



THE  
GORDON MILLS MBE  
*Bus*  
COLLECTION  
AT ALFORD



# NEWSLETTER

Issue 36

Dec 2025

## ***Chairman's Update - Spreading the Word...***

We have taken a look at our social media 'footprint' over the last 12 months and found some interesting facts. The Trust uses four social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, our Website, and "X". Since October 2024, we have seen a significant increase in visits across all the first three platforms which is fantastic news. Amazingly, 19,200 visitors viewed our Facebook page in October 2025, which is a c2,600% increase when compared to October 2024, and we have seen similar increases on Instagram (2000%) and our website (660%).

Looking at our website specifically, in October 2025, we had a total of 646 active users across 7 countries with China accounting for over 70% of our active users, with the United Kingdom in second place accounting for over 21% of our active users. This is great news, and it is really pleasing to see a such a globally increasing interest in our bus collection.

Nearer home, the Trust attracted 227 visitors to the Aberdeenshire Doors Open Day last September. Another community service was the provision of a free bus service to the Aberdeen Model Railway Club's exhibition at Curl, Aberdeen, in October. This bus service carried 150 passengers. And at the end of November a free bus service will again be provided to support the Alford Christmas Festival.

**A date for your diaries: Sunday 5th July, 2026, the Trust's next "Open Day".**



***Wishing all of our volunteers, friends and readers a very Happy Christmas  
and all the very best for 2026!***

***David Liston, Trust Chairman***

## ***Meanwhile, back in the Workshop...***

**ACT 11** - Work on the rear panel has been completed. This involved cutting the panel for rear number plate and installing a hatched panel for the spare wheel. Additional bodywork to be completed at the area in front of the entrance door, using the original body parts. Wheel bearings have all been checked; both the rear sets of bearings will need to be replaced.

**ACT 14 (Daimler) at SVBM, Lathalmond** - More handrails have been fitted in the saloon. The engine has now been put in position, and the complicated rear engine mounts have been secured.

**GRT 209** - Further air system problems have come to light. Searches are now being made for sources of suitable seals.

**ACT 40 and GRT 121** - Both have now been sold for preservation elsewhere in Scotland.

**ACT 26 at GVVV, Bridgeton and ACT 154** - Both are being prepared for sale for preservation elsewhere in Scotland.



## ***Think Sponsorship...***

From time to time folk develop a desire to acquire a bus of their own. From years of experience it must be recorded that it is relatively cheap to acquire a retired bus. The major expenses come in storing it securely and maintaining it in a presentable and roadworthy condition.

An alternative approach to such commitment, could be to sponsor an existing vehicle held by an established group such as the Trust. The Trust has a range of historic buses that span the years from the 1930s to the 1990s that need more support.

As mentioned above, the Trust's 1947 Aberdeen Corporation Daimler single decker needs replacement rear wheel bearings. One estimate is in the region of £600. Anyone care to help sponsor this vehicle?



## ***The Last Years of the Trams in Aberdeen (Part 1 of 2)***

It was in July 1954 that the Corporation announced its plan to replace all the city's tramway services by buses. Prior to then, three tramway routes had been abandoned: Torry (Bridge St – Victoria Rd) and Ferryhill (Castle St – Fonthill Rd or Duthie Park) in 1931, and Mannofield (Castle St – Great Western Rd) in 1951. Nonetheless, between these years the remaining tramways had been upgraded with some route extensions plus new and upgraded cars. But society was changing faster than ever.

Withdrawal of the Rosemount/Queens Cross Circle routes was effected in October 1954. Nineteen trams were withdrawn and replaced by twenty Daimler CVG6s with 60 seat Metro Cammell or Crossley bodywork. The expanded bus fleet was used only in part as direct tramway replacement; most went to augment routes into the new municipal housing in Summerhill and Mastrick. Bus services into these areas had already been abstracting passengers from the Rosemount tramway.

There was an official marking of the closure through the running of the Corporation's horse tramcar on the last evening of service on the route. The horse car had been quietly forgotten for nearly 30 years but was repainted in the colours of the Rosemount horse tramway service for the occasion. The effort was rewarded with criticism of extravagance from some quarters. And all did not go precisely to plan on the night. The pair of borrowed horses pulling the car struggled to get up South Mount St and the team had to be gently helped up the hill by the following electric car.

The next route to go was Woodside (St. Nicholas Street – Woodside Fountain/Scatterburn) in November of the following year. This time seventeen trams were replaced by twenty five new buses - twenty Daimler CVG6s and five A.E.C. Regent Vs which, very unusually, had Gardner Engines. All had Crossley bodywork, this time with 62 seats. Four new bus routes were introduced: 24 Braeside – Scatterburn, 25 Hayton – Faulds Gate, 26 Kincorth – Printfield Walk (Woodside), and 27 Market Street – Printfield Walk. The Woodside tramway always worked as an isolated route and was not duplicated by any other Corporation bus services. The new bus services were now providing additional cross-city services.

In contrast to the Rosemount closure, abandonment of the Woodside route attracted no official commemoration. The public thought otherwise and a sizeable crowd attended the last car from Scatterburn.



*One of the 1955 tram replacement AEC buses. This bus survives but in poor condition.*

*Photo Courtesy of FGHT*

*Our thanks go to Peter McCutcheon for producing this article.*

### ***Tramcar 15...***

As reported in Newsletter 35, the Trust's Aberdeen Corporation tramcar has benefitted from the estate of a benefactor. A potential contractor has been identified to undertake restoration of the car's bodywork, and their specialists have been to Alford to survey the car.

Their outline plan is for the car to be dispatched next Spring with work expected to take two years. However, their premises cannot take the car with its top cover in place. The top deck will therefore have to be dismantled between now and Spring. Restoration of the truck (running gear) for the car will be done as a separate project depending on the availability of sufficient funds.



The car is very much a construction in wood with a modest steel underframe plus steel strengthening, some original, some added later. The types of wood used are gradually being identified, the list so far including oak, ash, mahogany, teak and pine.

**Question: any readers interested in coming to Alford on a Wednesday or Saturday to help with elements of the dismantling?**  
**Please email [iastry@globalnet.co.uk](mailto:iastry@globalnet.co.uk)**



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