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Although not strictly anything to do with transport as such it is worth noting that Franz Carl Weber, of the well-known Swiss toy firm, recently passed away. He was 77. Founded by his grandfather in 1881, Weber and his younger brother pushed the business forward to encompass over 50 shops. The company was sold in 1984 but retained the name. Hands up any member who hasn't bought a model railway item or a present in one of the stores. I doubt if there are any.

swissinfo

A well-known Swiss symbol and product is the Swiss army knife. One of the stranger effects of the September 11th New York attack has been the slump in sales of this famous pocket tool. Sales have been banned at many airports and travellers are having them confiscated at checkpoints. In the final three months of 2001 business for Victorinox, one of the two official producers has slumped by about a third. Attempts to encourage sales are being made with new products such as rounded blades and tool sets without blades. Perhaps in the future the fuss will settle down and normality will return. Perhaps.

swissinfo

International

DB's general dissatisfaction with tilting trains is alleged as the reason for them withdrawing from the TEE Alliance project with the ÖBB and SBB where each company would buy trains based on the SBB RABe500 design for international workings. There is a benefit for the remaining two railways - their new trains will no longer have to be compatible with the DB 411 and 415 (ICE-T) units!



SBB CFF FFS

The partial reopening of the Gotthard road tunnel on December 21st caused the withdrawal of the Göschenen - Airolo shuttle service and the cancellation of the hire of BR 185s from DB. These were intended to replace the BLS Re4/4s, which were required back at Kandersteg for the holiday period. The BLS stock was returned on 17th December and replaced for the last four days of operation by hired in car flats topped and tailed by Re4/4's released at the end of the sugar beet season.

During the period of operation, Oct 25th to Dec 21st, the Göschenen - Airolo service with its 24

trains per day in each direction carried over 70,000 motor vehicles at a cost of CHF2.7 million. Average load factor for the period was 45 per cent and average waiting time was 40 minutes.

Using a 3-shift system the SBB/HUPAC built in record time the connecting road, track and loading equipment for the Brunnen terminal of the Rolling Road service at a cost of SFr 1.7 million. The new Hupac service carried 2,000 vehicles in the period 12th Nov to 22nd Dec on 4 trains per day in each direction at 75% capacity. Currently the service is closed except for a single train service for use by Migros on a requirement only basis.

A referendum has approved the SBB plan to build a new 'Löwenstrasse' station under Zürich Hbf. In preparation for this work, and to allow the lengthening of tracks 3 to 9 to a length of 420m, a four track temporary 'Sihlpost' station is being built on the south side of the existing station. From the June timetable change, this station will accommodate trains on the Luzern Interregio services and the S-Bahn routes via Enge.

Schaffhausen, Wil and Romanshorn stations are all being modernised and resignalled; at Romanshorn the extension of the platform on Track 2 to 420m length in September brings to an end the need to split Zürich services to allow foot passengers access to the Freidrichshafen ferry.

The new Siemens-built locomotives to the DB BR 185 design will be classified Re 482 and numbered 482 000 - 009. They will carry a predominately blue livery and be branded SBB Cargo. These are twin system locomotives (16kV and 25kV AC), and will replace Re 465 009 - 018 in SBB stock. The Re 46's will be transferred to BLS stock.

Ae6/6 11410 *Basel Stadt* has been withdrawn after accident damage.

Work has started on rebuilding the Solothurn - Inkwil line as a link between the Rothrist - Mattstetten NBS and Solothurn. The line, once part of the Solothurn - Herzogenbuchsee branch, has been closed to passenger traffic since 1992. At Rothrist, tracks 3 and 4 have been brought into use; Track 4 is equipped with a raised platform, which means that Regionalzüge towards Olten no longer need to call at the old low-level platform on track 2.

Three double track 'islands' are to be installed on the Gümligen – Langnau section of the Bern – Luzern line at a cost of SwF 70m. This will allow the Bern – Luzern Interregio service to run at a regular hourly frequency, at the same time as increasing the frequency of the S-Bahn Bern S2 service to half hourly throughout the day.

Trials of the European Train Control System Level 1 cab signalling system between Zofingen and Sempach have proved successful, and will be brought into general use during the spring.

The SBB has been named as the operator for the Stadtbahn service in Kanton Zug, due for introduction in Spring 2004.

On the 10th December 2001 SBB announced that they were purchasing Autogrill AG's 60% of Passagio Rail AG, the jointly owned on-train catering company. SBB had wanted to increase their influence and this seemed to be the answer, particularly as Autogrill wanted to sell! SBB want to improve the quality as this had been identified as a major objective following customer surveys. The position of the other partner, Mitropa AG is still under discussion but merging the two organisations looks to be on the cards. The redesign of the double-deck Bistro cars is independent of these changes but will no doubt reflect them as the first prototype is tested, probably in spring 2002.

