



Magazine

E-edition

Issue 57 September 2025



Route 418 Heritage Day
Summer Gathering
Bus Stops and Roundels

The Journal of the London Bus Preservation Trust



£4 to non-members



EDITORIAL Dave Jones

This has, so far, been a great summer for bus rallies and the Museum has benefited from favourable weather for the route 418 event and the Summer Festival, photos from both of which appear later in these pages, along with some from other events that our buses have attended. Worthy of mention is ERNIE's Retro Wheels event at the Oxford Bus Museum (just a shed full of buses when I last saw it, but now a fully-fledged attraction) to which G 351 and 738J were taken. Neither are speed machines, so we must be grateful that Ian Barrett, Derek Hanlon and Rod Lucas were prepared to rise at dawn and head west - about as far west as either bus had been. And so it is, by efforts such as these, that our Museum is able to gain publicity and attract more visitors.

The Trust's latest acquisition, BS 4, was in action on 10th August at the Kent & East Sussex Railway's bus rally, a small but very pleasant event, organised by a very friendly group of people. It was surprisingly popular

with visitors who had a number of very interesting buses to choose to ride on.

Thinking of photos, I am indebted to a very small number of contributors whose names appear throughout this, and other, editions. While I have a fair amount of written material on file to publish in the future, photos from other sources would be welcome. Either email them direct to me, or send me a link to a Flickr page. Variety is the spice of life, so they say!

Finally, and with Leon's pleas in mind, we have recently lost two significant members from our number, Ian Cormack and David Hurley. See p22. Having been a member for 48 years, I don't expect to go on for ever, so we really do need to bring on board some younger folk to carry on the great work done so far. If you know of anyone with an interest in buses, or who just likes helping people, please do bring them along to check us out - they won't even have to pay to get in!

Cover photo, ST 922 was out on route 462 for the Summer Gathering, captured on its return to the site by Nigel Eadon-Clarke.

Back cover, top, RML 3 was also out on route 462 but was taking a breather when snapped by Adrian Palmer.

Back cover, bottom, Adrian also caught former Cobham resident, STL 2692, which recently took part in the Hertford Running day and is seen at the former Braughing Station.

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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT Leon Daniels

Two essential things to discuss with you this issue.

Firstly, the London Bus Museum is believed to be the country's largest museum of its kind, open every day and staffed with only volunteers. Volunteering is the lifeblood of our organisation and the reason why we can achieve so much.

There are now one or two areas where the system is clearly under strain as some volunteers reach a point in their lives where they have to scale down their help. Most importantly, every day we need a Duty Manager and three stewards. Tom Yun is doing an admirable job, but we really need more people on the roster to ensure we can remain open daily. Stewards will tell you that helping happy visitors enjoy our museum is one of the most rewarding things in their lives.

If you could spare us a day from time to time, this would ensure we can be confident in keeping the museum open.

Please offer some help to tom.yun@londonbusmuseum.com, where you will be very warmly received!

Secondly, another area in which you can help the Museum, even from home, many miles away. Too much of your annual subscription goes to the Royal Mail for delivering your printed magazine slowly. All that cash can stay in the Museum for use on restorations if you agree to receive your Magazine by email instead. There are lots of advantages - you receive the magazine instantly; the pages are brighter on screen; your entire collection takes up absolutely no space at home, and is always there for you to access.

A simple email to membership@londonbusmuseum.com will make this happen.

Finally, I must add my own great sadness at the loss of Ian Cormack, who, until recently, led the Duty Manager and Stewarding team at the Museum. Ian had told us that he had a degenerative illness, and in time, he was forced to step down as a volunteer. His last journey was on 738J for his funeral, attended by many members.



When is a London bus not a London bus? When it's a tendered bus such as Bill Hiron's 1981 Bristol VRT which was new to Eastern National for London Regional Transport services. It's seen in a very damp Guildhall Yard for Cart Marking, Nigel Eadon-Clarke

ITEMS FOR THE MAGAZINE

Please send contributions for the magazine to the Editor at editor@londonbusmuseum.com or by post to the Museum at the address on page 23.

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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.

2025 Diary Dates

**Saturday 13th September - Route 54 Heritage Day and
Catford Garage Open Day
Sunday 19th October - TransportFest**

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A HISTORY OF ROUTE 54

Peter Osborn

[More photos here](#)

London bus route 54 has run between Woolwich and Elmers End for over 100 years, having been longer up to the year 2000.

The route has its origins in new routes 54 and 54A in January 1922, which ran from central London via Lewisham and Catford to Bromley (54) or Forest Hill (54A). In October 1922, the 54A was withdrawn from Forest Hill and rerouted to run via Beckenham and Elmers End to South Croydon, establishing the southern part of today's 54. At the same time, the route was transferred from the London General Omnibus Co to be operated by Thomas Tilling from their garages at Catford (TL) and Croydon (TC).

In February, the 54 to Bromley was withdrawn (covered by the 47 south of Lewisham) and the 54A to South Croydon renumbered 54. Then, in June 1924, the 54 was withdrawn between central London and Lewisham to run from Plumstead Common and Woolwich via Blackheath, establishing the northern part of today's route. At the same time, the Southern Railway restricted access over their bridge on Addiscombe Road to B and K types, requiring the withdrawal of Tilling buses and the transfer of operation to the LGOC's Old Kent Road (P) and Plumstead (AM) garages, using K types.



