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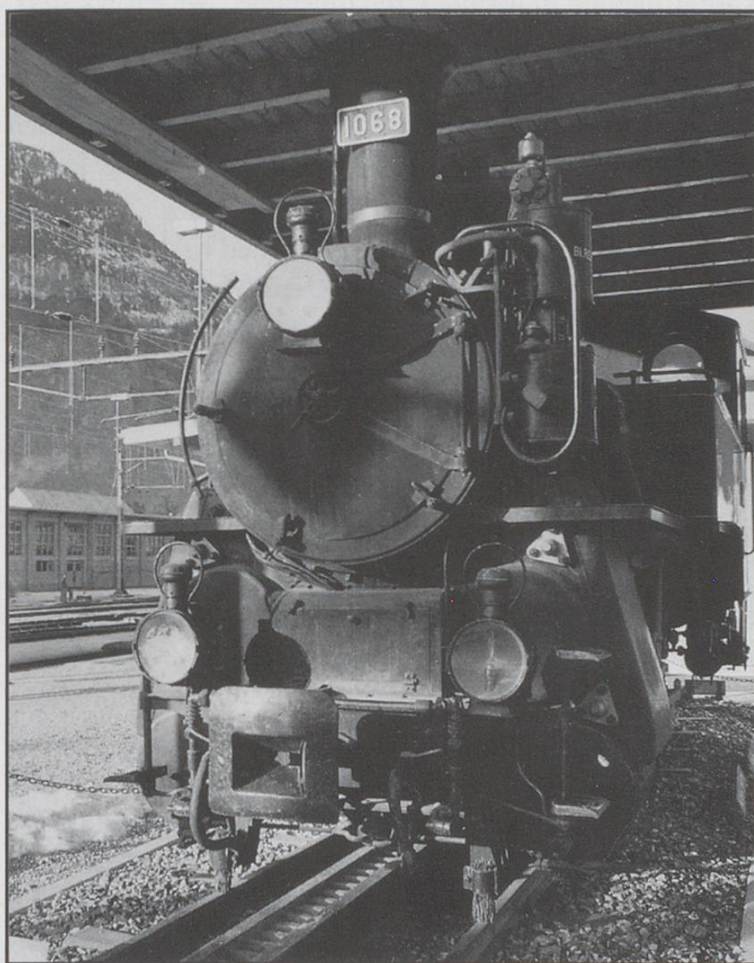
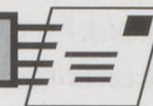
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Letters are welcomed on any relevant subject. Please ensure that when you send an email letter you include your address. Cyberspace is a bit too Star Trek.

From: Michael Cross - Essex

RE: Ballenberg Dampfbahn

I have just returned from Wengen, and on 3/9/200 joined the excursion Interlaken-Giswil and return again. I noticed and enquired about loco no: 1068 which was not on the plinth at Meiringen. I was informed and subsequently saw that it/she had been transferred to this enterprises' extended workshops at Interlaken Ost for restoration to working order. Presumably 1068 will replace 1067 when the latter is due for overhaul

*Former SBB HG3/3 1068 on its plinth in Meiringen prior to removal and restoration. See letter from Michael Cross.
Photo: R Williams*

From: Peter Arnold -Milton Keynes

Referring to the last Swiss Express

Scuol Buses by Rob Morrey

Despite staying at Klosters this summer, we still have not visited Scuol-Tarasp. After reading Rob's article we certainly intend to do so at some future date purely for that bus ride to Samnaun!

We did take the bus from Zernez to Mustair preceded by the connecting bus from Davos over the Fluela, Pass. The journey from Davos to Zernez was on top of one of the new double deck Neoplan vehicles where sitting at the front "on top" gave us the sensation of being in mid-air on some of the hairpins. Quite how the driver negotiated the "T" junction in Susch village and then demonstrated a 360° turn at Susch station is more than skill; it is an art!

