

COBHAM HALL

LONDON BUS MUSEUM MAGAZINE



The Journal of the London Bus Preservation Trust, Cobham Hall, Brooklands

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Contents

| | |
|---|-------|
| From the cab | 2 |
| RT 2775 | 3-5 |
| Book Review | 5 |
| Wet, Wet Wisley! | 6-8 |
| Big Game Hunting in Bloomsbury and Hackney | 9-10 |
| Cobham Tours Presents 2012 Bus Trips from Cobham Hall | 10 |
| Loudwater's Little Bus | 10 |
| Kingston in the 1930s | 11-12 |
| The Late Alan Purssey | 12 |
| Behind the Workshop Doors | 13 |
| RM 140 Appeal | 14 |
| The Museum on the Web | 14 |
| DVD Review | 14 |
| Renewal Reminder from Membership | 14 |

FRONT COVER PICTURE

Mrs. Audrey Dennis and Roger Stagg standing beside RT 2775 the only survivor of three London Transport buses which took part in a highly successful promotional tour of the USA and Canada in 1952. Mrs. Dennis is the widow of Albert Dennis, one of London Transport's employees involved with the tour. (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, Cobham 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 cab

Wisley has come and gone! Once again we were victims of the very adverse weather. Happily a good number of people managed to brave the conditions and were able to enjoy the day which improved as the day wore on. We hope that our major fundraising event will still produce a modest surplus. A great deal of thanks must go to those organising the event including Roger Stagg, Steve Edmunds and Gerry Job and the many other members that carried out tasks in very unpleasant conditions. There were some very popular activities on the day: the Horse Bus attracted a good crowd and the mud splattered STL 2377 bore witness to the popularity of driving a pre-war London Bus.

For the photographers the line up of RT 1, RM 1 and LT 1 (the new London Bus) was a unique opportunity. Many thanks to Peter Hendy and Leon Daniels our Vice Presidents for bringing along LT 1.

The day saw the launch of RT 2775 in the period dress of the visit to the USA and Canada in 1952. The official launch was addressed by the TfL Commissioner, Peter Hendy, C.B.E. The ceremony was attended by family members of two of the original drivers that had driven the bus on the original historic tour. The family and invited guests travelled from Wisley on RT 1 to the Museum building where RT 2775 was unveiled. The party then travelled on RT 2775 to Wisley for the launch ceremony.

Soon after the Wisley event RT 2775 (4th May) was entered into the Historic Commercial Vehicle Society London - Brighton run. Despite another very dismal day the bus not only won Best in Class and Best AEC vehicle (in the centenary year!) but was also pronounced the Best Overall Winner at this prestigious event.

When you look at this fine historic vehicle it is not hard to see why the awards were given and it is a tribute to the many volunteers (currently led by Roger Stagg) over the years that have contributed to the fine restoration that has produced this show stopper. In this Jubilee year this bus will make a splendid reminder of the early days of Her Majesty the Queen's reign.

The engineering side of getting RT 2775 back on the road meant a lot of midnight oil burning for Ian Barrett and Andy Baxter. Not only did all of the RT 2775 work get done on time but we have the highest number of Trust vehicles fit and ready for action that we have ever had. This is a truly remarkable achievement, bearing in mind, also, we now possess our largest ever fleet of vehicles. Well done the engineering team!

Not included in the operational fleet but nevertheless safely home is RLH 53.

I have personally been involved with the repatriation of RLH 53 for over a year and just about every hurdle that could have been thrown in our way, was! Working in conjunction with Roger Wright (London Bus & Truck) and the late Peter Hobcraft (who did not live to see his bus come home) the epic journey to the UK ended in Liverpool and RLH 53 was finally transported to Cobham Hall to a rapturous reception. It now awaits restoration and initial inspection suggests that this will be quite straightforward (we hope!).

As I write this there is a lot of activity organising 'The Great British Bus Jubilee' and this will take place at the Museum on 24 June. Please do come along and celebrate midsummer in style.

Peter Duplock
Chairman

A probably never to be repeated scene at Carlton Colville Transport Museum on 8th May. No less than five former London trolleybuses, with No. 796 recently returned from a 40-odd year stay in Paris prominent, can be seen with, for added measure, T 792 and HR2 tram No. 1858.

(MHCb)



RT 2775

Based on information from Graham Smith & David Thrower and an interview with Mrs. Audrey Dennis

Who was the star of the show? Each year the London Bus Museum likes to add icing on the top of the cake of the collection of buses, mostly old, but always a few new as well, which congregate at Wisley. So who was it on a rather wet afternoon on 29th April, 2012? Perhaps it wasn't a bus at all but a very spritely, elderly lady, Mrs. Audrey Dennis? Mrs. Dennis is the widow of Albert Dennis. In 1952 Albert was an electrician based at Gillingham Street (GM), London Transport's only truly central London garage, situated just behind Victoria station. To quote from his diary - '1951 - Saturday 15th December: District Engineer, Mr Cadwallender, called to instruct me to report to Chiswick on Monday morning for an interview regarding a proposed visit to USA.'

Tourism and particularly that from across the Atlantic bringing in much needed dollars, was a priority of the British government in the early 1950s. Older members will remember the 1951 Festival of Britain which, despite prior grumblings about 'waste of money' turned out to

unknown. As Mrs Dennis told me this meant that the route across the USA had to be carefully chosen in order to avoid low bridges although for a large part of the journey this was not an issue as level crossings were the norm where road and rail met. But as these crossings were largely unprotected, hence the evocative hoot so familiar from Hollywood films as a train approaches, care had to be taken; there would be no racing to see who got there first! One of the elements of the tour was the promotion of the British motor industry and therefore two AEC RTs and one Leyland RTL, the RTs with Park Royal bodies, the RTL with a one off Weymann one were selected.

