

WHEN YOU COME TO
SUMMERLEE
be sure and visit the
MODEL TRAMWAY

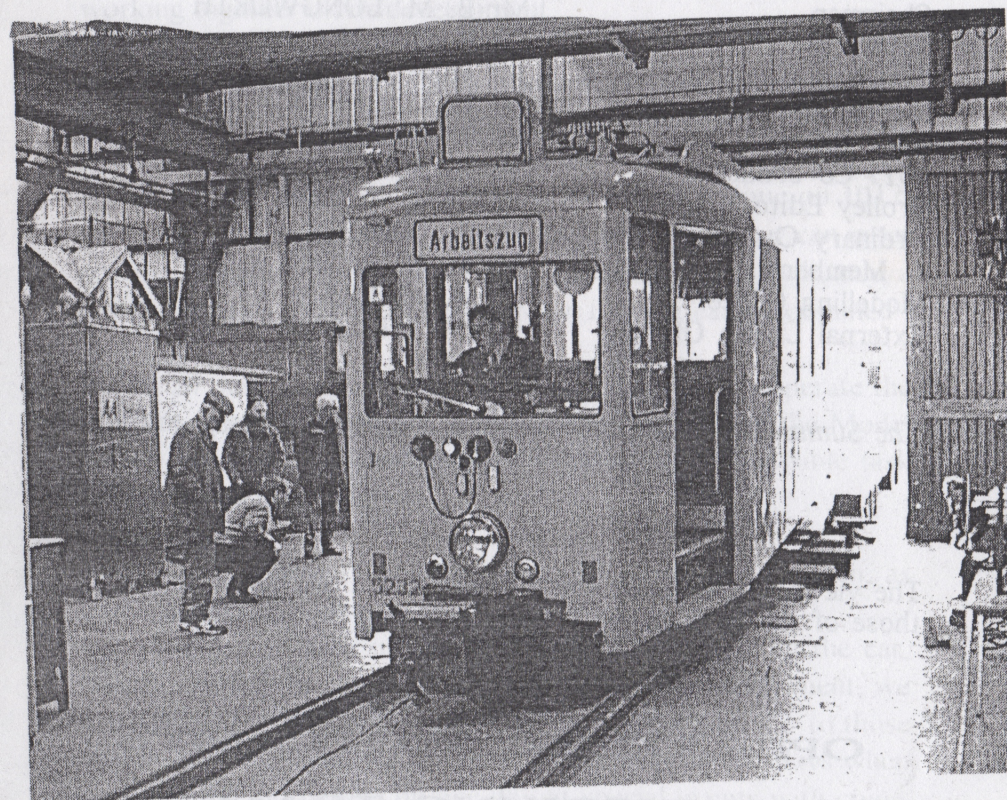
OPEN MOST SATURDAYS



TROLLEY

Newsletter of the Summerlee Transport Group

FEBRUARY 2000



OUR NEW TRAM



The Committee 1999

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The Summerlee Transport Group is a voluntary group and is registered as a charity.

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor, the Transport Group or Summerlee Museum.

**OPERATING SCOTLAND'S
ONLY WORKING TRAMWAY**

From The Chairman

This Annual Report and copy of Trolley is also being sent to former members of the Group.

While I fully appreciate work and family commitments have reduced the time available for Summerlee for many people, I am also aware that some people have lost their enthusiasm because of the apparent lack of progress with the Museum as a whole. It can now be seen in view of the developments within the past couple of months, as detailed, that the Summerlee management fully appreciate the importance of the tramway and that we are working together on its development.

The Group now has a runnable tram of its own, which we will have to finance to get it ready for service in the spring. All crews will need to be trained on it and learn how to operate the wheelchair lift. Once the specialist work has been done on 1017, there will be a lot for the Group to undertake before it can enter service, hopefully next year. North Lanarkshire has indicated a commitment to a depot extension when funding can be obtained.

To do all this, complete 225, maintain 53 and 9062, operate the service, as well as trying to generate income through the Model Group and sales stall, is going to be an almost impossible task for the few active members.

I hope that as many former members as possible will rejoin, as that will help our finances.

