

## Update 26

16th December 2013

### Christmas Cheer!

Several Cheers, in fact -

GKE has moved to New Romney, work has started on the HLF-funded scope and Karen Adams our Audience Developer is now on board.



### A Moving Occasion

On Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September GKE 68 was extracted from its home at Nu-Venture and taken on a journey to the sixth continent.... Translink Rescue were engaged to tow the bus from Aylesford to New Romney. GKE's tyres are well past their shelf life, so Roy Gould loaned some wheels to replace those on the rear axle. The move was made as a suspended tow, and went without incident although Chris Gibbons reported that GKE had probably never moved so fast in its life! The bus was positioned ready for the HLF-funded work which is now under way.



### Changing Places

GKE's move has left a sizeable hole in Nu-Venture's garage, a rather poignant sight now given the significance that being able to store the bus there has had. Norman Kemp has allowed us to retain space to accommodate our gear and some components pending work on the chassis. In the photo Chris Gibbons, Rob Murray and David Lawrence tidy up after removal of all those rusty bits of GKE's old bodywork needed as patterns for new items or as guides for re-assembly.



Work on GKE began almost as soon as the wheels stopped turning. The tow shakedown uncovered one or two areas needing attention. The stairs were removed to allow access to the platform metalwork and attention turned to releasing the bolts securing body to chassis.

Some pieces of work not part of the HLF scope are however necessary to facilitate it. The tow from Aylesford is one, and removal of the chassis to allow blasting and painting of the main body bearers is another. These costs will be met from our own funds.

## Audience Development

Karen Adams will begin soon to progress the issues which lead to a business plan for the restored GKE. First steps will be to start building links with schools and colleges, and look at ways of building awareness of how the buses contributed to life back in the 40s and 50s. Personal recollections are important in the latter cause, and our accumulated oral histories collected for us by Eddie Lane will be an important contribution.

An opportunity for some worthwhile exposure next year is that 2014 will be GKE's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary! The bus was delivered to Luton as one of a series of 37 vehicles which arrived between June and August 1939, so we needn't aim the event at a particular date. Rather, it can represent the coming of a type and style of bus that really typified Chatham Traction.

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## Merry Christmas

One of the talents its nice to know exists within our circle is that of painting. Phil Lightman, Ray Macey, Alan Page and John Watts have all provided examples of their work for our benefit.

John's latest offering of a wintery Christmas scene will do nicely for next year's FoCT cards. Good to see the kids sporting the Gills' blue-and-white!

I wonder from where in the Medway of old inspiration might have come? Somewhere in the arctic regions of Salters Cross? Or maybe the more exposed parts of the Top Road in Gillingham with the wind coming straight off the Ural mountains? (Small wonder my Dad would refer to that locality as "up Moscow", a valid description if you've experienced waiting late on a winter's evening for the last bus back down the Hill!)



## And Finally...

*End-of-year time means thanks all round. To award bodies and donors; to volunteers and vehicle keepers; to other restoration projects and local historians; to those who remember Medway the way it was; to fellow Trustees and post-holders and to all our Members and Supporters.*

*With all good wishes for Christmas and the New Year...*

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