



Although it operated trams until 1932, the Rawtenstall municipal transport undertaking in east Lancashire styled itself unusually as Rawtenstall Corporation Motors. It began operating buses in 1924, painted them maroon and cream, and other than a single vehicle allocated in wartime, sourced all of them within Lancashire from Leyland Motors. This scene has two Lancashire women striding purposefully past the newer of two of Rawtenstall's Leyland Titans. No.13 (JTE 498) was a PD2/1 with 56-seat East Lancs body new in 1948. Pulling up behind, with starting handle in place on its radiator, was 33 (CTJ 165), a TD5 with Leyland's own 54-seat bodywork, new in September 1938.

(Photographer J Wilkins, copyright The Bus Archive, ref. JW02/00300)

## IN THIS ISSUE

- Publicity Corner • Dealer stock • London General fares inquiry
- Northern General directors' visit • Regular Facebook Highlights

## News from The Archive

Since its creation in 2018, The Bus Archive has grown significantly. The quantity of donated archive and library material has mushroomed, from the general public, the enthusiast community and the industry itself. We have expanded our premises and brought our collections up to professional standards. All of this has largely been achieved by a small band of volunteers, backed up by Kim and Jo our part-time Admin Assistants.

The trustees have been considering for some while how to bolster our support functions whilst also reducing the burden on key people, and we now have two new appointments to announce.

### New Archivist

Elizabeth Shuck (*right*) has joined us as archivist. She has seven years experience of archives work, and has a Masters degree in archive and record management from the University of Liverpool. For four years, Elizabeth was Archivist at Islamic Relief Worldwide and joins us from the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust where she was Reader Services Archivist.

In her new role, Elizabeth will be responsible for our archive service including activity at our Droitwich, Walsall and Acton centres. Philip Kirk will now concentrate on strategic matters and retains the role of Director as well as continuing as a trustee. He will also now formally head up the photo archive, reporting to Elizabeth for that function.



### New Treasurer

In January, Laurie Powell (*on the right in the adjacent photo*) joined us as our treasurer and trustee. Laurie is a career accountant, for many years running his own practice. He is an active member of the Aldershot & District Bus Interest Group. Laurie takes over from Pat Russell (*seen here with Laurie*) who has been instrumental in the successful development of the archive, and who will continue to head up the timetable and publicity part of the archive, reporting to Elizabeth for that function.

### Ted at 30!

In contrast to these new appointments, we celebrated the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ted Gadsby volunteering at our Walsall centre and its precursor site at Coalbrookdale. It's quite a record, and we calculated it must equate to around 1,500 days – although Ted will doubtless have the exact number recorded! For many years Ted formed a partnership with the OS Hon. Librarian Alan Mills in building up the collections at Walsall as they are today. In the photos, we see the special cake for the event – carrying both OS and BA logos – and Ted regaling the Walsall team with the story of how the collections were transferred to the Walsall building.

Many thanks to Ted - here's to the next 30 years!





# Publicity Corner

Sheffield Corporation began to complement its extensive tram network with buses from 1916 and 100 years ago in May 1925 publicised an improvement to the Saturday timetable of its service to High Green to the north of the city to 34 round trips starting and finishing at Bridge Street in the city centre, six of them extending beyond High Green to Howbrook.

Three months later, it advised passengers of a change to the fare stages on the tram line to Intake, in the south-east of the city.

All are announced over the name of Arthur Robinson Fearnley, general manager from 1903 to 1936, a widely respected industry figure of the day who also acted as a consultant, advising other transport undertakings around the country. His grandson Giles remains active in today's bus industry and indeed is a trustee of The Bus Archive!

*1,000 of each*  
*£1-6-0 for 11,000*

Sheffield Corporation Tramways and Motors.

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## High Green (and Howbrook) Motor 'Bus Route.

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### IMPROVED SATURDAY SERVICE

Through to SHEFFIELD (Bridge Street)

Commencing on Saturday, 2nd May, 1925.

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#### TIME TABLE.

