

COBHAM BUS MUSEUM

MAGAZINE



THE LONDON BUS PRESERVATION TRUST

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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. Due to the introduction of new typesetting technology, it would be much appreciated if manuscripts were typed, although this is not essential. Views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Editor and Committee. When contacting the Committee, please enclose an SAE if a reply is required.

Front cover: Old and new together. T504 recently had a test run to Addlestone Garage, where it is pictured with rebuilt National Greenway 347. T504 ran without problems following successive tweaking by Messrs Baxter and Gibbons and at the time of writing was awaiting only a new set of injectors to complete the overhaul.

EDITORIAL

THE RELEASE OF THIS ISSUE heralds the start of what should be Cobham's busiest ever season. Our growing band of regulars has worked hard throughout the winter and all the fruits of their efforts are just around the corner.

By the time you read this, my feature in 'Classic Bus' magazine will already be in print, and a future issue of 'Buses' is to include a full Open Day report by member Michael H C Baker. Both Gavin Booth and Stephen Morris are 100% behind Cobham's revival and they commissioned the celebrated lensman Peter Durham to contribute portraits for future inclusion in both magazines. Watch out for the results. Hopefully, all this exposure will provide a further boost to membership, helped also by our new publicity leaflet designed by myself and Paul Morris. You should find a copy with this issue. Hope you like it!

Yet again I have been able to produce a packed publication and also paid particular attention to the quality and quantity of photographs. Our budget doesn't permit me to go glossy yet, but who knows one day? Special thanks are extended to those members who have returned their "Members' details" forms complete with snapshots. If you're one of those who hasn't responded yet, DO IT NOW! We provided a stamped, addressed envelope, so what's your excuse?

Anyway, on with the show. Please keep your fingers crossed for April 9th – and indeed, our five other 'Display Days'. More details in this issue. May I remind you that Open Day is a vital fund raising event for the Trust and only those members who have helped in its preparation or who bring a vehicle for display are entitled to a free souvenir programme/ticket. *Everyone* else pays a fiver. If you begrudge that, find another organisation to join!

We do need help leading up to Open Day, especially on the weekend itself. Also, on Saturday 8th, the filming of a video on RTs, to be released by W H Smith, is taking place, so a few 'celebrity' vehicles will be on hand and it will be further good exposure for Cobham.

Hope you enjoy this issue. See you on the 9th.

Mike Nash



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

FOLLOWING the publication of the Autumn magazine, several members have asked me what the outcome of the letter from Mr David Hurley dated 7 June 1994 was, and the proposals contained in it.

The short answer is – nothing.

At the informal meeting held in London on 18 August 1994 between Mr Julian Bowden and Mr Tony Peters (directors of LBPG Ltd) and Bill Cottrell and myself (representing the Trust), we were given an assurance by Mr Bowden in his capacity as the Chairman of LBPG Ltd, that the proposals made by his co-director, Mr David Hurley, would be considered and a report made available to me. To date, there has been no response and no written reply. I can only assume that the will to communicate does not exist.

The Fair Rents Scheme

The Fair Rents Scheme has now been introduced. The Treasurer has, predictably, received a small number of complaints – all from residents who have been 'dormant' and of no practical assistance to the organisation for a decade or even longer. The rent issue has been dealt with and explained in previous issues of the magazine, but in spite of this, we apparently have some residents who suffer monocular vision or severe learning difficulties.

I will quote from one recent letter which says, 'why do we need to raise more money – for nearly 23 years now we have survived'.

I shall try to keep the answer very simple. In introducing the fair rents scheme, the Treasurer had endeavoured to find an equitable solution. For the first time, everyone is being treated equally, because some recognition is being given to those who contribute a significantly greater amount of time and personal sacrifice to keep the Trust in being.

If we were in the situation where the seven duty keyholders put in as little time as the 'dormant' residents have been doing, and we *all* stayed at home, we would never even fulfil our basic obligations as a Charity. In consequence, we would be obliged to carry the burden of paying the full business rate, currently running at about £14,000 a year annually and increasing, because we would not qualify for rates relief.

If this situation prevailed, annual rents would need to rise to more than £1,000 per space, to cover essential running costs – there would be no alternative. There would be no Open Days, no progress on the restoration of Trust vehicles and no money in the kitty for repairs to the building – such as

when a section of the roof disappeared in the recent gales on 16 February.

At present, we rely heavily on the goodwill of those members committed to the objectives of the Trust and the development of the museum. More than a year ago, the committee members appealed to those people infrequently seen at Cobham, through the pages of this magazine, with a request for help in the maintenance of the site to help keep costs down. Predictably, there was no response from dormant residents. In consequence, the introduction of the Fair Rents Scheme required a drastic re-think and the Treasurer was obliged to come up with more radical proposals.

Working residents – and that includes members who own vehicles not garaged at Cobham – have incurred additional expenditure over the years by their regular attendance at Cobham to perform essential tasks. In effect, these people have helped to keep vehicle rents low and have subsidised other residents who make no practical contribution to the running of the place – but these people still *demand* cheap accommodation.

That situation is of course wrong, and it is now being changed in the interests of being fair to the majority. *Yes* – our priorities have changed. *Yes* – we do need to raise more money to cover the cost of essential repairs to the building and pay for other badly needed facilities. There is no other realistic option.

If the request for help is really so unpalatable and the option of higher rent is so outrageous, then the alternative for these owners who complain is to take their buses elsewhere and pay the going rate.

Ultimately, the choice rests with the individual.

Progress Report

Finally, I would like to report some positive progress on Trust projects. The most important of these is the successful outcome of the Trust's application to the Science Museum for a £15,000 grant towards the purchase of the 1929 AEC single decker bus T31. A special word of thanks to Roger West who convinced the Science Museum of the credibility of the Trust and brought the negotiations to a satisfactory conclusion on the Trust's behalf. A fantastic effort.

The new building extension is almost complete and this is discussed elsewhere by Bill Cottrell. My thanks and appreciation to those members who came to Cobham in cold and unfriendly weather on 18/19 February to get the move under way. It is planned to seal off the end of the paint bay with a new partition during the next few weeks, and create a much needed workshop near the end of the ramp. This will enable vehicle restoration to be carried out in a better working environment. Our thanks to Bill Strickley, the building contractor who carried out the work and has been very sympathetic to the

needs of the Trust.

Several trees were felled by a contractor during January. Due to their condition, they were considered to be a threat to the building and were removed on grounds of safety. Several others in the vicinity of Redhill Road will receive attention in the near future and be made safe before the Open Day. Other landscape work in the grounds is progressing. Roger and Pam West have made a superb effort in refurbishing the display cabinets, cleaning and painting floors and walls and generally tidying up the gallery and the ground floor adjacent to the entrance foyer where the museum shop is being installed.

Work on Trust vehicles in recent weeks has again been good despite the ceaseless wet weather and unpleasant working conditions. Details a given elsewhere in these pages.

I wish to extend my gratitude to all the worker residents and volunteers for their superb efforts throughout the winter. Attention is now being given to preparations for the Open Day, which I need hardly remind you is on 9 April. Do contact me if you can assist in some way.

The building and grounds

These areas have received the most concentrated attention during the last few months in order that the place is tidier and we achieve the basic standard of presentation necessary for museum registration, the conditions for which are stringent.

The process of painting the building, actioning repairs, clearing and tidying the building and grounds have been performed by the following individuals, for which I express sincere thanks.

Bill Ackroyd, Don Allmey, John Bedford, Ian Barrett, 'Blackie' Blackburn, John Broadhurst, Mike Clarke, John Clarke, Bill Cottrell, Brian Down, Alan Davidson, Simon Douglas Lane, Martin Gibbons, John Greene, Alan Hine, Brian Hine, Dave Kriesler, Raja Kalsy, Carol Langford, Alan Low, Kevin McGowan, Philip Millard, Paul Morris, Mike Nash, Peter Plummer, Colin Prince, Jeff Stoute, George Townsend and Pam and Roger West.

The building and its general appearance is the main target for improvement during the next few months and all help will be gratefully appreciated. Please come along to lend a hand – there's plenty more to do!

Peter Plummer

OPEN DAY INFORMATION

WITH the involvement of 'Buses' and 'Classic Bus' magazines, the 1995 Open Day on Sunday 9th April is expected to be the best ever, with more buses, more stands and more visitors. So we need help from more members. Ian Allan is producing a quality A5 size Souvenir Programme to commemorate the event and this will double up as the ticket for unlimited travel on the bus service and admission to the museum. Only those members helping with the event and the drivers and conductors of display vehicles will be entitled to free admittance. For all others the charge is £5.

