

ESSEX BUS NEWS

August 1996

The monthly magazine of the ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP

(Formerly the Eastern National Enthusiasts Group)

388



STANDING IN COLCHESTER BUS STATION IS EASTERN NATIONAL 1899
DAR121T, THE FIRST LEYLAND NATIONAL IN THE NEW LIVERY.

D ARNOLD 3-7-96

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Editorial

ESSEXBUS Thamesway receive new 'P' registered Dennis Dart SLF Plaxton saloons at Hadleigh depot.

More secondhand Leyland Olympians arrive at Southend Transport.

ROCHFORD MEETINGS.

The following dates are booked for meetings at Freight House 8pm.

September 10th. Photo competition and open slide show, come on bring your summer slides and give us all a treat.

October 8th Programme to be announced.

November 12th " " " "

December 10th " " " "

PHOTOGRAPH COMPETITION September 10th.

Classes as follows.

Class 1 Best photograph of Bus or Coach

Class 2 Best slide of Bus or Coach

Class 3 Best Bus Scene Slide or Photograph

Overall winners Cup Two prizes in each class.

Entries should be sent to Peter Snell to arrive by Friday 6th September, don't forget there may be a postal dispute still ongoing, or if you are attending the meeting bring them with you. Should you want prints/slides returned please enclose a stamped addresses envelope and make sure all entries are clearly marked. Judging will undertaken by Richard Delahoy and myself.

I promise I will not enter under a false name.*@**&

GROUP TOURS

October 12th Meadowhall Sheffield, hurry it is nearly full.

October 20th East London Municipalities Tour

An opportunity to view the Redbridge and Havering bus fleets, which include full size buses and coaches, including Bristol VR and Neoplan deckers as well vehicles from Eastern National and Colchester B.T. fleets. Not to be missed, so keep the date free, Booking form next month.

SOUTHEND TRANSPORT

Vehicles:

Acquired...

ON 905/6 & 909 (F575/76 & 579 SMG)
Leyland Olympian ONLXB/1RZ Alexander RL H47/32F
All arrived at London Road Depot on 16/7/96. (Ex L & C.)

LN 10 & 26 (BVP 810V/EON 826V)
Leyland National 2 NL116L11/1R B49F
Both Arrived at London Road Depot on 1/8/96. (Ex C.B.T)

All the Acquired buses are currently operating in their former owners livery.(905-909 green & 10/26 cream/maroon.)

Withdrawn...

VR 301 (YNW 401S) 309 (WTU 474W)
ON 446 (F246 MTW) 447 (H47 MJN)

Disposals:

ON 446 (F246 MTW)
ON 447 (H47 MJN) To Colchester Transport. (1/8/96)

Repaints:

LN 713 (LPB 218P) into Fleet livery,
(Ex Southend Tech advert.)

Route 6 Will no longer serve the Tesco Superstore, on
the A127 at Eastwood As from 18/8/96.

Route 13 (Sunday only) is withdrawn.

There is to be a service revision from 1st September.

Details next month.

Fleet as at 5th August 1996

FL 208/211/212/216/221-230/1-242/250-254.

ON 256-260/2-5/81-4 705-709 902-9.

VR 304/7/ 351/2.

TR 546-9/51/3/7-9/63

VL 565-8 569-72

LN 4707 711/3/4/6/7/9/23/45

10/26.

DL LSL001-4

Total 92.

Thamesway

New

702-710 P702-710 HPU Dennis Dart 9.8SLF, Plaxton Pointer B37F
These buses feature three inward facing tip up seats behind each front wheelarch which create spaces for wheelchairs, buggies etc..
705 was delivered on 30.7, 702/3/4 were delivered on 31.7. 706-10 are due later this month. 704/5 entered service on 3.8, 702/3 entered service on 5.8 (at HH).

Allocations

28.7.96 - no changes
5.8.96 - 336 HH-BN, 337 HH-BN, 338 HH-BN.

Repaints

327 has vinyls for the Southend Townhopper service.
941 is in advert livery for a Travel company.

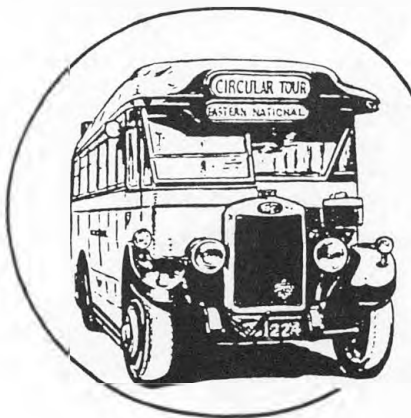
General

Withdrawn minibus 228 is working at Maldon on crew shuttle work at the new garage.. Dennis Dart 944 has had its blind box altered so that the number blinds are now on the off side.

