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Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

serving Essex since 1964

www.essexbus.org.uk

Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group - Directory

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A 12 month subscription is £18.50 by First Class post, renewable in January or July.

Data Protection Act: Members' names, addresses, subscription renewal dates and postal rates are held on computer for the purpose of administration. If you object to your information being held in this way, please contact the Membership Secretary.

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Missing, defective or damaged EBN?
Write to the Membership Secretary for a replacement.

TIMETABLE SUBSCRIPTIONS

Join this scheme to receive Essex County Council timetable books and updates. Please contact Derek Stebbing for information or visit www.essexbus.org.uk

YOUR REPORTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Members reports are always welcome. Please send them to the relevant Sub-Editor.

Photos (prints, slides or digital images - in JPG format) are also welcome - please send to David Harman.

The Editors exercise the normal discretion to publish contributions in full, in part, or not at all and cannot guarantee publication in any particular month.

Views expressed in EBN do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Group.

Every effort is made to ensure accuracy but the Group cannot accept responsibility for any errors published.

PUBLICATION SALES

All orders for publications should be sent to:

Owen Woodliffe
196 Sinclair Road Chingford
London E4 8PT

Owen also stocks a wide range of colour photos - send SAE with your requirements.

B/W PHOTO SALES

All orders for photos from lists enclosed with EBN should be sent to:

Lyn Watson
c/o Barrons Chartered Accountants,
Monometer House, Rectory Grove,
Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 2HN

Prints of specific EN (and predecessor) vehicles can also be supplied: email with requirements: lynw@barrons-bds.com

ESSEX BUS NEWS ~ Editors

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Eastern National Enthusiasts Guild

David Harman - as above

Dates for your diary

■ EBN PRESS DATES

For inclusion in EBN dated: reports should reach Editors by: planned despatch date:

July	5 July	14 July
August	2 August	11 August
September	6 September	15 September

Please note that the **planned** despatch date may change for all sorts of reasons. The **actual** despatch day is posted to the website as soon as it is known. Please allow reasonable time for postal delays (at least seven working days) before claiming non-receipt. Replacements can **only** be obtained from the Membership Secretary (address opposite). None of the Editors hold spares, so there is no point in contacting them. They cannot help!

■ ROCHFORD MEETINGS

Venue: **Pullman Suite, Freight House, Rochford**, (adjacent to Rochford station; Arriva 7/8 pass nearby). **19.30** onwards. Refreshments available. All members and guests are very welcome. £1 donation towards room hire please. *Richard Delahoy*

Spring/Summer 2006 season:

- ▶ **Tuesday 11 July** - informal social evening - bring along your photos and models to display and be ready for a gossip!

Autumn season dates will be

September 12, October 10, November 7 and December 12, 2006.

One of the autumn meetings will be devoted to a look back to the start of **bus deregulation** 20 years ago this October. If any members can contribute slides, video or memories of the events of that first traumatic year, please contact Richard Delahoy: richard@signal-training.com or phone **01702 588590** (not after 2100 please).

■ COLCHESTER MEETINGS

Venue: Downstairs room at the **Friends Meeting House, Church Street, Colchester**, just south of "Jumbo" (the water tower) and behind the Mercury Theatre. Town centre bus stops and parking are nearby. **20.00 to 22.00** (doors open at **19.30**). Refreshments available. All members and guests are very welcome. £1 donation towards room hire please. We can now show prints, slides or digital photos. *Dave Arnold*

2006 programme:

- ▶ **Friday 8 September** - *Graham Belfall*: 'Picture show on Wales'
- ▶ **Friday 13 October** - *Keith Woods*: 'East Anglian Buses ~ a Personal View'
- ▶ **Friday 10 November** - *Fred Lawrence*: 'On the Company's Expenses'!
- ▶ **Friday 9 December** - *Michael Yelton, practising lawyer* (author of "Trams, Trolleybuses and Buses and the Law") and *bus enthusiast* - topic to be advised.

■ 2006 TOUR PROGRAMME

- ▶ **Saturday 24 June** - **The 3 Counties Tour** - Departing from Redbridge in a luxury coach of **Genial Travel**, thence via Colchester > Boreham > Shenfield > Brentwood > Gallows Corner > Newbury Park > Gants Hill > Redbridge to **Emblings** of Guyhirn (Cambridgeshire), **Norfolk Green** at Kings Lynn (Norfolk), lunch at **Kings Lynn** bus station, **Fowlers** of Holbeach Drove (Lincolnshire), and finally, a stop for afternoon

Cover: **Blue Triangle RT3062** on the Sunday 363 at Braintree on 6 May. *Chris Stewart*

tea at **Peterborough** bus station.

Fare: £20. A booking form was in **EBN504**, or download from the website www.essexbus.org.uk

- ▶ **Saturday 2 September - Essex area tour** - details to be finalised.

Dave Arnold

■ **RALLIES, OPEN DAYS ETC.**

- ▶ **Sunday 18 June: "Nostalgia Day"**, a country bus running event for Father's day, London Bus Preservation Trust, Cobham, Surrey. www.lbpt.org/events.html
- ▶ **Sunday 25 June: Hemel Hempstead Running Day**, from Hemel bus station over former LT routes; 10.00 - 17.30, with frequent connections to/from the rail station. Timetable/programme, £5 from Peter Cartwright, 54 Guinions Road, High Wycombe, HP13 7NX.
- ▶ **Sunday 2 July: Gravesend & Northfleet Classic Bus Running Day**, classic bus services in and around Gravesend and Northfleet. Timetables and programmes: £6 in advance from Country Bus Rallies, 19 Hampton Way, East Grinstead, RH19 4SG.
- ▶ **Sunday 9 July: Bus Event 2006 at the East Anglia Transport Museum**. Rally of preserved and still in service buses and coaches; 10.30 - 17.30. Free half-hourly service between Lowestoft and Beccles, and P&R service from Gisleham school (no parking at Museum). www.eatm.org.uk

■ **BLUE TRIANGLE ESSEX SUNDAY ROUTES**

- ▶ **Sundays 18 June, 16 July, 6 and 27 August, 17 September.** See **EBN504** for details

From the Editor ...

In the light of reduced costs for EBN and growing income from photo sales, the sales stall and coach tours, the Committee has decided EBN will be mailed to **ALL** members by **first class post**, starting in July. Also, from July, there will be a **single subscription rate** of **£18.50 first class**, a reduction of £1 for those previously taking the first class option.

We believe this makes membership even better value for money, and hope members agree. If you do, why not: (1) recruit a friend? new members are always welcome. (2) continue to support the photo sales, sales stall and tours? Profits from these help keep the subs down.

Publicity and Small Operator News: there is little news this month, and Ian Ransom has held it over until July. Mark Garrett has had **NO Arriva East Herts & Essex** reports at all; hence no column. Both Editors would really appreciate reports from members please!

David Harman

Tony Lodge

We were very sorry to learn of the death of Tony Lodge of Lodge's Coaches, High Easter, on Sunday 21 May, at the age of 75. Tony was the second generation to run Lodge's, which was established back in the 1920s. He had been at the helm of the business for over forty years until the late 1990s. The funeral was held on May 30 at St Mary's Church, High Easter. The Group has sent the Lodge family a letter of condolence.

**14th May 2006 ~
The third Hedingham Shed Bash**



This tour had been billed as "Five Depots for £10", but in the event, owing to circumstances beyond our control, it became a Four Depot Tour with a grand circular trip of Sudbury and Great Cornard. Read on.

Three and a half years had passed since the group's last Hedingham tour, so here was another opportunity to see the varied fleet of this always interesting operator. Tour coach for the day was L311 (W311 CJN), a Volvo B10M / Plaxton Paragon, ably handled by our two drivers, David and Gary.

