

DECEMBER 2007

Well-known photographer and author, Hugh Ballantyne, was the guest presenter in December. This was Mr Ballantyne's fourth visit to Burton Railway Society, his first being in 1994 when he presented a show on the LMS 8P locomotives. This time his presentation was entitled 'BR Traction in the Deltic Era - 1961 to 1981'.

As this period began in 1961 one could have expected examples of steam traction featuring in the show as Mr Ballantyne is a prominent photographer who is renowned for his efforts in recording railway history. In his introduction, he said that if anyone in the audience was expecting to see a multitude of steam locomotive images, they would probably be disappointed for on this occasion the show would comprise mainly the diesel and electric traction that was in operation during the two decades of the review period. However, as the show progressed, there were a few occasions when images of steam traction did appear - these were mainly shots of steam locomotives which had diesel pilots as a result of other operational requirements or that the steam locomotives were in a transit movement which necessitated the need for towing by a diesel locomotive.

As rail enthusiasts are aware, 1961 to 1981 was the period when a vast change in the railway system took place; there was traction changeover from steam to diesel and electric, major changes in infrastructure and of course rationalisation – the latter mostly as a result of the infamous 1963 Beeching Report which began an era of numerous route closures. On the motive power side, traction featured in the review included Classes 08, 17, 25, 31, 33, 35, 37, 40, 44, 45, 46, 47, 50, 52, 55, 56, 71, 76, 81, and 86 plus a variety of diesel and electric multiple units.

The review began with a series of photographs depicting Class 08 diesel shunter No 08113 hauling china clay wagons on the Wenford Bridge branch. These pictures were followed by a powerful shot of a brace of Class 50 diesels in charge of a Penzance to Plymouth express at Burngullow, located to the west of St Austell. The ornate and colourful station at this Cornish town provided a splendid backdrop for a delightful photograph of a 7-coach IC125 set forming a London bound express which sported the original blue and yellow livery. At the time of viewing many of the photographers in the audience would have recalled how photogenic the high-speed train has been since its introduction during the late 1970s.

As the review period incorporated the transition from steam to diesel and electric traction it was not surprising that the earlier generation of modern traction featured strongly. In this respect Class 43 Warship D816 'Eclipse' was a classic example as it powered a westbound Wolverhampton to Penzance "Cornishman" service near Dainton Tunnel in the early 1960s.

Bath Road diesel depot (coded 82A) situated at the western end of Temple Meads station was transformed from a steam shed during the early part of the 1960s and provided the setting for a shot which illustrated the "modern traction" which was in regular use on Bristol area diagrams. This particular photograph incorporated blue liveried Class 52s, a green Hymek and a Peak resting between duties on the shed yard.

At regular intervals Mr Ballantyne made interesting reference to historical events. One such was when a colourful shot of Class 50 50019 'Ramillies' appeared on screen. The presenter explained that the train in question was passing Beam Bridge on Whiteball Bank on the Somerset-Devon border and 50019 was in charge of the 08.10 Penzance to Liverpool on this

day. He pointed out that this location claimed fame on 9 May 1904 when ex-GWR locomotive 3440 'City of Truro' stormed down the bank at a recorded speed of 102.3 mph. It was noted that the Class 50 was moving at a much slower speed.

The North British Type 2s were another WR first generation diesel locomotives. This class was represented with a shot of D6353 at Wookey, a location situated on the Witham to Yatton line which ran through Shepton Mallet. This 1963 picture was taken a short while prior to the line's closure.

Clink Road Junction, at the eastern end of the Frome avoiding line, witnessed the passage of a red liveried Class 52 1054 'Western Governor' hauling a rake of the new blue and white coaching stock in July 1967 whilst in charge of the 06.45 Plymouth to Paddington express.

Another NBL Type 2 (later designated Class 22), however this time sister locomotive D6325 in rail blue livery, was recorded at Midford Viaduct on the ex-Somerset & Dorset Railway hauling a track-lifting train. The presenter noted that he believed this locomotive may have been the very last one to have passed over the impressive viaduct as it hauled its rake of wagons past the quaint Midford signalbox. This was followed by a sequence of photographs that depicted other scenes on the S&DR. A diesel multiple unit forming a RCTS special was seen at Radstock where the small engine shed was clearly visible.

Moving round the country, the next region the pictorial review took in was the London Midland. The first example being a 3-car electric multiple unit forming a North London train to Richmond awaiting departure from London's Broad Street station - a station which was systematically run-down and then closed on 30 June 1886 to all traffic.

This was followed by a BR Sulzer Type 4 Peak heading 1C49 an up Midland Main Line express to London St Pancras, followed by the fine picture of one of the original Peaks - D5 'Cross Fell' hauling a rake of 16-tonne mineral wagons on the down Corby line at Glendon Junction in April 1975.

