

ESSEX BUS NEWS

December 1996

The monthly magazine of the ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP

(Formerly the Eastern National Enthusiasts Group)

392

A Very Merry Christmas to all our readers !



Just a reminder that winter is here. Heddingham's former Eastern National Bristol FLF L101 MVX 878C on route 90 at Heybridge a few years ago.

D. ARNOLD

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On behalf of the committee I would like to wish all members a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year, and to thank you all for your continual support.

ROCHFORD MEETINGS - FREIGHT HOUSE 8pm 1997

January	NO MEETING
February 14th	VIDEO EVENING
March 14th	GROUP AGM AND SLIDE SHOW BY ALAN OSBORNE
April 8th	Programme to be announced

'COLOUR PHOTOGRAPHS OF EASTERN ENGLAND OPERATORS' (from Yorkshire to Essex), available on approval. Operators large and small are covered. Please send SAE to David Longbottom, 9 Jevens Court, Driffeld, YO25 7LN.

CORRECTION Ref. EBN391 p20, The County Bus List of Leyland National 2's should have read - Capital Citybus - whoops, sorry!!

For railway enthusiasts, a new book by Peter Kay on the London, Tilbury & Southend Railway has been published - Vol. 1 1836 - 1893.

These can be ordered through the group from P. Snell at £9.95 each.

Will Southend get trams?



MERRY CHRISTMAS

EASTERN NATIONAL ENTHUSIASTS GUILD

THE ORIGINAL EASTERN NATIONAL

The Leyland Lion PLSC

1996 marked the 70th anniversary of Leyland's first chassis designed specifically for fitting with single deck bus bodies.

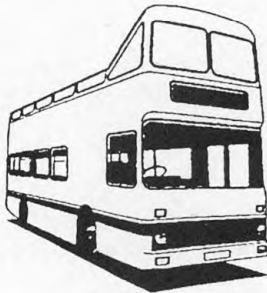
On the formation of Eastern National, a total of seventy-five PLSC3s fitted with mainly Strachan saloon bodies, a few carried Beadle and London Lorries coachwork, were transferred into the fleet.

Many of these over the years were rebodied by ECOC, ECW, Beadle, and in one instance by Duple - 2799 TM3883.

Loaned to London Transport from 1940 - 1941 were 2357, TW9353 and 2536 VW4578. Borough Motor Services at Southend used 2805 TM3884 from January 1939 to September 1940.

In 1932, Eastern National acquired Silver Queen at Clacton. Two more PLSC3 3161/2 VW4166 VW8256 with Leyland bodies were added to the fleet.

After a very hard working career with Eastern National the life of the EN Lion ended in 1950



Contributions for this EBN received with thanks from Essex Buses (Eastern National and Thamesway). Southend Transport. C Sigston.G Toon. Essex C.C. P Fford. M Ingle.R Dennis

Contributions for January EBN should be with Sub Editors by 3rd Jan and Man Editor by 13th January.

RE-ALLOCATIONS

11/96 None

REPAINTS

12/96 4016

GENERAL

Following a number of attacks on drivers, local press reports state that all vehicles are to be fitted with driver protection screens. There are of the type used by some London operators, that allow the screen to be flapped down when not required.

Through tickets from places such as Maldon to Liverpool Street are reported to be on there way, following the sucess of First Bus in obtaining the franchise for Great Eastern Railway.

A number of vehicles are being fitted with revised light clusters on their rear end following reairs to accident damage etc. This is believed to be a result of previous types no longer being available. It is not proposed to list individual vehicles in this column.

UNUSUAL WORKINGS

15.11.96 CF2252 on service 351 (normally big bus)

27.11.96 CR2667 on service 75 (normally big bus)

SERVICES

A number of extra services, were provided on the evening of 13th December in Braintree in connection with the Christmas lights/firework extravaganza.

PUBLICITY

Bus timetable books for:-

North Essex (includes Colchester, Clacton and Harwich)

Mid Essex & Herts (includes Chelmsford, Braintree and Bishops Stortford)

Both are priced 25p and dated 15th December 1996.

Many thanks to Colln and David at Essex Buses for all their help with this column and Thamesway notes during 1996.

OTHER OPERATORS - REST OF ESSEX

A&M COACHES CORRINGHAM Have acquired Fiat/Robin Hood minibus E450 TYG
APT RAYLEIGH A recent addition is AEF 268A (new as TUD 525T) a Volvo/Van Hool, it carries Thorns of Rayleigh fleetnames.

AVRO CORRINGHAM Former South Yorkshire PTE Fleetline GWA 808N has been sold. SFF 160M is now in use as a store.

