ESSEX BUS NEWS

The Monthly Magazine Of The **ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP** AUGUST 1990

(Formerly the EASTERN NATIONAL ENTHUSIASTS GROUP) **ISSUE No.** 316



An unusual working on 14.7.90. was that of BD 1902 on service 400 replacing a failed Southend Olympian. It is seen departing Basildon Bus Station.

(I Ransom)

ROCHFORD MEETING

These recommence on 11.9.90. at Freight House with a members slide evening. You are invited to bring along your latest holiday slides. Freight House is situated adjacent to Rochford Station. As an extra incentive bar facilities are also available.

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Introduction

This magazine sees the launch of Thamesway and creates a problem in how to report this months news and other items. As most of the vehicle items occured before the start of Thamesway operations these are reported under the Eastern National heading.
The fleet allocation due to appear next month has been brought forward to this month as a way of showing vehicles passing from Eastern National to Thamesway. I trust that members will not be too confused by the current situation, if you require further information please write to the editor and I will attempt to answer your questions via the magazine.

Report on the Ipsthorne Connection Tour- 17th June

The mode of transportation for this tour was Leyland Lynx 1400 (E400 HWC) from Hadleigh- which may prove to be the last Eastern National vehicle to be hired by the group as vehicles for our tours are normally provided from Hadleigh.
After a photo halt at Newbury Park to capture a Metrorider on LRT route 66 the first stop was at Fords of Althorne where the proprietor was in attendence to present his recently acquired former Southend Astromega for the cameras. Views of the other double deckers in the fleet were then secured. The arrival at Colchester was timed to coincide with the layover period of the Blue Triangle RF on Essex Sunday route 612, which was perfectly positioned for the sun. Eastern National Olympian 4004, in advertisment livery for Auto Trader, was also made available. We then made our way to Ipswich for an extended visit to Ipswich Buses with Stephen Cobb, Traffic Officer as our host. A good selection of the Ipswich fleet were positioned for the cameras as well as a pair of Leyland Nationals from the Suffolk County Council fleet. Dennis Falcon saloon 116 (E116 KDX) was then hired for a tour of the town which included stops at the transport museum at Priory Heath and Tower Ramparts Bus Station. The last visit of the day was to the new Eastern National garage at Clacton, where Coastline minibuses and former Milton Keynes City Bus VRTs were the points of interest. A speedy return home then ended an interesting day.

Report on Eastern National (South) Tour- 14th July

The vehicle for this tour was former EN Bristol FLF 1640 (RWC 607), with a proud Ted Miles at the controls, this vehicle having been the overall winner at St Albans on Sunday 8th July. As an added bonus the former EN Bristol L (ONO 49) followed to give passengers a chance to sample a very different Bristol.
Our first visit of the day was to Southend depot, a first for the majority on board following its opening on the site of the former Prittlewell depot a few years ago. Both of the London Express Olympians were present, although out of service with mechanical problems and we were informed that both will be repainted in the very near futute. It was then on to Hadleigh where the depots towing truck was the main subject of attention whilst inside Olympian 4006 was under repair following accident damage. A visit

to Basildon followed with Bristol K AJN 825 being made available for photographs, after which time was spent in the Bus Station for a photo stop. It was then onto Brentwood where the recently acquired ex MOD Bedford was photographed. Our vehicles became the subject of interest for some staff at the depot who remembered working on the vehicles being used on the tour. It was then time for a short photo stop in Romford where Mercedes minibus on the 193, Ensigns and a County Lynx were all to be seen. A run along the 251 route to Shotgate followed, to enable a visit to Nelsons where the owner made us most welcome and the Bristol RE was very much in evidence. Finally, a visit to the Stephensons yard at Rochford was made where the REs and VR were photographed. The Lynxline RE LHT 166L was then used for the journey back to Southend Central via Newington Avenue. A very enjoyable day with rides on three generations of Bristol vehicles and our thanks to Ted Miles, Don Sterling and Richard Delahoy for making vehicles available.

PRESERVED VEHICLES- FUTURE TOURS

Following the above tour, I regret to report that owing to an act of vandalism on the upper deck of the FLF, we have been banned from using any vehicle under the care of ENPG on future tours. It may well be that nobody connected with the tour scratched a name on an upper deck window and I would like to think that this is the case. If you saw anybody who you think may have acted in such a way then please write to the magazine editor.

CHELMSFORD MEETING

This will be held on Tuesday September 25th at the home of Colin Sigston, 62 Plantation Road, Boreham, commencing at 8pm. Evening services on service 53 pass his front door for those coming by public transport.

EVENTS DIARY

9.9.90. Norwich. British Bus Day at Norwich Show Ground.
16.9.90. Sheringham. Vintage Vehicle Rally. North Norfolk Rly.
Amersham. Vintage Bus running day.
Amberley. 75th anniversary of Southdown.
22.9.90. Hoddesdon. RM operation of routes 310A/B.
23.9.90. Harrow Weald. Open day moved again! Now 14.10.90.
29.9.90. Aylesbury. Luton & District open day.
30.9.90. Woburn. Showbus.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please note that Andy Meadows address is now:-
10 Harvard Court, Boston Avenue, Rayleigh, SS6 9ST.

OBITUARY

It is with regret that we announce the death of John Jepson, former Chief Engineer of Eastern National.

