

PCC welcomes new and former members

There are some new faces – and a return for some familiar ones – on the LRT Pensions Consultative Council (PCC).

The longest serving quarter of PCC members must retire on 30 November each year, although they can stand for re-election if they wish.

There was no election in 2004 as the number of nominations for candidates did not exceed the vacancies available.

In Section One (pensioners and deferred pensioners), the retiring councillors were John Brewster and Chris Miller. Chris Miller

was re-elected and was joined by Mike Swiggs.

In Section Two (TfL, its subsidiaries or contractors), Chris Godbold returns to take up the one vacancy available.

In Section Three (London Underground, its subsidiaries or contractors), the retiring councillors were Glenn Belton and Peter Moffatt. Peter Moffatt was re-elected and was joined by Brian Valentine.

For more information about the PCC, please log on to www.lrtpensionfund.co.uk or contact Sarah Parsons, PCC Secretary, on 020 7918 3018.



Taking the honours

Andy Barr MBE receives royal recognition for services to transport – turn to page 4-5 for the full story.

— News from LRT Pension Fund —

Pensions to rise by more than 3 per cent

The full pension increase from 1 April 2005 will be 3.1 per cent and is based on the rise in the Retail Price Index over the 12 months to September 2004.

This will be paid to eligible pensioners on 2 May 2005. If you have been receiving your pension for less than a year, you may receive a pro rata increase – see below.

Effective date

Up to 1 April 2004

2 April 2004 to 1 May 2004

2 May 2004 to 1 June 2004

2 June 2004 to 1 July 2004

2 July 2004 to 1 August 2004

2 August 2004 to 1 September 2004

2 September 2004 to 1 October 2004

2 October 2004 to 1 November 2004

2 November 2004 to 1 December 2004

2 December 2004 to 1 January 2005

2 January 2005 to 1 February 2005

2 February 2005 to 1 March 2005

2 March 2005 to 1 April 2005

Pension increase

3.1 per cent

2.84 per cent

2.58 per cent

2.33 per cent

2.07 per cent

1.81 per cent

1.55 per cent

1.29 per cent

1.03 per cent

0.78 per cent

0.52 per cent

0.26 per cent

nil

Bus to the future

The capital's buses aren't just red – many of them are green too!

Fuel cell technology is just one of the innovative designs you can see on the streets of London. *otm* takes a look at how bus designs are developing on page 8.



PENSIONERS' FORUM UPDATE

MAIN POINTS OF MEETING HELD ON 1 NOVEMBER 2004

- Chris Townsend, Director of Group Marketing, TfL, gave the Forum a presentation on the work of his directorate, highlighting recent marketing campaigns run on television and in the press
- The pensioners' representatives reviewed Issue 5 of the pensioners' edition of *otm*. They commented that, while it was very professionally produced, they believed that there should be a better balance between human stories and transport issues, as the balance had now swung in favour of human stories
- The pensioners' representatives were given a presentation on the operation of the Pensioner Liaison Representatives (PLR) scheme. They expressed a belief that the scheme was not operating as it should and was badly in need of an overhaul. It was agreed to set up a working group to review the scheme and undertake an audit of the information provided to PLRs and the extent to which pensioners are covered by the scheme
- The pensioners' representatives commented on the format and conduct of the recently held Annual Members' Meeting and generally considered that it had been an improvement on 2003.

Every picture tells a story

Do you have a tale to tell about your time at Notting Hill Gate, Holland Park, Shepherd's Bush or White City? Any photographic memories of the stations?

Customer Service Assistant James Monroe is on the look-out for anecdotes and artefacts from staff past and present. These will form a poster – one for each station – to be displayed on platforms to give customers a taste of what station life is like and an insight into each station's history.

James said: "I've only been here for a year so I'd love to learn what it was like to work here in days gone by. I'm sure customers would find it interesting too, and it will help to pass a few minutes while they wait for a train."

i If you have a story to share, please call James on 020 7027 2054 or email rcs1966@hotmail.com

Your contacts at your magazine

Do you have something you'd like to include in the next pensioner edition of *otm*? Let us know! Please remember to include a telephone number with your letter.

