

A new diamond for Luzern

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The next renovation project on Lake Lucerne is the flagship 'Stadt Luzern', here with 'Gallia' at Seedorf on a special cruise for the Association Dampferfreunde Vierwaldstättersee.

the general renovation of the SGV's 'Stadt Luzern' commencing at the end of 2018, whilst on the Thuner See it is hoped that restoration can commence on the 1901-built 'Spiez'. This screw steamer lost its boiler and engine in 1950 and since then it has cruised as a diesel ship. Thanks to a sponsor who has given CHF1m it is intended to rebuild 'Spiez' with new steam driven machinery. So, if everything goes well, in 2018 the Thuner See will have a second steamboat. More information is on www.spiezerli.ch. These three projects, and


the future plans on Le Léman, show us a very important fact: that the work of steamship salvation in Switzerland will never end!

In addition to all the hard work that has gone on in Switzerland, south of the Alps our Italian friends have also been active. Back in 1961 the Italian Government, who owns the navigation rights on the Swiss/Italian Lago Maggiore, decided to save the 'p/s Piemonte' the last steamer in their fleet. After four years of renovation, in May 1965 the 'Piemonte' returned to service as the first lake paddle steamer in Europe preserved as a historic steamer able to cruise using its original steam engine. The 'Piemonte' sails only for charters and only seldom are public sailings organised. However, on Saturday 21st October 2017 she will sail from Arona and Stresa to Locarno and return to Arona. For more information on this unique voyage see www.corona-sapere.ch.

It is to be hoped that all the active steamers will have a good and great future as they are a very good example of the best of Swiss tourism and are a very important marketing argument to visit Switzerland. Even when Switzerland is seen as too expensive for many people from other parts of Europe to visit, the fact that most of the steamers can be used with normal tickets (also Swiss Pass, half price tickets, etc.), everybody has the opportunity to take cruises on our lakes using historic vessels. This is thanks to the first generation of steamboat enthusiasts who started in 1967 with no money, but good arguments for saving the steam navigation. 


A New Diamond for Luzern

Mario Gavazzi

Sunday 9th April was a sad day for Luzern and for all enthusiasts of the fleet of ships that sails on the Vierwaldstättersee. On this day the veteran 'm/s Rigi' made her last public appearance on the lake, watched-over by her namesake mountain. In practice her last operational sailing was on 31st December 2016 when her Captain, Kurt Hunziker, also retired. From January to April she had been chartered by the cultural organisation 'Kunststube' as a floating exhibition venue, and it was with a private art cruise that she finished her service. The 'm/s Rigi' has been replaced in the fleet by a new five-deck hybrid motor ship the 'm/s Diamant'. This state-of-the-art vessel is electric powered, with 'clean' diesel engines generating the electricity, and was brought into service during a ceremony at Luzern on the 4th May 2017. She has a capacity of 1100 passengers and will be scheduled on public services and cruises as well as being used as an event ship. The new 'Luzern Diamant' gives the feeling to her passengers that they are on a yacht cruise, and it is certain that she will become a popular vessel. 



Where's Heidi?

In which station did Heidi find this impressive mural? 

Answer on page 36.