

RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY
EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH
NEWSLETTER No. 37

Winter 1981

Branch Chairman: Mr. S.F. Wilkinson, 52 Manor Park, Histon, Cambridge, CB4 4JT. (Tel: 3981)

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

TRAIN CUTS - AND THE FIGHTBACK

January 5th 1981 saw cuts in certain off-peak trains, promised by British Rail in the autumn, put into effect in East Anglia.

It also saw, however, some trains reprieved, thanks to the efforts of local users.

The East Suffolk Travellers' Association (Felixstowe) were faced with losing 3 return journeys on their line. They produced a leaflet which was distributed in the town and to passengers at the station. This urged objectors to write to the Secretary of State for Transport, the BR Divisional Manager and their local MPs. - which many of them did. The result: BR announced that they would retain the 20.48 Ipswich - Felixstowe train and return. But the 11.02, 14.07 and return workings remain axed until next May - unless more pressure can be brought to bear.

BR also proposed to terminate the 20.00 Norwich - Sheringham train at Cromer, thus depriving Sheringham of a nightly train from Norwich after 18.00. Local users and rail unions protested and this threat was withdrawn, meaning that the Sheringham line's timetable has survived absolutely intact.

In the south west corner of our region, the Stansted, Elsenham & Newport Travellers' Association has also had some success in opposing cuts, notably the 07.40 from Bishops Stortford to Cambridge, used by workers and school pupils commuting into the city.

Certain off-peak Sunday trains between Chelmsford and Ipswich have also been reprieved.

A piece of particularly welcome news is that the proposals to axe the morning service on the Sudbury branch on summer Sundays have been withdrawn. The proposed cuts - reported in our last newsletter - were strenuously opposed by our corporate member the Sudbury - Marks Tey Rail Users' Association, which has also been responsible for boosting summer Sunday traffic by getting BR to introduce excursion fares from the branch to the coast. SMTRUA Chairman Mr. M.J. Davies commented, "We are over the moon. We are very happy that our analysis of local needs has been justified."

These successes - some small, but all significant - were described by the RDS Branch Secretary in letters published in both the region's daily papers as showing "that it is important for all rail passengers to impress their views on British Rail; and, even more, on the Government, who are ultimately responsible for this state of affairs. It underlines the need for users to join their local rail users' groups (of which there are more than a dozen throughout East Anglia, most of them in close co-operation with our Society) to preserve and improve their services, working constructively with British Rail unions and management."

Mr. Garrod was also interviewed on "About Anglia" on December 3rd, as was Mr. W. Fordham of March NUR, and both stressed the background to these cuts - lack of investment and shrinking government financial support.

We must keep up the political battle. MPs who have recently received letters from RDS members living in their constituencies include David Ennals, John Garrett, Francis Pym, John Major, Robert Rhodes James and Keith Stainton. Have YOU written to YOUR MP?

THIRD NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF RAIL USERS' GROUPS - The cuts, and how to fight them will be a major theme of this important RDS conference, to be held in Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, on Saturday April 4th, commencing at 10.45. All users' groups in East Anglia will be receiving invitations shortly from the Branch Secretary.

SWAVESEY SPECIALS: RDS MAKES IT A HAT-TRICK

Having run special trains from Swavesey (on the former Cambridge - St. Ives line) to Cambridge and London, RDS has completed the hat-trick by chartering a 2 x 2 DMU to run from Swavesey and the other stations on the line to Stevenage and Welwyn Garden City on Saturday November 22nd. The train left Swavesey at 8.35, was at Cambridge by 9.30 and followed this by a fast run to Stevenage by 10.12 and Welwyn Garden City at 10.24, returning 4½ hours later.

Stevenage proved the more popular of the two destinations, with a modern pedestrianised shopping centre virtually next door to the station. Our special aroused an enthusiastic response from the Borough Council, who provided us with guide-books and street maps for the passengers; while the mayor himself was present on the platform to welcome the 237 passengers. As our Chairman told the local press, "People often moan about officials, but those in Stevenage went out of their way to help us."

One returning passenger proved the point that there are some things that you can put on a train that you could never fit in a car. He came back with a three-piece extension ladder in the guard's compartment.

