

COBHAM BUS MUSEUM

MAGAZINE



No. 10

AUTUMN 1995

THE LONDON BUS PRESERVATION TRUST

COBHAM BUS MUSEUM

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To avoid causing excessive disruption at home, especially during the late evening, telephone messages for committee members – except the magazine editor – should be channelled through Bill Cottrell (see number above), who will pass them on to the appropriate person. Your co-operation will be appreciated.

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Please send all magazine contributions and advertisements to the Editor. In order to make the most effective use of new typesetting technology, it would be much appreciated if manuscripts were typed, although this is not essential and all contributions are, of course, welcome. Views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Editor and Committee. When contacting the Committee, please enclose an SAE if a reply is required.

Front cover: Our strong links with Brooklands Museum have seen a number of the fleet in action there. T31 has made several visits and is pictured outside the Shell petrol pagoda with a Vickers Viscount aircraft in the background. (Photo: Peter Starks)

EDITORIAL

Yet again I find myself saying how fast another season has flown by. We've had some good times though, both at the museum and at various rallies, and vehicles from the Trust's collection have been more active than for many seasons, thanks in the main to our small band of regular volunteers who have done so much to keep the fleet in fine fettle.

TD95 was one of the stars at Southampton and then went on to win 'Best of Day' at the well organised Bus of Yesteryear event held in Staines, known affectionately as 'Boshers Bash'. Bill Cottrell was delighted to receive a fine award there in recognition of 30 years outstanding contribution to bus preservation and this topped off what was very much a Cobham day due to the number of vehicles and members we had present.

I had the pleasure of being in charge of RM3 when we arrived at Brighton following the Routemaster run and never before have I faced such a huge bank of photographers. This was a super event and it is hoped that a similar one can take place for RFs during 1996. And talking of super events, one of the very best was Sevenoaks. I will long remember how the bus preservation world descended on the sleepy village of Ide Hill and brought it to a complete standstill. Such trips are what our hobby is all about.

Back at base we've had two more successful Display Days, the latter of which on the August Bank Holiday Monday was outstanding. By the time you read this the September one will be but a memory but be sure not to miss our final one on Sunday October 22nd. This should be huge, as we are combining with a special farewell to Kingston Garage event organised by RF owners who will be operating a free service between the two venues. Added to this, it will be 'Ladies Day' at the museum and there will also be some nocturnal running of vehicles and a car club in attendance. Talk about action packed!

At which point may I remind members that with all this activity we do need more of you to come down and help with various aspects at

Cobham. Whilst we have a strong mechanical team, skilled and unskilled assistance is urgently needed on the coachwork side. Peter Plummer and Brian Down have been putting in incredibly long hours on T448 and RT2775 lately but they need more pairs of hands made available to carry out these important rebuilds and others which will follow. If you can help in any way, please contact Peter on 01474 704776. It would be nice to see a few more members coming along to wash and sweep out the buses because at the moment it seems to be too few doing too much. Why not come down and make a few new friends!

And so to conclude – whilst there has been much occurring at Cobham which is positive, not least the wheels having been set in motion for driver training so that members can take their PCV licenses, there has I'm afraid been continued frustration on the part of your committee in trying to complete the process of re-uniting the Trust with its rightful assets. In fact, I held this issue back in the hope that I could publish some good news but unless there happens to be a 'stop press' item elsewhere this issue, you can take it that things are now very close to coming to a head. Meanwhile, the Redhill Road closure saga is covered by member Robert Vince in his own inimitable style. Robert is one of a number of Redhill Road residents who have joined the Trust as a result of this campaign and it is pleasing that we now have such a good rapport with the locals.

I hope you enjoy what is my tenth magazine as editor. I'm told they keep getting better. Well, so is Cobham, so why not come on down!

Mike Nash

SHORT TURN

Congratulations to Dave and Sue Jones (36) on the arrival of their baby boy, Andrew William on Saturday 23rd July at 6.35am. Weighing in at just 6 lbs 10 ozs it is likely to be some time before Dave can type-train the little fellow on RF672!

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

We have received, very recently, through the Trust's Solicitor, David Morgan, a copy of a letter from Hollingworth and Company (acting for the Directors of the London Bus Preservation Group Ltd.) concerning progress on the setting up of the new Charity. Part of this is reproduced below.

"I have been able to take brief verbal instructions as follows:

- a) The EGM has taken place and the Resolutions passed. I enclose a copy of the notice of the EGM.
- b) I have been promised a Minute of the EGM as soon as possible.
- c) My client's accountants have been instructed to register the change of name and the new revised Memorandum and Articles of Association with the Companies Registry.
- d) My client's accountants have also been instructed to make the formal application for charitable status with the above-mentioned Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Certainly my understanding and that of my clients, was that on the granting of charitable status by the Charity Commissioners the Company would then invite directors to be appointed from the Trust and members from the Trust membership."

The approval of the Charity Commissioners is an important step towards reuniting the Trust and the members with the principal assets held by the LBPB Ltd. and enable the Trust to become properly established (as was originally proposed in 1986). Assuming the Directors now intend to implement the agreement, the committee will be discussing, through David Morgan, a timetable for meetings for the election of a Council of Management for the new Charity, to ensure that this takes place as soon as possible.

LBPB Sales Ltd

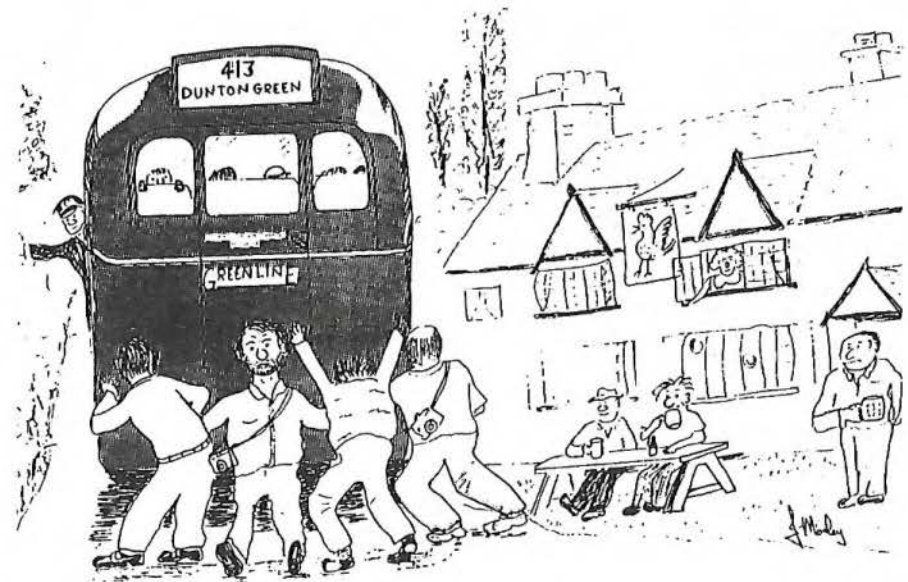
The financial accounts for the year ending 31 July 1994 have been published. It is noted that these include no donation to the Trust and no contribution towards the running costs of the site, from which it is operating as a private company. This demonstrates that the museum

continued on page 17

8.8 LITRE ENGINE AND PASSENGERS RUN OUT OF PUFF

Poor old T504 had a struggle at the Sevenoaks event. Not only was it downgraded to bus status, but on one of the photographic runs, it's tired old 8.8 litre engine failed to make a hill and the passengers had to get out and push. I'm told it got up to 70mph on the way back down the other side though! And whilst this was going on, 'His 'n Hers' Hinson were renaming themselves 'His 'n Hers' Havoc when they completely blocked one end of the (normally) sleepy village of Ide Hill in trying to get RF280 and RF433 past each other. The problems were compounded by the presence of T504, RF672 and a GS which were all jostling for position whereby the hordes of enthusiasts could take suitable snaps.

Mike Nash



This is the last time I go on a nostalgia trip in T504

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Once again I can report a healthy influx of new members, many of whom have been gained as a result of Trust vehicles visiting events, whereby our leaflets have been distributed. Cobham's profile continues to grow and membership has now reached another all time high of 329.

With the winter months approaching, it is likely that the rate of growth will slow for the time being, but I do hope that we can at least consolidate our position ready for another hectic season in 1996. In the meantime, if you've been meaning to enrol a friend or colleague to the Trust, why not get him or her to sign on the dotted line sooner rather than later.

The following new members are warmly welcomed to the Trust.

344	Sandra Bond	Farnham Royal		AB
345	John Butler	Ashtead		MN
346	John Jolliffe	St Albans		RW
347	Michael Dove	Farnham Royal		AB
348	L Britton	Redhill		CB
349	Leonard Barnes	Sidcup		MN/PM
350	Roland Graves	Meopham	Reliance/Leyland PSI	MN/PM
351	P Killingley	Byfleet		DD
352	Tony Cleden	New Malden		DD
353	John Herting	Chorleywood	RT2177/RF539	IB
355	Judith Doyle	Cobham		MN
356	John Latimer	Welling		
357	Chris Dean	Cobham		DD
358	G Edgington	Chiswick		
359	Chris Ireland	Cobham		MN
360	Routemaster a/s/b/l	Luxembourg	RM1180	DJ
361	Ken Duke	Enfield		
362	C Bicheno	Harrow		
363	Charles Bayliss	Byfleet		
364	Bill Strickley	Tadworth		RL
365	Nigel Martin	Lancing		
366	Simon Lambert	Newton Abbot		
367	Graham Baker	Frome		JH
368	Geoffrey Green	Brentwood		
369	Peter Sapte	Watford	C4, CR16/32, RT1/1499/3148, RF48/114, RM1403	PM
370	G Hurrell	Pinner	RT1323	DA

371	Martin Eaton	Greenhithe	
372	David Earl	Brighton	
373	Len Biggs	Cobham	
374	David Porter	Woking	Dennis Lancet
375	Philip Jones	Ashford, Mddx	
376	John Doust	Ashford, Mddx	
377	David Christian	Maplehurst	

JB

Recruited by: AB: Alan Bond; CB: Classic Bus; DA: Don Allmey; DD: Display Day; DJ: Dave Jones; IB: Ian Barrett; JB: John Bedford; JH: John Hambley; MN: Mike Nash; PM: Paul Morris; RL: Rod Lucas; RW: Roger West

Mike Nash

MAGAZINE BACK COPIES

Members who have joined the Trust more recently may be interested to know that I have a stock of back copies available at £1 each including postage. Issues 4 onwards are available. Alternatively, there is a 'loan set' available for those wishing to borrow specific copies. Members are requested to state which issues they require and enclose a suitable donation to Trust funds.

There are still some copies of the excellent Cobham Bus Museum Guide Book available at £3.75 including postage. Cheques for all of the above should be made payable to the L.B.P.T. and sent to my address.

Mike Nash

CHERISHED MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS

You may remember the above suggestion which I mentioned a few issues back whereby, as a novel way to raise funds for the Trust, members could bid for 'desirable' membership numbers as and when they became available, much as people do with vehicle registration marks. Well, let's see how generous you are! I'm putting five numbers up for auction as an experiment as follows: 3, 4, 13, 15 and 55.

The closing date for bids is October 31st so if you fancy a lower or more distinctive membership number now's your chance. Please bid generously, after all, it's the Trust that benefits.

Mike Nash

GOING FOR A P!

