

NINETY GLORIOUS YEARS?

by Kim Rennie

THE LONDON TRANSPORT JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

THE 1983 EVENTS

1 July 2023 marked 90 years since the creation of London Transport (LT) in 1933. Forty years ago, in 1983, a comprehensive series of year-long events celebrated its Golden Jubilee. Just as with the 1963 Underground Centenary and the 1979 Omnibus Sesquicentennial, a special logo was designed for the 50 years festivities. This consisted of the numerals '5' and '0' positioned to read '50', with the zero also appearing as an LT roundel, below both of which were the dates 1933 and 1983. Circling all this were the words 'LONDON TRANSPORT GOLDEN JUBILEE'. Each staff member was issued with a special red badge carrying the symbol in gold, and ties featuring the logo were also available for purchase. The logo was used on printed material and on a number of 'show buses' (basically standard LT buses that had been 'customised' by operating and engineering staff at certain garages). The Underground management clearly frowned on such unofficial practises and deviation from the norm, as no railway rolling stock were ever so adorned – though the Jubilee and Metroland rail tours (q.v.) carried it on headboards. LT produced its own fully-illustrated 192-page commemorative volume entitled *The London Transport Golden Jubilee Book 1933-1983*, in both hardback and paperback form, authored by Oliver Green from the LT Museum and John Reed from the Public Relations Department. British Transport Films released *Moving London*, an 18-minute short film for LT. This combined modern bus and train scenes with archive black & white footage from the BTF library. The plot, such as it was, follows an unnamed "recently retired staff member" (actually played by Walter Harris of the Public Relations Department) as he travels around the modern system and reminisces about earlier days. Despite supposedly being a former employee, in one scene he clearly receives change after boarding an OPO bus. Director's licence presumably.



Left: Two versions of the Golden Jubilee logo, which was used widely throughout the year.

The 1983 Jubilee season commenced with a 'Gala Concert' held at the Royal Festival Hall on 17 March in the presence of HRH Prince Michael of Kent. The musical programme was as follows – Overture, Variants on a Bus Route by Carl Davis, followed

by Eric Coates' London Suite, Rachmaninov's Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, and the evening finished with Elgar's Enigma Variations. The concert was performed by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Carl Davis and Sir Charles Grove. A 44-page souvenir programme included a short illustrated-history of LT's fortunes to date. Launched on the day was a special envelope featuring a D78 car and RT bus and which was cancelled by a Jubilee logo handstamp.

Events ramped-up on 24 April with a public open day and comprehensive display of rolling stock in Neasden depot. Those inside the stabling sheds were as follows:

1938 Tube Stock 10156-012248-12119-11156

1959 Tube Stock 1036-2036-9037-1037

1967 Tube Stock 3079-4079-4179-3179

1972 MkII Tube Stock 3439-4539-3539

1973 Tube Stock 864-664-865

Q Stock L126-08063-L127

R Stock 21121-23323-23415+23555-22652+
23556-22653

Battery loco L32

C Stock 5717-6717+6713-5713-6724-5724

D Stock 7124-17124-8124+8125-17125-7125

A Stock 5076-6076-6077-5077+5153-6153-
6152-5152

Standard Stock pilot car L135

Diesel loco DT82-DL82

Leaf Clearing Train ESL118A+F311+ESL118B

Sleet loco ESL117

On show outside were:

Tamping machine TMM773

Hopper wagons HW215 HW403

Tunnel Cleaning Train TCC1-TCC2-TCC3-TCC4-TCC5

Battery locos and Long-Welded Rail train L53+RW494+RW493+RW492+RW491+RW490+L33

The lifting shop was host to 1972 MkII Tube Stock unit 3440-4540-3540 and A Stock unit 5110-6110-6111-5111, both in the 'raised' position. Road vehicles on show included current and historic breakdown tenders and road-rail Unimog L84. As well as many enthusiast sales stalls, there were also stands and displays from LT's various central departments, including Cleaning Services, the Fire Department, Chiswick Research Laboratory, Underground timetables section, and the Test Train Department. Rolling stock 'foreign' to the Metropolitan and Jubilee lines were moved to and from Neasden in a series of stock transfer moves made over 20 April to 26 April. The estimated attendance was 6,000.



Above: Seven cars of withdrawn R Stock on display inside the Neasden Depot stabling sheds on 24 April 1983 and flanked by 1938 Tube Stock and 1959 Tube Stock.

