

ESSEX BUS NEWS

May 1998

The monthly magazine of the ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP

(Formerly the Eastern National Enthusiasts Group)

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THAMESWAY 4022 LEYLAND OLYMPIAN ROE ex County Bus and Coach LR5 at Hadleigh Garage receiving a top up before going to Bournes Green to operate service 21d to Benfleet Station

P Snell.

MANAGING EDITOR:

Peter Snell

Please send your news reports to:

SUB EDITORS:

Southend Transport:

Steve Thompson, 19 Haven Close, Canvey Island, SS8 0LX

Thamesway:

John Weeks, 34 Elliot Close, South Woodham Ferrers, CM3 5YN

Essex Buses & S Essex small ops:

Ian Ransom, 34 Donald Way, Chelmsford, CM2 9JE

County Bus:

Ian Burton, 46 Stoneleigh Drive, Hoddesdon, EN11 9LN

North Essex major ops:

Paul Sparks, 87 Thorpe Road, Great Clacton, CO15 4NT

North Essex small ops:

Dave Arnold, 21 Cedar Chase, Heybridge, Maldon, CM9 4NR

TOURS ORGANISER:

Dave Arnold, 21 Cedar Chase, Heybridge, Maldon, CM9 4NR

PHOTO ORDERS:

Peter Snell, 6 Mandeville Way, Benfleet, SS7 4LH

MEMBERSHIP:

Derek Stebbing, 18 Lynmouth Avenue, Chelmsford, CM2 0TP

ESSEX BUS NEWS

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EDITORIAL

409 FOCUS OF THE MONTH

3--409 was Eastern National Dennis Lancet AEV 779 fitted with an Eastern Counties B36R body, new in 1933, it operated for some years with Borough Motor Services at Southend, it was withdrawn in 1950 and was seen as a store shed in Wickford in October 1951.

The new magazine Bus and Coach Preservation monthly are running a competition, and the first prize is ex Eastern National Bristol MW5G ECW 1356 MOO 177.

What a pity the Thamesway 'coat of arms' has now disappeared from the exterior of the fleet. With the new corporate style plain fleetname the individual identification of local buses especially the unique one of Thamesway will be missed-----bring it back First Group please.

For all Railfans

Volume II of the history of the LTSR by Peter Kay is now available from Group Sales @9-95 plus £1-00 P&P from Peter Snell.

On 28th April Railtrack had problems at Hatfield Peveral and in one hours observation Phil Ford saw the following buses and coaches on replacement services.

Boon	MVK538R
Chambers	K815KUM MIL5015
Fourways	MNK417V MNK429V DKE350Y
Graham	G805RNC G885VNA
Hedingham	L256 L268 L280 L281
Ipswich	23 27 30 35

GROUP TOUR

Suffolk and Norfolk 13th June

The vehicle for this tour will be a Leyland Olympian coach, which will be an ex Eastern National example (subject to availability on the day) Seats are still available, so why not join us for a good day out?.

MEETINGS

June 16th Visit to Harris Bus West Thurrock 7pm

The Group Sales Stand will be at following events

June 7th Southend Rally

June 28th North Weald Bus Rally

On 24th May a new bus ticket will be on sale called BUS RANGER and will be available on Thamesway, Eastern National, and Eastern Counties more details next month.

A transport rally will be held at Magnapps Farm at Burnham on Crouch on the 23rd August for more details phone 01621 784 898.

Eastern National and Essex Operators notes.

These have been produced on a different PC this month, as your sub editors machine has a serious hard disc error, it is hoped that he will have a new PC, with improved software for the production of next months notes.

Contributions for this edition of EBN received with thanks from Essex Buses, Arriva Southend, Arriva EHE, Harrisbus, P Ford M Evans, R Delahoy, G Toon R Dennis, I Taylor, N Eccleston, J Read, C Sigston.

NEW VEHICLES

411, 412, 415, 416 R411VPU etc. Mercedes 0814D Vario, Marshall B27F. 413/4 were delivered in September and were defective. The above were delivered in March leaving 417 to 419 outstanding.

ACQUIRED VEHICLES

4022	TPD105X	Leyland Olympian ONTL11/1R	Roe	H43/29F
4023	TPD111X	Leyland Olympian ONTL11/1R	Roe	H43/29F

ex County Bus, Harlow, via Fleetmaster, Horsham 4/98.

The above contains corrections to last months notes.

Chassis No's

4022 - ON206 4023 - ON223

These are probably the first Roe Bodies in this part of Essex since the late forties and early fifties when Southend Corporation Transport and Victoria Coaches at Leigh operated ex Leeds Roe Bodied AEC Regents.

DISPOSALS

1868	YEV326S	To Hardwick (dealer) Carlton
1889	BNO679T	To Hardwick (dealer) Carlton

ALLOCATION CHANGES

250, 255, 260 & 307, PD - Pool, 411, 412, 415 & 416, New - PD, 4022, 4023 acquired - HH,

City Saver 602 is at Hadleigh on school contracts.
3234 has returned to Eastern National.

REPAINTS

04/98 802, 4004, 4022.

City Saver Coaches now carry the FIRST 'F' symbol in blue.
The New Canvey Clipper Darts do not yet carry fleet numbers.

ODD WORKINGS

09/04/98 4005 on Service 20, usually a Dart.
14/04/98 701 on Canvey Clipper, usually a route branded Dart.
27/04/98 1870 on EN Diamond Service duplicate - Chelmsford pensioners free day.
30/04/98 964 on 251/551

NEWS

The Volvo's on loan at Basildon came from Eastern Counties whilst awaiting delivery of new buses as a result of service changes commencing on February 28, 1998. They have now been returned to Eastern Counties, Ipswich after only a couple of weeks operation in Basildon. They were used on most 'big bus' routes. The electronic destination blinds were used for numbers only; destinations were shown on slip boards.

Staff transfers at Ponders End are usually carried out by company owned black Austin London taxis. Seven are known to be operating at present. Two of which are registration numbers CYE 68V and GYD 613W. If anyone knows of any other black cabs which have been owned, either past or present, let me know and I will publish a list.

Service 1001

In the March 1998 issue of Essex Bus News you ask for any information about service 1001.

I observed the service operating into Basildon Bus Station on a number of occasions as well as one evening at Stanford-le-Hope Railway Station. As I was driving Thamesway buses on each occasion I was unable to take notes and so the real value of my observations has been lost!

