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CHAIRMAN'S THOUGHTS - Paul Russenberger

These notes have to begin with an apology. Last year, about a month before the Society AGM, the family agreed the dates of a holiday to be taken in March 2000. Last October I was looking through the notes of that AGM when I realised to my horror that the holiday coincided with the year 2000 AGM in Derby. Because the holiday dates are driven by my eldest son's school, they could not be changed; the immovable was encountering the irresistible. I began to steel myself to negotiate an early return for the AGM. Before doing so, I placed my situation before senior members of the Society who were unanimously adamant that I should remain away with the family. I think I have more or less squared it with my conscience, but I very much regret not being present at the AGM and ask you all to accept my apologies.

In my absence, Roy Dunglison has kindly agreed to chair the meeting and I am most grateful to him.

Surfing the Internet the other evening, I decided to put Swiss Railways into the search engine. Results came up very quickly and the second entry read Swiss Railways Society. What a relief our Internet site works. Take a look at it, because it is our site about our Society. It includes our logo, which, incidentally, is copyright, and is regularly updated to give a listing of the topics covered in the most recent Swiss Express. For those of you who are web site builders, why not include it as a link? One thing however we, that is the Committee on behalf of the Society, not the Chairman's plural, require that you do not do is to include information about the Society in your web site. This is simply to ensure that no inaccurate data is published which could unintentionally mislead or cause the Society an embarrassment.

Lastly, I wish you all an excellent and fruitful gathering in Derby.

SECRETARY'S NOTES - Brian Hemming

By the time these notes appear in Swiss Express the Annual General Meeting will be only a couple of weeks away and the Committee will be working feverishly to finalise their reports for presentation to the meeting. All of what has happened in the past year will be included in these reports, but there are matters of importance to advise you of now.

Since the December Swiss Express was published, our Sales Officer, Steve Horobin, has indicated that he will not be offering himself for reelection to that post. Nominations for all positions were invited in the last edition of Swiss Express and therefore, unless a nomination or nominations are received for the post of Sales Officer before the closing date (4th March) and one of the candidates is elected at the AGM, the post will remain vacant until it can be filled. In the interim our Exhibitions & Publicity Officer, Andy Nelson, has kindly offered to fulfil the duties of Sales Officer to ensure an uninterrupted service to the membership.

The Society is extremely grateful to Steve Horobin for all the work he has done and the time he has spent on behalf of the Society in promoting our range of sales items. A look at the accounts will show only too readily the contribution that sales make to the income of the Society and the efficient way in which Steve has operated has made this possible. We are delighted that he has indicated that he will continue to support the Society whenever his considerable work commitments permit and look forward to seeing him at functions.