Pickups completed on schedule, we made for our first depot at Tollesbury. Hedingham acquired these premises from Osborne's in 1997 and a legacy of the Osbornes era is the substantial depot building, sufficient to keep all the current allocation under cover. Sixteen vehicles were present including four Bristol VR's, three Leyland Olympians and three Leyland Lynx and everything possible including the depot sweeper was moved for photography.

On to Kelvedon where Hedingham occupy part of the former Eastern National/ Tillings/Moore's depot, the remainder be used by various industrial concerns. Twelve vehicles were present here including two recently acquired former Metroline Darts

L108 HHV and P104 OLX, and again the cameras were kept busy.

Now followed a trundle through the pleasant Essex countryside the via Coggeshall, Earls Colne and Halstead to reach Hedingham. Seen in its usual lay-by just outside house that was a former Midland Red Ford, now a cafe. It must have spent many more years here than it ever spent in service with Midland Red.

Hedingham depot provided the usual variety including recently acquired former London Central Volvo L345 (N427 JBV), and preserved vehicles EX 6566 and VNO 859. Those fortunate to have been on the group's 1997 tour will recall the splendid trip on the former over the hills to Sudbury. We were able to appreciate several examples of the company's expanding low-floor fleet and as always L84 was present, now preserved by the company and available since the service if needed.

So far things had run closely to schedule but as we made our way towards Sudbury this was about to change. Without going into detail, 'road closure' signs indicated the

above: Hedingham depot with B10M Paragon L311 and Olympian L345. David Harman



above: Depot 1 - Tollesbury
Panorama of B6's L308
and L207, Lynx L150 and
L322



left: sweeper S480 DCD,
which bears a passing
resemblance to *Noo-Noo*,
the naughty vacuum
cleaner in BBC-TV's
Teletubbies.

below: Depot 2 - Kelvedon:
"Is that about right?"
Gary reverses ex-
Brighton & Hove L194.





above: **Depot 3 - Hedingham:** "Mind those walls, Dave!"
B10RLE L340 inches out of the main depot.

below: **Depot 4 - Clacton:** The Olympian is making inroads into the extensive VR fleet. Ex-London Central L336 poses for the assembled cameras.

Iain Stewart's
Hedingham
Photo Album



northern part of Sudbury was 'out of bounds' and despite a circular tour of Great Cornard followed by another of Sudbury, Gary's efforts to access Hedingham's depot it on the Chiltern Industrial Estate proved in vain. We were forced to escape via Acton and Great Waldingfield to reach the A134 east of Sudbury and head for Clacton. At a road junction a masked police officer and car stood guard, leaving us to speculate what fate had befallen Sudbury's residents.

The upshot of this, combined with Gary's route knowledge of the ever-expanding north Colchester suburbs, was that we arrived in Clacton slightly early and were able to fully appreciate the extra time. Thirty vehicles are seen here with L334 out on service on route 130. There was so much of interest that we spent around 1¼ hours here, surely some sort of record. Amongst the 13 VR's present was a former Eastern National example STW 30W and there was a good representation of the coach fleet including Volvo W649 FUM which had arrived the previous day in exchange for a L135.

Depot 5 - Sudbury
Chemists to
blame as usual!
~ East Anglian
Daily Times
15 May 2006

Crews battle to stop chemicals disaster

Residents ordered indoors as fumes spill from tanks

In spite of the extended Clacton visit good progress along the A133 and A12 ensured return times were close to schedule. Despite the loss of Sudbury we still managed to see 78 vehicles (out of 106) from Hedingham's fleet, a most enjoyable day.

Our thanks once again go to Hedingham for allowing our visits, to Dave and Gary, our drivers/shunters and also to their two colleagues who assisted at Hedingham depot.

Richard Huggins

p.s. For those tour participants worried about any friends and relatives in Sudbury, the *East Anglian Daily Times* reported the following day that chemical drums at Antec International premises (unfortunately rather close to Hedingham's depot), had overheated and Suffolk emergency services had leapt into action. It seems matters were under control by the evening with no known casualties.

Chelmsford Park & Ride

The Sandon Park & Ride has exceeded all expectations since it opened in March. Over 600 cars per day have been parked at the site and over 1,400 customers per day have used the service. Essex County Council are now accelerating plans to expand capacity.

A planning application has been made to Chelmsford Borough Council to expand the site by approximately 320 spaces. This will be accommodated on land already purchased at the rear of the existing car park. It is hoped that once planning and financial approvals have been obtained, work will commence, with the extended site being ready for Christmas this year.

David Harman

with acknowledgements to Kate Trindle, Essex County Council

Spare buses now seem to park in the north-east corner of the car park, rather than on the stand by the terminal building.

Essex Service Changes

<i>Operator</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Route</i>	<i>Days of operation</i>	<i>Terminals and Notes</i>
Arriva East Herts & Essex				
	5 Jun 06	10	M-S	Harlow Town Station - Church Langley (circular) Daytime frequency imcreased from 4 bph to 5 bph.
Ensign Bus Co				
	1 Jul 06	77	M-S	Tilbury - Lakeside. New service operating every 30 minutes.
		83	M-S	Chadwell St Mary - Lakeside New service operating every 30 minutes.
		X80	Daily	Bluewater - Tilbury, Asda Store. Revised to operate every 30 minutes (M-S) Bluewater to Lakeside with an hourly extension on Saturday to Grays. Sunday and PH hourly service Bluewater to Tilbury.
First				
	28 May 06	74	Daily	Colchester North Station - Clacton, Jackson Road Minor timetable revision.
		74B	M-S	Colchester North Station - Clacton, Jackson Road Minor timetable revision
		76	Daily	Colchester North Station - Clacton, Jackson Road. Service now operates to/from Greenstead. Tesco Store and Clacton on M-S. (Sunday: Colchester to Clacton)
		78	Daily	Colchester High Street - Brightlingsea, Regent Road Minor timetable revision with changes to stopping places in Colchester.
		103	M-S	Harwich Bus Station - Colchester Bus Station Minor timetable revision
		104	M-S	Harwich Bus Station - Colchester Bus Station Minor timetable revision
	5 Jun 06	15A	M-F	Southend Bus Station - Basildon Bus Station Minor timetable revision.
		21	M-S	Southend Central Bus Station - Canvey, Eastern Esplanade Minor timetable revision.
Hedingham Omnibuses				
	2 May 06	3	M-F	Colchester, High Street - The Hythe, Tesco Store
		4	M-F	Tollgate Medical Centre - Colchester, High Str
		80	M-F	Fordham, Memorial - Boxted, Homedale Corner Minor route revision to all three services - they will no longer serve the temporary bus station in Colchester due to traffic congestion.

David Tomlin

Infrastructure News

COLCHESTER BUS STATION: The start of Phase 2 eventually took place on Monday 5 June. Most of the old bus station is now closed, and there is no access from East Hill. All buses enter and leave via Queen Street. The Temporary Bus Station now occupies the lower half of the site (see overleaf). A new stop has been placed in Queen Street, to serve routes that would otherwise have passed through the bus station.