There will be a number of special events occurring during the day and it is hoped that several Trust buses will make photographic runs during the afternoon. A full itinerary will be provided in the programme, together with some interesting features on Trust vehicles. The display theme at the museum this year will be Vehicles of World War II and The RT family, the latter having been involved in the making of a video the previous day, to be subsequently released by W H Smith.

Mike Nash

HELP IS REQUIRED: 0181 8240 (weekdays); 01932 078 (weekends)

THE MUSEUM SHOP

APRIL 9TH is not only 'Open Day', but also *Opening Day* for our new shop, which will be selling bus-related items throughout the year for the benefit of the Trust. (that means *you*, by the way).

Items for sale – at very competitive prices – will include all the obvious things from pens and pencils to tee-shirts and sweatshirts, caps, bags and aprons (for mum!) Brand new, and unique to the shop, will be a range of postcards, note pads and photo keyrings featuring Trust vehicles. Also available, of course, will be this year's EFE Cobham model and a limited supply of TD95 mugs.

On Open Day, there will be two shops – one at Apps Court and the other permanent one in the foyer of the museum. Make sure you visit these stands before the others – we need the money to help assist with other projects. Also available on the day will be a good selection of food and a large supply of membership forms so that we can sign up a record number of new members. Not enough money? No problem, credit cards welcome!

PS We need your help on Open Day and on the five Display Days (see dates elsewhere), so please ring us at weekends to have a chat. (01932 078)

Roger West

EXTENSION NOW IN USE

Bill Cottrell

The long awaited extension is substantially complete. The idea of building an extension was mooted about five years ago when it was found the existing air-raid shelters, which were being used for storing various panels, glass and other spares, were suffering from water ingress, in spite of the roof being constructed of several inches thickness of reinforced concrete. Consequently, the items stored suffered from prolonged immersion in water. Attempts to water-proof the flat roofs were not successful. The area outside between the shelters filled up with a mixture of spares, street furniture and tyres. A crude fence was erected to shield the site and the area became known as 'the compound'. Planning permission was sought to build an extension covering the two shelters and the compound. It was the intention to rationalise all the years of accumulated spares, or junk as it was known in some quarters. The room gained inside the main building could then be utilised as a workshop. The restoration of the TD showed up the inefficiencies in our working practices. For example, the electric saws were put into any space that could fit them, and, to machine any piece of wood more than two feet long, the bandsaw had to be positioned so the wood could be threaded through a pile of engines – most frustrating!

The extension project lay dormant until the election of Peter Plummer as chairman in February 1993. It was soon realised that this project would be a catalyst in stimulating progress on both Trust and members' vehicles in that a proper workshop could be created allowing better facilities for members.

Four builders were invited to tender for the project. The tender accepted was from the builder who had taken the most trouble to submit a detailed tender, and who he had come to the site to suggest ways in which the work could be done more cheaply. We accepted the tender from Bill Strickley and work got under way in October 1994. The first problems encountered were the demolishing of the reinforced roof and internal walls. A structure constructed to withstand a near-miss from a bomb did not yield very easily to a Kango hammer. Bill did point out before starting that the shelter nearest the lake had moved down in one corner, causing the whole structure to crack away from the main building. When the compound was dug out to allow for the foundations for the floor to be laid, we learned about the construction of air-raid shelters. They were built on a bed of about nine inches of ballast to allow for the shock of any close bombs. This lack of foundation had allowed the shelter to subside over the intervening years. The council building inspector would not allow us to proceed with adding to the height of the remaining walls without

underpinning. This necessitated digging out nine metre-cube holes around the periphery of both existing structures and in-filling with concrete. This has added substantially to the original cost, but having gone as far as we had with the project, there was no way of turning back. In spite of this set-back, we feel that this project will still be value for money in revitalising the activity at the museum by allowing the building of the workshop. □



From top: **15 October 1994**, the two former shelters can be seen with roofs already removed; **22 October 1994**: Blackie Blackburn demonstrates the cavity dug for underpinning; **12 November 1994**: brickwork progressing nicely; **5 February 1995**: extensive side elevation complete. The extension will also house the towbus in 'call out' mode.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

THE RESPONSE to our Deed of Covenant/Standing Order campaign has been excellent, with ninety members already having signed up. This equates to an extra £1440 into club funds over the next four years. Hopefully, many more members will follow suit as time goes on. However, quite a number of members have not returned *any* of the paperwork sent out with the last issue despite our having provided a stamped, addressed envelope. This is quite unacceptable in view of the efforts the committee and I have been putting in. If your name is on this list, *sort it out now*. We know who you are!

It has been a quiet period for new members, but the forthcoming publicity should soon sort that out. Meanwhile, I am particularly pleased to welcome Michael H C Baker to the fold. A regular contributor to 'Buses' magazine, Michael will be at Cobham during Open Day weekend so as to compile a feature for the same. He will also be signing copies of his new book, 'Farewell to London's Trolleybuses', at noon.

I have received no feedback on Family Membership, so won't be pursuing that avenue. As regard current paid-up membership, I have had to send out 38 reminders to individuals, which is disappointing, so it is difficult to ascertain quite where we stand. However, I am confident that further growth can be reported next issue. To the members who have received a renewal notice with this issue, please respond without delay. To those who needed a reminder, let's see a little more commitment from you, please.

Mike Nash

The following are welcomed to the Trust:

270	Michael Baker	Wareham, Dorset		
271	Malcolm Parsons	Staines		
272	John Rawlins	Esher		
273	Brian Hutchinson	London SW4		
274	Jim Poots	Co Armagh, NI	PS1, 2x Tiger Cubs	IB
275	William Montgomery	Belfast, NI	D93	
276	James Andrews	Romford	RT4497	DJ
277	Graham Pycock	London SE27		PP
278	Adrian Oliver	Guildford		WC

Recruited by:

DJ: Dave Jones; IB: Ian Barrett; PP: Peter Plummer; WC: Bill Cottrell

LADIES!

HOW MANY TIMES have you dreamt of spending your weekends surrounded by men? Well now is your chance. Cobham needs you! For the past three weekends I have been the only lady at the museum, and believe it or not I haven't cleaned the loo and I only make tea when it suits me. We have plenty of men around to do that sort of thing. My time has been spent painting display cabinets, walls and anything else that didn't move, and maybe a few that did. It was messy, cold and tiring, but lots of fun and there is still a lot to do before Open Day.

Our new shop will be opening on 9th April, and help is needed not only on that day but also on the five Display Days during the year. We also have a great deal of landscaping to do around the building and keen gardeners are urgently needed, along with a few ideas on how to improve the look of the grounds.

Once the hard work is done, there will be more time for social events, not all to do with buses, lets have some suggestions. So please take time to consider the skills and ideas you can contribute, and if you would like to get involved give me a ring on 01252 060 (before 9 pm), or come along to the museum one weekend.

Pam West

DISPLAY DAYS

Five dates have now been confirmed as 'Display Days' at Cobham Bus Museum. Simon Douglas Lane and John Greene will be operating RT3491 on each occasion, connecting Brooklands Museum, Weybridge Station and Weybridge Town Centre. There will be a variety of interesting events taking place at Brooklands on each of the dates to which Cobham visitors get reduced admission prices. The Cobham shop will also be open. It is hoped that there will be a selection of visiting vehicles on each of the dates, and the aim is to give Trust buses plenty of exercise whereby members can enjoy a few trips around the locality.

On the first Display Day, we will be playing host to members of the Transport Trust whose AGM is at Brooklands that day. Please make a note of the following dates in your diary. We do need a good turnout of members each time.

Saturday 13 May; Sunday 2 July; Monday 28 August (Bank Holiday); Saturday September 30th; Sunday October 22nd (pre hibernation day) □

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS TOUR 1994

John Hinson

AS DUSK SETTLED IN OVER ST PANCRAS STATION, buses began to gather. RFs and RTs of all liveries appeared, plus the odd RM and even an ex-Barton Leyland. The departure time of 5.30 pm came and went, but buses were still arriving. The pavements were thronging with passengers. Around 6 o'clock RT3496 arrived, our usual contender for the award (if there was one) for the last arrival who as usual managed to arrive at St Pancras facing the other way to everybody else. But this year he wasn't the last, for even as the first of the vehicles departed, a blue and yellow RF pulled onto the back of the line.



