

ESSEX BUS NEWS

Issue 537
January 2009



ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP
www.essexbus.org.uk

SOUTHEND SECOND HERITAGE RUNNING DAY

front cover:

Stephensons' first ever new double decker is 501, EU58BRX, an Optare Olympus bodied Scania. Normally found on school routes 503 & 593, on January 1st it ran on the 6 and 61. Here it lays over prior to working the final 61 of the day. John G Lidstone

Ensign team at work: Cravens bodied RT1499 stands at Benfleet Station en route for Southend.

Peter Newman checks the departure time for son Ross in the hot seat.

Chris Stewart

Hardy Miles Travel of Southend own two RMLs but they are rarely seen out and about; however RML2466 ran service 1 extras between Southend and Thames Drive on January 1st, with hastily arranged blinds, as seen here in the Travel Centre. Their other Routemaster is RML2564.

Richard Delahoy

Sharing the London Road service 1 shuttles was Timebus (St Albans) SRM7.

This was a genuine ex Southend Transport bus, the former 113.

Richard Delahoy



Essex Bus News

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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 ...

A correction to EBN 536: The City OWB on page 28 was B29, not B26. Thanks to Peter Carr for pointing this out.

From this month, EBN will be despatched by second-class post rather than first class. This will save a considerable amount on our monthly bill, and thus help to keep subs down. Royal Mail have already announced a 3p rise in second-class postage, applicable from April.

A further photo list is in the centre pages, comprising prints from negatives made available by Alan Osborne. These were previously offered by the Group some years ago.

David Harman

We welcome new members ...

Russell Young of Colchester - 980

Keith Lee of Durham - 981

George Bedding of Romford - 982

Roger Partridge of South Woodham Ferrers - 983

Lewis Brownlow of Hockley - 984

Rev. Terry Challis of Thornton Cleveleys - 985

Richard Delahoy, Treasurer and Membership Secretary

Dates for your diary

■ PRESS DATES

<i>For inclusion in EBN dated</i>	<i>reports should reach Editors by</i>	<i>planned despatch date</i>
February	31 January	19 February
March	28 February	19 March

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 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 February 13** - *Trevor Brookes*: TBA.
- ▶ **Friday March 13** - *Alan Osborne*: "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".
- ▶ **Friday May 8** - *Richard Delahoy*: "20 years ago - part 2".
- ▶ **Friday June 12** - *Dave Mitchell*: "Hong Kong in the 80's"
- ▶ **Friday July 10** - *Dave Arnold*: "Channel Islands & Plopsaland @ De panne"
- ▶ **Friday September 11** - *Russell Young*
- ▶ **Fridays August 14, October 9, November 13, and December 11**: TBA

■ EVENTS

- ▶ **Saturday February 28: Enfield Spring Transport Bazaar**, St. Stephens Hall, Park Avenue, Enfield.
- ▶ **Saturday / Sunday March 7/8: London Transport Museum**, London Transport in Miniature, Family Open Weekend at Acton Depot.

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 three a year) 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

Service Changes

Beestons

17 Nov 08 247 M-S Dedham to Colchester, 0945 departure from Dedham Heath now starts at Lamb Corner at 0941.

Ensign

3 Jan 09	22	D	Grays to Aveley revised timetable
	44	M-S	Lakeside to Orsett Hospital revised timetable.
	66	M-S	Lakeside to Chadwell section of route between Lakeside and Ockendon Station withdrawn.
	73	D	Lakeside to Tilbury revised timetable.
	83	M-S	Lakeside to Chadwell revised timetable.
	X80	D	Chafford Hundred to Bluewater revised timetable.

First Capital

24 Nov 08 498 D Brentwood to Romford, minor adjustments on schooldays only journeys.

First Essex

11 Jan 09 21 D Canvey to Southend services will revert to Elmsleigh Drive peak hour and Manchester Drive off peak so there is now no change to the current timetable or route.

12 Jan 09 70 D Colchester to Chelmsford via Braintree new additional peak hour journeys introduced as 70X between Braintree and Chelmsford by passing Great Leighs and Little Waltham. Minor timetable adjustment to the 0650 from Colchester.

352 D Chelmsford to Halstead via Braintree additional peak journeys introduced between Halstead and Braintree which will link to new 70X at Braintree to provide a through bus facility from Halstead to Chelmsford in morning peak and return facility in the afternoon peak.

2 Feb 09 21 D Black Notley to Halstead minor timetable adjustments.

Florida Taxis

12 Jan 09 44 M-F Halstead Sudbury Road Circular new town service.

Galleon Travel (Trustline)

3 Nov 08 22/33 M-S Harlow Circular new service

28 Jan 09 22/33 M-S Harlow Circular service withdrawn.

Hedingham

8 Dec 08 89 M-S Braintree to Haverhill via Great Yeldham, service now terminates at Braintree Bus Park.

419 M-F Newport to Finchingfield service extended to/from Wethersfield.

SM Coaches

12 Jan 09 SM19 M-F Harlow to Epping revised timetable.

Travel with Hunny

1 Feb 09 55 M-F Harlow to Loughton service withdrawn.

6 Feb 09 NWF M-S Epping to Harlow via North Weald new service.

Paul Harvey

(acknowledgements to LOTS,

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

Publicity News

Recent items include

Essex County Council – Bus and Train Maps 2009 (includes 21 town maps);

Timetable leaflet for services 301/2 dated 1.9.08

First A7 overground leaflets for services 42, 45 both November 2008 (reprint); 48/A/B dated 7.12.08

Timetable leaflets for service 31/B/C/X, 36, 351 dated 5.10.08; 21, 30, 70, 71/2, 131/2 dated 7.12.08

A5 leaflet for service 55 (undated)

Arriva – A5 leaflet for “Great value Day, weekly and four weekly tickets for the Harlow area. Inside is a map showing the area in which they are available

Octopus ticket – Red A5 leaflet for this Southend area, multi operator ticket

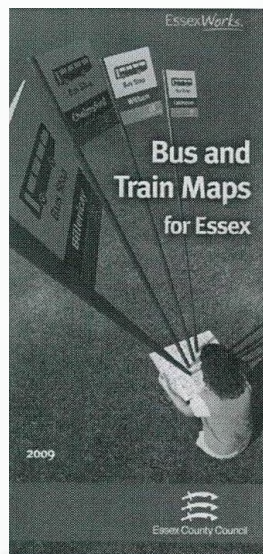
Ensignbus – Bus Times Book Number 4 dated 1.11.08 includes details of all services operated in the Grays area. An A5 leaflet was also issued for the Heritage Running Day on service X55/80 on 6.12 and 13.12

Imperial – A5 leaflet for service H1 dated 10.11.08, the back cover features a picture of preserved RM1641, RT 786 and a former Portsmouth Atlantean. (If only these were standard vehicles on the H1!)

