

Winter 2022

Membership renewals

Your badge is enclosed



A message from our President

The New Year brings with it lots of challenges for the Museum and an opportunity for me to share my thoughts on how you, our members, can get more involved with the running of the Museum.

As many of you know, lots of the Trustee and Management Committee have been in post for many years. Some individuals have been around since the inception of the Charity and the opening of the Ravensthorpe building, others have come and gone over the years, and a core group of hard-working individuals have stuck with things through thick and thin to make the Museum the success that it is today. Teamwork, respect for others and a willingness to put personal differences aside to make the Museum a success, is non-negotiable for the Trustee and Management Committee, and are the key qualities that make for a successful group to run any Museum.

With some of the team advancing in years, or having a change in personal circumstances, the time will come when some individuals must move on, and a fresh new team made up of familiar faces and new faces need to take the reigns to move the Museum into the next phase of its life.

As such, I am asking all our members, be they Full or Associate, to consider if you could add some value to the operation of the Museum by undertaking one of the Committee Posts or expressing interest in one of the Trustee roles. We currently have vacancies for the role of Secretary, Membership Secretary and Events Organiser, and other opportunities to undertake deputy or training roles are also available. Trustee roles are also required to bolster the expertise of the Charity and include the requirement to provide leadership and set behavioural standards that any Charity would expect from its senior team.

For those of you that just want to enjoy "helping out" without significant commitment, we are always looking for volunteers to assist all year round helping to maintain the Museum building, its exhibits, such as the Archive and vehicles, and even the cleaning of the toilets! Sorting photographs can take hours and simple tasks like this need volunteers to come along and get involved!! Whatever you can do, you would be welcome to come along and help. From cleaning the buses, to strategic thinking, or applying for grants, you could be the key to greater success, and I encourage you to contact me via the telephone or email to tell me how you can help, apply for a committee post or be considered for the role of Trustee.

At the other end of the spectrum is the need for improvement of what we currently do. So, if you have any ideas that could assist the development of the Museum, have concerns about anything that prevents the Museum moving forward, then once again I encourage you to contact me, so that I can support any improvements that are required within the Charity, by removing any barriers that stand in its way.

You can contact me by:
Telephoning 07960 956390
Emailing lesleigh@live.co.uk
Saying hello if you see me around face to face!
Yours, Lesley

The Green Buses – the final instalment of Stuart Goldthorpe's story

In November 1971 I left behind the town where I was born and bred. It is a sad occasion to pull up ones roots but I will always be part of Ossett in that particular era, and Ossett will always be part of me. Anyway, I only moved about four miles away to live in an area of West Ardsley. It was certainly different from Ossett, in that it was a Yorkshire Woollen District operations area. The West Riding route 49/50 Leeds - New Farnley ran past my door, so all contact with West Riding was not entirely lost.

With the National Bus Company now at the helm of both West Riding and Yorkshire Woollen, the fleet numbering system was changed, and the two company's vehicles were renumbered, intermingling with each other. The West Riding renumbering included the remaining rear platform buses ordered by the company. These were from the Guy Arab IV KHL 818- 862 batch. As if in an act of defiance, a small number of Wulfrunian still survived and had to be included. These survivors saw off their intended replacements, the initial batch of Lodekkas 400-409 (XNU 423-432), along with 416, 418-429, 457-458, 472, 474-475 & 477, which were not included in the new order of fleet numbers. One disappearing feature to note was the well-known West Riding garter. A familiar design that adorned the rear of buses since the 1920's, not only the garter but the large fleet numbers which were standardised on the rear of older vehicles, were slowly being removed. If memory serves me correct, I cannot recall any of the rear engine double decker's displaying the garter that was a symbol of ownership, except Daimler Fleetline 235 mentioned earlier.

Attention had been given towards the replacement of dual-purpose vehicles for use on motorway express routes, so I suppose that it was fitting that the last batch of vehicles delivered in 1971, were five Leyland Leopards with Plaxton DP49F bodies. The previous batch of similar buses now found themselves on mundane bus route work, occasionally straying back onto motorway express services when needed.

