

London Bus Magazine

Spring 1987

Number 60



London Omnibus Traction Society



***Simply the best
for news on London's Buses***

write (enclosing an SAE) for more details to:-

The Membership Secretary

LOTS

Unit 37, Battersea Business Centre

103-109 Lavender Hill

London SW11 5QF

Back soon



The London Transport Photographic Library is being transferred to the London Transport Museum at Covent Garden. The present facility in the Advertising and Publicity Office at 55 Broadway will be closed by 31st March. The new Photo Library in the Museum will be opened after the completion of new offices currently under construction. It will not be possible to provide any public service until these new facilities are ready in the Autumn.

Watch this space for a further announcement!

London Bus Magazine

Editorial % 10 Greenfield Crescent, Patcham, Brighton BN1 8HJ

Subscriptions 62 Kingston Avenue, Cheam, Surrey SM3 9UF

CONTENTS SPRING 1987

LBM 60

Around & About	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Big Bang Buses!	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
London Transport Trolleybuses by Hugh Taylor						...	...	12
Notting Hill Nighters		...	...	...	...	...	...	47
The Friendly Buses	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	48

Front cover: The summer Sunday morning of 27th August 1961 witnessed 1477 on route 609 leaving Barnet Church for the long haul south to Moorgate. Note the absence of all pedestrian and motor traffic. *Hugh Taylor*

Back cover: We do not usually include tramway material, still less paintings, but could not resist this depiction of the Kingsway Tramway Subway by Malcolm Drabwell. Here E3 cars, 1992 and 1944 are seen on the 33 (West Norwood – Manor House) and 35 (Forest Hill – Archway), two of the last routes to penetrate north London. The subway itself was opened in February 1906.

EDITOR DAVID LEEFE

PRESS ASSISTANT BARRY SKINNER

REVIEW ASSISTANT MIKE HARRIS

PRODUCTION MANAGER EAMONN KENTELL

SUBSCRIPTIONS MANAGER DAVID CATTELL

ISSN 0140 8380



LBM is published quarterly by the London Omnibus Traction Society and appears during Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. No part of LBM may be reproduced without prior permission in writing. A limited amount of advertising space on transport related subjects is available. Advertising rates may be had on application to the Editor.

Articles and Photographs are always welcome, but photographs submitted cannot be returned unless a stamped addressed envelope is supplied. Negatives and transparencies are of no use. The Editor and Publisher do not necessarily agree with the opinions expressed in contributions.

Subscriptions Annual subscriptions to the London Bus Magazine are available at the rate of £8.00 post paid. Members of LOTS qualify for the post-free rate of £6.40. Details of Membership of LOTS can be obtained from the Subscriptions Manager.

Production LBM is filmset and printed by **KPC PRINT**
London and Ashford, Kent

Around & About



On 29th November the 228 and shortlived 61B were replaced by a circular service 228A/C. The letters stand for 'Anti-Clockwise': another of those 'clever wheezes' that probably only serve to confuse passengers. L34 was photographed in Eltham High Street two days after Christmas. R. J. Waterhouse

Minister delays new London Coach Terminal

LRT and its consultants have recommended to David Mitchell, Minister of State for Transport, that the major new Central London coach terminal should be developed at Paddington. However, the Minister has in the light of representations from the MP for Westminster North and Westminster Council's Planning and Development Committee, decided that "it would not be appropriate to take this matter forward by means of a Private Bill in this session of Parliament, nor am I persuaded that a single bus terminal is necessarily the right solution". He went on to say that he was considering an appropriate form of enquiry for the public airing of the respective arguments in favour of a single bus terminal or a number of smaller terminals.

Video cameras to combat hooliganism

In a further bid to reduce assaults on staff and vandalism on its vehicles, London Buses are to instal video cameras for a trial period on six buses – one in each of the six Bus Districts. This measure follows the fitting of anti-assault screens to drivers cabs on 3,500 OPO vehicles last summer which has already led to a marked reduction in assaults to drivers.

Bryan Gilbert, Personnel Manager (Operations), said "we want to try out the equipment on a variety of vehicles and routes to see how successful it is. The equipment will not be concealed on the bus – its presence will be a deterrent – but it will be robust enough to be vandal-resistant". The cost of the equipment has not been disclosed but each unit is said to involve "some thousands of pounds".

LRT Business Plan for 1987/88

Increased levels of service and further improvements in efficiency leading to a reduction of more than 20% in Government grants are among the key elements in London Regional Transport's annual Business Plan for 1987/88, published last December.

Bus travel increased by 4% during 1986 and is expected to hold steady during 1987/88. The overall level of service will be maintained with a modest increase in total bus mileage reflecting new service initiatives and the introduction of more high-frequency local routes using smaller buses. There will be a continuing review of bus services on an area-by-area basis with the aim of matching resources to passenger demand. The Plan emphasises, however, that little improvement in passengers' waiting times can be expected due to the constant problem of traffic congestion. Driver-only operation is expected to rise to 83% by March 1988 and an experimental electronic ticketing system to reduce passenger boarding times (as reported in LBM 58) will be introduced during 1987.

By March 1988, some 20% of LRT's bus services will be operated under contracts secured by competitive tender and they will continue to be carefully monitored to ensure reliability is maintained. Further Mobility services for the disabled are planned and if successful, all areas of Greater London will be on the Mobility bus network.

There will be further productivity measures resulting in cost reductions of 5% on both the buses and the Underground; similar reductions have already been achieved during the current financial year. Staff numbers are therefore expected to fall by a further 3,400 making an end of year total of 44,500. Revenue support from the government for day-to-day operations will be substantially reduced from the estimated figure of £92 million for the current year (1986/87) to £58 million in 1987/88. As a result, London's domestic and business ratepayers will be paying £36 million less (equivalent to 2p off the rates) towards the cost of running LRT.

London Country North East is so far the only one of the four companies to have produced its own livery, the first vehicles so treated being LR69 (seen here in Harlow on 22nd December) and SNB168. It is a light green (with a bluish tint) with white window surrounds and dark green skirting. R. J. Waterhouse



Chiswick's new role

As a consequence of Aldenham's closure (as reported in LBM 58) on 14th November 1986, the 20-acre site at Chiswick has undergone a major reorganisation costing in the region of £6 million. LRT's subsidiary company, Bus Engineering Ltd (BEL) "has had to move both physically and psychologically to achieve a commercial future" and as a result Chiswick not only now offers a comprehensive range of bus engineering facilities but is also able to handle repairs to commercial vehicles. Although LRT (and London buses) are expected to continue as BEL's biggest customer, the amount of work from this source has declined in recent years; hence the need to obtain work from elsewhere.

Already, BEL is recognised as a service dealer for both Opbase and Volkswagen and also holds servicing contracts for Butec, Econocruise, DAF Diesel and Webasto products. During 1986, Chiswick's growing number of customers reached 155 and BEL's managers are hopeful that their company will become established as a major engineering supplier throughout the PSV industry.

New and Secondhand vehicles for London Country companies

New minibuses and midibuses together with second-hand Atlanteans have been delivered in recent months to both London Country North West and London Country South West consisting of:-

London Country Bus North West Ltd

MBS 13-19 Freight-Rover Sherpa – Dormobile B16F.

Operating from Watford (GR) on routes W10 and W30, these vehicles are rented pending the arrival of 21-seat Ivecos.

MBD 20-24 Dodge – Reeve-Burgess B25F bodywork.

In Hampstead Hoppa livery operating on LRT tendered service 268. These vehicles have partially replaced the MBMs (Mercedes), some of which in turn have been transferred to London Country (South West).

AN 800-807 Leyland Atlantean AN68/1R – Park Royal H75F bodywork, ex-Greater Manchester, new in 1972; operating initially from Two Waters (HH) mainly on routes 347, 348 and the H group of services.

London Country Bus South West Ltd

S 1-4, 6-8. Freight-Rover Sherpa – Dormobile B16F; operating initially from Guildford (GF) on routes G7, G8, 525, 535, 545 and Addlestone (WY) on routes 538 and 539.

Those Sherpas based at GF were expected to be transferred to operate new Horsham minibus services H1, H2 and H3, the vehicles in turn being replaced at GF by MBMs transferred from London Country North West.

AN 357-363 Atlantean AN68/1R – Northern Counties H75F bodywork, Ex-Greater Manchester, new in 1974. Entered service on LRT tendered route 110 on 24th January 1987, the first regular double-deck operation from Addlestone (WY) since 1972.

London Midibuses loaned to Eastbourne

On 27th October 1986 four of the Iveco-Robin Hood midibuses originally intended for the Orpington network of services, made their operating debut on Eastbourne's "Red Carpet" services. The vehicles (RH 14, 19, 20 & 22) were loaned by London Buses Selkent District to Eastbourne Buses pending the arrival of four East Lancs bodied Dodges which were eventually delivered to Eastbourne at the end of the year. Whilst in service, the RHs were in full "Red Carpet" livery of biscuit cream and blue window surrounds with red carpets fitted inside.