Railway infrastructure was the key factor in the picture taken in 1981 of the work involved during the construction of the new station at Milton Keynes. Another shot captured a recently outshopped Class 56 56066 at Bennerley where the impressive structure that once carried the ex-Great Northern line featured prominently. The large diesel maintenance depot at Toton, situated on the Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire border played host to sister locomotive 56036. This June 1979 photograph depicted the locomotive sporting the experimental large logo livery. Another photograph depicting an historical piece of infrastructure showed a Class 31 locomotive collecting a rake of wagons from the siding adjacent to the shed at Hellifield. The shed was the resting place for some of the locomotives which had been earmarked for preservation, but I believe by the time this picture was taken they had been allocated to other centres for restoration.

After the break, the review continued with further examples on the London Midland Region. Garston station in 1977 provided a timeless setting for an ex-LMS Class 503 diesel unit, Class 50 D406 powering an Anglo-Scottish express out of Crewe station, and a brace of Class 17s D8564 and D8590 hauling a pick-up freight train through Beattock station in 1963. Maybe one of the more difficult classes to capture on film was the Class 01 diesel shunter, allocated to Holyhead for use on maintenance trains on the breakwater (BR had responsibility

for maintaining this piece of infrastructure). An example of the class was pictured in the small shed whilst its sister locomotive could be seen sheeted over, out of use.

The Eastern was the next region to pay a visit, Tinsley yard being the location where Class 13 13001 was pictured resting between duties. Moving over to the eastern side of the region a brace of Class 25s heading the 08.00 Walsall to Yarmouth were pictured passing Trowse Junction, Norwich in August 1980. A fine picture showing the inside of the signalbox at Trowse Junction proved interesting.

A well-known feature located near to the East Coast Main Line at Little Bytham was 'The Mallard' public house and it was at this spot that a fine shot of an HST was captured. Mr Ballantyne explained that to photograph passing trains at that location proved much difficulty as the very high speed meant that from the time of first hearing a train approaching it had passed over the nearby bridge very quickly.

Moving north, the Manchester to Sheffield electrified line featured with Class 76s passing Worsborough Bridge signalbox heading a freight train. A visit to the depot at Wath resulted in the sight of a line of sister locomotives awaiting their next turn of duty.

Rationalisation at Lincoln was evident in the picture of a Class 47 locomotive heading a Kings Cross to Cleethorpes service passing through St Mark's station.

The Grimsby and Immingham Light Railway finished operations in 1961 and an example of the vehicles that operated the service was seen at Pipewye depot on the 1st July of that year.

The final part of the presentation was devoted entirely to the Eastern Region's Class 55 Deltics. A pictorial review showed each member of the class in the numerical order as dictated by the TOPS system – D9001 (later renumbered as 55001) and named after winning the 1960 Epsom Derby or St Leger races winner 'St Paddy' was the first off at the start. The first D9000 'Royal Scots Grey' was the final one viewed and it became the last one in the series (55022) when the class was renumbered. The images showed the class earnestly at work performing top link duties in-charge of Anglo-Scottish expresses on the East Coast Main Line for a period of two decades. The selection incorporated examples as they were when new as well as numerous examples sporting the corporate blue livery as seen in later years. Finsbury Park depot customised its allocation of racehorse examples with white cab surrounds in the late 1970s which they retained after transfer to York prior to withdrawal.

The final shot of the night was of an advanced passenger train at Stafford in July 1980. The APT was BR's tilting train and was the forerunner of the Pendolino - the electric units which now ply their way of the West Coast route between London and Scotland, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool and the north-west.

In conclusion, I would congratulate Hugh Ballantyne on the content, as his selection of transparencies suitably illustrated the railway network of the period 1961 and 2001. It was a pity the continuity of the show was interrupted at intervals due to some of the transparencies failing to proceed through the slide changer correctly and thereby requiring some manual attention. Nevertheless, it was an excellent presentation that was enjoyed by those present.

John Tuffs

NOVEMBER 2007

At the 'Natter Night' on 15 November, Peter Williams presented some of Eric Edward's photographs taken in and around Burton.

However simple and straight forward this sounds, Peter had to put in a lot of time and effort to get the presentation together. To start with he had to sort the rail negatives from the rest of the collection. Next he scanned the 355 railway negatives and printed them, four to a sheet. From the sheets he selected 60 shots for their photographic quality. He then printed them on to A4 paper and photographed them using 400ASA slide film. To preserve his selection he saved them to three discs. The lapsed time for the whole process was three months.

But it was certainly a worthwhile effort and the presentation was well-received. For many it was sheer nostalgia viewing again steam locos that had been based at Burton or were regular or even occasional visitors. Even the locations raised interest and debate as a result of changes that had taken place to the landscape since the photographs were taken.

The evening finished with members handing in their order form to Peter for copies of their favourite shots. The cost of the prints was £2 for A4, £1 for 7"x 5", and 50p for 5.2" x 3.5".

Well done, Peter for a job well done and a memorable evening's viewing.

Rodger Smith

NOVEMBER 2007

Paying his first visit to the Society was the well-known railway photographer, Derek Huntriss, with a colour slide show entitled "BR Steam in the Final Years". All who attended were treated to a splendid night's entertainment with a constant supply of high quality pictures and entertaining and occasionally very funny commentary.

