LB MUSEUM NEWS

The new Newsletter of The London Bus Museum, Cobham Hall, Brooklands Road, Weybridge, Surrey

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Another month comes around and there are more things to tell you about, so, without further ado, here is the news (with acknowledgements to The Two Ronnies):

Reproduced here is the briefing note that was given to Peter Hendy for the launch of RT2775 at the Museum's Spring Gathering on Wisley Airfield, 29th April 2012, including a few words about buses designed especially for London.

60 years ago this year, 3 London buses toured 12,000 miles across USA & Canada to promote British goods and travel to Britain. Over 80,000 people took trips on the buses in over 80 towns and cities. The buses were not modified in any material way, they were just standard London buses, and they completed their 6-month tour without a hitch. Upon return to London, they entered normal service and served for up to 25 years on London streets, always carrying a GB-plate on the rear to remind people of their special history.

This bus here today is the sole survivor of the 3. Worn out by 25 years' service, it has been completely restored by the volunteers at London Bus Museum to its original condition. Note the original advertisements - exactly as carried on the North American tour. On the tour it was the workshop and crew quarters but I think we can forgive the Museum for restoring it with all its normal seating!

It has been a long restoration, 15 years? - somehow other projects always got in the way but now it's finally done. Some of the restorers deserve a special mention - their meticulous attention to detail has resulted in the fine vehicle you see here today - Peter Plummer, Richard Hussey, Nick Abbott, Ian Barrett, Saul Woods, Andy Baxter, Steve Bigg and George Goodwin - and I am pleased that many of them are here with us today.

London Transport sent 11 staff with the buses - drivers, fitters, engineers and craftsmen under the leadership of a senior inspector. All the staff were expected to take turns driving. The youngest crew member was Albert Dennis, an electrician at Victoria Garage who had to take a crash driving course and passed his PSV test just before departure.

Although Albert has since passed away, I am delighted to welcome his widow Audrey who is here with is today. Back in 2001, Audrey very kindly donated to the Museum her late husband's collection of photos and memorabilia from the Tour and we always promised her that she would be our honoured guest when the bus was restored.

Audrey - I am only sorry that it has taken so long but we are so pleased that you can be here today, to see the bus that Albert drove 60 years ago, and I would like to present to you, on behalf of the Museum, with our grateful thanks, these pictures from our archives showing the crews on the Tour and including your late husband.

Photographs were presented to Audrey Dennis at this point.

I am also very pleased to welcome here today members of the Gwynn family. George Gwynn was the Tour's senior driver and based at Catford garage. George first drove London buses during WW1 and during his long career with London Transport, he was often called upon to drive the preserved buses, including the famous B-type from WW1 called 'Ole Bill'. Three of George's great-grandchildren - Allyson, Jon and Alan - are here with us today, together with their spouses and children. We welcome you all warmly and would like to present to you also a set of the photographs of the Tour crews, including your great grandfather.

Photographs were presented to member of Gwynn family and small souvenirs to children at this point.

Three firsts for London! RT1, RM1 and LT1 share the spotlight up on the runway at Wisley with newly restored RT2775, lights aglow.

An impressive display of different thinking over the course of time, all with a common theme – "A Wet Bus For London". *Photo © John Sullivan*

Ladies and gentlemen, I would now like formally to announce the completion of the restoration of RT2775 and have pleasure in presenting it and commending it to you. It will now be one of the star exhibits at Cobham Hall but, have no fear, will also be seen out at events from time to time.

But, before finishing and allowing you all to get back to all the attractions here at Wisley today, can I also draw your attention to the other special display here.

Since the days of the B-type of 1910, London has had a tradition of designing its own buses and for many decades those designs led the country, if not the world. London General and London Transport epitomised, not only good design, but also the leading edge of technological developments.

I am delighted to have been able to bring here today "LT 1", the first of a new generation of buses designed for London and now in trial service on route 38. This bus combines the latest technology - it's the greenest bus on the road - with the traditional features that Londoners value so highly: attractive design, passenger comfort and that important hop-on, hop-off facility at the back.

Alongside LT1, we have RT1 of 1939 and RM1 of 1954. These two are each the first of probably London's most famous buses - the 7,000 RT-types which dominated London's streets in the 1950s and the Routemaster which operated in London for 50 years.

So, please feast your eyes and enjoys these three Number Ones - each of them a groundbreaker when launched, each of them much loved by Londoners, each of them a London icon and, above all, each of them Designed for London.

Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you so much for coming today and I very much hope that you will enjoy the rest of the day here at Wisley. Thank you.

Carlton Colville

Michael Wickham

On 8th May, exactly 50 years after London's last trolleybus entered the depot, a large contingent of Museum members attended a special event at the East Anglia Transport Museum, Carlton Colville to witness a very special commemoration. Every surviving London trolleybus bar one (1253 on display at Covent Garden) was back under the wires, including Diddler No. 1 and the recently repatriated trolleys - Leyland H1 796 back from Paris and Leyland K2 1348 back from Ireland.

