70 features in all the external close-ups, with several night-time wet weather shots, one featuring a convoy of trams at Camberwell Green.

Roofbox RT400 must also have been hired for the film as it is shown with restricted 15 blinds to Aldgate, then, in the next scene, with East Ham as the ultimate blind. The bus has a large near-side mirror as used by RT190. Another roofbox RT, presumably not RT400 as it has different adverts, is shown on route 47.

The cops and robbers car chase takes place through streets empty of traffic and parked cars (reminiscent of the car chase in *The Blue Lamp*), finishing in the Rotherhithe Tunnel after a near-collision with a Leyland Hippo lorry.

A film recommended for the transport interest, if not for its own merit.

PHOTO CAPTION COMPETITION

- 1 'At last I now know what it is, it's Gordons.' (M Lewis)
- 2 'Well, the boss said he wanted a cheap O.M.O. conversion – so I squashed the conductor.' (M Nash)
- 3 'What do you mean a motorcycle courier boarded your bus when you stopped at the traffic lights.' (C Sheppard)
- 4 'I wash jush lookin' to see if the boddle wash emp-hic-ty.' (D Jones)
- 5 'These damn bus enthusiasts, they'll even try ram-raiding just to get the used bus tickets.' (C Sheppard)
- 6 'I told you these buses weren't suitable for ram-raiding.' (C Sheppard)
- 7 'I know Gordon's Gin sponsor the stock car racing at Wimbledon, but whose idea was it to take the bus onto the track?' (C Sheppard)

The Trust Committee was unanimous in awarding first place to entry number 2 and congratulate Mike Nash for his valued humour.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Alec Swain

Many thanks for the re-vamped Newsletter no 1. It is heartening to read of the efforts to revitalise the Museum project. For my part I really am only a passive member, not owning a vehicle but having been introduced by Roy Gould some years ago. There is little I can do to assist at Cobham as, although retired, I do not have a car and it is a difficult journey by public transport. Also, I have other hobbies which, most of the time, have to take preference – in particular, model railways!

It occurs to me that perhaps a category 'Friends of Cobham Museum' might attract new members as the application form tends to suggest that you need to own a vehicle – just a thought.

Elizabeth Court, Sudbury Avenue, Wembley Mddx HA0 3BD

Thanks to Alec for donating material to the museum archives – MN

From Philip A Millard

Just a short note to say how pleased and impressed I was by the new look LBPT Newsletter. You have certainly succeeded in presenting a 'new look' to support a very clear message of change and improvement.

I am not an expert on buses so I don't feel that I am able to offer much by way of a contribution at this stage, but I much look forward to the next issue!

Shaftesbury Road, Woking, Surrey GU22 7DT

From George Townsend

Congratulations to the team involved in the excellent production of the Cobham Museum Newsletter that I received this week.

Whinfell Way, Gravesend, Kent DA12 4RX

VEHICLE NEWS FROM PETER PLUMMER

- TD95 Star member this quarter is Steve Jackson for his effort with Bill Cottrell on the engine rebuild work. Since newsletter no. 1, the replacement engine had the sump dropped and surprised everyone by being less sludged than the rocker housing. However, Bill and Steve investigated further and the general conclusion was that it was a 'tired' engine with significant wear in some areas like timing chain sprockets and shell bearings. At least one piston was rusty and two had broken piston rings. The result from this is that Bill and Steve are rebuilding one good engine from two worn ones with a few new parts yet to be obtained. Therefore, our 'flagship' is unlikely to be roadworthy this year. (more on this in the following article)
- T448 Our 'metal surgeon' has deemed the most economic approach to the corroded window pans is to have complete new units made. Ian Barrett is supervising this operation.
- T504 The radiator bottom tank has had a crack aluminium welded and members Mark Winston and Ian Barrett are arranging for a specialist to tackle the corrosion around studs that hold the core frame to both top and bottom tanks. The fuel pump will be sent away for overhaul very shortly.
- RT2775 Your chairman is periodically working to restore the front upper deck interior which was stripped for repair.
- 702B This is the Bedford Tractor Unit which draws the Scammell semi-trailer mobile canteen – also subject to major overhaul. Both doors have now been repaired and returned to Cobham with thanks to Ian Barrett for overseeing a first class job. Your chairman and member Brian Hine applied the first green undercoat to the cab shell during July.
- The electrical re-wiring has slowed down during June/July, awaiting new parts. However, our secretary has managed to obtain new side-lights and arranged for a new offside headlamp to be delivered. Also, John was able to purchase a brand new

