

RUNNING SHEET

OCTOBER/ NOVEMBER, 2011

The Newsletter of the Omnibus Society Inc., PO Box 9801, Wellington, NZ

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As this issue comes to you all so close to the end of the year, the Officers and Committee of the Society send you warmest good wishes for Christmas and the New Year.



Even we bus enthusiasts noticed that a large sports event seemed to be going on around us during October, 2011. Here is Go Wellington 1320/AZE115, a Designline MAN, in a special WRC supporters' livery. (Photo: Alan Wickens)

HAPPENINGS AT KARORI... *thanks to Peter Rendall for most of this information which covers a number of months, and also to Henry Brittain.*

Peter begins..... What's the Bus Operating Group up to? Not a lot of restoration, after supplying two buses (**462 & 322**) for the Festival in Palmerston North over Easter. We entered into discussions with Go Wellington about our activities at Karori Depot. The good news is that we aren't being thrown out yet, but we were asked to bring our operations into line with GW's (Regional Council) Health, Safety, etc Policy. This is because under their policies we are visitors to the site and have to comply with their policies. So, much of our activity over recent weeks has been getting the workshop area, where we spend most of our time, up to snuff. Henry and Morris were away, so Mike Flinn and I were busy. There are pluses - we have found tools we didn't know we had, and one of my pairs of glasses - which I proceeded to lose again shortly after – it's lucky I buy them in \$10 lots at the \$2 shop. Mike is updating his records of what parts we have, and much of the jumble on the shelves is being boxed and labelled. That way we can make them stay on the shelves easier. If one reads the news from Ferrymead, one of the main jobs they have had to do is put everything back on shelves after their quakes. Hopefully, our work now will save us time and effort if the great Wellington shake happens.

About two years ago I was contacted by the Otago Daily Times, asking if I knew where there was a suitable vehicle to put in the Early Settlers Museum. They wanted one from when the building opened as the NZRRS depot in Dunedin in the 1930's. I immediately thought of the blue Leyland Cub sitting in the Karori store. When in Dunedin about a year ago I called at the Early Settlers and advised them that the vehicle could be available on long term loan. About six weeks ago they came back to me saying yes, so **761** (now **759** – see below) is heading south where it will be restored to its original configuration. It was stripped out to be a movan, so lacks seats. We

have one elderly double seat stored and will send that south with it as a possible guide. However, if anyone has any interior photos of 1930's NZRRS vehicles I'd love to see them. Fortunately NZMB didn't change the jelly mould light covers much between the 30's and the 60's so we can provide light covers, and ventilator covers, and some suitable instruments for the dash panel - which has been vandalised. It sails south on a ro-ro ship to Lyttelton on 26 June. **759**'s departure will free up much needed space at Karori. We also plan to swop **49** and **6** over. The Morris Commercial seems to have stalled in recent months so some of **49**'s parts have been put inside safely out of the way. Both buses will be backed in so towing out is easier. The swop will make **49** more accessible for Jim to work on the front end, and there's a chance we could start putting the skin back on at the rear, and be able to do some of the underbody stuff from the 2nd pit....All this is progress, though it will be invisible for some time.

When **759** goes, we will probably move the Ford V8 back and possibly put the MLZ school bus in front of it, to free up the area in front of the Farmer's trolley which will allow us to do more stores work and tidying up. Anyone with time on their hands would be welcome at Karori of a Tuesday, or any other time by arrangement.