As the first new buses delivered after the renumbering, they were numbered 326-330 (AHL 726-730K). This batch of Leopards along with the previous batch of RE 290-293 (now 315-318) brought a return to AHL registration marks, not seen since the Guy Arab II and red Regent III of the 1940's. All other vehicles with AHL registration marks had been ex J Bullock & Sons.

First-hand experience of a new Leopard was gained early in the New Year of 1972, when 328 appeared on the 16 Leeds - Overton route that was a ten-minute walk from my house in West Ardsley. During the short fifteen-minute journey I found the Leopard to be a comfortable bus. The impression it gave me was that any weary passenger laying back on the large headrest, could quite easily fall asleep. These dual-purpose vehicles could quite often appear on ordinary services when not required for motorway runs. They could also be found on the London service and what luxury it was to ride on them - if only the seats on buses built today were as good!

On the subject of dual-purpose vehicles, towards the end of 1971, five Leyland Leopards and three AEC Reliance were transferred to the West Riding. These eight vehicles came from Hebble Motor Services Limited whose head office and depot were at Walnut Street, Halifax and Park Lane, Bradford, which at one point also housed vehicles of Yorkshire Woollen District.

It was ironic that the Leopards were originally purchased by Yorkshire Woollen, transferred to Hebble during the course of the year, then returning back to the West Riding. With Walter Alexander DP49F bodywork these Leopards looked slightly out of place, when side by side with colleagues from the Plaxton stables. The three Reliance, that also had Walter Alexander DP49F bodywork may have been allocated to Savile Street depot but soon ventured across to Selby depot and I saw them on a few occasions laying idle outside the depot building. The Leopards were numbered 93-97 (GHD 412-416G) and the Reliance 98-100 (KJX 1-3G), soon to become 265-269 and 270-272.

1972 was a leap year, although what we were leaping into (in terms of buses) I was unsure. It was very mixed as some sad and disappointing events took place. However, under the circumstances it was to be expected. The first new buses of the year were a small batch of Bristol RE, numbered 319-322 (BHL 631-634K). These were followed in due course by the final batch of the order for RELL6G to give these vehicles their correct title which were 323-325 (CHL 635-637K), the last of the type to be received by the West Riding. These were superseded by Leyland Nationals.

The allocation of the RE 319-322 I would imagine to be either Castleford or Featherstone depots. To the best of my knowledge, I cannot remember Selby depot ever receiving a direct allocation of new RE, but I could be wrong. They did receive RE on occasions transferred from other depots. The remaining RE 323-325 joined their stable mates at Savile Street depot but may also have seen service from Belle Isle depot.

It is worth recording that these final RE would also be the last single deckers to arrive in Tilling green livery. It was thrust upon all National Bus Companies that they be in a common livery of Apple green or Poppy red. The West Riding and Yorkshire Woollen were to be in Poppy red and along with the new livery came a new style of fleet name on the side of both bus fleets. No more gold lettering, just stuck on block letters surrounded at each end by a double N symbol, proclaiming that the vehicle was part of the National Bus Company.

An interesting member of the RE class was UHL 941J, 308 (271) which was most extraordinary, as the only West Riding vehicle to receive National Bus Company style fleet names on Tilling green livery. Several reasons for this have been suggested including the story that upon launch of the National Bus Company, all constituent bus operators supplied a vehicle to appear in a television commercial to advertise its formation. One of my friends remembers seeing the commercial, but as to whether this is the reason for the unique RE is not clear.

Perhaps the saddest occasion, from my point of view, came in March when the Guy Wulfrunian bowed out. On the final day, none of the remaining roadworthy vehicles were scheduled for service, although due to breakdowns all serviceable Wulfrunians saw action. It is somewhat ironic that these last Wulfrunians provided replacement services for the very vehicles that had been brought in to replace them due to their perceived unreliability and yet here they were on their very last day of service bailing them out. A fitting end to a troublesome short existence, a magnificent bus ahead of its time.

