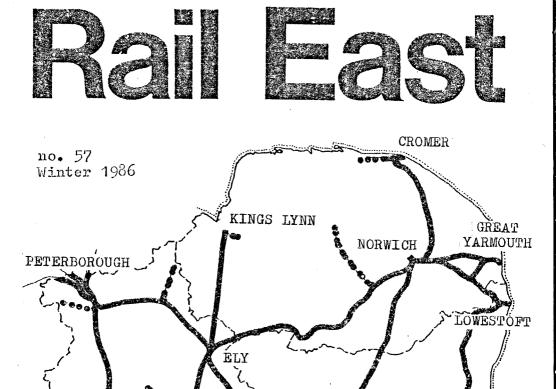
### Railway Development Society





NEWSLETTER OF THE EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH

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A Voice for Rail Users

#### RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH

CHAIRMAN: Steve Wilkinson, 52 Manor Park, Histon, Cambridge, CB4 4JT (tel.: 3981) VICE-CHAIRMAN: Charles Taylor, 15 Gainsborough road, Felixstowe, Suffolk, IP11 7HT (tel.: 270612) SECRETARY: Trever Garred, 15 Clapham road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1RQ (tel.: 81721, or at work Norwich 628181 ext.44) TREASURER: Ian Carter, 1 Oak Green, Halesworth, Suffolk, IP19 8EA (tel.: 3206) MINUTES SECRETARY: Peter Wakefield, 43 High street, Oakington, Cambridge, CB4 5AG (tel.: Histon 3230) SALES OFFICER: Peter Lawrence, 75 Marlpit lane, Norwich, NR5 8XN (tel.: 743446) OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Lewis Buckingham, 25 Drury road. Colchester, Essex, CO2 7UY John Page. 30 Meadowcroft. Stretham, Ely, Cambs, CB6 3JY (tel.: 732) John Brodribb, 12 Kemp's lane,

Beccles, Suffolk, NR34 9XA

The full Committee, elected at the Annual General Meeting, meets at least four times a year. In addition, there is a Printing & Publications Subcommittee, responsible to the main Committee, consisting of John Brodribb, Louis Hipperson and Anthony Barfield, with the Branch Secretary and Chairman ex officio.

(tel.: 716961)

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 the exhibition can be displayed. It can, for example, be shown in its entirety in libraries, or a selection of material can be displayed in Building Society windows, on stalls at fetes, etc.

Mr Brodribb is Branch Photographic Officer, and is anxious to hear from members who have, or are willing to take, suitable photos that could be used to illustrate RDS local and national publications.

Mr Hipperson is Branch Membership Secretary and keeps up-to-date records of paid-up members, addresses, etc. He lives at 16 Harsh 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.

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

#### £52,500 RAISED TO SAVE THREATENED LINE

The Reedham-Yarmouth section of the Norwich-Yarmouth line should now be safe from closure, following an unprecedented response by the local community.

During September and October, members of RDS and the East Norfolk Travellers' Association, together with other bodies represented in the East Norfolk & Suffolk Rail Alliance, worked hard putting the case to councillors and other people for financial help towards British Rail's track renewal costs.

Hard, patient, well-informed lobbying paid off. Commendable donations of £10,000 each from Great Yarmouth Borough and Norwich City Councils were followed by smaller sums from Waveney and Broadland District Councils, and Cantley and Bradwell Parish Councils. The Broads Authority and the Great Yarmouth Port & Haven Commissioners also pledged money. For most of these bodies, it was the first time that they had given money to support local rail services.

This was encouraging news — but perhaps the best news of all was when Norfolk County Council, on 28 October, reversed its Transport Committee's policy and voted to top up the contributions by nearly £20,000 so that our target of £52,500 a year was reached. It was the first time since 1975 that this Council had given any financial support to railways.

It also shows that the extremist views of the Transport Committee Chairman, Ian Coutts (who the previous month had told listeners to Radio Norfolk that 100 miles of railway in the county should be closed) are not shared by most of his colleagues.

