

Vice-Presidents:

Sir John Betjeman, C.B.E.

Lord Kinross

Lord Popplewell, C.B.E., J.P.

John Arlott, Esq., O.B.E.

The Very Rev. J. H. S. Wild, M.A., Dean of Durham

Torquil Nicholson Esq., B.Sc., A.M.I.E.E.

P R O G R E S S R E P O R T

No. 87

JUNE 1971"RAILWAYS IN THE SEVENTIES"

✓✕ Our new policy statement, which bears the above title, was released to the press at a conference between journalists and officials of the Society held in Birmingham on 24th April, the same day as that of our annual general meeting.

The press conference produced reports in several newspapers and the Society's Chairman was interviewed for radio. Copies of the statement have been sent to the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for the Environment, the Minister for Transport Industries and the Chairman of the British Railways Board. ✕

The points emphasised most at the press conference were the need for railways to receive a greater share of national transport investment and for local communities to assist in developing their rail services.

One practical way of doing the latter is the distribution of timetable leaflets. A recent example is the leaflet issued by the Romford-Upminster Railway Users' Association. This gives details of the passenger service between Romford, Emerson Park and Upminster and has received approval from British Rail. 4,000 copies are being distributed in the area, by door-to-door delivery and other means. We strongly urge other local action groups to do something similar.

RESOLUTIONS

The following resolutions were passed at our annual general meeting this year:-

- (1) That the Society should send to the Secretary of State for the Environment copies of past resolutions relevant to his Department.
- (2) The National Committee was asked to request the Minister for Transport Industries to investigate the possibility of incorporating a rapid-transit public transport system in new motorways.
- (3) The National Committee was asked to suggest to either a national newspaper or British Rail that a national competition should be organised to produce slogans for stimulating rail travel.
- (4) The Technical Sub-Committee was asked to investigate the possibility of converting disused lines to carry small electric cars, so that such lines could act as feeders to main lines.

SUGGESTIONS TO THE RAILWAYS BOARD

On the 26th March, the Society issued the following press release:-

"The Railway Inivigation Society, whilst appreciating that British Railways are required by statute to 'pay their way', believes that a more positive approach should be made to increase revenue rather than the negative one of increasing fares.

The Society offers the following suggestions which it believes could result in increased revenues, at the same time benefiting large sections of the public, encouraging people to travel by rail in preference to other forms of transport and, in many cases, persuading them to make journeys which they would not otherwise contemplate.

These suggestions have been forwarded to Sir Henry Johnson, the Chairman of the British Railways Board, in the hope that they will be given consideration.

At the same time, the Society is firmly of the opinion that Government help in the form of more investment capital and subsidies for unremunerative but socially desirable lines are vitally important in the national interest.

1. A discount for ordinary return tickets to save time and administrative costs.
2. Universal extension of group reductions for families to encourage them to make more use of rail services.
3. Special reduced rates in the rush hour for travellers 'going against the stream'.
4. More reduced rates for parties on the same conditions as those now applicable from London to the Continent.
5. Reduced rates for senior citizens to encourage them to make more frequent visits to friends and relatives by 'off-peak' traffic.
6. More consideration for season ticket holders, especially for travel outside the rush hours.
7. More flexible route and mileage availability of season tickets.
8. More package deal fares, i. e., fares with hotel accommodation, etc. included.
9. Conferences and trade fairs - special concessions to visitors and participants to encourage them to travel by train.
10. As far as possible all special fare concessions should be universal on British Railways, so that the public can more easily be made aware of these benefits.

Because at present many of these suggestions operate in restricted areas only, many people are unaware of their existence."

"ANY QUESTIONS?"

In the BBC radio programme "Any questions?" broadcast on 15th February, a member of the audience raised the matter of free public transport. One of the panel, Mr. John Arlott, a vice-president of this Society, said that such a change would lead to more people using fewer vehicles. Public transport had been dogged by politics. Britain needed adequate railways, instead of which many railways had been destroyed in modern times. The position of public transport was at its worst for over a hundred years.

"THE CRISIS IN RURAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT"

A conference on the above theme, organised by the National Conference on Inland Transport, was held in Shrewsbury on 3rd April. Among the speakers was Dr. M. P. L. Caton, Chairman of the Railway Invigoration Society. Dr. Caton has also addressed a recent meeting of the Stephenson Locomotive Society.

