

Autumn 2023

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

Welcome to new members:

Rob Shorland-Ball
John Graham, Grant Jackson
Martin Simm & David Storey



West Riding conundrum

We start the Autumn Newsletter with a challenge!



Left- a row of three houses near a former terminus

What have the above houses got to do with West Riding? A few clues: they are positioned next to a former public house, they originally had a toilet block to the left of the original row, where the garage now stands, and they are most certainly sited within the Wakefield City boundary!

The answer will be revealed at the end of this Newsletter!!

Restoration updates – a Resurrected Reliance & Titivating a Tiger!

In a dark corner of the Museum, under the mezzanine sits JHL 708. Having slumbered untouched for many years, Mike Bennett has now got the time to lavish on his own bus.



Mike has started a methodical restoration plan as can be seen above. Much work has already been completed on the framework before restoration halted years ago.



In the picture above we see sister JHL 714 sat in Wakefield Bus Station on a usual "Healey" service, giving a good indication of how Mike's bus will look when it is finished.

Meanwhile, at Cobus near Filey, one of Julie's Tigers, C39 CWT, continues to receive attention. A simple "tart up" has developed into a proper job. The plan was to replace the incorrect rear light clusters with proper Paramount ones, which then led onto a full rear boot replacement as shown below. Meanwhile all the stretch panels have come off, structural work attended to, and the panels are now back on, an example of which can be seen in the second shot.



Even when a professional outfit is used, things take time, but if an owner wants it done right, there is no point in taking short cuts that always come back to haunt the vehicle. Julie is clear what livery she wants C39 painting in, but for now she is keeping that a close secret. However, what she has said is "don't expect it to be an identical twin of one of my other Tigers, C38 CWT" which wears a particular style of United livery.

To give an idea of potential end results, look at these two in-service shots.



Is that a Yorkshire bus we see in the second shot??? Clearly taken after the "Fastaway" services were ended, and carrying a hybrid livery that didn't require much repainting!! YWD fans will be frothing at the mouth at this potential livery. The United livery on the shot above is quite different to the one on C38, so is Julie sending us up the garden path with the comment that it won't be a twin of C38??? Could it be another United, but in a different livery layout??

Coronation PD2's – an unanswered question

In our Spring edition, we carried the story of the PD2's painted in honour of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. There have been various stories about "How many" carried this livery,

In 1953, West Riding received EHL 831-836 and FHL 111-116, all Leyland PD2/12's, but how many carried the Coronation livery? In August 1979 the West Riding fleet list publication detailed that EHL 831-834 (numbered 739-742) and FHL 111-116 (numbered 745-750) all received the Coronation livery, with EHL 835-836 (numbered 743-744) wearing red and cream "track" livery.



Comments from some members have centred around the thought that there were never ten buses that carried the Coronation livery, but does anyone know for sure?? Please let us know if you have the answer!!

September Open Day reviewed

Thanks to everyone that turned out to help give the public an amazing day out. The weather remained dry and visitor numbers held up on target despite our change of date away from November and the fact that an event was put on in the North-West after we had published our date!! We always check the rally calendar before agreeing a date, and yet others do not seem to bother. Duplicated dates within 100 miles of each other only serve to dilute visitor numbers.

We had some vehicle issues on the day which impacted the running published bus details. Firstly, Steve's Oly left Barnsdale at 6am only to fail on the Upton bypass only a few miles from the shed. A tow was required back to its stable and Steve turned up at the Museum later. It is thought a fuel issue is the cause and will need investigation. Also, out of Barnsdale at 6am was Ethel C and having arrived at Ravensthorpe water was spotted dripping from the underside. A quick inspection of hoses revealed they were fine and thus by elimination, a problem with the water pump was diagnosed and she remained out of service all day. A steady run back to Pontefract with three stops for water checks was the order of the day and she will also need a check over to resolve the issue before she is back out on the rally scene (this meaning she could not attend the AVTG Skipton event in early October) All that said, buses were substituted, and the timetable continued, despite the horrendous traffic on Huddersfield Road, due to roadworks.

Paul Goldthorpe's Atlantean made a very welcome return as an operational vehicle, as did the Magicrider. Our WROPS stall traded very well and despite the reduced visitor numbers the Café almost hit its normal takings – well done ladies!! Di had a great day on the tombola and don't forget more donations are needed to top it up. Traders reported excellent takings.