During his time with the company he took a very active interest in the group and gave up his own time to give us guided tours of Central Works, as well as an endless supply of information.
He passed away on 21st May 1990 aged 70 following a long illness. We send our condolences to Mrs Jepson and family.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I agree with Michael Allen in his letter in the July mag. that railway items are not really appropriate for an EBEG publication. If in some way such items were bus related they would be of some use. Future plans for light railway/rapid transit proposals fall into this category, as they might replace buses, making this a bus related topic.
You say, in your role as editor that the 'Public transport in Essex' section would fill space yet I myself have sent a few articles which have not been published which have done the same and were as readable as anything else in the magazine. I do not think you are encouraging people to send in material with this sort of attitude. Can such a small group as ours afford to be so choosy when at least the articles I have taken the trouble to submit were at least to do with buses.
On another matter, I have still not been credited with a certain news item and suggestions I made for improvements to the magazine, all of which I see you have implemented.
With regards to the Essex Bus Review section I hardly think one particular article in four months is my idea of a review section. If this is not to be expanded by including other items then I do not know why you are pesisting with it. It makes me wonder whether the club is there for just a small clique and is not open to anyone with something original to say.
Before Essex Bus News became a magazine the buses themselves seemed to be of prime importance, these days too much space is devoted to endless service revisions and adverts for Tom Sangster. Anyone interested in this only has to look in the free sheet newspapers delivered to virtually every home in the county. To merely repeat them with no added comment or leaving out some of the minor changes is just wasteful duplication.
I don't know what other members think or would like to see printed but I believe various changes need to be made and a clearer idea of future policy needs to be decided upon. By printing this letter openly in the magazine others could add their comments too. If this letter goes the same way as my articles I will conclude that democracy is dead within the EBEG and will think more than twice about renewing my subscription.

Peter Oughton

Editor: Many thanks to Peter for his letter and the points that he makes, and I hope that the following points will answer your questions.

1. I accept the criticism of the Public transport in Essex feature and this will be discontinued.
2. My apologies for the lack of a credit and the exclusion of a couple of articles that you have written, I appreciate the time

and trouble that has been taken writing them and I hope to include one of them in the very near future.

3. I accept that the Essex Bus Review section has been slow getting off the ground. This has been due to a lack of space to include features of a large size and the fact that with the exception of the articles you have written only one other has been submitted.

4. The lack of new vehicles and hence a lack of disposals has led to a drying up of vehicle news. Service revisions are included as a large number of members live outside the county and commercially registered services are usually excluded in the local papers. Tom Sangster adverts are included as these adverts are paid for and hence reduce members subscriptions.

5. As I have written many times before in the magazine members news and views are always welcome. I cannot see everything that goes on in the area. A glance back at this years magazines shows contributions from the following numbers of group members excluding committee members:-

Jan 11, Feb 9, Mar 8, Apr 10, May 11, Jun 9, Jul 7. This out of a membership of about 230. This is not meant as a criticism of the membership but shows the problems faced in trying to report up to date items with so little information.

EASTERN NATIONAL

Eastern National/ Thamesway

With effect from 29th July 1990 Thamesway became operational which resulted in a reorganisation of operating areas.

Eastern National

North Essex covering Braintree, Colchester, Harwich and Clacton.
Mid Essex & East Herts covering Chelmsford, Maldon and Bishops Stortford.
Robin Orbell the former Operations Director takes over as Managing Director from Geoffrey Clarkson who has left the operational side of the company, to take a role as a non-executive director.

THAMESWAY

Brentwood & East London covering Brentwood, Ponders End and Walthamstow.
South Essex covering Basildon and Southend.
Peter Edwards formerly regional director for Badgerline at Bristol takes the position of Managing Director.
Thamesway have PTNC4/17/4428 as an operators disc number covering 174 vehicles.
Vehicles will continue to operate in yellow and green with a Thamesway fleetname.
All vehicles are carrying Thamesway vinyl fleetnames and logo, these being green on yellow for application on yellow painted areas or yellow on green for application on green painted areas. Fleetnames have been applied in the standard positions on

vehicles above the door on single deck vehicles and to the rear of the door on deckers and dual purpose tigers. Fleetnames are also applied to the rear of Lynx and Olympian coaches. Certain vehicles have the incorrect vinyl applied but it is not intended to list them here. Fleetnames have not as yet, been applied to the front of vehicles. Vinyls were applied to all vehices on July 29th, with vehicles required for service on this day being the first to be treated. There appears to be a shortage of minibus size vinyls as a number of vehicles are running without fleetnames.
The Citybus name has been dropped with vehicles carrying Thamesway names on LRT services. Indeed the name had been removed from a number of vehicles before July anyway.
Leyland National 2 1930 which is on loan from Braintree to Basildon has Thamesway vinyls, but this vehicle should have reverted to Eastern National at Braintree by the time these notes are read. Uniforms are not expected to be changed in the near future.
Legal lettering on vehicles remains as Eastern National until services can be registered by Thamesway. This is expected to occur during late August. G Clarksons name has been removed from the legal lettering on both EN and Thamesway vehicles.

Gurna

The holding company set up when Eastern National joined the private sector remains to provide support services to both companies. Geoffrey Wilcox formerly Company Secretary and Chief Accountant heads this Central Services Company.

Acquired Vehicles

The ex Badgerline minibuses are C432/41/57 BHY.

Reallocations

7/90 0244 Pool- BD; 0754 Pool- BD then BD- Pool (EN); 1721 & 1725 Pool- Pool (Thamesway).
All other pool and withdrawn vehicles remain part of the EN fleet. This includes 1737 which remains at Hadleigh.
In response to a members query the swap of 3082 & 3092 between CF & BD is due to 3082 being tachograph fitted.

Repaints

W.E. 28.7.90. 1831 & 1939 both at CN.

1839 has lost its Laidlaw unibus adverts.
The allover advert on 4004 for Autotrader is of some note as the rear registration plate has been repositoned to the engine cover.

