

Spring Newsletter 2019

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:

Frederick Reeve, David de Gruchy, Tony Hollands & John Turner,



Coming soon to an event near you – a secret restoration project!

We try and keep some things up our sleeves despite this publication keeping you up to date with all the happenings connected with the Museum and its membership.

We have however deliberately omitted to talk about this little gem being worked on by several of our members in the form of a Bristol FLF!!



Left – a big surprise

For many years, David, Nigel and Ian have been busy beavering away on restoring EHT 108C in a shed in North Yorkshire and the time has now come to make things a little more public!

As can be seen over the page she is wearing West Riding Green and will recreate one of the 27 West Riding FLF's that became the backbone of many routes after early withdrawal of the Wulfrunians. These machines were ultra-reliable and found themselves working on a variety of routes, some of the longest in the West Riding network, despite their advancing years. The last West Riding example was retired in 1980 along with about half a dozen of its stablemates. Some of the last few in service found further life with Lincolnshire Roadcar and Top Deck travel.

Several West Riding FLF are believed to survive but are overseas:
813 MHW was last reported in Santa Barbara USA in 2017

HAE 275D was last reported in Norway in 1998 so it is questionable as to whether or not this one still exists.

JAE 630D was last reported as a restaurant in Ontario Canada in 2018

HHY 184D was last reported in Fontana USA in 2017

However, lets focus on the one in hand and see EHT 108C as she is today....



Nigel Blair takes up the story.... as all is not what it seems!

EHT 108C is a Bristol FLF6G 229172 with Eastern Coach Works body 14865 seating H38/32F and was numbered C7219 in the Bristol Omnibus fleet, new in 1965. It gave sterling service being withdrawn in 1978, then passing to Kentish bus as a Driver Trainer, which seems to have been when it had the most photographed part of its life!

It is thought that during this period it had its cab and stairs adapted (and frankly hacked away) so that the cab area could be accessed by the instructor. By 2003 it had found its way to Wales as a caravan with three bedrooms upstairs and a shower, kitchen and living area on the lower deck. A set of wooden steps precariously connected the two levels! It appeared to be prepared for a repaint at this stage, but this never happened and thus it was acquired for preservation in a shabby state!

Initial work on the bus included the removal of the living accommodation and parts were acquired to rebuild the staircase and the work began with a couple of proper stairs positioned before work stalled. As is often the case, the bus then became a store, some of the parts being useful for its restoration when its day to be properly restored finally came!

Around 2014 David Keel, one of our members, decided he would like to take on the project with his aim being to create a pseudo West Riding FLF, particularly given that West Riding operated sister buses EHT 106C & 107C, transferred from Bristol Omnibus to cover withdrawal of the Wulfrunians in November 1969. These two were put to use on many West Riding routes and lasted until May 1978, being moved on to Lincolnshire Roadcar for further service in Scunthorpe.

The plan is now coming together to get the bus up and running, on the road, in a presentable state and on a budget. Rather than spend thousands on things like new moquette and stripping panels, and potentially the bus never getting fully restored back on to the road, a different approach has been taken.

It is true to say that the end result often does not show the man hours actually put in and the amount of strip down and rebuilding work done, for example just to replace a two inch piece of water hose took several weekends! We have recently refitted the drivers windscreen and the wiper motor was overhauled and now works perfectly, without its previous grim sound effects!

In summary, we are having fun rebuilding a fifty four year old bus and a recent morale booster was completion of the lower saloon, as can be seen above.

B – JAB and its sisters

Following Julie's successful rally season with her Leyland Tiger, and the previous details published in this newsletter, Julie has sent in some further information on a "what might have been"

Whilst 1006 and 1007 were enjoying some Yorkshire hospitality, National Travel East Plaxton bodied Leyland Royal Tigers 327 (A327 XHE) and 328 (A328 XHE) were working hard with Midland Red West and often found themselves working alongside sister 1003 (B103 JAB), often on Continental Tour work. So here goes with a few interesting shots kindly supplied by midlandredgroup



The photographs show Alan Ogree a now retired driver stood next to 327 and another National Travel East Tiger which would eventually become one of Ridings Travel coach batch 54-58. (WWA 299-303Y)

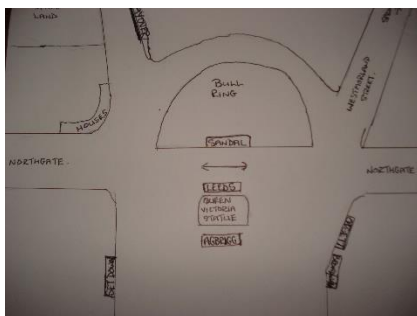
But for a twist of scheduling, the National Travel East coach that could have found itself working on this Midland Red West tour could have been 1006 or 1007 running alongside its originally intended stablemate!

