

THE CIRCULAR

Bradford Railway Circle

No.356 – 2nd Quarter, 2011

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Editorial

We regret to record the loss of yet another long-standing member of the Circle: Brian Moss. John Holroyd's tribute follows on the next page. Our sympathies to Barbara and Brian's friends.

This issue has a couple of longish contributions, which means that in order to keep to 20 pages (pretty much the maximum thickness for posting as a "standard letter", without resorting to the Editor's bench vice to compress a thicker magazine) I have temporarily suspended Special Traffic Instructions. There is a small amount of material thus left over for next issue, including another railway-websites bonanza from Victor Lee, but not enough to fill it – PLEASE submit more articles & photos!

John Holroyd has come up with an interesting competition in this issue – scrambled branch-line junctions and termini – that should keep us busy in our deck-chairs over the summer – thank you, John.

[NB. In order to maintain a sensible balance of material in the Circular, future letters to the Editor must be kept to a maximum of **one page** in length – this should be quite enough to make the salient points. Discussions on railway-related matters, if longer, can be presented in the form of an article.]

Brian Moss: 12/12/1944 – 3/5/2011

Tribute by John Holroyd, as spoken at Brian's memorial service on 13th May. Readers will understand John's references to "here", "you" and "this day" as referring to the congregation at the church on the day of Brian's funeral and memorial service.

'Brian planned this day's service, but one detail he omitted was the opportunity for his friends to say a few words.

Michael's theme has been "Where am I going?" My follow-up could well be entitled "Where have I been?"

Surely the best accolade anyone can give is Jonathan Stockwell's description of Brian as the brother he never had.

Jonathan first met Brian on a canal holiday in 1969, when the two of them would chat at the tiller realising how many interests they had in common. Indeed Brian's interests seemed boundless: The Shadows, trams, warships, Guy, Wulfrunian and Black Prince buses, flying-boats, even Leeds United FC until they lost form.

From our first joining Wakefield Railfans Club in 1958, Brian and I have cycled, boated, flown and ridden many rail miles together. In those far-off Wakefield days we would cycle back from the clubroom late at night in the company of Michael Cooper, John Sykes and others; Brian to the family home in Harrop Terrace, Morley, whilst I continued to Gildersome.

We would also meet up at some ridiculously early hour to cycle to join shed-bashing coach trips – trainspotting around Birmingham or Tyneside in pre-motorway days.

22nd November 1961 saw four of us riding the Derwent Valley Light Railway from Layerthorpe, York to Cliff Common and back. Whilst the train crew had their lunch break at Elvington we put together the frame and wheels of a ganger's trolley and pumped up and down the sidings to keep warm!!

It was Brian who first introduced me to canal boating when, with Peter Smith and Alan Garthwaite, we hired *Water Willow* from British Waterways at Middlewich, to do the circuit of Shropshire Union, Staffs and Worcester, Trent and Mersey canals, which included Stourport in its itinerary. Back in 1967 the boat's equipment included a spade with which to bury the contents of the toilet receptacle in a suitable field corner . . . boating has improved!

We fed well, but Brian always insisted on hot plates. I recall we overtook the previous night's excess of boiled rice floating along after we set sail one morning.

On later canal trips we always had to moor for the night within reach of a phone box so that Brian could chat to Barbara. We eventually met Barbara at a Land-Rover rally at Ashover – blonde hair and mini-skirted. I subsequently photographed their wedding on 10th May 1997 – no doubt many of you were here!

Brian obtained a South African locomotive's number-plate and, as he'd never been overseas before, asked if I'd care to accompany him to South Africa "to see where the loco used to run". We went, he joined the South African Railway Society and went again, and again!



Brian Moss with the SAR loco numberplate, Quainton Road, 27/3/1993

J W Holroyd



Brian Moss in Dzherelo lounge-car, Korzhevtsy, Ukraine, 23/4/1996

J W Holroyd



53 tractors for France – 08:10 for Nottingham, 23/7/1964

Michael Leahy



48267 at Bradford Exchange on B906 for Bournemouth, 3/9/1966

Michael Leahy

Brian's modelling activities extended to either kit-building or ready-to-run engines, primarily of former LNER classes. We well recall a Y5 saddletank on which he installed the ogee tank upside-down.

Philip Lockwood, Jonathan and others were appreciative of Brian's skills and willingness to help with their model railways. Indeed he became known as Doncaster Railway Workshops In Miniature.

Visits to Austria and Germany inspired a second layer in the railway attic. Frequent visits to Statfold Barn narrow-gauge system gave much pleasure. Jonathan reminds us of their final, and most enjoyable, overseas visit to the Harz mountains. At one stage the two of them were waiting for a service bus back to Wernigerode, Jonathan at one side of the road, Brian at the other, forgetting that over there they drive on the wrong side!

A final anecdote we mustn't overlook was a visit to Dresden in July 2001. Sandra and I were in room 1030 whilst Ben Burrows and Brian were further along the corridor in room 1027. We awaited their call on the intercom to join us for an evening stroll. When Brian eventually rang he had to report that they'd collected their key from reception, and ascended to room 1027 only to find it empty! Frosted glass in the shower cubicle was the only clue that they'd entered the wrong hotel of the three identical tower blocks in the city precinct.

Barbara has happily tolerated – perhaps even enjoyed – many of the transport events they have attended; although being covered in soot from a steam engine was not her finest hour!

