

ESSEX BUS NEWS

The Monthly Magazine Of The Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

February 2001

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28 Page issue



A Festive Brentwood High Street is the location for First Thamesway 3109 UAR 599W on the last but one day of the DD circuit on services 81/82 on 4th January 2001. There are now just 21 VR's in the First Essex fleet. (Chris Stewart)

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Arriva Southend

First Eastern National, Airport

Bus & Essex small operators:

First Thamesway:

North Essex major operators:

North Essex small operators &

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Essex Bus News

We welcome your comments, suggestions and contributions. Please enclose a s.a.e. If you would like a reply. The contact addresses are listed on the front cover.

Membership and Subscription Information

A one-year membership includes 12 consecutive issues of Essex Bus News Magazine and runs from either January or July. Current rates are £13.50 First class £12.50 Second class postage.

Membership applications and any enquiries about your membership should be addressed to Derek Stebbing.

Timetable Subscription Service

The groups Timetable subscription service is an excellent way to ensure that you've always got the latest timetables. Members of the scheme receive the Essex county council timetable books and monthly updates plus copies of Thurrock councils timetable book. Please contact Derek Stebbing for information on joining the service.

Photo Sales

A very large selection of photos is available for you to purchase. Please write to Peter Snell if you have a particular interest. We have photos of most operators and vehicles in Essex both past and present.

Members Adverts and Appeals

As a free service we will publish members for sales, wants and appeals for information. Publication will be subject to space and restricted to bus and transport related items. Please send your advert to the Managing Editor.

Members responding to adverts should deal direct with the advertiser, as the group is not involved in any of them.

Reports and Observations

We aim to provide comprehensive coverage of bus services in Essex and members news reports and observations are very welcome. You can either send them direct to the relevant Sub-Editor or E-mail them to essexbusnews@hotmail.com

We are also interested in publishing articles concerning Essex operators, routes and vehicles past and present. Please send these to the Managing Editor.

Contributions and Closing Dates

Thank you to the following for their help this issue – Essex Buses, Arriva Southend , Arriva Shires & Essex ,Essex County Council , LOTS ,PSV Circle , Richard Delahoy, Colin Sigston , Bill White , Jon Cush , Steven R, Ross Whitley

**Contributions for the next issue of Essex Bus News to Sub-editors by 5th March and to the Managing editor by 9th March
The March magazine is due for posting on Wednesday 21st March**

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Arriva Colchester and Hedingham reports have not been received this month.

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Rochford Meetings

The next group meeting is on **Tuesday 13th March** at the Freight house in Rochford at 8 PM. It's the group A.G.M followed by a slide show by Alan Osborne focusing on operators and buses in the far north .

If you've haven't been to one of our meetings before ,why not come along ? The freight house is easy to find and you'll be more than welcome. If you're travelling by train then come out of the station on the Southend side and turn right . Arriva Southend routes 7/8 also stop nearby .

The programme for the group meeting on 10TH April will be given next month .

Dates For The Diary

The new bus rally season will be starting soon and here are the dates of some events already announced.

Sunday 8th April

Cobham Bus museum open day and Bus show

Sunday 15th April

Barking Bus rally

Saturday 16th June

EBEG Coach trip to Leicestershire area operators – More details of this exciting day out very soon .

Sunday 24th June

North Weald Bus rally

We'll publish the dates for other rallies and open days when we receive them. Organisers of events are welcome to contact the editor with details of their event.

Life In The Old 'Uns

Peter Snell has noticed that in the January issue of Buses there was a photo of a Daimler Fleetline in Montreal. It was formally registered UFC 422K and was new to City of Oxford Motor Services but was later operated by Castle Point Bus company for many years.

Another ex Castle Point bus AEC Reliance MRR808K is now being preserved in the Midlands.

Peter says that it's good to see there's life in the old 'uns yet!

THIRTY SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

A Review of the Group's activities during 2000

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The first twelve months of the Y2K period has been one of continued good progress for the Group, however, we have to mourn the sad loss of Phil Ford. It is pleasing to note that membership retention remains very high, although recruitment of new members is still running at a low level. Coach tours were particularly successful during the year with events to Southampton and Sandtoft, our thanks to Ian Ransom, Dave Arnold and their team for their splendid efforts. There have been a few recent changes to the committee. We have managed to recruit a new committee member, Sean Menzies, who has some media experience and also a knowledge of the workings of the internet. With his help we hope to launch the EBEG web site soon into 2001. Sean has also offered to take over as Editor of Essex Bus News, which will facilitate electronic transmission of news items between sub-editors. We owe a great debt to Peter Snell who has held this post for many years and I am sure all of the membership will join me in thanking him for his efforts. However, fear not, Peter will still be an active contributor to the magazine by way of his "Guild" column and other historical features. John Weeks, our Thamesway sub-editor has now moved out of the area to Derbyshire, we thank him for his efforts and hope his new location "peaks". Chris Stewart has kindly offered to fill the post of Thamesway sub-editor, we wish him well in this new venture. Our Arriva Herts & Essex sub-editorship has also changed hands, we thank Ian Burton for his contributions and welcome Mark Garrett to the post.

All of the committee is looking forward to a highly successful first year of the new millenium, we thank you all for your continued support.

Alan Osborne

MANAGING EDITOR REPORT

As I explained to you in the December Essex Bus News I have decided to step down as Managing Editor to let "young blood" take over. I have enjoyed my position over the years but feel that a younger person would be more appropriate to deal with the new technology now available. I trust you have appreciated my efforts, however, I will still be around editing the Arriva Southend column in future. Finally, I would like to say that the sudden death of Phil Ford this year was a sad loss to the Group, he always seemed to be in the right place at the right time and so his photographs and letters to me containing notes and unusual shots have been greatly missed. Do not forget, that anything that you see will be news to somebody else, so please let us have your observations.

Peter Snell

TREASURERS REPORT

The draft Group accounts for the year 2000 are now complete. The Group had an operating surplus of £352 (After allowance for one unpaid invoice) for the year based on an annual turnover of £6743. The full audited Statement of Accounts will be available at our Annual General Meeting. Our reserve funds still remain at a generally healthy level, well able to met all of our liabilities. May I thank Richard Delahoy for carrying out the duties of Auditor in a most efficient manner.

Alan Osborne

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY REPORT

The year 2000 was a less encouraging period in term of attracting new members to the Group compared with the two previous years, and this was especially disappointing as we had managed to reverse the previous slow decline in membership.

During the year ten members did not renew their subscriptions (six in January 2000 and four in July 2000). Eight new members joined the Group during the course of the year, and whilst this helped to maintain membership levels at a reasonably stable level, the principal factor which led to a drop in our membership total was the sad fact that several of our older members passed away during the year. I very much hope that 2001 will be a better year for the Group in terms of attracting new members.

We continue to receive a steady number of enquiries from our advertisements in the magazine "Bus Fayre", and generally from enthusiasts living outside Essex and London. However, only a relatively low percentage of these enquiries result in new members, which is somewhat disappointing.

Subscriptions have been set at £13.50 (1st class postage) and £12.50 (2nd class postage) for 2001. It is intended to maintain subscriptions at these rates throughout the year.