Services

32/32B From 5th August the Monday to Friday journeys operated under contract to Essex County Council between Wickford and Billericay have been withdrawn.
LTB214 From 7th July Sunday frequency increased from x15 to x12 mins. On LU strike days extra journeys are being operated.
Townhopper-This service will operate until 30th August operating a Circular service between Pier Hill and Town Centre every 20 mins.

Stagecoach East London are advertising seaside specials from Laindon, Basildon and Pitsea to various coastal resorts.



THAMESWAY
(Disposals, Initial)

<u>Fleet No.</u>	<u>Registration No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Date</u>
0031	D220 SKD	-?-	05/96
0037	D551 FAE	-?-	05/96
0208	C491 HCV	Withdrawn.	05/96
0228	D228 PPU	Withdrawn.	05/96
0232	D232 PPU	Withdrawn.	05/96
0242	D242 PPU	Withdrawn.	05/96
0276	C200 PCD	Withdrawn.	05/96
0277	C204 PCD	Withdrawn.	05/96
1738	GJN 998	To Wigley, Carlton.	11/91
1823	VAR 900S	To South Wales Transport.	11/95
1839	WJN 559S	Dismantled for spares by Eastern National at Clacton Depot.	04/96
1840	WJN 560S	Withdrawn.	05/96
1847	YEV 305S	Withdrawn.	05/96
1853	YEV 311S	To South Wales Transport.	11/95
1857	YEV 315S	To South Wales Transport.	11/95
1864	YEV 322S	To South Wales Transport.	11/95
1869	YEV 327S	Gone by.....	05/96
1876	BNO 666T	Gone by.....	05/96
1878	BNO 668T	To Fleetmaster, Horsham.	04/96
1881	BNO 671T	To South Wales Transport and subsequently withdrawn.	11/95
1884	BNO 674T	To South Wales Transport.	11/95
1887	BNO 677T	To South Wales Transport.	11/95
1894	BNO 684T	Dismantled for spares by Eastern National at Clacton Depot.	04/96
1895	BNO 685T	To South Wales Transport.	11/95
1897	DAR 119T	To South Wales Transport.	11/95
1898	DAR 120T	To Trent.	04/96
1906	DAR 128T	To Powell, Wickersley ex Carlton Hardwick.	03/96
1908	DAR 130T	Withdrawn.	05/96
1909	DAR 131T	To South Wales Transport	11/95
1911	DAR 133T	Withdrawn.	05/96
1912	DAR 134T	Withdrawn.	05/96
1913	JHJ 139V	To Trent as their Fleet No.568.	03/96
1920	JHJ 146V	To Trent as their Fleet No.570.	03/96
9002	UCO 46L	To Hardwick, Carlton.	03/96
9013	WSU 452P	To Heywood, Bedworth.	04/96
9014	MHS 25P	To Western National.	04/96
9015	MHS 32P	To Heywood, Bedworth.	04/96

THAMESWAY

(Subsequent Movements)

<u>Fleet No.</u>	<u>Registration No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Date</u>
0023	E105 50G	To Lancaster Bus, Lancaster	04/96
0030	D873 LWR	To Lancaster Bus, Lancaster.	04/96
0040	F892 XOE	To Ely, Woodston.	04/96
0503	D592 MVR	To South Mimms, South Mimms ex Kirby, Anston.	02/96
0506	D598 MVR	To Turner, Maidstone, ex Kirby Anston & re-registered TCT 51.	12/95
0512	B336 BGL	From Western National to Godward, South Woodham.	01/96
0513	B337 BGL	From Western National tp Godward, South Woodham.	01/96
0516	F771 GNA	To Farmer, Ashford.	03/96
0705	C483 BFB	To North Warwickshire, Birmingham ex Morgan Nantyglo.	12/95
0711	B444 WTC	To Morgan, Nantyglo from Henley's Abertillery.	04/96
0715	C508 BFB	To Haywood & Prosser, Bedworth.	03/96
1875	BNO 665T	To Powell, Wickersley.	05/96
1876	BNO 666T	To Powell, Wickersley.	05/96
1896	DAR 118T	To Powell, Wickersley.	05/96
1919	JHJ 145V	To Powell, Wickersley.	05/96

COLCHESTER BOROUGH TRANSPORT

Service cut-backs were implemented on 29.7.96. Service 9 was withdrawn commercially, as was the evening service on 1/1A and some early evening journeys on the 2, 5 and 8 groups. As very partial replacements for the 9, service 1B was diverted via Bridgebrook, and service 2B via St Cyrus Road. On journeys to Highwoods services 2/2B go direct via Highwoods Approach, and 2A continues to serve Eastwood Drive. On journeys to town, however, 2, 2A and 2B are all routed via Brinkley Lane and Derwent Road. Services 5/5A are combined as service 5 and in Lexden run via Straight Road, Chaucer Way, Shakespear Road, Scott Drive, Heath Road and Straight Road.

