

Ticino comes to Vaud

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TICINO COMES TO VAUD Le Vaudois



MOB 1001 (ex LCD No 9) with B-C trailer La Giardinera at the time of a previous visit by it to the museum line in 1995.

PHOTO: Alain Candellero

Over the weekends of the 10th/11th and 17th/18th September visitors to the Blonay-Chamby Museum Railway will be able to ride on four historic metre-gauge vehicles originally in use on Ticino lines which are not normally in public service. For these "Ferrovie Ticinesi" events the enthusiastic management of the B-C have arranged to borrow three bogie railcars (1001/2/3) normally seen lurking in sidings or working as station pilots on the MOB, along with the last Locarno tramcar which is now kept by the Ferrovie autolinee regionali ticinesi (FART) at Ponte Brolla on their Centovalli line.

In the 1970s the MOB needed to increase local services on various parts of the line and searched around for suitable second hand railcars which could be operated as driver-only

units. At about this time there were several changes in the Ticino with the Lugano-Cadro-Dino (LCD) closing in 1970 and the Biasca-Acquarossa (BA) in 1973.

The first vehicle to arrive at Chermex Works in 1973 was LCD Ce 4/4 No 9 which in moving to Vaud was coming back to its birthplace, having been built by ACMV at Vevey in 1955. Renumbered as Be 4/4 No 1001, modifications included automatic doors and the replacement of the original bogies with a pair by SWS/BBC from a VBZ (Zürich) vehicle of the 1301-1350 series. After serving faithfully on the Montreux-Les Avants shuttle trains, 1001 enjoys her retirement as station pilot at Montreux, whose arms she carries on each end. No 1001 will be reunited with former LCD open coach "La Giardinera" (B-C No c21) which is always popular with visitors in sunny weather. The coach celebrates its centenary this year, which is the excuse for the B-C to gather the Ticino stock together.

In 1975, two years after the last train ran between Biasca and Acquarossa, the MOB obtained BA ABe No 4, built in 1951 jointly by SWS (mechanical parts) and SAAS (electric equipment), and now classified as Be 4/4 No 1002. As the magnetic brake on this unit has been disabled No 1002 is officially allocated to Zweisimmen and restricted to operating on the less hilly sections of the line between Lenk, Zweisimmen and Montbovon.

MOB No 1002 (ex BA No 4) in May 2004 on the MOB near Saanen.

PHOTO: Alain Candellero



When the Ferrovia Lugano-Ponte Tresa (FLP) began modernising its rolling stock in 1968, railcars ABe 4/4 Nos 4 and 5 were surplus to requirements. The MOB bid for No 5 which arrived at Chernex Works in 1981, becoming Be 4/4 No 1003. The builders were similar to the BA car with SAAS using BBC electrical components. Due to limited braking equipment, No 1003 is also restricted from travelling on the steeper gradients south of Montbovon. For several years it was stabled in the shed at Gstaad but when this was demolished to make way for the new "S-bahn" style station No 1003 moved to Saanen and became station pilot there.

The final visitor to the Blonay-Chamby will be the neat little tramcar that was formerly No 1 of the Tramvie elettrichi di Lugano (TLo) which operated from 1911 to 1960. This was one of three 18-seater vehicles built in 1908 by MAN/BBC for the opening of the line. They were acquired by FART on the demise of the TLo for use as works vehicles. TLo No2 was scrapped in the 1970s; TLo No 3 received a new body in 1975 and became Xe2/2 No6; whilst TLo No1 was beautifully restored by the Ticinese craftsmen in 1991 and became Ce2/2 No7. Whilst the future of this vehicle is safe the three veterans at the MOB are having a pretty subdued life nowadays and their survival is very much subject to a "no major breakdown" clause. Hence for a Swiss rail enthusiast this is a rare chance to see all of them together, possibly for the last time.

Further information about the two "Ferrovie Ticinesi" weekends, for which a special day ticket will be available at CHF 22, can be found on the Blonay-Chamby website: www.blonay-chamby.ch



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1. Blonay-Chamby's ex LCD trailer car La Giardiniera.
PHOTO: Alain Candellero

2. FART No 7 (ex-TLo No 1) at FART's Ponte Brolla Depot.
PHOTO: Alain Candellero

3. MOB 1003 at Saanen in 2008.
PHOTO: Michael Farr



Swiss Tip *Some good ideas and information about Switzerland from travellers.*

Rotkreuz may seem to be 'nowhere in particular' but if you are interested in watching or photographing frequent trains it is hard to beat for its sheer interest and variety. It's the crossing point where north-south freights between Basel/Brugg and the Gotthard meet trains between Zürich and Luzern, Luzern and the Gotthard and frequent S-Bahn locals. It hosts its own freight business and it is also a loco depot for the Dispo-Loks of Open Access operator MCRE. All this means that it's seldom quiet. Recently seen in a typical 45 minute period were five heavy freights (of three different operators); five InterCity or Regio passenger trains; a Gotthard ICN; and an Ae 6/6 on a local move. The best view-point for the east-west alignment of the station with its several parallel tracks is the south side, whilst at the west end a short walk into the riverside fields give excellent views of the freights on the Brugg line.