

RAILWAY INVIGORATION SOCIETY
EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH
NEWSLETTER No. 27

August 1978

Branch Secretary: Mr. T.J. Garrod, 15 Clapham Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 1RQ.
 (Phone 81721; or, at work, Norwich 28181, ex. 44)

SIGNALS AT "GO" FOR THE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY

On October 1st the Railway Invigoration Society and the Railway Development Association will amalgamate to form the Railway Development Society. Members of both bodies have voted overwhelmingly in favour of such a merger, which will result in a stronger national voice for the retention, modernisation and greater usage of rail transport. A national press conference is planned for October 3rd.

The East Anglian Branch of the Railway Development Society will cover the same area as the East Anglian Branch of the RIS and will hold its first meeting on SATURDAY OCTOBER 7th, at 2.15 p.m. in the Sexton Room of the Assembly House, Theatre Street, NORWICH.

The format of the meeting will be as follows:

1. Business meeting: including Chairman's Introduction; Election of Officers and Committee; National Report; Reports around the Region; Future Activities (to include discussion of special trains, especially possible ones to be run in 1979).

(Branches of the RDS will be able to have their own funds; while still being able to call upon national funds as well, and with subscriptions still being collected nationally. The Branch Committee has agreed that this branch should have its own funds and Mr. F.I.S. Carter, as Acting Treasurer, has opened a bank account.)

2. Film in colour, of the Norwich - Dereham special train service on April 8th, made by Mr. R.B. Whipps, with commentary on cassette. This will be the premiere of the film, which has been bought by the RDS and will also be available for hire to any interested organisation, price £1 plus postage/carriage.

Mr. Whipps will also show films which he shot of the two special trains organised by the Felixstowe branch of ESTA in 1977.

At the same time as the launching of the RDS, its first publication, A Guide for Rail Users' Groups, will be issued. This booklet, selling at 20p, tells you why and how to set up local users' groups and gives many hints, suggestions and other handy information on what such groups can do.

There is a possibility that October will be General Election month. In that case, the new RDS will also do its utmost to ensure that candidates of all parties are made fully aware of our policies, and that transport and related issues are effectively raised in the election campaign.

SPECIAL TRAINS

The specials to Dereham were a great success and, in the words of the local press "cocked a snook at Beeching". Let us ensure that the special trains on the Aylsham line (September 16th) and to Wisbech (September 23rd) are equally successful.

The date of the Wisbech special has had to be altered because of BR's rolling-stock problems on the date originally set.

Leaflets advertising both specials have already been sent to some members; for others, copies of the leaflets, which include booking forms, are enclosed with this newsletter. Bookings are coming in steadily. Have YOU booked yet? Have you told your friends? A chance to visit Aylsham, Reepham, Lenwade or Wisbech by train does not come along every day (Yet!)

A number of RIS members have volunteered to help with stewarding duties on one or both trains; anyone else who would like to help should contact the Branch Secretary.

NB If booking for the Sept. 16th special, please note that in early August Mr. Coton will be moving to 63 Soame Close, Aylsham, Norfolk.

R.I.S. SPRING MEETING, CAMBRIDGE, SATURDAY MAY 13th

Some 30 members and supporters attended the East Anglian Branch meeting of the RIS on May 13th, and there were 12 apologies for absence.

During discussion of local and national issues, it was agreed to write to the Dept. of Prices and Consumer Protection, seeking permission for the RIS to nominate a member to the Transport Users' Consultative Committee for East Anglia. Mr. P.R. Lawrence said that he would be prepared to be nominated.

It was also agreed to write to the Council on Tribunals, which had recently made recommendations to the government for changes in the procedure for road inquiries; urging that, in view of our own experiences at the Ipswich Bypass inquiry last year, the government be pressed to take suitable action to make the inquiries more democratic and wider-ranging.

Mr. S.F. Wilkinson reported on local suggestions that Barnwell Junction station be reopened for football specials, in view of its closeness to Cambridge United football ground. The team had just been promoted to the Second Division, which was likely to bring large numbers of extra followers with visiting teams. This could cause problems, with Cambridge station so far from the ground.

