

THE CIRCULAR

Bradford Railway Circle

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Editorial

Following the Editor's plea for more material, several members have made an effort and contributed articles, so in this issue we have a piece by Stuart Lindsey on Morecambe's Midland Hotel, and the first part of an epic on the Harz narrow-gauge system, from Robert Pemberton. Many thanks for those articles.

Stuart Baker's announcement at his talk recently, about his involvement in the Birmingham New Street rebuilding project, gives an interesting parallel with the St Pancras project. In New Street's case, there aren't the constraints of having to preserve a listed building, and I think most people would admit that whatever the final result, it's very likely to be a big improvement on the existing underground concrete monstrosity.

Just a note omitted from the last issue – the colour photos in issue 343 were courtesy of the Editor himself. This issue's colour photos (from his St Pancras Eurostar trips) are from Peter Holden (see p.12).

Harz Narrow Gauge Railways (Pt.1) R Pemberton

Last September I was invited to join a private party to the Harz NG system, organised by David Alison of Tracks North Tours. The Harz mountains lie roughly in the centre of Germany, and are composed of granite and limestone. They are rich in metalliferous ores, and the lower slopes are thickly forested. This led to the construction, in stages, of the largest metre-gauge system in Germany at the beginning of the 20th century. The 132-km line is Y-shaped, with the northern termini at Wernigerode, the headquarters, and Gernrode, with the southern at Nordhausen. Eislefeld; Tahlmühle represents the junction. On the entire network there were 41 stations and halts. Spur lines to the resorts of Harzgerode and Hasselfelde lay on the Gernrode line, and to the summit of the Brocken (3750ft.) on the Wernigerode line. The latter lay on the border during the Cold War, and trains were not resumed to the summit until 1992. Also, after abandonment of the SG line from Quedlinburg to Aschersleben, Gernrode was isolated from the rail network, so it was rebuilt to metre gauge and ceremonially reopened in 2006. The 8km extension to Quedlinburg, a World Heritage Site, added a further 3 stations to the present 140km system.

In 1993 the railway was privatised, the shareholders being the district councils, with support from the state governments. For marketing purposes the system is divided into:

Brockenbahn (Drei Annen Hohne - Brocken).

Harzquerbahn (Wernigerode - Drei Annen Hohne - Eislefeld Tahlmühle – Nordhausen).

Selketalbahn (Quedlinburg - Gernrode - Alexisbad - Eislefeld Tahlmühle).

The entire system is now essentially a tourist railway, carrying over million passengers a year, but these are unequally distributed throughout the network. At present the railway has 25 steam locomotives, including 17 1950s-built 2-10-2Ts, which were primarily intended for freight. About half of these are operational, and are used on the heavy Wernigerode - Brocken trains, and to a much lesser extent to Nordhausen. The other smaller, vintage, engines are mainly used on the Selketalbahn, usually on the scenically attractive Gernrode - Alexisbad section, but also running double-headed on heritage tours throughout the system. Other services are operated by a fleet of diesel railcars, some already of vintage status. Freight trains and the mighty 2-10-2Ts pulling a service train of 2 coaches, as seen on enthusiasts' videos, virtually ceased at the turn of the century. Perusal of the current timetable indicates that a basic daily steam service can be operated by 6 locomotives: 5 2-10-2Ts, 4 from Wernigerode, the other from Nordhausen, and the sixth using one of the smaller engines based at Gernrode, probably the 2-6-2T.

The short tour took place over the long weekend of 20-26 September 2007. On the Thursday I took the Jet2 737 flight from Manchester to Berlin Schönefeld, and then a taxi to the Hotel Bogota in West Berlin. This is an old fashioned B&B establishment conveniently near Berlin Zoologischer Garten Station.. Here I joined the 18 other members of the party, whom I had mainly met before. The final two were travelling out to Wernigerode by train.



Eurostar 3002 St Pancras 7 Feb 08



Tram 7001 Antwerpen 7 Feb 08



Tram 7041 Antwerpen 7 Feb 08



Belgian dmu 4190 Gent StPieters 1 Apl 08

Friday

A short coach tour of the city was laid on before we arrived at Zoo Station.. This has diminished in status since the opening of the new Hauptbahnhof, and many long distance trains no longer stop there. We were to board the 10.19 Regional Express service, RE 38016, to Magdeburg, arriving at 11.54, and comprising double decker coaches hauled by an electric locomotive. The area around Berlin and Potsdam is surrounded by a surprising number of lakes and waterways, but further on the landscape is flat or slightly undulating, of forest or arable land, often with groups of lazily turning wind turbines. As became apparent elsewhere there were plenty of level crossings, a few underpasses on new roads, but no overbridges except in the cities.

At Magdeburg I saw the only revenue earning freights on the whole tour, one electric, the other 66-hauled. Here we transferred to a blue and white Hex 2 car unit running on 3 bogies; a unit we were to travel on 12 times over the weekend. At first impression it is ingeniously designed, with 1st and 2nd class accommodation, a toilet, space for several cycles, prams and wheelchairs, with pull down seats when the space is not in use. The units rode smoothly and easily accelerated.

Further acquaintance lead me to compare them with the replacement units at home, viz. Pacers for 1st generation DMUs, and Voyagers for HSTs. The trains were well used, but in only one instance were two units employed coupled together. A combination of several mountain bikes, a large baby buggy, a wheelchair, our party of 18 with cases, and a good number of similarly laden passengers did not make for a comfortable journey. Also the steps over the bogies are a handicap for the less agile with accompanying baggage. In addition the overhead racks held only small articles as with the Pacers and Voyagers. Our train left Magdeburg at 12.11 and arrived at Halberstadt at 12.57.

