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Thinking to the Future

SRS Secretary David Stevenson puts forward some suggestions.


Recently I began volunteering at a fairly well known transport archive in Droitwich called the Kithead Trust. It holds in particular the National Bus Company files and several well-known photographic collections. This, coupled with ever increasing age, lead me to think about what was going to happen to the roughly 100,000 photographs I have taken and collected over the years.

Without wishing to sound morbid we have a limited time on earth and really it came to a head at a recent committee meeting. I was talking about this in connection with photographs and one of the committee said “*who will want them?*” This was a perfectly reasonable question and was said without malice. The only answer I could truthfully give was that I didn’t know who would but the alternative was to chuck them in the bin. Was he going to do that with his considerable collection? He obviously said “No” and so from there the discussion broadened and as a result I have a couple of proposals to make to the membership as a whole.

1. What are you going to do with your photographs? I’m sure you do not want to just ‘*chuck them in the bin*’, so in that case you need to do something about them. SRS are going to start an archive of photographs based around donations from members. Firmer proposals will be outlined later in the year once we have a proper structure - and inevitably some volunteers to help organise it. In the first instance please give some thought as to what you want to do with your

photographs, they are precious to you and they are precious to us. We have no definite plans as yet but we will have soon and one particular objective is very clear, to maintain and to preserve them in the best way possible. If you have any ideas yourself or would like to volunteer to assist in this long-term project please get in touch with me. My email and mailing address are in this journal and let’s do something to provide a heritage for the future.

2. In turn we moved on to collections themselves. It’s not just about photographs after all, what about your models, what about your artefacts, books, etc.? We intend to offer a service to members, and members’ families, in the sad event of their death. We will endeavour to sell, on behalf of the member, or their estate’s items and models for a commission. We do not intend to offer to purchase these ourselves for resale. This would have all sorts of implications for us and frankly the Swiss Railways Society is not in a position to either value or take the risk. Once again this is a long-term project and we are not currently ready to begin, but please give some thought as to whether you would like to help or if you have some definite ideas yourself.

As I have noted, so far nothing is set in stone, everything is open for debate. The reason we are going to try these two ideas is because we think there is a need and after all the SRS is here to serve its members. 

Walking with the RhB – Part 2

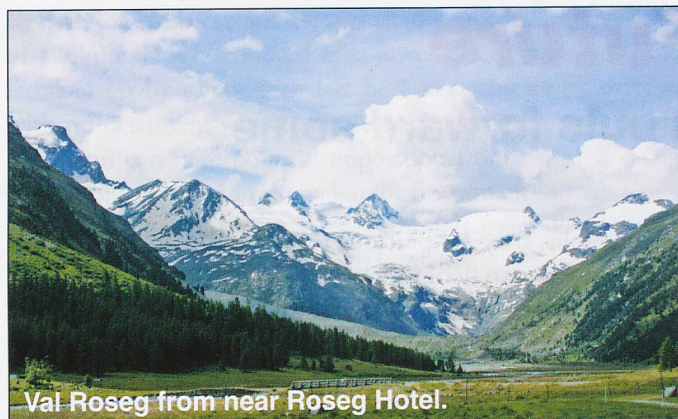
Philip Nalpanis introduces four more (energetic) walks in the Upper Engadin

Piz Palü and Piz Bernina.

All photos: Philip Nalpanis

As with the three walks I described in Part 1 of this article you should be suitably dressed and equipped. Take note of local weather forecasts and plan accordingly: being on a mountain in a thunderstorm is “*déconseillé*”

as the French say! Also take a map, preferably one with main paths (those signposted) overprinted in red. If possible always let someone else know what you are about to attempt as accidents unfortunately can happen.



Val Roseg from near Roseg Hotel.

