



LONDON BUS MUSEUM MAGAZINE



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

RML3 entering the
Brooklands site at the
Campbell Gate on 25th
June 2017.

(MHCb)



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

ITEMS FOR THE MAGAZINE

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

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From the Editor

In a sense the London bus has two faces. There is the one the visitors from far and wide love, sitting high up on the top deck of a big double decker as it passes Trafalgar Square, Westminster Abbey, ambles down Oxford Street - at least for now, we'll have to see what Crossrail brings - and a dozen other world renowned locations. Then there is the other face, the one, as reading members' reminiscences brings home, which is largely about suburbia. I guess we all love the front seat of a double

decker, but quite often the suburban bus is, or certainly was in the brief Merlin/Swift era, let alone the vastly longer Dart era, a single decker. The suburbs inevitably lack the glamour of the City and West End, but it is here where much of the London bus fleet has gone about its business. And whilst for various reasons, not least congestion, patronage is declining in central London, out in the suburbs it is on the increase, which is not to say congestion is unknown here.



RT3142 takes a breather from working the 403 Express at Chelsham garage, 1957.

Back in the days of the Country Area this was in some ways a misnomer for much of the business of the green bus was conducted in the suburbs too, and whilst some routes penetrated deep into the countryside, just as many popped out into the rural Home Counties, quickly popped back in again, popped briefly back out again, and then retired to complete their journey in suburbia whence it has begun. The routes which served my home town, Croydon, were good examples of this, and such a situation was repeated around Kingston, Windsor, Watford, St. Albans and elsewhere. Very little is left of this network in Croydon, the Country Area one I knew best and travelled on the most, the 403, is now purely a red bus route, the present day 414, a variation of the 14, bears no relation to that which extended deep into Sussex and enabled one to change into one of those beautiful Southdown PD2s and continue all the way to the Sussex coast. No point in wishing for a world which has gone, for it was never fixed in time, but think of those weekend, holiday time routes, which probably very few members now can actively recall, back in the open top double deck era, when Londoners could board a bus in the West End and, regardless of the vagaries of the English weather, hardy souls that they were, venture 30 miles or more deep into the countryside of Essex, Hertfordshire, Middlesex, Berkshire, Surrey, Sussex and Kent.

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Atop the North Downs, deep in the Surrey countryside, RCL2240 heads northwards towards Chelsham and suburbia, June 1977.

Right: RT1025 in Windsor town centre, in the summer of 1960.



Below: West Croydon bus station in 2017, complete with a bright red 403. (all MHCb)



Dates for your diaries - Members' Trips

Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th October
loW Beer and Buses Weekend

Saturday 18th November
Kempton Park Narrow Gauge Railway

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 or call 07774 871

From the Workshop

By Roger Stagg

By the time this edition falls on your doorstep we should be experiencing an Indian Summer, perhaps.

Mrs Stagg, better known by longer term members as Aunty Dawn, has been ill for the past two months but as I type this in mid-August she is about to go in for what we all hope is the final time before getting the whip out again and it will be back to salad for dinner and no cakes in the Wednesday lunch box. These problems have

caused me to not be able to spend as much time at LBM as would be usual but I was lucky enough to meet Sharon's husband when we were both purchasing our nurses' uniforms from the Guildford branch of Ann Summers. Us men have such crosses to bear when our dear lady wives eventually admit they are unwell.

Short words only then for this issue and no doubt borne out by photographs our Editor will have taken on his regular visit.

NS174 is slowly getting its upper deck, it would happen quicker if John H was not called away for something else constantly. The challenge is always "We thought of asking you if you could do this but realise it's just too complicated" - works every time. RF19 now has all its windows, I note seat frames being painted ready for bolting down. The panelling is being prepped and etch primed.

The Canteen Trailer is now complete with seats and tables in the eating and drinking end, Attention has now turned to the kitchen - "John, we thought of asking ---".

Q83 is now prep completed and two broken windows have now been replaced and the sliding door gear overhauled. The step needs rebuilding - "John, we thought ---". Sharon and Evette have removed half a tonne of dust from inside and with the RTL now moved away it will go on road test in a few days, then for painting. The inside could do with a few man or woman days of TLC, any volunteers?

The replacement engine rebuild for RF395 is progressing and the block is about to go away for new liners to be pressed in.

Not without difficulty those on the mechanical side are just about keeping their heads above water. The newer electronic buses such as TAI, WVLI and the Dart tax our



Sharon Burton, Gerry Job and Roger Stagg see the funny side. (MHCB)



Michael Waterman making time for a quick 'cuppa'. (MHCB)



John Hutchinson working on the NS upper deck. (MHCB)