Photo: Colin Smith



Above: The Bakerloo Line was represented by a 4-car unit of 1938 Tube Stock. To its right is a 4-car 1972 MkII Tube Stock from the Jubilee Line and R Stock to the left.

Photo: Jim Blake

Below: For the event at Neasden, Metropolitan Line trains made special stops at Neasden during the opening hours.

Both photos: David Rowe



The LT Museum opened its special Golden Jubilee exhibition at Covent Garden from 26 May and, in association with this, a bus rally was held in the piazza on 30 May.

The most formal event of the year occurred on the exact 1 July anniversary date, with a commemorative service at St. Martin-in-the-Fields church. The address of welcome was given by LT Chairman Dr Keith Bright. The Rev. Charles Hedley presided. Readings included Sir John Betjeman's poem *Middlesex*, read by Leading Travel Information Assistant Andy Pendle; whilst Philip Greenslade, acting Divisional General Manager, Central & Bakerloo lines, read an extract from *London Transport at War*. Bus Driver Ray Binns, of Thornton Heath garage, read *The Last Tram* by Stan Collins. Dr David Quarmby, Managing Director (Buses), also gave an address; and the LT Choral Society was in attendance. The

duties of organist were shared with Docklands Light Railway engineer David Catling. Travel Information staff served as ushers to guide the congregation to their seats. Funds raised were divided between the LT Benevolent Fund and the church's renovation appeal.

There were also a number of LT public relations film shows screened during the year, with performances at the Harrow Arts Centre, Queen Elizabeth Hall and the Fairfield Halls.



Engineering apprentices at Acton built a special Golden Jubilee float out of wood that depicted a 1973 Tube Stock cab emerging from a tunnel (Left). Mounted on a Distribution Services trailer, pulled by one of their tractor units, and 'crewed' by Travel Information staff in uniform, the float made appearances throughout the year at events like the Easter Parade and Lord Mayor's Show.

Photo: Brian Hardy

The July 1983 issue of *Underground News* (No.259) was designated the 'London Transport Golden Jubilee Edition' and

included a comprehensive 11-page history of LT up to 1983 written by Desmond Croome. Desmond also presented the July LURS meeting with an illustrated talk on the same subject.

GOLDEN JUBILEE EVENTS

April 24	Neesden Railway Depot Open Day
May 7	Croydon Bus Garage Open Day
May 30	Bus Rally at LT Museum, Covent Garden
June 4	Stamford Brook Bus Garage Open Day
June 11	Edmonton Bus Garage Open Day
June 25	Plumstead Bus Garage Open Day
July 2/3	Transport Gala, Chiswick and Acton Works
July 16	Romford North Street Bus Garage Open Day
July 30	Stockwell Bus Garage Open Day
August 13	Willesden Bus Garage Open Day
Sept 3	Ash Grove Bus Garage Open Day
Sept 11	Enthusiasts Jubilee Tube Tour
Sept 18	White City Railway Training Centre Open Day
Sept 25	Aldenhams Bus Overhaul Works Open Day
October 9	Enthusiasts Jubilee Tube Tour No.2

This is your invitation to our 50th Birthday Celebrations at Chiswick and Acton Works on Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd July

Join us in West London for our main Golden Jubilee celebrations. It's going to be one of the biggest and most varied transport extravaganzas of all time. There'll be something for all the family. From the youngest to the eldest. Among the attractions planned are:

- * bus skid pan demonstrations (with rides on the skid bus)
- * your chance to drive a bus
- * Tube train overhaul demonstrations
- * miniature and model railways
- * displays and models of engineering equipment
- * London Bus Rally
- * police dog and crime prevention displays
- * righting an overturned bus
- * transport flea markets and collectors' sale
- * side shows, video shows and competitions for children
- * try your hand at archery
- * licensed bars and refreshments and much, much more

For further details please ring 01-222 3311

The party starts at 11 am and lasts until 5 pm on both days. Admission is just £1 but accompanied children under 16 will be admitted FREE!

How to reach Chiswick and Acton Works (which are next door to each other)
Please try to come by train or bus. There are no car parking facilities. Underground to Acton Town or Gunnersbury Buses 27, 237, 267 or E3.

Left: Posters promoting Golden Jubilee events.