Revised bus network planned for Bexleyheath and Thamesmead

Another bus network consultation document, similar in style to the one covering Kingston, has been issued by LRT. The proposals include five new midibus routes (provisionally numbered L1-L5 and centred on Bexleyheath) and four new trunk routes (T1-T4) using conventional-sized buses operating in and around Bexleyheath, Thamesmead and surrounding areas. Sixteen existing routes, including five operated by London Country South East, are affected by the proposals. The changes are planned for implementation in November.



Brighton & Hove have recently been evaluating the use of conductors and to that end, RM 1721 was loaned by London Buses for two weeks in January. It was captured on film at Hove Station on its first day of service dirty from the inclement record breaking weather in January, Eamon Kentell.

The effects of deregulation are evident in this picture as LS46 (NB) on LBL route 306 passes AN126 on LCSW route 406 at Tolworth Broadway. The two routes competed between Kingston and Epsom with LBL running two buses per hour and LCSW three.

Two of the latter's departures each hour from Kingston for example were within four and six minutes of those of the former. We report without comment that the LBL service was withdrawn from 7th February and that LCSW has reduced its fares on the

406. R. S. Godfrey



AN801 exemplifies one of the eight ex-GMPTE Atlanteans purchased by LCNW and allocated at Hemel Hempstead and Watford. The inadequate blind is typical. A rather better job in that respect has been done by LCSW on AN361 (ex-GMPTE 7504) which is turning from Powder Mill Lane, Whitton into Hanworth Road on the first day of their operation of LRT 110 on 24th January. Two of the LCSW vehicles were initially operating in GMT livery. R. S. Godfrey/R. J. Waterhouse



Route 24 and the politicians

The conversion of route 24 (Hampstead Heath – Pimlico) to OPO last October prompted one of the route's regular passengers, the Rt Hon Michael Foot MP, to raise the matter in the House of Commons at Transport Secretary's Question Time. The following is from Hansard, 1st December 1986:-

Mr Foot: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the shambles that his transport policy is causing on the No. 24 bus, which is supposed to bring me to the House of Commons from Hampstead? Is the principle that he applies that it does not matter what happens to the passengers as long as a few people are thrown out of jobs?

Mr Moore (Secretary of State for Transport): The right hon Gentleman has of course, written to me on that subject. I do not accept his criticism, and should like to remind him of two facts. He keeps drawing my attention to the operation of buses by one person. That is a matter for LRT, but it should be remembered that staff on crew buses are three times more likely to be assaulted than those on one-person buses. The right hon. Gentleman is a fair man, and he should remember that.

The prospective Conservative candidate for Holborn and St Pancras, Peter Luff, had also complained about route 24's conversion and received a letter from Mr Telford Beasley, Chairman and Managing Director of London Buses, claiming that the autumn dispute by garage engineering staff was more to blame for the route's deterioration than its conversion to OPO.

Opposite page & below. The newly introduced 310A service between Hertford and Enfield is operated by LS vehicles on Monday-Friday whilst Saturday sees Ms such as 342 (PB) caught at Cheshunt on 3rd January. Note the upper case intermediate lettering and oddly sited route number. The LSs are, as always, beset with the problem of how to fit in the 'fourth track': solutions have included the one adopted here on LS112 at Hoddesden Clock Tower; also placing the suffix inside the '0'; and omitting it altogether. R. J. Waterhouse/R. Upcraft



LRPC Annual Report 1985/86

In the introduction to the London Regional Passengers' Committee Annual Report for the year ending 31st March 1986 (published last November), the year under review is optimistically described as "one which retrospectively may go down in history as having seen the reversal of the long spiral of decline in London's public transport". Whilst accepting that this assessment is open to argument, the LRPC in its role as the statutory consumer watchdog body for LRT (and also for BR in London) feel that "there are some real signs which suggest that the optimism which such a statement evinces may not be misplaced". The continuing success at the Travelcard and Capitalcard is cited as one of the major 'signs' in contributing towards the increased level of patronage.

The LRPC is well aware, however, that there are still many problems to be resolved as is borne out by the many letters of complaint received each week. The Committee reports that "without doubt the single most worrying and oft repeated cry has been in relation to the reliability of the bus service". The report continues that "in the majority of cases LRT cannot themselves be blamed for the unreliability of their services because the buses have got caught up in traffic congestion" and rather gloomily concludes that "unless and until the admittedly thorny problem of traffic congestion is tackled by Government – both central and local – and by the Police, the bus service will never be and can never be really reliable".

Of all the issues considered by the LRPC "none have raised more passion amongst members than that of One Person Operation of London's buses". Members were "divided right down the middle". The argument of those in favour of OPO hinged on why London should be different from the rest of the country and European capitals in retaining crew operation on some routes. The opponents of OPO (the majority of LRPC members) however regard London as different from other cities due to its greater traffic congestion and they point out that OPO buses themselves contribute to that congestion because of longer boarding times. The LRPC is therefore to continue its previously declared intention of opposing any further OPO conversions.



Tendered Services – Recent developments

Various developments have recently taken place in respect of LRT tendered services.

The ten service contracts announced last October most of which are now in operation, are as follows:-

Route C2 Regents Park–Parliament Hill Fields	London Country North West operation from 14th March 1987 using Optare midibuses in red LRT livery. This service replaced the northern section of route 53. Possible livening of garage journeys to and from London Country North West's new operating base at Muswell Hill, Coppetts Road.
Route 4 Archway–Waterloo	London Buses contracted operation began on 7th February 1987.
Route 42 Aldgate–Camberwell Green	London Country South East operation from 7th February 1987 using SNBs based initially at Catford (NL) but subsequently moved to the former Samuelson's garage at Victoria.
Route 62 Barking–Gants Hill	Ensign operation from 17th January 1987 using DMs, based at Purfleet.
Route 110 Twickenham–Cranford	London Country South West operation from 24th January 1987 using ex-Greater Manchester ANs based at Addlestone (WY).
Route 153 Archway–Islington, Angel	London Country North West operation scheduled to commence on 4th April 1987 using midibuses possibly in a livery similar to that on route 268.
Route 173 Stratford–Becontree Heath	Grey-Green (Dix Travel Ltd) operation from 28th February using ex-South Yorkshire Fleetlines based at Dagenham.
Route 196 Norwood Junction–Brixton – Islington, Angel	London Cityrama operation from 7th February 1987 using ex-South Yorkshire Fleetlines based at Nine Elms. The contract for this service had originally been awarded to London Country South East but owing to the closure of the National London garage at Catford (NL), the contract was subsequently transferred to London Cityrama.
Route 289 Elmers End–Purley	London Country South West operation from 7th February 1987 using SNBs based at Chelsham (CM). This service was originally to have been operated by London Country South East.
Route 297 Willesden–Ealing Broadway	London Buses contracted operation began on 7th March 1987.

In addition, the operational base of LRT tendered route P4 (Lewisham–Brixton) which is worked by London Country South East, was transferred from Catford (NL) to the former Samuelsons garage in Victoria.

Several of the services affected by the revised bus network planned for the Kingston area (as reported in LBM 59) were put out to competitive tender last December. Taking into account some changes to the original proposals, the tendered services consist of:-

- Route K1 New Malden – Malden Manor – Sunray Estate – Tolworth – Surbiton. No Sunday service.
 Route K2 Hook, Cox Lane – Tolworth – Surbiton – Kingston. No Sunday service.
 Route 65 Ealing – Richmond – Kingston.
 Route 71 Richmond – Kingston – Surbiton – Copt Gliders Estate – Chessington.
 Route 85 Kingston – Putney Bridge Station.
 Route 131 West Molesey – Kingston – Wimbledon.
 Route 213 Kingston – Belmont/Sutton/St Helier/West Croydon.

Routes 152, 216, 281 and 285 will continue to be operated by London Buses Ltd but will be revised as part of the network scheme. The changes are planned to take place during May 1987.

Operation of tendered service 359 was transferred from London Country North East to Eastern National Citybus on 25th January 1987. However the service was revised to operate on Mondays to Saturdays between Manor House and Waltham Cross only, through journeys operating to Hammond Street on Sundays only. This change of plan stems from London Country North East's introduction of a new commercial route, numbered 383, between Waltham Cross and Hammond Street on Mondays to Saturdays, resulting in the withdrawal of financial support by Hertfordshire County Council for the continued operation of the 359 to Hammond Street on the days concerned.

The following correction should be made to the bottom caption of p5 of LBM 59:

Route 174 was of course *not* "withdrawn on Monday-Friday (except for a peak hour service between Dagenham New Road and Fords Foundry)", and "reborn on Saturdays as an express route between Harold Hill and Romford". Although the projections from Dagenham New Road and Fords were withdrawn outside the Monday-Friday peaks and a Saturdays only express service introduced between the points shown, the basic service from Noak Hill–Dagenham (Kent Avenue) remains. The error stems from my writing captions in the early hours of the morning and my apologies are duly offered!–Ed.

