

RIS

Railway Invigoration Society

for the retention and modernisation of railway services

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PROGRESS REPORTNo. 101DECEMBER 1974RAIL FARES

According to Letter No. 7 (October 1974) of the Newmarket and District Rail Users' Association, "last winter the cost of petrol went up by over 50%. Rail fares, in comparison, went up a mere 12½% and then not until June".

The document also compares 1974 rail fares and other prices with those of forty years ago. It states that, "according to our recollection, the 1934 single fare from Cambridge to London was about seven shillings. The 1974 fare is £1.44, that is, it has gone up four times. Also, according to our recollection, the cost of cars has gone up about ten times, of clothes, food, beer, tobacco and petrol by similar amounts and houses probably more. You can all make your own comparisons. Can you think of anything that has gone up between 1934 and 1974 by so little as rail fares?"

(Reproduced by permission of the Newmarket and District Rail Users' Association, the Secretary of which is Mr. D. Maudlin, Treasurer of the Railway Invigoration Society).

BOOK REVIEW

Railway ribaldry: being 96 pages of railway humour, by W. Heath Robinson
Duckworth, 1974, £3.25 ISBN 0 7156 0823 1.

William Heath Robinson (1872-1944), "whose name passed into the English language during his lifetime", produced, at the request of the Great Western Railway, a book of drawings to mark the Company's centenary in 1935. Almost forty years after its first publication, this delightful work appears again, with an up-to-date foreward.

Although the Railway Invigoration Society supports the modernisation of railways, many of its members must look back with nostalgia to the days before the inter-city train and the ubiquitous diesel multiple-unit, to the steam locomotive and the numerous branch lines wandering across the countryside. For such, and indeed for all who appreciate the mock-serious presentation of the absurd at the hands of a superb draughtsman, this is a book to be looked at again and again.

The generous-sized pages enables one to study fully the wonderful detail contained in such gems as "Mr. W. Heath Robinson's own private railway engine", "Building the first locomotive", "The new humane cow-catcher" and "The first smoking carriage".

RIS 21st BIRTHDAY DINNER

As announced in our last issue, the twentyfirst anniversary of the foundation of the Railway Invigoration Society is to be marked by a dinner to be held at the Charing Cross Hotel, London, on Friday evening, 25th April, 1975. Time; to be announced. The event will be open to both ladies and gentlemen. Members may bring guests. Dress for gentlemen: lounge suits.

On the day following the dinner, the twentysecond annual general meeting of the Society will be held, also in London.

WHAT OTHER SOCIETIES ARE DOING

(Readers are asked to kindly mention this feature when writing to any of the addresses given below).

Midland and Great Northern Joint Railway Society was formed in 1959 with the aim of preserving a stretch of the former M. & G. N. Joint Railway. Eventually, the Sheringham-Weybourne section was selected and the North Norfolk Railway project started. The trains are run by a public company, the North Norfolk Railway Co. Ltd. in which the Society has a large holding.

From Sheringham the line runs along the north Norfolk coast, within sight of the sea for most of its length, to Weybourne. Plans are in hand to extend the line through more of this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty up over Kelling Heath to the outskirts of Holt. The historic J15 loco is being fully restored and it is hoped that this will be hauling trains next year. Six films have been made on the railway this year.

Further information obtainable from Secretary, M. & G. N. Joint Railway Society, Sheringham Station, Sheringham, Norfolk.

Main Line Steam Trust Ltd., has been running steam trains at weekends, since 14th July, between Loughborough Central and Quorn and Woodhouse stations, a distance of 2½ miles. Further information obtainable from Secretary, Main Line Steam Trust Ltd., Central Station, Loughborough, Leicestershire.

North York Moors Historical Railway Trust Ltd., has been granted permission by the Secretary for the Environment to use Pickering station as a terminus for its service from Grosmont (18 miles). The former Pickering Urban District Council had wanted to demolish the station and to use the site as a car park. Hitherto, the North York Moors Railway has used a temporary terminus 400 yards short of the station. Further information obtainable from Secretary, N. Y. M. Historical Railway Trust Ltd., Pickering Station, Pickering, North Yorkshire.

GENERAL ELECTION

Dr. M. P. L. Caton, RIS Chairman, sent a questionnaire to selected candidates in the October general election. Some useful contacts have resulted.

