

Summer Newsletter 2020

If you have any news or views for publication please contact, hand or send them to mark.byard@live.co.uk or Andrew Beever 01924 265528

Welcome to new members:

Michael Brook & Bill Oldroyd



Members meetings recommence

We are happy to announce that we will recommence our members meetings on Monday 21st September at 7.15pm. At the current time we are unable to confirm the venue but this will either be Soothill WMC or the Museum building. Once we have confirmation that Soothill WMC is COVID compliant, we will update you on the Museum website and our Facebook page. For those without access to either, please call our Secretary, Andrew Beever on 01924 265528 week commencing 14th September for final details.

Penistone delights!

A recent visit to one of the storage facilities that house part of the Museum collection gave us an opportunity to photograph some of its residents, as can be seen below:



First up above are Colin Sidaway's two former Huddersfield Corporation buses, a front view of his Daimler with a front door and rear view of his AEC with its open rear platform.



Minibuses are well represented with four in the shed. Seen above are three of them; from left to right are Jo Ellis's Keighley Hoppa, Simon Turner's Little Nipper and Andrew Tindall's Warrington-on-sea Motor Services Mercedes.



Next up above, Andrew Beever's Tracky National and the famous Woods of Mirfield Crossley, expertly restored by J Colin Wood & David Hudson. The National is laid up awaiting repairs on its power steering and as you saw in March, the Crossley is back on active service at our Open Day events!



Sitting at the rear of the shed and being actively worked on by John Hinchliffe is his full fronted Blackpool PD2 with centre entrance. This bus has required a lot of structural work on its Burlingham body and John is making steady progress each year. You can support this project by buying photographs from John's stall at our summer events or via his ebay sales page.

Finally, Paul Goldthorpe's Atlantean and Simon Turner's ex Pennine Leopard Plaxton coach



At our Dewsbury building, ongoing restorations include the return to the road of WHL 970 this year (subject to a satisfactory road test!), the refurbishment of Ethel (inside and outside) and as the Dalesman is now mechanically fit, a return to service in the latter part of the year. Meanwhile another West Riding vehicle is getting quite a bit of TLC – see later on in this newsletter! Work also continues at our Pontefract building on a Yorkshire Woollen VR and West Riding Bristol RE & VR.

Wulfrunian update

It is always sad when a bus ends up as scrap, but our story here is even sadder! Seen below centre and far right in January 2020 are the remains of a Wulfrunian.... former Bury Corporation, LEN 101.



LEN 101 was originally rescued from the famous bus graveyard at Berresfords of Cheddleton, near Stoke-on Trent. It was taken to a depot in Manchester for preservation and storage and whilst parked in the yard was subjected to a serious collision with another decker. The front nearside corner of the bus was wrecked and whilst it could have been salvaged, it was decided to scrap the vehicle, the chassis being offered to WROPS for further use. After many years of open storage, and with no prospect of ever having a body put on it, a decision was taken to finally bite the bullet and remove all serviceable spares for the continued preservation of 970 & 995. Prior to this decision being made, several appeals were made in B&CP Magazine for any interested parties to come forward and take on the chassis, but none was forthcoming. So, on a spring day in 2020, LEN met his fate and was cut up at Penistone. R.I.P LEN 101.

Resurrected Reliance

In a dark corner of the Museum, under the mezzanine sits JHL 708. Having slumbered untouched for some years, Mike Bennett has now got the time to lavish on his own bus.

Thanks to John Stringer for the shot below that shows a trio of buses from the same batch as JHL, sat behind Saville Street Depot in Wakefield



Left; a trio of Roe bodied Reliance in the late 1960's

On the two vehicles that can be clearly seen, there are different livery styles in view. However, neither is the style that the buses were delivered in, but it does make an interesting comparison, perhaps one having been repainted at Belle Isle and one at Castleford?



However, back to JHL 708! Mike has started a methodical restoration plan as can be seen above. Much work has already been completed by Mike's father many years ago and the bus is sound. Those in any doubt about this vehicle being completed need only look at the work Mike completed on KHL 855 to see what a high standard of presentation can be expected in the coming years.

Mike can give us no firm timeline for 708's restoration, but what we can say is that it will be a sight to behold when it returns to the road. In the meantime, we have 970's launch to look forward to.