As to operation, the service did seem to be somewhat spasmodic and the last occasion I espied the service was in the middle of January. I regret I cannot be more specific than that but I do recall realising in the third week that I had not seen 1001 for some few days. Several colleagues I spoke to had the same vague recollection!

Passenger loadings were fair on morning peaks into Basildon but seemed to be light at other times, even when Thamesway services were unreliable.

The vehicles I saw were all double deckers on loan/hire/lease. I noticed an East London T and a Stephenson's.

There was no easily spotted operator identification, the service number was not displayed, the destination being shown by a slip board showing "BASILDON" or "STANFORD" as appropriate.

I regret being so imprecise but hope that nevertheless, you may be able to put this together with other snippets to give a better picture.

Incidentally, I never did notice any vehicle operated by Abbott although there was an Abbott timetable in the Basildon Bus Station before Christmas.

Yours sincerely

Maurice Austin

Maurice Austin
Member 822

NEW VEHICLES

Five Super Dennis Darts, are expected to arrive at the end of May. They will be allocated to Colchester depot.

VEHICLES ON LOAN

Two Dennis Dart SLF are expected on loan from Eastern Counties. They will operate from Bishops Stortford on recently won Herts CC services 350/1 (Bishops Stortford to Hertford). It is expected that EN will acquire two similar vehicles to replace these later in the year.

ALLOCATIONS

3/98 308/28-35 Tway-CN; 2217/30/31/33/37/42/47/48 CN-D/L(D); 2232/52 CN-Pool; 3230 CF-CR; 4503 CR-D/L(D)
4/98 1510/11 CR-CN; 4010/12 CR-CF; 4501/12 CR-CF

ACQUIRED VEHICLES

1890 (BND 680T)	Leyland National 113511A/1R	B49F
7130 (DWU 296T)	Bristol VRT/SL3/6LXB	ECW H43/31F
7170 (EWR 165T)	Bristol VRT/SL3/6LXB	ECW H43/31F
9800 (SWW 305R)	Bristol VRT/SL3/6LXB	ECW H43/31F

The Leyland National is ex Eastern Counties, having of course been new to Eastern National. The VR's are from Rider York.

All are at Clacton depot, and are to be used for spares.

SERVICES

Diamond	Revised evening service introduced from 9.5.98
351	Introduced on Sundays between Chelmsford and Romford from 24.5.98
352	Revised to operate between Chelmsford and Halstead on Sundays from 24.5.98.
353	Sunday service revised on Sundays from 24.5.98. to operate between Chelmsford and South Woodham only.
632	Re-introduced onn Sundays from 24.5.98. between Maldon and Braintree.
633	Introduced on Sundays between Braintree and Saffron Walden from 24.5.98.
75A	Sunday service renumbered 76A from 24.5.98
102	Revised Sunday service introduced from 24.5.98
605	Introduced on Sundays between Colchester and Walton from 24.5.98.
1	Daily summer service introduced between Clacton and St Osyth from 24.5.98.
5/6	Revised route and timetable introduced from 25.5.98.
108	Revised Sunday service introduced from 24.5.98.
606	Re-introduced on Sundays between walton and Harwich from 24.5.98.

851	Slight timetable revisions from 24.5.98
70/A	Minor timetable revisions from 26.4.98
71group	Timetable revisions from 26.4.98.
72/A	As service 70/A
15	Walton to Colchester service withdrawn after 24.4.98.
74	Revised to operate between Clacton and Tiptree from 26.4.98.
75	Revised to operate between Colchester and Maldon from 26.4.98.
76	Replaces service 75 between Colchester and Clacton from 26.4.98.
77/78/A	Revised timetable introduced from 26.4.98.
88/A	Minor timetable revision introduced from 26.4.
188	Withdrawn after operation on 24.4.98.
X3	Minor timetable change from 26.4.98.
7/8/8A/9	Revised timetable introduced from 26.4.98.
73	As service 88/A.
350/1	Introduced from 11.5.98 under contract to Herts CC, between Bishops Stortford and Hertford.
354	Introduced from 11.5.98. under contract to Herts CC between Buntingford and Harlow

PUBLICITY

Timetable leaflets are now being issued in a revised style. They feature a photo of local interest, or a bus on the service covered. Issues dated 27.4.98 are for services:- 7/8/8A/9; 70/A; 71/A/B/C; 72/A; 73; 74/B; 75; 76/75A; 77/78/78A; 88/A/C; X3

Of note is that the leaflet for service 75 shows 4016 en-route to Clacton, which it no longer serves. The 75A has also been re-numbered 76A.

GENERAL

Leyland Olympian 4017 has undergone a pilot refurbishment, no others are planned at present. Further to reports elsewhere, 12 Volvo olympians are to be acquired from Calderline in the near future. Mercedes 424 has now been returned. This has meant that the Mercedes on loan from Cheshire Bus and Coach has been returned. 421 is currently on loan from Chelmsford to Braintree, where its additional seating capacity is required. 2666 is on loan to Chelmsford as it's replacement.

REPAINTS

The following have been repainted in recent weeks:-

1407/14/27 2812 3071

INITIAL DISPOSALS

3224 (AYG 848S)	Hardwick, Carlton (for scrap) 2/98
2237 (C678 ECV)	Midland Bluebird, Larbert, 3/98.
2242 (C695 ECV)	As 2237

2244 (C698 ECV) As 2237
 2247 (D534 KGL) As 2237
 2248 (C107 HGL) As 2237
 3232 (JWT 760V) Hardwick, Carlton, (for scrap), 3/98
 4503 (B691 BPU) Stephenson, Rochford, 3/98
 2240 (C687 ECV) Hardwick, carlton, (for scrap), 4/98
 1851 (YEV 309S) As 2240