Finally, can I again remind all members that it remains vitally important that we attract new members to the Group, so if you know anybody who may be interested in joining us, please ask them to write to me. We lost a considerable number of members during the early-1990's and it would be very pleasing to see membership numbers return to their pre-1990 level.

Derek Stebbing

TIMETABLE SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE

The Group's Timetable Subscription Service continues to provide all Essex County Council timetables for members of the service. In addition, we now offer copies of the Thurrock Council timetables without any additional charge.

Towards the end of 2000 Essex County Council revised the pattern of their timetable books, with five separate area books now being published in place of the previous three. Unfortunately this will result in an even greater proportion of members' subscriptions being committed to postage, and consequently I have had to introduce an increase of £5.00 for subscriptions to all five books.

Despite these constraints, I believe that we offer a service that is amongst the best available, particularly as members not only receive the Essex and Thurrock area books but also regular copies of Essex County Council's "Bus Passenger News" and all maps that are produced.

This service simply would not operate without the help of David and Mary Arnold, who are responsible for the mailing of all timetables, and the valued assistance of Robin Wheatcroft and his staff at Essex County Council and David Slay and Faye Mason at Thurrock Council. My thanks go to each of them.

We can always accept new members into this service, just write to me for details.

Derek Stebbing

TOURS ORGANISERS REPORT

Two tours were operated in 2000, the first to Southampton on June 24th, the second to the Sandtoft gathering on July 30th. Both tours used Genial Travel's OIL 2479, a Volvo

B10M/Plaxton, our thanks are extended to fellow enthusiast Trevor Brooks for making his vehicle available for these tours.

The first tour was organised by Group member Nigel Wheeler, to whom we extend our thanks. Visits to Stagecoach at Winchester, Brijan Travel at Bishops Waltham, First Provincial at Hoeford, Marchwood Motorways at Totton and Solent Blue Line at Eastleigh were included. In addition a lunch stop was made in Southampton City Centre. The weather proved to be mixed, but all 42 passengers enjoyed their day out, with a large variety of vehicles recorded on film. Indeed many Bristol VR's were photographed from the dizzy heights of a bar stool ! The second visit was something different in that we visited a rally. This proved to be very popular as 38 passengers set out on a sunny Sunday morning. A large variety of buses and trolleybuses from various parts of the country, together with some from overseas, were seen and numerous rides on the vehicles were enjoyed.

Plans for the 2001 programme should be finalised soon, so look out for the booking forms with Essex Bus News in the near future. Thank you to those who supported our tours this year, we look forward to seeing you, and some news faces, in 2001.

Ian Ransom
Dave Arnold

EVENTS SECRETARY REPORT

The sales stall was present at the rallies at Southend, North Weald, Castle Point Museum and at LOTS. Rally sales have been particularly good this year, and sales at the Rochford meeting are also satisfactory. The meetings at Freight House are now attracting a few more members, but I am always looking for more to attend, so if you come on the second Tuesday of the month I am sure you will find it enjoyable, watching slides, having a chat whilst supping a pint. I am always looking for guest presenters and speakers, so if either yourself or someone you know would like to perform than please let me know.

Peter Snell

PHOTOGRAPHS OFFICER REPORT

As I mentioned above, sales have been good over the year, my grateful thanks to those members who have kindly donated their surplus prints for the stand. We have also acquired a large slide collection from Andy Meadows to swell our stocks. With our vast negative archives we can probably help you to fill a few holes in your collection. Whether it be a particular operator or chassis/body make then I am sure we will be able to help. Many East Anglian operators of the past are well represented, so if you are a fan of Corona, Theobalds, Premier Travel or Blackwells, to name but a few, then why not drop me a line and I may be able to help. Its all part of the service.

Peter Snell

INTERNET OFFICER REPORT

Initial progress has been made in getting a Group web page up and running with the aim of increasing the awareness of our existence amongst the wider community. We have also promoted the Group on the internet by getting mentions on an expanding series of e-groups, which allow users to post their own news and observations.

Whilst we are aware that not everybody has internet access, it is essential that we are not left behind and we keep ahead of this new technology. It is planned to launch the Groups web page later in 2001.

Sean Menzies

EASTERN NATIONAL SUB EDITOR REPORT

The year 2000 has seen a number of changes to the Eastern National fleet and this has added interest for the enthusiast.

Additions to the fleet have included a number of Alexander bodied Dennis Darts from First Leeds as well as some ECW bodied Leyland Olympians for use on Phoenix School contracts.

The end of Eastern National bases in Hertfordshire ended with the closure of Bishops Stortford outstation with the vehicles being moved to the Stansted Airport base of Airport Coaches during the summer.

The size of the combined Eastern National/Airport Coaches fleet has reduced by only 15 vehicles during the year. This has seen a large number of minibuses leave the fleet to be replaced by larger vehicles. Movement by vehicle group is mini (24), midi 6, single deck 0, double deck 4 and coach (1).

Perhaps the biggest surprise is that the remaining Leyland Nationals have survived until the end of the year, with 1850 still in passenger service and 1924 in use as a driver trainer. It is unlikely that they will feature in the fleet another year on !

Finally, thanks to those of you who take the time and effort to support the column, it really is much appreciated. I would urge all members to report something, send in publicity items or provide new ideas to ensure that the column becomes even better in 2001.

Ian Ransom

THAMESWAY SUB EDITOR REPORT

Millenium year has been a quiet time for Thamesway with very few changes in the fleet. Although there have been no deliveries of new vehicles, several buses have been transferred between the Thamesway and Eastern National fleets. The Mercedes minibuses have been further depleted with several more moving to Eastern Counties. The few remaining Bristol VR's are now used mainly on school work with occasional appearances on normal routes. The Volvo coaches have now emerged in Green Line livery for the joint 721 group of routes to London.

Earlier in the year saw the final demise of the "City" route 251. This long established route has seen various changes to its terminals and route over the years but there was still some of the old route left. Several Group members travelled on the last journeys to and from Walthamstow and a vote of thanks goes to Basildon depot for providing double deckers on the final day.

Both Ian Ransom and I would like to thank Essex Buses for providing allocation changes and other fleet information, and to those Group members for their regular reports.

John Weeks

WE NEED YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

Your contributions to Essex Bus News are vital if we are to provide a good quality magazine.

If you've seen something, heard something or read something Let us know! E-mail essexbusnews@hotmail.com or write to us.

Don't leave it to someone else – it's your magazine after all!

First Eastern National

ACQUIRED VEHICLES

It is reported that six **Volvo B6/Alexander** are to be acquired from First Capital, they will be numbered **621-26**. It is expected they will go to Colchester, replacing the last of the Mercedes here.

The following were noted at Clacton in late January:-

L673RMD(Now numbered 622 and has Essex Bus legals and FEN lettering still in Capital livery)

L675/6/8/9RMD all still in First Capital livery and old numbers attached

LOANED VEHICLES

Volvo B6/Alexander L672/4 RMD have departed from Colchester and are reported as having gone to either First Leicester or First Northampton.

ALLOCATIONS

Period end 28.1.01. 102/112 AB-AC; 343/2253 AB - D/L(D); 110 AC-AB
621-6 Acqd - Reserve; 1431 CF-Tway(HH); 1850 CR-Reserve;
2602/3 CN-AB; 2621/75 CR-CF; 2909/11 Reserve - CF;
3076 DT - CR; 3220 CR-D/L(D)

In addition 360, which was in use as a shuttle, bus at Airport Buses is now delicensed for disposal.