I would add to Rob's list of recommended bus rides the two inter connecting routes forming the service between Meiringen and Grindewald via Schwarzwaldalp. In particular, the ride up the valley from above Meiringen to Rosenlauri is one of sheer beauty and buses are often duplicated in high summer. Right Hand drive buses were in regular use here as recently as 1986!

We often use public transport in association with the start or finish of a day's walk in the mountains. Four other interesting bus routes we have used over the years, all of which are minibus operated due to mountain roads and/or narrow village streets, are: Le Châble - Moay; Tschierschen - Chur; Küblis - Conters im Prättigau; Wilderswil - Saxeten. Try them for yourselves, you may well be the only passengers! (*cont. overleaf*)

(cont.)

Letter (re. Klosters RhB) from Hywel Jones

I would agree that the Davos - Disentis trains are struggling to maintain the timetable. We left Klosters, homeward bound, on 26th July to connect with the 10.28 SBB train at Landquart. With the trains from the Scuol-Tarasp line scheduled to run ahead of those from Davos, we caught the 09.28 which is due at Landquart 10.14. Unusually, we did not cross another train at the new loop at Fuchsenwinkel but we then had to wait for two trains at Schiers instead! We eventually reached Landquart at 10.22 and, just as Hywel described, the SBB train had to wait for the train from Davos.

I do not think that the RhB bus which runs between Davos and Klosters is designed to connect with Scuol-Tarasp trains. Rather, it is a substitute service for the communities normally served by the intermediate stations of Davos Laret and Davos Wolfgang. Officially these are now closed to rail services in summer although we were on one train which stopped at the former to enable a local lady to alight! During the winter ski season these stations are served by the Filisur shuttle service which is extended from Davos to Klosters and Küblis.

From: Andy Mickelthwaite - Belper

Pontresina layout

Some while ago, Mark Fox and I were discussing the model railway that used to be in a small building just South of Pontresina station. An appeal for information in this journal brought no response. Mark's persistence has now paid off and he sent me the following:

"During my annual Swiss Railway jaunt I met one of the main builders of the RhB model layout in the Bergün Town Museum who knew the man that built the Pontresina layout. He told me that when his friend died the children decided not to keep up the layout, and had it broken up and the parts sold off second-hand."

I thought members might like to know!

From: Nigel Pocock - Old Windsor

RhB working timetable graphs.

I recently enquired from those in the know how I could obtain RhB working timetable graphs. The SRS stand team at the Continental Railway Exhibition/Convention at the Oxford Show advised me to go to the MITV stand. In turn they informed me that they had obtained some from the RhB at Chur and that it was possible for individuals to likewise obtain copies.

MITV advised me to write to the Rhätische Bahn, CH-7002 Chur, Switzerland, and ask for the "Fahrplan Grafisch" (Graphic Timetable), offering to pay for the full cost involved. I offered to pay by Eurocheque as I knew the RhB does not accept credit cards for payment of under a certain amount. (unfortunately I've forgotten what the limit is). So I wrote for any timetables they had covering the period 1997 - 2000 and the timetables for 1998/9 and 2000/1 came more or less by return of post. In fact they came from Landquart from Herr Jürg Boner, Rhätische Bahn, Bahnladen, CH-7302 Landquart, Switzerland. The packet included an invoice for CHF47,90 so they work out at about £10 per year set (including post and packing) at the current exchange rate.

Each year pack (from May through to June of the following year) contains an explanation leaflet and three large sheets - folded to just under A5 size - covering the whole RhB network. The sheets have the train working number against each line on the time and track graph but only limited explanation as to what the train is: mixed, engineering, etc. The goods trains are usually numbered 5XXX on the timetable graph sheets and ideally one wants at least the public passenger timetable, either from the RhB or that contained in the "Cook's Continental Timetable" which is available at most big libraries to know which workings are the passenger trains. The passenger timetables will also give additional information such as which trains carry through coaches and restaurant cars and which workings are special trains. Also there are various letters after the number on the lines on the graphs: F = works/engineering train - run as required; L = light locomotive(s); P = mixed goods and passenger train (but note that for the Arosa and Bernina branches passenger train num-

bers do not have a P after them and in fact carry goods as required and according to the load available in addition to the passenger stock already allocated to each working); U = transfer/mixed gauge train(?); A = bus; Y = connecting works/engineering trains with the SBB(?).