To return to Albert Dennis's diary - 'Monday 17 December: the great day arrived for the interview at Chiswick. Had spent a worrying weekend. Would I be good enough?...Many questions were asked, am I familiar with RT, could I handle a generating set, could I drive a bus...Left in high spirits and hope...' Three days later Albert is asked to attend Griffith House for a medical and assumes he must have been successful. '10am brought us all anxiously before the x-ray specialist for the first stage of the most severe medical I have yet received...Then it came - we were all to report back to our garages and await further information!!!! What had happened? Had we all failed?...Thursday 27 December: six more days have passed and I have been told to report to the office - here it comes - 'We are sorry to inform you' ...'Dennis I have much pleasure in telling you, you have been chosen to accompany us on the Tour.'

Rolling Stock Engineer Edwin Bonny was in charge of the eleven drivers, fitters, engineers and craftsmen and they spent 'a hectic two months' training which for Albert Dennis included passing his PSV test on RT 68. They had an official send off on Horse Guards Parade on a miserable winter day, 29th February, 1952 but their spirits were certainly not dampened and a few days later they drove up to Liverpool, a city which was familiar not only with Corporation AEC Regents but with the RT for in 1950 St Helens Corporation, which worked into Liverpool, had bought 15 RTs to London Transport specification, right down to the route indicators, and would buy more in 1952. However it was the docks where our heroes were bound and on 8th March they embarked on the Cunard liner, the *SS Parthia*, the buses been carefully lowered into the hold. Ten days later they arrived in New York.

Here they were required to take US driving tests and the buses were fitted with US licence-plates. The Mayor of New York gave the party a civic reception, and the public flocked to inspect and ride on the buses; many ex-servicemen from both world wars renewed old



The welcome home reception on Horse Guards Parade on 18th August 1952. (Museum collection)

be a spectacular success, much more so than the rather sad Millennium effort of the year 2000. The big red London double deck bus had become very much a symbol of London, along with Big Ben, Tower Bridge, etc and four RTs toured Europe in 1950 to promote the Festival. During the festival they worked a very popular sightseeing service which was the forerunner of the present day much copied all the year round London tour. What better, thought the British Travel Association, to promote travel to London than a promotional tour of the United States of three London double deckers. At that time New York had quite a large fleet of double deck buses but elsewhere in the USA they were largely



acquaintances with the red double deckers. Of course few would have come across the ultra-modern RT but many WWI veterans would have been delighted to meet the senior driver, George Gwynn of Catford garage, whose career began during the First World War when he drove B types. Only RT 2776 actually carried

passengers, RTL 1307 being fitted out as an exhibition bus with blacked out windows and displays about tourist locations on both decks. RT 2775 was the workshop bus, the lower deck being a mobile workshop, its windows blacked out, whilst there were some seats upstairs and lockers for the crew's possessions, etc.

There followed a journey of around 10,000 miles, visiting 45 cities, from east to west, the highlight of their arrival in Hollywood being a meeting with Bob Hope and Bing Crosby - I wonder if 'The Road to Chiswick' might have resulted? Britain was still undergoing rationing but, as Audrey Dennis remarked, the party lived the life of luxury, food wise, whilst they were in the USA. The journey had been planned to end back in New York but as Canada became aware of what was happening that country was determined not to be left out of what was clearly a highly successful promotion of the UK but also an exercise in nostalgia. The second world war had ended only seven years earlier, many RAF air crews had trained in Canada, many children had been evacuated there and ties between the two countries were as strong as they had ever been. So another month was added to the itinerary, 26 destinations in Canada were visited, up to 4,000 people rode RT 2776 in a day, and the bell punch tickets issued to each one became treasured souvenirs.

The only mechanical problem experience by RT 2775 in all those miles - which included a climb to 9,000ft, rather more than anything a London bus had experienced before, to cross the Sierra Nevada - was with the starter motor but plenty of spares were carried and it was soon replaced. The party returned on the *Parthia* from New York, arriving back in Liverpool on 16th August, 1952 with a welcome home reception in Horse Guards Parade on the 18th. The tour undoubtedly paved the way for the export of RTs and Routemasters as tourist buses in the USA and Canada in the decades to come, as well as others masquerading as such; I came across a former Wilts and Dorset FLF which used to pass the end of our road in Wareham in Monterey brazenly bearing the destination 'Piccadilly Circus.'

The tour over, RTL 1307 and RT 2775, were fitted out as standard double deckers and the three buses took up ordinary service. RTL 1307 was sold to Sri Lanka in 1964 whilst RT 2776 lost its body which had been specially



Mr and Mrs Dann and Mrs Dennis aboard RT 2775. Together with Graham Smith, Peter Dann was instrumental in ensuring that Mrs Dennis's late husband's collection of the 1952 visit came to the London Bus Museum. (MHCB)



The sun shines - eventually - on RT 2775. (Peter Zabek)

fitted with additional 'eyebrow' upper deck ventilators and an air-scoop beneath the canopy to RT 1708 in 1968, being scrapped in 1976. RT 2775 performed Coronation Tour work in 1953 from Old Kent Road (P) garage, its chassis and body were, uniquely, kept together during three Aldenham overhauls, and when it was withdrawn



Jon, Alan and Allyson, great grandchildren of George Gwynn, with other members of their family aboard RT 2775. (MHCB)

from Palmers Green garage in May, 1997, two years before RTs disappeared from normal duties on the streets of London, it was bought by the London Bus Preservation Group and has been with us (now the Trust) ever since. We ran RT 2775 for a number of years, but eventually it was set aside for an extensive refit. This took far longer than intended. There were many preserved working RTs and other priorities pushed it back down the list. Eventually, with the 60th anniversary of the historic visit across the Atlantic looming and with RT 2775 the only survivor, it became a priority. Thus, to quote Peter Hendy, the Commissioner of Transport for London, and an enthusiast, who began his career as a London Transport Graduate Trainee and who knew George Gwynn, the senior driver on the 1952 visit, what was presented on a rather damp day at the end of April, 2012 was, with its plethora of period advertisements, its immaculate exterior and interior, to all intents and purposes 'a brand new RT.'

