

Autumn 2022

If you have any news or views for publication please contact, hand or send them to parkin_d@sky.com (07930 395639) or Andrew Beever 01924 265528

Welcome David!

We start with a formal welcome to David Parkin as the new editor and master of compiling the Newsletters.

The County Arab 99's – by Tony Hanson

From time to time, I have been asked about these buses, so I thought a brief synopsis might be of interest. There were nine new to County Motors, all with Roe lowbridge utility bodies, except two with highbridge Park Royal bodywork.

64. CCX 696 was new in July 1944, but probably did not run until fitted with some old County seats a few weeks later (as the Utility specification had wooden seats) It eventually got some better seats in August 1947 but was scrapped in January 1949. It must have had a rotten body, but would have been a useful source of spares for its former stablemates.

65/6. CCX 701/702 were the two Park Royals new in May 1944. New or used seats were fitted in March 1947 and these buses were rebuilt in October and November in 1948. In May 1953 the were fully re-bodied to highbridge style by Roe and ran until 1962/63 when they were finally scrapped.

67. CCX 715 was new in March 1945 and was re-seated with old West Riding seats shortly afterwards, running until transferred to Yorkshire Woollen in January 1949. It was later rebodied by them as part of their upgrading programme.

68. CCX 716 was new in March 1945 and was rebuilt in house in November 1947 and January 1949. It was rebodied by Roe in June 1953 and finally scrapped in March 1966.

69. CCX 797 was new in August 1945 and rebodied by Roe in August 1953. It was scrapped in March 1966.

70. CCX 801 was new in September 1945 and was rebodied by Roe in October 1953. It ran in service until acquired by yours truly on 9th July 1968. It is now the subject of a very thorough restoration.

71/2. CCX 931/932 were new in 1946. These ran with no changes until sold in early 1958, presumably on the expiry of the C.O.F. The bodies on these two must have been quite decent as they were sold for further service, uniquely for County, with 71 going to Everett at South Kirby for a couple of years, and 72 was used as a works bus for several operators.



Note the different destination layouts



This is not the end of the tale, as County got four Leyland PS2's in 1949 numbered 83-86, being EVH 211-214. They did not seem to think much of them as two were rebodied as coaches by Windover, not seeing much use at County, as they had no licences for E & T or express services, The other two went to Roe for new highbridge bodies and works photographs are shown below of one in County livery, but with no registration plates fitted.



Huddersfield CBC, the licencing authority would not allow them to have new registrations, so Yorkshire Traction nabbed them, and they were registered KHE 649/650, foisting County off with two un-rebodied Arabs, HE 9917/18. Tracky got many years of service from their nearly new buses whilst County only got two out of their consolation prize Arab's!



Left, KHE 650, an almost County rebodied bus, but now in Tracky livery – note the additional numeric destination aperture that Tracky added. Bizarrely, the bus is sat outside South Yorkshire Motors, Pontefract, garage – perhaps her blue and cream original paint was subliminally drawing her to another blue and cream garage, despite her red and cream appearance!!

As for the longevity of the rebodies, the reason is quite simple. In 1946 as the last Mk II's were built, the bus industry was clamouring for new buses. Guy immediately offered the Mk III which was the final development of the Mk II but was tweaked back into the legal 26ft length after the termination of the 26ft 4inch version, as what would become the Mk IV, was not ready.

Co-incidentally, many Mk II's were coming to their C.O.F and operators were reluctant to throw them away such a rugged, reliable chassis with good engines, simply because the bodies were past it. Guy sensibly developed a scheme for updating the chassis for rebodding with parts destined for the Mk IV and this included items such as a new radiator, higher bonnet line and not so curly wings, producing a very neat front end. A constant mesh gearbox with conventional gate was also added, the Mk II having had the wrong way around gate which many drivers had struggled with in mixed fleets with Leyland's and Bristol's



It doesn't seem possible, but it is that time of year again! Pie and peas beckon....



**HOT CHRISTMAS SUPPER – 715pm Wednesday 14th December, Soothill WMC.
– come along and enjoy some food at our usual monthly meeting – all members welcome!**

We will have our usual raffle and keep the business stuff very brief so that we can have a social focus to this meeting.