The station complex at Halberstadt was being completely rebuilt with new platforms, track work and signalling. As elsewhere the old station building was boarded up and only one platform was in use, which necessitated much extra movement of the units. Visible was the prominent old water tower, together with a complete pair of turntables in their pits, and the old signal boxes. I gained the impression that parts of the infrastructure, that were not to be used, were often simply left or boarded up like here, whereas at home they are too readily demolished.

Needless to say the platform was full for the short journey to Wernigerode departing at 13.10 on Hex VT 802. I looked through the driver's cab on the single track section, and saw a range of low rounded hills appearing. These were the Harz mountains, actually higher than the Snowdon range.

Wernigerode was finally reached at 13.28. Here again only one platform was in use, a 4-wheeled tank wagon acting as a buffer stop. The 3 road track layout was being completely remodelled with new signalling. However the old signal box with some traditional semaphores was still operational. When the reconstruction is completed the modern colour light signalling will be controlled from Halberstadt. The line beyond Wernigerode was closed for reconstruction, so the remaining two members of our party had to arrive by service bus, a comedown from Eurostar!

Unlike almost all other small town stations we encountered, the station buildings were fully functional, with a booking hall and two shops, one a sub post office, which also had a nice selection of railway books. The HSB station lies alongside, also with a shop of railwayana.

We were booked in at the Hotel Johannishof in Pfarrstrasse, a short walk from the station. Meanwhile our host took our luggage on by car. The hotel was a very comfortable ensuite B&B establishment with full facilities. The buffet breakfasts were excellent, and we also had made up packed lunches to save time during the day.

Wernigerode is a town of some 35000 souls, and is now primarily a tourist centre for the Harz National Park, largely because of the steam railway and historic local architecture, although there is still a brewery and a chocolate factory.

Later in the afternoon we walked across the town along the pedestrianised main street, Breitstrasse. Firstly we passed the half-timbered Hotel Zur Tanne, where we were to enjoy traditional German 4 course dinners in the restaurant, with the local Hasseroder beer of course! Further along we noted the ½-metre Bratwurst stall in Nikolai Platz, the fairytale Rathaus in Marktplatz, and of course the HSB shop with its model railway in Westernstrasse. Finally, through the gateway Westerntor to the famous rail crossing bisecting 4 major roads, as well as the Zillerbach river.

Here the 14.00 ex. Eislefelder Tahlmühle was due to pass at 16.15, bunker first, and then the 16.10 ex. Wernigerode Hbf to the Brocken would pass chimney first. The first train, 2-10-2T 99.222, with its rake of red and ivory coaches and an open wagon next to the engine, was late. Apparently it is one euro extra to ride in the latter and it was well patronised. This meant that the 16.10 hauled by 99.7234-0 was held in the loop at Westerntor Station. The standard consist for the 2-10-2T's is a rake of 7/8 air braked red and ivory balconied coaches plus an all red baggage van. The open wagon normally makes one return trip from Wernigerode to Eislefelder Tahlmühle daily, unless it is used for a special working. There is also a rake of air braked green balconied stock used for vintage trains.

We then took the 15 min. walk past Westerntor Station to the running shed at the Hbf. Until the 1930s this was the original terminus, when it was extended to the SG station. The Harz railway workshops were constructed at Westerntor in 1926, and the attractive adjacent station in 1936. It has 2 roads, with an island platform, and a single faced platform on the station side. We were to find that all the major stations on the Harzquerbahn and Brocken had refreshment facilities and shops, in contrast to SG stations where they only occurred in the cities.

Wernigerode NG Hbf consists of 3 roads serving a single faced platform and an island platform, with an additional loop line between the roads. A visitors' viewing gallery overlooking the adjacent running shed was constructed a few years ago on the main platform. Seven locomotives were in the yard, which had open access for visitors. The austere signal box and shed master's office dominate the scene. A dual gauge turntable leads to a 3-road shed built in 1990.

The sole surviving 1930s built 2-10-2T 99.222, which we had seen earlier, was being serviced, ash shovelled out of the smokebox. Later it was moved to the sand tower to have its boxes replenished. Three engines were built: two were lost in

Norway during WWII, the last one moved to the Harz in 1973. It bears brass plates on the cylinder covers : Berliner Maschinenbau 1931. No. 9921. Aktien-Gesellschaft Normals L. Schwarzkoff. Berlin. An unusual feature at the centre of each plate was a relief of a side view of a man's head.. At its last rebuild in 1999, the locomotive was restored to as much as possible of its original appearance, including a tubular feed water heater above the smokebox, in contrast to the uglier rectangular type fitted to the later LKM engines. The locomotive weighs 65.8t. and produces 735hp.

Two other 2-10-2Ts were in the yard, 99 7232-4 and 99 7240-7. All the 2-10-2Ts have a capacity of 3 tonnes of coal and 8 cu.m. water. A skull and crossbones sign on the side tanks warns against drinking the water! Seventeen were built 1954/1956 by VEB Locomotivebau "Karl Marx" at Babelsberg (LKM). These "new build " engines have welded boilers and plate frames, limited articulation between the first and second axles, and wide unflanged tyres on the centre driving wheels to negotiate the sharp curves. They weigh 61.0 tonnes, with an output of 700HP. The 2-10-2Ts are thus the most powerful metre gauge steam locomotives in Europe.