It was certainly more pleasant having our Autumn event in the warmer month of September as who needs to stand outside in cold wet weather when a warm September afternoon is available?? So well done to Julie for organising things. It was fantastic to see great teamwork at play to ensure as many running museum buses as possible could be out on the road so thanks to all involved.

On a final note, we understand that some recent facebook comments have indicated that our 2023 events attracted less visitors than our 2022 events. Our financial results prove otherwise, with our two 2023 event numbers showing we attracted MORE paying visitors than our 2022 events when added together. That said, we also had lots of positive facebook comments too from happy visitors.

It really does frustrate those members who work hard to put on events, with hours given in their own time for no direct benefit, only to find those who should know better making negative comments when they have done nothing to either help put on the event or support it. It is fair to say that the Committee always welcome constructive feedback, facebook keyboard warriors please take note.

WROPS stall on tour

Thanks to Andy Hartley the WROPS stall has been out and about, with the help of many Museum members to set it up, man it and repack it! A great day was had at the WRBG event at Whitley and the weather held off, so Gazebo's were not required! Mark and Andy Hartley assisted on the stall most of the day with other volunteers popping in and out so that they could enjoy the event. Next up was the event at Eastwood in Rotherham in October. We have mastered the art of setting up the stall within 30 minutes and can take it down and load it back on to a bus even faster, but we do need 6 volunteers minimum to do this. Shout up if you'd like to help as supporting the stall means you get a free ride (and usually entry) to the event we are attending - Andy Hartley can be contacted on 07776 114218

Out and about

On the 23rd and 24th August we displayed two coaches at the Temsa Sales UK Coachfest at Cleckheaton (in the old Arriva Sales Venue) We had been invited along to support this new venture and Julie kindly did the honours with the Doyen and the B JAB Tiger. 28th August saw the Museum out in force at WRBG Whitley event. In attendance were THL 261H, LHL 164F, A577 NWX, TWY 8 and B106 JAB. As noted above we also took our sales stall and promoted our September open day.

On Saturday 9th September we attended Dewsbury town centre at the request of Kirklees council who were holding a heritage weekend.



Left, the PD2 and Red Wulf looked splendid in the sunshine. Did a red Wulf ever make it Dewsbury on a 69 or 70, we wonder? Perhaps by coincidence, both vehicles that were chosen for the display were both celebrating special birthdays. The PD2 was 75 years young, and the Wulf was 60!!

We supported the AVTG Skipton event on 8th October and went to Eastwood on 22nd October with TWY 8 and the Panther.

In service shots

Martin Cotton has requested we feature some "in-service" shots and supplied several photographs which he has hunted down, that depict several of the Museum's collection of vehicles in service. So here goes. Apparently, Andy Hartley had suggested that some readers may like to see these!



WHL 970 heading towards Leeds and it looks like she is just past Thwaite Gate in Hunslet.



KHL 855 is in Wakefield Bus Station, resting up!

Worthy of note on this shot is the offside flashing indicator position on the middle cream band just behind the drivers door. This was clearly a trial and was unsuccessful as it is thought the positioning here would slightly obstruct the drivers view. We have yet to find any other Arab with this indicator layout, unless you know different? Also worthy of note is the adjacent Arab from the earlier GHL batch with a slightly wider cream band above the drivers cab, indicating there were clearly some slight differences between the 1955 open rear platform batch and the later 1957 closed platform ones.



THL 261H makes a fine sight in Pontefract Bus Station, with a Fords of Ackworth Leopard at its side, and a repainted Fleetline from the West Riding fleet behind. Check out the updated "WEST RIDING" on THL (with white rose inserted) fleet name over the front wheel arch indicating that the bus was a few years old, this batch having been delivered with the standard WEST RIDING fleet name (without the white rose) on the middle panel of the bus.

Our oldest operational bus BHL 682, is seen sat in Leeds bus station prior to heading back off to Castleford.



and here she is in service, in colour as a driver trainer! We understand this is Andy Hartley's dad, Mick, collecting her for preservation.



