

# Kithead News

Newsletter of The Kithead Trust



An ADC climbing Shap in what then was Westmoreland – 16 miles of 1 in 4 gradient.

Merry Christmas from the  
Kithead team

## In this issue:

The Tony Whitehead collection

The Hodgetts railway photo collection

Some last-minute Christmas ideas

A last look (for now) at the Townsin collection

# The Tony Whitehead Collection

Once again we have had a photograph collection of great significance donated. Tony Whitehead was official photographer for the National Bus Company (NBC) for just about its whole life and as such he was responsible for capturing on film just about every significant development through the company's near-20 year history.

Tony retained the negatives and many prints from his time with NBC, and for the last few years these have been stored at his business premises, Mayflower Galleries, in Tavistock in Devon. He has now retired from the business and was delighted to hear about The Kithead Trust as a suitable new home for the collection.



Tony (above) hands over the NBC collection at our Droitwich premises.

In addition to the launch of many a Leyland National and Bristol VR, here are two photographs of less usual activities: (left) London Country "Pick-me-up" Ford Transit (carrying the Lord Mayor – chain of office and all) in Harlow and (right) Falmouth Park & Ride with a Bristol SU.





# The Tony Whitehead Collection



Typical of Tony's work was the launch of special products, such as on the left, the 1975 National Holidays and National Ensign Holidays programmes and brochures.

Pictured are Derek Fytche and David Glassborow, then both of National Travel, along with the type of person that you weren't necessarily guaranteed to meet on this type of holiday....

...and new uniforms for London Country below.

"Having seen the impressive collection at Kithead, and the tremendous work that is taking place there, I am very pleased to be able to donate the photograph collection," said Tony. "It has been stored for many years and I have been wondering how best to preserve it intact for the long-term."

Tony freely admits that he could be highly resourceful when a "natural" shot was required. Not only would office staff be used as "passengers" on a new bus or service, but passers-by would also often be pressed into service – without payment!

As usual with a mixed collection, it isn't easy to estimate how many separate views there are in the collection, but it certainly runs to many thousands. It will take some time before these are all catalogued but here are a few tasters.



# The Hodgetts Railway Photo Collection



A jewel in the Trust's railway holdings is the Hodgetts collection, around 750 photo negatives taken by a rail enthusiast in the 1930s. These came to us from Mr Hodgett's widow in the 1990s, via the Dart Valley Railway Association; and what a great collection it is. Here are just two views from it. See page 7 for more news of our railway collections.



Above is a 4-6-2T engine in LMS ownership, taken at Bangor depot on 12<sup>th</sup> April 1936. It was built at Crewe in 1911 by the London and North Western Railway. They were known as the "5ft. 6in Superheater Tanks".

Below is Caledonian Railway No. 23 ready for preservation at the superbly named St Rollox works in Glasgow on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1936.