BISS STANSTED Mercedes 0303 125 LUP has been re-painted in the new livery.

CARTERS With effect from 21.12.96. service 755 is revised to operate on Wednesdays only.

CHELMSFORD CAB A further Ford Transit G533 BRK has been acquired.

CLINTONA BRENTWOOD Two further Iveco minicoaches are P585/6 HME.

COLCHESTER COACHES Former London Country Tiger/Berkhof C130 PPE has been acquired.

COUNTY COACHES BRENTWOOD A recent addition is ?/Plaxton Paramount registered 2899 RU, meaning the vehicle sold to Webbs has been re-registered TIW 2801.

CRUSADER CLACTON A new and unusual addition is P390 ARY a Iveco/Beulas EuroRider.

EASTERN MINICOACHES DUNMOW An addition is Nissan L155 LTW, which appears to have replaced Transit F121 YCX.

FARGO BRAINTREE Fleetline MBE 616R is now single doorway. Mercedes 0303 coaches 784 EYB and HIJ 6931 are in a new livery of silver and dark grey. The taxi business appears to have been sold - the Transits having lost Cabus lettering and are now back on taxi plates.

GLEW COLCHESTER Further to EBN 390, A895 KGV is es 4092 PP and A321 JBJ.

GOLDEN BOY ROYDON Leopard YOI 7374 has lost its Marks and Spencer lettering, but retains the green livery.

GOLF EXECUTIVE BOREHAM A new operator with JIL 5229 (F120 KAO) a Mercedes 609/Reeve Burgess.

HAILSTONE BASILDON A recent addition is H68 BKM a Ford Transit/Dormobile.

HARRIS BUS The final pair of Optare Excels P322/3 KAR arrived in mid November. Demonstrators N272 DWY and N330 EUG were returned to their owners at the same time. The final Atlantean OCO 117S failed on 19.11.96. and is unlikely to return. Brighton Buses TYJ 15S has arrived on loan again as a replacement.

LEE-ROY KELVEDON HATCH One of the two operators with the same name based here, has sold B530 BJO a DAF/Plaxton.

PAGE FOBGING Talbot F59 AJK has been sold.

ROADRUNNER CANVEY A further all Ford transit is G707 YMG.

S&M HADLEIGH Fleetline TGX 820M has been converted to single doorway.

S&P ROCHFORD Recent additions are Leyland National VOD 603S and Sherpa/Dormobile D208 NON.

SILVER KNIGHT WICKFORD Have acquired Setra S215HD SIW 8306, which was new as PKW 322X.

SIMIEN RAYLEIGH Leyland National YFB 971V, has appeared in a Stephensons dealer advert in the trade press, and is assumed to have been on loan. Leyland Leopard SJI 2238 has now appeared in Ridgeon livery, but may only be on loan.

STANS GT TOTHAM Bedford YLQ/Duple LER 666P has been sold, after a short stay here.

SUPREME SOUTHEND Atlantean LGA 18P has suffered accident damage and is currently out of service.

WESTS WOODFORD GREEN A recent addition is DAF/Caetano A17 BUS.

SOUTHEND TRANSPORT

Vehicles;

On Hire. 423 (L423 CPB) Mercedes Benz 709D

Dormobile Routemaker B25F.

This MiniBus arrived on 19/11/96 and was used in service until 22/11/96, when it then returned to London & Country.

Disposals;

VR 301/2 (YNW 401S/YUM 515S) have passed to Maidstone
& District.

LN 717 (GGE 158T) was towed away to PVS, Barnsley on 19/11/96.

Subsequent Disposals;

LD 336/7 (CTM 406/7T) To Southampton Transport 6/96.

(Ex Williams, Emsworth.)

FL 373 (WJN 373J) To North, s Sherburn. (Dealer.)

(Ex Appleby, Scarborough.)

Repaints;

ON 904 (F574 SMG) into full fleet livery.

Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year
to all members.



We welcome Geoff Toon's Media Monitor back this month. Geoff's comments are in the main from the Colchester And Clacton area, where the Press appear to publish more comments on passenger transport than can be found in other parts of the County. From personal observations in the Southend, Basildon area very little appears about the local scene. Recent comments have been about the withdrawal of Thamesway buses one night due to vandalism and the unfortunate accident that Southend Transport had recently. However, if members in the South+West region of the county see anything, please send the 'snippets' to the Managing Editor and let us catch up all over the County.

