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A “Parliamentary Train” with a difference

by Mario Gavazzi



The last kilometre before Eschenbach: “Black and white coal” at the head of the train!

Photos: Mario Gavazzi

Swiss politics are just so different to ours. For example, each Canton has its own Government and Parliament. Mario Gavazzi was on hand to record what happened when Josef Wyss, a resident of the village of Eschenbach on the Seetalbahn, made his first journey home as the newly elected president of Canton Luzern.

It is early evening on 18 June 2019 and the rush hour is getting under way at Luzern Hauptbahnhof. Commuters are hurrying toward their trains but they have to stop and stare when they see an unusual extra service pulling into Platform 4. Two veteran coaches belonging to the Verein Historische Seetalbahn (HSTB), supplemented by two more from the Verein Mikado 1244, are being brought into Platform 4, “topped-and-tailed” by ex NOB E3/3 No. 456 and the ‘Seetal Krokodil’, De 6/6 No. 15301.

This was certainly a special train, chartered by the parliament, to convey Josef Wyss home after his swearing in as president for the parliamentary year 2019/2020. And what does a newly-elected president do to ensure that his first commute home is noticed? Well, he travels by steam train, of course! Ah, but he must also demonstrate his “green credentials”. What if he is criticised for his CO₂ emissions? Better make sure there is also an electric locomotive behind the steam engine. “White coal” as well as “black coal”. Swiss politics is not known as a daily compromise for nothing!

Welcome to Eschenbach, with the Cistercian monastery in the background.



Half an hour after leaving Luzern the special arrived in Eschenbach, where the entire population was on the village square to welcome their new president. Everyone was invited to the official event while the train then continued to HSTB’s Remise (Depot) at Hochdorf. Special trains are always good publicity and this was an excellent opportunity for HSTB to market themselves. 



Welcome to Luzern: ‘Seetal-Kroki’ De 6/6 No. 15301.

NOB/HSTB E 3/3 456 at Luzern.

