

THE LONDON BUS PRESERVATION GROUP LTD



COBHAM BUS MUSEUM REDHILL ROAD COBHAM SURREY KT11 1EF COBHAM 4078



COVER Amersham Garage Open Day – 25 July 1981

INSIDE 1. RT re-roofed at Cobham – described in accompanying article by Colin Wickens.

2. RM3 at East Anglia Transport Museum, Carlton Colville, during group visit to Eastern Counties Rally on 12/13 September 1981.

Our belated thanks to Andrew Morgan of Kenton for the photo of RM737 at North Weald, used for the cover of the last newsletter.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
PRINTING & DISTRIBUTION

Bill Cottrell
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PERSONAL VIEW by the Editor

The interest in 'customising' Routemasters by certain sections of LT staff has gained momentum this year. As I see it, as a boost to staff morale and as a way of earning money through the sale of gold transfers it is a positive force for the preservation movement, so long as it is kept in perspective. The danger is that these buses, as inter-garage rivalry becomes more intense, have a disproportionate amount of effort spent on them to the detriment of the rest of the fleet. Even if the time spent is wholly voluntary the contrast between the superficial condition of these showbuses and the rest of the fleet could cause the banning of such projects by the powers-that-be. At least when these buses pass into the hands of private preservationists they can be shown with chromed engines as they were like it in service!

This reminds me of an incident at the North Weald rally earlier this year with FRM 1. It was penalised as its livery was not right. How can a current LT vehicle painted at Aldenham not be in the right livery?

WORKING PARTY AT COBHAM

Thanks are extended to all members who gave up their week-end to help with the massive clear up at Cobham on October 17th and 18th. Acting on the theory that RT/RF gearboxes expand to fill the space available we found there were over 30 boxes in various nooks and crannies. It was the intention to try to gain another bus space and I would estimate we just about achieved this. I would suggest the space gained be given first refusal to those who assisted in this project.

NEWSLETTER

Reaction to the last Newsletter has been mixed. Many members spotted the misprint in the vehicle movements section referring to the purchase of Leyland Cubs being 'cheaper in paris' This should of course read 'cheaper in pears'.

VEHICLE MOVEMENTS

- 26.7.81 RT4744 in for engine change.
- 2.8.81 RF332 towed a Thorneycroft lorry from Hounslow to Steadham. I understand that the new owner of the lorry was saved the task of dismantling it as it gradually fell to bits during the journey.
- 13.8.81 RT3103 in for roof work (see later story)
- 12.9.81 RM 3 was used to visit the East Anglian Transport Museum and Eastern Counties Golden Jubilee Rally. The visit to Carlton Colville on the Saturday was a lesson in hospitality. In spite of the pouring rain we had a very enjoyable visit. Perhaps it was because of the weather, as trams seem to look right in the rain. The highlight of the visit was when tram 1858 was wheeled out for our benefit and ran up and down for as long as we wanted. Vehicles with LT ancestry are listed below.
- 626X 1942 Fordson tractor
- ? Q AEC Mercury Pole carrier
- RT 2827 Osbornes of Tollesbury livery
- 1858 HR2 tram, formerly kept at Chessington Zoo.
- 1201 The trolleybus used as a store at Shepherds Bush from 1961 to 1968.
- 1521 London's last trolleybus.

This visit was linked to the Eastern Counties rally at Norwich on Sunday. Most of us spent Saturday night at the University of East Anglia, utilising their bed and breakfast facilities. The weather on Sunday was in complete contrast to the previous day.

Unfortunately the RM nearly let us down with flat batteries and only just started in the morning. We made it to the rally ground, but missed the road run while attempting to rectify the fault. We managed to overcome the problem by putting our batteries on an adjacent RM (thank you GM garage) and running the bus for a couple of hours to charge them up. As they had their own problems with a blown head gasket it was a very kind gesture and much appreciated.

The rally was part of a county-show with many other events going on, one of which was a demonstration of recovery vehicles righting a couple of double-deck buses.

Fortunately we made it back with no further difficulties and the fault was eventually traced to a loose wire.

On 27.9.81 RF 332 was used to tow what remains of RF 594 from Swanley Garage to Effingham.

Finally, work has started on re-framing the near side lower saloon of STL 441.

FROM THE SECRETARY

GROUP MEETING 18th NOVEMBER 1981

A meeting has been arranged at The Stephenson Room, Euston Station, Eversholt Street, NW1 commencing at 7.30 p.m. to enable members to get together and discuss with the Committee matters of mutual interest. Refreshments will be available and it is planned to devote part of the evening to a film show of activities at Cobham and elsewhere. The first part of the evening will be reserved for discussion of business matters.

