

Summer Newsletter 2022

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



Another "Golden moment"

It isn't that often that one of our members finds a photograph that reminds them of a 50-year anniversary, but long-standing member, Tony Hanson, must have had a shock when he was shown this gem.



Left; Classic Bus magazine April-May 2022

Sat on a commemorative Bradford Trolleybus service (far left) in March 1972 is Tony, enjoying a final ride. There is no doubt it is him, and what a compliment that he is so recognisable 50 years on. Tony continues to attend the Museum every Monday to work on the County Arab, and despite his failing eyesight, he is determined that his beloved Arab will be back on the road. Congratulations Tony on your Golden Anniversary!!

More West Riding (& Yorkshire Woollen) One offs

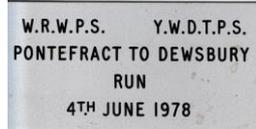
Thanks are extended to Paul Goldthorpe for these two shots. First up is absolutely a one off, in the form of a former Sunderland District Atlantean parked up being used as a passenger survey vehicle. You can't help but think that this one should have had a large Union Jack painted on it, along with Stan Butler behind the wheel, Blakey the Inspector on board being chased by a lion, and a couple of monkeys sharing the driving. For those not in the know – watch the film "Mutiny on the Buses" when all will become clear!



Next up from Paul is this one, a Leyland from Yorkshire, in London, covering a vehicle shortage. We are not sure if this is a one off, as other stablemates may have also helped, but this is the only one we seem to have a photograph of on service in London. If you know the answer, please let us know

Rally dates remembered

In a couple of recent Newsletters, we reported on two previous Society Rallies organised at Wakefield Belle Isle Depot many moons ago.



Thanks to member Kiran Tolson for these plates

As can be seen, the two dates we featured are clearly dated on the plates and it appears that WROPS organised both the events at the Depot, perhaps having no viable building to utilise at Ravensthorpe!

Back in the day, these plates were generally issued to vehicle owners that brought along their pride and joy. If you look on the museum walls, there is an example of a board carried around with Ethel bus where numerous plates are presented and displayed to give a flavour of where she went!

Fashions change and rally plates (or plaques) are now out of fashion but do give us a glimpse as to how things were in the early days of the Rally scene. We suspect that a couple of our long-standing members may even remember getting the plates shown here commissioned!!

The Green Buses by Stuart Goldthorpe - continued

In the light of experience gained with one man operation and no doubt to save money and use less staff, a large batch of 45 Leyland Panthers were on order. However, before they arrived it was decided by the vehicle licencing authority that the year suffix introduced for all vehicles on the 1st January 1963 would no longer change on the first day of the year but on the first day of August instead. When the first batch of Panthers with Roe B51F arrived, they were numbered 136-145 and registered JHL 136-145E. The second batch 146-155 with Marshall bodywork arrived after 1st August and were registered KHL 646-655F. My first glimpse of a Panther was 136 which made regular sojourns on the number 3 Cullingworth where it remained until its place was taken by newcomer 146, which I managed to snap with my Polaroid, but it was a poor shot.

To the best of my knowledge after a brief period at Belle Isle, Panthers 139-145 were despatched to Castleford depot. Meanwhile 136-138 remained behind but eventually joined their stablemates at a later date. The allocation of Panthers 147-155 was at Selby depot, to be joined later by 146. Unfortunately, 148 had a relatively short life being written off during 1968. The next two batches of Panthers had the bodywork order divided between Roe 156-165 and Marshall 166-180 (LHL 156-180F). Some of the Roe bodied batch were divided between Castleford and Featherstone depots. However 164/165 were at Belle Isle and also saw some service with Castleford depot. The remaining buses were based at Belle Isle depot, although I believe 176-180 did see life at Featherstone where the Panthers were nicknamed "bullets". On a visit to Featherstone depot during 1976 I came across Panthers 158/159 and 180 now in Poppy Red and numbered 249/250 and 236.

