

ESSEX BUS NEWS

Issue 536
December 2008



ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP
www.essexbus.org.uk

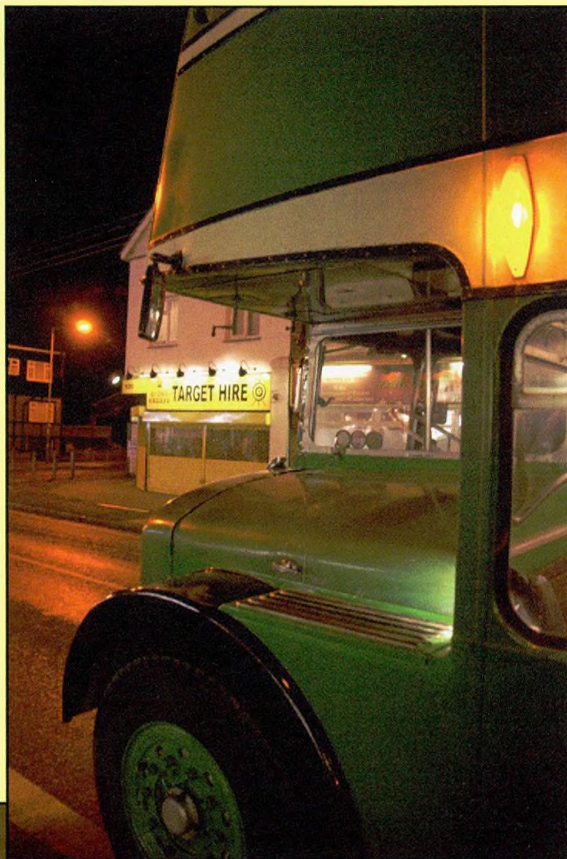
LDL by Night

I was very kindly treated to a ride in LDL6G 2510 (236 LNO) on 26th November, resulting in some very atmospheric pictures that might delight the hearts of Eastern National fans!

I've waited just under 32 years to have a ride on 2510, as, on its only day working at Southend (after reinstatement from withdrawal in January 1977), I chased it in the driving school driving ST's 315 (PHJ 954) between 9am and 12am, then ran down to Central to catch a ride on my break, just as the T&GWU reps blacked it - they didn't want back-loaders back in SD again!

Thanks to Ian Mahoney for the great ride and to Craig Mara for his kindness.

John G Lidstone



Essex Bus News

Magazine Editor

Eastern National Enthusiasts Guild

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Your reports and observations

Members reports, quality photos (prints, slides or JPGs) and original articles are always welcome. Please send them direct to the relevant Sub-Editor.

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

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

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

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From the Editor ...

Another eventful year draws to a close.

In January, we recorded the first Southend Heritage Running Day, and 1 Jan 2009, sees a repeat (with N90734 brought out for an airing; let's hope he can remember how to 'ring off' and manipulate a Setright). In February we visited Foulness (while we could). April saw the sale of Excel Passenger Logistics to Arriva. The old Colchester Corporation Magdalen Street depot closed. Truly the end of an era. April also marked the move to a colour cover for EBN, and an extended report on the Southend bus strike of 1967 - both of which were very well received by members.

In May, the Excel *airdirect* service (Ipswich - Stansted was launched, and Ensign received an influx of 51-plate Spectras. VHK 177L was examined in detail by Chris Stewart in June. Network Colchester and NIBS received their Scania/East Lancs in July, and the MWs that weren't MWs were discussed. In August the X1 was laid to rest (although it was to fly again with Swallow), and the Group visited foreign parts to see Bus Rapid Transit in action on the *fastrack* system.

Not to be outdone by *airdirect*, First launched the *Stansted aircoach* service in September with new Volvo/Plaxtons. Bob the Niblet, Crossleys, a left-handed Southend open-topper and Imperial on the 260 also featured, as did the vanguard of the First cascade programme (Scanias from First Beeline). Ensign stole the glory in October with a batch of Volvo/East Lancs for their Grays network, but RWC 607 ran them a close second. November was 'casacade' month, when Arriva brought in Scanias, DAFs and Darts to upgrade local

operations, whilst First readied what is thought to be a record influx of vehicles (Volvos and Darts) to the former EN fleet. This month sees them enter service, whilst Terry Challis recalls earlier, but equally exciting times in the Southend area in the early 1950s.

Will 2009 be so eventful? Who can tell, in these uncertain times? However, we will do our best to record events in EBN as they happen, and also to look back at times gone.

Thanks go to the Sub-Editors, the many members who sent in contributions and photographs, our fellow enthusiast clubs, and to the local operators who keep us so well-informed. A Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year to all.

David Harman

Dates for your diary

■ PRESS DATES

For inclusion in EBN dated

January 2009

February 2009

28 February 2009

reports should reach Editors by

3 January 2009

31 January 2009

19 March 2009

planned despatch date

22 January 2009

19 February 2009

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 (see Group Directory).

■ SOUTH ESSEX MEETINGS

Venue: **Wickford Cricket Club, off Swan Lane, Wickford** - 5 minutes walk from Wickford Station and 5 minutes drive from the A130 and A127. In Wickford town centre, turn into Swan Lane from Runwell Road (Swans pub is on the corner); then turn right into the entrance about 100' up on the right - marked Wickford Tennis Club. This is an unmade road, so beware of potholes. Go straight ahead towards the tennis courts and then left at the end - you will see the cricket clubhouse in front of you. Car parking available on site.

Doors open at **1930** for an informal chat, with the main talk or show from **2000 to 2145/2200**; a cash bar is available. Members and guests welcome. *Richard Delahoy*

Winter 2008 - Spring 2009 programme

- ▶ **Monday January 12** - "Southend Trams and Trolleybuses", illustrated talk by *Richard Delahoy*.
- ▶ **Monday February 9** - slide show by *Martin Weyell*, 1960s and 1970s.
- ▶ **Monday March 9** - "The X1 story, Southend to London and beyond, 1980 to 2008", illustrated talk by *Richard Delahoy*.
- ▶ **Monday April 6** - slide show by *Owen Woodliffe* "To the Western Isles" - Great Britain and Vancouver.

In **May, June and July** we will not be meeting in Wickford as the venue is not available in those months. Meetings/visits are being arranged at an alternative location, dates and details to be advised. to be advised.

■ NORTH ESSEX 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. Doors open at 1930 for an informal chat, with the main talk or show from 2000 to 2200. £1.50 donation towards room hire, please. Slides/digital photos are preferred, but prints can also be shown. Members and guests welcome. *Dave Arnold*

2009 programme

- ▶ **Friday January 9** - slide show "Braintree to Cape Town".
- ▶ **Friday February 13** - *Trevor Brookes*: TBA.
- ▶ **Friday March 13** - *Alan Osborne*: slide show: "Back to Back".
- ▶ **Friday April 17** [note: 3rd Friday **not** the 2nd] - *Robin Jenkinson*: Talk: "My Experiences in the Bus Industry in Essex in the 70's".
- ▶ **Fridays May 8, June 12, July 10, August 14, September 11, October 9, November 13, and December 11**: TBA

■ **SOUTHEND HERITAGE BUS RUNNING DAY - 1ST JANUARY** - *see overleaf*

Membership Renewals 2009 ~ Final Reminder

Many thanks to all the members who have already paid your subscriptions for 2009. As at December 1st, there were however 90 members still to reply. If you received a renewal slip with the October magazine, please return it as soon as possible with your subscription for 2009, in order to continue receiving Essex Bus News - otherwise, this will be your last issue! Chasing overdue subscriptions causes unnecessary work for your hard pressed officers (with full time jobs, family commitments and little spare time!) so please renew by December 31st at the latest.

Richard Delahoy, Treasurer/Membership Secretary

Timetable Subscription Service

We are pleased to advise that the service whereby members can receive each copy of the Essex County Council timetable book as it is published, will be continuing. Now that ECC have moved to a single book covering the whole county (including Southend but excluding Thurrock, both separate authorities) there will normally be three issues a year. The new book is widely available within Essex but we welcome new subscribers from anywhere in the UK. With postage, each copy is likely to cost subscribers £3.50. We will also post out the separate Essex bus map to subscribers, but can no longer continue to send the monthly "Bus Passenger News", which is already available via our website.

Existing subscribers were written to at the end of November to explain their options; new subscribers can join at any time by sending a £10 cheque/postal order to Richard Delahoy (details in the Group Directory), who has taken over the administration of the service. We have recently streamlined our processes to offer a more efficient service than in the past couple of years, subject to timely receipt of our stocks from Essex CC.



Southend "Heritage Bus Running Day" - January 1st, 2009



3 Southend - Westcliff - Leigh Elms - Hadleigh - Tarpots - Benfleet - Canvey

Southend, Travel Centre stop B	10:15	10:45		15:15	15:45	16:15	16:45	17:15
Victoria Circus, Queensway	10:17	10:47	then	15:17	15:47	16:17	16:47	17:17
Leigh, Elms	10:30	11:00	every	15:30	16:00	16:30	17:00	17:30
Hadleigh Church	10:39	11:09	30	15:39	16:09	16:39	17:09	17:39
Tarpots Corner	10:48	11:18	mins	15:48	16:18	16:48	17:18	17:48
Benfleet Station	10:56	11:26	until	15:56	16:26	to	17:26	--
Canvey, Haystack	11:07	11:37		16:07	16:37	Aldgate	17:37	--
Castle Point Transport Museum	11:15	11:45		16:15	--	(X1)	--	--

Castle Point Transport Museum
The museum is expected to be open to visitors during the hours that buses are calling there.
Toilet facilities are available and it is possible that refreshments may be on sale as well.

