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# SWISS NEWS

## Incident at Rafz – 20 02 15

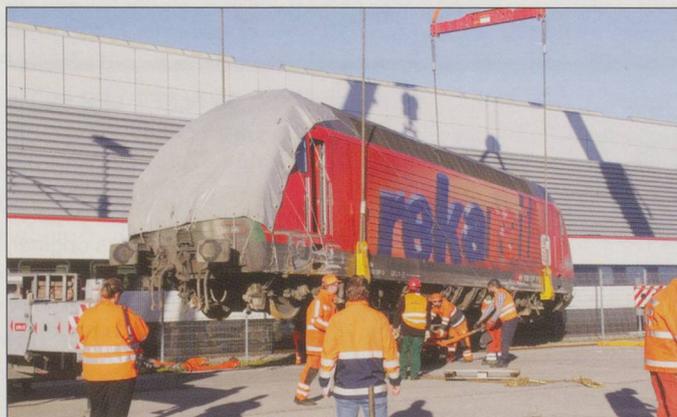
Rafz is a station on the line from Zürich to Schaffhausen. In 2010 double-track was installed from the next station south, Huntwangen-Wil. North of Rafz is single track. The line is busy, being used by Intercity trains Zürich – Stuttgart, Regional Express and InterRegio Zürich-Schaffhausen, and S5 and S22 of the Zürich S-Bahn network. Train IR 2828, 06.05 Zürich HB – Schaffhausen, is scheduled to pass Rafz without stopping at the line speed of 125kph at 06.32. On 20th February it was running 11 minutes late. A peak-hour S-Bahn service, S18014 formed of a unit from Schaffhausen, which reverses in Rafz, is timed to leave for Schaffhausen at 6.40.

Although the through road was set for the IR, powered by 460 087 and running under clear signals, Train 18014, made up of unit 514 066, a new double-deck suburban set, left the platform, apparently passing the station starting signal at danger, and being stopped by Integra automatic train control. It was probably stationary, but fouling the through road, when it was struck laterally by the IR train at 06.43. Loco 460 087 left the track to the right, and struck a catenary mast before crossing an underpass and came to rest with its four derailed EW IV coaches, at the side of the single line to the north.

Both trains were in the care of drivers under instruction, accompanied by experienced mentors. The Swiss 'popular press' made much of this, but all personnel were competent and approved to drive these trains. One experienced instructor was on the right cab side of 460 087, as this struck the catenary mast, and was seriously injured. It is remarkable that apart from this engine, with extensive but (as far as is known at this time) mainly superficial damage, and some side and running gear damage to the EW IVs, the accident was not much worse. Enquiry will show how far the IR's speed was reduced before the collision. The passenger vehicles remained tilted, but in line, on the underpass bridge and subsequent embankment, and with no serious deformation. A few passengers complained of minor injuries. The S-Bahn was only slightly damaged. Some 60m of track were deformed. The route was newly signalled when Rafz station was rebuilt in 2011 with Euro-ZUB train protection. This did not prevent the S-Bahn from starting, and passing a red signal, and the question is why this was possible. S18014 is one of only two trains daily that reverse in Rafz to return northwards, and this

The Rafz accident engine 460 087 on delivery into Yverdon workshops, 25/02/2015.

Photo: Mario Stephani



may be part of the problem. Hourly trains from the south do reverse there. Also the block signal admitting trains into the single line section northwards is apparently visible from the platform and may allow misunderstandings, since it was showing clear for the IR. The local, leaving on time, would also require this signal clear.

The preliminary inquiry has concluded that the driver of the local train saw the starting signal on the through track turn to green for the passing IR train (approaching at 110kph) at exactly the same time as their departure was scheduled. By virtue of the through line signal's location (virtually in the line of sight, and in early morning darkness) it was most probably taken by the local's driver as for him. The immediate consequences are that trains starting (like the local) from such stations must not exceed 40kph until on the main running lines. This limited speed would allow the automatic train stop at a starting signal to bring the train to a halt almost immediately. The case at Rafz was that the local reached 59 km/h before passing the station starter, and its stopping time took it into the path of the express. As is the case in Switzerland there were no catch points present, an omission that will puzzle many British readers, especially the railway professionals. There are many more lessons, especially over signalling systems, rules and costs, but these are still under consideration.

