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Die Elektrischen und Dieseltriebfahrzeuge der SBB. Band 2 - Konstruktionsjahre 1952-1975 Electric and diesel power of the SBB. Vol 2 - Constructed between 1952 - 1975

Authors: Hans Schneeberger/ Reto Danuser/
Hans Streiff.
Published by: Minirex AG, Maihofstrasse 63,
CH-6002 Luzern.
German. 384 pages. Format: 280mm x 215mm.
600 pictures.
Price: CHF188. Discounted price for SRS members (quote
Membership Number when ordering): CHF149.
More details from verkauf@minirex.ch or www.minirex.ch.

I read many railway books but in January, as part of the Swiss Express team, I attended the launch in Bombardier Transportation Switzerland's 100 year-old 'Historic Hall' at Oerlikon of a very remarkable, indeed monumental, work. For those interested in Swiss traction Paul Russenberger has worked wonders in Swiss Express describing the background to electrification and the locomotives. I am sure however that he would be the first to agree that the full story is much more complex and was still waiting to be told.

There is a standard work of reference for Swiss steam engines known as the 'Moser-Buch'. Its title is *'Der Dampfbetrieb der Schweizerischen Eisenbahnen'* written by the late Alfred Moser, a Basel engine driver. It is a huge, detailed work that has been re-edited several times and recently republished by 'Eisenbahn-Amateur'. Despite other 'lighter' works, a thorough and comprehensive, technically complete, work on electric power had to wait until 1995 when Minirex published Volume 1 of Hans Schneeberger's *'Die Elektrischen und Dieseltriebfahrzeugen der SBB'* covering developments up to 1952. Again written by a professional engineer who had lived with the locomotives he described this became the definitive work. Sadly Schneeberger died in an accident shortly before publication. His notes, compiled for the next volume covering the new designs from 1952 on, lay unfinished. Two colleagues and lifetime friends, Reto Danuser and Hans Streiff, now retired senior engineers, took on the task of completing Volume 2 that covers non-steam motive power from 1952 to 1975. They have reworked and enlarged Schneeberger's material, from industrial and operational sources, including working and maintenance of units in service described up to 2009. The next part, of power units built after 1975, should appear in two years.

Volume 2 - Part 1 (as it now is) describes seventeen classes of power units, from the diesel TEEs to the ex DB Am4/4, as well as developments in motors, brakes, adhesion, riding and suspensions, control systems, multiple unit working, the huge increase in installed power, and also the hotly debated coming change over to from traditional to thyristor power systems. The close co-operation with industry comes out with descriptions of research, testing, disappointments and breakthroughs. This is why Bombardier, successor to MFO and ABB (whilst SLM is no more) was pleased to sponsor the event. It was also a delight to meet the two now elderly, surprisingly humorous, authors, who obviously loved their profession. Schneeberger's son was

also with us. This volume details many old friends still active (the Re4/4 II and Re6/6 being examples) but over 40-years that have elapsed so many types, including the TEEs, have now disappeared. The inside stories are also enlightening, whether tragic or comical, and even with good German you will never read it all - but I find I can't put it down! Perhaps one day a work in French could follow. Such books can never be cheap although Minirex' the leading rail publisher based in Luzern' are offering a discount to SRS members. This is a labour of love, beautifully illustrated with photographs and technical drawings.

BAS

RIGI - A full colour look at its railways

Author: Ron Smith.
Published by the author at 'Rhus', Banff Rod, Keith,
Morayshire, AB55 5ET.
English and German. 42 pages fully illustrated in colour.
Format: 8" x 5", softback. Price: £9.75.
Available from SRS Sales for £10.50 including postage.

SRS member, and frequent Swiss Express contributor, Ron Smith has recently published a second volume of excellent photographs of the two lines operated by the Rigibahnen organisation that serve what is known in Switzerland as the *'Queen of Mountains'*. The book has been produced in co-operation with Bernhard Studer and the Rigibahnen, who have both supplied some of the images. The book has captions in both English and German as it is intended for sale to visitors in Switzerland. The photos cover the whole scope of the operations on the mountain and also show them both in the summer and winter. This well produced slim volume is recommended for anyone interested in the day-to-day workings of the Vitznau-Rigi-Bahn, Europe's oldest rack-railway, and its slightly younger sibling the Arth-Rigi-Bahn. MAB

The Scenery Handbook

Author: Peter Marriot.
Published by: Warners Group Publications Plc (British
Railway Modelling), The Maltings, West Street, Bourne,
Lincs., PE10 9PH.
ISBN 978-1-907292-41-5.
English, 104 pages fully illustrated in colour.
Format: 9" x 6", softback.
Price: £12.99.
Available direct from the publishers (01 778 392 002) or
from all good book or model shops.