Book Review

The Birth of the RT

by Tony Beard, Capital Transport, 96 pages hardback £14.95p

Members may well be familiar with Tony Beard and Alan Townsin's *The First RTs* (Capital Transport) which they surely will have found a most interesting read. They will not be disappointed with what is, in fact, the prequel as Hollywood have it, to that volume. As Mr Beard relates in his introduction, 'there survives in the safekeeping of TfL's Group Archives and Records Custody Service a significant collection of documents that refer to the development of the RT', and these records are the basis on which 'The Birth of the RT' is based. Inevitably some of the photographs have been published before for one could

hardly expect much new material to emerge of an event which took place over 70 years ago, although there are three depicting RT 1 working route 22 in the late summer of 1939 which, although less than pin sharp, have surely never been reproduced before, whilst the paintings by Barry Pearce on the front and back covers and on page 13 give an excellent sense of what a splendidly colourful sight this wonderful bus looked when brand new. Incidentally why is it that bus paintings tend to be not only more accurate than many railway ones, but aesthetically a good deal more pleasing? Tony Beard has also unearthed a series of paintings contemporary with RT1 entering service, 'presumably produced in order that officers might select a style of livery for the RT'. Readers will have their own views on just which livery variation best suits the 'pre-war' RT. That

the London Bus Museum owns the precious RT 1 (the body that is, the design of which, rather than the chassis we are presently considering) is something which we should never take for granted for we are told that its designer, AAM Durrant, decreed in February, 1954 that it be scrapped, 'the vehicle had not been used for some time.' The chassis, which was not the original one, could be sent to the Chiswick Training School. We are not told just why Durrant's orders were not carried out, but what a narrow escape for this iconic vehicle. The book details the planning, the inevitable, early teething problems and the difficulties of solving them in wartime conditions, how the RT coped through the early 1940s and emerged triumphant and the modifications which experience dictated when post-war production began.

Wet, Wet, Wisley!

Sunday 29th April dawned wet and windy over Wisley and much of south east England, which no doubt discouraged a number of possible visitors. Eventually the afternoon weather cleared up and the sun actually appeared and a good time was had by, well, nearly all.

1: Room for one more.

2: STL 2377 makes a splash behind a Marshall bodied Dart.

3: LT 1, a bus for all ages.

4: Now they're preserving bendi-buses!

5: Beware men in yellow anoraks.

(All photos MHC B unless shown otherwise)





6: Ray Stenning, Editor of 'Classic Bus'.

7: LT 1 fan club.

8: A New York taxi.

9: Pre and post war London taxis.

10: RT 2775, Peter Hendy, Graham Smith and Peter Duplock.

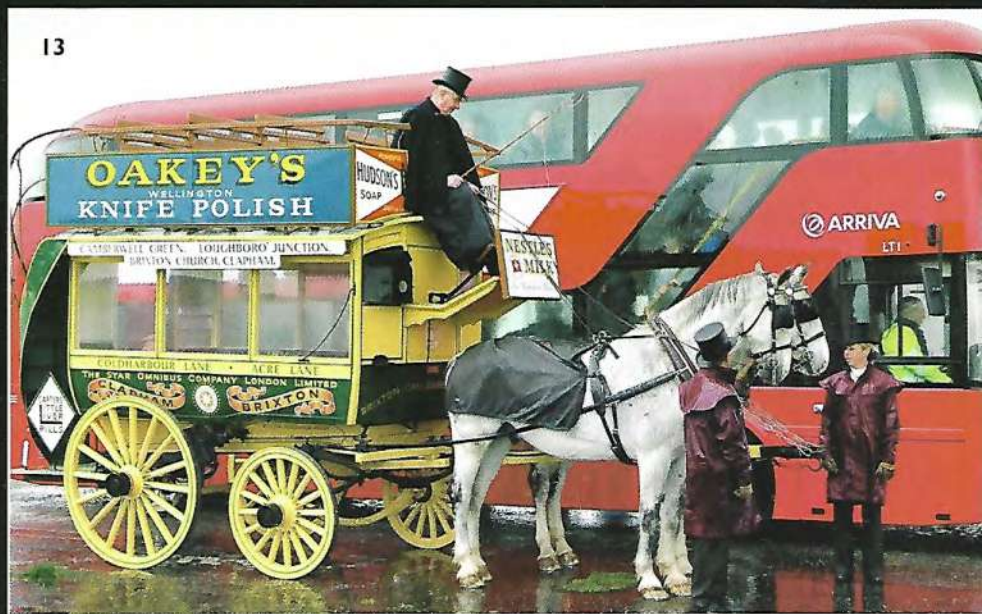
11: RT 1, RM 1, LT 1 and RT 2775.

