

# NEWSLETTER

No. 19

August 2021

## Chairman's Update ...

Work sessions are now going ahead routinely at Alford and we are ploughing into some long jobs and making progress. We have not advertised that we are open to the public, but we have had one or two visitors drop in by to say hello and see how we are doing. We always try to get these folk to sign the visitors book and check if they are interested in getting our newsletter by e-mail on a regular basis. It helps to keep our-selves in the public eye and it is really nice to get comments and an e-mail 'thank you'.

You will see below that we now have just taken delivery of seat frames for bus 160, this being the main reason why we have had this restoration on hold for so long. The manufacture of this type of seat ceased in the UK about twenty years ago. We left finishing the paintwork until we had made progress on the seats; it remains for us to finish painting and getting the upholstery made and the handrails fitted.

There are many aspects to looking after the *Bus Collection*, one of these is keeping up with legislation and in line with expectations from regulatory authorities. We have been told by our insurers that following the Grenfell Tower fire in London all of their clients are being reviewed for fire prevention provisions. We have consequently had to sort through our storage arrangements for flammables, reduce stocks and consider new cabinets for what we need to keep. This all seems a long way from restoring buses but, it all still must be done.

**Stay Safe ... Stay Well! Gordon Mills, Trust Chairman**

## Workshop Update ...

We have just received 17 newly made seat frames for the top deck of our Daimler CVG6 double-deck dating from 1951 that originally had a Northern Coachbuilders body but was rebodied by Alexanders in 1960. Unfortunately, when we acquired the bus it had all the seats removed, we had instead a set of Eastern Coach Works standard seats that had the wrong legs, seat height and back rest angle. We have a couple of options for getting the frames re-upholstered so I am hoping that we can make quick progress on the remains of this major project.



I mentioned in Newsletter 18 that we had brought Dennis Dart/Plaxton Pointer II bus belonging to First Group Heritage Trust back into the workshop to complete mechanical work. This has now been largely completed with new rear suspension air bags fitted and the not inconsiderable amount of work done to re-set the bus at its correct ride height with no air leaks. A rebuild of the engine alternator belt tensioner and a new belt now means we do not get a "screech" every time we start the bus. Much still remains to be done on the bodywork including the re-instatement of the exit door and repainting into the orange, green and white livery of New World First Bus.



Progress on single-deck Daimler CVD6 has been good in the last month with the fitting of the rebuilt entrance steps. We will need to rebuild the entrance doors next and find a suitable bottom pivot bearing to install the doors. Rebuilding of the cab front has commenced and completion of the offside wing which forms the cab floor is imminent. The emergency exit door and the cab door are under way and just waiting for parts at present.

The Bus Collection at Alford is open again to visitors, please check our website for further visitor information: <http://thebuscollectionatalford.co.uk/>

---

## Aberdeen's Leyland Tiger Cubs – Pioneers of One-Man Operation - Continued

The first six Tiger Cubs – ERG 1D – 6D, fleet No's 1 - 6 took up service in February / March 1966 and service 14: Footdee – Castle Street was the first route to be converted. A further 6 identical vehicles - GRS 7E – 12E, fleet No's 7 – 12 followed the year after.



Their success prompted the order of further batches of single decks and here it is interesting to look at how prices per vehicle rose over a short period of time. Dr. Mike Mitchell's book (Fae Dee to Don and Back Again: 100 Years of Public Transport in Aberdeen) records that in 1966, fleet No's 1 to 6, cost £5,138 apiece, a year later, no's 7 – 12 cost £5,405 each and the year after that, the first batch of 10 slightly more substantial AEC Swifts, albeit with identical seating capacity were priced at no less than £7,039 each, a massive increase for a bus undertaking essentially the same work.



For illustrative purposes, just 4 years after that, each of the final batch of Swifts cost no less than £8,260, while the three Leyland Nationals taken into stock in 1973, only 7 years after the first Tiger Cubs, were priced at £10,038 each, double the price of the original Tiger Cubs! You then begin to wonder about just how an operator makes any profit!

Notice here if you will, the reversion to AEC to supply the next order for single decks. The engine type as used in Aberdeen's AEC Regent decker's had undergone that major internal re-design in the 1965-66 period already referred to. It was also enlarged and was of 124bhp output (similar to the Tiger Cub unit) but obtained at a slightly lower speed. This engine was also over 1.5 litres larger than the Leyland, and it could be that the Corporation's engineers considered this would be more durable than

Leyland's equivalent "400"series engine used in the Tiger Cubs. Up to a point, that much was probably the case.

Tiger Cubs worked many city routes of which Service 20 (Old Aberdeen) was a regular haunt, some others were the 11 to Craigiebuckler, the 15/16 Kincorth Circular and the 13 to Scatterburn. A picture of Tiger Cub 3, when quite new, shows that bus on city tour duty at the Shiprow stance. This work would be catered for a little more appropriately by delivery of the pair of AEC Reliances 13 and 14 in 1968.

*Guest Writer - Lawrence MacDuff*

---

**Yes, we do require volunteers to help us keep our fleet in a good condition, assist with vehicle refurbishment or a range of other tasks. If you think you could help, either in person or by making a donation please contact us at: [thebuscollectionatalford@outlook.com](mailto:thebuscollectionatalford@outlook.com)**



---

## John Scott (1949—2021)

John Scott first became involved with the Trust as a volunteer when the Open Days were established in 2016. He usually worked his way to the event as a co-driver of Aberdeen Corporation bus 155 from its base at the Scottish Vintage Bus Museum, Lathalmond. His links with the Trust were strengthened when he became part of the Daimler Bus 14 restoration project at its foundation in 2018, the project benefitting both financially and physically from John's input. John had been active in bus preservation from the mid-1960s from his various home bases in Central Scotland, and in later years was a volunteer at Lathalmond.



John's professional career was in banking where he was ultimately a branch manager, but this was later abandoned in favour of coach driving. John's wide general knowledge of history and a way with words made him a first-class guide and always good company. He was also well known in bus modelling circles, and a view of his model of Aberdeen Corporation 13 is attached.


Tragically and unexpectedly, John died at home at the end of last June. Our sympathies are with his wife Susan, his family, and his many friends.

*(photo kindly provided by the Scott Family)*

---

 [https://twitter.com/buses\\_at\\_alford](https://twitter.com/buses_at_alford)

 [www.facebook.com/thebuscollectionatalford](http://www.facebook.com/thebuscollectionatalford)

 [thebuscollectionatalford@outlook.com](mailto:thebuscollectionatalford@outlook.com)

 <http://www.thebuscollectionatalford.co.uk>