

TROLLEYBUS

Vol. 62 No. 739

February 2023



The Magazine of the British Trolleybus Society



*Memories of 1963
The Most Beautiful Christmas Trolleybus
Boston SilverLine
Solingen 70*

TROLLEYBUS

The magazine of the
British Trolleybus Society

No. 739 February 2023

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Printed by Barden Print, Birkby
Huddersfield. Tel: 01484 422522

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

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BTS NOTICE BOARD

Reading Meetings

Held at the Reading District Oddfellows' Hall, 118b Oxford Road, Reading RG1 7NQ. Admission: Adults £3.00, Juniors £1.50. Non-members £4.00. Meetings commence at 19.30. Organised by the BTS. NTA members welcome (Please note that there has been a small increase in the admission charge but that there will now be no charge for tea and coffee).

Meetings Organiser Graham Bilbé, 12 Belle Avenue, Reading RG6 7BL. Email grahamebilbe@btinternet.com

Friday 3 March Ian Thompson tells of his involvement within the transport industry, which is sure to be entertaining!

London Meetings

Held at The Model Railway Club, 4 Calshot Street, London N1 9DA (nearest Underground station: King's Cross). Organised by the NTA. BTS members welcome. Start 19.00 – doors open 18.30.

Meetings Organiser John Parkin, 59 Beechwood Court, West Street Lane, Carshalton SM5 2QA. Email trolleybus654@aol.com

Wednesday 15 February Peter Haseldine looks at a variety of European trolleybus systems in the early 1970s.

Bradford Meetings

Meetings are not being held at present.

West Midlands Transport Circle

BTS members are invited to attend WMTC meetings, which are held on the second Wednesday of every month at Bradmore Community Centre (Main Hall) in Wolverhampton. Doors Open 19:05, Start presentation : 19:30 prompt!, Break (around) 20:30 - 20:45; Finish 21:45: Out of venue by 22:00 Visitor fee £3.00, just turn up and bring others with you.

Wednesday 8 March Colour-Rail - Journey 10, by Paul Chancellor

Organised by Mike Richardes.
michael.richardes64@btinternet.com

MONTHLY PRIZE DRAW

The January and February prizes will be drawn at the February Reading meeting.

Front Cover: A memory of Bournemouth in 1963 as an unidentified MF2B crosses Tuckton Bridge.
See the feature starting on the opposite page. [Tony Belton]

Memories of 1963 : The Big Freeze

Article and photographs by Tony Belton

I visited Bournemouth on Thursday 17 January. It was a beautiful crisp day, ideal for taking photographs. I have chosen to illustrate the day with a picturesque view of

an unknown Sunbeam MF2B crossing Tuckton Bridge over the River Stour.

This image appears on the front cover.

This page: The following Thursday, 24 January, I visited Portsmouth on a bitterly cold day. The temperature was so low that in certain areas of the south coast the sea had frozen over; an example being this view at Ports Creek from London Road at Hilsea. Trolleybus route 5/6 passed this point.

Page 24, upper: The next week I visited Ipswich on 31 January. The day started off bright and sunny but gradually deteriorated as the day wore on. By the time my Grey-Green coach was ready to depart back to London (10 shillings return) the snow had started to fall heavily. The photograph is of 112, a 1949 Karrier F4 with Park Royal body, on route 4 at Electric House which was the central trolleybus terminus.

The coach left on time but the heavy snow turned into blizzards; at a point along the A12 the road became blocked and the police put all traffic on diversion. The driver, being new to the route started to panic, so me being the gentleman that I was offered my assistance which he gratefully accepted. Between us we managed to get back to London, albeit 1 hour and 45 minutes late.

Page 24, lower: The next trip was to Maidstone on 7 February, which was a miserable day with a biting wind. The roads had been cleared to a degree although the pavements no longer existed; it meant pedestrians had to walk on the roads which were very slippery. This shot is taken of 56, a 1944 Sunbeam W which was rebodied by Roe in 1959, at the end of the one-way system on the Park Wood route.