## Construction trains collide.

At around 04.40 on Wednesday 18th March two trains carrying construction equipment collided and derailed on the line between Immensee and Arth-Goldau. This resulted in SBB shutting down the operation of Gotthard-line services from Luzern until the following Friday. One person, a 54-year-old German worker, who was standing on the front platform of the moving train (apparently 'assisting the driver') died at the scene. Six other workers were inside the train at the time of the crash, and one of them, a 51 year old Portuguese man, was injured and hospitalised. The location was on the viaduct along the flank of the Rigi, over the Zugersee, and the police and the local fire service set up a spill prevention perimeter on the lake, since diesel and hydraulic oil leaked from the trains following the crash. The two trains were works trains of a third-party private company contracted to SBB Infrastructure. These organisations have their own heavy equipment, staff, rolling stock and locomotives. Their access to running lines (which is their job) is tightly controlled. The accident was a collision in-section where both trains were working. One was stationary and the other running at what seems to have been a too-high speed. The Public Prosecutor for Canton Schwyz; the cantonal police, and the Swiss Safety Investigation Service launched an inquiry. This was yet another of those 'it can't happen - but it did' incidents.

## Discussions about introducing mobility pricing.

There have been discussions in Switzerland about introducing mobility pricing on public transport. According to forecasts, the aim of this proposal would be to better regulate the ever-growing traffic on the streets and on the rail network. This would reduce the amount of traffic on the streets, stop trains from becoming overcrowded and avoid unnecessary waste spending on enhancements. The Swiss Federal Office for Roads (Astra) suggested pricing per kilometre and higher costs during main

commuting times and main areas, which would cancel the vignette, road-use tax and oil tax. The Swiss Federal Office for transport (BAV), is in favour of holding a pilot trial over major public transport routes to see how higher costs affect traffic flow management. From this, season tickets and mobility pricing will not end, but the season ticket prices would increase. The implementation of any plan would begin after 2020. Swiss transport minister Doris Leuthard suggested that businesses and employers be more flexible on working times for its employees to reduce the amount of traffic on the road and rail network. Others think that mobility pricing is just a method to get more income. Commuters would feel that higher prices for main commuting times are unfair, as they cannot choose working hours. People from surrounding areas would have to pay more to commute to central areas.

## Changes to the GA, etc.

Early in March, SBB announced changes to the GA and half-price abonnements that will come into effect from the 1st August. The current blue plastic cards will gradually be replaced by a red plastic card, called 'Swiss Pass' showing only the customers' photograph, name, date of birth and an un-personal number. There will be no indication as to what type of ticket the customer holds, and when on the train they will need to hand their card to the conductor for it to be scanned and checked against the ticket information held on a central server. The system is based on the proven RFID (radio-frequency identification) technology. From day-one, the card may also be used for Mobility Carsharing, PubliBike and SchweizMobil services. A number of major ski resorts are also proposing to use the 'Swiss Pass' as a base for online ticket purchases. Reservations have been made about the increased time it will take to control all tickets on a train. Field trials however proved that the system was popular with staff. Perhaps of more importance to *Swiss Express* readers is that from 1st August the 3-year half-price abonnement will no longer be available.

## Performance and Punctuality.

SBB/CFF transported more passengers and goods in 2014 compared to the previous year whilst the proportion of passengers that arrived on time, or with less than a three-minute delay, increased by 0.2% year-on-year to 87.7%. The company remains the most punctual rail operator in Europe.

