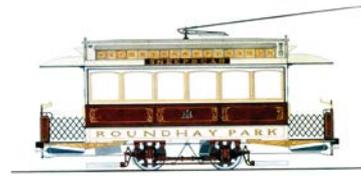


# LEEDS TRANSPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS SHEET 180

FEBRUARY 2015



## **OBITUARIES**

Two well-known members of the LTHS passed away during January. Brian Parkin, former Chairman, died on 4<sup>th</sup> and Roger Benton on 29<sup>th</sup>. Their obituaries follow on the inside pages of this News Sheet.

## **FORTHCOMING L.T.H.S. MEETINGS & EVENTS**

Meetings at Richmond Hill Community Club, Railway Street, Leeds, LS9 8HB, 1930 for 2000

- Mon. 9 Feb. **From Teenage to Twenties - Visits to Belgium, France and Germany 1961-65** Eric Smith
- Mon. 9 Mar. **A Tour of Yorkshire by Train & Tram** Paul Abell
- Mon. 13 Apr. **Annual General Meeting**
- Mon. 11 May **Woltersdorf Tramway, Berlin** Richard Buckley
- Mon. 9 June **More Leeds buses of 50 years ago from the USA** Ian Dougill
- Tue. 14 July **Evening Visit to Heaton Park Tramway, Manchester**

## **OTHER LOCAL MEETINGS & COMING EVENTS**

### **February**

Thu. 5 (NGRS) **Monsoon Tours – faces and places** Philip Lockwood

Tue. 10 (LRTA) **Austrian Tramways** Paul Abell

### **March**

Tue. 3 (MRT) TBA

Thu. 5 (NGRS) **Transport from old cards** Bob Schofield

Tue.10 (LRTA) **Swiss Trams** Richard Buckley

### **April**

Thu. 2 (NGRS) **Island Railways** Tim Hudson

Tue. 7 (MRT) TBA

Tue. 9 (LRTA) **TBA** Malcolm Hindes

### **May**

Tue 5 (MRT) TBA

Thu. 7 (NGRS) **New Zealand Railways Today** Henry Gunstone

Tue.12 (LRTA) **Trams & More Trams** Mel Reuben

## **Groups, Meeting Places & Times**

**MRT** Middleton Railway Trust, The Engine House, Moor Road, Hunslet, 1930. No charge, refreshments on sale.

**LRTA** Light Rail Transit Association, Committee Room No. 5, Civic Hall, 1900. collection £1.

**NGRS** Narrow Gauge Railway Society, Yorkshire Area, The Epicentre, Meanwood Valley Urban Farm, 7.15 for 7.30. Collection £2. Refreshments (and fresh eggs!) on sale.

## **LEEDS TRANSPORT TOURING GROUP**

### **Jamie Guest**

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome members of the Leeds Transport Touring Group into the Society. The Group has been in existence for over 40 years and has organised many tours to transport related events over the years as well as having regular meetings with speakers on transport related topics. Unfortunately due to declining attendance at meetings and other factors the group has taken the difficult decision to disband.

They contacted the LTHS and the Committee decided to offer members of the LTTG membership of the LTHS for the remainder of this membership year.

We are happy to welcome LTTG members to our meetings and look forward to them taking a role within the LTHS.

In particular we are pleased that they are willing to continue to organise the annual trip to Heaton Park, joint with LRTA, in July. Planning for this year's trip is now in hand.

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

As usual, our April meeting is the Society's AGM.

The formal notice of the meeting, Minutes of the 2014 AGM and Trustees' & Secretary's Reports are being distributed to members with this News Sheet.

Accounts will be available at the meeting, or on request from the Hon. Secretary at the address on the back page (SAE please).

Members' attention is drawn to items 7 and 9 on the agenda. The Committee is always seeking to recruit new members, and nominations for election can be made beforehand to the Secretary or at the meeting. The nominee's assent must, of course, be obtained.

## **NEWS SHEET NOTES**

### **Malcolm Hindes**

Since the documents for the AGM are being sent out with this News Sheet, all members will receive hard copies regardless of usual arrangements.

However, as always I appeal for anybody prepared to receive the News Sheet in electronic form (pdf) to email me at [malcolm.hindes@btinternet.com](mailto:malcolm.hindes@btinternet.com). Not only will you receive your News Sheet sooner, you will save the Society at least £3 a year in printing and postage costs, money which can then be devoted to Society projects.

Former LTTG Newsletter readers will be pleased to know that Doncaster-based correspondent Charlie "Leroy" Watson is "Still Open All Hours" and has brought his column with him. He can be found in his customary position near the back platform!