Travel with Hunny – leaflet for service 55 (Including night buses and Wednesday day trips to Romford) undated

Blue Triangle – Leaflet for service 575 from Epping/Debden to Romford and Lakeside dated 3.11.08. This is thought to be the first Blue Triangle item in Go-Ahead corporate style

Ian Ransom, with thanks to LOTS



First

■ FIRST ESSEX BUSES LTD

Acquired vehicles from First Eastern Counties Buses 200/1

20500	AO02RBX	Volvo B12M	00516	Plaxton 0212TJT4610	C53F 5/02
20501	AO02RBY	Volvo B12M	00517	Plaxton 0212TJT4611	C53F 5/02

First Eastern Counties have been receiving new Volvo/Wright 69421-33 for the Ipswich P&R, and these will displace 66794-801/3-6/13 for transfer to Basildon

42439 is B35F+18 and has an unladen weight of 7493kg.

The dates of first registration for 66820-30/7 are 18.5.2005 (66820), 19.5.2005 (66822-24) and 10.6.2005 (66821/5-30/7).

Allocation changes

Period 9a: 23 November 2008 to 6 December 2008

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

(A)=acquired, including vehicles on loan; Anc=Ancillary fleet; RES=reserve (spare/retained, licensed); D/L(S)=spare/retained (delicensed); D/L(D)=delicensed for disposal; DS=Driving School; PS=Paint Spare

34311 CR-CN; 34314 CR-CN; 40734 RES-BE; 42439 RES-BE; 42483 CF-BE; 42484 CF-BE; 42485 CF-BE; 42486 CF-BE; 42927 RES-CF; 42428 RES-CF; 42929 RES-CF; 42930 RES-CF; 42931 FGC-CF; 42932 RES-CF; 42933 RES-CF; 42934 RES-CF; 42935 RES-CF; 42936 RES-CF; 42937 RES-CF; 43712 BN-HH; 43713 BN-HH; 43714 BN-HH*; 43729 BE-CF; 46108 HH-D/L(D); 46109 HH-D/L(D)*; 46110 HH-D/L(D); 46116 BE-HH; 46120 HH-D/L(D)*; 46122 HH-D/L(D)*; 46127 HH-D/L(D); 46128 HH-D/L(D); 46129 HH-D/L(D); 46132 HH-D/L(D); 46136 HH-D/L(D)*; 46143 BE-D/L(D); 46144 BE-D/L(D); 46168 BN-HH; 46169 BN-HH; 46173 CF-HH; 46174 BN-HH; 46175 CN-HH; 46176 CN-HH; 46177 BN-HH; 46183 BN-HH; 46184 BN-HH; 46185 BN-RES; 46186 CN-HH*; 46803 D/L(D)-sold; 46804 D/L(D)-

sold; 46806 BN-CN; 46811 BN-D/L(D); 46813 BE-D/L(D); 46814 HH-D/L(D); 46815 HH-D/L(D); 46816 BE-D/L(D); 46817 BE-D/L(D); 46818 HH-D/L(D); 46821 BE-D/L(D); 46822 BE-D/L(D); 46823 BE-sold; 46825 BN-D/L(D); 46826 BE-D/L(D); 46827 CN-BN; 47220 CF-CN; 47221 CF-CN; 52584 BN-RES; 52585 BN-RES; 53117 CF-BE; 53118 CF-BE; 66802 RES-CR; 66816 RES-CR; 66817 RES-CR; 66820 FGC-BN; 66821 FGC-BN; 66822 FGC-BN; 66823 FGC-BN; 66824 FGC-BN; 66825 FGC-BN; 66826 FGC-BN; 66827 FGC-BN; 66828 FGC-CF; 66829 FGC-CF; 66830 FGC-CF; 66837 FGC-BN; 67012 CN-BN; 67013 CN-BN

*Note: Many of these moves physically took place after 6 December; most were completed by 12 December although Volvos 66820-7 took longer (see BN notes). Regarding those marked * 65675 was lent to HH for familiarisation, leaving 43714 at BN while 46186 remains at CN as at 8.12.08. 46109/20/2/36 were never delicensed.*

Period 9b: 7 December 2008 to 27 December 2008

20110 CR-DS; 20500 FGC-CR; 20501 FGC-CR; 46109 D/L(D)-HH; 46116 HH-D/L(D); 46120 D/L(D)-HH; 46122 D/L(D)-HH; 46127 D/L(D)-RES; 46132 D/L(D)-RES; 46136 D/L(D)-HH; 46143 D/L(D)-RES; 46144 D/L(D)-RES; 46145 CN-BN; 46185 BN-RES(BN); 46811 D/L(D)-BN; 46815 D/L(D)-BN; 46822 D/L(D)-DS; 46825 D/L(D)-sold; 46826 D/L(D)-RES; 46828 CN-BN; 47102 CR-CN; 47103 CR-CN; 53115 CF-BN; 53116 CF-BN

46822 has since been withdrawn again as defective, its place (for CPC training) being taken by 46144

Disposals (period 9):

46803 46823 46825 to Erith Commercial for scrap
46804 Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, Southend (for training purposes)

Repaints (period 9):

43730 67036 43721 67003 20501 34284 20500
(20500/1 to an X22 version of the Aircoach livery)

67003 was the last vehicle at CR to retain 'Overground' branding (for the 67)

Area News - workings and sightings:

Clacton & Harwich (DT)

DT65652, having been off the road since 30.10.08, was moved to Scania at Witham just before Christmas but Olympian DT31377 was defective at Clacton with a fuel pump fault and DT34282 was at Barnhawk Engineering for tree damage repairs. Both Solos, DT53138/9, had been at outside contractors in Harlow for steering and brake repairs. DT34284, however, was back on the road following repaint. Lance 67011, due for transfer from CN to BN, had been in use for some time at DT covering for repaints and defective vehicles while CN also loaned 65691 and 67010 during December.

Colchester

Volvo/Plaxton CR60130 was finally taken into the workshops for engine repairs in early December, having been out of use in the Bus Station parking area since October. It and 60031 are due to be cascaded out of the fleet once 20500/1 enter service.

December

1st CR34303 on 65
2nd CR67006 on 60
5th CR65650 on 65
9th CR67008 on 65
20th CR34308 on 60 - usually a low floor single decker
22nd CR34056 on p.m. Tiptree short 75 - usually single decker
29th CR34056, CR34301, CR67003/7 on 60; CR67006 on 70 (rather than low floor),

CR34309 on 83 (usually low floor single decker)
30th CR34014/34315 on 60
31st CR34303/9 on 60

Chelmsford & Braintree

There has obviously been a very significant cascade of vehicles to *First Essex* in the last few weeks. Member John Salmon kept a special eye on the events in his home patch (the Little Waltham area) with the introduction of the revised service 70 to Chelmsford – much of what is listed may become 'normal' but hopefully the new patterns of working are of interest. Having ridden on Volvo 66818 he was very impressed by the standard of the body construction - no rattles, loose panels or doors.