Towards the end of the seventies some of the West Riding Panthers were transferred to Yorkshire Woollen in Dewsbury, also part of the National Bus Company and joined with the West Riding. With such a large batch operated by the West Riding, it is pleasing to note that one of the Roe examples survives in the care of the West Riding Omnibus Preservation Society. Number 164 (LHL 164F) has been subject to a thorough restoration and is active at many events in Yorkshire.

Meanwhile the travelling public had been made aware of the new one man operated buses through on bus leaflets and a feature in local newspapers. The Roe bodied examples carried an illuminated "pay as you enter" sign above the nearside area of the windscreen whilst the Marshall examples had a bright yellow flip up/down sign in the front nearside corner of the windscreen. Either way, it was clear to passengers when a conductor was not on board and allowed continued use of conductors on busier routes. The Panthers entered service on existing routes which had been the domain of various Leyland PD's and Guy Arab IV, allowing passengers time to adjust to one man operation before more winds of change started to blow. Some of the bus routes operated from Belle Isle depot were quite long and arduous, for example: 67 Leeds – Wakefield - Barnsley - Sheffield. This was a joint service with Yorkshire Traction and Sheffield Transport involving a 5 hour round trip. 3 Wakefield – Dewsbury – Brighouse – Queensbury – Cullingworth. This involved a 4 hour round trip. 85 Pontefract – Wakefield - Denby Dale – Holmfirth. This involved a 4 hour round trip.

Savile Street depot was responsible for seven bus routes; 51/52, 68, 69/70, 81, 157, 183, 189. The longest route operated from here was the 183, with a round trip of 4 hours between Leeds – Castleford – Featherstone - Hemsworth - South Elmsall. The 189 Wakefield – Normanton – Castleford - Leeds took 2 hours and 30 minutes, involving 107 bus stops. This information comes from a friend who worked at Savile Street depot in the late sixties to middle seventies. Many tales have been recalled and some will be mentioned later. With the introduction of one man buses, plus the lack of passengers on existing routes, many services were altered and the bus network was dramatically changed. When the changes took place, it was chaotic for both the driver and passengers. Routes were extended to cover parts of other routes which were withdrawn, and new routes commenced with journeys diverting off the beaten track into housing estates which had never seen a bus before.

Naturally there were complaints when waiting passengers saw the usual route numbered bus turn and disappear down another road, When a new route numbered bus arrived, showing a normal destination, passengers were still not pleased, when this route also went in a new direction, away from the normal run to which they were accustomed. The green bus routes to Ossett (81/100) were affected. Now operated by Leyland Panthers 171-174 (LHL171-174F) service revisions took place. The Healey route 81 was withdrawn from Teall Street, Manor Road and Station Road sections with the exception of only four journeys 0638, 0738.1738 and 21.58 being retained. New services to Healey which ran via Roundwood and Broadowler Estate (80) and 122 which ran via Lupset Estate, Roundwood and Broadowler Estate were introduced.

Due to poor patronage service 100 Ossett – Flushdyke had run at peak times only for several years. A new service 121 was introduced every two hours from 08.58 until 14.58 via Lupset Estate, Teall Street to Ossett - Flushdyke complementing service 100 which remained in its present format. Before service changes were implemented leaflets were placed on buses and a section in the local press was dedicated to the changes to local bus services in the Wakefield area. A petition was signed, sealed and delivered in advance objecting to the removal of service 81 from the aforementioned areas. One person wrote to the West Riding saying that it was supposed to be a bus company licenced to run buses and not Pickfords! We all know what he was suggesting.

To compensate for the loss of service 81 along Teall Street a new service every two hours from 10.02 to 19.02 to Horbury Junction commenced which ran via Dewsbury Road, Roundwood, Queens Drive, Teall Street, Horbury Queen Street, Horbury Junction (104) and via Lupset Estate then as above (119). This service only required one bus which also intermingled with service 121. The number 3 joint service by Yorkshire Woollen and West Riding remained untouched. It did eventually convert to one man operation, but the Yorkshire Woollen placed conductors on board at regular intervals (peak times/Saturdays) confusing passengers to say the least. Without conductors on board at these periods it was nigh on impossible to run to time.