Bizarrely, Derek began with a shot of the canal near Nuneaton, but this was explained away as the first time he had presented this show, it had been for the Railway Club in Nuneaton. The show then proceeded in earnest with some shots of Ivatt 2-6-0s at Coventry Power Station and a superb shot of a Britannia near Leamington Spa at sunset. This was followed by a series of photos of 'Clun Castle' which at the time had just been purchased by Pat Whitehouse who, of course, was on the footplate. Mr Whitehouse asked if the pictures Derek was taking were in colour. Derek said that they were, so Mr Whitehouse asked if he could have some copies. "OK," replied Mr Huntriss, "but only if I can have a footplate ride back". So the bargain was struck and to prove it a couple of shots taken from the footplate were shown.

Most areas of the country were covered, although not too many in the Southern Region because in Derek's opinion "The best loco to run on the Southern was probably a Black 5!" Outstanding in the first half of the show were 'Spitfire' (the Spam Can) on World Cup Final day and some shots on the Swanage Branch - (on this occasion Derek had been obliged to kick over Derek Cross's tripod!). Also, there were two shots of the Coventry Tax Office on fire. Why was Derek so near on both occasions? Highly suspicious!

The second half of the show was devoted to the last two years of BR steam with excellent shots of steam in Scotland particularly in Fife, the North East, and inevitably the last knockings of steam in the North West. There were also pictures taken at some off the beaten track locations such as Manningham shed. Highlights were shots in torrential rain on the Settle & Carlisle, very snowy scenes around Buxton, a telephoto shot of a 9F on Copy Pit, and snowy (again) at Croes Newydd. We should congratulate Derek on his fortitude as not even appalling weather was allowed to get in the way of the picture. The absolute highlight for me, and a few others, was an evening (almost sunset) shot of Rose Grove shed and Padiham Power Station in the background - it was truly stunning.

Many thanks must go to Derek for a very interesting and amusing evening. Let us hope he can be persuaded to come again some time.

Dave Hook

OCTOBER 2007

David Cross, son of the well-known railway photographer the late Derek Cross, paid his third visit to the club to present a selection of his father's photographs in black and white slide form.

I had always thought that Derek was a born and bred Scotsman, but David informed us that in fact he was a Man of Kent, having been born in Hythe in that county. Educated and trained in geology, he emigrated to New Zealand in the early 1950s spending most of that decade there, and David was born a Kiwi in 1954. The family returned to the UK in the late 50s and settled in Maybole, Ayrshire, via Kent. Derek passed away in 1984.

The slide show covered lines from London to Carlisle mostly up the West Coast Main Line, but also included images on the Midland Main Line, the Welsh Marches and the Tebay – Darlington line. The first slide was of 46245 on the down “Caledonian” at South Kenton in July 1958. This was followed by numerous pictures on the southern end of the WCML including Bushey troughs and alongside the then recently opened, and almost empty, M1 near Watford Gap. The one and only industrial loco shown was the now preserved ex-NCB Garratt ‘William Francis’ at Baddesley Colliery – what a site that must have been crossing the A5 en route to the exchange sidings near Atherstone! The famous Lickey incline was not forgotten and amongst locos shown attacking the 1-in-37 gradient was B1 61041 with its chalked reporting number nearly filling the smoke-box door. David remarked that it was probably for the benefit of shortsighted signalmen!

One image that was out on a limb, so to speak, was that of J94 68012 on the Cromford & High Peak line at Middleton Top with one mixed wagon, an old loco tender (or, as corrected by members of the audience, a water carrier) and brake van.

Ex-G.W. locos of Classes 28XX, ‘Hall’, ‘Grange’ and ‘Counties’ were featured at work on the Welsh Marches. Then David switched to the Buxton area for a shot of 48741 on a Gowhole freight passing the huge limestone establishment at Peak Forest Junction, and 45705 at the erstwhile Buxton Midland station with the early morning commuter train to Manchester.

A particular favourite shot for me was of 70026 'Polar Star' leaving the Castle tunnel portals at Conway with a Crewe – Holyhead parcels train, an image that portrayed the sheer power and majesty of a steam loco that was master of its class, with an impressive background. A later photograph of a 'Britannia' showed a class member on the WCML at Garstang and the audience was invited to guess which one it was, this not being obvious on the screen. Most people plumped for 70047 the only unnamed member of the class. However, David revealed it was in fact 70045 'Lord Rowallan' sans name plate, apparently the only 'Brit' with oval buffers. *[At the end of the show, member Peter Baumgartner suggested to David that the buffers could have been transferred to 70045 from 71000 'Duke of Gloucester' after it had been withdrawn from service in 1962. However, Mark Ratcliffe said he has a photograph of 70045 taken by Derek Cross in June 1961 showing it fitted with oval buffers.]*

A shot on the Settle & Carlisle at Ais Gill portrayed 46115 struggling over the summit with a southbound freight, a photograph that seemed vaguely familiar – it was in fact used about 40 years ago on the dust jacket of an Argo transacard E.P. – remember those? Another S&C photo featured 45593 on a Glasgow express at Garsdale in August 1967, a train that your reviewer was actually travelling on. Was that my head poking out of the fourth carriage?