If only the prototype 863 could have remained in that status for a year or two more then many of the problems may have been overcome by installing more tried and trusted components in the production vehicles. After the stripping out of many usable parts, all that remained was a one-way journey to the scrapyards. It was certainly the bus of that time (1959-1972) and will remain in history as a true red/green West Riding bus.

The same month as the last Wulfrunians left the fleet, the final buses received in Tilling green were starting to arrive. More Daimler Fleetlines, this time with Northern Counties of Wigan H43/33F bodywork. The last batch of Fleetlines to be purchased, with fleet numbers 706-730 (BHL 606-630K). they joined the WHL Fleetlines in having the West Riding fleet name separated by a small white rose of Yorkshire in the middle. This could be seen in a marked out square above the front wheel arches.

On a mechanical note, these particular Fleetlines were powered with Gardner 6LX engines taken out from 50 withdrawn Wulfrunians. The remaining engines were used in Yorkshire Woollen District Fleetlines, which incidentally were numbered 683-693 (JHD 324-334J) & 694-705 (LHD 304-315K). To the general public these vehicles were all brand new, when in fact their engines were anything but.

The Northern Counties bodywork did not look out of place and was similar in appearance to the ex-Mexborough & Swinton batch. The configuration of the hoppers on the normal seven bay window construction were placed in a different fashion, along with the destination box which displayed the numbers first. The downside was that they lacked design appeal at the front (like the Swifts) which let the whole batch down. Northern Counties Fleetlines were based at Belle Isle depot appearing on the Bradford, Ossett and various routes to Leeds, eventually finding their way to other depots. By now the oldest buses in the fleet (not including Lodekkas) were the trusty and reliable Guy Arab IV. By August 1976 the final five located at Belle Isle depot 421/422/433/457 & 459 would all be withdrawn except for the examples transferred to the training fleet to replace the last Leyland Titans.

Although the Titans usefulness as Trainer Buses came to an end, Leyland Titan 640 (A13) (BHL682) was saved by the West Riding Omnibus Preservation Society as previously mentioned and is now restored as the star exhibit at Dewsbury Bus Museum. The Guy Arab IV driver trainers, painted in a striking cream and black livery could be seen around Wakefield and Dewsbury until 1980, eventually

replaced by Leyland Atlantean and Leyland Panthers. Today Guy Arab IV 855 (A14) (KHL 855) is also preserved and after 30 years in storage is finally restored.

During the latter half of 1972 the West Riding entered the era of the Bristol VR, with Eastern Coach Works bodywork. My personal thoughts were of dismay at this passenger carrying vehicle of the National Bus Company. No more interesting buses of a special nature would be received. Although with hindsight my opinion would eventually mellow towards the VR, I had to face facts, it was here to stay. Along with the Leyland National which would arrive the following year they would both become the standard buses to be received for the next ten years – and they were poppy red not green. The most noticeable likeness between the VR and the RE was the split windscreen, along with the Gardner engine and a five-speed gear box which could reach speeds up to 50 MPH. It should be stressed incidentally that five speed gearboxes were coming into fashion, to be fitted to most makes of vehicles. However, the only bus I cannot recall being fitted with a five-speed gearbox were Daimler Fleetlines.

Continuing in the West Riding fleet number series, the VR became 731-734 (GHL 191-194L). They were the first new West Riding buses to wear the poppy red version of the National Bus Company livery. After a short spell in service around Wakefield the VR's were despatched to Selby Depot and were well suited for the long runs from York to Doncaster and Leeds to Goole. They remained at Selby until retirement. Eventually after passing through several operators 731 passed to Guide Friday who used it on York sightseeing services. It was back home for its final few years of service! Over the next few years more Bristol VR, albeit in dribs and drabs, would arrive. During 1973 VR 735-739 (HHL 735-739L) & 740-742 (JHL 774-776L) arrived and merit mentioning because of registration mark "HL" always associated with Wakefield. These eight VR, along with the first batches of Leyland Nationals, which arrived at the same time or later in the year, became the last buses to be issued with the "HL" mark. In 1974 government boundary changes abolishing Borough Councils came into force. The registration mark of vehicles in the Wakefield area moved to South Yorkshire and future buses would now be issued with "UA, NW, WY or WR" marks, more associated with Leeds.