Display boards take shape

We have been busy during the Spring placing new display boards on the rear wall of the Museum.



In an effort to fill every space available on the Museum walls, David Parkin and Mark Parr have pulled together eight new boards, some of which are shown above.

If you have anything that you would like to donate to the Archive for conservation or display then please let us know. Why not share your enjoyment with others and have your memorabilia displayed in the Museum so that a much wider audience can enjoy it? Donated materials for display will have a guaranteed place on our walls, if you make that request, for future generations to enjoy!

Constitution change – notice of vote for all members

In line with our current legal requirements and Constitution rules, the Management Committee are legally required to advise all members that a vote will take place at our next Annual General Meeting (in the Autumn) to amend various aspects of the current West Riding Omnibus Museum Trust Constitution. If you would like to have your say and you are a full member, you will be part of the voting process if you attend the meeting. This discussion will take place at our September members meeting. We plan to distribute copies of said amended Constitution at the meeting preceding the AGM to allow reflection and comments prior to the final vote in October.

Summer Open Day - CANCELLED

At the current time we have had to make the difficult decision to cancel our August event at The Mill Outlet Batley. Having reviewed the most recent COVID guidelines regarding events & gatherings, and in consultation with the Mill Outlet management, we felt the only logical decision was to “park up” the event for this year.

We know that this will disappoint you but we must put safety first. On a more positive note, November is a long way off and we hope that our Autumn event will take place, even if we have to make changes to its format. The Mill Outlet are still keen to welcome us, and given the restrictions that may still be in place at the back end of this year, we may involve the Mill in our Autumn plans – watch this space as the year unfolds but nothing is guaranteed!

Out and about

Well, obviously, we have nothing to report! Various plans were in place for rally visits including cancelled events at Middlesbrough, Rotherham, Accrington and we even had to cancel a booking for the Arab to run a Sheffield to Leeds journey via Barnsley and Wakefield for the Sheffield Transport Study Group. Julie’s extensive Ridings Travel excursion programme was also curtailed! Hopefully, normal service can resume as soon as possible. Updates will be posted on Facebook & our website.

United Services follow up

Following on from our Winter Newsletter article on United Services, Andrew Tindall says it sparked a memory of when a National2 from the fleet ended up with some severe damage. Andrew says;

“It takes a lot to kill a Leyland National2 as WR & P Bingley found out some time ago when a National2 left the road between Wakefield and Doncaster.

For whatever reason one of Bingley’s blue liveried National2 left the road and went off roading, demolishing a wooden fence in the process and collecting some of the posts and rails as it went. Recovered from the ditch, it was taken to WYPTE’s Kirkstall Works with a fence post still firmly and shockingly stuck fast through the front radiator, Dracula style! The post entered the saloon and had it hit a passenger or the driver they would have been killed.

However, it did not kill the National2 despite the fact that Kirkstall garage did not want the repair job. It was towed to Huddersfield’s Great Northern Street works, fully repaired in quick time and was soon on the road back to Kinsley!”



Left; one of Bingley’s National2 buses

Was it this one that left the road? Who knows!

Number plate heaven

Take a look at this lot – a recently acquired collection of West Riding number plates!



David & Paul, our Archivists, have been busy cleaning them up before they are mounted on a display board for the Museum walls. In addition to this haul bought by WROPS, a further selection of glass number plates was also acquired from the same chap in the Midlands. We are still deciding how best to display the glass versions and do have some fancy ideas to back illuminate a board to display them on (if only we could find the time to do all the jobs that are needed to be done this might move up the priority list) Our thanks are extended to Darren Sentence for putting us in touch with the seller so that we could rightly place them somewhere for everyone to enjoy!

Wulfrunian photograph appeal

We are currently trying to pull together a photographic history of every Wulfrunian that operated for West Riding. So far most of the fleet has been tracked down but we still have a few missing gaps! Here is a list of the missing ones:

876 THL 876
889 THL 889
899 THL 899
905 THL 905
940 VHL 940
944 VHL 944
946 VHL 946
947 VHL 947
952 VHL 952
976 WHL 976
978 WHL 978
982 WHL 982
1004 BHL 355C
1011 BHL 362C
1015 BHL 366C
1017 BHL 368C
1020 BHL 371C

If you have any of these either in photograph or slide format and would be prepared to loan them for reproduction, please call Julie on 07983 095551 so that we can tick them off the list.