Castle Point Transport Museum	--	--	--	--	--	11:39	12:09		16:09	16:39	--
Canvey, Haystack	--	--	10:15	10:45	11:15	11:45	12:15	then	16:15	16:45	16:45
Benfleet Station	09:26	09:56	10:26	10:56	11:26	11:56	12:26	every	16:26	16:56	16:56
Tarpots Corner	09:34	10:04	10:34	11:04	11:34	12:04	12:34	30	16:34	to	17:04
Hadleigh Church	09:44	10:14	10:44	11:14	11:44	12:14	12:44	mins	16:44	Chelm-	to
Leigh, Elms	09:53	10:23	10:53	11:23	11:53	12:23	12:53	until	16:53	sford	Chelm-
Victoria Station forecourt	10:05	10:35	11:05	11:35	12:05	12:35	13:05		17:05	--	sford
Southend, Travel Centre	10:07	10:37	11:07	11:37	12:07	12:37	13:07		17:07	--	--

6 Southend - Southchurch - Garon Park

Southend, Travel Centre, stop F	10:15	then	17:15
Southchurch, White Horse	10:23	hourly	17:23
Hamstel Road top, Garon Park roundabout	10:26	until	17:26

Hamstel Road top, Garon Park roundabout	09:27	then	16:27
Southchurch, White Horse	09:30	hourly	16:30
Southend, Travel Centre	09:37	until	16:37

7 Southend - Thorpe Bay - Shoeburyness

Southend, Victoria Station forecourt	09:20	09:50	then	16:50
Southend, Travel Centre, stop H	09:24	09:54	every	16:54
Thorpe Bay Station	09:33	10:03	30	17:03
Shoeburyness, The Renown	09:43	10:13	mins	17:13

Shoeburyness, The Renown	9:50	10:20	then	17:20
Thorpe Bay Station	10:00	10:30	every	17:30
Southend, Travel Centre, stop K	10:10	10:40	30	17:40
Southend, Victoria Circus, Queensway	10:13	10:43	mins	17:43

251 Southend - Kent Elms - Eastwood Road - Rayleigh

Southend, Travel Centre, stop D	9:45	10:15	then	17:15
Southend, Victoria Station	09:48	10:18	every	17:18
Eastwood, Kent Elms Corner	09:57	10:27	30	17:27
Rayleigh Town Centre, Eastwood Road	10:08	10:38	mins	17:38
Rayleigh Station	10:10	10:40	until	17:40

Rayleigh Station	09:45	10:00	10:15	10:45	then	16:15	17:15
Rayleigh High Street	09:48	10:03	10:18	10:48	every	16:18	17:18
Eastwood, Kent Elms Corner	09:59	10:14	10:29	10:59	30	16:29	17:29
Victoria Station forecourt	10:07	10:22	10:37	11:07	mins	16:37	17:37
Southend, Travel Centre	10:10	10:25	10:40	11:10	until	16:40	17:40

Feeder buses

Aldgate, Mansell St stop S non stop to	10:00	
Benfleet, Tarpots Corner & all stops to Southend Travel Centre	11:04	
Returns from Southend at	11:37	
	16:15	
Chelmsford Rail station via Regal 1B to	09:20	10:20
Canvey, Haystack	10:10	11:10
Southend, Travel Centre	11:07	12:07
Returns from Southend at	15:15	15:45
Returns from Haystack at	16:45	16:45
Returns from Tarpots at	--	17:04

Services are provided by Stephensons of Essex Ltd with support from other bus operators. Participating buses are expected to include:

Stephensons: "Queen Mary" PD3, London Olympian, Scania DD, MPD Dart,
ex Lothian Olympian
Regal: Leyland National, Olympian
Talisman: RML, ex Colchester Olympian
Alpen: Ex Southend Astromega
Ensign: London RLH, ex Southend Tiger coach
Arriva: Ex Southend Transport Olympian
First: Bristol VR, dual purpose Olympian
Wealden: Leyland Titan (which variety we can't say yet!)

Vehicle working details and full timetables will be available at www.stephensonsof Essex.com by December 20th.

61 Southend - Bournemouth Pk Rd - Sutton - Fossetts Pk

Southend, Travel Centre, stop L	08:42	then	17:42	18:12
Bournemouth Park Road, School	08:48	hourly	17:48	18:18
Sutton Cemetery, Main Entrance	08:52	until	17:52	18:22
Fossetts Park, B&Q	08:55		17:55	18:25

Fossetts Park, B&Q	08:30	08:58	then	16:58	17:58
Bournemouth Pk Rd, School	08:35	09:03	hourly	17:03	18:03
Southend, Travel Centre	08:42	09:10	until	17:10	18:10

7 Southend - General Hospital - Rochford

Southend, Travel Centre, stop K	09:12	9:42	then	17:42
Southend, Victoria Station	09:15	09:45	every	17:45
Westcliff, General Hospital	09:24	09:54	30	17:54
Rochford Station	09:38	10:08	mins	18:08

Rochford Station	8:56	9:08	9:38	then	16:38
Westcliff, General Hospital	09:10	09:22	09:52	every	16:52
Victoria Station forecourt	09:18	09:30	10:00	30	17:00
Southend, Travel Centre	09:20	09:32	10:02	mins	17:02

X30 Southend - Stansted Airport

X30 is operating but not part of the running day; normal fares apply			
Southend	02:00	and	23:00
Chelmsford	03:00	hourly	00:00
Stansted Airport	03:32	until	00:32

Stansted Airport	04:00	and	23:00
Chelmsford	04:40	hourly	23:40
Southend	05:35	until	00:35

Plus night coaches as usual timetable

Special fares apply today: £2 adult single, £1 child single; £6 adult day rover, £12 family day rover. Special £1 "short hop" fare in Southend. Arriva, First and Octopus tickets are not valid on these services. English National Concessionary passes are accepted for free travel. Profits from today's operations will be donated to charity.

Group Directory

SUBSCRIPTIONS

A calendar year subscription is £20, renewable in January.

New members may join from any month during the year, but subscriptions will always run to December, from whichever month the member chooses. Those joining from February to December inclusive will pay a pro-rata subscription calculated at £1.70 per month. E.g., a member joining in March would pay 10 x £1.70; i.e. £17.

Data Protection Act: Members' details are held on computer for the purpose of administration. If you object to your information being held in this way, please write to:

Richard Delahoy, 272 Shoebury Road
Southend-on-Sea SS1 3TT
richard@signal-training.com

Replacements for missing or defective EBNs are available from Richard.

TIMETABLE SUBSCRIPTIONS

Join this scheme to receive the Essex County Council timetable book and bus map. Send

your details and a cheque for £10 to
Richard Delahoy, 272 Shoebury Road,
Southend on Sea SS1 3TT.

Subscriptions can start with any issue of the book (usually 3 a yealexanderar) and will be renewable annually at the same time as your Group membership subscription is due.

PUBLICATION SALES

Send orders for publications to:
Owen Woodliffe, 196 Sinclair Road,
Chingford, London E4 8PT

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

BLACK & WHITE PHOTO SALES

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

Prints of specific EN (and predecessor) vehicles can be supplied; email with requirements:

lyn@barrons-bds.com

Essex County Council Timetable Books 2007/8

Following the appearance of the new all Essex Bus Timetable Book in October 2008, this is an opportune moment to list the final editions of the five area books issued in 2007/2008.

CENTRAL ESSEX

February 2007
May 2007
October 2007
March 2008
June 2008

SOUTH ESSEX

January 2007
May 2007
October 2007
January 2008
May 2008

WEST & NORTH

WEST ESSEX
January 2007
April 2007
September 2007
January 2008
April 2008

NORTH EAST ESSEX

February 2007
May 2007
October 2007
March 2008
June 2008

SOUTH EAST ESSEX & SOUTHEND

January 2007
May 2007
September 2007
February 2008
May 2008

Those issued in 1999-2006 were listed in EBN519. All of the following books were A4 size:

Ian Taylor

Publicity News

ENSIGNBUS Issue 4 of Bus Times dated 1st November 2008 - 24 pages including full colour route map as per earlier editions.

NATIONAL EXPRESS AIRPORT timetable leaflets for routes 707, 717/727/797, 717/787/797, 727, 747/025 all dated 3rd March 2008. The leaflet for routes A4/A6/A9 dated 21st January 2008 was replaced by an issue for routes A6/A9 dated 2nd June 2008.

TERRAVISION Two leaflets have been issued recently for the London to Stansted Airport coach service dated 12/07 and 09/08.

LAKE SIDE SHOPPING CENTRE Public Transport Guide - folded slimline route map, no cover date but FWT 10.9.08 inside.