The highlight of the year was the two-day Golden Jubilee 'Gala' held on the weekend of 2/3 July involving a joint open day of Acton Works and Chiswick Works. At the latter site, visitors could drive a London bus for £1, or ride on the skid pan for 20p. There were demonstrations of air-bag vehicle recovery, with withdrawn Daimler Fleetline DM 1077 repeatedly righted after been turned on its side. There were displays of

current and historic buses and coaches and examples of the extensive and varied road service vehicle fleet.

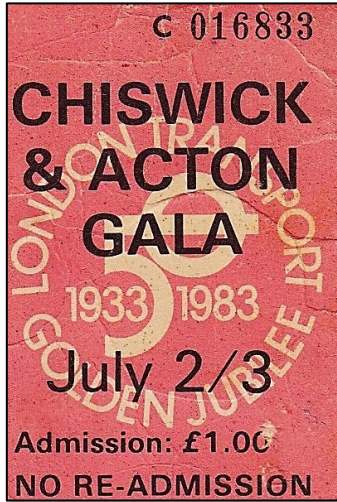
The exhibition at Acton was more technical, with an emphasis on the works then functioning as a central overhaul and modification facility for the whole of the Underground. This was in the days when ex-works rolling stock would be returned to their line effectively looking like new. Areas open to the public included the heavy engineering shop, the wheel and truck shop, and the trimming shop. Peripheral displays spread across both sites included those on first aid (provided by LT's 'Industrial Corps' of the St. John Ambulance Brigade), the Lost Property Office, the Uniform Stores, the Lifts and Escalators Department, Cleaning Services, Fire Department and the British Transport Police.

Rail vehicles on show included the following:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 1938 Tube Stock | 10172-012259-12061-11172 | 10177-012265-11177 (units uncoupled) |
| 1959 Tube Stock | 1170-2170-1171 | Electric loco 12 'Sarah Siddons' |
| 1967 Tube Stock | 3067-4067-4167-3167 | Diesel loco DL81-DT81 |
| 1972 MkII Tube Stock | 3238-4238-4338-3338 | Crane & Jib Carrier C606+J683 |

1973 Tube Stock 339-539-139
Q Stock L126+L127 08063
CP Stock 53268-54239+53220-54264
R Stock 21147-23231-22679
D Stock 7536-17536-7537
Battery loco L 21
Acton Works shunter L11
Standard Stock pilot cars L130-L131+L134-L135

Engineering wagons HW403 F366 RW506
Tamping Machine TMM771
Tunnel Cleaning Train TCC1-TCC2-TCC3-TCC4-TCC5
Leaf Clearing Train ESL118A-F311-ESL118B
Sleet loco ESL107
Unimog L84



Around 30,000 people are thought to have attended over what turned out to be an extremely successful weekend and which has probably never been bettered since.

Left: An admission ticket for the weekend 'Gala' at Acton and Chiswick Works.

Below: Q35 trailer 08063, then in LURS ownership, formed part of the Acton Works exhibition. To its left is D Stock unit 7536. The latter was visiting the works for ventilation modifications. The Q35 trailer was donated to the London Transport Museum in 1997 and is now an important part of the three-car Q Stock restoration project.

Photo: Colin Smith



Below: (Left) Rail vehicles on display in Acton Works looking east. Visible are 1959 Tube Stock, 1938 Tube Stock, Q38 Stock, and a Standard Stock pilot motor car.

Photo: Robert Gadsdon

Below: Looking west at the rail vehicles display. Additional units seen are D Stock, R Stock and a 1972 MkII Tube Stock on accommodation bogies.

Photo:

Andrew J Crowther / ee20213 on Flickr



The tradition of annual enthusiasts' rail tours was maintained during 1983, with three such events organised. The first was the 'Metroland Rail Tour' of 1 May, an ambitious joint LT and British Rail (BR)

operation to work a through train from Wembley Park to Rugby and back. The coaching stock was provided by BR and was as follows:

Type:	Mk1 SO	Mk1 SO	Mk1 SO	Mk2a TSO	Mk2a TSO	Mk2a BFK	FO
Carriage No.	E3603	E3600	E3610	E5284	E5294	E14073	E3244

The train was hauled by electric loco 'Sarah Siddons' from Wembley Park via the Fast Line to Amersham. At Amersham, 'Sarah' was uncoupled and replaced by Class 25 diesel loco 25.278. The train then continued to Aylesbury and onto the single line section to Quainton Road. Here there was an hour's break when passengers could alight and visit the Quainton Railway Society's premises (now the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre).

