

COBHAM BUS MUSEUM

MAGAZINE



No. 7

WINTER 1994

THE LONDON BUS PRESERVATION TRUST

COBHAM BUS MUSEUM

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TELEPHONE CALLS

The large number of telephone calls being received by some committee members is causing excessive disruption at home, especially during the late evening. For the future, 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 in this will be appreciated.

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Please send all magazine contributions and advertisements to the Editor. Views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Editor and Committee. When contacting the Committee, please enclose an S.A.E. if a reply is required.

Front cover: A Victoria-bound RT on route 29 waits at the traffic lights in Trafalgar Square on a damp evening in December 1963.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to another jam-packed issue of your favourite magazine! Space is at a premium, so I'll keep my ramblings short and sweet on this occasion. Starting with some great news, I am delighted to announce that our 1995 Open Day is to be sponsored jointly by 'Buses' and 'Classic Bus' magazines, the plan being that a souvenir programme will be produced which will form the ticket for visitors to use the bus service and gain entrance to the museum. With the publisher, Ian Allan, based so close to our event, both parties should benefit from this partnership, which will hopefully be the start of a long-term relationship, doing much to re-establish Cobham's credibility and status within the movement. My grateful thanks to Stephen Morris and Gavin Booth for considering my original suggestion and for their generous support, both past and future.

You should have received a selection of paperwork to accompany this magazine. Do not file it in the bin! Refer to the Membership Report for further instructions and follow these carefully, giving special consideration to the subject of Deed of Covenant, a way in which most of you can help boost the Trust's funds without it costing you a penny.

If you study the inside front cover, you will notice that the committee has undergone a slight re-shuffle which has given me an earlier than expected opportunity to review our membership arrangements as explained in my report elsewhere in this issue. I would take this opportunity on behalf of everyone to thank Win and Colin Wickens for their efforts over a twenty year period, and hope they will remain active on the preservation scene for many years to come.

Finally, can I draw your attention to our 'Screen and Social' gathering on Saturday, 4th February, at the Red Lion, and also ask that those wishing to assist with Open Day make it known to the Chairman at the earliest opportunity. For instance, we will need a lot more people helping to sell programmes this time.

May I also wish everyone compliments of the season. I hope this issue helps to brighten up the cold days ahead. Keep up your support, and don't forget to send photographs to accompany your articles. Thank you.

Mike Nash

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This report follows closely on the heels of the Autumn magazine. Because of the shorter interval of time, there is less to report on the legal situation than before. However, I have very recently received from David Morgan, the Trust's Solicitor, an important letter indicating that the Charity Commissioner has approved the draft Memorandum and Articles of Association for the new charity. This, you will appreciate, is a significant step forward.

In consequence, I have written to David asking for clarification on several matters. As soon as the committee has been advised on these procedural points, an explanatory letter will be circulated, setting down the current position and future intentions. In the meantime, I want to assure you that no fundamental decisions will be taken by the committee or changes made, without proper consultation with the membership as a whole.

The Trust committee hopes that progress can now be made by negotiation, avoiding the unpleasantness and embarrassing publicity which would have resulted from court proceedings – and that the Trust will, in the very near future, be reunited with its rightful assets after nearly a decade of separation.

As we approach the end of the second year in this dispute, I find it helpful to reflect on the more positive aspects of our achievements to date. Progress during the past two years has been remarkable, and the passage of time has demonstrated that, to a large extent, the recent impetus for change and improvement has been initiated mainly by the newer members.

How do we explain this? I believe it is the matter of loyalty which is at the heart of the problem. Let's take a look at the facts. Nine resident members who are working on Trust projects have eight buses between them garaged at Cobham. Nine other resident members own fourteen buses between them, also garaged at Cobham, but these other members currently make no practical contribution to the running of the museum. Also to be included in the equation are the 14 Trust-owned vehicles which need to be cared for.

Quite recently, the Treasurer received a letter from a non-worker/resident – seven months after the inception of the new rent scheme, criticising the changes and declining to pay. No letters were

received beforehand from this or any other individual and it is evident that loyalty to the Trust is a secondary consideration to at least one non-active resident.

Fortunately for the Trust, the apparent selfishness of these individuals is outweighed by the quality, enthusiasm and dedication of the volunteer workforce, which continues to expand and is helping to restore the credibility of Cobham Bus Museum as a democratic and respected institution. It is crucial that we address this problem if we are to survive. Regrettably, the committee has had to review the workings of the rent scheme again and a statement on this by the Treasurer appears elsewhere in this magazine.

On the social side, I wish to express a vote of thanks to Mike Nash for organising a superb outing to the BaMMOT museum at Wythall, near Birmingham. This raised £55.00 towards our clubhouse fund.

In addition, our annual social and members' slide evening has been booked at The Red Lion, 172 Westminster Bridge Road, SE1 (adjacent to Waterloo Station) from 6pm onwards on Saturday 4th February. At this popular event, members are invited to bring along their thirty favourite 'golden oldie' slides and share the reminiscing.

I close by wishing you all a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Peter Plummer

VEHICLE RENTS – 1995

Last April, we established a principle that whilst members benefit from a low vehicle rent at Cobham, they are expected to donate 10 periods of work per annum to keep the fabric of the building from decaying. Those who chose not to agree with this condition will pay extra to cover the cost of 'bought-in' labour needed to maintain the building. We started on the basis that a premium would be levied on top of the basic rent. From January 1st, this will change. The base rent will be the higher figure, and a discount can be earned in accordance with the previously stated principle.

The new rents, taking into account an increase, will be £840 per annum or £78 pcm. Members will be notified individually of their rental due, based on the credits earned since last April.

Bill Cottrell Treasurer

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

As I mentioned in my editorial, I have for the time being at least, assumed the role of Membership Secretary and with the help of Paul Morris and his computer, have spent many hours in recent weeks bringing the whole system more up to date. Please repay our efforts by carefully following the instructions below.

- 1 Firstly, we have tried to compile a membership list which is 100% accurate. Please check the address label on your envelope. If your details are incorrect, please let me know.
- 2 Those of you whose membership renewal is due will find a new style form to complete and return. This is applicable to around 150 members so a prompt reply will be essential to boost Trust funds.
- 3 All members will have received a Record Sheet to complete and return. These will form a central record file to help with the future efficiency of the Trust. Where applicable, please return it with a photograph(s) as these can be used to fill spaces in future issues of the magazine.
- 4 Roger West has compiled the information sheet and relevant paperwork concerning Deeds of Covenant and Standing Orders, facilities which I feel sure many members will utilise. Remember, you will be helping the Trust by doing so, and it won't cost you a penny!

A stamped, addressed envelope is provided for all but our overseas members so there is no excuse not to respond. If you care about Cobham's future, please do your bit to help. After all this hard work, I shall take it personally if so members can't be bothered!

You have all been allocated a membership number which appears on your address label. Apart from a few special exceptions I have allocated these in chronological order, using old membership records where possible. It was suggested that 'cherished' membership numbers could be auctioned in the same way that the DVLC sells cherished registration numbers! I might try this sometime for a bit of fun! Another suggestion was that 'family membership' should be offered and I should like members' views on how we could go about this. But it won't happen unless I get some feedback.

Meanwhile, despite having entered what is traditionally the quiet period in terms of membership, I am pleased to report that we have reached another height at 270 members. It will be interesting to see how many whose renewal is due will stay with us. Hopefully, all will!

On a final note, Paul and I are currently designing a new publicity leaflet which will be updated on an annual basis. With this, and the support from 'Buses' and 'Classic Bus', further growth can confidently be expected in 1995, with a bit of help from our own members, of course.

The following are welcomed to the Trust:

253 Malcolm Webster	Wychling, Kent	RF429	
255 Philip Thomas	Sutton, Surrey	RF26	IB
256 Brian Dabbs	Swansea		
257 Kenneth Moody	Holland		
258 David Morgan	London WC1		
259 D Smith	Welling, Kent		
260 Charles Young	Potton, Beds	RT4317	PP
261 Sydney Betts	Watton, Herts	RT2084	PP
262 David Brown	London N22	RM196	JB
263 Graeme Brazier	Ashford, Mddx	HDV624E	
264 Richard Stanton	Walton-on-Thames		PP
265 Pamela West	Fleet, Hants	RF486	RW
266 Len Cole	Sudbury, Suffolk		
267 Martin Fuggles	Basingstoke	RT2240	MN
268 Barry Shorland	Shirley, Surrey	Looking!	
269 Clifford Jones	Bognor		MN

Recruited by: IB: Ian Barrett; MN: Mike Nash; PP: Peter Plummer; RS: Roger Stagg; RW: Roger West; JB: John Bedford

Mike Nash

BUILDING EXTENSION –
FULL STORY WILL APPEAR IN NEXT ISSUE

ROUTEMASTER 40

Graham Lunn

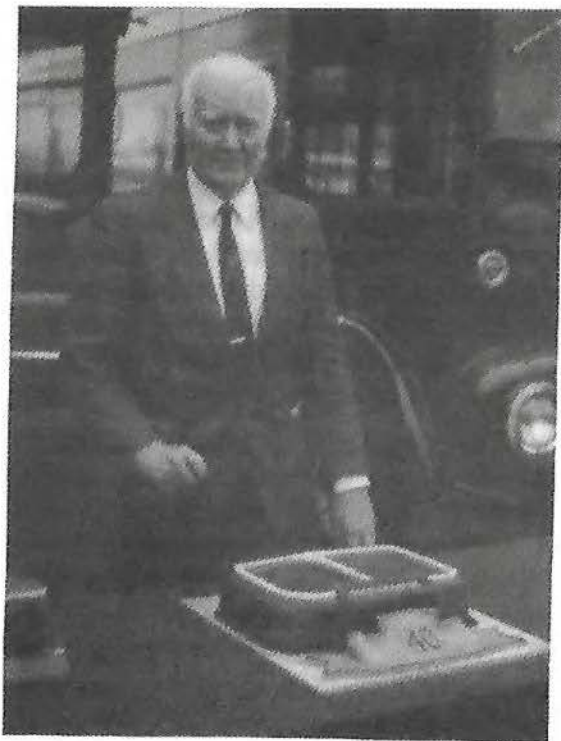
Being one of the organisers of the above event as well as a Cobham Member, I feel I should give an account of the day. The Routemaster Owners and Operators Association (RMOOA) in conjunction with the London Transport Museum decided that Routemaster 40 should take place at the Royal Docks. But when we thought up the event, we didn't realise just how big it would be! It was a success for everyone concerned, whether vehicle owners or visitors.