RT 2410 at Catford garage in 1978, Dave Jones

The summer Sunday southward extension of the route to Whyteleafe which operated in 1924 was not repeated in 1925. However, in April 1927, the route was extended daily from South Croydon to Selsdon. The Old Kent Road allocation moved to the new Elmers End (ED) garage when it opened in March 1929, still operated by K types, with the Plumstead allocation moving in over the following 12 months.

Elmers End then remained in sole charge, providing 23 buses, until joined by Catford in April 1936. The type operated changed in quick succession, to S types by May 1931, then by covered top NS by August 1931, at which point the bridge in Croham Road was considered too low

and the route was revised to follow the convoluted route via Sussex Road still used today by the 403 to avoid the low rail bridges in the area. The NSs were in turn replaced as ED received more nearly-new STs over the winter of 1931/2. LTs and then STLs made an appearance on Sundays in 1933, then STLs took over all week in March 1936, before the Monday to Saturday operation was moved to Catford the following month, also with STLs. Elmers End's Sunday operation converted progressively to LT during 1936, the route's busiest day of the week, with both garages operating on that day from October 1936. Since 1923, route 289 had operated parallel to the 54 from Plumstead Common all the way to Southend Pond (just south of Catford garage), then on to Bromley; the route was renumbered 89 in October 1934. In October 1936, the 89 was replaced by the Monday to Saturday 154 and diverted at Southend Pond to run to Elmers End, thus paralleling the 54 along its entire route; it was operated by Catford using STLs. In March 1937 the 154 was introduced on Sunday between Lewisham and Selsdon, again paralleling the 54, but with LTs from Elmers End. Between the two routes, 35 buses were operated on Sundays. The 154 Sunday operation ceased for the winter but reappeared for the summer of 1938. October 1939 saw the last operation of the 154.

Back at the 54 itself, Elmers End's Sunday contribution ceased just after the outbreak of war, replaced by Croydon (TC), reappearing briefly over winter 1940/41. Otherwise Croydon and Catford shared the operation until 1947, with Croydon reverting from STLs to STs from 1944. The route continued unchanged from Plumstead Common via Woolwich, Lewisham, Catford and Croydon to Selsdon.

The Monday to Friday requirement peaked at 35 buses in February 1950 (38 on Saturday, 28 on Sunday), just before RTs replaced the STLs from Catford that spring. Elmers End was also now operating RTs on a minority share of the allocation from November 1951 until May 1961.

RM 141 Blackheath, Mike Harris



The shortening of the route commenced after the major bus strike in 1958 which affected bus usage and led to reductions in service. The section between Woolwich and Plumstead Common was withdrawn, first on Sundays from October 1959 and entirely from May 1963. Catford still provided 24 RTs Monday to Friday, but the weekend service reduced.

In June 1965, a peak hour service was added at Woolwich to serve Woolwich Industrial Estate. This operated until November 1973 when replaced by new route 198. Also in June 1965, two school journeys morning and afternoon were extended from Selsdon to Riddlesdown, Mitchley Hill. The Sunday service between Croydon and Selsdon was withdrawn in July 1969, with the route terminating at West Croydon on that day; the route was withdrawn entirely south of Croydon in January 1973. Rather than West Croydon, on Monday to Friday, the route terminated at the Fairfield Halls.



DMS 2265 Addiscombe Road, David Bowker

From January 1972, Elmers End again contributed buses for the route, initially RTs but providing the first Routemasters for the route on Sundays from March 1973, then on Saturdays from December that year, when Sundays were converted to one person operation using DMSs. Catford provided RMs on Saturdays from March 1975, but Monday to Friday remained RT-operated until the whole route was converted to one-person DMS operation in April 1978. Operation was now from Catford Monday to Saturday and Elmers End on Sunday. Over six months from July 1983, Catford's DMSs were replaced by Ts.

The route's requirement reduced progressively to 15 buses Monday to Friday, 14 Saturday and 5 Sunday, until in April 1985 Catford took back Sunday operation and Elmers End retired for the last time, closing in October 1986. The new Plumstead garage (PD) operated the Sunday service from November 1988, initially on its own, then from January 1991 jointly with Catford, at which point both garages provided midi-buses for the Sunday service. After a brief weekday allocation from Plumstead in 1991, Catford withdrew from the route in July 1993, leaving Plumstead to operate with a mix of Ts and Ls on Monday to Saturday and MAs and MRLs on Sunday. Double-deckers returned informally on Sundays from summer 1996 and officially from September that year.



T 1028 in Woolwich, Mike Harris

In 1989, London Buses set up its new districts, with Plumstead and Catford being part of Selkent, which was acquired by Stagecoach in September 1994. The first tender for the route was issued in summer 1996, with the contract being won by Stagecoach Selkent starting from April 1997, with new VN Olympians for the contract arriving in November.

The final major route change occurred in June 2000, when the route was shortened to run between Woolwich and Elmers End, following the opening of Croydon Tramlink between Elmers End and Croydon at the end of May.

In March 2001, operation again was shared by Plumstead and Catford, both running VNs. After Stagecoach won the second five year contract, these were replaced by TAS short Tridents, and in February 2003, operation was concentrated at Catford. The next contract, from May 2009, was won by Metrobus, part of Go Ahead, using Scania double-deckers from Orpington (MB), moving to Croydon (C) in May 2012.