Remember, remember - a traveller's tale by Stuart Goldthorpe

Remember, remember, no (although it must not be forgot) it is not the 5th November 1605, it is Wakefield in the early 1950's without a bus station. Layovers on a rough road which would become Union Street, or on waste land which was purchased by the West Riding Automobile Company with the intention of building a bus station, which was put on hold due to the war.

Pick up points for passengers requiring buses were around and through a central area called the Bull Ring where a statue of Queen Victoria presided over every coming and going without a word.

Red buses for Leeds and Sandal ran along Northgate, which passed through the centre of the Bull Ring in a North or South direction pausing to alight and pick up passengers behind her Majesty's back! Those of us waiting for buses to Broadway, Horbury and Ossett could find bus stops to the left of Victoria, where "my lady" could keep her eye on you.



Left – the Bull Ring set up 1950

The Bull Ring was the main point for setting down or picking up passengers using red buses. The green buses were using the Springs, Wood Street or Westgate. With all this traffic, including cars, vans and push bikes, the Bull Ring was chaotic to say the least. I do wonder what the accident statistics were?



Left – Bull Ring in chaos early 1950's

It was no fun for pedestrians as it was a risky task crossing the road to reach shops surrounding the Bull Ring. Heading back to a bus stop was always a dilemma and I would often see odd bits of fruit in the road from people's rations!

However, 1952 saw the winds of change in the centre of Wakefield. New shops were being built and a completed roundabout ensured that all traffic had to circle around the Bull Ring to find the correct roads and junctions. However, the statue of Queen Victoria was removed and moved to Thornes Park which upset many people. It is funny how things are never missed until they are no longer there?



Left – Queen Victoria keeping an eye out or is she directing traffic?

During the same year the long-awaited bus station was finally completed during the month of June. Remaining unused for a further three months (does anyone know why?) it was opened on 30th September by the Chairman of the Yorkshire Traffic Commissioners Major F S Eastwood. At last buses were able to use this new facility freeing the City Centre from its previous congestion.

I am not sure which bus was first to enter the new bus station- does anyone know for sure which one it was?

Strange as it may seem, not all the bus routes actually used the new bus station. Only one red route the Ossett 20 service was to be found on its own stand displaying the same stand and route number 20 – the only one to have this honour! Another red service number 10 stopped outside the bus station on Union Street making its way via Borough Road and Providence Street and then turning right on to Northgate and continuing to Leeds. On the return route the service was to remain on Northgate and stop outside the Talbot and Falcon Inn, passengers using the Talbot and Falcon yard to enter the bus station on foot, usually through an alleyway that accessed the "Gents Toilet" of the bus station

(Editors note – there were many photographs in the national press of various “ladies” walking into the alleyway with the gents sign above their heads)

The Agbrigg and Broadway service was another route that turned its back on the bus station. To Broadway was via Kirkgate, Upper Kirkgate passing the Cathedral on its right, Little Westgate to the junction of Marygate and then turning left to head down Westgate. The 32 route ran via Horbury Road to the Lupset Hotel and then turned right into Broadway. The 33 ran via Dewsbury Road to the Malt Shovel then turning left on to Broadway. Both routes terminated at Waterton Road/ Snapethorpe School and ran in a circular fashion.

The return route no matter which direction was always a service 30 to Agbrigg (replicating the Tram route number) and there were no separate blind numbers as all route and destination details were in one blind. On reaching Wakefield centre the route circled around the Bull Ring entering the lower half of Northgate with the Cathedral on the left, down Upper Kirkgate to a bus stop just after Teall Street near Lodges Radiovison shop. From there, the bus then turned right onto Kirkgate and on to Agbrigg via Doncaster Road to the terminus at The Duke of York public house.

I remember taking a service from Agbrigg through to Ossett and it was operated on a 20 minute frequency and this ran via the Bus Station, but the return journey was shown as a 30 and omitted the Bus Station

A number of green bus routes for Alverthorpe, Eastmoor and Portobello did not use the bus station either, preferring the Springs or Upper Kirkgate instead.

Wakefield was certainly taking on a new look in the 1950's with the local bus station being a key piece in its development, despite the fact that food rationing was still in place and did not end until several years later, the date being 3rd July 1954.

855 in Trainer guise



Left: in the company of Mr Wright's Albion

Looking rather resplendent in its Driver Trainer livery is KHL 855, probably in its first flush of restored vehicle status! It was only rallied for a couple of years in this guise before being laid up for over 30 years. It will shortly make a very welcome return, restored to as delivered condition by our dedicated team of restorers at the Museum. Had Tony White and Nigel Blair not saved it, we would not be about to enjoy it in the coming months.