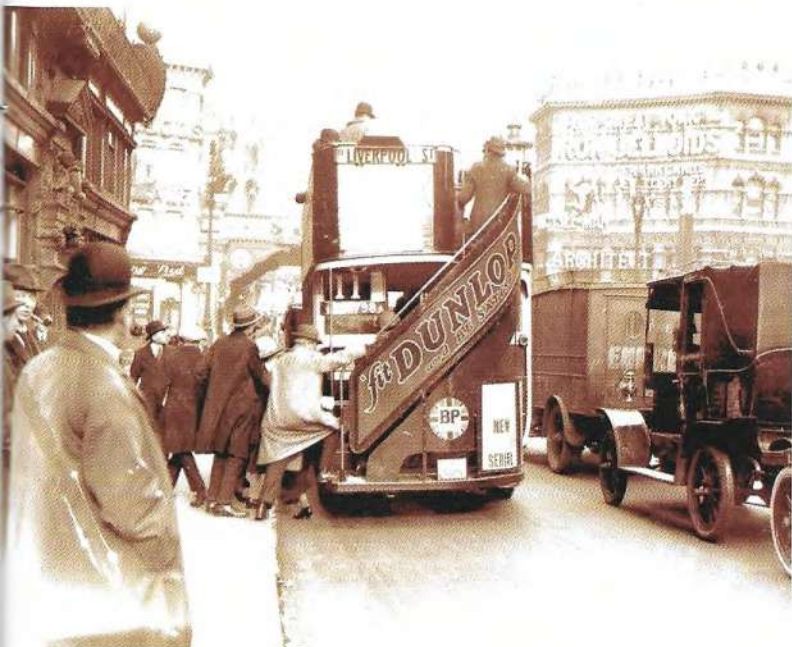
older brains, more accustomed to nice simple RTs.

Thanks to ALL the volunteers who make this possible. We don't win races but we get there and we enjoy ourselves.

A few weeks ago I was caught in the canteen reading the magazine from my local Model Engineering Society (I was assured that Razzle was the correct name). It was noted and mentioned that a number of the articles were not about building 1/12 full size railway engines but totally unrelated subjects of general interest. Accordingly I will give you a task for the Xmas issue and see the reaction. Hopefully it will push some of you into writing about something yourself and give our Editor some more text to fill the areas between the photographs. Do remember however that we do have lady members.



The NS upper deck making progress will one day look like below (although we can't guarantee the bowler hat).
(Above: MHC.B. Below: Collection)



Top and above : The canteen trailer with Keith Hales and David Erlam testing the seats.
(MHC.B)

John Birnie's Reminiscences

I spent my formative years living in Kingsbury Green, North West London. My father worked on the railway, as did my grandfather on my mother's side. Having worked as Station Master at Hendon for a number of years, he moved to Leighton Buzzard in Bedfordshire. We used to visit my grandparents regularly, our usual route being to catch one of Hendon's (AE) RTs on the 183 to Kenton station (more of which later). From there we would board the local stopping train (Dad called it "The Rattler" which ran between Euston (or Broad Street) and Watford Junction and connected with trains to Leighton Buzzard at Harrow & Wealdstone, which in those days still bore the scars of the dreadful disaster there. This worked very well as long as the local train wasn't late, as there was usually enough time to change platforms at Harrow. You could (and still can) see the West Coast Main Line from the platforms at Kenton, which was something of a mixed blessing as there is nothing more frustrating than seeing a train or bus you know you want to catch speeding past you and you can't do anything about it.... I lost count of the number of times Dad would curse saying "That's our b****y train!" whilst we were standing on the platform waiting for the slow train. It was on one of these trips that we passed the train involved in the Great Train Robbery berthed in the platform at Cheddington and being thoroughly examined by the police.

It was usually dark by the time we were coming home, and this led to something which has puzzled me ever since. The RTs on the 183 used to sound quite different in the lower saloon at night than they did during the day. There was a distinct whine when the driver accelerated which was not present in daylight hours. I remember telling my parents the bus "had its night engine on" on several occasions. Why standard LT RTs should sound different to a child at night, I have no idea, but they did. If anyone can offer an explanation, I would be most interested to hear it.

Kenton station ticket office holds a special affection for me. I used to stand with my parents whilst they got the tickets, but I could never see over the counter to observe what was happening, or what the clerk was doing. Then one day I could just see over the counter. That was the day I realised I was growing up. Little did I know that nearly 60 years later I would be working in a station ticket office doing pretty much the same job as the clerk was doing that day.

We occasionally used to visit my aunt in Bexhill-on-Sea. I liked this trip because we were going through parts of London which we didn't usually visit. It was usually early morning and we used to catch a 52 from the top of Church Lane and go to Victoria to get a train to Bexhill. RTLs from Willesden (AC) were the usual fare, but occasionally Gillingham Street (GM) buses made an appearance, and I vaguely recollect Edgware (EW) having a Sunday allocation of RTs too.

We were making our way to the bus stop one day when we saw the 52 approaching. We started



A Park Royal bodied Sunbeam trolleybus of 1946 on a very wintry seafront at St.Leonards, c1950. (Collection)

to hurry up, but whether the driver didn't see us or chose to ignore us, I don't know (Dad chose to adopt the latter opinion!) but the result was he sped past and we missed the bus. Having waited for the next one we got as far as Ladbroke Grove only to overtake the bus which had passed us parked at the side of the road in a sorry state. There had been some sort of altercation with a van carrying pipes and the bus had come off very much the worse, witness the amount of coolant all over the road! It was clearly suffering from a punctured radiator. "Serves him right!" chortled Dad.

Between Kingsbury Green and Roe Green there was an establishment which some would regard as the nemesis of public transport at the time. It was a petrol station and second - hand car dealership called Kingsbury Motors (Now defunct). However, at the back of the site they operated a 'sideline'. They hired out vehicles to film and TV companies for use as 'action vehicles'. They had two BMC ambulances (Used in the 'Carry On' films amongst others, I think), a Dennis fire engine, a dustcart, various white saloon cars made to look like police cars,



Golders Green in 1958 with, from left to right RTLs 1213 and 1426, and RT194. (MHC)



RT280 at South Harrow station on 14th July 1972.

