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COVER PICTURE:

TMR(MC) BDeh 4/4 No.5
to Le Chatelard-Frontiere
at Martigny.

PHOTO: Graham Smith.

EDITORIAL

Malcolm Bulpitt

Another AGM and another discussion about the cost of postage for Swiss Express! Again it was suggested by a few members that we could get better value for the Society if we looked at other ways of sending out the magazine, including emulating the manner in which other magazine publishers seemingly obtain discounted postage rates. I do not wish to calculate how many hours I have already spent in following-up similar suggestions since I became Editor.

Basically we are a small player in a big commercial pool. If we forget the overseas mailings of Swiss Express, which would not normally qualify in any bulk posting deal, we only send out around 1,000 magazines every three months - 4,000/year, the equivalent of 77 letters a week, or 15 mailings a working day. This is nothing to what the commercial publishers send out. I understand that a well known railway publisher apparently sends out some 10,000 magazines/month by post - some 120,000/year, or 30 times our volume of post. They have dedicated facilities where they can easily set-out the 100-plus Mail Bags that they have to sort their magazines into in order to get part of their discount - the rest comes from the sheer volume of postings. Our dispatch is done from a private house in Scotland - a somewhat different proposition! If we were to have to use the similar 100-plus bags these would fill a normal garage several times over and many would only have one magazine in them - something that would not go down too well with the local sorting office.

We will always try to reduce costs but I do wish some members would remember the scale of our operation. The SRS is a small organisation that is run by a dedicated group of people in their spare time from their homes. The Society simply does not have the resources, or the volume of postings, to be able to benefit from the money-saving initiatives that the big players have. Next time anyone has a bright idea to save the Society money please fully research all the implications before you suggest it to the Committee.

In response to frequent suggestions that the SRS should issue a calendar we have put together a super series of photographs for a 2009 one. To avoid wasted printing it will only be available on a pre-order basis. Details are on the Society News page.

JUST A SEC

David Stevenson

Many of you will be surprised to see my name reappear on the Committee as the new Secretary and probably many of you will ask why? The short answer is that I missed the involvement in the Society and following yet another huge upheaval where I work I am able to make the time. For me just being a member and paying one's subs is not enough and I feel the need to contribute more so being able to return to the Management Committee is my answer. My two main interests are Swiss and Spanish railways and I am fortunate to now enjoy a role in both and I love it and them!