Many thanks to all who helped to secure this very significant victory.

#### NENTA AGM

Councillor Coutts was not present in Cromer W.I.Hall on 24 October for the Annual General Meeting of the North East Norfolk Travellers' Association - but over 100 people were.

The hard-working officers of NENTA were re-elected and a healthy membership and financial situation were reported. Trevor Garrod, as one of the founders of NENTA ten years ago, congratulated the Association on its successful campaigning on the Sheringham line since then.

Graham Eccles (BR Area Manager) announced plans to rebuild Cromer Station, for which money was expected to be authorised shortly. He thanked Sheringham W.I. for helping to tidy up that station; and NENTA for providing flowers to decorate Cromer Station. He saw a future for partnership between BR and local bodies in the upkeep of stations. It was

good that Roughton Road halt was now open (at a cost of £50,000) but the delay in building it had "put me off Manpower Services Commission schemes, unless BR can keep a much tighter rein on them".

After showing a video of the "Sprinter", Mr Eccles also said that BR had definite plans for radio signalling on the Sheringham line, but would want at least one year's experience with it on the East Suffolk line before going ahead with these plans.

#### NEW CAMPAIGN ON KINGS LYNN LINE

On Saturday 23 November, some 80 people filled the Lecture Theatre in the Norfolk College at Kings Lynn for an RDS public meeting on the future of the line from Ely.

The main speaker was BR's London & South East Manager, Theo Steel, who spoke about their future plans for the line.

It would "make a lot of sense", he said, to extend the wires northward to Lynn, once the Cambridge electrification scheme was complete in 1987. BR were doing an appraisal of this at present, and it was posssible that electric trains could be running into Lynn in 1989.

"The case for electrification would be helped by greater use of the trains," Mr Steel stressed, adding that feedback from, and promotion by, a local rail users' group would be helpful in this respect.

In the more immediate future, he announced, BR were taking a number of steps to keep and increase their business: some improvements in line speeds north of Cambridge could be expected now that continuous welded rail had been laid; Lynn booking hall was to be improved and there were plans for coach refurbishment; from May, there would be a through train between Lynn and London every 2 hours throughout the day; he hoped to get buffets on all these trains; and there would be an extra train on Sunday evenings.

A wide range of issues was covered in discussion, and a proposal by the RDS Branch Secretary, Trevor Garrod, that a new users' group be set up was carried.

The new group is the FEN LINE USERS' ASSOCIATION, which aims to represent all users, from Ely to Lynn inclusive. It will concern itself with connecting buses, and with rail connections at Ely, as well as with the Lynn trains, and welcomes all users, be they daily commuters, weekenders, shoppers or visitors to the area. It costs £1 to join. The Secretary of FLUA is Anthony Barfield, 91A West Fen road, Ely, Cambs, CB6 3AD. The Chairman is Rodney Collins, 31 Church road, Wimbotsham, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE34 3QG. Mr Collins chaired the inaugural meeting and worked particularly hard to ensure such a good attendance. A Treasurer and seven committee members were elected, and FLUA looks set to take off with a strong team.

#### WNPTU

Consequent upon the formation of FLUA, West Norfolk Public Transport Users have been disbanded and their members encouraged to join the new Association. Part of WNPTU's remaining funds have been donated to FLUA, and the rest to the RDS Anti-Closure Fund.

#### ESTA WOODBRIDGE MEETING, 23 NOVEMBER 1985

As part of the celebrations of its 20th anniversary, the East Suffolk Travellers' Association organised a public meeting at Woodbridge Library on 23 November. This precise date had been chosen to coincide with the introduction of radio signalling on the line, together with the conversion of the level crossings in the area to "open" status, the two events being the culmination of the modernisation programme. The two guest speakers were Steve Wilkinson, Chairman of the East Anglian Branch of RDS, and Graham Eccles, British Rail's Area Manager at Norwich. Russell Whipps had very kindly agreed to provide equipment for showing videos, and the room was already comfortably full 15 minutes before the start of the meeting.