The arrival of the Bristol VR and the colour scheme they displayed brought an end to the West Riding, not as a company, but as how I remember it. You cannot live in the past, only the present and hopefully the future. Those of you who are not old enough to remember can look at transport of the past through old photographs taken by many enthusiasts. You can sample the remaining buses at running day events and Museum open days. To all of you like me who can remember, we can go back into the past in our minds eye, where red and green buses of the West Riding remain forever.

Stuart Goldthorpe 2019

It is several years since Stuart passed. We are grateful to his family for allowing us to serialise his memories from his unpublished book. R.I.P Stuart His association with Ethel and the Red Wulf will be remembered by all that knew him.

The Leyland TD2 and other buses as remembered by a small boy

by Peter Darkin

I was born in 1934 and lived on Dewsbury Road, Wakefield – just above Eden Avenue. For a child with a very strong transport gene, this was a perfect place to be brought up. I could watch traffic either from my bedroom window or from our garden gate with West Riding red buses passing at the rate of one every 10 minutes and green ones every 20.

Although the main subject is West Riding Red TD2s, I must start with the first recollection I have of any bus, which happened to be a West Riding green one. It had passed our house heading towards Wakefield and it stopped at Eden Avenue. The reason I remember it was because it had an outside staircase leading to the top deck, something I had never seen before or since.



The West Riding had a number of these Leyland Titan TD1s but as the last of them was withdrawn in 1938 I could not have been more than 3 or 4 years old when I saw it.

Although I must have been taken into town on the bus by my mother when she was shopping, it was not until I started school that I began to take a great interest in the West Riding red buses. My education started at Snapethorpe Council School on September 4th 1939, the day after war was declared on Germany. The school was on Broadway and about one mile from home. I had to walk to and from school every day accompanied by my mother. Although there was a school bus, adults were not allowed to travel on it, hence my daily walk.

In January 1940 heavy snow fell and my mother decided that if she took me to the bus stop and met me there coming home, I was capable of getting to and from school on my own. After about a month I convinced my mother that at 5 ½, I was quite capable of getting to and from the bus stop on my own and travelling on the buses became independent and more pleasurable. As a way of reducing fuel consumption during the war, the government had issued a directive to bus companies requiring them to remove many non fare- stage bus stops. Eden Avenue (our nearest bus stop) was one of these. Walking to the bus stop on my own gave me the choice of Neville Road or walking the other way towards Wakefield to Townley Road. By choosing the latter I got a longer ride. When a child has an interest in something, it is amazing how many small details are noted and remembered. The windscreen wipers on the red buses were unusual having two blades which were attached to an endless drive chain at each side of the screen. The blade swept the whole width of the top part of the screen and can be seen quite clearly in the accompanying photograph.



Whether it was due to heavy maintenance or shortage of spare parts I do not know but around 1941 these windscreen wipers began to be replaced by the conventional single blade variety. The next major change was less subtle. One day our school bus arrived and it was just out of the paint shop. It was painted grey not red and had black mudguards, the front ones having the obligatory white patch. During the black out headlights had to be fitted with shields to prevent any light shining upwards. (More of this later). This greatly reduced illumination and the white patches were to help people to see the vehicle.

The West Riding name in gold edged with black was in its usual position as was the fleet number in large numerals and the garter style name and address on the back. It had two cream bands just below the windows on upper and lower decks. The centre cream band had disappeared. The white roof and the bow tie West Riding insignia (visible in the above photograph) had disappeared before the war. In fact I do not remember seeing a bus with them. Grey paint was used due to a shortage of coloured paint and in due course about 20% of the fleet received this treatment.

