

# Trolleybus

Vol. 60 No. 716

March 2021



The magazine of the British Trolleybus Society



*Recalling Mexborough & Swinton*

*A Day in Košice*

*World News Extra - Photo Feature*

# TROLLEYBUS

The magazine of the  
British Trolleybus Society

No. 716 March 2021

## Editor: Dave Chick

23 Pryor Close, Purley on Thames,  
Berkshire RG31 6UG  
[editor@britishtrolley.org.uk](mailto:editor@britishtrolley.org.uk)

## Production Editor:

### Philip Jenkinson

32 College Street, Crosland Moor,  
Huddersfield HD4 5EB  
[blindlemonjenkinson@btinternet.com](mailto:blindlemonjenkinson@btinternet.com)

## Preservation News Editor:

### Jody White

20 Cunningham Crescent,  
Chatham, Kent ME5 0ES  
[museumnews@britishtrolley.org.uk](mailto:museumnews@britishtrolley.org.uk)

## World News Editor: Bruce Lake

35 Warneford Road, Cowlersley,  
Huddersfield HD4 5TW  
[worldnews@britishtrolley.org.uk](mailto:worldnews@britishtrolley.org.uk)

## Distribution: Derek Pearson

25 Caldbeck Drive, Woodley  
RG5 4LA  
[distribution@britishtrolley.org.uk](mailto:distribution@britishtrolley.org.uk)

## Subscriptions and Membership:

### Andrew Barton

2 Josephine Court, Southcote  
Road, Reading RG30 2DG  
[secretary@britishtrolley.org.uk](mailto:secretary@britishtrolley.org.uk)

## Website:

[www.britishtrolley.org.uk](http://www.britishtrolley.org.uk)

Printed by Barden Print  
Birkby, Huddersfield  
Telephone (01484) 422522

*Trolleybus should be regarded as  
overdue to subscribers if not received  
by the 20th of each month*

© The British Trolleybus Society  
Registered Charity No. 1033666

# B T S NOTICE BOARD

## BTS Meetings – by Zoom!

**Friday 2 April** Four Tramways and an Exhibition. Mark Hamlin describes a visit to the North-West in 2018.

All members who have registered their email addresses on the BTS website will receive joining instructions for the meeting as part of the Society's email newssheet. If you do not receive emails from the Society please email [chairman@britishtrolley.org.uk](mailto:chairman@britishtrolley.org.uk) to be sent the meeting link.

The Zoom meetings are working well and have started to have quite a social feel to them. Members who login from 19.15 are able to chat with each other and at 19.30 everyone is muted until the end of the presentation so that there is no extraneous noise. Unmuting is then encouraged for a question-and-answer session.

## Zooming Forward!

The Society will restart the Reading meetings when it is considered safe to do so, but with the Zoom meetings proving popular and allowing the participation of members who would not usually be able to attend a meeting, Zoom meetings will continue but on a different day. Graham Bilbé is drawing up a programme and details will be announced when we know more about the possibility of holding physical meetings.

## MONTHLY PRIZE DRAW

### February Winners

£70 **J O'B Smith**, Staines, Middlesex

£50 **F R Whitehead**, Hildenborough, Kent

## Subscriptions

If you have registered on the website you will receive your subscription reminders by email. This reduces the work of the Membership Secretary and saves the printing costs of reminders. You will only receive a paper reminder if you are not registered.

## On The Cover

*Mexborough & Swinton's last trolleybus ran 60 years ago this month. This painting by George Sydney Cooper, published with the artist's kind permission, shows 1947 Brush-bodied Sunbeam W No 10. The backdrop is the 12th century Conisbrough Castle, which inspired Sir Walter Scott's Ivanhoe.*  
G S Cooper



# BTS Vehicle News

## Mexborough & Swinton 34

In this month's Trolleybus we commemorate the 60th anniversary of the closure of the Mexborough & Swinton trolleybus system, the last company-owned system in the UK.

Although four of the company's Sunbeams which were sold to Bradford and rebodied as double-deckers are preserved, our 1927 Garrett is the only complete Mexborough & Swinton trolleybus that still exists, although it is complete only in the sense that the chassis and body remain.

Since launching what was always going to be the most challenging restoration project in the Society's history there may have been no visible progress but we have acquired a set of original Garrett drawings and received a report setting out how the restoration could be achieved. We also have a carpenter lined-up for the woodwork.

One of the difficulties we have is that there is insufficient working space available at Sandtoft for the major work required by this project. The Committee is very keen to make a start on the restoration and is considering a number of options for how we can do this.

We have been building up a fund so that work can start when we have the room to do it. If you feel inspired by our Mexborough & Swinton features this month then please feel free to make a donation!

