

Vehicle Profile: LTA 748

An initial look at a vehicle in
the TV&GWOT Collection

**THAMES VALLEY &
GREAT WESTERN**
 Omnibus Trust

LTA 748 was delivered new to Western National in January 1950, at that time painted cream and green with a C29F Duple Vista body. The fleet number was 1409. In March 1955 it was transferred to the Royal Blue fleet being repainted cream and blue and down-seated to C27F.

1409's was withdrawn in September 1962 and it passed to a dealer who secured a sale to Lefkaritis an operator on Cyprus. By the end of the year the vehicle had been exported.

Quite what happened in the intervening years is uncertain but in September 1978 1409 was acquired by Staff Sergeant Robert Burt who had a British Forces posting to the Island. In his spare time he started its restoration and on his return to the UK 1409 came too, transported in an RAF Hercules air freighter. Unfortunately the coach later suffered extensive rear damage from an army truck while Staff Sergeant Burt was away in the Falklands. Even more tragically, he was injured whilst at war and was unable to continue with the coach restoration on his return.

By April 1986 1409 had been secured by a Mr Penny in Hampshire who set out to restore the coach. Work stripping the coach proceeded but restoration was thwarted when he sadly suffered a series of health issues which led to his premature death. It was a casual conversation between Colin Billington (now TV&GWOT's Chairman) and a well-known supplier of bygone Bedford bits lamenting the absence of Royal Blue OBs on the preservation scene which led to the coach being purchased as a kit of parts in November 1992.

Much work has since been done on the engine, the complete body framing and panelling and re-upholstery. With the restoration at the stage of finishing and fit-out, 1409 has been put on long-term loan to the Trust for volunteers to transition from a project to a vehicle running at events for the public to enjoy.

DATA PANEL

Registration: LTA 748

Type: Bedford OB

Built: 1950

Engine: Bedford

Body: Duple Vista C27F

Operator: Western National (Royal Blue)