

ESSEX BUS NEWS

August 1997

The monthly magazine of the ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP

(Formerly the Eastern National Enthusiasts Group)

400

Issue 1 - January 1964) Thirty three years
Issue 400 - August 1997) reporting the news!



LEAVING THE OLD LONDON ROAD GARAGE AT SOUTHEND IS EASTERN NATIONAL
BRISTOL RELH .ECW SALOON BN 1610 GVV980H ON SERVICE 400 TO KINGS
CROSS.

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ESSEX BUS NEWS

No. 400

EDITORIAL

Yet another milestone in the Group's history with the 400th edition of the magazine.

With all members support and co-operation we look forward to issue 500 - whether I am still the Managing Editor then remains to be seen!

PJS

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The first two page newsletter of the Eastern National Enthusiasts Group appeared in January 1964, this month we reach issue 400, and to mark this event a special feature on that renowned Southend-London service is included.

Our thanks to all Editors, Sub-Editors, and contributors for their efforts over the past 33 years, and to all the operators for their continued support.

Only another eight years and four months to a half thousand!

A. OSBORNE

ROCHFORD MEETINGS - FREIGHT HOUSE 8pm.

September	9th
October	14th
November	11th
December	9th.

All members welcome. Come along, meet other members, have a chat, enjoy a 'pint' if you want one.

The September meeting will be an open slide evening, so if you have some interesting slides bring them along.

Southend Transport are still experimenting with their livery. Olympian 282 receives yet another Cowie version strip.

With the final withdrawal by Southend Transport of their Bristol VR, these sturdy 'deckers' can still be seen on stage services by Nelsons; Wickford, Stephenson; Rochford, and of course by the lone Thamesway car. Incidentally, Stephenson uses VR's on the ex-Simion service from Benfleet to Canvey - peak times.

I wish to thank the Omnibus Society for inviting Group members to the Southend Transport depot, and to ST for supplying a new Dennis Dart for a tour of some of ST's routes.

Material for the September EBN should be with Sub Editor by ~~5th~~ September, & Managing Editor by ~~12~~ Sept.

Contributions received with thanks from Essex County Council. Essex Buses (Eastern National and Thamesway) Southend Transport. G Toon. C Sigston. R Delahoy. B White. P Ford. D Coulson. PSV Circle. LOTS.

GROUP TOUR

The proposed tour in September has been cancelled owing to difficulties in arranging visits to operators. Out of 11 operators contacted, only 2 granted permission in time to arrange booking forms etc..



THE SAFFRON WALDEN POST BUS

P FORD.

The 400 - by Alan Osborne

When it comes to memorable Eastern National bus services, certain numbers immediately spring to mind. There are, of course, the established long distance north/south county links, the 19 and 53. There are also the trunk routes inherited from former operators such as the 2 (ex Westcliff), 311 and 322 (ex Hicks), 251 (ex City) and, "Moore" recently the 70. This months focus features a much more recent creation, the 400. Although it was around for just 20 years, it still holds many fond memories.

Its origins can be traced back to a Southend - London express service started by Westcliff. It ran in the summer only, picking up at points to Hadleigh for setting down at Walthamstow, Dalston and Islington and terminating at Victoria Coach Station. When acquired by Eastern National three return journeys were provided and the letter D was allocated. Later additional workings were instituted, year round operation commenced and the route revised to serve Basildon New Town. In 1962 the operation was re-numbered X10 and later converted to Bristol FLF coach operation with tickets now issued on the vehicles rather than being pre-booked.

In 1971, following the acquisition of 15 Bristol VRT's from Alexander (Midland), the operation was re-vamped as a P.A.Y.E. limited stop service and given the number 400. The blue liveried vehicles certainly created a focus of attention. At this time a basic hourly service was provided with the section west of Basildon being express and that to the east being limited stop to cater for local passengers. During the 1970's and 1980's Bristol VR's in a series of special liveries with appropriate route branding and pricings were employed on the popular "City 400" service. For a number of years Southend Transport ran the 400 over the Christmas period.

After the opening of Basildon Railway Station in 1975 and the commencement of the Southend Transport X1 express route in 1980, traffic started to decline, although the Romford - Basildon section remained popular.