David Harman

Colchester Temporary Bus Station

Phase 2: Monday 5th June 2006 onwards

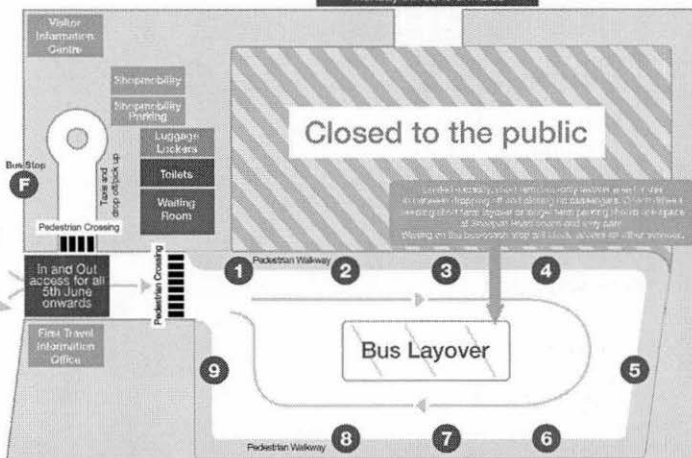
Greyfriars Bus Stop

High Street

No Access to Temporary Bus Station
Monday 5th June onwards

East Hill

Queen Street



Where to catch your bus at the temporary bus station

Service Number	Destination	Operator	Bus Stop
1	Shrub End/Aintree Ave/Progate	Network Colchester/First Sun	F (Queen St)
2/2b	North Station/Highway Road/Bus	Network Colchester	F (Queen St)
2c Sunday	North Station/General Hospital	First	F (Queen St)
3 Mon-Fri	Colchester High Street	Heddingham	J Osborne St
4 Mon-Fri	Tolgate	Heddingham	W High St/J Osborne St
5 Mon-Fri	Leaden	Network Colchester	5
6/6a/6c Sunday	Monswick	Network Colchester/First	7
X22 daily	Stansted Airport	First	1
50	Tollesbury/Layer	Heddingham/Network Colchester (Sat)	5
51	Old Heathway Lane/Lea Valley/Lea Valley	First	8
64/64a daily	Hythe/Rensselaer	First	4
65 daily	Leaden/Highways/Stanway/Tolgate	First	2
66/66a	Stamford/Highways/Stanway	First	3
66 daily/66a	North Station/Highway Road/Bus	First	9
67a/67b/67c daily	Burtonville/Walton/West Marina	First	7
70 daily	Leaden/Marke Tay/Coggeshall/Brainhoe	First	5
71/71c daily	Leaden/Marke Tay/Walton/Chelmsford	First	5
74/74b daily	Greenstead Road/Lea/Walton/Aintree/Thornington Cross/Clacton	First	8
74/74b/76 Sun & 1st M-F journeys	North Station	First	9
75 daily	Shrub End/200/Tipton/Malden	First	9
76	Greenstead Road/Lea/Elmstead Market/Weekly/Clacton	First	8
76/76a daily/76x	Greenstead Road/Lea/Walton/Aintree/Thornington Cross/Brightlingsea	First/Cedrics	V. Z. Greyfriars (High St)
76/76a daily/76x	Town Centre also North Station (see and Sun only) (Sun only)	First/Cedrics	9
80 Mon-Fri	Mill End/Barsted or Leaden/Eggham Green/Fordham	Heddingham	P (Head Street) V/W High St/J Osborne St
83	GI Tay/Coggeshall/Buses or Colne Engine	Network Colchester	5

Service Number	Destination	Operator	Bus Stop
84	Gen Hosp/Gt Horkesley/Raydon/Sudbury	Chambers	6
86 Wednesday	Fratting/Gt Bentley/Angers Green	First	1
87/87a	Ardleigh/Oadham	Network Colchester	6
88 daily/88a/88b	Leaden/Eggham Ash Green/Halstead/Wakes Colne/Halstead	First/Heddingham	5
92	Bich/Tollesbury	Heddingham/Network Colchester (Sat)	5
93 daily/93a/93c	East Bergholt/Spewich	Network Colchester	9
102 Sunday	Ardleigh/Oadham/Manningtree/Dovercourt/Harwich	First	6
103/104	Ardleigh/Manningtree/Dovercourt/Harwich	First	6
105/107/109	Crookford/Gt Bromley/Thorpe-Le-Soken/Frinton/Walton	First	6
175	Monkwearth/Blackthorn/Albion/Fringing	First/Heddingham	7
176 Monday	Puldon/West and East Mersea	Heddingham	6
247	Langham/Oadham/East Bergholt	Network Colchester	9
350 daily	Liverpool or Clacton	National Express	1
484 daily	Walton/London or Clacton/Walton	National Express	1
600 Thursday	Jaywick/Clacton/Holland/Frinton/Walton	Heddingham	6
605 Sunday (summer only)	Gt Bromley/Thorpe-Le-Soken/Frinton/Walton	First	6
753	W Bergholt/Sudbury/Bury St Edmunds	Chambers	5
755/756	Langham/Stanford St Mary/Hedleigh/Spewich	Carlars	5

Services run Monday - Saturday unless stated otherwise. Information correct at time of printing June 2006. All services that previously used the bus station are included. For areas served better from other town centre bus stops, see North Station and the General Hospital please see other information provided/contact the bus operators direct.

For information on:

Details of Phase 2 phone 01206 282888 weekdays 8.30am - 5.30pm. In an emergency outside these hours 546444 or visit www.colchester.gov.uk and click on 'Bus Station Redevelopment'.

How this fits in to Colchester's regeneration plans, phone 507885 or visit www.colchester.gov.uk and click on 'Regeneration in Colchester'.



We apologise for any inconvenience you may have experienced while we make these important improvements.

■ FIRST ESSEX

New vehicles

Following the use of a demonstrator some time ago, two Plaxton Primos are to be delivered to Harwich for evaluation by First Group alongside the Solos.

The new Scania's for the Chelmsford Park & Ride have been seen at Scania UK's Hull facility, three labelled with chassis numbers 1854076, 1854138 and 1854139 being noted.

Allocation changes

Period 2: 27 Apr to 28 May 2006

FGC=First Group cascade, i.e. transfer to/from another First fleet

(A)=acquired, including vehicles on loan; Anc=Ancillary fleet; RES=spare/retained (licensed); D/L(RES)=spare/reserve (delicensed); D/L(D)=delicensed for disposal;

DS=Driving School

46119 RES-sold; 46125 RES-sold; 46126 RES-sold; 62524 RES-sold

Repaints: *full list to follow next month*

By observation: 34011, 34311, 46178

Disposals:

46119 to Erith Commercials for component recovery (axles and engine) and scrap.

46125/6 - confirmation awaited.

62524 still physically at CN on 8th June.

Other Vehicle News

Scania 65733 is confirmed as having Wright body number J489.

In answer to a query, Dart 42483 remains off the road awaiting repair after accident damage.

In EBN505, it was reported that 51780 and 51803 were both in use at Harwich on 23rd April. In fact it appears that 51780 was due for MOT at BN on 18th, and went for this early when BN51803 was transferred to DT on the night of 11th. 51803 was used on the 12th and briefly on 13th but urgent repairs put it out of use again until 18th. 51780 meanwhile passed its MOT, returned to DT and had re-entered service on routes 22A/B by mid afternoon on 13th. 51803 was taken to CN for checking on 18th (and may have been used), moved again to CF on 24th and back to BN on 26th for rectification work. It had returned to DT by 7th June but had not re-entered service, leaving 51780 still in use.

34288 had been off the road at DT since 12th April, but has now had its engine repaired, passed its MOT at BN on 2nd June and is currently at Harris for repaint. In the early hours of 3rd June, 43800 was regrettably stolen from the depot but later recovered, albeit with some damage to bumpers, skirts and one window which was all repaired in time for the Monday morning. 53139 received body damage on the way out of the yard as were various cars in the street.

VEHICLE WORKINGS

Unusual sightings:

May 2nd Route 78 CR34018 on 193/88A; CR67006 on 66.

3rd Route 78 CR34013 on 193/88A; CR34307 on 64; CR67004 on 64; CF34818 on 351.

4th CR34305 on 64A.

5th CF43730 and CF60103 on 352.

8th CF60103 on 33.

9th CR34304 on 66A; Route 66 CR43741 on 61; DT46802 on 103; CR67005 on 65.