2602/3 are used as driver shuttle buses between Stansted depot and Bus Station.

SERVICES

Butt Road, Colchester Park and Ride service C2 taken over from Hedingham continues to operate, but according to timetables is now every 30 minutes rather than every fifteen minutes.

The Stansted Coach Link was cut back to Colchester North Station and a revised timetable was introduced from 14.1.01.

Additional journeys were introduced on Village Link services 3 and 4 from 10.1.01, as part replacement for service 16.

Service 90 (Witham to Maldon) passed back to Hedingham, but under contract to Essex County Council from 12.2.01.

UNUSUAL WORKINGS

22.1.01 CF1416 on service 67 (CR operated service)

CF1403 on service 71B (normally Olympian)

25.1.01 CF731 on 351

30.1.01 CN2652 on service 64 (CR route)

CF729 on service 351

CF1516 on service 351

One very unusual working occurred on 9.1.01. DT 3076, which had failed on service 93 (Colchester to Ipswich) on 6.1.01, was used on Eastern Counties service 81 (0850 Ipswich to Aldeburgh and return). The original working on 93 was unusual in that EN normally used Darts from Colchester depot on this service.

Brentwood town service 73 four Mercedes from the batch 2631-36 normally operate (Bishops Hall to Warley). These are fitted with blinds to cover this service. Other vehicles cover from time to time, but do not have blinds for the route.

21.1.01 Rail replacement Shenfield-Witham:-

1415 3103 3109 3110 4007 4025 4026 4030 4305 4307 4310 4311

GENERAL

Eastern National is operating the rail replacement service between Shenfield and Witham on Sundays for First Great Eastern.

The bus shelter at the Cherry Tree on Mersea Road, Colchester was demolished by a bus on 24.1.01; does anyone know the identity of the vehicle involved?

Mercedes minibuses 2602/3 have been fitted with orange roof lights for use airside at Stansted Airport. Despite this they are normally found on Bishops Stortford town services 308/9.

John Stewart, brother of the Thamesway sub-editor reports the following. I live in the heart of First Eastern Counties territory, and have previously reported the use of former 1130 (C130HJN) on RBG-sponsored service 156 from Fakenham to Dereham via his home village of Brisley. During the week commencing 17th January, former FEN 840 (J613UTW) operated the route on the Monday, 25 (C130HJN) on Tuesday, 842 (H363LJN) on Wednesday, 844 (H308LJN) on Thursday and 872 (reg?) on the Saturday! (There's a photo of 1130 on page 14 this month)

PUBLICITY

First Airport

Stansted Coach Link - Plain blue A5

(Note: Dunmow timing point has been replaced by Sailing Oak so assume new route.)

Eastern National

Booklet - Buses Serving Clacton 8/1/01 Ser 5/5A/6/7/8/10/11/17/18/74/76

24 pages Inc fold out map.

Note: Separate leaflets for 74 and 76 do not appear to have been published

Ser 67/A/C/D/E/76C 8/1/01

Ser 70 8/1/01

Ser 75 8/1/01

Ser 77/77A/78/77A 8/1/01 - note 77A was withdrawn from that date!

Ser 88/A/B/C 8/1/01

FLEET ALLOCATION 28.1.01

BRAINTREE (BE)	944/45 2628-30/63-66 2808/11/12/16-21/26/27 3219 5000
CHELMSFORD (CF)	430-34 716/29-33/39-44 1401-03/07/08/13-16/25-29 1516-20 2610-12/17-21/27/31-46/67/68/70/71-74/75/77 2823/24 2901-11 3071/77/83/84 3103/10/12 4007/08/10/12-14/24/25 5002-06/11
CLACTON (CN)	1510/11 2608/22-26/47-54/83 4009/15-19/28
COLCHESTER (CR)	650-54 907-12 1501-09 2676/78-80 2801/03-06/09/10/29/30 3072/76/79/92-94 3101 3228/30 4301-05/07/09/15
HARWICH (DT)	1512/13 2655/56/69/81/82 3078 4308/10/11/14
AIRPORT BUSES	100/101/110/17 435 601 916/17/43 2604/05/07/09 2802/13-15/22/25/28
AIRPORT COACHES	102-04/07/11/12 397/398
RESERVE	346 621-26 1850 2383
DISPOSAL	343/60/84 901 1916 2253 2614-16 3106 3220/22 4029
SHUTTLE (AB)	2602/03
DRIVER TRAINER	1924 9020 9021 9023 9026

OUTSTATION REQUIREMENTS

MALDON

1 minibus, 3 midibus, 8 single deck, 1 double Decker

The Maldon allocation is taken from Chelmsford. The single Decker's are normally a mix of Lance and Lynx. Reserve and disposal vehicles are normally kept at Clacton or Stansted.

First Eastern National

	CF	BE	MN	CR	CN	DT	TOTAL
TRAFFIC REQUIREMENT							
MINIBUS	34	6	1	3	13	4	61
MIDIBUS	21	12	2	13	0	0	48
SD	9	0	8	13	2	2	34
DD	17	1	1	15	6	4	44
ENG SPARES							
MINIBUS	4	1	0	1	2	1	9
MIDIBUS	1	2	1	2	0	0	6
SD	3	0	0	1	0	0	4
DD	2	0	0	2	1	1	6
TOTAL ALLOCATION							
MINIBUS	38	7	1	4	15	5	70
MIDIBUS	22	14	3	15	0	0	54
SD	12	0	8	14	2	2	38
DD	19	1	1	17	7	5	50
TOTALS	91	22	13	50	24	12	212

First Airport Bus and Coach

	Airport Buses	Airport Coaches
Minibus	6	8
Midibus	9	
Coach	2	
Eng. Spares		
Minibus	2	
Midibus	1	
Coach	-	
Total Allocation		
Minibus	8	8
Midibus	10	
Coach	2	
Shuttle	2 (2602, 2603)	
Total	22	8

February 2001

FLEET CHANGES

Acquired

1431 reacquired from First Eastern National

Disposals

311 345 348 353 371 deleted from stock

Allocation Changes (January 2001)

310 HH-D/L(D) 313 HH-D/L(D) 355 RD-BN 357 RD-BN 364 RD-BN

368 Paint spare-reserve BN/RD 408 BN-RD 409 BN-RD 410 BN-RD 808 RD-HH 1431 Acq-HH 2662 BN-RD

(Note: 808 is Hadleigh's first ever Mercedes 811D. 2662 remains in BT livery until January 2002)

Vehicle Requirements

Totals for the end of January (plus engineering spares shown in brackets) are as follows. Please note the Company designates all Mercedes-Benz (including 811D's) as Minibuses and Midibus refers to all varieties of Dart.

