



SHELVOKE & DREWRY ENTHUSIASTS' CLUB NEWSLETTER

Volume 2. Issue No. 32.

Winter 2018.

From the Editor.

In this final issue for 2018 we've a variety of news items, an account of SD's attempt at an airport bus, details of numbers of SD's surviving, news of what a former SD demonstrator got up to as a boy and as a young man and lots more. I hope you'll enjoy it.

Brian Carpenter Editor 1st December 2018.

To all my readers I wish you a Happy Christmas and look forward to the next Newsletter in the New Year.



I thought this photo was very attractive. It shows London Fire Brigade's SPV WY with a hydraulic platform Reg. No. **GYW 665 W** on Lambeth bridge on a sunny 22nd February 1982. It was posted on Facebook by Mark Kirk who wrote:- "It was part of a job lot of slides I brought on eBay with copyright. I thought it was too good not to share."

How many SD's are left?

Phil Clifford directed me to the useful website "How many left?" This clearly shows how the numbers of SD's on our roads declined from 1994 onwards. The site warns that there are inaccuracies in the DVLA records.

1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
599	416	321	226	148	103
2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
72	54	41	38	36	31

From 2007 figures include vehicles registered as stored off road (SORN) and total numbers have remained fairly constant around 35. The latest figures are 28 licenced and 9 SORN. From my own trawl through the DVLA records I know the identity of 14 licenced, 9 SORN and 37 untaxed SD's. Details of these can be found on the Preserved Vehicles page on the website. Further work is needed to try to understand these results.

September 11th A good day for your Editor.

From time to time people write to thank me for the effort I put into the SD Enthusiasts' Club. My reaction is usually "It's a pleasure!" Sometimes it is very rewarding and on 11th September a lot of things happened to make the job well worth doing. First I was able to give a former SD employee contact details for a colleague with whom he'd lost touch, then I found a photo for a member of the Facebook Group of his uncle who worked in Sales at S&D, also the context for a photo I'd posted on Facebook was given to me and finally I was able to help someone who was putting together a magazine article about Peter Johnston's newly created TN tar tanker. And to cap it all a few days later Phillip Clifford advised me of the website How Many Left? These stories follow below.

For many years now this has been a rewarding hobby for me, but I am conscious that one of these days I'll have to give this up. I was about 66 when I started the website. Is there anyone, perhaps newly retired, who would enjoy carrying the SD Enthusiasts' Club forward? I would give you all the help I could to carry it forward.

Jack Davis.

Rod Davis wrote on Facebook on 1st September :- "Does anyone remember my Uncle Jack Davis who was, I believe, Sales Director in the 1950's 1960's or thereabouts. He was a Captain in the REME during the Desert Campaign in WW2 He died at the young age of only 49 after two massive heart attacks." He attached this photo of his uncle.



I knew that Rod was somewhat mistaken in saying Jack Davis was the Sales Director but for reasons I didn't fully understand I thought the face was recognisable and so posted this:-



Was Jack on the right of this photo? The answer came back:- Yes. The photo is from the Mechanical Handling Exhibition at Olympia in 1952. Does anyone remember Jack?

Sheffield Lord Mayor's Parade 1982.

Michael Harmes kindly sent me further photos from his late father's collection. Ernie Harmes is well remembered as a demonstrator driver. Four of the photos show the Folkestone preserved Freighter on display in a town centre with the date 4th May 1982 on the back. When I posted these on Facebook Ian Morrow wrote back:- "It was the Sheffield Lord Mayor's parade. I went on the parade with Ernie whilst an apprentice. Ivor Shipp drove the tiller up there on the low loader. I believe I have some photos of this too. I have very happy memories of trips out with Ernie to numerous events."



A Google search revealed that the Lord Mayor elected in 1982 was Gordon Wragg, OBE, JP who died 2003. A further search for images confirmed that he is the mayor with Ernie Harmes shown in the photo above.

NOT AN OUTSTANDING SUCCESS.



In September Michael Harmes kindly sent to me a further seven photos from his late father's [Ernie Harmes] collection. Ernie was a well respected demonstrator driver at S & D. Among the photos was this fine study of an airport bus created by the SPV team. This bus was introduced to the public at the 1980 Motor Show at the N.E.C. at Birmingham as a low floor bus chassis. Designed for an overall length of 10 metres with a wheelbase of 5.9 metres and powered by a front mounted Ford six cylinder 6.0 litre engine with the drive through an Allison four-speed automatic gearbox to the Ford rear axle. The chassis featured small diameter wheels and low profile tyres. After the Motor Show the chassis was fitted with a Reeve Burgess body, hence the Reebur number plate.