Our sympathies are particularly extended to Barbara, who has been a constant help and companion throughout. And to everyone here at City Mission for rallying to assist.

From 5 years of age, Michael Cooper certainly has claim to knowing Brian the longest. His words must sum up my account: "Brian was a great friend to us all, but a very brave gentleman during these last few years".

J.W.H.

HTTS Isle of Wight trip 2010

Keith Preston

I have been a member of Harrogate Transport Touring Society for about 15 years. Every year they have a weekend tour. For the first few years we travelled overnight Friday using coaches with volunteer drivers from Independent of Horsforth. Thornes Coaches of Hemingborough (east of Selby) took over Independent. Pickups are in Harrogate, Leeds and Bradford. Now the weekend tours have extended to three days to include two nights bed & breakfast.

2009 was South Wales, which included bus museums, preserved railways and the usual surprise visits, not advertised. How many BRC members know about private "museums" in Herefordshire such as Titley Junction and Village Green at Shobnal, which are open to the public one day a year for charity?

About 8:00 on Friday 3rd September 2010 I arrived at Hall Ings, adjacent to the Hilton Hotel, for the pickup at 8:15. Our 55-seat Thornes coach (new in 2005) arrived and the 28 members all settled down for the first day. Our ultimate destination was the Ibis Hotel in Portsmouth for two nights. Peter Seeword, who is on the committee of the Historic Commercial Vehicles Society, was our first volunteer driver. HCTS secretary Ian Winchester had organised the majority of visits, whilst Ken Johnson had done the bookings, taking the money from the members.

En route to our coffee break at M1 Rothersthorpe Services, Peter explained that we were to visit two private collections of buses and commercial vehicles. The first would be at Mick Sergeant's in Fawley, about four miles from Henley-on-Thames. Mick is a neighbour of Sir William (Bill) McAlpine, who has established his own large transport collection. It had been hoped to visit, but Sir William was elsewhere. BRC visited there about five years ago, but since then some of the collection has been sold by auction, and the 1930's-built HC 0-6-0ST ex-Slough Estates is no longer in use.

12:30 arrival at Fawley after our coach negotiated several very narrow roads on the uphill journey from Henley. (The story of how difficult it was to transport the McAlpine Hudswell-Clarke steam locomotive from the main road at Henley to the proposed site at Fawley, 350ft higher, is told in a booklet "The Fawley Railway", which I purchased in 2005.)

We walked down the drive of a detached house, to tables laid out under a walnut tree with branches and leaves almost forming a circular canopy. A lunch of elderberry wine, water, meat or vegetable lasagne with salad was served by two attractive ladies (Mick Sergeant's wife and her sister). The weather was warm and sunny. Trays of home-made breads and butter were consumed. Seconds of both wine and lasagne were available. Fruit salad, cream, brownies, then tea or coffee followed in this fabulous setting. We were invited to stroll around the orchard and vineyard before a visit to two large sheds. Here were four vehicles – Albion lorry DS7223, AEC Scott Greys single-deck coach SHN301, Alexander Bluebird single-deck half-cab BMS414 and Albion lorry WV9280. Both Albion lorries were from Skillbond High Wycombe. In the second shed were a Gilford small lorry GW9608 of the 1930's, and an unidentified 1920's charabanc with Willowbrook body in process of restoration. In a locked shed not available to us were several vintage and classic cars stored for other people.

After 2½ hours we bade farewell to the ladies, but Mick drove his Mini Cooper ahead of our coach to the private Billington collection, near Maidenhead, as we were unsure of directions. This collection comes under the auspices of the Historic Vehicles Trust (or similar name). It's on a farm, with many secure outbuildings covered by CCTV. There are three or four employees working full-time on restoration of the 65 vehicles on site. There were many Southern National, Reading, Brighton and Hove, and London Transport buses in various stages of restoration. Pride and Joy for Colin Billington was a late-1920's Western National single-decker, which is expected to take another 3-4 years to fully restore. Several vehicles had taken part in the 2010 London-Brighton Commercial Vehicle Rally the previous June. The double-

deckers were packed into the sheds like sardines, with only a small gap between. At times it was necessary to walk sideways. Restoration and paintwork are of a very high standard. At the end of our visit we were provided with tea, coffee and fruit cake. It was sometimes quite difficult to hear the comments of our host as the buildings are under the flight-path of incoming jets landing at Heathrow Airport. Several aircraft could be seen, and they passed over us every 2-3 minutes. Shortly before we arrived an Emirates A380 Airbus (currently the largest passenger aircraft in the world) had flown over, shaking loose some of the workshop tools – Colin reckoned it was below 2000ft on its landing descent.

At 5:30pm we continued with our second driver Martin along a busy M4 (fortunately going the opposite way to homebound commuters from London). An interesting feature was on the road near Windsor Great Park, passing Ascot Racecourse and the large houses at Sunningdale, by the famous golf course. At length we reached another motorway network, which we followed to the outskirts of Portsmouth. I'd not been by road to this naval city for about 15 years when I used to do courier work. Many business parks, flats and housing complexes have been built in the intervening years. We did pass the Pompey football stadium (Portsmouth FC were demoted to the Championship for 2010/2011), Fratton Station. The site of the former steam shed is now a servicing depot for the 3rd-rail emu services of the area. First Great Western operated dmu cl.159/9 from Portsmouth to Cardiff, SouthWest Trains and Southern also operate here, though time restrictions prevented me from visiting the station as it was dark and raining when we arrived at the Ibis Hotel. I finished some sandwiches I had brought as we weren't told in advance about the refreshments at Fawley and Maidenhead. I watched ITV1, where England beat Bulgaria 4-1 in a European qualifier.