Page 25, upper: On Wednesday 20 February I visited Bradford where the roads had been cleared of snow and a full trolleybus service was operating. I have chosen this view of unlicensed 610, a 1934 AEC 611T rebodied by Northern Coachbuilders in 1948, in the yard at the side of Thornbury Depot to show the snow piled high on its roof. The vehicle next to 610 had been taken to the scrapyard at Auto Spares (Bingley) earlier in the day and 610 suffered the same fate later that day.

Page 25, lower: On Thursday 21 February Huddersfield was on the agenda; it was a miserable dull day, not good for taking photographs. Always very photogenic is this view of the reverser on the specially-built platform at Longwood route 40 terminus, on this occasion with 622, a 1956 BUT 9641T with East Lancs body.







The Most Beautiful Christmas Trolleybus

By Zdeněk Kresa

Many operators decorate a trolleybus for the Christmas period. In January the results were announced of the third annual poll for the most beautiful Christmas trolleybus. The poll is run by the Society for Public Transport (SPVD) in cooperation with the MHD86.cz transport magazine and the Plzeňské trolejbusy Facebook page.

This year 15 trolleybus operators from ten countries competed for the title. More than 5,000 votes were cast with the following results.

1 Žilina, Slovakia Škoda 26 Tr NU No. 301.

2 Opava, Czech Republic Solaris Trollino 12 AC No. 93.

3 Ústí nad Labem, Czech Republic

The Transport Company of Ústí nad Labem

traditionally adorns a pair of Škoda 28 Tr trolleybuses (No. 412 and 424).

For the first time this year, there was a Special Jury Award for the fourth place. Sofia, Bulgaria had a Christmas trolleybus for the first time, decorating the exterior and interior of Ikarus 280T No. 2703, which was built in 1985.

For the full results see the SPVD website.

POLL: Where does the most beautiful "Christmas trolleybus 2022" run? Outcomes (spvd.cz)

This adds an interesting postscript to Tony Belton's feature on Cardiff's decorated Christmas trolleybuses which appeared in our December edition.

Thanks to Zdeněk Kresa for providing the information and facilitating publication of the photographs.





Page 26: The gold medallist, Žilina 301.
[Transport company of the city of Žilina
(Michal Noga)]

Left: The interior of 301, with its ceiling strung with coloured lights and Santa in the rear window.

[Transport company of the city of Žilina
(Michal Noga)]

Lower: Sofia 2703, winner of the Special Jury Award.

[Stolichen Elektrotransport (Nanko Ivanov)]



Boston's Silver Line Trackless Trolleys

Article and Photographs by Tom Douce

The first trolleybus line in Boston, Massachusetts, was opened by the Boston Elevated Railway on 11 April 1936. By the end of 1952 the city had 463 trolleybuses (known locally as trackless trolleys), which was the third largest trolleybus fleet in the USA, after Chicago and Atlanta.

When the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority took over responsibility for the operation of most services in Greater Boston in 1964, only the four trolleybus routes in the Cambridge area remained, all others having been converted to motor bus operation. The last two of these closed on 12 March 2022.

That was not quite the end of the system, because the Silver Line trolleybus BRT service which opened in 2004 is still running, although it is planned to replace the trolleybuses with battery-electric buses.

The present Silver Line fleet comprises 32 18 m low-floor articulated Neoplan USA duobuses (1101-32), built between 2004-06 with Škoda electrical equipment. They operate as trolleybuses in the 1.3-mile-long (2.1 km) tunnel and for about 900 feet (270 m) on the surface, then change to diesel mode. Motor buses are not allowed to operate inside the South Boston Waterfront tunnel because there is insufficient ventilation.

There are three routes, all of which terminate at South Station: SL1 to Logan International Airport, SL2 to Design Center and SL3 to Chelsea. The vehicles used on the airport service have luggage racks, resulting in a seating capacity of 38 instead of 47. Frequencies are high, and it was not unusual to see trolleybuses in convoy.









Boston. Page 28: 1130 is seen approaching Logan International Airport. Rides from there to downtown are free of charge.

