

CANVEY ISLAND TRANSPORT MUSEUM

Newsletter – June 2023

Castle Point Transport Museum Society – 105 Point Road, Canvey Island, Essex SS8 7TD – Telephone: 01268 684272 – Registered Charity 278658



YOUR SUPPORT NEEDED IN TESTING TIMES



Hello folks and welcome to our Newsletter. We trust you are all well, and despite the testing times, it was great to see around 35 members attending our AGM - nearly a new record.

The Committee remains the same as no other members were willing to stand for a position. The only difference for the forthcoming year is that Janet Walden resigned as Vice Chairman, a position she agreed to take on when our previous Chairman suddenly resigned. However, Janet was prepared to remain on the Committee as an ordinary member, and we thank her for stepping into the breach when required. We would still like to find a Vice Chair for the Committee, so if any member would like to be considered for this role, please contact me.

Buildings Update

We currently have no significant news to impart on the building works. Frustratingly, we are still waiting for the Council to approve the project and they have many questions, as well as wanting us to install a new entrance and more exits. We await their conclusions and proposals with interest. As soon as we get the go ahead we can resume getting quotes in to complete the major work outstanding to the required specification.

We realise that some members are questioning the wisdom of embarking on the refurbishment programme. We feel it is essential to address damage caused by nearly 75 years of wear and tear on the structure that is at the core of our Society and its principal asset. Wherever possible, work is in full swing as you can see. The walls have been cleaned off (we are sorry about the dust but we did notify you!) and repainting has already begun. We have chosen the cream and green used by Eastern National as this is in keeping with the depot's use when we took over in 1978. The beams have all been cleaned off and undercoated and are now receiving a lovely coat of gloss cream at the top and green at the lower end. Two rows of bricks at the bottom of the wall sections are being painted black which will enhance the red floor when we get to that area. All of this will be noticed and appreciated by visitors, and bring the Museum up to a standard we can all be proud of.

Events and Fund Raising

You may be aware that we cancelled the proposed Easter Railway and Craft show. This was due to the concern that our Electricity Testing was out of date, and as we are preparing to fit new LED lights it was prudent to cancel the show and get the necessary work done. We are awaiting the quotes which should be with us shortly.

Year-over-year, things got better though COVID is still around and hits you when you least expect it. We took some money on our open days and various private visits from U3A groups around the area, the Hadleigh Camera Club, Cubs from Canvey and Benfleet, and several visitors just popping in on Saturdays and being shown round, which allowed us to talk about what we do and they usually put money in the box or give us a £10.00 note, so it's usually worth looking after them.

In February, our RT took part in the Flood anniversary event on the Island. Ideally, we would have used LEV and FOP, but LEV is still away and you may have seen the status of FOP's fuel tank, so the RT went. I know from personal experience that red buses took us off the Island during this time. Dave Tucker and Kevin Elliott took charge and did a marvellous PR job. Local school children came on the bus and were given interesting talks on how the vehicle works and what a ticket machine is (some had never been on a bus!), and it went off very well indeed.



Testing Times *cont'd*

Working with, and supporting local community events is fulfilling one of our key objectives and is currently only possible with the help of Nigel Parks and Keith Patten to whom we owe a vote of thanks for the use of NEH and the RT respectively. Also thanks to members who supported the annual Dr Feelgood run, and thanks to Lyn and Pat Mara for allowing their coach to fill in for an unexpected breakdown on one of the open days. Also huge thanks to everyone who turned up to support and help host the June private visits by the Young Buffers and the Friends of London Transport Museum.

Finally, it almost goes without saying, but we really appreciate the help of all members who have turned up to support our open days and private visits, and to the crew who have been cleaning and painting the building all these past months. Without you all we would not be so far forward, and we look forward to seeing more members returning to the Museum during the course of this year.

Marian Patten (Hon. Secretary CPTMS)

Take Note

- **CORONATION QUIZ:** Sue Taylor has kindly agreed to run a “Coronation Quiz” event for us at the Museum in July (what else could it be?!). Last year’s one went off very well, so we’d love as many members as possible to support this. More information will be sent out closer to the date.
- **COMMUNITY FUNDRAISER:** A local couple who like to help charities are also planning on doing a Quiz event to raise money for us and for the Canvey Archive in October/November at the War Memorial Hall. If you can contribute any prizes for the raffle on the day, this would be most appreciated. Please contact me.
- **IMPORTANT MUSEUM CLOSURE:** We regret that the Museum building will need to be closed for a minimum of 3 days when the vital electrical work will be undertaken. No members will be allowed on site during this period for Health and Safety reasons. We will notify everyone when this is to take place as soon as we have the dates sorted. Thanks for your understanding.

