

Rheinfelden

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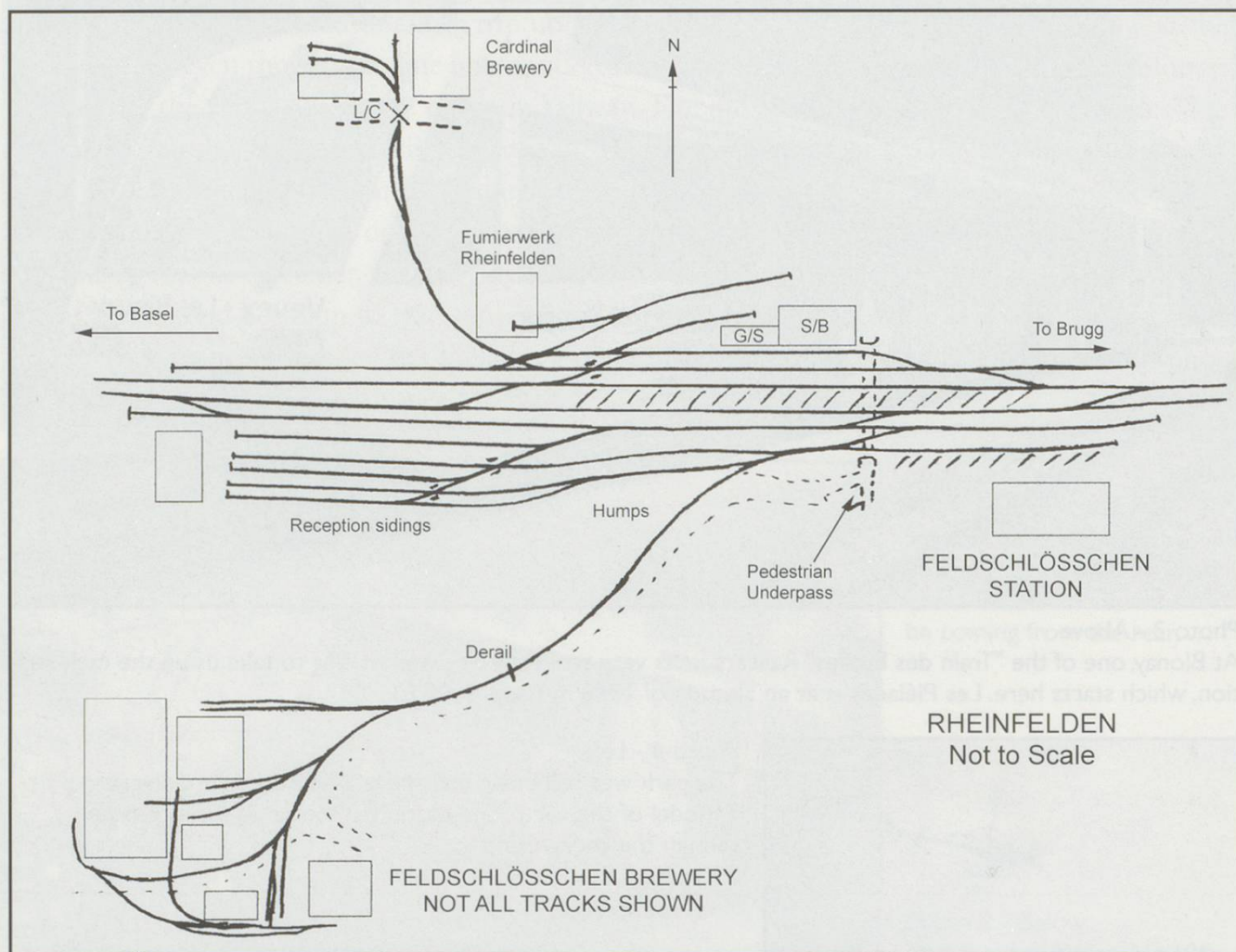
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When I first developed an interest in Swiss trains I read about the Feldschlösschen Brewery and came under the impression that this was situated in Schaffhausen. It was only after travelling from Brugg to Basel in 1988 that I realised on passing through Rheinfelden that the complex resembling a large Kibri kit up on the hillside was in fact the Brewery. Whilst my train awaited departure at the station I observed the local railway facilities and made a note to return as soon as my itinerary permitted me. Subsequent visits have confirmed my initial favourable impressions of the station and Brewery facilities and I would definitely include Rheinfelden in my Swiss railway "Top 20".