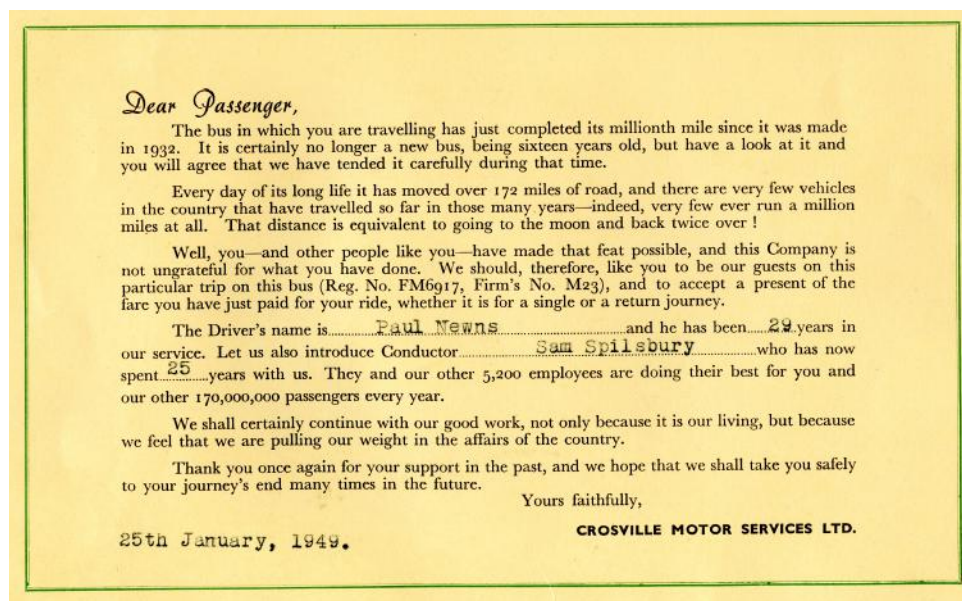
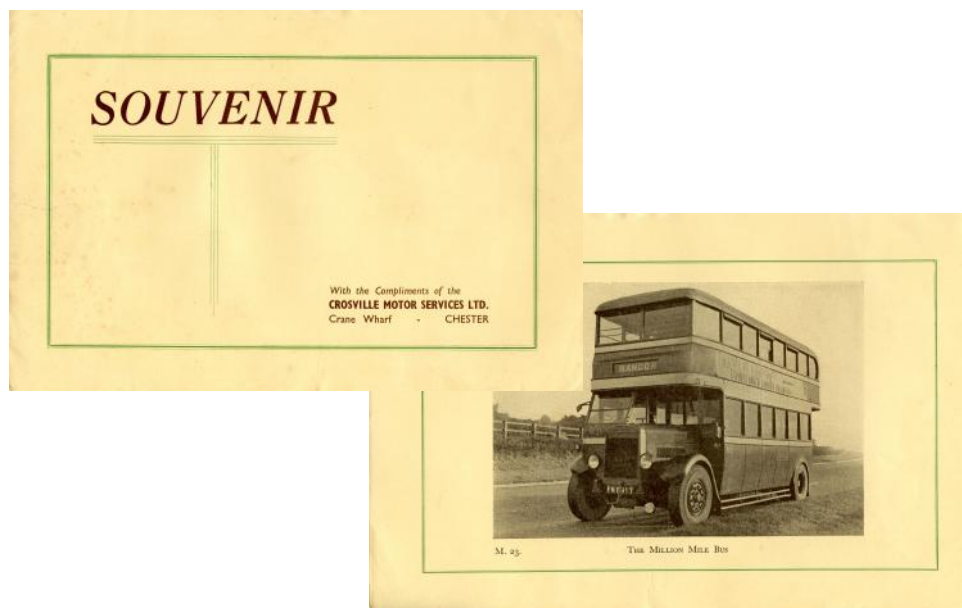
# The Townsin Collection: Crosville extra



For our final glimpse (for now) at the collection of the late Alan Townsin - seen above on journalist duties in London in the mid 1960s - we follow up the mention last time of Crosville's kindly disposition to enthusiasts, at a time when some companies took a decidedly different view. General Manager of the time W.J. Crosland-Taylor, whose family had started the company, referred to enthusiast as "fans" in his two-volume work on the history and operation of the company. (An excellent read, highly recommended).

Crosville were clearly highly sensitive to their public image and when they were running superannuated buses in the 1940s due to restrictions on obtaining new

stock, they made capital of the situation by staging a commemoration of a Leyland Titan achieving its millionth mile by presenting passengers with a commemorative brochure, complete with typed-in names of the driver and conductor.



The text also makes reference to the excellent way in which Crosville has maintained the bus since it was new in 1932, and that "we are pulling our weight in the affairs of the country".

A great PR piece - if any operators of superannuated Dennis Tridents are watching....

# Christmas Special

(unfortunately unavailable) gifts on a transport theme



First up is a delightful range: Dodge, Ford and Bedford, which look like they are all for sale at a field near the premises of Theobald's of Long Melford. Prices range from £75 to £125 so they should go pretty quickly!

If that doesn't stretch the pocket far enough then how about something from the Duple Annual for 1962?

This seems to have been distributed to operators. In addition to details and illustrations of the whole Duple range, the bookmark is helpfully sponsored by finance house United Dominion Trust (UDT). Very handy if you wanted to buy that new Commer Avenger....

**TROUBLE-FREE PERFORMANCE WITH OUTSTANDING ECONOMY**

Brilliantly designed and beautifully styled, the 'Avenger' with the silent, smooth, and easily maintained Rootes diesel engine developing 105 b.h.p., gives many operators 20 m.p.g. or more, bringing economy with prestige.

