



Anniversary Supplement

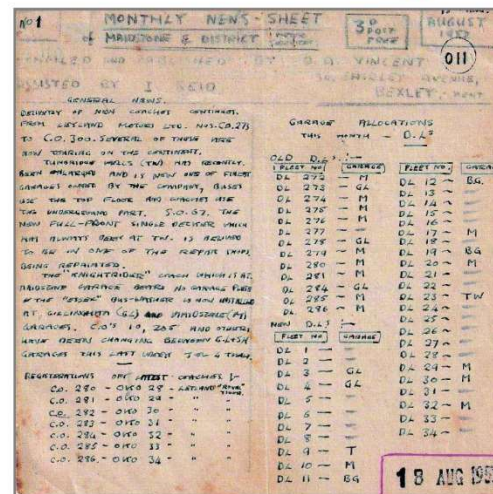
to mark

70 years of The M&D and East Kent Bus Club

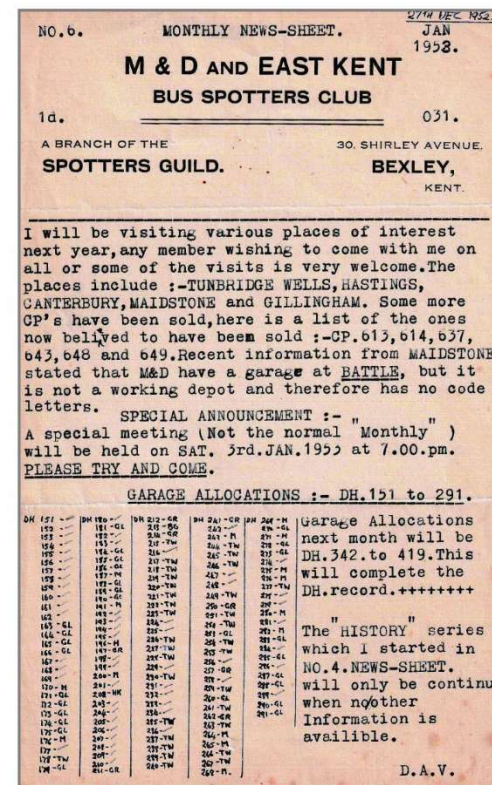
and

50 years' Editorship by Nicholas King

Where it all began - News-Sheet No. 1



Handwritten and single-sided News-Sheet No.1 dated 18th August 1952.



News-Sheet No. 6 of January 1953, now part-typed and part-handwritten.

Note the Club's original title and address and the price of 1d (1/2p in today's currency).

There are only very few enthusiast societies that can claim a longer heritage than our own M&D and East Kent Bus Club, and whilst we can't claim with certainty to be *the* oldest still-extant regional society in the country, we are without doubt one of the oldest, and have a rich history to look back on. From the very earliest days when our Founder handwrote four copies of his first single-sided News-Sheet, to the 844th edition of the now *Invicta*, there have only been three Editors, mixing members' reports with information from official sources and exchanged with other societies. With this special insert being sent to all members we celebrate both the 70th Anniversary of the Club, and the 50th Anniversary that our present Editor, Nicholas King, has been in post.

Much has been recorded over those 70 years, and many members have leafed through the monthly bulletins since 1952; some have remained constant since first joining, others have left and re-joined, more still may have wished they'd found – or been allowed to join – us earlier. From our Founder onwards (who never actually gave himself a formal membership number!), we still have representation from each batch of 100 members, now into our 27th, our 379 members reaching membership number 2716 this month. That we continue to attract members of all ages is testament to how people still value organisations such as ours, and we hope we'll continue to do so for many years to come.

To have volunteered for any organisation for 50 years is quite something, and to do so in a role that requires an intensive amount of work each month, whilst also offering support to similar organisations and life outside of bus enthusiasm is really very special. There is no doubt that Nicholas' firm attention to (every) detail has encouraged our relationships with company officials, and every member report is valued. Even if it may not appear in the next *Invicta*, it is filed away, physically or mentally, to be used as backing for a future statement or lasting historical evidence. I'm sure I speak for all of the Committee, and many other members, when I hope that compiling *Invicta* each month remains a labour of love, and not just a labour.

The Club undoubtedly means different things to different people, and we all have our areas of interest, however specific or general they may be. We value your membership, and we hope that you value being a member in the same way. On behalf of your current Committee, it gives me great pleasure to include these commemorative messages from Club Officers and company officials past and present to celebrate these two significant anniversaries.

