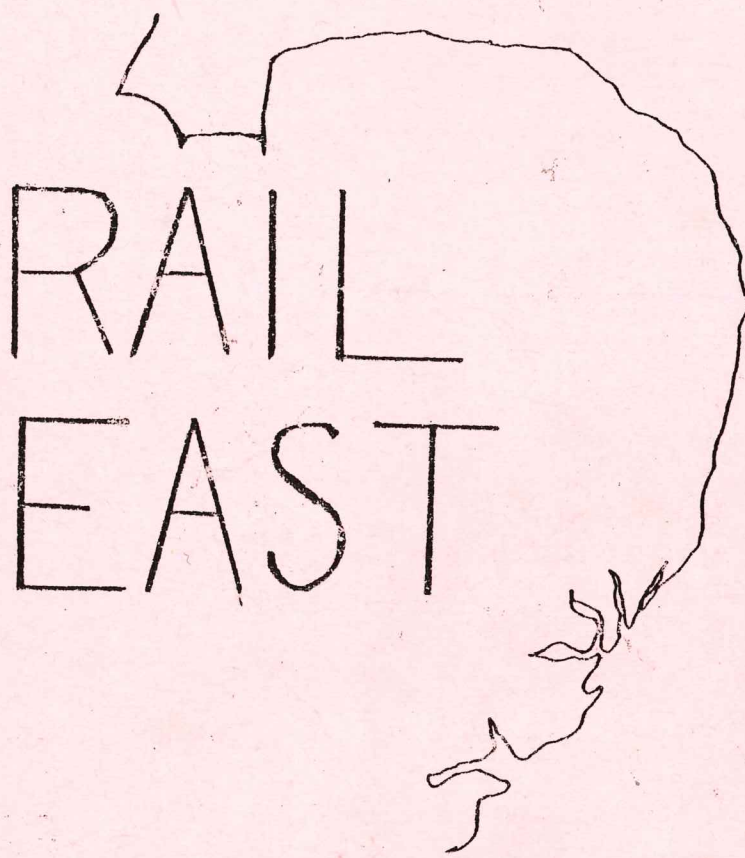




RAIL EAST

Newsletter of the
East Anglian Branch

A Voice for Rail Users

RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY

EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH

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CB4 4LS (Tel: 3877)

John Brodribb, 12 Kemp's Lane, Beccles, Suffolk,
NR34 9XA (Tel: 716961)

The Printing & Publications Sub-committee consists of Messrs. Roper and Brodribb, plus Louis Hipperson and Anthony Barfield, with the Secretary and Chairman ex-officio.

Mr. Buckingham is responsible for the Branch exhibition material and is always pleased to receive offers of photos, maps, documents etc. for inclusion, and suggestions of places where it can be displayed.

Mr. Brodribb is also Branch Photographic Officer, and is pleased to hear from members with suitable photographs that could be used to illustrate Branch publications.

Mr. Hipperson is also Membership Secretary for the Branch, and keeps up-to-date records of paid-up members, addresses etc. He lives at 16 Marsh View, Beccles, Suffolk, NR34 9RT (Tel: 713910)

The RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY is a national, independent, voluntary body representing rail users and campaigning for the retention, modernisation and greater use of rail transport for both passengers and freight. It has twelve Branches throughout Great Britain.

The East Anglian Branch covers all of Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, plus North Essex (as far south as Kelvedon and Bishopstortford), North Hertfordshire (as far south as Hitchin) and East Bedfordshire (Arlesey, Biggleswade, Sandy).

TWO NORFOLK ROADS TO RAIL

ECCLES ROAD and ROUGHTON ROAD are two Norfolk stations which have seen significant rail developments this summer.

Junior Transport Minister David Mitchell, MP, visited Eccles Road by special train on 10 July to open a new £700,000 rail link connecting the grain store of Richard Johnstone Ltd. to the Breckland Line. Polybulk wagons can now be seen on this, East Anglia's newest railway, which will ultimately reduce lorry movements on our roads by 7500 a year.

