



SHELVOKE & DREWRY ENTHUSIASTS' CLUB NEWSLETTER

Volume 2. Issue No. 34.

Summer 2019.

From the Editor.

Things have been pretty busy here since I published the Spring issue of the Newsletter, so I've increased to six pages for this issue. I've a whole page of news from Northern Ireland, and SD has appeared in two publications. There's news of three surviving SD's and a bumper quantity of interest sent in by Mike Mullarkey who was the Depot. Manager at Exeter. I hope you'll enjoy all this as much as I have. So a big THANKYOU to everyone who has contacted me in the Spring.

Brian Carpenter Editor 1st June 2019.



Richard Wilson from Redditch informed us on Facebook that he has a Model 100 Freightlifter which he is restoring to working condition.

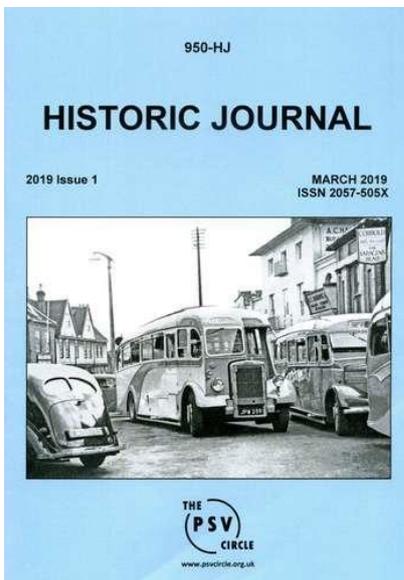
The last Freightlifter left Letchworth in 1962. I find it amazing that examples of this fork lift truck still survive.



Centenary Celebration 2022

Although it's three years away I feel it's time to think about how the centenary of the foundation of Shelvoke & Drewry might be celebrated in its home town of Letchworth Garden City. I have already contacted the Garden City Collection to ask that they put the event in their diary to hopefully arrange some sort of exhibition in the town of some of the memorabilia of S&D in their collection.

I'm certain that in three years' time I will not have the energy to involve myself in celebrating this important anniversary. So PLEASE those of you who live in the area consider involving yourself in ensuring that the importance of S&D to Letchworth is celebrated.



The March Issue of the PSV Circle's Historic Journal features a seven page article about SD Freighters fitted with bus type bodies written by Peter Tulloch. Three pages are devoted to a short history of S&D.

Unfortunately this history contains a number of errors. In fairness to Peter the deadline for him to provide the article was brought forward denying him the opportunity to allow me to see his draft copy. I am assured that a correction will appear in the next issue of the Historic Journal.



Update on the Amberley Tramocar from Richard Borrett.

On the Amberley Bus Weekend the Tramocar was started at 10.15 am and was running all day, and put away at about 5 pm.

The amount of interest was unbelievable, the queue was constant all day, the more it ran the better it got, the clutches are now bedding in nicely, making the drive nice and smooth. It has seemed never ending, fault after fault, to see it going at last was great I was so pleased, it made my day.

My next project is fitting an alternator out of sight to keep the battery topped up, will send some photos when completed.

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND.



The March 2019 issue of Irish Vintage Scene contains a five page article by Seamus O'Brien about Peter Johnston's TN which now carries a tanker body in the livery of McCreath Taylor, along with some lovely photos by the author.

CAN YOU HELP?



When Peter Johnston visited Douglas, in the Isle of Man, and obtained three SD's from Mrs. Magee, he was invited to look around Magee Bros.' premises to see if there was anything of interest to him. In an office he found these two photos pinned to a wall. They have the appearance of having been taken with a Polaroid camera. He has asked if anyone can suggest the location where the photos were taken.

The second photo is clearly of one of the street washers supplied to Westminster City Council. In both the photos the 'F' suffix is visible on vehicles and the "1922" SD Freighter can be seen above. The 'F' denotes August 1967 to July 1968. Peter thinks the occasion will have been an Institute of Public Cleansing Conference.