Following this, the tour recommenced, heading further north to Claydon L&NE Junction and via the Varsity Line to Bletchley. The original intention was to run to Bedford, but this would have involved opening seven signal boxes normally closed on Sundays in order to operate level crossings, and so Rugby was chosen instead.

After passing over Bletchley Flyover, the West Coast Main Line was joined for a direct run to Rugby, where 25.278 ran around the train. The tour returned via the same route to Amersham and continued, still diesel-hauled, to Watford via the North Curve. At Watford, the Class 25 was detached, and 'Sarah' recoupled at the other end, and the train was then worked via the South Curve back to Wembley Park, where the tour ended. Both locomotives carried a maroon headboard lettered 'METROLAND RAIL TOUR' in yellow, with the Golden Jubilee logo forming the 'O' in the first word.

Was this the last time the Underground gave passengers the option of 1st Class fares?



Left: The Metroland Rail Tour of 1 May using loco 25.278. This is the outward trip during the pause at Quainton Road.

Below: (Left) The Metroland Rail Tour returned via Watford, where 25.278 was detached from the train and 'Sarah Siddons' coupled to the other end.

Both photos: Bob Greenaway/LURS

Below: 25.278 with the tour train at Rugby.

Photo: Brian Hardy



The second event was the 'R Stock Farewell Tour' on 15 May, which as Train 452, ran over the entire District Line, and also on sections of the Piccadilly and Metropolitan Lines. However, this was not marketed as part of the Golden Jubilee programme and the headboards did not carry the Jubilee logo.

The third and final excursion was the 'Jubilee Rail Tour' using Jubilee Line 1972 MkII Tube Stock. There were two tours, which were both sold-out, and these operated on 11 September and 9 October. Units used were 3238+3540 on the first date, and 3238+3536 on the second. Numbered as Train 413, the tours visited parts of the Metropolitan, Central, Piccadilly, Northern, District and Jubilee lines over a 9-hour period.

The route of both tours was as follows: Baker Street (platform 3), Harrow-on-the-Hill, Rickmansworth (reverse). Harrow-on-the-Hill (reverse), Ruislip siding (reverse), Ruislip Depot, Ruislip Gardens, White

City (reverse), Ealing Broadway (platform 6), shunt to Ealing Broadway (platform 9), Hammersmith, Barons Court siding (reverse), Northfields (reverse), King's Cross, shunt via loop to Euston, Mill Hill East (reverse), Euston, shunt via loop to King's Cross, Arnos Grove (reverse), Barons Court siding, Hammersmith (reverse), High Street Kensington, Edgware Road, Aldgate (reverse), Baker Street, Wembley Park (reverse) Finchley Road and Charing Cross (platform 4).

A special headboard bearing the Golden Jubilee symbol and 'JUBILEE RAIL TOUR' in white-on-red was carried at each end of the trains on both days. The scale and aspiration of the event puts today's single return trips using the 4-car 1938 Tube Stock at the north end of the Met to shame.



The Golden Jubilee railtours using 1972 MkII Tube Stock, approaching Ruislip Gardens (Above, Left), having travelled through Ruislip Depot (with many handworked points having been secured) and looking east (Above), showing the concrete 'butterfly' canopy, then common at the west end of the Central Line. Crossing over from the Central Line to the District Line (Left).

All photos: David Rowe



Above: The 9 October Jubilee Rail Tour Train 413 in Ealing Broadway District Line platform 9, having shunted from Central Line platform 6.

Photo: Andrew J Crowther / ee20213 on Flickr



Above: The 11 September tour reversing at Northfields in westbound platform 2.

Photo: Paul on Flickr



Above: The 11 September tour reversing at Arnos Grove in eastbound platform 1.

Photo: Paul on Flickr



Above: Mill Hill East with the Jubilee Rail tour on the single line. Note that a wooden platform was still in place then.

Photo: 70009 on Flickr

Below: Reversing west to east at Northfields (Left). On return from Mill Hill East, passing through Finchley Central (Right) with a 1972 Mk1 Tube Stock train on the left in platform 1.