Mike Clarke's RF643 was one of 18 vehicles in attendance. Indeed, there were probably as many Santas – at least two can be spotted in this shot taken in the tunnel under London Bridge station.

Away the buses went, first to the City, and across the river at Tower Bridge. The usual stop for photographs in the floodlit tunnel under London Bridge station presented a problem the last four buses couldn't fit in and had to park way back down the road! Then away again, weaving across the river and back again, along the Embankment, Fleet Street-you name it, we went there.

Opposite St Thomas's Hospital, the convoy drew to a halt in the only road in London with enough parking space for them all Suddenly it was realised there were no less than eighteen buses in the convoy (far more than have ever attended before) namely: RF 4, 10, 28, 255, 433, 453, 486, 534, 643; RT 1544, 1599, 1705, 3028, 3496, 4497; RM 291, 2156; Barton Leyland PSI: WAL782

Some of the vehicles were bedecked in decorations and coloured lights. Father Christmas was at the helm of one RT, whilst other drivers were seen in red hats with flashing lights, or antlers! Everyone was having a roaring good time, and when a couple of crew members appeared with an LT cash bag or the statutory drivers white-top hat demanding money for the BBC Children-in-Need Fund they dug deeply into their pockets and produced a total of £317.04 (plus, so generously, one French franc and a US cent) for this worthwhile cause.

Off again, Westminster, Trafalgar Square, a small diversion to avoid the Piccadilly bus lane (one driver got ticked off by a policeman last year!) and Green Park, where a quick halt was made for the stragglers to catch up. One of the RMs got into an interesting knot when the others pulled away - he was just too close to a parked car to be able to swing out and the two buses behind had pulled up inches away! A quick shuffle solved the problem and on the move again, up Park Lane to Oxford Street and Regent Street where the lights looked good. Somebody asked why Oxford Street was so congested. "Because there are eighteen extra buses going this way!" (Bill Cottrell was heard to mutter the next day "Oh, that's why we had so much lost mileage on the 10 yesterday")

Suddenly, it seemed, we were back at St Pancras and it was all over. One by one the buses drifted home. One RF owner bold enough to shut his engine down found it wouldn't start again. Yours truly collected jump leads from another bus and soaked myself laying in the wet road under another RF preparing to link the two vehicles together. Somebody (MN) decided to have one last go at turning the engine and, hey presto, it started! Why didn't that happen before I wetted my back?

Everyone who was there must have their own special memories of the day. One highlight of the trip for your scribe was at Lambeth Bridge, where a glance over my shoulder at a roundabout revealed two "Sightseeing" RFs following, well loaded and lit up, with the destination "EVENING TOUR OF LONDON" displayed in one of them. Another grand sight was at Parliament Square, where I could see a variety of RTs, plus the odd RM, jostling for position.

It was a real pleasure to have Dave Mann travelling on RF433. He was really the instigator of this whole event - which started in 1983 with his RT1784. From a one-bus tour, specifically designed in the first instance to utilise as many bus lanes and "no right turn except buses" junctions, it has grown and grown to the record size achieved this time round.

Everybody agreed it was a really good night out. See you all there (and more?) next year on Saturday 16th December 1995. □

VISIT TO FIFIELD - 29 JANUARY 1995

Ian Barrett

A SHORT WHILE AGO I had a call from that well-known preservationist David Boshier, asking if I would like to attend a function at Fifield, near Windsor, where he keeps his bus along with many others. The site is owned and run by Colin Billington who had arranged with David to hold a slide show and social gathering. My intention had been to take Michael Deans' ex-Royal Blue Bristol MW, but as I was working on it and couldn't get all the parts needed in time, this proved impossible.

A telephone conversation with member Dick Garbutt the week before revealed that he was also going to Fifield and he offered to use XF1 as transport, calling in at Cobham en-route to pick up those members who had put their names on a list in the museum canteen, announcing the Fifield event.

I arranged to meet Dick at 11 am at Dorking depot where XF1 is kept, for a 12 noon departure and when I arrived just before eleven, he was already there, checking the Fleetline's levels. With the situation well in hand, I decided to do a



XF1 is pictured here outside Cobham Museum on 29 January 1995

bit of work for myself (doesn't happen often) so I sneaked off to another part of the depot.

At noon, we locked up and Dick asked me if I would like to have a drive, so I took first turn so as to get some practice in before reaching Cobham. The Gardner engine gave surprisingly sprightly performance – one firm push of the throttle and you definitely knew you were going places. Gear changes came up very quickly in the engine's urgency to reach top gear.

Semi-automatics are not renowned for precise gear changes and some vehicles tend to hang on in the previous gear after you have moved the small selector lever, which can make changes a bit haphazard. Fortunately, XF1 was not like this and as soon as the lever was moved, you knew the gear was disengaged. Hey presto, early gear changes – just how I like them!

It's a few years since I drove a DMS in London, so getting used to the steering took a few minutes. Drivers familiar with modern layouts will know that as the front wheels are so far back, you have to build a slight delay into your steering action so as not to start bouncing off kerbs or clipping bus shelters due to the front overhang. On top of this, early generation rear-engined deckers tended to wander from side to side, probably due to the light front end and over sensitive power steering.

XF1 was a bit like this in that you constantly had to correct the steering, but it wasn't hampered by being over sensitive and although it felt a bit woolly with a lack of road feedback, the balance and level of assistance was well judged so as not to hinder.

We arrived at Cobham at around 12.40, but as usual had to wait for late arrivals, meaning that we didn't get back on the road until about 2 pm, the time we should have been at Fifield! No matter, though, the journey lasted only an hour despite the amount of flood water evident on the day. Indeed, on the approach to Fifield it had been interesting to note that a swollen roadside stream had diverted itself up someone's drive, moving at some pace, and possibly four inches deep.

On arrival, our parking guide, member Graham Lunn, ran out from behind a wall and very nearly straight into the front of XF1 which was now in the control of Dick, following a crew change at Runnymede. A quick reaction saved the day and saw several members hurtle to the front of the bus as the strong, but not snatchy brakes did their job.

With Graham recovered, XF1 was found a space to park and everyone piled off and into the various sheds full of a variety of buses. David Boshier arrived to greet us and then proceeded to move some of the vehicles out to make viewing easier as some of the parking is even tighter than Cobham standards.

Following a comprehensive tour through the sheds, where some fifty vehicles were to be found, we gathered for the slide/film/video show which featured a variety of interesting subjects including AECs in Australia and some fascinating, if shocking, scrapyards scenes taken by our own Bill Cottrell. By now, the heavens had once again opened and by 7 pm it was mutually agreed that we should make a move. While Dick fetched XF1, some people braved the weather whilst others sheltered until the bus appeared round the front of the large farming site.

I took the first shift at driving home and so could sample once again the wonders of XF vacuum driven windscreen wipers, which although quite noisy, are speed adjustable on the driver's side and give good efficiency and vision through the large screen.

Dick took over near Addlestone, and with everyone dropped off at Cobham, we headed back for Dorking and were away home by 9.40 pm.

On behalf of Cobham, thanks are extended to Colin and David for their hospitality and to Dick for his generosity in using the beautifully restored XF1 in such appalling weather, and for giving me the opportunity for such an enjoyable drive both on the way there and back. Dick has very kindly offered to make XF1 available when required for some future Cobham evens so we can expect to see more of this interesting vehicle in the future. □

ANSWERS TO VIC'S QUIZ NUMBER 3

Only a handful of members responded to the last quiz, but it was a close run thing for those who did. By the narrowest of margins, the winner is Dave Jones of Romford, who receives a £20 voucher to spend at the new museum shop. Due to the poor response, this will be the last quiz for a while. Meanwhile, the answers to number 3 are as follows:

1-LPTB at Chiswick; 2-trolleybuses; 3-RC; 4-RF16; 5-last of their type built 6-5; 7-LUC; 8-red; 9-RTs 1431 and 1499; 10-push; 11-no; 12-500; 13-LTs 1059 and 1077; 14-no; 15-BEA 4RF4; 16-pre war 2RT2; 17-offside staircase for export; 18-eleven; 19-RMs; 20 front 90 lbs, rear 60
Easy quiz: i-1963; ii-Kingsway, trams; iii-John Bedford; iv-RT, RTL; v-Route-master Coach Long; Regal Flat Wide; vi-they all covered Green Line services vii -Westminster Bridge; viii-RF41; ix-ambulances; x-Epping to Ongar xi-trolleybus; xii-rear entrance body

MEMBERS' VEHICLES

You will all have received a 'Members Details' form with the last issue of the magazine, together with a stamped, addressed envelope. Most of these have now come back to me duly completed . . . if yours hasn't, DO IT NOW . . . and my thanks are extended to those who sent in vehicle photos and histories.

