



# STL 441's New Coat Look Back at '22 Bus Maps

# Magazine

The journal of the  
London Bus  
Preservation Trust

Issue 47 Spring 2023

£4 to non-members



## Editorial

### Dave Jones

Welcome to the first edition of a new year, I hope you will enjoy its content, which contains a greater proportion of verbiage than usual. Although perhaps the centre pages make up for that.

The Trust's activities continue with the now customary three running days followed by gatherings at Brooklands. The policy of taking our buses to the public has been very successful so far and it's hoped that this can continue for many years. While we all appreciate the need to reduce pollution, I doubt that our events, even combined with every other running day in the UK, would make a significant contribution to poorer air quality planet-wide. It has been shown that vehicle preservation does make a positive contribution to the country's economy - something legislators should keep in mind.

To launch our 2023 season, we have the 175 running day (with the 174 thrown in for good measure), a route almost on my doorstep for the past 40-odd years, having spent my formative years close to the 37. Thanks for the memories, Peter! Also, thanks for the very interesting history of both routes which I've included as background to the event.

Our Spring Gathering is next on the list and we hope that the weather gods will be kinder than last October. In any case, the "Brooklands spirit" will prevail and a great event will be enjoyed by many.

Our autumn running day is planned to coincide with Heritage Week organised by Heritage Open Days which was established in 1994 as England's contribution to the European Heritage Days. It has since grown into the country's largest community heritage festival. A route connecting a number of participating venues is being planned. Keep an eye open for further news.

STL 441's recent repaint has featured greatly in the enthusiast media of late and I had joked at the last Council of Management meeting that this could be an "STL Special Edition", (fear not - it isn't). However, the recent acquisition of STL 2692 by Roger Wright, also owner of 97 J, provided an opportunity to re-unite three former Redhill Road residents. Some of the resultant photos are included.

As always, contributions are always welcome, although I can't promise specific publication dates. It's your magazine, not just mine!

Front cover photo - This edition's cover star is STL 441, freshly repainted and captured on Tower Bridge while returning to the Museum. Photo-Keith Valla.

Back cover, top: STL 441 on Hornsey Rise in 1950 during its five month stay at Putney Bridge garage (F). Photo-J H Aston from the Museum's collection

Back cover, bottom: Wearing a later, simplified, livery, STL 441 is seen at Morden Station on 16 April 1952 while at its last garage, Streatham (AK). Photo-Alan Cross.

## Membership Matters

To ensure you continue to receive the LBM Magazine, LBM E-news, subscription reminders, membership cards and other LBM communications, please send changes of postal address, email address, bank direct debit details, and any membership queries to: [membership@londonbusmuseum.com](mailto:membership@londonbusmuseum.com)

or: Membership, London Bus Museum, Cobham Hall, Brooklands Road, Weybridge KT13 0QS

Thank you to all those members so far contacted who have provided a new Gift Aid declaration. We will be asking the remainder of members during this year in our quest for 100% response.

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## Chairman's Chat

### Leon Daniels

We have started 2023 with a bang and despite very cold weather we have had some good attendances at London Bus Museum.

DI42 is now in pride of place in the exhibition hall where it has attracted a huge amount of positive comment. Its present position is a temporary one; in due course it will join the 'time line' which runs from the Horse Bus to WVLI. It will take the place of T31 which, thanks to Tim Nicholson and Derek Hanlon is now mobile again under its own power. Shortly it will depart for a major repaint and hopefully will return looking as beautiful as STL441 which recently returned and is now on display.

So quite soon after you read this will be our Member's Day and AGM on 12<sup>th</sup> March and our route 174 and 175 running day on 25<sup>th</sup> March. Please come and support London Bus Museum at both of these events.

I hope you have had chance to watch my Review of 2022 on YouTube. Just search for me and you will find it. Many thanks to all the members and volunteers who have written in and said how much these videos and occasional bulletins help them keep in touch even from afar.

The wonderful LT Bullseye and flagpole for the bus station at Hounslow has been safely removed from the garage and is now resident at London Bus Museum. Hopefully this year you will see it re-erected and on display.

Looking further forward to Spring Gathering we will launch our new book 'In and Out of Service'. Written by (the late) Ian Read and Guy Marriott we explore all of the important London buses in preservation including all of ours! A wonderful reminder of all that has been achieved by the preservation movement over the past seventy years!

All in all an exciting year coming up and I look forward to seeing you all at our events in 2023.



## Annual General Meeting

This year, to save money and, more importantly, to avoid the potential impact of strike action, documents for the Annual General Meeting on Sunday 12 March 2023 will be available on the Museum's website for members to access.

To access the documents, visit [www.londonbusmuseum.com](http://www.londonbusmuseum.com) and select *Members' Area* option.

Then enter:

*username* = your membership number

*password* = your postcode in LOWER-CASE with NO spaces.

Select *AGM 2023* option to display all documents

In case of difficulty, please email: [membership@londonbusmuseum.com](mailto:membership@londonbusmuseum.com)

A hard copy will be posted to members who have not provided us with an email address. It is hoped that as many of you as possible will be able to attend for the meeting, which is combined with Members' Day. It is also hoped that, on the day, we will be able to give members the chance to ride on DI42.

## STL 441 - New Year, New Coat



STL 441's Christmas present this year was a new coat of paint following body repairs last summer. The work was carried out at London Bus Works, associated with Roger Wright's London Bus Company, and overseen by MD Wesley Tierney. It was a back-to-metal job followed by several coats of paint. The finishing touches, adverts, were applied by the Museum's regular sign-writer. These photos, by Wesley, show various stages of the work.

A bit about the bus: STL441 was ordered by the London General Omnibus Company, but not delivered until after the formation of London Transport. It was originally petrol-engined, but was fitted in May 1939 at LT's Chiswick Works, with a flexibly-mounted 7.7 litre diesel engine. A body rebuild was carried out by Mann Egerton in January 1948.

During its service life, the bus was allocated to a number of garages,

including Epping, which was odd as that was a country area garage. Prior to its 1948 rebuild it spent time at Chalk Farm, Hounslow and Harrow Weald, then Forest Gate, Putney Bridge and finally Streatham.