RDS supported this project, which received a Government grant of £348,000, and our Branch Chairman Steve Wilkinson was among those invited to the opening.

On 20 May, Roughton Road Halt, on the southern outskirts of Cromer, opened for business. This sturdily built platform with access steps is in an idyllic setting, surrounded by woods and within easy walking distance of attractive residential areas. It was built on the initiative of North Norfolk District Council, as a job creation scheme, and should have been completed several months ago. However, it is at last open - nearly ten years after our Society started campaigning for a halt on this section of line.

SPECIAL TRAINS AROUND OUR REGION

The 1985 season made a good start on Easter Saturday, when our corporate member the North East Norfolk Travellers' Association ran the first of its series of six special trains. Locomotive 47 487 hauled 370 passengers from North Walsham and other Norfolk stations to Harrogate and York - turning some heads on the way as she was freshly painted in BR's new Inter-City livery.

On 20 April and 4 May, two more NENTA specials left North Walsham for the Settle-Carlisle and West Highland Lines respectively, each carrying 500 passengers. As NENTA says in its new slogan, perhaps improving on BR - "We're going there".

The East Suffolk Travellers' Association also "went there" on 11 May, when 480 passengers filled the first loco-hauled passenger train over the East Suffolk Line for a year. Nearly a quarter of the passengers were from Lowestoft and Oulton Broad - undeterred by the fact that they would have a relatively long ride to York via Ipswich, picking up at each East Suffolk Line station.

On Sunday 30 June, the RDS special "Derbyshire Adventurer" carried 330 people from Colchester, Ipswich and St. Edmunds Line stations to the Matlock branch. Hauled by Class 47 locomotive "Great Eastern", with Stephen Binks's headboard on the front, we had a well turned out set of

coaches in the new Inter-City livery, with public address system. This factor, coupled with a smooth and largely punctual run, made a good impression on passengers, and the day was marred only by an hour or so of heavy rain at Matlock. Thanks to all those members who helped by distributing leaflets and selling tickets; and, on the day, by acting as stewards on the train - which was a good advert, both for BR and for our Society.

On 18 June, a different sort of charter train used the Broads Line. The "Orient Express" was chartered by the Post Office as part of events to mark the launch of new "Safety at Sea" stamps, and ran from Liverpool Street to Cromer. A locomotive was provided at either end - making this the first loco-hauled passenger train into Cromer (which has no run-round facilities now) since the 1960s, and possibly setting a useful precedent.

Unfortunately, the RDS/WyDRAC special from Dereham to Llandudno, planned for 18 May, had to be cancelled. We had 100 firm bookings, but were unable to risk running the train at a substantial loss. This train was thus a victim of the unrealistically high quotations being given by BR earlier in the year - but they have since then reduced their charges, and we are confident of being able to run a successful excursion from the freight-only Dereham line on 28 September (see p.4).

BR MANAGER ADDRESSES RDS SPRING MEETING

The speaker at our Spring Meeting in Ipswich on 8 June was to have been BR's Assistant General Manager, Eastern Region, John Ellis - but a few weeks previously he was moved to a new post on the Southern Region, and in his place we were pleased to welcome Theo Steel, London & South East Passenger Manager, based at Liverpool Street. He has direct responsibility for the main line services in our region, plus Essex commuter lines. \

After discussion of Branch business, the 40 members present heard a lively and very informative talk by Mr Steel on BR's future plans for these services. This sector had a better financial performance than many others on BR, being a growth area but with less infrastructure to maintain than some others. This did, however, cause operational problems and reduced flexibility.

Mr Steel mentioned a number of schemes planned or underway to improve main line stations: work had started on a new car park at Witham, and authority had been given for an additional 150 parking spaces at Manningtree; while Colchester was to receive new platform indicators, and £300,000 had been spent on improvements to Ipswich station.

