

RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY

EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH

NEWSLETTER No. 43.

Summer 1982

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, NR32 1RQ  
(Tel: 81721; or at work, Norwich 28181 ex. 44)

EXPERIMENT AND INVEST!

All rail users will naturally be relieved that the trains are now running again, after the end of the ASLEF strike on July 18th.

However, that relief must be tempered with a concern that the peace is just and lasting, and that central Government should give a firm commitment to investment in the railway industry.

As an independent body, the Railway Development Society does not normally take sides in industrial disputes; but the seriousness of the recent situation prompted the East Anglian Branch Committee to issue a statement on July 4th, which was sent to the Secretary of State for Transport, Chairman of the British Railways Board, General Secretaries of the three rail unions and selected MPs.

The statement (reported fully in the Eastern Daily Press and Eastern Evening News and partially in other media) urged both the British Railways Board and ASLEF to come out of their entrenched positions and agree some experiments with better use of manpower.

Such experiments could include proposals made by both the BRB and ASLEF; and should be backed by "a clear commitment to investment" from the Secretary of State. The unions often complain, with some justification, that they have agreed to improved productivity in the past and that the promised better deal for the railways never materialised - indeed, we have in this country, thanks to the negligence of successive governments, one of the most investment-starved rail networks in Europe.

Now that the strike appears over, we must urge the politicians to commit themselves to increased investment. If Secretary of State David Howell will still not agree, for example, to the Cambridge electrification or the East Suffolk Line modernisation, is his professed support for a "modern rail system" just so much hot air? The alternative - an ageing railway run by an embittered, demoralised and divided workforce will be of little use to rail passengers or freight customers.

RAIL DEVELOPMENT WEEK: OCTOBER 23rd - 30th

A nationwide week of activity will be launched by RDS in late October, to put the case for rail investment and show how the services can be improved. The Society's book on rail reopenings, "Bring Back The Trains" will also be published that week.

In East Anglia, it is planned to have displays in the window of a Building Society or bank in as many towns as possible. The Nationwide Building Society's branch in Lowestoft is likely to be one of them; and several members have already agreed to approach a bank or Building Society where they have an account. Any member who is willing to do this should contact Mr. E.J. Graves, 60 St. Audrey's Close, Histon, Cambridge, CB4 4JY, who is co-ordinating this work. Photos, maps etc. for the displays will come from the RDS exhibition material - but further material will be welcome. RDS will be producing a national poster for the Week and a series of leaflets.

The East Anglian Branch will also be having a leaflet-drop through every door in Thetford - one of the towns where our membership is lowest - and may do the same in other places if enough volunteers are forthcoming. It is hoped to leaflet Thetford on October 30th. Any member willing to help on this or any other day should contact Mr. P.R. Lawrence, 75 Marlpit Lane, Norwich, NR5 8XN (Tel: 746447)

There will also be an RDS Eastern Region Public Meeting on Saturday October 23rd in St. Mary-le-Wigford Church Hall, Lincoln at 2.00 p.m. The Hall is next to Lincoln Central station. Full details will be available shortly from the Branch Secretary.

### 1400 USE OUR FIVE SPECIAL TRAINS

Five special trains have been chartered from British Rail so far this summer, by the Railway Development Society and its associated local groups in East Anglia - carrying between them 1400 people.

On May 15th, a class 37 locomotive hauled 9 coaches out of Dereham station at 7.22, calling at other stations on this freight-only branch, plus Wymondham and Attleborough, then heading to Matlock via Peterborough and Nottingham with over 300 passengers on board. Refreshments and RDS books and pens sold well on the train, which reached Matlock a little late at 12.40 (One reason being the need to wait at the junction to the branch for the empty stock of another RDS special - from Birmingham and Walsall - to work back to Derby) Passengers then enjoyed a full afternoon in warm spring sunshine in the Derbyshire Dales, before a troublefree journey back to Norfolk.

On June 6th, the Felixstowe Branch of ESTA celebrated its tenth anniversary by carrying 180 people on a 4-car DMU train to Orton Mere. A successful raffle was held and refreshments sold on the train; and the Association received many expressions of praise and gratitude for their efforts. They in turn paid tribute to the train staff and to the Nene Valley Railway who were very co-operative and adjusted their own steam timetable to fit in with the arrival of the special.