Many jigsaw puzzle routes did not survive, and they were changed frequently, all for the sake of economics, whilst destroying passenger morale. However, the buses (Panthers) covered all routes mentioned above, eventually being joined by 175 (LHL 175F) that had escaped from Selby depot. The Panthers were not trouble free, but performance outshone the Roadliners and Swifts. One driver said that Panther 174 would catch sparrows, and that another driver of a similar bus catching sparrows, blew the engine up! He was on the motorway at the time. Compared to the service life of the Roadliners and Swifts, the longevity of the Panthers stretched to twelve/thirteen years.

The West Riding was no longer an independent company, having become part of the Nationalised Transport Holdings Company. Facing engineering problems due to underdeveloped vehicles it had invested in, the situation looked bleak but hopefully in the foreseeable future things would improve. During 1968 the first new buses of the year to arrive were a batch of Daimler Fleetlines 181-190 (MHL 181-190F) which entered service introducing a new livery known as Tilling Green with a single white band above the lower saloon windows. Based at Belle Isle depot the Fleetlines ran on local routes and even encroached on red bus routes along with Wulfrunians

Appearance of the Fleetlines on the 20 Ossett gave opportunities to sample this new breed of buses. The Roe bodywork resembled that of the Atlantean, the only differences being the light clusters on the front panel, a split windscreen and of course the Daimler badge. There were more differences such as a metal beading strip below the upper and lower saloon windows and no shrouds covering the engine compartment (shame). However, they seemed to be sharper when setting off in second gear. Upon reaching fourth gear the whine from the engine (Gardner CRG6LX) was like music from an orchestra. By July Fleetlines 191-210 had arrived. Here the registrations differed slightly in comparison with the fleet numbers. Fleetlines 191-199 (MHL 291-299F), 200 (MHL 311F) and 201-210 (MHL 301-310F). The Fleetlines brought stability to bus services which had suffered due to engineering problems.

Since 1966 new vehicles had seen the end of old faithful's Guy Arab II, AEC Regal, re-bodied Tiger PS1 and a massive cull of Leyland Titans, including the final Bullocks examples 313-318 (BHL 272-277) Titans 634,636, 640 & 642 belonging to the West Riding passed into the Training School fleet, where they became A15, A12, A13 & A14. When the time came to finally retire 640 (BHL 682) from the Training School she was acquired for preservation by the West Riding Omnibus Preservation Society and is now restored and in full working condition. The new Fleetlines were allocated to Belle Isle, Saville Street and eventually Featherstone depots. However, buses were often loaned or swapped between depots causing confusion for enthusiasts!

There was a price to pay and the first casualties were Wulfrunians 878-883 from Savile Street depot along with 884-889 from Belle Isle depot, all withdrawn between March/April. Although in green livery they were former red buses, the only exception being 889 that still carried red livery at the time of withdrawal. Perhaps more interesting was the fact that the more elderly Guy Arab IV had been left untouched and were destined for many more years' service whilst the newer Wulfrunians had been dealt the death knell. Meanwhile the original batch of Fleetlines 181-190 were soon cascaded to Castleford depot where they remained as far as I am aware for the rest of their working life. Not all batches of buses allocated to various depots were permanent residents. After a number of years at Selby, Guy Arab IV 762-768 (GHL 711-717) transferred to Belle Isle depot, joining stable mates 769-781 whilst AEC Reliance 811-812 (JHL 711-712) transferred to Savile Street depot.

To be continued.....

Newsletter Archive

In our last edition we mentioned that some very early copies of this Newsletter had been unearthed and that we would include some early "gems" in our current rag.

First up in issue number one was the inclusion of the membership badges – clearly nothing has changed on that front as we always try and save cash and send out your badge with the Winter newsletter. Details were included of the United Services bus fleet, which in 1972 consisted of 3 bus bodied Leopards, a Swift, a Leopard coach and a Bedford coach. Double deckers were still being used too, with a Loline, a RegentV and a PD2 on service. A sole Panther Cub was in use along with a Ford, so variety was the spice of life back then!