At the event, we had no less than 96 Routemasters, the biggest gathering ever, many of them making a rare trip to London. For some of them, it was the first visit back since sale. There were too many highlights to list, but special mention must be made of RM2208 which is owned by Malcolm King of Leeds. Wearing the Shillibeer livery, RM2208 is kept at Dewsbury Museum which is well worth a visit. Stagecoach Perth brought down RM560 which must have been an epic journey, whilst East Yorkshire sent down RM188. Museum vehicles included RM1414 from Greater Manchester Museum, RCL2219 from BaMMOT and of course Cobham's own RM3.

We also had a few 'invited' vehicles and amongst these were RT113, STL469, Peter Plummer and George Townsend's RT593 and FRM1, the latter of which performed on the R40 bus service to Covent Garden Museum, as it has now got a ticket again. Hopefully, we will see FRM1 at more events during 1995.

Finally, may I thank everybody who supported Routemaster 40, vehicle owners and visitors alike. You helped make it a very successful event for the two charities concerned, which were Guide Dogs for the Blind and the Red Cross. □

PS A further event is planned for 1995 – ROUTEMASTER LONDON TO BRIGHTON on July 23rd. It does not finish at Madiera Drive but it is on the sea front! Any enquiries, please ring 0784 849. Hope to see you there.



COLIN CURTIS OBE, is seen here cutting the RM40 Birthday Cake at the Royal Docks. The Trust-owned prototype RM3 is in the background.

HELP WANTED ON OPEN DAY! SUNDAY 9TH APRIL 1995

Now is the time to let us know if you will be available to help with Open Day. With the support from 'Buses' and 'Classic Bus' magazines, we are expecting the 1995 event to be our biggest ever, so we need lots of help from members. If you can lend assistance on either Saturday 8th April or Sunday 9th (or both!), please let Peter Plummer know as soon as possible, by all means indicating any preference you may have as to the type of duties you wish to be involved with.

We need to know sooner rather than later as the organisation of manpower takes place long in advance of the event, and it is therefore difficult to slot people in last thing. The Chairman hopes to hear from plenty of you. Help us make the 1995 Open Day our greatest success yet. Thank you.

Mike Nash

50 YEARS AROUND LONDON TRANSPORT AND NEVER AN EMPLOYEE

PART ONE
Roger Stagg

Grandfather Crittall came from Oxted and moved to Camberwell in 1912 when he joined the London General Omnibus Company as an apprentice mechanic. I know little of what he did in those years before the Great War, but, along with so many of his contemporaries, he joined the Army in 1915 and was soon in the trenches in France where he won the Military Medal. In 1916, having risen to the rank of Sergeant Major, he was put in charge of a unit keeping requisitioned B-type buses in running order and, probably only as a result of this, survived to be discharged in 1919. Upon discharge he re-joined the LGOC at Walthamstow before eventually transferring to the old Norwood garage. Other than moving between a multitude of garages fulfilling the emergency requirements and training replacements during the Second World War, he remained at Norwood for the rest of his life.

Grandfather Stagg was born in Croydon. One of a large family, he, like most of the men of the family worked on the Croydon tramways which by his time had become electrified. As far as I know, he remained a tram driver from 1908 when he joined until 1951 when the Felthams departed. He then carried on as a bus driver at Thornton Heath until his retirement in 1955. Three of his brothers were also tram drivers and two of his sisters were clippies during the Second World War.

Father was a drill sergeant during the war and, thus, being in charge of training, never left the country. When he came home, the army routine was still with him and it was very hard for a young boy to understand why one should wash in cold water when there was hot and polish one's shoes every morning. Father joined the LPTB in 1946 and became a tram driver operating out of Norwood tram garage on routes 33 and 48. We had lived in the same house as Grandfather Stagg until we were bombed out during the War. In 1947, Father secured the tenancy on a property in Poplar Walk Road, Herne Hill, on the single track, one way section of the 48 tram route. I was to stay there until 1958 and witness the departure of the trams for replacement by buses.

My first recollection of buses must be that there often appeared to be one outside our door and as I grew a little older, I undoubtedly realized at some time that Grandfather Crittall would frequently come home for his dinner (lunch in our day), presumably on some routine road test! Other early recollections included being rushed out on the upper deck of an outside staircase LT on route 35 at Loughborough Junction to be ill over the back. Visits to Norwood bus garage were frequent and I can remember these prior to Father becoming a tram driver, though most of the memories involve simply running up and down the stairs of what seemed to be the hundreds of buses parked there.

The serious involvement must have started around 1949 with Father passing the door most days in his tram and regular visits to Norwood garage to see Grandfather. There were periods when Father's schedule would bring the 48 tram up Poplar Walk Road at around 8.40 at which time I was ready for school and I would wait in the road with his white enamel can of tea. Of course, in those days one could wait in the road as the only likely traffic would be the tram. Father would stop outside our house which is about a hundred yards down from the tram stop on the corner of Poplar Walk Road and Lowden Road, a photograph of which, with a No. 48 tram passing by, has featured in many publications. I would climb aboard through the front entrance where I could barely see over the lower rail of the windscreen and, standing behind the controller, would "drive" the tram to the corner. How many times this occurred I do not know; it seems as though it was virtually every day. I soon noticed that, as we approached the corner, father would stamp on something on the floor to the right of the controller and the brake handle would swing round bringing the tram to a halt. It was not long before I plucked up courage at what I thought was the appropriate moment and stamped on the pawl, releasing the brake handle which struck me on the forehead and knocked me off the platform into the road. Fortunately the only damage was the cut across the temple from the impact with the handle – of which I proudly wear the scar to this day.

Route 48, particularly between Loughborough Junction and Herne Hill, was little used and, as such, there was never any fuss about my riding on the front platform over that section, and many is the day during school holidays when I would wait at the points at Loughborough Junction for the appointed time to climb aboard. As soon as the tram had turned the corner, I would go through the sliding door to the front

platform and become a "tram driver". If there were only a few people on board, I could go upstairs and become a monkey, swinging by the arms along the roof mounted handrails until I reached the front, where it was possible to hang out of the small air vent window which contained no glazing. What fun those trams were for an 8/9 year old, authoritatively reversing all the seat back directions as soon as West Norwood terminus was reached. Occasionally the tram would be scheduled to run in to the depot down the narrow alleyway to the tram shed and on to the traverser, and, if the right person was on duty, I was sometimes allowed to drive this. Norwood depot remains in my memory to this day as the place where I ate world's best bread pudding whilst Father and his Conductor counted out and stacked the Farthings, Halfpennies and Threepenny bits before we caught the tram home, sitting smartly in our seats – somewhat in contrast to the activities of the upward journey.

Visits to Grandfather Stagg's were few and far between. I am not sure of the reason; perhaps there had been a family feud or because of the fact that he lived at Croydon, a substantial distance in those days. I can only recall one occasion of going down to meet Grandfather Stagg on a running-in turn at Thornton Heath, travelling with him to the little South Croydon depot (which still exists) and being amazed at the sheer luxury of the driving compartment of his Feltham in comparison to Father's E1/E3. He had a seat and a windscreen wiper that worked. (Father, as I recall had a rubber squeegee and a potato cut in half to deal with rainfall.) The only similarity appeared to be that you still stamped on a button on the floor to ring the warning bell, but, unlike the traditional tram, there was a separate driver's compartment so that small boy passengers could not stamp on the bell at the alighting end when the conductor was somewhere inside the car.

I am not quite sure what Grandfather Crittall's position was by 1950: I believe that he was the day foreman. He was based at Norwood and had an office of his own – the first in the gate on the left hand side – and seemed to have several people working under him. He travelled to several other garages and he only occasionally seemed to get his hands dirty. I had become an avid Meccano fan and the nearest shop holding a full stock of spares was only a five minute walk from the West Norwood garage. Saturday trips for spares invariably meant a diversion to the garage, where, if it was before 1 o'clock, I could almost guarantee that there would be four persons, including Grandfather, playing dominoes in

his office. As a minimum 5½ day working week was the norm of the time, Saturday morning services were at as high a level as on a week day, but, from 1 o'clock, buses started to run in for the reduced service that featured in the afternoon. The dominoes had to cease until around 5 o'clock as the buses started to line up at the diesel pumps on the two islands for filling and garaging. Norwood could accommodate around 6 buses in an orderly two rows of three, leaving a clear line for exiting on one side and a line on the other side that was always kept clear as it was the walkway to the canteen which was situated on a span above the pumps. All those there had to frantically fill each bus with diesel and park it to prevent a build-up of running-in buses, though they frequently ended up in lines in the side roads either side of the garage. By 5 o'clock the garage would be around ⅓ full and everything would be quiet again, as large mugs of tea appeared from the canteen and the dominoes recommenced.

These were interesting times for a young boy, standing on the back platforms as the buses were taken from pumps and parked at furious speeds, as though to demonstrate how fast it was possible to turn a tight circle in the centre of a garage. Over a short period of time things changed from my hanging on the platform to climbing up in the cab alongside the driver. There were no doors to open on the STLs which I recall mainly filled the garage at that time.

I do not know how many visits I had made, when, one Saturday after the rush was over, Grandfather upped me into the driving seat of an STL, lowered the seat to the bottom position and, with him crouching inside the door and operating the peddles with his left foot, we set off for a tour of the garage with me steering. Needless to say, I was "chuffed" and naturally found it difficult to contain my enthusiasm on arrival home. Most surprisingly, or at least to me at that age, Mother did not share my enthusiasm – in fact quite the opposite – and I was banned from any further visits to the bus garage. There were also strong words between Mother and Grandfather when he came in during the evening as usual for his supper. Boys being boys and grandfathers being grandfathers, being banned is, of course, tantamount to full approval and thus every opportunity was sought to visit the garage without raising suspicion. All my pocket money went on Meccano spares and tram tickets to and from West Norwood. Each visit developed a little further and by the time I was twelve I had mastered not only the STLs of which there by then only

a few left, but also the RTs which were beginning to fill the garage (though they did not seem as much fun because they did not have the bulb horn).

As time went by, I grew taller and thus it became somewhat easier to reach the pedals and, with proficiency growing in tandem, Grandfather or one of his mechanics took less and less interest until it was decided one day that supervision was no longer required and I could "go it alone".

Many years later it is difficult to ascertain the time scale of how things developed; certainly by the time I was 14 every possible Saturday afternoon would be spent at Norwood garage, filling buses with diesel and parking them with great enthusiasm. Although there were more buses than I could deal with between 1 and 5 o'clock, I was always upset if somebody took one that I felt should have been "mine".

