



Magazine

Issue 59 March 2026

E-edition

Route 159 Road Run
Bromley Running Day
Pioneering Spirit
Life on the Buses



The Journal of the London Bus Preservation Trust
£4 to non-members



EDITORIAL

Dave Jones

Welcome to the first edition of 2026, I hope you all enjoyed the Festive Season.

I'm not sure if I should apologise for the amount of reading there is for you in this issue. The lack of LBM participation in recent events has given an opportunity to dust off some items that have been on the shelf for a while. It's interesting reading that you're not likely to find elsewhere. The lack of photos has also led to the unusual back cover this time. You could remove it and post on a wall as a reminder!

Looking at photos from recent events, it's good to see some younger folk taking part, something that's also apparent at the Epping Ongar Railway where I enjoy driving an assortment of old, and not-so-old, buses, including, late last year, former Cobham resident STL 2692 - that was a challenge! I hope that the attractions of our various buses and our Council of Management plans can sustain their interest to ensure that the Museum passes to capable hands in future.

Front Cover, David Bowker has caught STL 2377 perfectly as it crosses Putney Bridge on Christmas Day.

Hopefully you won't miss the advert on the following page for someone to take on the vital role of managing our volunteer recruitment. Current post-holder, John Owens, has had to step down due to ill health - we wish him well in the future. Referring back to my last paragraph, this role is key to ensuring that the Museum is kept supplied with volunteers to carry out the varied roles that keep things going, so if you're close to the "ideal person" description, please give the job some serious thought.

With the above in mind, we are always on the look-out for stewards as well.

Those of you who have opted out of paper copies of the Magazine will see a couple of changes that should make navigation easier - single page view instead of spreads. For those who have yet to decide, you can find a copy in the Members' Area of the LBM website - just log in with your membership number and postcode with no gaps. There are plenty of other items of interest within.

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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.

**LAST COPY DATE FOR THE
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Sunday 3rd May 2026**

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.

2026 Diary Dates

Sunday 19th April - Spring Gathering
 Saturday 13th June - Route 213/293 Heritage Day
 Sunday 28th June - Summer Festival
 Sunday 3rd October - Route 106 Heritage Day
 Sunday 18th October - TransportFest

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Leon Daniels

We enter 2026 and discover we are all older, our vehicles are older, and the challenges of preservation are ever present. Our mailbox is full of people with ideas but very few offering practical help.

Quite a few vehicles are now owned by people who are coming to the end of their time and energy to look after their vehicles. Reasonably they are looking for a good home for them and we have benefited from some vehicles coming to the Museum, including XF 3 and BS 4.

Sadly, there are many more that we must decline. We already have as many RTs and RFs as we need. We also have enough Routemasters. Our policy is very clear – we take vehicles that help us tell the story of the London bus; and we take interesting vehicles that are in danger of being lost to preservation.

Sometimes people are surprised that we are not able to take their vehicles. Equally that we say we will take them but only to break for spares. I know this sounds harsh, but the very best examples of the post-war types are already securely in preservation. Over time they may well need major units which is why we will hold a small stock of them.

There are some gaps in our collection but there may not be a gap in the secured preservation world. We don't have a DMS, but the first one is in the LT Museum and there are

others. We do not have a Dart, but there are scores in preservation. We do think one would be a valuable addition to our collection as we don't have a story for the midibus, but we must wait for one to shake out from private preservation.

As for more modern types, we are glad there are those looking after them: a modern bus needs the skills required and the software that laptops can plug in with. Thanks to our Trustee Richard Telling we have some capability on modern types but even this is necessarily limited.

We, therefore, must face the fact that as our collection gets larger we need more and more sophisticated resources to look after them.

As for the older vehicles in private preservation, I am afraid some of them will not survive with the passage of time. There is significant duplication and the national survey by NARTM (National Association of Road Transport Museums) is designed to grade vehicles so that continued preservation can be prioritised.

Finally, to say that as our own collection grows, we need more space. We have taken the opportunity to secure the freehold of our premises at Northchapel and to secure more space elsewhere.

This is all a careful balancing act!

VACANCY FOR VOLUNTEER/HR MANAGER

We need a Volunteer HR/Manager to manage the recruitment and subsequent training of Volunteers working alongside a small group of Team Leaders and an assistant, with a robust internal communication system in place.

Key responsibilities:

- Determine volunteer requirements with team leaders.
- Encourage recruitment via local events and organisations..
- Process applications – interviews, documentation, ID and uniforms.
- Ensure adequate documentation and training is provided.
- Monitor progress during a probationary period.
- Mediate in cases of difficulty and discipline - if necessary.

- Report to the Council of Management (in person or by Zoom)
- Update E-news and LBM Magazine as required.
- Arrange "Thank You" events for volunteers (With Social Secretary and Trips Organiser),

The ideal candidate will:

- Be able to attend the Museum on a regular basis (minimum once per month)
- Have an approachable and personable manner
- Be competent with Office 365 elements such as Email, Excel and Word
- Have some knowledge of HR/ Volunteer processes
- NOT need an in-depth knowledge of London's buses!

If you feel you can fulfil this vital role for the Museum, please email: Peter.Brown@londonbusmuseum.com

BROMLEY RUNNING DAY 7th December 2025

For more photos...



Once again, the sound of vintage buses could be heard in Bromley and surrounding areas as past times were recreated. RFW 14 was a surprise attendee and seemed well loaded during the day, as were the other buses taking part. As well as the 227 between Bromley and Penge, a section of route 725 was covered, along with double deck journeys on routes 47 and 94. Crews were: Peter Larkham, Peter Larking, Glyn Matthews, Tom Drake, Peter Maynard, Peter Osborn and James Wake. Thanks to all.

Above, an almost time-less scene with RFs 368 and 486 at Bromley garage, Adrian Palmer.



Left, RF 486 ready to depart Penze, Nigel Eadon-Clarke.

Below, RF 226awaite departure time at the Crooked Billet at Penze, Adrian Palmer.



Above, RM 980 turns from High Street to Elmfield Road in Bromley.

Lower left, RFW 14 turns from East Street to West Street, Bromley, Nigel Eadon-Clarke

Left, RF 633 with seasonal decorations in Penze, both Nigel Eadon-Clarke.



Left, RM 1397 seems all alone on Queensway, Petts Wood.

Below right, RT 1702 departs Petts Wood with a healthy load, Both Nigel Eadon-Clarke.

Below left, RF 28 was operating part of route 725 between Bexley and Elmers End, where it is seen, Adrian Palmer.



IAN CORMACK MEMORIAL TOUR 20th November 2025



Colin Fradd has supplied these photos of RML 2760 on its tour of Ian's old haunts and seen at Richmond, the site of Mortlake garage, and Barnes Common, where Ian's ashes were scattered. Dressed all round with suitable blinds, LBM volunteers and family members travelled from Kingston through Hampton Wick, Isleworth, Twickenham, Richmond and East Sheen, terminating at Barnes Pond. The journey concluded at The White Hart, Barnes Bridge where a buffet lunch was provided.

