

RETRO UNDERGROUND: THE SEVENTIES TO THE NOUGHTIES –

3. OTHER EVENTS

by Tony Morgan

My earliest memories of the Underground are during the Second World War travelling from Kingsbury on the Bakerloo Line into London and sometimes on to Kent on the Southern Railway to visit relations. In 1968, after ten years of driving to North Acton, I started commuting in to Great Portland Street. While I was there the second section of the Victoria Line opened as far as Warren Street. One lunchtime I decided to have a quick trip on it. The 1967 Stock train came in to reverse back. The Train Operator was standing in the cab with his back to the direction of travel as the ATO stopped the train. Maybe this was being done to build confidence in the new control system. Travelling home one day from Great Portland Street I saw the latest LT Magazine on display in the ticket office. I then started buying it on a regular basis. The front cover of that first edition had a photograph of the C69 Stock about to be introduced on the Circle Line on it.



From that magazine I found out about 'The Last Drop' event at Neasden Depot, on Sunday 6 June 1971 advertised, which celebrated the end of use of steam locomotives for engineers' operations. There I joined the Society because of their Sales Stand. This was my first organised event. At this event all three remaining locomotives were in steam. L94 hauled a rake of engineers' vehicles from the City and pulled into one of two Klondyke Sidings in Neasden depot. L90 was shunting up and down the other siding and L97 was outside the Steam Shed.

A selection of rolling stock and engineers' vehicles from all over the system had been assembled and the crowds were huge. The traction current was, of course, off.



The next event I attended was the opening of the London Transport Collection at Syon Park on Wednesday 23 May 1973. I was in a small crowd waiting for the gates to open. When they did, ten people set off at a run up the drive to be first in. By walking quickly I got ticket 00011, one of those strip automatic tickets similar to those issued in cinemas. The Collection was of course the forerunner of the LT Museum at Covent Garden. The display included Metropolitan class A loco No.23, Metropolitan electric loco No.5 *John Hampden*, the Metropolitan Railway milk van, the Brill Tramway locomotive (Left) and Q23 motor car 4248.

A 56- page booklet illustrated in colour and covering the buses, trams, trolleybuses and trains was available at 50p.

At Ruislip Depot on Monday 22 September 1975 a collection of Underground stock and vehicles was assembled for the 150 Anniversary of UITP, the international organisation for public transport. London was hosting the event. A collection of Underground rolling stock had been assembled for the delegates to view over the weekend just gone and LURS members were given a private view on the Monday evening. As we began to leave the stock started to be shunted for return to its own depots. There was a loud crash and we went to see what had happened. There had been a 'depot collision'. A battery

locomotive had gone in the wrong direction into an electric sleet locomotive, which suffered some damage.

On Monday 28 January 1980 the D Stock entered service from Ealing Common depot at 06.21 as running number 46. I decided to be on it as far as Tower Hill. Then it reversed and returned to Ealing Broadway at 07.27. From there it ran to Dagenham East. The plan was that it would then complete two return trips to Richmond and finally ran to Upminster and back to Ealing Broadway where it terminated after the evening peak¹. From Tower Hill I got in to my office in the Euston Road very early that morning. I had to remember that evening my car was parked near Acton Town that day rather than at Eastcote!

The London Transport Collection was moved from Syon Park to its new home in the Old Flower Market Building in Covent Garden and opened on Friday 28 March 1980, renamed the London Transport Museum.



After the closure of the London Transport Collection of Syon Park, the exhibits were taken to their new home at Covent Garden. Metropolitan electric loco No.5 "John Hampden" is seen departing from Syon Park (*Top Left*) while 1938 Tube Stock DM car 11182 sits outside the Covent Garden Museum before off-loading and transfer in (*Top Right*). Metropolitan Railway A Class steam loco is seen resting in the Aldwych (*Above Left*) before being off-loaded into the Museum (*Above Right*).

