

RAILWAY INVIGORATION SOCIETY

EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH

NEWSLETTER No. 24

November 1977

Branch Secretary: Mr. T.J. Garrod, 15 Clapham Rd., Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1RQ
Phone 81721.

CAN BUS REPLACE TRAIN? - OR WILL THEY NEVER LEARN?

At the end of September, the Railway Invigoration Society published a 24-page booklet with the above title. Several members of the East Anglian Branch were involved in the research and writing of it, and it contains many references to our area.

A senior official of the British Railways Board has said of it, "The arguments are impressive", while the National Union of Railwaymen's Transport Review has commended the RIS for "a very competent job" which has "taken the arguments (for replacement buses) to pieces."

The booklet also has many positive things to say about how bus and rail services can be developed.

It is selling well and has already been reprinted once. Copies can be bought at several station bookstalls and other bookshops in East Anglia, thanks to the efforts of various RIS members. Have you bought your copy yet? Individual copies are obtainable from Mr. V.G. Christie, 26 Davis Road, London W3 7SQ. Bulk orders are dealt with by Mrs. Barfield, 35 Colinsdale, Camden Walk, London N1 8DZ. The price is 30p plus 10p postage.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM of the Branch will be held on SATURDAY, JANUARY 28th, 1978 in room 2, IPSWICH TOWN HALL, starting at 2.00 p.m. Non-members are very welcome to attend, but may not, of course, vote.

The business part of the meeting will be followed by a film show. It is hoped to show a film of the fight to save the Cambrian Coast Line, in Wales, followed by a British Transport film.

JOINT MEETING AT ATTLEBOROUGH: "YOUR LOCAL RAILWAY"

The RIS and the Breckland Line Users' Association will be holding a joint public meeting on WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16th at 7.00 p.m. in the lounge of the Connaught Hall, Station Road, ATTLEBOROUGH. The hall is only a couple of minutes' walk from the station, and will be open from 6.30 onwards.

RIS Branch Chairman Mr. P.R. Lawrence will preside, and speakers will be Mr. T.J. Garrod and Rev. E.J. Buck (Secretary, BLUA). The formal part of the meeting will be followed by three railway films.

SELTA: The AGM of the South East Lincolnshire Travellers' Association will take place on Saturday, November 12th at 2.00 p.m. in the Parade Hotel, Skegness (a short walk from Skegness station, near the Clock Tower on the sea front.)

LINCOLN: RIS members living in the west of the region, in particular, will be most welcome at a public meeting to be held in Lincoln College of Technology on Saturday, November 19th, commencing at 2.15 p.m. Chairman will be Mr. M.J. Savage, RIS Area Representative for North & East Lincs, and speakers will be Mr. T.J. Garrod and Mr. P.B. Jowett (Chairman SELTA) on "Can Bus Replace Train?"

WISBECH: The RIS exhibition will be on show in the library at Wisbech from Tuesday, January 10th until the end of the month. On Tuesday, January 31st, in the evening, our member Mr. D. Maudlin will give a lecture on Communications in East Anglia, at Wisbech library - full details later.

It is also hoped, in conjunction with West Norfolk Public Transport Users, to mount the RIS exhibition at Kings Lynn later in the New Year, probably during March. Details in the next Newsletter.

In case you haven't heard the good news: CYCLES are now carried FREE on BR trains, thanks to the success of last summer's experiment.

R.I.S. BRANCH MEETING, NORWICH, SEPTEMBER 24th

There was an attendance of 21, with 12 apologies for absence, at the autumn meeting of the Branch, which began with a business session. A full and wide-ranging discussion of local issues and activities took place, and resulted in the following two resolutions being passed:

1. "We welcome the introduction, for a 3-month period, of the One-Day Anglia Ranger ticket as partially fulfilling what we have, for some years, felt to be an important need, viz. day returns on Paytrains in East Anglia.

We hope that this facility will be re-introduced next year, with the following improvements:

(a) It should be available at least from April to October and, ideally, throughout the year.

(b) It should also be available from British Rail agents in towns where there is no staffed station.

(c) Negotiations should take place with the staff to see if a way could be found of issuing these tickets on the train to passengers boarding at unstaffed stations, e.g. conductor-guards could have a small supply of One-day Ranger tickets; or they could issue a £2 ticket on their machines, which could be exchanged for a One-day Ranger upon arrival at a staffed station."

The resolution was sent to BR's Passenger Commercial Officer at Norwich, Mr. R.M. Senter, from whom a sympathetic reply has been received.

