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Roger Ellis offers an opportunity – to spend weekends in Southampton or Birmingham, and days in Derby!

I thought I had better advise members, as early as I could, that I will not be seeking re-election for the post of Publicity & Exhibitions Officer when the position comes up for renewal at the 2017 AGM. I have been on the Management Committee since “nineteen hundred and frozen to death” and I think it is about time that I let someone else, perhaps younger, take my place.


As Exhibitions Officer I normally take our Stand, complete with our portfolio of sales items, to exhibitions at: Southampton (“Eurotrack” in February); wherever the Society AGM is held (March); Derby (May); the Midlands (the “Warley Show” in November) and Birmingham (the ERA Meeting in December). However, we also usually receive invitations every two years to go to: the Model Railway Club exhibition at Alexandra Palace, London (March); the “Gaugemaster” event in Arundel, West Sussex (September); and an exhibition in Tolworth (December). The year can get quite busy especially as most exhibitions are over two days and, depending on where you live can involve a fair amount of travelling. I almost forgot, in addition to the exhibitions there are four Committee Meetings a year usually held in Oxford. The SRS does receive invitations from other Exhibition Managers, but these must be looked at from a cost/benefit point of view. We usually concentrate on events that have a European content and/or that other European Societies are supporting as well. All travelling costs, etc. are reimbursed, and if the hire of a van is required those costs are too.



Storage? I do have five fairly large boxes of sales stock, plus a folding exhibition display screen and some other incidental equipment. If you are living in a one bedroom flat in say Penzance or Thurso the position may not be practical! There would be a requirement to liaise with Glyn Jones, who as you know is the other half of the “Sales” operation, and to work with him to undertake a yearly stock check. After each exhibition monies must be paid into the Bank, and an appropriate spread sheet completed for our Treasurer. It is best to keep him sweet, as it is he who reimburses your expenses.

As for the publicity side of things this is a little less time consuming in that once a month you would need to communicate with the SRS Secretary (currently David Stevenson) and the printers of ‘Continental Modeller’ magazine, to ensure that our advertisement is both topical and timely for the upcoming edition. Most exhibitions that we attend issue a catalogue, and you would need to write an appropriate entry about the Society for these.

The up-side to the role is the enjoyment you get by meeting people and talking to them about Switzerland, Railways, the Society (of course), and life in general. You also get into exhibitions for free, and when there you will find that there is great camaraderie with our colleagues in the other European Societies present. The general public are for the most part delightful, but a little strange sometimes - but then aren't we all?

Of all the positions I have held in the Swiss Railways Society this has been the most enjoyable. I think I have transformed the look of the Stand for the better over my tenure, and the income that Glyn Jones and I have generated has contributed to keeping the subscriptions as reasonable as they are. The Society needs someone to take this forward so if you think you can help please do get in touch with either myself, or any of my fellow Committee members. Our contact details are in this magazine. 

And finally...

Did you know that Christies, the London Auction House, hold an annual sale of Ski Posters? And you thought that being interested in Swiss railways was an esoteric pursuit! Well the two interests came together last year (as they probably have previously) when someone paid £5,625 for an original poster featuring an image of a female skier riding on the roof of an MOB train. (Please do not try this activity yourself.) Artist Martin Peikert produced the drawing in 1957, and apparently it is considered to be a classic of both its period and genre, with an example featured in the Zürich Design Museum's Poster Collection. A postcard of the image is available for sale in Switzerland at considerably less than the poster price! It is reproduced here. Perhaps you should check the attic or cellar to see what is lurking in that pile of ‘stuff’ you keep meaning to sort out, or did you give those old posters Uncle George gave you to the children to use as scrap paper? 