On Sunday after a good buffet breakfast we left at 08:15 for Gunwharf Ferry Terminal, where we arrived at 08:20. We watched the 08:30 Wightlink ferry *St Helen* load and leave and at 08:40 our ferry *St Clare* arrived. These boats have five decks, and after our coach had boarded we climbed several flights of stairs to the boat deck. The overnight rain had stopped and clouds were lifting as we sailed across the Solent. Two of the HoverTravel fast passenger-only hovercraft passed us on the Southsea-Ryde services, as well as the Wightlink fast catamaran service to Ryde Pierhead. We alighted at 09:35 at Fishbourne and drove through heavy traffic to Newport, arriving at 09:55, where we had a break until 11:00. Several people walked to the nearby bus station to photograph Southern Vectis double-deckers in their attractive two-tone green livery, but they were all the same design of a new fleet from 2008-2009. Three of us decided that a coffee-break at the adjacent Morrisons supermarket was the best idea. Brian Myland had a walk around Newport trying to find remains of the three former railway branch lines which merged here, but apart from a tunnel under a road and a section which was now a cycle-path, all the rest has disappeared with redevelopment, leaving no chance of the railway ever being reinstated. Newport is the largest town on the Isle of Wight, and it is shameful that Beeching decimated the thriving railway with its unique O2 locomotives, of which only one W20 *Calbourne*

survives, recently returned to steam at Haven Street by the Isle of Wight Steam Railway.

At 11:00 we reboarded the coach for the short run to the IOW Bus Museum alongside the River Medina in Newport. The proprietors ushered us on to 1966 Bristol MW FDL927D for an hour's run past the picturesque Pointer Inn and church at Newchurch, and up a steep hill to a viewpoint nearly 450ft above sea-level. The highest point is on the southern hills above Ventnor at 772ft. It was rather hazy and the potential view to the sea was obscured. The actual museum is well set out, with small exhibits and photographs on the first floor. Next-door is the Classic Boat Museum, with several historic wooden boats under restoration.

Next, a 13:20 departure to the IOW Steam Railway at Haven Street, arriving 13:45. We had 30 minutes for a quick bite before taking reserved seats on the 14:17 for Wootton hauled by HE 3758 of 1953: 0-6-0ST WD198 *Royal Engineers*, ex-Longmoor Military Railway and MoD Long Marston. The train reversed at Wootton, currently the terminus of the original line towards Newport. However, ½-mile further on the line disappears under redevelopment. Back through Haven Street (14:40-14:51) and to Smallbrook Jct. (arr. 14:56) where there is an interchange platform to SouthWest Trains Island Line, where former London Underground 1938 stock operates from Ryde to Shanklin. The trains are now in an almost authentic LTE maroon livery with full yellow ends. We returned to Haven Street at 15:35 and our coach took us on to Ryde. There we had an hour's ride on a Southern Vectis route Island Breezer open-top bus. As it was a relatively modern bus (1990's) I decided not to bother. I walked down part of Ryde Pier under reconstruction with the road to Pierhead Station and the fast ferry terminal closed off. I watched a large OCL bulk container-ship pass on its way from Southampton to Asia, and a couple of hovercraft on the Southsea run. The former pier railway closed several years ago, but Island Line is still running to Pierhead Station. I had a snack at a local cafe and joined Peter with our coach. The traffic wardens were around, as the annual Ryde Carnival parade was due to start at about 19:00, so many No-Waiting cones were out and parking restrictions were being enforced. We left at 17:20 for Fishbourne, sailing back at 18:00 to Portsmouth. Three passenger liners had recently left Southampton on the evening high tide, and our ferry's tannoy announced the *Oceania* for the Western Mediterranean, the *Grand Princess* for Malaga, and ahead in the distance another of the Princess fleet bound for some port in West Africa. Passing the inward service to Southampton were OCL *Hamburg* and one mile behind OCL *Norfolk*, both fully laden with containers. As we approached Portsmouth in beautiful clear evening sunshine the white Spinnaker Tower (650ft) stood out, as did the sail-masts of *HMS Warrior* and *HMS Victory*. Further on in the naval docks were several warships.

That evening, several of our party had an evening meal at Wetherspoons' "White Swan", only 200 yards from our hotel. There was heavy rain later that night, though I managed to sleep through the downpour,

Our Sunday departure was late at 09:00. The news on the radio mentioned a collision between two light aircraft over the Isle of Wight, during a race, when sadly both pilots were killed. The significance of this was that the accident took place near

Haven Street, and debris fell on the area round the IOW Steam Railway around 5pm on the Saturday, only about 75 minutes after we had left. No-one on the ground was injured, but police cordoned off the area for several hours.

