

# THE CIRCULAR

Bradford Railway Circle

No.372 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter, 2015

---

## Contents

### Page

1	Editorial	
2	Michael John Wade 1944-2015	Peter Holden
5	HRC Absent Friends Special	
6	“Tren Crucero” & The Devil’s Nose (Ecuador) – Pt. 2	Dave Peel
10	Denmark 2014	Andy Roberts
12	Special Traffic Notices	
13	Meeting Reports	Philip Lockwood
16	Ben’s Bits	Ben Burrows
19	Secretary’s Page	Peter Holden
20	Circle Diary 2015	

---

## Editorial

We are very sorry to announce two deaths among members. Firstly, long-standing and Honorary Life Member Michael Wade died of pneumonia a few weeks ago. Michael had a stroke in June 2013, and had transferred from hospital to a nursing home in Lightcliffe. We much appreciated the gift that Michael made to the Circle of his book & slide collections, and we extend our sincere sympathies to his family. Second, we heard recently that member Mel Haigh had died. Mel hadn’t been able to visit the Circle frequently of late. Again, our condolences to Mel’s wife and family. Please note the HRC “Absent Friends Special” advertised on page 5.

This issue isn’t quite up to the 24-page bumper issues of recently, but 20 pages isn’t bad. We conclude Dave Peel’s article on Ecuador, and thanks to Andy Roberts for his interesting article on Denmark. We have a couple of good articles in store for next issue. Dave’s next destination is Peru, which is especially interesting to your Editor, whose grandfather worked at Cerro de Pasco a hundred years ago). More material is always welcome, though - so please et writing, no matter how short a piece.

The Network Rail suspension of West Coast Railways’ operating licence has been lifted, doubtless to the relief of railway enthusiasts across Britain. It was imposed in March, after *Tangmere* on a tour over-ran a red signal, and then had its safety system inexplicably deactivated. The train was brought to a stop across the junction at Wootton Bassett, seconds after a HST had passed across. Almost the end for many passengers’ lives, and for heritage operations on BR, one might say. WCR got a very nasty shock and no doubt are reviewing their safety policies . . . !!

## Michael John Wade 9th June 1944 -18th May 2015

I first met Michael at Bradford Railway Circle around 1987. Michael started attending meetings with a chap called Eric Mallinson, who I knew from when he ran a model railway shop in Halifax. Apparently Michael knew Eric through his work. Eric had been pestering Michael to attend our meetings for a while. Following the meetings we would go to the pub for a pint or two. It soon became apparent that Michael and I had many shared interests, mainly railways and real ale!

Michael's career was in the family engineering business in Halifax, Michael being the accountant and his elder brother David running the engineering side. Often in the pubs we visited around the country, which had the old copper and brass ornaments hanging from the roof, Michael would point "that's one of ours" (blow lamps, posers, paint kettles). I understand they were big in copper balls! He would readily tell me that the only reason he was still working was "David would not retire!"

We soon struck up a friendship which lasted until Michael passed away. I count myself as being very lucky to have, and I have had, some very good friends over the years, but Michael was definitely one of my closest. He was 100% reliable, if he said he was going to do something, he did it. There was never any "Oh I'm sorry, I can't make it". So many in life let you down, not Michael.

Despite living on his own he did over the years spend a lot of time looking after his older relatives - this he took on without question. At one time he was having to sort out three Aunties. A sign of this commitment was that when Michael had his stroke after the Circle Meeting two years ago, it was his aunt who alerted the family that all was not well, when Michael had not turned up with the Fish & Chips on Thursday evening. This was something he simply would never normally do.

We would go on many railtours over the years, and following Michael's retirement, (when he was around 58) we would make many journeys around the country on rover tickets. I would say that when he was in the country I would see him on average twice a week.

Michael did not suffer fools well, so it is surprising that he coped so well with me! We were like chalk and cheese in many ways. Michael had, it appeared, a great deal of problems with actually getting out of bed. He would insist that anything before 09:30 simply did not exist! Yet if I came up with a plan for a day out which meant him getting out of the house at say 05:00 Michael would absolutely refuse to have anything to do with it. However his will power was none existent, and nine times out of ten he would capitulate and join me. I could go on for hours about the many journeys around the country and into Europe we made.

Michael's railway interests were very widespread, his knowledge of most aspects of our interest were immeasurable. He kept a wonderful record of every journey he had made from around 1958 onwards. He was indeed very lucky to have been able to go on many of the "Last trains to wherever" and so many railtours in the sixties. His interest most definitely did not stop at the end of steam, or at the English Channel, he was indeed far happier traveling abroad than in his own country.



