

HRR NEWS



ISSUE NO. 13

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1985

NEWS IN BRIEF

Old news for most of us now, but nevertheless still worth a mention - Andrew and Lynn announced their Engagement on Boxing Day so the Champagne flowed when we got back to work after the Christmas break!!... Lester Bowden's Winter Sale is now on, rumour has it that maroon skirts and blazers are their special line this year....Ivan wins a pair of binoculars in the Blenheim Palace Coach Drivers' Draw, should be useful on the beaches of Costa Brava!....Peter Tribe has succeeded in giving up smoking for his New Year's Resolution, what has everyone given up for Lent?....We have said goodbye to a number of staff over the past couple of months - Len Spencer had his Retirement Party at the New Bull Inn and was presented with some Edinburgh Crystal wine goblets to match his whisky tumblers; at the end of January we said farewell to Sally - after coming down from the filing cabinet where she was hiding behind an Amsterdam poster (quite normal!), Sally was presented with a leather handbag, purse and gift vouchers. A couple of weeks later Brian Mutter left us to take up a job nearer home. He was obviously delighted with the whisky decanter, glasses and silver tray he received.....don't mention chicken and chips to "Grandad".....our driving staff have been busy flying the flag for Epsom Coaches with promotion stands in Leatherhead, Sutton, Surbiton and Twickenham. Alan McTrotter and Peter Walsh raised £42 for Queen Mary's Hospital by giving rides to children around the block in the mini mini coach....uniforms are on their way, crash dieting required by Tuesday please....Warden has been brushing the dust off his dictionary, not only to help him with the Daily Telegraph crossword but to help us with press releases, etc.....is RBR applying for membership to the Magic Circle after his visit to the Paul Daniels show....Pearl Jones is retiring with the sale by its present owners of Yew Tree Farm....Elsie has broken her foot, in the snow we believe, hope it won't stop her from going on an HRR to Paris later in the year....Ken Le Lacheur would like to see you all down at the Herald of Spring Exhibition at Bourne Hall this Saturday and Sunday (don't laugh at the entries to the Photographic Competition, at least we're entering into the spirit of the occasion)....Cathy and Brenda are our latest theatre critics with visits to "Run for your Wife" and "Two into One"....Brenda along with Kay has been sampling Italian cuisine at a new restaurant in Epsom High Street, as guest of the Management - they arrived before the restaurant had opened officially!...Robbie is coming back into the fold to help with driver training - our thanks to Peter Walsh for all his work in the past with training, and good luck to Les Wernham who has taken over....thieves showed an ounce of good taste when they stole an Epsom Coaches ticket from a safe at the Royal School for the Blind - they won't get very far though, it's non-refundable....Kay went to Holland as guest of Sealink....Tony Hallett fell for that old one about ringing Mr Lion on Epsom 27227....quite a few members of staff enjoyed a weekend in Ostend and Bruges, but we could have done with skates for the guided walking tour of Bruges....the hot food stand which rolls up outside the garage Monday to Thursday lunchtimes has been tried and tested, Irene thoroughly recommends.....Ron Chandler and Dave Broughton have been inspecting ladies' toilets down in Winchester....we'll have to call Ray Lance "sweetie" if he moves to Claygate....would Ken Le L like some spare ribs?.... Mr T starts his new job soon, drinks all round!!!!

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: RED AND CREAM SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB :
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January and February have been busy months for the Social Club with two theatre outings, a darts and cribbage match against Ben Stanley and a liberal sprinkling of raffle and pontoon winners.

On 13th February the Committee met to appoint a new Chairman and to discuss Club matters generally. Peter Cooper was elected as the new Chairman (call me Cooperman!). The Committee expressed their sincere thanks to Peter Walsh, the out-going Chairman, for all his hard work over the past months. In appreciation of his past services to the Club, Peter has been elected as an Honorary Member. Also Stan Robbins, John May and Len Spencer, all recently retired, have been made Honorary Members too. Staff are reminded that subscriptions are now due so if you have not already done so please let Peter have your 50p as soon as possible. A vacancy exists on the Committee and Harry Willingham has expressed an interest to stand.

It had been suggested that the Raffle should include a gift voucher as one of the prizes and this was generally considered to be a good idea - any other bright ideas to a Committee member please. With the start of the High Season fast approaching, it has been decided to hold a Grand Draw at the end of April and then the raffles will resume at the end of September when things are a little less hectic. The "Lucky Fiver" membership draw will continue, probably being drawn in 2- or 3- monthly blocks.

