

Chairman's notes

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CHAIRMAN'S NOTES Paul Russenberger

When you read this, it will be almost AGM time again. If you can, please do come along to Bristol; to have your say; to support your Society; to see what the traders have on offer; to look at the layouts; and ...

Seriously, it is important because it is the time when you can take part in electing the Committee, give your ideas a constructive airing and, yes, offer to do things. The Society is not run by paid staff but by volunteers in their spare time after work - at present, only one Committee member is retired from full time employment. It relies on those who do it because we want to help, want to put something back and want to enable others to enjoy the fun of being interested in Switzerland and its railways. I hope there will be an election for some of the posts on the Committee. It is NOT that I would like any member of the current Committee to leave - very far from it. It is simply that I firmly believe in the democracy of the Membership being able to decide who is on the Committee, which must never become a self-perpetuating clique, rather than having to accept single nominations for each position. I was delighted that an election for the post of Treasurer was necessary last year.

Elsewhere in this issue you will see that the possibility of another Branch is being mooted, this time on the eastern side of Birmingham. If you live somewhere between Rugby and Birmingham (inclusive!), do consider getting involved - it increases the effectiveness of the Society and the only problem is that we may be running out of space on the Branch Notices page.

Hopefully, I look forward to seeing you in Bristol on the 24th March.

JUST A SEC - "Should I stay, or should I go?" Roger Ellis

If I remember correctly this was a favourite song of the late John Peel, as sung by The Clash. Which brings me by a clever link to the AGM in Bristol, and the fact that it is on the same weekend as the Alexandra Palace MRC Exhibition. The clever link being that some members may be demanding that I resign because of the clash of dates!

I am afraid that when organising an AGM, or an Autumn Meeting in my village, I do not always look at the local or national railway event's calendar - sorry. My prime thought is the availability of the venue for a suitable weekend, this being the prime objective when running the AGM as my hotel of choice does have other events happening around the chosen date and is usually booked well in advance. However, this year the London exhibition is on for its usual two days so members could travel back to the capital on either the Saturday night, or on Sunday, and still be able to attend both.

I have been contacted by Gill Riding of the Zurich Tram Museum Society regarding the opening of a new Tram Museum in May of this year to rehouse the Society's collection of trams, equipment, tickets, signage, photographs and a wealth of objects and archive dating back to early transport planning in Zurich. Some SFr 1.5m has been raised for this venture by the Society, local businesses, MIGROS, and the Zurich City government. I understand that the Society has joined forces with the Zurich Auto Bus Society and therefore the story of Zurich's buses is also included. Both have a joint membership of over 750. The Museum will open on 26th May and will celebrate 125 years of the Tram in Zurich, 80 years of the Auto Bus and 40 years of the Tram Society.

The Museum is at Limmattalstrasse 260, which Gill tells me is on the number 11 tram route from Zurich Hbf, or a walk of some 15 minutes from Zurich Stadelhofen station. At the time of writing Gill was unable to tell me the time of the opening ceremony or the opening days/hours of the museum but the museum web site may be of some help at www.tram-museum.ch. In any event I will update members in the Swiss Express.

Editor. So, members, do not just stay - you have visits to Bristol, London and Zurich to go to!