Upon withdrawal in 1952, the vehicle was eventually sold to a museum in Holland, being acquired in February 1953 by the Het National Automobielmuseum at Leidschendam, the Hague.



Once the paint was thoroughly dry, STL 441 was taken to Roger Wright's premises for storage. While there it snowed and the opportunity was taken to capture some seasonal images. Roger has recently acquired STL 2692, which resided for many years at Cobham. He also owns another Cobham exile, 971J, former STL 1470 and for a brief period all three STLs were reunited and taken out for a rare, but hopefully not the last, photo-shoot.

Top left photo by Wesley Tierney  
Top right and bottom right photos by Keith Valla.  
Middle and bottom left photos by Leon Daniels.



# STL 441 - A Dutch Adventure

## The Late Bill Cottrell

The following first appeared in a 1976 London Bus Preservation Group Newsletter and tells of the repatriation of STL 441.

Alan Cross and myself went across to Holland on the 17th July to Leidschendam where the Dutch National Motor Museum is situated to inspect STL441. We travelled by British Rail 'Awayday' tickets, which at £11.90 each proved to be good value. Fortunately the North Sea was calm that night, but the ship was very crowded and we hardly slept. We travelled from Harwich to the Hook of Holland and then by train to The Hague where we boarded a local train. At The Hague we took the opportunity to photograph the trams and emerging from the station the first vehicle we saw was a Southdown coach in National livery parked outside a local hotel. However, we were keen to get on with our mission so we returned to the station to catch the train to Leidschendam, only three stations down the line. At the station there was a convenient 'You are here' type map from which we gained our directions and so we set off on foot. After about a mile we thought we had better check our bearings and we asked a helpful Dutch citizen for directions. We asked if he could understand English, to which I think he replied 'No'. So we showed him the piece of paper with the Museum address on, and he asked us, in German, whether we could speak German, to which we replied 'Nein!' Here followed a conversation in sign language, which ended with our hDc

pointing with his right hand, saying 'Left, Left!' we thanked him and continued our hike. After about five minutes the hDc cycled past and pointed in the same direction. After another five minutes he cycled back shouting 'Toyota, Toyota!' as he went by. We were still discussing what he might have meant by this when we saw a large garage, which turned out to be the main Dutch Toyota dealers, and next to this, on the right, was the National Motor Museum.

The museum was closed for alterations and we made enquiries at the office we were directed to the Toyota premises. It turned out the directors of the museum and the garage were the same. We introduced ourselves and we were shown to the boardroom for coffee and to discuss the STL. Apparently they had owned it only two years and they acquired it from another museum that had since closed. The first move we decided was to inspect the bus. It was parked in the yard where it had been for two years. It was painted red all over apart from black wings. The panels were in good condition; the only rust present was on the steel beading. Inside it had twenty years accumulation of dust and dirt. The roof-dome had been dented. This had disturbed some screws, allowing water to enter through a small hole. The condition of the woodwork in the area of the third and fourth pillars is suspect. Downstairs an attractive feature was the original advertisements, especially a large Heinz advert on the bulkhead and another proclaiming a fares decrease! The main problem in

restoring the interior will be refurbishing the seats, which are of the wooden framed 'integral' type, similar to those fitted to the 4Q4s. The moquette is in poor condition. However, generally the bodywork is very sound.

Mechanically there are quite a few parts missing and many of the parts that are present are badly worn. The parts missing include the front prop shaft, change speed lever and box, throttle pedal and linkage, dynamo and control; box. The brakes and steering will need overhaul and a new set of tyres purchased. The engine has been removed and was mounted on a stand inside the museum as separate exhibit. Also inside was an RTL. This looked as if it had come straight from service as it still had the batteries connected.

We returned to the boardroom for further discussions. The directors agreed to make arrangements to tow the bus to the docks and we agreed to take over responsibility from there. During lunch we talked generally about buses, and the conversation got very complicated, converting pounds to guilders, tons to kilograms, yards to metres and MPG to kilometres per litre. It transpired that the Dutch car tax system is based on engine size, and it would cost over £300 annually to tax an RT!

The directors gave us a lift to Amsterdam and we spent the rest of the day sightseeing. On return, I delivered a favourable report to Alan Allmey, and after some deliberation he decided to try to acquire it on behalf of the LBPG. By the beginning of

August all the arrangements had been made, and on the 8th I returned to Holland, this time with John Warner, to make sure the bus was loaded onto the boat.

We arrived at the Hook at 6.30 Friday morning and caught the train to Rotterdam. There we found that Benelux-haven, from where the bus was being shipped, was about 25 miles out of Rotterdam, on the other side of the river and almost opposite the Hook. We tried to make our way by Metro and bus, but soon realised the nearest bus route finished over 5 miles from the dock, and we had to take a taxi. This was a bit nerve-racking as we sat and watched the meter ticking over as it was rapidly approaching the amount I had in guilders. We arrived at the dock gate as the meter clocked 26.00, which was exactly the amount I had left!

The STL was parked on the quay, almost dwarfed by the Scania, Volvo and DAF trucks. We checked in at the office and confirmed that our boat was sailing at noon. We reminded the clerk the bus was a non-runner, and he said that did not present any problems. So, we sat and waited and watched the boat being loaded. By 11.30 the activity had slackened. No one had been to inspect the bus so we were once more beginning to feel a bit apprehensive. We checked once more with the clerk who assured us all was well. John went off to see the loading supervisor to tell him a tow-bar was necessary to reverse the bus onto the ship. At 11.45 a towing tug arrived and we were soon reversing onto the ship. We were the last large vehicle to load, and on the stroke of noon, we left Holland.

We reported to the purser and found to our delight that included in the cost

of transporting the bus the driver and his mate got a cabin and free meals. The crossing once again was calm and we spent the time catching up on lost sleep and chatting to the truck drivers about their many and varied experiences.

