



European Association of Railway Personnel

British Section

Newsletter

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Association Européenne des Cheminots (AISBL)

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**A.E.C. BRITISH SECTION NEWSLETTER, Vol. 12 No. 4
SUMMER 2008**

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**A separate membership application form
is enclosed with this issue.**

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

AEC France is at www.aecfrance.eu/)

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.xhost.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 www.aslef-dc5.org.uk/europa.htm (NEW)

Editorial: A note from the President.

Not a lot to say this time, since most of my comments are in my annual report, which you will find appended to the minutes of the Annual General meeting, which are printed towards the back of this edition. At that meeting, your committee was re-elected, there being no other members offering themselves for any of the posts. You might like to think on this during the next twelve months. It is not a good idea that the same people just carry on from one year to the next. European Days in Antwerp and elsewhere in Belgium, and six of us are going – we'll probably be there by the time you read this. Getting Eurostar reservations proved a bit of a problem due to limited availability of seating for rail staff, our outward journey coinciding with the Spring Bank Holiday weekend. Booking for European Days in Lyon, France is closed, so I have not repeated the programme in this edition. There will be some changes to that programme because of the unexpected and lamented closure of the Chemin de Fer du Vivarais, occasioned by lack of serviceable locomotives, infrastructure problems and the impending withdrawal of the 'mixed gauge' facility, which allowed the Vivarais trains to reach Tournon station at the lower end of the line.

Our proposed programme for European days in York has been revised. This revision was presented at our AGM and will be put to the European Executive Council when it meets in Antwerp. One point I must make you all aware of is that, having failed to obtain any sponsorship for the event, we are faced with having to pay for the hire of the Hall at the York Railway Museum. This is in the order of £1000 and would significantly increase the cost to our overseas guests. True, the value of the pound has decreased relative to the euro but by European standards the event is still not cheap. (The Italian section is advertising a three day event in Rimini for which the cost is 126 euros for three days full board!) Your committee has therefore decided, with the approval of the Annual General meeting, to subsidise this event from our own funds to pay for the hire of the hall.

Patrick Rigby was very kind to attend as an observer the Annual General Meeting of the German Section on 12th April. We thank him for going. I gather he had an enjoyable time.

2008 is the year of European Cultural Dialogue. May 9th was Europe Day. The slogan on the poster that Josée Willems sent me, if my translation from the Flemish (using my Berlitz guide for travellers) was correct, was 'Not them and us; it changes to me and you!' That has certainly been the experience of those of us who get to European Days. Sadly I don't think it is the case for the majority of British people, who see Europe in general, but 'Brussels' in particular, as 'them' – and not to be trusted.

Elsewhere there is a lot of material in this edition, so I won't waste any more space!

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, re-elected on 24th April 2008 is as follows:

Honorary President:

Theo Steel (Retiring 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:

At the Annual general meeting, this post was left vacant on a temporary basis.

Treasurer and Membership Secretary:

Bill Andrews,

Recruitment Secretary:

Bob Clark,

Auditor:

Mike Hill

PEOPLE

We congratulate Manfred Schampel on his election to the post of President of the German section.

TRAVEL NEWS

Eurotunnel has turned in an operating profit for 2007-2008. The future looks rosier than of late. An issue of further shares is on offer to increase capital.

Eurostar has been achieving 95% loadings following the fiasco that was the opening of Terminal 5 at London Heathrow Airport.

The Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) has published its plan for the future of the British railway network, saying that the explosion in rail travel means that growth of the network is urgent. ATOC proposes more high speed lines, including HS2 London – Manchester and Glasgow; HS3 London – Sheffield, Manchester, Liverpool and possibly via an Irish Sea tunnel to Dublin; HS4 London – Bristol and Cardiff; HS5 Sheffield to Edinburgh and Glasgow. Also included in the proposals are a reinstatement of the line between Oxford and Cambridge; the re-routing of the West of England main line between Exeter and Plymouth away from the fragile coast route at Dawlish. This could be via the former 'Southern' route via Okehampton. And finally a second Channel crossing! I don't think any of this will happen during my lifetime. I doubt, even, that any of the arguments will have been settled!

EUROPEAN DAYS and OTHER EUROPEAN EVENTS

The current position is as follows:

Autumn 2008	European Days and Congress in Lyon, France . (Booking now closed).
24 th – 30 th May 2009	European Days in Lüneburg, Germany (feature in this edition)
20 th – 26 th Sept 2009	European Days in York, England (revised programme featured in this edition)
Spring 2010	European Days in Santiago de Compostella, Spain.
Autumn 2010	European Days in Poland

Forthcoming events in the German Programmes are:

14.05.2008	RV Rostock: Bundestaginformationen im Club
21.05.2008	RV Rostock: Rügenrundfahrt
11.06.2008	RV Rostock: Vortrag ‚Vorzugevollmacht‘ im Club
14.06.2008	RV Frankfurt: Fahrt nach Gelnhausen
26.07.2008	RV Hamburg: Grillfest in Meckelfeld
10.09.2008	RV Rostock: Vortrag ‚Erste Hilfe‘ im Club
08.10.2008	RV Rostock: Kegeln im Brauereikeller
27-29.10.08	RV Hagen: Reise auf ein Weingut mit Ausflug nach Trier

