

RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY
 (incorporating Railway Invigoration Society
 and Railway Development Association)

EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH
NEWSLETTER No. 28

November 1978

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

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TWO MORE SPECIAL TRAIN SUCCESSES

220 Wisbech people filled the special train chartered by the Railway Development Society and the Wisbech & March Rail Action Committee on the afternoon of Saturday September 23rd for an excursion to Cambridge. It was the first time since the line's closure to passengers in 1968 that local people had a chance to travel by train from Wisbech. The 2 x 2 diesel multiple unit also made a morning return trip on the branch, and the total number of people carried throughout the day was over 350, nearly all making return trips.

The train took between 34 and 40 minutes for each trip along the $7\frac{1}{2}$ -mile branch, with the guard opening and shutting 4 of the level crossing gates. This was 20-25 minutes less than the generous scheduled time, and therefore meant an early arrival in Cambridge, giving participants nearly $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours in the city. The weather was excellent, operations went very smoothly and, in the words of the Wisbech Standard (29.9.78), "you would have been hard-pressed to find a dissatisfied customer on Saturday evening".

Tribute must be paid to Lt.-Col.J.A.V. Bolam, Co-ordinator of WAMRAC, for the many months of preparatory work he put in; to those WAMRAC and RDS (at that time RIS) members who acted as stewards; and to British Rail's management and staff for their help and co-operation throughout, and especially their smart work on the day. Thanks are also due to two Wisbech schoolboys, Mark Granger and Timothy Yates, who made a headboard for the train and signs for Wisbech's temporary station - a loading bay in the goods depot which, with parking space alongside it, proved very satisfactory.

The Wisbech special was preceded on September 16th by another successful Norwich - Lenwade train, chartered by the RDS and the Aylsham & District Rail Action Committee. This carried about 250 passengers, including a considerable number who visited the Reepham Spectacular and some who alighted at Aylsham to visit Blickling Hall.

During a 40-minute stop at Lenwade, many passengers took advantage of the refreshments laid on at the village cafe, while others did a spot of blackberrying and some dedicated enthusiasts walked to the very end of the track!

Again, the warm sunny weather and smooth organisation helped ensure an enjoyable excursion for all participants - some of whom had travelled from London, the Midlands and even Lancashire, thus providing BR with a considerable amount of contributory revenue. This train was the third special passenger train on the line in three years - giving it in effect an annual passenger service; and, as ADRAC secretary Mr. J. Coton assured the press afterwards, "our aim remains to get a daily passenger service to Aylsham and Reepham".

Dereham, the Aylsham line, Wisbech... our series of special train services on freight-only lines has carried over 1,100 passengers this year, providing a public service, publicising the lines and indeed other rail services and getting local people more rail-minded. Representatives of the RDS will shortly be meeting BR to discuss the possibility of a similar series of charter trains for 1979.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, IPSWICH, SATURDAY FEBRUARY 3rd, 1979

The Branch AGM will be held in room 2, Ipswich Town Hall, on Saturday February 3rd, commencing at 2.15 p.m. After the official business we shall welcome as guest speaker Mr. J.R. Ogilvie, C.Eng., M.I.Mech.E., M.I.E.E., Hon. Technical Adviser to the RDS, to speak on new technology and how the railways can benefit from it. All are welcome at what should be a very interesting meeting.

BRANCH MEETING, NORWICH, SATURDAY OCTOBER 7th

There was an attendance of over 30 at the first meeting of the East Anglian Branch of the new RDS, with 9 apologies for absence. The officers and committee of the former RIS branch formally resigned, and elections took place as follows:

Chairman: Mr. P.R. Lawrence; Vice-Chairman: Mr. S.F. Wilkinson; Secretary: Mr. T.J. Garrod; Treasurer: Mr. F.I.S. Carter; Minutes Secretary: Mr. P. Wakefield; Committee: Messrs. K.O. Cutmore, D.J. Jasper, C.J. Milnes and C.W. Taylor. Mr. B. Woolsey agreed to continue assisting with newsletter distribution, and Mr. R.B. Whipps agreed to be in charge of hiring out the RDS film of the Dereham special.