In February 2011, the Elmers End terminus was moved from Tesco to Elmers End Station, where the new Interchange with trams and National Rail opened.

From the May 2014 contract renewal, operation returned to Stagecoach at Catford, using Enviro 400 hybrid double-deckers and featuring an improved daytime frequency of 10 minutes. Stagecoach retained the contract in May 2019; the next tender is due to commence in May 2026.

DT 33 on a Sunday in Lee, Mike Harris



EAST GRINSTEAD RUNNING DAY 27th April 2025

[More photos here](#)

The ever-popular event at East Grinstead enjoyed fine weather, taken advantage of by large numbers of people and buses. LBM's was represented by RT 3491 and T 23 which is currently in the care of the Bromley Bus Preservation Group.



Above, RT 3491, crewed by Paul Naylor and Kevin Porter. Left, T 23 running an M & D route, both in East Grinstead and both photos by Nigel Eadon Clarke. Below left, RT 3148 creeps up on RT 604, a regular attendee at the event. Below right, RF 271 turns at Turners Hill with a solitary passenger, both photos by Adrian Palmer



Below, RF 633 passes through Lingfield having travelled the scenic 494 from Oxted, Adrian Palmer.

Right, Maidstone & District also ran into East Grinstead with their route 97 from Tunbridge Wells, as shown by 1956 AEC Regent V with Park Royal body, Nigel Eadon Clarke.



Left, a tidy pair of Routemasters, 1009 and 1699 attract some interest at Forest Row, standing on what was the station forecourt.

Below, the sole surviving MB arrives at East Grinstead, representing a troubled period in London's bus story, both by Nigel Eadon-Clarke.



LOW-ISH FLOOR RUNNING DAY, EAST GRINSTEAD 13th July 2025



Left, T 23 made a second appearance in East Grinstead, while, above, LS 174 made a rare appearance this far south.

Bottom left, the event brought out some unusual visitors, such as this 1981 Volvo B10M with UTIC bodywork that was imported from Funchal, Madeira. Another odd attendee, below, was this ex-KMB Volvo Super Olympian - VW04 RBH Volvo B10TL, now with Replacement Bus Hire.

Photos by Nigel Eadon-Clarke



OXFORD BUS MUSEUM ERNIE'S RETRO WHEELS 25th May 2025

[More photos here](#)

This one-off event was arranged to showcase rare and unusual buses in preservation. Ian Barrett, Derek Hanlon and Rod Lucas took G 351 and 738J along for the day. ERN 1E is a mini play-bus at the museum, a scaled-down replica of a 1960 AEC Reliance!



Above left, 738J on a rare outing while, above, G 351 entertained the public with a trip to Church Hanborough, both Nigel Eadon-Clarke.

Left, the Oxford museum's own 1967 AEC Renown with Northern Counties body was visiting picturesque Witney, Adrian Palmer.

Below left, FUF 63 was an early preservation candidate, an AEC Regent I with Weymann body from 1939, new to Brighton, Hove and District.

Below right, also from Brighton, Hove & District and also with a Weymann body is this 1962 Leyland Titan PD2. Converted to OPO in 1966. Both Nigel Eadon-Clarke



Above, Robin Helliar-Symon's award-winning Jersey Leyland paid a visit.

Right, Oxford 395, an AEC Regent I with Weymann body built in 1949. The bus has been repatriated from the USA where it has almost certainly posed as a London bus, both Nigel Eadon-Clarke.



Above, Barry Weatherhead's superb 1922 AEC S 433 was perhaps the oldest visitor, Nigel Eadon-Clarke.

Top left, T 792 is captured in a timeless scene at Church Hanborough as a 1938 Morris 8 overtakes, while at North Leigh, A & D's 1950 Dennis Lancet enjoys a break, both Adrian Palmer.

Left, Maidstone & District's VKR 39 (again!) a 1956 AEC Regent V with Park Royal body looking at home in Woodstock, Nigel Eadon-Clarke.

Below, 305 KFC, a Dennis Loline, has been cut open to show its construction. An idea for RM 140? Nigel Eadon-Clarke.



ROUTE 418 HERITAGE DAY 8th June 2025

[More photos here](#)

As part of the ongoing programme to take the Museum to the public, four of our buses, and many others, took to the roads over route 418, centred on Epsom. As has been the case for much of the year, the weather was kind, so there were plenty of people around to enjoy vintage travel. Our pop-up shop in Epsom raised over £1,000 towards our funds, thanks are due to those who staffed it and those who provided buses for the day.



Top right, RT 3491 sweeps into Longmead Road, Epsom with a good load on board.
Above right, RF 226 sets off on a short run to Wells Estate.
Upper left, XF 3 came along as a static exhibit at Epsom.
Left, RT 4779 returned to its routes, having been based at Leatherhead garage between 1963 and '69 when it was transferred to the central area and was painted red.
Bottom left, RT 604 trundles through Epsom near the end of its journey.
Bottom right, RF 600 is pursued by RT 4779 heading for the northern terminus at Kingston.
All above by Nigel Eadon-Clarke, except RT 3491 by David Bowker.



Above, our heritage days wouldn't be the same without the odd visitor. 1988 vintage Volvo B10M with Alexander body adds some variety to the shades of green.

Right, King Alfred's 1956 all-Leyland product demonstrates provincial buses to the locals. Both Nigel-Eadon Clarke.

Left, RMC 1500 arrives at Epsom. The registration was once carried by East London Coaches' T 1128.