Europäische Treffen
 25.05.- 31.05.2008 Europ. Tage in Antwerpen, Belgien
 18.08.- 23.08.2008 Europ. Tage und Hauptversammlung
 in Lyon, Frankreich
 24.05.- 30.05.2009 Europ. Tage in Lüneburg, Deutschland
 Sept/Okt. 2009 Europ. Tage in York, Großbritannien

And in Italy
 15.05.- 18.05.2008 Congresso Nazionale Sezione Italiana, Rimini.

**PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME FOR
 EUROPEAN DAYS FROM 24.05. UNTIL 30.05.2009 IN LÜNEBURG (GERMANY).**

Sunday, 24.05.2009 **Arrival of the Executive committee members**
 Arrival of the delegates for the committee meeting at **Lüneburg**
 railway station; Transfer from Lüneburg station to Hotel
 Seminaris after registration, at extra cost.
 20h00 Evening meal in Hotel Seminaris.

Monday, 25.05.2009 **Committee meeting**
 until 10h00 Breakfast in Dining room.
 12h00 Lunch for the delegates of the committee meeting in the Town
 hall.
 13h30 Meeting of the Committee: Timing according to the Agenda.
 until 18h00 Arrival of the other members at **Lüneburg** railway station.
 Free transfer from railway station to Hotel Seminaris after
 registration.
 19h00 Grand opening of European Days in Lüneburg 2009.
 20h00 Dinner in Hotel Seminaris. Musical entertainment.

Tuesday, 26.05.2009 **Lüneburg Day**
 07h00 -08h45 Breakfast in Dining room.
 09h00 Tour of the town with guide through the Old Town, starting from
 the hotel.
 10h30 Reception of the members in the Huldigungssaal (Council
 Chamber) of the Town Hall by the Mayor, Herr Mädge.
 13h00 Lunch in Hotel Seminaris.
 15h00 -17h00 Travel to and visit the Salt Museum.
 Escorted walk in the Old Town centre of von Lüneburg.
 19h00 Evening meal in Hotel Seminaris. Cosy end to the day.
 20h00 Performance by a musical group.

Wednesday, 27.05.2009 **Hamburg Day**
 07h00 -08h45 Breakfast in Dining room.
 09h00 Journry by coach to Hamburg.
 10h00 Visit to St. Michaeliskirche, the Landingstage und the
 „Altes Elbtunnel“. (Old Tunnel under the Elbe River)
 11h00 -12h30 Trip in small boats Rundfahrt auf kleinen Barkassen around
 Hamburg port.
 Journey in our bus on the Elbchaussee and through Blankenese
 (Principal district of the rich merchant families).
 13h00 Lunch in ther ‚Willkommhöft‘ Ship greetings point at Schulau on
 the bank of the Elbe. Greeting of arriving and departing ships by

14h00 playing the National anthem of the country of registration.
 Tour around Hamburg in our buses.
 15h00 -17h30 Stroll through the luxury shopping streets in the Alster:
 Jungfernstieg, Große Bleichen, Neuer Wall und Mönckeberg
 Straße (our „Mö“).
 Look at the computer controlled marshalling yard at Maschen.
 19h00 Evening meal in Hotel Seminaris. Cosy end to the day.

Thursday, 28.05.2009 *Hansestadt Lübeck Day*

07h00 -08h30 Breakfast buffet in Dining room.
 08h30 Journey by coach to the Hanseatic League town of Lübeck.
 09h00 Visit to the Boat lift at Scharnebek.
 10h30 Guided tour through the Old Town of Lübeck.
 12h30 -14h00 Lunch in the historic restaurant of the Shipping Company.
 14h30 Trip by ship on the Trave estuary and into the Baltic Sea.
 16h00 Return journey on the bus through the Ratzeburg sea marshes
 to Lüneburg.
 If possible, visit to the cathedral in Ratzeburg.
 19h00 Evening meal in Hotel Seminaris.

Friday, 29.05.2009 *Lüneburg Heath Day*

07h00 -08h45 Breakfast buffet in Dining room.
 09h00 Bus journey to Undeloh in the middle of the heathland.
 10h00 Walk or trip by horse drawn carriage in the ‚Naturpark
 Lüneburger Heide‘ (Lüneburg Heath Natural Park).
 Over a distance of about 20km no motor traffic is allowed.
 To reach the idyllic little village of the heath Wilsede, the only
 possibilities are: on foot, by bike or by horse drawn carriage.
 The distance from Undeloh to Wilsede is 4 km.
 12h00 Lunch in "Wilseder Hof".
 13h30 Return trip in the horse drawn carriage, or walking to Undeloh.
 Free time for visit to places on the heath or a coffee in the
 numerous small guesthouses.
 Possibility to buy souvenirs.
 16h00 Return journey by bus to the hotel. - Free time.
 19h00 Gala evening and ball, with dance band, floral and table
 decorations. Various dishes and drinks, presentation of
 honours, handing over of the symbols of AEC: the banner, the
 key, the cushion and the lantern.