Switching back to the WCML, a sad sight was of 46256 in neglected condition working a Carlisle – Maiden Lane fitted freight at Tebay on 17th September 1964, which Derek reckoned must have been one of its last ever workings. Penrith featured heavily in shots towards the end of the show with one particular picture David described as 'Crewe of the North', there being so much activity in shot. There were: 46134 on a Glasgow – Blackpool; 46458 and 45540 coupled tender-to-tender on freight; a Derby lightweight dmu approaching on the slow; and shunting activity in the background! Further shots in the area featured Keswick Convention specials including one of consecutively numbered 'Pigs' 43120 and 43121 passing a particularly attractive signal box at Penruddock. These specials were an annual affair, although neither David nor the audience seemed to know what the convention was. *[After the show, a lady member told David that the specials catered for dedicated Christians who met each year at Keswick for a religious convention.]*

A photo on a freight avoiding line in the Carlisle area was at a location that David thought Derek liked the name of, 'Bog Junction'! It showed 92055 on a southbound freight in a very 1960's setting with industrial buildings, a huge gasometer, and tall chimneys punctuating the skyline.

The most northerly image was at Rockcliffe near the Scottish border and featured an unkempt 60012 approaching the camera on a Millerhill – Kingmoor freight – a sorry portrait of a once proud loco towards the end of its days. The final slide was a three-quarters rear shot of 46241 as it was about to set off from Carlisle Citadel for the south.

David contrasted the variety of motive power seen in the 1950s and 60s with today's traction: the first ten photos he had shown featured ten different classes of loco. One shot of 46209 showed it climbing Shap with a variety of stock in its unbanked 14-coach consist. One-hundred-and-fifty slides were shown on the evening, all taken by a master cameraman whose photographs we revered in the 1950s and 1960s and still are revered today. Our thanks go to David for showing them to us and for his excellent presentation

Paul Forbes

SEPTEMBER 2007

Unfortunately, Roger Jones was unable to show his slides to the Society on 5 September, but valiantly Mark Ratcliffe presented them for him and used Roger's notes. Mark spoke as if it were his own collection of slides!

Roger started colour slide photography in 1963: the show chronologically encompassed the five years to 1968. The locations were incredibly varied, some very local – Derby station, Burton, Melbourne, Trent Junction – others further afield – Gloucester, Somerset & Dorset, Kingswear, Isle of Wight, Tonbridge Wells, York, and Shap to name a few. (It was a delight for me to see the slides of Highbridge station, which was the destination of my only BR footplate ride, on 41248 in 1959.)

In the first half of the show there were some incredibly obscure locations, but in the second half the locations were better known – a reflection of the decreasing steam activity on BR. Some locations he captured were subsequently to furnish preserved railways, for example, Loughborough GCR and Butterley. He showed a great variety of locomotives from all four regions, 'Alberta' and 'Clun Castle' being regulars. Roger's photo of 47000 on the Cromford & High Peak jogged Mark's memory, as he and his school friends at Peel Croft, Burton, surreptitiously cabbed the loco during cricket practice: the wrath of the approaching cricket teacher, Percy Davies, was defused with "We've found the ball, Sir!" Locomotives to be preserved were also captured – 31263 the Bluebell H Class 0-4-4T, 3442, 'The Great Marquess', 30053 the LSWR MT (which I was fortunate to see in America in 1971 together with a Big Boy!), 7029 'Clun Castle', and 4079 'Pendennis Castle' to quote a few.

Roger clearly delighted himself in photographing specials, and they got him to some odd locations too! But it was not just the locos that were of interest. The background to the photos revealed station architecture, freight sidings, a siding crane, a steam crane, a level crossing lamp, the twelve-post signal gantry at Scarborough, a "100 Miles to London" sign at Stoke summit, cattle wagons, NCB wooden-bodied wagons, and viaducts: it was lovely to see because so many of these items have now gone or changed radically.

Roger's favourite slide included a boy in shorts admiring 45562 'Alberta' again at Nottingham Midland station. My favourite was 68012 in fog on the Cromford & High Peak line. But choosing one favourite was difficult, there were just so many excellent slides.

Guy Cooper

AUGUST 2007

Bob Goodman was on his fourth visit to Burton this month and he brought greetings from the Lincoln Railway Society. His talk and slide show was entitled "The Bulleid Pacifics". He should have given his presentation in July to coincide with the 40th anniversary of the withdrawal of Bulleid Pacifics (BPs) on the Southern Region and the end of mainline steam into Waterloo, but "higher authority" told him he was going on holiday!

Bob divided his presentation in his usual way – giving a talk in the first half and showing slides in the second. (I have the impression that this format is not to the liking of many

members. Not that the talk was boring, because it certainly was not, but it would have been easier to take in all the information if it had been interspersed with slides.)

Bob said that his first acquaintance with BPs was as a ten-year old lad when he and a mate climbed over an air-raid shelter to enter Bricklayers' Arms shed. Evidently they had to keep a lookout for the sharp-eyed and fleet-of-foot yard foreman. Perhaps a more significant event for him occurred in 1952 when he was posted to Stockbridge near Winchester during national service and he became a regular traveller on the Southern Region. He has now seen most of the BPs and in his collection he has a colour slide of all of them.