Chris Duncombe *Secretary*

" I am very pleased to be given this opportunity of congratulating the Club on attaining its twentieth birthday this month. It is very gratifying to know that in a climate which of late has brought about a reduction of bus services, there is still an enthusiastic section of the community, and the Club has gone from strength to strength during these twenty years, not only in terms of membership but also in the scope of its activities.

" I trust that the two-way interest between the Club and the Companies will continue to flourish and it is with much pleasure that I extend my best wishes to the M&D and East Kent Bus Club and all its members. "

1972: Anniversary wishes from J.M. Bodger, Traffic Manager of M&D and East Kent

Don Vincent, Club Founder

In the summer of 1949 I was 12, and had my first local bus travel by East Kent on a family holiday to Blean. In 1950 we holidayed in Hastings, where I had my first experience with M&D and Hastings Tramways' trolleybuses, and on a visit with my mum and dad, Hilda and Harold, to the Festival of Britain site near Waterloo Bridge in April 1951, I saw a brand-new M&D Leyland "Titan" PD2 on display, NKT 876 (DH380), but had no camera! Having been an early "Loco-Spotter" in 1950 and 1951, with visits arranged by managers or staff of Ian Allan Publishing, early in 1952 (age 15) I had started having thoughts of a "Kent Bus Spotters Club", and through the influence of Prince Marshall and Mike O'Connell, who I'd met at the "London Bus Group" meetings in Central London, just a few streets away from where I worked for W.H. Smith & Son Ltd, I joined the Omnibus Society.

As soon as we returned home to Bexley after our first family holiday in Shanklin, Isle of Wight, in September 1952 I made the decision by 21st September to form the M&D and East Kent Bus Spotters Club – it was also my 16th birthday! It had taken me over a year since my first thoughts in 1951 at Yew Tree Farm, Blean, whilst on an East Kent No. 4 bus into Canterbury. The EFN-series of Guy "Arab"/Park Royal buses have always stayed in my memory ever since!

Your Club founder can still recall cycling to/from Dartford each month with a completed typed-up stencil for News-Sheet duplicating in 1957-58. From 1959 until December 1966 duplicating of News-Sheets and other circulars was done at the then-editor's employers Westinghouse Brake & Signal Co. Ltd., at Kings Cross, London N1, before handing over to Paul Hollingsbee at Maidstone. The Club's name was changed in November 1957 by deleting the word "Spotters", and in 1960 the Club assisted Ilford Group leader, Alan Osborne, with some printing for the newly-formed Eastern National Enthusiasts Group.

In 1961-1963, the Club assisted member 49, Brian Smith, at Gillingham with the ex-Chatham Traction/M&D Bristol K5G (GKE 68) which he had bought for restoration. The Bus Club organised and paid the then Maidstone Corporation Transport to arrange vehicle tests (MoT) together with Medway Group members Brian Baldry and Len Randall, also living in Gillingham. Many years later, I continue to support the Friends of Chatham Traction.

Best wishes to all past and present Club Members and particularly to all past and present Officers, Committee members and to Area Organisers.

Did you know...?

- The first five News-Sheets were handwritten on notepaper-sized sheets. The size changed a lot in the early days, but eventually settled on Foolscap, used from 1957-1986, then A4 until we moved to A5 *Invicta* format in January 2003.
- For several years, the stencils were typed at Folkestone and sent to Maidstone for duplication using the parcels service on route 10. Once, they were left on a bus swapped at Ashford by accident, and had to be retrieved from the garage!
- The Club ran overnight tours in 1966, 1978-1982 and 1984, with "road and rail" tours following until 1994.

Jerry Spillett, former Chairman

As Chairman of the Club for “quite a number of years” I was fortunate indeed to have presided over quite a few very knowledgeable, enthusiastic and interesting committee members, for which I was eternally grateful. However, for my entire spell in the chair one of the members was “NDK” – red dot!

It was in the days that each officer had a coloured paper dot to direct correspondence to the right person – mine was yellow – an initiative that came from Paul Hollingsbee’s term as Secretary, a post which I later took over from Nicholas.

He was a hard act to follow, but his very precise and well-defined modus operandi taught me everything I needed to know about Secretarial duties. I am currently secretary for three local organisations and I use exactly the format for minutes and agendas that I inherited from him, much to the amazement of those committees I serve who, to quote one person had “never seen anything like it”.

