

Winter Newsletter 2019/20

If you have any news or views for publication please contact, hand or send them to
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Welcome to new members:

Mandy Hinchcliffe, John Lister,
 Sue Wood, Steven Smith & Ian
 Lethbridge



Happy New Year!

We start the 2020 season with a focus on all matters green! (and we don't mean West Riding buses) Firstly, you will notice that this newsletter is now six pages long rather than its previous eight. Don't worry – we are not short-changing you. We have simply changed the margins around to get more information on each page and thus reduce our carbon footprint!

We have lots of things planned for 2020 including our usual events, ongoing restorations including the return to the road (we hope) of WHL 970 this year, the refurbishment of Ethel whilst keeping her mobile and as the Dalesman is mechanically fit, a return to service in the latter part of the year. We will continue to take our vehicles to numerous events so why not come and join us for a great day out?

Bingleys United Services coaches remembered

First up (below) are two former touring coaches that were eventually downgraded and repainted blue and cream from their original red/cream/grey liveries. First up are two Duple bodied examples and just peeping into the first shot is the former Manchester Panther Cub used by Cooper Brothers, this being one of the three buses that passed to Bingley's upon takeover.



Phyllis Bingley liked Plaxton products as represented (below) by two Elite coaches, again decked out in the service bus colours but in this case from brand new, no doubt so that they could be used on both service work and private hires, and a Derwent dual purpose bus (one of three) with high backed coach style seats. In later life, the coach seats were removed and replaced with bus ones.



Meanwhile, old coaches in red/beige livery were still occasionally used on the United Services carriage service and sometimes even a Val might turn up! To the left is a "swinging sixties" Panorama Val and a slightly later Panorama Elite to the right, this one ending up with the famous Fowlers fleet.



Whilst not strictly a coach, you might find yourself travelling from Wakefield to Doncaster on one of these gems (below) in the 1960's. Ribble had introduced double deck coach standard vehicles and when they finally dispensed with them, Phyllis decided to buy several, perhaps due to the long distance nature of the Wakefield to Doncaster route.



Ex Ribble "White Lady" deckers were standard stock

The end came just after the other remaining United Services operator Cooper Brothers was bought by WR & P Bingley on 3rd April 1977. Three weeks later it was announced that Bingley's had been bought by a subsidiary of the West Yorkshire PTE.

Initially new vehicles were bought and several National 2's received blue and cream livery but eventually succumbed to PTE Verona Green and Buttermilk in later life. Whilst not coaches, they are worthy of note as being the last of the Bingley's branded vehicles. Meanwhile the coaching side was branded "WR & P Bingley Metrocoach" as seen on the Duple coach below right.



In some respects, not a lot changed after the PTE takeover. The familiar blue and white stage carriage vehicles continued pretty much as normal, even if they were more "bus" than "coach" and the red and ivory coaching fleet plied for private hires and contracts, as previously. For a few years the Kinsley depot even expanded and continued well into Yorkshire Rider ownership.

If you would like to know more about the United Services combine, the history of the operators involved in its services is covered in "Super Prestige books Doncaster 1 and Doncaster 2". Copies of these books are available for purchase from the WROPS stalls at our open days.

R.I.P Stuart Goldthorpe

It is with great sadness that we have to report the passing of our very active member, Stuart Goldthorpe on 17th December after a short illness. Stuart had been a firm supporter of the Museum and WROPS and was a regular attender on Mondays, being heavily involved with the restoration of Wulfrunian WHL 970. He was more widely known as "Ethel's regular Conductor" at our open days and usually featured as our top performer for sales of events booklets and tin donations. As with many of the core membership he had roped his wife Heather in to help cook bacon butties on Open Days. His son Paul is also a very active member, owning a YWD Atlantean and trading a stall at our events.

Stuart's other claim to fame was the publishing of his book "The Red Buses" which told the tale of his early interest in buses with red West Riding AEC Regents and Wulfrunians being his favourite buses.



Left; Stuart, far left, receiving an award from royalty for WHL 970

Stuart was a gentleman, he was quiet and dedicated and will be sadly missed by his many friends at the Museum, particularly those who became firm friends over coffee breaks and lunch on Monday work days at the Museum. Our condolences are extended to all his family.

Display boards take shape

We have been busy during the Autumn and Winter constructing new display boards to go on the rear wall of the Museum.



In an effort to fill every space available, 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? If you wish to gift something for display rather than for sale on our stalls, then simply say so and the Trustee will guarantee that your wishes are respected providing the donation is relevant to the purpose and aims of the Museum.

Tony Mowley take a bow!



In the June 1997 edition of Buses magazine, the above shot shows a Yorkshire bus on service in the streets of its home town. Although this is a small photograph, we are assured that sat behind the wheel is Tony Mowley!! Tony says, "it's definitely me although it must be one of the few shots of me not clipping the kerb or knocking a set of dustbins over on a left turn!" Best stick to Conductor duties on Open Days Tony.....

November Open Day reviewed

Thanks to everyone that turned out to help give the public an amazing day out. Despite the shocking weather in the week running up to the event, the day remained dry and the sun even came out in the afternoon.

Paid visitor numbers were slightly down on last November, so either we let a few people sneak in without paying, or the weather in the preceding days did us no favours! That said, we achieved a net profit result in excess of last years figure so well done everyone. The Café team must get a special mention as takings were almost identical to last November, despite the reduction in visitor numbers.

