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Video Reviews

Glacier Express Part 2 - MITV Ltd.

This is every bit as good as Part 1. In some ways it is even better both for the rail enthusiast and the general public for it is a fine blend of rail and scenic shots from many vantage points, including a helicopter. Technical information about the rolling stock and the route mingles easily with historical information about the area traversed. The graphics, especially about the Albula spirals, are most useful.

The film starts with a brief reminder of the journey from Zermatt over the BVZ and the FO to Disentis then, in glorious sunny weather, we set off down the Rhine valley pausing at Ilanz and in the Rhine gorge for a spot of white water rafting.

Into Chur, reverse and on to Thusis and a side trip down the Via Mala for a quick look at the remains of the RhB outpost known as the Misox.

The shots of the bridges at Solis indicates that the 'chopper' was dicing with high tension electric cables. Landwasser is viewed from above. Then to Filisur for an interlude with a 'Krok' on a special there and at other locations as well as steam with No. 1 double heading 107 and another of 108 rousing the echoes.

The Albula is covered from several angles then through Bever to finish at St. Moritz with views of various daring winter sport activities.

The video costs £19.95 but if both are ordered together, the cost is £36.00 post free ONLY IF YOU BUY THROUGH OUR SALES OFFICER.

AJP

City Transport - The Way Forward

by Simon Smiler/On Line Video -

Although the Swiss content is relatively small, it provides an opportunity to try to identify systems and locations. The film appears to be primarily intended to promote the much wider use of public transport and draws attention to systems available and in use world wide. One British example at least, has recently closed, the Birmingham Airport Maglev, but this was because of maintenance problems and spares. What's new!

It rightly recognises that there is much to be done

by the planners and designers, especially in the early stages of new developments, to provide attractive public transport if increased dependence on the car and, therefore, pollution is to be avoided.

The video will please devotees of light rail, trolleybus and bus with a plethora of interesting snippets.

However, the environmental message is repeated too often leaving your reviewer (who is involved in the environmental transport field) feeling battered. It would benefit, on this account, from sharper editing especially of the voice over.

Nevertheless, it is good value for money.

AJP

Emmental Railways 2: VHB - MITV.

As yet, the Emmental is relatively unspoilt by tourism but its rolling hills, lush valleys and verdant pastures dotted with large family houses and farms in the old style which the tourist wishes to see. But the EBT is not there for the tourist: it is there to serve the people of the area and the multivarious industries it supports as well as providing speedy rail links between the SBB Bern-Luzern line and industrialised northern Switzerland.

The sense of all this is well conveyed by this film with the usual skilful blend of lineside, on train and air shots. Starting in the flat lands around Langenthal, there are shots of the RVO (ex OJB) lines before moving on to Huttwil, the busiest junction on the system with its loco depot which is host to the local Eurovapor steam collection. South to Langnau and a visit to a fascinating local museum. At Ramsei, watch out for the cycling pointsman.

Emmental is world famous for cheese and the old and new methods of production are portrayed. Archive films show how those massive roofs of the farms are clad with wooden shingles. In the closing credits, watch for the Collani liveried Re4/4 on freight.

This is an enjoyable film for all the family.

AJP



Mailbag

SBB in Troyes?

Could I through the columns of the Swiss Express, ask if any member of the Society, can explain the prescence of an SBB Dining Car Type IV complete with pantograph on a NON-electric line in France.

The above photograph was taken at Troyes yard SNCF the coach was there from the 3rd September until the 8th September.

D. Wilson,
Hemel Hempsted, Herts.

Shortest Train Journey?

Having been unable to travel to Switzerland this year I have had to content myself with jounries in the Kursbuch. In table 870 I noticed a train 7662 which takes four minutes from start to finish (St. Gallen to St. Gallen Haggen). Is this the shortest train journey in the country?

Christopher Elliott,
Caversham, Reading.

BLS 465's reliability?

On Tuesday 10th October 1995, travelling on the 18.01 train from Brig to Basel. The train left Brig on time pulled by BLS 465-003-2 after some 15 minutes into its journey it came to a complete halt, and eventually it was announced that the loco had failed and a replacement loco was awaited, eventually BLS Re4/4 194 came

Above: The restaurant car referred to in the first letter, at Troyes.

to the rescue and the train arrived in Kandersteg at 19.12pm but should in fact have arrived at 18.37pm.

Problems appear to be being experienced with 465's?

Peter Dransfield
Mirfield.

Video Review

Brienz Rothorn Bahn - MITV Ltd.

This is the best video of the BRB I have seen. It is more of a film for the rail cognoscenti although the scenic content should interest all especially the remarkable air shots near the end.

Technical and historical information is good and the scenes on shed are absorbing. The angles from which the hard working locos are filmed, using high-tech miniature cameras, make the video a 'must' and one finds out the use of the bent pipe attached to the top of the funnels.

Cow bells and staccato exhausts mingle in the high pastures as the trains near the summit.

Perhaps, like other films of this line, it is a little too long but the excellence of the filming balances this out.

AJP