

Remembering Brian

A bench, presented by Railfuture, and inscribed in the memory of Brian James Hastings was unveiled at Crowle station on 23 February. Brian, who passed away in February 2015, was a former Lincolnshire branch chairman who had spent a lifetime campaigning for better public transport in all forms. After a career as a teacher Brian took early retirement then went to work in the rail industry and used his comprehensive knowledge of fares, ticketing and the rail network to run a booking office. The formal unveiling was done by Peter Myers, Client and Stakeholder Manager Northern Rail, who had known Brian for many years and was a former colleague. It was watched by many of his Railfuture Lincolnshire branch colleagues and friends from Crowle, where Brian was a long standing councillor and former Mayor.

Photographs: Lincs branch members and the bench; Pete Myers, Eric Dinsdale Mayor of Crowle and branch committee member Sue Dovey admiring the inscription (inset).



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AGM

*Barry Coward of Gainsborough Rail & Bus Group
addressing the meeting*

PHOTO-CALL

by Mike Savage

*The Branch Chairman welcomes
Pete Myers of Northern Rail.*



*Hon Secretary, Don Peacock presents a Member's Certificate to
Tom Rookes in recognition of his valuable contribution to the
Society's work.*





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From the Chairman

I am writing these notes a few days after returning from the Railfuture national AGM where the proposed changes to our Articles of Association, which govern the way we operate, were approved by an overwhelming majority.

When the original Railway Development Society constitution was written back in 1978, the world was a different place. Travel by all public transport was declining year by year; we got our British Rail train times from a printed timetable; nearly every ticket was purchased from a booking office or on a Paytrain and was paid for by cash or cheque. Whilst on the train we might have read a newspaper or book. Much of our campaigning activity was devoted to fighting threatened closures and cuts to services.

We have seen huge changes since then. Instead of coping with a declining market, rail operators now have overcrowded trains; passengers use a smartphone to look up train times; many tickets are purchased in advance over the internet or from an automatic ticket machine at the station with payment by debit or credit card. On the train we see passengers listening to music on their smartphone or maybe browsing the internet using the on train WiFi or even watching a film on their tablet.

The world has changed and Railfuture directors have in recent years been changing the structure of our organisation so we have changed with the times and are in a better position to fight for rail users. Changes to the Articles

continued overleaf

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of Association are just one step on the journey. There is still some way to go.

At the AGM, our President, Christian Wolmar, pointed out that he was looking at an audience which was nearly all white, male and over 60, yet when he is travelling by train he sees carriages containing not just white, elderly males but also many females, often with young children, a lot of students and every nationality you can think of.

In response, our new national chairman, Chris Page, confirmed that he

sees expanding our membership to be much more representative of the typical rail passenger as a high priority. If we wish our views to be taken seriously in the corridors of power then it is expected of us that we do represent a wide proportion of the travelling public. The best way to do this is to widen our membership so I am urging all members to do what they can to recruit more members, especially if they happen to be young and female. How about telling your children and grandchildren about Railfuture?

David Harby, Branch Chairman

Next East Midlands franchise

Experience from recent franchises has shown that the most effective approach from stakeholders is for them to agree a set of proposals among themselves before the Department for Transport (DfT) start formal consultations. With this in mind various stakeholders have been working up some proposals since early 2015. Some initial thoughts were outlined by Bob Poynter at the Railfuture conference in Newark last June. More work has since been done to put together an ambitious set of proposals. We are unlikely to get all we are asking for, but we will get none of them if we don't ask.

To formally launch the proposals, over 50 people from 30 different organisations across the East Midlands, including Railfuture, took part in an East Midlands Franchise event at the Newark Civil War Museum on 25 April. The event was chaired by Cllr Roger Blaney, Leader of Newark and Sherwood District Council. Delegates agreed to work with the DfT through East Midlands Councils on the next East Midlands (EM) Rail Franchise Competition. Three officials from DfT were present to explain their current thinking on franchises, listen to the discussions and talk to stakeholders. Key points for Lincolnshire are:

- There is a case for transfer of the Nottingham – Birmingham service to the EM franchise and Birmingham – Stansted Airport to the London Midland (LM) franchise. This fits with the Midlands Connect principle that inter-urban links across the Midlands should be controlled by the Midlands.
- Eliminate capacity constraints by a mix of more carriages and more frequent services.
- A complete rethink of timetables in Lincolnshire with the aim of a minimum of hourly services.
- Develop hubs at Lincoln, Nottingham, Leicester and Derby to optimise connections.
- Better connectivity to the North by an hourly service between Lincoln and Doncaster.
- An hourly service between Lincoln, Nottingham and Birmingham.
- Work towards a full Sunday service including mornings. *(DH)*

Links to the event presentations and feedback summary are here:

http://www.emcouncils.gov.uk/write/EM_Franchise_Event_Master_Presentation.pdf

http://www.emcouncils.gov.uk/write/EAST_Midlands_Franchise_workshop_Summary_Feedback_FINAL.pdf

Disruptions to train services

In recent months, train services in our area have been affected by a couple of major fires close to the tracks.

On 22 March at about 17:15, a fire and explosion at a large electrical sub-station south of Grantham station caused delays to East Coast Main Line (ECML) services and East Midlands Trains (EMT) services to and from Nottingham and Skegness. Trains were held on the ECML as there was a fear that a pylon at the sub-station could fall on to the tracks. Power to overhead lines was switched off and, as with many properties in the area, Grantham station lost its electricity supply. Train services resumed after around three hours, but as darkness fell, it was deemed unsafe for passengers to use the station and trains were stopped at Newark North Gate where passengers were transferred by bus to and from Grantham. It is not known what effect this had on Nottingham Skegness services, but assumed buses were used between Ancaster or Bottesford to Grantham, with Norwich – Liverpool Lime Street services

diverted via Loughborough.

On 7 June, ECML services were severely disrupted due to a fire at a former railway house adjacent to the ECML at Sutton on Trent, north of Newark. Up and Down services were queuing for up to four hours as overhead power was switched off and, according to passengers, there were many complaints due to lack of air conditioning and provision of water, on what was one of the hottest days of the year.

A gas leak east of Lincoln station caused disruption to services on 8 April, but later on 11 April road traffic was prevented from passing under Barrowby Road Bridge (Bridge No. 246), in Grantham, after ballast was reported to have fallen on to vehicles. The road was closed for sometime, but a temporary speed restriction allowed trains to pass over the bridge. Barrowby Road Bridge has been notorious for receiving bridge strikes from large vehicles, so some might say this was a case of revenge by the railway!
(PM)

ORR confirms paths for VTEC's planned IEP services

After a prolonged period of consultation and discussion with bidders, the Office of Rail & Road (ORR) have finally awarded the train paths to Virgin Trains East Coast (VTEC) that they need to run the service they committed to run in their winning bid for the East Coast franchise. This includes a firm start date of May 2019 for the services to Lincoln.

When the award was announced there was some media speculation about VTEC extending their Lincoln service to

Grimsby. Your chairman is sceptical about the logistics of this. VTEC have an allocation of rolling stock which is designed to run the service they bid for so they may not have any spare to run to Grimsby. The service is also planned to run alternate hourly with their Harrogate service. The extra time taken to Grimsby would probably not fit in with the allocated East Coast Main Line (ECML) paths.
(DH)

Newark Castle station

The new ticket office including toilet facilities is open and is reported to be doing well. It is anticipated that the rest of the building will be occupied by the autumn and that this will include some form of catering outlet.
(DH)

Friends of the Barton Line

For many months, the poor performance on the Line has caused the Group to consider it a waste of time and a disservice to prospective customers to recommend the trains service. In May it was noted that staffing issues had improved and the main cause of disruption was down to train failure. In view of the improved service, the Group feel more confident again in promoting the Line. Although in April a Barton to Cleethorpes service was delayed by fifteen minutes because of a non-fare-payer in the lavatory!

- With improvements at New Clee station enabling trains to call at the request stop throughout the day, the Group is considering promoting the station as convenient for Grimsby Town stadium.

- TransPennine Express (TPE) included an up-beat poem entitled “The North Will

Rise Again” in its customer magazine, which extolled the benefits of rail travel across the region. However, as the South TransPennine route was not specifically included, the Secretary submitted to TPE some verse of his own, which was well received, to redress the balance:

Through the vale of Hope we will cope with slopes and rocky peaks.

