

ESSEX BUS NEWS

Issue 545
September 2009



ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP
www.essexbus.org.uk

Southend Heritage Open Top Bus Running Days

The conductor stands at the top of the stairs to watch over his passengers as WNO482 passes under Southend's Pier Bridge - but this is a new bridge with greater headroom than in the days when KSWs regularly passed under here.

Richard Delahoy



The shapely rear of Southend Daimler 244.

John G Lidstone



Ensignbus 233 - the ex London Coaches 'Harrods' sightseeing Metrobus at Thorpe Bay on Sunday with Peter Newman at the wheel.

Russell Young



Essex Bus News

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Your reports and observations

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

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

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

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

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Cover: As summer slips away: ECC service 323 operated by Heddingham Omnibuses must pass through some of the most deeply rural parts of the county, running by a very roundabout route from Greenstead Green (near Halstead) to Sudbury once a week, on Thursdays only. Here, ADL Dart L339 (EU05 AUR) is seen passing through the village of Althamstone on the return journey in July 2009. The spelling on the blind is incorrect! Greensted Green as shown, is near Ongar; this one is Greenstead Green Keith Woods

Dates for your diary

■ PRESS DATES

For inclusion in EBN dated

October

November

reports should reach Editors by

3 October

31 October

planned despatch date

22 October

19 November

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*

Autumn / Winter 2009 programme

- ▶ **Monday Oct 12** - "The X1 story, part 2 - 1987 to 2009" by *Richard Delahoy*
- ▶ **Monday Nov 9** - "Essex buses from the 1960s, 70s and 80's, part 2 - F onwards", slide show by *Martin Weyell*
- ▶ **Monday Dec 14** - Christmas Social and "20 years ago" slide show by *Richard Delahoy*

■ 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*

Autumn / Winter 2009 programme

- ▶ **Friday Oct 9** - *Steven Hughes: "Lancashire"*.
- ▶ **Friday Nov 13** - *Owen Woodliffe: "Independents in the Home Counties"*.
- ▶ **Friday Dec 11** - *Paul Ashman: "Malta 2009"*.

2010 programme

- ▶ **Fridays** January 8, February 12, March 12, April 9, May 14, June 11, July 9, August 13, September 10, October 8, November 12, December 10.

■ EVENTS

- ▶ **Saturday/Sunday Sept 25/26:** London Transport Museum, **Guided Tours at Acton Depot.**
- ▶ **Sunday Sep 27:** EFE Showbus Rally, Duxford Airfield, Cambridgeshire.
- ▶ **Sunday Oct 4:** Come and Ride on our Buses! Ipswich Transport Museum.
- ▶ **Sunday Oct 11:** Castle Point Transport Museum Open Day, Point Road, Canvey. #
- ▶ **Sunday Oct 17:** Wheels by Lamplight, Ipswich Transport Museum.
- ▶ **Sunday Oct 25:** Running Day and Museum Display, London Bus Preservation Trust, Cobham Bus Museum.
- ▶ **Saturday/Sunday Oct.30-31:** London Transport Museum, **Guided Tours at Acton Depot.**
- ▶ **Saturday Nov. 21:** LOTS Autumn Transport Spectacular, Harrow Leisure Centre, Christchurch Avenue, Wealdstone, near Harrow & Wealdstone Station: 10am to 4pm. #
- ▶ **Saturday/Sunday Nov. 27-28:** London Transport Museum, **Guided Tours at Acton Depot.**
- ▶ **Sunday Dec 5:** "Christmas Cracker", Fayre with bus and fire engine rides, Ipswich Transport Museum.
- ▶ **Friday Jan 1, 2010:** Third Southend Heritage Running Day - details to follow.

The Group Sales Stall will be at these events, 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.*

Photographs wanted

Several years of sales of photographs at bus rallies have taken their toll on our stock and to reflect the title of the Group it seems appropriate to restock if possible with operators in Essex and nearby areas. Should any members have spare photos (b&w or colour) they wish to donate to the Group, these will be most welcome. I am at most monthly meetings at Colchester and Wickford and will be at Castle Point and LOTS events.

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

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

Following the highly successful running days in 2008 & 2009, it is planned to organise a similar event for 1/1/10, again based on registered local services providing a public service as well as delighting enthusiasts.

BUT, it can only happen if we are able to find some volunteers to help in the planning and on the day. I (**Richard Delahoy**) have done this pretty well single-handedly for the last two years, to the detriment of my business and family. I need to put together a small group who can take on various tasks to make it a team effort. Some of the jobs include preparing publicity and timetable leaflets, driver briefing packs, duty cards, producing tickets/waybills, etc, fares & ticketing briefings, design and production of destination displays and finally supervision on the day. Templates or specimens exist for most documents already, so it is a largely a case of updating this work. A pre-requisite is access to e-mail, Word and Excel.

If you'd like to become involved and help shape the event, please let me know by e-mail to richard@signal-training.com no later than September 30th. It is then planned to organise a preliminary meeting of volunteers early in October.

And if you are an **operator** with an interesting or heritage bus or coach and would like to take part, we'd be delighted to hear from you! Again, please e-mail me. We take care of service registration and route/duty planning and provide a comprehensive briefing pack, all you need to do is to turn up on the day.

New member

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

Maurice Doggett of Purley - 996

Richard Delahoy

► **Professor John Hibbs OBE PhD FCILT FInstTA**

We don't normally publish biographies for new members, but it would be very remiss not to say a few words of introduction to a distinguished academic, former busman, one of the architects of bus deregulation - and now Group member 994.

John Hibbs graduated from the University of Birmingham in 1950, and joined Premier Travel of Cambridge as Personal Assistant to the Managing Director (the legendary Arthur Lainson). After two years he was appointed Rees Jeffreys Research Student at the London School of Economics, analysing the economic consequences of the Road Traffic Act 1930 for his Masters degree.

He then took the plunge and joined with a colleague to purchase and run Corona Coaches in Suffolk. (This eventful story is recounted in *A Country Busman*, published by DTS Publishing in 2003). In 1961, he moved to British Railways, Eastern Region, as Traffic Survey Officer, later Costing Officer and finally Market Research Officer.

After teaching part-time for some years, he moved to full-time teaching and research, initially in 1967 at City of London College and from 1973 at Birmingham Polytechnic (later the University of Central England and now Birmingham City University), where he was Professor (later Emeritus Professor) of Transport Management.

In 1987, he was awarded the OBE for services to transport education.

Among John's books are several "standard works" which belong on the bookshelf of the student of transport, be they amateur or professional:

The History of British Bus Services (David & Charles, 1968, 2nd edition: 1989).

An Introduction to Transport Studies (Kogan Page, 1999).

Transport Economics and Policy (Kogan Page, 2003).

David Harman



Bristol in Bristol ~ David Edwards' former Eastern National RE 1516 (FWC439H) seen at Bristol Temple Meads during a very successful visit to the Brislington rally and a private tour of the City. Chris Stewart

Group Directory

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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

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

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

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

Replacements for missing or defective EBNs are available from Richard.

TIMETABLE SUBSCRIPTIONS

Join this scheme to receive the Essex County Council timetable book and bus map. Send

your details and a cheque for £10 to
Richard Delahoy, 272 Shoebury Road,
Southend on Sea SS1 3TT.

