

VISITING THE TRANSPORT MUSEUM

The recent Cab Guide Course run by The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers has been a great success. Throughout the weeks of the course, the group has made visits to various destinations including Museum in Docklands, the V&A and most recently The London Transport Museum in the listed Floral Hall, Convent Garden. The Museum itself has recently been refurbished, re-opening in November last year. To ensure no-one misses anything out during their tour, visitors receive a guidebook which includes a ticket stamping at various points around the Museum. One of these stamps is a taxi. Starting on the third floor, the displays chart the path of transport in London. Many of the exhibits can be touched, sat on and are interactive.

During the visits the Course members have attended over the last few months they have met a variety of people who have explained their Museum's contents. It is these guides who bring the Museum alive, pointing out things that perhaps might have slipped by unnoticed. The London Transport Museum is no exception and thanks to the two excellent guides, who are volunteers, the group learned much about the development



of the trams and buses used throughout the years in London. To the amusement of some of the children visiting on the same day, the horses even have suitable piles of manure underneath them. This of course is a reminder of another kind of pollution which was suffered on the streets many years ago.

Moving down to the second floor, the building of the Underground system for London is looked at in depth. It is amazing to look back at how they bored out the tunnels and how the system gradually expanded to its current size today. The first section opened from Paddington to Farringdon on 10 January 1863. A second underground line, the District, began operating five years later. The two were eventually linked to create the Circle line in 1884. At this point in time, the Underground was using steam locomotives which created their own problems at stations and on platforms with a sulphurous fug. Today the Underground roundel is recognised around the world.

On the ground floor are buses, trolley buses and of course taxis. LTI donated a TX4 to the Museum and older taxis are also on display. There is also a café and a gift shop at the Museum.



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