Steve Wilkinson spoke about the new leaflet  $\underline{A}$  new future for local  $\underline{trains}$ , which was launched at the meeting, and which features the East Suffolk line. People continued to arrive, and the room was crammed to overflowing for an interesting and penetrating speech which generated a number of questions.

Graham Eccles had brought two video films, about the new open crossings and the "Sprinter" trains. He spoke about these, and then generally about the line, giving some of the background to the present work. He said that, prior to the new scheme, the line had cost £4 to work for every £1 in revenue, and that he hoped that this could be reduced to £2 for £1. The immediate benefits would be a new 2150 train from Ipswich to Saxmundham, and an increased Sunday service from next May. He conceded that there had been some singling, but that closure was not now likely. Motorists had now benefited from the much shorter waits at level crossings. He expected that all routes in East Anglia, apart from Inter-City services, would be using the new "Sprinter" trains from October 1987.

There was very little money available for station improvements, but he instanced the reopened Melton station as an example of good value. BR expected that communities would take an interest in the facilities, and BR would match them pound for pound, as at Melton. He thought that Women's Institutes and other local bodies could play a part, and quoted staion gardens at Beccles, Thurston, Melton and Brundall as examples. Car parking improvements were in hand at Woodbridge, undertaken jointly with Suffolk Coastal District Council. Otherwise, he saw Brampton as a model of the facilities that BR should provide: a platform, lighting, noticeboards, and a simple shelter. Where toilets existed, the policy is to maintain them until major expense is needed; he compared the facilities offered by BR and by bus companies. Whatever might be thought desirable, BR had to operate according to financial criteria laid down by the Government; the

most pressing of these was the need to reduce the Public Service Obligation grant by 33%.

Answering a variety of questions, Mr Eccles said that few people need connections between bus and train, and that they were not a panacea for public transport problems. Considerable concern was expressed from the floor about open level crossings, and there was a long exchange on the matter. Views for and against were often forcibly argued. In response to a questioner who felt that local stations should be the focus for local transport, Steve Wilkinson stressed that the local councils must be encouraged to act; Mr Eccles instanced Stowmarket as an example of a location where BR and Eastern Counties were to cooperate. On the matter of cycles, he said that "Sprinters" could accommodate them, but that there are now too many at some times of day, leading to complaints. He hoped that the 2150 train from Ipwich to Saxmundham could be extended to Lowestoft if it could be shown to pay. Reopenings of lines to passengers, such as the Leiston branch, would involve provision of extra multiple units, which would have to be financed entirely by revenue from these lines.

Steve Wilkinson called for electrification of at least the shorter local lines, such as Royston-Cambridge, pointing out that oil will have largely run out within the foreseeable future, and that such schemes bring about large increases in revenue. Population changes around some freight lines, especially the St Ives branch, made their reopening an attractive proposition.

In response to a question on connections, Mr Eccles said that the needs of passengers on both the ongoing service and the connecting service had to be considered. In fact, very few connections between the East Suffolk and London were lost at all. He saw no prospect whatsoever of driver—only operation on passenger trains in East Anglia. There were loud calls for the restoration of the through Lowestoft—London train. On timekeeping, headways could be down to 2.25 minutes out of Liverpool Street in the peak hours, and this demanded a high standard of maintenance. Resignalling would help the situation greatly.

Albert Godfrey, the Chairman of ESTA, thanked the speakers for their contributions, and the meeting finished at about 1645.

John Brodribb

#### RDS WINTER MEETING IN CAMBRIDGE

Nearly 30 members attended our meeting on 7 December, when a good discussion took place on many issues, most of which are reported elsewhere in these pages.

Technical problems meant that we were unable to see John Bourn's film, but Russell Whipps gallantly stepped into the breach with some interesting film of the East Suffolk Line before and during modernisation.

#### FOR YOUR DIARY

#### Saturday 22 February: RDS EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Lecture Theatre, City Museum & Art Gallery, Priestgate, PETERBOROUGH, at 1400.