A resolution was passed unanimously by the meeting, urging the authorities "to seriously consider the possibility of upgrading the existing freight-only track and reopening Barnwell Junction on match days." Our suggestion was reported in the local press and on BBC's "Look East"; BR have not, however, been too enthusiastic about the idea, but have suggested special buses from Cambridge station to the ground - which, if they materialise, will at least be better than letting large numbers of fans find their own way through the city.

A further resolution was passed, stating, "It is the view of this meeting that, resulting from the two recent major oil disasters off the southeast shores of our country, we would support the moves being made by British Rail and the SNCF (French railways) to construct a single-track tunnel beneath the Channel - we would also ask what studies of present shipping movements have taken place, and the likely effect of reducing shipping movements and consequently accidents, should the Channel Tunnel be built." This has been sent to the Chairman of the British Railways Board.

Our guest speaker was Mr. R.P. Stratford, BR Divisional Commercial Manager, on BR's Freight Role in East Anglia. He began by saying that, despite economic stagnation in 1977, BR had achieved a record of which they could be proud, cutting their freight deficit from £27,500,000 in 1976 to only £5,500,000. They had carried 170 million tonnes of freight - 6 million less than in 1976, thanks to the worldwide problems of the steel industry.

He described the trend towards train-load working in the last 10 years - it now accounted for 80% of BR's tonnage. Referring to EEC rules on road freight, he added, "The terms of competition are moving towards us. But we mustn't be complacent. We must still make BR services more competitive. We need more investment in private sidings and air-braked wagons."

Mr. Stratford spoke of BR's major freight customers in East Anglia - such as British Industrial Sand at Middleton near Lynn, and ARC at St. Ives. The British Sugar Corporation was also very important, with ingoing limestone and coal, and outgoing pulp, refined sugar and animal feedstuffs - but problems in this business were its seasonal nature and the effects of weather conditions on it.

About 200,000 tonnes of grain a year were forwarded from about 20 railheads in East Anglia; EEC regulations were encouraging the import and export of grain, which was good for BR. There were also hopes for expansion of the canned foods traffic from Kings Lynn. BR were actively marketing Speedlink throughout East Anglia and had high hopes of gaining more traffic - nationally, 25% of Speedlink traffic had previously gone by road.

There would probably not be any more major Freightliner terminals in East Anglia, but he would like to see one at Norwich. Hydraulically operated containers were being investigated; and another possible future development was combined Freightliner and Speedlink trains, as both were airbraked.

Mr. Stratford showed two films and answered many questions, after which a vote of thanks was moved by Mr. F.R. Melvin and echoed by all those present.

NEW DIESEL UNIT ON THE WAY?

Over 3,000 of BR's present fleet of 3,500 diesel multiple unit vehicles were built between 1957 and 1960. Put another way, most of the diesel trains providing the service on secondary lines like the majority in East Anglia have been worked hard for 20 years and soon need replacing.

As the current cost of a conventional 3-car d.m.u. is £600,000 BR are looking around for cheaper alternatives to some of them. In June, the Railway Technical Centre at Derby unveiled an experimental vehicle which they have developed in co-operation with British Leyland. It has a Leyland National-type 12-metre body mounted on a 100-tonne End Load resistant under frame with 4-wheel Flexicoil suspension and isolating rubber mountings between the body and under-frame.

The vehicle is thus a type of 4-wheel railbus reminiscent of railbuses like the five Waggon and Maschinenbau vehicles which worked the Maldon, Saffron Walden, Mildenhall etc. lines in the early 60s; but modern techniques should overcome the problems of those earlier models.

The test vehicle is currently being towed by a conventional locomotive at various speeds to see how it stands up to railway conditions. This vehicle has 40 seats and 4 doors (2 each side), but no toilet or guard's compartment, and could be one-man-operated. Modified versions (e.g. with toilets) could be produced and vehicles could be coupled together.