There was discussion of the County Councils' Public Transport Plans (see p.4) and Inspector Clinch's report on the Ipswich by-pass. On the latter, it was felt that the cutting of the £3 million Bentley Long Wood to Belstead section showed that even Mr. Clinch found it impossible to accept all the road builders' extravagances; and that this vindicated the Society's own stand, in principle, that the scheme was over-extravagant. In the light of our similar views on the western section expressed in 1976/77, it was resolved that we lodge an objection to it in principle, once the new Draft Order is published. (see p.7)

Mr. K.O. Cutmore spoke on the recent BR discussion paper on electrification, and it was agreed that the Branch should submit its own comments on the need for further rail electrification in East Anglia, to supplement the general comments made by the RDS at national level.

Mr. J.S. Hull spoke on the recent Department of Transport report on Level Crossing Protection. There were 2,000 protected crossings in Great Britain, costing £22 million a year to run - but under section 3 of the 1974 Railways Act, and EEC Regulation 1192/69, BR could claim a grant for 50% of the cost of public crossings.

The report recommended a phased changeover from gated to automatic crossings wherever possible, as these were cheaper in the long term, safer and involved a shorter road closure time. Open crossings were possible on roads used by less than 200 vehicles daily, with a maximum rail speed over them of 10 mph; flashing lights were possible on any single track provided that the driver could see far enough to stop if necessary. A new type of open crossing with flashing lights was now being suggested, with a maximum train speed over it of 75 mph, which would be especially suitable on lines where there was a signal box nearby. Somewhat simpler automatic half-barriers were also being suggested. The simplification of fencing and cattle-guards was another proposal.

If capital was made available - e.g. £11,000 for open crossing with flashing lights; £22,000 for the new type of open crossing; £32,000 for automatic half-barriers - the operating costs, especially of secondary lines in this area, could be considerably cut. Mr. D. Maudlin commented that the traditional elaborate British level crossing amounted to "spoonfeeding the motorist at the railways' expense."

The meeting closed with a showing of Mr. R.B. Whipps' film of the Norwich - Dereham special train, with taped commentary. The film now belongs to the RDS and can be hired for showing (use a Super Eight projector) from Mr. Whipps at 42 Derby Road, Ipswich, IP3 8DN (Tel: 73366). There is a hire charge of £1 plus a deposit of £2 (returned if the film is received back undamaged).

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

SATURDAY JANUARY 13th: Half-day Conference on Reopenings, Sexton Room, Assembly House, Norwich, 2.00 till 5.00 p.m. The RDS is organising this conference to discuss what has been achieved so far by various reopening campaigns for lines and stations, what future prospects are and what we should concentrate on doing over the next few years. Although it is primarily concerned with East Anglia, we hope to have some representatives from other areas; notably from Transport 2000 Derbyshire, who were involved in the Sinfin reopening. The conference will not be a public meeting, but will be for RDS members, members and associate members of rail action committees and non-members by invitation.

SATURDAY MAY 5th: National RDS AGM: Westgate Church Hall, Peterborough, 2.00 - 5.00. Full details in the January issue of Rail Development News. Meanwhile, please note the date.

SUDSBURY LINE NOT JUST OF LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

This is one of the conclusions that can be drawn from a survey carried out on 6 days in June by the Sudbury - Marks Tey Rail Users' Association (a corporate member of the RDS) and published in September. Passengers on the Sudbury line trains were asked about their points of origin and destination. Results showed that they were beginning or terminating their journeys at 79 different stations elsewhere, as far afield as Portsmouth, Teignmouth, Barnstaple, Birmingham, Sheffield, Darlington, Yarmouth, Cromer and even Invergordon! "Local" people using the line came from 57 different parishes, from Drinkstone to Earls Colne, from Haverhill to Boxford - a catchment area whose extent surprised even the organisers of the survey. Tourists from 6 foreign countries also used the line during the 6 days of the survey. This data shows the importance of such lines as Inter-City feeders and gives the lie to those who, like some of the authors of last year's White Paper, try to dismiss them as being of purely local significance.