It was about an hour's journey through some pretty Hampshire villages to Alresford. We were booked on the 11:50 Mid-Hants Railway service for the 10-mile steam-hauled journey to Alton. This is a section of the former LSWR line from Woking via Aldershot and Farnham to Winchester. The through line was closed in the late 1960's – it had been a useful diversionary route for the Portsmouth direct line but closed when the Winchester bypass was built using a section of the track-bed. In 1972 the Watercress Line opened between Alresford and Ropley and over the next 15 years it was extended, eventually reaching Alton where the main-line service was retained with a cross-platform connection. Currently, Alton-Waterloo services of SouthWest Trains are operated by class 450 emus.

Our steam loco was 73096, recently restored once again. The first station is Ropley, where the locoshed and workshops are situated. In July 2010 the Mid-Hants suffered a catastrophic fire in their Lottery-funded 2009-built carriage shed. Several coaches and a rebuilt tender off 31806, plus a 1950's diesel shunter, were destroyed. We noticed that the damaged section of the burned building had been demolished. It is hoped that they can raise funds for a replacement, as all their coaching stock is now stored outside. The cause of the fire has not been established, but arson is not suspected.

Beyond Ropley the line climbs at 1 in 60 to Medstead and Four Marks station at 630 ft above sea level (Oxenhope on the KWVR is 669 ft above sea level), followed by a descent to Alton. Since my last visit there in the mid-1990's, Alton has a 1950's look, with a SR cream and green livery for the buildings on Platform 2. Platform 1 is the main line with the modern signage for SouthWest Trains (owned by Stagecoach).

73096 ran round after the 25-minute journey from Alresford, which had been delayed by a minor operational problem – we were told by a MHR official that a Wickham petrol trolley had derailed near Ropley. On shed were 41312 and 37909, with out-of-use locos 34102, 75079 and 30825, plus others unidentified. A4 60019 *Bittern* is now based here, as it belongs to millionaire Jeremy Hoskins, but it was not seen. 34007 *Wadebridge* was on the second of the two train services. 2-car Hampshire diesel 1125 was on test for working a 1960's weekend over 18/19th September.

A brief run back to Alresford had made up 10 minutes of the original 20-minute delay, and the weather was now bright and sunny. Platforms were busy as the next train included two coaches for Sunday luncheon diners.

We left at 13.20 for our last visit of the weekend at Long Hanborough, adjacent to the station where there is the Oxford Bus Museum, which also includes the history of Cowley, where Morris cars were built. In 1997 they were awarded a Heritage Lottery grant, which enabled some new buildings and a purpose-built 2-story exhibition hall to be erected. On Sundays there are bus rides for about ½hour. They brought out an Oxford Bus Company AEC Renown of 1967. We passed through Bladon, but the churchyard where Sir Winston Churchill is buried was obscured by

housing and trees. The walls of Blenheim Palace and the official entrance were just along the road. We skirted the London Oxford airport - yes, that's its new name even though very few passenger flights use it! The weather was now warm and sunny and it remained like that until dusk.

We had a short stop at M1 Watford Gap Services, and I was dropped off in Bradford at 20.40, just missing the 20:45 class 62 from Interchange to Keighley, as it was over 5 minutes walk from Hall Ings to the Interchange. The 21:15 was 5 minutes late, due to delays around Bingley following the weekend music festival there, and I arrived home in Saltaire at 21:55

RCTS Meetings – West Riding Branch programme

Indoor meetings at Saltaire Methodist Church, 19:30 – all welcome. Admission £2.

2011

21 July	Members' Meet, Doncaster
18 August	Members' Meet, Doncaster
15 September	Hugh Ballantyne : "Traction in the Deltic Era"
20 October	Ken Grainger : "South Yorkshireman" (Bradford to Marylebone)
*1 Nov (Tues)	John Holroyd : "30/40 Years Back"
17 November	Donald Townsley : "Locomotives Built in Leeds" (digital)
8 December	Gavin Morrison : "A World Tour"

2012

19 Jan	Ken Horan : "Now and Then" - Memories from an ex-BR Fireman (digital)
16 Feb	John Meredith & Bob Schofield : Peter Barnes Memorial Slide Show
15 March	AGM + Slides + Artefacts
*3 April (Tues)	Dave Beeken : "When Ripon Had Rails"
19 April	David Walker : "All Colours of the Rainbow"
17 May	David Tillotson : "Around Great Britain"
21 June	Outdoor Event – TBA

* Denotes Tuesday afternoon meetings, Saltaire, 2.00pm start

"Name That Depot" Quiz – Answers

Answers to the picture quiz in Circular 355 are as follows :-

1. Shirebrook
2. Toton
3. Midland Road, Leeds
4. Merehead

Branch Line Puzzle

John Holroyd

The first column lists the jumbled names of junction stations from which you would travel to a branch terminus. The second column lists similarly jumbled names of these termini, but not necessarily in the same order. You just have to unravel the names and pair them correctly. To get you started and to illustrate the challenge, Earby and Barnoldswick have been completed. Enjoy your journey!