(John Capel)

and yes, buses too. I remember two RTLs in the yard, but this later dwindled to one. As children we were not allowed on the site, of course, but I was never much interested in these buses anyway because they always looked very tatty to me. Parked outside in all weathers and with long periods of inactivity between 'jobs' (as is often the case in showbusiness!) they suffered and were only spruced up (on the outside at least) when a job was in the offing.

I'm not sure, but I think the bus used in the famous Michael Crawford BBC TV 'Some Mothers Do 'Ave Em' stunt where Crawford as 'Frank Spencer' is on roller skates hanging on to the pole on the platform whilst fiddling for change in his pocket to give to the conductor came from there.

Kingsbury Motors was used a lot by film and TV production companies. I believe 'John Steed's Bentley as used in 'The Avengers' was stored there, but my favourite was a white Rolls-Royce (registered 3 KMH) which was in countless TV shows. It did spoil the suspense somewhat when watching a car chase at home on TV you knew that both the 'chaser' and the 'chased' vehicles were actually parked just around the corner...

My best friend was Kenneth Hancock, and we used to go all over London on the bus together. One day we had decided to go to Ealing. I've no idea why, but it was the sort of thing we used to do. By this time the 83, another of our local routes, had been converted to RMs operating out of Alperton (ON) garage. We waited for the bus, again at the top of Church Lane, but as soon as it came around the corner we spotted something amiss. At this point my memory fails me slightly. I can't remember if it was RM1136 or RM1163. I think it was the latter so I will assume it was. In those days LT had adopted the practice of mounting the front number plate underneath the radiator grille, something which I thought spoiled the look. This was a case in point, but they had made a mistake. The registration plate should have read 163 CLT but they had transposed the numbers and letters making it read CLT 163. Naturally, as public spirited citizens, we couldn't possibly let such a heinous crime go unreported (!), so when the bus terminated at Ealing Broadway we made a beeline for the nearest bus inspector.

"You haven't been reading one of those ABC book things, have you?" was his immediate response, to which we (honestly) replied "No!". After several laps of the

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vehicle, accompanied by us, and after much head scratching (the rear number plate was correct), he made a phone call and the bus was taken out of service, presumably being driven back to Alperton garage under 'trade plates'. We decided that was enough detective work for the afternoon and got on another bus to go home.

In those days you could board the bus before it actually went into service, of course, so we went and sat in the front seats and discussed at length our afternoon's exploits, which the crew could hear us doing. They came and sat alongside us and started to ask us questions, the first of which being "You haven't been reading one of those ABC book things, have you.....?" I think the driver in particular was more interested in establishing that it wasn't the bus he was driving that had committed the offence!

A couple of weeks later I saw the bus concerned. They had remedied the problem by cutting the number plate

in half and remounting it with the numbers and letters in the correct order, albeit with a gap between them. Not sure if that was strictly legal, either!

Ahhhh.....childhood memories!



An RT at Kingsbury Green on route 52 to Mill Hill Broadway. John Birnie lived nearby in Buck Lane. John thinks the RT may have been a substitution, as by 1970 route 52 had gone over to RMs.

(John Birnie collection)



Golders Green 1999, two Sovereign single deckers on route 183 with a Routemaster on route 13 beyond.

(MHCb)

Buses and Me

By Keith Hales

Growing up in Highbury in the immediate post-war years, the red buses attracted me in an otherwise grey, utilitarian world. My family used the 30 to travel to grandparents in Hackney, and I could tell it was approaching round the corner by the deeper engine note of the pre-war RTs used on that route. In Hackney, I observed the single-deck LTs on the 208 from a first floor window just off Urswick Road. There were the rugged TDs on the 236, and shiny new RFs on the 212 from Finsbury Park to Muswell Hill. I recall the trams on the 35, including the exciting dive into the Kingsway subway from Theobalds Road, sitting in the upstairs front seat. Later I used various routes along Upper Street to my secondary school at the Angel, including trolleybuses 609 and 679, and the 611 up Highgate Hill to Hampstead Heath, and the 609 all the way through Finchley to Whetstone to reach the school playing fields once a week. Sometimes we'd add to our fare allowances to take the Kings Cross suburban steam trains (hailed by the N2 class) back to town.

mainly Bristols used by the nationalised Tilling Group, such as Western National in Cornwall, the double deckers of the lowbridge type with the upper-deck side gangway. I also recall the yellow Bournemouth trolleybuses, including the turntable at Christchurch terminus.



A former LNER N2 0-6-2T on Holloway bank with a suburban quad-art train), 8th February 1958. (MHCB)

Top: As a contrast from RTs, a Western National Bristol KSW6B outside St. Austell station in Cornwall. (Collection)

Above: A pre-war Bournemouth Corporation Sunbeam in Bournemouth Square c. 1955. (Collection)

Highbury and Islington had two separate stations, one for the North London Line, then using Oerlikon stock, and the tube station, with spiral stairs or an ancient wooden lift, on the Northern City line using standard stock at the time. My paternal grandfather had been a train driver on the original full-sized trains on the line, before he died on the Somme during WW I. It was then part of the Metropolitan Railway, and his name is on the war memorial near platform 5 at Baker Street station.