BR stressed in a press release in June that, if this experimental vehicle were to be put into production, it would be to supplement, rather than completely replace, conventional multiple units: "Whatever emerges from the trials, a light-weight vehicle of this kind is unlikely to replace the present development of electric and diesel-powered multiple-unit vehicles to which the Railways Board is committed."

In East Anglia, such a vehicle could well be employed on more lightly-used services and on certain reopened lines; indeed, a prototype could well be run experimentally in revenue-earning service on a line at present closed to passengers.

These ideas, and their implications, are currently being discussed by the RIS Branch Committee and the local users' associations and rail action committees associated with us. We hope to gather all the views together in a report at the end of the summer and send these to BR. Comments, questions and suggestions to the Branch Secretary, please.

BUS/RAIL CO-ORDINATION: A SMALL VICTORY

One of East Anglia's very few rail-replacement bus services to survive in any recognisable form, that which replaced intermediate stations between Norwich, Diss and Stowmarket in 1966, has suffered some cuts - in January, some of the buses started to terminate in the centre of Norwich and Diss instead of continuing to the railway stations, where they had connected with Inter City trains!

The RIS lodged an objection to this move with the Traffic Commissioners, as did Mr. G.H. Reeve, who lives along the route in question. At a hearing on May 2nd, the Commissioners upheld our complaint as far as the 06.30 Diss - Norwich bus was concerned and asked the operators, Messrs. R.O. Simonds, to continue to run the bus through to Norwich station, as required, to provide a connection for people living in Long Stratton and other villages into the Inter City trains to Birmingham (07.54), and London (07.58) plus local trains.

BRECKLAND LINE USERS' ASSOCIATION

BLUA has just issued its seventh newsletter, publicising services and bargains available to users of the Norwich - Ely line and describing as "good viewing", "The graph in the (BR) Commercial Passenger Manager's office at Grosvenor House, where the earnings line has remained above the budget line for a considerable period." In response to BLUA's suggestion, BR are unwilling to stop the 12.36 from Norwich at Spooner Row unless firmer evidence of the need for it is produced. Next BLUA Committee meeting is at Attleborough on September 13th; the RIS representative Mr. L.J. Howes will not be able to attend on that date; any member able to go instead, contact Branch Secretary.

BUSY TIME FOR ESTA

The East Suffolk Travellers' Association had an attendance of 30 at its Annual General Meeting held at Halesworth on April 22nd, with 18 apologies for absence.

The Secretary, Mr. M.J. Farahar, in his annual report, reviewed the policies of central and local government towards rural railways over the past year, pointing out that ESTA, in its comments on the White Paper sent to all four local MPs, had stressed that "each line is an integral part of the overall network" and decisions about its future should not be left to County Councils. The councils did have an important role in co-ordinating, improving and publicising public transport within their areas, however, and it was not sufficient for Suffolk County Council to make "generalised statements... about the continuation of investigations aimed at increasing rail ridership". "Is it not about time," asked Mr. Farahar, "that we saw some positive action based on the results of these investigations, or were even informed as to the matters being investigated?"

He also drew attention to the plans announced a few months previously to site a simplified automated level crossing - consisting of red and amber warning lights to road users, but no gates, barriers or attendants - where the proposed Beccles by-pass would cross the East Suffolk line. If such an installation could be allowed on what would be a main road, then why were there still over 25 manually operated level crossings between Ipswich and Lowestoft, many of them over quiet country lanes and nearly all of which had to be manned continuously during the line's operation? Unless such high cost-absorbing features were gradually phased out by a planned re-investment programme, there must surely always remain a long-term threat to the line's future.

The officers and committee were all re-elected, with the addition of Mr. A. Hadingham as Minutes Secretary and Mrs. T. Helps as Assistant Membership Secretary.