In committee Nicholas was (and I am sure still is) a focussed, knowledgeable, enthusiastic and affable member and a stickler for perfection, as is borne out in his editorship of *Invicta* and all the other publications he has produced.

The Club is reaching seventy, and for a large portion of that time Nicholas has remarkably, amongst all the other commitments with which he is associated – a professional organist to name just one – given his full attention to make the Club an exceptional one, and one with which I am proud to be associated.

Thank you, Red Dot!

Paul Hollingsbee, former Editor

The Club was only just over 10 years old when I was encouraged in 1963 by an existing member to join. Little did I know that Don Vincent would hand the reins over to me so shortly after that! He asked me to take over, firstly as Secretary, in 1965, then as Editor, in 1966. Don had until then been very much a “one-man band”, but the workload on one person was increasing as facilities were being expanded. I felt it was time to establish a formal “structure”, and I set about forming a Committee, from whom I appointed a number of “Officers”. That structure has certainly stood the test of time when I look back over the past 57 years since I first became Secretary, and I recognise that the present Management Committee of the Club still very much follows that same format that was created back at the end of the 60s.

I therefore look back with considerable pride and satisfaction that the Club is now celebrating 70 years of its existence. My hearty congratulations to everyone who has been involved in some way or another over these 70 years to make the Club the huge success it has become - from Don Vincent’s humble beginnings as Founder, through my time on the Committee, serving variously as your Chairman, Editor, Tours Officer, Secretary, Membership Officer, Preservation Officer, and Treasurer over a span of about 20 years. My sincere thanks to all those who served with me through the 70s and the 80s, but very grateful thanks to those who have kept the flag flying and who have contributed so much in time and effort right up to the present time.

Having been Editor, I know only too well of the commitment and dedication that this role demands for it to be successful. As I was involved in the Club’s Management for about 20 years overall, including about 5 years as Editor, I look with dismay that just one person could have continued the Editorship for a further 50 years after I handed over to him! That in itself is one amazing achievement, so we all owe enormous gratitude to Nicholas King for his never-failing commitment as the Club’s Editor for a staggering 50 years.

My hearty congratulations and thanks to Nicholas for his achievement, and Happy 50th Anniversary as Editor. And, congratulations to the Club on achieving its 70-year landmark, and thanks to all who currently work within it, and those who have served in some way between 1952 and 2022.

Matthew Arnold, Commercial Director, Stagecoach South East

I first heard of the Bus Club when we moved to the Medway towns in the late 70s and my first fleetbook, bought from the travel shop in the Pentagon bus station, was the most important item in my school blazer pocket. The sheer variety of vehicles which M&D operated in the area at the time meant that a schoolboy with an interest in public transport who’d moved down from vanilla London instantly became hooked and my curiosity was satisfied by eventually joining the Club (and taking a dent in the meagre earnings from my paper round!)

Even in these days of instant information through social media, *Invicta* is still a cover-to-cover read each month and meticulous editing is always to the highest standards. At Stagecoach we joke that Nicholas probably knows more about our operations than we do!

I feel enormously privileged to have been a member for 40 years and that my career has allowed me to contribute to the historical recording of fascinating businesses, not forgetting that the two major operators in the Club area have been operating for well over 100 years.

On behalf of all of us at Stagecoach South East I send heartfelt congratulations on two incredible milestones and reiterate both my personal and our corporate commitment to continuing the close relationship with the Club.

Did you know...?

- The first illustrations appeared in the News-Sheet in November 1980. The first word-processed News-Sheet was August 1985, and was still printed and dispatched in the Club area until December 1994.
- As well as more substantive involvement in CJK 959 and HKE 867 (acquired by groups of members in 1966/1967), the Club also had involvement in company preserved vehicles, including a Hastings trolleybus, the M&D “Knightrider” coach, and East Kent MFN 888, often taking them to rallies on behalf of the respective company owners. CJK 959 was sold in March 2000.
- Fleet lists were first issued by company in 1959, although had been issued by type beforehand. Now titled *Enthusiasts’ Guide*, the Club’s first fleet list booklet was published in July 1973, and this year’s is the 35th edition.

