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VALAIS IN VAUD

Michael Farr looks at the Blonay-Chamby's 2009 Plans



When running trips from Martigny to Vernayaz on the open day on 8 September 2001, automotrice No.15 was classified as ABFeh 4/4, although in publicity for this year's Le Valais en fête she is described as BCFeh. ALL PHOTOS: Michael Farr

After the ambitious celebrations for the line's 40th anniversary in 2008, this year the Blonay-Chamby has planned for a special event in September entitled *Le Valais en fête*. The celebrations will begin during the annual *Journées du patrimoine* (heritage days when many museums open their doors free of charge) on 12/13 September and continue for the two following weekends, 19/20 and 26/27 September. Five automotrices and locomotives from Le Valais will be in use on the line, four from the BC's own collection with a visitor from the Martigny-Chatelard. Their 100 year old BCFeh 4/4 No.15 has been beautifully restored by the supporters of the *Train nostalgique du Trient* and runs occasionally on its original railway but they have agreed to loan the railcar with its *voiture-pilote* (driving trailer) for the special BC weekends.

Two other Valaisian automotrices will be on hand, both in regular use on the BC, BCFeh 4/4 No.6 of the Monthey-Champéry-Morgins (now the AOMC) which also celebrates its centenary in 2009 and the similarly classified No.10 of the Chemin de Fer Loèche-Loèche-les-Bains which, with a coach and van, were acquired when the LLB closed in 1967. Modellers in HOm gauge have been promised a model of this complete train by H-R-F, so start saving now! Valaisian steam will be represented by HG 3/3 No.3, built in 1913 for the Brig-Furka-Disentis (BFD, forerunner of the FO) and last but not least, the diesel tractor Tm 20200 built in 1931 for the construction of the Grande Dixence dam. This was saved by the BC in 2006, since when it has been overhauled and repainted.

Towards the end of the year, over the weekend of 7/8 November, the Blonay-

Chamby's annual event "*En famille au musée*" gives the railway the opportunity to open its doors to families living locally – although visitors from farther afield, including members of the SRS, are equally welcome. A feature of this weekend is the use of some of the smaller and service vehicles which are seldom used on public days. If any of our members are able to join in these activities your editorial team will be delighted to receive photographs for possible use in *Swiss Express*.



TOP:

The BC's own steam loco HG 3/3 No.3, seen here at Chaulin Dépôt in May 2008, still carries its BFD livery and will take part in September's special event Le Valais en fête.

MIDDLE:

The restored train has arrived at Vernayaz and waits for a through train to France to pass before returning to Martigny. Note the third rail pick-up in use here, as in France.



BOTTOM:

Passengers wait to board the restored train as she waits for clearance before leading her voiture-pilote along the level valley route from Vernayaz to Martigny during an open day in September 2001.

