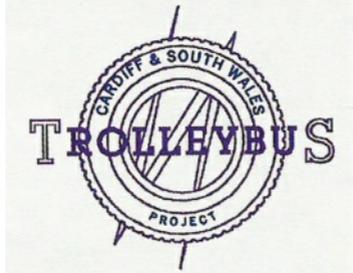


CONTACTOR



// THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CARDIFF & SOUTH WALES TROLLEYBUS PROJECT //

Preserving the past for the future

December/January 2017

Issue 206



This months front cover features one of the vital trolleybus ancilliary support vehicles. Tower wagon 3 started life in 1945 as motorbus 83, and served until 1960. On withdrawal it was converted in 1961, and remained until near the end of trolleybus operation in 1969, then like most of the vehicles it supported was sold to Bill Ways Cardiff East Dock scrapyard, another interesting part of Cardiff Trolleybus that failed to survive.

We are grateful to member Geoff Sandford for the photograph and Glyn Bowen for the above information.

December/January 2017

Issue 206

Editorial - Well with Christmas now over (though technically this issue covers the period), lets wish everyone all the best for the New Year, and what a year this could be.

Ever since the project first saw the light of day it has set itself various aims and with restoration well under way, the project committees' view is the final aim is now the object of our attention, the establishment of a local circuit on which to run trolleybuses. The Editorial is not the place to go into great detail that will follow, all that can be said here is that to achieve progress will take more than the regular group but the full memberships input. The reader is urged from this issue and future issues after reading presentations on the topic, to become involved now is the time to put forward your views you may have experience or just an idea that could just be a spark that assists us achieve this final aim

Contactor Sponsorship - This issue of Contactor is sponsored by project member Alan Hardwick of Rhoose in the Vale of Glamorgan. If like Alan you would like to sponsor an issue which helps offset printing costs its £15, and the sponsor can choose the front cover it may be a favoured vehicle or type of transport, just supply a script to aid publication

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NEWSLETTER TOPICS CONTENT

- Membership, membership renewal & meeting night report
- **PROJECT AIMS.** "Overhead Statement" a proposal
- Vehicle restoration news
- Barn update
- Fundraising - shows & sales items
- Other business
- Meeting dates, venue details & useful addresses.

Membership, membership renewal and meeting night reports - Once again we forward best wishes to those members with health issues, especially Allan and Nan Morse, Tony Simmonds all Mid Glamorgan, Tom Powell, Irene Walker and Mike Street all Cardiff and in the Lydney area both Robert Cullen and Kevin Reeks have had inpatient stays, while down in Yealmpton Bryn Jones is making a steady recovery, to anyone not mentioned apologies trusting that as we enter 2017 their health improves.

Well on the membership renewal front we still have a March and July renewals outstanding, those in question have been contacted. As we enter February the new membership rates apply and will appear on your renewal forms at the appropriate month. The new rates are Full members increased by £1 to £15, Family membership increased by £2 to £22 and Junior membership increased by £1 to £4. Members are requested again to **forward the form** with their remittance as this greatly helps in updating the membership file and saves time.

On the meetings for the final two months of 2016 those present received the usual progress report supplemented with a visual presentation. After refreshments a transport dvd completes the evening, and it is on this point the wider membership could help. Gradually our stock of dvd and those brought along by attendees is running low so is it possible that members could visit any of the numerous charity shops and purchase any transport dvd's posting them to Keith all costs will be refunded and once they have been used they can be resold on our bric-a-brac stall. Finally we have secured another six months of meetings at the exceptional facilities afforded by Newton Court, greater support by local members would be appreciated.

PROJECT AIMS "Overhead Statement" a proposal - As the reader progresses through this issue it is hoped the work on our vehicles is testimony to what we are all achieving and another constructive look at the establishment of an overhead circuit on which to operate them, in this their home environment. Some months back a project exercise was conducted prompted by an offer out of the blue from a venture opposite our base, and so the memberships views were sought on two options, it is fair to say that the response was disappointing, but considering the spread of the membership support, plus the surprise by others that the thought of a venture of this magnitude was maybe pie in the sky.