opening driver's windscreen and rear window rubber. I can't wait to see the invoice John brought back headed 'Bedford Parts' - 'Bionic Bedford meets Cuckoo Cottrell!'

PHOTO CAPTION COMPETITION NO 2

Can you put a caption to this photo?

This shocking scene depicts none other than our esteemed Chairman about to be engulfed by the Nicotine Queen herself, DOT COTTON of East Enders.



Please write in with a suitable caption to Peter Plummer, c/o Cobham Bus Museum.

The best 10 replies will be published in Magazine issue no.3 and the winner will receive one year's free membership of the Trust.

M Nash

TD95 - PROGRESS ON ENGINE CHANGE

The original engine was stripped first to assess the damage caused by the broken timing chain. Apart from the obvious damage to the bent rockers and push rods, it was found that parts from the broken chain had lodged in the gear driving the oil pump, causing a ridge. In all, the damage caused was not too serious, but we did observe very badly worn timing chain sprockets, which could have caused the original breakage. We stripped the cylinder heads and found the valves and valve seats worn to the point of extinction. So far, one piston has been withdrawn and the wear in the engine liners and crankshaft is acceptable.

It was also decided to strip the replacement engine for cleaning due to the amount of sludge apparent. Although the valves and valve seats are worn, they are redeemable, although ideally it would be nice to acquire a replacement set of valves. The sump was removed to assess the wear in the bottom-end of the engine. All the pistons have been removed. The crankshaft shows signs of distress in areas, as do the big-end bearing shells. The timing chain sprockets are in much better condition than our original engine.

It has been decided to use the original engine block and crankshaft. We will attempt to transfer the timing chain sprockets and mating gears from the second engine, along with the cylinder heads. The injectors from both engines have been checked and ten out of twelve are no good (dribbling).

We are trying to find the following parts:-

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 6 injectors and rubbers | 1 bearing set |
| 1 gasket set | 6 inlet valves 6 exhaust valves |
| 1 timing chain | 1 service/repair manual |

The parts remaining after re-building into a 'good' engine will also be assembled, to make a display engine.

Bill Cottrell

DIARY DATES

- Saturday October 9th 'Bus of Yesteryear' Rally at Egham. A friendly local rally with a good indoor sales stand and catering facility. 0784- 955 for more information.
- Sunday October 10th 'Buses on Parade' Rally at Canvey Island. Always a good turnout at this event, which also provides a vintage bus service to the local Castle Point Bus Museum where a large indoor gathering of sales stands awaits you. The bus gathering is on the seafront but don't bother to take your swimming costumes – the beach is concrete!
- Sunday October 17th Dean Forest Railway and Transport Extravaganza, Lydney, Gloucestershire. As approved by our own Martin Gibbons!
- Weekend October 23rd/24th Cobham Bus Museum 'Repaint Weekend'. Cobham residents are expected to make every effort to attend and of course all members will be welcome to help make our museum a brighter place. The empty tins will be sent to non-participants so why not use this as a good excuse to mix bus-diction with brush friction. Free fish 'n chip supper each evening.
- Saturday October 30 'LOTS' Autumn Transport Spectacular, Central Hall, Westminster.
- Saturday November 6th Cobham Bus Museum 'Bonfire Night Party'. All members and friends welcome. Bring a few fireworks and enjoy the free refreshments. If last year's event was anything to go by, also bring a suit of armour and earplugs! Commence at 6.30pm.

