



# LONDON BUS MUSEUM MAGAZINE



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### Telephone

01932 837994. The phone is manned by the duty volunteers during opening hours but please bear in mind that most of the officers work from home, so it may be a question of passing a message on. Contact by email (see below) will usually bring a quicker response.

### Email

Please use the General Enquiries e-mail form on the Museum's website.

### Post

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London Bus Museum  
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Brooklands Road  
WEYBRIDGE KT13 0QS

Please note that this address cannot be used for visits in person, which should be via the main entrance.

### Museum on the Web

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### FRONT COVER PICTURE

**T31 at Brooklands on 1st May, on its return from the HCVS run to Brighton in the capable hands of Robin Helliar-Symons.**

**(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](mailto:michaelhcbaker@londonbusmuseum.com), or by post to the Museum at the address opposite.

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## From the Editor

Who says a passion for vintage buses is for nerds? The recently retired Mayor of London loved the red London double decker so much he brought back the Routemaster - in a manner of speaking. And the father of his successor drove a London bus for a quarter of a century; QED. Which brings me to the volunteers who drive the Trust's buses. I've no doubt said this before but it is worth repeating that the skill with which they handle our vehicles, whether out in the country or, in particular, in busy London streets leaves one full of admiration. They exhibit such skill and confidence one would think they were doing it every day of their lives. I was reflecting on this on the way to Brighton on the annual HCVS run in RMC1461 as we weaved our way through narrow Sussex village streets and jam packed roads following T31; most drivers of the cars who passed were considerate enough but on any such run there's the odd idiot who would be a danger at any time both to others and himself; heigh-ho. But, as the pictures hopefully convey we had a great time. At Brighton we met founder member the Rev John Lines, MBE, a Guy specialist like no other, and one of the judges. John is quite something; he was awarded the MBE for caring for 800 street homeless folk at the Whitechapel Mission in the East End.

Whilst on the subject of founder members, I trust you have all ordered your copy of the book entitled 'London Buses - A Living Heritage - Fifty Years of the London Bus Museum' written by Trustee and Information Officer, Graham Smith, which we advertised



John Lines MBE, RT4139 and an East Kent Beadle coach at Sturry near Canterbury, January this year. (MHC B)

in the Spring magazine. The publisher is Silver Link with whom I've had a long association. They have always taken great care in the presentation of the many transport books they have published over the years. I'm sure the combination of their house style and Graham's 20+ years of involvement with Cobham/Brooklands and the in-depth researches he has carried out will be something to treasure.

It is most pleasing that my plea in the last magazine for members to record their early adventures on the London bus network has prompted several to respond, as you will discover within these pages and, hopefully, in future editions. Keep it coming and if you have any photographs to accompany them, even if its only of you in short trousers on a family outing, we'd love to see them too.

Michael H C Baker



Adrian Palmer stands in front of RMC1461 at Brighton as B1609 passes, 1st May this year.

(MHC B)

# Spring Gathering - 17th April 2016

The theme was Celebrating Weymann and Harrington, the sun shone, the crowds turned out, and a fine collection of examples of these two bus and coach builders was on display.



A Western Welsh Harrington-bodied Leyland Leopard of 1964 arrives on site.



A Crosville Weymann-bodied Leyland PSI Tiger of 1950 was giving rides from Brooklands and is seen heading south on the A3, about to be overtaken by something a little more modern.



A Weymann bodied AEC Regent from Porto, Portugal alongside a full-fronted Weymann 1950-vintage Leyland PD2/3 Titan of Bournemouth Corporation.



A Maidstone and District rebuilt Harrington-bodied AEC Reliance of 1958.



London Transport Central Area RLH61 with lowbridge Weymann body with, in the background, Country Area RLH48.



Harrington bodied Maidstone and District AEC Reliance of 1962.



Left: Standing with Brian Jones, who created this part of the exhibition, is Clive Harrington, grandson of Thomas Harrington, founder of the firm, and his rare coupe version of the Harrington Sunbeam Alpine conversion.



Dawn Stagg greets the Scarlett Pimpernel in the shape of this Harrington-bodied Leyland Comet of 1950.



Weymann built motor cars as well as bus and coach bodies, and this magnificent vehicle is one of the few surviving examples, on an Austin 6 chassis. It belongs to John Blakton who paid for it to be transported to and from Brooklands.



a rear view of Leyland Comet MYA590 displaying the distinctive Harrington tail fin.



A Harrington-bodied 1951-vintage AEC Mark III Regal of Surrey Motors.



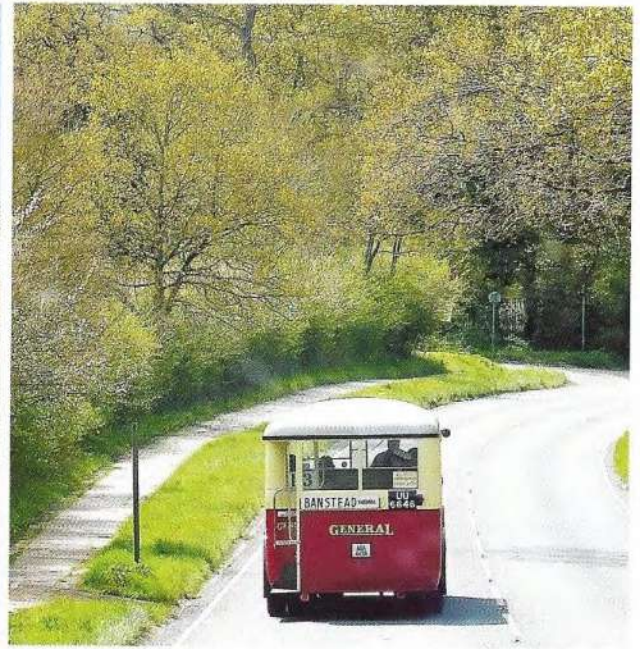
Not seen in public for some time was the Trust's 9T9 Green Line coach, T448, awaiting restoration and seen here leaving Brooklands a few days later. (Colin Read)



# HCVS Brighton Run - 1st May 2016



So now you know what a flatpack vintage bus looks like. Or is it sheer coincidence that David Bowker happened to photograph T31 passing IKEA in Purley Way, Croydon during the Historic Commercial Vehicle Run to Brighton on 1st May, this year?



For the first time for many years no Southdown vehicle took part in the 2016 HCVS run, so T31 is seen making amends approaching the South Downs near Ditchling. (MHCb)

## From the Workshop

By Roger Stagg

As I write this in early May the weather is warming up and whilst yesterday was spent in the garden on the hottest day this year I'm currently peering out of the window watching the rain lashing against it. The good thing is that we will, come Wednesday, be able to open the workshop doors to let out the fumes without the proverbial brass monkeys getting in.