Withdrawn vehicles

The location of withdrawn vehicles during July was as follows:-

Hadleigh 1737
Clacton 1751 1928 3048 3051 3062

Pool vehicles

Observations of pool vehicles in July were :-

1721 BE, 1725 HH, 1740 CF, 3033 ??, 3049 ??, 2383 CR, 2384 CR, 3500 CN, 3501 CN.

0121 is now in use as a fleet car at New Writtle Street!
1721 remained in use at BE during July, but will be move to BN in August to allow 1930 to return.
The KSWs often appear in carnivals etc. so can be seen at almost any depot being prepared for events.

Tachograph Fitted Vehicles

The following vehicles are currently fitted with tachographs:-
0200-60, 0750-56, 0800-04, 1110-30, 1308-10, 1400-05, 1501, 1779/80/89/91/96/97/1800-03/10/25/26/67/82/94/99/1905/11/13/15/16 1918/20/22/23/35/36, 2200-03, 2383/4, 3050/52/53/55-60/62/63/65 3066-68/70-85/94/96/3100-02/04-07/09/10/13/15/16/18-21/23-26/3204 3205-18, 3500/1, 4000-21, 4500-12

General

Running numbers are now in use at Walthamstow with VRs on service 20/275 carrying 1 to 10 and LNs on 20/167 carrying 21 to 29. Minibus services do not yet carry running numbers.
Ponders End recently received an award for operation of service W9. The commendadion came as part of the National Motivation Week looking for a "Caring Bus Staff Award". The overall winner in London was Upton Park for operation of service X15. Eighty routes were nominated including ENs 193, 379 and W9.
Basildon Leyland Tigers 1116 and 1124 were involved in a head on collision at Stifford Clays whilst operating service 153 in early July. Both vehicles are out of service at Basildon.
1793 now has the rear registration plate mounted flush with the body instead of being recessed. The reason for this is unknown, but may be as a result of accident damage.
The Thorley fete was held on 15.7.90. and featured 2383 in the parade and 4510 being used by the organisers. This vehicle was in fact parked on Friedberg Avenue part of its normal 712 route!
EN appeared to have been one of the sponsors of this years event. The Herts & Essex Observers open top RM was also present.

Service Vehicles

Further details of Bedford 9012 are now available. Its former MOD identity was 47 AC 63. Repaint and conversion to a driver training vehicle was carried out at Maldon during April.
Withdrawn Bristol VR 9003 was noted at Basildon during July. This vehicle is of note as it has never carried 9003 as a fleetnumber, having retained 3003 throughout its life.

Unusual Workings

4.7.90. DT 1754 on service 82. (CR operated).
8.7.90. CR 4501 on 53A. This service is CF operated on Sundays. It is thought that this vehicle must have failed on Saturday and was being returned to CR to allow the driver to return with a CF vehicle.
12.7.90. CF 4005 on service 53. This being the normal exchange with CR when Essex are playing at Colchester. This year the exchange has been with 4004 which was parked out of use with an 'On Tow' sign in the rear until at least 22.7.90.
15.7.90. BD 0238 in driver training yard, Chelmsford.
21.7.90. BE 4017 on Asda service. (A VR being normal).
29.7.90. CN 0202 & 0214 in driver training yard, Chelmsford.
29.7.90. SD 4002 on service 251
30.7.90. SD 3090 on service 251
31.7.90. SW 3070 on either 152 or 154 (CF duty).

0244 was used for driver training during its spell as a pool vehicle.
BS 1914 has been in use at Braintree during mid to late July.
CF 4005 was also in use at Colchester on various days during June.
Recent loans at Bishops Stortford include CF 1851 and BE 1931 both noted on 14.7.90. operating 309 and 333 respectively.
CF 3069 was a more unusual loan at BS during mid June.
BN 2200 when fitted for bus work appears to work services 233 & 234. CF 2201 when so fitted is normally on service 46. Does CN 2202 ever operate on stage work?
For the benefit of members who may not be aware, the driver training yard is located in New Writtle Street, Chelmsford.

Subsequent Disposals

0603 (C603 NPU) Midland Fox, M183, 3/90, ex. Alpine, Llandudno. Painted red with a yellow front and striped, although not in Fox Cub style, allocated to Market Harborough.

1206 (BNO 692T) Allocated unofficial fleetnumber 72 by Rainworth Travel.
1211 (BNO 697T) Rover, Bromsgrove, 4/90, ex. Key, Worcester.
1306 (LLT 347V) Kassbohrer (dealer), 2/90, ex. Cowdrey, Gosport.
1708 (WNO 557L) Salvation Army, Leicester (N-PSV), 4/90, ex. Midland Red (North), 798.
1727 (NEV 684M) Scrapped by Pride of the Road, Royston, by 3/90
1731 (NEV 688M) Morris (dealer), Carlton, by 4/90, ex. Driffield & District, Langtoft.
2892 (WNO 982F) Written off after fire, by Top Deck Travel, Horsell Common, Woking, 3/90.
3010 (SMS 36H) Noted at the Aberystwyth depot of Crosville Wales on 18.6.90.

Southend Transport

These notes are correct to July 30.

Vehicles

NEW: Olympians 262-5 were due to be displayed to the press on August 1 and then to enter service that day. The chassis designation is ONCL10/1RZ (ie Cummins L10 engine and ZF gearbox, the same spec. as 261). Body numbers are 1115-8 in order.

MODIFIED: the last of the Caribbean bodied Tigers (549) is about to be repainted into the new coach livery, leaving only the Dominant and Laser bodied coaches in the old, predominately yellow, scheme.