Page 29, upper: The total length of wiring that remains in the city is just under two miles. Most of this is located in a tunnel, aka the South Boston Piers Transitway. 1114 can be seen descending west bound. Page 29, lower: A rare sight on a trolleybus is that of luggage racks, one of which may be seen holding a red suitcase above the "CPA Card" advert. Twelve of the fleet are thus fitted (1121-32); the last of these is shown at the World Trade Center Station.

Page 30, upper: A view of 1132 at Courthouse Station. There are sets of passing wire at this location in both directions.

Page 30, lower: Silver Line Way is where the changeover between diesel and electric modes takes place. There is also a u-turn in the wiring. This is not used by vehicles in passenger service, but by those whose drivers are learners, such as 1113, seen undertaking the aforementioned manoeuvre. The destination screen displays Instruction Bus. Interestingly, the facing switch that allows access for the turn is operated manually by the driver pushing a button located on a traction pole.

Page 31, above: End of the line on Silver Line Way; 1106 is shown de-poling.

Solingen. Page 32, upper: Seen on Kölner Straße, crossing the junction with Kattenberger Straße is Van Hool/Kiepe 260, one of a batch of 20 (251-70) built in 2002-3. Route 682 operates between Solingen Hbf and Höhscheid-Brockenberg on 16 June

Page 32, lower: A view taken on Mühlenplatz on 17 June, depicting Solaris/Kiepe 871, one of a batch of eight (865 - 72) built in 2020-1. Route 683 operates between Wuppertal Vohwinkel and Burger Bahnhof.

Page 33, upper: Hess/Kiepe Swisstrolley 965 is one of a batch of 15 (951-65) built in 2008-9 and is shown ascending Gräfrather Straße from Wuppertal on 20 June.

Page 33, lower: Route 695 (Meigen - Gräfrath Abteiweg) was converted from diesel bus operation on 31 October 2019. About 34% of the route is beneath overhead wiring. Inward bound, 201 is shown beneath the rewiring pans on Industriestraße, at the stop of the same name on 20 June.

See also the rear cover.

Solingen's 70th Anniversary

By Tom Douce

Solingen's trolleybus system opened on 19 June 1952. Tom Douce visited at the time

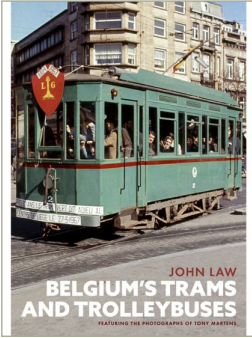
of the 70th anniversary celebrations.





Book Review

Belgium's Trams and Trolleybuses by John Law



Soft covers, 170 x 230 mm, 96 pages, 184 colour & black and white illustrations featuring the photographs of Tony Martens

Published by Amberley Publishing, The Hill, Stroud GL5 4EP www.amberley-books.com ISBN 97813981 0724 3 (print), 97813981 0725 0 (ebook). Price £15.99 plus P&P

John Law's friend, the late Tony Martens, lived in London but was a Belgian

citizen. This book is built around the photographs that Tony took from the 1960s onwards, supplemented by some of John's own and a few others, including vintage postcards.

The result is a fine pictorial collection that tells much of the story of the country's trams and trolleybuses from about 1900 onwards, through the judicious selection of photos and the detailed captions.

There are many delightful photos of trams built in the early 20th Century that were still in service in the 1960s and 70s.

Only six of the photographs are of trolleybuses, and so this is primarily a book for tram enthusiasts. However, the photos are excellent and the standard of reproduction is very good. John Law has done a great job of bringing Tony Martens' photos to a wider audience.

DGC

World News. Below: Praha's ex-Plzeň Škoda 24 Tr is seen at Letňany on its first day in service after being renumbered 508. This atmospheric photograph shows it against the setting sun and with an aircraft from the nearby airport above it. [Zdeněk Kresa]