A week later, the other section of ESTA ran the first hauled excursion train from all East Suffolk Line stations for at least ten years. Leaving Lowestoft shortly after 9.00, the eleven coaches hauled by a class 47 locomotive picked up passengers at every stop (ranging from 4 at Brampton to nearly 100 at each of Beccles and Woodbridge), leaving Ipswich with well over 500 people for Windsor & Eton Riverside. Some delays were experienced on the journey round North London, followed by an enjoyable afternoon at Windsor - where the second "ESTA special" - a chartered river steamer - took over 100 of our passengers for a trip on the Thames. Tribute must again be paid to BR staff, not only on the train, but also at Lowestoft and Windsor stations (where we were allowed to boil water for the two five-gallon containers used for tea and coffee in our makeshift buffet!)

The following week, on June 20th, saw a complex operation when an RDS special DMU from Sheringham, and a Fakenham & Dereham Railway Society special from North Elmham, met at Norwich station and were coupled together for a run to Orton Mere. In all, about 200 people were carried, including nearly 50 from North Walsham, the most popular single picking-up point. None of the problems that might have arisen from running a train in two legs did in fact occur, and timekeeping was good, with early arrivals at Orton Mere and back in Norwich in the evening.

Finally, on June 27th, RDS was able to give Wisbech its first passenger train for a year and a half, with a 4-car DMU excursion to Felixstowe. Nearly 200 local people boarded the train in the goods depot in Coalwharf Road and after a steady run along the branch in early morning sunshine (during which it was photographed several times by our member Mr. P. Summer who shadowed it by road!) it picked up a few more passengers at March and six at Manea - probably the first time in years that this last, isolated, Fenland halt has had an excursion train. Refreshments, raffle tickets, RDS pens and books were all selling well as the train continued its progress to Ipswich and Felixstowe - where it was met by committee members of the local ESTA branch; for not only was this a new departure from Wisbech, it was also the first time for several years that Felixstowe had received a seaside special. After five hours in good weather on the coast, 200 happy passengers returned to the Fens, asking when our next special would be.

Finally, tribute must be paid to all the ESTA and WYDRAC members who worked so hard to make these trains successful; and to the many individual RDS members who helped, especially Messrs. P.R. Lawrence, R.B. Davies, L.J. Howes, S.J. Goose, M.I. Brakewell, J.W. Page, R.G. Crawley and D. Ruffell (and apologies for any one else forgotten).

TEN YEARS AGO: From Branch Newsletter No. 3 - Summer 1972: New sidings were opened for grain at Fulbourn and aggregate at Melton; at an RDS Public Meeting, Mr. R.V. Banks quoted a Government statement that they could only afford £50 million in aid for rural railways - but were spending £1000 million on Concorde.

FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday August 22nd: RDS/WyDRAC Special Train from Dereham to Felixstowe dep Dereham 8.50, calling at Yaxham, Thuxton, Kimberley Park and Wymondham (dep 9.46) then via Norwich and Ipswich to Felixstowe (arr 11.27). Return from Felixstowe at 17.08, back in Dereham at 19.53.

Fares £5.90 (children £3.25) Bookings to Mr. J.S. Hull, Cydonia Cottage, Station Rd., Yaxham, Dereham, Norfolk (cheques/POs payable to WyDRAC; SAE please)

Sunday August 29th: RDS/SMTRUA Special Train from Sudbury to Yarmouth dep Sudbury 8.21, calling at Bures, Chappel, Marks Tey and Colchester (dep 8.56) then Norwich and Yarmouth (arr 11.25). Leave Yarmouth at 17.11, arriving back in Sudbury at 19.36. For operational reasons, this train will be attached to the scheduled service on the Sudbury branch.

Fares £5 return (children £2.50) Bookings to Mr. I. Thomas, 9 Hall Rd., Sudbury, Suffolk. Tel: 73301)

Sunday September 5th: ESTA Special Train from all East Suffolk Line stations to Wroxham, Cromer and Sheringham. dep Ipswich 9.33, arr Sheringham 12.45; dep Sheringham 17.18, arr Ipswich 20.37.

Fares £4 from stations Ipswich - Saxmundham; £3.50 from stations Darsham - Lowestoft plus Somerleyton (children half fare). Bookings: Mr. G.G. Lilley, 43 The Glebes, Snape, Saxmundham, Suffolk.

