



# SHELVOKE & DREWRY ENTHUSIASTS' CLUB NEWSLETTER

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Spring 2013.

## From the Editor.

Amazingly it was ten years ago that the first SD Enthusiasts' Club magazine came out – and we're still going strong! S&D have again appeared on TV as I recall below, Bill Thornycroft concludes his articles about the SD Freighter as a bus, and we cross the Channel for an insight into the inventor of the Pakamatic and Revopak, and finally I share some of the correspondence that has come in over the Winter months.

*Brian Carpenter 1<sup>st</sup> March 2013.*

## The Secret Life of Rubbish.

On 29<sup>th</sup> November and 6<sup>th</sup> December last year BBC4 broadcast two programmes on the secret life of rubbish. The programmes covered the period from the end of the Second World War up to the 1980's. For one viewer (that's me) it was strange to hear historian Rachel Bowlby describing the changes that have taken place in my life time, as though we hadn't lived through it all. Yes, at times we hadn't always recognised the changes that were taking place, but it was all part of our experience.

The programmes took us from those careful post War years when the "make do and mend" mentality persisted, through the years of "never had it so good" right through to our current wasteful life styles and reflected on their influence on the waste industry. In particular various government legislation was shown to be in response to changes in household habits.

Smokeless zones, the coming of supermarkets and increased packaging, the growing awareness of fashion and the desire to own the latest products each contributed to ever greater amounts of waste to be collected and disposed.

Later waste disposal was affected by the growth of environmental concerns and government support for privatisation of waste management revolutionised the industry.

The programmes didn't specifically comment on the effects of all this on the design of refuse collection vehicles, but towards the end of programme 1 Steve Jones was interviewed about his ex-Isles of Scilly SD Revopak. "The best dustcart ever built!" declared Steve. Intercut with publicity shots of the Revopak we saw an arm chair pulverised by the rotating tines.

Otherwise SD's appeared from time to time, without any commentary. Several times we saw 'W' type Fore & Aft tippers operating in Birmingham and a pair of 'T' types in a London street.

In the first programme we were shown how the City of Birmingham had a comprehensive waste policy overseen by their Salvage Department. Household refuse was carefully sorted to retrieve reusable materials and the remainder burnt in a destructor which produced electricity to power the Council's battery powered refuse collection

vehicles. One of these survives in the Birmingham Museum. By the end of the 1960's this system was abandoned on the basis of health and safety concerns.

The second programme featured an interview with Steve Jones where he revealed not only his fascination with dustcarts from a very early age, but also the extraordinary effect on his arm muscles from lifting dustbins when working on refuse collection. An unforgettable scene.



### Steve Jones with one of his Revopaks.

Former and present day dustmen, academics and researchers were interviewed, archive film clips illustrated the developments that took place. The effects of the 1979 London dustmen's strike were discussed, various technological solutions that worked for a while but didn't last were described. In all Lambent Productions did a fine job in describing an industry that most people only think about when for some reason their rubbish isn't collected.

The need for recycling was explored along with the ways that Councils had to find to alter householders habits, so that as in the War years we now separate our rubbish or are willing to take it away for disposal when it can not be collected from our doorstep.

## My S&D Memories. Part 4. The Replica Tramocar – a Footnote.

### Bill Thornycroft.

Some time in the 1980's Robert Dominic visited the Amberley Museum and heard about the plans to create a replica Tramocar. Robert's grandfather had been given the gong from an original Tramocar by Mr. Gates and the gong had been mounted on a wooden base and hung in the Dominic's family home as dinner gong. Robert promised to donate the gong to the Museum once the replica Tramocar had been completed.

In the previous part it was noted that the replica was completed in 1994. But all attempts to find Robert Dominic failed. It turned out that Robert and his family had emigrated to Canada and the Museum was delighted when in the Spring of 2004 an email arrived to say that Roger Dominic and his family were coming to England on holiday later that year and would bring the dinner gong with him.

On Sunday October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2004 the Tramocar gong was handed over. It is now fitted to the bus and is regularly heard as it trundles round on the Museum bus services giving the authentic, deep tone which is even now remembered by older Worthing residents.

The picture above shows from left to Right:- Robert Dominic and his family, Howard Stenning, director of the Amberley Museum who is holding the gong, Bernie Wingfield who used to drive a Tramocar, and Bill Thornycroft.



And finally a period photo of Tramocar No. 2 in service in Worthing.



#### Editor's Note.

We are most grateful to Bill Thornycroft for sending in his memories of Worthing's remarkable Tramocar fleet. Around 50 SD Freighter chassis were fitted with bus type bodies and it is a fascinating part of the Shelvoke story.

Bill also deserves our thanks for the part he had played in the creation of the replica Tramocar and as reported in Part 2 of his memories securing the survival of DPF 432 ex-Epsom & Ewell.

It has been so good that Bill has recalled his own memories and those of others associated with Mr. Gates' Tramocars.