December

2nd CF40733 on first 351
3rd CF42487 and CF65682 on 33
4th CF42927 on 42
5th CF66837 noted in service (562?)
6th CF34818 on 351, CF42921 on 36 (09.11 ex SW) and CF42933 on 33
8th BE40737, CR43715, CF43730 and CR65679 on 70, CF42934 on 33
9th CF42930 and CR66802/16 on 70, CF42927 on 42, CF42934 on 33 and CF66818 on 36 (09.41 ex SW)
10th CF31198 on 48A (p.m.); CR66816, CF66828/9 and CF42486 on 70; BE42439 noted empty at Little Waltham (off 30?)
11th Cheetah CF56009 on first 351; CF42928, CF65681 and CF66818 on 70; CF66830 on 31X
12th CF42928 and CR66807/29/30 on 70, CF66830 on 31X, BE47101 on 54 and CF47219 on 41
13th CF66818 on 31, CF66829 on 70
15th CF42936 on 33, CF42935 on 42 and CR66811 on 70
16th CF42932 on 351, CF40734 on 41 then 33, CF42938 on 50, BE47101 on 54, CF47219 on 45; CF65681, CR66807, CR66816/29 on 70, Cheetah CF56004 on first 351, BE42933 on 30 (now usually Solo)
17th CF66828/9 on 70, CF66830 on 33
18th CF42936, CR66802/14 on 70; CF66829 on 31 and Cheetah CF56006 on first 351
19th CR66810, CF66818/28/30 on 70; BE43729 and Solo CF53131 on 30
20th BE47101 on 45, CF47223 on staff transfer at Chelmsford, CF47219 on 41; CF65684 on P&R; CR66812 and CF66818 on 70
22nd CF46822 on 31, CF66837 on 31X
23rd CF42486, CF66829/37 on 70
24th CF42482 and CF42927 on 70, CF42935 on 33
27th Olympian CF34818 on 351 (08.05 ex CF), BE40736 on 48, CF42482 on 33, CF43731 on 54, CR66807/12 and CR34307 (first double decker noted) on 70, CR60102 on 72 (back in service following lengthy repair - new destination display but not working correctly)
29th BE40734, CF65681, CR66816 and CR66802 on 70, CF42483 and CF65680 on 33

January

3rd CF42930/4 on 351
6th CF66818 on P&R
8th CF66830 on P&R

Basildon & Hadleigh

Basildon's Volvos 66820-7 arrived on 10th December (66825/6), 11th (66822/3) and 12th (66820/4) with 66827 by 11th and 66820 by 17th.

December

3rd BN53113/4 on 73/A
8th BN46812 and BN52584 on 73/A

- 11th BN 34011 on 25B, BN46811 on 1, BN66819/25/7 on 5, BN67010/2/36 on 22, BN67013 on 8 by lunchtime; BN52584, BN53114/6 on 73/A
- 15th BN52585 on 73
- 16th BN43734 on 200, BN43735 on 8A, BN66819/22/4 on 5, BN67012 on 22
- 17th BN43732 (5) on 12, BN43733 out of use, BN43734 on 200, BN43735 on 25B, BN46812 on 200, BN61054 on 100, BN66819/21-5/7 all seen on 5 with BN66820 in yard, BN67002 on 8A, BN67009/10/36 on 22, BN52584 on 1A, BN52585 back in use on 73 (with BN46812 and BN53114/6)
- 22nd BN41645 on 73 (early), BN46811 p.m.
- 23rd BN41642 on 100 (12.40 ex CF)
- 27th BN65629 on 100 (arr CF 14.03)

January

- 2nd BN41651 on 73 (approx 16.50) with BN46811 on 82, BN53114 on 552
- 3rd Solo BN53114 on 551 and 82 (first reported use of a Solo on the 81/82)
- 5th BN43734 on morning 551 shuttles, BN67002 on early 82
- 6th BN43732 (5) on 25B, BN43734 on 5; BN46167 and BN61054 on 8A (BN65627/31 in depot yard); BN67012 on 22
BN46825 on 200 (probably its last day)
- 8th HH46150 on 21, BN66819 on 5, BN67036 on 22; HH41015 to Unitec for repairs to major accident damage
- 9th CR43716 seen near Wickford (probably PSV test at BN)
- 10th BN46177 on 100, BN61057 on 8, BN65626 awaiting accident repair; BN65665 (100), BN65675, BN66819 and BN67002 all on 5, BN67001/19 on 22

Other News

John Hutchinson (former joint Editor of 'Terminus' magazine) was away in Scotland over Christmas, flying from Norwich to Aberdeen and back and then going by train from Dyce to Forres. *First Aberdeen* had just introduced a rail link service (80) from the airport to Dyce Station (£1 initially, compared to up to £9 by taxi). Needless to say he used it, and travelled on former *First Essex* Cheetahs 56002/3.

On Tuesday 6th January, because other *Abus* of Bristol vehicles were suffering from frozen air systems, the 683 (at 09.03 from Keynsham) was worked by VR XHK221X (one time EN 3116) - its first public outing since 12th November. Unfortunately the steep climb onto the Mendip Hills was followed by it failing with a fuel-feed problem, whereupon it suffered the further ignominy of being replaced by a 16-seat LDV Convoy (the only thing available!) before eventually being coaxed back to Bristol.

First Essex official vehicle allocation list as at 28 December 2008

Excludes ancillary vehicles except Driving School

Basildon (72)	31373-5, 34011/2, 41637/40/2/4/5/7/50/1/3, 43732-5, 46145/67/70-2/85-7, 46811/2/5/27/8, 53113-6, 61054/7, 65626-32, 65665-77, 66819-27, 67001/2/9/12/3/36
Braintree (14)	40733/4/6-8, 42439, 42483-6, 47101, 51803, 53117/8 [actual allocation varies daily due to maintenance at CF]
Chelmsford (86)	20463, 20801-5, 31198, 34807/15/8, 42482/7-9, 42918-23/7-37, 43729-31, 47219/23/8/9/52, 53112/9-37, 56004/6/9, 60103/4, 65028-32, 65680-4, 66818/28-30/7, 68521/32/4/5/51/2/5
Clacton (21)	34311/4, 43736-8, 46806/20, 47102-6, 47220/1/4-7, 65690-2
Colchester (72)	20102, 20500/1, 30558/60, 34013/4/8/56, 34285/6/90, 34301-5/7-10/5, 43715/6, 43739-44, 56005, 60031, 60102, 60130, 60755-8, 62406-10, 65652-4, 65678/9/85-9, 66802/7-12/4-7, 67003-8/10/1
Hadleigh (67)	31376, 31456/62, 40777-9, 41005-17, 42852-5/7, 43712-4/7-21, 46109/20/2/36-8/40-2/6-58/68/9/73-7/9-84

