



LONDON BUS MUSEUM MAGAZINE



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£4 to non-Members

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FRONT COVER PICTURE

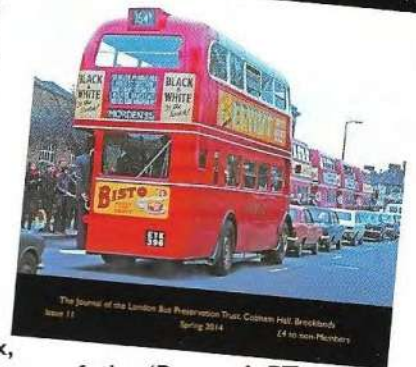
This year marks both the 75th anniversary of the entry into service of the first RT and the 35th anniversary of the final day of the RT in ordinary passenger service. RT 1 was present on both occasions and is seen here on that last day, 7th April 1979, newly restored by the Prince Marshall team, its gleaming paintwork scarcely dry as it makes its stately way, the rear roof numberbox, one of the unique features of the 'Pre-war' RTs, prominent, to head the final parade at Barking. (MHCB)

The views expressed in this magazine are those of the individual contributors. They are not necessarily the views of the London Bus Preservation Trust Ltd., its Trustees, Directors or Officers, London Bus Museum Ltd., its Directors, or the Editor.

ITEMS FOR THE MAGAZINE

Please send contributions for the magazine to the Editor at michaelhcbaker@londonbusmuseum.com, or by post to the Museum at the address opposite.

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From the Editor



This year Transport for London celebrates the 'Year of the Bus', hence the logos on the front cover and above. To quote TfL, '2014 will see a number of anniversaries which will help us tell this story. It's been 60 years since the creation of the iconic Routemaster, 75 years since the launch of the RT-Type bus and 100 years since the world's first mass produced motor bus, the B-Type 'Battle Bus' that carried soldiers to the frontline during the First World War'.

2014 looks like being an exceptionally interesting year for lovers of the London bus - and it is now official that this is half of England - well, to be strictly correct half of all bus journeys are now on the London network, 6.5 million to be precise, but surely that's the same thing, anyone who boards a London bus must instantly become hooked; yes? The New Bus for London is now officially

the New Routemaster and it is therefore possible to stand outside the Royal Albert Hall, (I bet Queen Victoria's amused) for example and be offered the choice of boarding either an original or a new RM - but not after this summer for the original RMs are being taken off the 9.

I popped into Brooklands on the Friday of half term and found children and parents swarming all over the entire site and riding on all sorts of vehicles from pre-war sports cars to RTL 139, the latter doing excellent business as was our bus museum itself. January and February mornings may normally be very quiet, but as virtually every steam railway has discovered, half terms are excellent money spinners and it is wonderful that we have the volunteer staff to make the most of this.

Michael H C Baker



The 9 is the only route where you can ride on both original and new Routemasters - at least until the summer.

(MHCB)



Above: Half term visitors to Brooklands discussing the finer points of driving a London bus with Bob Ansell. (MHCB)



Right: RTL 139 and a splendid 1927 Alvis 12/50 Sportsman Saloon. (MHCB)

Notes on driving a Museum bus

By Rod Lucas and amended by Tony Lewis and Bill Ackroyd

You may be aware that to drive Museum buses, you must satisfy certain criteria. This article is written by one of the team members (Rod Lucas) and although he wrote it, the whole team works in a similar fashion and looks for the same response. It was prompted following a vehicle familiarisation undertaken by one of our class 6 drivers, and as is per usual we had a discussion about his (rather good) drive and the methods he employed, just the sort of discussion that two like persons with the same interest would have. He suggested that it may be an idea if I wrote a short article on the subject - so here goes; it details the route I generally use, what I would be looking for on that route and, also, some hints. Obviously for a class 6 driver I would expect an excellent drive with most of the methods as described. However, with some practice, there is no reason why a class 5 driver should not reach the same standard; after all, we all started as just car drivers. Note that only paid up members are eligible to drive Museum buses.

Prior to any driving, a copy of your licence (paper and both sides of the plastic card) must have been sent to Ian Barrett for him to check that all is in order and, if a class 6 driver, also a copy of your CPC card (both sides) or, if not, proof that you are currently attending a CPC course. For either class any medical problems must also be disclosed. Also if new, you will then be taken for an assessment drive by Bill Ackroyd (a professional instructor and examiner) to check that you have basic road awareness etc, and are fit to continue.

We generally meet in the canteen where your licence particulars will be viewed and the relevant details entered on the training record sheet.

I should point out here that although I mainly do type training/vehicle familiarisation the same process will apply to an initial assessment.

Then out to the bus; I go via the workshop where you are shown that, on the top of the steel cabinet by the vehicle shutter, are cards that describe the parts of each vehicle in detail. Within that cupboard are the oil and

fuel dipsticks; we will gather the one appropriate to the vehicle we intend to use on the way, plus a piece of clean rag.

First task is to check the bus - walk around it, check tyres for defects and body for any signs of damage (report anything suspicious), then check the fuel and water levels and also the oil level as described on the vehicle sheet. Note RF oil dipsticks are to be found in the filler neck and remain on the bus.

With the help of another person check that all the lights perform correctly, fill out the vehicle defect book (prior to use) which is kept in the cab. After you have finished your driving, the top copy of the defect sheet should be torn out and put in the box in the canteen. When you have finished using the dipstick wipe it with a clean rag and immediately return it to its home in the cupboard.

