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Thinking to the Future

SRS Secretary David Stevenson puts forward some suggestions.


Recently I began volunteering at a fairly well known transport archive in Droitwich called the Kithead Trust. It holds in particular the National Bus Company files and several well-known photographic collections. This, coupled with ever increasing age, lead me to think about what was going to happen to the roughly 100,000 photographs I have taken and collected over the years.

Without wishing to sound morbid we have a limited time on earth and really it came to a head at a recent committee meeting. I was talking about this in connection with photographs and one of the committee said “*who will want them?*” This was a perfectly reasonable question and was said without malice. The only answer I could truthfully give was that I didn’t know who would but the alternative was to chuck them in the bin. Was he going to do that with his considerable collection? He obviously said “No” and so from there the discussion broadened and as a result I have a couple of proposals to make to the membership as a whole.

1. What are you going to do with your photographs? I’m sure you do not want to just ‘*chuck them in the bin*’, so in that case you need to do something about them. SRS are going to start an archive of photographs based around donations from members. Firmer proposals will be outlined later in the year once we have a proper structure - and inevitably some volunteers to help organise it. In the first instance please give some thought as to what you want to do with your

photographs, they are precious to you and they are precious to us. We have no definite plans as yet but we will have soon and one particular objective is very clear, to maintain and to preserve them in the best way possible. If you have any ideas yourself or would like to volunteer to assist in this long-term project please get in touch with me. My email and mailing address are in this journal and let’s do something to provide a heritage for the future.

2. In turn we moved on to collections themselves. It’s not just about photographs after all, what about your models, what about your artefacts, books, etc.? We intend to offer a service to members, and members’ families, in the sad event of their death. We will endeavour to sell, on behalf of the member, or their estate’s items and models for a commission. We do not intend to offer to purchase these ourselves for resale. This would have all sorts of implications for us and frankly the Swiss Railways Society is not in a position to either value or take the risk. Once again this is a long-term project and we are not currently ready to begin, but please give some thought as to whether you would like to help or if you have some definite ideas yourself.

As I have noted, so far nothing is set in stone, everything is open for debate. The reason we are going to try these two ideas is because we think there is a need and after all the SRS is here to serve its members. 

Walking with the RhB – Part 2

Philip Nalpanis introduces four more (energetic) walks in the Upper Engadin

Piz Palü and Piz Bernina.

All photos: Philip Nalpanis

As with the three walks I described in Part 1 of this article you should be suitably dressed and equipped. Take note of local weather forecasts and plan accordingly: being on a mountain in a thunderstorm is “*déconseillé*”

as the French say! Also take a map, preferably one with main paths (those signposted) overprinted in red. If possible always let someone else know what you are about to attempt as accidents unfortunately can happen.