



British Section

Newsletter

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European Association of Railway Personnel

**International Non-governmental Organisation with permanent advisory
status to the Council of Europe
European World Association with a consultative relationship with the UN
(decision E/ 2002/222/) and member of ECOSOC**

**A.E.C. BRITISH SECTION NEWSLETTER, Vol. 11 No. 3
SPRING 2007**

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**A separate membership application form
is enclosed.**

The European web page is at: <http://www.A-E-C.net>

AEC France is at www.aecfrance.org

AEC Italy is at www.aecitalia.org

AEC Latvia is at www.ldz.lv/biedriba/

AEC Spain is at www.aec-es.org

AEC Poland is at www.aecpl.republika.pl (*Private site, not officially recognised.*)

AEC Austria is at www.aec-oesterreich.at.tf

AEC in Romania is at www.aecaferom.3x.ro

The **British Section Website** is at <http://www.aec-europe.org.uk> You can also find the British Section Newsletter on line at the French and European websites by clicking on to the labelled link, and also at the ASLEF District 5 website at <http://www.aslef-dc5.org.uk/Members/europa.htm>

Editorial: A note from the President.

In our last issue, our listing of dates at the end of the month did not take account of the fact that our Annual General Meeting is scheduled to take place on THURSDAY 26th April 2007. There will therefore be no event on the day before, 25th April. The move to the Thursday was occasioned by the non availability of the venue on the Wednesday. As last year it will be held at the Royal Oak, 44 Tabard Street, London (the venue of our video session in January). The formal notice of the meeting and draft agenda will be found towards the end of this newsletter.

I have been reading a history book – the history of Europe since the Second World War. To all intents and purposes it is the history of my lifetime. It makes fascinating reading because it has clarified a number of things for me. Not least, it has helped to explain to me my country's relationship with the United States of America. Basically we have been so indebted to the U.S. that we have had little choice but to follow their lead. Let us hope that now these debts have been repaid, we might be a little more independent-minded. There is no doubt too, that Britain did not suffer the humiliation of occupation, during and after that war, even if we endured similar hardships afterwards, and this has meant that our ingrained attitudes are different.

Some of you will have heard of the Eddington Report on Britain's future transport needs. Sir Roy Eddington, former chairman of British Airways was commissioned by the British government to make an assessment. He came to the conclusion that Britain needed no more high-speed railways – indeed, the financial justification of the one we now have was borderline. I wonder what is taken into account in these 'financial justifications'. Had he undertaken his report before the Channel Tunnel was built, it would in all probability never have been built. In some things, there are overriding considerations which cannot be assessed in monetary terms.

Within the last month there have been demonstrations about train overcrowding – it takes a lot for the British to take that line of action but it is happening more and more over the effects of other aspects of government policy. At the same time it is reported that during the past 12 months, the railway system has for the first time exceeded the number of passengers carried in 1948, when the system was twice the size it is now. Rail managers in the west of England are apologising publicly for failing to realise the extent of the increase in rail use that a change in franchise would bring about. They reduced the service and the size of trains (to allow some refurbishment of run-down rolling stock) when the need was for an improved service with more capacity. So now we see Intercity trains with more seats (and less legroom) in Standard class, but real leather upholstery in First!

Now I read that the team at civil engineering consultant Ove Arup, with the experience of building our high speed line built up over ten years, is now moving its team to California, where, in a joint venture with other British firms, they will undertake environmental and engineering work for the Palmdale to Los Angeles section of the L.A. to San Francisco High Speed line. At the end of the Second World War, we 'exported' the jet engine to the U.S. and that didn't do us a lot of good!

I should like to take the opportunity of welcoming members in Romania and Bulgaria into the European Union.

Since the last edition, Peter Davies has put together a provisional package for hosting European days in York in the autumn of 2009. The provisional price is well outside the laid down guidelines, but hopefully AEC in Europe generally will come to realise that Britain is different, not least in how much things cost. With cheap air fares, at least many of them will be able to get here without breaking the bank, whatever the environmental damage. The package will be presented to the European Administrative council at their next meeting in Bucharest in May. Three of us will be representing the British section.