Mike Nash

With the uncertain and ever-tightening EEC directives as regards driving large vehicles on ordinary licences it has for some time been the wish of your committee to see a driver training facility reinstated at Cobham to assist members in gaining their PCV licence, as had been the case during the eighties.

These days, to be eligible for use for such a task, a vehicle needs to be manual, at least 30 feet in length and capable of more than 50 mph, which rules out those kept at Cobham.

Paul Morris and myself have long been keen for the Trust to acquire a more contemporary vehicle, one which could double up as faster transport for long distance trips. But it had to have a London connection. We had toyed with the idea of an RP such as the handsome example now back in use with London & Country for their heritage services. But with semi-automatic transmission it would have required conversion to a manual gearbox, something Paul was keen to attempt but others less so!

One Saturday during August in the Cobham canteen, conversation had once again got around to the subject of driver training, this time in the presence of Donald Allmey, that well known international entrepreneur and occasional bus dealer. 'How about a P?' he was suddenly heard to exclaim, at which point we directed him down the stairs and first right. 'No silly, I mean a London Country P, P3 to be exact. I've just taken it in for breaking'.

With brains working overtime we remembered that P3 was one of five such AEC Reliance coaches delivered new to London Country in 1973 with Plaxton Elite C49F bodywork, AH760 12.5 litre engines and ZF 6-speed gearboxes for private hire and excursion work. This particular one had spent much of its life based at Hatfield Garage until 1985 when it was retrimmed for three years of occasional use on Green Line services before being disposed of via a dealer to Uxbridge Football Club who had owned it since.

Paul and I decided to take a closer look, expecting to find a basket

case but were pleasantly surprised to find what was a scruffy, but obviously low mileage vehicle with excellent mechanicals and a very tidy interior – in short, just what we wanted.

Being a preservationist at heart, Donald was bullied into selling the old girl to us at a very favourable rate but with Cobham in no financial position to take on another vehicle, Paul and I decided to each become 50% shareholders, with the Trust for the present having only a nominal interest, until such time as it can adopt the vehicle itself. In the meantime, P3 will, with the help of the volunteers at the museum, be quickly returned to its former glory ready for its new role in preservation. Some may argue that it is too modern but at 22 years it is already older than many of Cobham's other exhibits were when they entered preservation.

You can read more about P3 next issue by which time it may well be available for duty and earning its keep. Alan Bond, who is an instructor by profession, will be co-ordinating the driver training aspect and wishes to hear from those members who are SERIOUSLY interested in training for their PCV test. You can contact him on 01753

497 to put your name on the list. Meanwhile, any members that would like to help work on P3 or who can assist with locating spare parts for the Plaxton bodywork are requested to phone Paul Morris on 0181 8394. □

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS TOUR

16th December

John Hinson is once again organising the annual Christmas Lights Tour on 16th December. Last year a record 18 buses were in attendance and a tidy sum was raised for the BBC Children in Need appeal. All buses are welcome, whether LT or not, and full details are available from John c/o Graham Road, Wealdstone, Middx. HA3 5RE. This is a great night out! □

BOOK REVIEWS

'CLASSIC BUS' YEARBOOK 1995 Edited by Gavin Booth

You will I hope, all be aware of the excellent bimonthly magazine 'Classic Bus' and I for one am looking forward to the day when Gavin feels he can go monthly with what is his pet project. But in the meantime this yearbook will do just fine. Packed with quality features and photographs and topped off with the editor's delightfully offbeat sense of humour, this publication should be on every enthusiasts shelf and at £10.99 it looks very good value.

LT fans will no doubt enjoy Alan Millar's feature which considers the reasons for the Executive's fall from grace, whilst T W Moore's graphic account of visits to Bird's scrapyard will put a lump in your throat. But to highlight particular features is to do an injustice to the overall scope and quality of the material contained here and there truly is something for everyone to enjoy. Be sure it's on your Christmas list.

BRITISH BUSES BEFORE 1945 by John Aldridge

BRITISH BUSES SINCE 1945 by Stephen Morris

BRITISH TROLLEYBUSES 1911-1972 by Geoff Lumb

These three new books form part of the Ian Allan Transport Library series and will appeal to both the casual and serious enthusiast due to the accessibility of the material, the quantity of interesting photographs and the excellent historical summary provided by the authors as an introduction to each volume.

There are 128 pages in each with the photos and text arranged in manufacturer alphabetical order, most of which have become but a memory. From a personal point of view I particularly enjoyed the Stephen Morris edition in which his summary of bus evolution since 1945 provides a fascinating explanation of how we have arrived at today's scene. At £14.99 all three books have much to recommend their purchase and it is really good to see how active Ian Allan have been of late in catering for the bus enthusiast. Long may it continue!

MN

VIDEO REVIEW

GUILDFORD RUNNING DAY 28 May 1995

The video market is ever expanding and the profusion of transport titles now available never ceases to amaze me. Of course, some are of very dubious quality and are, frankly, a waste of money. Others are lovingly pieced together to provide a thoroughly enjoyable tape, as is the case with this one from the Aldershot & District Bus Interest Group, kindly passed to me by our old friend Tim Stubbs.

With almost one hour of well taken footage featuring not only the majority of surviving A&D machinery but also RT3496, RFW14, GS1, RLH48 and RFs 627 and 643 in action. Scenes are nicely interspersed throughout the tape so the viewer never becomes bored, which is more than I can say for most such tapes. The sound quality is also good and there are some very nice onboard takes featuring Geoff Hudspith driving RF627 and that old smoothy John Huxford in an equally well turned out GS1, the Perkins death rattle being nicely audible. A cameo appearance is also made by my good friend from the BBPG, Nigel Adams, who provides a stunning demonstration on how to assemble a pushchair! Imaginative camera angles and a nice selection of video stills round off this excellent film which is available at £11 including postage and packing, from Tim c/o 1 Highfield Drive, Winshell, Burton-upon-Trent, Staffs, DE15 0LH.

MN

NB. I had hoped to carry a review of the excellent new video from W. H. Smith entitled 'The RT Story' but my VCR has rejected five copies to date for no apparent reason. Could it have been sabotaged by a disgruntled partner who doesn't like bus videos? Find out next issue!

BONFIRE NIGHT

Saturday 4th November

Details have yet to be confirmed so ring the museum nearer the time for more information. (01932 864078 - weekends only)

WELCOME TO ALDENHAM WORKS

The following was kindly passed to us by Vic Chivers.

The date of this guide is at present unknown.

London Transport runs about 5,500 buses which travel nearly 173 million miles in passenger service each year. Most of the buses pass through the busy London streets where they are continually stopping and starting, so that wear and tear on the vehicles is high. Buses run from 67 garages in the London area where servicing, docking and minor accident repairs are carried out.

Aldenham Works, which was opened as a bus repair works in 1956, deals with the overhaul of the bodies and chassis of London Transport's fleet of buses, together with the reconditioning and manufacture of body parts. Re-painting is also done, between overhauls, and the repair of heavy accidents where the amount of work is too great to be handled at the garages.

Overhaul of mechanical and electrical units is carried out at Chiswick Works, which supplies units as required to Aldenham and the garages.

SOME FACTS ABOUT ALDENHAM

The main building of Aldenham Works is a steel frame structure, 480 yards long by 180 yards wide, with a total floor space under one roof of 17 acres. An area of about $2\frac{3}{4}$ acres of the Works is let to the bus and truck division of British Leyland Limited, the remaining $14\frac{1}{4}$ acres being the bus overhaul works. Assuming full staff, the works output capacity is 15 overhauls, and 20 intermediate repaints each week. The production staff is 580 with another 500 staff engaged in progress, supply, maintenance, inspection, tooling, catering and various office services.

Your visit will include the following shops and stores:-

1: PRE-INSPECTION AREA where vehicles for overhaul are received. Upholstery is first removed and inspectors schedule the repairs required to the vehicle body.

2: CHASSIS PAINT – The completed chassis is sprayed with aluminium paint.

3: BODY OVERHAUL SHOP – Body overhaul is carried out in any one of 14 standings for double-deck types. The body is positioned on stilts and repairs are carried out in situ. There are also standings for single-deck types and separate standings for inspection. Defective parts are replaced by new or reconditioned items. Parts for repair are transported to the Repair Section. Replacement parts are stored in the adjacent 'cafeteria' racks.

4: PAINT PREPARATION – Advertisements are removed and the vehicle generally prepared for painting. Washing and rubbing down both inside and out, is carried out and a priming coat applied where necessary. Interior painting is carried out here and then the vehicle is masked ready for the spray painting process. This shop also prepares buses for repainting, which is necessary between overhauls.

5: DISMOUNT AREA – where the body is lifted from the chassis and carried by overhead crane over the roofs of other buses to the various overhaul sections. The chassis goes to the Chassis Overhaul Shop; in the case of the Routemaster bus, the front and rear sub-frames are joined together with special clamps to give them the same mobility as a normal chassis.

6: MOUNT SHOP AND TEST – here the body is positioned in an inverter to permit a protective treatment to be sprayed on the underfloor. The body is then re-joined to a chassis and then passed for paint preparation.

7: INVERTER AREA – Inverters enable a body to be tilted through 90 degrees for underfloor washing, inspection and repair.

8: CHASSIS WASH – Dynamo and starter are first removed and some mechanical units masked, to prevent water damage. The chassis is then connected to the underfloor wire-rope conveyor, a hand spray

wash being used to complete the cleaning.

9: CHASSIS STRIP – The chassis is progressively stripped with the units being sent to Chiswick Works for overhaul. Where fitted, the engine and gearbox remain with the frame. This assembly is then transported by overhead runway to the Frame Repair Section.

10: FRAME REPAIR – The frame is inspected and any works necessary carried out within the Shop using materials from the adjacent 'cafeteria' racks.

11: CHASSIS ASSEMBLY – Overhauled front and rear axles, together with other overhauled units received from Chiswick Works, are installed in repaired frames to rebuild the chassis

12: ACCIDENT SHOPS – These Shops are used for body and chassis repair following accident. Buses are also sent in from garages for intermediate repair of chassis defects arising from wear and tear.

13: PARTS MANUFACTURE AND REPAIR SHOPS – The manufacture and repair of body parts is dealt with in this group. Parts for reconditioning have been washed, inspected and batched before being passed to the Production Shops.

14: PAINT LINE – The final-painting and varnishing is carried out by a hot spraying process. Vehicles are attached to a stop-start wire-rope conveyor, along which there are two spray booths, one for the colour coat, one for varnishing. The booths are fitted with electrically-raised platforms to provide access to the whole of the outside of the vehicle. After spraying, each bus is baked for at least three hours, after which the masks are removed.

15: STOVE ENAMELLING – Here the new and reconditioned parts are stove enamelled to provide a protective clothing.

16: DESTINATION BLINDS – These are manufactured or repaired as needed. Bills are printed by the silk screen process and gummed on to linen in special machines.

17: TRIMMING SHOP – Cushions are beaten, washed, dried, inspected and coded for repair. Repairs are carried out on benched adjacent to conveyors which remove the finished work and any scrap material.

18: FINISHING LINE – Here the windows are cleaned and any touching-up done; grab rails, dress guards, driver's mirrors and other accessories are fitted and the headlamps focused. Upholstery is replaced and the completed vehicle passed for road test preparation.

