

# Book reviews

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## The Essential Guide to Austrian Railways and Tramways

Author: Mervyn Jones. Publishers: The Oakwood Press, PO Box 13, Usk, Monmouthshire, NP15 1YS. Language: English. 208 pages with numerous photographs in full colour. Format: A5 - 5" x 8", softcover. ISBN: 978-0-85361-674-0. Price: £16.95. Internet: [www.oakwoodpress.co.uk](http://www.oakwoodpress.co.uk)

This is the third in the series of Railway guide Books that SRS Member Mervyn Jones has produced in association with Oakwood Press. In the June 2007 edition of Swiss Express we reviewed his Swiss book and this new volume follows a similar layout, although there appears to be a subtle change in the format; certainly with the title. This volume is apparently a guide to all Austrian railways and tramways whereas the Swiss, and the French guide before it, both concentrated on heritage and tourist railways although this allowed coverage of most of the Swiss lines. Perhaps all of Austria's infrastructure falls into that category! Certainly, given the standardisation of equipment that is taking place on many Swiss lines, it is apparent from this book that a far more eclectic mix of rolling stock is to be found east of Liechtenstein than west of it.

As someone who sadly knows only a small amount about the railways of Switzerland's alpine neighbour the book succeeds in giving a good introduction to what a visitor, especially an enthusiast, could expect to find as they travelled around the country. This admitted lack of knowledge does mean that the reviewer may have missed some locational or technical error that would have been obvious to our friends in the Austrian Railway Group. The only glitch spotted was a reference to the Sud Tyrol (Italy) when it was assumed that the author intended to refer to the Ost Tyrol, a part of Austria.

The Swiss edition suffered from having a poor map and no index. Thankfully this book does have a useful index. However, although they are far better than the almost useless map in the earlier book, the small diagrammatic maps provided this time are no real substitute for the lack of a proper example of the cartographer's art. This annoyance is more than made up for by the amount of general information supplied for each of the 160 lines that Mervyn has comprehensively covered and by the profusion of his (and his wife Caroline's) excellent photographs. It is worth buying this book for the illustrations alone.

This is a well produced book that is recommended not just to those with an interest in railways in Austria but to anyone who have a general interest in European Railways, especially those in an alpine environment. **MAB**

## British Railway Modelling Book 2 – Scenic Modelling

Author: Peter Marriott. Publishers: British Railway Modelling, Warner Group Publications Plc, The Maltings, West Street, Bourne, Lincolnshire, PE10 9PH. English. 96 pages all in colour with multiple photos per page. Format 7.5" x 9.5" softback. ISBN 978-0-9556194-4-1. Price £9.95

Oh No – not another scenic modelling book? Well yes....but what a difference! No more dried tealeaves, dyed saw dust and budgie grit. This book brings scenic modelling into the 21st century. Peter Marriott (a SRS member) has produced a really useful source of information, tips and ideas that use the plethora of modern commercial scenic materials available. Many of these come from continental suppliers such as Heki, Faller and Vollmer, from the USA with the likes of Woodland Scenics as well as the small UK companies such as Green Scene. Peter leads the reader through a variety of superbly illustrated small projects showing how the basic landscape structure can be built, how to apply a variety of surface textures (grass, weeds, bushes etc) and the larger items like trees and fences. Also covered are how to represent rocks, water, snow and all the other difficult to model items found on a layout. There are many "boxed" sections of text highlighting specific topics and many of the photographs need careful examination to ensure they are actually models. With a book like this the days of bottle green grass are hopefully numbered. Well done, Peter. I can thoroughly recommend this book. **TB**