4. From Pontresina - Val Roseg and various continuations.

Don't be seduced by the road starting a short distance from the station just before you reach the bridge over the Roseg river! Continue over the bridge and turn right at the small car park as indicated by the yellow waymark. Better still, continue to the bridge over the Bernina river and look down into the deep gorge below from both sides of the bridge, then return to the start of the path. This climbs slowly for about 7km through woodland to the Roseg Hotel. From here you have several options. Taking a left turn, you can ascend to the Tschierva refuge; return by the same route. Continuing ahead you can reach the octagonal Coaz hut at the head of the valley, either taking a right turn about 1km from the Roseg Hotel to climb, then continue more-or-less on the level, or continuing a further 4km or so beyond this point, after a while alongside the lake, before the path leaves the lakeside and ascends to meet the other path about a km from the hut; go out by one route, back by the other. Turning right, a stiff climb will bring you to the Fuorcla Surlej and (hoepfully!) a view across the St Moritz valley with its lakes. There is a refuge here, which serves food and

drink (as do the Tschierva and Coaz huts). Continue for about half an hour to the Murtel mid station of the Corvatsch Cable Car. Take the cable car to the top first if there's good visibility, otherwise simply descend from here. Hourly buses from the bottom station will bring you either to St Moritz town and Samedan, or to St Moritz station and Pontresina.



St Moritz, Gelerina and MMB car from Muottas Muragl.

5. From Muottas Muragl.

Start by taking the gently ascending path to Lej Muragl. From here, various options open up. You could return a short way along the path then take a path on the right which climbs for a short way then descends into Val Champagna: follow this valley down into the En/Inn valley, from where you can walk to Samedan or Bever station. Or take the path following the stream issuing from the lake for about 2km, then turn left to climb a steep path to the Segantini refuge (Segantini was a famous local artist – there is a museum dedicated to him in St Moritz Dorf) on the ridge, with great views across Pontresina into Val Roseg and towards Piz Palü; descend from here to Pontresina, with views of Piz Bernina and the Morteratsch glacier opening up. The final option is to continue beyond the lake to the col at the head of the valley and follow the path



Refuge at Fuorcla Surlej.



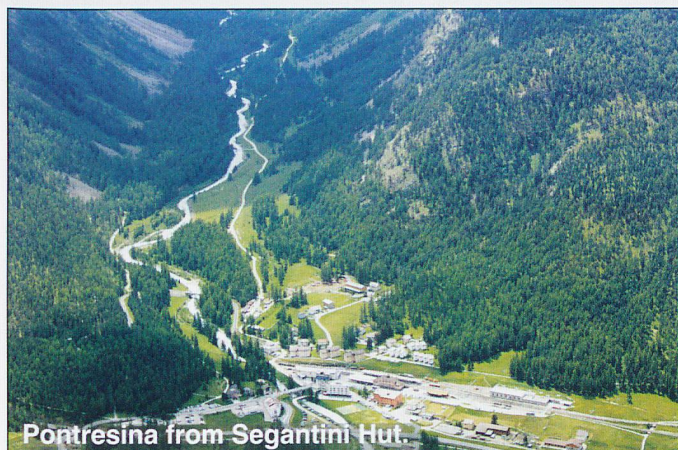
Lej Muragl in early July.



From the Corvatschbahn.



Piz Ela, Muottas Muragl from near Lej Muragl.



Pontresina from Segantini Hut.



Piz Kesch and Muottas Muragl from Segantini Hut.

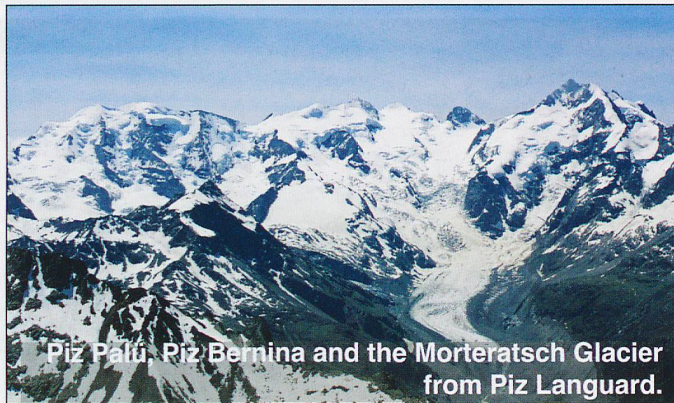
beyond this into the remote Val Prüna; after some 7km or so you will reach Serlas and a junction of paths – bear left here and eventually you will reach La Punt-Chamues-ch station. The whole of this walk is about 20km long, beyond the lake it's in remote country, but the ascent is only about 450m.