Your contacts

At London Underground

Dee Horsman
tel 020 7918 3388
fax 020 7918 3176
email
deirdre.horsman@tube.tfl.gov.uk
Employee Communications,
London Underground,
55 Broadway,
London SW1H 0BD

Or you can contact the team at

AB Publishing
tel 020 7922 5678
fax 020 7922 5679
AB Publishing Limited,
24-26 Great Suffolk Street,
London SE1 0UE
email
onthemove@abcomm.co.uk

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Diary dates

Calling all Chiswick colleagues

The 10th Chiswick Works Reunion Dinner will be held at the Twickenham Masonic Centre, London Road, Twickenham on Saturday 30 April 2005. All colleagues are welcome. Please contact Don Robson on 020 8570 3136 or Ted Kilby on 020 8894 6386.

Small is beautiful

Professional and amateur modellers will be presenting working layouts of different scales and sizes at the London's Transport in Miniature open weekend.

The event takes place between 11.00 and 17.00 on 26 and 27 February 2005 at London's Transport Museum Acton Depot. It will include the Holborn tram layout and models showing the forthcoming Channel Tunnel Rail Link. Children's activities include the Little Red Train.

Tickets cost £6.95 for adults and £4.95 for concessions (accompanied children under 16 go free). Buy tickets in person at London's Transport Museum or send a cheque, payable to London's Transport Museum, by 12 February to Resource Desk, London's Transport Museum, Covent Garden WC2E 7BB.

The venue is at 118-120 Gunnersbury Lane, London W3 8BQ (nearest tube Acton Town, bus to Acton Town station or Gunnersbury Road junction of Uxbridge Road).

News from LRT Pension Fund

Data to help beat fraud

The Audit Commission has used its legal right to request personal and payroll information from the TfL Group (and other public bodies) including the LRT Pension Fund to help it investigate potential fraudulent use of public funds.

Information was supplied in October 2004.

Frequently asked questions

What is the NFI?

The National Fraud Initiative (NFI) is the Audit Commission's data matching exercise. Its role is to detect fraudulent and incorrect payments from the public purse.

Why does the information have to be provided?

The LRT Pension Fund is required under Section 6 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 to participate in the NFI data matching exercise.

What information will be given?

Where relevant, the following data will be collected:

- Employee number
- Post number
- Department code

- Title or gender
- Surname and forename
- Address
- Date of birth
- Date started at TfL
- National Insurance number
- Gross pay to date so far this year (tax year ending 5 April 2005)
- Standard hours worked
- Date last paid

What happens with our information?

Payroll data will be used for cross-system and cross-authority comparison for the prevention and detection of fraud.

What if I don't want my details to be given? Aren't I protected by the Data Protection Act?

It's a legal requirement and this is allowed for by the Data Protection Act.

Accounting for change

The LRT Pension Fund's Annual Member Meeting on 30 September heard about a variety of Fund news, from the annual report and accounts to the website.

Stephen Critchley, Chairman of the Fund, detailed the role of the Trustees. This includes:

- Act in accordance with the Trust Deed and Rules of the Scheme, within the framework of the law
- Act prudently, conscientiously and honestly and with the utmost good faith
- Act in the best financial interests of the different categories of members

- Take advice on technical matters and any other matters where guidance is felt necessary
- Invest the funds to the best possible financial advantage.

Sue Timbrell, Director of Pensions and Fund Secretary, presented the Fund's report and accounts for the year to 31 March 2004. This highlighted changes during the period and clarified the sector and manager analysis of the Fund's investments and returns.

Richard Williams, the scheme actuary, gave a presentation on the actuarial

valuation as at 31 March 2003, which indicated that the Fund is now 85 per cent funded and that employer contributions were increased as of 1 April 2004 to cover the deficit.

Presentations were also given by Trustees Marina Ainsworth on the Fund's website and John Ingleton on the work of the Operations Committee.