Saturday September 11th: RDS/NENTA/ADRAC SPECIAL TRAIN FROM NORTH WALSHAM TO YORK

- the first Inter-City train off this line since 1967, with buffet car. The special will leave North Walsham at about 7.20 and call at Worstead, Wroxham, Salhouse and Norwich, and is expected to arrive in York at 12.00, leaving there at about 18.00. Passengers from stations north of North Walsham can catch the scheduled DMU as far as there in the morning (but must pay on the train) and transport will be provided back to Cromer and Sheringham in the evening. Unfortunately there is nowhere to run a locomotive round at Cromer or Sheringham, and so our train cannot serve these towns directly.

The fare is £9 return (£4.50 for children), but 50p less if you book before August 1st. Please send bookings (with SAE) to Mr. R.B. Davies, 36 Lighthouse Close, Happisburgh, Norwich, NR12 0QE (Tel: Walcott 650715).

NB The Ipswich - Sheringham and Sudbury - Yarmouth dates have had to be rearranged because of the rail strike.

Sunday September 12th: RDS has been invited to take part in the Norfolk Voice Fair and Open Day at Mannington Hall, between Aylsham and Holt, from 11.00 am to 6.00 pm. Some 5000 people are expected to attend and it would be a good opportunity for RDS and the local users' groups and reopening campaigns to get our message across. If you would be willing to help set up or man a stall, please contact Mr. P.R. Lawrence, 75 Marlpit Lane, Norwich, NR5 8XN (Tel: 743446) by August 10th at the latest.

Saturday September 25th: RDS Branch Autumn Meeting in the Edmund Bacon Room, Assembly House, Theatre St., Norwich, starting at 2.00 pm. After branch business and discussion of rail developments around the region, we hope to welcome as guest speaker Mr. William Hall, Freight Marketing Services Manager at the British Railways Board, who will speak on Future Prospects for Rail Freight and show a film. This will be the first time that we have had a speaker from the British Railways Board headquarters - but Mr. Hall is also very familiar with our region, having spent the early part of his career in the Cambridge area. (NB If Mr. Hall is unable to attend this meeting, he will speak at our Branch AGM instead, and the film scheduled for the AGM will be shown on September 25th instead)

Wednesday October 6th: North East Norfolk Travellers' Association AGM in the Methodist Church Hall, Holt Rd., Cromer (2 mins from station) at 7.00 pm.

October 23rd-30th: RAIL DEVELOPMENT WEEK (see p. 1)

Saturday November 6th: RDS Branch Committee Meeting at Histon.

Saturday January 29th: RDS Branch AGM, Ipswich Town Hall, 2.00 pm. After the business meeting, Mr. R.B. Whipps will show his film of the Felixstowe ESTA Special Train to the Nene Valley.

SHERINGHAM: The Town Council has been approached by the North East Norfolk Travellers' Association for its views on improving the station, by lengthening and platform, but has decided not to pursue the suggestion. One councillor said, "We would be very mistaken if we put any pressure at all on British Rail". Another commented, "it might lead them to closing the station down altogether".

BR were planning to start a reduced fares experiment on the line on July 12th (but this will presumably now start after the end of the strike). The cheap fares will apply on all trains except three peak-hour Monday - Friday ones, and involve an average reduction of 25%. As RDS has for some time advocated such experiments, we welcome this news and hope to help publicise the scheme.

HISTON: During the villages Feast Week, at the beginning of July, the flower display at the church, arranged by the Girl Guides, included a section on RDS, with a record of our special passenger trains on the line through the village and our anniversary book.

At what is sometimes called "Histon's other station" - Waterbeach - RDS pressed last year, in comments on the Landbeach & Waterbeach Local Plan (cf Newsletter 39) for extra stops and improved park-and-ride facilities. The final version of the plan, just published, includes a commitment by the Council to investigate these points.

ST NEOTS: "British Rail, so often condemned for its high prices, offers a 63p single ticket for the St Neots - Huntingdon trip, with day return tickets costing just 81p" (The Trader 28.5.82). In contrast, the article notes, United Counties bus fares are 64p single and £1.27 return.

