



NEWSLETTER

No. 23

May 2022

Chairman's Update ... We are at last able to hold an Open day at Alford again!



It is a great relief that the COVID restrictions have mainly now relaxed and there is nothing on the horizon to stop us having an Open Day again. We had originally planned for a date at the end of June, but after discussions with the GTM on available dates, we have decided that it shall be on Sunday 14th August. This will be a week before the schools locally go back, so I hope this will maximise the number that can attend. It is planned to keep things on the same lines as previous Open Days with a good selection of vehicles to ride on, displays in the garage and workshop plus some interesting visiting vehicles. The public will be able to see the progress on restoration of several buses, particularly our single and double-deck Daimlers, 11 and 160.

Unbelievably, the Leyland National has clocked up fifty years this year since production started and to celebrate it, we are taking our Grampian 74 to a special weekend rally in Whitehaven when it is hoped almost fifty different versions will be attending. It always amazes me that these buses are still regarded as “modern” to this day and whenever working on them you are reminded of the many advances in design they feature.



Tram car progress

We have recently had members of the Aberdeen Tram 15 Group visit us at Alford and carry on the job of uncovering the signwriting on the sides of the car. This is well worth studying if you call at Alford.

At the other end of the scale, there has been a lot of progress on restoration of the two large models of trams and the track they run on. Both cars are now powered and able to run simultaneously on the track. There have been many points of detail improved and damage due to storage over the years has been corrected. It should be up and running at the Open Day.

Civic Reception

At the beginning of April, we joined with the Trustees of FirstGroup Heritage Trust in attending a reception in the Town House to recognise the significance of the 1930 Albion PMA28 bus number 79 to the history of Transport in the City. The event was well attended by the folk who helped with the project in many ways. This was a memorable evening, and it was good to get recognition by the city for the achievement we have all made.

Gordon Mills, Trust Chairman

***The Bus Collection at Alford are holding an Open Day on
SUNDAY 14TH AUGUST 2022—1100 TO 1600 HOURS***

***Events will take place in the grounds of the GRAMPIAN TRANSPORT MUSEUM,
Montgarrie Road, Alford AB33 8AE. .***

Activities include, Vintage Bus Rides around the track and Alford; Vehicle Displays, Stalls, Guided Tours around the event, Talks and much, much more!

Come and join us for a fun day!

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

A Palace of Varieties—But On The Move ...

There is ongoing discussion at the present time on the future of the TV reception licence. What is much forgotten these days is that until 1971 there was a requirement for an equivalent licence to receive radio (“wireless”) broadcasts. And the significance of this detail to transport history?

When Aberdeen Corporation took delivery in 1940 of the first of its fleet of streamlined bogie tramcars, they had a much higher specification of passenger amenity than the Corporation’s contemporary buses. They had platform doors that were closed between stops, they had electric heaters, and they had a public address system.



The public address system was intended to be used by drivers to announce the next stop and generally keep passengers informed. Unfortunately the system was known to accidentally broadcast sounds that should not have been heard by passengers, eg, the driver’s personal opinions of other road users. A public address incident that was beyond the control of the driver was reported from car 139 in May 1956 – the system was broadcasting to passengers a service from the BBC Light Programme. The Corporation Transport Department sought an explanation for the incident from the BBC but their response was not what was expected. The BBC wanted to know whether the Transport Department had a wireless licence to be receiving public radio broadcasts.



***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 via:
thebuscollectionatalford@outlook.com***

Albion ... A Bit of History Part 1 ...



Most of you will have either seen No. 79 RG 1173 an Albion PMA28 with Walker 32 seat body in person or in photographs. It was one of 54 Albion’s bought by the Corporation Transport Department between 1926 and 1935.

The first was an ex demonstrator No. 35 HJ 4104, an Albion PJ24 with an unknown 20 seat body bought in January 1926 as a complete vehicle. It was a normal control vehicle, otherwise the engine was ahead of the driver. Being front entrance, it was different from the other buses owned by the Corporation at that time which were rear entrance. It was withdrawn in 1936.

Then No. 37-45 RS 8037-45, Albion PJ24s which were also normal control, but this time had 25 seat rear entrance bodies by Northern Counties. They were delivered between September and October 1926. Withdrawn in the years from 1935 to 1937, No 37-40 were converted to lorries with No. 40 becoming a tower wagon No. 1 for Tramway overhead maintenance.

Next in 1927 came another 10, between May and July. These were No. 46-55 RS 8985-8994, also being of type PJ24 with Northern Counties 25 seat rear entrance bodies. Withdrawn between 1935 and 1936. No. 52 and 55 were converted, No.52 to a tower wagon No. 2 and No. 55 as a lorry.

In 1929 another 10 arrived, but this time they were type PMA28s which were forward control, otherwise the engine was alongside the driver, i.e. half cab. They were fitted with 32 seat rear entrance bodies built by Walker an Aberdeen bodybuilder. Arriving between May and June ’29 they were numbered 59-68 RG 300-309. In 1939, they were handed over to the local A.R.P. wardens to be used as ambulances during the Second World War, however some of them may have been used as buses by the Transport Department during the period. Again, more of this later.



Our thanks go to Peter McCutcheon for producing this article. Photo’s from the A&DTPT collection.



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