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

PUBLICATION SALES

Send orders for publications to:
Owen Woodliffe, 196 Sinclair Road,
Chingford, London E4 8PT

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

BLACK & WHITE PHOTO SALES

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

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

lynw@barrons-bds.com

Noticeboard

- **David Shadbolt**, Marketing Manager - UK Bus for Arriva has kindly added a link to the Group's site on the Arriva UK bus website : www.arrivabus.co.uk/content.aspx?id=276&terms=enthusiasts and has asked a favour in return: He grew up in Hertfordshire and ascribes his interest in buses and subsequent 30-year career in the bus industry to travelling to school on the buses of **Golden Boy** of Roydon. He now seeks photos of any Golden Boy double-deckers - they had RTLs, an RTW, KSWs, a CVG6, Arabs, PD2s, Regent V, Bridgemaster, Lolines, even Barton rebuilt Tigers, Lodekkas, etc.

If you can help, please contact David direct at shadboltd@arriva.co.uk or write to me (address on page 1) and I will forward.

David Harman

- Former Eastern National and Thamesway Olympian **34812** (C412 HJN) is available for preservation. Contact Stuart Boxall dms2456stu@googlemail.com for further details.



Southend Heritage Open Top Bus Running Days



With Southend Pier in the distance, 244 heads for Chalkwell Shelter with another good load.

Richard Delahoy

To mark the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Castle Point Transport Museum Society, the CPTMS organised a hugely successful and enjoyable two-day event in Southend over the weekend of August 15/16. On both days three former Eastern National Bristol KSWs and the ex Southend Daimler CW plied their trade between Chalkwell Shelter and Shoebury East Beach, recreating the halcyon days of services 67 and 68. The open toppers ran full for most of both days, aided by glorious sunshine and attracting a lot of attention from the general public. Creating special interest for enthusiasts was WNO482, which had never before operated in Southend as an open topper, having been used only in Clacton, and displaying some subtle detail differences from the others, reflecting the differences between those converted at Prittlewell and those at Central Works.

NIBS helped out on each day with a modern, accessible Scania decker, and the museum also provided ex Southend Leyland Leopard 209, itself no stranger to seafront service 68 when substituting for open toppers, as happened on Derby Day and other occasions. On Sunday, Ensign joined the fray with a DMS full open topper and Metrobus part open top plus - well, what can you call it? - a mini open topper (yes, that's

one built on the chassis of an Austin Mini car!). Also participating on Sunday was Arriva Southend Olympian 5404, driven by Matthew Evans on one of its last duties before withdrawal (suitably decorated), and Dave Edwards' superbly restored Eastern National RELL 1516, the latter unexpectedly being used on the free service in the absence of anywhere suitable to park it (and providing me with a totally unexpected chance to get behind the wheel, not that I needed much encouragement!). There was a precedent for an Eastern National RE on the 68 as on one rare occasion, ST borrowed one from SD depot to cover for a vehicle shortage. Sadly, the hoped for appearances by ex City Leyland PD1 LEV 917 and ex Southend PD3 PHJ 953 didn't come off, but then there is always next year - let's hope this can become an annual event!

So sit back and enjoy our photo spread. And if you want to see more, the Museum have on sale a CD-ROM containing over 400 high quality pictures by John G Lidstone celebrating the weekend. At only a tenner, it's a bargain and will be on sale at the **CPTMS Open Day on October 11th** and by mail order (send a cheque payable to CPTMS for £11 to include P&P to **Gordon Claydon, c/o CPTMS, Bus Museum, 105 Point Road, Canvey Island, SS8 7TD**).

Vehicles participating were:

FOP 429	Southend Corporation 244	Daimler CWA6	Duple open top
GJN 509D	Southend Transport 209	Leyland Leopard	Marshall bus
H264 GEV	Arriva Southend 5404	Leyland Olympian	Leyland decker
WNO 478	Eastern National 2380	Bristol KSW5G	ECW open top
WNO 480	Eastern National 2384	Bristol KSW5G	ECW open top
WNO 482	Eastern National 2381	Bristol KSW5G	ECW open top
OWC 182D	Eastern National 392	Bristol MW6G	ECW coach
FWC439H	Eastern National 1516	Bristol RELL6G	ECW bus
EGP 33J	Ensign Bus 333 (ex DMS33)	Daimler Fleetline	Park Royal open top
KYV633X	Ensign Bus 233 (ex M633)	MCW Metrobus	MCW part open top
BNK 217A	Ensign Bus MRM1	Morris Mini	Ensign open top
YN04 YJR	NIBS 104	Scania	East Lancs decker
YN04 YJT	NIBS 304	Scania	East Lancs decker

Richard Delahoy



A few trips turned short at Thorpe Bay Corner, WNO 482 leading to the doubly unusual sight of an open topper in Thorpe Hall Avenue.

Richard Delahoy



WNO 478 attracts the interest of a passer-by with handy camera phone at the Southend Pier stop as Ian Banks prepares to depart for Shoebury early on Saturday morning.

Richard Delahoy



Still in the colours of former owner Town & Country, WNO 480 is well laden as it arrives at Shoebury's East Beach terminus. It retains part of an Arriva blind fitted for its appearance on Stephensons heritage services on January 1st, 2008 - as illustrated on the cover of EBN 525.

Richard Delahoy



Southend Transport used single deckers on the seafront when open toppers were not available, as GJN509D reminds us as it prepares to depart from the Pier.

Richard Delahoy



It is only since the Pier Bridge was rebuilt in recent years that standard height buses like the former Southend Transport 264 could pass under. With notices proclaiming it as one of "Southend's Last Municipal Buses", Arriva Southend 5404 is fully dressed ready for a trip to Shoebury. Driver Matthew Evans had specially refitted an intermediate blind for the occasion.

Richard Delahoy

*Ensign DMS33 crosses
Arriva Southend
Olympian 5404 at
Chalkwell on Sunday
16th August.*

Chris Stewart



*NIBS' former Unilink
Omnidekka in Shoebury
Village on Sunday, with
correctly-programmed
blinds.*

Russell Young



*Room for three
small ones on top ...*

*Ensign MRM1 (based
on a 1963 Mini) at
Chalkwell Shelter.*

Chris Stewart



Service Changes

Arriva East Herts & Essex			
31 Oct 09	SW1	M-F	Sawbridgeworth circular service withdrawn.
Arriva Southend			
23 Aug 09	5	M-S	Lakeside to Southend route revision between Pitsea and Sadlers Farm Roundabout due to road closure.
Blue Triangle			
30 Aug 09	232	Sun	Basildon to Shotgate service withdrawn and transferred to First from 30th August not as previously reported.
Carters Coach Services			
1 Sep 09	92	M-S	Ipswich to Stratford St Mary service no longer serves Stratford St Mary.
Centrebus			
1 Sep 09	7/A	M-S	Bishop Stortford to Stansted Airport new service with new off peak service serving Bentfield Green.
De Vere Travel			
2 Sep 09	330	Sch	Great Yeldham to Belchamp St Paul new schoolday service.
Essex County Buses			
3 Oct 09	City 42	M-S	Galleywood to Broomfield Hospital new service.
Excel			
1 Sep 09	7	M-S	Bishop Stortford to Bentfield Green service withdrawn.
	7A	M-S	Bishop Stortford to Stansted Mountfitchet service withdrawn.
	11	M-S	Chrishall to Saffron Walden service withdrawn.
	14	M-F	Staple Tye to Templefields service withdrawn.
	18	M-S	Haverhill to Newport service withdrawn.
	318	Th	Thaxted to Bishop Stortford service withdrawn.
	392	M-S	Harlow to Rye Park service withdrawn.
First Essex			
11 Aug 09	120/21	-	Shrub End to Weston Homes Community Stadium new services on match days only.
	122	-	Severalls Business Park to Weston Homes Community Stadium new service on match days only.
23 Aug 09	2	D	Southend to Basildon route revision between Pitsea and Sadlers Farm Roundabout due to road closure.
	22	D	Canvey to Basildon route revision between Pitsea and Sadlers Farm Roundabout due to road closure.