I have been informed that the engine class used for each train is on a list on public view at Filisur station. Does anyone know if this is true and if so do they have the details to publish in the "Swiss Express"? It would also be useful if anyone has the official train formation sets and coach workings (including postal workings) - if in deed they exist. Does anyone have these or know where to get them?

From: Mark Fox - London

re: Secrets of The RhB

I recently made a 3 day jaunt of Swiss Railways free to meander at will and briefly free of family duties. This year I revisited my favourite RhB haunts and chanced upon a couple of discoveries I thought worth sharing with other SRS members. Whilst staying in Samedan I discovered that on Wednesdays at 4.30 throughout the Summer the RhB were conducting tours of the Samedan loco shed. Obviously the day and time will have to be checked in subsequent years, but the point is that I found out about this solely through the Tourist Office in the main square in Samedan. This was not publicised in RhB literature on the website, there was not even a poster at Samedan itself.

The tour was tremendous fun. The Samedan shed houses the Bernina crocodile awaiting restoration, an RhB crocodile, a Ge 4/6 and a steam G 4/5. The G 4/5 was not steamed up, but the RhB crocodile was obligingly shunted around the shed for us. The tour last around 90 minutes and there couldn't have been more than 20 of us. The tour, was of course, in German but that really didn't matter. We were allowed to clamber all over the locos, including the cabs. We were even allowed into an inspection pit under a rebuilt Ge 4/4¹. The tour was completely free. We also saw a cement silo being swung off its base and other light restoration work being undertaken (the heavy work is all undertaken at Landquart these days). All well worth a detour.

That evening I caught a train down to Bergün to visit the Albula Model Railway Club layout housed in the town museum. This is a much better publicised affair, but still low key. The Club has its own website advertising times of opening, etc. This can be found at <www.ozdoba.net/abc/abc-e.html> and is available in English. Alternatively ring Rene Leuzinger on 41 81 420 5010 or write to him at Chesa Giassa, 7482 Bergün. The layout is a magnificent reconstruction of the stretch of the line from Bergün to Preda. It has taken eight members 10 years to construct. The summer evening meeting was a very friendly event. Again, there were no more than around 20/30 people there because it is rather off the beaten track albeit a wonderful way to spend an evening.

Now are there any other members out there who stumbled upon some hidden treasures this Summer that they would like to share for next year?.....

THE CLASSIFIED SECTION - Members Adverts

Looking for: anyone who has a Swiss layout and would be prepared to bring it to our 2001 Model Railway Exhibition on 2 and 3 June 2001, but any details would be gratefully received even if not available for 2001 - there is always the future! The exhibition is held at the East Anglian Railway Museum at Chappel Station, near Colchester. I can be contacted by post at 279 Bramford Lane, Ipswich, IP1 4EU, by phone on 07899 841039, by fax on 0870 1258315 or by e-mail at rob.boyce@earm.co.uk

Looking for: Hag No. 187 Bodensee-Toggenburg Re4/4s Wittenbach/St Gallen/Degersheim/Watwill, must be in original green/cream with no horrible adverts overall or otherwise. Contact the editor at any of his addresses or telephone numbers on the contents page.

Exchange/Barter: N gauge Hobbytrain. I have a red Re6/6 'Balerna', but to fit with me preference for Suisse Romande would like to swap (no money to change hands) like for like with 'Sonceboz-Sombeval' equivalent. My Balerna is 'mint' and little used, but would swap for a well used Sonceboz subject to inspection.

Tel: Gordon Wiseman. 0208 641 6497