Michael Wade in typical pose at Filisur

Philip Lockwood



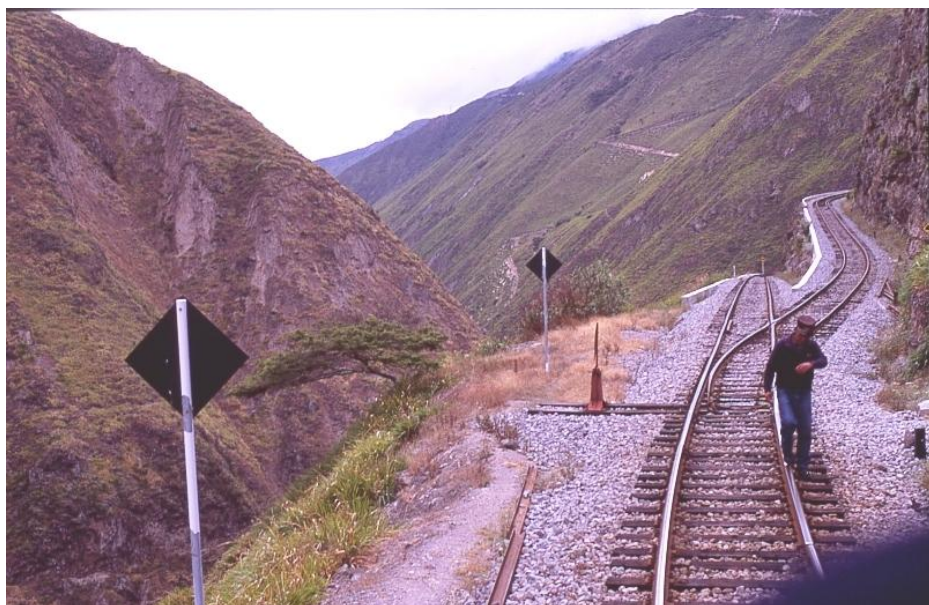
Bo-Bo-Bo diesel 2408 at the head of the Tren Crucero at Urbina station, Ecuador. Llamas graze peacefully on. 2/7/2014

Dave Peel



Ecuador - Baldwin 2-8-0 No.53 simmers at Riobamba station in the early morning sun, prior to running to Colta. 3/7/2014

Dave Peel



Devil's Nose, Ecuador: Points manually set for backwards descent. 3/7/2014 Dave Peel

As you are probably aware I got the job of disposing of most of his railway collection last year. On his instruction his railway books were sold to help Circle funds. Around £680.00 being raised. Eddie Lumb has found a home for Michael's slide collection. Some of his slides are truly both unique and most interesting.

He made many good friends through these travels. Bill Alborough at TEFS was not only a tour operator, but a great friend to Michael. Latterly he would travel around the world with many other foreign railtour operators also. Michael had a wonderful ability to make a three week trip pan out for around two months! By starting well before anyone else, and tagging a few weeks on at the end.

He became more involved in the Railway Circle when he became Honorary Treasurer, a job which he did meticulously for around twenty years. Michael was made an Honorary Member of our Society in 2013.

After his stroke two years ago, and his subsequent transfer to The Manor nursing home, Michael had developed pneumonia around the middle of April and been admitted to hospital. He unfortunately suffered a second severe stroke and did not regain consciousness passing away two days later on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May.

He will be sadly missed.

Peter Holden

---

## HRC – Absent Friends Special

Our Secretary received the following invitation from our kind friends at Huddersfield Railway Circle. In view of our recent losses of Michael Wade and Mel Haigh, this is especially timely and welcome. We hope a good number of members will join in.

*Hi Peter*

*The Circle has lost a few members and friends in other Societies this year and in order to remember them we have decided to run a special train on the Kirklees Light Railway, something they all enjoyed in the past. This will take place on the evening of Wednesday, 15th July next and as some members of the BRC may like to join us I enclose a booking form for you to distribute. You are guaranteed the usual HRC convivial gathering.*

*Regards*

*Mike*

[BRC members registered for email news should have received the booking form by email from Bill Jagger on 14<sup>th</sup> May – if not, or for a paper copy, please contact any Committee member. Closing date for bookings is 1<sup>st</sup> July, and the cost is £7.50 pp. It's a good example of the benefits of registering for email news]

---

## **‘Tren Crucero’ and the Devil’s Nose: Ecuador 2014 (Part 2) Dave Peel**

By 6.15am the next day we were off again towards our train, rejoining it at Latacunga station (just a few km from Lasso) and proceeding southwards. In glorious morning light we ran down ‘volcano valley’ for a couple of hours before detraining to reach (by coach) today’s first engagement – a visit to one of Ecuador’s success stories of recent years, the rose-growing firm of ‘Nevado’. This business is huge, with tens of thousands of blooms despatched (by road/air) on a daily basis; to New York in 2 days, Europe / China in 3 days, for instance. Any colour of rose can be provided, just name your shade from their extensive catalogue. A fascinating tour: the cutting & packaging procedures being of particular interest.

Further down the line, today’s lunch was at a small restaurant in the sizeable town of Ambato, and located only a few minutes walk from the station there. When rejuvenating the entire Quito – Guayaquil line to enhance its appeal to the tourist trade, all stations were given either a considerable face-lift or a total rebuild. Ambato comes in the latter category and is most attractively presented, both inside & out, despite the infrequent train service on offer. However, the infrastructure and capacity is now in place, as is the political will to exploit it, so here’s hoping Ecuador reaps the rewards of this extensive investment. Also on view as we departed the station was the ‘rail-bus’ used for the short out & back excursions between Ambato and Urbina, more of which later.

