



SHELVOKE & DREWRY ENTHUSIASTS' CLUB NEWSLETTER

Volume 2. Issue No. 45.

Spring 2022.

From the Editor.

It's another six page issue again. My thanks are due to everyone who has contributed to this issue. In SD's Centenary year we carry details of the events that are being planned to celebrate, and there is a varied selection of articles sharing people memories of S & D. I hope you'll enjoy your Spring Newsletter.

Brian Carpenter Editor 1st March 2022.



Richard Nash sent in this unusual photo of an SD Model 82 Freightlifter at Luton Airport. The aircraft is a BOAC Canadair CL44 Swing Tail Freighter owned by Seaboard World Airlines and leased to BOAC between 1963 & 1965, so the photo will have been taken between those dates.



Aled Rees posted the photo on the left. It would appear to be a trial run for the car parking system utilising an SD Freightlifter Model 72 that was trialled using concrete platforms for the cars.

Ingenious it certainly was but hardly a practical solution to car parking problems. However that didn't stop it from being demonstrated but there is no evidence that this system was ever developed.



**MY NAME IS “MIKE” – MIKE MULLARKEY CODE:- 007
A Newsletter Exclusive.**



It can now be revealed that Shelvoke & Drewry employed secret agents to ensure that they were constantly aware of developments at their commercial rivals.

For many years the refuse collection vehicle market was dominated by two names :- Shelvoke & Drewry of Letchworth and Dennis Bros. of Guilford. Other refuse vehicle manufacturers were regarded as second division as they mounted their bodies on commercial chassis. Glover, Webb & Liversidge favoured Karrier chassis whilst Eagle of Warwick often used Bedford chassis. So far as SD went the argument was that for refuse collection you needed a specialised chassis. The primary requirements were for a vehicle capable of constant stop/start conditions, a chassis rugged enough to travel on unmade roads to the tip (nowadays called landfill), and a cab large enough to carry a crew of five plus the driver. The large crew was necessary as customarily the operatives carried the bins from back gardens and returned them empty.

When Agent 007, otherwise known as Mike Mullarkey SD's Exeter Service Depot Manager heard that Dennis were demonstrating a new vehicle not far away from him in Exeter, the challenge to spy on the demo was irresistible.



With a quick:- “See you later lads” it was off in the car to see what was going on. Armed with his trusty camera Mike took the shot shown above. Clearly keen not to be spotted “007” kept his distance. And what a sight it was! An articulated Dennis! The

tractor unit carried the familiar Ogle designed Dennis cab which had caused such consternation at SD Headquarters in 1978 when it emerged that SD's revolutionary ‘P’ series cab wasn't as exclusive as they had believed. The tractor unit was coupled to a Dennis Phoenix 18 body.

“Ideal for Devon & Cornwall roads” thought Mike – “It wasn't!” “Who would ever want a vehicle this size?” he pondered. But this was clearly something he had to report back to Letchworth HQ. Emboldened by not being hustled away by Dennis heavies Mike selected the best secluded spot to carry on snapping away. And eventually he was close enough to get this shot of the coupling mechanism:-



Stewart Graham, a former Dennis demo driver told us:- “They were built for Hong Kong with Phoenix 18 bodies. Prior to delivery the customer wanted a demo, the problem was it could not reverse up some of the steep hills as it lost traction on the drive axle, they were a nightmare to reverse at the best of times due to single axle and very short wheel base.

They were not really designed for door to door street collecting, in HK they would drop the trailer under High rise flats and connect to mains to power the hydraulics and manually load as people bring to compactor. That said, as a tractor unit only, with Perkins twin turbo V8, they went like hell off the mark. I even beat a XR3 up to 40mph lol”

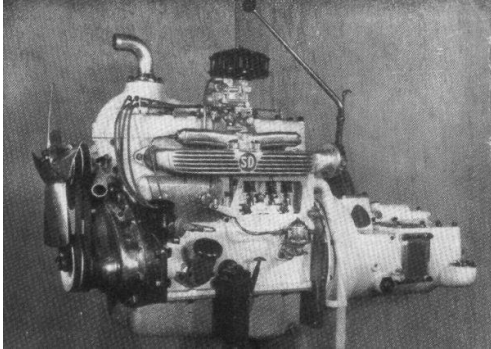
Well done 007!