From the age of 11 I became a bus spotter, with Ian Allan's ABC of London Buses. Using a child's Red Rover, price 2/6d, we could travel all over London to visit garages, and in doing so learned the geography of London. We even gained unauthorised access to Chiswick Works via a laundry and disused bridge over the North London Line.

I rode on three of the four prototype Routemasters; missed RM2 as it had already broken down on the 406 route from Kingston by the time I got there!

On holidays around the UK, I rode on other buses,

These experiences only reinforced my opinion that London had the best buses! I was extremely disappointed when LT removed all rear wheel covers around 1970. This was always a distinguishing London feature, compared to the oily cavities of provincial buses - in my limited experience, only Devon General shared this feature.

Coaches were almost exclusively Bedford OBs, including the occasional seaside excursion on North London's Orange Luxury company's vehicles.

From school I went on to Leeds University to study mechanical engineering, so became familiar with various operators in the area, including Leeds City Transport,



Former London Transport RT174 after sale to Bradford Corporation. (Collection)

trolleybuses in Huddersfield and Bradford, and West Riding's Guy Wulfrunians, front-entrance with underdamped swing-axle front suspension and the engine under a cover next to the driver. A local private operator was Samuel Ledgard, who bought a number of ex-London RTs tuned to run much faster, on routes such as Leeds to Otley.

One summer in the 1960s I worked as an undergraduate vacation student in LT's Chiswick Bus Development office, headed by Colin Curtis, where I spent six weeks in bus heaven! The main focus was RM development, ironing out many problems with this new design. I recall a problem with the rear subframes suffering stress cracks, and another with the heater matrixes below the front destination blinds. We carried out brake tests on the Great Chertsey Road, standing on the platform to warn following traffic to move out before our 'crash stops', and take subsequent temperature readings of the brake drums. We would often drive down roads where people waiting at bus stops hailed us, and get very irate when we didn't stop. Once we were forced to stop due to traffic, and people rushed the bus despite the strap across the platform, only to trip over the toolboxes in the gangway.

My father worked in the printing trade at the time, and could order books at trade prices, a valuable perk in the days of retail price maintenance. Once I gathered a number of orders for various Ian Allan bus books, including from Colin himself, and we took an RT to Ian Allan's then office in Hampton Court to pick them up.

Through a friend I made at Chiswick, I got involved with the then new Tramway Museum at Crich, in Derbyshire, and made weekend visits there for a few years as a volunteer.

I failed to get a job with LT after graduating, but joined The Rover Company in Solihull as a Research Engineer. Rover was still an independent family company at the time, later absorbed by British Leyland under Donald Stokes. I worked mainly on suspensions and torque converters, and was involved in handling tests on the road and at the MIRA testing ground near Nuneaton, where we also used the wind tunnel for aerodynamic development. I was heavily involved with a new vehicle called the 100 inch Land Rover (a reference to the wheelbase), designed by Spencer King, a member of the Wilks family which owned Rover. He was also responsible for Rover's gas turbine cars, and P6 (Rover 2000).

In the drawing office one day I suggested changing the name to Rover Ranger; subsequently a marketing bod cleverly turned this round to Range Rover. I calculated the spring, damper, and bush rates and tyre pressures to optimise the ride and handling. Driving the first prototype was fun, it looked like a van but of course had the Buick V8 engine. With its original Rochester carburettors it was prone to cutting out on hard left turns, which said a lot about the roadholding of American cars!

One day we wanted to measure aerodynamic lift on the Rover gas turbine car which had competed at Le Mans, so it was driven to MIRA, with me as passenger; only the chief mechanic was allowed to drive it. An interesting experience, especially pulling out at junctions, due to the delayed throttle response!

I was introduced to computers at Rover, we used the IBM mainframe for technical computing. It had 8k of memory, with punched card input and output. This led me into a career in IT rather than engineering, although I always retained my interest in cars and buses.

I have always cycled too, mainly on Moulton bicycles, with their innovative small wheels and rubber suspension systems. I bought one of the original Moultons in the 1960s, which I still have, and a few others too. This led to friendship with Dr Alex Moulton, who of course designed the Mini rubber suspension and subsequent hydroelastic system. He was designing and riding bicycles until he passed away at the age of 92 in 2012.

About eight years ago we managed arrange a viewing of his innovative 8-wheeled coach, dating from 1970, which is in the Science Museum's Wroughton storage facility, not open to the public. This is an extensive collection of all kinds of machinery and vehicles, unfortunately not accessible, due to the poor state of the hangars.



One of the very early Routemasters, RM12, working trolley bus replacement service 279. (Collection)

I have visited various transport museums over the years, so it was inevitable that I came to Cobham. I did visit the Redhill Road site a couple of times on its rare open days, but a visit to Cobham Hall at Brooklands when it opened in 2011 led to my enrolment with LBPT and volunteering for the workshop. I joined the team restoring UMP, and am now working on the canteen trailer. After about three years work, we are about to complete the saloon end, and will then move on to the kitchen. Anyone care to join us? No experience necessary!



Fun for everyone at the London Bus Summer event on 25th June 2017



John Surtees CBE - Farewell to a British Icon

By Bob Ansell

Like many of the population, I heard, on 10th March this year, of the death of the former motor racing champion, John Surtees CBE, with more than a degree of sadness.