Our monthly London Reunions continue to take place at the 'Lord Moon of the Mall' in Whitehall, on the second Thursday of each month. We are there from approx 16h15 until about 18h45. The regulars would be delighted to see some new (and old) faces.

Philip Worsfold and the production team.

Recruitment

Bright ideas should be discussed with Bob Clark. Enquiries about membership should be addressed to **Bill Andrews**. Their addresses and phone numbers are given below.

There is a separate membership application form with this edition of the newsletter. Please use it if you are able to recruit a new member. Recruit seven members and get your next year's subscription free!

COMMITTEE

The committee is as follows:

Honorary President:

Theo Steel (Project Director ONE Railway)

Past Honorary President:

Malcolm Southgate OBE (formerly Deputy Director, Eurostar)

Honorary Vice-president:

Colin Charman, MCIT, Eurostar (UK) Ltd,

President:

Philip Worsfold, B.Sc., C.Eng., M.I.C.E.

Vice-president:

Patrick Rigby.

Secretary:

Gerry Atkin M.I.L.T.

Assistant Secretary:

Peter Davies,

Visits Secretary (Co-opted):

John Cresswell

Treasurer and Membership Secretary:

Bill Andrews,

Recruitment Secretary:

Bob Clark,

Auditor:

Mike Hill

TRAVEL NEWS

Money matters

The European commission announced just too late for our last edition that the countries below will be adopting the Euro as their currency in the months and years shown. After the given date, existing notes and coins will cease to be legal tender. Since the date for Slovenia has already passed, I hope that not too many of you will be inconvenienced.

January 2007

Slovenia.

January 2008

Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Malta.

January 2009

Slovakia

No current target date

Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland (and now also Romania and Bulgaria)

Rail Canterbury

In the last issue, mention was made of 'Canterbury Travel'. The firm I had in mind was;

Rail Canterbury
Continental Rail Specialists
34 Palace Street
Canterbury CT1 2DZ
Tel; 01227 450088
Fax; 01227 470072
E-mail; rail@rail-canterbury.co.uk
Web; www.rail-canterbury.co.uk

They can arrange FIP staff tickets, Eurostar, rail & sea crossings, continental rail Inter-Rail passes, car hire, hotels etc.

EUROPEAN DAYS and OTHER EUROPEAN EVENTS

The current position is as follows:

- 20th – 27th May 2007 European Days in **Bucharest and Lower Carpathia, Romania. Booking for this event has now officially closed.**
- 17th – 22nd Sept 2007 European Days in **Burgenland, Austria.** The programme is featured in this edition of the newsletter. **Booking through the British section closes on 16th March.**
- 25th – 31st May 2008 European Days in **Antwerp, Belgium.**
- Autumn 2008 European Days and Congress in **Lyon, France.**
- 24th – 30th May 2009 European Days in Lüneburg, Germany
- Autumn 2009 We are looking into the possibility of European Days in York, England – but this will be expensive for our European friends.

The draft programme for the Austrian event is also featured in this edition of the newsletter.

Forthcoming events in the German Programmes are;

Europäische Treffen

Frühjahr 2007 Europäische Tage in Bukarest, Rumänien
17.09. – 22.09.2007 Europäische Tage im Burgenland, Österreich
25.05. – 31.05.2008 Europäische Tage in Antwerpen, Belgien
Herbst 2008 Europäische Tage und Hauptversammlung
in Lyon, Frankreich
24.05. – 30.05.2009 Europäische Tage in Lüneburg, Deutschland

Aktuelle Termine RV Hamburg

09.03.2007 RV – Vorstandssitzung 17:00 Uhr „Restaurant Eckhardt“

08.06.2007 RV – Vorstandssitzung 17:00 Uhr „Restaurant Eckhardt“

Geplant:

08.09.2007 RV – Vorstandssitzung in Berlin

07.12.2007 Adventskaffee in der Heide

Proposed visit to London by the Paris Regional Group of the French Section of AEC.