He covered the development, building, operation and eventual demise of the class. It all started in 1937 when New Zealand born Oliver Vaughan Snell Bulleid was appointed as Southern Railway's Chief Mechanical Engineer. SR was mostly electrified and had no real interest in up-grading its steam traction performance. However, new broom Bulleid had other ideas. He sourced higher quality coal and encouraged hard running to achieve average start to stop speed of 60 mph for the 600-ton boat trains. He also proposed the introduction of a new class of 2-8-2 locomotives, but the Civil Engineer (he who must be obeyed) objected. However, agreement was reached on a 4-6-2 configuration which heralded the beginning of the BPs.

Bulleid's design incorporated many new, and some revolutionary, features including chain-driven valve gear, a partially welded boiler and firebox, and an air-smoothed casing. The first locomotive, 21C1, turned out in Malachite green, was completed in February 1941 at a cost of £23,800 (21C2 and the remaining eight in this batch cost less). Bob told the interesting story of the naming of the class. The first proposal was to use names of land, air and sea victories in World War II. As it was still 1941, the only qualifying name would have been (River) Plate. The suggestion of capital cities also failed to find favour. An acceptable agreement was reached on using the names of the shipping lines which used the port of Southampton (which had obvious links with SR), and the class was called 'Merchant Navy' also known as 'Packets'

As it was wartime, Bulleid could get authority to build further locos only if they were classified as mixed traffic and not passenger. The first BPs were used on freight duties between Salisbury and Exeter, however there was not enough work for all of them and so the remainder took over passenger workings, such as the 16-coach London – Exeter service.

Bob then traced the growth of the fleet and its operational use with the introduction of the slightly smaller (Light) Pacifics for use on more lightly built lines – the "West Country" Class in 1945 and the "Battle of Britain" Class in 1946. Suitable coal was difficult to obtain during and after the war and there unsuccessful experiments with conversions to oil burning. After nationalisation, BPs were used in other regions and even more were built. In the mid-1950s there was talk of scrapping them and replacing them with Britannias, but in 1955 a programme of re-building was begun. In all, 30 Merchant Navy Class and 60 Battle of Britain Class were re-built.

The beginning of the end came in 1963 when the Western Region scrapped the Light Pacifics it had been allocated the previous year. The first modified BP was scrapped in May 1964. However, at the end on 9 July 1967 there were still 26 Light Pacifics and 7 Merchant Navy Class in service and many others had only recently been withdrawn. A driver waiting at Waterloo on that day was surprised to see his loco for the trip back to Nine Elms was 35030

'Elder Dempster Lines' rather than the expected Brush 4 diesel. He commented that it was the last to be built and the last out of Waterloo and he pulled out with many blasts on the whistle. The fact that 31 BPs (11 Merchant Navy and 20 Battle of Britain/ West Country) are still around is due in no small measure to Woodham Brother's scrap-yard not cutting up 28 of them – probably because at the time it was busily engaged in cutting up wagons.

Bob said that BPs were not really accident-prone but they did have problems: drifting smoke in the early days, keeping west Country firemen busy with grass fires, and on two occasions hopper doors dropped during shunting and welded themselves to the third-rail. The worst accident involving a BP was in 1957 at Lewisham when 'Spitfire' collided with an electric train and it became the third worst accident in Great Britain for fatalities and casualties.

After the break he showed his slides in chronological order from 1947 ('French Line'), to the end of SR steam and into the preservation era. Mainly colour, there were a few black and white. As to be expected, locations were mainly on the Southern Region but slide number two was 'Bude' in Aylesbury on the exchange programme. The changes in livery – malachite green, black, and blue with red stripes – and the change in loco appearance from original design to rebuild also gave added interest. Locos on passenger duties and on shed predominated but there were some shots of freight trains.

Bob commented on the regular appearance of a van behind the tender on passenger trains, quite often on boat-trains. My neighbour and I agreed that it must have been there to carry the trunks of ships' passengers. That was until we saw a slide of the same van on a Barnstaple local train!

Memorable slides? Well, there were BPs at high speed at Battledown flyover; others pulling Pullmans trains and the Golden Arrow; a night shot taken at Southampton in 1966, and 34007 in superb condition on the Mid-Hants in May this year. A good evening's entertainment.

Rodger Smith

JULY 2007

The presentation for July was a little out of the ordinary for the society in that its primary focus was not on locomotives. The speaker, Geoffrey Kingscott from Long Eaton, gave a talk entitled "The Lost Railways of Nottinghamshire" based on his book of the same name. His definition of a lost railway was a line that no longer had a passenger service and he also included stations on existing lines that had lost their passenger service. His presentation covered the origins of railway lines in the county; how, when and where passenger services were withdrawn; and, importantly, what remained of the lines today.

He started by sketching the development of railways in Nottinghamshire highlighting the primary importance of coal in the decisions to establish lines and where to route them. Later, railway operators realised there were benefits from carrying passengers. At first people were prepared to walk long distances to reach the rail system, but when competing lines were built with stations closer to the population, convenience became a factor and efforts were made to improve the situation, particularly by establishing short branch lines. So many competing lines were built in Nottinghamshire that it was inevitable that once the railway companies were grouped and later nationalised there would be rationalisation. But even earlier, stations

and lines were gradually being closed to passengers due to the massive improvements in urban road transport – first the electric tram and then the motor omnibus.

