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THOUGHTS FROM THE CHAIR - Paul Russenberger

It would be no exaggeration to state that events of the past eight months have been deeply unsatisfactory as far as the publishing of "Swiss Express" is concerned. This situation is very much regretted by the Committee. The root of the difficulty has been in unexpected and unpredictable professional demands on and serious health problems suffered by those in the production team, not least the Editor.

The Society has no paid officials and, like all similar organisations, relies totally on the efforts of members working in their spare time. Nevertheless, there is a need for the principal organ of the Society, by which members are informed of events and news, to appear reliably and regularly. This has caused the Committee, who are ultimately responsible for every aspect of the running of the Society, no little anguish and took up the greater part of the Committee Meeting in January. There was much hard talking to develop a plan firstly to get "Swiss Express" back on track and secondly to keep it there.

It was originally intended to produce a full length, albeit late, issue for December 2003. Unfortunately, an unexpected organisational problem prevented that and the December issue appeared in shortened format. In order to get the March issue out as soon as possible it was decided to publish a smaller issue, only requiring a minimum of input from the editorial team with as much assistance as possible given by committee members. This could most easily be done by making it a shortened, specifically pictorial issue. Given that the pictures were needed very rapidly, it was agreed that committee members would submit pictures on specific subjects to David Stevenson to make up pictorial articles. In the event, it has proved possible to include a much larger proportion of written material than initially anticipated.

The search for editorial assistance continues. The Society has so far been able to publish "Swiss Express" in its present format, and remain the cheapest of the specialist continental societies, through the efforts of unpaid members who undertake preparation work often done by paid printers. This can, and I most sincerely hope will, continue. No decision has been taken, but it may not, because, unfortunately, it relies on the work of members whose time is necessarily limited by professional and family commitments. This is specifically so in the matter of producing the journal. Here particularly critical reliance is placed on one individual. I firmly believe that more people each doing less could relieve this situation by reducing the pressure on any one person. Can some members assist? Are you one of them? If you think you might be able to help, please contact the Editor or myself – if you do it by email, copy me in on it.

On a happier note, I am most grateful to all those who have submitted images for the Society Calendar. Glyn Jones, Neil Wheelwright and I spent a challenging Saturday selecting the images. More about that in the next issue.

JUST A SEC - Roger Ellis

I am taking this opportunity of updating members on two projects:

- The Societies' Archivist, David Baker of Manchester Branch, has now committed to record a complete set of Swiss Railway News and Swiss Express including the two special issues namely 'The History of the Swiss Federal Railways' and the 'Vereina Tunnel'.

They have been put onto CD, which we are proposing to sell to members for £10.00 including post and packaging. Each CD contains 12 issues of the magazine. It will not be possible to send 'hard copies' for those who do not have a computer due to the inferior qual-

ity of the resulting monochrome pages and the amount of work involved. If we were to copy to colour, for the later editions, then the cost would be too high bearing in mind the special paper and inks needed.

- Members have wanted a Swiss Signalling booklet and John Jesson has agreed to update his previous articles. We have just received from Switzerland information, which it is hoped will enable John to access information on the new LED signals such as those in the Bellinzona area. I will keep you informed.

EXHIBITIONS - Paul Hannant

If you are able to assist in "manning the stand", even if only for a few hours, it would be most appreciated and it can be fun! Offers of assistance can be emailed to me at: Exhibitions@SwissRailSoc.org.uk or Tel. 01885 483697 (evenings).

Do you have a Swiss layout – which you are exhibiting this year or next?

Then let me know, so we can let all our members know, but bear in mind the copy dates for Swiss Express at the front of the journal. We need to know at least 2-3 months in advance.

We are frequently asked whether our members have Swiss layouts available for exhibitions. Please let me know if you have an exhibition layout, either one already on the circuit or one which has not made an appearance yet, as I am looking to put together a portfolio. Please contact me for a form for layout details if you wish to be included on our register.

Happy Modelling!

The SRS Sales stand/diorama Mensiwil will be at the following:

SAT. 19TH JUNE 2004

EUROPEAN RAILWAYS SOCIETIES EXHIBITION - NEWMARKET

St Felix Middle School, Fordham Road, Newmarket. (A142 north out of Newmarket).

European layouts and specialist traders including Winco and Gerald Savine Prints.

Exhibitions/Swapmeets in Switzerland- * Denotes the bigger shows.

01.05.2004	Tägerhardstrasse, Saal Tägi Sport-fun, Wettingen.	1000-1500
08.05.2004	Oberer Quai Farelsaal (b.Zentralplatz), Biel	0900-1500 - 70 tables
15.05.2004	Einkaufszentrum Dorfmarit, Bolligen.	0800-1530 - 40 tables
16.05.2004	Uetlibergstrasse 378, opposite Kongresszentrum Schützenhaus Albisgütli, Zurich.	1000-1500 - 155 tables*
29.05.2004	Industriestrasse 1, Einkaufszentrum Volkiland, Volketswil(ZH).	0800-1700 - 105 tables*

If anyone is able to provide further details or feedback from attending these events (opening times, addresses, size and scope) please contact me.

Other European Interest Swapmeets:

Saturday 15th May 2004	Euretco-Expo-Center, Meidoornkade 24, Houten, Utrecht, Holland. Largest swapmeet in Europe. Open from 1000-1500.
Saturday 31st July 2004	Euretco-Expo-Center, Meidoornkade 24, Houten, Utrecht, Holland. Largest swapmeet in Europe. Open from 1000-1500.