Please endeavour to support this. In the past there has been criticism that regular workers at Cobham were detached from a large section of the membership. We are trying to remedy the situation and maintain better contact by means of regular newsletters and periodic meetings, which we hope will be well supported.

MEMBERSHIP RULES

When the Constitution of the Group was drawn up in 1972 it provided for two categories of membership - owner membership and membership by invitation. Persons owning or being joint owners of vehicles formerly operated by London transport fell into the first category. Those not owning such vehicles but dedicated to supporting the aims of the Group and proposed for membership by an owner member, fell into the second category. This created a two-tier membership structure - a differential subscription and perhaps most importantly - no voting rights for invited members.

This membership structure has been in use for the past ten years, but there has from time to time been pressure on the committee to review the rules.

Briefly the alternatives would be:

- (a) Retain the existing two tier membership structure.
- (b) Amend the constitution and introduce a single class of membership open to all those dedicated to supporting the aims of the group and the preservation of buses of London transport origin - adopt a single subscription figure and provide equal voting rights.
- (c) Retain the two categories of membership and adopt a single subscription rate and voting rights for all members.

Members may consider the third option insignificant. If so, the choice would rest between the first and second options. The meeting of 18th November will present the opportunity to discuss possible revisions. Any change to the Constitution would need to be approved at the Annual General Meeting of 10 February 1982.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

Although the building structure at Cobham is substantially sound, it will be necessary to keep in motion the programme of essential maintenance commenced in 1980. - although the extent of work carried out will be dependent on the availability of funds.

Trees

During the summer, several trees have dropped branches and there is evidence of 'dieback' in others. Some trees are leaning excessively, and we have been reminded by our insurers that damage to the building and vehicles or injury to persons would be regarded as negligence by us and the cost of repairs or compensation would not be recoverable under the terms of our insurance.

An experienced highway surveyor has visited the grounds and prepared a schedule setting down the state of the trees and identifying those works which should be carried out as a matter of priority.

It may be possible for members to carry out ground clearance and the removal of smaller trees. The felling of larger trees and the effecting of crown reduction by the removal of selected higher branches to achieve better weight distribution is not considered suitable work for the inexperienced. In view of the risks involved the committee have decided to place the work in the hands of a suitably equipped company and this will be done as soon as possible.

Main Gates

The main access gates to the museum are in poor condition and for security reasons they will need to be repaired or renewed in the near future. The opportunity will be taken to widen the gate opening at the Silvermere end to provide easier access for vehicles. Estimates of cost are being obtained.

MEMBERSHIP LIST - ADDITIONAL MEMBERS

Attached to this newsletter is a membership list. It contains amendments and additions to the original list circulated in July 1981 and should be attached to it to keep your records complete.

ME AND BY 'GS' by Bill Ballard

Looking through the Membership List we were supplied with recently, I note that there aren't many of us 'North of Watford' and even more interestingly, I am just about the only member 'up North' with a 'GS' (that is until I recruit Stuart Davies, who is hoping to acquire GS7 in the near future!)

How I came to own GS2 is quite a story. Prior to 1977, I hadn't owned a historic vehicle in the accepted sense, but I was actively engaged in preserving the vehicles owned by the Transport Appreciation Society in Oldham. Early that year, TAS was approached by Robin Hannay with a view to buying his 1953 Guy Special and a party of members duly visited Astle Farm, Chelford, Cheshire to inspect the said vehicle, which had not moved for some 3½ years. Robin (who introduced me to the L.B.P.G.) had done some repairs to the engine, including fitting new injectors, but had neglected the saloon and the exterior, both of which were rather tatty. However, we liked what we saw, and reported our findings to the TAS Committee who resolved not to proceed with the purchase on the grounds of finance (or lack of it!) She was then offered to the membership, and so Dick Mentern, Stewart Bodkin and myself clubbed together to buy 'GS2'.

She was moved to Oldham one sunny evening in August 1977, and the fun began right from the start: we had to reverse her out of the farm and down the access road for some considerable distance because there wasn't enough room in the farmyard to turn her round! We used a triangular junction with a road from another nearby farm to turn her round and proceeded up the lane leading to the main Macclesfield to Chelford road, with me following behind in the 'support vehicle'. This was my first mistake, for the lane

was bounded by high banks and hedges, which retained the clouds of white smoke being emitted from the exhaust of the bus, blocking my view entirely and doing its best to choke me to death!

At the first opportunity I overtook the bus, whose exhaust became clearer the more we progressed, but I was soon behind her again after stopping to take some roadside photographs.