19: LICENSING GARAGE – The bus is now prepared for road test to check brakes and chassis condition. After a final inspection, the bus is passed to the MOT Certifying Officer for clearance for a certificate of road-worthiness. Advertisements are then fixed and the bus is ready to go back to its garage for another 5 to 7 years service.

20: TILT-TEST – Each new type of bus is tilt-tested. Double-deckers must achieve an angle of 28 degrees from the vertical without falling over! The figure for single-deck vehicles is 35 degrees. The Routemaster can be tilted to 40 degrees (unladen) and will still not fall over! Vehicles are also tested following major design alterations. □

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT *(continued from page 6)*

has, during this period, survived – and can survive – without the existence of the trading activities, an issue which has been at the centre of the long-running conflict at Cobham.

Without discussing financial matters, I would like to refer to our running day on 28 August which raised an income well beyond our expectations – and which coincidentally equates to more than 50% of the reduced donation made by the trading company for 1993/94, as a contribution towards site costs. My thanks and appreciation to all who made the day a success.

TRUST VEHICLES

Restoration in the last quarter has progressed well, especially with the 9T9 – T448. Another step forward is the acquisition by two Trust members of SPK 203 M, an AEC Reliance with Plaxton coach body, new to London Country in 1973. More about this later, and proposals now being discussed to introduce a driver training scheme. In conclusion, my gratitude to all Trust members who donate their time and effort to promote and keep the Trust alive.

Peter Plummer

LONDON TO BRIGHTON ROUTEMASTER RUN

Kevin McGowan

As part of last year's RM40 celebrations the Routemaster Operators and Owners Association organised a London to Brighton road run which took place on Sunday July 23. RM3 was the only one of the four prototypes to be entered for the event and was driven in turn by Paul Morris, Mike Nash and myself. The first part of the journey was to the starting point of the run, at the Millbank Tower near Vauxhall Bridge, which for us was about 25 miles in the opposite direction to Brighton. I was elected to drive first and as I had never driven any Routemaster other than my own RM291 before, was interested to see how the non-standard RM3 compared with a production version.

The cab layout was basically similar with all the controls being in their expected places. On starting up, a difference in engine note was apparent. Obviously not AEC yet lacking the usual Leyland bellow, probably because it was possible to squeeze a large airfilter under the bonnet, a feature lacking from the Leyland engined production RMs. Consequently noise levels were no higher than an AEC. Out on the road acceleration was good but the power assisted steering proved to be rather sluggish and wandered a little more than usual. The other major difference was the gearbox, which is of the electro-hydraulic type instead of electro-pneumatic. This requires a slightly revised technique in order to effect a smooth gear change. When changing up, the engine must be allowed to slow right down before selecting the new gear to avoid a jerky change. The brakes and overall handling were good and similar to 291. The tiny nearside mirror was not to my liking nor was the almost inaudible interrupter unit on the trafficators but these were minor quibbles. On the whole, there was little difference between the two vehicles.

The journey to Brighton was in glorious weather and uneventful apart from the inevitable crawl on the final approach to the seafront. It was almost as if we were still in central London as the RMs mingled

with Blue Triangle's DMSs. The sound of disintegrating fibreglass drew our attention to someone using the edge of a roundabout as a guided busway whilst shaving a bit off the side of his Leyland Lynx in the process. He never even stopped to inspect the damage! The actual rally site was some way east of central Brighton located in the new marina complex on land reclaimed from the sea. A varied selection of was on display – 44 in total – and it was good to see RM9 reunited with its original registration number VLT9. A most bizarre sight was RM1842 converted to a mobile home complete with chimney and 'Do It All' style front door fitted to the platform.

After viewing the buses everyone went off into Brighton to indulge in the usual seaside activities, which for Mike Nash included failing off a street cafe chair and pulling down a length of chain link fencing to an appreciative audience. In the excitement, Paul Morris then proceeded to mislay his wallet.

I have to confess to being a sad character who's forgotten how to enjoy himself when not restoring old buses, so I mooched around the rally site all day waiting to go home. That time arrived eventually. We avoided the horrendous traffic congestion in the London direction by scooting along the almost deserted coast road to Worthing, where an optimistic lady at a bus stop tentatively outstretched an arm. Worth a try I suppose. Then up the A24 to Dorking and around the M25 to Cobham. We were back in no time and a great day was had by all, as they say. □

SHORT TURN

Such was the level of distress caused by the shirts worn by Peter Plummer and Ian Barrett on a recent trip to Hastings that Donald Allmey came out in sympathy at 'Bus of Yesteryear' with an even more tasteless example. An appeal is soon to be launched to help these poor souls with all their future clothing purchases as the toll of having spent too many years sniffing diesel fumes means that they can clearly no longer lead a normal role in society. □

RT CAPTURED IN STAGG HUNT

Roger Stagg

I would like to thank those members who commented upon my article, published over two issues. The thanks include those who found the article interesting and those who helped correct some of the errors, caused by incorrect youthful memories, wrong assumptions and typographical faults. Those with better memories than mine (and who were probably older at the time!) have helped me correct the original text that my great grandchildren may one day read.

In my parting words of the article, in October 1994, I referred to my quest for a suitable RT. One, questionably suitable, was offered the day before I went on holiday in late November. Having pondered this whilst away, I decided that I should acquire a home for her before purchase. Whilst working at Cobham on 5th/6th December, she was parked in the yard and I was alternately encouraged and discouraged regarding her purchase. Spending that weekend on RT2775 stripping out the rear end of the chassis to enable the new rear riser to be fitted, should to any sane person, have set the seal that this was not a task to be undertaken lightly, particularly taking into account the condition of the vehicle and Ian Barrett's 'Bus Buyer's Guide'.

The only good thing seemed to be that the rear riser appeared intact. The lower deck was devoid of seats, fitted out as a bar and the upper deck as a hospitality lounge. The front destination blind glasses were broken, water was running into the cab and the familiar RT rear light cluster and number plate had been replaced by two trailer lights and a stick-on number. Although red on the outside the inside was a Jacob's coat of many colours, tastefully set off by the beer stained upholstery of the upper lounge seats! Inner panels on the upper deck had been replaced by decorative oak effect melamine faced hardboard, complete with mock V board joints. The floors were covered with cork tiles. The outside sported a variety of advertisements for a water garden centre near the South Coast and on the inside for brewers and wine bars. The side panel advertisements were sign written on large sheets of aluminium, rivetted to the panel

work and a number of the panels on the lower part of the body had replacement panels rivetted over them inside the strapping plate lines.

The impressions of youth are difficult to dispel and as I mentioned in the earlier article, Leylands were simply not acceptable. The AEC radiator shape said it all, and the fact that Norwood only had AECs, helped to reinforce this attitude. Foolishly, therefore the biggest disappointment that I felt on initial inspection was that the centre bar of the radiator was bent in, together with the grill panels, and that there was no LT triangle. (More on this subject in the next issue!)

Bill Cottrell offered to give her a once over but despite every effort, battery charge and tinkering, we were unable to get the engine to turn over and thus she never found her way to the ramp. Having lain outside in the pouring rain of that weekend, I did establish that the platform surface had been rebuilt but that the build-up at the rear of the platform was in sections of Dexion; this, coupled with a non standard rear panel arrangement, suggested that she may have been involved in a rear end collision, followed by a non standard repair.

My mind was fully made up; this one was not for me! Definitely a basket case and the relief of my wife when I told her that I had definitely decided against it was almost euphoric. A little research in Ken Blacker's book during the following week established that 2043 was built at the end of 1950, entered service at Streatham in 1951 and was retired from service in Palmer's Green at the end of 1976. She went on to become a Lesney Bus. No further details were known.

Having now firmly decided not to buy her I did however contact Ted Brakell, who was offering her for sale, and agreed to have a further look and a test drive on the following Thursday at his yard, which is only some five miles or so from where I live. I should have known at that moment that I had become infected with mad bus disease and other owners will not be surprised to know that despite all my better judgements, I agreed to rescue this old lady before the Grim Reaper took her away. An agreement was reached, including the supply of many missing parts. Of course the prima facie agreement that she would not be acquired until a covered space to house her had

been identified had been quickly forgotten, so an agreement was made to keep the vehicle at Ted Brakell's yard pending restoration and a permanent home

Phase one of her restoration is now virtually complete but it has involved substantially more work than was anticipated in December last. Full supply of RT moquette cushions and seat backs could not be located, so RM fitments have been used instead until such time as enough moquette or enough covers can be obtained. A recent advertisement in the HCVC News for these appeared to be the answer but a reply from the number quoted could never be obtained. In the meantime those seats that cannot be reused from RM components have been recovered to match the remainder.

There were major internal problems on the lower deck and after the removal of the bar and sink it was found that there were no interior panels. Part of the floor had been cut away and leakages from the sinks had corroded away many of the coving panels. There was also wet rot in the main plywood bulkhead, so the work involved the replacement of the coving panels and interior plywood. Everything is back now, the only outstanding item being the lower deck front grab rail on the bulkhead behind the driver.

As with any vehicle of this age, the rexine interior facings do not exist any more – they have either been destroyed by the multiple coats of LT-applied paint or went when the interior panels were removed. From advice given in a recent newsletter therefore, it was off to Essex to see the rexine man about replacement. A number of problems here: one, they no longer make it in brown, green or cream as per the original; two, they make it in two grades, both of which are too stiff to use on anything but the slightest of curves and thus would only be suitable for major panels or seat facings; and three, to buy enough material would have cost more than the bus. It is amazing how effective a coat of dark chocolate brown paint can be and the green and cream is sufficiently effective, at this stage anyway.

On the outside, removal of the advertisement panels revealed the original panels, covered with a multitude of 1/4" diameter holes. These

were filled with blank rivets for renovation stage one. When the rivetted-on body panels were removed, lo and behold, revealed huge holes where the original panels were crudely cut out, leaving only a border secured by the strapping plates onto which the replacements were rivetted. At least the body building practice of RTs renders panel replacement quite easy.

With the support of Mrs Stagg, we agreed to set a target to attend Apps Court but as the time approached it became increasingly obvious that the original idea of simply repainting any replacement panels was not going to be the answer and that an overall coat would be required. So the repairs and replacements went into primer only. I was still determined to go to Apps Court but it was pointed out that we returned from holiday on the Saturday and would be arriving back at Heathrow at 10pm – 5,000 miles jet-lagged and with a five hour time difference. Accordingly arrangements were made with No. 1 son, to bring her up and put her on the drive to permit a speedy departure on the Sunday morning. It may be fair to say that the wife was less than impressed to find it there when the taxi drew up outside around midnight.

The Sunday morning was bright and clear and I set off just after 8.30 in slacks and a T-shirt only. By the time I reached the M26 my hands were frozen by the fresh morning temperature air flow entering from the bottom of the upper windscreen from which the deteriorated rubber seal had fallen away, the gap is almost exactly coincident with the level of the steering wheel and so within 10 minutes there are icicles on the fingers and the T-shirt is not offering much protection.

Clacketts Lane services, normally passed within 7 or 8 minutes in the car, eventually appear after what seems like two hours, where the thankfully remembered sweater was donned and a pair of gloves bought. There were many wishes that the cab heater was not disconnected! An RM was met whilst leaving Clacketts Lane and stayed about half a mile in front all the way down, we then collected another RM behind at the top of Reigate Hill, to make a mini convoy.

