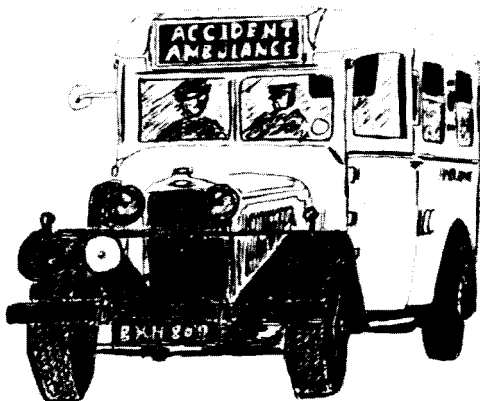




# BRITISH AMBULANCE SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1974  
INAUGURATED 1985



# FACTS - SHEET



## **WHY AND HOW WAS THE BRITISH AMBULANCE SOCIETY CREATED?**

The British Ambulance Preservation Society, was founded in 1974, (changing its name after a ballot of its members to the British Ambulance Society, in January 1994), by two, then serving ambulancemen, Roger Leonard and Michael Newbold, who while crewing regularly together over several years, had amassed between themselves, a large collection of photographs, literature, models, badges, uniforms and information relating to British ambulance vehicles and services over the past hundred years.

Both were concerned with the fact that though the Ambulance Service as we know it today, is comparatively young in relation to the Police, Fire and even Lifeboat Service, it appeared that very little was being done to document its history or record details of the numerous services and the vehicles that were used. Much was being lost in 'clear outs' due to the multitude of changes that had taken place over the past decades, or were about to be implemented. Services are currently being engaged in a numerous changes, most if not all Services having now become National Health Service Trusts. Already we are witnessing on-going continual changes, with N.H.S. Trusts in some cases amalgamating or being absorbed into a larger operational body.

In a number of cases, even long established and some lesser known ambulance construction companies have ceased trading, to be forgotten, except in the memory of but a few.

The purpose of forming the British Ambulance Society, was therefore to do something positive, in preventing an important aspect of British history, from being lost for future generations. The Society and its members are playing an active role in recording as much of what is left and seeing to it that steps are taken to document future years as the ambulance services develop and progress, through the co-operation of those services, their personnel and ambulance vehicle manufacturers.

## **THE SOCIETY WAS FOUNDED IN 1974, WHY WAS IT NOT INAUGURATED UNTIL ELEVEN YEARS LATER?**

When Roger and Mike, founded the Society back in 1974, several attempts were then made, to find like minded individuals, to support the venture. An article appeared on the front page of the forerunner to Ambulance Journal (now incorporated with the publication Ambulance UK), but regrettably the response at that time was not encouraging. It was therefore decided to continue the Society in name only, working under its banner, in order to further the collection and research already undertaken, with a view to opening up to a membership at a later date.

Eleven years later, in 1985, it was felt that the time was right to make another attempt at "going public". A pilot meeting was held at Richmond, (Surrey), during February to gauge a response. A month later a further meeting was held at which it was agreed that the Society should open to a membership and by June of that year, a Constitution had been formulated and adopted and the first Committee elected, and so the British Ambulance Society, was at long last officially inaugurated.

## **CAN ANYONE JOIN THE SOCIETY, OR IS IT EXCLUSIVELY FOR AMBULANCE PERSONNEL?**

The Society is open to anyone who has an interest in ambulances or related services, irrespective of whether you are, or ever have been a member of an Ambulance Service, Voluntary Aid Society, Private Ambulance Company or Military Medical Services. Indeed the Society membership is made up of men and women from all walks of life, a great number of whom have never had any form of working connection with the ambulance world. The current membership is drawn not only from all parts of the United Kingdom, but from all over the world. The Overseas aspect, as with British members, encouragingly becoming stronger each year as the Society steadily progresses. The only requirement you need to join the Society, is to share an interest in our aims as outlined within the current Constitution, which if not attached to this leaflet, may be obtained direct from our Head Office. (See address on back page of this publication). You do not even have to own an ambulance to join!

## **IF I WERE TO BECOME A MEMBER, WHAT WOULD I GET FOR MY SUBSCRIPTION?**

Upon joining the Society, you would firstly receive from the Membership Secretary, a membership card and letter of welcome. Membership of the Society runs for one year (from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>, irrespective of which month you join. You may consider this a little unusual or even unfair, but it should be pointed out that you will automatically receive all back issues of our publications (AMBULANCE WORLD our A4 format journal produced on average four times a year, and AMBULANCE SCENE our newsletter normally issued bi-monthly). You will automatically get all issues published in the year of joining, therefore not losing any benefit of membership as the subscription is based upon the cost of production, printing and postage of our publications to you.

The Society from time to time publishes special supplements or bulletins on specific features, which are issued free or at discounted rates to paid up members. Our two major publications, **AMBULANCE WORLD** and **AMBULANCE SCENE**, regularly feature a wide variety of articles relating to the ambulance services and their vehicles from home and abroad. Within **AMBULANCE WORLD**, there are featured many photographs in both black & white and colour, together with cartoons and illustrations, that help provide a host of varied interest to the readership and compliment the articles, many of which have been kindly submitted by members.

Within our publications, you will be able to catch up with all the latest news and information on miniature ambulance models, and from time to time we also feature competitions that you could take part in. There are details on member's actual ambulance preservation projects, details of ambulance vehicles for sale, Shows and open day information, where you can attend with or without a vehicle. There are also reports on Shows at which the Society has been represented, plus detail on vehicle registrations, new liveries and all the latest news from within the ambulance world generally.