Top performer on booklet sales and tin shaking was Richard Hall, who received a small gift at the November Members Meeting in recognition of his achievement. Best newcomer was Mark Parr, who achieved number 3 position on his first solo outing as a Conductor – well done Mark!

We had an excellent number of visiting vehicles on display on the static area and our services ran to time, with the exception of two departures that found themselves blocked in by a delivery truck on the loading bays.



As can be seen above, (clockwise) the traders in the building were not short of customers, we displayed some vehicles directly in front of the museum, the static area was busy with visitors and the final shot shows the dedicated crew putting the buses to bed after a busy day.

It goes without saying that if you can help on the day please shout up. Despite the number of active members we have helping out, it would be nice to have more people involved so that we can reduce duties for some members to enable them to enjoy the day. As for the visitors that turn up and try to avoid parting with £3 to support the activities of the Museum, (which may explain why booklet sales were down but Café sales were broadly the same) all we can say is “shame on you!”

Out and about

The winter months are always quiet on the rally front but before we put the buses into hibernation we did manage a day out with three Museum buses to Sandtoft. Julie's Doyen, 73 and the Panther attended the Trolleybus Museum and we also took our stall. We also took KHL & BHL to Skipton and we were invited to a photoshoot with Bus & Coach Preservation magazine at Pudsey to showcase KHL at the Ledgard Society trade fair. We also were invited to attend the same event again in early January to promote the Museum, which we duly did with our promotional stand.

March Open Day planning – diary date Sunday 8th March

We are planning some key enhancements to how we operate our Conductor duties, Loading Bay gate control and banksman duties and will be covering these changes at the February Members Meeting on Monday 17th February at Soothill WMC, Batley. If you normally cover any of these duties please try and come along to receive the briefing.

In the meantime, our usual appeal continues for Cakes, Tombola prizes and your attendance at the Museum to ready the buses in the couple of weeks prior to the event.

Vehicle Updates

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

County Arab

We are delighted to update you on the progress of CCX 801 thanks to an update provided by Tony Hanson. Tony says that at the Mill Outlet Event a fellow member mentioned that he is unable to attend monthly meetings and thus found it difficult to keep up to date with all that was happening with each vehicle. As such, Tony has now presented this report. As the shots below show, a renewed focus to see the County Arab back on the road is seeing positive steps made to see this project to fruition.



Spot the workers!



Tony says: "The first issue to resolve was to find the missing parts of the engine which were located in my cellar! The engine is now complete, with only a few hoses missing. The fuel pump and governor gear has been freed off. Decompression gear has been replaced and partially calibrated. The lost starting handle for the engine has now been located!"

The fixing of the radiator turned into a major project as it was found that during its previous overhaul it had been incorrectly assembled. The top tank overhung the sides by 1/3 inch and the replacement grille would not fit into the recess. Thus, the outer aluminium outer shell was dismantled, the parts drilled and filed and ground until it all now fits together correctly. The opportunity to renew gaskets on the top and bottom tanks was also taken. A little bit of photographic research has shown that the top tank was replaced in 1961 but I can find no reason for it being such a poor fit. The top stay to the bulkhead was replaced but large bolts to the chassis frame have been lost in the post! I am awaiting another delivery.

A new replacement near side wing, had got a little rusty over the years and thus the rust was removed, it was scraped and undercoated. It is now fixed securely to the bus. The Bonnet- side anchor rail was fettled and fitted. A plate previously made to secure the bonnet top needed the previous repair grinding and the front end slightly extending to suit the radiator top and this work is ongoing. The vacuum servo has also been refitted except for one very difficult bolt.



Left; one decent roof vent out of six – can you help locate 5 replacements?

Finally, the task of rubbing down the old paintwork is well advanced and the roof rub down revealed corroded roof vents that have had to be removed" **Nice one Tony & team, keep the focus going!**

Dalesman Coach

JHL 983 now sports a correct style destination blind as can be seen on the shot below. It only took four people two hours to fix this in place thanks to the rather cramped area full of hoses and wiring right where the blind goes! Destination box design was clearly not Charles H Roe's finest hour on the Dalesman product.



There are lots of costal destinations on this blind – how about an excursion?

Plans for the coach now focus on road testing following a full re-wire. With her up and running Paintpot will commence the repaint as soon as Ethel is finished. Meanwhile the Monday team will complete a comprehensive deep clean and tidy up of the interior. We are still considering what to do about some of the shot window rubber. The replacement chrome insert beading will be ordered and will be inserted after the painting is complete and this will give us yet another pristine vehicle to display and use on open days. This coach still needs an official custodian and the good news is that it occupies a rent free space, so if you would like to look after her please speak to any member of WROPS.

Ethel

Lots of team work has resulted in some major progress on refreshing Ethel for the 2020 season. Each Monday as seen a dedicated crew of 6 working on her to bring her back to tip top condition whilst on Saturdays Paintpot Andy, Colin, Mark Parr and Andrew have continued the work.

The near side seats have been removed for a rub down, re-paint and upholstery deep clean. A thumped panel has been replaced and the incorrect full rear panel has also been replaced. Meanwhile Paintpot Andy has been hard at it with the external repaint, working down from top to bottom. Inside the floor has had a very deep scrub down and new polish applied and the window pans have been removed and are being re-sprayed in metallic green (the same colour as KHL 855) Inspect the results yourself at the March Open Day.

The final bit

You should have already noticed that your 2020 membership badge is enclosed with this Newsletter. Our thanks are extended to everyone for the extremely prompt return of membership forms which also enabled this newsletter to be sent out right on time.