Ian had been a long-standing volunteer, particularly in the role of Stewarding Roster Manager. He had a long and distinguished career as a diplomat which took him to 33 different countries.



ROUTE 159 COMMEMORATIVE ROAD RUN 13th December 2025

For more photos...



Above, 2025 marked the 20th anniversary of the end of the RM's everyday service, so there was a particularly good turn out at the Ace Café, Adrian Palmer.

Left, what it's all about! Nigel Eadon-Clarke

Below right, RM 158 passes RMLs 2744 and 2440 outside Brixton garage, Adrian Palmer.



Left, further along the route at Norbury, RML 2583 passes RM 158 and RML 2744, Adrian Palmer.

Bottom left, resting in Brixton tram depot, RMs 5 and 2217, the latter recently repainted in its 159 branded livery, Nigel Eadon-Clarke.

Bottom right, 20 years earlier, RM 2217 wasn't quite the last RM in service, Dave Jones.



ROUTE 430 25th December 2025

This year's service on the 430 consisted of RM 1005 and STL 2377 crewed by Graham Burnell, Peter Milner, Peter Osborn and Dan Sullivan.

When STL 2377 entered service in 1937 Roehampton was an area of country houses and Victorian villas, acquired in the late 1940s by the London County Council, the area became a flagship housing scheme in the 1950s. The buses are in Danebury Avenue, and the tower blocks behind are in what were once the grounds of Mount Clare House, which is now part of the University of Roehampton. I wonder what Lancelot "Capability" Brown would make of the changes to his handiwork!



Dan Sullivan



David Bowker



Peter Osborn

MEMORIES OF THE 38

For more on route 38.....



As an aide-memoir that the route 38 Heritage Day is not far off, here are a couple of reminders from 2023.



Peter Zabek



Bob Stanger

WORKSHOP UPDATE

Roger Stagg

As its now the end of January 26 the first news is that it can be cold working on metal.

That aside it has not stopped work yet. The winter is the time when we try to catch up with those jobs that we thought would wait until we were less busy. Of course, less busy never happens and outside parties promise delivery dates that they rarely achieve with the consequent effect on what we were certain we could complete.

That is the whinging part so moving onto the facts.

T 357, affectionately known as "The Chicken Shed" has made excellent strides although congestion has not so far given us the space to lift the body, nevertheless the time approaches. The team of skilled volunteers has now virtually completed the replacement of the stressed skin inner bodywork having successfully rolled the double curvature rear corners. Whilst the body lift will give us better access, we are already aware of the bent rear cross member caused by inadequate sizing of the original design, although it's somewhat doubtful that the designers at Weymann ever envisaged not only its hard life during and post WWII, but that it would still be existing some 90 years later!

CR 16, the brakes on this small rear engined Leyland were simply unsatisfactory so the decision was made to overhaul throughout. The individual components were unique to these vehicles and setting them up, including the handbrake, has proven a learning curve but, at the time of writing, a test drive is imminent. Once passed mechanically there is a host of minor body items never finished by the original restorer, but I have a personal interest as this vehicle was repatriated from Cyprus in the late 90's and was stored alongside the two surviving LT Scooters just a couple of hundred metres from my home.

T 448, showed a tendency for slipping in second gear on its manual pre-selective gearbox. Adjustment is about to be undertaken.

NS 174, although not technically in the workshop, it's in the hall, it is still a long way from completion but just a whole list of bodywork items to be tied up. This is where it would be so much easier for it to be worked on without the visitors! Much could be achieved by non-skilled volunteers so if we are to see it on the road in 2027 it's very much up to you readers.

Milly, it was always intended that Milly would go external for bodywork and repainting but the closure of the Bodyshop that was set up to do the work meant that the work was forced to move in-house. She takes up a lot of room and progress outside was hampered by the onset of

the British winter and the delays of "one day a week". She is now inside the Workshop and extensive bodywork repairs have been undertaken that will see more new paintwork shortly.

WVL 1, one would have expected that modern manufacturing would have ensured longevity to the bodywork main support structure, but that is not the case. Following the failure of the disabled access ramp cassette at the second doors, fairly extensive corrosion to the main outriggers was identified hidden under thick undersealing. In addition, accident damage hidden behind bodywork panels was revealed. The good news is that it's all been dealt with in-house and by the time you read this it will have been granted a further 12 months MoT.

RT 4779, has been gifted to the Trust by former Treasurer and owner Peter Osborn. Bodywise this is a superb vehicle having been totally rebuilt by Ian Barrett. Since it passed over, the rear springs have been re-tempered and an engine change to a newly overhauled unit will be carried out shortly.

Our various other vehicles are fit and in good order although some re-wiring is underway on RLH 48. Steering column rubber shock rings are being replaced on many of the half cabs with improvements in steering response (see the note below regarding the incorrect email address I gave in the previous edition)

It's your Museum and hence your Workshop, we just use it for you. There is always room for more volunteers, even for the mundane things that need only an element of nous not a specific skill. Come join us, we are just a bunch of miserable enthusiasts that want to be happy.

On the parting subject of "happy" I will almost conclude by wishing a Happy 2026 to you all.

BUT.....APOLOGIES.

STEERING COLUMN RUBBER SHOCK RINGS

No, it was not the Editor nor the printer. One would expect I would get my own email address correct!

For those of you having your email order returned as undeliverable the correct address is:
roger.stagg@londonbusmuseum.com

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

James Freeman

Thank you for the wonderful work you do in bringing the LBM Magazine to us all. The latest edition, No 58, is full of interest, as ever.

One thing that caught my eye relates to the famous AEC Regent FUF 63, preserved for so long by the late lamented Michael Dryhurst. On page 2, in your editorial, you say that FUF 63 belonged to Brighton, Hove & District. It didn't. It was bought by and always belonged to Brighton Corporation. (You say something similar on page 22, too.)

What may have confused you is that, under the terms of the Brighton Corporation (Transport) Bill of 1938 there was an agreement, implemented on 1 April 1939, that coordinated the services of Brighton Corporation and Brighton, Hove & District Transport Ltd. As part of this, the buses and trolleybuses of both operators carried the fleet name "Brighton, Hove & District Transport", although the Corporation vehicles generally carried the Borough coat of arms below, whereas the company buses lacked this feature.

Thus, FUF 63 carried the words "Brighton, Hove & District Transport" on its flanks, but was owned by the Corporation.

For more detail on all of this, see Brighton's Buses and Trams, by David Toy, published by Capital Transport in 2016.

Keep up the good work!

Thanks, James, for putting me straight - Ed!



Nigel Eadon-Clarke

VOLUNTEERS' LUNCH

100 LBM volunteers sat down together for our annual festive lunch on 10 December. In a change from previous years, this took place in the warmth and comfort of the Napier Suite in the Brooklands Clubhouse. All agreed that this was improvement on the slightly draughtier workshop!



Chairman Leon Daniels welcomed everybody and thanked them for their contributions over the last year. He also shared some exciting news about the Museum's future plans.

Photos from Richard Hastings.

ROUTE 213 - A HISTORY

Peter Osborn

For more on route 213.....