Saturday, 30.05.2009 *Departure*

07h00 -10h00 Breakfast buffet in Dining room. Morning free at your disposal.
 Departure of delegates. Luggage transfer to Lüneburg railway
 station.
 Possibility of a direct transfer to Hamburg at extra cost.

Cost:

From evening meal on Monday 24.05. until breakfast on Saturday 30.05.2009: **490 €**
 From evening meal on Sunday 23.05. until breakfast on Saturday 30.05.2009: **565 €**
per person in double room.

Single room supplement: 20 € per Night.

The basic package includes: 5 night's stay with full board in Hotel "SEMINARIS" in
 Lüneburg.

Tours with guided explanations, Opening evening and Gala evening with a dance band.

Included in the price are catering, accommodation, trips and visits and the transfer from Lüneburg railway station; each meal includes a drink of your choice.

Enquiries about booking or costs should be addressed to the treasurer of the German section, Frau Marita Kynast-Kohl,
- Fax: 05725 915838 or Email: marita.kynast-kohl@bahn.de

Bookings with a deposit of 250 Euro per person, with details of single or double room (smoking or non smoking) and arrival times should be sent, before 15.01.2009, to the treasurer of the German section Frau Marita Kynast-Kohl.

**Bankverbindung: A.E.C.-Sektion Deutschland,
Sparda Bank Hannover, Konto: 100924814 - BLZ: 25090500
IBAN: DE55250905000100924814 – BIG: GENODEF1S09**

Final payment: 240 Euro (or more, according to booking) before 30.03.2009 to the same account.

Hotel address: Hotel SEMINARIS Lüneburg, Soltau Straße 3, D-21335
LÜNEBURG

Tel. +49 (0) 4131 7130 – Fax: +49 (0) 4131 713128

Email: lueneburg@seminaris.de - Internet: www.seminaris.de/lueneburg

The event is arranged by the German section of AEC, which is the responsible organiser. Payment through the British section will be offered purely to minimise the cost of money transfer. The deposit required will be decided later in the year, depending on exchange rates but will not be less than £200. The British section 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.

EUROPEAN DAYS IN YORK, 20th – 26th SEPTEMBER 2009 Revised Provisional Programme

Hotel: Ramada Encore Hotel, York

Your Hotel is very centrally situated. Perhaps after arrival, if time permits, a walk to the famous "Shambles" or a visit to York Minster.

Note that there are no car parking facilities at the hotel.

Sunday 20th September 2009

Arrival of some delegates (Executive Committee) at Ramada Encore Hotel Central York.

Executive Committee Meeting

The Conference room for committee meetings is at the Ramada Encore Hotel.

Monday 21st September 2009

Continental Breakfast in Ramada Encore Hotel Central York.

Other delegates arrival by rail, air or road (see note above about car parking).

For those arriving early: 14.00hrs Traditional London 'Routemaster' Bus sightseeing tour of York. (approx one hour)

Opening Ceremony at Priory Centre 16.30 hrs

Evening Meal at local Italian Restaurant. (Possible Two Sitzings) (one drink included)

Tuesday 22nd September 2009

Continental Breakfast in Ramada Encore Hotel Central York.

Whitby and the local Countryside to include a Fish & Chips lunch with a cup of tea.

We return by North Yorkshire Moors Railway from Whitby to Pickering at approx 14.00hrs . Then coach from Pickering back to our hotel.

Evening Meal at Russells Carvery with one drink per person included.

Wednesday 23rd September 2009

Continental Breakfast in Ramada Encore Hotel Central York.

We visit Castle Howard with a 2 course buffet lunch (water on the tables)

Medieval Banquet Evening Meal and Entertainment.

Thursday 24th September 2009

Continental Breakfast in Ramada Encore Hotel Central York.

Free time to explore York yourself. Take a sightseeing trip on the river with Yorkboats (45mins) included in your stay. (see voucher)

We will be having a traditional English Ploughman's lunch and a pint at local venue. (See voucher)

Evening Meal will be in a York historical building with one drink per person

Friday 25th September 2009

Continental Breakfast in Ramada Encore Hotel Central York.

During the morning we visit the famous Jorvik Centre. Otherwise time is free for that last minute shopping.

Betty's, is your destination for lunch time (you will have a £10 voucher)

Optional Traditional London 'Routemaster' Bus sightseeing tour around York from the Hotel departing 14.00 & 15.30hrs.

Tonight we have our Gala Dinner at the National Railway Museum York, which includes the Lord Mayor's Reception in the NRM Great Hall followed by music and the closing ceremony.