## BTS Email News-sheet

The News-sheet will be emailed to all members who are registered on the BTS website on or around the 20th of every month. Thank you to everyone who has contacted Publicity Officer Paul Dicken since publication commenced. You can email Paul at [publicity@britishtrolley.org.uk](mailto:publicity@britishtrolley.org.uk)

## The London 1812 Appeal

This month we have received just over £1200 towards the mechanical overhaul which is needed before 1812 returns to Sandtoft. Our grateful thanks for their generosity go to:

Brian Hadnam

Jim Hunt

Martin Harvey

Thanks also to another two members who have not yet given their permission for their names to be published as donors. We have also signed up to the PayPal Giving Fund and this has provided donations from non-members who have seen details of the appeal published elsewhere.

Including the Gift Aid the Society will be able to collect on the donations, more than £2500 has been raised so far. That sum does not include the amounts to come from the Prize Draw profits or from the profits from *A London Trolleybus Reborn*, which is available from BTS Sales <https://www.britishtrolley.org.uk/otherpubs>

The Society also wishes to thank member Guy Marriott, who has offered to arrange and cover the cost of the tow to the workshop near Dorking.

## How to Donate

Via the BTS website, use the PayPal link on the Home page. You may use a credit or debit card; you do not need a PayPal account. Please then email [chairman@britishtrolley.org.uk](mailto:chairman@britishtrolley.org.uk) stating which vehicle you wish to receive the donation.

By post, please send cheques payable to British Trolleybus Society to the BTS Treasurer, Roy Fawcett, 57 Sutcliffe Avenue, Earley, Reading RG6 7JN. Please state which vehicle you wish to receive the donation.

# Trackless to Conisbrough High

Colin Allan

The Society's restoration plans for Mexborough & Swinton 34 encouraged me to research this Yorkshire trolleybus system. During my 'studies' I was much impressed by two photographs of trolleybuses running near Conisbrough Castle.

The first image was on the internet and showed a single-deck Sunbeam with Brush bodywork turning right at a sharp bend with the castle providing an interesting background. Bordering the narrow road were attractive limestone walls. The vehicle's destination board displayed 'Conisbrough High' and it was on Route C. The second photograph featured Sunbeam trolleybus No. 33 (recommencing numbering from 1 took place in 1943 with the arrival of six Sunbeams with Brush utility bodies). A striking image, in *Trolleybus Trails* by James Joyce, shows No. 33 "negotiating the narrow roads near Conisbrough Castle."

In addition, I came across a painting by George Sydney Cooper showing a trolleybus heading for 'Conanby'. It seemed to show the same general area of Conisbrough with the castle proving an artist's delight. The vehicle's green and cream livery with the distinctive frontal V looked splendid.

I was so taken by these three images that I decided to visit Conisbrough one bright Autumn morning to find the exact spots from where the trolleybuses were depicted.

Thankfully, there is a very convenient car park near the castle. I walked up towards the imposing structure which was the inspiration for Sir Walter Scott's epic *Ivanhoe* story. On reaching the entrance to the castle and visitor centre, I realised I was at the very junction of roads shown in two of the trolleybus images.

As I stood at this 'historic' spot, two locals walked by. I stopped the chap who looked more-or-less my age and showed him one of the photographs. He was able to confirm that this was the same place. He was called John and remembered the trolleybuses. Keen to recall the vehicles, he mentioned that the C service turned at this corner to go uphill along Castle Street and Church Street to eventually reach a housing estate at Conanby. The B service (Conisbrough Low) skirted the base of the castle to reach its terminus at Brook Square.

A one-way arrangement mentioned by Joyce began at the top of Station Road for vehicles heading uphill. A tight turn was required into Dale Road and then a sharp right turn to access Castle Hill. Now beside the castle grounds, the trolleybus would soon make another right turn into Castle Street. One wonders how vehicles coped in these narrow roads before the introduction of the one-way system in 1948. A short climb up Castle Street led to the end of the one-way loop. Trolleybuses then progressed up Church Street which was widened in 1950 as it, too, proved a tight fit for passing vehicles.

Once Church Street had been negotiated, the Conisbrough High route took passengers uphill yet again towards the Conanby housing estate. Eventually, a right turn was made into Welfare Avenue.

There had been an interesting structure with a central arch and waiting rooms to either side at the end of the street. Originally, trolleybuses turned left at the arch to complete a half circle around The Crescent before returning to Welfare Avenue. However, the route was shortened in 1931 to stop near

the archway. Then trolleybus drivers had to negotiate a tight turning circle at the end of Welfare Avenue.