Attention Vehicle Owners

Some months ago, vehicle owners should have received a letter asking them to supply details of their vehicle(s) so the Museum can update its website and also create information boards for each one to provide an enhanced visitor experience.

Needless to say, the response has not been entirely overwhelming, so please please please please could we ask you to complete the Vehicle Detail form sent to you, or provide any additional words you may have, and return it to **Kevin Elliott** at the Museum address as soon as possible – **THANK YOU!**

Your 2023 CPTMS Committee

At the Society’s AGM held at the Museum on Sunday, March 26th 2022, the following members were elected and confirmed as Committee members (Officers in bold):

CPTMS Chair:	Callum Taylor
Hon. Treasurer & Memberships:	Craig Mara
Hon. Secretary:	Marian Patten
Community Liaison:	Janet Walden
Website / Funding:	Janet Penn
Building Projects:	Keith Patten

As mentioned above, Janet Walden voluntarily resigned her position as Society Vice-Chair, and the decision was taken not to elect any member to this position at the current time. Our thanks to Janet for her efforts in the role, and we are pleased that she has chosen to continue to serve as a non-Officer Committee member.

Should any member wish to be considered for a position on the Committee at any time (subject to Society constitution and process), or take on a specific role in the Museum in a non-Committee capacity (eg: Sales/Shop Manager), then please contact CPTMS Chair or Hon. Secretary at the Museum address.

Member Obituaries: Paul Moss and Andy Spiller

It is with deep sadness that we must repost the passing of two of our valued friends and members.



PAUL MOSS (1947 to 2022) was a former Chairperson of the Society and passed away on November 24th. Paul chaired the Committee of CPTMS until 2016, after which he became unwell. During his term in office, Paul was a great inspiration to members and worked tirelessly to strengthen the popularity of the Museum and its events, particularly the annual October Open Day. Thanks to Paul's efforts, we had in excess of 400 exhibits displayed in the grounds of the school next door which, coupled with over 120 commercial vehicles exhibited at the Labworth Car Park, provided the majority of the annual income for running of the Transport Museum.

Paul purchased ex-Eastern National Bristol MW coach, OWC 182D, and returned it to the Museum. Latterly he enjoyed this vehicle in shared ownership with Callum and Geoff Taylor, until his illness forced the sale of his share to the Taylor family.

A mechanic by trade, Paul also spent a period as a driver with Southend Transport and would, at times, share eye-opening 'experiences' over a tea in the messroom, particularly regarding his stint on the X1 to and from London and especially the weekend Saturday night/Sunday morning shifts which were highly amusing. Whilst with ST, Paul also drove Routemasters in service, including VLT 44 (now on display at the Museum) on the 1, 3A, 5, 29 and 63 routes.

As well as attending various events around the country, including the annual Armed Forces Day, he also organised several trips to Holland and Belgium, piloting various vehicles housed in the Museum. He always took an active role in promoting the Museum during his time as both a member and an Officer, and will be sadly missed in the future.

We send deepest condolences and best wishes to his family and friends. Paul Moss – RIP.

Bob Miles

ANDY SPILLER sadly passed away in hospital on January 28th, 2023. He suffered several bouts of ill health over the last ten years, but was admitted to hospital on becoming unwell in mid-January, after which his condition deteriorated quickly despite being put on life support in the Intensive Care Unit.

Members will remember Andy fondly as a quiet individual whose love of buses stemmed from his childhood, and whose enthusiasm for Eastern National FLF Lodekkas saw him proudly investing in the personalised number plate 'X10 FLF' for his Renault car. He career was in Barclays Bank, and he was a passionate music lover (notably for the band Deep Purple). Andy supported the Museum and its events as much as he could over many years and despite his periods of illness, he never missed an opportunity – health permitting – to ride on Museum vehicles, particularly AVX 975G and NTW 942C for which he had a particular fondness.

The last time I saw Andy was when he joined several of us on August 16th 2018 as we quietly celebrated the 50th anniversary of AVX 975G being delivered 'home' to Prittlewell from Eastern Coach Works with a little road trip to Southend.

