



SHELVOKE & DREWRY ENTHUSIASTS' CLUB NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 6. Summer 2010.

From the Editor.

I hope you'll enjoy reading how a Freightlifter forklift truck is being preserved (Page 10), about a dustman's memories (page 4.), and Les Spencer's account of working at Marshalls of Cambridge which starts overleaf.

Brian Carpenter. 1st June 2010.

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WHAT'S IN A NAME?



The familiar SD 'P' series cab bears the name "Marshall SPV." The year is 1991 and Shelvokes is no more. Marshalls of Cambridge has a number of SD vehicles to refurbish and the one pictured was one of eight bound for the Caribbean island of St. Lucia.

In this photo Peter Whyatt is on the left with Les Spencer on the right with two ex-Letchworth workers in the centre.

Marshalls had recruited ten former production workers from SD at Letchworth to work on these vehicles, but they were unfamiliar with working on parts that had rusted or seized up on usage. So Keith Jackson, who was in charge of the project, sent for Les Spencer, who was the Manager and Peter Whyatt, the chargehand fitter/welder from SD's Manchester Depot to provide the necessary dismantling skills.



The Revopaks were stripped right down, the chassis were sand blasted and re-sprayed, new road springs were fitted etc., so that on completion the vehicles were "as good as new."

Now bearing the Marshalls name the smartly turned out vehicles are ready for shipment overseas.

"We were in Cambridge for three months up to December 1991," Les Spencer recalls, "and we could work as many hours as were willing to put in."

"Three months work was very welcome," Les told me, "after 23 years at the Manchester Depot. redundancy came as a nasty shock."

My thanks to Les Spencer for sharing his memories and for the loan of photographs.

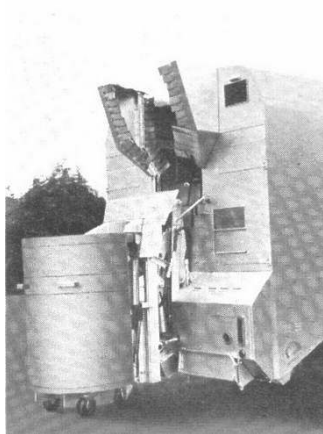
A DUSTMAN REMEMBERS. Part 1.

By Trevor Wood.

I worked on the dustcarts from 1972 until about 1976 and worked on most of the common makes but always found the SD to be the best.

It certainly was a job I look back on with fond memories, we did have a lot of fun and at the time I joined the money was good (it was not long after the big strike and the money had shot up.) I had a friend who was a policeman and my basic was higher than his, plus we got 50% bonus on top every week and a bit of overtime.

I joined Dorking U.D.C. in Oct 1972 who at that time had three SD TZ Pakamatics, one SD F&A with bulk bin lift and a Bedford TK with Eagle Crushload body. When I had been there for about a year I decided to try Guildford R.D.C. as I lived halfway between their depot and Dorking's. They were 100% SD Pakamatics, nine 35yd TZ's, three 20yd TN's and two stretched 25 yd TN's, most were new in 1971/72. They had introduced the plastic bag system and it was not as good a job as Dorking (who used skeps) so I went back to Dorking a.s.a.p.



Pakamatic with bin lifter.

The oldest Pakamatic at Dorking U.D.C., a 1964 version with bulk bin attachment was quite a thing. You may recall that when fitted for Paladin bin handling doors were fitted on the rear, either side of the lifting mechanism. This vehicle was mainly used for manual loading and it required quite a knack to empty a bin through those holes without getting cauliflower ears from the bin! A fact most of our crews discovered when the vehicle was replaced by a Revopak and thus became 'the spare.' The hopper had sloping sides on these early versions and the driver had to constantly push the refuse in with a shovel since we were loading in the corners of the hopper. Because of the extra weight on the rear end the vehicle would easily stand on its back legs when tipping! Something I found out when taking a drink in the cab while emptying the body. It nearly choked me! It also had the habit of breaking half shafts fairly often.

