

# THE CIRCULAR

Bradford Railway Circle

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## Contents

### Page

1	Editorial	
2	Cash, The Clash . . . and Crepello	Spencer Vignes
5	A French Shed Bash	Gary Hayhurst
6	USA – from Trains Newswire	
15	Going To The Flicks	Chris Taylor
16	Japan Notes	Michael Leahy
19	Meeting Reports	Philip Lockwood
21	Invitation	
22	Special Traffic Notices	
24	Secretary's Page	Peter Holden
24	Circle Diary 2016	

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## Editorial

Apologies for the slightly delayed appearance of this issue, owing to various contributory factors. Anyway, an excellent variety of articles – thank you to all concerned.

Especial thanks to Michael Leahy for securing the permissions that enable us to read this issue's main article, which originally appeared in the DPS magazine Deltic Deadline – about how trains, and especially the Deltics, have inspired pop music composers and songwriters.

Members have been travelling all over recently, so we have articles about France, Canada and Japan; our Hon Sec is currently in Ukraine, so watch out for a piece about his trip in due course.

May I remind all members about subscription renewals due on 31<sup>st</sup> October – the appropriate form (also giving notice of the AGM in December) should be included with this issue.

# Cash, The Clash . . . and Crepello    Spencer Vignes

For as long as there have been trains, there have been songs about trains. I get that now, but it's taken three years for me to see the whole picture, all the while researching and writing my latest book "The Train Kept A-Rollin': How The Train Song Changed The Face of Popular Music" (Soundcheck Books). In that time I came to realise just how many songs have been written featuring trains either in their lyrics, rhythm, or in some cases both. We're not talking hundreds, but *thousands* of them. And, to my astonishment and I have to confess utter delight, it turns out that a few were inspired by our old friends the Deltics.

First, a bit of background. Back in the summer of 2013 I was driving along the M62 with my daughter Rhiannon for company when Elvis Presley came on the car radio singing 'Mystery Train'. Up went the volume and we sat in silence listening until the fade out, at which point Rhiannon (who was 10 at the time) turned to me and said "Daddy, why are there so many songs about trains?" The more I thought about it, the more I realised she had a point. That evening I entered the words 'train songs' into an internet search engine and up came a web page containing a list of over 1,000 tracks. Many were household names - 'Rock Island Line', 'Last Train to Clarksville', 'Midnight Train to Georgia', 'FreightTrain' - yet the closer I looked the more I began to notice the ones that weren't mentioned. Where was 'Train in Vain' by the Clash, 'Waterloo Sunset' by The Kinks and the myriad of other songs such as Cream's 'White Room' using railways as location settings for broader themes? I was never especially fond of 'You're Beautiful' by James Blunt, but who am I to argue with the millions seduced by the poignant tale of a man coming face to face with an ex-girlfriend and her new beau while trapped within the confines of a London Underground carriage?

In the wake of that car journey I looked for a book on the subject only to discover no such thing existed. That was the bad news. The good news was a lightbulb had gone off in my head. Here was a vast subject that no other author had ever properly explored before. I loved trains. I loved music. And so I decided to go out and capture the stories behind many of these songs before we lost any more of the greats renowned for their love of trains such as Johnny Cash, Lonnie Donegan and Pete Seeger. Not everyone I approached for an interview wanted to play ball (I'm sorry Mr Springsteen, but it's too late now) yet plenty did. Ray Davies, Nick Cave, Ian Anderson, Chas McDevitt, Ralph McTell, Francis Rossi, Peggy Seeger, Bryan Ferry, the list just went on and on, all of them spilling the beans about their love for the railways (or 'railroads' in the case of the Americans), what motivated them to write or perform various songs, plus their favourite train songs of all time recorded by other artists. It was supposed to be work, but it sure didn't feel like it.

Of course a book like this wouldn't be complete without the big hitters - 'Homeward Bound', 'Folsom Prison Blues', 'Smokestack Lightning', 'City of New Orleans' and what have you - but I also wanted to dig down below the 'A' list train songs and explore many of the lesser known ones including some of my own personal favourites. And that's where the Deltics started creeping in. While talking with the likes of Andy McCluskey of Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark and Chas Hodges, as

in Chas & Dave, it soon became clear that a sizeable number of faces within the music industry are either closet or out-and-proud rail enthusiasts with a deep-seated love of trains. Talk about opening a can of worms. The stories simply poured out about trains and hidden gems in terms of songs, among them the track 'Deltics' by Chris Rea.

Now way back in 1979, when I was 10 years old and had just joined the DPS, I remember a small piece appearing in an early issue of the Deadline about a young singer/guitarist from Teesside who had recorded an album called Deltics and was tipped for big things. That was Rea and the tip proved spot on. It was another few years before I had the money and inclination to invest in a copy, but what I heard turned me into a fan of his for life. The title track in particular, a rousing salute to iconic British and American trains, was and remains a thing of beauty ('Old train, take me back again, to the one that I love - Deltics'). Sadly Rea is a reluctant interviewee these days and my attempts to pin him down came to nothing, but in many ways he wasn't the man I wanted to speak to about Deltics. Oh no. Ian Naisbitt was my true goal, a top session drummer and lifelong railway enthusiast who not only played on the title track but provided Rea with the initial inspiration for the song. "I was telling him (Rea) about Deltics and in particular how powerful they were," Naisbitt told me a few months prior to his death in 2014 following a long illness. "He was a good listener, Chris, and I'm always full of talking. I told him 'You need to hear them'. Chris was well into his Ferraris and that, but I said 'No, you need to hear a Deltic start up mate. That'll blow a Ferrari away'. They had the noise the power, the speed, everything. They were just marvellous, unlike anything that had gone before or indeed been since, and exactly the kind of reason why people fall in love with trains. That was the beginning of how the song 'Deltics' came about".