(In June, Peter reported that the Society had been thinking of the blue Cub as NZRRS **761** - but looking at the chassis plate, he now says that it is **759** according to Mike Jarka's book. He continues) Even before we checked the plate, having emptied everything out of the vehicle, I was thinking that it couldn't be **761**, as **761** was one of the first steel-bodied buses from NZMB and our Cub is very much wooden-framed. We have taken out all the stuff that was stored inside and today I adjusted the steering so it could turn left *and* right. However, having done this, it was pointed out that the steering column was at an odd angle and examination showed that the bracket part way down the column had pulled out of the firewall which had corroded. The next task is to fabricate a plate to reinforce the firewall and remount the bracket, then I'll have to reset the steering. It should be easier as I lubricated everything when I put it back together. Once this is done I'll install a temporary seat for the steerer....I suppose legally a "driver" even if the motor won't be running. Since **759** was a B22F we will be able to supply suitable seats to go in it. Movement will be by solid bar - also being fabricated at Karori. I've fitted an axle block to the front axle and there is a bracket mounted on the bumper mount on the door side of the bus. I've found while researching this vehicle that NZMB interiors didn't change much over the years - generally bus seats in the 1930s were much like the seats fitted in the 1950s as were the ventilator covers and lamp glasses. The vehicle is mechanically complete but the handbrake is non-operative. All going well, it will depart Karori next Thursday (30 June) and sail south to Lyttelton on the "Hoegh Chennai" on 1 July. From Lyttelton it will go to Ferrymead, where the team will assess it and make a restoration proposal to the Early Settlers Museum. Then it either heads south to Dunedin or stays at Ferrymead for restoration. This would be good as the paid team at THS don't have a lot to do while the city tramway isn't functioning - and when the Birney is finished it's probably going to Auckland. Also on board ship will be ex-WCT Volvo/Hawke trolley **258** for the THS.



*Ex-NZRRS Leyland Cub **759**, having arrived in the South Island from Wellington. (Photo: Alan Roi)*

During August, Peter reported that ex-NZRRS Cub **759** had gone to Ferrymead so far, en route to the Early Settlers' Museum in Dunedin, and Volvo trolley, **258**, was at Ferrymead, with Alan Roi making headway getting the missing bits.

There has been some progress on rebuilding the front step area on Thorneycroft **95**. We've also had trouble getting Reliance **322** ready for COF ! One pair of tyres on the rear axle weren't really a pair, as one was bigger than the other. It turned out to be a retread, so had to be changed. The options were to replace the big one with a smaller one, or the smaller one with a big one. We decided on the former, having a suitable smaller 10-00:20 in stock. However, we wanted to keep the big tyre on its original rim as we have an 11-00: 20 of the same diameter so we could make a pair.

Some nice person donated us a set of four wheels from a Mk II Reliance Movan, but these have odd tyres, so we removed the odd tyre from the rim and replaced it with the spare. The Firestone truck came by and getting the tyre off proved to be very difficult. It was taken away for removal using machines at their Seaview base. A lot of rust inside the rim was the cause. The tyre lads declined to put our tyre on it so, as we don't have any accessible AEC rims, the big one had to be taken out and removed from its rim. The reject rim will be dealt with by M. Flinn's anti-corrosion technique. It will then be available for use again. We might put the odd tyre - the four are of the cross rib type - back on a Leyland rim, and put all four on the back axle of **23**, ex-Wanganui Cub, which currently has only three wheels fitted as we needed a tyre for **322** - or **255**, the Royal Tiger at the tramway. This will free up three good 10-00 : 20s for use. (NB Cross rib tyres don't have a tread pattern but are lawful for use provided all tyres on the axle are the same.)

Henry adds this interesting piece.... Mike Boyton (our Treasurer) completed the purchase of Volvo coach IA662, ex-Newmans **262**, a founding coach of Richard Potts' **Classic Coaches**, and the coach went south on 30th September, 2011, to the "Motueka branch of the Society". (This is where Mike B. lives. No room for pix, sorry – next issue. – **Ed.**)

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BOOKS FOR SALE TO MEMBERS

Te Kopuru -Dargaville Bus Company	(2 COPIES)	\$ 7.00
Over The Plains To Thames	(9 COPIES)	\$ 7.00
New Zealand Buses Prior To 1930	(2 COPIES)	\$ 7.00
North Island Buses In Colour	(6 COPIES)	\$12.00
South Island Buses In Colour	(13 COPIES)	\$12.00
Buses & People - A New Zealand Album	(2 COPIES)	\$12.00
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Wellington's Volvo Trolleybus Finale	(15 COPIES)	\$ 7.00
On The Buses (Slight Water Damage)	(1 COPY)	\$40.00
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Bedfords Galore N.Z.R.R.S. Buses & Coaches 1950S & 1960s	(6 COPIES)	\$15.00

BOOKS CAN BE ORDERED FROM:

Morris Moller
30 Abilene Crescent
Churton Park
WELLINGTON 6037
PHONE (04) 477-9467
email: morrismoller@slingshot.co.nz

Gus Weir's World Tour of the UK

Part 10

Our type of air ticket meant our travel continued westward, so to get back to NZ from UK we had to pass through North America. It also meant that jetlag was not a problem going against the clock. Taking advantage of this allowed us to investigate at least some of the US and Canada.