The Green Buses – Stuart's story continues

During 1968 the last coaches to be purchased by the West Riding arrived. Seven Bedford VAM70 with Plaxton C45F bodywork, a typical modern coach of its time. Although I am not a Bedford fan, these coaches looked really smart, especially the interior, with antimacassars on the headrests. The fleet numbers were 25-31 (MHL 225-231F). However, they were not to remain long and were all gone to other operators by 1972.

Following the Bedford coaches came Leyland Leopards 32-34 (NHL 532-534F) with Plaxton Derwent DP49F bodywork. These semi coach/bus variants were purchased with the idea to use them to connect cities via towns, providing a comfortable reliable express service using the motorway where possible. The first route operated by these vehicles was the new service 210 Wakefield - Leeds. Despite the improved seating, the service was under used leading to its eventual withdrawal. A limited stop joint service between Yorkshire Woollen, & Yorkshire Traction commenced, X32 connecting Leeds and Sheffield via the M1 calling at Barnsley. The X33 connected Bradford with Sheffield via Dewsbury, Wakefield and Barnsley.

The Leopards had the distinction of being the first West Riding single deck vehicles to have pneumocyclic semi-automatic transmission. A small gear lever was to be found on a pedestal mounted column, to the left of the driver. The only piece of equipment not to rely on air was the handbrake. With a 5-speed gearbox they performed to satisfaction, showing the way forward. The Leopards lasted over 3 years on these long interurban duties before they were demoted to mundane routes. They carried more cream livery than the standard West Riding service buses and were instantly recognisable as being something special. Eventually some appeared at other depots and Leopard 34 found itself working from Selby depot. I hope the public appreciated the luxury. During 1968 the law was changed allowing one man operation on double decker buses. In order to comply with omo working the new Fleetlines and older Atlanteans returned to Roe for modifications, having periscopes fitted above the driver's head to give a clear view of what was happening on the upper deck. It would still be another 15 years or more before full omo workings were achieved.

On the 1st January 1969 the West Riding became part of the National Bus Company. From the outset 1969 was set to be a turnaround year. It began with the arrival of a batch of 25 Daimler Fleetlines 211-235 (PHL 211-235G) which must go down historically as the last double deckers to be ordered by the West Riding and the last West Riding buses to be bodied by Roe. Therefore, a long and fruitful association with this bus manufacturer from Crossgates in Leeds had been ended. The latest batch of Fleetlines had pneumocyclic transmission (like the Leopards) but only a four speed gearbox. Operating on many routes, some which were crew operated, and others which were one man operated, a total of fifty-five Fleetlines were now in revenue earning service. These latest vehicles brought about a cascading of older vehicles which returned to Belle Isle and Savile Street depots. On arrival many were immediately withdrawn but others saw months of service depending upon the condition in which they were received.

The Fleetlines were to last many years in service and in recognition of their value to the company 670, PHL 235G, the very last example delivered of the Roe and Fleetline combination, was chosen to wear a commemorative West Riding livery in April 1984 to celebrate 80 years of West Riding Automobile Company. It was treated to a full overhaul in the Belle Isle Depot workshops and placed back in service as the last of its class. Eventually withdrawn in December the same year it was placed on loan to the West Yorkshire Transport Museum in September 1985. It was eventually exported to the USA in November 1992 and its current condition is unknown. What a shame for such a noteworthy bus.

All depots saw Fleetline activity. Once they were modified for one man operation, routes could be shared with single decker workings which enabled new routes to commence. The Fleetlines were slowly converted without difficulty, as rear-engined buses were ideal for this mode of operation. There was, however, no possibility of converting Guy Arab IV because of their rear platform layout, although they lasted in service until the mid 1970's with the final five being withdrawn in 1976. Guy's 835, 837, 845, 855 & 858 became Driver Trainers A16, A17, A15, A14 & A13 during 1974 and 1975. It is also worth noting that no attempt was made to add periscopes to modify the Guy Wulfrunians in service and thus they never operated as omo vehicles, despite them having the ideal layout for such work. With the Fleetline reliability a success, service frequency began to decline. Vehicles could now be spread over a large number of extended routes. Relieved of their duties all traces of the Leyland Titan were virtually gone. The Leyland Tiger PS2/12 which had graced colliery yards in their earlier years, along with AEC Reliances, the first of the amidships underfloor engine buses, were on their way out. Reliances 710, 711 and 712 were transferred to join others which had a lifetime working from there. The remainder were at Castleford depot. Thinking of Reliances and Savile Street Depot, reminds me of another tale that I was told about a conductor who disliked cashing up. On regular journeys down to Altofts (which were operated by a Reliance) he would

throw all his half pennies into a nearby field (naughty man). No doubt a few tickets would not be issued, leading to lost revenue.