It's been an interesting quarter, perhaps one we might try to avoid in the future. Workshop Manager Owen Wright went home feeling a bit unwell and the following day he was in a new bed awaiting a triple by-pass. With that behind him he is now back with us but no more lifting bus wheels. It certainly has not dampened his enthusiasm as last week saw him under RMCI461 making adjustments here and there.

Whilst his absence has slowed us down a little on the mechanical side its main effect has been that some less essential routine tasks have had to fall behind with more work having to be taken on by Engineering Manager Andy Baxter. This has unfortunately slowed the return of STL2377 to the road. Both steering and engine are back in place but minor works remain on brake adjustment and water pump before the radiator can be replaced.

ST922 and T31 were expected to go on the HCVS London to Brighton but after ST922's recent engine overhaul improved its breathing it had a nasty habit of stalling and backfiring. The original carburettor jetting just did not work well on modern high octane fuels in an engine designed for 84 octane. A Herculean effort equipped with jets of different sizes and alternative

Venturi choke tubes and assisted with spares from The Carburettor Hospital (0845 061 4477 Eric) would cure one problem but introduce another. At 10.30 pm on the Friday before the run we had to admit defeat. With a fresh start on the following Wednesday equipped with boxes of drills the size of hairs we tried again and by lunch time she was on full song. On the Saturday she travelled up to London for a photographic session and and period photos of her in her final set of London Transport clothes will appear in the next issue. Paint wise she has got a little tired and on 11th May she journeyed off for a change of livery and will be relaunched at Bromley Garage Open Day on 13th August.

RT2657 has not received as much attention as we would have wished but Malcom Cron keeps some progress going when Heathrow gives him a shift to allow him in. Mechanically with the exception of the unloader valve we are there so anybody who feels that some interior cleaning up and repainting is their idea of warding off dementia (or getting away from the good lady) come and join us and help return a good lady to the road.

Mechanically we are almost back in full swing and once Brian Roshier is back from his op. we hope for more noticeable progress.

At the rear of the workshop we find the hive of activity on both RF19 and the canteen trailer and in this issue I'll leave out the names to protect the innocent! Final painting of the ceiling is underway on RF19 and most of the panelling is now in place with strapping and beading progressing. Linoleum has been resourced and

Not seen out and about for some time and thus a most welcome sight, having arrived at Marine Parade, Brighton, was STL469 from the London Transport Collection.

(MHCB)



excitement is growing. Alongside RF19 is, of course, the canteen trailer, always a source of interest to any visitor given access. Panelling and strapping of the sides is close to completion and prep work before primer and undercoat is well advanced. Internally all of the metalwork and woodwork for the chairs and tables is complete and sheets of the original Formica has arrived to complete the table tops. Whilst there is still a long way to go the progress is now very noticeable.

So many other Museum tasks seem to have pulled John Hutchinson away from the NS that visible progress has been slower than we would have wished. Nevertheless lower deck panelling, beads and bump rails are fitted but some minor adjustments to screw heads are required before we hide the shiny surfaces behind a coat of etch primer. Brackets for the upper deck have been fabricated and a few have been trial fitted to enable us to set out the handrail for the staircase. The balustrade has been the subject of much head scratching and the brackets from the stair strings have been made, test fitted, modified to suit and will be finally in place by the time you are reading this article. The balustrade itself which most people think of as being a simple curve is actually two straight lines and three different radii on an incline that itself is not constant. Attempts to make a pattern from stiff card were not successful so one had to be made from sheet metal. The finished article is now on site but needs fitting with literally dozens of small countersunk bolts followed by the edge stiffeners with over 200 snap head rivets. How much easier this must have been when you ordered a few hundred staircases and the original drawings existed!

There is still plenty of woodwork to be cut, bent and screwed so if you are handy with a saw or screwdriver,



RT4570.

or just feel happy doing a bit of filling and rubbing down call in and see us on a Wednesday.

Some time back we received an enquiry for RT moquette from Sweden. To cut a long story short member Olle Gorman visited us earlier this year with photographs of RT4570 and RT3494 which he and his group had acquired and were restoring. We have been able to offer him a lot of assistance and he returned a month later to collect an estate car full of rubber, moquette, Rexine and a 100 O's and S's. Full to the roof he then drove back to Sweden to complete the work. The standard of what they have achieved is remarkable and it was with great pleasure that we heard recently that RT4570 had passed the Swedish equivalent of a Class 6 MoT and was off to the paint shop for a new set of clothes and very nice she looks too. Olle is a Veterinary Surgeon and amateur chef and RT4570 will feature a kitchen at lower deck and be original on the upper deck. If all goes well she will be 'in Service' when you read this. RT3494 which has been partially vandalised will be restored as fully original. Interesting to note that both RT's were sold direct to Sweden by LT but could never at the time get a 'ticket' for passengers on the upper deck as the transport authority felt they would tip over. Hopefully I can convince Olle to spend a little of the winter writing up his story for us all to read.

Well that's all for now folks, move on and read something far more interesting.

# George John Rackham - Promoter of Bus Design Innovation

By Brian Jones



In the graveyard at Little Marlow, Buckinghamshire, the faded gravestone of George John Rackham, his Wife Mildred and Daughter Lorna is to be found.

No acknowledgement is found there of the very significant contribution to the development of British bus design that John Rackham, as he preferred to be known, made during the 1920s and subsequently until his retirement from the manufacturing industry in 1950.

Born in 1885 John Rackham qualified as a draughtsman in 1906 and was employed by Vanguard, a bus operator that also, through a subsidiary, manufactured bus chassis at Walthamstow in North London from September that year.

A year later, aged only 21, he became Chief Draughtsman for the London General Omnibus Co. Ltd. (LGOC) at their Dollis Hill offices. In 1908 following the merger of Vanguard with LGOC, he returned to Walthamstow and joined the team that designed the X-type bus which then evolved into the well-known B-type.

Much later, after retirement, Rackham revealed that the fletched chassis frames<sup>(1)</sup> used for the X and B types had been copied from those of De Dion vehicles already in the LGOC fleet. The willingness to observe, examine and adopt new engineering practices would be a key to success in his future career.

Rackham was also a 'networker', maintaining contact with other prominent early bus industry leaders and thus ensuring that he could seemingly move between companies with ease, usually with the support of former colleagues already in place.



G J Rackham in 1935.

