ESSEX BUS NEWS

Issue 547
November 2009



ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP
www.essexbus.org.uk

Scanias named at Network Colchester



The two new Scanias were named in a ceremony outside Colchester Castle on 27th October, and Russell Young was there to take these pictures. The buses and names are:

105 : Colchester Rose

106 : Colchester Castle

Names are affixed below the destination box and above the nearside wheelarch. Scania badging has also been added.



Essex Bus News

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Your reports and observations
Members reports, quality photos (prints, slides or JPGs) and original articles are always welcome. Please send them direct to the relevant Sub-Editor.

The Editors exercise the normal discretion to publish contributions in full, in part or not at all and cannot publication in any particular month.

Every effort is made to ensure accuracy but the Group cannot accept responsibility for any errors published.

Views expressed in EBN do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Group.

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*Front cover: A recent acquisition by Network Colchester is Scania **231** (N161 VVO), It entered service on the 5th November. Seen on the 7th in St John's Road, Colchester.*
[Russell Young]

Dates for your diary

■ PRESS DATES

For inclusion in EBN dated	*reports should reach Editors by*	*planned despatch date*
December	**28 November**	**12 December**
January 2010	**2 January 2010**	**21 January**

Please note that the planned despatch date may change for all sorts of reasons. The actual despatch day is posted to the website as soon as it is known. Please allow reasonable time for postal delays (at least seven working days) before claiming non-receipt. Replacements can only be obtained from the Membership Secretary (see Group Directory).

■ SOUTH ESSEX MEETINGS

Venue: **Wickford Cricket Club, off Swan Lane, Wickford** - five minutes walk from Wickford Station and 5 minutes drive from the A130 and A127. In Wickford town centre, turn into Swan Lane from Runwell Road (Swans pub is on the corner); then turn right into the entrance about 100' up on the right - marked Wickford Tennis Club. This is an unmade

road, so beware of potholes. Go straight ahead towards the tennis courts and then left at the end - the cricket clubhouse is in front of you. Car parking available on site.

Doors open at **1930** for an informal chat, with the main talk or show from 2000 to **2145/2200**; a cash bar is available. Members and guests welcome. £1 donation please towards the hire of the room. *Richard Delahoy*

Winter 2009/Spring 2010 programme

- **Monday Dec 14** - Christmas Social and "20 years ago" slide show by *Richard Delahoy.*
- **Monday January 11** - to be advised.
- **Monday February 8** - to be advised.
- **Monday March 8** - AGM, followed by slide show "The Eastern National Midland Area, Past & Present" by *Alan Osborne.*
- **Monday April 12** - to be advised.

■ NORTH ESSEX MEETINGS

Venue: downstairs room at the **Friends Meeting House, Church Street, Colchester**, just south of "Jumbo" (the water tower) and behind the Mercury Theatre. Town centre bus stops and parking are nearby. Doors open at **1930** for an informal chat, with the main talk or show from **2000** to **2200**. £1.50 donation towards room hire, please. Slides/digital photos are preferred, but prints can also be shown. Members and guests welcome. *Dave Arnold*

Winter 2009/Spring 2010 programme

- **Friday December 11** - *Paul Ashman:* "Malta 2009".
- **Friday January 8** - *Trevor Brookes*
- **Friday February 12** - *Fred Lawrance*
- **Friday March 12** - *Alan Osborne*
- **Friday April 9** - *Dave Mitchell*

■ EVENTS

- **Saturday November 21: LOTS Autumn Transport Spectacular,** Harrow Leisure Centre, Christchurch Avenue, Wealdstone, near Harrow & Wealdstone Station: 10am to 4pm. #
- **Saturday/Sunday November 27-28:** London Transport Museum, **Guided Tours at Acton Depot.**
- **Saturday December 5: "Christmas Cracker", Fayre** with bus and fire engine rides, Ipswich Transport Museum.
- **Saturday December 5: Ensignbus Heritage Bus Running Day** See page 4/5.
  Friday January 1, 2010: - Third Southend Running Day. See page 4.

  # The Group Sales Stall will be at this event, selling a wide range of photographs, the latest ECC timetable, and Group Publications including "Blackwell's of Earls Colne".

- *Information is published in good faith. Members are strongly advised to check details with the organisers/website nearer the date. The Group can accept no liability if events are cancelled or altered.*

From the Editor ...

From this month, Peter Mansbridge will take over the Sub-Editorship for Excel, thus bringing the two TGM Group companies (the other being Network Colchester) under one 'hat'. Needless to say, Peter would welcome more news contributions ...

Correction to EBN 546. The photo of Hedingham E200 L380 was taken at Station Road, Clacton (literally at the end of the line), *not* Manningtree.

David Harman

Membership Renewals : 2010

Many thanks to the more than 50 members whose renewal subscriptions for 2010 were received within a week or so of last month's magazine being published. If you've not yet renewed, please use the slip enclosed with the October EBN and post your cheque to the Membership Secretary. Alternatively, you can hand in your form and payment (cash or cheque) at the December meeting in Wickford and Colchester, or at our stand at the LOTS Sale on November 21st.

Richard Delahoy ~ Treasurer

Timetable Subscription Service

The latest Essex CC timetable book was published in mid-October and mailed out to subscribers on October 27. This issue has more pages than the previous one (526, against 496 in June) but is printed on thinner, shiny paper so is quite a bit slimmer, albeit weighing the same at a fraction under 1kg. As with the previous edition, the book is also available on CD (as pdf files); there was insufficient demand from members for the Group to stock this version, so our subscription service will continue to be limited to the printed version at present.

New subscribers to the TTSS are always welcome - details are in the Group Directory section on page x. Alternatively, if you just want a single copy but cannot buy one locally, you can order individual copies direct from Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH. Enclose a cheque payable to Essex CC for £3.50 to include post & packing, or £2 if just ordering the CD version.

The next issue is expected in February 2010.

New members

This month we are delighted to report that the Group has reached a significant milestone with the recruitment of member number 1,000. We started in 1964 with member number 1 - Laurie Murphy - when the Eastern National Enthusiasts Group was formed as a separate society, having previously been a section within the M&D and East Kent Bus Club. Our current membership of around 265 members still includes number 10 (Martin Weyell) and four others under 100 (including EBN Editor David Harman, at 34). By contrast, your current Membership Secretary/Treasurer can only come in at 180.

So, a hearty welcome to two new members who joined at the recent Castle Point Transport Museum Society open day:

Terry Forsdike of Westcliff - 999
Jonathan Bale of Westcliff - 1000

Richard Delahoy

Ensignbus Vintage Bus Running Day : Saturday 5th December

Seasonal treat #1: This year, there will be just the the one Running Day, but all the stops have been pulled out by the Ensignbus team to cram in as much enjoyment for enthusiasts (and their families) as is possible!

The small profit made from the day goes toward a very good cause - the continued restoration of the Ensignbus vintage bus collection. The rebuilding of RT8 is progressing and this now has its own blog at *http://restoringrt8.blogspot.com/*. The 10T10 are STL are next in line for restoration.

So .....

- Please support the Running Day by buying a Vintage Day Pass, an absolute bargain at £6 adult; £3 child (same price as last year). This year they can be bought on ANY Ensignbus local service, not just the vintage buses.
- Bring the family! - to ride on the buses, or go Christmas shopping at Lakeside or Bluewater - or both!
- Concessionary passes are welcome for free travel, but please consider making a donation to help keep the vintage fleet on the road.

Changes this year include:

- Earlier and later journeys from / to Upminster Station by feeder service X55, plus the service will run every 30 minutes via a slightly revised route.
- The first three journeys on the X55 will be run with vintage double deckers, extended to Grays where they will start an X80 duty. Two of these will have a 'quick turn around' at Grays which means that you can stay on the bus even longer if you wish!
- Last few evening journeys back to Upminster will also be by vintage double decker.
- During the main part of the day, vintage SINGLE deckers will operate the X55 (every 30 mins).
- At least one 'guest vehicle' is hoped to be in attendance.
- There could be anything up to five 'surprise vehicles' depending on whether they are ready in time/ fit. The X55 single deck service will definitely be one to watch!
- The newly-acquired ex-Selkent V-reg Dennis Tridents will be out and about on route 22, and hopefully the rare Saffle-bodied B10L on the normal X80.

David Harman with thanks to Paul Dickson of Ensignbus

Third Southend Heritage Bus Running Day : Friday 1st January 2010

Seasonal treat #2: Plans are now well under way for the Third Southend Running Day on New Year's Day, organised by Stephensons of Essex and featuring an interesting mix of new, interesting and heritage buses. Around 18 buses are expected to participate with a similar pattern of operations to 2009, but with at least one new route.

