

Autumn Newsletter 2016

If you have any news or views for publication please hand or send them to Mark Byard or Andrew Beever

Welcome to new members:
Andrew Keeble, Sophie Jenkins, Elliot Day, Philip Carlton, Mark Kloda & Lawrence Dutton.



Do you remember Illingworths of Wakefield?

To open our Autumn newsletter we thought we would bring you this shot of a former member of the fleet of a Wakefield independent that many of you may well remember.....



Left; standard Illingworth fayre – a Plaxton bodied Bedford.

Illingworth operated from a small garage next to Marsh Way in Wakefield. During the 60's they had four coaches but by the late eighties were down to two. Always a fan of Bedford and Plaxton the coaches were always smartly turned out and stood out from some of the other small operators around Wakefield. Do you have any shots of the other coaches they operated?

The Illingworth garage still stands and is now an MOT centre for cars. Gone are the days when you could see a line-up of smartly presented coaches ready for excursions and private hires.

Yet another Fleetline



A green one this time! BHL 616K sits in Leeds Bus Station showing off its Northern Counties bodywork and hidden beneath its bodywork a redeployed Wulfrunian Gardner engine.

Summer spectacular makes an impact

Well what a superb day everyone had with some excellent visitor and trader feedback about how things went.

We had an excellent turn out of visiting buses with the lay over area at the Mill full to bursting. The services we provided were full with passengers, particularly the ones to the Museum, and the overall footfall was estimated at over 1000.

Our main sponsors, the Mill Outlet were overwhelmed with how successful the event was. We had a few last minute vehicle drop outs (due to mechanical issues) but several visiting vehicles came to the rescue and with the exception of two Black Prince services everything ran to timetable.

It goes without saying that we cannot do this without every bus owner, driver, conductor, member and volunteer that gives up time to assist in making the event a truly professional affair so a BIG THANK YOU to all of you that give up time, money and expertise.

From a financial point of view we had a cracker with a significant increase on last year's result for both WROMT & WROPS pots! However, never to be satisfied we could do better on TIN DONATIONS so perhaps we should get our STAR PERFORMER Stuart Goldthorpe to do some training sessions on how to part the visitors from their cash!

A final note of thanks must go to Tony Salmon for his organisational skills which ensured everything came together on the day.

Open Day coming together - Sunday 13th November

Hot on the heels of the summer event Tony has already started planning for the November event.

Firstly we need donations to make up our Christmas Raffle so anything from a tin of peaches to a bottle of Fizz will be most welcome. Thanks must go to the Wimpenny family of Huddersfield for getting the ball rolling on the Christmas Hamper front with a donation of cash to buy the first items for the Raffle. **Please see June Hare at the October members meeting with your donations! You can also send a cheque payable to WROMT to the Museum contact address if you would like to help raise funds through the raffle.**

We had lots of positive feedback about our new green Hi Viz vests so in November all volunteers will be issued with one. Some will also promote event booklet sales. We will not be operating services to Charlottes any longer but Tony has a few other options up his sleeve – more information at the coming members meetings!

We are also planning to debut a surprise former local coach that has been secretly acquired and is being worked on outside Yorkshire! If all goes to plan the coach will be our star attraction on the day.

More details about the event will be discussed at the October members meeting!

A letter from Leo – the early days!

I was pleased to read Ken Aveyard's letter in the summer newsletter regarding his long term membership and the formation of the Society in November 1971. I also attended that very first meeting and recently handed over to Mark Byard my original letter of invitation, a copy of the minutes of that meeting along with the first 25 Newsletters (mainly edited by Ken) and numerous other Society and Wulf items for the Archive.

I thoroughly endorse Ken's comments about the amount of effort and work that has gone into Ravensthorpe and the wider Society in recent times. I also recall the very cold and dirty working conditions he mentions when working in the old building, especially when restoring the Dalesman Reliance coach first time around!

In reality JHL 983 was the Society's first major restoration, previous work was carried out on Ethel and the Wulf (UCX) within the well-equipped confines of the West Riding Automobile Company garages, mainly at Saville Street Depot next to the now demolished original Wakefield Bus Station. With the advent of Ravensthorpe we were on our own and we had already started on BHL. However, a vote at a Society meeting put this on hold in favour of starting work on the newly acquired Dalesman coach.

When I first saw the Dalesman coach I wondered how it had managed to get past Barnsley, it really was in a sorry state, missing its front bumper and grill, with damaged bodywork, dented panels and a boot that had been set of fire. Nevertheless a small team of members set to work on the project and I recall many Sundays working on the Reliance in the cold and damp conditions of the old building. Each of the team took on different tasks, and in my case it was to be the bodywork and bright-work, and when necessary we all helped each other. With the lower panels removed much of the body frame required splicing or replacing and almost all of the lower panels were renewed. The centre entrance sliding door had major problems and a spare door was acquired from the Barnsley bus graves with one good door being made from two!

