

Rail East

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25p Free to members

Newsletter of the East Anglian Branch of the Railway Development Society.

1992: THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE BRANCH

IN February 1972 a small group of East Anglians got together in a pub in East Suffolk to found the East Anglian Branch of the RDS. Since then we have continuously grown and have helped form nearly all the local line user groups. The Branch has grown steadily in influence and stature throughout this period. We think that we have something to celebrate in early 1992.

To celebrate our 20th anniversary, we intend holding our AGM at the Ely Maltings on the 22nd February 1992. We hope that you will be able to come along, with your partners, and meet other members during a buffet lunch. The lunch will be provided by the Maltings and will cost £6.50. We shall invite guests from BR and local politics whom we consider have helped the railway cause over the last 20 years. Chris Green, Director of Network SouthEast, has accepted our invitation to give a keynote speech. We intend also to use this event to launch our revised 'Rail Strategy for East Anglia'.

If you would like to come to the buffet, please could you let Clara Zilahi know by the end of September. Her address is:

31 Wimbotsham Road
Downham Market
Norfolk PE38 9PE.

It would help us reduce administration costs if members would send the money with their orders. Cheques should be made payable to RDS East Anglian Branch. To make our celebration successful and meaningful, especially in view of our invited guests, your presence is important!

I look forward to seeing you.

Peter Wakefield, Branch Chairman.

FELIXSTOWE NEWS

COUNCILLORS at Felixstowe and Trimley have called for an improved service on the Ipswich to Felixstowe line. They consider that a more frequent service and a new station at Warren Heath will help relieve the traffic congestion on local roads. The local rail users group ESTA are concerned about the state of Felixstowe station and have called for urgent repairs to be carried out.

STANSTED AIRPORT

DURING the public enquiry into the new development at Stansted Airport the RDS stressed the importance and benefits of a direct rail link to the airport. Our views were accepted and the rail link to the airport opened to the public in March this year.

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A new branch line has been constructed, starting at a triangular junction on the Liverpool St to Cambridge line just north of Stansted Mountfitchet station. The line runs through a 1795 yard tunnel under the runway to a 3 platform station directly below the terminal building. A ramp between the station and terminal building enables luggage trolleys to be taken onto the platform.

There are 4 trains an hour at present to the airport. The half-hourly Stansted Express, which links the airport to Liverpool St in only 41 minutes, and a local stopping service to Stratford both started in March. In July, a Regional Railways cross-country service started giving an hourly service to Cambridge and Peterborough, with alternate trains going to Birmingham and Liverpool.

BRANCH LINES TO HUNTINGDON

by Christopher Awdry and Allan Mott

THE latest book from the Middleton Press features the line from Kettering to Cambridge. The book will be of interest to many members as the RDS are leading the campaign to reopen the Cambridge - St Ives - Huntingdon section of the route. The text mentions our campaign and there are several pictures of the special train service run last year. The final picture in the book, under the caption 'The shape of things to come', shows a LRT train running on the A604 Huntingdon flyover - not quite what we had in mind!

INTERCITY IN EAST ANGLIA

COMMITMENT to quality was the theme of the talk given by the East Anglia InterCity Manager Peter Koning at our Ipswich meeting in June. He said that rolling stock has recently been refurbished and problems with the multiplex control system have been resolved. The use of driving trailers has reduced the turn round time at terminal stations so that any lost time can be made up. However, there were still problems with the class 86 locomotives and signalling which were due to old age and intensive use of the equipment.

Mr Koning considered that there was a bright future for the railways. Growing concern about traffic congestion and pollution and an increased demand for travel to mainland Europe, were challenges that the railways had to meet. As major schemes took up to 10 years from conception to completion, decisions were needed now if BR was to be able to meet this demand.

Following his talk, Mr Koning faced an hour of questions regarding InterCity services from RDS members. Subjects included catering, connecting trains, timekeeping and better information.