We have now heard from the Paris group. Unfortunately they will not be able to make a visit in the Spring – I suggested that some of them might like to come to our Annual Dinner at the end of March – but envisage a visit either between mid-June and the beginning of September or in October or November.

They are just as interested in a general visit to London as with a technical one – so a jar or three are on the cards!

EUROPEAN DAYS AUSTRIA/BURGENLAND SEPTEMBER 16th to SEPTEMBER. 22nd 2007

Programme (as at September 2006)

Sunday September 16 th	Arrival of participants of Executive Committee Transfer from Vienna to Eisenstadt Dinner
Monday September 17 th	09h00 -12h00 and 14h00 – 18h00 Session of the Executive Committee Arrival of the participants to Vienna or Eisenstadt Transfer from Vienna or Wiener Neustadt to Eisenstadt
19.00 h	Dinner and Welcome Inauguration in the palace “Esterhazy” (music with Haydn Ensemble)
Tuesday September 18 th	Castles and monastery from 07h00 breakfast 08h00 departure by coach through Burgenland and Styria. Visit monastery of Vornau and castle Schlaining 12h00 Lunch on the castle Lockenhaus 14h00 departure by coach to castle Forchtenstein 17h00 return journey to Eisenstadt 19h00 dinner <i>about 220km coach-ride</i>

Wednesday September 19 th	<p>A day in Vienna from 07h00 breakfast 08h00 departure by coach to Vienna Drive round and Sightseeing 12h00 lunch 14h00 leisure time 18h00 with the Lilliput Railway 18h30 dinner 20h00 go to the "Giant Ferris Wheel" 21h00 return journey to Eisenstadt</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>about 120km coach-ride</i></p>
Thursday September 20 th	<p>A day in Lower Austria from 07h00 breakfast 08h00 departure by coach to Puchberg 10h00 with the rack-railway up the "Schneeberg" 12h00 lunch 14h00 departure to the valley 15h00 departure through the Semmering-region 16h30 wine-tasting 18h00 depart for Oslip; return journey to Eisenstadt 19h00 dinner and traditional Burgenland-evening 22h00 return to Eisenstadt</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>about 180km coach-ride</i></p>
Friday September 21 st	<p>A day in the Burgenland from 07h00 breakfast 08h30 departure by coach via St. Margarethen 09h30 arrival at Rust 10h00 boat trip on the "Neusiedlersee" 11h00 departure by coach through the national park "Lange Lacke" 11h45 arrival in Podersdorf 12h00 lunch 14h00 departure by coach to the place of pilgrimage "Loretto" — devotion 15h00 "Loretto" — devotion 15h30 return journey to Eisenstadt 18h30 Closing of the European Days, Dinner Music</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>about 150km coach-ride</i></p>
Saturday September 22 nd	<p>Departure from 07h00 breakfast Transfer to the station at Eisenstadt or Vienna</p>

Changes to the programme are possible

Provisional cost of the programme:

EURO 525

from 17th Sept 2007 dinner to 22nd Sept 2007 breakfast, including all the meals mentioned in the programme, guided tours, accommodation in double room and transfers.

EURO 600

from 16th Sept 2007 dinner to 22nd Sept 2007 breakfast, as above.

Extra days at EURO 75 per day.

Single room supplement **EURO 12** per night

Deposit EURO 200. Final balance due 15th August 2007, after which a cancellation fee will apply.

Booking through the British Section

Bookings can be arranged through the British section, as for previous European Days. To be included, you should send a **deposit of £200** per person to Philip Worsfold by **Friday 16th March 2007 at the very latest. Cheques should be made payable to Philip Worsfold.** The deposit includes an allowance for bank transfer costs. Any excess will be credited towards the final payment. **Please note that you will need to secure your booking before our Annual dinner. You will be too late if you try to wait until then.**

The event is arranged by the Austrian section of AEC, which is the responsible organiser. Payment through the British section is offered purely to minimise the cost of money transfer. It is not acting as a travel agency and does not make travel arrangements. Neither the British section of AEC, nor any individual officer thereof can accept responsibility for any problems arising. You will be responsible personally for your payments and for any losses that may be incurred. You are advised to take out appropriate insurance cover.