31 Aug 09	30	M-S	Marks Farm to Beckers Green revised evening timetable (updated information).
1 Sep 09	5/6	D	Holland to Bockings Elm service 5A withdrawn from 0930 (Monday to Fridays and all day Saturday (updated information).
	75	D	Colchester to Maldon minor early morning timetable change (updated information).
	302	Sch	Bishop Stortford to Saffron Walden no longer serves Audley End Station.
4 Oct 09	61	D	Colchester to Wivenhoe revised timetable.
	62	D	Colchester to Wivenhoe revised timetable.
	80A/C	Sun	Brentwood Circular new service.
Florida Coaches			
13 Oct 09	44	M-S	Halstead Town Service revised timetable and route.
Freedom Travel Coaches			
1 Sep 09	18	M-S	Haverhill to Saffron Walden new service.
Regal Busways			
1 Sep 09	652	Sch	North Weald to Epping new schoolday service
	654	Sch	Ongar to Epping revised route and timetable.
	655/6	Sch	Abridge to Epping revised route and timetable.
	659	Sch	Stanford Rivers to Epping new schoolday service.
18 Sep 09	N1	FS	Canvey to Basildon new two hourly evening service to Festival Leisure Park.
	N2	FS	Brentwood to Basildon new two hourly evening Service to Festival Leisure Park.
Renown Coaches			
1 Sep 09	11	M-S	Chrishall to Saffron Walden new service.
Stephensons			
5 Oct 09	1/A	M-F	Basildon to Pitsea revised timetable.
	814	Sch	Rochford to Westcliff St Thomas More School minor route and timetable change.
TWH Bus & Coach Hire			
1 Sep 09	14	M-F	Staple Tye to Templefields new early morning service.
	392	M-S	Harlow to Rye Park new service.
6 Sep 09	80	M-F	Kelvedon Hatch to Sawyers Hall College service withdrawn.
	NWF	M-S	Epping to Harlow service withdrawn.
29 Sep 09	X55	M-S	Debden Broadway to Harlow new service.

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

■ FIRST ESSEX BUSES LTD

New and acquired vehicles

Trident 33152 (LR02LXL) arrived at Clacton on 25th August following repaint but has since been returned to ADL for rectification work and MOT. At least some of the 51/02 plate Tridents intended for Essex may be used in Norwich instead because of the LEZ there and exchanged for older Tridents already in use by FEC, but the position remained unsettled at the time of writing.

90414/5 (ref EBN544) are both Vauxhall Corsa vans for Engineering use.

Allocation changes

Period 5: list dated 23rd August 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

31198 CF-CN; 34311 BN-CN; 38790 CN-CF; 46186 CN-D/L(D); 46811 D/L(D)-sold;
46828 BE-BN; 47101 CF-BE; 47102 D/L(D)-CN; 60102 BN-CR

Note: 46120 was reinstated temporarily during August while 51803 and 56004 remained in use. 46186 has been withdrawn after sustaining rear collision damage.

Disposals:

To Erith Commercials for scrap: 46811 (after component recovery at A Barham & Sons)

Repaints (period 5): none

Area News - workings and sightings

[x] indicates route branding

V2009 reports received

- 21st 31462, VR 38790 and *Fourways* H259MFX, H691PTW & G937FVX
- 22nd *First Essex* 31198, 31374/5, 31456/62, 34014, 34285/90, 34301, 38790
First London 33036/41/82/6/91/4/7, 34215
Stephensons EU09AUK and *Fourways* (as 24th plus G310FVX)
- 23rd 31198, 31374/5, 31456, 34014/285/290/301/815/8, 38790, *First London*
33036/41/82/4/5/6/91/7, 34215
Stephensons Scania EU09AUK; *Fourways* Dominators H259 MFX, J267 SPR,
Olympians G937 FVX, G981 FVX, H699 PTW and Dragon G310FWC.
- 24th 34315 and *Fourways* J267SPR, G981FVX, H259MFX, G937FVX & H699PTW

Clacton (CN) & Harwich (DT)

August

- 20th Primo CN57001 on 75
- 24th CR34311 on 5A, CN41644 & CN43739 on 10/11/12, CN57001 on summer only 17X
(often a step entrance Dart)
- 27th CR67006 on DT103



Primo 57001 (YN56 NHE) made a short working trip on the 75 from Colchester to Tiptree on 20th August and also the following day. Dave Arnold

First London again provided a number of vehicles for V2009, including Trident 33036 seen here on Sunday 22nd. Chris Stewart



September

9th CN57001 on 18 (17.48 ex Point Clear)

Colchester (CR)

Hythe Station Rd, Colchester was reopened to traffic from mid August when routes 64/A, 76 and 103/4 reverted to normal routing.

Only the yard of the old Network Colchester "no 2" garage at Magdalen St is now being used, reported to be mainly for staff car parking.

August

6th CR34018 on 63
19th CR34301 on 64
21st CR67011 on 64A
22nd CR61057 on 72
24th CR65654 on 71/72, CR60756 & CR65675 on 70
27th CR67003 on 66

September

2nd CF65680/3/4 on 70

Chelmsford (CF) & Braintree (BE)

August

1st CF66828 on 33
3rd 41235 on 42 [was also seen on 56 on July 29th/30th]
13th BE46828 on 48, CF56004 on X30 to (15.00 CF-Stansted)
21st CF31198 on 33 (11.25 to BS), 41235 on 31 (12.35 to MN)
24th BE40736 on 50 (10.57 from Bus Station), BE40733 on 351 (11.05), CF42923 on 70 (11.20) and CF34815 on 33 (11.25), CF66799 on X30
29th CF53119 on 42, CF56004 on X30

September

2nd CF31198 on 33, BE40736 on 46, CF53112 on 73, BE53117 on 132, CF53119 on 21, CF53136 on 31
3rd CF31198 on 33, 41235 on 48, CF42919 on 73, CF46132 on 351, CF46140 on 42, BE47101 on 36, CF47252 on 33
4th CF34818 and CF46132 on 48, CF66799 on X30

Basildon (BN) & Hadleigh (HH)

Stanford Le Hope level crossing was closed to road traffic from 14th to 16th August, affecting routes 100 & 200 which were diverted (both directions) via A1013 Stanford Road (by-pass) and A1014 (The Manorway).