OTHER OPERATORS - REST OF ESSEX

COGGESHALL COMMUNITY BUS Revised route and timetable introduced on Tuesday and Thursday local services from 21.4.98.
 GOLDEN BOY Schools services FM31/47 between Sedge Green and St Marks school, made available for public use from 20.4.98.
 CLINTONA From 6.4.98. an additional service on route 2 from Waltham Cross to Epping at 0800. This is replacement for a service 255 journey operated by Townlink.
 CAPITAL CITYBUS School service 89 between Chigwell Row and Chigwell station has been withdrawn. This follows damage to vehicles by pupils.
 CARTERS Sunday services on route 78/A at 0841 ex Colchester and 0920 ex Brightlingsea have been withdrawn.
 NATIONAL EXPRESS Summer services were re-introduced from 24.5.98.
 AVRO STANFORD LE HOPE Service 231 will be de-registered with effect from 29.6.98.
 CHELMSFORD CAB Please ignore any previous reference to Transit N978 EHJ, which was reported in error.
 GOLF EXECUTIVE BOREHAM A recent addition is LAG Panoramic B13 SMC (new as L678 BBD)
 PANDORA COACHES The recently acquired Mercedes minibus SBZ 1582, was formerly B344 PDG with Knights, Gt Braxted. Pandora has now ceased operations.
 COUNTY COACHES BRENTWOOD DAF/Plaxton coaches re-registered and sold are 1023 RU to SPP 610W and 7947 RU to MNM 45V, both of which are their original plates.
 APT RAYLEIGH Bedford YNT/Duple TGS 924W has been re-registered YFC 736.
 TRAVELRICH WEELEY Neoplan UGV 847 (F622 CWJ) has been sold.
 WEBB HIGHWOOD Bedford YMT/Plaxton VPF 322S has been sold.
 COOKS SOUTHEAD Bova G888 EFX has been sold.
 WAYS BOREHAM DAF 400 L579 CND has been sold.
 STEPHENSON ROCHFORD Leyland Leopard/Plaxton rebody SJI 2238 (HBP 331X, YDF 329K) has been sold.
 BRENTWOOD COACHES Scania/Jonckhree NJI 3995 (E214 GNV) has been sold.
 SUPREME SOUTHEAD Three further Scania/Van Hools here are R862/3/4 SDT.
 AIRPORT COACHES STANSTED Mercedes/Reeve Burgess E940 CJN has been acquired from Biss and re-registered BAZ 7349.
 Tiger/Berkhof BAZ 7349 (C140 SPB) National XEH 254M, LAG Panoramic D732 BFF, and Transits G995 VEU and H140 WMR. SOLD.
 BARKER ROYDON MCW Metroliner D683 YTN has been sold and is en-route to Australia. The following have been acquired in recent weeks, HUI 2756 a Neoplan Skyliner K457 LDM a Mercedes and IUI 6719 a Bedford/Plaxton, thought to be BBN

Nepolan C791 PEM has been re-registered IUI 6718. Iveco minibus E705 GNH is now de-licensed.

MILESTONE CANVEY A recent addition is E758 HJF a Dennis Javelin/Duple.

CEDRIC WIVENHOE Further vehicles destroyed in the fire were Bristol VR PWR 443W, Dennis Javelin/Berkhof P20 CED and Bova N7 CED. Those damaged were Bova L3 CED, Volvo/Jonckhree MXI 8204 and VR HWJ 933W. VR BKE 835T is thought to have passed to Colchester Coaches before the fire, but is now back here. Setra P200 OMT has been acquired, while nepolan H881 AVK is here (but may only be on loan). Vehicles here on loan are 759 KFC and 240 FRH of Partridge (details please) and LDV 400 M953 UHK of Supreme.

CROWN THUNDERSLEY A further Iveco minibus from Tillingbourne is G810 DPH. VW/Optare D345 JUM and Fiat minibus C504 DYM are thought to have been sold.

RYDERS HARLOW Have acquired LDV400 J558 PPA.

GRAHAMS KELVEDON Peugeot 806 P122 RFW has been acquired.

FORDS ALTHORNE Bedford YNT/Plaxton C995 ERO has been sold to Lodge, High Easter. The former 820 KPO a Bedford YRT/Plaxton has been re-registered EHJ 147P and is de-licensed.

ROYDON COACH TRAVEL A new operator, have acquired A331 VHB a Tiger/Jonckhree from Lodge, High Easter. It is now registered IUI 7970.

LEOS MINIBUSES HARLOW Ford Transit F741 OJN and LDAF 400 F795 CAN are recent additions.

MASTER TRAVEL HERONGATE Have sold K640 HNW a Mercedes minicoach.

MCINTYRE HARLOW Ford Transit/Deansgate C235 GNA has been acquired.

NELSON WICKFORD Dodge BIL 6538 (D202 YDX) is in store in the yard, as is former Manchester minibus C566 NHJ. National GUG 132N is now being used as a store.

RAYNHAM SAFFRON WALDEN Further to EBN 407, this operator has moved to Bridge End, Newport.

SCOTTS HARLOW Ford Galaxys R913 GNS and R915 GNS are owned, both with discs. Also here are Sherpa F664 LTA and transit R217 LGA.

SEYMOUR HARLOW Further to recent EBN's LIL 5072 is ex XSV 839, A400 WGH.

FARGO RAYNE A further Scania/Irizar is R449 YDT.

BJS GT WAKERING Volvo/Plaxton BJS 98Y is thought to hve been sold.

H Heddingham Omnibuses

SERVICES

- 129 Introduced from 29.5.98. between Ramsey and Clacton on Tuesdays only.
- 601 From 24.5.98. revised to operate between Sudbury and Colchester only. A new service 603 will operate between Sudbury and Saffron Walden.

VEHICLES

L286 P530 CLJ Volvo B10M Plaxton C??F

This was ex Excesior, Bournemouth and was registered A13 XEL.

Leyland Tiger/Duple L226 - 129 SDV has been sold.

HARRIS BUS

VEHICLES

DAF/N Counties R382 GTW has been repainted in Harris livery and carries Ilford Link lettering.

SERVICES

Gala Bingo services from Socketts Heath and Corringham to lakeside had revised routes and timetables introduced from 1.4.98.

All Sunday journeys on service 140, will operate five minutes later from 24.5.98.

HARRIS COACHES

Mercedes/Autobus minicoach R989 TLD is a recent addition to this fleet.

ESSEX SUNDAY SAVER

A fares revision from 24.5.98, saw the following apply:-
Adult £3.80, Senior Citizen £3.00, Child £2.00, Family £8.00

A new Sunday saver timetable booklet, will be available. It has been delayed awaiting confirmation of Suffolk CC Sunday services.