The service later passed to Thamesway and was then marketed as the "London Express". Finally, as part of a package of extensive service changes introduced on 20th January 1991 the 400 was withdrawn and partially replaced by a revised service 2.

The full story of the 400 is to be told in a forthcoming Group publication, in the meantime why not browse through the photograph selection and think of days past.

NORTH ESSEX - HEDINGHAM TOUR 12th JULY 1997

by Richard Huggins

There was a very good turnout of 50 members and friends for this tour, the best supported Group Trip in several years. We were fortunate also to be blessed with a day of fine sunshine to enable the cameras to record as many vehicles as possible of the interesting and varied Heddingham fleet.

The main tour vehicle was provided by Harris of Grays, one of their new Volvo Olympians with East Lincs. (Premyer or Pioneer!) bodywork, P338 ROO.

After picking up at a number of points in East London and South Essex, a short stop at Boreham Services enabled photographs to be taken of the Chelmsford Playbus, FEK 3F, formerly of Wigan.

Our route to Tollesbury, the first depot visit, was via Hatfield Peveral, part of the Maldon bypass (built on the course of the former Witham to Maldon railway) and Heybridge where roadworks were delaying Maldon bound traffic. For many this was the first visit to the former Osborne's depot since the Heddingham take-over and already alterations and improvements were evident. 14 vehicles were present including the two Leyland Nationals latterly bought by Osborne's and a number of vehicles in both Heddingham and Osborne's livery were moved for the camera.

Travelling on via Tiptree and Colchester we were able to make full use of the recently opened Little Clacton bypass to reach Heddingham's new depot on the Gorse Lane Industrial Estate at Clacton. The increased allocation here since the closure of Walton was evident by the presence of some 20 vehicles including veteran L84 and three former Eastern National vehicles, two LH's and Bedford BNO 700T, all now having spent far longer with Heddingham's than with their original owner. Former Osborne's vehicle EWW 213T has now moved to Clacton having been repainted in Heddingham livery. The increasing dominance of the Bristol VRT in the fleet was evident.

We re-traced our route back to Colchester and took a lunch break at the bus station which now affords excellent photographic opportunities. A number of Eastern National's new Dennis Lance's were seen together with the usual variety of vehicles from a number of local operators, including Heddingham's.

Leaving Colchester, we travelled by way of the A604 road, through the pleasant Colne Valley and Halstead to Heddingham, where we were assured of seeing an interesting selection of vehicles. These included the two varieties of Leyland Lynx, one of Heddingham's low floor Lance's and most importantly their immaculately restored former Great Yarmouth Leyland PD2, EX 6566. This latter vehicle was to be utilised as our transport across to Sudbury and back, and an impeccable performance it gave, negotiating the undulating Essex-Suffolk border country with a full load of passengers. The opportunity to ride on this vehicle was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone.

Sudbury depot is on the Chilton Industrial Estate, North-East of the town centre and, again, there was a good selection of vehicles present including former Carter's and Eastern Counties Leopard XPW 877X and re-bodied former London Country-Kentish Bus Tiger, WPH 135Y. On the return we made a slight detour to photograph the PD2 with Chilton Church in the background, making full use of the excellent weather.

Back at Hedingham we rejoined the Olympian and our return was by way of Braintree for a short stop in the Bus Park, Chelmsford and the morning pick-ups.

Thanks go to all concerned for a most enjoyable day out, in particular to Hedingham's for allowing us to visit their premises and to our drivers, Dave, John, and Geoff. The excellent fleet and service list compiled by Dave was much appreciated.

It is to be hoped that future Group Tours will attract a similar level of support.

FODENS

The PSV Circle have recently published an excellent book on Fodens and those readers who can remember these sturdy buses and coaches may be interested to know that only eight were registered in Essex.

HARRIS GRAYS	NHK 561
HARRIS GRAYS	NVW 299
KNOWLER WALTHAM ABBEY	OEV 926
MAJESTIC E15	ONO 242
MAJESTIC E15	ONO 243
FLACK EPPING	SPU 86
VICTORIA LEIGH-ON-SEA	FJN 500.