It is important that we revisit this topic and take a couple of newsletter issues to explain and clarify where we are at this time so that members may appreciate in greater detail and understand the current position. First it is worth recapping on our original aims and ambitions as it is now 25years ago! The original order of aims was to

1. Locate local trolleybus enthusiasts to found a group and begin raising funds and gauge interest.
2. Establish where and how many Cardiff trolleybuses were extant and their availability.
3. Seek suitable accommodation for vehicles locally.
4. Re locate trolleybuses to this area, which proved a problem at first convincing owners of our intent.
5. Accept accommodation in the old Western Welsh bus depot in Barry.

With the collapse of the Wales Transport Experience at nearby Barry there followed a five year period of inactivity with the three vehicles inside the disused bus depot, but they were undercover it was rent free and there was the opportunity to raise funds which provided us with a sound financial base. As we reached the end of 2000 it was decided that to move forward and gain credibility we needed to find alternative accommodation which is very much where we are today, moving on with another project aim Vehicle restoration at our workshop in Peterstone Wentloog near Cardiff. During this time an aim we hadn't thought about was gradually turning half a stock barn into a well equipped workshop, but now paying rent it has meant the bulk of our income is during the Summer period attending numerous shows in the locality plus other more basic schemes to keep the funds coming in. So as not to overwhelm the reader it is probably best to end this article at the recent offer of land opposite on which to establish and reach our final aim a circuit on which to run our restored trolleybuses or alternatives, what is asked of the membership is to bear in mind what can be achieved? if the numerous railway restoration groups had reservations where would they be, others include Crich, non transport heritage sites, numerous car and commercial vehicle societies, Bus preservation groups, the Paddle steamer society, Transport museums, Aircraft restoration groups, Newport Transporter bridge, steam locomotive preservation groups (even diesel enthusiasts) the list is endless but finally the Rhondda Tunnel Society? yes you may well ask, but that's for the start of part two next time.

Vehicle Restoration News - During the last reporting period its been the supposed winter season and there have been many comments about how cold its been especially as we are in technically an open barn. Apart from one day the weather has been mild and once the portable heaters are on boilers suits donned and work commences the conditions aren't a concern as we carry on vehicle restoration mind you copious amounts of tea and coffee help.

Cardiff 243



showing the completed job, looking down from the top of the container

Of the two vehicles 243 has tasks that require a warmer environment in the cab area, so this periods vehicle restoration starts here, with the refitting of both the front windscreens. The drivers side is in two parts and after a thorough clean the glass received new rubber seals all round, then the hinge mechanisms were stripped cleaned and with the chrome plating in poor condition it was rubbed down and then given a spray of plasticoat chrome spray which certainly improved things. First the lower screen was fitted quickly followed by the upper hinged section, and to complete a bead of silicon sealant for weatherproofing. Between Christmas and New Year the nearside windscreen was similarly treated, first the body opening was prepared then complete frame was buffed up and coated with the plasticoat chrome spray, and as that dried the bodywork opening was given a bead of silicon sealant prior to fitting place its been decided that further varnishing/painting in the cab area will wait until the temperature rises.

Cardiff 262 - As December started it was decided that our efforts concentrate on the upper deck nearside window timberwork which would permit John to work on the window pans. Due to the new window rubber seals being of a new profile the timber inlay to support the glass and seal, needed a new design to suit and as such we returned to Mon Timber in Newport for suitable section Ash and on return John having taken the sizes Paul and Keith got to grips with the router and after a few trial pieces the items began to run off the production line. In total there are 7 parts for each of the six standard rectangular bays, and care had to be taken as one of these was slightly shorter.