Priestgate is the second street to the south of Queensgate Shopping Centre, less than 10 minutes walk from the railway station.

The Agenda will be:-

- 1. Apologies for absence
- 2. Minutes & matters arising
- 3. Any urgent correspondence
- Reports from Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Sales Officer
- 5. Election of Officers and Committee
- 6. Appointment of Hon. Auditor
- 7. Local reports
- 8. Notices of Motion
- 9. Future activities
- 10. Any other business

(Nominations and motions should be in the hands of the Secretary seven days before the Meeting.)

After a short break, we shall welcome as guest speaker <u>Councillor Michael Evelegh</u>, who is Chairman of Cambridgeshire County Council's Transportation Committee. We look forward to hearing him speak on the transport policies of this Council (which underwent a change of control last May) and to discussing them with him.

#### Saturday 12 April: NENTA special train

North Walsham, Norwich, etc. to Kidderminster for Severn Valley Railway.

#### Saturday 19 April: National RDS AGM at Cardiff.

#### Sunday 25 May: RDS/WyDRAC special train

Dereham to Sheringham. The fare will be £5 (children £3) and it is hoped to run via the Wensum Goods Single Line. The train will pick up at all branch stations, plus Wymondham.

#### RDS East Anglian Branch Spring Meeting

Mr Colin Crawford, Manager of Sealink at Parkeston Quay, has agreed to be guest speaker at this meeting, which is expected to be on a weekday evening in Ipswich during May.

#### Sunday 15 June: ESTA special train

Lowestoft and East Suffolk stations, plus Ipswich and Colchester, to Bournemouth.

Saturday 20 September: RDS Autumn Meeting, Assembly House, Norwich.

#### Saturday 4 October: RDS special train

The SHROPSHIRE ADVENTURER, from Colchester, Ipswich, Bury St.Edmunds and intermediate stations to Birmingham and Kidderminster (for Severn Valley Railway).

#### RDS LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

East Anglian Branch members are very welcome to attend (but not to vote at) this meeting on Saturday 1 February at 1400 in St.Mary-le-Wigford Church Hall, next to Central Station, Lincoln.

Our Lincolnshire colleagues have several issues of common interest with us - including the need for decent connections at Peterborough between our two areas, promised when the March-Spalding line closed but not yet much in evidence.

#### WANTED: AN ELECRIFICATION PROGRAMME

The national RDS leaflet on this theme will now be launched in mid-April. Full details in next Rail East.

#### HEAVIER LORRIES

The Freight Transport Association has just launched a campaign to push lorry weights up to 40 tonnes. That's not very surprising, as Trevor Garrod told the East Anglian Daily Times when they rang him up to seek the RDS reaction. After all, the road lobby wanted more than the 38.5 tonnes which they were allowed the last time that lorry weights were increased.

RDS nationally is consulting with colleagues in Friends of the Earth, Transport 2000 and other bodies to discuss the best ways to counter this latest campaign.

#### N.E.N.T.A. RAILTOURS - WE'RE GOING THERE

APRIL 12TH: KIDDERMINSTER & BRIDGNORTH

APRIL 25-27TH: INVERNESS & KYLE OF LOCHALSH JUNE 8TH: MATIONAL GARDEN FESTIVAL, STOKE ON TRENT TICKETS AND ENQUIRIES 36 LIGHTHOUSE CLOSE HAPPISBURGH NR12 0QE

#### REOPENINGS Finningham

Over the last ten years, local people at various places on the Colchester-Norwich main line have expressed interest in having their local stations reopened — but campaigns at Forncett, Bentley and Bramford,

in particular, during the 1970s came to nothing, for various reasons.

The electrification of the main line, with new service possibilities, is arousing fresh interest, and nearly 30 people braved a cold night on 28 November to attend an RDS public meeting in Cotton Village Hall, and set up the Finningham Station Action Group.

Finningham Station, between Stowmarket and Diss, could serve the adjacent and growing villages of Finningham, Cotton and Bacton (the last of which is earmarked for further growth in the Structure Plan), and nearby Gislingham and Wickham Skeith.