Mr. R.P. Stratford, BR Divisional Commercial Manager, addressed the meeting, admitting the deficiencies of the rolling stock on the Lowestoft - London through train and local diesel units, but giving an assurance that improvements would come, especially with the "cascading" that would follow the introduction of the High Speed Train in the Eastern Region. The large conurbations were getting priority for investment; but he predicted that electrification would reach Ipswich by 1985 and that there would be a good future for local lines like the East Suffolk.

EAST SUFFOLK TRAVEL No. 4 ESTA's twice-yearly newsletter, appeared in May and 5000 copies have been distributed, together with BR leaflets. ESTA also mounted the RIS exhibition in Beccles library for three weeks beginning on June 26th; and on July 15th, members of the association distributed 3,000 copies of a special leaflet prepared by BR, together with paytrain guides etc. door-to-door around the town. So the people of Beccles should now be well aware of their rail services and facilities and the advantages of using them!

ESTA has also been promised by BR that notice-boards will be erected at the ingate crossing, Beccles and Bramford Lane road bridge, Ipswich. These are to be maintained by ESTA members and used to display BR and ESTA literature.

Eastern Counties have not been quite so co-operative - after 12 months of correspondence with ESTA, they are still unwilling to retime three Southwold - Norwich buses by 5 minutes so that these connect with trains at Halesworth.

FELIXSTOWE TOWN STATION DEVELOPMENT PLANS

The BR Property Board have applied to Suffolk Coastal District Council for outline planning consent to re-develop Felixstowe Town station and adjacent land with shops, offices, a pub etc., but still leaving a platform and some car-parking space. The RIS has written to the Council, saying that we welcome the scheme in principal but urging that the needs and convenience of rail users be safeguarded and asking for a copy of the detailed plans when these become available.

AWAYDAY KIDS GO FOR 40p (20p SINGLE ON PAYTRAINS)

BR have again introduced this cheap fare facility for accompanied children, at the same rate as last summer, for the period June 18th - September 9th. It means, for example, that a family of four having a day out from Lowestoft to London can now pay £15.20 instead of £21.60. Each adult can take two children at the cheap rate.

This year, the facility also applies to season ticket holders; so a commuter from, say, Sudbury to London, can, at the weekend, take two children all or part of the way to London for 40p return each. This is a useful innovation that should encourage more off-peak use of commuter lines.

LINCOLNSHIRE

Mr. S.F. Wilkinson reports that over the Spring Bank Holiday, 15,813 passengers arrived at Skegness by train - the highest over a Bank Holiday for many years. Many trains arrived carrying over 800 people and excursions were run from fifteen places, including Alfreton, Biggleswade, Cambridge, Kettering, Leicester, Manchester, Leeds and Kings Cross. There are nine through trains from Skegness on summer Saturdays this year, all departing between 11.15 and 13.40.

So Skegness remains busy with holiday traffic, but this is not much comfort to the locals, who cannot leave the town before 09.50 because of the 10-hour shift.

In a letter to Mr. Wilkinson concerning the level crossings on the line, which have prompted the 10-hour shift, BR Divisional Management at Doncaster state, "Nothing would please us more than to reduce the costs on such crossings by either closure or some simple form of traffic lights for the lesser used crossings. Unfortunately, we are completely in the hands of the Dept. of Transport who set out the conditions under which crossings must be operated on public roads".

Lincolnshire County Council have completed a transport survey at Branston and Heighington, 3 miles east of Lincoln on the Sleaford line, which could possibly lead to the reopening of that station.

NEWMARKET SINGLING?

BR are considering singling the track between Dullingham and Newmarket, abolishing Newmarket as a signal box, and thus making a single track section from Dullingham to Chippenham Junc. (The line through the tunnel at Newmarket has always been single.)

NORTH WALSHAM BUS/RAIL IMPROVEMENTS

Changes to the bus services into North Walsham from villages in the coastal area were introduced on July 2nd, giving extra connections with the trains to and from Norwich.

MOTORAIL AT ELY

The Motorail trains to Scotland are taking on cars at Ely instead of Cambridge this season, for operational reasons.