A load of old Bullocks!

60 Years in Road Transport

*Acknowledgement: Article first published on 8th February 1952 in **Commercial Motor** magazine and reproduced here with their kind permission via Julie Aylward*

<http://archive.commercialmotor.com/article/8th-february-1952/57/60-years-in>

Mr. E. P. Bullock Looks Back on a Lifetime Spent in Road Passenger Transport

After 60 years, Mr. Ernest Peter Bullock, of South Yorkshire Motors, Ltd., is still engaged in road passenger transport. From the 'eighties, when he helped his father in a small horse-cartage business, which included one cab, and worked 10 hours a-day as a railway porter, he looks back on a life of commercial adventure that has seen the complete transition of British habits.

Featherstone was the scene of Mr. Bullock's first commercial steps and he still lives there. This Yorkshire colliery community saw the beginning of the county's road passenger services in the modern manner. When his father's health failed, he left the railway and took over the business. This consisted of a dray, which delivered rail-borne goods in Featherstone, retail coal sales and cab work. By the careful management and hard work of the family, horse was added to horse, and carts and cabs became more numerous. Funerals were a speciality.

As the head of the clan, Mr. Bullock looked round for opportunities of expansion. The railway provided the answer. Rail transport from Featherstone to Castleford is poor. Three miles by road become five by rail, with a change, of trains and arrival at a station far from Castleford's town centre.

Instant Success

Messrs. Bullock put on a horsed char-à-bancs service at week-ends, this was an instant success. A route from Featherstone to Wakefield was added, and gradually an excursion service was built up covering all sports events and trips to the Yorkshire Dales.

In 1909, the firm were among the first owners of motor chars-à-bancs in Yorkshire. The vehicles were Karriers, and Messrs. Bullock had far more work than they could handle. Featherstone was put on the map.

Mr. Bullock next entered the retail motor trade. He supplied Mr. Sam Ledgard, now one of Yorkshire's leading operators, with his first motor char-à-bancs. Incidentally, it was the first in Leeds. The city council took one look at this monstrosity and refused it a licence. This action was a shadow of things to come. Regretfully Mr. Ledgard had to ask Mr. Bullock to take back the purchase and this was done.

In 1914 the firm's whole motor fleet was requisitioned for troop transport. The business was rehoused, but not for long, as soon the Government needed mechanical transport to bring workers to the new munition factories from the scattered areas ill served by the railways. Messrs. Bullock was given the task, and many villages had a foretaste of the difference that road transport was to make in their standard of living. With 1918 came the renewal of peace-time enterprise. Bit by bit, the fleet was built up once more, and a motor removal service, believed to be the first in Yorkshire, was added.

Making Hay

Still looking for ways of expansion, Mr. Bullock again found the answer in the railway system. In the rail strikes in the early 'twenties, the public seized with gratitude the service offered by the road passenger operators and found it so good that when the trains ran once more, much of the traffic remained on the road.

The trams also began to feel the draught. Their decline was slower than that of the railways, but it was more complete. Tram companies became bus companies. Wakefield became a sub-depot to Featherstone and the services extended in many directions. Mr. Bullock claims to have introduced the first pneumatic-tyred buses (Lancias) to the area. He also bought special Albion and Leyland buses — makes which he still uses.

Municipal authorities made great efforts to extinguish privately owned road passenger services. Leeds was a black spot. By refusing licences and starting prosecutions, the council tried to keep buses off the streets. Later it became known that the council hoped to establish its own monopoly. It promoted Bills to enable it to run county-wide services to the exclusion of the men who had taken the pioneer risks and succeeded. Mr. Bullock organized his fellow operators to oppose the council, and the powers were not granted. Before this happened, public opinion had beaten the short-sighted councillors. The outcry was such that licences were issued, although with irritating conditions.

Road passenger transport was complicated by "pirates," who ran buses at peak periods, but gave the public little real service. The large concerns were also engaged in cutthroat competition. All this was most uneconomic and Mr. Bullock compromised with his competitors, particularly the West Riding Automobile Co. Ltd. Timetables were agreed and the pirates were gradually bought out.