Saturday 26th September 2009

After a Continental Breakfast in Ramada Encore Hotel it's Homeward Bound.

NOTE EXTRA DAYS MAY BE ADDED SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY AT £80 DOUBLE/TWIN & £70 SINGLE PROVIDED REQUESTED ON INITIAL BOOKING FORM.

- THIS PROGRAMME IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE -

Special dietary requirements will be accommodated wherever possible.

Due to restraints on accommodation, the total number of delegates is limited to a maximum of 140 persons, including members of the executive committee. It may become necessary to limit the size of individual national delegations.

Booking arrangements and application forms will appear in a later edition of the newsletter.

THE CONTINENTAL RAILWAY CIRCLE – John Batts

Those of us whose railway interest extends into the “enthusiast” sphere may be interested in the Continental Railway Circle. It was founded in the days when steam enthusiasts were being driven across the channel by the decline in British steam. Subsequently the decline in European steam propelled the interest further afield and the Circle’s title now reflects all continents. The CRC is unusual in being undemocratic and having no members. The annual subscription buys a season ticket, not membership. A few years ago there was a brief flirtation with democracy but the new organisation, like the DDR government, voted itself out of existence.

The main activities are monthly (August excepted) meetings at London and Stafford and the Continental Railway Journal (Quarterly). Meetings consist of slide, film or electronic equivalent showings with book sales and much gossip beforehand and in the interval. Membership includes a large proportion of railway staff – many retired.

Meetings:

London Second Thursday of the month at 19h15.

 St. Paul’s Church Centre, Rossmore Road (about 5 minutes walk from Marylebone Station).

(It is possible to combine these meetings with the AEC monthly reunion earlier in the day. - ed)

Stafford St Leonard’s Sport & Social Club, St Leonard’s Avenue at 19h30
(Joint with Stafford Railway Society).

Subscriptions:

There are three types of UK subscription –

- 1) Postal subscriptions providing 4 issues of the CRJ starting with the Autumn issue at £14.
 - 2) London Meeting subscriptions including the CRJ for collection at the meeting £20.
 - 3) London Meeting subscriptions including the CRJ posted to your UK address £22.
- Those attending meetings without London Meeting season tickets are asked to pay £2 towards the costs.

Overseas subscription rates are Europe £17 (25 Euros), elsewhere £17 surface or £19 airmail.

Orders for subscriptions should be sent to Bryan Benn,
(Email bryan.benn@tesco.net) or pay at meetings.

Web site:

<http://www.trainweb.org/continentalrailwaycircle/>

GERMAN PLANS FOR MAGLEV DERAILED (As reported by BBC on 27.03.2008)

Germany’s plan to launch a magnetic levitation - or maglev - rail service has collapsed amid soaring costs.

It was to be built in Munich from the airport to the city centre, making it Europe’s first commercial maglev train. The plans came unstuck after the estimated cost of the track spiralled to 3.2bn euros (\$5bn; £2.5bn), up from 1.85bn euros. Maglev trains use electric-powered magnets that enable them to float above their tracks, allowing for high speeds.

"The Munich magnetic levitation rail project has collapsed," said Transport Minister Wolfgang Tiefensee.

The developers of the train, Siemens and ThyssenKrupp, had been working on the project which had been spearheaded by construction firm Hochtief. Rail operator Deutsche Bahn, Munich airport and the European Union were also involved. Bavaria's plans for the train, announced last year, had created great excitement in Germany since it had already played a leading role in pioneering the new technology. It also lifted hopes for the future of the maglev trains, which have enjoyed little commercial success outside China. In Shanghai, the floating train has shuttled passengers between the airport and the financial district since 2003 at a top speed of more than 500km/h (310mph). Japan has said it aims to launch its first maglev rail service by 2025.

The UK was first to introduce maglev trains in 1984 in Birmingham to bridge a short distance between the city's airport and railway station. But after 11 years in operation, reliability problems and the sheer expense of extending the network, which are incompatible with traditional railway lines, prompted its replacement with a conventional system.

How Maglev trains work.

Like poles on magnets keep the train above the track. The train is propelled by an electro-magnetic system in the sides of the "guideway" instead of an onboard engine. The top speed with passengers is 450 km/h (280mph). It was developed by Transrapid in Germany and German Hon. Vice-president Robert Gellekum has been deeply involved with its development. A system is operating commercially in Shanghai. The test facility in Elmsland, Germany, at 31.5 km (19.5 miles) is the longest of its kind in the world. (Source: Transrapid International)

SAVVY TRAVELLER: HOW NOT TO LOOK LIKE A TOURIST

Nick Trend. From the Daily Telegraph 9th April 2008.

You can't avoid being part of 'the tourist problem', but lowering your profile will help you feel more like a local.

One of the things I enjoy least about travelling is the feeling of being a tourist. True, there have been some memorable times when it has felt like a privilege. In the USSR and eastern Europe before the fall of the Berlin Wall, and in China in the 1980s, visitors from the West were still quite rare and had a special status. Many locals would positively want to meet and talk to you. It is still often true in remoter parts of the world, though only where tourists are a novelty rather than a nuisance.