WISBECH SHOPPER - ANOTHER HAT-TRICK

On Saturday November 29th, RDS and WAMRAC ran, for the third time since 1978, a special train from Wisbech to Cambridge. Over 100 people filled the 1 x 2 DMU which left Wisbech Goods Depot in wintry conditions, with the first real snow of the winter. Conditions on the roads may not have been good, but passengers on our train had a safe, comfortable journey to Cambridge, and over 4 hours' shopping time there. Leaving Cambridge at 14.30, we were back in Wisbech at 15.45 - particularly good timing in view of the fact that the crew had to open and shut 5 sets of level crossing gates on the freight-only branch.

Thanks are due in particular to Messrs. M.I. Brakewell, M. Granger and S.J. Goose for acting as stewards on the train; and to Mr. Brakewell for analysing the results of a questionnaire to passengers, which is being used in our planning of excursions on the line for 1981.

ENTA-PRIZE

Our corporate member the East Norfolk Travellers' Association planned to run two special trains from Yarmouth and Lowestoft - the ENTA-prizes - on Saturday December 13th. In the event, competition from other special trains from the two towns to London in previous weeks, and from BR's own "Saturday Shopper" bargain fares, meant that the two trains had to be amalgamated into one. The special left Yarmouth at 8.30 and picked up at Acle and Lingwood. For passengers who had booked from Lowestoft and intermediate stations, BR made special arrangements for them to travel as far as Brundall on scheduled trains; and put in a special stop there on the 8.01 which is normally non-stop from Oulton Broad North to Norwich.

Thus it was that, having taken all these passengers on board, the ENTA-prize carried over 500 people round the Wensum Curve and non-stop to Liverpool St, arriving just ahead of schedule at 11.09. Nerve centre of the ENTA-prize was the guard's brake, marshalled in the centre of the train, from which Mike and Brenda Taylor and their band of helpers did a roaring trade in refreshments; while stewards sallied forth to check tickets and hand out descriptions of the route. These advised passengers "... we pass the imposing ivory tower of Norfolk County Council offices on the right... the appearance of a number of sidings indicate our arrival in Ipswich (apparently the name of a respectable football team!)..." The leaflet struck a more serious note too, suggesting to passengers that they write to their local MP about rail cuts and the threat of heavier juggernauts.

In the evening, after rescuing a dozen or so passengers who boarded a Merrymaker back to Wakefield by mistake, we had some delay with loco problems; but once underway, a spirited run was experienced - overtaking the 19.30 while it stood in the platform at Colchester - arriving back in Brundall in just over 2 hours. BR had delayed the 21.11 Norwich - Lowestoft train so that it would connect with the ENTA-prize, and by half past ten all were back at their respective destinations after a memorable day.

FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday January 28th: Aylsham & District Rail Action Committee Public Meeting. Aylsham Youth Centre, Cawston Road, Aylsham, at 7.30 p.m. The meeting will start with a business section, including the 1981 Annual General Meeting of ADRAC. New members to serve on the committee will be particularly welcome. There will then be a break, during which coffee will be served; followed by a showing of the RDS film "Special Train to Dereham" and Mr. Whipps' film of the LEV in East Anglia during the summer and autumn. Mr. T.J. Garrod will then introduce a discussion on the way forward for rail reopening campaigns.

Saturday February 14th: RDS Branch Committee Meeting.

Saturday March 14th: RDS National Committee Meeting, London.

Saturday April 25th: RDS National AGM, Sheffield.

Saturday May 2nd: Reepham Centenary Special: a special train chartered from BR by the RDS and the Aylsham & District Rail Action Committee to make two return journeys between Norwich and Reepham-plus, it is hoped, a connecting coach excursion for those making the journey out to Reepham. The section of line from Cawston to Reepham was opened to passengers on May 2nd, 1881. Details of the special are still being discussed, and will shortly be available from Mr. J. McCarter, York House, Church Street, Reepham, Norwich (Please enclose stamped addressed envelope.)

Saturday May 9th: RDS National Committee Meeting, Cambridge.