Arrival at Apps Court, and what a disappointment! Surrounded by

pristine restorations and gleaming paint, 2043 looked a sorry state in her partly red, partly fleet named, partly primed and grossly unfinished state, but at least she got there.

Stage one is now complete. She is all one colour, shining, with new fleet names and numbers. She looks good from a distance but would not yet win any concours. Nevertheless that was not the intention. We just wanted to put her in a state where we would not be afraid to use her. A more detailed restoration would have either been prohibitively expensive or taken too long and we continue to believe that you need to get the pleasure of ownership to justify continuing the restoration.

Some months ago we jokingly offered to convey the guests at our neighbour's daughter's wedding between the Hotel and the village church and then found that this had been taken seriously and accepted! We certainly now had a deadline for the completion of phase one. There would be a dozen or so guests to be taken from hotel to church and vice versa, so there was no real problem, but by 7th July, the day before the wedding, the number had risen to 30. Meanwhile we were furiously vaccing the seats, washing and polishing. The number had risen to 35 by the morning of the 8th, when the flowers, balloons and ribbons were being installed by the female contingent, whilst I applied the tyre paint, polished the wheel nut rings and installed the final destination, Offham Church, in the blind boxes.

Unfortunately, a coolant leak had developed with the anti-freeze dripping copiously from what must be the most inaccessible hose on an RT, being one of the short stubs in the lower deck heater connection, sandwiched between the cab floor, the front bulkhead and the offside mudguard liner. With extreme difficulty, a new jubilee clip was installed but this only made the leak worse and now we were just a couple of hours before the wedding, considering the consequences of the hose bursting en-route and quickly pumping all of the coolant out. With the necessity of someone who is 3 ft 6in tall and only 9in wide to replace the hose, and someone of that build not being available, the decision was made to drain the rad, isolate the heater connections at a more convenient part and thus feel safe. With the temperatures

heading into the 90s, it was not felt that the heaters were going to be necessary. At 4pm, now with 37 passengers, we left for an uneventful but uphill slog for the 3 miles to the Church. Unbeknown to us, the bride's father had arranged for a number of guests to board at the Village Pub. We might have seen them if they had been standing outside the Pub but with the ladies tennis final in progress on the television, everyone was glued to the screen inside. By the time someone saw 2043 and everyone rushed out, she was disappearing into the distance, hotly pursued by a Maidstone & District Bristol! A reported comment was 'You can wait all day for one, and then two come along together!'

The service over and the Bride and Groom having left, people piled back on the bus, presumably desperate to get to the bar in an escape from the 100 plus temperature inside the Church, although I suspected that it was even higher on the upper deck. Total confusion is reigning, apparently everyone wants to be downstairs where it is cooler and peering back I can see that we now have a number of standing passengers inside who presumably, cannot endure it on top. We set out to return to the Post House and she did not seem to want to pull too well up the steep incline, which was not surprising when we stopped and 73 passengers dismounted, including the bride's mother, father and bridesmaids! It seems that passengers were sitting three to a seat on the upper deck. Lesson learnt! We are off to the 'Bournemouth to Bath' in September – a long journey at RT speed.

After six months of prevarication with the local authority, we have just received planning permission to keep her under cover, so hopefully, her future is now assured. Most importantly, the radiator is now straight and features the LT triangle!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have given help and assistance in getting this far, with advice, encouragement, parts and labour, in particular, Peter Plummer, Bill Cottrell, Ian Barrett, Martin Gibbons, Ted Brakell and of course my ever suffering wife Dawn, who is now utterly convinced that every ring at the front door will be two men in white coats holding a straight jacket! □

A CLANDESTINE MEETING, 35 COD AND CHIPS, AND A HANDFUL OF LOCALS

Robert Vince

IT ALL STARTED WITH A PUBLIC MEETING . . .

The residents of Redhill Road were alerted in April this year that a public meeting had been held to re-open Redhill Road. A road which had been closed for almost three years as it was a serious accident black spot.

It transpired that two local councillors were attempting to bulldoze this idea through the council without anyone knowing. A so called 'poster' in the little known Weybridge library, announcing the public meeting, was indistinguishable from a holiday postcard. Advertisements announcing the meeting as claimed by these councillors turned out to be a small editorial mention.

Blink and you missed it . . .

And we were told by one councillor that there was 'definitely no agenda about Redhill Road at the meeting . . . the subject of Redhill Road just came up by accident . . . No, definitely no agenda . . .'

Of course there was an agenda!

The 'agenda' was finally discovered by one Redhill Road resident, a Mr S. Holmes!

All these lies about hidden agendas galvanised the residents into action.

A meeting was promptly called.

In the local Bus Museum of course.

It was handy, free, and large enough for the 25 people that turned out.

The Redhill Road Rangers were formed.

R.R.R. was their name, stopping traffic was their game.

They were a pretty disparate group.

Legal gurus, oil executives, people in the city, racehorse owners, out of work marketing executives, property millionaires, cat lovers, jewelers, HGV drivers. And very soon the Residents were getting their act together.

Letters published in the press every week, articles in all the local papers, representations to the two councils involved, special events (like presenting a petition to the council with the residents being transported there by the London Transport Roadster STL441, driven by Ian Barrett.)

Photo opportunities were created, handing flowers to every councillor at a full council meeting to which was driven TD95 with Paul Morris at the helm, more letters to the press, lobbying every member of the council . . . still more letters . . .

The campaign seemed unstoppable.

The result was that Elmbridge Borough council changed its already made up mind, and voted to close the road.

Surrey County Council changed its already made up mind, and voted to close the road.

The police agreed the road should be closed.

Surrey Ambulance agreed the road should be closed.

The Residents were jubilant!
A celebration was called for.

During a somewhat potentially dangerous encounter between a Redhill Road Ranger walking the dog, and a Bus Museum driver undertaking a three point turn, the Ranger was told that the Bus Museum was having a barbecue.

'Hey that sounds like a real rave . . .' the Ranger retorted innocently, having never been to a Bus Museum barbecue before.

'Yes come on down' said Mick, (or was it Mike?) Difficult to tell, Mick has a beard, Mike doesn't have a beard (it's Mike at the moment, then! - MN)

So on that fateful balmy evening, with throats taut with emotion on their recent success (or was it diesel fumes from T504?) the R.R. Rangers arrived at the Museum.

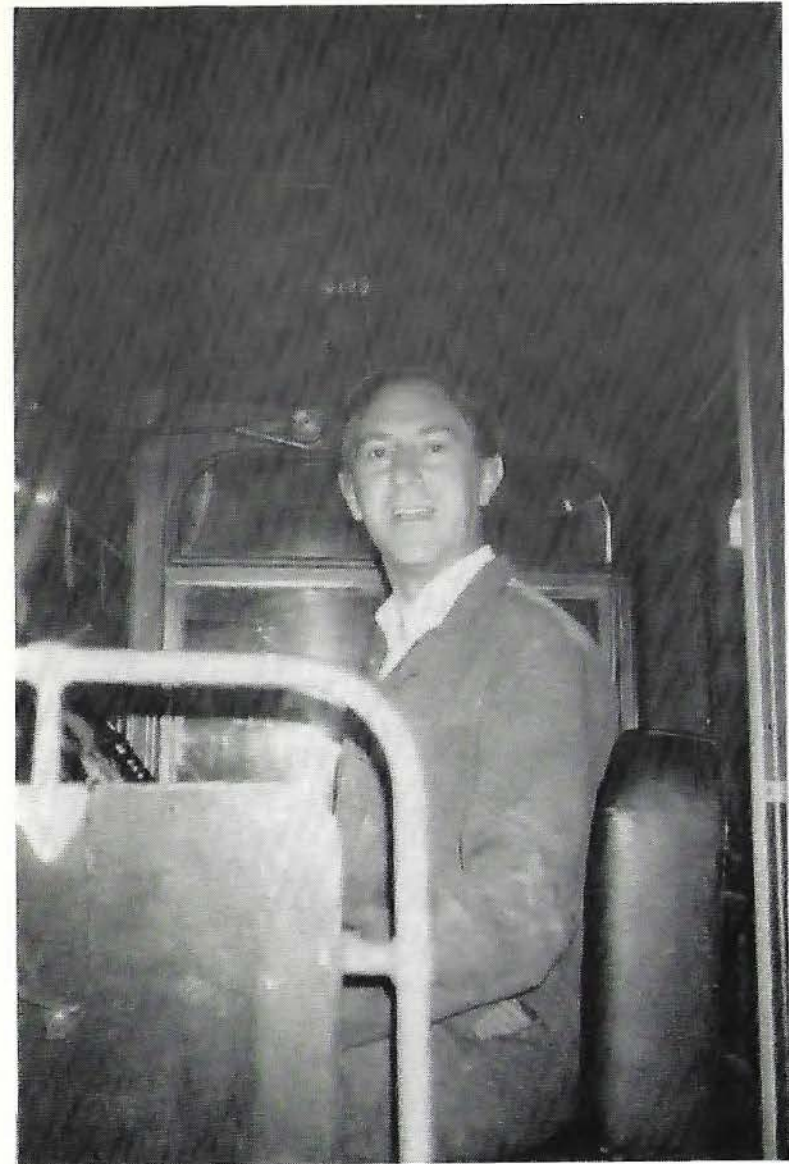
Some arriving the worst for drink it should be said.

But they were a happy if bizarre bunch.

And they all joined in the discussions about whether or not RTs could really out-perform RTLs or not . . .

They also ate their fair share of food particularly the sausages. (Those pepperami midgets lying ashen faced on the table were sausages weren't they?)

They drank into the night, contented that they had almost closed the road for good and happy and pleased to be among other like minded people. The sun disappeared down Byfleet Road, fingers of orange and red gently touched the gents loo door . . . laughter broke out as Peter Plummer told the one about RM3 and the actress on Box Hill . . . again!



'Your Chairman needs you!' PP is seen at the wheel of GS34. He needs you to help with coachwork, cleaning and many other tasks.
(Photo Martin Gibbons)



RM3 basks in the sun at Brighton following the successful London to Brighton run which 44 Routemasters attended. (Photo Mike Nash)



One of the photo runs from the Sevenoaks event took T504 to Ide Hill for this very period view featuring a Riley RM and a similarly vintage garage scene. (Photo: Mike Nash)

N



Work to the nearside of T448 is continuing at some pace thanks to many long hours put in mainly by your Chairman and Brian Down. (Photo: Mike Nash)

N



P3 is seen on the Cobham ramp as Paul Morris and Andy Baxter commence a full mechanical inspection. There has been much enthusiasm at the arrival of this coach and its appearance is likely to be transformed during the winter. (Photo: Mike Nash)



Our printer refused to handle this picture in anything but black and white due to shocking colours evident on Peter Plummer's and Ian Barrett's shirts. The tasteless duo are pictured with Martin Gibbons' ex-Grey Cars AEC Reliance during a museum trip to Hastings. (Photo: Mike Nash)



A cable television crew was down at the Display Day on August Bank Holiday. Roger West is seen doing the talking, the excitement of which later put him in a spin. Just don't ask him why! (Photo: Mike Nash)



TD95 is seen at County Hall, Kingston on 29th August, with assorted Redhill Road Rangers, a racehorse, dogs, cats, golfers and your editor seen holding the No Entry sign. (Photo c/o Robert Vince)



Andy Baxter (with his back to the camera as usual) supervises the team of volunteers which re-united STL2377 with its engine on 27th August (Photo: Martin Gibbons)

X



Two of Aldershot and District's finest, Dennis Loline 357 and Dennis Lance 220 are seen at Guildford Cathedral whilst on route 27 for the successful running day there. (Photo: Tim Stubbs)

X



As mentioned in 'Vehicle News', the Bedford/Spurling canteen trailer is pictured being moved under cover at Cobham following some 11 years of outdoor storage. Member Raja Kalsy can be seen in the foreground. (Photo: c/o Colin Shepperd)



The RF518 duo, Peter Starks and Graham Ruddock will be in the thick of the action at K.O.D. on 22nd October. They are seen here in 'North Kent Vehicle Preservation Group' guise doing the stewarding at Sevenoaks. (Photo: Mike Nash)

It was at this point that some bright wag suggested the Chip shop. 'I'd like to get rid of the taste of sausages so what about some chips?' he said.