Harwich (12)	31377, 34280/2/4/8, 43800, 53138/9, 57001/2, 65650/1
Driving school (7)	20110, 46822, 67037/8/40, 60469/84
Heritage vehicles (2)	38790, 90230
Reserve/spare (7)	46127/32/43/4, 46826, 52584/5
Delicensed for disposal (13)	46108/10/3/6/28/9, 46808/13/4/6-8/21

Sources: Own observations, with many thanks to *First Essex* and to A Bird, N Clark, T Clark, J Collins, D Edwards, M Farmer, J Hutchinson, A MacFarlane, N Mansfield, J Podgorski, D Pretty, I Ransom, J Salmon, C Sigston, 'Solo', A Timms, A Toms, 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

■ ARRIVA SOUTHEND LIMITED

Vehicles in

3122 (N542 TPK) Dennis Dart/East Lancs B40F from Horsham. New 2/1996 as London & Country DS22. This has displaced Dart/East Lancs 3004 to training duties. 3004 is currently at Maidstone awaiting conversion.

A new service vehicle reported at Southend is engineers van Ford Transit V049 (LS03 UUA). This has replaced V168 (R103 CBU).

Olympian Disposals

The two Olympians sold to Stephenson's of Essex (5394 and 5808) are not now to enter service there and have been sold on by Stephenson's to Wealden, Five Oak (dealer), who took many of the other recently withdrawn Arriva Olympians.

It is reported that recently withdrawn Arriva Olympians 5881/29 (E225/9 CFC) have been exported to Malta and are in the process of being converted to open top.

Forthcoming Vehicle Movements Update

An addition to the forthcoming vehicle movements listed in EBN536 is the transfer to Southend of two step-entrance Darts from the P4-HVX batch made surplus at Gillingham. It is planned that these will replace Dart/Northern Counties 3145/53 (L145/53 YVK) at Southend.

Other News

Former Southend Transport Leyland Leopard BTE 206V new to Southend as 206 in 1980 has been acquired by the Kells Transport Museum, Cork.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to David Harman and Essex Bus y-group

Ensignbus

■ DEALER STOCK MOVEMENTS

Vehicles in

	<i>from</i>
Arriva Kent & Sussex:	Olympian G903 SKP
Arriva the Shires:	Volvo B10M F124 PHM
Dublin Bus:	Olympians 96-D-262/283, 97-D-332

Go-Ahead North East:	Solos T461/2BCN
Heddingham Omnibuses:	Bristol VR JWT 757V
Ipswich Buses:	Excels P194 SGV, P443 SWX
MASS Transit:	Trident W598 CCW
Metrobus:	Dart MPD W795 VMV
Metroline:	Darts DLD34/5/55/6/7
Stagecoach Manchester:	Olympians F282/95/300 DRJ, Scania F112/3 HNC, G115 SBA, J140 HMT, H463/6 GVM K852/55/6/61/63/70 LMK.
Stagecoach Strathtay:	Dart N308 DSL, Olympian D388 XRS.

Vehicles out

	<i>to</i>
Solo T462 BCN:	Bakers Dolphin , Weston-super-Mare
Dart M461 LLJ:	The Big Lemon , Brighton.
Metrobus POG 490Y:	A & S Bone , Hook, Hants.
Dart MPD: SN51 SXU:	Carters Coaches , Ipswich
Dublin Olympian 96-D-259	now N644 JNO with Chalkwell , Sittingbourne
Dart MPD W795 VMW:	Clintona Minicoaches , Brentwood, Essex.
Volvo B10Ms N446 XVA M948 TSX:	East London Bus Group .
Volvo B10M G112 NGN:	Farleigh Coaches , Rochester, Kent
Dart M46 2LLJ:	Florida Coaches , Halstead, Essex
Lance K315 WMV:	Golden Eagle Coaches , Salsburgh, Scotland
Volvo B10Ms H658/82 GPF:	The Green Bus , Birmingham
Olympians K508/18 ESS:	Heddingham Omnibuses
Trident PO51 UMK:	Ipswich Buses
Scania F113 HNC:	Langtoft Private Hire , Peterborough
Solos T465/7 BCN:	Renown Coaches , Bexhill, East Sussex.
RF603 (NLE 603) and Solos S251/4 KNL:	RH Transport , Witney, Oxon.
Dublin Olympian 96-D-278	now N647 JNO with Swanbrook , Cheltenham
Dublin Olympian 96-D-263:	Auto Conversions Ltd , Clara, Eire
Metrobuses A897SUL LAT 508V:	Lafilia Ltd , Framagusta, Cyprus.
Bristol VR VEX 287X:	Little London Elli Lacatena s.r.l

■ ENSIGNBUS LTD

Acquired vehicle *from Dublin Bus*

195 Leyland Olympian 97-D-334 now P495SWC.

Withdrawn vehicles

Dart 783. Optare Spectra 106 has been sold to MASS Transit, Sheffield. Metrobus 167 has been sold to Scenic Suncruisers, Scarborough. This was the last operational closed top Metrobus. Metrobus 192 with drawn and transferred to heritage stock.

General

Olympian 128 (P428 UUG) has been reregistered WLT 428.

David Harman with thanks to Ross Newman of Ensignbus and LOTS

Network Colchester

During December step entrance Dart/Plaxton 802/3 and Dart East Lancs 806 were still at work although mainly restricted to Suffolk CC routes 730/1 and the 93 group plus Saturday turns on the 50/95.

Former Arriva Colchester Leyland Lynxes 3342/3/6 (H252/3/6 GEV) were with Kells Transport Museum, Cork by December. They had previously been with O'Sullivan Coaches, Hospital, Co. Limerick.

Scania Omnidikka 104 was on London Overground Stratford-Dalston Kingsland Rail Replacement on 27th December. On Sunday 4th January Scania/Olympus 101/2 and Scania Omnidikka 103/4 were on National Express East Anglia rail replacement between Ingatestone and Newbury Park, with DAF/Plaxton President 133 and Dennis Trident/East Lancs 156 working on rail replacement between Colchester and Walton.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Richard Delahoy and John Podgorski.

Stephensons of Essex

Volvo B10M/Plaxton GIL 8879 (D101 VRM) has been sold to PKS Travel, Cannock. This was the last Fargo coach in the fleet, some buses still remain.