Saturday April 9th 1994

Open Day preparation

Sunday April 10th 1994

Open Day. Yes, we're already working on it!

CLUBHOUSE FUND RAISING

Member Dave Pring has taken on the responsibility of 'Clubhouse Fundraising Officer'. It is hoped to convert our 'canteen' at Cobham into a clubhouse where social evenings, meetings and similar functions can be held. In addition, an area would be set aside during all other times for visitors taking refreshments.

If you have any suggestions or can offer Dave any assistance in this vital facility, please drop him a line c/o Cobham Bus Museum.

PROPOSAL FOR A VARIABLE RENT SYSTEM

A view has been expressed that to gain the benefit of the minimum rent, a member should have a preserved vehicle occupying the rented space, and should also work ten times a year on Trust projects, be it building or vehicles. A space occupied by non-preserved buses would have a penalty of 50% imposed on the rents. If no work is done on Trust projects, a penalty of 25% would be added, with each day worked reducing that by 2½%. A formula would have to be worked out to cover the position of joint owners of single vehicles or individuals who own more than one vehicle. Non-resident members working on Trust projects would gain 'credits' which would be taken into consideration when applying to take out Trust-owned vehicles.

Reactions to the above proposal, or any alternative thoughts, are welcome.

Bill Cottrell

MEETING REPORTS

The Surrey Vintage Vehicle Club visit to Cobham Bus Museum - Sunday 16 May 1993

Thirteen immaculate vehicles belonging to members of the Surrey Vintage Vehicle Club visited Cobham for one of their monthly gatherings during May.

Forty-three of their members were entertained by only six Trust members, so it was a disappointing turn-out, as it was a struggle to cope diplomatically with the demands of courtesy placed upon us.

However, Win Wickens performed her usual rôle in the catering division while the various vehicles were photographed and discussed by all. These included:-

- 1920 Austin Twenty, registration FX1581 belonging to Mr Guest
- 1935 Bentley Derby drophead coupé belonging to Alan and Lesley Millbank, registration KSK264
- 1934 Austin Seven Ruby, registration BGK841 belonging to Mrs King
- 1947 MG 'Y' type, registration 82JPB belonging to Mr and Mrs Alderton
- 1931 Austin Seven Tourer registration DV8491 belonging to Mr and Mrs Hart
- 1937 Austin Seven Opel registration AMR918 belonging to Mr Powell



- 1934 Morris Ten Four registration OY9328 belonging to Mr Gorman
- 1939 Austin 8 registration MSK182 belonging to Mr Dilley
- 1935 Crossley Regis (apparently one of only four known to exist) registration BLU77 belonging to Mr Pratt
- 1937 Morris 14 registration CBY924 belonging to Mr Bishop
- 1952 Healey Tickford registration OTB333 belonging to Mr Geary
- 1947 Wolseley registration GPF765 belonging to Mr Fraser Clayton
- 1951 AEC Mammoth Major 8 wheel lorry registration MLE411 belonging to Mr Fraser Clayton. Fraser's car had a ride out for the day on the back of his splendid Mammoth Major

All owners were then taken to Painshill House at Cobham in STL441 which had been cleaned and washed by John Bedford and myself the day before. (the house or the STL? - It's the house, can you do mine? - MN)

Everyone present had an enjoyable day even when a passing Grey-Green coach brought a further 52 elderly people from the Romford area requiring more guided tours of the museum and two more trips out for STL441.

Due to staff shortage, visitor Fraser Clayton stood in as a conductor on both trips in STL441 and his lady Linda kindly assisted with serving refreshments, for which we extend our gratitude. The day proved a very profitable one for the Trust and we thank the members of the Surrey Vintage Vehicle Club for the pleasure of their company and their donations. Members assisting on the day were:-

Philip Millard; Colin Wickens; Mrs Win Wickens; Martin Gibbons; Brian Hine; Peter Plummer

Peter Plummer

- NB Mr Chairman, can I arrange a similar such event for the Vauxhall VX4/90 Drivers Club next season, perhaps incorporating a bus ride to Brooklands?