Saturday May 16th: It is planned to run a joint RDS/Ecology Party special train from Hitchin to Peterborough, then over the Fletton Loop to Orton Mere, for transfer to Nene Valley Railway steam train. For details, when finalised, please send stamped addressed envelope to Mr. M.J. Hadley, 39 Holmdale, Letchworth, Herts., SG6 1QQ.

Saturday May 30th: RDS/WyDFRAC special hauled train, Dereham - York. Details and bookings: Mr. J.S. Hull, Cydonia Cottage, Station Road, Yaxham, Dereham, Norfolk, enclosing stamped addressed envelope.

Saturday June 6th: RDS East Anglian Branch Spring Meeting, in the Kennedy Room, Cambridge Union Society, Cambridge, beginning at 2.00 p.m. In addition to discussion of branch business and local rail developments, we hope to have a speaker on section 8 grants and the encouragement of rail freight.

Saturday June 27th: Fi-ESTA! Halesworth Playing Field, 2.00 p.m.

The East Suffolk Travellers' Association is holding a fete with, as far as possible, a rail theme. (Instead of Bingo, for example, there will be "Where does the Train Stop?") One reason for this venture is to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the reprieve of the East Suffolk Line from the Beeching axe. Another is to celebrate the fact that BR are now using the line to pioneer new ways of operating rural railways. The fete will also aim to promote both ESTA itself and the local rail link, as well as raising funds for the association. If you would like to help in any way with "Fi-ESTA", please contact Mr. G.G. Lilley, 43 The Glebes, Snape, Saxmundham, Suffolk.

Sunday July 12th: RDS/ADRAC special train, Reepham - Lowestoft, calling at all stations on the Aylsham line, then Oulton Broad North and Lowestoft.

Saturday September 19th: RDS and WyDFRAC have chartered a 2 x 2 DMU for one day, to provide a service of four return workings between Norwich and Dereham. Details in our next newsletter.

Saturday September 26th: RDS East Anglian Branch Autumn Meeting, Edmund Bacon Room, Assembly House, Theatre Street, Norwich, commencing 2.00 p.m.

TWO MORE SPECIAL TRAINS have also been agreed with BR but the dates requested are subject to confirmation. They are:

Saturday April 11th: RDS special Inter-City train Swavesey (and all stations to Histon) - London Liverpool St. We hope to run this train at times very close to our successful venture in April 1980. Details (s.a.e. please) from Branch Chairman.

Saturday September 5th or Sunday September 6th - RDS hopes to run a Mystery Trip from Swavesey. Details (but not destination) in next newsletter.

Other specials, including a Wisbech - Norwich excursion and another Swavesey- Stevenage trip, in the second half of the year, are still under consideration.

RDS NATIONAL REOPENINGS CONFERENCE

The East Anglian Branch of the RDS was host to the first National Conference of Rail Reopening Campaigns, held at the Bull Hotel, Peterborough on Saturday December 6th. 30 delegates were present, including representatives of 10 reopening campaigns, from as far away as Devon, Lancashire and Scotland.

Our Chairman, Mr. S.F. Wilkinson, presiding, opened the conference by referring to the recent Policy Studies Institute Report on the social consequences of rail closures. This confirmed many of the things that RDS and its predecessors had been saying for years, and must strengthen us in our resolve to get certain of the Beeching cuts reversed, as well as preventing further closures.

Mr. Wilkinson continued, "I have been actively involved with the reopening campaign for the Cambridge - St. Ives line, and until a few years ago most people, although they probably sympathised with what we were trying to do, regarded the campaign as a lost cause. There is no doubt in my mind, however, that particularly in the last two years the general public is now seeing how right we are, and they have started to support us... This is largely brought about by the general concern of everyone regarding energy conservation, and also by BR marketing offers (Railcards, free carriage of cycles, Rangers etc.) that didn't exist when many of our lines were closed."

Individual campaigns then reported on their achievements and problems - which were often common to more than one group: such as the wide credibility gap between what local people said they wanted, and what the relevant County Council said they wanted; the need to educate local politicians; the need to comment on local Plans; and the need to identify which places would benefit most from a line reopening and concentrate on mobilising public opinion there.

