

# LEEDS TRANSPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS SHEET 171

NOVEMBER 2012



## FORTHCOMING L.T.H.S. MEETINGS & EVENTS

**Mon. 12 Nov. - Modern British Trams** Paul Abell

**Mon. 10 Dec. - Across the USA in search of a Tram to Roundhay** Jamie Guest

**Mon. 14 Jan. - Members' Digital Images** Yourselves

**Tue. 15 Jan** LTHS Committee Meeting

**Mon. 11 Feb. - European Travels** Mel Reuben

**Mon. 11 Mar. - Oddments from the Camera** Mike Waring

**Mon. 8 Apr. - Annual General Meeting**

## OTHER LOCAL MEETINGS & COMING EVENTS

Here's a summary - places and contact details below. Please contact the News Sheet coordinator with details of other local events which may interest members.

### November

**Sun. 18 - Dewsbury Bus Museum - Open Day**  
1030-1630, admission £1.50, free shuttle service from Dewsbury Bus Station.

**Mon. 19 (LTTG) - Transport Cine Evening**  
Sylvia Spencer

### December

**Sat.- Sun. 1-2 - Wakefield Model Railway Exhibition,**  
Thornes Park 1000-1800 (Sat), 1700 (Sun)

**Tue. 4 (MRT) - Christmas social quiz - not too difficult!** Team Dobson

**Fri. 14 (LRTA) - Trams in North America**  
Paul Abell

**Mon. 17 (LTTG) - AGM (members only) followed by "Charlie Watson's Trambus Highlights"**

### January 2013

**Tue. 1 (MRT) - Some more holiday pictures**  
Ian Dobson

**Fri. 11 (LRTA) -** To be advised

**Mon. 21 (LTTG) -** To be advised

### February

**Tue. 5 (MRT) -** To be advised

**Fri. 8 (LRTA) -** To be advised

**Mon. 18 (LTTG) -** To be advised

### Groups, Meeting Places & Times

**MRT** - Middleton Railway Trust, The Engine House, Moor Road, Hunslet, 1930.

**LRTA** - Light Rail Transit Association, Leeds Area, Committee Room No. 5, Civic Hall, 1900.

**LTTG** - Leeds Transport Touring Group, at Grove Inn, Back Row, Holbeck, 2000. £1 inc. supper.

### YOUR NEWS SHEET

**Malcolm Hindes**

Starting with this issue, we hope to post the News Sheet as a PDF file on the Society's web site.

A major item of expenditure is postage, and members

could help save that expense by receiving their News Sheet electronically, releasing valuable funds for practical projects such as the Horse Tram.

If you are prepared to do this, please send an e-mail to me at [malcolm.hindes@btinternet.com](mailto:malcolm.hindes@btinternet.com) and we will do the rest. You will receive the sheet as an attachment as soon as it is ready (usually the day of the meeting). We promise that addresses received for this purpose will not be disclosed or used otherwise without your permission.

## OBITUARIES

Two local transport enthusiasts passed away during October. Although neither was a member of our Society, they were both well known to us.

**Stanley King** died suddenly in hospital on 7 October at the age of 80. He was a transport enthusiast *par excellence*, who put his enthusiasm to the public service as Bradford spokesman on the West Yorkshire PTA between 1986 and 2007, rising to the role of Chairman. He was Councillor for Heaton Ward and became Lord Mayor of Bradford in 2000. He was also Lord of the Manor of Heaton.

However Stanley's real fame (for us) was his role as a transport historian, with books on trolleybuses and trams in Bradford, Keighley and Halifax. He was a long-standing TMS member and volunteer in the library at Crich, and as recently as March last year gave the LTHS a presentation on Halifax Tramways.

Stanley's funeral at St. Barnabas' church in Heaton was well attended, with two Bradford trolleybuses parked in the road outside.

**Peter Lowe** was the creator, owner and Chief Engineer of the Abbey Light Railway at Kirkstall. He was an engineer by trade and by calling, one who could make anything, from drawing up plans to fabrication and finishing, and eventually became a college lecturer - in Mechanical Engineering, of course.