SHIPPEA HILL station was, perhaps, the busiest it has ever been during the Spring Bank Holiday Weekend, when 91 trains stopped there (instead of a normal 32) to convey thousands of visitors to the nearby Mildenhall Air Show, with special buses ferrying passengers between the station and the air base.

EAST SUFFOLK LINE stations are "generally good for passengers" was a conclusion of the East Suffolk Travellers' Association station survey published in early June. The report does, however, suggest a number of inexpensive steps that could be taken to improve matters - like installing litter bins at Westerfield and Somerleyton; a shelter on the up platform at Brampton and better direction signs at Halesworth. It is suggested that Beccles station - which is seen by more people now that the new road has opened adjacent to it, - needs smartening up. Maybe local councils could help here and elsewhere? They are being sent copies of the report, as are BR.

SUDBURY BRANCH: The Sudbury - Marks Tey Users' Assn conducted a survey of usage in May, which indicated an increase in the number of season ticket holders; but a fall-off of 15% in optional usage of the line since the ASLEF strikes. Particularly noticeable was the drop in usage of Chappel station, apparently because local people were motoring to Kelvedon station or going by bus to Colchester. This is also the part of the line on which SMTRUA has fewest members. Also disappointing is a decision by Cornard Parish Council not to go ahead with the campaign for a rail halt. More encouraging, however, is an agreement by BR to repair and repaint the canopy at Sudbury station (long felt by many people to be the most decrepit in East Anglia!) The Sudbury Museum Trust, which also uses part of the station building, is faced with a bill for over £300 to make good the rest of the property - any donations will be gratefully received and should be sent to Mr. C. Finch, Sudbury Museum Trust, Council Offices, Sudbury, Suffolk.

SEALINK: RDS members Messrs. S.F. Wilkinson and P. Wakefield are continuing correspondence and contacts with all parties over the cuts in freight services through Harwich. We are particularly concerned over reports that British Companies are now being rationed to a number of rail wagons which is so low that it is affecting their production.

STRIKEBOUND! Our member Mr. D.J. Jasper writes: "My wife and I travelled by train to the Lake District, having a very comfortable and quick journey. We returned last Saturday, July 10th, by coach. We left Windermere about 10.00 am. A stop was made at Preston which was only supposed to be for 10-15 mins, we did not leave until 11.15. A short stop was made off the M6 and we reached London about 5.00. It was chaotic at Victoria coach station. We left about 6.30 and arrived home at Ipswich at 9.15. Give me rail travel any time!"

RAIL LINK BUS: A GOOD IDEA - OR A DIVERSION?

In May, a rail-link coach started operation between Kings Lynn and Peterborough stations, via Wisbech. Four return trips a day are run - somewhat faster than, but in competition with, Eastern Counties' own services on this route (which may explain why, in early June, the timetable was not on display at Wisbech bus station).

Following an article in the July issue of Modern Railways, the RDS Branch Secretary wrote to that magazine, "While not wishing to denigrate genuine efforts by BR management to boost Inter-City revenue; one is bound to wonder whether the introduction of such coach services is also influenced by certain people in higher BR management who would be happy to see secondary routes replaced by buses.

"It would certainly be interesting to know how much extra Inter-City revenue has been generated at Peterborough station by the operation of this bus link and the similar one to Kettering. It would also be interesting to know how much, if any, revenue has been lost on the rail services between Lynn, Ely and Peterborough.

"In this context, it is also significant to note that the first train out of Lynn now misses the connection from Ely to Peterborough by 4 minutes. Is this deliberate?"

Comments on this rail link bus, or on those from Peterborough to Kettering and Newark to Mansfield, from any members who use them would be gratefully received by the Branch Secretary.

RDS SPONSORED TRAIN RIDES

A new record was set by our member Ian Brakewell on June 19th, when he covered 312 of the 340 route-miles over which the Anglia Ranger is valid. His journey started from Peterborough at 5.40 and took him almost everywhere except Acle and Felixstowe, before arriving back at 22.49.

The following Saturday, Desmond French set out from Westerfield at 6.32 - the first time anyone has attempted a sponsored ride from this station - and covered 281 miles, including Felixstowe, Lowestoft, Yarmouth, Peterborough, Royston and Bury St. Edmunds.