The Bill by Tony Speller MP (Conservative, North Devon) was discussed. This would make it easier for BR to reopen a line for an experimental period, and was to be reintroduced in the 1980/81 Session of Parliament. While it would not in itself solve all the problems involved in reopening a line, it was an important step in the right direction, and Conference resolved unanimously to give Mr. Speller our support. Local campaigns, and individual members, are urged to lobby their own MPs and press them to support Mr. Speller (whose Bill is being sponsored by Members of both major parties.)

Much attention was also paid to the question of costings, and we were pleased to welcome from South Wales Mr. F.K. Davies, Hon. Planning Advisor to the RDS, whose comments were particularly illuminating here. It was felt that we should press for marginal (or avoidable) costings to be applied to restored passenger services, not allocated costs (which included administrative overheads.) It might be possible to add a suitable clause to Mr. Speller's Bill about this.

Discussion continued on sources of cash for reopenings, and the possibility of the Manpower Services Commission being asked to help was raised; it was pointed out that many of the unemployed were skilled people in the building and electrical trades. Some delegates felt there was a place for some private fund-raising towards the capital cost of reopening a line; and the idea of a local firm, or firms, sponsoring a restored or improved service was mooted. It was stressed, however, that any private fund-raising should aim to contribute to, not cover, the costs of reopening a line.

It was agreed to hold further such conferences as this, probably once a year, and to ask the RDS National Committee to appoint a Reopenings Officer or Sub-committee.

NEW RDS BRANCH: We are pleased to report that the National Committee of the RDS has agreed to the elevation of our South East Midlands Area to Branch status. The precise area and name of the new Branch are still under consideration. The borders of the East Anglian Branch in south west Cambs. may be slightly adjusted. The growth of the Society in this area is a tribute to the energetic and imaginative work put in over the last 18 months by Mr. M. J. Hadley. One of Mr. Hadley's ideas, the Weekend Ranger sold 150 tickets during the experimental period this autumn, and BR have pronounced this sufficiently good for the facility to be re-introduced in the coming spring and summer.

RDS LEV-ITATES!

The East Anglian Branch became the first organisation to charter BR's unique Light Experimental Vehicle (LEV) on November 1st. The 4-wheel railbus - whose progress we had followed closely since the project was started by BR Research in Derby some three years ago - was based at Ipswich from October to December, and operating two return trips a day, Monday - Friday, on the East Suffolk Line.

BR agreed to allow us to hire the vehicle on condition that it only travelled over routes operated by Ipswich crews (who were the only ones trained to drive it), and so it was that the LEV departed from platform 3 at Ipswich just after 9 o'clock on that Saturday morning and headed down the branch to Felixstowe. It was half full with RDS members and friends for this run, and during the short turn-round time at Felixstowe the remainder of its 40 seats were filled with local people taking advantage of our offer of a direct trip to Cambridge at £4 a head.

After a quick reversal in the bay platform at Ipswich, all was set for a non-stop run to Cambridge, - and the LEV did indeed flash through places like Stowmarket and Bury St. Edmunds, reaching quite a high speed. The lack of a toilet on the vehicle began to be felt by one or two passengers, however, and so an emergency stop had to be put in at Dullingham! Nevertheless, the vehicle had reached Cambridge within an hour and a quarter; and aroused considerable interest along the lineside and at the station.

Another 40 passengers filled the LEV for a trip to Bury St. Edmunds and back, before our Ipswich and Felixstowe passengers left Cambridge in mid afternoon for another brisk run home.

General verdict was that the LEV was good value for money; and, as our Chairman told the press, "I would have reservations about going from Cambridge to Norwich in one. But one isn't conscious of being in a 4-wheel vehicle." Most noticeable was the quietness of the ride, especially when compared with the ageing DMUs providing our staple local services. One soon gets used to a somewhat different motion, when on jointed track; and riding on continuous welded track on the Ipswich - Stowmarket section, and on some parts of the Felixstowe branch, was very smooth and pleasant. Some stray vibrations are noticeable after several miles at high speed - but it must be remembered that LEV is not intended for this, but really for relatively short, stopping services. It must also be stressed that the present vehicle is not intended as a prototype for regular passenger services, but primarily as the test of the new lightweight technology that should reduce the cost of providing some of our secondary services.

