

WESSEX TRANSPORT SOCIETY

FOURTH

FESTIVAL OF TRANSPORT

SUNDAY 14 AUGUST 2005

The Wessex Transport Society is proud to hold its fourth popular running day and static event again at Avon Heath Country Park. Visitors who have come before will know that the park is located very near to the attractive old market town of Ringwood and also of the woodland and flowerings heaths of the New Forest where ponies are free to roam across the road in front of buses! The August sunshine has brought many visitors to the park for our event and there is a generally relaxed and happy holiday atmosphere.

If you are thinking of staying or having a holiday in or around the New forest area then here are some useful details:

Where to stay in and near to the New Forest:

An accommodation list is available from the tourist information office, Salisbury Street, Fordingbridge, Hants, SP6 1AB (01425 654560) and The Furlong, Ringwood, Hants, BH24 3QT (01425 470896).

Red Shoot Camping Park, Linwood, near Ringwood, BH24 1AZ (01425 473789).

Sandy Balls Estate Holiday Centre (caravan and camping), Fordingbridge (01425 653042).

Original White Hart Hotel, Market Place, Ringwood, Hants, BH24 1AW (01425 472702).

Where to stay in and near Salisbury:

An accommodation list is available from the tourist information office, Fish Row, Salisbury (Tel 01722 399955).

Youth Hostel, Milford Hill House, Milford Hill, Salisbury (01722 327572).

The Yew Tree Inn, Odstock (01722 329786).

The King's Arms, High Street, Downton (01725 510446).

Geographically, Avon Heath Country Park is very easy to get to as it directly lies off the main A31 trunk road; the A31 itself joins up with numerous other trunk roads and also the M3/27. By car is straightforward: the entrance road to the park is off St. Leonard's roundabout (you will see the Little Chef one side, or the St Leonard's hotel the other), 2 miles west of Ringwood on the A31. The free 101 and associated services from Ringwood car parks (short & long stay charge is now in place) will again operate frequently. Andrew Wickham, Operations Director of Wilts & Dorset (who gave an excellent presentation at the Wessex AGM in January) has given support and the use of vehicles again and we hope to provide the same feeder buses from Poole and Salisbury-volunteer drivers willing.

Avon Heath Country Park is open daily from 9am to 7pm. It was formerly Ministry Of Defence land (used for tanks) and it is split into two: 'North' and 'South'. There are 580 acres of Dorset Heath, Scots Pine and Birch trees. The visitor centre and gift shop (run by volunteers) frequently holds wildlife exhibitions and is open from 11am to 4pm and sign-posted trail paths are ideal for walking and cycling; guided walks are often available. 'The Lizard' is a climb-through tunnel for younger children descending from a large hill onto a safe park with different wood and rope type constructions to play on.

There are picnic areas and the very reasonably priced transport-style café/restaurant serves a good variety of hot and cold food. The ice-cream van does very well at this time of year too! There are proper toilets here-not like the site at Wimborne we had a few years ago, which had the horrid 'portaloo'. The on-site parking caters for approximately 60-70 cars with a small charge. Any enquiries about the park should be directed to: Avon Heath Country Park, Brocks Pine, St. Leonards, Ringwood, BH24 2DA. The Warden is Steve Davies (telephone: 01425 478470). Attendance figures were good last year in spite of some drizzle. Not only were bus enthusiasts present, but also were former and retired members of staff from bus companies and the general public; we also thank you our members for coming and making it a good turnout.

There was a good turnout of vehicles despite the and as usual entries that were not listed in our programme came along and helped to cheer the day; a small handful of motorbikes (not one official entry) turned up along with some buses, cars, commercial vehicles, fire appliances and an extremely old steamroller on a trailer. Last but not least, was an increased presence of army vehicles over last year-the park still has that MOD feel about it. Good selections of stalls were trading books, photographs and timetables, and did you see those superb models of W&D and Yellow Buses on display by the visitor centre?

Our apologies go to you for all entries listed in the programme that were not able to come. You can see the routes in the table (below) operated last year, which will form the basis for consideration this year. Bill Santer told me on Jan 1 at FOKAB, Winchester that he is interested again doing another tour, which is great. The H&D run to Bournemouth was a last minute idea: 3 Royal Blue coaches, 3 Hants & Dorset Motor Services and 1 Western National vehicle travelled as a convoy through Boscombe, Bournemouth town centre and back through Ferndown, generating interest from passers-by and causing a lot of fuss from intending passengers at bus stops! This year I have contacted Bournemouth Parking And Enforcement requesting access to Exeter Crescent. The time of this gathering would be about 1.30-2.00pm and lasting no more than half to one hour. A possible thought is to have a yellow-jacketed Marshall to help oversee the safety aspects of shunting: the first vehicle entering the Crescent could turn into the opening of Exeter Lane so as to reverse to the closed-off Crescent end, followed by the second vehicle and so on. No passengers would alight from the vehicles until shunting has finished. I also asked if it is able to have any No-Parking cones along the edge of the road. At this stage it is not possible to give a positively firm answer about parking in the former bus station.