The RDS Branch Secretary Trevor Garrod explained to the meeting the steps that would have to be taken, including a survey of usage, in any campaign. He added that BR would be unlikely to stop the majority of Intercity trains at Finningham, and so a semi-fast service of electric multiple units, also calling at a few other reopened stations, should be aimed at. Some money for it might well have to be raised locally.

The meeting, which was chaired by Dennis Evans of Gislingham Parish Council, agreed to set up an Action Committee, whose convenor is David Bridge, 8 Broadfields road, Gislingham (tel.: Mellis 797). Our local member Jonathan Moore is also representing RDS on the Committee.

#### Arlesey

BR has accepted the survey results and, at a meeting with representatives of Bedfordshire County Council in early December, said that a full engineering, operational and financial assessment of the project had been authorised. It is likely to cost £400,000 to build the station and BR are looking for funding on a 50/50 basis. The project could be completed in the financial year 1987—88.

#### Sawston

Our member Basil Bonner would be pleased to hear from anyone interested in campaigning for a station to serve this growing village in South Cambridgeshire, about 2 miles north of Whittlesford station, on a site close to Spicers' Paperworks, within half a mile of the centre of Sawston and its Village College. Mr Bonner adds: "I doubt if any traffic Whittlesford station might lose would be such as to lead to its closure, because it is so inconvenient for Sawston residents that (without a station of their own) they nearly all use cars, motorcycles or buses". Mr Bonner lives at 54 Duxford road, Whittlesford, Cambs, CB2 4NQ (tel.: Cambridge 832585).

Our member Geoffrey Roper was interviewed on the case for Sawston and other new station or reopening schemes in Cambridgeshire (such as Cherry Hinton) on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire on 9 December.

#### SUFFOLK: TOWARDS 2000

RDS has submitted 1,500 words of comments on the above document, produced by Suffolk County Council to update its Structure Plan. Our comments range over such matters as where growth should be; new rail halts; ports and rail freight; tourism. A copy of the RDS comments can be obtained from the Branch Secretary (please send s.a.e.).

Other counties are also revising their Structure Plans (see last  $\overline{\text{Rail}}$   $\overline{\text{East}}$ ) and the Branch Chairman will be compiling comments on the Cambridgeshire Plan later this year.

#### COUNTY COUNCIL LIAISON

Our member John Thompson of 136 Dell road, Lowestoft, NR33 9NT has offered to be County Council Liaison Officer for Suffolk. He will be pleased to hear from any member who has corresponded or had discussions with his/her councillor on transport matters, as part of the dialogue which RDS needs to develop with elected representatives.

We need RDS members to take some responsibility for council liaison in the other counties also. All offers to the Branch Secretary, please.

#### ANTI-CLOSURE FUND

Following several generous donations from members during the autumn, this fund now stands at £153.59. It is used to help any RDS Branch or users' group needing to fight a rail closure. Further donations are always welcome and should be sent to Trevor Garrod.

#### FUND RAISING

Many thanks to Clara Zilahi and friends for raising over £50 for RDS with their stall at Downham Market on 9 November.

#### NATIONAL BIKE WEEK

The 1986 National Bike Week will be from 24 to 31 May . For the last two years, RDS members have undertaken sponsored rides to raise money and publicise bike-and-train travel possibilities, during National Bike Week.

RDS Yorkshire Branch member Chris Hyomes has offered to do a ride this year. I am also willing to do one (maximum 75 miles) in our region. Is anyone else? (It does not have to be as long as that!) Any offers and ideas would be welcome, if possible in time for discussion by the Branch Committee on 1 February.

Trevor Garrod

#### DRIVER-ONLY TRAINS / BIKES ON TRAINS

The recent RDS leaflet on driver-only trains was sent to the British Rail Board, and has elicited the following comment:-

"D.O.O., of itself, does not preclude the carriage of cycles. In fact, cycles will be conveyed on the Kings Cross line when D.O.O. is introduced and it is intended that the St.Pancras line units will be replaced when the Snow Hill tunnel is complete by new trains and these units will have space for cycles."