CBT is operating Essex County Council contracts for an hourly evening service on 1/1A (via Prettygate to Ambrose Avenue, returning via the Leather Bottle), for six journeys on service 9 (those in shopping hours being extended from Highwoods to town via the service 5 route) and for single early evening journeys on 2, 5 and 8.

Timetable leaflets of the new services have been published; copies can be obtained from CBT Limited, 38 Magdalen Street, Colchester, CO1 2LD on receipt of a stamped and addressed envelope.

Because of a shortage of drivers and in anticipation of the changes later in the month, two Southend Transport drivers worked on the 1 group from 8.7.96 to 26.7.96.

Two permanent additions to the fleet arrived on 2.8.96. They are Southend Transport's Olympians 446 and 447 (F246MTW and H47MJN), which were originally CBT's 46 and 47. 46 entered the paint shop on 3.8.96 for repainting into fleet livery.

Open-top Atlantean 55 has been pressed into service once again on the sight-seeing tour. It runs every day, except Sundays and the Bank Holiday, from 24.6.96 to 7.9.96, at 1100, 1330 and 1500.

The Atlantean which was withdrawn from the fleet in June 1996 was 72 (RFR419P), and not as given last month; sorry. London & Country's AN 145 arrived in Colchester on 28.6.96 for cannibalisation. The remains of AN 352 were removed from Magdalen Street on 25.7.96.

Atlantean 84 was repainted in fleet livery between 23.7.96 and 2.8.96, ex 90th anniversary tramway livery.

Olympian 43, which went to Duffields for a new engine and gear box on 28.5.96, was returned on 19.6.96, but went back again the following day. It eventually came home on 9.7.96.

The company continues to borrow coaches from Southend Transport, sending a National to Southend in exchange. From 4 to 6.7.96 ST's 565 and CBT's 19 changed places. From 12 to 13.7.96 it was the turn of 546 and 26. These two were also swapped on 16.7.96, 546 going home on 17.7.96 and 19 on 18.7.96. On 27.7.96 open-top 55 was borrowed by ST for just that day, in return for 551.

Railway replacement services were operated on 14, 21 and 28.7.96. In each case 48 and 49 operated single early morning journeys from Colchester and Witham to Shenfield.

War Time Service

BETWEEN

Lt. Baddow & Chelmsford

	MON. THURS. FRIDAY	TUES. & SAT.	SAT.	SAT.
	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.
Lt. Baddow (Paper M)	9 28	1 45	2 0	5 0
Crossways ...	9 35	1 50	—	—
Old P.O. ...	9 40	1 55	—	—
Holybred Lane	9 45	2 20	5 2	6 32
Little Baddow Church	9 50	2 5	5 5	6 35
Hammonds	10 0	2 15	6 15	6 45
Great Baddow	10 7	2 22	6 21	6 52
Chelmsford (Station)	10 15	2 30	6 30	7 0

	MON. THURS. FRI.	SAT.	TUES. & SAT.	SAT.
	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.
<i>Victoria Road</i> Chelms'd (Station)	2 30	4 0	5 45	8 15
Great Baddow	2 37	4 8	5 52	8 22
Hammonds	2 44	4 15	6 0	8 30
Little Baddow Church	2 55	4 25	6 10	8 40
Holybred Lane	3 0	4 28	6 13	8 43
Old P.O. ...	3 5	—	6 20	—
Crossways ...	3 10	—	6 25	—
Lt. Baddow (Paper M)	3 17	4 30	6 30	8 45

H. STRACY, Little Baddow.

'Phone: Danbury 313

OTHER OPERATORS - REST OF ESSEX

ADVANCE MINIBUSES HOCKLEY A recent addition is Ford Transit H235 BTC, which replaces Renault Traffic G382 RVU.

AIRPORT MINIBUSES COLCHESTER Hardly a month goes by without a new operator, with one minibusi This one has LDAF 400 L919 ABJ

AMBER BUS & COACH Service 28 between Canvey and Benfleet was withdrawn after 23 8.96.