BRITISH RAIL SUCCESSFULLY CHALLENGED

Mr. Gavin Gibbons, one of our more energetic members, hit the headlines recently when he secured a refund of 60p. from British Rail after he had been wrongly charged excess fare for the journey between Oxford and Paddington. He had travelled from Shrewsbury to London via Oxford, a recognised alternative to the more usual route via Wolverhampton which terminates at Euston.

IN PARLIAMENT

Selections from the official reports

House of Commons

SSE = Secretary of State for the Environment.

An asterisk denotes an oral answer; those not so marked were written.

22nd January Railway lines (closure) Mr. Gwynoro Jones (Carmarthen)

asked the SSE if he will list the railway lines closed since 1959, with the mileage involved in each case and the date of closure. Mr. Peyton The full information requested is not readily available. The following details relate to the closure of lines to passenger trains from 6th January 1964, to 31st January, 1970. (see cols. 351-60 of "Hansard")

26th January Unremunerative railways Mr. Elystan Morgan (Cardiganshire)

asked the SSE what is the total sum of grants paid to unremunerative railways in England and Wales respectively. Mr. Eldon Griffiths For services wholly or partly in England, about £45

million, depending on the financial computation on the reduced sum to be paid this year for the London commuter services. For services operating wholly or partly in Wales, about £4.2 million.

27th January Fleet line, London Mr. Moyle (Lewisham, North)

asked the SSE whether he has received a proposal from the Greater London Council for an extension of the Fleet line into south-east London; and if he will make a statement. Mr. Peter Walker Only last week, I discussed this with the GLC and I am considering the application for a Government grant towards this proposed new line.

Railway services (Cornwall) survey Mr. Mudd (Falmouth and Camborne)

asked the SSE if he is yet able to state the intended publication date of the Ministry of Transport survey on cost/benefit services in Cornwall which was carried out during the summer of 1970. Mr. Eldon Griffiths I hope it will be ready this year.

Urban Transport (Investment) Mr. Spearing (Acton)

asked the SSE if he will make a policy statement on the financing of new investment in urban transport. Mr. Peter Walker We are at present considering local and Government investment in various forms of transport systems, including roads and railways and we are talking to the GLC to ascertain the most appropriate methods for financing alternative transport systems in London. Mr. Spearing Does the rt. hon. Gentleman recall that in a press release issued by his Department he or his colleagues stated that grants for public transport could be put on the same basis as for principal roads? Does the rt. hon. Gentleman accept that new rail track - for instance, the Fleet line - could be on the same basis? Will the rt. hon. Gentleman explain why it cannot be? Mr. Walker Different criteria are involved. I genuinely want to take a sensible formula to tackle the methods by which we should finance these two alternative forms of transport.

Passenger rail services (closure) Mr. Barnett (Heywood and Royton)

asked the SSE if he is now ready to make a considered statement on his policy relating to the closure of passenger rail services. Mr. Peyton No, Sir. The general policy on unremunerative rail passenger services is still under review.

Mr. Deedes (Ashford) In my rt. hon. Friend's review, will he take a close and critical look at the Cooper formula? Mr. Peyton Yes, Sir. Certainly I am prepared to accede to my rt. hon. Friend's request. However, I should tell him that the Cooper Brothers formula has now been fairly well enshrined in folk lore. I think that it is likely to stay there.

Transport Users' Consultative Committee (terms of reference) Mr. Raphael Tuck

(Watford) asked the SSE if he will seek powers to enlarge the terms of reference of the Transport Users' Consultative Committee. Mr. Peyton I have just received representations from the Central Committee to this end, and will consider these carefully.

3rd February Waverley railway route Mr. David Steel (Roxburgh, Selkirk and Peebles)

asked the Secretary of State for Scotland whether he will seek the advice of the Scottish Planning Council about the retention of the former Waverley railway route as a unit for future transport development. Mr. Gordon Campbell The views of the Scottish Economic Council will be sought in the usual way before a decision is taken on the disposal of the formation of the former Waverley railway route.

4th February Swansea-Llanelli-Shrewsbury railway line (grant) Mr. Gwynoro Jones (Carmarthen)
asked the SSE if he will give an assurance that the grant paid to the Swansea-Llanelli-Shrewsbury passenger service railway line will continue after the expiration of the present grant on the 31st December, 1971. Mr. Peyton No such assurance can be given about any grants for rail passenger services, especially while they are still under review.