We called at 'The Sidings', a well-known hostelry in Alderley Edge, to celebrate our achievements, much to the chagrin of the other patrons, who are not used to people in jeans and overalls turning up in scruffy old buses at their beloved gathering place (Alderley Edge is in Manchester's 'stockbroker belt'.) I cannot remember whether the appointed driver had orange juice or not that night!

Safely installed with the vehicles owned by TAS in our newly-acquired compound off Manchester Street in Oldham, we retired for a nightcap to another hostelry whose landlord just happened to be the TAS president!

She was to remain in that compound for a further 12 months, during which time she was vandalised several times: all the lights and reflectors were smashed in one of these vicious, unwarranted attacks. Upon reflection, we got off lightly (if you'll excuse the pun!) - they could have smashed the windows!

Apart from starting to strip the paint off the offside panels and beating out the dents in the rear dome, not much work was done on her until she was moved onto a private industrial estate in the Oldham suburb of Hollinwood in August 1978.

I really began restoration in earnest in October 1979, by which time Dick and Stewart had decided to pull out and sell me their shares, leaving me sole owner of GS2.

Umpteen gallons of Nitromors were required to remove the remnants of Southern Motorway's maroon, red and cream livery and by Christmas 1979 she stood naked, a gleaming aluminium and steel giant in the winter sunshine.

Steel panels were quickly painted in Bondaprimer (resin based - marvellous stuff - keeps the rust out like no other primer!) and the front and rear wings were removed prior to replacement.

The Spring of 1980 was particularly severe weather-wise and I devoted much of the time to stripping and repainting the interior, mixing two paints from the Tekaloid range to match the original shade (as near as damn it!). The exterior was etch-primed and undercoated in the standard paint (obtainable from the L.B.P.G.) and I was about to 'top coat' her when I had all my paint and materials stolen whilst on holiday. It took a long time to recover from this dastardly act. In Spring 1981 there were a further two moves, culminating in her sojourn in a yard owned by Textile Distributors Transport in Chadderton (another suburb of Oldham), which was patrolled all day and night by a watchman. TDT were persuaded to steam-clean the engine compartment for me; the radiator was removed, tested and painted and by Easter 1981 the new wings had been fitted. TDT were also involved in collecting the fresh supply of paint from Cobham, with a little collaboration from Tony Peters, who must have thought I'd never give up pestering him!

New rexine was applied to the walls of the saloon (I found Nitromors useful for removing the old glue) and a fresh set of seat cushions and other fittings purchased from Wombwell Diesels, the graveyard of so many London buses.

By mid-Summer she was beginning to look once more like a London 'country bus' and my thoughts turned to the MOT test. 'How do I get the lights and brakes to work' I pondered, being no mechanic but a pen-pusher by trade.

Help was to come from a friend of a friend, Martin Hill, who moved her to his garage in Mossley under her own 'steam' (proverbially, not actually - she behaved herself this time, breaking down twice only through clogged-up filters!) He gave her a thorough 'going over', replacing all the wheel bearings, the front oil seals and overhauling the brakes, steering and lighting. (Those oil seals alone were to set me back £17 + VAT each, due to having had to have a tool made for them!). After a lot of 'midnight oil' had been burnt, she duly passed her MOT test on 28th August 1981 and has been rallied at Bishop's Castle, Shropshire and at Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire since, causing a great deal of interest at both places. Incidentally, before we set off for the former place, we took off the fuel tank to see just what was causing the filters to malfunction, and removed 3 pages of the 'Manchester Evening News', a handful of gravel chips and some very murky diesel fuel - courtesy of the aforementioned vandals!

Restoration is still not quite complete - I need a set of wheel trims for the front wheels. Is there any LBPG member willing to lend me one to have some cast?

If anyone requires new front axle oil seals for a 'GS', they know who they can contact (they should work out considerably cheaper - about £10, apiece or less - now that the tool has been made!).

Now I intend to redress the balance of all those 'RT's' and 'RF's' attending Northern Rallies with an occasional sortie to join my buddies 'down South'! See you soon folks!

SOUTH OF FRANCE - BY RT

A group of enthusiasts from Derbyshire are planning a trip to the S. of France by RT, during August 82.

If anyone within the group with experience on this type of journey could offer any advice, eg. best routes, channel crossings, French laws! it would be most appreciated.

Please contact - Adrian Dodsley c/o Kettering Tyres Ltd., Derby Road, Ripley, Derbyshire. Phone 0773 675.