Fuller details will be included in next month's magazine and will be posted at *www.stephensonsofessex.com.*

VINTAGE BUS SPECIAL

Timetables

X80

Grays Bus Station, Bay 1 ⇄	0857	0927	0957		27	57		1527	1557	1627	1657
West Thurrock, The Ship	0905	0935	1005	then	35	05		1535	1605	1635	1705
Lakeside, Bay N	0910	0940	1010	at	40	10		1540	1610	1640	1710
Greenhithe Station ⇄	0935	1005	1035	these	05	35		1605	1635	1705	1735
Bluewater, Bay 12	0940	1010	1040	mins	10	40	until	1610	1640	1710	1740
Swanscombe, George & Dragon	0948	1018	1048	past	18	48		1618	1648	1718	1748
Northfleet Bus Garage	0956	1026	1056	the	26	56		1626	1656	1726	1756
Gravesend, Garrick St, Stop B ⇄	1000	1030	1100	hour	30	00		1630	1700	1730	1800
Gravesend, Clock Tower	1005	1035	1105		35	05		1635	1705	1735	1805
Gravesend, Clock Tower	1015	1045	1115		45	15		1645	1715	1745	1815
Gravesend Station ⇄	1021	1051	1121	then	51	21		1651	1721	1751	1821
Northfleet Bus Garage	1025	1055	1125	at	55	25		1655	1725	1755	1825
Swanscombe, George & Dragon	1033	1103	1133	these	03	33	until	1703	1733	1803	1833
Bluewater, Bay 12	1040	1110	1140	mins	10	40		1710	1740	1810	1840
Greenhithe Station ⇄	1045	1115	1145	past	15	45		1715	1745	1815	1845
Lakeside, Bay P	1110	1140	1210	the	40	10		1740	1810	1840	1910
West Thurrock, The Ship	1115	1145	1215	hour	45	15		1745	1815	-	-
Grays Bus Station ⇄	1123	1153	1223		53	23		1753	1823	-	-

X55

Upminster Station ⇄ ⊖	0911	0941	1011	1041	1111	then	41	11		1541	1611
Corbets Tey, Parkland Ave	0916	0946	1016	1046	1116	at these	46	16		1546	1616
Aveley 'The Top House'	0926	0956	1026	1056	1126	mins	56	26	until	1556	1626
Arterial Road / Armor Road	0932	1002	1032	1102	1132	past	02	32		1602	1632
Lakeside Bus Station	0937	1007	1037	1107	1137	the hour	07	37		1607	1637
Grays Bus Station ⇄	0950	1020	1050	-	-		-	-		-	-
Lakeside Bus Station, Bay B	1013	1043	1113	then	43	13		1643	1713	1743	1845
Arterial Road / Armor Road	1018	1048	1118	at	48	18		1648	1718	1748	1850
Aveley 'The Top House'	1024	1054	1124	mins	54	24	until	1654	1724	1754	1856
Corbets Tey, Parkland Ave	1034	1104	1134	past	04	34		1704	1734	1804	1906
Upminster Station ⇄ ⊖	1040	1110	1140	hour	10	40		1710	1740	1810	1912

Fares

Vintage Day Pass - Adult £6, Child £3

(also valid on / available from normal Ensignbus services)

Local Single & Return Fares will also be available

Concessionary Passes will be accepted, however, donations towards the upkeep of the vintage fleet would be welcomed

Ensignbus

www.ensignbus.com

01708 86 56 56

customerservices@ensignbus.com

Group Directory

SUBSCRIPTIONS
A calendar year subscription is **£20**, renewable in January.

New members may join from any month during the year, but subscriptions will always run to December, from whichever month the member chooses. Those joining from February to December inclusive will pay a pro-rata subscription calculated at **£1.70** per month. E.g., a member joining in March would pay 10 x £1.70; i.e. £17.

Data Protection Act: Members' details are held on computer for the purpose of administration. If you object to your information being held in this way, please write to:

Richard Delahoy, 272 Shoebury Road
Southend-on-Sea SS1 3TT
richard@signal-training.com

Replacements for missing or defective EBNs are available from Richard.

TIMETABLE SUBSCRIPTIONS
Join this scheme to receive the Essex County Council timetable book and bus map. Send your details and a cheque for £12 to

Richard Delahoy, 272 Shoebury Road,
Southend on Sea SS1 3TT.

Subscriptions can start with any issue of the book (usually three a year) and will be renewable annually at the same time as your Group membership subscription is due.

PUBLICATION SALES
Send orders for publications to:

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

Owen also stocks a wide range of colour photos - send SAE with your requirements.

BLACK & WHITE PHOTO SALES

Lyn Watson
c/o Barrons Chartered Accountants
Monometer House, Rectory Grove,
Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 2HN

Prints of specific EN (and predecessor) vehicles can be supplied; email with requirements:

lynw@barrons-bds.com

Service Changes

Arriva Southend			
1 Nov 09	**150**	Sun	Basildon to Lakeside revised route and timetable.
First London			
21 Sep 09	**853**	Sch	Sewardstone to Waltham Abbey revised afternoon timetable to reflect changes to school finishing times.
First Essex			
15 Nov 09	**21**	D	Canvey to Southend on Saturdays and Mon to Fri off peak service reduced to every 30 minutes between Canvey and Hadleigh. Between Hadleigh and Southend to operate every 15 minutes. Service 21 no longer serves Manchester Drive and runs via Blenheim Chase. Service 21A operates via Manchester Drive but is withdrawn from Leigh Station.
16 Nov 09	**24**	M-S	Rawreth to Southchurch 1744 journey from Woodmans Arms will now start at Rayleigh Station at 1754.
6 Dec 09	**31/X**	D	Chelmsford to Burnham minor route change to service 31X.
	36	D	Chelmsford to South Woodham minor timetable revisions.
	232	Sun	Basildon to Shotgate service renumbered within the 25 series with revised timetable.

7 Dec 09	**66/A**	D	Old Heath/Rowhedge to West Bergholt revisions to evening timetable.
	67/A	D	Colchester to West Mersea revisions to evening timetable.

Nelsons (NIBS)

12 Oct 09	**104/6**	M-F	Langdon Hills to Basildon revised route.

Network Colchester

14 Sep 09	**2**	M-S	Severalls Park to Horkesley Heath additional schoolday journey introduced at 1604 from North Station to Severalls Park.

Stagecoach Cambridge

29 Nov 09	**7**	M-S	Cottenham to Saffron Walden revised timetable and route.

Stephensons

13 Oct 09	**288**	M-S	Maldon to Blackwater minor route change to serve Mill Road and Mundon Road.

Paul Harvey
(acknowledgements to LOTS, Essex & Hertfordshire County Council, Richard Delahoy, Harlowride and First)

First

■ **FIRST ESSEX BUSES LTD**

Acquired vehicles

20351 WA05UNG Volvo B7R YV3R6G7225A106183 Plaxton Profile 0512TFL6044 C49FL
8/05 new to First Devon & Cornwall

20352 WA05UNE Volvo B7R YV3R6G7245A106184 Plaxton Profile 0512TFL6045 C49FL
8/05 new to First Devon & Cornwall

20353 WA05UNF Volvo B7R YV3R6G7255A105447 Plaxton Profile 0512TFL6043 C49FL
8/05 new to First Devon & Cornwall

43357 V357DVG Dennis Dart SLF SFD615BR1XGW13898 Plaxton 998.8GKB1729 B29F
11/99 new to First Eastern Counties 357

43358 V358DVG Dennis Dart SLF SFD615BR1XGW13899 Plaxton 998.8GKB1730 B29F
11/99 new to First Eastern Counties 358

43359 V359DVG Dennis Dart SLF SFD615BR1XGW13900 Plaxton 998.8GKB1731 B29F
11/99 new to First Eastern Counties 359

43360 V360DVG Dennis Dart SLF SFD615BR1XGW13901 Plaxton 998.8GKB1732 B29F
11/99 new to First Eastern Counties 360

43801 AO02ODM Dennis Dart SLF SFD6B2CR31GW16154 Plaxton 0175/1 B29F 11/99
new to First Eastern Counties 384

43802 AO02UDN Dennis Dart SLF SFD6B2CR31GW16156 Plaxton 0175/2 B29F 11/99
new to First Eastern Counties 385

20353 arrived (from *First Eastern Counties*) on 15th October with 20352 at a later date. 43357/8, 43801 were delivered over the weekend of 31st October/1st November with Solos 53118-20 passing to FEC in exchange. 43359/60, 43802 were due to arrive over the following weekend in exchange for 53121-3. The Solos are for Norwich service 9, to provide Low Emission Zone compliant vehicles. Coaches 20500/1 are also due to return to *First Eastern Counties*.

Further Tridents to arrive at Clacton are 33155 (LR02LXO), 33164 (LR02LYA) and 33169 (LR02LYJ). None have been used, and 33152 has only performed route assessment work.

41240 (S240KLM) was first registered 21.10.1998.

Allocation changes
Period 7: list dated 25th October 2009
These are, and always have been, taken from the Company's allocation sheet. For operational reasons there may sometimes be discrepancies with the actual situation on the ground.
FGC=First Group cascade, i.e. transfer to/from another First fleet
(A)=acquired, including vehicles on loan; Anc=Ancillary fleet; RES=reserve (spare/retained, licensed); D/L(S)=spare/retained (delicensed); D/L(D)=delicensed for disposal; DS=Driving School; PS=Paint Spare
34807 CF-RES; 41240 FGC-BN; 41241 FGC-BN; 46141 D/L(D)-sold; 46186 D/L(D)-sold; 43744 BN-CF; 47104 D/L(D)-CF

Accident-damaged 34807 was subsequently cannibalised for spares at HH. 43744 was still working from BN on 6th November. 41240/1 were used at CF prior to entering service at BN.

Disposals:
Period 7: 46141 46186 to Erith Commercials for scrap
Period 8: 53118 53119 53120 to First Eastern Counties

Repaints (period 7): 41653 42919 65627

Area News - workings and sightings
[x] indicates route branding

Clacton (CN) & Harwich (DT)
Operation of the X22 passed to Clacton on 1st November and 20351-3 are for this service. 20500/1 are still in use on this service at the time of writing.