- The report and accounts and the Q&As from the meeting can be found on the website at www.lrt-pensionfund.co.uk or from the Fund on 020 7918 3733.

Veteran Bus Driver honours fellow comrades

Retired Bus Driver Ian Aitchison laid the Transport for London wreath at the Cenotaph, Whitehall, to honour First and Second World War servicemen on 14 November.

Ian is a member of the London Transport Old Comrades Association, the only civilian group allowed to place a wreath on Remembrance Sunday.

He said: It's a true honour to have laid the wreath, particularly as 2004 is the 60th anniversary of the Normandy landings."

From 1942, Ian served in the Royal Signals, who were attached to the 53rd Heavy Regiment RA. During that time, he was based in Normandy and survived the heavy bombing of Calais, before finally returning to England in 1947.

Following his war years, Ian joined Walworth Garage as a Bus Driver and later moved to Camberwell Green Garage working on route 45. In 1988, he moved to Wandsworth Garage, where he drove sightseeing buses, before retiring aged 79.



Ian Aitchison leads the transport colleagues in the Cenotaph ceremony.



Moving memento: Violet Clements with her framed poster organised by London Underground.

Commemorating heroes for Remembrance Sunday

Remembrance Sunday posters depicting holders of the George and Victoria Cross have been displayed at Victoria line stations.

The posters show people awarded the George Cross at King's Cross station and the Victoria Cross at Victoria station.

A passenger alerted Violet Clements, whose son John was awarded a George Cross in 1976, after seeing his picture on a King's Cross platform. John, a teacher, died aged just 22 after rescuing 35 of his students when their Italian hotel caught fire on a school trip.

Violet contacted London Underground's customer services team and was invited to King's Cross station on 15 November for a framed presentation of her son's poster.

Advertising Executive Chas Bayfield devised the campaign in memory of his great-great uncle, who is one of the Victoria Cross holders featured. "I thought that a poster campaign coinciding with Remembrance Day was one way to honour the heroism demonstrated by the award holders," he said.

King's Cross Station Supervisor Jai Anwar added: "I think the posters highlight the bravery of these individuals, and it is a very good campaign."

The project is supported by Transport for London and Viacom Outdoor, the company which handles advertising on London Underground sites, and runs until January.



A Silva lining

Variety was the spice of Underground life for retiree Florencio de Silva (pictured), The Great Portland Street Station Supervisor (known as Angelo to colleagues) loved working at different stations and meeting various people over the course of his 20-year career.

Florencio joined the company in 1984 as a Booking Clerk, after moving to the UK from Kenya.

"I joined the Underground as it seemed like a career with security and a chance of promotion," he said. "After

my training I spent six months in a covering role, working wherever I was needed in the ticket offices across the Metropolitan and Jubilee lines. I enjoyed this as it gave me a chance to learn about different stations."

In 1992 he became a Station Supervisor at Great Portland Street, a position he held until his retirement this month.

"Twenty years later, I'm happy I made the right move. I've had a great career and really enjoyed myself."

A great time: Florencio enjoyed the variety of life on the Underground.

Friendship never ends

Making lifelong friendships has been the highlight of Horace Brown's Underground career.

The Rickmansworth Station Supervisor retired in October, after almost 25 years with the company, and is now looking forward to life in the sunshine.

"I've really enjoyed the camaraderie and teamwork, and have made some great friends – people I'll continue to see after I've left," said Horace.

Horace joined London Underground in 1980. He was encouraged to join the

company by his brother-in-law, who was a driver on the Victoria line.

"I'd worked on the buses in the Midlands where I lived, but the job on the Underground offered more security, as I had a young family to look after," he said.

Man of the people Horace Brown bids a fond farewell to Rickmansworth.

"I've enjoyed my career, but I'm looking forward to moving back to the Caribbean," he said. "It's what I've always been working towards."



Denville hangs up his hat.

Farewell to good friends

Denville Goddard said farewell to friends and colleagues at King's Cross station following a career that spanned 42 years.