IN PARLIAMENTSelections from the official reportsHouse of CommonsQuestions and answers

SSE = Secretary of State for the Environment.

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

19th June Railways (Government grants) Mr. Moate (Faversham) asked the SSE what has been annual cost of financial support from the Government for British Rail, showing separately capital grants, other operating grants and deficit funding, for the last five years, and what are the expected payments for the current year. Mr. Carmichael Government grants to the British Railways Board were for the period mentioned, by calendar years :

	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	£ million 1974 (estimated) *
(i) Capital Grants :						
Transport Act 1968 (Section 56)	0.3	0.4	0.7	9.2	14.3	17.0
(ii) Operating Grants :						
Transport Act 1968 ;						
(Section 20)	-	-	-	-	13.8	8.3
(Section 39)	50.6	65.6	61.1	68.1	59.4	95.4
(Section 40)	11.3	14.8	8.5	-	10.3	1.2
(Section 57)	0.2	0.7	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.8
Transport (Grants) Act 1972	-	-	-	27.0	-	-
(iii) Special Grants :						
Cashflow Shortfall Grant	-	-	-	32.0	72.0	172.1
Totals	<u>62.4</u>	<u>81.5</u>	<u>71.9</u>	<u>138.0</u>	<u>171.4</u>	<u>295.8</u>

* includes supplementary provision shortly to be laid before Parliament.

22nd June East coast main line (electrification) Mr. Albert Roberts (Normanton) asked the SSE what plans he has to give his consent to the electrification of the rail service between King's Cross Station and the West Yorkshire metropolitan area; and what likelihood there is of electrification being completed within the next decade. Mr. Mulley The Railways Board has not yet sought my consent to such a proposal. But I understand that it hopes to electrify the east coast main line by the 1980s.

* 3rd July Passenger trains (punctuality) Mr. Teddy Taylor (Glasgow, Cathcart) asked the SSE what percentage of passenger trains arrived at their destinations on time or within five minutes of their scheduled arrival times, respectively, in 1973; and what were the comparable percentage figures in 1972 and 1971 ... Does the Minister agree that British Rail's record has been improving, despite an improvement in the scheduled time in the inter-city services? Bearing in mind the substantial proposed increases in air fares between Glasgow and London, Aberdeen and London and Edinburgh and London, does the hon. Gentleman accept that the railways will in future be carrying a much bigger share of this inter-city traffic and that a further improvement in punctuality is therefore to be encouraged? Mr. Carmichael I agree with the hon. Gentleman. Quite apart from the increase in fares, an increase in traffic on the railways can be expected because of the greatly improved service on the west coast route between Glasgow and London. There has been a very slight deterioration in time-keeping in the past three years, because of one or two exceptional circumstances which we hope will disappear very quickly.

Mr. Spriggs (St. Helens) Is my hon. Friend aware that the British Railways Board is now operating one of the finest passenger services in the world and that many of us hope for a great extension of those services to all parts of the country, including Scotland? Mr. Carmichael ... I am well aware of the improved and excellent service that British Rail provides. It is certainly among the best in the world. I use the service to Scotland quite frequently and I can recommend it to hon. Members. ... The following information has been provided by the Railways Board :

Percentage of Passenger Trains

Year	Express Trains		Other Trains	
	on time per cent	Within 5 minutes of scheduled arrival time per cent	on time per cent	Within 5 minutes of scheduled arrival time per cent
1971	68	85	83	95
1972	65	83	81	94
1973	63	81	81	93

23rd July Railways Mr. Eldon Griffiths (Bury St. Edmunds) asked the SSE if he will provide a table for the 10-year period 1964-74 of the number of route miles of the British rail system, the annual number of passengers and tons of freight carried, the numbers of staff employed and their expected annual wages, together with most recent figures available to him under these or comparable headings for the railway systems of the other EEC countries. (We regret space does not allow reproduction of these figures. Ed.)