Ian Taylor

Service Changes

Arriva

27 Dec 08 126 WFS Waltham Abbey to Harlow Stadium new service.

Blue Triangle

13 Dec 08 11 M-S Basildon to Purfleet service withdrawn.

Clintona

13 Dec 08 11 M-S Basildon to Purfleet new service.

Ensignbus

24 Dec 08 55 M-F Belhus to Upminster service withdrawn.

First Essex

20 Oct 08	8/A	D	Pitsea to Laindon Circular revised route due to road closure on Long Riding.
	15	M-F	Southend to Basildon revised route due to road closure on Long Riding.
8 Dec 08	21	D	Black Notley to Bocking extended to Halstead on Mondays to Saturdays, no change to evenings or Sundays.
	30	M-S	Braintree to Marlborough Road revised timetable and will operate from Beckers Green to Kings Park and Marks Farm via Marlborough Road.
	37	M-S	Braintree to Beckers Green service withdrawn.
	55	M-F	Chelmsford to Springfield new commuter service.
	70	D	Colchester to Braintree service extended to Chelmsford with increase frequency. No change to evenings or Sundays.
	71	M-S	Chelmsford to Colchester revised timetable.
	72	M-S	Braintree to Chelmsford, service withdrawn between Braintree and Witham with revised timetable.
	88	M-S	Colchester to Halstead, certain journeys will not serve Roland Road Halstead.
	132	M-S	Braintree Springwood to Witham Gershwin Boulevard new service.
	352	D	Chelmsford to Halstead via Braintree main Monday to Saturday daytime service withdrawn, no change to evenings or Sunday services.
4 Jan 09	60	M-S	Colchester to Prettygate service withdrawn
	67	D	Colchester to West Mersea revised timetable.
11 Jan 09	5	D	Basildon to Pitsea revised running times.
	8/A	D	Pitsea to Laindon circular revised running times.
	21	D	Southend to Canvey all journeys to operate via Elmsleigh

- Drive instead of Manchester Drive.
 24 M-S Rawreth to Southchurch terminal point now Archer Avenue instead of Newington Avenue Southchurch.
 73/A D Warley to Bishop Hall Estate minor timetable changes
 351 D Brentwood to Chelmsford minor timing change to one journey in the afternoon omitting Clements Park.

Imperial

10 Nov 08

- H1 M-S Harlow to Loughton revised timetable.

Network Colchester

5 Jan 09

- 2/B M-S Severalls Park to Horkesley Heath revised timetable and route.

Regal Busways

8 Dec 08

- 34/A M-S Braintree Town Service, section of route via Kings Park withdrawn and route amended to serve Braintree College, Church Lane and Deanery Gardens.

Stephensons

3 Nov 08

- 510 Sch Southminster to Chelmsford St John Payne Sch, new connecting bus introduced from Burnham to Latchingdon.

Travel with Hunny

29 Dec 08

- N55 FS Harlow to Debden Circular service withdrawn.

Paul Harvey
 (acknowledgements to LOTS,

Essex & Hertfordshire County Council, Richard Delahoy, Harlowride and First)



With the service changes of 8th December, the through 15.45 Chelmsford-Halstead and return double deck 352 working looks likely to become an outward only Chelmsford-Braintree working on the 70.

Your reporter braved the very cold upper deck of 34818 from Braintree to Halstead and then back to Chelmsford. Photographs were obviously difficult at the very dark Colne Road terminus and at the glass screened Chelmsford Bus Station at the end of the return run. This might have been the last ECW-bodied First Essex vehicle to reach Halstead.

Chris Stewart, 5 December 2008

■ FIRST ESSEX BUSES LTD

Acquired vehicles

42439	P439ORL	Dennis Dart SFD322BR1TGW10210	Plaxton 9610HJZ5268	B35F	9/1996
		new as <i>Western National</i> 439			
42927	SN05EAF	Dennis Dart SFD3CACR45GW18201	Alexander 4242/4	B37F	4/2005
42928	SN05EAG	Dennis Dart SFD3CACR45GW18202	Alexander 4242/5	B37F	4/2005
42929	SN05EAJ	Dennis Dart SFD3CACR45GW18203	Alexander 4242/6	B37F	4/2005
42930	SN05EAM	Dennis Dart SFD3CACR45GW18204	Alexander 4242/7	B37F	4/2005
42931*	SN05EAO	Dennis Dart SFD3CACR45GW18205	Alexander 4242/8	B37F	4/2005
42932	SN05EAP	Dennis Dart SFD3CACR45GW18206	Alexander 4242/9	B37F	4/2005
42933	SN05DZO	Dennis Dart SFD3CACR45GW18207	Alexander 4242/10	B37F	4/2005
42934	SN05DZP	Dennis Dart SFD3CACR45GW18208	Alexander 4242/11	B37F	4/2005
42935	SN05DZR	Dennis Dart SFD3CACR45GW18209	Alexander 4242/12	B37F	4/2005
42936	SN05DZS	Dennis Dart SFD3CACR45GW18210	Alexander 4242/13	B37F	4/2005
42937	SN05DZT	Dennis Dart SFD3CACR45GW18211	Alexander 4242/14	B37F	4/2005
		42927-37 new to <i>First Devon & Cornwall</i>			

Please note that this list supersedes that given in EBN535 – 42439 replaces the expected 42430, while 42924-6 are not now coming to First Essex.

Although listed when new as B36F, physical checks on several show them to be B37F + 21 or B31F + 27 or B34F + 21 + 1 wheelchair. They have an unladen weight of 7474kg and all were first registered on 1.4.2005.

Volvo B7RLEs received since EBN535 are 66823-6 (2 Dec) and 66820-2/9/30 (3 Dec).

Dates of first registration for those received previously are:

15.4.2005 (66802), 24.4.2005 (66807/9), 1.5.2005 (66810), 11.5.2005 (66808/11-4), 17.5.2005 (66816/8), 18.5.2005 (66815) 19.5.2005 (66817) and 10.6.2005 (66819).

Strathclyde Buses Ltd was renamed First Glasgow (No.1) Ltd 29.5.1998 and 40733 et seq passed from that company to First Glasgow (No.2) Ltd. in 9/1998.

Allocation changes

Period 8: 26 October 2008 to 22 November 2008

FGC=First Group cascade, i.e. transfer to/from another First fleet
(A)=acquired, including vehicles on loan; Anc=Ancillary fleet; RES=reserve
(spalexanderare/retained, licensed); D/L(S)=spare/retained (delicensed);

D/L(D)=delicensed for disposal; DS=Driving School; PS=Paint Spare

40733 RES-BE; 40736 RES-BE; 40737 RES-BE; 42439 FGC-RES; 42927 FGC-RES; 42928 FGC-RES; 42929 FGC-RES; 42930 FGC-RES; 42932 FGC-RES; 42933 FGC-RES; 42934 FGC-RES; 42935 FGC-RES; 42936 FGC-RES; 42937 FGC-RES; 43738 BN-CN; 46127 CN-HH; 46806 BN-CN; 46812 D/L(D)-BN; 46827 CF-CN; 47105 CR-CN; 53113 CF-BN; 53114 CF-BN; 65690 CR-CN; 65691 CR-CN; 65692 CR-CN; 66812 FGC-RES; 66814 FGC-RES; 66815 FGC-RES; 66818 RES-CF; 66819 RES-BN

*42931 arrived after 22 November

Repaints (period 8):

67001 67002 42483

HH46128 noted with super rear advert for Southend Radio
 65678 to LED rear route number display (ex dot matrix)



First cascade contrasts: Dart SLF/Plaxton 40736 (P629 WSU) new to Strathclyde Buses, seen in Chelmsford, and Scania L113CRL/Wright 60755 (N420 MWU), new to Rider (York), in Colchester. *Kevin Smith*



Area News - workings and sightings:

Clacton & Harwich (DT)

As these notes were written, 34284 had just gone to Harris for repaint, 65652 was still unserviceable at Clacton (as it has been for over 4 weeks) and CN67011 & CN65691 were working at Harwich. Other vehicle loans are shown below.

November

- 13th CR34013 o/l to DT in exchange for DT65651
- 14th DT31377 working at CR
- 21st CN67010 on DT104 (18.10 ex CR), CN67013 on DT103 (17.40 ex CR)
- 24th DT31377, DT34280 and DT43800 all VOR at CN

Colchester

On 20th November, Colchester town centre was closed for another parade of Parachute Regiment members returning from Afghanistan. The usual diversions applied. The ex Manchester B7RLEs are now daily performers on CR route 60 (Colchester-Prettygate), replacing the Scania's which launched the route.

