

## SUMMER 2023

If you have any news or views for publication please contact, hand or send them to [mark.byard@live.co.uk](mailto:mark.byard@live.co.uk) or call 07956 579684

### Welcome to new members:

Darren Potter (re-joined)



### *TV stars*

Watch out, there's a museum bus about..... in a TV drama coming soon in September on ITV! The Panther was used for a full day of filming for the drama series "The Long Shadow" that tells the story of the Yorkshire Ripper. Set in the 1970's in Leeds, the Panther was the ideal choice.



Period drama with a period bus (and period car in the background)

Colin and Mark did the honours almost a year ago, with Mark taking the acting role of bus driver. Fortunately, his equity card was in date, so the opportunity to shout "hold tight" was taken!! A false 1970s style moustache was added for effect (to Mark, not the bus!) and a hectic day was had by all.

A suitable location was found in north Leeds, with old council housing providing the backdrop, along with randomly placed metal dustbins on the street (who remembers them??) to give it a proper 1970's feel. The day was quite taxing, manoeuvring a 36ft bus through a small housing estate, with multiple takes of the same scene, being no easy task. The lads left the set at 630pm whilst the rest of the crew went on to the next filming location, fortunately the Panther was not needed for that shoot, otherwise Colin and Mark would have been on double time and out of hours!! So, keep an eye out on ITV in the coming months, for a Panther on the streets of Leeds!

### *01WU 905P restoration in focus – follow up*

Our article in the last edition, prompted this response from a reader regarding potential livery application for this bus. Could we consider painting it like this??



The reversed green and cream livery was trialled on a VR, with the bus having more green paint applied than cream, which seems logical, but somehow did not look quite right. Was this bus the first one painted during Caldaire ownership, along with a National in the same paint scheme, and was the decision taken that perhaps reversing the colours around worked better? It's all about personal taste, but the decision makers certainly didn't like this application and went for the livery that became familiar to us all for many years. More cream, less green looked better!!

## *An update from Basil on the Guy Victory Airides*

Further to the article in the last newsletter, I can report that both Western Australian Guy coaches were recovered and await preservation, and the news gets better. More of that later.

The Guy Victory UF (for underfloor engine) was a heavy-duty export chassis built by Guy from the 1950s to the early 1970s. It could be thought of as Guy's equivalent to the AEC Regal VI and Leyland Royal Tiger Worldmaster. In 1958 Guy produced a version with air suspension (independent at the front) and disc brakes, soon to be used in the forthcoming Wulfrunian of course, and the chassis, although never given a proper designation, was known unofficially as the Guy Victory Airide.

The Airide was not a success. Only eleven were sold, four in Europe and seven in Western Australia. All had Leyland 680 horizontal engines and semi-automatic transmissions. The Western Australian Government Railways Road Services (WAGRRS) operated long distance coach services which complemented, and eventually largely replaced, its country passenger rail services. The first three Guys, G58 "Pride of the West", G59 "Queen of the South" and G60 "Wheatlander" were completed in 1961 with high specification high floor coach bodies including a buffet and toilet, and at the time they were the most advanced coaches in Australia. Sadly, the WAGRRS had overspent on its budget and the remaining four followed with lower floor and plainer bodies.

Amazingly the four European examples had their chassis removed and were apparently scrapped in 1965/66 and the bodies were mounted on new chassis, believed to be conventional Victory UF, and all seemingly at Guy Motors expense. Would West Riding have liked a similar deal for its Wulfrunians.... you bet!

The disc brakes and air suspension caused major issues (now haven't you heard that before?) and the three high decks were out of service by 1971, with the other four low floor ones lasting a little longer.

The full Airide story will be told in my forthcoming book on the Guy Wulfrunian, complete with several photos of chassis and completed vehicles.

Meanwhile, as shown in the previous article, the shells of G58 and G60 were recovered in 2011 and taken to the Bus Preservation Society of Western Australia (BPSWA) Museum in the Perth suburbs to await restoration. Even better, the remains of low floor G63 were recovered a few years later, and although its body is in poor shape, it has an engine and transmission. The intention is for one good restoration to be made from the three. The BPSWA has an amazing record in restoring derelict hulks and I have no doubt that they will make it. Have a look on their website for examples of their superb restorations, including a number of prewar and postwar British buses.

<https://www.bpswa.org/collection.html>

By sheer chance, when in Perth in November 1987 I stumbled on the third high floor Victory, G59, converted to a mobile home and on sale in Perth. There are hopes that it just may still exist.