ARROW GAINED	CHELK AND WOA
WHILST LEATH	OWING LEADS
AILING BULL	PHONE AM
HOMED NUT	NOB MERRY NOTH
TO BRUINS	THROWN HI
BE RAY EARBY	LANCE
ILL HATCH	LITH FROM H
WATER TOWN NEST	BRICK THIRD GUK
VILE CHUBY	SCOLD BARK WIN BARNOLDSWICK
ALOOF VENT	BEEFY LARD
SLAVE	SHELTON
BURNT RACEY	SASHES EOU
FENCE N LORRY	FAUST TRUG SOU
VOKER PRAG	FOR LAD
VARIES MANY	COD HORN
TIE KORN	CHART MOUNT OP
SCHOOL KERB	TONALS
PEACH MINPH	SHAWL BITTE
LEAN	SHALL CLUB AHI
BEAR DIGS PEN	MAD CUFF
SLUG LEAST CADO	LAY BEFORE

Answers in the next issue

Letters to the Editor

1. From John Tickner,

Dear Editor,

Seeing the vote of thanks debate batting back and forth in the Circular, I thought I would ask my brother (as chairman of his local camera club) for an independent view.

He suggests that out of courtesy there has to be a vote of thanks, irrespective of whether there has been spontaneous applause when the speaker concludes his talk or

not. However, he always takes this responsibility himself, and admits he would quickly upset a few people if he tried to delegate this to ordinary members present. For the first few weeks of doing the job, this did impinge on his enjoyment of the talks as he pondered his vote of thanks, but it soon became second nature. Now, he simply praises anything that he has particularly enjoyed about a show, or on the, thankfully rare, occasion it was poor, he thanks the guest for their effort in putting the show together and sharing it with them, something along those lines. (Anything so long as it is not a blatant untruth!).

My personal view is that dropping the job on an unsuspecting individual at the start of the evening is rather unsatisfactory, especially if that person is not comfortable with public speaking, and that my brother's comments make a lot of sense.

John Tickner

2. From Victor Lee

An absurdity worse than useless: let's end this pantomime!
(Oh, no! Not MORE thoughts on ditching VOTs!)

Members who want to keep the VOT custom evidently feel that the simple natural applause at a show's end isn't quite enough of a thank-you. They argue that it needs underlining via some brief *spoken* thanks. This wish to express additional courtesy (the essence of Chris Taylor's pro-VOT plea in Circular 354) may sound quite reasonable But hang on a minute! Shortly before the VOT speech, *brief words of thanks have usually already been given*. By our affable MC, the president, during his spoken link between the natural applause and "Were there any questions?" So there's *simply no need* for some press-gang victim (sorry, VOT-giver) to then pop up and spout a separate, rather painfully-contrived speech. Where simple *thanks* is, inevitably, expanded into *praise*. Which is at best superfluous (i.e. sycophancy) and at worst dishonest (i.e. hypocrisy). Yep, that sums VOTs up! If they were renamed using the more accurate term SOPs (Speeches of Praise), their essentially sycophantic nature would be more obvious. And members would be more easily convinced that VOT-dumping is long overdue. My dictionary defines sop as "something offered as an appeasement or bribe". Remarkably apt!

In the wider world of entertainment, the sensible "only-by-the-MC" voicing of thanks has always worked fine. Singers, musicians, conjurors and other performers are shown appreciation via (a) audience size, (b) audience applause and (c) the bonhomie of the MC. Nobody bothers organising separate VOT speeches as a *fourth* helping of compliments! We don't need to bother, either.

. Yet some members have this persistent delusion that we *do!* Several have protested to me that, without the traditional VOT, visiting speakers might not feel sufficiently welcome or appreciated. But I think that's unlikely in the extreme! Don't pro-VOT members realise just how many welcomes, courtesies, appreciations, plaudits and rewards a visiting speaker receives? Let's list them :

- (1) The secretary's letter of invitation (a compliment in itself)
- (2) His affable pre-show publicity on "Secretary's Page"
- (3) Greetings, handshakes and affable chat from committee members
- (4) Ditto from individual members
- (5) Help with setting up equipment
- (6) The President's formal welcome
- (7) Welcoming applause from the audience
- (8) Appreciative audience noises during the show (e.g. "ooh's", "aah's" and good-natured laughter)
- (9) Polite questions during and after the show
- (10) Natural applause at its end
- (11) The President's link, usually including short thanks (as mentioned above)
- (12) VOT-giver's speech
- (13) Further applause
- (14) Free refreshments, with immediate waiter service
- (15) Praise/compliments from individual members (1:1)
- (16) Monetary reimbursement (exceeding actual expenses)
- (17) Farewell handshakes/compliments
- (18) (Sometimes) a free lift to the station
- (19) Sometimes a letter of thanks (as at RCTS and HRC)
- (20) And finally an appreciative write-up in "Meeting Reports" forming a permanent record

..... Is anyone still worried that the guy might feel snubbed if we quietly omitted (12) and (13) from this almost-endless sequence of bonhomie? He'd barely notice the difference! As I said in my first anti-VOT letter (in Circular 353), there were enough "channels of compliment" besides VOTs. But I didn't then realise there were as many as EIGHTEEN more!

Speaking of lengthy lists, it's useful to summarise all the bad points about VOTs that I've discussed in my three letters:

- (1) VOTs are a waste of both time and effort: presenters are given more-than-adequate plaudits in other ways
- (2) VOT's are, thus, superfluous praise (SOPs!). And praise to excess is . . . *sycophancy*.
- (3) VOTs spoil the entertainment for one unfortunate member at most meetings, by imposing the chore of speechwriting
- (4) VOTs could cause "dumbing down" of entertainment standards, via automatic praising of undeserving shows
- (5) Not only that, such forced praise makes *hypocrites* of VOT-givers. Furthermore, *all* VOT-giving is thus tainted by doubts about sincerity. Is *praise contrived to order* really worth very much? It is, in fact, *sycophancy* (see (2) above).

