

SPRING 2023

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

Welcome to new members:

Andrew Pickles



R. I. P J Tony Mowley

We start this newsletter with the very sad news that J Tony Mowley passed away in mid-March. Julian, or Tony as he always preferred to be called, was a popular member of the Museum team, perhaps because of his kind a caring nature. Tony had joined the Museum after retiring from a lengthy career in professional driving, latterly spending his days with YWD and Arriva. His eyes were starting to fail him, which is why you never saw him behind the wheel of one of our buses. A lot has been said about Tony, from our youngest members the comments that he made them feel welcome and checked in with them on Mondays to ensure that they were happy and comfortable, to our older members who said they would, without doubt, really miss him on Mondays



Left; Tony representing the Museum at an Official visit from the Mayor of Batley

We have lots of happy memories of Tony. He was there at the building every Monday, he was there with us setting up the WROPS stall and serving on it at various events, he was there at the Open Days working as a Marshal and Conductor, and he was there at the monthly meetings buying raffle tickets and supporting the activities of the Museum. He even roped his daughter Chantal in as a member too, Chantal being a regular donator of raffle and Tombola prizes.

Tony had previous health issues which he never complained about. Many members would be surprised to hear that because he was such an active chap and could be seen out walking everywhere. He would think nothing of walking from Dewsbury to Wakefield for shopping and he certainly had a love of travel and would spend lengthy periods on holiday abroad.

Tony was the sort of chap anyone could talk to over a cup of tea. Indeed, he was often the person that had made the tea for everyone in the building, without being prompted, and then he would wash and dry the cups up too!!

He was a true gentleman who just used his initiative for the betterment of the Museum. He had no hidden agendas and just "wanted to help" and did so for many years, gaining the respect of us all.

The celebration of his life was at Dewsbury Crematorium on 11th April, where his family and many friends paid their respects.

We would like to extend our sympathies and condolences to Coryne, his wife and Chantal, his daughter and the wider family. Rest in Peace dear friend.

Basil's latest - two abandoned Guys for rescue

Basil has kindly supplied this article written by John Young, because of its links to the Wulfrunian – look at that suspension!!

08.00 Sunday 24 July 2011

I met Mark Granich, the owner of G58 and G60 - on site, 81k east of Merredin, 3k North from the Gt Eastern Hwy on the North Nulla Nulla Rd - a well-formed gravel road.

Within a couple of minutes Mark offered both buses to the BPSWA for FREE although if we do take up the offer, I suggest an appropriate Aussie payment of a carton or two of "stubbies" (beer). Having inspected many derelict buses over the years, I am pleased to say that the condition of these two is quite remarkable, due, I believe to the hot dry climate and isolated location away from prying eyes and vandals. The buses have been used as living quarters and they are both clean and tidy not like the rubbish filled buses we are usually accustomed to seeing. In fact, the original carpet in G60 could have a quick vacuum and be presentable. Apart from the driver's area in both buses, there is not any visible water damage in the passenger's salon - all windows were shut. Both roof linings are OK and after all these years I had forgotten that they had a series of stars painted on them in the shape of the Southern Cross. No passenger seats at all in either bus.

The radiator, motor, gearbox and tail shafts are missing on both buses and the removal has been done without the use of an oxy-torch. On the positive side, all of the panels and the very hard to get fluted aluminium central side panels are in very good condition - no rust or dents. I only managed to find one exposed upright rusted. The outside panels are heavy duty zinc galv and from outside observation very minimal surface rust. The chassis and under floor panels seem in good condition with no glaring sign of rust or failure. All decals and sign writing still visible and both buses have original paintwork. Small Guy "Indian" head and plastic "GUY" missing on both buses. Unfortunately, some front windows are missing, and this has made the drivers area a bit messy. I have written two separate reports and there are two separate groups of photos. TYRES - there are 9 wheels missing off the buses but there are 5 rims that could be used to make up replacements. Most of the wheel nuts have been put back on the hubs which is a blessing.