He was "quite pleased" with the way that the new electric timetable had settled down between London and Ipswich, and hoped to run some peak-hour electrics through to Stowmarket later in the summer, once resignalling was complete. It was also hoped to reach Harwich before the target date of May 1986, if possible to coincide with the introduction of a new large Dutch boat on the Hook route.

On the cross-country routes, Mr Steel described as "success stories" the European boat train to Glasgow and the new Harwich-Wolverhampton service. BR was still endeavouring to improve links between East Anglia and the North-West, with a proposed Harwich-Blackpool train in 1986, and extension of one of the Norwich-Birmingham trains to Liverpool.

On the "East Coast" Main Line, electrification masts had now reached north of Arlesey, and BR envisaged an hourly electric multiple unit service in 1987, non-stop from Kings Cross to Stevenage, then all stations to Peterborough.

On the other main electrification scheme in our region (Bishops Stortford-Cambridge), work was being done mainly at night; though from October, an additional ten minutes would be built into the timetables of Cambridge-London trains, while engineering work went on during the day. BR ultimately envisaged an hourly 55-minute run to Cambridge, locomotive-hauled, stopping only at Audley End and possibly Whittlesford, with trains every two hours continuing through to Kings Lynn.

Looking further ahead, Mr Steel added: "I make no secret of the fact that in the longer term - say five years - I'd be looking to get the wires up north of Cambridge, where there are not many overbridges, and ideally right through to Lynn".

For DHU services in East Anglia, he hoped that new Metro Cammell or Sprinter trains would be available in October 1987. He suggested that Sprinters, perhaps with superior interior appointments, could be used on the Norwich-Birmingham service, and also run in and out of Ely. By that time, all the old Type 1 electric multiple units in Essex should be replaced by Class 310s being cascaded from the Midland Region.

In the new timetable, it was possible for passengers from Bury St. Edmunds to get to London by 0900, thanks to better connections at Cambridge. Stansted Airport should also generate extra traffic on the Cambridge main line, but he questioned whether there was as yet sufficient traffic to justify a direct rail link into it [Mr Steel was speaking before the recent decision by Parliament to allow Stansted expansion - Ed.]. BR were experimenting with bus links from the airport to railheads. If a direct rail link were built, he was confident that, for the rest of this century, a rebuilt Liverpool Street station, with longer platforms, could cope with it.

BR had come in for much criticism for bad time-keeping during the winter. Mr Steel outlined some of the causes of this, and said that he was in no way complacent about it; but all transport operators had had problems during the severe weather, and the Dutch railways, using very similar equipment to ours, had had a worse time than we had had.

Another problem was that more and more freight traffic needed to be pathed along the main line, as did up to 13 boat trains from Parkeston on some days. In fact, the Shenfield-Colchester section was probably carrying on average 50% more trains each day than it was ten years ago.

In a wide-ranging question and answer session, Mr Steel ruled out bi-directional working on the Colchester main line, but said that better signalled cross-overs could improve the traffic flow.

Did not St.Neots, now the third largest town in Cambridgeshire, deserve a better service? It would get direct electric trains to Kings Cross in 1987, said Mr Steel, and these could eventually be non-stop if the business built up sufficiently.

Colchester had probably the biggest car park on BR, and its problems of congestion might be eased by diverting some of the park-and-ride business to other main-line stations.

Computerised coaching stock records were enabling extra coaches to be used elsewhere - could not this make possible the reinstatement of the Lowestoft-London through service? Mr Steel thought a high-quality DMU service along the East Suffolk Line would be preferable.

Mr Steel agreed to look into what one member described as a "comic opera" situation at Chivers crossing between Ely and Thetford, where all trains had to slow to 35 mph in case lorry-drivers did not stop at the crossing.

On Royston-Cambridge electrification, he reminded members of the Department of Transport's contention that the traffic presently being carried in 2-car DMUs would not justify 4-car EMUs. However, if DMUs ultimately had to come from a depot further away than Cambridge, the cost of an electric service might become relatively more attractive. He agreed that there might also be a case for BR building a fleet of 2-car or 3-car EMUs for less heavily used local electric services.

