

# LONDON BUS MUSEUM

*E-news*  
December 2025

Farewell to the Routemaster: 20 years on



PHOTO CREDIT: EDITOR

On 13 December under a clear winter sky, the [Routemaster Association](#) held its annual gathering at the [Ace Cafe](#). This year marked 20 years since the withdrawal of the last Routemaster from regular London service, so it was a particularly significant occasion. After assembling at the Cafe, the buses departed for a run over the 159 route, followed by a West End Christmas lights tour as night fell.

# Routemaster farewell



A pair of RF interlopers joined in too!

PHOTOS THIS PAGE:  
EDITOR



# Routemaster farewell



PHOTO CREDIT (ABOVE AND LEFT): NIGEL EADON-CLARKE

Above: The vehicle owners (with canine assistants) assemble before the run over the 159 route

Left: RM 5 and RM 2217 lay over inside Brixton Tram Shed

Below: RM 1527 on the 159

Below left: RM 188 on the Christmas lights tour

PHOTO CREDIT (BELOW AND BELOW LEFT): STEVE IRELAND



## *Routemaster farewell*

Like many others, Colin Fradd was out with a camera to record the historic day, 9 December 2005. Many thanks to him for sharing these photos.



*Routemaster farewell*





# Ian Cormack

Adorned with appropriate blinds, **RML 2760** conveyed Ian's friends, former colleagues and LBM volunteers for a tour of his old haunts on 20 November, which would have been his 69<sup>th</sup> birthday. The bus journeyed through Kingston, Hampton Wick, Isleworth, Twickenham, Richmond and East Sheen, terminating at Barnes Pond, where Ian's ashes were scattered.



PHOTO CREDIT (ABOVE AND ABOVE RIGHT) JOHN COPE; OTHERS: EDITOR



Above: the group meets close to Ian's home in Kingston

Left: Barnes Pond

Below left: Richmond Bus Station

Below: the site of Mortlake garage

See p15



# Camden Running Day

The second of November's running days took place on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup>, this time focusing on Camden Town, with historic buses running over parts of routes 31, 134 and 253.

The event was organised by the late **Trevor Muir**, with donations going towards **BBC Children in Need**.

PHOTO CREDIT (LEFT, BELOW AND FAR BELOW): EDITOR

OTHERS: NIGEL EADON-CLARKE



# Camden



PHOTO CREDIT (ABOVE AND RIGHT): EDITOR  
OTHERS: NIGEL EADON-CLARKE



# Coffee, cakes and catch-up

*Sharon Burton*

On 19 November some old friends visited the Museum to catch up with developments and enjoy a chat with current volunteers.

Plenty of home-made cakes were on offer thanks to Dawn Stagg, Rachel De Wilde and Sharon Burton. Dawn made her special John Bedford Chocolate Cake but sadly, John couldn't be with us. We sent him our good wishes.

Rachel made her now famous shortbread biscuits in the shape of buses and her delicious orange sponge. Added to the other treats it made for a rather fattening morning!

It was good to see friends we'd not seen for a while, including Steve Hook and Bob Hamilton, amongst others.

We hope to do this again in the spring.

ALL PHOTOS: SHARON BURTON





## Q&A with Steve De Wilde, volunteer driver

**What inspired you to volunteer as a bus driver at the LBM and what do you enjoy most about volunteering?**

I started volunteering just after the move to Brooklands, initially as a steward. I'd visited Redhill Road with my dad, who worked for LT for most of his working life, and then visited again after the move to Brooklands. I was really impressed. I had just cut down my work hours, so I had some Fridays free, and I had always thought that volunteering at a museum would be worthwhile and enjoyable. And so it has been. I also really wanted to drive some of the old buses, especially an RF (see below). I didn't have a PCV licence, but after I'd volunteered for a few years I decided to get one. It's not easy (or cheap) if you are not being trained by a bus company. I went to a training company in Park Royal. My instructor was an ex-Gurkha, who made me drive round the Hanger Lane gyratory system in the morning rush hour on my first lesson! I'd expected a few gentle turns around a car park to start with. I didn't hit anything, though, and really enjoyed it all. A few lessons in, he told me he thought I was a "rather aggressive driver", which, coming from a Gurkha, I took as a compliment! I now steward and am an occasional Duty Manager. I drive for the bus rides, and I am involved in the induction process for stewards and Duty Managers.

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

**RF 226.** It was the first LBM bus I drove after passing the PCV test. I have always had a liking for the RF. A very neat, solid design. Growing up in an LT family in the 1970s, I have fond memories of a social trip to Hayling Island and another to see *Oklahoma* in the West End, both by RF. I also have a vivid childhood memory of an RF fishtailing its way up the Hounslow Road one very icy morning in those old days when we used to have winters!

PHOTO CREDIT (ABOVE AND BELOW): EDITOR



## Steve De Wilde

### What is your favourite transport era?

The one I grew up in: the 1970s. It wasn't really a very happy time for the country, but I have fond memories of LT in all its pomp and of the myriad ways it looked after its staff. My dad started off as a trolleybus conductor (on **1812**, the BUT Q that was at the LBM for a while) when he met my mum. He became a driver and latterly an inspector - on the Airbus services ultimately. The LT Flying Club featured prominently in our lives, as did Hounslow garage corned beef hash. I liked the buses too, even the unpopular ones. When I first climbed aboard the LBM's **SMS**, I was transported back to the bus journey to school. They did rattle, and the drivers had no idea how to persuade the gearboxes to make smooth changes.

