

# The Rages Rag

Newsletter of Rail Action Group, East of Scotland  
Issue No. 3 - October 1999

## Refurbished Dunbar Station MSP Performs Official Opening

On 19 July, the refurbished station at Dunbar was officially opened by the recently elected MSP for East Lothian, John Home Robertson.

RAGES attended the ceremony and our photograph, kindly supplied by GNER, shows from left to right:- John Home Robertson MP and MSP; Ralph Jordinson RAGES secretary; Tom Thorburn RAGES chairman and Christopher Garnett GNER Chief Executive. Also present from GNER was Bob Bone, Andy Naylor and Sean English.

Sean confirmed that the platform shelter was due for erection in August along with the promised cycle racks. The capacity of the racks would be for 8 cycles and more would be provided if capacity was outstripped.

Bob Bone informed us that the 07.20 service to London was being reinstated in the winter timetable, starting on 27th September.

Andy Naylor introduced Christopher Garnett to us and we had an excellent exchange of words. Christopher re-confirmed the 07.20 service coming back and that another afternoon southbound service was being investigated (possibly 16.00) in order to relieve some of the pressure

from the 17.00 ex Edinburgh service. He has had discussions with Alastair McPherson of ScotRail about their coming to Dunbar off-peak. Tom pointed out that RAGES did not want to lose the existing GNER services. Christopher also remarked that we were a sensible balanced group.

The ceremony concluded with coffee and delicious cakes.



### Station update

There are still some outstanding matters to be addressed:

- A large hole, surrounded by barriers, has been present for a number of months on the only footway to the station.
- No work has been done on the construction of the shelter at the far end of the platform.
- On occasions, the street lighting on Station Road has not been switched on.

With the onset of darkness and colder weather, we consider that these should be addressed as a matter of urgency.

We have also been told that customers have been unable to purchase tickets even though stopping trains are still due. A notice should be displayed giving the opening and closing times of the ticket office.

### 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 reopened 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.

### Train re-instated

Although it is not in the new winter timetable, the 07:00 hrs from Edinburgh with a 07:20 departure from Dunbar to London has been re-instated from 27 September 1999.

We are indebted to John Home Robertson for all his effort in the return of this service.

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

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## The good and . . . . . the not so good

One of our number having travelled from North Berwick to Glasgow on the train discovered his car and house keys were missing. Phone calls to previous offices visited were fruitless.

In the meantime, the guard on the train to Edinburgh had found a set of keys on the train and, on his return to North Berwick, along with the station newsagent, searched for a BMW in the car park. The key ring gave the clue to the car model! There wouldn't be many of them to look for there.

A BMW was soon found that fitted the key and its distinctive number plates identified the owner.

When our member phoned the newsagent to inquire if he had dropped his keys at the station, he was somewhat surprised to be greeted with the good news as to how they were found.

Well done to ScotRail and the station newsagent.

One Sunday morning another of our members phoned the GNER travel line for the cost from Dunbar to Aberdeen.

This request was responded to by being told it was ScotRail who went to Aberdeen.

Our member replied that she was aware of that, but knew GNER also had a train which went from Dunbar, so could she please have the cost.

After he had given her the details, she asked why he had not given her the information when first asked. His reply was that he was doing her a favour, i.e. far more trains are run by ScotRail. He actually did not mention that these were from Edinburgh!

Is this GNER trying to run down the use of Dunbar? - of course not, but we would appreciate a little help in promoting one of the group's stations.

### Data Protection Act 1984

As detailed in the above act, RAGES is exempt from registering as it maintains a computerised database of information solely for its own use as a mailing list or summarised for committee purposes. The data held is that supplied on the Application Form and will not be passed to any third party.

Your entry can be obtained by request to the Membership Secretary, enclosing a S.A.E.

