

# LEEDS TRANSPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## NEWS SHEET 201

JUNE 2020



### **JIM SOPER 18 April 1934 - 29 March 2020**

James Soper Dipl.T.P., Dipl. Arch. – Jim - who has died at the age of 85, was the archivist for our Society and author of its many books, notably his monumental five-volume history of Leeds Transport (with a sixth volume in preparation), the Postcard book and the ones on Leeds Transport in Colour and Leeds Pubs and Cinemas by Tram in the 1950s. But he was more than an author – he was a leading light in the restoration of the Leeds tower car and 399 and a skilled woodworker on horse tram 107, all of which are now resident at the National Tramway Museum at Crich.

Back in the Middleton Railway's early days, Jim was one of the group moving the Leeds trams from Swinegate Depot to Parkside for preservation. Subsequently, he worked in Robinson & Birdsell's field at Parkside on the overhead lines tower tram after the LTHS had purchased it from the (then) Middleton Railway Preservation Society. That car's restoration was completed off site before it went to Crich.

Jim was born in April 1934, the son of a garage proprietor. Living first in Alwoodley, then Meanwood, he noted at an early age the changeover from trolley poles to bow collectors on the Meanwood tram route. After the family moved to Chapeltown, he had a grandstand view of trams on Harrogate Road passing his bedroom window. He attended Chapeltown Council School and then Leeds Grammar School, travelling daily by tram. He served a mechanical engineering apprenticeship at his father's premises but, after National Service, enrolled with the Leeds School of Architecture, qualifying in 1962 and subsequently gained a diploma in Town Planning. He worked as an architect in Pontefract, Harrogate and Leeds, retiring in 1999.

These skills and interests lead to him designing (and providing much of the physical labour for) the Bowes-Lyon Bridge at Crich using York Stone setts which he acquired from Leeds and took to Derbyshire in the back of his Morris 1000 traveller. He also masterminded the design and reconstruction of the Red Lion pub at the Crich museum, doing much of the hard manual work himself. He brought most of the faience (tile) work from the facade back to Leeds where he repaired it in his garage at home. Serving a term as President of the Tramway Museum Society he was their architectural adviser. He also designed the

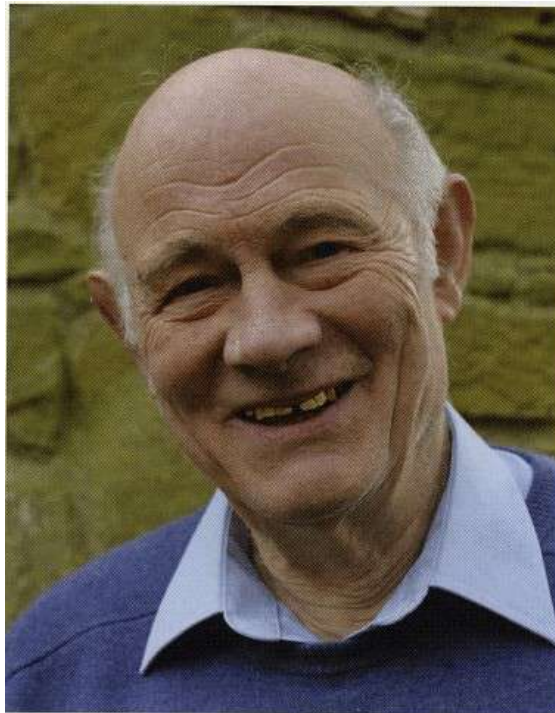
Burnley Tramways Offices reconstruction and the workshop extension at Crich.

Jim's early interest in trams led him to record the later years of the Leeds tramways in great photographic detail, both still and cine. He was part of the team which founded the Leeds and District Transport News (now the Metro Transport News) and was a founder and lifelong member of LTHS.

Jim was a man of few words but many skills, held in great regard by all who knew him, both in the tramway preservation movement and in the architectural profession.