I am obviously aware that Mr. Surtees's first interest was probably not London Buses, and, having been the first, and so far the only, person to be World Motor Racing Champion on both two-wheels and four, his passing would perhaps have been expected to be commemorated more by the 'other' part of Brooklands, rather than in our magazine. Our photo does, however, show him also very much at home in charge of six wheels together, on the platform of one of our Museum flagships, the also iconic RML2760.

The occasion of the photo was the annual HSF (Henry Surtees Foundation) Brooklands Karting Challenge Event, held at the Mercedes Benz World track on 5th July 2016. The event attracted some 35 teams from a variety of fields and raised over £60,000 for the Foundation, set up by John Surtees in memory of his son Henry, himself an up and coming racing driver, who was sadly killed in a freak accident whilst racing at Brands Hatch in 2009, when only 18 years of age.

Following Henry's tragic death, Mr. Surtees was very quick to acknowledge the work done by the Kent, Sussex and Surrey Air Ambulance Trust, and became involved, very actively, with promoting and supporting the work of that and many other Air Ambulance Trusts nationally. He also, especially, supported the work of the out-of-hours volunteer blood runners, 'SERV', of which I was a one-time member and advanced-driver trainer for their blue light four-wheel drive Response vehicles, which run 24/7, and are staffed entirely by volunteers.

One of the problems facing HeliMed teams at the scene of an incident can be the terrain on which they have to operate. This is often only accessible by four-wheel drive

vehicles and John Surtees, through the Foundation, funded the purchase of such vehicles for SERV, in order to get urgent blood delivered to the scenes of such incidents with minimum delay, thereby enabling the medical teams to carry out, often life-saving, tasks at scene.

LBM were honoured to supply the RML as the 'Hospitality Transport' vehicle from the main MBW building to and from the track at the HSF Karting Challenge.

Colin Read and I were the nominated crew and we both agreed it was probably the least stressful day either of us had ever spent whilst driving a bus, and that John Surtees and the team at HSF could not have been more accommodating, helpful or pleasant. The beautiful early summer sunshine was simply the icing on the cake.

Mr. Surtees also used the bus, whilst it was parked by the track. He came on board and did a magazine interview in the quiet to escape the noise of go-karts flying round in the near distance, and he was unpretentiously simply talking about his life, casually dropping names like Fangio, Stirling Moss, Mike Hawthorne, Jack Brabham, Graham Hill, and Jim Clark to the two youngsters interviewing him; I don't think they really had a clue of the significance of the people he was talking about but Colin and I sat there, on the lower-deck rear bench seats, eavesdropping and open-mouthed.

Much has already been written about

John Surtees CBE, and there is undoubtedly still more to come, but I think the best way I can end this short piece is by simply reprinting my message in the Book of Condolence on the HSF website:

"Mr. Surtees was what I regard as a True-Brit. Outwardly, quiet and understated, but underneath a determination to rival anyone; an "achiever" long before it was fashionable. I did not "know" him, albeit I had met him, but, being born as I was in 1952, I feel I have 'known' him all my life. He was, for me, a schoolboy hero and, the older one gets, one realises he was also, quite simply, 'a nice bloke'. R.I.P."

www.henrysurtreesfoundation.com

www.serv.org.uk



West Croydon to West Byfleet

By Graham Burnell

The picture of DMS2374 on page 5 of the Summer magazine reminds me of the my final days at NB after having been transferred from K as a TPO driver several years earlier. Presumably the picture was taken on a Sunday or Bank Holiday as there is a Kingston Bus and Coach DMS to the left of the picture on route 213. This Sunday extension never did have a correct intermediate blind and the running staff amended offending blinds with black tape

It seems that London Buses will no longer issue bus maps and so I had a look back to 1990, when Kingston Bus and Coach was wound up, and discovered no less than three issues for that year. The winter issue was the largest with its additional Beatlemania panels and there are two route 213s shown.

Having tried bus, train and plane spotting during the fifties my interest in buses stemmed from rover tickets used to travel to airfields within the LT system. Although RTs were the norm sometimes an RLH would be used for travel to Biggin Hill or perhaps a GS to Bovingdon aerodrome. Travelling through Reigate, home of the Country Bus headquarters, sometimes produced new vehicles whether it be brand new red RMLs or a new Autofare Merlin on the 430. Later, when the Weekender ticket was valid on Green Line coaches, I took my first ride on the 727 to Luton Airport and the first aeroplane I saw was an Ethiopian Air Force C-54 (the military version of the DC-4) with the serial number 727!

When visiting the northern area both Red and Green Rovers were necessary, assuming I had the pocket money, because living in Chessington the lengthy detour via Leatherhead and Staines would have wasted valuable time especially on weekdays when Rovers were only valid after 09.30. The Twin Rovers were quite useful and provided a quicker alternative by Underground to aerodromes such as Elstree and Stapleford Abbotts.

Oh! West Byfleet. This was served by another Norbiton route, the K10 Kingfisher running every thirty minutes from Kingston to Staines via a lot of northwest Surrey. Taking one hour and fifty minutes this route was mainly fishing for London Country's passengers using Leyland Nationals. Sometimes these vehicles were



The Ethiopian Air Force C-54 at Luton Airport in 1968.