2. "We welcome in principal the plans to develop the Norwich station site with offices, hotel, conference centre etc. as this would no doubt increase the numbers of people coming into the city by rail. We reserve judgement on the details of the scheme at this stage, however, and urge that full attention be paid to the visual effect of any development, to the convenience of rail users and to the road network around the station."

Copies have been sent to BR and the planning authorities.

Public Meeting

This part of the meeting was to launch the RIS' pamphlet, "Can Bus Replace Train?", and we were pleased to welcome our National Chairman, Mr. R.V. Banks, and National Committee Member Mr. V.G. Christie, both of whom were members of the study group which had prepared the pamphlet.

Mr. Christie began by recalling the Beeching cuts in rail services, when bus services were specified as "artificial limbs" to replace closed lines - "cardboard replicas" might have been a better description! The RIS' principal argument then, and which was even more valid today, was that the range of facilities offered by a passenger train service could not be satisfactorily replaced by buses - we were later proved right when most of the replacement bus services turned out to be "dismal flops".

Yet now the idea was being revived in some quarters. The implications of the White Paper were that some local services might be replaced by buses - but that the responsibility for such a move, and the associated unpopularity, was being "heaped... on to the shoulders of the poor county councils."

An article in the June 1977 issue of the "District Councils Review" by BR's Chief Passenger Manager, Mr. P.A. Keen, also floated the idea of some replacement bus services, under the control of BR and subject to the Transport Users' Consultative Committee process - but the government seemed to be going against this idea, since the White Paper threatened to cut the powers of the TUCs embodied in the 1962 and 1968 Transport Acts.

It was in the face of this revival of the "replacement bus" idea that the RIS had decided to publish "Can Bus Replace Train?". Mr. Christie emphasised that the RIS was not anti-bus, but supported schemes in which buses co-operated with trains, feeding passengers to them. He quoted the "Caerphilly Super Multi Ride" scheme, commenting, "I don't think much of the title, but I think a lot of the idea." This was a joint marketing exercise recently started by bus operators, BR and Mid-Glamorgan County Council.

A copy of the full text of Mr. Christie's talk can be obtained from the Branch Secretary. The talk given by our other guest speaker, Mr. J.S. Hull, is reported in a special article on the Wymondham - Dereham - Fakenham line on page 6.

NORWICH - LENWADE SPECIAL TRAIN A GREAT SUCCESS

250 people travelled on the special train organised by the Aylsham & District Rail Action Committee on Saturday, September 17th to mark the 25th anniversary of the closure to passengers of the line from Wroxham to County School via Aylsham and Reepham.

Such was the popularity of the special that an extra 2-car diesel unit was added by BR to the 3-car set originally chartered for the trip. Thus a 5-car set left Norwich at 15.15 for a brisk run to Wroxham, where more passengers boarded, proceeding then at 20 mph along the branch to Aylsham and Reepham, where photo stops were made. After negotiating the Themelthorpe curve, the train then ran down the former M&GN line to Lenwade for a short stop before returning, stopping at Reepham and Wroxham and arriving back in Norwich at 19.10.

The weather was good, and everything went very smoothly. Congratulations are due to ADRAC, and especially to its Chairman Mr. J. McCarter, for all the hard work put into the organisation of the trip. Thanks are also due to local BR officials for their help and co-operation, and especially their willingness to add the extra coaches at short notice.

Although occasional London-based enthusiasts' specials have run between Norwich and Lenwade since the line was closed, this was the first real opportunity for the local people to use it. Some of the passengers had not in fact been on a train for years! The RIS produced a special leaflet giving a history of the line and the reopening campaign which, together with other literature, our members distributed to every passenger.

More specials?

At the RIS branch meeting on 24.9.77, the secretary was asked to write to the General Manager of BR Eastern Region, drawing attention to the success of the three special trains that have run partly over freight-only lines in East Anglia this year; and asking for a statement of BR's future policy with regard to such specials.

Consequently, the Branch Secretary has been invited to meet BR officials in Norwich, and hopes to report fully in the next Newsletter.

WHITE PAPER ON TRANSPORT

At the Branch Meeting on September 24th, it was agreed to send comments on the recent White Paper to all East Anglia MPs, and these are now in the process of being sent. Some spare copies are available from the Branch Secretary.

We stress many of the points made in the RIS Progress Report for September; and, in particular, express our disapproval of the suggestion that County Councils should decide whether secondary lines should be kept. This could lead to a chaotic situation, especially where a line runs through two or more counties, e.g. Marks Tey - Sudbury, Ipswich - Cambridge, Norwich - Ely.

