



RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY
EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH NEWSLETTER

no.49 Winter 1984

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YES! WE HAVE NO BOTTLENECKS!

- OR: WILL TWO GO INTO ONE?

Will British Rail's track singling plans in East Anglia - and indeed in other areas - lead to less attractive, less reliable services?

RDS has voiced its fears to British Rail over the last three months and, as a result of our correspondence, a delegation consisting of Adrian Fawcett, Trevor Garrod, Gordon Knott and Charles Taylor was invited to London to meet Divisional Manager John Ellis and Divisional Passenger Manager Theo Steel on December 21st.

We had a 2-hour meeting with Messrs. Ellis and Steel, which was very informative and allayed some, but by no means all, fears.

Firstly, we were assured that BR had dropped their proposal to single the main line between Dury St. Edmunds and Kennett - so no additional bottleneck seems likely, at least for the present, on this important passenger and freight link.

On the Freckland Line, there is no immediate singling threat, though some of the track will need renewing by 1986/7. BR intend to have a hard look at the timetable on this line, and considerable recasting of it could be on the cards in the near future. When this has been done, they may look again at the scope for singling part of it. It was stressed that BR Eastern Region still had certain targets to meet for track simplification.

The singling of part of the Ipswich - Norwich main line, between Mellis and Tivetchall, with a passing loop at Diss, would save BR £750,000, according to Mr. Ellis. With 100 mph double-to-single turnouts at either end, through trains would only take about 7 minutes to pass over the single section; or 10-11 minutes if they stopped at Diss. Trains in the opposite direction would not be delayed by more than 10 minutes - usually only 5 minutes. We were also assured that the Norwich - Ipswich line would still have the capacity to take not only an hourly Inter-City service, but also a semi-fast electric multiple unit service (calling at some reopened stations) should there be sufficient demand for this.

If plans for this singling are changed, we were told, it would put back the completion date for the entire electrification scheme (due to reach Norwich in May 1987).

From the plans that we were shown, it appears that either the up or the down track will be lifted, but the remaining track will not, in most cases, be slewed into the centre - and so redoubling will be physically possible should it prove necessary (though Mr. Ellis was sure that it would not prove so.)

At national level, RDS has produced a leaflet, entitled "BottleNecks", for mass distribution - urging caution on the question of main line singling. Bulk supplies of this are available from Leslie Freitag, 22 Cravells Road, Harpenden, Herts, AL5 1BD.

ST. IVES :A REVERSAL BY CAMBS COUNTY COUNCIL? ARC have been extracting sand and gravel from the former trackbed of the St. Ives line. In 1981, at our request, Cambs. County Council imposed a planning condition that enough land be restored for a single rail track to be possibly relaid at some future date (Newsletters 38 and 39). They have now gone back on that condition and decline to meet us. The RDS Branch meeting on January 7th empowered the officers to take appropriate action, including an appeal to the Ombudsman.

RDS WINTER MEETING HEARS ABOUT ELECTRIFICATION

Room 2 at Ipswich Town Hall was filled to capacity on January 7th, when 50 members and supporters attended the Winter Meeting of the East Anglian Branch of RDS.

As guest speaker we welcomed Mr. Mike Foulkes, British Rail's Project Manager for the Anglia Electrification scheme, who gave a very informative talk illustrated by slides.

Mr. Foulkes described his job as being to co-ordinate the work of everyone involved in the scheme to "provide East Anglia with modern, reliable main line railways", ensuring that all stages were completed on time and within the budget allocated. As a historical contrast, he mentioned that, when the Liverpool - Manchester railway was built in 1829, it had been expected to cost £400,000 but ended up by costing about £1 million! Nowadays, railway engineers would not be allowed to overspend anywhere near that amount. Only a tolerance of up to 5% would be allowed.

The layman often imagined that electrification simply involved putting up posts and wires and buying new trains. In fact, Mr. Foulkes explained, there was much more to it.

A major step towards electrification in East Anglia was track rationalisation. Some sidings and connections were never used and so layouts could be simplified. Diamond crossovers were not favoured, because of high maintenance costs. He showed by diagrams how the old track layout at Cambridge, which had "just grown through the ages", had been reduced by six track miles, with 80 point ends being eliminated, and a layout which enabled trains and stock to move more simply and efficiently had been introduced. Similar rationalisation was planned for Ipswich and Norwich.