Two small batches of buses with a difference were 5 Leyland Panthers and 5 Bristol RE. The Panthers were the last to be received and the only ones with bodywork by Plaxtons of Scarborough. The fleet numbers followed on in sequence from the Fleetlines 236-240 (PHL 236-240G). They had standard Panther PSUR1A/1R chassis but with Pneumocyclic gearboxes. All the fleet of Panthers had Leyland 0600 engines, and had seating for 52 passengers, just one seat short of a PD2. The 5 Bristol RELL6G bodied by Plaxton were also in the process of delivery. When they arrived, the sign of the National Bus Company Authority, which was created on 1st January, became endorsed as Bristol was their favoured product. The RE were similar in appearance to the Panther, the identity was only revealed by a Bristol RE badge on the front grille, compared to the black head of a Panther. In later life the Bristol RE appeared to be subjected to a minor bodywork change at the front end with a smaller depth grille aperture and headlamps changed to vertical rather than horizontal positioning. This may have been due to a requirement to gain improved access for certain maintenance issues?

It was most unusual to have Bristol buses of any shape or size to display anything other than Eastern Coach Works bodywork. Here was something different to break the mould. For all my reservations of Bristols, these RE found my favour, just because of the Plaxton bodywork. Numbered 241-245 (PHL 241-245G) they had the advantage of five speed gearbox, but not to be outdone, the Panther could also race away when conditions allowed. Renumbered as 285, PHL 244G was to suffer an early fate when in January 1975 it was burnt out, the body being scrapped by the company and the chassis cut up in July 1975. The West Riding, now under the influence of the National Bus Company, had to call time on the Wulfrunian. It became evident that large quantities of replacement buses were needed and new buses would not be an easy option. A plan was hatched to transfer large numbers of Bristol Lodekka to the West Riding enabling withdrawal of Wulfrunians to be made more quickly. During the spring of 1969 the first second hand Lodekkas from Mansfield and District arrived. These were Bristol LD6G dating from 1955 with Eastern Coachworks bodies. The first thing to be said about the Lodekka is that it started a new 400 series of fleet numbers last used by Leyland TS7C built in 1935/36. Fleet numbers 400-409 (XNU 423-432), 410-412 (VRB 522-524), 413-417 (RAL 974-978) and 418-421 (SNN 73-76) were LD6G with Eastern Coachworks bodies with platform doors H33/28RD. Many more Bristol LD6G and FLF6G would transfer to the West Riding during 1969/70 however this is as far as I go (please refer to Fleet List for all Lodekka acquisitions.

The Lodekkas were the first Bristols to grace the West Riding fleet since the 2/4 Ton and Bristol BGW of the early nineteen twenties and thirties. At least the first two batches of Lodekkas were divided between Belle Isle and Savile Street depots. When appearing on the Dewsbury route in place of a Wulfrunian opportunities arose to sample unknown vehicles on occasions, whilst travelling to and from work. I must confess that I am not a Bristol enthusiast, but to those of you who are I mean no offence. Each and every one to his or her own. The appearance of these interlopers did not go down well with drivers or the travelling public. One elderly gentleman broadcast his feelings to the conductor by stating "you're a bit young to be working on the Ark - where have these things come from?" The young man smiled, but I do not think he understood what the gentleman was referring to. However, it must be said that although the Lodekkas were not popular, they were reliable and filled a major role in providing reliable rolling stock, going down in the annals of West Riding history. With the coming of the Lodekka, by April the exodus of Wulfrunians had commenced. The saddest blow of all was the withdrawal in early May of Wulfrunian 863 (OHL 863) condemned to the scrapyards without thought or concern. What a shame! Whatever your thoughts of the Wulfrunian this was the prototype which should have become a preserved vehicle. More Wulfrunians followed the same road as 863 and when the month came to a close 872/874/879/939/940/941-946/948-952/954 and 971 had also gone. Interesting acquisitions came with the purchase of Daimler Fleetlines 246-249 (RWY 515-518F) with Northern Counties H44/33F bodywork from Mexborough & Swinton Traction Company. These were acquired in late 1969 (246-247) and early 1970 (248-249). Mexborough & Swinton was a small bus company with around 45 vehicles, mainly Leylands, the livery was green and cream, reversed for coaches, and the depot and headquarters were based at Rawmarsh near Rotherham. Unfortunately, Mexborough & Swinton had ceased operations and services were absorbed consumed by Yorkshire Traction, who were also part of the National Bus Company. I would imagine at only two years old these Fleetlines were a very good buy. Every depot had use of at least one of these vehicles during their working lives. I had several journeys on them both to Dewsbury and Ossett, at least one vehicle being in Mexborough & Swinton livery.