MUSEUM & PRESERVATION NEWS

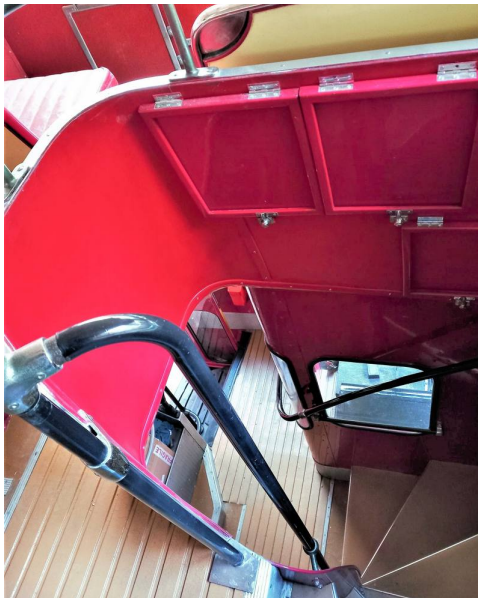
Edited by Jody White



BTS Vehicles

Bournemouth 301

It was hoped to make a start on replacing



the rubber mounting of the windows during January. Keith Baynton has finished polishing all the rather corroded aluminium window sliders/front hoppers (inside and out) using fine wire wool and Autosol. They have all responded well and a couple of seized ones have been restored to free working order.

Glasgow TB78

The work on the rear axle oil seals has been completed and everything re-assembled. Further work has been carried out on the platform. Sandtoft's "Wednesday Gang" has been repairing faults to make the vehicle ready for service. It has recently passed its brake test.

South Shields 204

Jim Sambrooks and Barry Fullen have cleaned the nearside rear brake drum and linings.

The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft

Open Days The full programme for 2023 was published in the January edition of Trolleybus. There are many exciting events planned and a notable development is that following the success of the full week of opening in August 2022, there will be three such weeks in 2023. It is important for the museum to increase the number of days that it is open for when bids are made to fund some of the planned developments.

The Museum will reopen on Saturday 8 April.

Sandtoft District Railway There have been several days of work on the land at the rear of the Society's Burntwood property in recent months. The former goat shed has been demolished and the concrete base broken up. Work has started on installing the narrow gauge railway which was formerly the Ise Valley Railway. It is expected that the northern part of the Railway will open for passenger service in 2023.

Working Parties There is a great deal of work to be done to prepare for the 2023 season and working parties will be taking place on the weekends of 25/26 February and 25/26 March. Offers of help will be much appreciated. Please contact Stewart David - sdavid@sandtoft.org

Railway Working Parties The general working parties will be preceded by several of days of work installing the Sandtoft District Railway. These will be 18 – 24 February and 20 – 24 March. Again, offers of help will be very welcome. Please contact Kieran Proctor kproctor1204@gmail.com
www.sandtoft.org

Romania Muzeul de Transport Public Cluj-Napoca

It is reported that the three trolleybuses reserved for the proposed museum have been scrapped. All were built in Romania

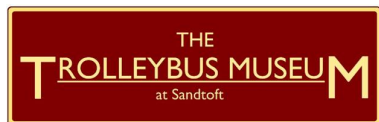
and were a Dac 117E, a Rocar 312E and a Rocar 412E. There are hopes that with the transfer of responsibility to municipal administration, some potential exhibits may be obtained.

Page 35: Bournemouth 301's front staircase and floors are looking smart.

[Keith Baynton]

Right: The lower deck, with all the windows removed ready for the new window rubbers to be fitted. The outstanding work on 301 includes re-trimming the seat cushions for the lower deck. Most of the cushions seen here have been temporarily transferred from the upper deck.

[Keith Baynton]



Sandtoft Seeks a Fundraising Manager

The Museum has an exciting development plan which will bring new attractions, such as the Sandtoft District Railway which is currently being built, and better facilities for the storage and preservation of the historic trolleybus collection, including an exhibition hall and a restoration shed.

Significant new funding will be required for these improvements and so the Museum's Board is seeking to recruit a Fundraising Manager. The person appointed to the role will work with the Development Director and will help to

identify new funding possibilities and assist with writing bids.

The successful candidate will ideally have some experience of fundraising, but just as important is enthusiasm, a willingness to learn and an ability to work on your own initiative.