If we go ahead, then my son in law will bring his 4WD with his industrial air compressor and pump up the tyres although the NSF on G60 is flat and will have to be changed - we will need at least 6 complete wheels to make up 2 rolling buses.

BUSES BACK ON WHEELS - See the photos as there are varying degrees of wheels on, hubs off the ground on blocks and hubs on the ground, and this will take patience and skill to get some of the wheels onto the hubs. One is to dig into the ground, fit the wheel and then jack up the bus and replace the dirt under the tyre - done without damaging the panels.

RECOVERY and TRANSPORTATION.

Mark has offered to cut down the trees you can see in the photos and offered to use his tractor to help move them to the low loader if we require. Towing - There has been a suggestion that we could get "someone" to tow the buses by back roads to Merredin - I do not think that this is a good idea as we would damage the airbag mounts and also the Police "Heavies" are always patrolling the back roads looking for overweight trucks trying to beat the system, just like we would be doing. Our reputation would be compromised. The buses are 11ft high and 38ft long with big front and rear overhang - I am sure if we asked Mark he would construct a dirt ramp or sink hole with his tractor to get them on the truck. We don't want to ruin perfectly good lower front/rear/middle panels getting them on and off the low loader.

REPORT G58 "Pride of the West"

Has a 240v electrical cable from the ground near the OSF wheel up and into the front saloon to a fluoro light. Mechanical - Wheels O/S rear, no others - most wheel studs still on - both front hubs turn - no motor, gear box, radiator, fuel tank or tail shafts - has temp and air gauges - no drivers gear shift assembly

Body - No dented panels and only slight surface rust in a few places. - no pax seats - no N/S front windscreen and one window missing from pantry area - wood cupboards in panty area u/s due to

rain - driver's seat needs a cushion - front door panel has 15 bullet holes - no good outside lights but has most interior lights- interior saloon roof lining has one small tear

REPORT G60 "Wheatlander"

Mechanical - Wheels N/S/F (flat) and O/S/F no others - most wheel studs still on - no motor, gear box, radiator, fuel tank or tail shafts - has one gauge - drivers electrical switch boards damaged. Body - No dented panels and only slight surface rust in a few places.- no pax seats - no O/S quarter window, drivers O/S window or O/S large first pax window N/S front windscreen cracked - wood cupboards in panty area in good condition - driver's seat needs a cushion - no good outside lights but has most interior lights- interior saloon roof lining good condition - original carpet and curtains in good condition.

In my view G60 "Wheatlander" is in slightly better condition even with the O/S engine hatch missing (could be in the bush) or use the one off G58.

John Young



Editors note — it would be nice to know if they were recovered and restored and there appears to be something very USA Greyhound looking about that Australian coachbuilding? (It's certainly not Crossgates style!!)

OWW 905P restoration in focus

As many of you know, this bus has been sat patiently waiting for its turn for attention for years, and we now have an active team of younger members working on it. If you would like to be involved in making things happen faster, please contact Steve Hurley on 07738 835431 or email steve.hurley6@gmail.com

Bristol VRTSL6G, registration number OWW 905P, was delivered to West Riding on 10th May 1976 and numbered 761 in the fleet. It was part of a small batch of nine vehicles registration numbers NWR 505-508P & OWW 903-907P and carried Eastern Coach Works H43/31F bodywork. Being immediately used on trunk routes around Wakefield it was another example of the vehicle that had become the standard double deck bus in the wider National Bus Company fleet. The arrival of these buses ousted the final five 1957 Guy ArabIV's, that were still in passenger service.



Left; NBC red, but displaying the later Metrobus insignia

Originally delivered in National Bus Company poppy red and NBC style West Riding insignia, 761 was to receive the honour of being chosen to carry a special livery to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's silver jubilee in 1977 and was duly adorned in silver and blue livery from May 1977 until March 1978.



A similar treatment was also applied to Bristol RE registration number THL 259H.