Left: Such a picture really speaks for itself. Fully blinded (even at the rear), RT3232 performed a one-day stand on route 145 on 20th December. The conductor used a Bell Punch machine and did not have to carry any electronic ticketing equipment about his person! R. J. Waterhouse

Right: It is not only at the Trocadero that Wonders Never Cease, especially with the interesting happenings brought about by Ensign in its tendered operations in the Barking area. Here ex-DMS 353 works the tendered 62 on 17th January, the first day of its operation as such. R. J. Waterhouse



Big Bang Buses!

Later this year we shall be producing a main feature on the new (and not so new) operators who have made their debut in the Country area since deregulation. As a foretaste there follows a small selection from the camera of Richard Godfrey showing contrasting views of what is going on.



Four new Plaxton bodied Volvos complete with informative and legible blind displays have been introduced by Frank Harris Coaches of Grays on services won on tender from Essex County Council. The last of the four (registration-wise) is about to turn right at Chadwell St Mary toward Tilbury on Sunday-only service 379 on 7th December.



Jubilee Coaches got off to an uncertain start on the tenders won in Stevenage from LCNE. They were initially unable to take up some of their awards leading for a time to a bizarre situation where LCNE appeared on some routes to be competing (as the commercial operator) against itself (as the tender operator in place of Jubilee)! Ex-WMPTE 4278 operates SB9 (Bus Station-Lister Hospital) for Jubilee on 2nd January.



Above left: Sampsons Coaches now operate the entire network of local routes in Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield (prefixed G) and all town services in Harlow on Sundays (T1-5). On 23rd November an ECW bodied Fleetline (ex-SYPTE) was seen on the T5 with a simple but adequate blind display. Above

right: Considerable inroads into LCSW territory in the Epsom area have been made by Epsom Coaches, an already established operator. This operator now has four commercial services and several more on contract from Surrey County Council. The latter include route 551 from Epsom to Dorking operated here by a Mercedes minibus.

The route slipboards by the entrance are a standard feature on the company's vehicles.



Right: Reigate local services 447 and 487 became 547 and 587 when the contract was awarded to Tillingbourne by Surrey County Council. A Robin Hood bodied Iveco with the marketing name 'Hobbit' has just passed the LCSW headquarters and garage at Reigate on 13th December.



Right: The 532 (Guildford-Bookham Station) is one of three tendered services operated by Blue Saloon. The route number would appear to derive from the former LCBS service between these points. The Bristol LH caught here on 28th October bears the marketing name 'Hoppa-Shoppa'.

London Transport Trolleybuses

A personal view by Hugh Taylor

I was asked to produce this feature for LBM as a tribute to the London trolleybus system which closed twenty five years ago this year. In it I give a précis of the system's history illustrated with photographs that have been chosen as representative of the network, although I have attempted to show much of the unusual that was to be found together with items that were seldom photographed. As far as I am aware none of the photos have been published before in any transport book. I have included a vehicle in every lxx of fleet numbers, featured each lettered class and rebodied type, and shown every stage of the conversion scheme.

Trolleybuses were introduced to London on 16th May 1931 at Fulwell depot under the auspices of the London United Tramways. When the London Passenger Transport Board took over public transport in the capital in 1933, they embarked on a tram to trolleybus conversion programme which ran from 1935 – 1940. The War halted the conversion of the rest of the tram system to trolleybus operation. During hostilities 18 trolleys were loaned from Bournemouth Corporation, 61 vehicles had to be rebodied, 15 were completely destroyed and two other were burnt out but not as a result of enemy action. Three routes, 651, 692, 694 were abandoned in their infancy and the 612 was withdrawn in the first stage of the tram to bus conversion scheme in 1950. Route 565 was withdrawn in 1956 and the 664, 683 and 695 were withdrawn in January 1959 as a repercussion of the 1958 bus strike.

Trolleybuses ran on many major routes both in the suburbs and to fringe termini in Central London. They were very much part of the everyday scene: a 645 slamming down from Canons Park, a 630 dashing across Mitcham Common, a Q1 on the 657 sweeping through Hounslow and a 699 bouncing over the cobbles of Stratford Broadway being typical memories. They were speedy movers of large crowds, efficient, well maintained and in most cases well turned out (Highgate and West Ham being the worst offenders). The fleet totalled a maximum of 1891 vehicles and apart from temporary depots at Chiswick and Acton was housed in a total of 21 depots.

There was much about trolleybuses that was indigenous: battery workings, pole swaps, power failures and wire breaks, short workings round obscure back streets, conductors on the frog handles, not to mention the bamboo pole carried beneath the vehicle to retrieve flaying trolley booms when a dewirement occurred. Very occasionally a vehicle with low batteries would be stuck on a dead section and the passengers would have to get out and push! If a bamboo pole was not being carried when a dewirement occurred everybody simply had to wait until a pole could be obtained from another vehicle.

The flashes from the overhead wires were peculiar to the trolleybus as was the wallop on the roof when the poles were pulled down. Yet another aspect of 'trolleybuscape' were the T-badges of the crews and the MSC-plates carried on the rear platform of the vehicles.

Major trolleybus junctions were to be found at locations such as Ilford Broadway, 'Nags Head' Holloway, Gardiners Corner Aldgate and 'Bakers Arms' Leyton; and not to be forgotten was the 'Trolleybus Café' at Tramway Avenue, Edmonton. It was possible, of course, to travel by wire considerable distances from, say, Sutton to Waltham Cross or from Uxbridge to Barking.

The much delayed trolleybus to bus conversion scheme commenced with Bexleyheath and Carshalton depots on 4th March 1959 and led to the demise of some of the oldest vehicles still running.

Lea Bridge and Clapton were dealt with at stage 2, and stages 3 – 6 saw trolleybuses off from East London when they were withdrawn from Ilford, Bow, Poplar, Walthamstow and West Ham.

Stages 2 – 6 of the scheme included the later tram to trolleybus conversions and saw the transfer of newer stock westwards to replace older vehicles at depots which had been the subjects of earlier tram conversions.

Stages 7 and 8 saw trolleybuses removed from Hammersmith and Hanwell depots. The conversion programme was scheduled to conclude on 31st January 1962 at Colindale, Stonebridge and Finchley (stage 13), with post war Q1s delivered between 1948

914 at Bounds Green illustrates the early days of trolleybus operation. Note the use of an offside route holder, the silver roof, single running plate and the same size via point as terminal point on the destination blind. Photomatic



– 1952 being retained at Fulwell and Isleworth until they were life expired in about 1970. However the Q1s were sold to Spain in 1961 and a fourteenth stage was virtually tagged on for 23rd May 1962. Therefore stage 9 at Highgate saw most of this depot's vehicles going to Fulwell to replace Q1s with the last of this class being replaced at stage 10 at Fulwell and Isleworth by further older vehicles.

Stage 10 was to bring in its wake yet another new date for the end of London's trolleybuses. Route 629 was brought forward two stages to stage 10 due to a one-way scheme at Tottenham Court Road; this enabled route 609 to be converted at stage 12 instead of stage 13, and the whole of stage 13 was brought forward four weeks to 3rd January 1962. The third new date now became 9th May 1962, two weeks earlier than had been planned, though 16th May – 31 years to the day, would surely have been more appropriate.

Stages 10 – 12 saw the removal of trolleybuses from North London (at Highgate finally, Stamford Hill, Edmonton, Wood Green and partly at Finchley) with stage 13 taking trolleybuses away from North West London (at Finchley, Colindale and Stonebridge). Even stages 12 and 13 saw some vehicles being replaced by others in better condition. Therefore at the commencement of traffic on 3rd January 1962 trolleybuses were left just at the mighty Fulwell and little Isleworth which were to be the subject of stage 14.

The conversions had taken place in mixed weather with stages 1 and 10, for example, occurring in torrential rain and stage 13 in appallingly freezing and

snowy conditions. Stage 6 was hit by gremlins on the last day but one, when a trolleybus pulled down the overhead at the Victoria and Albert Docks terminus. A wooden section insulator had to be replaced at Brentford a couple of days or so before the end of trolleybus operation in the capital, as many trolleybuses were suffering serious dewirements there. The last day of all however was blessed with glorious sunny weather.

At 11.46 pm on 8th May 1962 trolleybus 1521, packed to overflowing and bedecked with bunting left Wimbledon Town Hall. Through Malden and Kingston people lined the route to wave her and London trolleybuses goodbye. As Fulwell was approached the crowds got deeper. 1431 had 'hung back' though eventually she had to move on. This latter vehicle had incidentally been scheduled for the last running into Fulwell (FW5) that night but did not in fact do so when 1521 took over FW5 at Hampton Court at 11.06 pm with 1431 running in front as an extra. 1521 was by now the only London trolleybus left on the road, the glory (if that was what it was) being hers; the wires belonged to her alone as Isleworth's last trolley, 1274, had already 'run in'.

Pyjama clad people were standing on the walls of their houses as 1521 approached. At first she could not make it so great was the crowd, but eventually she reached the depot forecourt at 1.30 am, one hour late.

At about 1.45 am her twin trolley arms were pulled down from the wires in Fulwell yard. Trolleybus operation in London had come to an end and history had been made.