The original Conisbrough service which was inaugurated on 31 August 1915 ran from the Old Toll Bar, Denaby to a terminus at the junction of Elm Green Lane and Station Road. Extensions to the service made at the Conisbrough end to Brook Square (Conisbrough Low) from Swinton and Conanby (Conisbrough High) from Manvers Main were in place by 11 November 1928. Through services between Rotherham and Conisbrough Low and between Mexborough and Conisbrough High commenced on 10 March 1929. The new fleet of Garrett O Type trolleybuses (including our very own No. 34) were to be used on these services.

As I entered the castle grounds, I turned round to look at the corner again and tried to imagine No. 34 turning right towards Conanby. As I did so, a modern single-decker bus on the Doncaster to Sheffield Route X78 negotiated the very same tight bend. But for the lack of trolley booms it brought a fitting end to the day's explorations.

Having bought *Mexborough & Swinton Trolleybuses* by Colin Barker (Trolleybus Classics, Middleton Press), I returned to Conisbrough three weeks' later, armed with more photographs and a route map. I soon found these 'new' photo locations around the one-way system and decided to follow the route up to the Clock Terminus in Welfare Avenue.

Sadly, the arch with its waiting rooms had long been demolished. Now there is an attractive open space surrounded by the Crescent. Having reached Conisbrough High, I walked back down Old Road towards Conisbrough Community Library.

Here I met a very helpful library volunteer called Barrie Dalby. He dug out some old photos of the trolleybuses from the archives

and told us about when he had used the service. Barrie had attended Mexborough Grammar School and rode the trolleybuses back and forth to school during the period 1954-61. He mentioned that his school pass was simply for Conisbrough High and couldn't be used on the Conisbrough Low route. Recalling that the vehicles were quiet and comfortable, he also mentioned that several de-wirements took place at the sharp bend out of Dale Road.

The return journey to Manvers Main had entailed using a short section of overhead to avoid the aforementioned route around Dale Road and Castle Hill. This had involved a steep descent from Castle Street into Station Road. Seeing the hill for myself, I well understood why a 5 m.p.h. speed limit was imposed on the trolleybuses at the start of the descent.

By the way, Barrie Dalby constantly referred to the vehicles as 'trackless' and not as 'trolleybuses.' It seems that their original name stuck with the local residents. I told him about the Society's plans to restore Mexborough 34 and will let him know when he can ride on a Mexborough trolleybus again.

## Tip for Reading Online Magazines

If you are an online-only subscriber or if you like to read *Trolleybus*, *Wheels* or *Bus Fare* as soon as they are available on the website, did you know that you can see adjacent pages side-by-side, as you would in the printed version? When you open the PDF you will see "View" on the top line. Click on it and from the drop-down menu select "Page Display" and then "Two Page View".

The cover is shown on its own but when you click on the down arrow you will see pairs of pages.

# Mexborough Remembered

*A selection of photographs associated with Mexborough & Swinton  
from Tony Belton*



*My one and only visit to Mexborough & Swinton was on 19 March 1961, exactly one week before the closure.*

*Above we see No.39 on Doncaster Road at Denaby Main whilst on route B to Rotherham. 39 (JWW 377), a Sunbeam F4 with Brush body delivered in 1950, was the last trolleybus to be purchased by Mexborough.*

*Below: Another casualty of the Mexborough closure was the withdrawal of Rotherham Corporation's single-decker Daimler trolleybuses with East Lancs bodies that operated side by side with the Mexborough Sunbeams. Illustrated is Rotherham 8 on route 8 which is passing Mexborough's Rawmarsh depot.*





*A very lucky shot of Rotherham and Mexborough trolleybuses together. Rotherham Corporation Daimler No.6 is closely followed by Mexborough & Swinton Sunbeam No.35, approaching the Adwick Road terminus in Mexborough.*



*Mexborough's No.26 and No.36 are both changing crews outside Rawmarsh depot, allowing all aspects of the Brush bodywork to be captured.*



*Bradford Corporation purchased twelve Sunbeam chassis from Mexborough, seven of which were given new 8 foot wide East Lancs double-deck bodies. Bradford 847, originally Mexborough 39 (illustrated earlier), is seen here in its new guise turning at the Bingley terminus of route 26.*



*Doncaster Corporation 354, ex Mexborough 18, is one of several chassis purchased from Mexborough that were given new 7 foot 6 inch wide Roe double-deck bodies. This arrangement was short-lived because due to change of policy the chassis were scrapped and the bodies transferred to new bus chassis.*

## Tributes to John Whitehead

*Geoff Sandford writes:*

I was saddened to hear about the passing of John Whitehead. John and I met many times at Reading meetings and Sandtoft and always spent time together chatting about all manner of subjects. John was also extremely helpful to me when I was doing research for my book on St Helens trolleybuses. He gave me much valuable information and sources of photographs which were invaluable. John got the St Helens Trolleybuses booklet printed and sold within the Reading Transport Society. He also encouraged me to get it published, which I did thanks to him many years later.