The Botzbergbahn through Rheinfelden, worked by the Schweizerische Nordostbahn, but jointly owned by them with the

Schweizerische Centralbahn, was opened from Pratteln on the SCB near Basel to Brugg on the NOB on 2 August 1875. The route was doubled in March 1895 and absorbed into the SBB on 1 January 1902. Electrification was inaugurated on 18 October 1926.

The Brewery was built in Rheinfelden in 1876 as a direct result of the opening of the railway. The founders, Mathias Wuthrich and Theophil Roniger, were looking for a site served by a railway in order that their beers could be rapidly transported to all areas in Switzerland by train. Although the Brewery was not linked by its own branch line to the main station until some 13 years after opening Feldschlösschen soon became the pre-eminent Swiss Brewery and, over the years, the majority of other Swiss breweries have been

absorbed into the Group, although in the main they have kept their individual trade marks.

In addition to beers the Group also produces and markets various soft drinks, some under licence from internationally famous companies such as Pepsi. When you see those

the west end of the goods yard. This receives wagons of large logs that are kept wet by an elaborate sprinkler system. The reception sidings for the Feldschlösschen Brewery are laid out like a mini hump marshalling yard and the Brewery also has a private station alongside the



The Brewery shunter hauls a rake of vans over the "hump". The spur to the Brewery in the background curves alongside the road on the left of the locomotive. Aug 1997. This and all other photos in this article by Ernie Brack

colourfully named goods wagons like Cardinal, Hürlimann, Wartek, Gurten, Löwenbräu Zürich, Schweppes, Rhäzünser, Arkina or Passagger to mention just a few, they are all part of the same Group.

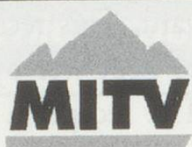
In 2000 the beverages part of the Feldschlösschen Group became part of the Carlsberg empire and according to their Web site it is the intention to continue brewing at Rheinfelden and the other Swiss production sites. (www.feldschlösschen.com)

The branch line to the brewery is not the only factory siding at Rheinfelden; a further branch curves away to the north west and descends to the former Cardinal Brewery located on the south bank of the River Rhine. This is shunted by the Feldschlösschen diesel as and when required. There is also an industry by the name of Furnierwerk Rheinfelden situated at

SBB one. There are several events during the year when the Brewery ex SBB e3/3 steam locomotive is used with a rake of historic carriages on a shuttle service between this station and the Brewery.

Although there are regular organised trips around the Brewery it is possible to observe all the rail activity without leaving public footpaths and a road which runs right through the middle of the complex. The connecting siding to the station is laid with concrete between the rails and doubles as a footpath alongside the road. At the Brewery a Krauss 0-4-0t builder's no.5666 of 1902 is displayed along with an old goods van.

The Feldschlösschen diesel shunter and the resident station tractor which on my last visit was Tmiv 8755 are kept busy all day shunting the various facilities. Whilst continued on pg.49



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Rheinfelden station from the Brewery spur; note the footpath between the rails. Aug 1997

continued from pg.47 the SBB tractor assists shunting the Feldschlösschen traffic in the reception sidings I have never witnessed it traversing either of the sidings to the Breweries. Both Brewery sidings are worked with the locomotive at the station end of the train in both directions, no doubt a sensible precaution when working traffic via the steeply graded line to the Feldschlösschen complex. Whilst the Cardinal Brewery tends mainly to despatch and receive its rail traffic in containers, a variety of wagons can be seen at the main brewery. Whilst in the main outward traffic is in covered vans, there is some container usage and demountable tanks on flat wagons can often be seen. In-bound grain etc., is received in covered hoppers. Vans in the liveries of the various Group members are often intermixed with Feldschlösschen-liveried vehicles.