- 10th Route 61 SLF CR43715 on 70; CR46829 on 66; CN67010 on 18.
CF43729 and 43731 both on 352, CF43730 on X30.
- 11th CR46830 on 64A.
- 12th CR34303 on 64A; Route 61 CR43716 on 64A; Route 66 CR43741 on 61; CR46829 on 64A; CR47102 on 65; CR67005 on 65. CF43729 and 43731 on 352, BE46821 on 42.
- 13th CF60103 on 33, CR67008 on 65.
- 14th CR34305 on 1.
- 15th CR47103 on 65, Olympian CF34818 and CF60103 on 352 (not usual double deck line).
- 16th CR34304 on 66A; CR34307 on 64.
- 17th CR34302/15 on 64A; CR67004 on 64A; CR67008 on 65.
CF43730 on X30, BE46821 on 351.
- 18th CR46829/30 on 64A, CR34014 (78 branded) on 70, CF60102 on 352 (also 17th).
- 19th Route 66 CR43741 on 61 (later 71), CR43743 on 64. Olympian CR34303 on 66A, Scania CR65651 on evening 68.
- 22nd CR34056 on 64; CR67008 on 65. CF43730/1 both on 352, CF42482 and BE46827 on 33, BE46821 on 36.
- 23rd CR34310 on 64A. CF42487 on 42, BE46827 on 352 (still also showing fleetnumber 2827).
- 24th Route 78 CR34018 on 71; CR34309 on 66A; CR46830 on 66; Route 65 CR65687 on 88; CR67006 on 64.
- 25th Route 67 CR67002 on 65. BN43713 on 100, BE46808 on 352 (and 26th), BE46812 on 36, BE46826 on 41.
- 26th CR47106 on X22; Route 61 CR43716 on 66; Route 65 CR65685 on 64.
- 27th CF60102 on 33. CR67006 on 64A.
- 29th CR34302 on X22, one of S-TWC batch Darts on X30 (04.00 ex Stansted). CR34301 on loan to DT (covering 34285).
- 30th CR34310 on 64, CR34012 on 61 and 78; CR34315 on 78s; CR46829, 47103 and 67004 on 66A; CR47101 on 78, CR47102 on 70; Route 64 CR65650 on 65. CR34315 apparently on X22 duplicate (to 20110). CF34815 on 48, BE46808 on 352, BE46826 on 72.
- 31st Route 66 CR43742 on 64; CR67006 on CN75/76 (seen on 10.30 75 CR-MN).
- June 1st CF34816 on 11.05 CF-BD 351; CF43729 on 352; CF65728 on evening 352.
- 2nd CF47229 on 352.
- 3rd CR67001 (67 branded) on 14.05 service 70.
- 5th CR34056 on 65, Scania CR62408 on 61, CR47102 on 17.55 service 61, CR47106 on 64. BE46812 on 46, BE46813 on 351, BE46816 on 35, BE46821 on 352. CF43730 on 352, CF47221 on 42, CF46827 on 72.

OTHER NEWS

ECW Olympians

Olympian CF34818 is reported out of use with engine failure, and its future is uncertain. CF34816 is usually outstationed at Dunmow where it works dead to Chelmsford for the 05.55 service 33 to Stansted and 509 Dunmow-Colchester (working back dead to Chelmsford, where it can see daytime use). CF34807 usually substitutes if necessary. CF34815 remains in use at CF as the only other ECW-bodied Olympian in the fleet. It is also reported that the 03.05 Sunday Chelmsford-Stansted and 04.00 return are usually a double deck working, to cater for returning nightclubbers.

Personal

First Essex Marketing Manager, Colin Riches has moved on to pastures new. We thank Colin for all his help over the years, and wish him every success in his new job. Colin's role is now undertaken by Jessica Broom, formerly Promotions Manager, and we wish her well.

Sources: Own observations, with many thanks to *First Essex* and to A Bird, T Clark, J Clayton, D Edwards, M Farmer, I Hardie, A Kelleher, J Podgorski, J Salmon, C Sigston, 'Solo', A Toms, G Toon, R Webb, R Whitley, J Wilson, *Essex Bus*, *South West* and *UKBusFleetNews* y-groups, *Real Bus News*, *LOTS*, *PSV Circle*, *Terminus*.

Chris Stewart



above: **ABUS XHK221X** at Westbury-on-Trym on the afternoon of the Bristol Harbourside rally/running day having been taken there by your truly - I lived in Westbury for about 8 months in 1977/78 and used to catch Bristol OC VRs into the City on route 1 from Henbury to the Centre.

below: **KOO790V** at Bristol rally having been taken by Nick Field.

Chris Stewart's
First
Retro
Photo Diary



■ ARRIVA SOUTHEND LIMITED

Vehicles in

The three new vehicles for route 498 were due to be delivered during the week commencing 5th June, although they have not been reported as arriving at the time of writing (9th June). They will be:

3971	YE06 HPX	VDL SB120/Wrightbus Cadet B28D 14020/K875
3972	YE06 HPY	VDL SB120/Wrightbus Cadet B28D 14021/K876
3973	YE06 HPZ	VDL SB120/Wrightbus Cadet B28D 14022/K877

Vehicles out

DAF 6221 has been withdrawn at Grays. Its replacement is DLA263 (ASC Fleetnumber 6230) which has come from store at Southend. 6230 was seen on working the 498 on 8th and 9th June still displaying 'Arriva serving London', TC garage code and London fleetnumber.

6220/2/3 are due for transfer to Arriva North West when the Cadets arrive. However, 6230 (DLA263) is likely to remain on the 498 until the end of the school year.

Arriva Southend provides garaging and support for the "Southend SOS bus", a mobile centre that is parked in Southend's clubbing district on Friday and Saturday nights to provide a refuge for people in trouble. **G649 EKA** is a former North Western, London & Country and Arriva Southern Counties East Lancs bodied Dennis Dominator, similar to ones still in service in Southend, but it has never operated for Arriva Southend. Behind it is one of the 13 ex London DLA class deckers currently in store at Southend.

Richard Delahoy



TfL route developments

Arriva Kent Thameside (through the Arriva Southend operating subsidiary) have been successful in retaining routes 256/346 in the recent TfL tender round (tranche 220).

The tenders have been let on the basis of the existing vehicles being painted red and receiving a "refresh", probably at Pickering's, Thurmaston, over the next few months. This will also include the removal of the 3-track number blind equipment, which will be replaced by TfL standard one piece number blinds.

Schoolday only route 370D has been lost to First.

Branding

Two East Lancs bodied Darts and one unspecified double decker are to receive route 29 branding in the near future.

Several Dominators allocated to route 1 have lost their route branding upon repaint.

Other News

Southend's 1755 and 5404 were visitors to the Arriva Southern Counties bus driver of the year competition at Detling near Maidstone on 14th May. Driver Steve Peachment from Southend was runner up in the competition and overall winner of the Highway Code section. Southend depot won the company 5-a-side competition!

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Matthew Arnold and Chris Stewart



Vehicles in

Dart SLF/ Caetano (HX51 LSN). From Classic, Annfield Plain;

This has been given fleetnumber 351. After preparation at Old Heath it entered service on 17th May on 8A, in full Classic livery.

Optare Solo (W427 CWX). From TGM ex Crystals. Received in red on 12th May and repainted into TGM blue/white. To Old Heath for service preparation by 22nd May before entering service on the 23rd on 247.

Leyland Olympian 346.(F246 MTW) from Haverhill (Burtons). Arrived on 23rd May. First used on schools, then 8 from 24th.

Alexander Dennis Dart/Plaxton (LK55 KZZ) from Classic, Annfield Plain. This has been given fleetnumber 530. This entered service on Saturday 3rd June.