My lasting memory was staying with him and Rosemary one weekend when on the Sunday I should be returning home to Wigan. John would have none of it, I was to join the group on Reading 47 to go to the Southsea Spectacular. What a day; it was a great trip, and meeting other friends at Southsea which I did not expect, a trip round the harbour to see the warships, and the return to Reading. I left John's at 12midnight, got home at almost 4am and was on my police beat in St Helens by 6am.

Thank you, John, for everything.

*Bryan Beauchamp writes:*

John was the reason I joined the BTS. John's wife and my wife were in adjacent beds in the maternity hospital, giving birth to our first children. We started chatting and with John's enthusiasm he persuaded me to come to meetings.

When I was Publicity Officer John was always there to provide support and information for our events. These included the link-up with the Great Western Society at Didcot, both societies celebrating their formation anniversaries, and the exhibition at the Hexagon, Reading, during the televised World Team Snooker Championship. It was John who provided a lot of the exhibits and

## John Parish

BTS members attending Reading meetings knew John Parish, who passed away on 13 January, as a regular member of the tea crew, serving refreshments at the interval and then staying in the kitchen to clear away and wash up. Not a glamorous job, but something that was very much appreciated. John had a ready smile and a kind word for everyone. He had not attended meetings since moving to a care home. It had been hoped that some members would visit John, something his daughter reported he was very pleased about, but the initial enquiry was made only days before the first pandemic lockdown and it did not prove possible to go to see him.

Our condolences to John's family.

## Paul Sutherland

Paul Sutherland, a founder member of the National Trolleybus Association (NTA), died on 18 January. Paul, who had been an active member of the Wolverhampton Trolleybus Group and was involved with establishing the NTA in 1963, became the Association's second Chairman in 1965, a position he held for ten years. He remained a supporter of the Association for the rest of his life.

Known to his fellow-enthusiasts for his gentlemanly conduct, Paul will be greatly missed.

artwork and was on hand at busy times to talk to visitors.

During my time he was always very helpful, providing information for radio broadcasts and phone-ins.

I will always remember John for his enthusiasm, knowledge, friendship and for accepting people as they are. A genuine good guy. I send my condolences to all John's family and friends.

# Košice

*The final part of Tom Douce's tour of Slovakia. All photographs taken on 7 July 2019.*

Trolleybus operation began on 27 September 1993. Due to tramway reconstruction work, the system was suspended on 30 January 2015, initially for a period of 5-6 months. Prior to this, duties on the trolleybus routes were covered by diesel buses on weekends and public holidays. All views are of 2003, a Škoda 14 TrM, built in 1999, which operated a free service as 'Dobrý trolejbus' (Good Trolleybus), staffed by volunteers (see *Trolleybus* 690 and 693 for more information).

A SOR TNB 12 battery-equipped trolleybus was borrowed from Banská Bystrica in May 2019 and operated in service for one month. The Dobrý trolejbus ran until the end of 2020 but the future of the system is still not known.



**DOPRAVNÝ PODNIK  
MESTA KOŠICE**

*Right Upper: 2003 on ulica Bottova, which is also the Námestie Osloboditeľov terminus.*

*Right: Note the NOT IN SERVICE (deliberate use of capitals) on the destination screen, as well as the volunteers alongside at the Lingov terminus. 2003 attracted much attention from passers-by as well as passengers on diesel buses.*





*Above: Beside the tramway reservation on Senný Trh.*

*Below: Under a threatening sky, 2003 turns from Rooseveltova into Štefánikova.*



# World News Extra



6603 is seen on service 6 on 19 December. After the batteries recharge from the overhead on the common section with line 2 they take over for the unwired sections at either end of the route.

Fribourg's new batch of Hess lighTram 19s, having been tested in Biel/Bienne and demonstrated in Neuchâtel and La Chaux-de-Fonds, created another surprise when they entered service in Fribourg on 13 December by being used on bus route 6.

Also seen on 19 December is 6607 on service 3.