Top: 1779 was the first Q1 to be delivered – on 31st January 1948. This was LT's official photograph at Hampton Court. Note the unusual destination blind which was blue on black. London Transport. Above left: Wandsworth depot operated route 612. 474 stands at Battersea terminus, and still displays a window mounted 612 route holder on the nearside; a five line side blind without route number is in use. Fred Ivey. Above right: An anomaly that existed was that Hammersmith depot had a 612 aperture on its Charlton produced side blinds for 1950/1 even though it was not the operating depot and the route was withdrawn on 30th September 1950. Although the HB 612 display was never used it had nevertheless been wound up in this view of 1176 obtained on 16th July 1960. Hugh Taylor

At the same time as route 612 was withdrawn so was the workman's fare facility. To indicate when such fares were available, a special blind display was carried in the rear destination box. 1094 displays 'WORKMAN' at Ponders End on 25th March 1961 to illustrate the facility, although it had been withdrawn over ten years earlier! Hugh Taylor



In the early 1950's a short lived experiment saw the loss of the front bullseye transfer; the vehicles looked very bare and the practice soon ceased. 432 travels over the tramlines near Woolwich. W. J. Haynes



808B passes tram 559 at Beresford Square, Woolwich during the last week of the London tram operation. The tram is using the positive wire of the trolleybus overhead. Hugh Taylor collection



6th July 1952 – the day after the trams had gone. 98C was rebodied and lengthened after war damage and is also seen at Woolwich. Note the use of Charlton linen blinds. Alan Cross





To many readers this rearward facing view will be familiar. 1473 is at Hampton Court on 7th April 1962. Alan Cross



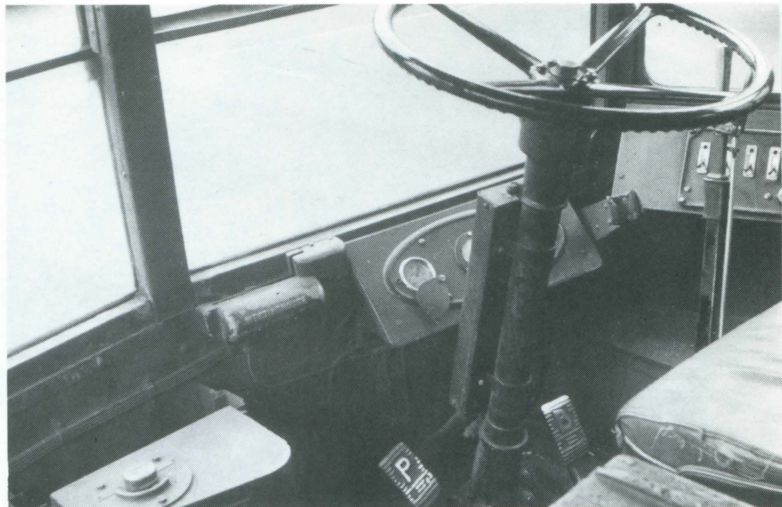
The top deck of 618 on 2nd February 1960, its last day. Note the RT moquette. John Gillham



The pleasing appearance of the trolleybus moquette is brought out in this photograph of the lower saloon of 1779 taken in Fulwell depot yard when the vehicle was brand new. London Transport



1333 is seen partly dismantled in the dismantling area of Colindale scrapyard. The cab door has already gone enabling us to see the location of the fleet number in the cab. Tony Belton



The driving controls of 1473 at Hampton Court on 7th April 1962. Note that the power pedal is operated with the left foot. The instrument in the lower left hand corner is the trolley-to-battery changeover switch. Alan Cross

Between 1956-1958 Ilford depot was allocated three standard vehicles to cover for SA overhauls. 1399 is at Ilford Broadway followed by SA1 1728 originally bound for Durban. Fred Ivey





LETCHFORD GARDENS

The turning point in this Harlesden thoroughfare was shown in three different ways on destination blinds. Top: 192 looks in fine fettle during its twilight days. It appears to be performing an extremely short short working from Craven Park Circle to College Park, barely a mile away. Fred Ivey

Centre: 705 on loan from Hanwell to Stonebridge for football traffic is using a Stonebridge destination blind though displaying a 607 blind in the side box. It is seen turning at Wembley as a stadium EXTRA. Fred Ivey

Bottom: 528 at West Croydon displays 'NR WILLESDEN JUNCTION', the most obscure of the destination points for this terminal. Hugh Taylor collection





Left: 'The Bell', Walthamstow was the setting for a vast amount of overhead due, mainly to depot access wiring to WW. 972 takes up service from that depot on a 625 short working to Tottenham Hale. Tony Belton

Below: Major junctions hosted great weights of overhead: that at 'Bakers Arms' Leyton weighed about three tons for the whole layout (excluding Lea Bridge Depot). Here 1406 waits beneath a large proportion of that weight. As the conversion programme spread, redundant junctions were removed at such locations as this, making life easier for remaining routes. C Carter



Right: Route 649A ran only on Sundays – the only route to do so. 1201 is now preserved by the London Trolleybus Preservation Society at Carlton Colville, but is seen here at Liverpool Street. Note the two banks of flutes in the valance which were to be found on some of the K class vehicles. Photomatic





CONTRASTS

1385B of class N1B became a vehicle with a chassis; it was originally a chassisless L3 but its bomb damage brought about a completely new vehicle in essence. It is seen here (Top) in Plaistow High Street. Cobble narrow roads were very much part of the East End. Note the specially adapted lengthy feeder arrangements here in contrast to the normal bow bracket arm. Pamlin Prints. The dinginess of Pancras Road is exemplified by 1540 (Centre). Two sets of bridge troughing can be seen. Tony Belton. Suburbia provides the backdrop for L2 1373 at Wembley (Bottom). Four of this class worked at Stonebridge for a number of months in 1961. 1373 performs a short working at 'STADIUM Wembley Hill Road'. Peter Moore



BANK HOLIDAY WORKINGS

Bank Holiday trolleybus services produced many extra vehicles; there were also numerous strange workings two of which are featured here. Those masters of trolleybus lore Messrs Belton and Ivey, were in operation in the Hammersmith and Shepherds Bush area on Whit Sunday, 6th June 1960 to record:- Top: Stonebridge depot ceased regular workings on route 628 on 6th January 1959 but continued to work this route on Bank Holidays. 1614 is photographed on the last such occasion and is seen here at Shepherds Bush Green. The unusual blind display for Craven Park is worthy of note; it was one of only four amplifications on trolleybus blinds. Fred Ivey. Hanwell workings on route 667 were confined to Bank Holidays. They were to display 657 when working Hampton Court to Shepherds Bush (this being a supplementary service) and 667 in the reverse direction. As the crews worked this route infrequently, various permutations were to be seen as shown by (Centre) 707 displaying the wrong route number at Shepherds Bush and (Bottom) 1846 doing likewise at Youngs Corner. Both photos Tony Belton





Above left: Tours of the system were few and far between. On 29th April 1962, 1528 the highest numbered vehicle in service was used, and at Brentford (Half Acre) had to traverse the loop the wrong way round due to roadworks. The bamboo pole's position on the vehicle is for the conductors easy access as he needed to use it three times in quick succession. 1528 was one of five L3s that were fitted with sliding windows on the offside and nearside. Hugh Taylor. Above: London Transport seemed to have a "its never too late to learn" policy when it came to driver training; one man in fact passed his test at Stonebridge on 1st January 1962, drove trolleybuses for one day and on 3rd January had to report for bus training. The last test was carried out in March 1962 when Conductor Terry Shaw of Isleworth depot passed out; therefore his MSC (Metropolitan Stage Carriage) badge, T14876, was the last such badge to be issued. 1372 was one of a number of vehicles in the fleet which could easily be adapted for training use in that there was a removable glass screen behind the driver. The vehicle is seen here on 21st January 1961 at "Nags Head", Holloway in this guise. Even so most of Hugh Taylor Highgate's routes were withdrawn on 31st January!