The maintenance staff also dealt with breakdowns and one of the common problems around 3 o'clock on a Saturday was someone having been sick on the top deck, probably as a result of having imbibed too much in the Saturday lunchtime pub. There were frequent telephone calls therefore to change buses at either Crown Point or Crystal Palace. Crown Point was almost always where someone was ill but Crystal Palace called equally often for a large watering can full of fluid flywheel oil. I was never quite sure what was happening but we always seemed to put a huge galvanised watering can full of oil in the luggage compartment beneath the stairs and drive off to discharge it somewhere under the bonnet of an RT parked outside the old high level station, and then either come back or exchange it for our bus. It was after one of these call-outs that my visits became officially known at home, although in retrospect they must have been more than obvious by then from the stink of diesel fuel on my clothing.

It was always gratifying to stand on the platform like the conductor and lean back against the stairs. The drivers liked to show how fast an RT could corner and how far they could lean over. On one particular occasion, the driver cornered very fast and leant over a great deal such that the centrifugal force generated acted in an unfortunate manner on the half full can of fluid flywheel oil, turning it over (and over me). We cleaned up what we could from the platform and the white gunge that featured in the wash-rooms – apparently made from a combination of Vim and washing up liquid to the consistency of putty – adequately dealt with hands, but it was not too effective in respect of trousers, socks and

shoes. It was deemed necessary for a bus to travel with one passenger on a "test run" and, coincidentally, to stop outside my front door. There was much fury regarding this as I believe I had officially gone to Saturday afternoon pictures and I shall never know whether the fury was over the proof of the suspicion that for "pictures" or "Meccano shop" should have been read "bus garage", or because of the damage to the clothing which was probably significant to my now bus-driving Father's wages. The result was that my Mother gave up the ban on the bus garage. My Father never gave a view one way or another (I think he was quite happy but was not prepared to risk telling my Mother).

With Grandfather Crittall's family based in Oxted, frequent visits were made. The journey always commenced with the No 68 bus to Croydon and continued either on the train or, if I was lucky and Mother did not get her way, by a green 405 to Godstone and then the 410 Godstone STL. These were handsome buses and great fun with the upstairs outside aisle and the four across seats. When they were replaced by the RLHs, things were never quite the same. Local trips were by the handsome C but it was a Leyland and the only acceptable ones to me were the AECs. The best trips of all were when it was possible to cajole enough to get to Oxted via the 35 to Brixton, 10T10 Green Line to Croydon and the 405 and 410.

It must have been around this time that my interest in London Transport expanded. Grandfather gave me his collection of bus tickets, which stretched back to the turn of the Century and contained literally thousands of different tickets, particularly as in those days each route had its own ticket in a number of denominations. Over half of the tickets were in paste board and most were in mint condition and featured both punched and unpunched copies. The collection had apparently been started by a man under whom my Grandfather had trained and it had been passed on to him. Enthusiastic collecting of tickets started but by this time route numbering on tickets had ceased and plain tickets showing just the price and fare stage numbering were taking their place. There were however many tickets to be had and every opportunity for increasing the collection was taken. It was thought that the best place to look for old tickets was beneath the lower floor over the rear wheel arch seats, down between the wheel arch and the inner panel; but although the RTs often revealed some interesting specimens of route detail tickets, they never produced any great finds. The nearest drooping cab RTs were

on route 37 and only one was ever seen at Norwood by myself, following a breakdown replacement at Herne Hill. This presented a number of good finds. It was then that Grandfather mentioned that there were a large number of STLs in store awaiting sale or scrap at the side of Edgware tube station; so friend Tony Moller and I took ourselves off via a 68 and the Northern Line tube to "Aladdin's cave". I have no idea how many were stored there, boyhood recollection would have been thousands, but there certainly must have been between 50 and 100, all intact and ready to go.

There was no problem getting into the compound: it had a chain link fence around it but it also had an open doorway and no-one around to keep you out, vandalism not being the same then as it is now. So we started on each bus, lifting the seats and delving around for tickets, getting filthy hands and filling our pockets with anything that we could find. We would open up the used ticket boxes and often there were a number of tickets in them and also some that had stuck inside which had not fallen out with the normal clearing. Visits started to be made every 3 or 4 weeks. When we had finished searching for tickets, we would sit in the cabs and this brought about our downfall as we started honking the horn which eventually brought forth somebody from somewhere who swiftly evicted us. There were several more visits – souvenir hunting this time – where we attempted to collect as many different bell pushes as we could: different sizes, different shapes, labelled "push once" or "push once to stop", though unfortunately neither of these sounded quite the same when operated from a door bell and battery. We collected triangular London transport plates from the rads, filler caps from the radiators, AEC plates from the wheels and even some rectangular Leyland plates (so there must have been STDs there as well).

Some still had their aluminium garage plates and a collection of these was started. Originally the collection was held at home but the garage plate collection which grew and grew ultimately found its way to the sixth form common room where they were screwed all round the walls, demonstrating that we had all but five of every garage in use. □

Roger's story is concluded in the next issue.

THE BRISTOL BUS: PART 3

Alan Bond

Returning to the Bristol saga, the next type on the list is the LS5G, a type whose acquaintance I made early on in my UCOC sojourn. The local name for this type was a 'Tram' but in some parts of the UCOC they were also known by the familiar name of 'Scooter'. Oh what I would have given to drive a real scooter in preference to the LS. Like all the earlier SWL powered Bristols the performance of this type was far from sparkling, despite the fact that the five speed gearbox had a peculiar system of synchromesh which meant that you could change gear without double-declutching on the way up as far as Fourth but not on the way down. The gearbox, with a few modifications was later used in the MW type and also the few early REs that were fitted with manual gearboxes. In the 6LW powered MW it proved its worth, for the performance was, at last, up to contemporary standards.

I have to admit, though, that I have a soft spot for the LS with the 6 cylinder Bristol engine. At Bletchley we often used a dual purpose example, No 486 (KNV29) and how this thing could go; it was my first experience of driving a bus at the magic mile a minute. The exhaust note had a beautiful crackle to it and you really felt that you were making progress; although, as all experienced drivers know, pride cometh before a fall. In this case the lack of stopping power nearly led to my undoing. Now, until the advent of the flat floor Lodekka and the RE, all Bristols, without exception, were fitted with vacuum brakes and by the standards of the early post war years they were adequate for the job; but, as speeds increased, stopping became a problem and by the sixties and the advent of the motorway era, things were starting to get out of hand. On this particular occasion I was returning on the last bus of the day from Buckingham to Bletchley which departed at 18.50 and was due into Fenny Stratford at 19.30. The easy scheduled run along the B4034 was a piece of cake and allowed adequate time to give an early arrival at Bletchley if necessary. On the evening in question, I was surprised to be approached by an RAF officer who wanted to get to Bletchley station to catch a train to London. The connection was tight, very tight, the scheduled departure time being 19.18. However, armed with the famous 486 and the perfect conditions of an early summer evening, I said I would do my best for him, particularly as I knew that he would be my only passenger. After leaving Buckingham the road twists and turns, or used to (it has been

straightened now), for about a mile or so before dropping down into the valley of the River Ouse, which the road crossed by a narrow, medieval style of bridge with refuges for pedestrians. This bridge was something like ten feet wide throughout its length, which was considerable, but the view of the road at either end was excellent and a good run up the hill at the other side was guaranteed if the road was clear.

This night it was, and I crossed the bridge flat out and just touching 60. The speed fell as I climbed the hill but I was still doing fifty when I flashed past the Lone Tree at Thornborough. After this the road is fairly straight and level apart from a little "S" bend at Singleborough stud and after this the speed came up again until I was flat out at Singleborough Cross. To my surprise there was a passenger waiting at the roadside whom I couldn't miss him as he had his hand raised for me to stop. It didn't count that he was the first passenger to board this bus on the Buckingham Road in twelve years: it was my job to stop. My education into the vagaries of vacuum braked Bristols was completed on this day, for, despite what almost amounted to an emergency stop, he still had to walk at least a quarter of a mile to board. His first, only, and very offhand remark was 'I didn't think you were going to stop'. I didn't like to tell him that I was thinking the same. The strange thing was that he never made any further comment at all and he even wished me a cheery goodnight as he left the bus at Fenny Stratford. The RAF officer did make his connection at Bletchley station but I have never decided whether his parting remarks were a compliment or not. All he said was 'I had complete confidence in you, you fly this thing very well. I didn't think that bridge was wide enough but you proved me wrong'. I have never forgotten those words just as I have never forgotten that you just don't drive vacuum braked Bristols at speeds in excess of 50mph on country roads.

By way of complete contrast, the LS5G, let it be said, was very hard pressed to reach fifty, let alone exceed it and it was a constant struggle to keep the engine at peak revs in order to make reasonable progress. I remember, too, a few second hand LSs which came from Red and White but these supposedly had the Gardner 6HLW and should have been quite lively. My first drive in one of these was a huge disappointment and I was at a loss to understand why the performance was so poor. Then, one day, during a quiet moment at Great Horwood I lifted the floor panel over the engine and, hey presto! all was revealed: either somebody had

been active with a chainsaw or the engineers had done their worst and substituted SHLW engines for the originals.

The LS gear change was of the five speed variety with the identical layout to the Lodekka, but there the resemblance ended for the travel from 1st to 2nd and 3rd to 4th was enormous and the gear knob finished a good three feet behind its original position. For the unwary this could result in a sharp contact of the elbow with the back panel of the cab and this could be detected by the passenger from the sundry splutterings mixed with swear words that issued forth from the sharp end. I might add that this could happen even when the gear linkage was new and free from wear and consequent sloppiness. With a worn gear linkage the effects could be even more spectacular, for one of two things could happen: either it would become necessary to open the cab door to engage reverse or, in rarer cases, it was possible to engage reverse instead of 2nd with not very amusing results when moving off again. The last straw with the LS was the fact that the brakes, in common with all contemporary Bristols, had no automatic adjusters and as they would go out of adjustment fairly quickly, braking efficiency would suffer as a result. I remember refusing to drive two LSs in quick succession when I discovered that neither hand brake would hold the bus (even on the last notch) and that brake pedals on both were almost on the floor. The galling part about this incident is that the first bus was handed over to me by another driver without a murmur.