For more details of the role please contact Dave Chick dchick@sandtoft.org

To apply, please write to HR Director Stewart David - sdavid@sandtoft.org

Auction Raises funds for Bournemouth 301

The biennial auction was held at the Society's December meeting in Reading. Graham Bilbé was the auctioneer, ably assisted by Roger Clark. Dressed in a festive waistcoat and tie, Graham encouraged members to bid for the large array of donated items, including books, DVDs, jigsaw puzzles, models, bus stop plates and many more items.

Wayne Ball was again the most generous bidder and he also donated the mystery item, clad in Christmas wrapping paper. This practise was started by Colin

Enticknap in the early days of our auction and Wayne has continued the traditional since Colin's death.

The auction raised £686.10 which will go towards completing the restoration of Bournemouth 301. Many thanks to the members who donated items to auction and to everyone for their generous bids.

301 Fund Grows!

Our thanks to Brian Hadnam, who is the latest member to donate to 301's restoration fund.

World News

Edited by Bruce Lake



ARGENTINA Rosario

The 12-metre Mercedes-Benz OH 1618 SB with Metalpar Iguazu bodywork converted into a trolleybus has been numbered 34 and is now being tested. Another 19 of the 11-year-old vehicles are also to be converted. A different diesel bus model was converted in 2020 and is in service numbered 33.

They will replace the current fleet of Marcopolo trolleybuses built in 1988 for a new system in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, which never opened. They did not enter service until January 1994, when they relaunched Rosario's system after operation had been suspended for more than a year.

The company is not satisfied with the Trolza "Megapolis" battery trolleybuses delivered in 2017, which showed considerable body damage, including cracks, after only a short time and had to be repaired at great expense. The additional two Trolzas agreed upon as compensation for delays in delivery never actually arrived in Argentina. It is unlikely that second-hand trolleybuses will be purchased from other cities.

AUSTRIA St. Pölten

The Mayors of Sankt Pölten and the neighbouring towns of Wilhelmsburg and Herzogenburg gave a presentation in December about a proposal to introduce a trolleybus system, which could be running within two years. Backbone Line T1 (16.1 km) would connect

Viehofen in the north with St. Georgen on the southern edge of Sankt Pölten. There would be extensions to Wilhelmsburg (6.1 km) and Herzogenburg (8.3 km) to the north, as well as a shorter route through Sankt Pölten (4.3 km). In total almost 35 km of new trolleybus lines are proposed, which should be fully electrified, with a few exceptions. There are strong commuter flows in both directions.

Although start-up costs are higher for trolleybuses than pure battery buses, trolleybuses are much more cost-effective in the longer-term. The use of smaller batteries makes them much lighter, they consume less energy and have greater passenger capacity. It is now intended to apply for financial support from the state and federal government.

CZECH REPUBLIC Brno

The first two SOR TNS 12/ Rail Electronics CZ trolleybuses were completed at the trolleybus depot in Komín in November and are numbered 3065 and 3066. The framework agreement stipulates that DPMB will assemble up to 40 of these trolleybuses by 2025. A further 40 vehicles are to be built based on the same body but with Škoda electrics as Škoda 32 Trs, also under a framework agreement. Ten vehicles from this order are for delivery in 2023.

There are no more Škoda 15 Tr and 22 Tr trolleybuses in scheduled service, although 3505 and 3605 are still available for use as reserves,

but are only occasionally used. All other 15Trs and 22Trs will be scrapped. A farewell event for the Škoda 22 Trs was held on 22 January. The last high-floor trolleybuses are the four Škoda 14 TrMs (3256, 3259, 3274 and 3279).

By 2025, the trolleybus fleet will consist of 40 Škoda 27 Tr, 10 Škoda 26 Tr, 30 Škoda 31Tr and the 80 externally identical SOR TNS 12 or Škoda 32 Tr based on the SOR NS12 bus body.

CZECH REPUBLIC České Budějovice

Operator DPMCB has published a tender for the supply of 14 articulated trolleybuses with batteries. The contract is linked to an EU-funded programme, the Integrated Regional Operational Programme 2021-2027 (IROP).