Immediately TD95 was drawn up and was transporting 35 happy Rangers to the local 'battery'.

'35 cod and chips please my good man' said the property developer.

'My friend the lorry driver has the cash' he added . . .

Within minutes, replete, and covered in salt and vinegar, the residents returned to a favourite Rangers home.

With a big table.

Champagne was served, the evening was complete.

The Rangers had won their case so far.

But it has to go before one final meeting, and then it should be all over.

The Road will be closed permanently.

Although some Rangers would rather like it to stay open . . .

'so the campaign could go on and on and we could all be friends .' said the legal guru swaying slightly in the evening air.

'so we can have midnight trips on old buses' said the racehorse owner.

'so we can have fish and chips by moonlight' said the oil executive.

' . . . so we can talk about STL 441.' said the jeweller.

' . . . so we can have some more of those sausages.' said the city gent.

' . . . well, for me' said the out-of-work marketing executive, 'it would be to hear the story about the actress and RM3 on Box hill again . . .' □

REDHILL ROAD UPDATE

Just to update things a little from Robert's feature, after both Surrey County Council and Elmbridge Borough Council had voted to keep the road closed permanently there had to be a statutory time in which people could appeal against the decision. This was due to cease on August 29th but certain opposing councillors have managed to get this extended by one month due to the summer recess.

To deliver the final deputation to the County on August 29th, TD95 was once again summoned, this time in the hands of your editor, for another trip to County Hall in Kingston to be joined by various Redhill Road Rangers, a racehorse, a golfer and 29 pigeons, the latter of which were released as a visual protest against the appeal extension. Naturally, the press were invited and as a result our case has gained further exposure. But in the meantime, those opposing councillors have themselves been getting together a petition to overrule the previous decision.

It's now a case of fingers crossed. Meanwhile, those of you who did bother to respond with postal signatures helped to provide a further 400 names to the cause. Special thanks are extended to Peter Cousens, Alan Goodey, Michael Halls, John Pimlott, Roger Stagg, Tim Stubbs and Chris Sullivan for taking extra effort in this respect. You made up for all those who couldn't be bothered. I hope to be able to report on a positive outcome next issue.

Mike Nash

SHORT TURNS

- That south coast character Hugh Harland has run into both mechanical and storage problems with 'Swiftly' – his beloved SM91 which was notable for having been the last AEC single decker on LT's books. If you can help Hugh with advice both mechanical and in terms of storage, please give him a call on 01273 321314. Meanwhile, he was spotted down at Brighton for the Routemaster bash using alternative transport, a tricycle sporting AML 91 H number plates! Does this mean he has a PCT licence?
- Following some 27 years of LT experience as an electrician, Cobham stalwart and owner of RF10 Dave Kriesler (10) has taken the plunge and gone self-employed. He will be pleased to hear from members whose vehicles require any type of electrical work. Give him a call on 0181 688 0395. Oh, and ask to see the photos of his leaving do! □

CELEBRITY DRIVES COBHAM COACH

Ian Chidlaw, Publicity Correspondent

On August 23rd, the week before the August Bank Holiday Display Day, the Museum was asked if they could provide two buses or coaches for an event at Brooklands. This was thought to be just another job of ferrying an invited number of guests from their cars parked on the runway to an event in the main museum. It wasn't anything like that, there were only a handful of people about with a few cars and an odd assortment of other vehicles including, stock car bangers, a skid car, a beautiful brand new AC Ace with a top speed in excess of 140 mph, a 4-wheel drive Subaru Turbo 2000, together with other odds and (the Editor wouldn't let me use the word but you know what I mean).

Why are we here? Answer, to take about 30 people to lunch in the Brooklands Museum and to provide shelter if it rained. These organisers certainly had insider knowledge because it did rain for the first time in over 6 weeks. But why were we here apart from being a mobile bus shelter and here's the important answer.

There is an organisation which some of you may well know, called 'Partnership for Defensive Driving' which is dedicated to improving driving standards and reducing accidents. This is something we are all concerned about, so a few months ago the Partnership ran Post-a-coaster Challenge.

There were nearly 400 entries from PSV, HGV, and Emergency services drivers with a winning entry picked from each group. The top three winners spent the day at Brooklands with Universal Driver Training and tried out one of the latest advanced skid control systems.

Now, the winner of the PSV entry was a very charming, tall, good looking young lady by the name of Su Ings from Bath who has been driving for 7 years. The last 3 years with National Express Coaches on the trunk route from Bath to London operated by Badgerline. Having heard all about her achievements, your two Committee members - Martin Gibbons and Roger West couldn't resist saying to her 'How about driving a real bus?'

So with Martin at the platform side of Roger's RF486 and Su sitting

at the wheel, she took the plunge and off we went. This was quite an experience for Roger – he’s never sat at the back of his own bus before with someone else driving and judging by the very contented look on his face he was more than satisfied with the confidence she was handling his RF. You may ask why wasn’t Roger showing her the way – his wife was sitting in the bus with him!

Then it was the turn of our own Green Line coach T504. Firstly Su was surprised when she had to climb into the cab from the outside and even more surprised when Martin followed her in – but this of course was only for driving instruction! Off we went again but this time for a longer journey into the main part of Brooklands and through some narrow bends that needed a lot of heaving on the wheel, but again the coach was handled with great skill.

After, I asked her what she thought about her trips in the old buses and coaches and it was summed up in one word – wonderful – though she was not too keen on the manual steering. When asked about her life away from the steering wheel, her favourite pastime is travelling abroad (by plane) but Su said she really does love her work with the buses and coaches. By the way, she also passed her Advanced Driving Test on the special day. Her winning slogan was ‘BEFORE JUDGING OTHER DRIVERS, CHECK YOURSELF IN YOUR MIRROR’ and everyone wishes her continued success in her career.

IF YOU HAVE A PSV OR HGV LICENCE, why not have a go with your tips and comments on Road Rage and excessive speed in urban areas? There will be another campaign in December, with prizes, so send your ideas to: Janice Heath, Partnership for Defensive Driving, FREE-POST LON2239, London EC3B 3QR (To arrive by 13th November)

That was not all that happened on that eventful day. After lunch in the main museum we watched with the TV, Press and others, the cyclist Bruce Bursford break the world cycling record of 207mph it took just 21 seconds to achieve and he didn’t move an inch, it was done on rollers. It’s amazing what you see when involved with Cobham Bus Museum! □

RAMBLES WITH A ROVER

Ken Duke

As a new member of the Trust I have been dredging up a few memories of a typical ‘spotting’ trip in the late ‘fifties which I would like to share with readers. This was a time when any self-respecting pre-teenager spent week-ends collecting bus or train numbers or both (as we did) – without even a hint of jokes about anoraks from nonbelievers.

Early on Saturday a small group of us caught the 557 trolleybus from our base in Walthamstow bound for the City. Essential supplies included the precious Red Rover tickets entitling us to travel on any red bus, sandwiches and orange jubbly drinks, bus maps, and of course pencils and notebooks.

The trolleybuses were slightly awe-inspiring with their impression of immense size, remarkable acceleration and silent travel. Some conductors used to ring the starting bell when you were only just getting on the platform, causing one to hang on for dear life as the vehicle shot away. I saw at least two instances of little old ladies holding on to the pole but flying horizontally behind in an involuntary impersonation of Superman as a result of this dangerous practice.

Once we reached the City, the first call was Liverpool Street station to check out the ‘Britannias’ and ‘Sandringhams’ lurking in its murky depths. No other station oozed atmosphere like the west side of Liverpool Street when shafts of sunlight briefly penetrated the smoke-filled air to the pulsating accompaniment of Westinghouse pumps. We then got on the number 11 outside the now vanished Broad Street station, invariably an RTW out of Shepherds Bush garage. Handsome buses they were, their wide profile, purposeful front appearance and vibrating throb from the Leyland engine giving them an aura of strength and power the RTs could never quite match.

The 11 route took us on a sight-seeing tour of London, but we were unimpressed with St Pauls, Trafalgar Square and Big Ben. What did excite us however was arrival at Victoria, at which point we tumbled off for a round-up of bus numbers at the terminus. All the RT types were there in profusion, and along the road to Eccleston Bridge were

vast flocks of Green-line coaches – RFs galore, with the occasional bonus of one of the attractive private hire RFs or RFWs.

We briefly hunted down any Bullied Pacifics or other representatives of the steam age in Victoria BR station. A quick look around Gillingham Street garage where the special BEA coaches were to be found, and we recommenced our journey. The 11 route went a short distance from Lillie Bridge depot, home of many ‘emergency’ service vehicles which were highly prized as ‘cops’. We never got in though as the sloping tunnel down to the depot had a guard on the gate and was strictly out of bounds for spotters. The other main depot for service vehicles in that locality, a yard next to Parsons Green underground station, was only visited on a couple of occasions. I can recall seeing 1010L, a big articulated Leyland tractor unit and low-loader trailer for heavy loads (ps. has anyone a comprehensive list of these vehicles as they existed at that time?).

Hammersmith was our next alighting point and after visiting the trolley depot off Butterwick we hurried across to Riverside garage (awkwardly situated inside the network of main roads in the locality) where an STL type vehicle converted to a breakdown tender could always be found in one entrance (possibly 739J).

I walked along Queen Caroline Street in Hammersmith last year and found that developers had obliterated Riverside – except that one tiny part of a wall yet to be knocked down still had on it the tell-tale sign ‘Sprinkler Stop Valve Inside’. Not much of an epitaph.

Next port of call was King Street where we boarded a 667 trolleybus to Hampton Court. These were the most modern and comfortable of all trolleys and contrasted with the early types with wheel spats operating on the 660/666 routes to North-West London. We visited Colindale from here during the bus conversion programme and walked with morbid fascination amongst the skeletal remains in the trolleybus graveyard behind the depot; a melancholy place indeed which left quite an impression on young minds.

Returning to our normal route, we travelled through Brentford then south towards more attractive scenery by the bank of the Thames

around Twickenham. A short, fast hop from Hampton Court to Kingston and we settled down with our notebooks at the bus station for a couple of hours. Apart from RTs in both red and green and a regular procession of RFs, we were lucky to see the last days of the TDs in service on route 215 – what lovely buses! Was TD95 one of them?