EHL 336, is seen here when quite new, as identified by the fact she has no nearside mirror fitted, leaving Wakefield Bus Station on a coastal express. This batch of six Tigers were used for private hire and express services to Blackpool, Scarborough, Filey and Bridlington, before eventual downgrading to works specials and general service duties. No doubt the requirement to keep opening and closing the heavy door on stage carriage work, meant they were a last resort on any local service and would have been hated by any Conductor!



JHL 983 makes a fine sight surrounded by coaches of similar vintage, and clearly parked up next to another West Riding Dalesman.



We are often asked for shots of 995 when she was a County bus. Here she is sporting the different destination aperture layout, and with lots of cream paintwork. No doubt the operational staff at Waterloo loved the winter months and their never-ending duties of keeping her running and clean!! Did they pop the brown ale bottles open when UCX 275/276 got moved on to West Riding and two brand new PD3's half cabs arrived to replace them??



To the left, LHL 164F is seen sat in Wakefield bus station waiting to be moved onto the correct stand for a Batley departure. Eagle eyed readers will spot that the Panther carried two illuminated "Pay as you enter" signs, one on the front above the windscreen and one on the side, just behind the door at waist height. Aficionados will note that currently LHL does not have the side illuminated sign on her since this had been removed when she was in the Training fleet! If anyone has said missing side PAYE sign in their personal collection, an attempt to fit it may be made if it is returned!! That said, let's not mention the indicator side lamps either! On the right we see the Panther in the drabber Tilling style livery in Leeds Bus Station.

In our last edition we asked if anyone knew why 164 was the chosen specimen for preservation and Nigel Blair has kindly answered the call for information. "The illuminated Pay as you enter sign above the windscreen was still present on 164 whilst in the training fleet, and this was the sole specimen still retaining that layout, so the decision was an easy one and 164 was saved!"

As we previously reported the Panther made its TV debut (having already featured in a film a few years ago) during the first episode of The Long Shadow on ITV on the 29th September. She appeared in the first 5 minutes and the sound effects were amazing and certainly NOT dubbed!!

The Long Shadow can be watched on demand on ITV X.



TWY 8 captured by Rev Peter Calvert on a day out to Doncaster. By the time this shot was taken, TWY 8 wasn't used that often on the longer routes, but Peter was elated to find that the scheduled Atlantean had failed, and TWY 8 was rolled out to perform the duty. A lovely run out from Pontefract to Doncaster followed.

XUA 73X is seen below on a local Pontefract service (somewhere in Chequerfield Estate we think) wearing Caldaire chevron style livery.



She looks a bit different today in her heritage livery but perhaps one day she can recapture her Caldaire identity?

The Chevron livery was eventually replaced on many buses with a half and half green and cream scheme, which to many onlookers did not look quite so classy as the chevron style.

Vehicle Updates

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

UCX 275

Work continues on the Green Wulf. The gear selector has experienced similar issues to that uncovered on WHL 970 during its restoration. Bill is advanced on solving the problem and has already sorted the rear airbag leak issue. Whilst this vehicle is having its mechanical overhaul anyone interested in deep cleaning the vehicle could start with the interior upstairs. Its last proper scrub was way back in 2012 when Mark took on the challenge of bringing the interior back to life. It now needs some TLC again starting with deep cleaning of the seat cushions, floors, interior panels, and ceilings. If you would like to help, Mondays at the Museum are a great day to attend and get stuck in on the **upper deck** whilst mechanical work continues downstairs.

OWW 905P

Work is ongoing on paint removal and the bus now moves under its own power with the gearbox refurbishment completed. It is capable of being driven off the road and is performing well in the large yard outside the storage shed. This VR is quite tidy inside following the fitting of some missing correct specification seat pads by Colin. Andy and Martin continue with the laborious task of paint removal, but each Saturday brings the project nearer to completion

JHL 708

As seen previously in this newsletter – enough said!!

CCX 801

All the running light circuits have recently been proved, all fittings and bulbs acquired and installed and any raggy wiring has been covered in new sheathing. A new exhaust pipe has been made up using old bends and new straight sections and has been fitted. New volunteer John Wade has been stripping all the seat frames and repainting them. John had also dismantled the interior light fittings pending their re-chroming. The lower saloon ceiling has been undercoated.

The upper deck cushions and backs have been taken to the trim shop in Blackpool for recovering. A sample of the lower deck cushion refabrication has been returned and looks very impressive! New machine screws have been obtained to secure the padding strip for the bonnet top and side on the radiator and the drain plug has been remounted and tightened but a leak has been found on the bottom tank and will need to be dealt with.