If using a class 6 vehicle you need to fill in a tachograph disc. The new blanks are kept in the cab. If in doubt of how to fill in the disc, you can refer to the details on the wall chart in the canteen. Or if Alan Eggleton is around ask him, he's our expert, he analyses the charts, and will be contacting you later if he notices it is wrongly filled in. For class 6 vehicles, this filling in documentation forms part of the familiarisation run. Turn on the vehicle electrics and open the tacho case, fit the tacho with the details you have entered facing outwards and then set the clock via the small knurled wheel on the side of the opened lid. Be careful to set the time to the correct segment; the disc is a 24 hour one but the clock face is 12 hour. So look at the timing on the tacho disc, you may need to advance the clock by 12 hours. When you close it, ensure the key locks the tacho lid shut. At the outset of the drive, you will probably be told of the route to be taken plus a few other requirements like stopping when belled to etc. Sometimes to give directions, I use a small sound system which puts a loudspeaker in the cab.

Make yourself comfortable, adjust the seat if necessary and check you are happy with the mirrors.

When told start the bus, you will be checked on starting procedure. Remember on air pre-selectors to

ensure neutral gear is selected and always push and hold down the operating pedal and keep it down for about 5 seconds after the flag has risen. To help the air pressure rise, run the engine at medium revs but do not race it. RM vehicles also have two warning lamps above the flag, both of these must also be extinguished before you move off.

Move off when instructed - looking in both mirrors and possibly a quick glance down to your right side - a person alongside may not show in the offside mirror.

Usual gear for move off is 2nd and don't be tempted to change up, you need to go very slowly around the site. Don't pre-select another gear, you really have no idea what it will be. If you are leaving via Campbell Gate the hill up to it is very steep and some vehicles will not go up there in 2nd (RML 2760 will). I prefer drivers not to have to go down into 1st on that hill, so if in doubt stop at the bottom and engage 1st, then pre-select 2nd, as that probably will be the next required gear. Sometimes the trees are low, so if in a double decker, make the gesture of looking up and if you think they are low go to the right of the security hut. Once past the hut you can go into 2nd (or leave it there). Don't go fast as the road surface is poor, you will need to almost stop to go over the speed humps and to pull over them you may need 1st again, so same as before engage 1st, pre-select 2nd then go slowly up the hill, again best to leave in 1st until over the brow, it is easier and acceptable to go to the right of the island. Usually I like to go left onto the main road. I will have asked you to go slow approaching the hill after the left curve, I want you to do a downchange of gear on a hill and see how you do it. The correct way is pre-select the lower gear, which in this case will probably be 3rd, whilst holding your foot down on the accelerator, push down and immediately up on the operating pedal. When depressed it gives the engine time to rev up for the lower gear. If driving a semi like RML 2760 keep your foot on the accelerator and just move the gear lever to the lower gear, the time the lever passes through neutral

gives the engine revs time to rise. To get smooth changes, both these versions may need a little practice as some rev up quicker than others and if going from 3 to 2 on the RML you may improve the change (because you're going across and down the gate) by not putting the accelerator fully down. I will have asked you to pull into the bus stop just before the railway bridge, then I will 'ring you off'. The purpose of this stop is for two reasons. One is to see how you pull up. I don't like that characteristic jerk made by many bus drivers, so just let your foot off a bit before actually stopping. This allows the suspension to catch up with the rest. The other reason is to see how you pull away from a left hand bend when the offside of the bus obscures oncoming traffic, so not a very good view in the offside mirror. The knack here is to also use the nearside mirror to view past the bus. From that stop you will go down the hill and then up Weybridge High Street where the traffic is usually stop/start. Each time you pull away, apart from using your offside mirror I want you to use the nearside one also. The reason for this is two fold, one to look for cyclists etc and secondly to view the platform to ensure no passengers are about to alight etc, and this even applies to doored buses where there have been instances recorded of passengers trying to push open the doors when in slow moving traffic. Cyclists may also overtake you on your offside, so be aware and have a quick look down. What I'm looking for is how aware are you of the traffic situations. Don't go into a dream and just look ahead - keep alert. Even watching the local talent means you are aware!

At the end of the High Street the road goes up a hill and again I will be looking to see how you change down gears if necessary. At the top are two mini-roundabouts after which we will be going straight on. I will be looking to see how you have analysed the oncoming traffic and how you merge in gaps in the traffic flow, maybe without stopping. The gear you pull away with is your decision. Along that road there are generally lines of parked cars your side. If you have to wait for oncoming traffic, don't go right up to the parked cars. Hold back a bit as this makes for an easier pull away, meaning you don't have to turn so sharply and take up more of the other side of the road.

Keep your indicator going so that oncoming traffic can see your intentions. In general, use your indicators more than you probably would in a car as there may be someone behind obscured from your view. Always remember that indicators are to inform all road users, including pedestrians. As you go into this situation have a glance in your nearside mirror to see how close you are to the obstacles but keep it brief as the important view is in front.

We will keep going and at the roundabout take the left fork, then continue over the next three roundabouts after which the road becomes a dual carriageway where, if you feel confident you can go a bit faster. You will be directed to go right around the next roundabout and return to where we have just come from. After this instruction you should look ahead and analyse this required move and decide how to do it. The roundabout is quite small and will be very tight if you try to use the road positioning you would in a car.

To make life easier the best way is to pinch a bit of the other lane. However this has its problems, in that a car may still try to squeeze past you on your nearside, so if using this technique anywhere always be aware of that, and take extra views from your nearside mirror. Also be aware of the rear overhang of your vehicle when turning, even RFs have one. Don't rush this manoeuvre, take your time and, as I hope you will be going slowly, don't let the bus labour around in a high gear, but use one appropriate for that speed.

