

ESSEX BUS NEWS

**Issue 542
June 2009**



ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP
www.essexbus.org.uk

*Freah out of the paintshop is L374 (R543 MNU), one of a trio of former Arriva Derby Olympians now in the **Hedingham** fleet.*

Dave Arnold



***Peter Godward Coaches** has former Harris Bus Olympian/East Lancs P338 ROO, seen here at Gants Hill on rail replacement work in May.*

Dave Arnold



***New Horizon Travel** started running the Colchester General Hospital staff Park & Ride service in May. It links the hospital with a car park area next to the Colchester United FC's community stadium. The service requires two buses in the peak and one off-peak.*

Two former Thames Transit Darts M61/63 VJO are used. Here, the former is turning into United Way, the new link road from Boxted Road at the western end of the stadium.

Russell Young



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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Cover: *Stansted Transit ex- Go Wear Buses Delta J202 VHN at Braintree. Chris Stewart*

Dates for your diary

■ PRESS DATES

For inclusion in EBN dated

reports should reach Editors by

planned despatch date

July

27 June

16 July

August

1 August

20 August

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

2009 programme

- ▶ **TUESDAY July 14** - evening visit to the Castle Point Transport Museum (jointly with the Omnibus Society). Arrive from 1900 onwards.
- ▶ no meeting in **August**
- ▶ **Monday September 14** - "Bristol REs home and away", slide show by *Chris Stewart*
- ▶ **Monday October 12** - "The X1 story, part 2 - 1987 to 2009" by *Richard Delahoy*

- ▶ **Monday November 9** - "Essex buses from the 1960s, 70s and 80's, part 2 - F onwards", slide show by *Martin Weyell*
- ▶ **Monday December 14** - Christmas Social and "20 years ago" slide show by *Richard Delahoy*

Meetings from **September** onwards will resume at our new venue, Wickford Cricket Club.

■ 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

- ▶ **Tuesday June 23** - Evening visit to **Talisman** - pick up at Colchester North Station at 19.00. Phone 01621 857509 to book. £5 donation to charity please.
- ▶ **Friday July 10** - *Dave Arnold*: "Channel Islands & Plopsaland @ De panne"
- ▶ **Friday August 14** - tba
- ▶ **Friday September 11** - *Russell Young*: "Around the UK and Ireland in 200 operators"
- ▶ **Fridays October 9, November 13, and December 11**: tba

■ EVENTS

- ▶ **Saturday / Sunday June 26-7** : **London Transport Museum**, Guided Tours at Acton Depot.
- ▶ **Sunday July 5** - **North Weald Bus & Coach Rally** ~ 50 years of the production RMs.; North Weald Airfield. Vintage Bus Services to & from Epping Central Line Station and Ongar for Epping Ongar Railway. Rally open 10.30 to 17.00. Admission £8.00 (includes travel on route 339 to and from Epping Station).
- ▶ **Sunday July 19** - **Ipswich Engineering Day** (guided bus tours of old engineering sites), Ipswich Transport Museum, Suffolk.
- ▶ **Saturday / Sunday July 24-25** - **London Transport Museum**, Guided Tours at Acton Depot.
- ▶ **Sunday August 2** - **Middy Joint Admission Day**, Ipswich Transport Museum, Suffolk, joint admission with Mid-Suffolk Light Railway
- ▶ *All details of rallies etc. are published in good faith, and we rely on information supplied by the organisers or others at the time of going to press. Members are strongly advised to check details with the organisers/website nearer the date; the Group can accept no liability if events are cancelled or altered.*

■ VISITS, TRIPS and TOURS

- ▶ **Sunday June 23**: Evening visit to **Talisman** - See under North Essex Meetings.

Timetable Subscription Service

The latest Essex CC timetable book is expected to be posted to subscribers later this month (indeed, it may well have been dispatched by the time this issue of EBN appears).

To date, there has been insufficient interest in the CD-ROM version of the timetable so we are not currently planning to offer it to TTSS members. Copies can still be ordered direct from Essex CC. *Richard Delahoy*

New Group Publication

Blackwells of Earls Colne ~ the story of an Essex independent bus operator

We are pleased to announce the imminent publication of a new book, the biggest and most lavish the Group has yet produced. In A4 size with 72 pages on glossy paper, extensively illustrated and with colour pictures on the covers, the book by Michael Yelton tells the story of an enterprising Essex bus operator, from the early days around the time of the First World War to the sale of the business to Heddingham & District in 1965.

The book includes extracts from timetables, Notices & Proceedings, posters, tickets and a full fleet list; there is also a section on the buses and coaches that Blackwells handled in a dealer capacity, many being dismantled on site - and we have the pictures to prove it!

Orders (with cheques payable to "Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group" please), to the Sales Officer:

Owen Woodliffe,
196 Sinclair Road, Chingford,
London E4 8PT

Blackwells of Earls Colne

An Essex independent bus operator



Michael Yelton

Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

£9.95
post-free

New member

We are delighted to welcome the following new member who has recently joined the Group:

Len Rason of Romford - member 989

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 $10 \times £1.70$; 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:

lynw@barrons-bds.com



Executive Minibuses EM09 BUS, now fully signwritten, approaching Basildon Bus Station on the Saturday 1 service: on 16 May 2009. Russell Young

Stansted Transit ceases



All bus services operated by **Stansted Transit Ltd.** ceased by the evening of 4th June, after the company went into administration.

Essex County Council arranged short-term contracts with other operators for both scheduled and school bus services and these began on the 4th.

The company was known to be facing difficulties for some time, having been called to a Public Inquiry by the Traffic Commissioner. The hearing was due to have been held on April 24 but was deferred at very short notice; the hearing was also due to consider new licence applications in the names of two associated companies, **Stansted Transit Buses Ltd.** and **Stansted Transit Coaches Ltd.** Those two companies had been registered in 2007 but appear not to have traded yet. The operating business, **Stansted Transit Ltd** also faced action by the Registrar of Companies to strike the company off due to their failure to file accounts for more than the past two years,

the last accounts covering the year to June 2005. In addition, in the *London Gazette* dated 19 February 2009, there was notice of a petition by HM Revenue & Customs to wind up the company, presumably for unpaid taxes.

In the event, Stansted Transit had lost services 9/10, 17, 21, 71C, 73A, 118, 301, 306, 317, 319 and 347 at the last tender round, and these would have passed to other operators from 30th August anyway. It is possible that the take-up of services by those operators may be brought forward in some cases. Otherwise, services will be re-tendered under the formal tendering process during the summer.