By the end of 1969 Leyland Titans dating back to 1950 had gone, along with 27 green and 25 ex red Wulfrunians. Meanwhile second-hand Bristol Lodekkas were still arriving, continuing to do so right up until September 1970. These latest Lodekkas were front entrance supplied by Bristol Omnibus Company, where the Bristol Bus Manufacturing Company, at nearby Brislington was to be found. The arrival of these particular buses known as FLF6G led to controversy from the residents of the City of Bristol. The residents were up in arms as somehow the local newspaper had found out about the transfer of the City of Bristol's newest buses. A photographer had taken a picture of the buses which were stored in a compound awaiting despatch to Wakefield. Meanwhile older Bristol K5G buses had been returned to service. The story made national headlines in newspapers and television. The FLF's did not return to Bristol – they were in Wakefield to stay and did so for almost another ten years. Within months the departing Bristol FLF were replaced by Bristol RE in the City of Bristol initiating omo operation on previous FLF routes. Thus the National Bus Company had a double win.

The first surprise of 1970 was the entry into service of five Dennis Loline III that had come from Halifax Joint Omnibus Committee. The Dennis Loline was in fact a Bristol Lodekka chassis, manufactured under licence from Bristol. These vehicles had a front entrance body by Northern Counties H41/33F and were powered by a Gardner 6LX engine and a five speed gearbox, which was semi-automatic, also an option for the Lodekka. The Loline was better suited to some of the West Riding long runs, than the hilly terrain of Halifax. They were numbered 464-468 and carried registration numbers FCP 300-304E. Occasionally a Loline could be seen on the 69/70 Dewsbury - Pontefract route or the 189 Castleford - Leeds. Sometimes they appeared on a duty on the 20 Ossett or the 57/58 Bradford route, which means the Lolines were divided between the two Wakefield depots. I presume that each of the five depots had at some point a Loline on their premises due to the fact that I have seen photographs of Lolines leaving Leeds bus station en route to Castleford and one Loline parked in the yard of Selby depot, which suggests they were moved around in later years. Perhaps the most striking feature of the five Loline was the standard of interior fittings with lovely high back seats that somehow gave them an air of luxury and bright orange roof sky lights which seemed to belong to a coach rather than a double decker bus.

Eventually the last of the second hand Lodekka appeared with rear platform and doors from Midland General Omnibus Company & Mansfield & District through until the end of September. These were numbered 458-463 & 469-473 registration numbers 968 ARA/970 ARA/ 972 ARA/ 976 ARA/9 DRB/ 974 ARA/ 973 ARA/969ARA/ 977 ARA/971 ARA/ 8 DRB/ 10-12 DRB from Midland General. From Mansfield & District came 474-7 WAL 441/442/437/438/439. A grand total of 82 Lodekka vehicles were now in stock. The West Riding was now in a similar situation to 1950. Between 1946-50 the West Riding received 32 Guy Arab II, 75 Leyland Titan plus 62 AEC Regent III (for the red fleet) and 10 Regal, all new stock to make up the for the war years. As you are aware the purchase of J Bullock & Sons brought over 100 second hand vehicles into the fleet. Twenty years later, the West Riding was in the same position. Since 1966 new vehicles added to the fleet consisted of 25 Leyland Atlantean, 10 Daimler Roadliner, 6 AEC Swift, 50 Leyland Panthers and 55 Daimler Fleetline. However with the intake of second hand Lodekka to replace the Wulfrunian the West Riding was back to square one. The heavy investment in the Wulfrunian had backfired and left the company exposed. During 1970 the first new buses in Tilling Green joined the fleet. These were Bristol RELL6G 250-261 (THL250-261H). I dubbed these the National Bus Company buses. These vehicles had Eastern Coach Works B53F bodies since they were the main supplier to the National Bus Company. The choice of the bodywork was no surprise. Bristol and Eastern Coachworks had been joined at the hip as part of the Transport Holdings Company for many years. With nationalisation of large bus companies, they were virtually compelled to purchase Bristol RE with Eastern Coach Works as the body builder. It was indeed wheels within wheels (pardon the pun).