Most exhibits were on the ground floor with a recommended route to view them. After the motorbuses, trolleybuses and horse buses came the trams. Then on a plinth was the 'large' rolling stock. This

¹ A problem with the first train to enter service resulted in it being withdrawn from service at Ealing Broadway at 08.09. It was replaced by a second 'new' train and re-entered service at 10.44 Earl's Court westbound and then continued with its planned workings. Ed.

consisted of Metropolitan Railway Ashbury coach No.400 and the Milk Van, the Central & South London Railway Padded Cell car, Q23 Stock car 4248, the Wotton Tramway locomotive and a signalling exhibit. Back on the ground floor were the Metropolitan Railway steam locomotive No. 23 and electric locomotive No.5, John Hampden, along with lift, escalator and ventilation exhibits and a poster display. On exit there was of course a shop, rather limited in those days. A 64-page booklet was published illustrated with colour and black white photographs covering the buses, trams, trolleybuses and the development of the Underground lines. The formation of London Transport in 1933 was covered together with a description of its unique design style in architecture, advertising and maps and its role during the World Wars. Six pages had photographs of the 33 main exhibits with descriptions. A second edition was printed in 1983. The Museum closed in 2005 and reopened on Thursday 22 November 2007, very much revamped. There was now a mezzanine floor called Level 1. This displays Metropolitan Railway steam locomotive No.23 and electric locomotive No. 5 John Hampden, Q23 Stock car 4248 and Metropolitan Railway Ashbury coach No.400. The City & South London Railway locomotive and 1938 Stock car 11182 are on the ground floor. Buses, trams and trolleybuses still feature as well as the design aspects. A 12 page illustrated booklet co-produced with Ian Allan was published, price £1.25.



Some of the Underground vehicles in the revamped London Transport Museum at Covent Garden. An exterior and interior view of the C&SLR 'Padded Cell' car (*Top, Left and Right*), interior and exterior of District former G class Q23 motor car 4248 (*Centre, Left and Right*), Metropolitan Railway Ashbury coach 400 (*Above, Left*) and electric locomotive No.5 "John Hampden" (*Above, Right*).



North of Pinner station, from 16 to 31 August 1986, a half-mile section of the 'main' lines built in the early-1960s for the double tracking from Harrow-on-the-Hill to Moor Park had to be replaced, which included the foundations. A recreation ground off West End Lane was taken over as a works site. I had been to a Guy Fawkes display there. I checked progress from time to time and the work went down pretty deep, probably deeper than the first attempt. The area is notorious for its Middlesex clay and the attendant problems, house foundations being the prime example.

A Special Metropolitan Line Timetable covering 16-31 August was issued featuring trains only via the local lines. BR trains shuttled between Marylebone and Harrow-on-the-Hill and between Amersham and Aylesbury, every 20 minutes peak and 30 minutes off-peak. The Amersham service operated 20/30 minutes peak/off-peak, the Watford service 15/20 minutes and the Uxbridge service 5 or 10/15 minutes. The photograph (*Above*) shows the entrance to the works site, with the foundations ready for track relaying)

On Sunday October 14 1990 the Society organised a visit to the Northern and Victoria Line Cobourg Street Control Room, which was very interesting. A fortnight later Ruislip Depot organised an open day. A special bus service using both vintage and modern buses operated from Ruislip and Ruislip Gardens stations. A temporary platform had been constructed outside the main depot building entrance and Metropolitan Steam locomotive No.1 ran trips via the shunting neck from the Ruislip Gardens end into Ruislip Siding and back again. Another train ride was in a 1962 Stock unit through the new train wash. It had been planned to use the 1960 Stock Craven unit. Two miniature train rides were also available. Units of A, D, Q, 1962, 1967, 1973, 1983 and 1986 Stock were on display in the main shed, plus a Class 322 Network SouthEast train. A C stock train was unavailable as planned, as wasn't the anticipated 'The Flying Scotsman'. Also in the train shed were the Society's owned City & South London Railway coaches 135 and 163 on flat wagons. The Engineers' Train Unit display had five different trains, including the Tunnel Cleaning Train. Stock was also on display in the Engineers' Train Unit Workshop and the Lifting Shop. A mixture of other engineers' vehicles was on display on the outside roads including Sarah Siddons. Admission was by programme, price £3.00. The 12-page programme, illustrated in colour, covered the depot history and the main exhibits. In the middle pages was a two-page plan of the Depot and exhibits.