Ian Ransom with thanks to Lyn Watson



Stephensons' dwindling fleet of ex London Olympians will be withdrawn during 2009. Toby Prescott eases the former L82 through the narrow streets of Rochford town centre en route for Southend on 1st January. Russell Young

NIBS

Four Scania/East Lancs Omnidekkas have been acquired from Unilink in Southampton, namely YN04YJR/S/T/U. These have been made surplus following the transfer of the Unilink contract to Bluestar (Solent BlueLine). Two (YJT and one other) arrived in late December, still in Unilink livery, and the other two are expected early 2009.

Ian Ransom with thanks to Chris Stewart

Regal Busways

Dennis Dart/Plaxton K832 SFT is still here, although stripped for spares

Ian Ransom

Stansted Transit

MCW Metrobus POG 502Y and Leyland Olympian/ECW A503 EJF have been withdrawn. Scania K114/Irizar YN55 PZS has been sold to A to B, Luton

Ian Ransom

Trustybus

Dennis Dart/Plaxton L161 XRH has been acquired. Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton P844 KOT has been withdrawn. Leyland Olympian/Alexander H721 PVW has gone to Ensign (dealer), Purfleet. Rare Dennis R/Plaxton YR02 ZKW has gone to Maynes, Buckie.

Ian Ransom

Other Operators

ACAB, Broomfield Here and operating as a PSV, is Ford Transit EU51 BXY.

APT TRAVEL, Rayleigh Acquired from Chambers, Moneymore are Scania K114/Irizar YR02 ZYW and YN04 GKG. Dennis Javelin/Neoplan DCZ 3813 (R459 ECW) has been sold.

BPH TRAVEL, Elmstead Market LDV 400 N27 MPV has been sold.

CEEFA COACHES, Thundersley Leyland Tiger/Van Hool NIW 2309 (new as A574 UHB) has been sold.

CLINTONA, Brentwood A first here is Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton SN51 SXV. It came via Ensign, but was new to London United, plus W795 VMV a similar vehicle, new to Metrobus.

FORD, Althorne Bedford YNV/Duple D66 ONS has been withdrawn.

FOURWAYS, Highwood Acquired is N910 NAP a Mercedes Benz 709D/Alexander.

FRASER EAGLE have established an operating centre in Wickford, with the following at least based there: Volvo B10M/Jonckheere G170 RBD, Volvo B12M/Jonckheere FN52 HRW/X, Scania/Van Hool YR02 ZZS.

FST COACHES, Bulphan Ford R1114/Plaxton WVM 101S has been sold, This leaves only one Ford chassis coach with a PSV operator in the county - PJT 518W which was withdrawn some while ago by DMA, Brentwood.

GARDNER, Boreham Mercedes Benz 811D/Optare F43 MGB was sold for export, some while ago.

GBN ASSOCIATES, Pitsea This recruitment agency operates minibuses as PSV's. Ford Transit LN52 YRA has been returned to Robertson Van Hire, Colchester.

JACKSON, Bicknacre Vehicle re-registrations here are Bova Futura T322 KNN to MJI 3084. The previous MJI 3084 a DAF SB3000/Van Hool is now back to its original J811 KHD and has been sold to Compass, Worthing.

KINGS, Stanway had on a very short hire from Arriva Bus & Coach, Cleckheaton. YD 02 RHF - EOS 90 - 51 seat with toilet - all white livery. This was collected on Friday 5th Dec. and returned Monday 10th December.

L&B LEISURE, Stansted The proposed

move to start PSV operations were not taken up and Ford Transit EY54 NYV has been sold.

LCB TRAVEL, Harlow Ford Transit EY54 VYM has been sold.

LODGE, High Easter Recent additions are Optare Excels V936 VUB and W428 CWX.

MELS MINIBUS, Horndon-on-the-Hill A second Ford Transit is EK57 ZDP.

NEW HORIZON, Frating Recent additions are Ford Transit MA03 WWK and LR05 KBV. Optare Excel V390 KVV has been sold to Geoff Amos, Eydon. V388 KVV is now with Harlequin, Dunblane.

OLYMPIAN/SM TRAVEL, Harlow Acquired are Dennis Dart SLF/Marshall P830/1 BUD.

SKY TRANSFERS, Laindon New here and not previously reported is Ford Transit SD57 HYP. This together with similar SD57 HYS and SH57 LJY passed to Essex

Minibuses, Laindon in November, but are still branded for **Sky Transfers**.

SOUTHEND RADIO CARS Ford Transit J990 XVW has been withdrawn.

STB COACHES, Tilbury Volvo B10M/Berkhof IAZ 9564 (G416 WPA) and LDV Convoy P552 OVG have been sold.

SUPREME, Southend The remains of MCW Metrobus B279 WUL have been sold for scrap.

SWIFT CARS, Chelmsford Have ceased operating PSVs, in addition to a number of minibuses, DAF MB200/Van Hool LDZ 9430 (new as FRP 831X), and LAG Panoramic SIL 6721 (new as D556 XTG) were here.

TWH, Stapleford Abbots Acquired is Dennis Dart/Marshall N762 SAV.

*Ian Ransom with thanks to LOTS, PSV Circle,
Peter Mobbs (Kings)*

Preservation Notebook



FLF6G 2849 (NTW942C) from Castle Point Transport Museum is seen at 'The Rose' in Shenfield on 23 December 2008, en route to a private function.

Chris Stewart, with the assistance of member/driver Ian Banks

Southend Second Heritage Running Day

Vehicles participating:

Registration Operator

KGK 758 Ensign Bus
 MXX 261 Ensign Bus
 424 DCD Stephensons
 ALD 871B Timebus Travel

JJD 466D Hardy Miles Travel
 JJD 535D Talisman
 BYW 365V Regal Busways
 KOO 790V First Essex
 OFS 683Y Stephensons

B125 WUV Autocar

B203 DTU Regal Busways
 C407 HJN First Essex
 C418 HJN First Essex
 C82 CHM Stephensons
 CCG 376 Aspen Bussing

H264 GEV Arriva Southend
 H265 GEV Arriva Southend
 H47 MJN Talisman
 H547 VAT Stephensons
 V415 KMY Stephensons
 EU07 FRN Stephensons

EU58 BRX Stephensons

Type

AEC Regent RT/Cravens, ex LT RT1499
 AEC Regent III/Weymann, ex LT RLH61
 Leyland PD3/Northern Counties, ex Southdown
 AEC Routemaster, orig RM1871, then SRM7, latterly Southend Transport 113
 AEC Routemaster, ex LT RML2466
 AEC Routemaster, ex LT RML2535
 Leyland National 10.3m, ex LT LS365
 Bristol VR/ECW, originally Eastern National 3072
 Leyland Olympian/ECW, ex Lothian (mainly used as control/info bus)
 Leyland Titan (Workington body), ex LT T1125 - the last Titan to be built; still in Stagecoach East Kent livery
 Leyland Olympian/ECW, ex Potteries
 Leyland Olympian/ECW, originally Eastern National 4007
 Leyland Olympian/ECW, originally Eastern National 4018
 Leyland Olympian/ECW, ex LT L82
 Van Hool Astromega, originally Southend Transport C256 FHJ, in Westway livery
 Leyland Olympian/Leyland, orig. Southend Transport 264
 Leyland Olympian/Leyland, orig. Southend Transport 264
 Leyland Olympian/Leyland, ex Colchester Borough Transport
 Leyland Olympian/Northern Counties, ex East Yorkshire
 Dennis Trident/East Lancs, ex Metrobus
 Alexander Dennis MPD Dart (replaced by Scania double decker mid afternoon)
 Scania NUD/Optare Olympus (replaced the MPD Dart mid afternoon)