HIGH GREEN to SHEFFIELD (Bridge Street).					SHEFFIELD (Bridge St.) to HIGH GREEN.				
a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	a.m.	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.
7.35	12.15	3.15	6.20	9.25	6.40	11.25	2.0	5.15	8.10
8.45	12.40	3.45	6.45	9.50	7.55	11.50	2.25	5.30	8.35
9.20	1.5	4.10	7.15	10.15	8.30	p.m.	2.55	5.55	9.0
9.55	1.30	4.35	7.40	10.45	9.5	12.15	3.20	6.25	9.25
10.30	2.0	5.0	8.5	11.10	9.40	12.40	3.45	6.50	9.55
11.5	2.25	5.30	8.30	11.35	10.15	1.10	4.10	7.15	10.20
11.45	2.50	5.55	9.0	—	10.55	1.35	4.40	7.40	10.45

\* Howbrook. † Runs through to Howbrook.

A. R. FEARNLEY,  
General Manager.

Division Street,  
Sheffield,  
April, 1925.



## Intake Section.

# FARE STAGES.

---

Commencing on MONDAY, 10th August, 1925, and until further notice, the 1d. and 1½d. Fare Stages from Intake Terminus will be :---

**1d. Stage (No. 5):**  
**Between Intake and Cemetery Gates.**

**1½d. Stage:**  
**Between Intake and Long Henry Street.**

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**THE OTHER STAGES ON THIS SECTION WILL BE UNALTERED.**

Division Street,  
7/8/25.

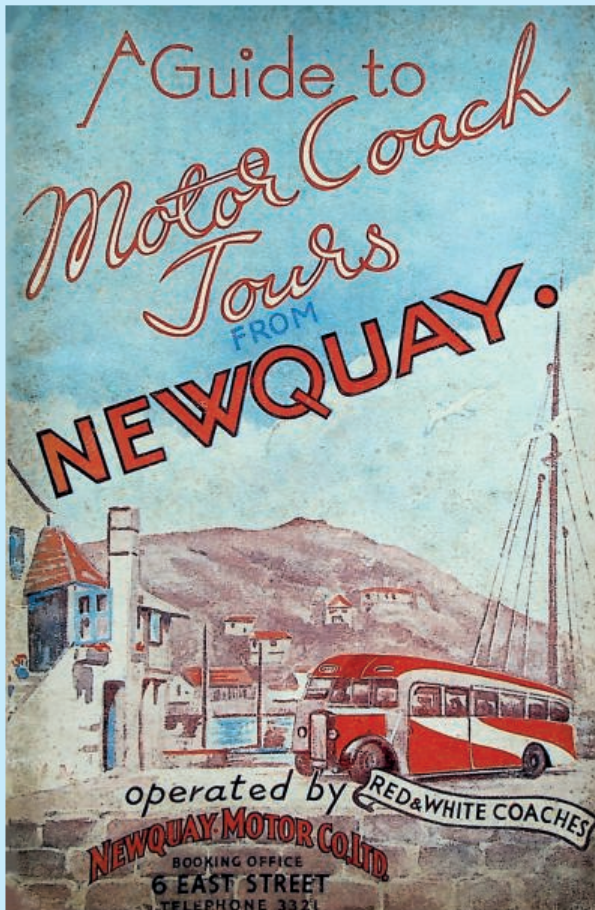
**A. R. FEARNLEY.**  
General Manager.



## Publicity Corner

The cover of an undated brochure from the Newquay Motor Company's Red & White Coaches has an idyllic scene placing a halfcab coach — it bought a new Tilling-Stevens in 1945 — by a quayside. Inside are details of where they went, how often, how long was the drive and — inked in as presumably they changed from year to year — the prices.

The longest and most expensive were the 15 shilling (75p – about £21 today) day tours of between 140 and 210 miles. Cheapest were the six shilling (30p – about £9 today) afternoon tours.



