

Cumbria Classic Coaches NEWSLETTER

www.CumbriaClassicCoaches.co.uk

2010 A BUMPER YEAR!

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR
From All at Bowber Head & Cumbria Classic Coaches



Well, we are coming to the end of the season for 2010 and it's been a really busy year. We've had lots of wedding bookings and the Barnard Castle route is well established with lots of locals going shopping as well as the odd tourist. The Hawes route still enjoys bumper numbers, so much that we have had to use the double deckers on both routes for most of the season.

The Barnard Castle route is now on it's winter timetable. We have had some of our regular ladies asking about any possible changes the government might bring in to the passes but we know of no changes and will definitely be running the winter Wednesday shopping spectacular regardless. Not even the weather stops us, the A66 has been shut once already because of the deep snow we have had here and we still went out...to Penrith!

We have had lots of very interesting private hires this year with Ant and Gordon going as far as Arisaig in Scotland and Dad staying in a castle near Edinburgh. We also ran a holiday to Shetland which the interested can read about overleaf. The second box file of 'Thank You's' is bulging, with 3 coming in for Dad's jobs just this last week! We now have a competition going as to who gets the most.

FLEET NEWS

It's amazing, a year has passed without us buying any new vehicles for the fleet! The core of workable vehicles seems to be at an optimum and we have just been basically working on the ones we have to make sure they are kept in the best condition.

Restorations and repairs this year:- Spring saw Alison relining the inside of the Guy Arab, we took the seats out and repanelled the sides, replacing any rotten framework. We also carved two new vent covers on the bulkhead that Alison is rather proud of.

Also in an exciting move, after receiving an interesting introduction letter, work on the Commer restoration has finally, after 12 years been resumed.

We bought our 1949 Commer Commando first in a flush of enthusiasm when we started Cumbria Classic Coaches and although work progressed rapidly in the first 6 months, when we bought the already restored Leyland Lion the business of actually operating our classic fleet took over and the Commer was put on a back burner.

Therefore our fans will be delighted to know that Rusty Trucks aka Paul Brooks of Warcop are manufacturing a new front end and we hope to get it fitted by the end of the year, hopefully also, time willing Alison will be looking at the interior this winter, (first Paul has to fill up the holes on the bulkhead and then the cat can be kept out!).

Details of Pauls work so far can be seen on <http://rustytrucks.tripod.com/>



BOWBER HEAD NEWS

Not a lot has changed at Bowber Head this year. Anthony hit the big 40 in June and we had a great night at the Fat Lamb to celebrate. Finn is in his last year of GCSE's and doing well...at least in the subjects he likes, he has also started to play the Bass guitar and Bowber Head regularly rocks to either his strumming or Mai on the drums. Nana is still our most regular passenger on the buses, training new conductors and keeping the drivers in order. Ali and Steve have also had a bumper year with their signwriting business. Overall it's just been a really busy year.

Photo at the top is of one of Anthony's 'sculptures'. This one brings a smile to the many walkers that pass through Bowber Head. His other sculpture, 'a statement in Oil', is in his field on the road to Ravenstonedale, unfortunately, Ant has more planned for this year.



SHETLAND MOTOR SHOW

In 2008 Claire and Will, accompanied by Karin and Dan entered our 1937 Rover 14 into the Shetland Classic Car Show and thoroughly enjoyed the show and touring the Shetland Isles. Whilst we were there, the organisers realised we also operated buses and wondered if we could enter a bus or coach in the next (2010) rally.

Having organised a few holidays on the past we knew, it is a big responsibility to undertake a holiday tour for several people, many of them strangers, in a classic bus with maximum speed of 40 mph over such a long distance and invent a full itinerary to keep everybody occupied.

Thus at the beginning of June 2010, 22 slightly deranged and diverse travellers set off from Cumbria to Shetland in our 1954 AEC Regent double deck bus. A double decker might have seemed a bit big for the amount going..but there was a lot of luggage!

We overnighed in Perth and continued the next day to our ferry at Aberdeen via the home of deep fried Mars Bars, Stonehaven.

After a superb 12 hour ferry trip we arrived at Lerwick and immediately undertook a bus tour of Shetland and Unst before settling into our hotel for the week.

The Classic Car Rally is a great 2 day event attended by about 300+ cars, motor-bikes, lorries, tractors, bicycles and models from all over the U.K. We volunteered to operate an hourly bus service from the rally site to Lerwick and it was so well received we never stopped and it became a ½ hourly service. Never having a double decker on the island, all the locals and visitors wanted to ride the upper deck of the bus!

The rest of the week was far from an anti climax as we went on plenty of excursions including a music night at the Spiggy Arms where we got roped in to providing transport for a funeral reception.

Our bus enthusiast friends who operated from the top deck only, developed a bell system to give directions to guide us onto unusual bus routes, including to the uniquely named village of Twat!

Quarantening of the ferry delayed embarking on the trip home but on the way back we visited the Lothalmund bus collection and Baxters Soup works.

All the intrepid journeymen enjoyed the trip and the bus was certainly a hit with the islanders and everyone is asking whether we will be going again in 2012.



BIO ALL MEANS

One of the biggest and for me most exciting changes to the way we operate our fleet of vehicles has been made this year, after a lot of research and advice taken from trusted parties we have put our classic buses and coaches onto 100% recycled bio diesel, this is not bio diesel specifically grown for use as a fuel, which has dubious environmental benefits, this is pure recycled waste product from restaurants and chip shops etc.

The advice was that our vehicles with older direct injection diesel engines were very suitable to running on bio diesel especially since they were designed as multi fuel engines, I think a bonus from the fact they were designed during and made just after WW2. Modern diesel engines also have computers that are not programmed to accept bio diesel!

After construction of a concrete base and the installation of a 1000 ltr tank with gravity feed and a meter for filling the vehicles we had the first delivery from Oil Solutions of Brough, we then started trials first using a Land Rover on the oil, which ran very well then the Guy Arab Lawrence.

Once this was successful we slowly put bio diesel in the whole fleet with so far, very pleasing results. The vehicles have covered thousands of miles now in every different kind of condition from town centre work to motorways and hot summer to at least minus 15c winter conditions, all without any major problems. We find in cold weather they are harder to start but, once running, are fine. Overall the vehicles seem to have more torque and are a little quieter. They also smell funny and you tend to arrive at every destination with an inexplicable hunger for fried food.

The only modification to run on bio diesel was the replacement of the old fuel filters with modern easy to change ones, as the bio diesel cleans out the whole fuel system and leaves the muck in the filter so at first the filter needs changing on a very regular basis but once the system is clean it is no longer a problem. We have now quite possibly one of the most environmentally friendly fleets of public transport vehicles in the country especially when you take into account the energy used to make them has been paying back for 60 years plus. Classic Coach transport for a great sustainable future