Thanks for the success of the venture are due to the co-operative BR management and staff; and to our members Messrs. C.W. Taylor and J.W. Page for taking charge of ticket sales.

Local railmen commented favourably on LEV in an article in the December issue of Railnews: the foot-operated safety device was felt to be more comfortable for the driver to operate than the hand-pressure version in DMUs; and there was praise for the smooth-changing automatic gearbox. The Area Mechanical Engineer pointed out, "LEV is achieving nearly nine miles a gallon in service as against less than four from a DMU, so it is very economic." It had stood out in the open on damp cold nights yet displayed no starting problems. Checking of batteries was easier because of the swivelling battery tray.

USERS' GROUPS NEWS: EAST NORFOLK TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION Chairman Mr. J. Apsey met officials of Eastern Counties on December 31st, for discussion of bus connections (or lack of them) with trains, with particular reference to Acle.

EAST SUFFOLK TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION: Two members of the Committee had a meeting with BR Divisional Passenger Manager Mr. D. Gibson on January 12th, to put the association's views on connections at Ipswich; the axing of the 19.55 Norwich-Lowestoft train; and future investment and experiments on the line. ESTA note with satisfaction that an overflow car park sign has at last been put up at Darsham!

BRECKLAND LINE USERS' ASSOCIATION: A further newsletter has just been issued, and the AGM was due to be held in Attleborough on January 21st.

SMTRUA: BR are now to act on the Association's suggestion of closing the virtually redundant signal box at Sudbury station.

INTER-CITY: MIXED NEWS

At the beginning of December, electrically heated air-conditioned coaches were introduced on the Norwich - London run for most trains, replacing stock that was up to 25 years old. As well as providing a more comfortable ride at a steady temperature, the new coaches have a public address system. Our Vice-Chairman, Mr. C.W. Taylor, was quoted in the EADT of 26.11.80 as welcoming the introduction of these coaches and adding "it will to some extent counteract the whacking rise in rail fares."

The Crown Point carriage servicing depot is now taking shape next to the Wensum Curve at Norwich, with the steelwork nearing completion. Planning permission has been granted for the rebuilding of Liverpool St. station, where new computer-operated train indicator boards came into use in December.

A relaxation of the ban on cycles on High Speed Trains on the East Coast Main line has been announced. Passengers from stations like Kings Cross, Huntingdon and Peterborough can now take cycles free of charge on these trains between noon on Saturday and 10.00 p.m. on Sunday.

Meanwhile, electrification of the main lines to Ipswich, Harwich, Norwich and Cambridge is still being talked about. BR Divisional Manager, Mr. Gordon Clarke OBE, now predicts 1986 as the date when the wires reach Ipswich. A cost of £35 million is quoted for electrification from Colchester to Norwich; and £20 million to complete Cambridge's link to London. BR's plans are now with the Government - and the more we can do to persuade the politicians of the value of investing in rail electrification the better. The RDS' 4-page leaflet on this subject is now with the printer and should be available any day now from our Sales Officer, Mr. R.F. White, "Latymer", The Drive, Belmont, Surrey.

Less encouraging is the withdrawal of micro-buffets on the Norwich - Birmingham trains. This started on autumn Saturdays (apparently because of fears of drunken football supporters) and since January 5th applies Monday - Friday as well.

CONNECTIONS FROM EAST ANGLIA TO MIDLANDS AND NORTH

Replies have now been received from most of the BR officials to whom our Committee Member Mr. P. Wakefield sent his report on this topic. (see Newsletter 36).

One of the most detailed replies came from Mr. R. Harman, Divisional Passenger Manager at Kings Cross. He accepted that conditions on platforms 4/5 at Peterborough were cramped, and added "it is now probably too late to solve this problem physically." He would, however, investigate the movement of parcels trolleys away from main passenger areas; and promised better train information in 1981 with the installation of three VDU screens on those platforms. BR would also look at the possibility of routing some East Anglia services over the goods lines, but felt it would not be advantageous to use platform 3 for this purpose.

