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THE EDITOR HAS HIS SAY!



They say time flies by faster the older you get, seems true enough to me. April and the magazine is finally ready but it's late again. Although I have managed to catch up a couple of months I am still finding punctuality elusive.

First of all many thanks to all those members who wrote, phoned and wished me well after my prolonged illness towards the end of last year. You would be surprised how much it helped. I should point out that it wasn't only myself, Andrew Russell also was laid up for a long period and the knock-on effect on Swiss Express you all know about by now. Paul Russenberger has, in Thoughts from the Chair, explained what we hope to do about it. The advert for Deputy Editor was in the last edition and several replies were received, Thanks to all those who have volunteered, we will be contacting you shortly.

Once we have established a new team things should start to settle down again and I am hopeful that the June issue will be on time. Dave Howsam certainly has this in mind promising me a lot of finger wagging if not. Whilst we volunteer for these posts it is still incumbent on us to do our very best to perform, there is no point in putting oneself forward unless you mean to do the very best you can. Illness and personal circumstances are all very well but prolonged problems as we have experienced recently have to be sorted out and we on the Management Committee have some future plans to prevent something like this happening again.

Regular readers will know about my obsession with Apple Mac computers and I am sure those of you who don't have a Mac will be pleased to learn that I recently suffered a catastrophic failure resulting in the need to erase the hard-drive and re-install everything from scratch. Don't laugh too soon though; the reason was the inability of Microsoft Office to handle the number of fonts on the system. I wish I had realised this beforehand. The result has been that I have lost all my emails from before March 2003. Although many were archived the problem caused by Office was such that I was unable to save these to an external drive. If you have sent me an email this year and still have a copy then please resend it. I have also lost my address book, so if you have corresponded in the past send me an email so that I can re-establish contact, telephone numbers and addresses would be useful if you are happy to let me have them.

That's it for now, thanks for all your thoughts, thanks for your patience, hope you enjoy this edition and I look forward to meeting many of you during the year.

For those members who are interested in learning more about Switzerland in general The Economist recently published a very interesting supplement. I am unable to copy it for obvious reasons but if you have access to the internet then go to the website, www.economist.com and follow the links from Country Briefings to Switzerland and then the special February 2004 survey. It gives some interesting details about Government, voting, referenda and "Swissness".

In 2003 we achieved our highest ever membership. We hope that despite the long wait for this Swiss Express your patience has been rewarded. Some members may have thought long and hard about renewing for 2004 because of the recent delays.

We are pleased that you have.

The only reason that the magazine is as good as it is is because we have such a large membership who contribute to the magazine and Society.

Normal service should be resumed this year now that the Editor has recovered from his illness and hopefully will have the help of a new Deputy Editor.