November

- 4th CR67036 on 64
- 14th DT65651 on 64/64A
- 17th CR67004 on CN74, CN67010 on DT104, CN67012 on DT103/4, CR66812 first seen in use
- 22nd CR34018 on 65, CR62407 on X22

Chelmsford & Braintree

November

- 4th Olympian CF34815 on 351 (09.05 ex CF), BE46144 on 351 (13.05)
- 7th BE40736 on 72 (first sighting in use)
- 11th BE40733 on 36, BE40737 on 42, CF53121 on 72
- 14th BE40736 on 351
- 17th BE40733 on 351
- 20th BE47101 (reportedly 'withdrawn' briefly in early November) in use on 351, BE40736 on 42, CF34818 on 351 (09.05 ex CF)
- 22nd CF34818 on 351, BE51803 on 21
- 24th 42937 to CF for driver familiarisation (still displaying '1A Lands End' on arrival!), Solo CF53131 on 351 (16.05 ex CF and return)
- 26th CF42488 on BE21, Solo CF53137 on 351 (16.05 ex CF and return)
- 27th BE46817 on CF352, 42927 on 42

December

- 5th CF34807 on 351 (12.05 ex CF), CF34818 on 352 (15.45 to Halstead and return – service changes mean this was the last double decker through to HD), CF42927 in use on 36, CF42928 on 42 and CF42937 on 72

Basildon & Hadleigh

November

- 1st BN46174 on 73
- 4th BN41645 on 73
- 8th BN67002 on 100
- 10th BN46808 on 1/1A, BN65632 on 5, BN67001 on 22, BN67002 on 100
- 11th BN41647 on 5, BN46169 on 73, BN61054/7 on 5, BN67001 on 5
- 14th BN65676 (100) on 22
- 17th BN46812 on 73A
- 19th BN41650 on 5
- 20th BN31373 on 22 (a.m.)

21st BN43735 on 100, newly-transferred BN67009 on 5
 22nd BN46140 on 73
 24th BN43738 on 5
 25th BN67009 on 5
 26th BN65666 on 12, BN67001 on 100, BN67009 on 8, HH31462 believed ex 22
 27th BN34011 on 12
 28th 46116 on 2/25 from HH [transferred from BE as spare vehicle]

December

2nd BN34011 on 25B
 5th BN31373, BN43713, BN65627 (8), BN66819 and BN67001/2 all on 5;
 BN46827 and BN61057 on 8, BN67002 on 100, BN67009 on 22, BN46812 on 200
 [BN65626 VOR with collision damage]

Other News

Unladen weights noted recently:

40733 et seq: 6793kg
 60031, 60130: 12040kg
 60755-8: 10340kg
 668xx Volvos: 11060kg

And finally...



16 November 2008 was a sad day for those of us who grew up with a weekly dose of FLFs on our TV screens. Reg Varney, a.k.a. Driver Stan Butler, passed away that day aged 92. Eastern National's Wood Green depot was transformed (during filming on Sundays) to that of 'Luxton & District', the operator in "On the Buses" which was a hugely popular comedy serial between 1969 and 1973. The spin-off films coincidentally featured former Eastern National KSW5Gs (painted red, filmed at Borehamwood and no longer working for 'Luxton & District' because of the TV rights). Not in the least bit politically correct, much exaggerated for comedic effect – but, despite what has been written in some places, many

of the goings-on had more than a grain of reality about them - and there really were 'Blakeys' around. Rest in Peace, Reg, and give our regards to Jack. And "get that bus out!!!!".

Sources: Own observations, with many thanks to *First Essex* and to A Bird, N Clark, T Clark, J Collins, D Edwards, M Farmer, N Mansfield, J Podgorski, D Pretty, I Ransom, J Salmon, C Sigston, 'Solo', A Timms, TBL177M, R Webb, R Whitley, the *Essex Bus*, *South West*, *First Group Fans* and *British Buses Abroad in North America* y-groups, www.bustlistsontheweb.co.uk, *Real Bus News*, *LOTS*, *PSV Circle*, *Bristol VR South West Bus News* (www.geocities.com/ndl642m).

Reports relating to First Group may be sent by text on 07973 509459, by fax on 01277 216745, by e-mail or by conventional post. Many thanks to all who do so.

Chris Stewart

■ ARRIVA EAST HERTS & ESSEX LTD

New vehicles

2403	YJ58 PFU	Optare Versa V1040	SABVWJAC08L320123	Optare	B34F	11/08
2404	YJ58 PFV	Optare Versa V1040	SABVWJAC08L320124	Optare	B34F	11/08
2405	YJ58 PFX	Optare Versa V1040	SABVWJAC08L320125	Optare	B34F	11/08
2406	YJ58 PFY	Optare Versa V1110	SABWWJAC08L320138	Optare	B38F	11/08
2407	YJ58 PFZ	Optare Versa V1110	SABWWJAC08L320139	Optare	B38F	11/08
3910	BK58 URL	Mercedes-Benz 0530	WEB62808023116238	MB	DP37F	11/08

Vehicles in

from *Arriva The Shires* 3416 10/08

3416	P416 HVX	Dennis Dart SLF	322BR1TGW10291	Wright W83 B40F	8/96
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Allocations

9/08: 3252.u (fire damage)

10/08: 3416.HA

11/08: 2246/375.w, 2376.WEa; 2403-5.WE; 2406/7.HA; 3910.WE.

Vehicles out

2371 (R941 VPU), 3352 (J402 XVX): Hardwick, Carlton (dealer) 10/08

Subsequent Histories

2315 J935 WHJ): re-registered BHZ 8677 by D&G, Adderley Green, Staffs 9/01; gone 11/07

3359 (K409 FHJ): Goodyear, Staincross, South Yorkshire 9/08 ex B Line, Royston, South Yorkshire; Hardwick, Carlton (dealer) 10/08

General

2376 (R946 VPU) is to be converted into a Crew ferry vehicle at Ware

2403-5 (YJ 58 PFU/V/X) are specifically for service 331 (Hertford-Buntingford-Royston) & 2406/7 (YJ 58 PFY/Z) for service 59 (Harlow-Chelmsford)

3910 (BK 58 URL) is the additional vehicle required for service 724 (Harlow-Heathrow) following the extension of this service to Terminal 5. It was exhibited at Euro Bus Expo 2008 held at the NEC from 4-6 November.

COUNTY BUS & COACH COMPANY LIMITED

Subsequent histories

DP304 (J304 WHJ): gone from Stansted Transit, Great Notley (EX) by 9/08

LR101 (H101 GEV): Arriva North West 3101 9/07 ex Arriva Merseyside 3101

LR103 (H103 GEV): gone from Tyrer, Nelson (LA) 9/08

LR107 (H107 GEV): re-numbered 8200 by Arriva North West 8/06; gone 8/08

TL24 (UBZ 3362 ex UJN 430Y, FAZ 2514, WPH 124Y): GHA, Ruabon (CN) 4/08 ex Davies, Bettws Gwerfil Goch (CN)

EASYBUS fleet based at Excel, Eleventh Avenue, Stansted Business Park, Stansted Airport CM24 1RY although operating under Arriva The Shires discs

300	YX 57 CCO	Mercedes-Benz 515CDi	9061552N337374	Optare	C19F	11/07
301	YX 57 CCU	Mercedes-Benz 515CDi	9061552N343689	Optare	C19F	11/07
302	YX 57 CCV	Mercedes-Benz 515CDi	9061552N344473	Optare	C19F	11/07
303	YX 57 CCY	Mercedes-Benz 515CDi	9061552N349374	Optare	C19F	12/07
305	YX 57 CAE	Mercedes-Benz 515CDi	9061552N359050	Optare	C19F	12/07
306	YX 57 CAO	Mercedes-Benz 515CDi	9061552N359963	Optare	C19F	1/08

307 YX 57 CAU	Mercedes-Benz 515CDi	9061552N359051	Optare C19F	1/08
308 YX 57 CAV	Mercedes-Benz 515CDi	9061552N359884	Optare C19F	12/07
315 YX 08 AOR	Mercedes-Benz 515CDi	9061552N362961	Optare C19F	5/08
316 YX 08 AOS	Mercedes-Benz 515CDi	9061552N362958	Optare C19F	4/08
317 YX 08 AOT	Mercedes-Benz 515CDi	9061552N363207	Optare C19F	4/08
318 YX 08 HWC	Mercedes-Benz 515CDi		Optare C19F	6/08
319 YX 08 HWD	Mercedes-Benz 515CDi		Optare C19F	6/08
320 YX 08 HWE	Mercedes-Benz 515CDi		Optare C19F	6/08
329 YX 08 HWP	Mercedes-Benz 515CDi	9061552N383795	Optare C19F	8/08
ex-New Enterprise Coaches (Tonbridge) Ltd. 0329 10/08				

Mark Garrett

■ ARRIVA SOUTHEND LTD

Disposals Update

The Olympian with Arriva Scotland West (EBN535) is Alexander bodied 5395 (F575 SMG).

It is understood that the Olympians which have passed to Wealden, Five Oak (dealer) are Northern Counties bodied 5891/3/4/5/7 and Alexander bodied 5807 and 5829.

Forthcoming Vehicle Movements

The following vehicles are due at Southend during December:

Volvo Olympian/Northern Counties 5934-7 (P934-7 MKL) from Maidstone. 5930 (P930 MKL) illustrated last month is *not* due.

Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton 3086 (P286 FPK) from Guildford.

Dennis Dart/East Lancs EL2000 3122 (N542 TPK) from Horsham.

DAF SB220LF/Plaxton 3916 (T916 KKM) from Tunbridge Wells.



