

# S R U B L U K

## *The Society for the Reinvigoration of Unremunerative Branch Lines in the United Kingdom*

### *The Branch Line Reinvigoration Society*

PROGRESS REPORT - DECEMBER 1960/JANUARY 1961.

A Happy New Year to all our members.

SUBSCRIPTIONS - 1961. The Annual subscription of 10/6 (6/- for members aged under 21 on January 1st) is now due. The Committee hopes that everyone will make a special effort to send their subscription promptly to the Membership Secretary (whose address appears at the end of this circular) and that those who are able will include a donation. Application form is at bottom of page 4.

REINVIGORATION PARTY. It has been decided not to hold a public meeting, as mentioned in the October/November Circular, but instead another Reinvigoration Party has been arranged. This will take place on Saturday February 25th and will include the Hatfield-Luton, Luton-Leighton Buzzard, Northampton-Bedford, and Bedford-Hitchin branches. The party will assemble at the Main Line Booking Office, King's Cross, at 11:15 am.

The schedule is as follows:-

King's Cross	dep 11:30 am	Northampton	arr 2:36 pm
Welwyn Garden City	arr 11:59		dep 3:30
	dep 12:14 pm	Bedford	arr 4:11
Dunstable(North)	arr 1:7		dep 4:28
	dep 1:16	Hitchin	arr 4:58
Leighton Buzzard	arr 1:31		dep 5:14
	dep 1:44	King's Cross	arr 6:7 pm

A party ticket has been arranged and all those intending to go are asked to send the fare of 22/6d (half fare if aged under 14), to the membership secretary who will forward a receipt.

The local press and local authorities in the areas served by these branch lines are being notified beforehand of this event.

COLNE VALLEY REINVIGORATION PARTY - PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT. In view of the threat of closure hanging over the Colne Valley Line and neighbouring lines it has been decided to hold a Reinvigoration Party in this area on Saturday June 10th. The details will be announced later.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. The Annual General Meeting will take place at 7:15 pm on Wednesday April 26th. All members are asked to note this date and do their best

to attend. The place where it is to be held will be announced in the next circular.

RECENT PROCEEDING OF THE COMMITTEE OF GENERAL INTEREST.

West Drayton-Uxbridge Branch. It was mentioned in an earlier Progress Report that the Western Region had been examining a SRUBLUK communication regarding the lack of nameboards outside the stations on this line. As a result of this we are pleased to be able to say that suitable notices have been erected at Cowley Station. It is hoped that they will soon appear at Uxbridge.

Colne Valley Line. The case for the closure of the Colne Valley Line in Essex is to be heard by the Transport Users' Consultative Committee for the East Anglian Area on February 14th. It is intended to withdraw passenger facilities from the whole line i.e., between Chappel & Wakes Colne, and Faverhill, and to close the Faverhill to Yeldham Section completely.

Much local opposition has been aroused by these proposals which would affect 23,500 people. The population of Halstead, the largest town served by the line, is expected to almost double before long. SRUBLUK feel that there is a strong case here for adequate rail services and have communicated with Halstead and District Chamber of Trade offering assistance in opposing the closure. This has been gladly accepted and we are pleased to report that the Chamber of Trade has become a member of SRUBLUK. An objection is being prepared and will be submitted to the Consultative Committee.

Mr. R.A. Butler, whose constituency includes Halstead, has protested to Sir Brian Robertson about the closure.

Long Melford-Bury St. Edmunds. The proposed closure of this line was heard by the T.U.C.C. on November 8th and was accepted with the proviso that the section to be closed completely (Lavenham to Long Melford) be retained for at least one year in case it be found necessary to rehabilitate the service in the light of any recommendation by the Government Committee investigating Railway Problems. Further representations may be made by the local authorities to the Central Consultative Committee.

It was stated that the line is unremunerative but SRUBLUK were not aware that any figure had been quoted. We therefore wrote to the T.U.C.C. to enquire about this and were told that the annual loss was £6,261. This is not a very considerable sum to pay for a public service - perhaps it is not surprising that it was not publicised.

NEWS OF OTHER BRANCHES.

Traders in Swaffham, Norfolk, are very concerned about suggestions that the King's Lynn to Norwich line may close. They are seeking the support of their M.P. The President of the Chamber of Trade has stated that the closure would have a very serious and detrimental effect on the business life of the town.