A more subtle alteration to the coach fleet is the fitting of new, clearer, number scrolls which contain two sets of numbers - once white on black, and then again yellow on black.

WITHDRAWN:

Fleetlines 208/11/2/6 should be withdrawn on July 31 - details of their disposal next month.

The Freight Rover Sherpa noted last month (D180 DRE) has not in fact entered the fleet but has been sold Apix (the purchasers of Astro 603), otherwise known as K Line (London E10). It was acquired by ST from Transcity, Kent.

605 (C256 FHJ) was withdrawn late in July and placed in store - marking the end of a very interesting and unusual era.

SUBSEQUENT DISPOSALS: the City Pacer acquired by Lancaster City from Derby City is confirmed as the ex ST 404 (E404 BHK), now LCT's M11.

General

Diversions have inevitably affected ST's services with the recent spate of carnivals, eg Canvey and Benfleet. Seafront 67 will be disrupted by Southend Carnival on August 11 and probably by the torchlight carnival the following Saturday evening. The 67 had already been messed up on Sun 8/7 and Sat/Sun 21-22/7 when Western Esplanade was closed for displays. The latter was due to an exhibition by the police, which included a mock road traffic accident involving a double decker (which, from the press photos, looks very like Ensign series 3 VRT/ECW CJO 473R)! A further diversion on July 28 (evening)/29 (day) saw 7 and 8 removed from the Shoebury Asda store whilst the road was resurfaced, running instead via N. Shoebury Cnr.

News of former ST staff is that ex DGM Mike Wescombe is on the move again, going north from Maidstone to become Depot General Manager for Greater Manchester Buses at Queens Road.

Publicity news is that a new Silver Card leaflet/application form has been issued. Silvercard, it will be recalled, gives unlimited travel on ST commercial services east of Basildon for £8-25 a week, £30 a month or £300 annually (Thamesway's Bus Hoppa [which is only valid east of Tarpots] is the the same price, although not available for more than a month at a time).

COLCHESTER BOROUGH TRANSPORT

A further demonstrator is F100 AKB a Renault/Northern Counties single decker numbered D32. It arrived on 17.7.90. for a three week trial.
The accident repairs to Lynx 35 are almost complete and this vehicle is expected to return to service in early August.
101 was on the Milton Keynes excursion on 7.7.90. 103/4 are the more common vehicles for Coachways excursions.

SERVICE REVISIONS IN ESSEX

Cambus have taken over the majority of Premier Travels services and vehicles. Premier have retained their airport services and hence all local routes in the North West of the county formerly operated by Premier are now being operated by Cambus. The actual registrations of these services commenced on 2.7.90. did Cambus commence operations before this date please?

Saffron Walden, Braintree

1,2 Renumbered 31,32 and revised timetable introduced by Cambus with effect from 28.8.90.
16 Service withdrawn by Cambus with effect from 28.8.90.
17 Withdrawn by Millers on 29.7.90.
18 Revised timetable introduced by Millers on 30.7.90.
22 Revised route and timetable introduced by Cambus from 28.8.90.
34 NEW SERVICE. Introduced by Eastern National between Braintree and White Courts Estate using minibuses. Operation is half hourly Monday to Saturday and commenced 19.8.90.
37-39 NEW SERVICES. Introduced by Eastern National on 19.8.90. using minibuses and replaces Witham Town service 337.
53 From 19.8.90. Eastern National have withdrawn the 1018 & 1618 ex Witham and the 1305 ex Colchester.
112 Cambus introduce a revised timetable on 28.8.90.
337 Withdrawn see above.
354-6 Revised timetable introduced by EN on 19.8.90.

Colchester

124 NEW SERVICE. Introduced by Eastern Counties from Colchester to Ipswich, Lowestoft and Yarmouth on Thursdays only from 26.7.90. to 6.9.90.
The Saturdays only Park & Ride service was introduced on a permanent basis from 28.7.90. Operation is by Eastern National under contract to CBC. The service is numbered 555 and fares are 40p return adult, 20p child with 90p covering all occupants of one car. The first day of operation saw open top VRs 3500/1 in use.

Clacton

133 Withdrawn by Eastern National after operation on 27.8.90.

Harlow

724 The 1810 ex Harlow was withdrawn on 9.6.90. and replaced by a SM Travel journey on service 524.

930 Introduced on 16.5.90. and runs Wednesday only from Old Harlow to Southend via Hertford, Ware, Hoddesdon, Cheshunt and Waltham Cross. Operation is by Green Line (County Bus).

Loughton

216 This service operated under tender to ECC by Vantage and introduced as an experiment on 7.3.90. will be withdrawn on 31.8.90.

242 Evening service revised from 21.7.90. Operation remains with London Northern. Evening journeys now operate to Hammond Street as County service 383 lost its evening journeys from this date.

Maldon

Malbus 3. Operation passed from Fords to EN from 11.8.90.

Brentwood

225 NEW SERVICE. Brentwood to West Thurrock via Upminster and Ockenden. Commencing 28.8.90. hourly with operation by Thamesway. (NOTE Do not confuse with Thameside).

Grays

380 This service is operated by Priory (corrects 315/7), please refer to 312/6.

Sunday Saver

From 20.7.90. a weight restriction has been introduced on Bures bridge. This has resulted in services 602 & 612 being diverted via Lamarsh between Bures and Sudbury. These services are thus unable to serve Gt Cornard and now stop south of the bridge in Bures. Chambers service on Monday to Saturday is also diverted.