At Sheffield we call and at Meadowhall to be enthralled

By super trams, river craft and stores that everyone seeks.

On shiny rails of Scunthorpe steel the train runs smooth and fast

At a gallop for the races to Doncaster at last.

From Manchester to Cleethorpes beach for sun and sea and sky

And on the way a buffet tray of tasty cake and pie.

Grimsby fish makes a super dish as everyone will say

With chips and peas – to reach with ease TransPennine is the way

(AASB)

Lincoln footbridges and station

Work on the High Street footbridge is nearly finished and it is expected to be open sometime around the end of June. After plans for the Brayford footbridge, including lifts, had been abandoned due to costs, the latest plan is for a footbridge without lifts. A footpath linking Brayford Wharf East and High Street is due to open before the new bridge, so there will be access from Brayford to the lifts in the

High Street footbridge.

Work to create a cycle hub in the old staff car park at the station has started, as have renovations to the main station building. Work will start on the transport interchange later this year. The first stage is for the bus station to move to its temporary home in Tentercroft Street car park. This will allow demolition of the current bus station. (DH)

Parking at Swinderby station

The new station car park is complete and, at the time of writing, all that remains to be done is to finish off the direct link to the Nottingham platform from the car park, so passengers do not have to walk on to the narrow road. (DH)

We value your opinion.

The Branch committee would like to increase attendance at future branch annual general meetings and other events. Your views will be greatly appreciated in providing guidance on how this can be achieved.

We considered asking you to complete a Questionnaire, but return postage would be an obstacle. We are not in a position to set-up an internet based version. Can we, therefore, ask you to pass on your views by **email, Royal Mail, or telephone?**

Please consider the following:

If you do not normally attend the AGM/Members' Meeting, what can we do to tempt you to attend in 2017?

Can you suggest a suitable venue for the AGM either in Lincoln or another town in the County?

Do you find the current arrangements for the AGM (ie business meeting in the morning followed by lunch and a guest speaker) to YOUR liking?

What meeting format would YOU like?

Please send your opinions to the Vice-Chairman (Details on page 3)

BRANCH COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Branch committee will be meeting on the following dates in 2016: 2 July, 17 September and 19 November at Croft Street Community Centre (St. Swithun's Church), Baggholm Road, Lincoln LN2 5AX, commencing at 13:00.

All Branch members are welcome to attend and participate in these meetings. The only restriction being that voting on appropriate issues is limited to elected members of the committee.

On the Joint Line

Paul Jowett has learnt from a Network Rail track walker, he met at Ruskington, that a close eye is being kept on track conditions between Sleaford and Spalding with remedial work being undertaken. Problems are caused by the peat base in this fenland area. The relaying was carried out on the existing foundation which was satisfactory for the passenger service and freight use at the time, comprising of not too long trains running at lower speeds. Since the upgrade, the freight traffic is running at higher speeds, has become heavier and longer, therefore giving the track a 'hammering' which was not anticipated. (PBJ)

NKDC 'Wish List'

North Kesteven District Council has forwarded a comprehensive 'wish list' to Lincolnshire County Council as part of the East Midlands Trains franchise consultation. Paul Jowett assisted in its preparation. The Council's comments were very much in line with Railfuture Lincolnshire Branch official submission. (PBJ)

Commercial usage at Grantham

Country and Equestrian Estate Agent's office in the former Red Star Parcels office, complete with artificial grass at the Station Approach entrance and another entrance on Platform 1



Editor's Mail

I was interested to see the figures for Annual Passenger Journeys from the stations in our region (*Rail Lincs 74*). As you imply in your footnotes the totals for both Grimsby and Cleethorpes will be higher than this due to people purchasing split-tickets. Nevertheless a growth of 17% and 30% over the decade is respectable when one considers the time there has been disruption to services. Certain bus substitution puts people off travel, and I for one decided not to go to a meeting at London in early January because of this.

The growth figures for Great Coates (29%), Healing (54%) and Stallingborough (62%) presumably reflects the increase in the number of houses in these villages, showing that there is potential for rail as part of any new build.