In 1975 he acquired and completely rebuilt a derelict 2ft. gauge Lister diesel loco at home. Thus inspired to create a railway, he leased land adjacent to Kirkstall Abbey, where he built his line. This involved digging out a cutting and constructing - from scratch - a girder bridge over a mill stream. Over the years his stock of locomotives grew and he built passenger coaches on wagon chassis, operating the railway for visitors every Sunday. His workshop developed into a well-equipped and self-sufficient depot capable of maintaining and restoring all manner of artefacts, railway or other.

Peter had suffered cancer in the past and was re-admitted to St. James' Hospital in September, where he died on 3 October, aged 77. His funeral at Rawdon Crematorium was packed with representatives from the many groups he had joined or helped.

## HORSE CAR 107 UPDATE

**Jamie Guest**

The last update concentrated on the move of 107 to the Middleton Railway. Since then an awful lot seems to have happened, even though the usual suspects were away in the US looking for parts for a Roundhay Electric for several weeks. We moved the tram down to Middleton in late August and managed to unite the body and the running gear before putting it away in the Engine House where it is visible to the public. It is already causing a lot of interest with both visitors and volunteers alike. Before we set off on our trip across the pond various tidying up jobs had to be done. During the move, a lot of the brake gear and several tie bars were removed from the running gear. Over the past few weeks these have now been refitted and a lot of nuts and washers have been put back on. During this time we have had to move the tram several times inside the Engine House. The remarkable thing is how silently it moves. Apart from a low rumble it is very difficult to hear it at all as we push it along.



While Tony, Jim, Ian and myself were away Richard Syms and Paul Brearley concentrated on the upper deck seats. This resulted in the assembly of a prototype which looked very good. Since then Paul has built the other seats at home and then brought them to Whitkirk for final touches. All of them have now been taken down to Middleton and placed on top of the car. This has totally altered the appearance and they look great. There is just one problem. In mid October I went to Ipswich to look at the Cambridge Horse Car that they are starting to restore. They have two original Milnes seats and I discovered that we had got part of the stays wrong. This has been corrected for the two long end seats on 107 and we will now have to decide whether or not to correct the remaining 6 short seats. However the seats really do look good.

Work has also continued on fitting floor latts and both platforms are now complete. Jim and Paul are now concentrating on fitting the end plates in the lower saloon that protect the ends of the



seats. Meanwhile the upper deck handrail stanchions have been made along with their brackets. As soon as we can get safe access to the roof we will fit these, then put temporary handrails in place to allow us to continue working upstairs. As the tram is now mounted on its suspension there is a surprising amount of movement as people walk around inside the car. This shows that the suspension is working as it is supposed to, a tribute to Bernard's design work. The first four dash stanchions have also been made and the B end dash has been trial fitted. The various pins for the draw gear are being made by Mike Cook and last week we fitted the B-end draw gear. Hopefully we will be able to fit the brake columns soon and then we will be able to test the braking system.



Some work has been going on at Whitkirk to finish the various parts that were being made there but there isn't much more to do there and we will soon be working full time at Middleton on Wednesdays.

Just a word about Middleton. Our hosts down there are being extremely hospitable and their workshop staff have helped us in many ways. However it is a working railway and we have to comply with their various rules and policies for safety reasons. Members who want to see 107 must NOT come on a Wednesday without getting in touch with me to arrange it as we all must have a safety briefing before being allowed on site when the railway is closed to the public. However the Middleton Railway Trust have generously allowed any member to have free admission to the engine House to see 107 when the railway is open to the public at weekends. All you need to do is produce a current membership card for the LTHS and ask to go into the Engine House. I would encourage any members who haven't seen 107 recently to try and go and see it. Progress is rapid at the moment and we are looking forward to seeing it finished.