Lower left, RM 1005 paints the town red, but clean!

Below right, RML 2456 crosses into High Street at the end of a run from Kingston. All from Nigel Eadon-Clarke.



Below left, GS 42 heads into High Street at the start of a trip on the 481.

Below right, SNB 449 brings some retro-modernity to the route. Both Nigel Eadon-Clarke.



SUMMER FESTIVAL 22nd June 2025

[More photos here](#)

Our Summer Festival was most aptly named given the weather so far, which was, no doubt, a help in bringing nearly 1,400 visitors to the event and 60 buses. This resulted in a useful boost to our income. Huge thanks are due to the volunteers that turned out to help, expertly organised by Deryck Fill, well done all. The theme this time was the 130th anniversary of Dennis Brothers of Guildford, with D 142 parked in a display of Dennis vehicles.



Left, beside D 142, the chassis of CC 8670 was on display. It was built in 1928 with a charabanc body for tours of the Great Orme, Llandudno. Also on display was a Dennis Fire Engine - Trailer Pump from 1913. Nigel Eadon-Clarke.

Lower left, it's been a while since RF 226 was last in service on route 462, Phil Hambling.



Upper right, RTL 1427 and RT 3254 representing their family, Nigel Eadon-Clarke.

Above, RM types were more numerous, Adrian Palmer.

Left, DM 999 sets off for Weybridge, Phil Hambling.



Above, staying with Dennis, this Dart with East Lancs body was new to Yellow Buses of Bournemouth, Adrian Palmer. Right, a classic Dennis, a Loline of 1965, Nigel Eadon-Clarke. Bottom left, three decades of coaches, 1965 Reliance, 1951 Bedford and 1939 Leyland, Adrian Palmer. Bottom right, a last Dennis, a Trident with East Lancs body, Nigel Eadon-Clarke.



Top left, 1989 Volvo B10M / East Lancs and 1984 M 1069, Top right, T 23 with ADL E400 MMC, which has a distant connection to Dennis, Left, also with a Dennis connection, a pair of Darts, Carlyle bodied DT 15 and former Arriva Southern Counties Dart SLF 3302, all Nigel Eadon-Clarke.



VEHICLE UPDATE & CART MARKING CEREMONY 19th JULY

Roger Stagg

Much activity has taken place in the workshop, and elsewhere, in recent months.



By virtue of it being on site for repairs, XF 3 took part in the "London Comes to Wythall" event! Nigel Eadon-Clarke

XF 3 travelled to the [Transport Museum at Wythall](#) for attention to its rear springs and transmission. The perished window rubber has been replaced, which will help keep the newly refurbished interior dry. It will shortly return to LBM and go into service.



T 357 is slowly being dismantled, Nigel Eadon-Clarke

At LBM, work continues slowly but positively on T 357 which will shortly have its body and chassis separated, reducing the chance of body-builders getting in the way of spanner-wranglers and vice-versa, which should allow quicker progress.

NS 174 with Derek Hanlon at the wheel has moved around the local area under its own power after much adjustment to clutch and gear selection mechanisms. There isn't a Haynes Manual for the NS, so it was very much trial and error.

After many years standing outside, the bodywork on 1456R (Milly) is receiving attention. The cab area is now in primer and it will soon be ready for painting.



NS 174 is closely inspected during a Summer Festival workshop tour, Nigel Eadon-Clarke
Other routine work on D142, STL 2377, RMC 1469 and RML 2760 has ensured they will continue to be fit and well for the foreseeable future.



1456 MR, seen at the Summer Festival, is undergoing body repairs prior to painting, Nigel Eadon-Clarke
The [Annual Cart Marking](#) ceremony took place at the City of London Guildhall when LBM was represented by no less than three of its vehicles, D 142, T 448 and STL 441. After a long period of heatwaves and drought the day was "blessed" with monsoon rainfall and the term "drowned rat" seemed inadequate to describe our valiant crews (especially those on D 142). Our three entries were duly branded by Alan Gaskell, Sharon Burton and the writer.



Colin Read



STL 441 and D 142 provide contrasting degrees of driver comfort! Both, Nigel Eadon-Clarke

Rod Lucas, Derek Hanlon, Chris Taylor and Graham Bartlett, LBM's wet weather team! Corporation of London



Sharon Burton does the honours with T 448, no harm was done to the bus! Richard Hastings.



WELL DONE ROBIN

Congratulations to LBM volunteer Robin Helliar-Symons, whose newly-restored Leyland TD1 picked up no fewer than four awards: best single or double decker built before 1st January 1950; best vehicle built before 1930; best double deck passenger vehicle and third place in the Concours d'Elegance.

It's an interesting bus, dating from 1929. In 1930 its body was passed to Leyland's first trolleybus chassis for demonstration purposes. The bus came together again in 1933 prior to its sale to Jersey Motor Transport. It worked throughout WW2 and was withdrawn in 1960, bought by Colin Shears and Peter Stanier. Between 1968 and 1984 it was loaned to Geoffrey Hilditch, General Manager of Halifax Corporation and later Leicester, along with a number of other vehicles from the Museum of British Transport Collection, and was painted in Halifax livery.

Robin bought the bus in 2015 and a major restoration was carried out by Ian Barrett between February 2019 and November 2024.