It was January 1962 when Denville first started after being recruited from Barbados to work on the Underground.

"I was 21, and back then we were called 'Railmen'. Our duties involved washing tiles, cleaning platforms, toilets and escalators as well as polishing brass – it was a lot of hard work but I enjoyed it," he said.

Denville started as a relief worker based at Baker Street and then spent nine years as a roster worker there.

"I loved it there; the staff were great and the work was good. Since then

I have worked all over the Underground system," he said.

Since working at Baker Street, Denville has been stationed at Golders Green, Waterloo, Edgware and High Street Kensington as well as many other Underground stations before his final stop as Customer Service Assistant at King's Cross.

Although Denville hasn't decided what he will do in his retirement, he intends to stay active.

"I do shopping for handicapped people on my rest days, so I will carry on doing that," he said. "I plan to relax, but you have to keep trim – when I write my first book I'll let you know!"

Palace day blows Andy away

Network Co-ordination Manager Andy Barr dedicated his MBE to his entire team and described the ceremony at Buckingham Palace as "phenomenal".

"There are six or seven days of my life which I would love to relive," said Andy.

"Receiving the MBE comes second only to getting married. I'm not one for pomp and ceremony, but receiving this accolade blew me away.

"Because I heard about my award so long ago, back in May, I thought it would be an anticlimax, but I couldn't have been more wrong."

Andy was awarded the MBE for co-ordinating public transport for massive events such as The Queen's Golden Jubilee, the Queen Mother's Funeral and New Year's Eve.

But he is adamant the accolade is not just for

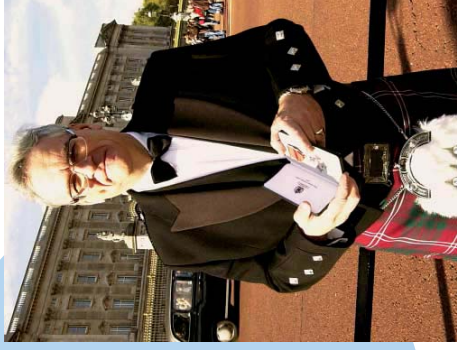
him: "Although I was the one collecting the award on the day, this is for my entire team who have worked tirelessly and I dedicate it to them," Andy said.

On the day, Andy, a Scotsman, was joined by his wife Judith, and sons Andrew and Matthew. He was one of two people wearing traditional Scottish attire, which received royal approval.

"The Queen said it was good to see me there in my kilt," he said.

"The entire England rugby squad was also there and people keep asking me if I got Jonny Wilkinson's autograph.

"Do they really think a Scotsman in a kilt would go up to an English sporting hero? I don't think so!"



Andy shows off his MBE.

Big surprise for Eric



Eric receives a surprise treat during a class at Ashfield House.

A serious 'statto' is the best way Eric Oliver's colleagues could describe the retiring Stations and Revenue Trainer.

The number cruncher is statistics mad and can tell you exactly how many days he has worked since joining the Underground back on 5 August 1968 – 13,296 if you're interested.

"I joined as a 16-year-old apprentice," said Eric. "I started work on the Central line doing a little bit of everything. I worked in the station depot, on the platforms and in the booking office."

Since leaving the Central line, Eric has worked on every line on the Underground except Hammersmith and City, and he can even tell you how many days he worked on each.

"I worked in the ticket office for 25 years, then as a Revenue Inspector for 8½ years and I have worked as a Trainer at Ashfield House for three years," he said.

Eric plans to move to Wales for his retirement, once he gets over the shock of his surprise visit from arm in the middle of a class.

"This was a big surprise! You've really caught me out," he said.

Lloyd goes full circle

The career of Lloyd McConney has come full circle in the 37 years he's been on the Underground.

The Paddington Group Duty Station Manager, who retired in November, finished his career working at Latimer Road station – the very place he started in 1967.

Lloyd began his Underground life as a Foreman, after a move from working on the buses.

