



Chairman's Update ...



I have just learnt that we are to have a “Lockdown Finale” to the most awful year in many people’s memory. My hopes that we would be able to keep the volunteer sessions at Alford going into the New Year were dashed and we held the last session on Wednesday 16 December. I believed at that time we would be surely able to start up in the early New Year!

May I wish all our supporters, volunteers and friends of the Trust a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. We will see you all as soon as we can in 2021.

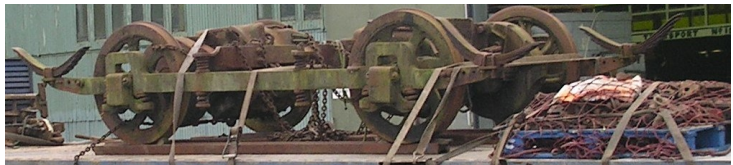
Stay well ... Stay Safe!
Gordon Mills, Trust Chairman

Keep on Truckin’ ...

The world’s first commercial electric tramway was in 1881 in Germany, and the next two electric lines were in the British Isles two years later. In the following years there were a handful of other pioneer lines in the UK but it was in the USA that the electric tramway concept caught on and expanded from the late 1880s. It was to be another ten years before Britain followed suit when there was then a rate of expansion of electric tramways without equal in the world. This meant that technology had to be imported to meet demand, and the USA had many willing sellers.

Some 120+ years later, these historic events have been playing a part in the restoration of the Trust’s Aberdeen Corporation tramcar 15. The Trust’s tramcar originally had a “truck” (the forged steel framework holding the wheels and motors) from a major supplier in the USA, J G Brill of Philadelphia. An original Aberdeen Brill truck still exists – it is under Grampian Transport Museum’s Aberdeen horse tramcar. However, the Brill company exported their products all over the world and they were often copied, legally or otherwise, by overseas manufacturers.

The Trust has been fortunate in obtaining a “Brill” truck from Oporto, Portugal, that is a particularly good match for what 15 would have had in its later years. There are no firm details as to the provenance of this truck but is believed to have been made in Belgium in the 1920s. It is educational to compare differences between the original design for Aberdeen and this later Oporto example. The main structural members of the truck, the two side frames, have a cross section measuring 1½” x 4” on the Aberdeen truck but, as an instance of design/development progression, the equivalent dimensions on the Oporto example have become 2” x 5”. In Oporto, such trucks were once in common use and many had service lives of over 60 years.



“Brill” Truck Loaded and Secured for Transport to Alford

The Bus Collection at Alford is presently not open to visitors, please check our website for further visitor information: <http://thebuscollectionatalford.co.uk/>

A.E.C.s Post Second World War Part 2 - The Regent V Years ...

After a six-year gap, Aberdeen bought its next A.E.C.s in 1955, as part of the Tram replacement program. These were five 62 seat Crossley bodied Regent Vs No. 205-209 (HRG 205-209). They were unusual because they had Gardner 6LW engines instead of the usual A.E.C. units.



The next to be delivered, as part of the program, were another five in 1957, but this time with 66 seat Park Royal bodies and A.E.C. AV 470 engines. No. 250-254 (KRS 250-254). They were the first 8-foot-wide buses with two pedal, brake and accelerator, operation. This became standard until 1993.



To complete the Tram program on the 3rd May 1958. Fifteen 66 seat Metro Cammell "Orion" bodied vehicles with AV 470 engines were delivered, No. 255-269 (KRS 255-264, LRG 265-269), entering service during the last day, by replacing the Trams one for one.

The last A.E.C. double deckers were five more bought in 1959, No. 271-275 (MRS 271-275). Alexander 66 seat bodies were fitted this time, with the then standard AV 470 engine. Alexander had supplied two single deck bodies the year earlier onto two Daimler chassis that they re-bodied, and to this day (2020) there are still Alexander bodies in the fleet.



Unfortunately, the A.E.C. AV 470 engines of 250-269/271-275 were not the most reliable, therefore in 1963 it was decided to replace the ones in 271-275 with Gardner 6LW units. The five engines taken from them were used as "float" units by Engineering.

At the end of 1959 there were 55 A.E.C.s in service, 10 Regent III "RT" type, 15 Regent III "Provincials" and 30 Regent Vs. The 6 pre-war Regent double deckers having been withdrawn during that year. The last Regal single deckers had been withdrawn a year earlier.

The last Regent Vs were taken out of service and sold in 1976. Of the 30 Regent Vs, 15 were sold for further service, all being bought by T.D. Alexander (Greyhound Luxury Coaches) of Arbroath. No. 205-209 in 1971, 250-254 in 1973 and 271-275 in 1976. Two of the 1955 Crossley bodied vehicles still survive, 207/209 and are owned by Aberdeen & District Transport Preservation Trust. It is hoped one day to restore at least one of them to late 1950s condition.

Next time we will look at the One Person Operated (O.P.O.) single deckers.

(ADTPT Collection Photos)

Guest Writer - Peter McCutcheon

Workshop Update ...

On a positive note, we have made good progress on the interior of Daimler 11 and I am pleased to say we have been able to source the two missing bell pushes to finish the roof panels. We are now working on the cab and have trial fitted the offside wing and cab floor sections. So much of this area is inter-related and there will still be much to do to get everything fitting perfectly.



In bay 2 of the workshop we have now re-laid all the wiring under the front panels of AC68.

New hardwood framing is needed below the windscreen but we have protected all the exposed steelwork from rust. Work progresses on re-wiring the dashboard, bodywork switchboard, main switchboard and door control panel.


We now have six new tyres fitted on the Albion's wheel rims, with the rims being painted prior to refitting.



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