RIS MEMBER MEETS SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT

Our criticisms of the White Paper were also voiced by Mr. S.F. Wilkinson when he headed a delegation to Secretary of State, Mr. William Rodgers, who visited Cambridge on September 24th.

Mr. Wilkinson told the Secretary of State that, while it would appear that the Government wished to curtail the powers of the Transport Users' Consultative Committees, we considered this a retrograde step, and would rather see them strengthened, and dealing with freight as well as passenger matters.

The importance of maintaining concessionary fares was emphasised, as was the scope for increasing rail usage by more active promotion. Members of the delegation also said it was necessary to assess the relative merits of road and rail on similar terms, adding, "we cannot accept that the White Paper has done this."

NORTH NORFOLK RAILWAY

Ticket sales on the North Norfolk Railway, between Sheringham and Weybourne, rose by 26% this season. By the end of August, 80,000 passengers had used the line, and a target of 100,000 per year by 1980 has been set.

The Company has just received its third grant, of £28,000, from the Man-power Services Commission, to enable it to take on 18 young unemployed people for six months, to do a variety of work, including rebuilding a steam engine, resiting a signal box, coach renovations and track work.

FREIGHT ON THE NENE VALLEY

As well as running weekend passenger trains, this preserved line, from Wansford to Orton Mere, near Peterborough, has also gone into the freight business, carrying regular consignments for a local boat-building firm.

BETTER FREIGHT FACILITIES AT SNAILWELL

A £263,000 grant under the 1974 Railways Act has been made to the firm of A. King & Sons Ltd., scrap metal merchants and steel stockholders, to increase the capacity of their railhead at Snailwell, not far from Newmarket, on the Bury St. Edmunds - Ely route. This move should reduce the flow of heavy road vehicles between Snailwell and Rotherham, Scunthorpe, Sheffield, Sheerness, Norwich and Shotton.

AROUND THE LOCAL STATIONS:

1. NORWICH: During October, track work was being carried out between the platforms. A reinforced concrete base was laid, with drainage channels on each side, and then the track was relaid. This work was to improve drainage of diesel oil and water.

As part of improvements to the station concourse in 1975, a new departures board and map of East Anglia lines was put up - but it didn't include the Felixstowe branch! The RIS pointed this out to BR at the time, and we are now pleased to report that a new map has been put on display, including not only the Felixstowe line but also branches in Essex.

2. LOWESTOFT - BUS/RAIL INTERCHANGE? This scheme, which could involve rebuilding Lowestoft station slightly to the west of the present site, has been talked about for many years (cf. Newsletter No. 11).

Suffolk County Council's Transport Policies & Programme for 1978/79 states (para. 2.1.2.7), "The County Council have now been informed that British Rail are intending to revive the scheme as part of a development plan of the area, and that negotiations with concerned parties have already started. In accordance with their policies... the County Council will consider a contribution to this scheme when the need arises."

3. DARSHAM: The BR Property Board have put up the station building for sale, and concern has been expressed by ESTA members that the sale would also include part of the car-parking area. Darsham is popular as a "park and ride" station, since, although rather isolated, it has good road access, and is used by motorists from as far away as Southwold.

ESTA Secretary Mr. M.J. Farahar has pursued the matter further and discovered that the sale will include a large tarmac area on which rail users' cars are currently parked; leaving only the small station yard to be shared between rail users, patrons of the Stradbroke Arms public house and vehicles needing access to nearby cottages. Mr. Farahar and Mr. T.J. Garrod, after a careful inspection of the site, felt that the station yard would be quite inadequate, and, at the time of writing, are making strong representations to BR to revise their plans.

We fully support the sale or lease of redundant station buildings and land, of course; but feel the Darsham plans inconvenience rail users.

4. THURSTON: Following complaints by RIS member Mr. D.J. Jasper about the leaky state of the accommodation on the up platform, BR have promised to investigate the matter.

5. BRUNDALL: An arts and craft shop has opened in the former ticket office. Its name - "Just the Ticket".

IPSWICH BY-PASS INQUIRY "A MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY".

This was the way RIS member Mrs. O.F. Bridger described the continuing inquiry into the proposed Ipswich southern by-pass, at the beginning of August.

Mrs. Bridger was presenting her personal objection to the Compulsory Purchase Order for land to be used in building the bridge over the Orwell and its approaches.