Pressure of time brought this meeting to a close, and Geoffrey Roper put a motion of thanks to Mr Steel which was heartily endorsed by all present.

FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 3 August: RAILWAYMANIA, Princes Theatre, Clacton, 1030-1700. RDS will have a stall at this popular local event. If you can help, even if only for a short time, please contact Committee Member Lewis Buckingham.

Saturday 21 September: RDS BRANCH AUTUMN MEETING in the Assembly House, Theatre Street, NORWICH, starting at 1400. The first half of the meeting will be devoted to Branch business: the second half to a talk on the current transport scene by our guest speaker, SUSAN HOYLE (Executive Director, Transport 2000).

Saturday 28 September: RDS/WyDRAC SPECIAL TRAIN from Dereham (dep. 0825 approx.) to Ely and Cambridge for nearly seven hours' sightseeing and shopping. Fare: £4.99 (children £3.99). Details and bookings: John Hull, Cydonia Cottage, Station Road, Yaxham, Dereham, Norfolk, NR19 1RD (tel.5154). Please enclose SAE.

Thursday 24 October: NENTA 10th Anniversary AGM, W.I.Hall, Cromer, 1900.

NENTA RAILTOURS from North Walsham and the usual Norfolk stations, plus Ely and/or March and Peterborough to Blackpool (14 September), Aberystwyth (28 September), Portsmouth (19 October). Details are enclosed for members in the relevant areas. See NENTA advert. on back cover.

RDS AND THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Steve Wilkinson writes: During the run-up to the recent elections, the Conservative Party came under considerable fire from many quarters, not least from its own supporters, because of its resurrection of the so-called "Railway Road".

Despite pleading poverty for public transport, hospitals, education, etc., some councillors plucked the sum of £30,000,000 out of the air, plus £40,000 for a feasibility study, to build a road alongside, and in places actually on the railway tracks around Cambridge!

This plan was discussed 20 years ago, and was evidently not thrown away but hidden for future use. What the illustrious councillors forgot was that, over the years, housing and industrial development had taken place along the route, a multi-million pound signal-box had been installed at Cambridge and, if the plan were to become reality, much destruction and compensation would be inevitable.

One piece of election literature actually claimed that the St.Ives line was closing anyway! This faux-pas prompted an urgent meeting of ASLEF men at Cambridge (attended by RDS members Steve Wilkinson and Peter Wakefield), and as a result the Area Manager wrote a denial in the local press and all local staff had a note in their pay packets denying the County Council scaremongering.

Over the years, our Branch of RDS has consistently campaigned for the re-opening of the St.Ives line to passenger services. This latest political publicity stunt gave us another opportunity to do so. In a very short time indeed, the two above-mentioned members plus Geoffrey Roper produced a 14-page response entitled The Rail Alternative.

This document pointed out the case for helping alleviate some of the traffic problems in Cambridge by re-opening (and electrifying) the St.Ives line, plus some other park-and-ride schemes around the city.

Copies were sent to all election candidates in the areas that would be affected by the Tory plan, to the City and County Councils, St.Ives Town Council and the various Parish Councils, plus other interested parties including three MPs.

There was no response from any Conservative candidate - only a rather pathetic letter from the former Tory leader of the Council some time after she lost control of it - and nothing from the Labour candidates either, but the response from Alliance candidates was excellent. Twelve of them wrote

in support, of which eight were elected. Protracted correspondence took place with the City of Cambridge Chamber of Commerce, and we were pleasantly surprised at the comments we received. Perhaps the recent census figures which we quoted, revealing a catchment area of over 70,000 people (not including two large military bases) surprised some people! Even BR themselves expressed surprise at this revelation. Certainly, the idea of park-and-ride is now being studied by the County Council and BR, the most likely place being Whittlesford, plus expansion of car-parking at Audley End.