The London General Omnibus Company (LGOC) introduced a new route on 7 September 1921 between Kingston and Lower Kingswood. Numbered 113, it ran via Norbiton, New Malden, Worcester Park, North Cheam, Cheam, Sutton, Belmont and Burgh Heath, using B type single-deckers from Putney garage. The route was part of territorial expansion that year which also included new routes 112 from Kingston to Weybridge and 115 to Guildford plus a new agreement with the East Surrey Traction Co to support their expansion to the south, which included route S6 (later 406) between Kingston and Redhill via Epsom.

Within four months, on 4 January 1922, the Sutton to Lower Kingswood section was split off as route 80A and the 113 moved into Kingston garage, which opened that day. The B types were replaced by larger S types that October, still running on solid tyres, and the following January the route was extended to Banstead.

Sutton Garage opened on 9 January 1924 and for the first six weeks took over the whole operation on the 113, before the route settled down to be shared by the two garages, a logical arrangement which lasted for 50 years, either with Kingston or nearby Norbiton garages. Sutton replaced its Ss with modern T class Regals in 1930, before both garages put three-axle LTL 'Scooters' on the route in 1931.



LT 1139 outside Sutton garage 1953. Fred Ivey.

Meanwhile in 1930, the Belmont to Banstead section had been transferred to route 164, one of the routes introduced on the opening of Morden Underground station in 1926. This route was renumbered into the single-deck sequence as 213 in October 1934 and in 1935 rerouted from the direct road between Sutton and Belmont to serve Carshalton Beeches.

The Scooters operated by Sutton continued to serve the route until conversion to RF in 1952, although Kingston's

minority share varied from time to time to include Ts or Qs, until in 1952 the allocation, by then Ts, was transferred to the new Norbiton garage, seven months before conversion of the route to higher-capacity RFs (still with conductors). Single-deck operation had been required due to low bridges at Norbiton and Worcester Park. The route was diverted in 1962 via Kingston Hill to avoid the former, giving a year for the old route to be forgotten before the lowering of the road at Worcester Park allowed the route to be double-decked with RTs in May 1963.



RF 371 under the old bridge at Worcester Park, 1961. Andrew Hicks.

At the same time, the service was split between the 213 and new route 213A, the latter serving Clarence Avenue rather than Coombe Lane in Norbiton. The section of route between Sutton and Belmont had been transferred to route 151 on Monday to Saturday in January 1962, the Sunday service now being provided by the 213A alone, with the Sutton terminus now Sutton Garage.

Compared with the stability of the preceding 25 years, the 1960s and 1970s saw regular changes to these routes. In February 1964, the Sunday service between Kingston and Belmont was renumbered 213B, whilst Monday to Saturday route 213A was extended to Wimbledon via Sutton Common Road and Morden. The Sunday 213B lasted until November 1964 and was replaced by the 213, while the 213A was reintroduced on Sunday to operate between Kingston and Morden (via Sutton) only.

Kingston RFs had replaced Norbiton's on Sundays from August 1961 and on conversion to RT, Kingston took over the minority share of both routes, except that on Saturday the 213 was run by Norbiton until early 1964. The 213A was taken over by Sutton in its entirety in 1964. Norbiton returned to the 213 on Sundays in 1966 (with RMs) and replaced Kingston (again) in 1968. It also provided the 213A's only RMs on Sundays in 1969-70.



RT 1200 in Sutton before the one-way system came, 1972.

Fred Ivey

In March 1969, the 213A was withdrawn between Wimbledon (Morden on Sundays) and Sutton Garage, and the Sunday service to Belmont switched back from the 213 to the 213A with the 213 withdrawn on Sundays. The Sunday service between Sutton and Belmont was withdrawn completely in April 1970, but at the same time this section was added to the 213 in Monday to Friday peaks from April 1970, in place of the 151. This peak hour service also switched to the 213A from August 1972.

One man operation with DMS Fleetlines came on 5 August 1972, the routes then running as 213 (Monday to Saturday, Kingston to Sutton Garage, by Sutton and Norbiton garages) and 213A (daily, Kingston to Sutton Garage, plus a Monday to Friday peak hour service Kingston to Belmont, by Sutton garage plus Norbiton on Sunday).

In April 1978, the 213A replaced the 213, except for the experimental retention of six shopping hour 213 journeys between Kingston and New Malden, which ceased that October. The 213A continued to be operated by Norbiton and Sutton for six years, until it was renumbered 213 on 4 February 1984.

The map of the new 213 from February 1984 looks like an octopus. Running daily from Kingston to Sutton, the route then continued either to Sutton Garage or north to St Helier (Monday to Saturday), south to Belmont (Monday to Friday peak journeys) or, on Sunday, north, south and east to West Croydon via Rose Hill, Carshalton and Roundshaw. Norbiton provided Metrobuses for the majority of the service and Sutton continued with Fleetlines.

The London Regional Transport Act 1984 brought London Transport under Government control. Rather than the deregulation of services occurring elsewhere in the country, London introduced route tendering within a publicly-run framework. The new commercial imperative led to the establishment of operating divisions of London Buses to be run as separate businesses and reduce costs to compete with private operators. One of the early low-cost

units was Kingston Bus, based on Norbiton garage, which duly won the first tender to start on 27 June 1987. Norbiton reverted to using Fleetlines, using refurbished training buses, although service was disrupted by industrial action and staff shortages as staff voted with their feet.

A threat by London Buses to hand back the Norbiton contracts (including the 213) and close the garage led to a compromise solution. In the event, a Wimbledon area scheme from 29 October 1988 led to a new tender, again won by Kingston Bus. This involved the withdrawal of the 213 between St Helier and Sutton Garage and a rerouting of the Sunday service to Croydon. However, because the new SuttonBus contracts, which would cover the St Helier section with the 151, did not start for another month, Sutton operated a Monday to Saturday shuttle service numbered 213 between St Helier and Sutton.



D 2589 in Sutton on the temporary St Helier shuttle (in the unbranded remains of SuttonBus livery), 1988 . John Parkin

In 1988, London Buses created twelve geographical business units, of which London United included Norbiton and London General included Sutton. London General created the SuttonBus trading unit at Sutton garage, which won the next tender for the 213 from 29 September 1990. This new operation introduced Metrobuses to Sutton, largely transferred from Norbiton, which had lost all three of its tendered routes and closed the following year. The new contract also removed the Sunday extension to Croydon and the peak hour journeys to Belmont, creating the Kingston to Sutton Garage route which operates today.

London General was acquired by its management in 1994 from London Buses and in 1996 sold to the GoAhead group. London General has won each succeeding tender and continues to operate the route from Sutton garage. The Metrobuses were replaced by NV class Olympians in 1997, which in turn were replaced in 2002 by low-floor EVL class Volvo B7s. Subsequent low-floor double deck classes at Sutton included WVL Wright Volvo B7s, PVL Plaxton Volvo B7s, DOE Optare Tridents, E Enviro400s and WHV Wright Volvo B5s. In 2023, the route 213 was converted to electric operation using Ee class ADL E400-BYDs and from 2025, Sutton is an all-electric garage.