Actual loadings on trains, while confirming the heavy peak usage and relatively light off-peak usage of which we were already aware, showed a small increase in journeys compared with the last County Councils' survey, in November 1976 - and this despite the fact that in mid-June, when the SMTRUA survey was taken, student travel had virtually ceased owing to examinations, some regular travellers were on holiday and the day-trip season had not begun in earnest.

A copy of the 17-page report of survey is available from the Branch Secretary - send 15p, please, to cover postage and packaging. Congratulations to our colleagues in SMTRUA for an excellent piece of work.

SMTRUA's latest newsletter also reports on the association's concern that there should be tax concessions for rail commuters (like those available on company cars - a case of double standards on the part of the government - Ed) and that there is a need for vigilance to catch fare-dodgers. The association is now among the largest in our region, with over 220 members and still growing.

ESTA CONCERNED ABOUT HALESWORTH BUSES ... STILL!

After more than a year of trying to persuade Eastern Counties to slightly re-time and re-route service 871 buses to provide connections at Halesworth station to and from Bungay in particular, ESTA is hardly any further; and so the last committee meeting, on September 26th, agreed to ask the bus company to receive a deputation to discuss the question.

The association also hopes to discuss with BR the possibility of establishing BR agents in towns along the East Suffolk line which have only unstaffed stations: to wit, Beccles, Halesworth and Saxmundham. (Woodbridge already has such an agent and Leiston gained one recently).

Car-parking for rail users at Saxmundham station has recently improved somewhat as a result of ESTA's efforts; and the association is now turning its attention to the car-park at Ipswich station, which is run by National Car-parks Ltd., has rates higher than BR car-parks at Inter-City stations and no cheaper rate for rail users.

The fifth issue of the association's newsletter, East Suffolk Travel, is due out at the beginning of November, and future plans include a lottery, for both fund-raising and publicity purposes.

DELTIC COMES TO LOWESTOFT

On Sunday September 3rd, Lowestoft station reverberated to the sound of Deltic class locomotive No. 50 015 "Tulyar", bringing in 400 enthusiasts on a 10-coach special from Kings Cross. The train returned via the East Suffolk line and Bury St. Edmunds. It was the first time such a locomotive - at 3,300 bhp one of BR's most powerful - had visited Lowestoft. This excursion was one of several operated this year by BR in various areas for rail enthusiasts - the most well-known being the steam specials in Yorks. and Cumbria. It is pleasing to see both local interest stirred and extra revenue created by BR catering for the enthusiast market in this way.

PTPs and TUACs - WHAT ARE THEY?

Under the 1978 Transport Act, section 2, County Councils are required to produce a Public Transport Plan not later than March 31st 1979, and to re-issue and revise the plan (which is for a 5-year period) each year. They are required to consult with District Councils, public transport operators etc; and, when a draft plan is ready, to invite comments and representations from "trade unions, transport user organisations and others appearing to the county council to be especially concerned with public passenger transport matters."

Our Society has not so far been approached by any of the County Councils in East Anglia, and nor has any of the local users' groups or action committees associated with us. Cambridgeshire C.C. has apparently issued a draft plan (C.E.N. 6.10.78) which is more concerned with what the Council does not want to do (e.g. rail reopenings; a new Cambridge bus station) than with positive policies. We have written to the County Surveyor, quoting the Act and asking for a copy of this reported draft plan.

Some Norfolk County Councillors seem less than keen on producing a plan or consulting the public. The EDP (16.9.78) quoted Transportation Sub-committee Chairman Mr. Gunson as describing the plan as "a substantial waste of time and effort", while the remarks of his colleague Mr. T. Carey suggested that he was against the wide consultation required by the Act. The RDS sent in some proposals for the Norfolk Draft Plan on September 28th, based on the Society's stated policies but also drawing attention to the recent level crossings report. Our colleagues in WyDFRAC and West Norfolk Public Transport Users have done likewise.