AYRSHIRE COMMERCIAL VINTAGE VEHICLE CLUB

Static Display
Low Green Avr Sat 13th 9am to 11am
Vehicles will leave Low Green heading along the Esplanade into Wellington Square Turn Right at T/Lights towards Doonfoot.

A77/A78 to Ardrossan, Seamill, West Kilbride, Largs, Kilbirnie, Beith, Lugton, Stewarton, Springside, Crosshouse, Kilmarnock

Static Public Display Kilmarnock FC, Rugby Park
1pm.....3pm
Vehicles follow A77 route to **Portpatrick** arrive 5pm onward

Sunday
Sunday Leave Portpatrick 11am onward follow route to Lunch/Finish.....Lockerbie Truck Stop
Vintage Vehicle Road Run Sat/Sun 13th/14th July
Road Run 2019
More Information from Jim Smith on 07980 315932 Or Bill Reid on 07712 347889

Peter Johnston hopes to take up to five of his SD vehicles to this year's Ayrshire Run.



Tommy Moore who drives 1991 'P' type Reg. No. **OJI 2936** was delighted to be given a new driving seat taken from a DAF road sweeper.

SD's SERVICE DEPOTS.



The Exeter Service Depot in 1976.

Mike Mullarkey, who was the Manager of SD's Service Depot in Exeter kindly sent me some material that dates from the time when he was an SD employee. It included the lovely photo above. Mike has clear memories of the day that Malcolm Bates, SD's Publicity Manager, arrived to take photos for a forthcoming brochure. Those who know Malcolm will not be surprised to learn that it was by no means a straightforward job. Realising that he needed a high viewpoint Malcolm climbed a building opposite the Depot. This was primarily so that the motorway running from left to right should be visible behind the Depot. And to this day we can see that he succeeded in this. Most of you will have seen the photo above in Kaleidoscope of Shelvoke and Drewry, where it is caption No. 127, but it's great to see it in colour.



The Exeter Depot was formally opened on 1st December 1976 and above Mike Mullarkey is seen at the time of the opening. Mike also sent a brochure that announced that the Exeter Depot was fully operational. I have drawn upon this brochure and a later one from when the company was known as Shelvoke Dempster for much of this article. S&D were unusual in taking responsibility for most of their sales and service in Great Britain whilst relying on a

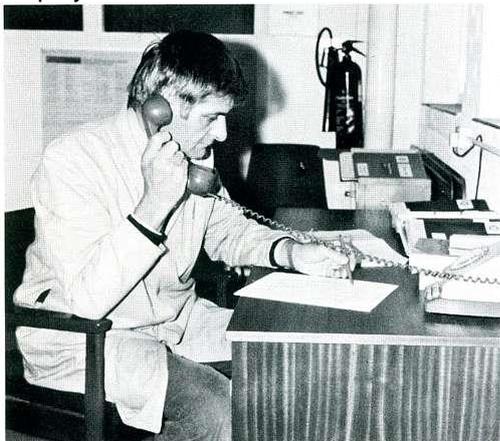
network of distributors for their export customers. In 1979 the existing service network was strengthened and expanded to cater for the increase in production from the Letchworth factory. The late Bob Edlin was given responsibility for setting up the new service depots and he named the depots:- "The Magnificent Seven". The depots, which were in addition to the main base in Letchworth, were:-
 Birmingham – Long Acre
 Newcastle – Birtley
 Manchester – Audenshaw
 Exeter
 Glasgow
 Croydon
 Merthyr Tidfil
 The last three being opened after Exeter was opened. Kaleidoscope also lists Cardiff, Bradford and King's Lynn but I think they may have been operated by SD agents as was the Belfast branch operated by McCreath Taylor from Lisburn.



In 1979 several additions were made to SD's service and distribution fleet. The Exeter brochure speaks of how "the

completion of the M5 and M3 motorways has considerably improved communications.” And the Exeter depot was practically on the M5 Motorway!

Two key employees at Exeter are shown below.