Seen on the previous page, back on their wheels and tyres, are former WAGRRS Guy Victory Airide G63 (low floor), G58 "Pride of the West" and G60 "Wheatlander" in store at the BPSWA Museum in Whiteman Park, Perth, awaiting their turn for restoration. With the European examples scrapped, these are now the only surviving Airides. (photo; Colin Davison) Below are a couple of shots that may be of interest.



WAGRRS Guy Victory Airide G59 "Queen of the South", stands at Albany before starting its 260 mile journey to Perth on 6 April 1961, when still new, and former WAGRRS Guy Victory Airide G59 "Queen of the South", converted to a mobile home, on sale in Perth on 15 November 1987.

Editor's Note; As a footnote to this story, long standing member, John Hinchliffe, posted a series of shots of these very same vehicles on the Dewsbury Bus Museum Official Facebook pages after reading Basil's story in the last edition. Its unbelievable what John can throw up from his personal collection – thanks for sharing the shots with us John!!

### *Wakefield, Leeds and Sheffield buses go down under!*

Basil also reports that during the 80's and 90's many UK deckers found their way overseas and here are a few examples from Leeds and Sheffield that prove the point. Atlanteans, Fleetlines, VRTs, VRLs, Titans, Olympians and Metrobuses, were all popular with Australian operators and many operated in extreme temperatures, often requiring modifications to cope with the climate. In October 1984 he was able to see West Riding Fleetlines 676 (Alexander) and 716 (Northern Counties) with Companion Travel in Perth. 716 still had what was believed to be an ex-Wulfrunian Gardner 6LX engine.

West Riding Daimler Fleetlines 676 (Alexander body) and 716 (Northern Counties body) are seen below in Perth, Western Australia, on 1 October 1984. 676 is in service with Companion Travel and 716 is being prepared for service. When new 716 was fitted with a second-hand Gardner 6LX engine removed from a Guy Wulfrunian, and it probably still had the same engine in Western Australia. Seen below is the same West Riding Alexander bodied Daimler Fleetline 676 in Wakefield Bus Station, about to depart for Pontefract on 20 June 1974.



Of interest to members, over the page, are these former Leeds Jumbo Atlanteans with Roe bodies, some of a batch being sold to Westbus in the western Sydney suburbs for school bus duties. Parramatta and Penrith can get very hot in Summer, temperatures reaching up to 47C (117F), so not surprisingly opening windows were added. Astonishingly one of these, still in the remains of its Westbus livery, was discovered in a poor state in rural Victoria in 2022. Do those with an interest in preserving Leeds buses know this??

Former Leeds Leyland Atlantean PDR2/1-Roe 451 at the Westbus depot at Parramatta on 22 January 1988, alongside a Custom Coaches-bodied Volvo B10M. Note the additional opening windows.



Former Leeds Leyland Atlantean PDR2/1-Roe 450 and 479 at the Westbus depot at Parramatta on 22 January 1988. Again, note the additional opening windows.



Former Leeds Leyland Atlantean PDR2/1-Roe 462 and Sheffield AN68/1R-Alexander 304 at the Westbus depot at Parramatta on 22 January 1988.



## *Spring Open Day Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May Rally Report*

There's lots of behind-the-scenes activity that keeps things moving, so hats off to these lads who gave up their time in the week running up to the event to ensure all the equipment was clean, tidy, and reached the Mill Outlet well ahead of the event! They also ferried the WROPS stall to Batley too!!



The lads from left to right: Martin, Cameron, Andy, Paul & Martyn  
After a few hours graft, they were treated to tea and cakes at the Mill as a thank you!

If you think you could get involved then why not join them as we cannot continue to provide first class events, without more volunteers. Age is not a barrier, as we welcome everyone!! Next up was an MOT failure for Oly 577 only 3 days before the event. A swift trip for a spare part, and rapid fitting of it by Steve, ensured that a re-test was done the next day and she passed with flying colours, and was out and about at the event.

Congratulations must also go to Julie Aylward for taking up the challenge of the post of Events Organiser. Following comments made at the March Members Meeting, Julie has undoubtedly turned things into a massive positive by getting the event over the line, despite those who doubted it could be done after Arriva's change of decision, having originally told us it was OK to use Dewsbury Depot! It was very fortunate that we had taken the decision NOT to produce an event booklet, as if we had, we would have incurred wasted printing costs due to the last-minute Arriva cancellation. All the information that someone could need was contained in the Event Flyer, and this acted as an

admission ticket, not an Event Booklet. Thankfully, we had Plan B in hand with the Mill Outlet ready to help out when Arriva changed their mind about hosting a depot event.

