

OTA

ONLINE
TRANSPORT
ARCHIVE

Newsletter

Issue 7
August 2016

Welcome to the seventh OTA newsletter, which is coming to you at a busy and active time for the Archive. We are now well-settled in the new Shrewsbury premises and much of the material which had been in temporary storage elsewhere has now been consolidated at the new site. Particularly through the efforts of Peter Waller and Tom Ferris (the latter recently becoming an OTA trustee), a significant amount of sorting has taken place, which makes dealing with enquiries and accommodating

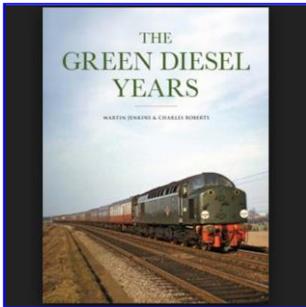
researchers much easier. In this newsletter, we tell about separate developments in partnership with the LRTA and with Unseen Steam, explain what we've been doing as regards image scanning, bring you up to date with recent publications with which OTA has been involved and profile another of our collections.

LRTA/OTA agreement

Following detailed negotiations with the LRTA, the ownership and copyright in original slide and ciné collections previously held by the LRTA (London Area) has now passed to Online Transport Archive. The collections include those taken by Wally Akerman, Peter Atkinson, Frank Hunt, Mike Lea and Jack Wyse, as well as many slides received by Jack as part of his long service as Foreign News Editor and then main Editor of *Modern Tramway* and its later journal names. OTA is indebted to Roger Jones who spent many hours cataloguing the slides collections; Nick Britton who devoted time to scanning many thousands of images; Alan Pearce who sorted the ciné films; and Carl Isgar who oversaw the agreement on behalf of the LRTA. As from



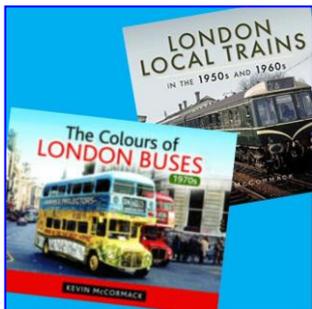
now, any of the former LRTA images reproduced in books or other publications will be credited as follows - *Photographer's name/LRTA (London Area)/Online Transport Archive*. The collection contains more than just tramway images as exemplified by the images above.



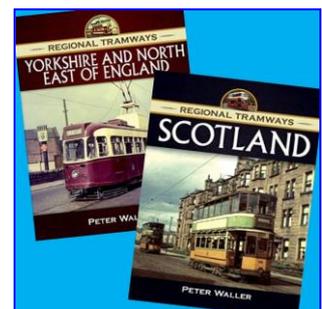
Publications

Co-authored by OTA trustees Martin Jenkins and Charles Roberts, *The Green Diesel Years* (Ian Allan) has just been published. The book features a fine collection of rare and unusual colour photographs featuring virtually all the types of diesel locomotive and multiple unit in service during the 'green years' (approximately

1954-1970). This book was an OTA commission and all the writers' fees and royalties, totalling approximately £2500, will all go directly to the Archive.



London's Local Trains in the 1950s and 1960s and *The Colours of London Buses (1970s)* are two books for Pen and Sword Books by Kevin McCormack, both of which feature many images from the Archive. Also by Pen and Sword, but this time authored by Peter Waller, are the first of a complete regional series of books about the tramways of Britain. This series will make considerable use of the Archive and the extensive



collection of early black and white pictures accumulated by B J 'Curly' Cross – as profiled in newsletter 3 back in 2013. Commissioned from the authors rather than OTA directly, royalties from the use of large numbers of OTA images has brought

several thousand pounds into the Archive and ensured that readers may enjoy previously unseen images from outstanding photographers, many of whom are now sadly deceased.

Isle of Man books

Martin Jenkins and Charles Roberts are also co-authoring a pair of all-colour books devoted to the transport scene on the Isle of Man. The first volume – covering the steam railway, Isle of Man Road Services, the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company and the Ramsey Steamship Company – is due for publication in early 2017. The second volume will cover the Manx Electric Railway, the Snaefell Mountain Railway and the buses and horse trams of Douglas Corporation. To be published by Pen and Sword, both volumes are OTA commissions and should raise close to £5000 for the Archive as all the writers' fees and royalty payments will go directly to OTA.

In the second volume, the authors aim to include a quality colour image of all MER vehicles and every horse tram (preferably on the road) which operated during the 1950s to the end of the 1970s. Currently there are a few gaps. **Can you help?** – if so, please contact Martin on martinjenkins2@tiscali.co.uk The gaps are: horse car No 11; MER trailers 36, 53, 54, 60; MER trailers 50 and 61 *in green*. Ideally, the authors should also like to include a couple of MER snow scenes. On the bus side, it would be an added bonus to include a colour view of one of the Douglas Corporation Vulcans which survived until 1957, as well as one of the 1944 Bedford OWBs which also lasted until 1957.

Unseen Steam



The eagle-eyed and steam railway enthusiasts amongst you may well have seen a long feature article in *Steam Railway* magazine earlier in the year about OTA and the website Unseen Steam in which Martin Jenkins, Bill Lucas and Peter Waller were extensively quoted. OTA had been seeking a partner in order to try and catalogue and digitalise the archive's film collection for a number of years and, last year, the fruits of a couple of years' discussion progressed when OTA signed a contract with a media company. The result of the contract is www.unseensteam.co.uk through which enthusiasts can pay for downloads of short extracts of film and hour-long DVD programmes based upon the OTA collection. OTA is paid a commission on all sales generated as well as getting comprehensive cataloguing and hi-resolution digital files for its records. The digital transfers are an essential part of ensuring that the vulnerable film collection survives for the future.

Profile: Chris Bennett

Raised and educated in Wallasey, Cheshire, Edward Christopher Bennett (b 1939) was awarded a BEng in Civil Engineering at Liverpool University in 1961. During his time at the University, Chris was a founding member of the Public Transport Society (LUPTS) and the Merseyside Tramway Preservation Society and was to the fore in the moves to preserve Glasgow tramcar 1055 (Liverpool 869).



During a distinguished career, Chris worked for a range of local authorities in the North West of England until he retired from Manchester City Council in 1993. He was especially pleased that he started his professional life riding to work on Blackpool trams and finished by using Manchester Metrolink.

Chris took his first colour slides in 1958 and his first 8mm ciné films in 1959. Together with his long-standing friend, Martin Jenkins, he recorded many of the UK tram and trolleybus systems still in operation as well as aspects of the vanishing railway scene. From 1960, he travelled extensively in Western Europe visiting and recording many tram and trolleybus systems. In the mid-1980s he took hours of video, with sound tracks, in many countries including the USA and Canada.

Chris was one of the first people to pass his collection to OTA and since then many of his images have appeared in a wide range of publications. Today, he and his wife still travel extensively and Chris retains a keen interest in OTA and its activities.



Scanning update

In the last newsletter, reference was made to a core group of volunteer helpers who are undertaking vital scanning work - Nick Britton, Geoff Smith and Garry Ward – not to mention OTA trustee Peter Waller – have put in long, but ultimately rewarding, hours undertaking this vital work. As mentioned before, some of the collections passed to OTA show the effects of poor storage over many years and so scanning is vitally important to ensure that OTA has a digitised version of each image in case further deterioration takes place. **OTA still needs more helpers – if you think you may be able to help in any capacity then please get in touch with the secretary using the email address on the right.**

Contacting OTA

Secretarial address:
25 Monkmoor Road
SHREWSBURY, SY2 5AG

Email:
secretary@
onlinetransportarchive.org