August

10th BN66804 on 551
14th BN46120 on 551, BN65631 on 81, BN66825 on 25
17th BN60103 on 100
25th BN67009 on 100
27th HH46146 on 20, BN51803 on 25C
28th BN46120 on 81/82, also HH43739 seen at CN

September

2nd BN65666 on 100
3rd BN51803 on 81/82

Other News

Heritage VR 38790 (KOO790V) has been fitted with a tachograph and can be made available for private hire. Anyone interested please contact your sub Editor who will put you in contact with the relevant person at *First Essex*.

News of ECW Olympians is that 34807 is at CN awaiting decision following collision damage, whilst 34810 (at Weymouth) is now the only one still in use with either *First Hampshire & Dorset* or *First Devon & Cornwall*, 34812/3/7 having been replaced at Torpoint by K-ORL registered Olympians. Meanwhile Dart 46123 has been withdrawn by *First Eastern Counties* following accident damage.

Sources: Own observations, with many thanks to *First Essex* and to P Ashton, A Bird, N Clark, T Clark, D Edwards, M Farmer, D Flatman, C Paynter, J Podgorski, D Pretty, I Ransom, J Salmon, 'Solo', 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* (www.geocities.com/ndl642m).

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

Chris Stewart

Arriva

■ ARRIVA SOUTHEND LTD.

Vehicles In

3186 (P186 LKJ) Dennis Dart SLF Plaxton B40F
3289 (T289 JKM) Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton B39F

Vehicles Out

Withdrawn for disposal

Dennis Dart/Plaxton 3410 (P330 HVX)
Leyland Olympians 5402-5 (H262-5 GEV)

With the withdrawal of Olympians 5402- 5, new to Southend Transport in 1990 as 262-5, there are no longer any buses in the current fleet from the era when the undertaking was owned by Southend Council. 5404 took part in the Castle Point Transport Museum Society's Southend Seafront Running Day on 16th August before being withdrawn at the end of service on 18th August. It is understood that 5405 was withdrawn by the 22nd August, with 5402/3 due to be withdrawn by the end of August. It is reported that one of either 5402/3 was working routes 7/8 as late as Saturday 29th August. H262-5 GEV were the last new vehicles bought by Southend Transport whilst still part of Southend Council and were therefore the last ever municipal buses for Southend. An article about their withdrawal from service appeared in the *Southend Evening Echo* on 20th August. It is interesting to note that none of the vehicles has been continuously allocated to Southend for the past 19 years. By the end of 2002 all four vehicles had been transferred away from Southend to other depots within the Arriva Southern Counties group including Arriva's former Colchester operation. The quartet returned to Southend in the summer of 2004 as replacements for the Dennis Tridents and Volvo Olympians being transferred out of Southend at the time.

Other Vehicle News

Step-entrance Dart/East Lancs 3123 was back in use at Southend briefly in August, having been withdrawn originally in June.

MPD Darts 1608/9 have received route 13 'Sutton Shuttle' branding. The former route 13 Dart SLFs 3307/8 have lost their branding, with 3307 seen working route 9 on 25th August without route 13 branding.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to David Flatman and Essex Bus y-group.

Network Colchester

Acquired vehicles

from Arriva Northumbria 7430/1

195 W395 RBB Dennis Trident / Alexander ALX400 H51/31F

196 W396 RBB Dennis Trident / Alexander ALX400 H51/31F

These are branded (light blue) for the 8 (Monkwick - Highwoods)

Dart SLF/Caetano HX51 LRK has been repainted, renumbered to 512 (was 106) and has received lilac branding for route 6 (Old Heath - Town Centre). LED displays have replaced manual blinds.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to John Podgorski and Russell Young

Stephensons of Essex

After preparation, the new Enviro 200, 421 (EU09 NYO) entered service on Friday August 14. It is expected to replace Dart SLF 450 (P749 HND) which is now listed for disposal.

Leyland Olympian 682 (C382 SAO) has been withdrawn and sold to Axe Vale Coaches, Axebridge, Somerset. Volvo B10M/Van Hool coach 133 (A14 SOE) has been sold to Coach Choice Ltd, Wolverhampton, and dealer stock B10M/Plaxton G479 FWC to Gary Bishop (Bishops Travel), Downham Market, Suffolk.

Four deckers were in use on shuttles from Chelmsford to Hylands Park for the V (music) Festival on August 22/23.

A further new Scania decker is expected in October.

Ian Ransom with thanks to Lyn Watson

Trustybus / Centrebus

Control passed to Centrebus of Leicester from 24 August, after Galleon Travel Ltd. went into liquidation. A new company, Galleon Travel 2009 Ltd. is continuing services, still under the Trustybus name. Three of the newest vehicles are now in the Centrebus orange/blue livery, with Trustybus vinyls.

Acquired from Metroline is Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton R141 RLY.

Scania K114/Irizar YN53 CEX has been sold.

Ian Ransom, David Harman, with acknowledgements to LOTS

Essex County Buses / ECB

Essex County Buses Ltd., of Henham, Bishops Stortford, Herts., began operating two town services, 81/2 in Bury St Edmunds on 2nd September. These compete with existing First

Eastern Counties services. Former Stansted Transit Plaxton Darts T74/75 WWV, UVG Dart T414 LGP and MAN/MCV AE08 DLF are in use in a red/cream livery layout, reminiscent of the Eastern National "badger" era scheme. They bear large "?" fleetnames. This refers to a passenger competition to choose a new logo for the operation. The operating centre is Woodlands Farm, The Street, Sheering, Bishops Stortford.

As noted in this month's Service News, a Chelmsford town service, City 42, has now been registered over the existing First 42 from 3 October. We await developments with interest.

David Harman with acknowledgements to East-Anglia-Buses y-group

National Express

■ NATIONAL EXPRESS OPERATIONS LTD.

Fleet numbering

In 8/09, the SC (Volvo B12B/Caetano Levante) class was reclassified as the CO class, with the same fleet numbers as before.

Allocations

7/09 : SC41-6 : FM-ST.

Liveries

Branded for A6/A9: SC3, SC13, SC22, SC32, SC34, SC35, SC41-6. It is believed that all

Stansted-based Caetano Levantes have been branded for the A6/A9 London services.

Debranded: 7/09 : SC27-31/4.

To new National Express livery: LK 53 KWA.

Disposals

7/09 : SC27-31/4 to Bruce of Shotts.

by 7/09 : D22 (R200 SPK) to Olympian Coaches, Harlow; re-registered to WKZ 2463 by 8/09.

by 8/09 : D304/14 (Y304/14 HUA) to Olympian Coaches, Harlow.

John Podgorski

NIBS

Leyland Olympian/ECW C51/73 CHM have been withdrawn. With all four Dominators out of use, this means the end of Gardner-engined vehicles in this fleet.

Ian Ransom

Stansted Transit

T13 VCC and T13 VVC have gone to Home Counties Travel, Heydon by 07/09. As noted above, Darts T74/75 WWV, T414 LGP and MAN/MCV AE08 DLF are now with Essex County Buses Ltd., Henham, Herts.