Mr. Eldon Griffiths asked the SSE if he will publish a table in the OFFICIAL REPORT for the 10-year period 1964-74 of the annual subsidy paid to British Railways in respect of the unremunerative services, contributions to the London commuter network and other capital costs of the commercial railway, and the overall profit and loss account, together with the most recent figures available to him under these or comparable headings for the railway system of other EEC countries. Mr. Mulley Following is the information for British Railways :

	(£ Million)				
	1964-65	1965-66	1966-67	1967-68	1968-69
Unremunerative railway passenger services	-	-	-	-	-
Commuter railway capital projects	-	-	-	-	0.2
Other (details below)	<u>119.4</u>	<u>130.4</u>	<u>148.2</u>	<u>175.4</u>	<u>158.0</u>
Total payment to BRB	<u>119.4</u>	<u>130.4</u>	<u>148.2</u>	<u>175.4</u>	<u>158.2</u>
OTHER					
Revenue deficit	119.4	130.4	136.0	154.1	133.8
Surplus track	-	-	-	-	-
Research and development	-	-	-	-	-
Compensation in respect of price restraint	-	-	-	-	-
Cash flow shortfall	-	-	-	-	-
Level crossing modernisation	-	-	-	-	-
SET rebate and REP	-	-	12.2	21.3	24.2
	<u>119.4</u>	<u>130.4</u>	<u>148.2</u>	<u>175.4</u>	<u>158.0</u>
	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
Unremunerative railway passenger services	71.1	60.5	65.2	66.3	83.5
Commuter railway capital projects	0.4	0.3	1.3	11.1	14.3
Other (details below)	<u>47.1</u>	<u>44.9</u>	<u>29.4</u>	<u>93.7</u>	<u>99.2</u>
Total payment to BRB	<u>118.6</u>	<u>105.7</u>	<u>95.9</u>	<u>171.1</u>	<u>197.0</u>
OTHER					
Revenue deficit	2.0	-	-	-	-
Surplus track	15.0	12.0	7.5	8.5	1.8
Research and development	0.5	1.1	1.6	1.4	1.8
Compensation in respect of price restraint	-	-	-	27.0	-
Cash flow shortfall	-	-	-	42.0	95.0
Level crossing modernisation	-	0.7	0.1	-	-
SET rebate and REP	<u>29.6</u>	<u>31.1</u>	<u>20.2</u>	<u>14.8</u>	<u>0.6</u>
	<u>47.1</u>	<u>44.9</u>	<u>29.4</u>	<u>93.7</u>	<u>99.2</u>

Figures on a comparable basis for other railway systems are not available.

* 24th July Rates (local railway services) Mr. Trotter (Tynemouth) asked the SSE if he will introduce legislation to amend section 20 of the Transport Act, 1968, so as to remove the rate burden on areas with passenger transport executives in relation to local railway services.

Mr. Mulley No, Sir ... There is no reason why the metropolitan counties should not make a

contribution which is assessable for transport supplementary grant for rail services, if, as I understand, they use them as part of their total transport pattern, particularly for travel-to-work journeys. In the non-metropolitan counties it is not usually possible to use rail services to the same extent. But under section 203 of the Local Government Act, 1972, non-metropolitan counties can, if they wish, make arrangements similar to those of the metropolitan counties.

BRIDPORT BRANCH LINE

RIS member Mr. D. Rootham states that a group of Dorset residents are so concerned about the neglect of the Bridport branch line that they are publishing at their own expense a publicity leaflet for the line. In addition to a timetable and map of the Bridport line, the leaflet also has a map of Dorset's other railways. Single copies can be obtained free of charge by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the following address :- Mr. Dan Rootham (BBL leaflet), Peverell, Bradford Peverell, Dorchester, Dorset. Bulk supplies for societies and amenity groups are available from the same address at a cost of 85p. per fifty leaflets (post free). X

REPORTS FROM BRANCHES AND AREAS

BRANCHES

London and Home Counties

The 1974 annual general meeting of the Branch was held at Friends' Meeting House, London on 17th September with, regrettably, a poorer attendance than in previous years.

X The organisation of special excursions on London Midland Region was the subject of a talk given by Mr. Percy Danks, of the LMR Public Relations Office, at a branch meeting on 21st November. On Thursday, 30th January, 1975, Mr. J. R. Ogilvie will present a lecture entitled "Southern into Europe" at a branch meeting to be held in the Caxton Hall at 6.45 p. m. X

X The Branch committee is concerned over the delay in the publication of the London Rail Study report. The Study, set up nearly two years ago under the chairmanship of Sir David Barron, was expected to be completed within a year, although, not surprisingly, this has proved to be too optimistic. In anticipation of possible publication by the new year, a special sub-committee has been formed to obtain and consider in detail the report when it is published and to make preliminary observations before producing a more comprehensive reply. The branch committee attaches a great deal of importance to a study of this kind. X

The branch committee has noted that the October supplement to the British Rail timetable has not yet fully corrected the Marylebone-Aylesbury line table, particularly in respect of the London Transport train times, for which the pre-June 1973 information is still shown; also that no new local timetable has yet been produced to replace the one issued in May which was withdrawn from circulation owing to numerous errors and omissions. The branch is conducting correspondence with British Rail on these matters.