APT RAYLEIGH Leyland Tiger/Van Hool A661 AHB has been acquired. Bedford/Duple KBC 6V is delicensed following an engine failure. One time operated ADX 49S a Bedford/Willowbrook is also present but is for scrap.

ASSOCIATED COACHWAYS HARLOW Have sold leyland Tiger/Plaxton IIL 1640 (D585 MVR). The afternoon 864 service was withdrawn after 2.8.96.

BEESTONS Service 151 had a revised timetable introduced on 5.8.96. Some journeys are now numbered 150 and serve Gestingthorpe.

BISS STANSTED DSU 733 (DSU 470, PNK 160R) a Leopard/Duple 320 reboddy has been re-acquired from Sampson Coaches.

BOBS MINICOACHES WICKFORD Have sold Ford Transit B568 ABH.

BOON BOREHAM KSU 369 has lost it's Denure Tours lettering. Setras H435 GVL and J75 VTG are still here on loan from dealers.

BORDACOACH WICKFORD Former Grey Green Leyland Tiger/Duple B873 YYX has been acquired to replace the Dennis coach, damaged by vandals.

CARTERS COACHES Revised timetables were introduced on services 750 and 758 from 19.8.96.

CEDRIC WIVENHOE Have acquired FSK 868 (C357 KGG) a Setra S228DT. New here is N7 CED a Bova Futura. KIW 7813 a Volvo/Irizar has been sold.

CHELMSFORD CAB Have added Ford Transit's K341 EYT and K45 DFA, plus Omni H227 BKM to their fleet.

CLINTONA BRENTWOOD Service E45 was re-routed via Lower Sheering on Wednesday and Friday from 7 8.96

COOK SOUTHEND DAF/Plaxton D622 SJX has been re-registered 799 XWC.

CRUSADER CLACTON Have sold Setra's 4011 LJ (PKW 323X) and WCR 819 (RAX 21Y).

DAVES COACH HIRE COLCHESTER Leyland Tiger/Duple MIB 513 (ODM 534Y) has been sold. The registration has been transferred to a Leyland Leopard/Duple acquired from Beeston, the former identity of which is not known at present.

FARGO RAYNE Some vehicles are now being parked at the former Goodwins depot, about a mile up the road from the Fargo depot.

FERRERS COACHES SOUTH WOODHAM Have sold F242 OFP a Dennis Javelin/Duple.

GLEW COLCHESTER Has acquired RJI 1633 a Bedford Vas/Duple from Brians, Maylandsea

GODWARD RAMSDEN HEATH Former Thamesway Tiger B337 BGL has been re-registered IAZ 6394.

GOODWIN BLACK NOTLEY Have moved their operating ccentre to Driberg Way, Braintree.

GRAHAMS KELVEDON Two Bristol VR's have been acquired - CPT 731S and HUP 766T

HALLS ELSENHAM Have acquired C88 HSE a Bedford/Plaxton.

HALSTEAD TRAVEL Have moved to Unit 5, Second Avenue in the town. Ford Transit J460 WTH has been acquired.

HARRIS BUS FNJ 993V is still on loan from Fargo, although Atlantean's BRC 680/1T have returned to Nottingham. All Easybus routes in the Brentwood and Thurrock area were withdrawn after 3.8.96. Two of the Talbot's are expected to be sold, while the other will be used on Walkers service 152/3, which Harris takeover from 12.8.96. The L registration examples will remain on services 98/99. The Monday to Saturday evening service on route 40 passed to Nelson from 5.8.96. Services 390S and 391 have been withdrawn. Service 23C had slight timetable revisions from 5.8.96. Service 500 will operate to a revised timetable from 3.9.96.

HARRIS COACHES Volvo/Van Hool L645 AYS is currently on loan from a dealer.

KENTISH BUS Service 722 between Gravesend and Lakeside was revised from 12.8.96 to operate Monday to Friday.

LODGE HIGH EASTER New here is N369 GPU a Scania/Van Hool. Acquired vehicles are G31/32 HKY both are Scania/Plaxton. Van Hool integral E432 KRT has been sold.

MIKES BASILDON Acquired is GSV 905 (JUC 516W) a Volvo/Jonckhree.

NELSONS WICKFORD The last of the RE's appears to have gone. Fleetline SMU 729N has been acquired for spares. Service's 7 and 122 were withdrawn after 2.8.96. and will be part replaced by a much revised service 222.

OSBORNE TOLLESBURY The first Leyland nationals are NPJ 473R and PPM 896R. Leopards EWW 213T and RWC 41W are now in bus livery. Sister RWC 40W has been sold for scrap, while Van Hool T815 TJI 3130 (G430 VML) has been sold for further service.