West Riding were busy withdrawing lots of life expired vehicles including the last Wulfs, mainly the 1965 C registrations, a selection of dual door Reliance's and a couple of second-hand Bristol LD6G, both of which had suffered engine failures. Finally, Guy ArabIV KHL 861 had been written off following an accident on the 12th January.

WRWPS had commenced activities, an early outing referred to in Leo's wonderful previous article, also featured, with UCX 275 venturing out to the Lincoln Vintage Vehicle Society premises on 12th December 1971.

In the second issue dated 1st May 1972 reference is made to the newly delivered Fleetlines, and it was reported that Atlantean FHL 770D had been stolen from Savile Street compound, taken for a joyride, damaged and returned. The annual Heath Common Easter Fair had warranted the use of 5 vehicles, four of the five being the Dennis Loline acquired from Halifax, for the service from the Bus Station to the Common.

The feature in our Spring issues regarding a visit to Haxey is also covered. EHL 345, number 734, sister to our Ethel B is mentioned as being owned by Roger Hill. It was reported that 734 was used to try and tow a former Reading Trolleybus, but all this seemed to effect was the smell of a burning clutch from Ethel B's twin. Wulfrunian UCX 275 had been used for the trip and had performed faultlessly.

7 members trips were announced on the rally calendar, and from all accounts in following issues, were very well supported. Finally, the fleet of a certain J Colin Wood of Mirfield was reported as follows: Crossley EVD 406, Bedford SB5/Plaxton FYG 926C, Bedford VAM/Duple FYG 927C, Atlantean KTD 551C, Ford R226/Plaxton YWW 31G and Leopard/Plaxton FWR 232J. We are sure Colin will correct this in due course if anything is incorrect or omitted!

Out and about

A couple of our members ventured to the King Alfred running day in Winchester on Monday 2nd May, and by all accounts it was worth the trip. Comparisons are inevitably made, and this visit was a reminder of how smart and clean WROPS present their vehicles wherever they go! Meanwhile, Julie took E50 to the National 50th event at Workington on the same weekend. Julie's extensive Ridings Travel excursion programme was recommenced so why not join one of the trips? Updates will be posted on Facebook & our website. A trip out with the WROPS stall and several buses was made to Doncaster on the Platinum Jubilee weekend too, but the stall remained unpacked due to heavy rain.

Another London Bus experience!

Following on from a previous report about the London Bridget Bakery Bus Tour, news has reached us from a member of an even more upmarket offering.



Our younger members can probably identify the make of vehicle being used by Bustronome, whilst the older end will probably be more interested in the five-course meal being offered on board! The tour takes approximately three hours whilst enjoying hospitality at your table, fine food and drink.

As can be seen in the last shot, special plastic glass stem holders are provided for any emergency stops, and more importantly, to prevent any wine spilling from your glass as you transverse the street of London. Tours are run during the day and evening, and we understand that a French company is responsible for this enterprise.

A personal memory – how my interest in buses started by David Parkin

So how did I become a bus enthusiast? Well neither Dad or Mum could drive and as our family was spread around West Yorkshire, my dad's family lived in Dewsbury and Batley, Mums family lived in the Wakefield area from Horbury up to Flockton, so when we to see them, it was by bus. Mum also had family in Bedfordshire so when we went to see them it was by coach and also holidays were by coach to the east and west coast. I suppose it was only time before buses and coaches came to the front.

As a young lad of 7 years old, I was told that we were moving house ,we were going to live in a three storey house at Manor Road cross roads opposite the bus stop on Sowood Lane Ossett. Great for a novice bus spotter. At this time little did I know that buses that were operating the 20 service to Wakefield were called Wulfrunians and were creating massive problems for West Riding. I first started to notice that the front seats upstairs had gone!!! What a crisis, my front seats that I always went for were no longer there, but why? So, after nagging my dad for quite a while he asked the driver and he told him that they were having problems with the front suspension and new disc brakes.