Dennis Dart/ Caetano Nimbus (X198 FOR) from Haverhill (Burtons). This has provisionally been given fleetnumber 998.

A second Scania Omnidiekkka is due for delivery on 10th July.

Vehicles out

DAFs 358/9; withdrawn.

Metrobus TVE 804 to Haverhill (Burton's.)

Volvo B10BLE/ Alexander 381 to Haverhill (Burton's).

This had had its route 2 branding removed prior to transfer.

Vehicle Workings

The ECC Saturday workings of 50 and 92 are now normally low floor throughout, using generic SLF/ Caetanos and the SLF/Pointer.

Unusual sightings:

May 2nd 107 on 1; 309 (8 branded) on 1; 302 (8 branded) on 83; 367 (1 branded) on 2/B;
TVE 804 on 5.
3rd 109 (2 branded) on 83 & 87; 310 (8 branded) on 2.
9th 360 on 5; 373 on 8A.
10th 366 (1 branded) on 8A.
11th 108 (2 branded) on 83 and 87.
18th 360 on school service 728.
19th 108 (2 branded) on 247; 109 (2 branded) on 8.
23rd 109 (2 branded) on 83 and 87.
24th 351 on 1; 302 on 8E (usually SLF).
30th 109 (2 branded) on 8.
31st 303 on 8E.

Operations News

On 8th May Colchester High Street was closed, between 1900 and 2100, due to a civic reception held as a result of Colchester United being promoted to the Premiership. There were diversions to routes 1/E, 2/E, 8/E as follows:

- 1/E eastbound; Maldon Road, Southway, St Botolphs Circus, Magdalen St, Brook St, East Hill, Bus Station, East Hill.
- 2/E eastbound; Middleborough, Balmerne Hill, then as 1/E eastbound.
- 8/E southbound; Middleborough, Balmerne Hill, Southway, St Botolphs Circus, Mersea Road.

On the morning of 10th May, Colchester High Street was closed again, this time due to a fire in an underground cable. Diversions were as above with additionally 5, 83, 87, 247 affected, but not evening routes 1E, 2E or 8E.

When the second phase of the temporary Colchester bus station opened on 5th June, eastbound 93s became non stop between the bus station and East Bay, because they are no longer able to exit the bus park via East Hill. Queen Street, St Botolphs Street, St Botolphs Circus, Magdalen Street and Brook Street will be the diversionary route until at least 2010 when the new permanent bus station is open.

Coaches

Harris B10M/Premiere (T600 BCL) was present again on 2nd May, but had gone by 9th May.

Burton's B10M/Premiere (T300 BCL) was present again on 9th May. It retains Colchester Coachways names. It had gone by end of May.

Other News

Olympians 347-9 no longer have operational dot matrix destination displays. They now use paper notices.

All the Volvo B10BLEs have now been fitted with three-track number blinds.

Burton's D10M/Alexander (G619 OTV) was present for repaint. It left the week ending 13th May.

At Old Heath, the ex Supreme yard is no longer used by Network Colchester.

The former A&O Travel shop at St Botolphs Street has been acquired by Galloway Travel for the same use.

Glovers of Ashbourne, Derbyshire have acquired former Colchester Leyland Lynx 35 (E35 EVW) from Dove Valley Poultry, Ashbourne. It is currently operating in Dove Valley grey.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Richard Delahoy, David Harman and John Podgorski

Hedingham

New vehicle

additional details to **EBN504**

L346 EU06 KCX ADL Dart MPD SFD6BACR46GW88688 / ADL 5248/1 B29F

Allocated to Clacton.

Acquired vehicle

from *National Holidays (970)*, 5/2006

L347 W649 FUM Volvo B10M-62 051905 / Plaxton Premiere 350 0012VUP0644 C53F
new 3/2000 to Wallace Arnold, Leeds.

This was delivered to Clacton depot on the day of the Group tour (14 May). It was in livery but awaited signwriting.

Subsequent disposals

Former **L151** (F151 NPU) Leyland Swift/Wadham Stringer was recently offered for sale on *eBay* by Fantazy (sic) Enterprises (dealer?) of Ely, Cambs. It appeared to be in near-original condition and was still in Hedingham colours. It sold for £620.

Allocations - June 2006

Hedingham	[HD]	Lynx	L196, L200, L206
		Dart	L312, L325, L328
		Lance	L211, L212
		B6	L297, L319
		B10M bus	L301
		B7RLE	L340
		Olympian	L337
		B7TL	L330
		(14)	
		service vehicle	W761 TRE - Vauxhall Astra van
Clacton	[CN]	Leopard	L84
		PD2	EX 6566 (Gt Yarmouth CT)
		Lynx	L321
		Dart	L210, L326, L335, L338, L343, L346
		B6	L287, L303, L304, L320
		VR	L199, L202, L235, L236, L245, L248, L249, L251, L253
			L255, L289, L292, L293
		Olympian	L160, L300, L305, L307, L313, L314, L336
		(40)	
		B10M coach	L244, L285, L286, L290, L295, L299, L323, L324, L347
Kelvedon	[KN]	service vehicles	L942 APV - Proton car
			N316 HGP - Iveco tow-truck
			P380 RAH - Vauxhall Astra van
		Lynx	L318
		Dart	L198, L241, L342, L344
		B6	L258, L296
		VR	L167, L168, L194, L197, L254
		Olympian	L306, L310
		(16)	
		B10M coach	L281, L311
Kelvedon	[KN]	service vehicles	N108 CAR - Vauxhall Astra van

Sudbury	[SY]	(16)	Tiger bus	L122
			Dart	L339
			B6	L208
			VR	L237, L246
			Olympian	L331, L332, L333, L341, L345
			Tiger coach	L148, L233
			B10M coach	L242, L282, L291, L298
			service vehicles	A391 NVX - Volvo tow-truck
				N107 CAR - Vauxhall Astra van
Tollesbury	[TY]	(18)	Lynx	L150, L322, L327
			Dart	L334
			B6	L207, L243, L283, L308
			VR	L252, L261, L262, L288
			Olympian	L315, L316, L317
			Tiger coach	L124
			B10M coach	L309, L329
			service vehicles	M680 TNO - Ford Mondeo estate car
				S480 DCD - Johnson sweeper

Dave Arnold, David Harman

Dart L210 (N210 VEV) in deepest suburban Jaywick in early May. *Chris Stewart*



■ DEALER STOCK MOVEMENTS

VEHICLES IN	from
Amberlee, Chatham	DAF's P712/3/4/5 RWU
Arriva North West	Olympians B198 DTU, A141 MRN, G522/3/5 WJF Volvo D10M's H665/79 GPF
Arriva Southern Counties	Darts L505 CPJ, L148 YVK, K469 SKO Olympians C32 CHM D182 FYM
Arriva TOLST	M724 M729
Bournemouth Transport	Lances L401/3/4/5 BFX
Go Ahead North East	Metrobuses A633 BCN C765/8/77 OCN Olympians C665/72/73 LJR Metroriders N413 NTN, P414/5/8/9/20/2-4/6/9 VRG Deltas G734/8/9-40/3/6-7/41 RTY, J201/2/3/4/6 VHN Volvo B6 M419-22/4/30 PVN, N670/1 VUP
Kent County Council	Darts S772/3/5 RNE
Manns Travel, Gravesend	Volvo B58 SFH 655W
Mullaney's Coaches, Watford	Volvo B10M's F707/9 WCS
New Enterprise, Tonbridge	M1275
Reading Buses	Olympians E911-17 DRD Deltas G501/2/4 XBL
Stagecoach East Midland	Olympians A324 AKU, E924 KYR
Stockton Council	Excels V823/4 DHN.
Transit Group	RM758.