Alan Johnson was Chief Storeman



Foreman fitter was Paul Josey seen above with Mike. In addition to providing a comprehensive range of spares, said to be 14,000 items across the network, the depots could carry out pre-delivery checks, vehicle conversions and rebuilds.

Expansion to the Channel Islands.

Mike Mullarkey has written:- “Not so long after the Depot was opened I found out that spares could take two to three days to reach our customers in the Channel Islands when sent from Letchworth via Heathrow. I checked flight details from Exeter Airport and realised that provided orders were received before midday, we could get parts to Jersey airport the same afternoon.

I spoke to Jack Arnold, the General Service Manager at Letchworth, and suggested that it would be a good idea for the Exeter Depot to be responsible for the Channel Islands. He agreed!! I contacted the customers that had SD Vehicles to introduce myself and to advise them of the service that I could provide.

It will not surprise you when I say that it was not too long before I flew over to meet the customers. As time went on I had several holidays with my family in Jersey, taking the car across on the ferry. On these occasions I would phone the

customers and say that I would be bringing any parts they might need and these would be in the boot of the car, meaning that our personal luggage would be on the roof rack. This idea did not meet with the approval of my dear wife!!! However the customers were well pleased. So a strong relationship was formed, not just with those that actually bought SD vehicles, but with other contractors who acquired second-hand vehicles. I was very happy to supply services to anyone that had SD vehicles.”

Other facilities available.

As their customers continued to expect more and more efficiency from their vehicles the Service Depots stocked e.g. a range of service exchange units, a hydraulic hose making facility, chassis, body and cab parts. A hopper loan scheme was available for when the hopper on a body was damaged allowing the vehicle to be back in service within two or three hours whilst the hopper was repaired. The parts and service operation was described as: “friendly as well as extremely efficient.” Having had the pleasure of meeting quite a few of the people involved I think that may well have been true.

The End.

The end came for Mike Mullarkey in 1991 when SD closed. But he continued for several years under the management of Norba Ltd. who took over the Exeter Depot. Throughout his years with SD Mike worked closely with Colin Humble, the Area Sales Manager for the South West. Colin once told me:-”I sold them - Mike kept them running.” A strong friendship was formed which carries on to this day.



Mike (left) and Colin enjoying the SD Newsletter in October 2014.

Footnote

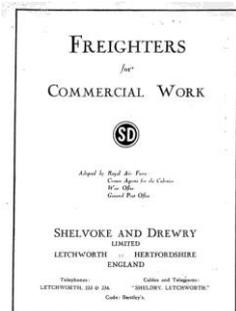
My thanks go to Mike Mullarkey for sending this brochure and for the second brochure details of which appear on the next page.

SD FREIGHTERS FOR COMMERCIAL WORK.



BOX VAN WITH WINCHES AND RAMP END. 10 ft. x 6 ft. 6ins. LOAD 2 tons. Price £640
Photo supplied by Malcolm Easton.

In March Mike Mullarkey kindly sent me a number of SD related items. Among them was an A4 sized photocopied brochure with the title *Freighters for Commercial Work*. This has turned out to be a little gold mine. Initially I was a little confused as attached to the document were fourteen pages each with two photos of Freighters for refuse collection. Some of these have solid tyres, whilst some are on pneumatics. The main brochure is 27 pages with an additional price sheet. In the brochure all the Freighters have solid tyres. My guess is that the brochure dates from around 1926. Because of the limitations of photo copying the photos are not of sufficient quality to use here, so I have substituted photos from my files.



I think that the contents of the brochure will be of interest to the readers of this Newsletter.

It reads to me like a re-print of an article written for a magazine, such as *Commercial Motor* or similar journal. And it sets out the reasoning behind the design of the SD Freighter and gives reasons for prospective purchasers to consider the Freighter.

I have divided the contents of the brochure into eight separate sections and will include most of the actual text from the document along with my comments.

