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The schedule for the preparation of Swiss Express means that I am writing these words before the team actually meets to put the magazine together. Our move to an A4 format, although carefully thought through for some time, is actually a leap in the dark regarding how we organise the content and the layout. Obviously we have many ideas as to how we would wish the revised magazine to look, but only the practical exercise of actually doing-it will see if these will work. If we get it wrong we expect you will let us know - if it comes out OK I expect that the comments will be less. Also from this edition we are entering into a new distribution arrangement with the printers as they will be sending Swiss Express out directly to you, rather than the magazine being laboriously placed in envelopes (to which stamps then had to be attached) by Alan and Nan Mackie. If it does not work first time I am sure that you will again let us know. The increase in space for your articles will be welcome, as will the mechanisation of the distribution process, and (if we have got it right) it should all happen in a cost-neutral manner, increases in postage charges, etc, aside. Have you ever tried to type with your fingers crossed?

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES**Ian Athey**

My notes this time are very much a case of first and last! This is the first edition of Swiss Express in the new format and I hope that you like what you see (and read!). Many hours have been spent by the Editorial team to get to this point and I have no hesitation in thanking them for their efforts in this respect. Whilst I acknowledge that not every member wished to see a change from A5 format I do hope that you find the journal as attractive and interesting as usual.

This is the last time I will be penning these notes because, as indicated in the December edition of "Swiss Express", I will be stepping down as Chairman at the Annual General Meeting in March. I will, of course, continue to support the Society whenever I can and may even appear at future AGMs! I wish my successor well whoever he (or she) may be. The Society, and you its members, also have my best wishes for the future. Liliana Wood, who has served on the Committee for several years now, has indicated that, because of personal circumstances, she will not be seeking re-election this year. On your behalf I would like to thank Liliana very much for the work that she has done for the Society during these years.

I do hope that as many of you as possible get to the AGM. Apart from the formal business, it gives members the chance to renew acquaintances and friendships and also to support the traders who come along on the day. I look forward to seeing you there!

JUST A SEC**David Stevenson**

I guess you will have received and read this issue before the AGM in Derby on Saturday 26th. If you are a new member, or you haven't come to an AGM before, please try and make it. It's the one place you are guaranteed to get the chance to have your say and to tell us what we are doing right (everything) or wrong (nothing). I've said it before and no doubt will say it again that the Society is not the Management Committee; you the members are the Society and we need to know what you want us to do, or even not do. Even if you don't say something at the formal AGM all the Committee are there all day and we want to hear from you.

I'm also going to mention once again the local groups and branches. If you live near one why not come along and give it a go. You may decide it's not your thing, fine, at least you've been and tried. The West Midlands Group, which I helped found with Geoff Turner and Gerry Savine, has been a great way to meet new friends and again have one's say. If your area doesn't have a group speak to me and I'll tell you how to go about starting one.

Hopefully I will see you at the AGM, seek out the George Clooney look-alike, that'll be me.

Swiss Railways Society – Membership Details

If you are not currently a member of the Swiss Railways Society, and have only just discovered Swiss Express, why not join so you can keep up to date with railways and the transport scene in Switzerland? For a modest UK subscription of £16 a year, in addition to receiving four quarterly issues of this splendid publication, you can also take part in the other activities organised by the Society.

For a Society Prospectus you can either write to Martin Fisher at
28, Appletree Lane, Redditch, Worcestershire, B97 6SE,
or email him at membership@swissrailsoc.org.uk