Ian Ransom

Ensignbus

DEALER STOCK MOVEMENTS

Vehicles in *from*

East London Bus Group: Tridents T664/80/2/5/7/92/7 KPU, Delta J711 CYG; Scania RDZ 6119/20/2-4/6-8, Olympians R122/3 EVX

Geldards Coaches, Leeds: Olympians G760 VRT, G365 YUR
"Glasgow Corporation Transport" (M Roulston), Beith: RML2677

Herschel School, Slough: Dennis Javelin K662 PHW
Stagecoach East Midlands: Volvo B10L L456 JCK, Volvo B10M K733 DAO.
Stagecoach East: Volvo B10Ms N813 DNE, N206 DTU, N326 VMU

Vehicles out

to

Darts R451 / 68 LGH: **Ace Travel**, Liverpool.
 Tiger XEF 11Y, Javelin K662 PHW: **Amber Coaches**, Rayleigh, Essex
 Darts R472/83/86 LGH:
 Dublin Olympian 96-D-258/83 now N694/761 JNO with
am-pm Travel, Birmingham
 Volvo B10B M101 UKX, Volvo B6 N326 HUA:
Jim Bell Coaches, Hull
 Dart M459LLJ, Olympian G365YUR: **A&P Brown**, Barway, Cambs.
 Darts R462/84 LGH: **Centrebus**, Harlow
 Volvo B6 L67 UNG: **Charter Travel**, Royston
 Volvo B10B M38 PVN: **Coastal Liner**, Wolverhampton
 Darts V682 FPO, W483 OUF: **Cotswold Green**, Nailsworth, Gloucs.
 Scania M169 GRY: **Countryliner**, Guildford
 Olympians P412/4 KSX: **Fishwicks**, Leyland
 Trident T694 KPU: **Fords Coaches**, Althorne, Essex
 Olympians G704/10 TCD: **Freedom Travel**, Ely, Cambs.
 Tridents T688/93 KPU: **Garnett**, Bishop Auckland, Co.Durham
 Olympians P602/8 CAY: **Heddingham Omnibuses**, Essex.
 Trident PO51 UMS: **Kime**, Folkingham, Lincs.
 Solo V648 EEF: **Little Jims Buses**, Hemel Hempstead
 Olympians P417/21/3/7 KSX: **On-a Mission Coaches**, Letchworth
 Dart V158 MVX: **Padarn Bus**, Llanberis
 Volvo B10Ms N206 TDU, N813 DNE, N326 VMS:
Peoples Bus, Liverpool
 Dublin Olympian 98-D-20422 now S246 YOO with
Redbridge Transport
 Darts N414/24 MBW: **Regal Busways**, Chelmsford
 Olympian J199 YSS: **Scotbus**, Inverness
 Dublin Olympian 98-D-20397 now R114 LHK with
Stanley Transport, Co.Durham
 Tigers B124 BOO, F148 SPV: **Tourmaster**, Peterborough
 Dart EU06 KOW: **Travelsure**, Alnwick, Northumberland
 BMC Falcons CN04 XCK/L: **TWH Travel**, Noak Hill, Essex
 Dublin Olympian 97-D-373 now R95 LHK with
Herschel School, Slough
 Bristol VR SGR 780V: **Prosolve Consulting**, London, W1

RML2677: **Ambassatours**, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.
DAFs KUI 9267, J711 CYG, Scania RDZ 6119/21/2/4/6:
Geoff Ripley, Barnsley

■ **ENSIGN BUS CO. LTD., Purfleet**

Disposals

Metroliner 464 (864 DYE) to Shoreline Suncruisers, Scarborough; registration to be retained.

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

Other Operators

- 24x7 Elsenham** VW Caravelle K380 CAV has been sold.
- AAK TRANSPORT/ALAN MINIBUSES, Shotgate** Recently acquired are DIG 6213 (J430 WFA) a Mercedes Benz 709D/Plaxton and M319 WKA a Renault Trafic.
- AC ROSS, Braintree** Acquired is Ford Transit AO05 UNM.
- AIR CONNECTIONS, Wendons Ambo** Acquired is Ford Transit MF06 ZGC.
- AIRLUX EXECUTIVE CARS, Gt Dunmow** Acquired is Mercedes Benz Vito EX55 RUA (non PSV).
- APT COACHES, Rayleigh** Volvo B10M/Jonckheere Y717 HWT has been sold to Laser Minicoaches, Llanharry.
- BLUE DIAMOND, Harlow** Dennis Dart/Plaxton M96 WBW has been withdrawn. Mercedes Benz 811D/ Wadham Stringer, M93 JHB is back in use.
- CEDRIC, Ardleigh** Acquired ex Trathen, Plymouth is SE51 DZA a Volvo B12(T)/Jonckheere. Volvo B12(T)/Van Hool YIL 7758 (N316 BYA) has been sold for scrap, following severe fire damage.
- ENIGMA TRAVEL, Colchester** Acquired from PDQ, Colchester is Iveco minibus R824 GKX and unusual Isuzu Nipper/Leicester Carriage Builders R767 TKX.
- FLAGFINDERS, Braintree** Acquired ex Stagecoach Manchester, is Scania N112/ East Lancs E706 EFG.
- FLORIDA, Halstead** An impressive addition is Neoplan Starliner YN54 JTX, from Ellison, St Helens. It is used as the Peterborough United FC team coach.
- GROUP TAXIBUS, Chelmsford** Acquired from sister company Excellent Connections, Edinburgh is AE54 FMG a Mercedes Benz 0814D/Eurocoach.
- LCB TRAVEL, Harlow** Mercedes Benz 413CDI/Excel W724 WAK has been sold.
- LODGE, High Easter** Acquired from Talisman, Gt Bromley is J534 CEV, a Leyland Olympian/Alexander.
- MALCOLMS BLUE BUS, Clacton-on-Sea** Mercedes Benz 709D/Wright TXI 7874 has been sold to Fowler, Holbeach Drove.
- MORTLOCK, Linford** Acquired from PD Minibuses, Margate is Mercedes Benz 811D/Optare MJZ 3812 (E402 YNT).
- NEW HORIZON, FRATING** Dennis Dart/Plaxton M76 VJO has been withdrawn, following accident damage and has been sold for scrap. Fleetnumbers are M61 VJO initially 26 but now 61; M63 VJO initially 27 but now 63; M65 VJO - 31; M76 VJO - 32; N632 JNO - 23; N638 JNO - 12; N657 JNO - 25; N661 JNO - 24.
- O'TOOLE, Navestockside** Acquired from Pavilion Travel, Ditchling Common is YN56 FEK a Scania K124EB/Irizar.
- PDQ, Colchester** VW Transporter MM05 YNP has been sold.
- SIMONS BUS, Wickford** Acquired is LF07 BMU a LDV Maxus.
- SINNOTT, Molehill Green** Acquired from R&R Warminster is Mercedes Benz 811D/Plaxton XCZ 4146 (N275 KAM).
- SJS TRAVEL, Chelmsford** This new operator has LDV Convoy P4 SJS (LJ51 YBB).
- STANSTED COACH & CARRIAGE, Birchanger** Acquired ex Bliss Travel, London is former Cardiff City Optare MetroRider L105 GBO, while from an unknown owner is LDV Convoy T441 FOW.
- TALISMAN, Gt Bromley** Acquired from Westbus, London is L959 WGK (New to Reading as L751 FRD) a DAF DB250/Optare. Leyland Olympian/Alexander. J605 CEV has gone to Impact, Perivale. This ends operation of the type here (see

Lodges entry above). Volvo Olympian/
Alexander L972 MSC has gone to
Holloways Coaches, Scunthorpe.