Urbina is 43km south of Ambato uphill all the way, as this is the highest station on the system, at 11,840ft. However there is nothing at this wild spot except a turning triangle, a small station building and a delightful view of the close-by snow-capped Chimborazo volcano that totally dominates the scene at 21,220ft. We did make a stop here, as there’s a café in the station (!) serving coca tea and chocolate (both of which alleviate the effects of altitude) and a display centred on ‘the last ice-man’. Naturally both attractions are only present when a train arrives (not very often!), the ‘ice-man’ himself being present (plus his daughter) to tell the tale of how he still cuts blocks of ice from a cave (8km away) half-way up Chimborazo and transports these by donkey-cart for sale in Riobamba. It is still the case that refrigerators are not yet common here, though in addition to selling ice blocks in the market, he now uses crushed ice to make and sell his own fruit drinks. At 70 years of age, and having outlived both his siblings and former fellow workers, he is venerated locally as having achieved a ‘grand old age’, a reflection on the disparity of life expectancy between Andean men and those in our group!

The downhill run to Riobamba was in beautiful afternoon sunshine, and on arrival our train was greeted with much whistling from the Baldwin 2-8-0 (already in steam) that was to take us onward tomorrow. When the line was built, Riobamba had declined the provision of a station, so that the original alignment skirted the town. Then a late change of mind was made, and a terminus constructed in the middle of town, connected to the main line by a spur, down which trains had to reverse the kilometre or so to access the station, situated in the central square.



Riobamba is a large town, and this time our accommodation was a short ride away, within the town's boundary. Another 5am alarm call was early enough to get our small group (nine only) breakfasted and to the station square by 7am. There we were met by the sight (and smell) of the simmering black oil-fired 2-8-0 No.53, at the head of our stock, all basking in the first rays of the morning sun. Many photos were therefore taken before the train exited the square at 7.30am to climb fairly steeply up to the main line junction, passing a plinthead Baldwin 2-8-0 on the way. At the junction a large railway workshop area was passed, and our 2-8-0 then opened up fully to attack the continuous ascent to Colta, about 1½ hours away, where steam was replaced by diesel again. Indeed the diesel loco followed us all the way only a few hundred metres behind – often less – towing a 'water-cart' which would be left with No.53 at Colta. Here, whilst engines were changed and the 2-8-0 turned on a triangle just down the line, our group visited the first Catholic church built in Ecuador (1534) situated only 200m away across the Trans-American Highway – here only two lanes wide! On leaving Colta we soon passed the Baldwin, receiving attention next to the triangle in its home-made 'shelter' (and now attached to the water-cart) where it would lay-over until the Tren Crucero returned northbound about three days later.

Before long we had stopped again, this time for lunch within the rebuilt and extended station at Guamote, where the platform road is one side of a turning triangle. This station is, on Thursdays, surrounded by a vibrant local market, which occupied our interest prior to the meal, which was provided by the Guesthouse & Foundation Inti Sisa. This project began in 1999 with the aim of changing the future for many local indigenous people by giving education, practical handicraft workshops, music classes, catering training and child nurseries, both within Guamote station and in surrounding mountain villages. The spacious dining hall had some surprising railway artefacts decorating the walls. Not so much the station running-in board declaring 'Guamote alt. 3,056m Quito 270.7km Duran 181.3km' but the eight brass gas-lamp holders lettered 'Improved Platform Lamp, Linley & Co, Birmingham, England' – these really caught the eye! Undated, but apparently original.

The next break was at Alausi, for ½ hour to stretch our legs and buy postcards. Here the tracks run straight up & down the main street (not unusual in itself), but also parked on a 'street siding' was the Devil's Nose up-and-down-in-day excursion stock (five coaches) complete with diesel loco, which runs as required from Alausi. And so to the Devil's Nose itself.

The descent starts in earnest on leaving Alausi (at 7,745ft) well before reaching the rocky promontory round which we zig-zagged down via two reversals on a gradient mostly at 1 in 18, close to the limit of adhesion for rail traction. The train's observation platform was of course packed for the descent, especially whilst running backwards, thus giving an uninterrupted view of the giddy sight of the valley bottom far below. Particularly noticeable was the narrowness of the ledge the track ran on! This sector was completed in 1902 and is widely considered to be one of the most difficult railway engineering feats successfully undertaken anywhere.

On reaching the bottom at Sibambe (now at 6,058ft) there is an observation platform from which passengers can better appreciate the line's transit of the 'nose'

down which they have just descended, or wonder at their forthcoming upward journey if heading north. I have to say I'm glad we came south!

During the following hour or so the track descends almost as sharply as on the 'nose', but is now trapped inside a steep-sided ravine, criss-crossing a fast flowing river as it does so, which although small at the time obviously grows into a raging torrent when the rains come.

By the time we reached Huigra, most of the altitude has been lost and we are now at a mere 4,141ft. It's now also warmer, more humid and the vegetation is now lush and dense, though still encased in a slowly-widening scenic valley. Tonight's lodge overlooked Huigra town and is wonderfully located on the hillside, but rather more basic in its facilities than previous haciendas.

In the morning the downhill run continues through delightful gorges, until eventually the gradient eases, the valley widens and we reach Bucay, now almost on the coastal plain. Here we departed the train once more to travel to a village of the indigenous Shuar people. We were welcomed in their traditional style – a style acquired over the centuries when these people lived in the rain forest, before migrating to the plains only a few generations ago. After typical ritual dancing displays by both boys and girls, we had the opportunity to purchase locally made crafts and taste their home-made liquor, before heading to a nearby beauty spot for lunch. Here the meal lasted just long enough to see Germany beat France 1-0 in the World Cup – timely!