VEHICLES OUT

	to
L550	Abbey Group, Wantage, Oxon
M304	Allans Coaches, Goresbridge, Scotland
Metroriders N413 NTN P418 VRG	Al-Rite Travel, Middlesbrough
Hong Kong Condor EM8983	now G355 FWC with Andronicas Coffee, Corby as demonstration/hospitality unit
M306:	ASPRO Ltd, Tarragona, Spain
Iveco L775 GNM	Aurora Lighting, London
Metrorider R629 NJM	ASD Coaches, Strood
Hong Kong Olympian FC7233	now J645 CEV with Beestons, Hadleigh, Suffolk
Olympian F260 YTJ	Carmarthenshire County Council
Darts P691/7 RWU	Cavendish Motor Services, Eastbourne
Darts S775/6/ 8RNE	Coakley Bus Co., Motherwell
Tiger WJI 9074	Clockhouse Farm, Maidstone, Kent
Hong Kong Olympian FC8014	now J646 CEV with Don, Dunmow, Essex
Dublin Olympian 91-D-118	now J644 CEV with Eastbourne Buses
Dublin Olympian 91-D-119	now J642 CEV with Eastbourne Buses
Olympian A324 AKU	Excel Coaches, Stansted, Essex
Bristol VR HWG 208W	Fashion Store Italia, Valencia, Spain
DMS1002	Mr Paul Furse for preservation
Tiger F781 GNA	Tony Glew Coaches, Colchester
Tiger E118 Kfv (was Leaside 530 MUY)	Peter Godward Coaches, Chelmsford, Essex
Excels V823/4 DHN	Hatts Coaches, Chippenham, Wilts
Dart L354 PPF	Huyton Travel, Liverpool
Volvo D10M's H665/679 GPF	Irvine's Coaches, Law.

Volvo B6 M71 HHB}	Jaycrest , Sittingbourne, Kent
Volvo B58 SHH 655W}	
Olympians C665/72 LJR	Johnsons Coaches , Hodthorpe, Derbys.
Fleetline UKV 473R	The Labour Party , London N19
Metroriders P426 VRG N624 ATF	Manns Travel , Gravesend.
Bristol VR SNJ 591R	John Massy , Roermond, Holland
Metrorider R627 SJM	North West Travel , Liverpool
Delta J201 VHN	David Ogden Travel , St Helens
Volvo B10M J617 CEV	Overland Travel , West Sussex
Hong Kong Olympian FC7695	now J629 CEV with Patron Travel , Newark, Notts.
Delta J206 VHN	Poynters Coaches , Wye, Kent
M490/935/1065/1142/1389	PVS for scrap
PD3 PRX 199B	Roman City Travel , Bath for preservation
Volvo Olympians P487/91 MBY	Scotguide , Glasgow (part open top for City Sightseeing Glasgow)
Metrorider P422 VRG	SE Coachworks , Faversham, Kent
DAF's P712/3/4/5 RWU	Shamrock Travel , south Wales
Delta J204 VHN	Southern Transit , Brighton
Delta J202 VHN	Stansted Transit .
Atlantean TRN 469V	Stoerds Autos , Huizen, Holland
Dublin Olympian 92-D-126	now J628CEV with TM Travel , Chesterfield
Bedford YPB823T	Tourmaster Coaches , Peterborough
B10M F707 WCS}	Wealden PSV , Five Oak Green, Kent
Darts L505 CPJ K469 SKO}	
Metrobuses A633 BCN C765/8/770 CN	Weardale M.S. , Stanhope, Co.Durham
Dublin Olympians 91-D-112, 91-D-113	now J639-40 CEV with Weardale M.S.
Hong Kong Olympian FS6511	now L662SNO with Weardale M.S.
Routemasters RML894	Vetra BV , Spijkenisse, Holland
RML896	Carousel Buses , High Wycombe, Bucks
RML2287	Helfenberger Immobilien , Helfenberg, Austria
RML2488	TFC Leisure , London, W14
RML2546	Redby Coaches , Sunderland
RML2730	Roy Watts , Coulsdon, Surrey
RML2752	Arriva Spain , La Coruna, Spain

■ ENSIGNBUS, Purfleet

Acquired vehicle

from *Wilsons Coaches, Glasgow*

- 700 V800 CBC Dennis Dart SLF SFD322BR1XGW13763 / Plaxton 9910.7HLB1793 B39F
New to Coakley Bus, Motherwell, 11/99. It was re-registered WIL 9217 with
Wilsons and back to V800 CBC since..

Withdrawn vehicle

- 121 F821 YLV MCW Metrobus DR132/16 MB10352 MCW H46/31F
For scrap after serious accident damage.

■ ENSIGN HERITAGE FLEET, Purfleet

Acquired vehicle

- RCL2226 CUV 226C AEC Routemaster
for restoration and eventual service use.

With thanks to Ross Newman of Ensignbus

Heritage / Preservation Notebook

You wait ages to see a Southend Fleetline then two come along at once! That was the lucky co-incidence at this year's Southend Historic Transport Show on June 4th. Stephenson's of Essex entered their **MRJ233W**, originally Southend Transport 233. Recently acquired from Fargo Coaches, it had just been repainted into ST livery (not without some problems!) and is undergoing preparation prior to entering the fleet as a "heritage" vehicle.

Later in the day it was joined by sister 232, currently registered **PIB 5891**. This bus has just been bought by Elliott Spiteri for preservation from the previous owner, Coach Hire Maintenance Ltd of Shoreham By Sea. It had only been collected that morning and is currently in its former owner's purple livery. *Richard Delahoy's* nearside shot shows the contrasting styles, with 232 remaining dual door but 233 converted to single door. The last time they would have been seen together in Southend was late in 1999, when 232 was withdrawn; 233 lasted until summer 2000.





Plaxton Supreme-bodied DAF MB YJN 455S of **Talisman**, Great Bromley visited the Concours d'Elegance at Noordwijk, Netherlands on May 13th. 2006. This event is held every two years on the seafront of the resort, and provides an opportunity to see a fascinating selection of preserved Dutch buses and coaches alongside some of the local operators' current coaches and a number of the latest demonstrators. YJN 455S is seen being driven along Koningin Wilhelmina Boulevard by Paul Smith, past Leyland Tiger Cub Verheul "Holland Coach" dual-door bus PB-40-19 of Stichting Veteraan Autobussen. Other British attendees were Leyland Tiger PS1/1 Barnaby AHL 694, Bedford SBG Plaxton JHL 701, Beadle-Leyland OKP 980 and Bristol LHS6L Marshall NDL 769G.