- (6) VOT-giving can make members look foolish if, like me, they're not very good at making speeches. Every VOT-giver must look and feel somewhat foolish by having to call for "appreciation" that has, er, *already been shown!*
- (7) VOTs usually require a "press-gang" procedure, a bugbear for both the presser (president) and the pressed.
- (8) In practice, far from any intended strengthening, VOTs actually *divide and weaken* the applause!

I mentioned this divide-and-weaken effect in Circular 355, after it spoiled the applause for Dave Scriven's 2010 show. Another recent example was in Jane Ellis's "Tk of Old Rly" show: again, two poor lots of clapping instead of a single, wholehearted, decent one! No doubt there are further examples aplenty.

Just think – if nobody had ever thought of VOTs before, and someone was urging BRC, in 2011, to adopt his "New VOT Idea", he'd be *laughed at!* Waved away as a nutter, a crackpot, a deluded "change for change's sake" meddler, an upstart seeking to make his mark on BRC to the disadvantage of everyone else in short, a SILLY ASS! Typically, members would respond as follows (and rightly so!):

"You're JOKING! Who'll want to be saddled with blinking SPEECHWRITING AND SPEECHIFYING?"

"We've managed fine for SIX DECADES without blinking SPEECHES!"

"Stuff SPEECHES! It's *slides* we come here for!"

"Since it ain't broke, why fix our procedure with something more complicated?"

"Fine fools *we're* all going to look! Having to pop up like a Jack-in-the-Box and urge expression of something that's *already* been loudly expressed. As if to say I'm this week's deaf bonehead!"

"SPEECHES? But *why?* Speakers are already shown more than enough gratitude. It'll *rebound!* By seeming obsequious, superfluous, presumptuous, pretentious and sycophantic (Er, excuse me a moment, where did I put that dictionary

. Perhaps his reason for wanting a dictionary was not to check meanings, but to THROW. In exasperation! Those who delude themselves with absurd pro-VOT sentiments (and want to keep inflicting such tomfoolery on the rest of us) deserve to be pilloried and pelted! Metaphorically, of course.

Earlier, I listed no fewer than *eight* thoroughly bad things about VOTs. But do they have any *good* points? Not to my knowledge, they don't! All the advantages I've heard claimed for VOTs are either illusory or negligible. Let's face it: *the VOT ritual is an absurdity worse than useless.* As I discussed in Circular 355, it appears to be a hangover from an arguably worth trying (but failed) bulking-out experiment, SIXTY YEARS past its "ditch-by" date.

The sooner it is done away with, the better!

Victor Lee

Meeting Reports

Philip Lockwood

6th April - Bulleid's Pacifics, by Colin Boocock

A welcome return by this popular speaker, tonight his subject being the Bulleid Pacifics of the Southern Railway. Having worked at Eastleigh works, Colin is well qualified to explain the somewhat unusual and innovative aspects of these locomotives. The three classes being the original Merchant Navy, the West Country and the Battle Of Britain. Colin went into great detail to explain the many variations between the different classes, and indeed, between different locomotives of the same class! This would require detailed research in order to make an accurate model of a particular engine. A lighter note was the method employed to straighten a bent coupling rod by parking the locomotive alongside a solid wall and placing a jack between the wall and the bent rod! Another entertaining evening with the collection going to Colin's favourite charity, "The Railway Children". The vote of thanks was given by Tony Newnham who lived in the land of the Bulleid Pacifics in his youth.

13th April - A Collection of Robertshaw, by Frank Robertshaw

Tonight's show which was scheduled for last year but fell foul of the extreme weather conditions at that time. I think this must be the first time in the Circle's history that we started the evening by being served popcorn, had an intermission where we were served ice cream and had the assistance of Franks Grandchildren, Carl and Danielle. The theme of the evening being a "Visit to the Cinema" So we had adverts for the circle tea bar courtesy of Pearl and Dean plus a cinema organ playing appropriate railway music. The film itself featured visits to Germany to film the special steam celebrations, a curious monorail system which must rank as the most precarious railway ever seen by your reviewer. Slightly more stable but still more unusual being the Listowel and Ballybunnion in Ireland. A most entertaining evening for which we must thank Frank and his assistants which included the Frank lookalike Frankie Wietfield!

20th April - American Oddities, by Jamie Guest

Not probably what was initially expected as the America that Jamie covered tonight was the continent of America, and not the USA. We started at Scagway on the White Pass and Yukon complete with trestle bridges and rotary snow ploughs. Jamie unfortunately lost one of his films from this section.

Our next visit in 2007 was to Costa Rica by way of a cruise which navigated the Panama Canal. Jamie's liner was a tight fit in the canal, and it was interesting to learn that the "Mules" or the rail mounted tugs which at first were thought to pull ships through the canal were actually used as a means of guiding and steadying the ship. Our next visit was to El Salvador where Jamie was involved through his Church in building a house. An interesting show covering areas probably not too well known to most of our members.