A pair of the 3 surviving original 0-4-4-0T Mallets built by Am-Jung GmbH Jungenthal were in steam for a vintage special viz. 99 5901, Works No. 258, 1897, in black livery; and 99 5902, Works No. 261, 1898, in green livery. The former carries 1.5 tonnes of coal and 5.3 cu.m. water, the latter 2.5 tonnes coal and 5.0 cu.m. water. Both weigh 36 tonnes with an output of 255HP. Twelve of the Jung compound Mallets were built for the line in 1897-1901. They have inside frames on the front low pressure pivoted bogies, and outside frames on the rigid high pressure rear section. During WWI 6 were requisitioned and lost in France. As compensation for the loss, the Army supplied 2 Henschel 0-6-0Ts, and a 1918 0-4-4-0T Mallet by Maschinenbau Gesellschaft of Karlsruhe.

We were lucky to see one of the 0-6-0Ts in the yard, 99 6101. Two were commissioned in 1914 from Henschel, to compare the benefits of superheated and saturated steam. The engines are normally based at Gernrode, and used for special trains.. They are maintained by supporting societies. 99 6101 is the superheated example, has black livery, with the works plate No. 12879, 1914, Henschel & Son. Cassel. It carries 1.5 tonnes of coal and 4.0 cu.m. water. Its weight is 32.0 tonnes and its output is 380 HP. This locomotive had the distinction of operating the last freight out of the chocolate factory in October 1992.

While we were on the viewing platform a pair of VPS Bahn blue and white centre cab Bo-Bo diesels 1502 + 1503 travelled westwards on a works train. These were the last diesel locomotives we saw on the main line.

The seventh locomotive, a large "Harz Camel" diesel poked its nose out of the shed. This would be 199 861, the 1200HP yard shunter. The locomotive was one often SG Bo-Bo centre cab diesels built 1976/8 by VEB Lokbau Henningsdorf, and then converted to Co-Co machines in 1988 by fitting 6-wheeled metre gauge bogies. It was originally intended to replace steam by these machines, but only 3 now remain operational, their weight and the 3 axle bogies result in excessive track wear, apart from their lack of passenger appeal on a tourist railway.

And so we reached the end of a most interesting day. *[To be continued]*

The Midland Hotel, Morecambe

Stuart Lindsey

The Midland Hotel in Morecambe was purchased recently by a Manchester development company called Urban Splash, with the intention of renovating the building. After 2 years preparing plans and with grants from the Development Agency and English Heritage worth £7.2 million work started in 2005.

Two hotels have stood on this site, both called the Midland Hotel. The former was built in 1848 and originally called the North Western Hotel changing in 1871 when the Midland took over the Little North Western Railway.

Later it was demolished and replaced in 1933 by the structure we see today.



As Morecambe grew in the 20th century, only interrupted by the 1st World War, by the 1920's the first Midland Hotel needed replacing. The LMS Railway decided to build a new hotel and in 1932 plans were approved for a new hotel on the seafront at a cost of £72,000. Architect Oliver Hill was to provide the company with "*a building of international quality in the modern style*" as part of his brief. Furthermore Hill used other features such as furniture, upholstery, and extravagant interiors and he used glass, chromium and marble to great effect.

All this resulted in a curved 3 storey structure on the new promenade facing the railway station. The completed hotel prompted Lord Clonmore to write in the Architectural Review that the Midland was "*in complete harmony with its natural surroundings....it rises from the sea like a great white ship*".

Works of Art

Eric Gill, a renowned sculptor and engraver, was commissioned to carve 2 seahorses outside the building and a circular medallion in the ceiling overlooking the staircase depicting a sea god attended by mermaids. Gill also designed a relief map of the Lake District and the Lancashire coast for a wall of the South Room. However, his greatest work was the huge bas-relief for the hotel's entrance lounge entitled "*Odysseus welcomed from the sea by Nausicaa*".



The interior of the rotunda café at the north end of the hotel was painted by another well-known artist of the time, Eric Ravilious. As the café was originally intended for the use of casual visitors to the beach its walls were painted with seaside themes of day and night. Unfortunately, due to insufficient preparatory work, the surface began to peel off almost immediately and the wall was painted over completely two years later. In 1989 the mural was reconstructed for an episode of the TV detective series "*Agatha Christie's Poirot*" which was partly set in Morecambe.



The Midland Hotel opened on 12th July 1933 and the Hotel subsequently had weekly dinner dances, but it was soon to face the ravages of World War II, when the hotel was requisitioned by Government as a military hospital. Two rooms were turned into operating theatres.



Reconstruction of Eric Ravilious' mural by set designers from London Weekend Television.

After the war, the Midland was handed back to the LMS Railway in February 1946, but it floundered and in October 1951 the Midland was advertised for sale and, following an abortive auction, was finally bought by Lewis Hodgson of Bolton Abbey for £50,000. Contracts were signed and on 25th July 1952, nineteen years after it first opened, the Midland Hotel passed out of railway hands.

Other owners used the hotel with mixed success before it was bought by Urban Splash for restoration.



The state of deterioration of the hotel prior to being bought by Urban Splash.

