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We proceeded eastwards along the inside southern edge of Muttenz marshalling yards to Pratteln, where the locomotive ran round. Recalling steam Railtours of 1967/8, along with a very few others I sprinted successfully to the adjacent platform to get an image of it without a platform in front of it and the sun behind me. (British enthusiasts are clearly made of sterner stuff than the Swiss as at least 90% of the participants remained next to the train!) The train then headed off a little way into the yard before setting back onto a non-electrified branch line leading towards the Rhein. Here we got off for a photographic run past, away from the clutter of railway infrastructure and with perfectly positioned sun.

Back on the train we proceeded to reach other parts of the railway that other (passenger) trains cannot, by running through the northern side of Muttenz yard. This gave views of the locomotive holding sidings, which are at a lower level, explaining why they cannot be seen from the main line. The two yards are laid out so that one of the yards deals with traffic inbound to Switzerland and the other outbound. Both comprise of reception, sorting and departure sidings. It was interesting to note a red Re 4/4^{i} belonging to the R4C group which specialises in the rail haulage of chemicals. Given the continued trend towards international block train working, it will be interesting to watch the future use of these yards.

Being in a marshalling yard, "permissive working" was in force. This worked well until we came to stand behind a rake of wagons, only to discover that it had no locomotive on the far end! We backed up! At the western end, we left the main line and took a branch that descended to reach the Rhein at a station proclaiming the name of "Hafenbahn BL". Here there was another chance for photography and a visit to the interior of the locomotive – of which I have to confess I did not take advantage – before a stroll to the ship which was to take us up river and provide an excellent lunch. In conversation with Scott Rankin of the Lausanne club we found that the time passed all too quickly and we were soon disembarking for the short bus ride to Liestal.

As with every visit, it is clear that the Swiss value our connection with the SVEA. *Eisenbahn Amateur* is the publication of the SVEA and it is available at a very favourable rate to members. A subscription form for it came with the September "Swiss Express" and as the closing date for subscribing is 9th December, if you have not done so already you should still have time to dispatch your cheque to John Stokes.

Bill Weber

BACK IN BLACK
– Furka Oberalp No 4 returns to service

The SLM Steam Locomotive FO No 4 returned to Realp on 18 July after seven years of restoration by volunteers of the Verein Furka Bergstrecke (VFB)/Dampf Furka Bergstrecke (DFB) at the workshop in Chur, Switzerland. This locomotive was built by SLM Winterthur in 1913 as factory No 2318, delivered as BFD No 4 and in 1926 became FO No 4. This all-black locomotive will be used for passenger service starting on the 23rd June

The FO No 4 on the turntable at Realp. *Photographs: Bill Weber*

2007. This locomotive was last used on these tracks in 1942, when the line was converted to electric traction. Between 1930 to 1942 it was used to haul the Glacier Express between Oberwald and Andermatt. FO No 4 remained with the Furka Oberalp Bahn after electrification and was used for snow clearing, overhead line work and nostalgia journeys. In 1998 she was placed on long-term loan to the DFB.

In mid November the Verein Furka Bergstrecke (VFB) and the Dampf Furka Bergstrecke (DFB) will officially begin restoration of the two large steam rack locomotives. These locomotives were built by SLM Winterthur for the French to use in Indochina (Vietnam) and were returned to Switzerland in 1990 as part of the program "Back to Switzerland". These two HG 4/4s were moved from Altdorf to Chur in April 2004 (see Swiss Express March 2005).

This restoration work is supported by the 6,000 members of the 23 sections (or clubs) of the Verein Furka Bergstrecke plus the 11,000 shareholders of the Dampf Furka Bergstrecke, AG. General, membership and stocks information may be found at www.fu-be-ch, www.vfb-edelweiss.ch and www.vfb-edelweiss.us.

HG4/4s - Photographed in the Chur Workshop showing the tracks where the two locos will be placed to work on them.