

Basildon Dupes : 1963

More reminiscences from Ted Miles

Hopefully some information on duplication at Basildon depot (BN) in 1963 will be of interest. On the blinds, RELIEF was always shown, although on duty cards these journeys were referred to as 'DUP's.

Service 34: Basildon - Chelmsford

06:26 service: always duplicated as follows:

Depart BN at 06:23 three minutes in front of the service car. This was a very busy journey in the days when you reversed in Billericay High Street to face the Chelmsford direction after coming up from Ramsden Heath. Normally, on leaving Stock War Memorial you had a standing load. Then, flat out to Chelmsford via Marconi's. Arrive at Chelmsford (CF) at 07:40. Here, have a quick tea and cheese roll at the canteen which was very good.

07:45: service 53 to Billericay (full load for station)

08:25 Billericay 53 to Chelmsford, arrive 09:00 (full load)

09:05 Chelmsford to Basildon service 34.

This was always an overtime duty. The fact that we took so much money on it never put into the schedules by union agreement. The duty was always OT1 and it was good to have overtime available like this as it was much sought after.

Duty no. OT2 (Saturdays only)

09:57 Orsett Hospital - Tilbury

10:30 Tilbury - Orsett

10:57 Orsett - Tilbury

11:30 Tilbury - Orsett

11:57 Orsett - Tilbury

12:30 Tilbury - Laindon

13:26 Laindon - Garage (dead)

This duty had very tight running time and was a real moneyspinner.

Bata Shoe Factory services

Service 245 shows a journey from Stanford-le-Hope at 07:57. In fact this started from Homesteads, Mackley Drive at 07:50 for commuters from Stanford station. Passengers could book from Homesteads to Bata if they wished. Services to Bata's were busy and on Monday mornings, the secret was to run off, say 30 or 40 weekly tickets in advance and hope and pray the level crossing would be closed at East Tilbury to give you enough time to issue the passengers with their tickets. Needless to say, the rest of the week was a piece of cake.

The 16:45 from Bata's was shown in the timetable as going to Stanford-le-Hope station but in fact operated to the Homesteads, again for the benefit of commuters at Stanford.

Duty no. OT3 - Wednesdays (am) was for a duration of four and a half hours. You reported to inspector at Pitsea Broadway and worked duplicates as required to suit Pitsea Market which was very busy in the 1960s. Normally we did two or three journeys to Corringham on service as required. Eric Cellar was normally the inspector and he was very easy to get on with and didn't overwork you.

Whitsun and August Bank Holidays

A real treat this - meal breaks paid and bank holiday pay rates. BN had two duties right through to Clacton (lovely!)

Duty 1

Dead to Chelmsford: arrive 07:30

08:15 Duplicate: Chelmsford - Clacton; arrive 10:25. LS saloon, normally 409



Basildon allocated LS 409 (29 ENO) inside Kings Cross depot. *Chris Stewart Collection*



Ex-Westcliff K5G 1280 (BJN 114) blinded-up for the 34 inside Basildon depot. *Chris Stewart*



Southend FLF 1578 (87 TVX) in trouble on Bell Hill, Billericay in February 1963.

Chris Stewart Collection

(29 ENO) or 410 (30 ENO).

16:30 Clacton - Chelmsford

Dead to Garage (BN)

19:35 Finish

Duty 2

Dead to Chelmsford: arrive 08:30

09:15 Duplicate: Chelmsford - Clacton;
arrive 11:25

17:30 Clacton - Chelmsford; arrive 19:45
Dead to Garage (BN)

20:35 Finish

These duties were sought after and were allocated by means of lucky dip ballot organised by the union rep. I was lucky just once.

I hope readers find this topic of duplication interesting. BN depot had continual staff shortages. These guaranteed overtime duties It was hoped would encourage staff to stay as there was guaranteed extra money to be earned especially in the winter months.

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I always find Doug Brown's notes interesting and can add some BN notes to his account of the cold winter of 1963.

Harold Biggs, Mechanical Superintendent at BN decided to economise, and so, no anti-freeze was put in the motors. Well, you can imagine what happened! I don't know how many motors had cracked blocks on the first Monday. Driver Brian O'Connell and myself were on service 243 from Pitsea to The Knares with 1332 (ONO 65) and - yes it happened at Clay Hill Road - a motor with a cracked block. BN depot in a state of chaos with no motors spare! However, anti-freeze was the rule after this in all vehicles.

During this cold spell, services at works times were very busy. Out of the peaks just no-one used the services. I remember being on the 244's at Pitsea station with 1352 (SHK 513) and the condensation had frozen and was hanging in icicles. (I should have had a camera to picture this!). BN was so short of serviceable vehicles that buses were brought in on loan from all over the fleet for two or three weeks. Is there any record of this?