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME FOR EUROPEAN DAYS IN BELGIUM, 25th to 31st MAY 2008 – ANTWERP, BRUSSELS, LEUVEN

Hotel “TOERIST” * opposite the Central Station Antwerp.**

Sunday 25th May 2008:

“The Scheldt River owes its existence to God, and Antwerp owes its Existence to the Scheldt river”

Afternoon

Arrival of the members of the Executive Council and transfer to the Hotel (meeting Sunday 25th May afternoon or Monday 26th May: preparation for Congress in September, Lyon, France)

Arrival of the participants for optional programme for the excursion to Bruges on Monday 26th May

Dinner in the hotel

Monday 26th May 2008:

Bruges is called: “the Venice of The North”.....

Breakfast in hotel

Tour by bus to Bruges: visit to the city with lunch in a typical restaurant in Bruges. (optional)

Meeting of the Executive committee in Hotel.

(Lunch: in the restaurant of the Belgian Railways (NMBS-SNCB) at Antwerp Central Station)

Afternoon: Meeting (continued)

During the day: Arrival of remaining delegates to European Days.

Evening: Welcome to European Days and reception – Dinner + overnight in hotel.

Tuesday 27th May 2008:

Antwerp: Art Nouveau in diamond museum – Museum Rubens

Breakfast in hotel

Visit to the city of Antwerp + harbour tour – lunch on board.

Afternoon 15h00: Free for shopping or visit to museum.

Dinner and overnight in hotel.

Wednesday 28th May 2008:(*)

Brussels is the capital of the Kingdom of Belgium and Brussels is more than a 1000 years old. Brussels has an important international vocation; as the European capital the city is home to the European Commission and the Council of Ministers of the European Union (EU).

Breakfast in the hotel

Tour by bus to Brussels:

09h30 Visit to the European Community building

Lunch in Restaurant “LA MOULE SACREE” in Brussels.

Afternoon : Visit to the old town of Brussels.

+ visit to the Atomium (This structure was built in 1958 for the World Exhibition '58 in Brussels)

Dinner in the restaurant of the Atomium

Overnight in the hotel.

Thursday 29th May 2008:

Leuven (Louvain): + Fonske (the student) Leuven is capital of the province of Flemish-Brabant is perhaps best known throughout the world for its magnificent architecture, its internationally renowned University and maybe most of all for its world famous beer.

Breakfast in the hotel.

Tour by bus to Leuven:

Visit Town hall + University library

Lunch in the restaurant “Salons Georges” in Leuven.

Free to 15h00.

Departure from Leuven to Mechelen: Visit of the Saint Rumbold's Tower + archiepiscopal church.

(Visit to the weaving/renovation of carpet (factory DE WIT- contractor of big building)
Dinner in the restaurant in Mechelen or hotel (still to be decided)
Overnight in hotel.

Friday 30th May 2008:

Antwerp: Central station + Square Astrid. Breakfast in the Hotel
Morning: Visit of the new Station 'Antwerpen Central'. (Restoration of the Central Station and the vault, which started in 1993 have recently been completed, but due to the construction of underground high speed train tracks, it will be a construction site at least until 2007.)

Lunch in the new restaurant of the Belgian Railways of Antwerp Central Station.
Afternoon: free

Closing ceremony + Dinner of the European Days.
Overnight in the hotel

Saturday 31st May 2008:

Breakfast in the hotel

Transfer to Antwerp Central Station.

This programme is subject to change.

The prices shown are indicative only and have still to be finalised.

