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All things considered the change-over to the new A4 format appears to have gone well. There were a small number of glitches with the new mechanized distribution system but the new-style magazine seems to have gone down well with you, the members, with comments running 50 to 2 in favour. If members are aware of any problems please let us know. As members will have noticed over the last couple of years Bryan Stone, one of our Swiss members, has been supplying the magazine with a lot of up-to-date information and interesting background articles. I have now asked him to become a member of the Swiss Express team as our Swiss News Editor. A Nottinghamshire lad Bryan worked for BR and in 1968 they seconded him to Intercontainer in Basel for two years – but he never returned. He and his family moved to a village in Basel Land and became Swiss citizens whilst Bryan's railway career led on to the founding of his own Consultancy from which he retired a few years ago. The SRS is fortunate to have several friends in Switzerland who frequently write for the Society, for which we are grateful. Now we have our own resident correspondent with his ear to the ground, and with industry connections. In this edition's Society News you will find details of a Member's discount scheme when booking trips to Switzerland - please take advantage of it. Also in this section are details of our new SRS Web Forum.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

John Jesson

At the AGM on 26th March Ian Athey stepped down as Chairman of the Society having overseen the continued development of the SRS as well as the change of magazine format from A5 to A4. My thanks to Ian for his efforts, which I know have been greatly appreciated. I wish Ian all the best in the future, and am sure you will all join me in this. At the end of the music, I was left holding the parcel, having found there was no-one to pass it to, so I have taken on the mantle of Chairman. For those who do not know me (lucky people), I joined the Society in 1985 and have recently retired, which has allowed me the time to do many things that have always, previously, only been future projects. My interests include model railways and I visit the Nuremberg Toy Fair each year on behalf of the Society (and myself, to be fair). This year's report, with photographs, is on the Society website and a hard copy of the report is available from the Editor. In future years the June Chairman's notes will include my comments and observations on this annual event. As far as the prototype is concerned, my main interests are freight and operations, particularly in Germany and over the Gotthard. The operational interest stems from a career in the railways' Control Offices, while freight trains are, these days, a lot more varied and interesting than passenger trains.

JUST A SEC

David Stevenson

AGM 2011

This year's AGM was attended by 118 members, down from last year's 142, but I felt it was busier so perhaps some people did not sign in. Glyn Jones and the East Midlands Branch organised the event and the displays. Many thanks to them for making the day so successful. The winning entries from the respective categories of the photo competition can be seen in the centre pages of this magazine. As always SRS Sales were busy. The AGM saw the launch of the second in the series of SRS Swiss Travel Guide Books written by Martin Fisher. This volume describes the Lake Geneva region and it is reviewed elsewhere in this Swiss Express. It is available from Glyn Jones now and also introduced at the AGM was the new SRS roller ball pen; see the Sales pages for details.

The AGM was led by Ian Athey for the final time before he stood down from the Chair. He has been a wonderful Chairman and will be missed. Liliana Wood also stood down and I am pleased to report that John Jesson was elected as Chairman together with Roger Kemp who is the new Committee Member. The AGM was notable for its good humour and it appeared general satisfaction on the part of the Membership, particularly the introduction of the A4 format to Swiss Express. I also want to thank Pam Jones who took the minutes, much appreciated by me as always.

Once again a great day was had by all, and we all look forward to next year when Roger Ellis (who he?) will be organising it once again for Saturday 24th March 2012 in Bristol.

Swiss Railways Society – Membership Details

If you are not currently a member of the Swiss Railways Society, and have only just discovered Swiss Express, why not join so you can keep up to date with railways and the transport scene in Switzerland? For a modest UK subscription of £16/year in addition to receiving four quarterly issues of this splendid publication you can also take part in the other activities organised by the Society.

For a Society Prospectus you can either write to
Martin Fisher at
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or email him at membership@swissrailsoc.org.uk