Back on the Tren Crucero we now ran on to Yaguachi, where steam took over for the final, mostly level, stage of our journey to Duran. This time the loco was a red-liveried 2-6-0 No.11 originally by Baldwin, but 70% rebuilt by Duran workshops quite recently. With the diesel now attached to the rear of our train, the run to Duran was largely through a mix of urban and agricultural landscapes, with street running (and much whistling!) through the various towns on the way – which kept the police outriders busy! It was on this stretch that the only evidence was seen of a new station being constructed – incomplete as yet.

And so it was that on Friday 4 July at 5pm No.13 steamed to a halt in Duran station and the 445km journey from Quito was over, but certainly not forgotten. Memorable in several ways, this tourist excursion recommends itself for the quality of the rolling stock and the service provided on it; the exceptional overnight accommodation; the stunningly scenic views from the train; the variety and interest of the off-train visits, and the attention to organisational detail throughout the four days. Little wonder that the Tren Crucero has been awarded the 2013 Best Wide-World Tourism Award – and is nominated again this year. We would certainly endorse this nomination!

The city of Guayaquil, as remarked earlier, has never had any railway service. It was originally connected by ferry across the Guayas River to the outlying terminus at Duran, which served as the city's railhead for Quito. Later of course, bridges replaced the ferry, though Duran remains the closest rail access point to the port city.

My railway interest was not, however, quite over. The following day, having only just reached sea level for the first time, we departed by road for the 4hr journey to



Cuenca, topping 14,000ft on the way! Sightseeing in this ancient town took place in the afternoon once we'd seen the Panama hat factory and grabbed some lunch. (The hats have always been made in Ecuador, not Panama! The name gained fame when the Cuenca factory supplied hats of this design to President Theodore Roosevelt whilst attending a conference in Panama, and he was much photographed wearing them). Later unexpected entertainment included Cuenca's annual 5km charity race through the streets, and the gripping penalty shoot-out between Holland and Costa Rica, which to local dismay went 4-3 to Holland.

On the morning of the next day we set off back to Guayaquil, but via two Inca sites on the way. The first was at Coyocto close to El Tambo, and is connected to this small town by a railbus that traverses part of the track-bed of the branch from Sibambe (at the foot of the Devil's Nose) to Cuenca, an original distance of 145km. This line was built between 1915 and 1965 but was badly damaged by a landslide in the 1990s, the blockage giving rise to a new (and now permanent) lake, rendering any restoration towards Cuenca a non-starter. Consequently the short (about 3km) stretch over which the railbus operates – maximum capacity one coach load of tourists at a time – may remain forever isolated.

The Inca site at Coyocto is fairly small, so we moved on to the more extensive and better known remains at Inga Pirca before commencing our 10,000ft descent back to the coast.

Other than the Tren Crucero which runs the full length of the main line, there are several other short excursions that may be taken over parts of this main route. The most northerly is the 30km (each way) isolated section from Ibarra to Salinas (north of Quito), followed by the 59km run from Quito south to Boliche for the Cotopaxi National Park. There's also a 43km ride possible between Ambato and Urbina (the highest station) and a 25km out-and-back journey from Riobamba to Colta. The Devil's Nose excursion from Alausi has already been mentioned, and the 90km sector Duran – Yaguachi – Bucay also sees occasional tourist traffic. Plus of course the short 3km line detailed above. Depending on demand these services, purely for tourists, could be operated by steam/diesel + rolling stock, or railbuses. The fares charged on all these trains are well beyond the means of the general Ecuadorean public, even those considering themselves relatively well-off, our guide, for instance! As far as I could discern, no freight traffic at all is carried. There appears to be only one Tren Crucero set of 4 coaches – built by Cintratec in Spain in 2012 – though any extra stock would of course be stored out of sight, most likely at Riobamba.

Prior to our subsequent 4-day excursion to the Galapagos Islands, the one remaining day on mainland Ecuador was spent exploring Guayaquil. This, a large port city, still has considerable French influence in the architecture of its municipal buildings, though the old docks area has been converted into an attractive pedestrianised waterfront, with the docks relocated some distance away. Nowadays, as we found out on a walking tour of this much enhanced waterfront area, a token railroad coach is displayed (on rails) next to the river, as a reminder of the city's isolation from tracks

of any gauge?!! There cannot be many cities as large as Guayaquil anywhere in the world where trains/trams/metros etc. play absolutely no part in the overall transport system of the city. Still, Ecuador seems willing to invest in its 'old' railway to encourage tourists, so perhaps one day a new rail system of some sort will emerge here to stave off road gridlock!

---

## Denmark 2014

Andy Roberts

*[And while Dave was in Ecuador, Andy goes to Denmark . . . – Ed.]*

Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July This being a group holiday, everyone met at St. Pancras with plenty of time to catch the 12:58 (9132) Eurostar to Brussels Midi. After a short our next train was the 17:28 (9461) to Cologne, our overnight stop.

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> July Our onward train today was the 08:10 IC (2320) to Hamburg. Changing their onto the 13:30 ICE380 terminating at Flensburg due to engineering work in Denmark.

The rest of the journey to Randers (Jutland) would be by coach. My memory of the second day was the fantastic spiral near Rendsburg. And one to forget: the worst motorway journey ever.