Geoffrey went around the county, and into Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Leicestershire as appropriate, explaining line by line what changes had taken place. He illustrated the talk with maps and with photographs of the old and the new. It was particularly interesting to hear and see what still remained of those lines and their infrastructure – the stations, tunnels, cuttings and embankments. But it was sad to be reminded of those wonderful structures, such as Nottingham's Victoria Station, that had been demolished in the name of progress, and of those lines that could still have been utilised today. However, the two preserved lines he showed running on the Great Central Railway (at Ruddington and Loughborough) illustrated success stories in preserving our great transport heritage.

Geoffrey had also been introduced as the author of 'Last Train from Trent Station' and he said later that had been surprised and pleased by the members who had spoken to him after the meeting about their experiences and recollections of that remote station. Perhaps if the book is re-printed, some of those anecdotes will find their way in to it?

Rodger Smith

JUNE 2007

The annual fun quiz with question master, Dave Hook, took place on Wednesday 6th June. Many of the members who attend, regard this as the best evening of the year because it gives the opportunity not only to pit one's wits, but to meet up and talk to members that we normally do not get the chance to chat to. In the traditional manner, teams of four were drawn out of the box, so you have no idea who will be in your team. This year we were very pleased to welcome three members from Leicester Railway Society. With a total of 29 names in the box, the competition got under way with six teams of four and one of five members.

Dave had two surprises for us this year, the first was round one which, instead of easing us in gradually, he made deliberately very hard and had us all gasping wondering what was coming next. The other surprise was a picture round which featured close-up sections of various steam locomotives and we had to guess to which class they belonged. This caused much head scratching. As usual after the first two rounds, teams had the opportunity to choose a round to play a "joker", this enabled double points to be scored.

Numbers attending this year were slightly down, some familiar faces being on holiday. One member affected in this way was so disappointed that he asked the Dave to e-mail the questions to him. I wonder how many he got right! It would be nice to see more members taking part - another eleven joining in would result in ten teams, so perhaps we can achieve this next June. Nobody is put on the spot and questions are answered by team discussion and prizes are plentiful, being awarded to the first three teams with even a prize of a can of beer each for those in the last placed team. As I said earlier, it is after all a fun evening.

Scores were as follows: team G 151 / D 138 / F 133 / E 132 / A 128 / C 124 / and B 95. The final round of questions "Fun With Schools Class Names" rounded the main part of the quiz off very well. There was just time for two quick mini-competitions of "Last Team Standing" and "Nearest the Bull". Terry thanked Dave for organising the evening. Thanks to the power

of Pedigree, whilst pedalling home, Dave apparently thought of another round of questions ready for another year.

Mark Ratcliffe

MAY 2007

“The Collectors Mix” was the title for the show presented to members. The guest presenter, Gavin Lake, is a member of the Society. He currently resides in Melbourne and is a dentist by profession, but when he is not engaged in ensuring his patients’ teeth are spic and span, he loves to be out and about with his camera recording the present day rail scene.

With this in mind, portraits of steam were not the main theme of the evening and as members have been reminded in the past, railways did not end in 1968. Gavin's show was a selection of diesel, electric and steam slides spanning 50 years taken from the "Rail Image Collections" (RIC) catalogue. The show included Gavin's own work, contributors’ material and purchased slides. The second half of his presentation focused on new material to be produced in the future and again covered all forms of rail transport together with a most interesting section of EWS locos at work in France and Spain.

From my personal point of view, I thought the best slide of the evening was a Class 37 at Abergele depicted in superb lighting, (I hope I have these details correct, but there were so many images to enjoy).

Two catalogues are currently available in the RIC portfolio being produced by Gavin and Michael Mercer. Rail Images are proud to support and be associated with "The Class 58 Locomotive Group” and there were some splendid shots of Class 58s in action in Spain. The catalogues are a real labour of love and well worth purchasing. Gavin cannot always attend Society meetings, but he is usually present at the Society “Rail Fair”, so please visit his stall and take a first hand look at the images he has for sale.

Mark Ratcliffe

APRIL 2007

Not available

MARCH 2007

Chris Banks from Hinckley was making his seventh appearance at Burton where he was the speaker at the March meeting. This time, assisted by his son John, he was showing slides of ‘Loco Sheds of London’. The slides were from three sources: Colour Rail, his own slides and from collections he had bought. He said that the slides illustrated 13 sheds around London in steam days, with the occasional diesel to be seen.

Bricklayers Arms, named after a pub in the nearby the Old Kent Road. When BR took it over, it had 100 locos allocated primarily for freight workings. It also had 31271 from Ashford shed, unusually in use as a stationary boiler.

Camden came into use in 1847. Here we saw slides of 45004, 45592 'Indore', 46156, 46207 (very well turned out), 46208, 46225 (a superb slide of the loco oozing steam whilst situated on the turntable with a block of flats behind), 46226, 46239 (in blue!), 46240, 46254, 70043 and 71000 (a regular visitor to Camden). Chris commented that he quite liked Stanier engines!