Finally, we retraced our steps to Victoria to find a familiar RT on route 38 to take us home. This route terminated at the Royal Forest Hotel, Chingford – superbly sited in the heart of Epping Forest, where buses had to reverse to form an impressive line-up in front of the Inn; a mobile canteen similar to the Trust’s resided here. Sadly neither buses nor pints are to be found at this location anymore.

I always associated RTs more with outer suburban services and the Leyland versions with inner London. The RTs on routes which used the faster main roads around the capital could really motor – the sensation of speed at over 40 mph akin to doing the ‘ton’ in a car of today. Pre-war versions with the rear roof box were at that time used as training vehicles and we were always pleased to spot one; many of them were eventually stored in the cavernous Stockwell garage prior to scrapping and luckily we got in there to see them.

We journeyed through the drab streets of Islington and Dalston and were lucky enough to spot a couple of the newfangled Routemasters at Bloomsbury on the trolleybus replacement services out of Poplar. Just before the changeover a visit to the big depot, situated amongst the bomb-sites and cobblestones of the old East End, had been most enjoyable as we managed to get round the whole place copping scores of brand new RMs as well as lines of doomed trolleybuses. The most noticeable difference to me between an RT and an RM from a passenger viewpoint was the much bouncier ride of the Routemaster’s soft suspension. The 38 eventually brought us home under darkening skies, drowsy in the warm, smoke-laden atmosphere of the upper deck but contented and with the anticipated pleasure of underlining copped numbers in our Ian Allen ABCs the next morning.

Was it over 35 years ago? A trip to Cobham made it seem like yesterday! □

THE BRISTOL BUS – PART 6

Alan Bond

In December 1972 I had the opportunity to get out of the developing City of Milton Keynes and move to Windsor. This meant a change of job and I started with the then Alder Valley company at Maidenhead depot, there to renew my acquaintance with Bristols.

More Lodekkas

At Maidenhead we had a large and varied selection of Lodekkas of LD and FLF types. Some of the LDs were second hand from various sources and all were different in various ways. The ex-Thames Valley buses were mostly LD6Gs with five speed gearboxes and these were the first, five speed Lodekkas I had come into contact with. Some of the others came from the Midland General/Mansfield District fleet and these were originally fitted with four speed gearboxes, and with this box, the rear axle ratio is normally higher than with the five speed version. It was Thames Valley and Alder Valley policy that all Lodekkas were fitted with five speed boxes for emergency use on the A and B services to London and these were duly substituted for the originals. The axle ratios, however, were not altered and so we had a number of vacuum braked double deckers which were capable of speeds in excess of 65 mph. In order to stop one of these it was necessary to put in a request in writing the week before and we were running through brake linings at an alarming rate. Performance wise this company's Lodekkas were mostly still rather pedestrian but they seemed to be rather better than any of the UCOC examples that I had driven. Strange to relate, the 58/60 seat versions were with one exception, all LDs, Thames Valley having never purchased any FSs from new. The solitary FS was a second hand example, ex-Midland General and was registered 566 ERR. It appeared at Maidenhead garage on one occasion after a breakdown but I never had the chance to drive it.

The LDs were in the process of being withdrawn as new REs were received and routes were converted to OMO. Gradually the mainstay of the crew operated fleet became the FLF. We had one, with the BVW

and one with the 6LX and the rest were 6LW powered. Eventually the few BVW engines around the fleet were replaced by Gardners and the only variety was our tiny fleet of FLF6LXs. This, at last, was a man's Lodekka. It would pull and it would run and the compressed air brakes would give you a stop when and where you wanted it. The nicest thing about it was that it would hang on in fifth gear long after a change down would have been necessary with a 6LW.

For the novice, the steering on the FLF could be a bit of a problem. Being very low geared it required many turns from lock to lock but at the same time it was fairly light even with a 7 standing load. The castor return action would centralise the steering very nicely, provided it was kept under control by not accelerating too soon.

One of our lady drivers, who was, to say the least, tiny, got into difficulties on a very sharp left turn. The turn required the use of full left lock and she then accelerated away from the corner and started to allow the wheel to slide through her fingers. As the speed increased so the wheel spun faster and, becoming worried by this, she took a grip of it only to find that she had been dragged out of the seat and squashed between the cab side and the wheel. This stopped the wheel alright but she still had a fair amount of left lock on and the bus mounted the pavement and demolished a bus shelter before coming to a halt against a tree. Even more annoying was the fact that this was Maidenhead depot's sole FLF6LX (690, PBL 58F) and that it was off the road for a few weeks undergoing repair. This batch of seven FLF6LXs was soon to fall prey to vehicle swap with the Scottish Bus Group and along with a number of FLF6Gs, they went in exchange for a motley collection of mark one and mark two VRs.

REs again

The Alder Valley RE Types came in a number of different categories. The original batch were of the early type with the wrap round wind-screens and five speed manual, gearboxes of the type fitted to the MW. I never had the opportunity to drive one of these and it looks like never will as I don't, think any are left. Later examples of this type had the

semi automatic transmission and I believe an Eastern Counties example of this type is still around in preservation. A later batch of RESL6Gs were fitted with forty seat dual doorway bus bodies and then the standard 49/53 seat type became the standard for most of the rest of the fleet. These earlier REs had the cable operated accelerator and this proved a problem as the cable would gradually stretch and performance would suffer as a result. Later examples went over to the hydraulic throttle in line with the VR and LH, but though a little more reliable, even this was not totally satisfactory as the system had to work far harder than a braking system and as a consequence the gain in reliability was marginal.

The most spectacular of these REs was a batch of five which were a diverted Southdown order. These had the four-speed semi automatic transmission coupled to a Leyland 0680 engine and here we had a bus that catapulted us into the twentieth century. The take-off was phenomenal and the hill climbing had to be experienced to be believed. It would be no exaggeration to say that they would run rings round any other Bristol I have ever known. This was my first experience of a system much used around the country, rarely that of including the door control in the gear change gate. This prevented the driver from moving off with the doors open and, in theory, should have stopped him from opening them before the bus had stopped. The former worked fine but, the latter was easy to override simply by coasting for the last few yards to the stop with the gear selector in the 'D' position. The other half of the fleet, the ex-Aldershot vehicles, included quite a sizable number of RFs with Marshall bodies and a slightly lesser number with ECW bodies. They were virtually all dual drive forty seaters and a few of the ECW examples drifted across to the northern half of the company where we found very little difference from our native examples. Our fitters always seemed to have problems in getting heaters to work properly on REs and on one memorable occasion I remember a heater motor being connected up the wrong way and then we had a bus queue warming device as the heat was pumped out through the intake grille on the side of the bus.

The SC and SU

Everybody knows the famous suspension bridge over the Thames at Marlow and a lot of people will be familiar with the fact that it carries a weight limit of five tons. This very fact made it necessary for the Maidenhead to Marlow service to be operated by lightweight vehicles.

In the days of Marlow and District the service, was operated by twenty seat Karrier Chasers and eventually, with the take-over of Marlow & District, these came into Thames Valley hands. In around 1934 the Karriers were replaced by pretty little Leyland Cubs and these lasted until 1950 or 1951, when they were replaced by Bedford OBs.

By about 1958, replacement had become necessary again and this time, the choice was the Bristol SC4LK. If ever there, was a retrograde step, this was it, I have no personal, experience of the Thames Valley SCs as they were gone before my time. I have driven one ex-Eastern Counties example and I came away with a lasting impression. The noise in the cab is unbelievable, the gear change can only be described as appalling and pulling power equals nil. By all accounts on the return journey from Marlow it was not unusual for passengers to have to ascend Bisham hill on foot, because the bus would not climb the hill with them aboard. The SC started a short lived trend towards what are colloquially known as 'Chinese' gear boxes. Instead of the gear selection following the logical sequence through the gate, one or more gears are found in the 'wrong' place and the SC had one of these gearboxes and the unfamiliar would often find they were changing up when they thought they were changing down and vice versa. All in all, I expect that this did not help the hill climbing a lot and no-one was sad to see the last of the SC.

The successor to the SC came in the form of a fleet of six SUS4A 30 seaters. Once again we had a 'Chinese' gear-box and no pulling power, and, to make matters worse, no stopping power. A full. load on one of these meant a very steady journey. The brakes were fine when cold, but frequent use led to brake fade of unimaginable proportions and then they just would not stop.

The four cylinder Albion engine was certainly not man enough for the job and was very prone to head gasket failure and this further impaired what was already a lacklustre performance. On the Marlow service the descent of Bisham Hill became a compulsory first gear job and coming back it would be a good bus that came up in second and I recall that just one of the entire fleet of SUs could manage that feat. Whisper it gently, but some valiant soul not a million miles from Cobham has no less than five of these things in his care and they are all preserved. Well, it all sorts.

In the end the SU was replaced by yet another monstrosity in the shape of three Leyland EA440 bread vans with 19 seat bodies by Ascough and the mini bus had arrived on the scene. Of all the buses used for the Marlow service these were by far the most unreliable and it was unusual to have two of the three on the road at the same time. In the end they just faded away and at that point the service through Bisham village and across Marlow bridges was temporarily suspended until suitable lightweight vehicles could be acquired and in the meantime the service to Marlow was maintained by full size buses operating via the Marlow by-pass.

The final chapter in the Marlow Bridge service was written large under the name of Ford, a four letter word if ever there was one. In line with a number of NBC companies, Alder Valley had taken delivery of a fleet of Ford R192 chassis fitted with ECW B4SF bodies and Bracknell depot operated them for their sins. As they fell by the wayside most, of them drifted away to pastures new but three outlived the rest when they were converted to short wheelbase 27 seaters by Midland Red, after, the fashion of a prototype which had done the rounds. The hybrids were numbered 797 to 799 and were intended to be the new generation of buses for the Marlow service. The very first journey gave us a rude awakening as we bounced and bounded our way to Marlow, leaping from crag to crag like a mountain goat.

Passenger complaints were legion but that was only the tip of the iceberg. The original six-speed gearboxes had been removed (thank goodness) but the four-speed replacements had very widely spaced

ratios which permitted the same top speed but allowed for the considerable decrease in weight caused by the conversion.

It was now impossible to get away in second without considerable slipping of the clutch, but first was so low that it was quite easy to spin the wheels on a wet road when starting away. The reduction in weight had, of course, led to a reduction in grip acid where there is no grip for traction there is no grip for braking and we were into the realms of the most spectacular skids. The effect was so great that remarks were passed if one of these puddle jumpers was seen to be travelling straight rather than sideways.

Management scratched their heads and looked for solutions but none were forthcoming, simply, because basic is basic and we had gone from that downwards. I don't think any buses in history have had shorter service lives than these three. The third conversion (797) had seen less than three weeks' service when the driver en masse passed a message through the trade union that the buses would not be driven again, and they quietly faded away, hopefully to the nearest scrap yard. They well deserved the nickname which derived from the registration letters TRD which they all carried. □

Next issue – Bond gets bitten by LeyNats!