The handbrake travel on the LS was also enormous and once again, if the brakes were badly out of adjustment, the unwary driver could make elbow contact with the back of the cab. Of course a bang on each funny bone, once when changing gear and again when applying the hand brake, did not make for a happy driver and was the cause of many a passenger getting a chilly reception. The final agony of the LS was a tendency to understeer in the wet at very low speeds. It was very disconcerting to come into a corner that you could expect to take at a reasonable speed in an RF only to find the LS sliding away from you in no uncertain fashion. Front wheel skids certainly needed no forcing with that little baby.

All this, of course, is bad enough on a summer's day but, come the winter our troubles got worse. The first problem is starting a Gardner engine from cold on a frosty morning. Use of the cold start or excess fuel device fitted to the engine is essential in these conditions and there we

would run into problems because it could only be operated from outside the vehicle, making starting a two man job. The snag there is that at 5 o'clock on a winter's morning bodies are conspicuous by their absence and thus my patent emergency device came into play. This was a short length of broom handle which could be pressed on the external cold start button on the side of the LS and jammed against any convenient surface to hold said button in. It worked like a charm, but excess fuel means excess smoke and rapid removal was required before the surrounding area became enveloped in a man-made fog. I developed the technique of moving the bus to release the stick and it worked against many a solid surface such as a wall, a bus wheel, a door pillar or even the centre pole on an FLF platform. It does not work so well against body panels unless you require extra ventilation and on one occasion a neat 1 ¼ inch hole appeared in the side of another bus, though, fortunately for me, nobody was able to work out how this phenomenon occurred there having been no other witnesses.

Having coaxed the engine into a state of activity, a period of quiet reflection over a dish of tea was the order of the day and this would serve to give the engine a chance to warm up. It would be the only thing that ever did, for the demisters didn't demist and the heaters didn't heat. Your intrepid LS driver would be swathed in at least four layers of thick clothing and would, in fact, have been able to go straight off on to an antarctic expedition without changing his clothes. It was, though, despite the freezing feet and fingers, possible to manage until the bus started getting busy, at which point the combined exhalations of around forty passengers would begin to attach itself to the windscreen and there it would either a) form a mist or b) freeze, whereupon the rest of the journey would consist of the driver crawling along peering through the windscreen and all the while scratching away at the ice. I don't think the LGOC B type cab could have been any colder, and at least with that type there was no problem about demisting a windscreen. I once made a casual remark to the depot engineer at Stony Stratford about how up to date our buses were to be fitted with solar heating (which was then in its infancy). Like Queen Victoria, he was not amused. Solar heating it was, though, for it only worked in the summer and the rest of the year you froze. □

Next issue – MWs and REs



The two basic styles of bus body for the Bristol LS. The small and large destination indicators were specified by differing operators. These two examples came together in the Thames Valley fleet along with quite a number of other second hand Bristol buses and coaches. For a standardised vehicle the LS showed a remarkable variety of styles and specifications as even a cursory glance at these two examples will reveal.

Not a lot else I can say about these two and it's probably as well to let everyone have a good look for themselves as LS variations would fill a massive volume on their own. I don't think there were more than three or four which were identical... so much for standardization!

TRUST OUTING TO MIDLANDS MOTOR MUSEUM

OR 'THE NASH'N'ALL EXPRESS'

Alan Bond.

I have to say that the subtitle for this report is not my brainchild and therefore I have to give credit to its originator who is none other than our ubiquitous treasurer, Bill Cottrell.

Enough said: November 6th started out a little foggy but a prompt start was made and very quickly we were on our way up the M40 in RF534. Our first raid was made at the last service area before the Birmingham ring, where breakfast was devoured in record time by certain members of the party – and this despite the very short duration of our stay. Because of this haste, arrival our destination gave us about as much daylight for the visit as we had any right to expect at this time of the year and the weather was, fortunately, very kind to us, for, though fresh, there was plenty of sunshine.

The BaMMOT museum is a place which I – and I suspect many others – have wanted to visit for some time, and I have to say that if you missed this visit DON'T miss the next. The collection is excellent, covering as it does a large slice of the omnibus history of the Midlands, with particular reference to Midland Red and Birmingham Corporation.

The Smethwick HA registration mark, which adorned all Midland Red vehicles, is very much in evidence and restoration projects are current on several SOS type vehicles of BMMO, Trent, and Northern General origin. The BMMO SOS came in numerous guises, most of them using the highly efficient 4 cylinder side valve BMMO petrol engine. Surprisingly enough, the bodywork on many of these early examples was built almost entirely of wood, even down to those lovely curved wings which were made from shaped plywood. Panels with multiple curvature were then beaten to shape from sheet metal. The combination made these vehicles surprisingly light for their size and thus they reputedly gave quite a good performance for the time. Certainly by the standards of 1923, BMMO were ahead of most of their rivals. Engine sizes ranged from the 4 cylinder 4.3 litre of 1923 through a series of six cylinder versions of 5, 5.9, and 6.3 litres and it would appear that each engine type is represented in preservation. Many of these SOS types were supplied to BMMO associated companies as diverse as Potteries,

Tynemouth and District, Northern General, Ortona Coaches of Cambridge, Llandudno and Peterborough Electric Traction Companies (and others) to the tune of 597 vehicles, almost half as many as were built for BMMO themselves. From 1923 to 1929, no double deck buses were purchased or built by Midland Red and by the later year the fleet was entirely single deck and mostly SOS. The SOS designation for the company built vehicles has its origin shrouded in as much mystery as the meaning of the letters RT in London. It has been suggested that it means Satisfaction Over Size, which seems a very convoluted explanation; but, as nobody really knows, the educated guess must remain the order of the day. One fact is certain and that is that on these early SOS types the driver carried out his daily task while sitting on top of the fuel tank and I wonder if this had some bearing on the prohibition of smoking by PSV drivers which was bought in with the 1930 Road Traffic Act.

With the intensive heavy industrialisation of the West Midlands and the Black Country, a need arose for double deck buses and REDD and FEDD types came into use from 1931, whenceforth the die was cast until the end of the war. Unfortunately, it would seem that none of these double deck types have survived and that is a great shame for it leaves a gap in the history of the pre-war Midland Red bus. I can recall the FEDD type from visits to Birmingham in my youth and they held a fascination for me very much akin to my liking for the standard STL. As far as post war BMMO buses are concerned, the picture is bright with most of the major types represented. Most of the single deck buses from the S6 to the S23 can be seen along with the double deck types D5, D5B, D7, D9 and D10. A number of our members sampled the D9 on this day and most, if not all, came away very impressed; not surprisingly as the D9 was the BMMO equivalent of our own Routemaster. The solitary remaining D10 of two prototypes is also preserved and in a way this must be counted as the BMMO equivalent of our own Routemaster. The solitary remaining D10 of two prototypes is also preserved and in a way this must be counted as the BMMO equivalent of the FRM. When we go again I just hope we can have a ride on this fabulous beastie. BMMO also have the distinction of being almost the first to build a coach specifically for use on motorways and I recall the CM5 type going into service on the very day that the M1 was opened. I took the opportunity to ride on one in that first week for the special offer fare of five bob return from London to Birmingham and I can recall the driver just touching 100 mph on several occasions on the outward journey. These solid, well appointed

and quiet coaches were powered by the 10.6 litre BMMO engine and I seem to recall that they were supercharged and therein probably lies the reason for the spectacular performance. Even at that speed the vehicles seemed to be rock steady on the road which is more than can be said for some more modern vehicles at 70mph. What price progress? Still, whatever your bag is as far as Midland Red is concerned, most of it can be found at Whythall – a Mecca to BMMO enthusiasts.

I have to confess a particular weakness for Birmingham buses, for, like those of London, they are distinctive. The added bonus is that the vast majority of the post-war fleet had pre-selector gearboxes, though by then this form of transmission was familiar to many Birmingham drivers as the pre-war bus fleet was standardised almost entirely on Daimlers with Gardner 5LW engines. One of these, fleet number 1107, has been preserved for many years and several of us took the opportunity of a ride on such a rare bus. The Metro Cammell body is very well appointed with lots of varnished wood and moquette covered lining panels and the standard of ride is excellent. The bus was fairly well loaded which affected the performance rather spectacularly. In short, on anything like a hill, the 5LW was literally knackered, though the performance improved once we reached the Kings Norton area. By the standards of 1937, though, this cannot be taken to be unusual, though STL441 would have given him a good run for his money. Later in the day and on the last journey of the timetable we were rewarded with a spanking run on a post war pre-selector Guy with 6LW engine. On the inward journey to the Bull Ring a similar load to that on 1107 showed that the extra 1400cc makes all the difference and on the return run to the museum a reduced load allowed us to move along at fair rate of knots. By now it was dusk and, with the interior lights on and night rapidly approaching, the atmosphere was pure nostalgia as only a journey in darkness can be. As far as Birmingham buses are concerned, most types seem to be represented at the museum, but of particular interest is a very early petrol engined AEC Regent of similar vintage to our own ST922. This is one of a large batch supplied to Birmingham in 1929–1931 and fitted with bodies by Brush, Short Brothers, Vulcan, English Electric, and MCW. The preserved example, on which restoration has yet to commence in earnest, carries the typical 'piano front' body as built by MCW and it probably survived by dint of the fact that the batch were among the earliest of all metal bodies to be constructed. The Morris Commercial marque is represented by an Imperial Double decker, again with MCW body, and by

a Dictator single decker with yet another MCW body (this latter chassis type being a rarity among rarities in itself). The Birmingham bus is well represented in preservation with at least one each of all the major post-war classes from that city still extant, but disappointingly none of the RT type Regents with standard Birmingham bodies has survived for us to compare notes. Post-war Birmingham buses can be divided into two basic camps: on the one hand there are the Crossleys and Leylands (mostly fitted with synchromesh gearboxes), and on the other there are the Daimlers and Guys (with pre-selector transmission). As a London Transport man, I have to say I have a particular leaning toward the latter classes, but, whatever takes your fancy, they are all stamped with that distinctive Birmingham look.

The lesser municipalities of the Midlands are represented at Wythall and buses from Wolverhampton, Walsall and West Bromwich can be seen, though, strangely enough, Coventry is not represented. One of the short Daimler Fleetlines of Walsall has been beautifully restored to almost original condition. This batch had a front entrance with folding doors combined with an exit behind the front wheels which was enclosed by a sliding door. The frontal appearance was enhanced by multi-curvature windscreens which have been replaced by two flat panes of glass to give a V-front effect. I have seen this done before on occasion, usually by a penny pinching private operator who was not prepared to pay out the extra cost of proper replacement screens. It is a great shame because it spoils the frontal aspect of what could be considered quite a nice looking body for a modern style bus.