RUFFLE CASTLE HEDINGHAM SIB 6176 (new as FKX 238Y) a Van Hool T815 has been acquired.

STEPHENSON ROCHFORD Ford/Plaxton OJI 1681 (ENP 444S) is being used for driver training

SUPREME SOUTHEND A further Scania/Irizar is N852 DKU.

SWT PRIVATE HIRE SOUTH WOODHAM A further Ford Transit J813 AWF is operating on a taxi plate.

WALDEN TRAVEL SAFFRON WALDEN A recent addition is RJI 1978 (SUH 160Y) a DAF/Plaxton.

WAYS BOREHAM Ford Transit minicoach H821 HVM has been re-registered LHJ 766.

WEBSTER BASILDON Former Thamesway Leopard rebuild ATH 110T is now IAZ 6387.

LOST PROPERTY - CAMBRIDGE TOUR

If you left a jacket on the coach, following the tour to Cambridge and Peterborough, it can be re-claimed from Harris Coaches. Please phone 01708 862720.

EASTERN NATIONAL KSW PRESERVATION GROUP

This group has been set up to preserve and rally KSW open top 2383 (WNO 479) and hopefully save 2384 (WNO 480). Membership is open to anyone and includes Mr T Smallwood and Mr M Lockhead, who are at the very top of FirstBus. Membership is £5 per year. If you would like further details, please write to Mr P Sparks, 87 Thorpe Road, Clacton, C015 4NT.

EASTERN NATIONAL ENTHUSIASTS GUILD

THE ORIGINAL EASTERN NATIONAL

THE PREWAR BRISTOL K5G STORY continued.

Eastern National had embarked on a programme of rebodysing some of these Bristols, namely 3729-35/7 FPU509-15/7 and 3744/54 GNO688/698 with Eastern Coachworks L55R bodies and also fitting new PV2 radiators in 1952. None of the GTW batch received new bodies.

With the exception of 3732/4 FPU512/4 all these passed later in 1952 to United Counties Omnibus Company with the transfer of the Midland area. Interestingly in 1960, United Counties transferred the body on 3733 FPU513 (UCOC 620) to another ex Eastern National Bristol K5G 3950 MPU11 (UCOC 727).

In 1955/6 Eastern National required extra buses, consequently some former Eastern National Bristol K5Gs were acquired, hence 3743 FPU523, 3745 GNO689, 3749/50 GNO693 GNO694, 3807GTW888. (UCOC 619/25/8/9/40 returned as 1011/5/6/22/21) respectively Others of these batches saw service with United Welsh and Thames Valley.

The last delivery of prewar Bristols in 1940/1, wartime in fact 3820-3844 JEV411-435 will form the last part of this story.

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THAMESWAY BRISTOL VR 3113 XHK218X OPERATES SERVICE 214 ON JULY 25th ON
UNDERGROUND STRIKE DAY. EXTRA SERVICES BETWEEN LIVERPOOL STREET AND KINGS
CROSS HAVE ON OPERATED ON STRIKE DAYS

O WOODLIFFE.

COWIE GROUP NEWS

Cowie Group buys North East Bus

Wednesday 31st July saw the Cowie Group purchase the North East Bus Company from National Express for £24.5 million. Cowie now has an 18 per cent share of the market, putting it just ahead of Stagecoach to become the second largest bus operator in the UK. The company is just behind First Bus, which currently has a 20 per cent market share.

The £282 million acquisition of British Bus was completed on 1st August following a deal last month.

The Cowie Group's profits for the half-year rose by 19 per cent to a record £32.2 million.

As reported in last month's Essex Bus News, the chairman of British Bus, was arrested on corruption charges on Friday 19th July. The Serious Fraud Office and the City of London Police had been carrying out an investigation since July last year. The British Bus chairman was due to step down once the Cowie deal had gone through at the end of July, but following his arrest, he resigned. Cowie has stated this has not affected its purchase of British Bus.