SRUBLUK hear from Mr. Hipperson that notices have been posted on the Ashchurch to Upton on Severn line regarding application to the T.U.C.C. for withdrawal of passenger services. We understand from Mr. Bellows that there is no prospect of the neighbouring Ashchurch to Evesham line being closed in the near future. The line does not, however, appear to be well patronised and most connections with other services seem quite hopeless.

The Consultative Committee have approved the closure of the Louth to Mablethorpe line via Grinoldby with the result that both passenger and freight facilities were discontinued on December 5th. Louth and Mablethorpe will still be linked by rail via Willoughby.

We understand that the reprieve given to the Banbury to Buckingham branch ended on January 2nd when the line was due to close.

Tenbury Rural District Council are concerned about the closure of the Bewdley to Woolferton service.

The line over the Pennines from Barnard Castle to Penrith formed the subject of a four-hour meeting on December 9th when its closure was considered for the second time by the Transport Users Consultative Committees of the North-East and the North-West Areas. A final decision has, however, still not been reached and the matter has been deferred for another month. Although the P.T.C. state that the through freight traffic has been satisfactorily diverted, there is much concern over the withdrawal of the passenger service. It was pointed out at the meeting that this is not a small branch line connecting a few isolated villages but is a link connecting Teesside and County Durham to the Lake District and North Lancashire. Its closure together with that of the Midland Line between Carlisle and Hellifield, also threatened, would leave an area of 500 square miles without any railway service.

The Penrith to Cockermouth branch via Keswick has recently been given a reprieve but would suffer considerably if the Barnard Castle to Penrith line were closed since it draws many of its passengers from this route.

A second attempt is being made by the B.T.C. to withdraw the Gravesend to Allhallows and Grain services. The first attempt at closure failed last June.

ACTIVITIES OF OTHER SOCIETIES.

BRASS Devon Railway Society - Special Attrraction Weekend, March 6th.

A preliminary notice of this appeared in the last Progress Report. Details are as follows:-

- Saturday March 4th - 12:30 pm Conducted Tour of Newton Abbot Motive Power Depot.
- 2: 0 pm Brake Van Trip on the Teign Valley Line - Fare 12/6d.  
(Applications to Mr. E.G.Parrott, 5 Old Mill Road, Chelston, Torquay.)
- 6: 0 pm The Society's Annual General Meeting.
- 7:30 pm Free film show and colour slide display of the Moretonhampstead branch line.

Sunday March 5th - Coach trip to Hay Tor Granite Railway by way of the Society's Headquarters, Teigngrace Halt - depart Newton Abbot station at 11 am. Applications for this should be sent to Mr. Benson, Benmay, Foxhole Road, Chelston, Torquay.

Branch Line Society.

A special train is being organised by the Branch Line Society on Sunday March 12th and will cover a number of lines in the London Area. Anyone interested will be welcome.

The train will depart from St. Pancras at about 2 pm and will run via the North London Incline, Camden Road, Primrose Hill, and Willesden to Watford and then to Rickmansworth (Church Street). After reversal it will then proceed via Watford Junction to St. Albans (Abbey), reverse again, run to Hatfield and then via G.W. Main Line to Finsbury Park. The route will continue by way of Canonbury, Broneston Jct., Victoria Park and Lee Bridge (avoiding Stratford Station), South Tottenham, Highgate Road Jct., Kentish Town Jct., and back to St. Pancras.

The cost, including itinerary, will be 17/-, and applications, together with remittance, should be sent as soon as possible to Mr. J.M.Firth, 22 Ingham Road, London, N.W.6, and should enclose a stamped addressed foolscap envelope.

Chairman - Mr. C.F.Manley, 42 Fillsborough Court, London, N.W.6.  
Membership Secretary - Mr. J.P.Groves, 46 Stonepark Avenue, Beckenham, Kent.  
Editor - Dr. M.P.L.Caton, 10 Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster, Essex.

The Membership Secretary, SRUPLUK,  
46 Stonepark Avenue, Beckenham, Kent.

Ren/61.

Please renew my membership for 1961. I enclose subscription of 10/6/6/-  
(Junior Member) and also a donation of.....  
Name (BLOCK CAPITALS).....

Date..... Address.....