The ship docked about 7.00pm. The STL being right at the front was the first vehicle unloaded. It was towed to the customs shed where we were expecting a few problems, but they were very helpful and interested in the bus. A younger customs officer was delegated to climb over the engine which had been loaded onto a cradle and secured to the platform. He went upstairs and we heard him lift the back seat. As it was not illegal to bring that variety of toadstool into the country he pronounced us clean. By 8.30 all the formalities had been completed and we settled down to wait for our towing vehicle to arrive, Ted Brakell's RT277 being used for the purpose. Alan Allmey and John Flint arrived around mid-night. We rigged a set of lights for the STL and set off about 1.00am with John Warner driving the RT and me steering the STL. It was raining heavily, and I could only manage the section from Felixstowe to Ipswich. After Ipswich my eyelids refused to stay in position and John Flint took over in the STL. After that, until we reached

the outskirts of London, I had a blissful doze. All went well, apart from the heavy rain making progress slow. All continued well until we reached Wandsworth. There the RT petered to a halt, as if it had run out of fuel. A quick check of the tank showed that in spite of having several gallons in there, non was reaching the fuel pump. Luckily there was a Derv-selling garage opposite and rather than take time to find the fault it was decided to fill up the header tank and continue. So with the header tank filled and two gallons of fuel in a watering can we continued to Cobham. It transpired later that the fuel was contaminated with water and this was clogging the filter.

We arrived at Cobham at 8.00am with John Warner still at the wheel of the RT, I wish I knew his secret of how he keeps going.



## T 31 Runs Again

Tim Nicholson

T 31 has not been mobile since before the pandemic and recently Derek Hanlon and I have successfully carried out repairs so that it now runs very sweetly.

Prince Marshall and I travelled up to Morecambe sometime in the late 1970s as Morecambe & Heysham were the last bus company to run petrol AEC Regents – up until about 1969. Prince heard that they had a few spares that they wanted to dispose of, which could be useful for ST 922 that was then running in London service. We duly travelled up to Morecambe to see what was available and agreed to take what spares they had. But what really caught my eye was an AEC petrol engine coupled to a mains generator in the works. This, apparently, was put together in preparation for the 3-day week, which the Heath Government had imposed to save electricity during the miners' strike of 1973. As I remember, it drove a single-phase generator which supplied only the lights of the offices and workshops. They were only too happy for us to take away the engine – but they did keep the generator.

I fitted it to T31 in around 1980, when Norman Anscombe purchased the bus and when LPC Coachworks rebuilt the body. Prince was intimately involved in this restoration and took enormous care in researching the interior layout and livery and with restoring the rear entrance. The resulting vehicle was very much as it had been when new in 1929.

Fast forward to 2022.

Firstly the magneto was removed and taken to the workshop, where the usual check of lubrication, rotor and contact breaker was made. The latter was removed, the points cleaned, reassembled and the operating gap set. The magneto was then set up on the bench and a visual check made of the high tension spark. This seemed very good, so we made temporary marks on the coupling to aid the timing of the magneto back on the engine - the magneto was then refitted.

An attempt was made to turn the engine on the starter just to test the basic electrics – but this produced no effect whatsoever – not even a click! After confirmation of electrical power at the starter motor, the unit was removed for examination. Simon Greatwood was very helpful in jacking up the front of the bus and lowering the heavy starter motor to the floor which provided an interesting attraction to the visiting public!

A rough check on the electric operation of the starter on the bench showed that all was in order – possibly the disturbance of the unit was what it needed - perhaps just a judicious whack in the appropriate place would have done the job! However, it turned out that it was a wise decision

to remove the unit, as the bronze starter pinion was in a very poor state – possibly a third of the teeth had worn away.

Fortunately, there was a spare scrap starter motor in the workshop with a very good pinion of the correct type, so Derek took the opportunity in swapping it over. Simon's great ability with such items was again called upon to fit the starter motor back on the engine again. A subsequent test proved that all our work had not been in vain when the engine spun over perfectly!

Our attention was now drawn to the fuel system, which was a bit concerning as the bus had not run for some years and modern petrol has a reputation for 'going off' so we took the decision to drain the fuel out of the Autovac tank and put in some fresh – hopefully, enough to draw some fresher fuel from the main tank, on which we had previously carried the 'smell test' and which seemed to be okay.

Derek had noted that the petrol flow was suspect, as when operating the carburettor 'tickler', there did not seem an adequate flow to the carburettor. After some time spent in checking pipes, filters, taps and tanks – the likely culprit was a blockage in the main body of the carb. This unit was then completely stripped, all passages blown out and then reassembled by Derek.

Everything was ready. We promised the Duty Manager we would be quick and after a moment's confusion as to whether the fuel was on or off, the engine started and ran sweetly.

Hopefully by the time you read this the road test will have been completed. This then clears the way for it to go for a long overdue repaint.

*It's just possible to see a puff of exhaust as T 31's engine fires up, watched over by mechanic-extraordinaire Tim Nicholson.*

*Photo-Leon Daniels*



## Remembering Mike Garside 1937-2022

Steve Edmonds

Mike joined LBPT as member number 783 on 1 April 1999. He was a staunch supporter and a well-liked and respected volunteer steward, almost to the day he died.

Mike was born in 9 May 1937 in Camberwell, the oldest of the three sons of Teresa and Charles Garside. Mike's mum was Irish and his dad a Londoner from Bermondsey. Charles worked for London Transport as a driver after the war and no doubt helped spark Mike's enthusiastic interest in transport of all types.

Evacuated during the war to Oxfordshire, Mike returned to live with his parents in a prefab in Peckham. He subsequently moved into his own place in Slough, convenient for his career in the airline industry based at London's Heathrow airport.

Most of his working life was spent with BEA in a variety of customer facing and administration roles. He later joined Hunting Club, a freight carrier, one of whose former Vickers Vanguard is at Brooklands on display in the aircraft park.

I first met Mike at Redhill Road in 2007 following my own retirement at a volunteer recruitment meeting, and ended up helping him maintain the extensive grounds. On first meeting

his striking appearance with huge moustache and goatee beard looked as if he had dismounted his Battle of Britain Spitfire. We spent the next four years working together on Wednesdays, doing our best to keep things as tidy as possible; sweeping leaves, weeding, pruning and best of all, burning all the fruits of our labours in the incinerator.