Naisbitt recalled how Rea's band had nailed 'Deltics' in one take under the watchful eye of Elton John's producer Gus Dudgeon, before adding some fascinating vignettes about the album's artwork.. I remember that we were going to have a picture of a Deltic on the cover of the album as well. We'd been to the Science Museum where the prototype Deltic was and taken a load of great pictures of it, but the record company didn't like them. They didn't want a picture of a diesel locomotive on the front, so it ended up being one of Chris walking on the beach at Saltburn. It's a nice shot and one that a lot of people are familiar with now, so I suppose it served a purpose in that it helped raise Chris' profile. But I still think a Deltic would have been better!".

Andy McCluskey of Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark talked about how his passion for class 55s also stemmed from an encounter with the prototype at London's Science Museum, its pre-National Railway Museum home. "The first time I ever went to the Science Museum was as a 10-year old " he recalled. "I saw the big blue Deltic diesel, and that was it. A personal love affair of mine started at that moment. It was blue but it also had these cream flashing chevrons on the front. It looked staggering, very American with all the curves, but engineered in Britain. I've always had a soft spot for machinery but in particular for that Deltic diesel". McCluskey's infatuation even extended to naming Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark's thirteenth studio album English Electric. "We're English, and we were an electric band, still are," he explained

That's the analogy. But it's actually more about that love affair of mine with the big blue Deltic which has been there ever since I was 10. I don't think that will ever go away".

At this point I suppose I ought to hold back on the Deltic stories. I mean if I give you too much then you're not going to want to go out and buy the book, are you? What I will say is this - as the chapters started slowly falling into place, it gave me an immense sense of satisfaction to see the class 55s holding their own in the text alongside what you might call more mainstream material such as Johnny Cash's much documented love of the railroads, how 'Long Train Runnin' by the Doobie Brothers came to be written in a toilet, or the genesis of 'Midnight Train to Georgia' (involving The Six Million Dollar Man Lee Majors, a song that was originally called 'Midnight Plane to Houston', and Farrah Fawcett - seriously, you couldn't make this stuff up). I've been in love with the 55s since my father first took me to Kings Cross station on a Saturday afternoon at the turn of 1978 and *Royal Scots Grey* pulled in alongside us on Platform 1. *Meld* was my favourite and I well remember the pain I felt at her withdrawal relatively early on in the Deltic cull. The memory of *Tulyar* howling southbound through Sandy in April 1981 (I'd gone to stay with an old school friend but spent most of my time at the station instead -the friendship, needless to say, didn't last) will stay with me until I'm pushing up daisies. Likewise, *Crepello* majestically departing the Cross for Newcastle one sunny Sunday afternoon in April of '78. To have the prototype and her offspring in my book gives me an immense sense of pride and satisfaction.

And they're there on merit, without any false engineering from me, all because several of my interviewees wanted to talk about Deltics. How great is that? So why are there so many songs about trains? Simple. Singers, musicians and songwriters are inspired by what's around them. For almost 200 years trains have played an integral part in our lives. They have taken us to work. They have taken us on holiday. They have taken us to visit loved ones. They have separated us from loved ones. They have symbolised escape and freedom, even fear and oppression. They changed the social and economic landscapes of entire countries including Britain and the USA which would become the engine rooms of the entertainment world. Small wonder trains and railways feature so prominently in music. Tune your radio to any station playing country, blues, jazz, soul, folk or rock'n'roll and it won't be long before a train makes its way through the lyrics or tempo of a song. If there was such a thing as Skiffle FM then pretty much anything on the playlist would contain a train. My book is the story of how many of those songs came to be and what it is, or perhaps was, about the railways that seduced generations of musical talent from Birmingham, England, to Birmingham, Alabama.

Of course some of us were seduced by the railways to ridiculous extremes. Yep, that's you I'm talking about, plus Nigel Fletcher of the group Lieutenant Pigeon (anyone out there remember 'Mouldy Old Dough?'). Now Nigel is as mad about trains as anyone I've ever encountered. At the same time as he was appearing on Top of the Pops during the seventies, Nigel was carving out a healthy sideline making live

recordings of diesels including the Deltics which were subsequently released through the Argo Records label. Once the music career dried up he became a signalman with British Railways working on the Coventry to Nuneaton line. When Michael Palin was researching for an episode of the BBC TV series Great Railway Journeys of the World in 1980 (which featured a cameo appearance by 55022) he wrote to Nigel asking for his input. Noddy Holder, ex-frontman with the band Slade, still greets him with the words "Hello Nigel, how's the trains?" He even accompanied Pete Waterman when the record producer went to buy his very first diesel locomotive (25309, for the record books). "Basically I'm a trainspotter who got lucky in the recording industry," is Nigel's own honest assessment. "Trains are percussive. Trains sing. If you don't like trains, you probably don't like music either." So said Peggy Seeger, the first lady of folk music. And she's right. My word, how the Deltics used to sing - still do, thanks to the efforts of people such as the DPS. I'll leave you with this thought. In 1975, Ian Naisbitt and Johnny Cash bonded over trains during one of the 'Man in Black's European Tours. Cash would talk about his favourite American locomotives, and in return Naisbitt (who later became a DPS member) gushed enthusiastically about A3s, A4s.....and Deltics. Cash was by all accounts intrigued. It's just a shame the DPS wasn't founded until a couple of years afterwards, otherwise we might have had one of music's all-time greats as an early member. Now wouldn't that have been something?

