

Motor Bus Society – Summer 2014 Newsletter

CONVENTION REPORT

Seattle in the Spring

The Motor Bus Society held its Spring 2014 Convention in Seattle, Washington, where attendance was very good, with registrations totaling 82. The headquarters hotel was the Best Western Plus Pioneer Square in the historic Pioneer Square neighborhood. The hotel is an elegant, thoroughly restored Romanesque-Victorian boutique hotel. Fortunately for those in attendance, the weather for each of the three days turned out considerably better than the forecast, and the cry of, "We lucked out with the weather" was heard throughout the Convention.

Day 1 (Friday, April 25th) started with our two charter buses from MTR Western picking us up at the hotel and taking us to the nearby Washington State Ferries pier, where we boarded a ferry for the hour crossing to Bremerton. It was a very scenic and enjoyable ride, made more interesting because of the Coast Guard's quarterly review of the safety drill performed by the ferry's crew, including the deployment of a lifeboat. Once in Bremerton, our first stop was the Bremerton Transportation Center right at the ferry dock, where several Kitsap Transit Gillig Advantage low-floor buses came and went.

Our next stop was Kitsap Transit's Charleston Garage, where more of the Kitsap fleet was ready for our photos. Kitsap has a large fleet of MCI coaches operated by employees of the major employment sites in Kitsap County, including the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Bangor SubBase, on a part-time basis. Other than these MCI's, the fleet was all Gillig Phantom and Advantage. Our visit was followed by lunch at the Kitsap Mall in Silverdale.

After lunch, we arrived at the Mason Transit Authority in Shelton, which is northeast of Olympia, the state's capitol. The Mason fleet was largely Gillig, although one of its reserve buses is an MC-5. We then proceeded to Olympia, stopping at the downtown Transit Center. There was much activity from Intercity Transit, the local operator, as well as a few suburban

operators, one of whom (Grays Harbor Transit) broke the Gillig streak with a New Flyer D40LF.

We then travelled to Tacoma, our next stop, but encountered some unanticipated rush hour traffic on I-5. We had hoped to get to the Tacoma Dome Station in time for some of our members to ride a Sounder commuter train back to Seattle (there are two reverse trips in the PM rush hour) and we seemed to get there in time for the final departure at 4:55 PM. However our members were not able to make that train. Some opted for the Sound Transit 594 express bus, while others returned to the hotel with our charter buses. It was a great day, but it was unfortunate we were not able to get to the Tacoma Dome Station earlier to provide a longer stop there and the train option.

Day 2 (Saturday, April 26th), we headed up north in our two charter buses. A last-minute change, arranged with help from a King County Metro attendee, brought us to the Lynwood Transit Center, between Seattle and Everett.

Activity was brisk for a Saturday morning and was composed of Sound Transit ("ST") express buses between Everett and Seattle and local service on Community Transit ("CT"). Most CT service was provided by New Flyer D40LF's and D40LFR's, but the group was pleasantly surprised to see a New Flyer Invero enter the Center. The driver was very hospitable upon layover and advised us that the Invero's are affectionately often referred to as beluga buses (yes, like the whale).

We saw numerous ST New Flyer LFR 60-foot diesels as well as a few Gillig 40-foot Phantoms. We continued the ad-lib itinerary with a stop at the Aurora Village Transit Center near the Seattle-Snohomish County line, where we saw local Community Transit buses, RapidRide buses on King County Metro's E route and CT's rapid bus service called "Swift," where New Flyer DE60LFA's are used. King County Metro uses similar buses on its RapidRide routes, which now number five.

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After ad-libbing, we got back on schedule when we visited the Community Transit garage in Everett. There were many varieties of equipment there, including the new New Flyer Xcelsiors, as well as Gillig 29-foot Low Floor BRTs. The Xcelsiors seemed to be temporarily out of service due to a break-in issue. But the three highlights of our visit were: (1) a Two Tall double-decker bus (aka "The Double Tall"), which CT was nice enough to bring over from the garage where they are normally housed; (2) a GM fishbowl that came to CT in the early 1960's; and (3) two RTS's still on the property although evidently no longer in service. Thus, our visit to CT was exceptionally nice.

