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Autor: [s.n.]
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SUCCÈS POUR VAPEUR MANIA 08

Le Vaudois



RhB G3/4 No. 1 "Rhätia", once a regular performer at the Blonay-Chamby line, prepares to enter the arena with its train of RhB coaches for the son et lumière presentation. 3 May 2008.

PHOTOS: Le Vaudois

As we reported in the March edition of Swiss Express, the Blonay-Chamby Museum Railway celebrated its 40th anniversary over a six day period at the beginning of May. The festivities began with an afternoon for *invités* – people closely involved with the growth and success of the Museum Railway. They gathered at Vevey on the 30th April to board a double-headed steam train to Chaulin Dépôt scheduled for 14.00 and hauled by BFD HG3/4 No.3 and ZTB G2x 2/2 No. 105. Sadly, at 13.55, rain began to fall, though this did little to dampen the enthusiasm of the supporters and their guests – and did mean we had a lot more steam in our otherwise dull photos!

On arrival at the Dépôt the proceedings were enhanced by a pipe and drum band whose music punctuated the usual speeches made (thankfully) in the shelter of the carriage shed. The guests returned to Vevey

in the same train, which included some coaches borrowed from TPF (GFM), hauled this time by the GFM automotrice Be4/4 No. 111.

The public had been invited to join the festivities the next day, 1st May, with the supporters praying for dry sunny weather. They were not disappointed, for the sun shone brilliantly and the trains – hauled in turn by every available locomotive – were well filled. As well as their own fleet, the railway had borrowed the RhB's No. 1, *Rhätia*, the DFB's HG 2/3 No. 6 *Weisshorn* and the LEB's No. 8 *Echallens*, all of which were turned out in superb condition.

The little tram-type loco No. 4 *Rimini* of the Ferrovie Padane (built for the Italian railway by Krauss in 1900) teamed up with the recently-restored voiture-pilote of the Aigle-Leysin line, No. 21, to provide a shuttle service between the sheds and the



coaling stage. Probably the noisiest event of the weekend was the performance of synchronised whistling, with each loco crew trying to outdo the others! The most civilised feature was the sale (and drinking) of bottles of wine with special BC 40th labels.

The celebrations continued over the following two weekends, with a spectacular son et lumière presentation on the Saturday evenings. Trains marshalled to represent a particular line were driven, one at a time, in front of marquees set up on the field in front of the museum. They paused in the spotlights while some superb historic film of the lines and live shots of the trains were projected onto a huge screen. An informative and professionally-presented commentary (in French) added to the interest. Over at least the first of the

TOP: BFD HG3/4 No. 3 runs into Vevey with the empty stock for the special train for invited guests. 30 April 2008.

MIDDLE: BFD No. 3 on the empty stock for the train for invited guests. 30 April 2008.

BOTTOM: G2x2/2 No. 105 of the Zell-Todtnau Railway backs onto the special train at Vevey ready to shunt it into the platform to pick up the invited guests. 30 April 2008.

weekends the weather cooperated perfectly, so much so that the start of the son et lumière had to be delayed because it was too bright!

The BC supporters can be very proud of the success of their May celebrations – and if you missed them you can still join in the fun during the *Journées de Patrimoine* on 13th and 14th

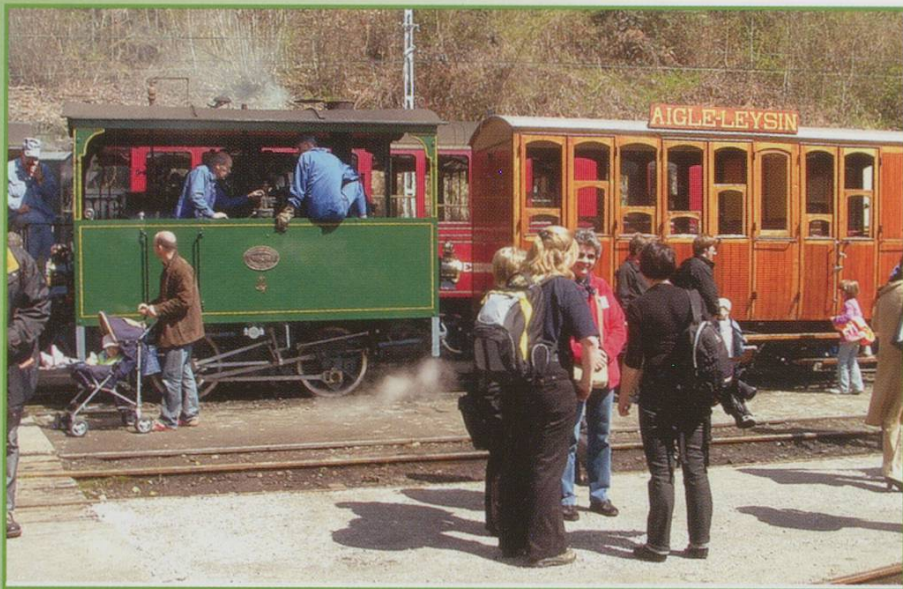
September. On these heritage museum days the railway is presenting a Bernina weekend using the recently restored RhB Ge 4/4 locomotive No. 181 hauling the two coaches from Graubünden which are kept at Chaulin. Other Swiss museums will be organising special events and many waive their admission charges for this weekend; the BC usually have a reduced price day ticket on sale.

TOP: BAM G3/3 No. 6 spruced up for inspection on 30 April 2008.

MIDDLE: The pipe and drum band marches to the carriage shed at Chaulin Museum in preparation for the official speeches to mark the Blonay-Chamby's 40th anniversary. 30 April 2008.

BOTTOM: BFD No. 3 lines up alongside the beautifully-restored voiture-pilote No. 21 of the Aigle-Leysin Railway at the Museum. This coach was fitted out for taking patients on stretchers to the sanatoria at Leysin. 30 April 2008.





The final special event in the line's 40th year will be held over the weekend of 1st and 2nd November. *En famille au musée* gives an opportunity to welcome local families as well as visitors from further afield before the railway closes for another winter of restoration work.



TOP and MIDDLE: The tiny G2/2 No. 4 "Rimini" of the Italian Ferrovie Padane ran shuttle services to the coaling stage with the Aigle-Leysin voiture-pilote No. 21. 1 May 2008.

BOTTOM LEFT: G2/2 No. 4 "Rimini" pauses on the coaling stage with the voiture-pilote No. 21 before taking part in the run-past for the son et lumière presentation. 3 May 2008.



BOTTOM RIGHT: Visiting locomotive LEB G3/3 No. 8 "Echallens" waits for its cue to join the procession of locomotives at the son et lumière presentation. 3 May 2008.





TOP LEFT: DFB HG 2/3 No. 6 "Weisshorn" runs round its train at Chaulin Museum. 1 May 2008.



TOP RIGHT: MOB automotrice BCFE 4/4 No. 11 approaches the bifurcation at Chaulin to run onto the main line of the BC. 1 May 2008.



MIDDLE TOP: DFB HG2/3 No. 6 "Weisshorn" couples to sister loco BFD No. 3 for the son et lumière presentation, 3 May 2008.

MIDDLE BOTTOM: RhB G3/4 No. 1 "Rhätia", once a regular performer at the Blonay-Chamby line, couples up to its train of RhB coaches for the son et lumière presentation. 1 May 2008.



BOTTOM RIGHT: G2x2/2 No. 105 pauses in the spotlights with its short train. 3 May 2008.

BOTTOM LEFT: A busy day at Chaulin Museum as the crowds gather to witness the synchronised whistling. 1 May 2008.