Just before Christmas Jim suffered a major stroke and was admitted to Leeds General Infirmary, later being transferred to Harrogate District Hospital. He recovered only partially, being unable to speak or eat although fully alert. He was discharged to a nursing home in Castleford, where he died peacefully in his sleep on 29 March. A devoted family man, he is survived by his wife Valerie, brother Bob, two daughters Gillian and Helen and three grandchildren. Because of the Coronavirus pandemic, only a minimal funeral ceremony could be held, on

15 April. A fuller celebration of Jim's life will be organised when restrictions are lifted. IMD, JMH



Until my dad (Bernard Donald) died, I hadn't realised how much he valued Jim's friendship and engineering mind. Many times in the 70s and 80s Dad and Jim would meet up to figure out how a tram part needed to be mended to enable it to go back on a tram!

And meetings, particularly the Tramway Museum Society AGM in Matlock, would see me, Helen, Gillian and our mums, Valerie and Margaret, left to amuse ourselves while Jim and my Dad spent their time talking trams!

When Jim started writing his history of Leeds Transport, Dad became a proof reader and somehow ended up with boxes of the first print stacked around our house - presume it was the same at Jim's house? Jim always had a smile to give and a warm welcome, which I was particularly grateful for when Dad died. I felt I'd still got a tram connection, and my Dad, through Jim.  
Christine Clark

My memory of Jim Soper is of a valued friend of my step dad - Bernard Donald. They met at school and were lifelong friends.

I remember trips to Crich and Leeds (Hollyshaw Lane, which was the residence of the Leeds Horse Tram during its renovation), where Jim would always be there to work with Dad, and others, on renovating Leeds trams. Between them they solved numerous problems to bring them back to life.

He was just such a lovely man, as was my Dad; they went very well together. Jim's books, which I 'inherited', are amazing and very readable, even to someone not from Leeds or with any prior knowledge of Leeds Transport. Ian Johnson

When Keith Terry passed away Jim, Derek Redmond and I were executors of the Will. It was a nightmare at first trying to find out how much the estate was worth; I was very impressed how Jim methodically delved into the task we became very close over those months speaking and meeting nearly everyday. I found Jim to be a remarkable man his knowledge on trams and tramways was unsurpassed a stalwart of the LTHS a go to person at anytime.

The LTHS and the Tramway world has lost a colossus and through his books his name will be remembered for ever. Mel Reuben

**Sadly, we also have to report the passing of two former members.**

#### **Albert Marshall**

Albert Marshall died on 16 April. He would be best known to members as a transport enthusiast and keen tram modeller, and with his characteristic white moustache and walking stick was often to be seen at exhibitions and transport collectors' fairs.



However it was his *alter ego* that brought him real fame. While still a youngster he was fascinated to see preparations for wrestling at Leeds Town Hall and soon caught the wrestling "bug".

His father, a blacksmith and amateur boxer encouraged him to train, which he did at Leeds Athletic Institute and under promoter George de Relwyskow among others. It was TV presenter Kent Walton who suggested he shorten his name to Al Marshall for appearances in the ring, where he earned a reputation as a clean and clever wrestler. His professional debut was in 1969 but sadly his career as a fighter was cut short after 10 years as a result of an industrial injury. However he turned his hand to refereeing and training others as well as having minor television and film roles and serving as fight arranger for the Jorvik Viking Centre in York.

His interest in armoury led to making suits of armour for local museums and individuals as well as replica weapons for the Jorvik Centre.

#### **Ralph Mayland**

Rev. Canon Ralph Mayland RNVR VRD died on 27 April at the age of 93. Born in Beeston, he attended Cross Flatts Elementary and Cockburn High Schools and Teacher Training College in Scarborough. He served deferred National Service in the Royal Navy and stayed on, rising to the rank of Lieutenant Commander. After naval service he worked as a teacher in London, but also enlisted as a padre with the Royal Navy Reserve. From 1957 he trained for the clergy at Ripon Hall, Oxford and was ordained as a curate in 1959. He served churches in Lambeth, Worksop and Sheffield (Brightside and Ecclesfield) and was a chaplain with the Sheffield Industrial Mission.

In 1982 he became Canon Treasurer at York Minster and had a lead role in the restoration of the South Transept after the disastrous fire of 1984; he was proud to have invited the Queen to its rededication ceremony in 1988.

He retired in 1994 but remained active as an honorary curate in the Durham Diocese, moving eventually to Hexham. He and his wife Jean had two daughters (who enrolled him in the LTHS as a birthday present) and three granddaughters.