If you sponsored either Desmond or Ian, please collect and send your sponsor money to Mr. L.G. Hipperson, 16 Marsh View, Beccles, Suffolk, NR34 9RT.

RDS ANTI-CLOSURE FUND

Following a resolution at the National AGM, RDS has set up an Anti-Closure Fund, to help any Branch, Area or local users' group to fight any rail passenger closure proposal that may be made - and in the present climate it seems likely that BR may be forced to propose some. At the beginning of July, the fund stood at £86.50, including a £10 donation from one local users' group in East Anglia. The Branch Meeting on June 5th also agreed to donate a quarter of the Sponsored Train Ride proceeds to this fund. Individual donations will also be very welcome, and should be sent to the National Treasurer, Mr. A.R. Macqueen, 20 Culgaith Gardens, Enfield, Middlesex, EN2 7PE.

COLCHESTER: How many people know that there is a very useful station in the centre of Colchester - called St Botolphs? It is not listed under Colchester in the main BR timetable, yet it is much closer to the shopping centre and tourist attractions, as well as to some residential areas, than the main line station. Would it help matters if the station were to be renamed Colchester Central - or Colchester Town? Our committee member Mr. L.J. Buckingham has written to BR and other bodies about this, and about publicity in general for this station.

Mr. Buckingham also reports that Anglia Ranger publicity is now on display at Colchester - something which RDS suggested to BR last year. We hope people from south of the Stour will be encouraged to take a day return to Ipswich and then buy one of these bargain tickets!

SPECIAL TRAINS 1983: RDS normally meets BR's Passenger Sales & Marketing Officer at Norwich in the autumn to discuss and receive quotations for special trains for the following year. Any member with ideas for possible destinations is therefore welcome to write to the Branch Secretary during August or September.

### RDS BRANCH SPRING MEETING

Thirty members attended this meeting, in Cambridge on June 5th, to hear our guest speaker, Mr. Len Dumelow (Secretary of the Central Transport Consultative Committee). Mr. Dumelow outlined the work of his committee, and its regional committees, as a government-appointed watchdog for passengers; but also criticised the Government for its insistence on applying rigid financial constraints on BR. "Because of Government policy", he said, "British Rail are putting the interests of passengers second to the requirement to make more economic use of manpower and rolling stock...The railway network is degenerating".

Mr. Dumelow also had some words of criticism for the rail unions who, he suggested, should "get their own house in order before seeking the support of passengers in getting a better deal for British Rail from the Government".

The meeting also passed a resolution urging that rail users' representatives (in the form of the TUCCs and RDS/users' groups) should be involved in consultations, together with the BRB and unions, in the future of the railways and especially in investment. The resolution has been sent to the BRB, DTP, opposition transport spokesmen and rail unions and is resulting in some useful ongoing correspondence, on which it is hoped to report more fully in the next newsletter.

### THE HARDWICK SAGA

The Branch meeting on June 5th also voted to refer to the Local Government Ombudsman the lack of co-operation received by us from Cambridgeshire County Council - including its failure to object to the March - Spalding closure proposal, its refusal to guarantee that it would consult rail users about services in the county and the plain discourtesy of its Transportation Committee Chairman, Councillor Hardwick, who has failed to acknowledge, let alone answer, four letters sent to him by our Branch Chairman.

Three weeks after a report of our dissatisfaction appeared in the Cambridge Evening News, we were contacted by an official of the council, offering a meeting. Three officers of the RDS hope to attend such a meeting and will report back to members on September 25th.

### THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN US AND MR. BRADSHAW

The Branch Secretary is involved in correspondence with Mr. W.P. Bradshaw, Director of Strategic Development at the BRB, after an article by him in a BR internal publication found its way to us. Mr. Bradshaw was floating such cost-cutting ideas as singling the main line to Norwich when it is electrified and "rolling stock stripped to its bare essentials" for secondary lines.

Attempts to pin Mr. Bradshaw down as to what he means have revealed, inter alia, that "provision (of lavatories) will probably depend upon the distances over which people are expected to travel"; while any main line singling would provide "a reasonable double track section in the centre ...where it would be possible to time trains to pass one another leaving a reasonable margin for late running".

This correspondence is continuing, as the Branch Committee feel that some of Mr. Bradshaw's ideas for economies would give BR a less attractive product to market and could ultimately lose revenue.

