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CHAIRMAN'S THOUGHTS - Paul Russenberger

There are some lessons I have great difficulty in learning. In Wengen in March I took an early evening walk to the station to purchase a pass for my wife. The day had been clear but after some fairly hard exercise I did not feel like taking my camera. As I left the station the sun was setting casting a deep pink hue over the clean snow on the Jungfrau. It would have made a wonderful photograph, perhaps even a competition winner. We will never know as my camera was at the hotel and the sun had set by the time of my return. A few days later the family were skiing together and had stopped, quite fortuitously (yes, honestly) by the Wengernalpbahn line. In quick succession three trains passed, first the modern BDhe4/8, then the more traditional BDhe4/4 to be followed by one of the latest blue HGe2/2 locomotives with two trailer coaches. Again, no camera with me.

This issue of Swiss Express contains a great increase in the colour content with pictures submitted by members who did have their cameras with them. The Committee hopes you enjoy this feature and we would like to thank those who submitted photographs and to hear from you what you think. Do not do as I do, do as I say. When in Switzerland always have your camera with you, there is so much worth recording.

Good colour illustrations always increase the impact of a magazine and colour will make this issue of Swiss Express that more noticeable. Again, while in Wengen, I discovered how much it is noticed. My copy of the March issue was lying on a table in the hotel lounge when the hotel owner passed by and commented We had another member from that Society staying last summer. I did not, unfortunately, recruit a new member during the ensuing conversation, but it demonstrates how the magazine can be noticed. It is sent to the SBB, to the Verkehrshaus and to other organisations. It acts as the illustration, the window into the Society, which shows who we are and the type of group we are. We know that it is read and that is the greatest complement that can be paid to the Society. It also becomes one of the Society's greatest responsibilities.

If you are going to Switzerland this summer, do take Swiss Express to read and definitely your camera to use.

SECRETARY'S NOTES - Brian Hemming

By the time these notes are read the Annual General Meeting at Derby will be almost three months away. Following the precedent set last year the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Editor all submitted written reports which were available at the meeting and which will be appended to the Minutes. No nominations for the Committee had been received and therefore with the exception of Giles Della Gana and Steve Horobin who were not offering themselves for election your committee was re-elected. Giles remains as Librarian in an ex-officio role but the departure of Steve Horobin left a vacancy on the Committee for the post of Sales Officer. We are pleased to announce that this has now been filled by the co-option of Glyn Jones who will be known to many of you as the Organiser of the East Midlands Branch.

Your new Committee for the year to the next AGM is therefore:

Chairman - Paul Russenberger

Secretary	Brian Hemming	Treasurer	Ian Athey
Editor	David Stevenson	Membership Sec.	Dave Howsam
Sales Officer	Glyn Jones	Committee	Roger Ellis, Geoff Thompson
Publicity & Exhibitions Officer	Andy Nelson		

The AGM weekend started with a meeting of the East Midlands Branch on the Friday evening which was held at their regular venue. The speaker was Richard Pinner who gave a very interesting talk entitled "Holiday in Brig" which featured slides of many of the magnificent views in the area taken from footpaths in the Rhône valley and around the Aletsch glacier. Those present were certainly left with the desire to explore the Brig area more thoroughly, and our thanks are extended to Richard for making the evening so enjoyable.

Saturday morning started early for many of those participating in the Spring Meet and their efforts were well rewarded by an excellent turn out of members. Elsewhere in this issue are photographs of some of the

layouts present. The builders of these layouts together with the various supporters from the trade are all to be thanked for their participation in this event. Last but not least the thanks of the Committee, on behalf of all the members, go to Dave Howsam who put the whole thing together so ably and effectively.

We were able to negotiate with a couple of publishers a supply of three titles of Swiss related books for the Spring Meet. There are still some copies left; the details of which and where to obtain them are given elsewhere in this issue.

The evening dinner after the AGM has become something of a tradition and this year was attended by some 60 members and guests. In true railway fashion all participants in the dinner received Edmondson card tickets which had been specially produced and kindly donated by Michael Farr for the occasion. The East Midlands Branch provided the after dinner entertainment with their member Rob Morrey presenting a quiz (won by your Secretary!) and then a fascinating slide show on his Swiss Top 20. Thanks are, of course, due to both Michael Farr and Rob Morrey for their valuable but very different contributions. If any members would like one or more of the Edmondson card dinner tickets please write to the Secretary enclosing an stamped addressed envelope

One point raised at the AGM was the difficulty some members were experiencing in reaching the Society web site. Our providers have now set up an alternative domain which is <http://www.srs.uk.btinternet.co.uk>. The previously notified address still works but, although we have not been so advised, its life may be limited. The website has been significantly expanded with scans (kindly provided by John Whitby) of Swiss Express covers for the current and 1999 issues as well as details of their contents. A diary has now also been included of all published Branch fixtures as well as details of their meeting places and Organisers. Work is now in hand to build links to other Swiss railway related web sites. Many links can be found immediately on John Whitby's website, which incidentally has a link to the Society website, and is on <http://website.lineone.net/~john.p.whitby>.

EXHIBITIONS REPORT - Andy Nelson

The support shown at the AGM for Society Sales was fantastic and we took an all time record amount. A great weekend, thanks go to the East Midlands group.

I will be attending a new European event on June 17th at Newmarket (see below). This is a new part of the country for the stand to go to and I look forward to meeting many members from the surrounding areas. If you would like me to bring an item you require then please let me know.

The SRS Stand, together with my diorama "The Wrong Kind of Snow", will be at the following:

June 17th Newmarket, new Continental show, St Felix Middle School, Fordham Road

Sept. 23rd German Railway Society, Oxford

Mike Polglaze will be taking his layouts to the following exhibitions:

VIA MALA Aug. 12th-13th Blandford, Royal Signals Museum, Blandford Camp

Oct. 14th-15th Giessen, Modellbau (TBC)

Nov. 11th-12th Tamines, Belgium, L'Athenee Royal (TBC)

Nov. 25th-26th Southend, Cliffs Pavilion, Westcliffe-on-Sea

SANGIA COMO - The new layout replacing Bimblebahn has it's first outing on:

Sept.. 23rd-24th Wood Green Village Hall - Charity show on the A338 between Salisbury and Ringwood. It will still be under construction.

A WORD FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

I would like to thank all those who have renewed their subscriptions. Renewal rate is already almost 92% - the same as for the whole of last year.