8th February British Rail (Newcastle-South Shields) Mr. Fernyhough (Jarrow)
asked the SSE when he intends to give approval to British Rail's application to spend £50,000 on improving stations on the Newcastle-South Shields line. Mr. Peyton Approval was granted on 27th February 1970. The relevant application for infrastructure grant is under consideration.

Edinburgh-Newcastle railway line Mr. David Steel
asked the SSE what proposal he has received for the inclusion in the capital electrification programme of the Edinburgh-Newcastle railway line. Mr. Peyton None.

12th February British Railways (return on capital) Mr. Golding (Newcastle-under-Lyme)
asked the SSE what target percentage return on capital he has set British Rail for the present year; and how that target has been calculated. Mr. Peyton I have set the British Railways Board the target of earning £17 million in 1971 over and above interest on capital and historic depreciation. It is based on estimates of trading results and the need to make provision for replacement of assets.

15th February Cambrian Coast railway line Mr. Elystan Morgan (Cardiganshire)
asked the SSE if he will make it a condition of any closure proposal in relation to the Cambrian Coast railway line that British Railways should first introduce a six month's experiment of rigorous economies in the running of the line. Mr. Peyton No, but the possibility of making yet further economies will be taken into account before any final decision is taken on the future of the service.

Aberystwyth-Shrewsbury railway line Mr. Elystan Morgan (Cardiganshire)
asked the SSE if he will give an undertaking that the Aberystwyth-Shrewsbury railway line will not be closed in the long-term future. Mr. Peyton No.

19th February Broad Street-Richmond railway line Mr. Geoffrey Finsberg (Hampstead)
asked the SSE if he will give an undertaking that the Broad Street-Richmond railway line will not be closed in view of the contribution it makes to the traffic and commuter problems of north London. Mr. Eldon Griffiths No.

4th March Railway commuter services Mr. Moate (Faversham)
asked the SSE what estimate he made, when deciding to withdraw grants for commuter services in the financial year 1971-72, of the amount British Rail would have to earn to offset the lost grants. Mr. Peyton £10 million.

Railway services (profit and loss figures) Mr. Moate (Faversham)
asked the SSE if, in view of the selective pricing policy for rail fares he will give a general direction to British Rail to publish separate profit and loss figures for individual lines. Mr. Peyton No.

8th March British Rail (Government grants) Mr. Evelyn King (Dorset, South)

asked the SSE what is the value of grants made by his Department to British Rail in respect of the London area and the rest of Great Britain, respectively; and what percentage is the total of these sums in relation to British Rail's total deficit in the last accounting year. Mr. Peyton The grants payable in 1970 for unremunerative rail passenger services in the London Commuter Network and in the rest of Great Britain totalled £14.5 million and £47.3 million respectively. The Railway Board's accounts for 1970 are expected to show a small surplus.

9th March British Rail (subsidies) Mr. Arthur Lewis (West Ham, North)

asked the SSE whether, in view of the fact that rail fares are to rise by amounts varying between 7 per cent and 66 per cent and that this is against the Government's policy, he will restore the cuts which Her Majesty's Government have made in the subsidies to British Rail. Mr. Peyton No. The only relevant cuts which have so far been announced relate to the London commuter services on which the Government's policy is that the costs should be borne by the users rather than by the Exchequer.

10th March British Rail (fares) Mr. Robert Hughes (Aberdeen, North)

asked the SSE if he will circulate in the OFFICIAL REPORT the number and details of cases where British Rail fares from towns in Scotland to towns in England is greater than the fares charged for the corresponding journeys made in the reverse direction; and if he will make a statement, Mr. Eldon Griffiths No. Questions of details should be addressed to the Railways Board.

31st March Oldham-Rochdale railway line (proposed closure) Mr. Meacher (Oldham, West)

asked the SSE how the social and economic criteria relating to the application by British Rail to close the Oldham-Rochdale line will be evaluated in his consideration of this application; and whether he will apply the same criteria that were applied in the cases of the Kentish Town-Barking Broad Street-Richmond, and Witham-Braintree loss-making lines, which remain open. Mr. Eldon Griffiths All relevant factors are weighed before any closure decision. No statutory closure proposals have been made for the three London services mentioned. But grant is to be withdrawn from all the London commuter services by 1973.

Railway branch lines Mr. Bray (Rossendale)

asked the SSE whether he will give a general direction to British Rail to provide factual costs and information on each branch line which it either wishes to close or for which it requires subsidy, and to discontinue its practice of using a system of standard costs. Mr. Eldon Griffiths No.

