



# LONDON BUS MUSEUM

*E-news  
August 2025*

## 100 years of Swanley Garage



Swanley Garage was opened by the East Surrey Traction Company in 1925 and is one of only three LT Country Area garages still in use for its original purpose. This milestone was celebrated on 23 August with a garage open day including talks and tours, historic vehicle displays and bus rides. There was also a display of vintage buses, cars and trucks at Gamecock Meadow, West Kingsdown. The Museum sent **RT 3491** crewed by **Simon Greatwood**, **Peter Milner** and **Emma West** and a number of volunteers came along to enjoy the celebration.



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PHOTO CREDIT (BELOW): JON BATCHELOR OTHER PHOTOS: EDITOR



# Imberbus

It's hard to convey the scale and spectacle of this incredibly popular event through photography, but your Editor couldn't attend and is extremely grateful to those who have contributed! The sun shone, the crowds flocked and over £40,000 was raised on 16 August.

KEVINAS ARLAUSKAS



JON BATCHELOR



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JON BATCHELOR

# Imberbus

ALL PHOTOS BELOW:  
NIGEL EADON-CLARKE

ALL PHOTOS BELOW: JON BATCHELOR



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# Low-ish floor running day

LBM's **T 23** was on duty at this event on 13 July, organised by the Bromley Bus Preservation Group, which currently looks after the bus. Vehicles ran in service between Godstone and East Grinstead.

As well as examples from London fleets, there were appearances from some tri-axle former Kowloon Motor Bus vehicles.



*Low-ish floor*



# A Tribute to Ian Cormack

On 6 August LBM volunteers gathered with Ian's friends and family to say farewell to Ian. Roger Stagg gave the following tribute:

Even in the distant days of the old Museum at Redhill Road, Ian was often on hand to help after he became a member in March 2009. At that time he had a full-time job in the diplomatic arm of the Civil Service, so it was a wonder that he found time between his constant trips abroad to be there at all.

No doubt like so many of us, the London bus was in Ian's blood. In those now seemingly distant days, we could as "mere children" take ourselves off for bus rides that were adventures far and wide, without parental control. There can be little doubt that in the past, some of our paths must have crossed with Ian's on the top deck of an RT or Routemaster, or perhaps hanging around a garage or bus station before being led away from the banned areas by a diligent Inspector.

When the collection moved to Brooklands in 2011 and became a public Museum, operating seven days a week, we needed volunteers to staff the premises. There were many who prophesied that doing this was an impossibility. New posts as daily Stewards and Duty Managers were created. Ian fell into this with enthusiasm, despite his home situation caring for his partner Debbie, who so sadly predeceased him.

ALL PHOTOS: EDITOR



Above: Roger delivers his tribute, as Adrian Palmer, Graham Burnell and Simon Douglas Lane look on





## *Ian Cormack*

Ian started as a Steward and progressed to Duty Manager. Is it just coincidence that Ian was on duty with **John Cope** on 6 August 2011, exactly 14 years ago today?

Ian took on the job of managing the daily stewards rota in 2021. Post Covid, the Museum developed enhanced displays needing even more stewards, but Ian made sure the show went on. Even after illness forced Ian to work mainly from home, he still ensured the Museum was staffed on almost every occasion. How he did it bears witness to his unrivalled persona as a gentleman, and the diplomat that he was.

Thus we say farewell to a friend and colleague, and a lover of the London bus - as long as it was red.

Ian really wanted to make his final journey on a red London bus. AGX 520, known as **738J**, was a 1933 red London double decker that suffered severely from enemy action in 1944. It was rebuilt by London Transport in 1950 as a breakdown tender - a mobile workshop, remaining in service for another 20 years. Resident now at the London Bus Museum, today it undertakes a duty for which it was not intended but one it is proud to do.

It has been an honour for all of us to have known Ian and distressing that he has left us too early. He leaves behind a legacy of service that will continue to benefit all of us at the Museum.

*With additional thanks to Derek Hanlon for driving 738J*

# Ian's funeral

*Derek Hanlon writes:*

The picture (right) shows 738J at the funeral director's storage unit in Walton. During the journey from the LBM, Rob, one of the funeral directors, told me they have only been at this unit for less than a year. Because it is in a site of about 20 mixed units, the landlords were worried about coffins being seen and are limited to four hearse visits a month in case the locals get upset. There is no limit on unmarked vans or estate-type vehicles, into which group 738J fitted.

As soon as we arrived and backed into position, the next-door neighbour appeared and chatted enthusiastically about 738J. A short time later, two ladies driving past asked if 738J is for hire. I explained it was being used for a Museum member's funeral so not generally for hire. She said her elderly father used to build these buses at Park Royal and he would be interested to see it. I explained where it can be seen and that we would be happy to see him and talk about his Park Royal days.

As we pulled away, a tenant from an opposite unit stopped us and wanted to chat about what we were doing. 50 yards or so further, a delivery driver stopped us and happily chatted about it. Just after leaving him, a lorry pulled into the site, and I had to stop and wait for him to pass. Instead, he stopped and wanted to know all about it and said how stunning and gorgeous 738J looked. All this happened in only a few hundred yards of private road to and from the unit. Rob said no one has ever shown that much interest in a funeral before, and it is certainly one he will never forget.