*Taking a tight turn in the centre of Bratislava.*

The prototype Solaris Trollino MetroStyle 24 has been demonstrated to two operators which have plans to introduce double-articulated trolleybuses. These photos show it in Bratislava on 19 November and it was also tested in Winterthur in January. No orders have yet been announced for this model

*The Solaris is seen at the main railway station.*



# MUSEUM & PRESERVATION NEWS

edited by Jody White



## Cardiff & South Wales Trolleybus Project

*Report by Keith Walker and Jody White*

To all followers of this column, the Welsh outpost of trolleybus restoration wish readers a much happier 2021 with, hopefully, an end of the pandemic and a return to normality. In keeping with all vehicle restoration groups, the necessary lockdown can have not only a severe effect on progress, but leaves restorers and members frustrated with inactivity. Our group arguably has had a lot more to contend with over the last fifteen months, from the devastating workshop fire, protecting the trolleybuses against three horrendous storms and minus a roof, plus having to clear all the debris and salvage what we could without mains water and power. Gradually, as we began to see the wood for the trees, Covid struck but despite this, we managed to maintain our twice weekly visits.

Eventually, as many of you know, we negotiated spaces at the Barry bus museum - and in September relocated there and commenced settling in, with much thanks going to the five members who stuck to the task. So we have restarted and sorted ourselves out to the long road back to where we left off in October 2019. And despite lockdowns, which has limited progress, some tasks have taken place intermittently.

### Vehicle Restoration

**Cardiff 262** After the success of clearing up the inside of the single decker, we started removing items from the lower saloon; and with a little more space, we ensured that any missing floor sections were covered for safety.

The large quantity of broken glass and other debris were swept out. Next to sort out was beneath the stairs; and by the time we finished, we found that tools and parts could be stored there.

Then came the upper deck, where it became apparent after clearing, that, too, could be used as storage space for a large quantity of tools. And with all the timber renewal, it can also act as a workshop. Consequently, the Workmate was brought from the farm and set up along with lighting and power leads. Following an examination, it became clear that the new bell push and lighting wiring would have to be renewed.

While this was taking place, the cab was cleared and tidied. It was decided that restoration of the offside will be one bay at a time, starting from the front wheel arch panel, the driver's door lower panel and the panel at the rear of the wheel arch. All these panels have been made, so preparation is the order of the day. The inner driver's door skin was cleaned,

*John measures up for the panel above the driver's cab.*



followed by an application of red oxide Hammerite. The cast hinge bracket was also refurbished and the creation of a leather strop is now in progress.

There are still a few items of glass needed, including the large offside cab window. The large rear platform acrylic window had become heat distorted by the fire, so this, along with its TROLLEYBUS warning vinyl, are now off site being reproduced.

Externally, both vehicles have been measured up for all the new panels, including beading and trim from the supplier. So when we are able to place the order, we will face a bill in excess of £550! However, amongst our salvaged aluminium sheets, we found enough material to create a few window pan parts, in addition to a piece that will cover the front offside mid-deck panel above the driver's cab, which has now been cut and tacked in position.

**Cardiff 243** Currently, Covid restrictions are observed within the depot, so having purchased a new kettle and the saloon cleared, we use it for our tea breaks. On arrival at the depot, an examination of the roof and the structure was made, and thankfully, the wiring looks in good condition. The booms have been released from their retaining hooks and we plan to erect a section of wiring in the roof space, between both vehicles, to show visitors how trolleybuses operate. To relieve pressure on the tyres, 243 was jacked up and donated timber was cut to length and placed under the axles.

During the fire the rear offside window was smashed by a wayward steel section, so the nearside glass was removed for a pattern and this has also been cut and awaits installation. Externally, beneath the rear window emergency door, there is an illuminated STOPPING sign, which when installed was made from acrylic. This was also heat affected, so has been removed and is presently

at our supplier. Luckily the STOPPING stencil had been retained, so another task can be completed. In addition, the necessary electric (PAT) testing was done on all our tooling.

### **At the depot**

Our hosts at the depot have been accommodating, but having less room, we must be very selective on what we can store. A rear room is now our paint locker, as well as space for both filing cabinets. Fortunately, we managed to keep our portable worktable, although it had to be modified and now sports a set of lockable wheels. It will be fitted with a bench vice, but once complete, the table will be turned on its side to minimise its footprint.

Finally, the dockside facility (Windward terminal) has an area that has a large amount of tools, spares and fundraising items, and once the opportunity arises, we'll need to complete moving items there from the farm.

### **At the farm**

Since the vehicles and relocation of items to Barry, we have split our time and limited numbers between the two sites. Our shipping container was moved outside, due to the farmer's restoration of the barn and gradually, the side of the barn we last occupied was totally cleared and the final scrap collections made.

---

*The newly refurbished door hinge bracket for 243's nearside cab door. Luckily there was a suitable bolt in a box of bits.*



# The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft

## Preparing to reopen the Museum

With long-awaited light at the end of the Covid tunnel the Board's thoughts are now turning to preparing to reopen the Museum to visitors, with specific dates yet to be confirmed. However, before that could happen a large amount of preparatory work will be required. Therefore we will need to prepare vehicles, visitor and staff indoor and outdoor facilities and attractions and generally ensure we are good to go following our enforced closure last year.