But for the most part, in the big holiday destinations of the world, we tourists are blight on the landscape, clearly wanted for our money, but often resented, or at least regarded as irritants, by the local population.

I have just come back from two weeks in Venice, where the problem is acute. Watching old ladies and young mothers struggling to get through the crowds of visitors on the water buses, I found it is easy to see why the number of permanent residents is in serious decline, and why tourists can often get an impatient response from locals.

But while you can't avoid being part of the problem, there are things you can do to keep a lower profile. This has its advantages. After all, camouflaging your tourist status not only helps you feel less of an intruder, it makes you more secure - a much less obvious target for opportunist pickpockets and conmen.

Of course it won't work in all cultures. Unless you are of Oriental extraction, you will always look like a foreigner in China, for example. And unless you are a linguist, you will always get found out when you try to speak the local language.

But in European or American cities, it is possible to take a more discreet approach to travelling. Here are some ruses to lower your profile, and make you feel more like a local.

How not to look like a tourist

Buy a plastic carrier bag

It may not be stylish, but it seems to work. Here's the proof: in two weeks of regular travel on the vaporetti in Venice, I was never asked to show my ticket once - even though other tourists were checked regularly. Since I scarcely look Italian, the only explanation I could think of was that I had kept my notebook, guidebooks and camera in a carrier bag I picked up from a local supermarket. Had I been carrying a day pack, or wearing a money belt, I'm sure I would have been treated differently.

Don't wear shorts

I wouldn't dream of offering sartorial advice to women, but on men, shorts are a sure-fire giveaway of your tourist status in Europe.

Do wear a jacket

Few tourists bother, so if you make the effort you will look more like one of the locals.

Carry your camera discreetly

You inevitably give yourself away when you take snaps. But in between time, disguise your status by putting your camera in your bag or on your belt, rather than leaving it bouncing ostentatiously on your chest or dangling from a wrist.

Fold the map in advance

We have all stood on the corner of the street struggling with a map of an unfamiliar city. But you can reduce the chances of appearing quite so obviously alien if you get as much of your route in your head before you set off. Folding the map carefully will also mean you can glance at it more discreetly.

How not to feel like a tourist

Learn some key words

Having even a handful of basic words, and especially numbers, changes the way you are treated, and reduces the sense of being a complete outsider. And even if the waiter replies in fluent English, at least you have shown a willingness to make an effort.

Use local buses

In Venice this advice doesn't work very well, because so many tourists use the vaporetti. But in most cities, familiarising yourself with the bus map is a big step towards living like a local. Pick the routes carefully and you can even use them as an alternative to a sightseeing tour. The number 100 in Berlin, the 40 in Rome and the M1 in New York, for example, all follow routes past many of the principal sights.

Rent an apartment

Everything mitigates in your favour: you won't be surrounded by other tourists at breakfast and dinner, you will be living alongside the city residents, you will probably use the local food shops and markets, and, to cap it all, if you cater for yourself, you will spend much less money than you would eating out. For a good selection of accommodation, see Interhome (020 8780 6633, www.interhome.co.uk).

Visit off-beat sights and areas

In Venice, the contrast between the everyday city and the tourist town is especially sharp. Step just one street away from the railway station/Rialto/St Mark's axis, for example, and you find yourself in a real city rather than an overcrowded stage-set. Here, too, there are dozens of smaller museums, churches and palaces that often see only a handful of visitors at a time. You may still be a tourist, but you won't be part of the visiting hordes.

Travel alone

This is not the ideal solution for most tourists, but it is certainly easier to blend in with the local crowd when you are travelling solo than when you are kissing and cuddling in a gondola on the Grand Canal.

The following are some random comments posted subsequently on the 'Telegraph' website.

I concur with the comment about wearing Speedos in the USA. Please leave them at home! I don't care how trim you are, you will illicit nothing but giggles and remarks. Ditto with short shorts. You are branded immediately as an Eastern European tourista.

Some tourists travel so they can behave in ways their home area will not tolerate. Think rock concerts, sex tours and football excursions. Tourists are anonymous. Shorts may be more comfortable than trousers but locals can't wear them because they are on the way to work!

Brits, French, German tourists:

1. Men - Leave your speedos at home when vacationing in Florida. Also, PLEASE, no black sox with your beach sandals...
2. Women - leave your thong bikinis at home.

I live on a Florida offshore island where we get many Europeans. We welcome them with open arms. We appreciate the business. We try to show them a good time....

that said, when we hang out at the beach and watch the overweight foreigners wearing their speedos, thongs, we can't help but laugh. It's NOT a pretty sight. Occasionally we do get to see the European beauty with long legs and a body to kill for and the thong does her justice.