Paul Creighton

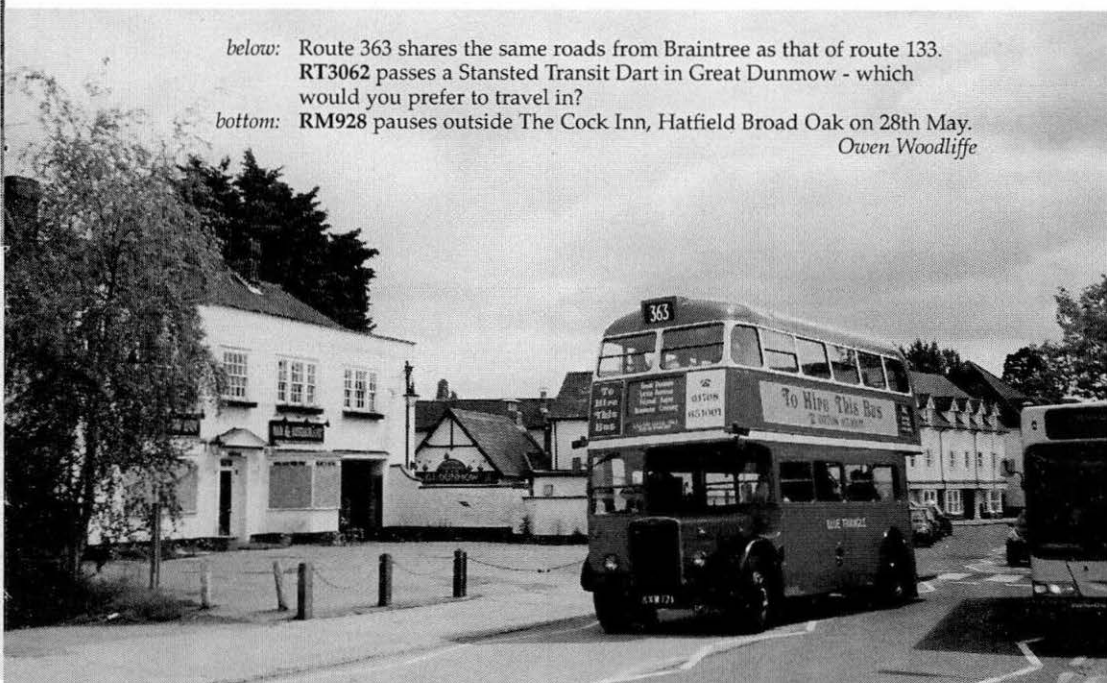
Beer 'n' buses

Blue Triangle's Essex Sunday routes gave me the opportunity to venture into Essex to pursue my interest in real ale. So, having planned my route by consulting the Good Beer Guide and timetable, I joined RM 298 at Epping for its positioning journey 363 to Harlow. It then becomes a 622 for Braintree, although I alighted at Rayne where I had 20 minutes to wait for the midday opening time. As the return 363 is at 12.17, I had a swift half in and I was grateful that the stop was opposite the pub. A spirited drive on RT3062 had me back in Great Dunmow 20 minutes later with 50 minutes for me to sample the delights of **The Saracens Head**. The next bus was over 40 minutes late by which time I had returned, not too despondently, as the Mighty Oak beer was excellent, to plan my revised course of action. Lunch was taken here as it was now too late to reach Hatfield Broad Oak by closing time at **The Cock Inn**, so I decided to go to another **Cock Inn**, this time at Sheering. It was not too much of a disappointment as RT3062 was to be my transport there and for a journey back an hour later to Braintree, where three of the quartet of buses arrive at 18.00. T22 was there and so I took this to Great Dunmow for my visit to yet another **Cock Inn**, albeit just short of three hours later than intended. The last bus of the day was 30 minutes after this, so it was a swift half before joining the bus I started on, RM 298.

It was an enjoyable day and I achieved all I intended to do, although it took longer. There are other real ale pubs that can also be visited by using these routes, whilst a double deck ride through Essex is an interesting experience. A trad jazz band playing on top would, for me, make it absolutely perfect! *Owen Woodliffe*

below: Route 363 shares the same roads from Braintree as that of route 133.
RT3062 passes a Stansted Transit Dart in Great Dunmow - which would you prefer to travel in?

bottom: RM928 pauses outside The Cock Inn, Hatfield Broad Oak on 28th May.
Owen Woodliffe



Warning - low bridge !

from Andrew Colebourne:

A bridge missing from the list in **EBN505** is the 13' 6" plated railway bridge at **Kirby Cross**. This required the use of lowbridge double deckers on Eastern National's 107/8/9 Walton - Clacton via Great Holland services. As far as I am aware the last Eastern National double deckers to be scheduled under this bridge were Bristol FLF's and in consequence the service became single deck when converted to one-man-operation (apart from, possibly, the use of o-m-o equipped FLF's in the early days; my memory is not clear on this and perhaps someone can confirm it or otherwise).

Standard Bristol VRT's are of course 13' 8½" high and therefore should not have fitted, but Hedingham Omnibuses found that there was in fact sufficient clearance - see my photograph below, taken on 10th March 1994 of L197 on route 700.

I believe this bridge was the cause of an Eastern National industrial dispute over the routing and use of double deckers on excursion services 53E and 70E, which I think were officially routed between Clacton and Walton via Thorpe le Soken. I am not aware, however, of any buses actually hitting the bridge.

There is another bridge in north east Essex that should be mentioned, this being the one next to the level crossing at **Manningtree** station. The crossing meant that double deckers could be used on services routed this way. The bridge is far too low for double deckers, but some single deckers could use it. I do remember that the Eastern National former coach Bristol MW's allocated in the area had a notice in the cab warning drivers not to pass under this bridge with the roof vents open.



from Nigel Turner:

Regarding the low bridge article in EBN 505, Tony Langley records in his Hicks Bros book that the bridge at **Felsted** (now demolished) had a clearance of 13ft 2ins and lowbridge buses heading towards Bishops Stortford had to go under on the offside carriageway. Apparently the D/D's had red metal plates on the dashboard in front of the driver reading "DO NOT EXCEED 5M.P.H. UNDER FELSTED RAILWAY BRIDGE". In 1946 Hicks paid £100 (50% of the cost) to Essex County Council for the road to be lowered. This gave a headroom of 13ft 6in.

Hicks vehicles also had to pass under Chelmsford railway bridge and then IMMEDIATELY turn right into Park Road which must have been interesting.

In Braintree the bridge at **Rose Hill** is tight while the nearby bridge at **Mill Hill** (not on a bus route) will not take even lowheight buses which is why a Braintree allocated VR (one of 3001/2/4) had a new roof fitted in the 1970's!

Other problem bridges are at **Coggeshall Road**, **Kelvedon** and near **Kirby Cross**. I believe at one time VR's were considered too high to pass under the latter although K's, LD's and FLF's were OK.

On the Essex border at **Manningtree** I'm told that the underpass by the level crossing would take a Bristol L in the 1960's unless it was being driven with vigour in which case the roof ventilators would suffer.

A friend who worked for a number of councils in Essex from the 1950's to the 1990's assures me that bridge signs were recalibrated after roads were resurfaced although he doesn't know if this still happens today.

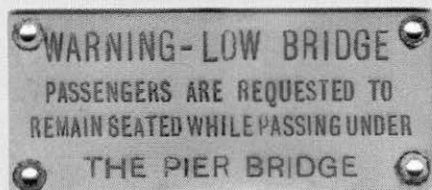
from Peter Carr:

I was crew at Bishops Stortford from 1970 until 1982, and played for the EN cricket team. In June 1978, we played a London Transport Chiswick Works team at Chelmsford and they travelled to Chelmsford in RM 1784 (784 DYE) and tried to get under the station bridge. Fortunately,

the driver was aware of the height problem but decided to try it at low speed right in the centre (unsuccessfully of course!). The front of the bus got wedged and was stuck too tightly to reverse out. They had to let most the air out of the front tyres in order to reverse out. They were reflat again by a couple of maintenance staff from Duke Street, and were given directions as to the long way round. All this was viewed with a great deal of amusement by the drivers and conductors watching from the canteen windows up on the first floor of the garage/bus station.

There was (and still is) the low bridge on the route between Start Hill and Great Hallingbury on the Bishop's Stortford - Braintree branch (closed to passengers in 1952 and to freight in 1972). We had to use single-deckers on route 347 (Thursdays only) under here.

My first driver at Bishop's Stortford had been there since before the war, and told me that the conductor of an open-top double-decker had been killed at Newport in the 1920's or 1930's, by standing up on the top deck as the bus passed beneath the railway bridge on the old A11 outside the Grammar School. I'm not sure if the road was lowered since then, but we operated 'deckers on the 301 under the bridge okay.