Excel are covering most services and school contracts in the short-term, and started on the 133 on the evening of the 4th. The exceptions are the 9/10 which were worked by **Network Colchester** on the 5th (only), with **Burtons** taking over from the 8th, and the 73A which is worked by **Stephensons of Essex**.

Services as at 4th June, with short-term replacement operators:

1	Takeley - Ugley - Saffron Walden	SDO	Excel
5	Saffron Walden - Stansted - Bishops Stortford	M-S	Excel
7	Bentfield Green - Stansted - Bishop's Stortford	M-S	Excel
7A	Stansted Mountfitchet - Parsonage Estate - Bishop's Stortford	M-F	Excel
9/10	Great Bardfield - Panfield - Great Notley	M-F	Burtons *
11	Chrishall - Clavering - Saffron Walden	M-S	Excel
14	Harlow, Staple Tye - Brays Grove - Templefields	M-F	Excel
17	Great Bardfield - Great Sampford - Saffron Walden	TFS	Excel
18	Haverhill - The Bumpsteads - Hempstead - Radwinter - Saffron Walden	M-S	Excel
21	Bocking - Braintree Town Centre - Black Notley	Su	Excel

* except 5th June: Network Colchester

71C	Colchester Town Centre - Kelvedon - Chelmsford Town Centre (evenings)	M-S	Excel
73A	Maldon - Langford - Chelmsford Town Centre	M-S	SoE
118	Great Yeldham - Radwinter - Newport	SDO	Excel
133	Bocking - Blake End - Stansted	D	Excel
301	Bishop's Stortford - Quendon - Saffron Walden	M-S	Excel
302	St Michael's Mead - Ugley - Saffron Walden	SDO	Excel
306	Wicken Bonhunt (Sch) - Bishop's Stortford - Clavering	M-F	Excel
317	Elsenham - Takeley - Bishop's Stortford	M-F	Excel
318	Thaxted - Takeley - Bishop's Stortford	Th	Excel
319	Bishop's Stortford - Great Hallingbury - Great Dunmow	SDO	Excel
347	Harlow Town Centre - Sawbridgeworth - Hatfield Heath	M-S	Excel
392	Hoddesdon (Rye Park) - Harlow	M-S	Excel

The Stansted Transit fleet had undergone several changes in recent times, with an influx of new or nearly new Darts and Enviro 200s, to join a collection of much older Darts, Deltas, Olympians and Metrobuses. More recently, the newer stock seems to have gone, with secondhand Solos arriving instead. Does anyone have an up-to-date fleet list?

To cover the extra work, **Excel** drafted in vehicles from:

Ensign dealing stock including:

Arriva Olympian/Northern Counties:

G904 SKP, Volvo B10M/ East Lancs:

H656/9 GPF and Scania N113/ East Lancs: M169 GRY.

Stagecoach Volvo B10M/ Alexander PS:

N202 LTN, M767 RAX, K726/9 DAO,

and Plaxton Darts N413/4/24 MBW.

Metroline Dart SLF/Plaxton: R143/

6/53 RLY.

Dawson Rentals (all in dealer white):

Dart/Plaxton KP54 BYY/Z,

Dart/Caetano KX04 HRE/F KM51 BFX,

MAN/MCV Evolution AE55 V GK.

Burton's Vario R194 DNM, still in Arriva livery, has also been noted in use

Network Colchester used DAF/Plaxton Presidents 131/3 on the 9/10 on the 5th., and 131 was working the route from Haverhill on the 8th.

Stephensons have been using Withamlink Solos and the newly-reseated Volvo B10M/ Alexander PS's on the 73A.

David Harman; acknowledgements to Richard Delahoy, Chris Stewart,, Nigel Turner, LOTS, PSV Circle, Essex y-group

*A personal perspective on the day after the demise of Stansted Transit: **Nigel Turner** tells of ...*

... Excitement in Panfield

Being situated on a loop off the B1053, the village of Panfield is not on the way to anywhere and therefore only sees traffic which has a reason for visiting it such as the Great Notley – Braintree – Great Bardfield bus service (9/10) operated by Stansted Transit (M-F) and Hedingham (Sat). I was therefore somewhat surprised to see a small van signwritten for Burtons Coaches and Network Colchester passing through on the evening of Thursday June 4th. I was a lot more surprised at 0830 next morning when instead of the usual Stansted Transit single

decker on service 9, a Network Colchester DAF 250LF with Plaxton President H45/27F body stopped opposite my abode to pick up the children for Shalford School. Needless to say, I rapidly rearranged my plans for the day in order to investigate this phenomenon.

It soon became apparent there were two of these vehicles operating the route, T131AUA and T133AUA, both new to Capital Logistics of West Drayton with dual doors. It was also obvious that they were running somewhat late. Boarding T133AUA as it worked the 1150 ex Gt. Bardfield gave me the next surprise as in over forty years of not putting my bus tickets in the little slot marked "Used Tickets" I do not remember ever remembering receiving an emergency ticket before. While I

knew such things existed, in my experience drivers with faulty ticket machines usually let you ride free as it takes too long to write out tickets by hand. This was one of the causes of the late running as there hadn't been time to program the route in to the machines. The driver informed me that Stansted Transit had ceased operating and in fact it appears from passenger comments that the 1753 ex Great Notley and 1832 ex Braintree Rail Station had not operated on the previous day.

Another problem for the drivers was that they were using what I think were the first full height doubledeckers *ever* to run on this route. Stansted Transit had never used deckers although Heddingham did sometimes use the odd VR when they ran the M – F service in years gone by and of course in the days of Eastern National, Ks, LDs and FLFs were commonplace. Consequently there were a good many tree branches below the roofline of the buses. Apparently Essex County Council had requested that deckers be used, I suspect due to the low seating capacity of many single deckers.

The third problem was that Network Colchester had been given the Council's version of the route rather than the actual route. For the record, just in case anybody from ECC reads EBN, service 9 does not run the full length of Panfield Lane on leaving Braintree but turns right in to Churchill Avenue, then left at the top of Deanery Hill to regain the B1053 (return route as outward reversed). On reaching Great Bardfield buses have not reversed off the main road into Alienor Avenue for about the last thirty years, they turn left in to Bendlowes Road, pass on the right hand side of the traffic island and turn right in to Alienor Avenue where they terminate thus avoiding a reversing manoeuvre.