We send our heartfelt condolences to his wife Maria, and his family.

Paul Harrison



Pass The Tin Opener...

If you've never visited the annual Techno Classica show in Essen, Germany, then you're missing a treat. Despite living in Bonn for 5 years in the 1990s, I never actually made it – until now. A dash across the channel, overnight in a hotel, and a full day at the show before heading back left me and a friend utterly knackered. But we did drool over hundreds of stunning classic cars and, more importantly, we managed to keep our wallets firmly shut.

There was only one British bus at the show – believed to be RML2567. It was in use as a stand for *Old Timer Markt*, the leading German classic car magazine. And yes – your eyes don't deceive you. To comply with the 4 metre height restriction, the German owner literally took the top off the tin!

PH



NEWS UPDATES 1

PRIVATE VISITS BOOST MUSEUM FUNDS – While we may not be able to allow unsupervised members of the public into the Museum at the current time, we have been able to host a number of private and strictly controlled visits by various clubs and societies. These generally yield generous donations, plus revenue from sales of books and models.

On June 6th, we hosted a group of around 35 members of the ‘Young Buffers’ who, despite their preference for railways, enjoyed touring the Museum and a ride around the island on the RT, with suitable commentary from Janet Walden. Thanks to Dave Tucker for taking the wheel on this occasion.

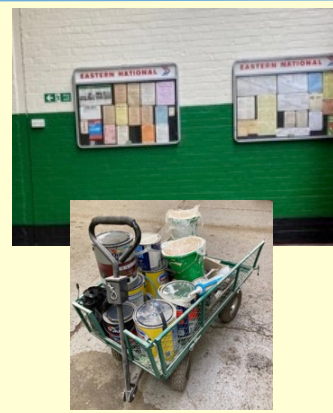


Barely had the dust settled from that event and on the following day we welcomed 75 members of the Friends of London Transport Museum who were undertaking a Thames Estuary Transport Adventure. They came to us on a pair of wonderful vehicles from the London Bus Company (including the one and only ECW-bodied Routemaster), and after snacks and drinks were able to sample the delights of FLM NTW 942C, courtesy of Mike Pack, as well as photograph our vehicles and chat to members about them. The group then departed on an Ensign open topper for Southend, to enjoy the Pier railway and Museum.

Huge thanks to everyone who supported the events on the day – whether in the kitchen, in the ‘front of house’ or behind the scenes, behind the wheel or on the sales stall. You know who you all are – and we love your enthusiasm and commitment to helping us make these visits enjoyable (and profitable).



WONDER WALLS – Member Len Cottiss has not only become our resident vehicle paint specialist, but has also developed a taste for something even bigger – the Museum walls. Work continues to strip off the old and apply the new, which is undeniably a messy job! Vehicle owners may find their buses a little dusty, and we apologise for that but, as you know, you can’t make an omelette without breaking eggs. Anyway, the end result will provide visitors with a brighter and cleaner experience when they come inside. Jim Winch has also done a fabulous job reinstating period notice boards in the entrance area!



NEWS UPDATES 2



FOP FIND – The need to resolve ongoing fuel issues saw a decision to drop FOP's tank for cleaning. Nothing prepared the team for the sight that greeted them! Several buckets of muck were literally scraped off the inside of the tank, which had to be opened up to allow access.

The tank was then fully cleaned inside and out, and is being primed and repainted prior to being welded back together for re-installation.

FINESSING FLEETLINE – Progress is continuing in leaps and bounds. Also, the back axle will be repositioned once welding on the chassis has been completed. Keith Patten managed to drill out the 7 studs (not without some difficulty and a lot of careful drilling) that had broken in the back brakes and with new ones made this is going back together, and Keith also made a new trammel to adjust the brake shoes. . There's a lot of oil and grease covering this part of the chassis, accumulated over some years, and this has taken lots of effort and time to clean. It really needs a good steam clean before she is back on the road. The front wheels are now on and we are concentrating on the back axle which also has special bolts missing. These are being made at Dawes and costing £20.00 each! But needs must! Once we have completed the rear of the bus we can come out of the workshop and get on the pit.



FAB FLEET – The May 8th Eastern National Heritage day held at the Museum of Power at Langford, near Maldon, was a significant event for us also. It marked the first time CPTMS members had been able to parade such an impressive array of vehicles at an event off Canvey for many years.