October
16th CN65690 on 17
November
1st CN57001 on 18
4th CN57001/2 both in use (57002 had been at DT)

Colchester (CR)
October
16th Volvo coach CR20102 on complete morning diagram of 71/72 (inc 10.40 ex CF)
15th CR34013 on 63
31st CR60757 on 72

November
2nd CF46140 in CR Bus Station, believed to be 12.20 service 70. CR20102 on private hire.

Chelmsford (CF) & Braintree (BE)
October
1st 41241 and CF46140 on 54/56, BE40734 on 33 (17.25 ex CF), CF46132 on 70 (17.50), CF53132 on 46 (17.32 to Ongar)
2nd CF46132 on 33 and CR67007 on 70
5th CF47105 on 33
6th CF47102 on 33

7th 41240 in bus station at Chelmsford
8th 41241 on 47
10th 41240 on 47
12th *First Essex* Strike Day – noted during an hour at Chelmsford Bus Station
41241 service 48 to Beaulieu Park at 13.57
42923 service 45 to Oxney Green at 13.57
42485 service 45 passed heading to Moulsham Lodge at 14.00
53115 service 46 to Oaklands Park at 14.01
42483 service 41 to Chignall Estate at 14.03
42927 service 50 to BAE Systems Great Baddow at 14.03
42928 service 56 to North Melbourne at 14.08
42935 service 48 to B Park at 14.26
42932 service 54 to Wicklow Avenue
ECC contracted service 73 to Heybridge was covered for the day by Stephenson's of Essex (P749HND noted)
16th BE47105 on 33, CF53134 on 509
22nd CF66807 on X30 (18.30 ex SD), CF46140 on 56 (19.00 Beaulieu Park–CF)
26th *First Essex* Strike Day – Park & Ride operating, Solo on 46
30th CF34815, CF53117 on 42

November
2nd 43801 on 41
3rd 43357 on 45
4th CF47252 on 41, 43357 on 42, 43358 on 351 (09.05 ex CF and return) plus BE47101 and BE47105
5th BE47101 on 42, CF47102 and BE47105 on 351 (14.05 and 15.05 ex CF), 43358 on 56, CF53134 on 31
6th CF47104 on 351 (08.48 and 14.48 ex BD), CF47252 on 351 (09.05 and 15.05 ex CF), 43357 on 56, 46140 on 42

Basildon (BN) & Hadleigh (HH)
October
1st BN47171 on 100
3rd BN66806 on 8A
6th BN43744 on 25B
12th Strike day – CF53114 on hourly Brentwood 73
19th BN34011 on 25C, BN43845 on 25B
21st BN41239 into service on 200, BN43845 on 25B
26th Strike day – 100 turning short at Wood Street Tesco (evening ECC service covered by NIBS)

November
2nd BN41238 on 25B; BN65628, BN66804 and BN67002 on 8; BN65669 on 25
6th 43744 on 25B

Other News
Driver trainer 60305 M510PNA has Unladen Weight of 10500kg.

Dart 47102 has lost its all over rear advert and Scania 65651 has gained side advert frames. Other vehicles are being fitted with these. 31198 has gained a Hanover display and the P-TGDs at CR have now been updated so are more commonly seen on 61/62/63.

Volvo/Plaxton former 60030 (R343GHS) is now with Lloyd, Bagillt in an all over cream livery. It joins similar R346GHS.

Bristol MW coach 348 (YBD201), new to United Counties and for sale on ebay (see EBN546) has been sold to a small operator in the South West and recently passed a Class V MOT.

Staying in the South West, Abus VR XHK221X has been in use again as recently as 3rd November on the Tuesdays only Keynsham-Wells 683 (it has also been on the Wednesdays only 791 to Weston). Full details can always be found on *http://ndl642m.blogspot.com* (note new address).

Sources: Own observations, with many thanks to *First Essex* and to A Bird, N Clark, T Clark, D Edwards, I Mahoney, M Farmer, J Podgorski, D Pretty, I Ransom, J Salmon, 'Solo', A Toms, TBL177M, R Wansbury, R West, R Whitley, the *Essex Bus, South West* and *British Buses Abroad in North America* y-groups, www.buslistsontheweb.co.uk, *Real Bus News*, LOTS, PSV Circle, *'Terminus', Bristol VR South West Bus News* (http://ndl642m.blogspot.com).

Reports relating to First Group may be sent by text on 07973 509459, by e-mail or by conventional post. Many thanks to all who do so.

Chris Stewart

Arriva

■ ARRIVA EAST HERTS & ESSEX LTD

Vehicles in

from Arriva The Shires 3249, 3833 10/09

3249	R606 WMJ	Volvo B6LE 006468	Wright	Y454	B38F	3/98
3833	M503 VJO	Dennis Dart 9.8SDL3054/2290	Marshall	C37.057	B38F	3/95

Allocations

8/09: 0444.u; 3357.w
10/09: 3249.HA; 3833.u

Vehicles out

0443 (YS 02 UBX): gone (believed Essex County Council) by 8/09
1258 (KS 05 JJE): LCB Travel, Harlow 9/09
2248 (R758 DUB), 3357 (K407 FHJ), 3399 (L119 YVK): gone by 10/09

Subsequent histories

2117 (N187 EMJ as FIG 4531): Petty, Berkhamsted 11/07 ex Pickford, Chippenham ; gone 1/08
2159 (N367 JGS): Jones, Blaenau Ffestiniog 8/09 ex Awaydays/Far Est Travel, Ipswich via Pickford, Chippenham
2194/5 (R194/5 DNM): Excel, Stansted Airport 6/09 ex Arriva The Shires 2194/5
2200 (L426 CPB): Beattie, Renfrew 10/03 ex Arriva The Shires 2200
2236 (N936 ETU): gone from Arriva The Shires 2236 11/05
2282 (P382 FEA): Hughes, Widnes (CH) 6/09 ex Aerriva Midlands
3124 (M724 OMJ): gone from Arriva The Shires 3124 10/09
3334 (L124 YVK), 3398 (L118 YVK): gone from MK Metro 3334/98 by 10/09
3355 (K405 FHJ): Liyell, Wednesfield) 114 10/05 ex Arriva The Shires 3355; D&G Adderley Green, Staffs 114 4/06
5381 (MUH 281X): Hardwick, Carlton (Dealer), fior scrap 6/09 ex Arriva Thwe Shires 5381
5833 (C 38 CHM): Cavalier 14388 3/08 ex Cavalier, Long Sutton 4228; Stagecoach In The Fens 14388 7/08, Hardwick, Carlton (Dealer) 3/09
5836 (WLT 916 ex C816 BYY): Ensign, Purfleet (dealer) 3/09 ex Arriva The Shires 5836

5839 (D181 FYM): Cavalier 14393 3/08 ex Cavalier, Long Sutton 4230; Stagecoach In The Fens 14393 7/08; Hardwick, Carlton (Dealer) 3/09
5840 (815 DYE ex D215 FYM): Cavalier 14394 3/08 ex Cavalier, Long Sutton 4231; Stagecoach In The Fens 14394; 7/08 ; Hardwick, Carlton (Dealer) 3/09.

Mark Garrett

■ **ARRIVA SOUTHEND LTD.**

Dart SLFs 3387 (P257 FPK) and 3325 (T825 NMJ) have both been repainted into the new standard Arriva group livery (previously known as interurban)

Leyland Olympians 5402/3 remained in service in mid October.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Essex Bus y-group

TGM Group

■ **EXCEL PASSENGER LOGISTICS**

There have been substantial changes to the fleet in recent months and we apologise for the lack of detailed notes - it has been difficult keeping up with the movements since Excel took on the former Stansted Transit operations! A full fleet list will be published in December EBN, but in the meanwhile here are some updates on the bus fleet:

Acquired from Arriva London are five Dennis Dart SLF with Plaxton B26D bodies: 410-414 S310-4 JUA. All are to be converted to single door and repainted from London red into fleet colours; the first to be refurbished should be in service by the time this issue appears.

From Arriva Midlands have come a number of Scania buses:
N113CRL with East Lancs B51F bodies (most in fleet livery): 867/9, N167/9 PUT; 870, N430 XRC; 872, N172 PUT; 873, N433 XRC; 876, N176 PUT N113DRB with East Lancs H47/33F (261/2) or H45/33F (264) bodies (all in plain white): 261/2, M161/2 GRY; 264, M834 SDA.

Transferred from Burtons, Haverhill (and previously Arriva The Shires):
239/40, F639/40 LMJ, Leyland Olympian/Alexander H47/32F, both in fleet livery.

On long term hire from Dawson Rentals are:
530 KP54 BYY, Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton B37F
564/5 AE55 VGK/L, MAN 14.220/MCV B40F (similar to "native" 561-3, AE56 MDV/X/Y)

Still on short term loan as at September 30 were Dart SLF/Plaxton 551, KP51 RXT; 552, KP51 UFL; 553, KU52 RYO; 554, KU52 RXF; 555, KU52 RXT; and 556, KP54BYZ. Some/all may have now been returned to Dawsons.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Richard Delahoy

■ **NETWORK COLCHESTER**

The new Scania N230UD/Olympus 105/6 (see EBN546) were named Colchester Rose (105) and Colchester Castle (106) by local MP Bob Russell at a ceremony on 27th October. 105 had entered service during the afternoon of 8th October on service 1. 106 had entered service on 11th October complete with route 1 branding (105 hasn't been branded yet).

Former Arriva Midlands Scania N113/East Lancs 'Decker M834 SDA was on loan to Network

Colchester from Excel from 5th October to 9th October.