TENDRING TRAVEL, Thorpe-le-Soken

LDV Convoy RN03 OCJ has been sold.

TONY GLEW, Great Tey Acquired from
Yelo, Braintree is T320 UEU a Mercedes
Benz 310D.

TRAN SAFE Gt Burstead This new
operator has Ford Transit RJ53 UOH.

TRAVELUX Stanford-le-Hope LAG

Panoramic SJI 4781 (new as E671 NVV)
has been sold.

TURNERS, Little Maplestead A second
Citroen Relay here, is T190 JRD.

VICEROY, Saffron Walden Recently
acquired is Scania L94/Irizar S331 SET.

YELO, Braintree LDV Convoy V239 MNM
has been sold.

*Ian Ransom with thanks to Dave Arnold,
Colin Sigston, PSV Circle*

Brightlingsea Buses

I grew up at No. 5 Regent Road, which my grandfather built in 1900, and which was my home from 1925 until I married in 1950, work and university apart from time to time. I remember the horse-drawn carts that brought the coal and took away the rubbish - when I was old enough it was my job to collect the horses' droppings for the garden. I was never interested in trains, but when I was quite small I used to run bus services in the garden, with a disused pram, a pushchair and a wheelbarrow. When I was five I started at the Wesleyan School in Church Road, going 'across the fields'. Then when I was about eight I started at Colchester Royal Grammar School Preparatory Department - the Pre - and that meant going by bus. Berry's.

I would catch the 8 am bus at the corner of Spring Road and Ladysmith Avenue. It was a single-decker, of course, with rear entrance, and the older boys sat on the back seat. Coming home was the 4.20 pm, generally without a conductor - at the newsagents opposite the road to The Hythe the driver would throw a bundle of newspapers over the top of the bus to be caught at the shop!

Apart from Berry's, with their impressive depot in Victoria Place, I can just remember the Silver Queen buses going to Clacton - there is a picture of one in my book *A Country Busman* (now, alas, out of print).

In due course Eastern National took over, and that meant the end of the 4.20 bus, so we had to leave school early. The hourly timings went to five minutes past. With double-deckers the boys went upstairs and the girls down, and on the top deck the Technical School boys sat at the back and we grammar-bugs were at the front, hurling things at each other, to the disadvantage of the High School boys, who sat in the middle. Once when throwing something I broke the front window with the back of my (gloved) hand - no one complained and I didn't have to pay. After a while the order was reversed, boys down, but not for long!

That is about all I can remember, except latterly, when I used to sit downstairs with my girl friend. But the buses were a world of their own.

John Hibbs

- **A W Berry & Sons** were pioneers, having started a horse bus service from West Mersea to Colchester in 1888. They placed a Daimler wagonette on this route in 1899, it being the first motor vehicle in the area. Routes were built up, linking Brightlingsea, Rowhedge, Fingringhoe and West Mersea with Colchester, and upon takeover by Eastern National (April 1937), an AEC Regal, three Dennis's, two Bedfords, two T.S.M.s, two Giflords, a Commer and a Morris passed into ENOC stock. The Brightlingsea garage in Victoria Place and office were retained by ENOC for some years, but Berry premises in Colchester and West Mersea were not acquired. (*The Years Between - Vol.2*, RJ Crawley, DR MacGregor and FD Simpson, Oxford Publishing, 1984). *David Harman*

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

by the Revd. Terry Challis

Chapter 5 : Relationships with Eastern National renewed : 1965

(The previous part of this story was in Essex Bus News issue 544, August 2009)

My year at the Bernard Gilpin Society at Durham came to an end in June 1965 and the next part of my theological education at St. Aidan's College Birkenhead was due to begin in September. In the meantime it was essential that I should get some seasonal work in order to remain financially solvent. The logical thing was to try to do something that was both seasonal and enjoyable. I therefore applied to the Clacton Garage of Eastern National as a seasonal conductor.

My application was successful and on the first Monday of my vacation I joined the conductors' training course at Clacton Bus Station. The course lasted one week and began with an arithmetic test, which I passed. We then went on to learn how to use the Setright Speed ticket machine and how to fill in the way-bill. We were also taught how to read time-tables and fare-tables. Of course this was not difficult for me having worked as a schedules clerk. I had also had some experience of fare-tables as the whole of the traffic office at Chelmsford had done overtime preparing new fare-tables each time there was a fare-revision (increase!). In those days they had to be submitted to the Traffic Commissioner for approval.

We were told that way-bills should be filled in at every fare-stage which seems amazing today and was very optimistic then. We were also taught how to make out transfer way-bills and transfer tickets. These were used if it was necessary to transfer passengers from one bus to another. This would happen as the result of an accident or when a duplicate journey was cut short when there were not enough passengers to justify two buses. They would also be used when another crew were due to take over a bus en-route: such as on services 19,19A and 53. Fortunately, I never had to issue a transfer way-bill or transfer tickets. I cannot

remember issuing them on the Clacton Town services where the changeover was at the bus station. Perhaps I should have done! I imagine such practices became redundant on buses years ago! I seem to remember that a short time was allocated to route learning.

After a week of training, we were sent out on to the road. However, it was not as brutal as it may sound, as the first week was spent with a senior conductor who acted as a tutor. I was placed with Reg Turner whose regular driver was Reg Old. They were a bus crew of great experience and I could not have hoped for a better introduction to the practical work of being a bus conductor. Reg Turner was a dry "old stick" with an understated sense of humour. Reg Old had a certain authority but was also a very pleasant and supportive driver. They were a great team. I was fortunate enough to work some overtime with Reg Old later on in the summer.

Our first journey was a works service to a factory at Beaumont near Great Oakley and our bus was a Bristol K5G of the ONO batch with, of course, an ECW low-bridge body. After dropping off our passengers at Beaumont, we ran "dead" (light) to Great Oakley to work a peak hour journey to Clacton on service 106. This was a busy journey and as it was Monday morning, it involved the issue of some weekly tickets [these were card tickets issued by inserting them into a slot on the front of the ticket machine, then running off the appropriate value ticket, which printed onto the card rather than the ticket roll].

Reg followed me around the bus to make sure that I was issuing the tickets correctly and giving the right change. After all it was his shift and he would have been responsible for any shortage of money when it came to paying in. The rest of the week was spent on the usual round of shifts on regular rota and we worked on routes to Walton and



5 day weekly (khaki) stamped in the Setright. 6 day weeklies (yes - some people worked 6 days a week then!) were white. ~ David Harman

Colchester as well as some more local services.

It was an enjoyable week and, by the end of it, I must have passed the test as Reg let me run the bus more or less by myself. There were other advantages of spending one's first five days with a regular crew. They introduced me to the secrets of Clacton Garage in Castle Road, the Canteen at the bus station and the process of paying-in.

