

Zeitschrift: Swiss express : the Swiss Railways Society journal
Herausgeber: Swiss Railways Society
Band: 6 (2000-2002)
Heft: 2

Artikel: Unexpected bonus
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-854869>

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FO HGE4/4 106 in Winter Olympics mode at Oberwald. Photo: Author



In July 1999, along with my wife Joyce, we had a very pleasant holiday at Saas Fee. First bonus was to see lots of BVZ and FO rolling stock at Brig whilst waiting for the Saas bus. However one day we decided to go to Fiesch to catch the cable car to Eggishorn to see the magnificent views of the Aletsch Glacier. Checked with the ticket clerk when buying the combined bus/rail ticket - use any train. At Brig we found an East bound Glacier Express with just one (the last) non booked coach.

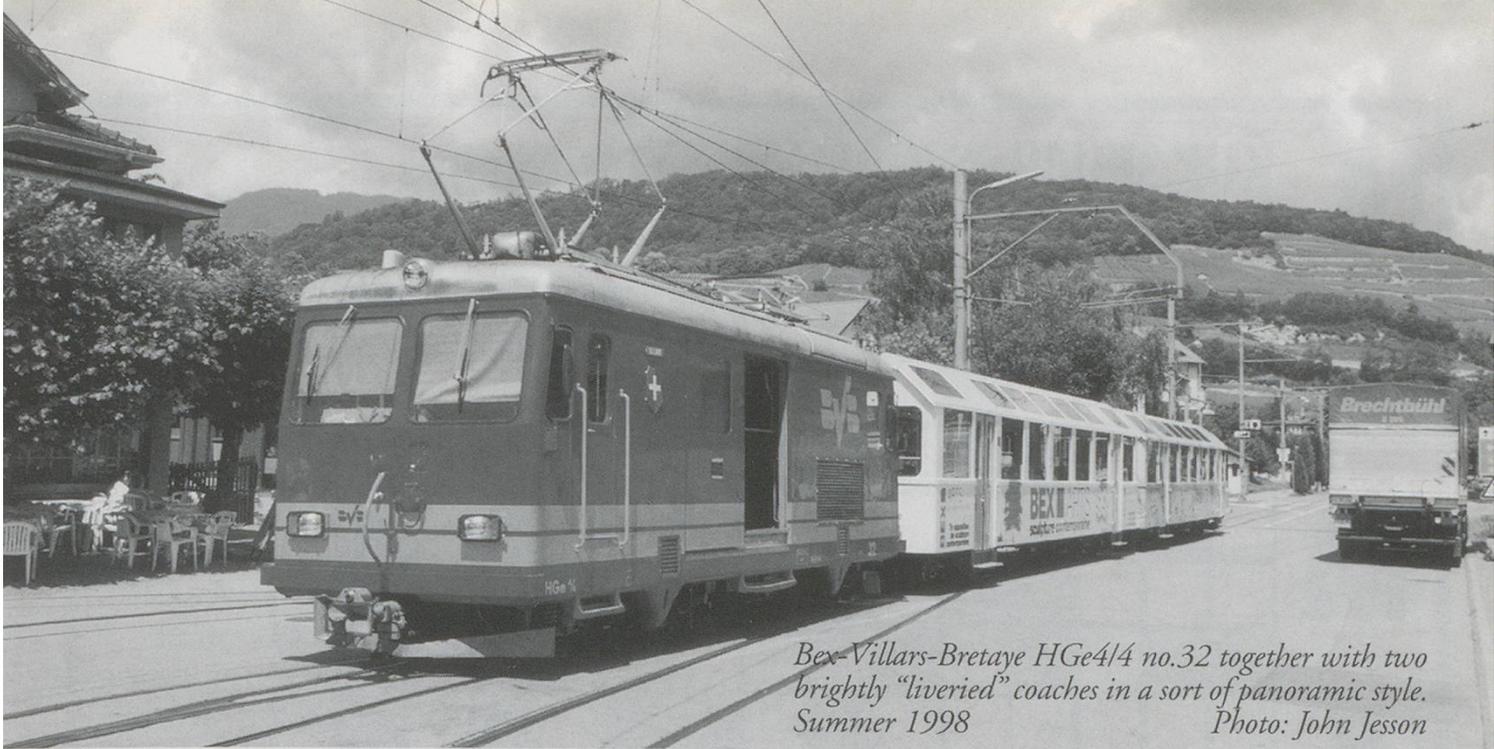
As we left, the automatic announcement system described the features of Brig (something wrong we thought!). Arriving at Fiesch, the train stopped with our coach over the points at the entrance to the station. Should we get off now, or will it pull into the station and if so which platform? We tried the doors, they wouldn't open and then the train set off - no it did not stop again - in fact the next scheduled stop was Oberwald, a half hour away. Oh dear. Checking the timetable showed that we would have to wait at least an hour for a return train which would stop at Fiesch.

After a delightful run to Oberwald, we got off and wondered how to spend the next hour. First stop at the ticket office, purchase tickets to Fiesch plus various FO souvenirs. We need not have wondered how to spend our time - so much to see and photograph! First stop the DFB snowplough (pictured in the March edition), then a tunnel loco with its trucks. Eastbound another Glacier Express with 5 panorama coaches (see photo). Westbound, a Glacier Express, from which the Gourmino restaurant car was removed and placed in a siding (see colour photo) then later added to an eastbound train. Watched a coach being backed very carefully onto a tunnel wagon. Local train arrived with white Aletsch Cycle Hire luggage van and a family collected their bicycles (what a contrast to UK railways attitude to cyclists!!!).

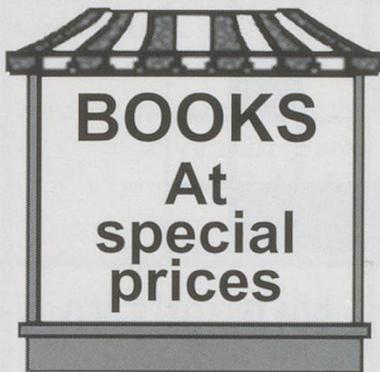
Another east bound Glacier Express complete with Gourmino car passed through. Then our local train arrived. It stopped at all stations back to Fiesch where we still had just enough time to see the Aletsch glacier (see colour photo), before returning to Fiesch station. Local train to Brig arrived, pulling onto the far platform and we boarded. Then the Express to Brig stopped on the middle platform, then a local eastbound train arrived on the town side platform (see photo). Naturally we were last to leave for our final trip back to Brig.



Local train arrives at Fiesch headed by a driving trailer. Photo: Author



Bex-Villars-Bretaye HGe4/4 no.32 together with two brightly "liveried" coaches in a sort of panoramic style. Summer 1998 Photo: John Jesson



Clouds on the Brienzer Rothorn

(P R Arnold - Plateway Press) @ £7.50

Mountain Rack Railways of Switzerland

(J R Bardsley - Oakwood Press) @ £9.00

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Right: A nice view of the new station at Wengen showing some complex trackwork for a rack railway. Photo: R Little. Below: One of the new Martigny-Châtelard BDeh4/8 units waiting departure at Martigny. 1999. Photo: David Swann