WANTED

1. Two wheel trims for a 'G.S.' (or loan of a wheel trim for a few weeks to have some made).
2. Two "SV" or 'HN' garage code plates (for slotting in the brackets on the exterior of London buses).
3. Two driver code plates - preferably 'No. 2' - to match items (2).
4. A Country Area blind suitable for a 'G.S.' with Hitchin, Stevenage or Hertford destinations.
5. A full set of rollers suitable for a 'GS' required to display item (4), i.e. 2 rollers which blind is fitted to and 2 guide rollers.

Offers to: Bill Ballard, Tudor Avenue, Chadderton, Oldham, OL9 9PG

RT 3103 - A RUEFUL EXPERIENCE - Colin Wickens

The story of the re-roofing of RT 3103 begins sometime in June. That is when Tony came to see me, to ask if I would take on the task of putting a new roof on an RT. Well as I had my holiday coming up in August, I thought it can't be that difficult - it's only pieces of wood and metal. I said O.K. I will have a go, and arranged to do the job on my holiday.

August 17th came and that was the day it was arranged that, John Flint, Tony and myself, went along to Aldenham to see Mr. Allder. The reason was to have a chat about the construction, and some points we might have trouble with in putting a roof on an RT,

and also to have a look at an RT roof that had been made available to us.

The next part of the story was to get the roof to Cobham, so on the Wednesday morning we arrived at Aldenham with the Southport P.D.2 open topper, and a few of the Aldenham work force said 'cor that looks good, it's nice to see a proper bus, it's a STD ain't it'. I suppose they were half right. Any way the open topper was an ideal way to carry the roof back to Cobham, it rested on the seats, it was a low, low height bus.

We arrived back at about 2 p.m. after a cuppa. I started to repair some parts of the roof, as it was a second hand one and there were some parts damaged. The repairs were carried out while it was still resting on the open topper. The RT by now had all the wreckage removed from the top of it; John had been busy since Monday lunchtime. When the roof was ready, the small amount of damage to the rear dome was repaired on the bus, I think at this stage I had better explain that the front dome inner and outer had been removed, and the main centre section of roof from front to rear domes also, this part of the roof is about 19 feet long, there was no damage to the cant rail or below. The cant rail is rebated, and so is the roof -they just fit into each other, like a model bus kit, but in a foot to a foot scale.

Let's get back to the story - it just so happened that Dave Stevens and his son were at Cobham that day, so that gave us five persons for lifting. The next thing was to drive the RT and park it inches away from the open topper, then we gradually lifted the roof over, with a lot of tooting and froing between the two vehicles. Once the roof was resting on the RT it didn't take long to locate it, and screw it along the cant-rail on each side of the bus.

All that took the rest of Wednesday, so the next day John and myself pressed on with the front outer dome, after making some of the timber work good where the lighting panels go. There was some fiddly bits, mainly the bolts along the front. Once the dome was fixed, the joints between the three sections were sealed, and a wide beading screwed down over them. While we were on the beading I finished the beading off over the front windows, that only left the beading along each side. To finish the day off, the front inner dome was fitted, and the light fittings, and some of the lighting panels.

As there wasn't much more to do it wasn't worth me going to Cobham to finish off, as John could complete the job by himself. There was the outside beading along each side, some lighting panels and trim.

There is another little part to the story, when the accident happened, the seat frames that had the rail up to the roof were somewhat distorted by being pressed down. Well, the following week I called into Cobham to take some pictures of the completed thing all painted. I backed the RT out into the yard to get my photos, and all of a sudden there was some very loud XYZ's coming from upstairs. I stopped to investigate and found John with a bad burn on his arm - he had been up there with his blow lamp heating the seat frames and straightening them out. After a cup of tea he was ready to carry on, and did a good job with his seat frame straightening.

I think that concludes the story of our first major accident repair at Cobham.

SPECIAL ITEMS FOR SALE:

Items on special offer until Tuesday 1st December 1981.

Post Office telephone kiosk £175. Buyer collects.

RF parts:	Leyland Price	Our Price
Exhaust 2nd section	£60.89	£25.00
Exhaust 3rd section	£114.49	£30.00
Exhaust tail pipe	£22.94	£17.00
Cylinder liner 130mm x 124mm	£37.55	£15.00
RT/RF wheel nut wrench & bar		£16.82
RT rocker cover joints (2)	£1.88	£1.00
RT rear brake drums	£92.12	£45.00
RTL/RTW front & rear brake linings (set of 8)		£20.00
GS front & rear brake linings (set of 8)		£10.00
GS Various engine and clutch parts		
AEC 7.7 decoke set		£25.00
RF rear springs		£15.00

All items are new and prices shown do not include VAT.