MN

Brooklands Museum Festival of Transport

Four vehicles represented Cobham Bus Museum at the transport spectacular held by the Brooklands Museum Trust Ltd. over the Bank Holiday weekend 1st-3rd May 1993. The vehicles were STL441, STL2692, RT593 and RF672 on the Bank Holiday Monday, with RT3491 running a connecting service to Weybridge Station on two of these days. Appreciation to all crews and to John Bedford for furthering our involvement with Brooklands Museum and its administrative team.

Peter Plummer

Bus-B-Que

Our summer evening event on 5th August was experienced by a sizeable proportion of our membership. Perhaps curiosity provided the spur to come, or the thought of trying a novel idea, but whatever it was, we came, in some numbers, and we enjoyed it.

A brickwork barbecue device had been built upon a concrete base platform, once reserved for a non-existent telephone kiosk. And it worked. Win Wickens, with several appropriately bearded male assistant cooks, saw to that. Any notion that an earlier demonstration with fire extinguishers was there solely to reassure on the ability to control the barbecuing arrangements, could soon be put aside. They all looked as though they'd done it many times before. The quality of the product showed it, too.

Gentle, period (1950s, I think) music added to the feeling of bonhomie. We met each other in a relaxed way, the sun setting on a warm Surrey Saturday, tree-shaded and secluded, without the pressures and energy of the Open Day. Together, these gave the opportunity for reflection, good conversation, and welcoming several preservationists from the RT/RF Register.

Once or twice, remarks were heard – when can we do something like this again? – proof enough of success. But the final word needs to be to thank all those who not only arranged it and carried it out, but also cleared up afterwards. Thanks – we thought it was so very well worth while. And next time, we'll do the clearing up!

John A Gray

The Chairman wishes to thank all those who attended the Bus-B-Que, on making the evening a complete success, especially to Win Wickens, Ron Salway and 'Blackie' Blackburn for their effort and work on the night, which was appreciated by everyone.

Peter Plummer



'Ketchup' Cottrell downs another burger at the very successful Bus B-Que. Note the use of a serviette, a refinement which has taken months of training by our Culture Officer!



Win Wickens serves up the food in a natty pair of cellophane gloves. Well, wouldn't you take precautions when handling Blackie Blackburn, seen behind!

RT/RF Register's Tribute to Sixty Years of London Transport –

Staines, 30th May 1993

Many thanks to the participants from the Cobham stable. It was good to have you all. Not only did you represent the post-war RT/RF/RLH families, but you provided the only pre-war and early post-war varieties too, and so deserve an especial vote of thanks.

Judging by requests already received for information about a future event, it went down well. There were some imperfections; some of the bus service timings were too tight, and public conveniences, which the borough council assured would be available, weren't.

For the RF40 event two years ago, Win Wickens had provided packed lunches for bus crews. Not many lunches were taken, so the rest were made available to our audience. So this time, we did not provide refreshments. And what did we get? – right – complaints about no refreshments. If, and at the moment it's quite a big if, another event is put on, I may encourage the attendance of the Bedford canteen. . .

John A Gray



GS1 and RF534 depart from Cobham to attend this event

KNOW YOUR COMMITTEE: Win Wickens

I started work in 1959 as a machinist for Raelbrook Shirts and was there until 1970, when I joined Kent County Council. In those days, buses to me were just vehicles that took me from A to B. I didn't take a lot of notice of them until 1962/3 when I met Colin. He was always talking about them and taking photos. From then on, I spent most weekends travelling around with him looking at buses.

My first bus outing was with the Omnibus Society. Talk about being the odd one out. They were all men! Anyway, I did go on a few more outings with them and in 1967 we got married. In 1968 we became partners with David Boshier jointly owning TD95 and later 738J. I had a lot of fun going to rallies, etc.

