

Thoughts from the chair

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THOUGHTS FROM THE CHAIR - Paul Russenberger

First I must thank all those members who troubled to contact me in response to the flier with the June "Swiss Express" in connection with the editing of our journal. I really was concerned that there might be a "nil" response and I am very relieved that a significant, though limited, number of members responded. I am also grateful to those regular contributors who assured me that they would continue to submit their sections.

At the time of writing this, no decision has been made, so if you were wondering whether to offer assistance, please do so. That said, I would expect that by the time you read this, your Committee will be at least part way to deciding how to proceed.

All this bodes reasonably well for the Society. All the same, we need to remain aware that any society is only as good as its members and input is always needed to keep things alive and well. Please remember my plea in my last Notes for assistance at exhibitions, not least (or only) Warley in December. Paul Hannant will be very pleased to hear from anyone who is willing to help.

Also with this issue there should be an invitation to take out, or continue with, a subscription to "Eisenbahn Amateur." This is a well-illustrated Swiss railway magazine, which shows things very much as the Swiss see them. It covers modelling as well as the prototype, with a brief section on foreign, if you are Swiss, railways – did you know the Tel Aviv to Jerusalem line has just reopened after 7 years? – and the August issue has a detailed 2-page article on the massive power failure of 22nd June. From the illustrations, it seems that those wanting to be hauled by unusual motive power could have had a field day! If you haven't tried "EA" yet, why not give it a try? The strong value of the pound has enabled the Society to offer it at the same price as last year.

As the days shorten, try to think of it as the evenings lengthening, so it will be easier to view slides. The modelling which did not get done while you worked in the garden can become your autumn project.

Lastly, and nothing to do with railways, my elder son has just returned from the European Scout Jamboree at Chelmsford having swapped his British red-white-and-blue scarf for a red Swiss one. When he lost his bag and went to the lost property to retrieve it (successfully, I might add) and gave his surname as "Russenberger," he received the unexpected reply "Which?" Unfortunately, he never did get to meet the group from Schaffhausen that reputedly had at least two!

JUST A SEC - Roger Ellis

"There may be more than one way to skin a marmot!"

Referring back to the AGM in London there was a lengthy discussion in the Open Forum after the meeting on the subject of disclosure of members' addresses. The majority of those present were against the idea for a variety of reasons, and even if we made disclosure up to the individual member this then gives the Membership Secretary additional administrative work, which he can do without. To publish a members email address is laying him or her open to more "spam" which is already becoming one of the more unattractive features of owning a computer. My personal view is that the Society should not publish a list of members' addresses, and I believe that this is shared by other members of the current Committee.

The active Branches list their meetings in the Swiss Express together with details of the Branch Organiser so that interested members can make contact with like-minded individuals using that route. However, I realise that we do not have Branches in many of the major areas of the Country and some members would like to contact others in their locality.

Why not use the Swiss Express that you are holding as you read this article? The final page of this excellent magazine has the heading "Members Adverts" which is usually used for the buying and selling of model railway equipment. It could be used for other purposes, for example a member from Northumberland, where it is always cold and only sheep and Treasurers reside, could place an advert saying they are interested in constructing a scale model of Basel Station and would any like minded members in that area make contact. He or she would obviously include their full address or maybe just a telephone number. Just a thought.