We are confident that 855 will be ready for action at the June Redbeck Rally or Batley event. Redbeck or Batley will be 855's first passenger carrying duty since 1973!

A full report on its lengthy restoration will be included in the next edition of the newsletter

E53 TYG comes home!

Well done to Julie Aylward on yet another purchase, swelling the ranks of preserved West Riding coaches!



Right: Doyen E53 TYG having a piggyback!

On 30th January, 53 was moved from Essex to Cobus at Filey for an initial inspection. Julie will keep us updated as things unfold however in the meantime, one of her other projects (Primrose) is coming to fruition – watch this space!

Julie is building up a nice fleet of ex West Riding coaches which she constantly makes available for our members to use on trips to long distance rallies. Please support her and hitch a ride on her superbly restored fleet!

Fleetlines go Kangaroo... again!

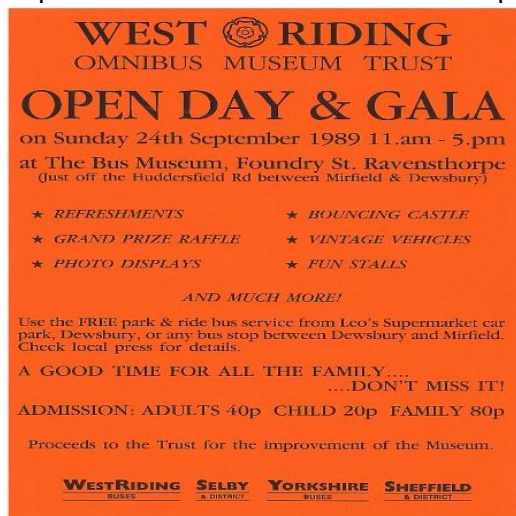
Thanks to Nigel Blair for the following shots of the far flung Fleetlines mentioned in the last edition of the Newsletter and photographed in Australia.



First up is BHL 616K looking a little careworn! The second shot shows the same BHL sat alongside WHL 278J. The third shot is a rather fine looking WHL 278J still carrying its West Riding Metrobus fleet name and registered TC203. Finally a rear view of WHL 282J carrying registration TC317 with the rather strange addition to its roof – any ideas anyone on why it carries this addition?

Our Pearl Anniversary – 30th June 2019

Thanks to Julie Aylward for supplying this timely reminder of when it all began... in the new building at Ravensthorpe! As can be seen below, Sunday 24th September 1989 was the first ever opening day for the museum.



So what are we going to do to celebrate this special anniversary? Taking a look to our heritage as a Trust and associated society (WROPS), we thought let's take an event back to where it all started – Wakefield.

In late 1971, a group of Wakefield based people met up to try and arrange the preservation of one of the remaining Wulfrunian still in service. The West Riding Omnibus Preservation Society was formed and within a matter of months Ethel and Wulfrunian 995 were acquired. Following years of goodwill storage at West Riding's Saville Street Depot, the opportunity to acquire dilapidated storage sheds at Ravensthorpe was taken with a sweet deal to acquire old West Riding Group premises in Foundry Street. Thanks to the then Trustees taking personal responsibility for a mortgage, a new shed was built and finally opened to the public on 24th September 1989.

So, on 30th June we will be taking our buses to the Redbeck Café, Doncaster Road Crofton, Wakefield. (1 mile from Heath Common)

We will be using the large car park to the rear of the famous Café and operating regular services into Wakefield City Centre. A selection of Mystery Tours and perhaps other routes will be offered subject to a low bridge on the Doncaster side of the Redbeck Café.

We have already had some traders book stalls in and will be looking for everyone to pitch in as usual. We will not be operating a Café for obvious reasons, we do not want to upset the owners of the site!

We have already received confirmation of support from the White Rose Bus Group, who plan to bring numerous exhibits to run in service. (Thanks lads!)

We must extend our thanks to Julie Aylward for arranging use of the Redbeck site having used her charm to convince the owners that we would take good care of the car park for the day! The event has already received great exposure in the monthly Bus & Coach Preservation Magazine. See you there!

Finally..... don't forget that we also have our usual Summer Spectacular event at The Mill Outlet Batley on Sunday 11th August.

A bit of recovery

It is not often that we feature support vehicles but how about these shots of something from Belle Isle in the 50's & 60's



137 HL



If anyone has details of the history of this ancillary vehicle please send them in for publication. We try and include a little bit of everything in this newsletter and we know many of you are interested in tow trucks as well as buses!

If anyone has further photographs of what went before and after this one please let us have them for publication.

United we stand



Left; MDT 220 outside Howarth Timber?