"The Underground offered a more secure career. It afforded me the opportunity to look after my family, which I was grateful for," he said. "My duties as a Foreman included making sure the station was safe for customers."

Eighteen months later Lloyd became a Booking Clerk, covering rest days and holidays across the whole Metropolitan line.

The dawn of the 1980s saw Lloyd qualify as a Senior Relief Clerk. The same decade saw him become the first person at Hammersmith station to sell a ticket on the new UDS system, train other staff to use the system, and then in 1989 become a Duty Station Manager.

"My first post was at King's Cross. It gave me a real buzz working at such a challenging station," he said.

After stints at Liverpool Street and Baker Street, Lloyd joined the Paddington group, working across Shepherd's Bush, Goldhawk Road and Latimer Road stations.

"I've made some excellent friends over the years, including people I've known since I joined, who I will still see now I've retired."

Lloyd McConney waves farewell to colleagues at Latimer Road.



January 2005

on the move

noticeboard

● The Post Office has launched a new saving stamp initiative to help customers budget more effectively. The saving stamps can be used to pay for any products purchased at the Post Office, from insurance to car tax. The stamps will be available nationwide for £5 each, up to 20 of which can be saved on a 'collector' card.

● People aged 60 or over should have received their 2004/05 Winter Fuel Payment. This is £200 for households with one or two eligible residents, together this year with a one-off payment of £100 if there is someone aged 70 or over. In addition, each eligible resident beyond the first two will receive £100. On top of these payments, each couple or single person aged 80 or over receives the annual 80+ payment of £100.

● Pension Credit claims can now be backdated for up to 12 months and there is automatic backdating of housing and council tax benefit in line with the pension credit backdating. An updated version of PC10S –

A Guide to Pension Credit, updated application forms and leaflets are available from www.pensioncreditinfo.gov.uk/communications.asp

● The Department of Health has issued 'best practice' guidelines on achieving 'simple' discharge from hospital. The booklet applies to at least 80 per cent of patients with 'simple' discharge needs. This relates to those usually discharged to their home, without major medical complications. It is available free from the Department of Health, PO Box 777, London SE1 6XH, tel 08701 555455.

● A compilation of stories has been published from Caribbean families and individuals who came to Britain after the Second World War. *Legacy describes the hardships the immigrants had to endure as they attempted to adapt to a new country and differing lifestyles. It costs £10, available from Thumbprint Creations, 36-38 Whitmore Road, London N1 5QA, tel 020 7613 3331.*

Useful telephone numbers

For general pension enquiries, please dial the number that corresponds with the first letter of your surname:

ABCDEG	020 7918 3662	
FHIKLM	020 7918 3017	
JNOQRSTU-Z	020 7918 4498	
Age Concern (Head Office)	020 8765 7200	
Age Concern Information Helpline	0800 009966	
DSS Freephone (Disability)	0800 882200	
Health Shield	01270 588555	
HM Inspector of Taxes	0845 3000 627	
Hospital Saturday Fund	020 7928 6662	
Hospital Savings Association	01264 353211	
Kenbrook Retirement Home	020 8904 5818	
London Taxicard Scheme (for disabled people)	020 7484 2929	
London's Transport Museum	020 7379 6344	
Norwich Union Life	01438 732000	
Railway Convalescent Homes	01626 866850	
REPTA	or 01492 874230	
Simple Health	0161 456 1425	
Transport Benevolent Fund	01992 515515	
Transport Friendly Society	0870 0000 172/3	
	020 7240 8886	

LT Pensioner Liaison Scheme

Pensioner Liaison Scheme and Retired Travel Facilities – London Transport Pensioner Liaison Scheme, Floor 26, Empress State, Lillie Road, Earls Court, London SW6 1TR

Please note that the telephone numbers for Travel Services/Pensioner Liaison and HR Services have changed. The new numbers are:

Travel Services/Pensioner Liaison 0870 900 2332
HR Services 0870 900 5333

Both 0870 numbers are charged at local rate.

