



# SHELVOKE & DREWRY ENTHUSIASTS' CLUB

## NEWSLETTER

Volume 2. Issue No. 31.

Autumn 2018.

### From the Editor.

In this issue we have reports of vehicles which surprisingly have survived including a recent restoration, we look back to World War II and the part SD played in producing items for the war effort. We also carry the usual news items.

Brian Carpenter Editor 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018.



What more could a cub scout wish for an a sunny summer's evening? In July Chris Shelly Houghton and Terry Prince took two of their Shelvoke SPV fire appliances to their local cub scout pack's "wet night". Water and two fire engines – memories that will last a very long time I imagine.

On the weekend of 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> July again they took two of their SD's to the Fire Service Preservation Group's 50th anniversary show at Gaydon, **YHV 187 T** was presented with the trophy for Best Preserved Fire Engine. The trophy is proudly displayed in the photo bottom left. Congratulations on this award.



Two of Peter Johnston's fleet of preserved SD's took part in the Monalty road run on the 12<sup>th</sup> August. There's more about **GJD 12 N** overleaf.

## SNAPSHOTS FROM THE LIFE OF GJD 121 N



It's hardly possible to believe that five of these six photos are of the same chassis and cab. Top left is an earlier version of one of several TN's that SD developed for BP to transport central heating oil in central London. Kaleidoscope of Shelvoke & Drewry states that with its narrow 6' 6" width the little tanker could go virtually wherever a taxi could. Built in 1974 **GJD121N** will have been very similar.

The photo top centre shows the tanker being used as a fuel bowser in the mid to late 1980's by Cambridgeshire based Premier Travel coaches. Their coaches were parked some way from the company's main garage and the little tanker transported diesel fuel to them. We next find the tanker in a very sorry state and up for sale. Michael Cooper from Maybole in Ayrshire, Scotland, purchased it and in 2008 it re-appears in the livery of the Burgh of Maybole with a replica Chelsea type body. Photo bottom left.

Later the vehicle passed into the hands of Peter Johnston of McCreath Taylor (N.I.) who are based in Lisburn. The photo bottom centre shows the vehicle with additional sign writing when it became part of Peter's growing fleet of preserved SD vehicles.

Peter Johnston and his son, David, had taken over McCreath Taylor in 1999 and the company for the last 30 years has operated from their purpose-built premises in Lisburn. They supply on hire: Scarab Sweepers, Hook Loaders, Skip Loaders, Pedestrian operated Sweepers and Refuse Collection Vehicles.

McCreath Taylor & Co. Ltd. was formed in 1906 in Glasgow and also operated in Dublin, Belfast and London.

The company established a depot in Belfast in 1925 and around that time became agents for Shelvoke & Drewry. They were also agents for S&D in Scotland. But the company were also tar importers and Peter Johnston has already restored a tar boiler from the early 1900's.

Peter wanted the ex-BP tanker to reflect this part of the company's history and he has truly done it in style. Once again James McAleer and others have done a magnificent restoration and in mid-August the vehicle had its first public outing.

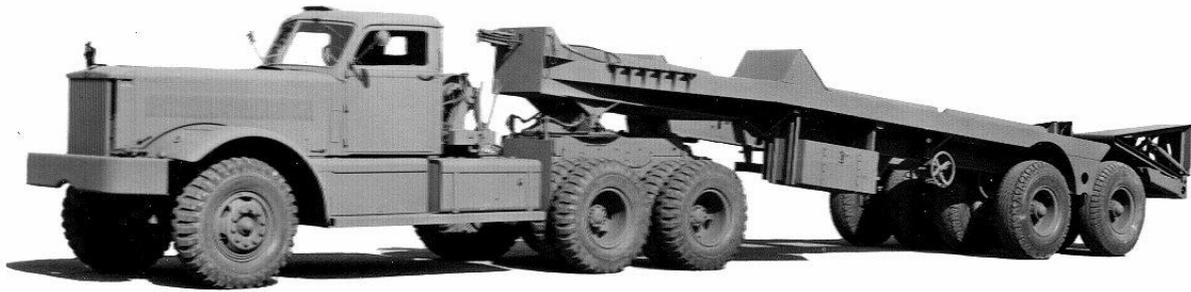


The smartest SD cab ever?



The tanker even looks lovely from behind.