We are now back on the dual carriageway and again you could go faster. I will be looking at how you react to change in speed limit. We will be following a similar route back to the cricket ground but, instead of going to the High Street, will be taking the sharp left back to the station. This is a nasty sharp corner in that you are going into a fairly narrow road which often has cars queuing for the roundabout. You will need some of their road to avoid going over the kerb on your side, so be patient, wait until either the road is clear or someone gives way to you, and watch that nearside mirror. If you clout the kerb here or anywhere else for that matter, you will be failed (and not be the first one either) so be warned. After that it is straight up to the roundabout, bear left, but watch the

high kerb. We usually turn right into the Museum via the Campbell Gate but, when doing so, don't be tempted to go too far past it as this makes your life hard. Also, there are some trees on the left pavement and, if cutting the corner a bit as you are, look out for cars trying to emerge from the site. Hold the bus in 2nd gear when going down the approach to the gates. If you have to stop, apply the handbrake or, if not, go very slowly (almost stop) when going over the speed humps. Approach the security gate slowly and still in 2nd gear go very carefully down the slope and slowly around the site. You will probably be directed to reverse the bus up to the Museum. All reversing when the Museum is open (and in fact some forward manoeuvres on display days) must be accompanied by a 'banksman', usually me. I will walk behind you in such a position that you can always see me in your mirrors. If in doubt stop. I don't generally beckon you on with my hand, only raising it if I want you to stop. To reverse you can use a combination of whatever means you think best, mirrors, looking through the bus, hanging out of the door etc. Don't think it looks professional or clever to do it only by using mirrors. There have been cases of items being run over because they were not visible in mirrors. Also some of our buses have very poor mirrors.

Before you move off in reverse, honk your horn, not just touch it momentarily.

When safely parked switch off the engine and, if used, remove the tacho chart and fill in the end distance, turn off the vehicle electrics and we will adjourn to the canteen for a chat, where you can put the vehicle defect sheet in the box and, if not driving in the near future, also the correctly filled in tacho chart.

Following any comment on my part we often discuss the point in finer detail - you may have a different view or a good reason why you did things a certain way.

Message to you all, do not be put off coming forward for driver tuition, that's all part of being part of our interest.

If you have taken all my hints of what I'm looking for, you should be OK - the big message is plenty of mirror work and take it easy! Our old vehicles have mirrors that are pretty useless on the nearside so be extra careful with these vehicles, you would feel terrible if you damaged one.

LBM members' visit to Colin Billington's collection on Sunday 10th November 2013

By Brian A L Jones

Once again Adrian Palmer's excellent planning ensured that many members enjoyed the outing to Colin Billington's famed collection in rural Berkshire.

with a restoration workshop to the rear. There resided two amazingly challenging projects, pictured below.



An exciting sight when the LBM Members arrived was two of Colin Billington's most impressive restorations. 1951 Bristol LL6B carrying Duple bodywork was numbered 1250 in the Western National fleet. The 1927 Great Western Road Motors Guy FBB, with a Vickers body, is the only survivor from that company's fleet of more than 600 vehicles. Colin noted that it had rewarded an attempt at hand-cranking with a broken wrist. *(All pictures by Brian Jones)*

Arriving at midday in RP 90, which was driven by Alan Eggleton, our group was personally greeted by Colin, whose organisational abilities contributed much to enjoyment of the day. Refreshments were immediately served in part of a converted barn. That facility also provided a comfortable venue for Colin's fascinating account of how a boyhood interest in buses in his home town of Taunton had developed to the stage where he owned around 30 vehicles located at two sites, the second being in the West of England. He explained that supporting running days in the West and re-creating former Royal Blue coach services was a continuing interest. We were amazed at the details of vehicles that Colin could recall from memory, while providing an enthralling Power Point presentation.

Colin stated that it was his intention to place his collection into charitable ownership and that the Thames Valley & Great Western Omnibus Trust had been established as a charity with this potential in mind. So far five of his vehicles, including the GWR Guy had been put on long term loan to the Trust. He added that he was currently serving as Deputy Chairman of the National Association of Road Transport Museums.

An excellent and comprehensive buffet lunch provided welcome sustenance before the party was divided for a tour of Colin's premises and the exciting selection of vehicles that were contained within.

Colin explained that the site was previously a chicken farm before he adapted the buildings for their current use. The first shed that we visited had been relocated by the farmer from AEC's former Southall Works and primarily contained a selection of Royal Blue coaches



The temporary internal supporting structure of timber beams may be seen within the body of the 1929 AEC Reliance (RU8806) restoration project.



The rear-entrance body of the Leyland Lion had been extensively reframed and repanelled.



The Bristol KS6B imported from Ohio, USA.

Another building, which was Colin's finishing and maintenance workshop, currently housed the appealing Southern National Dennis Mace and a Southern National Bristol KS6B, believed to be the sole survivor of its type. Colin had repatriated the Bristol from Canton, Ohio and shipped it home via Baltimore, Maryland (why didn't that work for us!). He explained that his forte was in applying the finishing elements of restoration and his attention to detail was evident when he explained those aspects of the restoration process.



The 1934 Southern National Dennis Mace, which had been used as a mobile caravan by a family in the Midlands from 1952 until the 1980s.

The next building housed several London vehicles including RMs and RMLs, an RMA, BL, RT and RTL, together with provincial vehicles including the ex-Brighton and Hove Regent FUF63 that had often attended Cobham running days. Others were a Hants and Dorset FLF and a left hand drive Lisbon AEC Regent V.

We then moved to the rear yard, where ex-Reading Transport vehicles dominated the scene, before entering another building. There a 1920s Leyland Lion PLS3 chassis was undergoing a meticulous restoration, including the chassis straightening needed after a long past accident. The roof structure and walls of a building, originally constructed in 1922 as the waiting room and ticket office at Maidenhead Bus Station then, in 1952 becoming a cricket pavilion at Sonning, was nearby and is due to be erected in the Spring.

After viewing the contents of further storage sheds, with most vehicles contained therein awaiting major



Colin Billington, third from the left, views the Leyland Lion chassis with LBM Members. He described how the frame had needed extensive straightening off-site and indicated parts that had been cast and custom-made in connection with the project.

restoration, we were invited to board two buses for a short local tour.