The County Councils have also been recommended to set up Transport Users' Advisory Committees, by the Department of Prices and Consumer Protection, to help them formulate their Plans. Norfolk have refused to do so. Suffolk promised on September 6th to let us know when they had decided. Press reports in the first week of October said that they had set up three such committees, but neither the RDS nor any local users' group known to us had been contacted. The Cambridgeshire County Surveyor had, by mid October, not even answered our letter to him on the subject sent on September 1st. We understand that Cambs. does not even have a Transport Co-ordinating Officer at present.

Needless to say, the RDS meeting on October 7th empowered the Branch Secretary and other officers to pursue these matters vigorously with the Councils. The County Councils may try to ignore us and to avoid doing anything really effective - we must not let them get away with it.

NORTH EAST NORFOLK TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION

NENTA's AGM will take place on Wednesday 1st November at 7.00 p.m. in the Methodist Church Hall, Holt Road, Cromer. RDS members welcome. The association has enjoyed a steady increase in membership, which now stands at 171, of whom 55 are in Sheringham, 41 in Cromer.

FUND-RAISING

Mrs. O.F. Bridger is planning to hold another sale, in the Community Hall, Leiston, on Saturday January 20th. Her sale last summer raised a most useful sum for RDS funds, and she hopes for an even more successful venture this time. If you can help on the day, or have any jumble or other saleable goods, or can make anything for sale (we hope to arrange collection), please contact Mrs. Bridger at 8 Cross Street, Leiston, Suffolk (Phone 830293).

FOR SALE FROM THE BRANCH SECRETARY

Can Bus Replace Train? - 30p (+ 10p postage)

A Guide for Rail Users' Groups - 20p (+ 7p postage)

RDS ballpoint pens - 10p each (+ 7p postage less for bulk orders)

Cheques/postal orders for the first book should be made out to RIS, for accountancy reasons; for second book or pens, make it out to RDS.

ELECTRIFICATION - RDS VIEWS SENT TO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

In May, the BRB published a discussion paper entitled Railway Electrification, as part of a joint review being conducted by itself and the Department of Transport. The RDS nationally has submitted comments and so has the East Anglian Branch - thanks are due to Messrs. K.O. Cutmore and D.W. Green, in particular, for their help with the latter.

Our comments back up those made by the Society at national level and stress the need for as many as possible major passenger and freight routes to be electrified - not only in East Anglia itself, but from our region to the Midlands and the North. This is especially important for freight, since the discussion paper notes, "in present circumstances, a high proportion of freight movements over electrified routes employ diesel haulage to avoid a multiplicity of traction changes. Probably only when a substantial amount of route mileage is electrified can the comprehensive use of electric traction for freight be contemplated." (In this connection it is interesting and encouraging to note that BR have plans to extend the proposed Bishops Stortford/Royston - Cambridge electrification to Ely, March and Peterborough - C.E.N. 6.10.78)

We draw attention to the possibility of more intensive use of electric multiple units than D.M.U.s (they require less time out of service for maintenance, and none for fuelling) and the potential for a better local service in the Ipswich - Colchester - Harwich area.

We call for more research into the generation of electricity from benevolent and renewable sources (e.g. water, tides, waves, wind); and into batteries (e.g. sodium sulphur cells) which can enable electric trains to run off the wires on to certain lengths of non-electrified track as well.

Copies of our submission to the Department of Transport are available from the Branch Secretary (please send stamped addressed envelope)

EXPERIMENTAL RAILBUS (see also last Newsletter)

On September 5th, our report on this lightweight vehicle being developed by British Leyland and the BR Research Dept, in Derby, was issued and sent to all interested parties.

We welcome in principle the co-operation between British Leyland and BR on such a project but urge that the disadvantages of a bus (e.g. lack of toilets, restricted luggage space) should not be transferred to the train. We are also concerned about the suspension system, but note that during trials of up to 90 mph the test vehicle has shown "excellent" lateral stability, "while the verticle ride left some room for improvement."