Left: One of the routes to be withdrawn following the 1958 bus strike was the 664 which was jointly operated by Stonebridge and Colindale depots. Colindale based 381 is photographed taking the right hand set of points at Craven Park Junction. Alan Cross



Trolleybuses continued to be overhauled at Fulwell works despite their imminent sale to Spain - 1768 being the last, when it was outshopped on 20th February 1961. Here 1821 is captured by the camera in process of its last overhaul. Tony Belton

The smaller depots really kept their vehicles in pristine condition, particularly Lea Bridge and Isleworth. 1143 receives loving attention at Isleworth on 7th April 1962 during the very last phase of trolleybus operation in London.
Hugh Taylor

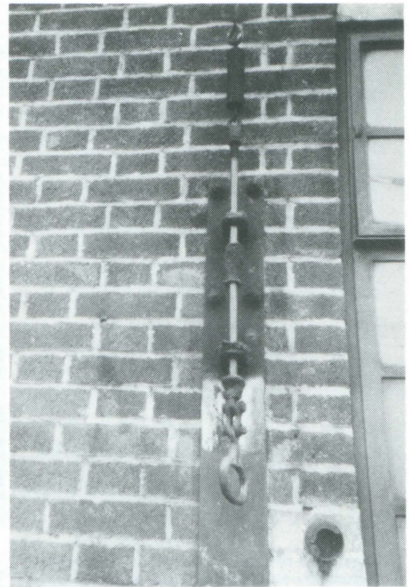


Many depots had traversers which could move a vehicle the length of the depot and then turn it around. Although against regulations, these two operations usually happened simultaneously. 1116 is seen here on Wood Green's traverser; this vehicle (as shown later) was to survive until the last day of trolleybuses in the metropolis.
Peter Moore



Below right: The Metropolitan Police required all London trams and trolleybuses to carry an MSC plate. On trolleybuses this was carried above the disposal part of the used ticket box on the platform. Each plate would normally stay with the vehicle for its entire life. 8333N belonged to 816. The police were very particular about these plates being returned but those known to have survived belonged to 74, 260, 796 and 919, although 1537's plate was noted still in position when the vehicle had been cut down to just the lower deck in Colindale scrapyard. Tony Belton. Below: The carbons on the trolley heads had to be changed at intervals and here at Isleworth depot trolleybus fitter Ron Hayward performs this task on 1060 whilst on the traverser. Hugh Taylor





Overhead

Above left: The conductor of 1626 pulls the semi-automatic frog at Craven Park on the last day of the 662, 2nd January 1962. Hugh Taylor. Above: The manual frog at Collindale depot was unusual in that it was mounted on the wall of the traffic office. This photo was taken on 18th February 1962. Hugh Taylor. Far left: The hand frog at Edgware was typical of those to be found on the system. Each traction pole was numbered: the A-suffix signifies that this was an additional pole and would have been planted when the extension to Canons Park was being constructed. The photo was taken on 11th February 1962 some six weeks after abandonment. Hugh Taylor. Left: Conductress Costello pulls the semi-automatic frog at Cricklewood Broadway for vehicle 1666, the last passenger trolleybus to use this equipment, (which as Stonebridge's last trolleybus closed Stage 13), in the very early hours of 3rd January 1962. Hugh Taylor. Below left: The pulling of the auto-frog handle would change a signal light in a box mounted on a traction standard ahead of the junction. This light can be seen in the photo, and indicates to the driver that the frog is set for route 662 to Paddington. The location is Scrubs Lane. Roy Makewell. Below: Still at Scrubbs Lane, tower wagon 1598 attends to the overhead as 1598 passes by. Terry Cooper



780 cautiously negotiates a broken spacer bar at Mitcham under the watchful eyes of both the driver and an inspector (Gestapo!).

780 an H1 was allocated to Hammersmith depot for a few months in 1960, having been forwarded from the Rolling Stock Engineers fleet of spare vehicles. Tony Belton



1317 passes beneath the North London Line at Kentish Town West. As can be seen a special gantry had to be used to support the wires here. 1054, incidentally, finished its days wedged underneath the bridge. The guiding lights for the driver can be observed under the bridge. Fred Ivey



It was rare for a trolleybus to be towed in; however it had been necessary for 1278 seen here entering Wood Green depot. Peter Moore





Top: New housing contrasts with old at Plaistow in the East End. 971's trolley poles have just taken the wires for the turning point at Plaistow Station. 933, sporting Charlton blinds in the rear boxes, had become a stable-mate to 971 at Walthamstow for its last few months of life having been at Finchley previously. It had gained a reprieve through being placed in the spares float. Fred Ivey. Centre: 1543B has to make a circuitous journey to reach Mornington Crescent Station from Highgate depot. As no right-hand wire was available at "Nags Head", Warlters Road had to be traversed. Tony Belton. Bottom: 298 demonstrates the old style of wire grille over the rear wheels which were to be found only on vehicles of the C class. As 298 approaches Craven Park, its front adverts denote that it is the summer of 1959 and that its withdrawal is imminent. Fred Ivey



FLOODING



Top: Some of Carshalton depot's B class were put out of action for two weeks in September 1958 due to their motors being damaged by being driven through floodwater. Coasting and run back brake vehicles were required for Anerley Hill and as plenty of this type of vehicle were at Highgate, three of their J3s were sent to Carshalton for cover. 1050 is illustrated at West Croydon. The driver will incidentally be performing an unusual task at each end of the journey in that it is he who will be changing the front destination blind on such vehicles as opposed to the conductor. As these vehicles were longer than the B1s they were driven on a voluntary basis. Fred Ivey. Centre left: The rain came down and the floods came up – at Malden on 7th August 1960 but they did not seem to bother Q1s though. 1845 assaults the water without detriment. Tony Belton. Centre Right: The water got deeper so 1847 just goes through the middle of it all. Tony Belton. Bottom: When the situation became impassable though, the vehicles turned to avoid the floodwater, and 1809 demonstrates how versatile a trolleybus could become. This almost incredible manoeuvre would only be performed by the most skilled of trolleybus drivers; this driver has managed to manipulate his vehicle to turn the other way, by using just one set of wires. Tony Belton



STAGE 1: Only three reversers existed on the system. One of these at Crayford, Princes Road was regularly used, in this case by 784B just before the first stage of the conversion process. Fred Ivey



STAGE 2: 1261 on route 677 in earlier years. Alan Cross



STAGE 3: Hainault Street at Ilford was wired as late as 1958 due to the rebuilding of Ilford Station Bridge. 1759, an SA3 originally bound for Johannesburg, enters this thoroughfare. The bamboo pole hanging from the traction standard, which has no finial, is for easy access and indicates that dewirements often occurred there. C. Carter

STAGE 3: The last route extension was that of the 663 over the 695 to Chadwell Heath on 7th January 1959. This extension, in operation for only seven and a half months, is illustrated by 1579 at Manor Park. Peter Moore



STAGE 4: 1508 on peak hour route 569 has just left North Woolwich. This type of overhead bracket support was quite common in East London. Peter Moore



STAGE 5: Rebodyed 621A on route 669 at Stratford Broadway one rainy day. Note how the configuration of sliding windows compares with those on 1528 shown previously. Alan Cross





Left STAGE 6: 1516 on route 697 show its trolley gear to good advantage in this view at Custom House, Fred Ivey. Above: The most celebrated of all London's trolleybuses was undoubtedly vehicle 662. Inaugurating trolleybus operation in the County Borough of West Ham on 6th June 1937, this vehicle was retained at West Ham depot for a further twelve weeks' service after its sister E class vehicles had gone for scrap, so that it could be the last trolleybus back into the depot – which indeed it was in the very early hours of 27th April 1960. It is seen here "dressed like a queen" on the depot forecourt in the afternoon of 26th April 1960. Tony Belton. Below: STAGE 7: Only J3 and L1 class vehicles were allowed to work route 611 for Highgate Hill required the use of coasting run back braked vehicles. There was no need to use other types as more than enough of these vehicles were allocated to Highgate depot. Occasionally, when spare vehicles of these classes were working on other Highgate routes and another vehicle was required for the 611, a different class would have to be used, although they were not allowed any further than Archway Station. Here 1454 demonstrates this situation. Tony Belton

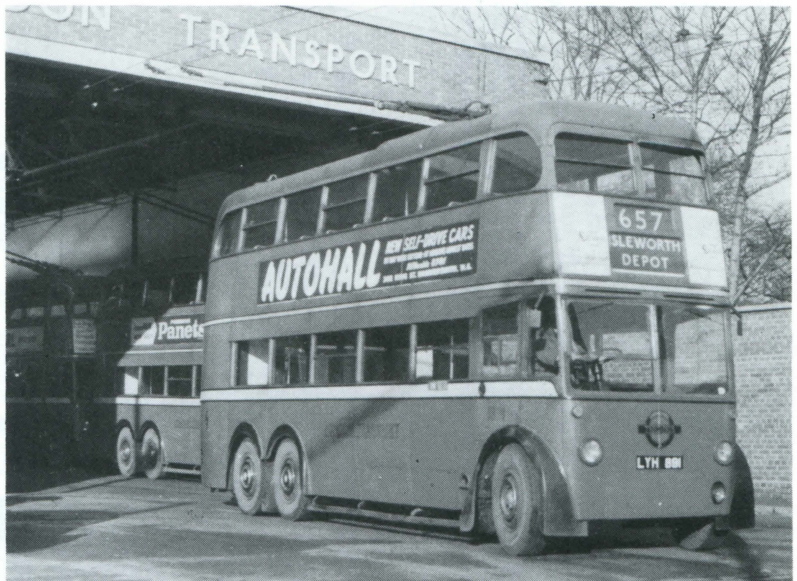


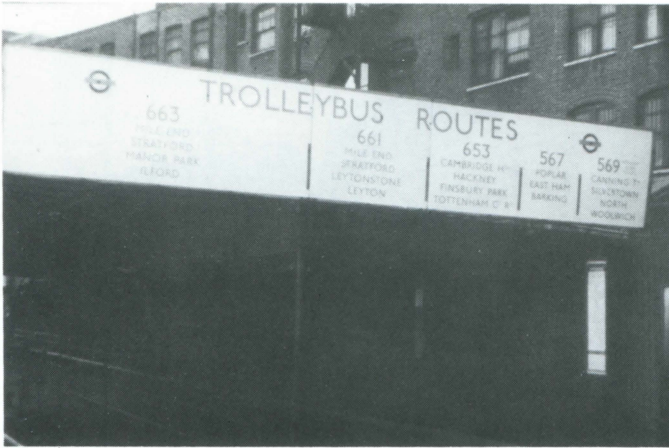
STAGE 8: (Top) Due to service cuts in the early fifties a number of Q1s became surplus to the requirements of Fulwell and Isleworth and they were put to good use on Hanwell's 607 route. 1765 and 1772 both turn short at Hillingdon Church; the destination blind indicated a shuttle working, but had been composed misleadingly, for these two locations are only two stops apart – at the top and bottom of Hillingdon Hill. The blind display should not have included the word "AND" and should have had STRATFORD BDG in brackets. Tony Belton