Norman Kemp, Director, Nu-Venture

The world of buses and coaches has changed beyond recognition during the history of the Bus Club. It is perhaps surprising to realise that the Club's seventy-year life has spanned in almost equal measure (about 35 years apiece) the previous, regulated era and the current de-regulated/privatised one.

Nu-Venture – founded in the 1970s to operate coaches and contracts under the old regime – moved with the times and took advantage of the opportunities presented by de-regulation to run buses. We must now move on to embrace the world of enhanced partnerships and, maybe one day, franchising.

Every twist and turn of policy, all the highs and lows and, most recently, the biggest undoing of established bus services ever seen – the Club's publications have moved with the times and faithfully reported with an accuracy which, sadly, is not always emulated by other enthusiast media.

Those committee members who, over the years, have managed the Club so prudently are to be congratulated on the achievement of the 70th birthday milestone, and the members who report sightings are to be warmly thanked. We may be living in less certain times, but that doesn't make the bus and coach industry any less exciting - keeping the Editor aware of what you see and hear helps all the membership to derive great value from the still-modest subscription.

Paul Gainsbury, on behalf of the Southdown Enthusiasts' Club

Warm congratulations from the SEC committee and members on reaching your 70th anniversary. Like most similar enthusiast clubs, your club has made steady progress over the years, embracing new technology and the advantages that this brings, but The M&D and East Kent Bus Club has always stood out as a steadfast and respected organisation with a regular output of high quality, accurate and informative news-sheets and publications.

Particular recognition and deep appreciation must be given to Nicholas King for holding the post of Editor for 50 of those 70 years. Having been editor for the SEC news-sheet/Journal for a little over half of that time I know all too well what an achievement it is in producing a regular monthly output, which can be very demanding whilst trying to balance this with family and work life, especially so for Nicholas as he has been through some very difficult periods over the last few years. Progressing technology has, no doubt, helped him in some respects, but I am sure that Nicholas, like myself, found this a mixed blessing as detailed reports from members diminished as more information has become available on the internet and such mediums as Facebook, but this then means time must be spent trawling for it and confirming its authenticity. However, the output that Nicholas has achieved over the years has been most commendable and I feel fortunate to have most of it to hand as a detailed reference library, which sometimes helps with what is being produced by the SEC.

Whilst it is difficult to predict what the future may hold in such a rapidly changing world, one hopes that what has been achieved by your club over the past 70 years will help it to continue to flourish and provide a service to enthusiasts for many years to come.

Alan Osborne, Secretary, Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

The committee, on behalf of the membership of the Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group, is most pleased to send this commemorative message to mark the 70th anniversary of the M&D and East Kent Bus Club and the amazing 50th year of Editorship by Nicholas King. The link between our two societies goes back a long way. I first met Don Vincent in the Enquiry Office of the old Canterbury Bus Station in the summer of 1958. We soon discovered that we worked quite close to each other in London, Don in Kings Cross and myself in Clerkenwell, and lunchtime meetings started. In January 1961 club member number 500 was recruited, he was from Ilford. So Don suggested that I might like to form a new Ilford Club Group, which took effect from 1st July 1961. On 12th November our first coach tour was arranged, picking up Kent members in Tilbury after a short sea voyage, ably assisted by Ken Pitt, Gravesend local representative. Later, on 1st March 1962 the Group was re-named the Eastern National Enthusiasts Group which, with Don's help, became a separate society from 1st January 1964.

Further Kent/Essex links were forged following the opening of the first two-lane Dartford tunnel on 18th November 1963. The following summer new jointly-operated Dartford Tunnel Coachways express services were introduced connecting East Anglia with the South Coast with an interchange at Basildon Bus Station.

In the early days News-Sheets were in duplicated typescript format which have now evolved into illustrated A5 booklets. Under the sustained Editorship of Nicholas these have now become "Invicta". In Essex, following our society name change (to reflect the area served) we now distribute the "Essex Bus Magazine" being a mix of both news and articles.

Long may our societies continue to supply the news.

Did you know...?