A third general aspect of this museum is the collection of electric milk floats. Now this is a form of street traction we all take for granted and we don't usually miss the older types when they go. I think this is probably because, like all electric vehicles, they have very long lives and they fade away gradually to the point where suddenly they are not around any more and we don't even notice they are gone for good. If you want pure nostalgia of the ordinary kind, this collection gives it to you with a bang. Milk floats, indeed! Whatever next!

Finally we made our departure from Wythall in twilight and the Nash machine purred its way home with a very happy, if tired band aboard. Many photographs and videos were taken, so, if you missed the trip, chat up your friendly participant and ask to see the pictures: it will be well worth it. □

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Roger West

Once a month, a group of ten people gather together in a rather dingy room. There is a single strip light illuminating the papers they spread out before them on a table. The room is either too hot or too cold – never quite right. Tea bags are produced and immersed in boiling water. When everybody is seated the business begins . . .

This is, of course, the beginning of a Committee Meeting at Cobham. It is held at the Museum for two reasons: firstly, because this avoids spending money on another venue, and secondly, so that when the meeting is finished the Committee Members will be on site to continue their various tasks around the Museum, working on the vehicles and the building itself.

In the corner of the "Restaurant" sits a solitary figure hugging himself "to keep warm", he says. This is the Editor – Mike Nash – who is always a fly on the wall at these meetings where he gathers scandal (sorry, copy) for his Editorial. Make no mistake, we have to be businesslike if we are to remain in being with our buses, our building, our bank accounts and our Members. The Agenda makes one realise just how many balls there are to be juggled at any one time.

The Chairman starts with Apologies for Absence. These are rare, for the enthusiasm is such that a full house is the norm. The Minutes of the last Committee Meeting have already been circulated and Matters Arising are discussed with enthusiasm as progress reports are received around the table.

Reports are heard from the Chairman, Secretary and the Treasurer on various pertinent matters. Yes, the assets creep on to the Agenda every month under one of these headings. The Chairman and Secretary are our link with the Solicitor, but the Treasurer pays his fees. Frustration is often present, but so too is anticipation. Each month we hear how the Membership has swelled since the last Meeting. A new application form will enable us to identify the skills of new Members and to invite them into the Museum at weekends to help with the current projects over the coming months.

Other matters are discussed (progress on the vehicles always adds a positive touch to the proceedings) but we still need either more money or more volunteers at weekends. The Museum extension – which looks

enormous – started in September and is due to be finished by Christmas. (see photographs in this issue) The Treasurer usually pales at this point in the proceedings. The cost is high but the Committee is flushed with the success of the 1994 Open Day and have even greater hope for 1995. Rumours of sponsorship are beginning to circulate. Much discussion took place before builders were instructed and the Committee will be personally liable if the finances go wrong. (Did you think we just talked about buses once a month?)

Agreement is reached to increase the subscriptions but to hold the increase down by asking you to make future payments by Charitable Covenant (this is worth £4 per year extra from each of you). The entrance to the Museum will house a small shop by next Open Day. The cost of fitting out will be offset by a Grant and the takings will soon cover the rest . . . then comes the profit! Any Other Business always brings something new to the Agenda, leaving reports to be prepared and circulated and decisions to be made. Finally, the date of next month's Meeting is agreed.

By lunch time, the Meeting is over and the home made sandwiches are opened. A more informal session takes place prior to the overalls being donned for the afternoon's labour. It is not until long after dark that the last Committee Member switches off the lights and locks the door. In all probability he will be back in the morning – our Meetings are always held on a Saturday – to spend another full day helping to keep the Museum alive and available for your enjoyment. □

Editor's Comment: I can confirm that your Committee do not just meet to 'play at buses'. Such is the seriousness of our current situation that they rarely get the time to play at all! Because we still have a small minority of individuals with less than honourable intentions as regards Cobham and who continue to hamper progress, your poor Committee is having to tackle many more important issues than would normally be the case. And it takes up an awful amount of time. But I can assure members that as a result of recent changes, we now have a Committee which is more focused and united than ever and I have complete confidence in their combined talents and determination to rid Cobham of its problems. Of course, new blood is always welcome so should YOU wish to contribute to the future running of the Trust, please put your name forward before the next AGM.

KNOW YOUR COMMITTEE SIMON DOUGLAS LANE

My first encounter with buses was back in 1952 travelling to Whitton for music lessons on STLs in the 203s. Thereafter, as a non-car-owning family and living but 100 yards from Fulwell Depot it was but a matter of time before I was being smuggled into the Depot on trolleybuses to feast my eyes on all those lovely post-war Q class vehicles.

Some 20 years later, I bought Evadne (RT3491) via Ted Brakell, and she still lives on with help in partnership from John Greene. She has now been in preservation longer than in service, having last plied the streets of London from Walworth. Problems at the time of purchase meant that she was destined to be green and not red; she does have an RT8 Green Line body so no apologies to the purists!

I joined Cobham in 1973 and resided at Richmond Pioneer Yard for 11 years when the luxury of under-cover accommodation became available. I worked in the gas industry for ten years after university, and then from 1979 to 1992 worked as an estate agent. Redundant for the first time in 1989, I was happily combining being an Abbey National branch manager with training for the Anglican ministry, when the Abbey changed its mind and said 'job or training but not both!' So I chose the training and am now self-employed as a piano teacher as well as being curate at St. Augustine's, Whitton. Jeff Stoute is one of my parishioners but hasn't asked for a visit yet!

Technical skills I do not have but I enjoy dealing with the hostile grounds at Cobham and anything else that does not entail causing mechanical mayhem! Both John and I are eternally grateful to the wonderful team that put Evadne back on the road – good luck for the future to us all. □

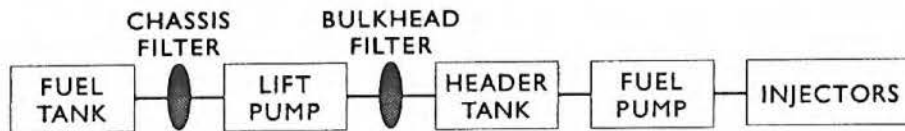


DR SPANNER'S SURGERY

Starting this issue, a new regular feature by our own agony uncle, Dr. Spanner. There will be general mechanical advice and answers to specific queries. To get the ball rolling . . .

Fuel problems and how to avoid them

The most common cause of breakdowns on diesel-engined buses are problems associated with the fuel system, and most of these can be avoided by preventative maintenance. Using the RT as an example, we will consider each component, and the steps that need to be taken to avoid problems.



Plan of RT fuel system

In common with most LT buses, there is no filter in the fuel tank, so the system is vulnerable to any foreign matter put into the tank, blocking the fuel line. A lock on the tank has the double advantage of discouraging sabotage in this area and preventing pilferage. Whilst examining this area, check that the seal under the cap, if fitted, is secure. It is not unknown for these to become detached and fall into the tank.

Just forward of the tank, bolted to the chassis, is a small filter with a gauze element. This should be removed, cleaned and replaced occasionally. Any debris found here is a good indication of the state of the tank.

Next in line, attached to the front of the gearbox, is the lift pump. This does not work when the prop-shaft is not turning, so when the bus is stationary in gear, it relies on the fuel in the header tank to keep the engine running. There is nothing that can readily be done to the lift-pump in the way of preventative maintenance.

Next in the system we have a pleated linen filter tied around a cage and situated in the round bowl bolted to the header tank. There is an art in transforming a square piece of linen cloth into a filter with pleats worthy of a Christian Dior creation.

When tightening the bowl, be aware that there is a rubber seal in the lip, and this ought to be examined and replaced if damaged. Do not overtighten as this can cause the bowl to distort and leak.

From the filter, the fuel passes into the header tank on the bulkhead. Here, there is a tap to stop the supply of fuel to the pump. On some designs of pump there is a gauze filter on the inlet pipe which can be treated in the same way as the chassis filter. The fuel is delivered to the injectors from the pump at very high pressure. The pipes that carry this are the most vulnerable part of the fuel system and are prone to breaking due to the vibrations induced by the engine. It is absolutely essential that these pipes are securely clamped together in banks of three. If possible, a spare set of pipes should be carried as this is the easiest one to bend to fit any of the others.

The final part of the system that could cause problems are the injector return pipes. These also can leak, but if no spare is available, only a small amount of fuel generally escapes before a repair can be effected on return to base.

PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE

- Lock fuel cap
- Clean filters on chassis and, where applicable, fuel pump
- Change filter cloth and sealing ring
- Ensure all pipes are secure

SENSIBLE SPARES

The following list is what we consider to be desirable to carry to overcome any fuel problems that are likely to leave you stranded at the roadside.

- 5 gallon container of fuel
- 1 gallon container
- Small funnel (to fit plug in header tank)
- $\frac{5}{16}$ inch bore hose (6 foot length)
- Hose clips for above
- Spare injector pipe(s)
- Spare injector return pipe

IN THE EVENT OF BREAKDOWN . . .

Any problems that stop the fuel being supplied to the header tank can be overcome by directly filling the header tank. Undo the square plug at the top and replenish using the gallon can and small funnel. Do not expect to fill up the header tank; when it is more than $\frac{3}{4}$ full, the surplus is piped back to the main tank. You may need to bleed the air from the pump by undoing the screw at the front. When you get going again, with sympathetic driving you should manage five miles before having to repeat the process. Once you feel the engine losing power, stop as soon as possible, otherwise you may find you flatten the batteries by repeated cranking of the engine to get the fuel through. The small hose can be used to suck out fuel from the tank to refill the containers.

If an injector pipe breaks and you have no spare, all you can easily do is secure the hose over the broken end and direct the fuel to a can, or to the plug in the header tank. You will need to avoid the exhaust pipe. If the pipe has been broken at the fuel pump end, turn the pipe round.

Never hammer the broken pipe flat. Due to the pressure involved, damage will be done to the fuel pump, making you totally immobile and incurring expensive repairs.

RFs ARE THE SAME BUT DIFFERENT . . .

On the RF, the lift pump is driven off the side of the fuel pump, so it works all the time the engine is running. This has the disadvantage from our point of view of doing away with the need for a header tank. The injector pipes are much longer than on an RT and are therefore more prone to vibration, leading to fracture. It is *absolutely essential* that these pipes are clipped in the two places specified on each bank of three pipes.