#### **FORTHCOMING LTHS MEETINGS & EVENTS**

Social meetings are normally held at the Leeds Postal Sports Association Club, off Beecroft Street, Kirkstall, Leeds, LS5 3AS, 1900 onwards for 1930 start. Inevitably, the Coronavirus restrictions have meant cancellation of meetings and we were lucky to get our March meeting in just before lockdown.

We are now into the usual summer recess, but hopefully we will be able to resume regular meetings on **Monday 14 September**, subject to the availability of the Club (or alternative suitable premises).

Happily the size of the Concert Room at Kirkstall means we should have little difficulty maintaining Social Distancing! The next *News Sheet* may be produced a little early to give adequate notice of arrangements for September.

The Committee has decided that the £1 donation for attendance at meetings will no longer apply to members, but we do still ask you to sign in. Membership is due for renewal in September!

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

At the time of writing, the following events are still "on".

News of regular September and October meetings will appear in the next *News Sheet*.

#### **October**

Sat. 24 (SLS) **Collectors' Fair** Pudsey Civic Hall  
**\*\* N.B. LTHS Sales Stand \*\***

Sat.- Sun. 24-5 **Leeds Model Railway Society Exhibition**, Grammar School  
**\*\* N.B. LTHS Sales Stand \*\***

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

**LRTA** Light Rail Transit Association. Committee Room No. 3, Civic Hall, 1900. collection £1.

**SLS** Samuel Ledgard Society. Barry Rennison, 0113 236 3695, [rennison@cc-email.co.uk](mailto:rennison@cc-email.co.uk)

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Our AGM on 6 April was an early casualty of the Coronavirus lockdown and was technically adjourned due to lack of a quorum (or anybody at all!).

Subject to the usual reservations, we are proposing to resume with a brief AGM at the start of the September meeting, possibly starting at 7.00 p.m. The reports were issued with the March *News Sheet* and nominations are still open for election to the Committee, not forgetting that there is currently a vacancy.

## **SALES STANDS**

As mentioned above, we have Sales Stands booked simultaneously at Pudsey Collectors' Fair Saturday and Leeds Model Railway Society Exhibition Saturday - Sunday 24-25 October, both subject to confirmation. Also possible is the Late July Trolley Weekend at Sandtoft on July 25-26. However this year's Middleton Railway Model Railway Exhibition and Otley Vintage Transport Extravaganza have definitely been cancelled. Our sales team would welcome help with setting up and manning the stalls. If you can help, please contact Stephen Longthorpe or the Secretary, John Holmes telephone (0113) 258 0767.

Please **do not** just turn up unannounced as you will have to pay to get in!

## **PASSENGERS STOP DRIVERLESS TRAM**

Passengers on a Stadtbahn light rail vehicle in Bonn had to break into the driver's cab and follow telephone instructions from the control centre to stop the vehicle after the driver collapsed. The vehicle operating between Siegburg and Bad Honnef via Bonn city centre on 22nd December, passed through at least eight stops at up to 70kph (44mph) without stopping and without a conscious driver. The operator Stadwerke Bonn (SWB) told the media after the incident that it appears the driver collapsed and after the tram failed to stop at the next stop the first calls went to the emergency services by passengers. Eventually two passengers managed to break down the door to the drivers cabin and were able to stop the tram.

It appears the driver collapsed in such a way that the driver vigilance equipment fitted was activated as "safe". He was released from hospital before Christmas with no apparent long-term health issues. The Stadtbahn vehicles are fitted with emergency brake override which prevents the trams stopping in tunnels, as are some trains on routes across Europe. However, as the passenger alarm only alerted the driver who was unconscious, nothing happened when the passengers used the emergency alarm system on board the vehicle.