Probably not the councils fault, but the version of the route shown on www.traveline.org.uk can only be described as hilarious as it involves driving along roads in Braintree which have *never* seen a bus, through several sets of steel posts (and I don't mean retractable ones) and

demolishing part of Sainsbury's supermarket.

Another little point is that the timing point at Panfield has always been the "Post Office" but unfortunately its most recent incarnation closed nearly ten years ago and the house called "The Old Post Office" is not it, but the location of an earlier one.

On reaching Braintree I found that Excel were running the 133 to Stansted Airport with BU51 REG and KP54 BYY, the latter in overall white, with only a card in the window to indicate the operator.

Having speedily concluded some business in Braintree I returned to the Bus Park to catch the 1306 to Gt. Bardfield and 1350 return worked by the same vehicle but with a different driver. A small boy boarding at Finchingfield was very excited at the thought of riding on a double decker although I'm not sure that that his mother was as impressed. After the round trip I was then able to take a coffee break before boarding the 1610 from Braintree worked by T131AUA back to Panfield.

A change in operator on the route had been expected in September as it was known that Stansted Transit had lost the route on retender but nobody knew the identity of the new operator. Many passengers were hoping that it would be Heddingham as it runs a very reliable Saturday service with a modern bus and friendly driver. However it transpires that Burtons were the successful company. Hence, they were asked to take over on Stansted Transit's demise. It was thought that Friday June 5th would be the only day on which the route would be run from Colchester as it was expected that Burtons Haverhill depot would operate it from Monday June 8th.

My thanks to the Network Colchester drivers for some interesting journeys; they were surprisingly cheerful given the various problems they had to contend with.

Nigel Turner

Service Changes

Arriva Southend

22 Jun 09	33	Mon	Temple Sutton Fossetts Park to Shoeburyness Blackgate Road via Asda, new Monday only service 5 round trips. (updated information)
4 Jul 09	375	M-S	Romford to Passingford Bridge new service.

Blue Triangle

4 Jul 09	375	M-S	Romford to Passingford Bridge service withdrawn.
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Excel

1 June 09	X6	D	Stansted Airport to Colchester new service.
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First Essex

11 May 09	24D	M-S	Leigh Station to Highlands short term service due to closure of Woodfield Road on service 24 for gas main repairs.
5 Jul 09	25	D	Southend to Basildon minor timetable changes
	25A/B	M-S	Langdon Hills to Shotgate/Runwell service via Beauchamps to be served by new service 25C.
20 Jul 09	17X	M-S	Clacton to St Osyth Beach new summer only service.

Imperial Bus Co

15 Jun 09	269	M-S	Grays to Brentwood 0845 journey from Warley will commence from Brentwood Station at 0840.
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Stephensons

8 Jun 09	60	M-S	Southend to Paglesham - extra journeys introduced to replace withdrawn Arriva journeys.
31 Jul 09	201	Sch	Copford to Coggeshall school service withdrawn.
	203	Sch	Earls Colne to Coggeshall school service withdrawn.
	204/6/9	Sch	Kelvedon to Coggeshall school service withdrawn.
	205	Sch	Kelvedon to Coggeshall school service withdrawn.
	516	Sch	North Fambridge to South Woodham school service withdrawn.

Swallow Coaches

29 May 09	X1	M-F	Southend to London Express service withdrawn.
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Trustline

27 Jul 09	C3	M-S	Harlow to Waltham Cross Holdbrook Estate revised timetable.
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Viceroy

15 Jun 09	445	M-S	Barley to Saffron Walden new service 444 introduced and revised route and timetable for service 445.
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Paul Harvey
(acknowledgements to LOTS, Essex & Hertfordshire
County Council, Richard Delahoy, Harlowride and First)

■ FIRST ESSEX BUSES LTD

New and acquired vehicles

On 21st and 22nd April, *First London Dart*/Marshall 41235/8-41 moved from storage at Hayes to MCV, Ely where they are being prepared and repainted for *First Essex*.

Allocation changes

Period 2: 26th April 2009 to 23rd May 2009

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

44516 new-DT; 44517 new-DT; 44518 new-DT; 44519 new-DT; 46109 D/L(D)-sold; 46140 HH-D/L(D); 46145 D/L(D)-HH; 46811 BN-D/L(D); 46815 D/L(D)-sold; 47105 CN-D/L(D); 47106 CN-D/L(D); 47228 CF-CN; 47229 CF-CN; 53138 DT-CF; 53139 DT-CF; 56005 CR-BN; 56009 CF-BN; 57001 DT-CN; 57002 DT-CN; 60031 CR-D/L(D); 60130 CR-D/L(D); 67038 RES-D/L(D); 67040 RES-D/L(D)

Dart 46186 was loaned to *First Eastern Counties* at Ipswich from 11th May, following the collapse of Country Travel and the takeover of school contract IP179 by First. 46148 returned to *First Essex* on 22nd April, having been at Ipswich since 2nd March. 46149 was reported as due for FEC but was never sent.

Disposals (period 2):

46109 to private buyer (preservation)

46815 to Erith Commercial (scrap) – removed from HH on 21 May after cannibalisation

Repaints (period 2):

65677 43738 43737 60755 43732

Area News - workings and sightings

Clacton & Harwich (DT)

No sooner had EBN541 gone to press than the remaining *Enviro* Darts entered service, releasing Solos 53138/9 to CF on 9th May. However within a few days Primo 57001 was back at DT, both 57001/2 were there on 18th May and 57002 was still in use on 22nd. Meanwhile Dart/Alexander CN47103 has remained on loan, with Olympian DT31377 again out of use despite a new MOT. DT42937 has also been off the road with a defective engine.

On 13th May, routes 3, 4, 20, 22, 103/4 were affected in Dovercourt by traffic being diverted off the A120 between Ramsey and Parkeston owing to a lorry overturning and leaking its load of acid. The B1352 Church Hill and Ramsey Road, and Parkeston Road, were used for the diversion. This disruption continued into the following day.

May

12th CN65691 on DT103/4

26th CN65692 on DT103

Colchester

During the morning of 1st May, a traffic collision in Coggeshall affected X22 and 70 with bunching noted on 70s at the Colchester end.

On 7th, CR-bound 71s were affected by a collision on the A12 whilst 64/As were diverted via Hawkins Road and Haven Approach because Hythe level crossing in Colchester was closed for maintenance.