Although the vehicle could possibly be used for one-man-operation, our report comes out generally against this, other than in a small minority of cases (e.g. a possible shuttle between two stations e.g. March and Wisbech, and then only off-peak preferably). It could, however, also be used for private hire and thus broaden BR's potential market in this field.

We conclude that there is scope; especially with suitable modifications, for the experimental vehicle to play a part in East Anglia's local rail services; but we look forward to other developments also in the multiple unit field; and indeed would prefer to see hauled trains on certain lengthy d.m.u. runs (e.g. Cambridge - Doncaster)

Thanks to all members who contributed their views on this project. Our views were featured in the Cambridge Evening News and Peterborough Evening Telegraph, and a few copies of the report are still available from the Branch Secretary.

A refurbished diesel multiple unit bearing the West Yorks PTE badge was seen at Norwich and Lowestoft at the end of August and a Scottish Region unit has been operating in the Cambridge area.

Recent local freight has included 300 tonnes of concrete beams from Lenwade to Leith docks (for oil terminal) and 430 tonnes pipeline wire from Norwich to Immingham. A bumper Norfolk barley crop is also likely to provide a lot of rail freight to Scotland in the coming months.

ON THE FREIGHT SIDE

IPSWICH: Container traffic gets heavier - Increasingly heavy loads from the West Bank container terminal have led to civil engineering improvements on the short branch connecting it to the main line. The class 03 shunter of 204 horsepower which used to work the line has been replaced by a 350 horsepower shunter of class 08.

BR are currently lowering the track in three tunnels on the East Coast main line, to enable larger containers to pass through them - a move which increases the scope for container traffic from the Haven Ports and elsewhere to be sent to the North and Scotland by rail.

LOWESTOFT: Freight traffic picked up at the end of August, after a rather slack period, with grain traffic resuming and the start of regular consignments of scrap metal for export to Spain. The scrap is brought in by rail and shipped by Messrs. A. King & Sons Ltd., who also use the railways for a lot of their other traffic. It is expected that there will be one sailing a week under the new service, bringing total tonnages for 1978 to around 20,000 tonnes. Next year, it is expected that 50,000 tonnes will be sent.

WISSINGTON: The British Sugar Corporation, whose factory is served by the remains of the Stoke Ferry branch off the Ely - Lynn line, is switching to heavy oil fuel and is considering applying for a grant under section 8 of the 1974 Railways Act to enable the oil to be brought in from Ipswich docks by rail. The grant would be for the building of a new terminal and modifications to the factory's rail link. If the oil were brought in by road, it would mean 35-40 tanker lorries per night trundling along the country roads to the factory, which has no "A" class roads to it, only "B" ones.

The RDS has written to the Works Manager at Wissington, expressing our support for any grant application which the BSC decides to make.

HISTON: A small victory - Cadbury-Schweppes are not now to remove 2 sidings at their Histon factory to make way for new road access. Our Society was among objectors to such a move when it came before South Cambs. District Council last year. The retention of these sidings maintains the potential of the factory to receive more railborne freight.

SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION

SELTAs will be holding its AGM on Saturday, November 25th at 13.45 in the Parade Hotel, Skegness (about 10 minutes' walk from the station) and RDS members will be welcome. The BR Area Manager at Boston has been invited to speak to the meeting.

As a result of pressure by the association, the BR winter timetable supplement shows the early morning and late evening bus service between Boston station and Skegness. BR have agreed to SELTA's request that the 18.03 ex Grantham train make additional stops at Thorpe Culvert and Wainfleet. SELTA is also pressing BR about the lack of connections to Merrymakers from the Boston/Skegness area; and overcrowding on the 09.47 ex Skegness on Summer Saturdays.

SELTAs chairman and RDS member Mr. P.B. Jowett has had useful talks with officials of Lincs. County Council and may soon be serving on one of their Transport Users' Advisory Committees. He has also started contributing a column on railway matters, about every 6 weeks, to two local newspapers.