West Riding had bought 127 of the 132 of the Wulfrunians built, and they were now causing major problems for the West Riding mechanics, and one wonders what the canteen conversations were like around this time. West Riding's financial state was getting tight so a decision was taken to sell out to the THC which would later merge with BET to form the National Bus Company. West Riding needed buses fast and 25 Leyland Atlanteans with Roe Bodies quickly arrived. It was a start, but it wasn't enough, and more were needed. No more Atlanteans were bought by West Riding, instead they would concentrate on Daimler Fleetlines for their future double decker needs.

So where do you find 127 replacements? Well around this time Bristol Omnibus wanted to one man a lot of their operation so 28 Bristol Lodekka FLF6G arrived which were redundant were drafted in. Midland General must have thought it was Christmas when 42 Bristol LD6Gs were dispatched to Wakefield, Lincolnshire Road Car sent 8 Bristol LD6Gs and dear old Halifax sent 5 Dennis Loline with Northern Counties bodies. Northern Counties was the body builder for 4 ex Mexborough and Swinton Daimler Fleetlines also acquired which were only 18-month-old. More than one driver said " we have joined the National bus company and get this load of #££#£#£### instead!" One wonders what would have happened if the Wulfrunians had been a success, Volvo got it right with Ailsa, but they had to look at a Wulfrunian before they started, the poor old West Riding maintenance guys were battling with the Wulfrunians, the Daimler Roadliner had engine problems, the Leyland Panther had engine problems and the AEC Swifts were not well!

West Riding was probably not the only bus company facing problems. Yorkshire Woollen was also in need of a injection of new equipment but again second hand buses came into the fleet from the former Joint Omnibus company's Sheffield being a major contributor with AEC Regent 5s and Leyland Atlanteans and a batch of AEC Bridgemasters from South Wales Transport which lasted around 12 months. To add to the mix, batches of Bristols with ECW bodies arrived from United Auto and West Yorkshire Road Car and from memory they were a bit battered. Around this time Hebble Motor Services became the coach operation for Yorkshire Woollen and West Riding and all the coaches ended up at the former Yorkshire Woollen depot at Frost Hill in Heckmondwike. Hebble's bus fleet was distributed between Yorkshire and West Riding and Calderdale JOC.

Meanwhile in Huddersfield, County Motors at Waterloo was absorbed by Yorkshire Traction which was a third share owner of County, along with West Riding and Yorkshire Woollen, County's two Wulfrunians ended up going to West Riding and they were replaced by two Roe bodied Leyland PD3s which spent all their life at Waterloo. County's fleet was steadily repainted into Yorkshire Traction red and cream, but you could still spot the former County buses because of their blue interiors. Interestingly, County didn't have a coach fleet one wonders what the livery would be?

So by now, West Riding and Yorkshire Woollen had eased there current fleet problems but only for a short while, fleet renewal was needed and being part of the newly formed National bus company would help. The Wulfrunians that were still serviceable stayed in in service until March 1972, some only managing only ,5 years' service. The last Wulfrunian in service was 995 UCX 275, an ex-County bus.

There is no doubt that if there had been more investment from Guy Motors, the Wulfrunian could have been a success. There were suggestions that a big order from Hong Kong was possible but in-

stead Guy Arabs were bought. Volvo came and looked at the preserved Wulfrunian at Dewsbury Bus Museum before they started developing the Alisa, noting where Guy went wrong. We all know what a success it became, if only Guy had invested more time on development!

As I had previously said, a new fleet was needed, and the Daimler Fleetline was chosen with Charles Roe of Crossgates in Leeds the body builder of choice. The deliveries started in 1968 with fleet number 181 MHL181F, with a total of 30 in this batch but a further 25, fleet numbers 211-235 PHL 211G to PHL 235G would follow in May of 1969. So that was the double decker fleet problem solved, and attention then was moved to the single deck fleet. Firstly, a small batch of Leyland Leopards arrived, fleet numbers 32 to 34, NHL532/34F, with Plaxton Derwent bodies and coach seats for the newly introduced White Rose Express services from Leeds and Bradford and Halifax to Barnsley and Sheffield and Mexborough. There were a number of variations of these services and come the weekend they could also found doing coastal express work.