* London commuter services (grant aid) Mr. Hunt (Bromley)

asked the SSE what further requests he has now received from the Southern Region of British Rail him to reconsider the withdrawal of grant-aid for commuter services. Mr. Peyton None, Sir. Mr. Atkinson (Tottenham) Is the Minister aware that the Railways Board is under the impression that it is being asked by the Government to make each separate service and route stand on its own feet and the GLC is now having some idea about a separate fares structure for each route or service in the underground system? Before this idea catches on with either the Railways Board or the GLC, will the Minister say that the Government would want to discourage any such idea creeping into a new fares structure for the underground and London commuters? Mr. Peyton Any idea that may be in the mind of the Greater London Council is not my responsibility. What I am concerned with is the amount

aid which the Government are called upon to give to a commercial operation. We have made it clear that we intend that the London commuter network should be viable by 1973.

House of Lords

1971

18th March Rail fare increases Lord Beswick My Lords, I beg leave to ask the second question which stands in my name on the order paper. (The question was as follows:

To ask Her Majesty's Government to what extent the recently announced increase of rail fares is in accordance with Government policy of restricting price increases in the public sector)

Lord Mowbray and Stourton My Lords, the Government's policy is that price increases in the public sector will be allowed only where they are justified by increased costs. The recently announced fares increases are needed partly to offset increased costs and, in London and the South-East, to replace the Government's grants towards unremunerative services.

BOOKSHELF

Walker, Peter J. (editor) Transit for Norwich: a feasibility study.

Light Railway Transport League, (1970) £0.40 (20) p.; illus., maps, plans.

Obtainable from Honorary Secretary, LRTL, 64, Grove Avenue, Hanwell, London, W7 3ES.

This is a pilot study to illustrate the principles of light rapid transit. The editor in his foreword states that, although Norwich was not considered suitable for the purpose - "because of its relative smallness and low population densities", and, surprising in a county usually regarded as very flat, owing to "its hilly terrain" - the city was chosen "on account of local interest in the concept." "Future planning proposals for the area envisaged an unspecified form of rapid transit system." The planning authority is in favour of linear development, which calls for public transport with a relatively high peak capacity, i.e. 5,000 passengers per hour in one direction. Such movement is beyond the power of the motor bus but below that of the conventional electric railway. The answer is, therefore, light rapid transit and a basic network for the city is described. The unique qualities of Norwich are rightly stressed and the consequent need for careful landscaping pointed out. Technical details are given, operating methods are outlined, a fares system is suggested and capital and operating costs are stated. An appendix compares the costs of light rapid transit with those of an equivalent segregated busway.

Publications also received

Walker, Peter J. The new tramway: the case for light railway rapid transit, 2nd ed. Light Railway Transport League, April 1969. £0.70 . p. 50; illus., plans. Bibliography, p. 49-50

N.B.

We have now been notified that the cost per copy of the LRTL's publication "The way ahead - with Speedrail" is ten new pence.

This was reviewed in our last issue, page 7.

REPORTS FROM BRANCHES AND AREAS

BRANCHES

London and Home Counties

✓✗ The Branch welcomed Mr. Metz, director of the German Federal Railways freight agency in London as guest speaker at its meeting on 24th March. This was the best attended meeting since the inception of the Branch.

The Branch has sent a 5-page memorandum to the Greater London Council on "The future of London Transport" and has been informed that the views expressed in the paper have been noted. A public meeting on the same subject, held in the Queen Elizabeth Hall in April, was addressed by Mr. Banks on behalf of the Branch. ✗

Free travel on London buses and underground trains has been rejected by the Working Committee of London Boroughs Association. The Committee regards the 20 pence extra on the rates which would be needed to implement the idea as "totally unacceptable". It has also turned down the suggestion for free travel in a restricted ^{inner} area; this would add 10 pence extra on rates throughout Greater London.