Inspector Clinch had interrupted the main inquiry, into whether there should be a road there anyway, to hold this second inquiry. Some would say this exposed the main inquiry as a meaningless public relations exercise.

Just beforehand, the men (and women) from the ministry had told individual objector Mrs. F. Ambagtsher that they had "forgotten" to call her, and given her one hour's notice of her chance to appear before Inspector Clinch. Mrs. Ambagtsher was able to appear, and made many points similar to those made by the RIS earlier.

In mid-August, Inspector Clinch and the Department of Transport decided to allow objectors to cross-examine other witnesses at the inquiry - something which John Tyme had told him on July 19th that he should have done. (This decision was prompted by a High Court ruling in another case, that objectors at public inquiries should have the right to cross-examine other objectors.)

The inquiry resumed on October 12th, when Mrs. A.P. Moon, Mrs. O.F. Bridger and Mr. S.F. Wilkinson attended on behalf of the RIS. The Society produced a special leaflet for the occasion, entitled "John Tyme was right". The leaflet (some copies of which are still available from the Branch Secretary) lists 13 examples of bias, maladministration or difficulties placed in the way of objectors by the Department of Transport and its inspector.

Mr. Wilkinson conducted the RIS' cross-examination of representatives of Ipswich Borough Council and Ipswich Industrial Group.

The councillors, who had previously attacked "people from outside the area" for opposing the by-pass, now conceded, in reply to Mr. Wilkinson, that such people had every right to voice their opinions since they, like all taxpayers in this country, would be paying for the new road. In reply to five other questions, the councillors were vague and/or evasive. When asked to name the "outsiders" they had previously attacked and accused of disruption, for instance, they could only name John Tyme.

The Chairman of the Industrial Group, Mr. F. Heath, had claimed that "the Government had carried out exhaustive research" into the possibility of more freight going by rail, and had come out against the idea. Pressed by Mr. Wilkinson to say which research, he could only cite "independent research by my members" - the nature and extent of which remains unknown.

Mr. Heath also admitted that most freight to his members would still use town roads, because it had to get to firms in the centre. While complaining that the "Beeching cuts" had led to "too low a service" on the railways, he admitted that his members had lodged no objections to these at the time.

Mr. Jeremy Coles, who was unable to attend this hearing, succeeded in obtaining a further adjournment till October 26th, when he was due to conduct further cross-examination. Thus the inquiry has lasted virtually 6 months - the Department of Transport had hoped to get it over in rather less than half that time.

MEANWHILE....

Lowestoft - the Road to Ruin is the title of an article criticising the "relief road" now being built there, in the October issue of the Waveney Clarion (obtainable from Ruth Sparksman, 13 Beresford Rd., Lowestoft, 20p inc. postage)

At Kings Lynn, residents of Tennyson Ave. are petitioning against heavy lorries using their road and told the Lynn News & Advertiser (30.9.77), "Look what it cost to have the by-pass built - and the lorries do not use it." As the RIS has often said, you can control where a train goes; it's not so easy with a lorry!

SPOTLIGHT ON THE WYMONDHAM - DEREHAM - FAKENHAM LINE

"Can Bus Replace Train? No - it's been shown to fail through the example of central Norfolk."

This was the conclusion reached by WyDFRAC secretary Mr. J.S. Hull when he spoke at the RIS Public Meeting in Norwich on September 24th.

Mr. Hull had been speaking of the way in which rail passenger services had been "cunningly withdrawn" from the area in the 1960s - the system serving Dereham had been dismantled in stages over five years, rather than all at once, in which case a much fiercer protest against closure would have resulted. There had been a good rail service after dieselisation - but a lot of staff had been required to run it, particularly as most stations had been manned up to the time of closure and there had been many level crossings. The problem of high running costs resulting from under-investment was very apparent here.

Replacement bus services were in most instances more expensive and invariably slower than the trains had been. Even the freight train now got from Fakenham to Dereham in less time than the bus! The "fast" bus from Norwich to Lynn only did an average of 20 mph and was slower than the slowest trains had been. One needed to allow 2 hours to get from Dereham to catch a train at Norwich, if going by bus.

There were hardly any bus shelters in Dereham or Fakenham. Dereham market was very congested because of the buses and coaches.

The railway service had had the combined function of linking the central Norfolk towns to Norwich and linking them to local villages; on closure, it had required four separate bus services to do its job - now only three of these bus links survived in any form. All the more reason to support WyDFRAC's campaign to get the line reopened to passengers.

