



SHELVOKE & DREWRY ENTHUSIASTS' CLUB

NEWSLETTER

Volume 2. Issue No. 27.

Autumn 2017.

From the Editor.

We have a bumper six page issue for you this time. I'm a very fortunate editor in having so much material available, largely due to the affection people have for Shelvoke & Drewry. There's news of preserved vehicles, memories of former employees and by former employees, a little bit of history and requests for your help on several matters. I hope you'll enjoy our Autumn issue.

Brian Carpenter. Editor. 1st September 2017.

FROM FACEBOOK.

The formation of a Facebook Group last year as an experiment has succeeded beyond my wildest dreams. So many photos are being posted that there simply isn't room for them in the quarterly Newsletter but I will share as many as I can with you. The Facebook Group now has 205 members. From Facebook I have received notification of two more preserved SD vehicles



Willie Bermingham from Longwood, Ireland, posted this picture of his newly acquired 1977 Shelvoke SPV Crash Tender which has been abandoned in the corner of a field for the past 8 years. He reports that it is well worth restoring and posted a video of it being towed out of the field. These crash tenders appear to have continued S&D's reputation for long service. Possibly there are some still in service.

Dave Madden from Nottingham tells us that he hasn't had this SPV turntable ladder vehicle shown bottom left very long and he has quite a lot of work to do on it. But it's great to learn of another SD survivor.



Not a survivor but I thought this was a good photograph.

This Corbridge sweeper was new to Dublin Corporation in 1989 and was taken a little afterwards.

Photo:- Courtesy of Michael Corcoran, Dublin Corporation Dublin City Council, posted by Phil Tallant.



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 December 2017 Winter Issue.

THE SHELVOKE DEMPSTER YEARS.



Trevor Upchurch posted this photo on Facebook in June of himself and Bob Porter at No 4 factory Icknield Way Letchworth circa 1985 with a Shelvoke Dempster Routechief. I was pleased that Trevor has kept this photo for over 30 years as it indicates to me that he retains happy memories of his years working at S&D. In 1985 it was over 20 years since I left the company, but I am aware that it still was regarded as a good place to work. This was despite the changes of ownership that had taken place and that the company would only survive for a further six years.

These thoughts led me to think about the 'Dempster Years'. I turned to Eric Voytko's excellent website Classic Refuse Trucks to learn more about Dempster and as I've not written about the company before I thought it appropriate to give a little of its history here.

George R. Dempster was involved in construction work in Knoxville, Tennessee, U.S.A. in the 1930's when he conceived the idea which became the modern skip loader as a means of moving construction material more readily by attaching a frame to a lorry chassis. So in 1935 Dempster Bros. Inc. was formed to produce the Dempster Dumpster. This soon found favour also for refuse collection from blocks of flats etc. where large containers needed to be transported. In 1955 a front loader was developed that could contain the contents of more than one container. In 1964 George R. Dempster died and was succeeded by his nephew James Dempster and throughout the 1960's the company remained family owned, providing a range of refuse collection solutions. In 1970 the Dempster RouteKing rear end loader was added to the range which previously hadn't included a rear end loader. In 1975 the company's name was changed to Dempster Dumpster Systems.

In 1980 the company was sold to Technology Incorporated of Dayton, Ohio, a company founded by the Krug family in 1959. In 1983 the new company introduced the mid range RouteChief rear end loader and in the same year purchased Shelvoke & Drewry.

On the face of it this could have been a highly successful move. In the 1970's Jack Allen had built a flourishing business by importing the American Heli bodies into the U.K. and mounting them on mainly Seddon chassis. And soon building their own bodies in Scotland under licence from Heil. So a proven American design eliminated all the usual modifications that introducing a new model normally involves.

At Shelvoke Dempster the RouteChief for the U.K. market was to use aluminium alloy for the body rather than the steel body used in the U.S.A.

Meanwhile in the U.S.A. the name of Technology Inc. was changed to Krug International to reflect the original family founders. Krug International's Dempster division was sold to Wastequip in March 1990, and the division was sold twice again before finally closing in 2003.

Meanwhile back in Letchworth things weren't going well for Dempster and the Shelvoke company was sold to a private financier in 1988 after just five years of ownership.