Reprinted from "Deltic Deadline" magazine (Journal of the Deltic Preservation Society Ltd), issue 231 June/July 2016 - by permission of the authors & publishers. Thanks to Michael Leahy for noting the article and securing the necessary permissions for the Circle.

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## A French shed bash

**Gary Hayhurst**

This is the continuation of the visit to northern France by David Tillotson, Robin Patrick, John Hullett and myself in April 2016 [*see last Circular – Ed.*].

On Monday 18<sup>th</sup> April David requested that we should be at breakfast for 6.30 am as that day we had two depot visits and a train to catch to get us back to the UK.

This we managed to do and then left the hotel at about 7 am to go towards Rouen which is south from Abbeville. Near Rouen on a motorway we had to follow a diversion that took us through the heart of Rouen at the peak morning rush hour.

Fortunately the car's sat-nav kept us on course until we neared Alizay where we went round in a loop so we had to start guessing where to go. This was not helped by a large bank of fog; we could hear trains in the distance but could not see where to go.

Eventually a post office was spotted and John went in to make inquiries in his best French. He came back with some directions and just by sheer luck we found the depot down a dirt track.

This depot is for Eurocargo locos and is also the storage yard for many of the class 58s that were used in France and Spain when Spain had gauge conversion work. It was still thick fog but we went into the shed and saw a number of class 60s which are used by Eurocargo - many are ex-UK locos and have long EU numbers on the side.

As we left the shed we were met by bright sunlight and the fog had lifted so we could see the two lines of class 58s and some other class 66s outside. Also standing on its own was a large white loco. The number was G2000BB. Check on internet later reveals this to be a diesel hydraulic by Vossloh and when production started in year 2000, they were the most powerful diesel hydraulics in Europe. None of the engines were running but at least 6 men were working on the class 66s in the shed. We bid our goodbyes and set off for the large SNCF works at Rouen. The last time we were here was 3 years ago when David managed to persuade the person in charge to give us a tour round. However this time it was an official visit with two younger employees to give us a conducted tour of the works.

For such a large works it did not seem that busy, the emphasis seemed to be on modernization of freight locos with one to two going through the works on a weekly basis. Also some locos had been modified to create a powerful shunter and slave for trip workings. I believe that there has been a contraction in work for SNCF within France and this may reflect the reason the works were not so busy. There were several new builds for infrastructure work and were about the size of a diesel shunter.

Rouen is also responsible for the maintenance and repair of TGVs and many of the cab nose cones were on display, these being made out of fiberglass. We had just over an hour looking round the depot before we had to leave in order to reach the port for our trip back on the shuttle to England.

However we did have time to take photos of the large marshalling yard at Sotteville near the works where over 500 locos both diesel and electric are stored. Many of these locos appeared to be ones we had seen three years ago. At the French shuttle port after loading up with some duty free wine we managed to catch the shuttle an hour earlier and after dropping off John Hullett at Peterborough services we were back to David's house at Bolton Percy for about 8.30 pm.

Once again thank you to David for arranging the depot visits and all the driving.

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## **USA - From Trains Newswire (via Gary Hayhurst)**

### Bad times for locomotives, train crews, and maintenance shop workers

By Bill Stephens | August 12, 2016

With North American rail traffic down 7.1 percent through the first half of the year – and coal traffic plunging 30 percent — it's not a good time to be a train crew member, a shop employee, or an aging road locomotive. All have had their ranks cut as railroads slash costs to weather the downturn.



Alizay near Rouen - ex-BR classes 58 & 66

Gary Hayhurst



Alizay near Rouen - ex-EWS 66216 showing new EU number

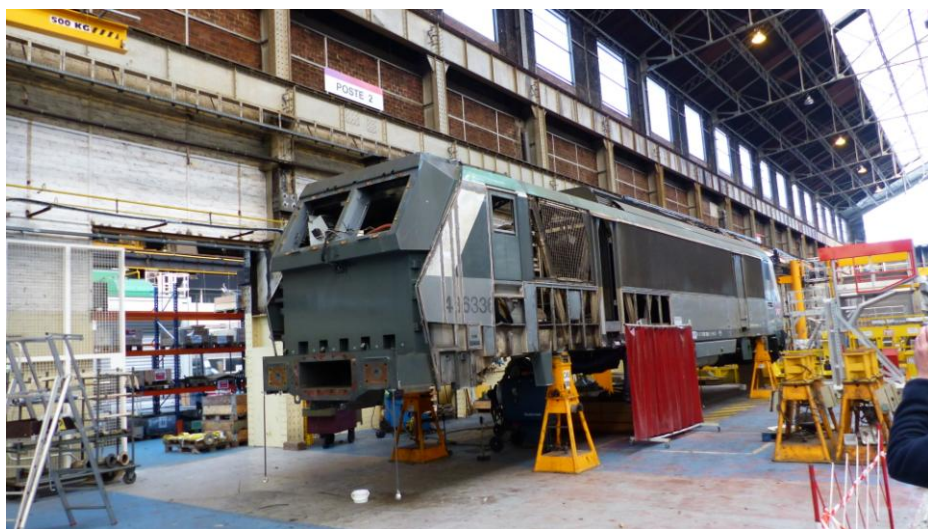
Gary Hayhurst





Sotteville yard 18<sup>th</sup> April 2016 - stored locos

David Tillotson



SNCF Rouen works - heavy rebuild in progress

Gary Hayhurst



Employment at the six big Class I railroads in North America has decreased by more than 23,000 positions, or nearly 12 percent, in the 12-month period ending June 30, according to a Trains News Wire review of quarterly earnings reports and federal data.