Various Essex operators acquired second-hand versions, namely Brentwood Coaches and Kirbys of Rayleigh.

For those members who are interested, the Group photograph collection contains a small selection. Any member requiring a list of these should send a SAE to Photograph Officer.

NATIONAL EXPRESS >>

THE 305 service from Southend to Liverpool is now operated by Express Travel of Speke in place of Wessex of Bristol.



Eastern National

SERVICES

- 1** Clacton summer service, withdrawn after 31.8.97.
- 2** Clacton summer service, withdrawn after 30.8.97.
- 3** The Malbus service was withdrawn after 9.8.97.
- 31** From 4.8.97. the 2100 ex Maldon was advanced to 2055.
- 32** Writtle short workings withdrawn after 9.8.97.
- 71C** Revised evening service introduced from 4.8.97.
- 73** The 0759 ex Boreham was withdrawn after 9.8.97.
- 93** Revised route and timetable introduced from 4.8.97.
- 105/7** Operation passed to Heddingham from 4.8.97.
- 351** Revised evening service introduced from 4.8.97.

UNUSUAL WORKINGS

The following are all on services 33/X, which are a result of only having six Tiger/Duples to cover five duties

28.6.97. CF 1428 **30.6.97.** CF 2824 **9.7.97.** CF1130
29.7.97. CF1402 and 3077

PUBLICITY

The following have been published recently:-

Timetable leaflets for services 1 dated 25.5.97; 5,6 dated 29.6.97; services 7,8/A,9 dated 30.6.97; 65/A dated 27.5.97.

Route Map and Frequency Guide updated to 15.5.97

Bus Excursions from Chelmsford 1997

Clacton on Sea area Bus Map dated Summer 97

Excursions 97 Booklet.

HARRIS BUS

VEHICLES

Volvo Olympians now delivered are P338-53 ROO and R354-5 XVX, all have East Lancs bodywork. P338-49 ROO seat H51/28D, while P350 ROO onwards are H51/35F, all carry Ilford Link lettering. DAF deckers P317/8 KTW now have Ilford Link lettering as do P335-7 ROO which are now in Harris livery.

As a result of the late delivery on new vehicles for Ilford services, four Atlanteans and an Olympian have been on hire from Ipswich Buses. They are RDX 18R, SDX 22/30/35R and M42 EPV, all the Atlanteans were still in use during early August, with the Olympian being replaced by Dominator B82 NDX. In addition deckers normally used on

the North Kent and ASDA services have been drafted into Ilford, resulting in the DAF Ikarus vehicles being used on these services.

Mercedes minibus J382 WVX has been repainted in a blue and turquoise livery for use on the Tilbury Town to ferry shuttle on behalf of LTS.

A further demonstrator was in use on service 383 in late July, P718 WFR a Dennis Dart SLF with East Lancs Spryte bodywork.

HEDINGHAM

SERVICES

31 Service operated by Heddingham for ECC withdrawn after 1.8.97.

85 Operation passed to Heddingham ex Carters with effect from 6.8.97.

86 As service 85.

89/A/B Revised timetable introduced from 4.8.97.

95/A Revised timetable introduced from 1.9.97.

105/7 Service taken over from EN, with some services numbered 109 from 4.8.97.

VEHICLES

Three vehicles have been repainted into fleet livery ex Osbornes colours, they are L275 (RWC 41W), L271 (KBC 2V) and L277 (EWW 213T). In addition several ex Osbornes coaches have been retrimmed. Minibuses L149 (E79 HVX) and L152 (D576 VBV) have also been repainted.

Fleetline GSL 897N has been sold to Majestic a new operator in the Harwich area. Also sold are Nationals NPJ 473R and PPM 896R to Bygone Buses in Kent, while the remains of Bedford KHJ 786P and VR OSR 181R have gone for scrap. Bedfords GPV 685N and MDW 584P have moved to Clacton for spares.

Leopards MNK 427/9/30V have been advertised for sale.

A Volvo/Plaxton Premiere is due shortly for use as the Colchester United team coach.