A fascinating coincidence in this story is the decision by Shelvoke & Drewry in 1968 to produce a skip loader. Unfortunately S&D only saw this as of interest to municipal authorities when a knowledge of the market in the U.S.A. could have led them to becoming market leaders in an emerging skip utilising construction industry.

WEEKEND SUNSHINE JULY 8th & 9th.



On a lovely sunny day two pairs of Shelvoques are pictured several hundred miles apart. On the left two PN's were photographed by Tommy Moore at Kilmarnock parked up for lunch as they participated in the Ayrshire Road Run. On the right two SPV WX Fire appliances are being admired at the Fire Show at Lullingstone Castle in Kent where they were photographed by Rus Attree.

a pump escape, both being ex-London Fire Brigade. Terry also owns two further Shelvoke appliances. Darren Perry sent in some lovely photos from the two days.

For the Ayrshire Road Run Peter Johnston had brought his PN with a Norba K70 body and now in the livery of Belfast City Council over from Northern Ireland to Scotland. Peter is shown below with his vehicle.



It was joined by Michael Copper's PN Revopak which was another one of the three rescued from Magees Haulage on the Isle of Man. The road run taking place over two days is very popular with drivers and Tommy Moore who drove Peter's PN commented that it is : "A super little lorry."

The Fire Show at Lullingstone Castle, Eynsford, Kent was in its fourth year and Chris Shelley Houghton and Terry Prince took their fire appliances. Chris's is Reg. No. GYW 614 W and is a pump ladder, whilst Terry's YHV 187 T is



OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO FORMER EMPLOYEES.

ERNIE HARMES

It is with regret that we learned of the death of Percival Ernest Harmes on 23rd May 2017 at the age of 88. Preferring to be known as Ernie, he had suffered from Parkinson's disease for several years. Ernie was a much loved partner, father and grandfather as well as a demonstrator driver at S & D. Later, I understand, he became chauffeur to Stan Quin, SD's Managing Director. On your behalf I have offered condolences to Ernie's family and have received a reply from Michael Harmes which included the photo below.



Ernie is shown at the 1982 London to Brighton Historic Commercial Vehicle run, at which he was the driver and is shown at the centre of the photo wearing a bowler hat.

Two former demonstrator drivers have written to me.

Barrie Woods said:- "I remember Ernie very well as he took me out many times on the Artic in order to get me through my HGV 1, which I passed."

Steve Swain wrote via Facebook:- I have good memories of Ernie Harmes. He was due to take on the job of chauffeur to one of the directors (Basil Barber I think) and I had joined S&D as his replacement, I think it was 1971, delivering and demonstrating fork lift trucks with the Commer TS3 tractor unit and a four in line low loader trailer.

My previous employer, having agreed to sign the papers to enable me to get an artic licence (under grandfather rights) went back on his word and only signed me up for the class2 multi axle rigids (I had been driving both). So, I was effectively now a learner class 1 driver and Ernie came with me as instructor. He taught me everything about the job and I may say, my driving faults! He always carried a cane in the cab as I had a bad habit of resting one hand on the gear lever and would whack me as soon

as he saw it! He was a really great bloke and the job was not as enjoyable (for me) once he went to his new duties. I have some good memories of the journeys we did all over Britain. I delivered quite a few refuse vehicles when there was no fork lift work and used to love watching the sign writers finish off the cabs, very skilful guys."

Two delightful testimonies from those who knew Ernie. Michael Harmes also sent me Ernie's collection of SD memorabilia which I will describe in the next Newsletter.

JACK HUBBARD.

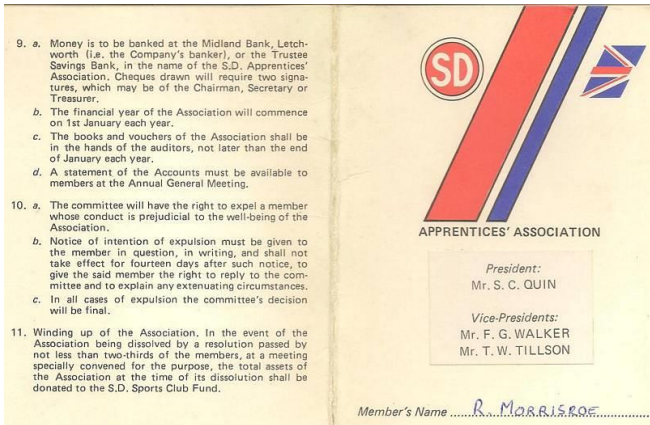
On 6th August Samantha Hubbard posted on Facebook:- "My grandad Jack Hubbard worked for the company both before and after the war." And also posted were six photos, a newspaper cutting and two letters.

