

Cyberspace corner - Swiss Railway websites

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be gratefully remembered by the whole population of Kandersteg as the year of liberation: the opening of the village-bypass to the loading ramps. The traffic of over half a million cars through this mountain village at 4000 ft had made life quite unbearable for inhabitants and tourists alike. I remember it only too well. 1986 brought the 10th million, 1995 the 20th million and today, only four years later, the 25th million. Improvements to the road from Goppenstein down to the Rhone valley, as well as the gold plating of the Simplon pass road (travel it by postal coach from Brig and you will see what I mean . . .) led to the normal service now being limited to Kandersteg-Goppenstein. Every half hour from early morning to late night (hourly through the night at summer peak times) and on peak days, a 7 1/2 minute service is possible. If the roads become blocked, as happens sometimes in the winter, the BLS is flexible enough to operate other services at very short notice. For example: Gampel/Steg - Domodossola (Simplon road blocked and no ramp at Brig at the time due to construction work there), Frütigen -

Kandersteg (road blocked due to avalanche this winter), Frütigen/Kandersteg - Brig (same reason). Since 1996 the BLS has 8 push-pull car carriers, including two built by Talbot with higher roofs, which can take small coaches and light lorries as well as the cars and transporters the other ones can carry. Larger vehicles will have to wait for the opening of the base-tunnel in 2006. The roofs are now too high for the tunnels on the rest of the line. Normal maintenance and small repairs are thus undertaken in a newly build shed in Kandersteg. Heavy overhaul means a trip down to Spiez and for this the roofs have to be lowered by hand. The record number of cars transported in one day, with all the 8 sets in operation and with the 7 1/2 minute interval service, was reached on the 28th of February 1998: no less than 13,729, vehicles were transported, about as much as in the whole of 1960. The service is now getting new ticket machines as the old ones have the millenium bug. Also, with about one third of the traffic coming from foreign tourists, they must be able to accept the Euro as payment, in cash as well as from credit cards.

CYBERSPACE CORNER – Swiss Railway Websites

Mainly John Whitby with some additions by the Editor

<<http://www.bruenig.ch/bruenig/>> - The Brünig site, being updated, not yet in English

<<http://www.uol.ch/gotthardbahn/>> - A great site about the Gotthard line, photos, news etc.

<<http://www.digittrain.ch/>> - Model Shop in Luzern with Mail Order.

<<http://www.modelco.ch/f/catalogue.html>> - Model shop in Neuchâtel. Very comprehensive on-line catalogue

<<http://website.lineone.net/~john.p.whitby>> - Johns own site with links to other related sites.

<<http://www.swisscraft.ch/BAM>> - excellent site from the Bières-Aples-Morges, includes track plans to download.

<<http://www.bt-bahn.ch/>> - Bodensee-Toggenburg Bahn, the editors favourite railway.

Good site with nice pictures to download and even the chance to apply for a job.

<<http://www.szu.ch/>> - Sihltal Bahn. Another clever site. Includes games which you can download onto PC's only.