Yellow Liveried Volvo B10M/Northern Counties G626 BPH (from the TGM Strategic Reserve/Hire Fleet) arrived on 14th October as a temporary replacement for Volvo B10M/Northern Counties 337 off the road with engine problems.

Rail Replacement

4th October	Scania DDs 101/102/103/104 operated Shenfield to Newbury Park
11th October	101 & 102 operated Marks Tey to Clacton
18th October	101 operated Colchester Town to Colchester North & Manningtree – Harwich, 102 operated Colchester Town to Marks Tey, Trident 156 operated Manningtree to Harwich, Trident 195 operated Colchester Town to Marks Tey and Trident 196 operated Colchester Town to Colchester North & Colchester Town to Marks Tey.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Richard Delahoy, John Podgorski and Keith Sadler

Regal Busways

Leyland Olympian/ECW OUI 6274 (JTY 401X) has been sold. Also Mercedes Benz 609D/UVG N159 MTG, which had been here on loan, went some months ago.

Acquired is WX08 DFN (numbered 802) a MAN NL273F/Wright (pictured last month). This former demonbstrator served with Lothian Buses, Whitelaws of Lanark, among others.

Ian Ransom

Stansted Transit

Further disposals are Dennis Dart SPD/Plaxton R739 TMO to Mullany, Watford and Dennis Dart SLF/SCC T402 LGP to Essex County Buses. *Ian Ransom*

Ensignbus

■ DEALER STOCK MOVEMENTS

Vehicles in	*from*
Arriva North West:	Volvo B10Bs: M515/6/8/24/5/8/3-5/37 WHF M551-3 WTJ, M564 YEM
Bugler Coaches:	Mercedes R814 LFV
East London Bus Group:	Darts V159/64- 72MVX; W204/6-8/11/28/32 DNO Tridents V108/115/120/2/5/35/7/47/476/8/479 MEV Scanias RDZ 6115/6/7/8 Deltas J401 LKO, J729 CYG
Lothian Buses:	Olympians P251/63/4/5/7/9/70/3/4/82/4 PSX
Stagecoach East Midlands:	Volvo B10M R639 RSE
Stagecoach Western:	Dart P392 LPS, Volvo D10Ms B181/2FFS.
Stagecoach Yorkshire:	Volvo B10Ms L341/2CCK.
Wilts and Dorset:	Spectras K103/4/5/10 VLJ, L113/26/8 ALJ M134 HPR, M145 KRU, Bristol VRs GEL 682V KRU 848/51/5W

Vehicles out	*to*
Volvo D10M B182FFS:	**A & P Travel**, Barway , Cambs.
Trident T690 KPU:	**Amber Coaches**, Rayleigh
Olympian H139 GGS:	
Dublin Olympian 96-D-262	now N737 JNO **AM/PM Travel** , Birmingham
Spectra L113 ALJ:	**Beaver Bus**, Leicester
Volvo B10Bs M516 /25 / 28 WHF:	**Beestons Coaches**, Hadleigh, Suffolk
Volvo B10B M535 WHF:	**Buglers Coaches**, Bristol
Dublin Olympian 96-D-303	now N732 JNO with **Chalkwell**, Sittingbourne, Kent
Volvo B10M K716 DAO:	**Excel Passenger Logistics**, Stansted, Essex
Dart P391 LPS:	**Florida Coaches**, Halstead, Essex
Dart N413 MBW:	**Halifax Joint Committee**
Olympian S851 DGX:	**Harpurs Coaches**, Derby
Delta P191 SGV:	**Home Counties Travel**, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk
Volvo B10M CJZ 6782:	**L&R Transport Services**, Basildon
Dublin Olympian 98-D-20399/413	now R98/63 LHK with **Littles Travel**, Ilkeston, Derbys.
Dart S308 MKH:	**M Travel**, Manchester
Mercedes R814 LFV:	**OTT**, Faversham, Kent
Olympian P284 PSX:	**Rodgers Coaches**, Corby , Northants.
Dart V560 JBH;	**Star Travel**, Aylesbury, Bucks.
Volvo B7TL's PL51 LGD/G:	**Sullivan Buses**, South Mimms.
Volvo B10M's K726/9 DAO:	**Sun Fun Coaches**, Earith, Cambs.
Dart R467 LGH:	**Tates Travel**, Barnsley
Darts KE53 VDP/Y:	**Thamesdown Transport**
Olympian P269 PSX:	**Totally Transport CIC**, Blackpool
Volvo B10M R639 RSE:	**Travelmasters**, Sheerness, Kent
Volvo B10B M564 YEM:	**Balfour Beatty Civil Engineering**, Edinburgh
Olympians P251/64/70/3 KSX:	**Golden West Holdings**, Sydney, Australia
Volvo B10Ms M709/15 KRH, M551 SPY:	**E Ndlovu Transport**, Harare, Zimbabawe
Metrobus A895 SUL:	**Erith Commercials** for scrap
Scanias RDZ6115-8, Deltas J401 LKO, J729CYG:	**Geoff Ripley**, Barnsley

■ **ENSIGNBUS CO. LTD.**

Acquired vehicles

from Selkent TA147, 121, 122, 123, 115, 110

101 V147 MEV Dennis Trident SFD311BR1XGX20701 Alexander 9915/49 H47/24D 12/1999
102 V478 KJN Dennis Trident SFD311BR1XGX20624 Alexander 9915/23 H47/24D 11/1999
103 V479 KJN Dennis Trident SFD311BR1XGX20626 Alexander 9915/25 H47/24D 11/1999
104 V122 MEV Dennis Trident SFD311BR1XGX20625 Alexander 9915/24 H47/24D 11/1999
105 V115 MEV Dennis Trident SFD311BR1XGX20612 Alexander 9915/17 H47/24D 11/1999
106 V476 KJN Dennis Trident SFD311BR1XGX20607 Alexander 9915/12 H47/24D 11/1999

All are to be converted to single door for conversion of service 22 to double-deck operation. 104 will be reregistered 864 DYE.

David Harman, with thanks to Ross Newman of Ensign Bus Co. Ltd.

Renown ... or Southdown in Essex!

Not Essex-based, and moreover, an operator with a route that only just runs into Essex! Renown Coaches Ltd of Bexhill, East Sussex, took over route 11, Saffron Walden - Chrishall (two journeys each way Tu; one journey each way MWThFS) on 1 September. Times are shown on *www.renowncoaches.co.uk/* Traveline show the same times but coded as operating M-F schooldays only. Which is correct?

Anyhow, a new Enviro 200 has now been delivered for this service, in Renown's pleasing Southdown-style mid green/cream, as carried by the now-ceased Cavendish Motor Services fleet at Eastbourne:

16 KX59 CXO ADL Enviro 200 SFD151AR49GY ADL 11314 DP29F

They have another four in the same batch but these are in East Sussex County Council *Local Rider* blue livery (for use at Seaford/Newhaven), and unlikely to appear in Essex.

David Harman

Other Operators

AMBER, Rayleigh Former East London, Dennis Trident/Alexander T690 KPU has been acquired for schools contract work.

APT TRAVEL, Rayleigh Acquired is Bova Futura R59 BJC, this is a 70 seater, for schools work.

BARKER, Roydon MAN/Caetano JIL 3125 (H397 CJF) mentioned last month, has been re-registered WIW 8983.

BESTAX, Rayleigh Acquired from a private owner is R960 ETW Volkswagen Transporter minibus. Ford Transit N886 XKE has been withdrawn.

BROWRING, Westcliff-on-Sea Acquired from DeLux Travel, Southend Airport is T287 WWY a LDV Convoy.

CEEFA, Thundersley Bova Futuras N74 WSB and N121 YLS plus Scania K112/Van Hool, have all been sold for scrap, following fire damage.

CHARIOTS, Stanford-le-Hope LDV 400 M420 BCD has been withdrawn.

CHELMER VALLEY, Chelmsford Ford Transit EN54 WRT has gone to a private owner.

CLARK, South Benfleet Ford Transit AY02 TBZ has gone to a private owner

DALYS TRAVEL, Harlow Ford Transit ND06 XBC has been acquired

DELUX TRAVEL, Southend Airport Toyota/Caetano L46 DBC has been sold to Laugharne Travel, Carmarthen.

FARGOLINK Rayne LDV Convoy X413 UAF has been acquired.

FARNHAM HIRE SERVICE, Farnham Acquired from PC Coaches, Epsom is W591 YJE a Mercedes Benz 0814D/Eurocoach.

HAILSTONE TRAVEL, Rawreth Mercedes Benz 0814D/Eurocoach AE51 AOF has been sold.

HARDY MILES, Rochford Vehicles re-registered are MCW Metrobuses LOA 426X to BIG 8745 and F762 EKM to BIG 8744. Mercedes Benz 609D/Alexander Belfast N661 VSS is now BIG 8753.

KNIGHTS, Witham Acquired is Mercedes Benz Vito BV54 XDR.

LCB TRAVEL, Harlow Operation of the Zip service in Harlow, commenced on 1st September. The vehicle used, a Mercedes Benz 115CDI KS05 JJE, transferred from Arriva, with the contract.

MALCOLMS BLUE BUS, Clacton-on-Sea Mercedes Benz 811D/Plaxton K632 SWP (K4 SBC) has been sold.

MASTER TRAVEL, South Ockendon Leyland Leopard (rebuild)/Plaxton Q553 UOC (LOA 843X) has been sold

NEW HORIZON, Frating The move to "big

bus" operation, has seen the sale of Ford Transits MA03 WWK, LR05 LWU and LR05 KBV.