Price: From dinner Monday 26.05.2008, until after breakfast on 31.05.2008 = ± 550.00€

Included: Bus trip for all the visits indicated in the programme.
Accommodation in Hotel Toerist Antwerp * (opposite the Central Station – comfortable rooms, equipped with bathroom/douche, TV + telephone + minibar), all the meals and dinners, with a drink, water, and coffee included, in a room reserved for the group (rooms for 2-4 persons).**

Prices for additional programmes:

Visit to Bruges: ± 120.00€

Meeting of the Executive committee in Hotel: meeting room + meals; breakfast + lunch + diner + accommodation in Hotel ± 95.00€

The event is arranged by the Belgian section of AEC, which is the responsible organiser. Payment through the British section will be offered purely to minimise the cost of money transfer. It does not act as a travel agency and does not make travel arrangements. Neither the British section of AEC, nor any individual officer thereof can accept responsibility for any problems arising. You will be responsible personally for your payments and for any losses that may be incurred. You are advised to take out appropriate insurance cover.

Firmer prices and payment details will be given in the next newsletter.

MY ADVENTURE IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE, MARCH 2006 - by Preston Glass

My latest trip was, once again, of my own creation, planning my own itinerary and travelling along under 'my own steam', as it were. I booked my flight via the Internet from Stansted to Ancona, Italy, by Ryanair and that cost £33-92 [GBP] return and inclusive of taxes and other levies. This was booked last summer for the best possible deal.

The flight to Ancona was very good and was on time. At Ancona Airport I took the bus to Ancona City and checked into the hotel 'Fortuna' a 3* establishment and it had been booked via the Internet with a discount granted.

The next day, I booked in for the 13h30 sailing from Ancona (Italy) to Patras (Greece), a 21 hour 'cruise'. The carrier was *SUPERFAST XI*; a commercial ferry carrying cars, lorries, buses etc. and the speed was some 31 knots! I had a bed for the night and meals were bought at the help yourself restaurant. There were adequate saloons/lounges to sit in and open spaces on the vessel. *SUPERFAST X1* arrived next morning at Patras and everyone disembarked at 11.45am (11h45).

I had a light lunch and a beer before taking the express train on the metre gauge to Corinth and the train terminated there. I found a hotel for the night and later, I had dinner at a restaurant but it was not all that good a meal; I gave it a 'Greasy Spoon' award! The next day, I took the train to Corinth "New Station" where a new railway has been built to the new airport and Athens. The new railway replaces the metre gauge, the new gauge being 4ft 8 ½ ins (1435mm). Certainly it's a faster service. I found a very reasonable hotel near to Athens Station, the "Hotel Bill". Later, time for supper and bed as the next day was to be a long day.

The next morning, I took the 9.54am (09h15) train to Thessalonika on the main trunk line and a superb journey, riding in new saloon carriages and reclining seats and this was in '2nd class' The train arrived in Thessalonika at 3.24pm (15h24). There was time to look around the city, have a meal and later, I took the overnight train to Dikea in NE Greece, near to the Bulgarian and Turkish borders. I booked myself into a budget sleeping car or simply, 'couchettes'. The train left at 11.41pm (23h41) and arrived at Dikea the following morning. After Passport check, it was onto another train for Silvengrad in Bulgaria and a further passport check then time to change money to Bulgarian Leva and to buy a ticket to Plovdiv the second capital of Bulgaria. The weather in Greece was quite warm but it was cold in Bulgaria and on arrival at Plovdiv it was snowing. I found a cheap but good hotel for the flight, the 'Leipzig Hotel'. That cost the equivalent of £14.45, B&B and it was a 3* hotel! Dinner was taken at 7.30pm (19h30) in the hotel dining room and cost some £2 - £3 [GBP] for a 3 course meal and a pint of beer!