CZECH REPUBLIC Jihlava

New trolleybus 94 is a Škoda 26 Tr NU. It entered service on 1 January, replacing Škoda 26 Tr 69, which was built in 2009. Services are being reorganised from 1 February, when the new 5.7 km trolleybus line to the Bedřichov area opens. Bus services have route numbers and trolleybuses have route letters. Bus lines 3 and 5 are being replaced by trolleybus services G and H.

CZECH REPUBLIC Ostrava

The first of the production batch of Škoda 36 Tr trolleybuses (Škoda T'City 12), one of 18 for this operator, commenced test running in service in Plzeň on 19 December. The first two

deliveries to Ostrava were made on 13 January.

CZECH REPUBLIC Plzeň

Operator PMDP has a strategy for dealing with frozen overhead lines. On days when there is a risk of frost, trolleybuses with batteries are used as much as possible. When there is a higher probability of frost, a special anti-frost trolleybus takes to the streets. This is Škoda 26 Tr no. 551, which since 2020 has been equipped with a system for applying a special ecological antifreeze mixture on the overhead wires. This system was developed by ESKO.

CZECH REPUBLIC Praha

The ex- Plzeň Škoda 24 Tr has been renumbered 508 from 9508 (see *photograph*, page 34). When delivered the new trolleybuses will have three-digit fleet numbers. 508 returned to use on line 58 on a shortened route from Letňany to Čakovice (which was fully wired) on 7 January. The prototype Škoda 36 Tr trolleybus is being hired from February for use on the full line 58 until the new SOR trolleybuses are available and route 140 is converted to trolleybus operation. It had been planned to hire the Ekova Electron 12T trolleybus, but it was found to be unsuitable after a long period of disuse.

ECUADOR Quito

The Chinese company Yutong was expected to be chosen to supply 25 new trolleybuses for delivery this year. The operator wishes to buy a total of 50 trolleybuses by 2024.

FRANCE Nancy

Current TVR operations are expected to cease on 12 March and a replacement network of buses will be set up. In a poll, passengers have chosen blue as the livery for the new Hess



trolleybuses (see *image above*, courtesy *Métropole du Grand Nancy*), production of which will start this year, with the first scheduled to arrive at the end of the year and all 25 being delivered by mid-2024. Commissioning of the new trolleybus line T1 is planned for summer 2024.

GERMANY Marburg

There have been delays to the timetable for introducing a new trolleybus system. It is now expected that all necessary documents will be submitted to the approval authority by the end of 2023 and that the building permit will be obtained at the end of 2024.

HUNGARY Budapest

Six new Škoda 27 Tr trolleybuses were delivered in 2022 and another ten were expected in January.

HUNGARY Debrecen

Trolleybus operation has not temporarily ceased from 1 January after all because of the risk of deterioration of the infrastructure as well as there being insufficient drivers for the replacement buses.

ITALY Chieti

The call for expressions of interest for the construction of a new 4.8km trolleybus line received no applications, probably because a very tight ten-day deadline had been given. Subsequently, the Abruzzo region decided to

withdraw funding so the city has lost about €4 million and must also return an advance of €200,000 euros that the region provided for preparatory and design work. The local opposition party claims this is because of a failure of the current municipal leadership.

ITALY Verona

Following the redesign of the new trolleybus system in 2021, approval is awaited from the Interministerial Committee on Economic Planning and Sustainable Development. Once approved, the city plans to restart construction work quickly.

The current city administration claims that the trolleybus project, which was designed for Verona thirty years ago, cannot be abandoned because a lot of money has been invested and trolleybuses are already contracted, some of which have long been manufactured.

KAZAKHSTAN Almaty

100 new low-floor rigid trolleybuses are to be purchased, with funds provided by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The first 50 vehicles are to be delivered by July and the rest by 1 December. Almaty is already carrying out the

reconstruction of 10 substations, a general modernisation of the overhead line and is proceeding with the renewal of some previously abandoned trolleybus sections.

MEXICO Mexico City

Following the arrival of 100 new Yutong trolleybuses all old vehicles were withdrawn with effect from 20 December. MASA/Mitsubishi trolleybuses have been in operation for 25 years and the oldest of them for more than 30 years. City Hall did not say whether it would keep any of the cars as a backup or as museum vehicles.