THE MAKING OF AN SD ENTHUSIAST Part 2.

John Holt.

In the very early days of the SD Enthusiasts' Club John Holt wrote to me on 30th March 2003. Included in his letter were the words:- "People say that I am like a stick of rock – S&D right through."

John was typical of many SD employees, his father had two spells at S&D, as a demonstrator driver in the 1920's and 1930's and again as a driver in the 1950's. John came to the company in 1946 as an apprentice and his brother, Raymond, was also an SD apprentice. John served his National Service from 1951 to 1953 and then worked on the engine bench for a few months.



The photo shows the SD engine fitted in the 'W' type – in those days SD made their own engines and gearboxes.

John then moved to the Service Department where he rose to become a foreman and remained there until he was made redundant in 1983 having completed 35 ½ years at S&D. He also served on the Apprentices' Committee and enjoyed seeing school leavers progress to become qualified engineers. He had many friends at the company where he spent so many happy years.

Steve Jones.



From a very early age Steve Jones was fascinated by dustcarts. His Mother recalled that as a small boy he was getting all excited by Sunday because the bins would be emptied on the coming Wednesday. And he soon got to know the operators of the Council's dustcarts.

By the time he was at Secondary School he had to make sure that he had a window seat when the refuse collectors made their weekly visit to the school. So it was no surprise that on leaving school Steve spent nineteen years with Hounslow Borough Council on refuse collection and grounds maintenance. His overall favourite was the NY Revopak.. He enjoyed the work so much that even on holiday on the Isles of Scilly he managed to help out on their refuse collection where eventually they used a PN Revopak. When that was retired Steve managed to get

ownership of the vehicle and then persuade TV's Salvage Squad programme to restore it with the programme being broadcast in January 2003. A second vehicle was used as a source for parts and Steve also purchased from Blackpool an PNL Revopak that had been on sea front litter bin collecting duties.

Steve now lives on the Isle of Wight where he runs his own landscaping company. Steve keeps the ex-Isle of Scilly vehicle in pristine condition and ensures it stays in working order by making a regular collection of waste cardboard from an Isle of Wight retailer. The restoration of the PNL is a long term project with Steve spending many hours in a barn carrying out all the work that is required.

If that isn't defined as:-"Preserving the memories and reputation of Shelvoke & Drewry" ? I ask, what is? A visit to Steve's home reveals all the memorabilia he has accumulated about Shelvokes over the years.

Trevor Wood.

By coincidence Trevor Wood is also a resident of the Isle of Wight where he lives in retirement. He joined Dorking Urban District Council in October 1972 working on refuse collection. At that time Dorking had 3 TZ Pakamatics, the oldest being from 1964, one Fore & Aft tipper and a Bedford TK with an Eagle Crushload body. When the Pakamatic was replaced by a Revopak Trevor describes it as like being given a Rolls-Royce - such was the improvement.

In the 1974 Local Government Reorganisation Dorking U.D.C., Leatherhead U.D.C. and the rural part of Dorking & Horley R.D.C. became Mole Valley District Council. The amalgamation of the refuse collection fleets gave Trevor the opportunity to compare SD's Fore & Aft tippers with their Glover Webb & Liversidge equivalent – the DualTip.



A G.W.& L DualTip on a Karrier chassis.

Over the years Trevor discovered that Shelvoke & Drewry's products were generally superior to those of their competitors and the higher purchase price was fully justified. As a result many local authorities remained loyal to a particular manufacturer as their vehicles came to the end of their economic life.

The operatives looked for a reliable vehicle without any major faults in their design. And that's the reason why Trevor would describe himself as an SD Enthusiast because experience told him that SD's were quite simply the best.

