

August 2005

Hastings Tramways Club

No. 31

Newsletter

Special Centenary Edition!



Taken on 15th July 1905 and car 10 is about to pull away on its first trial trip at the Albert Memorial watched by a large crowd.

Centenary Celebrations (15th July 2005)

On Saturday 15th July 1905, the first test trials of the tramcars bound for the newly laid tracks of Hastings, took place. On Friday 15th July 2005, the club celebrated the centenary of this event by running several trips with Happy Harold, kindly driven by Ion Castro, along the seafront. Throughout the day, Happy Harold ran trips for a small amount of passengers each giving a donation for the trip to and from the Rock-a-Nore coach park. The weather was lovely for a ride on an open top bus, sunny and warm with a cool breeze. At 3.30pm, Happy Harold drove up to the town hall where we met up with a few other members and councillors who boarded Happy Harold for a trip up to Hastings Old Town museum, for the opening of the centenary exhibition of Hastings Tramways. Several items owned by the club are being displayed



Derek on Happy Harold during celebrations

there. The museum kindly put on tea and biscuits as a celebration. The exhibition is very good and has many interesting exhibits. Overall the day went off without a hitch and ran very smoothly. Thanks to everyone who helped. It was a most enjoyable day out!



“Happy Harold” outside the Town Hall along with some of the members.

Centenary Celebrations (31st July 2005)



On 31st July 1905, the first passenger carrying car left Silverhill Depot. Hundreds of passengers took a ride on the new tramcars that day. On Sunday 31st July 2005, the club celebrated the centenary of this event by a trip around the old circular route with Happy Harold, a car pulling the club's mini tram, built by Roy Austen, on a trailer, a modern Hastings Arrow bus, a Maidstone and District open top single deck Regal coach, a Maidstone and District double-decker bus and a modern Hastings Tramways Bus. At around 12pm, they all started the 9 mile trip from Rock-a-Nore coach park. The trip took about an hour

finishing up at Rock-a-Nore again. Happy Harold wasn't expected to do the whole trip, but it made it all the way around the route without a problem. Thanks to all the drivers who participated in this event which went off without a hitch. It was a great day!



The Mini tram on its trailer at Rock-a-Nore car park.

Turn over to find out what the press said about the event



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On the (vintage) Buses

A SELECTION of five vintage buses were on display at Rock-a-Nore in Hastings on Sunday to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first passenger-carrying tram service in the town.

The selection included an AEC Regal bus, which was built in 1948 before being converted into an open-top bus 10 years later to provide town tours of Hastings.

Such tours used to cost 1/9d.

Another bus on display was a green

double decker.

Maidstone and District used to test its new buses in Hastings because of its hilly nature.

The first tram service for passengers ran in 1905 and ran through streets like Cambridge Road, Silverhill and The Ridge.

During the day enthusiasts attempted to drive around the town following as close as possible the original tram route.

OTHER PAST EVENTS By Roy Austen

Thank you to all who attended the Bus Rally at the Oval in Hastings on Sunday 15th May. By sheer luck it seemed we were fortunate in having a fine sunny day despite the somewhat unsure forecast given.

Our club stall did exceptionally well with overall takings of £125.80, of course the biggest contributor to this was once again the “pick-a-ticket” which took £92.30 with all tickets and prizes being sold. I would like to thank Jean and Derek Masters for supplying most of the prizes and of course for putting all the tickets in the board, which I have done before and it is a rather fiddly job to say the least. I would also like to thank Oliver and family for producing the T-shirts for this years special anniversary of the Hastings Trams. We did well selling all that were made and taking 3 more orders to members and the general public at £7.50 to non-members and £5 to members. As for myself, I managed to get some badges made for the centenary, those also sold very well and again more have been ordered for later events in the year.

Being handed the job of exhibition manager for the Rother Valley Railway Supporters Association model meet, I felt somewhat obliged to help as we are part of their railway scene. I had a call from a reporter from the Battle and Rye Observer who had seen the show advertised. I told her a little about the club and the event, not knowing she was intending to publish it in the paper. Un-

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til I read it when it was publish, I didn't know she had put that the event was organised by the H.T.C not the R.V.R.S.A. Well that's newspapers for you. Oliver's new "00" gauge tram layout with working Traverser was displayed at the show for the first time. It gained quite some interest including being photographed in the newspapers. Our usually "00" Hastings scene layout was there, but as our "0" gauge layout has suffered thought storage, it was not fit for showing.

APPLEDORE STALL

On the 17th July, the club held a stall at Appledore vintage car rally. Even though it was a very hot day it was still very pleasant. Not that many people turned up to the rally so sales were down on our stall. In total we raised £44.04 which wasn't bad for the poor turnout.

CLUB WEBSITE

In late July the Hastings Tramways Website got up and running. Oliver Boorman-Humphrey designed our website and is now the editor of it. The Address is: <http://hastingstramwaysclub.tripod.com>. Also the club now has an e-mail address which is: hastingstramwaysclub@yahoo.co.uk. If you have the internet give it a visit and see what you think.

COMING TRAMWAY EVENTS 2005/06

24th/25th Sept. Oliver's new layout at a model railways exhibition at Staplehurst, Kent.

October 2005 Stalls at Hillcrest (Family History) and William Parker (craft fair).

July 2006 Centenary celebrations of Hastings Tramways in Bexhill.

Hastings Tramways Projects *By Roy Austen*

Ex- SR PMV No. 177 (Ex KESR no 89)

Work on renovating the dilapidated PMV van body started sometime in mid 2004 and has continue on &off up to now. The roof had gaping holes, but thanks to Peter French's son, David, some replacement timbers were made to our measurements. The roof is now completely fixed and felted over.

Painting the interior has been completed and the damaged floor repaired. A donated carpet has been fitted and a fire extinguisher and first aid kit installed by one of the door ways. Work has started on the painting of the outside, which has been treated and undercoated and the top coating has just begun. I decided to paint one side in the SE&CR livery and the other side in Southern railway livery.

CLUB CHANGES

Roy Austen is giving up his job as editor of the Hastings Tramways Club Newsletter. Starting from this issue, the new editor is our junior member Oliver Boorman-Humphrey. Thank you Roy for all your past hard work.

CENTENARY T-SHIRTS

Oliver Boorman-Humphrey and family have been producing centenary t-shirt for the 100 year celebrations of the first electric tramcars in Hastings. If you haven't yet purchased yours, contact Oliver on 01424 774102 (evenings.) They are £5 each for members. The total made for the club from the sale of the t-shirts is £47.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next open meeting will be held on Thursday 25th August 2005 at 8pm at the R.A.F.A. Club, Wellington Sq. Hastings

CONTACTS

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