(AEC Gazette)

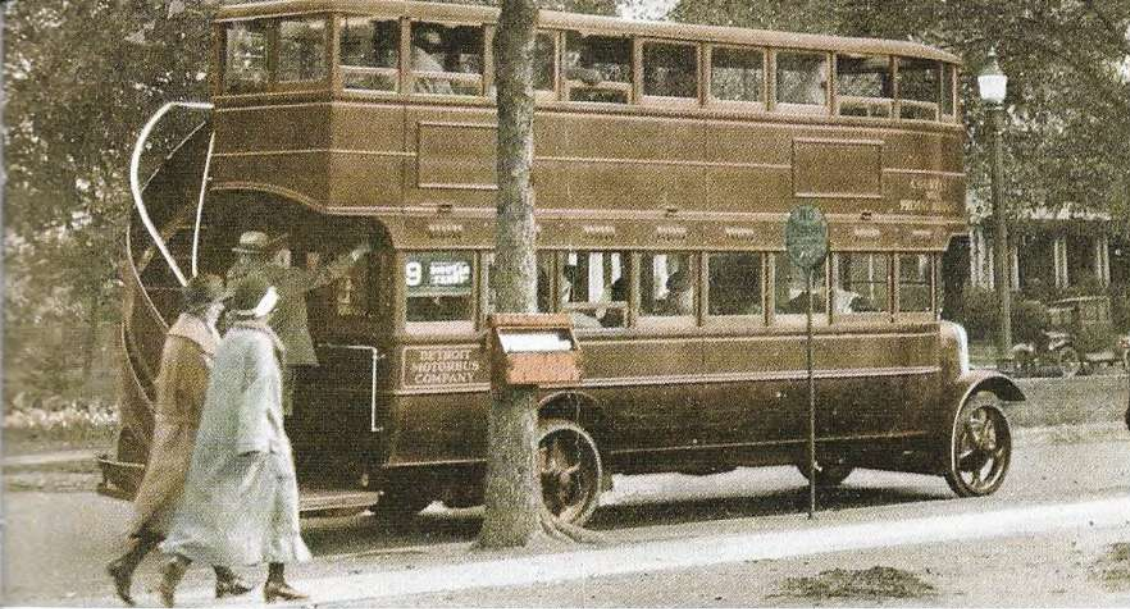
After a spell in Huddersfield with David Brown, then known as gear manufacturers, Rackham returned to the LGOC fold at Walthamstow in 1912 as Chief Draughtsman of the Associated Equipment Company Limited (AEC), part of the Underground Group.

With the advent of war in 1914, bus manufacturing gave way to production of lorries using similar chassis, with Daimler engines<sup>(2)</sup>. Rackham was then employed by the War Office in the later stages of the conflict on tank design and was responsible for leading the group<sup>(3)</sup> that developed the Mark IX tank.

A couple of years after the Armistice, Rackham moved to the United States, initially with the Roadless Patent Holding Company. Previous networking then paid off when George Alan Green, whom Rackham had known since his Vanguard days and who had moved to the American Fifth Avenue Coach Company in 1912, invited him to become Chief Engineer of the newly formed Yellow Truck and Coach Manufacturing Co. of Chicago<sup>(4)</sup> in 1923.

Exposure to current design and practice in the American bus industry would have profound effects on Rackham's future designs, in both the mechanical and aesthetic senses.

During 1923/4 his first Yellow design went into production at the new Chicago factory as the Yellow Z. This featured the Rackham 'trademark' chassis elements of front and rear curved members rising over the axles with a broadened centre section for increased strength. The pressed steel side members were linked by tubular cross-members to resist chassis twisting. A further development in 1924 (the Y type) provided an offset transmission shaft to the rear axle worm gear casing to allow for a lower floor level.



Hand coloured photo of a Yellow Coach Z type operated by the Detroit Motorbus Company. While the bus windows have been lowered, the passing ladies seem to be clothed for bad weather. The tree-mounted unit is a newspaper dispenser.

(From c.1930 edition of the *Timken-Detroit Axle Magazine*)

By 1st May 1926 Rackham had returned across the Atlantic to accept the position of Chief Engineer at Leyland Motors Ltd. Using his Yellow Truck and Coach experience to good effect, he developed a new single deck chassis - the Tiger TSI and double deck Titan TD2 in short order; production commencing in late 1927. A further variation, the three-axle Titanic, was also developed, but few were built.



Leyland works photo taken in March 1927 of the prototype Titan. Note the unfinished bonnet which had just been altered to accommodate a new design of radiator grille from that originally fitted. In cross-section the Leyland low-height body matched the profile shown on a U.S Patent filed by Rackham while working for Yellow Coach in 1924.

At this juncture I would point out that the introduction of the low-floor double deck bus in London was originally the brainchild of LGOC's Chief Engineer in the 1920s Charles Kearns Edwards. His motivation was different from Rackham's. Edwards was anxious to cover the top deck to increase passenger occupancy and thus revenue during adverse weather. He recognised that, to

achieve an acceptable overall height for a double deck bus, he would need a lower deck floor level. While providing an upper deck internal head clearance of only 5ft 8.5in. (174cms) in the NS class design, the lower deck floor was considerably lower than that of the S class which immediately preceded it. Edwards was also a visitor to the USA to study design

trends and his NS chassis reflected that adopted by Rackham, with cranked ends carried over the axles.

Rackham had brought with him an American patent for a 'low-bridge' double deck body design. He persuaded Leyland to purchase British patent rights and this was adopted for early examples of the Titan. The new buses were powered by a six-cylinder overhead valve, reflecting large elements of an American Hall-Scott design<sup>(5)</sup>. Rackham improved this with altered valve layout and provided a seven bearing crankshaft, resulting in impressive smoothness in operation.

In addition to the new bus designs, Rackham also rapidly overhauled Leyland's lorry ranges with new chassis and engines adopted. In overall terms he had provided the Company with a basis for successful production and sales for the following two decades.

The bus industry must have been surprised that, after little more than two years at Leyland, Rackham joined their major competitor AEC on 1st August 1928 as Chief Engineer. Dissatisfaction with the Northern climate and the desire of Lord Ashfield<sup>(6)</sup>, then AEC Chairman, to employ Rackham were both suggested as reasons for the move.

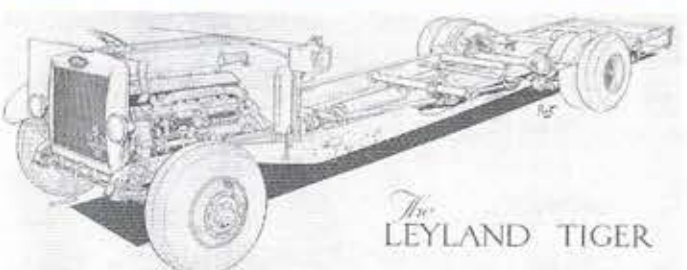
By 29th September 1928, AEC already had a test

engine running that reflected the design elements that Rackham had introduced at Leyland, but with a shorter stroke for higher revving capability. That engine was rapidly offered in AEC's Reliance single-deck range. In the following year Regal single-deck and Regent double-deck bus chassis were in mass production together with a six-wheel three-axle design the Renown, all of which shared similar elements of chassis construction to Rackham's previous Yellow and Leyland units. It should be noted that, unlike Leyland, AEC did not provide bodies on their own chassis, but nevertheless provided guidance for coach-builders.