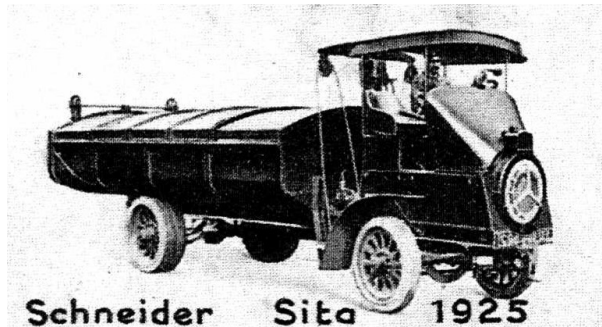


Another photo shows two of Mr. Gates' crew from the Tramocar era.



## THE FATHER OF THE MODERN REFUSE COLLECTION VEHICLE – Mr. Fernand Rey.

Although it is only a short stretch of water that we call the English Channel visitors to France quickly become aware that a different culture exists just those few short miles away. And in their methods of refuse collection the French developed a very different system from their English neighbours. In Paris, as an example, the bins were emptied daily, the work being carried out by contractors, years before Margaret Thatcher introduced that system in Britain.

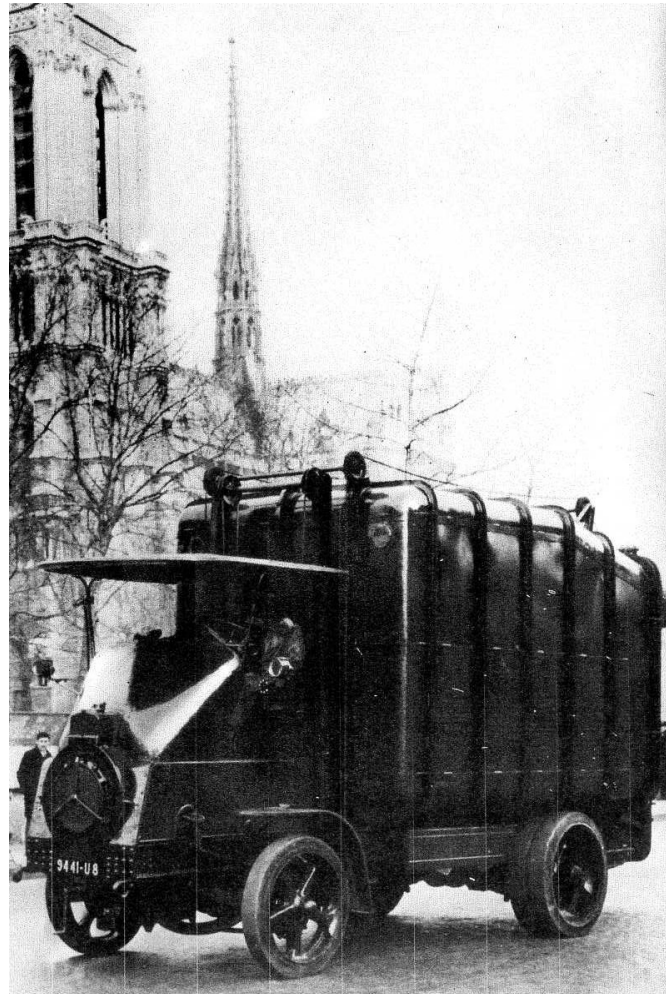


This photo shows the type of vehicle employed in the 1920's with what we would term as 'Chelsea' type body. By 1934 S.I.T.A. (Societe Industrielle de Transports Automobiles) operated over 500 of these Schneider 7 ton tipping lorries. Their average annual mileage was only 3,000 miles and the vehicles were splendidly maintained. Mr. Fernand Rey was the Engineer-in-Chief of S.I.T.A. In 1934 he obtained patents for a refuse collection body employing a rear mounted hopper which contained a reciprocating ram to compress the refuse and propel it forwards into the body.

Rey claimed both improvements in hygiene and economy for his patent design. The rear loading permitted use in narrow streets, the enclosed body eliminated refuse blowing away when the bins were emptied, and the low height of the loading rave speeded up collection.

Between 1934 and 1936 450 Schneider chassis were fitted with Rey's body. The chassis being reduced in length by two feet. When Commercial Motor visited Paris in November 1934 they learned that one vehicle could do the work previously carried out by three vehicles and two loaders replaced the previous three. An outstanding increase in productivity.

In 1945 after the end of the Second World War Mr. Rey formed S.E.M.A.T. (Societe d'Equipments Manutentions et Transports) this was purely a commercial company designed to exploit Mr. Rey's patents. In 1950 Mr. Rey took over control of C.I.V. (Constructions Industrielles de Versailles) who manufactured Rey's designs until 1970.



