

The letters pages

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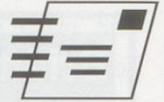
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Letters are welcomed on any relevant subject. Please ensure that when you send an email letter you include your address.

From: David G. Baird – USA

Metre Gauge Modules

As an update for my metre gauge module article may I mention that there is a website which has some photos and diagrams of our metre gauge module setups over the last 3 years.

Please visit <http://www.ete.org/HOm.html>

If you would like to e-mail me directly, please use: David_G_Baird@stanfordalumni.org

From: Brian Hemming - Chobham

The Mystery at Kaufdorf

This locomotive was formerly SBB E3/3 8527 with SLM works no. 2507 of 1915 and is indeed one of the class known collectively as "Tigerli". It was withdrawn by the SBB and sold to Von Roll, Klus (as their no. 2) in 1963 and further sold to Mr Messerli of Kaufdorf in 1981. The locomotive is listed in the preserved locomotives section of the Platform 5 publication *Swiss Railways* as being stored at Kaufdorf.

From: Roger Barton – Luton

Mendrisio

In *Swiss Express* 6/9, page 55, Alan Snowdon appeals for help regarding the "chartered" trains working Mendrisio - Valmorea. I encountered such a train at Lugano FFS on Sunday 1st July 2001.

The train was composed of three elderly former FNM (Italian) coaches, Nos. Az130/6/7, and was hauled by locomotive Ce4/4 42. The loco was in brown livery with yellow lining (i.e. 'Classic Rail' style) and had a strange looking 'logo' which might be that of 'Club San Gottardo'. I am of the opinion that this loco is the former SZU 42, originally BLS (GBS) 312. The brown liveried former FNM coaches had yellow side plates for 'Lugano - Valmorea'.

On my arrival at Lugano FFS, the train was stabled north of the station. After a look around at lake level, I returned to find the train standing in platform 1, ready for, presumably, the excursionists to reappear and take their seats.

Regarding the BT/SOB pictures: like you I am a great fan of BT/SOB and, particularly the steeply graded SOB section Arth-Goldau - Pfäffikon. I certainly don't like the look of the 'new SOB' livery - I imagine that the Swiss equivalent of Ray Stenning of 'Best Impressions' might have been responsible.

STI Trolleys & Trams

In response to your appeal for information, I've delved through various references to offer the following little summary of the STI trams and trolleybuses, 1913-82. *RECHTSUFRIGE THUNERSEEBAHN* Steffisburg - Thun - Interlaken, STI (also referred to as 'STJ') in tramway days.)

Electric tramway / light railway (roadside). Steffisburg -Thun -Oberhofen opened 10.10.13, extended to Beatenbucht 24.12.13 and on to Interlaken 20.6.14. There were 14 Ce2/2 oars of 1913, built in Germany by Credé, Kassel with electric equipment by SSW (Siemens & Schuckert-Werke), Berlin. The section Beatenbucht - Interlaken was closed 18.12.39 and replaced by a motorbus service. Several rock tunnels featured on this section.

Merligen - Beatenbucht was closed on 31.1.52 with Thun - Merligen following on 18.8.52. 9 new trolley buses took over Thun - Beatenbucht on 19.9.52. These were Berna chassis with SAAS electrical equipment and bodywork split between Gangloff (Bern) Nos. 1/3/5/7/9 and Ramseier & Jenzer (Biel) Nos. 2/4/6/8. These originally seated 40 with 33 standees. They were rebuilt (with an extra doorway?) 1964-8 to seat 33 with 50 standees.

The remaining urban section of the tramway, Steffisburg - Thun, was withdrawn on 31.5.58 and replaced by a motorbus service. Tramcars 3,4,6,10,12 and 14 went to Innsbruck, Austria, in 1952.

The trolleybuses on Thun - Beatenbucht soldiered on until 21.3.82, when motorbuses provided a through service (like the trams until 1939) to Interlaken. Trolleybus 1 was kept by STI after withdrawal. Trolleybus 7 went into the collection of Tramverein, Bern.

Consulting the 1978/9 SBB winter timetable (Kursbuch), Table 44, the trolley buses were generally running at 20 minute intervals. Some of the morning journeys turned short at Oberhofen, whilst some early morning/evening journeys turned at Gunten or Merligen. The connecting bus service, Beatenbucht - Interlaken, ran hourly at best.

