

The Rages Rag

Newsletter of Rail Action Group, East of Scotland

Issue No. 4 - January 2000

Our First Year

A message from our Chairman

It seems no time at all since the big night that set it all off – yes, Wednesday 13th January 1999. Ralph and I were a bit apprehensive about this inaugural meeting, which we were going to hold in the Royal Mackintosh Hotel in Dunbar. Would there be many people turn up? Thankfully yes, in fact nineteen attended for which I would like to thank them for their support and the local press for their coverage of the intended meeting.

I feel that I must go back a little further, to the May/June of 1998, when Ralph and I first got together with

the common objective of trying to secure better rail services for the area. You may wonder how we came to meet. As we are both members of the Railway Development Society, David Hansen, secretary of RDS, put us in touch with each other when he realised our similar pursuits.

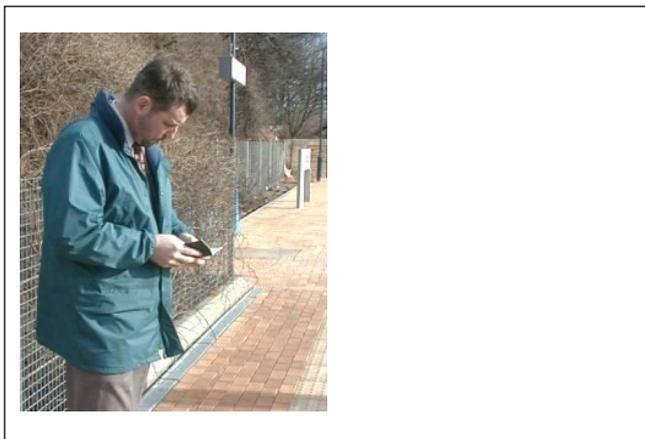
Back on track again, RAGES to date has held three open meetings, these being: Dunbar, East Linton and Reston, in conjunction with their respective Community Councils namely: Dunbar, Dunpender and Reston & Auchencrow.

The achievements of the group, in its first year, I would say are good and great.

Good in the fact that we have achieved with GNER at Dunbar:

- the new 08:54 to and 18:30 from Edinburgh services

- greater awareness of fare dodging
- cycle racks
- a new shelter at west end of platform
- Haymarket now appears in their timetable (for all of us who didn't know that some of the services called there).



There is also the promise of a feasibility study for Reston Station.

Great in the fact the group has 118 members. We also have an excellent web site that has been recently updated, four newsletters recording what is going on within the group and excellent relationships with other bodies, including:

- Railway Companies
- Rail Users Consultative Committee for Scotland
- Railway Development Society
- Parliamentarians (Westminster, Scottish and local level)
- East Lothian Courier and Berwickshire News.

Finally, I would like to wish you a belated Happy New Year and hope that together we can achieve much more in the coming year.

The Aims of RAGES

- To improve the rail service between Edinburgh and Dunbar with extension to Berwick upon Tweed at a later stage.
- To have East Linton Station re-opened for active use and to press for the re-opening of Reston Station.
- To consider the implications with regard to car parking and bicycle storage at Stations between Waverley and Berwick upon Tweed.
- To improve the level of service to North Berwick.
- To keep under scrutiny the standards of passenger facilities at stations between Waverley and Berwick upon Tweed, including North Berwick, and to draw the attention of the relevant bodies to shortcomings which arise.
- To re-open the branch line from Longniddry to Haddington.
- The group, being environmentally minded, will actively strive to encourage rail travel within its geographical area.

Welcome to this issue of The Rages Rag, which we intend to publish quarterly. It will be the main means of communication to our members.

In Issue 4:

- Railway snippets - Page 2
- SSRA Performance - Page 2
- RAGES News - Page 2

The editor invites contributions which should be sent to him at the address at the foot of page 2.

Railway Snippets

From Railnews

A lesson from the Highlands?

It was reported earlier last year that an extra morning commuter service was started from Dingwall to Inverness. This has proved successful.

But this had highlighted demands for trains from Beauly, the problem being that the station closed in the 1960's! The station building is now a private house.

Railtrack, ScotRail and the Health and Safety Executive are evaluating the situation as there have been requests from the local community council to consider re-opening.

I cannot help thinking of a parallel somewhere not far from here.

225 locomotive is named

A class 91 GNER locomotive has been named 'Holyrood' by Donald Dewar, MSP/MP, the First Minister for Scotland.

The naming of locomotive 91015 took place at Edinburgh Waverley on 10 November 1999 to celebrate the first Scottish Parliament in 292 years.

From East Lothian News

Increase in North Berwick service

A half-hourly rail service from Edinburgh to North Berwick begins next summer.

East Lothian Council has been in talks with ScotRail about the plan which will replace the hourly service.

(Ed: Initially this half-hourly service will be on Saturdays only. There will also be an enhanced Sunday service.)

From Lothian Times

Improvements at Prestonpans

Around £93,000 has been earmarked for improvements at Prestonpans railway station.

Ideas being mooted included moving the entrance to the station to create more parking spaces and for retaining the derelict red brick building and converting it into a shop or kiosk for selling newspapers and refreshments.

Access for the disabled needs to be tackled as the only access to the other side of the track is via a bridge.

Local groups will be able to put forward proposals and a meeting will be held soon to advance the plans.

Shadow Strategic Rail Authority Performance Figures for year to 16 October

		Punctuality	Reliability
ScotRail	Category B - 6 companies	95.4% - top	99.4% - 3rd
GNER	Category C - 12 companies	89.8% - 9th	99.7% - in the top 3

ScotRail's position is threatened by its problems with the Edinburgh to Glasgow line.

GNER's punctuality has been improved by 1% and reliability by 0.5% since last year.

Source: Scotsman

RAGES News

Web Site

The RAGES web site has been re-vamped and can be found at http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/russell_darling/rages.htm

Subscriptions

These will be due in April and a pro-forma will be issued with the April Rages Rag inviting members to renew their subscription.

AGM

Details of the Annual General Meeting, tentatively arranged for Wednesday 10 May, will also be published with the April Newsletter.

Membership

We now have 118 members from around the counties.

Please encourage your neighbours or fellow passengers to join RAGES, as our combined voice can make a difference.

Membership forms can be obtained from committee members, whose names can be found on your membership card.

Stop Press

As this issue was going to press, the long-awaited East Lothian Rail Study had been delivered to our Secretary.