✓✗ The TUCC for London has made its report to the Minister on the proposed closure to passenger traffic of the Epping-Ongar line. It is understood that the Committee has stated that unalleviated hardship would arise if the service were withdrawn. ✗

✓✗ A press report in early April stated that British Rail was "actively investigating" the passenger potential on the Oxford-Bicester portion of the former Oxford-Cambridge line. Local representatives had a meeting with railway officials from Oxford and Paddington on this topic. The Oxford-Bletchley route is at present used by a number of freight services. ✗

Northern England

✓✗ In the December, 1970, progress report, it was stated that the Branch had lodged an objection with the TUCC concerning the proposed closure of the Haltwhistle-Alston line. The hearing took place at Alston on 17th February and the Branch was represented by our member Mr. T. R. Dring of Carlisle. The TUCC has since circulated a press release of its findings. This indicated that the Committee had reported to the Minister that severe hardship would be caused to the regular users of the line and to the people in the area who rely on the holiday trade. Closure would also cause a lesser degree of hardship to those who use the line for social purposes. The TUCC also accepted that it is common in winter for there to be periods when Alston has no connection with the outside world except by the railway. It saw no means of alleviating the hardship which would be caused by closure, as the local roads were not suitable for a bus service and any attempt to provide such a service could not be regarded as a reliable alternative.

The improved north Tyneside services between Newcastle and the coast continue to attract a far greater number of passengers than they have done for many years.

It is interesting to note that, at the time the improved service came into operation, the local bus services were being dislocated by an overtime ban and some of the increase in rail passengers was attributed to this. However, the railways have retained a high percentage of their extra passengers and press reports indicate that, during the recent "work to rule," British Rail did not lose many passengers to the buses. Indeed, a spokesman for one of the local bus companies admitted that preparations to deal with extra passengers had proved to be unnecessary.

A further improvement on the north Tyneside line from 13th December, 1970, was the restoration of Sunday trains at Jesmond and West Jesmond on an all-the-year-round basis instead of just during the summer months as has applied since 1964. The Branch has campaigned for this for a long time and present usage of the restored facilities indicates it was justified in so doing. ✕

AREAS

Devon and Cornwall

Following the introduction of the new timetables in May, there will be an increase in conductor-guard working between Exeter St. Davids and Paignton. The stations at Exeter St. Thomas, Starcross, Dawlish Warren and Torre will become unstaffed halts, accompanied by the withdrawal of parcel services. However, Torre will be staffed on summer Saturdays.

✓✕ Our corporate member Ilfracombe UDC is interested in getting the Barnstaple-Ilfracombe line re-opened. A local society has been formed to consider the possibility of purchasing this line from British Rail and of using it as an attraction to summer visitors and steam locomotive enthusiasts. Is anyone else interested in this project?

The Secretary of State for the Environment has agreed to the withdrawal of the passenger service from the Exeter-Okehampton line, subject to the provision of adequate replacement buses. ✕

After a prolonged inquiry, it seems that the Dart Valley Railway Company will not be able to use its section of line between Buckfastleigh and Ashburton as this is needed for a road-widening scheme. Nevertheless, the Company has commenced its summer activities on its existing section (Totnes-Buckfastleigh) with great success.

Greater Manchester and North Lancashire

✓✕ The most encouraging news in this area is that plans for the Piccadilly-Victoria (Manchester) underground link are to be deposited in the next session of Parliament. This scheme would afford through running from the Stockport direction in the south to the Bury line in the north of the city. Members are referred to an article in the April issue of "Modern railways" for a complete description of SELNEC PTE's plans for railways in the Manchester area. ✕

British Rail is to be congratulated on its enterprise in running so many "mystery" and other excursions this spring and early summer under the name of "The Manchester Explorer". The most popular trips have been "holiday preview" specials - not surprising in view of the attractively low fare of £1.50. These "previews" have been run with the co-operation of the holiday resorts

concerned. Places visited have included Eastbourne, Brighton (twice), Bournemouth and Tenby.

The formation of the High Peak Railway Passengers' Association has been welcomed. It is hoped that close co-operation will be maintained between the Association and this Society.

The Society has offered its support to Ribby-with-Wrea Women's Institute in its campaign for the re-opening of Wrea Green and Moss Side stations (on the Blackpool-Kirkham line) as unstaffed halts. Lytham, Ansdell & Fairhaven and Squire's Gate stations (on the same line) have recently been unstaffed.

We have also made contact with Atherton Urban District Council, as a councillor from this town has recently appeared on a TV northern news programme explaining the Council's pro-public transport attitude.

On 26th February the Area was pleased to welcome two members of the committee of the Wessex Branch of the Society and an interesting tour of various lines in the area was undertaken. On 21st February the party travelled to the Liverpool area and, in company of a member in that district, had a further enjoyable tour.