The separate sections will have the following titles:-

1. Introduction.
2. The Advantages of the Freighter.
3. Running Costs and Maintenance.
4. Special Transport Problems.
5. Standard Chassis Sizes.
6. Special Types.
7. Cable Drum Equipment.
8. Prices and Conclusion.

On request by email a re-typed version of the brochure can be supplied as a pdf file.

Additions to the text are shown in italics.

Introduction

From the time when petrol-driven vehicles were first adopted for the carriage of goods, one transport problem became increasingly acute until it was solved by the production of the Freighter.

While it is generally conceded that the motor lorry is an excellent method for conveying large quantities of goods for long distances, there is even now a prejudice against its use for short journeys, local deliveries, and for city work where there is a great deal of traffic. The conventional motor lorry was not designed for this service, and has been proved uneconomical when used in this way.

The Freighter is constructed especially for this work, and its design eliminates the unsuitable features of the conventional lorry.

Motor transport thus becomes economical even with the conditions stated above. An outline of the distinctive features of the Freighter will not only indicate its points of difference from the ordinary vehicle, but also explain the economies effected in money, time and labour.

Below:- photo of a very early Freighter courtesy of Malcolm Easton.



THE EDITOR'S POSTBAG



This photo is of Barrie Woods (left) Dennis Nelson (right) and British Railways Pacific No. 70000 'Britannia' at Crewe station on Saturday 13th April. They were on a day trip to Stratford-on-Avon as a celebration of Dennis's 80th Birthday. Dennis worked as a Demonstrator at Shelvoke & Drewry from 1960 to 1974 then progressed to Norba for a further five years. He then transferred to John Lewis where he drove artics until retiring. John Lewis, as with most large companies, had fleet numbers on their lorries, for some time Dennis's lorry was fleet number 60103 the number of the famous Flying Scotsman!

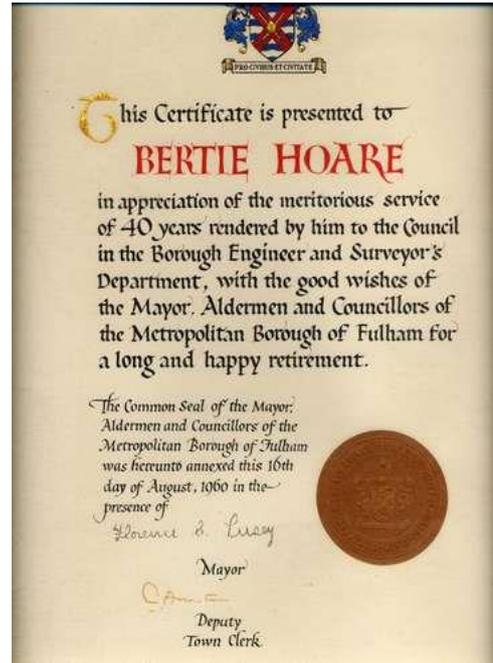
It's amazing how friendships have endured over the years. See also Colin Humble and Mike Mullarkey on page 4.



Lynne Verrechia had inherited this rather tired looking 'T' type Cesspool Emptier and, needing to sell it, turned to the SD Enthusiasts' Club Facebook Group for help. Despite advertising it twice sadly the 'old girl' went for scrap.

The Garden City Collection.

The collection would welcome anyone with a knowledge of S&D to help them catalogue the photos, brochures etc. that were donated to the collection on behalf of the SD Enthusiasts' Club.



Richard Nash sent in a scan of a certificate presented to his grandfather in 1960 by the Borough of Fulham after 40 years' service.

He drove an SD Freighter like this:-



Photo sent in by Shaun Taylor.

FOOTNOTE.

Over recent months it has been a pleasure to be able to give assistance to Peter Tulloch and Seamus O'Brien in writing their magazine articles, to Richard Borrett by sending him a copy of the user's manual for the SD Freighter provided to me by Shaun Taylor, and to attempt to sell Lynne Verrechia's 'T' type, I am grateful to my readers who have enhanced my knowledge of S&D over the past years.

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 September 2019 Autumn Issue.