Full 8 ft. wide coachwork provides spacious comfort for 41 passengers, while superb brakes and suspension, maximum driver comfort and visibility give the highest possible safety factor. Choose the 'Avenger' for your fleet!

**THE ROOTES DIESEL-ENGINE**  
**COMMER 'AVENGER'**  
**41 SEAT LUXURY COACH**      **COMFORT \* POWER \* SAFETY**

COMMER CARS LTD. LUTON BEDS.      EXPORT DIVISION: ROOTES LTD. DEVONSHIRE HOUSE PICCADILLY LONDON W.1

**"COACH OF THE YEAR"**

British Coach Rally 1961  
 OVERALL WINNER IN ALL SECTIONS  
**DUPLE-BRITANNIA**  
 A.C.C. RELIANCE COACH

OVERSIGHT: LONDON NEW TRANSPORT CO. LTD.  
 BY BRITISH UNITED AUTOMOBILE SERVICES

POWER OF 3 TONNES

**DUPLE** annual 1962

**UNITED AUTOMOBILE SERVICES LTD.**  
 1954

Finally, how about a card and present from the boss? The card on the left was sent by A.T. Evans, General Manager of United Automobile Services to conductress Mrs. A. Cleasby along with a bonus of ten shillings. We know what the bonus was because the 10/- note is still with the card in the original envelope!

Mrs. Cleasby's brother-in-law was a bus operator in the Durham area who sold his service to United.



## A Bit of Advice, Dear

Peter Shipp of East Yorkshire Motor Services recently donated some material to the Trust, including this undated advert. Probably the best we can say is that it is self-explanatory.

Mrs Editor, who is a native of the East Riding is unavailable for comment as she is still on the roof



## Railway Corner with Tony Jones

Following our appeal for railway material in the last issue, Ken Swallow got in touch. Ken was the custodian of a Roll of Honour of the London and North Western Railway which had been retrieved from a skip in Liverpool. The book covers the 4,000 employees of the Company who lost their lives or were decorated in the First World War.

Inside is a certificate from the General Manager, Euston Station dated August 1911, addressed to Mr. J. Rutchings recording the management's thanks for his services during the "recent labour troubles". The name of R. Rutchings is included in the Roll of Honour under the "station employed" heading at Garston. Many other names associated with Garston have been underlined in the Roll, which would possibly indicate a link with the station.

Attempts through the Garston and District Historical Society and the Liverpool and SW Lancashire Family History Society have failed to locate any surviving members of the Rutchings Family. However, through other family history sources it can be deduced that the certificate was addressed to James Rutchings and the death in the Great War was his son Robert Hutchings.

The 1911 census records show that seven members of the Rutchings family were living at 8, Dock Cottages, Dock Road, Garston. The Garston Docks were owned by the LNWR as were the Dock Cottages. It appears that all four of the male members of the family were employed by the railway, namely James (Dock Gateman) and his three sons James Albert, (Crane Driver), Robert (Porter) and William (Parcels Delivery Van Boy). This is indicative of the traditions of the period when subsequent generations of families followed their parents into railway service.

# Final Words (and pictures)

## from Archivist Philip Kirk

It's been a great year at Kithead and I would like to say a personal "thank you" to our supporters who have given their financial backing, to our volunteers who have given freely of their time and worked so hard, and finally to those who have donated material to us. In wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, we draw on a couple of photos from two of the largest collections we received this year. Thanks again.



On the left, from the Whitehead collection, appears to be Terry Scott and June Whitfield discussing the secret of low cost vehicle reliability with a representative of Cumberland Motor Services (doubtless with hilarious consequences). On the right, from the Townsin collection, proof that we really should have a caption competition.

## Are You Signed Up?

If you didn't receive this direct from us and you would like to receive the newsletter on a regular basis, simply email 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 Trust and we won't disclose it to anyone else.

## Why not pay us a visit?

We are open Wednesdays and Thursdays each week from 10am to 4pm (and some other days and times by arrangement). Please book your place in the Search Room by emailing [hello@kitheadtrust.org.uk](mailto:hello@kitheadtrust.org.uk)

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This Newsletter is Published by The Kithead Trust, De Salis Drive, Hampton Lovett, Droitwich Spa, Worcs, WR9 0QE. [www.kitheadtrust.org.uk](http://www.kitheadtrust.org.uk). Charity Number 328257.