The show of strength included 217 MHK, PTW 110, 208 YVX, XVX 19, NTW942C and AVX 975G. Significantly, AVX got to meet its modern 'livery clone' for the first time – First Hadleigh's Volvo B9TL (37986). The day didn't end well for either bus however, with 37986 conking out on the A130 and AVX refusing to reverse inside the Museum on its return thanks to a fuel problem which has plagued the vehicle ever since. MHK also suffered some mechanical issues on the day, but despite all of these hiccups CPTMS members made an extraordinary effort to represent the society and ENOC's finest on the day. Thanks to everyone involved for putting on a great show!



NEWS UPDATES 3

PAPER PILE-UP – Member Mike Minchin has been steadily working his way through the boxes and piles of old timetables, leaflets and books in the Museum Archive over the last year in an attempt to catalogue what we have and reduce the number of duplicates. There’s lots to do, but we certainly have an impressive collection of books and significant documents and papers which make the archive worthwhile. Our plan is to sell off excess materials and duplicates could be sold to raise funds. After this comes the sorting of the uniforms – again, there’s lots of them!



LIT-UP LODEKKA – I’m often in awe of the way Craig Mara approaches restoration projects. Not only is he always helpful and encouraging to others when they need it (like me!), but his patience and attention to detail when it comes to the “loves of his life” - including wife Cheryl of course! – are admirable. It’s great to see the progress as he moves forwards at a measured pace because he wants to get it right and leave no stone unturned as he goes along.

Recently, Craig has been very busy cleaning off and preparing the interior roof on the top deck of his unique and prized LDX004 (236 LNO), and has started to undercoat it with the help of Cheryl. At the same time, with the side coving panels removed, he has been re-wiring the top and lower decks and re-fitting the traditional light bulbs. I’m envious – because if your bus uses fluorescents and ballast units you’ll understand what a pain in the derriere they can be compared to the relative simplicity (and warmth) of an incandescent bulb.

The end result is magical – and even the front and rear destination blind boxes are now fully lit and looking lovely.

Paul Harrison



NEWS UPDATES 4



TOO BULBOUS?



A REAR? TOO SMALL!

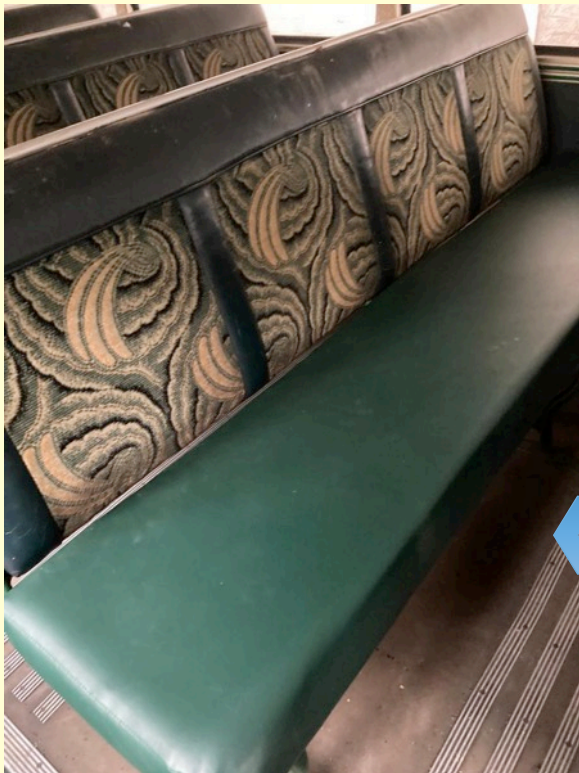


THANKS HIPWELL!

BULBOUS PROBLEM SOLVED – “You never stop restoring a vehicle. In the case of AVX 975G, one of the things on my “To Do” list was to try and source the right front wheel covers because the ones fitted during the 2009 restoration have always been a bit too “sticky-outy” compared to the ones in pictures of FLF coaches in service.