I first became involved with the Group when I met Alan and Lyn Allmey in 1968, and in 1971 when Cobham was purchased, 738J was the first vehicle to be resident in the building.

I did a lot of work on the grounds with Lyn, and in 1973 we purchased STL2692, which we still own. I am still deeply involved with the Group, particularly with cleaning, catering and assisting with social events and membership.

I must conclude by saying that it is a very interesting hobby to have.



This is a very rare shot of Win as she complains that all Colin's photographs are of buses!

PHOTO GALLERY

As mentioned elsewhere, Phil Roderick of Norwich has rescued RF512 for restoration. After withdrawal from LT in 1979, RF512 was one of three RFs to go to Eynon's of South Wales for further service, where it performed until the late 1980s before falling into the hands of preservationists. The project failed and 512 was left neglected for several years in a transport yard with vandals and the weather taking their toll until its recent rescue and move to the Midlands. (lower picture)

RF512 is interesting because it was one of the three RFs on LT's commemorative final run from Kingston garage on 31st March 1979, and due to its suffering gearbox problems and spectacularly boiling over at Walton-on-Thames Station (top picture), it became the last RF to run for London Transport.



COBHAM GUIDE BOOK

The Guide Book has now been completed. Some vehicles proved problematic, with a great deal of research being required, and this obviously slowed down the copy writing; the fact that access to the Trust vehicles' documents was not readily available meant more work than expected. Interestingly, it came to light that some of the resident members knew very little of the history of their vehicles, so investigations have served yet another good purpose.

The book will be A5 size, saddle-stitched with 36 pages of text on glass art paper and a four-colour cover depicting ST922 on the front and T504 on the back cover. This will be the first time that a comprehensive history of all major exhibits in the Cobham collection has been put together in one book. It is hoped that the Guide will generate significant income to finance future projects and, of course, conforms to the demands of the Charity Commissioners for educational material to be made available to members of the public.

I owe a vote of thanks to two members, Bill Cottrell and Colin Wickens, for their arduous research work, in addition to their committee duties. Also, new member Alan Bond has assisted in checking details listed, for which I am very grateful.

Peter Plummer



Messrs Plummer and Townsend hard at work on the Bedford doors, with RF534 looking on.

SPECIAL EVENT

A news-sheet from the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs informs us that entries are invited to a Channel Tunnel Celebration Run. There will be a procession of 100 vehicles, 50 British, 50 French, dating from 1894 to 1994 (I make that 101!) taking part in the official opening ceremony. The main drawback would seem to be that the programme of events starts on the evening of Thursday 5th May and ends on the morning of Tuesday 10th May. However, if you fancy a change from Brighton and especially if you live in this corner of Kent, apply to:-

P H J Whyman, Secretary FBHVC,

Church Lane,

Tydd St Giles,

Wisbech, Cambs PE13 5LA

Send full details of your bus, on a single sheet of paper, plus a good colour photograph. After all, they must pick at least one London bus.

Bill Cottrell

SERVICES TO MEMBERS

I own a small business specialising in the machining of prototype components and feel that I could be of use to your members, in manufacturing or modifying obsolete parts. I can undertake machining, turning, drilling, milling and grinding, as well as injection moulding in rubber and plastics for small run items.

My rates are very competitive and can offer a fast turn-round. I currently manufacture spare parts for a member of the 'Armstrong-Siddely Owners' Club', and I am looking to increase my involvement in this interesting field.

If any of your members has a problem with the manufacture, design or modification of a spare part, please call me or send a fax to the above number and I will be pleased to discuss it with you.