### DAILY TOURS

No.	Tour	DEPART	Miles	Page	
		a.m.			
1	Land's End, via Penzance and St. Ives	9.45	105	4	3/6
2	Tintagel and Boscastle, via Port Isaac	10.0	75	9	8/-
3	Looe, Polperro and Fowey ...	9.45	105	11	2/6
4	Lizard and Mullion (Kynance Cove) ...	10.0	95	15	2/-
5	Falmouth and Truro (River Fal Trip)	10.0	63	18	7/-
13	Tintagel, Boscastle and Bude ...	9.45	105	31	2/6

### EXTENDED DAY TOURS

6	Clovelly, via Hartland Point and Bude	9.0	140	20	5/-
7	Dartmeet, via Princetown, Two Bridges and Plymouth ...	9.0	150	23	5/-

#### SUNDAYS

	Torquay and Dartmoor ...	9.0	188	—	5/-
	Ilfracombe and Clovelly ...	9.0	210	—	5/-

### AFTERNOON TOURS

	Tour	DEPART	Miles	Page	
		p.m.			
8	St. Mawes, via Porthscatho and St. Just-in-Roseland ...	2.0	60	25	7/-
9	Mevagissey, via Gorran Haven and Caerhayes ...	2.0	58	26	6/-
10	Fowey ...	2.0	58	28	6/-
11	Padstow and Harlyn Bay ...	2.0	38	29	6/-
12	Bedruthan Steps and St. Mawgan ...	2.0	30	30	6/-
14	Helford Passage and Falmouth ...	2.0	70	Mystery	7/-



## Facebook highlights

Here are the six most-liked posts from the last quarter. The captions are highly abridged from the original posts; for full stories behind the operators and the vehicles go to <https://www.facebook.com/thebusarchive/>.



Plymouth was the most south-western municipal in Britain and by the end of the 1970s had a highly standardised fleet of Leyland National single-deckers and Leyland Atlantean double-deckers. It was an early customer for the Atlantean, receiving its first 18 in the summer of 1960. It updated its image in 1982, introducing the Plymouth Citybus fleet name, which was supported by a major marketing and publicity campaign and proudly displayed by our May 1983 picture of MCW-bodied Atlantean 212 (FJY 912E), one of 15 delivered in spring 1967, on the city's Royal Parade.

(Photographer Roy Marshall, ref. RM02/MM11C94)

Southdown was Leyland's biggest customer for the 30ft Titan PD3, purchasing 285 between 1957 and 1967, as it held out against the tide elsewhere towards rear-engined double-deckers. All had forward-entrance Northern Counties bodies with full-width fronts and came to be nicknamed 'Queen Mary'. The last 24, delivered in 1967, had long side windows and quickly became known as 'Panoramics'. Passengers found them to be uncomfortably hot in summer and they were soon modified by fitting a push out window in the front dome, as seen in this 1974 picture of 352 (HCD 352E), which by then had succumbed to National Bus Company leaf green.

(Photographer Roy Marshall, copyright The Bus Archive, ref. RM02/MED93).



NHG 732P was the fourth prototype Leyland B15 (later Titan) built and the first to go into public service. London Transport operated it from Chalk Farm garage between May 1976 and April 1978 on route 24 (Hampstead Heath-Pimlico) which passes through Trafalgar Square, Whitehall, Parliament Square and Victoria. It also was later exhibited at the final Commercial Motor Show at Earls Court in London, in September 1976. The Titan operated alongside Daimler Fleetlines, including Park Royal bodied Daimler Fleetline DMI151 new in 1975, one of the 2,646-strong DMS class which London received

between 1970 and 1978. As is well known, the DMS was not the success London had hoped for, and many were disposed of as soon as their seven-year certificates of fitness expired. DMI151 was no exception, passing to dealer Ensign in October 1982 but was soon snapped up by Grimsby-Cleethorpes, becoming its No.7. The Titan prototype survives today in preservation. (Photographer Harry Hay, ref. HH01/01182).

## Facebook highlights



was rebodied with this ECW body from a 1939 Bristol L5G; withdrawn in 1960 it later worked for Yorkshire Poultry Packers in North Yorkshire. (Photographer Roy Marshall, ref. RM02/13550).

A classic line up of ECW-bodied Bristols at Grantham. LS5G 2224 (OFU 435) was one of eight delivered in late 1956 and early 1957. All were buses although the first four were fitted with 41 coach seats and the others, including OFU 435, were 45 -seat buses. The Lodekka next to it is 2333 (NBE 136), an LD6B new in 1955 and fitted with the 'long apron' radiator grille that was a feature of early production models. Next to it is 2382 (OVL 476), an FS5G from a batch of 17 new in 1960/61.