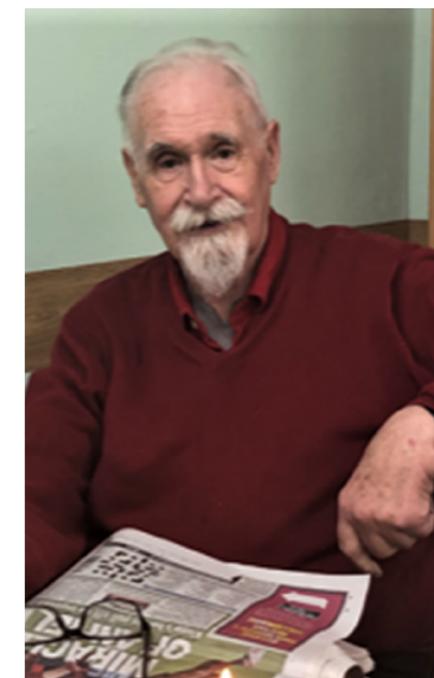
Mike was one of the first out of the blocks in 2011 to volunteer as a steward at LBM at Brooklands. He was one of over sixty LBPT members who stepped up to ensure that we could open 362 days per year. He was ideally suited to serving our visitors given his extensive customer experience with BEA.

He preferred to drive himself to the Museum but the time came when he had to use public transport. Doggedly determined to continue attending he took three buses and a train. Subsequently a friend from Slough and Ray Bradford, a fellow volunteer who also lived locally, would give him a lift.

In addition to LBM, Mike invested his time in supporting local charities including Citizens Advice Bureau and Slough Museum. He also indulged his love of trains at the Slough & Windsor Railway Society. He was also welcome at a local church where he attended

regularly and particularly enjoyed their excellent café.

Mike was a rather reserved, private man who seldom talked about his personal life. I am sure that those of you who knew him will agree with me that he was a resilient and stoical character, comfortable in his own skin. He willingly took responsibility, freely used his initiative to solve problems as they arose and was committed to providing our visitors with a high-quality experience. In short, a dear man with a big heart; the epitome of the authentic fine English Gentleman.



The invaluable contribution of the Museum's volunteers was marked by the annual festive lunch which took place in the workshop on 14 December.

Thanks to Simon Douglas Lane, Sharon Burton, Yvette Gower and Rachel DeWilde for organising and catering a fantastic festive lunch that was enjoyed by all. Photos from Simon.



# Looking Back at 2022



Peter Osborn



Adrian Palmer



Peter Zabek



Adrian Palmer



Adrian Palmer



Michael H C Baker



Peter Zabek



Stuart Hicks



Phil Hambling



Judy Howard



Peter Zabek



Peter Zabek



Bob Stanger



Phil Hambling

## Routes 174 and 175

### Peter Osborn

Some background to our running day in March:

The Ford factory at Dagenham produced its first vehicle on 1 October 1931. Shortly afterwards, a new bus service was introduced to serve the works, running along New Road and down Kent Avenue from Dagenham *Chequers* and numbered 224. The level of service increased rapidly and, on 6 July 1932, three new peak hour routes were added, including the 175 from Stapleford Abbots via Collier Row, Romford and Becontree Heath. In off-peak times, the 175 ran as far as Dagenham *Chequers*, at the southern end of Heathway. Two in every three journeys reached no further north than North Romford *Chase Cross*. The route was operated from Hornchurch garage (RD), using ST class double-deckers.

Between December 1939 and June 1973, the 175 was extended west from Dagenham *Chequers*, running initially to Manor Park, then from November 1940 to Poplar *Blackwall Tunnel*. From 1942, journeys to Ford Works ran from both the Romford and Poplar directions. To the north, a few journeys had been extended during the war to serve Chipping Ongar or Stapleford Tawney aerodrome, but it was not until November 1958 (after the disastrous bus strike that year) that the route was extended to Chipping Ongar in replacement for route 103. As with the route to Stapleford Abbots, the majority of journeys still terminated at North Romford *Chase Cross*.

The broadly 10 minute frequency continued from the 1930s to the 1950s, needing over 60 buses to provide the peak service in the mid-1950s. From 1936, Hornchurch garage was joined in operating the route by Barking (BK), using LTs, and Upton Park (U), using LTs, then TD class Leyland Titans, then STLs, then back

to LTs in wartime. The petrol-engined STs from RD were replaced by diesel STLs at the start of the war, supplemented by LTs. In 1945, all three garages received utility-bodied G class Guy Arabs, 50 of which replaced most of the scheduled allocation.

The Guys were only ever intended as a stopgap, and had short lives in London. In 1951, the entire allocation was replaced by pre-war STLs, which had been in turn replaced by the new RT family elsewhere. In the spring of 1952, the 62 STLs used on the route were all replaced by RTs and their Leyland RTL cousins. RD provided 27 RTLs, BK 12 RTLs and U 23 RTs.

To ease pressure on Hornchurch (RD), a new garage in North Street Romford (NS) opened in August 1953. From February 1954, it provided 7 RTs in replacement of part of the U allocation. Spring 1954 also saw a phased replacement of RD's RTLs with RTs, but BK retained its RTLs until replacement with RTs in November 1958. By 1970, the allocation had dwindled to 27 buses and the route was concentrated in U and NS garages, with U continuing only to June 1973.

In that month, the northern section of the route was renumbered 175A, running Chipping Ongar to Romford with one RT (converted to RM in 1974). This route operated until 1977, when it was converted to a one-person-operated single-decker, the route being withdrawn in 1982. Meanwhile, the 175, now running between North Romford *Chase Cross* and Dagenham *Ford Works*, retained its RTs (except on Sundays, from 1972 converted to one-person-operation with DMSs) until London Transport acquired from BEA a number of front-entrance Routemasters, previously used on the service to Heathrow along the M4. In October 1975, a group of these were pressed into



RMA 3 on North Street July '76. Dave Jones

service on the 175, still in BEA orange livery and with no blind boxes, instead carrying panels in the front window ahead of the doors. A few were repainted red during this period, but they were unpopular and the route reverted to RT operation during summer 1976; the BEA Routemasters became training buses and did not work in service again, except RMAs 5 and 8 which operated on routes X15 and 15.

The end came for the RTs on the 175 on 19 March 1977, when 13 RMs were collected from round the fleet and sent to NS; even at that late stage, many of the RTs moved on for continuing service at other garages. The RMs remained for five years before in turn being replaced by T class Leyland Titans during 1982, crew operated until April 1983. Ts had replaced the DMSs on Sundays from November 1979. Also in November 1979, the 175 had been extended to Hillrise Estate, up the hill from Chase Cross; for a brief period in 1981/2, the route had been extended (again) from there to Passingford Bridge via Stapleford Abbots.