KINGS LYNN - HUNSTANTON RAILWAY RESTORATION SOCIETY

Membership of this recently-formed society costs only 10p. To join, send your money to the Chairman, Mr. R. Duggan, 5 Stag Place, Kings Lynn, Norfolk. A leaflet issued by the Society says of its aim, the rebuilding of the Hunstanton branch, "We make it quite clear now that this would NOT be just a novel summer attraction - it would be a service".

EAST NORFOLK TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION

No one has so far been willing to take on the secretaryship of ENTA. It is therefore expected that the association, suspended last November, will remain in indefinite suspense until a secretary is found.

Anyone interested in taking on this job, or who knows of a possible candidate, should contact either the RIS Branch Secretary or ENTA's Chairman Dr. B. Callan, 37 Busseys Loke, Bradwell, Gt. Yarmouth, Norfolk. The Norwich - Yarmouth line is the only paytrain route in our area without an active users' association, though ENTA does have about 30 members and considerable potential.

SUDBURY DEVELOPMENTS

The RIS Branch Committee wrote to Babergh District Council supporting its decision to refuse planning permission for a hypermarket on the former railway goods depot site - where, as we have said for some time, a new rail halt ought to be built.

In its reply, the Council's Planning Dept. informed us that "a Town Centre Plan for Sudbury is in the course of preparation and will attempt to find a use for vacant land in general". We look forward to making comments during the public consultation on the plan later this year - as also will our colleagues in the Sudbury - Marks Tey Rail Users' Association.

SMTRUA issued its third newsletter in June, and its campaign to publicise the line and itself is now well under way, with posters and leaflet dispensers in local shops, notice-boards at all stations and car-stickers.

The association is also taking up the question of bus connections from Lavenham - where the bus sometimes connects with the train provided that you can sprint the quarter-mile from the bus station to the railway station in 2 minutes! Chairman Mike Davies comments, "This shows just how much local transport co-ordination has disintegrated since the closure of the majority of our local rail lines. The bus timetable has simply failed to adapt to alterations in the rail timetable, despite the fact that it is allegedly providing the alternative service from the villages".

SMTRUA has also protested to BR at Liverpool St. about the recent action of their Public Relations Officer in inviting a press reporter and photographer for a free ride on a mid-morning train on the branch - resulting in a double-page spread in the "Suffolk Free Press" about near-empty trains; with just a couple of lines at the bottom of the page about trains being full of commuters at peak times. An up journey in a peak-hour train, followed by a down trip in an off-peak one, would have given the press a balanced picture of the line and its role.

Suffolk County Council, while still prevaricating about the possibility of a halt at Cornard, have done something positive by publishing in April a Bus and Rail Timetable for the Sudbury area. The 44-page booklet sells at 10p (2 spare free copies are available, plus 10p postage, from the Branch Secretary). It contains timetables for a dozen different bus operators in the area bounded by Nayland, Bildeston, Shimpling and Clare, plus the Marks Tey - Sudbury and Ipswich - Cambridge lines.

There are only two criticisms: the rail timetable changed slightly in May but the County Councils timetable contains the old times and therefore became out of date shortly after publication (One would have thought the Council officials would have known that BR bring out a new timetable in May each year, and would have obtained advance details of changes). Secondly, it would be useful to mention in the rail section of the timetable the car-parking facilities existing at most stations and the free carriage of cycles on the train.

However, perhaps one can give the County Council 8 out of 10 for this project and add, "A good start - keep trying."

FREIGHT NEWS: IPSWICH

Mr. S.J. Hammond reports seeing quite a lot of wagon load freight during April, including whiskey from Scotland, steel strip coil and steel plate on little-used dock lines; plus one or two wagons a day loaded with seed potatoes from Scotland for Eastern Counties Farmers. Pauls are making increased use of the Speedlink air-braked freight services for the transport of their bagged malt and barley from Ipswich docks.

