



# Newsletter

ISSUE FIVE

SPRING 2018

## ***A message from the chairman of the trust ..... That was a year that was!***

We are fast approaching the season when our buses will be in use and seen by the public out and about.

Last year we had a very busy period when within eight days we took part in "Silver City Stories" at the Castlegate in Aberdeen, ran a free car park bus for the Grampian Transport Museum Speedfest Event and held our Open Day at the Collection Centre. This year the events will be a little better spaced out but no less busy.

Our Open day will be held at Alford on 8th July and I hope you will be able to come and join us for a laid-back look at the



collection hopefully, in the sun! There will be rides on the track and some runs around Alford.

We have booked the Leyland Olympian 131 for a sea crossing to Shetland to attend the bi-annual vintage vehicle rally in Lerwick on the weekend of 1/2 June. Closer to home The Bon Accord Steam festival at Castle Fraser is on 16/17 June and we will take PA171, the Bluebird 1950 Leyland.

In the workshops we are about to move the 1947 Daimler CVD6 single-decker in to start work on this major restoration. Friends are welcome to visit us at The Bus Collection on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays and see the progress

***Gordon Mills, Trust Chairman***

## ***Important local bus saved for the collection ...***

Late last season we learned that the group that have owned an important local bus were looking to pass it on for long term preservation in the Aberdeenshire area. We inspected the bus and decided to make an offer and were successful in taking it over.

The bus in question is GWG472, a 1955 AEC Monocoach with Alexander 45 seat bodywork that had been operated from new by Alexanders in the North East of Scotland. It became an Alexander Northern vehicle fleet number NAC68 when the company was split into three regional companies and latterly wore that company's yellow and cream livery. The AEC Monocoach was a rare vehicle normally built as a chassis-less bus by Park Royal vehicles of London using the same running units as the heavier AEC Reliance. This batch of thirty buses ordered by the Scottish Bus Group was specified to have Scottish built body by W. Alexander of Falkirk and its frugal specification must have meant it used low fuel compared to other vehicles with the same number of seats in the fleet. We believe this bus is one of only two of the type remaining.



NAC68 was rescued from its open storage in November and moved to our store. We shall bring it into our workshop as soon as we have a space and assess the condition, develop a preservation plan and make it ready to display.

**IZZATAFACT ONE:** The world's first electric railway locomotive was developed by Robert Davidson of Aberdeen. It was battery powered and was demonstrated in Central Scotland in 1842 – railways did not come to Aberdeen until 1850. He had previously (1839) built a battery powered road vehicle and this year the Grampian Transport Museum have built a full size working replica of his motor as part of a display on electric vehicles. Davidson died in 1894 and is buried in St Peter's Cemetery, King Street, Aberdeen.

## Tram Car Memories ....

There are more than a few folk around of a certain age who have fond memories of Aberdeen's tramcars. Some were also able to gather tangible momentos and one such collector was David Thomson, latterly of Gourrock, who used to gather items in the 1950s when visiting relatives in the city.

Sadly, David passed away late last year but he remembered the Trust in his will. The Trust now has an expanded collection of timetables and destination blinds, one of which records the different route colours used by Aberdeen's tramways. Some of these items will be enhancing the exhibitions to be presented later this year to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the city's last tram.



**IZZATAFACT TWO:** On the 3rd May this year, it will be 60 years since Aberdeen Corporation closed its tramway system. Within a few weeks of the closure all the remaining cars except one were driven to the private track across the links where they were burnt for scrap. The sole survivor was the 'horse car' which is now on display at Grampian Transport Museum.

## Visit by the Burgesses of Aberdeen

One of many events during 2017, was the visit by thirty Burgesses of the City of Aberdeen to The Bus Collection at Alford and The Grampian Transport Museum.

Their visit started at Kingswells Park and Ride site, from where they were driven, in the Daimler, by Joe Mackie who is a burgess, to Alford.

Following a welcome by Joe and Gordon, Chairman of The Bus Collection, the burgesses enjoyed a guided tour of the facilities and then were driven in the Albion to the transport museum where they were greeted by John Rathz, Chairman of GTM.



On behalf of the visitors Colin Taylor, Lord Dean of Guild thanked the hosts for a most enjoyable visit, some for the first time to the museum site. Colin advised that the party looked forward to a return visit and perhaps the opportunity to drive a bus!!

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



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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, 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)**