

Zeitschrift: Swiss express : the Swiss Railways Society journal
Herausgeber: Swiss Railways Society
Band: - (2013)
Heft: 113

Rubrik: Society pages

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2013 AGM

A reminder that this year's AGM will be held at the White House Hotel, Foregate Street, Worcester, WR1 1EA, at 14.00 on Saturday 23rd March. The Spring Exhibition will be held at the same venue from 11.00 to 16.30. The Hotel is in the middle of Worcester's excellent shopping area, so there will be an alternative activity for any partners or friends to profitably while away the time whilst Members attend to the business of running the Society. There is some parking at the Hotel but it is also adjacent to Foregate Street Station with its direct rail services to London Paddington, Birmingham and Hereford. We look forward to seeing you there. 

BLS 100th Anniversary Celebration 29/30th June - Frutigen

Roger Ellis writes: "Although I have tried to contact members who are, or indicated that they were, joining me for the above, there may also be those of you who maybe considered travelling to the Frutigen area to witness the above event. However I have heard from Bryan Stone, the magazine's Swiss News Editor, that due to economic circumstances the BLS is curtailing the celebrations and focusing them on "people and staff". This does not mean that there will be nothing to see, for there will be a main fixed event based on Frutigen station, and there will probably be a lot to join in with. Frutigen, in any case, always has a lot of trains. We hear that the village of Kandersteg is still very keen to mark the event but, for example, special trains may not run and of course this may mean any parade of locos is also unlikely to happen. If sponsors come forward then the matter could be reviewed. At the time of writing (mid-December) neither Bryan nor I knew exact details of the celebrations that are now planned for this weekend, except that Andrew Cook's Swiss Classic Train was scheduled to be present. I am still going to Kandersteg on Thursday 27th June and staying until I transfer over to Filisur on the Monday 1st July. I am not going to be put off by a minor set-back (!) and I hope to still see a few of you there." 

Caption Competition

On P22 Of SE111 we asked for suggestions as to what the apparently ecstatic gentleman on Arth Goldau station found so good. The best idea came from member Mel Barnes who suggested "*He thinks it says Switzerland 0 South Korea 5*". Thanks Mel, but sorry there were no prizes! 

New SRS Website

By the time you receive this edition of Swiss Express our totally revised Website should be up and running. Glyn Jones has now taken over as our Webmaster and has used his design skills to introduce major changes to this Society feature. If you have access to the Internet take a look, the address is the same as previously, and pass on any comments to Glyn. 

A source of Swiss news

Rico Signore, a good friend of the SRS, has recently informed us that there is a comparatively new website giving a lot of new and unbiased (sometimes unusual) information

about Switzerland. It is <http://www.newlyswissed.com/> and is in English. For example in the edition of early December there are articles amongst others on the Zurich Tram Museum, Swiss Whisky(!), the St Nicholas tradition and the Romansh language. Rico is long retired from the former Swiss National Tourist Office in London and, as he puts it, a proud Honorary Member of the Society. 

SRS at Exhibitions

The SRS Stand, and possibly at least one Swiss-based layout, will be at the following Model Railway Exhibitions in the next few months. On Saturday 18th May – Mirfield, Yorkshire and on Saturday and Sunday 15th & 16th June – Cromford, Derbyshire.

Ray Williams (1948-2013)

Ray Williams, builder of the well-known RhB layout Bärental, which was featured in Harrods window during the Swiss promotion in 2011, has died aged 64. A long time modeller Bärental was his first Swiss layout which he built to relieve the stresses after a days work as a Headmaster. More recently he has completed Bärenschlucht with automatic vehicle operation and was still working on a Dutch modular layout right until his death at the beginning of January.

Ray Williams's widow, Margaret, has asked if any member would be interested in Ray's RhB HOm layout Bärenschlucht. She really wants it to be seen on the exhibition circuit as it only attended two exhibitions before Ray's illness. It can be seen at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9bvb-bkqxXsA>. It was only exhibited at two exhibitions, Falkirk and Halifax and on both occasions it won a cup. Help would be available from the man who assisted Ray with the construction of the layout and full wiring diagrams exist. Anyone interested should contact Margaret at margaret@parwichps.wanadoo.co.uk. 

MEMBERS' LETTERS

From: David Carpenter – By Email

Having read Jason Sargerson's article about the Parc d'Attractions du Chatelard in the June issue of *Swiss Express*, my wife and I were inspired to visit these ourselves. The lady operator on the Le Chatelard funicular was most informative and told us that this was the last season the existing cars would operate, because new totally enclosed cars will be in operation next year. This would allow all-year round operation. I enclose a photo showing the old cars in their last year of operation. Also, it would appear that the return fare has increased to CHF55 but, interestingly, by



buying your ticket from the travel centre at Martigny station you can save CHF11. You do have to change the voucher they give you for the normal Edmonson card ticket at the funicular booking office, but it is well worth the saving.