If you have a supply problem on an RF, you will need to rig up your own header tank using the five-gallon container and the length of hose. The hose is placed below the level of the fuel in the container. Unfortunately, it will have to be sucked through the pipe, eliminating all the air. The best way of performing this unpleasant task is by getting a friend or partner to do it for you, thus avoiding the nasty lingering taste! The hose will have to be routed through a floor trap and swapped with the original inlet hose. It is best to route the hose to the fuel pump before starting the 'sucking' phase of the operation. Due to the length of the

injector pipes, if you have totally run out of fuel, you will need to bleed the air out of the system by slackening the injector ends of the pipes. As soon as you see fuel dribbling from her whilst cranking the engine, tighten the pipes. Be careful not to run the batteries right down. There are no chassis or pump filters on RFs, but they do have the same cloth filter.

RMs with in-line fuel pumps are the same as RFs on the supply side and the same as RTs on the delivery side, so the appropriate advice applies.

DR. SPANNER'S HELPFUL HINTS . . .

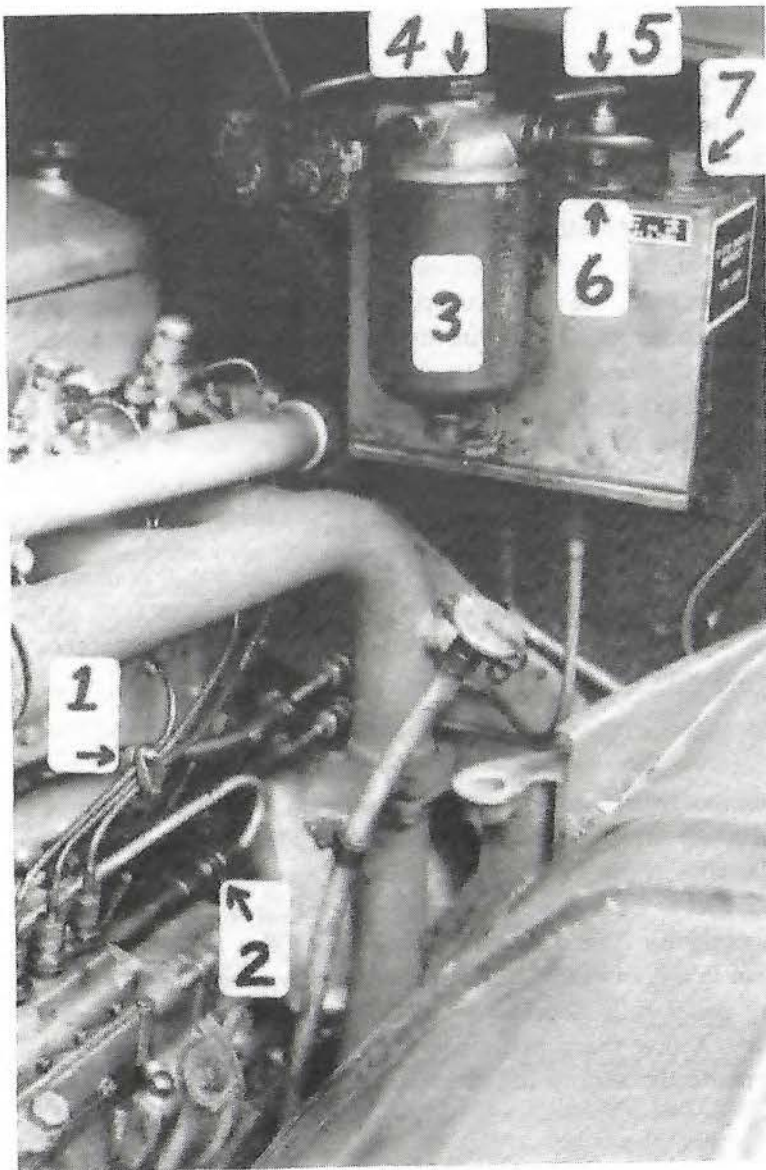
Anti-freeze

Even if you have drained your water completely out, it is likely that some remains trapped in the block by sediment, or in places such as the water pump. It is prudent to add a couple of gallons of 50/50 water/antifreeze mix back into the system.

No air build-up

A common fault which manifests itself with the fall in temperature is caused by air leaking past the gearbox seal. The cold makes the seal less pliable, thus stopping it from expanding against the wall of the liner. If the air will not build up, or the pressure falls quickly, you can check if air is escaping from the gearbox dipstick filler hole, and if it is, your problem is a cold seal. This can usually be overcome by keeping the operating pedal fully depressed and building the pressure to its unloader pressure. A few sharp applications of the pedal is then usually enough to persuade the seal to function properly. □





KEY TO PHOTOGRAPH

- 1 Pipes clipped securely
- 2 Fuel pump filter
- 3 Filter bowl
- 4 Undo nut to access filter
- 5 Cut-off lever
- 6 Filter seal
- 7 Remove plug to fill header tank

NEWS FOR RT OWNERS!

David Boshier

Possible the single major factor to overcome in the restoration of the RT is the corrosion which has taken place over the years in the platform area. During the mid-1970s, LT themselves were coming up with this problem in the re-certification programme which was intended to extend the life of some RTs following the dismal performance of the DMS type. Unless you are extremely fortunate, this problem may well be affecting your vehicle. Our Saunders bodies example last saw service in 1969. Since then, it has spent twenty years exposed to the elements. Believe it or not, the main platform riser was holding together and was not in danger of falling apart! However, much of the structure elsewhere in the platform area required attention.

Without any further delay, allow me to introduce Geoff Harsant, one of the three owners of our Saunders RT, who is joint managing director of a company producing sheet metal fabrications . . . just what the doctor ordered!

Having secured the official RT drawings for the component parts of the RT platform, a production run of three complete sets was commenced. This has consisted of the main platform riser produced to the final LT design without the large holes embodied in the original design which served as a trap for the damp. Secondly, the battery box riser which is attached to the main platform support brackets which are attached again to the main riser and extend to the rear rail or bumper assembly. These brackets are of the later design which were flanked by timber fillets forming a sandwich. The earlier pattern, which was more of a box construction, embodied a flat timber fillet which sat in a channel. This deteriorated very quickly and was replaced with the later design.

For those who wish to effect a 'proper' repair using the correct components rather than a Meccano set, I will be pleased to talk the problems over with you. Equally, in the words of Peter Plummer . . . We've been there, we've worn the T-shirt . . . meaning that Cobham has undertaken the surgery on two RTs.

The worst part is to come, what's it going to cost?

Platform riser: £590 each; battery box riser: £430 each; set of three platform support brackets: £215 per set – total £1,235 plus VAT.

Orders will be held until a total of three have been received in order to maintain the prices quoted above. Individual production will be subject to higher charges.

For further information, contact the manufacturers directly:
Geoff Harsant, GS Precision, Russell House, North Weylands Industrial Estate, Molesey Road, Hersham, Surrey, KT12 3PL
Telephone: 01932 231345

OR

David Boshier, Hythe Park Road, Egham, Surrey, TW20 8DA
Telephone: 01784 955

WANTED

FARECHART for RF route 711, period from 1951 to 1954.
Also route 717, mid 1960s, and photographs or history on RF41.

Vic Chivers - 0279 309 (Harlow)



Member Alec Swain sent in this wonderful shot of the Trust's own T792 when owned by the contractors, Bovis, seen at St Pancras on 25 June 1964. It is hoped that T792 will return to active service during 1995

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

HIS N'HERS TEAM WRITE IN! . . . From him, David Johnson
We are pleased to confirm that the 1995 'Open All Day' rally will take place on 4th June 1995. And at the request of our friends at the Garden of the Rose, the Organ Museum, the Mosquito Museum and Verulamium, we are also proposing a further running day on September 3rd. The recent move of our supporter, Sam Mullins, from the Director of the St Albans Museums to Director the LT Museum at Covent Garden makes LT involvement a prospect. Sam has agreed to be involved in the organisation and input of the 1995 event, so we are anticipating a highly successful day.

Cobham's members will be kept informed of the programme and it is hoped that they will be able to play a big part, especially in a proposed display of early London Transport vehicles. We shall give you more information as arrangements progress.

and from her, Miss Cobham 1994 . . . a.k.a. Pam Johnson

The last thing I wanted to do last Saturday (November 5th) was to drive round the M25 in the pouring rain with a borrowed ten year old who would not stop talking, but I'm glad I did. As usual, I had a good time, good food and company, but left my skin behind every time a firework went BANG!

Oh, yes, one more thank-you for keeping Dave amused all day.
I cannot think of anywhere else we would go in separate cars with fuel costing what it does, but it was worth it.

*Weston Ave, Leighton Buzzard, Beds. LU7 8QZ.
(ST ALBANS GARAGE PROJECT)*

Ed: Pam, you can send David down to us anytime; we'll always find him something to do. By the way, I thought John Clarke was older than ten!!
Thanks for your support.

From Roger Stagg

As a relatively new member to the Trust, the reading of many of the letters in the magazine/newsletter can lead to a mixture of concern over the degree of political discourse regarding the Trust's buildings and vehicles. The lack of faith on the part of some members in what appears to be a responsible endeavour to resolve the consequences of mistakes that are purely historical, is very surprising. Blaming the past is pointless and the only way forward that can benefit the Trust and its members overall, surely, can only come from a unified approach to meet the best interests of the majority of the membership. That surely is the basis on which a Committee is elected and an essential part of a democratic society. For dissenters who find the majority viewpoint untenable, there is only one solution.

The Trust's prime responsibility must be for safeguarding its assets, ie the buildings and vehicles. The Trust seems clearly to suffer from the same problems as most similar organisations in being supported by the efforts of only a small percentage. It should not be disregarded that a high percentage of the Trust's members are not domiciled conveniently to the Trust's location, or that, like myself, they have commitments of work which currently prevent attendance on Saturday and Sunday.

The storage of the Trust members' own vehicles, whether at discounted rates or not, should only be a secondary consideration if there is room left after storage of the Trust's own vehicles, even though the rental is obviously beneficial to the Trust's annual costs.

What all Trust members are aware of is that even simple maintenance on the Trust's assets is in itself an expensive and time consuming operation which nevertheless has to be undertaken before restoration of any of the vehicles can even be contemplated. The Trust owns an enviable collection of vehicles, many of them virtually unique, but the longer the period of time before renovation, the more difficult that restoration will become – not just from problems of deterioration, but through apathy in regard to the project which takes over from the euphoria of its initial acquisition. Whilst the easier availability of spare parts and indeed the simpler work required in many instances can engender more enthusiasm for working on RMs, RFs, and RTs, none of these are unique and, despite our relative enthusiasms, to Joe Public they still appear to be little more than the usual London Bus.