Former Arriva Southend Lance 3364 (M764 JPA) is now with Arriva Kent & Sussex at Tunbridge Wells, seen in November at the War Memorial, en route for Edenbridge. Meanwhile, DAF 3916 is moving in the opposite direction. Who got the best deal?

David Harman

As a result Olympian/ Alexander 5089/90/392/6/882 are due for disposal, with Dart/East Lancs 3004/5 due to transfer to training duties.

Service 5 Website

Service 5 has its own dedicated website at www.basildondirect.co.uk. It is similar in design and layout to the route 29 website (EBN527) and includes timetable, route map and wider Southend area network map.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Matthew Arnold

Network Colchester

Corrections to EBN535

Optare Excel N204 LCK remains with Classic. This vehicle did not move from Classic to either Colchester or Haverhill.

Dart/Caetano HX51 LSN, transferred to Excel, was numbered 351 in the Colchester fleet, not 355 as stated last month.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Richard Delahoy



DAF/Plaxton President **131** (T131 AUA) is now in fleet livery and looks very impressive. *Kevin Smith*



Network Colchester's much-travelled Volvo B10BLE/Alexander ALX 902 (W902 UJM) retains full Classic Coaches colours. *Kevin Smith*

National Express

■ NATIONAL EXPRESS OPERATIONS LTD.

Transferred in 9/08:

Y185 HNH, Volvo B7RLE/Wright B--D; another Stansted Park & Ride vehicle.

Liveries:

By 11/08,

DAF SB3000/Van Hool D304 (Y304 HUA) to new NatEx.

Volvo B7R/Plaxton LK 53 KVT to new NatEx.

General:

The Stansted P&R is the Coopers End to Enterprise House shuttle, aimed at staff, and running within the airport perimeter. It was taken over from Meteor Parking from 9/08.

Cambridge Kings Hedges depot, which closed in 2005, was demolished for redevelopment in 11/08.

■ CONTRACTORS

Burtons, Haverhill

YN 04 XFB/C/D, YN 54 DDL/O, Volvo B12B/Plaxton, to new NatEx livery by 11/08.

NatEx 787 has passed from Burtons to NX Ops. I understand that NX Ops already had a partial interest in the 787. The Scania/Levantes have transferred from Burtons to NX Ops.

John Podgorski

NIBS



Delays with the delivery of Scania/Darwen YN08 OWR meant it was not long before another Scania (with body now badged Optare) arrived, the third new bus being the Solo.

EU58 BLJ was collected from Scania at Purfleet on 11 November and entered service the following day. It is seen leaving the depot for the first time in service, passing YN08 OWR.

Chris Stewart, with many thanks to Steve Nelson and driver Bernie.

Stephensons of Essex

The registration of the new Scania/Optare Olympus is EU58 BRX.

Ian Ransom with thanks to Lyn Watson

Stansted Transit

The PSV Circle reports that the Viceroy depot in Saffron Walden is in use as an outstation. Mercedes Benz 0814D/Plaxton T462 HNH has gone to Dawsonrentals (dealer) Milton Keynes. *Ian Ransom*

Trustybus

Mercedes Benz 709D/Plaxton J861 HWS has been sold. Scania K340/Irizar YN57 FWT has been sold from the Galleon coach fleet to Craske Coaches, Catfield. *Ian Ransom*

Ensignbus

■ DEALER STOCK MOVEMENTS

Vehicles in

from

- Arriva Midlands:** Volvo B10Ms H649/53/56/58/64/84 GPF, C144 NRR, E149/52/3 BTO, B135 GAU C148 NRR
- Blue Triangle:** Tridents P051 UM/H/K/L/R.
- Dublin Bus:** Olympians 96-D-258/9/262/278/279/280/283.
- Metroline:** Darts R164 VLA, R130 RLY.
- Rotala Group:** Volvo B10M G647 SGT
- Stagecoach East Midlands:** H344 SWA.
- Stagecoach Manchester:** Scania H465 GVM, J136/41 HMT, K853 LMK, E706 EFG
- Stagecoach Strathtay:** Olympians K508/10/18 ESS, J196 YSS
- private preservation:** Bristol VR VEX 287X.

Vehicles out

to

- Darts L714/9 JUD: **ACL Travel**, Hewish, Somerset.
- Volvo B10M's B306KVO C308/9 NRC: **A&P Brown**, Ely, Cambs.
- Dart MPD SN51 SXV: **Clintona**, Brentwood.
- Volvo B10M E153 DTO: **Dews Coaches**, Somersham, Cambs.
- Volvo B10M's G119NGN G850 GWG: **Farleigh Coaches**, Rochester, Kent.
- Olympian G511 SFT: **Johnsons**, Hodthorpe.
- Volvo B10B M648 YLV: **Kearney Coach Hire**, Eire.
- Dart MPD's SN51 SXD/E/F/P/R/S/T/W : **McGill's**, Greenock.
- Darts P303/10 MLD: **Renown Coaches**, Bexhill
- Dart R131 RLY: **Rotala Group**, Birmingham.
- Dublin Olympian 96-D-304: **TM Travel**, Sheffield.

Bristol VR's RUA 461W HJB 455W: **BBC Wales**.

Bristol VR's HJB 464W RAH 265W: **Little London Ltd**, Safano, Italy

■ ENSIGNBUS LTD

Olympian S128 RLE has been acquired and reregistered WYJ 759.

Dublin Olympian 97-D-334 is now registered P495 SWC and numbered 195.

Darts 700/711/2/53/82 have been sold to AM-PM Travel, Birmingham; 753 being re-registered back to P720 RYL. Spectras 103 and 105 have passed to Renown Coaches, Bexhill.

David Harman with thanks to Ross Newman of Ensignbus and Ian Ransom

Other Operators

24x7, Elsenham This name is now in use with a minibus operator, based in Elsenham. The only vehicle recorded so far is VW Caravelle K380 CAV.

ACCESS ANYONE, Leigh-On-Sea Fiat Ducato GF53 YDK has been acquired.

AIR CONNECTIONS, Wendons Ambo

Ford Transit V236 JRD has been sold.

AIRPORTS 2000, Pitsea This new operator has Iveco/Crest BP51 LOD.

ALS MINIBUS, Harlow Mercedes Benz 413 MV53 GRZ has been sold.

ASTROCABZ, Maylandsea LDV Convoy Y649 DHF has been sold.

BARKER, Roydon Acquired from Logic Transport, Nazeing is NIW 8795 (A655 UGD) a Volvo B10M/Plaxton; unusual addition is Renault PP160/Wadham Stringer K18 WPA, acquired from Ealsons Coaches, Chertsey. More common are Dennis Javelin/Wadham Stringer N982 BHE ex Rotherham Borough Council and similar FA54 WMW (new as MoD GE 55 AA) ex Romdrive, Melton Mowbray. Finally S105 KJF an Iveco 391E/Beulas has also been acquired. Reregistered is Volvo B10M/Ikarus HKZ 3852 (G132 RYC) to XIL 5455. Leyland Olympian/ ECW ARP 606X, is now registered VJI 1985. Vehicles sold are Leyland Swift/ Elme BHZ 9550 (G917 GRN) to Specialist Training, Gosport, Setra S215 A252 TAG (new as A33 KBA) and J8 WSB a Plaxton 425/Lorraine. New owners for the last two, are not known.

BRENTWOOD COACHES Mercedes Benz 0814D/Plaxton W209 YAP has been acquired and has been re-registered 823 NMC. (See County Coaches below).

CHELMER VALLEY, Chelmsford New here is Ford Transit YS07 UXX.

COLCHESTER COACHES, Clacton-on-Sea

Acquired from Billingham Coaches, Crawley is K285 NHU a Volvo B10M/Plaxton.

COUNTY COACHES Brentwood Dennis Javelin/Duple 5189 RU has been re-registered to its original F879 RFP. Volvo B10M/Van Hool 823 NMC has been acquired from Brentwood Coaches and re-registered to 5189 RU.

EXECUTIVE MINIBUSES, Aveley This new operator has a Mercedes Benz Sprinter minicoach EM06 BUS .

FLAGFINDERS, Braintree Sold to Tony Glew, Little Tey is former Eastern National Leyland Olympian/ ECW coach PLZ 2876 (D510 PPU).

FLORIDA, Halstead Vehicles sold are Bove Futura F690 ONR, MCW Metrobus F817 YLV and Ford Transit N804 HVX

HARWICH TAXIS, Harwich Recently acquired are Ford Transit LN52 LFW and LN52 YOT.

LCB TRAVEL, Harlow Acquired is R536 AVX a Fiat Ducato (non PSV).

LODGE, High Easter Bedford OB/Duple TMY 700 has been acquired.