Issuing the report was a fairly costly exercise, for which the Branch had not budgeted, but it was worth the effort and expense. Cambs. County Council is, like many others, now a "hung" council, with Liberal & SDP councillors holding the balance of power - so we haven't seen the end of the fight yet!

Incidentally, the Chairman of the Transportation Committee lost his seat after holding it for many years. As far as RDS was concerned, this was the best bit of news since Anglia electrification was announced! The gentleman concerned was never seen on a train (or bus), and it was apparently only our threat to approach the Ombudsman in 1982 that made him take any notice of us at all.

ARLESEY STATION REOPENING CAMPAIGN

John Tizard reports: "The Arlesey station survey has now been completed. The aim was 100% coverage in Arlesey and Henlow, with tapering off as the radius from Arlesey increased. We were very fortunate with the number of willing volunteers who conducted the survey."

"Bedfordshire County Surveyor's Department is now engaged in analysis of the returns and it is hoped that we shall have the findings before mid-July. The results and report will probably not now go to the County's Environmental Services Committee until September, having been first to a Transport Advisory Group, though 18 July is still a possibility. British Rail have accepted this timetable. From what I have seen and heard about the survey, the general public reaction is very favourable."

EAST SUFFOLK TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION

AGM

The AGM of our corporate member ESTA was held in Saxmundham on 27 April. Officers elected were: Chairman - Albert Godfrey; Vice-Chairman - Sheila Malham; Secretary - John Brodribb; Treasurer - Mike Farahar; Membership Secretary - Geoffrey Cutting; Publicity Officer - Trevor Garrod; plus a Committee of 15 drawn from practically all places served by the line.

Retiring Secretary Arthur Haddingham was presented with a framed picture of a steam train reaching the top of Beccles Bank, in recognition

of his many years of service to the Association.

The first guest speaker was Mike Watson, Secretary of the Heart of Wales Line Travellers' Association, who showed slides of this scenic route and outlined the activities of his 900-strong Association. These included political pressure, station adoptions and running a volunteer buffet on certain trains in the summer.

The line would never make a profit in strict commercial terms, and so it could be seen as always under some threat. However, its future looked more secure after a 20% increase in revenue in 1984; the announcement of a £750,000 investment scheme including contributions from local authorities; and a relaxation of the previous ban on main-line excursions.

Mr Watson's Association, together with many other bodies including RDS, had voiced strong opposition to a recent Welsh Office Green Paper which advocated handing over the running of such lines to the County Councils, and this idea seemed to have "died a death", at least for the time being. It had been feared that such a scheme might be tried out on Wales and then extended to England.

The second speaker, BR Area Passenger Manager Stephen Rattue, explained timetable changes on the East Suffolk Line. The 1715 from Ipswich was terminating at Halesworth for operational reasons: track was now being singled north of Halesworth, but once the Beccles loop was completed, this train could again run through to Lowestoft. An extra train from Saxmundham to Ipswich at 0856 was being introduced as an experiment; and radio signalling should now be introduced on the entire line in November or December.

College traffic on the line was now worth £75,000 a year to BR, and they could not afford to ignore it when planning the timetable. BR were now starting to plan the 1986-87 timetable, and would look at evidence produced by ESTA of the demand for additional trains.

Survey

In late May and early June, members of ESTA conducted a survey on the trains between Lowestoft and Ipswich, using a questionnaire approved by BR. Passengers were asked how often they used the line, between which stations and for what reasons; also whether and how often they would use an extra train leaving Ipswich about 2200; or one leaving Lowestoft at about the same time; and whether they would use a Sunday morning service in the winter. The results of the survey, to which 1500 passengers responded, are now being analysed.

STOP PRESS

THE BRANCH SECRETARY WILL BE ON HOLIDAY AUGUST 4TH - 15TH.