David Harvey

New Wokingham Road, Crowthorne, Berks RG11 6JP

Telephone/Fax: 0344- 392

SERVICES TO MEMBERS

Items available from the Museum Shop

T-shirts featuring red RLH small/medium/large	£8.00
EFE bus (green RTL with adverts for Open Day 1993)	£9.00
EFE bus (red RT with adverts for Open Day 1992)	£9.00
Cobham mugs featuring ST922	£2.50
Jigsaws (open top RM)	£2.50
Balloons with printed red RLH	0.20
Note-pad printed Cobham Bus Museum in plastic wallet	0.50
Badge featuring red RLH	£1.00
Pen 'Cobham Bus Museum'	0.20
Pen 'Cobham Bus Museum' refillable type	0.40
Key ring with coin wallet	0.50
Key ring with small pen attached	0.50
Book mark 'Cobham Bus Museum'	0.60
Cobham Bus Museum Guide * * * NEW * * *	£3.50
Suggestions for additional merchandise will be gratefully received	

ADVERTISEMENTS

1966 HUMBER SCEPTRE MARK II 1725cc with overdrive. Restored five years ago. VGC £1200 o.n.o.

1966 SUNBEAM RAPIER MARK V 1725cc pillarless coupé. Abandoned project. Requires inner cills and repaint. £450 o.n.o.

Telephone Andy 081- -3602

LONDON TRANSPORT BUSES FOR SALE

MODERN AND OLD

4mm scale models

The following models are to exhibition standard built from white metal kits such as Pirate Models, ABS Streetscene, Garrick Leisure Consultants, etc.

They are solder assembled, primed, have precision detail on the liveries and finally finished in lacquer for crisp detail as well as protection for the transfers applied.

The models for sale are as follows:-

MCW METROBUS MKS I AND II; LEYLAND TITAN; DMS; OLYMPIANS; LEYLAND NATIONALS; LEYLAND LYNX; VOLVO CITYBUS (Alexander R type)

Leaside; London Northern; Centrewest; Harrow Buses; Capital Citybus; Grey Green; etc

Prices between £49 and £84 each

AEC ROUTEMASTERS

RM; RML; RMC; RCL types between £52 and £87 each

TROLLEYBUSES PRE WAR AND Q TYPES

London Transport £76 each

VARIOUS LONDON RTs

Including roofbox and Green Line versions £62 to £84 each

LONDON RLHs and RFs

Central and Country versions

£58 each

In addition, there are built kits of London Underground 1938 surface and tube stock in red livery with brown or grey roof - £40-£65. I also make models assembled in finished in primer

Models can also be made to special order.

For further details, please enquire to:-

Raja Kalsy Boleyn Way New Barnet Herts EN5 5LH
or at Cobham Bus Museum (preferably Sundays)

BOHEMIA AUTOFEST

PO Box 358, T.1.Máje 97, Liberec - 46 031,

Czech Republic, Tel/Fax:++42-48-23276

Will you accept the New Europe Challenge?

The organisers of the Bohemia Autofest invite you to take part in two great events in 1994.

FIRST LONDON - PRAGUE - LIBEREC CLASSIC MARATHON

2nd May - 6th May

To celebrate or otherwise the opening of the Channel Tunnel on 6th May, we have organised this ultimate challenge for classic trucks, fire engines, buses and military trucks. Depart 2nd May from Wheels of Yesterday Rally at Crystal Palace, London, arrive Liberec Friday 6th May.

Distance 900 miles.

Ferry and accommodation partly sponsored.

4TH BOHEMIA INTERNATIONAL AUTOFEST

6th May - 8th May

The largest meeting of veteran and classic motor vehicles in the Czech Republic. Special 1994 themes: 'The Sixties'; 'Fire Engines'; '100 years of Škoda'

For further information, return the form below as soon as possible.

To: BOHEMIA AUTOFEST

PO Box 358, T.1.Máje 97, Liberec 46 031, Czech Republic

Please send information on your 1994 events.

LONDON-PRAGUE-LIBEREC CLASSIC MARATHON YES/NO

4TH BOHEMIA INTERNATIONAL AUTOFEST YES/NO

Name

Address

Vehicle type

Make

Year of manufacture



Rare shot of 738J in 1970, shortly before withdrawal