Elsewhere in Lincolnshire it is pleasing to note that the County Council and District Councils are co-operating in a series of 5 surveys for possible rail halt re-openings: Cherry Willingham, Holton-le-Clay, North Kelsey, Moortown and Donington. Pressure for the last of these, between Spalding and Sleaford, to be reopened, was first mounted by the RIS in 1975.

NEWMARKET & DISTRICT RAIL USERS' ASSOCIATION

N&DRUA is preparing its ninth newsletter, to inform local people of services and facilities available to them; and is also planning to run another shoppers' special to Norwich just before Christmas. Concern is being expressed about the state of the canopy on Newmarket station.

BY ROAD OR BY RAIL?

The policy of our Society on road and motorway building has evolved out of our experiences over a number of years, and became embodied in a resolution passed at the RIS national AGM in April 1977. This urged "that before any road or motorway scheme be started, consideration be given to the rail alternative... data should then be made available to all objectors who request it on the feasibility and cost of rail improvements to take traffic off the roads; the likely future energy situation; and the indirect, as well as direct, costs of road schemes (e.g. loss of productive agricultural land.) The subsequent inquiry should be empowered to take all these matters into account and be under a genuinely independent inspector."

Thus it is not our policy to be totally opposed to all road schemes; but to question the proposals for extravagant highways to carry through traffic, much of which could and should go by rail for ecological and environmental reasons; and to favour modest relief road schemes instead.

Extravagant claims are sometimes made by the road-builders, about how much relief their new roads will give to residential areas, and we sometimes have to cut these down to size also - for you cannot control the route which a juggernaut takes in the way that you can a train!

In Kings Lynn, for example, after a series of accidents injuring children in Burney Road, angry parents blockaded the road (Lynn News & Advertiser, 22.8.78), complaining, "There's a by-pass that's been specially built for this through traffic. They must use it." As we have reported in earlier newsletters, residents of Tennyson Road, Lynn, feel likewise.

There is a similar situation brewing at Cambridge, where the Department of Transport has been refusing to direct heavy lorries bound for Harwich round the northern bypass when it is completed this autumn (C.E.N. 10.8.78). The prospect of heavy lorries continuing to rumble through the city brought from the local MP the comment, "One of the main reasons for investing so much public money in completing the bypass was to divert heavy traffic from Cambridge. The Minister now says that drivers can't be compelled to use the bypass... This is an absolutely crazy situation."

The cost to the community of road and motorway building is often not properly brought out when the proposals are made. Earlier this year, members of S. Cambs. District Council accused the M11 builders of "holding a knife to our backs" in making new and unexpected applications for ballast excavations in the district (C.E.N. 2.3.78); while a resident at Newport, Essex, sent the builders a bill for the cleaning of cement dust from his house close to the construction site. (C.E.N. 26.7.78)

IPSWICH: INSPECTOR CLINCH SPEAKS

Inspector Clinch, appointed and paid by the Dept. of Transport to conduct the inquiry into their proposed Ipswich bypass, issued his report on September 8th. He accepted most of the Department's proposals - but found it impossible to justify the Bentley Long Wood - Belstead section (which the RIS said, in its objection, was unnecessary). Instead of the proposed western route, Mr. Clinch recommended the "Fiske route", a route closer to the town, into which there will now have to be a new inquiry.

Inspector Clinch also commented, "I have had statements before me alleging an impending world energy crisis. Supporting evidence was not given." It may be that Mr. Clinch was struck by temporary deafness when the RIS and certain other objectors quoted evidence of this at the inquiry... He did however also concede in his report, "it is undoubtedly advantageous to make as much use of the railway system as reasonably and economically possible" - whether his definition of "reasonably and economically" would be the same as ours is another matter. He dismissed the waterway improvement proposal as "unacceptable".
(see also p.2)

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Mrs. A.P. Moon has moved to Leeds. We thank her for all the valuable work she has done while a member of this branch, especially in connection with the campaign for alternatives to the Ipswich by-pass. Our loss will certainly be the Yorkshire & Humberside Branch's gain.