Before we left Richmond Park to return the coffin to Walton, Rob put a single rose on top of the coffin before friends and family raised their glasses for a final farewell. The ride is quite hard and bumpy in 738J, and we were surprised that after a ten or so mile return journey, the rose had remained in the same place on the coffin.



PHOTO CREDIT (ABOVE): DEREK HANLON



PHOTO CREDIT (ABOVE): SHARON BURTON



# (F)air stage

Your editor had always thought that nothing beats the view from the top deck of a bus. That opinion was challenged on 19 July, when the Gatwick Airport cherry-picker, which was visiting Brooklands for Working Vehicles day, offered visitors the chance to ascend over 17 metres for some unique views of the Brooklands complex.

Thanks to **Martin Skeggs** from Gatwick for the fantastic shot of **RML 2760** leaving for a bus ride, crewed by **Duncan Law** and **Ben Kingsley-Scott**.

PHOTO (RIGHT): MARTIN SKEGGS  
ALL OTHER PHOTOS: EDITOR



# Q&A with Emma West, volunteer conductor

How did your interest in buses begin?

It began just shy of 20 years ago, at the age of three. On the way to and from school, I was studying bus stop timetable posters and watching the buses on my local route (ex-Stagecoach London ALX 200 Darts from the late 1990s) going towards their various destinations. That interest then blossomed into collecting all sorts of bus paraphernalia like signage, posters, timetables and models, travelling all over England and Wales, riding different buses and taking photographs of them for posterity, and being involved in bus preservation on a handful of occasions with friends' vehicles.

How did you hear about the LBM and what do you enjoy most about volunteering?

I heard about the LBM some years ago (around 2015, I would imagine) but didn't make my first visit until TransportFest 2021, with my friend's Green Bus Plaxton President. I then returned for TransportFest 2022 and 2023, before signing up to be a volunteer over the winter of 2023-24 and conducting my first bus in February of '24, so I'm still a relative newbie. I really enjoy conducting buses on our route recreations. The busy nature of the services can be a challenge for me, but I persevere. It's a really rewarding feeling when I've done my bit on one of those days. The comments I get from passengers, old and young, make my day as well!

What's your favourite vehicle in the collection and why?

A very difficult question to answer, this! I think my favourite bus has to be **RML 2760**. It was the first vehicle on which I gave the "ding ding" as a conductress, and it's the only member of the Bus Rides fleet that was still in London service during my lifetime, with it being retired from normal duties in 2004, the year after I was born.

It's also a very significant vehicle, being the last Routemaster built!



## Emma West

For those reasons, I was really excited to see EFE Road's recent announcement of a model of RML 2760 in its preserved condition, which will be released this autumn. It's safe to say that one of those models will definitely enter my collection soon!

Where do you see yourself in five or ten years' time?

I hope to see myself in a fulfilling career in the transportation industry. It's simple as that. Transport is my bread and butter, and it's where the vast majority of my knowledge base lies. What part of the transport industry, I don't yet know - there are so many variations and career paths to choose!

Do you have a favourite book/TV show/ film?

To be honest, not really! I'm firmly within the computer generation, so I haven't really watched much television since I was a child, nor have I really seen a film since around then either! Most of my time is spent either at home on the computer doing various transport activities like playing simulation games, talking with like-minded friends or listening to music. When I'm out on the buses I also stick my headphones in and put a decent album or playlist on to help pass the time!



## Receiving your LBM Magazine

At our 2024 AGM, members overwhelmingly agreed that they can help the Museum save considerable postage and printing costs by receiving their magazines electronically.

Your online magazine will be just the same as the printed one, will take up no physical storage space and will be available anywhere! There will be no postal delays or damage to it.

The money we save on postage and printing will be used to fund the work of the LBM!

Printed copies of the magazine will continue to be available to those who would like them.

If you wish to receive the electronic magazine only, please notify us by email: [membership@londonbusmuseum.com](mailto:membership@londonbusmuseum.com). This will take effect from September.



# Can you help?

Trustee **Richard Telling** of Falcon Buses has very kindly provided us with a software programme (Freeway) to track and monitor the work that is being done on our buses. We're now looking for a volunteer to maintain the system.

The Freeway System is a cloud-based fleet and asset tracking system, which allows you to manage the Museum's assets. It has a comprehensive maintenance tracking system to allow you to plan and schedule the routine preventative maintenance of the fleet. It can easily track driver first use checks to ensure that they are done correctly and track and monitor any outstanding defects that have been reported.