OLYMPIAN/SM TRAVEL, Harlow Acquired from Stagecoach South East, is Dennis Dart/Alexander N602 HGF, while from First Glasgow is Mercedes Benz 0814D/Plaxton P809 REX.

P&M, Crays Hill Volvo B10M/Plaxton FE02 FBN has been re-registered MNZ 9302

PDQ, Colchester Ford Transit SJ07 WJE has been sold.

SBC ENGINEERING Wickford EW03 NLV (03-D-36557) a Setra S415HD has been acquired from Last Passive, Ireland. MAN 11.220/Caetano X2 ERN has been sold to Anderson Coaches, Rotherham.

SINNOTT, Molehill Green Ford Transit EK55 XCB has been acquired.

SOUTHEND RADIO CARS Acquired but not previously reported are M608 UUR a Peugeot Boxer, FL03 LWY, Citroen Relay and HJ03 NPG, Ford Transit. Vehicles re-registered are Ford Transit BIG 8744 back to N798 XKK, Mercedes Benz 310D back to G659 WHV and Mercedes Benz 507D BIG 8753 (F782 LOD) to XIL 3730, G659 WHV and XIL 3730 are now withdrawn, as is Ford Transit H484 CMD.

SUPREME, Southend-on-Sea Acquired from Logans Tours, Southfleet is Volvo B12M/Jonckheere LL02 ANJ. Leyland Tiger/Plaxton TIB 4587 (B488 TYG) has been withdrawn. Short Volvo B10M/Plaxton L300 SUP has gone to Central Garage, Keith.

TURNERS, Little Maplestead New is Scania/Irizar YT59 NZE.

WICKFORD COACHES, Wickford Bedford YMP/Plaxton D279 RBV has been sold to DK Diners, Great Dunmow (non-PSV)

Only one Leyland Leopard remains in PSV use in Essex. A62 OJX, which is a rebuilt chassis, with Don, Dunmow.

Ian Ransom

EASTERN NATIONAL

Enthusiast's Guild

ACCIDENTS *WILL* HAPPEN (5)



A bus in a ditch by the roadside at Benfleet, Essex, after a collision in the fog with a lorry yesterday. Seven passengers were hurt and were taken away in another bus. They suffered from severe cuts and shock.

Peter Mansbridge has sent this newspaper cutting of an accident that occurred exactly 80 years ago, on Friday 15th November 1929. The cutting was given to him, with other items, by an elderly neighbour in Rayleigh, the late Sid Goodwin. Sid had worked as a bus and coach driver in South Essex for

SEVEN INJURED IN 'BUS COLLISION.

FOG ACCIDENT AT BOWERS GIFFORD.

WINDSCREEN AND WINDOWS SMASHED.

'Bus Used As Ambulance.

A serious accident occurred at the junction of Pound Lane and the old London-Southend road at Bowers Gifford early on Friday, in the thick fog. A saloon omnibus owned by the Borough Services was bound towards Grays when a lorry owned by Messrs. Baker, contractors, of Rayleigh, in avoiding a cyclist, swerved and hit the 'bus.

The force of the impact tore the wheel from the 'bus driver's grasp, but he regained control in a moment and kept the vehicle from turning over. He was, however, unable to prevent its mounting the greensward on the off-side of the road and running into the ditch.

The windscreen of the 'bus and windows on the off-side were smashed and seven of the passengers received facial cuts and shock.

Mr. Thos. Hyett, of Cranleigh Drive, Leigh, one of the injured passengers, suffered badly from shock and collapsed, and Dr. T. M. Wilks, from South Benfleet, was called to attend him. Mr. James Murphy (68), of Glendale Gardens Leigh, and his son, Mr. W. Murphy (46), of Colman Street, Southend, after having their injuries dressed, were taken by car to Hadleigh, where they received further attention from Dr. Grant.

The other injured men were: Mr. Alfred G. Townson (28), of Flemings Farm, Eastwood; Mr. Henry H. Chinnery (38), of North Road, Southend; Mr. Edward Mayor (32), of Easton Lodge, Woodgrange Drive, Southend, and Mr. Thomas Hobday of St. Ann's Road, Southend. All the injured men were attended first of all by Mr. Buckwell, of the South Benfleet St. John Ambulance Brigade, who is stationed at the section's first-aid post at Tarpots Corner.

A special 'bus was sent out by the Borough Services to take the injured back to Southend Victoria Hospital.

Those conveyed to the Victoria Hospital, Southend, were: Mr. J. Murphy, Mr. W. Murphy, Mr. T. Hyett and Mr. A. Townson. They were treated for shock and minor cuts, and sent home.

An official of the Borough Services informed the *Southend Pictorial Telegraph* that the 'bus involved was the 7.15 a.m. from Southend. It was full of workmen, who stated that the 'bus was going at between seven and nine miles per hour on account of the fog. "I believe," said one of the men, "that the lorry swerved to avoid a cyclist." The 'bus driver was Mr. Reginald Wayland, of Westcliff, and he escaped with minor cuts and shock. The 'bus was extensively damaged, but it did not overturn.

many years, starting with the Borough Services in the late 1920s and retiring from Eastern National in the early 1970s. He then carried on doing part-time work for Kirby's of Rayleigh until the mid-1980s.

The picture and report appear to have been published in the *Southend Pictorial Telegraph*. On that November day in 1929, a Borough Services bus, HJ 8199 collided with a lorry in fog at the junction of Pound Lane and the old London - Southend road at Bowers Gifford. The report, (left) describes the accident and injuries suffered by seven passengers, perhaps made worse by the then use of conventional (non-safety) glass for the windscreen etc.

HJ 8199 was a Gilford 166OT with Wycombe B31R body, new in 1928. Eastern National obtained control of Borough Services Ltd. in 1933, but the vehicles remained owned by Borough. The company itself continued until 1947, but vehicles and service licences were transferred to ENOC on 30th October 1940. However, HJ 8199 (numbered 3446 by ENOC) had been withdrawn by 1935, and is presumed to have been scrapped. The short working life of seven years was then by no means uncommon.

###

100 years ago, in November 1909, the National Steam Car Co. Ltd. began operating buses in London. This was the small acorn from which grew the mighty oak that was the 'National' and its later, sturdy saplings, Western, Southern and Eastern National.

To mark the 25th anniversary, Eastern National issued the brochure reproduced on the following four pages (and if I recall correctly, reprinted it for the Golden Jubilee in 1980).

The buses illustrated are one of the Clarkson steamers, 3332 (MJ 406), one of the two imposing Strachan-bodied AEC Renowns, new in 1932, and 3510 (AEV 88), a 1933 AEC Regal with Duple coach body, taken over with the fleet of Bird Motor Services (A. Akers) of Halstead in 1934. 3332 went for scrap in 1949. 3510, renumbered 144, lasted until 1958, before it followed suit.

David Harman with thanks to Peter Mansbridge

A SILVER ANNIVERSARY 1909-1934



One of the Earliest Steam 'Buses

"THE NEW NATIONAL STEAM CAR SERVICE CO. STARTED ITS MOTOR 'BUSES IN LONDON ON SATURDAY. THIS NEW COMPANY HAS ITS HEADQUARTERS AT CLARKSON'S WORKS, CHELMSFORD, WHERE THE 'BUSES ARE MADE. IT IS GENERALLY ADMITTED BY ALL WHO HAVE SEEN IT THAT THE VEHICLE FOR WHICH MOST OF THE CITY'S INHABITANTS HAVE LONGED A NOISELESS, ODOURLESS AND JERKLESS OMNIBUS HAS COME AT LAST."
—The "Essex Chronicle." November 5th, 1909

SOUVENIR FOLDER ISSUED TO MARK THE 25th ANNIVERSARY OF THE "NATIONAL" COMPANY FORMED IN 1909. AND TO RECORD SOMETHING OF THE PROGRESS MADE DURING THE TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

THE EASTERN NATIONAL OMNIBUS CO. LTD.

Head Offices :
NEW WRITTLE STREET
CHELMSFORD
'Phone 1031 (3 Lines)



Modern 6-Wheeled Double Deck Omnibus

EASTERN NATIONAL ADVERTISING. AD. 1166 1134

THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE "NATIONAL" COMPANY.

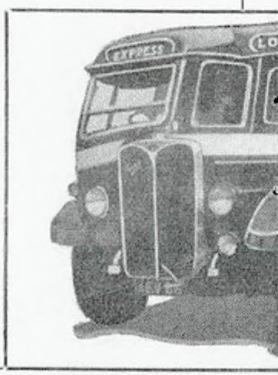
EARLY DAYS.

The quotation on the front page is from a reference made by The "Essex Chronicle," at the time, to the formation of The National Steam Car Company in November, 1909—25 years ago. This Company operated several services in London using Clarkson Steam 'Buses, a number of which had been built at the Queen Street Works, Chelmsford since about 1902.

In 1912, The National Steam Car Company took over certain Routes around Chelmsford, commenced by The Great Eastern Railway Company as far back as 1905, these being from Chelmsford to Danbury, Great Waltham and Writtle. Whereas the G.E.R. had employed Petrol vehicles, however, the new Company put into service some of its Steam 'Buses, using Paraffin as fuel. Extensions to the existing Routes were soon made, including a Service to Maldon on Sundays only, and in the following year to Boreham and Galleywood, the latter Routes being afterwards extended to Kelvedon and Billericay respectively and a new Route opened to Leaden Roding on Fridays.

THE WAR PERIOD.