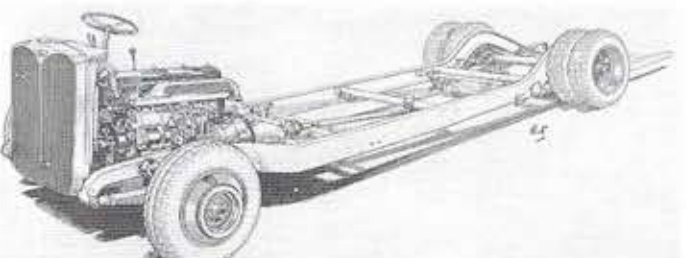




The prototype AEC Regent, fitted with a so-called 'camel-back body' climbing the 1 in 4 test hill (which still exists) at Brooklands, Surrey, as part of a 24 hour endurance test at the Racetrack.  
(Reproduced from the Manufacturer's brochure)



Chassis of a Leyland TSI, as published in the April 1931 edition of Bus and Coach magazine. The earlier design of radiator grille is featured.



1930 drawing of the AEC Regent chassis. The similarity to the Leyland chassis above may readily be seen but a neater solution to the forward end of the front spring mountings (dumb irons) should be noted.

The rate of adoption of Rackham's bus designs by operators was phenomenal, resulting in around 5,000 Leyland and 3,500 AEC vehicles running on services by the end of 1931.

Rackham also oversaw the development of new ranges of AEC commercial vehicles, namely the Monarch, Mandator and Mammoth Major lorries. Those would later form a basis for significant production of military vehicles for the armed forces throughout WWII.

At the same time Rackham turned to what was subsequently regarded as a 'vanity' project, but produced the most futuristic passenger vehicles seen in Britain at that time - the Q types.

With the chassis hidden and the engine mounted almost centrally on the offside, the Q reflected elements of design that had been seen in the Fageol Brothers' Twin Coach products in the USA<sup>(7)</sup>. LGOC bravely introduced the prototype which they had bodied to closely follow Rackham's vision on 5th September 1932. It operated on busy route 11E which linked Liverpool Street and Shepherd's Bush, entirely unsuitable for a single deck central door layout but giving the new bus maximum exposure and publicity. London Transport, as LGOC's

successor, ordered 232 Q buses out of the disappointing production total of 336. Elements of the design and layout of the 24 double deck versions of the Q would prove to be precursors of those adopted for buses three decades later.

Towards the end of the 1930s Rackham further refined the Regent chassis and power unit to produce the Mark III, which formed the basis for the London Transport RT class, mainly produced from 1947 onwards and eventually numbering 4,825 examples.

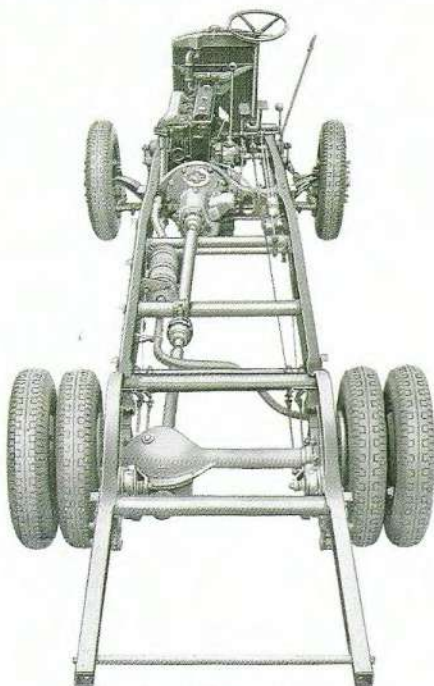
During WWII Rackham was again engaged in tank design for the British Army. Rackham's final major



The AEC Renown six-wheel chassis was utilised by LGOC for their 'LT' class. One of those is seen here in East London post WWII.  
(Photo from the Edward Shepherd collection of the London Bus Museum)

*Dynamo Directly Driven  
by Timing Chain.*

The generator is a 12-volt C.A.V. dynamo of the constant voltage type, positively driven by the timing chain. A 7-in. dynamo is standard equipment, but the engine is so designed that an 8-in. dynamo can be fitted when special brilliant illumination is required.

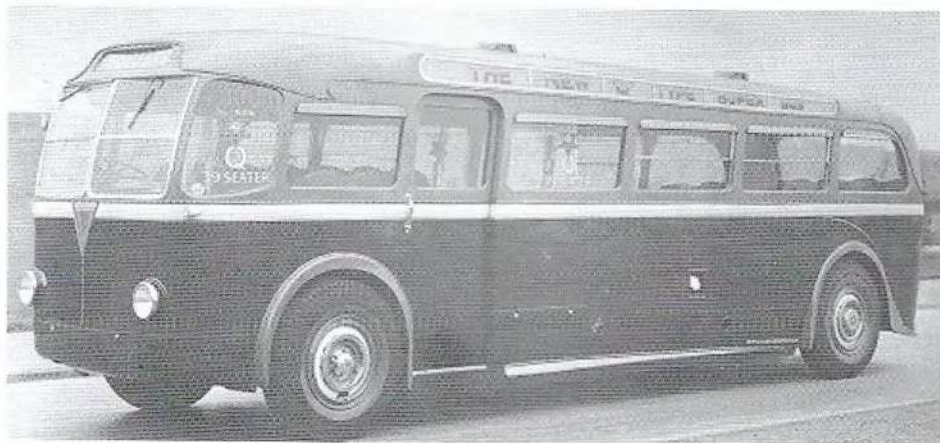


*Semi-plan view illustrating the clean design of the REGENT Chassis and off centring of axle casing.*



15

The AEC Regent chassis, as shown in an original manufacturer's brochure.



This Weymann bodied Q 39-seat coach probably best reflected the overall concept that Rackham had developed for his innovative vehicle.

design was the Regal IV single deck bus chassis, introducing a horizontally mounted underfloor engine layout. While a prototype appeared in 1939, serious development and production only commenced post-War. London Transport adopted the chassis for its RF class, numbering 700 vehicles, which included sightseeing

Positioned outside the Clubhouse at Brooklands, Surrey in October 2015, these buses are almost certainly the last remaining Q vehicles from the former London Transport fleet. In Country Bus livery, on the left, Q55 is owned by the London Transport Museum. Q83 is liveried as a Central Area bus and is owned by the London Bus Museum. Both were built in 1935 and bodied by the Birmingham Railway Carriage and Wagon Company. *(Writer's photo)*

coaches, Green Line coaches and bus versions for both town and country. An interesting feature of the chassis design is the ability to easily slide the engine outside the body line for maintenance. Rackham had no doubt remembered that Twin Coach had introduced a similar feature on their buses, albeit front-engine, in the late 1920s.