Both photos: David Rowe



METROLAND TOUR

VALID FOR ONE PERSON ON THE SPECIAL TRAIN ON Sunday

01 MAY 83

On the same day, also available for unlimited travel on any other LT trains, except as shown on reverse

JUBILEE RAIL TOUR

LONDON TRANSPORT GOLDEN JUBILEE 1933 1983

11 SEP 83

On the same day, also available for unlimited travel on any other LT trains, except as shown on reverse

Above: Tickets for the Metroland Rail Tour and Jubilee Rail Tour.

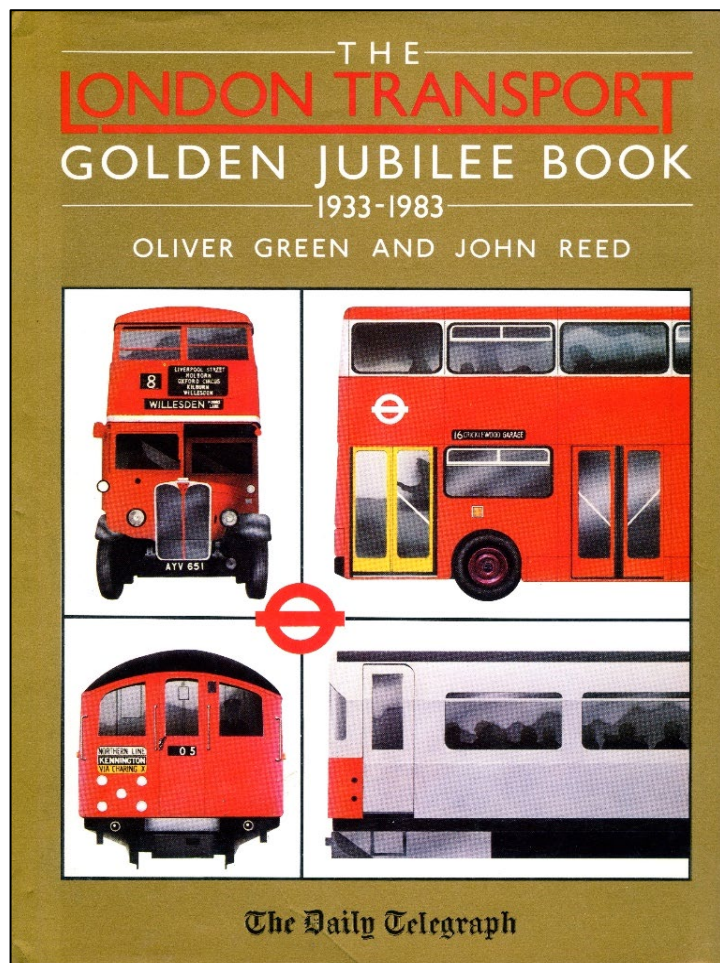
Photos: Colin Smith/Author

At a number of locations, it was necessary to scotch & clip points to allow participants to travel past shunt signals and/or over non-passenger routes. At Ruislip, nearly 20 sets of points required securing in order to transfer the train between the Metropolitan and Central lines via the depot. This was in pre-Company Plan days, when there would be ample relief Station Foreman, Station Inspectors and Station Managers standing spare on a Sunday and available to perform the task ('job and finish'!).

Such an event could never be repeated today, what with the removal of inter-line connections, incompatible signalling systems, staff cuts, and the intense 'can't do' risk-averse culture now prevalent – though even then, those on the 11 September tour had to alight at Ealing Broadway whilst it shunted from platform 6 to platform 9.

The tours' tickets also gave unlimited travel on the Underground for the day, but with the usual exception of the BR sections from East Putney to Wimbledon, Gunnersbury to Richmond, Kensal Green to Watford Junction, and at New Cross and New Cross Gate stations.

On 18 September, it was the turn of the Railway Training Centre at White City to throw open its doors. Visitors were sent on a specific route that included, in order, the rules & regulations room (including the model railway), the Westinghouse brake room, the EP and Westcode brake room, the lift and escalator and air door operation room. Traction current and its discharge procedures were demonstrated in the arc room. The mock station allowed tuition on headwall telephones, platform repeater signals, and of various items of equipment found on the track – such as rail gap indicators, section switches; and the use of scotches and clips (then always referred to as clips and scotches – even though you used the latter first when securing). The mysteries of the ticket office were revealed in another dedicated classroom. The adjoining White City depot also opened for the day and contained 1962 Tube Stock unit 1582-2582-9583-1583 and 1973 Tube Stock unit 864-664-865. The overall estimated attendance was 5,000.