Lowbridge buses last ran in normal service in Southend on April 8, 1978 when Southend Transport 316 ran to Rayleigh on the 7; Ensign's RLH61 provided a reminder of those days. Chris Stewart prepares to depart Rayleigh Station for Southend. Chris Stewart



It was not a good start. Cdr. Harman, badge N90734 was four minutes late signing-on, but luckily, Drv. Forsdike, badge B963, had already extracted our car, Southdown Queen Mary 424 DCD, performed the walk-round check, set the blinds, and initiated what would ultimately be an unsuccessful project - getting the heaters working. Fifteen minutes later, we were 'on stand' at Victoria Station forecourt for the 09:50 service 7 to Shoebury, The Renown - a new route to me. (pic by John G.Lidstone shows us just arriving)

With two day rover passengers on board, we pulled away on time, through the cut-through and along Chichester Road to the Travel Centre, stop H, where the enthusiasts were out in force despite the chill weather. Four boarded, all wanting rovers, and then we're off through the lights and Travel

Centre, down past the Seaway and into Woodgrange Drive. Terry and the PD3 are old friends and he doesn't miss a gear all day - the bus just purrs along. Into Acacia Drive and past Thorpe Bay Station, into Maplin Way and left into Caulfield Road. Progress is less spirited here as there are speed tables, requiring second gear. Then onwards to ASDA and a circuit of the deserted car park (they are closed today). Out of ASDA's into Frobisher Way and then Eagle Way, and we are soon at The Renown. Terry has to work the wheel to get us round the turning circle and onto the stand. Here are the first 'real' passengers, who are pleasantly surprised that the fare is only £2 (and indeed that there are buses running at all).

Back to Southend, picking up a goodly load of members of the public, cash-payers and

Stephensons of Essex Ltd

Duty sheet

Duty number: 955 C

Depot	January 1st only		Conductor duty		Start	09:10
Crew mobile numbers:		Driver: Terry Forsdike	Conductor: David Harman	Finish	18:15	
Effective from:	1-Jan-09	<mobile>	07806 927526	length	09:05	
Ends:	ufn	Vehicle type:		Driving hours	06:07	
Hours rules:	Domestic	Southdown PD3		WTD hours	07:51	
Dep	Service	From	Key intermediate timings	To	Arr	Notes
09:10		SIGN ON, Prepare bus, complete walk round check			09:30	
09:30	Dead	Rochford depot		Southend Victoria Station	09:45	
09:50	7	Victoria Station forecourt	Travel Centre (H)	9:54		
			Thorne Bay Station	10:03	Shoebury, The Renown	10:13

'twerlies' alike. Up to Victoria Station again, where a passer-by asks "No trains today?", apparently thinking we are on rail replacement.

Our second 7, the 10:50 is busier, with the same mix of enthusiasts and general public. Fares are simple: £2 flat fare (child £1), a £1 central area short hop fare, plus £6 day rover (£12 family), so there is no need for faretables. Back in Southend once again, it's dead to the Travel Centre layover area for a 10 minute break. Richard has arranged with the powers-that-be to open up the portacabin mess-room, where supplies of the fluid that keeps the Great British bus industry lubricated are available - tea! (and bikkies - we *are* being spoiled). A chance to thaw out and view the other vehicles running today - the Aspen Bussing Astromega looks especially smart, and someone has gone to the trouble of programming its miniature LED blinds.

Our next trip is the 12:15 251 to Rayleigh Station. I don't remember there ever being Rayleigh 'shorts' in olden days, but this is one route I do know well, even though we start a quarter-mile from the old terminus at the Seaway. The route is otherwise almost unchanged from Victoria Station onwards - straight down Victoria Avenue, left at Cuckoo Corner, and up the A127. At Kent Elms, Terry has to ease the Queen Mary into the fast lane and then into the filter lane for the turn into Rayleigh Road. Past Edwards Hall (of Edwards Hall Motors) and Rayleigh Road now becomes Eastwood Road. At Rayleigh, we turn right into the High Street, then almost immediately left, to descend Crown Hill, and then into the station forecourt.

The schedule compiler is a hard taskmaster for we have just five minutes here. At 12:45, we pull out of the forecourt, observing the stop opposite, and start the ascent of Crown Hill (who says Essex is flat?). Terry storms the hill in third with full sound effects from the 0600 engine - the dinner plates must be vibrating off the table in the Dutch House as we roar past!

At the top, we turn left, rather than right, following the one way system, before regaining the Eastwood Road. Passengers are few, but we pick up a group of girls, dressed

to the nines, intent on sampling the delights of Sarfend. They proffer Bite cards which (I think) entitle them to half fare. Nothing about Bite cards on my Fares & Ticketing sheet, but they seem young enough for half fare, so we won't argue. Back, once again at the Travel Centre, to park in the layover area, for we now have our lunch break (30 minutes).

Terry and I decide against McDonalds and make for a caff in York Road instead. Now, we could have had a nice quiche and salad, but you'd never hear the last of it if you ordered *that* in a depot canteen, so we settle for a more authentic omelette, beans and chips, washed down with a mug of tea. Then, Terry, in contemplative mood, recalled his days driving Albion Victors, Dennis Falcons, Lancets, Paxes, Tritons, bull-nosed Leylands and RTLs. Where could that be? Well, his badge gave the game away - B963 is a States (Jersey) number, for he had spent many years with JMT, right up to the Ford (Trimdon) era. As it happens, I used to visit Jersey regularly on business in later Swift and Dart days, so we both settled down for a serious nostalgia session, when suddenly ...

... brrring! ... brrring! ... brrring! ...

... who could this possibly be, calling us on the mobile? Cripes, it's Inspector Blakey-hoy - we're due out in a minute and why wasn't our bus on the stand? !! How had he managed to track us down? It was never like this in "On the Buses"!!

It transpired that Richard had kindly shifted DCD onto the stand (he had secretly wanted a drive and this was his chance), so we left on time. Our next trip was another new route to me: the 3 (13:45) to Canvey.