At the first tendering of the route by London Regional Transport in 1990, operation was retained by NS, by now

operated by the East London division of London Buses. East London was acquired by Stagecoach in 1994, who retained successive contracts until 2017. During this period, Ts were replaced first by VN class Volvo Olympians and then from April 2001 by low-floor TAS class Dennis Tridents. These were partly replaced under a new contract in 2012 by Enviro400s. In December 2016, initially as a temporary measure, the route was withdrawn from Kent Avenue and Ford Works; it has not returned and Kent Avenue is now closed.

At the latest tender, Arriva London gained the contract to operate the 175 from October 2017. Operation is from Arriva's Barking garage (DX) using DW class Wrightbus DB300 Gemini 2's, then already about seven years old. The route continues to operate every 10 minutes from North Romford to Dagenham *Kent Avenue*, along the same route introduced in 1932, with the exception of road changes and the diversion to serve Queen's Hospital Romford in 2007.

### The 174

The 174 by contrast is a post-war route, introduced in May 1950 to serve new roads east of Heathway and running between Romford *Parkside Hotel* (in North Street) and Dagenham *Kent Avenue* via Dagenham Road and Oxlow Lane, initially every 17 minutes. After five months, the northern terminus was changed to Harold Hill *Myrtle Road*, running via

RT 2295 on Heathway, May '77. Dave Jones



Straight Road and replacing the 86B. Operation was from Barking (BK) and Hornchurch (RD), like the 175 using utility Guys.

February 1952 saw an extension in Harold Hill to Gooshays Drive and conversion to STL operation. In August 1953, operation transferred to North Street (NS), with a BK allocation (now RTL) on Saturday only. After a phased transition, STLs were finally banished in favour of RTs from December 1953.

Noak Hill *Pentowan Café* had first been served by bus in 1926, by Romford District using 14-seat Chevrolets. On acquisition of Romford District by London Transport in July 1934, the service from Romford was numbered G5 but was curtailed at Noak Hill *Bear* since the Traffic Commissioner would not permit standard ex-LGOC vehicles to make the difficult turn by the café at the Pentowan (even though these were only 20-seat DA class Darts). This was the cause of much complaint and the service was restored in November 1934, by which time the route had been renumbered 252; this section was renumbered 238 in 1940 and ran until 1958.

Following the introduction of single morning and evening 174 journeys to Noak Hill *Pentowan* in January 1955, the 174 was extended in November 1955 via Whitchurch Road to Noak Hill *Tees Drive* with journeys to the Pentowan Café (the full route terminating here on withdrawal of the 238 in 1958). At the same time, express journeys (carrying blue blinds)

were introduced in the peaks and on Saturdays between Harold Hill *Gooshays Drive* and Romford Station. The Saturday service ceased in 1957, but the weekday peak journeys survived much longer, finally finishing in 1977.

The 174 did not serve Ford's Main Works, but in January 1958 was extended in the peaks from the Kent Avenue terminus via New Road and Thames Avenue to Ford's Foundry. On the other hand, the Pentowan journeys were reduced to hourly in the 1960s and ceased (apart from school journeys) in 1974. In a move that probably represented increased passenger numbers, the 174 was converted to RM operation 10 years before the 175, in July 1966, although Barking's Saturday allocation remained RT until it ceased in 1970.

Routemasters ran the route for 16 years before being progressively replaced by Ts during 1982. Like the 175, conversion to one-person-operation came in April 1983. Perhaps reflecting a more commercial approach in the 1980s, Saturday express journeys again operated between 1986 and 1990. Also, as for the 175, the first tender in 1991 was won by East London from NS and the vehicles used were changed in line with the 175. However, in an unusual occurrence, the Boxing Day service in 1994 and 1995 was operated by Capital Citybus, using Olympians from route 123. Unlike the 175, the 174 has been retained throughout by Stagecoach East London, which since 2009 has operated from Rainham garage (RM).

Journeys to Ford's Foundry ceased in 2002, but the following year, the route was extended via New Road and Marsh Way to Dagenham *CEME*. The Centre for Engineering & Manufacturing Excellence is an education facility part-funded by Ford following the closure of the main part of their works.

Following another frequency increase in 2020 to every 6-7 minutes, the route now requires 23 buses. 25 new BYD ADL Enviro400EV City electrics were introduced to RM from the end of 2020 and the route was the area's first electric bus route, closely followed by the 173 (which parallels 174 and 175 along Heathway), operated by identical buses from BK.

# Bus Maps

## David Bowker

I joined London Transport in 1992 and, after time in Travel Enquiries and Bus Infrastructure, in 2000 I moved into 'Publicity' on the 16<sup>th</sup> Floor of Windsor House in Victoria Street, a department that was split between Marketing and Customer Information. If interested, I can tell you more another time, but one of my many responsibilities there was updating bus maps.

It was in the Millennium year that the All-London Bus Map was split into four 'Quadrants' (plus a separate Central London Bus Map), which we called Bus Guides and I became responsible for these in 2002. When I was a kid, I loved these maps (I still do) and I'd use them to get to know London and the bus routes of the capital. When still at school, I thought it would be fantastic to be involved in updating them, never thinking that I actually would, especially as I spent my first eighteen years of work in banking.

I didn't even apply for the job; it just fell to me – fantastic! I was going to make some changes and I didn't have anyone to order me what to do. However, I wondered why we then showed all of the non-TfL routes in the Debden and Loughton areas. The person who had previously managed production of these had been doing so for many years (back to the 1970s), so I asked him why these areas were treated differently. His answer was because it was a London County Council Estate. Well, that may be a reason why they were there in the first place, but not a reason to keep them, so I had them removed. One of the reasons for this was the constant changes to those 'green' routes and the lack of information about them – after all we didn't show them anywhere else in London, so either we add them all on the outskirts of London, or remove them from Debden and Loughton, and I wanted to keep things simple! We did show non-TfL routes that ran within

the TfL area as green numbers (or green roads if they were the only route that served that road).