There seems little doubt that concentrated efforts on the 9T9 and 10T10 could put these on a par with the TD in a very short period of time and make a substantial difference to the variety of the Trust's vehicles in running order. Inevitably, a lot of eyes must turn towards the STL2377 and an effort to see it returned to reasonable condition as quickly as possible. The problem is, of course, of both labour and finance; nobody can be expected to provide the long term enthusiasm for a project such as this. No matter how dedicated, there can never be the same spirit of enthusiasm given on a voluntary basis as that for a project that is purely one's own. One has only to look at the railway preservation societies and their inability to attract sufficient manpower to deal with the rebuilding of their stock.

Perhaps what is needed would be an arrangement for the Trust to sell time shares in a vehicle to a restricted number of enthusiasts. The time share would give each person, for a limited time span, part ownership of the vehicle (for example, for five or ten years after its completion to running order). Suitable persons would be those who would wish to be in a position of owning a vehicle but are unable to do so because of the expense or because restoration on a lone effort would be impractical or impossible. Time share holders would need to be selected as having suitably varied skills for each vehicle, ie, not all body builders, mechanics or general hands for one vehicle. It could be respectfully suggested that members already owning one or more vehicles which must already take up much of their time would not be considered if it meant they would displace persons who were non-owners.

If there were six time shareholders, each taking an 8% share of the vehicle, leaving 52% with the Trust, and each purchasing a share for, say, £1000 and pledging an agreed number of hours work on the vehicle – say two days per month – then a minimum of 144 man days of enthusiastic work could be guaranteed in each year of restoration. In addition, £6000 would be raised. As well as the advantage of there being money specifically allocated for materials, there would be guaranteed enthusiasm to work on the project because of the investment made. Time share holders could, with the Committee's approval, sell back their time share if they were unable to continue, at a percentage of the purchase price related to the proportion of the estimated rebuild time that had expired (subject that the Trust can identify a new purchaser at the

relative proportion of the cost and only at an equivalent period of ownership), or for full cost for the full length of ownership.

Essentially the Trust would be leasing part of the vehicle to a number of members on a full repairing basis. The members would benefit from being part owners, albeit for a finite period of time, although realistically, after that period, they would either have their sights set higher or have reached the age where they would prefer only to view.

What the part owners would get from the completed vehicle would, of course, have to be carefully decided, but essentially they would be entitled to an 8% use of the completed vehicle, but with agreement of all the other leaseholders (over which, of course, the Trust would hold overall control).

It is always said that there is nothing new and perhaps this has all been thought of before. If it has, then I apologise for raising an issue which has been dealt with already. The same principal has worked very successfully with aircraft, where a number of us owned shares to purchase a suitable model, with 60% being purchased by a flying club. The 8 owners plus the flying club contributed to the cost of the aircraft by a combination of percentage ownership and actual flying hours, meeting one's own fuel cost and landing fees etc. Whilst the degree of maintenance and repair which we could undertake ourselves was severely limited, the general standard of upkeep of the aircraft itself, both inside and outside, bore no resemblance to other similar aircraft within the flying club itself, some of which became quite tatty. Whilst there may be an argument that the share ownership was not finite, meaning that there was always a residual value, I can assure any of those Trust members who have not been involved with aircraft that the costs not just of acquisition but of running and routine maintenance (and indeed insurance) make bus ownership look like manna from heaven, and the relative values of ten year old aircraft against their value at purchase renders the depreciation rate on a new Lada look positively good.

This is all intended as food for thought and the most specific purpose to see STL2377 back on the road before too long.

Teston Road Offham Maidstone Kent ME19 5NE

Editor: An interesting suggestion. What do members think? Thanks, Roger, for your support and valuable contributions to this issue of the magazine.

From David Boshier

I am from time to time shown a copy of the excellent periodic magazine which is produced for the members of the LBPG.

Your article on the 'Bus of Yesteryear' back on August 14th was of particular interest. I would like to thank Alan Bond for the kind thoughts contained in the article. I would also like to extend my sincere thanks for those of you that came along and contributed to the success of the event.

Alan, in his article, referred to one or two points which I would like to reply to through your medium. Firstly, reference was made to TD71 and the photograph contained in the 'Bus of Yesteryear' programme. The photograph was produced by kind permission of Geoff Rixon, however, the point I have to make is that TD71 was one of two Mann Egerton TDs allocated to Plumstead, the other bus being TD44; both buses were replaced by RTLs during August 1954.

The second point I wish to refer to revolves around the chassis classification included in programme descriptions for RTL and RTW vehicles. These vehicles were classified by Leyland Motors as Titan PD2/1; it is to the manufacturer's reference or model type I was referring purely and simply because the event also welcomed many provincial vehicles whose operators were content not to allocate their own classifications as LT did. It was purely to create some uniformity in the programme descriptions that LT classifications were omitted.

Concerning the matter of photography, Donald Allmey drew this point to my attention that the vehicles were parked with little thought for the photographer. At that stage, it already had become difficult to rectify the situation. I will most certainly look at this point next year.

Lastly, going back to the photograph of TD71 operating from Plumstead, had nobody noticed the presence of dustbin lid wheeltrims on the back? It is the only photograph of one of these vehicles with them so fitted that I have ever seen in service . . . Wouldn't they look good on TD95!

Oh, and by the way Alan . . . you owe me a pint!

Hythe Park Road, Egham, Surrey.

DIARY DATE
SCREEN & SOCIAL EVENING
Saturday 4th February 1995

Is it really almost a year ago since we last packed out the Red Lion for this event? Take my advice and get there early if you want a seat for what is likely to be an even better-attended occasion still. Always entertaining and light-hearted, it's usually a case of more 'screen' than 'social', but the earlier start – assemble from 6 pm, films start at 7 pm – should see more of a balance to keep our partners happy.

Members are encouraged to bring along suitable viewing material (last year, it wasn't just buses) so we will no doubt keep going until everyone nods off!

A nominal entrance fee of just £1 will be charged to cover the usual generous buffet, so make sure you're at the Red Lion, Westminster Bridge Road, just south of Waterloo Station on February 4th for what will be a great night out.

Mike Nash

BACK NUMBERS OF MAGAZINE

Since the first issue of this magazine was released in June 1993, the Trust has seen substantial growth, as has the print run of each successive magazine. But of course, supplies of the earlier issues have long since been exhausted, so they are now considered quite collectable!

As an increasing number of our more recent members are searching for these early issues so as to gain a greater understanding of our current legal position, I have decided to make a 'loan' set available which members can either read or photocopy and then return for the next person.

This service is available in return for a suitable 'donation' to Trust funds, so please drop me a line stating which issues you wish to borrow.

Which just leaves me to remind our newer recruits that the excellent Cobham Bus Collection Guide Book is available at just £3.75 including postage, as is the Cobham Bus Collection poster at £2.00. Please make your cheques/POs payable to LBPT. There will be a full range of Cobham merchandise available when the Museum Shop opens in April

Mike Nash

RF366: THE STORY SO FAR

Jim Andress

Alan Bond, in his complimentary article about the '94 Finsbury Park Rally, for which I thank him, commented about the progressive improvement in the state of RF366, and I thought members might be interested to know something of its history.

RF366 IN SERVICE

Being one of the Central Bus versions, RF366 was delivered in December 1952, ready for operation with both a driver and a conductor and did not have doors on the entrance. At that time she was numbered RF390, the number change taking place at overhaul. This change came about because of the special authority granted to London Transport to give the identity of a bus arriving for overhaul to one just completed overhaul so as to replace it immediately in service using the same licence and insurance. Thus each time an RF was overhauled it came out with a different identity. Fortunately, London Transport (like LGOC before it) allocated each body a unique number from new. RF390 was delivered with body number 7908 and the chassis was allocated unit number 9429. From these numbers it has been possible to trace the history of what is now RF366.

July 1952	Chassis 9821LT755 delivered to MCCW by AEC
December 1952	RF390 delivered to Chiswick LT works
January 1953	Entered service from Norbiton Garage on 213
May 1957	Returned to Norbiton after overhaul as RF371
March 1961	Returned to Norbiton after overhaul as RF410
March 1965	Transferred to Kingston after overhaul as RF375
May 1971	Returned to Kingston after overhaul as RF366
March 1976	Withdrawn from service at Kingston

From this it can be seen that, remarkably, virtually her entire service life was spent in the Kingston area, starting with route 213 from the then new Norbiton Garage in Kingston. During the 1965 overhaul she was converted for one man operation and had the entrance doors fitted, subsequently working the 218 and 219 among others.

RF366 IN PRESERVATION

When her service life finished at Kingston in 1976, after covering some 1.5 million miles, she was saved from the breakers yard by being taken over by the London Transport (Central Road Services) Sports Association to carry sports teams to various venues. During this period of her life, which lasted until mid 1985, 366 was housed at Peckham Bull Yard garage and may therefore lay claim to being the last RF kept, maintained and run by LT in a passenger carrying role. Anecdotal evidence suggests that 366 was lent to Portsmouth Poly in 1985 to carry students from POMPEY to POMPEII in Italy. It is said that during the return trip a problem occurred with No 6 cylinder and that she limped home on 5 cylinders. It was after this trip that she was sent from Peckham to New Cross and never returned. Later work on the engine after she came into my possession revealed the No 6 piston was badly damaged and had pieces of piston ring embedded in the remains.

However, we are getting ahead, so let us return to 1985. Following her withdrawal from her second life, she was purchased for preservation and subsequently joined the various vehicles which comprised the ill-fated Docklands Museum, during which time she was repainted externally though no transfers were applied.

I purchased 366 at the beginning of July 1989 in a barely running state and made the obligatory trip from Tilbury around the M25 and down the M4, boiling every time we went over 30mph for more than a few minutes. We eventually got her back to Wiltshire and spent the next day, Sunday, preparing for the MOT test booked for the Monday morning. The only item that obviously did not work was the horn, which, after totally stripping it, I was able to get to bleat! Bright and early Monday morning I set off for the local D.Tp testing station, expecting to come away with a list of defects to work on for the remainder of the summer. Imagine my surprise when she passed with only a few recommendations of items needing attention! Needless to say she has been extensively renovated since. The first year was spent principally on the mechanics, culminating in the engine overhaul in summer 1990 when the piston and liner in the No 6 cylinder were replaced. In addition new fleet name and number transfers were applied during this time.

During general work it was found that five out of the six wheels were in fact Routemaster wheels and these were replaced as they have a different offset to correct RF wheels which are similar to RT wheels. This

stopped the inner rears rubbing on the chassis when cornering and improved the handling, as did the new tyres progressively fitted.