ALL ROADS LEAD TO IPSWICH

A report by Halcrow Fox considers ways of solving the traffic problems in the Ipswich area. The £500,000 report for Suffolk County Council and Ipswich Borough Council dismisses rail travel as a way to help solve these problems in just 3 lines. The report then calls for a large road building program.

In our comments on the report, we explain why rail should be used to help reduce traffic congestion. Possible new stations in the area are suggested, along with additional services on existing lines.

MEETING WITH THE MINISTER

RDS member Peter Lawrence joined representatives from the Breckland and Fen line users at a meeting with the Public Transport Minister Roger Freeman and local MP Gillian Shepherd to discuss rail services. Roger Freeman said at the meeting that there may be scope for additional resources to enable extra morning trains to run on the Breckland line to reduce traffic congestion. It was agreed that the seating layout on the Class 317 units was not suitable for London to Kings Lynn services when electrification of the line is complete in July 92. The Minister would question BR regarding the need for more suitable stock.

During the meeting, the Minister had a copy of our Rail Strategy for East Anglia in front of him and referred to it frequently. It's good to see our publications being used in high places.

MORE MEETINGS

RDS members have had meetings with BR managers to discuss rail services in the area. On the 8th July we met Regional Railways managers Nick Highton and Barrie Thomas in Norwich. RR confirmed that the Class 101 DMUs would be replaced by the end of the year and gave details of a new information system for the East Suffolk line. Other items discussed included new stations in the Norwich area, the Bury St Edmunds line, cycles on trains and ways in which the RDS could help promote services.

Two days later a group of RDS members met Julian Crow, Route Manager for the Kings Cross to Huntingdon and Cambridge services. The service on these routes is generally good, with punctuality at 93% within 5 minutes. Next year's timetable was discussed, including the hourly Kings Cross to Kings Lynn service and revised peak services on the Liverpool Street line to give a more regular pattern. We suggested additional morning trains to Peterborough and a fast Cambridge service on Sundays.

SUDBURY BRANCH

A new leaflet called 'Off the beaten track on the Sudbury Branch' has been produced jointly by Network SouthEast and the Sudbury and Marks Tey users group. The leaflet describes 4 short walks between stations on the branch line and gives full timetable information.

FUTURE EVENTS

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| Sat 14th September | We have a stand at Cambridge Station as part of the West Anglia Gala Day. |
| Sat 21st September | RDS public meeting Assembly Rooms Norwich starting at 2pm. Guest speaker Barrie Thomas of Regional Railways. |
| Sat 16th November | RDS public meeting Little St Mary's Church Hall, off Trumpington Street, Cambridge, starting at 2pm. Guest speaker Julian Crow of Network SouthEast. |
| Sat 22nd February 1992 | Branch AGM and 20th anniversary event at the Ely Maltings. |
| Sat 2nd May 1992 | RDS National AGM in Birmingham. |

GENERAL ELECTION

THE RDS is concentrating its pre-election lobbying on a number of marginal seats, including Cambridgeshire North East. If there is anyone in that area who is willing to write, under guidance if necessary, to the candidates regarding their views on rail issues please could they contact Peter Wakefield.

BR SAFETY CODE

COLLISIONS and derailments are rare on our railways. In fact, more people are killed on our roads each week than the total number of passengers killed in train accidents on BR over the last 10 years. There are, however, a number of accidents each year on our railways caused by trespassing, getting on or off moving trains and at level crossings. To help reduce this BR have produced two new safety booklets.

The 'Railway Code' gives advice on what to do and what not to do at stations, on the train, by the track and at level crossings. The second booklet, on a similar theme, is aimed at children and has been written by children's author Roald Dahl, with illustrations by Quentin Blake. This booklet also mentions the damage to the environment caused by cars and looks forward to the day when more people travel by train.

Both booklets are available free of charge at stations.

NEW STATION PROPOSED

DEVELOPERS for the new town south of Peterborough have included a station on the East Coast Main Line as part of their plans.

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The next **Rail East** will be issued at the start of November. Items for the next edition should be sent to Nick Dibben by the end of September. News from Line User Groups and press cuttings from the Peterborough/March area would be especially welcome.

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