

# FRIENDS OF CHATHAM TRACTION

## Update 13

Thursday 28th October 2010

***Holidays and the other activities tend to take precedence during the longer days of Summer but things haven't stood still with GKE 68. In fact, the "real physical work" in prospect at the time of the previous Update in July has materialised!***

### ***Pillar Talk***

- Rob Murray and Brian Missons have worked to give us a progressively better understanding of how the Weymann body was constructed and what issues we shall have to address. The list doesn't get any shorter, but it's all part of the fun!
- The early dialogue with Avery Engineering quickly produced a prototype replacement pillar, which not only reproduced the cross-section of the original but also the profile of the body side. The photo on the right, taken on 27<sup>th</sup> July, shows this pillar offered up to the bus to check for fit.
- We've used the same method of reproducing the section as did the Black Country Museum team, and enquiries elsewhere suggest this has been the favoured method for other Weymann restorations.



### ***Appealing Prospect***

- Avery's have now been asked to produce all the pillars required for both decks. Delivery is expected in a few weeks. This much-anticipated step will mean we can put some strength back into the lower deck structure and give us confidence to go upstairs again!
- This key element of the restoration process will be our first major item of expenditure on the bus itself, and our first opportunity to invite Subscribers and Supporters alike to make a direct contribution.
- Everyone is invited to offer sponsorship of £10 a foot, which approximates to the actual cost of the new pillars. A lower deck pillar is 7ft tall, upper deck ones 5ft, but any amount you can give will be greatly appreciated.
- We will be able to claim Gift Aid for sponsorship amounts where contributors have signed the form, and names will be added to a "Roll of Honour" in due course.

Please send all monies to David Swan.

## Constant Gardner



- In August David and I went to see Ray Harrison, a life-long Gardner engine specialist based near Canterbury. Ray contacted us some 18 months ago to offer his expertise having seen our appearance on BBC South East in November 2008.
- Ray's son Michael runs Gardner Marine Diesels Ltd, now owners of the remaining assets of the original Gardner concern. Between them Ray and Michael can offer unrivalled experience and expertise to apply to GKE's 5LW engine.
- Negotiations to set down a method for establishing the extent and cost of work required on the engine are continuing. We can then agree with the Rochester Bridge Trust a formula for the advance of monies under their grant award to FoCT.
- Meanwhile, preparations are in hand for the removal of the engine from the bus. Ian Marsh has been involved in identifying the necessary disconnections and a method of work has been established. It's hoped that the engine will be out of the bus by mid-November.

## From the Membership Secretary

- Membership has settled down to around 65 subscribers. New memberships have kept pace with the few who have dropped out or have sadly passed on. Regular subscriptions provide a working fund to cover administration costs (mostly postage and stationery) and storage rental for vital parts of GKE secured off-site.
- There are a few subscribers who have not yet renewed this year - if you're amongst these perhaps you would consider bringing things up to date. Should you feel for any reason that you do not wish to continue please let Paul know so that he can adjust our records accordingly.
- In addition to those who subscribe and are thus 'full' members able to vote at formal meetings we have on our database around eighty supporters. These are people who have shown interest in GKE 68 and who provide excellent support by way of one-off donations, historical and technical knowledge, memorabilia, personal memories and promotional assistance of all kinds. The Trustees are very grateful for all the support the project receives, whether financial, practical or moral!

## Gift Aid

- Following our recognition by the Charity Commissioners HM Revenue and Customs have agreed that we can take advantage of the Gift Aid Scheme and reclaim tax paid on amounts paid to us since September last year. Thanks to all who were able to sign the Declaration.

All the best,

Richard Bourne  
Chairman

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*The Friends of Chatham Traction was formed in March 2007 to restore, exhibit and operate as an educational resource the sole surviving Chatham Traction bus, GKE 68.*

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