After lunch at the Everett Mall, we stopped at Everett Station, home to both Sound Transit (buses and trains) and Everett Transit ("ET"). An ET representative was there to invite us in the Station for a short power point presentation and to present us with a few gifts. After photographing both ST and ET buses (and a ST rail train stored for the weekend), we proceeded up I-5 toward Skagit Station in Mount Vernon. However, we encountered heavy traffic and realized much of it was headed to a tulip festival right near Skagit Station. To avoid a bottleneck, we aborted this stop and headed to our next stop, Bellingham Station. We reviewed and photographed numerous Gilligs in the Whatcom Transportation Authority fleet and then headed back to our hotel in Seattle.

Saturday evening's entertainment was very nice. Mike Bergman from Sound Transit talked about ST and then showed slides from Seattle and other places where he had lived or visited. Glenn Bartolome then spoke about King County Metro and various transit improvements over the years. Unfortunately, the state electorate had just turned down an increase in the state sales tax to provide more transit funding earlier in the week. This will most likely lead to transit cutbacks instead of improvements. There was then a brief business meeting, followed by additional Seattle slides provided by member Glenn Bartolome.

Day 3 (Sunday, April 27th), two historical buses from the Metro Employees Historical Vehicle Association ("MEHVA") came to pick us up at the hotel: (1) a 1963 Flixible new-look

and (2) a 1968 GM fishbowl. They took us to the King County Metro South Base, where the MEHVA bus collection is kept. The buses in running condition that we were able to view and photograph there, in addition to the two above, were: (3) a 1955 GM TDH-5105; (4) a 1959 GM TDH-4512; (5) a 1976 AM General; (6) a 1978 MAN artic; (7) a 1979 Flyer D40; (8) a 1986 MAN Americana; (9) a 1990 Breda dual-powered artic; and (10) a 1997 Gillig Phantom.

There were four other older buses waiting to be restored, but we only got a distant glimpse of these. Two of King County Metro's newer 60-foot New Flyer DE60LFR's then came to pick us up and take us to the next stop, which was Metro's Central/Atlantic Base, which is basically two bases at one location. We visited Atlantic Base, which houses the Metro trolley bus fleet, including 5 MEHVA trolley buses.

We then proceeded to the King County Metro Convention Place Station, which is the northerly end of the downtown transit tunnel. The Central Link Light Rail line terminates one station south of this one. In addition to viewing buses, we took a short walk to the present Greyhound Station, which is being relocated in the near future.

After that stop, we had lunch at the Northgate Mall, near the Northgate Transit Center. We observed more King County Metro buses, including some 30-foot Gillig Phantoms. We then made a stop on the University of Washington campus, where we took the group photo. This was probably the first time that there was no bus in the group picture.

Two more stops were made before we ended the day: (1) the Bellevue Transit Center and (2) the 1,500 space Eastgate Park and Ride in Bellevue. At the Bellevue Transit Center, we saw ST DE60LF's and DE60LFR's; ST uses hybrids on this and a few other routes that use the downtown transit tunnel, as diesel buses are not permitted in the transit tunnel. Special thanks for the day go to MEHVA and King County Metro, especially Josh Shields and Glenn Bartolome, who were our leaders and tour guides. A very good time was had by all.

—Nolan Kolmel

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MBS Officer and Trustee News

Long time MBS member and Trustee Murray Kramer has resigned his position as MBS Board of Trustees Chairman at the end of 2013. Murray was immediately nominated by the Board to become our third Trustee Emeritus joining Charles Bailey and Paul Semendinger. Murray continues to be active in the Society with a new focus on being the Technical Editor for Motor Coach Age. MBS Trustee Jim Gilligan has been elected to the position of Chairman of the MBS Board of Trustee.

Another longtime MBS member, James F. Gilligan, has been appointed by the Board of Trustees to fulfill the remainder of Murray's Trustee term thru 2016. MBS President Mandros has nominated, and the Trustees have approved Al MacPherson, a longtime employee of Rockland Coaches/Coach USA to serve as the new MBS Northeast Regional Vice President. The Board welcomes both James and Al to their new positions

2014 MBS Election

The biannual election of MBS Officers and Trustees will take place later this year, with electees taking office on January 1, 2015. Up for election are the four corporate officers (President, Executive Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) and two of the six Board of Trustee members. Nominations for these offices are now open and should be received by the MBS President or Secretary by September 1, 2014. Nominees must have been a paid-up MBS member for three consecutive years; in addition, nominees for the Board of Trustees must be a resident of the state of New Jersey.