4th May - Views from Across the Pond, by Chris Davis

Our second American show in succession but this one definitely featuring the USA! what we have come to expect from Chris is excellent photography, mostly still using transparency film and long trains in spectacular scenery. We started In Iowa with a most interesting remnant of what was once an extensive electric railway, I remember this from an old copy of "Trains" magazine from the 50's which described it as an "Interurban" line, now a goods only line with very spidery catenary. Chris certainly covered some ground as we moved from Mason City Iowa to North Dakota, Texas and Kansas. It was interesting to note the lack of cars and people even though much of the time we were close to route 66. Although your reviewer is not to familiar with the USA scene it was interesting to see remnants of well known names such as "Santa Fe" with the distinctive "War-bonnet" paint scheme. Wonderfully composed pictures in spectacular scenery, thanks for a most interesting show assisted on the projector by that other Chris. Vote of thanks given by Eddie Lumb.

18th May - Favourite Lines Part 2: Yorkshire Coast Line, by Victor Lee

As the name suggests the subject of tonight's show covered the coast line between Scarborough and Hull. Victor has given an earlier version of this talk to the Circle some time ago. We started with Scarborough long after the coast line north had closed, although to fool us, Victor had a picture of a class 47 peeping out of Falsgrave Tunnel! Victor is a mine of knowledge regarding station architecture and Scarborough Station was covered in some detail, and in all seasons. I seem to have remarked in an earlier review that as a child being scared by the steam locomotives 'blowing off' just below the railings on the South side of the station. Both signal gantries and both signal cabins were pictured and it is good to know that one is in the process of being refurbished for use on the North Yorkshire Moors Line. The Coast line features many interesting stations, Beverley and Filey being good examples, both retaining their overall Roof. As mentioned earlier Victor is prepared to go out in all types of weather to show us his 'trademark" reciprocal shots, often in rain or snow. As a "warm-up" act Victor showed a selection of steam road going vehicles before the start of his show. Vote of thanks given by Eddie Lumb.

Secretary's Page

Peter Holden

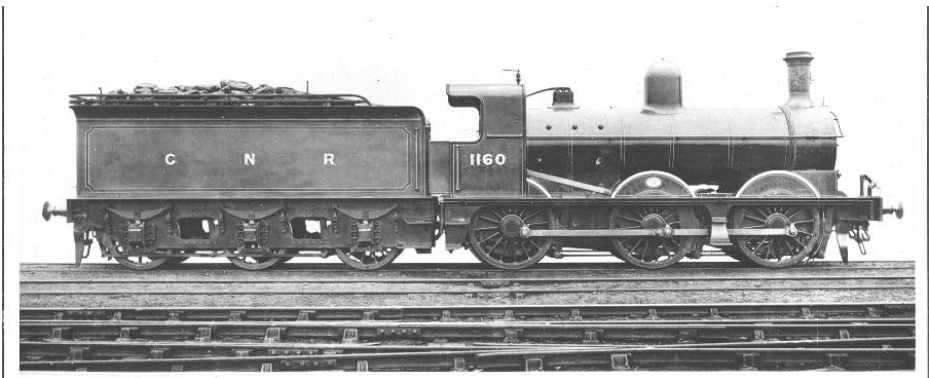
As we have received letters from two members regarding the vote of thanks at the end of meetings, I thought I would chip in with my view on the issue.

In my opinion there is no problem with the system we now use at meetings. True when I was a 25 year old and had just started attending meetings at The Circle, I used to cringe as one or two who shall remain nameless in this article (although, sadly, they have since passed away) used to stand up at the end of meetings and rabbit on for an eternity (minimum of seven to ten minutes). Yes, I for one found this a pain; I look back on those epic votes of thanks now with a smile on my face. Truly a farce! One member always managed to turn his votes of thanks into a résumé of his past holidays, it was just unbelievable.



№ 60114, BUILT IN 1948,
 CLASS A1. DR WH'LS 6' 8".
 № 525, BUILT IN 1947,
 CLASS A2. DR WH'LS 6' 2".

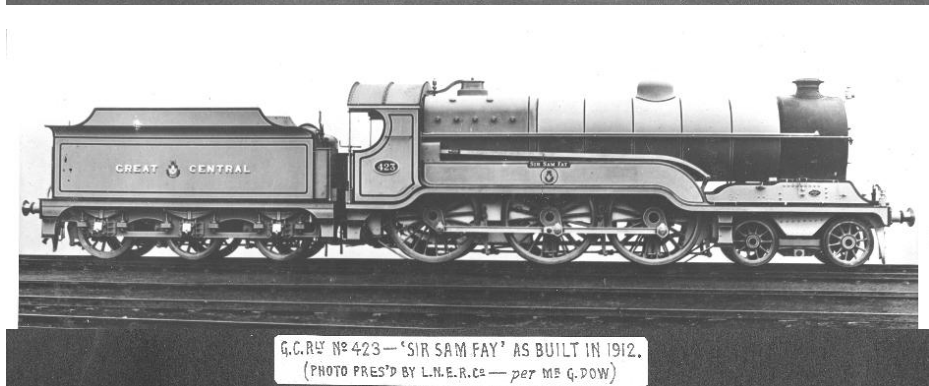
PHOTOS PRESENTED BY
 BRITISH RAILWAYS
 — per MR GEORGE POW.