From: Joy & Gerald Funnell – Hastings

Holiday Magic



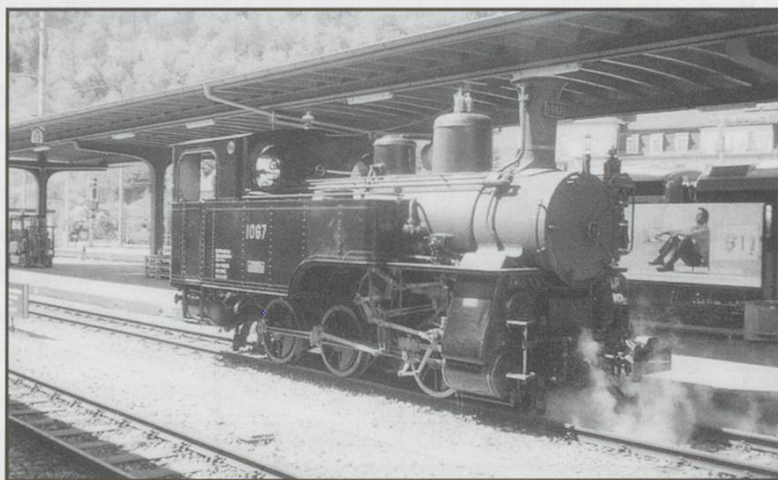
We made our spring visit to Interlaken this May and our visit was enlivened by the sight of two German Railways preserved Class 01 Pacifics. They had come from Karlsruhe the previous day on an excursion with some preserved rolling stock. On the Sunday they did a round trip from Interlaken Ost to Berne running double-headed tender first. I do not have an adequate photo of the two, my Voightländer would not cope and the video will not produce adequate pictures however I enclose a photo of 01 202 being coaled on the Sunday evening.

During our stay we also encountered one of the preserved tank locos now owned by the Ballenberg Museum, which are kept at Interlaken Ost. It had just carried out a trial run with carriages for Grindelwald and will be used on an all day excursion from Interlaken Ost to Grindelwald and then Lauterbrunnen on 22nd September - hopefully better than last year when for some reason it did not reach Grindelwald on a similar excursion. Here is a photo of 1067 in Interlaken Ost station.

On a rather wet day, we made a trip over the Brünig to Lucerne and in the sidings we saw the three car set shown in the two photos sent herewith. Can you tell us what this is, please? *Note from Editor – The pictures were of one the new Seetalbahn units which are depicted elsewhere in the magazine.*

Talking to the owner of the campsite we stayed at revealed that the Dragon boat is apparently very popular with tourists! We join with other members in thinking that it does not look at all attractive - perhaps we are old fashioned, but a boat should look like a boat.

Finally, we went to renew our two-year, half price Swiss Rail cards at Interlaken West station on the 10th May. On the 16th May we received our new plastic cards, complete with photographs provided two years ago. The assorted British railway companies could learn much from the Swiss with these - particularly as there are no silly restrictions as to when they can be used.



From: Glyn Jones - Coalville

Swiss Television

All Swiss Television channels are broadcast encrypted on the Hot Bird satellite, digital only and are sold as the Swiss Package. I do not know how to subscribe, legally or otherwise to this package. *Note from Editor: see the article by George Hoekstra as subscription is illegal unless you are a Swiss citizen abroad.*

An easier way to view some Swiss television is SAT3, available on Astra 1 in digital and analogue. SAT3 is one third owned by DRS (the other owners are Austrian and German stations). This broadcasts some Swiss German content including the news programme "10 vor 10" each evening. It also has excellent Swiss Teletext information. It is interesting to watch the "High German" subtitles when interviews are conducted in "Swiss German"; obviously the Zurichers cannot understand the Oberlander's (and other regions) dialect!

From: R Williams - Dyserth

Regarding "Swiss television"

I have seen "Eisenbahn Romantik" which appears mainly on SWR (Sudwest Rundfunk). Swiss television - 3Sat - very rarely has anything re. railways but SWR has at least 1 programme - ER. I should also add that the programming on most of these German stations can be found using our teletext controllers (zappers) by inserting 301-305 for same day programmes and 321-325 for next day although some stations have the next day on 311. At any rate inserting "305" will tell you when the next day programme can be found.

Incidentally there is an interesting website from Holland. www.tzeinen.staittips.com. This will give you almost any train timetable in the world including the North Wales coast line. Easier than accessing what is left of whatever bunch of cowboys are now running (strangling?) our network. It also includes data on the US, Eastern Europe and Japan amongst others too numerous to mention.

From: Peter Valentine - Chester

Swiss Television - As the original correspondent I gave Peter a copy of the article by George Hoekstra

It is obvious from George Hoekstra's article that only Swiss nationals can legitimately receive Swiss television programmes in the UK. However, some Swiss-made programmes (travelogues, documentaries and news) are shown on the satellite channel 3sat, part Swiss-owned, which is free-to-air. German free-to-air channels also carry programmes featuring Switzerland, especially "Eisenbahn-romantik" which often covers Swiss railways. While some members who answered the original query (6/9, March 2002) rely on teletext pages for programme information, I would recommend a subscription to HÖRZU, a weekly German TV listings magazine - approximately £72 for a year's issues by post.