6. From Morteratsch - Boval Hut.

From the station follow the signposted path to the refuge. The path is behind a wall of lateral moraine for much of the way but eventually emerges above this. The hut (where food and drink are available) provides a wonderful viewpoint over the glaciers towards the triple-butressed Piz Palü. Return by the same route but, before catching the train (or taking refreshments nearby), take the path up the centre of the valley towards the tongue of the Morteratsch glacier ("Gletscherzunge"). There are signs at intervals marking where the foot of the glacier was every past 10-years. In 1890 it came almost to the station; now it is 2-3km up the valley. You can also see on the valley sides how deep it once was. A sad shadow of its former self!




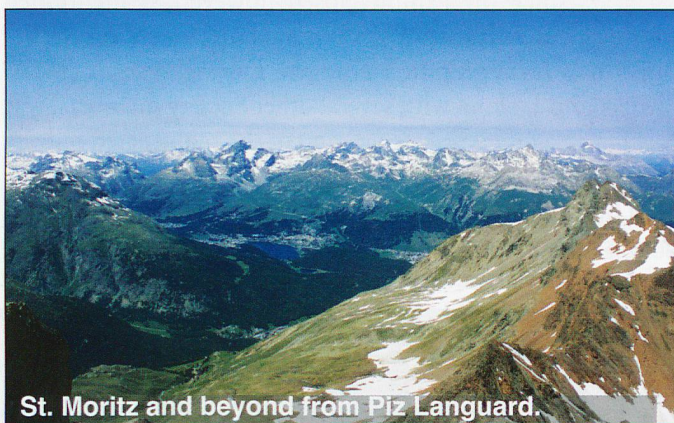
Towards Piz Kesch from Piz Languard.



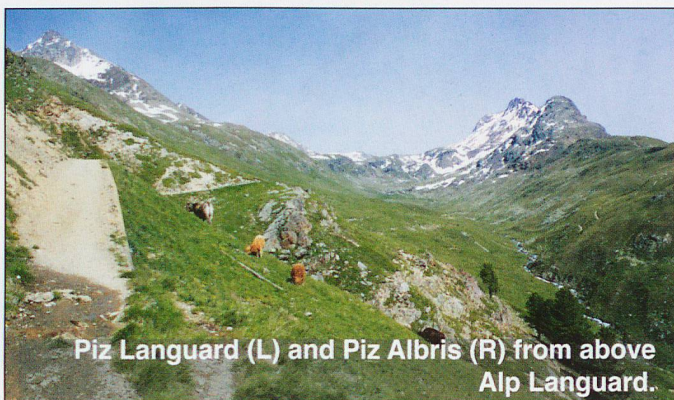
Piz Palü, Piz Bernina and the Morteratsch Glacier from Piz Languard.

7. From Pontresina - Piz Languard.

This is the classic walk in the Pontresina area! Like Munt Pers its summit is over 3000m; unlike Munt Pers there is no cable car to take you much of the way. You can take the chairlift out of the town (15-20 minutes' walk from the station) up to Alp Languard, saving about 300m of ascent, or walk all the way up. From there, a good path ascends steadily up the valley and finally climbs rather more steeply via a series of zigzags to the Georgy Hut, where food and drink can be purchased to fuel you for the final 100m or so of ascent. This is quite steep and rocky but there is a cable to hold on to for much of the way. The views from the terrace of the Georgy Hut are breathtaking enough (Piz Palü, Piz Bernina, the Morteratsch glacier) but the 360° views from the summit of Piz Languard are absolutely stunning: the mountains of the Süd Tirol, the Ötztal range in Austria, Piz Kesch to the north, and many of the mountains of south-east Switzerland. Stay here a while not only to catch your breath, but to enjoy the views. Return by the same route, or part way down take a path on the left across the Languard Valley to the Paradise Hut for refreshments and more views. This would be a fitting end to a week's walking in the area, but it is a big walk. 



St. Moritz and beyond from Piz Languard.



Piz Languard (L) and Piz Albris (R) from above Alp Languard.