Minibus	BN 14 (2)	RD 14 (2)	HH 12 (2)
Midibus	BN 41 (6)		HH 35 (2)
Single-deck	BN 3 (0)		HH 15 (2)
Double-deck	BN 4 (1)		HH 6 (1)
Coach	BN 8 (1)		
Total vehicles	171		

SERVICE CHANGES

12.02.01	1	Timetable change
	25C	Route revision in North Leigh
	77/77A	Revised timetable (with only Mon-Fri 5 peak hour workings to Warley Fords, and introducing morning and evening short workings)

PUBLICITY MATERIAL

- 31.12.00 Essex CC 'Transcard' facility withdrawn (Southend area prepaid cards introduced 1995, valid on First Thamesway, Arriva Southend and Stephenson's)
- 8.1.01 Timetable Leaflets - 1, 2, 15, 22, 25 and 100
- re EBN441, the Brentwood area fare zones were introduced on 30.10.00 and there is a leaflet of that date which is still in use.

VEHICLE WORKINGS

Further to EBN441, Romford depot continues to operate one of the 2 vehicles on the evening service 301 (Ongar – South Woodford) as well as the Sunday 200 (Harlow – Buckhurst Hill), 201 (Ongar – Buckhurst Hill) and 500 (Harlow – Romford). RD are normally responsible for the Brentwood/Hutton circular 77/77A and LT contract 193, but Basildon's 372 was noted on the 193 on 30th January, and their 364 & 375 were both on the 77/77A on 2nd February (possibly on loan).

The Village Link 19-22 routes duly finished with the 13.50 Romford to Fryerning service 19 on Saturday 20th January (not 22nd as I suggested in EBN441), the last journey being operated by 2659 (2657 having run the Monday and Tuesday services that week, and 2659 the remainder). Loadings on the last journey comprised your sub-editor, an enthusiast from NW London and a lady travelling one way only from Romford to Doddinghurst Post Office, where the bus reversed. Discussion with the driver suggested that the Tuesday Fryerning to Chelmsford 22 and Wednesday Fryerning to Romford 19 were generally quite well patronised, and in fact observation in the last week confirmed this - the other journeys were sadly under-used.

Severe overcrowding on the new 77/77A will be countered by an enhanced timetable from 12th February, but in the meantime double-deckers have not disappeared from Hutton as planned - Basildon Schools contract vehicles have been used as duplicates. A morning Romford minibus short working has also been seen. An evening circuit with Olympians (4026/30 both noted) has been running just from Shenfield Station via Hutton. This has been joined by a morning double-deck extra, with 3109 seen for the first time on 1st February running one circuit behind the 09.21 from Brentwood High Street (Kavanaghs Road bridge precludes double-deckers working the full route). Closure of King's Road in Brentwood for five weeks for major road works starting 5th February means that Saturday 77/77A's will operate non-stop via London Road and Kavanaghs Road.

Meanwhile the 751 is now normally Dart SLF-operated, with mixed low-floor and standard-height Darts on the 752 (including occasional Super 8 liveried ones). The morning peak hour extra 752's (Shenfield Station to Brentwood Station) are usually a Basildon Mercedes 811 in the morning and a Hadleigh Lynx in the evening - the same follow-on from a Shenfield School contract as before 8th January. Hutton Village short 751's in the morning have often been worked by ex First Airport Bus & Coach Volvo/Plaxton 35 (4750 WY). Crew changes for the 752 (from BN) are usually carried out at Shenfield using shuttle bus 9029. Dart/Marshall 855 (S979JLM) has found regular employment on the 269 (Grays – Brentwood/Shenfield) recently. Lynx 1432 was an unusual sighting on 23rd January on the 100.

Southend area services 21/22 are no longer exclusively low-floor vehicles, as they are now interworked with the 2/25 and feature standard Darts and Lynx (including 1431). Minibuses have also been noted fairly frequently on the 21, including 313 on the 5th and 18th January, 310 on the 10th and 325 on the 12th. On 26th January, 940 and 949 worked the Canvey Clipper (usually SLF Darts), 314 was on the 07.32 service 3B (325 working it later, and being seen again on the 30th) while Lynx 1430 worked a Green Line 721. Unusual double-deck workings include Olympian 4005 on service 3 to Canvey (09.00 from Temple Sutton) on the 12th January whilst on Saturday 27th 3069 worked on the 21 (very unusual for a Hadleigh VR to work Saturday except to Tesco Pitsea on contract C52).

Members Advert

Appeal for information

If you have any Eastern National or Thamesway fleet lists from 1975 onwards please e-mail them to me . etbuses@yahoo.co.uk . Thank you , Webmaster of Essex Bus e-group and etbuses.com

Arriva Southend

Transfers in

The following were added to the fleet in January 2001 from fellow Arriva Shires & Essex companies -

2131 (N911 ETM) Mercedes 709D /Plaxton Beever B27F

2137 (N917 ETM) Mercedes 709D /Plaxton Beever B27F

2319 (L613 LVX) Mercedes 811D /Dormobile Routemaker B31F

Services

Essex county council contract service 31A Chelmsford –Little Baddow – Woodham Walter was gained from First Eastern National from 8th January . The dedicated vehicle is 2319 which is outstationed at Latchingdon . This outstation is also used for Dengie Village link drivers meal breaks .

An interesting situation has now transpired with Arriva the Shires & Essex working into Chelmsford on ECC journeys on Service 349 Harlow –Chelmsford , Arriva Colchester on 3 morning journeys on service 59 and now Arriva Southend on the 31A .

Timetable and Route Changes

Route and timetable changes are expected from 18th March affecting services 12, 13, 17 and 62/62A, with minor timetable revisions on a number of other services. There will also be a vehicle rescheduling, to lessen the extent of interworking between services in order to keep specific types of bus to specific routes. Full details will be given next month

Unusual Workings

11th January 5449 on Route 2 to Lakeside

18th January 4354 on Route 1

Fares Revision

Fares on Route 2 Southend – Lakeside were revised from 5th February on the Tarpots Corner – Lakeside section . There were also some changes to child's fares .

Subsequent Disposals

4307 (A247 SVW) Re- registered TIL 3357 by Goodman , Whittlesey 9/00

4308 (A248 SVW) Re- registered TIL 3358 by Goodman , Whittlesey 9/00

4322 (F572 UPB) Bosvock , Congleton 9/00

4323 (F523 UVW) Bosvock , Congleton 9/00

Ensign and stephensons are advertising some former Southend Q & W registered Leyland Fleetlines . The whole batch was originally sold by Ensign last year .



Former Eastern National 1130 Leyland Tiger /Plaxton Paramount is seen at Colkirk working First Eastern counties Service 156 Fakenham - Derham on a frosty 18th January 2001. New in 1986 for London commuter services, the coach is now numbered 19. (John Stewart)



9028 H397 OHK has recently been converted to become the First Thamesway publicity vehicle and painted in white. Previously numbered 386 , its role is to replace timetables at bus stops. Chris Stewart caught up with the Mercedes 709 / Reeve Burgess Beaver in Brentwood High Street on 3rd January 2001.