May

- 1st CR60102 on CN76
- 8th CR65654 on 71 (18.40 ex CF)
- 9th CR65681 on 88 (07.40 ex HD)
- 9th 38790 on rail replacement (CN-CR North Stn)
- 13th CR34303 on 65
- 18th CR34305 on 65
- 23rd CR66815 on 71

Chelmsford & Braintree

Daytime use of Solos on 351 is now relatively commonplace on Mondays to Fridays, with SLF Darts or the remaining step entrance Darts (47101/252) on other workings. Solos are now also the normal vehicles on 48.

The actual disposition at BE on 31st May was: 40738, 42482, 42920/5//9/33/4, 47252, 53125/8/9/35/7/8.

April

- 30th BE47101 on X70, CR34286 on 70

May

- 1st CF69434 on 70, CR65687 on 70
- 2nd CF69434 on 33
- 4th CF69434 on 70
- 11th CF46826 on 47
- 12th BE42928 and BE42936 on 21
- 13th CF69434 on 70, CF53112 and CF53113 (ex BN) on 351, 46145 still in service, CF53138 on 41 (ex DT)
- 14th CF53133 and BE42485 on 21, CF53126 and CF53139 (ex DT) on 351
- 15th CR34304 on 70 (13.20 ex CF), CF42931/5 on 351
- 16th CF40737 on 33
- 19th CF66809 on first 33, and CF34818 on second 33, to Bishops Stortford
- 20th CR65688 on 70
- 21st CR67006 on 70, CF47252 and CF53139 at BE, CF40733 and CF42921 on 351
- 22nd CR65654 on 70, BE47101 on 351 (14.05 ex CF)
- 23rd CR34056 and CR67008 on 70, with 351 having CF40738 (10.05 ex CF), CF53136 (13.05) and CF53129 (15.05) [unusual for a Saturday], BE40737 on 42
- 24th BE42485 on 54C
- 26th CF53128 on 351
- 27th CR62406 VOR at BE, CR62410 replacing on 70
- 30th CF53138 on 132

June

- 4th CF34815 on 351

Basildon & Hadleigh

May

- 9th BN43487 first noted in service (551), HH46158 on 21
- 12th BN41644 on 73, BN67002 on 5
- 14th BN43847 on 25B
- 15th BN43486 first seen out (73), BN51803 probably off 81/82, HH31456 on 20 all day
- 20th BN51803 on 73
- 21st BN60103 on 25 (first sighting)



Primo 57002 was back in use at Harwich for much of May despite the arrival of replacement Enviro, and is seen at Warham Road in Dovercourt on 26th. Chris Stewart

One time Thamesway (full height) Olympian 1003 (H103KVX) has been transferred by First Eastern Counties to Great Yarmouth for what may well be its last summer. 1 June 2009

Grahame Bessey



26th Olympians HH31456 and HH31462 both on 20

27th BN34011 on 25, HH31462 on 20

30th BN43845 on 8, BN65626 on 100

June

1st BN46827 on 5

Other News

Former ENOC/First Essex vehicles

One time 3112 (XIL1254, XHK217X) has been photographed in one of the Barnsley scrapyards. Meanwhile Former Thamesway Olympian 1003 (H103KVB), now First Eastern Counties 34903, has been transferred to Great Yarmouth from Norwich.

Sources: Own observations, with many thanks to *First Essex* and to A Bird, T Clark, J Collins, D Edwards, M Farmer, D Flatman, N Mansfield, C Paynter, J Podgorski, D Pretty, I Ransom, J Salmon, C Sigston, 'Solo', 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 e-mail or by conventional post. Many thanks to all who do so.

Chris Stewart

Heddingham Omnibuses

Acquired vehicles

from Arriva Derby 4626/9/43 via Ensign Bus (dlr) May 2009:

L372 R626 MNU Volvo Olympian 28782 Northern Counties 6183 H47/29F new 4/1998

L373 R629 MNU Volvo Olympian 28790 Northern Counties 6185 H47/29F new 4/1998

L374 R643 MNU Volvo Olympian 29050 Northern Counties 6263 H47/29F new 6/1998

David Harman with thanks to Mr. D R MacGregor of Heddingham Omnibuses

Excel Passenger Logistics

A second ex-Burtons, Haverhill, Mercedes Benz 0814D/Plaxton is S550 BNV. Also acquired is Scania L94/Irizar Y83 HHE ex Romsey Coaches. Former First Essex Mercedes Benz 709D/Plaxton K397/8 GHJ have been sold. *Ian Ransom*

Regal Busways

Dennis Dart/Plaxton J132 DUV has been withdrawn. Similar M91 WBW is numbered 511. The remains of Leyland Olympian/ECW C80 CHM have gone for scrap.

Ian Ransom

Stansted Transit

The company ceased operations on 4th June - see report on earlier page.

Optare Metrorider P427 VRG has been sold for scrap. Mercedes Benz 0814D/Plaxton T431 EBD has gone to Top Travel, Stevenston. *Ian Ransom*

■ DEALER STOCK MOVEMENTS

Vehicles in *from*

Arriva Midlands: Olympians R632/33 MNU
Arriva North East: Scania N381/2 OTY
Chambers, Bures: Olympian M81 MYM.
Dublin Bus: Olympians 97-D-329/67-9/71/3/5/8, 98-D-20399/406/7/14/22/9/31
East London Bus Group: Darts V148/50/52/56 MVX, W178/99 DNO
London General: Volvo B7TLs PN02 XCA/K/R/S/T/Y/Z
Metroline: Darts R124/26/40-3/6-8/51/3 RLY
Stagecoach North East: Volvo B10Ms N202-4 LTN, K714/6/23/4/6/9 DAO