Colin drove his own 1951 Royal Blue liveried Bristol LL6B and was trailed by an ex-Reading Corporation Park Royal lowbridge bodied AEC Regent III. We proceeded at a brisk pace to a layby alongside Legoland, where the opportunity was afforded to change vehicles, and then continued back to base via central Windsor.



The 1955 ex-Reading Transport AEC Regent III with a Park Royal lowbridge body.

Following a further serving of tea or coffee and cakes, the party expressed their sincere thanks to Colin and his assistants for providing a very memorable day before boarding RP 90 for the return trip to Brooklands.



Adrian Palmer's photograph above shows LBM Members prior to boarding RP90 for the return journey to Brooklands.

I would like to express my appreciation to Colin Billington for his assistance when preparing this article.

CLEARING OUT YOUR UNWANTED TRANSPORT ITEMS? WHY NOT DONATE THEM TO THE MUSEUM?

London Bus Museum is a Registered Charity and our fundraisers can turn your gifted items into cash that keeps the Museum running. Our fundraising stall attends all our special events, as well as other functions, and raises several thousand pounds each year.

We would welcome your donation of your unwanted transport items and will always consider first what might benefit the Museum's own Collection before putting anything up for sale. We are interested in receiving:

- bus badges, bus stops, enamel signs and plates
- tickets and ticket machines
- transport uniforms, cap badges etc
- maps and timetables
- destination blinds
- bus posters and notices
- bus models
- transport books
- bus photos, negatives and slides

We can also accept other transport-related items. If you are having a clear-out, why not call Melvin Phillips on 01342 177, email: melvinphillips@.com or Bob Bailey on 01483 006, email: bailey.bunch16@.com?

Work in Progress

Pictured by Roger Stagg



Above: Work proceeds in reframing the Canteen Trailer.



Left: The Regent Cinema re-opening shortly!



Above: Tin worm and woodworm are eradicated on RF 19.



Below: NS 174 starts to take shape.



Left: Will RT 1962 get through the MoT?



Above: A final clean up of the replacement compressor for UMP.

Right: The engine of RT 3491 awaits reassembly following attention to a gouge in No 1. cylinder liner.



Attention RF owners

As part of the refurbishment of RF 19 the Museum is having manufactured certain sections of RF rubber that have not been available for some many years. These include:

- 1) The flanged rubber used on nearside windscreen, lower offside windscreen and all three rear windows;
- 2) The rubber weatherseal that fits in the underside of the rail containing the drop light winding mechanism and secures the glass and seals the gap between drop light and fixed light;
- 3) For Sightseeing RF's the rubber that secures the roof lights and overlaps the internal framework.

These will be one off makings by one of the UK's foremost manufacturer of bus window glazing seals and will cost a fortune to remanufacture in the future for one offs. Orders will be placed with the manufacturer in early April but only on the basis of secured orders. Likely costs are for 1) £100; 2) £75; 3) £200. Even if you do not need it now you will at sometime. As long as it is kept in a black plastic bag out of sunlight and heat it will last until needed. If there is sufficient demand then standard window rubber (RF and RT) will be ordered from the same manufacturer.

Interested? If so please write or email to the Rolling Stock Department at the Museum.

Roger Stagg

Book Reviews

Boris's Bus, Capital ISBN 978-1-85414-369-3, £19.95.

The title says it all. Whatever one thinks of the 'Blond Bombshell', London's controversial Mayor, it is a fact that it was he who achieved what practically everyone thought impossible, London once again having its own, purpose built double deck bus. Call it a vanity project, and many did, I certainly can't remember when a bus won an election, but to quote James Whiting in the introduction, writing of the 2012 London Mayoral election, 'It seems possible that the popular pledge on the 'new Routemaster' swung it for Boris'. Eight well qualified writers have contributed to this profusely illustrated 112 page book, with many references to official documents and quoting the words of those involved in the origin, design and operation of the New Bus for London.

So, how well has it succeeded in telling the story of this unique vehicle? First let this reviewer pin his colours to the mast and confess he considers the LT, the New Bus for London, the new Routemaster, call it what you will, the finest bus ever to grace the streets of London, bar none. Capital have long ago established a reputation as the leading publisher of books on the London bus, tram and trolleybus scene, not least for the extraordinary quality of their photographic colour images, often of those taken 40 or 50 years ago. This time, of course, they have had it easy in that the New Bus for London was not launched until 2011 and therefore every picture in the book is digital.

Not the least interesting are the computer-generated images by Keith McGillivray of possible variations on the New Bus for London theme, which include a Hong Kong six-wheeler; a London open topper and even a Paris single deck bendi-bus.

But it is the depth and span of the information of a bus which only entered public service on 27th February 2012, that ensures its place in the essential section of every library devoted to public transport, not just in London but in the UK. It pulls no punches, detailing the reasons why some opposed it on grounds of cost, ignoring that both the RT and the Routemaster were expensive by conventional standards of the day, but proved to be remarkably sound investments in the long run. One of the contributors, Gavin Booth, who needs no introduction, initially argued 'Why do they need this when ADL and Volvo can supply perfectly good hybrids?' but in the end admits that he was 'won over by the way the bus looks, the ride, the interior décor'.

Saturday 17th May 2014.

Faversham Bus & Commercial vehicle day.

Display of commercial vehicles and buses in the pedestrianised town centre of this historic market town.

Free bus rides around the area and over some former bus routes from 10am until 4pm.

Part of the Transport Through Time weekend with cars and motorcycles displayed on the Sunday.

