

From The Chair

RTL 803 was spared the indignity of being wrecked down a Swiss mountain due to the good sense of Swiss bureaucracy who refused permission. The bus returned to Cobham for a pre-MOT check. The work arising proved to be inordinately expensive to rectify bearing in mind the owner's ambition of finding the most spectacular way in which to wreck it. Upon leaving the owner was heard to be discussing with a friend the possibility of attaching the RTL to a rocket and jumping the Grand Canyon!

RF 136 has undergone fairly extensive repair to bodywork followed by a total repaint. I saw it subsequently at the Chiswick rally in a paddock with many other green buses in the Country Area livery. For some reason no two seemed to be identical in colour - (talk about forty shades of green!). Perhaps Lincoln Green weathers with a more noticeable variation than the red, or perhaps there is a problem with matching now that green is a special order.

All the Group and other buses stored at Richmond had to be moved out at short notice by the beginning of July to various locations. This caused the tow-bus to be pressed into service, as a large number could not move without assistance. After a fortnight's gruelling work it blew a head gasket across the front head where we know we have a problem with a couple of weak studs. It was repaired in time to attend the AEC rally at Nottingham the following week.

GS 33 has been bought by Michael 'Blackie' Blackburn, owner of GS 34, from Graham Burgess.

A new window pan has been manufactured by Aldenham works for the TD. After inspection by us it was declared satisfactory and a complete set is now on order. Meanwhile, the re-panelling is almost complete apart from a single off-rear corner panel which is bulging in all the wrong places. This is being rectified.

The STL tower wagon advertised for sale recently turned out to be 726.J, ex STL 314. After a phone call to the advertiser, a cheque was duly despatched to purchase it. However when the photographs arrived, it was seen to be in very poor condition with all the running units gone and the crew cab collapsed. The best part on it seemed to be the tower. Peter Moore (the owner of STL 2377) at Woolwich offered to buy it from us and as he had access to a low-loader to transport it, it was sensible to pass it on to him. He is not interested in the tower and that has been offered to the LT Museum for 89Q which incidentally appeared at the Chiswick rally. The blurb attached, stated that it would be painted back in its original dark Chiswick green livery. I do hope not.

The fuel problem with T 504 was looked into. It was decided to fill up the autovac and run it to see what would happen. What happened was that it ran out of fuel at Sunbury on the way back from Chiswick so a deeper investigation was warranted. A loose pipe was traced between the filter and the fuel tank. After removing most of the plumbing on the engine for access it was tightened up and everything replaced. We have now filled up the autovac and will send out an intrepid volunteer to see what happens. Geoff Stoute was doing his customary

yeoman service lining up RM's at Chiswick. It would appear that his table tennis bats with 'Halt' on one side and 'Follow me' on the other are getting a bit faded. It has been suggested that to keep his arms free that he be fitted with a tee-shirt with 'Halt' on the front and 'Follow me' on the back (all the rage in the King's Road this season). In addition it is proposed that the bottom of his hush puppies be inscribed with 'Back a bit' to assist those RM drivers who insist on driving around with the brake warning flag down.

Bill Cottrell.

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ROY'S REMEDIES PART 4

This time finds our pioneer GS preserver stuck on the M1 service area at Leicester Forest, with the Chairman driving and cursing Guy Motors.

"Oh dear" says Bill as he changed into fourth as we joined the motorway at Derby South, "Clutch has packed up." Anyway, he decided to carry on to the next service area to try and sort something out.

No sooner had we stopped than in rolls Tim Nicholson, in I think, CR 14. "Wotsup?" he asks. "Clutch broke," replies Bill.

Tim rolled underneath and a couple of minutes later came out with the verdict that the linkage had broken.

He went back underneath with a couple of spanners and re-emerged with the offending broken bits. He sauntered off in the direction of the workshop area and came back about half an hour later. "There you are, that should hold long enough to get home."

The GS clutch linkage that breaks, is a piece of about $\frac{3}{8}$ " steel rod with a hook bent in one end and a long threaded bit on the other end wot adjusts the clutch. It usually breaks on the threaded bit, which it had done this time.

Tim managed to find a long nut with which he joined the two bits, and made sure it didn't work loose by putting another nut each side to lock it up solid. He went under 67 again, and within five minutes, we were on our way again. By the way, that repair lasted about five years till eventually it broke some where else, so I got my dad to make me two new ones, one to fit on and one as a spare.