The next day, I boarded the 8.15am train, an Intercity service to Sofia, the Bulgarian capital. It was an InterCity train and I found a very comfortable carriage, very good for a 2nd class I thought - better than the 1st class carriage I shouldn't wonder. The journey was slow to Sofia and it was overcast with snow showers but very scenic. It goes to show that money is needed to upgrade the track. On arrival at Sofia, there was time for sandwiches and beer before taking the 12.15pm train to Vidin, in NE Bulgaria.

It was a comfortable journey and a very scenic trip to Vidin, up the Iskar River Valley to Mezdra then a scenic route on higher ground then descending to Vidin. On arrival

at Vidin, I found a hotel for the night and later, a good 3 course dinner plus a pint of beer for around £4 [GBP]. Later, back to the hotel for a shower and bed.

After a good night's kip*, I got up next morning and took a taxi to the Vidin Ferry crossing point, a few miles from Vidin Town. The roads there I found to be bumpy and with potholes here and there. *[Just like Devon! – Ed.]* I passed through the Bulgarian police check point, bags were searched - no problem - and my passport was duly stamped. Then down to the ferry, a typical river ferry, which carried four lorries. The weather was very cold and foggy and there was freezing fog. I was allowed to sit in the crew's room which was warm. The fare was in Euros. That cost me €3. Half an hour later, the ferry reached Calafat, in Romania, and I, together with a few other passengers, disembarked and walked up the concrete ramp to the Frontier Police checkpoint. My passport, together with others, was checked and all was satisfactory. A police officer, probably of high rank came up to me and was interested in my travelling arrangements - where I was going. I told him I would be taking the 11h30 train to Craiova for the night and onto Timișora for a further night and then on into Hungary. He directed me to a taxi which would take me to Calafat station, ½ mile away. He was very helpful and we both shook hands. It is interesting to tell of a similar experience when I was on the train from Sofia to Vidin. As train travel in Bulgaria is very cheap, even at the public rate – I travelled at ½ fare using my FIP Card, as a retired employee of former British Rail – I travelled 1st class for little extra, for more comfort and legroom. An hour or so before the train arrived at Vidin my tickets were inspected by a ticket inspector, a very friendly gentleman with a very bushy moustache and smartly dressed, wearing a braided hat with his uniform. After the ticket inspection, he and I shook hands with each other. All this is good for Anglo-Bulgarian and Romanian relations, don't you think? I think we made each other's day on both occasions.

The 11h30 train was made up, mainly of double deck carriages. I rode upstairs on the train and it was well heated despite the somewhat tatty appearance of the carriages. It was a slow stopping train calling at all stations but it didn't matter, *trai de looar*, time enough! There was snow on the ground. At around 2.15pm (14h15) the train arrived at Craiova. Later, I found a hotel, the 'Hotel Jiul' a 3* hotel. It was built during Communist times, a large international looking establishment but has been revamped in recent times. Bed & Breakfast was about £24 and dinner in the evening was Vegetable soup, steak, chips & tomatoes, followed by a pudding and a pint of beer. That cost £4 or so. The hotel was clean, comfortable and well heated, and I enjoyed a hot shower prior to going to bed for a good night's kip*!

The next morning, I got up, had breakfast and after breakfast checked out and made my way to Craiova railway station for the train to Timișora, which left around 1 o'clock pm (13h00). The journey was indeed a very scenic one, passing by the River Danube at a resort, Drobeta-Turnu Severin and a short distance away. Orșova. The train then went up into the mountainous district of the Carpathian Mountains with plenty of snow on the ground and there were some fairly steep gradients thus a slow run at times. Later, dusk came and the train entered the flat lowlands where there was no snow. At 8.30pm (20h30) or so, the train arrived in Timișora on time. I took a taxi to the city centre and booked a night for bed and breakfast at the Central Hotel, at around £24 per night. After checking in for the night, I had dinner at the Lloyds Restaurant and I was ready for it! Timișora is an interesting city with its Metropolitan Cathedral adorned with conical turrets with coloured tiles on the roofs. It also has numerous narrow gauge branch lines and tramways.