(Photographer Roy Marshall, RM02/MBE108).



And our most popular post is....



Western National 2002 (807 KDV) was one of a batch of 24 forward-entrance Bristol Lodekka FLFs delivered from the end of 1962 with a mix of Gardner and Bristol engines, 2002 being a Gardner. Despite being 15 years old in this picture and apart from a few little dings in the front roof dome no doubt from overhanging trees on the Devon lanes, it still looks in fine fettle. It spent 17 years working for Western National before passing to dealer North's of Sherburn-in-Elmet at the end of 1979. From

there, like many Lodekkas, it was exported for tour and sightseeing work in Canada for an operation in Winnipeg and, at the time of writing, is still based in Alberta, converted into a mobile coffee outlet in Spruce Grove, west of Edmonton. (Photographer Mark Page, ref. MP02/02283)



## London General fares inquiry

The London General Omnibus Company, owned by the Underground group and with a virtual monopoly of London's bus services, was far from popular at the end of World War One.

Around 40% of its vehicles and 4,500 of its men, mostly drivers, were called up into military service after hostilities began in 1914, leading it to reduce operated mileage by nearly 16% by 1919, while the war effort increased London's population over the same period by around the same percentage. Rising costs raised fares by around a third between 1916 and 1918.

An account by the author C. Playne published in 1933 described rush hour travel in 1917 as "a daily terror". "The crowds of office workers were vastly increased and the scramble to get into some of the longer distance trams and omnibuses constituted a bear fight out of which those of both sexes, who were worsted [defeated] or driven off the over laden vehicles by the conductors, retreated to the pavements with hats bashed in, umbrellas broken, shins and ankles kicked and bruised, in dazed and shaken condition." Rules were relaxed to permit standing passengers on buses for the first time.

All of which helps explain why General's decision to increase fares again in March 1919 — by means of what today we might call "shrinkflation", shortening the distances between penny stages — prompted the Home Secretary, the Liberal MP Edward Short — to commission a noted accountant of

the time, Sir Arthur Whinney, to investigate the company's finances and determine whether the increase was justified. Whinney was the senior partner of the accountancy practice Whinney, Smith and Whinney, and had served as consulting accountant to the Admiralty during the war.

He presented his conclusions quickly, submitting his report on General's fares and working expenses — held in The Bus Archive — on 13 June 1919, concluding that the increase was entirely justified.

A doubling of tax in 1916 and subsequent price rises in 1917 and 1918 had raised the price of a gallon of petrol by over 250% since 1913, contributing to a 43% fall in General's working profit. And although it had set aside reserves of £1.9 million, it needed to make good the loss of buses commandeered by the military and to replace all but 250 of those in the current fleet. That amounted

to 2,500 buses over two years, which the company anticipated would cost it £3 million.

"If these figures are correct, and there appears no reason to doubt them," Whinney concluded, "contributions of at least £250,000 per annum will be required to meet the entire expenditure, whilst more will be necessary if the fund is to be placed on a sound footing to meet wear and tear during that period." He also identified some cause for financial optimism, stating that "in all probability" there would be a "considerable" fall in the price of petrol and in maintenance charges and that revenue would be boosted by the higher passenger capacity of the new K-type double-decker that was succeeding the prewar B-type. "The conclusion, however, remains that the reserves made in the past are not more than what is necessary to meet the company's present requirements."



LGO K808 (XC 9759) photographed at Streatham Garage. The K-type had capacity for 46-passengers compared to the 34-passenger capacity of the B-type. (Photographer Ernest Masterman, copyright The Bus Archive, ref. EM03/0418)

Labour costs also were rising quite sharply, with a wage increase granted during 1918 resulted in General making a £9,590 loss in the three months to 31 March 1919. The company had subsequently agreed to an 8 hour working day for all its employees, which it estimated would add £600,000 to its annual costs, possibly more as it increased the size of its operating fleet. The 8 hour day also brought a change in the rate that drivers and conductors were paid, from per mile run to per hour worked.