We leave with a good load, mostly enthusiasts, and head down London Road, through Westcliff and Leigh. Past HH, with all the step-entrance Darts tucked up snugly inside, blissfully unaware that their days are numbered. Down Bread & Cheese and through Thundersley to the Tarpots. Left to Benfleet and to the War Memorial. Then, under the bridge (will it fit? - yes!) and past the station, over the creek and onto the island. A straightforward run now, through downtown, razzamatuzz Canvey to the tight turning circle at the very end of Point Road, where again, Terry does it in one, without

Likewise for us. Back on the road, and round the one-way system, off the island and at Benfleet station we must wait time by the creek as we are a minute or so early. Waiting time opposite is Ensign's Cravens RT with neatly-dressed blinds - a fabulous sight - windows steamed up and interior lights twinkling in the deep gloom of the early evening.

Reasonable numbers are carried to Rochford, and on the way back, a slightly inebriated gentleman and an attractive Danish lady greet us enthusiastically. She declares that DCD has materialised "like a vision" out of the gloom to save them from perishing by the roadside in the arctic weather. Their gratitude is touching. *Godt nytår!* (Happy New Year!)

Driving home, I couldn't help but compare conducting now, versus conducting on a manual-box FLF as a 'student' on Eastern National in the 1960s. Like riding a bike, you don't forget the basics: waiting for passengers to settle in their seats before collecting their fares; anchoring yourself against a stanchion to issue tickets; returning the shillings dial on the Setright to zero afterwards, to avoid 'over-rings'.

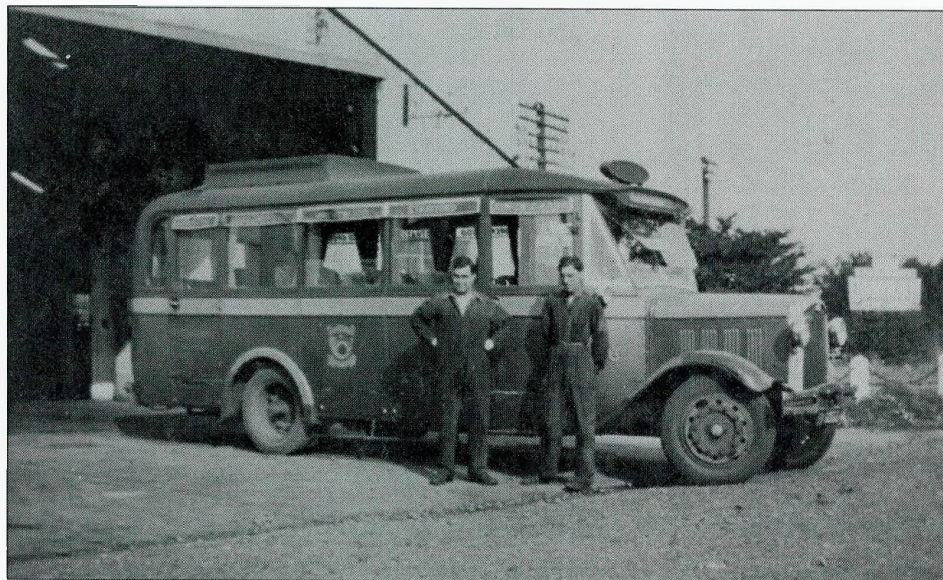
But there was one thing I had completely forgotten. In two-man days, the conductor was a sort of ambassador for the company, or more accurately, *for the bus service*. As well as collecting fares, he chatted with passengers, dispensed information and advice, arbitrated over such matters as the opening of windows, the folding of pushchairs (buggies in old money), and dealt with myriad, minor dramas.

Thus, for Southend folk, it was a pleasant reminder of a vanished era. Yet, whilst OMO and modern schedules don't leave much time for drivers to chat to their passengers now, the fundamentals haven't really changed. Front-line staff continue to be the visible, human face of a bus service - and still play a key role in its success or failure.

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EASTERN NATIONAL

Enthusiast's Guild



RAYNE ROAD GARAGE

In EBN 536 the question was posed as to when Eastern National ceased to use the former Horn Motor Coach garage at Rayne Road, Braintree as a paint/body shop. The short answer to this question is probably Friday November 2nd 1956, however, having been interested in this one-time operator for over forty years, I can expand somewhat on the subject.

Around 1926 a new proprietor came to the Horn Hotel in Braintree's High Street. He was Major CM Taylor, and for many years I struggled to find out what the "C.M." stood for, but eventually discovered that his full name was Charles Major Taylor which does make one wonder whether he really was a Major in the military sense. Around 1928 he branched out into the omnibus business as "The Horn Motor Coach Co" (not a limited company as suggested), initially keeping his vehicles in the yard behind the hotel. This was accessed from the High Street through an arch which still exists. Looking at it today one can see that it was a very tight squeeze so it was not surprising that Mr Taylor

sought new premises. As yet I have been unable to discover whether the Rayne Road garage was built specifically for The Horn or if it was an existing building. What can be said however is that the site had passed from FA Hunnab to ECP Brand on June 6th 1928. The former was a well known builder who developed much of the land to the south of Rayne Road, giving his surname to one of the roads and his family's Christian names to others. More recently his family developed the Towerlands Equestrian Centre in Braintree and ran it until about 5 years ago. ECP Brand was another well known builder in the area whose descendants now run Bowergrange Estates Ltd in the town. What Edgar Brand did with the site is not known but he resold it to Mr Taylor on June 2nd 1932. The Horn timetable for November 1932 showed the new address so operations had obviously moved there by then. Incidentally Mr Taylor seems to have given up the Horn Hotel about the same time, moving to 28, London Road.

Although only one photo of the premises in

the Horn era is known to me, detailed plans have survived which serve to give a good impression of the site which is a corner plot having a frontage of 138ft to Rayne Road and 120ft to Francis Road. The garage was roughly in the centre of the plot, vehicular access being from Francis Road with petrol pumps at the entrance to the building and a pit in its centre. Five retail petrol pumps with 500 gallon tanks below were situated adjacent to Rayne Road with a concreted roadway between them and the building. Along this side of the garage were a showroom, an office with paying in room behind and a fitters bay with another pit.

The Horn did not occupy the premises for long because the management of Eastern National held a meeting on November 16th 1934 at which they resolved to confirm the purchase of the business at a cost of £11,575 to include six vehicles, the building and plant, a deposit of £1,157 having been paid on November 9th. However the actual takeover did not take place until August 24th 1935.