DS

Lötschbergbahn

On the Friday evening and Saturday afternoon of the two weekends before Christmas, a car carrying train was run between Kandersteg and Iselle (and return!)

Other Standard Gauge

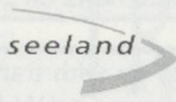


Once the NBS line from Mattstetten to Rothrist is opened, all RM services at Burgdorf will be concentrated in the main station area, allowing the platforms in the goods yard south of the station building to be abandoned.

SÜDOSTBAHN

Certain Voralpen Express services were strengthened during the period of the OLMA exhibition at St Gallen in October. MThB Re4/4 21 was hired in to assist these trains over the SOB banks.

Metre gauge

aare seeland 

The group has received an international award for its integrated transport and tourism policy; the group includes trains (the Biel - Ins, Solothurn – Langenthal and Langenthal – St Urban lines), buses and river services.

Berner Oberland Bahnen (BOB)

A concession has been granted to the BOB for a 350m long branch to the Mystery Park at Matten outside Interlaken.



The four new GTW ABe2/6 officially entered service on 22nd September. The four units carry the following names, the first metre gauge CJ units to be named:

631 - *Puilleret* 632 - *Mont-Soleil*
633 - *La Gruère* 634 - *La Tabeillon*

Ferrovia Lugano - Ponte Tresa (FLP)

Stadler are building five centre sections for the line's Be4/8 to the same design as that provided earlier this year to the RBS.



The Chur – Arosa line reopened throughout on 16th November. During the five-month closure to stabilise the cliff face, a 25m long gallery has been constructed near the Steinboden Tunnel, between the loop at Untersax and Luen-Castiel station.

The 'short' EW I coaches used on Berninabahn services are to be refurbished.

Two more vehicles have been repainted into the gold Berninabahn livery. These are ABe4/4 34, renovated after accident damage, and the former Celerina Staz mess coach X 9079, which has been restored to passenger traffic under its original Berninabahn number of C 114 and named 'La Bucunada'.

Tm 111, the first of four new Schoema shunting locomotives, was delivered in December.

Details of the Steam and enthusiast specials are now available on the RhB website and more importantly here in *Swiss Express*.

JUNGFRAU-ALETSCH-BIETSCHORN - WORLD HERITAGE STATUS

Following on from a recent Notepad item Unesco recently (December 2001) accepted the Jungfrau-Aletsch-Bietschorn area to their World Heritage List. Although the first natural area it joins a distinguished number of Unesco Cultural Heritage sites in Switzerland such as the old city in Bern, Mustair Abbey and the Three Castles of Bellinzona. The JungfrauBahnen are an integral part of this success contributing by way of environmentally friendly transport.

JUNGFARUJOCH-THE FINAL PHASE

A 30-year building period on the Jungfrauoch with a total investment of CHF 130 million is drawing to a close. The final phase will connect the Ice Palace and plateau, the two most popular attractions on the Jungfrauoch after the Sphinx Terrace. Construction should be completed by spring 2002, at a cost of CHF 5.5 million. Since 1972, when the old Berghaus and Tourist House were completely destroyed by fire, Jungfrau Railways have carried out an almost continual programme of improvements and innovations to the facilities at Europe's highest-altitude railway station, 3454 metres above sea level. The new Berghaus was completed in 1987 after two years of planning and a five-year construction period. In 1992, the second station hall was opened and in 1993, renovations to the Ice Palace were completed. 1996 saw the inauguration of the new Sphinx Terrace, Europe's highest-altitude observation point, providing a spectacular 360° Alpine panorama. It is reached by the highest-speed lift in Switzerland, travelling at almost 4 metres/14 feet per second.

The wooden barrack buildings will be removed. The new two-storey building will meet the high standards set by Jungfrau Railways for the whole complex. It has been designed to form one architectural unit with the Berghaus and Sphinx, using only a few robust materials and light colours. The south-facing facade will be built of glass, and a covered Panorama Terrace will provide visitors with imposing views of the glorious glacier world even when outside conditions are less than perfect. The panes of glass will be heated to prevent ice-formation.

Great emphasis has been placed on the building being user-friendly. The plateau will be reached by lift or stairs and the new lower exit to the glacier will greatly reduce the risk of slipping, and so increase visitor safety. The lift will make it possible for wheelchair users to visit the plateau via the Ice Palace, and the Ice Palace itself will be completely wheelchair accessible.