Less helpful was the Chief Passenger Manager's department at York, who seemed to have misunderstood our proposals for an improved service over the Joint Line between Lincoln and March and seemed intent on diverting the existing trains from the March - Spalding section via Peterborough.

The General Manager of the London Midland Region welcomed our report as "interesting and constructive" but said that their "short term financial position" made BR reluctant to introduce a through service on the Ipswich - Crewe axis as we had suggested. However, he was hoping that improvements to passengers travelling in that direction could be made in the not too distant future, and was "examining the possibility of introducing a Manchester - Norwich service in 1982."

Further consideration to these replies will be given at the Branch AGM on January 24th and Branch Committee meeting on February 14th.

"EAST ESSEX RANGER" - this RDS proposal (see last newsletter) has been considered but turned down by BR, who contend that in Essex, in contrast to the Norwich Division, there is already a fairly comprehensive range of Awaydays. We have therefore suggested to them that they at least start advertising (and possibly selling) the 1-Day Ranger ticket on stations like Colchester, Manningtree and Parkeston Quay, and tempt people to make more day trips northwards.

DEREHAM AND FAKENHAM LINE

WyDFRAC has just issued its 14th newsletter and continues to salt away money in its Passenger Service Reopening Fund. A Christmas Fayre held in Dereham raised over £70 for this. WyDFRAC secretary Mr. J.S. Hull had a meeting with officials of Breckland District Council in December, to discuss the re-opening issue. WyDFRAC members also organised a traffic census at Garveston crossing, over a minor road between Yaxham and Thurton stations. The results are being analysed by the Committee and could provide useful data if and when consideration is given to automating crossings.

The track between Ryburgh and Fakenham has now been lifted, and the Fakenham & Dereham Railway Company are angry at not being allowed by the BR Property Board to tender for the land. An appeal by the Fakenham & Dereham Railway Society to the Secretary of State for Transport fell on deaf ears. Mr. Fowler simply stated that BR were "acting commercially."

The F&DRS have not given up, however, but are still seeking all possible ways out of what is, to put it mildly, a most unsatisfactory situation. They are continuing to raise money, and are running an enthusiast special in early April from Ely and Cambridge to Poplar Docks and Thames Haven. Details from the secretary, Mr. B.D. Woodgett, 19 Marshleys Court, Goldings, Northampton, NN3 4XU (Please enclose s.a.e.)

"HEAVIER LORRIES - DON'T GIVE THEM THE GREEN LIGHT!"

This is the title of a new RDS leaflet being printed at the moment and to be available from the Branch Secretary by the end of January. It is our response to the Armitage committee's report which recommends increases in lorry weights to 44 tonnes in some cases - and longer and taller lorries. To cope with these, it has been estimated that over £1000 million of public money would have to be spent on reconstructing bridges; and County Surveyors in East Anglia already complain that roads are breaking up under the existing juggernauts. Moreover, the more money that has to be spent on coping with larger and heavier juggernauts, the less there is likely to be available for investment in our railways.

Order your leaflets now, and help us to convince public opinion and our local councillors and MPs to oppose heavier lorries. RDS is also distributing a leaflet "NO to heavier lorries" published by Transport 2000 and the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, and these can also be obtained from the Branch Secretary.

NOW THE GOOD FREIGHT NEWS...

Tilbury Roadstone's aggregate railhead at Barham, between Ipswich and Needham Market, was opened at the end of October. RDS supported this firm in their application for a section 8 grant 3 years ago - against the opposition of Suffolk County Council at that time; and we are pleased that the railhead - with its three sidings and conveyor belt - is now in operation.

By mid-January, the new $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile line from Trimley to the northern development at Felixstowe Dock looked certain to go ahead. Unless there are any last-minute objections, the Felixstowe Dock & Railway Bill is likely to get royal assent in mid-February. RDS has always supported this scheme in principle, and we are glad that the contention surrounding the choice of route now appears to have been amicably settled.