The outbreak of the Great War prevented much further extension, and the existing Services were often interrupted in order to provide for the conveyance of troops. During this time paraffin became scarce, and coke was burned as fuel, an arrangement which was fairly satisfactory except for the emission of coke fumes. Towards the end of the War the Company withdrew its services in London and concentrated upon its provincial undertaking, acquiring certain Routes in and around Bedford, and further extending the services in the Chelmsford Area. Petrol driven Omnibuses were introduced, in the form of the famous "B" type, well known to those who served in France in the early days of the Great War, and the forerunner of London's present-day Omnibuses. These soon superseded the Steam driven vehicles, leading to the changing of the name of the Company to The National Omnibus and Transport Company Limited, which also carried a certain amount of goods as well as passenger traffic.



Latest Type Luxury Sal
Express Services betw

During the next few years further extensions were made including through services from Chelmsford to Colchester, Southend, Ongar, Dunmow, Braintree, Halstead and Brentwood, and the Leaden Roding service continued through to Bishop's Stortford, whilst another service was also commenced between that Town and Saffron Walden. A new Depot was opened at Colchester about 1920, and services run to Stoke-by-Nayland, Halstead, Clacton, etc., and a Garage was also opened in the latter town. Later extensions accounted for the opening of a Depot at Grays and the Company also extended its activities to the West of England where Depots were opened at Stroud (Glos.), at Yeovil, Plymouth and other West of England Towns. In due course the Bedford Area was extended including such towns as Northampton, Stony Stratford, Huntingdon, Biggleswade, etc., and a new Depot was opened at Luton upon the acquisition of a local Firm under the title of "The Road Motors." In 1930 the separate Eastern, Southern and Western National Companies were formed, corresponding with the Areas served by the respective Railway Companies which became interested in the Omnibus undertaking.

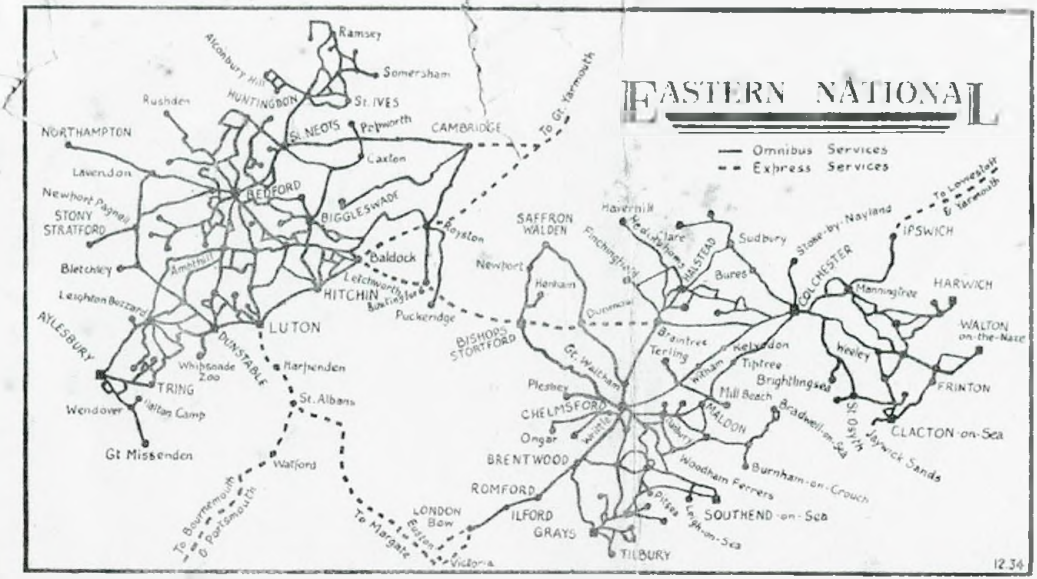
THE PRESENT TIME.

To-day The Eastern National Omnibus Company Limited, with Headquarters at Chelmsford, transferred thereto from London in 1932, provides services throughout eight counties, and the extent of the company's system may be seen from the Map on the back of this folder. Further extensions have included the absorption of The Silver Queen Motor Omnibus Company Limited, which operated in the Clacton and Harwich districts, and also The Aylesbury Omnibus Company Limited with Routes around Aylesbury and other Buckinghamshire Towns, together with The Borough Services Limited, a Southend Company, and numerous smaller concerns. Some 250 services are now in operation comprising ordinary Country Routes linking Towns and Villages, busy In-Town services, carrying a large volume of traffic and operating at frequent intervals, and long distance Coach services between the Essex Towns and London and between Bedfordshire and South and East Coast Resorts, and in the aggregate about forty million passengers are carried per annum.

Amongst Special Facilities now available, may be mentioned the Interavailability of Road and Rail Tickets without extra charge between certain points. In Chelmsford the Company has its own Omnibus Station replete with Waiting Rooms, etc., whilst Enquiry Offices and Waiting Rooms have been opened in the Principal Towns served, and every consideration is given to possible extensions and improvements with a view to still further development in the Public interest.



on Coach, employed upon
en London—Essex Towns.



ROUTE MAP

showing Services now in operation

COUNTIES SERVED :

BEDFORDSHIRE
HUNTINGDONSHIRE
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
HERTFORDSHIRE
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
ESSEX
SUFFOLK

LOCAL OFFICES & DEPOTS :

AYLESBURY, BEDFORD, BIGGLESWADE, CHELMSFORD, CLACTON, COLCHESTER, GRAYS, HARWICH, HALSTEAD, HITCHIN, HUNTINGDON, JAYWICK SANDS, LUTON, SOUTHEND, WALTON-ON-NAZE.

EXPRESS SERVICES : In addition to the Omnibus Services, important Express Coach Services are operated, as follows :

LONDON BRAINTREE HALSTEAD HEDINGHAMS.
LONDON COLCHESTER-CLACTON-JAYWICK SANDS.
LONDON ILFORD ROMFORD-BRENTWOOD CHELMSFORD.
BEDFORD ST. NEOTS YARMOUTH.
BEDFORD BALDOCK COLCHESTER CLACTON.
LUTON ST. ALBANS WATFORD-BOURNEMOUTH.
LUTON-ST. ALBANS PORTSMOUTH & SOUTHSEA.
LUTON-ST. ALBANS MARGATE.
LUTON-YARMOUTH.
TILBURY GRAYS IPSWICH LOWESTOFT YARMOUTH.

EXCURSIONS & TOURS : During the Summer Months, Day and Half-Day Excursions are also run from each of the principal centres on the Company's System to Seaside and Country, and Local Tours to surrounding Places of Interest, as well as Special Trips to Popular Events, Race Meetings, the Aldershot Tattoo, etc.

Transports of Delight ~ Memoirs of a Bus Anorak : 1940 to 2009

by the Revd. Terry Challis

Chapter 6 : The Crosville Interlude (1966 and 1967)

(The previous part of this story was in Essex Bus News issue 545, September 2009)

In September 1965 I went to St. Aidan's College, Birkenhead to begin my theological training. This was, of course, a new experience both as far as study was concerned and also environmentally. Living in a north-west town on the south bank of the River Mersey and opposite Liverpool was something completely different. It was also very different as far as the bus scene was concerned.

The Birkenhead Corporation services that passed the college were the two Oxton Circles, numbers 2 and 6. The 2 ran anti-clockwise via Conway Street and the 6 clockwise via Borough Road. Both services began and terminated at Woodside, which is the ferry terminal for Liverpool. St. Aidan's College was roughly in the middle of the Oxton Circle so that it was possible to get either route to and from town. Perhaps because they ran through some of the leafier suburbs of Birkenhead, they were usually operated by the newest buses in the fleet. For the three years that I was there, they were always Massey-bodied PD2s. Having bought nine Daimler Fleetlines in 1964, Birkenhead had reverted to buying PD2s with Massey bodies. The last ones were delivered in 1967 and had 66 seat bodies.

In those days the Mersey ferries were run by Birkenhead and Wallasey Corporations (not Liverpool!). Birkenhead operated from Woodside, and Wallasey from Seacombe and New Brighton. Because of the Corporation transport connection it was possible to buy "bus-boat returns" on the buses to Liverpool. This was the cheapest and usually the most convenient and pleasant way of travelling to Liverpool. It was probably marginally quicker to go via Hamilton Square Station on a Mersey electric train, but a sail across the River Mersey was preferable on most occasions.

One of the things that always fascinated me about Liverpool was the number of different operators to be seen in the city centre. There were, of course, many green Liverpool Corporation buses but there were five other liveries to be appreciated. Wigan Corporation buses, in their mainly maroon livery appeared on the route from their home-town. There was also the red and white of St. Helens Corporation as well as the red of Lancashire United on a number of routes, including the long Service 39 from Manchester. The other red buses belonged to Ribble, while there were also the green Bristols of Crosville on routes to Warrington, Prescot and Rainhill.

In July 1966, after my first year at St. Aidan's, I married my first wife, Margaret. Having been on honeymoon and returned to Birkenhead where we had a flat in the College, Margaret began her work as a therapy-radiographer at Clatterbridge Hospital. I managed to find some seasonal work at Port Sunlight as an "office-labourer" or messenger with Unilever. The quickest way to work was cycling but I did take note of the variety of Birkenhead Corporation buses that served the Port Sunlight works, which included Daimlers and Guys as well as the inevitable Leylands. The other transport interest at Port Sunlight was the railways. When walking on legitimate business around "the soap", as the industrial side of the complex was called, it was possible to see, close up, massive British Railway Standard 9Fs simmering away in the sidings. Only now am I aware of my good fortune!