PIONEERING SPIRIT IN SOUTH EAST LONDON

David Bowker

On July 1st 1933, the London Passenger Transport Board (LPTB) was established to control and run all bus services in a huge area extending some twenty miles from central London. It brought order after the chaotic pirate years, with LPTB taking over many well-established and respected bus operators as well as the smaller independents, including Penfold & Brodie, who had a garage in Green Street Green. However, it stifled development of new bus services, with decisions made from an office in central London and with little regard for local knowledge or experience. Very few independents were given consent to run new routes by the Board.

Following an almost seven-week-long bus strike in 1958 (5th May to 20th June), many passengers found alternative ways to travel and never returned to the bus, resulting in a substantial reduction in services and frequencies, which continued into the 1960s. Opposing the cuts and mindful, perhaps, of the damaging strike eight years earlier, from 23rd January 1966, the union ordered an indefinite ban on overtime and rest day working. To protect its busier routes, London Transport withdrew a number of lighter-used services but consented to more than twenty private operators running those routes during the dispute. After it was settled a month later, two of those routes never returned to LT – the 98B (Ruislip-Rayners Lane) and 235 (Richmond-Richmond Hill). The 235 was operated by Isleworth Coaches, which in 1968 was acquired by Continental Pioneer who ran the route until September 1980 when LT's route 71 was rerouted via Richmond Hill. LT only consented to these private operators because they were unable or unwilling to run them. Elsewhere, LT steadfastly protected their monopoly and, in most cases, continued to refuse consent to private companies to run a route, even if it left vast areas without a bus service. However, a group of local residents in south-east London were determined to get the bus service they knew was needed.

Orpington Rural Transport Association (ORTA) was set up in 1962 to campaign for a bus service between Biggin Hill and Orpington, serving Berry's Green, Luxted and Downe, along very narrow roads, which would require the use of a vehicle with no more than fifteen seats. The smallest bus in LT's fleet was the 26-seat GS, which they considered unsuitable for London's suburbs and therefore unlikely to accommodate the Association's wishes, so ORTA applied to LT for consent to run the service. LT refused but agreed to trial their own service. Route 479 began on 16th February 1963 with four return journeys from Biggin Hill Post Office to Orpington Station on Saturdays only using a GS out of Dunton Green garage. Whilst the first couple of

weeks it was well used, it ran along the main road to Leaves Green and Shire Lane, so didn't serve the areas ORTA had requested and passenger numbers dropped. It lasted just four months and ran for the last time on 15th June.



GS 19 at Orpington Station on the last day of route 479. Alan B Cross

The fact that LT withdrew their service meant that they could no longer refuse consent, so the following week (22nd June 1963) ORTA took over, running it as an unnumbered route using a hired Bedford CA. A month later it was rerouted via Berry's Green, Luxted and Downe (today's TfL route R8) and increased to hourly, still on Saturday only, and using volunteer drivers, thus becoming the first community bus service in the country, although that was not understood at the time. It ran under the management of John Wylde, who became responsible for many groundbreaking developments in local bus operations. Protective of its own revenue, LT prevented ORTA from carrying passengers on local journeys between Orpington and Green Street Green but, of course, people could ride this section if they were travelling beyond.

In August they acquired their own vehicle, an Austin J2 Omnicoach. The term 'minibus' didn't exist and wouldn't do so until set down under the Minibus Act 1977, and the only small-enough vehicle on the market in the 1960s was



The Austin J2 showing the very unconventional way to board a bus in London. John Wylde

not ideal for stage-carriage services, with doors that open outwards like a car and restricted headroom inside.



Inside the Austin with side-seating and a ticket machine on the dashboard. John Wylde

The success of the new route soon saw demand for it to run during the week, first on Tuesdays only; then Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays (Mondays being wash day and Thursdays being early closing day), and in early 1965, a full Mon-Sat service was running. A second vehicle was purchased in September 1964 – a 13-seat Trojan P4, which was built in Croydon. In October 1965, they were replaced by two 12-seat Commer 2500s with a raised central



The unique Croydon-built Trojan. John Wylde



The Commer at Orpington station Michael Cleary

section to increase headroom inside the vehicle and, whilst not an option, John Wylde insisted a front blindbox be included. January 1966 saw Joan Normington appointed Operating Manager.

In March 1967, the route was extended into Biggin Hill Valley to serve new housing development, with half the service extended to New Addington and half to Tatsfield (both largely via today's 464). However, the route to Tatsfield was thwarted by delays in constructing the new road and was soon abandoned.

After John Wylde left ORTA, he set up North Downs, to run a service between Orpington and East Croydon (Altyre Road), which began on 8 April 1968, initially without a route number but, after a few months, was designated 853. Whilst its main purpose was to provide a connection between Orpington and Croydon, it also ran via Keston Mark to Coney Hall, unserved by LT. It also provided a service in Croydon along Coombe Lane and Park Hill Road for the first time. In granting consent to the service, LT issued strict conditions on what fares North Downs could charge, in that the fare should be no less than the combined fare they charged if a passenger took LT's route 61 to Bromley and changed to a 119 to Croydon. As LT would not provide bus stops along these roads, North Downs became the first operator in the country to use the then new Government standard flag, which had been set out under the Transport Act 1969 (enacted on 1 January 1969) forming the National Bus Company. As the stop flags were the first order received, the manufacturer incorrectly made them in red instead of the required black.



Ford Transit at the East Croydon Altyre Road terminus. Michael Cleary

A Ford Transit was used but, in those days it was nothing more than a van with bus seats and had little headroom inside. It also still had a swing door, which continued to be awkward when people were boarding or alighting at frequent intervals. Therefore, when a young teenager boarded one day and asked if he could act as conductor and operate the door, his help was very welcome and he became a regular on the bus, assisting the operation in many ways. He was Peter Larking and his name will be seen again later in this story. North Downs was also the

first operator in the UK to prohibit smoking – previously people were allowed to smoke at the rear (or on the upper deck), or if not designated it was accepted that smoking was allowed anywhere.

As passenger numbers grew, additional buses were required so John Wylde visited Strachans in Hamble, Hampshire. They had recently started building a parcel van with a taller, wider body on a standard Transit chassis and had just completed a passenger version. John suggested more comfortable seats, power-assisted door and a destination box in the front. Unfortunately, Strachans would only agree to the improved seats, but later builds did accommodate John's requirements and therefore North Downs became the first operator in the UK to run the first true minibus that actually looked like a bus, entering service in September 1969. It would be three years later that London Transport ordered the first FS (Ford Strachan) minibus for their new routes W9 (Enfield), P4 (Brixton) and B1 (Bromley).



North Downs did anything to make their Transit look like a bus! Michael Cleary



Looking more like a bus at last – the first John Wylde specified Strachan-bodied Ford Transit, which would become the standard minibus. Note the North Downs bus stop. Michael Cleary

When Wates were developing the Forestdale Estate, the house-builder provided a free shuttle bus from the top of the estate to the bottom of Gravel Hill, in the expectation that LT would soon introduce a bus service. It would have been very easy for LT to extend route 64, which then terminated at Addington. With no sign of LT responding to

this request, Wates approached North Downs to provide the service, so in August 1970, North Downs introduced a daily route 855 from Forestdale to Addington, continuing via their 853 to East Croydon. It was soon realised that minibuses were totally inadequate in peak hours so North Downs acquired a variety of larger single-deck vehicles including RF 254.