Leaving Heathrow by United Airlines Boeing 777-200, which after seven hours and two meals arrived at JFK Airport, New York. Our hotel was on Lexington Avenue and I believe we had the smallest room not counting the traditional smallest room in the hotel, just enough room for the bed and no real room for suitcases. However, seeing we were only there for a day or two, we put up with it, being in the room only to sleep.

Lexington Avenue provided an introduction to New York MTA buses, which to me all looked much the same, large, noisy GMC and MCI diesels. We did the tourist stuff, riding the large red open-top double deck buses to view the sights like the UN Building, Ground Zero etc., but we didn't join the many lining up to board the boat from which to see the Statue of Liberty

After two days in The Big Apple, we joined an organised tour heading for Boston, Mass. It left the City in a horrendous rainstorm which played havoc with the Subway and closed many New York roads. In Boston we visited the Statue of Paul Revere from where the legend began. Following an overnight stay in Boston, where I believe our credit card details were stolen, of which more later, our coach left for Quebec and more of those large diesel GMCs. Our tour programme in Quebec took us to the reservation of the Huron Tribe of Native Americans where we were taught a greeting in the native language and entertained with a native dance - very interesting. Here I viewed my first real tepee.

On then to the National Capital, Ottawa, where we saw the Parliament Buildings and a real Royal Canadian Mounted Policeman in traditional uniform complete with lemon squeezer hat and jodhpurs, acting as an information provider in the 'Museum of Civilisation'. In the grounds of the Parliament Buildings is a controversial statue of HM Queen Elizabeth not only astride a horse, which is thought to be undignified for HM, but she is also showing a somewhat unqueenly portion of bare upper leg. The local bus service in Ottawa is called O C Transpo and runs a make of bus I had not seen or heard of before - Orion Bus Industries. There are rigid and articulated vehicles in a pleasant red and off-white livery. Through the wonders of the internet I have since discovered that Orion is a Canadian Company established in Ottawa in 1975 and has vehicles in many US and Canadian cities. An unusual feature of the Transpo system is that it operates an interchange on the Mackenzie King Bridge which crosses the Rideau Canal.



Toronto Transit Commission GMC 2080, Toronto, Canada (Photo: Gus Weir)

Next stop was Toronto to ride their splendid TTC Urban Transit Development Corp. manufactured trams. These cars, rigid and articulated, are single-ended so obviously the routes all have balloon loops at their terminals and we tried several of them. The TTC also operate a fleet of GMC diesel buses to outlying areas. I also discovered a handsome-looking vehicle (of a type not

familiar to me) at the Union Station. It was a Prevost Mirage 3-axle coach used on long distance commuter services. (Prevost is apparently a subsidiary of Volvo Sweden). A dinner at the revolving restaurant atop the CP Tower ended the day and our stay in Toronto. Next day we moved on to Niagara and the tourist delights there! **More follows in Part 11.**

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***Here's a thought...** (thanks to Henry Brittain who vows this is not autobiographical.)*

I would like to share an experience with you all that has to do with drinking and driving. As you know some of us have had brushes with the authorities on our way home in recent years. Well, I for one have done something about it. The other night I was out for dinner and a few drinks with some friends, after having far too much wine, and knowing full well I was wasted, I did something I've never done before. I took a bus home.

I arrived home safely and without incident, which was a *real* surprise, as I have never driven a bus before.

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OBSERVATIONS...*Thanks to Graeme Inwood, Markus Lang, Henry Steele, Alan Wickens* **AUCKLAND -**



Scania 2163/FJQ531 and Nissan(?)1842/WB2444 on WRC duty, Auckland, 24/9/ 2011. (Photo: Graeme Inwood)



Alexander Dennis 4011/ FZQ846, at the Auckland urban depot in September, wearing Outer Link livery. These buses are assembled in NZ. Soon, Mana Coach Services, Porirua, are due to receive four. Two may have been delivered as you read this. (Photo: Graeme Inwood)

HUTT VALLEY - Since the last report, advises Henry S., there seems to have been little vehicle activity with **Valley Flyer** and **Runcimans**. Accident-damaged **Go Wellington MAN**, **179**, is being used for spares at Upper Hutt and Runciman's coaches **58/ABT 884**, Denning, and **59/PN 8565**, Volvo, were sold to **New Zealand Coach Services (NCS)** early this year. **Classic Coaches** acquired an ex-Christchurch (**Red Bus**) **MAN**, **645/NK 1187** early in the year.