Obituaries and in memoriam

If you have an obituary notice for inclusion, please send details to *otm* pensioner edition, 24-26 Great Suffolk Street, London SE1 0UE, or email onthemove@abcomm.co.uk. Please include a contact telephone number in case we need to clarify any information.

■ **Reginald (Dick) Bird** died on 4 March 2004 aged 81. He joined LT in 1947 aged 25 as a Conductor at Victoria Garage. He became a Driver and then Road Inspector at Sidcup and Garage Inspector at Bromley, where he worked until he retired due to ill health in 1984.

■ **John Briggs** died on 7 January 1993. He worked on the buses for 15 years, based at Potters Bar garage.

■ **William Bryant**, Conductor and then Inspector at South Croydon Garage, passed away

on 10 July 2003 aged 83.

■ **John Codrington** died on 11 October 1999. He joined LT in 1973 as an Electrical Engineer and served for 23 years, later becoming a Foreman covering substations such as Tower Hill, Neasden and White City.

■ **George Ford** passed away on 18 July 2003 aged 71. George worked for LT for more than 40 years, starting in Catford in 1946. George was Chairman of the local TGWU branch and also took part in most sports, winning trophies in boxing, football, cricket and golf.

■ **Lorraine Hartley** died from breast cancer in May 2003 aged 44. She worked in the stationery and textiles office in Acton during the 1980s.

■ **Bob Hillman** died on 22 October 2004 aged 65.

Bob worked for LT Buses for 32 years as a Driver and Conductor based at Elmer's

End and Peckham Garages. He retired in 1991.

■ **John (Jimmy) James** passed away on 20 October 2003. He worked at LTE Chiswick for more than 36 years and retired in 1984.

■ **James Arthur Lavender** passed away on 7 March 2004 after a long illness. He worked as a Bus Driver at Uxbridge for 27 years and also represented his garage at the remembrance service at the Cenotaph for nine years.

■ **Ernest Makewell**, who worked for LT Buses for 38 years as an Advertising Inspector, died in hospital on 17 September 2004 after a long illness.

■ **James (Jim) Moulinie** passed away on 13 May 2004. He joined LT in January 1961 as a Conductor at Plumstead Garage and retired on medical grounds in 1978.

■ **Brian Stephen North** died on 5 June 2004 aged 47. He

worked on the Piccadilly line for London Underground and then Tube Lines for 30 years as a Technical Officer.

■ **Raymond Purland** passed away on 25 March 2004. He retired in 1983 after more than 45 years in commercial advertising.

■ **Don Stannard** passed away on 24 September 1992 and not 2004 as stated in the last edition. We apologise to Ellen Stannard, who has contacted us about the oversight. Don retired in 1983 as an Electrical Foreman after nearly 37 years' service at Earl's Court.

■ **Len Tulley** died on 6 October 2004. He had more than 27 years' service with LT Buses, based at Thornton Heath, where he was a Driver and later an Inspector.

■ **James (Fred) Wheatley** passed away on 4 August 2001 aged 90. He worked at Euston station for 18½ years before he retired in 1976.



Does forces service count?

Dear Editor,

I was surprised to read on page 4 of the July 2004 edition of pensioners' *otm* that Stanley Kingsnorth would have clocked up 50 years' service but for his six years in HM Forces.

From my experience in drafting innumerable internal job applications to work my way up the clerical ladder, my strong recollection is that service in HM Forces during an otherwise unbroken career in London Transport counts as part of the London Transport service.

In other words, one's retirement date minus the original engagement date equals the length of LT service.

Absence for service with HM Forces was, in effect, unpaid leave, although I believe that, in World War II, certain grades had their service pay supplemented by the LPTB to equal their civilian pay.

Also, employees who had been initially engaged as temporary staff but

were later classified as permanent were given the opportunity to backdate their pension contributions across the period of military service.

Both these examples support the 'temporary absence on unpaid leave' theory.

This question is still important in view of the recall of LRT staff to the colours for service in the Iraq theatre and elsewhere.