I carried out a lot of the work in my own workshop such as re-skinning the boot doors, engine hatch panels, emergency door etc and new front bumpers were fabricated in alloy to match the originals, as was the front grill. Yes, I have many memories of what was a successful restoration achieved by a small team of dedicated members and topped off by an ace paint job completed by Tony White. I was therefore delighted to read of the current progress being made to get the AEC Reliance Dalesman up and running again as she is a quality motor with a good turn of speed and a comfortable ride. Yours Leo Pratt

From the past

Do you recognise this depot?



Mid 1980's- a West Riding outpost!

Turn the page to find out which one!

For those in the know they will recognise part of the old Featherstone Depot just off Station Lane and the former home of B & S Motor Service. The shot was taken just prior to demolition. It was not unusual to find yourself sat on a bus on this forecourt when a driver took a slight detour off Station Lane to "pop" into the Depot for something, even the odd crew change was not unheard of. All great stuff and something that probably would never happen now due to health and safety reasons.

The pit gets a clean out!

Most members have never seen the pit, and those that have seen it before have probably never seen it as clean as this. Here are a couple of shots to prove it got a good clean out and does exist in the Museum building!



Given the warm and humid temperatures up on the Mezzanine, it has been suggested that we fill it with water and use it as a plunge pool to cool the workers down in the summer months. Anyone got a spare rubber duck?

Out and about

We included a questionnaire with our last newsletter to try and solicit some feedback on what we were getting right and what we could improve on. We only received a minimal amount of feedback that doesn't really give us enough information to base any future decisions upon. More feedback will be taken at this month's members meeting. In the meantime we have continued to send vehicles to other events throughout the country.

July – Liverpool. We had planned to send THL but due to less than 10 members placing names on the list the trip was cancelled.

On 21st August we supplied three buses for the Leeds Running Day. BHL, TWY 8 and the Panther were representing the Museum and we were given the opportunity to take along the WROPS stalls. A great day was had by all.

We supported the Aldwarke event on 11th September

Here are our planned visits in the next few months:

25th September Keighley – because of the clash with Showbus at Donnington we are not planning to send a bus to Keighley but watch the website for changes on this plan! (if any member drivers would like to do Keighley please let Tony Salmon know so we can provide a feeder service)

9th October Skipton – one or two of our buses will be supporting our friends at the Aire Valley Group event

29th October Samuel Ledgard Transport Fair Pudsey – we will be taking a half cab bus to sell our November event programmes from on the forecourt outside the venue

30th October Keighley – we will be providing free public feeder services from Wakefield, Dewsbury and Bradford, taking our stalls and selling our event programmes.

Vehicle Updates

JHL 983 Following the recent updates on the progress of our Dalesman coach, Leo Pratt has sent us a little update on his memories of the restoration of this lovely coach the first time around and we hope you enjoyed reading them earlier.

Meanwhile back at the ranch, we were all delighted to see the Dalesman move under her own power on 1st August after the team effort to get her clutch sorted. Dave Sayer is continuing with the overhaul and is now on with the engine fluids and brakes.

WHL 970 The paint work is completed and she looks absolutely stunning thanks to paint pot Andy, Colin Poole & Stuart. She made a very impressive sight at the Open Day. Next on the agenda is the refurbishment of the brake callipers. Thanks must go to Terry Hutchinson for a substantial donation to the Wulf fund this month.

KHL 855 Bodywork restoration has commenced on the nearside – take a look at the shot below of what she looked like after a few weeks in the Museum building!



If it's worth doing at all its worth doing well! Mike, Colin Wood and Andrew had a smashing time! Mark sat crying in the corner.

EVD 406 The radiator refurbishment is now complete and Andrew and Colin Wood spending hours on it. A big tick for apprentice Beever being supervised throughout by Colin! However on the open day a large "bang" was heard from the rear of the bus so this is being investigated.

EHL 344 Ethel is a bit poorly. First of all her starter motor has been playing up and a problem with the flywheel housing has been discovered. Her clutch is also at maximum tolerance and her cylinder heads need some attention so we have decided to bite the bullet and get all these issues sorted with a costly external refurbishment of parts. If you could spare any dosh please speak to any Trustee.

XUA 73X The National is still requiring attention to the steering ram and otherwise she is ready to rally. However, this needs fixing before she can be re-presented for MOT.

THL 261H – The RE in distress!



"Back her in lads"



On 19th July the RE was being repositioned for pre-MOT work to commence and unfortunately failed in Dewsbury town centre. This is the first failure we have had for years and turned out to be a very expensive recovery job at £420 for a two mile tow. Thus a warning to all bus owners that if you don't have recovery cover in place you might want to consider some. She is now MOT'd and fit once more.

Bear Grylls hitches a ride

We mentioned in our last newsletter that Ethel carried a celebrity in the summer months. Tony Salmon and Steve Hurley did the honours and escorted Bear in Ethel from his helicopter landing pad to the nearby Bradley Wood Scout Camp.