Merseyside

Both Liverpool City Council and the Merseyside Passenger Executive are studying the possibility of free public transport in the conurbation.

✓✗ In an article on Merseyside transport which he contributed to an industrial supplement to the Liverpool Daily Post of 17th February, Mr. Albert Burrows, Director-General of the Merseyside Passenger Transport Executive, stated: "There is no doubt that a rail orientated system of passenger transport for Merseyside will be the most efficient and fastest. It will mean that less has to be spent on building new roads or flyovers and, because the public will be encouraged to use a faster and cheaper system rather than their own cars, the streets in Liverpool and Birkenhead will not be so choked with traffic. From a purely operational viewpoint, it will mean not so many long-distance buses will be required. And trains are not affected by traffic congestion." ✗

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board closed Riverside station, Liverpool, from 1st March. Arising from this, British Rail has announced the proposed withdrawal of passenger services from the Edge Hill-Waterloo Dock line (connection with Mersey Docks and Harbour Board's lines). No scheduled passenger services use this line, but specials to and from Riverside station ran along it.

Southport station has been demolished and is being rebuilt.

As foretold in our last report, British Rail has published a proposal to withdraw the Liverpool Lime Street to Southport passenger service. This is maintained by diesel multiple units.

Our member Mr. P. T. Byrne, of 164, Park Road, Formby, Liverpool, L37 6ES, has suggested in letters to the press that a commuters' union should be formed on Merseyside and has invited those interested in the suggestion to get into touch with him.

Norfolk (North and West)

Norfolk County Council and local authorities in the area are not prepared to subsidise the King's Lynn to Hunstanton route operated by the Eastern Counties Omnibus Co., Ltd. The rail service between the two towns ceased two years ago.

North and Central Wales

Public meetings were held in April to discuss the proposed re-opening of two sections of the Ruabon-Morfa Mawddach line under the auspices of Merioneth County Council which owns the land. The sections are (a) Bala Junction to Llanuwchllyn (4 miles) and (b) Morfa Mawddach to near Dolgellau (7 miles). The Council is willing to lease the two sections to any company or association interested in constructing light railways.

North of Scotland

✓X The public inquiry into the proposed closure of the Dingwall-Kyle of Lochalsh line was held on 17th February. Mr. Torquil Nicolson, who is one of the vice-presidents of this Society, is the chairman of the Kyle Committee, the body formed to fight the proposal. X

OTHER NEWS

✓X Starting late this summer, experimental hovertrains will be tested on a Fenland track near Ely by Track Hovercraft, Ltd. The trains are expected to reach a speed of 300 mph towards the end of next year. X

Lincoln City Council, in co-operation with the Department of the Environment, is to carry out a land/use transportation study in the city. The project will take about two years.

✓X Advance notice has been given by British Rail of a proposal to withdraw the passenger services between Birmingham Snow Hill and Wolverhampton Low Level, also between Snow Hill and Langley Green. If these withdrawals were effected, both Snow Hill and Wolverhampton LL stations would close down entirely. The West Midlands Passenger Transport Executive is not opposing the proposals. Birmingham, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton councils have refused to provide financial assistance after grant-aid ceases. X

British Rail has issued notices proposing closure to passenger traffic of Ashchurch (for Tewkesbury) station, which is served by Cheltenham-Worcester trains. The Society is opposing the proposal.

Cheltenham Borough Council proposed to use the Charlton King's-Leckhampton section of disused railway line for the purposes of road conversion. It has made a similar proposal regarding the railway line which runs through the closed Malvern Road station, through which 30 goods trains at present run daily. The Society is persuading the Council to change its mind over the latter suggestion.

The Secretary of State for the Environment has agreed to the closure of Brent Knoll unstaffed halt, between Highbridge (for Burnham-on-Sea) and Weston-super-Mare stations.

✓ A body has been formed with the object of restarting a service of trains on the Taunton-Minehead line. It is called the Minehead Railway Preservation Society and its secretary is Mr. B.H. Jackson, of Myle Cottage, Ashburnham Avenue, Harrow-on-the-Hill, Middlesex, HA1 2JQ.

The one-thousandth train pulled out of the rail siding at Foster Yeoman's Merehead Quarry (Somerset) on 30th April. Up to eight train-loads of stone each day since last June have gone to destinations all over the country for road and motorway construction.