If you compare the July 2001 guide with the later ones, you will see my influence. We completely changed the way the route listings were shown, with the places served running down the page instead of across and we changed the red roads to grey. I know some enthusiasts think they should have remained red but I had other ideas about these maps and the May 2002 edition was just a start. For the November 2002 edition, I changed the railway lines from a very thin black or blue line to hatched for National Rail and line colours for the Underground. Later I used the Tube Roundel or National Rail logo (crowsfoot) to show the position of the station (rather than a circle) with the logo against the station name. For the November 2004 editions, I put Night buses back on to the map (a huge task for the cartographer and a lot of checking for me), which had been removed during the first computerised map in 2000. However, whilst we used the correct blue according to corporate guidelines for the May 2002 map, it was difficult to see the difference between dark blue and black numbers (it looked okay in the cartographic proofs), so in 2005 *Extract showing the changes made during my management of the bus guides. Note the symbol for bus station at Walthamstow on the right-hand map. The hatched orange line for the Overground is much more obvious than the previous thin black line. The Central line stands out well with the grey roads.*



we changed them to a lighter blue. Another change I made was to add an inset to show TfL routes that ran off the map, eg 465 to Dorking and 246 to Chartwell. I also removed the operator name from the route list, arguing that it was superfluous, as the only reason anyone needs to know the operator was for lost property. They also quickly became out of date – another reason for not showing them!

I did many more changes – virtually every edition had something different, including more town centre enlargements, including the whole of the Olympic Park (now Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park). I added many more places of interest, including Brooklands Museum, until the space was taken up by the aforementioned 465 inset. My last major change was to show Hail & Ride roads in a different colour (red). I never asked if I should do these things – I was responsible for them and I took responsibility for my actions should any senior manager complain. They never did complain and I did receive a commendation when these were first improved. The adding of the Hail & Ride was even picked up by a major blogger (Diamond Geezer), who commented "I'm delighted that TfL have introduced a thoughtful and informative update to their quadrant

maps, rather than some marketing wallah deciding that all New Routemaster routes should be in gold, or some such travesty. I'm pleased that somebody's thought about Outer London for once, rather than always concentrating on the middle. But above all I give thanks that these paper maps still exist, in full technicolour glory, for those of us who choose to plan our own journeys rather than have some algorithm choose it for us". More than thirty favourable comments were received.

Unfortunately, TfL has decided not to produce these any more, the March 2016 editions were the last. Their argument is that most people use electronic maps and many can't read, or get confused by geographic bus maps. However, road atlases are still popular and it's unlikely they will no longer be produced despite the prolific use of sat-nav, so, if that is the case for driving, it should be the same for bus maps! There is nothing else that TfL produce that gives the level of detail that the bus guides did, and (like Diamond Geezer) I certainly don't want to be told how to do a journey – I want the information to enable me to decide my options. In fact, the bus guides became a multi-modal transport map and I even added the London Loop walking route.

The bus guides were produced by FWT and I worked with them to make the changes over the years. They came up with the actual design from my instruction and were invaluable in this respect. I decided when the guides were produced, and I based this on when service changes were due. I had to plan nine or ten months in advance, so I had to know what changes were due that far ahead or longer. It was hard enough getting information one month ahead, so up to a year could only be a rough guideline to when things were planned. One year, 2008, it was necessary to delay the North East Guide by one month because of major bus changes in that area but in most cases all guides were updated at the

same time, although for a while the central London had additional issues during the year.

During the Olympics, we produced special editions (three of which were only for the Games period) but in the SW and NW area, where there were no Games bus changes, we produced the normal editions for the entire year, although all five guides had an Olympic venue on the front cover – Wembley (NW), Wimbledon (SW), Greenwich (SE), The Mall / St James's Park (Central) and, of course, the Olympic Stadium (NE) – now the London Stadium.

You not only need good knowledge of buses and the geography of London, but you had to be aware of changes to museums, football and rugby grounds, sports centres, hospitals etc – even name changes must be picked up. When Barnet FC moved away from its former home in Barnet, we had to amend the guides and when Saracens RFU moved into the new Allianz Park in Mill Hill, we had to ensure that was picked-up too, as well as when Mayday Hospital changed to Croydon University Hospital. Again, we were helped in this respect by the professional and knowledgeable people at FWT.

Occasionally we'd get a call from a customer wanting another place of interest added. One of these was from a lady representing the Hatton Garden Association, who asked that Hatton Garden be marked on the Central London Bus Guide. We don't put any old thing on, but if it is useful for bus users, we do try to add it, although bus information comes first and we do not want to add to the clutter with other information. The lady was very surprised after I had looked at the area, I promised a minute later to add it upon the next update.

In 2009 I became responsible for commissioning the front cover illustrations for the bus guides. I decided that it would be nice to have

just one landmark building for each area and I said that it need not be one that is well known. Previously, the covers showed numerous landmarks, so ideas of what to show quickly became repetitive. The agency came up with some good ideas and so did I. So, the March edition had big block NW letters made to look like the art-deco Hoover building. The NE was the Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge in Epping Forest made into the NE letters. We had Kew Gardens for SW and, not known by many Londoners outside the south east, I decided the remains of the Crystal Palace and the dinosaurs, together with the BBC transmission mast would be good for the SE map. An explanation to their location and bus routes serving them was shown inside. The central guide was made into a big 'C' out of the London Eye. Each design would last for two issues but slightly modified for the second issue. I loved doing these and for the 2011 editions I chose Tate Modern (Central), Kenwood House (NW), Three Mills at Bow (NE), Hampton Court (SW) and Down House (SE) – definitely not a well-known building (and, if you think I have spelt it incorrectly, Down House is actually spelt differently from the village of Downe).

This theme could have gone on for years but we had to change design agency in 2012 so we had to change the design again but still with the one iconic building idea, although I didn't think they had the same visual impact. In 2014 it was dictated that we must have a Year of the Bus (YoB) themed cover and I had no part of that – can you recognise the YoB in these covers? I did have some new ideas for the 2015 editions with the Royal Albert Hall (Albert Memorial and Princess Diana Fountain) for Central London; Wimbledon Windmill (and Common) for the SW; the wonderfully-decorated Shri Swaminarayan Temple in Neasden for the NW; Hackney Empire, NE; and Danson House (Bexleyheath), SE; Incidentally, the front-page colours

**Continues next page**

## Bus Maps - continued

### David Bowker

changed in 2003/4. We had not thought about this and received a complaint from the Travel Information Centres who had got used to reaching for a mauve map for South East and suddenly mauve became South West. I promised that we wouldn't change them again and basically they remained the same since.



