

Just a sec

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COVER PICTURE:

C56 2978 leaving Erstfeld on 8th September.

PHOTO: Phil Weaver.

EDITORIAL Malcolm Bulpitt

First an apology from both David Baker, the Society Archivist, and myself. Having decided to reintroduce an edition number on the cover starting with the last magazine we believed that 76 was the correct one. Not so – and we should have been more alert to realise our mistake. It should have been Number 92, so this magazine becomes Number 93. The surprise has been that no-one has contacted us to point out the error of our ways.

Secondly some of you may have noticed that the SRS website was down for a while at the end of November. For reasons too complex to go into here we lost our domain name and this also resulted in all the email addresses linked to the Society (as listed at the front of the magazine) going down. If you tried to contact any of the officers at that time your emails are probably still out there in cyberspace. Thanks to a lot of work by Neil Wheelwright, and I understand the co-operation of his employers, we are now re-established in the electronic age. I hope that I will not have to write a third editorial explaining computer problems that have been afflicting *Swiss Express* and the SRS.

Finally, thanks to all of you who have sent in photos, news items and potential articles for the magazine over the last few weeks. The team will do their to fit everything in over 2008, and we are always looking for more things. Switzerland has the most diverse and interesting railway infrastructure in Europe so if you see something that interests you remember that it will probable interest your fellow members, so photograph it and tell us about it.

JUST A SEC Roger Ellis

Silly Grandad!

It is a compliment that I am known as such by my son Simon's two daughters, Rebecca and Victoria. I cannot think why, when members of the Society only know me as being shy, reserved and unassuming! (Incidentally before many of you ask, yes, I am old enough to have granddaughters). However, this brings me in a roundabout way to asking members if they know of any way in which we can attract younger persons to join the Society? The SNCF Society have 'junior membership', but I don't think that this is necessarily the answer. I am sure many society's and special interest related groups would tell a similar story, but that does not mean that we cannot come up with a solution. We have our new prospectus, and the web site has been much improved of late. Can I ask you to think of any other ways in which we can get younger persons involved in the Society? After all they are the future and may even replace 'Silly Grandad' as Secretary.

Erstfeld 2009

To date about twenty persons have expressed an interest in coming to Erstfeld for the proposed 2009 Social Event, which I think is a little short of the minimum number I need. However I will be going to Switzerland in the autumn, and I will discuss with Paul at

the Frohsinn a possible programme. In the December Magazine I will outline what we have in mind and whether the event can proceed, which will give members ample time to organise discounted flights and rail travel. Thank you to all who have contacted me and I look forward to hearing from any other members who would like to join us.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES Paul Russenberger

There is no truthful denying that I am finding more than a little difficult to realise that when most of you read it. I will have barely more than a week as Chairman before reverting to being simply Member G37. Perhaps that is the surest sign that it is high time that I went!

I owe massive thanks to all those who have worked to support the Society over the last 9 years.

I am not going to name any because if I do I shall unintentionally forget somebody. Members up, down, and out of the country, have arranged events, organised Branches, given talks, written articles, attended Committee Meetings, run the website and more. I am sincerely grateful to all of you who have contributed. Things have undoubtedly happened within the Society since April 1999. I can claim responsibility for very few, if any, of them. Ideas have been generated by members, not least, but not exclusively, those on the Committee. Members have taken action and made things happen. *Swiss Express* has developed out of recognition; new Branches have been formed; the Autumn Meeting has been launched and become part of the Society calendar. And the calendar was something that did not go as well as hoped – (most) members liked it, but it appeared that it would not attract sufficient demand to make it annually viable. (As I write this the calendar may yet be resurrected, but I have only one more Committee Meeting to attend ...) It was good to hold a gathering in the *Verkehrshaus*, but difficult to develop this into a repeated event.

At the first Branch I visited after becoming Chairman I was asked 'Is there a future for the Society?' I would give the same answer today as I gave then. 'That is not up to the Chairman; it is up to the Membership.' Well, of course it is in part up to me since I am a member, but I am only one member in over 1300; the other 1299 plus can make a greater overall contribution, though I hope I will still be able to contribute. Years ago, long before I thought I would become Chairman, I ran into a colleague whom I had not seen in the Society for a while. He explained that he had left because 'he didn't see what he could get out of it.' While it is right and proper that we all seek something from the Society, it is important that we all also consider what we can give to the Society. The result of the whole is the result of the actions of the individuals.

The role of Chairman is curious. It carries responsibility without authority. If something goes wrong, then the Chairman has to manage the putting right, if not actually doing the putting right. But while the Chairman has to be answerable to the Society, nobody is answerable to the Chairman. Nobody can be forced to carry out the work they have taken on. That can be a significant source of anxiety to the Chairman who is a volunteer working for you in their spare time. Therefore, I ask you to give your full support to whoever you elect in my place so that they will be able to concentrate on enabling the enhancement of the Society for the benefit of every member.

Special Trains in 2008

Notice has been received of the following planned special trains:

23/24 March		Alpine Classic Pullman Express – Route of the Glacier Express
19/20 April		Alpine Classic Pullman Express – Route of the Glacier Express
11 May	G 4/5 or G 3/4	Landquart – Landwasser Viaduct – Landquart
17 May	Ce6/8II	Basel – Schaffhausen – Zürich – Olten
24 May	TEE RAe	Bern – Lötschberg – Domodossola – Valais – Bern
31 May	Ae 3/6 II	Olten – Zürich – Winterthur – Konstanz and return
28 June	Preserved	Brig – DFB – Chur
29 June	Preserved	Chur – DFB - Brig

Further information can be obtained from the RailAway internet site at www.railaway.ch/erlebnisfahrten
While this information is given in good faith, no responsibility can be taken for inaccuracies.