Vehicles out

to

Volvo B10B M901 DRG: **ATbus**, Ashford, Middx.
 Volvo B7TLs PN02 XCA/K/S/T/Z: **Carousel Buses**, High Wycombe
 Trident PO51 UMF: **Centrebus**, Leicester
 Darts V147-50 MVX: **Chalkwell**, Sittingbourne
 Dublin Olympian 98-D-20398/401/4/17
 now R43/5/9 LHK, S216 YOO with **Chambers, Bures**
 Volvo B10Ms N203/4 LTN, K714/24 DAO: **D&G International**, Glasgow
 Volvo B10M M913 WJK: **First Bus Stop**, Gravesend
 Volvo D10M B135 GAU: **Fowlers**, Holbeach Drive, Lincs.
 Olympian G818 GSX: **Frasers Garage**, Ross-shire
 Olympian P425 KSX: **Herberts**, Shefford, Beds.
 Dart R141 RLY: **Imperial**, Rainham.
 Dublin Olympian 96-D-261/79/302
 now N632/57/38 JNO with **New Horizon**, Frating, Essex
 Metrobus B153 WUL: **On-a-Mission**, Letchworth, Herts.
 Dublin Olympian 97-D-346
 now P564 SWC with **Red Route**, Northfleet, Kent
 RML2266: **RH Transport**, Witney, Oxon.
 Darts R156/7 VLA: **Rotala Group**, Birmingham
 Dublin Olympian 98-D-20390
 now R32 LHK with **TM Travel**, Sheffield
 Volvo B10M L578 HSG: **Travelmasters**, Sheerness

 Volvo D10M's H653/84 GPF: **The Norwich School**, Norwich
 Volvo B10M's J722/3 KBC: **Sandfield Farm**, Stratford-upon-Avon
 RM1260: **Kurt Soezen**, Denmark Hill, London

 Bristol VR JWT 757V: **Nick Peters**, Farnborough for preservation

 RM's CUV 210C and LDS 239A: **The Bus and Boat Co.**, Ontario, Canada
 Olympian A158 FPG: **HLS2000 Ltd**, Rainham Essex (shipped to Columbus, Ohio, USA via Southampton on 1 June)

 Metrobuses KYO 617X, C313 BUV, Dominator G801 THA
 all to **Erith Commercials** for scrap

■ ENSIGNBUS LTD., Purfleet

Disposals

Darts 703 and 704 have been sold to Arriva Midlands. Dart 701, sold last month is P81 MOR, not L101 HHV (an earlier 701).

Fleet list : 1 June 2009

<i>no</i>	<i>reg.no.</i>	<i>chassis</i>	<i>body</i>	<i>seating</i>	<i>note orig re.g.</i>
111	PO58NPG	Volvo B9TL	Optare Olympus	H51/31F	
112	PO58NPJ	Volvo B9TL	Optare Olympus	H51/31F	
113	PO58NPK	Volvo B9TL	Optare Olympus	H51/31F	
114	PO58NPN	Volvo B9TL	Optare Olympus	H51/31F	
115	PO58NPP	Volvo B9TL	Optare Olympus	H51/31F	
116	PO58NPU	Volvo B9TL	Optare Olympus	H51/31F	
117	PO58NPV	Volvo B9TL	Optare Olympus	H51/31F	
118	PO58NPX	Volvo B9TL	Optare Olympus	H51/31F	
119	PO58NPY	Volvo B9TL	Optare Olympus	H51/31F	
120	PO58NRE	Volvo B9TL	Optare Olympus	H51/31F	
124	S124RLE	Volvo Olympian	Alexander	H43/29F	(1)
125	S125RLE	Volvo Olympian	Alexander	H43/29F	(1)
126	P426UUG	Volvo Olympian	Alexander Royale	DPH45/27F	(2)
127	P427UUG	Volvo Olympian	Alexander Royale	DPH45/27F	(2)
128	WLT428	Volvo Olympian	Alexander Royale	DPH45/27F	(2) P428 UUG
129	P429UUG	Volvo Olympian	Alexander Royale	DPH45/27F	(2)
132	S132RLE	Volvo Olympian	Alexander	H43/29F	(1)
136	S136RLE	Volvo Olympian	Alexander	H43/29F	(1)
138	S138RLE	Volvo Olympian	Alexander	H43/29F	(1)
152	392MBF	Volvo Olympian	Alexander	H43/29F	(1) P482 MBY
156	S126RLE	Volvo Olympian	Alexander	H43/29F	(1)
159	WJY759	Volvo Olympian	Alexander	H43/29F	(1) S128 RLE
163	P563SWC	Volvo Olympian	Alexander RH	H47/31F	(3) 97 D 341
168	P568SWC	Volvo Olympian	Alexander RH	H47/31F	(3) 97 D 340
195	P495SWC	Volvo Olympian	Alexander RH	H47/31F	(3) 97 D 334
233	KYV633X	MCW Metrobus DR101/14	MCW	DPO31/14F	(4)*
307	WLT307	Volvo Olympian	Northern Counties	O48/27D	(5)* N537 LHG
382	EU04CUW	Volvo B7L	Ayats Bravo City	O55/34F	*
464	864DYE	MCW Metroliner DR140/3	MCW 400GT	CH53/20Dt	(6) E906 TOJ
702	P82MOR	Dennis Dart SLF	UVG UrbanStar	B37F	(7)
705	P505MOT	Dennis Dart SLF	UVG UrbanStar	B37F	(7)
710	P910MOR	Dennis Dart SLF	UVG UrbanStar	B37F	(7)
714	P514CVO	Dennis Dart SLF	East Lancs Spryte	B39F	(8)
719	R619VEG	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(9)
720	R620VEG	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(9)
721	R621VEG	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(9)
722	R622VEG	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(9)
723	R623VEG	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(9)
724	R624VEG	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(9)
725	R625VEG	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(9)
726	R626VEG	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(9)
727	R627VEG	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(9)
729	R629VEG	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(9)
730	R630VEG	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(9)
731	R631VEG	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(9)
732	R632VEG	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(9)
738	R638VEG	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(9)
764	R864MCE	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B36F	(1)
770	R870MCE	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(1)
771	R871MCE	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(1)
772	R872MCE	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(1)

776	R876MCE	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B36F	(1)
777	R877MCE	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(1)
792	R692MEW	Dennis Dart SLF	Marshall Capital	B37F	(1)
(1)	ex-Metroline	(5)	ex-Metrobus	(9)	ex-Thorpes
(2)	ex-Lancashire United	(6)	ex-Yorkshire Traction	*	Ensignbus Ltd owned,
(3)	ex-Dublin Bus	(7)	ex-Airlinks		in City Sightseeing
(4)	ex-Arriva OLS	(8)	ex-Nottingham City Tpt		livery.

■ HERITAGE FLEET

RM371 has been repainted red for the private hire/heritage fleet.

RMA58 has been sold to Rob Duker, St Neots, Cambs for continued preservation.

