

# LEEDS TRANSPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## NEWS SHEET 183

NOVEMBER 2015



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

Meetings are held at Richmond Hill Community Club, Railway Street, Leeds, LS9 8HB, 1930 for 2000

- Mon. 9 Nov. **Railways at Night** Peter Holden  
Mon. 14 Dec. **Some Continental Photographs** from the camera of Roy Brook  
Mon. 11 Jan. **Members' slides and video** - Please bring along your own contribution  
Mon. 8 Feb. **Transport Cine Films** Malcolm Hindes

### OTHER LOCAL MEETINGS & COMING EVENTS

#### November

- Tue. 3 (MRT) **A little piece of this & a little bit of that** Martin Plumb & Ian Hodgson  
Thu. 12 (NGRS) **Czechoslovakia 2** Mike Swift  
Tue. 17 (LRTA) **Leeds Trams Remembered** Ian Dougill

#### December

- Tue. 1 (MRT) **Christmas Social Quiz** Team Smith  
Thu. 3 (NGRS) **Industrials on Two Continents** David Moores  
Tue. 15 (LRTA) **Tramways of Stockport** Paul Abell

#### January

- Tue. 5 (MRT) **Travels in Recent years in the UK** Ian Dobson  
Thu. 7 (NGRS) **10½" to Standard Gauge** J.H. Meredith  
Tue. 19 (LRTA) TBA Tony Wilson?

#### February

- Tue. 2 (MRT) TBA  
Thu. 4 (NGRS) **Narrow Gauge Potpourri** Peter Kirby  
Tue. 16 (LRTA) TBA

### Groups, Meeting Places & Times

- MRT** Middleton Railway Trust, The Engine House, Moor Road, Hunslet, 1930. No charge, refreshments on sale.  
**LRTA** Light Rail Transit Association, Committee Room No. 5, Civic Hall, 1900. collection £1.  
**NGRS** Narrow Gauge Railway Society, Yorkshire Area, The Epicentre, Meanwood Valley Urban Farm, 7.15 for 7.30. Collection £2. Refreshments (and fresh eggs!) on sale.  
**SLS** Samuel Ledgard Society. Next event is a film show evening in April - watch for details.

### LEEDS LAST TRAM DAY

**M.H.**

Remember the evening of Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> November? Closure of the Leeds Tram system? Well not quite; this was 2015, not 1959, and a grand day out at Crich for members of TMS, LRTA & TLRS to celebrate 60 years of the Tramway Museum Society. There were invited guests - Ian Dougill and Malcolm Hindes were there to represent the LTHS, along with representatives of various tramway systems and preservation groups. Also there (in their own right) were several other LTHS members - Charlie Watson, Chris Thornburn, John Holmes and Robin Oldfield to mention but four (apologies to all those missed out!).

Conscious of the date, and of the fact that Horsfield 180 (as 189) operated on that sorry day back in 1959, it was arranged that the car ran most of the day showing "18 CROSSGATES", and it was deemed that it would be the last car in service.

The weather decided not to play ball, and although there was rain earlier in the day (like 1959) it was fine when the final procession left Town End in the fading light around 4.00 p.m. However, fate took a hand. Liverpool 869 (aka Glasgow 1055) had suffered a mishap at Glory Mine and was marooned there. 180 was held at Wakebridge for a while, and the remaining trams returned to Town End, leaving 180 to complete the trip. By the time 180 was allowed to proceed to Glory Mine it was almost dark, and the return trip to Town End through the gloom to the welcoming street lights was most nostalgic.



## **SPOT THAT TRAM**

Many thanks to those who have contributed possible answers to the August collection of photos, particularly Dave Johnson and Eric Smith.



The first of these brought two quite different answers! Eric shared the opinion that it was York Road, adjacent to Temple View Road and Berking Avenue. However Dave is equally sure it is Burmantofts Street, just below the junction with Nippet Lane. We'll leave that for further discussion!



This shot of Regent 277 had nearly everybody foxxed. Working on a hunch, your Editor went out to Bramhope, to the junction of Leeds Road and Breary Lane. The tree on the corner has grown up a lot, but the houses are still just visible, confirming the location. But that raises another question - why?