In Ipswich Tunnel, it was planned to lay slab track - a composite floor with the rail fixed into the concrete - which would be easier to maintain and help solve clearance problems. At Trowse, it was planned to rebuild the swing bridge as a single-track structure, since the existing one was life-expired.

Electrification also entailed resignalling, and main signalling centres were being established at Cambridge and Colchester, with the elimination of many old signal boxes with frames that were often 75 years old. "We're really into computer-controlled signalling now," said Mr. Foulkes as he also showed a photo of Cambridge's new box complete with carpet on the floor.

BR were also taking advantage of resignalling to automate as many level crossings as possible - up to 40 on the main lines (assuming that the Cambridge electrification went ahead as well as the Norwich scheme.)

They were aiming for 100 mph top speeds on the Norwich line - which meant in some cases track re-alignment. Work was in hand to slew the track by up to 17 feet at Heedham Market.

Bridge reconstruction was one of the biggest items of expenditure in the scheme, with 54 needing to be tackled on the Norwich line. 11 of these had been completed and another 16 were in hand. The need to keep roads and the railway in use as far as possible, while executing these civil engineering tasks, showed the complexity of BR's task. Sometimes, temporary bridges had to be built for farmers. Major road bridges, especially in towns, were often also used for water pipes, gas pipes etc. and sometimes, as at Ipswich Road, Colchester, it was best to build a separate service bridge, which could be used by pedestrians, alongside the road bridge.

Other work in hand included some modification to the canopies at Ipswich and Stowmarket station and provision of bell gauges at occupation crossings used by farmers; while refurbishment of the fleet of class 86 locomotives destined for the scheme had just started.

Mr. Foulkes was confident that BR would meet their deadlines for completion of the scheme. They had sent back the Cambridge electrification proposals to the Department of Transport with additional figures and were still having meetings with them.

After answering further questions, Mr. Foulkes was thanked for a most enlightening talk by RDS Branch Vice-Chairman Charles Taylor, and this was endorsed by applause from all present.



Saturday February 4th: RDS Branches & Areas Conference at the Queen's Hall, Derby, 11.00 a.m. - 4.30 p.m. This conference will discuss the functioning of RDS Branches and Areas throughout the country, how they can learn from each other and how they can best campaign over the coming year. Any member interested in attending should contact the Branch Secretary. It is a useful opportunity to compare notes with members from other parts of the country.

Saturday February 11th: West Norfolk Public Transport Users Annual General Meeting at the Ex-Servicemen's Club, Paradise Road, Downham Market, 2.45 pm. From Downham Market station, walk along the main road into the town centre and take the second turning on the left. RDS members are very welcome to attend this meeting, which will discuss the prospects for rail and bus users in West Norfolk.

Monday February 13th: East Norfolk Travellers' Association Public Meeting on THE FUTURE OF THE REEDHAM - YARMOUTH LINK at Reedham village school, 7.15 p.m. The school is at the eastern end of the village, overlooking the railway bridge across the River Yare. This public meeting has been called to consider the threat to the Reedham - Yarmouth line, which could be proposed for closure in the not-too-distant future. The MPs for Yarmouth and Mid Norfolk have been invited to attend the meeting and speak.

Saturday February 25th: RDS EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year's AGM is being held in the Lecture Room of the Central Library, Lowestoft, starting at 2.00 p.m.

It is an opportunity to see England's most easterly town without the crowds of holidaymakers - and to assess what RDS has achieved in East Anglia over the past year before mapping out our course for the coming year.

The Library is in Clapham Road, less than 10 minutes' walk from the station. Leave the station by the main exit, turn right then second left up the pedestrianised shopping street. Turn left at W.H.Smiths and the Library is 100 yards further, on your right.

The Agenda will be:

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. Minutes of 1983 AGM and Matters Arising.
3. Any Urgent Correspondence.
4. Treasurer's Report and Balance Sheet.
5. Secretary's Report.
6. Chairman's Address
7. Election of Officers and Committee. (Nominations for Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and 6 other committee members should be in the Secretary's hands by February 18th.)
8. Appointment of Hon. Auditor.
9. Notices of Motion. (In writing, by the start of meeting)
10. Forthcoming Activities.
11. Any Other Business.

After a short break (during which you can use the Library's coffee bar) we shall welcome as guest speaker Don Mathew, National Transport Campaigner of Friends of the Earth. RDS has co-operated fruitfully with Friends of the Earth on a number of issues (anti-Serpell petition, bus cuts, cycles on trains etc.), and we look forward to hearing from Mr. Mathew on the issues and challenges facing transport and the environment in the coming period.