SERVICES

5 August	347/8/9	Harlow-Hatfield Broad Oak. ECC contract retained.
	352/353	Basildon-Aveley. ECC evening contract ceases. Last day of operation 3.8.96. No change to Sunday operation.
	379	Orsett-Grays. ECC Monday-Saturday evening contract retained. 2310 Lakeside-Brentwood Road Estate withdrawn.
	393	Hoddesdon-Harlow. Conversion of ECC contract to commercial operation. No change to timetable.
	860	Pinnacles-Harlow Bus Station. ECC contract retained.
24 August	377/378	Purfleet-Tilbury (377), Grays-Lakeside (378). Alternative route available between Lakeside Bus Station and Lakeside Tesco via Arterial Road.
31 August	17	New HCC contract. Garage journeys on Route 20 to operate in service numbered 17 via Route 331 to Puckeridge then Standon, A120 to Bishops Stortford Interchange.
	331	Hertford-Royston. Revised timetable. Journeys reintroduced to Hertford Regional College, Turnford as limited stop calling at Hoddesdon Clock Tower, Broxbourne Station Road and Wormley Queens Head. To Turnford via Route 310. From Turnford via 310/392. Schooldays only, journeys diverted via Ward Freeman School, Buntingford.
	M4	Hertford & Wareside-Ware. 1608 Hertford Bus Station - Hunsdon, advanced to 1558 for operational purposes.

4 September	322	New ECC contract, Magden Laver-Saffron Walden schooldays only. One return journey via Sheering, Hatfield Heath, Little & Great Hallingbury, Birchanger, Quendon, Widdington and Newport.
	393	Hoddesdon-Harlow. 1645 Tuesday and Friday journey Harlow-Roydon withdrawn.
14 September	370/373	Grays-Romford. Converted to Metrobus operation (ex South London). Atlanteans to Stamford Hill for disposal.
	724	Harlow-Heathrow Airport. Revision to early morning journeys on Mondays to Saturdays to improve reliability and provide connection at Hatfield to 797 Green Line to London
28 September	256	Noak Hill-Hornchurch St. Georges Hospital. LTB contract retained. Present loopworking between Harold Hill and Moak Hill withdrawn. Extended daily from Harold Hill, Gooshays Drive to Noak Hill, Tees Drive via Hildene Avenue, Straight Road, Noak Hill Road, North Hill Drive, Whitechurch Road and Tees Drive (return direct to Noak Hill Road). Sunday operation expanded to operate all day. New 9.0m Darts.
	346	Upminster Station-Upminster Park. LTB contract retained. Rerouted on departure from Upminster Park Estate, Waycross Road via Brunswick Avenue, Roseberry Gardens, Queens Gardens and Moor Land to Front Lane as inbound buses. Converted to new 9.0m Darts. Introduced on Sundays as one year experiment.
	370/373	Grays-Romford. Revised timetable. Earlier and later journeys introduced. Sunday service introduced on Route 373 between Romford and Lakeside between 0800 and 1800 hrs. Converted to 10.8m SLF Darts when available (possibly November).
	371	Grays-Belhus. Service withdrawn. ECC contract ceases.

EDITORIAL continued.

Contributions for this EBN received from Essex C.C. . Essex Buses Thamesway and Eastern National. Southend Transport. Colchester B.T. County Bus Coach. all with grateful thanks.

Contributions for September EBN should be with Sub Editors by 5th September and Man Editor by 12th September.

Cambridgeshire

Our tour to Cambridgeshire commenced at Harris's depot in Thurrock, where an air-conditioned N-reg Daf/Van Hool awaited us. After stopping at the regular outer London stops to pick up the usual suspects, (including one chap sporting futuristic, Bladerunner-style sunglasses, who turned out to be the Chairman & Founder), plus some new faces, we made good progress up the M11. There were a few hitches: the combined technical expertise, (one GCSE in woodwork), of five members was sufficient to get the radio and PA working, but the coffee machine was beyond us.

First stop was *Cambus* at Cambridge, (curiously located in Cowley Road, like their opposite numbers in Oxford), where a selection of VRs, from West Yorkshire, Ribble, Devon General, and an Olympian/NC, were presented for the cameras. For single-deckers, we had a Metrorider, a diverted Western Scottish Mercedes and a Volvo B6/Marshall, all in Stagecoach garb. Also present but immobile were two City Pacers, as unloved here as elsewhere apparently.

Our next stop was *Grettons of Peterborough*. Like nearby Whippets, Grettons have a soft spot for the Metropolitan and have six, (2 x Leicester, 1 each from Hull, Tyne & Wear PTE, Reading and West Yorks PTE), still in fine fettle. A further ex-WYPTE example, (still in Metro livery), is undergoing cannibalisation so that the others might live. Also becoming rarer is the AEC Reliance, of which Grettons have a number, including three formerly with National Travel companies. One, a Willowbrook Spacecar example, now immobile, was a model once considered the height of modernity. A further attraction discovered at the rear of the depot was a National formerly with a well-known operator.