FIRST GROUP corporate liveried Thamesway Dennis Dart SLF Plaxton Canvey Clipper at Canvey Newlands 718 R718DJN is one of five SLFs used on this service P Snell

New Vehicles

As of 1st May, it is believed that at least some, if not all of the Mercedes Varios (MB 940-54) have now been delivered to Ware. They have been seen in County Bus "Lea Valley" livery.

Repaints

3/98	MR 715	F715 CWJ	to County Bus "Townlink" livery
	DW 65	J65 BJN	to County Bus "Townlink" livery
	DW 761/2	K761/2 JVX	to County Bus "Townlink" livery

All ex West's, Woodford vehicles are now in County Bus livery.

Allocation Changes to April / May 1998

MB 940-54	R940-54 VPU	New to Ware (delivery of all to be confirmed)
VDL 891	E891 KYW	Ware to Sold (London Coaches)

SERVICES

23 May	201	Ongar - Loughton. Service withdrawn between Tylers Green and Ongar except Monday - Friday peaks. Extended from Loughton Station to South Woodford Station via service 249. No change to ECC contract journeys operated by Thamesway. Improved Monday - Friday peak service between Epping Station and Ongar
	249	Debden - South Woodford. Day time service to Debden withdrawn. Re-routed in Loughton. Revised timetable. No change to ECC contract journeys.
	500/1/2	Stansted Airport - Romford/Lakeside/Harlow-Romford. Minor timetable and running time revisions. Additional early and late journeys to and from Stansted Airport. Revised evening service with hourly timetable between Stansted Airport and Romford.
	724	Harlow - Heathrow Airport. Minor revisions to running time.

FLEET ALLOCATION AS AT 30 APRIL 1998

Edmonton EM, Harlow HA, Ware WE, Grays GY

EM DP 301-13, DW 314/5, DPP 416-31, MD 601/3-12, MB 918/9/27-31, MB 722/3, MBT 713-6, BP 504 (PSV) / 7 (NPSV)

Leaside Travel MCW 170/5/537/73/625/49/1248/1367/9/89/1437, Titan 69/83/100, RMC 1453/64, AEC RV.1, TPL 1/2/8, DI 753/4, DPL 551/2, VPL 3/4

GY M 80/366/7/72/782, SLF 419-31, DW 316/7, DP 323-34, MB 725-7, MB 924-6

HA LR 1/2/9/17, LX 251-8/888/9, TDB 61-3, VPB 64/5, OD 621/760, DPL 406-14, DP 318-20/2/545/6, DW 64/5/761/2, WS 350, SLF 266-9, TDL 60/5, PDL 207-9, MD 613/4, MR 367/667/713-5/8/9, MB 707-12/17-21/30-8/41-4, MB 932-8, MBT 801-5, MBT 865, BD 357 (NPSV), TL 30, AN 248 (NPSV)
 (including Debden outstation vehicles)

WE IR 4/7/10/5/23, MVW 1/4/5/8/9, DI 56/124/926-8, DWL 401-4/15, DPL 405,
DP 321/951, SLF 165/9/70/416-8, MB 724/8/9/39/40,
MB 52-4/115/54/706/48/95/6, MB 939, TDL 55, PDL 201-6, BOV 594-6,
VPL 501/3, TPL 518, STL 10, VDL 185/205/891, MC 540/D45

Delicensed TL 13
Stored TDL 54



Colchester Borough Transport Limited was renamed Arriva (Colchester) Limited on 2 April 1998. The bus stops were re-labelled on 16.4.98.

Two coaches have arrived from Arriva East Herts & Essex. BAZ 7384 (C210 PPE) is a Leyland Tiger/Plaxton Paramount C49FT, which was new to London & Country in 1985. It arrived on 29.4.98 and is to be no 101 in the Colchester fleet. HDZ 8354 (C904 JOF, 245 DOC, C566 LOG), a Bova Futura C49FT new to Smith of Birmingham in 1986, arrived on 30.4.98. It is to be no 102. A Volvo B10, L501 MOO, was borrowed from Ware from 2 to 4.4.98 for a private hire.

Ex-London Metrobus M336 now carries fleet number 336. 299 came out of the paint shop on 9.4.98 and entered service on 17.4.97. 220 (BYX 220V) was towed to Colchester on 31.3.98, but was towed back to Enfield the following day. It arrived under its own power on 7.4.98 and went into the paint shop two days later.

Olympian 41 was damaged in an accident in Brightlingsea on 2.4.98.

The service revision on 20.4.98 involved one journey an hour on service 2 being extended from North Station via General Hospital and Severalls Park to Highwoods, and one 2A an hour to General Hospital. These journeys serve Asda only in the to-Town direction. Other journeys on 2/2A/2B lay over at North Station and serve Asda in the to-Town direction only. New service 3 operates via Ambrose Avenue, King Harold Road, Prettygate Road and the Commons. It runs every 75 minutes. A new company timetable was issued; it is an attractive design, but contains several errors, the route diagrams are misleading and the route map is unclear.

On 21.4.98 Atlanteans 69 and 80 operated a railway replacement service between Colchester and Clacton, and Colchester and Colchester Town respectively. Greenway 354 ran between Mark's Tey and Sudbury on 29.4.98.

ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL MINIBUS FLEET

Those members who obtained a copy of the June 1997 fleet list of Essex County Council minibuses (EBN 399 refers) may be interested in the following changes which have taken place subsequently. This information has been gleaned from a revised list supplied to me by the council for my role of Vehicle Records Officer, Council Vehicle Society.

NEW VEHICLES

P422 EOV LDV Convoy/UVG 14 seater welfare bus (ex demonstrator 6/97)
P325 MFL Ford Galaxy Aspen 1.9D 7 seater station wagon
P749 PEG Ford Transit 150 14 seater minibus
P326 RGV LDV Convoy/UVG 10 seater welfare bus
P188 RVX Land Rover Defender 110 TDi 12 seater station wagon
R 89 VLN Iveco Daily 49.10 10 seater welfare bus

VEHICLES WITHDRAWN

E264/65/67 CPU, F190 LJN, F209 SWC, G790/95/97/98/99,801/2/9 WEV
H103 KWC, H783 GAR, H912 KVX, H949 KVX, J28 YHJ, J748 ONV, M227 HTT, N305FWC

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

K813/5 DVT were ex Budget Rentals 7/93, they were new 5/93
M477 UMH was acquired secondhand by 6/97

Although fleet numbers are not generally carried by Essex CC vehicles, two number systems exist for welfare and education vehicles in Southend and Thurrock. These numbers began to appear on vehicles in early 1997 and those noted so far consist of:

01 L690 KNO; 02 F772 KVV; 05 L689 KNO; 19 H951 KVX; 22 K873 G00;
29 J167 AAR; 49 J168 AAR; 59 G380 BEV; 63 N236 DPU; 75 J34 YHJ
78 N235 DPU.

