

No. 31 - DECEMBER 2025



A charming snowy scene in Wolverhampton with tram 3, built by the Electric Railway & Tramway Carriage Works in Preston in 1901, making its way to the railway station.  
(Wolverhampton Corporation collection, copyright The Bus Archive, ref. WC02/00079).

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## 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/> Copyright of the photos is held by The Bus Archive.



of 858 and rear of 857 in Walsall's St Paul's Street bus station. The Walsall system passed to West Midlands PTE four months later and closed on 3 October 1970. (Photographer Roy Marshall, ref. RM02/M13D49)

In some ways, 1984 was the year of the double-deck coach: Plaxton launched the Paramount 4000 and ECW revamped its Leyland Olympian coach. Fighting for its share of the limelight was the new 11m Alexander RDC, based on the framework of the standard R-type service bus, but with several styling cues from the single-deck TC coach. Two low-height versions, type RLC, were built on long wheelbase Leyland



Olympian chassis for Eastern Scottish, seating 63 and with a large luggage hold at the rear of the lower deck. Both were sold to Cambus in 1993 but only stayed for a short while. Our picture shows 506 (B144 GSC) leaving Cambridge's Drummer Street bus station, a facility little changed over 30 years later. (Photographer Roy Marshall, ref. RM02/UAD49)

R Edgley Cox was appointed general manager at Walsall Corporation in 1952 and the trolleybus system enjoyed rejuvenation with expansion. At its maximum size, Walsall operated 61 trolleybuses over six routes. In 1954, 15 new Sunbeam F4As with Willowbrook bodies arrived, the first UK double-deckers (trolleybus or motorbus) to 30ft length on two axles. Our June 1969 picture depicts the front



Bury Corporation bought 15 Daimler Fleetlines with Alexander's stylish A-type bodies in 1964. Our picture shows 128 (TEN 128) standing on The Mosses in Bury during July 1967. It became 6328 when renumbered by SelneC PTE and passed to Greater Manchester PTE after SelneC was renamed in 1974. (Photographer Roy Marshall, ref. RM02/M3B105)

The National Bus Company trialled new types of double-deckers to establish which would be the best choice to succeed its then standard choice, the Bristol VRT. Potteries Motor Traction evaluated a Dennis Dominator, a Foden-NC and a Bristol VRT starting in 1978 from its Newcastle-under-Lyme depot, chosen as it was felt that its routes would provide a stringent testing environment with the buses covering around 200 miles a day on intensive urban routes. Our picture shows Foden 900 (WVT 900S) in 1980 alongside a couple of PMT's by then 16-year-old Alexander-bodied Daimler Fleetlines. The Foden — the last of only eight built — was taken out of service in 1985 and placed into store. There were attempts to acquire it for preservation, but it went for scrap in 2001. (Photographer Harry Hay, ref. HH01/19116)



Jonckheere Jubilee P90-bodied Volvo B10M seen in London's Gloucester Road coach station when quite new. It was sold after less than a year to Halford of Kempsey in July 1984. (Photographer Roy Marshall, ref. RM02/NAA4)

Deregulation of the British coach industry in 1980 swept away many of the licensing regulations that had been in place for 50 years and created new opportunities for express services, holidays and tours. As a result, many operators soon started routes from their home towns, often to London and frequently in competition with National Express or British Rail. One of the more successful was from Bakers of Weston-super-Mare, an operator established in 1889 and is still in business today, trading as Bakers Dolphin. A125 SNH was a

# Facebook highlights

## And the winner is....

Towards the end of 1976 South Yorkshire PTE (SYPTE) had an overdue batch of 60 Alexander-bodied Leyland Fleetlines on order. Alexander let it be known that it was struggling to complete orders and would only be able to body 31 of the 60 Fleetlines. The PTE struck a deal with Metro-Cammell Weymann (MCW) which was building DMSs for London Transport. To speed up delivery, it was agreed that all 29 would be bodied to the same style as the London buses but with enough alterations (including destination equipment, doors and the absence of engine side fairings) to make them suitable for SYPTE. Deliveries began in March 1977. The batch was numbered 1501-29, registered OKW 501-28R and SHE 507S. Pictured is 1524 on Harmer Lane in the entrance to Sheffield Pond Street bus station in September 1979. It was withdrawn in July 1986. (Photographer Roy Marshall, ref. RM02/MRB1)



In the last edition of Bus Archive News, our Facebook feature included a photograph of what we termed a Mancunian double-decker. Several of you wrote in, including D Scott Hellewell who served as Selneclan planning officer from 1969 to 1976....