## LTHS WEB SITE

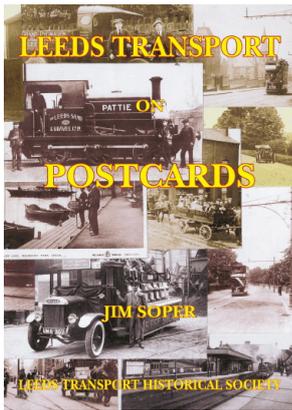
Due to technical problems not yet resolved, the Society's web site <http://lths.org.uk> is currently out of commission. The Hon. Secretary has managed to "resurrect" the content and host it on his Horse Tram web site <http://leedshorsecar107.squarespace.com> where you will find a link to follow.

We hope to get this sorted in due course; meanwhile warmest thanks to Jamie for coming to the rescue. The photos on this page are all from the 107 web site, where you will find many more - do have a look!

## **LEEDS POSTCARD BOOK (and after)**

**Malcolm Hindes**

As predicted, our latest book from Jim Soper - "Leeds Transport on Postcards" - was "launched" on Saturday 27 October on our stand at the Leeds Model Railway Show. Initial sales have been steady, but the introductory discount offer is still open so you can get yours in time for Christmas (assuming you haven't bought one already).



Apart from the mass of fascinating pictures, with extended captions, Jim has included a detailed history of

the Leeds postcard business which, like the Turnpike appendix in "Leeds Transport Vol.5" is a topic that hasn't been documented previously.

As if continuing work on the horse tram wasn't enough for him, Jim is already preparing *yet another* book - "Leeds Transport on Postcards Vol. 2" since so much material has now come to light.

Also "on the stocks", with input from Mike Waring and Tony Cowell as well as Jim, we have at least two Leeds transport history videos - watch for details.

## **LEEDS MODEL RAILWAY SOCIETY EXHIBITION**

Apart from unveiling Jim's new book (see above) our Society had its customary stand at the Leeds Model Railway Show at the end of October. Once again we were in a good spot just inside the entrance to the Grammar School at Alwoodley Gates.

Peter Malone brought his transport museum layout and a wide variety of trams took it in turn to circulate round the track, past the trolleybuses and garage and behind the back scene.

As well as the new book we had a good range of new and used books, videos and models on sale and takings were well up on last year. Thanks go to all who helped staff the stand, but we do ask potential volunteers to let Stephen Longthorne know when they are available so he can plan the staffing. Some helpers who turned up unannounced had difficulty getting in and then found the stall already staffed.

We have no more sales stands planned for 2012, but Stephen should soon be issuing his plans for 2013.

## **A TRIP TO MANCHESTER**

**Jamie Guest**

The second LTHS outing of recent time, saw seven members gather at Leeds to catch the 9.32 Trans Pennine, class 185, to Manchester Piccadilly. From there it was down to the Undercroft to the Metrolink platform where we all bought Day Rider tickets. This allowed us access to a very vibrant and rapidly growing system. One of the second batch of T68A's took us swiftly out to Eccles along a fascinating route that included a large amount of street running. Mike Waring pointed out some remaining original tram rails outside the old Salford depot along the way. It was then back

to Harbour City for a quick change onto the Media City Branch. The architecture around Salford Quays is stunning and the services on this branch are very good, mostly the preserve of the T68A's but there are some of the new M5000's running as well. After a break at Media City it was on to Cornbrook where we caught a tram to St Werburgh's road. This took us past the Trafford depot; this current terminus is shortly to become a through station with routes to Didsbury and Manchester Airport under construction. A short pause before we set off back to Piccadilly Gardens where we broke for lunch. As we sat on the benches I became aware that every time I looked up there was another tram going past. Jim commented that it was like a continental tram system.

Then it was onwards via Victoria to Oldham Mumps, a temporary terminus before the Rochdale route opens next year. Back to Victoria we then changed onto a Bury bound tram that took us along the original route to Bury. A short stop ensued then it was back to Piccadilly before catching a train back to Leeds.