Talking to London Country people after the event, they told me that whenever they took a GS out on a private hire, they always took a spare clutch rod with them. Moral here is to carry a spare, 'cos Tim Nicholson may not always be following you.

Many thanks to Tim for his help on this occasion in 1970!!

Roy's Remedies next issue deals with Flat Batteries. No, that's too obvious, how about when your GS gear lever gets stuck in reverse and the bus is actually in second gear? Yes folks, it actually happened.

Roy Gould

THE NATIONAL MOTOR MUSEUM AT BEAULIEU

Late last year, the Group was commissioned to supply an RT bus in "service" condition to the National Motor Museum. Apparently, after approaching London Transport our quote was nearly a quarter less than theirs!

The bus was to be sited in a new permanent display of commercial vehicles within the Museum. The brief was to supply a bus which would be restored to a condition that most visitors would remember them in. The interior was to be repainted but only as per an Aldenham overhaul of the 60's. In other words painted rexine rather than new rexine, etc.

As there was some discussion about the bus being used during the next Summer (1985), a specimen with good mechanics was required. RT 1808 was chosen as the vehicle to represent the London Bus at Beaulieu. At that time it was in good mechanical order, but the bodywork did require some attention. Prior to its purchase by the Group, it had been used by Lesney UK Ltd., of Matchbox Toy fame, as a staff bus, and was showing signs of neglect. However, the resident coachmaker got to work and repaired or replaced all the bad bodywork. Preparation and then internal and external repainting was carried out to complete the bus.

As it was decided that a video display would be included in the lower deck, with visitors being allowed to board the bus to watch, three front seats were removed and wiring installed.

It was during the final inspection by the Beaulieu management, that we were told that the plans for running the vehicle in the Summer had been shelved and now the thinking was to put it in its place and build a display around it. It was unlikely to move again, once in position, for many years.

Everything was ready on time, and the vehicle was delivered to Beaulieu on Wednesday 27th April. As it arrived it was driven into place in the hall. Once parked, the set builders were already boxing it in, and the electricians fitting the video display.

The new Commercial Vehicle section was officially opened on Monday 29th April by the Secretary of State for Transport, Mr. Nicholas Ridley M.P. In his opening address, he referred to the importance of the bus in today's world of transport and made comment about how bus drivers must have suffered when 'those things' (pointing to the RT) were on the road.

All in all, a very satisfying exercise, and already another Museum has enquired about the Group supplying them with a similar bus.

Just as a footnote to this, the bus is currently fitted with route 21 blinds. From our vast stock we haven't got a mid 1950's fare chart which would complete the vehicle. If anyone has such a fare chart, would they care to lend it to Beaulieu who would then get it photocopied and returned then to the owner? Please contact Tony Peters at Cobham if you can help.

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"SO YOU'VE BOUGHT A BUS"

That's the first thing you're told, then the next question you're asked is, "How much did it cost?" "What do you use it for?" Followed by, "Where do you keep it?" That's usually the three questions I get asked by all sorts of people, relations-friends-and general public. You've met them, usually at rallies and it's an education to watch Mum, Dad and young Bert (for want of a better name), just keep out of sight and listen.

Young Bert - "It's a bleedin' London bus dad, look."

Dad's reply- "Yes mate, just like the one I get me dole money on, and stop your swearing.

Then you hear Mum say - "I wonder who it belongs to?"

At about this point they are about to invade you (thinking no-one's on board), complete with sticky candy floss and smelly hot dogs, not to mention the stereo tranny, when all of a sudden they stop at the foot of the stairs, (at this point you have been spotted), in hesitation dad pops the question, "can we come in mate?" Already they are halfway up the stairs. "You can listen to our tranny if you like." A sudden hostile approach comes over you, you are calm and collected and explain that it is a private bus and you don't want hoards of kids clambering about (in a polite way of course), and that they did pass a sign that said private, which by now has been trampled into the dirt. At that moment they beat a hasty retreat with murmurings such as "not much of a bus," or, "I've seen loads of them go up in smoke," and so on.