It's not just buses that are in danger of - coming to grief under low bridges:

Upper-deck seat-back sign fitted to Eastern National open-top Leylands and Bristol KSWs at Southend.

Was a version of this fitted to the Clacton open-toppers?

Braintree Garage ~ an update

As recorded in the May issue of EBN, demolition work has started at First's former garage at 18a, Fairfield Road, Braintree. When its closure was first announced, a number of articles appeared in various magazines including EBN (May and August 2004) relating its history. These were mostly taken from information in Tony Langley's history of Hicks Bros, which company had developed the site for their bus operations. His book was based on the reminiscences of former employees. However recent research has revealed some inaccuracies in those accounts and now seems an appropriate time to correct and expand the information which has previously been published.

Although the complete history of the site is too long to relate here, it was originally developed by a wholesale boot manufacturer, James Fuller. By 1881 he was living at "Fairfield House", now No.20, Fairfield Road. His boot factory occupied the brick building which now accommodates two takeaways (No.18) and various less substantial buildings to the rear. Mr. Fuller seems to have sold up around 1904 at which point he also owned a house adjoining the "takeaway" building on the north side and three cottages set at right angles to the road. In late 1919 or early 1920 (certainly by May 14th 1920) Arthur Reuben Hicks of Hicks Bros, Felstead and Matilda Sleeman (the latter assumed to have been a housekeeper) moved in to Fairfield House. By October 10th 1920 the boot factory outbuildings had been demolished and the first part of the garage had been built behind Fairfield House (this is two years earlier than indicated in Tony Langley's book) and Frank Hawkes (assumed to have been an employee) was also living in Fairfield House. Hicks Bros. did not acquire the "takeaway" building which appears to have passed to Lake & Elliot (a jack manufacturer) some years previously. The next stage was to demolish the house adjoining the north side of the takeaway building and replace it with a shop which by April 1923 was occupied by Edith Elliott's hairdressing business (in later EN days this was the enquiry office). It is probable that the narrow width of the shop was to allow vehicles to exit the garage on this side. By April 1925 a new house (now No.22) had

been built adjoining Fairfield House for Frederick Page Baxter who had joined Hicks in 1911 at the age of 16 and remained with them to the end of family ownership, latterly as traffic foreman.

By 1927 the Payne family who were the last tenants in the row of three cottages at right angles to the road had vacated their house and moved to Hay Lane in Braintree. These cottages were demolished in due course. In late 1928 or early 1929 Arthur Hicks moved from Fairfield House to Clacton to run that part of the Hicks business. However developments continued at Braintree and at that time a house was built on to the end of the workshops for Frederick Shuttlewood who was responsible for vehicle maintenance. Tony Langley's book suggests that this was on land which had formed part of Cuff's coal yard but it appears that this may not be correct. Around this time Hicks acquired No.57, South Street, the garden of which extended up to Mr.Shuttlewood's house which thus became No.57a. In addition to maintaining their own vehicles, Hicks were also doing outside work at this time as my late father remembered going there with his brother in law to get new solid tyres fitted to Ford model T trucks, Hicks being one of the few companies in the area with the capability to do this.

The next stage of the ongoing development occurred on April 26th 1932 when Hicks bought a pair of semi-detached houses (Nos. 8 & 10) from Charles H.Gray. These houses occupied the space between the existing Hicks land and the row of buildings which are now No.2, 4 & 6, Fairfield Road. Their demolition allowed the erection of the impressive extension to the garage together with a forecourt. This work had probably been completed by September 16th 1932 as Hicks made an agreement on that date with E.G.Salmon for him to operate a café in the small building on the north side of the new building. Mr. Salmon already ran a similar enterprise at Hicks' Chelmsford Bus Park.

As noted above Arthur Hicks had moved to Clacton leaving the Braintree garage without a member of the family close at hand, however this was to change by 1934 as Ernest Hicks son,

Maxwell, moved in to "Hatherley" (No.13), Victoria Street with his wife. A couple of years later in 1936 the family influence was increased when Frank Hawkes vacated "Fairfield House", to be replaced by the newly married Maurice and Joyce Esther (nee Hicks) Holmes. One wonders whether, some thirty years later, the employees of the London Transport Board realised that their Chairman, Sir Maurice Holmes, had once lived in a house attached to a bus depot!

The last major part of the development of the Braintree garage occurred when the land to the south of No.22, Fairfield Road previously part of Cuff's coal yard was acquired from the Gill family. This area was known right up to closure as "The Wash" despite latterly serving as a car park for employees. Tony's book implies that it was bought in prewar days, however the only transaction so far found took place on April 12th 1946 between Percy W.Gill and Hicks Bros. An interesting fact, which as far as I am aware has never appeared in any publication, is that when the Hicks family were negotiating for the sale of the business to the BTC, they wanted to retain "The Wash" and build a garage on it to run the coach side of the operations. This idea was strongly resisted by Eastern National and in the end only the Clacton part of the business (and the Dunmow premises) was retained by the Hicks family as Cansdall Coaches(Clacton) Limited.

Although not part of the story of the garage as such, it is worth relating that Hicks bought another four houses for their employees in South Street, Nos. 75 & 77 (on the corner of Fairfield Road) in 1941 followed by Nos. 59 and 61 in 1942. In the latter year they also bought No.11, Fairfield Road (almost opposite the "Wash"). Thus it appears that there was a concerted effort to buy up all available premises in this block of land, an aim possibly frustrated by the Gill family who had arrived in Fairfield Road by 1904 and whose properties in the road currently house four generations of their descendants, not to mention an electrical appliance shop. Other houses owned by Hicks in Braintree were Nos. 21,23,25 and 27, Manor Street (conveniently almost opposite the entrance to the Bus Park) probably from about 1927, 109,Chapel Hill from 1942 and 16, Harold Road from 1943 giving a total of thirteen houses. By today's standards this was an amazing amount of property for a 50

vehicle operator to own, bearing in mind there were also premises at Clacton, Silver End, Chelmsford and Dunmow as well.

The houses mentioned above were owned by the Hicks family and leased to the company, although the wartime acquisitions were briefly owned by the company. The garage itself was transferred to the company before the business was sold to the British Transport Commission on January 1st 1950. It finally passed to Eastern National on April 10th 1956. E.G.Salmon who had operated the café (Sams café) since 1932 died in August 1950 and was replaced by J.Lawson who seems to have run a somewhat unhygienic operation. He gave up on August 13th 1956 and the building then became a hair-dressers until circa 1970 (it later housed "Fairfield Printers"). This does not seem to have been a direct replacement for Elliotts as they appear to have latterly operated as a general shop. Their premises were converted to an enquiry office around this time, but for the last ten years of the garage's existence were boarded up. Although Eastern National did make some alterations to the garage over the years these were relatively minor compared with all the work that Hicks Bros. had done.

I hope the above serves to correct some previously published information and also gives an idea of the huge amount of investment in property made by a medium sized family bus company. Starting at the top end of the garage site, just walk down Fairfield Road and round the corner into to South Street as far as the Waggon & Horses" and this will show you the extent of the Hicks properties. Then see how long it takes you to walk round First's new depot on Springwood Industrial Estate! According to the plans submitted by the developers it will still be possible to see some of the legacy of Hicks Bros. in future years as the houses built by them (57a, South Street and 22,Fairfield Road) will remain while the vehicle entrance to the development will be the original one between Fairfield House and the "takeaway" building. Also the residential part of the redevelopment is being advertised as "The Depot" to provide a further reminder of the site's former use.

I am grateful to Tony Langley for checking the draft of this article and for his comments.

Nigel Turner

PCV HOLDER ?

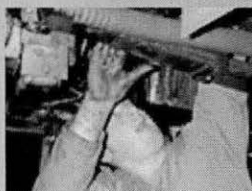
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