As for Barton, I'm not surprised at the decline (3%) when one considers how often trains are replaced by buses. Indeed it is a credit to the line's Friends that the decrease isn't greater. Skegness though (-23%) and Wainfleet (-45%) are the most disappointing stations, and work clearly needs to be done here.

Tim Mickleburgh, Grimsby



Lincolnshire Charters

Compiled by Geoffrey Meanwell

Sunday, 14 August

Kings Cross, Potters Bar, Stevenage, St. Neots, **Grantham, Retford to York**
Hauled by Class B1 61306 Promoter: Steam Dreams

Saturday, 24 September

Skegness, Wainfleet, Boston, Heckington, Sleaford, Ancaster, Bottesford to Weston Super Mare

Hauled by Class 47/57 Promoter: West Coast Railway Company

Saturday, 1 October

Cleethorpes, Grimsby, Habrough, Barnetby, Scunthorpe, Thorne South to Dundee

Hauled by Class 47/57 Promoter: West Coast Railway Company

Saturday, 15 October

Doncaster, **Retford, Newark North Gate, Grantham, Peterborough**, Huntingdon, St. Neots to **Salisbury**

Steam haulage for part of journey to be advised, remainder by Class 47/57

Promoter: West Coast Railway Company

Saturday, 3 December

Leeds, Wakefield, Doncaster, **Retford, Newark North Gate, Grantham, Peterborough to Canterbury West**

Hauled by Class 47/57 Promoter: West Coast Railway Company

Saturday, 10 December

Peterborough, Spalding, Sleaford, Metheringham, Lincoln, Saxilby, Gainsborough Lea Road, Doncaster to Edinburgh

Hauled by Class 47/57 Promoter: West Coast Railway Company

Railway Film Shows

Forthcoming "Railways Remembered" film shows presented by Rob Foxon:
Thursday, 13 October 2016 at the Palace Theatre, Newark - "Towards 70s"
(BR modernisation).

Thursday, 10 November 2016 at Memorial Hall, Cleethorpes – New Programme
(to be announced).

Thursday, 24 November 2016 at Palace Theatre, Newark - "Christmas Programme"
(to be confirmed)

All shows commence at 19:30.

(PBJ)

An opportunity to Promote Rail Travel

Grantham Railway Society Takes to the Rails.

Background.

In common, I am sure, with most railway societies throughout the country, Grantham Railway Society (GRS) membership has a fair selection from that long list that makes up 'railway enthusiasm' - modellers, train spotters, historians, photographers, writers, real volunteering railway doers from station adopters to Heritage Railway workers, armchair critics, pro-rail travel politicians and activists (three cheers for Railfuture) - the list seems endless, and not forgetting railway employees and retirees - for Grantham was and still is very much a railway town.

Yet in spite of this wide range of interest and enthusiasm within GRS, for many members so much of it seems to me to be car, glossy-mag and digital-image based enthusiasm, reminiscing on what we used to do before the perceived miracle of the car brushed real rail travel into the sidings.

All this exposes an inviting 'gap' in our market place for development. As well as indoor meetings with visiting speakers (and what great stories they have to tell!) and occasional steam specials to watch or travel on, why not encourage more of our members to become real rail travellers, if only occasionally, using ordinary scheduled services?

Now, after a cautious start 'Days Out by Rail' are working their way into the Society's annual programme.

How it all Began and How it Works.

One bleak day in the winter of 2013-14, I stepped off the train at Belper, last station on the Midland Derby - Chesterfield main line before the Matlock Branch goes off at Ambergate. I walked (under 5 minutes) to the bus station and caught the local bus to Wirksworth, the upper terminus of the Ecclesbourne Valley Heritage / Community Railway (EVR) which runs from Duffield, further back towards Derby on the main line.

What a grand old town is Wirksworth. At Wirksworth Station I found Tom Tait, Operations Manager chatting with the day's working volunteers in the station canteen / buffet car. No trains were running of course, it being winter and out of the popular tourist season. But there is work to be done - hence the volunteers - and the buffet car was also open to the more hardy car-travelling visitors, as a welcome revenue earner.