PJS

MEDIA MONITOR

September 4th: Hedingham Omnibuses are to introduce a new service to replace the withdrawn CBT Service 9 from September 23rd. Robert MacGregor said "We only need six or seven passengers every trip to break even so we are not asking for miracles". A letter complains of the withdrawal of some early morning and early evening CBT services. A CBT spokesman responded that the buses had been axed owing to lack of use but admitted that the new timetables had been printed before ECC had contracted replacements for some of them.

September 5th: Sewage improvement works in Station Road Brightlingsea will result in diversion of bus services. Cedric's will operate via Ladysmith Ave, High St., and Chapel Road while EN will use Victoria Place, Duke Street and Silcott Road.

October 4th: Students from Dedham are arriving late after EN made timetable and route changes. The bus due in Colchester later than before at 0850 but has been up to twenty minutes late. Students were having to leave lectures early to catch the bus home. but EN would, just a week after the change, re-time the afternoon bus.

October 9th: Tiptree Council complains that it was not consulted or advised of planned cuts in the bus service to Maldon and requested that the service was reinstated with reduced fares between 9am and 3pm.

October 16th: During the first few days of a crackdown on school bus safety it is claimed more than half the vehicles inspected were defective, with a third being ordered off the road immediately.

October 18th: Following an accident on October 2nd when Whiffens Bedford YRT GSX118N overturned in Bovingdon Lane, Bocking while carrying school children papers have been forwarded to the Crown Prosecution Service.

October 26th: C&BW carry a photo & advert placed by Hedingham offering for sale L81 (YNO481L) their unique Bedford YQT/Marshall Camair for £2,000 +vat. Described as "one owner from new, suitable for preservation group". The Confederation of Passenger Transport claims than only two buses were given immediate prohibitions during an Essex Police check on school buses. Some delayed prohibitions were cleared at testing stations without work being done on vehicles. Not all defect notices compromised safety, an EN vehicle received a defect notice for having chewing gum on a seat.

October 30th: The half year report from Channel Television group says that following the take-over of British Bus by the Cowie Group the production contract with their subsidiary, Creative Channel, would not be renewed by the new owners due to a decision not to continue with television on their buses.

October 31st: 60% of school buses tested in Chelmsford and Maldon were defective according to a police report. Only 54 of 141 vehicles stopped in a three week period complied with all safety regulations.

November 1st: From 4th the morning service from Dedham will change for the third time in two months, being extended back to start from Mistley and timed to arrive in Colchester well before 0900. The afternoon journey will operate via North Hill in response to requests from students. A woman has hit out at EN for leaving her stranded a week previously when the last bus to West Mersea had not arrived 45 mins

after the scheduled time. The bus concerned had been fired upon in West Mersea on an earlier journey and had two windows broken. Robin Orbell said the driver was shaken up but another bus went out as soon as it was free.

November 8th: A Stanway student frustrated at morning peak buses from Stanway and Lexden being full asks for more or bigger buses. EN say all buses are committed and its unlikely any additional ones can be found. A letter complains that Service 88 buses are running up to seven minutes early and there are no bus stops or timetables displayed in Ford Street.

November 15th: D R MacGregor responds to the complaints about Service 88 and offers to provide a timetable but feels that a bus stop would not be in keeping with the area.

November 21st: The Colchester Express a freepaper, illustrate an article on a possible site for a new Post Office at the junction of North Hill and High Street with photograph that includes one of the initial batch of long withdrawn CBT Atlanteans 55-60.

November 22nd: A bus driver was attacked in Rowhedge last night by a man wielding a 10" knife. Hedingham announce that the Transport Commissioners have given special dispensation for them to introduce, Service 15A from November 27th. There would be one journey to town leaving Stanway at 8.22 with a return journey starting from Colchester Institute at 16.15. The service will operate initially only on school or college days but will extended if there is a demand.

November 23rd. The East Anglian Daily Times states that in the attack at Rowhedge £42 was stolen. As a result of the attack buses had been taken off the road at 9pm the previous evening and would cease at the same time that evening.

November 25th: The EN driver who was attacked had only been with the company four months having previously driven buses in London without incident. Buses from Clacton, Harwich, Braintree and Chelmsford had terminated on the outskirts of town during the stoppage.

December 4th: Letters complain about the withdrawal of services following attacks on drivers, the lack of notices or advanced warning of this action. Two wrongs don't make a right and was it acceptable to leave passengers stranded and equally likely to attack. What was the position on ECC contracted services which are paid for from public funds, if an operator was not prepared to fulfil the contract why did another not step in; who pays the £10 taxi fare are questions posed.