I took the tram to Békéscaba, a town in southern Hungary, where I alighted and was in time for a train from Békéscaba to Szeged, travelling on a secondary route. The train was a 2 car diesel multiple unit, each car being 4 wheeled and was 2nd class only but 'well appointed' with road coach style seating and reservation compulsory for a few bob*. It was a slow run but scenic for what it was. It was a little late arriving in Szeged but no problem. I took the No 1 tram, which stopped right close to the Royal Hotel, a 3* hotel. That cost me €47 (about £26.45) for B&B. There was a kettle, cups and saucers, tea coffee etc. – ideal for a much needed brew!

I had a wander round Szeged but but did not have too much time as it would soon get dark. I saw the Cathedral, the square and other sights including the River Tisza. Later, I had dinner in a pub restaurant to round the day off. I shall have to visit Szeged again to explore it in greater detail.

The next day, I took the No 1 tram to Szeged station for the train to Budapest Nuyagati Pu (Station) then to Keleti Pu via the Underground for the fast train to Vienna West. The Hungarian State Railways (MÁV) are coming on with their modernisation. New rolling stock etc and are doing well. Who needs the privatised railway? No one does!

After dinner in the early evening in Vienna, I took the night train to Bologna, Italy, then the connecting service to Ancona, a 2 hour journey, and checked in to a hotel for the night.

The next day, after breakfast, it was time to get the bus to Ancona Airport for the Ryanair flight home. It was on time.

In conclusion, it was a successful trip and very satisfying. The planning and itinerary was of my own making – all part of the fun.

Preston Glass.

**For our European readers, 'kip' is a slang word for sleep; 'bob' is a slang word for the old British shilling – 5 pence in today's money.*

[I wish to thank Preston for this article and hope that he might consider other trips around Europe – maybe to European Days? – Ed.]

RECENT ACTIVITIES ...

With the Christmas festivities, we have had only one event besides the regular Reunions in London. On Wednesday 31st January, a group of us met up for lunch at the Royal Oak, in Tabard Street, London. After lunch we adjourned to the upstairs room where we were entertained by a number of DVD presentations by John Batts, all with the underlying theme of the Channel tunnel – then and now. The first was an amusing early film (about 1898?) depicting the building of the tunnel and its first accident! The others dealing with more recent history – in one of which our Hon past President starred! We finished with a video from Philip Worsfold's collection about the De Glehn compound steam locomotive on the Nene Valley railway, made for the occasion of its 75th birthday.

... AND THINGS TO COME

- Reunions in London continue to take place at the ‘**Lord Moon of the Mall**’ on the **second Thursday of each month**, so the dates from now on are, **8th March, 12th April and 10th May 2007**. Please note that **Easter Sunday is 8th April**.
- **Please remember that, generally, the last Wednesday of the month** is earmarked for possible lunchtime talks and visits. Subsequent ‘**last Wednesday**’ dates are **28th March** (possible visit in mid Devon, after the Annual Dinner) and **30th May 2007**. **BUT IN APRIL** we have the Annual General Meeting on **THURSDAY 26TH April** at the **ROYAL OAK, 44, Tabard Street, London SE1, commencing at 1630hrs**.
In the future we still hope to visit Harvey’s Brewery in Lewes (who own the Royal Oak) and to one of the train simulators and to SERCO’s tilting coach. John Woods is still in the process of handing over the reins to John Cresswell.

ASSOCIATION TIES AND BADGES.

In common with other sections, the British section of the Association has a necktie and a badge. Our particular items are common to both the British and Belgian sections. We have produced the ties and the Belgian section, the badges. I am sorry that we do not have a specific item for ladies.

Ties are now available, at £4.50 plus postage, and badges are again in stock in small numbers, at £1.50 each, including postage. These items are available from **the President, Philip Worsfold**. Please contact him first by phone to check availability.

GREAT BRITAIN ALL LINE TIMETABLE THOMAS COOK EUROPEAN TIMETABLE

John Woods, holds a copy of the Great Britain All Line Timetable, and can be consulted for train times. He will continue to hold one as long as publication continues.