LOGIC TRANSPORT, Nazeing BMC 850



Cedrics now have former Stagecoach East Midlands Olympian K360 DWJ, still in Stagecoach livery, but with a deeper red skirt. *Kevin Smith*

- DX04 WKV has been sold to Delta Line, Molesey.
- MILTON MINIBUSES, Corringham** Ford Transit W495 AEV has been sold.
- NEW HORIZONS Frating** BX55 FYN a Mercedes Benz minibus has been acquired.
- P&L MINIBUS, Colchester** Has recently become a licensed operator. Vehicles owner are LDV Convoy Y469 HPL, Ford Transit EF52 KSE, Fiat Ducato DN06 EWX and ex Hawaii Five O Ford Transit EU04 EAA, all of which are non-PSV. Also here is ex Towncars Renault Master LX03 CVR.
- P&M, Crays Hill** Former East Yorkshire Volvo B10M/Plaxton V842 JAT has been sold.
- RANDALL ,Crays Hill** This new operator has Ford Transit NJ55 YSC.
- RICHMON 4 WHEEL DRIVE, Stapleford Tawney** DAF 400/Jubilee L634 ANX has been sold.
- SALWA TRAVEL, Abridge** This operator has moved to London (out of our area), with Setra KSU 476 (A422 CJU) and Volvo B10M/Jonckheere TXI 8757 (MRP 837Y).
- S-CAPE Corringham** Mercedes Benz 412D P966 PUA has been sold.
- SINNOTT Molehill Green** Recently acquired are Mercedes Benz 811D/ Plaxton NIL 8276 (J832 RNK) from Millennium, Warnham and W373 KBE a Mercedes Benz 0814D/ Autobus from Hatts Coaches, Chippenham
- SM TRAVEL/ROADRUNNER** Iveco/Marshall M736 AOO has been withdrawn. Iveco/Mellor L699 NWX has gone for scrap, Iveco/Marshall N662 HBY has also ben sold. Dart SLF EU06 KNR has gone to Central Connect, Birmingham.
- SOUTHEND RADIO CARS, Southend** Recently acquired from Advance Minibuses,Hockley are W879 WHS a VW LT46 and X86 JOJ a Mercedes Benz 411D/Excel.
- SOUTHERN STAR, Stansted** DAF SB2305/ Caetano J40 PSW has been sold.
- SPECHT, Abridge** Have acquired W364 MKY a Scania L94/Van Hool.
- STANSTED COACH AND CARRIAGE, Birchanger** Acquired from Sinnott, Molehill Green is M269 FNS a Mercedes Benz 609D/Onyx. In from a private owner is Ford Transit V315 OOC. LDV Convoy S797 JPR has been sold.
- SWIFT CARS, Little Waltham** Mercedes Benz 811D/Optare E200 UWT has been sold to Private Hire, Blackburn.
- TALISMAN, Gt Bromley** Accident victim H49 MJN a Leyland Olympian/Leyland has arrived from Burtons, Haverhill. Also here is Bristol RE/Plaxton SGF 483L. Acquired are open toppers NFX 136P a Daimler Fleetline/Alexander and MCW Metrobus EWF 453V; the future use for these is undecided
- TENDRING TRAVEL, Thorpe-le-Soken** This new operator is operating RN03 OCJ a LDV Convoy
- TN TRAVEL, Colchester** Have ceased operations and LDV Convoy P801 MTR has been sold
- TONY GLEW, Great Tey** Toyota/Caetano L480 NUD has been withdrawn
- TRAVEL WITH HUNNY, Stapleford Abbots** Acquired from Fowler, Holbeach Drove is XJI 9426 (E270 KEF) a Leyland Tiger/Plaxton. Leyland Atlantean/Roe XPG 201T has been withdrawn
- VICEROY, Saffron Walden** Acquired from Bowens, Tamworth are Setra FHD12-290 MUI 1393 (K297 GDT), OUI 2298 (K298 GDT) and YIL 1840 (K296 GDT) and from Premiere, Nottingham, Mercedes Benz 0814D/Plaxton S390 HVV. Vehicles sold are Scania K113/Van Hool HOI 7544 (new as E125 BRG) to Miller, Foxton, Ford Transit G272 NWF to Snowdrop Travel, Rainham and Volvo B6/ Alexander L667 MSF to an unknown owner
- WICKS, Braintree** Recently acquired from Johnson, Hodthorpe is Neoplan Cityliner T3 JBT. This vehicle has fire damage and will need a rebuild before use. The registration has been retained by Johnsons. Bedford YMP/Plaxton SIB 8345 has been reregistered to its original YAJ 503Y and has been sold, as have Bedford YNV/Duple TJI 2807 (D101 PBM), E822 WAH and similar, but Plaxton bodied C746 DVG
- YELO, Braintree** Ford Transit N962 VEG and P204 CRG have been sold
- Leyland Olympian/Northern Counties B122 TVU has been seen on schools services in Brentwood; the operator is unknown

Ian Ransom with thanks to the PSV Circle, Paul Smith (Talisman), Dave Arnold, Colin Sigston

Bus driving again

In 1966 I took my PSV test on a Leyland PD2 OHJxxx with Southend Corporation Transport and passed first time. I spent a few years with them before joining Eastern National at Southend depot. After leaving the buses, my PSV licence lapsed as I had no need for it.

In October 2008 I decided to take the new PCV test as I am involved with The Castle Point Transport Museum Canvey Island and wanted to play a fuller role driving buses for pleasure, and of course driving Bristol VR CPU 979G of which I am part owner. Being 64 years of age I thought long and hard about taking the test but decided it was what I wanted to do.

First of all, I had to have a medical which I passed. I then bought two DVDs to train on the Theory and Hazard Perception Tests, which I passed in early October. I then had to find a driving school. I settled on one in Basildon as I live in Southend. When they sent me the details, I was told to report to Charfleets Industrial Estate, Canvey Island which was even better. My training vehicle was a Scania coach, MIL 2274, 40ft long with five speed manual gear box. I was told it was a J reg. from Manchester.

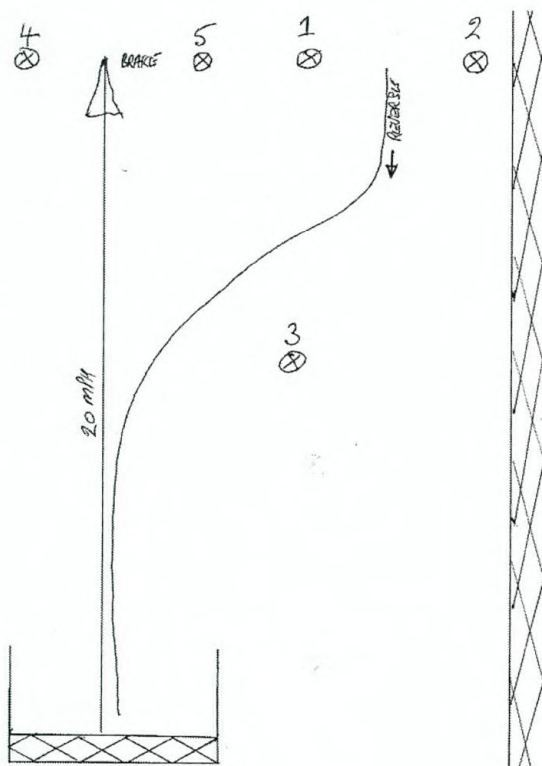
The course was five days, 0800-1200 Monday to Friday, with the test at Chelmsford on the Friday. Luckily for me the schools were on holiday so the roads were a lot quieter.

After a short drive around the dual carriageway on Canvey to get the feel of it, we set off for Chelmsford where all my training was undertaken.

Having only driven up to 36ft, 40ft seemed a lot longer. It is strange

how you have to start driving by the book all over again. Some of the roads I went down in Chelmsford were very narrow with quite sharp angled turns. On the test, we went along some roads I had not driven down before. All the reversing practice was carried out on the old airfield at Bradwell-on-Sea with the same set-up as the test centre. During the five days training, the instructor said I was up to standard for the test, which was at 0845 Friday morning - an early start from Canvey.

After a few questions on finding faults on the vehicle, it was time to do the reversing movement (see diagram). I had to drive forward towards cones 1 and 2, stop just before hitting them and then reverse past



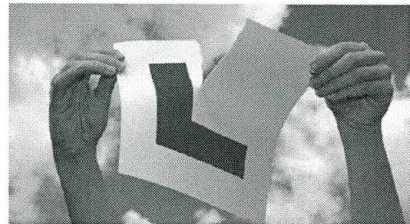


RSM Driver Training Scania MIL 2274

cone 3, not crossing a wide shaded area on the right with the wheels. It was all right for the body of the coach to go over it. Then, the coach had to be positioned in a shaded box area without knocking the barrier behind down. After this, you had to come out of the box at 20mph and when you reached cones 4 and 5, do a controlled stop. I was told by the instructor I could make one correction to the reverse if needed. I did not have to. You were also allowed to get out of the vehicle to check if you were in the box. I did this to satisfy myself. With this all done, it was out on the road for the test proper.

You were allowed to make twelve minor mistakes on the road test, but if you made three on the same thing it, was three strikes and you were out. I made six in total - all minor, so I was quite pleased. One point he

did make was that on the A12, the speed limit was 60mph. I let the speed drop down to 50-55mph and should have kept the speed up to 60mph if possible. All in all I was quite relaxed on the test after the reversing manoeuvres.



I hope this gives some insight on gaining a PCV class D licence for anyone thinking of doing the same.