A very modest description of SD's Chief Demonstrator driver from 1936 to 1979. The two letters Samantha posted give a glimpse of the man Jack was. They concern a visit to Scotland that Jack undertook in 1948. A. Inman wrote to Harry Shelvoke:- "Our Chief Demonstrator Hubbard did a wonderful spot of work during this tour. He was willing to work all hours, including Sundays, and somehow kept the vehicle perfectly clean. It is a great pity that there are not more like him about today." Harry Shelvoke wrote to Jack:- "I think you must be fully aware of the regard in which you are held by the Heads of this business ..." Praise indeed for the hard to please Harry Shelvoke.

I turned to 'Trying a Tiller' in Nick Baldwin's 1979 Vintage Lorry Album, to learn a little more about Jack. In the article Jack recalled that in pre-war demonstrations he could remember it taking three days to do a Scottish trip and a journey from Newcastle-on-Tyne to the factory in Letchworth which started at 4.00am, and by going flat out and coasting whenever this increased his speed arrived at 4.00 pm. Below Jack demonstrates a Freightlifter to the Duke of Edinburgh at Peterborough.



OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO FORMER EMPLOYEES Continued.



SHELVOKE & DREWRY LIMITED APPRENTICES' ASSOCIATION

RULES

- The name of the Association will be the Shelvoke and Drewry Limited, Apprentices' Association.
- The following persons will be eligible for membership:
 - S.D. Apprentices
 - S.D. Ex-apprentices
 - Vice-Presidents
- Membership subscriptions:
 - For apprentices will be £3.12 per year payable at 6p per week for 52 weeks.
 - For ex-apprentices £4.68 per year payable at 9p per week for 52 weeks.
 - For associated members £6.24 per year payable at 12p per week for 52 weeks.
- The objects of the Association are:
 - To create social interest amongst members.
 - To encourage a spirit of fellowship with other firms' Apprentices' Associations.
 - To further the general engineering knowledge of all members.
 - All activities should be non-political and non-secretarial.

- The committee of the Association shall consist of nine members comprising:
 - Chairman
 - Treasurer
 - Secretary
 - Six Committee Members
- The committee will be elected at the Annual General Meeting but will have the power to co-opt should this be necessary.
- The normal period of service on the committee will be two years, one half of the committee retiring annually.
- Ex-apprentices can hold position on the committee.
- A quorum shall consist of the Chairman or Vice-Chairman or Secretary plus four other members of the committee.
- The Annual General Meeting will be held in February each year or as near to that month as possible.
 - An extraordinary general meeting of members may be called by the general committee, or by a written request to the Honorary Secretary signed by at least twelve members of the Association and stating the object of such a special meeting.
 - Notice of such meetings must be given seven days prior to the meeting.
- Amendments or alterations to the Rules can only be made at the Annual General Meeting.
- Voting at the Annual General Meeting will be by simple majority.

Roger Morrisroe sent in this scan of his membership card of the Shelvoke & Drewry Apprentices Association. As the nephew of an SD apprentice, and a former apprentice myself, I was a little surprised that I had heard so little of this Association. The card tells us that Stan Quin was the President which since he'd been an SD apprentice and

had become Managing Director of the Company seems entirely appropriate. The Vice Presidents were Tom Tillson, the Chief Engineer and Fred Walker the Company Secretary. I think readers would be interested to hear any memories former apprentices may have of the activities of the Association. Was the £3.12 per year good value for money?

NEWS OF FORMER EMPLOYEES.

I have felt it right to try to pay tribute on these pages to former SD employees that I'm notified have died. After all in the past the Company had the custom of flying the Company's flag at half mast to mark such an occasion. I have resisted the temptation to report on serious ill health or the deaths of relatives of former employees. From time to time I learn of long term health difficulties for former employees and I am wondering whether you would like me with their family's agreement to pass on these items of news. It could well be a little help to the family to know that their relative is remembered by their former work colleagues. I have little idea of how many former employees regularly follow this Newsletter, but pleased let me have your views on this topic.

THE EDITOR'S POSTBAG.