*Your photo in the September edition is of a Salford-ordered Mancunian — you can tell by the destination layout. Salford City Transport placed its last bus order to have a Mancunian-style body in anticipation that the Mancunian would become the Selneclan standard double-decker. Selneclan PTE was established in November 1969. As we know, Selneclan designed its own standard bus, introduced at the 1970 Commercial Motor Show in the new Selneclan colours. Nevertheless, when the Mancunian bus was introduced early in 1968 it took the world by storm. Ralph Bennett inspired, Ken Mortimer designed. Unfortunately, as time went by it tended to rattle badly.*



Apologies all round. The fault is all ours. When we transferred the text from Facebook, we inadvertently edited out the Salford details thereby change the sense of the piece.

# Surplus stock, photographs and lots more...

There are several ways you can support The Bus Archive. You can make a regular cash donation and become a Friend of the Archive or you can make your own collection more complete by buying surplus books, publicity items (timetables etc) and photographs from us.

## Photographs

We have joined with our sister organisation The Omnibus Society to offer copies of our photograph collection with The Transport Library. There are now over 117,000 images available to purchase and on average 1,500 new items are added every month.

Omnibus Society members get generous discounts on the purchase price.

New additions from the comprehensive Roy Marshall collection are:

- Black & White Motorways
- Burton Corporation
- County Motors, Lepton
- Derbyshire independents
- Devon General
- Dundee Corporation
- Eastern National
- Haslingden Corporation
- Hebble
- Newport Corporation
- North Western
- Provincial (Gosport & Fareham)
- Shropshire independents
- Somerset independents
- South Midland

Roy Marshall's photographs of Derbyshire independents include this one with a child playing close to KRA 668, a Guy Arab II new to W Truman's of Shirebrook in 1947. The lowbridge double-deck body dated from 1931 and came from a former Guy demonstrator. It was rebodied as a coach in 1949. (Photographer Roy Marshall, copyright The Bus Archive, ref RM02/00057)

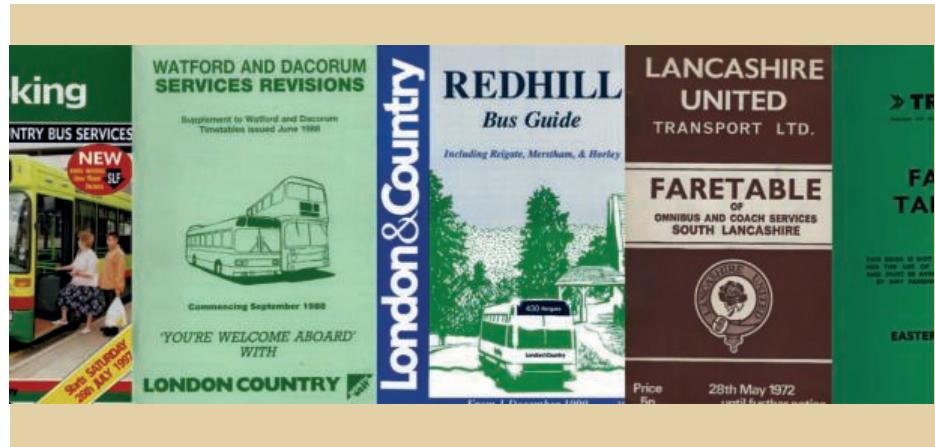


The Shropshire selection includes this one taken at a bus rally of HNT 49, a Beadle-bodied Sentinel STC4 new to Brown's of Donnington Wood in 1951. Sentinel's factory also was in Shropshire, in Shrewsbury. (Photographer Roy Marshall, copyright The Bus Archive, ref RM02/29011)



## BusMart

We are grateful for all the donated books, magazines and publicity material we receive every year. Anything we don't already have we add to our collection, but for items we already have are offered for sale, through BUSMART which brings in valuable funds for our charity.