The Fleetline was a familiar face in Southend until last year and 237 (Renumbered 5337 with Arriva) Leyland Fleetline /Northern counties MRJ 237W is seen on Service 1 on layover at Rayleigh Station in November '99. (Steven R)



New to Lodge's Coaches of High Easter in 1978, Bedford YMT /Duple Dominant YMJ 555S looks resplendent 22 years later when pictured at Showbus 2000 in Duxford. (Chris Stewart)

Arriva East Herts & Essex

Vehicles in

2099 M159 RBH Iveco 59-12 2115759 Marshall C31-081 B27F New 10/94
From Arriva the Shires 1/01

Vehicles out

2114 (N918 ETM): Arriva Southend (2114) 11/00
2189/90 (R189/90 DNM): Arriva the Shires (2189/90) 1/01
2313/5/6 (J933/5/6 WHJ): from Ramm, Sudden (dealer) to Sassarini, Wemyss Bay, Strathclyde t/a Orion) 11/00
(2319 (L613 LVX): Arriva Southend (2319) 1/01
2320 (L614 LVX): Arriva Colchester (2320) 1/01
2329/31/2 (K709/11/2 FNO): Gale, Harlow (as dealer) 1/01
3341-3 (H251-3/6/7 GEV): Arriva Colchester (3341-3/6/7) 1/01
3344 (H254 GEV): Arriva the Shires (3344) 1/01

Allocations

1/01: 2099, 2186-8, 3446-9 - HA

Liveries

1/01: to Arriva corporate - 2099

General

2114 (N918 ETM) was erroneously reported as being transferred to Arriva the Shires in the last issue. In fact it returned to Watford for repainting into corporate livery and was then "borrowed" by Luton for a few days before being despatched to Southend.

Service reductions at the turn of the year at Harlow saw the withdrawal of that depot's Leyland Lynx which initially went into storage at Arriva the Shires' Stevenage depot before going on to Colchester.

It is expected that 3344 will follow; it is required at High Wycombe as a "paint float" whilst the ex Wycombe Bus vehicles are repainted into corporate livery.

Lynx 3345/8 transferred to the parent company last spring are said to be destined for HighWycombe.

However in mid 1/01, 3345 was at Watford being prepared for service whereas 3348 was parked out of use at Dunstable

It is believed that 2189/90 were temporarily in service at Harlow for a few days before being transferred to Hemel Hempstead.

Although some of the DAF Greenline vehicles for the 724 (3441-9) have always been operated from Harlow, maintenance has been the responsibility of the Hoddesdon workshops but with Harlow now having some spare capacity 3446-9 have been officially transferred there.

Anticipated transfers Feb & March 2001

1) All the Iveco minibuses to be concentrated at Harlow/Debden except for 2233/5/6 which having non-standard bodies, are to be transferred to the Training School based at Watford.

2) Grays to be an "all automatic gearbox" depot, with Mercedes minibuses (cascaded from within the group) replacing the Ivecos.

3) The Swift (3335) also to go to Training School

4) Some of the DAF SB220 at Harlow to go to Arriva Colchester

5) The recently acquired Metrobuses at Grays (5254/6) are due for withdrawal.

Subsequent movements

LR101-10/2/5 (H101-10/2/5 GEV) from Arriva London North East (401-10/2/5) to Arriva Manchester (3101-10/2/5)

LR113/4 (H113/4 GEV) from Arriva London North East (413/4) to Arriva Merseyside (3113/4)

(These Leyland Olympian/Northern Counties were with County for only a few months in 1990/1 and were acquired to operate service 103 in the Romford area. The service and vehicles subsequently passed to Grey-Green, the predecessor of Arriva London North East)

Darts DP311-3 (J311-3 WHJ), DW314/5 (J314/5 VXV) & Mercedes 811D MD601-12 (J601-12 WHJ) which passed to Arriva London North with the Edmonton operations in 10/98 have now been withdrawn with the Darts passing to Arriva North West as 1111-5 and the Mercedes are appearing with various independent operators throughout the country

Service News

All units within the group (with the exception of Aylesbury & Colchester) are suffering from severe driver shortages. Service revisions are planned at both Ware & Grays in order to reduce lost mileage.

Service 17 (Gt Bardfield to Saffron Walden) Further to last month, the new operator is Viceroy.

Service 510 (Stansted Airport to Harlow) Additional journey daily at 0015 introduced from 2.1.01

Forthcoming changes from 10th March

Ware Garage - Service 333 withdrawn and later in the spring Services 363 & 517 will be withdrawn and replaced by 251 (Hammond St-Waltham X- Upshire).

Grays Garage

Service 20 withdrawn

Service 370 extended to Tilbury (to cover route 20)

Service 377 Lakeside - Tilbury weekdays only

Service 348 revised t/t and withdrawn on Sunday.

Service 383 withdrawn from Lakeside Tesco & Turps Corner

Publicity

Timetable leaflets for 2/3, 4/5, 500/1/2 and 505 dated 23/12/00 510 dated 2/01/01 and updated Harlow Metro map dated January 01.

LATE NEWS

A newspaper cutting from the "Thurrock Gazette" of 2/2 mentions that Arriva are to commence reduced but hopefully more reliable services from 11/3. Apparently Grays depot has a need for 130 drivers but currently has only 100. David Shelley, General Manager, Arriva East Herts & Essex has mentioned that services 370, 373 & 377 will be guaranteed low floor vehicles. The 370/3 already have them, but the 377 is currently IvecoMini operated.

OTHER OPERATORS - REST OF ESSEX

BLUE TRIANGLE regular vehicle on 565 is now MCW160

BRENTWOOD COACHES Still own Bristol VR UNW 928R but it is now out of use at their Hutton depot.

CARD Mercedes Sprinter N303 XRC has been sold to a private owner, in the Chelmsford area.

CARTERS IPSWICH Service 92A Ipswich to Colchester) was renumbered 93 with a revised timetable from 8.1.01.

INGATESTONE COACHES have BGS295X a blue/cream ?/Plaxton coach

LONDON TRANSIT Dennis Dart S782 RNE has been replaced by X242 ABU a Volvo B6/Alexander in plain white livery.

SUPREME SOUTHEND Supreme have received planning permission to use part of the former British Gas site on Whithall Road Industrial Estate, Colchester as a workshop with parking for 20 vehicles. The consent however has a restriction limiting the number of vehicles returning at night to 3. Vehicles are currently kept at Thorington for use on contracts in the Harwich and Colchester areas. It is assumed this depot will replace that facility.

Suffolk County Council

A recent item of publicity is a Summary Timetable showing revised services for travel between Ipswich and Colchester 8/1/01 - 8 page A5 booklet.

Essex County Council

The latest West & North West Essex Timetable book is dated 21st January 2001. The books for South Essex and for South East Essex and Southend will be published at the end of February. New editions of the North East Essex and Central Essex guides follow in late March.

Other new items include a Winter 2001 county transport map and a Sunday travel guide supplement.

Thurrock Council

A new edition of the Thurrock Bus, Train & Ferry Timetable Book was published in January. Don't forget that you can receive this and all Essex Timetable books by joining our Timetable subscription service. See page 2 for more information.