The day was extremely well supported by the public as the figures show later in this report, and the Mill Outlet were over the moon with the footfall in their shops. Queues formed for entry to the event, and we operated a bus service every 15 minutes from 1030 to 1600. The usual feeders ran in (except for Halifax, as Damian was at Morecambe!) and stall holders reported a very good day of trading, with our WROPS stall having a cracking result – well done Richard, Nigel and Martin for manning it!!



Most traders were positioned under-cover as they had requested, but the only downside of this was that some of them did find the building a challenge for unloading and loading due to the ramp to the parking area, and this will need thinking through for future events at this location. Meanwhile those traders that opted for outside trading required Factor 50 suntan lotion, or in the case of Richard, a Gazebo to keep him in the shade!!

A special mention must go to Bradley and the Black Prince crew for supporting the event in style, and to Malcolm Wright who brought his wonderful Devon General Regent complete with musical tones on its three Mystery tours. Malcolm very kindly covered the cancelled Arriva Bus Wash tours, as without explanation, Arriva also cancelled them at very short notice. Several folk had a go at driving it and commented how easy a drive it was, so THANKS Malcolm! From a vehicle perspective, the showstoppers were undoubtedly Richard Cleggs County Motors National and Ben Carrs K-Line Commander, both recently outshopped in sparkling paintwork.



Left; what a beauty – well done Richard and crew!!

It is sad that Gordon Fitzgerald, who was a joint partner in restoring the National, sadly passed away a few months before the project was completed. 245 went out with several full loads on duplicate services as the queue for rides built up and what a fitting tribute to him it is.

It was nice that several members of the public came and thanked many volunteers for organising the event, and we even had a visit from Batley and Spen MP, Kim Ledbetter, and her family who commented what a fantastic community event it was. Finally, what about the financial results?? Paid visitor numbers were up by 8% on our last combined Museum and Mill Outlet event and when adding in the prepaid entries for Mill Outlet customers, we achieved an actual growth of 20%. (When adding in the free entries) Like for like comparisons on the net profit front were superb, with an increase of just short of £650 on the same event we had at the Museum and Mill previously, and this was achieved without operating our Café! It would have been great to have the Museum building open, but we simply did not have enough volunteers. Similarly, we did not have enough drivers to bring more vehicles out to Batley from the Museum and this generated some negative comments on facebook, which is very frustrating when those commenting do nothing to contribute to the running of any bus events. A BIG THANK YOU to all those individuals that did help make this event a huge success under the stewardship of our new Events Organiser, Julie.

PS Thanks to a suggestion from Nigel Blair, we have some plans in preparation for improving our previous Event Booklet format, which historically contained almost the same information for each Event. Watch this space for a new fresh approach at the next Event!!

## *Autumn Open Day now Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September plans come together*

We have also confirmed the details for our next event too. We are back at the Museum with a full roster of West Riding buses out and about. We are planning to run Paul Goldthorpe's Yorkshire Atlantean in service for the first time in many years. The Optare Magic Rider is now fully operational, and there will be a chance to see the only two surviving Wulfrunians together on the day. Both are currently in the Museum building.

Julie is looking for volunteers and if it is the first time you have felt able to help, give her a call on 07983 095551. As usual, we have assumed that all regular volunteers are available unless we are informed otherwise, so thank you in advance!!

## *Change of monthly meeting venue!*

We are sad to report that following the annual general meeting of the Soothill WMC members, the decision has been taken by the Club Committee to close the Club due to spiralling utility costs. This is very sad as we had found the Club to be an excellent location for our meetings over the last three years. We send our best wishes to the staff who have been displaced by this decision. This will therefore mean a change of venue for our forthcoming meetings, and you are advised to check facebook and the Museum website for any updates. Several potential alternatives are under review.

## *Congratulations Paul!*

We are delighted to announce that long standing member, Paul Goldthorpe, has been elected to the role of Archivist. Paul has already been very active in assisting with the sorting of thousands of photographs and will now make a start on the somewhat neglected storage cupboards, to get the contents in some form of proper order. We are sure all members will join the Trustees in congratulating Paul on this appointment. Should you wish to donate any items of interest to the Archive, Paul can be contacted on 07742 050911.

