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LEFT: The remains of the old steps to the glacier.
ABOVE: An original Wetterhorn cable car with a forlorn passenger.

RIGHT: The remains of Wetterhornbahn base station. *All photos: David Carpenter*

decay. In Grindelwald the museum near the church contains a display on this pioneering project, including a model showing how it worked. Admission is included in the Swiss Pass, but its opening times are restricted so check with the tourist office to save a potentially wasted journey. An illustrated booklet on the Wetterhornbahn (in German only) can be purchased from the kiosk in the car park opposite the Hotel Wetterhorn.

Sadly I see no chance of Switzerland's (and one of the world's) first passenger carrying cable car operations ever being revived. However, a thought occurs to me. Until recently, it was possible (if you had the stamina) to climb the 890 wooden steps from near the former base station up to a terrace giving views over the Oberer Gletscher. A couple of winters ago a storm destroyed part of this staircase and ascent is no longer possible. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the Wetterhornbahn was revived as a replacement? *Perchance to dream, I suppose....* 

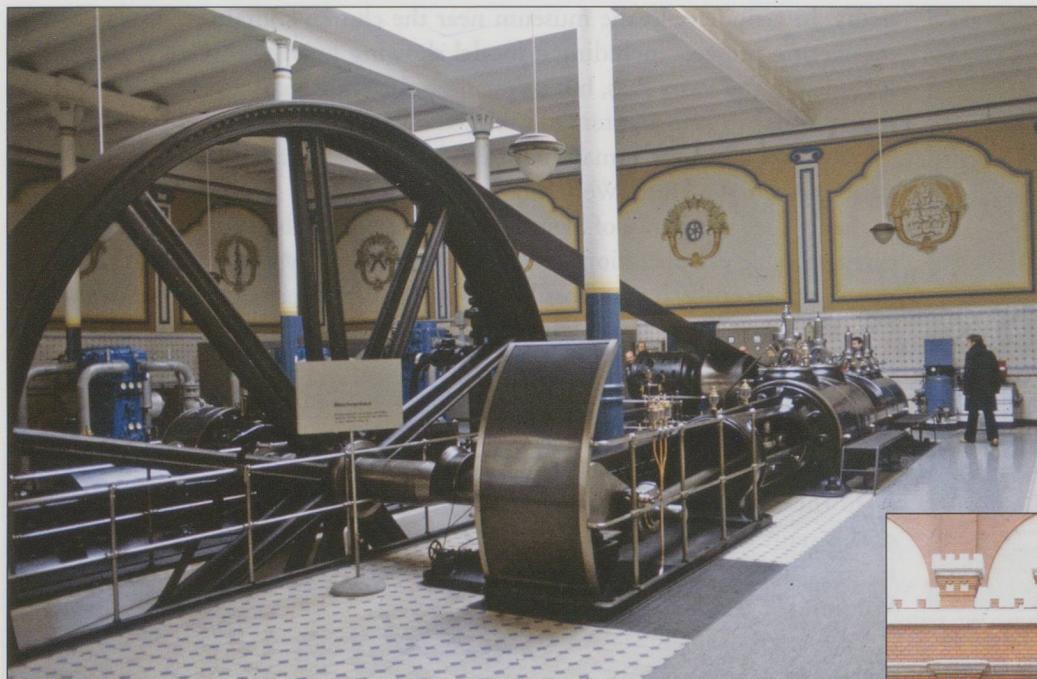


A couple of the twelve brewing vats.

All photos: Neil Wheelwright

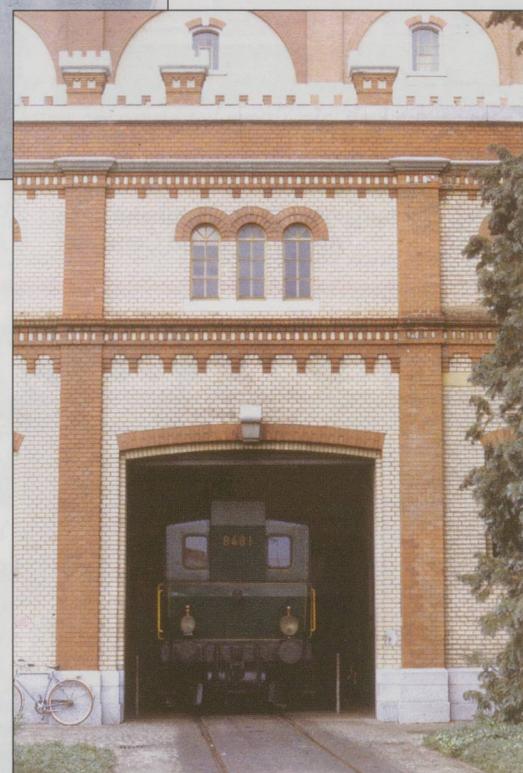
The article about the Feldschlösschen Brewery by Ron Smith in the December 2013 *Swiss Express* reminded me of when I had a tour of the brewery in October 1982. Whilst the group would not normally have been big enough to be taken up to the brewery by their steam train, but as the loco was still in steam, we were given a ride up to the brewery pushed by their ex-SBB 0-6-0T 8481. After

refreshments, we were given a very full tour. As can be seen from the outside of the building when going past on the train, it is built in the style of a late 19-century impression of a mediaeval castle. Construction started in 1876 and a rail connection was laid in 1889. After watching a wagon being shunted by an adapted road tractor and a quick visit to the steam loco shed, we were taken inside. The twelve



ABOVE: A preserved stationary steam engine.

RIGHT: Locomotive shed with ex-SBB 0-6-0T 8481 SLM of 1907 acquired in 1965.
BELOW: A wagon being shunted by an adapted road tractor.



An integral transport “Island” within Europe

Boyd Misstear takes a brief look at the wider European rail transportation plans and how Switzerland is a key component

Great emphasis and focus in the media, including *Swiss Express*, has in recent years naturally been directed towards the considerable engineering feats of the opening of the Lötschberg Base Tunnel and the opening in 2016 of the Gotthard Base Tunnel. This is an integral part of the “Neue Eisenbahn-Alpentransversale” (NEAT) route, and its extension further south with the Ceneri Base Tunnel in 2019. These transalpine corridor marvels are being built at great expense with long term planning objectives both to handle anticipated growth in North - South freight as well as to assist the environment by migrating additional cargo from road to rail to cut down on CO₂ and other harmful

environmental pollutants - not to forget noise and disturbance in the alpine valleys! We have learned about the need to cater for 4m above rail level containers, to enable piggy-backing of lorries/trucks, coaches and so forth. But little mention has been made of how all this fits into a larger European plan, a plan in some ways reflecting the thoughts of our forebears 150 or so years ago, when bordering countries north and south of the Confederation sought out quality fast transalpine connections for both strategic and commercial reasons. In today’s world, that planning is being driven by the European Union (EU).

On 11th December 2013 the European Commission

polished copper vats made a wonderful sight, the marble pillars and the stained-glass windows were a surprise. We were also shown a massive stationary steam engine albeit no longer in use. The original refrigeration plant was also on show and the visit concluded with the very much active bottling plant. 