STEPHENSONS ROCHFORD - FLEETLIST AS AT JANUARY 2001

Leyland Olympian/ECW buses: TSO13, 15, 29, 32X - ex Stagecoach

Leyland Olympian/ECW dual purpose: B689 BPU - ex Eastern National

Leyland Olympian/ECW coach: C101 OTW - ex South York's PTE

Leyland Fleetline/Northern Counties: MRJ 238W - ex Southend Transport

Leyland Tiger/Duple Caribbean coach: A249 SVW - ex Southend Transport

Volvo B10M/Ikarus coach: E964 EHK

Volvo B10M/Plaxton coach: H640 UWR

Bristol VR/ECW open top: VHB677/8S - National Welsh (stored for the winter)

Leyland PD3/East Lancs: MHJ 347F - ex Southend Transport, awaiting restoration

Ford Transit service van: G28 DFA

Also note that the list is fluid because, as a dealer, vehicles from the dealer stock can be used in the fleet as required from time to time.

Essex by Bus

The Thurrock Wanderer

On Saturday 3rd February John Rugg handed over his £3.75 for a Thurrock Wanderer ticket.

I caught the 12.42 Arriva Shires & Essex service 374 that was operated by a Dennis Dart with a Plaxton body and Fleet number 3373.

I boarded at West Horndon station and travelled through Bulphan, Horndon on the Hill, Stanford Le Hope, Linford, Bata Estate, East Tilbury, and Tilbury Fort, West Tilbury. Chadwell St Mary, Grays Bus Station and Chafford Hundred to reach Lakeside Tesco and Bus Station.

I remained on the bus for the return journey that left five minutes late because of traffic congestion at Lakeside.

The Verdict

Number of passengers including me - Outward 7 Return 5

Journey time – Just under Three hours

The Views - Varied wet rural countryside views plus Town traffic in Grays. Also, plenty of new houses and shops in Chafford Hundred and extremely long traffic queues and congestion as Saturday shoppers headed to Lakeside.

An interesting talk with the drivers of the 374 (there was a driver change at Grays Bus Station) revealed that service 374 is much busier during the week and that it warrants the Rural Bus Grant and financial support from Thurrock Council to keep it running.

What Could Be Improved?

There was no Bus stop or any timetable information at West Horndon Station, even though there are six journeys each day.

Value For Money 9 Out Of 10

Why not tell us about your bus journey? Maybe you use a bus to get to work everyday or spend your weekend travelling around on a rover ticket.

We'd love to hear about your journeys and the places that you visit

Please send your article to the Managing editor at the address on the front cover.

THAMESWAY**SUBSEQUENT
DISPOSALS**

<u>FLEET No.</u>	<u>REG No.</u>	<u>DETAILS.</u>	<u>DATE.</u>
26	F995XOV	Traditional (t/a Fountain Coaches), Lake. ex Redbeam (t/a M Travel), Newport, ISLE OF WIGHT.	05/00
28	G148GOL	Page, Fobbing. ex Arriva the Shires FLEET No 2208.	05/00
29	G145GOL	Riley, Benfleet. ex Arriva the Shires FLEET No 2206.	05/00
503	MIL6994	Buzz Co-operative Ltd, Harlow.	by 11/00
	[D592MVR]	ex South Mimms Travel Ltd, South Mimms.	
718	C449BHY	Newton, Crumlin. ex Webley, Abertillery.	by 10/00
0755	D755RWC	Plaza, Birmingham. ex Mitchell, Birmingham.	02/00
1124	A693OHJ	Wacton, Bromyard (dlr). ex Fleetlink, Mossley Hill (dlr).	by 04/00
1838	WJN558S	gone. ex York Pullman, Elvington FLEET No 182.	01/00
1840	WJN560S	believed gone. ex Powell Bus, Hellaby FLEET No 34.	by 10/00
1847	YEV305S	believed gone. ex Powell Bus, Hellaby FLEET No 36.	by 10/00
1898	DAR120T	Konect, Saham Toney. ex Trent FLEET No 568.	by 09/00
1900	DAR122T	withdrawn. by Linkstart, Craven Arms.	by 06/00
3074	KOO792V	gone. ex First Bristol Buses Ltd FLEET No 5551.	09/00
3080	STW 24W	gone. ex Hoare, Chepstow.	by 10/00

3085	STW 29W	Transporte DAN, Panama City. ex Munden, Bristol (dlr). [updates EBN428/14]	02/00
3089	STW 33W	gone. ex First Bristol Buses Ltd FLEET No 5560.	07/00
3116	XHK221X	gone. ex First Bristol Buses Ltd FLEET No 5562.	07/00
3217	LBD922V	Transporte DAN, Panama City. ex Munden, Bristol (dlr).	02/00

ESSEX BUSES ON LINE

Four Good Reasons To Surf the Net

One of the advantages the Internet has over books and magazines is that it's much easier to cover the more specialist sides of a topic. You're also not limited by space considerations or by the number of copies that you can sell. The dedication of some web site owners is amazing and judging by the exhaustive content, they must be good typists too!

A good example of an outstanding website that services a niche interest is Brian Girlings Transport web site www.buses96.freeseve.co.uk there's literally hundreds of pages of vehicle data, much of which is unavailable elsewhere. Personally I've found this one of the most useful web sites around and it's thoroughly recommended.

Something that we've occasionally featured in Essex Bus News is bus destination blinds. Again, it's a very specific topic and I'm pleased to see a new site dedicated to it. www.busblinds.com Not a huge selection at the moment but there are some Eastern National, Colchester and Southend blind listings and other operators in Essex and East Anglia will feature soon.

If you're interested in finding out more about the history of Eastern National and Thamesway then John Ryan's site www.bside90.freeseve.co.uk is the place to look. The site has plenty of photos, fleetlists and articles and it's fascinating to see the changes from the 1940's to the present day.

There's also a nostalgic look at Southend Corporation transport at www.sct61.freeseve.co.uk - Primarily focusing on the 1960's with fleet and route lists and photos. Hopefully they'll be some information on more recent events in the future to enable us to chronicle the changes over the years.

Finally for this month, the correct address for the Essex bus Egroup is www.egroups.co.uk/group/essex-buses and not as printed last issue.

Don't forget that if you know of a web site featuring Essex routes or vehicles then let's know and we can give it a mention. essexbusnews@hotmail.com is the address.

Next Month – More Essex operators sites plus Colchester past and present

Eastern National Enthusiasts Guild Page

Westcliff Double Deckers In Wartime

By Peter Snell

During the early years of the second World War, many Southend residents were evacuated for their safety and allow military personnel to be accomadated

This rendered Westcliff Motor Services with a surplus of buses, having already dispersed their coach fleet to "pastures green" and in 1940 calls from other operators for help resulted in a total of twenty five double deckers operating in various parts of the country.

In October 1940, Thames Valley took Bristol K5G/ECW, JN9541-3. AHJ401-3 and BHJ532-3, these were allocated Thames Valley fleet numbers 101-108 and were returned to Westcliff in April 1942, at the same time AEC Regents MV3394, JN2798-2800 and JN3229 were sent to London Transport but only saw service in London for two months, returning in December 1940.

In 1941, AEC Regents/Weymann JN3230, JN4295, JN4748 went to neighbouring Eastern Counties, where they operated until 1945. Also in 1941, Bristol K5G/ECW AJN823-5, JN9540 went to Bristol Omnibus, followed in 1942 by Bristol GO5G/Brush JN6890/5/6 and Dennis Lance/Park Royal JN961-2, the latter pair returned in 1943. In 1944 Bristol numbered the Bristols 3716-3722 respectively in their fleet, these returned to Southend in 1945. The interesting thing was that Westcliff's entire stock of Bristol K5Gs were sent away.