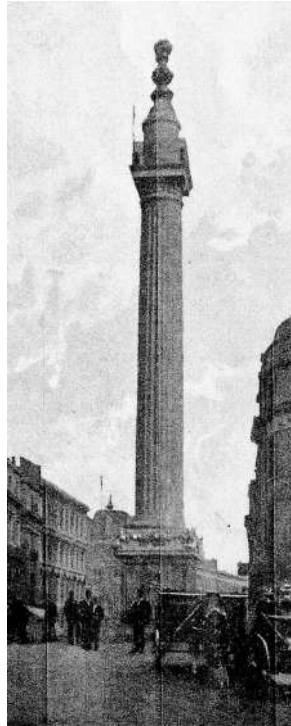
The incident could have been very serious had it encountered road traffic or sharp curves at 70kph; fortunately it didn't, and nobody was hurt. Had the tram not been stopped whilst it was still on reserved track and reached shared road space controlled only by traffic lights a serious collision could have occurred – by good fortune it was still on the reserved track equipped with automatic treadle operated level crossings – albeit very near the end of the reserved track when it was stopped.

*News report via JBH*

## **CHARLIE'S COLUMN**

### **Two Manx Tales (Tails?)**

I was once sitting on MER No.20 at Derby Castle as a horse car pulled up at the terminus. As the crew changed the horse round, a woman appeared and started making a fuss of the horse. She suddenly produced a big bag of apples and gave one to the horse. Clearly the horse liked apples and lunged for the bag which was promptly moved out of its reach. This did not please the horse.



The woman then asked if she could take the reins so her husband could take a picture of her pretending to be a tram driver. This was agreed, but her husband was struggling to work the new camera.

Suddenly the horse lifted its tail and let go a large amount of gas straight at the woman! It was so loud we heard it on No.20. At this point her face turned NBC green. Click!

The woman instantly vacated the tram towards the horse trough whereupon her breakfast reappeared!

Once the woman had regained her composition she seemed to lose all interest in the tram and its power unit . . . !

Manx cats really do exist, usually ginger and about twice the size of a domestic cat, and they're vicious beggars! I was sitting outside the Mines Tavern at Laxey (trams and beer - who could ask for more?) when the whole area was invaded by American tourists. A Manx Cat was lying on the grass dozing, only to be grabbed by the scruff of the neck and cuddled and stroked by a woman of gargantuan proportions. She squeezed the "cute liddle kittycat" until its eyes nearly popped out. Suddenly the "cute liddle kittycat" went berserk, biting the woman's nose and clawing across her face before escaping her grip and scampering across the tracks into the shrubbery. The language contained words even I'd never heard before. Her fellow tourists gave her tissues to stem the flow of blood and after some more ripe language made their way to the Snaefell car for a ride up the mountain. I didn't see the party again but I suspect that lady will never forget her visit to Laxey!

Never trust animals - you can never know what they will do . . . !

## **CORRECTIONS DEPARTMENT**

The photograph of Horsfield 200 in Kirkgate on the front page of *News Sheet* No.200, credited to Mel Reuben, was actually an extract from a Travel Lens Photographic image. Apologies to Tony Wilson.

Reference to our Middleton Railway visit in the Annual Report mis-identified the locomotive "Mary" as a Hunslet. It is actually Hudswell-Clarke D577 of 1932. Thanks to Andrew Gill for spotting this one.

## **METROLINK TRAFFORD PARK LINE OPEN**

The 5.5 km Manchester Metrolink light rail extension to the Trafford Centre shopping complex was opened for revenue service on March 22, around seven months ahead of the original target date.



The line mostly runs on segregated alignment, diverging from the Eccles/Media City route at Pomona.



It serves six new stops at Wharfside, Imperial War Museum North, Village, Parkway Circle, EventCity and Trafford Centre, bringing the Metrolink network to a total length of 103 km and 99 stops. Running through Europe's largest industrial estate, the Trafford Park line runs provides access to thousands of jobs, including global companies such as Kellogg's, Unilever, L'Oreal and Adidas. As well as the intu Trafford Centre other leisure destinations along the route are Manchester United's Old Trafford stadium and the Imperial War Museum North.



The line is initially being served by a shuttle between Cornbrook and Trafford Centre, operating at 12 min intervals in common with other Metrolink routes. Delivery of 27 additional M5000 trams to augment the 120-strong fleet by August 2020, will enable services to be extended through the city centre to Crumpsall where a new turnback platform has been constructed. Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, said the new line was 'a much-needed addition to the Metrolink network' which would 'encourage more people to use

public transport to journey around our city-region, and in doing so reduce congestion on our roads and improve the quality of our air'.