People in train and engine service have taken the brunt of the cutbacks. In the U.S., Class I train and engine crew positions were down 18 percent through mid-June, according to Surface Transportation Board figures that include the American subsidiaries of Canadian railways.

Nearly 9 percent of other transportation-related positions have been eliminated in the U.S., along with 12 percent of executive, professional, and administrative positions, and 6 percent of maintenance-of-way workers, according to the latest STB data.

Mechanical forces also have been hit hard, with an 8.7 percent reduction in the U.S., STB data shows. With fewer cars on line, and fewer locomotives in service, there's not as much repair work to go around.

The industry-wide drop in employment is not all layoffs. Railroads have also reduced their employee headcounts through attrition. And with so many train and engine employees furloughed, there are fewer people in the training pipeline.

Kansas City Southern has been the only Class I exception to this trend as its overall traffic has held steady. Although 7 percent of its U.S.-based train crews were laid off as of June 30, the railway's overall headcount in the U.S. and Mexico remained essentially the same as 2015.

Railroads say they will bring people back to work once traffic rebounds. But employment levels may lag a traffic recovery. With merchandise and intermodal trains generally operating below capacity, railroads will be able to fill out trains before increasing the number of train starts and, therefore, the number of crews they need.

The decline of coal, crude oil, grain, and potash traffic through the first half of the year had an outsized effect on train crew layoffs because these bulk commodities tend to move in unit trains. Coal volumes will remain challenged through the rest of the year, officials say, and crude has virtually dried up.

But grain offers some hope for furloughed crews. Every unit train added to the lineup is an additional train start. Grain shipments are picking up in both the U.S. and Canada and are expected to be strong in the second half of 2016 and into 2017.

As of June 30, the Class I systems had more than 4,000 locomotives in storage – or more than 14 percent of the total North American fleet. (The figures do not include BNSF Railway, which did not respond to requests regarding the status of its fleet.) Railroads that are taking delivery of new fuel-efficient models are quickly storing the oldest, thirstiest units.

In the East, CSX and Norfolk Southern had a total of 800 units – or about 10 percent of their fleets – in storage at the end of the second quarter.

At CSX, the storage line – now at 350 units – is likely to grow by the end of the year as it takes delivery of about 65 new locomotives that will complete an order placed in 2014, Chief Financial Officer Frank Lonegro said during the railroad's second quarter earnings call. "I doubt you would see us in the market for new locomotives" in 2017 and 2018, Lonegro says. But it's likely that over the next two

years the railroad will invest in rebuilding some of its four-axle switching and local service fleet, he says.

NS, which has 450 units in storage, will receive the final 50 units of a multi-year order in 2017. Then it will focus on rebuilding units instead of buying new. “We continue to progress down the really innovative DC-to-AC rebuild strategy that we have in place, which over the next several years will allow us to bring the age of our fleet down and get good locomotives at a much lower capital cost than new,” Chief Operating Officer Mike Wheeler said during the railroad’s second quarter earnings call.

In the West, UP had 1,700 of its 8,400 units in storage as of June 30. UP will take delivery of 70 new units next year, the final locomotives in an order placed in 2014. They will be UP’s last new power for the foreseeable future, Chief Financial Officer Rob Knight says.

If BNSF had the same percentage of units in storage as UP, it would have 1,600 units parked, or roughly 20 percent of its fleet.

The Canadian railways have more surplus locomotives than their American counterparts. CN has about 530 units – or 24 percent of its fleet – in storage, spokesman Mark Hallman says. Canadian Pacific had 674 units sidelined as of July 1, spokesman Martin Cej says. That’s 44 percent of its 1,515-unit fleet.

Much of CP’s motive power surplus stems from the 2012 arrival of CEO E. Hunter Harrison and his precision railroading operating model. Even before the downturn, CP had parked hundreds of locomotives. The railway expects to take a “locomotive holiday” and not purchase any new power for the next several years, Harrison has said.

None of this is good news for locomotive builders. Progress Rail, which owns EMD, would not comment on its production outlook. GE Transportation would not provide specifics on its outlook. GE Transportation’s results were mixed and continue to be reflective of the challenging external environment – low oil and commodity prices, and declining North American carloads continue to impact order and production volume,” spokeswoman Mailee Garcia says. “We’ve had a strong focus on cost management and productivity as we navigate this cycle, with a focus on global competitiveness. Despite the challenging market, we are in a strong position to help customers improve productivity and efficiency.”

GE celebrated a milestone in July as the 1,000th locomotive rolled out of its 3 1/2-year-old assembly plant in Fort Worth, Texas. It might be the last celebration for a while. Locomotive production for the North American market will be anemic in 2017 and 2018.