In 1948, Rackham was elected to the Board of AEC Ltd.

By 1950 AEC was confronted with management, operational and commercial challenges that resulted in a serious reduction in orders for vehicles. John Rackham took the decision to retire at 65 during the summer, concluding a career which had influenced evolutionary change across the bus and commercial vehicle industries.

**Notes**

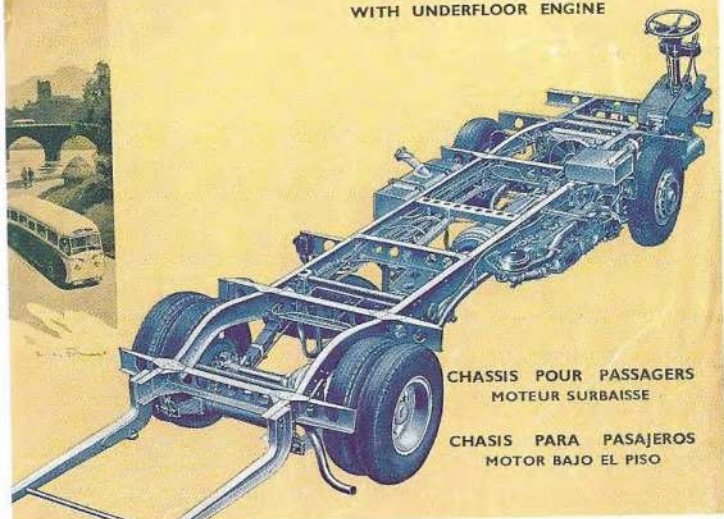
- 1) The use of a wood insert to increase the strength of pressed steel frame members which sandwiched it.
- 2) Daimler engines were also adopted prior to WWI for B-type buses sold to operators outside London.
- 3) That team included Harry Ricardo on engine development and Walter Gordon Wilson, later known for his pre-selector gearbox and transmission innovations.
- 4) The Company was founded by John D Hertz, who had developed the Yellow Cab Company. He would further enhance his fame with the well-known rental car business, which was based on a company started in Chicago by Walter L Jacobs in 1916 with 12 Ford Model Ts that Hertz purchased. A controlling interest in the Yellow Truck and Coach Company was sold in 1925 to General Motors, which purchased the remaining shares in 1943.
- 5) Hall-Scott was founded in 1910 in by Elbert J Hall and Bert C Scott in Berkeley, California, to produce petrol-powered rail cars. They then moved to specialise in high performance light weight engines for both vehicles and aircraft with overhead cams and valves. Bought out by American Car and Foundry in 1925 they then focussed on truck and bus engines. Following various changes in the company structure, the Hall-Scott name eventually vanished in 1960.
- 6) Albert Henry Stanley, 1st Lord Ashfield (1874-1948). Born in Britain, Stanley initially made his name in the USA in management positions in tramway companies in Michigan and New Jersey. He returned to Britain in 1907 joining the Underground Electric Railways Company of London (UERL) and became that company's Managing Director in 1910. Elected MP for Ashton-Under-Lyne in December 1916, he became President of the Board of Trade in the same month, continuing in the position until May 1919 and leaving Parliament in January 1920. Returning to UERL, he then moved to chair its successor, the London Passenger Transport Board from 1933 to 1947.





# REGAL Mark IV

PASSENGER CHASSIS  
WITH UNDERFLOOR ENGINE



CHASSIS POUR PASSAGERS  
MOTEUR SURBAISSE

CHASIS PARA PASAJEROS  
MOTOR BAJO EL PISO

Regal Mark IV chassis.

(Reproduced from a multi-lingual Manufacturer's brochure)

## References

Characters of the Bus Industry - The Omnibus Society (2004) - article by Alan Townsin  
Article "The Men Who Shaped AEC's Destiny" by RA (Bob) Fryars in the October 2015 edition of The A.E.C. Bulletin

**Acknowledgement** - Thanks to David and Vivian Scott for assisting in tracking down the grave site in Little Marlow Cemetery.

## Dates for your diaries - Members' Trips

**Sunday 24th July**

CPPTD Portsmouth, Private Visit to the CPPTD store near Portsmouth and a ride on one of their vintage vehicles. On the return there will be rare opportunity to visit LBM's premises at Northchapel and see some of the vehicles not normally on display at the Museum. Departure at 08.50 from outside the Vickers Bridge entrance to the Museum.

£15.00 per person.

**Sunday 31st July**

Worthing Bus Rally/Running Day

**Saturday 20th August**

Imberbus

**Saturday/Sunday 15th & 16th October**

IoW Beer and Buses Weekend

- Overnight stay.

**Saturday 5th November**

Thames Valley Great Western Omnibus Trust (Colin Billington Collection) Private Visit

Booking forms are available for each trip. Please send an sae for each outing required or email Adrian Palmer, Heathside, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 9YL [akpalmer@...net](mailto:akpalmer@...net) or call 07774 871

## Membership and Volunteering

By Steve Edmonds

We shall be celebrating five years of London Bus Museum on 1st August. Whether this achievement might have been envisaged by those far sighted individuals who established the London bus preservation movement almost 50 years ago, we cannot truly know.

The London Bus Preservation Trust has evolved and grown over the intervening years as new generations of enthusiasts have brought their own contributions. The restoration and preservation of old London buses continues to be at the core of what we do and ensures that we continue to flourish as a working bus museum.

Thousands of pounds worth of work carried out by our valued volunteers over the years has brought us to where we are today. No longer an exclusive club for those few who owned a London bus we have a membership exceeding eight hundred and growing; a dozen more added since Spring Gathering alone.

I am pleased to report that we are about to move to automatically

generated renewals of LBPT memberships, including laser printed membership cards integrated into the computer generated printed notifications. My thanks go to the Membership team for their valiant efforts to move the process into the 21st Century.

As Membership is now to be managed from the centre, Debbie Morris has told me that she is to relinquish her Membership Manager role after six years of keeping the previous manual system going. I am most grateful to her for taking on the job from Steve Hook and for her solid support during a very challenging time, as previously recorded in this column. She has stuck to the task with commitment and determination. Given the demands on my time in staffing the Museum, I could not have done the job without her. Thank you so much Debbie.

We have responded positively to our Arts Council assessors' requirement that we actively promote LBPT membership and volunteering.

We had separate recruitment tables at Spring Gathering for each area, supported by new attractive signage and some written material to distribute. We are in the process of acquiring a London Bus Museum branded gazebo to house this marketing activity for use at both our own and external events.