I have put forward a suggestion to Bradford Railway Circle committee to visit the hotel after restoration for an evening meal, with dress code and perhaps spend a night at the hotel

Ben's Bits

The Lancashire Plateway Scheme

Due to railway freightage charges being high between Liverpool and the cotton towns (double the cost elsewhere in the country), high ship-to-truck loading charges (up to more than treble elsewhere) and high dock dues (up to 7 times those at Hull), in 1879 Sir William Forwood proposed a scheme for carts to be hauled in trains on stone runners or plate rails laid in the highway by traction engines and finally hauled by hordes to their destinations. In 1882 the scheme was raised again, but he realized that highway authorities would control the running of "Extraordinary Traffic" under the Highways and Locomotives Amendment Act of 1878, so he proposed to use special plate rails on privately owned land, using standardized wagons and 0-4-0 locomotives with flanged wheels. This was as proposed by Alfred Holt as a consultant, and was named "Alfred Holt's Goods Railway", and had no passengers, no stations, branch-lines or sidings, and having a wider and higher loading-gauge than standard. Routes to all the principal cotton towns were proposed, totaling 145 miles. All this coincided with plans for the Manchester Ship Canal (initial meeting June 1882) proposed by Daniel Adamson. The MSC Act received Royal Assent in August 1885, and work commenced in 1888. In view of the canal scheme, a revised plateway scheme was prepared in 1889, reduced to 85 miles, with average speeds of 10-15 mph and, according to a pamphlet of 1884, at a charge of "a penny a ton per mile" - its title. Several plate sections were considered, including a bullhead rail with a separate flange spaced from it by a cast-iron block in each railway-style chair, but the final plate consisted of a bridge rail (inverted U section) 7½" wide across the flanges by 4½" high to the crown, with a separate vertical flange riveted to its side and projecting between 5/8" and 1 3/8" above the running surface depending on its location – 5/8" at stations (for removal of the standardized carts), 1" normal and 1 3/8" at points and level-crossings! The bridge rail bottom flanges were bolted to a ½" flat plate 1' 2" wide, total weight per yard being between 220-230 lbs. The gauge between the flanges was 5' 5 ½". Locomotive flanged wheels were standard gauge. Because the plateway was to be more like a road than a railway the cost per mile was estimated at £38,500 against L&Y and LNW costs of £67,854 and £53,407 for lines already constructed. The 85-mile scheme cost estimate was £3.3 million, the Ship Canal cost estimate was £8 million (including £1.7 million for the acquisition of the Bridgewater Canal and the Mersey and Irwell Navigation).

The MSC won the day and the Plateway scheme died, although the East Lancs Road of 1925 has been viewed as its successor, and to which the Mersey Docks & Harbour Board contributed £100,000 because of perceived benefits to the port.

[condensed from "Industrial Archaeology" Vol.10 No.4, Nov. 1973]

Channel Tunnel – Part 1

Peter Holden

Having Seen Ian's request in the last issue of the Circular, I decided to put pen to paper (so to speak) as I have now made three trips from St.Pancras to Brussels. I am not at all sure whether I was the first Circle member to do so or not?

The three trips have been very different. [*Editor's Note – The other two trips will feature in future issues of The Circular*]

The first trip was a day return from Bradford to Brussels, this being at the request of one of my work colleagues. Despite my best efforts, I could not persuade him to spend the night in Belgium. The basic upshot of this was we only had two hours in Brussels before catching the same train back! This really is not my idea of a trip to Belgium. I think the new link opened on 11th November? And we made our trip on Thursday 25th November.

An early start sees me walking into town to catch the 06:30 Forster Square to Kings Cross. I managed to talk the train crew into letting Richard and me have a breakfast: the restaurant is not normally available to standard class passengers until they have checked availability, normally after leaving Doncaster. The GNER (as it used to be) breakfast was £17.90, and is not at all bad, and of course having a breakfast allows you to sit in first class for a fraction of the price, so that's the sort of outlay I can run with. Richard joined me in Leeds and by this time the restaurant car was full. We had a fairly uneventful journey down to Kings Cross, probably because we were busy with the breakfast! Arrival was on time at 09:06. Twelve minutes later we have checked in and are ready to board the Eurostar, I could not believe how quickly we got through, mind you we had no baggage and the place was not too busy. We were the first two through the boarding gate. Whilst walking up the platform, I noticed the train manager walking towards us. I decided to try my "charm" on her. I showed my staff pass, saying we worked for East Midlands Trains and was their any chance of travelling first class. She replied "Oh you are the ones who fill our lovely new station with disgusting diesel fumes" I replied with "Well actually it is our old station and you've nicked it" That did the trick, she asked one off the stewards to find us a seat.

Whilst on the subject of station theft... in my opinion, (which should usually be thrown out with the rest of the rubbish) the whole St.Pancras rebuild is yet again the British boding up something rather than doing what our EU partners would have done and started afresh.

Yes it may look nice and it does look better, but surely if you are insistent on fitting a train that is obviously far too long into a station which is far too short, you would do the job properly and extend the original Barlow shed in the same manner as built, yes it would cost more money but this must be a better option than just bunging a cheap crap awning on the end? (Apparently when it is windy and wet the EMT station staff gets soaked as the roof and the walls of the "new station" have a large gap) It is symbolic of station rebuilds in this country that we feel it necessary to move the Midland out of St.Pancras, to what seems half way to Derby! Well ¼ of a mile anyway.

In my opinion a new station should have been built between St.Pancras and Kings Cross, no matter what the cost. If we can throw money at motorways like it's going out of fashion (example farcical new car sharing lane on M606!), surely the bean-counters can put their hand in our pocket to pay for a proper job doing for a change? Rant over.

Richard and I settle down for our momentous trip to Brussels. I could be in a minority here, but I preferred the old route from Waterloo, this new one is just a procession of tunnels, one after another. I would much prefer to have a view rather than speed.

Well I could hardly keep my face straight when the crew wheeled out the Eurostar breakfast. I was not going to have a breakfast as we had just had a very good breakfast already – BUT - when I saw the miniscule size of the Eurostar breakfast I decided that I must try one! It consisted of an incredibly small roll, half of a tomato with pepper on, some minute thin sliced mushrooms, a three inch square piece of ham and half an egg. The whole ensemble fitting easily on to a tray six inches square! The only saving grace was the blueberry yogurt that was smashing. Blimey! I'm glad we have not paid for this, was my comment. After spending ages adjusting my watch through the Channel tunnel, I tried my best to have power nap through France, to no avail! I still can't get my head around the concept of leaving a Brussels-bound train at Lille, but people do just that.