We are continuing discussions at national level with both management and unions on this general issue. The above clarification at first sight seems encouraging — but restrictions on bikes on peak—hour trains between Royston and London, introduced on 12 January, which effectively prevent commuting with bicycles, are a set—back.

#### NEWS OF MEMBERS

Welcome to more new members:

- 1. A.R.WALLACE, Spinney Lodge, Westmill lane, Ickleford, Hitchin, Herts, SG5 3RN;
- 2. Rev. K.DOBSON, 57 Hargham road, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 2HG:
  - 3. S.LEVEN, U.E.A. Residences, Fifer's lane, Norwich, NR6 6DA;
- 4. J.W.PEACOCK, 49 Harbord close, North Walsham, Norfolk, NR28 OTA:
- 5. R.COLLINS, 31 Church road, Wimbotsham, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE34 3QG;
- 6. N.J.R.BARTLETT, 80A Colman road, Norwich, NR4 7EH;
- 7. ANGLIA RAIL ASSOCIATION, c/o G.J.Round, 15 Harpsfield, Chapel Break, Norwich, NR5 9LG;
- 8. Mr & Mrs C.J.SENDALL, 45 Gilbert road, Cambridge, CB4 3NX;
- 9. HISTON & IMPINGTON VILLAGE SOCIETY, c/o N.Harper-Scott.
- 2 Croft close, Histon, Cambs, CB4 4HU.
- 10. Mr Frank SAWBRIDGE, 9 Gildencroft, Norwich, NR3 1DS.

Cecil BRENAN has moved to Wood Advent, Church close, West Runton, Cromer, Norfolk, NR27 9QY.

Our Hon. Auditor, Nigel BAYLEM, has moved to 83 Rosslyn Crescent, Luton, Beds, LU3 2AT.

#### OUR CHAIRMAN HAS BEEN SPEAKING

Our Branch Chairman Steve Wilkinson has had a full diary in recent weeks, including well-received talks to Cambridge University Railway Society, Histon & Impington Village Society, the Corporate Institute of Transport (East Anglian Section), the East Suffolk Travellers' Association and South Cambs Rotary Club. Mr Wilkinson was also interviewed on electrification by BBC Radio Cambridgeshire.

#### PERSONAL THANKS

I should like to thank all members who sent me Christmas cards, and also BR who sent me two calendars.

Trevor Garrod

#### BOOKS

Congratulations to our member John Brodribb on the publication of his book Steam in the Eastern Counties (Ian Allan, £7.95).

The second edition of our guide-book <u>East Anglia by Rail</u> has now sold 2000 copies, three-quarters of them through the book trade. We hope to start thinking soon about a third edition, to appear in May 1987. Meanwhile, Peter Lawrence (address inside cover) will still be pleased to supply copies of the second edition at £1.95.

#### THEO STEEL

Our Chairman has written to congratulate Theo Steel on his promotion to Assistant General Manager, BR Eastern Region, on 1 January.

#### NEW NORWICH MINIBUS LINK

The RDS Branch Secretary had letters in the local press in early October congratulating Eastern Counties on their enterprise and initiative in introducing the City-Line minibus service. This runs every 5 minutes throughout the day on weekdays from Norwich Station forecourt to points in the city centre and beyond. It is the first regular bus service from the forecourt for many years, seems to be well-used and could be a useful model for some other towns and cities in our region.

#### A VISIT FROM THE SPRINTER

For seven years, RDS has been pressing for the construction of new diesel multiple unit trains to replace the 1950s-vintage ones still used on most secondary routes.

It was therefore encouraging to see a prototype "Sprinter" class DMU making runs on four of our lines during the weekend of 9-10 November. Several RDS members took the chance to ride on it (James Apsey also did a televised interview on it), and comments were subsequently sent to BR.

In our comments we commended the smoother ride, public address system and interior flexibility - a variety of seating patterns is possible, with seats ranging from very comfortable to cramped, hard bus-type, and tables can be fixed in for units doing longer journeys.

