

THE CLASSIC LONDON BUS SOCIETY

Memorable days out by bus for enthusiasts



NEWSLETTER 2 - February 2008

Introduction

Dear Member,

Firstly a huge thank you to all those who came along on our first trip to Ensign. It was good to finally put faces to names that are becoming very familiar to me. I hope all 88 of you enjoyed the day as much as I did, and speaking to many of you afterwards, and judging by the many kind emails and letters I have received, I think it is safe to say you probably did. I tried my very best to provide you all with a memorable day out, and your support was greatly appreciated.

One thing in all the excitement that I forgot to do on Saturday was the draw to win the free trip to The Sittingbourne and Kemsley Railway. The winner, pulled out by TCLBS's official draw master (see picture), was Colin Conway.

The one slight blip on the day was at lunch, when the Royal Hotel let us down a bit, and a handful of you did not get as much food as your £6 should have entitled you to. I think I know who the unlucky ones were, but if you felt a bit short changed, and empty in the tummy, then please drop me a line, and I will ensure you get a suitable refund in the form of a discount against a future booking.



More excursions

So what next for The Society? Well I can now reveal details of another trip we are undertaking, this time on Sunday 30 March, when we will visit Reading Transport's depot at Great Knollys St (it's the one you can see from the railway line). Again we shall pick up from The Embankment at around 10:30, and travel out to Reading along the old A4, rather than on the motorway. It is hoped that we will be able to use RMA58, which many commented on Saturday they would like to experience a ride on. James Freeman, the Chief Executive Officer of Reading Transport will be our host, and after an introductory talk about operations at a large depot, he will give us a

guided tour of the site to look at the vehicles. It is possible they may have some of their new bio-methanol buses (whatever they look like) being introduced in April available for us to look at in the yard. No details on a lunch stop yet (phew), and we are also trying to arrange one or two other surprises to enhance the day, before returning into Central London around 16:30.

Many of you asked me on Saturday if I had timings for the bus running to the Annual Cobham Open Day the following weekend, and the answer is no, but hopefully I will do soon. This is not so much an organised trip, just a service running under my banner, and is open to all enthusiasts, although you as members will receive a discount. So if it makes your journey easier or more fun, it is there for you to use.

On Saturday 12 April we visit The Sittingbourne and Kemsley Steam Railway which I have previously advised you about. A bus ride from London, steam train rides and a footplate ride for all are amongst the fare on offer.

So a lot going on in a short space of time, but I was keen to take up the offers that came our way. If there is something that appeals, bookings are being taken now, and I would be delighted to see you. Incidentally, I know some of you like to pay in advance, but I am quite happy to take payment on the day. That way if your domestic arrangements suddenly change and you can't make it for some reason, I don't have to worry about refunds.

It's just like the Oscars

Now although it is me who is lapping up all the congratulations after the Ensign trip, this would seem a good time to mention a few others who have contributed to the success of the Society, and the enjoyment of our Ensign trip.

Firstly my good friend Bob Stanger, a regular driver of heritage vehicles for Ensign, who organised a similar visit to Purfleet last year, and kindly invited me along. That trip was the inspiration for the formation of The Society, and I am extremely grateful to Bob for his continued support. The Reading Transport day is his idea, and he is working hard to make it a success. So it is Bob's fault if it goes wrong, and my good organisational skills if it is a winner !

Next the Newman family, and indeed all the team at Ensign. In particular though, Steve Newman, who when I went to see him last October and told him of my plans for a Society, readily agreed to help and support me, as well as kindly host our first visit. I thank him for believing in me, and for arranging the VIP treatment for us on Saturday. Ross Newman was the driver on the Cravens RT, and Chairman Peter Newman was one of the tour guides, so a real family effort from a trio of incredibly passionate enthusiasts, and a huge thank you to them all.

Peter Brown who drove RT624 on Saturday, has been equally supportive, and helped me out with the recent visit to Rainham and Purfleet a few weeks ago. Someone has to check suitable pubs out for lunch, and that onerous task fell upon Peter and myself !

Mike Welch, the major shareholder of RT624, who spoke to us at lunch on Saturday, also provided the blinds for both vehicles to enhance their appearance, and our day, and I'm extremely grateful to him.

My elder son Alex who helped me out so much on Saturday and really didn't think his dad was serious about forming this Society. See I told you I was, and now I've done it ! Thanks mate.

Those of you with ftopic sites, and other websites, who generously advertised The Society, in advance, and now continue to do so with their splendid pictures from Saturday's trip. You were just names to me before I started this, and I only ever caught fleeting glimpses of you huddled together on street corners, as I sped past on a bus. Now it is a pleasure to have met you all, and in particular I pay homage to Terry, Jimmy, Bob, John, Mick and the many others who took the trouble to add me onto their sites. Long may you continue to provide us with photographs to remind us of our days out, capture those buses we somehow conspired to miss, and freeze in the middle of roundabouts at Lakeside on the X80 Heritage running days ! I salute you chaps.

Next an apology to my wife Claire, to whom I promised faithfully that running this Society wouldn't mean she would see less of me, and that it wouldn't interfere with family life - oops.

And finally, thank you dear member. For without you I would just have my real work to occupy my mind and day, rather than being able to indulge in this wonderful pastime of ours.

With my best regards to you all.

Trevor