## *Rally reports - There's something familiar about those King Alfred Buses!*

On 1<sup>st</sup> May each year, Winchester is taken back in time to when King Alfred buses roamed the streets. This year the Museum was represented by Julie's Doyen and a fine sight it made too. A steady run down the motorway, at a cruising altitude of 10 inches, and an average speed of around 60mph, with suitable refreshment stops (no Rapide hostess on this service) and Winchester was reached.



Resting at St Catherines coach park

A wide selection of vehicles was evident and West Riding enthusiasts would be in their element with the first ride of the day being on a Leyland Panther with Plaxton Derwent bodywork. For a moment we looked twice, when we saw "Broadway" on the front – it was somewhat off its route from Agbrigg on the 32/33, but looked very much like a West Riding one, in its green and cream hues!



On the right; heading to Lupset Estate!



Closer inspection revealed a different floor layout, with this bus having a completely flat floor, resulting a much higher step arrangement than its West Riding cousins, those having had had a sloping arrangement and an easier step entrance.

West Riding had split their Panther order across three body builders and operated Roe, Marshall and Plaxton examples. The Plaxton ones were rather confusing, because West Riding also had several Bristol RE with the same Plaxton Derwent bodywork, so at first glance, you weren't sure what you were boarding, until the engine sounds gave it away!

More rides were had before another very familiar sight appeared.....



Left; how long is it since you enjoyed a West Riding Atlantean?

West Riding had a large fleet of Roe bodied Atlanteans and this one is a proper ringer. You could be forgiven for thinking it had been in West Riding service when riding upon it, with only minor differences to what we were all used to back in the 60's and 70's. The one in question is the closed top version, which apparently was de-roofed, and then was reroofed, many years ago to make it complete once more. To be fair, its engine is a little tired and it struggled in first gear up a couple of hills, but to enjoy the smell of diesel in the lower saloon and the transmission noises was a joy. You really could think you were travelling on a West Riding one. For those in the know, enough said!

Several rides later and we reached the bus stop again. We stopped in our tracks. What was a green Wulf doing in Winchester? Some bright spark pointed out that the number plate was in the wrong position and only one or two Wulfs carried this reduced cream style livery, as seen below, so all bets were off, and we retreated for a coffee! That said, this rear end resembles a Wulf, without doubt!



A Wulfrunian in Winchester, well almost! It's an AEC!!

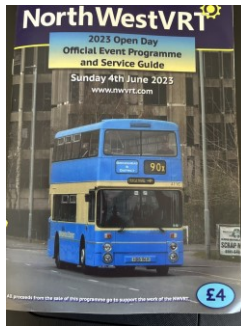
So, what did we make of the day out. It is certainly a long way to travel for a rally, but if you've never done this one before, it is worth the trip. An overnight stay is recommended unless you are a very early riser or enjoy sharing the driving.

The variety of buses out on service was great. As we have already said, some can certainly bring back memories of former West Riding and YWD vehicles.

A final tale to tell from the rally visit is to say that the former owner of Julie's Doyen was at the rally and asked for a drive. Julie obliged, and Dave got behind the wheel of 50 and drove it with ease, as if he had driven it the day before. His parting comment was "I should never have sold it" – that is so true Dave, as your loss is our gain!!

## *NWVRT Annual Kirkby Event & the East Coast run*

A speedy trip across the Pennines in a Plaxton coach on 4<sup>th</sup> June took us to the annual NWVRT event, where the lads a Kirkby always put on a great event. It is fair to say that previous events have had more "modern" rolling stock out on service, but this year at least five half cabs were out in force, almost outnumbering their historic replacements, thus giving a great mix of vehicles to ride!!



A good selection of stalls was evident, along with a local Radio station providing music whilst cakes were scoffed, and hot dogs consumed! If you have never been to this event, it is worth a trip and isn't that far, being just to the east of Liverpool, and easily reached by car or train, with free services linking the event to two local railway stations.



Left; Motorway cruising to Kirkby, at its best

The overall event would not disappoint anyone, irrespective of what decade of bus you are interested in. Why not give it a go next year and hop on board the museum feeder service?

Sunday 11th June saw the famous East Coast run from Hull to Bridlington with Steve's Oly ferrying several members to the event from Barnsdale Bar.



Left; in the shed and almost ready for the off

The weather was glorious and the Oly performed faultlessly on the long run out to the event and the way home too. The event itself featured about ten buses, a wide range of trucks and vintage cars along, with a range of traders. Public rides do not take place at the event.