On one occasion we were travelling on the rear steps on one of the later Pakamatics, we were going down this bumpy track and the driver was a mad sod. There were two of us on each step and suddenly the step that the other two were on came off, one chap jumped off but the other, a poor old fella who could hardly walk anyway tried keeping up with the wagon whilst still hanging on to the handrail. We told him to jump but he wouldn't and he

ended up almost horizontal as if flying! -- I can see why steps were discontinued.



Revopak with bin lifter.

The Revopak which replaced the Pakamatic was like a Rolls-Royce even though we still loaded through the doors either side of the slimmer rack & pinion bin lift we could not block it up no matter how quickly we loaded. The door to gain access to the ejection barrier was also useful as an emergency toilet, no doubt health & safety would not approve! On one occasion I was operating the bin lift when a wheel came off the raised Paladin bin and hit me on the head - no hard hats then - I saw stars for a while then carried on working.

In April 1974 amalgamations took place between Dorking U.D.C., Leatherhead U.D.C. and the rural part of Dorking & Horley R.D.C. to form Mole Valley District Council. From Dorking & Horley Rural District Council came some Glover, Webb & Liversidge [GWL] vehicles plus a 15 cu yd SD F&A and a 35 cu yd SD F&A - the big one with the pneumatic operated rear door. From Leatherhead came one SD F&A several Dennis Paxits and a couple of Dennis Bulkmasters.

I left Mole Valley in 1976 and went off to do other things. In the next article I will tell of my memories of the Fore & Aft tippers and then go on to the Eagle Crushload and in my final article the GWL Musketeers, and a prototype Grenadier.

EDENBRIDGE 2010.

Again this year the Southern Counties Historic Vehicles Preservation Trust are inviting owners of preserved Shelvoke & Drewry vehicles to join them at their annual rally for an **SD Gathering**. This will be held on the weekend of 19th and 20th June at Edenbridge, Kent. I understand that several owners of preserved SD's have indicated that their vehicles will be attending. For further details please contact me.

THOSE SHELVOKE CABS. Part 3.

By The Editor.



By 1972 the wooden framed cab could no longer be considered ideal. So when designing the 'N' type S&D chose to purchase a proprietary steel cab. The main body of the cab was bought in from Motor Panels but S&D built their own steel floor and base structure, and the back of the cab. The doors specified were larger than normal to allow loaders easy access via the steps. Increased headroom was achieved by fitting a fibreglass roof.

Safety concerns now decreed that loaders had to access the cab from the nearside as only a driver's door was fitted. Because the cab was bought in the cabs of some other manufacturers looked very similar to the 'N' type.

In the next and final part of this series we look at the 'P' series cab.



A 'P' series and an 'N' series pose together in Malta in 2009.

Photo: Jaap Mikkers.

VEHICLES IN EXISTENCE.

Based at the Midland Railway Centre's Swanwick Junction station site, about a mile north of Ripley in Derbyshire in a purpose built museum Jim Brindley has assembled an amazing collection of forklift trucks.

I visited the centre on Sunday 18th April and was delighted to find among the exhibits the SD Model 82 Freightlifter that is pictured below.



The truck dates from 1956 and is an ex-military machine. Equipped with a side shifting and side tilting fork carriage and powered by a Perkins P6 engine the truck is in need of some cosmetic tidying up but is still in working order. The museum acquired the truck in 2005 when a local contractor had no further use for it. There is every indication that the truck was stored outdoors for a number of years. In later years the Freightlifter was used for lifting military tanks on and off transport using long fork extensions which the museum also obtained.

There are many other fascinating forklift trucks in the collection. The rarest is the 1926 Yale stand-on counterbalance which not only is the only working truck of its type but also is the oldest forklift truck in the world. The oldest British forklifts on display are the 1946 prototype Coventry Climax "ET 199", the 1946 Clifford "Aerolift" and a "Ransome Sims and Jefferies, battery operated, platform truck. Other items of note include the very first reach truck made by Komatsu in Japan and a prototype, rider operated Wrigley stacker from Wessex Industries of Poole in Dorset. Many other manufacturers are also represented with early machines made by Conveyancer, Matling, Hyster and Lansing Bagnall.