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187 at Klosters Platz, 18<sup>th</sup> August 2016



415 at Bergun, 19<sup>th</sup> August 2016



649 at Davos Platz, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2016

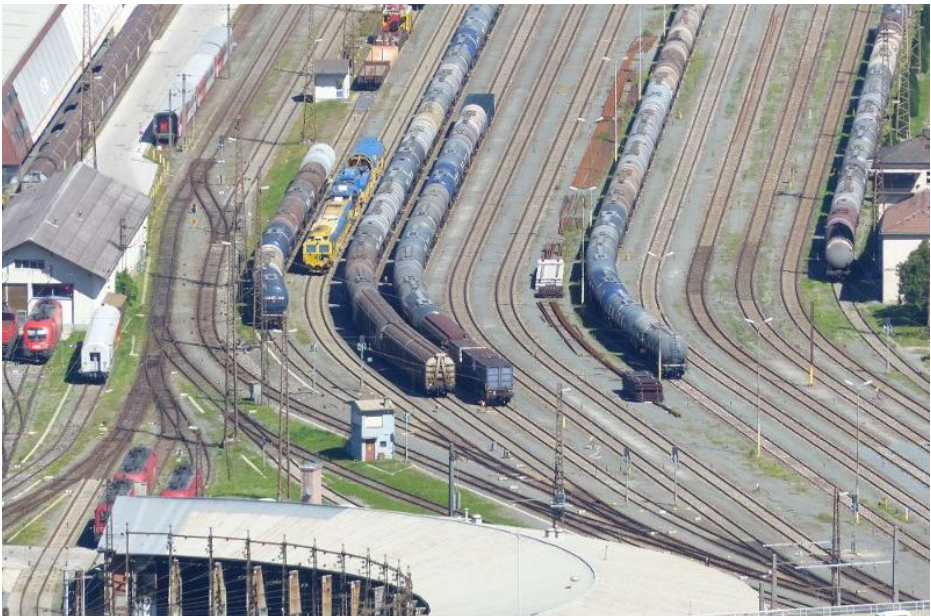


415 at Davos Platz, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2016





Tram 371 at Innsbruck, 24<sup>th</sup> August 2016



View of Innsbruck station sidings (from the top of the ski jump), 24<sup>th</sup> August 2016



Zillertalbahn No.5, Schlitters 28<sup>th</sup> August 2016



Achenseebahn No.4, Jenbach, 28<sup>th</sup> August 2016

## Going to the Flicks

Chris Taylor

We flew specially to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA from Manchester UK, to see a 45 minute IMAX film entitled “Rocky Mountain Express”. That is over 3000 miles each way just to see a 45 minute film. In truth we flew from Manchester to Philadelphia 17 days previously and visited Niagara Falls and Boston amongst other places.

We checked in at Philadelphia Airport at 1340 for our 2040 flight home to Manchester, so with 7 hours to spare we decided to catch the train to 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station, the main station in Philadelphia in order to view an IMAX film at the Franklin Institute, around 10 minutes walk from 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station. The Franklin Institute is similar to our Science Museum. We duly booked our tickets for the 1515 (sorry this is USA so it is 3.15pm) screening. The IMAX theatre in the Franklin Institute is different to the one in Bradford at the National Media Museum. The screen is a dome shaped not curved as at Bradford. *(Note we checked in very early for our flight home to avoid paying for another 24 hours for car hire when we would have got only a couple hours of use, after all we are Yorkshiremen).*

The IMAX film was filmed in 2007 and Chris Davis and I saw the filming around Banff, having followed the train over the Rockies. We talked to the director and cameraman, Stephen Low, at Banff. The film was released in 2011 and was on show at various USA IMAX cinemas but only three in Europe, in Holland, France and Switzerland.

The film tells the story of the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway in the 19<sup>th</sup> century across the Rocky Mountains. Quite a substantial footage comprises aerial shots of a Hudson class steam locomotive - Canadian Pacific #2816 a 4-6-4 locomotive which was built by Montreal Loco Works in 1930 and restored to working order in 2001. Some of the footage was on the front of a diesel locomotive, which is the part we saw being filmed. The locomotive used for this was a brand new GE ES44AC diesel locomotive, a Canadian Pacific loco # 8817.

“Across the continent the obstacles were daunting: the Precambrian Shield featured 700 miles of granite, impenetrable boreal forest and uncountable lakes. The shield was followed by 300 miles of muskeg (machinery-swallowing bogs) and a windswept desert of grass 800 miles wide. Finally, to reach the Pacific’s ragged and little-explored coastline, the builders would need to penetrate the ultimate barrier: a range of mountains rising 8,000 feet above sea level. And beyond it another range. And beyond that, another mountain range. The Rockies, the Selkirk and the Monashee mountains: four hundred miles of rocky, snow-peaked chaos punctuated by deep chasms and roaring river gorges—some of the most stunning and unforgiving territory a railway surveyor ever set eyes upon. It was engineering insanity.” “All aboard for the ultimate in romantic railway travel. Rocky Mountain Express, a new giant screen experience for IMAX® theatres by award-winning filmmaker Stephen Low is rolling into IMAX theatres”.