### Seen in Switzerland

On a two hour visit to a railway town:

- Several goods trains with cars, timber and closed wagons
- Two trains of lorries

### Seen in East Lothian

- No cars on trains
- SIX car transporters in a convoy on the A1

### OPRAF Performance League for 1998-99

		Punctuality	Reliability
ScotRail	Category B - 6 companies	95.7% - top	99.4% - 3rd
GNER	Category C - 12 companies	88.8% - 9th	99.2% - 5th

Source: Railnews, June 1999



For those who wondered where this was seen, it can be found in Belhaven Road, Dunbar - the now closed Inverleith GaRAGES LTD.

### Membership

We now have 111 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.

# Railway Snippets

## From Railnews

### Cycle Mark Award for ScotRail

ScotRail has been named the most improved rail operator for cyclists. It has dropped charges and increased capacity on some services. 22 stations are now equipped with bicycle lockers.

### Bike cull

Nearly 170 abandoned bikes have been cleared from Cambridge Station. Three men using bolt cutters and angle grinders worked for 2 nights to remove them. Only 50 bikes were re-claimed! This will not happen at Dunbar?

### GNER's burger no more

In its place comes a new buffet menu of tastier sandwiches with fuller fillers. Also available are hot and cold baguettes, soups, pizzas and pastries and hot vegetarian pasta dishes.

### Quote from Tom Winsor, Rail Regulator

"Passengers have been waiting too long for better performance from the railways.

"They have heard numerous statements of good intentions and promises of jam tomorrow.

"The time has come to take action to make the privatised railways treat the travelling public with the same respect as they treat their shareholders"

### GNER investment

Christopher Garnett, GNER's Chief Executive, has said that investment of more than £40m in its business is more than double the amount it agreed to spend during the seven year franchise from 1996 to 2003.

Passenger numbers are up by 21% so far - against 18.5% forecast for the whole franchise term.

## Railtrack NMS Consultative Meeting

### By Tom Thorburn

I had the privilege of attending the Railtrack Network Management Statement Consultation 1999 meeting on behalf of RAGES, on 8th July 1999 in the George Hotel Edinburgh. The above meeting was attended by representatives from:

- Local Authorities
- RUCC for Scotland
- Enterprise and freight supporting groups.

Chaired by Nigel Wunsch, Railtrack Scotland Business Development Manager, he welcomed us and then told us about the partnership between themselves, ScotRail and First Engineering (as it should be in my opinion). This partnership was further emphasised in the 'ScotRail 2000' video.

After a short question and answer session, where I remained silent - for a change, (Ed: hard to believe), the group split into their respective syndicates namely: Passenger; Freight and Vision.

As some of RAGES main aims are the reopening of stations, Vision was clearly the most suitable group to attend. Robin Harper, the Green MSP, was in this group and Gordon Brown, Railtrack Scotland Commercial Manager chaired it. Minutes of this meeting were taken on a 'NOBO' flip chart such that points raised were/could not be misinterpreted. I raised a number of points:

- In 2001 the station regeneration programme is due to end which has had a massive investment - can we see this being replaced by a station re-opening programme starting with East Linton, Reston and Haddington?
- Have Scottish Borders Council included Reston in their update of the NMS Council Aspirations (East Linton and Haddington are already there)?
- When are Railtrack going to address the pinch points of the Calton Tunnels east of Waverley and the re-instatement of passing loops to ease the flow of all types of train?

•Wearing my Campaign for Borders Rail cap, Railtrack have this very large ball-park figure for re-instatement of closed lines which is not relevant to the Waverley route as it passes through mainly rural habitat - such that the Borders can get their Railway back thus relieving the plight of Central Borderers and in turn save some 175 timber trucks (each way) thundering through Newcastleton, please review this figure and reduce it accordingly.

In case you are now wondering, did anyone else attending this meeting get a chance to express their views? - yes, but if the pause was too long yours truly was back in. Seriously though, one of the main points to come out of this meeting was that the attendees wanted greater accessibility to the network via new stations and more frequent services. Reduction in journey time, i.e. Edinburgh to London, took a definite second place, which somewhat surprised Railtrack.