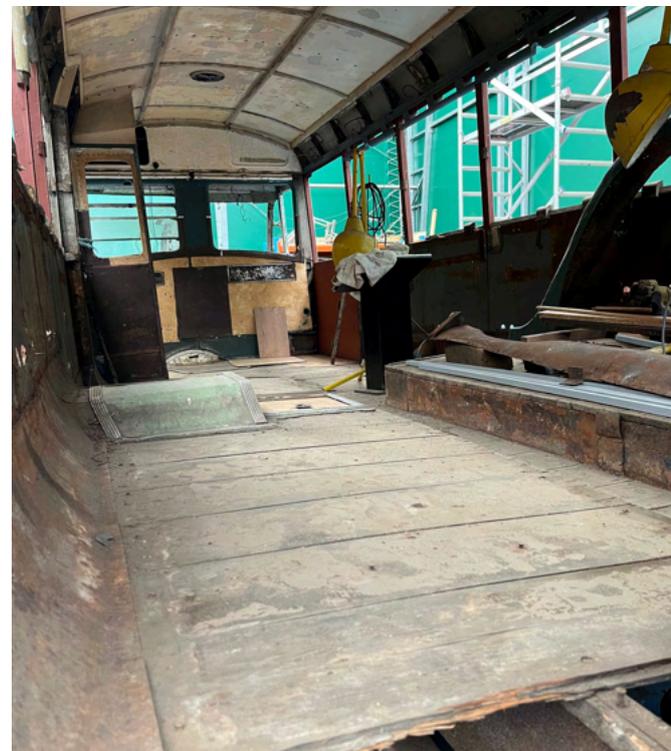


The system tracks all assets, so it can also be used to keep a register of the other plant and equipment in the Museum and to track and schedule its routine maintenance.



There is a full purchasing and stock management module to allow placing orders through the system. This can then talk to other systems, such as finance to automate other processes.

If you think you could help, please contact Peter Brown:  
[peter.brown@londonbusmuseum.com](mailto:peter.brown@londonbusmuseum.com).



# LBM Events 2025/26



## Route 54 Heritage Bus Day

13 September

Join us for a ride along route 54 with free vintage buses running all day between Blackheath and Elmers End.

[View more >](#)



## TransportFest

19 October

Save the date for our autumn extravaganza with a dazzling range of vehicles from across the decades, bus rides and traders' stalls.

[View more >](#)



## Spring Gathering

19 April 2026

Join us for our annual transport curtain-raiser to kick off the 2026 rally season with a range of vehicles, rides, stalls and fun.

[View more >](#)



## Summer Festival

28 June 2026

Our annual summer event returns, with visiting vehicles, bus rides, traders' stalls, food and more for all ages.

[View more >](#)



## TransportFest

18 October 2026

Round off the rally calendar at our autumn event with a wide range of vehicles, bus rides and traders' stalls.

[View more >](#)

# Friends reunited

Spot the difference: Former Upton Park garage stablemates RMLs 2760 and 2499 meet at the Vickers Gate



PHOTO CREDIT (ABOVE): EDITOR; BELOW: MIA HASTINGS



PHOTO CREDIT: SHARON BURTON

# From the Editor

It's been a memorable summer of heatwaves and brilliant bus events. There's still plenty to look forward to in the autumn, with our Route 54 running day approaching in September and our TransportFest in October.

Thanks to Kevinas Arlauskas, Jon Batchelor, Peter Brown, Sharon Burton, Nigel Eadon-Clarke, Deryck Fill, Derek Hanlon, Mia Hastings, Martin Skeggs, Roger Staggs and Emma West for contributing stories and photos.

Please email me any content for our next edition.

*Richard*

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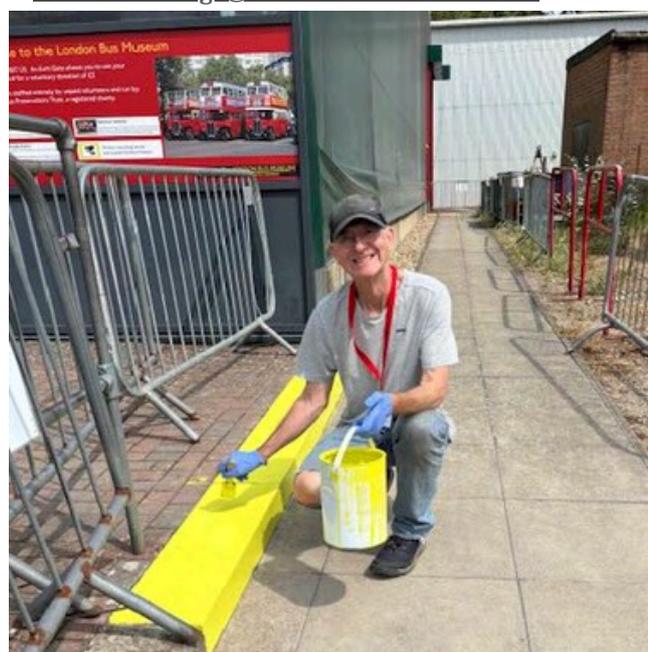


PHOTO CREDIT: DERYCK FILL

Artist in residence: Many thanks to volunteer **Martin Watkins** for painting the yellow warning lines on the stair treads up to the mezzanine level and the steps up to the Museum's main entrance. This ensures the building is a safer place for all our visitors and volunteers.

E-news is produced for the members of the London Bus Preservation Trust and sent to those who have supplied an email address.

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