G.N.R.'S STANDARD GOODS ENGINE AS INTRODUCED BY H.A. IVATT IN 1898, DIFFERING ONLY
 IN DETAILS FROM THE DESIGN INTRODUCED BY P. STIRLING IN 1882. DRIVING WHEELS 5'1".
 № 1136 WAS BUILT BY KITSON IN 1900. REBUILT BY H.N. GRESLEY WITH LARGE BOILER.
 (PHOTO PRES'D BY L.N.E.R.C.S. — per MR GEORGE POW.)

Photos from a BRC Archive scrapbook.

Original captions by Douglas Butterfield



Photos from a BRC Archive scrapbook.

Original captions by Douglas Butterfield

But we have moved on - hopefully you will have noticed that nowadays it is usually Eddie who does the vote of thanks. He volunteered to do this, he keeps it short and concise, and usually it takes around 30 seconds! Now I am fifty one, I have learned to tolerate other people's opinions. What I want, and what I think, do not matter - what matters is that we behave in a manner which is best for our society, and its future. Surely we should extend common decency to a person who has put a lot of effort into entertaining us.

In however many years as Secretary (too many), I have never received one complaint from a guest speaker, regarding the vote of thanks. On the contrary in fact, many have commented on how much they enjoy the whole evening when visiting us.

We face a situation where our membership and the number attending meetings are dropping. We should all focus on the important items rather than rant on about our own personal dislikes.

Therefore at the next AGM I will be proposing a vote as to whether we carry on with our new shortened version of the vote of thanks, or scrap it all together. I think it should stay, you will decide.

A simple and practical answer to this problem: if one of our members dislikes the vote of thanks so much, then he should go and make the tea (using a proper metal kettle of course)! Then he will miss it. Problem solved.

As I begin to work on next year's meetings diary, can I take this opportunity to thank all our members who have given talks over the years. Your generosity, giving your time to prepare and show excellent talks to our society both keeps us all entertained and also helps to keep the costs of meetings down. If you feel you could do a talk at the Circle please have a word with me asap.

Also may I take this opportunity to ask members who attend "other railway meetings" - if you enjoy a talk somewhere else and you think the talk would be appreciated by our members, please ask the speaker for his contact details and we can try and arrange a visit to our society.

Forthcoming meetings

Standards will plummet on Wednesday **13th July**, when we will all suffer a slide show from me! "Nineteen Nineties Part 1" Oh dear! Anyway I have dug out some slides from 1990 and 1991. Almost all taken in daylight! Come along and heckle. Most of the trains photographed have now gone!

July 27th sees the very welcome return of Noel Coates. Noel will be giving a talk about L&Y Locomotives. Noel always presents a well-researched talk, and I am sure we will all learn something from his visit. Who remembers the tale Noel told about the tank engine the L&Y built that was so useless they put it to work banking out of Manchester Victoria. It did not last long as it could not keep up with the trains? "Hills and Valleys" is the title of Richard Winfield's talk to the circle on Wednesday **10th August**. Richard showed an excellent collection of slides last year, I am sure this year will be as good.

Ray Wilkinson will be presenting "Narrow Gauge East of Geneva" on Wednesday **24th August**. Anything narrow gauge is always popular with Philip and me! We

always have a good attendance for such talks, so come along and enjoy Ray's presentation.

Robin Patrick will be presenting a collection of "Enjoyable Pictures" on Wednesday 7th **September**. I am sure we will be in for a treat.

At long last I have managed to book Dave Stacey to come and present a selection of his slides to us. Through no fault of Dave's I have kept badgering him to give a talk for a few years. Problem being this badgering has been done on David Tillotson's Christmas Drinking Trips. For some un-explicable reason I have always managed to forget to do anything about afterwards! Anyway Dave will be presenting "35 Years Of Photographing Trains, Fun Or Frustration?" on Wednesday 21st **September**.

Small Ads

BRC member John Tickner is now offering a digital imaging service. For scanning from print, negative or slide (including medium format), Photoshop retouching, photo restoration, and printing up to size A2, contact John on 01535 601050, mobile 07967 604074, or email john@johntickner.co.uk.

Wanted – As always, good home still offered to broken/surplus cameras & photo equipment. Please don't throw dead cameras away, they can sometimes be mended (or used for spares) - donations invited for "camera sanctuary" – please contact Ian Button. Very many thanks to donors thus far, for their great kindness and generosity.

Circle Diary 2011

P Jun 29 th .	Fitter, Steam & Diesel	Ivan Stephenson
Jul 13 th .	Nineteen Nineties Part 1	Peter Holden
Jul. 27 th .	L&Y Locomotives	Noel Coates
C Aug.10 th .	Hills & Valleys	Richard Winfield
Aug.24 th .	Narrow Gauge Railways East Of Geneva	Ray Wilkinson
Sep.7 th .	Enjoyable Pictures	Robin Patrick
P Sep. 21 st .	35 Years of Photographing Trains - Fun or Frustration?	Dave Stacey
		Dave Peel
Oct.5 th .	Vintage USA Mainline Steam	Jim Livesey
Oct 19 th .	Broad & Narrow Tracks	John Whiteley
Nov. 2 nd .	BR Steam in the 1960s. Modern Traction in the 1970s & 1980s	Arnold Ridley
C Nov.16 th .	A Taste of the Old School	Dave Scriven
Nov.30 th .	Oh No! Not More Snapshots	
Dec 14 th .	66 th AGM	
P Dec 28 th .	Members Night	Members

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

P – Publication date, ditto – last meetings of **March, June, September & December**.