FOUR LIGHT HORSE BUS UPDATE

Alan Gaskell

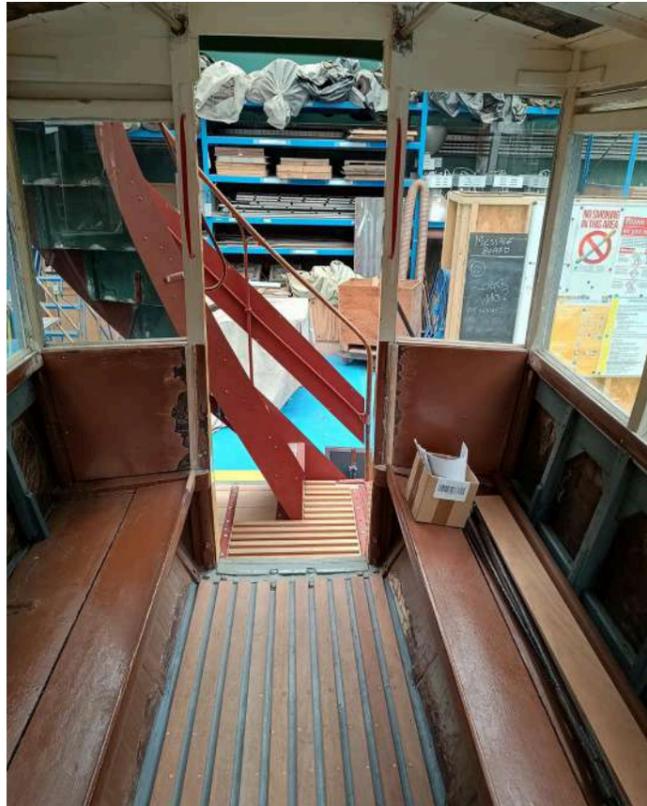
I am pleased to report that the horse bus is now ready for its professional hand painting. By the time you read this it will have been delivered to Martin James for his expert finishing.

Since my last article the bus has been glazed and the seats have been fitted temporarily on the upper deck as they will be removed for painting and refitted when the bus is completed. New advertising signs have been hand painted by Stuart Betts and have been fitted in bead surrounds. All minor repairs to the body, inside and out, have been undertaken, all small things but surprisingly time consuming.

The undercarriage has been realigned so that the bus now sits level. This involved having the front springs re-tempered with revised dimensions, the rear support pads between axle and springs reduced in thickness and one front pad increased in size to even out the fall that had existed across the front. The other springs were also re-tempered which hopefully will improve the ride.

Upon its return Stuart will complete the sign-writing and body and wheel lines and I will fit the last of the advertising signs and general fittings.

Photos by Alan.



BS 4 JOINS THE MUSEUM

We are extremely grateful to Chris Stanley, who has donated his 1975 ECW-bodied Bristol LHS, BS 4, to the Museum's collection.

The BS class was a unique fleet of 17 very short, manual gearbox buses bought by London Transport to replace Ford Transit (FS) minibuses, which did not stand up to London's punishing operating conditions. BS 4 was only ever allocated to Holloway (HT) garage, either as a trainer or in service on route C11 running between Highgate and Brent Cross, originally using FS minibuses. The route was converted to BS operation on 3rd August 1975.

BS 4 was withdrawn in 1981 and sold to the London Borough of Richmond, via Ensigns, and was then sold in 1994 to Deeble of Upton Cross, near Liskeard in Cornwall. In 1999 it was bought for preservation and passed through various owners until Chris purchased it in 2015 and has since carried out a first class restoration. BS 4 is the sole survivor of the class, the other, BS 5, became a food outlet.



Above, looking as good as new, if not better, BS 4 heads off on a trip on route 462 at this year's Spring Gathering.

Lower left, two years earlier, restoration was well underway.

Lower right, as acquired in Deeble's livery.

All by Phil Hambling



THE HOUNSLOW GARAGE ROUNDEL

Mark Kehoe



This Roundel dates from the rebuilding of Hounslow Bus Garage in the early 1950s and was installed on the front of the building on London Road beside, the vehicle entrance to the Bus Station and Garage.

The design and build is identical to many used by the Underground, either sidewall mounted or post mounted. These are of the inner illuminated, glass face, design and double sided, very similar to the pair at Northfields Tube station (albeit pedestal mounted). Those are complete rebuilds from the late 1980s and used to have 'NORTHFIELDS' and 'UNDERGROUND' on opposite faces so you could see both 'Northfields' and 'Underground' if approaching from either direction. That detail was somehow missed on the listed building refurb.

This Roundel is original, and slightly newer, but of the same basic design and probably used the same castings. The Roundel structure itself is a mix of cast alloy and sheet aluminium with four steel torsion bars which retain the integrity, load and resistance to wind, which bolted to the wall of the building. The glassware is rubber mounted. Originally, the Roundel was

illuminated by traditional incandescent light bulbs and has four opening covers to facilitate bulb replacement and cleaning.

Whilst it was under restoration it was found that it had been modified at some stage and taken apart. Several bolts and screws had been cross threaded or were seized and others were broken. With alloy being a soft metal rethreading and resizing is a bit risky within some of the parameters and confines so it was decided to limit how far to dismantle the unit. At some stage, probably when it was previously taken apart, it had been converted to fluorescent lighting, with additional cast brackets added to reconfigure the luminary positions.

