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SEEBURG RECEIVES STAMP OF APPROVAL



Passengers on Lake Lucerne ships this year may have noticed how smart the landing stage at Seeburg now looks.

Built in 1911/2 to serve the hotel complex used by British travellers of the London Polytechnic's travel organisation (who also owned the buildings), the pier has received a generous restoration grant from the Pro Patria Foundation small buildings fund. Realising that the owners of many small structures could not afford to foot the bill for their restoration themselves, Pro Patria set up this fund, which has now helped more than 250 projects.

Another factor in the choice of projects to be supported is where any commercial benefits are minimal – as is the case with the Schiffstation Seeburg, which must be one of the lesser-used Lake Lucerne piers. Indeed on none of my journeys last September did any passengers join or alight here.

Pro Patria explained the reason for their support: "The Seeburg landing stage is a relic of the *Belle Époque*. Together with the magnificent fleet of steam paddlers on the Lake of Lucerne (which themselves have received support from the fund), it brings back the heyday of Swiss tourism prior to the First World War. With its contribution to the renovation of the waiting room, Pro Patria underlined the value

of historic transport structures."

The Foundation is funded by an annual stamp issue carrying a charity surcharge and the sale of badges for the 1 August celebrations. This year one of the four Pro Patria stamps (face value of SFr1. with a SFr.50 surcharge) featured the *Schiffstation Seeburg*, as did the first day cover envelope.

To launch the stamps, the shipping company, *Schiffahrtsgesellschaft des Vierwaldstättersee* (SGV) operated a special journey to Seeburg with M.S. Rütli, one of its smaller motor ships. Knowing that the Seeburg Hotel had once sold Edmondson-style card tickets for journeys from Lucerne to its visitors (specially headed "Polytechnic Touring"), I decided it was appropriate to print a souvenir in the same format.

I still have a few tickets on hand and if any members would like a specimen I shall be glad to send one upon receipt of an s.a.e. (If you have one or two unwanted Swiss tickets to spare they would, of course, be greatly appreciated, but this is by no means essential!) Please write to: Michael Farr, 1 Trethury Gardens, Callington, Cornwall. PL17 7RH

Do you know that there is a Helvetia Philatelic Society? The members made me very welcome when I recently gave them a talk about Swiss transport and I was amazed at the range of postal material they collect, including postcards posted and franked at funicular stations and the tops of mountains. If any SRS members would like more information about the HPS, please let me know and I will pass their names on to the secretary.