Just arriving and departing airside at Heathrow an Airbus Metrobus and Harrow Buses' Ailsa using the bonded tunnel to and from Terminal Four.

poached from other routes. One morning rush hour I was on the 71 and instructed to transfer passengers onto the bus behind and take the National directly back to NB for use on the K10. This also involved ejecting a revenue inspector who seemed quite upset for some reason but as the shed was working to rule because of the 26% pay cut I was just obeying the management!

Right: A windup with Dave Stewart at NB just prior to the RT's being replaced; the new DMS on the 131 is a clue!
(all Graham Burnell)



Last Summer in the City

By John Hinson

Well I don't know about all of you but we enjoyed the last Summer in the City and wasn't the weather kind to us! We even managed a fairly traffic-free run to Mandela Way, apart from slightly slow progress around Trafalgar Square. We rather enjoy the trip round the square because it is the only time on the route when you have a chance to see all the buses taking part progressing round the square (can you progress 'round' a 'square'?).

We were expecting 10 buses but sadly one had mechanical problems and was unable to join us so nine stalwarts set off reasonably promptly from Hyde Park. In under an hour we were all parked up in Mandela Way. Now for the very good news - we raised £586.48 for the Rainbow Trust. That is well over £100 more than last year so thanks to all for their generosity. We are still open to late donations - it would be nice if we could push it to £600.



(Graham Smith)

Some photos of the event will be found on the web site at

<http://self-preservation-society.co.uk/summer/2017.php>.

If anybody would like higher-resolution images please just ask.

The first 'Christmas Lights' took place in 1983, before we owned any buses, but it was organised by some friends who then owned RT1784. In 1985, the RT wasn't available and we filled in with our RFs plus vehicles of a few friends from the RT/RF Register. The 1986 event was the first that supported a charity - initially BBC Children in Need but from 1999 we switched to the Rainbow Trust.

Although this was the 'last' we don't think there is a better place to take London buses than Central London and we will still take every opportunity in the future to do so with ours. We know one or two people take their vehicles in for a Christmas Lights tour too. London is where they belong.

Our records aren't quite complete but we can offer some numbers of participating vehicles recorded since 1983:

AN??
BL49
DM1052
DMS132
GS17, 62
LS35 (as Thames Valley 385)
RCL2233
RF4, 10, 26, 28, 146, 167, 213, 269, 271, 280, 315, 319,
326, 366, 381, 401, 406, 433, 444, 453, 457, 486, 489, 503,
518, 522, 530, 539, 627, 633, 643, 672
RFW14
RMA10, 58
RM3, 14, 16, 85, 158, 216, 308, 545, 642, 719, 1033, 1348,
1397, 1571,
1993 (as Southampton 403), 2097, 2116
RMC1456, 1459, 1461, 1462, 1469, 1485
RML901, 2323, 2330, 2366, 2499, 2504, 2548, 2650,
2666, 2700, 2755
RT8, 604, 935, 1206, 1431, 1544, 1594, 1700, 1705, 1784,
1790, 2043, 2083, 2084, 2177, 2291, 2293, 2420, 2591,
2688, 2794, 3062, 3143, 3183, 3228, 3254, 3435, 3491,
3496, 3871, 4275, 4421, 4779
RTL1163, 1427
RTW467
RP90
S454
SMD91
ST922
STL1470 (as tree lopper 971J)
TI100
TD95
XFI
V3
Alder Valley 251 & L214 GJO
BEA MLL 740
Burnley Colne & Nelson 73
East Kent 7742
Portsmouth 724 UXW
Royal Blue 2250
Southern Vectis 759
Trent 832
Wigan Corporation 140
A US Military truck
An Austin FX4 taxi
A 1931 Ford AA van
At a quick tot-up that's 133 different vehicles!

I suspect that the furthest-travelled was RTL1163 which came up from Torquay many times in earlier years, but I think the owner of RT2688 needs a medal too for travelling from the Isle of Wight to Essex to collect the bus for the tour and doing the reverse afterwards.

As this was the last Summer in the City, we would like to thank all those who have supported both the summer event and the Christmas Lights tour in the past, both bus owners/drivers and passengers. Including the Christmas Lights tour, we have organised 33 such events over the years so perhaps you can all allow us to retire!

Spreading the Word

By John Sullivan

My role as the talks organiser for the bus museum is probably one of the world's best kept secrets. The only evidence that I have given a talk is an envelope in the treasurer's basket containing a cheque for £50.

So, what do I do? How do I do it? And why do I do it? To give you an insight into the answers to these questions I have penned a brief description of a recent talk I gave to Camberley Rotary Club.

This talk is not representative of all the talks I give and, in fact, none of them are. They all differ in respect of the type of audience, the venue and the level of equipment available on site. Regardless of what equipment they have I always turn up with a projector, screen, laptop, extension cable and leaflets. If the audience is young I also have a bellhop's bell and try to borrow a Gibson machine to explain the role of the conductor.

The starting point for the Camberley talk was an exchange of emails between me and Norman Borrett of the Rotary club. This is mainly to fix the date and time but I also make it clear that I charge £50 but can waive this charge for charitable organisations provided they allow me to pass around a collecting box at the end of the talk.

