



Dewsbury Bus Museum NEWSLETTER

Winter edition - 7th December 2012
West Riding Omnibus Museum Trust (Charity No. 702232)

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HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

Another year over already - and what a year it has been! We now have 62 members and three volunteers, and around 50% of these manage to attend our monthly meetings - a far cry from the days of six or seven of us sitting in a cold bus in a darkened shed!

Events - We have had two Open Days this year, both with attendances well over the 500 mark, and both yielding a four-figure profit. We were also prominent players in the Heath Common Rally.

Finance - We are in what our treasurer calls a "comfortable" position, again an achievement in these days of austerity, when many similar organisations are having to tighten their belts.

Vehicles - The Wulfrunian (UCX 275) and the Leyland PD2 (BHL 682) are now both taxed and tested, and made their appearance at the November Open Day. Both are still in need of some cosmetic attention, but should be carrying passengers in the New Year.

Andrew Tindall's Optare City Pacer (D901 MWR) finally carried passengers for the first time in many years in November, alongside Simon Turner's Yorkshire Woollen Ford Thames coach (GHD 215), which also returned to the roads this summer after a long absence.

Steve Hurley rescued a "Tracky" National 2 (NKU 245X) and ran it at the November Open Day.

Most other vehicles in the restoration programme have also made great strides this year. The only casualty was the Panther (LHL 164F) which had to be stood down in June with a cooling system problem. Hopefully this will

be back in business in the not-too-distant future.

Merchandise - Stuart Goldthorpe's book is now sold out, and most of the commemorative mugs have now gone. We will be looking at producing more mugs and books in the New Year.

Raffle - this continues to be popular, raising more than £30 each month, and some very interesting prizes have been on offer. Stocks of prizes are running a bit low, so if anyone could donate something, please see June Hare.

Membership - From 1st January, three associate members will receive full member status. Congratulations to June Hare, John Alexander and Irene Day. Also, from the same date, Julie Aylward will be standing down as Trustee and will be replaced by Mark Byard. We are thankful for all that Julie has done over the years, and wish Mark well as he takes on this responsibility.

This has all been made possible by a core group of very dedicated members, some of whom seem to almost live in the museum building, and to whom we are very grateful.

2013 promises to be a challenging year. The more roadworthy buses there are, the more time, effort and money must be spent keeping them running, but we look forward with confidence to another busy year.

THE NEWSLETTER



If you have an article to include in the March Newsletter, please send it to the Secretary by Thursday 28th February 2013.

PRESERVATION PROJECT

Daimler Fleetline WHL 275J – Part 2

By Mark Byard

Following the last edition, that included an update on WHL 275J, a summary of the entire Fleetline Fleet of West Riding is detailed below:

181-190 (later 616-625) MHL 181-190F Roe

191-199 (later 626-634) MHL 291-299F Roe

200 (later 635) MHL 311F Roe

201-210 (later 636-645) MHL 301-310F Roe

211-235 (later 646-670) PHL 211-235G Roe

246-249 (later 612-615) RWY 515-518F
Ex Mexborough & Swinton Northern Counties

273-284 (later 671-682) WHL 273-284J
Alexander

706-730 BHL 606-630K Northern Counties

West Riding operated the Fleetline from 1968 until 1984, when the last few examples were withdrawn. The Fleetline had gained such notoriety that PHL 235G was overhauled by West Riding apprentices and repainted in West Riding Green livery. It made a fine sight as it plied for trade on the West Riding network prior to final withdrawal.

A notable point about the final batch of Fleetlines was that when they entered service they received second-hand engines from withdrawn Wulfrunians that were a mere seven years old and therefore had plenty of life left in them. A brand new bus with a second hand engine must have been well disguised to the general public. This does perhaps explain though why not many of this batch made it to further service with other operators when withdrawn from service with West Riding.

Several of the Fleetlines did enter service with other operators after West Riding withdrew them and some did get sent abroad for further work. Paul Salmon has supplied the following details:

MHL 185F & MHL 307F went to paddleboat River Cruises, Selkirk Manitoba, Canada in April 1984 and later transferred to River Rouge

Winnipeg, and to Big Bus Vancouver. They may still be in service.

PHL 212G & PHL 213G went to AS University of California and operated for Unitrans on the University contract alongside several ex London Transport half cabs. They lasted until 2001 and PHL 212G was parked alongside The Lakeview Hotel, 13 Water Street, Mayville NY in mid 2009. This bus was recently advertised for sale.

PHL 235G was exported in November 1992 and operated in Denver alongside several Ex West Riding VR's . It later moved to Eventful Ventures Kalamazoo and is believed to now be suffering the elements . What a shame given this bus was fully refurbished, including a full strip down prior to it being repainted green.

Several of the WHL batch were fortunate in finding second homes, with several being operated in the UK. As far as we know none exist in the UK now but the following examples may still be around overseas:

281 went to Canada, 274, 278 & 282 went to Australia and of these examples 278 is still with Horizons West (Bentley) and we believe was still active in July 2011.

So that just leaves 275 in Holland as a possible candidate for preservation, unless someone wants to take a trip across the Atlantic or Pacific! How it got to Holland is a bit of a mystery although it did pass through the hands of Ensign so that may be the clue. Where the Scottish connection mentioned in the last edition comes in we simply don't know!

Since our appeal at the Museum monthly meeting no one has firmed up any offer of additional financial support. Therefore, the potential to rescue this final Fleetline is significantly diminished. Several members of the active WROPS team have expressed some interest and a desire to rescue this bus however with several other active projects on the go our ability to save this vehicle with already stretched resources means nothing is guaranteed. Our contact in Holland is still awaiting final details on the price to acquire the vehicle but we are not in a position at this stage to make any firm offer for it. So..... a final plea. If you can help please let any WROPS member know before it is too late!