

# Memorie di Luino

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**WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO TRACE ANY PICTURES OF THE RAILWAY MENTIONED BELOW, SO IF YOU HAVE ANY OR ARE AWARE OF ANY PLEASE LET US SHARE THEM WITH OTHERS. IN THE MEANTIME THE NEAREST WE COULD GET ARE FROM THE FLP**

A note in a recent Swiss Express on the possible extension of Ferrovia Lugano-Ponte Tresa (FLP) to Luino in Italy brought back memories of my first visit to Switzerland in May 1951 when we stayed part of the time in Lugano and took the FLP to Ponte Tresa. We walked over the bridge into Italy, another first, and came across a derelict station with many wrecked car-

Savoy and Tyrol (23rd edition 1909) describes the journey:

Luino (Railway Station). The pier adjoins the waiting room (Lunch 2<sup>1/2</sup> Fr, Dinner 4<sup>1/2</sup> Fr incl. wine) of the steam tramway to Ponte Tresa (Lugano). To the left, passing a statue of Garibaldi and following the broad 'Via Principe de Napoli', we reach the (12 min) Stazione



*19th March 1977. FLP station at Ponte Tresa looking towards the buffer stops. This was before the rebuilding which placed a sort of roof garden above half the lengths of the tracks in this photo. Photo: Alan Pike*

riages and wagons lying about. It had obviously not been used since some time during WW2. From P M Kalla-Bishop's book "Italian Railways" (pub. David & Charles - 1971) I note that the the Ponte Tresa-Luino was opened in 1885 by Lake Lugano Railways as a 850mm gauge tramway of 12km with 3 steam locos and 1 diesel car in total. It was absorbed in 1924 by Varese Railways (opened 1903), converted to 1100mm gauge and electrified at 600Vdc, all closing in 1955.

My copy of the Baedeker Guide to Switzerland and the adjacent portions of Italy,

Internazionale of the Bellinzona-Genoa line where the Italian and Swiss Custom-house examinations take place (\*Restaurant, Lunch 2-2<sup>1/2</sup> Fr, Dinner incl. wine 3-4 Fr). Omnibus 40c., hand luggage 25c, trunk 50c.

HOTELS. \*Grand-Hotel Simplon et Terminus, on the lake with garden, 80 beds at 3-5 Fr, Lunch 3 Fr, Dinner 4Fr, Pension 8-12 Fr; Eden Kursaal Hotel with restaurant on the lake, with garden; Hotel Poste et Suisse, with baths, Room 2-3 Fr, Dinner 3<sup>1/2</sup> Fr, Pension 7-9 Fr; Vittoria, Room 2-2<sup>1/2</sup> Fr, Breakfast 1<sup>1/4</sup> Fr, Lunch 2<sup>1/2</sup> Fr, dinner 3<sup>1/2</sup> Fr, Pension 7-8 Fr; Angora et Bolivia, Room 1<sup>1/2</sup> Fr-3Fr, Breakfast 1<sup>1/4</sup> Fr,



*19th March 1977. Ponte Tresa looking towards Lugano. The station is very close to the Italian border.  
Photo: Alan Pike*

Lunch 2<sup>1/2</sup> Fr, Dinner 4Fr, Pension 6-9 Fr. These three near the pier: Hotel Metropole, Room from 1<sup>1/2</sup> Fr, Dinner 3 Fr; Albergo Falcone, moderate - - Near the Stazione Internazionale: Milano, Room 2 Fr, Lunch 2<sup>1/2</sup> Fr, Dinner 3<sup>1/2</sup> inc. wine, pension 6-7 Fr. - - Cafe Clerici.

LUINO (690 ft), a busy town with 8000 inhabitants, lies a little to the North of the junction of the Margorabbia with the Tresa.

STEAM TRAMWAY from Luino to (8 miles) Ponte Tresa in 40 mins ( 2Fr95, 1Fr35c). Steamer from Ponte Tresa to (15 miles in 13/4 hours) LUGANO and (26 miles in 2<sup>3/4</sup> hours) PORLEZZA (4Fr55, 2Fr75c). Steam Tramway from Porlezza to (8 miles) MANGGIO in 1 hour ( 2Fr90, 1Fr55c). through tickets 10Fr40, 5Fr65c; return, Sunday and circular tickets at reduced rates also to be had on board the steamers. Swiss and Italian Custom-house examinations on board the steamers.