The radiator was removed and stripped with many of the tubes found to be blocked with something very close to concrete which required drilling out with a long masonry drill. The automatic chassis lubricator was also inoperative and needed a new internal spring to get it working again.

The winter 1990-1 was spent completely stripping and repainting the interior, the principle change being the return to cream around the top three quarters of the window surrounds, this having been the original, 1952 colour scheme; and, because the seat cushions had mostly been changed to Routemaster moquette at some time in its life and the original pattern could not be obtained, it was decided to convert the remaining original seats to match the rest.

The drab chocolate brown paint which covered everything below window level was replaced with Burgundy Red to match the seats and the lino coving panels all round were reinstated. The cork floor tiles were all replaced and the wooden floor slats along the aisle painted black. It has been said that had LT decided to modernise the central RFs, the interior would probably have looked much like 366 does today.

At some time in the past the rear exterior had been modified by fitting two modern rear lamp clusters and two number plate recesses. During Spring '91 these were removed and replaced with the original type of single offside rear lamp box and number plate assembly as well as the nearside direction indicator arrow as fitted in the early '60s.

During the summer of '91, the rear axle differential was replaced with one having the original 5.17:1 ratio in place of the one with 4.57:1 ratio fitted to most RFs during their lives, thereby improving its hill climbing.

In the autumn of '91 the well worn gearbox was exchanged for a rebuilt unit, and, during the winter 1991-2, the generator and starter were rebuilt. A start was also made on stripping, "de-denting" and repainting the roof and this work continued through the winter of 1992-3.

During the winter 1993-4 the front panelling and windscreens were removed and much of the structural steelwork renewed. The nearside windscreen frame and glass were renewed as was the lower drivers screen (the upper screen had already been renewed because of stone damage), before, after stripping and repainting, all the panels were

reinstalled. During this time it became apparent just how much better is the appearance of the front of the RF without the 'ears' and thought was given to how to create safe driving without them.

It was then recalled that all the RFs used on route 213 in the early 50's were experimentally fitted with semaphore trafficators. Route 213 was presumably chosen because at that time it had the largest allocation of RFs to any one route, 33 being shared between Norbiton and Sutton garages. So it came to pass that a pair of the right sized units were located, rewired for 24 volt working and installed. The unique feature I introduced was to so arrange the wiring that, when an arm is activated, the twin lamps in the arm as well as the arrow on the rear all flash together. This has proved to be very effective on the road, for the sight of a big flashing arm sticking out of the side seems to draw the attention of even the least alert drivers.

In the spring of 1994 an opportunity arose to purchase the running gear from a Regal IV coach, originally fitted with a Burlingham Seagull body (unfortunately long since rotted away to nothing). So one Saturday morning I set off with a friend to Derbyshire towing a robust 6 wheel drawbar trailer behind my Montego diesel estate, where, on arrival, we loaded tons comprising:

- 1 Engine complete with Dynamo, Vacuum Pump, Flywheel and Clutch
- 1 Manual gearbox
- 1 Front axle with hubs
- 1 Rear axle with hubs
- 1 Set of road springs
- 1 Radiator assembly complete
- 6 Road wheels and tyres

Needless to say we travelled back at a very gentle pace before unloading everything into the proverbial field.

A few weeks later, after an inspection by Paul Morris and having removed all the extraneous parts, we transported the engine to Cobham on the trailer. Paul then checked out the engine and converted the various mountings etc. to match an RF installation. I then drove 366 up to Cobham bright and early one Saturday morning and some 30 hours later we had the new engine in and running. Yes, we did have some sleep, though not a lot! Why change the engine, I hear you ask? No oil pressure when hot, is the simple answer.

The combination of better engine and the very low ratio differential fitted earlier made 366 extremely lively but painfully slow. Bearing in mind where we live and the need, therefore, to travel a substantial distance to any event, I resolved to do something about it. An examination of the differential which came with the other parts of the coach revealed, to my delight, that it was the highest ratio available, 4.14:1. This was removed from the axle, dumped from a tractor bucket into the back of the good old Montego, and transported to Cobham where it was found to be in excellent condition, and a merry day was then spent just 'popping it in'. Thanks once again to the help of Paul and various other members who joined in the fun (FUN?), we got her out on the road and experienced for the first time in an RF the need to slow down for 40 and 50 mph speed limits. Well, strictly, 50 limits are not a problem, because the pump is set for 1800 rpm, which the AEC manual equates to 49.9 mph, that is, some 10 mph faster than with the old differential. 49.9 is of course, the full load governed speed and on no-load it will go up to 2000 rpm, equivalent to 55.4 mph. In practice we find that she will run level on the motorway at about 52 mph, dropping to about 40 to 45 on normal gradients and to as low as 30-35 on steep motorway climbs. I am now looking for an 11 tooth speedo drive shaft so we don't have to keep doing the mental arithmetic to correct for the differential ratio change . . . any offers?

The new engine ran very well but proved that a vibration already present with the old engine had its origins elsewhere. After further checks were made it was decided that the gearbox was the most likely source, and the decision was taken to replace it. Fortunately Cobham had a suitable box and a further trip was made to what was rapidly becoming its second home. Once again Paul and I spent a day under the bowels of 366, and, like magic, the vibration was all gone.

So as a result of all this work, we now have a reasonable motorway cruiser which can still be used on normal London routes when required. During the recent Finsbury Park Rally we carried a virtually full load up Muswell Hill, naturally in bottom gear, but with 30 mph available in third, no problems were found in keeping to time during the service runs along former route 233 to West Green.

One further mechanical happening this year concerns a bearing- type noise, noticed because everything else had become so much quieter. After suspecting the O/S front wheel bearing, the source was finally tacked

down to the self-aligning bearing on the compressor jack shaft, and this has now been replaced. An uncanny silence now accompanies trips up and down the motorways.

Runs on the motorway have however highlighted a tendency for her to get hotter than usual and a study of this leads me to conclude that the aerodynamics of the RF body lead to a low pressure area under the front which results in insufficient air flow under the vehicle to carry away the heat from the engine, gearbox and axle. I am now considering ways of overcoming this and a study of photos of contemporary long distance coaches (as opposed to buses) on Regal IV chassis shows them to be fitted with grills in the lower front panel. One possibility is to cut vents in the standard front panel in the style provided on London Trolleybuses. Has anybody got any better ideas?

So what of the immediate future? The steady refurbishment continues: currently 366 is minus the first window pan on the nearside, this having succumbed to the dreaded metal moth due to the gutter outlet which ensures it is kept wet whenever possible. A replacement pan has been obtained and is being prepared for installation once all the surrounding structure has been cleaned and repainted. It is then planned to continue through the winter by stripping and repainting the nearside, renewing any other defective parts found in the process.

This will then leave the offside as the only part not touched since we purchased her five and a half years ago. Some may think this is a long time to get round to giving it a coat of paint, but we have been rather busy doing the other things described above, and it should also be remembered that 366 has been on the road through each rally season, having passed six MOT tests along the way.

So that's the story of RF366 right up to date. I hope that we will be able to continue to look after her for many years to come and keep the steady improvement of her condition, while using her from time to time for the purpose for which she was built over 40 years ago: namely, carrying the citizens of London about their business and their pleasure. □



RF366 is pictured in March 1994, about to depart from Weybridge Station on the Kingston RF Reunion, an event which eight of the type attended

VIC'S QUIZ NO. 3

For lovers of old LT vehicles

Set by Vic Chivers. This time, there are twelve extra 'easy' questions for Christmas. Score the most points and win a £20 voucher to spend in our new Museum Shop which opens in April. Send your answers to the Editor, results next issue. Let's see plenty of you putting pen to paper this time!

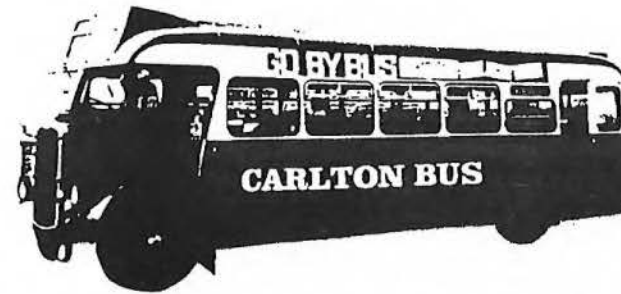
- 1 Who built the pre-war 2RT2 bodies and where?
- 2 Which type of six-wheel bus was sold to Spain in the early '60s?
- 3 Which was the last class of vehicle built to carry Green Line routeboards?
- 4 What is the fleetnumber of the most recent 'shorty' to enter preservation?
- 5 What is special about the two Routemaster vehicles RCL2260 and RML2760?
- 6 How many pre-war RTs are thought to survive in preservation?
- 7 What was the first series of registration letters used on RFs?
- 8 What colour was 332W when new?
- 9 Which two Craven's RTs survive in preservation?
- 10 Does an RLH cab door slide or push open?

- 11 Did GSs carry wheel trims when in LT service?
- 12 How many RTWs were built?
- 13 Which two 'Scooters' survive in preservation?
- 14 In which way did the rear of the RLH differ from the RT variants?
- 15 What type of vehicle carries the registration MLL740 and where is it kept?
- 16 What type of RT had two blind boxes on the body?
- 17 What was done to RTL3 prior to its sale and why?
- 18 How many liveries were carried by RTs whilst with LT and LCBS?
- 19 What type of LT buses did a number of overseas visits during the 60s?
- 20 What are the tyre pressures on RT, RTL, RTW and RF type vehicles?

AND SOME EASIER ONES . . .

- i When were the last Private Hire RFs withdrawn from LT service?
- ii Which famous subway tunnel in London was used by LT vehicles?
- iii Who owns the superb vehicle CDX516 and where is it from originally?
- iv Which of these four classes had roof blind boxes – RT/RTW/RM/RTL?
- v What did RCL and RFW code letters actually stand for?
- vi What did these garages have in common – E, H, EW, SW, AR, HT?
- vii Name the famous river bridge near Big Ben?
- viii Which Green Line RF was the first to receive experimental 'dogs-ears'?
- ix What were some T and Q class vehicles used for during WWII?
- x Which famous section of the tube network closed on 30 September 1994?
- xi What type of LT vehicle carried a bamboo pole underneath?
- xii What is special about T31?

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO EVERYONE
FROM VIC CHIVERS AND RF41



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STL441 has been out and about during 1994 and made its longest journey in the hands of Martin Gibbons when it visited the Dene Forest Railway Autumn Rally, gaining Cobham some useful publicity within 'Buses' magazine which published a full report of the event