We should shortly be in a better position for operating the car, but if members are prepared to make a regular commitment, we are willing to train new people or give refresher courses to those with previous experience. Let's try to get back to the days when we carried 1500 people on one day at special events with crews working very short shifts.

Thursday nights are again established as work nights so we would welcome any other members who would like to help.

Saturdays and Sundays have been less regular due to other commitments of the workforce, but it should be possible to make suitable arrangements in advance. There are plenty of jobs for unskilled members so all offers of help will be most welcome. Even if you do not feel you have sufficient skills, the operating fleet needs to be washed and cleaned regularly. The less fit would be very useful in staffing the Exhibition.

You have all supported us in the past, even if it was only by paying your annual subscription. Will you now support us again, either by just rejoining, or ideally by taking a more active part, at what is a very important time in the Group's history?

I hope I will see many new as well as familiar faces at Summerlee this year.



Rheinbahn 5232

Paul Geissler & Mike Chalton

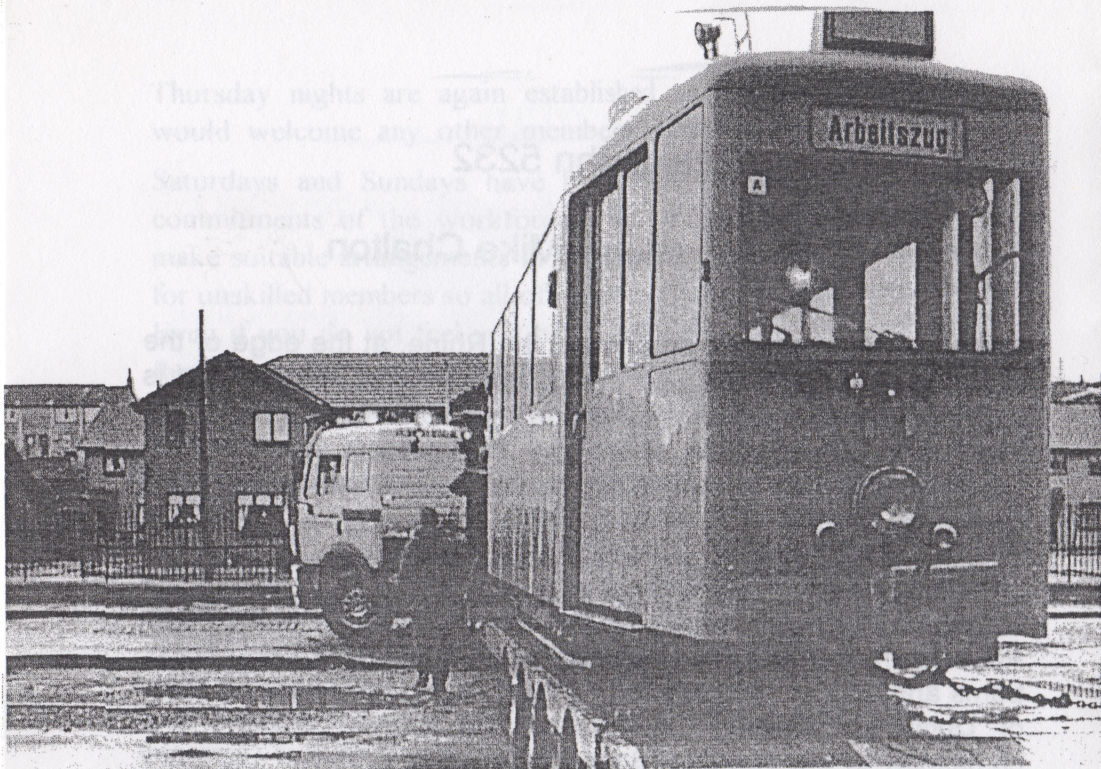
Düsseldorf lies on the right bank of the Rhine, at the edge of the Ruhr industrial area. It has a population of about 700,000 and is the administrative capital of the Land of North Rhine Westfalia. The city's elegant main street, the Königsallee, affectionately known as the 'Kö', is recognised as being the fashion centre of Germany.