According to my friend, Bristol RE 251-253 were at Savile Street depot. He states they were a "smashing bus to drive" unlike the Lodekka which every driver despised. The RE were regular performers on the routes to Ossett and Healey along with the Panthers. However, here lies a problem, with subject of joint workings of the RE and Panthers. In all of his five years service with the West Riding my friend never drove a Panther. There were no Panthers at Savile Street depot. Now as previously mentioned Panthers were at the forefront on one man operation of the Healey route and former 100 route. With the arrival of the Bristol RE the question now arises where were the Panthers based? The logical answer is of course Belle Isle depot. However, if the same diagram could be operated by an RE or a Panther it would make sense to say that both types of bus would be based at the same depot. Information on this dilemma is not forthcoming. One suggestion is that if a bus failed in service then a relief was laid on from the nearest available location. But this would not explain the regularity of such instances, unless of course there were regular failures!

Meanwhile the remainder of the batch of Bristol RE 254-261 were allocated to Castleford depot, although I gather some may have escaped to Featherstone depot substituting for displaced double deckers. It must also be mentioned that one Bristol RE 259 THL 259H had the distinction of wearing the special West Riding 75th Anniversary livery, making a public debut for the open day at Belle Isle depot in September 1979. There is one survivor of the batch and this is number 261 THL 261H and it is out and about on the rally scene. Although I have already confessed that I am not a fan of Bristol vehicles, I would not be a true bus enthusiast if I did not sample (not just criticise) Bristol products. Besides that, the law of averages would ensure that an RE was bound to appear. My first journey was on Bristol RE 252 (THL 252H). First impressions are most important and I was not disappointed. Inside the bus was bright and airy, the plain green seats, not the usual moquette pattern, were impressive. At the rear a flat door was fitted at the centre as an emergency door, this seemingly only achievable on the RE chassis. The five speed gearbox suited the RE, which like the Fleetline gave an orchestral sound in fifth gear. The truth is, I had a most enjoyable ride although it must be said I warmed up towards the West Riding RE, but I did not boil over!

The thought of a five-speed gearbox reminds me of a journey to Leeds. Starting out from Wakefield on the 68 Pontefract service this was ideal for a broken journey at Castleford for photographs, and a sandwich. From Castleford to Leeds I caught the 189 which had arrived from Wakefield, a Lodekka no doubt from Savile Street depot, I believe the fleet number was 463 but I am not sure. On an open stretch of road towards Methley the driver suddenly changed into fifth gear. I was quite surprised, not knowing that these buses built in 1956 had five gears. Believe me, it certainly could go! During the latter months of 1970, Bristol RE 262-272 (UHL 932-942J) arrived at Belle Isle depot, where they remained (unless on temporary loan to other depots) throughout their working lives. The one feature on all the RE with Eastern Coach Works bodies, which pleased me was the destination box that displayed numbers first, then the destination. The small fleet of RE, would sometimes appear on the ordinary double decker routes complete with a conductor possibly testing the waters for one man operation. Certain routes were reorganised removing all traces of the once familiar Leyland Titan, apart from those in the driver training school, these remaining in their present role for a few more years.

Thinking of these long lasting buses reminds me of Titan 700 (CHL 798) which was the only bus I recall of the 1948-50 batches that was treated to a re-paint, albeit in Tilling green livery. Several of the 1953 batch of Titans also appeared in Tilling green. Titan 745 (FHL 111) not only received the new livery but during 1970 became the last Titan to enter the Training School fleet. The only Training School bus in Tilling green it retained its fleet number until being renumbered A16 later in 1970..