The first timber is the one that sits on top of the angle iron and these are in such good condition we decided after a slight modification to retain. Next were the two main uprights "L" shaped where the thicker part fits neatly into the pillar recesses and as they sit back to back with the next pillar are screwed through to secure. John meanwhile was producing the bottom timber that has radiused at each end and from where these radiused end there are two uprights which are a smaller "L" section and fit flush with the outer edge of the pillar, resulting in a frame to which the glass will sit. The final part of the jigsaw will see the upper timber added which is a quadrant. Luckily we have enough hardwood and the ability to use the router to



The two main window pillar uprights, clearly showing the "L" shape to fit the body pillars

make the radius without expending funds, but this is for the next issue.

In the final bay on the nearside we have a large radiused end which had us scratching our head as to how to undertake its restoration. At its furthest end was a large right angled wooden insert that was beyond saving and when removed brought a question from one of the projects followers on Facebook "What is it"?



The Wooden corner insert

As we reached the end of the January the numerous timber sections are being made and fitted, more of the same but the good news is have enough offcuts to complete these items and hopefully next time we will show one of the bays complete with timber. John is also making the two piece aluminium window pans in between fitting the timber and to date has nearly half of these complete.

Over the last few months it was felt that a morale booster was called for and with the rear platform window complete we should investigate the making of the unique to Cardiff TROLLEYBUS warning sign. It was opportune that Peter Smiths book had just been published, as it contained all the information on size, font and colour we needed but on studying numerous photographs of where it was sited, proved difficult and appeared to be non standard but mostly to the nearside of the vehicle so to maintain authenticity we found a rear photograph of 262 that decided us. In the Canton area of Cardiff not far from the Beda Road loop, was a shop "Design and Signs" who were very helpful and the only problem was the background colour as they were limited by their supplier, but in the end Pale Lemon was chosen to good effect. As transfers are not available, Vinyls were used and this is a two part process and needed great care in application. First the area had to be marked on the outside with a chinagraph pencil, marking the outline of both the wording and backing vinyls. Then the window surface was dampened and the red TROLLEYBUS vinyl with its red rectangular edge applied and the water wiped away and the vinyl pressed into position. Then followed the yellow backing and this again required water to permit correct location, and this of the two was the more critical. Since application and publishing on our Facebook page the comments indicate the sign has been well received.



The first vinyl "TROLLEYBUS" is applied.



With the background vinyl applied.

After the light relief of the platform sign Bob and Keith focused their attention on the external roof as work on the window installation was in the capable hands of John and Paul. It had been some months since the rear dome and surrounding area had been paint stripped and hopefully the source of the water leak cured, so both the radiused walkway rails over the dome were pit back to their original shape but with the inner aluminium feather edge removed the size of the holes through the roof were now on the large size and

misshapen that it was dubious if large rivets would be adequate and we could have a series of leaks develop. The decision was taken to use coach bolts that have a large domed head, a square immediately under the head and have a shaft diameter to suit the old rivet holes. Between the walkway rails thin strips of rubber have been applied which we hope will help seal the roof from water ingress but importantly help prevent the action that saw one of the rails cut through the roof, which created the original leak.



Bob putting the final touches to the walkway rail installation.

All was going well as the coach bolts were fitted and tightened up and to add to security a second nut was applied to lock things tighter but on looking at the inner side of the dome it dawned on us that the two new aluminium feather edge strips hadn't been applied, so it all had to be taken off for the strips to be fitted, but as the photograph shows all's well in the end.

Next items for replacement were the boom retainer hooks, platform support brackets and the hand grip. Our attention then turned to the small wooden



That's better the new aluminium strips in place showing the coach bolt fasteners to good effect.



The old and new platform timbers.

platform and apart from the condition of the old platform, its tread plates contained unknown inlays we suspected could be asbestos so a rummage around the workbench produced an section of old varnished table top which, much to our surprise and delight, after cutting and running through the planer to reduce the thickness produced a stunning hardwood, and this is where we end this periods report.