It also appears highly likely that some forms of Covid-related restrictions will remain in place through the spring and summer periods and possibly longer. This in turn will of course require additional staffing assistance on public open days.

If you can assist the Museum in *any* way both with the vital prep activities and/or providing extra assistance on open days please contact me at [sdavid@sandtoft.org](mailto:sdavid@sandtoft.org) or call 07720 396372 at your earliest convenience. All offers of assistance will be very much appreciated.

Thank you in advance for your co-operation.

*Stewart David.*

*Chief Operating Officer & HR.*

*The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft*

## Traction Pole replacement

A Doncaster-based engineering contractor has been engaged to replace the six poles identified last year as being life-expired.

## Axholme Stores

The refurbishment of the Trolleyshop is being led by retail manager Mark Boulton. When the museum reopens the shop will be far more spacious. The shop window displays are being renewed by Displays Manager Bob Ashton assisted by Pat Ashton and Steve Hobbs.

## Westgate

The Museum Board has accepted an offer of £80,000 for the Westgate storage facility in Belton. This followed negotiations with a Harrogate-based development company which has also obtained outline planning permission for several houses on land adjoining the building.

Westgate Primitive Methodist Chapel was built in 1868 and used until 1965. After deconsecration it was sold to Mike Dare in 1967. While vehicles were being moved to Westgate it was noticed that the former RAF base at Sandtoft was for sale, leading to the creation of the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft in 1969.

When Mike died in 2005 he left Westgate to Sandtoft Transport Centre Ltd. For well over fifty years the building has housed a small number of historic trolleybuses and buses. The first restoration of Reading 113 was carried out there and it is still used for some vehicle work.

The capital generated from the sale of Westgate will significantly contribute towards the funding of an additional new vehicle depot on the main Museum site. Discussions will be held with a local construction company to prepare for the building of the North Depot.

*M J C Dare*



*Westgate as it was when Mike Dare found it in 1967. The new houses are to be built on the land visible to the left of the building.*

# WORLD NEWS

edited by Bruce Lake



## ARGENTINA Mendoza

Only Marterfer trolleybuses 01 and 07 are still operational and the system may close at any time.

## AUSTRIA Linz

On 12 January an order was placed for another nine double-articulated trolleybuses as part of the framework contract with Van Hool.

The local transport initiative provides for two new trolleybus lines to relieve the Urfahr main station traffic junction, which has reached its capacity limit. New trolleybus line 47 will run from the Reindlstrasse / Hauptstrasse terminus while new line 48 starts at the Karthof terminus. Both lines will cross the New Danube Bridge to Derfflingerstrasse and continue over the Garnisonstrasse and Liebigstrasse to Laststrasse, where there will be a new transfer point with the S-Bahn lines and Franckstrasse station. The trolleybus lines will continue via Bulgariplatz and Wankmüllerhofstrasse to the New World, where a transfer hub for trams and regional buses will also be created.

## BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA Sarajevo

The Minister of Transport for the Sarajevo Canton has announced the expansion of the trolleybus network to Vogošća. It is expected that a tender for the construction of the line will be published this year and that the contractor will complete the work by 2022. Ten new trolleybuses are to be procured for this line in addition to the 25 articulated trolleybuses on order from BKM.

Three-axle MAN SL172HO 621, ex-Solingen 34, is in daily use on route 108.

## CZECH REPUBLIC Brno

A contract has been signed with Škoda Electric for the supply of forty 27 Trs, with the first twenty being due for delivery within one year of the contract being signed. They will replace the last remaining 15 Trs and expand articulated operation. SOR Libchavy also tendered unsuccessfully.

However, the order has been complicated by the Office for the Protection of Competition, which banned the contract from being concluded following a complaint. The ban was issued on 29 January, after the contract had been signed but one day before it was entered into the register of contracts, which is required by law to validate a contract.

The remaining tenders published in mid-2020 have not yet been concluded and so the last 15 Škoda 14 Trs will remain in service for some time.

## CZECH REPUBLIC Plzeň

Another four Škoda 26 Trs have been ordered, for delivery by November.

## FRANCE Lyon

By 20 January the first Hess lighTram 19 DC, registered WW256 ET, had received fleet no. 2001, a red stripe below window level on the nearside and offside and a short red stripe between the headlights. Above the third set of doors it proclaims that it is 100% electric.

The new Hess LighTram DC19 trolleybuses will be used to reinstate electric operation on route C13 from March. The use of articulated vehicles will increase capacity by around 30%.

Extensive construction work at Part Dieu station has resulted in removal of the overhead and this section will be battery operated.

