

Many hands make a great Swiss express

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Many hands make a great Swiss Express

Gerald Savine

Tony Bagwell's article in June's issue of *Swiss Express* 'After the click, the Techie bit' gave some idea of how much goes into getting the Society's magazine onto your doormat.

However, in addition to Tony's essential input with his technical wizardry, there is a lot more to producing a high quality 52-page magazine each quarter. Malcolm Bulpitt collates and edits the copy that goes into each edition, and manages the whole process. He conservatively estimates that he spends some 100 hours over the 13-week gestation period of each magazine undertaking these tasks, along with dealing with the innumerable emails and other correspondence associated with the role. The editorial team has a production meeting at my studio in Upton-upon-Severn some six weeks prior to each publication date to decide on the articles to be used that will result in an interesting magazine with a balance of topics, and to allocate space in a basic layout.

We have a broad spectrum of membership and it is not always easy to ensure that we get the mixture correct. My role is then to pull the design and layout together, a task that takes at least two solid weeks of work using my iMac computer with a professional desktop publishing programme. The first draft of the proofs then return to Malcolm for their first reading, at which point changes to the layout and the input are sometimes required. He also tries to ensure that we stick to a 'house style' regarding non-English spellings, etc. and that the technical details are as correct as possible. Getting photo captions right is often an issue, as we rely upon those submitting the images to supply the correct information. *It would help greatly if all photos were supplied with a short caption.* At this time the proofs are also sent off to Lesley and Chris Johnstone-Senior in Yorkshire for the main proof reading to ensure as far as possible that the spelling, grammar and punctuation are correct. I am afraid that Malcolm and I sometimes miss the occasional glitch, or put the wrong caption to a photograph. It happens in the best of organisations, for none of us are perfect and mistakes

happen especially when working to a tight schedule.

Finally I have to put all the changes together and get the production CD to the printers within a time-scale agreed with them to ensure it reaches you at the specified time.

There are also a number of other important people involved with the production of *Swiss Express*. One is our 'Swiss News' Editor Bryan Stone, who is based in Switzerland where he uses the contacts he had forged in his railway operating career to collate up-to-date information, and to provide interesting background articles. The magazine would be poorer without his input. Neil Wheelwright manages the incoming advertising and supplies me with a list of advertisers, plus their copy-material that often has to be technically re-processed. Glyn Jones not only looks after the 'Society Sales' page, but he also collates the 'Diary Dates' information that is supplied on the insert sheet. Steve Buck makes sure that our printers have an up-to-date list of addresses each quarter for the delivery process as well as sorting-out any problems with missing copies. As we have mentioned in previous magazines it is probably down to the delivery organisation when things go wrong, not Steve. He also manages the distribution of a small number of copies that are sent to organisations such as the British Library, the Swiss Embassy, the SBB for their Archives and some other organisations with which the Society has essential contacts.

Mention must also be made of Tewkesbury Printing, who produce a top quality product that we believe would be fit for the shelves of the big newsagents, and also get the magazine and the face sheet into envelopes prior to distribution. All being well your copy of the magazine will arrive just before or just after the beginning of the month.

Finally it is you, the members, who are the most essential part of the process, as there wouldn't be a magazine without the articles and photographs you contribute.

By the way, it would be helpful if when writing your articles, you leave only one letter space between sentences, and change the default language to UK English. 🇬🇧

From The Treasurer and Membership Secretary

Included on the address sheet of this issue of *Swiss Express* is the subscription renewal form for 2015. You may renew by UK cheque, PayPal or bank transfer from a UK bank. If paying by bank transfer please note that the SRS bank account has changed since last year, full details are on the renewal form.

Having held the subscription rate at its current level for some 2 years, the cost of producing the magazine has increased (mainly printing and postage) to such an extent that an increase has become necessary. However the modest increase of £1 per annum will not fully cover the costs and we expect to again draw upon our reserves during the coming year. If you renew for two years now, you will be protected if we have to increase rates again next year. Please remember that late renewals cost the Society more in postal charges as we miss out on bulk discounts from Royal Mail when we have to post individual copies to late renewing members. 🇬🇧