We arrive on time into Brussels Midi and the harsh reality of a two-hour visit to Belgium begins to hit home. There is not much you can do in two hours (actually, there probably is, but we won't go there!) We found a bar near the station and managed to try five different beers, before retracing our steps back to the station. As the instruction came over to board I suggested to Richard that we would let everyone rush to the train as we had reserved seats. We picked our moment to make our way to the train, at this instant Richard decided it would be a good time to buy some chocolate, I told him to get a move on as we did not have much time!

We just managed to board as they were blowing whistles and closing doors! Eurostar have a habit of putting everyone in the same carriage and having several carriages empty, so we found a table in a virtually empty carriage, rather than walk further forward. I decided that a spot of food would be a good idea, so I volunteered to mount an expedition to the buffet car. I came back with two ham & cheese toasties and 4 bottles of Duvel, not a bad option.

The journey back was quite pleasant, as the alcohol seemed to be a good counter measure to the tunnel fest that was to come. Departure from Brussels was prompt at 14:59 and arrival time back into St.Pancras was also on time at 15:57. We are on the 16:25 to Derby before 16:15! Not bad. We decided to end the day with a few pints in The Brunswick Arms, Derby before heading home. Richard thanked me for going with him; all I could do was to say "never again" There was no way I would ever go again for just one day.

Meeting Reports

Philip Lockwood

24th October 2007 - Out and about in the eighties, Robin Lush

[Editor's apologies – this item was accidentally omitted from the last issue]

Robin started with a suitable snow scene to open his talk in January 1980, we had a very nice picture of Flying Scotsman on Miles Platting bank at Manchester. We next moved to Liverpool for some very moody shots in Olive Mount cutting, quite intriguing just how Robin managed to reach the location! Our next series of pictures featured the original Liverpool and Manchester locomotive 'Lion' running between Wigan and Southport, looking very incongruous under the wires and dwarfed by a DMU. 1980 also saw the return to steam of City of Wells with some nice shots taken on the Worth valley line. Deltics were also rostered to work passenger trains between York and Liverpool and it was nice to them working over the Pennine route. We next moved to Scotland to follow the ex-North British Rly locomotive Maud to follow her travels south on the way to the forthcoming celebrations at Rainhill, Robin slept in his car whilst following the train, the things we do for a picture! Rainhill was covered in some detail as this was a major event in 1980, out of the many Rainhill pictures my favourite was of 'Lion crossing the original Sankey viaduct of the Liverpool and Manchester railway. The most unusual being being a seagull being chased by an A4, pity it wasn't named Seagull. For the aircraft and motoring fraternity we were shown a flypast of a Coastal Command Shackleton and also a visit to the Jaguar factory at Coventry. A wonderful evening of top quality pictures, hopefully not too long before Part 2. The vote of thanks was given by Jim Livesey.

16th February 2008 - European Narrow Gauge Networks by Stuart Baker

This meeting was originally scheduled for the 30th January, but due to Stuart being out of the country in Argentina, was swapped with Alan Ward's show. As the title suggests, almost every European country including the Isle of Man and Ireland had some coverage, so I will try to pick out what to me were some of the more outstanding lines. We started back in 1974 in Yugoslavia with a spectacular 76cm line, which used to run between Sarajevo and the coast at Dubrovnik. This was very much a narrow gauge main line, complete with restaurant cars, and ran through scenes which reminded me of the Welsh Highland through the Aberglaslyn Pass, though of course on a much larger scale. Principal locomotives on this line were the large 0-8-2 tender engines built by Krauss-Linz in 1908, one of which can now be found on another line visited tonight (the Zillertalbahn line in Austria), but at a time long before the arrival of this loco. Another line of particular interest to many members was the Harz system in northern Germany. This system was visited by Stuart not long after the reunification of the old East Germany as it passed from Soviet control. The Circle has a visit planned here in October, so although much has changed from Stuarts visit it was good to have a taster of what to expect. France was also able to provide some interesting and unusual lines, the one most familiar to me being the metre-gauge line linking France to Switzerland running through the Chamonix valley with views of Mont Blanc, an unusual aspect of this line being the outside third rail power supply!

Many lines in Switzerland were covered, as Stuart has been visiting the country from the age of 12! Of particular interest were scenes on the Rhaetische Bahn at Filisur during the 'Green Period', before the adoption of red for the railway. The line from Interlaken to Lauterbrunnen and on to Wengen was very familiar to your reviewer. Stuart used a combination of digital projection and the more conventional slide, but in both formats the standard of photography was excellent. Perhaps Stuart can be persuaded to make a return visit in the near future. The vote of thanks was given by Dave Scriven.

27th February 2008 The Blue Period, by Graham Maple

This evening's presentation by Graham, as the title suggests, covered the period when most of British Railways adopted what to my eyes at the time was a very drab livery, particularly when compared to the more colourful liveries of many of the overseas systems. Looking at Graham's slides tonight, call it nostalgia or what, or maybe the interesting variety of motive power then available - the blue period suddenly took on a new charm! Graham started out in 1976 with a very basic Instamatic camera with a top shutter speed of 1-60th of a second but still managed to take an excellent picture of a Hymek at Bristol Temple Meads. Over the years as equipment improved and 300mm lenses were added to the collection Graham was able to travel further afield with pictures of the Woodhead line in snow, Ribbleshead Viaduct, and a Co-Bo at Bristol Bath Road. Like that other railway photographer Ivo Peters who often had his Bentley car in many of his pictures, Graham's turquoise Inva car featured in many of his shots. This proved to be unreliable, which explained why many of the photographs were taken from stations where Graham often encountered hostile staff when setting up his tripod. Many of the locations have changed over the years and the classic views looking down Marsh Lane cutting at Leeds have been made much more difficult to access. A most enjoyable evening - thank you Graham. The vote of thanks given by Keith Preston.