The Central London guide used to have a large section of places to visit, together with a description of what to see there, and the places may or may not be well known. The BBC had their own team that devised such listings and they put it together for us, although I'd chip in with some ideas, such as the London Canal Museum – I'm sure their attendances improved that year! These last appeared in 2005 and from the 2006 edition I had an A4 space to fill so I decided to use the Tourist bus map, which had been produced for several years for the 'Welcome to London' leaflet produced by 'Visit London'. I renamed it 'Key bus routes in central London', which was a spider-type map with 21 key routes and little pictures of key tourist sites. There is a limit to the number of routes you can show in this format and I'd get 'complaints' that such and such route had been missed off; after all, all routes are a 'Key' route to the person that uses that route. I did add a few new routes and removed

others but I think we made the best map possible given the limitations.

The Central London guide also had a separate map for Night buses in the central area. Being geographical and with the increasing numbers of night bus routes it was becoming ever more cluttered with a smaller and smaller font size. I changed this to a diagrammatic map, but, although I prefer geographic maps, this was a big improvement for customers. When River buses added route numbers to their services (RBI etc) I added listings for River bus services in the Central London guide.

I mentioned that I had to plan these guides ten months or so in advance. This was because when I printed one edition I had to print enough to cover until the next. It was far more expensive to reprint a guide than to do extra in the first place. At the same time, we didn't want to have a massive amount left over. I had to look at the call-off for the previous six months and project that into the future, taking into account the large initial distribution. The use of these guides was rising so I had to understand that too (Shame those who took the decision not to produce these any more didn't appear to take that into consideration!) We printed 700,000 of the Central London and 110,000 of each of the Quadrant guides and this should last nine or ten months.

Checking these maps is a challenge. You had to understand exactly what each change meant and how it looked geographically. You also had to know how the cartographer worked. If they were asked to add a new route along a section of road, they might temporarily move the current routes away from the road in order to space them out correctly with the new route. If they missed one going back, you could find a route number floating in a

blank area. Although mistakes were rare, whichever part of the map I knew they had been working, I would check everything about an inch or so either side. Adding a new rail line (such as TfL Rail between Shenfield and Liverpool Street) meant a lot of movement of current information, so a lot of checking was required in those areas. Spotting a rogue route number is relatively easy for someone with good bus knowledge but, noticing a missing route is much harder. Occasionally, I'd refer to Mike Harris's excellent bus map and cross reference things.

There was, of course, always something that you spot that is wrong as soon as the guides hit the shelves, mostly due to a change of route (or shelving of a route change) but other things could go wrong too. When we proofed these maps, we could spend weeks on it, going through every detail and discussing with colleagues at London Buses about the likelihood that a route will be 'live' at issue date. It is not a quick print job, taking four or five weeks to do, so we had to be relatively sure a route would change or not, but we could get caught out. I was livid when the only time someone 'helped' me with these (I was instructed to give some of the work to this person) it came back with route 167 cut back to Loughton from Debden. It had been planned to make this change but was soon cancelled and well before we went to print, so if you look at the November 2004 edition, the 167 is wrong, but it's easy to make such a mistake.

In June 2008, the U7 was extended to Hayes Sainsbury's (on the map) but the change was postponed at the last moment and it didn't get removed from the map before being printed. Furthermore, the terminus was shown in the wrong place because the information we were given was wrong! It was delayed so long that the

extension did not appear on the following edition and it was January 2010 before the route was actually extended. We worked on the information that was available to us at the time but I should have spotted this in proof stage – time to forgive my colleague for the 167 error! With all of the uncertainties, I'm surprised we didn't have more such errors but I'm pleased that these were the only two that I know of, although other changes that appeared on the map may have been delayed a month after the map appeared.

As I said, we could work on these for six weeks or more before sending them to print and it could look great when we sent the files to the printer but we had one final check to make; the print proof. What could go wrong in just transferring a file to the printers? A lot actually! One edition had a slight misalignment, which was fine on the cartographic proofs but shifted one small section of the route listings so that it overlapped another bit. Print proof reading is not about the information but about alignments, colours and things that might drop off in file transfers. A map is designed in layers, so that a station logo may be on one layer, the station name on another and the line colour, roads, routes etc may all have their own separate layer. Therefore, if one layer drops off, you'd lose all of the logos or something else. I received the North West guide for November 2002 where the Uxbridge enlargement showed a brown Underground line. It looked fine on all of the work I had been working on but if I had paid more attention to the print proof, I would have seen the wrong colour. This happens because colours can be very different depending on the printer or paper you use. An office-based plotter, which we used for proof checking, will be very different to the actual print versions. The wrong colour was an error by the cartographer but it's not worth reprinting the guide just because of that. After weeks of proof reading the bus guides, I had to do a

completely new set of checks when the print proof came in.

You may be wondering why it takes four or five weeks to print items such as the bus guides. It actually takes longer than that! When you are printing nearly half million Quadrant guides and three-quarters of a million Central London guides, that is a lot of paper and printers do not have that lying around. The guides are a special size too, so we either have to buy the paper on the market and cut it down to size (which is expensive and wasteful), or we have it made specially. Making paper to order is much cheaper but we have to order it two months in advance (via the printer) and it is made to the right size directly at the paper mill, and mills generally close down during August, which we had to be aware of if doing a September edition. I never got to visit a paper mill but seeing how things are printed and folded is interesting. 110,000 South East guides weigh around 7 tons, so 28 tons for the Quadrants and 700,000 Central London guides weighs another nearly 30 tons. So, you can see, just getting the paper is a massive task.