Recent disposal Tiger Cub/Harrington Grenadier BCJ 710B, now with Alpine Coaches, Llandudno, is used on their Great Orme tour, and is now in fleet livery.

Fleet list : 1 June 2009

<i>no</i>	<i>reg.no.</i>	<i>chassis</i>	<i>body</i>	<i>seating</i>	<i>note</i>
192	F292 NHJ	MCW Metrobus DR102/71	MCW	H46/27F	(1)
204	KTJ 204C	Leyland PD2	East Lincs	H37/28F	(2)
333	EGP 33J	Daimler Fleetline	Park Royal	O45/29F	
DM2646	THX 646S	Leyland Fleetline	Park Royal	H44/27D	
M1	THX 101S	MCW Metrobus DR101/3	MCW	H43/28D	
RCL2220	CUV 220C	AEC Routemaster	Park Royal	H40/27RD	
RLH61	MXX 261	AEC Regent III	Weymann	H27/26R	
RM54	LDS 279A	AEC Routemaster	Park Royal	H36/28R	
RM371	WLT 371	AEC Routemaster	Park Royal	O36/28R	
RM1361	VYJ 808	AEC Routemaster	Park Royal	H36/28R	
RMA50	NMY 634E	AEC Routemaster	Park Royal	H32/24F	
RMA58	NMY 655E	AEC Routemaster	Park Royal	H32/24F	
RMCI485	485 CLT	AEC Routemaster	Park Royal	H32/25R	
RML2405	JJD 405D	AEC Routemaster	Park Royal	H40/32R	
RT624	JXC 432	AEC Regent III	Weymann	H30/26R	
RT1431	JXC 194	AEC Regent III	Cravens	H30/26R	
RT1499	KGK 758	AEC Regent III	Cravens	H30/26R	
RT3232	KYY 961	AEC Regent III	Weymann	H30/26R	
RT4421	NXP 775	AEC Regent III	Weymann	H30/26R	
TD895	HLJ 44	Bristol K6A	ECW	L24/24R	(3)
TP839	839 XUJ	Leyland Tiger PS1	Guernseybus	B31F	(4)
TP840	840 XUJ	Leyland Tiger PS1	Guernseybus	O35F	(4)
5280	5280 NW	Leyland Titan PD3/5	Roe	H38/32R	(5)

Non operational

549	A249SVW	Leyland Tiger	Duple Laser	C57F	(6)
MLL735	MLL735	AEC Regal IV	Park Royal	C18C	
RCL2226	CUV226C	AEC Routemaster	Park Royal	H40/27RD	
RT8	FXT183	AEC Regent III	Weymann	H30/26R	
RT1239	KGK708	AEC Regent III	Saunders	H30/26R	
RTW335	KXW435	Leyland PD2	Leyland	H30/26R	
STL2093	DLU92	AEC Regent I	LPTB	H30/26R	
T499	ELP223	AEC 10T10	Weymann	C33F	
TD161	KR1728	Leyland Titan	Short Bros	H24/24R	(7)
SP665	KR8385	Leyland Tiger TS2	Burlingham	B30F	(7)

All new to London Transport

or predecessors, except:

(1) Ensignbus

(2) Lancaster CT

(3) Hants & Dorset

(4) Jersey MT

(5) Leeds CT

(6) Southend Transport

(7) Maidstone & District

David Harman with thanks to Ross Newman of Ensignbus.
LOTS, Crosville Enthusiasts Club Review

Other Operators

BARKER, Roydon Recent acquisitions are GAZ 4363 (D334 SHS) a Bedford YNV/ Duple ex Gardner, Boreham. This was reregistered to D334 SHS and has since been sold; Leyland Royal Tiger/Plaxton B298 AMG ex Star Travel, Swindon; Duple 425 D136 XBV, now registered GAZ 4363; Plaxton 425 J8 WSB previously reported as sold, is still here and is now registered HKZ 3852; Scania K113/ Plaxton K83 DTM has been acquired from Davian, Enfield and re-registered D104 XAN. Neoplan Skyliner WIW 4748 (H204 AOD) has been re-registered JIL 4680. Mercedes Benz 307D/Reeve Burgess D104 XAN has been re-registered to D757 YNO and sold. Renault PP160/Wadham Stringer K18 WPA has been re-registered WIW 4748. Vehicles also sold are NIW 8795 (A655 UGD) a Volvo B10M/Plaxton, Setra S228DT RJ1 6569 (A848 UGB), Leyland Olympian/ECW VJI 1985 (ARP 606X) and LDV Convoy T923 GJH.

CAR SERVICE TRAVEL, Lower Sheering Acquired is Ford Transit/Dormobile M696 SKP.

CBBB TOURING, Rettendon Recently acquired is luxury 12 seat "band bus" SJI 8123 (H833 RWJ) a Scania K113/Van Hool.

CRUSADER, Clacton-on-Sea Coaches sold are Setra S315 GT, EK51 KZB and EU03 OJG/H/J/K.

DALYS TRAVEL, Harlow A second LDV Convoy is AD02 HCP.

ESSEX MINIBUSES, Laindon New here, but not previously reported is SD57 HXB.

FARNHAM HIRE SERVICES, Farnham New is Iveco 45C15 minibus FJ09 NEO. It replaces Mercedes Benz Sprinter/Autobus X845 HEE, which has been sold.

FLAGFINDERS, Braintree MCW Metrobus B82 WUL has gone to Hardwick, Carlton (presumed for scrap).

GALLEON, Harlow Mercedes Benz 0814D/Plaxton X216 HCD has been re-registered LSK 607. The associated Trustybus fleet have sold Leyland National Greenways GUW 452/505W, former Chester Dennis Dart/Plaxton J51 EDM, K58/59 LLG, L61 PDM, L64 SFM and K92 BNY. Dennis Dart SLF/Marshall S521 KFL has gone to M Travel, Manchester, while

Dennis Dart SLF KX58 GTF has returned to Dawsonrentals.

HIGGS, Stapleford Abbots Ford Transit EY53 YAA and BD56 EVW have been acquired.

JACKSON, Bicknacre MAN/Marco Polo PN09 CWP is new here.

LCB TRAVEL, Harlow New but not previously reported is Ford Transit EO08 CNX. Acquired is similar DY02 NRV.

LODGE, High Easter Setra S315GT Y377 UOM has been acquired, it has been re-registered 46 AEW on arrival here.

LOGIC, Nazeing Acquired is YF03 AGC a LDV Convoy.