London Commuter Services

Grey Green operations were revised on 30.7.90. when service 191 from Colchester and 205 from South Woodham were withdrawn. Services 190, 197, 198 & 204 were revised from the same date.

National Express

Chartercoach provide vehicles for service 084 (London- Clacton), with Woods, Beestons and CBT providing duplicates when required. Service 081 (London-Ipswich)is operated by a number of operators including Atlas, Galloways of Mendlesham and Ambassador Travel. The Southend- Birmingham service was operated by Premier Travel but is now in the hands of Cambus.

OTHER OPERATORS - South East Essex

Ensign Bus Services Ltd: dominates the news this month. The LRT and commercial bus services (but excluding the London Pride sightseeing operations) were sold on July 20 to a US corporation, Whitehall Investments Inc (who have no other interests in the bus world, but who are involved in truck rental in Missouri and property development in North Carolina) for a reported £6m. Vehicles are initially operating on the licence of the previously defunct Frontrunner Buses South East Ltd, but it is understood that the firm will trade as London Suburban Buses - indeed Olympian 121 had received a London Suburban Buses fleetname on our press day. All Whitehall owned operations will be based at Dagenham, leaving PT just as the dealership and London Pride.

Slightly more mundane news is of the acquisition of GRA 102V, Derby City's sole Metrobus; initially numbered 101 (which clashes with a DMS) it swiftly became 112. DMS's 104 (KUC 941P) and 109 (OJD 219R) are now overall adverts for IBM. Despite Peter Newman's forthright comments about minibuses in 'Bus and Coach Manager', a Dormobile B25F bodied Iveco demonstrator, G315 TKO, was observed on the 347 on July 21. Finally, an item of route news is the application for a commercial night bus route, N23, Trafalgar Square to Cranham!

M & E Coaches, Shoebury: a somewhat unexpected acquisition is Leyland National, GUG 132N, a B52F example ex West Yorkshire RCC.

T V Taxis, Southend: a further withdrawal is low roof VW A303 BET.

UMBH Coaches, Southend: ceased trading in mid July and have gone into liquidation. We do not have any details of vehicle disposals.

SUNDAY DAY OUT

Group member Ray Palmer has shown just what good value the £2-40 Sunday Saver is, with 3 days out submitted to the magazine. Here is one trip, Sunday July 1st (subtitled The Marathon!):

Left Southend at 0822 for Chelmsford on an ST Leyland National DP (service 11). Perhaps not surprisingly, Ray was the only through passenger! A Lynx on the 451 took him on to Braintree, in time to pick up Blue Triangle's RF on the 612 through to the East Anglia Railway Museum at Chappel, connecting there with the Hedingham operated 602 to Saffron Walden; the boss himself, Donald MacGregor, was the driver until a crew change at Castle Hedingham. The 602 was continuing on to Cambridge, but instead Ray picked up Hedingham's other Sunday Saver route, the 631 to Burnham on Crouch - initially with a saloon, but at Maldon passengers changed to the Carlyle bodied Iveco minibus which works the South Woodham town service on Mondays to Fridays. After a whole 7 minutes at Burnham (enough time for an ice cream??) the 631 was used back to Latchingdon (for those unfamiliar with the geography of Essex, 'the back of beyond' is a good description!) to connect with an EN Lynx on the 31 to Chelmsford. Returning to Southend on the 11 would be far too easy! - instead another Lynx took Ray on to Brentwood (route 451), to catch a DP Olympian on the 251 back to home. The round trip was about 175 miles, with 10 hrs 10 mins spent on buses - an average speed of 18mph. That's how to see the countryside!

OTHER OPERATORS REST OF ESSEX

BONNERS Former London Country SNB 217 which arrived via ST is the normal vehicle on service 207.

CARTERS Bristol VR AUD 460R has passed to Fords, Althorne. Ipswich Buses 203 was noted on hire to operate service 123 on 27.7.90.

CEDRICS C408 LRP has been numbered 23 and reregistered KIW 4388

CHARTERCOACH F180 CGN an Ensign Charisma has been acquired from The Kings Ferry with E179 KNH a DAF/Caetano passing the other way. Both seat C49FT.

CHELMSFORD TRAVEL A705 KMH is numbered 3 and came from Essex Coachways, London.

C+I COACHLINES VTM 581W a Volvo/Jonckhree has been sold.

COUNTY Recent vehicle movements are as follows LR 65,68,69 AN 194,199 SNB 76,91,116,180,204,212,221 all withdrawn. Allocation changes are SNB 284 HA-GY,G920-22 WGS GY-HA SNB 206/8 have gone to Hoddesdon whilst TL6 has moved to Harlow from Hoddesdon. SNB 115 has been on loan to Soverign at Stevenage. A new Lynx H251 GEV was noted in Grays garage on 26.7.90. This vehicle and H252 GEV were seen on the A1 heading South on 23.7.90.
Leyland Nationals acquired from the former West Yorkshire fleet are PWY 585/6W, PNW 604/6W all are series 2 the PWYs being NL106L11/1R B44F ex York & District, the PNWs are NL116L11/1R B49F ex Harrogate & District. They have not yet entered service.
Service 383 between Waltham Cross & Hammond Street was due for minibus conversion on 21.7.90. LRT service 66 was taken up on 4.8.90. with the 103 due to commence on 1.9.90. A further tender for services 256,346 using minibuses commencing on 22.9.90 has been won.
Withdrawn Leyland Nationals are once again being dumped at Grays.

FARGOS C333 PEW a Bedford YMP/Plaxton 3200 C29FT has been acquired from the former Premier Travel fleet.

HARRIS 8947 FH a Bova Europa has passed to Jackson, Bicknacre. On loan for three days in July was G700 APB a Toyota Optima/Caetano C18F. It was used by the coach fleet.