With flaking paint, oxidising alloy, previous repairs and a fair amount of superficial alloy and rust corrosion, it soon became apparent that it would take months work to effectively remove all of the detritus and corrosion to a satisfactory standard. Much was very hard to access even with small hands! So it was sent off for media blasting then powder coated in black. The end result is a Roundel 'deluxe' which should last for a great many years and is better than new.

It has been reassembled using almost all the original components where possible with minimal changes. All of the screws - even those resized and re-tapped - are slotted and stainless with extra anti-corrosion care added. The hinges, where needed, were replaced and soft rivets used in the same way as the originals. All of the opening panel stays have been restored with new leather anti slip washers fabricated in the LBM workshop and all the fastenings replicated and renewed. The entire interior had to be painted matt white to reflect the light without shadows. The glass is new and now says 'BUS MUSEUM' with the long out of stock sealing rubbers recommissioned by Roger Stagg.

The only major alteration is the conversion to LED lighting. This has the benefit of reducing cost but also replaced heavy control gear and eliminated a lot of wiring, much of which is not I.P. (ingress protection) compliant. The installation uses LED battens, just like fluorescent tubes but much simpler to wire and maintain. It was found that the brackets could be reused and in almost the same positions.

A post has been erected outside the Museum, secured by tension bars (which can be seen inside) to mitigate any loading from the elements.

We installed the Roundel on Wednesday 9th April with both Ian Reddick and Alan Gaskell working up in a cherry picker. It took much of the day fettling. I, being on the ground, had the huge task of fitting a 13amp plug, plugging it in and switching it on which had no visual impact at all in the bright sunlight!!

There are a few things still to do but it is now in situ and works. It looks splendid with its new wooden flagpoles top and bottom thanks to the exacting skills of Alan Gaskell.

It could only be topped by having it mounted on a rotating base, which would make a certain neighbour very jealous!!



BOOK REVIEWS

Michael H C Baker

The London Merlins by Matthew Wharmby, Capital Transport, 151 pages, hardback colour and black and white. £30



The London Merlins

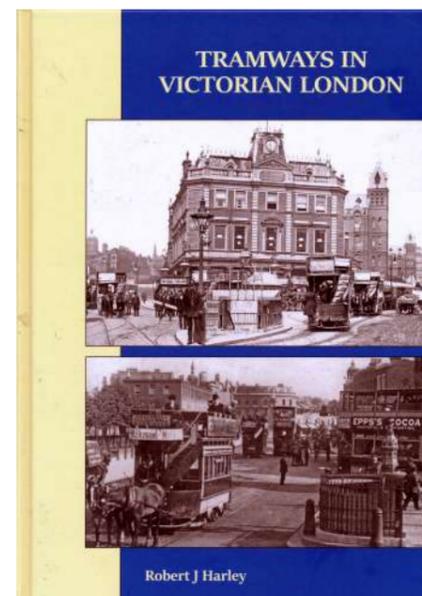
Matthew Wharmby

quickly wastes no time in getting to grips with such phrases as 'dreadful unreliability', 'too much for Londoners to handle', 'big-end bearing failures', potentially harmful

It might perhaps be prudent to warn those of a tender, over sensitive disposition who prefer stories with a happy ending to those with a sad one, that this latest offering from Capital Transport might turn out to be rather upsetting. At the same time it is gripping.

Matthew Wharmby

Tramways in Victorian London by Robert J Harley, pub Heathfield 111 pages hardback £25



One's first reaction on Tramways in Victorian London as it thudded through your reviewer's letter box was "Why has no-one written such a book before?" Upon discovering the author, one instantly realises that we have been waiting for him, and no-one else, to complete this highly

detailed, entertaining and most informative task. The opening sentence beautifully sets the scene: "Trams arrived in London in 1861, became established in 1870, departed in 1952, and returned in modern form in the year 2000." From there on the author sets wide-ranging boundaries and succeeds in comprehensively reaching them all. One of

foreign matter', 'buses unable to pull into kerbs', 'structural cracks across the bodywork', 'passenger accusations of cattle-truck conditions', 'unpopularity with passengers and drivers alike' and so on and so on.

The author leaves the reader in no doubt that the Merlin, introduced in April 1966, with the last being taken out of service in July 1981, was a disaster. He explains succinctly, and at the same time in depth, that there were many reasons for this. AEC, once so proud to declare itself the 'Builder of London's Buses', got so much wrong and would soon go out of business. Yet it began well enough with the Red Arrow and the Reshaping Plan. But so much of what went wrong was beyond London Transport's control. The pride which had once gone with the job of being a London bus driver had vanished, full employment meant recruitment problems. The hiving off of the Country Area to the National Bus Company meant that the Merlin was foisted upon a management which had no use for it, whilst the biggest mistake of all was the assumption that in future the big red London bus would be a single decker.

the themes running through the book is how different it could have been. At the beginning of chapter 11 we read that "Right from the inauguration of the LCC (London County Council) in 1889, the relationship between cheap travel and decent housing for working people was crucial. However, politics bedeviled decisions; not only was County Hall divided on party lines, but each of the twenty-eight Metropolitan Boroughs had a potential veto. Consequently, councils such as, Kensington, Westminster and Chelsea dug in their heels in their desire to keep trams out. The City of London, a stubborn opponent of tramways, did not form part of the LCC." If trams had been allowed from the outset to serve the entire West End and the City of London how different the story would have been; quite possibly they would never have departed in 1952, or at any rate their successors, the trolleybus, would have seamlessly become as much a feature in the heart of London as they did in such UK cities and towns as Belfast, Bradford, Bournemouth, Huddersfield, etc..