The curator also has an extensive archive of material concerning all aspects of mechanical handling. The realisation of this remarkable museum is down to the dedication of Jim Brindley and gives a fascinating insight into the development of forklift trucks. The museum is only open on Sundays or by prior arrangement.

I would recommend a visit but please contact me for directions as a prior telephone call is advisable. The museum is reached via the Butterley station on the preserved Midland Railway.

THE EDITOR'S PAGE.

OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO FORMER EMPLOYEES.

OBITUARY.

We were sorry to learn of the death of Mrs. Dorothy Marshall on 29th March 2010. Mrs. Marshall was one of the young women who came to work at S&D during the Second World War. Trained a welder she was with the Company from 1941 until 1946. Dorothy cycled from Dunton, Beds to Shelvokes every day and said they were some of the best years of her life. She had her 21st birthday whilst there and used to remember that she had a lot of fuss made of her.

Along with her daughter, Gill, she attended SD Remembered at Letchworth Hall Hotel in the Autumn of 2004. Gill too worked in Material Control at S&D from 1978 to 1984. On your behalf I have offered our condolences to Gill on the death of her Mother.

MYSTERY PHOTOGRAPH.



You may wonder what this strange photo is doing in the pages of the SD Enthusiasts' Club Magazine. Further clues will be given in our next issue.

The photo is one of a fine collection of well over a hundred photos kindly donated by one of our readers. The photos mainly feature S&D's output of forklift trucks. Included are early pictures of the Model 82 Freightlifter followed by the Model 100 and the industrial sized model 72. The innovative Dualdrive Model 100 developed for British Railways Western Region also appears.

A further selection of photos of the Defiant range includes the giant 27 tonne machine. I have no doubt that photos from this collection will appear from time to time in the future. On your behalf I have expressed my gratitude to the donor of this wonderful archive.

Letchworth in the Second World War.

The Welfreighter.

Following the article in the last issue of the magazine, Josh Tidy, Curator of the First Garden City Heritage Museum wrote in with the following he'd received:-

"My Dad, Ernest Cordell, was born in 1909 at Chingford and he married my Mum who came from Letchworth, Florence Day.

My Dad worked at Shelvoke & Drewry during the second war, he kept wanting to sign on. He signed on a couple of times for the war and his boss told him not to sign on anymore as he needed my Dad at the factory where he

told him he was doing vital war work. This turned out to be The Midget Submarines and aircraft parts.

So my Dad stayed at the factory working on the war work and also he joined The local Home Guards.

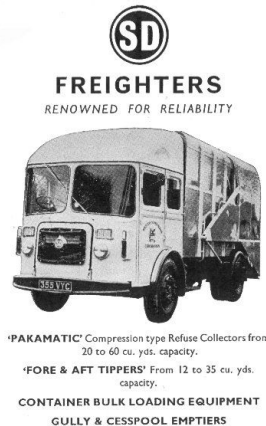
I have recently been to Scotland and discovered the midget subs was taken on the backs of lorries to be tested in The Waters of Kylesku in Sutherland. There is also a monument there for the people who lost their lives on the subs.

My father lived in Spring Rd Letchworth and then he got a job as head gardener at Rosehill Isolation Hospital Hichin Rd Letchworth. He passed away in 1982 at the age of 72yrs.

Yours sincerely Sylvia McBeal nee Cordell"

Tom Colville has confirmed that the Welfreighter was tested in Scotland:

"The outer Loch Cairnbawm was used as the Top secret training base for both the Chariot teams and for the other midget subs. The three 12th submarine flotilla motherships were moored there at various times. The six X craft teams that eventually disabled the Tirpitz in the fjord in Norway, in September 1943, did all their final training based in the Loch and left from there. The village pub by the ferry landing at Kylesku, where the memorial now stands was where any off watch hours might have been spent by those involved."



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The Shelvoke & Drewry Enthusiasts' Club Newsletter is published four times a year on 1st March, 1st June, 1st September and 1st December. Items for inclusion may be e-mailed to me at:-

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