For more details of the event itself, The Festival Of Transport 2005 programme will contain details of all free bus services with their timetables and destinations and official static entries. A reduction entry price is agreed again with the Bournemouth Aviation Museum who have just purchased 2 static cockpits to walk around in, and 1 full aircraft.

It is possible to get your £3.00 programme (price frozen from last year) before the day if you send a self-addressed stamped envelope of A5 size to: Mike Caldicott, Wessex Transport Society, 7 Priory Dene, 47 Cavendish Road, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH1 1RA. Any surplus from the sale of programmes or anything bought from Mike and Penny's stall directly goes to the cost of the Festival, which is non-profit making.

Last year's running vehicles are listed below with the entry number first, followed by the vehicle and details:

Finally, if you would like to see the visiting vehicles to our previous events on the Internet, please check out Wessex member Ian Friend's digital photographs on:

www.wessextransportociety.co.uk

Ian shows 80 digital images of these as well as shots of Warminster 2003 and the Wessex 2002-scanned photo's are by Stuart Watson and late Chris Allnat. It would be appropriate at this stage to add that the sale of Chris's 12,000 photos is bringing in a significant amount of donations to help fund the festival this year.

Hope to see you there!

Paul Donald.

A1	URU691S VRT3	Bill Santer drove a Damory Bristol VR on the 38 to Salisbury and then the hugely successful 'Cliff Mystery Tour' giving a taste of the sea air and lovely views to passengers.
A2	VOLVO OR SUB W&D POOLE	We had an Optare Excel (lovely to drive), driven on 101 shuttles to the market town by G. Leyland. M. Caldicott & myself.
A3	BRISTOL VRT3 W&D POOLE	Thanks to Robert Bartle who drove feeder services, 101/102's and X39/X27's.
A4&5	VARIOUS W&D SALISBURY	Many thanks to Salisbury Operation Director Chris Gordon and Jim Bell who drove from Salisbury
A7	GLJ676N HANTS & DORSET	Anthony Poulton and National did the 101 Shuttle; H&D Bournemouth run and legendary service X1 to Holmsley
A8	KEL405 LL6B HANTS & DORSET	Mike Smith drove through the dense woodland valley into the Burley village; now home to 'White Witches'.
A9	ECG 112K RE PROVINCIAL	Feeder service 12 from Southampton and did the 13A service to Burley.
A10	OTT98 LS6G ROYAL BLUE	Weymouth Feeder; 101 Shuttle; Long Run to Bournemouth via New Forest & Holmsley station, Christchurch
A11	HAC628D STRATFORD BLUE	Chichester Feeder; was due to do shuttles and 13A but broken window unfortunately took it out of service.
A12	FFX 458 MLC BEDFORD DCC	Norman Aish visited some station sites now fast asleep on the former Salisbury to West Moors line; 124 to the Causeway.
A13	XUO 721 MW6G DEVON GENERAL	38 to Christchurch and quay; 13A to Holmsley's station, which now lives again as the Old Station Tearooms.
A14	C407VVN GEMMA WEAVERBUS	Open top from Weymouth; 101; 13A; 124. People loved riding on this little bus to the Avon Causeway, hidden behind the A338.
A15	JHT 827 L5G CROSVILLE	Vehicle was urgently replaced with Shaftesbury & District coach-Plaxton LH; A new welcome entry from Laurence Burt.
A16	OLD 564 AEC RT SHAFTESBURY D	Shaftesbury & District RME 1 did 1xMoors Valley; Short 27's; Driver's Andy Wood & Laurence Burt
A17	KLB 716 AEC RT LONDON TRANS	27's to Hurn Airport & Bournemouth Aviation Museum. The Red Arrows are based for four days in Bournemouth during August.
A18	OTA 290G VRT 1 WESTERN NAT	A great effort from Plymouth (4 hours mist & rain both directions); H&D run to Bournemouth
A19	KRU 224F FLF6B HANTS & DORSET	Geoff Cummings and Tim Cook; H&D run to Bournemouth; 102's to Ringwood. Brings back memories riding on this bus.
A21	XLJ726K RELL6G HANTS & DORSET	Brought 2 RE's; H&D run to Bournemouth; short 27; although based at Fareham, this bus looked the part here.
A22	KJD431P LHS T MITCHELL	Former London Transport (white at present) narrow Bristol did 101-shuttle trips and 124 to Avon Causeway with restricted access.
A23	ALDER VALLEY NATIONAL	Friends of H&D GLJ676; 13A; 27 short to Hurn to watch holiday makers jet off to places like Ireland, Germany or the Caribbean.
A24	EASTBOURNE AHC442	Last minute entry covered 102 Moors Valley and Ringwood; yellow vintage double-deck filled up with passengers straight away.