“Against this increased cost, additional revenue will be derived from the raising of fares since March 1919, but it is estimated that such additional revenue will not completely cover the additional working costs,” Whinney concluded.

THE LONDON GENERAL OMNIBUS COMPANY, LIMITED.

## REPORT

UPON THE

## FARES AND WORKING EXPENSES

BY

SIR ARTHUR WHINNEY, K.B.E.

*Presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty.*



LONDON:  
PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

To be purchased through any Bookseller or directly from  
H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE at the following addresses:  
IMPERIAL HOUSE, KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C. 2, and 28, ABINGDON STREET, LONDON, S.W. 1;  
37, PETER STREET, MANCHESTER; 1, ST. ANDREW'S CRESCENT, CARDIFF;  
23, FORTH STREET, EDINBURGH;  
or from E. PONSONBY, LTD., 116, GRAFTON STREET, DUBLIN.

1919.  
*Price One Penny Net.*

[Cmd. 209]



## THE LONDON GENERAL OMNIBUS COMPANY, LIMITED.

The Right Honourable Edward Shortt, K.C.,  
H.M. Secretary of State for Home Affairs,  
Home Office,  
Whitehall, S.W. 1.

SIR,

1. IN compliance with instructions with which you have favoured me I have the honour to report that I have investigated the accounts and records of the London General Omnibus Company, Limited, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the increase in fares charged to the public is justified by the increase in the Company's working expenses.

2. I have had before me the statements submitted to you by the Company and have had due regard to the contentions set forth therein so far as the same are material to the main object of the inquiry. I have also called for further information which has been supplied by the Company.

3. **Arrangements with Associated Companies.**—In order to enable the subject to be understood it is necessary to refer to the arrangements which exist between the London General Omnibus Company and its Associated Companies, namely, the South Metropolitan Electric Tramways and Lighting Company, Limited, the Tramways (M.E.T.) Omnibus Company, Limited, and the Gearless Motor Omnibus Company, Limited.

Up to the 31st December 1918 the Associated Omnibus Company was also a party to this arrangement, but this Company has since been absorbed by the London General Omnibus Company, herein-after referred to as the "General" Company, who have purchased its entire fleet of motorbuses.

The working arrangements vary in each case, but, broadly speaking, the "General" Company runs the motorbuses of the Associated Companies as though they were its own. It arranges the routes, provides the drivers and conductors and all working expenses. The "General" Company takes all receipts and pays to the Associated Companies an agreed proportion thereof. The "General" Company also charges each Associated Company with a proportion of the working expenses based upon the agreed average cost of running and it pays over to the Associated Companies the difference between the proportion of receipts and expenses so arrived at.

This arrangement was in existence in July 1914 when the "commandeering" of motorbuses came about and the position became somewhat changed, for the War Office did not select a proportionate part of each company's fleet, but took the motorbuses at will. In the case of the Gearless Company the whole fleet was "commandeered." It was, therefore, mutually agreed that each of the Associated Companies should remain relatively in the same position as they were before "commandeering" took place, and in order to carry this arrangement into effect a table was drawn up showing the number of motorbuses owned by each Company in July 1914, and the takings were divided in the following proportions:—

Name.	Motorbuses.	Percentage to Total.
General Company - - - -	2,636	85·83 per cent.
South Metropolitan - - - -	10	·33
Tramways (M.E.T.) Omnibus Company	350	11·40 "
Gearless Company - - - -	20	·65 "
Associated Company - - - -	55	1·79 "
	3,071	100·00 "

These percentages were slightly modified at a later date when the "General" Company acquired some additional motorbuses, but not sufficiently to cause more than a fractional difference.

As regards expenses these were also apportioned on the basis of the estimated cost of running, and although other factors arise which slightly vary the proportions, broadly speaking, they are apportioned on the above basis. Other arrangements with



## Dealer stock

Catalogues from two dealers reveal some of the secondhand vehicles on the market at dates between the 1950s and mid-1970s.

The earliest of these, from an unspecified date between the mid- and late-1950s, was circulated by Lansdowne Commercial Engineers (Stratford) Ltd, an exporter and importer of passenger, commercial and military vehicles, based in Leytonstone, east London. This was accompanied by a “Dear Friends” letter in which it boasted a trebling of exports of vehicles and diesel engines over the previous 12 months.