Over a cup of tea, then another and another, and a plate of chips - Could we bring a visiting party from Grantham



They really made us welcome on the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway



..... and a conducted tour of the railway's facilities by Operations Manager Tom Tait, centre, white cap and high-viz jacket.

There was no stampede, but there was enough interest to show a green light. Some asked if it would be cheaper to hire a bus or go by car – but this wasn't the point!

This may seem all too obvious and read like a self-advertisement for our own small-scale rail touring operation, but I have learned it is what you have to do to make this sort of thing work.

Make sure you've been there and done it before you offer it to members. Make sure you tell them that it can

Railway Society in the summer? We'd come by train of course, changing at Duffield onto EVR. Could you do us a conducted tour?

Yes, yes, yes, we would be welcome. They would reserve us seats on their train from Duffield and make sure we'd catch our connection back to Nottingham and Grantham at the end of the day.

Over the next few weeks, with help from a lot of people, I searched out the cheapest fares, with the various options from Grantham to Duffield, via Nottingham and Derby, with and without Rail Cards, learned how East Midlands Trains' Small Group Travel ticketing works – all this several months in advance of the event. I set it all down on paper and offered it to members at the next meeting. If they filled in a booking form, paid me on behalf of the Society, everything would be organised and they would receive their tickets and full information in advance. All they would have to do – turn up and get on the train.

take ten minutes or more to walk from the ex-Grantham train at Nottingham platform 2, the full length of the station, over the footbridge or on the lifts, and then back along the full length of the station again to platform 4B for the Matlock train.

Saturday 21 June and Grantham Railway Society members travelled by train to the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway, a journey that most of them would most likely have made by car, if they made it at all – and a great day was had by all.

The next year, 2015, following further 'go-and-find-out-first' expeditions, we visited the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway (K&WVRLy) in mid-summer, this time based on 3-months-ahead cheap advanced bookings through then East Coast Trains.

Then came our journey to Matlock and Peak Rail on a darkening autumn last day of British Summer Time, using once again normal Rail

Card and East Midlands Trains Small Group Travel bookings (which in effect give Rail Card fares to non Rail Card holders) plus Peak Rail add-on fares available for Rail Card holders only. Ticketing for mixed groups can get a bit complicated.

We had pre-arranged conducted tours on K&WVRly and Peak Rail visits. What marvellous, dedicated, rail-minded people we met behind the scenes, doing what they enjoy doing without being paid.

We don't get huge support for these rail outings - never more than ten or a dozen - but that's ten or a dozen rail journeys that would otherwise not have been made - and who knows - how many cars have we kept off the roads?

On Saturday 18 June this year we are booked on the 08:14 northbound train for Doncaster and Darlington for the Bishop Auckland Branch and the National Rail Museum, Shildon, and birth place of the world's first public railway:

the Stockton and Darlington Railway Company. With a conducted tour of the original Timothy Hackworth buildings.

This is based on 3-months ahead booking with Virgin Trains East Coast and our Rail Card holder members are paying £19.10 for the round trip that would otherwise cost around £50.00 or £75.00 for on-the-day Rail Card or Non Rail Card booking respectively.

Perhaps local Railfuture members would be interested in joining our future Days Out by Rail. Just a thought, but you would be most welcome (Contact the branch Vice-Chairman).

Revealing a secret. I have got the Bluebell Railway under the microscope at the moment for a possible rail journey, crossing London over ground - but even at advanced cheap booking rates, it will hardly be cheap - and our members may have other ideas and wishes.

Watch this space! *(John Ginns)*

More Saturday trains from Hykeham and Swinderby

From the start of the summer service on May 15 the Matlock service has been extended to Newark Castle on Saturdays to give a two trains per hour service from Newark. This has enabled the Lincoln to Leicester service to be speeded up and for additional calls at Hykeham and Swinderby. This was a commitment in the Direct Award from December 2016 but East Midlands Trains have managed to introduce it early. The service at Hykeham on Saturdays is still not as good as we would like to see, but if current plans come to fruition there will be some more calls added from December. *(DH)*



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@RailfutureLincs

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Refer to pages 2 & 3 for contact details of branch officers mentioned in Rail Lincs.