## Gauge conversion installation approved.

After numerous politically-inspired delays (mainly in Canton Bern), the funding for the proposed metre-to-standard gauge conversion mechanism at Zweisimmen has been finally approved by all Cantons involved, and should be in action in 2018.

## SBB is short of drivers.

The SBB Passenger business employs some 2,300 engine drivers (corrected to full-time equivalence). There are at present around 50 vacancies on any working day. The reason is not only lower recruitment, but the increased demands made by new building projects, training for the Gotthard base tunnel or new signalling systems, and by diversions where renewals are in progress. In the short term, supervisors with driving qualifications will work more trains, requests for part time contracts and early

retirement will be refused, and recruiting and training will be stepped up. Usually around 100 drivers per year are newly trained. In 2015 the plan is for 169, and in 2016 for 194 new drivers. The drivers' union is in a 'We told you so' mood, but trains will run as timetabled.

## WAB Departures.

At Lauterbrunnen on 5th March WAB BDhe 4/4 No.119, stripped of useful bits, was loaded onto a truck for its last journey - to the scrapyard. Nos.101, 107, 109, 119 and 124 are also taking this road, whilst No.102 was scrapped last year. No.109 was still in action at the station, but reprieves are short.



WAB 119 on low loader at Lauterbrunnen Photo: Abtransport

## Aaretal steam railway.

The miniature railway at the Münsingen psychiatric hospital celebrated its 20th anniversary last year. It has 850m of multiple-gauge running line (1200m of track) and usually some 12 steam and various diesel and electric models are available. A special feature is that passengers in wheelchairs can also be carried. With two stations, a tunnel, bridge, and a four-track depot with turntable there is a lot to see, but best is to ride the railway. It is normally open between March and October, but look up 'Dampfbahn Aaretal' on the web for opening times. Sharp-eyed passengers on the right-hand side of trains on the main Bern - Thun line will spot a level crossing on this miniature railway, when looking towards the walled gardens of the Hospital (which stands in the fields just outside the village) north of Münsingen station.

## BLS Cargo.

Following the move by DB Schenker (then part owner of BLS Cargo) in 2014 to transfer its Gotthard transit cargo from BLS Cargo to SBB, a logical consequence of the ensuing conflict of interest is that BLS has bought back the DB-Schenker 45% holding in BLS Cargo, and now owns 96% itself. The remaining 4% of the company is owned by the Italian intermodal service operator Ambrogio. It may not be known that back in 1970 Ambrogio was one of the very first freight transport companies to make a commitment to intermodal European domestic freight (not maritime boxes as others did), by chartering a network of block trains from the then rail intermodal subsidiary Intercontainer. Expanding steadily and exploiting the liberalised access, which the EU made possible, Ambrogio is a major player today and its block container trains are a familiar sight on the Alpine transversals.

## Crossrail (the Swiss one!).

A majority shareholding in Crossrail of 50.1% has been bought by German organisation Rhenus AG. Crossrail, with headquarters at MuttENZ (Basel) marshalling yard, operates a frequent service of container trains mostly over the BLS route, including some which take the old line through Kandersteg. Their locomotives are a familiar sight on trains, and in Brig, Spiez and Thun for banking and double heading. Crossrail has recently opened an operations centre in Brig, from which out-and-back workings to Basel and Milano/Novara are possible, and has some 60 drivers based there.



Double header Crossrail train.

Photo: John Porter

## SBB Cargo.

On 14th March the new SBB Cargo headquarters building in Olten was officially opened. Known as 'SBB Aarepark' the building is located about 100m from the Berne end of Olten station. The building is also shared with some functions of SBB Infrastructure. Apparently desk sharing is the order of the day in the new building and some 900 employees will share 750 workspaces. The former SBB Cargo building in Basel, on the site of the old Alsatian railway goods station, was closed in January and Roche has now taken over the premises.