Transport in Düsseldorf

Transport in the city is run by the Rheinische Bahngesellschaft AG, usually shortened to Rheinbahn, which operates the U-bahn, trams and buses. The services connect to the neighbouring cities of Duisburg, Krefeld and Neuss. The interconnections and complexity of the transport undertakings in this part of Germany are beyond the scope of this article. Suffice to say they are organised as a regional transport authority covering the whole of the Rhine Ruhr area, with local trains (S-bahn) operated by the German Railways (DB), trams and buses by the local areas..

The present tramways of Düsseldorf started as two separate undertakings, the Düsseldorf City Tramways were established as a horse tramway in 1877 and were electrified in 1896. The Rheinbahn was established in 1898 to connect Düsseldorf with the city of Krefeld and was electrified from the start. It was the first European electrified interurban fast tramway and from the outset was highly successful both commercially and financially. In 1920 the City Tramways were taken over by the Rheinbahn. Following the second world war the system was completely refurbished, several of the city lines were rebuilt as U-bahn lines, the trams modernised and more recently low floor cars from Düwag introduced.

The imminent delivery of a new batch of low floor cars is resulting in the disposal of some of the older cars, including 5232.



5232

This car was built in 1951 by Düwag as an all electric bi-directional motor tram, in conventional 2 axle form and was numbered 392. It was fitted with 2x75 kW motors for service on the long interurban routes to Krefeld and Duisburg, towing two trailers. In 1972 the car entered the engineering fleet, being rebuilt as a works car and renumbered 5232. During its life it has been meticulously maintained and is in excellent condition. It is only a lack of space which has forced its withdrawal,

Summerlee

One of the main attractions for visitors to the Summerlee Museum is a ride on a tram, a new experience for younger visitors and a nostalgia trip for the more mature. One group we are not able to entertain is the wheelchair visitor - and this forms a not insignificant number of our visitors. The reason being that no tram is fitted with a wheelchair lift.

This is where Rheinbahn 5232 enters the story. It is being disposed of and could be fitted with a wheelchair lift. It was therefore decided to send the two of us to Düsseldorf to inspect the car and, if satisfactory, commence negotiations for its purchase.

Inspection visit to Düsseldorf

Thursday 30th September saw us arrive in Düsseldorf where we were met at the Airport by Stephan Winkler, and installed in our hotel. The heavens opened that evening so we did not have a chance to do any exploring.

Next morning Michael Tesche picked us up and we were taken by the U-bahn to the Central Workshop at Heerde. Here we met other members of the Rheinbahn. The word Workshop had a different connotation from what we have seen in the UK transport undertakings. This was on a vast site, possibly twice as large as Summerlee. There were running roads, maintenance and

overhaul sheds, all excellently fitted out and with plenty of working space, as well as permanent way and overhead maintenance facilities. Round the depot there was a test track.

Since 5232 was to be withdrawn we had expected it to be parked in a corner of a back shed but no, here it was in a heated running shed looking immaculate in its orange works livery, its destination screen showing 'Arbeitswagen' (Works car). On board the seating was formerly 2+1 but the double seats had been removed and cupboards constructed holding batteries and other gear. A rotary convertor, used for charging the batteries and driving ancillary gear, was mounted on the floor. Large blower heaters were also mounted.

The drivers positions have comfortable seats. The controller is all electric, with rheostatic braking and a swan necked parking brake. There are four pedals, gong, sand, emergency track brake and electric bell. The windscreen wipers are in working order!

So we examined it from the outside, from the inside and down the pit to see the underside - excellent. Unlike UK works cars which were the forgotten relics from the past which were parked outside and all rusty, here was an immaculate car.

The next thing was to give us a demonstration out on the line. It so happened that a trailer was to be taken across the city to the Handweiser depot. 5232 is not fitted to run on the U-bahn lines during normal service hours, so we had to run via Neuss. This involved reserve track, normal street track and down the pedestrianised main street of Neuss. 5232 performed magnificently - very powerful, and full use was made of the parallel notches.

We arrived at the Handweiser running depot which was even larger than Heerde, with 50 roads and a driver training track, possibly 1 Km long, round the perimeter.

Here we had lunch in the depot canteen, although 'restaurant'

might have been a more appropriate description. Excellent food in bright and immaculate surroundings.

