

Chairman's thoughts

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CHAIRMAN'S THOUGHTS - Paul Russenberger

The other night I was bemoaning to Alan Pike that I was not really having any thoughts worth putting down. When he replied that he thought that was a good thing, I expressed extreme surprise. "But don't you see," answered Alan; "that means things are going well." And I suppose he is right.

Membership is rising. The Swiss were delighted to meet Alan and me at Le Bouveret ("Au Bouveret?") earlier this year. By the time this appears, the Society will have held its first meeting in Switzerland for some years. "*Swiss Express*" now has colour in alternate issues.

However, success brings its own problems as well as rewards. I am grateful to each of the Committee for all they are doing. The bigger the Society, the more work there is to be done. The Membership Secretary is faced with an annually more daunting workload. More articles and photographs are submitted to the Editor for our journal. Without wishing to place either of the Davids above the rest of the Committee, they do carry the more time-sensitive responsibilities. David Stevenson has requested assistance in his work and there has indeed been a positive response to this. However, I would add my voice to his pleas for aid. The Society possibly has the best of the journals and this is in no small way thanks to the present Editor's efforts and commitment. I commend anyone thinking about ways in which to help the Society to get in touch with David.

Looking back over summer holidays in Switzerland, I have seen changes in so many aspects of Swiss railways. Since my first visit was in 1958, this is only to be expected. If things were to be otherwise, Switzerland would be in a very poor state indeed! If I had to cite just one change to be highlighted above all others, it is the increase in push-pull working. For many enthusiasts, not least the photographer as I discovered on the Lötschberg Südrampe a year ago, there is something disappointing about a locomotive pushing a main line express. The fact is that this change in working method, which was around in a much lesser way in 1958, has been a real benefit to the SBB.

Keeping a locomotive at one end of a train while driving from either end frees up capacity at stations by eliminating movements over the throat. Given the number of reversals which occur in Switzerland, notably at Bern and Zürich, this removes the need to hold locomotives ready to take over arriving trains. It therefore becomes possible to increase the number of trains in the timetable without the equivalent increase in the locomotive fleet or the even more expensive alterations to track layouts to increase track capacity.

Summer is now behind us and we have those long winter evenings ahead. But do not be depressed. Now is the chance to get on with that model you were long planning which will bring back to life those memories of summer holidays!

EXHIBITIONS REPORT - Andy Nelson

By the time you read this I should have returned from my own annual pilgrimage based in Interlaken and Bergün. If you have a layout you are exhibiting or if there is any sales item you may want and which I can bring along to the Exhibitions, then please let me know on 01753 534313 or by letter.

I have had a request for a Swiss Layout for the show at Newmarket on 8th June 2002 (yes 2002). If anyone is interested then please let me know as soon as possible.

The Exhibitions Stand will be attending the following venues.

2001	Sept. 22nd:	Oxford GRS. Usual location at the College of Further Education Mike Polglaze will be there with San Giacomo
	Oct. 20th-21st:	Warley (NEC Birmingham) (to be confirmed)
	Nov. 24th:	Letchworth Model Railway Show
	Dec. 8th:	Mirfield Model Railway Show. Mirfield Fire Station
2002	Jan. 12th-13th:	St Albans Show. St Albans Arena
	Feb. 23rd-24th:	Eurotrack Southampton. New venue at Eastleigh Sports Centre

Swiss Layouts on view.

Oct. 27th 2001 MALOJA HOm Expo Narrow Gauge. White Oaks Centre, Swanley, Kent
Note from the Editor - There is also an excellent swimming pool here with flumes and slides for children. Makes a good day out for everyone.