On the day of the talk I always turn up at least a half an hour early and so I did in Camberley. The talk was in the cricket club which was difficult to find and involved the dreaded M3. The venue was a function room with a bar and tables set for dinner. It was only at this point that I realised that they wanted an after dinner speaker which meant that I was treated so a rather good meal and got a chance to talk to members who included

Peter Allin, a Brooklands member of the car club who occupy the site next to us. This is not always the case and my usual fare is a cup of tea and maybe a biscuit. At one venue in Twickenham I arrived and found a lady setting up and told her that I was there to give a talk. She immediately replied that I couldn't be as there was a meeting of the Trefoil Guild that evening. When I explained that that was who I was talking to and gave her an outline of what I was talking about she immediately started berating me about the quality of the bus service in her area. The talk that night was, however, extremely successful.

At Camberley I managed to complete my talk without sending anyone to sleep. My past experience has taught me that giving a talk after any meal is dangerous ground as you are competing against the natural tendency of the human being to sleep off good fayre. My talk is in two parts, the first being a layman's explanation of how the London Bus came about and the second part about the museum, what it does, its location and why it would be such a jolly good idea to visit the place and become a member. At this point I tell them about Brooklands itself, what a wonderful place it is and how it is full of exciting things but the best bit is, of course, the Bus Museum.

I usually take questions at the end but will answer anyone who asks a relevant question during the talk. The trick here is learn an eloquent and lengthy way of saying "I don't know" although I need this skill less and less as I go on. Very few questions were asked at Camberley because we had run out of time. At a different talk one lady asked whether I knew



anything about Aldenham as her father used to work there; this led to a long and interesting discussion during which I had to explain to the group as a whole what Aldenham was. It helps if people remember the film Summer Holiday during such an explanation.

After the talk I hang around packing up with my tea in hand and people will come up and ask specific questions like "my grandson is three, is he old enough to visit the museum?" The answer to that is "yes" but another common question is "do you have anything of interest to girls?" I have to explain that girls are generally just as interested as boys but sometimes in a different way. I tell them that girls will ask what a bus is made of whereas boys will ask how fast will it go.

Having said my goodbyes to the good people of the Camberley Rotary club I made my way home only to find the M3 to be closed so had to do the long slog along the A30.

So that's what I do, but why do I do it? First and foremost it is very good fun; secondly I meet a range of splendid people; thirdly I expand my knowledge and lastly but not least it brings money and visitors in to the museum. And if you don't believe me come along to my next talk and see for yourself.



A 1974-vintage Plaxton Panorama Elite-bodied Bedford YRQ delivered to Ouse Valley coaches. Since March 1999 it has been in the care of preservationist John Bedford of Staines who is seen here in the cab, 25th June 2017.

(MHCB)

Membership and Volunteering

By Steve Edmonds

Year seven at Cobham Hall is underway and maintaining continuous improvement across the board continues to challenge us.

Firstly it is a warm welcome to another new Trustee, Robin Warne. Already a busy man dealing with all the Trust's insurance matters, he has been co-opted to the board as our Health & Safety Director. This is an essential function and one that we need to focus on more keenly now we are an Arts Council England accredited Museum.

His appointment brings the number of Trustees to the maximum twelve permitted by the Trust's constitution. Your Council of Management (CoM) has never been stronger in terms of its leadership and management capability and experience. A new committee of Directors to manage the day to day running of the Museum has been set up in addition to the team of Trustees, currently CoM.

We are embarking on a new period of cooperation and collaboration on a number of fronts with our friends and colleagues in the Brooklands Museum. Exciting potential developments on the site for both Museums will be possible in the years ahead. Experience tells us that change is inevitable in every walk of life.

The welcoming message to students over the main entrance door to the University of East Anglia in Norwich is 'Do different'. It has since used as a promotional message by various organisations across the county. The will and desire to do things differently is said to diminish somewhat in those of us of a certain age. We can easily get settled in our own familiar comfort zones and when changes come along we experience discomfort. Those familiar phrases "We have always done it that way" and "We have never done it that way before" are commonly used by those resisting change.

Moving swiftly on from East Anglia to 19th century America, it is perhaps worth a look at the westward expansion of population spearheaded by the pioneers. They were the forerunners exploring uncharted

territory. They were adventurers, ready to face danger in order to establish new frontiers.

After the pioneers came the settlers. Once a pathway had been established they came to establish communities and raise their families. Although they would face some danger if they were forced to, they had no intention of placing themselves in harm's way. They had little desire for adventure and excitement. Their main concern was to stay safe and secure.

You may see yourself identifying more closely with either one of these groups. I think LBM needs both pioneers and settlers amongst its volunteers. We need those who have the vision to think and act creatively and break new ground. We also need those who come in and apply themselves on front and back of house duties, getting done what needs to be done. I am pleased that we have developed a culture which embraces both and is generally positive about the future.

Let's face it; nothing in our life experience ever stays the same. Indeed, there is probably less fear and trepidation in not knowing and anticipating what's coming round the corner. From where I am standing, LBM's future looks positively bright. Presently, we carry on doing what we do and do it as well as we are able. And if and when the situation requires it, we do different.

Some volunteer activities captured by MHC.B.



'Blakey' visiting London Bus Summer.



Simon Douglas Lane watering the memorial garden.



Tea's Up!

David Bowker was out and about during the 406 Running Day on 18th June and captured these vehicles.