Double-deckers for sale included 1941-built Leyland Titans from Birmingham and early postwar AEC Regents and Guy Arabs from Midland Red. Among the coaches — all advertised as dating from 1950 — are Bedford OBs and halfcab AEC Regals. While their date could be true, what are billed as 1950 BMMO Leyland diesel 31-seater service coaches from Midland Red really were a lot older than that. The design and registration CHA 959 identify an SOS SLR with English Electric body built in 1937 and repowered postwar with a Leyland E181 engine, so 1950 might be when the engine was new.

Cables : LANSKOACH, LONDON.	<i>Lansdowne</i>	Telegrams - LANSKOACH LEYSTONE LONDON
<i>Plant and Machinery Specialists.</i>	COMMERCIAL ENGINEERS (STRATFORD) LTD.	<i>Head Office :</i> <i>502 High Road,</i> <i>Leytonstone,</i> <i>London, E.11.</i>
<i>All types of W.D. Vehicles in Stock.</i>	EXPORTERS & IMPORTERS of Passenger, Commercial & Military Vehicles	
Telephones : Head Office : LEY 2384 and LEY 4355 Works : MAR 7457/8		


LANSDOWNE COMMERCIAL ENGINEERS (STRATFORD) LTD.	LANSDOWNE COMMERCIAL ENGINEERS (STRATFORD) LTD.
1950 AEC Diesel 35 Seater Full Luxury Coaches	1950 AEC and Guy Diesel 33-seater Luxury Coaches
1950 BMMO Leyland Diesel 31-seater Service Coaches	1950 Rebuilt Leyland and AEC Diesel 35-seater Observation Luxury Coaches
	1950 Bedford Petrol Duple Vista 29-seater Luxury Coaches Conversion to Diesel Ford 4D extra cost



## Dealer stock

The 1962 and 1974 brochures are from the Glasgow branch of SMT Sales & Service, the Scottish agent for Bedford buses and coaches. Originally part of the Scottish Motor Traction group which ran most of Scotland's bus services outside the four main cities, the SMT dealerships selling Vauxhall cars and Bedford commercials were kept in private ownership when the British Transport Commission acquired SMT's buses in 1949.

The 1962 offering included what was billed as "a must for the operator in need of a top-quality machine at a reasonable price", a year-old Ford Thames Trader with a Duple Yeoman body, which had clocked up a "genuine" 35,000 miles over just one summer season on "high class tour work". Yours for £2,750, which is about £50,300 in 2025.

	<h3>Stock List of USED COACHES</h3> <p><i>FEBRUARY 1963</i></p> <p>●</p> <p><b>THE S.M.T. SALES &amp; SERVICE CO. LTD.</b></p> <p>177-205 FINNIESTON ST., GLASGOW, C.3. <i>Telephone: GLASGOW DOUGLAS 2940</i></p> <p>AFTER BUSINESS HOURS <i>Telephone: SCOTSTOWN 2627</i></p>
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### THAMES TRADER

1961

THAMES TRADER/DUPLE 41-seater Full Luxury Coach, diesel engine. Certificate of Fitness to January 1968. Exterior in Blue and Grey. Interior Maroon patterned moquette. Extras include Heaters, Radio and Public Address. The mileage of approximately 35,000 is genuine. This coach was only employed during summer season on high class tour work and, at the price offered, is a "must" for the operator in need of a top quality machine at a reasonable price.

£2,750



## Dealer stock

The choice in 1974 brought the possibility of a six-wheel Duple Viceroy-bodied Bedford VAL, seven years old and in process of recertification, for £3,750, which is about £35,000 today.



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1967  
BEDFORD VAL14./DUPLÉ  
52-seater  
Currently undergoing re-certification

---

Grey and Red exterior. Red  
moquette. Saloon Heaters, Wheel  
Discs.

£3,750



# A state visit

A packed two-day programme was organised in 1948 when the chairman and directors of BET-owned Northern General Transport, and its subsidiary companies, travelled to Newcastle for a board meeting and tour of inspection.