Barn Update. - Every now and then despite having enough work on vehicle restoration, its decided that to help with our work either items need relocating or



Modified metal bender with a coat of point



Modified metal bender

out of service tooling is repaired/renovated or a new item is purchased but this period all three

occurred. For more years than I care to remember we have had a small home made metal bending machine just sitting on the bench. After the once over it was felt it could be of use but needed some alterations to increase its capability so end adjusters were made and fitted.

To keep items clean and protect them from the elements Paul became involved with making plywood box covers first for the recently acquired Planer and larger bench pillar drill followed by a cover for the old pillar drill, that we thought was only fit for scrap until some timely advice so read on.

After more times than we cared to remember trying to start the old pillar drill was tedious, as it would only burst into life by spinning the chuck. A decision was made to visit our local Machine Mart when they have special vat free events and an order was placed for a larger machine. In chatting with the staff Keith explained the reason for renewing and straight away he was told that a new relay would fix it and was advised on the best place to obtain the part for £15. During the next visit to the barn the item was easily removed and Keith called in to Glamorgan Electrical Services whose premises were at first difficult to locate and it was a culture shock walking in as the barn at its most dishevelled looks extremely tidy! anyway within minutes the faulty item had been checked and the replacement purchased, so the next visit saw the old pillar drill back to its old self. It has been decided to locate the new drill at the main work bench and relocate the other on a bench alongside 262 as due to the on going work it will save time and shoe leather.

With the drill awaiting installation it was decided to give the workbench a facelift, so it was completely cleared a new sheet of plywood fitted and painted and as the last photograph shows a much improved work centre.



The new box for the planer as featured on page 13 of the last issue, and is similar to the pillar drill covers.



John getting to grips with the new drill



The newly refurbished drill awaiting installation near 262.



View along the improved work bench complete with power tools.

FUNDRAISING - Our events calendar still has a few dates to be confirmed, Penarth and Whitchurch but we were informed that the good show at nearby Marshfield is taking a different format for 2017, so we have a spare date, so we'll be open to a substitute. Events and dates will appear in the next issue so as always help from local members to man the

Books and Diecasts - We thank members Alf Sparks and Howard Payne for their generous donations that have overwhelmed us but member Alan Fossey travels from Cwmbran by bus every two weeks and on our barn days he is compiling comprehensive lists presently of all diecast models and is soon to catalogue all our transport books, how we notify members of what we have in stock either diecasts or books still has to be decided, but raising funds in this manner will help considerably.



Alan installed in the caravan working through the donated diecasts.

Scrap - Once again we had accumulated enough steel scrap by mid December to call our scrapman to collect and a few days later Keith took along some old batteries so the funds benefitted to just over half months rent. Our on-going problem has been the unfortunate



A selection of the scrap awaiting collection outside the barn

downturn in the price Aluminium can recycling. Currently we have approx. one hundred bags with an average weight of 5kilos. In its heyday these cans would realise forty-five pence a kilo but this has fallen to around fifteen or twenty plus a reluctance to collect. Enquiries are being made but collections have been greatly reduced and presently storage isn't a problem. One idea was to call at the nearby council recycling depot and ask who purchased their cans hoping to obtain an address, but despite saying that we

used them for fundraising they thought I wanted to have them collected without payment so the offer was declined.

Premium Bonds - Now usually the announcement that bonds were being purchased was met with "I've had a premium bond since a lad and not won anything" wasn't what we wanted to hear so more good news is that the project venture produced two more wins during mid January so the total stands at £75, well on the way to what we could have expected keeping them in the building society.