There are three branches of BUSMART activity:

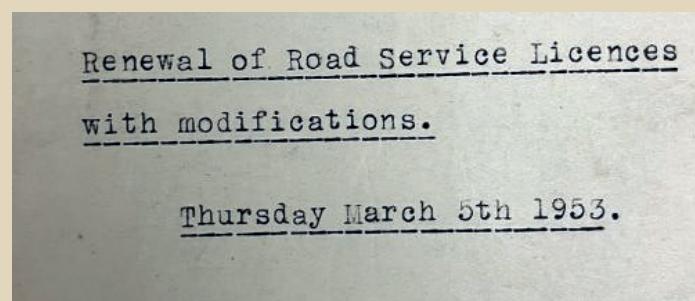
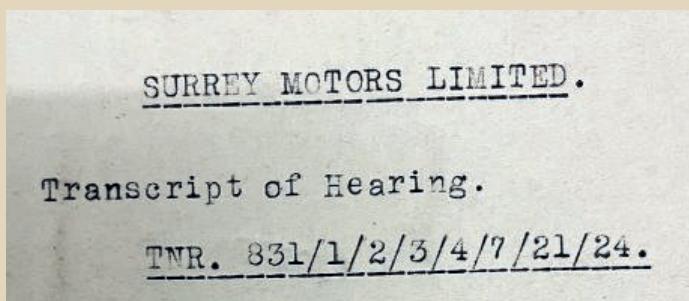
- eBay: follow our main account 'busarchive', and also our volunteer seller's account, 'keith2380'
- BUSMART sales catalogue which is published three times a year and sent out to nearly 1,000 people. If you wish to be added to the mailing list, email [hello@busarchive.org.uk](mailto:hello@busarchive.org.uk)
- Online at [busmart.org.uk](http://busmart.org.uk) where we have catalogues of all our surplus material for sale

# David Hurley and Surrey Motors

Dave Hurley was one of the best-known characters in the enthusiast movement, who died in July aged 82. He willed his collection of records of his beloved Surrey Motors of Sutton to The Bus Archive along with many official photographs and his own collection of glass plate negatives.

Dave for many years worked in the insurance industry, with a retailing sideline of Lens of Sutton, one of the pioneering suppliers of transport photographs and books to enthusiasts.

His Surrey Motors collection includes many files of transcriptions of traffic commissioners' hearings in the 1930s. The market for coach travel between London and the south coast at that time was hotly contested, and each application for a road service licence would be challenged by other operators. The traffic commissioners were then left to decide on the application, in a hearing held in the atmosphere of a courtroom.



<u>THE CASE OF</u> <u>SURREY MOTORS LTD.</u> <u>TNR. 831/1/2/3/4/7/21/24.</u>		
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<u>MRS NORA LEE, called.</u> <u>Examined by MR AMPHLETT.</u>		
Q	What is your full name?	A. Nora Lee.
Q	Do you live at No. 4, Willow Gardens, Tattenham Corner?	A. Yes.
Q	Where is that in relation to Tattenham Corner Railway Station?	A. About ten minutes to a quarter of an hour.
Q	And you cannot take a train from that railway station on to Sutton? A. No.	
Q	It is a different route altogether? A. Yes.	
Q	How far away are you from the proposed picking-up point at Tattenham Way? A. About ten minutes.	
Q	Do you travel by coach to the Coast? A. Yes, occasionally.	
Q	With your family? A. I have no family.	
Q	But you do go down occasionally? A. Yes.	
Q	Have you travelled on Surrey Motors, or how do you travel? A. I travel on Surrey Coaches.	
Q	How do you get on to the coach? A. I would have to pick it up by going to "The Wheatsheaf."	
Q	Have you been to Brighton at all? A. Yes.	
Q	Have you been anywhere else? A. No -- only Littlehampton.	
Q	I suppose you know that for the other places you would have to go into Sutton, and that has tempted you to go to Brighton rather than to the other places? A. Yes.	
	<u>Cross-examined by MR GRANVILLE DIXON.</u>	
Q	I take it that you are really only interested in Brighton? A. I would like to go to the other coastal resorts.	
Q	Where else? A. I would like to go to Eastbourne and other places.	
	28.	