POLAND Gdynia

A contract for the supply of two battery-equipped articulated trolleybuses has been awarded to Solaris, which was the only manufacturer to submit a bid.

ROMANIA Vaslui

The first 12m Solaris Trollino was delivered on 14 January.

ROMANIA Bucuresti

A contract for the delivery of 100 Solaris 12m trolleybuses with Medcom electrics requires the first to be delivered in March 2024, with all to have been received by the end of that year. They will be equipped with batteries allowing them to travel up to 20km in battery mode. They will replace the high-floor Ikarus/Astra trolleybuses built between 1997 and 2002, of which around 100 are still in operation.

RUSSIA Krasnodar

Tenders for the purchase of 60 new trolleybuses have been announced. They will replace some older trolleybuses but otherwise will be used on completely new routes.

RUSSIA Novosibirsk

A tender has been announced for the acquisition of 120 new rigid battery

trolleybuses, with all to be supplied by November.

RUSSIA Penza

Ninety new battery trolleybuses are on order, the first three of which were scheduled to arrive before the end of 2022 and the remainder by 1 October 2023. At present only 62 trolleybuses are operated and it is intended to retain some older vehicles to increase the fleet strength to 100.

RUSSIA Stavropol

The city plans to buy 45 battery trolleybuses to renew three-quarters of its fleet of 61 trolleybuses, but they will not be delivered until 2024.

SLOVAKIA Prešov

Six Škoda 27 Trs have been ordered to expand the trolleybus fleet. They will have traction batteries with a range of at least 12km.

SWITZERLAND Genève

Operator TPG intends to operate a 100% electric fleet by 2030, but replacement of diesel buses will be by 119 new battery-electric buses using opportunity charging of the type used for its TOSA experimental line.

SWITZERLAND Industry

Carrosserie HESS AG intends to open a plant in Porto, Portugal, soon. Production at the Hess plant in Minsk has been suspended and its fate is not yet resolved.

SWITZERLAND Luzern

The first member of the undertaking's first batch of low-floor Hess trolleybuses to have clocked up more than 1,000,000 km was No. 205, which did so in November. These vehicles were built in 2004 and are VBL's oldest trolleybuses.

SWITZERLAND Winterthur

With the entry into service of the new Hess trolleybuses the ten Solaris Trollinos with Cegelec equipment are being withdrawn, with only five

remaining by mid-December. Delivery of all the Trollinos to Chişinău for further service was scheduled to have been completed by the end of January.

UKRAINE Rivne

Although this city is about 550 km from the Russian border it was targeted for a series of attacks on energy infrastructure in November. Despite quick repairs there are problems with the power supply to the trolleybus network, limiting operation. Rivne is the only operation in the world where it is still possible to ride on a Škoda 9 Tr in normal service. Five of the type are still in stock but only one of them appears in service, albeit very rarely. Officially, operation of the type has already been terminated.

There are 84 trolleybuses in working condition of which 49 are Škoda 14 Trs. No. 103, which dates from 1989, has been refurbished and restored to its original red and cream livery. Archive photos have been used for the external treatment but the quest for authenticity has not been extended to the interior treatment. After a test run on 26 December, No. 103 re-entered service on 28 December.

With thanks to: Dave Chick, Zdeněk Kresa, České noviny, Československý Dopravák, Plzenske Trolejbusy, sustainable-bus.com, Škoda Group, Trolleybus Trollino, Urban Transport Magazine, Ville Rail & Transports, zdopravy.cz

Preserved trolleybuses at Solingen's 70th anniversary

Photos by Tom Douce



Upper: One of the guest trolleybuses, on which passengers made pre-booked tours was Esslingen 22, built by Henschel in 1962 and withdrawn in 1986, depicted at the depot on 18 June.

Lower: Another guest vehicle was Trier 28, one of a batch of six Henschels (26-31), built in 1961-2. When the Trier system closed in 1970 it was converted into a diesel bus and in preservation has again been equipped with trolley booms but the electrical equipment has not been reinstated and so it operated in diesel mode. The location is the terminus of route 681 at Hästen, the other terminus being Solingen Hbf.