Harwich 40 Years ago – Eastern National Allocation For Harwich (DT) In March 1961

This month we look back to the spring of 1961 when Eastern Nationals Harwich depot was allocated 9 buses . As was typical of a Tilling company , all but one bus was a Bristol /ECW combination .

167	NVX529	Bedford Beadle	Beadle	B35R
394	YVW122	Bristol LS5G	ECW	B45F
452	9576F	Bristol SC4LK	ECW	B35F
453	9577F	Bristol SC4LK	ECW	B35F
498	1262EV	Bristol MW5G	ECW	B45F
517	2728VX	Bristol MW5G	ECW	B45F
1288	MPU8	Bristol K5G	ECW	L55R
1381	UEV831	Bristol KSW5G	ECW	L55R
1413	VNO865	Bristol KSW5G	ECW	L55R

Eastern National and Thamesway London Bus Contracts

-A Look At the Routes and Vehicles Used -

Part 1 - 1984 To 1987

Eastern national is well know for operating into greater London with the famous routes 151,251 and 351 but a major opportunity for expansion came with passing of the London regional transport act.

The formation of London Regional transport (LRT) in April 1985 heralded the start of major changes. The routes, working environment and business prospects for bus operators were revolutionised as London's bus services were opened up to competitive tender.

Apart from London country and it's successors, Eastern National was the only National bus subsidiary to take a serious interest in London tendering and looked like becoming a major player until other companies became stronger and tender prices became keener.

This series looks at the history of Eastern National and later Thamesways involvement with London bus contracts.

The Background to LT Tendering

There have been two phases in London route tendering and we'll start by looking at the system that applied until 1994.

LRT set up the tendered bus unit headed by Nick Newton in July 1984 with the remit of progressively tendering out bus routes.

Gross cost tendering was seen as being the most suitable for London conditions with all the costs of providing a service being covered by the contract price with a margin for profit. Revenue from fares and passes continued to go to LRT.

The intention was that poorly performing routes would be given priority for tendering. That is, those that were losing money, passengers or had a high cost base. With a few exceptions it would be the mid- nineties before the most profitable central routes were tendered.

Initially, the contracts were for two years but most were extended to three years before retendering and negotiated renewals were common.

Apart from advertising individual routes, whole garages work were put up for tender. As will be seen later, some of these networks were more successful than others and Eastern National and Thamesway both gained and lost in the two Walthamstow network schemes in 1988 and 1992.

LRT tendered about 5% of its total mileage each year and by 1994 had tendered 45% of the network.

In late 1993 all London routes were put onto formal contracts to prepare for the privatisation of the London bus companies the following autumn. Also, after much heated debate, the government decided not to proceed with deregulation in London and a new round of tendering would begin.

1984/85 Into London with VR'S and YMQ'S

The first batch of 13 routes were advertised in October '84 with the winners announced in April '85. Eastern National were successful in being awarded the **193 (Hornechurch –Romford)** and in north London the **W9 (Enfield to Muswell Hill)**. The contracts for both routes commenced on 13 July.

The 193 was operated by Brentwood (BD) garage using 2 Bristol VR's whilst the W9 – marketed as "W-Niner" was worked by 4 Bedford YMQ's with Wadham stringer bodies which were outstationed at Enfield district councils transport depot in Carterhatch lane, Enfield. BD maintained them.

1986 Further Expansion and Driver shortages

This year would see the company expand its operations in London with more tender wins. The first route to be taken over was the **145A (Goodmayes - Chingford Station)** on schooldays only. From the 7th April this was worked from the Enfield outstation using VR's in a new livery incorporating the marketing name "Citybus – running in London for London regional transport".

A new 32-vehicle garage opened at Walthamstow (WW) on the 24th May and the **20 (Walthamstow-Debdon)**, **167 (Ilford - Loughton)**, **206 (Walthamstow –Chigwell)**, **275 (Walthamstow- Barking)** were operated from this date. In addition, Eastern National was awarded peak hour route 252, school service 253 and Hospital service 254 which were tendered by Essex county council.

Leyland Nationals were cascaded to work the routes with VR'S allocated to the 275 and mini buses for the 252 –254. Route 145A also moved into walthamstow.

Romford route 193 was relaunched on 2nd August and branded "Hornechurch Hoppa". Pending the arrival of dedicated minibuses, 5 new Ford Transits/Carlyle were used, topped up by buses hired from Maidstone and district. By late autumn, a batch of 20 Mercedes 608D /Reeve burgess or Dormobile had been delivered for the 193. They were also used to convert Brentwood town services from Nationals to minibus. 7 buses were required for the 193 and they were used on the route until 1991.

The take up of two more contracts for the **307 (Brimsdown –Arkley)** and **359 (Manor house- Hammond St)** were delayed by recruitment difficulties at Walthamstow garage and drivers from other garages were bussed in to try to maintain the existing services. It was decided to operate the 307 from Brentwood garage on a short-term basis and this contract commenced on 27 September with VR's.

Arrangements were made by LRT for London country north east to run route 359 for three months from 25 October until Eastern National had sufficient drivers.

Next Month

The Story Continues into 1987 With More Contracts Wins and a New Garage

Former Eastern National Bristol Lodekkas thought to be still in existence

1964 numbers used for simplicity, chassis and body number given together with date last recorded

This information is available by courtesy of the Bristol VR Enthusiasts' Society's whose website editor Rob Sly maintains up-to-date lists and photographs of VR's in service around the country (www.bvres.freeseerve.co.uk). If anyone can help update the list given here, please contact Chris Stewart (First Thamesway sub-editor).