December 5th: FirstBus announce their plans after being granted the Great Eastern rail franchise. The Walton to Colchester and Harwich to Manningtree stopping services will be extended to Liverpool Street. Improvements will be made to station lighting and security with more and better information points, improved car parking and bicycle facilities. People would be able to board a bus and purchase a ticket through to their rail destination. Sunday services would be doubled, and there would be a Maldon to Hatfield Peverel rail feeder at peak times.

The above items have appeared in the Evening Gazette, Essex County Standard or Coach & Bus Week

Comment: The recent batch of EN minibuses have a full height screen on the internal drivers cab door. While not providing full protection they should stop anyone grabbing the driver from behind. A similar style door is currently being fitted to earlier vehicles. It appears strange that during the two day withdrawal of late evening services buses on rural routes stopped on the outskirts of Colchester - surely running non-stop to the bus station would have been far safer for drivers and for those passengers dumped three miles short of their destination.

Hedingham Omnibuses produced a 4 page full colour timetable leaflet for the launch of their Service 49 Colchester Town Centre to Highwoods. Featuring L212 and pointing out the advantages of a low floor bus it contained the following message.

Dear Customer,

Welcome to HEDINGHAM OMNIBUSES new Service 49. This is a MONDAY to FRIDAY service replacing the Service 9 withdrawn by Colchester Borough Transport as unprofitable. Hedingham will do their utmost to promote this service. We will provide one of our super LOW FLOOR buses for the majority of journeys

There will also be comprehensive marketing including timetable leaflets for every home along the route. Please support this service and tell you friends

Hedingham Omnibuses will take up any bus service in Colchester withdrawn by the two big bus companies - with no burden to the tax payer. By the year 2000 Hedingham plans to be a major operator of bus services in the town.

Help us to achieve this ambition - support Service 49

Yours Sincerely

Robert MacGregor
Managing Director



Former Eastern National 1866 has been rebuilt to Greenway specification and is now number 430 in the Blackburn fleet. Seen in Darwen Bus Station.

A. OSBORNE

Thamesway

Allocation changes 24.11.96

200 BN-D/L(D), 203 BD-D/L(D), 205 BD-D/L(D), 206 BD-D/L(D), 209 BN-BD,
211 BN-D/L(D), 225 BD-D/L(D), 226 BD-BN, 235 BD-BN, 249 PD-D/L(D),
254 PD-BN, 258 PD-BN, 349 BN-BD, 350 BN-BD, 351 BN-BD, 352 BN-BD,
354 BN-BD, 356 BN-BD, 358 BN-BD, 389 VN-BD, 390 BN-PD, 391 BN-PD,
392 BN-PD, 393 BN-PD, 401 NEW-BN, 402 NEW-BN, 403 NEW-BN, 404 NEW-BN
405 NEW-BN, 406 NEW-BN, 407 NEW-BN, 408 NEW-BN, 409 NEW-BN,
410 NEW-BN.

249 is an accident write off.

The situation at Brentwood is unchanged from last month

Repaints

343, 350, 356, 366, 383.

Service Revision

W9 (LTB) Withdrawn from the deviation into the Highlands Hospital after 12th October but reinstated from 26th October. The Highlands Hospital closed some time ago, but a new housing development on part of the site has meant that buses are again from Green Dragoon Lane via what is now known as Highlands Village to regain the former routeing at Eversley Park Road.

Publicity

Amendment sheet for service 2 timetable for Sundays dated 6th October

Working

22.11.96 LTB Mobility Bus 854 seen working route 151.

Late News

369 (H380 OHK) is in advertising livery for West Park Nexus

General

Following two vicious attacks on Hadleigh drivers, all services operated from Hadleigh now terminate at 2200hrs. To combat these attacks, Thamesway are looking at a number of security devices like video surveillance cameras.

251 (F251 NJN) chassis no is 669003 20 905331
309 H310 LJN) chassis no is 669003 2P 024350
312 (H313 LJN) chassis no is 669003 2P 034451
306 (H306 LPU) Chassis no is 669003 058644
916 (K916 CVW) chassis no is 9SDK3016/1007

851-4 (N851-4 CPU) Marshall body nos are ML C36 020-023 and are named Odin, Zeus, Thor and Lokl. Seating specification is B17F as the lift is an integral part of the step (B17F is where a separate tail or side lift is fitted).

Man, Editor, Although the allocations above are from official sources, the Mercedes 401-410 are at Ponders End.