My first ride on Roe Fleetline was probably one of the last 89 Huddersfield Flockton Wakefield services. It was a very cold evening and I remember that bus was warm and very comfortable. It's such a shame that one of these buses didn't get preserved as they were the backbone of the West Riding for some years along with later batches of Daimler Fleetlines, first with Alexander bodies fleet numbers 273 WHL 273J to 284 WHL 284J. They were delivered in April 1971 they looked very classy in West Riding green and the new style of fleet name with the white rose within the fleet name. By now the Wulfrunians were getting thinner on the ground. The single deck fleet wasn't being neglected after troubles of the AEC Swifts and Daimler Roadliners although West Riding did quite well the their purchase of 44 Leyland Panthers with Roe and Marshall bodies there would be another batch of Panthers with Plaxton Derwent bodies in 1969. These could also be seen on coastal runs a photo exists of one at the Colosseum coach station in Blackpool!

The first batch of Bristol REs arrived with Plaxton Derwent bodies fleet numbers 241, PHL 241G to 245 PHL 245G, they were classy looking buses. Then in March 1970 came the first of 23 ECW bodied Bristol RE's and they carried fleet numbers 250 THL 250H to 272 UHL 242J. These felt rather spartan compared to West Riding's usual internal finish. I was a bit surprised that no dual-purpose Bristol RE's were bought and I now wonder what they could have looked like, but the Leyland Leopard was the chassis of choice for the dual purpose needs.

Around this time adverts were appearing on the sides and front of the West Riding and Yorkshire Woollen fleet, West Riding /Yorkshire part of the National bus company together we can really go places and new fleet colours were coming, either Poppy Red or Leaf Green. So after painting one bus in NBC green and one in NBC red, what colour did West Riding go for yes, you've got it, NBC poppy red which was a total surprise to all. Sadly, some of the fleet would not get repainted; none of Yorkshire Woollens AEC RegentV's got repainted, neither did the ArabIV or Wulfrunians in their final days. I wonder what they would have looked like?

The Wulfrunians would have the last laugh with their Gardner engines being removed from scrapped vehicles to be taken to Gardner's, refurbished then dispatched to Daimler and put on the batch of Northern Counties bodied Fleetlines fleet numbers 706 BHL 706K to 730 BHL 730K. These were delivered in February 1972.

Yorkshire Woollens fleet was in urgent need of an injection of new kit, and this started with a batch of A look Alexander bodied Daimler Fleetlines with fleet numbers 24 JHD 324J to 34 JHD 334J. There was talk that these buses were ordered by Hebble, but I haven't seen any record of this. Next came a batch of Leyland Leopards with Marshall bodies fleet numbers, 331 KHD 911K to 344 KHD 924K delivered in June 1972. Also in June 1972, a batch of Daimler Fleetlines with ECW bodies fleet numbers ,694 LHD 304K to 705 LHD 315K. These would help in the fleet modernization of Yorkshire Woollen, the next new buses would start the standardisation of both West Riding and Yorkshire Woollen with the Bristol VRT and single deck Leyland National.....

A final note,

Having read the appeal for someone to take over the Newsletter compilation, I have put myself forward and will take over from the next issue, with Mark helping until the end of the year.

West Riding one-offs - mailbag

Following the article in our last edition on the one-off Regals, Basil Hancock writes;

When underfloor engine single deckers appeared in the UK in the late 1940's and early 1950's there were no plans for one man operation, so the entrance did not have to be at the front of the bus as all had a Conductor. Whilst most did have a door at the front, it was not universal. A number of operators continued with rear entrances, right up to Accrington Corporation with their 1956 Guy Arab LUF (their Wulfrunians were not the only unusual buses they bought!) and numerous rebodied Tilling Group Bristol L series also continued up until that time. Some of the best known were Sheffield's pair of rear entrance Leyland Royal Tigers with open rear platforms, which I can remember riding on.

