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## AGM 2011

The 2011 Annual General Meeting and Spring Meet will be held at the Hallmark Hotel, Derby, on Saturday 26th March 2011. It is being organised by the East Midland Branch on behalf of the Management Committee and will follow the usual format, with a Friday evening presentation and dinner on the Saturday evening with a guest speaker.

Offers of layouts and displays would be most welcome and it may be possible for a contribution to be made towards expenses. If you have anything suitable please contact Glyn Jones. More information will be provided in the September edition of *Swiss Express* but in the meantime reserve this important date in your diary. Contact:

**glyn.jones@btinternet.com** or at his address shown on the Branch Diary page.

## AGM 2010

Following his two very professional audio-visual presentations at this year's AGM Tony Bagwell has written - "Can I please thank all those kind members and guests at the AGM who donated to CLIC Sargent (the children's cancer charity), either by buying model cars or simply as money in the collecting box. Your generosity has resulted in over £150 being passed on to the charity. Be assured the money will be put to good use helping youngsters who are less fortunate than ourselves."

The photo competition that ran during the day at the AGM was won by Nick Freezer.

## West Midlands Branch goes high tech...

After about six months of discussion this go-ahead branch of the society has acquired its own digital projector. For them no more reliance on "borrowed" works projectors; no more variable

presentations; no more requests to speakers to "bring their own kit"; just great picture quality and lots of functions including the ability to play DVDs. Like almost all photographers most of the WM members had gone digital, as had the majority of their visiting speakers. The branch enjoys the privilege of having some creative photographers, but they were hampered by not being able to use a digital presentation format. Having identified the issue the branch has now dealt a final blow to the problem. All the branch members contributed to the fund, as did the Severn Valley Railway who will also get to use the machine.

## ... and also goes on tour

Their advertised Snowdon Mountain Railway trip is taking place on the 19th June with 17 SRS members (15 from the West Midlands and 2 from Wales) booked as this edition is being prepared. Departure up the hill from Llanberis will be at 13.30 to allow for an audio-visual show, along with a presentation by Sam Reeves ex CME on the SMR operation, prior to leaving. As was previously said this is "Brienz in Wales" and it should be an excellent day out for all.

## Alan Snowden writes

"Volumes 1 and 3 of the video archive series "Swiss Railways in the Sixties" are being reissued as DVDs, becoming available just in time for the 2010 AGM at Derby, so this is a good moment to comment on them.

On my first visit to Switzerland in 1958 I filmed on many lines, from Nyon in the west to St. Gallen in the east, and continued this activity over six further summers. I then spent many hours editing the 8mm films using a hand-cranked film viewer, a splicer and cement, a notebook and several numbered circular tobacco tins! Having

joined the SRS and given some well received film shows at the London branch it seemed worth making them available to the wider membership on video tapes. As a trial I made what became Volume 1 – Gotthard and Zürich Area, with a Swiss neighbour speaking the narration to ensure correct pronunciation of place names. Paul Russenberger now speaks the narration on the DVDs and I am grateful for his assistance. Having converted all the original films to videotapes in the early 1990s I am now digitising these, using a professional computer programme which allows me to attempt correction of colour casts and exposure faults (brightness and contrast) in the original film. It is however a tedious task and unfortunately perfection isn't always possible. A big advantage of DVD over videotape is the ability to make a simple list menu, so it is possible to go immediately to the start of any item of the programme without winding through ages of tape. The remaining three volumes will be reissued as DVDs when I can fit them in with other projects. I am frequently asked if I am going to make DVDs of the modern Swiss rail scene. The answer is no, as MITV and others have done it so much better than I could. But I do not think they are able to show you Swiss railways of the past in the detail I can, despite the imperfect picture quality of the oldest footage.

Recently I have been working on European journeys on Inland Waterways. Ships are slower than trains, so offer a more suitable camera platform as one ages. Also the windows on many Swiss trains now do not open giving reflection problems. This does not happen on an open deck! If you are interested please email [alan.snowdon@mymailbox.co.uk](mailto:alan.snowdon@mymailbox.co.uk) for details. Like the archive Swiss railway

series all my DVD sales raise funds for a local charity."

## Binders for Swiss Express

Glyn Jones, our Sales Officer, notes that following the discussion at the AGM concerning the possibility of changing *Swiss Express* to A4 format (probably from the March 2011 edition) he has placed a "final" order for 50 A5 magazine binders. These are available now at the usual price of £6.50 by mail order, or £5.00 at exhibitions. As this may be the last chance to buy these binders, he suggests that you order as many as required to complete your collection. They will be available on a first-come-first served basis.

## New publication

Hard on the heels of the publication of *Swiss Express Portfolio* last autumn the SRS has a new publication available. Our Membership Secretary Martin Fisher has put together *Swiss Travel Guides No. 1 – Bern and the Bernese Oberland*. It is a 48-page A5 paperback with numerous colour illustrations. It is reviewed elsewhere in the magazine and it is now available from Society Sales.

## Competition answer

On P 43 in the last magazine we asked which rack system was used by the RigiBahn. The answer is the Rigenbach system and, unsurprisingly, quite a number of members submitted the correct answer. The winner of the pair of RigiBahn adult day rover tickets was Peter Arnold.

## 2011 Calendar

Following the sell-out success of the last two calendars we will be producing a calendar for 2011 that will be on sale from September. The size and cost of this has yet to be determined but will probably be slightly larger than last year's edition.