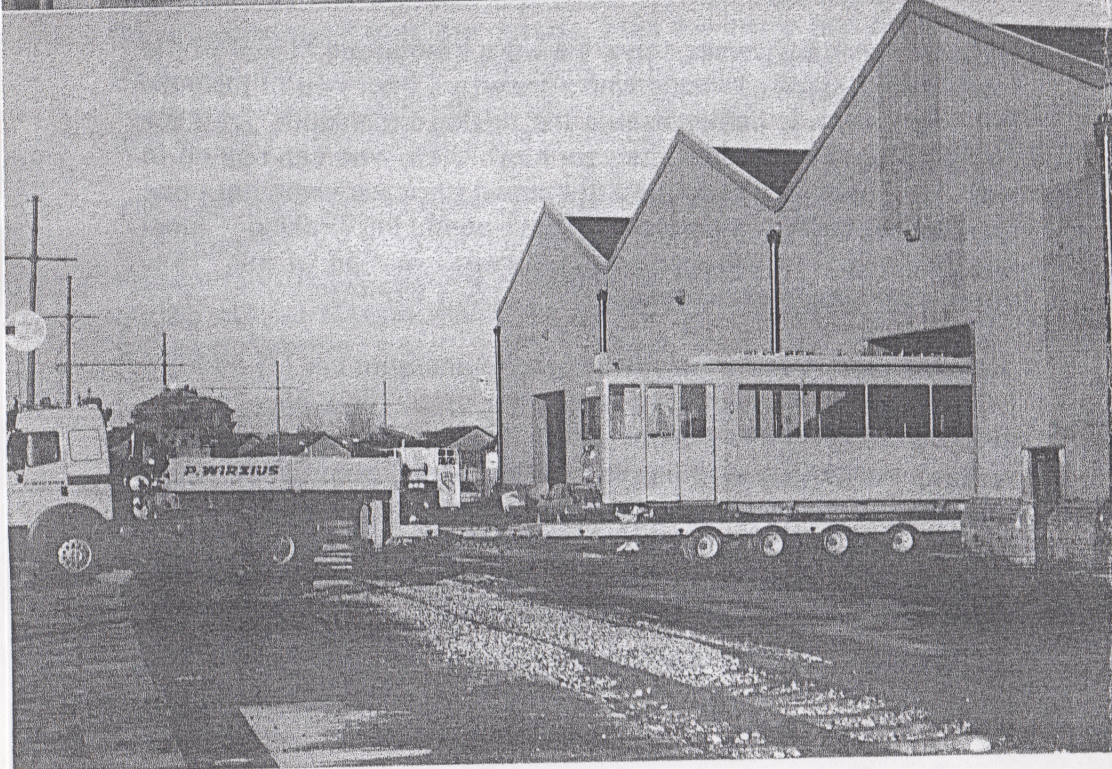
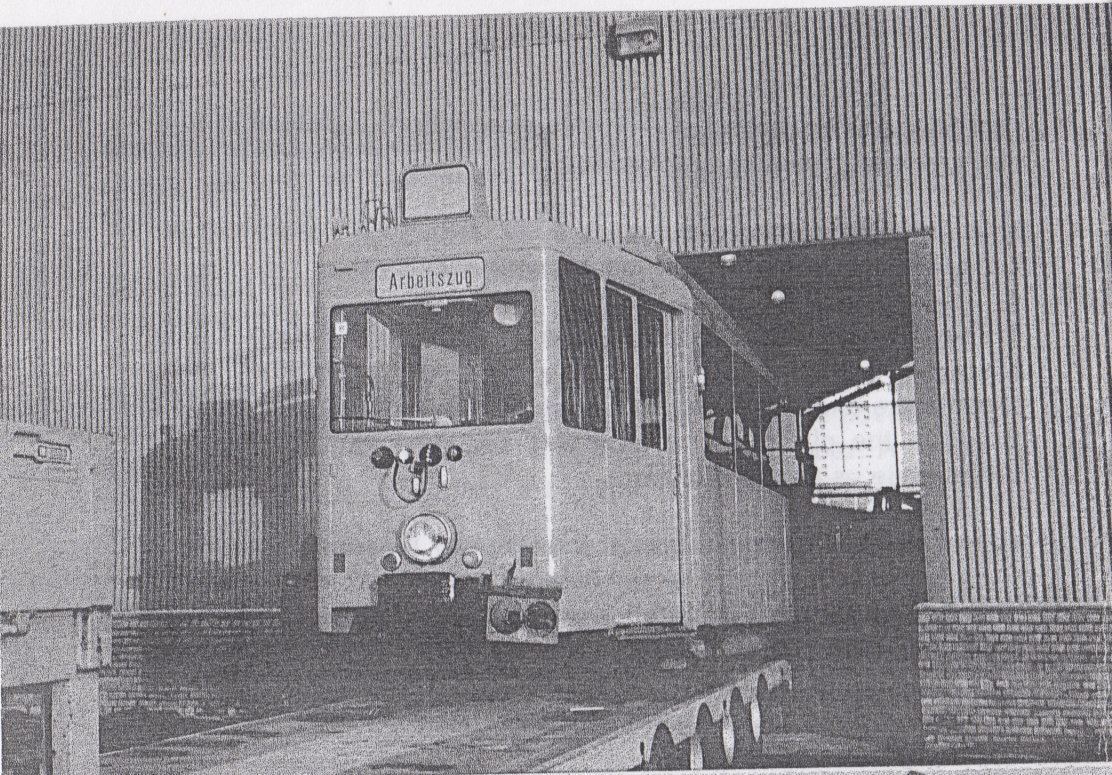
In the afternoon we drove back in 5232 through the centre of the city to Heerde and again the car showed its paces.