One such member was Robert Wilkin (48), who is involved with the 1702 Preservation Society and therefore RT227 and RT1702. The history of RT227 follows below, together with some additional notes from our Archivist, Alan Bond. RT1702's history will be in a future issue. Thanks are extended to Robert for his effort.

MN



RT227 (HLW214) BUILT 1947 BODY: PARK ROYAL 1476

RT227 was delivered new to London Transport in December 1947 from Park Royal and was allocated to Croydon Garage (TC) to operate on such routes as 12, 59, 64, 68, 115, 130, 133, 159, 166, 166A, 197 and 234 until its first overhaul in November 1951. It returned to TC until October 1952 when it was transferred to Thornton Heath (TH) to operate routes including 109 and 190 until October 1954, when it returned to TC to see out the rest of its life with LT. It had

one more overhaul in April 1955 and kept its original body throughout.

After the disastrous bus strike of 1958, RT227 was withdrawn and stored in Stockwell (SW) until April 1959, when it was sold via Birds of Stratford as dealers, to Warners, who operated local bus services and contracts in Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire. Before entering service with them, it was fitted with platform doors and painted light and dark green. After serving Warners faithfully for 14 years, it was withdrawn for scrap in 1973. In the same year, Warners sold RT227 to some young enthusiasts and in September it was noted in a field in Wilmington, Kent. 1974 saw it moved to Poplar Garage (PR) in a partly dismantled and very dilapidated condition, until in March 1977, it was purchased by the 1702 Preservation Group (Historical London Bus Trust), who started the mammoth task of fitting everything back together again, including re-wiring electrical circuits and restoring the bus to a roadworthy condition.

Finally, in 1981, RT227 went for its first MoT and only failed on two minor defects – the stop light glass should have been red, not orange, and there was a small hole in the silencer. On its second visit, a pass certificate was given. So, after lying derelict for four years, followed by four years restoration by a few dedicated enthusiasts, RT227 was finally ready for its debut.

At 10 am on 5th April 1981, the inauguration ceremony of RT227 took place at Poplar Garage. More than 50 members and friends attended with champagne glasses raised in one hand and special inauguration cake in the other. With the final speech over and the ceremonial tape broken to the sound of three cheers, RT227 moved off to take part in the bus rally in Barking to mark the second anniversary of the last RT route in London (62).

So RT227 was back in London after an absence of 22 years and has since won many prizes, a tribute to the small band of dedicated members.

The original livery was LT red, and not the present one of LT Lincoln Green. The reasons for this change are as follows. The last operator fitted platform doors and LT did not have them on their red RTs. RT227 was already in a green livery, and thus was ideal for painting into Lincoln Green. RT227 would add to the number of RTs in green livery and would complement red RT1702, and the livery represents LT Country Area services seen in the Bromley and Dunton Green area (402, 410, etc).

ALAN BOND, OUR ARCHIVIST, ADDS . . .

When is a body change not a body change?

It is a well known fact that during 1958/59, in the aftermath of the 1958 bus strike, LT withdrew from service as surplus to requirements a total of 242 RTs. Many of these carried bodies which still bore the original bonnet numbers they

carried when new and, in the absence of concrete information, many assumed that no body changes had taken place. In a sense this is true if bonnet numbers are taken at face value. However, many RTs that were overhauled during 1954/55 had their chassis' exchanged with other vehicles which were in works at the same time. Though not obvious to the layman these were body changes in substance since the chassis emerged from works carrying a different body even if only Aldenham knew about the change. RT227 is interesting in that I believe it to be the only RT remaining in this country which was involved in such a body change during the period in question. The preserved RT 172 is another possible candidate in these stakes but I have yet to confirm the facts of that particular case. As far as RT227 is concerned the bare bones of the case are as follows:

RT227 with chassis 1103 and body 1476 enters Aldenham works on 16th March 1955 where the body is removed for overhaul. On 1st April 1955 body 1476 is put on to chassis 1157 and the resulting combination leaves works as RT227 on 13th April 1955 for service at Croydon. Chassis 1157 had arrived in works on 27th January 1955 carrying body 1527 with the identity of RT278 and on 15th March 1955 body 1527 had been mounted on chassis 1099 thus leaving 1157 free to receive another body. In each case the bodies left works carrying the bonnet numbers that they arrived with, these being carried from new. Thus, the history of the present RT227 must now read:

Chassis 1157 new from AEC 10/9/47 to store at Aldenham works and to Park Royal for bodying on 11/12/47. It arrived back at Chiswick for licensing on 15/1/48 and a CoF was granted with effect from 17/1/48 and the complete vehicle (RT278) was available for service from Middle Row garage from 19/1/48. RT278 entered works for overhaul having seen service at Palmers Green for just five days from 15/5/50 to 20/5/50 during the RTW availability trials. Apart from this its entire working life as part of RT278 was spent at Middle Row. The history of body 1476 reads as per the record with periods of service at Croydon. Thornton Heath and Stockwell albeit on two different chassis. The original chassis of RT227 (1103) ended its days carrying body 6923 as RT4547 which was sold to Omnibus Promotions and exported to the USA. I have no idea whether it still exists but there are others whose knowledge of the transatlantic situation is far greater than mine and they may be able to shed some further light on the current situation. □

PHOTO GALLERY



Seen at Crystal Palace in 1968 is the Trust's own G351, soon after having passed into preservation from Burton Corporation. The photo was sent in by Michael H C Baker, who will be compiling a report on our Open Day to be published in 'Buses' magazine in due course.



This recent snap was sent in by Peter Duplock, who spotted RT2617 in Nuremberg, Germany, being used in probably its final role as a car dealer's office. That gives me an idea, Peter!

TD PICTURE SPECIAL

There are four TDs known to survive. All are from the Mann Egerton bodied batch and all are with the Trust and its members.



TD95 is very much the Trust's flagship, and will be in regular use during the season. Pictured here in September 1994 at Finsbury Park.



TD89, seen here in November 1988, is in the part ownership of member Roger Wakeford



TD118 is undergoing extensive restoration by member Richard Bole of Dover, who also owns RT2556 and JK9115, an ex-Eastbourne Corporation 1946 Leyland PDI converted to open-top, which he used to travel on in his schooldays!



TD130 is, like TD95, in active use, being owned by member Roy Adams, who, despite hailing from Bristol, is a regular Cobham volunteer. Roy also owns RTW29 and RT1599.



Former Ipswich Corporation Transport no. 16 is the superb 1954 AEC Regent III owned by John Bedford, who is pictured with his vehicle at Showbus '93, Duxford. This bus was recently the subject of extensive footage in Channel 4's 'Classic Trucks' series



Members Andy Baxter and Martin Gibbons are pictured with T504 at Addlestone Garage during its recent test run. The bus is likely to make some photographic runs during Open Day on 9th April

50 YEARS AROUND LONDON TRANSPORT AND NEVER AN EMPLOYEE

PART TWO

Roger Stagg

IN THOSE EARLY TEENAGE YEARS, like I suspect every other boy at the time, I hankered for a train set and many is the Sunday afternoon when I should have been at Sunday school when I could be found in Vauxhall Bridge Road, Victoria, having taken the Southern Electric service from Herne Hill station. In the hour and a bit that was allocated to go to and from Sunday School, it was possible to get to Herne Hill station, catch a train, lust at the windows of Ian Allan's train shop and be back in time to join the other children who had not found the courage to play truant.

Eventually a train set was forthcoming and a board for the layout was required. Such things were not readily available, nor for that matter affordable in the 1950s but Grandfather came to the rescue with some plywood boards which were laid down to cover a large part of the bedroom floor onto which the track was then laid. At that time paint was virtually restricted to two colours, green and brown but as such was ideal for painting a baseboard, green for grass and brown for earth and this was liberally applied, to the detriment of the linoleum underneath! Such served well for many years and train layouts came and went until other things became more important and the boards were removed to form part of a shed that Father was building in the back yard. The house is still there, albeit much refurbished but I doubt that the shed is. Recalling that all of those boards were the hand painted destination boards from the pre-roller blind buses, I hazard to think what they may have be worth today if they had not performed what was certainly for me at that time a somewhat more useful function.