The location of "Lance Corporal" 274 on 25 Hunslet, was identified unanimously as the junction of Hunslet Lane and Great Wilson Street, the railings on the right belonging to Hunslet "Special" School.



Likewise, unanimity on PD2/11 203, also in Hunslet, turning from Church Street into Balm Road.

Now for the last of Chris Spring's puzzle pictures, but they're all buses this time.



To start off, here is Leyland TS8 No.24, GNW 707, on the 45 route towards Wortley. There are tramlines in the road, but where is it?

[R. Marshall collection]



Regent 269 (GUA 794) looks to be on familiar ground, no prizes for guessing. Tramlines *and* overhead, plus a horse for good measure!

[Travel Lens Photographic]



Crossley 714 (MNW 714) inbound on the 68 route.  
Not so easy, this one, unless you happen to know  
which "Albion Inn" it is.

[R.F. Mack]



Finally an easy (?) one. Regent V 777 (WUA 777) on  
the 63 Circular.

[R.F. Mack]

#### **SUBSCRIPTIONS    A. Cowell, Hon. Treasurer**

The yearly £10.00 membership subscription was due on the 1st September 2015. If you haven't paid up yet, this will probably be your last News Sheet.

The postal address is: A.Cowell, 3 Windmill Rise, Aberford, LEEDS, LS25 3EW. If you require a receipt by return, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope, otherwise a receipt will be sent out via the News Sheet Alternatively, acknowledgement can be sent electronically via an e-mail. I would like to thank the members who have already renewed without any reminder. If you change your address, please send advice to the above address.

Members should note that details of membership are held on a data base. Anyone, should they so desire, can be removed from the list. The status as a member will, of course, remain.

#### **THE TRUTH IS OUT - DARLING ADMITS ALL**

Former UK Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary of State for Transport Alistair Darling has said lessons need to be learnt from mistakes made during the Edinburgh tram project. The 14km (8.7 mile) tramway eventually opened over a truncated route between York Place and Edinburgh Airport in

2014, significantly delayed and at £776m costing more than twice the original estimate.

Mr Darling, who stepped down as the UK Member of Parliament for Edinburgh South West at the country's 2015 General Election and was known for his distrust for tram schemes while in government, told *The Scotsman* newspaper:

**"I stopped most tram projects in England** because they all had the same features that the Edinburgh tram has - you start off with a price which is hopelessly unrealistic, you then discover nobody knows what's under the ground, and the whole thing has to be rethought".

In the interview, published in the newspaper on 29 April, Mr Darling added of the Edinburgh tramway: "Big projects are always full of mistakes and something went very wrong along the way here. You have to learn because there will be other big engineering projects in the future.

"And if the tram is to be extended, you wouldn't be forgiven if you didn't learn from the things that clearly went wrong this time."

#### **NOT THE SOCIETY OUTING TO NOTTINGHAM!**

**Malcolm Hindes**

No sooner had we had publicised the date of our proposed LTHS informal excursion to Nottingham on Saturday 17 October than the LRTA announced the date of their deferred visit - Sunday 18 October!

Sensing that some members (at least) would prefer this latter event, which came with the hint of a possible visit to Wilkinson St. depot, your Committee decided to postpone our trip to next Spring, so watch for the date. If anyone inadvertently went on the 17<sup>th</sup> and couldn't find us, we can only apologise.

The instructions were to meet at the Mercure Hotel, George Street (the historic George Hotel) 12.00 for a 12.30 start. The Lace Market tram stop at 12.00 was a scene reminiscent of the closure days, with hordes of camera-carrying anoraks photographing any and every tram that dared to appear, plus virtually anything else that moved.

A short walk to the hotel and the assembled throng then sat a good half hour waiting for the start, entertained with time-lapse videos of the Noel Street crossing relaying and placement of the new bridges. Eventually Andrew Braddock, LRTA Chairman, introduced Phil Hewitt of Nottingham Tramlink (the new operator), who gave a detailed presentation on the concession agreements which led to construction of the new lines. At 1.15 we broke for a hurried buffet lunch (sandwiches, salad & chips) as we had to leave by 1.50 to walk to Old Market Square for our special tram; Lace Market stop was not considered adequate for the 100 or so people involved.