Luino. The tramway station adjoins the pier. Our train crosses the St. Gotthard railway near the Luino station and at (2 miles) CREVA (745 ft), a manufacturing place, reaches the TRESA, the exflux of Lake Lugano. Winding up the abrupt right bank of the TRESA we cross the river, which here forms the boundary between Switzerland and Italy, pass through two tunnels and stop at (4<sup>1/2</sup> miles) CREMENAGA (833

feet). We then follow the left bank, obtaining fine views of picturesque villages and churches to (8 miles) PONTE TRESA (912 feet) on the Italian side of the river. The village (Hotel CRIVELLI), on the Swiss side lies on the mountain-girt bay of Lake Lugano.

The LUGANO ROAD (6 miles; motor-omnibus 5 times daily) leads across the MAGLIASANO to (2 miles) MAGLIASO (Hotel Helvetia) and to (3<sup>1/2</sup> miles) AGNO (9968 feet, Restaurant BOFFA). Crossing the AGNO and passing the little lake of MUZZANO, we gradually ascend to (5 miles) SORENGO and descend to (6 miles) LUGANO.

The railway from Ponte Tresa to Lugano is not mentioned being 3 years away, although some proposed lines are. The Franc prices are for the gold francs of the Latin Monetary Union of 1865 when the twenty Franc coin on 5.81 grams of fine gold were identical in France, Belgium, Switzerland and with 20 Lire coins in Italy and 20 Drachma of Greece and 20 Spanish Pesetas as well as several South American countries. The British gold Sovereign of 7.322 grams of fine gold was worth 25.222 gold francs and Baedeker's has the same currency exchange table in my 1888 Guide to Belgium and Holland as in this 1909 Guide to Switzerland. What chance the Euro against stability like that?

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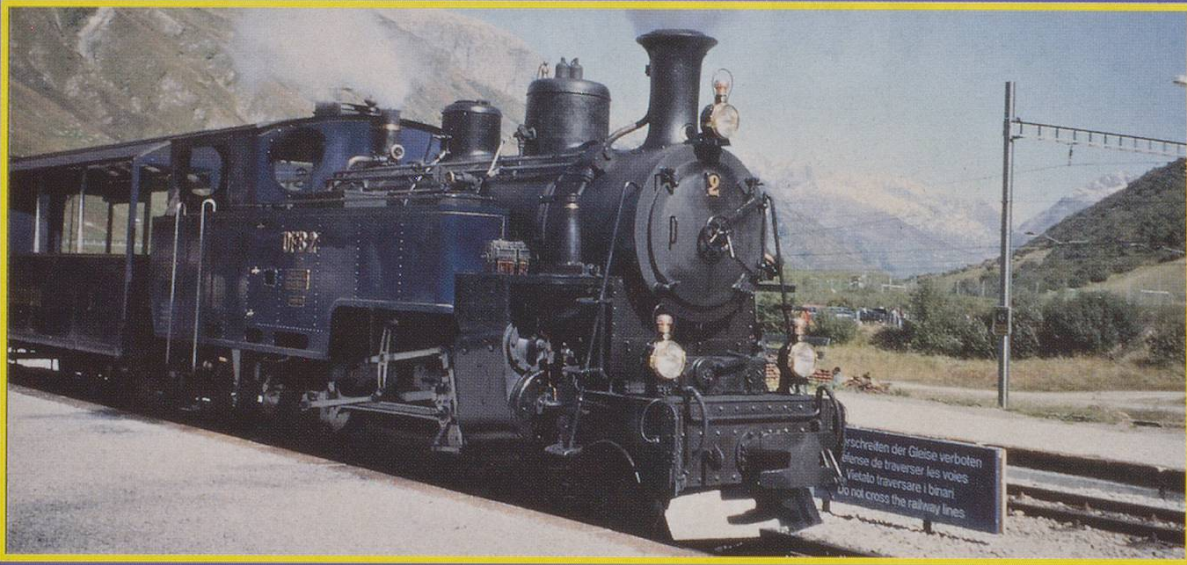
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**ABOVE:** A nice picture by Andy Nelson of DFB no. 2 at Realp.