Attracting the young to volunteering continues to challenge us. The youth recruitment team have produced some good ideas on the Education front and new initiatives are in train to establish closer relationships with local schools. There is also a joint project in train with a charity to engage and incentivise young people in the summer period.

Our reliance purely on volunteer resources places restrictions on activity and lack of time and staff availability is a big disadvantage for us. As we look forward to the next five years more change to how we run things is inevitable, if we are to maintain the excellent progress made so far. Onward and upward!

# Bus Memories of Uxbridge

By Peter Goodfellow (KK 46204)

I was born in March 1939 and can only remember bits of the war before I was evacuated. Ten years later I can remember fully that I had developed a great interest in buses, so much so that I declared then that I wanted to be a bus driver when I grew up. Even at a younger age I had Dinky Toy STL models and played with them and had great fun.

I used to live at Iver Heath so my local bus was the 457 and when I was young, once a week Mum took me to see my grandparents at Hillingdon via Uxbridge and onto the 607 trolleybus. I remember those days vividly and always used to sit on the front left hand seat downstairs so that I could watch the driver. The earliest type of buses I can recall on the 457 were the old lean-back STLs and the newer STLs followed by the RTs when they were brand new and their new fresh smell was intoxicating. Later, we had the 459 that used to run past our door; these were RFs but with conductors. In the opposite direction to Uxbridge were Slough and Windsor, other places we used to travel to, especially Windsor. The Thames Valley Bristol Ks used to operate out of both towns.

Looking back I wished dearly that I had had a camera in those days, even a Brownie Box would have captured some of those magical moments on the buses. When I was ten I, along with several of my friends, used to purchase all the latest editions of the Ian Allan bus books from a newsagent in the Underground station foyer. Talk about spoilt for choice, apart from the trolleybuses there were Green Lines coming through and they stopped in the front forecourt of the station (the trolleybuses stopped in the main road) but all other buses terminated/commenced their journeys in the bus station at the back of the tube station. Some of the buses I have

seen there were STs, STLs (some front entrance), a variety of Ts (including 7T7s, 10T10s, 11T11s, 14T12s and 15T13s), there were Scooter LTs, Qs, RTs (some Craven) and RFs. A real melting pot of red and green buses from UX, WR, HE, GR, LS, SA, WA and of course not forgetting the trolleybuses from HL. These buses covered routes 223, 224, 457, 458, 459, 309, 321, 351, 347, 803, 455 and no doubt others that I have forgotten. At the Slough/Windsor end we had buses from AV and ST (Routes 81 and 441).

My memories of this era (late 40s/early to mid-50s) will never fade but it would have been nice to capture some of those splendid sights on film. Lo and behold, along comes James Whiting's class album 'London's 1950s Buses' and in particular John A Gray's article on 'Trips to Uxbridge' which show nine photos by Peter Grace and Alan B Cross reviving a lot of what I had seen, fantastic.

I never became a bus driver; my career was with BT (GPO). However, I was lucky enough to stumble upon the London Bus Museum (LBPT) and have carried out volunteer duties there for the past 16 years. I have done a mix of mainly restoration work and some driving, ending up driving most of the Museum's buses at one time or another at events and in service and have also driven many private owners' buses. One of my greatest delights was driving an RTL on the 457 on a Slough Running Day from Windsor to Uxbridge and actually terminating in UX bus station; marvellous.

If anyone reading this short piece has any photos of those days in Uxbridge and is willing to show me some of them that would be great. My email address is (pakt@btinternet.com).



Left: Old London buses seldom fade away but often find further employment all over the world. This one, however, has stayed at home and if it had only been facing the opposite direction could have joined the rehearsal for Trooping the Colour outside Buckingham Palace on 24th May, this year. (MHCB)

Below: This former London Transport Metrobus, another bus which has lost its roof, finds itself on the promenade at Scarborough, the beach enveloped in thick North Sea mist on 12th April this year. (MHCB)



# Bus Spotting Memories

By Robert Hughes

(Photographs by the Author)

After reading your article 'From the Editor' in the Spring edition of the magazine it sent my grey matter into over drive.

I was born 1940 in London and as a young boy travelled a lot on the red buses. We lived on a busy bus route, the 118 (Clapham Common to Raynes Park), and my bedroom overlooked the bus stop which was a good spotting place.

Towards the end of the war I was surprised to ride on a green bus, obviously a borrowed one, and sit on wooden seats.



The view from Robert's bedroom.

I went through a period of collecting car registration numbers and strangely enough one number which always has been on my mind CXX 207 which was STL1454 a regular on the 118.

At the age of eleven I went to secondary school which meant a bus ride to school, walking up to Clapham South and catching the 155,181 or 88 buses to Clapham North. Two of these routes were run from Clapham bus garage which had just stopped running trams and were full of new buses, the RTL.

The school was situated next to the London to Kent railway line. With a number of boys being train spotters, and twice a day in certain classes, heads would turn towards the window as the 'Golden Arrow' went past in order to see what loco was pulling the train.

One boy, however, every dinner time went up to the main road with his note pad and come back to sit down with his pad and small book and underline numbers, so I had to find out what it was.

It was of course the well known ABC series, not about locomotives but about London Transport buses and

coaches. I then went and bought one when I next got enough pocket money and became hooked.

As well as learning about RTs and RTLs I found out about other classes and as well as getting the local buses I started at weekends to go 'up town' and collect some new numbers. On one occasion I stood on a island by Trafalgar Square and jotted down as many buses I could, not only the stock number but also the reg. numbers. On one occasion went I got home and started to underline the ABC I found I had 'copped' RTL11. I was so pleased.

My grandfather was interested in what I did and bought me two mapping pens one red ink and one green ink to make the book look more interesting, although the only green buses were the RFs which I saw the most on Green Line routes in town.

Later I got a bike and started to ride in to the country area and started spotting green buses and seeing RLH and GSs.

Soon after I got the 'Buses Illustrated' magazine regularly and in my late teens I joined the PSV Society and with information about garage changes, overhauls, body changes and sale of buses when time expired, started a new and long interest in London buses.

Although I moved out of London in 1966 to Norfolk I did not miss the London bus as in Kings Lynn where I first moved to, as there were ex RTLs working for a local firm as well as the odd RT now and again. Even later in life I still managed to find a London bus somewhere. My first trip abroad was to Spain where, in Cartagena, I found ex-RT2473 advertising Philips products and in Paris I have a photo of me in the French transport museum, now closed, next to RT2657 which is now back in the UK at Brooklands.

On a visit to New Zealand I found an RT at a tram museum in the North Island; my wife could not believe it!

I have not bothered with the modern bus since the demise of the DMS but have renewed my London visits with a ride on a 'Borismaster' and even jot down their numbers when I see or photograph them. And, of course, as member of the LBPT and the London Transport Museum I still keep my finger on the pulse.