Mr. L.G. Hipperson is moving from Merseyside to 4 Homefield Ave., Beccles, Suffolk, NR34 9UB in early December. Mr. Hipperson was a founder member of the RIS and for many years edited its Progress Report. An East Anglian by birth, he has always taken a keen interest in developments in our region, and his experience will, we are sure, be of very considerable benefit to the Branch. Mr. Hipperson has agreed to become Branch Archivist.

Mr. J.W. Page has moved to 8 Glebe Way, Histon, Cambridge, CB4 4JB.

Mr. D.W. Green now lives at 186 Appletrees, Bar Hill, Cambridge.

Colchester & District Chamber of Trade & Commerce are now at 5 High Street, Colchester, CO1 1DA.

Welcome to new members:

Mrs. D.E. Aubin, 82 Sefton Avenue, Wisbech, Cambs. PE13 3QW.

Mr. J. Crissall, 5 Cyprus Road, Cambridge.

Mr. R.H. Gibson, 14 Bishops Way, Buckden, Huntingdon, PE18 9TZ.

Miss E. Glenn, 10 Dean Street, Brightlingsea, Essex.

Miss E. Phelan, Manor Lodge, Church Road, Brightlingsea, Essex.

Fakenham & Dereham Railway Society. Sec: Mr. B.D. Woodgett, 4 Andover Road, Benson, Oxford, OX9 6DB.

Mr. R.B. Whipps, 42 Derby Road, Ipswich, IP3 8DN.

Mr. B.J. Eyre, 39 Grosvenor Road, Norwich, NR2 2PZ.

STUDENT RAILCARD: The Railcard for school and college students over the age of 14 has now been extended beyond the experimental period. A Railcard bought now is valid until September 30th 1979, costs £7 and enables the holder to save 50% on Ordinary Singles, Awaydays or Ordinary Returns.

HUNTINGDON AREA GETS EXTRA BUS/RAIL CONNECTIONS: Welcome news from Eastern Counties and United Counties - the midibus is making an extra trip from the Earith area to connect with the 08.11 train at Huntingdon and an extra trip back to St. Ives off the 16.15 train from Kings Cross. Peak journeys on service 219 (Huntingdon - Upton) are being diverted via the station to give train connections and the 08.04 St. Ives - Brampton is being extended daily to St. Neots to connect with the London train.

Modern Railways: the September issue contained an interesting and generally encouraging article about the Norwich Division of BR - but without mentioning the existence and work of the local users' associations and re-opening campaigns. The Branch Secretary has written to the Editor to put things right.

BRAMFORD STATION ACTION GROUP: a leaflet putting the case for a rail halt at Bramford has now been printed and is being distributed by the local Brownies. This will be followed in the coming weeks by a door-to-door survey. Any RDS member willing and able to lend a hand in conducting the survey or analysing the results will be very welcome. Contact Mr. Jeremy Coles, Dairy Farm House, Somersham Rd., Bramford, Ipswich. (Tel: Ipswich 830985)

FAKENHAM & DEREHAM RAILWAY SOCIETY

This society has been formed "primarily to continue and to expand the existing freight service to Fakenham and to prevent the rail connection to the town from being cut." The Ryburgh - Fakenham section will remain operated by BR until at least early 1980 - but if it should be closed at any time after that, the F&DRS will try to acquire it, continue the freight service and operate steam and/or diesel passenger trains. The new society is co-operating with WyDFRAC and has become a corporate member of the RDS. Details of its membership and fund-raising are enclosed with this newsletter. A public meeting due to be held in Fakenham on October 21st will be reported in our next newsletter.

THE NEXT NEWSLETTER, due out at the end of January, will also contain a report of the Transport 2000 meeting to be held on October 28th, and details of the plans to show the RDS exhibition in Bury St. Edmunds library in the New Year.