For those living in the south east of Wakefield, a familiar sight of blue and cream buses plying for trade on the Doncaster Road would have included this bus in the 1960's. United Services was made up of three operators being Everett, Cooper and Bingley but by the early 70's only Cooper Brothers and WR & P Bingley remained.

MDT 220, was a former Doncaster Corporation AEC and is seen here in the fleet of Cooper Brothers in a rather vivid blue and cream livery. The Roe bodywork is unmistakable along with its "UNITED CB SERVICES" fleet names, the CB denoting Cooper Brothers ownership.

By the mid 70's both Cooper and Bingley had retired all their deckers with Coopers buying Bedford's and Bingley's preferring Leyland's.

It is our understanding that MDT 220 did make it into preservation in the early days of our hobby but did not survive (unless you know different!)

Vehicle Updates

This section requires information from vehicle owners so if you own a bus or coach please can you send in your updates!!

We have the following updates provided by WROPS

XUA 73X In full running order with no noted issues. Provided the Pontefract, Castleford feeder in March. The previous oil leakage issue was down to a filler cap not securely fastened.

LHL 164F In full running order and operated a shuttle at the open day before loss of 1st gear. Another air pipe had blown off the exchanger to the gearbox, being immediately resolved. Still requires a rear reversing light fitting. 2 panels need painting and some minor cosmetic finishing is needed following the repaint.

THL 261H An ex West Riding fitter will be attending Barnsdale Bar to assess the air issue – no further updates at this time. Laid up.

BHL 682 In full running order and operated shuttles on the open day. No mechanical issues to report. A small hole in the exhaust downpipe may need attention.

EHL 344 In full running order and provided shuttles on the open day. The gearbox was dropped and the clutch refurbishment completed. The spare tyre is currently on the front awaiting the original being sorted out.

JHL 983 In running order. Rear hubs overhauled. The front panels on the interior will now be put back in place and the drivers seat re-instated to allow some test road running. Andrew continues to complete the re-wire but the indicators are proving to be a challenge.

OWW 905P Removal of paint continues. Laid up.

WHL 970 The rear brake overhaul is fully completed. Callipers need re-instating. In process of acquiring injectors and/or getting existing ones refurbished. Once re-instated and the brakes recommissioned an attempt to start the vehicle will be made. The air filter has also been rebuilt.

UCX 275 Nothing to report since no restoration activity has taken place. The vehicle is a runner. Three known issues to resolve – ball joint, wiper motor and washer tube severed. Once 970 is nearing completion the outstanding issues will be resolved.

Other updates:

KHL 855

Mark says that this bus is almost fully restored, with the final coat of paint and varnish applied, along with the finishing touches externally of black coachlines and appropriate varnish fix transfers. The interior is nearing completion with almost all the seats re-instated, however work is still required on the floor, with the floor treads between the seats awaiting fixing.

RUA 455W

Steve Hurley reports that the YW VR is now stored at Barnsdale Bar and is his main focus with help from Simon Turner.

The Pennine Leopard

Simon reports that the radiator is now refurbished and refitted.

The Yorkshire Atlantean

Paul reports that this bus was due to provide services on the open day however it will not engage reverse gear and thus had to be withdrawn for the fault to be investigated.

Full monthly updates on every vehicle in our collection are provided at our monthly members meeting so if you would like to know more please come along!

R. I. P John Riis

We have had the very sad news that John Riis, one of our long standing WROPS & WROMT members, passed away in March. John is probably best known to many of us as our Open Day "pay desk man" until his health deteriorated about two years ago. He would religiously turn up, with cash float in hand, ready to man the cash desk and was completely reliable, trustworthy and personable. His funeral was well attended by his friends from the Museum and a special note of thanks must go to Colin Poole who regularly visited John during his lengthy stay in hospital and during his time spent in his final months at home.

Off piste – a fire engine remembered

At our November Open Day, we had an enquiry about an old Fire Engine that had been garaged at the Museum in the early days of the Trust. A bit of detective work resulted in Nigel Blair supplying a little bit of information.



The first picture shows the 1935 Ex Wakefield and latterly Storiths Hall Dennis Fire Engine being collected from Wakefield Fire Station The shot is courtesy of Ian Hunter. The black and white shot shows it in the war years. (we think)

Nigel believes the vehicle went to a Barnsley preservationist called Harry Cawthorne. It is believed that it then went to the Fire Service Museum in Sheffield and Nigel is pretty certain that HL 6582 was the same vehicle. Having researched the current exhibits at the National Emergency Museum it is no longer listed but may well be stored awaiting further restoration. We hope this helps the person that asked about the vehicle at the Open Day! Thanks Nigel!!