**JOHN BRIAN PARKIN (1933–2015)**

**Ian Dougill**

It is with sadness that we record that Brian Parkin, a former Chairman of the LTHS and lifelong transport enthusiast died of heart failure on 4th January. Born in June 1933, he lived all his life in Halton, Leeds.



**The last known photograph of Brian, November 2014**

He was a life member of the Tramway Museum Society but at the end of Leeds trams, decided to concentrate his interests towards buses, particularly in the Yorkshire area. In 1958 he took over the Editorship of the Leeds Tramway News, soon to be renamed the Leeds & District Transport News, becoming the Metro Transport News in 1973. He remained Editor until his death. Is there any similar news sheet with the same Editor for over 50 years? – A tribute in itself!

Brian married Cynthia in the early 1960s and they had two sons, Andrew and Stewart. Unfortunately Cynthia pre-deceased him in the early 1980s. He never remarried.

When his sons left home he was able to travel abroad more and he visited many parts of Europe and Australia, as well as forming a bus preservation group to preserve Leeds City Transport AEC Regent 139, the group ultimately owning four iconic L.C.T. buses.

In the mid-1970s he used his knowledge of the bus industry to his advantage when he became employed by Wallace Arnold, the coach travel and excursion specialist, in their licensing section, later moving to National Express where he was Regional Manager in Leeds until they moved their local office to Manchester. In retirement Brian concentrated on his bus and railway interests together with a love of good beer. His regular daily visits to Leeds for a drink kept him in touch with the bus scene and it is with great sadness that we note his passing.

**BRIAN PARKIN'S FUNERAL** **Malcolm Hindes**

Dubbed by some as the first LTHS Tour of 2015,



**The cortege at Shaw Lane**

**M.Hindes**

Brian's funeral at Lawnswood Crematorium on Thursday 22 January was a spectacular and well



**Arrival at Lawnswood Terminus**

**M.H.**

attended tribute to his long service to local transport enthusiasts over many years. Keighley Bus Museum provided two splendid Leeds City

Transport vehicles - AEC Regent 139 (naturally) and Leyland PS1 28 - which picked up mourners in York Street, adjoining the bus station, then followed the hearse to Lawnswood. Here an elaborate manoeuvre involved holding up all the Otley Road traffic while the buses reversed into the cemetery grounds. 139 backed up all the way to the chapel, while 28 parked up just inside the gateway. The non-religious service started with the Dam Busters



**139 by the chapel**

**I.M.Dougill**

March in tribute to Brian's time in the RAF. After a detailed eulogy, the hymn "Be Thou my Vision" was played, as it had been at Cynthia's funeral.



Following the committal, the congregation left to the sound of the Blue Danube waltz, although Brian's son Andy confided that he would have preferred

the sound of a Stanier Pacific climbing Shap! Sadly he was overruled.

The buses then took the mourners to the Adelphi Hotel, Hunslet Road, for refreshments.

There was an excellent spread although Brian's eyes would have watered at the price of the beer!



**Hunslet Road**

**M.H.**

### **ROGER BENTON (1940-2015) Ian Dougill/MH**

Another sad death in the last few days has been that of Roger Benton who suffered a heart attack immediately after a car accident whilst on the way home to Sheffield from Crich on Saturday 24th January. He was taken to Sheffield Northern General Hospital where he was put in an induced coma from which he did not recover, passing away on Thursday 29th at the age of 74, without regaining consciousness. Roger will be known to many of his fellow LTHS members as the projectionist who brought TMS films to our meetings on his almost annual visits.

Roger who never married, was the only child of a cinema projectionist, later manager, and his wife. He often said that it was seeing his father at work which gave him a lifelong interest in both local films and tramways.

Joining the TMS before the establishment of the Museum at Crich, he was involved in the acquisition of the Sheffield trams and took part in many aspects of museum life, later specialising in the acquisition and care of tramway films etc.

A rating assistant with Sheffield Council, he assisted the PTE with research facilitating the establishment of Sheffield Supertram. After retirement from the Council he became an instructor and driver on the new tramway. He spent some time in Düsseldorf, preparing the training manual and training the first drivers on the new Sheffield trams being built and tested there. He enjoyed relating how, on an early visit, he was handed one of the first Sheffield cars and told to take it out on to the Düsseldorf system in the early hours of the morning to find out how it worked!

He resurrected Roger Michael's interest in tramway preservation when he booked TMS groups visiting Portugal through the travel agent Roger was working for in Sheffield, Roger (M) even accompanying the group to Oporto. Roger Michael later became the current TMS Secretary.