Ian Banks

Transports of Delight ~ Memoirs of a Bus Anorak: 1940 to 2008 ***by the Revd. Terry Challis***

Chapter 1 : The Early Years (1940 - 1951)

I was born in February 1940 at Pitsea in South Essex, the youngest of seven children. However we did not stay there long because of the War and the 'invasion scare' - children were evacuated from the coastal areas thought to be at risk of invasion. Therefore my brothers and sisters were evacuated to Northamptonshire. Being a baby however, I was taken by my parents to live at my father's brass and aluminium foundry 'underneath the arches' at Leyton Midland Road Station. When the 'invasion scare' was over, we returned to South Essex and lived at Hadleigh.

My earliest recollection of an interest in

buses, apart from playing with a toy trolleybus as a toddler, was soon after the war had finished when, in London Road Hadleigh, my eldest brother pointed out the difference between an AEC and a Bristol. The local services in the area were mostly provided by **Westcliff-on-Sea Motor Services** at that time. They ran a mixture of AECs and Bristols: being a Tilling firm they were nearly all fitted with Gardner 5LW engines. For many years I could not understand why the Westcliff AECs sounded different to the Southend Corporation ones!

Westcliff had an interesting collection of buses. I remember that the oldest were two



One of the oldest buses seen by Terry Challis in his Hadleigh childhood was Westcliff MV 3394, a 1931 built AEC Regent with distinctive Metro-Cammell "piano front" body. It was originally an AEC demonstrator and appears to have a London style straight staircase. It is seen here late in its life outside the Westcliff MS Prittlewell garage and works in Fairfax Drive. EBEG collection

what appeared to be AECs but were in fact Dennis Lances built in 1931 and latterly fitted with AEC radiators and the inevitable Gardner 5LW engines, JN 960/1. There were also a couple of ex-AEC demonstrators. One was MV 3394 which was a Regent 1 with a highbridge Metro Cammell body with, I recall, a "piano front". The other was HX 2980 which had been re-bodied during the War with an ECW high-bridge body. It was to become one of the first 'open-toppers' after the War, being converted in 1950. I think both of these buses were allocated to the small Hadleigh Garage on the corner of Oak Road and London Road (which was actually the former depot of Thundersley, Hadleigh & District Motors, taken over by Westcliff in 1933).

Westcliff's Oak Road Hadleigh garage later became the Supreme Coaches depot after the take-over of Benfleet & District and Canvey & District by Westcliff in 1951. Supreme Coaches (and Superior Coaches of Tottenham) were owned by other members of the Bridge family who owned the Benfleet and Canvey companies, about which more later. Another interesting resident of the Westcliff garage at Hadleigh was a Leyland Cub coach with an ECW 20 seat body. I cannot recall having ever seen it outside of the garage! [There were three in all, JN 7833, 7985 & 7986, the first two being shown as withdrawn by the time the PSV Circle published a Westcliff fleet list in July 1951]. Westcliff also had an AEC 'Q' double-decker (as modelled by Corgi OOC), JN 3457, however I never travelled on it or saw it and it was withdrawn in 1950.

The rest of the Westcliff AECs were Regent 1s new in 1933/4/5, most with low-bridge Weymann bodies and roof-route indicator boxes which were no longer in use. There were also some highbridge Regents with Park Royal bodies (JN 2796-2800) that rarely ventured to Hadleigh except on the occasional 'Relief'. I believe that these interesting vehicles were used mainly on the Shoburness services (see for example the superb colour shot of JN2800 on the cover of 'The Heyday of the Bus - the Post-war Years' by C Carter, published by Ian Allan). However, there were many variations on this theme. Some of these Regents were rebuilt

with sloping and 'squared-off' drivers windows, and their roof-route boxes were removed (as can be clearly seen in the picture of JN2800).

Some of the AEC Regents were later rebuilt by Beadle in what amounted to almost a complete rebodding, others were refurbished by the local firm of Chas Beale. However two of them, JN 4294 and JN 4745 had been very nicely re-bodied by ECW complete with new front mudguards so that they looked like Regent IIs.

The Westcliff double deck Bristols were not uninteresting either. The earliest were GO5G models, but most were the K5G variety. Westcliff had some single-deck Bristol buses which were all JO5Gs except for one solitary L5G (AJN 826). I think all of these were allocated to Southend for services such as the Wallasea and Paglesham routes and were not often seen in Hadleigh. Some of the JO5Gs were single-deck buses in white 'coach-type' livery for the sea-front services 19 & 19A, Leigh Elms Hotel to Southend Kursaal. Talking of sea-front services, there were three GO5Gs deckers (JN 8570-2) of 1937 which were originally built with open-top ECW bodies and painted white. During the War they were fitted with covered tops and used mainly on Service No. 3 (Southend to Benfleet) on which Benfleet & District also operated. They reverted to open-toppers after the War ready for the 1950 season, replacing the single deckers.

The other GO5Gs were known by my brothers and myself as 'squares' because they had Brush bodies with roof-route boxes which produced a rather square silhouette. In the late 1940s some were rebuilt by Beadle and the others rebodied by ECW. The Beadle ones retained the original high radiator while the ECW ones were fitted with the post-war PV2 radiator and looked almost like a post-war Bristol K type. However, they always gave the impression of being particularly slow and underpowered buses, even more under-powered than other 5LW fitted double-deckers!

The Westcliff "K" were divided into two groups: the pre-war ones and the post-war ones. All the Ks had ECW bodies and all the



The trio of 1937 built Bristol GO5Gs were delivered as open toppers but Terry recalls seeing them fitted with roofs during the war and early post-war years. They reverted to open top for seafront use in 1950 as JN 8572 illustrates here, near Southend Kursaal. Richard Delahoy collection

pre-war ones were K5Gs. These were known to us as "No 1s" as they were regular performers on Service No.1 (Southend to Rayleigh): the 'BHJ' pair, BHJ 532 & 533 were most common on this route in the post-war years. However the pre-war K5Gs were used on all the routes and some were re-built with the lower PV2 radiators which made them look a little more modern. Perhaps the most interesting of these vehicles were the "AJN" batch, AJN 823 to 825, which were originally fitted with canvas-opening roofs. As a result they had narrower rear upstairs windows and two fewer seats upstairs in order to provide room for the canvas roof to be folded away.

The post-war "Ks" were mainly K5Gs but, eventually there were also some K6Bs which brought a new standard of performance and comfort, in terms of less vibration, to the services to which they were allocated. I cannot remember to which services they were allocated but I can remember travelling on DHJ611, one of the last batch of K6Bs, when

it was brand-new, on Service No.24 (Leigh Church to Rayleigh - not a trunk or very demanding route) which seemed to me to be a waste of its qualities! In railway terms, perhaps it was a 'running in' turn!

The other two main operators in the area were **Eastern National** and **Benfleet & District**. Eastern National shared the Southend to Grays service with their Tilling Group relative Westcliff. The Eastern National service number was 70 (plus 84, for Tarpots Corner to Grays workings) while the Westcliff numbers were 2 and 2B. Return tickets were transferable between the two companies. The Eastern National vehicles that I remember are post-war K5Gs, of the KNO and MPU batches, and, from 1949, ECW re-bodied GO5Gs. On reflection it amazes me that Eastern National used these re-bodied buses on trunk routes like services 19/19A (Southend to Clacton, not to be confused with Westcliff 19/19A on Southend seafront) and 70. I suppose at the time there was nothing else to use.

"Benfleet & District" were another cup of tea altogether and seemed to have their own following among passengers. Together with Westcliff they provided a service between Southend and Benfleet every 15 minutes. But that is where the similarity stopped. I believe that they had run mainly AEC Regents and some ex Westcliff Tilling Stevens double deckers before my time, but after the war their main fleet consisted of well-turned out Daimler CWA6s with utility Brush and Duple bodies, delivered new to Benfleet/Canvey. In 1950 they acquired many similar ex-Birmingham CWA6s with Park Royal and Duple bodies. Their tickets were not transferable with Westcliff and they seemed to duplicate a lot of journeys, presumably to make the most of any traffic that was available; some duplicates only ran over the Southend to Hadleigh section, others through to Benfleet. Their vehicles were notably faster than anything that Westcliff or Eastern National could put on the road at the time. The associated "Canvey

& District" company was similar to the "Benfleet" fleet but, I believe, also included the remaining AECs. Both fleets used a sage green livery and there is a colour picture in the Heyday book mentioned earlier of FOP462 on the Benfleet to Southend route. All the buses in both fleets were of the high-bridge variety.

There was another operator that appeared in Hadleigh on a few peak hour journeys. This was **Campbell's of Pitsea**. They ran a service from Pitsea Station to Hadleigh Church. This was used by commuters who found it more convenient to join the London, Tilbury and Southend railway line at Pitsea instead of Leigh; my own father used this service sometimes. At that time, the bus service to Leigh Station was a bit erratic with few direct services: the regular service No. 22 went a rather long way round on its journey from Hadleigh to Leigh Station. Campbell's fleet consisted mainly of Albion single-deckers although towards the end of



Campbell's PPU 187 married a brand new (1949) Albion Venturer chassis with the 1934 Weymann body off Westcliff's JN 4294. Photographed here at their depot, it was regularly seen in Hadleigh on the peak hours service to Pitsea Station used by Terry's father.

