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JUST A SEC - Roger Ellis

The Importance of Being Honest

The Chairman has shown the Committee an anonymous communication he received from a member enclosing a Newsletter from another Railway Group, whose Chairman has been made aware of its receipt, which included a full report of their Annual General Meeting. The inference was that the Swiss Railways Society should do the same and that the Committee was indulging in secrecy by not doing so.

Members are aware that those attending the AGM are given the minutes of the previous AGM, and the reports from all the Societies Officers together with the Accounts for the year ending the 31st December. A decision was made some time ago on the grounds of cost not to send a separate Newsletter to members or reprint this in full in a future Swiss Express. The cost of over 1300 Newsletters plus postage would be considerable; and even if it were to be included in a future magazine then the extra pages could push the publication into the next postage band.

Any member not attending the AGM has always been able to ask the Secretary for a copy of the "pack" which is handed out at the meeting, but to date none of these "packs" has been requested.

The correspondent also alleged that the Committee enjoyed a number of "freebies" during their tenure, although none were detailed or specified. This brings me to the point of my article, and I apologise for giving so much space to a person who does not deserve it.

If you have any matter, which you wish to raise with the Committee then contact us, as many of you do. The AGM in March of next year is an ideal place at which to bring forward any concerns that you may have or to ask questions of the Committee. I hope that our anonymous correspondent will be there in person, and will use this forum to raise any issues that they feel strongly about. I look forward, as do the other members of the Committee, to learning of the "freebies" that we receive.

Potential Branches

As Secretary, I should have referred to the Constitution of the Society before putting words to paper! Before a new Branch can be set up, at least two members must contact the Committee and advise us of what they are proposing to do in order that we can ensure these persons will represent the Society as members would wish.

However, the Committee only meet three times each year, and this may place an obstacle for any members who are keen to proceed with an initial meeting. Can I suggest that if you do want to go ahead, contact Paul Russenberger, Dave Howsam, Ian Athey or myself. If none of us can be reached, any member of the Committee will be glad to pass the information to the rest. Electronic or 'snail mail' between us does work, and a reply can be given within a short time.

ALAN SNOWDON VIDEOS

It may be possible, if there is sufficient interest, to make the Alan Snowdon series of historical videos available in NTSC format suitable for our North American members. This would be done on a one-off basis against firm orders. It would cover volumes 1 to 5 and members could pre-order however many volumes they require at a cost of £10 each plus postage at actual cost.

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