## EW 1 and II.

Only a few sets of these classic lightweight coaches, which generations of Swiss-lovers have admired, remain in service. Six diagrammed train sets run between St Maurice and G n ve, two between Brig and Domodossola, and five sets work around Basel, of which four provide peak hour services on the Laufen/Del mont lines. The reserve sets (Dispensdel is the new word) made up of EW1 are two 11-coach sets in Z rich and Basel, and a 9-coach set in Bern. This cannot last long. Eighty-eight EW I and II coaches were withdrawn in November and December. The 'lightweights' were first introduced in the early 1930s as high capacity suburban trains, an enormous leap forward from existing traditional stock. They were so successful that they were taken for the 'high speed trains' on the main line G n ve-Z rich, powered by modified Ae3/6 I authorized to run at 110kph, then an unheard of speed for Switzerland. However, shortage of money meant that only about 100 vehicles were in service before WW II. After the war they became, despite the long life of all the rest,

the classic Swiss coach with their inset end or centre doors, centre aisle, their simple seating (red or green plastic covered) luggage racks, and the feeling of rushing along at ground level. To people arriving back in Switzerland from abroad they once emphasised that they were 'home'. Now the last are just holding out as new, and potentially far more user-friendly EMUs come on stream.

## SBB Historic.

Over the past winter SBB Historic has moved its archive and offices from Bern to Brugg. This move is planned to be celebrated in Brugg, together with 'Bahnpark Brugg', on 31st May when a programme of special trains will operate through the day with Eb 3/5 No.5819 from Brugg station. Also this year two more trips are planned using 1874-built E 2/2 'Zephir', a survivor of the B delibahn the first railway in Interlaken. These will be on 26th Sept. and 10th Oct. in conjunction with a conducted tour of the Del mont roundhouse of SBB Historic and Historische Eisenbahn Gesellschaft, and a return trip to Choind z for a visit to the Von Roll museum of the one-time ironworks located there. Your correspondent enjoyed a similar trip behind 'Zephir' last December.



Locomotive 'Zephir' at Choind z station. (2) Photos: Bryan Stone



## New Albula Tunnel.

This major engineering project, for which the planning and design work commenced in 2011, is now well on-course with a final completion date set for 2022. In June/July an information centre with an exhibition will be opened at Preda and this should be worth a visit. The actual construction process of the 5,860m tunnel, that will run parallel to the existing bore, will apparently be quite innovative and is scheduled to take some 6.5 years at a cost of CHF345m. Some money is coming from central government (45%) and the Canton (15%). The tunnel construction is planned in such a way that the current train service should not suffer any major disruptions. There is a mass of information available on-line at [www.rhb.ch/albulatunnel](http://www.rhb.ch/albulatunnel). Whilst the major work is underway other tunnels on the Albula line will also be subject to renovation and work on some of these has already commenced.

## Tram-Trains for Aargau?

In the region of Baden, particularly toward Dättwil and Mellingen, there is heavy road congestion. Local politicians have reopened the discussion of a tram-train along the former SNB Mellingen - Wettingen line with an extension to Otelfingen. The line was closed to passengers some 20 years ago and passenger traffic was handed over to a PostAuto service that departed, more conveniently, from Baden. The rail route between Mellingen - Wettingen is currently only used on average by 5 freight trains each day so the proponents of the scheme argue that there is plenty of capacity for the tram-trains. Signalling and passing loops would need to be reinstated. Initial reactions from Stadt Baden and Canton Aargau are that it would cost too much.