The author has clearly gone to great lengths to provide as wide a photographic selection as possible, going right back to the time when photography was still a recently arrived wonder and bystanders in streets and in vehicles immediately struck suitable, dignified poses.

BUS INFRASTRUCTURE

Andrew Colbourne

I was very interested in David Bowker's Bus Infrastructure article in the March 2025 issue of the magazine as articles on the subject are few and far between and preserved examples of road services signage and infrastructure are not that common in publicly accessible locations either, unlike their Underground equivalents. It is great that the Museum does have examples at Brooklands.

In this regard I'm not aware of any of the 1970's design of London Transport shelters being preserved but there is a surviving example in Buckhurst Hill and I'm attaching a picture. Last July Essex County Council entered into a contract with Clear Channel UK "to upgrade, maintain, and expand bus shelter infrastructure across Essex". Thus it must be "at risk", so now might be the time to rescue it if the collection doesn't have one.



I think the lowest numbered stops might have been Green Line stops. Stopping places in central London for coaches were marked earlier than most bus stops because of legislative requirements. Hence if the numbering system was started by the LGOC there is a good chance the lowest numbers were for coach stops.

Regarding the application of bus stop numbers, it is unfortunate that the present method is a vinyl label rather than the screwed on engraved plastic LT used. The vinyl labels do become detached, I've come across a number recently where this has happened. However, I have found there is available online an Excel spreadsheet list of stops and locations dated 2023 that resulted from an Freedom Of Information request. This tells me that the highest existing stop number without prefix is 91531 at the inner London Crown Court in Southwark.

It also tells me the prefix-letters for stops and other types of locations other than BP are C, CW, FC, FL, FW, H, HC, HF, LE, LG, LRS, M, OC, PCO, QNORT, R, RR, RTP, SL, T, TRS, and W.

You can deduce the logic for most of the above that are bus stops based on location and knowledge of present or former operator or unit names. However, others are:

- LRS are London River Services piers
- OC is for stops outside Greater London (including those without TfL flags)
- PCO is for some, but not all, taxi ranks: I know there are numerous "Taxis" flags in Kingston but only one is listed.
- QNORT02 - 05 are North Greenwich bus station stops A to D described as "Stop - Stn Hanging w QSlats".
- RR are railway replacement stops (some outside Greater London)
- TRS are Croydon tram stops.

Two dummy stops are also listed; DS04 in Surrey and DUMST in Waltham Forest. The coordinates of all stops are given, so I'll have to work out where those are!

There are two H-prefix numbers that are ordinary stops and they are in Hounslow. They are H371 for point C in the High Street and H372 for point A in the bus station. All other H-prefix locations have four-digit numbers and are the Hail & Ride timetable frames mentioned. These are stated to be "Not NaPTN" (National Public Transport Access Node). There are far more Hail & Ride locations with HC prefixes and numbers in a sequence starting from 1 and running up to 878. These are all "virtual stops" for iBus announcement purposes. Some OC numbers are also virtual Hail & Ride locations.

There are two locations, both called "Westminster Bridge Tp", with RTP prefixes, which are "virtual" for iBus announcements as well. I assume these are for River Services purposes.

Included in the spreadsheet, but not in the list of prefixes above, are IMB101-8 and IMB201-6 for Imberbus locations!

The spreadsheet uses 20,610 rows to list all the stops and locations, one row each.

David said that the bus stop with the most routes is stop S in Orpington High Street (number 12240). As that is something I had wondered about, I made a pilgrimage to photograph it and a copy is attached. It now displays only sixteen day route numbers, but ought to display one more, Go Coach's non-TfL route 3. The E-tile for route R7 is new because route R6 was withdrawn on 28th March 2025



Covid meant the tiles for the 654 and 684 were replaced by the "School Buses stop here" tile, and that change explains why there is one blank tile. The number of routes (and some of the route numbers) has fluctuated since 2017 but I think the maximum would have been 21 numbers including the two school buses and one night route, so 18 day routes as David said.

Note that the 477 is a non-TfL route, currently Arriva Kent Thameside, which explains why it has Fare Stage lettering in the traditional style. I've always found it odd that TfL does not specify anything to identify non-TfL bus routes on E-tiles.

I think I would be correct in saying that the abbreviation of days of the week was not allowed under the original specifications for the present type of stop signage, but old habits die hard and "Mon-Sat" appears four times at this particular stop - and you have to understand in the case of the tiles with two numbers, that it applies to the route number above the qualification, and only the route number immediately above!

Although this stop might have had the maximum number of day routes, the Southampton Street, Covent



and the unserved section replaced by a diversion of route B14. The R3 tile was new with a change implemented in April 2017 that curtailed route R2 from Petts Wood to Orpington (Walnut Centre) via a clockwise terminal loop, so it now only serves the other side of the road.

Additionally, TfL's removal of school route E-tiles during

Garden, stop at point A in the Strand used to have E-tiles for a total of 24 routes (10 day and 14 night, picture attached). Was it the stop with the most route numbers? With reductions in Central London day routes there are now only 8 serving the stop but the night route total remains the same (though some of the route numbers are different) giving a current total of 22 routes. I suspect that total may be matched elsewhere, but if anyone knows of a stop with more than 22 routes indicated I would be interested to know.