FLEET ALLOCATION JULY 1997

HEDINGHAM 87 89 95 98 103 114 133 136 137 151 160 167 194 196 200 206 211

CLACTON 84 94 105 111 112 116 121 125 147 149 152 158 162 164 165 169 170
175 178 201 202 203 204 209 215 221 226 230 233 234 235 236 241 242 244 250
251

SUDBURY 88 115 135 140 148 150 163 199 208 212 222 224 225 229 231 237 240
243 245 246 248 275

LITTLE TEY 96 100 113 122 124 126 138 153 193 195 205 210 232 255 259

KELVEDON 139 141 146 159 161 166 168 197 198 207 247

BURNHAM 156

TOLLESBURY 249 252 253 254 256 257 258 260 261 262 268 269 270 271 272
273 274 276 280 281

UNLICENSED 85 214 277

Preserved PD2 EX 6566 is kept at Heddingham.



1. Typical of the coaches used by Westcliff on the London express service was JN 6889 an Eastern Counties bodied Bristol J05G, new in 1936. (EBEG collection)



2. Seen at London Victoria Coach Station on express service D is 362 (EJN 638) a Bristol LS6G dating from 1952. (EBEG collection)



3. Also at Victoria awaiting departure for Southend on express service X10 is 1640 (RWC 607) one of the splendid Bristol FLF6B coaches which graced the route for many years. (EBEG collection)



4. Limited stop service 400 was operated for some years by dual purpose Bristol RELHs, such as 1604 (BNO105B). (EBEG collection)



5. Double deck O.M.O. operation on the 400 started with the batch of Bristol VRs acquired from Alexander (Midland) in 1971. 3019 (SMS 45H), formerly MRT 15, enters Southend Bus Station.

(A. D. Broughall)



6. The 400 was operated for many years with route branded Bristol VRTs in a special green and white livery. Seen in Southend is 3069 (KOO787V), day return to London £1.95! (EBEG collection)



7. Southend Transport vehicles operated on the 400 as reliefs and also over the Christmas period. Daimler Fleetline 379 (GHJ 379L) loads in Southend Central Bus Station. (EBEG collection)



8. 4500 (B688 BP) was the first of the 82-seat Leyland Olympians delivered in 1985 for operation on the 400, labelled as "City Commuter". (EBEG collection)

OTHER OPERATORS - REST OF ESSEX

AIRPORT EXPRESS SOUTHEND Ford Transit K2 KMK has not been sold. This operator is now also based at Pipp's Hill Road North in Basildon.

AMAYESING MINIBUSES GRAYS This new operator has Transit P499 NWC.

APT RAYLEIGH Further to EBN 397 M1 APT was new as M708 HBC.

ASSOCIATED COACHWAYS HARLOW Volvo/Plaxton KNP 1X has been acquired.

BARKERBUS ROYDON Fiat/Caetano YHA 983X has been sold.

BISS STANSTED Van Hool T815, 114 UPH has been sold.

BLUE DIAMOND HARLOW Have sold Tiger/Caetano C360 LVV.

BLUE TRIANGLE Service 204 was introduced during school holidays with effect from 11.8.97. **This service is scheduled for operation by RT/RM vehicles during August.** Operation of Sunday service 500 passed to Thamesway from 10.8.97.

BRANDON BLACKMORE END MAN/Caetano G153 XJF has been sold.

BRENTWOOD COACHES Registration 823 NMC is now on a private car. This was previously on the former Ebdons Olympian, which has been advertised for sale.

CHELMSFORD TAXIBUS These services now seem to have commenced after a few false starts and are as follows:-

- 1 Town Centre to Broomfield Hospital via Kings Road
- 2 Town Centre to Chelmer Village via Army and Navy
- 4 Town Centre to Springfield Torquay Road via Arbour Lane
- 5 Town Centre to Springfield Paddock Drive via Chelmer Valley
- 6 Town Centre to Gt Baddow Vineyards via Baddow Road.
- 7 Town Centre to Galleywood Watchhouse Road via Moulsham Lodge
- 9 Town Centre to Writtle Green via Westlands

Also operated is "The Loop" from Wood St Tesco's via London Road, University, Springfield Park, Town Centre, Corporation Road, Park Avenue, Town Centre and back to Tesco's.