In the 1970s, there were many routes across the capital that London Transport and London Country Bus Services (LCBS) didn't run on Sundays but some independent concerns thought there could be a demand for a service on this day. North Downs introduced route 854 between Orpington and Ramsden Estate, which LCBS covered as route 493 on Mon-Sat. London Transport Country Buses had used '854' for the first service to Ramsden Estate c1959-1966 before '493' was adopted, so the choice of '854' by North Downs was quite appropriate. On the other side of Croydon, LT introduced route 233 from May 1969 to serve the new Roundshaw development on Mon-Sat. North Downs received consent to provide a Sunday service between East Croydon and Roundshaw from May 1971 using the route number 856. It lasted for a year and it would be 1981 before the estate got a permanent Sunday service when the 233 was replaced by a rerouted 154. On the 854, Orpington & District took over from North Downs in spring 1972 but it was withdrawn the following year. Today, Ramsden Estate is served by routes 353, R4 and R9. Sunday journeys were also tried on route 853, first by North Downs, then by Orpington & District and when proved unsuccessful, Thamesmead Motor Services had a go. None lasted long.

Joan Normington, Operating Manager of ORTA, set up Orpington & District (O&D) in 1971, taking over route 855 from December, where the huge demand for larger vehicles had proved too much for North Downs. Some double-deck buses were used, which needed to be low height due to the Coombe Road railway bridge. There were now three independents in the area, Orpington Rural



An ex-West Riding Fleetline at Forestdale on Orpington & District route 857 David Bowker



The O&D driver has forgotten to change destination for Orpington as this ex-West Yorkshire Road Car Bristol MW departs East Croydon. David Bowker

Transport Association, Orpington & District and North Downs.

On the original ORTA route, a bifurcation was introduced in September 1974 to Melody Road, to serve new developments in the southern end of the Biggin Hill Valley (today this is TfL's route R2). In July 1975 Joan Normington left ORTA and John Wylde was reappointed as Operating Manager using North Downs vehicles and he allocated a route number 858. However, in December 1975 ORTA was disbanded and O&D took over the 858 but withdrew the New Addington journeys, leaving it running between Orpington and Biggin Hill Valley. North Downs struggled on with route 353 but collapsed on 15 January 1976 and Orpington & District took over shortly afterwards.

In 1976, O&D tried two new routes, the 860 and 861: East Croydon to Biggin Hill via Addington, Keston and Leaves Green with 860 continuing to Biggin Hill Valley and 861 to Downe via Berry's Green. Both were withdrawn in June the following year.

Orpington & District ran the routes for the next few years but at the end of 1980, unreliability on the routes and maintenance issues with vehicles saw the company withdraw route 858. A month later, the Orpington-Forestdale-East Croydon routes were reduced to peaks only. On 20 February 1981 the 853 (and 857 which ran when 853/855 didn't) was withdrawn. A week later, on the 27th, Orpington & District collapsed suddenly after the morning peak, leaving Forestdale, the Orpington-East Croydon corridor, and the Orpington-Biggin Hill Valley route bus-less.

The young teenager that volunteered to conduct during the early days of Orpington Rural Transport Association, Peter Larking, persuaded Tillingbourne to run the routes and from 2 March 1981, route 855 was reintroduced between Forestdale and East Croydon and quickly renumbered 355. Also, on 21 April, 353 (Orpington-Croydon direct) and 357 (double-running via Forestdale)



Tillingbourne's Bristol VR passes under the 13'6" Coombe Road bridge David Bowker



Crystals Mercedes on route 858 at Orpington War Memorial. Mike Harris

were introduced. Peter Larking, along with Garry Wood became Directors of a separate company – Tillingbourne (Metropolitan) from August 1981, running the service from O&D's former garage at Green Street Green.

A new operator emerged from 26 May 1981 to run the 858 between Orpington and Biggin Hill Valley. Crystals would also be one of the first independents to win a London Transport bus route contract, taking over route 146 in August 1985. In Downe, it met the 858, which they ran until August the following year, when it became LT route R2. The five-month loss of a bus service into Biggin Hill Valley probably hastened London Country Bus Services' decision to extend its route 410 down the hill to King's Road, which took place on 13 June, providing a direct route from the Valley to Bromley (today provided by TfL route 320).

Tillingbourne (Metropolitan) introduced a new shopper service (route 354) in May 1982, between Sanderstead and Bromley (Churchill Theatre) with one return journey Monday-Friday. Later in the year it was rerouted to serve new roads in the Bourne Vale area.

The London Regional Transport Act 1984 wrestled control of transport in the capital away from the Greater London Council to the Secretary of State for Transport; London Transport becoming London Regional Transport (LRT). As well as requiring all of London's bus routes to be put out for competitive tender, the Act would also make it easier

for independents to run their own routes. Peter Larking and Garry Wood understood the implications and from 24 September 1983 Tillingbourne (Metropolitan) became Metrobus, in a dark blue and mustard-yellow livery (a reversal of the Tillingbourne livery). Metrobus's Directors would lead the way in developing new bus services, as well as winning LRT Contracts.

In August 1986 route 354 became a regular service and restructured to run between Bromley North and Selsdon. At the same time, although still run commercially by Metrobus (Go-Ahead), the route became part of the LRT/TfL network, worked under contractual agreement rather than competitive tender. It had been intended to reroute the 354 along new roads serving the new Selsdon Vale estate but this was frustrated by a few vociferous residents objecting to a bus service passing their home. However, this rerouting did take place in October the following year when the route was also extended to Croydon via route 64 and Park Hill Road. When Tramlink opened in May 2000, the 354 was replaced by new route T33 (now TfL route 433), the Bourne Vale estate already served by this time by the 314 and 352. Today's 354 is a completely different route.

Route 358 was introduced by Metrobus in May 1989, between Green Street Green and Crystal Palace via Orpington, Bromley South and Beckenham and rerouted the following year via Eden Park along previously unserved roads. Initially, double-decks were used but it was restructured again in 1992 via Shortlands, where there was a low bridge, and was changed to terminate at Orpington via Green Street Green instead of the other way round. It became part of the TfL network in May 2002 and still runs today by Metrobus (Go-Ahead).



Former London Transport DMS 2052 on Metrobus route 358 at Penge. David Bowker

Metrobus then introduced route 356 on 26 March 1990 between Croydon and Biggin Hill via West Wickham and Keston and extended to Tatsfield the following year. It was replaced in September 1998 by new TfL route 464 (New Addington – Biggin Hill – Tatsfield), very similar to ORTA's route thirty years earlier.