By the age of 15, interest at Norwood Garage was beginning to wane a little, although it felt quite "manly" to drive buses, showing off in front of the adults whose thoughts were probably more like "silly little pratt", but the occasional visit was still made when the interest of the time, probably of the opposite sex, was not currently available. One hot Saturday summer afternoon on one of these visits, the buses were running in with all windows open including both cab windows. It was required to close all windows when parking, as by this time a mechanical bus wash had been installed to one side and this was used during the night.

Those who knew the old Norwood Garage, will remember that behind the relatively narrow entrance was a large, virtually square garage with the pits at the far end. To the right was a small rectangular section leading to the adjacent street. In here, it was possible to store three buses wide and three buses long but three buses in length stuck out around 8 ft beyond the walls of the various stores and maintenance offices. There were always buses right at the end of the garage, those under maintenance and positioned at the pits. The system of storage required the section to the side to be filled first and then a row of buses brought up in front of the stores and offices, leaving a gap of around 6 ft behind them. There were always a fair few buses in on a Saturday, and on this particular occasion 8 of the 9 buses were in the side section and a number already lined up in front of the stores and offices. Buses were always reversed into position so that they could be driven out, under no circumstances was it acceptable to position a bus so that it would need to be reversed out when it went in to service. Running-in started and as usual I wanted to do as many as possible. The first bus was swiftly reversed in, I leant out of the cab door to get it straight and then reversed until the cab was dead in line with its neighbour, then immediately away for another and continued the long line beside the stores and offices. Several buses later I leant out of the door to ascertain perfect alignment, reversed back, watching to the right hand side for the cabs to be level but I was nowhere near level when there was a loud crash and the sound of breaking glass. This bus has passed the end of the offices and reached the point where the 3 buses at the head of the side section project forward, the first one of which I had parked an hour or so before and which still had both windscreen sections fully open, both of which were broken. The rear of the bus being parked had run into the dumb iron of the one below, bending in the rear panel and breaking the rear platform glass.

Panic set in; what I should have done was simply own up but own up is what panicking youths do not do and thus taking advantage of the lull in operations, I re-parked the bus on the other side of the garage in a group that had been lined up to go through the wash, I then pulled a number of buses out of the side extension, parked the one with the broken windscreen right at the back and moving the others in front of it, then parked a newly run-in bus properly in the position of the accident. I then conveniently bade farewell to Grandfather and his domino playing colleagues and departed on the first 68 available.

Grandfather turned up at about 11 o'clock on Sunday morning, I remember Mother expressing great surprise but I knew why he was there and attempted to make myself scarce but there was nowhere scarce enough. It was perhaps the only time I can remember Grandfather going through the roof, he had even

been relatively calm when I had once put a piece of Cordite in his Nosegay roll-up. He of course had not found the problem, it had been discovered by the night staff and all hell had broken loose. He was at great pains to emphasize that if only I had told him it need never have been a problem. I became "persona non grata" at the garage for a good six months.

It was soon after I started calling in again to "keep my hand in", including an experiment as to what would happen if you selected reverse and depressed the engage pedal whilst you still had a reasonable forward speed, that Grandfather was involved in an accident in the garage during a period of instruction, when an engine shifted sideways striking him on the head. He came back to our place and after eating dinner felt too unwell to return to his own house and was put to bed at ours. It was Saturday on the following morning when the doctor was called and shortly afterwards friends of Grandfather's started to arrive. Each one arrived in a bus and they were seemingly coming from garages all around, at one time there must have been fifteen or more buses parked in the street. Later that day Grandfather passed away with a blood clot on the brain caused by the accident. I believe he had the right for "Ole Bill" to be used as a hearse, indeed he had taken me over to New Cross on more than one occasion to see it when it was then in its full LGOC livery rather than the drab Khaki now has at the War Museum, but Mother would have nothing of that.

There was no compensation for accidents in those days and Grandfather had been our last link with LT, Grandfather Stag having now retired, Father had moved jobs and Grandfather's last brother with LT having emigrated to Australia. There were many of Grandfather's colleagues at his funeral but not a single official representative. Thus ended the family's direct links with London Transport.

Time marched on and I drove anything that I could anywhere on or off the road and four weeks to the day from my 17th birthday I passed the driving test to drive legally on the roads for the first time. So on Saturday it was into the Austin 7 Chummy and off to Norwood garage to find the same group playing with the same dominos and with a little badgering it proved possible to borrow an RT for 10 minutes for old time's sake.

Time passed, I went to university and ended up as a designer in the construction industry. Between appointments overseas I found myself on a large development outside Leicester where no public transport existed and few building industry workers could afford a car. The construction company decided to provide a bus and what arrived was a pre-war ex Oxford City AEC Regal with a crash gear box. Beautifully re-painted with a broom, in the Company's grey colour with the word "Token" blazoned in red down each side,

it arrived courtesy of a fitter from the Thatcham plant yard who deposited it on site and promptly left with a colleague in his Dormobile van. The problem was that nobody could drive it, we had a site lorry driver but he was used to driving a modern Bedford with synchromesh gears. A number of the labourers had driving licences but would have had difficulty even with a car. It therefore fell to me, and I have to say not reluctantly, to drive the bus to and from Leicester twice each day whilst I trained the lorry driver and remained as the spare driver.

The site was an old airfield and it turned into a very large industrial estate. One of the first jobs was to build a road all the way around it. One dark night the lorry driver failed to return, I had taken the labourers down to Leicester and had returned to the site with the bus and thought that it might be a good idea to drive the bus round the new road, which was not open for public use and see how well it cornered. It took the first corner quite well with a lot of sway but it stayed on the road. On the second corner although it went round without any problem there was a terrible bang from the back but I was unable to find anything wrong when I put it in the compound under the flood lights. The next morning the lorry driver came in to say that someone had stolen the spare wheel from under the stairs of the bus. We drove off in the Land Rover to the second corner and walked about 200 yards into the field where we found the wheel, somewhat covered in mud. I explained what had happened but threatened the lorry driver with instant wrath of God if he told anyone. By lunchtime everyone in the canteen knew.

The old Regal was a nice bus but at 30 mph it sounded and felt as though it was doing 100 mph. Unfortunately the bus outlived its gearbox and as the plant yard had no interest in dealing with its repair, it was towed away for scrap and replaced by a similarly painted RT. The RT involved training the driver all over again as he had no idea what a pre-selective gearbox was. The RT was seemingly in superb condition and went like the wind and I secretly enjoyed the times when the lorry driver was late back and I had to "reluctantly" take it down to Leicester. Can anybody help with its number?

Walking through fields near to our house one day in 1990, to my surprise I spotted an old single deck LT in very bad shape. I had thoughts of trying to buy and restore it but this was out of the question. Earlier this year it and its partner, presumably hidden from sight, were sold, one to the LTE Museum and one to Trust Members. I have ambitions to perhaps own a bus one day, my wife and friends think that I am mad but I shall keep looking! I would love the impossible but realistically I am looking for an RT and somewhere reasonably near at hand to store it. Suggestions or help welcomed. □

THE BRISTOL BUS: PART 4

Alan Bond



Ex-Royal Blue 2250 (617DIV) is a handsome example of the MW in ECW bodied form

NEXT in our mini history of the Bristol marque is the MW. This was a much improved version of the semi-integral LS and it incorporated a conventional chassis. In theory it was possible to have just about any make of body fitted but in the event no MW ever appeared with anything but an ECW body. The complete vehicle was somewhat heavier than the LS and at around seven tons or more unladen the title 'Medium Weight' was something of a misnomer, as was the sobriquet 'light Saloon' for the earlier model.

The prototype LS weighed in at around 5¼ tons and would have been adequately powered with the 5HLW. The problem is that the weight started to creep up once production had begun and many were very little lighter- than their successors. The MW had the advantage that the weight was predictable and even the luxury coach versions come out at less than eight tons. Despite being around the same weight as an RF many were fitted with the 5HLW and I shudder to think what their performance must have been like, for, fortunately, I never got my hands on one of these.

The MW6G is, for me, one of the best buses Bristol ever produced with one

qualification; you could only comfortably use them in the summer. The lack of concern for driver comfort was carried over from the LS and detracted from what would otherwise have been a very nice bus. The gear change linkage had been modified so that the travel on the slightly shorter, gear lever was reduced and thus the gear change became very much more positive. The different weight distribution meant that there was less of a tendency to understeer, and the ride was marginally better even on the dual purpose version.