Away from Crich, Roger was a regular driver on the Seaton Tramway although he chose to retire from tram driving at Sheffield, Crich and Seaton on reaching the age of 65.

At one time a Board Member at Crich, more recently Roger restricted his activities at Crich to the Library as well as researching the history of the Dearne District Light Railway. He was co-author with Paul Jackson and Peter Fox of "Tram to Supertram", celebrating the return of trams to Sheffield.

He will be missed by many people in many different walks of life.

### **TONY WILSON**

### **Mel Reuben/MH**

We are happy to report that our member Tony Wilson, proprietor of Travel Lens Photographic and Tram Junction enthusiast's shop at Laxey, former Leeds resident and President of Leeds Transport Touring Group, returned home to Douglas from Liverpool Heart & Chest Hospital on 30 January after five hours of open heart surgery on 20<sup>th</sup>.

Tony had been suffering shortage of breath for some time. Noble's Hospital in Douglas referred him to Liverpool as they don't have the expertise for such an

operation. Recuperation will be a long process, during which presumably his businesses will be on hold.

Tony's address for goodwill messages and (eventually) photo orders is : Ardenvoar, Hilary Park, Douglas, Isle of Man, IM2 3ED (not Merton Bank as last issue).

We send Tony all our best wishes for a quick recovery.

### **TRAM JACKS**

### **Jamie Guest**

Members may not be aware that the Society used to own a set of tram jacks. These were heavy duty lifting jacks, used to raise the body of a tram off its running gear. There were four large lifting units plus four interlocking girders that made a frame to support the body of the tram. I'm not sure where they came from but they were stored in the cellar at Whitkirk.

In 2007 we decided to donate them to the Merseyside Transport Museum at Taylor Street, Birkenhead. The group had been very helpful to us with advice about 107 and it was felt that this was a good home for the jacks. They were lifted out of the cellar using a chain hoist. The trapdoor to the cellar was in the doorway to



the kitchen and Bernard Donald had a special fitting to attach the hoist to the upper floor joists. Two employees from Taylor Street came over with a lorry to collect the jacks.

We later heard that Birkenhead had acquired some better jacks and that ours had been given to a museum near Dublin. By chance I saw some pictures on Facebook a few weeks ago of Hill of Howth car No.9 at the National Transport Museum of Ireland



<http://www.nationaltransportmuseum.org/b004.html>

The car was on jacks that looked familiar. Inspection showed that two of our jacks were in use at one end of the car. It's great to see them being put to good use.

**SPOT THAT TRAM**

Here is another batch of "puzzle pics" from the collection of Chris Spring. Once again, we know the identity of the vehicles, it's the locations that need recognising.

**Horsfield 167**

Roundhay Road is suggested. We're not so sure. What do you think?

© Travel Lens Photographic



**Feltham 574**  
Great Wilson Street?

© Travel Lens Photographic

**Horsfield 236**

Tong Road?

R.F.Mack



**Leyland PD1 328**

This one has caused a lot of brain-racking, particularly for an ex-Policeman friend who used to be stationed at Holbeck. It looks like Spence Lane, but the buildings don't seem to match.

Photographer unknown

Any answers will appear in the next News Sheet.

Just in time for this issue, Chris Thornburn came up with some ideas for the locations of the photographs we printed in the last News Sheet.

All © Travel Lens Photographic

### Horsfield 161

Chris S. suggested Dewsbury Road but Chris T. is confident it is Chapeltown Road, looking north. The car is at the



Barrack Street stop and from comparison with a shot Chris took at the same spot in March 1956 he reckons it was taken between then and closure 18 months later.



### Horsfield 174

The Eagle Tavern is a clear giveaway in this shot on North Street.

### Horsfield 192

Not Dewsbury Road. This is also North Street, half way along near Skinner Lane. But why did LCT call the Fare Stage "Concord Street"?



### Regent V 903

Outside Leeds Parish Church (now Leeds M i n s t e r ) turning into High Court (The Calls). But is it really on Route 12? That



usually went via Briggate.

## CHARLIE'S COLUMN

Charlie Watson

For those members of LTHS unfamiliar with "CC", it was conceived as an alternative look at passenger transport as seen by the writer. Columns vary from modern to vintage, serious to humorous, but always my personal look on life. Let me know your views ....



## NOT AS EASY AS IT LOOKS

I was in the Traffic Office of a certain tramway museum in Derbyshire when I was asked to take out a trainee conductor to "Show 'im t'ropes". As the day wore on, Eric (not his real name) seemed to be doing well and enjoying the job until a fella' and his wife boarded the tram.