Leyland Lynx at Tatsfield David Bowker



An interesting summer Sunday leisure route 746 ran in 1994 and 95 between Bromley and Tunbridge Wells using RF 255. It ran via Downe and is seen at Berry's Green. David Bowker

Route 351 was started by Metrobus on 2 March 1991 between Bromley North and Penge serving new roads at Ravensbourne and Birkbeck. It was largely replaced by a new TfL route 354 in July 2002.

The 353 continued to run between Orpington and East Croydon (via Forestdale) until May 2000 when Tramlink opened and the route was restructured to run Forestdale – Orpington – Ramsden Estate. It is still run by Metrobus (Go-Ahead) now, of course, part of the TfL network.

It is incredible to think that a large part of the bus network in Bromley and parts of Croydon were developed by just a few individuals, John Wylde (ORTA / North Downs), Peter Larkin and Gary Wood (Metrobus) and Joan Normington (O&D). TfL is very different to 1960s/70s London Transport and if Forestdale was built today TfL would plan a bus service well in advance. Father of the minibus, John Wylde, moved to Berwick-upon-Tweed where he developed the first taxi-bus service in the UK. There were a few other independents in London but nothing like the pioneering spirit we saw in the south-east of the capital.

A full history of the routes described and others of the operators concerned can be found in *London Transport Connections 1945-1985* by Philip Wallace (Capital Transport), *Metrobus – the company's first ten years* by Andrew Boag (Capital Transport) and *Experiments in Public Transport Operation* (John Wylde).

LIFE ON THE BUSES

Rod Lucas

According to my mother, my interest in buses started in about 1945 when I was three and she and her good friend used to walk with their two boys in prams from Epsom Downs to the town, and I would pull myself up out of my pram when I heard a bus struggling up Ashley Road on the 406 - probably an ST.

In about 1947 a bus service (419) started up to Langley Vale where we lived, initially it was 9T9s and Qs (4Q4 variety) but later they were replaced by 10T10s. However when the service was increased, a 9T9 (our T 448 newly overhauled and painted in nearly overall green) made several appearances. I used this service to get partway to and from school. Later, and initially just on Sundays, they were all replaced by crew RFs and that route, the 419 then became the first of the experimental OPO. My school was in Sutton, so from Epsom onwards I took a 408 or 470, which was one of the first to have RTs on it, my morning journey was a 408 - GF2, a Guildford allocation. Like many bus spotters, I used Ian Allan's books to keep up with the happenings and often pestered the Smith's book shop to see if a new edition had come out. I was also into photography, and it was then I met a fellow photographer, generally at Morden, who I later found out was Alan Cross - he had a better camera than mine. Unfortunately, all my collection was destroyed when our house was flooded.

In mid-teens, buses took a bit of a back seat as I was then at a mixed school and the female variety took over. Fast forward now to 1964 when I was working as an audio design engineer at Decca Battersea where I first met LBPT member Derek Hanlon, but this was short lived as he moved on. After nine years in that position, Decca decided to move their development staff up to Leicester and although they offered me a good moving package and we viewed several houses in Market Harborough, we decided to stay down south. But big problem just after the decision, my parents who we shared a big house with, suddenly decided they wanted to move out and we would have to buy our own - no real problem, I had capital for a deposit but still needed a mortgage, which as we all know, won't be granted if you don't have a job. Speaking to my dear widowed aunt, her then boyfriend said 'come and work for us', he worked at London Country Bus Service's Leatherhead bus garage. Now, I had always fancied driving a bus, so I phoned the garage superintendent, made an appointment, had a quick interview and then a short drive

from Leatherhead garage to Effingham and back in an RT, which went quite well and I was confident on the Highway Code questions as I had just taught mother to drive, so it was all alive in my mind. Actually, years back, when I took the RT to the Sutton school, I generally managed to sit in the front nearside seat so could see what the driver did with the gear selector, and later worked out what he was doing - and this came in very handy for the short drive. I went home that night with a letter that said I was now employed, so I was then granted a mortgage. All the training was done at Reigate and I took the test about a fortnight later and passed. I was also trained in the classroom as a conductor, then spent three days out with a conductor-trainer, but never actually did it, the training covered all the paperwork and was necessary for OPO driving.

I was really allocated to Leatherhead but, apart from the first few weeks on crew buses, and because I was OPO trained, I was allocated a slot on OPO duty rota on 'instructions'. Basically you didn't do the usual rota work but went in at a specified time and were given a job when one came up (like a driver suddenly going sick or filling in for buses that are running very late). I had to learn all the multitude of Leatherhead routes, which included all the odd turning points. I knew the locality very well so that was ok, but came unstuck on one occasion when told to take an SM on the 418 to as far as there were passengers on board, then bring it back dead (i.e. not in service). The lane I chose near Bookham to return being the shortest was not a bus route and a bit narrow. Sometimes, when there was no work for me at Leatherhead, they asked if I would go to Reigate to help out, as they also ran the 406 along with Leatherhead. This I did on several occasions but one time they asked if I would do the 414 as there was no problem with the 406. I knew most of the route from West Croydon, but got lost in Horsham and stopped at a road junction, but a kind lady passenger pointed through the window (the conductor was upstairs out of the way), the bus was an RMC. Drivers weren't allowed in the engineering workshops, but sometimes when I got bored with nothing to do I would creep in to see what was going on. One time I was caught by a top man from Reigate who asked "what do you know about f***ing buses?" to which I replied, "I don't know, I've never f***ed one". He soon found out I knew quite a bit about the electrics on buses, and he offered me a position in his team, but I already had a job offer outside which I took.

However, that didn't last long – yet another redundancy - so I started a radio repair business and also did a bit of part time driving with the likes of LT Merlins and Bournemouth buses. These erratic times came to a head with me actually being employed full time again at Leatherhead, but their new buses were of the BN type, manual transmission which my licence didn't cover. Back then one's licence only allowed driving on the type that one took the test on, and with RTs you got an "automatic licence double deck". So a new test was required, which luckily I passed, but it stated only up to 27' 6" long and single deck. It was at that time of the employment that I became involved with driver training. When the training section got overloaded, they used 'temporary instructors', normal service drivers who it was thought had the necessary ability to train new recruits, and they thought I had that. But this didn't last long, as I was offered a super high salary as a technical salesman for a company importing electronics from all around the world. They were lovely people to work for. At that time, I had just joined LOTS, and as my office was close to where they held meetings, I decided to go on one occasion, and it was there that I met Bill Cottrell and Alan Pearce (both no longer with us), who persuaded me to join Cobham Bus Museum and that I did. The first job I was given was to rebuild the water pump on T 504, someone had dismantled it and then disappeared. Eventually, after a bit of trial and error with springs of different tensions and a new carbon thrust ring, we succeeded, so that's me at Cobham. But yet again, I am on the move, I saw an advert for a position at Chiswick bus works, to oversee the repair of bus radio and all the little electronic bits then being fitted to buses like Titans, Metros, Nationals, and it included the repair of the automatic gear control panels. I had an interview and got the job. I was one of the five section engineers who effectively ran all the repair processes within the works. I still have the test gear for Titan panels and occasionally repair them for the likes of Dave Kriesler, LBM's electrical wizard.