It would be interesting to know the rules adopted by (i) the section responsible for preparing long-service certificates (ii) ditto for calculating the entitlement to long-service awards (iii) the pension fund.

I appreciate that a person cannot physically be in two places at once, but from every other angle I'm sure that service with HM Forces should count towards the total length of service with LT.

Desmond F Croome
(London Buses – retired)

If you have a letter to the Editor, send your contribution to *otm* pensioner letters, 24-26 Great Suffolk Street, London SE1 0UE, or email onthemove@abcomm.co.uk. Please remember to include your name and a contact telephone number – we won't publish your number but we may need to follow up information with you.

Dear Mr Croome,

Without the specific details of the individual concerned and the policies that may have been in existence at the time, I can only advise on the current 'Call Up of Reservists' policy, which states the following:

Continuity of service: a period of absence due to military duties is treated as special leave without pay, and service will be deemed to be continuous. Reservists are paid by the Ministry of Defence in line with HM Forces pay scales. Service period with the company will therefore be deemed to include the period of special leave.

Pensions: if the period of military duties exceeds 13 weeks, the employee may elect for the whole period to be non-pensionable, paying no contributions and accruing no pension.

Alternatively, the employee may elect for the whole period to be pensionable (again contributions can be paid in arrears on return to service). TfL will continue to meet the employer's contributions.

Joan Easson
Human Resources Implementation Manager

TBF – what's in it for you?

otm gets to know the Transport Benevolent Fund and finds out how the organisation can help people like you.

The Transport Benevolent Fund (TBF) is here to support people who work or worked in the public transport industry in Great Britain when they are in need, hardship or distress.

The organisation stems from the Train, Omnibus and Tramway Mutual Aid Fund, which was set up to give financial support to families of London public transport workers who were away serving in the First World War. It also offered medical and legal advice.

A permanent Train, Omnibus and Tramway Benevolent Fund was established in January 1923. When the TOT Group and other companies were amalgamated to form London Transport 10 years later, the organisation became the London Transport Benevolent Fund.

In January 1990, as a result of the fragmentation of London Transport, the Transport Benevolent Fund was formed.

Today's TBF has members in England, Scotland and Wales representing most major public transport companies.

The Fund is run by Trustees, who are also public transport workers.

There's a 24-hour emergency line for urgent help and there is no limit on claims each year.

The Fund offers a range of help and advice, from legal to financial to healthcare. Most benefits are available to retired members.

Its nominated solicitors have a free helpline, provide a wills service and can draw up enduring powers of attorney.

There are several types of financial help available, such as grants, debt advice, legal help and benefits advice.

The TBF can often help with the cost of medical equipment or living aids not available through the NHS – members should contact the Fund before buying equipment themselves.

To qualify for help from the TBF, you need to be a member. Any public transport industry worker can become a member for just £1 a week for yourself, partner and dependants, and the fee is often waived once a member retires. You can find out more about TBF at www.tbf.org.uk, or by contacting the Fund on 0870 0000 172.

Keen for green fingers

Gardening enthusiasts are being sought to tend the flowerbeds at Edgware Road tube station.

Group Station Manager Stevyn Walder is keen to restore the garden and is looking for someone with time they can devote to its upkeep.

Stevyn said: "If there are any London Transport retired staff living locally who'd like to take up the challenge, I'd be happy to provide a budget.

"It's a voluntary job, but think of the satisfaction when we win the Station Gardens Competition!"

● If you're interested, please contact Stevyn Walder on 020 7918 1546 or email stevyn.walder@tube.tfl.gov.uk

The ride of your future

London's buses are sporting some innovative new designs in a bid to improve passenger journeys and minimise the impact of buses on the environment.

Bendy buses were launched in November 2003. The 18-metre vehicles can carry up to 140 people, at least 60 more than a double decker bus. Boarding times and



Energy efficient: look out for fuel cell buses on the capital's streets.

journey times are quicker as all passengers must have a ticket before boarding. They also have three doors so congestion doesn't occur at one door when people board. The central doors have low floors for easy wheelchair and pushchair access.