Our first regular example of this type was delivered to Bletchley depot, for the inauguration of the 121 service to Oxford which replaced the very much superior train service between the two towns. The schedule for this service was, to say the least, tight, travelling as it did for the most part along country lanes as far as Bicester. We insisted that we would not operate the service with our regular LS5Gs as we would never have kept to time and so we received 142 (WBD142), newly converted to B45F from DP41F.

The service commenced on 2nd January 1968 with a rota of four drivers, one of whom had only just passed his test, and needless to say the weather was atrocious, with a blanket of snow of around six inches in depth everywhere. Our rookie driver was the first to leave on that morning and eventually he reached Oxford slightly after the scheduled departure time. This is not as good as it sounds, as he should have had a break of 1¼ hours at Oxford, but I suppose for a first attempt 77 minutes late isn't bad in the snow.

Worse was to come, the scheduled arrival time back in Bletchley was 1159, just in time for an early lunch, but the weather and the inexperience of the driver delayed this journey by a little over two hours. Thus was the rail replacement service born and it is small wonder that the locals have been calling for the reinstatement of the train service ever since. There was never a time when this service could be said to be an easy trip, for some very rapid motoring was always the order of the day and only our six cylinder motors could cope with it. On the very rare occasions that an LS5G wandered on to the service it always ran late.

It was with an LS that I experienced an amusing little incident on the last Oxford one winter's evening in 1969. I had fuel trouble on the way out and at Oxford I tried to get assistance from Cowley Road but they had no one available so I phoned the parent depot at Stony Stratford. The fitter suggested that it would be easiest to meet me at Winslow on the return journey and there the change of vehicle was effected. I had a few minutes in hand so I waited while he traced the fault and it took him no more than ten minutes to rectify it, so he suggested that he should follow me back to depot and take the spare bus back to SS leaving my original bus ready for the morning run out. I lost sight of him at

around Drayton Parslow and as I passed through Newton Longville high speed I spotted at the last minute a couple of pedestrians in the road. From the brief glimpse I had of them they appeared to be workers from the London Brick Company depot as they were dressed in overalls and donkey jackets. When they realised I was approaching fast they decided to get off the road and in their haste they both jumped into the deep and very muddy ditch on nearside. I had arrived at the garage and paid in my takings when the fitter arrived in the other bus and told me about two workers from the brickyard who had dived into the ditch when they had seen him coming. Who says lightning doesn't strike in the same place twice?

THE RE TYPE



One of more than 100 Bristol REs in preservation, ex-Trent 285 is rare, having the standard ECW bus shell, but with high chassis platform and dual purpose interior; with its Leyland engine, its designation is RELH6L

It was in 1969 that the first of the new breed of Bristol arrived with us. The REL6G was a development of the earlier RE coach. It was the first type of Bristol to be fitted with what is termed semiautomatic transmission. Our first example at Bletchley was 312 (NBD312F), and, like all the early examples, was fitted with a four speed gearbox. Unfortunately it was also fitted with a Gardner 6LX that was governed to 1700 rpm. This meant that a fairly high axle ratio was used and this made it necessary to use first gear for moving off every time. It also kept the top speed down to around 45 mph which was a blessing in dis-

guise, for the front end handling characteristics were inherited from the LS and the understeer had to be experienced to be believed. The ECW bus bodies on the RE were, like their, predecessors, somewhat flimsy when compared with, for example, an RM and the ride was somewhat harsh with the cross ply tyres then fitted. Later the ride was softened by the use of radial-ply tyres but this had the disadvantage of making the steering heavier. It always surprises me that a vehicle with the engine tucked away at the rear can have heavy steering while that on the front engined FLF was quite light by comparison. For some reason rear engined vehicles have this tendency to heavy steering and thus power steering has become the norm. Later RE deliveries had the five speed gearbox and this became the standard for most Gardner engined versions and as a result the performance, particularly the acceleration, was considerably improved. One of the nicest things about the RE was the very roomy cab; I don't think that there has been a bus before or since with so much room for the driver, to distribute his goods and chattels around him, for the cab was nearly big enough to hold a dance in. Rumour has it that the smaller drivers used to get lost in RE cabs and could be found struggling to get out long after the next driver had taken over the bus.

All of these early REs had a common fault. The original design had vertical windscreens and after dark the reflection from the interior lights immediately turned almost all the available width of the screen into a very effective mirror. It affected the entire near-side screen and about a third of the offside and driving after dark was extremely hazardous because of it. Once the problem was known the earlier examples were fitted with vertical sun visors which extended from the centre of the screen edge onto the driver's line of vision and this eliminated the reflection on his half of the screen though it did nothing for the nearside. On these early examples the cab area was painted dark Tilling green which did go some way towards eliminating reflections and the cab curtain did at least give you the chance to see a little. The next batch to arrive had the cabs painted in WHITE and this made the problem even worse. The reason for the change of colour was to match the light coloured melamine finishes used in the passenger saloon. Once again nobody had bothered to think about the consequences of this design and it took a while before the RE was modified to have BET style curved windscreens after which the problem was partially eliminated. Some REs were later returned from overhaul with the cab area painted matt black and this also did a great deal to help.

Not so easily cured was the problem with the rear window in the driver's cab. This was a large sheet of ¼ inch thick toughened glass carried in four rubber lined chrome plated clamps attached to the bodywork. Unfortunately, with the

constant flexing of the body these clamps would work loose and the glass would begin to rattle and eventually it would shatter, unless remedial action was taken. Various remedies were tried and suggestions were made that they should be removed altogether, an idea that was vigorously opposed by the trade union side. In the end the simple remedy was to replace the panel with a transparent plastic sheet which had the advantage that it didn't rattle and shatter like glass.

The RE made one important step forward in that it had heaters that worked. The cab heat came straight off the front mounted radiator and, despite the fact that most of it was directed upwards, kept the cab comfortably warm on the coldest of days. It was too good to be true and sure enough the design was modified, whereupon the cabs got considerably colder. Once again the designers had triumphed over good sense.

The RE was the first of the new types to appear and next time around I shall look at the Bristol LH and VR types which followed them into service. □

NORBITON COMES TO AN END

SADLY, examples of London's buses have left the old London Transport Norbiton garage for the last time. Since the spring of 1994 Norbiton has been a temporary home for the Routemaster Heritage Trust, thanks to the good offices of the St George's development group who had purchased the garage after its official closure as an LT base. The days of Norbiton seeing preserved buses was to be short lived, however, as early in January the various examples of RTs, RTLs, RFs and RMs, along with one or two examples of other Marques left Norbiton for the last time. Demolition work started two days later. Currently, the RHT does not have a home base and members' vehicles are garaged at various sites around London and the Home Counties. Members of the committee are exploring numerous avenues in order to find a suitable base for around 25 vehicles. If any reader hears of, or sees, any buildings within a reasonable travelling distance of London, which they think might be suitable, would they please contact either Mike Clarke on 01628-825691 or Bill Ackroyd on 01483 225060. Despite the current problems it is still planned to hold a running day to Syon Park from some other suitable venue, on Sunday 10th September 1995. Further details will be circulated as available.

M J Clarke (Press Officer) Routemaster Heritage Trust

Lillibrooke Crescent, Woodlands Park, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 3XQ
01628- 691 : fax 01628 736

KNOW YOUR COMMITTEE MARTIN GIBBONS

I am 49 years old and have been married to Pat for 23 years. We have a son, Luke, of fifteen, and a daughter, Di, of 22, who is married to member Aidan Garvey. I have three grandchildren and have lived in Byfleet village for 24 years.

I am employed by the Freight Transport Association (FTA) as a vehicle inspector and have been interested in and involved with preserving vehicles since visiting the HCVS rally at AEC's in 1958. Over the years, I have owned various vehicles as finances have permitted, while bringing up a family. My current vehicle is a 1959 AEC Reliance with a Willowbrook body, new to Grey Cars of Torquay. This coach is the only survivor from a batch of 16 and is of 7 foot 6 inch width. I use it for rallies and trips to other museums, etc.

