Editorial

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I have been reading ICE Proceedings now for some 35 years, keeping myself abreast of key technical aspects of civil engineering subjects and bridge engineering in particular. Today the ICE Proceedings consists of a wider range of journals; *Bridge Engineering* is the pre-eminent publication for most bridge-related papers. However, other journals often contain papers relevant to bridge engineers and should not be forgotten. A recent issue of *Structures and Buildings* has a paper on ‘steel-free bridge decks’ (Cho *et al.*, 2014) something related to my own research. The *Engineering History and Heritage* journal has an interesting paper on old timber railway bridges (Nicholas, 2014). As professionals we also need to keep abreast of the latest thoughts and trends in related subjects. There are papers in the *Transportation* journal and *Municipal Engineer* on climate change-related issues, with pictures of scoured and washed away bridges featuring prominently in discussions on climate change resilience (Dijkstra *et al.*, 2014; Parry, 2014). I would remind readers that these papers are available on-line via the ICE Virtual Library.

On now to this issue of *Bridge Engineering* (BE). Having spent some years in Asia working on some of the many bridges being planned, designed and built in that region it is good to see that BE is attracting papers from researchers and practitioners in that region. Four out of the six papers in this issue are from China. The first paper outlines the design and construction of a 1100 m span steel box-girder suspension bridge over the Pear River in Southern China (Wang *et al.*, 2014). The paper noting some similarities, and differences, between Chinese, USA and European codes of practice. The second paper outlines the design and construction of a 436 m span steel-concrete composite cable stayed bridge over the Yangtze River (Wang *et al.*, 2014). This paper also touches on the use of Eurocodes to verify some of the more complex areas of design not currently covered by Chinese codes (which are usually limiting stress based rather than limit state).

Research into bridge-related issues is also being carried out in Asia. The next two papers outline the initial stages of some of this research. The paper by Liang *et al.* (2014) outlines the influence of the large number of small individual cable dampers on the overall vertical dynamic response of a cable stayed bridge. Precast segmental construction is an economic and popular method of construction in Asia, USA and the Middle East. Au *et al.* (2014) outline a simplified analysis of collapse mechanisms for a continuous viaduct to assess its robustness.

Both these papers clearly have potential for development of the research, which hopefully will also be seen in BE in the future.

In contrast, the next paper is more typical of current UK practice and concerns. Chan (2014) outlines the upgrading of a relatively small bridge on the London Underground system, where project management and maintaining uninterrupted operation of the railway rather than the limiting stresses are the key issues.

The last, but by no means the least, of our papers is a historical review of railway loads from the *Rocket* (the first train on the UK’s Liverpool to Manchester railway of 1830) to modern high-speed trains by Hayward (2014). A fascinating story of increasing loads and reduced factors of safety interspersed with a few disasters. Returning to the earlier theme some readers of this paper may be interested in the paper in the *Forensic Engineering* journal (Lane and Thompson, 2014) assessing the risk to railway structures from train impact.

I have always been keen to read discussions on papers and would urge readers to ask pertinent questions of the papers in this issue: there is a ‘what do you think?’ section at the end of each paper telling you how to do this. A discussion on one of our earlier series of papers on arch bridges (Gibbons and Fanning, 2012) is included in this issue.

Finally we end this issue with a review by my colleague (Sanchez, 2014) of the book *Bridge Construction Equipment* (Rosignoli, 2013).

In order to allow contributions to be available as soon as possible, the journal now publishes papers online ahead-of-print. There are currently 12 papers available to subscribers on the ICE Virtual Library website at www.icevirtuallibrary.com/content/serial/bren/fasttrack.

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