28/03/08 The Douro Valley- Portwine and Narrow Gauge

A return visit tonight by Ray Wilkinson, this time the subject being the Douro Valley region of Portugal. I think this is the first time that we have had a full length talk about the railways of Portugal, Ray used a Powerpoint system which enabled him to show detailed maps of the area covered. The show covered not only the very interesting narrow gauge system that still exists, but also many of the earlier steam locomotives the majority sadly abandoned a situation that would probably not happen in any other western country.

The evening was not totally devoted to railways, as the waterway traffic, trams and many of the vineyards were visited together with another major interest of Ray's - the churches and general architecture of the area. So tonight an evening of contrasts, from smartly restored steam locomotives, complete with copper capped chimneys, to yards of abandoned steam locomotives, the interesting river boats connected to the wine trade and not forgetting the vineyards. Thanks Ray for another very interesting talk. The vote of thanks was given by Ian McDougal.

A Relief Signalman's Life, by Barry Bridges - 9th April 2008

A talk tonight without any form of illustrations - something of a rarity for the Circle in recent years, but brought alive by Barry's most entertaining yarns of his life as a relief signalman on the old GER lines. He started by giving a family history which included a remarkable number of relatives who had also served on the railways in the past. Having travelled from Stevenage to Doncaster earlier in the day and compiled his notes for tonight's talk during that journey, he talked from our start time of 7-30 and had to conclude at 9-00 although I am sure that we had only touched the surface by then and that he could have continued for much longer! Thank you Barry for having travelled so far to talk to us tonight. Vote of thanks given by Malcolm Riley.

Thirty and Forty years back by John Holroyd – 23rd April 2008

John's show started in 1968 with early views of the K&WVR, before moving on to Bradford trolley buses still with a few years to run before closure. A brief glimpse of John's model railway the EM&W Railway, before moving on to Waterloo Colliery at Leeds; a visit to Kippax Motors revealed not only interesting double decker buses but also "Old git on bicycle" to rival the best offering from Victor Lee. Moving on to Derbyshire for steam hauled mineral trains between Chinley and the Buxton area in the winter's snow. Still in winter conditions a visit to Selby swing bridge with the interesting mechanism for operating it. We then moved on to railtours in Europe, visiting countries still behind the Iron Curtain - your reviewer was so interested in the subject he made few notes, so just a brief mention of that most impressive class of locomotives the Austrian 2-8-4 which would prove quite a challenge for the model maker. The end of trolley bus operations in Huddersfield included one slide showing at least three people known to me - Bill Stocks, Eric Blakey and Den Robinson. We saw John's parents at Oakworth station, before we made a visit to the Manchester waterworks railway at Torside with the remains of a steeple cab electric. 1978 started with John's visit to India in the company of Gavin Morrison which must have been one of the earliest visits made by British enthusiasts to this country. As with almost all John's shows, all forms of transport received his attention, including the transporter bridge at Warrington, HMS Eagle, steam wagons and garden railways at Huddersfield. Thank you John for a most enjoyable evening. The vote of thanks given by Brian Moss

Membership Matters

Michael Wade

We regret to announce that Circle member David Spencer died recently. The collection at the meeting on 23rd April raised £115, which was donated to the North Yorkshire Air Ambulance charity, who were involved in attempts to save David's life.

The Photographic Competition – 4 June 2008

A final reminder, in this, the second issue of the Circular for 2008, that later this year we are holding our bi-annual photographic competition on 4 June 2008. Our last one held on 5 July 2006 was a momentous occasion with a record number of entries and the quality was superb. Let's see if we can beat this record next year, as I am fully aware there are certain members who are excellent photographers, but don't make the effort. I have already organised a judge.

The categories as before are :-

35mm slide - Steam

35mm slide – electric or diesel

B/w print – Steam or diesel (max 10 x 8)

Colour print – Steam or diesel (max 10 x8)

Humorous – slide and/or print (+ caption)

Basic Rules – Entries should not have been entered in a competition before
 Maximum number of entries per person per section – 4
 Print sizes will be strictly adhered to
 No momentous digital manipulation allowed
 (i.e. East Coast Electrification evidence removed)

Also, there will be an outright winner, and, in each category, a 1st, 2nd and 3rd.

See you all there and let's make the effort to outdo 2006 !

Photo Books

Tom Ickringill

I am aware that many photographers within the Circle membership have now turned/switched to digital. But have any of you considered 'making' a photo book of your best efforts ?

Last summer, I read an article in one of the many photo magazines available whereby they did a comparison test of a few that were available on the market, including Jessops, Truprint, Bonusprint, Tesco and Mypublisher. The winner by far was My Publisher and this was also the most expensive!

I decided to give it a go. Last October I logged on and downloaded the software (which is free), and, as I was doing it at home, used Edwards' computer. (Prior to this, I had printed off the help topics, which basically formed a manual). The next stage was to create a folder and download the photos from the digital camera. So far, so good.

The next stage was to choose the photos required, noting that if you wanted to use a photo twice, you had to bring it in twice. The next thing was to choose what size of book (3 available – small, medium and large) and style (i.e. modern, holiday, wedding

etc.). I chose the former and the large (deluxe) which is 293mm x 381mm (approximately A3).