✓
✗ The granting of an office development permit to British Rail enables plans to go ahead for the joint rebuilding of Liverpool Street and Broad Street stations at a cost of £120 million. A completely new station at Liverpool Street will cope with existing services, future growth, and the transfer of those Broad Street services which will remain after the Great Northern electrification scheme has been completed. Under the new railway station will be a new bus station and improved car access. Interchange with the Underground will be improved also. The redevelopment, which is expected to take ten years, will be the largest ever undertaken at a UK main-line rail terminal. ✗

Official proposed withdrawal of railway passenger services notices have been posted regarding lines which will no longer be required when stage one of the Great Northern electrification scheme is inaugurated in 1976. Only closure of one station (York Road, King's Cross) is proposed, as the Metropolitan widened lines to Moorgate will continue to be used by trains from Luton.

A revised timetable on the Liverpool Street-Southend/Clacton/East Anglia lines is to be introduced from May 1975. The new services are designed to take into account changes in patronage on these lines, especially during peak hours when the number of commuters is decreasing at inner suburban stations but increasing at stations in north and east Essex.

It is pleasing to report that 64 of the 115 trains cancelled daily by the Southern Region last spring have been restored. The end of staff summer holidays and the improved recruitment have both helped the staffing situation, although the position is still serious in the South Eastern Division.

A new station is to be built at Sevenoaks (Kent) at a cost of £637,000. Work, which is expected to begin early in 1975, will occupy two years.

At Reading station, work has started on the provision of an additional platform to help handle Southern electric services to the eastern side of the station. At present, a single platform is dealing with the half-hourly service to Waterloo via Staines and the hourly service to Tonbridge.

Bracknell (Berkshire) station is to be rebuilt. The cost of £1,300,000 is to be shared by the town's development corporation and British Rail.

East Anglian

✓
✗ Forty people attended the public meeting organised by the Branch in East Dereham (Norfolk) on 19th October to discuss the proposed re-opening to passengers of the Wymondham-Dereham-Fakenham line. After an informative and constructive discussion, the meeting decided to support efforts to re-open the line and set up a committee of local people (chaired by an RIS member in Dereham) to pursue the campaign. County council members, district councils, parish councils and MPs are among those who have expressed an interest in the proposal.

In August the Branch published a 9-page interim report entitled "By rail to Fakenham?"

This puts the case for re-opening the line and discusses the problems involved. Over 80 copies have been issued. A similar, but shorter report, on the Wroxham-Aylsham line, called "By rail to Aylsham?", has also been published. Both reports have received wide and generally favourable publicity. On the Aylsham proposal, the "Eastern Evening News" (6.9.74) published a favourable editorial, which ended: "It has been pointed out that this stretch of line has never had a chance of proving itself with a rail car passenger service. Perhaps now is the right moment to try." ✕

The Branch has submitted eight pages of comments on the Suffolk County Council's transport policy and programme, 1975-6. Recommendations made by the Branch include the opening or re-opening of certain halts; better rail-bus co-ordination; better publicity for services; opposition to any singling of the East Suffolk line; but support for automation of further level crossings; and encouraging the sending of more freight by rail.

Suffolk County Council hopes to provide a five-year grant towards the continuance of passenger services on the Colchester-Sudbury line.

The Branch has written to the Civil Aviation Authority objecting to the proposed introduction of flights from Norwich Airport to London; the Midlands and South Wales. We believe that this Airport (already unpopular with many local residents) should, if it is to remain, concentrate on continental traffic and that improved inter-city trains should cater for internal passengers.

A joint letter from the local secretaries of the RIS and Transport 2000 recently appeared in many East Anglian newspapers. It criticised the running of express coach services on routes parallel to inter-city trains and called for co-operation, not competition, between bus and rail services.