Some vehicle testing was required at times but was done by others, so I asked if I could do it as I still had a current PSV licence, (but didn't disclose my previous bus interest). 'No' was the answer as you weren't Chiswick trained – no one does it to the Chiswick high standard, in fact all my training had been done by ex-Chiswick instructors all having been with London Transport Country Buses before the 1970 split. It's who you know in life, and I often had lunch with one of the senior managers of the training school, and he agreed to arrange an assessment on my driving to see if I was up to the standard. At Chiswick

dining was segregated, persons of a certain grade had to lunch with similar in a small dining room, officer grades in another small room with 'posh' cutlery and works personnel in the big main canteen. My grade being 'senior executive assistant' was the middle one. I couldn't believe my eyes when the bus I was to be assessed on was an RMC, recently transferred back to LT and still green. I drove it around the local roads, after which the assessor asked have you driven one of these before? Anyway, after that success, I was type trained on every type they currently had (including an RT, for which we used the skid demonstration bus but only within the works as it was not licenced). Often we used the long haul to their other training ground at North Weald aerodrome where they used one of the runways, on these runs we acted as delivery for paperwork. My usual instructor was Bill Wingen, a German who decided to stay here after being sent here as a POW - he told me he hated the stupid war. Bill was very polite and always knocked on my office door before entering and clicked his heels when we shook hands. One time he said I needed another refresher but a short to Isleworth should suffice, actually he wanted to get a special bit of hi-fi in a shop there. I then used a similar reason when my video recorder needed repair by a shop near the Target pub at Norholt on the A 40.

Another thing I managed 'to swing' was a licence upgrade. As previously stated, licences only covered what you were passed out on, I had a double deck auto licence taken on the RT and a restricted length manual licence taken on a BN, I really wanted an 'all types' which allowed me to drive anything. So again, who you know, and in comes my dining partner who said he would lend me an instructor for a few lessons, but it would be difficult as there were only a couple of instructors who still knew about 'manual' driving. We borrowed Cobham's open top PD2 (FFY 403), a non-London vehicle long gone, for that and which I was tested on and passed.

I was lucky in that I was allowed to use the Chiswick – Reigate staff bus, as normally persons of my grade were not, and one night the bus, RMA 36 failed on Barnes Common, I think some the belts had broken and unfortunately it was a night when one of the two drivers was not present, he managed to turn over the remaining belt so giving it extra grip, so fixed the bus but came out from under covered in grease. He asked me to jump in the cab and start her up, all seemed ok, but then said he couldn't drive the bus in that mucky state and would I? So there am I, the most senior staff member on the bus

driving home all the workers - they were happy and so was I! The bus went quite well, I reached about 58 on the A3.

I became involved in many activities at Chiswick including engine test plus standing in for one of my colleagues on managing his section when he was away. One of my great interests was the fuel pump repair where I spent quite a while with the foreman learning about them. One of my duties was accompanying Colin Curtis to Voith technical meetings acting as technical support on gear panel repair. As is well known, LT was split into London Buses and Bus Engineering, I went to Bus Engineering which was then made a subsidiary of London Transport, but all important, we were allowed to do what previously we were not, i.e. tout for business. Soon after that time Aldenham closed and certain activities were transferred to Chiswick. Lots of the repair work was discontinued as it was found that 'buy new' was cheaper than the old repair processes left over from war days when material was hard to find. Soon Chiswick was sold off to a private concern and became Bus Engineering, huge demolitions of buildings was happening and there were four RMCs still on the old skid patch and I was told to get them all off quickly as the area was about to be fenced off, so I believe I was the last person to drive on it. But it wasn't long before we moved to a smaller site near Willesden.

When the main canteen at Chiswick was being dismantled, I noticed some rather nice, not too big, column loudspeakers and thought they would be just right for our local village hall. So, I enquired regarding a sale price, paid up and was told the foreman would remove them for me. When I went to collect them, he said the boss man said I could have all the eight larger ones as well and he had already taken them off the wall. But how to get them home? My assistant Wally da Costa reminded me that we were about to road test a Metro with a different gearbox (Avon?), so we loaded the speakers on to it and drove all the way to my home in Tadworth by the 406 route, which was actually a test route going back many years. But a big problem, at the top of the steep Ashley Road the overheat light came on, so we rested for a few minutes, it went out and we proceeded and returned. The next day I told Colin Curtis of this, he wasn't over pleased that I had actually gone that distance but was pleased about the report, as he was about to put the bus out on the 91 the next day. The fault was a blocked filter. These loudspeakers eventually found their way to Cobham and formed part of the public address system that I installed there. On the move to Brooklands we needed more, so the big four speaker cabinets were cut in half, new transformers fitted and the

resulting eight speakers are what currently form the system.

With the closing of Aldenham and change of repair procedures, there were many redundancies, both amongst the workforce and also at my management level, so that many of my section engineer colleagues were included and I ended up with being the unit manager for radio, electronic repair, trim shop, blinds and ticket repair, as George Sawyer who was ticket machine manager then retired. He was the man responsible for part designing the Gibson ticket machine. Actually BEL, or its variations as it came to be known, went into receivership twice, but was rescued by various takeovers. This touting for business, supported by a small team of salesmen, brought in huge interest in our electronic repair facility and business boomed for us. I used to accompany them where it was thought business could be had. I ended up road testing vehicles from many concerns, many of the bus types I had never driven, so it was a self type train. But the asset strippers really got to work and soon Bus Engineering was in the hands of the administrators and eventually the whole lot closed - very sad because the enterprise was a going concern when first sold - just greed got in their way.

Luckily for me I was known in the Underground and was offered a position in the document writing team, where I got involved with the repair processes of all the underground stocks, but that didn't last long, as the chap I originally took over from at Chiswick radio repair, who now had quite a senior position with the Underground, told them I knew quite a bit about radio systems, so I was transferred to improving the train-borne radio units and later ended my days on the 'Connect' project dealing with the introduction of digital radios on underground trains. They kept me on for eight years after my official retirement date, as the project wasn't finished. So here I am at London Bus Museum doing all sorts, mainly involved with driver and conductor training, writing vehicle data sheets, occasionally dealing with bus repair, and looking after the public address systems etc.

Much of what is written here is in my two books, the first is entitled "Shades of Green and Red" has many tales of my employment at London Country Bus Services and at Chiswick. I have quite a sense of humour and found passengers were a good source of material. The second version doesn't include Chiswick but has the addition of sections relating to before and after my time at Leatherhead garage. This version was produced with inputs from Peter Osborn of the London Historical Research Group and is published by them.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

David Harman

Mailing of new cards to renewing members

New arrangements are now in place for the mailing of new Membership Cards for members renewing by direct debit.

Instead of new cards being sent up to three months in advance with their quarterly LBM Magazine, cards are now mailed separately in the month prior to their membership expiring. Members renewing by other means will receive reminders around the same time by email or letter.

Under the previous system, many members seem to have been discarding their card and covering letter when taking the Magazine out of the envelope, and later requesting a replacement card.

Please keep your Membership Card safely. Brooklands Reception will not permit free admission unless you have a current card; nor is there any method by which the status of your membership can be checked by them or by LBM Reception if you turn up without a card.