Starting at page 1, the next decision was how many pictures per page, with or without captions. If you chose 1, a 'full bleed' option is available (i.e. a full page print – to all sides – no white space or border). If you want captions, there are various fonts available, script sizing, left/centre/right justification and bold, italic and underlining. There is also a built in spell check, just like using 'Word' software. (Actually, the first page, prior to page 1, was basically for narrative if required, say an introduction). I next designed the jacket, again from the options available, whereby you can drag in pictures, give a title, repeat the title on the spine and insert pictures/narrative on the inner leaves.

All was now ready to place the order, but unfortunately Edwards' computer crashed, the graphics card going caput. Nothing on the 'book' could be accessed. I then copied my picture folder onto a 2GB memory stick and transferred the data onto my laptop, after first downloading the software. I had to start again!!

This time it was easier as I had had the practice. (One point to mention at this stage is that it is recommended that digital pictures are taken utilising a 5 – 7 mega-pixel camera, with an image size of 1600 x 1200, around 180 – 200 dpi). Also available, within the 'book', once you have 'dragged' in the image, if it needs altering, there is a mini style 'photo – shop' software incorporated. This will remove red-eye, zoom in or out, move image, enhancement, cropping, change to b/w etc. (just a few).

My 'book' was now complete and ready to download and order. This process is quite easy and straightforward, although the upload time depends on how many pages (min 20, extra cost for more) and images are contained therein.

My order was placed on the lunchtime Wednesday and arrived the following Tuesday a.m., from the U.S.A.!! In the intervening period, you continually receive e-mail updates, stating what stage the printers are presently at. The book is delivered Fed-Ex, in a very sturdy box, inside, the book being in a cellophane style wrapper, wrapped itself in bubble wrap – no chance of damage here. On opening the book I was absolutely gobsmacked at the excellent quality contained therein, the pictures themselves being of the highest quality and printed on a heavy weight paper – 300gsm plus. The only problem was, where was the jacket? (On later investigation, it was revealed that I'd never ordered it in the first place!! Since rectified, and coming from Sweden!!).

A few friends have seen the end result and have been amazed by the quality and cost – roughly £ 40 (20 pages + £ 1.99 for each extra page + £ 9.95 for carriage & packing). Work colleagues have also commented that with the speed of delivery and cost, this is an ideal tool to use for presentation purposes to clients.

The website is www.mypublisher.uk.com, and, if anyone is interested for further details and would like to view the end result, please contact me. I'm not sure when you'll receive this issue of the circular, but there is currently an offer on of basically two for one, if ordered by 31/05/08.

Special Traffic Notices

Will members please take note of the following points :-

Fire Precautions. Will members please familiarise themselves with the positions of fire exits and extinguishers at Heaton Baptist Church.

Members' Discounts. In return for free advertising in *The Circular* members receive 10% discount on cash purchases at Frizinghall Model Railways and at Buffers – in both cases on production of a valid Circle membership card.

Contributions to *The Circular*. Original material, preferably in electronic format (almost any PC word-processor, preferably Microsoft Word or MS-DOS format, but not Microsoft Works, please), or by email to ianbutton1@btinternet.com or typescript – the Editor can scan & OCR (optical character recognition) typed pages.

Radiators. Please do not adjust the radiator settings in the meeting room. The valves easily become jammed, necessitating drainage of the system, dismantling and repairs – very expensive.

Railway Magazine bound volumes. The volumes of RM have been removed from the library due to lack of space. Any member wishing to read any volumes (we have c.1929-present day) should contact the Hon. Librarian, Gary Hayhurst, and he will bring them to the next meeting.

Pictures for *The Circular*. Photographic material submitted for consideration for reproduction in *The Circular* is accepted at the owner's risk. Landscape format is preferred for half-page reproduction, obviously, although if the photo is spectacular a vertical format full-page layout may be possible.

Disclaimer 1. The opinions expressed in *The Circular* are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Committee.

Disclaimer 2. The Bradford Railway Circle cannot accept any responsibility if video tapes borrowed from the library cause damage to a member's video recorder.

Ben's Bits

The Manchester Ship Canal itself opened in 1894, making Manchester the third-largest port in the world. It was 25ft deep and had locks 63ft wide, to take the largest ships of the day. Bridges (other than swing bridges) had 80ft clearance. The canal was constructed by 17,000 navvies, of whom 100 died during the task. It required 228 miles of temporary railway track, with 173 locomotives, to remove spoil dug by hand and machine, and there were 124 steam cranes. Of course the canal retained its own railway on each side, and the odd MSC locomotive has been preserved. In its heyday, 20 tugs were employed, but now there are only four. New trade in increasing, in the form of 150-container barges, carrying merchandise from Liverpool.

We may be having our Annual Dinner this year at the Midland Hotel, Bradford. Many members have suggested over the years that we should hold the dinner at a more central location. I have visited the Midland and was most pleased with the room they were offering - it is ideal for our needs. The dinner will probably be on Wednesday 17th September, but nothing is finalised as yet. I do not have menu details, but the cost will be £20.00 per head. We need to have around 30 attending, so please let me know if you are interested.

Forthcoming meetings.

Wednesday 4th June sees our Photography Competition. Tom Ickringill will be organizing the event; he has done a marvellous job in the past. Details of the rules for the competition were published in the previous issue of the Circular. Please come along and support this event by entering if you have any pictures. Who knows? - you may even win a prize (I never do!). Robert Anderson has kindly agreed to judge again this year; in my humble opinion Robert is one of the best judges we have had. Stanley Hall MBE will be returning on **Wednesday 18th June**, when he will be presenting "Random Thoughts about Railways" that would be a splendid title for most of Stan's talks! He truly is a magnificent speaker; I could listen to him all day. I am sure whatever the random thoughts are we will enjoy them greatly.