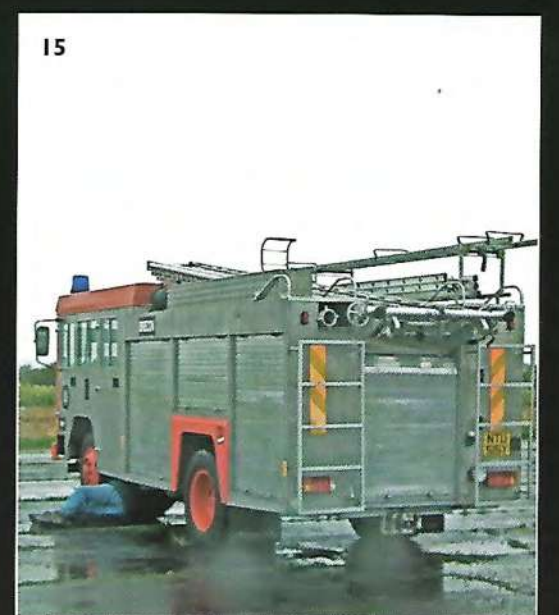
12: Two good friends of the London Bus Museum, Peter Hendy, Commissioner of Transport for London and Leon Daniels, Director of Surface Transport, Transport for London in front of RT 2775. (Peter Zabek)

13: Almost unlimited horse power. (Guy Marriott)

14: 2012 is the 100th anniversary of AEC and we welcomed these fine examples of 8-wheel AEC lorries.

15: Rather him than me.





Big Game Hunting in Bloomsbury and Hackney

By Michael H C Baker

The big game in question is the new London bus, the LT. Let me explain. On the day the first two were supposed to enter passenger service, Monday 20th February, I presented myself at Victoria station, the terminus of the 38 on which they were due to take up work, more in hope it has to be confessed, than expectation, for the grapevine had it that delivery from Wrights in Ballymena, Northern Ireland had only been a day or two earlier and that neither of the two buses would be ready yet. So it proved. They were seen that week on training duties but just to give them plenty of time to settle in I left it to Tuesday, 6th March before mounting another expedition. I had clasped in my hot little hand a timetable purporting to itemise their every move on the 38, Monday to Friday. My original intention was to get to Victoria in time to watch the 1029 arrival and board it at 1044. However driving up from deepest Dorset during the morning rush hour is always a lottery and both possible routes, the M3 and A3, were blocked and down to one lane. Admittedly some of the more heavily used Dorset roads are now tarmacised, motors are gradually taking over from horses on the trunk routes, but delays still occur when crowds of well wishers block the approach roads to Thomas Hardy's cottage, all of which meant I was late arriving in London and therefore made for Bloomsbury Square, hoping that I would be in time to board one of the LTs at 1109. The appointed time came and went, unlike the LT, nor did the westbound working, due at 1111, materialise. Eventually I reasoned that if I boarded one of the regular DWs and stayed on it until we reached Hackney I was bound at some point to encounter my quarry heading west. This I did almost immediately, LT61BHT passing me before we reached Islington... So at least one was at work.

I stayed on, visiting parts of London new to me and alighted in the heart of Hackney; if I'd ever been there before I'd quite forgotten, a dreadful omission from one who thought he knew every London suburb. Hackney's charms aren't immediately obvious, although I'm sure they exist. I couldn't help thinking of the old Norman Long musical hall song all about a house he is renting in Hackney for 'Ten pahnds dahn' with a view of Hackney Marshes, 'If it wasn't for the houses in between.' I reasoned that eventually LT61BHT would make its way back to Hackney. It was scheduled to take some 20 minutes on to Victoria, would leave there around ten minutes later and the journey to Hackney would be two minutes short of one hour. I came across two other bus spotters of mature years, both of whom expressed

uncertainty about what was going on although one had seen the LT which had passed me leave Hackney earlier that morning and, like me, reasoned that it must return, eventually. 'Eventually' came and went and receded further into the past, and although Mare Street and the whole area around Hackney Central was a bus spotter's paradise with a remarkable number of 61 registered double and single deckers to boot, no sign of the 'New Bus for London', to quote the Arriva timetable.

I had another appointment in Hackney, at the former horse tram depot at number 38-40 Upper Clapton Road, dating from 1873, (Clapton bus garage in the centre of Hackney began life as a horse tram depot in 1883 though I presume nothing of the original remains) said to be one of the very earliest surviving buildings of the period when Hackney was changing from a village to a heavily industrialised suburb and much prized by the local amenity society, but not, seemingly by the local authority who wanted to demolish much of it. So, for the time being I abandoned my bus hunt, found number 38-40 Upper Clapton Road, just beyond Clapton Pond, still intact although looking a little worse for wear. I carefully made my way past a collection of elderly, but not quite vintage cars, parked on cobbled sets between brick industrial buildings which certainly looked mid-Victorian, reached the end where large amounts of foam packing blocks and sheets were being tossed around, and was invited inside by a most obliging employee who replied, "Yes there is some track work set into the floor, come and look", which I did and noted the plethora of iron columns holding up the roof, features which would be lost if the development takes place. My guide said that as far as he knew this still on the cards but nothing was certain.