Godstone garage c.1968 with an RML working the 410 alongside a Green Line RF. Note the two sensibly dressed ladies on the far left for whom the Swinging Sixties seem to have passed by, and the London Transport employee setting off home, one assumes, on his motor scooter.

# Reminiscences

By John Birnie

Having just reached the age of 60, I have been thinking back over my early life and what sparked my interest in London buses.

I was born in Kingsbury, North West London. My family had strong railway connections, my father working at St. Pancras and later Euston, and my mother was the daughter of the Station Master at Hendon (A P Wilson), so you would perhaps expect my interest to be in trains, but in my formative years it was most definitely buses, and specifically London buses. I think this was because to my young eyes their red paint and multitude of advertisements meant they were so colourful. This was really how I got interested in buses. I was probably about six years old at the time. I started 'spotting' the advertisements, then noticed that there were numbers and letters on the sides of the buses which I then learnt translated into garage codes, fleet and running numbers.

We lived at Kingsbury Green. Three routes passed the end of our road, the 52, 83 and 183. The 52 was operated by RTLs from AC (Willesden) garage with the occasional interloper from GM (Gillingham Street). I believe GM buses only came this far north if the crew knew the route north of Willesden. The 83 was operated by RTs out of ON (Alperton) and the 183 by RTs out of the long since defunct AE (Hendon).

As we did not have a car, the bus was the means of transport to wherever we wanted to go, at least for the start of the journey. My father wore a moustache, and the front air vents on the upper and lower saloons of the RTs and RTLs looked like moustaches to me, so I became familiar with many individual vehicles by the often unique slight variations in those vents. I'm ashamed to say I much preferred the dirty ones or the ones the conductor had stuffed full of newspaper to stop the draught!

Our house was on Buck Lane, about 100 yards up from the junction with Kingsbury Road and Church Lane. Buck Lane itself was not actually on a bus route, but both the 52 and 83 sometimes terminated short at Kingsbury Green and the crews used Buck Lane as a turning point. As this was a steep hill, the sight and sound of RTs and RTLs roaring up the hill was something to behold. However, it was not without its hazards. I recall coming home from school one day in the dreadful winter of 1963 to find an RTL resting against our front garden wall! (Those were the days when you could safely let your children walk home from school alone...). The bus had ground to a halt attempting to get up the steep hill and the driver had been unable to stop it from sliding backwards down the hill. Fortunately nobody was hurt. Opposite our house there was a very wide junction with a road called High Meadow Crescent, and drivers sometimes did U-turns there. This was also not without its hazards. One RT driver lived to regret his attempt to do a U-turn on another icy and snowy day when the bus

became stuck on the crown of High Meadow Crescent and started sliding sideways down the hill towards a block of flats! The driver eventually regained control with the assistance of another crew, but not before his conductor had abandoned ship, letting him know his feelings about the manoeuvre beforehand! Both of these turns are now impossible because barriers have been erected at both ends of Buck Lane preventing large vehicles from entering without permission.

Many of the drivers knew me by sight, as I often used to sit on the corner of Buck Lane and Kingsbury Road with my notebooks scribbling down notes on every bus that passed. If I was lucky and the bus had to stop at the traffic lights the drivers would often give me a wave, but one incident I remember with particular fondness involved my mother as well. As I mentioned previously she was the daughter of the Station Master at Hendon. In



A scene at Golders Green in 1961.

(MHCB)

those days British Railways used to operate its own parcel delivery service, and I believe some of the drivers were based at Hendon, and so got to know my mother. A few of the drivers subsequently left the railway and went on to become bus drivers. At least one was based at Hendon and used to work on the 183. I remember one day we had been shopping in Kingsbury, and when the 183 arrived it was being driven by one of the drivers who knew mum. He obviously recognised us and took pity on mum, who would have been laden with shopping and had me in tow. The normal route of the 183 was to go straight along Kingsbury Road and turn right at The Hyde onto Edgware Road. Not on this day. We reached the junction with Buck Lane and promptly turned left and stopped outside our house! A somewhat bemused conductor said "Does my driver know you?" to which mum somewhat sheepishly replied "Yes ...".

Perhaps these are just the meanderings of an old man, but I do believe that whilst there was hardship, and service quality on the buses left a lot to be desired at times, life was better in so many ways back then.

## Letter

Having just told Chris Heaps at the Christmas buffet that I had been a TPO driver at K imagine my surprise to get home and find that LBM Magazine Issue 18 containing an article by the late Brian Bunker about the crew route 71 which I started on during 1975. John Parkin photographed me driving RT4210 during the last few months of RT operation, working duty twelve in the attached picture. Although the destination shown is Leatherhead this three bus job did not work south of Kingston unless the crew were asked to cover a staff cut south of Kingston.

The gremlins seem to have crept in on page eight of Brian's article as the two upper pictures were c.1976 with RT4286 seemingly photographed in front of the fuel tanks at LH eight years after the 71 replaced the 65 to Leatherhead on 30th November 1968. The BL class arrived at K during 1976 commencing on route 216 and many of the older drivers swapped duties to work on RFs on routes 218 and 219. I was type trained on BL6 in case I had to work a staff bus or the deckers were NBA.

The northern section of route 71 was diverted over Richmond Hill to replace Continental Pioneer's route 235 and the swingers between Ham and Richmond ceased about this time making the timetable posters' job somewhat easier. One morning a man posting timetables stopped me in

Dukes Avenue and asked which way the route went. I explained that during the off peak buses went via Ashburnham Road and Broughton Avenue but during the morning peak the swingers worked clockwise via Ham Street and Lock Road but in the evening peak they worked anticlockwise and on Sundays the OPO buses worked via Riverside Drive because these vehicles could not turn right at Sandy Lane due to the overhang. As well as this there was a stand in Beaufort Road for route 65 buses serving the British Aerospace factory and route 71 school workings plus late running terminating vehicles. He exclaimed that it was worse than B\*\*\*\*y Oxford Street and walked off.

This northern section is now numbered 371 because Surrey County Council were using number 471 for a TGM route between Kingston and Woking at the time of truncation. The section between Hook and Leatherhead is now covered by route 465 leaving what is left of the 71 to run from Kingston to Chessington World of Adventures, albeit via Penrhyn Road and Copt Gilders. The 71 is rather unique as the night service is provided by an extension of route 65 thus running over its post-1968 route with minor



Graham Burnell has charge of RT4210 on its way to Leatherhead just before the RTs were replaced. (John Parkin)

differences. The number 71 has a long association with Kingston being one of the early tram routes but had little in common with the motor bus route other than the four year Saturday extension during the sixties to Sunbury where both routes would have run 'along the walls' between Kingston and Hampton Court. The PVR in 1975 was for fourteen vehicles whereas the current shortened version is for thirteen.