Your Editor can add some more to the bus stop story from early times in his career.

Andrew's mention of a spreadsheet containing details of all stops means that some, or many, poor souls spent time transferring stop records from the "Kardex" cards once housed in the bus traffic office in the new "wing over station" at 55 Broadway. With somewhere in excess of 25,000 stops this

would have been a mind numbing task. If I recall correctly, there were eight stacks of drawers like that to the right. These rested on map chests that contained 25in/ mile maps of London with every stop location marked. A solid triangle for compulsory stops and open for requests, along with the stop number. If

the records still exist, my handwriting will appear in many locations. Each removable card carried the full history of each stop, with precise location and date of installation and any changes. Woe betide anyone who put a card back in the wrong place! Back then stops could have a maximum of 9 E-plates, and perhaps a single "G sign boat". Those illustrated would never have been allowed back then.

During my time with the team I wrote out many works orders for stop changes, followed up with amendments to the card and map. By the time I arrived at Forest District in April 1982, the maps and cards had moved following the establishment of bus districts. Forest was the pioneer user of a private company for bus stop work, which provided the opportunity to arrange for the removal and delivery to Redhill Road of a number of "Birmingham Guild" metal poles and signs deemed no longer needed. Happy days!



DONATIONS RECEIVED

Phil Palmer

The following individuals have recently made donations to the Trust:

Andrew Lambert
James Adlam
Clive Woodland
Phil Hampton
Alan Bond
Martin Fuggles
Collin Mellors
Roland Graves
Roger Stagg
Frank Young
Ian Barrett
Peter Hendy
Colin Fradd
Jim Eades
Ronald Galway

Robin Thomas
Alan Blissett
Guy Marriott
Executors of Henry Prior Deceased
Tim Plowman
Paul Cheeseman
Roger Armstrong
Mike Beamish
Robert Doe
Laurie James

As is customary, items that could form part of the Trust's collection are added to it, while other items are passed to our sales team to raise useful funds for the Trust.

Our grateful thanks to all who have donated, everything has a part to play in the continuation of our work to preserve and operate London's bus heritage.

DEPARTURES

It is with regret that we have to record the passing of a current and former Trust members.

Ian Cormack passed away on 13th July, having for many years coordinated the Museum's daily stewards rota. After a 35-year career in the diplomatic service which involved world-wide travel, Ian began volunteering in the early 2000s. His childhood in East Sheen brought him into contact with routes 37 and 73 and the buses used on those routes sparked a lifelong interest. An interview appeared in the [July 2024 E-News](#).

David Hurley passed away on 6th July following a fall. He was Trust Chairman during the late 80s/early 90s and saw the organisation through some difficult times, however, his involvement in the insurance business was particularly useful. A member of the [FBHVC](#) since 1991, initially as its commercial vehicle representative, he joined the board as Legislation Director in 1999 until his retirement from the role in 2013. He then took on the role of Vice-President for the Federation.

Until September 2024, when ill-health forced him to stand down, David was also chairman of the Working Omnibus Museum Project (having been on its board since 1996). He was a life member of the Historic Commercial Vehicle Society (HCVS), and also a member of the Albion Club.

REPLICA SUMMER UNIFORM



The Museum produces replica uniforms, which represent the jackets worn by crews in the 1950s/60s. They are made with either Navy or Green cuffs and collars. The Navy trim represents the uniform worn by Central area (red bus) crews and the green trim was for the Country area crews (green buses).

Members are entitled to a discounted price of £43 and drivers and conductors, who crew the Brooklands Bus Rides, are entitled to a significant subsidy.

The jackets are produced in sizes 38" chest to 50" chest in two-inch steps. They are equipped with the Griffin buttons designed by LPTB and which continued to be used into the 50s/60s.

For more information please contact Robin Helliar-Symons on RDHSymons@gmail.com, or write to 7 Bedford Close, Maidenhead, SL6 3UP

Did you notice the important announcement on page 3 about this magazine? It's your chance to chose to have your copy by email only.

Route 54 heritage day
Saturday 13 September 2025

IT'S FREE

54
● Blackheath Royal Standard
● Blackheath
● Lewisham High Street
● Catford Bus Garage
● Beckenham Hill
● Beckenham High St.
● Elmers End Green

Stagecoach will hold an open day at Catford bus garage on the same day. A small charge (for charity) will apply.

Heritage buses will not serve Elmers End Interchange

We will be running buses from the 1930s to the 1980s from about 09:30 to 17:00, 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 route 54 on which normal fares apply.

For updates, vehicles and timetables, scan the QR and follow the links to Events

London Bus Museum's TransportFest will be held at Brooklands on Sunday 19 October

The London Bus Museum is open Daily, located at the Brooklands Museum, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 0SL

londonbusmuseum.com
brooklandsmuseum.com

Who's Who in 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

Facebook: click [here](#).

Trustees and Officers of the London Bus Preservation Trust Ltd

Honorary Positions

Hon President: Paul Sainthouse
Hon Vice Presidents: Chris Heaps & Richard Telling
Museum Mentor: Sam Mullins OBE

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Uniform Manager: Robin Helliar-Symons
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*Member of the Council of Management

London Bus Museum Ltd

Managing Director: Gerry Job
Shop Manager: Yvette Gower
Company Secretary: Peter Brown

Registered Office

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Company Registration number: 1061762

