

# RAIL EAST

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Newsletter of the East Anglian Branch of the RDS

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## 1993 - A BUSY AND SUCCESSFUL YEAR: FROM THE BRANCH CHAIRMAN

The past year has been one of the busiest ever for the Branch, with Privatisation and the St Ives line dominating our thinking. The Branch committee met four times to discuss these and other issues. Various members have also attended many other meetings ranging from talks to groups such as the Womens Institute, local political parties, county and railway officials. These meetings play an important part in getting our message across. A second important arena is the media, and last year we were interviewed on both radio and television on many occasions.

One of the great strengths of the Society is the way in which the membership is willing to get involved. Our three public meetings were well attended, and many of you have written to MP's, councillors and the media on railway matters.

In spite of the doubts raised by rail privatisation, in some ways the outlook appears reasonable for the region's rail network. But we must continue to be vigilant and never be afraid to intervene, where necessary, to put the views of rail users.

Many thanks to the Committee, the RailEast team, and all those who have worked so hard during the year.

Peter Wakefield: Branch Chairman

## FROM THE BRANCH TREASURER

I would like to thank all members for their support throughout the year, especially to Chris Milnes for his sales effort; and to those members whose generous donations have made it possible for me to balance the books whilst enabling the Society to be an effective voice in the region.

Suggestions for events at which we can present our sales stand are always welcome. Not only does this provide useful income, but also important publicity for the Society.

As our railways enter a period of uncertainty the RDS will, I'm sure, have an even more vital role to play. We look forward to your continued support.

Lewis Buckingham: Branch Treasurer

## THE 1994 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 1994 Annual General Meeting of the East Anglian Branch of the Railway Development Society, will be held at the Ely Maltings (The Kempen Room) on September 26 February at 2pm.

### AGENDA

1. Chairman's Welcome
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Guest Speaker: David McIntosh, Regional Railways District Manager for the East Midlands
4. Questions
5. Minutes and Matters arising from the 1993 AGM
6. Chairman's Report
7. Secretary's Report
8. Treasurer's Report
9. Election of Officers:
  - i) Chairman
  - ii) Vice-Chairman
  - iii) Secretary
  - iv) Treasurer
  - v) Sales Officer
  - vi) Minutes Secretary
  - vii) Membership Secretary
  - viii) Press Secretary
  - ix) Committee Members
10. Appointment of Honorary Auditor
11. Motions
12. Discussion
13. Branch President's closing remarks

Nominations for the committee and any Notices of Motion must be in the hands of the Secretary by 16 February duly proposed and seconded. The meeting should finish by 4.30pm.

The Maltings is about a 5 minutes walk from the station. Turning left at the station exit into Station Road, take the next right into Anneside and continue on into Riverside Walk. The Maltings is on the left.

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## ST IVES LINE DEVELOPMENTS

The Branch has now seen the full preliminary report produced by the County Council on re-opening the line. It confirms our view (see last RailEast) that the cost estimate is indulgent. In response, and based on the Report's figures, the Branch has produced its own assessment, which indicates that costs might be reduced to around £10m without imperilling safety or viability. We have also disputed the low number of users predicted for the line. Our views are shared by many councillors across the political spectrum.

The County has agreed to review the figures, and have asked British Rail to scrutinise some of the costs and the feasibility of using the existing track. The outcome of these deliberations will be discussed by the County's Transportation Committee on March 24. Before then the RDS expect to meet Council officials for further talks.

In the meantime, RDS is holding a public meeting at the St Ives Free Church Hall on 10 March starting at 8pm. Please attend if you can, and do please write to your Councillor in support of the re-opening.

## JAMES APSEY

It is with great sadness that we have learnt of the sudden death, in January, of James Apsey who was a very active member of RDS for many years. Serving on the Railwatch editorial board and other committees, he was, in all his RDS work and as Chairman of the East Norfolk Travellers Association, a tireless and effective campaigner who will be greatly missed. His funeral was attended by a number of RDS members including General Secretary, Trevor Garrod.

## THE AGE OF THE TRAIN

Those interested in railway history, especially in how our East Anglian network developed, will be interested in a series of three 4 day courses being given in Norwich by well known railway author, Dr Richard Joby. Typical cost including food and four nights accomodation is £175. Further details from Dr R. Joby, 116 Gowing Road, Norwich NR6 6UQ.

## JUST THE TICKET

A new ticketing scheme for rail travellers from Ipswich has been introduced. Called LINKLINE, it forms part of Ipswich Borough and Suffolk County Council's strategy for promoting greater use of public transport.

On trains from Bury St Edmunds, Lowestoft, Felixstowe or Manningtree, passengers will be able to buy a combined train and bus Day Return ticket to Ipswich for just 20p above the normal rail fare. The facility is free to rail Season Ticket holders. The ticket is valid only on bus services from Ipswich and Ipswich Derby Road stations to the town centre. There are plans to extend the scheme to include rail passengers from Newmarket.

In Cambridge, Network South East tickets allow free access to the frequent Cambus 'Rail Shuttle Service' to the city centre.

We applaud these initiatives and hope they succeed in their intention of enticing more people away from their cars. Indeed, we believe a similar scheme is due to start shortly in Norwich although its publicity will have to improve; a recent visit to Norwich Station revealed a complete absence of bus information.

#### RAIL NEWS

Travellers from March, who currently have to contend with gaps in the timetable of up to two hours, will be happier people from May when Regional Railways turn the Cambridge-Birmingham service into an hourly event, with every train stopping at March.

British Rail and the Post Office have agreed a new 10 year contract coming into full operation in 1996. The nub of the agreement is that, ultimately, mail will be conveyed by dedicated postal trains only, and not passenger services. Postal activity at every London terminus will transfer to a new road/rail terminal near Willesden

SENTA and the Witham and Braintree RUG are part of a group set up to lobby for a Stansted Airport to Ely rail link. They are hopeful that the EEC,BAA, or both, will help with funding!

#### HOSPITAL THANK YOU

After spending six months in Cambridge's Addenbrooke's Hospital recovering from a brain abcess, former railwayman Derek Haynes is saying "thank you" via the profits from a video called Joint 92. It is 104 minutes of nostalgia for the Spalding to March route which closed 10 years ago. This fascinating compilation costs £11.29 inc. post and packing from: Derek Haynes, 32 Brewin Avenue, March, PE15 9SL. Cheques payable to C.J.D.Haynes.

#### FUTURE EVENTS

Saturday 26 March - Transport 2000 conference in Bedford. Details from Richard Pill, 4 Rowlandson Way, Manton Heights, Bedford MK41 7LT.

May 1994 will see the 150th anniversary of the opening of the Norwich to Great Yarmouth line, an ideal occasion, the Branch feels, to promote the route. A leaflet/booklet and an exhibition on the route have been suggested. Offers of help for these are required and should be sent to Mike Taylor, Mariners Tavern, 79 Howard St South, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR30 1LN.

#### AND THAT'S IT!

Don't forget the Ely AGM, and please, do let Editor Nick Dibben have any items for the Summer Rail East, no later than May 16. He really does like to hear from you!!