THE BRANCH WINTER MEETING WILL BE AT CAMBRIDGE ON SATURDAY DECEMBER 7TH ; THE BRANCH AGM WILL BE AT PETERBOROUGH, SATURDAY FEBRUARY 22ND

SAT

OBITUARIES

Mrs D.W.Briscoe

It is with great regret that we record the death of Mrs Briscoe, a member of both RDS and one of its affiliated bodies, the East Suffolk Travellers' Association. For much of its existence, Mrs Briscoe had served on the Committee of ESTA, to which she had made a notable contribution. At a memorial service held in Seckford Chapel, Woodbridge, on 22 June, RDS was represented by Louis Hipperson. We extend our deepest sympathy to Mrs Briscoe's husband, Dr A.Daly Briscoe, and family.

LGH

Gerard Fiennes, OBE

The railway community suffered a major loss at the end of May with death of Mr Gerard Fiennes, OBE, President of our corporate member the East Suffolk Travellers' Association.

Gerry Fiennes was a remarkable character who had worked his way up through the ranks of LNER and subsequently BR management, becoming General Manager, Eastern Region, in the mid-1960s, but then retiring with the publication of his book I tried to run a railway.

He was a clever, shrewd man with a keen sense of humour, but with no time for waffle or humbug - not always easy to get to know, but those who did were impressed by his sincerity and humanity. In his 77th year, he was still working actively with us younger members in our campaign to try to retain the Lowestoft-London through train; and in the last few months of his life he was able to see coming to fruition the East Suffolk modernisation scheme for which he sowed the seeds nearly two decades ago.

TJG

SPONSORED CYCLE RIDE

East Anglian Branch members Trevor Garrod and Clara Zilahi cycled from Peterborough to Corby on Sunday 12 May as part of National Bike Week, joining a party (in more senses than one) of 20 local members and supporters (including the Chairman of Corby District Council) on the one remaining platform at this Northamptonshire town which RDS is campaigning to have restored to the passenger network.

Clara pedalled back to Peterborough and raised £40.20 in sponsor money, which she has sent to help the group fighting to keep the Settle-Carlisle Line. Trevor, accompanied by East Midlands Branch member Dave Fursden, continued to Oakham and raised £66 for the RDS Anti-Closure Fund. Dave also raised £118 for the Scanner Appeal organised by the Northants Evening Telegraph, which gave good publicity to the event - while Clara and her bicycle were featured in the Lynn News & Advertiser.

Thanks to all members who backed the riders in this, our third annual sponsored bicycle ride.

NORFOLK STRUCTURE PLAN: ROLLING FORWARD (sic)

RDS has been invited to submit comments on the updating (or "Roll Forward") of this Plan by 23 September, and will do so in the next few weeks. In the Background and Summary document received from Norfolk County Council, we learn that "within available resources, the County Council will try to maintain a basic level of public transport..."

The Chairman of the Planning & Transportation Committee is now Mr I.D.Coutts - the man who is on record as wanting to close Norwich's rail link with the Midlands. Mr Coutts, whose party now has an overall majority of only four, stated at a recent meeting that he would like to hear from people who thought rail lines should be closed. RDS members who use lines in Norfolk may like to write and tell him why they should be kept open. Mr Coutts's address is 2 The Close, Norwich, NR1 4DJ.

RDS HAS WRITTEN TO:

- # Newly elected County Councillors, informing them of our views
- # Felixstowe Dock & Railway Company, supporting their application for a grant to build a new rail link from Trimley
- # Department of Transport, objecting to the present Acle by-pass plans.

EAST NORFOLK TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION

The 1985 AGM of ENTA was held on 5 June in the Family Room of the White Horse, Brundall - the same room in which the Association was founded on the initiative of our Society eight years ago.

ENTA Chairman James Apsey reviewed the year, highlighting the continued uncertainty over the future of the Reedham-Yarmouth link, on which it was claimed that half a million pounds needed to be spent on maintenance over the next five years. He challenged BR to "come out into the open" and either announce a reprieve for the line for the foreseeable future; or hold public meetings in like Reedham to explain to local people why it was being forced to propose closure. Such meetings could also then be used for constructive discussion on how the local community could help BR with its problems.