761 was renumbered 827 in November 1982 and was repainted into Metrobus Verona green and buttermilk livery and upon the privatisation of West Riding, was repainted into Caldaire West Riding chevron livery.



She continued to deliver reliable service until withdrawal in December 1989. However, her time in regular passenger service was not over and she passed to United Automobile Services the same month and eventually formed part of the Tees & District Transport Company from February 1990 to November 1995. Whilst with this operator she received a full strip down.

By March 1996 she had found her way to North's yard at Sherburn but found favour with IW & E Williams of Deiniolen until July 1996 when she passed to her final operator Japheth of Trefor, finally retiring in February 1997 after 21 active years.



Having been passed to Bus Parts of Doncaster by October the same year, she was spotted in their yard by Ian Hunter and rescued with support from Richard Hall and Neil Halliday and placed in secure storage. A quick repaint was completed into West Riding Ayres red and cream tramways livery before she was laid up out of service for many years. During late 2012 several WROPS members had the desire to see this bus in the collection of the West Riding Omnibus Preservation Society and wished to restore the bus to her former glory. Under the custodianship of Steve Hurley the VR was finally secured by WROPS and moved to a new home in Pontefract in December 2013.

A restoration team now works on this vehicle and the lads involved are Steve Hurley, Andy Hartley and Martin Cotton, who spend their Saturdays working on 827 to bring her back to life. As with all vehicles, storage costs money and WROPS are grateful for financial support provided by Andy Hartley and Martin Cotton and to Steve Hurley for use of his shed to carry out the extensive works required. Recent major works include the removal of her gearbox for refurbishment, and this was recently re-instated and is now fully working after many years of no second gear! A replacement mitre box has been sourced and various other mechanical tasks undertaken, but there is still much to do to bring the bus fully back to life. A full set of matching seats is now in place. Obviously, there is a wide choice of livery styles to choose from once she is fit for a repaint and much time is being spent removing the numerous layers of old paint.



WROPS are grateful to acknowledge the support given by Ian Hunter and Neil Halliday who applied a temporary red Wulfrunian livery many years ago, and for providing storage for this vehicle for many years before WROPS could secure alternative accommodation.

As with many projects, any donations to fund the restoration or practical help with restoration tasks would be gratefully accepted by the Society.

Current Status – active restoration project and now progressing well! Is available for passenger duties/members rides around the yard at Pontefract!!

Technical details

Chassis – Bristol VRTSL6G

Body – Eastern Coach Works

Power – Gardner 6LXB

A Doyen imposter!

While looking through some photos, Basil Hancock found this which may be of interest.

In the mid-1980s, as Bedford bus production wound down, many Australian bus operators were looking for a similar cheap and light replacement, particularly for rural and school bus operations. Quite a few different suppliers had a go, and one of the most successful was Hino with a range of front-engined buses. Similarly, various bodybuilders came up with offerings.

One example, which was popular for a short while in Victoria, was the importing of Soon Chow body kits from Singapore which were assembled in Victoria under the name of Maxim bodies. As anyone who has been to Singapore will know, their bodybuilders are masters of copying styling features of other bodybuilders, hence when I was there in 1987 there were lots of Mercedes Benz 0303 look-alikes on a range of chassis.

Earlier Maxims had a flat front, but if you look hard at this example, one of the later examples, you may just start to spot something familiar.

Yes, it is a rather basic, but not too bad, copy of a Royal Tiger Doyen front end. Check out the panel below the windscreen, the turn indicators, and the bumper shape. Pity about the rest of the bus!!



You decide – Doyen rip-off or not??