HEDINGHAM L147 was noted on service 105 on 8.6.90. the first time a decker from this operator has been noted on this service.

PRIORY A500 NWC has joined similar A600 NWC with this operator.

PUBLICITY

The following leaflets have appeared in the past few months :-
Eastern National timetable leaflets for services 11 dated 20.5.90; 41A/B & 44A/B both 20.5.90.; 106/126 dated 23.7.90.; 500/20/21 dated 4.6.90.; Sunshine Coast Special services 106/26 dated 23.7.90. to 31.8.90. Service 53 undated.
Eastern National serving Harlow dated 2.4.90.; Bishops Stortford dated 14.5.90.; Thorley dated 15.7.90.
Eastern National Your Buses In Harwich dated 23.7.90.

Eastern National Bus Excursions from Chelmsford dated 23.7.90. to 31.8.90. Buses serving Stansted Airport dated 13.5.90. Real Ale Runabouts 24.7.90 to 18.12.90.
NIBS School Bus Services undated.

Some of this most recent publicity requires some comment:-

EN for service 106/26 advertised as a Sunshine Coast Special. The editor at first thought that this was a new service to the South of France but instead is for a service between Harwich and Clacton. Or could someone at EN predict a hot summer?
EN service 53 refers to the luxury coach seats but the evening service is usually operated by Leyland Nationals.
NIBS for including a photo of a series 3 VR on the front of their leaflet. Or do they plan to rebuild a DMS with an ECW body??

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

The Evening Gazette recently reported a (Tendring ?) Council planning meeting at which a complaint was heard that a Clacton man is using a single decker bus as a hospitality suite in his front garden. He has been ordered to remove it. Does anyone know the identity of the vehicle or where it was being used?
The Standard Recorder reports that a Sunday bus service is to be introduced serving the Queens Park Estate. The article states that existing services will not be diverted to serve the area.
Also reported is that a special county highways planning meeting is to be held in Southend, at which plans for a long distance tram system linking parts of the county will announced.
The Essex County Standard carried an article about the Park & Ride scheme before its introduction. It stated that the service would operate as a six month trial and was expected to keep 400 cars from the town each Saturday. It was also reported that the council wanted to operate the service free of charge but local operators objected to losing passengers.
The Evening Gazette reports that minibus services are to be introduced between Braintee and White Courts Estate and between Witham and the Howbridge Estate during August. The Witham town service is to be split into three sections.
A planning report in the Essex County Standard gives details of a plan to demolish part of the garage in Magdalen Street to make way for a bus turning area.

NON PSVs IN ESSEX

Essex Police have C580 KNO a Volvo/ Paramount 3500 which it is thought they bought new. It has detachable side boards for Chartercoach or Adams Travel, obviously to disguise its use. Legal lettering is P Adams, PO Box 2, Chelmsford, CM2 6DA.
Druid Venture Scout Group have A231 AAK a VW 8 seater ex TVT.
Gordon Tanqueray & Co. better known as Gordons Gin have NNU 448J a Bristol RELL6G/ECW at their Fenton Way. Laindon depot. This was new to Midlang General as 149, becoming 359 in 1972. It passed to Trent on 1.10.76. and then later passed to East Midlands Airport and had perimeter seating. It appears to be used on site as it has not been seen on public roads.

White HGV Training of Smilers Farm Industrial Estate, North Benfleet has DTJ 960E. This is either a PD3/4 or PD3/14 both having been quoted, with East Lancs bodywork. New to Haslingden as number 2 it passed to Rossendale as 46. Last known owner was Rossendale Pre-school Playgroup Association. Livery is white and yellow.

ENOC 2954

A LONELY GUY

The title refers to a solitary Guy FCX purchased by the National Omnibus & Transport Company in 1927 and transferred to Eastern National in October 1930 with Grays garage.
The FCX was a revolutionary low level six wheel chassis, capable of being fitted with a high capacity body. National purchased only one as a prototype, although some municipalities who operated busy urban routes, placed considerable numbers in service.
The National FCX was numbered 2387 (TM 1401) and was fitted with a Dodson 64 seat body, costing a grand total - chassis and body complete of 1654 pounds 16 shillings and 8 pence. The merits of the FCX were questioned due to being underpowered and as Eastern National operated in a mainly rural area, did not warrant such a large capacity vehicle. 2387 was withdrawn in 1933 by Eastern National and was transferred to London Transport with four Gilford CP6 saloons 2925-28 (VX 1560/1/42/1) when certain routes in the Grays area were handed over to the LPTB, where it survived a short while before being sold to a dealer.
TM 1401 then moved down the River Thames when it was purchased by Canvey & District, who operated a substantial fleet of FCX vehicles originating from the Oldham and Middlesborough fleets.