LOWESTOFT During the first week in May, Lowestoft became a rail container port, with at least 2 special trains (one on the East Suffolk, one on the Wherry Line), serving a ship of the Overseas Orient Container Line. A crane had to be hired to lift the containers off their bogie bolsters and a class 47 loco hauled at least one of the special trains (normally Lowestoft only sees class 31s on freight).

From subsequent enquiries, we understand that the ship concerned had been diverted from Felixstowe, and this was a "one-off" job. However, it shows that Lowestoft can handle container trains, and this point must be pressed in future especially if proposed port expansion plans bring more container traffic.

ROAD OR RAIL?

There is a continuing need for the RIS and similar-minded bodies to press the rail alternative to costly road schemes, and to point out that new roads and motorways do not necessarily solve the problems it is claimed they will.

The Cambridge Evening News (21.6.78) reported that the 23-mile stretch of the M11 along the Essex-Hertfordshire border "has not attracted the traffic that transport pundits predicted" and that less than one in six of lorry-drivers using the A11 between the Cambridge area and London were using it. (The "transport pundits" have come up with an answer to this problem, however; they're spending £3,000 putting up new signposts to conceal from drivers the fact that the old A11 leads to London!)

Meanwhile, at Kings Lynn, residents of Tennyson Avenue carried out a census of lorries using their road instead of the by-pass - and found up to 600 in a 2-hour period (EDP 28.4.78). At Dereham, Mr. J.G. Ince reports that, from observations during his daily journeys, the by-pass, particularly in the vicinity of the giant South Green roundabout, "is taking very light traffic... Many local people just don't use the bypass, since they have regular calls ... and all of these are either inaccessible or awkward to get at from the bypass". Mr. Ince suggests that the extravagant South Green roundabout was "a real piece of vandalism" in view of the demolition needed to make way for it.

Criticism of over-designed roads and of failure to look at the rail alternative comes in a very useful booklet just published by Arfon & Anglesey Friends of the Earth on the proposed Bangor Bypass in North Wales. A copy can be borrowed from the RIS Branch Secretary - send 12p for postage.

Another important publication, on November 9th, will be John Tyme's book on Motorways and Democracy, which includes a chapter on Ipswich. Look out for it!

Inspector Clinch is now conducting a road inquiry down in Kent, but the implications of his behaviour at Ipswich rumble on. The Ombudsman is continuing his investigation into the RIS' complaints about the Ipswich inquiry, and his officials recently interviewed Messrs. T.J. Garrod and S.F. Wilkinson. There is no indication yet when the Ombudsman's report will appear.

Experience of the Ipswich inquiry has also prompted our member Mrs. O.F. Bridger to write a one-act play "Motorway Burlesque". The play could be adapted and performed by amateur groups, and anyone interested should contact Mrs. Bridger at 8 Cross St., Leiston, Suffolk.

The British Road Federation held a conference in Norwich on May 23rd, to call for more spending on road building and maintenance. Unlike the meeting on trunk roads and motorways jointly sponsored by the RIS in Norwich two months previously, this one was not open to the public. Similar calls for more spending on road maintenance have been made by the AA.

A letter from the RIS Branch Secretary, published in both the EDP and EADP, commented, "There are indeed problems (of road maintenance) - and one major cause is heavy lorries - whose owners are paying, in taxes, as little as 55% of the cost which their vehicles impose on the community... Making the juggernauts pay their true track costs would be one way of helping to raise the money the road builders claim they need".

Proposed meeting: arrangements are currently being made for a joint meeting of representatives of the RIS and the other three bodies sponsoring the meeting with John Tyme at Norwich in March, plus representatives of Transport 2000 from the East and West Midlands, to consider ways of pressing the rail case in the face of continuing campaigning by the road lobby for more and more roads from the Midlands to the East Coast.