I'm sorry to hear all this - I'm unsure why should I have to apologise for being a tourist. Whilst on holiday I take the usual care in not presenting myself as a target of crime, which I do as a matter of course anyway, even in my home city of Manchester UK! However, how can one not appear a tourist whilst wandering around the centre of Paris as I did recently - not many locals are seen mooching around the Sacré Coeur or the Eiffel Tower or maybe found talking on the Metro! When conversing with "locals" I attempted French but apologised for my abuse of their language! This brought a friendly response in most cases and conversation ensued in Franglais, great fun and part of the scene. This usually results in good service at hotels/restaurants too when combined with a gsoh! So don't be afraid to be a tourist - speak some of the lingo, take some snaps, try the local food and drink, relax and try not to be too British! Happy times!

If you are a westerner travelling solo in Asia (well in Indonesia, China & Japan at least) the local people either ignore you & carry on with their lives, or come up & speak to you, wanting to know how you like their country, where you have been etc. As English is the world language, practicing with a friendly native speaker makes them your friend & you more like a local.

Do you really know a country at all, if you never spend time with ordinary people who live there, and always rush about following the LP? You can nearly always go back another time, & visit the friends you made the first time.

In New York don't look up at the tall buildings - soon as you do you are marked out as a tourist...

Short sleeves and short trousers are not such a good idea, unless you're looking for a bad case of 'truckies' arm. Check what the locals are wearing; they bought their garments locally. And forget denim jeans, they take forever to dry, unless Jeremy Clarkson is your fashion icon.

To endorse igj, in Asia it is hard/borderline impossible to pass as a local, but that said, work on the body language as people seldom look at your face. Maybe don't dress too much like a tourist but ENJOY being a tourist, too many people are too 'cool' to be a tourist and insist being called a 'traveller' - often missing the fun of experiencing a new destination. Take the horse drawn carriage around Seville or the open top bus around Madrid and enjoy the novelty of doing something you don't do at home. Do eat in the main square or right on the waterfront once in a while and just enjoy the moment instead of scrabbling around the back streets all the time trying to be a 'local'. Life is too short - so we should all just enjoy the moment! Travel should widen our horizons, which means experiencing all the highs and lows of a destination. Getting the bus and then lunching in a Michelin star restaurant followed by a limousine transfer to a shack on the beach for fresh fish helps us experience more of a destination than doing it 'luxury' or 'bargain basement' all the time.

Wear sunscreen if you are not dark enough and you insist on lounging in the sun for hours and hours. The bright red lobster face screams tourist! In Spain it does, anyway.

And try and dress nicely instead of tatty stuff. Come on, it's not that hard to wear a decent shirt. Cargo pants also scream tourist mostly American. And pace yourself with the drink for the love of heaven.

It's amazing how quite respectable people (bank managers etc) seem to leave their inhibitions (and common sense) behind at Gatwick, and don baggy shorts, scruffy T-shirts and black socks and sandals! I'm ashamed to be seen near them...and the locals are generally appalled. There should be a tax on such an environmental menace.

A good idea to note & to educate our travelling CHAVs is not to look like a CHAV, even abroad.

Leave your favourite college sweatshirts at home. Leave your Hawaiian shirts at home. Leave your baseball caps at home. Leave your white runners at home (they scream loudly - "American tourist"). Denims are universal.

When walking from place to place - give the impression you know where you're going.

I live in Asia; maybe you can't not look like a tourist but you can start to look like a resident foreigner by following some of the above.

Also in US forget about buses and rent a car, if you want to look like a non tourist on an average bus dress like a psycho drugs dealer or someone very poor.

Take the bus in most large cities if you want to be mugged. (The exception is a Streetcar (tram) in New Orleans or San Francisco).

I stood out in NW1 last year because I was the only one with bare arms doing shopping outside, (I am an Australian who loves the English winters! and therefore, wherever I went, my outfits were a dead give-away!

A great tip, from a Canadian travelling in Vietnam. She had covered the ubiquitous Lonely Planet guide book with brown paper - which protected it, made it much less obvious and enabled her to scribble important numbers and suggestions from fellow travellers on the outside.

So now you know...

RECENT EVENTS...

We have continued to meet at the 'Lord Moon of the Mall' once a month. We have had no visits during the previous quarter.

...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, **12th June, 10th July, 14th August, 11th September and 9th October 2008**. **Please remember that, generally, the last Wednesday of the month** is earmarked for possible lunchtime talks and visits. Forthcoming '**last Wednesday**' dates are **25th June, 30th July, 27th August and 24th September 2008**.
- On **30th July** we have arranged a visit to the Mid Norfolk Railway, courtesy John Woods. We aim to meet up at Wymondham (Norfolk) at 13h00 at the latest, to travel on the 14h00 departure. The 10h30 train from Liverpool Street should get you there in time. Further details are available from John Woods by e-mail to jauwoods@googlemail.com.

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 e-mail to check availability.

GREAT BRITAIN ALL LINE TIMETABLE THOMAS COOK EUROPEAN TIMETABLE

Philip Worsfold holds a copy of The Stationery Office Great Britain All Line Timetable and recent Cooks European Rail and Shipping Services timetable (monthly edition). This timetable also contains the majority of British services in a succinct, abbreviated form.