Above. The front cover of the LT Golden Jubilee book (Left) and images of the Golden Jubilee (Right) featured in the 1983 LT Annual Report, published in 1984.

Non-Underground events during the year included bus garage open days at Croydon, Stamford Brook, Edmonton, Plumstead, North Street (Romford), Stockwell, Willesden and Ash Grove (one for each London Buses district). The premier bus open day was that held at Aldenham Works on 25 September and was served by a shuttle of 'show buses' (and others) running to and from Stanmore station.

Meanwhile, throughout the year, a series of eight lectures were given at the Museum of London on various aspects of LT history.

A three-day conference involving 300 delegates was held at the University of London from 20 to 22 September to mark the Jubilee and had the theme of 'Urban Public Transport – towards 2000'. This was sponsored jointly by LT, the University of London, and the Chartered Institute of Transport. Among the speakers were Dr David Quarmby and Dr Tony Ridley. Overseas attendees included delegates from Algeria, Denmark, Eire, Hong Kong, India and Malaysia. An evening reception was held at the LT Museum and there were also external visits, including to LT's Bus Control & Communications Centre at Baker Street and the new MAGLEV rail system in Birmingham.

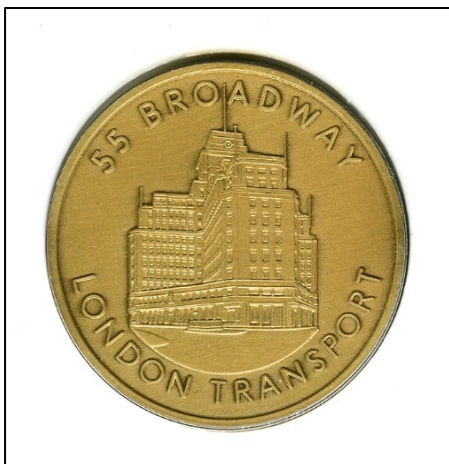
The final event of the Golden Jubilee year was the annual LT Festival of Carols on 12 December at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, where the LT Choral Society lead a selection of carols, both traditional and modern, and readings were given by bus and rail operating and clerical staff.

THE 1993 EVENTS

Ten years later, in 1993, London Transport was perhaps a less self-assured organisation. For a start, from 28 June 1984, it was actually now London Regional Transport (LRT). Initially, LRT was happy to take a back seat and mainly trade under the London Buses and London Underground brands, and the name London Transport was generally downplayed, but in 1990, the LT name was reintroduced for overall use.

Bus services had been put out to competitive tender from 1985 and numerous routes lost to private operators. Many central departments had also been tendered-out, or closed down, or both – including Aldenham Works, Chiswick Works, LT Architects, LT Cleaning services and LRT Builders ('Works & Building'). During the year, it was announced that LT Catering was to close, and that LT Advertising would be sold off. London Transport International, LRT's world-renowned consultancy arm, had also been wound-up, no longer being regarded as "core business".

The King's Cross fire in 1987 may also have affected LRT's confidence, whilst the widespread changes to terms and working conditions brought about by the 1991 Company Plan had a profound effect on Underground staff morale. On the road services side, staff conditions were also under attack, as the London Buses operating units attempted to remain competitive against the private sector. Thus, a more subdued and less-extravagant response was probably considered appropriate when commemorating the Diamond Jubilee.



Above: 70,000 commemorative medallions were issued to current and retired staff members. The presentation case (centre) carried a version of the Diamond Jubilee logo.

Two special Jubilee logos were created. One was a rectangular 'portrait' design with the numerals '60' in white above a red roundel, with the 'London Transport' name in white below, and all upon a black background. A badge version was issued, though distribution to employees was more restricted compared to 1983 (the author only saw one for the first time in the 2000s). The other logo design was a quartered square with (clockwise) a red roundel, black numerals "93", white numerals "33" and black numerals '60' respectively in the sectors.

A commemorative medallion was issued to all staff and featured the second version of the Diamond Jubilee logo on one side and a depiction of 55 Broadway on the other. On the accompanying presentation slip case, LT Chairman Sir Wilfred Newton CBE wrote:



The biggest difference in the way the 50th anniversary was marked compared to previous years was the general absence of Jubilee public events. There were no dedicated open days – though obviously many of the ‘star attractions’ had been sold off, shut down, and/or demolished since. There were open days held at Ruislip depot on 16 May, and at Ealing Common depot on 25 September, but neither of these made any reference to the Diamond Jubilee. The Ealing Common event was part of the 1993 ‘District Line 125 – 1868-1992’ 125th anniversary celebration. Other non-Jubilee events were ‘Steam on the Met’, operated on 22/23 May and 29/30/31 May, and ‘Steam on the District’ on 5/6 June, both using Met. No.1, the 4-TC set and ‘Sarah’. Conspicuous by its absence was anything involving London Buses Limited.