The film starts in Vancouver, British Columbia and finishes at Banff, Alberta, a distance of over 800 kilometres. Archive film is used as well as a



significant footage alongside the line, aerial shots of the Hudson steam locomotive as well as camera shots on the front of the Royal Hudson and the diesel locomotive.. Filming started in 2006 and the film was completed in 2011. Restored archival film was used with 3D maps to give an incredible experience. The 15 perforations/70mm negative film was used with 6 channel sound. The aerial shots utilised a Aerostar Squirrel helicopter with a remotely controlled gyro-stabilised camera to produce near vibration free film. To achieve a truly “being-there” experience for the giant screen, the camera was mounted on various locations on the steam locomotive itself: from the cowcatcher on the front of the engine to the frame with shots of the driving wheels and on the cab roof (suitable tied down). There are dramatic night shots as well. Filming with the camera attached to the cowcatcher on the front of the steam locomotive was restricted to the flatter sections of the route with gentle acceleration as when climbing uphill and working hard the camera would have been shaken so much to make the result unusable even if the camera had not been torn from its mounts. Canadian Pacific fully co-operated in the making the film.

Unfortunately the Franklin Institute’s screen is a dome. This made it difficult to see the full picture at the same time. It stretched the peripheral vision somewhat so what not a nice experience. As well the picture suffered distortion at the edges due to the dome shape of the screen. When the film comes to Bradford (if ever) the distortion hopefully will not be there due to the different shape of the screen

The Franklin Institute also has a railway section called “The Train Factory” The prime exhibit is a steam locomotive #60000, built by Baldwin in 1926 as a prototype compound locomotive. It is a 4-10-4 with a water tube firebox with a steam pressure of 350 lbs psi and an area of 82.5 square feet). It was the 60,000th locomotive built by Baldwin. It has 3 cylinders (1 high pressure and 2 low pressure and weighed 700,900 lbs in working order or in proper language 350 short tons (308 imperial tons). The tender could carry 14.5 tonnes of coal and 10,000 imperial gallons of water. (*As a comparison a LMSR Duchess class had 50 square feet firebox, carried 10.2 tons of coal and 4,000 gallons of water*). Under test the locomotive produced 4,500 hp but it could only be used on the on the straightest and heaviest track due to its length and weight.. It was sold to the Franklin Institute for \$1. The locomotive as exhibited moves 15 feet, so you can drive it. Hydraulics are used.

I would recommend seeing the Rocky Mountain Express IMAX film if you get a chance. There is short trailer & other information on their website at <http://www.rockymountainexpressfilm.com/film/trailer/> or try looking on Youtube. The film is now available on Blue Ray disc.

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## Japan Notes

## Michael Leahy

In December 2015 I made a brief trip to Japan to see my brother, flying from Leeds/Bradford to Kansai Osaka via Schiphol, a journey of 14 hrs 25 min & 6029 miles. I made my way from the airport to his flat in Maiko using express coach, train



Looking ahead between Maiko & Himeji ....6/12/2015

Michael Leahy



One of the HST things approaching Kyoto , 4/12/2015

Michael Leahy



Sanyo Electric Railway at Himeji ...3611 & 3638

Michael Leahy



Sanyo Electric Railway - coming back 8615

Michael Leahy

& taxi. The view from his 10th floor flat takes in the inland sea, Akashi Kaikyo bridge & in the distance 3 x 2 line railway tracks. They provide a constant stream of various passenger trains & a regular container train service.

We managed several train journeys from Maiko to Kyoto (railway museum closed), Kobe & also Himeji, the latter using one of the private railway companies. We used the suburban fast & semi fast trains, none of that high speed type stuff. The trains were on time, busy, clean & you can see out of the front!

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## Meeting Reports

## Philip Lockwood

### 22nd June - Scottish Railways Miscellany 1978-1981 John Bromfield

Tonight's digital presentation by John showed pictures originally from slides taken in the period 1978 to 1981. Some of the slides had started to fade and had needed some work to improve them digitally. The content was excellent including a signal cabin with the name BROMFIELD which I am sure John would have liked on his wall! This was from Bromfield near Ludlow. But the main subject tonight was Scotland, starting in Glasgow with the St Enoch Hotel and a visit to the then-closed Glasgow Underground system. John was able to walk through one of the tunnels to view the soon to be replaced tube stock. This is similar to the London system but of a narrower gauge, and I would guess with a much more claustrophobic feel. Next, the Waterside mine system in Ayrshire complete with Andrew Barclay 0-6-0 tank engines of 1913 vintage. From Glasgow Queen St we visited all points north with what is now vintage diesel propulsion, Oban, Fort William and the Connell Ferry Bridge, now road transport only. Also visited were the last remaining Peat railways in Scotland with some very basic motive power from Messrs Simplex and Ruston. We finally called in at the Falkirk preservation site with the under-repair LNER 4-4-0 *Morayshire*. We ended with a ride over the Forth Railway Bridge bringing to a close the evening of Scottish Railways. VOT by Eddy Lumb

### 6 July - Tourist Trains of Ecuador and Peru, by Dave Peel

Tonight's talk by our Country Member David Peel was a show with slides of two holidays in South America. The first, to Ecuador, was by special tourist train on the 3ft gauge system. The train comprised four coaches plus baggage car, one of the coaches having an open observation platform at the rear. The journey accomplished without rack assistance reached an altitude of 13,000 feet. Scenery was spectacular in a land with 47 active volcano's. A surprise visit to a rose farm where multi-colour roses are grown and exported worldwide. We were well supplied with maps and gradient profiles and your reviewer did wonder if we would be tested at the end, knowing David's background as a teacher! The highlight was probably the renowned "Devil's Nose" which required several reverse switch backs to make the ascent without rack assistance. The journey at this stage was accomplished with diesel traction although steam by way of a Baldwin 2-8-0 was used on the less challenging sections.