The early 1950's there were numerous trials with centre entrances on underfloor engine single deckers, some with lower seating capacity and seated Conductors. Examples included Manchester SHMD, Southampton, Swindon Corporation and Lancashire United Transport, while Glasgow Corporation had a number of single deck trolleybuses to the same arrangement. There were others too with Leeds investigating the layout for its three single deck trams, and later to buy a number of buses to this layout. West Riding would have been well aware of this interest and would not have wanted to be left behind. Some operators, such as Darlington and Rotherham Corporations and Mexborough and Swinton had been buying centre entrance buses and trolleybuses for many years and were apparently operating them successfully.

In theory a centre entrance is best for crew operated single deckers since no one has to walk too far to get to a seat, plus there could be two streams of passengers approaching the doorway, so boarding and alighting could be quicker. Theory does not always work out so well in practice. So, in summary, I suspect that West Riding may have been wanting to try out a concept which others were trying or intending to try. Interestingly though they already had experience with their fleet of centre entrance double deck AEC Regents. If it had worked out perhaps the whole fleet might have once centre entrance – now a centre entrance Wulfrunian – there's a thought!!

Meanwhile, Leo Pratt asks, could the picture below show the one-off Dennis Loline operated by Double Two shirts Wakefield for Staff transport?



Seen at Caphouse Colliery in 1974, but why at the Colliery?

He also asks if any readers remember these machines?



West Riding drafted in several ex-West Yorkshire Bristol MW's and shown below is West Riding 101 on a 162 service to Kippax at Woodend during April 1974. Although not strictly a "one off" it could be argued that the small batch was a "one off batch" as these were probably the only ex West Yorkshire buses operated by West Riding!

Finally, James Dunford writes – I can help with the question about why decker 677 had a strange arrangement of window openers. This bus had severe accident damage to both sides of the bus whilst based at Featherstone, resulting in major rebuilding work and the mix of window openers. Featherstone depot also used the roof of number 632, that had been written off, and placed it on former B&S number 186, HL 7416 that had hit a bridge. It seems like the Featherstone lads were apt at major rebuilds and would tackle anything!

Appeal success

In our last edition we appealed for any information regarding Ethel B's twin sister EHL 345 seen side by side with our Green Wulf way back in 1972. Mike Bennett has kindly supplied the following information. EHL 345 number 734 had latterly been the tow bus at Castleford before sale to R Hill in Wakefield for preservation in August 1971. By October 1972 she had been acquired by R Robinson & N Attenborough in Doncaster, before finally passing to Jameson of Dunscroft in May 1974 for scrap. Mike also notes that another late survivor was EHL 337, number 726, which passed to Higgs Monk Bretton, presumably for scrap, in May 1969, but was acquired by C Bannister Isle Coaches of Owston Ferry in June 1970, appearing to be used until December 1972, withdrawn but re-instated again, finally being scrapped in February 1979. A trip in early 1979 to Owston Ferry by Mike, Ian Hunter and Tony White to inspect it was met with disappointment when it had been scrapped shortly before the visit.

Meanwhile, regular contributor to the Newsletter, Leo Pratt, has provided his own memories. He states that he is pretty sure a young chap called Roger Hill bought EHL 345, as noted above by Mike. The photographs in the last edition were taken at Haxey Depot of the Doncaster Omnibus Light Railway Society. From his recollection he did not ever remember WROPS being offered EHL 345, but he was told it was sent for scrap due to bodywork and roof issues. Leo tracked her down at the Dunscroft scrapyards, as can be seen below, but there does not appear to be any damage or deterioration of the roof framework. She was another missed opportunity, but Leo did manage to salvage a few items from her to use on the restoration of EHL 344.



A sad end to one of Ethel B's sisters



Vehicle Update

Thanks to Tony Hanson for his regular updates on County Motors CCX 801

Brake parts including return springs and collars have been donated by our friends at Town & District and have been fitted, brake drums and wheels have been refitted so 70 has come back down to earth! Several road spring shackle pins have been replaced with much less worn examples. Rear brake rods have been freed off and replaced, forks welded up where badly worn and prop shaft layrub joints greased and tightened. Brass union and connector has been made up to join the fuel tank to the supply pipe. Electrical work has progressed with the rear junction box connected to the main front control panel via a 7-core cable and the circuit to the rear taillights has been proved. Front side lights have been refurbished and refitted. A working horn has been fashioned from the original honker and some scrounged mounting parts. A new set of destination blinds has been manufactured but will not be fitted until all painting has been completed.