I would like to see Cobham continue to improve its image and appearance so it can become a fully-fledged museum and an asset to the community as a preserver of our heritage. As a regular weekend worker, I would say to *all* members . . . Why don't you come on down, you can be sure of a warm welcome! □



25 YEARS AGO

Bill Cottrell

1st January 1970 saw the split of London Country from London Transport, in retrospect the precursor to the privatisation changes implemented in 1994, and an early chapter was being written in another story that also developed in 1994, the recovery of LT1059 . . . The newsletter speculated (wrongly) on the future of the RM and FRM

FROM THE NEWSLETTER, JANUARY 1970

. . . the first LONDON COUNTRY RT to emerge from Aldenham repaint after 1st January was RT4742 (B4724), OLD528, entering service from Garston on the 321 route on 2nd January. RF607 also led the field in its class, at HH, with the new fleetname. For the central area, RM1860 was an early carrier of the new-style LONDON TRANSPORT all-capitals fleetname similar to that used by the FRM for some months past. A minor transfer mod is the replacement of the long-standing capacity transfer over the ticket box by a new one, in three fines placed under the ticket box. We understand repainted RTs will display the old central fleetname while stocks last. The LBPG holds sufficient stocks of fleetname and capacity transfers to meet anticipated renovation requirements.

The overhauling of RTs at Aldenham ceased at the end of 1969 with RT4433 SP entering works, from which it will leave during February, probably as RT557.

Members may have noticed that London Country vehicles are already removing obvious signs of their former association – on radiator motifs and bullseyes etc, which sent us scurrying to purchase a small quantity of the RTpattern rad motifs to safeguard our future needs.

This separation of the central and country areas, coupled with the phasing out of the RT and RF (perhaps more speedily in the country area) is being closely watched insofar as it may affect our restorations. The RT/RF bear close design and material ties with several pre-war types, which are not present in the Routemaster and subsequent vehicles, although the latter hark back from time to time. Though there are many who question the wisdom of the formation of the LPTB in 1933, as no doubt many will question the wisdom of the current separation, there can be little doubt that, in those 36 years, LT has led the field, even the world in bus development and design. I remember after the war people were saying how amazing were the LTs and STs, up to twenty years old and still going strong, though inclined to sag at the waistline. But many RTs will have exceeded this when they are finally withdrawn and I have yet to see a saggy RT or one that is not fit for a good many years service (accidents excepted). The

RMs seem destined for a premature demise despite its advanced design and then we shall be back to square one with the ever faithful beam axle standard. And the FRM will hopefully live out its days in the loving care of Osborne's of Tollesbury, or A1 Services perhaps, until the day the INDUSTRY proclaims (in twenty years' time) tremendous new advances in bus design and introduces independent suspension and sub-frame construction. And we will mumble through our grey beards to the kids saying 'they had that in our day' . . .

Alan Pommer (USA) reports the arrival in Atlanta, Georgia of a Leyland open-topper JK9114 and MXX222 (RLH22), both bearing LT livery and fleet number at the Royal Coach Motor Inn, by whom they appear to be owned.

The January 1970 BUS AND COACH included a coloured hand-out for the Metro-Scania single decker, picturing the actual prototype soon to be on trial in LT service this month.

FROM THE INFORMATION SHEET – LATE MARCH 1970

Firstly, the LTL project, and by the time this is read, Tim (Nicholson) and Prince (Marshall) will be on site at Teignmouth tinkering with a view to starting the old lady. On Thursday the 'heavy gang' will move in and with any luck the weekend will see the vehicle safely at the Winkleigh premises of the West of England Transport Collection with not too many pieces having been lost on the road en-route! Applications for shares in the project have been coming in steadily over the month but of course one can never receive too many. It is appreciated that members are hard-pressed for funds in restoring their own vehicles but, if, from time to time groups or individuals find they have something spare for the LTL, it will be most gratefully received and will bring nearer the day that restoration of LT1059 can advance . . .

Another vehicle which came to life after a long silence is T792, after its major engine overhaul. An engine (from a former BEA Regal IV) has been acquired for RF10, and a sound radiator for TD130. GS67 will be the subject of an engine change shortly. After much searching, brake cylinder rubbers have been located for G351.

From the USA, Allan Pommer reports RTL327 to have blown a piston and RT1186 to have lost its lighthouse . . .

. . . AND 14 YEARS AGO

Mike Nash

Like Bill, I've also been delving through old copies of the newsletter and found the following in a 1981 issue. I feel sure that some members will find it most interesting. The Chairman back then was none other than Tony Peters, who announced the following . . .

'With effect from 1 July 1981, I shall be acting in the capacity of full time sales manager at Cobham.'

Bill Cottrell was newsletter editor at that time and in response to the above statement, he made the following perceptive and somewhat prophetic comments . . .

'I feel a little uneasy about the manner of the aforementioned appointment. For example, there could be a conflict of interests between Tony (as employee) and Tony (as Chairman). I understand that the Group has provided a company car, a Volvo 245, and other benefits with the job. How and who decided on the terms of employment?'

Here we are, some fourteen years later, with the above questions still to be satisfactorily answered. Meanwhile, Tony continues to trade from the museum during weekdays. Makes you think, doesn't it?

And here's another great unanswered question. Why is Mr Julian Bowden still a director of the Group Ltd., when he is not a member of the Trust? What can be the incentive for his continued involvement? I think we should be told and would invite members' comments. □

ITEMS FOR SALE

RT Silencers	£40
Regent V Silencers	£55
RM Brake Linings, hard and soft – FRONT	£12 hard, £18 soft
RM Brake Linings, hard and soft – REAR	£18 hard, £24 soft
Rivets for above	PO.A.
Relining above available	PO.A.
AEC RM DPA Type EN62	£450
Cloth Filters	£2
Bus Red Undercoat and Topcoat	£24 per 5 litres
Leyland RM engine, reconditioned ex-BEL	£950 to members
RM panel screws, 200 per box	£10 per box

For further information, please contact Museum Spares Co-ordinator – Bill Cottrell at Cobham on Saturdays or Sundays Tel: 01932 078

DR SPANNER'S SURGERY

A few gremlins crept into the December newsletter article on fuel problems. The reference to the easiest injector pipe to bend as a temporary replacement to the others, is number 6. The other error was in the illustration where the filter seal is 90 degrees to the left of where indicated. This month's words of wisdom cover the absolute basic level of maintenance, checking oil levels.

ROUTINE OIL CHECKS.

In our experience, second only to fuel problems as a cause of breakdowns, comes sudden failures of units caused by lack of lubrication. It is annoying because it is entirely preventable. It causes the vehicle to be disabled, requiring a tow, with all the trauma the organisation of that entails, plus the added aggravation in getting your passengers home. The engine does not often fail as the oil and water are usually routinely checked before each journey, it's the other units that let us down. Unless you are aware of a serious leak, a once a year check of gearboxes, compressors and differential oils should suffice to allow a trouble free rally season.

OILS FOR RF/RT

	Capacity	Type
Engine	Five gallons	Supplement 1 SAE 10 or 10-30A
Fuel Pump	Half-pint	SAE 30 Plain, no additives
Flywheel	Three and half gallons	SAE 30 Plain, no additives
Gearbox	Two and half gallons	SAE 30 Plain no additives
Rear Axle	One and quarter gallons	SAE 140 Plain, no additives
Compressor	Three pints	SAE 30 Plain, no additives
Auto-lube	Three-quarters gallon	SAE 30 Plain, no additives
Steering Box	Two and half pints	SAE 140 Plain, no additives

The oils shown in the table are those readily available. There are more specialist oils on the market of a better quality. It must be emphasised that on no account should EP oils be used, especially in the differential where it quickly corrodes the phosphor-bronze worm wheel.

It is not uncommon if a bus is started frequently and only run for short periods, for a grey deposit to collect in the filler neck. This is caused by condensation and is nothing to worry about. However, if you find the actual oil is grey when checked, this is a sign of water in the oil and needs further investigation. RFs usually come with their own dipstick. This is because the dipstick acts as a seal to prevent oil spilling from the sump. RTs on the other hand usually don't have a dipstick. This problem can be easily overcome by measuring a piece of wire 32 inches long. When inserted down the tube, the oil

level should be 28 inches from the top. Every inch below this equals a gallon to be added.

CHANGING RF ENGINE OIL

The RF sump is divided so that the oil draining from the bearings is separated from the section housing the main oil pump. The oil is pumped from one half of the sump to the other by a scavenge pump. This can lead to some misleading readings on the dipstick. It also explains why when six gallons of oil are drained from the engine, it only takes three and a half gallons to apparently fill it up again. In these circumstances the engine should be run on tickover for five minutes and a approximately three gallons added to attain the correct level.

GEARBOXES

These units have their own dipsticks and can be readily checked from above through the floor trap, so no excuses here for neglect. To determine when to change the oil, look at the colour. If it is black and smells burnt, or if there is signs of metal deposits in the oil, change it. Once changed, depending on mileage, it should be alright for a couple of years.