Train operators produce their own pocket timetables.

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 **9th August 2008** – so that we can again prepare for publication before European Days.

20TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BRITISH SECTION AT THE ROYAL OAK, 44, TABARD STREET, LONDON SE1 ON THURSDAY 24TH APRIL 2008, COMMENCING AT 1630HRS.

MINUTES OF MEETING

- 1. Opening remarks and Apologies for absence.**
Apologies for absence received from Peter Davies, Gabriel Drew, Colin Charman, Mike Atkin, and John Woods)
- 2. Minutes of the 19th Annual General meeting of 26th April 2007.** The previously circulated minutes were summarised and approved.
- 3. Matters Arising.** The proposed group visit to St Pancras International had not proved possible although a number of members were able to visit individually or in small groups.
- 4. Correspondence.** The European President has a security problem with his e-mail. Contact with Linda Travis, the AEC representative in New York had resulted in her visiting London in November. She was met by Philip Worsfold and Theo Steel. She will be attending the European Days in Lyon in August.
- 5. President's Report.** This is appended.
- 6. Reports from Officers.**
 - Secretary – nothing to report.
 - Visits Secretary – A number of successful visits have been reported in the newsletter. Those to the Isle of Wight and to Southend were particularly appreciated. Our thanks to John Woods. Also John Batts is thanked for his video presentations in January.
 - Membership Secretary – We have 76 paid up members, plus 6 Hon. Life members. 2 members have resigned and we have gained one new one during the year. 7 subscription-expired members have not so far responded to reminders. The declared number for capitation is 82.
 - Recruitment Secretary – Nothing to report but John Cresswell offered to do some recruiting in the Wrexham area. John Batts stressed the need for an eye-catching publicity leaflet in colour.
- 7. Treasurer's Report and Accounts.** Bill Andrews presented and explained his accounts for the year. (Further copies are available from him on request.) He presented a budget for 2008/9, explaining the extra items intended to cover any additional costs occasioned by European Days in York, particularly an allowance of £1000 to cover the hire of the Railway Museum for the gala event, no sponsorship being forthcoming.
- 8. Election of Officers for a period of one year, from 15th May 2008.** There were no candidates other than the retiring officers, who were all willing to continue. They were re-elected en bloc. The post of Visits secretary, held in abeyance since the last AGM, was continued in that state, pending the possibility of John Cresswell assuming this post at a later date.

Secretary – Gerry Atkin
Asst Secretary – Peter Davies
Treasurer and Membership secretary – Bill Andrews
Visits secretary – In abeyance
Recruitment Secretary – Bob Clark

(The President and Vice president were elected in 2006 for a period of four years. Election of a new President is due in 2010)

9. **Appointment of Auditor.** – Mike Hill, having agreed, was re-appointed.
10. **Nomination of delegates for Congress – (New Belgian law).** Jenny Worsfold and Julia Andrews had agreed to be nominated as voting delegates for the European Congress in Lyon, France in August 2008. Their nominations were accepted. The European Secretary would be informed of this decision. Representatives at the European Administrative council meetings would be:
 - Antwerp, May 2008 – Philip Worsfold and Peter Davies.
 - Lyon August 2008 – Philip Worsfold and Bill Andrews.
11. **Dates and Venues for forthcoming European Days. – Draft programme for European days in York.** The following programme had been agreed.
 - 25th – 31st May 2008 European Days in **Antwerp, Belgium.**
 - 17th – 23th August 2008 European Days and Congress in **Lyon, France.**
 - 24th – 30th May 2009 European Days in **Lüneburg, Germany.**
 - 20th – 29th Sept 2009 European Days in **York, England.**
 - Spring 2010 European Days in **Santiago de Compostella, Spain.**
 - Autumn 2010 European Days in **Poland.**

Philip Worsfold presented Peter Davies' updated version of the programme for European Days in York.

12. **Events Programme.** Theo Steel suggested visits to the new Bishopsgate Bridge (E. London line) and to Pudding Mill Lane to view progress on the railway infrastructure for the Olympics. A visit to the Mid Norfolk Railway is planned for the last Wednesday in July.
13. **The future of AEC in Europe.** The President explained the desire of the retiring European President, Jean-Pierre Estival, that national sections should be more proactive in promoting railway transport at government level.
14. **Any Other Business.** Patrick Rigby reported on his recent visit to the Annual General Meeting in Hamburg of the German section. Manfred Schampel, at present European Secretary, was elected President. (He will thus resign from his secretarial post). Horst Vanselow had stated that cheap air flights from Hamburg to Leeds/Bradford airport made European Days in York more attractive to German members.
15. **The date and venue for 2009 Annual General Meeting** were agreed as Thursday 23rd April 2009 at the Royal Oak Tabard Street London, commencing at 16h30.

The meeting closed at 17h55.