We moved on after the tea interval sustained without needing oxygen to combat altitude sickness, to Peru. This tour with the aim of visiting the famous Inca city of Machu Picchu was equally spectacular, starting with a 10 hour journey by standard gauge. This was 74 miles, 31 miles of which were at a gradient of 1 in 32 and 43 miles at 1 in 24. Transferring to 3ft narrow gauge for the journey to Machu Picchu. Time to photograph an even more opulent train named "The Hiram Bingham" named after the American who first re-discovered Machu Picchu in 1910. An interesting fact is the lack of any road access to the nearby town - all passengers and goods must arrive by rail. A fascinating talk with excellent slides and maps - we must thank David for travelling north to give this show. The vote of thanks was given by Ian Button.

#### 20<sup>th</sup> July – Looking Back I Enjoyed It, by Bill Jagger (report by Ian Button)

Following on from Dave Peel's trip to Peru, Bill entertained us with the story of his own South American trip. Different lines were traversed, this time in the north of Peru, and Bill also managed to see the restored steamer on Lake Titicaca, which had escaped Dave. As before, the scenery was stupendous, and the photos excellent – thank you very much, Bill.

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> August – Great Northern Outpost, Part 1 – The Bradford & Thornton Railway, by Jan Rapacz and Alan Whitaker

This local and much lamented line has created great interest with the publication of a new full-colour book on the line - this no doubt accounted for the large attendance for this talk. Alan, the son of the last Station Master at Thornton on this line, explained how despite the best efforts to drum up customers the line was finally closed. The co-author of the book, Jan, dealt mainly with the acquisition of suitable colour slides for inclusion and talked at some length of his methods in improving what are now historical slides, many having needed work to remove finger prints, colour loss and the results of poor storage. Both authors obviously have fond memories of the line, having lived close to it in their formative years and are now putting together material for Volume Two. We must thank them for coming along to speak to us tonight. Vote of thanks by Eddy Lumb.

#### 17<sup>th</sup> August – Pioneer Line, the Midland Electrification to Morecambe, by Jamie Guest

It is probably well known to anyone with an interest in model railways that Jamie is a dyed in the wool Midland Railway enthusiast, his large 0 gauge model "Long Preston" having been on the exhibition circuit for some time. The 1907 plan by the Midland Railway to trial electrification on the line from Lancaster to Morecambe would, because of the Midland interest, plus Jamie's interest in tramways be sure to interest him. By chance original drawings came into his possession enabling him to design a suitable 0 gauge model. The illustrated talk using maps and historical photographs, plus pictures of the model under construction painted a very clear impression of how the finished model would look. Building in 0 gauge requires a lot of space and



not surprisingly the layout can only be set up in a large exhibition hall or his local Church!. So it was no surprise that Jamie was on the lookout for a house with a large shed attached. What was a surprise was that the house and shed was to be in France! So Jamie will get his large shed to house the new layout and his wife will get her swimming pool. Hopefully we will have another talk by Jamie before he departs these shores. Vote of thanks by Eddy Lumb.

31<sup>st</sup> August – A Swiss Mixture, by Philip Lockwood (report by Ian Button)

An excellent talk by Philip, covering his travels in various parts of Switzerland. Interesting subjects, fabulous scenery and splendid photos of all types of railway subjects, and various ages & liveries of locos and trains, backed by Philip's extensive knowledge of the subject. Thank you, Philip, we will look forward to more talks on this most interesting railway country.

14<sup>th</sup> September – RCTS Railtours 1950's & 1960's, by Gavin Morrison

We must thank Gavin for stepping in at short notice due to our planned speaker being unavailable. Gavin, probably better known for his monochrome and slide photography, has now embraced the digital era - in this case, scanned slides and prints from his collection. The pictures were taken whilst on RCTS rail tours or whilst chasing the same. As we would expect from Gavin, the quality was excellent, and indeed Gavin was able to work on one or two poorer slides taken in dull conditions, to bring them up to projection standard. I only managed a few of the rail tours covered tonight. One was the "Three Summits Railtour" to Scotland with the remarkable performance of A4 Pacific *Golden Eagle* on the return lap, with Gavin on the footplate and me in the rear coach. It was quite something to experience especially on the Ingleton Branch! Another one was the Festiniog Railtour where half of the party experienced a derailment in the Conway Valley, though both Gavin and I had, as it turned out, wisely taken the direct route via Caernarvon. The movement of locomotives to work rail tours didn't seem much of a problem in those days with southern engines venturing north, and who would have expected to see a Stanier Pacific at Leeds. Vote of thanks by Ian Button.