✓✕ The survey of potential users of a restored March-Wisbech passenger service - a massive operation whereby questionnaires went to all households in the area - has been completed and the results should be known soon. ✕

✓✕ British Rail has issued detailed figures which show that on most pay-train lines in East Anglia, at least 5% more tickets are being issued in 1974 than during last year. On the Ipswich-Bury St. Edmunds-Newmarket-Cambridge service the increase is 13%. But a 9% decrease has been registered on the Felixstowe branch, where we understand British Rail intends to carry out further market research. ✕

There is a possibility of special consignments of grain being sent by rail from Halesworth (Suffolk). A group of farmers plan to build a 15,000 ton grain store next to the line north of the station.

✓✕ Three Counties (Gloucestershire and the united county of Hereford and Worcester)

This Branch has continued its policy of actively supporting local demands for restoration and improvement of rail services.

At Stonehouse (between Stroud and Gloucester), as a result of strenuous efforts by the

parish council, supported by the Branch, not only has closure of the station been averted, but a much improved service has been introduced - although not all that we asked for. An attractive and helpful publicity leaflet has been distributed by British Rail to every household in the community and refurbishing of the station has begun. None of this was likely to have happened without substantial financial support from the parish council.

At Charfield (between Gloucester and Bristol), the parish council is interested in the re-opening of the station to cater for commuter and social traffic to the Bristol area. The Branch has given advice to the council, which is carrying out a survey to assess likely demand. Here, as at Stonehouse, it is very probable that no progress will be made without a substantial local financial contribution.

At Pershore (between Worcester and Evesham), the Branch is supported by a local parish council (Pinvin) in urging a drastic improvement in the passenger train service over the present single stopping train per day. In this case, the station is in working order and the trains pass through. All that is needed is a British Rail decision to stop some of them.

At Bromsgrove (between Worcester and Birmingham), the Branch, in conjunction with other local action groups, is trying to get British Rail to recast the Worcester-Birmingham service so as to provide trains to serve this fast-growing community. The service is at present derisory.

At Ashchurch (between Cheltenham and Worcester/Birmingham) the Branch is interested in re-opening the station to provide a service for Ashchurch itself (which has considerable industry) and nearby Tewkesbury.

The Branch has decided not to oppose British Rail's plan to amalgamate all Gloucester passenger services at a reconstructed Central station, as it appears that no deterioration in services would result and that the possibility of expansion in the future would not be ruled out. ✕

Wessex

✓✕ RIS member Mr. J. Honeysett, representing Transport 2000, appeared at the public enquiry at Portsmouth Guildhall on 1st November concerning the South Hampshire Structure Plan. On behalf of the Railway Invigoration Society, Mr. P. Madsen has endorsed the objection raised by Transport 2000 that the Structure Plan fails to mention the advantages of third-rail electrification of the Portsmouth-Southampton line. The Plan even proposed that this route be considered as a "segregated transport link" and on this point Transport 2000 and British Rail are opposed to the Structure Plan. ✕

AREAS

North-Eastern England

✓✕ Our correspondent in Newcastle-upon-Tyne reports :-
 The Government has approved the scheme for a £500,000 road from Haltwhistle to Alston and it is expected that work will go ahead immediately. It is thought that the line may close in the spring of 1975. However, prior to this news, Cumbria County Council did not accept that the decision to close this line should be regarded as final. Following a cost/benefit analysis by

its Planning Department, the Council has asked the Department of the Environment to re-consider the closure decision. It is also contacting British Rail and has asked Northumberland County Council to support it. X

✓X Transport chiefs for Tyne and Wear Metropolitan County have agreed to cut next year's Metro building programme by £4 million, because they do not believe that they can spend money fast enough to keep up with their original schedule. It is almost certain that this will put the finishing date beyond the original target of 1979 and it is now likely that, instead of a grand opening of the complete system, there may be a gradual process of opening one section at a time. X

Durham County Council is considering the re-opening of rural lines closed by the Beeching Plan. The Council wants to improve existing train services by providing new bus-rail interchanges.