A new engine stop cable has been acquired, connectors made, and it has been fitted. New half shaft bolts have been made, threaded and fitted. The upper deck offside wood trim has been removed for renovation and revarnishing and the side panels have been removed for recovering in new Rexine.

KHL 855

The radiator has been away for specialist repair but has still not been returned but is being chased on a weekly basis.

EHL 336

A failed water pump that sprung a leak kept Ethel C out of service on the open day. She drove back home to Pontefract at the end of the day, but as she was put to bed not a drip could be seen!!

A577 NWX

The Olympian suffered a fuel starvation problem on the way to the September open day and has since had some attention. Steve reports that all seems to be in order again, but the bus will require a few runs out to check that all is properly sorted.

C39 CWT

Julie reports that the restoration of panel work on 39 is almost complete with Cobus at Hunmanby working their magic on the Tiger. Painting comes next and then the Tiger should be ready for her debut, hopefully during the 2024 season, assuming Cobus can complete the remainder of the work in the next few months. This coach will make another great addition to the collection and will no doubt attract a lot of attention when relaunched back into public service.

A Scarborough Bus Garage through the ages

How many readers always thought it odd that a bus company associated with the Northeast ran services in Scarborough and even had a large garage there?

Here is how it looks today, sat adjacent to the Palm Court Hotel, and to many looking at it now, they would never imagine it housing double decker buses!!



However, to prove the point that it was the United bus garage, look at the shot to the right.

But all is not what it seems. When did United ever operate Dennis Loline buses? (Looking very much like the West Riding ones bought from Halifax) Closer inspection of the photograph reveals that it has Aldershot in its destination aperture – so what on earth was and ALDERSHOT & DISTRICT Loline doing in the Scarborough garage of United? Over to you!!

There are quite a lot of connections between United and West Riding, not least of all the number of ex West Riding buses that ended up in United livery during and after the Caldaire years.

So, we are throwing out a challenge for our next Newsletter – send in your shots for publication of those West Riding vehicles that made their way north – send your entries to mark.byard@live.co.uk

AHL in all her Glory with a coach imposter at the rear!

Thanks to John Ramskill for this lovely shot of AHL 694 in service, sat in Castleford (we think)



Looking rather old fashioned compared to the AEC Reliance sat behind her, she was hard at work on a 167 to Leeds. We understand this bus has been for sale again – clearly, she needs to find a more permanent northern home.

The Reliance, bringing up the rear, can be seen wearing reversed cream and green livery, thus attempting to masquerade as a coach! Clearly West Riding were short of coaches in the mid 50's and dual-purpose buses were drafted in on weekends, with an attempt clearly made to make them look more like coaches by applying more cream paint!

Whilst having slightly higher backed seats, we do wonder how passengers would have reacted to one of these turning up for a trip to Blackpool for their week's holiday, particularly given they had no luggage boot area and limited luggage racks in the saloon. Perhaps they were used for day trips rather than routes where large luggage loads were known to be the order of the day?

Annual General Meeting update

The AGM took place in October and there were no changes to report to the post holders other than the resignation of Colin Poole as H&S Manager, the President formally thanking Colin at the AGM for his long service in that role. This Committee post now needs to be filled so if this interests you, please let our Secretary, Julie Aylward, know. We also still have two elected member posts available on the Management Committee. The Trustee Team remains unchanged other than John Wade being appointed as a Trustee with immediate effect.

A vote was taken at the AGM to increase the annual membership fee to £20 to assist in covering increased postage and other costs. An almost unanimous vote was in favour of this increase and therefore please also find enclosed the 2024 membership renewal form. Please return the form as soon as possible to avoid administration costs and time.

Our Secretary updated the meeting with the following overview;

This year has been quite a challenging year, but I am pleased to be able to report that the Trust is still here and is ending the year in a stronger position. Several Committee members relinquished their roles after many years' service, however these Offices have been filled and the new postholders are all doing well and bring with them innovative ideas and new energy. The President reviewed the structure of the Management Committee and new Trustees were appointed; Andy Hartley, Julie Aylward and Di Forbes.