Ryburgh - Fakenham Freight Link to be Cut?

BR have carried out an investigation into the future of the last $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles of the line, from Ryburgh to Fakenham, and are threatening to close it. The track was relaid, with new ballast, earlier this year and the distant signals repainted. Traffic beyond Ryburgh is currently limited to coal, and to occasional scrap metal. Yet Fakenham is one of the six towns which Norfolk County Council has chosen for expansion. No figures have been given as to how much BR would save by cutting off these $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles; but could not any saving be effected in other ways? RIS Branch Committee Member Mr. C.J. Milnes recently visited Fakenham station and comments, "The layout is not laid out for time-saving working."

WyDFRAC member Mrs. A. Fookes recently had a letter in the local press, as did Mr. T.J. Garrod, protesting against the proposed closure. WyDFRAC have been collecting signatures and letters from local people objecting to the closure, and have at the time of writing received 90, copies of which have been passed to the County Council.

WyDFRAC Secretary Mr. J.S. Hull, and Chairman Mr. D. Wick attended the October meeting of Fakenham Town Council, where it was agreed to seek a meeting between the Town Council, County Council, BR, WyDFRAC and RIS representatives to discuss the issue.

There is, as RIS members will know, no legal procedure through which the public can object to a freight closure proposal - Fakenham underlines the importance of the RIS' long campaign to get one!

At Dereham, WyDFRAC members have launched a petition, calling on the County Council to give "serious consideration" to the restoration of their passenger service, and have so far collected 250 signatures door-to-door, with very few people refusing to sign.

NORFOLK STRUCTURE PLAN

The RIS and WyDFRAC are among 55 bodies invited to take part in the examination in public of the Structure Plan, due to start on January 24th. Any member who can spare some time to help put our case should contact the Branch Secretary.

EAST SUFFOLK TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION

The Committee of ESTA, meeting at Halesworth on September 27th, heard a report from the secretary, Mr. M.J. Farahar, about his correspondence with Eastern Counties concerning bus/rail connections at Halesworth.

Apparently, retiming the first bus from Southwold in the morning, so that it connected with the through train to London, would bring objections from several regular bus users. However, three other buses on the Southwold - Halesworth - Bungay - Norwich route could be diverted past Halesworth station with only 5-minute alterations to their existing schedules. This would give handy bus/rail connections: but Eastern Counties did not seem willing to take action just yet - which caused concern and surprise among members present.

Membership Secretary Mr. V.W. Hinkley reported that ESTA had gained a net increase of 28 members since the association was reactivated in September 1976.

The meeting discussed draft comments on the White Paper, prepared by Mr. Farahar, and also heard the NUR's views on it from the Chairman, Mr. A.W. Godfrey. It was agreed to write to the four MPs through whose constituencies the line passes, giving them the associations views - which correspond generally to those of the RIS with regard to passenger traffic (q.v.)

The third issue of ESTA's newsletter, "East Suffolk Travel" appeared at the end of October, and 4,000 copies are now being distributed.

EAST NORFOLK TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION

The Committee of ENTA met at Yarmouth on September 21st, when it was reported that the association now had 27 members. Mr. M. Collier was elected Treasurer, and Mr. P.R. Lawrence was thanked for his work in getting the association off the ground as Acting Treasurer. Mr. E. Canham was co-opted on to the Committee, to represent Yarmouth Trades Council, but a permanent secretary to replace Mr. R. Darsley has still to be found.

The second issue of "East Norfolk Travel" will be published in November, when a further meeting will be held. This issue will contain a special feature on Yarmouth buses and how some short and long term solutions to the town's transport problems could be found.

A complaint had been received about the poor state of the level crossing at Lingwood station. This has been passed to BR, who have given an assurance that the Civil Engineer's Department will put matters right as quickly as possible.

NEWMARKET & DISTRICT RAIL USERS' ASSOCIATION

The Association paid for a large advertisement in the Newmarket Journal on September 29th, giving details of the various rail bargains available locally, and drawing attention in particular to the reductions of between 15% and 30% in season ticket rates to Cambridge and Bury St. Edmunds.

NORTH EAST NORFOLK TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION

The association issued 3,000 copies of its latest newsletter in October. The Annual General Meeting, marking NENTA's second birthday, was due to be held in Cromer on October 26th. It is hoped to include a report in our next Newsletter.

SUFFIELD PARK: the proposal for a halt at Suffield Park, on the southern outskirts of Cromer, is still under investigation by BR and Norfolk County Council, and negotiations have recently taken place with a local landowner over the purchase of land for car-parking.

