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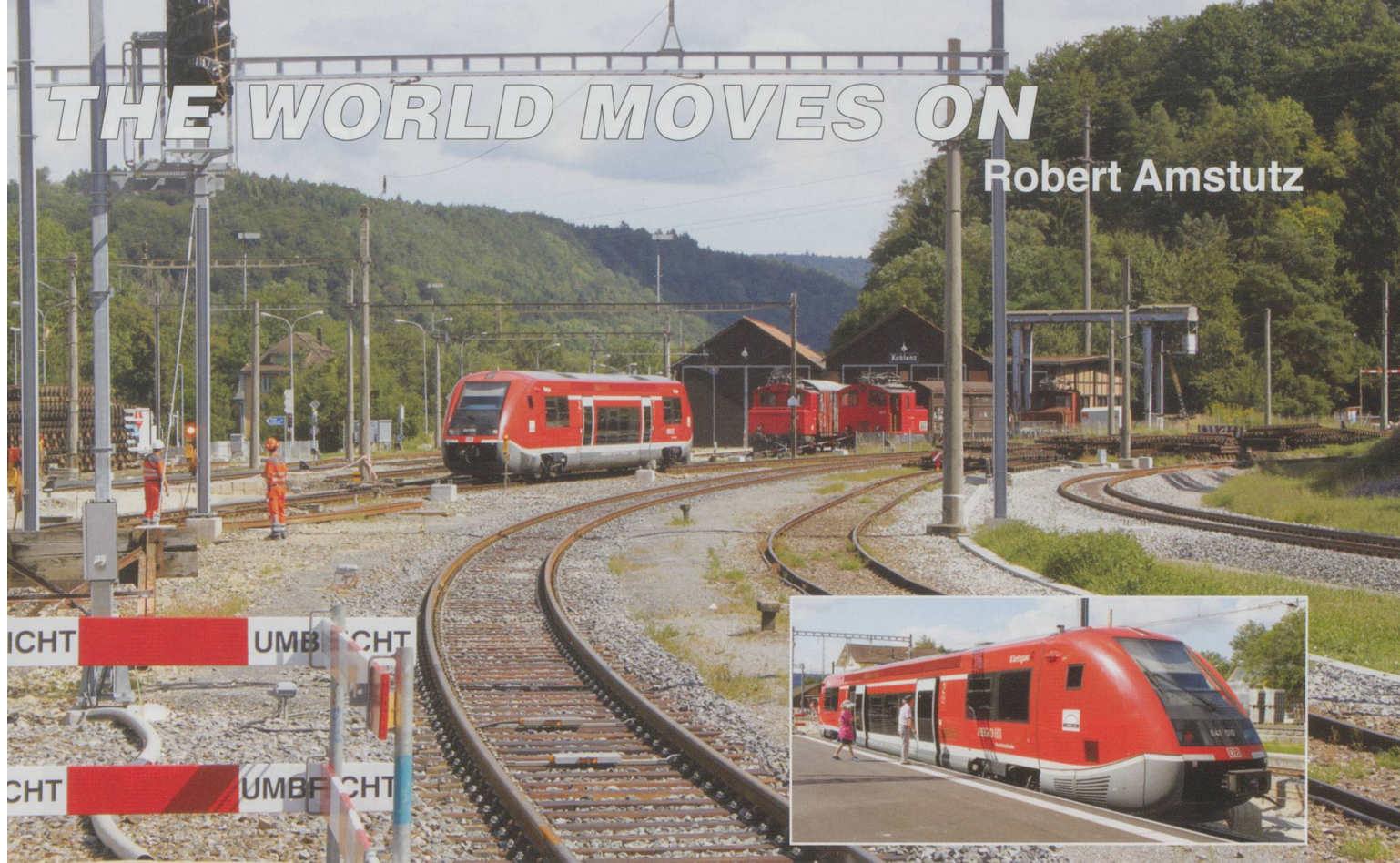
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THE WORLD MOVES ON

Robert Amstutz



In *Swiss Express* 113, just last March, my Swiss colleague s'Murmeli took a look at the railway operations in northern Kanton Aargau. Just a few short months later the modern world caught-up with this area that he noted as being 'off the beaten track'. Between 29th June and 23rd November various building and refurbishment programmes, basically designed to improve passenger comfort and safety took place, requiring the line along the lower Aare valley from Döttingen to Rekingen to be completely closed to passengers. During this period local trains were replaced by buses although the freight-only line between Laufenberg and Koblenz (AG) continued to be open for traffic, providing access to the container terminal in Rekingen. At Koblenz Track 1 remained energised whilst the power was off on all the other tracks. Passengers intending to cross the Rhein to Waldshut (Baden) had to change in Döttingen or Rekingen to a bus, and then change again in Koblenz to the 'international' train for Waldshut. As SBB owns no

DMUs, and in the absence of most overhead wires in Koblenz station, they contracted DB to run a 20-minute interval DMU shuttle between Switzerland and Germany. The following work took place. At Döttingen: replacement of the signalling equipment; a new platform (No. 3); new stairs and changes to the underpass. At Koblenz(AG): refurbishment of the signalling equipment; a new central platform; a new underpass; shortening of the double-track exit direction to Döttingen. At Bad Zurzach: replacement of the mechanical signalling equipment; an increase in the height of Platform 1; a new second platform; a new underpass to replace the pedestrian level crossing. In addition Rekingen was being repainted, and Siggenthal-Würenlingen was having necessary roof repairs and a new coat of paint. One of the less popular consequences of these "improvements" is that ticket office facilities have been withdrawn from both Döttingen and Koblenz. For the foreseeable future Bad Zurzach will retain its ticket office. 