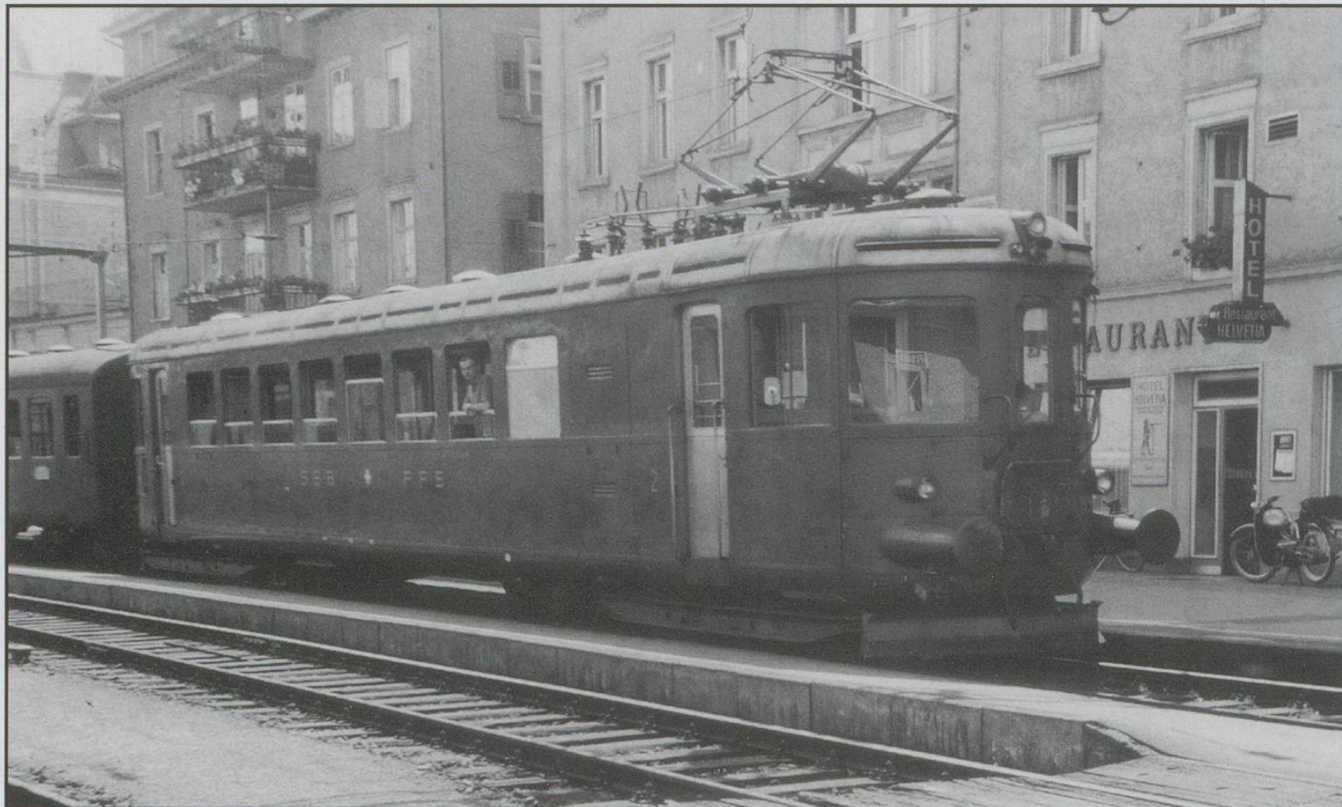
**RIGHT:** Readers will remember the article by George Hoekstra on the opening day of the DFB's return to Gletsch. Well he went back and took this photo to show what it can be like. DFB nos. 1 & 6 Wait to depart at Realp on a sunny day at last. 22/9/2000.





**ABOVE:** SBB Re 460 078-9 in the livery of Switzerland Tourism. *Photo: ST / swiss-image.ch*  
**BELOW:** SBB Re 460 017-7 in Märklin livery travelling along the Lötschberg near Luden in August 2000. *A picture giving a perfect image of the operating terrain. Photo: Paul Russenberger*





*SBB RBe 2/4 1010 pictured at Rorschach Hafen, 29/7/69*

*Photo: SRS Collection*

## **PAST TIMES - Some photographs from the archives**



*GfM ABDe 4/4 164 at Ins. 6/8/69*

*Photo: SRS Collection*