## Rolling Stock News.

1. From the Dec 2014 timetable change some further rationalization of traction and stock use has occurred. The use of Re4/4 II for InterCity and InterRegio services is steadily falling. Nine diagrams cover the Basel/Zürich-Locarno workings, which still include Panorama 1st. Class cars. Basel-Zürich and Basel-Luzern services are still covered, and the automobile carriers in the Simplon Tunnel, as well as some trains on Zürich-Singen, Zürich-Chur and Zürich-Buchs. The ICN 500 class are no longer used on Bern-Biel trains, or on the Flugzug Basel-Zürich Airport service. Some fill-in turns still bring them to unusual places such as Bern-Zürich via Burgdorf. Their main tasks are the Basel/Zürich-Lausanne/Genève trains via Neuchâtel, and the Basel-Lugano Gotthard ICs. There are 26 diagrams for Class 511 in northern Switzerland and a number of trains Genève-Romont/Vevay are worked by 511s. Demand on these has grown quickly and 6-car 511.0 sets, instead of the planned 4-car sets, have been allocated. Class 522.4 of the FLIRT-France sets, originally ordered for Frick - Mulhouse in the Basel region, are now working Genève-Bellegarde.

2. Class 540: although a few diagrams were foreseen, they are now officially out of use. The 'Jail Train' between Bern Weyer-mannshaus - Bassersdorf, which had one of the very last scheduled operations (540 038 in early December) is now an Re4/4 II working.

3. On the night of 30th December Re6/6 No.11636 was seriously damaged in a collision in Solothurn following which it was set aside in the Limmat marshalling yard

service depot for appraisal.

4. Last December Ee3/3s Nos.16427 and 934 551 were withdrawn. A curious move brought another Ee3/3 back to Chur. No.16410 was sent from Zürich as the new 922 013 intended for operation on the 3-rail industrial line to Maduzengut could not operate on the RhB's 11,000V power supply. Older SBB units can use this, which is why they can run to Domat-Ems too. So No.16410, late in life, is pounding the beat again in Chur, supported by No.16388 - some 70-years old - as reserve. Catch them if you can as coupling-rod drive Ee3/3s are now very scarce. Meanwhile the last former SNCF dual voltage Ee3/3 II, No.16515, long working the French end in Basel, is now works shunter at Yverdon and may be seen, probably not for much longer, on the works siding connection.

5. On 2nd January the Glacier Express was being hauled by RhB's 1953-built Ge4/4 I No.605 'Silveretta'. This was exceptional as the last three Ge4/4 I locos Nos.603, 605 and 610, are on borrowed time. They were all turned out during the unusually spectacular centenary celebrations of the Chur-Arosa line, including an outing with the steam rotary snowplough. Ge6/6 No.702 'Curia', previously in store, was reactivated in February as loco availability became tight with the busy winter schedules.

6. The last of the unreliable Class 470 'Pendolini' were due to finish on the Zürich-Milano route this June - probably much to the relief of SBB's operating and maintenance staff! Class 610s (now the first series Class 503s) and the newly delivered, by then, second series Class 503 will, at last take over all services between Basel, Genève, Zürich, and Milano Centrale. In February SBB ordered four more Class 610/503's from Alstom in a deal worth CHF120m to cater for increased traffic on this route. The introduction of the Class 503 fleet is a temporary solution to maintain this important service until the 29 High-Speed Stadler units arrive in 2019. Failed Class 470.005 has been dumped for breaking up, and the SBB has offered the remaining three of these units for sale. Two Class 503s were already in service in January 2015 whilst in the same month a failed Trenitalia Class 470 was out of traffic for 5-days requiring TILO-Flirts and a Class 500 ICN having to stand in on the Zürich service.

7. It's understood that the 1,500V dc Bem 550s dating from 1994 that operated SBB/CFF's Genève-LaPlaine service prior to its conversion to SNCF's 25kV standard, are being cut-up at SIREC Services at Ecublens, between Denges and Renens.

8. NStCM is about to receive a new unit from Stadler but the company will have difficulty stabling and maintaining it since legal problems have delayed construction of the new depot at L'Assel!

9. The RhB has issued a request for tenders to supply 27 EMU sets with options for further a 19. These are intended to replace loco-hauled trains. It is understood that they have already been allocated Nos. 3111 to 3137 within the RhB's system. The tenders must be received by 28th August. Each unit will be required to have a minimum of 32 first class and 128 standard seats (not including tip-up seats) and their maximum length will be 76.5m. It is intended to introduce a half-hourly service frequency across the network and to operate services that will split en-route with these units.

