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A short editorial this time as there is so much that we would like to cram into this edition of the magazine. The good news is that your Management Committee has decided that *Swiss Express* should now normally be of 60-pages although this does have a financial implication. A desire to have the larger magazine has been clearly expressed by the majority of attendees at our recent AGMs. The other good news is that many of you have responded to my request in the September edition to supply articles for the journal. I suppose that the only bad news is that I cannot fit everything into this edition. Never mind, there are always the March, June, etc editions to fill so please keep on writing items and submitting photographs. Just sending interesting images to Tony Bagwell is good and helps to maintain our data base of digital images. A long term project the editorial team would like to take forward is to produce a photo-album using this excellent source. A good thing about this edition is that we should have at least two articles from women in it. I would love to see more contributions coming from our female members – there are a number of you out there and this is only the second edition since I started editing the magazine that has included such contributions. Please keep this up.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Ian Athey

Whilst I am writing these notes on October 7th they will not, of course, be read by you until about the beginning of December. It is appropriate, therefore, that, on behalf of the Committee and Officials of the Society, I send you best wishes for a peaceful Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year. I would normally also couple the word "prosperous" with the latter part of the greeting but, with daily stories of extreme difficulties in the world's financial markets, 2009 may well be a very uncomfortable year for all of us although I do hope that this will not be the case. Your Committee had these difficulties very much in mind last Saturday when the matter of subscriptions for 2009 was discussed at one of our regular meetings.

During 2008, in response to requests from members, "*Swiss Express*" has been four 60-page editions instead of the 2 x 60 and 2 x 44-page editions originally planned. Whilst this meant an increase in the cost of the Journal it was felt to be affordable. However, like all of us in the past year, the Society has been faced with substantially increased costs, particularly those associated with the production of our journal. Furthermore, the Committee has now been advised that further increases of "around 10%" will probably be incurred with the magazine production and distribution costs in 2009, although included in this figure is the anticipated rise in postal charges. To ensure that the Society maintains the current content level and high standard of "*Swiss Express*", it was decided that 2009 subscriptions will be £15 for the UK, £17 for Europe and £20 (or US\$40) for elsewhere. This decision was not taken lightly. Indeed, it is anticipated that this increase will probably not cover our projected expenses in 2009 and it was agreed that funds from the Society's reserves would be utilised to cover any shortfall that arises.

Whilst it pains me greatly to pass this sort of news on to you in this my first "Christmas Message", I would like to assure you that your Committee are continually looking at ways of increasing income and also at ways to keep costs down. Neither of these are easy tasks in today's circumstances. On a brighter note I am very pleased to report that, in September, Alan Pike and I were able to meet a group of members of the Association Swiss Museum of Transport on their recent visit to places of transport interest in the northern half of the UK. Alan met them at York and I joined them at the Beamish Open Air Museum on their way to Edinburgh. Through the contacts made, it is anticipated that both organisations will be able to develop our respective interests further. Editor permitting, there will be a more detailed report of the above meetings in the March 2009 issue.

COVER PICTURE:

Swiss Express liveried Re4/4^{II} approaches Giubiasco with a northbound express 2nd August 2008.

PHOTO: David Carter.