As an independent bus company the West Riding was always noted for the variety within its fleet of buses. Becoming a nationalised bus company, it seemed that with the arrival of the RE, vehicle policy was changing. However, the West Riding was not about to disappoint those of us who like the thought of a mixed fleet.

In 1971 one of a batch of twelve Alexander H44/33F bodied Fleetlines with fleet numbers 273-284 (WHL 273-284J) entered service. The one thing they had in common with the RE, and all future suppliers of double deckers for the next fifteen years, was the Gardner engine. I was not impressed with the choice of bodywork, although Walter Alexander of Falkirk had a good reputation. What did appeal to me was the design of the destination box, because it was not to the Scottish style, which could be found on Yorkshire Woollen Fleetlines, also purchased around the same time. I wish the route numbers and destination letters could have been printed larger, but that is just me being a little bit picky. A majority of the Alexander Fleetlines entered service from Featherstone depot, which was by now a Fleetline stronghold, although a large number of elderly Guy Arab IV still plied for trade alongside the new deliveries. Supplemented by a few single deckers, the Fleetlines operated on many routes around Pontefract and to various destinations, including routes 69/70, 147, 148, 170, 190 & 191. Some were joint routes operated with Castleford depot. The odd one out was the 69/70 route that was a joint operation with Savile Street depot, only requiring two Featherstone buses. Fleetlines 273-284 came fully equipped for one man operation. However, like many long routes Pontefract - Dewsbury was crew operated, not becoming one man operated until much later in the seventies by which time my employment in Dewsbury had ceased.

Converted to one man operation some under used routes were joined with busier routes. Most routes including some local ones passing through Wakefield used the Bus Station, however there

were some exceptions such as red bus route number 10 Leeds had a special point outside the bus station on Union Street. On the return journey to Sandal and Kettlethorpe the standing point was on Northgate outside Taylors Furniture shop. Another red bus route not to use the bus station was 30, 32/33 Agbrigg/Broadway and local green bus routes Eastmoor/Flanshaw and Eastmoor/Wakefield/Portobello/Wakefield to name but a few used Upper Kirkgate. As the one man working extended to double deckers (only allowed since 1968) the future requirement for rear platform buses was diminishing, the only survivors of true West Riding origin being Guy Arab IV (Squarebacks) With such a large quantity of Fleetlines in service, it would be natural to think that one would have made it into preservation. I have already mentioned PHL 235G and its exodus to the USA, however perhaps all is not yet lost. One of the Alexander bodied specimens has recently been tracked down in Holland and negotiations are underway to repatriate it. Whilst nothing is agreed, the will is there to bring it home so let us hope that it can return to the streets of West Yorkshire, resplendent in Tilling green livery. Throughout the remainder of 1971, the policy of receiving Bristol RE continued. First to make their appearance were 285-289 (WHL 730-734J) which were followed at a later date by 290-293 (AHL 230-233K). Although the Eastern Coach Works body remained broadly unchanged from previous examples, a small glass window was placed in the lower half of the rear centre emergency exit. I could find no significance for the extra window except to allow more light through to the floor at the rear or was it an aid to reversing perhaps?

At least a number of RE, if not all of the two batches, were at Savile Street depot where they upgraded existing omo routes and possibly were used to create new routes. One man operated routes were prone to frequent changes, expanded into new areas, trying to achieve perfection. Some new sections may have been part of a previous route which was once operated from another depot, bringing together joint workings and with it buses from other depots such as Castleford.

The Bristol RE had come to the West Riding a little late in its production life. In another four- or five-years production would cease and replacing it would be a new bus, which was soon to enter the market, known as the Leyland National. The only Bristols left in production would be the VR lasting until 1982 and the LH with the final one being registered in 1983. **The final instalment of Stuart's book, will be in the Winter Newsletter**

Archive update

It's amazing what comes to light when folk are thumbing through their collections!



Here is a copy of the Daily Mirror, Tuesday 20th September 1966.

Conductor, John Halkyard, who worked for West Riding, was keen to point out that he had followed policy by charging 12-year-old, Judith Sharp, seven pence to carry her mouse when she boarded the bus. Company policy was to charge for items such budgies, pigeons, and hamsters, which John stated were regular travellers on his buses! He did however agree that he should have only charged 6d but stated "I am confident that I did the right thing!"