On the Saturday of this week I was out on the road by myself, or rather with my regular driver, Harry Lau, who was a friend whom I had met through the local church. He was an Asian and a very fast driver. We had asked to be put together as a crew. On occasions, when working on Service 111, Harry would stop off at Coppins Green, buy

some fish and chips, wedge them next to the engine in the cab to keep them warm and eat them in the rest room at the bus station. After about one month, Harry decided that it was time for him to move on and I was put with another driver. I cannot remember his name but we got on well together and worked as a crew for the next two months. However, on overtime it was not unusual to have to work with a different driver.

At this point I should explain that in those days there were three rotas at Clacton Garage during the summer season. There was a One Man Operator (OMO) rota, the Regular crew rota and the Seasonal rota. The OMO men mainly operated the Point Clear (101A), St. Osyth Beach (101B) and Burrsville Circular services, although in the winter months they worked further afield. The Regular crews covered mainly the longer distance services and the Seasonal crews the town services. However, there was a certain amount of overlapping and seasonal crews were asked to do overtime on all services. Indeed on the evening of my first Saturday on the road, I worked a service to Walton on an FLE.

On the Seasonal Rota nearly every service we worked ended up at Jaywick Sands: indeed, on some duties we were there every hour! This was not as bad as it sounds as there was a cafe at the terminus that was well-tuned to ministering to the needs of thirsty bus-men and women on a five minute (or less) turn-round. The main services that we covered were the 110 (Holland to Jaywick via the Main Road and Clacton Hospital), the 111 (Holland to Wargrave Road), 112 (Holland to Jaywick via the sea front) and the 121 (Highfield Park Caravan Camp to Jaywick). All of these services operated via Clacton Bus Station and took one hour for a round trip. The tightest timings were on the 110 which had only a two minute turn round at each end and was a busy route. This pattern of services provided six buses each hour between Clacton and Jaywick although the 110 did not go via Pier Avenue. The Pier stop was the busiest for picking up passengers for Butlin's Holiday Camp.

Most of the vehicles were early post-war Bristol K5Gs with low-bridge bodies. One

that I remember well was 2247 (ONO52) which was the regular performer on the 110. She (2247) was a particularly smooth running bus for a K5G and the only rattles were from the front destination equipment which was a common cause of interior noise in those days.

However, my experience of new vehicles in 2009 is not much better! I am convinced that in new buses it is because they do not have bulk-heads to help hold them together. Towards the end of the RM days on the 11 in London, I travelled downstairs on a "short" Routemaster and the body was as "tight as a nut": no rattles at all. Returning to 2247, I was interested to discover that it was one of the K5Gs loaned to London Transport when new and that it operated from Catford (TL) Garage.

The 112 Sea Front service was operated by open-toppers. These were Leyland PD1s which had been converted from covered top vehicles by Eastern National. One of them was an ex-City example with a Beadle body

while the other one was an ex-Hicks vehicle with Leyland body. Both had started their lives as low-bridge buses. The conversion work was a fine testimony to the expertise of the Eastern National engineering department. They were 59 seaters. When the weather was wet or very cold, the open-toppers were replaced by normal closed-top buses if possible.

My eldest brother had, by this time, transferred from Hadleigh Garage to Clacton and was an OMO driver. However at times the OMO drivers worked overtime on double-deckers. He once commented that "the Leylands" were too fast for the sea front. What was needed was something that would just "jog along"! I think that he was right.

As already mentioned, seasonal crews were sometimes asked to work overtime, usually half of a shift, on the regular rota. I cannot remember working any further afield than Walton-on-Naze as a conductor, but most overtime seemed to be on town services and



The Leyland PD1 open toppers were in their final season on sea front duties when Terry worked on them. LEV 920 (1111, later 2101) was a Beadle bodied example new to City Coach Company. Open-topped in the winter of 1958, it was withdrawn at the end of the 1965 season. It has accumulated a few top deck passengers ready for a bracing ride to Holland on Sea.

Richard Delahoy collection, photographer not known

the Point Clear (101A) and St. Osyth Beach (101B) roads. Both of these services were operated by single-deckers, Bristol LSs and MWs.

Two incidents come to mind. First, on the last service to St. Osyth Beach one night, we had over 60 passengers on a 45 seater LS simply because we could not leave them behind! The regulation number of standing passengers at that time was eight. I believe it was five on London Transport.

Second, one evening, on a late Point Clear service, we were "jumped" on the outskirts of Clacton, on a very dark St. Osyth Main Road, by two "flying squad" inspectors from outside of the area. There was, presumably, a third one in a car somewhere as there were not many other buses around at that time of night. Whether it was a targeted inspection on me or not, I do not know! Anyway they found nothing wrong and went on their way. Perhaps the object of their inspection was the crew who should have been working the

shift, bearing in mind that we were on overtime.

We were warned about a number of practices for which there was no excuse. One was the issuing of "two-star tickets", that is tickets with no value on them but just two stars. If these were found on a bus that you had been working on, you would be looked at very closely. Another was a warning about running early. The explanation was simple. There are a hundred reasons for late running, but none for running early!

Turning to the fleet in the Clacton area at that time, I have already mentioned the vehicles on the town services. The OMO vehicles were Bristol LSs and MWs. If my memory serves me right, Bristol FLFs had been introduced and were used mainly on the Walton services along with Bristol LD Lodekkas. The Walton road always had the best buses.

The Eastern National Enthusiasts Group had



In Terry's time, Clacton's allocation include Bristol LS & MW buses for one man operated services but in this slightly earlier view, 1859 F (441, later 1244) was still crew operated. The left hand number track illustrates a peculiarity of CN depot, with some buses including 10, 11 & 12 on the blind in order to display 3 number plus suffix displays, such as 101B. Note also the watering can hanging from the wall, ready to top up thirsty buses!

Richard Delahoy collection, photographer not known



Clacton's allocation included some of the WNO batch of Bristol KSWs that had staggered seats upstairs. Here WNO 482, then numbered 1424 but 2381 by the time Terry worked there, stands in the Bus Station having arrived from Walton on the 107. As illustrated elsewhere in this issue, it was subsequently converted to open top and worked out its days on Clacton seafront duties.

Richard Delahoy collection, photographer not known

The staggered seat layout, seen here on the upper deck of now-preserved KSW VNO 857.

Richard Delahoy





ONO 71 laying over in the bus station at Clacton. In the close-up, taking a probably brief but well-earned rest, a Clacton conductor shows off the summer dust jacket, obligatory uniform cap and of course, the trusty Setright Speed ticket machine.

Richard Delahoy collection, photographer not known



In this black & white view, ONO 71 looks at home in the company of other standardised Bristol/ECW buses in Ipswich's Old Cattle Market bus station at the end of the long route 123 from Clacton. In colour, of course, the Tilling green & cream of EN's ONO 71 would have stood out like a sore thumb in the sea of red & cream ECOC buses - and even more so when parked up for the night in the ECOC garage in the town.