MBS Officers for the 2012-2014 term are:

President: Dino Mandros
Executive Vice President: Robert Hussey
Secretary: Nolan Kolmel
Treasurer: Richard Phillippi

MBS Board of Trustees are:

James M. Gilligan – Chairman, Fred Eisinger, Michael Ferlise, James F. Gilligan, Sidney Keyles and Glenn Schmelz

Fall 2014 Convention

The MBS Fall 2014 Convention will be held on the four-day weekend of October 16-17-18-19, 2014. Headquarters originally proposed to be in Grand Rapids, MI, has been relocated to Ann Arbor to allow better travel access for attendees

Registration and event details will be included in the Fall Convention pamphlet. The garage and facility tours will include the cities of Jackson, Battle Creek, Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids, Lansing, Indian Trails, Flint, Bay City, Saginaw, Ann Arbor, Toledo, Monroe, Suburban Detroit (SMART), and Detroit. A visit to the Ford Museum is a possible addition.

Registration fee for convention attendees will be \$40 per day or \$140 for the four days. We are pleased to announce that starting with the Fall 2014 convention, registration fees can be paid to the MBS via PayPal.

Future Conventions

A recent newsletter requested members to submit their recommendations and preferences for future convention locations for the ten meetings to be held during the period of 2016-2020. Based on that feedback along with other input, the following dates and locations are proposed:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Fall</u>
2015	Conn. Valley 4/24-26	Halifax, NS 10/16-19
2016	St. Louis, MO 4/29-5/1	Sacramento, CA 10/7-9
2017	Orlando/Tampa 4/28-30	Phoenix, AZ 10/6-8
2018	Boston, MA 4/27-29	Portland, OR 10/5-7
2019	Minneapolis, MN 4/26-28	Europe, TBD
2020	Indianapolis, IN 4/24/26	Honolulu, HI 10/9-11

All locations and dates are subject to change

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2014 Membership Dues – Have you renewed?

Notices for the year 2014 membership dues were sent out during the month of April, and were due by May 15. If you have not received your 2014 dues renewal notice, it can also be downloaded from the MBS website. Dues are payable by check, money order or via PayPal to:

membership@motorbussociety.org

Any MBS member who does not renew for 2014 by September 1 will be dropped from the membership list.

MBS E-mail Notifications

As requested in the 2014 dues renewal notice, if you wish to be added to the MBS e-mail notification list and not have already done so, please send us your e-mail address to:

info@motorbussociety.org. By providing your e-mail address to the MBS, you can learn when the next issue of Motor Coach Age will be mailed and receive advance notifications about MBS Conventions and future MBS offerings.

2014 Donations to the MBS Archives

Thank you to those who continue to support the MBS Archives thru their financial support and material donations. During the last few months a special thanks goes to MBS Members:

John McDonnell, NJ – for a donation of 2000+ bus and light rail slides from various east & west coast operators and a NJ Public Service bus side destination sign.

William McKoy, PA – for an assortment of bus & truck related books & slides.

David Semendinger, MD – for an extensive collection of materials related to bus operations in the Washington, DC and suburban Maryland and Virginia areas.

Robert Wettling, OH – for a large collection of Corgi bus models and a replica Greyhound Bus Terminal from MTH.

Have a favorite bus related web site, bus blog or bus photo sharing site? Do you want to friend the MBS on Facebook? Coming later this summer.....

We are working on some new and exciting projects for MBS members that focus on social media for bus enthusiasts. If you have favorite bus/transit/light rail web sites or information blogs, Yahoo groups, or bus photo sharing sites that you frequently visit, we wish to know about them. Send a list of your favorite sites to: **webmaster@motorbussociety.org** We are planning to add some new sections to the MBS that expand the listings for these frequented sites.

Later this summer the MBS is anticipating the launch of the first Motor Bus Society Facebook page and Flickr photo sharing page. We hope that by adding the MBS to these popular electronic communities we can expand awareness of the MBS to more bus fans not only in the US, but throughout the world. Announcement of the launch on Facebook and Flickr will be done via the MBS website and via e-mail notice to those MBS members who have signed up. Once the launch on Facebook is complete, you will be able to “friend” us and see what is new with the MBS.

Also, as we move forward into the age of digital technology, the MBS is studying options for reproduction of back issues of Motor Coach Age and Motor Coach Today in a digital format for a fee.

MBS Contact Information:

The Motor Bus Society can be contacted by mail at:
Post Office Box 261, Paramus, NJ 07653
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