The transcript of a traffic commissioners' hearing in March 1953 for the renewal and modification of Surrey Motors' road service licences.

## David Hurley and Surrey Motors

A busy scene at the Surrey Motors garage, with passengers making their way to and from AEC Regal coaches on services to such coastal destinations as Clacton and Ramsgate.



Outside the Surrey Motors booking office, probably in the late 1940s, with advertisements for other coach operators Yelloway, Alexandra, Grey Coaches and Pearson's Happy Days Motorways. The newspaper billboards offer readers a range of stories from Gala Day in nearby Cheam to a gruesome find of a dismembered body, the death of a social worker (were these connected?), horse racing and the first step towards the rehabilitation of Germany. A neighbouring business acts on behalf of a "practical" chimney sweep — what was the alternative?

## David Hurley and Surrey Motors



Surrey Motors 10 (APC 422), a Harrington-bodied AEC Regal coach bought new in 1933, one of a pair.  
(Photographer Derek Giles, copyright The Bus Archive, ref. DG02/00395)



Surrey Motors 60 (UUL 652F), one of three AEC Reliances with 44-seat Plaxton Panorama bodies bought new in 1968. (Photographer David Hurley, copyright The Bus Archive)

## Donations

We have received the following donations in the last quarter. As ever, we are very grateful to everyone on this list:

Roy Yallop	Timetables and publicity, books, employment records. Northern General
Paul Williamson	Collection of the late Leo Markham (1964-2023)
Jenny Hurley	The late David Hurley's industry records particularly of Surrey Motors.
Steven Saunders	Timetables and maps.
Alan Millar	Edinburgh Corporation annual reports, Strathclyde PTE materials on rural bus initiatives, US transit report, timetables and publicity. Partly from collection of the late Dr Murdoch Currie
Leon Daniels on behalf of Executors	Collection of the late Peter Nicholls - London related material
Dovery Manor Museum, Porlock	Bound volume of <i>Old Motor and Vintage Commercial</i> (issues March 1964 to Feb 1965)
Andrew Tringham	Collection of the late Mr Dale Tringham - 20,000+ colour slides from 1968 onwards, transport books, timetables, maps and leaflets
Sholto Thomas	Managing Director's Reports, Strathclyde Scottish Omnibuses Ltd
Paul Williamson	Herefordshire timetables
Alison Jones	Collection of the late Ted Jones - photographic prints, slides, and books.
Darryl Meades	Publicity and books
Crosville Enthusiasts Club	Slide collection of Stephen Meredith
Ian Hedger	Derek Hedger collection of bus photos and slides.
Graeme Fraser	Mixed collection of industry material
Robert (Bob) Hind	Mixed collection of industry material
Vernon Ford	Timetables and maps
Eric Pounder	Tickets
Catherine Atkinson	Roger Atkinson collection
Chris G Roberts	Addition to the Chris G Roberts collection.
Dave Braisted	Timetables 2000-20
Richard Hunt	Coach tours leaflets, photographs, coachbuilders' brochures
Shawn G Board	Timetables 2003-25
Mrs Angela Montgomery	The late Roger Gordon Scott's collection of bus photographs colour postcards
Michael (Mike) Walton	Contributions made to OS Midlands Bulletins, service changes by operator from 1986, sundry files from analysis.
Sara Davidson	5 leaflets/brochures about weekend buses in the Oxfordshire/Ridgeway area