BRAMFORD STATION ACTION GROUP: This name was adopted by East Anglia's newest reopening campaign at a meeting on September 22nd, attended by 12 people. Messrs. T.J. Garrod and D.J. Jasper represented the RIS, and Mr. Jasper will be the official RIS representative on the Group. Two other members, Mr. and Mrs. A.L. Adams, have also expressed their willingness to help. Chairman of the Action Group is Mr. D. Porter, Secretary is Mr. J. Coles, Dairy Farm House, Somersham Road, Bramford (Ipswich 830985). A leaflet is being prepared for distribution in the village, and a survey of potential usage will be conducted later.

NEW MEMBERS: A warm welcome to the following:

Mr. B.J. Gray, 11 Brigham Gardens, Biggleswade, Beds. SG18 0LW.
Mr. D. Pitt, 31 Church Road, Wimbotsham, Kings Lynn, PE34 3QG.
Mr. J.L. Sillett, Flat 10, Norris Court, Waggon & Horses Lane, Norwich NR3 1JP.
Mr. W.W. Pickard, Crescent Lodge, 7 Lawn Crescent, Thorpe End, Norwich.
Mr. C.T. Barclay, Little Dunham Lodge, Kings Lynn, Norfolk.

Mr. D. Maudlin's telephone number is now Newmarket 5637. Mr. and Mrs. A.L. Adams now live at 24 Hillside, Stowmarket, Suffolk.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE STRUCTURE PLAN: the draft Written Statement has just been published, and the RIS will be studying it and compiling comments, which have to be submitted by the beginning of February. Any member with comments, or wishing to help, should contact Mr. S.F. Wilkinson, 52 Manor Park, Histon.

"RURAL DEPRIVATION AND SOCIAL PLANNING": The RIS has been invited to send delegates to a one day seminar on the above topic, to be held on December 2nd at the University of East Anglia. The seminar is organised by the Royal Town Planning Institute and costs £2 (£5 with lunch) - the fee for one delegate can be paid out of the RIS' funds. If you would like to go, please contact the Branch Secretary.

MISTLEY - NEW LIFE FOR OLD PORT, AND ITS RAIL LINK

Business is increasing at the port of Mistley, near Manningtree, where new equipment has recently been installed. The Managing Director of the recently-formed Mistley Quay & Forwarding Company told the EADT (15.10.77), "We have had lots of help and encouragement from British Rail, and have lifted some quite heavy cargoes directly on to railway wagons for transport to the Midlands."

IN BRIEF

1. Felixstowe Branch of the East Suffolk Travellers' Association held a successful autumn meeting on October 11th, when some 60 people attended to hear and question Mr. R.M. Senter, BR Passenger Commercial Officer.
2. Sudbury - Marks Tey Rail Users' Association recently collected enough money to present the porter at Marks Tey, Mr. C. Sergeant, with a colour television to mark his retirement.
3. Centrelink Bus continues to operate between Norwich station and points in the city centre, though the City Council no longer have any funds available to subsidise it. Eastern Counties' Traffic Manager informs us, "It is clearly meeting needs and... the traffic is slowly increasing. While severe financial constraints may not permit us to operate Centrelink indefinitely in its present form, we may well be able to incorporate the facility into existing bus services by reorganising them."
4. More government action to promote the railways was urged by our member Mr. G.J. Heathcock in a letter in Co-operative News, 5.10.77.
5. Juggernauts parking overnight on BR land at Newmarket are causing a lot of annoyance to local residents. A correspondent in the Newmarket Journal (22.9.77) wrote, "There is a curious irony here... We have British Rail providing free parking for their competitors."
6. "Make the juggernauts pay their true costs!" This is the message on window stickers being produced by Ipswich Friends of the Earth, and obtainable at a very small charge from Jeremy Coles (address on p.7)
7. Speedlink is the new name for BR's expanding air-braked freight network. A Speedlink exhibition train toured East Anglia in October, and the RIS was amongst those invited to inspect it. Mr. C.F.C. Brennan represented the Society at a meeting on the train in Norwich on October 18th.
8. A special passenger train shot up the Wisbech branch on September 24th (all crossing gates were manned) amid a certain air of mystery. BR said later it was an enthusiasts' special.
9. Any member who would like to attend the Transport 2000 AGM in Birmingham on December 3rd should contact Mr. D. Maudlin (Newmarket 5637).