Shortly after 2.00, Alstom Citadis car 217 appeared from the north, bearing "Special" on its indicator, and the party boarded. The first section traversed after the new Nottingham Station stop was the line to Clifton South. For operational reasons we had to halt at most of the stops, and members of the public were perplexed to find that the doors wouldn't open for them! After a photo break at Clifton South, the

return journey commenced, as far as Station Street where we used the old crossover to change back over to the southbound line.

Next came the long route west to Toton Lane where, for operational reasons, only a brief photo stop was possible before the return journey began.

By now the weather had turned to fine drizzle and we were held at Old Market Square because Control deemed that the rails on the steep Waverley Road section were too slippery for safety. Those who had trains to catch were advised to leave the tram and walk to the station. The NET representative on board left the tram several times to explain the delay to the growing crowd of would-be passengers, but eventually we set off again, observing at the High School stop the lorry-mounted pressure washer used to clean the rails. The limit of our journey was the third (middle) road at The Forest, after which we returned southwards, through the city centre and back over the Station Street crossover to enter the Nottingham Station stop wrong road, where the tour finished. Farewells were said, thanks expressed and the remaining participants departed homewards by tram, train or whatever means they chose.

#### **CHARLIE'S MEL'S COLUMN      Melvyn Reuben**

We've given Charlie a break this time but he will be back! Enter Mel:

#### **TECO STREETCAR, TAMPA BAY, FLORIDA**

Tampa Bay lies on the West Central Coast of Florida connected to the Gulf of Mexico. The Greater Tampa Bay area comprises over 4 million people. The first electric tram line started in the city in 1892 and spread its tentacles over the bay area. By 1920 the system was at its zenith, but with automobile ownership gathering momentum it was just a matter of time before ridership started to decline. The original trams were Birney Safety Cars but as the system began to contract many were scrapped. By 1946 most of the system had closed and trams were replaced by motor buses.

The Hillsborough Transit Authority (HART) was created in 1980 to provide public transport in Hillsborough County in which Tampa Bay is located. A proposal by Hillsborough County to provide an inner city tourist streetcar line in Tampa Bay was approved. HART formed a joint partnership with

Tampa Electric, construction began and by 2002 electric streetcars were back in Tampa running on a 3.86 km section connecting downtown Tampa through Channelside to the historical Ybor City. Tampa has a thriving cruise and convention industry and the line not only transports tourists but many workers involved in both businesses. A further extension of the line 0.54 km was opened in December 2010 connecting to the Convention Center. The system has eleven operating trams, nine modern replica Birney cars built by the Gomaco Trolley Company, Ida Grove, Iowa. One original Birney car has been restored and one open top replica open bench car known as "Breezer". The trams are painted in a yellow livery with red roofs and are bi-directional with two trolley poles.

There are 11 stations along the route with the termini at Centennial Park and Whiting; the depot and maintenance facility is on East 7th Avenue. The fares are quite reasonable by USA standards. Ybor City which the tram serves is a historic neighbourhood; from 1880 it was populated by thousands of immigrants from Cuba, Spain and Italy who worked in its numerous cigar factories. After years of neglect certain areas of the original neighbourhood have been redeveloped into an entertainment district with lots of bars, restaurants and night clubs. In 2008, 7th Avenue which the TECO runs along was recognised as one of the "10 Great Streets in America" and one of its restaurants "The Columbia" was named a top 50 all-American eating emporium.

I visited Tampa last December and thoroughly enjoyed riding the trams and exploring the line, the crews were very helpful and knowledgeable, the trams were kept in immaculate condition and the whole of the infrastructure was top class.

There are plans to extend the line further into downtown Tampa and with the continued success of the current line I can see no problem with the planners.

Finally if you are ever holidaying in Florida why not take a trip over to Tampa and ride the TECO? It's well worth a visit.

To find out more about Gomaco log on to their website:

[www.gamacotrolley.com/Resources/pages/trolleystyles.html](http://www.gamacotrolley.com/Resources/pages/trolleystyles.html)

#### *Season's Greetings*

Very shortly the festive season will be upon us and we trust you will have a joyous time over the next few weeks. News Sheet 184 should be out in February. Meanwhile, the Compliments of the Season to you all from us all,

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

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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