WENSUM CURVE: Great Yarmouth Borough Council agreed, on June 21st, to go ahead with plans to initiate a High Court action against the BRB for its failure to consult the public when the Wensum Curve was closed. Waveney District Council two Parish Councils, ENTA and ESTA have all promised donations towards the cost of the action; while the RDS National Committee has also offered Yarmouth Borough Council a £25 contribution, in view particularly of the implications for other areas if this closure remains unchallenged.

FENLAND RAIL ACTION GROUP At its meeting on June 20th, FRAG appointed Mr. E. Cooke, 15 Norwood Rd., March, Cambs as Acting Secretary; and Mr. P. Bevin, 49 Broadgate, Whaplode Drove, Spalding as Treasurer. A new recruitment leaflet has been produced and is being distributed. It costs £1 to join FRAG.

MEETING WITH MP: Messrs. G. Graham and R.B. Davies, representing the Aylsham & District Rail Action Committee, and Mr. T.J. Garrod representing RDS, met Ralph Howell MP (North Norfolk) on July 17th and put him in the picture over the future of the Lenwade line and other local rail matters.

FOR YOUR BOOKSHELF

1 Public Transport Guide for Eastern Suffolk (35p) Suffolk County Council has just published a very useful and well laid-out booklet giving all train, bus, coach and ferry timetables in the eastern half of the county - plus information on such matters as Anglia Rangers, parcels by train or bus and cheap and concessionary fares. The RDS Branch Secretary has written to congratulate the Council on its booklet, and has asked whether details of RDS and users' groups can be included in future issues. The Guide is on sale in local bookshops and is likely to appeal most to people who already use public transport; for those who do not, posters and leaflets similar to "East Suffolk Travel" (published by ESTA twice-yearly) are still important.

2 CAMBRIAN RAIL - This 48-page illustrated booklet is a must for anyone visiting North or Central Wales - in many parts of which the train "is the key which opens the door and takes you through a Wales which cannot be seen in any other way". Well written, appealing to both enthusiast and general reader, this Cambrian Coast Line Action Group publication costs £1.30 (postage free) from Chris Magner, 25 Dunval Rd, Bridgnorth, Shropshire, WV16 4NA.

3 BRITAIN BY TRAIN is written by RDS member Patrick Goldring and published by Hamlyn Paperbacks at £1.75. It is available from any good bookshop or bookstall. After making a point with which surely all RDS members would agree - "The train is perhaps the most civilised form of transport yet invented" - Mr. Goldring gives practical hints for the inexperienced rail traveller and then describes interesting and scenic routes in all parts of the country, often mingled with humorous, historical, sociological, or gastronomic observations. He also gives tips on such matters as hiring a special train, citing as examples the ENTA Christmas Shoppers from Yarmouth to London in 1979 and 1980.

IPSWICH BY-PASS - THIRD INQUIRY

Two RDS members, Messrs. M.J. Farahar and S.J. Harman, attended on the opening day, April 14th, and handed out the RDS leaflet "Stop this Highway Robbery - Now!" (Still available from the General Secretary - send foolscap SAE)

Mr. T.J. Garrod represented RDS on April 21st to put the case for a more modest western route which could save £15 million of the £18,700,000 which the Department of Transport's own route would cost. The money saved, argued Mr. Garrod, would more than pay for electrification of the Felixstowe line, a direct rail link from Trimley to the new container terminal and other local rail improvements.

The Department of Transport - predictably, perhaps - contended that only their own grandiose scheme would suffice for the future traffic levels which they claimed would be generated. It was notable, however, that DTp officials now appeared to be taking alternative road (but not rail) proposals much more seriously than was the case in the mid-70s (when there were angry scenes at many inquiries, including Ipswich) and were making some effort to produce evidence on the feasibility of the alternatives.

Meanwhile, other RDS members have also been putting the RDS case against heavy road transport - Mrs E. Wakefield and Mr. E.J. Graves had letters in the Cambridge Evening News on 21-4-82, answering propaganda from the Road Haulage Association.

ROAD ACCIDENTS in Cambridgeshire cost the taxpayer more than £11,500,000 in 1981 according to the Chief Constable in his annual report (Cambridge Evening News 28-6-82). Information like this is useful when we compare the cost of rail transport to the total cost of road transport - and RDS is continuing to collect press cuttings on such matters, with the intention of producing another digest in due course. Please send cuttings to Mr. B.J. Eyre, 127 Bullard Rd, Woodcock Rd, Norwich, NR3 3RA.