MATTS, Doddington Acquired in 2007, but only now reported is Ford Transit BP04 KYU.

NEW HORIZONS, Frating Vehicles sold are Ford Transits EA53 OJJ and EY05 VHC. Former Dublin Volvo Olympian/Alexander Belfast N632/38/57/61 JNO (96-D-261/302/279/280) have been acquired, for rail replacement/schools work.

OLYMPUS/SM TRAVEL, Harlow Volvo B10M/Plaxton N208 HWX has been acquired from Carol Peters, Ramsgate. Also acquired is R200 SPK a DAF SB3000/Plaxton, formerly with National Express.

PHILLIPS, South Woodham Ferrers LDV Convoy N878 ENK has been acquired from Rayleigh Roadways, Shotgate.

RICHMON FOUR WHEEL DRIVE, Stapleford Tawney Acquired in 2007, but not reported until now is Mercedes Benz/Scott WJI 2706 (E369 YGB).

RYDERS TRAVEL, Harlow Toyota/Caetano M202 DCV has been sold.

SBC LEISURE, Shotgate Former Anita's X2 ERN a MAN 11.220/Caetano has been acquired from Cousins, Durham.

STANSTED COACH & CARRIAGE Birchanger Recently acquired is Ford Transit R432 RFT.

STANSTED TRANSPORT SERVICES, Stansted Recently acquired is S552 RKU, an LDV Convoy.

TWH, Noak Hill Leyland Olympian/Alexander J688 TNF has been sold to Carvers, Little Sutton, Cheshire.

Ian Ransom with thanks to the PSV Circle



"Bertie", or GN09 HBH, an Irisbus Iveco Daily of Brentwood Community Transport joined a Ford Transit 58 plate called "Ziggy" on a free shuttle linking Shenfield/Brentwood Stations with Highwood Hospital site (near where the Green Line 721 and LT 247/347 used to turn round) and the Brentwood Community Hospital which has just been rebuilt. Chris Stewart

Cooks Coaches of Westcliff have favoured Bovas for many years. YJ04 GYX is a 2004 FHD12/340, the newest in the fleet. Tunbridge Wells; 28 May 2009. David Harman



ACCIDENTS WILL HAPPEN



Another selection of mishaps that occurred over the years to Eastern National buses - this time, FLFs. (The previous instalment, with LDs, was in EBN 518). Thanks to *Peter Carr* for most of these clippings.

The first involved Braintree's 2828 (KNO 951C) which collided head-on with a car on the Witham Road in Black Notley in May 1968. The bus was on the 332, Braintree to

Great Bardfield route. The car driver and passenger were injured, the latter seriously, whilst two bus passengers were treated for shock.

More serious, was a crash that occurred on 4th August 1975, in London Road, Hutton. A rush-hour 251, bound for Southend was in collision with a Hillman Avenger. Another



A policeman measures up at the fatal crash scene at Rayleigh Road.



continued on page 1 BUS PASSENGERS INJURED

and described what the next seat.
"I was just sitting
your fishing or something

Another passenger, 18-year-old
John Puccio from Newbury Park

"As the bus stopped a lot of
passengers came hurtling towards
me."

crash, Mr. Hyatt's car was towed
out of the hedgerow and taken to
Billericay's Sun Street Garage.
Police tested the road surface



car and another bus, travelling in the opposite direction were also involved, although the *Brentwood Gazette* report does not make clear how this occurred. The unidentified FLF left the road and ended up in a ditch. Sadly, there was one fatality, the driver of the Avenger, an employee of Hambro Bank at Shenfield station.

The conductor, Mr John Porter (above) of Leyton said "As the bus stopped, a lot of passengers came hurtling towards me. Seats were ripped up and metal roof supports were bent as passengers were hurled about inside". Eighteen passengers were treated at Basildon Hospital for cuts and bruises.

The characteristic British resilience in the face of adversity soon showed itself: Residents of Bushwood Farm and caravans on the site improvised a kerbside tea kitchen, providing welcome drinks for shocked and

injured passengers and members of the emergency services.

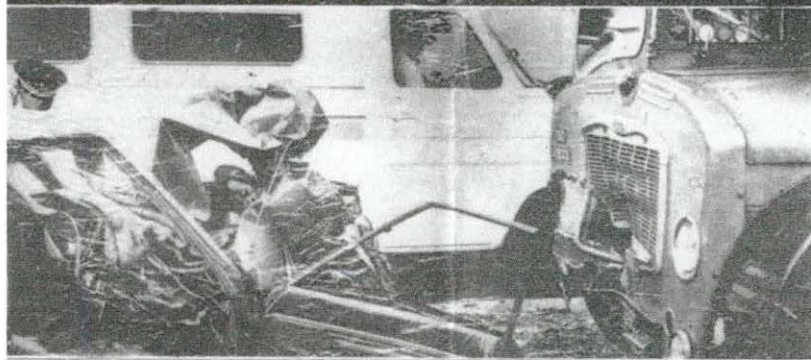
It took several hours to winch the FLF out of the ditch, after which it was towed to Chelmsford for an independent investigation by experts

Staying in the Brentwood area, on 1st September 1975, another head-on collision occurred, this time in Ingrave Road, at the junction with Hogarth Avenue. Brentwood's 2833 (LWC 659C) collided with a car.

The *Brentwood Gazette* recorded that the family of four in the car were all injured, the father and his son, seriously. One passenger on the bus was injured, but the driver was unhurt, despite severe damage to the offside cab area.

September 5, 1975

Car and bus in A128 horror crash



A FAMILY of four dangerously ill in F Wood Hospital this after their car in collision with a bus: A.128 Ingrave Road Monday morning.

The crash occurred junction with Hogarth / a spot that is usually it with schoolchildren who enjoying the last day summer holidays.

Firemen with a equipment had to be a release the debris as rolled across the road it mangled wreckage.

The front of the bus was completely inside bodywork of the bus miraculously the bus escaped smashed even a huge shock was gone beneath his cab.

And only one person the bus was injured in it which resulted in a traffic jam along the A.

Wife escapes death in bus smash



At the opposite end of the county, another FLF came to grief - whilst working the 78, Colchester to Brightlingsea on 20th July 1977. The unidentified FLF mounted the kerb and careered off the road into a house in Brightlingsea High Street. One of the occupants had just put the phone down in the front parlour and left the room, minutes before the bus crashed through the wall.