Saturday March 10th: RDS National Committee Meeting.

Monday March 19th: Breckland Line Users' Association committee meeting, Attleborough. Details from Secretary.

Saturday March 24th: Sixth National Conference of Rail Users' Groups, organised by RDS at University College, London. Guest speaker: David Mitchell MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Department of Transport. Local rail users' groups should by now have received invitations. There will probably be a few spare places for individual RDS members to attend, and anyone interested should contact the Branch Secretary.

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING SPECIALS

Nearly a thousand people took to the East Anglian rails to go Christmas shopping on two more special trains.

On Saturday November 19th, our corporate member the North East Norfolk Travellers' Association ran its third Inter-City train of the year from North Walsham. This time, passengers from the northern end of the line were also able to use the special, travelling by scheduled DMU from Sheringham. In the evening, BR re-timed the last train of the day so that it would connect off the special.

After picking up over 300 passengers off the branch, a further hundred at Norwich and a small group at Diss, the train ran non-stop to Liverpool Street, arriving in time for passengers to have 7 hours in London.

The formation of the train included a Travellers' Fare buffet; but the RDS stewards, under Ray Davies' energetic leadership, were kept busy selling morning newspapers and raffle tickets. RDS pens and copies of Rail Development News were also sold.

Two weeks later saw 550 people travelling from Hertford North and all stations to Cambridge to York on an RDS special which proved so popular that it was fully booked some two weeks in advance.

It was a memorable venture - to put it mildly - beginning around 4.00 a.m. with Mike Hadley and Leslie Freitag on the platform at Letchworth "flagging down" an empty carriage stock working to Kings Cross from the nearby depot. Frost lay deep and crisp and even on the ground and on the special train as our two hardy souls boarded it at Kings Cross, whence it left at 05.30.

Leslie and Mike were not, of course, engaging in these nocturnal rail ramblings just for the fun of it - there were cases of food, drink and leaflets to be loaded on the special, a headboard to be fixed to the class 47 locomotive and labels to be stuck on carriage windows.

Over a hundred passengers were picked up at Hertford and Watton-at-Stone; and more at each platform from modern, functional Stevenage to tiny, rural, ex-Creat Eastern Foxton as our train headed eastwards towards the rising sun in a cold, pale blue December sky.

Cambridge was left behind at 06.30, after which the serving of ploughman's lunches was begun by the team of stewards and caterers, working from the guard's compartment at the front of the train. 400 passengers had ordered meals in advance, and by the time we were passing March, some parts of the trains began to smell distinctly of pickled onions.

Arrival at York was punctual at eleven o'clock and passengers had over six hours in the city - which was receiving at least four other excursions on that day. The arrival of the train in York station in the early evening was unfortunately somewhat delayed, which meant that the catering staff were not able to prepare the plates of turkey salad etc. before the passengers boarded. Soon the train was a hive of activity, however, and remained so all the way back, with a to-ing and fro-ing of raffle prizes, BR and RDS leaflets, bottles of wine, trays of salads and gâteaux...

Our member Mike Hadley in particular is to be congratulated for masterminding this excursion; which showed again that there is a ready market for rail travel with convenient arrangements at an attractive price; and showed some of the people of Great Northern Outer Suburbia that London is not the only destination which they can reach by rail!

EXHIBITION

The RDS East Anglian Branch exhibition is being constantly updated and enlarged - most recent additions including photographs of the sponsored cycle ride to Watton-at-Stone in June last year. Mr. L.J. Buckingham, who is in charge of the material, is always pleased to receive suitable photos, press cuttings, documents etc. for inclusion; and to book the exhibition for showing at libraries, fêtes etc. Please write to him at 25 Drury Road, Colchester CO2 7UY. (The exhibition material will be used in early June as part of the East Suffolk Line anniversary events.)

EAST ANGLIA BY RAIL

Good progress has been made with this new RDS book (see last issue) and April 7th has been set as publication date. The many members who have contributed articles and photographs have shown a knowledge and enthusiasm which should result in an interesting, stimulating and attractive rail guide to our region.

East Anglia By Rail will retail at £1-50; but for members only, who order before March 31st, it is available at £1-20 including postage. You can also order bulk supplies (minimum of ten) at £1 - which will be the rate to the book trade. Send your order, with money to Peter Lawrence, 75 Marlpit Lane, Norwich, NR5 8XN.