- Tours started with the "Medway Group" in 1958. Specific events, such as the Commercial Motor Show or Brighton Coach Rally, were a regular feature as well as depot visits. 363 passengers were carried that year!
- After initial use of CJG 959 and HKE 867 for tours, three newer vehicles followed, 32 YKK, FKL 129D and RKM 620G, operated under the title "Maid of Kent". The purchase price of 32 YKK was £250, plus £143.90 for tyres!
- Route working guides were first produced in 1969. Content has varied over the years depending on availability and commercial sensitivity.
- Independent operator coverage started mostly privately. Club lists were first produced in 1973 on an area basis, and combined into our regular publication from 1987. We even produced a summary timetable publication from 1983-1994, growing from 13 sides to 104!
- How the News-Sheet has grown : 1966 offered 24 foolscap pages, whilst 1972 offered 70. 1987 provided 182 A4 pages and 2002 186. After moving to the A5 *Invicta* format in 2003, in 2020 the page count reached 416 (208 A4 sides).
- Official membership cards were introduced in March 1960.

Dave Stewart, Managing Editor of TLB (The London Bus), on behalf of LOTS

I note that the M&D and East Kent Bus Club is 70 this November – a remarkable achievement. We at LOTS can only clock up 58 years. Personally, late 1950s/ early 1960s spotting trips to places such as Gravesend on the Green Line 701/702 (all the way from Hammersmith!) and the “first sight” of those different green buses on Overcliffe expanded my interest beyond London. I had known of your Club and admired what it did via publications on M&D, and in due course I came to be in touch with Nicholas King, now with 50 years under his belt as Editor of what is now ‘Invicta’ – another remarkable achievement! Much more recently (too long ago to remember when!), LOTS and the M&DEKBC agreed to exchange our house magazines and have free exchange of information common to both of us, which became invaluable when the “operator borders”, once quite rigid, became blurred. Nowadays each month, we help to proof-read each other’s magazines, TLB and *Invicta*. Quite often this includes ‘friendly criticism’ (shall we say) but neither of us take offence as it will always lead to a better and more accurate magazine. Nicholas can always be relied on to go the extra mile to complete *Invicta*, even though it might be inconvenient. Many congratulations to the Club and especially to Nicholas.

Nigel Eggleton, Chairman, Omnibus Society

It gives me the greatest of pleasure to pen a few words on behalf of the Omnibus Society on the occasion of your double anniversary.

My own fascination with Maidstone and District started when wearing a National Bus Company hat and becoming involved with the early eighties evaluation of new double-deck bus types, a subject helpfully covered of late in one or two enthusiast magazines. The Pentagon Bus Station was certainly an experience. Working in Chatham for a fortnight also give me the opportunity to catch up with the former Northern General Daimler Fleetlines which I first saw being delivered new to Gateshead ten years earlier. As for the SKO-H single deck versions which went in the opposite direction it’s perhaps enough said!

Few of us can explain our enchantment with buses and its industry, and nor should we, but societies such as yours and the Omnibus Society provide us with great pleasure, friendship, information and the chance for a good natter.

Congratulations to all of the team involved with the M&D and East Kent Bus Club both now and during its proud history from all of us at the OS.

Did you know...?

- HKE 867 celebrated its 55th anniversary in preservation earlier in 2022, more than twice as long preserved as it spent in service!
- In the 1960s, tours offered special discounted prices for those “over 14 and still at school”, and “over 15 and at work”, as well as the regular “under 14” and “adult” rates.
- A leaflets scheme was introduced in July 1957 – who remembers Europabus or Silver City Airways?
- Don Vincent edited until March 1966, then Paul Hollingsbee until October 1972.

Roger Davies, former Director of Operations, Maidstone & District

I arrived at M&D on 1st March 1977 as Area Manager North-West based at Luton Road, Chatham. I'd come from Ribble in the Lake District, so it was all a steep learning curve for me, never having been in Kent for any time before. At the time, M&D and East Kent shared common management, and indeed my job interview had been in Canterbury. Thankfully, NBC made the correct decision to keep the two fleets separate but it was still very useful to know what was going on in the red side, and also in the Maidstone Borough fleet.

I soon became aware of the Bus Club. Its regular newsletters kept me up to date and the excellent annual fleet list book was invaluable and remains so today in helping my research for articles in the bus press.

Quite early on I volunteered to be the contact point for M&D and remained so during my time as Traffic Manager and then Director of Operations. The monthly letter of questions from Nicholas was always a most pleasant part of my job and led me into all sorts of uncharted areas like the fleetnumbers of fork lift trucks. I believe I was privileged to be with M&D during some of its most turbulent times and it was reassuring to know it was being well recorded.