Driver Albert Jacobs of Layer-de-la-Haye, and two passengers were treated at Colchester Hospital for bruises and shock.

The unfortunate owners of the house, Rosemary and Eric Fleet, had only just completed renovating it. Damage was estimated at £3,000. The FLF appears to be relatively unscathed.

A spokesman for Eastern National said it was too early to determine the cause of the accident.

Fans of 1970s TV cops and robbers series "The Sweeney", will recognise the police car as a Mk I Ford Granada. Those were the days!

On to January 1978, and Bishops Stortford car 2803 (BVX 679B) which suffered minor damage following a collision, whilst working the 309 town service.





An undated picture, courtesy of www.sct61.org.uk/, which originally appeared in the *Southend Standard*. Chelmsford car 1648 (VWC 51) on the 11A (Chelmsford - Southend via Rettendon) stuck under a low bridge. 1648 was delivered new in April 1963 and numbered 2771 in the August 1964 renumbering scheme, so this narrows the date down, but what about the location?

I wonder whether they remembered the old trick for freeing vehicles wedged under

bridges - letting the tyres down?

Finally a mishap from the 1950s, courtesy of Richard Delahoy: ex-City Daimler 1218 (NVX 173) ran off the road in fog at the bottom of Crays Hill, whilst on the 251 to Wood Green. A fitter and the driver (?) survey the scene, but who was the dapper gent in overcoat and gauntlets? Undated, although the bus has an allocation triangle, which would place it some time between 1954 and 1958.

David Harman



WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN ~ AN EASTERN NATIONAL DEMONSTRATOR

It's easily overlooked or forgotten that the county of Essex housed the HQ of what was once a major psv chassis manufacturer - the Ford Motor Company - even if the vehicles themselves were built elsewhere. Of course, Fords were most popular as lightweight coaches with independent operators, but some were bodied and used as buses. We had an unexpected reminder of this during the April North Essex meeting in Colchester, when the planned speaker was unwell and Trevor Brookes stepped in at very short notice with a fascinating slide show drawn from his archives.

Amongst the gems that Trevor produced was a shot of a Ford demonstrator on loan to Eastern National. Our duplicated news-sheet of the time recorded that UOO660L was loaned to Eastern National in September 1973 and worked from Basildon, Chelmsford and Colchester depots. It is seen here in Colchester Bus Station having arrived on service 80 from Harwich. Editing the news-sheet, Alan Osborne noted at the time that "since the present Chief Engineer [Rodney Hawkins] was previously with Midland Red

(a large operator of Ford saloons) this event takes on a new significance". Midland Red had taken no less than 100 Ford buses with Plaxton bodies, causing something of a stir in the industry.

Ford were clearly having a major sales drive for their recently redesigned models, where the R1014 and R1114 had replaced the previous R192 and R226. In fact, there were no fewer than four Essex registered demonstrators at this time:

UOO658L, a R1014 with Willowbrook B45F body

UOO659L, also an R1014 but with Plaxton C45F coachwork

UOO660L, R1014/Alexander B45F as shown here

UOO661L, the longer R1114 model, with Duple C53F body.

What made UOO660L particularly interesting was that it was fitted with what was described as a semi-automatic gearbox in place of the more usual clutch and synchromesh box. Does anyone know more





UOO 660L in Colchester bus station. Livery was cream and yellow - Alexander Northern style.

about this unusual (for Ford) feature and indeed, was it a semi-auto or an Allison fully automatic box?

Eastern National however were not then persuaded of the merits of Ford buses and continued to buy the recently introduced Leyland National for their single deck needs, later supplemented by the conversion of Bristol MW coaches to buses for more lightly trafficked routes. Indeed, the last Ford to enter the fleet had done so as long ago as 1925! (For the record, it was NM 4053, a Ford T type acquired with the Road Motors fleet in Luton). There were however some other brief dalliances with the marque, including:

533/4CYU, a pair of 570Es with Duple C37F bodies that were hired from Timpson's from 5.69 to 8.69 to cover a sub-hired Ford contract;

FWW705H, an R226/Plaxton C49F was on loan from Ford for 3-4 weeks from 10.8.70 for private hire work and excursions;

KEV951J, a red liveried Ford demonstrator R192/Plaxton B45F was used 9.1.71 (only) on the 234 & 248 from BN;

PTW168K, a green/cream liveried

R1014/Plaxton B44F used on or from 7.3.72 also at BN.

However, three years after UOO660L was tested, in February 1976 five Fords *were* bought during a phase when the NBC was toying with lightweight buses for rural routes. Numbered 1000-4, MAR775-9P, they carried attractive if somewhat angular Duple Dominant 43 seat bus bodies on the shorter R1014 chassis. Allocated to Bishops Stortford, principally for the 309 service, they only lasted just over five years, being delicensed in the summer of 1981 and formally withdrawn that November. Ironically, they were taken out of service just as another lightweight type was being acquired - ten shortened Bedford YMQ models with Wadham Stringer DP33F bodies.

Even in the independent sector, Fords were not that common in Essex, but that is a story for another day, perhaps.

Richard Delahoy, with grateful thanks to Trevor Brookes for supplying the picture that prompted the feature and to Chris Stewart for additional notes.



An earlier demonstrator - PTW168K heads out of Basildon Bus Station for Langdon Hills in March 1972. Bill Cansick

Bishops Stortford garage forecourt is the setting for Eastern National 1004, MAR779P, looking to be in imminent danger of a falling T! Taken on August 15, 1981, the bus was withdrawn shortly afterwards. Richard Delahoy



Rear cover ~ Farewell to Stansted Transit

Happier days: Stansted Transit former Armchair Dart P678 RWU crossing Hatfield Heath on Village Link 5 on 2 November 2006. Russell Young

The morning after: Stephenson's Withamlink-branded Solo 325 on the 73A on 5 June 2008.

Dave Arnold



Clacton Running Day

*Contrasting greens:
One time Kelvedon
shedmates 1516
(FWC439H) and 2017
(373WPU), the latter
having recently returned
to the road after some
considerable time.*

Chris Stewart



*Bristol LS5G 1237
(859ETW) seen at
Thorpe-le-Soken (with the
War Memorial visible
behind).*



*Series I VR 3000 (CPU979G)
passed its MOT just in time to
make its first appearance in
service for many years.*

all: Chris Stewart



ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP
www.essexbus.org.uk