Mr Apsey also expressed concern that "more trains stopping at more stations" on the Norwich - Liverpool Street line might cancel out the benefits of electrification for Norfolk passengers; but re-iterated ENTA's own view that the section from Whittingham Junction to Yarmouth should subsequently be electrified.

He applauded BR for accepting ENTA's suggestion of an extra afternoon train from Yarmouth to Norwich via Reedham; but expressed concern about the inconvenient Bank Holiday service.

ENTA has also lodged an objection with the Department of Transport about the proposed route of the Acle by-pass, since it is not yet clear how this will affect access to the station, especially for pedestrians and cyclists.

The Treasurer, Eric Woodward, reported a healthy balance of £433 in the funds, with membership at 102. The following were then elected: Chairman - James Apsey; Vice-Chairman - Steve Topasna; Secretary - Peter Warner; Treasurer - Eric Woodward; Publicity Officer - Steve Hewitt; Committee - Messrs. Taylor, Watts, Stoker, Northcott and Rivers.

EAST NORFOLK & SUFFOLK RAIL ALLIANCE

A meeting of this alliance - which includes RDS and ENTA as well as most local authorities and a number of other interest groups in the Yarmouth area - was held on 17 May. Correspondence was studied from BR, stating that it would have difficulty in meeting the cost of track renewal between Reedham and Yarmouth.

The meeting resolved:

1. To look into the possibility of seeking financial help from the various alliance members for the retention of the line.

2. That any such assistance, if forthcoming, be limited to a contribution towards track renewal costs only (excluding routine maintenance costs) for the lengths of line between Yarmouth, Reedham and Brundall.

3. That in any event the alliance would expect BR to meet at least 75% of the renewal costs involved.

4. That the figures provided by BR for renewal costs be investigated further.

NORWICH-BIRMINGHAM TRAINS: REFRESHING NEWS

Since April, a private caterer has been organising a refreshment trolley on all the Norwich-Birmingham through trains - even on Sundays. Hot and cold drinks, sandwiches, etc. are served to passengers at their seats. Rail East's gastronomic correspondent reports that the five-gallon urn had run out of water on one crowded train between Norwich and Peterborough by the time the trolley reached him - but the facility seems to be much appreciated by passengers. BR have also assured us that the appearance of a DMU on this service in February (see last issue) was a one-off thing; all services are still diagrammed to be loco-hauled.

TEN YEARS AGO: from Branch Newsletter no.15, August 1975

In co-operation with a local resident, the Society sent out a circular to over 50 local people and bodies, setting out the case for reopening Bentley station, between Ipswich and Manningtree, and the practical and financial aspects.

We submitted a 1,100-word report to the planning authorities on the Histon & Impington draft Local Plan, arguing the case for a restored passenger service on the St.Ives line; and our member Steve Wilkinson was invited to a joint meeting of Histon & Impington Parish Councils to discuss the issue.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Welcome to the following new members:

1. Mr A.J.Wallis, 1 Galloway Drive, Little Clacton, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, CO16 9LN;
2. Bromeswell Parish Council. Clerk: Mr J.E.H.Coster, "Kingsbury", 5 St.Edmund's Close, Bromeswell, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP12 2PL;
3. Mr P.Hoskins, 17 Howe Close, Colchester, Essex, CO1 7XD;
4. Mr B.Davey, 88 St.George's Road, Beccles, Suffolk;
5. Mr P.A.Dayless, 5 Kestrel Place, St.Neots, Huntingdon, Cambs., PE19 1TR;
6. Mr & Mrs Fisher, 1 Ash Ground Close, Brantham, Manningtree, Essex, CO11 1TY;
7. Mr S.J.McNae, 16 Pipers Court, Old Foundry Road, Ipswich, IP4 2DU.

Our member Mr E.Chamberlain has moved to 2 Elsworth Place, Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 2RG.

Our member Mr P.Smart is to be congratulated on his appointment as Chairman of Ipswich Borough Council Transport Committee; as is our Chairman, Steve Wilkinson, who is now Chairman of Histon Parish Council.