All services operate on a hail and ride basis and will divert up to half a mile off route when required. A mixture of Omnis and Transits are mainly used, although cars have also been seen in use.

CI COACHLINES HIGHWOOD One of the Volvo/Ikarus has been re-registered IU1 2735.

CJ TRAVEL HARLOW The start of the new school term seems to produce a crop of new operators, this one having Transit D930 CRE.

CLINTONA BRENTWOOD Ford Transit G588 RYA has been sold. New vehicles are P675/6 LWA, both are LDV Convoy with Crystals conversions.

CROWN COACHES THUNDERSLEY Recent additions here are Bova Futura D420 HPO and two Iveco/Carlyle F700 OPA and G442 WUL.

FARGO RAYNE Have sold Scania/Van Hool M309 VET.

FDR BASILDON Previously operated a couple of minibuses as PSV's for staff transport, has now had its licence terminated.

FISHER CANVEY Renault/Cymric L16 ATS is in use with this operator, who is in the car repair trade.

GOLDEN BOY ROYDON Have sold Tiger/Plaxton YO1 7575 (A80 NHK).

GRAHAMS COACHES KELVEDON Service 339 was withdrawn after operation on 1.8.97. Leyland Tiger/Van Hool MBZ 3733 has been sold.

KINGS STANWAY Bova E279 HRY has been sold.

MASSEY LAINDON This operator has commenced once more with Renault Master P985 PBX.

MJ TRAVEL SOUTHEND This operator has now had its licence revoked by the traffic commissioner.

MIKES COACHES BASILDON Have registered a schooldays only service from Basildon to Shenfield School with effect from 4.9.97. Volvo/Plaxton OSE 739W has been acquired.

NEED A BUS BOWERS GIFFORD Bedford YMP/Plaxton B630 WNG (OJI 4754, B392 WTT) has been acquired.

RGB COACHLINES SHOTGATE This operator has now ceased.

RONDA COACHES ROCHFORD Ford Transit/Dormobile C490 TBC has been acquired.

RUFFLE CASTLE HEDINGHAM Volvo/Berkhof A830 NTW has been re-registered XIB 2453.

SCOTTS MINIBUSES HARLOW Yet another new operator with LDV Convoy P963 ONC.

STANS GT TOTHAM Mercedes 0303, LSU 113 has been re-registered MIL 4003 and sold.

STEPHENSONS The former Simlen service between Canvey and Benfleet will be withdrawn after 29.8.97. Missing from last months fleet list were:-

MCW Metroliner (d/d) C979 HOX

Leopard/Willowbrook (trainer) Q287 HNR

A further Olympian/ECW has been acquired ABC 65Y (ex YPJ 503Y) from ABC Travel of Southport, this vehicle will be re-registered as the plates are to be returned.

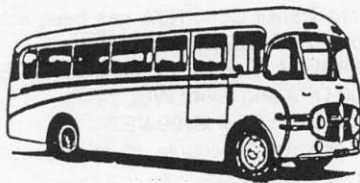
As well as the Olympian mentioned above, Tiger/Plaxtons TJI 4821/4 were also new to Alder Valley as YPJ 203/6Y.

SUPREME SOUTHEND A recent addition here is N680 AHL a Scania/Irizar.

THAMES WEALD The services from Sevenoaks to Romford/Southend have not been withdrawn and continue to operate.

WEBSTER BASILDON D868 VKE a Mercedes minibus has been acquired from Hailstone, Basildon.

WESTS COACHES All stage services and buses passed to Townlink with effect from 4.8.97. Wests will continue as a coach operator from it's existing base.



Thamesway

Allocation Changes July

208E Pool-D/L(D), 225 Pool-D/L(D)

A new outstation at Brentwood Station has been established - full details below

Leyland Lynx 1430 has chassis number LX1043 and was acquired from Centrewest (who own London Buslines) (no LX807).