Reeve Burgess could trace its history back to Harry Reeve who in 1888 started a wheelwright's business in Pilsley near Chesterfield in Derbyshire. In 1974 the company became known as Reeve Burgess and in 1980 it became a part of the Plaxton Group. By 1984 it was employing some 260 people. But in 1991 (That rings a bell for former S&D employees) despite a full order book, Plaxtons decided to close the factory and relocate the work to Scarborough.

The bus was handed over to the British Airports Authority on 8th May 1981. The bus was allocated as a car park bus at Gatwick Airport. The design of the body was somewhat strange in that the driver's cab was very cramped and was set at a much higher level than the saloon.

Writing in Buses Extra in 1987 the Editor, Stephen Morris described the handling as "indifferent" and stated that "the

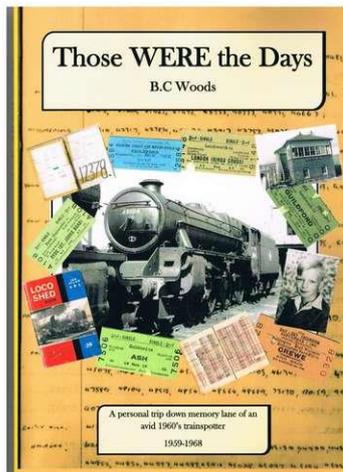
less said about the brakes the better." It was hoped that BAA would order a further five buses but the order didn't materialise and the bus was transferred to Heathrow and used for staff transport. So despite its attractive appearance the bus was not an outstanding success.

For this article I have relied heavily on David Kaye's article 'Freighter on the Front' which appeared in Buses Extra No 49 in October 1987 and for Wikipedia for the information about Reeve Burgess.



This attempt to break into the bus market reflected the early days of the SD Freighter when some 50 or so chassis were fitted with bus type bodies and mainly used at seaside resorts for holidaymakers. The largest fleet being at Worthing where they were known as Tramocars.

Those were the days.



Former SD demonstration driver Barrie Woods has written about his schoolboy days and later when he was an avid train spotter. He says of the volume "It is not intended as an autobiography, or a case history of the last part of the British Railways steam era, but an attempt to combine the two." For me it is a fascinating account of a way of life that no longer exists for young boys. I can supply details on how to obtain a copy and a special discount for readers of this Newsletter.

EXHIBITION at the EIKON Centre in Lisburn N.I.



This fine line up of preserved SD vehicles was seen at an exhibition held in Lisburn Northern Ireland on 25th & 26th September to promote municipal vehicles and plant, waste handling equipment, water, fire prevention & equipment, health & safety, recycling and industrial cleaning. Local organiser was Peter Johnston of McCreath Taylor Ltd N.I.

OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO FORMER EMPLOYEES.

Following on from announcements in the autumn issue the following tributes have been received.

Geoffrey Downing.

I have fond memories of both 'Bruvs'. I shall try to go to the funeral.

Kind regards, *Malcolm Bates*

Very sad news Brian . We are all getting older I am 70. As you said in your last email our ranks are fining. I last saw Jeffry just before Christmas at the local Morrisons when he said he had been invited to spend Xmas with, I believe, his niece. He was suffering with bad arthritis in his fingers and we helped him to pack his bags. I had been wondering why I had not seen him since, then mind you I only used to see two or three times a year.

Regards *David Potter*

The newsletter brought back some memories too, I remember the twins well, they were always very jovial. When the factory was shutting down we were taken down to the Icknield Way works and told to skip everything, so I took my van down and crammed as much as possible in there, the twins thought it was hilarious that there was more in my van than the skip, and when I got back to Blackhorse Road everyone had heard all about it, thanks to the grapevine, *Darren Ainsworth*

Bert Kerr.

Just read the sad news that Bert Kerr has passed away. I was only thinking of him yesterday. He taught me to weld, just like so many others. He will be sadly missed. My thoughts go out to his family. Regards *David Phillipson*

RESTORATION PROJECT.



Thomas Moore reports that work has started on restoring the TN gully emptier that was stored for many years in East London.

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

Next Issue :- 1st March 2019 Spring Issue.