Eric advised this man that the top deck was full and they would have to "sit inside". This upset him and pretty soon all the saloon passengers knew of his displeasure .....

Eric went inside to collect the fares but as he issued this couple's tickets his Bell Punch jammed, causing one of the tickets to tear.

This passenger blew up in Eric's face, shouting and making a fuss about the tram, the museum, the conductor and just about everything.

I stepped up and explained to the passenger that it was Eric's first day and he was still learning, which did nothing to calm this fella', who then expressed the view that Eric was "useless" and he could do the job better himself.

This was too much for Eric who suddenly flung his cash bag and punch into the passenger's lap. "If it's so easy, you try it!"

The passenger's wife nearly fainted and all the mortified passenger saw was the angry glares from Eric, all the saloon passengers and me. He tried to tell Eric he was only joking but Eric was in no laughing mood. They got off at the next stop and on the return journey we passed them having a row.

Eric eventually calmed down after a cuppa and got back to the job, eventually passing his test and is now fireproof as a conductor.

We often talk about it but not with any humour. You've got to be tough to be a tram conductor.

## POSITION VACANT

The Society Committee is considering the appointment of a volunteer Membership Secretary to take over administration of membership details.

Computer literacy and internet access would be necessary.

As this would not be a Committee Post it would not carry Trustee responsibilities.

Prospective volunteers please contact the Hon. Secretary (address on the back page).

## SOME ENCHANTED EVENING - AN ARRESTING EXPERIENCE

Chris Youhill

As a Ledgard's conductor in the Spring of 1960 I was off duty one fine Sunday and decided to visit a friend in Leeds for the evening. When I got on the bus in Burley in Wharfedale it was full to capacity with day trippers from Ilkley and so I rode on the platform chatting to the conductor, as one did in those more relaxed days. The bus came to a halt near the Beech Hill Cinema in Otley because the Sunday traffic was, as usual, at a standstill. All of a sudden two very formidable looking policemen leapt onto the platform and whispered something to my conductor friend. He appeared embarrassed and amazed and, pointing to me, said "AYE THIS IS HIM." Immediately and without explanation I was ordered off the bus in front of all the passengers and pedestrians and bundled into a police car.

Two questions were now fired at me. Firstly - "**WE BELIEVE YOU KNOW HOW TO START A BUS**" and then "**WHERE WERE YOU AT 2.50 P.M. YESTERDAY (Saturday) AND FOR THE ENSUING FOUR HOURS.**" I replied "yes" to the first, but I was so shocked that I simply couldn't think of any answer at all to the second.

I was completely unaware that Moorfield Bristol GHN 840, which had just been re-certified at Otley, had been stolen from the Bus Station at 2.50 p.m. It had spent the afternoon being driven safely from Otley to Ilkley, then via Guiseley to Bradford, and from there by way of Rawdon and Yeadon to Pool. Various drivers had evidently seen it and had simply waved to the driver but thought nothing of it - quite amazing as it should obviously have stuck out like the proverbial sore thumb. It is nothing short of miraculous that no accident had occurred but the thief's luck ran out in the most unexpected place. In Leathley Lane at Pool, a deserted country road, the bus left the road and after demolishing a fence and hedge came to rest partially overturned and suffering moderate damage. The culprit was seen by motorists fleeing across the fields in a successful escape.

Fortunately I eventually regained my composure sufficiently to remember that I had been at Otley Hospital at the time in question, discussing my Dad's serious illness with the ward sister. I was driven straight there and luckily the good lady was again on duty and was very glad to "get me off the hook." I was never able to identify the loyal workmate who had advised the police that as I was a crazy enthusiast the theft was almost certain to be my handiwork - but I suppose there's always a black sheep !!

The case remained unsolved until many months later when an off duty policeman in East Leeds was working in his garden one day. All of a sudden his horticultural efforts were rudely interrupted by the arrival through his hedge of a West Yorkshire single decker, which had evidently been taken in broad daylight from the rear of Vicar Lane Bus Station. The bus became firmly wedged on the officer's rockery and the culprit's Leathley Lane escape was not repeated. He confessed also to the "GHN" job and received six months full board at one of Her Majesty's better hotels. I still shiver at the thought that, but for that hospital sister's support, I could well have been that guest - I much prefer to pay for my own accommodation!

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Contributions of news or articles for News Sheets are always welcome and may be submitted to the News Sheet co-ordinator, Malcolm Hindes, at 34 Moor Park Villas, Headingley, Leeds, LS6 4BZ, e-mail [malcolm.hindes@btinternet.com](mailto:malcolm.hindes@btinternet.com)  
All statements and comments are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent Society policy.

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