By this stage I'd more or less decided to give up on the new LT. I took myself off to Clapton station, not what one would call an architectural gem, more a sort of cave with tracks running along it at the bottom of Victorian constructed tenement cliffs, boarded a train for Liverpool Street and then, by one of those coincidences which occur when one is least expecting a coincidence to come along, as we passed over Graham Road along which the 38 runs in the centre of Hackney what should be there but my quarry. Hurrying out of Liverpool Street main line station and down on to the Central Line I alighted at Holborn station, dashed alongside Kingsway Subway, avoided an E3 just emerging, and panted up to the westbound route 38 stop at Bloomsbury Square. I



LT 2 heading though **Bloomsbury** towards **Hackney** on **Tuesday 6th March.** (MHCb)

watched several DWs head past, no sign of the LT so asked the lady driver of one DW who said, 'It's up ahead, turning at Piccadilly and should be along shortly.' At last, something definitive. True to her word within five minutes the distinctive shape of the LT appeared. At this point I realised how David Attenborough must feel when he has been tracking some endangered beast through the Brazilian rain forest for several weeks. I leaped on, to the open rear platform of course, and climbed upstairs, half expecting it to be packed out with enthusiasts and anoraks, but there was a just a handful of bog standard passengers who nevertheless kept looking around realising they were riding on something rather special.

Loudwater's Little Bus

'Loudwater's Little Bus' - route 336A to and from Rickmansworth station - ran for the last time on Thursday 30th March 1972. It was then the last London Country route operated by GS buses.

The service had started in 1927, operated by Cameron Jeffs, the developer of the Loudwater Estate. The route passed to London Transport in 1950.

Throughout the 45 years of its operation, the route had a close affinity with the community it served. There were three dedicated drivers over all that time: Harry Simmonds, Owen Palmer and finally Harry Cross. The bus was outstationed on the Estate until Harry Cross's retirement in 1971.

To mark the 40th anniversary of the route's withdrawal, the London Transport Museum Friends

organised special trips on the 336A for estate residents and Friends on Sunday 25th March, using the London Transport Museum GS 64, supported by other privately owned buses. The photo shows GS 64 entering the private Estate through the access control barriers.

The Museum Friends have also published a commemorative 12-page booklet 'Loudwater's Little Bus', describing the history of the route and the community it served. Copies are available from the London Transport Museum Shop price £1, or by post

Cobham Tours Presents 2012 Bus Trips from Cobham Hall

Sunday 15th July Alton Bus Rally Depart 09.00hrs
Ret. approx 17.30hrs £10 Ride only

Sunday 12th August Bluebell Railway (Vintage Transport Day) Depart 09.00hrs
Ret. approx 18.00hrs £10 Ride only

Sunday 16th September Showbus Duxford
Depart 08.00hrs Ret. approx 19.30hrs £20 Ride only

Sunday 14th October Isle of Wight Running Day
Depart 07.00hrs Ret. approx 19.30hrs £25 Includes ferry and entrance/timetable.

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After a bit I descended, downstairs was pretty full and again there was an awareness of being in something special and mobile phones were merrily clicking away. I would have liked to continue all the way back to Hackney but time was pressing, as the man said when the grandfather clock fell on him, but I was mightily impressed by the ride, the ambiance, everything about this magnificent vehicle. We most fervently hope that nothing prevents it going into production.



from the Friends Office, London Transport Museum, 39 Wellington Street, London WC2E 7BB. Please enclose a cheque for £2 made payable to London Transport Museum Friends and mark the envelope '336A booklet'.

Kingston in the 1930s

By Brian Bunker

If you wanted something out of the ordinary, garage wise, then Kingston was always worth a visit for its specialised in single deckers on account of a combination of bridges with weight restrictions, routes distinctly rural in character involving much negotiation of country lanes, and relatively sparse demand for bus services. Brian continues 'Kingston garage operations were heavily affected by the events of 3 October, 1934 for all but one of its routes were renumbered, the exception being the double deck 65, although its short working suffixes were removed.



A lady on a bike speeds past Tilling AEC Regal T 309 at the Woking terminus of the 219. The bus is newly transferred to Kingston from Bromley. Judging by the plethora of open windows and the display of the lady's legs it's a warm summer's day, probably in 1936.

(A Duke, Brian Bunker collection)

In numerical order the renumberings were, 20 ex 620, 201 ex 105, 213 ex 113, 214 ex 115, 216 ex 198, 217 ex 62 and 219 ex 79. The starting point for all routes in the town was the bus station, built in the 1920s and recently demolished. The double deck 20 ran to the Horse and Groom, Guildford but on Saturdays and Sundays only it substituted for the 215: however as double deckers were not able to negotiate a low bridge at the Dittons they could not go down the Portsmouth Road but had to make a detour via Surbiton and the Kingston By Pass to rejoin the 215 route at the Scilly Isles outside Esher. K based STs worked it.

For the 65, which ran from Argyle Road, Ealing to the Bull, Leatherhead, K and

A fascinating scene at Hampton Court in pre-war days. Prominent is Dennis Dart DA8. The date has to be 1937, not least because the handsome Rover saloon has a 1937 registration, whilst beyond the Austin saloon immediately ahead of it is a NS, a type which finished passenger service in that year. (D A Thompson, Brian Bunker collection)

Turnham Green (V) which had the largest allocation, both provided STs. All the rest of Kingston's routes were single deck. K provided LTLs or Ts for the 201, Kingston to Lampton, along with LTLs from Hounslow. The 213, Kingston to Belmont was worked by LTLs from Kingston and Sutton garages. The 214 from Kingston to St Annes, Chertsey was worked by K's LTLs. The 215, Kingston to the Horse and Groom, Guildford was worked, Monday to Friday by Ts from K. The 216, Kingston to Bridge Street, Staines was worked by one man operated DAs (Dennis Darts). The 217 and 218, ran together from Kingston as far as Walton on Thames where the 217 continued via Chertsey, the 218 via Laleham, both terminating at Staines. Both routes were worked by Ts from K and Weybridge (WB). There were weight restrictions on the bridge at Walton on Thames. WB was a tiny garage and its Ts were officially part of the Kingston contingent but nevertheless carried WB plates. The 219, Kingston to Woking station, was worked by Ts from Kingston and a single T from Weybridge.