Gary's Boys Part 1. Gary Sugden in conversation with your Editor.



When in a phone call Malcolm Bates mentioned that he'd recently visited Gary Sugden and that Gary had a lot of stories about Shelvoke's SPV Division, I thought it was too good an opportunity to miss.

There hasn't been a lot in the Newsletter, or it's predecessor the Magazine, about the SPV's. Many of my correspondents are more knowledgeable about SD's refuse collection vehicles, although there is considerable interest in the SPV Fire Appliances. So I welcomed the opportunity to redress the omission.

Much of the account that follows has been taken from Gary Sugden's words on the telephone, with additional material from my archive of stories, and a lot of help from Malcolm Bates' writing in Vintage Roadscene Archive No.11 SD -Shelvoke & Drewry. [Referred later in the text as Bookazine.] The Photo above of Gary's Boys was supplied to me by Roger Morrisroe..

Gary came to S&D as a young man in 1960 having served an apprenticeship as a Motor Mechanic and joined the Service Department. Here he met up with John Hill, John Holt, Reg Bowles, Jim Morley (who served 46 years at the company), Jack Fitch, Eric Kilfoyle, "Charlie" Lawton, Frank Hopgood among others. All under the control of Jack Arnold, the well respected Service Manager, who reported to Jack Wilkinson, Sales Director. Gary must have liked the people he joined to work with, and the work, because he stayed in the Service Department for 17 years!

Now in 1974 the decision was taken to discontinue the manufacture of heavy duty fork lift trucks, and the Special Purpose Division (SPV) came about to provide alternative work and income for the company. For various reasons the SPV Division didn't get off to a good start and in 1977 Gary, who had been recommended by Harry Mansell, was sent for by Ron Nicholson an ex SD apprentice and the Manufacturing Director from 1975 – 81. "It's make or break," he told Gary "either you sort things out or the SPV Division will close." Gary accepted the challenge and set to work alongside the refuse collection vehicle chassis line supervised by Steve Pearce, an SD apprentice 1950

– 55 and now Superintendent of the chassis line. Here 60 men produced up to 20 chassis of the 'N' series per week. A far cry from your Editor's time at the company when I think six men produced five chassis a week.



A 1978/79 NY Revopak. Peter Jarman photo.

Gary had close contact with Frank Dean who had joined the company as Chief Engineer from Dennis Bros., along with Tom Tillson as Technical Director who between them had overseen the successful design of the 'T' series Pakamatic. in 1959. On the retirement of Tom Tillson in 1979 Frank Dean was appointed Technical Director.

Gary was given freedom to recruit his own choices to his team, and looking back he remembers:- "I chose well. They were a brilliant bunch of workers." The majority were quite young, and ex-SD apprentices, and Gary was impressed by the quality of the training they had received. "They were all good lads," he told your Editor.

With time the team grew to 40 personnel – a far larger enterprise than your Editor had imagined.


In part 2 we shall look at the SPV's on exhibition display.

THE CENTENARY OF THE FOUNDING OF SHELVOKE & DREWRY Ltd.

There are now four events planned to celebrate the founding of S&D later this year.

Peter Johnston Chairman of McCreath Taylor (N.I.) Ltd
is organising

**A GRAND DISPLAY OF
PRESERVED SD VEHICLES.**



In Conjunction with the Annual Classic & Vintage Commercial
Gathering at the British Motor Museum at Gaydon, Warwickshire on
Saturday 11th June 2022 and Sunday 12th June 2022
10.00 am to 4.00 pm

To register your vehicle for display and for further details
Please contact:-
Peter Johnston on 07860 868967
Or Malcolm Bates on 07831 798042

If you are going to join us at Gaydon in June advance tickets are now available at a reduced price and need to be purchased before Midnight on Thursday 9th June. If using a Sat Nav for directions it is recommended that you enter the British Motor Museum as a point of interest rather than using the postcode. Also from the website :- "Sunday is the busier day."



SD 100
The SD Enthusiasts' Club.