It should be noted that in the last round of local government re-organisation on 1.4.98 Southend on Sea and Thurrock Borough Councils became unitary authorities and assumed responsibility for some highways, education and social services functions, amongst other services. To enable these "new" authorities to engage in this work a number of vehicles were transferred to them from Essex CC including a number of welfare buses/minibuses as previously listed. Hopefully my society will be able to obtain details of which vehicles were transferred and I will advise the EBEG accordingly.

In the meantime if anyone should like further information about the Council Vehicle Society, and it's very large range of publications, please send a SAE to me, Ian Taylor, at 39 Hollingdean Road, Brighton, BN2 4AA. We record all types of registered road vehicles in service with county, borough and district councils (and their contractors) throughout the whole of the UK and have over 250,000 vehicles logged in our central vehicle files, including information for all 14 district and borough councils in Essex.

A LONE CRUSADER (BY IAN TAYLOR)

In a previous edition of EBN you will have read about the route histories of Wards service 381 and the service started by Anitas Coaches between Blake Hall and Ongar. Another small operator in this area was Crusader Coaches (Harlow) Ltd and the purpose of this article is to complete the picture of independent stage carriage in the Epping area in the 1970/80s by describing the services offered by this company.

Crusader Coaches commenced a group of three services on 6th March 1978 using a minibus with support from Epping Forest District Council. The routes all started at Hastingwood and operated on a "one in - one out" basis to Epping on Mondays and Old Harlow/Harlow (Bus Station) as two separate routes, both on Fridays only. Passengers were only carried to and from the area to the east of Hastingwood, to avoid competing with other services. The timetable for all three routes remained completely unchanged until they passed to Ongar Coaches on 6.5.86 as a result of being re-tendered by the council. Upon de-regulation, on 26.10.86, the Monday Epping service was numbered 214, with the Friday Old Harlow service becoming the 215 and the Harlow (Bus Station) operation 216. As you will have read earlier the Blake Hall to Ongar service, which started life with Anitas, became the 217 at the same time.

By February 1989 the Ongar Coaches routes had been re-numbered 394,395,396 although the timetables did not change in anyway. The route number 396 was of course no stranger to the Harlow and Epping areas having been used by LT/LCBS for many years. On the 18.5.92 the Monday 394 service was back-projected to start from Moreton running via High Laver, and on 1.11.93 a further back-projection saw the service starting from Abbess Roding and running via Birds Green and Fyfield. From the same date, the Friday 395 and 396 were sensibly combined to operate Hastingwood - Tilegate Green - Potter Street - Old Harlow - Harlow (Bus Station). Also from 1.11.93, the services passed from Ongar Coaches to County Bus and as the new operator already ran a 395 service in the Ware/Hertford area, the 396 route number was used to denote the revised Harlow service. At the time of writing, January 1998, there have been no further changes to these services.

On the 8.9.83 Crusader started another modest little service which ran from Perry Green to Bishops Stortford. Initially it consisted of one return journey on Thursdays only although an experimental Saturday service was added from 14.7.84. Operation on this day of the week was comprised of three return journeys, one of which was referred to in the timetable as an "Express" which did not serve Allens Green or Sawbridgeworth. However on 29.12.84 the Saturday service was reduced to one return journey to Bishops Stortford and one single express journey from Perry Green to Bishops Stortford only.

Initially the experimental period for the Saturday operation was due to end on the 30.3.85 but the reduced service was retained and on 30.5.85 the Thursday journey from Bishops Stortford was retarded by thirty minutes to give extra time for shopping in the town.

Re-tendering by Hertfordshire County Council saw a number of long established routes change operator in 1986, one of the biggest surprises being the small group of services operated by Biss Bros, centred on Bishops Stortford. These passed to Crusader Coaches from 6.5.86 who regularly used ex-East Kent Swift, VJG 190J, to operate them. The routes were: 18 (Bishops Stortford to Birchanger; Thursdays), 19 (Bishops Stortford to Farnham, Tuesdays and Thursdays) and 20 (Bishops Stortford to Furneux Pelham Mondays to Saturdays). Biss Bros. had acquired the services in March 1950 when it had taken over the long established business of H Monk of Northgate End, Bishops Stortford who had traded as the "Wheatshaeaf Bus Service". For many years the regular bus which Biss used to operate them with was HJU 339D a Bedford SB5/Duple Midland which had been ordered by Rickard of Brentford but transferred to Biss Bros. in 1966 without ever operating for Rickard. It was replaced in July 1981 by DHW 296K a former Bristol Omnibus Company Bristol LH/ECW.

Under the conditions of de-regulation the Thursday operation of the Perry Green to Bishops Stortford service was registered as route 4 whilst the Saturday service (which was now to consist of just one return journey) was added by Hertfordshire County Council under contract. Crusader also started a new commercial service 5 on Monday to Friday peak hours between Bishops Stortford and Potter Street (Community College) via Sawbridgeworth, Old Harlow and Harlow (Bus Station), but this only lasted until 20.1.87 when it was withdrawn.

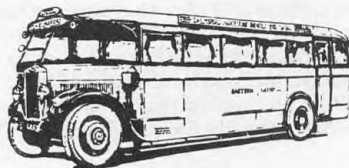
Crusader Coaches abruptly ceased to trade on 16.5.87 with responsibility for routes 4,18,19,20 passing to Biss Bros. on 19.5.87. The schoolday journeys which Crusader had been operating on Bishops Stortford Town Service 300 since de-regulation passed to Eastern National initially but they also came to Biss on 5.1.88. In the same area, Biss commenced a new Thursday service 29 on 21.5.87 between Bishops Stortford and Anstey but this ran for the last time on 1.9.88. As a matter of interest, upon cessation of the Crusader business, VJG 190J passed to Cullinan Coaches as a spare for route 249 in the Loughton area.