**10.** BLS Cargo has confirmed an order for 15 multi-voltage Siemens Vectron locos to operate through-services from Rotterdam to Melzo in Northern Italy. The first is scheduled to join the BLS Cargo fleet in 2016 and all will be in service by 2018.



**11.** On the 5th February the Federal Transport Office (BAV) gave authorisation for unrestricted commercial operation in Switzerland of Bombardier's Traxx F140 AC3 'Last Mile' locomotive. These engines are equipped with a 240kW auxiliary diesel engine for operation on non-electrified branch lines or sidings. The 15kV ac locomotives are designated as Class 187 and have been in use with BLS Cargo since March 2014. BLS Cargo leases them from Railpool In January operator Swiss Rail Traffic took delivery of a multi-system Class 487 Traxx 'Last Mile', which will also be used in Germany and Austria.

### Restoration delays.

The restoration work that has put Bern's Märzlibahn out-of-action has been delayed by the discovery of unstable terrain, meaning that this short, but useful, funicular will be out of action all this summer.

### Tunnel blocked.

On Friday 6th March at 06.30, the locomotive of a freight train failed in the single bore section of the Lötschberg base tunnel, blocking the route for some 2-hours. Passenger trains were diverted via Kandersteg and the BLS ran a series of extra shuttle trains between Brig and Spiez. The resulting delay to passengers, many of whom commute from Brig/Visp to Berne, was about an hour. The Brig based rescue train attended the incident and the failed train was subsequently pulled out of the tunnel by a diesel shunting locomotive. By 08.30 it was business as usual.

### Car-Sleeper Lörrach – Hamburg.

Contrary to the report in Swiss Express No.121, the car-sleeper service between Lörrach - Hamburg will operate in 2015 and indications are that this will also be the case in 2016. Trains will operate daily from end-May until end-September. After that the service reduces to four-times-a-week. Lack of ridership and reduced service quality have not been the only problems. DB Autozug/CNL have often shown trains as fully booked, when in fact, trains have often run with complete couchette wagons empty. Another problem in 2014 was that Scandinavian passengers could not book online, with many turning up in Hamburg on the off-chance that there would be spare capacity; however

DB Autozug/CNL apparently never found an answer to this. German press reports suggest that they did not want to find a solution!

### SBB App for passengers at Zürich HB.

The SBB has recognised that passengers changing trains at Zürich HB are confronted with the confusing situation of 4 sets of platforms at different levels. In January they announced the availability of a navigational App for use on Smart Phones and Tablets that shows the passenger the most direct way to their next platform, restaurant or shop, as well as the location of the nearest ticket machine. In addition there are now more standard directional signs.

### Franco-Swiss project agreement.

On 11th March the Swiss Parliament ratified an agreement with France to extend the Genève S-Bahn system across the border to Annemasse. France will finance and build 16km of new track between Genève and Annemasse. Costs for Switzerland are budgeted at CHF 1.56 bn. After completion an S-Bahn service will run from Lausanne to Annemasse. It is anticipated that this new line will relieve some of the road congestion in the greater Genève area caused by the many French commuters into Genève.

### SBB makes the grade.

Earlier this year the SBB announced that the last 'unsecured' level crossings of the 1,160 crossings on their network now conform to the national legal standards set out by the BAV (Federal Transport Office). Since 2004 SBB have rebuilt or modified some 550 level crossings. Some were replaced by subways that often required substantial highway works, but most have been modified with upgraded flashing lights, audible warnings and barriers. In all of Switzerland there are some 4,000 registered level crossings. Between 450 and 500 listed dangerous cases on non-SBB lines are still awaiting secure installations. Many of these are on local lines and often serve minor roads and local access. The necessary changes were subject to objections, with legal procedures, which have delayed the work and increased costs. The BAV was scheduled to report in April on the progress of the installations that were originally legally due for completion by end 2014.