NELSONS DESTINATION BLINDS 7/90

WHITE BLANK	BRENTWOOD via Ingatestone	NOAK BRIDGE via Pitsea & Basildon	PITSEA STATION via Basildon
BILLERICAY (Mayflower School)	BILLERICAY via Brentwood	NORTH BENFLEET via Basildon & Pitsea	LANGDON HILLS via Basildon
SHOTGATE via Wickford	NOAK BRIDGE via Wickford	NOAK BRIDGE via Lamson & Basildon	NOT IN SERVICE.
BILLERICAY via Basildon	BILLERICAY via Wickford	BEAUCHAMPS SCHOOL	REPLACEMENT RAIL SERVICE
WICKFORD via Basildon	BASILDON Bus Station	BROCK HILL via Wickford	SERVICE
WICKFORD via St Anne Line School	NOAK HILL ROAD (Police Garage)	WICKFORD	PRIVATE
BASILDON via St Anne Line School	SHENFIELD via Basildon & Billericay	WEST HANNINGFIELD	WHITE BLANK
WICKFORD via Billericay & Basildon	BILLERICAY TOWN SERVICE	BASILDON HOSPITAL via Wickford	

EASTERN NATIONAL FLEET ALLOCATION AUGUST 1990

Bishops Stortford (BS)	1111/27 1501/2 1741/69/92/1843/44/1909 1910/14/16 4510
Braintree (BE)	0120 1308/09/10 1120/25 1745/82/1812/13 1828/61/62/72/1924/26/29/30/31/32 3055/63/84/3128 4016/17/20/21
Chelmsford (CF)	0750-3 1112/19/21/28-30 1401/02/13-15 1426-29 1747/74/75/78/1804/05/11/19/24 1827/32/42/50/51/55/56/60/67/70/73/90/99 1901/17 2201/03 3054/57/69/77/83/91-93 3106/11/12 4005/13 4511/12
Clacton (CN)	0200/02-19 1110/17 1766/68/1831/34/41 1927/37-39 2202 3041/3109/3201-3
Colchester (CR)	1760/93/1816/65/1923/25/33/35/36 3052/56/59/61/64/66/78/95/3103/14/27 3204/18 4003/04/06/15 4501/03/09
Gt. Dunmow (DW)	1408
Harwich (DT)	1123 1500 1754/90/1885 3050 4007/08/14
Maldon (MN)	1114/15 1403/07/16/25 1750/64/1806/29 1833/63/74/92 3038/53/58/60/79/94/3200
South Woodham (SW)	1921 3070
Walton-on-Naze (WN)	0220-24
Pool Vehicles	0121 0754 1740 3033/49 2383/84 3500/1
Delicensed Disposal	1737/51 1928 3048/51/62

1928 no longer appears on the official allocation list.

THAMESWAY FLEET ALLOCATION AUGUST 1990

Basildon (BN)	1116/18/24/26 1404-06/10-12/22-24 1742/44/48/52/55/63/67/72/76/85/86/89/95 1797/1808/18/20/22/36/47/48/49/52/53/54 1866/77-80/83/84/86/87/89/91/96/98/1904 1908/22 2200 3117/20 4500
Brentwood (BD)	0201/25-44 0755/6 1113/22 1791/1839 1845/46/59/76/81/1902/03/12/13 3082 3206 4012/18/19
Hadleigh (HH)	1400/09/17-21 1738/43/53/56/57/58/61/65 1770/71/77/81/84/1817/21/35/40/57/64/69 1871/95/97/1900/19 3085/97/99
Ponders End (PD)	0245-52/57 3068/71/72/74/75/76/80/81 3100/01/02/04/3205/07/08/09/11-17
Southend (SD)	1762/73/80/87/88/98/99/1809/14/23/30/37/38 1868/75/88/93/1906/07/15/18 3065/67/73/86 3087-90/98/3108/13/22/29 4000-2/09-11 4502/04-08
Walthamstow (WW)	0253-56/58-60 0800-04 1779/96/1800-03 1810/25/26/82/94/1905/11/20 3096/3105 3107/10/15/16/18/19/21/23-26
Pool Vehicles	1721/5

All ex Eastern National on 29.7.90

EASTERN NATIONAL OVERALL ADVERTISMENT VEHICLES

BD 0201	Allen of Romford
CN 0205	Coronation Garages
WN 0224	Motor World
BD 0227	Eddy Grimstead
BD 0231	Eddy Grimstead
BS 1111	Stanstead RailAir Link
BN 1742	Yettons
WW 1779	Auto Trader
SD 1787	Vernon Collard
BN 1789	Liberty Shopping Hall
BN 1797	Basildon & Thurrock Health Authority
SD 1830	Auto Trader
SD 1837	Yettons
CF 1860	Trimoco
HH 1864	Class 1 Travel
CR 1865	BBC Essex
SD 1868	Wallspan Bedrooms
HH 1869	Vernon Collard
CF 1873	Medidian Windows
BD 1881	Yettons
CF 1899	Auto Trader
CF 1917	Osborne Honda
SD 1918	Victoria Circus
BN 1922	Crow Windscreens
CR 1923	Lancaster Garages
BE 1924	Quest Motors
SD 3113	Royals Shopping Centre
PD 3205	Auto Trader
CR 4003	Colchester Fuel Injectors
CR 4004	Auto Trader
CF 4005	Essex County Cricket Club
SD 4011	Interlink Parcels

Unibus adverts are carried by :-

BS 1843	John Whalley

Rear end adverts are carried by :-

CF 3083	Kennings Chelmsford
SD 3108	ECTA Motors Southend
BN 3117	ECTA Motors Basildon

ESSEX BUS REVIEW

EASTERN NATIONAL BRISTOL FLFs (Part 2)

Bodywork

All Bristol Lodekkas were built with bodywork by Eastern Coachworks at Lowestoft (ECW). Of the 247 FLFs delivered to Eastern National, 15 were 55 seat coaches, the remainder being 70 seat service buses. The coaches will be described fully in a future issue, whilst the many detail differences in the bus fleet are outlined here.