Entry forms and more information from:

Roland Graves. Ashkeys, Vigo Village, Gravesend, Kent
DA13 0SL or rolyg@ashkeys.com

Peter Hendy, Commissioner, and Leon Daniels, Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London, and, of course Honorary Vice-Presidents of the Trust, were enthusiastic supporters right from the start. In January 2010



Heatherwick Studios were commissioned to design the interior and exterior of the body. The studio has, to quote, 'Achieved a reputation for cutting edge design', in many areas of engineering and architecture. The New Bus for London project was led by Stuart Wood although Thomas Heatherwick himself was closely involved. Because, to quote Thomas, he 'knew nothing about buses' the studio started with no preconceptions of what a bus should look like although anyone who, like your reviewer, saw the non-working prototype at Acton at the end of 2011, was struck by the rear staircase, enclosed by glass and uncannily reminiscent of the open staircase LTs of 80 years earlier. Readers will hardly need to be reminded that the great Frank Pick was Managing Director of the General and then London Transport throughout the 1920s and '30s. In the words of Thomas Heatherwick, 'Transport for London is now re-affirming its commitment to the original values of transport commissioning established by Frank Pick more than half a century ago. We are proud to have contributed something to the continuation of Frank Pick's enduring legacy'.

Probably no bus has attracted so much media and public attention as did the first LTs which took up work on the 38 in early 2012. On the very first run, attended by hordes of the press, 'a surprisingly large number of pedestrians spotted the bus and quickly took pictures on their mobile phones. The bus was a good 30 minutes late by the time it reached Victoria bus station, where a huge crowd awaited. They occupied not only the adjacent bus stands but a fair part of the roadway too. And there were no bus station personnel telling them off'.

This, of course, is only the beginning of the story and no doubt over the years there will be many more books and articles on this extraordinary vehicle. But none will have a greater claim to authenticity than Capital Transport's Boris's Bus.

MHCB

The Lodekka Alternatives by Stewart J Brown, Ian Allan, ISBN 978-0-7110-3535-5

Not, perhaps, a subject directly relevant to London Transport matters, yet it will surely be of interest to members for London might well have at least dipped its toe in the low height field, given that AEC certainly did. The Bridgemaster was relatively successful and one can speculate that if London Transport had kept its assortment of pre-war and wartime lowbridge Regents going until 1956 it might have invested in a fleet of Bridgemasters which, with their 72 seats and greater

passenger comfort, would have been a much better investment than the RLH.

Stewart Brown has dug deep and provided a wealth of well produced colour pictures, as well as black and white, of the various AEC (some labelled Crossley) Bridgemasters, and Renowns, Dennis Lolines, Guy Wulfrunians and Leyland/Albion Lowlanders which are the subjects of this volume. As he points out that although interesting concepts, they could not really compete either with the Lodekka or the Atlantean or Fleetline. There were slightly under 700 of these alternatives, built between 1956 and 1967, compared with 5,217 Lodekkas and vast numbers of the first rear engined production buses.

MHCB

London Transport, 1970-1984 by Matthew Wharmby and R.C.Riley, Ian Allan, ISBN 978-0-7111-3730-4, £22.50.

Dick Riley was an excellent photographer of steam trains. Sadly, inspiration seem to desert him when faced with a London bus and this book is a collection of standard views of buses, and not much else, a few not even totally in focus, repetitive in their viewpoint, and showing very little of the setting in which the buses are operating or the people who rode upon them or operated them. Matthew Wharmby's captions are informative but I fear the blurb which tells us that the book contains 'an outstanding collection of stunning colour photographs,' is sadly overstated.

MHCB



Letter

Just occasionally something turns up at the TfL Archive, where I am a regular volunteer, that stops you in your tracks. In one of the files dealing with new builds of coaches and omnibuses there is a memo from one of the engineers to the Chief Engineer of the LGOC - dated 12th September 1929 - an extract of which reads as follows:

NEW OMNIBUSES

Following a conversation with Mr (Frank) Pick today, I understand as follows:

AEC Renown 6-wheel chassis with 54 or 60 seat body to be known as LT type

AEC Regent 4-wheel chassis with large platform and inside staircase body (50 seats) to be known as ST type

AEC Regent 4-wheel chassis with standard platform body similar to that on the 6-wheelers to be known as RT type

AEC Regal 4-wheel chassis with standard single deck body to be known as the T type

I wondered if the reference to the RT was a mis-type for ST but this is clearly not so. The vehicle so described sounds like what became the STL class. Interesting!

Yours sincerely
Colin Read

HELP!

Big 'B' Type model needed for our Great War display

David Kinnear, our curator, is planning a commemoration of the start of the Great War in 1914. The display panels in London Bus Museum's Sector 3 already have some information on the over a thousand London buses which went to Flanders and the Somme, but David wants to mark this special and very poignant centenary for our thousands of visitors. He is looking for a large model of a 'B' Type. He tells me he is not looking for an absolute precision scale model to be correct in every tiny detail to please eagle-eyed enthusiasts, but just a nice simple representation of this famous bus painted in correct 'General' livery, so that the public can see what it looks like.

He is looking for a simple model about 18 inches long, perhaps a bit bigger - and says he will consider paying a keen model maker to build it.

The model will need to look like the famous eight-and-a-half-inch-long 1/32 Airfix model in the picture, but needs to be about twice or three times the size.

If you have such a 'B' Type model you could loan - or - would be able to build one in time for the end of July, please contact him at d.kinnear1@...com - or call him on 01276 43.



To celebrate the 100th Anniversary of London bus route 142, Amersham & District Motorbus Society plan to hold a Vintage Bus Running Day on 30th March 2014 with departures from 1000. Based at Watford Junction Bus Interchange (by kind permission of London Midland Trains) and fully supported by Arriva the Shires as current operator of 142, it is planned to run over former London Transport routes 142, 158, 302, 306, 311, 345, 346 and 347 and former Timebus Travel route 73. A number of feeder services are planned for passengers from further afield such as High Wycombe, Slough, Welwyn Garden City, Swanley and south east London. Some exciting bus visitors and route variations are planned for the event! See www.amershammotorbussociety.co.uk for details and advance programme sales.