A short ride took us into Peterborough City, to sweep majestically, (the wrong way) into the coach layover area, where an ex-Wessex Metroliner with *Pullman Coaches* was kindly positioned for us by the proprietor. Also present was EBM448T of *Upwell & District*, which some thought might have been ex-Southend until the minor detail of it being an AEC Reliance was pointed out. Then, to the bus station to witness a veritable cornucopia of departures: *Viscount* VRs, Olympians, Ivecos, Metroriders, some in *Peterborough Bus Co* red, plus a few Stagecoach-liveried Mercedes, *Delaines* Olympian/East Lancs and Tiger/East Lancs rebody, *Morleys* ex-London Titan and ex-Western Scottish Seddon, *Enterprise of Chatteris* ex-London National, *First Choice Travel's* ex-Leicester City Pacer, *Blands of Cottesmore's* ex-UCOC B51 Leopard, plus various coaches of *Shaws of Maxey*, *Kimes of Folkingham*, *Wyatts of Woodston*, and *Miss M Green of Thorney*.

At the old tram depot of *Viscount*, rather appropriately, the Peterborough Electric Tramways-liveried VR had been kept back for us, together with standard-liveried versions and one that had been transferred from MK Metro. The sudden

influx of visitors encouraged the canteen to open, for us to enjoy a welcome cuppa, whilst catching up with news of all things striped in *On Stage*.

A brisk ride across the fens, brought us to Bourne, just in time to see an Optare Vecta demonstrator with *Reliance* of Great Gonerby setting off for the ancestral home of you-know-who. Our stop at Delaines was tinged with sadness, as it was to be the first visit, (of many over the years), at which Mr H Delaine-Smith would not be there to greet us. However, the business is now in the capable hands of his sons, one of whom was there to give us the usual warm Delaine welcome. Among the attractions present were the Routemaster, the two Titans, two newly-acquired ex-GM Buses North Atlanteans, (one of which was undergoing the thorough Delaine strip-and-rebuild, prior to entering service), the Tiger/Duple 300 and some of the earlier Atlanteans, now sporting select registrations. For the future, two P-reg deliveries are due, to replace further former Green Line Tigers. We were shown round the extensively-modernised offices, decorated with photos of Delaine buses over the years, and the rest of the immaculate depot. (Our two drivers were most impressed with the snooker table-equipped crew rest room, and I gather they have high hopes that a suitable proposal, placed in the Thurrock suggestion box will receive favourable consideration). The 4th Delaine Running Day takes place on Saturday 24th August, and promises to be as entertaining as ever.

Finally, back to the A1 and M11 for a smooth ride home. The verdict: a very enjoyable day and thank heavens for air-conditioning!

Our thanks go to the operators for catering to our every whim, Colin and Dave for piloting our "top-grade motor", and to the C&F for undertaking "movement control". Organising a tour may seem a piece of cake, but negotiating with operators, route planning, calculating mileage and timings, finding suitable parking spots, taking and confirming bookings and the myriad other things that need doing to ensure a successful day, all involve considerable effort. Those efforts are made all the more worthwhile when a tour is well-supported. So, our special thanks to Ian and Andy.

And on the subject of supporting Group Tours, a commercial break for the *Meadowhall* "Snapping 'n' Shopping" Tour on October 12th:

For those who may not have been there before, Meadowhall is rather like Lakeside, except that it is bigger, busier and has a tramway attached, (and Harris's don't run there except on October 12th). The bus station could keep you occupied for hours, and there is the choice of Supertram, Regional Railways Sprinter, (or somesuch), or Mainline Leyland-DAB artic to reach Sheffield City Centre, and the other bus station. Your better halves and offspring will find plenty to do in the Shopping Centre, (particularly if they borrow your credit cards): there are shops aplenty, a multiplex cinema, a giant video screen, kids play-area and numerous eateries; so you can safely park them there whilst you explore the Supertram system, or boost Kodak's profits in the bus stations!

Shop (and snap) early for Christmas for only £13 per person! Bookings to Andy Meadows, 10 Harvard Court, Boston Avenue, Rayleigh, SS6 9ST.

David Harman

EASTERN NATIONAL

SERVICES

- 21** Sunday service passed to EN from Fargo, with effect from 4.8.96
- 34** Revised timetable introduced from 5.8.96.
- 73** Slight timetable revision from 12.8.96.
- 82A** ECC journey passed from Carter's to EN with effect from 5.8.96.
- 103/4** Slight timetable alterations introduced on 12.8.96.
- 132** New service, commenced on 5.8.96. Braintree to Rayne. Replaces Fargo services 32 and 320.
- 133** ECC journeys on Monday to Friday passed to EN from Fargo from 5.8.96.
- 354** The 1700 ex Witham was withdrawn after 10.8.96.
- 356** Passed to EN from Fargo after 2.8.96. Revised to school service only.