For those that remember the early days of WROPS, this run was a firm favourite and there are numerous shots of The Green Wulf and Ethel B on many East Coast runs. Indeed, if we look through the Trophy archive, we are sure that we will find that one or both won awards on those trips. If you have any shots or stories of those early Rally run outs, please let us have them for publication!!

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> July in near Monsoon conditions, Bristol RE, THL 261H, went to Eastwood and the SYTT event with the WROPS stall. Flippers and Goggles were optional, and despite the weather, a good time was had by the six members that went with her!



## 71 years young

Yes, we admit it – we missed a very special Anniversary last year! Perhaps we were too consumed with the 70<sup>th</sup> celebrations of Ethel B and Ethel C to remember that a certain building would have also been 70 on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022.



1952, and under construction

!!

On 30<sup>th</sup> September 1952, the long-awaited opening of Wakefield Bus Station took place. Owned by West Riding, rather than the local council, it must have made an impressive sight, having replaced the use of on street pick up and drop off stops throughout the city centre. It operated pretty much unchanged until the mid-1980's, and finally made way for the building of the Market Hall replacement and Trinity Walk development in the new millennium.



Above left we see a busy bus station in the mid to late 1960's and on the right during Arriva's early ownership, with most buses still sporting the Caldaire livery style. The middle shot shows a busy 1970's scene with three Bristol RE's, two Fleetlines and an elderly Guy Arab. Also in shot, a Tracky PD3, an FLF or Loline and either a Panther or another RE behind the Tracky decker. So, here's to the old bus station, which holds very fond memories for those who had a first romantic meeting "under the bus station clock" and to others that simply went along to see, or even ride, the buses!!

## Sisters

We started this newsletter with a story about LHL 164F. As many of us know, the Panther had a long career in West Riding service and ended up in the training fleet, before finally being acquired by WROPS for preservation. She did 453,759 miles in passenger carry service before semi-retirement in the training fleet beckoned. 164 was not the only Panther to be acquired by the training department, as the shot below reveals.



Three sisters sat together in the training livery is a sight to behold! So, after several years of front-line service, and a stint in the Training fleet, 164 was to be the lucky one of this trio to make it into preservation. But why 164 and not one of the others?? If you know, let us know!!

## *Vehicle round - up*

We have included a few updates in this edition to show that many of the vehicles in the museum have been subject to serious works during the first part of 2023 which has made them unavailable for events.

Ethel – has been away in Penistone having some finishing touches to her full repaint.

The Dalesman – has been having its heads sorted along with a whole multitude of other tasks to bring it back to fully operational standard. It has therefore been occupying two “running” spaces in the Museum to allow use of the lifts on a regular basis. Thanks must go to member Chris Ellum for his regular financial donations to keep the restoration moving along.

The Green Wulf has been in the Museum building and has been having a thorough mechanical check over. As you are probably aware, she was last out and about nearly ten years ago, and our plans to have both red and green versions out together were thwarted by COVID. Work is progressing thanks to Bill, but Rome was not built in a day when issues like leaking air appear!

The Red Wulf has been awaiting the fitting of an expansion tank, so that longer journeys can be operated. Whilst she is a completed restoration, the final few tasks remain to give her an A1 classification for regular passenger use!

The Panther needed some Compressor work, which is now completed.

The WR Arab has a radiator leak that is being addressed.

Work continues of the County Arab with every week moving the vehicle closer to completion.

Mike is making excellent progress on JHL 708, and it is certainly looking like a “Resurrected Reliance”

A certain YWD Atlantean is now resident in the building!

All this work takes time and money. A big thank you to those that continue to bring vehicles back up to roadworthy condition and to those that raise the cash to pay for materials and other jobs that must be completed by third parties.

Which leads us nicely on to our final message for the summer 2023 Newsletter.....

## *The final bit*



We make no apologies for using the same message at the end of this Newsletter, like the last one!! The future of everything we do rests on having “doers” that get involved and make things happen. No matter how much time you can spare, it all helps to keep things on the up! So, make a date to come and help us. The May event shows that without active members, we can’t open the Musuem!

That said, we know that some of our members work or have other commitments and that is understandable. Donations to keep things moving are just as important, be it cash, a legacy, unwanted clean books, models & uniforms or even a bottle of something to go on the Tombola or in a raffle!! Over to you.