North-Western England

✓X A one-day inquiry into the proposal by British Rail Shipping to withdraw its ferry service between Heysham and Belfast was held in Morecambe on 29th October. It was not possible for the Railway Inigation Society to be represented on this occasion, but previously a formal objection in writing had been lodged with the North-Western Area Transport Users' Consultative Committee on behalf of the Society by its General Secretary. On the general effect of withdrawal, the Society's grounds of objection were that the alternative service from Stranraer to Larne, with its present circuitous rail connection via Ayr, could not be considered as a wholly satisfactory alternative for passengers from England. Furthermore, in the short term a worsening of terrorist activities could well lead to a cessation, if only temporary, of air-line services. Our letter stressed that "the general situation in Northern Ireland has had an adverse effect upon travel potential on this route (Heysham-Belfast) and, unless it is considered that the situation will continue indefinitely, the profitability of the service must be viewed in this light". Regarding the effect on connecting rail services, the Society argued that it was clear that withdrawal of passenger shipping services would be accompanied by a similar withdrawal of the rail facilities from Camforth and Morecambe to Heysham, together with the long-distance services from London, Manchester and Leeds, and would place in doubt the future of the Helli-field-Camforth line as well as the Leeds-Morecambe and Lancaster-Morecambe local services. X

British Rail recently introduced a through Railfreight service for full wagon-load traffic from Manchester to Frankfurt and Mannheim in Germany. The wagons cross to the Continent by Sealink's Harwich-Zeebrugge train ferry.

British Rail's report on two loss-making suburban lines in the Manchester area - mentioned in the last progress report - is entitled "Social cost/benefit study of two suburban surface rail passenger services" and may be obtained from British Rail (London Midland Region), Regional HQ, Euston House, Eversholt Street, London, NW1 1DF.

✓X Work on the construction of the inner loop line at Liverpool has fallen behind schedule.

In view of this, British Rail has announced that, in the middle of 1975, it may be necessary to terminal trains from the Wirral at St. James Station instead of Liverpool Central. BR adds that "every effort will be made to keep the period of interruption of the normal service as short as possible". ✕

Consideration is being given to the removal of Upton-by-Chester station to Bache, a quarter of a mile from the present site. The new site would afford much better car parking facilities and is within walking distance of a much larger population.

A new private rail siding to serve Bewsey Works of the British Steel Corporation was opened at Warrington on 22nd October. About fourteen trains a week are scheduled to run into the new siding.

On the late summer bank holiday, 26th August, Little Sutton and Ellesmere Port stations, on the Hooton to Helsby line, were opened, because of public demand. On previous bank holidays, these stations have been closed.

Fylde District Council (Lancs.) has asked British Rail to provide a better train service between Kirkham and Squires Gate, with stops at the villages of Moss Side and Wrea Green, both of which lost their passenger service in 1961.

OTHER NEWS

The research project on tracked hovercraft which was being carried out near Earith, Cambridgeshire, by Tracked Hovercraft Ltd., has now ceased, owing to the withdrawal of Government financial support. However, Government money may be made available for the development of a similar system at Sussex University, where, for the past nine years, a team has been experimenting with vehicles suspended magnetically from fixed rails and driven by linear induction motors. So far this work has been financed by the Wolfson Foundation, but the grant from this source is expected to last only until next year.

The double tracks between Didcot and Bristol (via Bath) and between Swindon and the outskirts of Bristol (via Badminton) are to be resignalled in a £1¼ million scheme, so that trains will be able to run in either direction on both lines. Existing colour light signals will be modified to control new high-speed crossovers linking the normal up and down lines at strategic points, enabling trains to be switched from one line to the other as required.

British Region has announced a £25 million track improvement and resignalling scheme to cover 84 miles of track on the east coast main line. The linch-pin of the project will be a new power signal-box at Doncaster. Track will be re-aligned for maximum speeds of 100-125 m. p. h. To prevent interference with the faster services on the main line, flyovers are planned at Doncaster and Newark to carry services from Lincoln to Sheffield and Crewe respectively. As a result of the completion of these and other schemes, the journey time between London and Newcastle will be reduced to three hours.

Further north on the east coast main line, plans have been finished for a new power-operated

signal-box at Waverley station, Edinburgh. When completed in about 1978, the new box will control 110 route miles and will replace 30 manually-operated signal boxes. It will permit 100 m.p. h. running for the first time between Edinburgh and Berwick.

British Rail has held a competition to find a name for the new station to be built at Bickenhill - on the Birmingham-Coventry line - to serve the National Exhibition Centre. The winning entry was : Birmingham International.