Apart from its large fleet of Ts, mostly original ITIs, and LTLs, Kingston garage also worked the three experimental CBs of 1931, Chiswick designed and built, but numbered in the T class as Ts 1000-1002. They were withdrawn in February, 1938. Two years earlier Bromley (TB) lost its entire fleet of ex Tilling Regals, Ts 307-318, to Kingston garage.

On 27 May, 1936, two new routes were introduced, the 206 and the 255. A solitary DA was sufficient for the 206 running between the Windsor Arms, Esher and the Causeway, Claygate, but for the much busier 255, serving the Red Lion, Feltham and the Clarence Hotel, Teddington, a batch of new, revolutionary side engined Qs was provided. The vehicle allocation records state these



The Late Alan Purssey

Known for his articles in the magazine under the heading 'London's Buses in Miniature', Alan was born in Edmonton north London in 1937 and grew up in Wood Green

His interest in public transport was fired by the diverse amount of buses in the North London area in the late '40s and early '50s. Trams were still running to Manor House and Trolleybuses were prevalent in the area with numerous routes terminating and turning in Wood Green where he lived.

Alan joined the Post Office at fifteen as a junior postman. National Service saw Alan serving with the Royal Signals as a radio operator in Germany; the technical knowledge gained in the forces enabled Alan to enter the engineering branch of the Post Office. In the early '60s the opportunity arose to transfer to installing the new range of colour telephones where he was to work in the homes and offices of many notable politicians, stage and radio personalities.

Alan and his family moved to Cambridge in the '70s at a time

when there was a great need for experienced engineers. Alan retired early at 55 as a manager after forty years service.

His interest in buses never left him and on being offered a model railway layout for his son he stumbled across an article on model bus kits. This led him into a new hobby that spanned over forty years.

Back in the '70s Alan was to discover Cobham but did not become a member until another visit much later when he answered a call from Bill Cottrell for material for the magazine. Finding that Alan was an avid collector he was asked to do a regular feature on new models, at a time when E.F.E. and Corgi were just beginning their now extensive ranges.

Alan was also a member of the Model Bus Federation and felt that he was helping to promote not only the Federation but also Cobham through the magazine. Sudden ill health which caused the loss of sight in one eye, foiled his plans to attend Cobham on Wednesdays. Deteriorating sight in his remaining eye made modelling buses difficult but not impossible and he did not let this impediment get in his way.

Failing eyesight and the inability to



Stanley Luckin, then aged 94, chats with Alan Purssey in 2007. (MHCb)

drive made the journey to Cobham difficult, but Alan managed this with the aid of his family. He enjoyed the company of his newfound friends at Cobham who would keep him up to date on developments.

The dry sense of humour of one particular friend, Peter Goodfellow, appealed to Alan. Working on the Guy, under Peter's guidance the pair were dismantling the light panels which were proving difficult to remove. Alan hit one panel so hard the window supports fell out; Peter turned to Alan said "The idea is to restore these old vehicles not demolish them".

That is the way Alan would like to be remembered, always out for a laugh and enjoying himself.

Now Alan has bought his last ticket and taken his last bus.

were transferred the very next day to for Harrow Weald (HD) in exchange for ancient S type single deckers, although they also state that these were soon replaced by another batch of brand new 5Q5s. The appearance of the 255 meant that the 201 was cut back from Lampton to Hampton Court, with the AV allocation withdrawn. Although not shown in the schedule books it is likely that



Experimental Chiswick-built T 1000, the picture probably taken in the summer - note the driver's white coat and hat - of 1937, the bus being withdrawn the following winter. It carries a WB, Weybridge, garage plate.

(J Higham, Brian Bunker collection)

for a very short while the new 255 was worked by Ss ex WD and that the type also operated for a short while in 1935 on the 217/8. The Sunday allocation on the 255 didn't last long, it being withdrawn in early August, 1935 and replaced by an extension of the 201 to Feltham worked by Qs. Even that situation was only temporary as in early August, 1937, the remaining 255 service was withdrawn the 201 extended on Sundays resulting in a daily allocation of Qs on the 201. On the very same day the Country Area took over the far end of some Kingston routes, the 217 was withdrawn entirely, the 214 cut back from Chertsey to Weybridge, the 219 from Woking to Weybridge, whilst the 219A was introduced between Grotto Road, Weybridge and the railway station; it was operated by LTLs. This new route and the 214 and the 219 were extended from the station to Vickers Works on various days, no doubt on account of the increasing amount of employees as Britain prepared for the now inevitable forthcoming war. Finally the 20 saw various changes over the years, V taking over or augmenting the K allocation with K reappearing and Twickenham (AB) putting on STLs.

Behind the Workshop Doors

UMP227 is progressing well. Much internal work has moved forward and rewiring is progressing well. The windscreen surrounds are being fitted and may even feature glass by the time you read this. RT2775, now painted and sign written, is being readied for its launch at SG and some bodywork repairs to RF226 have been completed.



UMP 227 undergoing restoration in the workshop. (MHCB)

A huge amount of work has been, and continues to be in hand to reduce the huge backlog of MoT's and Class 6 inspections to get a selection of our fleet to SG and available for outside events during the 2012 season. STL2377 has taken longer than expected to resolve a serious oil leak from the fluid flywheel, our local AEC dealer was out of stock it seems of parts for a 76 year old vehicle but it is now back in service. It is likely to take some 6 months or more to clear the backlog of this and outstanding repair work.