2nd July sees another return visit, this time from Colin Boocock. Colin's title this year is "1000 Eggs on a Bicycle" Colin's photography is first rate and his digital presentations are splendid. Someone sent me an email with many ridiculous photographs featuring vehicles overloaded with unbelievable things, one of which was a bicycle carrying a massive number of eggs; I wonder if Colin took the picture, I will have to see on the night.

Mr. Ken Geddis will be presenting a talk on "Eritrea and Java" on Wednesday **16th July**. Ken comes with a very good recommendation, so I am looking forward to seeing some excellent photographs of these two countries.

Dave Scriven is giving a talk on **30th July**. He will be entertaining us with "Ingrow to Interlaken" I wonder if Dave, or anyone else, has ever made the journey by train? Interesting thought. Dave always gives a humorous show, which is a breath of fresh air (which we sometimes need!), and always brings a smile to the faces of the audience.

"Rail & Sea" is the title of Richard Winfield's presentation on **13th August**. Richard always gives a good, well informed talk, this should be no exception. Richard is very keen on railways and ships, so it should be an excellent combination. It is good that we should occasionally look at other forms of transport, just because railways are the best, we should not neglect the rest!



Belgian emu 451, Kortrijk 2 April 08



Belgian electric 1608, Oostende 2 April 08



Belgian electric 2160, Oostende 2 April 08



Belgian diesel shunter 7799, Gent St Pieters 3 April 08

Outdoor Visits Diary 2008

David Tillotson

I am trying to speed up my contact with any member who has booked outdoor visit places. If you have access to an e-mail address and I have not been advised of your address, would you please contact me by e-mail in order that your name can be placed in my address book.

NB Changes to previously listed visits are **in bold below**.

Fri 23 May 2008	NRM 1T57 event Cancelled
Sat 24 May 2008	Brush, Loughborough
Thurs 29 May 2008	Corus, Port Talbot site.
Sun 1 June 2008	Great Northern and East Lincolnshire Railway, Ludborough.
Sat 7 June 2008	Statfold Barn Railway, Tamworth
Sat 14 June 2008	Corus, Tees-side, Redcar
Wed 25 June 2008	Network Rail Measurement train – maybe central Wales on a DMU or loco hauled on the main line
Fri 27 June 2008	Forth Railway Bridge. Climb to the top and walk part way over the bridge.
Thurs 3 July 2008	Ribble Cement, Dunbar and an afternoon at Berwick upon Tweed station
Sat 19 July 2008	Tube Lines depot at Neasden and Ruislip
Sun 3 August 2008	Steeple Grange Railway
Sun 17 August 2008	Sir William McAlpine's private railway.
Sun 31 August 2008	Adrian Shooter's private railway, Banbury
Thurs 4 Sept 2008	Visit to Blackpool trams – ride the system and visit the depot
Thurs 9 – Wed 15 Oct 2008	Wuppertal tram system (Schwebobahn dingly-dangly overhead system and Harz System for steamy weekend. Awaiting final confirmation of dates. Cost approx £250 including air and train travel and hotels on bed and breakfast basis.
Fri 17 Oct 2008	Jarvis Rail, Doncaster
Mon 20 Oct 2008	Corus, Castleton and East Lancs. Railway
Fri 31 Oct 2008	Jarvis Rail, York
Fri 12 Dec 2008	Neville Hill and Freightliner terminal, Leeds

The above visits have been provisionally arranged as of today 26.11.07. Changes can be made prior to final arrangements being confirmed, and some dates and visits may be cancelled owing to circumstances beyond my control.

Most sites require participants to wear strong footwear, orange high vis. vests, hard hat, eye and ear protectors – so carry them with you at all times on outdoor visits.

All photography is for private use only and must not be submitted to any magazines or placed on the internet.

David B. Tillotson,
'Newlands'
School Lane,
Bolton Percy,
YORK YO23 7AD,
North Yorkshire.

Telephone 01904 744330
Fax 01904 744330
Mobile 07860 644239
E-mail dbt1k@yahoo.co.uk

Circle Diary 2008

P	May.21 st .	Trans-Siberian Odyssey.	Dave Peel
	Jun 4 th .	Photography Competition.	Tom Ickringill
	Jun 18 th .	Random Thoughts about Railways.	Stanley Hall MBE
	Jul 2 nd .	1000 Eggs On a Bicycle.	Colin Boocock
C	Jul 16 th .	Eritrea & Java.	Ken Geddes
	Jul. 30 th .	From Ingrow to Interlaken in the 1980s.	Dave Scriven
	Aug.13 th .	Rail & Sea.	Richard Winfield
P	Aug.27 th .	More From Dad's Diary.	Ian Button
	Sep.10 th .	Diesels & Electrics Since 1963.	Robin Patrick
	Sep. 24 th .	45 Years of Railway Photography Part 2.	Les Nixon
C	Oct.8 th .	Railways North & South of The Equator.	Frank Robertshaw
	Oct 22 nd .	The Branch.	Robert Clarke
	Nov. 5 th .	Steam Saved from the Scrap Yard.	Tom Heavyside
P	Nov. 19 th .	Settle & Carlisle.	Peter Shaw
	Dec 3 rd .	63 rd Annual General Meeting.	
	Dec 17 th .	Members' Night.	Members

C - Copy date for *The Circular* – three meetings prior to ...

P – Publication date, ditto – last meetings of February, May, August & November.