**A Celebration of the Centenary of the Founding of
Shelvoke & Drewry Ltd.**
**Sunday 25th September 2022 afternoon & evening at
The Broadway Hotel Letchworth Garden City.**

An opportunity to meet up with former SD work colleagues, friends and others who have an interest in Shelvoke & Drewry.

There will be an extensive display of material concerning Shelvoke & Drewry including some from the SD Archive that has never previously been exhibited.

Refreshments will be provided and a licenced bar will be open throughout the event.

Tickets are £20.00 per person and will be on sale from 4th April 2022.

It is anticipated that at the same time an Exhibition will be open at the Museum at One Garden City which is located on the Broadway and is just a short distance from the hotel.

Having taken soundings, we are pleased that there is considerable enthusiasm for another Enthusiasts' Club event. This will be similar to the SD Remembered event of September 2004 and we think the additional features that we are planning will be attractive.



Celebrating the SD Centenary in Belfast.

On Saturday 3rd September 2022 The Ulster Vintage Commercial Vehicle Club are holding a Road Run to finish at the Titanic Quarter where there will be a display of preserved Shelvoke & Drewry Vehicles.

I have been advised of this event in Belfast on 3rd September and details will be available nearer the date. The photo shows the Titanic Museum located in the Belfast docks area.

**AN EXHIBITION TO CELEBRATE
THE CENTENARY OF THE
FOUNDATION OF SHELVOKE &
DREWRY Ltd.**



**The Museum at One Garden City
Broadway Letchworth SG6 3BF**

26th September until 30th November 2022.

In conjunction with the Shelvoke & Drewry Enthusiasts' Club there will be a special display at the above Museum.

For Opening Times See:- <https://www.lechworth.com/museum>
Or phone :- 01462 530350

This Exhibition is a combined project between the Museum at One Broadway and the SD Enthusiasts' Club. A small Organising Committee have given invaluable assistance in planning the above two events.



What's this flower planter doing here?

A correspondent who prefers to remain anonymous told me that when the teak floor boards that were taken up when the S&D boardroom was knocked down, someone rescued them and they were stored in his garage for years. When he was having a clear out a few were passed on. "It was a shame to let such lovely pieces of wood go to waste so I have made a couple of flower troughs."

THE EDITOR'S PAGE.

OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO FORMER SD EMPLOYEES.

Colin Pierson.



We were sorry to hear that Colin Pierson died on 19th December 2021. Colin was an SD apprentice who married a Danish young woman and settled in Denmark. In the 1970's he was instrumental in securing orders for S&D in Denmark from Bent Stage. The story appeared in an SD Newsletter Extra in April 2020. Colin is on the left in the above photo. On your behalf I have offered our condolences to his family.

Mick Hall.

Valerie Withy (née Hitch) informed me of the sudden death of Mick Hall in February. Mick was an SD apprentice who later worked in the Machine Shop. He was a keen sportsman playing hockey, golf and cricket for Barley C.C., the same village team that Val's husband, Dirk, played for. In later years he became involved in the local Bowls Club. He was a very kind man and Val remembers how when he saw her struggling with a heavy box he carried it home for her.

SURVIVING SD VEHICLES.

News has come in about some surviving vehicles..



This photo appeared on Facebook saying the tanker had arrived in a scrap yard near Biggleswade.

Your Editor recognised it as HYD 719 D a 1966 'T' type that had spent many years with SKF at Luton. Later it appeared on a auction site for auction on 16th February. Described as a She Lung Drewery!



Tommy Moore sent this historic photo of Peter Johnston's PN Revopak ex- Isle of Man arriving in Belfast. Tommy wrote to say that the Revopak is still getting the wiring loom fitted, some loose ends to tidy up, the radiator is also fitted. Work continues on the Gully Emptier KLK 464 K.



From Bristol Aled Rees sent in the above photo of his 1974 NY Revopak re-imported from Malta. The engine has been removed for overhaul as restoration continues on the vehicle.

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 June 2022 Summer Issue