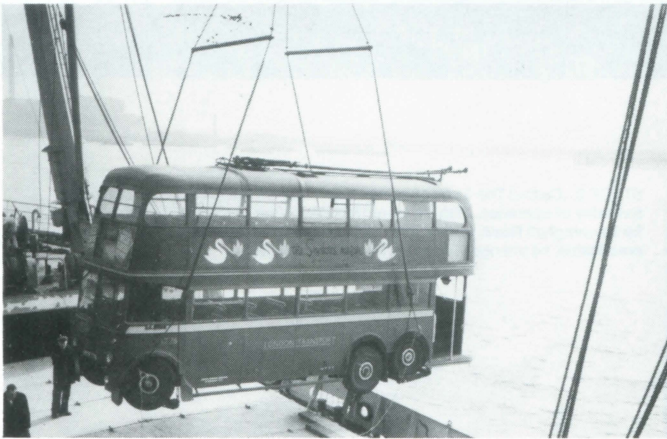
STAGE 9: (Centre) The trunk 653 route had many curtailment points. On the last Saturday of operation, 28th January 1961, the driver of 1335 had overshot the points for Kenninghall Road. Rather than reverse over the frogwork, which was quite practicable, he changes the poles by hand. Hugh Taylor

Bottom: Premature withdrawals at this stage of the proceedings comprised most of the Q1 class. No photographic survey of the system would be complete without a shot of the highest numbered vehicle in stock. 1891 was delivered on 1st January 1953 and was withdrawn only eight years and one month later exactly. It is seen here leaving its home at Isleworth depot for an afternoon peak duty. Note the white socks on the trolley booms – an embellishment which some of the depots gave to their vehicles. Fred Ivey





Stage 9 saw the final use of this sign at Aldgate Trolleybus Station. In earlier days the full display embraced details for five routes. Tony Belton.



125 of the Q1s were shipped to Spain in batches in 1961. They were sold for £500 which included loading the vehicles on the boats. 1776 is lowered aboard its means of transit to Spain at Dagenham Dock in February 1961. Unfortunately the last time it was to draw power was when it had arrived at Aldgate earlier that month (prior to storage at Poplar) as this vehicle was used as a source of spares at Pontevedra. Tony Belton

1768 was originally set aside for preservation. However a major fault occurred on 1784 (which was repaired before its sale to Spain) and 1768 was relicensed to Isleworth on 1st March 1961. With the strange feeling of route 657 blinds inside her, a gleaming 1768 passes 1789 in Chiswick High Road. She was at Isleworth for eight weeks but never gained an 'IH' code. Tony Belton



STAGE 10: (Top) The frog had not returned to its rightful position after a vehicle had short worked into Finsbury Park Station turning loop on 15th April 1961. The driver of 1237 would have been completely unaware of this, and the inevitable dewirement occurred. This view at first sight suggests that the conductor would be unable to retrieve the trolley arms without the aid of a second bamboo pole; but perseverance and possibly experience enabled him to rewire the vehicle with the implement in his hand. Hugh Taylor



Bottom: A few of Highgate's trolleybuses carried route blinds with details for routes 537, 637, 671 – tram replacement routes which never ran. 1575 was one such vehicle, and it led the photographer a merry dance in his attempts to capture these 'routes' on film. On the last opportunity to do so, 25th April 1961, they were wound up at Tottenham Court Road on the very last afternoon of 1575's stay at HT (it then ran to depot as a staff cut). A co-operative crew enabled the three routes to be photographed and route 671 is illustrated here. Hugh Taylor





**NAGS HEAD – EARLY EVENING TUESDAY
25TH APRIL 1961**

The photographer spent some time at this location, not only getting wet, but producing these perfectly exposed photographs; he is quoted as considering it a profitable exercise!

Top: 1468 (which was to become Finchley's last trolleybus) on the 609 pauses whilst 1548 on Highgate's 627 crosses on the last day that the full layout will be in use. The main north to south wire will be made redundant when 1263, as the last trolleybus to Tottenham Court Road, uses it later that evening. 1468 and 1548 will meet again though, as the latter is to be transferred to Finchley that night. Centre: Trolleybuses being taken away to storage lines at West London depots were being driven in many instances by their own staff; though Hanwell men for example, had not driven trolleys for some time. Coupled with this was the fact that these men did not know the wires and went via Nags Head instead of the shorter routing via Wood Green. Nags Head proved too much for some of them. 1697 got lost and started to proceed towards Tottenham Court Road. It was retrieved by two frantic inspectors, and they are seen here helping to reverse 1697 into Warlters Road so that it can gain the correct line of route. Bottom: 1715 just ran out of wire!! All photos Peter Moore



The remaining Q1s were withdrawn on 25th April 1961 and the batch of twelve that were bound for Zaragoza were all driven to Shoreditch on their current tax discs (the only ones not to use trade plates). They were removed from Fulwell with indecent haste on 27th and 28th April. Here at 7.05 pm on the 27th, 1837 passes through Craven Park. The driver of 1643 has timed his stop for the frog pull to the inch, and waits for his conductor to pull the frog so that this 660 can return home.

Fred Ivey



STAGE 11: The 'Trolley Bus Café' (previously the 'Tramway Café') at the top of Tramway Avenue, Edmonton, forms the background for 1689 on its journey to Dalston Stoke. Dalston Junction was an unofficial turn for Edmonton and Stamford Hill vehicles on the Kingsland Road routes; it was executed by using redundant 677 wires and the 641 Balls Pond Road turn at Dove Road. 'DALSTON STOKE' was displayed on Edmonton blinds by using the bottom half of the 'DOWNHAM ROAD DALSTON' and the top half of the 'STOKE NEWINGTON' display. The halfway blind was appropriate as it was halfway between these two places. Stamford Hill always showed 'DALSTON SHACKLEWELL LANE' which was before Dalston Junction and although they could have used a more appropriate half and half blind display which would have shown 'KINGSLAND ROAD DALSTON' this did not in fact occur. Tony Belton



The versatile trolleybus, 1310 had been parked out of use in Clapton Common and needed to gain the 647 wires at Stamford Hill on 1st July 1961. The use of traction batteries and trolleyboomwork in the form of two bamboo poles enabled 1310 to work an unwired curve. Hugh Taylor





Above left: STAGE 11 Some shortworkings saw spasmodic use, and that at Downham Road, Kingsland Road was rarely used. On the last day, 18th July 1961, however, 1214 was curtailed there; because of its infrequent use it entailed a pole swap instead of a frog. This was an awkward procedure here due to fouling the zebra crossing, there being only a short section of adjacent loop wire. In fact on this occasion, which was the last ever use of these wires, the second pole would not swing over and the photographer had to complete the swap as the driver moved 1214 up a few feet. The list of approved turning points for this particular location restricted use here from 6.00–9.20 am and 6.00–8.00 pm though this photograph was taken outside these hours. Hugh Taylor. Above right: STAGE 12: 1515 departs from Finchley depot on the afternoon of the last day, 7th November 1961. Transferred PR/FY it now moves FY/FW and will work until the last day of London Trolleybus operation. 1515 halts at the top of Woodberry Grove as a ferryman goes for the frog. Finchley sent many of their vehicles away with their blinds correctly showing blank and 'Private'. At other depots they either took the blinds out or left them in with various permutations showing. Tony Belton. Below: It's the last of trolleybuses operating at Moorgate, but this does not deter the driver of 1263 from losing his poles in Finsbury Square. Peter Moore