Report of the President to the 19th Annual General Meeting, 24th April 2008

Our monthly 'second Thursday' meetings in London continue to attract the same few faces, and we wondered whether a change of day or time might prove more convenient to a larger number of you. To find out what your wishes are, a pro-forma was issued. We had a few replies, mostly in favour of leaving things as they were so we shall continue to meet on the second Thursday of each month at the Lord Moon of the Mall in Whitehall, from 16h15 onwards.

The 2007 summer visits on the 'Last Wednesdays of the Month' proved very successful, with trips to Norwich in June (to learn first hand about our website from Julian Woods), July to the Alcazar Brewery in Basford, Nottingham, and in August, travelling on the Croydon Tram link from Wimbledon (reached by train from Waterloo) via East Croydon to Beckenham Junction, with lunch in the O'Neills Irish pub, which was nearer the station than the George, for those of us with dodgy feet. In October, a group of us went to Tunbridge Wells, intending to meet up with Mike Atkin, who has been unwell for some time. Sadly there was a mix up over the meeting point and we didn't manage to see him, but Patrick Rigby kindly volunteered to go to his house. He and John Woods managed another visit to Tunbridge Wells to see Mike in January. He is still unwell.

In November we enjoyed a hastily arranged visit to Southend, via Grays. Unfortunately the pier railway was closed for maintenance, but the trip was nevertheless worthwhile. On Thursday 9th January, we had an additional lunchtime session at the 'Royal Oak', when John Batts entertained us with several well loved films from the steam era, including 'Night Mail', made for the Post Office but now gloriously restored using digital techniques. Afterwards we moved on to the Lord Moon of the Mall for our regular reunion.

All the events described are predominantly of a social nature, with a bit of technology thrown in. They hardly constitute anything which might contribute to advice or opinion to influence affairs in Europe. Having received a copy of an e-mail from our European President, Jean-Pierre Estival, who is involved in detailed discussions with the Belgian authorities over our international status, in which he urges more effort on the part of national sections, I wonder what we as a section are in a position to do to further the progress of the rail industry in Europe. That said, rail is making inroads into the air travel market. On the day I write these notes, I hear that Eurotunnel has made a profit and is looking to paying a dividend next year; and that Eurostar trains are achieving 95% loadings. The problems at Heathrow Terminal Five are not without their silver lining!

The proposed 'visit' to St Pancras prior to its opening did not turn out the way we had hoped and from the point of view of the association was a bit of a disaster, although a number of members, relatives and friends took part in the trials on an individual basis and found the experience interesting. First impressions of the real 'Eurostar' thing were disappointing although the overall impression of the station is awe inspiring; but recent reports suggest that the international terminal is now a bit more user-friendly.

In November 2007, shortly after opening, our representative in the United States, Linda Travis, was able to get to London and was met by Theo Steel (who already knew her) and myself. By all accounts she enjoyed her brief stay. Finding Linda has proved to be a real feather in our cap and I'm delighted that she is able to come to the forthcoming European Days in Lyon, in August this year.

We have heard no more from the group of members in Paris, who had expressed the wish to visit Britain. Maybe now that is cheaper for them in euro terms, their interest will be rekindled.

We have been represented at both of last Years European Days events – in Bucharest in May and in Eisenstadt, Austria in September. Both were thoroughly enjoyable and well organised.

Some of us will be going to Belgium in May for the European Days in Antwerp. It should be interesting, since it will be the last event before the three-yearly General Assembly in Lyon, during the European Days there, as mentioned above. For that meeting we need to appoint our voting delegates, who must not be members who have attended or will attend meetings of the European Executive Committee this year – such as myself! The executive will be putting the final touches to the presentation of the revised statutes for formal approval. In this regard, there has been considerable correspondence with the Belgian lawyer and the Belgian Minister of Justice, to ensure that the new statutes comply with Belgian law. One outcome has been that for national sections such as ours, our own national law takes precedence, although there will be restrictions debarring members who attend the executive committee meetings also voting in the General Assembly – they are there to do the bidding of the membership! Your president has been kept quite busy providing translations for the Anglophone members of the committee. The British section will present the latest update of our proposals for European Days in York in September 2009. I must not let the opportunity pass for thanking Peter Davies for all the hard work he has put in to assemble such an attractive programme. I hope that our European friends will find it irresistible and, with the reduction in the value of the pound, more affordable.

Finally I should like to thank your committee for their continued support during the past year. Our membership still continues to dwindle; although there has been some minor recruitment, so again I ask you please do all you can to bring in new people to the cause. I repeat what I said last year; AEC is what you make it. And I hope you have not forgotten that you need to find a new President in two years time. I shall be retiring in April 2010.

Philip Worsfold

9th April 2008

SUMMARY OF DATES

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

12th June,
10th July,
14th August,
11th September,
9th October 2008.
etc.

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

25th June,
30th July (visit to Mid Norfolk Railway, Wymondham),
27th August,
24th September 2008.

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

E-mail: fam.andrews@ntlworld.com

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