Philip Worsfold has a recent Cooks European Rail and Shipping Services timetable, publication of which is set to continue. This timetable contains the majority of British services in a succinct, abbreviated form.

You should note that throughout the European Union, railways have now adopted common dates for timetable changes. The last co-ordinated change will be on 10th December 2006, although there have been supplementary changes on some of the UK network from June 11th and changes in Germany have taken place following the opening of the new ‘Berlin Hauptbahnhof’.

AND FOR THE FUTURE?

We shall endeavour to continue the production of these three-monthly newsletters to get information to you. They will still be mostly information with just the occasional article. So please, put pen to paper. We need to build up a library of articles. Please keep in touch and let us have your information, your views and your ideas. Next copy deadline is **18th May 2007**.

Notice is hereby given that the 18th Annual General Meeting of the British Section of AEC will take place at the ROYAL OAK, 44, Tabard Street, London SE1* on Thursday 26th April 2007, commencing at 1630hrs. Items for the agenda, including those for "Any Other Business" should be sent, in writing, or by e-mail to the Secretary, Gerry Atkin, to reach him not later than Monday 9th April 2007.

DRAFT AGENDA

(Amendments will be announced at the meeting)

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of the 17th Annual General meeting of 26th April 2006.
3. Matters Arising.
4. Correspondence.
5. President's Report.
6. Reports from Officers.
 - Secretary
 - Visits Secretary
 - Membership Secretary
 - Recruitment Secretary
7. Treasurer's Report and Accounts.
8. Election of Officers for a period of one year, from 15th May 2007.
 - Secretary
 - Asst Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Visits secretary
 - Recruitment Secretary

(The President was elected in 2006 for a period of four years)
9. Appointment of Auditor
10. Nomination of delegates for Congress. (New Belgian law.)
11. Dates and Venues for forthcoming European Days.
12. Events Programme.
13. The future of the video/TV
14. Any Other Business (see note above).
15. Proposed date and venue for 2008 Annual General Meeting

*The **Royal Oak** is about ten minutes walk from London Bridge Station, just off Borough High Street, near St George the Martyr Church. The nearest Underground station is Borough (Northern Line, City branch).

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SUMMARY OF DATES

London Reunions on the second Thursday of the month at the "Lord Moon of the Mall", Whitehall, London:

8th March, 12th April, 10th May and 14th June 2007. Please note that Easter Sunday is 8th April.

Dates reserved for talks or visits on the last Wednesday of the month:

28th March (possible visit in mid Devon, after the Annual Dinner), **30th May, 27th June 2007.** etc. **The AGM is on THURSDAY 26th April. See above.**

A.E.C. MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Other*. Surname:.....Initials:.....

Forename:.....

Job Description:.....

Work Address:.....

Town/City:..... Postcode:.....

Internal Phone:..... Fax:.....

External Phone:..... Fax:.....

Micromail Box No:..... E-mail Address:.....

ACTIVE / RETIRED *

Home Address:.....

Town/City:..... Postcode:.....

Telephone:..... Include in Directory?: YES/NO *

Mobile:..... Include in Directory?: YES/NO *
(*delete as applicable)

Membership of the A.E.C. costs only £5.00 per annum and is open to anyone in the railway industry without qualification. However, if you would like to complete the following statement, please do so. It would be helpful for us to know.

I can speak the following language(s) (state how well, e.g. fluent, fair, a little)

.....

I should like to join the Association Européenne des Cheminots.

Signature.....

Data supplied will be kept on a computer database. Home, **where authorised above** and Work telephone and Fax numbers and electronic mail addresses can be divulged to other members **only**.

Please make cheques/PO's for £5.00 payable to: "A.E.C."

Send this application to:

Mr W. Andrews, Hon. Treasurer, A.E.C.
32, Greet Road,
LANCING. BN15 9NS

*If you encourage 7 people to join within your subscription year, the next year's subscription is **free!***