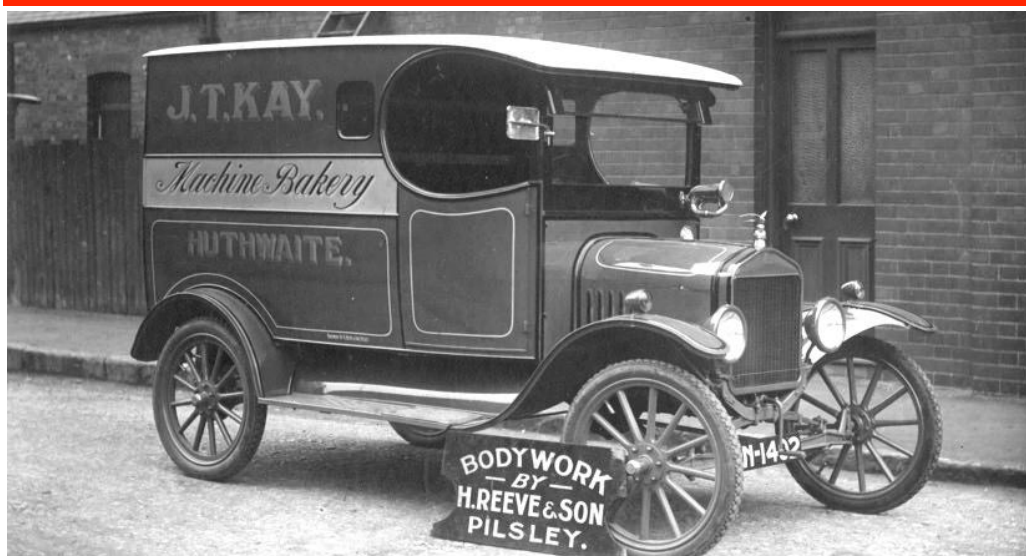


# Kithead News

Newsletter of The Kithead Trust



In this issue:

- Important addition to collection
- A mysterious (electric) map
- The Irish Sleeper Coach
- Railway Library

## Captain's Log with archivist Philip Kirk

Welcome to this second edition of our newsletter, which takes up a number of the themes from the first.

There is an update on progress towards our aim for accreditation under The National Archives scheme, and an excellent account of the short life of The Irish Sleeper Coach, which grew out of an unidentified photograph in our collection.

We also raise two new strands which have something of a “back to the future” flavour. There is a very curious map showing vehicle electric charging points - from the 1950s - and an account of how our collection is contributing to the ongoing debate about bus service regulation in the provinces.

Since last time, we have had an important addition to our collection of bus company records, with the usual surprises thrown in for good measure.

We are always on the lookout for appropriate material to add to our collection, and we were able to accept the United Enthusiasts Club archive in its entirety, whilst the Club has the satisfaction that it is well looked after in its new home.

Many thanks for all the good wishes which we received after the first issue. I hope that we haven't suffered from the musicians' “second album” syndrome with this issue, and there is something of interest for everyone.

We are now circulating to more than 200 inboxes. Please feel free to forward this newsletter to anyone who may be interested.

# Lessons from History?



*Dr. Iain Macbriar of The TAS Partnership collects evidence from PTE reports at The Kithead Trust.*

The debate about the best way to regulate bus services - or not - outside London continues between local and central government, bus operators and various pressure groups.

Leading bus industry consultancy The TAS Partnership made a significant contribution with the publication earlier this year of a report entitled *The PTEs 1975-85*.

Public Transport Executives (PTEs) were created initially under the Transport Act 1968 to co-ordinate public transport within designated conurbation areas. The first PTEs were in West Midlands, South East Lancashire and North East Cheshire (thankfully acronymed

to SELNEC), Merseyside and Tyneside. They started in 1969/70 and took over the existing municipal bus and trolleybus operations in their areas.

Subsequent local government reorganization saw three new PTEs created in the 1970s - Greater Glasgow, West Yorkshire and South Yorkshire. In addition, the areas of some others were expanded.

The bus operating powers of the PTEs was lost under the Transport Act 1985 and their operating companies were sold into the private sector.

Today the PTEs survive as Integrated Transport Authorities (ITAs) although their campaigning body is still called PTEG - the PTE Group.

PTEG argue that deregulated bus services have resulted in a dramatic fall in bus use and this can be reversed by a change to a London-style franchising system, with control resting with the ITAs.

The substantial TAS report considers the performance of the Passenger Transport Executives, using information extracted from PTE annual reports held at Kithead. TAS director Chris Cheek said:

“The reports retained at Kithead provided an excellent source - it’s another example of the importance of retaining historical material.”