Service Revisions

- 100 From 4th August the journey from Basildon Billericay Hall Station at 2258 will be extended to Mayflower school mon-sat.
- 500 From 10th August this service will be operated by Thamesway under contract to Essex County Council between Romford and Harlow on Sundays.
- 551 This service had served the Green Man bus station, Leytonstone but from 24th May stops outside the bus station have been used.
- W13 The terminal on the west side of the station was due to be abandoned from 7th April being deferred to 11th May this being moved again to 28th April this date was again moved to 3rd May when buses started to use the new route into the bus station on the east side of the station.

Ticketing

From 14th July, passengers with Great Eastern season tickets from Rayleigh Station will be able to buy supplements that can be used for travel by Thamesway bus to and from Rayleigh Station. Weekly supplements are available between £4.90 and £7.00 and can be used from Rayleigh, Eastwood, Hadleigh, Thunderley and Hullbridge. Existing ticket holders can join the scheme.

Brentwood area notes by S Menzies

The new outstation in fact opened on 28th June. Buses are parked in the Station car park with an office in the station. 11 vehicles are needed here to operate town services,, school contracts and some journeys on route 201. Basildon still operate four peak-time journeys using full-size buses. The journeys involved are-

- 71A 1723 ex Warley
- 73 0808 ex Bishops Hall
0825 ex Warley
- 80 (usually Leyland Tiger/Alexander)
0804, 1703, 1806 ex Warley
0735, 0835, 1735, 1837 ex Shenfield Station
1650 ex High Street
1542 ex St Martins School(National or Olympian)

11 Mercedes 709Ds are required monday to friday whilst the saturday operation requires all twelve vehicles.

THAMESWAY

Brentwood, North Road Garage closed on 9th December 1995. From 11th December 1995 until 7th September 1996 the forecourt area remained in use as an outstation, from 9th September 1996 until 27th June 1997 the Brentwood allocation operated from Basildon. A number of sites for a new outstation were considered before the Brentwood Station site was chosen. Maintenance is undertaken at Basildon and when possible route 75 (Bishops Hall-Basildon) is used to transfer vehicles between the two locations.

ALONG THE ESPLANADES 1997

With the sudden departure of the Eastern National Bristol VR open toppers 3500/1 WNO 546L and NPU 974M, the ranks of the summer time special in Essex becomes smaller.

Gone are the days when fleets of open toppers operated at Southend and Clacton. At Southend by Westcliff-on-Sea later Eastern National and Southend Corporation Transport with a variety of AEC Regents, Bristols, Leylands, Daimlers and a solitary Dennis Lance, but now a lone Bristol VR operated by Stephenson's Rochford on behalf of Essex County Council on a shortened route is all that appears.

At Clacton, Eastern National have for many years plied along the Sea Front, again with a variety of AEC, Bristol and Leyland types, but it seems that the 97 season will only see Leyland Nationals fulfilling the timetables.

In Colchester the Borough Transport will again be operating their Leyland Atalantean on their Town Tour.

With the vintage open toppers around, some already to PSV standards, an attractive service and a crowd puller could surely be operated at either Southend or Clacton.

OPEN TOPPERS

Stephenson Coaches Rochford

MBZ 7140	Bristol VRT	ECW OT74F
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Colchester Borough Transport

55 JHK 495N	Leyland AN68/1R	ECW OT74F
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Eastern National

2383 WNO479	Bristol KSW	ECW OT61R
2384 WNO480	Bristol KSW	ECW OT61R

Southend Transport

594 KTF594	AEC Regent III	PARK ROYAL OT59R
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(used for promotional purposes only)

Castlepoint Bus Co.

PHJ953	Leyland PD3/6	Massey/ST OT74R
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(in Southend Transport Livery)

GRY 49D	Leyland PD3A	MCW OT74R
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ESSEX MEDIA MONITOR

June 13th: Essex County Council has recommended further bus priority measures in Colchester. Bus lanes North Station to High Street and Southway to High Street are due to be in use by the end of the year at a cost of £40,000. Further lanes St. Andrews Avenue to East Street, East Street - Town Centre are being considered. Provision of cover for people transferring between rail and bus at North Station is also being planned.

June 18th: EN were holding a public meeting in Gt Clacton today at which they would give details of changes to local bus routes.