Left: The timeline poster produced in association with *Wheels under London*. The yellow bus carries the short-lived ‘Ensign Citybus’ fleetname.

The one public event that was tied-in to the Jubilee (as well to ‘District 125’) occurred on 4 July, with an attempt made to work a C Stock train around the Circle Line from Edgware Road to Edgware Road in Traffic Hours without stopping. Organised by District Line Train Services Manager Malcolm Dean, the refurbished C Stock, numbered as Train 144,



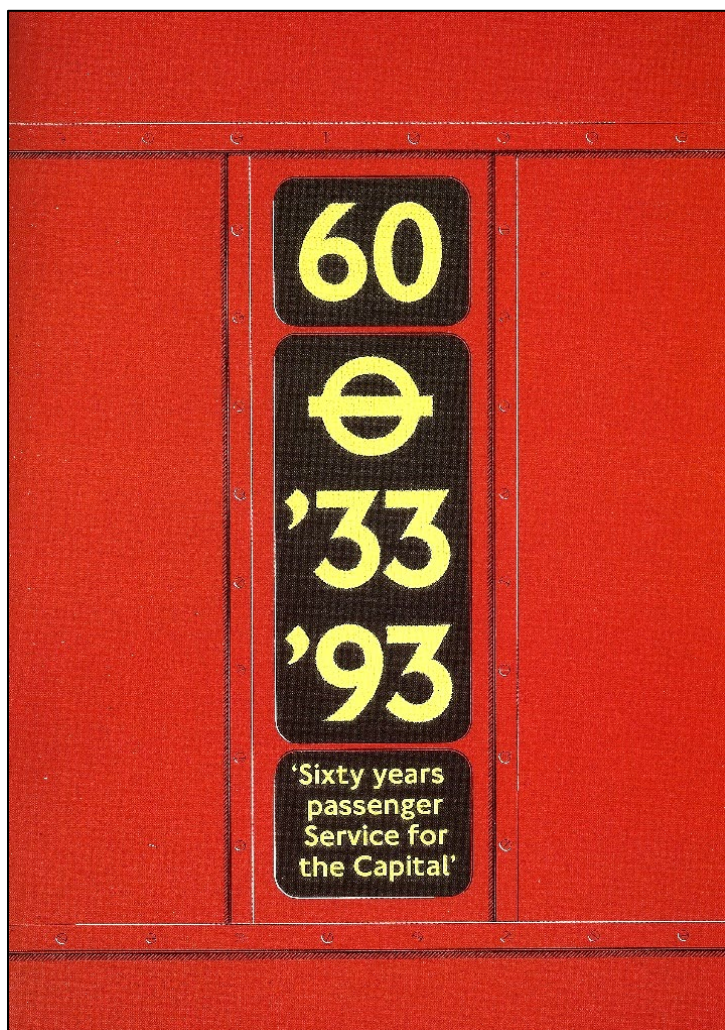
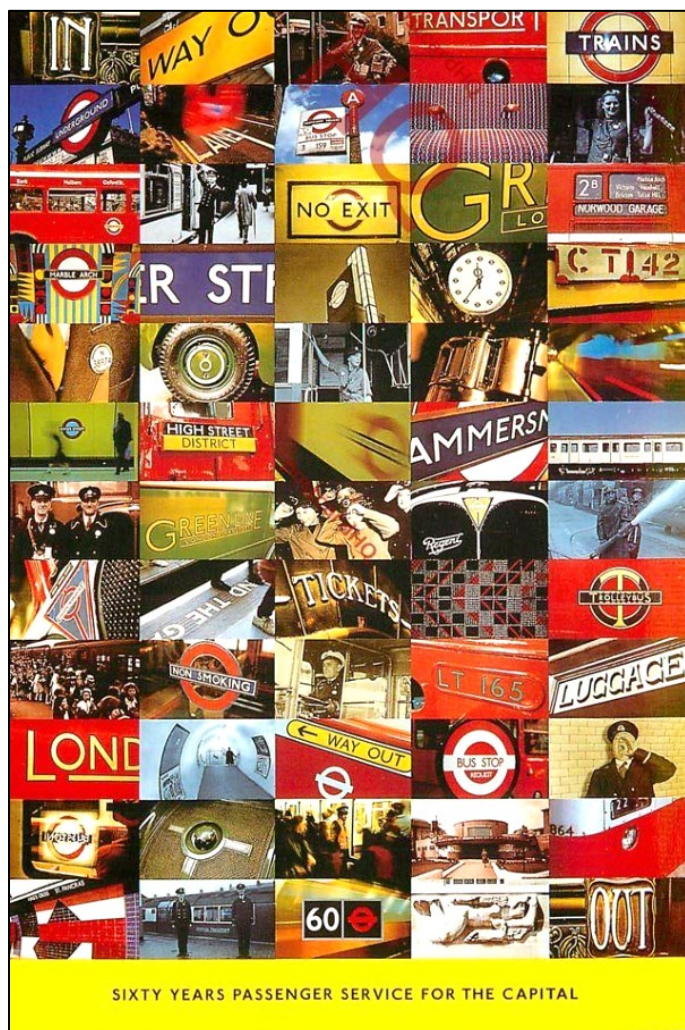
embarked passengers at Edgware Road, though it had to inch-through some junctions, and travel at walking pace at other times, co-operation with Edgware Road signal box and the Baker Street and Earl's Court control rooms meant it was clear signals all the way, and the train successfully completed a non-stop circuit around the inner rail and back to Edgware Road. Here, commemorative certificates were presented to all participants.