The PTEG website is at <http://www.pteg.net>

The TAS report is available to download free of charge at <http://www.taspublications.co.uk/content/index.php/publications-shop/busdownloads/the-ptes-1975-85-pdf-detail>.



*Back to the future? A typical West Midland PTE bus of the 1980s*

# Railway Library

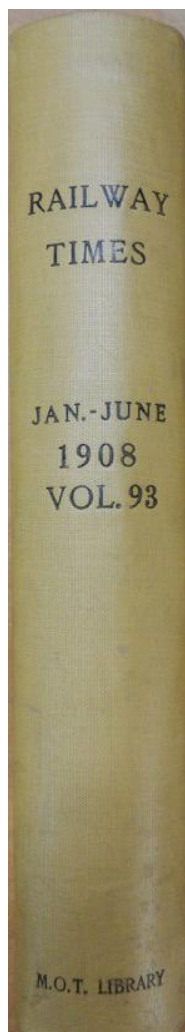
with volunteer Tony Jones



*We aren't just about buses!  
Here, Tony Jones, our  
volunteer heading up the  
railway library, opens the  
door...*

I have been working on the railway library for about two years, and I have now got through about 20% of it! We estimate that we have about 20,000 railway books in our collection and it is growing all the time.

It ranges from the usual Ian Allan titles covering a lot of subjects in "picture book" format, through very detailed studies of individual lines (Oakwood Press) and onto bound copies of official and industry journals from the Victorian era onwards.



These include Railway News from 1871 onwards, Railway Times from 1860, Railway Journal from 1851 and a relative latecomer in Railway Gazette from 1920.

All books are being catalogued, including descriptions, and a searchable library catalogue is planned to be available online with our new website later this year.

In the meantime, if you are interested in the extensive railway library, come along and take a look.

*Tony Jones is retired from a career in the oil industry, including logistics and supply chain roles. When not sorting through thousands of railway books, he can be found on his local golf course.*

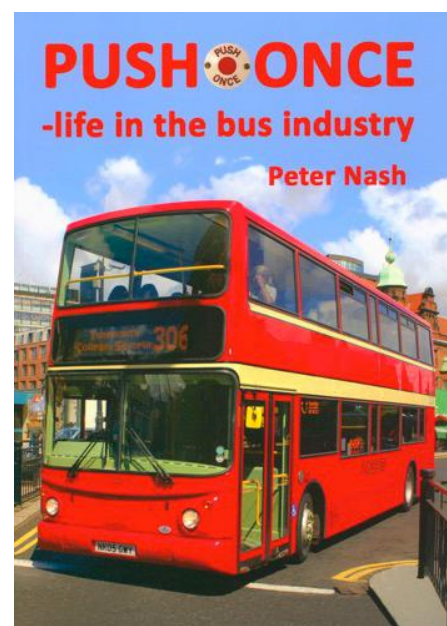
# Book Offer

Peter Nash enjoyed a long and highly successful career in the bus industry - ending as Policy Director with Stagecoach UK Bus.

Like many of us, Peter believes that the bus industry is all about people and their stories which make up the real picture.

The difference is that Peter decided to do something about it! He persuaded many notable bus industry characters to tell their stories and you can read all about it - 'Push Once' is now available for £10 including postage as a special offer to newsletter readers. All profits go to the Trust.

Just send your tenner to our address on page 8.





# Archive Progress Report

(or “How to get Very Excited about Boxes”).

In the last issue, we described our medium-term aim to gain accreditation under The National Archives scheme.

This will involve a huge amount of work in getting our collection organized and catalogued, and also ensuring it is kept in the right conditions.

In the last three months, we have taken the first significant steps towards this. We are separating published books (which will form our reference library) from records.

Within the records, we are then dividing different materials which may need different treatment to ensure their long-term survival. For example, photographs should be stored at a much lower temperature than papers.

Perhaps the biggest step forward is the adoption of acid-free boxes in which to store the archive material. These are hand-made to order at Ryder & Co. of Bletchley. It makes sense to order in bulk and so we obtained 700 as an initial order; these come ready assembled and stapled and so take up quite a bit of room.

We are also cataloguing the entire collection to professional standards - the *International Standard of Archival Description* or ISAD.

This standard is common throughout the archive community and it is designed to enable easy transfer of catalogues.

We will eventually be able to send a copy of the Kithead catalogue to The National Archive’s Discovery search engine and so our collection will gain the widest possible exposure.



The ISAD listing will form the basis of a searchable catalogue which is the main feature of our new website, due to go live by the end of 2015.

The first few sets of bus company records have now been boxed up and catalogued - United Automobile Services, South Wales Transport, Northern General and Barton Transport. These alone have taken up more than 100 boxes so we will soon need a further batch.

We will be giving regular updates, but you may wish to look at the accreditation standards yourself, at:

[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/archive-service-accreditation.htm](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/archive-service-accreditation.htm).