DIARY DATES

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Saturday 30 September | Cobham Bus Museum Display Day |
| Sunday 1 October | Amersham and district Running Day (01494 943) |
| Sunday 8 October | Staines '95 RT/RF Rally (01223 487)
Canvey Island 'Buses on Parade' |
| Sunday 22 October | Cobham 'Pre-hibernation' Display Day/K.O.D.
(see feature on page 52) |
| Sunday 29 October | Nocturnal 'Heart of the Pennines' Rally, Halifax
(01422 557) |
| Saturday 16 December | Christmas Lights Tour – details on page 11 |

ALDERSHOT & DISTRICT RUNNING DAY

Guildford – May 1995

Tim Stubbs

With little experience of organising events (the event at Guildford was only our second attempt) it does seem we have settled into standing arrangements with those on high regarding the weather, That is to say, for the second time, the day started wet! The plan for the 1995 Running Day was to re-create some bus routes in and around Guildford as operated in the 1950s and 60s. As a town with the Aldershot & District bounded by London Country services, it was natural some routes of each operator should be included. We finished up with 7 routes in all, most being operated on either hourly or half hourly even interval operation.

The Aldershot & District preserved operational buses include three Dennis Lollines, two Dennis Lances and an AEC Reliance. All six buses operated on the day and it is a credit to the owners that every preserved vehicle was made available for the event.

The London part of the entry comprised a good cross section of London green types: the RT of David Johnson, RF of Geoff Hudspith, RLH of Richard Proctor and, last but not least, the GS of John Huxford. We were very pleased to have the contribution of these owners.

A special arrangement was made with Guildford Cathedral. A&D route 27 operated there in the past and we resolved to fit our service times around their service times. This required a departure from Guildford Station at 0740 to connect with Holy Communion and an evening service at 1900 to fit with Evensong. Our roster clerk allocated the crew for the last journey with the remark, 'You will go all the way up and you will come all the way back and you won't carry a single passenger just as in real life.' He was wrong – there were five hardy enthusiasts!

We were very pleased to receive the full co-operation of South West Trains in connection with the event. We were granted full use of Guildford north station car park and with ten operational buses we

arranged departures from the terminal point every 7 or 8 minutes throughout the day. The wet weather did not last for long, and by mid morning there was warmth and sunshine.

I think that of the many impressions which crowd the mind after the running day, the most memorable for me was that of a retired A&D driver, sitting in the cab of the Lance, and relishing his own memories of driving for the 'Tracco'. He discussed the rather cramped cab of the K3, and the tendency of the clutches to judder, and couldn't help remarking, 'Ah yes, but they were nice buses to drive!' Let's hope we brought many such memories back in people's minds.

Thanks to sterling work by Ken Tarbox, the Guildford Running Day has been comprehensively recorded on video. In all over 5700 passenger journeys were made on the day and we ended the event determined to organise another Running Day for 1996. Now, let's see, the Woking area had Aldershot & District and London Country routes.

Footnote: The Guildford Running Day video runs for 58 minutes. Copies may be obtained from the A&D Bus Interest Group, Crawley Hill, CAMBERLEY, Surrey, GU15 2BZ, price £10 + £1 p&p. See review in this issue! □

DR. SPANNER

Following on from the advice given in the last article in the Spring newsletter, I regret to learn that Q83 ground to a halt due to lack of oil in the fuel pump on the way to the St. Albans rally. It was first thought to be a fuel problem as there has been a spate of problems at Cobham in this area but it proved to be a stuck rack, fortunately stuck in the closed position. After a couple of hours, just as the tow-bus arrived, the engine cooled enough for the rack to free. Subsequent checks found the fuel pump to be devoid of oil due to a leak from the governor housing. For the sake of a egg-cup of oil several people on the Q and STL441 who kindly returned to Cobham for the tow-bus, were inconvenienced and a good rally was missed.

READ AND LEARN.

This month, we will continue with the theme of lubrication and discuss greasing and oiling, essential to prevent premature wear. Taking the RF as our example, there are about 34 grease points, 4 manual oiling points and another 24 points served by the automatic lubrication system. The grease points can be found as follows:

Front Axle (12 grease and 2 oil)

Track rod ball ends: 2; Drag link: 2; Brake camshafts: 2; Upper swivel pin: 2; Lower swivel pin: 4

Additionally, there are 2 oil points on the brake adjusters.

Caution should be shown when greasing the brake camshafts as surplus grease will find its way into the brake drums soiling the linings. Ideally, these should be greased with the drums removed and excess grease removed.

Rear Axle (4 grease and 2 oil)

Brake Camshafts: 2; Wheel hubs: 2; rear brake adjusters: 2

Similar caution should be shown when greasing rear brake camshafts.

Chassis (18 grease and 1 oil)

Rear cardan: 4; Front cardan: 2; Rear Brake cross shaft: 2; Front brake cross shaft: 2; Selector linkage ball joint: 1; Throttle shaft: 2; Fan cowl: 1; Fan pulley: 1; Fan shaft: 1; Compressor drive housing: 1; Engine tensioner pulley: 1; stabiliser: 1

The grease nipples should be wiped clean then grease applied until clean grease appears. The excess should be wiped away.

The next article will concern the delights of the automatic chassis lubricator, its function and fault finding. □

PHOTO APPEAL

During 1995 Cobham has been holding 'Display Days'. These are a lot of fun for everyone involved and offer us an opportunity to increase people's awareness of what Cobham is all about. With this in mind, I would like to manufacture a portable information/membership display stand that can be erected on open days, display days and taken to rallies to promote Cobham and hopefully encourage more people to join. This is where you can help, I am looking for the following:

1: Any photos you may have of Trust owned vehicles in pre-restored condition, photos/series of photos of vehicles during restoration up to and including completion. If possible please include any pertinent information.

2: Any photos of your own vehicle that Cobham has assisted with in any way; please state Cobham's involvement.

3: Any photos of rallies or events that you have attended with Cobham. Please include details of event and any other relevant information including amusing captions or anecdotes.

I am also looking for some assistance in building the display stand, so any one who has skills in this area and would like to help, please step forward. I need help in the design stages as well, or if you know someone who wants to get rid of something you feel may be suitable please let me know.

If you would like your pictures returned please enclose your name and address, I will make copies for the display stand and return the originals. Please send all articles and correspondence to the following address. Thanking you in advance.

John E Pimlott, Spooner Walk, Wallington, Surrey, SM6 8LL
Tel: 0181 5548 evenings.

BY ROYAL APPOINTMENT

Roger West

Those of you who attended the recent AGM will remember hearing a call for assistance from members and perhaps the following might persuade some of you to come forward and join in with the Trust's work...

Brooklands Motor Museum is not far away from Cobham and they recently asked us to supply buses for two events.

TD95 and STL441 spent four days ferrying people around the Brooklands site and both were crewed by volunteers from the Trust. Amongst the rewards were free meals plus ice creams, access to all of Brooklands exhibits, a ride in an army jeep and a special treat for two of our lady members (Linda Blackburn and Pam West) – the chance to drive both Trust vehicles. I think both of these new drivers are 100% in favour of ladies' weekends which promise to be much more exciting than staying home and doing the housework.

The following week the buses were called on again for a charity dinner at Brooklands in the presence of HRH Prince Michael of Kent. Brian and Linda Blackburn (who had travelled up from Devon just to help the Trust) crewed TD95 and had the pleasure of driving Prince Michael and the other top table guests to their dinner. Another 'first' for the Trust and an example of how volunteer helpers get some fun out of working for the Trust.

Thanks to all those who helped out at the two events, especially to Brian and Linda who came a very long way to do so.

PS These two events also resulted in a cheque for £840 for the Trust from Brooklands. □

NETLEY RALLY, SOUTHAMPTON

9 July 1995

Alan Bond.

This popular rally was the opportunity for TD95 to redeem herself after her failure to get us to the St Albans rally in June so, after not too early a start five of us set sail, among them your intrepid Editor. He declined the chance to drive even though we were a substitute entry for his very own RF534. (blame Katie! – MN) The earlier mechanical problems having been solved, it was now time to travel a little further to see how our 'flagship' vehicle reacted. In the event, very minor fuel problems were encountered and the cause of these was discovered and rectified on MoT day on the 11th July. For Netley she performed very nicely indeed and between Sandra and myself we made the journey comfortably in something approaching 2½ hours. On the outward journey we encountered a Southern Vectis open top Bristol K5G which was stationary along the Hogs Back. Our offer of assistance for the breakdown was declined as the driver had the situation well in hand. We gathered that his destination was Netley but in the event he didn't arrive and this made TD 95 the oldest bus in attendance.

In previous years this rally has had some very large attendances in terms of buses and this time it was rather a disappointment as numbers were well down and the majority were modern vehicles of no particular interest to most of us. I think the lack of numbers is probably a reflection on the fact that this is one of the rallies where an entry fee is charged for vehicles attending. Many owners are not prepared to pay when they are bringing a vehicle along which helps to attract visitors. This was certainly one reason for the non attendance of the very nice RT 1107 from Fareham whose owner will not pay an entry fee. I have to say that on balance I agree with him and it looks as if a lot of other owners do too. I think organisers have to be a little circumspect in this regard or it could mean the demise of another rally from the calendar. It would be sad if this were to happen to Netley as it is very much a family day out for many people and that is the sort of

thing our hobby needs.

On arrival we were parked among a small London contingent which consisted of RFs 517 and 518, five RMs and a Metrobus. The Southampton heritage buses fleet was well turned out with two Guy Arabs, one an open topper, and a couple of AEC Regent Vs. Southdown was well represented in terms of a couple of Queen Marys and a nice PD2 which has been in the ownership of Ian Osbourne of Fareham for a good many years and is always nicely presented. Some years ago I had the opportunity to drive this vehicle when I attended the open day at the Provincial depot at Hoeford. It is one of the later PD2s with synchromesh on third and top gears only but it drives with absolute ease and it still makes me wonder how the Bristol concern could have been so out of date as to persevere with constant mesh to the bitter end. Talking of Bristols I was surprised to see that their numbers were very much depleted too and no more than about half a dozen or so examples were to be seen around the rally field. Among these was KRU 224F, the ex Hants & Dorset FLF with semi-automatic gearbox. This bus is always beautifully kept and is a credit to its owners. A nice Southern Vectis open top LD, late of the Sandown to Blackgang summer service, was looking very pretty, and a newcomer, at least to me, was the ex-Brighton, Hove & District RESL with dual door body. I seem to recall this vehicle being used at Butlin's at Minehead for some years and it is nice to see it back in its original livery. The Northampton Daimler with Northern Counties body was one of the first vehicles we encountered when we arrived and this one is a regular performer at rallies around the south of England. The Brighton Corporation PD2 with forward entrance Weymann body is looking a lot healthier than the last time I saw it and looks set fair to be a prize winner in years to come as it progresses. The elusive Silver Star Atlantean with the registration 1013 MW was again present and bringing back memories of its occasional forays to Victoria on the express service that Silver Star operated from the Salisbury area. This bus was in good company as it shared a tot of work with the famous, and now sadly defunct, RTL305. I have it on good authority that even the RTL was pressed into

service as a duplicate on the London service on one occasion, such was the demand for seats.

Netley is a nice venue and deserves to be better supported than it was this year but I suppose there are many factors to take into account. Certainly I think the organisers are putting off many people by charging them for showing their vehicles and they may perhaps have to rethink this policy if the event is to survive for much longer. It would be a shame if the event was to pass into history as it has all the ingredients for a great fun day out for all the family.

Nevertheless, a good day was had by all and we rounded it off with a run along the A27 to Fareham and a climb over Portsdown Hill to enjoy the magnificent vie of Portsmouth, Gosport, Southsea and Langstone Harbour. The only hiccup was the slight fuel problem which has now been cured and again TD95 performed magnificently which proves that there is life left in the old girl yet.