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> July Our first full day in Denmark, starting at the Randers branch of the National Railway Museum. It consisted of a semi round house with rolling stock within and around. Working steam loco here is K 4-4-0 No. 563 ??? 1899. We left here by coach for Habro to take a short cruise along Mariager Fjord aboard a mock paddle steamer to Mariager. Here is the Mariager – Handent Railway 17km long. Our train was supposed to be steam, instead it was an ancient 3-car wooden bodied rail bus (M1210 TRI 1937), giving us a pleasant run of about 50 minutes. The 2 steam locos here are 107 2-6-0T Henschel 1928, and No.7 2-4-0WT Henschel 1909. The last part of the day was spent back in Randers at the local zoo, the tropical type consisting of 3 glass domes, each representing different parts of the Earth. Inside was a wide variety of animals and birds all in a climate controlled environment.

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July Today started with a visit to the Lake District and another boat ride at Silkeborg, but this time it was a proper paddle steamer PS Hjejlen, this being supposedly the oldest working in the world and coal fired. The cruise lasted 1½ hours ending up in Laven. Off to Himmelbyerget, the highest point in Denmark at 482ft. Lunch was taken in a local hotel. Our next visit was the Veteranbanan Byrup – Vråds Railway. Leaving here for a return journey of about 30 minutes, rather short, but steam hauled by 658 0-6-0T Frichs 1948. Transfer to the main line station at Silkeborg here catching the 16:49 Arriva trains service to Skanderborg, returning to Randers by coach.

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July Transfer day, so an early start to catch Danish Railways 07:15 IC 116/18 DMU to Odense. Here is the Danish NRM It is well presented, but not the size of York. They have a demo line, no steam for us, but another wooden bodied diesel railbus. We left here by coach for Spadsberg for a ferry across Langelandsbaelt to Tars then onto Marbo for the line to Bnrholm Harbour. 7.9km in length. Departing at 15:00 behind Steam loco No. 19 2-6-0 Henschel 1920. A return journey of around 1¾ hours. Transfer to the main line for a local service at 17:11 for Nykoberg and there changing onto the 18:10 to Roskilde, our base for the next 3 days.

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> July A leisurely start today, catching the 09:42 local service to Borup, waiting here was a vintage bus to take us to the Danish National Tram Museum. A well-presented site, with two large exhibition halls and a good length of standard gauge running line to take a ride along an old railway track bed. Our next port of call was Hedelands Veteranbane a 700mm gauge railway, 5km long. It runs through old gravel workings which have been landscaped and are now a nature reserve. We made a return journey over the line hauled by steam (ex sugar-beet railway DA7 0-8-0T 1921). Returning now to Roskilde to visit the Viking ship museum, an option here was to row a long boat out into the bay. We all did take the option and it proved most enjoyable. There were twelve to each boat plus two members of staff (the boat actually came from the Faroe Islands). An interesting and varied day.

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July Today's visit was the capital Copenhagen, so leaving on the 08:57 a twenty minute journey. A quick visit to the Palace to do the tourist things, then off for a cruise around the waterways for about 1 hour's duration. Back to the Palace to see the changing of the guard, but as the Royal Family were not in residence today, it did not take place! Our next visit was to the free City of Christiana. A hippy commune with living accommodation, schools, shops, bars, the lot, an amazing place. I suppose when in Copenhagen one has to visit the Brewery, so off we went. Just about worth the effort, not much to see on the museum tour. It finished with free beer (if you can call it that). Finally to Tivoli, a glorified amusement park that has gardens, bandstands with actors, restaurants and fairground rides. We returned to Roskilde on the 18:24 train.

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> July Once more we board the same train to the Capital, there changing onto the 09:32 to Helsingborg, Sweden. This train traverses the Oresund Bridge, built in 1999 this is the longest combined rail and road bridge in Europe. On arrival we head for the ferry terminal for the 11:15 sailing to Helsingor (Denmark) a sailing of around 20 minutes. Here we headed for the castle and a comprehensive tour, it being famous as the setting for Elsinore In Hamlet. We then head for Denmark's Tekniske Museum, an immense building, home to an entire range of transport types. Back into town we are at Gronnehave Station for the Nordsjællands Veteranog. Our train, the 16:10 to Graested was due to be steam, but was diesel hauled by M8 Frichs 1952. This train runs on the National Network on summer Sundays. It has a buffet car and

interestingly mixes with local services - a journey of around one hour. In the shed was working steam locomotive No. 582 K 4-4-0 Breda 1900. We returned to Roskilde by road for the evening, visiting the local pub for some local beer.

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July Today is transfer, but time to visit Roskilde Domkirke (Church). This is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Inside was much fine architecture. The Danish Royal Family have all been laid to rest here over the last 800 years. Time for a quick beer and then on to catch the 13:12 to Høje Taastrup 20 minutes away, this connecting with the 13:58 EC238 Diesel set to Hamburg. This journey includes the train ferry between Rødby and Puttgarden (Germany), a first for me. A pleasant last evening was spent in a local restaurant.

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July Our last day, so we caught the 08:01 ICE73 to Karlsruhe, changing onto the 13:33 TGV (9574) to Paris Est. This train was formed of double deck stock, with a buffet upstairs. Transfer across to Paris Nord for Eurostar. The departure lounge here is a dump! We left at 18:13 on train 9051 to St. Pancras. Total distance travelled by Rail 3,501 Km.