"CINDERELLA" AT THE WIMBLEDON THEATRE ON SATURDAY 12TH JANUARY

Our visit to the Wimbledon Theatre for "Cinderella" was well-supported by almost 60 members, friends and family. The majority were the children of members of staff who, before the coach left for the Pantomime, enjoyed a McDonalds party in the Drivers' Mess Room (aptly named as it turned out!). 36 McDonalds were ordered from Epsom (Steve's 'local'), and Mervyn Tonkin and his wife kindly supplied jellies and cakes.

The children and their young-at-heart parents, as well as other members of staff, were in good spirits by the time they arrived at the theatre. Sweets had been handed out on board the coach. Once inside, the Theatre was full and everyone seemed to join in the fun, shouting "Look Behind You!" or "Oh No He Didn't" and "Oh Yes He Did". Most of the ladies in the audience, mums and daughters alike, fell for Buttons (Paul Nicholas), and not, as one might imagine, Prince Charming - and in any case he had fallen for Cinders! The entire cast gave fine and funny performances including Bill Owen, better known as Compo, and Kathy Staff who plays Nora Batty in "Last of the Summer Wine".....in fact, is it true that Sheena Richards is going in for a new brand of tights soon?....

"42ND STREET" AT THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE ON SATURDAY 26TH JANUARY

Without doubt, "42nd Street" must be regarded as one of the best musicals to have come to the West End in recent years. From the moment the curtain is raised, it is an all-action show, bursting with energy, colour and excitement. The costumes are dazzling and one is very aware of the enthusiasm generated by the cast, enough to make you want to get up there on stage yourself! Many of the tunes are familiar numbers and include "Lullaby of Broadway", "The Shadow Waltz" and "42nd Street". A visit to the Theatre Royal in itself is a treat with its elegant bars and grand staircases lined with original paintings. Judging by the scenes outside the theatre afterwards, "42nd Street" looks set to keep the chauffeur-driven limousine services in business for a little while yet, but for us it was an Epsom Coach to take us home, not that we're complaining. As if one show in an evening was not enough to take in, Alan and Yvonne Trotter asked to be set down at the Rembrandt for the late-night film! Obviously night owls!

DARTS/CRIBBAGE MATCH: EPSOM COACHES vs. BEN STANLEY ON TUESDAY 29TH JANUARY

An entertaining evening was had by all but unfortunately, for the first time in history, we lost out to Ben Stanley who were quite naturally delighted with their success. A few beers and several trays of sandwiches (thank you Carol!) were downed in an effort to drown our sorrows. A return match in the near future is imperative in order to recapture the trophy - hopefully Mrs Lever and Peter Rust will be on our side this time!

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RESULTS OF THE HRR NEWS PRIZE QUIZ (CHRISTMAS EDITION)

1st Prize: Grahame Bath 2nd Prize: Bob Armstrong 3rd Prize: Sally Cox 4th Prize: Lynn Bilham.

Consolation Prizes to John Goodwin, Jean Hendrick, Mervyn Steemson, Andrew Richmond and Mary Tilbury whose entries were also correct.

ANSWERS

1) Sally 2) Ford Motors 3) The Vyne 4) Battle of Bosworth 5) Holiday on Ice 6) Nutcracker Ballet 7) Jane Austen 8) London Pubs 9) Cardiff 10) Leeds Castle 11) Alton Towers 12) Cabinet War Rooms 13) ss Great Britain 14) Daffodil Sunday 15) London Coffee Information Centre 16) Turner's Merry-go-Round 17) Ideal Home Exhibition 18) Apple Crumble 19) Beatles Tour 20) The Trocadero.

Next time we hold a quiz, we shall have to try and smash the Bath/Armstrong prize-winning streak (Grahame - the £5 note with your entry had nothing to do with it!).

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HRR FILM PREMIERE

Members of HRR staff enjoyed a "Premiere" of "Epsom Coaches at Home" at the Bourne Hall on Wednesday 16th January. Those who made the 3 o'clock performance were lucky to hear the accompanying commentary by Mr Balne whereas for those in the later sitting, the narrative was left to the imagination, due to "technical difficulties". However, it did not spoil our enjoyment of the film and at times the makeshift-commentary matched the original in its humour! The film gave us a glimpse of Heather's toes that we are not often treated to, and in the summer we are looking forward to seeing the girls in Charts coming to work in leotards!