Mr. Lawrence would also like to receive names and addresses of bookshops and indeed other retail outlets to whom we can offer the book. Any member willing to visit bookshops in his/her area, with copies of the book, should also inform Mr. Lawrence.

Thanks to those who have ordered already and to those who have loaned the Branch money. This will be our biggest publication so far and should make an impact in promoting rail travel and the railways' case this coming summer. But it does mean that the Society will be considerably in debt during the spring, until sales money comes in - so we hope as many members as possible will buy it and help to promote it.

A VOICE FOR RAIL USERS

A more specialised RDS publication is also due to roll off the presses in early February. A Voice for Rail Users is being published by the Society at national level. Its 28 pages contain a distillation of the experiences of many RDS and users' group members on such matters as adopting a station, running a special train, putting its views to a local authority, celebrating a line's anniversary. The book is based on the Society's Guide for Rail Users' Groups, first published in 1978, but is completely revised and much expanded and updated. It should be part of every active rail campaigner's ammunition.

A Voice for Rail Users costs 60p plus 15p postage, from the Branch Secretary or direct from the national Sales Officer, Mr. F.J. Hastilow, 21 Norfolk Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B75 6SQ.

DEREHAM LINE NEWS:

Following closure and lifting of the public delivery siding at Dereham in the autumn, freight traffic on the line now consists only of fertilizer to UKF at Dereham and grain from Seamans of North Elmham. These traffics seem secure, however, for the foreseeable future, and Seamans have recently renewed a 10-year contract with BR.

Our corporate member the Wymondham - Dereham Rail Action Committee has been in correspondence with BR over the possibility of UKF acting as forwarding agents for any other major freight business that could be attracted.

At WyDRAC's AGM on November 26th, Mr. George Heywood was re-elected Chairman and Mr. Colin Newman Treasurer. Mr. Chris Pearson (75 Crown Road, Dereham, NR20 4AB; Tel: 66479) has taken over as Secretary from Mr. John Hull (WyDRAC's secretary since its formation in 1974), who is now Vice-Chairman.

Immediate activities of the committee include a Jumble Sale at the Old People's Club, Barwells Court, Dereham on Saturday January 21st at 2.00 pm. More helpers and jumble are welcome. Please ring Chris Pearson.

WyDRAC is to make a film about the line, hoping to have it ready by autumn 1984. Any ideas or offers of help to Colin Newman, 2 Ascot Gardens, Dereham.

Meanwhile, at Hardingham station, the Fakenham & Dereham Railway Society has laid 30 yards of track and has a diesel shunter on site. Regular weekend working parties are held to build up what it is hoped will ultimately be an attractive railway centre and which could be open to the public this summer. Anyone willing to help or to donate exhibits, should contact John Hull (Dereham 5154) or write to the F&DRS at Hardingham station.

NO MORE POCKET TIMETABLES (UNLESS YOU HAVE BIG POCKETS!)

BR is no longer producing the handy pocket paytrain guides for East Anglian lines. Instead, a free timetable of 56 pages is now available, for all lines in the region (except Hitchin - Cambridge, which is contained in a similar booklet issued by Kings Cross Division.)

The Divisional Passenger Manager at Liverpool Street has told us that the booklet is cheaper to produce than the individual guides were and that he can economise on two people's jobs in the process.

Certainly, the new booklet has advantages, in that users of a particular service can also have details of all connecting and adjacent services. Previously, for example, users of the East Suffolk line were left in blissful ignorance of services to places like Clacton, Walton and Sudbury!

But the booklet does not slip so easily into a pocket, wallet or handbag and is probably going to be less attractive to holidaymakers. Lack of a simple BR leaflet gives added importance to single-sheet publications like ESTA's East Suffolk Travel, 5000 copies of whose 15th edition are now being distributed.

PROPOSED WHERRY LINE LEAFLET

The East Norfolk Travellers' Association has decided in principle to publish an information leaflet to encourage holidaymakers and local daytrippers to use the Norwich - Yarmouth lines this summer.

Apart from concise details of the train service, the leaflet will outline the attractions of the various places en route (Berncy Arms mill and pub, Strumpshaw Fen bird reserve, trips on the "Regal Lady" etc.) and give suggestions for attractive walks.

Any RDS member with ideas and suggestions (e.g. of a favourite walk or cycle ride in the area), or willing to help with artwork, should contact Steve Hewitt, 103 Century Road, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, NR51 0BS by February 13th.