Another indirect cost of road transport is compensation for people suffering from traffic disturbance caused by the Cambridge Western By-pass: 33 claims totalling over £22,500 had been paid out by the end of May (CEN 27-5-82).

More positive news is that the Government has postponed till the autumn any decision to allow heavier lorries on our roads - thanks to pressure by MPs of all parties - plus, of course, bodies like RDS.

### OBITUARY

Mr. R.V. Banks, President of the Railway Development Society and former Chairman of the Society and its predecessor the Railway Invigoration Society, died suddenly on May 30th. Mr. S.F. Wilkinson, our Branch Chairman, was among the large number of mourners who attended his cremation at Maidstone on June 4th. The following day, at the East Anglian Branch Spring Meeting, members stood in silent tribute to Mr. Banks. A collection was taken and a small donation added from Branch funds, as a result of which £20 was sent in memory of Mr. Banks to the Benevolent Fund of the Association of Supervisory and Electrical Engineers - a charity with which he had long been associated.

I first met Rowland Banks in September 1968, on a train between Lowestoft and Yarmouth South Town. We were both travelling to object to the proposed closure of that line at the TUCC inquiry. It was indicative of Mr. Banks' deep commitment to our cause that he was prepared to travel the length and breadth of the country, speaking at hearings, inquiries and public meetings.

In subsequent years he attended East Anglian Branch meetings in Bury St. Edmunds, March, Ipswich and Norwich; and public inquiries at Colchester and Spalding. He took a keen interest in all aspects of the Society's work; but was especially involved in campaigns for the Channel Tunnel, electrification and investment in secondary services. The active life which he led, in his late 70s, promoting these issues, is an example to many of us younger members.

There were times when some of us had disagreements with Mr. Banks over particular strategies that RDS should be pursuing - but he was a tolerant man and stated on more than one occasion that in a voluntary body such as ours it was inevitable that differences of opinion would sometimes occur; we must always remember that the ultimate aims of our Society, which united us, were more important than temporary differences that might divide us.

A few days before his death, Mr. Banks spoke to me on the telephone, looking forward keenly to Rail Development Week. One fitting way for us all to pay tribute to him will be to work hard to ensure that this Week really makes an impact in promoting the causes for which he fought.

TJG.

### NEWS OF MEMBERS

Welcome to more new members:

Mr. C.J. Turner, 11 Caraway Road, Fulbourn, Cambridge, CB1 5DU

March Labour Party, Sec: Mr. D. Kent, 69 Grounds Ave, March, Cambs, PE15 9BG.

Mr. C.T. Lee, 25 Suffield Road, Gorleston, Gt. Yarmouth, NR31 7AN.

Mr. D. Taylor-Smith, 23 Britannia Rd, Norwich, NR1 4HP.

Please note these changes of address:

Mr. J.W. Page, 34 Hereward Close, Histon, Cambridge, CB4 4LS (Tel: 3877)

Mr. M.R. Hicks, Room 1, 185 St. Peter's Street, Lowestoft, Suffolk.

Mr. C. Hughes has moved to Somerset and joins the RDS Severnside Branch.

Thanks to members who have paid their subscriptions recently. If you fall in arrears, you should receive a reminder from Mr. L.G. Hipperson - but why not check on your RDS membership card, which indicates when your current subscription expires, send your subscription to the Membership Secretary and save Mr. Hipperson some time and money?

A new Family Subscription has been introduced for RDS. Its costs £5 plus £1 for each member of the household. Other subscription rates are £5 for individuals; £6 for corporate members; £3 for pensioners or students; £2 for students under 18. The Membership Secretary is Mr. H.G.M. Rogers, 64 Cowper Rd, Ealing, London, W7 1EJ.

PHOTOGRAPHIC CONTEST: RDS will again be holding a photographic contest this year, for the best picture on any theme on modern railway interest in East Anglia, taken during 1982. There will be a first prize of £5, with other prizes dependent on the number of entries. Judging will be done by our guest speaker at the 1983 AGM on January 29th. More details in next newsletter - meanwhile, happy photographing!