I have always believed that it is right for bus companies to foster relations with those who take an interest in what we do. This aim is helped no end if there is a professional and well-run body representing this. It is testament to The M&D and East Kent Bus Club that it has achieved this for 70 years and to Nicholas King for editing the newsletter for an amazing 50 years. Remember, NBC only lasted for 19 years!

Very best wishes to all involved with the Club on these two significant anniversaries.

Did you know...?

- The fledgling Club had 50 members by April 1954. Member 300 joined on 20th May 1959, and member 500 on 9th December 1960. For almost the first 40 years of the Club, subscribing to the news-sheet was optional.

"I am very glad to know that the M. & D. and East Kent Bus Club is celebrating its tenth birthday.

It is much easier to start a venture of this kind than it is to keep it going and it says much for the enthusiasm of the officers and members that the Club has had and continues to have such an active life.

The combined "bus knowledge" of the Club is encyclopaedic - the result of willing study mixed with pleasurable expeditions - long may it continue to flourish!"

1962: Anniversary wishes from R.G. James, General Manager of East Kent RCC

Back cover: Nicholas' first official News-sheet as Editor in November 1972.

THE M&D AND EAST KENT BUS CLUB,
20 SWIFT CRESCENT, CHATHAM,
ME5 7QY.

Invicta 844 Supplement.
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A selection of Club items from the 1950s to the 1970s

The M & D and East Kent Bus Club

APPLICATION FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

AGE _____

I am interested in the following operators:—

I heard of the club via: An advertisement A bus company A member

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

Please return this form with 2/- Postal Order to—

The Secretary
THE M & D AND EAST KENT BUS CLUB
30, SHIRLEY AVENUE, BEXLEY, KENT

**THE
M & D AND EAST KENT
BUS CLUB**

COVERING KENT, EAST SUSSEX AND S.E. LONDON

THE ORGANISATION FOR ALL THOSE INTERESTED IN MAIDSTONE & DISTRICT MOTOR SERVICES AND THE EAST KENT ROAD CAR COMPANY.

FACILITIES INCLUDE: 4-WEEKLY NEWS-SHEET, MEETINGS, PHOTOGRAPH SALES, PUBLICATIONS AND SPECIAL COACH TOURS.

For details, write: D. A. Vincent, Secretary;
30, SHIRLEY AVENUE, BEXLEY, KENT.

M & D and East Kent
BUS SPOTTERS CLUB


CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP

This is to Certify that _____
of _____
has been enrolled as a member of this club; which aims to unite all those interested in any aspect of Road Passenger transport operators in South-East London, and the Counties of Kent and East Sussex.

Yours faithfully,
D. A. Vincent
D. A. VINCENT,
Secretary.

Membership Number _____

**THE
M & D AND EAST KENT
BUS CLUB**



MEMBERSHIP CARD

The M & D and East Kent Bus Club organisation was founded in 1952 to bring together all those interested in Road Passenger Transport in Kent, East Sussex and South East London.

Developments concerning the East Kent Road Car Company Ltd and the Maidstone & District Motor Services Ltd are reported in the Club's monthly News Sheet.

Other facilities for Members include visits, meetings, photo sales and publications.

AREA REPRESENTATIVES:
Rochester, Chatham, Gillingham (District Group):
Mr. L. N. Randall, 121, Burnside Road, Gillingham, Kent.
Maidstone, Aylesford, West Halling:
Mr. H. E. Corfield, 6 Bramble Close, Maidstone, Kent.

THE M & D AND EAST KENT BUS CLUB

Secretary: D. A. Vincent,
30, Shirley Avenue, Bexley, Kent.

NAME _____


ADDRESS _____

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER _____

DATE ENROLLED _____

You should always quote your membership number in all correspondence with the Club

OUR members
rely on
YOUR accurate
reports



Calendar 1976

The M & D and East Kent Bus Club,
42 The Avenue, Aylesford,
Maidstone, Kent ME20 7RL

With the Compliments of


THE M & D AND EAST KENT BUS CLUB



**42 The Avenue, Aylesford,
Maidstone, Kent.**

THE M & D AND EAST KENT BUS CLUB

CLUB AREA COVERING KENT, EAST SUSSEX AND S.E. LONDON



OBSERVER'S NOTEBOOK

Member's Name..... No.

Address.....

THE M & D AND EAST KENT BUS CLUB

92, THE AVENUE, AYLESFORD, MAIDSTONE, KENT.