Besides our publications, the Society offers its members numerous other services:

**SALES DESK:** We have a thriving Sales Division, from which can be purchased a wide variety of goods, from badges and patches, to postcards, books, models, posters, binders, keyfobs, pens and caps and stickers, just to name a few of the items on offer. These are regularly updated with new lines being added all the time. As a member you will be kept regularly informed of sales items availability, and get first choice.

**SPARE PARTS DIVISION:** This service primarily exists for members undertaking restoration projects and will assist wherever possible in helping members to locate those special bits or pieces of equipment you seek. If the item you want is not in stock, the service will try to find it for you, though we cannot make any promises or guarantees. (This service is not available to none members of the Society).

**NATIONAL AMBULANCE REGISTER:** This is a free Service to members of the Society, though the register is also open to non-members. It exists with the aim of recording available current data on existing preserved ambulance vehicles, together with details of their condition and livery, and owners contact address. Owners have the opportunity of being directly approached by the Society, on the frequent occasion that a request has been made by a television, film, advertising or promotional company, seeking the use of a period ambulance. The register gives owners of ambulance vehicles opportunity of seeing their vehicle on the screen "up there in lights" and to earn a reasonable fee from those concerned for the privilege, (well at least it helps towards the maintenance and up keep of your pride and joy).

Non-members who have signed onto the Register for free, will be expected to make an undertaking that they will pay the Society a minimum fee of £25.00 each time they accept a film booking offered via the Society.

It is the Society's intention to continue developing its services to its members beyond those already established. We also wish to make a concerted effort to encourage the establishment of Regional Groups throughout Britain as well as overseas.

#### **WHAT ELSE CAN THE SOCIETY DO FOR ME AS A MEMBER, AND WHAT OTHER AIMS DOES IT HAVE FOR THE FUTURE?**

If you are seeking to purchase an actual ambulance for restoration, then the Society can certainly help you, as we get many offers of vehicles for sale at very reasonable prices in any one year. The Society can also put you in touch with other individuals or Organisations that can assist you with specific aspects of preservation projects, as well as finding new parts for your vehicle, as well as advising on liveries, histories etc.

The Society is by far the largest organisation of its kind within the United Kingdom, specialising wholly in things "ambulance". The British Ambulance Society is now universally recognised throughout the "Ambulance World" and endeavouring to foster closer understanding and a healthy working relationship with National Agencies, such as the County and N.H.S. Trust Ambulance Services, Private Ambulance Companies, Voluntary Aid Societies, in particular the St. John Ambulance and British Red Cross and of course the Military Medical Services.

The Society is responsible for the organisation of the annual National Ambulance & Emergency Services Show, normally held in conjunction with a County or N.H.S. Trust Ambulance Service. Every year this major two day event is staged at a different venue (usually in early September, though plans are afoot to vary this in the near future, so stay tuned).

The National Ambulance & Emergency Services Show, gets bigger and better each year, and is supported by Services and Private owners throughout the length and breadth of the British Isles (including Scotland and Northern Ireland). We are also fortunate in that we receive regular support from our friends and colleagues from Germany, Holland and Italy, all of whom have sent over, large contingents of vehicles and personnel on a regular basis, to support and help add an International flavour to each years show.

The British Ambulance Society are also forging new friendships with other similar organisations, such as the Fire Service Preservation Group, seeking to co-liaise with them at future events throughout the country and assist wherever possible in complimenting the others efforts in a positive and active way.

Over a number of years, the British Ambulance Society have attended a number of special events, from open days and organised displays, to major exhibitions such as the prestigious "Ambex International" held at Harrogate, North Yorkshire each year, organised by Brintex Ltd.

One of the main aims of the Society is to establish a permanent ambulance museum. Obviously, to make this goal a reality, we need to raise a considerable sum of money in order to pay for it, and to this end a fund was set up in 1988 by the Society for that purpose. It has to be realistically appreciated that it will naturally take some time and considerable effort to build up the fund and encourage sponsors. In the meantime, we are on the constant lookout for artefacts that can be eventually be displayed, and through the generosity of many people, have already been fortunate in gathering together a very interesting and sizeable collection of photographs, badges, uniforms and insignia, models, actual vehicles, literature and publications, equipment, documents, in fact everything and anything to help illustrate not only British but Overseas ambulance history.

The Society are currently looking for a suitable museum site, ideally situated within a main major public complex or attraction, centrally situated within Britain and within close proximity to major road and transport networks for ease of accessibility. Once the museum has been established, the Society intend to become involved in an educational programme, to encourage schools, colleges and training establishments to attend. We shall also seek to provide printed and audio visual material, to help promote the subject in which we are so proudly involved, more fully.

**SOME OTHER FACTS YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE SOCIETY:**

The Society has a joint membership affiliation with/and or a reciprocal arrangement with the following Organisations:

**The Professional Car Society of America (PCS).**

**The Council Vehicle Society.**

**St. John World (Journal of the St. John Ambulance).**

**The Fire Service Preservation Group. (F.S.P.G.).**

**Fire Service National Museum.**

**Museum of Road Transport. (Coventry).**

**The National Motor Museum (Beaulieu).**

**JOIN THE SOCIETY NOW, AND HELP TO PLAY A VITAL PART IN RECORDING AND PRESERVING A SMALL PIECE OF BRITAIN'S HISTORY . . .** If you can help in any way by providing information about your local ambulance service, be it County, N.H.S. Trust, (or even a former service), St. John Ambulance, British Red Cross, Private or Military, your active assistance would be greatly appreciated. Your action to-day would act towards making a positive and important contribution in achieving the objects and aims of this Society.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST.  
WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU SOON  
AND TO WELCOMING YOU AS A MEMBER.**

**HEAD OFFICE: 21, VICTORIA ROAD, HORLEY SURREY. RH6 9BN.**