Trolleybus photographs - Probably just after moving in at the barn member Alf Sparks donated between 2,500 and 3,000 good quality B&W 5" x 7" photographs. These were eventually extensively catalogued and it is fair to say that most if not all, cover every system though obviously a large number are of London. For those interested in trolleybus photographs we may just have what you are looking for so send your requests and we will see whats available. A price of £1.25 which includes postage with discounts for larger orders contact Keith for details

Shop idea - Presently we have a large amount of diecasts, toys, books, magazines and bric-a-brac in store around the barn, and though we try and do our best sell as much at shows we are limited by how much we can transport. An idea floated since the last meeting was to clear an area in the barn and be open on Saturdays when on site to raise funds and be able to show the workshop to the public. It is here that local members can be of assistance by mentioning this venture to friends, neighbours and work colleagues mention will be made when suitable ideas arise. We shall check with the farmer he is happy to have small groups visit by appointment, maybe in time word will spread and the stock will diminish as our funds increase so please start spreading the word, we are able to provide refreshments as an added incentive, members input appreciated.

Cardiff Trolleybus Book - The definitive book on Cardiff Trolleybuses by member Peter Smith as reviewed in the last issue is available through the project, however it has been pointed out that in our exuberance to promote it we failed to show the prices so apologies the price to members is £35 plus postage and £40 plus postage for non members. There have been many satisfied customers for a book that fills a long overdue gap in the trolleybus book market.

Other Business. -

Caitlin House Transport Project - The December newsletter sheet forwarded by Malcolm Kirk, featured a photograph of a fine array of AEC artics lined up outside the Hoover plant in Merthyr Tydfil, once that towns principle employer. From a personal viewpoint their twin tub washing machines were Welsh technology at its worst, as on arriving home from work Mrs W regaled me as to its faults during washdays, so my first task was to correct the malfunction, its a pity the product didn't behave as well as the delivery vehicles. The Caitlin House boys had a similar Christmas get together to us and amongst their mince pie fest, they reviewed an interesting survey conducted by a national organisation the F.H.B.V.C. that of the pre 1985 vehicles on record amount to 1,039,950 of which 50% are cars and over the last five years has increased by 87,500. The most encouraging part which should focus the project is that 25 million people want old vehicles preserved and 23 million state these vehicles be classed as part of our heritage and 8.2 million enjoyed reading and seeing vehicles on the road, but on the opposing side the UK government (who have more pressing things to contend with) have conducted a consultation about road worthiness without informing the F.H.B.V.C., as usual any government wouldn't involve those who know best as they wouldn't and couldn't act on their findings!

As the group entered 2017 the late John Kirk (a joint member) had accumulated 57 brass plaques of which 33 were from showing his preserved Morris LD30 ex Newport fire tender HSK 589. His brother Malcolm contacted the present owner who has purchased them, in addition through their Facebook page had uncovered colour footage of the vehicle when in service. With the New Year just started the group have started planning their first road run at the beginning of April, and as readers will see we have commenced our fundraising programme and hope you will help and support the stall. Finally we thank Malcolm for donating (from his own pocket) a sum of money equivalent to recycled cans from his neighbour.

East Kent Trolleybus Group (Barney). - The welcome newsletter from the EKTG arrived just prior to Christmas and covered the Halloween celebrations at the railway where they are based and its nice to see that the group is accepted by the railway group they are aligned with. Dana who compiles the newssheet apart from interesting photographs of old vehicles in the Kent area he details progress on Barney (Bradford 704) and hats off to the small band of volunteers who contend with restoring Barney outdoors in the most trying of conditions, where they are replacing external panels and work on the upper deck ceiling is on-going, we send our best wishes to them.

‘Philly Trolleybuses. - A couple more photo’s showing Roger Davies’ trip to the states.



Meeting Dates & Venues :- For your information all project meetings are generally held on the third Monday of each month. the usual venue is *Newton Court, North Luton Place, Adamsdown, Cardiff CF24 0NB*. If it has to be altered, members will be informed in good time. Immediate meeting dates are as follows:- January 16th, February 20th, March 20th.. With the April date falling on Easter Monday 17th., a decision as to moving the date will be discussed at the January meeting

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