Late Evening 7th November 1961

Below left: STAGE 12 saw off the last trolleybuses from the City at Holborn Circus and Moorgate. The last trolleybus of all to leave the City, and without ceremony was 1456, and it is seen here on the final northbound run at East Finchley Station. Tony Belton. Below right: Drama at Wood Green at ten minutes to midnight. Being taken away from Wood Green depot by men unfamiliar with the overhead layout, 1352 (left) had suffered a dewirement which involved the trolleyhead detaching itself from the boom; from the position of the head caught on the span wires, the frog could not have been pulled. 1353, WN's newest trolleybus and probably a coincidental allocation, was to be the last trolleybus into depot that night. When Jolly Butchers Hill junction was reached, Driver Shellick, proud to be driving the last trolleybus into his depot, was heard to say "Looks like we're not going to make Winchmore Hill, lads" as the northbound wires were blocked. A bit of quick thinking by the few remaining trolleybusmen on the scene saw the poles being swung to the free southbound wires. The obstruction bypassed, the photo shows the conductor of 1353 putting the negative arm back on the northbound wire whilst trolleybus driver Rider rushes in with a bamboo pole swiped from goodness knows where, to deal similarly with the positive arm. Thus . . . Bottom: Winchmore Hill was gained. Emblazoned with school chalk by the author (young lad with back to the camera to right of vehicle) 1353 waits for departure time. Only at West Ham, Isleworth and Fulwell were large crowds seen riding on last trolleybuses to their termini, and as can be seen from this photo there weren't many of us there! It was only when a last vehicle approached its depot that the crowds turned out, and even then most of them were staff who had come down from their Farewell Trolleybus Party. At 12.12 am on 8th November 1961, 1353, the last trolleybus of stage 12, left Winchmore Hill for home, depot and oblivion. Both photos Peter Moore





STAGE 13: Only two battery turns were on destination blinds in later years – Walthamstow, Sinnott Road and Holly Park, the latter being the most widely used of battery turns. It was not added to blinds until 1960 – before this vehicles would show a misleading Golders Green Station. Here 1638 reverses into Fitalan Road which was the proper procedure, Holly Park itself being just an obscure side road on the other side of Ballards Lane. Its prominence on blinds was therefore strange. Terry Cooper



An impressive time exposure of 1581 waiting at Canons Park on the 645 route, a short while before the end. The glistening wires – a sign of regular use, are noteworthy. Terry Cooper

Below left: The North Acton turn was unusual in that it required a double pole swap when turning from the north. Due to power failure at Hendon on 23rd December 1961, 1570 turned here and is seen on the second of the pole swaps. That the driver is performing this task is due to his having a conductress. Hugh Taylor. Below: 1558 finds itself disabled due to a puncture in Askew Road on 9th December 1961. Hugh Taylor





Above left: Stage 13 was known as "snowy thirteen" and could not have occurred in more atrocious weather conditions. It was as if all the elements wanted this stage to be something to be remembered. The biggest snowfall for many many years fell in the early hours of the last day of 1961, a Sunday. The density of snow is shown in this photograph of 1584 on route 645 taken in the afternoon at Edgware, which had just entered service from Colindale depot (hence no snow on the vehicle and 666 on the blind). It has already been curtailed; the absence of passengers, traffic and pedestrians, and the state of the roads, shows just how heavy this fall was. Freezing cold Hugh Taylor

THEIR LAST NEW YEAR'S DAY

Right: New Year's Day 1962 saw all LT services thrown into chaos including the remaining trolleybus routes. After the snowfall and a night's non-use, the wires were dirty, and this photo of 1469 approaching Canons Park shows a spark, the result of bad-contact. To obtain such a split second photo of this occurrence was not a matter of timing but pure luck! Freezing colder Hugh Taylor. Above right: Vehicles were losing half a journey due to the road conditions. On this day Cricklewood, St Gabriel's Church saw more short working trolleybuses than it did in a week of scheduled turns. 1647 on the 'treble six' overtakes 1564 on the same service but in the siding. Next day 1564 was to be the last passenger trolleybus to enter Colindale depot. Frozen solid Hugh Taylor



**THE DARKEST DAY – TUESDAY 8TH MAY
1962
THE FINAL STAGE – STAGE FOURTEEN**

Top: Driver Shanny of Isleworth told the author that he was going to dewire his trolleybus on that sad last day. On the journey from Shepherds Bush Green with 1116 he came out of Youngs Corner but avoiding the manhole cover, this being the drivers' guide for the correct angle for the poles to go through the junction. They stayed on. So he whipped round the Chiswick flyover (a notorious dewirement spot) like a bullet out of a gun barrel; but although 1116's poles bucked and swayed they clung to the wires like glue. He hit all the section insulators and frogs that he could to no avail yet Isleworth depot, 1116's destination, was not far distant. So he just smashed through the frog at Busch Corner and sent the poles into a tree. The photo shows how bent a pole can be but still be able to continue in service. Shanny looks on proudly as his conductor replaces the arms; Isleworth, faithful and meticulous to the end, straightened that arm on the last day, even though they could have put her to the side out of service. So, Shanny if you're still out there, your sins of that day are now in print! Hugh Taylor. Centre: The run from Hampton Court to Kingston Bridge on the 604 was something of a speed track. Nothing gives the impression that this is the trolleybuses' last day. Terry Cooper. Bottom: At Stage 14 though, the public did come out to say "goodbye trolleybus". Here "class 2B" of Teddington Public Schools line the pavement as 1521, in the charge of driver Tuttlebury, takes part in the ceremonial proceedings of the last afternoon. London Transport





Top: 1521 was preceded by No 1 which had been brought out of Clapham Museum to take part in the afternoon's ceremony with the big wigs. No 1 approaches its destination of Kingston with a police escort. 1521 pokes its nose in at the rear. London Transport



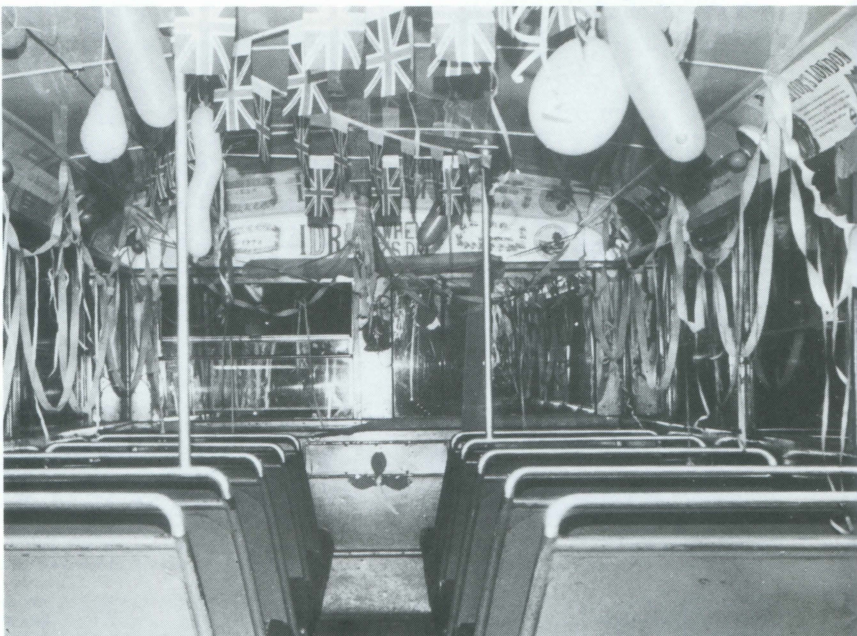
Left: Just before this draft was typed, evidence came to light showing just how close 1521 came to not making it as London's last trolleybus. Whilst being brought out of FW shed for its afternoon ceremonial run, it suffered a bad dewirement resulting in the positive boom being badly bent. As its special "last trolleybus" adverts were already fixed, the boom had to be straightened. Surely this would be the last time that the boom straighteners would be used BUT The last call out, 1057 had just taken up service from Isleworth as dusk approached, but suffered a dewirement under Isleworth Station Bridge. This was probably due to the negative arm being wrongly tensioned as this boom had had to be straightened following a dewirement which had occurred the previous day. The boom had been dealt with then, and this dewirement meant 1057 being attended to on successive days. On 7th May it had been repaired in the depot but on 8th May the Cub wagon had to be called out to do the necessary. Hugh Taylor

TWELVE SEVENTY FOUR

Only three depots decorated their trolleybuses to any large extent, these being West Ham, Fulwell and Isleworth. The best dressed "last trolleybus" was unquestionably Isleworth's, 1274, which in fact was the last Leyland trolleybus to operate in Britain, was put aside about a fortnight before the end, and gradually became dressed for the last run. She is seen here in Isleworth depot on the last evening, awaiting her moment of glory. Peter Moore

Centre left: "I Hate to say" starts the plaque on the back of 1274. There is even a union jack on a new bamboo pole. Hugh Taylor

Centre right: Beat that, Fulwell – and they couldn't! 1274 really did look good. Peter Moore



Bottom: 1496 was the last 605 from Wimbledon, and its entry into Fulwell depot was in complete contrast to the last 604 (1521) with scarcely a soul on board at the stop before the depot. Peter Moore





1521, using some of 622's decorations which had come via Edmonton, finally edges itself into the gates of Fulwell depot to become the very last London trolleybus of all. The placard being held aloft is all too true. People are standing on walls, and the author has his head out of the front window – he would like to meet again the chap who is on his right in this photograph. 1521 was chosen to be the last trolleybus, it is believed, because it was the most recently overhauled surviving vehicle, this having been done at West Ham on 24th July 1959. Surrey Comet

The placard on the rear platform window says "The End" – and it is. 1521 nudges into Fulwell depot in the early hours of 9th May 1962. Peter Moore