Their itinerary was typed up along with a brief history of the company, a map showing its area of operation and statistics of vehicles owned, miles run, and passengers carried.

There were visits to the Northern, Tynemouth and Sunderland District companies, and to the Gateshead tramway which would survive another three years before buses replaced it. There were three meals a day, all bar one served at the Royal Station Hotel in Newcastle where the party was accommodated, and the formal business was conducted. Lunch on the second day appeared to be more of a picnic, served in the coach en route from Sunderland to Durham, somewhere near Finchdale Abbey.

The history began with an extract from a newspaper report in May 1913, noting that "there was a good attendance of the general public" to see the start of the Gateshead Tramways Company's first bus from Chester-Le-Street to Low Fell, the seed from which Northern General soon grew.

THE NORTHERN GENERAL TRANSPORT COMPANY LIMITED,  
AND ASSOCIATED COMPANIES.  
BRIEF HISTORY.

"At two o'clock to the minute the first motor 'bus belonging to the Gateshead Tramways Company started on its journey from the bottom of Front Street, Chester-le-Street, on its way to Low Fell. It was a double-decker, and was quite full of passengers, who had all paid for the privilege of having a ride. There was a good attendance of the general public to see the start."

The above extract from the leader of the "Chester-le-Street Chronicle" for Friday the 9th May, 1913, records the start, on the previous Wednesday, the 7th May, of the first omnibus service between Chester-le-Street and Low Fell, which was to prove the foundation upon which the Northern General Transport Company has been built. The same issue carried an advertisement setting out the time-table and fare list. The fares were all single, and it is interesting to note that whilst many are still the same, and some have been only slightly increased, the cost of the return journey, in some instances, is cheaper to-day than it was in 1913. To quote an example, the return fare between Chester-le-Street and Low Fell is now 9d.; this compares with the original fare of 5d. single.

The success of this service was immediate and other services were soon put into operation. Once again the "Chester-le-Street Chronicle" for the 27th June 1913 gives the information that "on the new service between Chester-le-Street and Durham, with connections from the High Level Bridge, Gateshead, by tram and 'bus, the fare will be one shilling from Gateshead to Durham and sixpence from Chester-le-Street." The present fares are 1/11d. return from Gateshead to Durham, and 1/- return from Chester-le-Street to Durham.

In the same year a garage was erected in Chester-le-Street in order to accommodate the additional vehicles which had been acquired to maintain the new services. Also by reason of the rapid growth of the omnibus services it was deemed advisable to form a separate company, and the "Northern General" was registered on the 29th November 1913. On January the 1st 1914 the omnibuses of the Gateshead Tramways Company were taken over.



# Omnibus Society Donation

We are delighted at the news that our sister organisation, The Omnibus Society, has altered its loan of £250,000 into a donation to The Bus Archive.

Our chairman, Brian King, was on hand at the most recent OS management meeting to thank the Society for its generosity and its continuing support for BA.

Long-serving readers will recall that the OS loaned us this money as a 'bridging loan' so that we could acquire our new Droitwich building and move our collections into it, with the intention of selling the De Salis Drive premises which would then repay the loan.

Of course, this donation does not give us any more cash but it does remove any pressure to sell the old building. It is likely now that we will split the building, retaining what used to be Archive 3 for dealing with incoming material, and renting out the rest. This will generate much-needed income.

So, thanks again to The Omnibus Society for its generosity.

## Photo Sales

As most people know, we have been selling copies of photographs in association with The Omnibus Society, through two outlets, Zenfolio and Transport Library.

The long-term aim has been to consolidate these into the Transport Library, mainly because we receive more money that way but also because Zenfolio isn't really designed for the purpose we want. Earlier this month, Zenfolio announced the latest in a series of changes and also increased the annual fees and we took the decision then that we should simply accelerate our plans and transfer the Zenfolio material straight across.

This has now been done, and there is a new folder with the same content of 47,000 images within Transport Library, titled "Zenfolio site". Therefore, nothing has been lost and everything is still available although now from a different place. The Zenfolio site has now closed down.