QUESTION-MARK OVER WHITEMOOR YARD AND MARCH - SPALDING LINE

RDS has offered to meet representatives of March NUR, following consultation in November - December between BR unions and management over the proposed closure of the 19 miles between March and Spalding (which only carries 3 regular passenger trains in each direction, and is mainly used for freight.) Coupled with this threat is the likely run-down and closure of Whitemoor Marshalling Yard, at the March end of the line. RDS and the NUR may have to launch a campaign to keep this line, while at the same time looking at how it could be more economically operated and more effectively used.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Welcome to more new members:

1. Mr. A. Barfield, 91A West Fen Road, Ely, Cambs. CB6 3AD.
2. Mr. D. Gray, St. John's College, Cambridge, CB2 1TP.
3. Mr. F.G. Challis, 24 Fanshawe Road, Cambridge.
4. Mr. P. Barham, 76 Wimpole Road, Barton, Cambridge, CB3 7AD.
5. Mr. S. Willett, 5 Wroxham Road, Ipswich, Suffolk.
6. Mr. C.A. Shelbourne, Robin Hill, Shawcross Rd., West Runton, Cromer, Norfolk.
7. Mr. R.C. Vincent, 174 Norwich Road, Fakenham, Norfolk, NR21 8LX.
8. Mr. M.R. Hicks, 1 Fenlands Crescent, Waveney Gardens Estate, Lowestoft, NR33 9AW.
9. Mr. D. French, Blyth Cottage, Westerfield, Ipswich, IP6 9AA.
10. Mr. D. Andrew, "Ambarvalia", High St., Conington, Cambridge, CB3 8LT.
11. Mr. K.C. Burton, Old Vicarage Farmhouse, Vicarage Road, Foulden, Thetford, IP26 5AB.
12. Mr. P. Tyler, The Chalet, Ringland Road, Taverham, Norwich, NR8 6TH.

Mr. G.R. Burgess has moved to 22 Chesterton Hall Crescent, Cambridge, CB4 1AP.

Mr. C.H. Leigh has moved to 23 Sandy Lane, Cromer, NR27 9JT.

Mr. & Mrs D. Pitts have moved to 50 Riverside, Cambridge, CB5 8HN.

MAGAZINES: The Branch Secretary has back issues of Modern Railways and Railway Magazine for most months during 1980, for sale at 10p each plus postage - proceeds to Branch funds.

LOWESTOFT SPINE ROAD PROPOSAL

RDS was among the many bodies invited to comment on this proposal, and a letter was sent to Suffolk County Surveyor at the beginning of November. Our letter welcomed the fact that the County Council now appeared to be making an attempt to produce relatively modest plans to improve circulation within the town, rather than produce a grandiose through route; and expressed a hope that "concentration on cheaper road schemes will enable the County Council to devote a higher proportion of its transport budget to supporting and improving public transport within Suffolk."

Our letter expresses preference for Option 1, the second cheapest of five Options ranging from £5 $\frac{1}{4}$ million to £22 $\frac{3}{4}$ million and involving a crossing of the water near the existing railway bridge. We re-iterate the need to encourage as much long distance traffic as possible to go by rail.

RDS SPEAKING...

Branch Committee Member Mr. P.R. Lawrence gave a talk on the work of the RDS locally and nationally to the Eastern Regional Council of the NUR in Norwich on December 13th.

Messrs. R.B. Whipps and T.J. Garrod were invited to speak on rural railways to the "25" Club at Lothingland Hospital, Lowestoft, on Sunday January 18th. Two of Mr. Whipps' films were also shown to the members.

RDS EXHIBITING...

The Branch exhibition has now been totally refurbished, with many thanks to our member Mr. A.G. Brown and his wife, and is now available for showing once more. If you could help to arrange for it to be shown at a library or similar establishment in your area, please contact the Branch Chairman.

SPONSORED TRAIN RIDES: Our Treasurer acknowledges a total of £75.28 in sponsor money for the three Sponsored Train Rides undertaken by our members last summer. This compares with £66.93 raised in 1979. The record for travel in one day on a £4 Anglia Ranger ticket stands at 520 miles, by Ian Brakewell - who says he has already worked out itinerary that could beat this in 1981. Any challengers?

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Many RDS members will find that their subscriptions become due in January 1981. If you receive a green renewal form with your copy of "Railway Development News" - don't delay, pay today!