## Donations

Leicester Transport Heritage Trust	Manufacturers drawings, bus blind orders, Weymann and Northern Coach Builders
Jonathan Fynn	Timetables, publicity material, Notices & Proceedings
Ian Brown CBE	Books relating to trolleybus industry
Andrew Saunders	1950-2000s timetables
Jacqui Bell	Collection of the late John Pettifor
Anthony Haylock	Trident Engineering photographs and other materials
Guy Marriott	Vehicle registration books 1950s-2000s
Allan Edmondson	Timetables 1969-1970
Ken Jubb	Magazines
Maurice Collignon	Mixed collection - books, postcards, greetings cards, timetables and publicity, bus model, ephemera.
Stuart Wise	Timetables
Terence Bowker	1980-1990s West Yorkshire PTE items

Remember if you have any surplus material – whether it be official records, your own research, publicity or photographs – we would like to hear from you at [hello@busarchive.org.uk](mailto:hello@busarchive.org.uk). If we don't have a particular item, it will be added to our collections, and if we do already have it then we can sell the surplus one to fund our charity.

## Collections Policy

We focus our efforts on road passenger transport – buses, coaches, trolleybuses and trams - in the British Isles. We are taking a broad view of this and we will continue to accept material relating to UK manufacturers overseas (e.g. Leyland activity across the globe) and UK based businesses with overseas interests in foreign lands (e.g. BET).

We will also, by exception, accept collections which have a significant British Isles content but which also have a foreign component where it would be illogical to split these (e.g. the John Shearman collection which includes a strong element of Far East material). Finally, and again by exception, we will accept collections which are regionally based where road passenger transport has significant content (e.g. the Birmingham Transport Historical Group collection).

This means we will no longer be able to accept donations of international material and/or railway material, as a matter of course. A copy of our Collections Development and Access Policy can be downloaded here: <https://we.tl/t-DOrbZ7glot>.

## The Birks family pay us a visit

We were delighted that members of the Birks family were able to pay us a visit at Shillibeer House, to see for themselves our new facilities.

John Birks (1927-2003), (right), enjoyed a long and successful career in the industry, including general manager at both Southdown and Midland Red. He was instrumental in the retention of so many of the National Bus Company records when the group was privatised and this was the genesis of The Kithead Trust, of which John was the first chairman.

(Below) Archivist Elizabeth Shuck (on the left) shows Chris, Cathy and Austin Birks some items from their late father's personal collection – including a full report of his time as a BET management trainee with Northern General in 1951.

Archivist Elizabeth Shuck says: "It was great to meet members of the Birks family and to be able to show how far we have come in the 30 years since John Birks was determined that the records should survive."



## The Birks family pay us a visit

Below is John Birks 'Appointments and Experience' resume that accompanied his application for the position of General Manger of the Yorkshire Traction Company Limited, dated 27th January 1975. John's application to YTC was unsuccessful.

### APPOINTMENTS AND EXPERIENCE

Southdown Motor Services Ltd., Central Traffic Department	1954
Assistant to Area Manager, Eastbourne	1955 - 1956
Assistant to Area Manager, Brighton	1956 - 1961
Area Manager, Eastbourne	1961 - 1964
Area Manager, Brighton	1964 - 1966
Divisional Manager Eastern	1966 - 1967
Birmingham and Midland Motor Omnibus Co. Ltd., Deputy Traffic Manager	1967 - 1970
United Counties Omnibus Co. Ltd., Traffic Manager	1970 - 1974
National Travel Manager (Midlands)	1973 - 1973 April - Sept
Midland Red Omnibus Co. Ltd., Traffic Manager	1973 - to date

In the various posts which I have held, I have gained a very wide commercial and operational experience, and have carried a high degree of responsibility in the formulation and execution of policy.