In 2007 *Swiss Express* contributor Peter Marriott published the excellent book 'Scenic Modelling' and this latest volume is intended to be a supplement to this. The new book features more recent innovations in the world of modelling scenery as well as touching upon modelling such things as rocks and snow. So many new scenic products and techniques have appeared on the scene in recent years that in some respects this book is a useful primer to simply catch-up with many of these developments. It is illustrated with copious colour photographs. Peter has built so many railway layouts that he is a font of wisdom on the subject and he conveys this expertise to his readers in an easy-going and readable style. I can thoroughly recommend this book to those: who want to know

how to start modelling scenery; who want to catch up with some of the excellent products now on the market; and to those who wish to take their modelling to a further level. It is an essential on a model-makers shelf. MAB

Swiss Travel Guides No. 3 – The route of the Glacier Express

Author: Martin Fisher.

ISBN 978-0-9563436-3-5.

Published by the Swiss Railways Society.

Paperback A5 size. 48 pages with numerous colour illustrations.

Price: £7.00 by mail order from Society Sales, or £6.00 from our stand at exhibitions.

Rather than being based on a specific area of the country, this third booklet in the developing series, that will cover the whole of Switzerland is devoted to the route of one of the world's most famous trains, the 'Glacier Express' (GE). Running on metre gauge tracks throughout, the route of some 290km is split into logical sections for the journey eastbound. Initially using the tracks of the Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn (MGB) with its various rack sections the GE reaches Disentis, where the Rhaetian Railway (RhB) takes over for the remainder of the route. Starting from the mountain resort of Zermatt you are taken through the Mattertal to Brig, then along the Rhône Valley to Andermatt before making the dramatic climb to the highest point of the journey on the Oberalp Pass. Onward through Disentis, your journey continues through the Rhein Gorge to reach Chur. Turning south, the Schyn Gorge is negotiated before the UNESCO world heritage splendours of the Albula line are described. The route from Filisur to Davos is covered before you return to the Albula line to complete your journey at St Moritz in the magical Ober Engadin. The author provides an informed and easy to read guide to the numerous places and points of interest throughout the journey. The detailed text is complemented by a selection of suitably captioned colour illustrations, many depicting well the superb scenic and seasonal variations that can be experienced. As well as informed summary information for transport enthusiasts, the booklet is packed with other useful information that includes travel tips, fares, ticketing, accommodation and further reading. It provides knowledgeable guidance on many local excursions that will both encourage the reader to explore the route in greater detail and leave you wanting to return for more! Highly recommended. DCG

Swiss Travel Guides No. 4 – Lake Luzern & the surrounding area

Author: Martin Fisher (SRS Membership Secretary):

ISBN 978-0-9563436-5-9:

Published by the Swiss Railways Society.

Paperback A5 size. 48 pages with numerous colour illustrations. Price: £7.00 by mail order from Society Sales, or £6.00 from our stand at exhibitions.

Having personally used Luzern as a holiday base for touring the surrounding area, the opportunity to review this latest addition to the series of booklets covering Switzerland was eagerly awaited. The established series format confirms the various ways to reach Luzern and outlines an area of

considerable interest both from a scenic and an historical point of view. Lake Luzern is rightly considered the most beautiful of the larger Swiss lakes and in turn provides access to numerous fascinating locations. Luzern itself has much to offer the visitor and is a major railway junction. Within its well informed pages, the booklet covers a considerable variety of optional excursions to satisfy numerous interests whether you are an active walker, a cable car, gondelbahn or funicular rider, a railway traveller, a bus 'gricer' or simply someone who enjoys cruising on a paddle steamer where, to quote the author, 'The pace is extremely relaxing and the scenery is glorious'. The booklet describes well the splendour of the nearby Pilatus and Rigi mountains and outlines worthwhile excursions up to Engelberg or over the Brünig on the metre gauge lines, towards the Emmental, on the Voralpen Express and climbing the South Ramp of the Gotthard line, for example. The customary informed guidance on fares and ticketing, accommodation, further reading and general information completes another worthy addition to this popular and thoughtfully illustrated series. Invest in a copy with confidence.



DCG

DVD Review – Glacier Express

Producer : VGB/Edition Eisenbahn-Romantik, Am Fohlenhof 9a, D-82256 Furstenfeldbruck, Germany.

Tel: 0049 8141 5348136,

e mail: www.eisenbahn-romantik.de

Price CHF 45. Running time 70 mins.

This is a film made by SWR Television in Germany, marketed by the above company, and is the DVD sold on the Glacier Express by the MGB. There is a choice of English, German or French commentary. It is essentially a DVD aimed at the tourist, meshing as it does the journey of the *Glacier Express* from St Moritz to Zermatt with shots of attractive towns on the route; helicopter scenes of the scenery the train passes through; the history of the train as told by residents of the towns en route; the views of passengers on their experiences; and the explanation by railway staff of the logistics of running the train and the marketing involved. It cannot be classed as a pure railway film because its main emphasis is on the sights the train passes and life on board. The film does however contain much interesting archive footage as well as features on the nostalgic trains on this route including the Furka Bergstrecke. If you have travelled on this train this DVD makes an excellent souvenir and a reminder of what you may have seen on the journey but were unable to appreciate at the time. For those who have not experienced it, this film offers an insight into Swiss culture and scenery as seen from the train. Although the price is high, the picture quality is excellent, the commentary informative, and background music is used sparingly. The helicopter shots also provide an altogether different but excellent perspective. Highly recommended. RK 