



# Newsletter

ISSUE SEVEN

SUMMER 2019

## **Chairman's Update ...**

This is our busiest time of the year and restorations must take a back seat in our workshop so that we can get all the buses we intend to have on the road ready for the season.

This year our two newest buses will need to have tests before they can be re-licensed. It is very difficult getting test appointments and there are two options, firstly a class five test which involves going to Mintlaw and using the facilities of Aberdeenshire Council. The alternative is to get a Class six PCV test at one of the two commercial vehicle dealers in the town that host a DVSA tester. This year we chose the latter as this involves less travelling.

First to be tested was the 1988 Leyland Olympian and we managed to get a quick appointment due to a cancellation. We have carried out work on the Cummins L10 engine and although never a slouch it now pulls smooth and even.

The famous 1992 Mercedes Benz "Bendybus" was next up for test and this had work done about a year ago painting and repairing the chassis frame and renewing the alternator. It had a long wait for this work as it requires to take up the full length of our workshop and both sets of hoists. It is a nice easy bus to drive, but not in reverse!

The other vehicles we will be using for the next year are all covered by the latest changes in Department for Transport rules. They include Leyland National 74 dating from 1976, AEC Swift 22 from 1968 and Leyland Tiger PS1 PA171 new in 1950. These buses are in the "Historic Vehicle" tax class and do not need a formal test. Instead we give these a full internal test and carry out repairs and a service. The new regulations are very welcome, they save money, fuel and driver's time, in addition they attract a zero-tax fee. These rules now include a rolling forty-year starting date so more of our vehicles will come within these conditions in the fullness of time.

One final piece of good news is that our Trustee Joe Mackie has been awarded the Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.) in the Queen's Birthday Honours list for service to the local community in Scotland. Many congratulations Joe and well deserved.

**Gordon Mills,  
Trust Chairman**

## **"Our Senior Bus Number 14" ...**

Mention was made in the last Newsletter that work was to start on the Trust's other Aberdeen Corporation Daimler single decker, number 14. The team of volunteers at the Scottish Vintage Bus Museum has made good progress with rebuilding the vehicle to its original 1948 rear door condition.



The original Walker body was wood framed, but Aberdeen Corporation repositioned most of the bodyside pillars when they rebuilt the body in 1964. Fortunately, the sawn off remains of the original pillars were all present, making the replacing of pillars in their correct position a straightforward task. It was also found that the original floor had survived the various rebuildings, a pair of wooden ramps having been laid on top of the floor as part of the conversion from service bus to coach. Barring some sections of floor and the wheel arches, all wood has been found to be in very good condition. Repillaring of the bodysides has now been completed

When the two Aberdeen Daimlers were gifted to the Trust by the Ribblesdale Preservation Trust the package included the chassis of a Daimler from the fleet of Venture Transport of Consett, County Durham. This has been used as the source of an engine and other mechanical items. There has also been a delving into the accumulation of Daimler spares initially built up by group members in the 1970s. A radiator has also been sourced and refurbished, and the engine has been given a top end overhaul.

Work progresses in the main workshop at Lathalmond where the vehicle can be seen by visitors to the museum. Is there anyone out there who could loan photographs of these buses in original condition showing the doorway, or share personal recollections of their interior fittings?



## On Service to Her Majesty ....

Last year, we were invited to Balmoral Castle, home to her majesty when she is in the north-east, to provide a shuttle bus service for her visiting guests taking them from the

entrance on the South Deeside Road to the tearoom and shop where they begin their visit of the grounds and castle. Pleased to report that we were invited to do the same in 2019 but on three occasions during May, June and July. We used one bus from each trust, the Albion and Leyland PA171, both buses looking smart in front of the castle.

**IZZATAFACT:** In December 1931 Aberdeen Corporation tried out its first diesel engine, a Crossley, in a double deck Crossley bus. It ran reliably for at least the first 5 months, returning a fuel consumption of 9.13 miles per gallon compared with 4.5 mpg for the petrol engined vehicles. Given that diesel fuel then cost 3.75d (old pence) per gallon, but petrol cost 10.75d per gallon, it is easily seen why there was a great enthusiasm for diesel engines.

## Anatomy of a Tram Car Flit!

As mentioned in Newsletter 6, Dundee Museum of Transport asked last September that the Trust's Aberdeen Corporation tramcar number 15 be removed. The reason for the request is another story for another time; suffice to say that the move to the Collection Centre took place on the 8th and 9th January this year.

When 15 was delivered to Dundee, a local steel fabricator made a framework to fit under the saloon on which, through the aid of rollers, the car body could be moved on smooth ground. The day before the flit, the car was manually shoved round 90 degrees and lined up with the exit door thanks to a squad of Dundee museum volunteers. The car was pushed into the open on the Tuesday morning when it met up with a crane that had been hired to lift the car + underframe onto a low loader trailer provided by Colin Lawson Transport of Aberdeen. The crane lift involved the use of two sets of spreader beams to avoid the lifting straps contacting and crushing the sides of the car body. The first stage of the journey was to the Colin Lawson yard in Aberdeen where the tractor and trailer spent the night.



The last stage of the journey to Alford was more complicated, being mostly on the single carriageway A944. Unloading of the car at Alford was done with a Colin Lawson heavyweight forklift truck, the car body then being rolled through the door in a similar manner to that used in Dundee. And acknowledgement is made again to the work done by Neil Scullion before the original flit from Loirston in preparing the car body for 21st century transport.

The tasks for the Trust now are to prepare a permanent home for the car at Alford, to gather material and detail for its restoration, and to raise funds for the costs of putting the car back to running condition. **Want to be part of the scheme?**

Web: [HTTP://WWW.THEBUSCOLLECTIONATALFORD.CO.UK](http://www.thebuscollectionatalford.co.uk)



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



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## Open to the Public

The Collection Centre at Alford is open to visitors at the Grampian Transport Museum at certain times, with Trust personnel available to explain the significance of the items on view. Trust vehicles are also displayed to the public at events away from Alford. Some vehicles are also used to provide free bus services for the public at special occasions such as major events at the Grampian Transport Museum. The Trust gives presentations to interested groups and works to mutual benefit with other museum organisations .

## Continuity of Care & Knowledge

The Trust has care of a variety of vehicles of local interest and has premises within which they are looked after.

For the Trust's services to the public to be kept going in the long term, the Trust seeks to encourage the support of people who could develop the various skills to maintain and operate the various assets in future years, and to understand and explain to the public the significance to society of the items they are looking at.

## We need help

For the Trust to continue to be successful and maintain the collection for future generations it needs both practical and financial help. We need volunteers to help care for our vehicles, to administer the running of the Trust, and we need ongoing financial support through, for example, bequests, donations, and Standing Orders which can be Gift-Aided. If you have particular skills to offer, are interested in developing new skills, or can help in any way, please contact: **Gordon Mills on email at: [thebuscollectionatalford@outlook.com](mailto:thebuscollectionatalford@outlook.com) Tel: 07889 159 822**