SUDBURY CAMPAIGNING

Our corporate member the Sudbury - Marks Tey Rail Users' Association, which campaigns constantly to boost off-peak usage of the line, has negotiated another package of Seaside Special fares with BR. Every day until 1 September, there is a return fare of £4.50 from any station on the Sudbury branch to Clacton, Frinton and Walton, with each accompanying person, adult or child, up to a limit of four, paying just £1. Chairman Mike Davies told the local press: "The success of last year's offer went a long way towards ensuring the continuance of a Sunday service on the branch, with some guards reporting takings of £200 to £300 more than the normal service".

FELIXSTOWE CAMPAIGNING

The Felixstowe section of the East Suffolk Travellers' Association organised a leaflet drop with 2000 vouchers from one of the local BR Agents during June. Unfortunately, despite promises by BR at Norwich, and several urgent reminders from ESTA (Felixstowe), no BR leaflets on Anglia Rangers, fares, etc. arrived for distribution. Our member Charles Taylor also comments: "Were it not for our notice-board at Felixstowe station, there would have been no timetable on display there for well over a month. No attempt whatever has been made all year to combat vandalism, despite numerous and urgent pleas and FIRST AID BY US".

FUND-RAISING

Thank you to our member Joan Coombes, who held a stall selling plants and home-made produce at the Ipswich hospice fete this spring and, as a result, was able to give £20 to RDS East Anglian Branch funds.

Another batch of RDS re-use labels with the slogan "Save Fuel - Use Public Transport" has been produced, and sell at 90p per hundred. They are ideal for recycling envelopes, and can be obtained from the Branch Secretary.

SPEAKING

RDS is always pleased to provide speakers on the Society's work and general rail issues to meetings of other organisations. On 5 July, Trevor Garrod did just this at a meeting in Frinton of the North East Essex Railway Association.

LEVEL CROSSING PROTECTION

A useful reply has been received from the Department of Transport Railway Inspectorate to our letter on this issue. After reiterating that motorists can be prosecuted for incorrect behaviour at rail crossings, the Department says it has "no comparable statistics" for accidents at road junctions controlled by traffic lights. The Department has to allocate its limited funds for education campaigns to "those areas of road users which create the greatest problem in terms of road accidents" - and, interestingly, level crossings do not come into this category!

NEW RAILFREIGHT

Mr Wilkinson has written to Richard C.Larkinson (Cambridge) Ltd., expressing our pleasure at the opening of their new premises close to the station, which are now handling scrap metal by rail. The Managing Director replied: "I have received the utmost co-operation from the local Area Manager of British Rail, although...I am keeping my fingers crossed with regard to the planning authorities."

LOCAL RAIL USERS' ORGANISATIONS

These local groups look after the interests of individual lines or stations. Nearly all of them are affiliated to the Railway Development Society.

EAST SUFFOLK TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION. Secretary: Mr. J. Brodribb, 12 Kemps Lane, Beccles, NR34 9XA (Tel: 716961)

EAST SUFFOLK TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION (FELIXSTOWE). Secretary: Mr. C. W. Taylor, 15 Gainsborough Road, Felixstowe, IP11 7HT (Tel: 270612)

EAST NORFOLK TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION. Secretary: Mr. P. C. W. Warner, 27 Clarkson Road, Lingwood, Norwich, NR13 4BA (Tel: 0603 - 713361)

NORTH EAST NORFOLK TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION. Secretary: Mr. R. B. Davies, 36 Lighthouse Close, Happisburgh, Norwich, NR12 0QE (Tel: 0692 - 650715)

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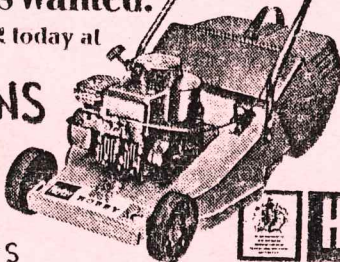
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