Ian Read
07801 116

First bus trip memories

By Ultan O'Sullivan

Fifty years ago my family lived on the only block of Monkstown Avenue with a bus route-the 46A. The houses on our block were all set back from the carriageway by a grass strip about thirty feet wide, called 'the bank'. Tall trees grew the whole length of the bank. My house was near the middle of the block. The avenue could not be seen from the house as a high wall stood between it and those trees. A small road between the bank and our front yards came in off the avenue to access the houses.

The avenue was on a hill. Buses bound for the city approached from a side street opposite the first house, turned left onto Monkstown Avenue then proceeded up the hill towards the last. From our house, I could see a bus making the turn, but then the lower deck vanished behind that wall! The whole bus appeared again once the wall ended, opposite the last house, where there was a bus stop.

Mum took the bus into the city every month or so on Saturdays, and when she took me along, we'd wait at that stop. Once I heard the sound of squeaking brakes coming from down the road, it was only seconds before I'd see the dark green double decker making its way up the hill towards us. "Put your hand out," mum said that first time as the bus approached. Once it stopped I jumped up on the platform and climbed the rather high step to 'go inside'. I then ran to the front and hopped up on the 'television seat', a full-width bench seat, attached to the bulkhead, facing backwards! Since I was only six, I knelt up on the left, so I could look out the front window over the bonnet and the big wing fender with its little headlight. Mum sat right behind me.

The television seat came about in 1957 when the company removed both front seats and replaced them by attaching a backwards facing seat-for-five to the front bulkhead, on all half-cab double deckers. This increased the seating capacity downstairs by one. This seat became very unpopular with the passengers (another seat was created upstairs, by replacing the seat above the platform with a seat-for-three).



This view from the television seat in R830 was taken in May 1976. The chrome grab bar attached to the corner of the cab just above the middle window frame helped the conductors to climb the radiator so that they could wind the front blind.

Other passengers might not have liked this seat, but once the conductor rang the bell and the bus started moving, I knew it was put there just for me! They could all sit somewhere else! What a view I got from up here! Once we got going, the conductor's bell signals and ticket machine just added mystique to what was rapidly becoming a most exciting ride.

By now we had turned onto the Stillorgan dual-carriageway, my favourite part of the route. This road's age was showing, with small potholes and bumps here and there. Buses could do 40 mph along here, especially when no-one was waiting for three or four stops in a row! So there we were, running over bumps, potholes and other blemishes in the road, at what looked to me like sixty mph! With the bonnet banging against the radiator, the little headlight bobbing up and down, and the whole bus shaking, I was hooked. Looking towards the right, I could see our driver as calm as ever in his cab. Sometimes, when I was the only one on this seat, I'd scoot over to the right and peek into the driver's cab to watch him drive!

After a few more miles we caught up with another bus, and I was thrilled when the conductor of that bus waved at me! I gave him a big wave back. A little later, both our conductor and the other conductor got off at a stop where a clock was built into a little nook in the wall, and both stuck a small card into it. But that conductor got back on his bus and left, while we stuck around for two more minutes!

At last we got going again, and soon we were in the city, approaching the terminus on D'Olier Street. Now it was time to visit the shops, which I really liked, my favourites being Woolworth's and Switzer's on Grafton Street. While walking around, I was fascinated by the buses coming and going everywhere. Most of them were painted the dark green colour, but I noticed that some were painted dark blue on the lower deck and cream on the upper, which looked very new!

Whenever a bus stopped really close to us, I noticed that it said 'Leyland' just below its radiator filler cap. Most buses had narrow radiators, like the one I came in on. These, I learned much later, were OPD2s and PD2s. Others, with a full-width grille covering the radiator, were OPD3s, which I sometimes noticed going up and down Monkstown Avenue, along with their older sisters!

I was about nine when I made my first trip alone by bus - on Route 8 - which was a ten minute walk from the house. I had to go to dad's office. Mum reminded me to ask the conductor to let me off at the Haddington Road stop. The trip went without a hitch, the conductor remembering my stop, and pointing me in the direction of Haddington Road before giving the two bells. Later, dad drove me home.

As I grew older, I learned how to climb many of the trees on 'the bank', from which I got a magnificent view of the buses on the avenue. From this vantage point I began to notice the registration plates with their letter and number combinations. Then I noticed that each bus



Conductor Ultan O'Sullivan stands in front of RA91, a Leyland OPD3, in summer of 1979, on Dublin's 58 Route. Notice the step to lower left of reg. no. which conductors used to climb up and wind the front blind using cranks which can be seen coming down from front panel at top of photo. (The 'O' in OPD3 denotes 'overseas', i.e. export!).

displayed yet another, smaller number plate, with an 'R' or an 'RA' prefix - I had just discovered the fleet number and the class designation! The Rs had the narrow radiators and the RAs the decorative grilles.

I made many trips in the half-cabs, but eventually noticed newer buses in the City Centre. These were the Atlanteans, Leyland's newest buses, where you got on up front. I soon got to ride on one, which popped up unexpectedly on the 46A one day. It was a little disappointing, because it just didn't do it for me like the old buses did! This day I also saw something I never saw before - a lady getting off and crossing right in front of the bus, just as it got going. Luckily our driver jammed on, saving the day. As the conductor corrected her for being so foolish, I realised that that could not have happened on

an old bus!

That safety feature didn't, however, stop them from steadily replacing the old buses with Atlanteans. By 1977 the R's were gone and only the RA's were left. By now I was studying at the local university. I became a conductor for the company during the summer holidays while at college, working on both Atlanteans and RAs. The RA was more challenging than the Atlantean, but it was worth it, and I loved the job. That little kid on the television seat had certainly come full circle!

In my last year of college I started mailing out job application letters to all the different employers, one of which was mailed to British Telecom in London. This company was one of the few who invited me for an aptitude test. They would pay my travelling expenses and put me up for one night, at the Bonnington Hotel, on Southampton Row. I was thrilled, as I'd never been to London before!