Along with ex-LCC HR2 tramcar 1858, these superb electric vehicles gave rides all day long to an enthusiastic crowd, the highlight for many being the re-enactment of "The End" when 1521, London's last trolleybus to operate in service, was dressed up with the plaques, blinds, flags and coloured lightbulbs it wore for its last journey into Fulwell Depot 50 years before.

The pictures below show the Diddler and 1521 together again and, later in the day, 1521 displaying its gloomy message.

Photos at Carlton Colville © Michael Wickham.

(Eat your heart out, Zabek! Ed)

OK, So I Like Trolleybuses Too!

Another fine shot of the Diddler, under the wires and running around like a three year-old, taken by that stout fellow Peter Zabek.

Buses Going Out

Please channel all requests for buses through Peter Brown, who will then seek the appropriate approvals on your behalf.

Ian Barrett.

Steve Edmonds

Membership

A number of LBPT memberships have lapsed over the last couple of years and I have received adverse comments that no annual reminders to individual members have been sent during that time. In the past, Steve Hook and I used to send up to three reminders to individuals and this was costly in terms of our time as well as postage, stationery and phone calls for those that we had no email address for.

Debbie Morris, our membership manager, has taken note of feedback from members and with effect from the July 2012 renewal date a list of names of those who do not pay by Direct Debit or Standing Order will be published in the summer edition of the quarterly magazine. This will become a regular feature each quarter and will fulfil the function of individual reminders for now. The introduction of our new Membership IT system may be able to send individual reminders automatically in due course.

If you pay be Standing Order please ensure you inform your bank of the

2012 increase to £25 for individuals, £37.50 for couples and £42.50 for family memberships. Direct Debit forms can be downloaded from the web site or you can request a hard copy from the Museum which can be posted to you.

Volunteers

I am pleased to be receiving a steady trickle of applications from potential volunteers, both for Museum stewards and for archiving, administration and restoration and maintenance of vehicles and bus related artefacts. A warm welcome to recent joiners: Jon Baggott, Michael Sweasey, David Erlam, Jason Tandy and Adrian Palmer. This is encouraging and bodes well for the future; we need to keep the flow of new blood coming to take on new projects and allow those of our more senior volunteers to ease off the accelerator pedal a bit, if they so wish.

I was delighted with the response from volunteers for the annual Spring Gathering at Wisley. It turned out to be a good day in spite of the appalling weather and I pay tribute to all the volunteers who weathered the storm, kept their heads and looked after our visitors without complaint.

Thanks to those who did the set up on the Saturday in equally bad, if not worse conditions, and a special thank you to the gallant few who remained behind to take down signs on the A3, load barriers, cones and signs on to the lorry and trailers and clear the site at Wisley at the end of Sunday. Also those who helped Kevin put the buses back in the Museum ready for the following morning's visitors. The last few hardy souls left Cobham Hall for home at 22.00 hours; truly "going the extra mile".

Our next public event will be held at Brooklands on Sunday 24th June. We shall need fewer volunteers than Wisley for this and I am expecting to be able to staff the following teams:

- Bus services to and from the Main entrance to Brooklands (Vickers Gate) – minimum of 6 people during the day
- Marshalling up to five separate display areas – up to 30 people on split shifts
- Stewards and Guides for the Bus Museum – 12 on split shifts
- Stewards at Main Entrance to the site to direct visitors – 4 on split shifts

I shall be emailing potential volunteers asking for help in due course but if you know that you are attending and you are able and would like to help you can let me know in advance on stevenstef@tiscali.co.uk Landline: 0208 661 0745. Mobile: 07906 587687.

From Down Under

We heard from the latest criminal to be transported down under recently. I refer to none other than the highly esteemed Graham Bartlett of course, our former resident Amateur Mechanic (how do they get "AA" from that?). He wants us all to know that the prison food is fine and that the wardens really aren't as bad as he was led to believe. He added that breaking rocks is now almost a thing of the past, being mandatory only on two days a week, although the forced exposure to inordinate amounts of sunshine while laying roads is tiring for the rest of the time.

He doesn't quite know what all the fuss is about surrounding the spiders, as they all seem quite friendly and wipe their feet as they enter his cell, although the process takes a little time. He ended by saying that he is in a very bouncy mood. I can only assume that he is eating too much kangaroo steak.

Behave yourself, Graham, and you might get a little time off for good behaviour, although I wouldn't count on it!

Quiz time

The first to identify last month's photograph from an odd angle was disqualified for "insider trading", so the winner was Jim Andress, who correctly identified UMP227. I didn't have the heart to disqualify him for sending his entry in by email, instead of on the back of a fag packet, so his prize is to have his name in print here – Jim Andress, for those who missed it the first time!

This month's mystery vehicle is below. Entries in morse code over the telegraph to BusesRus:

London to Brighton Success

No doubt you have heard that RT2775 almost swept the board in Brighton, winning "Best In Class", "Best AEC" and "Best In Show". What a beautiful vehicle she is, and a credit to everyone who has worked on her.

RT2775 posed with her deserved trophies. Well done to everyone who helped with her restoration through the years

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