Hipwell Arden supplied my wheel discs way back in the mid-90s, but while they looked great their bulbous appearance always bothered me. So I’ve been busy – and persistence finally paid off. Thanks to another round of helpful discussions with the chaps at Hipwell, it was concluded that originally ENOC’s FLF coaches actually used large rear wheel covers on the front rather than the bulbous coach ones usually fitted to single-deckers. However, the larger rears are no longer made, but after a search of the factory in Birmingham the chaps found some lurking – and duly dispatched them (for a price) to Essex. New brackets were made and - Vive la différence! Now, about that bloody fuel issue....!”

Paul Harrison



BYE – SICKLE – When you look at this picture you can’t help but start singing that song by Queen. Maybe that’s what’s been going through Jim Winch’s head as he has been trying to sort the displays of bicycles and tools at the back of the Museum. Jim is a one-man dynamo of sorting and he’s now taking on the red telephone box to make it more presentable to visitors.



CLASSY GUY – “She’s been in dock since just before ‘Lockdown’, initially just to change the servo gators! We went on to overhaul the brakes and bearings, and carry out cosmetic work on the bonnet and filling and painting the front wings, expertly crafted by our new member Len the Brush (Cottiss). Lights and mudflaps have been attended to, and we have new front tyres.

But the icing on the cake has been the replacement of upper and lower deck seat cushions

If you’ve ever ridden on the top deck of the Moore’s Guy, you’ll recall that before too long the old super hard cushions would give you ‘piles’ of trouble with your nether regions. Not now! New foam has been sourced, and new covers have been fitted which will provide passengers with a real magic carpet ride.

To cap it all, after being laid up for almost three years, once the batteries were charged up she started on the button. You can’t ask for more than that! We’re looking forward to getting her out for a run, purely for enjoyment.

Finally, a dear friend of mine called Judy - a guide from my sightseeing days – always asks “How’s the Green Goddess?”. Well, the Goddess is fine, and I think Judy’s got it just about right with the name! Come on folks – let’s keep those wheels turning in ‘23!”

Dave Tucker

LONDON BUS MUSEUM RUNNING DAY *A Special Report by Bob Miles*

Saturday March 25th 2023 saw the return of vintage transport running through the streets of Romford and Dagenham over London Transport routes 174 and 175. The majority of vehicles in use were RT-class double deckers, but sprinkled among the fleet were London Bus Museum's magnificent Guy G351 (HGC 130), STL2377 (EGO 426) and RLH53 (MXX 351).

For me, now a septuagenarian, there were a few 'bucket list' things that I wanted to tick off during the day. First port of call was a trip on the branch line between Romford and Upminster, now run by the "Overground". As a youngster in the 1950s, I would travel on this line behind – or in front of – the pull-push 0-4-4 steam locomotive known locally as 'Puffing Billy'. On the last time I used the line in the mid-1960s, a green-liveried Metro Cammell Class 101 Diesel Multiple Unit provided the ride. On March 25th, I parked the car at Upminster, the train was duly caught and the first box ticked!

For 23 years, I lived on the junction of London Transport routes 103 and 174 and, as there was no car in the family in those days, the bus was the main form of transport. The 174 route ran between Dagenham New Road in the south, terminating either at Harold Hill (Gooshays Drive) or Noak Hill (Tees Drive) to the north. However, there was an occasional extension to the route which took it right out into the Essex countryside, terminating in a field gate at Noak Hill (Pentowan). Although I visited the normal termini on many occasions I had never journeyed to the Pentowan, so this was next on the list.

Standing at the bus stop in Romford among a large group of fellow bus enthusiasts, we eagerly awaited the first bus of the day to Noak Hill (Pentowan). A distinct Leyland rumble was heard from the opposite direction to our intended travel, and suddenly London Bus Company's Routemaster RM1993 (ALD 993B) appeared from under the railway bridge with its blinds showing the Pentowan destination. Leyland Routemasters always had a throaty engine roar, vastly different to the AEC types, but RM1993 has the deepest note that I have ever heard, and is quite distinctive.

Stuart and I could not believe our luck as we grabbed the vacant seat behind the driver, and off we set through Gidea Park, Gallows Corner and Harold Hill, heading for Noak Hill. There are very few places within the TfL operating area that you can observe a grazing herd of deer at the side of the road, but you can at Noak Hill. We finally reached the terminus and RM1993 became the first 'service bus' to undertake the infamous three-point turn into the gated farm track since November 1980 (info from Jim Blake). Obviously this manoeuvre was only possible with a crewed vehicle, and RMs were the last. Operation of this service was replaced by Leyland Titan B15s from NS (Romford North Street). So, another box ticked!