---

## Special Traffic Notices

Will members please take note of the following points :-

- **Fire Precautions.** Please familiarise yourselves with the positions of fire exits and extinguishers at Sedbergh Community Centre.
- **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. See inside rear cover of *The Circular* for details.
- **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](mailto:ianbutton1@btinternet.com) or typescript – the Editor can scan & OCR (optical character recognition) typed pages.
- **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 Eddy Lumb, 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, or the picture might be used for our *Circular* cover picture.
- **Disclaimer.** The opinions expressed in *The Circular* are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Committee.

## Meeting Reports

## Philip Lockwood

18th March - More Ramblings of an Ex Signalman, by Dave Scriven

Quite a surprise and a pleasant one for this reviewer was that tonight's subject was a retrospective look at the railways of Switzerland. Dave first visited Switzerland in 1979. His first sighting of Swiss motive power was actually just over the border in Austria. At this time most Swiss locomotives were still painted in a rather dour shade of green. This was well before red was adopted as a standard. Dave was able to see many of the older classes of locomotives still in revenue service at that time. Many of the places visited were familiar to me, although it would be another 14 years before I would visit for the first time. Lots have changed, but a lot has stayed the same, including the 1901 built rack locomotives on the Schynige Platte railway. The railways around Interlaken in the Bernese Oberland figured strongly. At Interlaken Ost it is still possible to see three separate railway companies - the standard gauge SBB, the metre gauge Brunig line and the metre gauge Berner Oberland Railway. At Ersfeld, a depot for the SBB Historic fleet, Dave managed to talk himself into a cab ride on one of the older electrics. Dave covered large areas of Switzerland, this including many of the more minor lines, most of which still survive to the present day. Very little closure of lines in Switzerland, and certainly no Beeching type report! For your reviewer an evening of great interest for which we must thank Dave. Vote of thanks by Ian Button.

1st April - 1990's Part 3, by Peter Holden

Peter presented another chapter of his travels in the 90's. Still using slide film at this time. The slides were of excellent quality, and brought back many memories of past Bradford Railway Circle visits. Peter's first slide, taken at the East Lancs railway was of a Western Region "Warship" class, D832. We next moved to Liverpool Lime Street which included a very nice night shot, something that Peter seems to make a speciality of. Open days at Crewe with the Duke of Gloucester, and by contrast an 06 shunter at Meadowhall sporting the BRC headboard! A slide of a circle visit to Procor at Horbury organised by David Tillotson at the time when class 60 bodies were being built there. Another circle visit to the Tramway Museum at Crich with our late President Geoff Butland on the driving platform. This visit notable to your reviewer as the visit where he dropped his Pentax Spotmatic on the cobbled road! Some discussion as to the oldest Signal Box in regular use was generated with a slide of Milner Royd Jct box. Peter appears to have spent quite some time in the 90's near Merehead quarries photographing the aggregate trains, often with the Westbury white horse in the back drop. A very interesting evening with something to please every interest, even some steam! Vote of thanks by Eddy Lumb

15th April - Wade's Wanderings, presented by Eddy Lumb

In a change to the advertised programme Eddy presented a selection of Michael Wade's slides. These were mainly take-in the early 1960's. The first slide taken at the North Road scrapyard of Darlington works depicted a number of withdrawn

locomotives, including an ex NER 0-8-0 freight engine. By contrast an immaculate WD 2-8-0. Not for long I should imagine! Most of the next selection were taken north of the border, these included such gems as the ex GNofS Gordon Highlander as well as an ex LNER observation coach at Oban. It should be mentioned at this point that although Eddy had some brief captions on the slides, much debate was generated amongst the members present, the more knowledgeable being able to fill in the detail. Moving south a nice slide of the Beattie well tank which spent a large part of its later life on the Bodmin and Wadebridge line where the 2-4-0 wheel arrangement well suited the lightly laid sharply curved track. By contrast a head to head shot of a Western region Western class locomotive with the earlier Warship.

Next some nice slides taken on the Talylyn Railway, I suspect in 1991/2 at a time when BR were running excursions from the West Riding using the Trans-Pennine sets. These caused much interest on the Welsh lines running with the carriage destination boards, Hull-Liverpool. We saw slides of the Giesel fitted locomotive as well as the Locomotive 'Russell' behind the museum.

Another memorable RCTS Railtour from the West Riding headed for Scotland behind A4 'Golden Eagle' where at Carlisle Gavin Morrison was photographed by the locomotive, having travelled on the foot plate from Leeds. This brought back particular memories for your reviewer as he was also present on this train. Yet another rail tour travelled over the Pateley Bridge Branch. To conclude travelling overseas we visited Austria briefly, before moving on to Switzerland. I think at this stage we should thank Michael Wade for making these slides available to the Circle. I understand the slides shown tonight were only "the tip of the Iceberg" and that we can look forward to more Wadey's Wanderings in the future. We must also thank Eddy for putting the show together. Vote of thanks by our President Gary Hayhurst.