NCS has continued rebuilding ex-Christchurch MANs. There are differences in detail,

some retaining the original front end and some converted to single door, but all are badged as Scania. Those noted this year are **622/FSN 251**, **627/FPS 481**, **641/FSN 228** and **650/FYB 403**. NCS also has ex-Christchurch tri-axle MAN **680/PN 3865**. In April two former Stagecoach Auckland MANs (**1713 & 1729**) were acquired from Leopard Coaches, registered CCK 286 and NS 1648. Recently arrived is ex-Leopard Coaches Volvo B12B, CFT 801. Meanwhile ex-Invercargill Transport Leyland Tiger **11/MJ 2047** is being dismantled and, in July, Leyland Leopard 30/BGG 633 was sold. (ex-NCS30 registration, too. It spent a few years at Mana's Kapiti Depot before sale by Mana C.S. –*Ed.*) It was new as Newlands 30 (KX 2882) in 1982.



NCS 30/BGG633 on rail replacement duties at Waterloo Station in February, 2011 (Photo: Henry Steele)

Until this year, rail replacement for the Tranz Metro modernisation programme had been distributed among local operators. From mid-year, these operations were tendered as a single contract for a three year period and won by **Tranzit**. Most days there are emergency replacements by other operators when there are crew or stock shortages and train or equipment breakdowns.

WELLINGTON – **Mana Coach Services** – **Porirua Depot** will receive the first of four ADL (Alexander Dennis) 37 seat, two-axle buses, all due by the end of November. This type of bus is, of course, coming into **NZ Buses'** Auckland fleet(s), numbered in the 4xxx series (what of the 3xxx or later 2xxx series?). They are assembled by Kiwi at Tauranga. (See photo under **AUCKLAND** heading.) **Kapiti Depot** – here, Izuu **61/ WE3930**, has reached the age limits for school bus use and will soon leave the fleet. It was particularly useful on the Reikorangi school run because of its ground clearance, compactness and high capacity. It is the second-to-last manual gearbox bus in the Kapiti fleet, Hino coach **139/ NCS39** being the last. I'll miss it. At present, many vehicles are having white front LED running lights fitted, this being company policy. As soon as power is switched on in any bus so fitted, the lights illuminate and cannot be turned off while the vehicle is running. They automatically dim when main lights are on.

Go Wellington – In early October, MAN **760** caught fire towards the outer end of Miramar North Route 24, in Nevay Road, near the prison. It was in service, the *Dominion Post* reported, but no passengers were on board and no-one was hurt. It seems a battery fire may have been

responsible. (Thanks to Dan, my son, for sending the early report of this event, and to Graeme.)



The damage suffered by 760, as viewed at Kilbirnie Depot. (Photo: Graeme Inwood)

Graeme reports also that in August Scania's **2111**, **2116**, **2122** went to Auckland (in Metrolink blue and silver) and MAN **2303** (ex-Redbus) returned to Wellington. He's also been to Auckland on a delivery trip and return, doing the same, with some GW colleagues. Some also did some route driving up there!!



*Not far from Karori Park terminus, a **Go Wellington** 3-axle trolleybus (I think it is **381** as the rego seems to read EZS545) heads for the city and Lyall Bay through the amazingly snowy afternoon and evening of 14 August, 2011. The "Fish & Chips" sign looks inviting!! Buses ran accident-free during the snows. (Photo: Markus Lang)*

Destinations – Thanks to Alan Wickens for a photo of **Go Wellington** trolley **356/ETK202** displaying on its Hanover destination the following: "Want a career that moves you? 0800 287 374". Hope it wasn't in service !!!

WEBSITE...*The Society's website, masterminded by Mike Butler, is incorporated in **RUNNING SHEET's** title heading. Pay it a visit – it's well worth it! Also, if you've missed or lost issues of the newsletter, back numbers are available on the website.*

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