June 27th: Gt. Bromley Parish Council considers that bus services in the area are inadequate and that more attention should be given to wheelchairs.

July 4th: Tendring Council is continuing to investigate plans for a road train. A small novelty version, The Clacton Belle, is running along part of the promenade but the council wishes to see a larger version running on roads over a longer route between Martello Bay and the rail station. An average loading of 12 passengers per journey would be needed to reach break even point.

July 11th: A special "fun bus" service will operate in Colchester from July 23rd to September 3rd. The service runs hourly Mondays to Fridays, 0900 and 1700 Bus Station - Greenstead - St. Johns - High Woods Country Park - Leisure Centre - Bus Station. Adults must be accompanied by a child!! *CBT 463 is the dedicated vehicle carrying special advertising.*

Steve Smith of EN, Chris McCormack and Ian Humpries of Thamesway appeared on Dave Monk's programme on BBC Essex to answer listeners questions. The usual complaints of late/early running, rude drivers etc. were fielded. It was admitted there was a reliability problem with Thamesway revised services 21 and 22 which interworked and this was been looked at. A Thundersley caller complained she had bought an Essex County Council timetable dated 25th May only to find services 15 and 26 had ceased to run four weeks later. The panel were well and truly caught out on this one and conceded that they had better publicise changes more widely. *Matching changes to publication dates of timetable would appear more logical - but since ECC can't even manage that for their own contract journeys.....*

July 12th Martin Pettifer of Leigh On Sea was banned indefinitely from holding an O-Licence by Eastern Traffic Commissioners following conviction at Chelmsford Crown Court involving a prison sentence.

July 18th: EN is considering a request by Bradfield Parish Council to be route one of the bus services through the village via Steam Mill Road and Straight Road.

July 22nd: Parents and teachers have been urged to check the details of any operator they hire school transport from. The plea comes from Essex County Council after a VI check in Chelmsford failed 17 of the 20 vehicles inspected. One received an immediate prohibition for excessive smoke, oil leaks and a jammed emergency door.

July 23rd: Thurrock planners are considering a proposal for an additional 3,000 car parking spaces at Lakeside, a 25% increase. The scheme will see a bridge built to Chafford Hundred rail station which would spell the end of the Thamesway Service

July 26th: Wiffens were given an absolute discharge with £200 cost by Braintree magistrates after admitting a maintenance charge. They decided the company was not negligent for the steering arm coming loose on a school bus.

August 1st: A Gt. Wigborough reader responds to an earlier news item regarding the re-introduction of a midday journey to Nayland after a request from villagers with a plea for Hedingham to restore a bus service to her village. They now have a mile walk to the main road where that service has been reduced also. She suggests that as school buses use School Lane regular services are re-routed too.

August 2nd: An unnamed company with an 0621 telephone number is offering vehicles for sale following loss of school contracts. 3 x 1980 Leyland Leopard/ Duple Dominants at £4,000 each or £10,000 the lot. are still available but "SOLD" captions had been placed over the following: Daimler Fleetline for £1250, and 2 Leyland Nationals one at £2,000 and one fit only for spares at £500. Ho Ho!

August 4th: Dedham Parish Council has received no reply from EN regarding the provision of a mid afternoon journey to Colchester. "Residents using two bus stops in Berechurch Hall Road Colchester will have a more comfortable wait in future. The council has promised to double the size of the two stops opposite Queen Mary Ave and the Britannia pub" - *Visions of a cartoon of a giant bus stop with passengers sitting on the flag spring to mind.*

August 5th: Greenstead residents have made a plea for a bus service serving Colchester High Street claiming its too far to walk from the Bus Station! Ray Giles of CBT said it was impossible to cater for everyone but they did try to consider points raised while an EN spokesman said if ever a passenger had a suggestion about a services it would be looked at to see if it was viable.

All news items originally appeared in Colchester Evening Gazette, East Anglian Daily Times, Essex County Standard, Grays Herald or Coach & Bus Week on the dates shown.