ADRAC

The Aylsham & District Rail Action Committee was formally disbanded at a meeting on October 25th. Its remaining funds have been divided between the RDS East Anglian Branch, the North East Norfolk Travellers' Association and the Wymondham - Dereham Rail Action Committee. NENTA has subsequently donated its share towards the cost of producing East Anglia By Rail, and the RDS portion will also be used for this purpose; while the share going to WyDRAC will thereby help another Norfolk reopening campaign.

ADRAC was formed eight years ago to press for a restored passenger service on the Wroxham - Aylsham - Reepham section of the Lenwade freight line. The inaugural meeting was attended by 40 people and a lot of careful, patient work was put into the campaign, which included the running, in co-operation with RDS, of four special passenger trains on the line, carrying hundreds of local people. Despite the deaths or moving away of several key members, ADRAC renewed itself and carried on - demonstrating the considerable local concern for improved public transport.

However, the route was virtually dependent on one source of traffic - concrete from Anglia Building Products - and the failure of this firm and BR to reach satisfactory arrangements for the continued carriage of this freight by rail led to the line's closure. It had effectively been disused for over two years - during which time ADRAC explored ways of keeping it in being - was officially closed to freight last year and is now being lifted.

OPPOSING FREIGHT CLOSURES: There is no legal way in which the public can oppose the closure of a freight-only line, or a freight depot. The RDS Reopenings Conference in Kettering on October 29th renewed the call - first made by our Society in 1975, - for such a procedure to be introduced. Our National Vice-Chairman Steve Wilkinson has made an approach to the Private Wagon Owners' Federation to ask if they would support us in a renewal campaign for this.

REOPENINGS CONFERENCE: If you would like a full report of this, please send a stamped addressed envelope to John Page, 34 Hereward Close, Histon, Cambridge, CB4 4LS.

FOR YOUR DIARY (continued)

Saturday April 7th: Launch of EAST ANGLIA BY RAIL. The last Branch meeting agreed that a small reception should be held, to which the local news media and a few guests would be invited. These will include representatives of BR and the East Anglia Tourist Board. Any member with other suggestions as to whom it would be appropriate to invite should send these to the Branch Secretary. The launch will probably be held at Needham Market or Stowmarket.

Saturday April 14th: East Suffolk Travellers' Association AGM, St. Mary's Church Hall, Halesworth, 4.00 p.m. Refreshments provided. Guest speaker from BR. All RDS members welcome.

ESTA GOES OVER THE PENNINES

Owing to popular demand, our corporate member the North East Norfolk Travellers' Association is running TWO special trains from North Walsham to Carlisle, via the scenic Settle route and including a steam trip on the North Valley Railway. The specials will run on Saturday April 21st and May 5th. The trip includes two hours in Haworth, in the Brontë Country, and three in Carlisle, returning via Hexham and Newcastle. The trains will pick up at Worstead, Wroxham, Salhouse, Norwich, Wymondham and Attleborough. The fare is £14 (child £11), inclusive of steam trip. Bookings to Mr. R.B. Davies, 36 Lighthouse Close, Happisburgh, Norwich, NR12 0QE.

Saturday April 28th: RDS National Annual General Meeting at 2.00 p.m. in the Hallings, Ely, Cambs. Members will receive full details with the next issue of Railway Development News.

Saturday May 12th: RDS/WyDRAC Special Train from Dereham and all stations to Wymondham to Newcastle and Edinburgh. The Inter-City special will leave Dereham between 07.00 and 07.30 and allow all afternoon and evening in the Scottish capital - travelling back overnight to arrive in Dereham at about 07.00 on Sunday. Refreshments on board. Fare: £19 maximum - details still to be finalised. Please send SAE to Chris Pearson (address on p.5)

Saturday May 19th: It is proposed to hold a national RDS SPONSORED CYCLE RIDE on this, the last Saturday of National Bike Week, with cyclists converging on a reopened station in each of the five BR Regions. The suggested East Region destination is Ruskington, Lincs., to which Eddie Graves, Clara Zilahi and Trevor Garrod have already declared themselves prepared to cycle. Any member willing to cycle (any distance between 10 and 100 miles!) or to help in any other way, please contact Mr. Garrod.

Saturday June 2nd: RDS Branch Spring Meeting, YMCA, Gonville Place, Cambridge. Guest speaker: Bill Parker, BR's Divisional Manager at Kings Cross.

East Suffolk... 125...

ESTA's plans to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the opening of the East Suffolk Line include: a reception at St. Mark's Church Hall, Oulton Broad on the evening of June 1st (the actual anniversary day); an anniversary brochure; exhibitions in Beccles Library and Woodbridge Museum; and a special train from Lowestoft to Bath and Bristol on Sunday June 10th. Full details in next issue.