Another 13 lighTram DC19s will be delivered to convert line C11 to articulated trolleybus operation in the second half of this year.

## HUNGARY Miskolc

Miskolc is Hungary's fourth largest city and the only one of the country's four tram operators that does not also have a trolleybus system. That may change, as the transport company is seeking funding for the construction of a trolleybus system in the north-west of the city and the purchase of 30 trolleybuses with dynamic charging, although it has been made clear that no decision has yet been taken.

## ITALY La Spezia

The three municipalities of La Spezia, Porto Venere and Lerici have signed an agreement that provides for a joint project application for the construction of two new trolleybus lines. It is intended to apply for additional funding from the Italian Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport.

The project provides for the reconstruction of lines P (Porto Venere - La Spezia FS) and L (La Spezia FS-Lerici), with some parts being electrified while others will be operated in battery mode, using in-motion charging technology. A new, 100% electric line is to be built along the coast, known as the "Linea del Golfo", accompanied by measures including the construction of separate lanes, improvements to traffic lights and regulatory measures.

## ITALY Modena

The new 12m Solaris Trollinos started to enter service during January.

## ITALY Sanremo

Funding applications have been submitted to the Italian Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport for the reconstruction of trolleybus lines V and T from Sanremo to Ventimiglia and Taggia. In addition to this project, called "Intervention for the enhancement, restoration and adaptation of the Riviera dei Fiori trolleybus", partially segregated traffic lanes are to be created, thereby improving the flow of traffic in the streets, which are chronically congested, especially in summer. Transfer points are also planned at the stations in Ventimiglia, Vallecrosia, Bordighera, Sanremo and Taggia. The overhead line voltage is to be increased from 600 V to 750 V, which also entails the renewal of the substations.

The procurement plan is for 13 articulated trolleybuses (the first in the company's history) and 10 rigid battery-equipped trolleybuses with In-Motion Charging technology.

## MEXICO Mexico City

Following a major fire in a combined metro substation and control centre on 9 January, which caused one death and more than thirty people injured, metro lines 1 – 6 were out of service over the weekend and lines 1 – 3 may not return for some time.

As a result, from 11 January five of the new Yutong articulated trolleybuses entered service and two trolleybus lines were extended, with the extensions operated in battery mode. They are:

1 Center del Norte - Metro Miguel Angel de Quevedo

2: Metro Chapultepek - Metro Velodromo - Metro Pantitlan

Work on the BRT line is progressing well and the first section has already been tested. The articles will be used on it permanently after it opens during the summer.

After an absence of almost eight years, trolleybus operation returned to line 9 Apatlaco to Villa de Cortes on 30 January.

With the delivery of new trolleybuses, all the MASA trolleybuses built between 1984 and 1988 will be taken out of service at short notice.

## NEW ZEALAND Wellington

Some of the fleet of Designlines are now being stored in a yard in Taita in the Hutt Valley north of Wellington pending onward sale.

## POLAND Gdynia

PKT Gdynia has applied for a grant to support the procurement of seven articulated trolleybuses from the "Green Local Public Transport" program, which funds up to 80% of the cost of electric buses and trolleybuses and up to 90 percent for hydrogen / fuel cell vehicles and the corresponding infrastructure. The new vehicles will be used to convert trolleybus route 25 to articulated operation.

## POLAND Lublin

Five Solaris Trollino 18s (3960 – 3964) were added to the fleet at the end of 2020 and another ten are expected in April. They will be used to convert services 158 and 160 to articulated operation.

The two Solaris Trollinos on loan to Tychy are 3836 and 3839.

## POLAND Tychy

The Solaris Trollinos on loan from Lublin have been given temporary numbers 96 (Lublin 3836) and 97 (3839). The six new vehicles which will replace them are now not expected until 2022 after a renewed tender.

## ROMANIA Târgu Jiu

The eleven Solaris Trollino 12s on order are due for delivery at the beginning of next year. The award of the tender for nine battery-equipped trolleybuses is expected shortly. Currently only older ROCAR trolleybuses are in operation.

## SLOVAKIA Prešov

The ten new Škoda/SOR trolleybuses entered service in November. Four are type 30 Tr (737 - 740) and six are articulated type 31 Tr (741 - 746). The fleet now comprises 45 low-floor trolleybuses plus two Škoda 14 Trs, one of which is used as a de-icing vehicle.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the holiday schedule continues to apply and there is a reduced requirement for vehicles, resulting in the temporary withdrawal of the Škoda 25 Tr/s built in 2006-2008, and some of the older Škoda 31 Tr /SOR. Some of the 25 Trs are being used as parts donors while after three years in storage. 702 was the first of the 24 Tr type to be withdrawn, in October.