Returning to Romford on RM1993, by chance we saw that Guy G351 was headed for Dagenham (Fords) on route 175, so we boarded enthusiastically, heading upstairs this time. G351 was built to wartime austerity standards and the restoration has been undertaken to a superb standard by members of the Museum at Brooklands, the seating providing an incredibly comfortable ride over the numerous pot holes in today's roads.

Alighting outside the old Princess Bowl in New Road, Dagenham (another of my teenage haunts), we grabbed a quick bite at McDonalds before a short wait for AEC STL2377 on route 174 back to Romford. Sitting downstairs this time, we enjoyed a very smooth ride with the pre-select gearbox being expertly driven by a Museum member. Again, the standard of restoration in this bus is exemplary. As the bus navigated the roads of my old route, I couldn't believe the changes that have taken place in the area over the years since I was last there, with so much building of new property and so many of the old pubs boarded-up or demolished.



LONDON BUS MUSEUM RUNNING DAY *cont'd*



Back in Romford, it was now time to travel upstairs on Ensignbus RMA50 (NMY634E) over route 175 to Romford (Chase Cross). This forward entrance ex-BEA Routemaster was latterly operated by MacTours on sightseeing tours in Edinburgh and was fitted by them with a more modern Cummins B-series engine and Allison T270 gearbox which provides a very quiet ride. Notably, this type was used from October 1975 on route 175 as a stopgap measure due to an acute vehicle shortage at the time. They were liked by drivers for their acceleration thanks to high-speed axles, but disliked by conductors as there were no interior handrails! Worse still, there was nowhere to stand during loading and alighting of passengers unlike the standard RM's platform 'cabby hole'. Members of the public were also confused by the lack of a front destination box and scruffy time-worn liveries direct from their BEA duties (complete with Poundstretchers advertising). They were all withdrawn from the route by the end of 1976 and were transferred elsewhere for driver training and LT staff transport duties.

Parked at the Chase Cross terminus and in direct contrast to RMA50 was Routemaster BEA2 (KGJ 602D), preserved in BEA blue, black and white livery. This vehicle is still undergoing internal restoration, but the bodywork has been finished to an exceptional standard by the owner. Hopefully this fine vehicle will make a visit to Canvey sometime in the future.

Travelling back through Romford to Dagenham on AEC RT1798 (KYY 653), we agreed we were still short of a journey on a Leyland RTL. This was soon rectified, however, by a sighting of RTL1076 (LUC 253) on route 175 at the Queens Hospital stop. This duly gave us a ride back in the Collier Row direction before we quickly hopped off in Chase Cross Road, crossed over to the old Collier Row cinema (now a Tesco), and caught RT1658 (KXW 304) which gave us a return trip to Dagenham Heathway. As a point of information, RTLs ran in the area on the 175 operating from Hornchurch (RD) garage from 1951, and were replaced by RTs later in the 1950s. Romford's North Street (NS) garage was built in 1953 to relieve the pressure on RD caused by the rapidly increasing housing development in the area.

With the light fading quite quickly by now, we decided to catch the first bus back to Romford (both 174 and 175 routes ran along Heathway). A very full RT4779 (OLD 566) on the 175 was the first vehicle to arrive and luckily two seats were still vacant. Travelling through Becontree Heath (where the original terminus has now been replaced by a block of flats), Rush Green and Oldchurch, we reached our final stop of the day at Romford Station and headed for the train home.

This great day was expertly planned by the London Bus Museum at Brooklands. Although many enthusiasts attended the day as you would expect, I was amazed at the response from the general public to the offer of rides on "past age buses". Whole families enjoyed the opportunity of nostalgic travel and all the buses were running at capacity by midday. One woman, clearly unaccustomed to rear platform vehicles, actually walked to the front of an RT to pay the driver before boarding!

I extend the thanks of everyone travelling on these superb vehicles during the day to London Bus Museum and to Roger Wright and The London Bus Company (who provided 9 RTs and 2 RTLs on the day), also to Ensignbus, Timebus and several individual owners for putting on such a great show and saluting the half-cab bus era in that part of Greater London in style.

I ticked a total of six boxes on my "bucket list" on the day, and I have to say thank you to Stuart Miles for keeping me company and for providing me with certain technical input for this article.

Bob Miles