Withdrawal of the Euston-Stranraer boat train is threatened. As a result, thirteen local authorities in south-west Scotland and the National Union of Railwaymen have joined Stranraer Burgh Council in forming an action committee, as it is feared that the local service between Ayr and Stranraer may also be in danger of withdrawal.

Correction Closure to all traffic of the Lydney-Parkend line (in the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire) has been postponed (see previous progress report p. 12.)

EDITORIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

An apology

Owing to the editor's preoccupation with domestic matters arising from his change of address (see below) and to the incidence of the distributor's holiday, it is regretted that delay has occurred in the production and distribution of this report.

Editor: Mr. L. G. Hipperson, 24a, Cable Road, Hoylake, Wirral, Cheshire, L47 2BD
(Telephone : 051 632 4374)
(Please note change in address)

Sub-Editor: Mr. H. R. Purser, 30, Staines Road, Feltham, Middlesex.

Mr. Purser is responsible for branch and area reports, Mr. Hipperson for all other matter. To ensure inclusion in the next issue (to be published in September, material must be submitted to the appropriate editor so as to reach him by Saturday, 31st July (except that subsequent urgent late news will be accepted by Mr. Hipperson up to 7th August.

PUBLISHED by the RAILWAY INVIGORATION SOCIETY

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General Secretary: Mr. J. M. Stanley, 12, Westcombe Park Road, London, S.E. 3.
Membership Secretary: Mr. D. J. Bradbury, 59 Dore Road, Dore, Sheffield.

MEMBERS ONLY SUPPLEMENT: ISSUE No. 7

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Reports

A booklet containing copies of the reports presented to the annual general meeting held on 24th April is enclosed.

Officers and National Committee, 1971-72

All vice-presidents, as shown at the head of the main progress report, were re-elected.

The following officials were re-elected:-

M. P. L. Caton, Esq., PhD, as Chairman; Mr. J. M. Stanley as General Secretary;
Mr. B. R. Sageman as Treasurer; A. J. C. Read, Esq., FCIS, as Honorary Auditor.

The following were re-elected to the National Committee:-

Mrs. R. Colyer; Messrs. R. V. Banks, E. R. Barbary, J. W. Barfield, D. J. Bradbury,
G. L. Collett, J. M. Firth, L. G. Hipperson, P. I. Lighton, E. H. Longland, R. Macqueen,
G. F. Manley, H. G. M. Rogers, A. W. Sharp, R. H. Whittaker.

Two new members were elected to the National Committee, viz.,
Messrs. P. T. Byrne and N. P. C. Madsen.

In addition, all branch secretaries and area representatives are ex-officio members of the National Committee.

Honorary members

Mr. R. G. Pullen and Mr. A. J. C. Read were elected honorary members in recognition of their services to the Society.

Subscriptions

The meeting accepted the National Committee's recommendation that subscriptions should remain unaltered for the year 1972.

Future annual general meetings

It was decided that future annual general meetings should in general, be held outside London. This was in view of the publicity value of out-of-London meetings and the success which they had in attracting members who might not otherwise attend.

Future policy

Dr. Caton introduced the new policy statement. He said that this was to be sent to the various Ministers concerned with transport and to the Prime Minister, but wider distribution would be arranged later.

A copy of the statement is enclosed.

Mr. R. G. PULLEN

During May, Mr. R. G. Pullen, who was elected an honorary member of the Society at the AGM, left this country to live in Australia. He has been a very stalwart supporter since he joined the RIS thirteen years ago. At one time he was our representative in the West Country. For a long period he was a member of the National Committee and the Society's honorary legal adviser. In the latter capacity he has performed invaluable service in seeing that our affairs have been conducted on the proper lines and he will be especially remembered for his drafting of our constitution. Mr. Pullen has been a member of the Fares Sub-Committee. He has represented the Society on a number of joint committees, such as those for the Ashford/Ore and Lewes/Uckfield lines.

Mr. Pullen's wise and carefully-worded counsels will be much missed on the National Committee and in the Society generally. We wish him every good fortune in his future activities.

BRANCH SECRETARIES AND AREA REPRESENTATIVES

(Amendment to list shown in members only supplement no. 6 (March 1971))

AREAS

Merseyside

For various reasons, Mr. L. G. Hipperson has had to resign as Acting Area Representative. For Society's future organisation in this Area is under active consideration by the Branches and Areas Sub-Committee.

Mr. Hipperson continues as editor of the Society's progress reports and as a member of the National Committee.