The buses are designed with passenger comfort and security in mind. They boast climate control and CCTV cameras on board.

Bendy buses now operate on nine routes in the capital.

A new innovation is also on the cards – London's first fuel cell buses, which run on hydrogen, are now on trial. London is one of nine cities in Europe taking part in the pioneering CUTE (Clean Urban Transport for Europe) project to cut air pollution



Flexible friend: bendy buses are saving time and cutting queues.

and noise. The fuel cell buses will be put through their paces on ecological, technical and economic criteria, which will then be compared to conventional bus transportation.

Fuel cell buses can travel more than 125 miles before refuelling. Liquefied hydrogen is delivered to a fuelling site where it is safely dispensed as a gas into pressurised cylinders. These are the cylinders you can see on top of the buses.

The only emission from a fuel cell bus is water, which forms a vapour cloud when it leaves the exhaust and enters the atmosphere.

Pensioner Liaison Scheme

by Gordon Dixon, Pensioners' Forum Member

It was agreed at the Pensioners' Forum to set up a Working Group to review the Pensioner Liaison Scheme. The Group will undertake an audit of the information provided to Pensioner Liaison Representatives (PLRs) and the extent to which pensioners are covered.

It was subsequently agreed that the Working Group would begin in December 2004, pensioners' representatives Alexandra Barnes and Gordon Dixon meeting initially with representatives of the Pension Fund Office. Early in 2005, once their office move to Empress State Building is complete, the Group will be joined by the Pensioner Liaison Manager's team.

LT pensioners and their dependants automatically have membership of the scheme at no cost. The PLRs act as the link between the pensioner and the Pensioner Liaison Manager. They are issued with a list of LT pensioners within their area. Some of the duties of PLRs are:

- To visit and act as a link between a member of retired staff or dependant and the Pensioner Liaison Manager
- To alert the Pensioner Liaison Manager to any problems or concerns affecting members' well-being
- To maintain confidentiality and respect for individuals' privacy and independence
- To keep records of all allocated members and make quarterly returns to the Pensioner Liaison Manager and make claims for expenses.

If you have an interest in this type of work and wish to volunteer your services, please contact the Pensioner Liaison Manager at Empress State Building.

Note for existing PLRs: some colleagues have not received any recent list of pensioners in their area or have not been notified of changes of address or of deaths. Please advise Alexandra Barnes (01273 267186) or Gordon Dixon (020 8445 3017) of any such problems.



From left: Visits and Events team members Victor Odumenya and Sepp Embrechts give Rachel and John Bowden the lowdown on the station.

Hidden treasures revealed

Transport treasures across London were opened up to the public as part of Open House weekend in September, which gives people access to buildings they wouldn't normally get to see.

Among the gems on show were 55 Broadway, the disused signal cabins at Loughton station and the upper part of Highgate station. *otm* dropped in on the Highgate tour.

Originally opened on 22 August 1867, this was a link station on the London & Highgate railway line between Finsbury Park and Alexandra Palace and was rebuilt in 1900 and again in 1940.

In its heyday in the 1870s, the line carried up to 60,000 passengers a day, but was closed to the public in July 1954.

Because overland trains no longer run through it, the station is now considered the property of London Underground.

Station Supervisor Mazuri Sana,

who has been working at Highgate Underground station since the 1980s, joined the tour: "I come up here once or twice a week to check everything is okay," he said.

Duty Manager Trains Paul Abrams conducted the tour: "I help out with the commercial filming department and I've been here with them too. The derelict tunnel is a popular location and has been used in *EastEnders* and *Waking the Dead*."

Local residents Rachel and John Bowden were pleased to finally get the chance to see the station.

"We've lived in the area for nearly 40 years. We've walked around the station often enough and knew there was something down in the trees we couldn't see. This tour has filled in the gaps for us," said John.

● This year's Open House is scheduled for 17/18 September. To get involved, email jhoskin@londonopenhouse.org or call 020 7267 2070.