#### 29th April - The Route of the Master Cutler, by Ken Granger

After a couple of hitches - an accident on the M62 and lack of compatibility of slide magazines - the rearranged talk by Ken on the ex-GC Rly route from London Marylebone to Sheffield Victoria got under way. This route, known as the "Last Main Line", became one of the first to be closed in its northern stretches, despite the foresight of Sir Edward Watkin in building the line to European loading gauge with his eye on the possibility of a earlier Channel Tunnel. The slide show by Ken used mainly colour illustrations, I suspect from many sources, and was a station by station view of this most unique line. The characteristic design of the stations usually involved an elevated entrance to a island platform arrangement. Ken's enthusiasm for the line was evident from his knowledge of the workings during steam days, and in the latter days when through expresses had finished. Vote of thanks by Eddy Lumb

#### 13th May - Northern Rail, by Pete Myers

We were pleased to welcome Pete who gave a talk accompanied by a Power Point presentation. This covered the Northern Rail past, present and hopefully the future. He explained future developments including the forthcoming opening of stations at Apperley Bridge, Kirkstall and in the future Low Moor. The future of rail ticketing

was also explained. Mobile phones may well be able to be used to not only purchase tickets, but also to hold the ticket itself. The thorny problem of the much maligned Pacer trains was also touched upon. Am I the only person that quite likes them? Anyone for a Pacer preservation society? Will Gavin Morrison bring out a book "The Power of the Pacers" and the "Railway Magazine" publish Practice and Performance tables for them? On a more serious note time keeping and overcrowding issues were discussed. The question time, as expected, generated much further discussion. I asked why the Calder Valley service from Leeds via Dewsbury and Mirfield didn't run a Sunday service. The answer was that the trains used needed servicing! An enjoyable evening for which we must thank Pete for travelling from his home in Beverley to give this talk. VOT by Ian Button

#### 27th May - UK Mainline Steam, by Ben Collier.

This meeting started on a sad note with the news of the passing of long standing member Michael Wade. A one-minute silence was observed as mark of respect. Our talk and digital presentation followed with Ben showing a selection of his digital work taken mainly in the UK. Ben's style of photography where the train is often a small part of the scene very much appeals to your reviewer. The first image of the 'Tin Bath' double headed special leaving Huddersfield, with the Jubilee tower in the background taken over the roof tops of the town very much setting the scene. As a complete contrast mountainous scenes in the Scottish highlands were obviously taken after much effort in reaching a location. Ben seems to have the knack in not only climbing trees in order to get a better picture, but also in persuading ladies to allow access to attic windows. This resulted in an excellent view of Lockwood viaduct, again with the 'Tin Bath' special crossing. One picture taken on my home ground at Morley [Low] on wet winter evening of a Class 5 hauled special holds a particular memory for me as taking video at the same spot, my camera decided to play up. Hopefully we will see more of Ben's work in the future. Vote of thanks by Eddy Lumb

#### 10<sup>th</sup> June - To Germany and Austria for steam in 1969, by Noel Coates

When Noel comes to the Circle to give a show, we are usually talking Lancashire and Yorkshire, with much talk about Highflyers, Radial Tanks and Barton Wright. So as a complete change were taken overseas to Germany and Austria on a visit in 1969. Noel, with a group of friends and armed with two cameras (one soon failing) managed to photograph, mostly in black and white a wide range of still working steam. Noel seems to have had on the whole free access to most engine sheds. In some cases locomotives were stored scheduled for possible preservation., this being the case with a splendid Maffei four cylinder compound Pacific. Some of the pictures were in colour and this showed up the German way of painting the frames and wheels red. Old electric locomotives were also recorded, including the large crocodile Class E94, many of which were later to be found in use in Austria. Moving on into Austria, and indeed covering much of the standard gauge lines as well as some of the rack mountain lines. The somewhat unusual features of Austrian steam design, culminated



in the Golsdorf 2-6-4 four cylinder compound, with 7ft driving wheels! Of particular interest to your reviewer was the standard gauge mainline serving the Vordernberg iron ore mines, where the unique 297.401 2-12-2T is now preserved at Bhf Vordernberg. Noel also had the way of presenting his pictures in a very professional manner, something that your reviewer still has to master in this digital age! I expect Noel showed only a selection of this overseas tour as he also mentions travelling through France, so maybe he can be persuaded to give another show in the future. Vote of Thanks by Eddy Lumb

---

## Ben's Bits

Ben's "bit" about Bilbao in our last issue prompted Frank Robertshaw to send in some photos from a very recent trip, so we'll repeat Ben's paragraph to accompany the photos – and thank you, Frank!

"The station has a vast stained-glass window. The city's transporter bridge was the first in the world – the Puente Viscaya, built in 1893. Bilbao has a "scenic railway" – a roller-coaster on which brakemen ride the cars to ensure speeds are safe on bends."

-----

Zurich may be the busiest station in Europe – 24 platforms, 3000 trains a day, 300 thousand passengers a day – our could it be Paris Gare du Nord? Hamburg is the busiest in Germany, and Leeds is the second busiest in Britain outside London.

Ryde Pier's six class 483 emus, ex-London Transport tube stock of 1938 – are the oldest trains in use nationally.

The Brentford Branch railway crosses the Grand Union Canal and is itself crossed by a road, at Three Bridges.

The first recorded trainspotter – in 1861 – was at Paddington, and was Fanny Johnson, aged 14.

Before the first world war, the railways in Britain employed 500,000 people. 180,000 enlisted and 18,000 were killed. Two million soldiers were brought home by the railways.