COMPRESSORS

These also have their own dipstick and can be accessed from above through a floortrap. These should be checked at least annually as they only have a small capacity, although I have not known one fail in preservation.

DIFFERENTIALS

I have known two differentials to fail in preservation, in both instances due to lack of oil. The reason for this is it takes more effort to check and you access to a dipstick that does not come with the unit. As a rough guide, measure a piece of wire 9 inches long, insert it in the dipstick hole and if the oil shows, you should be alright. Here again, check for discolouration. If there are a lot of bronze particles apparent, change the oil. The filler cap also has a breather in it in the form of a split-pin. This should be freed off with a pair of pliers to assist in preventing oil pressuring and blowing glands.

In the next magazine, we will deal with greasing and the automatic lubricator but we welcome questions on any problem, and any model of bus. Write to Dr. Spanner, c/o the newsletter editor. In conclusion . . .

HELPFUL HINTS

With the rally season almost upon us, let us consider another common cause of breakdown, the puncture. There you are, on the hard shoulder with your off-front tyre flat. No problem. You have your wheelbrace, your jack, even your spanner to undo those lovingly polished wheel-trims. And then, as the

juggernauts whistle by six inches from your posterior, you remember. The last time the wheel was changed was when you had that new tyre fitted. The wheels were torqued up with the pneumatic equivalent of a super-gun, and just to make sure, the twenty stone gorilla in charge of the aforementioned tool, nipped them up by jumping up and down on a twelve foot scaffold pole attached to his wheelbrace. So the tip is, make sure YOU can undo all your wheelnuts. The recommended torque is 400 lbs/feet. This equates to a six stone weakling jumping on a six foot bar. Remember, on all sensible buses the wheelnuts do up to the front and undo to the back regardless of nearside or offside. If you cannot undo the nuts with a wheelbrace and extension, try the following. Whilst applying force to the bar, get someone to strike a blow with a hammer at the nut end. The shock may help to free it. Given a choice, it is better to be in charge of the hammer rather than the wheelbrace because if it is successful the resulting shock jars the elbows something chronic. As an absolute last resort, attach your wheelbrace and extension in a position facing forward so that it wedges on the ground, then drive slowly forward. Something is sure to give. It may be the wheelbrace, the nut or the stud, but believe me, something will shift. Be aware, the wheelbrace could fly in any direction, so make sure your car isn't parked in the area. □

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From John Marshall

Just a small but important correction to David Boshers' letter in issue no. 7. The Leyland Motors classification for RTW/RTL chassis was 6RT/7RT, not any variation on PD. Leyland deliberately chose to adopt the LTE chassis codes as their own classification.

VEHICLE NEWS FROM PETER PLUMMER

- RT2775 Ian Barrett has been working hard and long into the evenings on occasions to fit the new rear platform riser which is now in position. One problem experienced was that when the old riser was cut away, the rear bulkhead pillars splayed outwards on both sides of the bus, which was detected by the appearance that the new riser was short in width. However, all is now corrected and the process of making a new back bottom rail will be undertaken shortly. David Boshers has kindly donated three platform supports and a new battery cradle has been donated by Vic Chivers, many thanks to you both. Preparation and cleaning work has been undertaken by Philip Millard, George Langford, Frank Langford and just recently, Brian Down.
- STL2377 Work has temporarily halted to enable our team of mechanical experts, Andy, Bill and Martin, to lead the various groups on the three T-types that have received attention recently. Further work will resume shortly and it is hoped to get professional advice on the corrective measures required on the re-framed body.
- T31 The petrol and heater tanks were removed by Martin Gibbons, Colin Prince, Bill Cottrell and Andy Baxter, and drained for cleaning thoroughly by Martin and Malcolm Lewis. All parts were reinstalled by mid February with the assistance of Alan Bond, so our latest addition to the Trust fleet is confirmed as fully operational.
- T448 With the deployment of labour on the building and grounds, progress has slowed a little. Last of the window visors were fitted after a struggle to fit new bolts into new timbers awkwardly fitted in the cantrail position under roof panels. Brian Down and I are in the process of renewing the last decaying timbers on the rear nearside window. Rod Lucas, Roger Stagg, Alan Hine and Brian Hine have all assisted in preparation work with occasional assistance from George Townsend and Kevin McGowan. The rear of the vehicle will receive attention next.
- T504 The 'new' radiator was fitted to the coach in early February by Andy Baxter and Brian Down, so the vehicle has officially returned to the active list after 4 years. Andy and Bill Cottrell

are in the process of checking injectors and fuel pump to reduce smoke. Vic Chivers is preparing more Green Line side route boards. Other assistance given by me.

TD95 Following our appeal in this magazine for chromed, domed nuts for handrail fixings, member Roger Stagg has kindly machine-turned a complete set of nuts to the correct profile and arranged for chroming. All are now fitted.

332W After gathering dust for nearly two years at storage facilities at Ockham and Dorking, Andrew Hayward washed and cleaned out the vehicle in preparation for re-instatement as a breakdown vehicle at Cobham. It will be based in the new extension.

702B The mobile canteen tractor unit is now in running condition, but the process of finding a few parts such as new headlamp rims to replace the badly rusted old ones continues. The committee is delaying the decision to have new ones made by a metal spinner at considerable expense until all other avenues are exhausted. It is hoped that the reorganisation within the building into the new extension will allow the Scammell trailer to be moved into the building, so arresting the deterioration suffered after standing outside for 10 years.

DIARY DATES

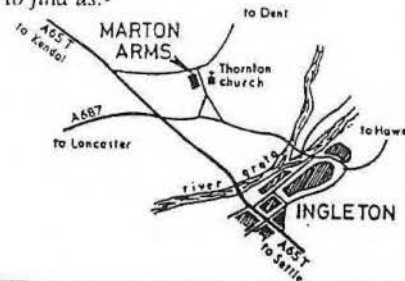
The rally season is so jam packed these days that it is impossible to provide a full listing. However, the following events are those most likely to be attended by Cobham members and possibly Trust vehicles. A comprehensive rally calendar is provided with the current issue of 'Buses' magazine. - MN

Sunday 9 April	Open Day, of course!
Saturday 13 May	Cobham Display Day
Sunday 14 May	Barking
Sunday 4 June	St Albans 'open all day' (01525 578)
Sunday 11 June	Southsea Spectacular
Sunday 18 June	BBPG Luton Transport Festival (01582 200)
Sunday 22 June	North Weald
Saturday 1 July	Mid Hants Railway (01276 53)
Saturday 2 July	Cobham Display Day
Sunday 9 July	Southampton, Victoria Park (01703 213)
Sat/Sun 8/9 July	Carlton Colville 'London Weekend' (01502 459)
Sunday 23 July	Routemaster 'London to Brighton Run'

A HOLIDAY IN YORKSHIRE?

Member Colin Elsdon (199) owns a hotel in the Yorkshire Dales as well as RF226 and RF530. For anyone interested in railways, the famous Ribbleshead Viaduct on the Settle to Carlisle line is only five miles away and Steamtown at Carnforth 17 miles. The current rate is £20 per person per night, breakfast included, but Colin is offering a 10% discount to Cobham members. Information is given below, together with a photograph of the RFs □

Where to find us:-



We are One Mile North West of Ingleton, in the heart of the beautiful Yorkshire Dales, near to the famous Waterfalls and Caves.

The Marton Arms Hotel

Thornton-in-Lonsdale, near Ingleton, North Yorkshire
Postal Address:
Thornton-in-Lonsdale, Carnforth, Lancashire LA6 3PB
Tel. (05242) 41281
Fax (05242) 42358

Established 1679

Directors: Colin Elsdon & Timothy Hazelden



Bendix

Portable Dual Control Single Cylinder Compressor for Manual Operation



INTRODUCTION

Based on our highly successful manual single cylinder compressor, we are now introducing the rationalized dual control model. Designed to meet EU requirements and the national characteristics of the member states, it will also reassure drivers who operate between the UK and the Continent. It will no longer matter whether a vehicle is left or right hand drive or whether the air reservoirs are on the left or right hand side of the chassis (ambidextrous drivers especially will appreciate its unique design). Whilst the original individual left and right hand models remain in production, the rationalized unit will eventually supersede both.

SPECIFICATION

Air cooled manual dual control operation, single stage, lightweight design. Delivers either imperial air (0.85 cu. ft.) or metric air (24 litre) at 1,000 strokes per minute. Bore is 0.7511 (19mm) and stroke is 1111 (280mm).

CONSTRUCTION

Robust lightweight construction in non corrosive material. Only one serviceable part.