### Tell us about your professional background.

Despite the LT background, I was always academically inclined. After briefly considering architecture, I became a medical doctor and a medical academic. I mostly worked in Tooting in a practice on Upper Tooting Road and at St George's Hospital Medical School. I can't say I made any earth-shattering discoveries, but I hope I made a few people better and added a little to the sum of human knowledge.



PHOTO CREDIT: EDITOR

### How are you finding retirement and how do you fill the time (other than at the LBM, of course)?

I retired at the beginning of this year and have been very busy ever since. My wife Rachel (also an LBM volunteer) and I are active in the life of our church, particularly in supporting Iranian refugees who have faced persecution for their Christian beliefs. We also have a motorhome, in which we have toured the country this year. We were amazed to work out that we had spent more than a month away in it this year. At home I like mending things. I sometimes think I became a doctor because I like to make things better. Now I mostly make old clocks better. The only problem is that I am running out of places to put them.

### What's your favourite book, film or TV show?

I love reading, all sorts, but I particularly like science fiction. My favourite Sci-Fi author is the late Iain M. Banks. His novel *Use of Weapons* is my favourite. On TV, we don't normally binge watch series, but we have binge watched all of the series of *Slow Horses* in rapid succession. Gary Oldman as Jackson Lamb is a superbly disgusting character.

PHOTO CREDIT: JOHN DUFF

# LBM Events 2026



## Route 38 Heritage Day

14 March 2026

Enjoy free rides on historic vehicles all day between Victoria and Clapton Pond on our first Heritage Day of 2026

[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 >](#)



## Route 213/293 Heritage Day

13 June 2026

Historic vehicles will offer free rides all day between Kingston and Sutton and North Cheam and Epsom

[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 >](#)



## Route 106 Heritage Day

3 October 2026

Our third Heritage Day will see historic vehicles in service free of charge, between Finsbury Park and Ash Grove

[View more >](#)



## TransportFest

18 October 2026

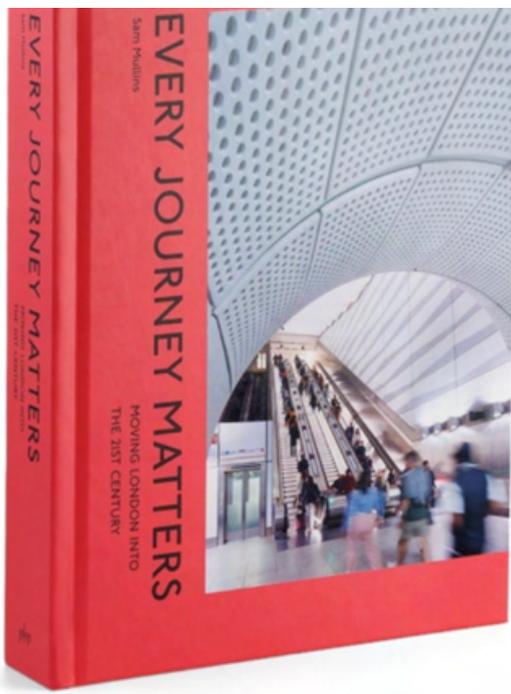
Round off the rally calendar at our autumn event with a wide range of vehicles, bus rides and traders' stalls.

[View more >](#)

# Spend all your Christmas money at Shillibeer Place, the LBM gift shop



Buy in store or online



This new book by Sam Mullins is signed by the author and marks the first 25 years of TfL

[Buy online >](#)



New from EFE Road is this highly-detailed model of RCL 2256 in Southend Transport livery

[Buy online >](#)



Design your own bus liveries with the LBM colouring book - for children or adults!

[Buy online >](#)



Above: the tree under which Ian's ashes were scattered

Below: a resident of the house adjacent to the Mortlake garage site clearly appreciates its history



# From the Editor

Happy new year to all our readers!

We were very sorry to learn of the death of David Stewart on 28 November. For many years he was the editor of LOTS publications. However, at the LBM he will be remembered for his immense generosity which enabled the restoration of T 448. We extend our sympathies to Dave's family at this time.



This plaque recording Dave's generosity has been installed in T 448

PHOTO CREDIT: LEON DANIELS

Thanks to Sharon Burton, John Cope, Leon Daniels, Steve De Wilde, John Duff, Nigel Eadon-Clarke, Colin Fradd, Steve Ireland and Peter Maynard for contributing stories and photos.

Please email me any content for our next edition.

*Richard*



Above: the old and the new meet at Richmond Bus Station. Left: RML 2760 takes a break at Barnes Pond

PHOTO CREDIT (ABOVE AND LEFT): PETER MAYNARD

OTHERS: EDITOR

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London Bus Preservation Trust Ltd  
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Registered address:  
Brooklands Road, Weybridge  
Surrey KT13 0QS

[londonbusmuseum.com](http://londonbusmuseum.com)