TRANSPORT 2000 EAST ANGLIA

There will be a meeting of Transport 2000 East Anglia on SATURDAY 28th OCTOBER at the University Careers Service office, Stuart House, Mill Lane, CAMBRIDGE, starting at 2.15 p.m. All RIS members will be welcome at this important meeting. Mill Lane is just south of Silver Street, near the river, about 20 minutes' walk from Cambridge station.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Welcome to the following new members:

1. Mrs. G. Stokoe, Station House, Kimberley, Wymondham, Norfolk.
2. Mr. G.H. Reeve, Nether Langleys, Lower Tharston, Long Stratton, Norwich, NR15 2YL. (Tel: Swainsthorpe 470207)
3. Mr. C. Pearson, Arrandale, 75 Crown Road, DEREHAM, Norfolk, NR20 4AE.
4. Mr. M.J. Farahar, 21 Briarwood Road, WOODBRIDGE, Suffolk.
5. Mr. D. Ruffell, 8 Romany Road, NORWICH, NR3 4RE.
6. E. Anglian District Council, NUR, Sec: Mr. J.F. Fernley, 48 Stradbroke Road, Gorleston-on-Sea, Gt. Yarmouth, Norfolk, NR31 7AQ. (Tel: 63977).

Change of address:

Mr. & Mrs. A.L. Adams, 53 Lime Tree Place, STOWMARKET, Suffolk.

Mr. J.A. Dennis, 16 St. Peter's Road, SHERINGHAM, Norfolk.

FOR SALE

1. Copies of working timetables (not current ones, but recent ones) covering passenger and freight lines in East Anglia and part of Lincolnshire are available at 25p each from Mr. J.B. Murray, 68 Frog End, Shepreth, Royston, Herts; or Mr. D. Barham, 62 Perne Avenue, Cambridge. The full title of the document is: "British Railways Eastern Region. Sectional Appendix to the Working Timetable and Books of Rules and Regulations - Southern Area."
2. Passenger Trains on the Hoo Peninsula is a feasibility study into the possible reopening (and partial rebuilding) of the Gravesend - Grain line in Kent. It is the work of a group headed by RIS National Chairman Mr. R.V. Banks and Hon. Technical Adviser Mr. J. Ogilvie. Copies are obtainable at 62p (inc. postage) from Mr. Banks, 121 Ashford Road, Bearsted, Maidstone, Kent.

WyDFRAC SURVEY RESULT

A survey carried out by WyDFRAC members on the special train from Dereham on April 8th revealed not only a large majority in favour of reopening the line to passengers, but also a strong demand for similar special excursion trains, not only to Norwich but also to London and the coast; and, amongst the coastal destinations, Lowestoft was the most popular.

Some demand has also been registered for a schools' special from Dereham to York. At present, some schools in the town take children by coach to Wymondham to join the specials run from time to time by BR from Norwich.

These and other suggestions will be put to BR, it is envisaged, by representatives of the RDS (as it will then be) at a meeting in October or November when we hope to discuss the possible chartering of trains in 1979.

OLD BOTTLES BY RAIL?

There have recently been moves by the Glass Manufacturers' Association to establish collecting points for empty bottles which can then be sent for recycling. This would be a possible traffic for the railways. BR have for many years carried scrap metal and have recently started transporting other types of refuse (e.g. the schemes at Stewartby, Beds. and Brentford.) Branch Committee member Mr. K.O. Cutmore is investigating the possibilities.

T.U.C.C. (see also p.2) The RIS has been given permission to nominate a member to be considered for selection to the TUCC, and the name of our Chairman Mr. P. R. Lawrence has been sent in. Nominations will be considered by the Secretary of State in September. Meanwhile, Mr. S.F. Wilkinson has been nominated by his District Council for a possible Traffic Commissioner.

MANPOWER SERVICES COMMISSION: Mr. P.R. Lawrence is looking into possible ways in which this Commission's job creation schemes could be used to improve rail facilities on BR. (They already operate on several private lines.)

CHANNEL TUNNEL: Our future colleagues in the London Area of the Railway Development Association have just issued a 64-page study into the case for the Channel Tunnel and are sending it to BR, Dept. of Transport etc., as part of continuing efforts by both themselves and the RIS towards getting this important project re-started.