So it was with much anticipation that I woke up early on Thursday, 4th June 1981, and made my way to Dublin airport (yes, that's where the above story took place!). After boarding the plane, we soon took off for Heathrow. While on the way, I wondered whether London had any half-cab buses left. After all, there were very few left in Dublin. At least I'd see Big Ben, Tower Bridge, Buckingham Palace, and maybe even Lady Diana Spencer!

Upon landing, I retrieved my baggage and found my way to the Heathrow Terminus of the Piccadilly Line. The train emerged above ground shortly after leaving Heathrow, and at one of the stops, a red double decker emerged on the left after passing underneath the railway.

O'Connell Street, Dublin in the early 1960s with Leyland Titans galore including, right foreground, a CIE-bodied Leyland PD3 No. RA129 of 1961, and just one green bus in the far distance.

(Collection)



I noticed it was a rear-engine bus, probably one of those new Leyland Titans, which was not a good omen! After going back underground, we eventually reached Holborn, which was my stop. I then took a ride on the longest escalator I'd ever seen!

Looking at all the advertisements as I ascended, and wondering what London would be like, nothing could have prepared me for the surprise that awaited me once I made my exit onto the street. There were Routemasters everywhere I looked. I couldn't believe my eyes, I thought I had died and gone to half-cab heaven!

Checking in to my hotel first, I then made my way to the British Telecom building where I took my aptitude test. After that I headed for Oxford Street, and then realised that I had to find a B&B for Friday and Saturday nights. One near Victoria Station had been recommended by a college friend. Now some buses with 'Victoria' on their destination blinds were driving past me. These were on Route 25, and all were Routemasters! I was about to take my first trip on a London bus!

London bus stops were actually works of art, so I enjoyed looking for one that had '25' placed on it. When the bus pulled up, I got on and once 'inside', I noticed that something was missing. There was no television seat! I then remembered reading that this seat had been very unpopular with Dublin passengers, and quickly appreciated the present arrangement. After all, I hadn't sat on that seat in Dublin for years, except when forced to do so by overcrowding, and even then I'd rather have stood!

We were soon on our way down Bond Street, then the swing around Hyde Park Corner, and finally into Victoria Bus Station. After finding the B&B, I took the 25 right back to Oxford Street, and enjoyed the rest of my day, including all that Royal Wedding euphoria!

Friday morning after checking in to the B&B, I walked to Victoria and caught the No. 11 to Aldwych, and a short walk to the LT Museum in Covent Garden, where I saw my first RT, along with many other beautifully preserved LT buses. The old Underground exhibits were also very

impressive. This museum was the highlight of my trip. I spent the afternoon on a walking tour of Central London, seeing Westminster Abbey, Big Ben and Buckingham Palace, among other places. Walking 'home' that night, I saw a Routemaster stopped at a light and noticed the driver winding the blind from inside his cab—the Leyland's conductor had to climb up the front of the radiator to turn the crank which wound the front blind!

On Saturday I went by Underground to Colindale, to visit the RAF and Battle of Britain Museums, as World War II aircraft are also an avid interest of mine. This being a suburban area, the one bus I recall seeing here was an OPO type bus.

Then came Sunday, and with just enough time left, I took a sightseeing tour of the City on one of those private buses, in this case an older rear-engine type, finally getting to see Tower Bridge! I then took a train from Victoria to Gatwick for my return trip to Dublin. My only regrets were not having seen the RT's in service, or Lady Diana Spencer making one of her public appearances.



As in so many cities across the world it is possible to ride in Dublin on a former London Routemaster. This is Stephens Green in the city centre in 2013. (MHCB)

Membership and Volunteering

There is plenty of good news for me to report this quarter. Our membership continues to grow with a steady trickle of new members and renewals of existing members. Also we have been able to welcome some new volunteers both back and front of house. We must be doing something right. A warm welcome is extended to Giffard Hazle, who has agreed to take on the IT manager role for us. This will include consolidating the work that Yulia did on the CRM system and taking this important task forward.

I have been informed that Brooklands Museum has reviewed its entrance and membership subscription fees. As you know we are obliged by our agreement with them to increase our subscriptions in line with theirs. However, any increase we are subsequently obliged to make cannot be implemented

without LBPT membership approval at the next AGM.

Eighty adults and five children enjoyed the excellent food and company at the annual New Year's lunch at Silvermere on 26th January. My thanks go to Peter Larkham for covering the overall management of the event on the day, in my absence. He was ably assisted by Roger and Dawn Stagg who additionally ran the ever popular raffle, which raised over £200 for Trust funds.

No expense has been spared to clothe our volunteers appropriately for their duties. Museum stewards are now sporting their new LBM sweatshirts which add that much needed extra layer in the winter temperatures. Also our restoration and engineering team are proudly wearing their newly acquired overalls, complete with LBM branding on the back.

The 41st Spring Gathering is in an advanced stage of being planned; Simon Douglas Lane takes on the overall event management role in place of Tony Lay. I have been pleased to have already received many offers of help to staff this event. We shall need over one hundred volunteers on the Sunday to cover all the jobs both on and off site. The £2 entrance fee applies to LBPT members except those who volunteer to help out on the 13th.

The RT running day in central London on Saturday 12th will also need around twenty staff on split am/pm shifts to marshal vehicles, staff the display bus and give out promotional material. Depending on when this piece is published; if you haven't already given me your name for the staffing roster of 12th and/or 13th April please get in touch. No reasonable offer of help refused!