Location	Box	Acc Number	Title	Creator	Date A	Date B	Extent	Level	Description	Notes	Donor	Access
E51	B00060	000247	Lincolnshire transfer	United Automobile Services	1931	1931	1 file	item	Correspondence and papers regarding the purchase of part of the United operations in Lincolnshire to Lincolnshire Road Car Company		United Enthusiasts Club	Open
E51	B00060	000248	Alnwick premises	United Automobile Services	1932	1944	1 file	item	Correspondence and papers regarding leasing and possible purchase of premises.		United Enthusiasts Club	Open

An example of ISAD listing, from the collection we have obtained from the United Enthusiasts Club.

## Additions to the Collection

### United Automobile Services

We have been fortunate to acquire a significant collection of records that originated with United Automobile Services, based in Darlington, County Durham.

The material was 'discovered' in 2001 when United's successor company, Arriva North East, vacated the long-established Head Office in Grange Road. The call went out - via a bus industry intermediary - to the United Enthusiasts Club to the effect that if they wanted the material they could have it, but that it had to be taken in the next 24 hours.

There followed a bit of a scramble to transport the material, but it was achieved, and for the intervening years it has been kept successively in individual members' houses, garages etc. It was used to good effect in producing excellent articles on historical subjects by members of the Club. The story so far is a probably a familiar one to lots of enthusiast clubs and societies.

There was concern within the Club that the material was not being kept in the best conditions and it was reliant on individual members giving up space to accommodate it. Therefore, they approached the Trust who were able to offer a permanent home, under professional conditions.

A vote on the issue was taken at the Club's AGM, and the change of ownership was passed by a significant majority. Philip Kirk and lead volunteer Bob Carr travelled to the north-east and boxed everything up ready for its transfer south, where the material became the first part of the collection to be fully catalogued, as demonstrated in 'Progress Report' on page 4.

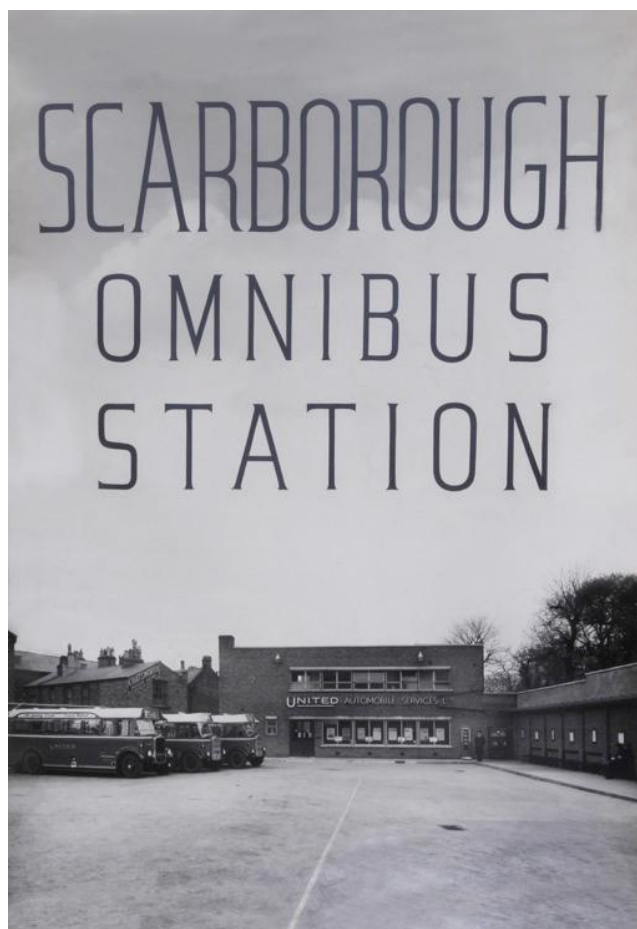
The material is a valuable addition as it complements our existing United Auto holding, expanding it by around 400%. It includes

company accounts and supporting papers, a lot of details on the fleet and company acquisitions - some which came to fruition and others which didn't.

If anyone would like to have a copy of the United catalogue spreadsheet, please email us at [hello@kitheadtrust.org.uk](mailto:hello@kitheadtrust.org.uk).

Probably the most significant photographs in the collection are a fantastic series of six which were taken in the 1930s to illustrate bus stations built by the company. We have had these professionally copied and the originals - which are 'confetti-ing' at the edges - will be placed in secure deep storage.

Below is one of the six, showing Scarborough Bus Station. Others are Ashington, Carlisle, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Stokesley. United really covered some territory!