In particular, I would refer to the decentralisation of the Staff Department and the introduction of one man operation and productivity schemes at the B.M.M.O. Company; the successful introduction of a consolidated wage rate and the restoration of reliable operation and profitability of the United Counties Bus Company, together with the absorption of the Luton Corporation Transport Undertaking.

I was responsible for the establishment of National Travel (Midlands) involving consultation and co-operation with the seven principal companies in the Midlands.

In my present appointment, the establishment of the West Midlands Metropolitan Company and formulation of the Cross Boundary Agreement, together with restructuring of the Traffic Department, has been undertaken.

My duties have also included the acquisition and absorption of four companies and the involvement in the formulation of Transport Policies and Programmes in six counties and representation of the Company at County Structure Plan hearings.

As a consequence of this experience, I am confident that I would be able to secure effective Company policies and satisfactory relationships with local authorities. Further, I consider that I would be able to appropriately guide, assist and co-ordinate the work of the Traffic, Secretarial and Engineering Departments of the Company to ensure that it fulfills its role as an effective unit in the region and in N.B.C.

## Depots to dance floors: Operators' Christmas parties in the 20th Century

As the end of 2025 approaches, we would like to share with you a gallery of bus company festive parties from the 1940s to the 1960s. From twinkling decorations to jolly headgear, these photos show staff letting their hair down and celebrating the year's hard work—far from the daily hustle of depots and busy streets.

There was a tradition of celebrating long service and retired employees in December at several operators, and at Ribble an annual children's party was always graced by the presence of Father Christmas himself. These snapshots from company photo albums and staff magazines are a window into the human side of the bus industry, where colleagues became friends and celebrations were a reward for the everyday graft.

So why not pour yourself a cup of eggnog and enjoy these cheerful scenes from Christmases past? They're proof that while buses and routes may change, the joy of coming together to celebrate never goes out of style.



(Above) Trent Barton Social Club Children's Party - Derby 1949

(Left) Trent Christmas Party - Belper 1948



(Above) Southdown managers party - 1950



(Above) Trent Clerical Staff Party - 1958



In this almost 100% male gathering in December 1961, eight retired employees of Potteries Motor Traction, each with 50 years' service, are entertained by chairman and managing director Raymond W Birch, chief engineer JW Womar, traffic manager Robert Bailey and general manager of Southdown Motor Services SJB Skyrme. The hosts are in the fourth row, directly behind the eight retirees.



Ribble Children's Party - Fleetwood 1961

## Outreach - Walsall Local History Fair

The Bus Archive took part in Walsall Local History Fair at Walsall Library and Archives on October 25. We were invited to attend as a heritage organisation operating in Walsall along with others including The Black Country Society, Walsall Windrush Sisters oral history project, Walsall Leather Museum and the RAF Museum Midlands to name a few.

The event, which was open to the public, was well attended with lots of people interested in our photographs of Walsall's famous trolleybuses and sharing memories of both catching and even driving buses in the town. Lots of people also responded to the evocative period illustrations and design work featured in items from the Walsall timetable and publicity collections.

We also had the chance to meet archivists currently working at Walsall Library and Archive Service, making important connections to build on in the future. We have since been invited to be a part of the working group for the Heritage Lottery Funded project Walsall Archive For All, a digital archive project which aims to broaden the understanding of Walsall's heritage evolution inspired by the collections of local historian Jack Hadden. He was a transport enthusiast who took many pictures of Walsall's buses, canals and railways, so lots of opportunities for collaboration in the future.



(Top) The Bus Archive's Archivist, Elizabeth Shuck, with a selection of ephemera and photos at the History Fair. (Middle) The stand generated a lot of interest. (Below) Peter Hale, our Lead Volunteer at The Bus Archive's Walsall premises.



# Merry Christmas



Merry Christmas from all of the staff, trustees and  
volunteers at The Bus Archive  
Thank you for all of your support in 2025

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year with this rare Thurgood-bodied Leyland Royal Tiger of Seamarks of Westoning.

**Please note that we will be closed from after service Thursday 18 December until Tuesday 6 January**



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