The biggest job at the printers is setting up the machines to fold the guides. It is hard to understand that, although the bus guides open to a flat sheet, we worked on the number of pages and it is not two pages. Each fold is another page, so they open up three pages, top to bottom and open out to ten pages – that's thirty pages a side, so a sixty-page leaflet. We also had to be clear how they fold and we got a folding proof – get it wrong and it would open incorrectly. Folding is really time-consuming, with each fold being a separate action on the machine and you cannot start the process until the ink has dried and it can take half a day just to set up the machine. Folding has to be precise too – if it is out by just a quarter of a millimetre, with ten folds that would be 2½ millimetres too big or too small on the last page. They

have to fold tightly as well to avoid the completed map being too thick.

Now, if you think that bus guides are a big job, the Tube map is even bigger, with 13 million printed in a typical year, which is more than 90 tonnes of paper, although with a much simpler fold than the bus guides. With all of the other printed material TfL issue, that is a lot of trees! The type of paper is important too. In October 2011, different paper was used on the bus guides, which was thicker and heavier but of poorer quality. I found that after one or two uses, it tore across the folds. Our print specialists should have ensured the right paper was used – I asked that future editions use better quality paper. We investigated plastic paper but the cost was prohibitive.

In March 2003, we produced a Green Line map (leaflet) – the first produced by LT/TfL since 1969. It was not so much routes marketed as Green Line, but all coaches that operated a service in London. It included commuter coach routes, especially those from Kent. The map was in the style of a spider but by this time few of the original Green Line routes still existed. In South London, all that was shown was National Express coaches to Gatwick Airport. There were plenty of adverts from the various operators. It was not something that proved to be useful because there were so few routes of interest and commuters only needed the one route into the city, so this piece of publicity was a one-off.

It is a real shame the bus maps are no longer produced by TfL – at the very least I think they should be on-line. Although scale is nowhere near as good as TfL's maps, we still have the excellent Mike Harris all-London map and these can be purchased from him at busmap.co.uk as well as his numerous historic maps going back to the 1930s.

# Donations Received

20th October 2022 to 18th January 2023

Thank you to the following donors.

The museum is pleased to acknowledge, with grateful thanks, the gift of objects from members and others who may be downsizing their collections or from families of those no longer with us.

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## Objects

Nineteen boxes of photographs and several bus books  
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Box of vintage timetables.  
Two fare charts, Rexine spray and fifteen feet of standard width RM seat moquette  
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Many thanks to those who have chosen to donate to us, and our condolences to those who have lost family members and friends.

We endeavour to add the gifts to our permanent collections although surplus material, where duplicating existing objects or not within our collecting policy, is offered for sale to enthusiasts and others. The resultant income is used to maintain and develop the museum.

If you have any items that you wish to donate, please contact the museum by telephone or email (details on inside of back cover) to tell us about the items. We welcome every donation whether bus or other transport related and whether London or elsewhere.

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## ITEMS FOR THE MAGAZINE

Please send contributions for the magazine to the Editor at [editor@londonbusmuseum.com](mailto:editor@londonbusmuseum.com). or by post to the Museum at the address above.

**LAST COPY DATE FOR THE  
SUMMER 2023 EDITION  
Sunday 23 April 2023**

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.

## 2023 Diary Dates

Sunday 12th March - AGM and Members' Day  
Saturday 25th March - route 175 heritage event  
Sunday 16th April - Spring Gathering  
Sunday 11th June - route 65 heritage event  
Sunday 25th June - On the Buses  
Heritage Week in September - to be announced  
Sunday 22 October - TransportFest

Routes 174 & 175 heritage day

Saturday 25 March 2023

IT'S FREE

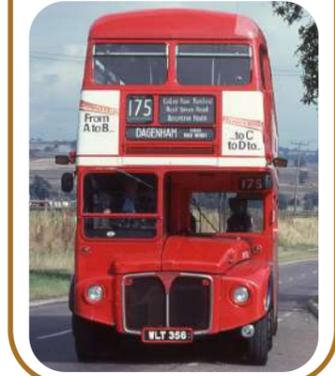
- 175 to North Romford Chase Cross
- 174 to Harold Hill Gooshays Drive
- Romford Market
- Romford Station
- Dagenham Road Eastbrookend 174 only
- Becontree Heath 175 only
- Dagenham Heathway
- Dagenham Kent Avenue

Some buses on route 174 will continue from Harold Hill to Noak Hill, Pantowan  
Timetables will be published early March - visit [londonbusmuseum.com](http://londonbusmuseum.com)

We will be running buses from the 1940s to the 1970s from about 1000 to 1700, which will be joined by other buses from private owners. It's completely free and you can ride with us all day.

This special service is not part of Transport for London but will run alongside the regular TfL routes 174 and 175 on which normal fares apply.

Come for a ride on heritage buses through Romford and Dagenham as part of our programme of bringing buses out of the Museum to run again on the streets of London



Please support our volunteers by visiting the London Bus Museum. We are open Daily and located within the Brooklands Museum, Weybridge, Surrey. [londonbusmuseum.com](http://londonbusmuseum.com)



## Contacting The London Bus Preservation Trust

**Telephone:** 01932 837994. The phone is staffed by 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 e-mail (see below) will usually bring a quicker response.

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

**Post:** The Museum's postal address is: London Bus Museum, Cobham Hall, Brooklands Road, WEYBRIDGE, KT13 0QS

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

### Museum on the Web

**Website:** [www.londonbusmuseum.com](http://www.londonbusmuseum.com)

**Twitter:** @londonbusmuseum

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/LondonBusMuseum](http://www.facebook.com/LondonBusMuseum)

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LONDON BUS MUSEUM

**SPRING GATHERING**

SUNDAY 16 APRIL 2023

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- Bus rides on classic and modern buses
- Children's entertainment
- Traders' market



- Free shuttle bus to and from Weybridge
- Entry to most Brooklands Museum attractions and much more

For admission prices including advance booking and other discounts, visit [brooklandsmuseum.com/tickets](http://brooklandsmuseum.com/tickets) or call 01932 857 381

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Join the Bus Museum on the day and we'll refund your entry fee

Parking on the day is FREE in The Heights car park KT13 0XP

Located at  
BROOKLANDS MUSEUM  
Weybridge

[Londonbusmuseum.com](http://Londonbusmuseum.com)  
01932 837 994

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Routes 174 & 175  
Heritage Running Day  
In Romford & Dagenham  
25 March

Summer on the Buses  
25 June

TransportFest  
22 October



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