Sold for £500,000

About this time, it was proposed that the business should be sold to the West Riding concern, but Mr. Bullock declined to agree. In 1928, when he parted with his interest to his brothers, the share of each partner was much increased from the figure fixed in the negotiations with West Riding, and in 1951, when, that company at last acquired J. Bullock and Sons (1928); Ltd., the reputed price was around £500,000.

In 1929, Mr. Bullock took over the bus service run by South Yorkshire Motors, reorganized it completely, extended its routes and amalgamated other services in it. Pontefract was the company's base and in the liquorice town, Mr. Bullock, still looking ahead, had bought large properties in the Cornmarket, where he proceeded to establish not only a bus depot, but a sales organization linked with the Ford Motor Co. Ltd. With the assistance of Cllr. J. R. Bullock, general manager and secretary, Mr. A. S. Dobson, traffic manager, and a devoted staff, many of whom have been with Mr. Bullock all their working lives, South Yorkshire Motors, Ltd., has become a power in the county. A depot has been built at Wakefield. The fleet comprises 12 Albion single-deckers and eight Albion and Daimler double-deckers, and operates over 85 route-miles.

Vehicle Updates

Vehicle owners - please can you send in your updates!!

With the museum building closed, there has been little work completed on restoration activity. That said, a gradual return by some owners to the building to complete vehicle maintenance, ensuring that they comply with COVID guidelines, has resulted in some progress on Ethel, the Dalesman, 970 and 708 – More details in the next issue!

On the 1st April 2020, TWY 8's engine and transmission change came to fruition which resulted in a new front-end arrangement as can be seen below. The number plate still had to be changed when this shot was taken as the new style front had been grafted on from a former Huddersfield Daimler.



Left – still requiring a paint job on 1st April!

Tony Hanson reports that the following work has been completed on County 70; nearside sidelight pedestal repaired, offside cab ventilator prepared for re-chroming, 2 plates for cab floor manufactured, fog lamp/footstep bracket manufactured and fitted, strap for vacuum tank made and tank refitted, useful parts for exhaust recycled, 6 new roof vent manufactured, most parts of gear stick assembly located but split collar needed before refitting, battery cables rethreaded into armoured housing, new terminals sweated on and re-run from batten box to control box and starter motor, start made on removal of wood interior trim for sanding and varnishing and replacement axle case obtained. Finally, (Editors note) all of this was done washed down with copious amounts of tea!

Classic bus Magazine and the Wulfrunian conundrum



April-May 2020 edition saw a photograph of restored 970 featured

Following months of correspondence in Classic Bus Magazine about various Wulfrunian specimens, and particularly which ones made it to a second owner, a letter appeared in the April-May edition of the magazine detailing the most likely answer to the Wulfrunian conundrum.

Questions had been asked as to which Wulf spent a brief period at Gilberts in Nottinghamshire before being returned (twice) to the dealer that tried to move it on! The bus in question was most likely WHL 983 from the same batch as our almost restored 970, and an explanation of the deduction was given in the article. Hopefully the conundrum was solved and those raising the question now know the most likely answer. As can be seen above, a photograph of our very own WHL 970 accompanied the letter and hopefully drummed up some interest in attending one of our future events. It is fair to say that the articles covering the Wulfrunian over recent months have not exactly been complimentary – and it never ceases to amaze us that many of those commenting never actually rode on a Wulf or had anything to do with their maintenance and operation in service.

We still have a few dedicated Wulf fans in the Society and Trust that can keep the Wulf flag flying and the best way to do this is by allowing visitors to our events to experience a ride on 995 & 970. This will allow them to make their own minds up – particularly on the comfort of the ride! As for the old wife's tale of passengers feeling seasick on Wulfrunian journeys, we have yet to see any evidence of this when we had 995 in passenger service a few years ago, which included long passenger runs to Pontefract, Dewsbury and Rotherham!! (without a sick-bag in sight)



June-July 2020 edition shows 970 before restoration, at Burscough

The end bit – starting an interest young!

There can be no better way of securing the future of bus preservation than by ensuring an interest in buses is encouraged from a very young age.



Left; Jacob and his Grandma, cake baker extraordinaire, Jean Parkin

Member David Parkin is determined to ensure bus preservation is a family affair, firstly by roping in his wife Jean to complete the baking of numerous cakes for our Café on Open Days and most recently by stimulating an interest in buses with his Grandson Jacob! Long may it continue.