Following the resignation of Peter Brown as Transport Manager, a task he completed admirably, the post has been taken over by Ian Barrett, with the Engineering Manager as Andy Baxter. Together they are introducing new controls on vehicle use and maintenance to suit the needs of the new Museum environment.

Over the past few months I have had to give a lot of thought as to where we go in restoration terms over the next five years. With so many vehicles waiting in the wings and two more on their way an endless supply of money and volunteers would be more than helpful. Unfortunately neither is that likely and as such I

need to look towards a priority list.

There are of course different wish lists for different people as well as the wish lists that may be more favourable for display. Additionally the source of funding also needs to be a factor as well as the interest profile of those who will do the work. At the same time we have to recognise the need to keep the current fleet maintained with repairs related to age as well as occasional accidental damage.

Currently my plan is to complete UMP227 before commencing a follow on project. The main contender for this is T448. This absolutely unique Art Deco vehicle is already 40% through its rebuild but has remained untouched for a number of years. It is the sole survivor of the 9T9 class and was built only a few miles from the Museum at Weymann in Addlestone. In its current condition it has a later standard AEC 7.7L engine but T357 in store at Northchapel actually has, incorrectly, the original type of 7.7 fitted to this bus.

After that thoughts turn to RFW6.

Hopefully as the problems of the backlog on the mechanical side allow a little more workshop room we can start a second minor project alongside the major work. The contender for this seems very much to be the canteen trailer that generates substantial interest from visitors.

Personally my thoughts are never far from the NS having been involved with its acquisition and there is a remote chance that funding may come forward to allow this to proceed alongside UMP and T448. Over the past month works have commenced in dismantling the parts of the old body to provide patterns for new components to be manufactured and importantly to see how much of the original can be saved. Whilst we can boast horse buses and early vehicles later converted to pneumatic tyres we do not have a true open top solid tyred London Bus in the fleet. We still have to complete the running chassis and we are probably around £6000 away from that. A body will not be cheap, mainly due to the cost of machining items such as the corner pillars but it is achievable within the foreseeable

future. It may well be a time for all of us who want to see this in our lifetime to dig into our pockets the way we did a few years back and delivered STL2377 and G351.

Nothing is as yet set in stone regarding any vehicle except UMP227 and I would like to hear from you, the members what you think should get priority. What do you think goes first? Does your interest in a solid tyred vehicle out and about give your chequebook that itchy feeling?

More volunteers have joined us recently and have soon found that having no previous experience is no reason to not become quickly involved. Do you have an interest in using a screwdriver or a drill? any motor mechanical skills, not afraid of greasy hands, happy to wield an oil gun or a spanner?, happy with a paintbrush?, come in on a Wednesday and join a happy and motivated band of volunteers. Wednesdays not your best day, no worry we are looking to open up a further day for those who prefer an alternative.



RLH 53 newly returned from across the Atlantic. (MHCB)

Like everything at the Museum it will not happen without you, every member is equal whether he or she helps in the visitor experience, pushes a broom, works the pop riveter or assists our ability to purchase outside resources such as joinery. It's your Museum and it is what you make it.

Roger R Staggs
Rolling Stock Director & Trustee

RM 140 Appeal

Please can I draw your attention to the donation form enclosed with this Magazine? Those Members for whom we have email addresses will have already received details when the appeal was launched in April, and the Trust is most grateful to those who have already contributed, but this is now an opportunity to become involved for those of you who rely on the Magazine as your principal source of contact with the Trust.

As many of you will know, RM 140 has recently been on loan to the Museum from our Chairman and has formed an important part of the display since last year. Peter has now given the Trust first option to purchase the bus, for a sum of £20,000 including some spares. The other trustees discussed the offer and concluded that, as a standard production Routemaster was high on the Museum's acquisition list and as RM 140 was an excellent example of an early, un-modified bus in its original condition, the Trust should seek to acquire the vehicle, provided that independent, external valuations confirmed that the price was appropriate and that the funds could be raised via an appeal.

The decision process has been conducted in the appropriate manner to take account of the fact that the vendor is a trustee; the owner has been excluded from all discussions or decisions by the trustees regarding the acquisition and independent valuations have been received which confirm that the asking price of £20,000 is significantly below that which might be obtained for the bus on the open market.

The owner has agreed that RM 140 will pass to Trust ownership after a down-payment of £5,000 and that the balance of £15,000 can be paid over two years. The trustees take the view that this is a generous gesture and have accordingly accepted. At the time of writing (early May), the first round of donations has covered the down payment and we now seek the remaining funds so that the Trust can meet its future commitments in this regard. Monthly donations by direct debit are particularly appreciated as these will give the Trust a level of security for the future but further lump sums are also welcome and will be ring-fenced into the fund to meet further payment instalments.

If you agree that the Museum should have an excellent, standard Routemaster in the Collection, please support the appeal - we can't do it without you! I look forward to receiving your contribution.

Michael Wickham
Appeal Organiser

The Museum on the Web

The Museum's new web-site is now becoming fully operational and I hope it meets with the approval of Members. In particular, the Members' Area is now up and running; this is your exclusive section where we will regularly post information and news for you. Over 460 Members have already had their access enabled and will have received their login details. You might want to put the direct access address into your favourites/bookmarks and this is:
<http://www.londonbusmuseum.com/wp-login.php>

If you haven't received your login details, that's because we don't have an up-to-date email address for you! Just email your membership number to londonbusmuseum@btinternet.com and we will do the rest. You can also use that email address if you have any comments or suggestions for the site - all constructive comment gratefully received.