**A Schneider fitted with Rey body in service in Paris.**

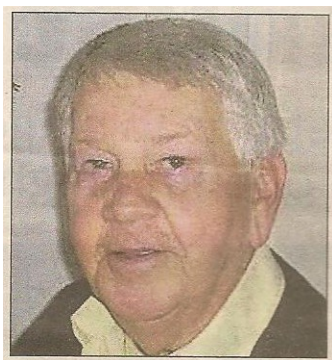
In 1936 S&D acquired a licence to build the Rey body on their chassis but this was not a success mainly because of the weight of the all steel body. But for the 'T' type Pakamatic Tom Tillson once more turned to the Rey design. Advances in hydraulic technology and the use of light aluminium alloy panels for the body created this satisfactory design.

Sadly Fernand was killed in 1966 when he was run into by a motorcyclist whilst demonstrating a dustcart. But by then he had also designed the Bennes Rey Superpak which formed the basis for SD's highly successful Revopak.

Fernand Rey introduced the concept of compression of refuse and the use of a rear hopper permitted a much lower rave height considerably easing the work of the loaders. Even the earliest of his designs in Paris are not so unlike the modern refuse collection vehicle.

## THE EDITOR'S POST BAG.

### Tom Nash

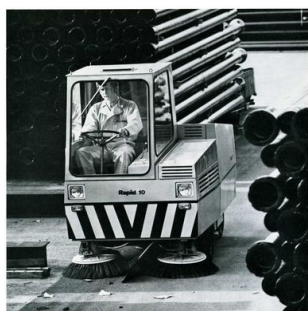


We were sorry to learn of the death of Tom Nash on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2012 at the age of 80.

**Roger Morrisroe** has written: "Tom Nash was a transport driver for S.D. in the 1970's when I was Transport Manager. Tom used to drive a Transit or 7.5 ton Ford petrol lorry, collecting parts from all over the UK. He was a good guy." We offer our condolences to Tom's family.

### Rapid Sweepers.

In response to my request in the Winter Newsletter **Malcolm Bates** has written by Email: "The 'Rapid' range of highway sweepers were made in Switzerland and as I discovered recently, still are! From memory, the idea was that by importing a couple of different compact sweepers - the one shown in the pictures was the largest and was powered by a V4 Ford petrol engine I think - SD would be able to offer overseas customers a full municipal range. Although a solitary SD NX chassis-based Johnston truck-mounted sweeper was built (which was sold to Accra, Ghana), the idea didn't pan out as the exchange rate of Swiss Francs made the units far too expensive to enable Basil Barber to add a stonking mark-up and still attract customer interest!



**The Rapid 10 Sweeper**

The other problem was the 'Not invented here' syndrome. Never mind the fact that rapid had already sold lots of machines over many years, to SD engineers, they weren't good enough and when they broke down - as they did quite often - there was

always a row as to who would pay to get 'em fixed. I suspect with the wonderful advantage of 20-20 hindsight that the SD service engineers were used to fixing big diesel trucks and forklifts with a decent sized hammer, whereas vacuum sweepers have always needed much more care and adjustment."

### Alfie Barker.

Dear Mr Carpenter,  
I was searching for information on Shelvoke and Drewry and came across your website. My grandfather (Alfred Barker) worked there all his working life. I have a letter which he received in 1950 to mark 21 years of service. It is signed by Mr Shelvoke and 3 other directors. So I know from that that he started in 1929 when he would have been 15yrs old. He died in 1975 when he was only 62years old (he would have been 100 this year!). He was ill for several years before then and I know that he worked at S & D for as long as he could. He was there for over 40years. During the war he was in the Home Guard as I understand that his was a reserve occupation. I do not know what he did at the factory. His widow, Phyll, died about two years ago.

I was wondering whether there were any records of what life might have been like there in those early days or any records of employees etc and what their jobs were. If you know of any such information I would love to hear about it if you have the time.

Many thanks for your help, *Jackie Noble*

**Roger Morrisroe** wrote:- " Alfie Barker was a chargehand, Foreman and I believe Superintendent in the West works where they built the F/A bodies, Gully tankers, sheet metal, welding, flamecutting and a small Jig and Tool dept. for small jigs and templates etc. Road test was also in the West works in those days. I remember he suffered from Carpel Tunnel syndrome where the little fingers bent over. The only cure in those days was to have them amputated, which he did and said it was the best thing ever. Very nice guy always got on well with him.

Also a very good darts player. That's all that I can think of at the moment. Steve Pearce should be able to fill in more details as he worked in West works longer than me. Roger."

I spoke to **Steve Pearce** on the telephone who confirmed all that Roger had written. Alfie was in charge of body assembly - fore & aft and Chelsea bodies etc. He said he could line up Chelsea bodies by eye before getting the sledge hammer to straighten them out. He lived on the Grange Estate and Steve also remembered him as a good darts player. "He was someone you remembered as always being there - a thoroughly nice fellow." **Can anyone add to these memories, please?**

**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> June Summer Issue.**

**Brian Carpenter – Editor.**