Shimla Station, on the narrow-gauge Darjeeling-Himalaya railway, has 40 porters. Delhi Station, opened in 1903, now sees 70 million passengers each year. The fare from Delhi-Kalka (160 miles) is about £2.

The Strasburg Railroad in Lancashire County, Pennsylvania, is the oldest "short line" in the USA. It opened on June 9<sup>th</sup> 1832 and linked to the Philadelphia & Columbia



Railcar being manually turned at Coyocto, Ecuador. Track-bed of the Cuenca to Sibambe branch on the left. 6/7/2014  
Dave Peel



Bilbao Funicular

Frank Robertshaw



Transporter Bridge, Bilbao. 20/5/2014

Frank Robertshaw



Window at Bilbao Station

Frank Robertshaw



Railroad. The railway now has 18 special passenger coaches, luxuriously restored (the President's Car being the oldest). But since 1957 it has essentially been a freight-only line.

570 Pullman coaches remain in existence, 170 of which are owned by the Pullman Rail Journeys company.

When the St Petersburg-Moscow railway opened in 1851, it was the longest double-track railway in the world. The Trans-Siberian railway opened in 1904.

The Moscow Metro has feral dogs travelling on the trains. Some have been recognized as making regular "commuter" journeys. Pigeons sometimes hitch rides on London Underground trains.

Wilbur Aitcheson Trail built a hydro-electric tramway (250-volt system) to the Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland, in 1879. It was the first in the world, but closed in 1949. It reopened in 2005.

Cockerill 0-4-0 vertical-boilered tank loco *Yvonne*, works-number 1283, ex-Brussels Gasworks, is now on the Lavender Line, but is currently withdrawn for repair.

---

## Secretary's Page

**Peter Holden**

Everything is full steam ahead for the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dining train on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July. Literally so, as I was unable to convince the powers that be on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway to replace the steam loco with the class 37! I realise this will be a major disappointment to everyone, but all is not lost, we won't be having 37 075 hauling our train, but I have managed to talk them into putting a barrel of Ale on board so we won't all have to endure that silly French wine business!! Please can all participants meet in Oxenhope around 12:45 for a departure at 13:15. The trip finishes around 16:30. Remember your ticket is a Day Rover.

Can I ask all members to think about giving a talk next year? Please get in touch if you feel able to give a presentation next year.

### Forthcoming meetings

**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July** sees a visit from Sean English from Grand Central Railways. The open access operator runs trains from the north east and from Bradford Interchange to and from London Kings Cross. It should be most interesting to hear what plans they have for the future, especially in Bradford.

Ian Dougill will be visiting on **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July** to give a talk about "The Tramways of Leeds. Ian is Secretary of the Leeds Historical Transport Society,

which are a group who meet monthly in Leeds and appear to be predominantly concerned with trams. I am sure we can stretch our railway interest and enjoy what should be a most interesting talk.

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup>** August will be this year's "Outside Visit". Gary Hayhurst is to organise a day out "Trainspotting to Doncaster. I guess we have all done just that in the past? So let's all get our cameras, thermos flasks and butties packed! Last year we decided to travel over t' ill and sample various modes of transport in the Greater Manchester Area. The members who joined thoroughly enjoyed the day. Please make the effort to come along.

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>** August should see a visit from Simon Swain who will be presenting "Lost Lines to Nottingham" Whenever in the area you can't help but notice many closed lines from the train window. So it should be a most interesting evening.

Chris Nettleton returns to the Circle to present "Steam in and Around York" on **Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September**. I have one of Mike Marsden's DVDs on the subject and as we all know there was a lot of it about! Should be good.

Something a bit different on **Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September** when our good friend Mike Swift from Huddersfield Railway Circle will be presenting a talk on "Ravensthorpe, The Story of a Station". I am sure it will prove to a most interesting subject.

**Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> September** will see a visit from Peter Berry. Peter will be presenting "The Robert Whitfield Show", which is, as I'm led to believe, a rather marvellous collection of steam photographs. No doubt we will be in for a treat and a full house.

## Circle Diary 2015

	Jul 8 <sup>th</sup> .	Grand Central Railways	Sean English
	Jul. 22 <sup>nd</sup> .	Tramways of Leeds	Ian Dougill
	Aug.5 <sup>th</sup> .	Outside Visit	
C	Aug.19 <sup>th</sup> .	Lost Lines to Nottingham	Simon Swain
	Sep.2 <sup>nd</sup> .	Steam In and Around York	Chris Nettleton.
	Sep.16 <sup>th</sup> .	Ravensthorpe The Story of a Station	Mike Swift
P	Sep. 30 <sup>th</sup>	The Robert Whitfield Show, UK steam 1948-1958	Peter Berry
	Oct 14 <sup>th</sup> .	First Five Years of Digital Photography	Alan Ward
	Oct.28 <sup>th</sup> .	40 Years Back	John Holroyd
C	Nov.11 <sup>th</sup> .	Steam and Diesel in the West Riding	Jim Livesey
	Nov.25 <sup>th</sup> .	Still On Film, Another 200 to View	Paul Corrie
	Dec 9 <sup>th</sup> .	70 <sup>th</sup> AGM, followed by Member's Night.	
P	Dec. 23 <sup>rd</sup> .	Monsoon Tours - Faces & Places	Philip Lockwood

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

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