Buses up to and including 2883 (UEV 221E)

All vehicles in this batch had the 38/32 seating arrangement within the standard body shell of 30ft long by 8ft wide by 13ft 4in high. The entrance was at the front and featured a four leaf jack knife door leadind to a rearward ascending staircase covering the gearbox bellhousing which would otherwise intrude upon the platform. A luggage compartment under the staircase gave access to the battery box.
Interior decor was mostly green with walls covered in a green rexine material, green painted bulkhead and doors with the roof being white. Seats were covered in the standard green/red ECW moquette of the day with light green formica backs. Several vehicles had their moquette replaced with green plastic to improve cleaning and repair-ability. Needless to say these seats were cold and lacked the comfort offered by the cloth trim. Lighting was provided by flourescent tubes fitted to the roof cant panels.
Externally several modifications were made to the standard body shell by ECW during the period in question. The first buses delivered had black window rubbers, a flat radiator grille and square number plates and mouldings for two waistbands that were originally painted cream with black lining. The bands were situated above the lower deck windows and below the upper deck windows extending right around the vehicle. Standard Eastern National destination equipment was fitted to the front and rear, this consisting of a 40 inch destination blind with a three track number blind in a 'T' shaped formation. Deliveries from 1600 (2729 - 176 XNO) had cream window rubbers whilst the chrome raised radiator grille with oblong number plate and footrest were introduced on vehicle 1616 (2742 - EOO 584). As the radiator grille panel was easily removed some earlier vehicles appeared with the newer panel and vice-versa. A number of earlier FLFs were fitted with offside illuminated advertisment panels. No records seem to exist of the vehicles that were so fitted however, photographic evidence suggests that most of 1591-1616 (801-3 WVW, 170-183 XNO, EOO 579-584) and 1650-2 (VWC 53, 987/8 KOO) had these panels when new. Although a splendid sight at night, the illuminated panels fell from favour in the mid 1970s and were painted over or in most cases removed altogether.
From 1963 a number of vehicles were fitted with the Cave-Brown-Cave (CBC) heating system. The most noteable feature of this

system was the radiator which instead of being at the front of the engine , was mounted in two parts below the front upper deck windows either side of the destination box. Large air intakes were therefore fitted in this position with air outlets each side of the bus. Pipes for the engine coolant were situated at the front corner of the drivers cab (these pipes fed water from the radiator to the engine and tended to get very hot). As the radiators were now repositioned, there was no need for a radiator grille to be fitted in the traditional position. It was decided however, to leave these in place to provide additional ventilation for the engine and also to enhance the looks of the bus. To accomodate the air intakes, the upper deck cream band and mouldings were removed from the front of the bus. CBCs were fitted to 1663-5/70/3/7/8 & 2808-2883.
The only modification to be made to the bodywork in 1964 was the introduction of the full width bulkhead window. This replaced the 60/40 arrangement of flat window and angled panel 1670 (BVX 667B) was the first bus to be fitted with the new arrangement with all deliveries from 2808 (FWC 426B) having the new window.
In March 1965 a 'one off' vehicle was delivered in the shape of 2826 (JHK 461C) this bus was fitted with a fibre-glass panelled body. This reduced the overall weight of the bus considerably and the experiment was conducted by ECW on a number of different vehicle types. When new ths bus was easily identified as it had only a single cream band between decks with no black lining and it also had a chrome strip above the upper deck windows.
As an experiment, 2831 (KNO 954C) was delivered with an inverted 'T' shaped destination box at the rear, this became standard on all FLFs from 2852 (OVX 296D) onwards. 2831 also introduced the latest ECW styling which incorporated the complete removal of the upper deck cream waisband and fixed drivers windscreen (a fully opening window had been used previously).

Buses 2884 (WNO 972F) to 2931 (AVX 973G)

The next major bodywork alterations came in 1967 with the introduction of the semi-automatic FLF6LXs (2884 to 2931). Although the body style was generally similar to that delivered the previous year, they were easily distinguishable because of their extra length (31ft 7/8 inch - 9.44m). As the wheelbase remained unchanged, the extra length was accomodated in rear overhang, consequently the last window on the sides of both decks was longer. The major differences with the 'semis' as they were known, was the interior layout. A foward ascending staircase was fitted giving a much tidier platform. This was possible as the electrically operated semi-automatic gearbox did not needa large bellhousing which protruded onto the platform on earlier models. As there was no luggage space beneath the staircase, a large luggage pen was fitted beneath the staircase taking up the space of two pairs of seats. In all 30 seats were provided on the lower deck (10 foward facing pairs with a bench for five above each wheelarch). The foward ascending staircase also took up less space on the upper deck where a total of 40 seats were provided. This included a bench for three across the front in place of the four provided on earlier models. At the top of the staircase a

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mirror had to be provided for the conductor. On 30ft FLFs this mirror was situated on the roof cant panel above the staircase. This position was not satisfactory on the new staircase and therefore the mirror was fitted to a pole half-way across the second off-side upper deck window.

Interior decor on the last batch of 'semis' (2917-31) was changed, green rexine giving way to off white coloured walls, cream painted bulkhead, insides of doors, drivers cab and staircase surround. However the drivers cabs were soon repainted green. This style of decor was perpetuated by ECW in Bristol VRTs until 1976. A new moquette was also introduced with this batch- a grey and green styling which did not last very long as most new ECW buses were fitted with the plastic seats mentioned earlier.

CBC heaters as detailed above were fitted to buses from 2884 (WNO 972F) to 2916 (WWC 746F). Seven of the semis were also converted for omo work, this subject will be dealt with later.

As an economy measure, Eastern National decided in 1970 that all vehicles in the fleet so fitted would have their rear destination equipment removed. Ultimately al vehicles had the area panelled over, but before this could be done, vehicles had the glass area painted over. The first FLFs to be so treated were 2814/18 and 2903 in 11.70.

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DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEXT MONTHS MAGAZINE IS 5.9.90.