Heddingham Omnibuses

SERVICES

- 75** Passed from Carter's to Heddingham with effect from 5.8.96.
- 84** Sunday service withdrawn after 4.8.96.
- 90/A** Revised timetable introduced from 5.8.96.
- 177** Service withdrawn and replaced by a taxi between Blue Row and East Mersea from 2.8.96.

FLEET ALLOCATION 6/96

BURNHAM	156
CLACTON	94 105/49/58/65/9/70/5 201/2/9/30/3/4/42/4
LITTLE TEY	96 100/13/22/4/6/38/52/3/93/5 205/14/32
KELVEDON	112/25/39/41/59/61/2/6/8/78/97/8 207/11/2
HEDDINGHAM	84/7/9/95/8 103/14/33/5-7/51/60/7/94/6 200/6/10
SUDBURY	88 115/40/6/8/50/63/86-90/9 208/22/4/5/9/31/7/9/40/3
WALTON	81/5/6 111/21/47/64 203/4/15/6/21/6/35/6/41

COVERAGE OF ROMFORD AREA OPERATIONS

In reply to a couple of recent letters, we have covered Capital Citybus in the past, but it was dropped through a lack of interest. If you require detailed information of these, Stagecoach East London and other operators in that area, then why not join LOTS. A monthly magazine is published covering the whole of Greater London and operations into the area. Full details are available from LOTS, Unit 8, Battersea Business Centre, 103-109 Lavender Hill, London, SW11 5QF. Please enclose a SAE of Essex Bus News size.

PAUL SPARKS CLACTON COLUMN

It's 1st August again and Eastern National sees the intake of five new Mercedes 709's. These are P678 HPU to P682 HPU, (Fleet No.'s 2678 - 2682 respectively). 2678 and 2679 have been allocated to Colchester whilst 2680, 2681, and 2682 have been allocated to Harwich. These five new vehicles have been fitted with vandal proof screens for driver protection and it seems evident that this is now going to be the norm for all future new vehicles. With the new allocation of 709's to Harwich three 608's are now displaced. These are C688 ECV, C232 HCV, and C230 HCV, (Fleet No.'s 2241, 2250 and 2252 respectively).

With the two new 709's going into Colchester a 608 and a 709 have now gone to Braintree. Mercedes 608D, Registration No. C212 HJN, Fleet No. 2212 and Mercedes 709D, Registration No. M665 VJN, Fleet No.2665 are the two vehicles in question.

Clacton vehicles are having their fair share of "knocks" lately. Dennis Dart Registration No. L817 OPU, Fleet No.2817 was involved in an accident in Tiptree at the end of July. It appears that a lady driving a Volvo on the wrong side of the road managed to hit a piece of bark from a tree, turned her car over and in so doing ran it down the whole length of the nearside of the Dart causing extensive damage to it and breaking windows! The vehicle is currently in the yard at Clacton but so extensive is the damage it is now thought that the vehicle will have to go to Plaxtons for its eventual repair.

In another quite separate incident Mercedes 709D, Registration No. L647 MEV, Fleet No.2647 was in a collision with a tractor on Clacton town service route 1A.This has resulted in the vehicle joining the Dart in the yard at Clacton. Extensive repainting is required along with other major work and it is believed that this work will be done at Clacton.

Also at Clacton at the moment is Leyland Tiger, Registrastion No. A660 KUM, Fleet No.1004. The purpose of this visit is for the fitting of a new gearbox.

The following is taken from the August 2nd edition of the Clacton Gazette:-

"A bus passenger was left waiting for one and a half hours after services were disrupted by a bout of driver sickness.

At Eastern National's Clacton depot on Monday, seven drivers were absent, causing severe delays to the 5/5a Flatford Drive circular route.

At Station Road in Clacton, four buses were due between 04.30p.m. and 05.45p.m. - none of these turned up.

One irate passenger, Ruth Knight, stood at the stop for 90 minutes. She said: "In the end, I was forced to get a taxi which I cannot really afford as I am unemployed".

A spokesman for Eastern National said: "We realise that the disruption will have caused a problem for our customers and we obviously apologise for this.

We will be writing to Miss Knight, refunding her taxi fare and giving her some free tickets to compensate for any inconvenience caused".

He said that the delay was an isolated incident and that no other services had been affected".

Open toppers WNO 564L and NPU 974M, Fleet No.'s 3500 & 3501 respectively continue to do well and this can only enhance their return to service again next summer.