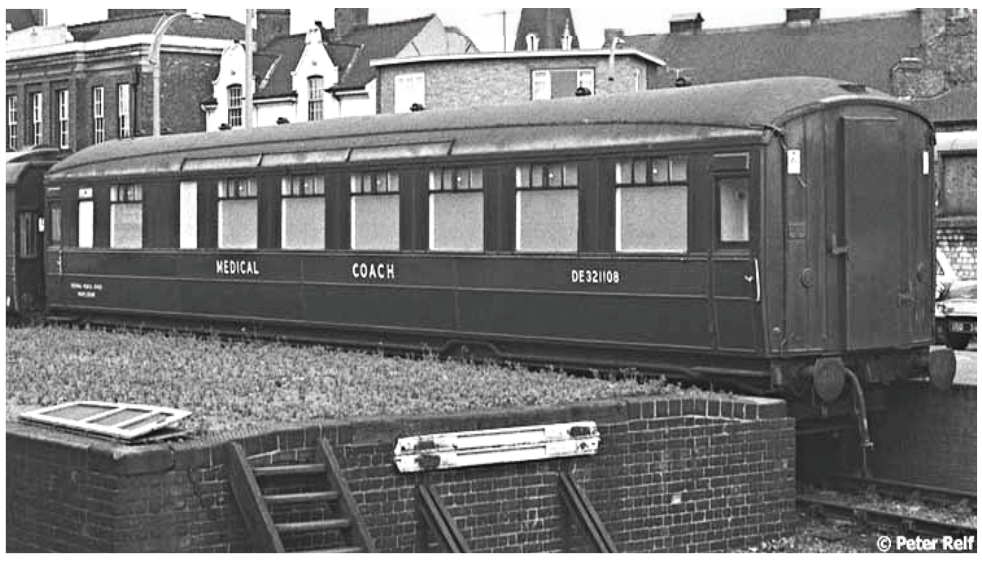
LNER COACH ASSOCIATION

History of Tourist Third Open (TTO) No. 56856

1938

The story of this carriage starts in Birmingham where the Metropolitan Cammell company built it for the London & North Eastern Railway in 1938.

It was the era when Art Deco was in fashion and No. 56856 reflected this with chrome finishes, such as chromed hat hooks. It was outshopped with the famed LNER 'bucket' seats, these later being replaced by the straight-backed variety. With the 1943 renumbering scheme, its identity changed to 13577.



A rare picture showing this carriage when in use as a Departmental vehicle when used as a Medical facility for staff. It is pictured at Lincoln on August 18, 1967. Photo: Peter Relf, courtesy of Ben Williams, Departmentals.com

Saved from the breaker

After 30 years in public service, the carriage was withdrawn on June 6 1964 but instead of going to a breaker, it was converted at York Works into Departmental use and specifically earmarked for use by the Eastern Region's Medical Office.

It started this role at Peterborough in 1966. The carriage was taken to different stations on the Eastern where staff could undertake medical examinations to determine them fit for duty or otherwise. For this role it received a Departmental number of TDE (Traffic, Departmental, Eastern) 321108. It ran in this unusual role until finally withdrawn from service on May 21, 1979 and, once again, its fate lay in the balance.

The interior of TTO 56856 showing the famed LNER 'bucket' seats.

Preservation beckons

Good fortune struck in the shape of Rick Edmondson who ran the Resco Railways company. He bought TDE 321108 with a view to restoring it for use in the luxury 'Royal Scotsman' private train. However, this did not materialize and the historical carriage was promptly bought by several members of the LNER Coach Association and moved to Starbeck, Harrogate. Whilst based on the NYMR, the LNERCA had several members in the Harrogate area where they could work on the carriage. The LNERCA members called themselves the Gresley Owners' Group (GOG).
The Starbeck site had to be vacated due to redevelopment, so this carriage and another acquired, Corridor Third No. 3291, were roaded to Pickering in May 1990.

56856 is regularly formed in the LNER set of carriages, likely to run in 2017 on specially advertised days. It is seen at Pickering being cleaned ready for the day's services.

Since then, it has been beautifully restored to the exemplary standard for which the LNER Coach Association is renowned and entered service in October 2002. It carries its original number of 56856 and regularly runs in the LNER set of varnished teak carriages. The crowning glory is the installation of the LNER 'bucket' seats, with the exact moquette with which this carriage carried in the 1930s.

Murray Brown Founder and Vice Chairman, LNER Coach Association.

If you have enjoyed reading about this historical vehicle, you might like to find out more about the LNER Coach Association, formed in 1979 and affiliated tothe NYMR. We welcome new members and provide a regularly updated website and a quarterly newsletter. For more information please call me – Murray Brown on 01733 578000 or email murray@lnerca.org