The last crew. Driver West and Conductor Gadsby crewed 1521 that night and therefore their T-badges were the last in use. These badges were issued by the Metropolitan Police to tram and trolleybus staff. London Transport

Scraping

George Cohen won the contract for dismantling the trolleybuses, along with the overhead and its associated equipment. The old tram scrapyard at Penhall Road, Charlton was going to fulfil the same purpose for trolleybuses. As there were local objections, particularly from a worried furniture factory it was only used for a few months in 1959 when the trolleybus conversion began. Its simultaneous use with a site on the old Hendon Tram Overhaul Works at the rear of Colindale trolleybus depot, enabled the backlog of vehicles which had built up before the conversion scheme to be dealt with effectively. The site at Colindale meant that trolleybuses could make their own way to hell fire. Well over half of them went to Colindale scrapyard or the adjacent depot for storage, from where they were shunted into the scrapyard under their own power. Each vehicle was sold to Cohens for £106-15s-0d. Top: The oldest trolleybus in service at the start of the conversion programme was 65, and it is photographed leaving Carshalton depot for Colindale shortly after conversion day. The non-use of trade plates was most unusual on such journeys and indicates that on this occasion the current tax disc was used. Hugh Taylor collection. Middle: Other members of the fleet were towed by Cohen's wagons. Here 1736 heads to the furnace along the Edgware Road by Staples Corner. Fred Ivey. Below right: **DIE TROLLEYBUS DIE.** One of Mr Cohen's employees make a start on 419C at Charlton. Someone might have at least put up the correct route blind of 696 for the destination shown. George Cohen. Below left: Over she goes. 472 bites the dust – almost literally – at Charlton. Tony Belton





The desolation and desperation of Colindale, a name to be reckoned with for London trolleybuses. 851's poles seem to cry for help, as she with others, including an SA type, await the torch in 1960. The last vehicle to be broken up was 1653 in September 1962. Fred Ivey



A few fires occurred at Colindale, the worst occurring in August 1960 when a number of vehicles were completely burnt out. The firemen seem to be enjoying themselves in this photo. Hendon and Mill Times



The wires are partly cut at Colindale as another of Mr Cohen's employees prepares to make the next cut, on 10th March 1962. Hugh Taylor



Evaders of Colindale
Top: 796 was specially photographed before its withdrawal prior to becoming part of the Paris Transport Museum Collection. Here she heads for Woodford at speed, passing the Ferry Boat Inn. Transferred BX/WW her stay at the latter depot lasted only eight months as she was withdrawn in November 1959.

London Transport

Bottom: 260 was labelled "THE CHOSEN ONE" by London Transport and was to have represented London's standard trolleybus in their museum collection. It was later replaced by 1253 which was deemed to be in a more original condition. 260 was saved literally at the last moment from being scrapped by the intervention of Messrs Belton and Ivey, who rescued it (in fact Cohen's men had to be stopped from hitching it to their wagon at Clapham). 260 had passed the scrapyards gates many times in its career, and its shave with these gates was far too close. Now in preservation it is displayed at the LTPS museum premises at Carlton Colville. 260 was last overhauled on 17th January 1958 and was withdrawn on 18th August 1959, thus still being in good condition. It is seen here near Craven Park shortly before its withdrawal from service. Fred Ivey



I would particularly like to thank my three most longstanding friends, Peter Moore, Tony Belton and Fred Ivey for the use of their photos; and I would not wish to forget the friendship extended to me by many of the staff at numerous depots, and in particular Driver Rider and Conductor Feirghley at Wood Green, the maintenance staff at Colindale, and both the operating and maintenance staff at Isleworth

(which was virtually home to me every Saturday from January – May 1962). Both their co-operation and their accommodation of my London 'trolleybussing' those many years ago are still highly valued. Anyone finding themselves featured in this article is invited to re-establish contact with me at 20 Hillside Drive, Edgware, Middlesex; any other correspondence arising from the article should be sent to the Editor.

Notting Hill Nighters

On the night of Monday 25th August 1986 London Buses provided a number of special night services in anticipation of the numbers of people wishing to get home after the annual Notting Hill Carnival. In the event the dreadful weather throughout the day and evening must have dampened some of the enthusiasm for staying out late, and the buses carried very few passengers. In addition to an extensive number of extras on routes N18 and N89, four other special routes ran, all six services being sponsored by Red Stripe Lager who allowed free travel on the buses concerned. The special one-night only routes were: N12 from Shepherd's Bush to Dulwich; N36 from Harrow Road to Lewisham; N50 from Harrow Road to West Norwood; and N73 from Shepherd's Bush to Tottenham. Special blinds were made by Aldenham for all the routes although the N36 was not fitted with them.



Above: On the stand at Dulwich (Plough) are M907 from Shepherd's Bush Garage, and later, T1021 from Peckham Garage. In the windscreen of T1021 can be seen the red and pink sign saying "Free Red Stripe Night Route". Paul Carpenter

Below left: The N50 number was used for Harrow Road to West Norwood service despite the fact that it followed very little of the usual N50 route. South of Victoria buses followed the N2, and the terminus at West Norwood was actually at Norwood Garage. The "WEST NORWOOD" destination is not normally found on any other service. M1253 is seen waiting outside its home garage. Paul Carpenter. Below right: The N73 followed the Bayswater Road to Marble Arch, and then daytime route 73 to Tottenham Garage, although it was surprising to find that it was worked by Wood Green Garage. WN's M548 is seen standing at Tottenham Green ready for its run out of service back to Shepherd's Bush and its next trip. Paul Carpenter



The Friendly Buses



At least we are not the only ones to coin silly names for minibuses! They may not be Routemasters but they are certainly becoming the masters of an increasing number of routes, of which a small selection follows.

The MBMs on tendered route 268 have now been replaced by LCNW with 25-seat Dodges classified MBD. The somewhat boxy style of their Reebur bodywork is apparent in this view of MBD20 at Finchley Road Station on 21st December. R. J. Waterhouse

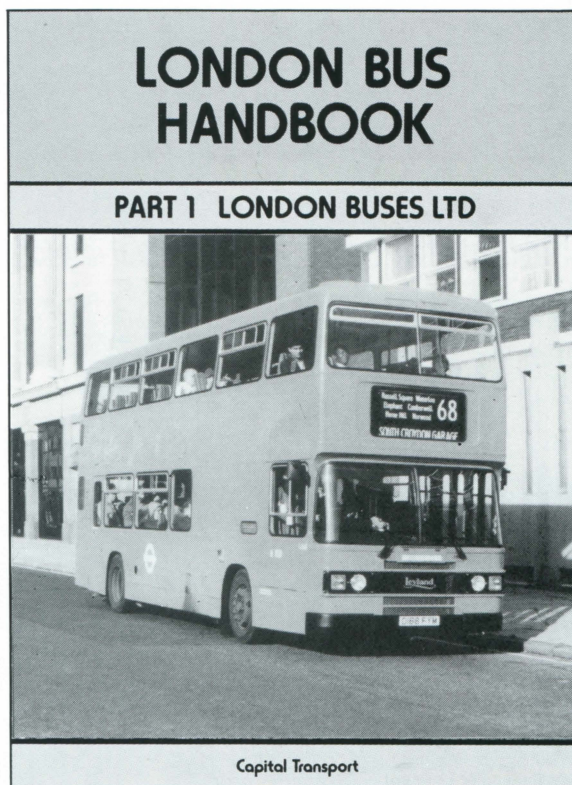


LCSW has been awarded the Tuesday and Friday services to Blackheath and Farley Green previously operated by Tillingbourne. On the first day of service (28th October) Sherpa minibus S6 is seen at Dorking Road, Chilworth heading for Farley Green and showing the new Surrey County Council route number 545. The inscription "Minibus Service" on the bonnet does seem rather superfluous! R. S. Godfrey



Two minibus routes are operated in Watford by LCNW under contract using Sherpas. MBS16 is about to cross Exchange Road on route W30 which links the Town Centre with the new Business Park in West Watford during the morning, evening and lunchtime peaks. The Watford minibus scheme is notable for having avoided the use of a brand name. R. J. Waterhouse

New from Capital Transport



This year the **London Bus Handbook** gains a sister volume dealing with the London Country companies and with LRT-contract independents. **Part 1 (London Buses Ltd)** is the familiar volume updated to 1st January 1987 and is published mid-March. **Part 2 (Independents)** is correct to the 7th February changes and will be published mid-April. Full fleet listings are included. Each book has 96 pages and is priced at £3.95.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED

Major Bus Operators The Midlands The new edition of this title is correct to 1st November and reflects the many changes that have taken place in the fleets dealt with since the previous book. Stevensons joins the list of companies included; also covered are West Midlands Travel, the Midland Red companies, Trent, PMT, East Midland, Derby, Nottingham, Leicester and Chesterfield. 128pp, £4.95.

Capital Transport books can be ordered through any bookshop, many transport societies, or post-free direct from Capital Transport, 38 Long Elmes, Harrow Weald, Middlesex HA3 5JL



£1.80