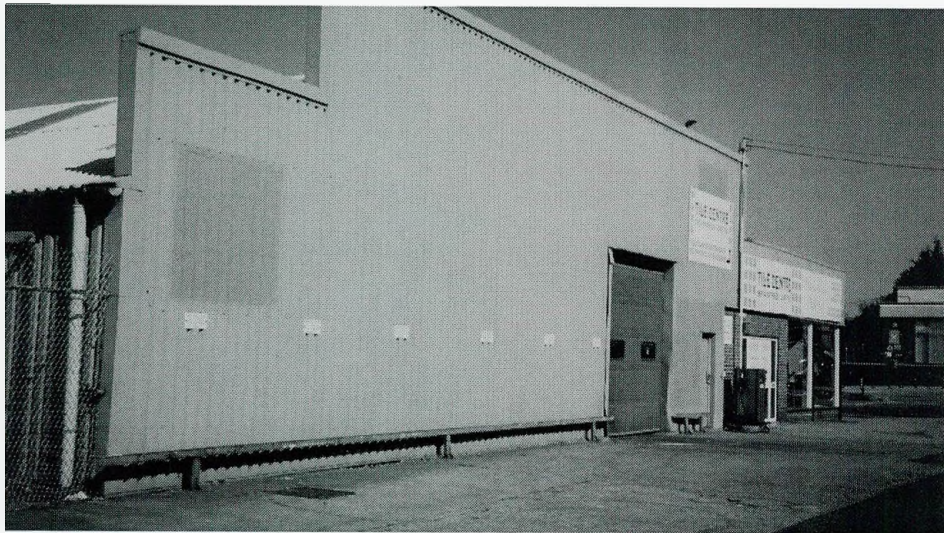
Initially the garage was operated as a sub depot of Halstead but seems to have fallen out of use by the beginning of World War II. In fact, a Mr WJ Firmin wrote to Eastern National in May 1938 asking if he could rent a room (presumably the showroom) to use as an Ironmongers, an offer which the Company declined. What is certain is that it was requisitioned by the Government on July 3rd 1940, a rent of £150 being suggested. Rather unwisely ENOC left 250 gallons of engine oil and 815 gallons of petrol on the premises which "disappeared" and for which they claimed £87 3s 1d compensation in July 1943 amidst much correspondence. It was then requisitioned by a different department and used for the garaging and repair of American Red Cross vehicles. From August 1943 EN were storing spare engines there and £50 of the £125 annual rent was refunded because of this.

The premises were derequisitioned on October 29th 1945 but it is not clear what if any use was made of them until 1950 when a memo issued on March 13th stated that some staff, machinery and materials were to be transferred from the recently acquired Hicks

garage in Fairfield Road, initially to repaint the Hicks fleet, then to carry out body overhauls on postwar Bristols.

In 1955 a useful booklet entitled "The National Way" was published to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of Eastern National and this stated that the premises were currently used as a Paint Shop for all vehicles except those dealt with at Prittlewell. Incidentally the author of this book was recorded as one Donald MacGregor, a name still very familiar in current bus operations in Essex.

By 1956 the moves were afoot to centralise repair work at Chelmsford and a memo stated "There is no likelihood of our requiring the garage for operational purposes as it is located too far from the town centre". This is a statement which readers familiar with the location of the current First depot will find very ironic. A memo dated October 27th 1956 stated that three employees were to leave the company (Redundancy not then being a word in common usage) while the other staff were to transfer to Central Works and that a "For Sale" sign was to be erected "early next week". This was in fact done on November 2nd and the very same day a letter was sent by FA Hunnabell & Son Ltd stating that they were interested as "it adjoins our property". They didn't however mention that they had previously owned it. Another enquiry was coincidentally sent by one of my then neighbours in his capacity as clerk for a local builder. However the initial front runner was the National Benzole Company which was prepared to pay £6,000 presumably for use as a filling station. By early 1957 it was noted that the garage was being used as a vehicle store. National Benzole then withdrew and the company then negotiated with a mysterious Mr McKay who agreed a price of £6,000 on March 18th but later withdrew his offer. Finally one of the earlier enquirers was prepared to increase his offer to £6,000 but even this did not go smoothly as ENOC wrote to the British Transport Commission on July 24th that "it has come to light that the prospective purchaser had some connection some years ago with an omnibus business which this company acquired". Exactly how it had taken EN several months to realise that the purchaser, a Mr JW



Gozzett trading as Quest Motors, was the same Mr JW Gozzett who had sold them Quest Motor Coaches in 1935 is beyond me. He had in fact restarted as a coach operator around 1951 but his solicitor wrote to say that he had no intention of continuing his omnibus business and was in fact disposing of his vehicles as he intended to use the premises as a Vauxhall and Bedford agent. A restrictive clause was therefore written in to the deed of sale which took place on October 22nd 1957. Thus Eastern National's involvement with the garage ended after some 22 years.

At some point, Quest Motors removed the petrol pumps and in 1974 extended the premises towards the Rayne Road frontage to create a car showroom. Around 1990 a company called Anglia Fixing Limited moved in to the next door premises at 287, Rayne Road which they named "Anglia House". They later fell on hard times and exchanged their modern buildings for those

of Quest in 1992. In 1993 they went in to receivership and subsequently (by 1998) the garage was occupied by The Tile Centre (Braintree) Limited who went into liquidation on August 8th 2008. At this point it became clear that the premises were still owned by Quest Motors as they started parking their vehicles there. A planning application to demolish the garage and replace with fourteen "residential units" was speedily made but was refused on the grounds of over development. However the property also carries "To Let" signs, so it remains to be seen what the future holds for a property which has been in the ownership of current or former bus operators for over seventy years.

The photos were taken from the same spot showing the Francis Road frontage looking towards Rayne Road, the modern (2005) photo showing the slope of the original roof and the 1974 extension.

Nigel Turner

back cover

Making a very welcome return to Southend was the former Southend Transport Van Hool Astromega coach 256, originally C256FHJ but now CCG376 in the fleet of Alpen Bussing of Raynes Park. It is in the livery of Westway for whom it often works. Pictured on arrival from London Aldgate. Matthew Evans

Talisman Coachlines' Olympian H47MJN looks very attractive in the livery of original owner Colchester Borough Transport. Paul Smith prepares for the 1715 to Rayleigh Station, duplicated by First's 34807 behind. John G Lidstone



SOUTHEND SECOND HERITAGE RUNNING DAY

Another genuine Southend Transport bus participating in the running day was the former ST 264, now Arriva Southend 5404, seen here in the familiar surroundings of the Queensway bus cut-through but on an unfamiliar route, the 251 from Rayleigh. Timebus SRM7 follows, duplicating.

John G Lidstone



Freshly repainted into Regal's attractive livery and fitted with a Southend Transport destination blind, former London Transport LS365 rests between trips on the 251 to Rayleigh.

Richard Delahoy



Two for the price of 1! Service 7 ran in overlapping sections, Shoebury to Victoria Circus and Southend Travel Centre to Rochford. Gareth Norris arrives with 34818 from Shoebury, passing Jeff Clayton with 34807 about to leave for Rochford.

Richard Delahoy



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