The film will now be shown to members of the public on Wednesdays 20th and 27th March in the afternoon, again at the Bourne Hall. A courtesy coach service from the Epsom and Leatherhead area will be operated on the 20th, and from the Sutton area on the 27th. Pre-booking is essential as space is limited, and the film will be accompanied by a short talk and tea and biscuits.

The film will also be used when we are invited by groups such as WI's, TWG's, etc. to give a talk at their meetings. Already we have a couple of shows planned in 1986 along these lines.

INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS (COMMERCIAL)

Several drivers have opted to take the I.A.M. driving test. Tests will be held over a three month period.

The first tests were held on 28th/29th January and passes were attained by Bob Armstrong, Ron Chandler, Richard Hack, Bernard Kelly, Ken Le Lacheur, Warden Miller, Leigh Richards, Ivan Stanley, Alan Trotter, Martin Wells and Les Wernham. The examiner said that he had been very impressed by the high standard of driving he had seen from those who had taken the test so far.

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IN THE PAPERS.....

■ WHEN you board an aircraft, you're bombarded with advice — 'No Smoking', 'Fasten Seat-Belt' and so on. But it was different in the Good Old Days, as you'll see from these *Hints to Air Travellers*, published in KLM, circa 1920:

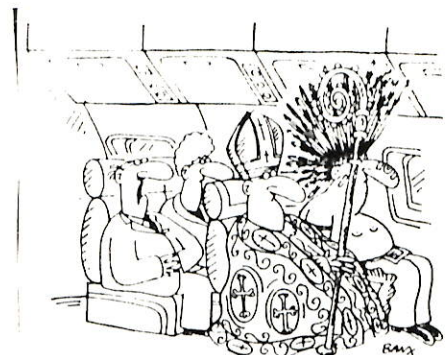
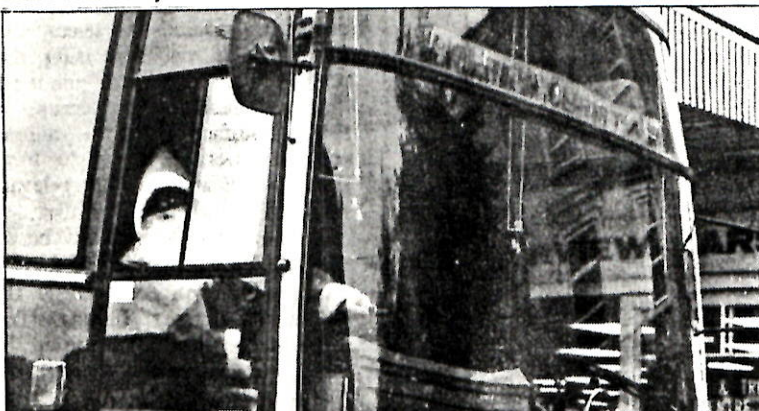
1. Never touch the propellor; keep a respectable distance from it and warn your fellow passengers.
2. Do not suddenly put your arm or head outside. The force of the wind might surprise you and you might injure yourself. You would certainly lose your headgear.
3. Do not wave your hat, scarf or cap outside the aeroplane when departing. The airstream might snatch it out of your hand and it might become entangled in the rudders, this putting them out of action.
4. Throw nothing out of the

aeroplane, however small. Falling from a height of a few kilometers, objects attain the speed of a bullet and are thus dangerous to earthly mortals.

5. If you are travelling in an open aeroplane, take a good pair of goggles with you and wear a leather or silk hood to protect your hair-do.
6. High-fliers should empty their bladders before leaving and should not eat such foods as peas, beans and brown bread, which are apt to cause excessive formation of gas in the intestines.

■ FROM a Surrey parish magazine: "... The winner of the competition to guess the number of sweets in the jar was Miss ———, who will therefore travel to Majorca by air, stay for two nights in a luxury hotel (all inclusive) and fly home via Paris without having spent a penny ..."

JOHN GOODWIN, one of the *Epsom Coaches* drivers, dressed as *Santa Claus* to deliver sherry and mince pies to the firm's 100 booking agents in Surrey. For once, he wasn't doing the driving, but was driven round by *Steve Whiteway*.