Dennis Gill, Richard Delahoy collection

this period they acquired a pair of ex-Barton 'unfrozen' AEC Regents with utility low-bridge bodies, FVO 322 & 323. They also bought a brand-new Albion Venturer double-decker chassis, PPU 187, which was fitted with the 1934 Weymann body from one of the re-bodied Westcliff AEC Regents (JN 4294). This was an amazing vehicle by any standard! At the end of this period the Hadleigh service was usually operated by one of these double-deckers.

However, my experience of buses and other forms of public transport were not limited to Hadleigh. There were regular trips by bus to Southend with my mother for shopping. On these journeys, buses from Hadleigh and Leigh and further afield had a minimum 3d fare from Chalkwell Schools going into Southend, so as to protect the traffic for the Southend Corporation trolleybus western circular and the Corporation and Westcliff jointly operated service 25A/25B that had replaced the Leigh tram route. In the Southend area there were delights such as the trolleybuses and the brown buses of the City Coach Company to attract the young bus enthusiast. I can remember travelling on the trolleybuses as well as Corporation buses. It always intrigued me that the Corporation buses had 'Spitting Prohibited' signs inside them.

On rare occasions, I was allowed to accompany my father to his foundry at Leyton in London on the London Tilbury and Southend Railway. The usual motive power was a Stanier 3-cylinder class 4 tank engine. We changed at Barking onto a Kentish Town train. However, there were a few through trains from Kentish Town to Southend. These were usually hauled by a 'tender loco' of some sort (a Fowler 4F or a Black 5). Tender locos were classified as express engines by my brothers and I, who had a very limited experience on these matters at that time!

Speaking about my father, in the early post-war years, he became Secretary of the Hadleigh and Thundersley Cricket Club when it was resuscitated after the war. The bus connection here is that he had to arrange transport to the away matches and this was usually provided by Westcliff-on-Sea Motor Services. I often accompanied the team to

exotic far-flung places such as Maldon, Woodham Ferrers and Clacton. The usual coach provided was a just pre-war (1939) AEC Regal with Duple body or, later, a Bedford OB. Much to my disappointment, I never got to ride on an AEC Ranger. On a few occasions, the vehicle provided was a Tilling-Stevens 'charabanc'. One of these had been rebuilt but that did not stop it breaking down on a non-cricket related outing to Reading!

One other story in this period is of interest. My eldest brother, Ken, returned from his National service in 1948 or 1949. He had been a driver in the Army (RASC) and served in Egypt and Palestine. After he had been home a year or so, he applied to Westcliff-on-Sea Motor Services to be trained as a driver. He was accepted and passed his PSV test first time. His first duty as a driver was to drive a 2A service from Southend to Romford, leaving Southend about 1pm. I well remember that, on my way back to school, I waited at the top of our road (Castle Road) in Hadleigh to see him go by. He was driving a fairly new K5G (DHJ607). This must have been in 1950.

These are my earliest recollections of the buses of the Hadleigh area in the period from the end of the Second World War until I began secondary school in 1951. It may be that some of the comments from this section really belong to the next chapter but I do not think that it will seriously affect my story.

To be continued

*Edited by Richard Delahoy,
who supplied the photos*

We are indebted to Richard for providing this article. It was originally submitted to his website:

*www.workingonthebuses.co.uk
"Creating an archive of stories of life
working in the bus and coach industry".*

*Well worth a look, and Richard would
welcome further contributions.*

David Harman

EASTERN NATIONAL

Enthusiast's Guild



Editor's perks time again, and another Brentwood picture; c1951. The photographer is thought to be Roy Marshall.

City Coach Co. Bedford OWB B26 (KTW 242) waits time at the Ingrave Road stop. In the background, to the left is the sun-awning of *Wilson's* department store, then *Jeanne* (purveyor of frocks, frillies and suchlike) and at no.11 - the fabled *Green's Music Store*, with HMV dog ("Nipper") and gramophone prominent in the window displays. *Green's* really *were* a Brentwood institution. They sold musical instruments, sheet music, 78rpm (later 45rpm) records, and sports equipment. The big market for these was their next door neighbour, Brentwood School. If this wasn't enough, they were also London Transport agents, and you could buy Red Rovers (a day's travel on all London's red buses for 2/6d, child) and Twin Rovers (Underground and red bus for 5/-, child). With one of these in my grubby mitt, I would cross the road to catch an RT on the 87 - the traditional start to a day spent 'spotting' new Routemasters.

Just visible in the original, is the stop flag entitled 'City Coach Stop', and I don't recall ever seeing one of these in any other photo.

Out of shot, to the right is a strange

structure - apparently at one time, a small garage. Brick-built with a pitched tiled roof, it was used as a bus shelter in ENOC and probably City days too. I dimly recall bench seating down each side, with a central queue barrier. It is not known when use of this ceased, but it was probably when the Ingrave Road stop was removed. It is still in situ, albeit now fitted with doors.

B26 is on the 11, Stondon (Church) to Woodman Road route, which in 1951, offered a distinctly non-clockface, approximate hourly service, interspersed with 'shorts' from Hook End. After leaving *Green's*, it will run a short distance along Ingrave Road, turn right into Queens Road, then head down to the station, and through pleasant roads lined with Victorian villas, to the Woodman Road stop (where the Clintona Vario is standing on the back cover of EBN533).

The 1946 Perkins P6-engined, utility seat-fitted Mulliner-bodied Bedfords did not last overly long. B26 became Eastern National 179, and was the first of its type to be withdrawn (in 1956). It went, minus engine, to dealers, A.M.C.C. of Stratford, presumably for scrap.

David Harman

Braintree past, present and future

Building work has finished, with just shopfitting yet to do in the retail units. The side of the head fitter's house (Mr Shuttleworth) has had the gaps in the rafters blocked up, and the walls painted cream. This had the ghosts of four sets of steps leading into the pits, and the pale green paint that most of the depot was painted with inside. A short stretch of land between the flats and the house, about level with the bottom of the pits, has been grassed over.

A tall redbrick wall exists along the rear part of the site here. The stumps of the RSJs that formed the workshop wall framing have been pulled out and all workshop brickwork has been removed. The only building that survives is the end wall of a single storey store building connected with the workshop, and forming a boundary wall.

The site of that building now forms additional garden space for the occupant of Mr Shuttleworth's house. Although the entranceway to the garage is now brick-paved, the end of a little metal pipe still protrudes from the paving near the lefthand side, which dates from the early days when there was a petrol pump for the buses on this side. The back of the building that the garage was built around, has been rendered and the rear wall painted cream. It is probable that old depot paintwork still exists under this.

It was suggested that when the workshops were built, that a bus chassis was buried under the hard-standing. When demolition took place, there was no sign of this, although a cylindrical object, possibly an old boiler or water tank was found. One of the few other elements of the old garage that remain, is the 'slope'. This, of course, has been re-paved, and now varies a little in

shape, but since the whole site is sloping, would have been difficult to disguise.

Earlier this year, planning permission was applied for to demolish a tile showroom in Rayne Road and build flats on the site. The showroom incorporates the old garage of the "**Horn**" Motor Coach Co. Ltd., at one time known as Horn Hotel Garage. In the private area behind the showroom, the trusswork of the old garage can be seen. I do not know whether planing permission has been granted or not. "Horn" had passed to Eastern National on 24 August 1935, with four Gilfords and two AEC Regals. The "Horn" services were worked by Halstead depot, although the Rayne Road premises were retained for a while as a body and paint shop. Does anyone know when that use ceased, or even have a photo in EN ownership days?

Braintree District Council want to build a new local government office to replace Causeway House. The proposed site is where the bus park currently is. When the idea was first mooted, conjectural drawings showed the Bus Park, much as it is now. However, more recent drawings ominously show **no** Bus Park; merely a row of three bus stops in Victoria Street ...

Back to the present and the recently refurbished Bus Park. This has five bays, A-E. A-D have bus shelters, equipped with "bumperches". Stops are equipped with 'bus due' digital displays (no 'real time' yet). They also have railings to deter the general wandering about that seemed to go on without incident in olden days, but which now tend to get Health & Safety people hot under the collar. First's 70 and 352 now run from the Bus Park.

Sue Burden

Back cover:

One of the First Volvo B7RLEs cascaded from Manchester to Colchester: 66811 (MX05 CDK).

The 59 (Harlow - Chelmsford) has gained new branded Optare Versas. 2406 (YJ58 PFY) displays the unusual lines of this model as it leaves Chelmsford.

Kevin Smith



The Optare Excel is rare in Essex. Network Colchester 429 (P429 AHR) comes from Classic Buses, and still bears their Nice 'n' Easy branding. Kevin Smith

On the other hand, the Scania/Optare (previously East Lancs) combination is becoming popular. Here is the new NIBS example. at South Green, Billericay waiting to operate its first journey, a 46 from Billericay School to Wickford via Basildon. Fom there it went onto the 221. Chris Stewart





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