In 1992 a new Hillingdon station was built just to the west of the old station because the A40 road was being diverted to remove the bottleneck at Hillingdon Circus. The new station has modern glass and steel train shed canopy for part of its length. It was intended to be the model for a larger version at Wembley Park in connection with the stadium rebuild but this did not happen. A model of this does exist. I visited the site on Sunday mornings during the construction period to see and photograph progress (*Left*).

A new rail bridge was built alongside the old one to span the diverted A40 and I saw it rolled in using hydraulic rams one morning. The new station opened on Sunday 6 December.

On Sunday 16 May 1993 Ruislip Depot held another open day, this time to celebrate the introduction into service of the 1992 Tube Stock. The bus service operated again and there was a steam shuttle hauled by L99 inside the depot. A 1992 Stock unit operated the train wash trips. The main line stock on display included a two-coach unit of the new Chiltern Line class 165 stock. The Underground stock on display included a refurbished A Stock unit, a C Stock train, a D Stock train, the LT Museum 1938 Stock unit, the 1959 Stock Heritage Train, a 1962 Stock train, a 1967 Stock train, a 1973 Stock train, the 1986 Stock blue B unit, a 1992 Stock train and a new 1992 Stock unit in Network Southeast livery for the Waterloo & City Line. Admission was by programme, price £3.00. The 24-page programme, illustrated in colour, had a history of the Central Line and the depot. The eight centre pages were full-page photographs of the main operational rolling stocks.

On Friday 30 September 1994 three 'Underground' stations were lost to the network for economic reasons. North Weald and Ongar with the closure of the Epping to Ongar shuttle, Blake Hall having been closed three years before, and Aldwych with the closure of that shuttle. Originally it had been planned to close Mornington Crescent and West Harrow as well, but new lifts were installed at the former and at the latter the wooden halt-type platforms were rebuilt to modern standards and the 'garden shed' replaced by a more substantial ticket office, which only serves the southbound platform – access to the northbound platform is through a lockable gate under the railway bridge with no barriers in that direction. I decided to visit the closing three stations on the day before closure and have a platform ticket from Ongar timed at 08.47 on 29 September 1994. I then went to Aldwych to complete the task.

On Sunday 17 September 1995 I was listening to the local morning news and heard that 55 Broadway was open that day as part of the London Open House '95 programme. I grabbed my camera and got up to London. In reception I told them why I had come. I was told I should have booked in advance but, as the next group had only just started their briefing, to quietly join them. We were taken around the building seeing places like the boardroom, Frank Pick's office and the design office where all LT's posters and timetables etc. were designed. Eventually we landed up on the roof. When 55 Broadway was built it was the tallest building in London. The views were still pretty stunning.

On Friday 14 January 2000, after the Jubilee Line Extension had opened the previous year, a visit to Stratford Market Depot was arranged. We met at Stratford East and walked to the depot via the closed, graffitied remnants of the old market. The building was an impressive single span with a glass roof. On the main track-side of the outside roads was a futuristic control tower. After an introductory talk, where issue 1 of document describing the depot was handed out, we were taken round and shown all the facilities, particularly the raised roads. These had replaced the under train pits of previous depots. Other roads had train length platforms either side of the track allowing easy access to the trains for personnel and equipment.



The year after it was opened a private visit was organised by the Society to the LT Museum Depot at Acton on Wednesday 20 September 2000. There was a collection of buses, trams and trolleybuses. Other exhibits include an 80-year old lift from Mornington Crescent and on a mezzanine floor were displays of enamel signs and posters. The rolling stock exhibits were organised on 6 tracks. The locomotives are battery, C&SLR and sleet examples, and the 1938 Tube Stock (*Left*).

The other tube stock included Pre-1938, 1972 Mk1 and the 'green' 1986 car. There was also a Metropolitan saloon car, two brake vans, a C&SLR wagon, a flat wagon on top of which was the pre-restoration Jubilee coach.

Over four decades I have been able to experience great tours, great steam and an interesting variety of other events. My thanks are due to LURS for being at Neasden in 1970 and the monthly *Underground News*, which I eagerly await to drop through the letterbox each month. Apart from contributing articles over the years I have also duplicated it for several years until my Roneo failed on the last page of one edition and I had to hand crank the last 375 pages through because I couldn't repair it!