******Stop Press**** coming in the Autumn edition, a story about the County Arab II's**

Spring Open Day success

We had a fantastic Open Day on 15th May with the financial results speaking for themselves! All figures are based against the last Spring Event we held - The Café was 12% up, the Tombola was 18% up and paid visitor numbers were also up 8%, despite four other events in Gateshead, Peterborough, Taunton and Sheffield causing some dilution of our regular attenders. Bottom line profit from the event was 33% up so the other events caused no real issues for us! We ran all the services with vehicles resident within the Museum collection and many services had to be duplicated to cope with the number of visitors wanting a ride. Alex Clough undertook the role of Bus Stop Despatch Manager for the first time and did a cracking job, as this is something we have omitted to have in the past - WELL DONE ALEX!! So, a BIG THANK YOU to every volunteer we had on duty that made a huge success of the day. Finally, WROPS reported that they had a superb day of trading with their sales stall up 82% year on year - well done Richard, Mark and Martin for holding the fort.

Then & Now

With WHL 970 finally considered "restored" we look at her as she was in service, and how she is today.



Spot the difference?

Seen in Wakefield Bus Station in the mid 1960's, loading for Ossett, she makes a fine sight, complete with an advertisement for WELBRED. Is this an intended Pun because she did come out of the well-respected Guy Motors factory and she is the only red survivor, somehow indicating that she was the "well-bred" specimen that would survive?

Fully restored and looking rather resplendent, we also see her at Havelock Street, Ravensthorpe, on a test run out. As you can see some artistic licence has been used with the addition of some coachlines, this style having been carried by 864 for the Commercial Motor show, so why not?

Far right, she appeared as the front cover star of B&CP Magazine July 22 issue with several pages inside dedicated to the story of her restoration and the history of the Wulfrunian.

It is fair to say that when she was towed into the building in 1991 many said, "she will never ride the road again" and it is somehow one of the most satisfying restorations that has been completed at Dewsbury by the WROPS team. So, when you are taking a ride, perhaps reflect for a moment and think of the thousands of man-hours that have been put into getting her mobile once more, the thousands of pounds that have been spent by the WROPS team to make it happen and reflect on those that were part of the project team, but sadly passed before they could enjoy that very special ride. We are sure Stuart and Paintpot would approve of the result. A special thank you must also go to Terry Hutchinson for his regular financial donations to get this bus on the road again.

A commemorative plaque has been sponsored by member Fred Walker that acknowledges that Stuart Goldthorpe was a key part of the restoration team, and the bus has been dedicated to his memory. This has been fixed to the bus display board that accompanies 970 on its rally visits. Bill has identified a couple of minor improvements to make to 970 over the coming months to truly finish the job off. The addition of an air drier will certainly help her maintain good lift!

Now the effort begins to get the green one back up to full strength, and cash donations to make this happen will be gratefully accepted! Whilst 995 has been kept in running condition since she was acquired and restored in 1972, she has had long periods of inactivity and does require some tender loving care and dosh!! Please send a cheque payable to West Riding Omnibus Preservation Society at Northfield, Water Lane, Kirk Smeaton WF8 3LD. The WROPS team believe that with the completion of 970 under its belt, it can demonstrate that your money will be very well spent!!

The end bit – a personal sign-off from Mark

This my last Newsletter after several years compiling the articles and editing the content, supported by Andrew Beever. Having made an appeal for someone to take the reins, David Parkin has stepped up the plate as our Archivist and will now be the key point of contact for your articles and contributions. David is contactable at parkin_@sky.com & **07930 395639**. I will be supporting David with the next edition to show him the ropes and then David will take over fully from the Winter 2022/23 edition.

To all of you that have contributed to make my task easier I say "Thank you very much" and I am now looking forward to reading the Newsletters, instead of compiling them!