In the summer of 1967, having completed my second year at St. Aidan's, it was necessary to find some more seasonal work. In good time I applied to Crosville Motor Services, who ran the inter-urban services on the Wirral Peninsula. I told them of my experience with Eastern National and, after an interview, was offered a job as a seasonal

conductor at their Rock Ferry Garage. This was their main depot on the Wirral. There were also smaller garages at Heswall and West Kirby but they only operated their own local services into Birkenhead: that is Heswall to Woodside and West Kirby to Birkenhead Park Station.

At the end of June 1967, I began work with Crosville. The mornings of the first week (Monday to Friday) were spent attending the class for new conductors. As I had been a conductor with Eastern National this was largely academic. However, it was a good way of learning of Crosville practices and getting used to the depot and the canteen. Each day, after the class, which usually finished around lunch-time, I spent the afternoon route learning: something that I did not mind at all! Wearing a Crosville summer dust jacket was considered to be enough authority to travel wherever the fancy took me.

After the inside of a week, I was out on the road by myself: this time there was no Reg Turner to keep an eye on me. One thing that I should have mentioned before was that, before I had begun work as a conductor, I had a fear of changing the ticket rolls on Setright Speed machines. This was because soon after the introduction of Setright Speed machines, I think that it was in the early 1950s, I had witnessed a Westcliff conductor having great difficulty changing the ticket roll on a busy bus on the way from Hadleigh to Southend. When I did the conductors' course on the Eastern National, I discovered that it was quite straightforward, but on the road I always took advantage of a quiet moment to change the roll in good time.



The first highbridge double deckers ordered by Crosville were 15 KSW6Bs, part of their 1951 order which included 10 lowbridge examples. One of these was their only Gardner-engined KSW - unlike Eastern National, where the KSW5G reigned supreme except for one Bristol-engined example. DKB434 (NFM66) is seen at Birkenhead Woodside, its top cream band and black beading eliminated on repaint many years before EN treated buses like this. The destination display has been reduced from the original three pieces as Terry describes, and the bus has never been fitted with flashing trafficators. DKB434 lasted until 1968, when it went - along with five others - to local operator Yates of Runcorn. [R F Mack, Bill Barlow collection]



The RFM registration series was shared by lowbridge KSW6Bs and LDs, with some of the latter (DLB666/83/6/7/9/93/8, 714 - RFM411 etc) being sold to PVS of Upminster for Lesney contracts as early as 1969. A number were later exported, having passed through Silver End or Earls Colne. Note the top cream band has gone already from both KSWs in this pre-1959 photo although the LD retains it. Older lowbridge KSW DKB441 (NFM73) ran for Ford's of Althorne and later for Highfields Holiday Camp in Clacton. [R F Mack, Bill Barlow collection]

One difference on Crosville, at Rock Ferry garage, was that the crew members changed every week. The drivers went down the rota and the conductors went up the rota. This meant that at the beginning of each week I had to find out who my driver was. It also meant that, to put it bluntly, we all had to accept our fair share of "the rough and the smooth". In some ways the standards were very different to those on Eastern National: but then this was industrial Merseyside and not Clacton-on-Sea.

The main routes that Rock Ferry operated were those from Birkenhead Woodside to Chester. The C1 was the direct route while the C3 and C4 operated via Ellesmere Port. Together the three routes provided a frequent service along the New Chester Road: indeed the frequency was such that, at times, it was virtually impossible for two buses not to run together. There were also short journeys on the C3 around Ellesmere Port that provided a kind of town service. There was also the C2, which was an occasional service to Chester Zoo.

Rock Ferry also operated many other routes to the southern end of the Wirral and into North Wales. These routes were always a bit of light relief from the Chester services. They were numbered in the "F" series: however I cannot be sure that the route numbers that I quote are accurate. The Wirral routes took us to Burton-on-Ness (F18), Neston and Parkgate (F17). These are nice residential areas and the passengers were of a more discerning nature than on the other routes! These routes passed the farm owned by the late Lord Leverhulme, the founder of Lever Brothers, at Thornton Hough.

The North Wales services took us, via the Welsh Cross-roads, to Mold and then onto Pant-y-mwyn or Llanferres (F8 and F9). I think that we covered all of these services

but when we got into Wales we mixed it with Chester and Wrexham Depots on the Chester to Wales routes.

There was also a route from Birkenhead to Holywell in North Wales which was very irregular. I worked on this route once. It was a long route of about thirty miles, which went down the Wirral Peninsula, along the Welsh side of the Dee Estuary to Greenfield and then up the hill to Holywell. Holywell is a place of pilgrimage to St. Winifred, the patron saint of North Wales. It was an evening journey and it would not be very busy. The driver who was my partner that week decided that it would be a bit boring for both of us if we used the bus allocated: a Bristol LL5G with, of course, a half-cab and rear entrance. Thus with strong persuasion he got the regulator to agree that we could take an LS6G dual-purpose vehicle. In this way we could talk to each other and enjoy the ride on a summer evening! It was a very quiet journey there and back.

I must confess that as an Essex-man working from a Birkenhead garage where the dialect was mainly Scouse, I sometimes found the Welsh names difficult to understand. When in doubt, I said, "What did you pay last time?" And I charged them whatever they said!

There was also a very irregular route to Ellesmere Port which ran via the "back roads". I worked on this on one Saturday in one of the few LL5G single-deckers at Rock Ferry. Indeed, I think that these were the only vehicles with five cylinder engines in the garage. Another route that I only worked on once was the F42 (I think) that ran from Rock Ferry via a circuitous route across the Wirral to West Kirby. Both of these routes were not demanding on the buses or the crews!

There was also an early morning journey through the Mersey Tunnel to Liverpool. I never worked on this route. Something at the back of my mind tells me that this service was maintained by an LL5G single-decker. This was, at that time, the only bus through the Tunnel, which is all the more amazing when compared to the fact that today there are buses through both Mersey Tunnels every few minutes. *[Bill Barlow adds: the services through the Mersey Tunnel were actually contracts for the Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Capenhurst, Wirral, many of whose employees lived in Liverpool. The establishment was in the middle of the peninsula and was not on any of the main bus routes, so had to have its own network. As well as to Liverpool there were buses to Chester and to many points in Wirral. The journeys were timed to suit shift changes at 0600, 1400 and 2200 and were not available to the public].*

Crosville also ran the express coach services from Merseyside to London. Rock Ferry put out the coaches on the Birkenhead service. As far as I can remember, these were black and cream Bristol MW6Gs, but the RELHs would have been making an appearance at this time.

What about the buses? My first reaction was that "I never thought that Bristol buses could go so fast!" I suppose that this was the result of my Eastern National background. The Rock Ferry allocation included every type of Bristol Lodekka available up until then with both Bristol and Gardner (6LW) engines. There were LD6G "back-loaders" and FLF and FSF front-entrance varieties. The newest buses at that time were "D" suffix registered FS6Gs of 1966. These were fine vehicles. All the rear-entrance Lodekkas had platform doors, which were seldom closed in my time because it was summer. The front-entrance Lodekkas tended to be kept to the Chester services.

There was also a small batch of "high-bridge" KSW6Bs dating from, I imagine, 1951. I had never been on a high-bridge Bristol of any kind before except the old open-toppers at Southend and Clacton, although I knew that Eastern Counties had some at Cambridge and Norwich. As a conductor at Clacton I had not worked on a KSW, as in 1965, I think, that the only KSWs in the area were at Walton. Thus the rear platform seemed much bigger than usual and, as the Crosville KSWs had no doors, I also felt very vulnerable! As I have written elsewhere, filling in a way-bill on the open platform of a KSW doing 40mph along the New Chester Road is an experience not to be forgotten! The Rock Ferry KSWs earned

their keep working alongside the Lodekkas on the Chester services. However they seemed to be kept mainly to the C3 and C4 via Ellesmere Port.

I also spotted an early post-war Bristol K in the garage at Rock Ferry: I think that it was a K6A (DKA class). However I never worked on it and never saw it in service. Perhaps it was a refugee from Liverpool Old Swan Garage! The single-deck allocation at Rock Ferry consisted mainly of Bristol LL5Gs with the standard ECW rear-entrance body. There was also at least one Bristol LS6G dual-purpose vehicle. There was no one-man operation at Rock Ferry garage.

The destination equipment on the Crosville buses was minimal: ultimate destination at the front plus route number. At the back it was a case of route number only. Older buses that had originally had the full Tilling style of destination equipment had the top ultimate destination masked out with metal panels and the rear ultimate destination and passing point aspects were also blanked out with metal panels. The rear display looked a bit lop-sided! However the general presentation and reliability of the buses was good. I never saw one a failure on the road.

Both Eastern National and Crosville were former Tilling firms but, in my experience, they were very different from each other. However that statement must be made with the qualification that the garages that I worked at were in very different parts of the country. Clacton is a medium size Essex sea-side town, while Birkenhead and the area around it is a large north-west mainly industrial area. In 1967, Cammell-Laird ship-builders was still busy and there was plenty of other work available at places like Port Sunlight and Vauxhall at Ellesmere Port. At other Crosville garages the culture was, no doubt, very different to that at Rock Ferry and Liverpool.



Crosville had an astonishing 351 LDs, by far the largest fleet in the country (the Bristol group were second with 198 and ENOC had 137). 1955 LD6G MG800 (renumbered in 1958 as DLG800 - Double deck, LD, Gardner) displays pre-1959 route numbers. Sister DLG797 (XFM208) was the only Lodekka ever rebodied - complete with cream window rubbers - after severe fire damage at Rock Ferry depot in December 1965. [R F Mack, Bill Barlow collection]

An obituary to Reg Varney in the Essex Bus News of December 2008 included this sentence about "On the Buses":

"Not in the least bit politically correct, much exaggerated for cosmedic effect - but despite what has been written in some places, many of the goings on had more than a touch of reality about them - and there really were 'Blakeys' around."