That evening we were entertained in a pub in the old town. Eating out was very popular and we had some difficulty finding somewhere to eat. Restaurants are plentiful but to get atmosphere a pub is the place. The food was super as was the beer. Our hosts made us most welcome.

Next day we were again met at the hotel by Michael Tesche and were taken to the Handweiser depot. On the way we visited the abandoned depot at Wersten where the Supporters Group store some of their historic trams. The running cars can be driven using a reduced line current of only 220V. Unfortunately with the conversion of the adjacent line to U-bahn use the depot connection has been cut.

On arrival at Handweiser depot we were introduced to one of the instructors, Günther Wenda who showed us over one of the new low floor cars and demonstrated the driving technique - joy stick control. Then he said "OK, its your turn". Well, who can say no to such an invitation, and round the training track we went, not once but several times - slow speed, full speed, full braking - most impressive. When this car was put away we had to ask "How much does a car such as this cost?" "Oh, £1m" !!!!

The next car for us to "play with" was Grossraum car No 5101, a fully electric car, which has been converted for driving school purposes. The controls were more conventional with rheostatic braking. Here they made us work for our living - emergency stops, and introducing various faults which had to be investigated and solved e.g. brake failure, motor failure. Why would the car not go? Check the pantograph in contact with the overhead, check the doors, check the motors, etc. All great fun.



The afternoon we were taken to the Bergisches Strassenbahn Museum near Wuppertal. As the Schwebebahn in Wuppertal is being rebuilt there is no service at weekends so we did not manage to see the railway in action. The museum was interesting with a collection of metre gauge cars from various locations and we were taken for a run in an ex-Wuppertal works car up their steeply graded line. The rain was coming down fairly heavily so distant view were limited but the sound of motors and gears was a joy. The Museum is open at weekends during the summer.

That evening we had discussions about bringing the car to Summerlee and the problem of the low bridge on West Canal St - 4m (13' 9").

Our flight out on Saturday was in the evening so we had time to do some sight seeing round Düsseldorf and ride the trams. Our impression was of a good system with modern ideas and steady investment for the future.

Thanks to the Rheinbahn, and particularly Richard v. Fragstein, Michael Tesche, Volker Eichhorst, Oliver Schmidt, Stephan Winkler and Karl-Heinz Müller and the others for making our visit so pleasurable.

Although retired Karl-Heinz came in to show us the technical modifications that had been carried out on 5232. Indeed, 5232 is referred to as the "Müller Tram". Hopefully, we at Summerlee can care for and maintain the car to Karl- Heinz's high standard.

Finally, although we had quietly hoped that we could get the car "as a present", we are indeed having to pay for it. It is going to cost the S.T.G. DM1 (approx. 33p). Help in raising the money would be appreciated.