Buses in the 1920s and 30s had an expected life of about 10 years (forget about the Wulfrunians) and thus by the middle of the war the red fleet was due for replacement. There was no chance of this happening because bus manufacturers were on war work, so it was a case of make do and mend. Breakdowns were quite common and I witnessed many of them. The procedure was always the same, the driver would contact Belle Isle Depot by telephone if there was a phone box handy. (Mobile phones had not been invented and very few private houses had a telephone). If this could not be done the driver would wait for another bus to come along and get its driver to report the breakdown. If the next bus was on the same route, the passengers would transfer to that bus, assuming that there was room, if not they would wait on the broken-down vehicle. I was used to all bus drivers wearing uniform, so it seemed strange when a mechanic turned up driving a replacement bus and wearing overalls. The mechanic would remove his toolbox from the spare bus, the driver and conductor and any remaining passengers would transfer to the spare bus and be on their way. In most cases the mechanic managed to get the broken-down bus going and then drive it back to the depot. In the event that he failed, the tow truck was summoned. This was an old front loading single decker with the body cut off just behind the steps and replaced with a lorry body. Towing was always by means of a bar and never with a tow rope.

The Red fleet comprised the original 48 Leyland TD2 buses purchased in 1932 plus two Guy Arabs Nos. 49 & 50, (HL5845 and HL5846) from 1933 which for some reason we did not like with crews.



Guy Arab 1

Our favourite red buses were the TD4c s from 1937 numbered 51 to 55 (HL7678 to HL7682). They had a more modern appearance sharing a body outline with the green TD4s.



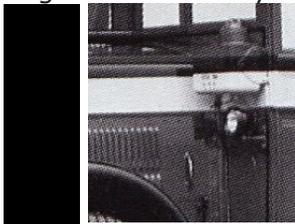
Leyland TD4c

The next memorable incident concerned bus number 34 (HL5339) which caught fire just outside our house when heading towards Wakefield. The red buses carried two pyrene fire extinguishers, one in the cab and the other mounted on the stairs where they divided.



Pyrene Fire Extinguisher used on all West Riding buses.

The fuel system used in the 1930s usually incorporated an autovac which was mounted alongside engine immediately in front of the front window.



I can only imagine that a fuel union had developed a leak and the fuel had ignited. The leak fed the flames which were burning through the floor of the top deck above. There was no explosion and there was just sufficient leak to feed the flames. Nevertheless, it was quite impressive. The driver did a stalwart job with the two extinguishers managing to contain the fire until the Wakefield City fire appliance arrived and quickly extinguished the fire.



City of Wakefield Leyland fire appliance which attended the incident as remembered by the author.

The fire had been confined to the front passenger area, the upper floor and front seats. Needless to say, the tow truck was required to remove No. 34 but happily it was back in service a couple of months later.

We were visiting Dewsbury during the war where The West Riding bus terminus was just outside Dewsbury bus station. Naturally I took an interest in these Yorkshire Woollen District maroon buses on the stands and to my amazement caught site of a Leyland TD2 with central doorway, identical to the West Riding ones apart from the colour. I wonder if any other company used the C.H. Roe bodied central entrance TD2s?

Occasionally the red buses were used for private hire. Children in Wakefield were taught to swim at the Almshouse Lane baths. We were taken a class at a time and with the class size of 50 to 55, the red bus with 48 seating capacity was ideal (some children had to sit 3 to a seat). The advantage of the red bus over a green one was that the centre entrance on the red ones had closing doors. The doors were very rarely closed in service but were ideal for containing the children.

My usage of the red buses increased when I was accepted in 1943 as a chorister in the Wakefield Cathedral choir. On Monday, Wednesday and Friday choir practice was held from 4.15 pm to 5.00. Most of the boys attended the Grammar School (Queen Elizabeth Grammar School now known as QEGS – pronounced kwegs) and had little difficulty in walking down Northgate to the Cathedral in 15 minutes. As I had to make a 2 mile bus journey I was given 5 minutes dispensation. The drill was to leave school at 4.00 pm prompt and run the ¼ mile down Broadway to Horbury Road where I could catch the 4.05 bus from Ossett to Agbrigg. This deposited me in the Bull Ring and a quick run to church got me there for 4.20. Choir practice invariably over ran so it was usually the 5.20 pm Broadway via Dewsbury Road bus that I caught home.