The SBB traffic through Rheinfelden is very heavy and the route forms part of the main Gotthard freight artery. In addition traffic from Basel to Zürich is often routed this way. Along the old

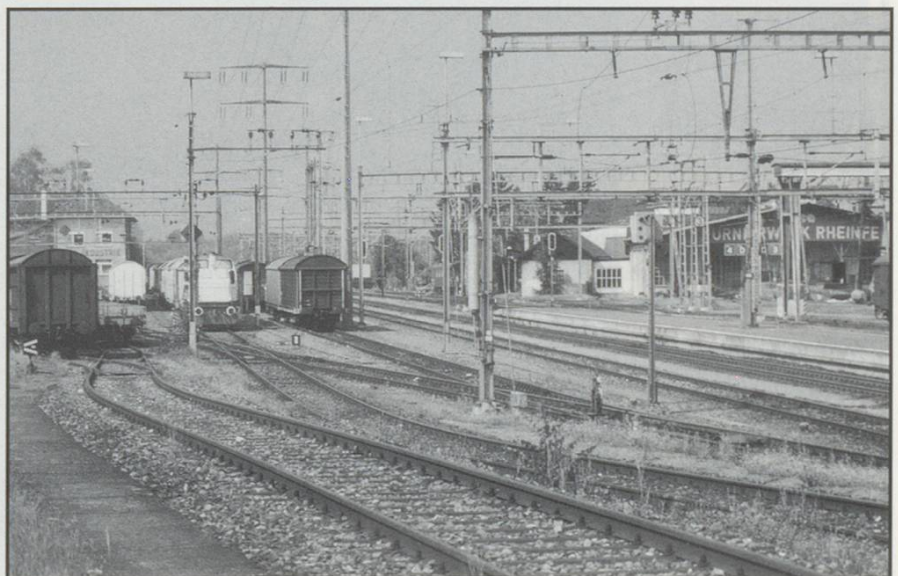
“Botzbergbahn” there are numerous industries and further freight originates on the old Rhine valley route to Koblenz.

With regard to passenger services the main services are between Basel and Zürich. It would appear that the SBB favours the route via Aarau and Lenzberg for the more important non-stop services even though this route is slightly longer. The basic service Basel-Zürich-Chur comprises hourly Basle-Aarau-Lenzberg-Zürich

and then via St. Gallen to Chur and hourly Basel-Rheinfelden-Brugg-Baden-Zürich and then direct to Chur. Both sets of trains make other intermediate stops. Various international through coaches are added to these services. A development in the latest timetable is the diversion of some of the trains via Rheinfelden to Schaffhausen rather than Chur.

Rheinfelden is now also served by a direct service from Basel to Zürich Flughafen, which avoids Zürich main station. This service is comprised of double deck coaches usually with an appropriately advertising liveried 460.

General view of the reception sidings. Station and Furnierwerk Rheinfelden premises on the right. Aug 1997





Shunter wagons loaded with demountable road tanks waits at brewery. Public road behind locomotive. April 2000

The through German ICE "Limmat" Zürich to Hamburg service is routed via Rheinfelden as it calls at Baden and Brugg. It should pass through Rheinfelden at 6.45am towards Basle and 21.15 returning to Zürich. We have often caught this service at Brugg on a Sunday morning and usually have a first class coach to ourselves!

Local trains are mainly the 562 variant of the "humming birds" and there are usually two services per hour in each direction alternatively working to Frick/Brugg and

Loading wagons at the brewery. April 2000

Laufenburg on the Koblenz line; with various extras including the odd loco hauled train in the peak periods.

Finally once or if you grow tired of watching the trains the town of Rheinfelden itself is well worth a visit.