Mike Sutcliffe MBE, Richard Delahoy collection



been founded in 1964 - although Terry was unaware of us when working at Clacton - and from the Group news-sheets of the period, we can piece together the allocation at CN (including Dovercourt - DT) for the middle of his stint there, August 1965:

Double deck (38):

Bristol K: 2219, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2237, 2247, 2248, 2256
Bristol KS/KSW: 2301, 2323, 2338, 2339, 2354, 2358, 2360, 2370, 2381, 2384, 2385
Bristol LD Lodekka: 2422, 2423, 2504, 2506, 2509
Bristol FLF Lodekka: 2750, 2754, 2757, 2758, 2800, 2801, 2830, 2833, 2834
Open top Leyland PD1: 2101, 2105, 2110, 2112, 2113

Single deck bus (19):

Bristol LS bus: 1219, 1225, 1228, 1242
Bristol MW bus/DP: 1302, 1304, 1305, 1306, 1307, 1308, 1312, 1313, 1317, 1319, 1323, 1324, 1327, 1400, 1424

Coaches (14):

Commer Avenger: 101
Bristol LS: 316, 318, 326
Bristol MW: 337, 340, 341, 345, 346, 367, 378
Bristol RELH coach/DP: 400, 401, 1606

Although there were some Lodekkas at Clacton, all the regular vehicles on the Town Services, apart from the open-toppers, were of the low-bridge type. The upstairs was not easy for passengers and the person at the gangway end of the four passenger seat often had to hold on tight! This was not the case for passengers on the back seat which was tucked away from the gangway over the platform. Low-bridge vehicles had one advantage for conductors. The view of the platform in the mirror looking back down the gangway at the platform was excellent, better than on a high-bridge bus. It was therefore possible to "ring off" the bus (give the driver the starting signal) from the front of the bus upstairs. However, I am sure that such practices were not encouraged and in the event of a platform accident, the conductor would have been to blame. Having said that, I am sure that few conductors did not "yield to this temptation" when under pressure.

Another practice that was possible with half-

cab vehicles was to "ring off" by giving a couple of sharp taps with a half-a-crown (12.5p) coin or a two shilling (10p) piece on the driver's bulk-head window. This, again, was not a safe practice but a very tempting one. With the advent of the front entrance (FLF) Lodekkas, the driver could see the platform and often started when he could see that it was safe to do so. However, it was often advisable to give a tap on the small window on the drivers cab. Of course, when working on open-toppers the conductor could simply look over the side and see what was going on "down below" and "ring off" by giving the driver a couple of sharp taps on the driver's cab roof with his or her heel! This was another practice that was not recommended.

For some reason, at this time, the Clacton EN Area never had many Bristol KSWs. One of the last (WNO) batch of KSWs was at Walton garage. Six of the WNOs and three of the VNO batch (VNO 858-860), the latter for the 322 service (Braintree to London), had "staggered" seating upstairs. This was a device to try to allocate the correct and fair amount of seating to each passenger on the bench seats upstairs. It did that, but it was very difficult for passengers to get in and out, and it did not help in the collection of fares.

I think that the Massey Brothers solution to this problem was more successful. The later Southend Corporation buses had two x two seats upstairs with generous leg-room between them. This seemed quite successful to me.

These days (2009) low-bridge buses are often spoken of and written about as though travelling on them was something from the "dark ages". The impression is given that they were little more than cattle trucks. The fact of the matter is that for people who lived in places like Essex they were the norm. Until the advent of the Bristol "Lodekka" and later the Dennis Loline, the AEC Bridgemaster and the Leyland (Albion) Lowlander, low-bridge buses were the only way of providing an extra twenty (20) seats over those provided by single-deckers and cope with low bridges of which there are many. Low-bridge buses served us well: for

many of us, highbridge buses were unusual and appeared top heavy!

Walton garage had four double-deckers allocated to it, including the Lodekka I referred to in Chapter 3. Walton garage worked on the 107 Clacton to Walton route and also had some turns on the 105 from Walton to Colchester. Clacton also worked on the 105 as part of a long round trip: that is Clacton to Walton (107), Walton to Colchester and return (105) and then Walton to Clacton (107). Other garages that worked into Clacton were Dovercourt (104/106) and Colchester (19,19A and 53).

There was also an out-station that worked into Clacton, or rather, for most of its existence, its vehicle worked into Clacton. This was Ipswich. I do not know the dates when this sequence of events happened, but the general history was something like this. Traditionally an Eastern National double-decker was out-stationed at the Eastern Counties Ipswich Garage with an Eastern National crew. For years this crew worked the Ipswich end of service 123 (Clacton to Ipswich). The 123 was a long, 29 mile route, which made its way from Clacton to Ipswich by way of Thorpe-le-Soken, Tendring, Mistley, Manningtree, Brantham and Holbrook. This was in no way a direct route and the running time was one hour and forty-five minutes. What happened was that the Ipswich crew worked towards Clacton and changed over with a Clacton crew when they met. The second part of the Ipswich crew duty read something like this:-

DD1		
6.25pm	Car to Stand	
6.30pm	Towards Clacton: change over	123
CN Car	Return to Ipswich	123
8.30pm	Towards Clacton: change over	123
DD1	Return to Ipswich	123

10.15pm Car to Garage
10.20pm Sign Off
10.30pm Finish.

The arrangement was not quite as disorganised as it might seem, as the Ipswich and Clacton crews knew where the change-over point was on each particular journey [looking the timetable of the period, the 6.30pm and 8.30pm journeys from each end passed in Mistley]. They did not just drive until they met one another! I imagine that these change-overs were occasions when it was necessary to write up a transfer way-bill and leave it on the bus for the next conductor. On rest days and holidays, Eastern Counties provided the crew. The bus, which was out-stationed at Ipswich, was an early post-war Bristol K5G. At some time in the early 1960s, it was decided that the Ipswich crew should work through to Clacton on the evening journeys. This meant, of course, that the Clacton crews would work through to Ipswich. My brother told me that the first time that the Ipswich crew worked through to Clacton, all the crews at Clacton Bus Station turned out to cheer them in! Some years later, the 123 became a joint service with Eastern Counties taking on the responsibility for the Ipswich allocation.

After three interesting and enjoyable months, my time as a conductor at Clacton Garage came to an end. It was time for me to move to Birkenhead for the next part of my training for ordination. However, this period in my life proved to be very interesting both from a theological point of view and an "omnibological" point of view. It also turned out to be the saddest period in my life.

To be continued

*Edited by Richard Delahoy,
who supplied the photos*

Rear cover

Stephensons new Enviro 200, 421 (EU09 NYO) in Southchurch Road, Southend on 15th August.

196 (W396 RBB), one of two ALX400 Dennis Tridents transferred to Network Colchester from Arriva Northumbria, entered service on 8th September. Both are to be branded for route 8. Seen on the first day at Turner Road, Colchester. both: Russell Young

Former Stansted Transit routes



- (1) ~ *TWH Travel CN04 XCK*, one of two ex-Stagecoach South Wales (new to Glyn Williams) BMC Falcons (CN04 XCL is the other), at Harlow (Stewards), Commons Road on former Stansted Transit ECC contract route 392. 5th September.
- (2) ~ *Excel 529* on route 301 at Takeley, Parsonage Road, whilst on loan from Network Colchester to Excel, pending ex-Arriva London Darts entering service. both: Russell Young





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