OTHER SPECIAL TRAINS:

It is planned to run an RDS special from Wisbech, March, Whittlesea and Peterborough to York and Scarborough on a Sunday in late June or July; and on a Saturday in late June from Colchester, Ipswich and all stations to Kennett to Carlisle or, more probably, Scarborough. In co-operation with the Sudbury-Marks Tey Rail Users' Association, a DMU special from Sudbury to Sheringham is planned for Sunday July 1st; while ESTA plans a DMU special from the East Suffolk Line to Clacton on Sunday July 22nd. It is also planned to run at least one special from stations on the Cambridge - Hitchin line this summer.

CARNIVALS AND FETES: These often provide a good opportunity to promote RDS, users' groups and rail travel in general. ESTA (Felixstowe) will be having a stall at Trimley Carnival in July. RDS is prepared to enter a float at Histon Feast if sufficient volunteers come forward to help. Please contact the Branch Chairman.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Welcome to more new members:

1. D.J. and J.S. Atkinson, 12 Angle Lane, Shepreth, Royston, Herts, SG8 6QJ.
2. Sandy Transport Society, 5 Laburnum Road, Sandy, Beds.
3. Mrs. J. Coombes, 25 Temple Road, Ipswich, IP3 8A
4. Mr. M. J. Lewis, 34 High Street, Great Barford, Bedford, MK44 3JH.
5. Mr. P. Fletcher, 5 Ely Road, Ipswich, IP4 3BY.
6. Mr. D. E. Mathew, 38 Reeve Street, Lowestoft, Suffolk.
7. Miss J. Barham, Level 6, Haston House, New Addenbrookes Hospital, Cambridge
8. Mr. M. R. Ballard, Station Farm, Bentley, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP9 2DB.

Congratulations to Mr. R. J. Wakefield and Miss J. Barham on the recent announcement of their engagement.

We also welcome to the East Anglian Branch Mr. B. D. S. Chaplin, who has moved from Northamptonshire to The Cottage, The Green, Monk Soham, Woodbridge, Suffolk.

Brian Chaplin was Northants Area Representative of RDS for nearly two years, during which time the Society's membership and influence in that county grew rapidly. He was particularly active in the campaign for a restored passenger service to Corby, which is being pursued now by the other RDS members in that area. We wish Brian well in his new job and, when he has settled in, look forward to the benefit of his experience in our local campaigns.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

Thanks to the 70 members who filled in and returned the questionnaire sent out with the last "Rail East." Much useful information was given and a full report has now been completed and is available, to members only, from the Branch Secretary (SAE appreciated)

Meanwhile, here are some major findings of the survey: 20 members out of 70 (or 28%) are in their thirties; followed by 13 or 14 each in their twenties, forties or sixties - but only 2 out of 70 are in their fifties! 34% voted Alliance in the last General Election, 26% Labour and 20% Conservative; 2% Ecology; only 6 members did not vote and 5 did not reply.

Some 20% of our members are pensioners; 25% office workers; 18% in education; 11% described themselves as manual workers and 7% in agriculture or horticulture. 4% work for BR; 5% work in other forms of transport.

TEN YEARS AGO: (From Branch Newsletter no. 9, March 1974)

The East Anglian Branch AGM, held in Norwich on January 26th, 1974, passed a resolution welcoming the recent announcement of greater Government investment, over a longer period, in BR, especially in view of the impending need to replace local paytrain stock; but expressing concern at what effect threatened cuts in public spending would have on the railways.

Branch membership stood at 47 (It now stands at 230), of whom 10 had joined during 1973.

Following the oil crisis at the end of 1973, the Branch had created a lot of interest with its call for 4 lines and 8 stations on existing passenger routes in East Anglia to be reopened.

BUS CUTS: Our member Simon Norton has suggested the formation of an organisation in East Anglia to campaign against bus cuts and for improved cross-country bus links. Any member interested in helping, please contact him direct at 6 Hertford Street, Cambridge.

RAILWAY PICTURES: Our member Russell Whipps is offering attractive reproduction oil paintings of locomotives, framed, for sale at £10 each - proceeds to Branch funds. Contact him at 42 Derby Road, Ipswich, IP3 8DN (Tel: 73366)

BACK ISSUES of this newsletter are available from Branch Secretary. Please send postage donation and specify which issue(s) or year(s).