Choir practice on Thursday was from 6.30pm to 8.30 again with a tendency to over-run. Catching the bus into town for 6.30 was no problem but to get home it was vital that I caught the 8.50 pm which was the last bus of the day. War regulations forbade any bus to start its last journey after 9.00 pm. I did have a back up because there was a 9.00 pm Broadway via Horbury Road and I could remain on it until it got to Dewsbury Road. People would be horrified today at the thought of a nine-year-old wandering about on his own in the middle of town during the black out with the last bus looming – but it was considered normal at the time. Despite the war most buses ran to time.

On another occasion as a choir boy, we were all taken annually to see a pantomime in Leeds. In 1943 we had to make our way to and from Leeds by train, but the following year regulations had eased and we were allowed to hire a bus. We only numbered 35 plus clergy, but a red double decker was sent in preference to a single decker. This time plenty of room to move around. When the bus arrived, we noticed that although the front route indicator showed 'Private'. The side one did not. The side route indicator was operated by a handle inside the bus next to one of the single upstairs seats. It was always a temptation to change the destination when travelling on those buses so here was a legitimate reason to alter it.

A bus station was needed desperately in Wakefield. Plans had been drawn up and approved, the site had been cleared of low-quality housing and everything was ready to go when war was declared, and everything was put on hold.

All RED buses via passed through the Bull Ring following the route of the tram tracks and making it their main pick up / set down point as the trams had done. There had never been trams on the Broadway route so those buses used the Bull Ring as a start and finish point. With six bus stands plus the setting down point for Broadway buses and considering that there were through roads, the Bull Ring could be a very congested place. Green buses used either the Springs, Wood Street or Westgate.



The above photograph of the Bull Ring must have been taken around 1940 because the bus has not lost its centre cream band, however the white patches on the front mudguards became mandatory early in the war. Not visible but doubtless in place were shields fitted to both headlamps. The bus is waiting to depart for Ossett. The queue of people is waiting for a Leeds bus which will stop at the far side of the Queen Victoria statue. The Austin 16 cars are taxis waiting on the rank.

The Agbrigg bus stand would have had the front wheel of the bus about where the last person in the queue is.

In the photograph below taken around 1950, things may be clearer. In the foreground, the Maypole and Zeeglers butchers' shops have been demolished providing an open space where the seats are positioned at the bottom of the photograph. AEC Regents have now replaced the Leyland TD2's.

The bus in the foreground is a 10 to Sandal (as Kettlethorpe Estate had not been constructed) with the bus opposite with the Queen Victoria statue behind it, being on the Leeds 10 service. The bus on the stand near Hughes brothers is the 20 to Ossett, with the bus attempting to pull into the stand in front of it being either a 32 or 33 to Broadway.

At the top of the shot is a green bus by the traffic lights at the bottom of Wood Street and opposite is part of a red Regent looking as though it is attempting a right turn for the Agbrigg 32/33 stand on the other side of the Queen Victoria statue. (a queue being shown on the previous shot from a different era)



Green buses did not pass through the Bull Ring. Westmorland Street at the top of the picture had a dog leg turning to get to the Springs and was too narrow for a bus to negotiate so the route was through Cross Square, right in front of the Cathedral and then a tight left at the other end of the Cathedral. Other starting points for green buses were Wood Street and Westgate. Most routes passed through Wakefield City centre making separate setting down points rare.

I mentioned earlier that although the red buses had doors, they were never closed and it was quite usual for people to hop on or off whilst the bus was moving. It was common practice to climb down to the bottom step as you approached your stop when getting off and I was as bad as anyone else. One evening coming home from choir practice I got it all wrong. I dropped off the bus 100 yards short of the stop, to make my walk home 100 yards less. On this occasion I fell and ended up with a broken arm. Having fallen, I picked myself up and set off for home because the incident must not be recorded by the conductress. I told my parents that I had tripped up. If they had known the real reason, I would have been in real trouble. When better I continued dropping off the bus before it stopped like everyone else – but not with the bus going quite so fast.