The Museum is now also on Facebook and Twitter; although our presence on these social networking sites is primarily intended for the general public and prospective visitors, Members who also wish to follow us there can do so on Twitter @lonbusmuseum and our Facebook page is at:
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/London-Bus-Museum/209228669158358>

Michael Wickham

DVD Review

Streets of London by Visions International Running time 75 mins - £19.95

This is the third bus production from this company (the others being Enviro 400 and Duxford 2011), which also produces rail DVDs with titles like 'Carry on Clagging'. The DVD has options such as motion-menus, chapter points and commentary off. For people of a certain age, like me, this programme highlights the great variety of rolling stock compared to the days when RTs and RMs ruled, and is thus quite informative as well. Broken down into bite size chapters the DVD is easy viewing and the commentary, by David Maxey, is light, detailed and at times, slightly tongue in cheek, which makes a refreshing change.

Subjects covered are: The Square Mile - operations within the City of London; Single Deckers - not just E200s; RV 1 - hydrogen and other power; Potters Bar open day; iBus - behind the scenes; Routemasters - two heritage routes; Touristas - sightseeing buses and Bendy Farewell - Boris' happy day! Production quality is excellent, with crisp editing and a surprising lack of cyclists in the way - videographer Ken Carr must be the modern equivalent of Gerald Mead! My only slight niggle is the lack of shots of the outer London termini in Bendy Farewell. The programme kept my interest throughout and while I can't claim to have been converted to being a fan of Wright's Eclipse Geminis, my knowledge in general has increased. Well worth opening your wallet for.

Renewal Reminder from Membership

It might be a help, just as a temporary reminder until we can do this electronically and automatically, to list those members who might have forgotten to renew their subscription. If by the time this is published it is out of date please accept our apologies.

It may be you either paid by SO (in which case you will need to contact your bank to amend the amount to £25 incl or £37.50 couples) or you paid by cheque in 2011. I look forward to receiving your renewals, if you do not wish to renew then this will be your last magazine.

Many thanks, Debbie Morris, Membership Manager

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|-------------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|
| 1209F Raymond Dickens | April | 312 Graham McQueen | April | 664 Richard Zarywacz | April | 1068 Bill Patterson | April | 1549 John Lockyer | April |
| 1557F Reginald Chopping | May | 453 Roger Davies | April | 674 Brian Bunker | April | 1105 Rev J Michael Phillips | June | 1550 Roger Huckle | April |
| 1627F Peter Pallett | April | 483 Nick Abbott | May | 794 David Lindell | May | 1139 Colin Godlement | April | 1624 Paul Baker | April |
| 1642F William Jones | June | 517 Martin Ricketts | April | 836 Leslie Bishop | April | 1145 Peter Zabek | May | 1625 David Malone | April |
| 946F Stewart Lilly | May | 547 Geoff Hills | April | 905 Steve May | April | 1402 David Edwards | June | 1626 Gordon Lethbridge | April |
| 101 Rev John Lines | April | 551 Phillip Chapman | April | 906 David Aldridge | April | 1420 Paul Smith | April | 1634 Sally Playne | April |
| 292 Christopher Hart | April | 592 Stephen Madden | June | 912 Kevin Hibbs | June | 1432 Richard Thomas | April | 1635 M Fielden | April |
| 309 D Hill | April | 652 Terry Cooper | April | 938 Adam Gittings | April | 1525 Dave Holliday | April | 1638 Derek Adams | June |
| 311 David Lelliott | April | 662 Marianne Ward | April | 985 John Allendon | April | 1527 Matthew Brothwell | April | 1639 Robert Emmans | June |



RT 2775 was the Outright Concours d'Elegance winner and was awarded The National Benzole Trophy at the culmination of the annual HCVS Run to Brighton on 6th May, beating some very strong competition. It also won two other 'firsts', The Modern Transport Trophy (Double-Deck Buses built from 1.1.46) and The AEC Trophy (The Best Badged AEC on the Run). RT 2775 and STL 2377 both performed perfectly throughout the day despite the wet, miserable conditions. To cap it all, a shot of the STL in Piccadilly was on the front cover of the programme. The magnificently restored RW 3 with John Huxford at the wheel seen alongside RT 2775, while in the inset picture RT 2775 displays its three trophies. (Both Graham Smith)

The Great British Bus Jubilee

London Bus Museum, Brooklands, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 0SL

Sunday, 24th June 2012

Opening Hours 09.30-19.00hrs (Last admission 16.00hrs)

Connecting Bus Service between the Museum Site and Weybridge Rail Station

Free Car Parking at the Heights

Adult £10.00 • Senior Citizen/Student £9.00 • Children (5-16) £5.50
 Children Under 5 FREE • Family Ticket £27.00 (2 Adults + up to 3 Children)
 Heritage Bus service at small additional cost • Trust Members are admitted FREE



LONDON BUS MUSEUM

A LIVING HERITAGE



A GREAT FAMILY DAY OUT

Display of Great British Buses
 (Up to 100 vehicles)

Open Top Bus rides • Special Heritage Bus service - approx 30 minute duration • Display of working models • Collectors' market place • Special children's activities • A musical performance by 'Transport of Delight' (Choristers) • Book signing by Brian Watson, author of 'Black Jacks, Fruit Salads, Cricket Stumps on the Wall' - a nostalgic look at growing up in 1950's South London.

PLUS Hot & cold food, refreshments and BBQ

If you would like a stall in the Collectors' market place or display a bus, please see our website for details



COMPETITION

WIN a day out with 30 friends, on a vintage bus to Brighton
 WIN an opportunity to drive a vintage bus (at our autumn event)