Judith, from East Ardsley stated, "I don't want any trouble for young Conductor," but her Grandad had reported the incident to an Inspector for investigation.

The happy end to the story was that Judith received a refund, and the mouse got to travel again!! It is quite amazing that this sort of story made the national press. Thanks to Colin Wood for this gem.

Open Day reviewed

Thanks to everyone for your support on 30th October. I think we can say that the star of the day was WHL970 our West Riding Guy Wulfrunian she performed impeccably in the hands of Colin Poole and Andy Hartley the loads were restricted but people were happy to wait their turn for a trip to delights of Dewsbury. Our other vehicles including Steve Hurley's ex West Riding Leyland Olympian also performed well and on occasions with nearly full loads. Julie brought her Leyland Tiger coach B JAB which performed several mystery tours again with full loads and as usual looking great I will get a ride one day! Another fine looking coach was the Wallace Arnold Plaxton Premier Volvo B10m; Torquay or the Rhine Valley could have the destination.

I had the joys of the PD2 with Mike Bennett and then our Leyland Panther with Andy Beever not quite sure which was the A team! Our guest vehicles were our other good friends from Teesside with their ex-Cleveland Transit Northern Counties Volvo Olympian. Another visitor was an East Yorkshire Bristol VRT again looking great in the late autumn sunshine. The years rolled back again when the ex-West Yorkshire Road Car ECW Bristol RE arrived but even further when the ex-Doncaster AEC Regal appeared. The Lincoln bus museum also came with their recently restored Lincolnshire Road Car ECW Bristol VRT. She looked great.

But we hadn't finished. Ex-Yorkshire Traction 245 Leyland National two came, she has recently undergone a considerable amount of work but it's great to see her back. As normal, the good old British weather had to stick its nose in somewhere but the rain showers didn't affect us too much and may have helped our stall holders have a good day. Also, I really must give mention to Di and the great team in our café. Thank you and well done.

Now I've left mentioning one visitor till the end of my review. We all saw a VanHool Volvo B10M of Robinson's arriving. My first thought was they were from the Lancashire area but I was totally wrong, they had travelled up from Bedfordshire because they wanted to see something different! I think we can say they did and they will be coming to see us again next year!!

Finally, yes I've nearly done, I spoke to a number of people on our open day and asked them where they had come from. The first two I spoke to were from Southend and Colchester and later two couples from Dorset, this just shows how far people will travel to our great museum collection.

Thanks to everyone for your support we couldn't do it without you see you all next May.

Building Housekeeping

During the summer months we took the opportunity to undertake some housekeeping jobs on the Museum. First up was the acquisition of two new scaffold towers that will allow better access around the buses when washing and maintaining them.

Next on the agenda was to inspect the guttering as we have had several downpours inside the building in recent months, when it appeared the deep gutters were overtopping. A quick inspection revealed that a serious clean out was needed, something well beyond our capabilities, so a professional company was engaged to complete the work. Two lads worked for four hours each and retrieved approximately 20 bin bags of grime from the gutters along with about 30 footballs of various sizes!! They even found a bowling ball up there which probably indicates that someone in Ravensthorpe has a cannon of sorts!! They did comment that it was the worst they had seen in a long time, and we kept quiet that we are sure that the gutters have never been cleaned since the building was constructed in 1989!!

As we had to hire a skip to remove the gutter debris, a tidy up of rubbish inside the building was completed by the Monday team and only stopped when the skip was full – all in all a very satisfying exercise – but there is still more to do on cleaning rubbish out of the museum.

Related to this point is the issue of "donations". Whilst many members think that bringing various items to "help" the museum is a good idea; the reality is that often the items brought have little or no value. So, before you load any items into your car, please check with a Trustee to see if what you

are intending to bring is of any use. Examples of what we CANNOT accept are; transport related magazines, kettles, microwaves and unsafe ladders.

Finally..... It is everyone's responsibility to keep the building tidy and we still have a long way to go to get the Mezzanine in a tidy state.