Traffic in the 1940s moved much slower than today, in fact commercial vehicles weighing over 3 tons unladen were subjected to a 20-mph maximum speed. Although this speed limit did not apply to buses they were only slightly faster with acceleration to match. Many of the red buses had small black vertical marks in the paintwork at the back. These were caused by cyclists. It was not uncommon for cyclists to use a bus as a shield when riding into a head wind, particularly where there was a gradient. With no rear platform the red bus made an ideal target. What happened was that as the bus was stationary at a bus stop the cyclist would position himself behind the bus and follow it as it set off. On occasion the front wheel would rub against the paintwork – hence the black mark. Another dangerous trick was for a cyclist to get hold of the back of a lorry and be towed along. After I got my bicycle in 1945 and I was guilty of the first act occasionally but only tried the second a couple of times.

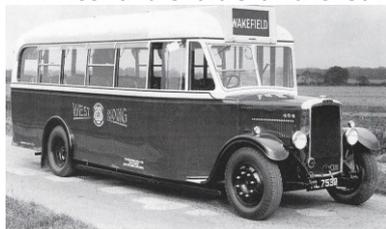
It was late 1943 or early 1944 when we were treated to a brand-new red bus - it was a Guy and we were amazed to see that it had a rear platform entrance. The Ministry of Supply had ordered Guy Motors (and Daimler) to produce a chassis suitable to replace double decker buses, completely worn out or destroyed by enemy action. In 1942 Guy launched the Arab utility double decker bus based on their original 1933 chassis. The 'Utility' buses were recognisable by their angular body with cor-

ners rather than curves on the roof. This red bus was numbered in the green bus series 580s or so (later confirmed as 582 – 588). It had wooden seats, which were great fun to slide along, particularly upstairs where it had the long 4 person seats associated with a dropped gangway. We still couldn't get over a red bus with a rear entrance. When the AEC Regents started to appear, these 'Utility' buses were taken into the green fleet.



Prior to the arrival of the AEC Regents the West Riding had not used route numbers relying on a description of the route. Coinciding with their arrival the Wakefield to Cullingworth route (suspended during the war) and shared with Yorkshire Woollen, was reinstated as route No. 3. As the Regent IIIs were introduced so the Titan 2s were withdrawn until suddenly there were none left in service. My final memory of them was on a journey to Leeds. I was on the top deck of a Regent and passing through Hunslet, looked over some waste land to a scrapyard where I saw a line of West Riding TD2s for the last time. A few weeks later they were all gone.

Naturally I travelled on other buses in the 1940s and here are a few memories. I had an aunt who lived on the Portobello Estate. We usually travelled by bus to Busy Corner and then walked into the estate. On a few occasions we would travel into the Portobello estate on a Leyland Cub. As a small child what fascinated me was that the driver sat with the passengers and collected the fares. The West Riding had three Cubs used to service the Portobello, Eastmoor and Lupset council estates. They were all withdrawn in 1949 and No464(illustrated) was purchased by Pritchard of Newborough, North Wales. Its Roe bus bodywork had originally held 20 passengers but at some point during the Second World War had been 'upseated' to carry 26. It continued in service until 1950 and was then sold to Hollis of Queensferry for use on 'heritage' work. It is now preserved in Pritchard's blue and cream livery.



Visiting my aunt was always looked forward to because the journey took us past Belle Isle depot. The top deck of a bus gave the best view but on occasion we would walk past the depot. What I noticed was that at the top of the ramp coming out of the new garage, behind the closed doors were parked side by side, ambulance buses with the destination blind replaced with a red cross on a white background. My father told me that they were ordinary single decker's with the seats removed to accommodate stretchers. They would meet trains carrying wounded soldiers and transfer them to hospitals, such as Pinderfields.



During WW2 many buses were destroyed in the Blitz causing shortages in places such as London, Sheffield and Birmingham. The government instructed unaffected companies such as the West Riding, to loan buses to the affected Cities. No.505 was one such vehicle seen here in London bearing a Golders Green 13 destination blind. When it returned to Wakefield a plaque was fixed to the bulk-

head on the lower deck in commemorating its war time service. In addition to the white mudguard edges the mandatory headlamp shields are just visible.