PAUL SPARKS CLACTON COLUMN

Five Thamesway Mercedes 608D's are currently at Clacton Depot awaiting disposal. These are Fleet No.'s 203, 204, 205, 206 and 225, (Registration No.'s C963 GCV, C978 GCV, C684 ECV, C957 GAF & D225 PPU respectively). Fleet No. 205 was, of course, originally Eastern National's Fleet No. 238.

In the paint shop at present is Leyland Olympian Fleet No. 4016, Registration No.C416 HJN. This will be the first Leyland Olympian to wear the newFirstBus logos along with the current Eastern National livery.

I would like to take this opportunity to apologise to any Group members or Company officials of Eastern National who may have taken the view that my reporting of the arrival and allocation of the new Dennis Lances was a little premature. The information was not through an official source, so I appreciate that the arrival dates and final allocations of these vehicles could differ slightly to those originally stated but I dispute rigorously claims made in last month's Essex Bus News that my article contained a number of errors. It has been common knowledge that these vehicles have been coming for a number of months now and obviously reporting in advance cannot bring with it total accuracy! It will be interesting to see how the actual situation evolves in comparison to my original reporting.

HEDINGHAM OMNIBUS NEWS

As I reported in last month's edition of Essex Bus News, Hedingham have acquired a second site on the Gorse Lane Industrial Estate in Clacton. This is what was the old Express Dairies site in Stephenson's Road. It is my understanding that Hedingham have now moved all their vehicles from their depot at Walton over to Clacton so that the depot at Walton can now be closed.

KSW NEWS

Continuing the pursuits of KSW Fleet No.2383 I am pleased to say that the vehicle is still very much in demand and still "up and running" despite the arrival of the month of December and the imminent arrival of winter. This Thursday, 12th December 1996, it will be taking a party of people from South Woodham Ferrers to Wembley on a private hire for an event, details of which are unknown. It is certainly a very brave person who would venture a journey on an open top bus in the middle of December!

LATE EASTERN NATIONAL NEWS

On Friday 6th December, EN Bristol VR Fleet No.3224, Registration No.AYG 848S was involved in a collision with two cars whilst performing a school's service on the road linking with Mersea island. Sadly one person, believed to be one of the car drivers was killed in the incident. The VR was towed to Clacton Depot. I saw the vehicle in the yard on Saturday, 7th December and can report that there was quite extensive damage to the front end. It presumably will be repaired but I report on this further in next month's issue of Essex Bus News.

The two open top Bristol VR's Fleet No.3500 & 3501, Registration No.'s WND 564L & NPU 974M are still in store at Walton along with the Westcliff-on-Sea 1939 Bristol K5G, Registration No. AJN 825.

COLCHESTER BOROUGH TRANSPORT

Greenway 355 entered service on 13.11.96. 347 went into the paint shop the same day and was on the road on 28.11.96, when 348 entered the paint shop. That will leave only 352 to be repainted.

On 15.11.96 Essex County Council confirmed that the Greenways, but not 463, met DiPTAC standards. Olympian 45 was returned to service on 2.12.96, having been up-graded to DiPTAC requirements.

On 6.11.96 Atlanteans 64 and 77 were taken to Ipswich Buses, where 64's engine was removed and fitted to 77. 64 was towed back to Magdalen Street on 19.11.96.

From 18.11.96 Turner Road was closed to through traffic, just north of the General Hospital. As a result, service 8 was diverted via Mile End Road and Mill Road, and a shuttle service, numbered X8, ran between North Station Lay-by and the General Hospital. ANs were used at first, then a Tiger, and finally midi-bus 123.

Because of a staff shortage at Eastern National, CBT operated the evening journeys on services 2, 8 and 67 on 7.12.96.

On 10.11.96 Olympians 47, 48 and 49 were used on a LUL replacement service for Capital CityBus, running between Leytonstone and Bethnal Green. 41, 46 and 47 were used the same way on 17.11.96. On 16.11.96 ANs 85, 86, 88 and 90 were used on a contract for Great Eastern Railway between Mark's Tey and Sudbury football ground.

On 18.11.96 Tigers 100 and 104 were hired to Countryliner of Waterloo. On 21.11.96 100 replaced a coach that had failed on East Hill on National Express service 084. It ran to Victoria and back to Clacton. The following day 104 did a round trip. The failed vehicle was recovered by Ipswich Buses.

On 9.12.96 most single fares, other than 35 and 60p, were increased by 5p. A new facility is a day rover ticket costing £1.75 (90p children) and usable after 9.00 on Monday to Friday and all day on Saturday. It is also accepted on Eastern National services.

The burger wars on the back of bus tickets continue. On 18.11.96 Burger King replaced McDonalds.