2400	XVX19	LD5G 100.021	6609	ENPG, Canvey Island	Oct 2000
2484	297JHK	LD5G 130.076	8578	Eves, Flint, Michigan, USA	Jan 1990
2487	76JNO	LD5G 130.083	8581	City Parks Dept, Newburgh, Indiana, USA	Jun 1990
2510	236LNO	LDLX004	EX4	ENPG, Canvey Island	Oct 2000
2604	RWC607	FLF6G 210.013	13149	Unknown owner, Germany (ex preserved)	Jan 1997
2605	RWC608	FLF6G 210.014	13150	Chepstow Classic Buses (EN open top)	Jun 1999
2608	KNO949C	FLF6G 224.178	14936	Cleveland D/D's, Valley View, Ohio, USA	Jul 1999
2611	AVW402F	FLF6LX 236.334	16981	Bus Fare, Cranleigh	Jan 1994
2614	AVX975G	FLF6LX 236.337	16984	P Harrison (pres) at CPTM, Canvey Island	Oct 2000
2700	80TVX	FLF6G 169.002	11726	Unknown, USA (ex New York DD Tours)	Jun 1993
2710	90TVX	FLF6B 169.003	11731	Top Deck Travel, Earls Court	Jun 1996
2736	183XNO	FLF6B 181.117	12520	Unknown owner, UK (caravan/car trsptr)	Jan 1986
2737	EOO579	FLF6G 199.043	13125	Exported (ex preserved)	Apr 1992
2748	EOO590	FLF6B 199.146	13136	Exported? (Via Carl Ireland, ex pres)	Mar 1999
2751	JWC711	FLF6G 199.173	13139	Domier Aircraft Co, Munich, Germany	Dec 1994
2755	JWC715	FLF6G 199.177	13143	Hughes, Hartlet (chassis only)	Jan 1984
2763	RWC605	FLF6G 210.011	13152	WMMK Radio, Destin, Florida, USA	May 1999
2774	987KOO	FLF6G 210.068	13938	Unknown owner, France	Nov 1982
2783	934LWC	FLF6G 217.068	13947	Double Deck Tours, Reno, Nevada, USA	May 1992
2788	AVX956B	FLF6B 217.081	13952	Berger, Tampa, Florida, USA	Sep 2000
2804	BVX680B	FLF6G 224.024	13970	Savannah College, Georgia, USA	Aug 1998
2805	BVX681B	FLF6G 224.025	13971	Der Blickfang, Hanover, Germany	Jan 1998
2810	FWC428B	FLF6B 224.062	14577	New York DD Tours, USA (withdrawn)	May 2000
2812	BNO788B	FLF6G 224.072	14579	Der Blickfang, Hanover, Germany	Aug 1999
2815	BNO791B	FLF6G 224.075	14582	Octobus SARL, Paris France	Jun 1996
2816	HEV994B	FLF6G 224.101	14583	Sound Prop, Budapest, Hungary	Apr 1993
2817	HEV995B	FLF6G 224.102	14584	Clown Jewels, Balntraid, Scotland	May 1989
2819	HEV997B	FLF6G 224.104	14586	Unknown owners, USA (ex New York DD)	Aug 1999
2820	JHK452C	FLF6G 224.123	14928	Great Knight Tours, Atlanta, Georgia, USA	Aug 2000
2821	JHK453C	FLF6G 224.130	14932	Unknown owners, Republic of Ireland	Jan 1994
2823	JHK455C	FLF6G 224.132	14930	Chepstow Classic Bus (for export to Holland)	Jan 2000
2835	LWC661C	FLF6G 229.102	14945	Drusillas Zoo Park, Alfriston, Sussex	Sep 2000
2837	LWC663C	FLF6G 229.146	14947	Savoir Fair, Nuneaton	Aug 1989
2839	LWC665C	FLF6G 229.148	14949	Top Deck Travel, Earls Court	Jun 1996
2841	MXV878C	FLF6G 229.177	14951	Hussey, Basingstoke (preserved)	May 1999
2844	MXV881C	FLF6G 229.195	14954	Garland, Myrtle, Ontario, Canada	May 2000
2846	MXV883C	FLF6G 229.198	14956	Pollock & Thomas, Anchorage, Alaska	Aug 1999
2849	NTW942C	FLF6G 229.224	14959	ENPG, Danvey Island (preserved)	Oct 2000
2852	OVX296D	FLF6G 231.019	15576	Theme Park, Jyväskylä, Finland	May 1992
2853	OVX297D	FLF6G 231.020	15577	Top Deck Travel, Earls Court	Jun 1996
2857	OPU822D	FLF6G 231.075	15581	Londag, Zurich, Switzerland	Feb 1997
2860	RHK345D	FLF6G 231.150	15584	Unknown owner, Belgium	Sep 1991
2861	RHK346D	FLF6G 231.151	15585	Unknown owner, Plymouth (caravan)	Oct 1993
2863	RHK348D	FLF6G 231.152	15587	Unknown owner, USA	May 1992
2867	RVV393D	FLF6G 231.180	15591	Bradley, Hatton (summerhouse)	Feb 1999
2871	RWC943D	FLF6G 231.221	15595	as 2867	Feb 1999
2875	STW763D	FLF6G 231.252	15599	Top Deck Travel, Earls Court	Jun 1996
2877	STW765D	FLF6G 231.254	15601	as 2875	Jun 1996
2878	SVX277D	FLF6G 231.316	15602	Kelly, Munuch, Germany	Jun 1993
2881	UEV219E	FLF6G 231.326	15605	Veloroute des Bleuets, Alma, Quebec, Canada	Oct 2000
2898	WXV525F	FLF6LX 236.208	16289	Unknown owner, Holland	May 1992
2900	WXV527F	FLF6LX 236.210	16291	Top Deck Travel, Earls Court	Jul 1996
2903	WXV530F	FLF6LX 236.213	16294	as 2900	Jul 1996
2913	WWC743F	FLF6LX 236.239	16304	Freetime Promotions, Den Haag, Holland	Oct 1999
2920	AEV814F	FLF6LX 236.300	16968	Autobus Antiques, Belgium	Jun 1994
2929	AVW398F	FLF6LX 236.330	16977	Munckhoff Reizen Group, Horst, Holland	May 1997

Note: KNO949C and RHK348D carry each other's front cowls and number plates.

2751 re-registered NVS695 in UK

2805 carries BHN658B

2819 carried GRU9xxD

2820 carries KNG467D on the front

2821 carries number 717KZL

Buses on Blue Brick Bridge, Shotgate

By Chris Stewart

Further to my article about the late lamented Service 251 in EBN 433, readers might be interested in some further information about the rebuilding of Blue Brick Bridge, Shotgate (where Southend Road goes under the Wickford - Southminster railway line).

City Coach Company route 1 from London to Southend operated under it with single-deckers, as did Westcliff with their parallel route 16 (sold to City in 1935). Derek Giles has added that the previous bridge was in fact just high enough for a lowbridge double-decker (usually about 13'4") but the shape of the bridge involved the bus being on the wrong side of the road London-bound. The Traffic Commissioners (Metropolitan area) would not sanction this four times an hour. I have now seen a number of photographs (thanks to Frank Church, Andy Rush, the Great Eastern Railway Society and Industrialogical Associates) showing the original bridge in 1959 and rebuilding under way in January 1961. Headroom of 13'9" is clearly indicated, but a footway on one side and the skewed nature of the bridge confirm the problems involved.

In 1934 Westcliff bought lowbridge double-deck AEC Renown JN4612 (see EBN435) which was said to have been for the London service, and there is a letter from a C A Lucas in 'Buses Illustrated' (c.1960) confirming its (brief) use. He also states that two other double-deckers (Regents) were used for a short time but that one struck this bridge and that single-deck working was reinstated as a result. Post-war, City obtained a large number of double-deckers, most of which were of lowbridge pattern but despite this the main service was diverted via Battlesbridge because of the bridge at Shotgate (with restrictions on local journeys insisted upon by BR and Eastern National).

As an interesting aside, there is now information from the Journal of the Leyland Society suggesting that City's only highbridge double-deckers LD1/2 (LEV917/8) were also intended to be of lowbridge design (of which more another time). I do just wonder if City either thought they could persuade the post-war Traffic Commissioners that it was alright to use double-deckers through Blue Brick Bridge, or else if the rebuilding of the bridge had been proposed a lot earlier. It looks to be in fairly poor condition in the 1959 photographs. Once rebuilt, double-deckers could use it with ease and began doing so in June 1961.

If anyone can add anything to the above, please let me know (address on front cover). Incidentally the lack of safety measures during the rebuilding work makes interesting viewing 40 years on.

NEXT MONTH IN ESSEX BUS NEWS

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Don't forget to send or Email your contributions – See you next month**

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