Two of several types of headlamp shield used in WW2.

In the 1920s and 30s it was usual for long distance coaches to carry passengers' luggage on the roof. A boxlike structure was built into the roof, which was suitably strengthened, foot / hand holes were built into the bodywork to enable climbing onto the roof. The West Riding had two such buses, but they were used not for long distance travel but for transporting brass bands and their instruments to concerts. Naturally they were known as 'Band Buses'. When not on hire they performed as normal service buses. I never saw them in the cream and green livery remembering then in plain green.



In the 1940s and 50s it was usual for police officers to travel from home to the police station in uniform. All beat bobbies wore helmets which made it impossible for them to stand inside a bus. Consequently, they usually rode on the platform by the stairs or in the case of the red buses, on the steps if the bus was full. I suspect that they travelled free of charge because I never saw one buying a ticket. Their presence was enough to subdue any trouble on a Saturday night.

My final memory is from the 1950s when a report in the Wakefield Express, complete with photograph, showed an AEC Regent on its near side in a field. It appeared that at Robin Hood on the Leeds - Sandal route, the bus had entered a bus layby but instead of coming to a stand, had continued through a low stone wall and dropped about 6 feet into a field. I would love to know how they got it out and whether it was a write off. Does anyone have any information? Although much has changed in the area, when last I passed by the bus, the layby was still there.

Photographs: John Banks Collection; Senior Transport Archive; C. T. Darkin; David Allen Collection; WROPS Peter Darkin, Westgate Drive, Bridgnorth, Shropshire, WV16 4QF
Email peterdarkin@talktalk.net Telephone 01746 762498

Thank you to all that contributed!

We had an amazing response to our Annual Donations appeal with almost £2000 added to the pot. Thank you so much for your kind donations, be it £5, £50 or whatever the amount! As you all know costs only go one way, and with increased energy costs, postal costs, business rates and more, every extra pound helps us. Given the current economic climate - all we can say is your generosity is not taken for granted.

We have been lucky to receive some legacy funds in the last 12 months and these have been placed in our reserves account to ensure that the money is not wasted on running costs. When someone decides to leave the Museum funds on their passing, they can detail what the funds are for or leave things with the Trustee team to decide.

We are fortunate to own our building outright and as such any legacy money will never be used to cover rent for buildings, as this does not solve long term storage issues.

Our reserves account has been specifically designated to provide funding for the purchase of an additional storage building to increase the size of our collection. This is covered in our Constitution document under our reserves policy section.

Once again, thank you for your financial support through your ongoing Membership subscription.

Ludlam Street Trio



Sadly, the Val is stored and deteriorating in the Midlands, the Dalesman is not quite road ready and the Fleetline was exported to the USA, final fate unknown.

The West Yorkshire Transport Museum at Ludlam Street, Bradford was a temporary home for many of the WROPS collection of vehicles, particularly during the construction of the current Museum building. Seen above at EHL 472D, JHL 983 and PHL 235G, the latter still in the ownership of West Riding, but on loan.

The final bit – the final end!!

When chatting amongst our preservationist friends, conversations often turn to the subject of “what about that one”, in the sense that an old vehicle did survive, but then slipped through the net. Take a look at this one;



EHL 471D was part of a trio of Bedford Val's delivered to West Riding in 1966. It is obviously less well known than the restored sister EHL 472D, that was part of the collection many years ago, and has been the subject of previous articles in our Newsletters.

Julie Aylward takes up the story of its sister, seen in the first shot above parked outside the old Ravensthorpe building - “Ken Newbold bought EHL 472D and it was considered to be in excellent condition. That said, and as with any vehicle being on the road, spare parts are always useful to have in reserve, so when the opportunity came to acquire a sister vehicle, Ken decided to buy it solely for spares.” After being acquired and stripped of useful bits, off she went to meet her maker. Would we do anything differently these days? Who knows – as we regularly remind ourselves – you can't save them all!