Over the last ten years a number of changes have taken place to the ex-Crusader services and to bring the story fully up to date, I will now briefly describe them. The Thursday 18 service to Birchanger ceased altogether from 30.8.90, it was covered by Eastern National 301 in any case, whilst on 14.5.91 buses on the Furneux Pelham 20 service were diverted to serve the new Bishops Park Tesco. From 21.11.91, the 4 was re-routed via High Wych whilst on 25.10.93 one of the peak hour journeys each way Mondays to Fridays on service 20 was extended from Little Hadham direct to Standon via the A120 thus omitting Albury and Furneux Pelham. Meanwhile the other peak journey in each direction was extended from Furneux Pelham to Standon via Braughing and Puckeridge.

On the 31.1.94 all Biss Bros. bus interests (including the 100 and the 317 which are outside the scope of this article) passed to County Bus although they continued to be operated using Biss vehicles until 4.9.95, the date which the routes were officially transferred to County Bus. A number of changes to the services took place upon this transfer. One return journey was added on Thursdays to route 4 from Bishops Stortford to Harlow (Bus Station) via Sawbridgeworth and High Wych from 7.9.95 whilst the Saturday service on route 4 ran for the last time on 2.9.95. In recompense, a new route 5 commenced on 9.9.95 running between Perry Green and Harlow (Bus Station) on Saturdays only. The 19 and 20 were also amended upon their transfer to County Bus; on the 5.9.95 the former was extended to Farnham Green and "against-the-flow" journeys were altered to run back direct and not via Level's Green. On the 20, from the 4.9.95 the peak hour extensions to Standon were withdrawn although the service was re-routed via Albury End. One return journey on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays was re-routed in Bishops Stortford via Cricketfield Lane and Lindsey Road whilst on schooldays one journey in the morning and afternoon was extended in the town to serve Birchwood High, Herts & Essex and St Marys RC Schools.

One final change to record, which occurred on 22.3.97, was the re-numbering of the commercial Thursday service on route 4 (1020 from Bishops Stortford, 1122 from Harlow) to 14 whilst a Saturday service was added over the route as the 314 (1032 from Bishops Stortford, 1230 from Harlow).

So in conclusion, it is a little ironic that all the services which Crusader slowly built up have all gradually been absorbed into the County Bus fold, although as they are all contracted services to either Essex or Hertfordshire County Councils who knows who will be operating them in the future!



EASTERN NATIONAL ENTHUSIASTS GUILD

MEMORIES

THE ORIGINAL EASTERN NATIONAL

The focus of the monthin the February issu of Essex Bus News prompted Guild member Norman Eccleston to write on his recollections of the Eastern National AEC Renowns.

The four Renowns were my favourite buses,I first saw one them in 1935 at St Neots in what was then Huntingdonshire. My parents had relatives there and most years we used to visit them,I know it was 1935 because we saw brand new LNER A4 2509 SILVER LINK on a test train as it sped through St Neots station as we waited for the Kings Cross train.

As a small boy living in the London Transport area I was mystified by this big green six wheeled bus,I believed that all six wheelers were all in London and were all red.

Four years later my family moved to Chelmsford and to my joy I discovered that by then the Renowns,or ratyer three of them 3332 MJ406 and 3334/5 MJ290/1 were at the local depot.To the best of my knowledge they remained there until withdrawn.They survived the bombing in 1943 and I particularly remember one of them on the forecourt at Chelmsford just after the war,fresh from the paint shop,immaculate in green and cream after it's first overhaul and repaint after the battleship grey of the war years.

Their length or wheelbase caused some operating problems at Chelmsford they could not execute the necessary U turn from the Bus Station into Duke Street to go under the railway bridge to the town centre,but had to make a reverse shunt,in effect a three point turn, causing considerable confusion to other road users.

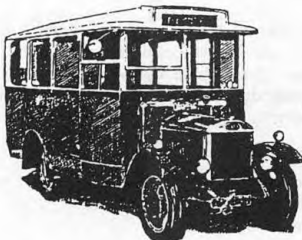
As you have written they were frequently on route 1 to Maldon and also the offshoot,the 1b to The Rodney at Little Baddow,both of which involved the long grind up Danbury Hill with a full load of 80 souls(66 eseated,12 standing,and 2 crew)this was acheived at a fast walking pace with the Gardner 5LW giving it's all*****..At Maldon,to turn onto the Bus Stations they had to reverse on to the forecourt,a similar process was necessary at Little Baddow.

They were also frequently on route 2 to Ongar and the offshoot to Oxney Green,along with rebodied AEC Regents and between them had virtual monopoly onthis road until the arrival of Bristol Ks in 1948/9. I travelled regularly to Epping from Chelmsford by bus at this time and was always pleased when a Renoewn turned up. In Ongar High Street I changed onto LT route 339 with green STs and later green RTs. At Ongar the turn was made at the small triangular green at the Two Brewers public house where the Renowns had to do another three point turn.

The fourth Renown 3333 MJ 407 was at Colchester at this time and I believe it stayed until withdrawn. I never saw it at Chelmsford. One has to wonder why it was allocated there,was it because Norfolks, who shared the route to Stoke by Nayland,had a Renown of their own,VO 7884 originally Ebor of Mansfield and Eastern National were not to be out done.

By 1950 all four Renowns had gone,I think prematurely due to the operating difficulties.They were never used on Chelmsford town routes,the last stamping ground for the rebodied Regents which outlived them by several years.After scrapping the body of 3332 lay for some years in Hill's scrap yard on the B1007 at Stock.Eventually that part of the yard was cleared and it was gone. In what was then mostly rural area they could never really made economic sense,but I thought they were superb.

The really shattering thought is this all happened 50 years ago.



Guild member Jim Read writes from White Roding.

The Dennis Lancets were the first buses to be issued with block registrations by Essex County Council thereby making 'bus spotting' an easier task, particularly as Eastern National or the body builders provided two fleet number plates for each vehicle, one on the front bulkhead and the other, for some obscure reason, on the bonnet lid-----very frustrating if one was following a Leyland Lion along Bedford High Street!!.

These vehicles were probably the last to be fitted with exposed cranking handles which were responsible for the neat round perforations in the rear anatomy of many a decker which had been over reversed during parking in the garage etc.,.