The Spring Running Day was planned to take place at the museum, but a sudden spate of non-mobile vehicles meant that we had to find an alternative venue. As Arriva had previously invited us to hold an event at their Dewsbury depot, this was an obvious solution. Unfortunately, despite having agreed with Arriva all the details, they pulled out without explanation after the advertising had been put in place and agreement to run the advertisements given. Due to our strong ongoing relationship with The Mill Outlet at Batley, they came to our rescue, and we were able to put on a great event. There was much criticism amongst the enthusiast community that none of our indigenous fleet was active on the day and we were not able to field a full team of Trustees at the event. Nonetheless, paid visitor numbers were up on our previous event, takings were up, and we had a lot of positive feedback from the many non-enthusiasts who attended. In September, we worked with Dewsbury Heritage to provide a shuttle service linking key points in Dewsbury, also displaying two buses in the town centre. This generated a lot of interest which was particularly useful, just ahead of our Running Day and had the full support of the Trustee team. The Autumn Running Day was also a great success, despite the clash with a new event in Lancashire added to the event diary after we had published our date. Visitor numbers were on target and the takings slightly up. An almost full complement of Trustees ensured that the day went well, despite two of our own vehicles having technical problems on the day. Based on the success of the Batley event and its appeal to a different audience, we will be holding the Batley Event at the Mill Outlet next July. This will not be an enthusiast event as such but will be aimed at the public. I do hope that you will all support the Trust at this event. We have decided to keep the equivalent dates for the two other 2024 Museum based events rather than continue changing. Hopefully, we will become established on these dates soon and others will schedule their events to avoid us.

Work continues on restoring vehicles with Wulfrunian 970 running again in public service and Wulfrunian 995 now receiving attention. The Magic Rider is back on the road and Paul Goldthorpe's YWD Atlantean made its public debut in service after many years in storage. Mike Bennett has made significant progress on JHL 708, and Tony Hanson continues to move CCX 801 forward with the help of John Wade and David Hudson.

It is obvious that some of the tensions within the Trust this year have been caused by us outgrowing the building in Ravensthorpe. It is eminently sensible that we should therefore be looking for a larger site where more vehicles can be kept thus avoiding future tensions. As such, we are exploring a potential site in Wakefield for a new building. It is off Ings Road, opposite Halfords. A local commercial estate agent has offered to start things off free of charge and when we are able to update you, we will. It is worth reminding everyone that our initial plan to extend our Ravensthorpe building was scuppered when investigations revealed that the land to the front of the building is unsuitable to complete the extension. Now is the time to look forwards, not backwards, to pull together as one team and to make 2024 our best year ever.

A White Rose one off??

As many of our readers know, a White Rose was added to the West Riding fleet name during the 1960's. At the same time, it appeared that the "West Riding" fleet name was moved to a different position on the vehicles, where possible being placed over the front wheel arch, or as near to it as possible on half cab vehicles! However, here is one that seems to disprove the rule!



Why did this one get the new white rose version placed exactly where the old one was??

The final bit

So where is the row of houses shown on the first page and what is the connection?

The houses were in fact owned by West Riding and used to house employees at a peppercorn rent. They were situated on Agbrigg Road, Wakefield, next to the Duke of York public house, and the toilet block was used for employees at the terminus of the original tram route, and eventually the 32/33 Broadway (Lupset Estate) to Agbrigg service.

Times have certainly changed, and this terminus/route along Agbrigg Road is not even served by West Riding successor, Arriva, with Globe now operating the Wakefield- Crofton- Ackworth - South Elmsall service via Barnsley Road and Agbrigg Road to Doncaster Road, this being the only service to Agbrigg at the current time. How sad!

As for West Riding being property moguls, here is another property interest they had, this time adjacent to Belle Isle depot, but not visible from Barnsley Road.



The six houses for more junior employees!

As many of you will know, four bungalows fronted the main Barnsley Road next to Belle Isle Depot, but to the rear was Belle Isle Crescent, were these houses. To the left of the row, is the tower of the former St Peter & Paul RC Church, demolished when a new church was built opposite the Asda store at Sandal. It is said that the former church site was acquired by the bus company, with a view to extending the car park or building more facilities. This never happened, and the site was later sold for the development of a health centre and chemist, which still occupies the site. As for the houses..... who knows what happened and when? Our thanks to Kev Malpass for the shot above.