A new station has been built at Kidderminster at a cost of £75,000.

A new rail-connected warehouse for household domestic appliances from Italy has been opened at Alsager, on the Stoke-Crewe line. Supplies arrive in continental ferry wagons direct from factories in Turin and Naples and are distributed from the warehouse to all parts of North-West England.

A 12-year contract for the carriage of iron ore from Immingham to steel works at Scunthorpe has been secured by British Rail. 13 trains a day are required to fulfill the undertaking.

Bridgend station, in South Wales, is to be rebuilt at a cost of £175,000 in preparation for the running of high-speed trains.

Approval has been given by the Secretary of State for Scotland to a 75% Government infrastructure towards the £15 million cost of carrying out the first stage of the Clyderail scheme, which has been planned jointly by British Rail and the Greater Glasgow PTE. An outline of the complete scheme was given in progress report no. 97 (December 1973), p. 14.

At East Kilbride, a new bus/rail commuter scheme has been introduced by Greater Glasgow PTE in co-operation with British Rail and the Scottish Bus Group. Non-stop express trains run between East Kilbride and Glasgow and are served by two bus feeder services. Through tickets for the combined journey are available.

The report in our last issue that Sunday trains have been introduced to Blantyre, Hamilton and Bellshill for the first time was, we regret, based on an inaccurate press release from Scottish Region. A letter in the November issue of the Railway Magazine points out that various Sunday services have been provided for these stations in the past.

STOP PRESS. Magdalen Road station (midway between King's Lynn and Downham Market, Norfolk) is to be re-opened. Date not yet known. Further details will appear in our next issue.

EDITORIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

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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 March, 1975) material must be submitted to the appropriate editor by Saturday, 25th January, 1975

PUBLISHED by the RAILWAY INVIGORATION SOCIETY

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RAILWAY INVIGORATION SOCIETY

PROGRESS REPORT No. 101

DECEMBER 1974

MEMBERS ONLY SUPPLEMENT: ISSUE No. 21

21st BIRTHDAY DINNER

Further to the information about the Society's anniversary dinner contained in the main progress report (p 2), we direct the attention of members to the following combined return rail journey/hotel (bed and breakfast) facilities available for visitors to London :-

1. One night mini-break.
2. Mini-holidays - minimum 2 nights in hotel (1 for travellers from Scotland); choice of 17 centrally-situated hotels.
3. Winterbreak weekend - minimum 2 nights in hotel (1 for travellers from Ireland); choice of four British Transport hotels, including the Charing Cross Hotel.

Leaflets giving full details of these arrangements may be obtained from either railway inquiry offices or travel agencies.

The cost per head for the dinner is expected to be about £5. Every endeavour will be made to restrict to a minimum any excess over this figure.

Members who wish to be sent further details of the arrangements for the dinner are asked to kindly complete the form enclosed with this members only supplement and to send it, at their earliest convenience, to our Press and Publicity Officer. The form may also be used to make provisional bookings.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

The Publicity Sub-Committee thanks all those members who replied to the questionnaire which was enclosed with our last members only supplement. The response far exceeded expectations. Many constructive suggestions were made and these are all being carefully considered by the Sub-Committee.

TIMETABLES

The Executive Committee has noted with concern the various shortcomings of the British Rail "all-system" timetable, e.g., format, errors, short supply. The views of members are invited. Please send these to Mr. P. G. Scott (one of the Society's assistant secretaries), 11, Duffield Close, Harrow, Middlesex, HA1 2LG.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

A subscription renewal form for 1975 is enclosed. If you have not done so already, would you kindly assist the Membership Secretary by sending him your remittance without delay.

KNOW YOUR REPRESENTATIVE !

The following is an amendment to the information given in Members only supplement No. 19 (June 1974) :-

BRANCHES

West Yorkshire

Mr. L. Schofield has resigned as Branch Secretary. The Acting Branch Secretary is Mr. P. T. Stevenson, of 57, Primley Park Crescent, Alwoodley, Leeds, LS17 7HY.

TRANSPORT IN METROPOLITAN AREAS

A meeting of representative RIS members from metropolitan areas, to review transport developments in those areas, was held in Birmingham on 7th December. A full report of the meeting will appear in our next issue.