

ANNUAL REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

It does not seem 5 minutes since my last report but the calendar says differently. Once again we have had a year of changes, some forced on us, some planned. The outcome has been a consolidation of working practices, a general smoothing of wrinkles and progress with the forward plan and where we are going in the future.

I now comment on the salient points of the Museum's activities which has been the result of the steady commitment of the members without whom we would be nothing.

EVENTS

Our running year was again significant and the breakdown was as follows:

In round figures we turned one or more vehicles out on about 62 vehicle-days. The bookings analyse into the general headings of :

	2005	2004
Rallies	11	10
Weddings	5	5
Theme days	9	3
Promotional Dates	6	12
Misc. & Sundry	2	27
Talks	2	1
NARTM meetings	2	1

Out-of-region bookings comprised of :

K type to Severn Valley Railway
L type to Amsterdam

The Newtonian only worked 7 events and again needs more exposure in 2006 whilst the L 27 days, K 14 days and Daimler 14 days took the lion's share of the calendar. Promotional bookings were up and I was pleased to see that the rally scene was better attended. We also went to two NARTM meetings and we undertook 2 lectures in Guisborough and Bedale. We failed with only one booking due to brake problems with the L type. We had two punctures, one with the L and one with the Daimler.

VEHICLES

AHN 451B - The Daimler did its bit this season and continues to perform well. There is a list of minor jobs to do on her but nothing of a serious nature. All these needs should be resolved with a committed 2/3 days in the workshop.

LHN 860 - the L type performed well except for a brake problem now expected to be the master-servo leather seal The water pump is to be changed as this continues to drip coolant. Otherwise the list of works is of a minor nature with some rechroming of saloon fittings to be carried out as part of the upgrade policy. The Secretary will not field any questions on his removal of the off-side inspection flap without the aid of a screwdriver.

NDL 769G - the Newtonian as last year did not get the exposure of the other vehicles. Significant work this year was the renewal of the step sub frame and the servicing of the hydraulic accelerator linkage which resulted in the top speed being held back to 50mph. Prop-shaft UJ's need some attention before the next MoT.

GHN 189 - the K continues to soldier on. It ran overnight to Kidderminster without a hitch in 7.5 hours. We propose to put in the replacement gearbox this close season as the gear change has become more difficult.

PROJECT WORK: THE BRISTOL LS

Progress on the LS continues but it suffered a 4 month stop due to the enforced move from unit 9 to 21 due to the sale of the premises to Roman Ltd in November 2004. Thanks to the efforts of the membership, we had a rolling chassis sufficient to put the vehicle out and into Roman's car park.

Meanwhile we fitted out Unit 21 and awaited the fitting of roller shutter doors which was completed in mid-January. By then we had more usable floor-space due to better planning and better racking and shelving.

In September we had the gearbox back at Aycliffe and this is now finished. Grey fabric work is complete inside, luggage racks finished and refitted, front cockpit recovered and windscreen glass refitted. Obviously the need for a rolling chassis pushed us to check the differential which appears sound, before permanently refitting it into the back axle.

Alan Tweedy continues his work on the electrics.

NEW HOME PROJECT

We have moved on from last year's report by being able to say that we have final general arrangement drawings and costs from the QS. The details of which will be up for discussion at the AGM. As you will remember Ian has had discussions with Sedgefield Borough Council regarding the prospect of the new build going to Shildon alongside *Locomotion*. The site has now been looked at and would seem to be a further option and one meriting full consideration.

At a tangent to this, Parliament Road shed is shortly to be redeveloped by

Siesta and we have been offered terms for staying with them. We hopefully will continue to be able to use Cargo Fleet Depot through the arrangement with Graeme Binns, and this will give us very good flexibility, with covered roof space in three locations.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Ernie's financial statement is attached to the Annual report. You will see that we have drawn nothing down from the HLF for the LS due to the rules which govern us. We have spent approximately £1500 at this time from a final recovery total of £2400. The contract has been extended which will allow for this eventual recovery of expenditure.

Peter Mitchell updates the website with thanks whilst Neil Cockburn has audited the books following the loss of S Russell after many years of service to the Society.

PROGRAMME - SEE EVENTS' PAGE

Our programme was varied, country-wide and very cost effective. We can only operate a season with the help of the members and I think that all those who have been involved will agree with me that it ran well. Yes, we did have one blip but by and large another vintage year.

Highlights must be another Dutch masterpiece by Derek Thompson and a faultless scheduling of the K to the Severn Valley Railway. I did suggest that we dropped the SVR event in 2005 but I soon became a committee of one.

FORWARD PLAN

The Forward plan comes up for review this year and will be linked to an invitation by MLA/NEMLAC to apply for MLA Phase III Accreditation in June 2006, hence the request to approve the revised Acquisition and Disposal Policy plus the draft Disaster and Emergency Planning Policy. We now have most parts of the policy statements sorted. Therefore I am hopeful that our application moves forward smoothly. I am assured by NEMLAC that we are shining examples of good practice. Pride before a fall, I think, but nice all the same.

CURATORIAL ISSUES

I am delighted to be able to continue as the Society's Curatorial Advisor for the year 2004/5 (and hopefully beyond) and make the following comments on the activities of the Society.

First, the Society is to be congratulated on maintaining consistently high standards in both collection care, marketing and promotion, and indeed in the

overall general development. In this respect, its progress towards two major goals is to be applauded, bearing in mind the small but dedicated number of people involved.

ACCREDITATION - the Society will be invited in June 2006 to apply for accreditation and I am confident that it will meet those new standards required of them by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). I shall be giving appropriate advice eg cataloguing, documentation, storage and conservation, as this process moves along.

NEW HOME PROJECT - the need to move forward and to provide good quality accommodation for the current collection and future acquisitions is being maintained and I am delighted to hear of the discussions with Sedgfield Borough Council about the possibility of an alternative move to *Locomotion* at Shildon. If successful, this will be to the benefit of both parties involved.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Society will continue to prosper in the coming years, with new and exciting ideas being proposed and more importantly being achieved with dedication, commitment and professionalism.

John Wilks

CONCLUSION

I believe that we have had another good year of consolidating our core business' activities while looking forward to resolving our permanent accommodation problems while still retaining the flexibility of the other two premises.

Certainly the influence of NEMLAC and the two local museums at Darlington and Shildon has been helpful in focussing our aims for the future. Succession, the recruitment of new blood and retention of skills are of paramount importance in the next 5 years. The comfort of this matter is that all museums have the same problem from the top to the bottom of the spectrum of the museum world

Nick Shakesby
Chairman



**Aycliffe & District
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