There was a curtailment at Surbiton Station due to the 'Petersham Hole' and then another at Chessington Fox and Hounds due to SCC reductions but these are covered in Ian Armstrong's excellent 'London Bus Routes' website.

Graham Burnell (NS)

## Need a new uniform? We have one just for you.

You will soon be seeing our volunteer Drivers, Conductors and Conductresses wearing a smart new uniform, when operating our vehicles. The jackets, modelled here by Clippie Sheila Helliar-Symons, are closely similar to the LT jackets worn in the 1950s/60s. If any member would like to purchase one for their own use, they are available in sizes 38in. to 50in. (in two inch steps) and will cost LBPT members £39 each (collected from the Museum), in order to cover costs. They will be available with either dark blue collars and cuffs (Central area), or with green collars and cuffs (Country area) and you can

purchase either, or both at this price. Each jacket will have three Griffin buttons and the Museum has commissioned a new supply of these buttons from the original manufacturer. Buttons can be purchased separately for £2 each.

These jackets will also be offered to vehicle owners and other enthusiasts outside the LBPT in due course, but will be sold to them at an higher price to show a profit.

If you are interested please contact Robin Helliar-Symons in the first instance.

(RDHSymons@gmail.com;  
01628 486).



# In the Beginning ...

By Mike Beamish

Mike Beamish tells a tale of his earliest days of involvement with the London Transport Museum

When recently I was able to see the progress being made on the re-construction of NS174 I became more than ever aware of the wow factor exhibit that it will eventually turn out to be.

This called to mind a time, now over four decades ago, when I was able to sample a ride on the LT Museum's final form example NS1995.

In the spring of 1973 we took the 'beast' to Greenwich Carnival, probably its first real outing for many a year. This was not, however, before it had been treated to probably its first re-paint since being withdrawn from service and set aside in around 1937. Nowadays we are used to seeing NS1995 out on jaunts, some quite long distance but it had rarely turned a wheel whilst at Clapham so it was, for me, a novel experience.



NS1995 Showing the works.

(Mike Beamish)



How had I come by that chance you may ask? - well, in late 1972 I had been appointed to a role that would see me assisting with LT's interests in the wake of the sad decision to close the Museum of British Transport. I was initially charged with the task (some task!) to catalogue everything related to London Transport and its predecessors ranging from full-sized vehicles to the smallest documents as these would all have to be officially claimed back following the closure. This eventually came several years after the dissolution of the British Transport Commission which had set it up.

To cut a long and involved story short - as history records, via abortive discussions concerning the old Chiswick Tram Depot and part of Greenwich Power Station an agreement was reached with His Grace the Duke of Northumberland to set up 'The London Transport Collection' (for it was not intended then to be seen as a museum). It was destined to remain there until 1978.

This saw me wearing yet another hat, as I was thrown in to the deep end, helping and arranging vehicle and other exhibit movements to the new location, assisting with research, and designing and preparing interpretive materials - oh! and I nearly forgot- getting very wet and dirty unearthing a couple of horse trams, eventually rescuing one. There was also a Metropolitan Railway coach body found in Wiltshire, much more recently restored as No.353 and taking part in the Underground 150 Years celebrations in 2013 but I did not get involved with that at all.

Major alterations for the internal displays were carried out by contractors Beck & Pollitzer and LT Engineering and Works & Building departments.

One of the last and most important of the smaller exhibits to be move from SW4 to what is now TW8 was the superbly crafted set of scale ( I guess about 1/20th) model buses which I think must have been created by Chiswick apprentices in the 1920s and 1930s. There were three horse-buses, a B,K,S,NS (open top), NS (covered top), LT and ST, and, finally, an STL.

I set myself the task of ensuring that this was done safely. Consultations with senior Rolling Stock management had led me to believe that each model had had its own dedicated case but, try as I did, these could not be found at Clapham. Careful packing was therefore the order of the day. In 1973 bubble-wrap and polystyrene pellets were things of the future, so I resorted to corrugated cardboard, blankets and tissue paper. Thankfully with the help of the Central Distribution Service they all got there safely.

Left Before coming to rest in the park NS1995 joined a parade. It was a glorious hot day but this created problems for the old girl. Fuel was evaporating and causing regular stalls. Chiswick's John Scott and Lionel Moss were in charge of the driving and had to hand-crank to re-start probably a dozen times! Here John goes through the motions preparing to leave while Lionel and a member of the public who said he remembered travelling on the type, look on.

(Mike Beamish)



One thing I did do was to quite unofficially take my own photographs of each model but somehow managed to underexpose my endeavours. I have, though, managed to obtain acceptable views of two shots of the open-top NS. Numbered as NS1927, presumably the year it was made, this model is, truly for us, the shape of things to come, all in perfect miniature



All that remained, as this was only a week or so before the opening, was for me to set the models out on showcase display, and therein lies a postscript!

I spent most of an afternoon, having prepared captioning and other accompanying materials, setting out the models in a form of timeline. I was still there at about five o'clock and was working on the horse buses which I had left to last as they were decidedly more fiddly with their horses, harness and perfect model figures as dressed passengers which had to be placed inside and outside the models. At this time two smartly dressed men came in and started wandering amongst and looking at the vehicle exhibits. I called out advising that the exhibition was not yet open to the public and politely asked them to leave. They both approached me, and one, gesturing towards the other, said rather sternly, "This is the Duke of Northumberland"

Oh! dear Michael what did you just say?

.....and so ended the day when I told off a member of the aristocracy for trespassing on his own property - all rather embarrassing at the time but after more than forty years I can now see the funny side of it! I recall it all ended OK, however, for when I was introduced to him at the end of the opening ceremony the Rt. Hon Hugh Algernon Percy, 10th Duke, shook my hand and gave a wry smile, perhaps thinking 'I know you don't! - we've met before.'

Left: The two models of NSs in original open top solid tyre condition which Mike thinks must have been created by apprentices at Chiswick in LGOC days.

Right: Staines garage in 1977 with a less than immaculate RML2334 on learner duty and almost new Duple-bodied AEC Reliance RB65 representing the new era in Green Line coaches. (MHC B)



Staines Running Day 8th May 2016.

Below left: RLH48 having just negotiated Chertsey Lane low bridge (Graham Jones)

Below right: TD95 at Horton. (Richard Jones)





**HRH Prince Michael of Kent, patron of the Transport Trust presented their awards on 6th June in the Club Room at Brooklands. Following the ceremony he drove our D142 accompanied by Roger Stagg from the Clubhouse to the Museum. Later, with the Chairman and several Trustees, he took a comprehensive tour of our exhibits and the workshop. More photographs and details of the Royal visit will appear in the next issue. (Peter Zabek)**