The train then continued as a more conventional enthusiasts' tour, visiting Richmond, Uxbridge via Acton Town, and eventually back via Rayners Lane and Harrow-on-the-Hill to Moorgate where it finished.

In November, The London Transport Diamond Jubilee Lecture was delivered at the Mansion House by the outgoing Lord Mayor, Sir Francis McWilliams. Prophetically, he called for business to be taxed to boost public transport and expressed a view that new financing and long-term planning were vital for its survival. Plus ça change!

Above: A limited number of Diamond Jubilee badges were produced for distribution to selected staff.

Below: The two contrasting Jubilee posters displayed during 1993.



THE 2003, 2013 and 2023 (NON)-EVENTS

There were no celebrations in 2003 or 2013, not least as it seems TfL sometimes regards its establishment in 2000 as 'year zero', and not merely a continuation of the LPTB, LTE, LTb etc. At times, it has felt like there was a conscious attempt to wipe out the LT name. For example, the roundels above the entrances to St. James's Park station had long been lettered LONDON TRANSPORT or ST. JAMES'S PARK, presumably to also represent the 55 Broadway headquarters building, but were changed in the early-2000s to read UNDERGROUND. The cap badges of TfL subsidiary London Buses

uniformed staff were redesigned to remove the L^{ONDON TRANSPORT} lettering and substitute it with a plain red bar (subsequently themselves replaced by badges reading 'SURFACE'). The London Transport Museum became 'London's Transport Museum', or sometimes the 'London transport museum', for a while. It has even been rumoured that sightseeing tour operator Arriva, which had acquired former London Buses subsidiary London Coaches in 1997, was ordered to remove the first two words of the LONDON TRANSPORT WANDSWORTH GARAGE lettering on its Grade II-listed depot.

It should be recognised though that, to its credit, TfL did celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Underground in style during 2013 – though we still await the 'postponed' planned open day at Neasden Depot. A year later, 2014 was declared the (somewhat spurious) 'Year of The Bus'. Today, in 2023, we have the rather low-key 'Love the Tube – 160 Years of Service' programme. According to a TfL Press Release, the latter is all about "innovation", "improving the environment", "connecting people and places", "supporting diversity and inclusion", plus celebrating LU's "unique and world-renowned architecture and design". ". From this, it might be inferred that the '160' has different aims and ideals when compared to previous years' events.

There is apparently no recognised or generally accepted word for a 90th anniversary, presumably as very few marriages or reigns last that long (some sources claim it is a 'Granite'). In any case, TfL chose not to recognise the 1 July 2023 date and the day went unmarked. Maybe there will be a change of heart in 2033 for the centenary? Any of us still around by then can only hope so!

Any uncredited photos are from the author's collection.