So far, so good. The reason why we haven't simply dropped the Zenfolio images into the existing folders is that the search function is different between the two websites and there is a lot of work to do to bring things up to standard. Once we have achieved that then we will then drop them into the appropriate folders. A reminder that all images can now be viewed and purchased at

<https://www.thetransportlibrary.co.uk/-/galleries/bus-images/the-omnibus-society>



Currently there are 115,442 photos available on The Transport Library site, broken down into the following categories:-

Major Companies, Municipals, London, Scottish Bus Group, PTEs, Independents - England and Wales, Independents - Scotland, Eire and Northern Ireland, Others, Isle of Man and Channel Islands, Overseas and Zenfolio Site.



## Letters to the Editor

*From Roger Davies, area manager, then traffic manager and finally director of operations Maidstone & District*

Many thanks for another informative newsletter.

I see you've used one of our Christmas cards as a greeting. These were huge fun and we were lucky to find a cartoonist who could draw buses. The interior of the coach is not too far removed from reality. One year I got on one of our double-deck Olympian coaches to find a note saying "Christmas party 23 Dec upstairs" - with regular customers and driver the commuter coaches had a family atmosphere.

I introduced Invictaway on 6 October 1980 but didn't come up with the name; that was my wing man Peter Blanchard when we first proposed it in 1978 but it was crushed then by British Rail, something stopped by the 1980 Act. It grew rapidly from a handful of coaches to around 70. You literally put a coach on one day and the next it was full. While many others ran commuter coaches, we were the only ones to run all day building up to the highest frequency from Medway to London off peak, every 30 minutes. The growth of commuter coaches after the 1980 Act was likely greater than the nationwide scene.

After the doom and gloom of the 1970s with route and depot closures with hundreds of redundancies, this rapidly growing business was embraced enthusiastically by staff and unions who were hugely supportive. The psychological effects of Invictaway cannot be overstated. It was an exciting time and great to see the card again.

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*From Mike Frewer*

The item on page 15 of your last newsletter refers to a City of Oxford AEC Renown converted for pay-as-you-enter operation. I was a management trainee there at the time and had the pleasure of working with Tony Beetham (general manager) and Alan Price (traffic manager).

The latter "invented" this conversion and it was indeed a wonder to behold, with a swivel driver's seat and an additional diagonal glazed panel across the bonnet to accommodate an electric Setright ticket machine. It also had a very clunky handle to the left of the windscreen for the driver to raise inside the cab with an external arm on the end of which was a mirror to see the destination screen before changing it. Much time was spent to perfect this arrangement, which I recall was quite successful on rural routes initially based at Wantage depot.

I'm pretty sure other examples existed too, but they were replaced with cascading of more suitable front entrance double-decks as soon as possible.

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*From Peter Osborne*

The statement in the last newsletter article regarding LT1429 was not quite accurate in one respect: the presence of the small letter 'c' after the fleet number. All LPTB coaches, Green Line and Private Hire alike, carried the 'c' to distinguish them from 'b' buses once Chiswick works got its hands on them. The Green Line livery is because all Private Hire coaches were owned by Green Line Coaches Ltd from 1932 until 1937, when Private Hire was transferred to the Central Area and Brixton, Waterworks Road garage closed.

## Blessed is the Peacemaker

One of the more exotic vehicles in our growing picture archive is this Peacemaker coach which Peter Nicols photographed when visiting the United States, probably in the 1990s, at the Smithsonian Air & Space Museum in Washington DC.

A group called the Twelve Tribes Communities created it in 1987 by combining a 1961 GMC motor coach with parts from a 1950 Aerocoach and fitting it out with living accommodation. Its Peacemaker name gives a clue to its role as a place to offer medical care to concert goers and to defuse conflicts that sometimes broke out between audience and police at major events.



## BusMart

We sell items which are surplus to the needs of The Bus Archive through BusMart, with a quarterly catalogue and website ([www.busmart.org.uk](http://www.busmart.org.uk)). This provides much-needed funds which allows The Bus Archive to operate. Drawing from this issue of Bus Archive News, for example, we have Sheffield timetables and folders of Northern Directors tours from the 1950's and 1960's.

For more details and to request the latest copy of our catalogue, email [jpeddle@btinternet.com](mailto:jpeddle@btinternet.com).



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