First of all, I think that the early series of "On the Buses" used Bristol KSW5Gs and, pertinent to this chapter, one of the spin-off films used a Crosville open-top Lodekka *[actually DLG817 (XFM229)]*: this was called "Holiday on the Buses". For a bus enthusiast it is not a pleasant film to watch, as the poor Lodekka ends up on the beach and is overtaken by the incoming tide! Second, and more importantly, the more outrageous goings on in "On the Buses" are perfectly believable in my experience. Perhaps a few examples will support my case.

In my first week as a conductor with Crosville, one day the first journey on our duty was a schools' service. The driver was late signing on which meant that we would be late arriving at the school. I did not know the route so I left it to him. As a result, we cut out part of the route and left two children to their own devices, with the usual repercussions at the garage the next day. When we arrived at the school, while the school-children (students) were alighting, I went to the front of the bus and, in good Eastern National fashion, changed the destination blind to "PRIVATE". The driver asked me what I was doing. When I told him, he said to me in a broad "Scouse" accent: "You're a furry (fairy) man!".

On another occasion, with the same driver, one evening we were working a service from Ellesmere Port back to Birkenhead and then into the garage. I think that we had been on some of the short journeys around Ellesmere Port on the C3 or C4. The driver, who I believe was a married man, told me that "his judy" would be getting on at the first stop after Ellesmere Port and that I was only to give her a ticket if an inspector got on. In that case he would reimburse me later. His "judy" duly got on and he pointed her out to me. When we ran into the garage she got down below the window line so as not to be seen. After we had parked in as remote a part of the garage as possible, I went to the canteen for my break. After my break of half-an-hour or so, I returned to the bus for the second part of our duty. I got on the platform and shouted a very loud "Hallo", whereupon the driver and his "judy" appeared from upstairs. There are no prizes for guessing what had been going on upstairs while I had been in the canteen! Then we went on our way back to Ellesmere Port.

Rock Ferry garage is ten minutes running time from the then terminal, Woodside. All change-overs were made going into Birkenhead. There was also an agreement that if there were no passengers on the bus when it passed the garage and it was "running in", the crew could run straight into the garage. Thus they could sign-off twenty minutes early. There was also a restriction on setting down and picking up between Birkenhead Woodside and Eastham. This was to protect the Birkenhead and Wallasey Corporation services along the New Chester Road. Wallasey ran jointly with Birkenhead on the Number 10 (New Brighton to New Ferry Garage). As a result, especially in the evenings, there was no incentive to pick passengers up at the last few stops before Eastham if there were no passengers already on the bus: enough said!

Having been brought up on schedules and timetables and with the experience of Eastern National, time-keeping is important to me. My problem was that with some drivers early running was normal rather than the exception. Some weeks I had to negotiate with my driver as to which degree of early running was acceptable. This was more of a problem in the evenings than during the day. With one driver, I agreed that if we left Ellesmere Port on time he could run as fast as he liked to Birkenhead: a journey of about 45 minutes in the timetable. We were at least five minutes early by the time we got to the terminus.

Chester Garage also had some turns on the Birkenhead to Chester services. One week my driver said to me, "These Chester crews have got no idea of how to come along the



Although Crosville had 241 F-series Lodekkas, the vast majority were 60 seat rear entrance FSs like the one behind and there were only 84 FLFs like DFB87, compared with the 247 delivered to ENOC. Some of the Cave-Browne-Cave fitted examples had MW-style 'wings' installed on the bonnets rather than radiator grilles, but all soon reverted to the normal style. Crosville also had 30 forward entrance FSF 60-seaters and, like ENOC, a handful of the FLFs were fitted as coaches for the North Wales coast express services. Liverpool Anglican Cathedral is prominent in this view at Birkenhead. [Photographer unknown, Bill Barlow collection]

New Chester Road!" He probably meant that they ran on time! However they could not sign off twenty minutes (or more!) early if they had no passengers when they passed their garage on a "running in" turn.
One evening we were booked to work a journey from the Vauxhall Works at Ellesmere Port. My driver gave me some advice, "Just keep your head down and do not try to control the passengers or they will throw you off the bus!" The passengers were in the main, mainly female, cleaning and canteen staff. Most of them (about twenty) sat downstairs and as soon as possible 'lit up' their cigarettes. (In those days smoking was allowed upstairs). I had no trouble collecting their fares but I took the driver's advice, kept my head down and stayed on the platform for the rest of the journey.

However, most of the drivers were good and conscientious. I remember one senior driver that I had one week whose work was a testimony to years of experience. He would sit in the cab, puff away at his pipe(!), give the passengers and myself a smooth, seemingly unhurried ride and still arrive on time.

Two apocryphal stories, which I can well believe to be true, are worth repeating. These were told to me by a driver. First, on one occasion, a driver took a spare steering wheel to the cab of his bus at Woodside and kept it hidden until the bus was going along the New Chester Road. He then lifted the steering wheel up and showed it so that the passengers could see it through the bulk-head cab window! This resulted in a certain amount of alarm!

Incidentally in a recent book about Birkenhead Corporation, mention was made about a war-time practice of removing the

steering-wheels from buses at Woodside when they were not in use. Perhaps there is something about steering wheels and Birkenhead!

On another occasion, at Woodside, the conductor of a bus led his driver, who was wearing dark glasses and carrying a white stick, to the cab of the bus. He opened the door for the driver and guided him to his seat. This also caused a suitable degree of alarm among the passengers: for a while at least.

Two minor differences come to mind about different practices. First, in the south with half-cab rear entrance buses it was usual for the driver to only use the cab blind on the bulk-head window at night, if at all. In the north, most drivers kept the blind down all day. Second, passengers in the north-west were not used to ringing the bell to stop the bus. Even if they were on the platform or near a bell, they would call to the conductor that they wanted the next stop.

Finally, after a few weeks, I discovered that, with permission from "the powers that be", conductors with driving licences could go out on the learner-bus in their own time. The bus left the garage at about 11am each day for two or three hours. It was up to the individual conductors to re-arrange their shifts if desired. Otherwise you just went out on the bus when you were on "lates" or on a rest day. I got the necessary permission with a view to working as a driver during the next summer (1968), if not before. The learner-bus was an early LD6G Lodekka with a removable bulkhead window behind the driver. This was a normal arrangement in those days. The instructor was a very patient senior driver. *[Bill Barlow adds: The bus with a detachable window for driver training was DLG 792 (XFM 203) and it later became a full-time training bus numbered G792 in the ancillary series. As such it had an extremely long life and was still in use when I photographed it in Parkgate Square on 18-07-84, as illustrated].*

When I had originally learnt to drive in my late teens (I passed my test at the age of nineteen in Colchester), my greatest difficulty was clutch-control. The first car that I drove was Morris 'Minor' 1000 but I passed my test in a Wolseley 4/44 with a column gear change. When driving this Lodekka, my problem was with the constant mesh (crash) gear-box. I am sure that I was not alone with this problem! I soon learnt how to change up the box but I just could not get the timing and foot-work right when trying to change down the box. However with much patience and perseverance from the driving instructor, I eventually mastered the gearbox and my potential life as a bus driver looked as though it would become a reality. However this was not to be: not yet any way.

On August 18th 1967 my wife, Margaret, was involved in a traffic accident on her moped on her way to work at Clatterbridge Hospital. The accident was not her fault. She never recovered consciousness and died on August 23rd at twenty-five years of age. Thus my time at Crosville was brought to an abrupt end. And so began the saddest period of my life.

To be continued

Edited by Richard Delahoy, with grateful thanks to Chris Stewart and Bill Barlow who supplied the photos.

Postcript from Richard Delahoy to the Clacton conducting story (EBNs 545/546):

I am grateful to Bob Williamson for his additional comments about the allocation at Clacton whilst Terry worked there as a conductor. 1220 which Bob recalls at CN is recorded as having been delicenced in 4/65, then reallocated to Southend in 9/65; 1222 was recorded at Braintree in 1964, de-licenced in 5/65 and then allocated to Basildon 9/65. 1225, which Bob doesn't recall, was a Chelmsford car that was not allocated to Clacton until 7/65. Finally, I was in error to have shown 1228 at CN - it had been transferred away in 3/65 to Braintree, then on to Kelvedon in 5/65.

These notes are all based on the Company's official allocation list, which was reported monthly in our news-sheet. Of course, what happened on the ground may well have differed from the official record, as it continues to do today!



Transports of Delight ***G792*** *(XFM 203), the Crosville driver training bus. [Bill Barlow]*

Lodekka contrast: *Eastern National* ***2510*** *(236 LNO) is seen tailing FLF coach 2610 on the X10 Southend - London Victoria run last month. [Chris Stewart]*

rear cover: Stephenson's *Scania/Optare Olympus* ***502*** *(EU09AUK) in Shenfield on rail replacement to Romford and Newbury Park on Sunday 4th October. Other vehicles seen were supplied by First Essex, Chambers, Swallow Coaches, Network Colchester, Epsom Coaches, Godward and Ensign. [Chris Stewart]* ***Ensign's*** *unique Volvo/Saffle* ***705*** *(GVV 205) at Lakeside on 5th November. [David Harman]*







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