From: Malcolm Hardy-Randall - Aberdeen

Wasting time

In a break from packing I undertook your challenge on the longest journey in a day.

And as I hate waiting around for planes trains, etc. here goes on a real time waster! Geneva Airport to Campocologno [on Italian border]

Dep	Geneva Airport.	07:21	IC 713.
Arr	St Gallen	11:53	
Dep	St Gallen	12:04	Rhine Express, RX 2813
Arr	Chur	13:38	
Dep	Chur	13:54	D551
Arr	St Moritz	15:55	
Dep	St Moritz	16:45	REG 455
Arr	Poschiavo	18:26	Very sore and tired!!

Note from Editor: I was a bit disappointed that only Malcom replied to this challenge. Check the editorial in the June issue for the details. In the meantime, thanks Malcolm

Dep	Geneva Airport.	6.39	IR613
Arr	Basel SBB	9.35	
Dep	Basel SBB	9.53	IR1765
Arr	Zürich Hbf	11.00	
Dep	Zürich Hbf	11.40	IC715
Arr	St Gallen	12.53	
Dep	St Gallen	13.04	RX2815
Arr	Chur	14.38	
Dep	Chur	14.54	D555
Arr	Samedan	16.41	
Dep	Samedan	16.48	REG755
Arr	Pontresina	16.55	
Dep	Pontresina	17.03	REG455
Arr	Campocologno	19.00	

From: Richard Baker - Middlesex

For your convenience!

I enjoyed the very interesting articles in the *Swiss Express* for June 2002. Amongst these, I noted the advice by Keith Pennyfather (on page 29) about locked toilets on the RhB south of Poschiavo, because I was about to travel this route. Whilst I cannot claim to have made a specialist or exhaustive study of the subject, I can confirm that on the "Heidi Express" southbound on Saturday 6th July 2002 the toilets were not locked south of Poschiavo. Our stock consisted of carriages with the sealed flush system which "can be used whilst standing in the station" though the use of its flush makes a considerable noise which is very audible to the other passengers when the train is stationary! My researches suggest that the toilets with this system are always kept open on this route. Conversely I imagine the stock with the "open the pan and see the track" type of flush on the ordinary services are probably kept locked (and rightly so) in areas of street running.

As we were travelling on to Lugano with the coach, I took the opportunity to look round and photograph the Italian Railways station at Tirano. Seeing the toilets along the platform and about to board the bus for the long journey, I used these facilities. As I came out I was stared at and then harangued for using them, (in Italian) by someone who I think may have been a railway official (but who was not in uniform). My comments in German (he didn't seem to speak English and I don't speak Italian) seemed to placate him. Others using the station "facilities" there may find this information helpful.

Whilst the rail journey down through the Bernina is truly wonderful, the connecting coach trip onwards from Tirano to Lugano was incredibly disappointing and in no sense a pleasure. Traffic on the road through Sondrio was heavy and difficult, the urban development was very ugly, and when we were at last on the scenic part of the route, the standard of car driving by those coming towards us was truly hair-raising. We were treated to a number of very near misses on corners and in tunnels, and incredible slanging matches between our driver and other drivers as we sought to pass their cars. "Never, ever again" was my wife's comment as she gratefully left the coach at Lugano station! So it's back to the railways! Some further advice to those in need. There is (apparently) no "comfort stop" on the three hour journey, but one solution (which another passenger used successfully on our trip) is to whisper something about "desperation" and any of the usual multilingual words for toilet to the driver and to offer him a tip. He obviously knows a number of places (cafes, etc) "en route" because he stopped and solved the "problem" almost immediately!

THE CLASSIFIED SECTION - Members Adverts

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For more details: w.jaydee@quista.net or 01438716958 anytime.

BOOKS FOR SALE: All prices include UK postage and packing. I can be contacted in the UK (44) on (0)1772 253765 or as duncanperry@btopenworld.com

1) **The Glacier Express** - Paul Caminada, English text. Good condition - £15: 2) **Die Rhätische Bahn** - Franz Marti & Walter Trub, English, French & German text. Good condition - £15: 3) **The Gotthard Railway** - Franz Marti & Walter Trub. English, French, Italian & German text. Good condition - £12: 4) **Switzerland- Its Railways & Cableways** - C.J.Allen, English text. Good condition - £10: 5) **100 Jahre Gotthard Bahn** - Karl Grieder, German text, plenty of pictures - £6: 6) **The Famous Glacier Express** - H.Schweers, English text, many good illustrations and line drawings. A lot of the pages are loose due to a poor binding but all present. Handy as modelling reference - £2: 7) **Train Journeys of the World** - some European ones - £7

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