"There's always someone irritating in front of you during an in-flight movie."

HRR

THE EPSOM TRADITION

There are two sides to our business which can be loosely classified as "Regular Services" and "Private Hire". (Regular Services include holidays, excursions and express services).

We have operated Regular Services since we began in 1920. In the early days we picked up in Ashted, Epsom, Ewell and Tadworth; visited coastal resorts and race meetings and our services were sold through local newsagents. Today we pick up at 35 points in Surrey, South London and Middlesex; and offer a range of over 400 excursion and holiday destinations with the help of 100 local agents.

Since the last war car ownership has increased resulting in some decline in the demand for coach services. Some coach companies have ceased trading altogether, others have concentrated on private hire.

Running a profitable coach service in the 1980's is not easy and we have expanded into UK and Continental Holiday tours, excursions, coastal and London express services.

Trends

The major growth in recent years has been on holidays - bookings are up by almost a third in less than four years and while the number of passengers on excursions and express services has also increased (up 10 per cent in the same period) this has been due to the enlarged catchment area and demand has tended to fall in established areas.

The demand for commuter services has proved to be limited in this area: we have a regular following and will continue to operate services 1 and 2. Fares which last went up in March 1984, will be pegged for the time being.

Costs

The overheads on Regular Services are considerable and include four persons wages, computer hardware and software, brochures, advertising, stationery, and commission to agents. Advertising our services also benefits private hire and the brochures are a useful reference for organisers looking for ideas. Small groups can join our advertised departures.

1984

Although we carried 55,000 passengers on our services, 1984 was a disappointing year - the holidays did well but the remainder performed poorly. This was due to many factors including competition from Mitcham Belle and London Country - the latter benefiting from bus grants and fuel subsidies.

On the holidays, we continue to compete with local newspapers arranging their own tours and enjoying subsidised advertising. Deregulation has also resulted in competition from other coach operators including National, Wallace Arnold, Surrey International and Grey Green. Nevertheless we succeed by offering convenience, quality, variety and value for money.

1985

Over the past few months, there has been a quiet revolution on Regular Services - an emphasis on consolidation rather than expansion. Advertising and publicity costs have been greatly reduced; also regrettably we have had to cut down on staff. We are now much leaner and are confident this year will mark a turning point and return to profitability.

May to December Excursions

The number of scheduled coach journeys in our May to December programme has been cut from 1500 to 1000. This will result in less "feeders"; also the average number of passengers per coach hopefully will increase from 30 to nearly 40.

The new brochure will be published in early March. Although the cover is in full colour, the inside is printed on newsprint in two colours only - this has reduced costs and we believe the brochure will still be perfectly adequate for its purpose.

For the first time, the 1985 brochure will have a diary format - all the essential information can be found in date order and should make for easier reading.

Long Term View

Each side of the business has its ups and downs and it should be remembered that following the demise of Surrey Motors in 1980 and Duvals in 1982 our services expanded when private hire contracted.

In many ways, our services are less volatile than private hire. Incoming tourism is largely dependent on a favourable rate of exchange.

Carrying on the Tradition

Provided we offer a good service and value for money, our customers are likely to stay loyal to us in good times and bad. Serving people can be very trying but most of the time it is rewarding and our efforts are appreciated, but we can never afford to be complacent in this fast-moving and competitive business, and in 1985 we are anything but complacent.

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MILEAGE STAKES

Reg. No.	Km.	
2	104111	(A. Trotter)
304	78924	(L. Richards)
347	77603	(I. Stanley)
1	76007	(P. Walsh)
343	69130	(R. Chandler)
336	67393	(F. West)
303	66975	(A. Graham)
344	66364	(K. Le Lacheur)
342	65576	(R. Lance)
341	65302	(J. Goodwin)

Distance covered for 1984
in Kilometres

Total Fleet Mileage: 2,637,960 kilometres

Highest Monthly Mileage: 350,080 (June)
Lowest Monthly Mileage: 80,792 (January)

++ STOP PRESS ++

The following have passed the
Institute of Advanced Motorists
test on 20/21 February:-

Martin McGlynn, Mike Adamson,
Adam Miller, Roy Turrell, Bert
Norris, Dave Gettings, Dave
Webb, Peter Tribe and Ray Lance.