Whisper it gently, but on the next outing I think we may persuade our editor to share the driving. I know he will enjoy it. □

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM DEREK ROBINSON (178)

Through the pages of your excellent quarterly magazine, may I pass on my thanks to all those fellow members of LBPT for making the Display Day such a relaxed, friendly and enjoyable day. My wife and I enjoyed ourselves immensely!

Hopefully, these Display Days will become regular features of the Cobham Museum and will encourage a greater attraction to the visiting public. Not quite the crush that can be experienced as on April's Open Days. A greater opportunity to enjoy a pleasant chat with several of those working on their vehicles. A chance to take a few photographs for the album without the usual haggle with the throng.

I am a non-active member of the Trust usually, as Sunday are my only day off from my job as a driving instructor with BSM, and we

usually go out somewhere – to rallies in the summer months. But I would like to offer myself and my wife’s assistance on the Sunday 22 October Display Day. Perhaps we could help out on the sales stand or help with the issue of admission tickets?

I hope that these Display Days prove popular this year and that they become a regular feature.

Can I add a suggestion? Vehicles could be invited to attend to add just a little more interest or perhaps a themed day could be arranged – for example – a GS Day with one or two operating the link service down to Brooklands. Please forgive my poor English – I trust my enthusiasm comes over.

Best wishes to you all and perhaps, one day, should I ever be fortunate to win the lottery or the pools, that I’ll be able to have my own bus preserved down at Cobham.

The Willoughbys, Upper Richmond Road, East Sheen, London SW14 8DF

SO WHO CAN DRIVE WHAT?

Mike Nash

There seem to be a number of interpretations these days as to exactly who is eligible to drive old buses and how many passengers can be carried. Of course, some insurance policies stipulate restrictions on the latter anyway, but I recently had an interesting chat with Mike Beeby of Carlton Insurance Brokers (01933 313769), who runs the specially negotiated Carltonbus insurance scheme for preserved buses. He has provided me with the following chart which was compiled with the guidance of DVLA at Swansea. However, he does point out that this information should not be construed as legal advice and that the interpretation of the law is ultimately a matter for the courts to decide!

To expand on the subject, I have always insured RF534 fully comprehensive through Footman James on one of their ‘classic’ policies. This covers me for a full load plus unlimited use on free bus services at special events, and all for the ludicrous sum of £61.50. However, only existing customers get this arrangement as new customers are now restricted to 13 passengers only.

	BUSES AND COACHES OVER 30 YEARS OLD		BUSES AND COACHES LESS THAN 30 YEARS OLD	
	MAXIMUM PASSENGERS PERMITTED	USE FOR HIRE AND REWARD	MAXIMUM PASSENGERS PERMITTED	USE FOR HIRE AND REWARD
PERSONS WITH ORDINARY CAR LICENCE WHO ARE OVER 21	8	NO	LIMITED TO VEHICLES WITH UP TO 17 SEATS	NO
PERSONS WITH HGV LICENCE WHO ARE OVER 21	8	NO	LIMITED TO VEHICLES WITH UP TO 17 SEATS	NO
PERSONS WITH RESTRICTED PCV LICENCE (GRANDFATHERS' RIGHTS)	UNLIMITED	YES	UNLIMITED	NO
PERSONS WITH PCV LICENCE	UNLIMITED	YES	UNLIMITED	YES

Most other specialists restrict owners to either 8 or 13 passengers these days, which is why Mike Beeby set up the Carltonbus package which does cover for a full load and three free bus service days per annum with the option of additional days at £10 per day. For vehicles up to a value of £5000, the premium is £102.50, and bearing in mind that the policy is custom made for preserved buses and there are no silly loopholes, I would recommend this option as Mike is very sympathetic towards preservationists, especially Cobham members!

My thanks are extended to Mike for his time and the information he has kindly provided. □

PRE-HIBERNATION DISPLAY DAY AND
KINGSTON OPERATING DAY
SUNDAY 22nd OCTOBER

Our final Display Day of 1995 is all set to be a major event. The museum will be open until 8pm to permit nocturnal running of vehicles for extra atmosphere. It will also be 'Ladies Day' as detailed elsewhere this issue. And last but by no means least, KOD will be taking place. This doesn't mean that we will be serving fish in the canteen, but it does mean that various RF owners will be running Kingston Operating Day as a separate event, with a free 215 service linking the two venues.

KOD has been organised to bid a fond farewell to famous Kingston Garage, and the service, which will utilise RFs, will be running half hourly with a few shorts to Esher and several 'celebrity' machines making guest appearances during the day. Thanks to the cooperation of Westlink, there will be a forecourt display at Kingston Garage featuring a selection of types formerly associated with the area. This will be constantly changing as vehicles come off and go on duty so there will be a wealth of photo opportunities in addition to the scenes back at the museum. It is also our plan to video the event.

Please note that KOD has been organised separately by RF owners and whilst the 215 service connects with Cobham Bus Museum, tickets to travel will not be required and some vehicles maybe running with limited passenger capacity.

You will need a ticket to travel on RT3491 which will once again be running a separate hourly service to Brooklands Museum, Weybridge Station and Weybridge town centre. Admission on the day will be £2 for adults and £1 for children.

This promises to be a memorable day combining lots of activity at Cobham with a final chance to see and hear RFs in their most famous haunts. All visiting vehicles will be welcome on the day and it is hoped that there will be a big turn out of RFs of which 366, 433, 453 and 534 have already been confirmed as on duty.

DON'T MISS IT!
THE COBHAM SHOP

Pam West

As well as a range of personalized items, we are able to offer 'Scotch' films, and these are available from the shop at discounted prices. Our exclusive range of nine postcards featuring Cobham vehicles has also proved popular, and it is hoped to expand the range before too long. Sales have also been brisk for the 1995 limited edition model Routemaster, although there are still a few available.

We are now looking forward to the next Open Day, but for those who are unable to attend in person we are pleased to be able to offer items from our gift range by post. Postage & packing has been included in the prices of these items, and should this prove to be successful the range of goods available by post will be increased. Prices are as follows:

Round button badges	15p	Enamel bus pins	65p
Pencil with eraser *	55p	Leather key fob	80p
Pen *	80p	Scrap pads *	70p
Comb in case	£1.00	Ruler *	80p
Tax disc holder *	£1.00	Leather bookmark *	£1.00
Photo key ring *	£1.20	Postcard notepad *	£1.50
Bottle opener key ring *	£1.80	Torch with batteries *	£4.75
Set 9 postcards *	£5.00	Cobham guide	£4.00
Cobham poster	£2.00	1995 model RM ltd edtn	£13.00
London bus apron adult	£7.50	London bus shopping bag adult	£7.00
London bus shopping bag child	£5.50	Baseball caps (red, black, green) *	£7.5
London bus T shirt XL/L/M/S (printed front and back)			£8.50
London bus sweatshirt XL/L/M/S			£15.00
London bus T shirt age 3-11 (please state age)			£6.50
London bus sweatshirt age 5-11 (please state age)			

* Personalised with the words "Cobham Bus Collection"

Please note that we are unable to accept orders with a value of less than five pounds. Cheques and postal orders should be payable to LBPT and crossed. Please allow 10 days for delivery.

Thank you for your support. We look forward to seeing you at the special 'Pre-hibernation' event on Sunday 22nd October.

VEHICLE NEWS

Peter Plummer

June to August 1995

- RT2775 The body was lowered onto the chassis on 3rd June. Brian Down and I have fitted the battery cradle support, the cradle itself, effected repairs to the steel back rail and fitted a number of various timber fillets. Ian Barrett is currently welding in repairs to the lower edge of the bottom stair which has suffered severe corrosion. John Bedford has cleaned off a good proportion of rear underbody in preparation for fitting the lower saloon floor.
- Bill Cottrell and Andy Baxter have fitted new rear spring shackles and differential gland. Other cleaning and painting has been performed by John Broadhurst, Philip Millard and Malcolm Lewis. Peter Burrows has prepared the new stair pan for assembly.
- STL2377 The 'new' engine was fitted by Andy Baxter on 27th August, with assistance from Ron and Gavin Cotton. Parts are awaited for the gearbox which was removed in early May. Chassis painting and cleaning has been performed by Bill Cottrell, Alan Davidson, Philip Millard and Ginger John.
- A professional coachmaker viewed the body on 22 July and pronounced that the piece by piece reframing performed before the Trust acquired the vehicle had inherent defects of alignment. The Trust committee is now considering all options on the best way to proceed.
- T448 This vehicle has received the majority of our coachworking labour this quarter. The last nearside window has been fitted and all associated timber mouldings inside the saloon have been fitted by Brian Down and myself. The nearside seats have all be removed, old rexine on the nearside sidewall removed, old, cracked linoleum lifted and preparation made for new materials to be fitted with the assistance of Malcolm Lewis, Rod Lucas and George Townsend.
- Externally, the framework from the nearside door to the emergency exit at the rear is complete and now awaits only

three complicated steel corner panels and fairing to be made and fitted, together with mouldings and beadings. Other assistance has been by Raja Kalsy and Brian Hine.

- T504 Our experts, Andy Baxter, Bill Cottrell and Tim Nicholson deem the exhaust smoke levels and lack of power to be due, probably, to a very tired and possibly well worn 8.8 litre engine. However, the vehicle put in a guest appearance at the Sevenoaks rally on 6th August, suitably demoted on the day for bus work and posed for photographs at Otford on routes 404 and 421, and at Ide Hill on route 413. By the following week, Brian Down, Roger Stagg and I had restored this fine old lady to Green Line 701 condition in readiness for a rally in Staines which is where T504 started her working life in 1938.
- 332W Bill Cottrell, Andy Baxter and Philip Millard prepared the new extension and installed 332W (our recovery vehicle) in 'fire station mode' ready for action at short notice.
- 702B I have been successful in locating and obtaining Bedford 'O' type headlamp bulb holders, which were fitted to working order by Andy Baxter.
- A horn push (in the centre of the steering wheel) has yet to be found and a few brake parts missing since the vehicle's strip down many years ago. However, restoration of the vehicle is well advanced. To my great relief, the Scammell trailer unit was moved inside the building on 18th June after eleven years outside.

**WE NEED MORE
VOLUNTEERS TO HELP**

PLEASE TELEPHONE 01474 776

LADIES' DAY

ATTENTION FELLAS!

Fed up with constant earbashings for spending too much time playing buses? Well now, we at Cobham have the answer to your problem: Ladies Day

This is your chance to bring your partner/mother/sister or any other lady that takes your fancy, and introduce her to the delights of bus preservation. Experts (Peter Plummer, Bill Cottrell and others) will be on hand to talk about the involvement of ladies in the following activities:-

BUS PRESERVATION

mechanical and bodywork.

BUS DRIVING

(we all know ladies make the best drivers)

RENOVATION WORK

on buildings, signs, Leyland clock, &c

DISPLAY

arranging model displays, &c. for the cabinets

BUS WASHING

for the energetic

GARDENING

a long term project to landscape the grounds

BUT MOST OF ALL good company, plenty of tea and coffee and the chance to share your interest. So make a date for October 22nd starting at 11 am, to combine with our last 'Display Day' of the year. A warm welcome awaits all ladies at Cobham, with or without their man. Children are welcome too. For more information, ring Pam West before 9pm on 01252 060