Cricklewood, off the Edgware Road, closed in December 1964. Locos featured included 70048 visiting from Neasden, 45694 spruced up for a Rugby League special and Garratt 47981.

Kentish Town which was accessed by a broad cinder path, worked mainly passenger locos on St Pancras local and express turns. The shed had a brewery as a back drop appropriate because one of the slides showed 42824, one of Burton shed's Reidinger fitted Crabs. It was also the home of several Fowler tanks. Looking very smart was 45562 up from its Nottingham shed.

Hither Green was a modern shed opened in 1933 and the home of the "W" Class locos. Chris showed fine shots of 31694 on the turntable and well-turned out 31924 and Q1 ex-works 32010.

Kings Cross was looking very smoky – it would certainly be an H & S issue today! It closed in June 1963. As you would expect there were loads of A4s depicted, one really fine image featured 60001 taken in February 1961 near the repair shop.

Nine Elms featured 30224 appropriately built at Nine Elms when there was a loco works there. 30582 was pictured having worked up especially for a rail tour. A rather run down 82029 apparently had to make the last steam working to Salisbury, the booked engine having failed. Quite how a tank loco with a limited coal supply managed the run would make interesting reading! Chris said that it was a good shed for photos.

Norwood Junction The slides reflected its freight and shunting roles. C2X 32545 fitted with twin domes was one of the engines featured.

Stewarts Lane (73A) A superb shot of Schools Class 30915 turned out with a white cab roof, white walled tyres, and, white edges to the smoke deflectors and handrails ready for hauling the Royal Train for Derby Day in 1955. 70014 and 34100 were also splendidly turned out read to work the "Golden Arrow". The Decca headquarters were alongside the shed.

Plaistow looked rather run down and depicted 42504 one of the class built especially for the Tilbury & Southend line.

Stratford (30A) the biggest loco depot in the country was illustrated with lots of shots of ancient machines including Departmental 33 which some wag had christened "Elvis"! Larger machines were represented by 61672 'West Ham United', an appropriate one for the area. Many of the slides were taken at or just after locos were withdrawn.

Old Oak Common was the largest GW shed. It had four turntables under one roof, so naturally we started with an interior shot of Castle Class loco 4082 'Windsor Castle'. At nationalisation 232 locos were based there. A shot of 4703 out in the yard led Chris to reflect that he would have preferred one of these engines and one S&D 2-8-0 to be preserved rather than the two S&D 2-8-0s we have today.

Willesden was situated almost next door to Old Oak. Common It consisted of two sheds, a Ramsbottom hipped-roof straight shed and a 1929 built round-house. The latter was used in the film "Train Of Events" starring Jack Warner. Jack fell into the turntable pit whilst making the film, the effects of the injuries he sustained being with him for the rest of his life. In 1945, 173 engines were allocated here. The shed closed in August 1965. Apparently it was the most visited shed in London, officially and unofficially. There was a lovely shot of 46240 in glorious red, and the evening closed with a slide of 92130 taken in 1963.

As well as showing a large number of slides, Chris gave added value with his commentary which gave the history and details of each shed and of many of the locos, from building to scrapping.

Mark Ratcliffe

FEBRUARY 2007

A very special event took place at Burton Town Hall on 21 February 2007 when a meeting of the Society was held in the Council Chamber there at the kind invitation of the Mayor of East Staffordshire District Council, Trevor Hathaway. The invitation had been issued as a result of Councillor Hathaway and his grandson attending and enjoying our "Rail Fair" in November 2005.

In his introduction, the Mayor welcomed the Society and highlighted the connections between the former Burton Council and the East Staffordshire Council's connections with the railway. He said that several Burton mayors had been railwaymen and he pointed out their coats of arms in the stained glass windows around the chamber. He invited members to view the regalia and mace on display, and to join him after the presentation for light refreshments.

The presenter for the evening was Peter Williams and his topic was "Brewery Railway Slides". He had obviously put great effort into his preparations and his presentation was well illustrated by maps, graphs and photographs.

He started with an overview of the development of brewing in the town and how that had been greatly accelerated by the arrival and expansion of railways. He then demonstrated how this in turn had had a marked impact on population growth in Burton.

In the next part of his presentation, Peter showed slides of locomotives and rolling stock from the different breweries as well as those of British Rail that shunted or hauled trainloads of brewery traffic. The last part, "Back to Bass", was novel and most entertaining. It consisted of a recording of former brewery railwayman discussing drivers, locos, and sites seen on a series of slides. These reminiscences added real human interest to the presentation and were a fine finale to the evening.

In his summary Mark Ratcliffe noted that the Society had never before met in such grand surroundings. He said that the choice of subject for the evening had been obvious as it was forty years since the brewery lines in the town had finally closed down. He concluded that it had been an evening of nostalgia and first class entertainment enjoyed by all.

I am sure that the Society and everyone who attended would like to record their appreciation to the Mayor, Trevor Hathaway, and East Staffordshire District Council for hosting the evening.

