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Roger Ellis outlines the plans for a member's trip to Switzerland

At the end of the visit to Erstfeld in 2009 I did promise those attending that I would consider organising another trip in September 2011, so with the assistance of Andreas Haesler, who works for the BLS as Manager of the Interlaken West Ticket Office and Tourist Information Centre, John Jesson and I have put together the following programme of excursions and events.

Wednesday 1st September. Members travel to Switzerland, or arrive in the Spiez area. Thursday 2nd September. A "Tram Day" in Berne with a hoped-for visit to the Depot and Museum together with travel over the system. The evening meal will be in either Berne or Thun with a visit to either town's Model Railway Club (The Thun Club has an "0" gauge BLS layout) – details have yet to be finalised. Friday 3rd September. Morning – Visit to take the Lötschberg Base Tunnel Guided Tour. Afternoon – Visit to Spiez BLS Depot and Signal Panel. Evening – Visit to the Model Railway Club MEFEZ at Zweilutschinen with a barbeque and drinks, plus a chance to "play trains" on their super layout. Saturday 4th September. Walkers – A walk on either the BLS North or South Ramp paths. Non walkers – Conducted excursion over the BLS to Ausserberg and Brig. Evening – A meal in Spiez followed by an audio-visual presentation about the BLS. Sunday 5th September. A visit to the Blonay-Chamby Museum Railway via the BLS and MOB.

Accommodation. Unlike Erstfeld I am not basing the holiday on a particular hotel. Unfortunately there is not a hotel in the Spiez area that has the same "single room availability" as the Hotel Frohsinn has in Erstfeld. I also realise that many members may have a favourite hotel in the Berner Oberland area were they would wish to stay. The public transport is good so that all members staying in the general area of Spiez should be able to get to each day's start point with no particular problem. However, it would make sense if we were ALL to try and stay in Spiez itself as the town does have a small number of hotels of various standards,

as do nearby Hondrich or Faulensee. The Tourist Office will supply information giving details of all the establishments.

General

- There will be a charge for some events, or for some special travel arrangements.
- Participants do not have to take part in all the scheduled events, although it is expected that they will join in with the majority of the arrangements.
- Some planned excursions will require participants to make swift transfers between travel modes.
- The types of excursions planned require a high degree of personal mobility and a basic degree of fitness as was discovered last year and, unfortunately, very few of the locations on the suggested agenda cater for those who have any form of mobility impairment.
- It is regretted that special assistance cannot be provided in any form for disabled individuals, who should make their own access and travel arrangements and be accompanied by suitably qualified carers.
- These logistical restrictions should be kept in mind when contemplating joining the trip.
- This trip is not being organised by the Swiss Railways Society and the Society cannot accept any responsibility for any of the planned arrangements.
- In organising this event my colleagues and I are simply acting as facilitators by arranging a programme of events that individuals may choose to take part in.
- If you would like to join us next year please contact me with your address and /or email so that I can keep you informed as to the progress of the planned events. I cannot guarantee at this early stage that the programme will not have to be changed as circumstances dictate, but I will be updating you with my usual Newsletters as time progresses.
- My address is at the front of the magazine but my personal email is **REllis@alfnalf.fsnet.co.uk**