A new tender for four rigid and six articulated trolleybuses was published in the European Official Journal on 27 January. Unlike the previous contract, the trolleybuses are to be equipped with batteries and will replace diesel buses. There are more than 30 bus routes, six of which (10, 19, 22, 29, 32A, 34 and 39) run under overhead for a large proportion of their length. However, the bus lines have a low frequency or only run during rush hour, so that the installation of overhead lines is not viable.

## SWITZERLAND

### Lausanne

The first lighTram19 DC arrived on 3 February and is numbered 801. Another was expected by mid-February, with a further five to be delivered in May / June and the final eight of the batch of 15 in the 4th quarter of 2021. Visually they are similar to the lighTram25 DC, six of which have already been delivered. The remaining six will follow in March and April.

By December only 12 trolleybus and trailer sets remained.

## SWITZERLAND

### Winterthur

Finances have been approved for the electrification of bus lines 5 and 7. It is expected that line 5 will be converted to trolleybus operation by December 2023 and line 7 by December 2026. 5 km of new overhead will be erected and five rectifiers will be constructed or upgraded to ensure the energy supply.

The replacement of diesel buses by trolleybuses on lines 5 and 7 is expected to reduce CO2 emissions by 2,650 tons per annum.

In connection with the tender for a framework contract for the procurement of a maximum of 70 trolleybuses with dynamic charging by 2031, three trolleybuses were tested at the beginning of January. Hess provided Zurich lighTram 25 DC No.92 while the Solaris and Kiepe consortium sent Esslingen 510, a Solaris Trollino 18 with Kiepe Electric equipment and the Solaris Trollino 24 double-articulated trolleybus arrived after receiving slight modifications. The test of the two Solaris was completed on 27 January. The final award of the contract and the presentation of the future vehicle type will take place in April at the earliest. The delivery of the first new vehicle for training purposes is expected in June 2022, with the conversion of Line 1 to double-articulated trolleybuses planned for December 2022. The first 18.7 m trolleybuses for the conversion of line 5 are then to be delivered by the end of 2023.

### TAJIKISTAN Dushanbe

By 1 September 2019, out of 13 trolleybus lines that had been operating in 1991, only four remained (1, 4, 5 and 10). As part of the "Dushanbe Public Transport Development" project, the European Bank for Reconstruction & Development provided US \$8 million to refurbish existing substations and install feeders and overhead lines. The financial package consists of a government

guaranteed loan of US \$5.2 million and an EBRD investment grant of US \$2.8 million.

The 100 new Belkomunmash BKM 321 trolleybuses entered service gradually from January 2020. 69 had arrived by the end of 2020, another 15 by mid-January and the balance of 16 were expected by Spring.

With the arrival of new vehicles, trolleybus operation returned to line 12 on 26 August 2020, to line 11 on 14 December 2020 and line 2 on 18 January 2021. Line 9 was expected to be added on 28 January.

All remaining ZiU682 trolleybuses built in 2009 were withdrawn after a presentation of the new trolleybuses on 11 December.

### UKRAINE Lutsk

Another four Bogdan T70117 (003 – 006) were received on 29 January and entered service on 4 February. The new vehicles have a white and red livery, which will also be applied to some of the existing trolleybuses, including six ZiU682s, which have been in operation for over 30 years, as well as one YMZ, three Bogdan and 7 ex-Lublin Jelcz. The white-green livery with "eco symbols" introduced with the procurement of the Polish trolleybuses is being discontinued after almost seven years.

## UKRAINE Sevastopol

One hundred new trolleybuses were received in time for the 70th anniversary of trolleybus operation on 5 November. The vehicles were ordered from Trans-Alfa in Vologda after the bankruptcy of the Trolza company. The type VMZ 5298.01 "Avangard" trolleybuses have been given fleet numbers 3001 to 3084 (with emergency battery for 500 m) and 3101 to 3116 (with battery drive for 20 km) and were distributed between the two depots, but without any special identification in the vehicle numbering.

With thanks to: Dave Chick, Vincent Lobjois, Jan Spousta, Československý Dopravák, Sarajevo Times, Trolley:motion, sustainable-bus.com, Urban Transport Magazine, Internet sources.

*Prešov 702 is the first of the operator's Škoda 24 Trs to be withdrawn. It was two years old when photographed on 12 September 2008.*



D G Chick

## 27 Trs on Test in Plzeň



*Above: By early February around half the batch of thirty 27 Trs for Sofia were being tested. After this order has been completed new vehicles for Romania will be next on the production line. The third of the Sofia batch is seen in Borská Street at the Karlov stop (adjacent to the Karlov depot) on 7 January.*

*Below: The twelfth Sofia vehicle is captured in the Zátíší locality near the Panelárna stop.*