Steve Edmonds
Human Resources Director

Something for everyone at

LONDON BUS MUSEUM

A LIVING HERITAGE



Our 41st Annual Spring Gathering

On the Brooklands Museum site, Weybridge Surrey KT13 0SL
Sunday 13th April 2014, from 10am to 5pm

All the family welcome

Adult £13.00 • Senior Citizen/Student £12.00 • Children (5-16) £7.00
Children under 5 FREE • Family ticket £34.00 (2 Adults + up to 3 Children)

London Bus Museum and Brooklands Museum Trust members are admitted for only £2

This year we are celebrating 75 years since the introduction of the famous London RT class, which came before the Routemasters, so we will have a fabulous display of RT family buses and their contemporaries plus a cavalcade around the Brooklands area.

There will be plenty of other things to see and do too, including rides on a variety of classic and modern buses all day.
Please note that certain buses may attract additional charges to ride.

A fundraising event organised by London Bus Preservation Trust Limited, Cobham Hall, Brooklands Road, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 0QN. Telephone 01932 837994.

More information online at www.londonbusmuseum.com

Registered Charity No. 1053383. Programme subject to change without prior notice



Membership Renewals

For the benefit of Members who do not pay by Direct Debit/Standing Orders here is a reminder of when your renewal is due including the month of your renewal.

The following subscriptions are due January-March 2014. If payment is not received by March 2014 then your membership will be cancelled and this will be your last magazine but many thanks for your support over the years. If you have renewed in the meantime then please ignore this reminder

1672	05/01/2012	4	Robert Fleming
979A	01/12/2002	4	Geoff Lemon
44F	01/01/1982	4	Rod Lucas
982	01/01/2003	4	Bill Miller
26	01/03/1976	4	Colin Prince
825	01/12/1999	4	Malcolm Rickman
1674F	10/01/2012	4	Michael Scott

Reminders -The following subscriptions are due between April-June 2014

1638	22/06/2010	1	Derek Adams
836	01/04/2000	1	Leslie Bishop
674	01/04/1998	1	Brian Bunker
1440	01/04/2009	1	Brian Chaplin
471A	24/02/2000	1	David Churn
1147	21/06/2005	1	Peter Comfort
1750	21/04/2013	1	Jimmy Comfort
1765	24/06/2013	1	David de Wilde
98	01/04/1993	1	Anthony Evans
1690	07/05/2012	1	Keith Hales
292	07/05/1999	1	Christopher Hart
912	13/04/2011	1	Kevin Hibbs
1525	02/03/2010	1	Dave Holliday
956	05/04/2002	1	Anne Letch
1549	12/04/2010	1	Grahame Lockyer
1521	20/02/2010	1	Chris Powis
1698	02/07/2012	1	Victor Rabaiotti

1693	07/06/2012	1	David Rowbotham
1526	10/03/2010	1	David Shillitoe
849	01/04/2000	1	James Smith
1312	06/05/2013	1	Brian Stickland
1696	18/06/2012	1	Cyril Theobald
1074	01/06/2004	1	Alan Thompson
1748	21/04/2013	1	David Thrower
989	01/01/2003	1	Tony Wild
325	14/04/1995	1	Robert Williamson
1749F	21/04/2013	1	B Withers
1127	30/03/2005	1	Terry Woodroff
1145	01/05/2002	1	Peter Zabek

Reminders -The following subscriptions are due between July-September 2014

809	12/08/1999	2	Alan Beard
1711	08/09/2012	2	Brian Boddy
1573	23/07/2010	2	Sydney Brown
1774	12/07/2013	2	Hugh Chappell
1566	01/07/2010	2	Stephen Dooley
1272	17/06/2007	2	Robert Dudgeon
1775	12/07/2013	2	P Esposito
1777F	12/07/2013	2	Eric & Sandra Jones
1705	21/08/2012	2	Paul Merrick
1779	04/08/2013	2	Derek Morey
903A	04/08/2013	2	Ultan O'Sullivan
1218	20/05/2006	2	Ewen Pring
1570	01/07/2010	2	Ted Reynolds
1586	01/07/2010	2	Roy Spurgeon
1776	12/07/2013	2	John Wilson

Completing a direct debit instruction will save both you and us considerable time and the form can be downloaded from the website under 'join us' or you can write to me and I will send you one. If you still pay by the old standing order method, please ensure that you have informed your bank of the current subscription rates (see below). If you wish

to pay by cheque, please make it out to LBPT Ltd and send to me at the address below.

Any queries about the above then please do write to me c/o London Bus Museum.

Membership Rates:

Individual - £30

Couple - £45

Family - £55 (2 adults and 3 children under 16)

Debbie Morris,
Membership Manager

New Members

Welcome to the following new members who have joined since the last magazine, currently there are 800 members of the Museum.

1794	Stephen Gillett
1795F	Martin Longhurst
1796	Dennis Grinstead
1797F	Anthony Cooper & Gill Smith
1798F	Martin Brimble & Charmaine Lewis
1799F	James Penman
1800F	John & Karin Walker
1801	Alec Newland
1802C	The Burchell Family
1803	John Grundon
1804F	Mr & Mrs S Doughty
1805C	The Southall Family
1806	Alexander Barison
1807	Michael Goodwin
1808F	Mr & Mrs David Bridge
1809F	Amanda Inwood & Mr C Alucard



Above: The Museum's RTL 139 and Ensign's RTL 453 were hired recently by The Classic London Bus Society for a tour of tram replacement routes in SE London and are seen here recreating route 184 at the terminus of tram routes 56 and 84 in Peckham Rye. Both routes were replaced by RTLs on 7th October 1951, the 56 by the 185 which was extended to Blackwall Tunnel and the 84 by the 184 which was extended via the Honor Oak Estate to Brockley Station. To conform with TfL's requirements the blind displays were not shown on the tour's buses when they were on the move. (Graham Smith)

Below: To celebrate the Year of the Bus several of the LTs (New Routemasters) are appearing in a basically silver livery. This is the first, LT 150, seen here overtaking LT 76, its red sibling, on route 9 approaching Hyde Park Corner. (Peter Zabek)