# Is Nothing New?

*This is a new feature where we try to shed light on an earlier example of supposedly ‘modern’ technology.*

## Can you solve the map mystery?

*It is inspired by a curious map...*

Electric vehicles have been around almost as long as the internal combustion engine, without really becoming a mass market solution. In recent years, there has been a series of breakthroughs and there are now electric cars and buses on many city streets.

This map (excuse the fold marks) was found in our collection, but not attached to anything and so we don't know its provenance. By its feel and look, we assume it is from the 1950s. It was published by SMMT (The Society of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers), when its address was 83 Pall Mall, London, SW1.

The title is “Electric Vehicle Charging Stations” and the assumption is that it was published as information to members.

But in that era, what type of electric vehicle would be so far from base that it needed to be recharged?

Was this a pre-development attempt to create a national network of charging points?

Enquiries to SMMT have drawn a blank, but we would really like to know what the map is all about!





## That Sleeper Coach



*In the last issue, we showed this photograph, part of our collection from Strachans coachbuilders of Acton. We asked if anyone had any information. Notable researcher from Ireland, Cyril McIntyre rose to our challenge for information. The coach is lettered "Irish Sleeper Omnibus Service" Cyril writes:*

The company - Furey's Tours of Dublin - was run by a Mr. T.J. Furey, and this AEC coach was claimed at the time to be the first sleeper coach in the country, for a service between Dublin and Cork, via Limerick. The coach was registered (at least) by 24 December 1928, when it was demonstrated to a correspondent of *The Motor News*, of Dublin.

A demonstration trip to Belfast included a delegation of bus and coach operators and dignitaries from Dublin, including Senator Sean Milroy. The press article stated that "at every wayside stop, interested crowds swarmed around."

The service started in January 1929, leaving Dublin at 2300 hrs on Monday, Thursday and Saturday, and returning from Cork at 2130 hrs on Sunday, Tuesday and Friday.

The journey took around nine hours. The fares were 35/- single sleeper, 25/- single non-sleeper. The capacity was 32 seats or 16 sleeping berths - the coach could be configured according to the bookings. A toilet and buffet service was included.

Sadly, the service didn't last long. *The Motor News* reported that 'the service has been temporarily withdrawn' on 13 April 1929.

Thereafter the coach was used on normal private hire work and special services to race meetings.

It was damaged by fire - possibly around 1932 or 1933 - and the body was rebuilt to normal 32-seat layout. The coach passed to the Great Southern Railway with Furey's business on 14 March 1935. It was withdrawn by the end of the same year and scrapped, probably without being used by its new owner.

*With thanks to Cyril for sharing his research with us.*



Cork to Dublin via Limerick – quite a journey

## Want to Find Out What We Have?

Our new website will be online by the end of 2015. This will include a searchable database of the parts of the collection we have catalogued.

In the meantime, if you would like to have a copy of our listing for your particular area or operator of interest, please email us on [hello@kitheadtrust.org.uk](mailto:hello@kitheadtrust.org.uk)

## Volunteers Needed

We have an interesting range of tasks ahead of us, which require an equally diverse range of skills and abilities. If you would like to get involved, please get in touch with us on [hello@kitheadtrust.org.uk](mailto:hello@kitheadtrust.org.uk).

Even if you can just do a half-day every month, this could be very valuable to us. Full training will be given.

We also have tasks which can be done away from our premises.

## Donations Welcome

We are always interested in acquiring new archive material on transport subjects. If you or your organisation have material which you are thinking of disposing, please speak to us first.

## Are You Signed Up?

This newsletter is being sent out to our supporters, and anyone who we think might be interested in hearing about us. To satisfy Data Protection requirements, if you would like to receive future editions please register with us, simply by emailing us at [hello@kitheadtrust.org.uk](mailto:hello@kitheadtrust.org.uk) with "Newsletter Subscribe" in the subject line.

We guarantee that we will only use your email address to promote The Kithead Trust and we won't disclose it to anyone else.

## How to Visit us

The Kithead Trust Archive and Library is usually open on Wednesday and Thursday each week, from 10.00am to 4.00pm.

There are a limited number of spaces available in our searchroom, and so it is essential that you check with us to book a place.

There is no membership or payment required to use the Archive and Library, although the majority of users feel that it is appropriate to make a donation towards the upkeep of the collection.

The nearest railway station is Droitwich Spa, some 1.7 miles away. Bus services which pass close by are 20 (Monday to Saturday) and 133 (Monday, Wednesday, Friday); full details are available from [www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info).

Our premises are wheelchair accessible via a separate entrance. If you do have special access requirements please let us know when booking.

We are able to provide hot beverages and have a refreshment area. We do not sell food, nor is there a shop nearby. We advise you to plan ahead and bring something with you - we can store it in the fridge!

Please note that we don't allow refreshments to be taken in the searchroom - for obvious reasons.

This Newsletter is Published by

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