Out and about

Keighley was on the agenda on 7th August when Steve's Oly attended "the last ever event at Riverside". We did ask to take the stall, but we were told it was full, so our request was declined. A week later saw, Ethel B, Ethel C, the Panther, and the Oly at the Leeds running day along with the sales stall and we also provided a refreshment tent. PJX 35 supported the Halifax bus running day in early September and we hosted Normanton Rotary Club at the Museum on 21st September. We took three buses to Arriva at Heckmondwike for their open day on 25th September along with our sales stall. We also supported the AVTG Skipton event as usual, and Julie has been globetrotting all over the place with her coaches!!

WROPS would like to thank the following members who regularly turn out to support the setting up, trading and packing up of the sales stall as without their help we could just not do it. So, take a bow: Tony Mowvley, Andy Hartley, Billy Scott, Cameron McLaughlin, Colin Poole, Mark Byard, Andrew Beever, David Parkin, Martin Cotton & Martyn Eastwood.

Construction remembered

We regularly receive donations from members of the public which help to support the finances of the museum. When items are donated, we can sometimes sell them on or in many cases, place them in our archive. Sometimes documents and photographs turn up, that end up in the archive as they are part of the history of the museum, or indeed, West Riding, Yorkshire Woollen or other local bus operators. Some recent donations threw these photographs up which we thought you would like to see. Take a look at the Ravensthorpe shed circa 1988/89, when the old building had been demolished and the new one was being constructed....



As can be seen quite clearly, a lot of work was involved in building the current structure and by all accounts, our then membership got well and truly stuck in. The facility that we now own outright and use daily owes a huge debt of gratitude to those early pioneers, some of whom are still with us as members. So, if you are reading this and thinking that you personally remember donning the wellies, handling the tools, laying the concrete, or raising the funds to pay for this building, we say THANK YOU very much.

We have long since outgrown the current building and it would be great to find a bigger home where all the collection could be garaged together, but it all takes time and money (and of course finding the right spot) Our hopes of extending the building were foiled by poor ground to the front of our current building that would not support an additional structure, so any increase in space owned by the museum would require an additional building to supplement the existing one, or a completely new bigger site.



Ps. Dear Santa, please can you drop off a sack of cash at the museum that you have left over from Christmas, to assist our plans!!

Before and after —

If you ever needed proof of the hard work that goes into restoring buses at the Museum, take a look at these two shots;



First up is 970 on arrival at Ravensthorpe, looking rather sad, but complete, well, almost complete!! To the right we see her in all her glory, fully restored and out on a road test. There were many that said, "she will never run again" and there were those few determined restorers who never gave up hope and had confidence that one day the "bag of wind" would rise and ride.

With her having given her first few public rides, we should reflect and give thanks to all those individuals who completed the transition of our red Wulfrunian, giving us another project to be proud of. So, on to the next project: major work is underway on Dalesman JHL 983 and we hope to bring you a full report in a future edition of everything that has been done.

Meanwhile, Bristol VR OWW 905P is also making progress, and as a tribute to our late Queen Elizabeth II, we thought it would be appropriate to remind ourselves of how the bus looked in 1977 for the Queen's Silver jubilee celebrations.



Left, a silver OWW 905P Bristol VR!

STOP PRESS – STOP PRESS – STOP PRESS

WE HAVE A VEHICLE SPACE AVAILABLE AT THE MUSEUM BUILDING. EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST, FOLLOWING THE GUIDELINES DETAILED IN OUR PUBLISHED POLICY (A COPY IS ON THE NOTICE BOARD AT THE MUSEUM AND THE POLICY SECTION OF OUR WEBSITE) ARE TO BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN MONDAY 14TH NOVEMBER. The space we will be available from 1st December 2022 at a charge of £60 per month

The end bit —

It is that time of year again when we reach out to all our members and ask them to support the Museum once again by renewing memberships and perhaps topping up the Museum bank account with an additional donation!

Enclosed with this Newsletter is the 2023 renewal form, which we ask you complete as soon as possible and return with your subscription payment.

Since the pandemic ended, we have seen very few new members joining up, which does seem a little strange. So, if you know a friend who would like to get involved then please encourage them to have a look on the Museum website where a joining form can be found and printed off.

As a reminder, we would appreciate an early return of your membership subs as this avoids having to chase late returns, which costs time and money.