BY THE SEASIDE.



Kevin Green sent in this photo of his maternal grandparents on an SD Freighter toastrack bus at Blackpool. Emma-Jane and Arthur Jaggar are the hatted

lady and gentleman standing towards the centre of the car. The outing was probably from Cumberworth (between Barnsley and Huddersfield) Workingmen's Club or Darton (near Barnsley) United Methodist Chapel. The Freighter bus was one of four that operated in Blackpool from 1926 until 1932. Unusually the bodywork was also produced by S&D. The buses operated in St. Helier, Jersey, until the outbreak of World War Two.

The Freighter in the photo carries the fleet number 35 and Kevin and I were intrigued by the number 163 appearing towards the rear of the photo. Study of some other photos from Blackpool reveals similar numbers on other photos. Our conclusion is that the photographer added this number so that a reference was maintained when the photos were offered for sale to the groups pictured in the posed photos.

THE EDITORS POSTBAG & NEWS Continued.

AN SPV MODEL.



This photo was found on the Internet. It shows a 1:60 scale model produced as a white metal kit by Phoenix World Reproductions (PWR). It dates from the early 1990s and is believed to be no longer available. Its owner, Peter Williams says that the model is very accurate although sadly damaged when stored in his loft, hence slight distortion on cage etc.

This is photo by Pete Matten shows a similar WY vehicle at Croydon fire station.

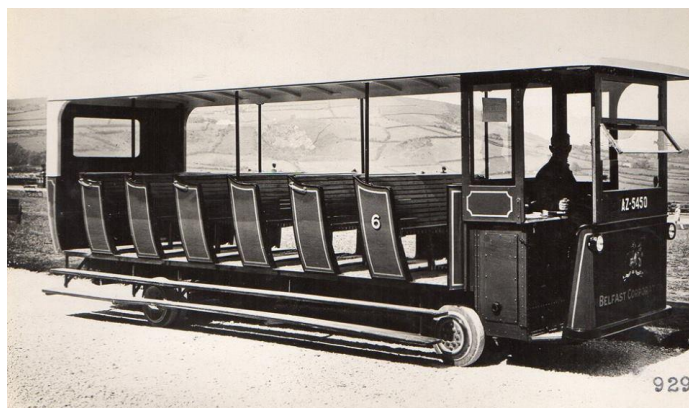


In July 2012 Bruce Hoad wrote:- "I drove GYW 666W (HP6?) at Kensington in the early 1980's. It used the 640 V8 engine (the early series Shelvokes had the 540 V8) and an Allinson auto gearbox which was a nice combination. Sadly it seemed to be off the run more often than on and was usually replaced by an old AEC/Merryweather TL. These CFE built machines suffered dreadfully from tin-worm in the cabs and I think a number were re-cabbed."

Facebook Group new members.

We were pleased to welcome Paul Swanton whose father, Derek Swanton worked for S&D for many years, his younger brother, Glenn, also worked at the Company for a short while. On page 4 words from Steve Swain, a demonstrator driver, who has joined the Facebook Group are recorded.

A BELFAST MYSTERY.



The photo above sent in by Shaun Taylor is of an SD Freighter as a bus on Belfast's service to the Zoo. Numbered 6 and with the Reg. No. AZ 5450. Bill Headley is asking our help in trying to discover whether a second Freighter numbered 8 ever existed. There are several photos of the vehicle shown here but none on No. 8. I told Bill that sadly all records of SD chassis numbers etc. were disposed of when the Company closed. If anyone knows of a second Belfast bus please let me know.

FOUND ON THE INTERNET.

Mr. J.S. Drewry, M.I.A.E., who was the founder of Shelvoke & Drewry Ltd., and had held the position of joint managing director of that concern for the past 14 years, resigned his position a few months ago. He has recently joined Hands (Letchworth), Ltd., as joint managing director with MR. H. HANDS. Mr. Drewry has now completed the production plans for the Hands semi-trailer, the extensions to the Letchworth works are finished, and a steady output is anticipated.

This undated newspaper cutting will date from a 1936 Letchworth local paper, which I think was 'The Citizen.' It reads to me as though James Drewry was saying:- "I'm o.k. again and determined to prove I'm still a capable engineer and managing director."

For those who don't know Letchworth – Hands Trailers factory was directly opposite S&D in Icknield Way.