

Book & DVD reviews

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- Windows can be made to look dirty by scrubbing them with sandpaper or painting them with thinned watercolours.
- Cutting the windows with a sharp craft knife or a screwdriver can give the appearance of broken window panes.
- One way of personalising industrial, office or station buildings is to fix signs and posters to them. Various companies sell miniature signs and posters in popular scales. Or why not make your own signs using a digital camera and a printer?
- The visual impact of a nicely finished building can be spoiled if there is a small gap running along the lower edge of the building. One of the most important finishing touches that we can do to buildings is to “plant” them into the ground rather than on top of the ground. PVA adhesive can be used to fix the buildings to the layout and as the glue is drying around the base of the building it is easy to sprinkle on a very fine scatter material such as Tremendus real earth or Woodland Scenics Fine Turf. The scatter material sticks to the drying PVA and hides the join.
- Use Hornby's Skale Lighting system to add interior lights to a building. These lighting parts are suitable for most sizes of building from Z scale through to O scale. 🇨🇭



A laser-cut house and outside toilet from Noch. The addition of window boxes makes the house look "more Swiss".



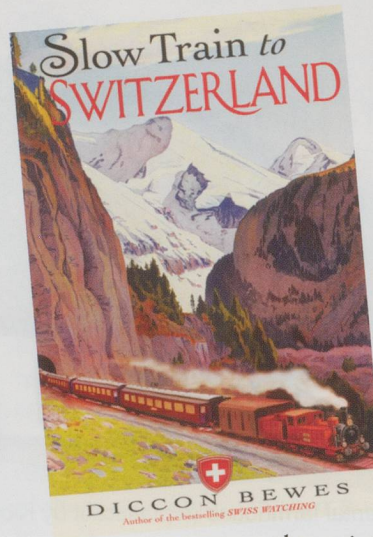
This Faller kit of a sports shop has been fitted with window display detail including a model modelling sportswear.



A Kibri plastic kit of the SBB Maienfeld station near Sargans awaiting its signage.

Slow Train to Switzerland

Author: Diccon Bewes. Published by Nicholas Brearley Publishing, 3-5 Spafield Street, Clerkenwell, London, EC1R 4QB. Hardback, 300 pages. 9" x 6". Over 70 vintage b&w photos. £18.99. ISBN 978-1-85788-609-2 Available from all good book shops – use them or lose them!



This year sees the 150th anniversary of Thomas Cook's first organised tour to Switzerland (see Michael Farr's article elsewhere in this issue). Two years ago, author Diccon Bewes and his mother, accompanied by, as he puts it, three long dead others – Thomas Cook, John Murray (an early guide book publisher) and Miss Jemima (who

was on the original tour and whose diary sparked off the modern day event) - set off to travel the original route by as near as possible the original means of transport. However donkey rides or walking over some of the passes may have been updated if more suitable modes of transport are now available. The 1863 party started off as 130 souls, but once the Alps were reached only 4 ladies and 3 gents were left – the “Junior United Alpine Club” as they labelled themselves. Starting on the ferry from Newhaven, Diccon retraced the route to Paris and then on to Geneva before visiting many of the current favourite alpine locations. In his typical slightly humorous prose, the author describes the difference in travel between then and now, slipping the odd quote direct from Miss Jemima's diary. He starts the tour in Switzerland by giving a description of life there in the 19th century, again using quotes from English visitors at the time. There are also quotes and tips from John Murray's 1861 guide book to set the scene for the travel still to come. As Diccon says “That first Cook's Tour was noticeable for its pre-dawn starts, 18-hour days and the place-a-day itinerary.” As the journey progresses around the country, each phase is accompanied by quotes from the original journal and other period publications, and explains the conditions prevailing at that time, conditions that were very different from those we are all familiar with today. For instance, how many of us know that the mountain folk of Valais suffered badly from goitres and being cretins simply because of a lack of iodine in their diet? This book gives an excellent history of our favourite country, not the usual “battle of this or war of that”, but at the much more personal level of the common people's everyday lives. The 1860s were

the birth of mass Swiss Tourism and here we learn how the Alpine visitors since then have changed the life of the locals from poverty to the country we love today. I'm certain that even those of us who think we know a lot about Switzerland will learn something new, and gain that knowledge in a very readable and entertaining way. If you enjoyed "Swiss Watching" and "Swisscellany" then you'll need to get a copy of this book by the same author. Highly recommended.

Tony Bagwell

The Longmoor Military Railway – A New History, Vol. 2.