At the outbreak of World War 2 our local depot at Bishops Stortford operated mainly five Dennis Aces 3596/933601/2/3 CTW 192/5/7-9, two Leyland Lions which had been redied by Beadle 2808 VW 7644, 2835 TM 4745 and AEC Regent 3326 MJ 289 and as I recall it was not until late in 1940 that a Dennis Lancet appeared on the scene. One such vehicle was 3420 AEV 780 and it's interior advertisements would suggest that it was a Midland area transfer, a practice which was quite common in those days.

Mention of the Duple deckers reminded me of the big raid on Chelmsford in May 1943. I remember missing school lunch on the following day and witnessing the scene of utter destruction in the bus garage as a photo in the Tilling book portrays .Replacement vehicles from the Midland area and other companies including an unidentified open platform saloon rallied to the cause---yes a Wells and Winch advert in Trumans territory was unique. Duple bodied Bristol K5G JPU 461 was the newest casualty on that fateful day and it probably holds the record as being the only Eastern National vehicle never to have seen a drop of green paint.



Southend Transport Ltd . was renamed Arriva Southend Ltd, on 2/4/98. legal lettering should be amended when the new depot opens.

VEHICLES

Repaints

OLYMPIAN 257 B185BLG and 260 B184BLG.

Disposal

Leyland AN110 MPJ 210L Stephenson's (dealer) Rochford.

This must be the shortest lived Arriva liveried vehicle.

Leyland Nationals 12 25 & 745 are due to be withdrawn shortly. They are to be replaced by an equal number of minibuses.

London Layovers

The allday London coaches currently layover at Stamford Hill (Rockwood Rd) the ex IEASIDE (SF) Depot now used by Arriva London North East (Grey Green). Previous to this they had parked at the former Grey Green Depot at Stamford Hill, now closed.

The Kentish Bus Depot at Cambridge Heath (Ash Grove) was used for short time and before that Londonlinks Walworth Depot had been host, also Aldgate Bus Station was also used for a time.

The Atlantean opentopper was not used by Southend, even when painted in Arriva livery!

M E D I A M O N I T O R

April 9th: After a succesful trial last year a land train started operating along Clacton seafront from Easter between the pier and Captain Hook's cafe at Holland-on-Sea.

April 10th: An Ardleigh resident complains that every day he receives junk mail just as every day large buses, often double deckers, pass his house empty. He knows not where they are going, where or when they stop nor the cost of travelling on them. He finds it easier to use his car rather than go to the bother of finding out. A Rowhedge reader complains that bus lanes might be a good idea but are no use if like service 66A the buses are always being cancelled.

April 16th: Sixty school children had a lucky escape when Southend Pier notched up another "kill". Metroliner double decker (M1236) was the casualty. Colchester Council gave to go ahead for a £80k scheme for bus lanes for North Hill and Head Street. *Environmentally friendly transport lanes might be a better description as hackney carriages, private hire vehicles, motor cycles and cycles can also use them.*

April 17th: A Layer resident complains that the bus service provided to Layer-de-la-Haye is abysmal. A single fare of £1.45 and no returns available.

Chris McCormack of Thamesway and Steve Smith of Eastern Nation appear on a BBC Essex phone-in. A caller claimed that a driver who had no change had given him an IOU. This was denied, if the driver had no change the passengers name and address was taken and an unpaid fare voucher issued for the person to pay at a later date. 95% of drivers have a float but if a number of notes are presented first thing all the change can go. On the question of a passenger with no money, they did not like to refuse travel if an adult had no money ID would be required. It was a strict policy that children were not refused travel and that also applied to a single female late at night. The shows presenter, a former solicitor, pointed out that such action could lead to a change of unfair discrimination.

The next question stated the bindingly obvious that has ben staring everyone in the face for years. Why did Service 74 do a circuit of Clacton town centre, with no set downs, to get to Jacksn Road frequently being heavily delayed when going in by Old Road and West Avenue would be quicker. The queuing of cars to get into Waterglades shopping centre might be a problem but the suggestion would certainly be looked at.

Braintree to Chelmsford buses no longer served the centre of the county town. The service had been split to improve reliability and there was on a 30 minute headway no longer time to serve the town centre. The suggestion that the ticket be valid on any bus from the Bus Station to the shops would be considered.

Can "out of service" buses run on any road was the question from Westcliff. Yes, they pay the licence just like any other vehicle but they should use the 24 route to run through Westcliff. The caller from 1st Avenue claimed they ran along that road all day, without lights in evening

No buses went near near Highlands Park why? They had never been asked in recent times and the location of the entrance might cause problems but it would be looked at.

Why is there no direct bus from Canvey to Chelmsford the journey requiring a change of bus in Basildon and an alleged journey time of three hours. Canvey councillors want bus priority on the A130 if that happens a direct link might then be possible if the public request it.

A bus had stood for an hour in Braintree because there was no driver, nobody bothered to tell the people. The company were recruiting in Braintree It was agreed customer information was bad if they are not advising people what is happening.

In Spain you buy ticket in shops and give driver the ticket when you get on. Why not here as it speeds things up. Thamesway were trailing magnetic card validations - if it works it will be rolled out You can get weekly/monthly tickets from agents, why not books of tickets for casual travellers? *Colchester Corp had these in the 1960's.*

An Eastwood caller said her son had a Transcard but when the machine refused to deduct the money the driver told him to get off and wait for the next bus. There had been problems getting the machines to read the cards but an unpaid fare voucher should have been issued.

April 22nd: A Cedric's coach crossing the Orwell Bridge lost two wheels, one ended up in the river, the other a mile down the road as the vehicle slid along on its suspension. None of the passengers were injured.