During the period under review both bus passengers and bus drivers have been attacked and robbed in Colchester. On June 19th a woman waiting for a bus in Osborne Street was pushed over and relieved of her winnings from the adjacent bingo hall. On July 19th an EN driver waiting in Hazel Avenue was hit in the face after refusing to hand over his cash. This follows on from a similar incident at the same location. Drivers were suggesting that colleagues should accompany them on late night journeys but EN responded by withdrawing service between the Town Centre and Shrub End/St Michaels on the following two evenings. Colin Riches, Essex Buses Marketing Manager, believed drink and drugs played a large part in the problems while Bill Lumb of the TGWU blamed lawlessness on the Thatcher years.

At 3.30pm on Saturday July 26th a man got onto a bus in Colchester Road, West Bergholt and demanded the takings, the driver refused, a struggle broke out and he driver was punched in the face. The driver had to make his way to a nearby petrol station for help and was taken to hospital. Following this incident EN withdrew the evening services - a move that was to cause great controversy as it was carnival night, the one night of the year when its full standing loads. The problem was discussed the following Monday on Dave Monk's Time to Talk on BBC Essex and the feeling of callers was that while the action was understand-

able the company had a duty to the customers and they appeared to giving in to yobbos. One caller pointed out that staff in hospital casualty departments faced similar problems, how would the injured bus driver have felt if he had been told sorry Causulty closed due to attacks on staff. Later news coverage was confusing with constant references to attacks on Eastern Counties drivers! It did however reveal that the fitting of bandit screens would be speeded up and, as requested by the TGWU, all vehicles would be equipped - in addition CCTV would be fitted on selected vehicles. The following day phone in discussions continued with the view that constant publicity could inflame the situation. An unnamed driver claimed that the bandit screen restricted view of the nearside mirror and the best solution, radios or mobile phones, had been dismissed as too costly.

In early August some vehicles are carrying CCTV stickers. Lances have been noted on Sunday contract and VR's on Service 64/A journeys normally covered by minis presumably off the road for fitting of bandit screens.

Southend Transport

REPAINTS

ON 282(MUH 285X) has been repainted again,into another revised livery, It has reverted back to the previous ON/VR style livery but with the darker blue(256 etc,) minus the red band. The red is now in two thick vertical bands on both sides ,towards the rear. (Cowie group style.)

SERVICES

During the summer holidays,Service 1 is extended from Southend Bus Stn to Peter Pans Adventure Island.(Southend Pier) Monday to Saturday daytimes until 17:35. On Sundays service 5A & 22 serve Peter Pans.

OTHER NEWS.

On 26/7/97 VL 568(H372 PHK) had a puncture returning from Brighton, and was replaced at Dunton Green by Kentish BUS Leyland Lynx 404(G37 VME) for the remainder of the journey to Southend.



A new section for the magazine.

"On Other's Pages"

From the Australian Bus Panorama Feb/Mar 1997, the magazine of the Bus & Coach Society of Victoria.

One item details the sheer scale of the bus service involved in the year 2000 Olympic Games, the other is amusing.

At a recent conference of bus operator's in New South Wales it was outlined to bus operators some of the requirements that will revolve around the year 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney. It is estimated that up to 2000 buses and 6000 drivers no less from all over Australia will be required for the duration which will include lead up and wind down periods before and after the games themselves.

Transport will be required for the Athletes, Officials, Media, Spectators, and all the various support personnel.

Just providing sponsor services may need 200 coaches (Coca Cola needed 145 in Atlanta) plus 5000 or so school children will be needed at each of the opening and closing ceremonies, all needing transport.

Also Athletes and their coaches will need to be moves from the village to training facilities at the Stadia, shuttle buses will run around the main Homebush Bay site and no less than 12 regional bus routes will bring people in from the suburbs - this is in addition to a railway line that is being built to the site.

Following the public outcry, a plan for a hi-tech aroma dispensing device to be fitted to bus stops in inner Melbourne has been shelved.

30 bus stops were to be fitted with alcohol aroma dispensers in a campaign to promote a new lemon flavoured rum. Sensors detecting movement in the shelter were to spray the rum every three minutes but as the sensors could not distinguish between adults and children there were accusations that both children and on the wagon alcoholics could be lured into or back to the demon drink by these devices.