Everyone who went enjoyed themselves. We were all amazed at how well the system is used. Most trams were well filled and it is obviously a boon to people who need to travel around Manchester. The amount of money going in to extending it is impressive, as is the new fleet of M5000 trams that is replacing the T68's which are being withdrawn. What a pity that Leeds hasn't got a system like this and is being saddled with a trolleybus system.

We are already planning next year's trip which will either be Sheffield Supertram or Croydon Tramlink. In 2014 most of the Manchester extensions will need riding or possibly the new Nottingham routes so hopefully the trips will become an annual feature.

## **DEWSBURY BUS MUSEUM OPEN DAY** 18 Nov.

The museum building will be open from 10.30 am until 4.30 pm. Admission is £1.50 per person, and includes a full-colour programme with bus service timetable and vehicle allocation.

A free shuttle bus service will operate from Dewsbury Bus Station (stand 1) every 20 minutes starting at 10.20 am, calling at the Bus Museum and terminating at Havelock Street.

Some free trips to the superb Charlotte's Ice Cream Parlour in Whitley will operate during the afternoon. Details and times will be in the Souvenir Programme. A couple of short mystery tours will operate. Times will be in the Souvenir Programme.

Visiting buses will be on display at the Kirklees Social Education Centre car park in nearby Havelock Street. There will be a large variety of trades stands, selling books, videos and memorabilia in the building.

## **Unveiling the Leyland PD2**

BHL 682 was new to West Riding in 1948. It carried its last passengers in 1967. After a spell as a training bus, it has been off the road since 1975. Now - after 37 years - it is almost completely restored and runs beautifully. During the event, it will be unveiled, although it is not quite ready to operate in service.

(From the Dewsbury Bus Museum web site).

If there had been a major car crash on the New Jersey Turnpike on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> September this year the LTHS would not have been counting the cars but looking for most of a new Committee. So why were your Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and one of your Committee members travelling that way in a hired Ford Escape that day.

The answer is a short one, that we were researching a potential next project for when 107 is completed. The thought of having to spend Wednesdays at home in the warmth in future is not a pleasant one as we are thoroughly enjoying the experience of recreating a working tram from a summerhouse. As a result conversations at Whitkirk have often turned to 'What shall we do next?'. The first suggestion was 'build a Middleton Bogie', this would no doubt delight Harold Pullan and many others but there is a slight matter of funding (approx £800,000) and also premises. The other missing Leeds tram of major significance is the Roundhay Electric. For those unaware of the history read Volume 1 of Leeds Transport (available to any members who don't have a copy). Six of these cars were built in 1891 by Stephenson's of New York and arrived in Leeds where they ran until 1896. They were the first electric trams with overhead current collection to run in the UK and possibly Europe. They lasted as stores cars on different trucks into the 1920's but none were preserved.

Ian told us that various Stephenson bodies from that era had survived in the USA as well as some Bemis trucks of a similar pattern to the ones fitted to the Leeds cars. We therefore raided our piggy banks and decided to go to the US to research the surviving relics and thus conduct a feasibility study into the building of a replica Roundhay Electric.

I had always wanted to drive right across the States and Tony Cowell was rash enough to say that he would like to as well, so we decided that Tony and I would fly to the West Coast and then meet Jim and Ian in Chicago, then to visit various museum's in the eastern US, before flying home. Thus after the September meeting Tony and I got a couple of hours sleep and set off to fly to San Francisco via Manchester, London and Chicago. The whole journey took 24 hours from leaving Gildersome and we arrived in a damp, dark San Francisco, (SF) without flowers in our hair, and faced a difficult drive in the rain across the Bay Bridge to our hotel in Oakland.