April 23rd: The County and Braintree Councils are looking at the provision of a community bus to serve villages not served by public transport

April 24th: Manningtree Rail Users Association is carrying out a survey to see if there is a demand for a bus service to the station. There is currently no service in peak hours and none at all from Mistley, Bradfield or Wix. The logic of a park and ride scheme at the Hythe is questioned as it is surely easier to take to train for the entire journey from most locations it will serve rather than use a car for all but the last mile. A bus stop in King Harold Road for use by Arriva Colchester's new service 3 is in a dangerous position according to residents as it is too close to the junctions of Scythe Way and Reaper Road. *A bus stop for a service running every 75 mins of course being far more hazardous than parked cars, a permanent stop has now been erected further down the road.* Posters have appeared on Hedingham vehicles warning that the 1715 Tollesbury to Maldon and the 1815 (1750?)Tollesbury to Witham and their return journeys will be withdrawn from September if usage doesn't rise. Robert MacGregor said passenger numbers were not even covering the drivers wages but nothing else would be cut as a core network was now established. *Notices may preach to the converted but why not try to attract new customers by finding out when people want to travel. Anyone working in Maldon and leaving off at 1730 is hardly going to hang around for 30 mins - they'll use a car. This applies to all operators, just look at how many buses leave towns between 1725 and 1735.*

April 27th: Graham Peck of Cedric's speaking on the fire that destroyed many vehicles on 24th March said that it has been a nightmare leasing vehicles and keeping services running while dealing with their insurers and loss assessors. With there being an increase in the upmarket end of coaching they were planning to rebuild the fleet and orders for new luxury coaches with video link, mobile phone, fax machine and air conditioning each costing over £200k.

April 28th: Essex has received one of the biggest grants as part of the Government's package of extra funding to improve rural transport. The grants are based on rural population and Essex will receive £1.060,000 a year.

May 1st: A reader says any plan for redevelopment of Colchester Bus Station must ensure that it is adequate for future transport needs but the present site does not offer integration with other modes.

Undated: May Chandler who has been driving for Thames Weald for 20 years is trying to raise £25,000 to keep the services running Dr Nesbitt Heffernan who started the company 37 years ago said it had always been supported by him personally but he was now struggling to find the money to keep it going hence the decision to close down.

All items appeared in the Colchester Evening Gazette, Essex County Standard or East Anglian Daily Times on the dates shown. Persona observations in italics.

NORTH ESSEX BUS SCENE

On a monthly basis I hope to bring to members of the Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group news items of interest and happenings in relation to the many bus and coach operators that are in evidence in the North Essex area. Hopefully this will prove to be of great interest to many members of the Group whom I know reside in the southern part of the County.

I would like to begin with some interesting observations that have been sent to me by Sue Burden of Braintree. Sue provides this information on two operators:-

Majestic The Fleetline this operator acquired from Osbourne's is in a yard near Dovercourt station and is extremely vandalised with lots of windows smashed. Reportedly wild parties have been held inside the vehicle.

Brandon's In the yard behind the Mushroom Farm where a busy fork-lift truck runs around are two disused DMS's. One has its engine cover open and the other has lots of offside panels removed. There are probably GHV 23N and GHV 29N. MLK 677L has gone, presumed scrapped. It is alledged to be one of the longest lasting vehicles in the Braintree area. Also in the yard is a Northern Counties bodied double decker with Stevenson's livery of white with dark green and orange, presumed to be an ex-Southend Fleetline. It is noted with interest that the livery Stevenson's paint their VR's in is the same pattern and colour as that of two old DMS's that Wiffen's used for school work in the early 1980's; one of which was MLK 677L.

I would like to thank Sue very much indeed for supplying this news.

Hopefully next month I will be able to report on some the many interesting aspects of the operations of Eastern National, Hedingham and Staines Crusader Coaches Clacton depots, which are coincidentally all based on the same industrial estate at Gorse Lane.

Paul Sparks, February 1998

MISSING FROM EBN407



NORTH ESSEX BUS SCENE

As the route between Clacton and Maldon has now been taken over solely by vehicles based at Clacton depot and operated by their drivers two different route numbers have evolved. For the section between Clacton and Colchester the route number is now 76, and for the section between Colchester and Maldon the route No. 75 is retained.

At the Telford Road depot of First Eastern National the following vehicles sit in the yard pending their next moves:-

<u>Fleet No.</u>	<u>Registration No.</u>	<u>Details</u>
1112	HHJ 373Y	Alexander Leyland Tiger.
0230	D230 PPU	Thamesway Reeve Burgess Mercedes 608D.
2252	C230 HCV	Eastern National Mercedes 608D.
2384	WNO 481	Open top Bristol KSW5G.
3233	LUA 717V	Eastern National Bristol VRT.
1114	HHJ 375Y	Alexander Leyland Tiger.
1907	DAR 129T	Thamesway Leyland National.
1115	HHJ 376Y	Alexander Leyland Tiger.
1890	BNO 680T	Eastern National Leyland National.
717	EWB 165T	Yorkshire Rider Bristol VRT.
980	SWW 305R	Yorkshire Rider Bristol VRT.
713	DWU 296T	Yorkshire Rider Bristol VRT.
2230	C485 BHY	Eastern National Mercedes 608D.
2217	C217 HJN	Eastern National Mercedes 608D.
2231	C486 BHY	Eastern National Mercedes 608D.
2232	C489 BHY	Eastern National Mercedes 608D.
1005	A663 KUM	Duple Dominant Leyland Tiger ; Eastern National.
0260	F260 RHK	Thamesway Reeve Burgess Mercedes 709D.
0252	F252 NJN	Thamesway Reeve Burgess Mercedes 709D.
0259	F259 RHK	Thamesway Reeve Burgess Mercedes 709D.
0248	F248 NJN	Thamesway Reeve Burgess Mercedes 709D.
0247	F247 NJN	Thamesway Reeve Burgess Mercedes 709D.
3225	AYG 850S	Eastern National Bristol VRT.

Interestingly amongst those vehicles was ex Thamesway Reeves Burgess Mercedes 709D, Fleet No. 0334, Registration No. H343 LJN one of a batch of vehicles sent in to allow the withdrawal of the 608D's from the Clacton town services. Evidently its premature withdrawal has been brought about by gearbox failure!

Some further news on the fire at Cedrics suggests that vehicles destroyed were Bristol VRT's NTC 571R, PWR 443W, CJH 116V; Dormobile-bodied Iveco 49.10 K878 GOO; Caetano-bodied Volvo B58 EIJ 4016; Setra FSK 868; Bova Futura N7 CED and Ikarus-bodied DAF P20 CED. Two other vehicles are reported as severely damaged but may be rebodied. These are Bova Futuras M15 CED and OIL 5313. Reported as damaged, but repairable are Bova Futura L3 CED and Jonckheere-bodied Volvo B10M MXI 8204.

On a final note it is pleasing to see an Essex Routemaster. The vehicle is ex London General RM 1528, currently registered as KGJ 117A and is in the ownership of a well known private individual. The vehicle is currently parked in a yard on the Gorse Lane Industrial Estate.

Paul Sparks, May 1998.