From: Trevor Bond – Southwell, Notts

I thought the Swiss edition of Michael Portillo's 'Great Railway Journeys' TV programme, shown in the UK last December, was the best of the series. There must have been a lot of planning and research before the programme was fixed; however they missed a splendid opportunity. After referring to his 1913 "Bradshaw" Mr Portillo then stepped onto one of the modern diesel ships of the SGV for his journey to Luzern. It would have been the 'icing on the cake' if he had been able to travel on the PS Gallia, which was built in...1913.

Ah well! ☑

Editor's Note: I agree. The production team did approach the SRS prior to making the programme and they were given some ideas and contacts. Unfortunately these were not used to their fullest extent.

From: Don Gatehouse – By Email

I refer to Keith's 'complaint' about the Hotel Grischuna (Swiss Express 112) and the fact that breakfast is not served

until 07:30, thus implying that the earliest train departures available would be about 09:00. Having stayed at the Grischuna several times, my wife and I have toured the entire RhB network and well beyond with no difficulty, having first enjoyed a splendid buffet breakfast (inclusive of freshly boiled eggs and two cups of coffee!) and never once missed our intended departure based on the 08:00 trio of services. Staying in Zurich, or other centres geared to the needs of early starters, breakfast can easily be obtained at an earlier time but Filisur is aligned to the leisure end of the market where there is little call for such an early start. Indeed, whenever we have been down for our 07:30 breakfast we were more often than not the only such guests about, and those that were, joined us on the platform within the next 30 minutes to commence their respective tours, no problem. The Grischuna team are very well in tune with the needs of the railway traveller and deliver a timely service as their part of the Switzerland experience. ☑

MEMBER'S ADVERTISEMENT

Wanted. Triang TT gauge A-1-A (Class 31) loco in any condition as the bogies are needed for my MOB diesel shunters. Non-runner willingly considered. Michael Farr, 01579 383482 or pandmfarr@talktalk.net ☑

BOOK REVIEWS

Die Themse-Schiffahrt des London County Council (L.C.C.) und die Schicksale seiner 30 Raddampfer

Mario Gavazzi looks at a special book that links some British ships with Switzerland.

Author: Dr Juerg Meister.

Published by the author at Hechtliacker 44, CH-4053 Basel. Email: meister.verkehr@sunrise.ch.

Language: German. 128 pages with 101 illustrations. ISBN 978-3-906023-05-2. Price (outside Switzerland) €33 plus delivery.

Juerg Meister – probably the best known author on steamships in Switzerland – has published a new book. It tells the story of the thirty paddle steamers operated by the London County Council's navigation service on the River Thames between 1905 and 1907. When the service failed most of the steamboats had to be sold and they found new homes around Europe – with one even making it to Argentina! Three ships came to Switzerland, two operating on Lake Lugano for just three years before the onset of the First World War in 1914 stopped the service. After many years being idle in the shipyard there was no chance to refit them for a new service period. A third ship the 'PS Ben Jonson' crossed the Channel under its own steam power and eventually arrived on the Rhein at Basel. It was then dismantled and transported in pieces by train to Luzern where – after being rebuilt – its second life started as 'PS Rhein'. Parts of the hull were used in 1948 for the first double deck motorship the 'MS Waldstätter II' which was only scrapped in 2001.

This, and many other very interesting stories, are presented in the book. ☑

Schweizer Bahnen – Berner Oberland

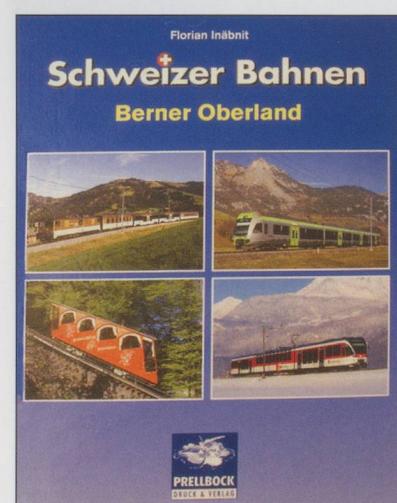
Bryan Stone describes the launch of a new book on Swiss railways.

Author: Florian Inäbnit.

Published by: Prellbock Verlag, Krattigen (BE).

Contact: www.prellbock.ch. Language: German. 336 pages with numerous illustrations.

ISBN 978-3-907-579-70-1. Price: CHF59.



On Friday October 26th, as the Swiss News Editor of Swiss Express, I was invited by specialist railway publishers Prellbock Verlag to join a group at what was called a 'Summit Meeting'. Around 25 of us first met in Brienz for a sample journey, with the Brienz-Rothorn-Bahn's 121 year old HG2/3 No. 5 hauling the legendary 'Salon Rouge' some 250m from the station into the workshop. This was full of engines already being prepared