## **SOME LEEDS TRANSPORT TRIVIA Mel Reuben**

Whilst trawling through the web my friend Neil Brook (alias IKB) found an amusing story from a local paper dated 27th July 1903 about escaping electricity discovered by Leeds Corporation Gas Department.

This discovery was of the utmost importance which could have effected all electric tramways. Apparently the gas and water mains and the electric light cable had been eaten through by the electric current which returns through the rails into the earth after serving the cars.

The discovery was made by the Gas Department. An escape of gas occurred in Kirkgate and digging operations ensued. A leak was found in a pipe of one inch in diameter, which could only be accounted for on the assumption that the electricity from the tramway current had eaten its way through the metal. This alarming theory led to further examinations with the result that in the space of six inches on a twelve inch main no fewer than seven holes were discovered, which were evidently ascribed to the same cause. None of the perforations were quite complete. They varied from one-sixteenth to five-eighths of an inch in depth, and as the thickness of a twelve inch main is only a little more than five eighths the damage in some case was almost complete. The gas main in question was a comparatively new one. More tests were carried out by the Gas Department in conjunction with the Tramway Department, which showed conclusively that the mains in other parts of the city were being subject to similar damage.

On July 6th 1946 Leeds City Transport trams and buses carried 941,061 passengers. The demand was due to Children's Day at Roundhay Park and a County Cricket match at Headingley. This record was beaten on May 15th 1948 when on a sweltering hot Whitsuntide day over a million passengers were carried. There was a sell-out crowd at the England v Australia Ashes Cricket Test match at Headingley and all the municipal parks recorded huge amounts of people arriving by public transport. For the journeys home, the queues for trams and buses at Roundhay Park stretched from the Park Gates up past the now Roundhay Fox pub and along Mansion Lane and on the other side of the road from past the tennis courts and along Lidgett Park Road. This was the only time that the number of passengers exceeded a million. A massive £8,138 in fares was taken, the highest amount ever recorded in a day.

Where the modern day Merrion Centre stands, there was once a rather obscure Leeds bus station known as Rockingham Street. Leeds needed a bus station to serve the north and west of the city. The bus station was opened on 11th July 1954 with four services using the facility. From the start the bus station was not very popular as passengers had a fair walk into the central shopping area of the city. The bus station only lasted until December 1960. Shortly after its closure it was announced that the site was acquired for a major commercial, retail and car park development - the Merrion Centre!

## **LAST ISSUE'S PUZZLE PICTURES**

This time, most members found this easy (but then you deserve a change sometimes). Thanks go to Robin Oldfield, Mike Holt, Chris Thornburn, David Johnson and Henry Heyworth for their responses.



This photo was actually not pre-war (Editor's mistake). The building under construction on the left is of course the Parkinson Building of Leeds University in Woodhouse Lane. The date is probably wartime (or early post-war) as evidenced by the white-painted bumper on the car and stripes on the traction poles. Chris Thornburn pointed out the crossover, later removed and also identified the Chamberlain car as No.1, not 100.



Horsfield 197 is seen on Stanningley Road, west of Bramley Town End at the stop for The Daisy pub. The building on the left is now the Daisy Café (Mike Holt).



And finally the station. Some thought it might be Beeston, but the quadruple track gives the clue - yes it is Osmondthorpe.

Here (for comparison) is Beeston.



Photo: Ben Brooksbank

## **NOW FOR SOME MORE**

This time we've just a couple of railway stations, both within the current Leeds Metropolitan Area rather than the traditional city boundaries.

The first was on a busy line, built to serve nearby housing developments although in this view only farmland can be seen.



Photo: Peter Sunderland

Our second photograph is of a station which served a village subsequently absorbed into the Metropolitan District.



Commercial postcard

## John's Leeds Summer Quiz

Each question gives a place or building in the Leeds Metropolitan Area.

Each answer starts with a different letter of the alphabet; there are no answers starting with J, X, or Z.

The questions are not in alphabetical order, but the number of squares indicates the number of letters in the place.

The red squares indicate the 12 letters of an anagram of a 24th place.

If you want you can send me your answers at [johnbholmes@btinternet.com](mailto:johnbholmes@btinternet.com)

It should give you a couple hours of head scratching fun in these bleak times – Keep well.