In the absence of a current card, you will have to pay the normal Brooklands admission fee which cannot subsequently be refunded.

In light of the number of replacement cards being regularly requested and the administrative time this takes up, LBM will be charging £5 to issue a replacement card to cover the cost and postage. This is in line with what Brooklands Museum are now doing.

Please check that you have your current card now and contact Membership Services if you have lost it.

Finally, I can only reiterate that paying your subscription by direct debit saves LBM a great deal of administrative time. If you wish to transfer to paying by direct debit, please let me know.

Magazine by email

Many members now take the LBM Magazine as a PDF by email. This saves the Trust money by avoiding print and postage costs. It also saves members space at home by avoiding the need to store paper, and you can search the PDF easily. Enhancements are being added to the PDF to make navigation easier and to link to other sources in ways that are impossible with a paper document. The LBM website Members' Area contains an archive of the vast majority of previous LBM Magazines and predecessors which you can access free.

But the Magazine as a PDF by email is entirely optional, and the paper version will continue for so long as members want it.

If you have "gone paperless" and now wish to change back to paper, let us know and it can be done. If you haven't "gone paperless" yet and now wish to, similarly, let us know at:

membership@londonbusmuseum.com

A SIGN OF THE TIMES?

Phil Palmer

The eagle-eyed amongst you will have spotted a new flag on the Mezzanine rail:

The 'Towards' sign seems pretty unhelpful. Given that this is a London sign, is there anywhere that a coach stopped here DOESN'T go?!

The answer is that this is not a service sign; it's a prototype to demonstrate the yellow Coaches roundel, which has been finished with a nonspecific location and e-tiles.

Thanks to Leon for donating this unusual sign. I'm looking forward to confusing my grandchildren with it!



BOOK REVIEW

Michael H C Baker

Regenerating London's Buses by Roger Torode, Capital Transport, 192 pages, hardback, colour and black and white.

This is a fabulous book, possibly, in its way, the best ever of all the countless books published over the year on just about every aspect one could imagine of the London bus. It is impossible to do justice to a book of 192 pages, packed with such a plethora of information, ranging from demolishing such myths that the Mercedes bendy buses were always catching fire and were an operating disaster, to numerous references to significant players in the story who became household names. These are notably Boris Johnson, Ken Livingstone, who, despite the best – or rather worst – efforts of the defunct Evening Standard, emerges as one of the heroes, and Leon Daniels and, especially Peter Hendy, who were not only in charge and captains - or rather in the latter's case, lord – of industry, but also have somehow constantly managed to appear on all sorts of occasions driving and conducting their own preserved Routemaster and RTW.

The breadth of topics covered by author Roger Torode is all embracing, ranging from the appalling 7th July, 2005 bombings to the glories of the LT New Routemaster, the steady reduction in the diesel powered fleet, the move to cashless travel, the extraordinary success of the Oyster, the employment of the boss of New York's transport system to run Transport for London, the complexities of the part played by trade unions, improving the status, conditions and the wage structure of drivers, and so very much more; not least of all the realisation that the big red, double deck bus had become as big a tourist attraction and revenue earner as, for example, Big Ben and Buckingham Palace. Mr Torode has interviewed just about everyone who has contributed a significant part in the story of the London bus between the end of the 1990s and the year (Peak Year as the author defines it) 2015. It is a story of great achievement, and to quote Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill CBE in his foreword, 'a work which brings the story alive and is worth reading from cover to cover.'



Regenerating London's Buses

Roger Torode

DONATIONS RECEIVED

Phil Palmer

The following individuals have recently made donations to the Trust:

Graham Burnell
 Peter Cartwright
 Leon Daniels
 Estate of D Haines
 Aidan Hardy
 M Kennard
 Mark Rowell

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.

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

Route 38 heritage day Saturday 14 March 2026

IT'S FREE

- 38**
- Clapton Pond
 - Hackney Central
 - Dalston Junction Station
 - Islington, Angel Station
 - Rosebery Avenue
 - Tottenham Court Road Station
 - Piccadilly Circus
 - Hyde Park Corner
 - Victoria Station



Come for a ride on heritage buses through Hackney, Islington and the West End, as part of our programme of bringing buses out of the Museum to run again in and around London

We will be running buses from the 1930s to the 1980s from 10:00 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 38 on which normal fares apply

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

London Bus Museum's Spring Gathering will be held at Brooklands on Sunday 19 April 2026

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

londonbusmuseum.com
brooklandsmuseum.com




LONDON BUS MUSEUM

SPRING GATHERING

Sunday 19 April 10am-5pm

prices & advanced booking
brooklandsmuseum.com/tickets
01932 857 381

LBM & BMT members free
join on the day & we'll refund your entry fee

free parking in
The Heights car park KT13 0XP

londonbusmuseum.com
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MARKET STALLS

CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT

FREE SHUTTLE BUS TO & FROM WEYBRIDGE STN & WEYBRIDGE

ENTRY TO MOST BROOKLANDS ATTRACTIONS

BROOKLANDS MUSEUM

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](#)

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Officers

Bus Crews Manager: Andrew Collins
Bus Service Administrator: Peter Osborn*
Curatorial Manager: Phil Palmer*
Education Manager: Bob Bailey*
E-News Editor: Richard Hastings
Events Committee Chair: Gerry Job*
Facilities Manager: Ian Reddick*
Fire Officer: Deryck Fill*
Fundraising: Simon Douglas-Lane*
Fundraising (donated items): Melvyn Phillips and Bob Bailey*
Health & Safety Manager: vacant
HR and Volunteering Manager: Vacant
Information Officer: Graham Smith*
IT Manager: David Harman*
LBM Magazine Editor: Dave Jones*
Marketing & Events Manager: Deryck Fill*
Members' Trips Organiser: Adrian Palmer
Publicity Distribution Officer: Colin Read
Rolling Stock Director & Vice Chairman CoM: Roger Stagg*
Talks Coordinator: Paul Raven-Hill
Transport Manager: Glyn Matthews*
Uniform Manager: Robin Helliar-Symons
Workshop Manager: Owen Wright*

*Member of the Council of Management

London Bus Museum Ltd

Managing Director: Gerry Job
Shop Manager: Yvette Gower
Assistant Manager and Director: Chris Taylor
Company Secretary: Peter Brown

Registered Office

Cobham Hall, Brooklands Road, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 0QS
Charity number: 1053383.
Company Registration number: 1061762

BUS EVENTS 2026

14
March

Heritage Day
Route 38
Clapton Pond to Victoria

19
April

Spring Gathering
BROOKLANDS
MUSEUM

13
June

Heritage Day
Route 213
Sutton Bus Garage to Kingston

28
June

Summer Festival
BROOKLANDS
MUSEUM

3
October

Heritage Day
Route 106
Finsbury Park to Ash Grove Garage

18
October

TransportFest
BROOKLANDS
MUSEUM

All events
10:00 - 17:00

A free bus 462 runs to and from
Weybridge station and High Street
during all our events at Brooklands