Editor: P. J. Hollingsbee

Vol. 20 No: 244

MONTHLY NEWS - SHEET

NOVEMBER 1972

EDITORIAL: With this News-Sheet, all members will receive a copy of our twentieth Annual Report, which includes a special Supplement of congratulatory messages received by the Club on its anniversary.

We were particularly pleased to welcome 66 members to the Annual General Meeting held in Maidstone on 11th November, representing the third successive year in which the attendance record has been broken. The strong turn-out was very heartening, and we would like to thank all those who were present. Much stimulating discussion took place on our future plans, and guest of honour at the Meeting was Don Vincent, the Club Founder, who gave a short talk on the history and early years of the Club.

The attention of all members is drawn to several important Club notices on page 6 concerning administrative changes, together with various general points.

NEWS IN BRIEF: Deliveries of two batches of vehicles are now in progress to Maidstone & District, whilst manifestation of the NBC corporate identity is taking place at a rapid rate. East Kent have despatched more coaches to rebodging and have commenced extensive modifications to the MJG batch of coaches. Further details are also given of the new Royal Mail Post Bus service operating in the Canterbury area.

NATIONAL BUS COMPANY notes

The National Bus Company has now announced that local "dual-purpose" coaches will be painted in white above the waist, with the Company's colour below the waist, and the Company fleetname and double-N symbol will be displayed on the cove panels in the Company colour. It is intended that all coaches not used primarily on long-distance express coach services or extended tours shall be painted into this livery, and as an approximate guideline it has been stipulated that such vehicles will be normally those over six or seven years old. Newer vehicles and touring coaches will generally be in the all-white coaching livery. It remains to be seen what effect this interpretation may have locally, if any, in view of the fact that vehicles of this age are only just being repainted into the all-white livery! At the same time, it has been decided that the small fleetnames applied to the sides of coaches in the white livery will in future consist of 3" high lettering in the colours of the Company, without any underlining, superseding the existing 1½" high steel-grey characters with their coloured underlining.

MAIDSTONE & DISTRICT notes

ORDERS: The remaining nineteen Leyland Leopards, 3457-3475, have been allocated the registrations GKE 457-475L, and delivery has commenced during November.

Confirmation is still not available that any Ford/Plaxton coaches have been ordered for either 1973 or 1974. It is understood that the order for 12 Leyland Leopard coaches mentioned last month will comprise six 11-metre coaches and six 12-metre coaches, but full details remain to be confirmed by the Company in due course.

NEW VEHICLES: The first vehicle from the resumed order of Leyland Leopards with Marshall D45F bodywork, 3457, arrived on 11th November. Structurally the vehicle is identical to the first sixteen buses of the batch, but has been delivered in National green livery with a white relief waistband; reflective number plates are carried, as will become mandatory on all new vehicles from 1st January 1973. No fleetnames were carried at delivery but these have now been applied at FW. 3457 has chassis 7200201 and Marshall body 34882, and has been licensed (exact date to follow) and allocated provisionally to H. Further deliveries from the batch were in prospect as we went to Press.

Delivery has also now commenced of the batch of twenty Leyland Atlanteans with Metro-Cammell bodies: chassis numbers, dates of delivery, allocation and date of licensing are listed for the first two arrivals as follows -

5703 7104012 10.11.72 GL -11.72 5704 7104013 31.10.72 GL 1.11.72

The bodywork has been amended from the intended H44/33F to H45/33F, the extra seat being provided at the top of the stairs, and vehicles are being delivered completely prepared for omo. It is anticipated that the entire batch will be allocated to GL. Flat V-type wind-screens are provided, and the vehicles have curved spiral staircases with regularly-spaced steps, a two-step entrance with flat floor throughout the lower saloon, single headlights, reflective number plates, and mustard interior in the entrance area, with interior panels in white with gold mottled Formica. The seat cushions incorporate a new moquette consisting of black lines crossing in oblong form and filled in green with a superimposed brown mottle, and the frames are in black, whilst seatbacks are in brown Formica. Mechanically, a four-speed gearbox is provided, air-controlled from a pedestal which features a door control in the sixth position, and spring handbrakes are fitted. National green livery with full white relief is carried, including new-style fleetnames, and Unladen Weight is 9t. 1c. 1q. 5704 has been noted initially working as a two-man vehicle on route 26: 5703 had yet to enter service in mid-November and an exact date of licensing will be given next month.