When the three groups reconvened, the minutes of their respective meetings were presented by the group chairmen and a question and answer session ensued. Sorry to say I remained quiet here, but the most relevant question raised was - 'why are Railtrack selling off the car park at Waverley Station when St Andrews Square bus station is being closed - surely would it not be better to see it re-sited at Waverley to give an integrated transport system?' The meeting concluded with an excellent buffet lunch.

As I had just missed the 14.00 service back to Dunbar, I took the train out to Bathgate and back. Bathgate is often quoted in railway circles as the swansong of a reopened passenger line, hence my justification for this journey. Taking the 14.06 service from Waverley, the train ran 30 to 40% capacity loading, which in my view is excellent for an off-peak service. Now when I quote the above swansong, I can be confident it is for real.

# Concessionary Fares for Senior Citizens

by Ralph Jordinson

## Introduction

The following tables summarise the arrangements for concessionary fares in 6 council areas in or adjacent to the East of Scotland.

With regard to concessionary travel it should be understood that concessions apply on the day of travel. It is recommended that rail travellers obtain return tickets on their outward journey, if intending to return on the same day, particularly if the destination is outside the local council area. Bus travellers can usually obtain single tickets only, although tickets for return journeys are available at appropriate bus stations. The maximum concessionary fare on buses is usually 40p but this is often reduced to 30p by "commercial enhancement", (referred to as standard in the tables).

## Permits

<u>Council</u>	<u>Initial Cost of Permit</u>	<u>Period of Validity</u>
City of Edinburgh	Free	5 years
East Lothian	£3.00	3 years
Midlothian	Free	4 years
West Lothian	Free	Up to 2006
Falkirk	Free	Up to 2002
Fife	Free	5 years

## Travel within Council Area

<u>Council</u>	<u>Bus</u>		<u>Train</u>	
	<u>Fare (Max/Std)</u>	<u>Available Times</u>	<u>Fare (Single/Return)</u>	<u>Available Times</u>
City of Edinburgh	40p/30p	04:15 to 23:59	Flat - 50p/£1	04:15 to 23:59
East Lothian	40p/30p	04:15 to 23:59	1/2 relevant fare (ie peak, off-peak etc)	04:15 to 23:59
Midlothian	40p/30p	04:15 to 23:59	Not available	-
West Lothian	40p/30p	All times	Flat - 60p/£1.20	All times
Falkirk	1/4 fare	All times	1/2 fare	All times
Fife	Free	Mon to Fri - 09:00 to 15:30 and after 18:00	Flat - 40p/80p	09:15 to 16:45 and after 18:20
	1/2 single fare	Mon to Fri - before 09:00 and 15:30 to 18:00		

## Travel outwith Council Area (details only to councils in first table)

<u>Council</u>	<u>Bus</u>		<u>Train</u>	
	Max/Std	Permitted Areas of Travel	Single/Return	Permitted Areas of Travel
City of Edinburgh	40p/30p	East Lothian, Midlothian. Also direct journeys to Linlithgow, Broxburn, Uphall and St John's Hospital	-	Not available outside Edinburgh area
East Lothian	40p	Edinburgh, Midlothian and above areas in West Lothian	1/2 relevant fare	Edinburgh and West Lothian
Midlothian	40p/30p	East Lothian, Edinburgh and above areas in West Lothian	-	Not available
West Lothian	40p/30p or 1/2 fare on some routes	Edinburgh and Falkirk	60p/£1.20	Edinburgh, Falkirk and East Lothian
Falkirk	1/2 fare	Edinburgh, Dunfermline and Bathgate	1/2 fare	Edinburgh
Fife	Free in off peak and 1/2 single otherwise	Edinburgh and Falkirk	40p/80p in off peak and full fare otherwise	Edinburgh