28<sup>th</sup> September – Steaming around Britain, by David Tillotson

Steaming around Britain, or as David explained 'Steam everywhere, everywhere steam'. As you can guess this covered David's extensive travels to photograph mainly steam trains. As these were all taken in the pre digital age using transparency film they are already becoming of historical interest. We started with a good selection of pictures taken at Bolton Percy virtually in sight of David's home. So by virtue of tip offs about special trains or nice lighting conditions he was able to get a good selection of pictures. Many pictures were taken either on Circle visits, or visits organised by David. Two in particular that I participated on were the pre-opening visit to the new museum 'Locomotion' at Shildon and the works open day at Crewe. So we had standard gauge, narrow gauge and even Thomas the tank engine photographed on the M1! Thanks David for a varied selection of pictures. VoT by Ian Button.

## Invitation

Would anyone who has bought a copy of Jan Rapacz & Tony Whittaker's book about the Bradford-Thornton Railway like to contribute a review of the book. The authors have invited us to review the book for them. I am sure many Circle members have bought copies of this book, which is of great local interest – so if anyone would like to take this up please contact the Editor.

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## 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.
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## Ben's Bits

In the Meccano Magazine for January 1953 there is a photo of the experimental lifting barrier type of level crossing, on the USA/Canadian pattern, just installed at Warhill on the NER between York & Hull. Is this location correct, can any member inform us?



In 1961 Mr Macmillan sanctioned the demolition of the Euston Arch, the monumental classical structure at the southern end of the London to Birmingham Railway. It was built in granite. Bits of it have been discovered dumped in the Thames. [*Some is also reputed to lie under a nearby car-park laid out soon after its demolition – Ed.*]

London Bridge Station is the oldest terminus in London – it was opened in 1836. It is the fourth busiest terminus in London, with 56 million passengers a year.

There is a plaque on the Forth Railway Bridge, which reads “Forth Bridge, commenced April 1883. Opened by H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, March 4<sup>th</sup> 1890”. There is another plaque which gives the names of the directors – Sir Matthew William Thompson, Bart., Chairman, plus the Secretary and directors, the engineers Sir John Fowler, Bart., KCMG, Sir Benjamin Baker KCMG, Chief Assistant Engineer Allan Duncan Stewart, Resident Engineer Frederick Eastment Cooper, and the Contractors Tancred Arrol & Company.

The main members of the bridge were formed and riveted by boilermakers.

The locomotive *Scots Guardsman* 46115 of 1927 appeared in the film “Night Mail” – the GPO documentary about the Travelling Post Office from London to Scotland. The film included the poem by W H Auden (“*This is the Night Mail crossing the Border, bringing the cheque and the postal order . . .*” and music by Benjamin Britten, and was made on a shoestring budget.

Mauretania has the longest trains in the world – up to 3km long (over 1¾ miles).

San Sebastian has the steepest funicular, rising 160 metres in 312 metres (gradients from 32% – 58%). The original rolling stock is still in use.

The collapse of Stephenson’s cast iron bridge over the River Dee at Chester in 1847, with the resulting 5 deaths of passengers in a train that was crossing, meant that wrought iron was favoured over cast iron after this.

Scarborough got its railway in 1845 – a year before Bradford. The seat 456 ft long was installed to accommodate passengers on excursion trains, the longest of which was organized by brewing company Bass.

The 2’ 3” gauge Talyllyn Railway didn’t close before being run by the preservation society (the first railway preservation society in the world). The inspector of railways said that he wouldn’t have allowed it to be reopened if it had been new. The Festiniog Railway closed in 1946 and reopened in 1954.

## Secretary's Page

## Peter Holden

Once more, not a great deal to report at the moment. I am working on booking speakers for next year's meetings at the moment. A few volunteers would be nice from amongst our members. Otherwise I may have to dig some rotten pictures out!! Please contact me if you are willing to present a talk. It has been suggested we could have two people giving a short presentation on the same night, again please contact me should you be interested. Also if you can pass on any contact details of a speaker you feel appropriate, please do so.

### Forthcoming meetings

**Wednesday 12th October** will see Jim Bennett presenting a selection from his marvellous video footage on Wednesday 21st December. "Run VT (unedited)" is Jim's title. Please come along and enjoy the moving world of railways. I will be in the Ukraine at the time.

**Wednesday 26th October** is the date when John Holroyd will be presenting "Forty & Fifty years back" 1966 and 1976. I don't remember much about 1966, but I left school and started work in 1976. Let's see what John will remind us of from those years.

**Wednesday 9th November** will see Tom Ickringill presenting a photography competition. Make note it's gone very digital instead of slides. Please make the effort to enter. Sparing no expense, the competition judge will be Ian Button (make note to dig out some GWR pictures!).

David Wilkinson will be presenting a talk on "The London Underground" on **23rd November**. A very interesting, but massive topic – it should be most interesting.

Our seventy-first AGM takes place on **7th December**. How thrilling! Hopefully the Members' Night contributions afterwards will help to get us over the state of depression following the AGM! Bring a few pictures to show us.

Saving the best for last? On **21st December**, Eddie Lumb presents a further selection of Mike Wade's Slides. "Wandering with Wadey" is the title. Plenty of 1960's steam no doubt.

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## Circle Diary 2016

	Oct 12th.	**Run VT (unedited).	Jim Bennett
	Oct.26th.	Forty & Fifty Years Back.	John Holroyd
C	Nov.9th.	Photography Competition.	Tom Ickringill
	Nov.23rd.	London Underground.	David Wilkinson
	Dec 7th.	71st AGM, followed by Member's Night.	
P	Dec. 21st.	**Wandering With Wadey.	Eddie Lumb

\*\* - these two talks have been swapped over, compared with previous lists

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

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