Spring Open Day Sunday 21st May - change of venue - now at Batley

Congratulations to Julie Aylward for taking up the challenge of the post of Events Organiser. Following comments made at the March Members Meeting, Julie has undoubtedly turned a negative into a massive positive! Our forthcoming first event of 2023 see's us taking the event out of the Museum to the Mill Outlet, Batley, where we will have exclusive access to the top car park and use of an adjacent indoor area for trader stalls. The Museum building will be CLOSED on this date. A full briefing will be provided on Wednesday 17th May at the monthly members meeting, so please come along to Soothill WMC at 7pm for all the details. It goes without saying that if you can help on the day, please shout up. Despite the number of active members, we have helping, it would be nice to have some new faces along so that we can reduce duties for others, so they can enjoy part of the day too. Please call Julie on 07983 095551 if you haven't been involved before and would like to help.

Autumn Open Day now Sunday 24th September - change of venue and a change of date!

We have also changed the date of our Autumn event to Sunday 24th September, and have exciting news to share with you in our next edition of this Newsletter regarding where this will be held! This event will have all its usual features, with our usual stall holders in attendance, bus rides and exhibits, Tombola, and Refreshments, but with added features kindly provided by our sponsor! Therefore, the original date of 29th October 2023 is cancelled and replaced by this September event.

We extend our thanks to all active Members for assisting with the operation of these events, as without them, the events could not take place.

Wakefield "JHL's" but not as we know them!!

Whenever West Riding fans see an old coach or bus with the "HL" registration, thoughts instantly turn to – that must have been a West Riding!!

However, not all HL's are as they seem. Wakefield had a motor company called Comberhill, on Ings Road, that specialised in selling cars, but also had a small commercial vehicle operation. Thus, this company, from time to time, took brand new coaches into stock and sold them on with HL registrations. In addition, part exchanges were taken in and retailed on a piece of land on the opposite side of the road to the garage.

So, to prove the point here are examples of two vehicles with HL registrations that never ran for West Riding, but still survive!



Left; JHL 670

Not only is this not a West Riding coach, but it is also not a truck, despite it being an Atkinson! It is currently being restored after being in store for many years, and carried a rather fetching silver and blue paint scheme when new. It carries a Plaxton Consort style body.



Left; JHL 701

Another Plaxton survivor is this one, last reported stored in France after making several TV appearances in Inspector George Gently. It is apparently for sale and had previously been bought to convert to a motorhome, after it had been fully restored! Yes, that's right, a full restoration does not guarantee it will survive as a coach if a buyer with cash has other plans. Fortunately, we understand the conversion never took place and it was dry stored and remains as originally restored and for sale.

And finally, a connection to Comberhill Motors that most members will not know about. J Colin Wood has confirmed that he had dealings with Comberhill and was only too pleased to buy a certain double deck bus from them after it had been part-exchanged. EVD 406 was bought from them and sent away to Charles H Roe by the Wood family to have the body that it now carries, fitted. Colin says he thought the bus was a bargain, and he did know that the Scottish Aviation body that was fitted to it was shot, but the chassis had potential, as clearly shown today, as it still survives in running order with its handsome Roe body, that Colin spec'd up.

Magazine stars – again!

Could any of us ever have enough of the two Ethel's??

Featured in B&CP Magazine March 2023, with a lovely review, were EHL 336 and EHL 344 in all their glory, as seen below.



The article also featured Roe Dalesman JHL 983 and its progress back to life.



Also featured is a shot of KHL 855, EHL 344, EHL 336 and UCX 275 at Belle Isle in the early days of preservation.

In addition, one of our members, Rev Peter Calvert, contributes regularly to Classic Bus Magazine and two of his photographic collection were printed, featuring unusual shots of West Riding PD2's

First up was one of three red and cream PD2's, allegedly delivered in "track" livery by mistake, and the other featuring the commemorative livery for the Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation.



It would be fantastic to see one of the red PD2's in a colour shot, so seek out your photograph collections and see if you can find one! Three rear loading half cabs on red routes would have certainly confused passengers, who were used to boarding centre entrance AEC Regents, and that's probably why they were quickly repainted green. Also note that the livery style layout was not to the normal three cream band style, so had someone mistakenly picked up a wrong drawing meant for a Yorkshire Traction bus??

