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CHAIRMAN'S THOUGHTS - Paul Russenberger

Welcome to the first issue of *Swiss Express* in the alternate format with some colour! Your Committee, not least the Editor, hope you like it.

Swiss Express is known in Switzerland and goes a long way to giving the Society its reputation. We need to be careful to maintain the reputation of the Society as a responsible body for the good of us all. That is one of the reasons why the Society is concerned that its name should not be used for the personal gain of a member. Occasionally, a member may be approached from outside the Society with an offer arising from their membership. If this should happen to you, contact a Committee Member, ideally the Secretary or Chairman for guidance before responding, unless you decide to decline the offer immediately. Similarly, no organisation should be approached using the name of the Society unless the prior approval of the Committee has been given.

March seems to be the time of year for holding AGMs and, inevitably, the Swiss Railways Society is no exception to this rule! AGMs have an understandable reputation for being boring. Some business has to be dealt with and it is the responsibility of the Chairman to do all she/he can to make it all as easy as possible. I have every intention of being there and I will do my very best to keep things as light as I can. However, when agendas have been lost and officers' reports studied, the fact remains that a Society's AGM is the opportunity for the members (who, after all, are the Society and it is their AGM) to make their representations over how the Society should be run. Come to Manchester, make your points, listen to the points of others, enjoy the layouts and stalls, and, if you can, stay for the dinner. See you there, I hope!

In the last issue of *Swiss Express* I promised to keep you all posted on the visit to the Verkehrshaus. At this moment, there is little further to report except that I have written to the Director letting him know that we have fixed the date as 22nd August, meeting at midday. While I am still aiming to keep the visit as informal and flexible as possible, it will help if members intending to be there were to let me know. That will not be taken as a firm commitment to being there, nor by the same token is it a requirement as a sort of booking, but it will give an indication of likely numbers. Of course the visit is open to families and friends, though Judith has been quite firm that being Chairman's wife does not extend to running a Society crèche! See you there as well, I hope.

SECRETARY'S NOTES - Brian Hemming

Apologies are due before proceeding any further, and I hold my hand up as the guilty one. When I sent the Editor the formal notice for the 2001 AGM I thought I had fully checked it over, so I was horrified when the December *Swiss Express* came and there barely half way down the first column of page 2 it was! I had advised that Steve Horobin was seeking re-election as Sales Officer, despite reporting in the previous issue that Glyn Jones had been co-opted to the post. Steve had not, of course, sought re-election at the last AGM and it is Glyn who is seeking election to the post of Sales Officer. My apologies for this error were sent post-haste to both Glyn and Steve.

I reported to the Committee at its most recent meeting, on 20th January, there had been no new nominations for the Committee, as well as no motions for the AGM. However the closing dates were still six and three weeks away respectively. If there are any new nominations, a list of nominees will be displayed prior to the AGM, whilst any motions received for the meeting will be on the agenda.

Those of you who have access to the Internet and have looked at our website will have seen that it is gradually being expanded. The Committee is very encouraged by the number of visits to the site which amounted to just over 1500 in the period April to December 2000. We are anxious to use this site for two main purposes: to provide basic information for our members by way of a diary of Society Branch meetings and exhibition participation as well as links to Swiss related websites and also as a means of publicity to help us recruit new members. Despite a number of requests it is not our intention to put on the site anything that could appear in or with *Swiss Express* which will always be the official mouthpiece of the Society.

Towards the end of last year the consultation document for the next Swiss timetable, to be dated 10th June 2001 to 14th December 2002 (yes, the dates are correct), appeared on the Internet for the first time. This is presented in the same format as the books and any of the proposed railway or bus timetables can be accessed and printed. A link to this website is provided on our web pages, but for those who do not have Internet access I will be happy to print any table which you require (up to a maximum of two) in return for three 1st class stamps. All I need to know are the table numbers required which are the same as those used in the current edition.

In concluding my notes I would urge you if at all possible to attend the Spring Meet and Annual General Meeting at Altrincham on 17th March. This is the major social and business event in the Society calendar and is always an enjoyable day out which is rounded off by an excellent dinner. Please also do try and get to the social evening at the Cresta Court Hotel, Altrincham on the Friday evening when entertainment will be provided by MITV. The Committee members are anxious to meet as many people as possible on the Friday evening and Saturday and will, as in previous years, be readily identifiable.

EXHIBITIONS REPORT - Andy Nelson

The SRS Sales Stand will be attending the following Exhibitions during 2001. Others may be added as time goes on. Watch *Swiss Express* for details. I always enjoy chatting to members so please come up and make yourself known.

- March 17th SRS AGM with the Sales Officer.
- April 28-29th Derby Model Railway Club - Special Continental Section, Derby Assembly Rooms
- May 26th Exmoor Railway Club, Minehead Station. Live Steam Included!
- Sept. 22th- GRS Continental Show, Oxford. Still to be confirmed. See June issue.

If you are able to help man the stand at these or other shows please give me a call. Wallet permitting I like to have a look round as well. Don't forget also that if you require something specific from SRS Sales give me a call on 01753 534313 and I can bring it along. Finally, if you are exhibiting a swiss layout anywhere then please let us know and we can advertise it in the magazine.

Members in USA., Australia & New Zealand

For some time, in the above countries, members have expressed a wish for closer liaison between fellow members in that country. Following suggestions to, and by, the USA coordinator, Jim Easley, it is proposed that members so interested should contact their coordinator stating what personal details (address, telephone number, email address) they are willing to have passed on to other members in that country and outlining any ideas they have. The preferred mode of contact would be email, followed by telephone and finally ordinary post (mail). The addresses of the coordinators appear at the front of *Swiss Express*. Jim Easley can be emailed at jeas@wa.freei.net and his phone number is 425 454 5956. Sean Millar and Victor Isaacs have not been able to get back to me before *Swiss Express* copy date to give permission for the extra details to be divulged. I suggest any members in Australia and New Zealand contact me by email at srsmembsec@email.com and I will simply forward the material. We hope that closer contact will benefit the members concerned and the Society.

Ride the MOB with Beat Feller

Zweisimmen-Lenk and Zweisimmen-Montreux - Alan Snowdon

A new video by Alan Snowdon - see the review in this issue

Available from the AGM and through SRS Sales

£10 including postage