### Dampftram Bern.

The team, which restored this tramway locomotive between 1994 and 2002, operate tours of Bern on advertised days throughout the year. These go through the heart of the old city, cross the Aare and then go up the Thunstrasse through the 'Diplomatic' quarter to Burgenziel depot and back. The round trip starting near Bern HB takes just under an hour. Your correspondent did this on Dec 21, and it is a thoroughly entertaining experience. Riding on the open platform, 20kph is more than enough; the coke-burning locomotive pulls one four-axle car, a replica of the originals of 1894. Booking ahead ([info@dampftram.ch](mailto:info@dampftram.ch)) is desirable. Our round trip, including hot drinks at the depot, cost CHF10 - a modest price. The loco, G3/3 No.12 of 1894, is one of two out of eight locos that outlived electrification of the Bern Tramways in 1902. At the time SLM built several hundred such engines, including many for export, but few survived. Bern's No.18 is in the Transport Museum at Luzern, after serving until

1950 as reserve on the Stansstad – Engelberg railway. In 1902 No.12 went to a sawmill in Biel, and from 1943 it was stored for an SBB museum. It was then exhibited at Technorama in Winterthur and it also ran from 1971 to 1983 on the Blonay-Chamby Museum Railway before returning to Bern.



Above, steam tram No.12 in Bern and below the driver's eye view of the controls and the road ahead. Photos: Bryan Stone



## Waldenberger Bahn.

The board of the 750mm gauge Waldenberger Bahn have decided not to run any more steam trains with the historic locomotive G3/3 No. 5 'Gideon Thommen', and to dispose of the loco and associated equipment by the end of 2015, presumably to an external society. Given the forthcoming renewal of the entire WB, it is unlikely that a steam operation will in future be feasible, and no society is at present in view. It therefore looks as if the trip (unannounced and private) operated on 8th November 2014 for the 100th birthday of a former SBB loco driver, was the last steam run on the WB.

## Zentralbahn sees growth with new stock...

The ZB, formed 10 years ago by a merger of the SBB's metre-gauge Brunig Line and the LEB, had a record year in 2014 with a 26% increase in passenger numbers. Growth occurred across the system with Luzern-Interlaken traffic rising by 25% following the introduction of the new trains and tighter scheduling, whilst

its commuter services also saw a rise in traffic, partly due to the introduction of a 15 minute interval service between Luzern and Hergiswil. The new FINK and ADLER units offering low-floor easy access have become an instant success with the travelling public in this area of Switzerland, as well as with the ZB's operating and commercial departments.

## ... whilst the Rigibahnen Roars into 2015 ...

The Rigibahnen carried some 115,000 passengers in the first two months of 2015, a 24% increase over the same period last year. The 1st January saw an all-time record number of passengers using the services from Vitznau and Arth Goldau when 6,500 passengers were carried on the mountain. This busy day was followed by a quiet month, but then February saw the lines carrying record numbers for any month, ever. Like most Swiss tourist operations it saw a major growth in visitors from the Far East, the area that is now the Swiss tourist market's biggest customer base.

## ... and the Jungfraubahn hits the heights!

Thanks again to booming tourist numbers from India, China and Japan the Jungfraubahn carried record numbers of people to the Jungfrauoch in 2014 when some 866,000 passengers travelled on this iconic line, an increase of some 5% over 2013. Against this the area had poor winter sports seasons with less than 1m skiers being carried, an almost 10% drop in numbers. However the early results for 2015 indicate that the winter results are showing an increase of 16% despite problems with currency fluctuations at the start of the year. 

*Swiss News* is compiled by Bryan Stone and includes input from, Michael Donovan, s'Murmeli, Mario Gravazzi, Robert Amstutz, Ron Smith, Werner Haas, and others.



ABOVE: WB No 5 at Bad Bubendorf. Photos: Bryan Stone  
BELOW: WB train in 1/11/1970 before the line was closed. Photo: Peter Willen