## DIAMONDS TO THE RESCUE.

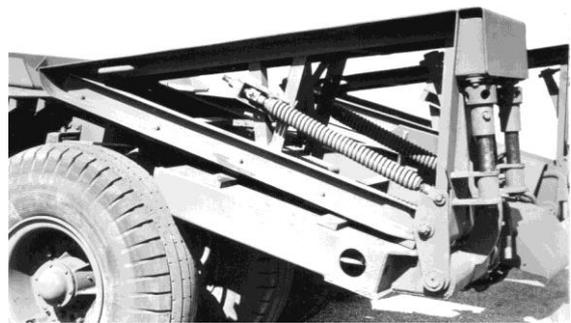


In the early years of the Second World War the British army had a severe shortage of tank transporter vehicles. These were based on the Scammell Pioneer 30 ton semi-trailer tank transporter or the Albion CX24S but the latter was found by the War Office to be unreliable. As Scammell were unable to increase production they turned to the U.S.A.'s Diamond T based M19 tank transporter. But this consisted of a separate tractor with a drawbar trailer. The War Office's preference for a semi-trailer was that with that configuration the weight of the load is transferred to the driving wheels eliminating the need for a ballast load on the tractor unit.

Late in 1942 Shelvoke & Drewry were asked to explore the possibility of converting the Diamond T to create a semi-trailer tank transporter using the Scammell trailer. Often people are surprised that the company that produced the somewhat eccentric SD Freighter had the expertise for such an enterprise, but in fact the Freighter was an ingenious design which demanded a high level of engineering skill from the company. By December 1942 S&D had produced a hybrid tank transporter with a Diamond T tractor unit and the unmodified Scammell trailer. Tested against the Scammell Pioneer the SD modification acquitted itself well. The ballast box had been removed from the Diamond T and a simple adaptation carried the Scammell ball joint trailer coupling just ahead of the bogie centre line. 100 examples of the tank transporter were ordered from S&D and the company designed a semi-trailer which follows the Scammell design but also has elements of the contemporary Dyson 40 ton drawbar trailer.

The major difference was in the treatment of the loading ramps. In the Scammell design these were raised and lowered by a hand operated winch. Talking to me in 2004 the late Vic Negus, who was an SD apprentice in those

War years could vividly remember the astonishment of the War Office officials when one man stepped forward and lowered the ramps which were cleverly counterbalanced by springs.



**Ramp details.**

After the initial order S&D received further orders for 120 30 ton tank transporters. An interesting footnote is that towards the end of the War the War Office tested a trailer with a 40 ton load and concluded that they could carry that load in an emergency. The photos are from those rescued from a recycling centre and the information is based on an article in *Classic Military Vehicles* April 2002.



**Trailers under construction.**



## OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO FORMER EMPLOYEES.

### Bert Kerr.



**The Apprentice Training School.**

Bill Stimpson has written in to say that Bert Kerr passed away on 15th June at the age 90.

Bill remembers him as "A great teacher and mentor to hundreds of first year apprentices and a real gentleman." I feel that many SD apprentices will remember Bill with gratitude.

### Claude Menen.



The photo bottom left shows the Drawing Office staff in 1950.

Back row: l. to r. Jack Rowe, Ron Nicholson, John Baldwin, Claude Menen.

Front row: l. to r. Barbara Guyton, Vic Preston, Pansy Wells.

The photo was supplied by Pansy Mitchell (nee Wells.)

With sadness we received the news that Claude Menen died at the end of July at the age of 91. The editor remembers Claude as the Drawing Office Manager when he worked in the Drawing Office as a very junior draughtsman during his apprenticeship in the 1950's. I understand that Claude continued at S&D for many years.

### Robert (Bob) Milne



**A Welder working on Revopak tines (Not Bob Milne)**

Again on 17<sup>th</sup> August we learned of the death of Bob Milne at the age of 79. Bob worked at S&D from 1979 – 1989 as a welder in No. 1 factory where he was also the union convenor. His Funeral was due to take place in his home town in Scotland, but a get together in his memory was organised in Baldock. Bob's two children both worked at S&D. Andrew worked at the company for a brief time, and Susan from 1981 – 1986 firstly doing the time sheets and then in the wages office. At S&D she met Dave Chapman who was an apprentice 1979 – 1983 and they subsequently married. Truly an SD family.

### Geoffrey Downing

We learned of the death of Geoffrey Downing in August at the age of 74. Geoff was a fitter and worked on the chassis line with his twin brother and then on Finish off. They were always known as "The Bruvs". Geoff's twin died in May 2006 after suffering from Motor Neurone Disease. In the paper donations have been asked for M.N.D. The funeral will take place on 11th Sept at 3.15pm at All Saints Church Stondon Beds.

To the families of Bert, Claude, Bob and Geoff we offer our condolences.

**The Shelvoke & Drewry Enthusiasts' Club Newsletter is published four times a year on 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1<sup>st</sup> June, 1<sup>st</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> December. Items for inclusion may be e-mailed to me at: [pinnerboy\[at\]btinternet.com](mailto:pinnerboy[at]btinternet.com)**

**Next Issue :- 1<sup>st</sup> December 2018 Winter Issue.**