Right: London Country Merlin/MCW MB 90, delivered to Garston garage in 1978. It lasted ten years, passed through various hands until being rescued by preservationist Chris Sullivan. Present owner, since 2008, is Peter Comfort of Hampshire who has kept this, the only survivor of the London Country Merlins, in tip top condition.



Left: RLH48 from the LBPT at Brooklands.



Below Left: RM2 from the London Transport Museum.

Annual New Year's lunch

I have made provisional arrangements for the annual New Year's lunch at Silvermere.

The details are:

Date: Sunday 21st January 2018

Time: 12.00 arrival for 12.30 start

Five course carvery: Soup, Starter, Main (choice of two meats plus vegetarian option), Sweet, Cheeseboard, Coffee

Cost £28.95, half price for children

Table places can be allocated according to personal choice

Bookings commence 4th December 2017

Cheques to be received by Friday 12th January 2018

Raffle prizes welcomed to help Trust funds

Whilst the cost has increased, the menu has been extended a little and the offering compares very favourably with other local facilities which are unable to compete on choice and value.

Steve Edmonds



This very fine, and immensely powerful Itala of 1908, at Brooklands in June, Only the brave - or foolhardy - would have dared use its full power. (MHCb)



There is mention elsewhere in this edition of East Anglia. Colin Read visited the Ipswich Transport Museum recently and captured this very fine 1920 Chevrolet LQ, One of its owners was Mulleys who, once owned STL2377 and the Tunnel STL1871, which also entered preservation and then, most regrettably, was scrapped.



Aiden and Shaun Robbins enjoying a ride in RT3491 on 25th June. (MHCb)



Above: Two views of horse transport from RT 3491 during the London Bus Summer event. (MHCb)



Left: Alicia, granddaughter of Transport Manager, Bob Ansell, and the great granddaughter of his former mother-in-law, Miss Marie Elizabeth Solley (as she was then) who was chosen by London Transport to feature in a series of publicity pictures of a 'clippie' at work during wartime, one of which was published on page 91 of your editor's 'London Transport in the Blitz'. (Bob Ansell)

Letters



Dear Editor,

I would like to take issue with you regarding your references to the AEC Merlin and Swift buses in the London Bus Museum Magazine, Issue 24, dated Summer 2017.

You state in your Editorial that 'history has judged that the Merlins and Swifts were an unmitigated disaster' but you have failed to quantify the reasons behind this so called 'history'. I am the AEC engineer who designed both chassis for these buses. I saw them through the prototype stages, the early production stages and saw them start the Merlin service at Hounslow Garage and find such a statement puzzling to say the least. I would appreciate an explanation of where this 'history' came from, as far as I am aware there were no major mechanical problems so it must have been something else which brought you to this conclusion.

As to your assertion that they sealed the demise of the once mighty AEC (AEC will always be mighty in the eyes of the thousands of employees, the many UK Operators and those around the world who were pleased to buy our products), nothing could be further from the truth. At the time of the AEC-Leyland merger in 1963 and the foundation of the British Leyland Motor Corporation, I have been advised that in the first Corporate plan it was intended to close the Southall Works and transfer production to Leyland which would most definitely see the end of AEC. In fact it took until 31st May 1979 to



FRM1, from the London Transport Museum, below the banking at Brooklands, 25th June. (MHCb)



Geoff Latham at LBM, 16th August 2017. (MHCb)

close AEC and make many skilled people redundant. AEC were starved of investment for many years which limited design and development, the purchase of new machine tools etc. It also saw the end of production of the Merlin and Swift, the end of the new V8 engine and new V8 Mandator but the biggest sin was to block production of the FRM of which only one prototype was built. I am positive that the FRM would have been as successful as the RT and RM for London Transport. Perhaps I am being petty but I don't think that for LT, the Leyland National, Atlantean and Titan did not do that well as replacements.

I trust that you will find a space for my comments in the next LBM Magazine and I would welcome any feedback. Thank you.

Geoff Latham

Right: Remains of a London Transport Merlin at Norbiton, 1984.

(MHCb)



Dear Editor,

I've made models of buses, (not kits) since I was eleven and am now 74. Also trains, planes, cars etc. As one of a traditional LT family, my Dad being a mechanic at Harrow Weald (HD). He started at the age of 12(!) at Middle Row (X) garage changing B type destination boards over for next day's



runs. Then there were uncles on the trolleys and others who were tube train drivers, and a sister in the Baker Street office. My wife and I were an RT crew at HD for several years, and I've been into RTs ever since.

I attach a photograph of my latest effort, a full size model of an RT's driving controls, my biggest model yet and all made out of scrap.

Cyril W Theobald

I am currently 84 years old and am a regular volunteer in the Curatorial Dept at LBM.

It gives me great pleasure to walk past SMS369 and to think to myself that I designed the chassis and it still works. It is, as you said, a nice looking vehicle.

Dear Editor, Thanks very much for the magazine, the pictures of the G, the RTs and the STL at Victoria were really great. Victoria was the place where I first fell in love with Guy buses! There was a grey painted Guy on the 76 route when I was on my way to Chorleywood, during the war I guess.

Cheers, John Lines



Above: Q83 being pulled out of the workshop on 23rd August before being sent off for remaining work to be undertaken. (David Bowker)

Below: The interior of Q83.

(MHCB)