SAFETY FIRST

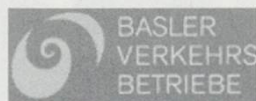
Safety has always been given high priority by the Jungfrau Bahn. With all the tunnel accidents, fires and deaths of the past few years the JB management decided, in 1998, to carry out a safety audit. One of the major considerations was the unlikely event of a fire in the tunnel. A safe, illuminated escape route was the ideal solution bearing in mind the need for speed in evacuation and attendance by trained staff. An illuminated handrail has been developed made of flame-retardant material reinforced with fibreglass. A continuous illuminated rod and power lines have been laid parallel in an insulated grill covered duct. Three automatic doors have also been fitted to the tunnel to reduce draughts, a major factor in the spread of fire. The Mont Blanc Tunnel disaster was compounded when the Italians inexplicably opened up the tunnel vents after the fire started thus causing a draught and fanning the flames. Other measures are being taken, including on train improvements and a total and strict smoking ban, railway staff also receive regular and rigorous training. Having said this it is worth remembering that since the railway commenced operations in 1912, more than 17 million passengers have been transported to the Jungfrauoch in comfort and safety, with nothing more dramatic than a broken arm.



TROGENERBAHN

Three articulated low-floor units have been ordered from Stadler to replace the 1950's built Be4/4's 6 to 8. Further line improvements will be made to allow these units to operate. These include remodelling the terminal tracks at St Gallen and lengthening the depot building at Speicher.

Trams



Seven power cars, one bogie and six articulated trams, have been sold to Belgrade.



The 3-axle trailers in the 1333 - 1344 series have been withdrawn from service; six have already been sent to Belgrade. They have been replaced in BLT stock by bogie trailers from the BVB fleet, renumbered into the BLT series by subtracting 100 from the BVB running number.

Preservation

Reiseburo Mittelthurgau (RMT)

The tourist arm of the MThB has been placed into receivership. The company's trains, including the 'Churchill-Pfeil' RAe4/8 1021, have been retained by the parent company.



Vapeur Val-de-Travers (VVT)

On the night of 15th/16th December the station at St. Sulpice was completely burnt out destroying the offices of the Vapeur Val-de-Travers (VVT) as well as the plans and archives of rolling stock and their reserves of drinks and souvenirs for the 2002 season. The locomotive depot some 50 metres from the station was unaffected. For more information and pictures see their website at <http://www.vvt.ch>

The provisional 2002 timetable for the Vapeur Val-de-Travers shows the following running days:

11-12 May

7-9 June

6-7 July

10-11 August

7-8 September

12-13 October

One or two of the trains run through to Neuchâtel. The timetable is published on their website and is of course conditional on recovering from the fire.

ALSTOM receives letter of intent from Swiss railways for European Train Control system

ALSTOM has received a letter of intent from Swiss Federal Railways (SBB/CFF/FFS) for a European Train Control System (ETCS) for the Mattstetten - Rothrist rail line between Zurich and Bern. The project value is in the range of 125 million euros. ALSTOM's share is approximately 65%, and partner Stadler will receive the remainder for integration and installation of on-board signaling systems.

This landmark project is the largest order to date for this proven, next-generation technology, which will greatly improve rail network performance not only in Switzerland but ultimately throughout Europe. This is the first of many projects within the framework of the SBB's "Bahn 2000" plan for network performance improvement. For this turnkey project, ALSTOM will supply components from its ATLAS™ system for signaling and train control. Specifically, ALSTOM will provide the on-board equipment, the radio-block system and peripherals; and the on-board cab-radio system.

Michel Moreau, President of ALSTOM's Transport Sector, said: "This award is a great success for ALSTOM; not only because it is the first signaling order we have received in this country, but also because it truly establishes the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) as the standard for future signaling systems in Europe. And ERTMS is vitally important to Europe as a whole as it will provide, for the first time, interoperability of trains across the entire continent. Switzerland lies at the very centre of Europe; our project will initiate the development of this seamless network."

The contract will come in force upon signing, scheduled for end of January 2002. Final delivery and commissioning are scheduled for November 2004.

ALSTOM is the global specialist in energy and transport infrastructure. The Company serves the energy market through its activities in the fields of power generation, power transmission and distribution and power conversion and the transport market through its activities in rail and marine.

Following the sale of its electrical contracting activity, finalised on 20 July 2001, ALSTOM has annual sales in excess of 22 billion euros and employs 120,000 people in over 70 countries.

The Company is listed on the Paris, London and New York stock exchanges. ALSTOM's Transport Sector, with annual sales of 4.4 billion euros, is an internationally leading supplier of rolling stock, information systems, services and complete turnkey systems to the rail industry.

MH-R

NOTEPAD is compiled by Nick Freezer and on this occasion includes contributions by Malcolm Hardy-Randall, David Stevenson, George Hoekstra, Duncan McKay, Brian Hemming, Steve Horobin. Other items are courtesy, Alstom, Swiss Info, Jungfrau Bahn and SBB

Brian Hemming

SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS-STOCK CHANGES

SEPTEMBER 2001

Withdrawn: Tm^I - 465 Tm^{II} - 619, 761, 762, 782, 820, 830
Ae6/6 - 11410 (first of class)

OCTOBER 2001 - Withdrawn: Tem^I - 263

NOVEMBER 2001 - Withdrawn: Tem^I - 272 Tm^{II} - 688, 713, 714

DECEMBER 2001- Nil