Well, that's an insight into one of my rally experiences. I expect you've had the same happen to you. I am not going to go through all my childhood experiences about buses because I never really took a lot of notice of them, in fact I used to hate them, any Sunday School outing or excursion and I would steer clear of them unless I could sit right up front - but never at the back otherwise it was "everybody out" at the nearest wood or lay-by depending how urgent my call was - back I would come white as a sheet and praying the journey was soon over before the next ordeal. It wasn't till the late Sixties and early Seventies that I started to take notice of buses. I am fortunate to live near a bus garage with a yard alongside where they kept their old buses ready to be sold for scrap. But I noticed the shape of the buses was changing they were getting bigger, less interesting (to me that is), and they have a different noise.

At about this time I knew a person in my town who had bought a double deck bus, but it wasn't one of those modern ones but a half-cab bus I used to dread travelling in. I got to know him and he went on to explain what is involved in owning your own bus. He was looking for other accommodation for his vehicle owing to being ousted from where he was. He went on to explain about the costs, insurance-tests and so on. It wasn't till he invited me to take a trip with a group of other enthusiasts one sunny Sunday morning that the bug struck - now I thought, here am I, single and unattached, doing some quick calculations, why couldn't I buy a bus? I must point out that my interest in buses was confined mainly to books and models particularly London buses, also supported by occasional visits to an aunt in Bexleyheath, well and truly London Transport territory. I always had a soft spot for London buses despite the fact I've never lived in London, I come from Glasgow Central and East Kent territory.

It was about 1973 that I really decided to take the plunge. It started with an advert I read in the Buses Illustrated, Vehicles for Sale column about an ex London Transport RTW for sale. It turned out to be the RTW 29 which did quite well at rallies although not heard much of these last years. Anyway, to cut a long story short, I went up to see it but found it had failed its MOT and was going to cost a fair bit to put right, and the necessary funds were not readily available, so I dropped out of the sale. It was not long afterwards when I received a 'phone call from a friend of a friend saying was I still interested in buying a London Bus? Yes said I, well if you come up to London someone will meet you at Victoria Station with the appropriate vehicle, which I hasten to add was an RT. So with introductions over it was off for a test drive which involved going round and round some London square, I forget which one although I am sure I saw some worried faces looking out of an Embassy window - probably thought we were some right wing group doing our own thing.

"Yes I'll have it," I said with an almighty gasp, thinking of what I had let myself in for. "Take it with you now if you wish," he said. I nearly fainted - here's me, I thought with 14'6" of double decker and only a half hour's driving experience to drive it out of central London towards the Kent coast.

Anyway, once I'd got the hang of it and found the sign that said A2 I knew I was on my way and feeling very proud of my new steed. Well, to cut a long story short, I have since cleaned, painted, rallied and cleaned it again. I must admit despite the number of RT's being preserved in the country I've had some good fun, may not have won all your big awards, but I've learnt a lot about how a bus works, how to drive them professionally, and met a lot of new friends in the bargain - and with the dreaded Class 5 testing, I still look forward to a new rally season with the mums and dads and not forgetting the young Berts.

Stuart Addison
Herne Bay Kent.

NOTE:

We still need more articles for the newsletter, so please keep them coming in.

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

5th October	The Malvern Motoring Event, at THE THREE COUNTIES SHOWGROUND, MALVERN.
6th October	VINTAGE TRANSPORT DAY. at the Midland Bus and Transport Museum and the Birmingham Railway Museum. An enhanced free service will link the two Museums where special displays and attractions will be provided. 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
20th October	Oxford Bus Museum Trust, Open Day at Long Hanborough BR Station, 9.30 - 5pm
3rd November	North London Cinema Society, Odeon, Muswell Hill - see attached leaflet.

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NEW MEMBERS

We should like to welcome the following:

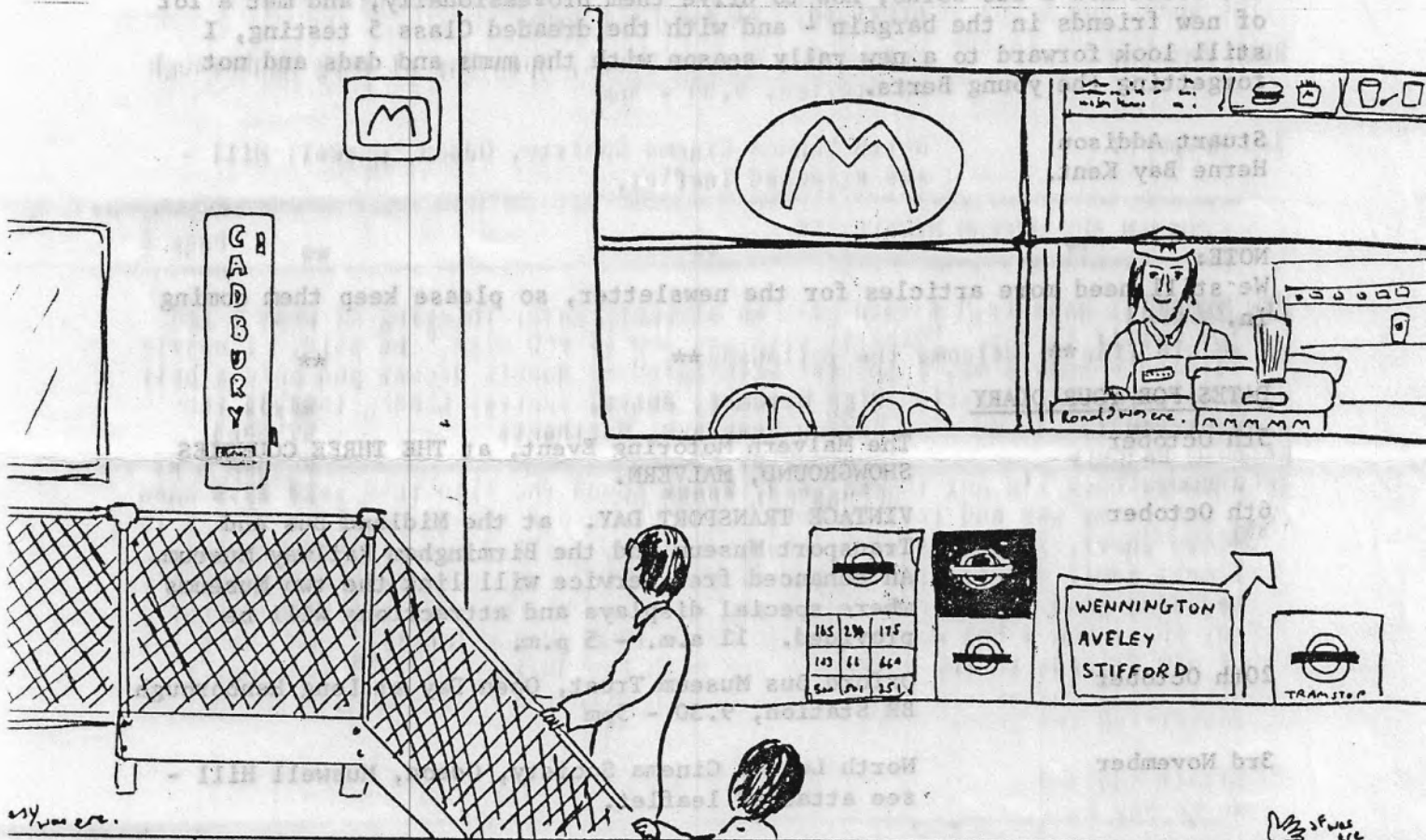
John Hutchinson	High Wycombe, Bucks.	RF.11
Alan Farrow	Barton Seagrave, Northants	RT 3865
Malcolm Padbury	Southgate, London	RF 351 & RT 2688
John Hammel	Wanstead, Essex	RT 3198

Stuart Addison
Herne Bay Kent.

SALES AND WANTS

Wanted - Hillman Cap Badge and Hillman Coaches and Aeroplanes, any photographs or information.
Mr. R. Taylor, Lodgefields Drive, Crewe, CW2 8TU.

FOR SALE - 3 x GS Wheels and tyres for sale.
Contact Tony Peters on Cobham 64078.



"I GATHER THEY'VE MADE SOME CHANGES TO THE CANTEEN RECENTLY"

NEW MEMBERS

We should like to welcome the following:

- John Hutchinson
- Alan Farrow
- Malcolm Padbury
- John Hurrell

- High Wycombe, Bucks.
- Barton Seagrave, Northants
- Southgate, London
- Hampstead, Essex

RT 3185
RT 3885
RT 351 & RT 3888
RT 3188