Authors: Col. David Ronald and Mike Christensen OBE. Published by: Lightmoor Press, 144b Lydney Industrial Estate, Harbour Road, Lydney, Glos. GL15 4EJ: Hardback. Vol 2: 235 pages 9"x11". Copiously illustrated, mostly from private collections. £24.90. ISBN 13:978 1899889 77 8

This 3-volume book has a curious connection to Swiss Express. How many readers of Swiss Express had, in the now rather distant past, a connection with the Longmoor Military Railway, that unusual network in Hampshire, between Bordon and Liss? Your Swiss News Editor spent 18 months of National Service there between 1959 and 1961, and learned much hands-on railway work, which stood him in good stead for a long career. Today the LMR lives on in northwest Switzerland in several hundred black and white photographs taken on and off duty in that time, but I was not alone. However, some 30 of these photos, together with those of colleagues like Stuart Sellar in Scotland, and John Poyntz, have recently appeared in this very impressive new book. Volume 1 appeared last year and covered the period 1903 to 1939; Vol. 2 goes from 1939 to 1965; Vol. 3, up to closure and a detailed rolling stock description, will follow. Col. Ronald was a CO of the Railway in the 1960s. The LMR trained thousands of military railwaymen for service in many theatres of war, and more rail professionals were there on Army Emergency Reserve camps and exercises. Breaking and restoring things, and getting services back to normal, were everyday tasks. By 1946 there were 46 miles of track, with 30 or more operational locomotives. The book contains innumerable stories and anecdotes, which before long may have been lost for ever.

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Peter's Railway – Hits the Jackpot

Author & Publisher: Christopher Vine, 13 Craigends Avenue, Bridge of Wier, PA11 3SQ. Hardback. 96-pages, 9¾" X 7". Well illustrated. £11.99. ISBN 978—9553359-9-0. Available in good book shops, at many heritage railways, or direct from www.petersrailway.com.

This is the 5th hardback aimed at the 6 to 12 age group in the Peter's Railway series. As with all of Chris Vine's books it is a good way to get children interested in how railways work and how they operate. It would make a splendid Christmas present from parents, grandparents, etc. for the younger members of their families who like railways, engineering or simply finding out how things work. Any member searching for Christmas gifts for

hard-to-please children should search the website above for the complete range of these great publications. MB

DVD – 'Die Lötschberg Bahn'

Produced by: Egger Film, Feldstrasse 10, CH-8800 Thalwil, Switzerland, Tel: 0041 43 388 55 66, e mail: info@eggerfilm.ch, website: www.eggerfilm.ch) Price CHF 36.00. Enquire about shipping costs.

This 2-DVD set was released by Egger Film to coincide with the BLS 100 celebrations at Frutigen on 29th/30th June 2013. The first DVD, which is about 135 min. long, looks at the line from Brig to Bern interspersing all the landmarks of the line with the history behind them. The film is a mix of line side scenes, views from the cab of a "Lötschberger" EMU, and aerial views. One particularly good idea is a split screen incorporating the view from the cab as well as that from the window. There are also helpful descriptions of the more complex part of the route. Reference is also made to the new Lötschberg Base Tunnel and the film uses the variety of traffic along both routes to illustrate the complexity of operation. There is also a visit to Spiez works to see how the various locomotives receive their overhaul and maintenance. The photography is of broadcast quality throughout and excellently produced. This is a recent film with many of the items being shot this year, as the centenary logo on various items of BLS stock is prominent. The second DVD has two sections. The first, about 90 min. long, looks at the scenery of the route between Brig and Spiez as well as Spiez to Zweisimmen. This is more of a scenic film showing the various excursions and walks available en route. If you do not like the railway but enjoy Swiss scenery this film has plenty to offer. There is also mention of the BLS shipping services. The second section is about 24 min. long and consists chiefly of line side shots of various locomotives and trains in winter. Although only in German the commentary is relatively easy to understand, but even if you do not possess knowledge of German the photography is so good that it makes no difference. This 2-DVD set is highly recommended for anyone interested in both the BLS railway and the scenery around it as the quality is superb throughout and the subject matter is covered as comprehensively as possible. Roger Kemp

Editor's Note. Dr Paul Salvesson, who is visiting professor in the Department of Transport and Logistics at the University of Huddersfield, has just launched his latest book 'Railpolitik: bringing railways back to communities'. The book is published by Lawrence and Wishart at £14.99. In it he takes a critical look at the British railway system and uses examples of European practice to highlight where this country could do things better. Inevitably he chose to look at Swiss operations and practice and as Editor of Swiss Express I was in a position to assist his research. At the time of putting the December magazine together I have yet to see the finished book but from the proofs it will be a good read for anyone interested in the area of ensuring that our railways serve our society. 