We were, however, critical of the smaller space available for bicycles and prams, and the need for them to negotiate two doorways. BR say in reply that "the luggage area is also going to double as a secure area for parcels and mail on occasions. As such a secure door is essential. I accept there is room for fewer bikes. There is, however, more room for passengers".

The prototype unit was a 3-car one with only one toilet. Those which should be operating on our local lines from 1987 onwards will, however, be 2-car sets.

TEN YEARS AGO (From our Newsletter no.17, February 1976:)

Cambs County Council's Highways & Transportation Committee voted to take "no further action" to reopen March-Wisbech, despite a detailed letter from our Society to all councillors. A recent report described Cambridgeshire as one of the "mean counties" when it came to public transport spending.

It took the Department of Environment two and a half months to reply to our letter putting the case for a procedure whereby the public could object to the closure of a freight line. They refused to consider such a procedure "at present". [Ten years later, there is still no such procedure.]

#### SUDBURY BRANCH

Our colleagues in the Sudbury - Marks Tey Rail Users' Association arranged for Santa Claus to travel on the mid-morning Sudbury-Colchester train most patronised by shoppers on the two Saturdays before Christmas.

SMTRUA Has also distributed a short questionnaire among regular travellers on the branch to help it formulate its comments on the May 1986 timetable.

#### BECCLES LOOP

RDS and ESTA are continuing to press for a loop to be installed here, to alleviate the problems of 17 miles of single track on the East Suffolk Line. BR's Regional Passenger Manager at York has agreed to come down again to see us, and we hope to have a public meeting early in February. The case for the loop, and for a better service to Lowestoft, was put by Trevor Garrod in the Eastern Daily Press on New Year's Day.

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#### WHERRY LINE TIMETABLE

RDS and ESTA have made strong representations to BR about proposed changes in Lowestoft-Norwich trains from next May.

It is proposed, for example, to make the 0756 fast train from Lowestoft to Norwich (on which there is usually standing room only) an all-stations train taking 45 minutes for 23.5 miles. Where the extra passengers will be put has not been stated. The 0835 Lowestoft-Norwich - popular with shoppers - is to disappear.

Just before Christmas, however, we were informed by the Area Passenger Manager that he hoped to introduce an O835 Lowestoft-Reedham, which would enable some stops to be cut from the O756.

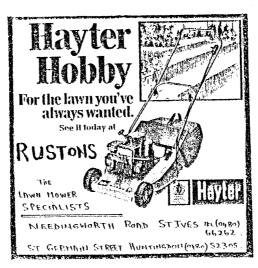
We have also been reassured that plans to cut the late night Norwich-Lowestoft train (which provides good connections from as far away as Edinburgh) have been dropped.

#### RDS EXHIBITION

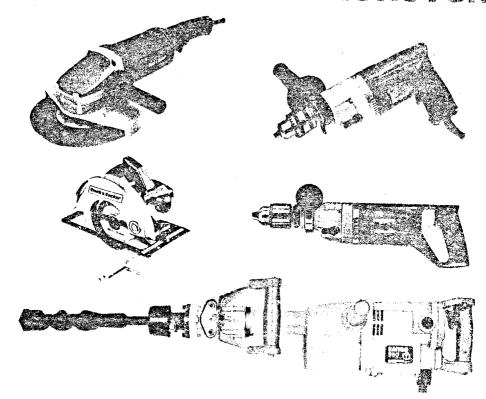
The Branch Committee has agreed to spend some of the profits from <u>East</u> Anglia by <u>Rail</u> on updating and refurbishing our exhibition material, with special emphasis on rail freight, and it is hoped that it will be ready for display at Felixstowe in the spring.

#### DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE - GO BY TRAIN!

This has been possible at the Suffield Arms free house, next to Gunton station, since the end of October; for the last Sheringham-Norwich train on Friday nights has been putting in an extra stop at this station, following a suggestion by licensee Brian Ilston and RDS member John Peacock.



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