John

1. North Yorkshire market town with a castle in front of a small mountain  
□□□□□□□□ □□□□
2. Small one of our capital city  
□□□□□□ □□□□□□
3. The UK's western neighbour in front of a small forest  
□□□□□□□ □□□□
4. The top learning establishment in Leeds  
□□□□□□□□□□
5. This village is home to a seventeen-century Puritan chapel  
□□□□□□□□
6. There is a hotel incorporating an old windmill here  
□□□□□□□□
7. Scrooge-like character lives here in the small forest  
□□□□□□□□
8. This village lies five miles SW of Leeds, four miles SE of Bradford and used to be on the A650  
□□□□□□□□□□
9. A famous furniture maker lived and worked here  
□□□□□
10. The "old" name for Leeds-Bradford International Airport  
□□□□□□
11. A quarter of a penny beheaded followed by 20 cwt  
□□□□□□□□□
12. Where all the sewage in Leeds ends up  
□□□□□□□□
13. It is said that there used to be treacle mines here  
□□□□□□
14. The emblem of our county and then the middle  
□□□□□ □□□□ □□□□□□
15. What we do to get hot food followed by the top of the roof  
□□□□□□□□
16. A famous pram works was in this town  
□□□□□□□□
17. This suburb had a tram and bus depot north of a famous oak tree  
□□□ □□□□□□□□□
18. The monarch after William 4th followed by a wooden or metal structure at the entrance into a field  
□□□□□□□□ □□□□
19. A female monarch's trees  
□□□□□□□□□
20. The opposite of west added to a Cumbrian town  
□□□□ □□□□□□
21. The author of "Swallows and Amazons" was born here.  
□□□□ □□□□
22. Pollard's old toll bridge is located here  
□□□□□□
23. A prickly on a rose bush followed by The Queen  
□□□□□□□
24. Anagram place  
□□□□□□□□□□□□

As most of us are self-isolating during this Coronavirus Pandemic and finding things to do, I was just reading the LRTA book “The Tramways of Western Scotland” by J. C. Gillham & R.J.S. Wiseman and I thought it’s about time I stepped back into my TARDIS and set the dials to 1927 and beam down to the Glasgow Area to do some tram riding. I have a few pennies and few Bawbees (Scottish for halfpennies) left over from my former conducting days down at Crich so that would not only pay for my fares but maybe a little bit of extra for food?

Before I start, in the early 1950’s my father’s best friend Alan Foreman was a double bass player in the Hallé Orchestra and he invited my dad up to watch him play in Glasgow. When my dad returned home he told me “You think in Leeds that we have a big tram system? Well it’s paltry compared to what I have seen in Glasgow this weekend. The city has a massive system with trams crisscrossing along nearly every street”. By the way Alan Forman’s son Anthony was The Welgar Boy dressed as a lifeguard on Welgar Shredded Wheat packet, for those who can remember.

So off we go. I landed in a back street just off Trongate and boarded brand new Standard double bogie car 1090 on route 17 to Cambuslang. I paid my fare to a lady clippie but to be quite honest I couldn’t understand her Glasgow droll. I passed lots of tenement blocks as the tram travelled on London Road, picking up and setting down passengers. When we reached Bridgeton we traversed the junction onto Dalmarnock Road. Passing the depot, we crossed the River Clyde onto Cambuslang Road to the terminus, where I boarded a dark green livered Lanarkshire Tramways Company tram to Hamilton via Blantyre (the birthplace of David Livingstone).

Arriving in Hamilton, it was a toss-up whether I should go to Motherwell or Larkhall, but I decided to make my way to Uddingston via Bothwell to reconnect with the Glasgow system. Boarding the tram on Bothwell Road, which was fleet number 53, I suddenly realised that this tram would survive and would in the future be an attraction at Summerlee Museum, Coatbridge. It started to spit a bit, so as it was an open topper I went downstairs.

I arrived in Uddingston, alighted at Bells Hill Road, crossed the road into Main Street and boarded a Glasgow Corporation tram on route 29. The tram chugged along Glasgow Road through Broomhouse onto Tollcross Road. Passing Parkhead Depot I could see to my left Glasgow Celtic’s football ground. There were more tenement buildings and the tram was held up at times as horses and carts blocked the rails. The tram went up Gallowgate on to Trongate and more and more trams from various routes converged as we hit Glasgow’s main shopping street, Argyle Street, which was packed with shoppers. The tram slowly edged its way under Glasgow Central station.