FEBRUARY 2007

It was PSOV time again. You could tell that because in January we had been warned to arrive early, not only for getting parking, but in order to gain admission to the hall – last year people had to be turned away because it was full to capacity. To alleviate problems this year, it was arranged that additional parking would be available at the brewery's main entrance.

The presentation followed the tested format with Dave and Karl showing a DVD specially compiled from all their footage taken during 2006, starting at the beginning of the year and progressing month by month. As usual, added value was given by their amusing commentary.

The DVD's introduction was made up of brief glimpses of the locomotives and locations that were to follow. I did not think that this worked too well – the scenes changed too rapidly - but that was a minor and my only criticism. What followed was up to and above the high standards Dave and Karl have set themselves. The photography was excellent and the locations were very well selected. There seemed to be more experimentation this year with more evening and night shots, cameramen on the footplate and even shots taken from vehicles speeding alongside the track.

With a limited number of filming opportunities during the year, the weather plays a major role. There is always the ever-present rain, low cloud, and fog to make life difficult. But at the beginning of the year there was snow lasting into March in many locations. You can sympathise with the cameramen coping with the cold, but for the viewer the results were excellent. It was not much better in September when there were six cameramen out on Shap filming 'Leander', and we were told that three of them had drowned! On the plus side, they also experienced the "best ever" lighting conditions on the Lickey Incline and "incredible" lighting at Aberystwyth.

As for the stars, there were Riley's Black 5, 'Princess Elizabeth', 'King George V', 'Duchess of Sutherland', 'Duke of Gloucester', and many others. The Black 5 was filmed struggling at Bradford because the "grey men" (I would call them something stronger than that) would not allow a banker because it had not been risk assessed! The "Exeter Incident" in March was dramatically recorded when a Bulleid and a Standard 4 came to a full stop in the station after some terrible slipping. No blame was attached to the operating staff when the train was found to be over-loaded by 200 tons!

Well done to Karl, David and their teams for a spectacular evening's entertainment.

Rodger Smith

JANUARY 2007

We must really like him and he must like us for Rob Foxon was making his 16th appearance before a BRS audience. His presentation was entitled “Railways Remembered” and with his son, Mike, operating the projectors he showed a range of films. He said that he had no particular theme for the evening but he would show archive material through the ages so that we would be both entertained and enlightened.

He started with two early rail photographs, one taken in France in 1895 and the second in the USA in 1897. But he quickly moved on to early silent moving films. The first showed the cutting of the first sod by Prince Edward at the site of the Royal Edward Dock at Avonmouth in 1902. The next, shot in 1897, was much nearer home and gave a driver’s eye view of the line from Millers Dale down the branch to Buxton. Next was a 1911 film taken at Charing Cross station, followed by a rare film of a steam tram on the Wisbech and Upwell Tramway in the 1930s. The following film featured a ship on its side in Immingham dry dock being prepared to be righted by steam locomotives. Rob said that it must have been successful because when he went there many years afterwards, the dock was empty! The next film recorded a City Livery Club’s train ride from Paddington to Oxford and its visit to Morris Motors at Cowley. The final film in this section was essentially train spotting at Doncaster between 1949 and 1951, mainly watching expresses thunder through the station.

Rob’s next film was made by British Transport Films in 1956. It was called “Link Span” and demonstrated the roles of cross-channel steamers and ferries in moving passengers between Boulogne and Dunkirk to Dover, and freight between Zeebrugge and Harwich.

The first film after the break was “Heavy Load Railway” which showed the long-distance movement of very long, heavy iron ore trains from mines of the Hammersley Iron Company in Western Australia to the coast. This was followed by a “bonus” film made by the BBC Film Club mainly from film shot in 1960 inter-cut with 1978 footage. It featured the Grimsby and Immingham Electric Tramway which had been constructed in 1912 to carry workers from Grimsby to the newly opened Immingham docks.

The next film had been made for BBC Television in 1959 and showed operations on West Country Kingsbridge branch line

Then came a complete change – “Overture 125” – one of the last films made by BT Films. Without any commentary it showed the building and testing of the IC 125 that celebrated its 30th anniversary last year.

2006 also marked the end of Kodachrome film and was the 40th anniversary of the closure of the Great Central as a through route. So Rob decided to use up the last of his film at the GC and further afield while it could still be sent to Switzerland for processing. He caught ‘Canadian Pacific’ 35005 disguised as 35030 ‘Elder-Dempster Lines’ which had run on the GC on the last day of its life as a long-distance railway. Other locations were on the Midland Mainline, WCML (Berkhamsted), ECML (Essendine) and at Leicester Abbey Pumping Station narrow gauge railway.

The last film “Railways Forever” showed a run from Liverpool to Carlisle and return to commemorate the end of steam. It featured a commentary by the poet John Betjeman, a strong supporter of railways, who reminisced on the history of railways and the last day of

steam. Rob apologised for the technical quality of the film – an Eastman Colour Print film – which had a strong magenta bias.

In his vote of thanks, Mark Ratcliffe said that we had been treated to a rich variety of films which had included trains, boats, cars and trams.