"What's that big green thing with black and white stripes?"



Obviously Bear had never seen a Tiger like ours before so was in for a shock! Well done to Tony and Steve for coming to the rescue of the scouts who wanted to impress the Bear after arriving at the scout camp by helicopter.

At the wheel

Thanks to Stuart Goldthorpe for the shot below of the Panther in its early days of preservation. Sat at the bus stop outside the Royal Public House on a sunny summer day (and complete with temporary authentic style West Riding Automobile Company Bus Stop) is 164 supporting a Museum Open Day.



At the wheel is Tony White our longest serving Trustee **** More news about plans for this bus in the next edition!****

One for John....

We are well aware that we don't always cater for our "younger" members in this newsletter so to address the balance here is a shot for John Alexander in particular and some of our other younger members.



N621 KUA, a Selby & District bus

This one was recently for sale following the demise of its current commercial operator

Arab on the move

We mentioned in the last edition that KHL 855 had made the journey from Kirk Smeaton near Pontefract to Dewsbury under her own power and here are a few shots to show what happened on Tuesday 24th May 2016. During the late part of 2015 and early 2016 all the paint had been removed as can be seen below. Early on the day Mike and Andrew made the final few adjustments, re-fitted the drivers seat (which in our view was pretty essential) and Mark gave the bus a quick wash to remove the dust. Here is the Arab in the sun ready for departure.



And we were off..... First stop was the Beverley Arms roundabout in Ackworth where Colin Poole was casually stood at a bus stop and hitched a lift! A quick run along Doncaster Road past Crofton and we pulled over into the Redbeck Café for more passengers to board and a quick cuppa. This time Tony Hanson and Andrew Tindall were awaiting our arrival for a trip down memory lane. By complete coincidence we were then greeted by Ken Crossley, a 90 year old former B & S driver who was somewhat surprised to see a West Riding half cab on the road! We had a chat with him before setting off again with our support vehicle in convoy, Andrews Mondeo estate. Here is 855 at the Redbeck attracting attention.



Ken spots the Arab



After a spirited run through Wakefield and heading over the M1 towards Ossett Andrew spotted a problem... the off-side front tyre was looking soggy so Mike headed the Arab towards Ossett in attempt to reach Pitchforths Tyres before complete deflation! Alas, with under 50 yards to go we had to pull over and seek assistance. The Mondeo support vehicle came to the rescue and within 10 minutes Pitchforths truck arrived, re-inflated the tyre in situ and Mike was able to limp the Arab to Pitchforths yard around the corner. If you ever want excellent tyre service then this is the place to go, within 30 minutes the tyre was sorted and we were on our way again.



At just after 2pm the Arab was safely tucked up in the Museum building and the RE was driven back to Kirk Smeaton by Colin via the Redbeck for a second cuppa.

Mark would like to thank Mike & Andrew for their continued support in seeing KHL returned to the road. Now she is in the Museum building the bodywork repairs have commenced as many of you have seen over the last few months.

Christmas is coming – date for our members FREE Christmas Buffet confirmed

Following the amazing success of the events we have run this year and with an exceptional team effort being the main reason why we have had so much great feedback about the Museum, we are delighted to announce that a free Christmas Buffet will be provided for all members at our December Meeting. We did something similar last year and it went down a storm.

The December Meeting will be more of a social event with the formal agenda being suspended so that we can all share a few drinks and food together and reflect on the year we have had. **So put Monday 19th December in your diary now so that you can enjoy this festive treat.**

The AGM is just around the corner

Just a gentle reminder that our Annual General Meeting will be held in the coming months (17th October) and this is your chance to influence the running of the Museum. All Committee Posts are open for any full member to be considered for and this is the annual opportunity to put yourself forward to upgrade from an Associate Membership to a Full Membership.

Stop press SOUTH YORKSHIRE OLY FOR SALE

We have been informed that fully restored South Yorkshire Oly A103 OUG is for sale in Scotland. Although currently sporting a Scottish Operators livery the bus has been in the same ownership for over 10 years and has recently had more than £2500 spent on it. It has recently passed its MOT and is for sale for continued preservation. Type into Flickr the bus registration and see what a fine machine this is! If you are interested in buying the bus or a share in it please contact Kieron Patterson on 07958 420393 who can put you in touch with the seller – it would be lovely to have it back home. If it does not sell then it's on a one way trip to Barnsley.

The final bit – a former member of the collection

There have been several vehicles that have come and gone from the Dewsbury Bus Museum collection. Here is one that got away but still survives in preservation.



Right; EHL 472D a Bedford Val/Plaxton

West Riding operated three of these beauties, having had six with the previous Plaxton bodywork style. Mostly used on excursions and tours, they did find themselves on stage carriage work during vehicle shortages. This one has been laid up for several years so has not been seen on the rally scene for quite some time. Fingers crossed that one day it will be seen in Yorkshire again and can perhaps be re-acquired for the collection.