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THOUGHTS FROM THE CHAIR - Paul Russenberger

Welcome to the Society's Silver Jubilee Year!

It starts with the Spring Meeting (I refuse to call it a "meet" – "meet" is a verb, not a noun unless it is spelled "meat"), AGM and Dinner. This time the venue is in the capital, not, unfortunately, Bern as the Society could not subsidise members to travel there, but it is returning to the roots of the Society's initial gatherings. The Society is being honoured in that the Swiss Ambassador will be represented at the Dinner by one of the Embassy Staff.

Most of the usual retailers will be at the gathering, so it will be a good chance to examine their wares and make a purchase. A newcomer is Platform 5 Publishing. Their appearance is somewhat experimental. It will be possible to order books from them beforehand to be purchased and picked up from their stand. They will be contributing a prize to the traditional raffle. No doubt a phone call to any other of those appearing will ensure that they bring that particular model you have been on the edge of purchasing for months.

There is a slight change to the format in that the AGM itself will be strictly confined to matters of business. It will be followed by an "Open Forum," still open only to members, in which members will be able to put forward ideas on what they believe the Society should be doing and, possibly, how it should be done. But beware – suggestions of things to be done could lead to requests for volunteers to do them! The Society does need its members to take an active part because it is the members who make up the Society.

See you at the meeting and AGM in London!

JUST A SEC - Roger Ellis

Location! Location! Location!

I am hoping that when you read this it will be in the March *Swiss Express* received before the AGM. If not then can you make a Diary note to refer back to this article in February 2006.

The Committee decided a long time ago to locate the AGM at a different venue each year so that all members would have an easier journey when the meeting was within their area. Also it is unfair to ask a particular Branch to be responsible for organising the event on a yearly basis.

This year's AGM is in London and I am aware that if you are driving then the cost of parking can be very high, and the number of parking spaces limited. However, for those of you who prefer public transport most of the train and coach companies do have advance purchase tickets available which reduce the cost of travel.

There is no venue that will suit everybody, even Bristol has its disadvantages, but we would like to see as many of you there as possible.

One for the Ladies

Members will be aware that Liliana Wood joined the Committee last year, and on her behalf can I ask our lady members to contact her by letter or email to let her know if there is any more the SRS can do for them. As I wrote this I thought that this sounds a bit sexist so the invitation is also open for our gentlemen members to contact her as well. They too may have thoughts on how we can attract, retain and interest more women to the Society.

Signalling booklet

Some time ago you may recall a promise I made to keep you informed of progress. The situation is that John Jesson has written the third part of the signalling article, which updates members on the latest Swiss signalling installations. Due to personal commitments and the need to provide drawings of the signals and their location in relation to track layouts, it is unlikely that progress will be made until the autumn. However this is to assure you that the project has not been forgotten and is ongoing. I will keep you informed.