The Coronation livery looks rather striking and there have been the odd colour shots of this batch of three buses in the past. It is stated that on certain days, and certain routes, they offered free rides to celebrate the Coronation. So, to a little challenge to any readers with influence at Arriva – how about a couple of buses liveried up in 2023 to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III?

New Trustee's appointed!

Following an appeal for members to become more involved with the Trust, our President, Lesley Sleigh, is delighted to announce that the following members have been appointed to the role of Trustee.

For regular attenders at the Museum these new Trustees will be familiar faces to you.

Julie Aylward. With six coaches to her name and having previously been a Trustee back in the days when the Trust was originally founded, Julie has a wealth of experience to bring to the team. Julie has recently taken on the role of Events Organiser, Secretary and Membership Administrator too! Julie's vehicles have long supported our events and include Tiger B106 JAB, Doyen E50 TYG and Tiger C38 CWT, all of which have regularly provided free rides for our visitors. For those not in the know, Julie has three other vehicles at Cobus, being restored professionally, those being another West Riding Tiger and two more Doyens!!



Andy Hartley. Many of you will know Andy from his regular attendances at the members meetings and his active involvement with Open Days and the restoration of our West Riding Bristol VR, featured in this Newsletter. Andy can claim to have had one of the longest associations with WROPS, as his dad was heavily involved in the early days of the Society, which meant Andy and his sister found themselves as children regularly riding on Ethel and the green Wulf to events all over the UK!!



Left; It's in the blood, Andy's dad with our PD2 as acquired!

More recently Andy has been assisting in fund raising for WROPS, all in his own time and often at his own expense, travelling long distances to collect donations for the Society. His hard-working attitude will certainly be an asset as a Trustee.

Di Forbes. Having run very successful businesses and having an amazing knowledge of all things mechanical, gained from her Truckfix and Clutchfix days, Di is often found on our Tombola stall and Café on open days, attempting to part you from your cash! More recently Di has been a member of the Management Committee and looks after the monthly raffle at our members meetings. Di has a breadth of business experience which will be a fantastic asset to the Trust.

Other Trustees. Lesley Sleigh, our President remains in place, and she is supported by Steve Hurley, Mark Byard, Colin Poole, Andrew Beever and Mike Bennett.

Vehicle space available

As per our vehicle space policy, please note that we have space available within the Museum building and any interested parties should submit their application by 15th May 23 to The Secretary, WROMT, 7 Manygates Lane, Wakefield WF1 5NT. Details of our vehicle space policy are contained on the Members section of the Museum website.

Sea front service

A recent trip to the Yorkshire coast by one of our members found a trusty Leyland PD2 on the sea front service!



Left; Parked up at North Bay ready for a run to South Bay and the Railway Station on Easter Weekend

We understand that this is not a commercial operation, and the rides are being offered free of charge. Passengers are welcome to donate to a Whitby Animal Charity.

A group of enthusiasts are operating the bus and are in the process of seeking a licence for a commercial service. There are already two commercial operators on Scarborough Sea front, those being East Yorkshire and Shoreline Suncruisers, so we wish our fellow enthusiasts well with their enterprise, as it is surely better to transverse the sea front in a half cab than a rear-engined decker, unless you are under 45 years old!!



Left; Members of the Eastern bus enthusiasts group based in Peterborough, who are operating the service.

The final bit



Due to unforeseen circumstances, the role of Archivist is now available, and with it comes the opportunity to compile and edit this Newsletter. We are grateful to Mark who has stepped in to produce this and the previous edition at short notice. If you would like to take this role on, please write to The Secretary, WROMT, 7 Manygates Lane, Wakefield WF1 5NT by 15th May 23.

We are also looking for someone with basic PC skills to assist the Archivist to compile the Newsletter. If this would appeal to someone itching to get more involved from the comfort of their armchair at home, then please shout up!! If you are interested in this option, please let us know by calling 07956 579684.