I got off the tram at Hope Street, walked back to a pie shop under the Central Station bridge (known as “The Hielanman's Umbrella” ) and bought a Scotch pie and a bottle of Iron Brew\* for just twopence. After quickly refreshing my hunger it was back to tram riding so I walked back to Hope Street and boarded a No.27 tram going to Renfrew Cross.

The tram crossed the Clyde and turned right on to Paisley Road, once again passing more tenements. There was a steady procession of trams on either side of the road going to various Glasgow destinations; the tram arrived at Paisley Road Toll and turned right on to Govan Road. I could see numerous shipbuilding yards with massive ships being built in different phases of construction. As we approached Govan Depot a steam train appeared; it was on its way to the Govan Goods Yard and diverted off the main line down Golspie Street. In future years (1988) this area would be site of the Glasgow Garden Festival.

We arrived at Shieldhall and turned left on to Renfrew Road. The tram gathered pace, swaying side to side. After an eventful ride I arrived at Renfrew Cross, the terminus. I crossed the road and fortunately, after waiting only

a few minutes, got on a No.28 tram for the short journey to Renfrew Ferry, I waited there for around 10 minutes and for the princely sum of one penny I boarded the ferry across the Clyde and walked up to Dumbarton Road, where I caught a No.1 tram on its way to Dalmuir West. This route hugged the north bank of the Clyde passing through the western suburbs of Yoker and Clydebank. The tram proceeded over the Dalmuir Canal swing bridge with its weird overhead catenary.

A few minutes later I reached the terminus at Mountblow Road and spied a Dumbarton Burgh and County Tramway open-top tram in a green and cream livery; the tram was heading to Balloch Central via Dumbarton. As the weather was not too bad I ventured up onto the top deck; the ride was bracing with fantastic views of the Clyde and the mountains beyond. As the track was single with passing loops, every mile or so we had to wait for a tram to pass on the loop before we could proceed. As the tram was coming into Dumbarton I could see the volcanic rock towering above the town on which Dumbarton Castle stands. The tram approached Dumbarton High Street and stopped to pick up passengers on their way to Balloch Pier for Loch Lomond. The tram route followed the River Leven, once again on single track and loops through Renton and a short double track through Alexandria and finally to the terminus at Balloch Central.

It was very busy; most of the passengers started walking towards the pier, probably for a boat cruise around Loch Lomond. In the distance I could see smoke coming from the smokestacks of the ships waiting to pick up passengers.

By now time was really flying and I urgently needed to get back to my TARDIS so I decided the best option was to catch the train back to Glasgow. I boarded the train and as I was very tired after all my tram riding I dozed off. Luckily I awoke to find I was in Glasgow Queen Street Low Level.

I walked through the imposing George Square, passing the impressive City Hall on to Glassford Street where in 2017 I would attend my cousin's wedding in the Trades Hall. Arriving on Trongate I quickly found my TARDIS which thankfully had not been discovered although I imagined a few drunken Glaswegians would have wondered what a Police Box was doing in a back street alley!

I set the dials back to 2020 and thought to myself "Back to Coronavirus lockdown and more self-isolation" but nevertheless I'd had a great day out around the city of Glasgow and guess what was for tea? An M & S steak pie (not a Scotch one) but no Irn Bru!

So now I am planning my next trip, possibly either to Tyneside or maybe the West Midlands. In the meantime stay safe and possibly do a bit of fantasising just like me to pass away the boredom.

\* it was only in 1947 that the spelling was changed to Irn-Bru. (Ed.).

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Committee & Trustees: Ian M. Dougill (Chairman); Malcolm Hindes (Vice-Chairman); Tony Cowell (Treasurer);

John B. Holmes (Secretary); Mike Waring; Melvyn Reuben

Registered Office: 16 Sussex Avenue, Horsforth, Leeds, LS18 5NP

web site <http://lths.co.uk/>, webmaster Simon Reuben

Hon. Editor: Malcolm Hindes, email [malcolm.hindes@btinternet.com](mailto:malcolm.hindes@btinternet.com) - contributions for future issues welcome

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