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BOOK & DVD REVIEWS

Little Peter's Railway Series

Author and Publisher: Christopher Vine, PO Box 9246, Bridge of Weir, PA11 3WD. English. 32 pages, many in full colour.

Format: 150mm x 138mm softback

Little Peter's Railway - Surprise Goods

ISBN 978-0-9553359-69.

Little Peter's Railway - Christmas Steam

ISBN 978-0-9553359-52.

There are also two new small size books in the Peter's Railway series.

A Bit of Energy

ISBN 978-0-9553359-76

A Dark and Stormy Night

ISBN 978-0-9553359-83.

All are priced at £2.99 each plus £0.50 p&p from the above address. Also available at many heritage railways' book/gift shops, good local bookshops or via www.petersrailway.com

This time Chris Vine has set the editorial team a challenge. Reviewing books aimed at 6 to 10 year olds was a task that was possible with a wife who is a retired junior school teacher, but finding out if books aimed at 3 to 6 year olds worked required the drafting-in of various generations of the family. The two Little Peter's books he has now produced are small books for small people at a small price - £2.99 - and they are based around the characters in the Peter's Railway series that we have reviewed before. The younger children have responded positively to these charming stories, as have the adults involved, so we have no hesitation in recommending them to members as ideal gifts for them to buy for their children, grandchildren, nephews, nieces, etc. Chris Vine has now also issued two further books in the original **Peter's Railway** series in the smaller format. These are also as good as their full size companions and these four nice little books should see sales escalating past the 25,000 books already sold. Incidentally I have suggested to the author that he should send his characters on a holiday to Switzerland where they could explore some of the mountain railways we all know. Watch this space.

MB

Bern - Buses, Trams, Trolleybuses (2002)

Author and Publisher: Ron Smith, Rhus, Banff Road, Keith, AB55 5ET. English. Book in full colour CD format.

Special price: £5.00 plus £1 p&p from the above address, or via ronald-smith@lineone.net

Back in 2002 SRS member (and regular Swiss Express contributor) Ron Smith produced the full colour book detailed above on a CD – an innovative format at the time. The comprehensive, fully illustrated publication contains the history of, and details the current successful operation of, the Bern public road transport system up to the publication date. This was before the adoption of the red livery and the arrival of the new fleet of articulated trams. It includes coloured pictures showing each side of each type of vehicle operated at the time (including the "Oldtimer" fleet) along with

technical drawings and full engineering details. The CD runs on PC or MAC. Ron has discovered that he still has some copies remaining and is offering them to SRS members at half of the original price.

"Railways of the Alps"

PJH Image Productions,

6, Darkie Meadow, Bunbury, Cheshire, CW6 9RE.

Obtainable direct from Peter Hanslip at

pjh_image_productions@hotmail.co.uk

(note an underscore either side of 'image') or telephone ++44(0)1829 260015.

Cost £9.99 each + £1.50 P&P (max. £3.00)

This is a series of four DVD's, remastered from original videos made in 2000/1, which cover the Lötschberg line from Bern to Kandersteg (2 DVDs); the line from Hohtenn to Brig; and the Gotthard line from Erstfeld to Bellinzona. All are similar, namely lineside shots of passing trains with no commentary or background music. The absence of background music and the accurate sound effects would make these films appealing to anyone who is purely interested in the railways of the area at that time and the material is exhaustive covering both passenger and freight movements. In particular the Lötschberg DVDs relate to the days when the BLS, not the SBB, operated main line services over the route. The DVDs, whilst not of the highest standard (the colours appear washed out in places) have nevertheless been produced with care and the amount of motive power shown should satisfy those who enjoy watching trains pass at specific locations, however they are unlikely to appeal to those seeking out the scenery of the line or placing them in the context of the terrain. The absence of commentary (or a map) does not enable the viewer to obtain a fully rounded picture of the lines covered, or place the location of the lines in question in the context of the dramatic scenery to be found in these areas. 

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

Like biscuits? Then visit the Kambly works at Trubschachen on the BLS operated line from Bern to Luzern. The factory that makes Switzerland's favourite range of biscuits is just metres from the station and you can participate in a free tour, followed by an opportunity to sample over 20 varieties from the company's range. It is open from 08.30 to at least 17.00 on most days, except Public Holidays.

Swiss Tip

Between trains in Brig? Since reconstruction on the ground floor of the west half of the station building there is a new and practical self-service restaurant with a good choice of well-presented and economical dishes. Sit near the window if you can for a view of the PostAutos and the MGB trains just across the road.