The next day we went to see some big yellow locomotives (Tony got to see over 1300 of these over the next 2 weeks); most had Union Pacific on the sides. Then it was into SF by BART, for an afternoon touring the Muni tram system. I paddled in the Pacific at Ocean Beach and we also rode the new T line south along the bay shore. I thought it was a very impressive system and we also rode the cable cars and nearly a trolleybus, before a vintage tram from Fishermans Wharf and BART back to the hotel. The next morning it was off on our long drive, after touring Oakland we met some friends of mine for a good breakfast and then went over Altamont pass via Stockton to Sacramento where we rode the very good tram system before ending up in Roseville, which believe it or not was on the Union Pacific (UP) main line and is home to the famous rotary snowplows. For the next 2 weeks we then followed the UP, or Uncle Pete as it's known, over mountain passes (7500 and 8000 feet, baking deserts, 3 of them, in Nevada, Utah and Wyoming, and then the endless cornfields of Nebraska, Iowa and Illinois, to Chicago. Along the way we saw some fabulous sights. The initial mountain range, the Sierra Nevadas, are very impressive and Donner Pass is a place of legend, as well as tragedy. The endless high deserts of Nevada and Utah, where no rivers flow to the sea but just end in either a sink or a Salt Lake, are like nothing we have over here. In Utah we took a short cut to the Golden Spike monument and ended up driving 60 miles on dirt roads, including 10 miles along the original Central Pacific track of 1869. Two nights at Ogden allowed us to visit Salt Lake City to ride the new tram system and also see the Mormon temple, as well as a 'Big Blow' at Ogden. Then it was up Echo Canyon to the high plains and the red desert of Wyoming, and on to Laramie where we slept at over 7000'. The following day it was another dirt road trip over Sherman Hill including 5 miles on a UP service road where we ended up being chased across a 130' high embankment by a 2 mile long train, before meeting the rudest English photographer that we could find. A side trip to Denver then followed, including a visit to the HQ of the Great Western Railway, (in Loveland Colorado). The Denver tram system was very interesting and impressive, as were the many big yellow engines that seemed to appear wherever we went. After that it was back to Cheyenne where by good luck we were able to watch a 450 ton steam loco head west with a train weighing 2000 tons. Then it was back onto US30 to follow the UP to the largest marshalling yard in the world at North Platte. After crossing the Missouri at Omaha we had to stop at a level (grade) crossing while a remote controlled shunting loco worked the yard. In Iowa we discovered Thomas the tank engine in Boone, and also saw the last all electric freight line at Mason City. Then it was on across the Mississippi into Illinois where we discovered a covered bridge before

getting to De Kalb outside Chicago. We had a full day in Chicago riding the “El” and the electrified commuter routes and the next day said goodbye to the UP and picked up Jim and Ian at O’Hare.

This first part of the trip for Tony and me was a fantastic experience and really opened our eyes as to the vastness of the US and to many other facets of that huge and varied country. Election fever was in full swing with people being encouraged to vote for their Sheriffs, judges, school supervisors and State Senators as well as their President, Senators and Congressmen. Throughout it we were awed by the huge long trains that looked tiny in the landscapes but keep the country working. To see two double stacked container trains, each over one and a half miles long, racing each other westward out of one town was truly amazing when they were doing 70 mph by the time the tails of the trains passed us. The trains became a sort of drumbeat to the trip.

(For more about the trip and explanations of some of the phrases come and hear the talk in December; wait for the next News Sheet for part 2 of this story).



### *Season's Greetings*

Very shortly the festive season will be upon us and we trust you will have a joyful time over the next few weeks. News Sheet 172 should be issued in February, with notice of the Annual General Meeting and (possibly) documentation. The AGM is the chance to vote some “new blood” on to the Committee. Think about it now. Who would **you** like on the Committee? How about yourself?

Meanwhile, the Compliments of the Season to you all from the present incumbents,

*Ian, Stephen, Jamie, Tony, Jim, Mike & Malcolm*

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Contributions of news or articles for News Sheets are always welcome and may be submitted to the News Sheet co-ordinator, Malcolm Hindes, at 34 Moor Park Villas, Headingley, Leeds, LS6 4BZ, e-mail [malcolm.hindes@btinternet.com](mailto:malcolm.hindes@btinternet.com)  
All statements and comments are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent Society policy.

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