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Re4/4 456 first series locomotive was waiting, with the legend *Mother greets Daughter* displayed across the front end. The naming ceremony of locomotive No.142 then took place and the various locomotives posed once more for the cameras before returning to their respective companies.

The bands of both Gutenberg and Menznau provided music and a splendid meal was provided at Menznau to round off the day.

The locomotives are now in service, operating in the main between Langenthal and Wolhausen.

Reviews

Videos

Locomemory

This SBB sponsored video shows a wide selection of historic Swiss electric locomotives and one diesel, in action during 1992 at the head of a variety of trains, working the routes they used when in revenue service. With the exception of the shots of Bm4/4^{II} No.18451, which of necessity were taken on the unelectrified and rather mundane Sursee - Triengen line, the settings show some of the more spectacular scenic sections of the SBB.

The English commentary is well balanced and provides sufficient technical and historic information on each locomotive to satisfy and then leaves the viewer to enjoy the rest of the section. Better still, in most cases it does not start until one has had time to recognise the locomotive and then either congratulate oneself, or when the identification is incorrect, to mentally kick oneself.

The photography is of a high professional standard and the editing is excellent, no shot is left on screen for long enough to bore, the sequences flow naturally and are a mixture of close up shots and overall views of the trains in motion. A few well selected archive black and white sequences are included.

It falls short of being a definitive railway video in one respect only. For some reason a needless series of linking shots are provided, involving a teenager who is looking through his grandfather's photographic record of the locomotives. This is a very old device, greatly favoured before the advent of sound on film, where it could avoid the need for obtrusive captions, but rendered obsolete when a commentary could be provided to match the visuals. When properly done, not only was the

still photo provided with a large, easily read caption, but in most cases there was a smooth dissolve between the still picture and the cine sequence which followed. This is not the case here, furthermore granddad remains asleep throughout the sequences, the only action coming when the blanket slips off his knees. I was expecting him to wake at the end and tell the teenager not to interfere with his collection, but nothing happened. The inept approach of this linking sequence, which would be rejected out of hand by any half-way experienced amateur film maker, is in complete contrast with the professionalism of the railway sequences. Fortunately, VCRs have a fast forward feature which can be used to skip this part. As it was, the tape ran for well over an hour, but such was the interest I did not realise just how time was passing.

Despite this criticism, this is a video fully worth its price. It would make an ideal Christmas present for any member; if all else fails, buy it for yourself.

CJF

Portrait of the SBB Re4/4 460 : Portrait of the Zürich S-Bahn

Railorama

A member has kindly provided two video tapes produced by the SBB, the first being in two parts. It would be nice to give these videos a rave review, but I cannot.

In my opinion, the Re4/4 460 and the S-Bahn is the better of the two. It is a compilation of four short promotional films, three of which cover the Class 460 and the other the S-Bahn. Running time is 47 minutes.

The technical and constructional sections are such that the average rail student will readily understand the material. The opera-

tional shots are largely on the BLS, where the prototypes are extensively tested; many of the shots are spectacular, particularly the aerial views. Later scenes appear to have been taken in the Ticino and are not of such good quality. But the enjoyment of the spectacle was, for me, marred by music instead of the natural sound of the train, which was just discernable in the background; yet the beat of the "chopper" blades was not similarly drowned.

The S-Bahn was interesting, albeit bitty, but it is valuable for the type of coverage that an amateur could not provide. Overall the tape is well worth buying.

Railorama is in four parts and runs for an hour. The sections are entitled *Holidays and Leisure, Journeys, Cargo* and *Selection of film clips for train enthusiasts*. It employs two linking methods, one conventional, where the actors turn up in the appropriate places to say their piece, and the other, using several of them playing the parts of editor and technicians in an edit suite where the film is supposedly being made. If only it were that simple! I found this an irritating diversion from the business of selling the rail ideas and this was made worse by the omnipresent sound of electronic music (?). Further comic relief was provided by a man and wife, presumably Appenzellers in the Swiss version, but cast as North Country in the English tape. I trust that the natives of the respective parts also have a strong sense of humour.

There are some excellent shots; I liked the *Cargo* sequences, which were out of the ordinary.

At the end I settled back to enjoy 20 minutes of pure rail material scooped from the cutting room floor. It started well with the unsullied sound of trains, but this was not to last. I recommend that this section, which contains some fine scenes, is best viewed with the mute button pressed.

Not a film for me, but the children should enjoy it.

AJP.

**European Railway Atlas - Denmark,
Germany, Austria, Switzerland**
Ian Allen £8.95

This atlas is the third in the Ian Allen series and as such has a wide availability in this Swiss Express Vol.3/12 December 1993

country. Generally, the contents have been accurate and detailed, even if the layout, with only two colours available, is somewhat restricted. As its title suggests, the railways of Switzerland are included, but beware - this is not a book for providing information you can't get elsewhere.

Although the rest of the atlas is homogenous, the Swiss section is, frankly, a disappointment. It shows signs of being very much an add-on, with Germany and Austria showing as white spaces. Far worse, however, is the content of the maps.

Basically, this section shows mainly passenger lines, only four goods-only lines are shown; Etzwilen - Singen, Sursee - Treingen, Beinwil - Beromunster and Solothurn - Herzogenbuchsee. Other well known lines such as the Misoix line of the RhB and the Basel goods network, are missing completely. Equally, the only steam lines shown are the Brienz - Rothorn, Blonay - Chamby and Bauma - Hinwil (incorrectly depicted as unelectrified!). The Furka Bergstrecke is completely omitted and the RVT St.Sulpice branch shown with an electric passenger service instead of its VVT steam service.

The basic conclusion is that this section of the atlas was put together in something of a hurry, possibly from the Kummerley + Frey map. If you only want a fairly detailed rail map of Switzerland the official SBB map is much more useful; however these comments certainly do not apply to the remainder of the atlas, which can be recommended.

NJF

Schweizer Bahnen 1994 Calendar.

Loki (in conjunction with SBB). Obtainable from MITV £12.95

The Loki calendar provides a fine mixture of high quality modern colour and nostalgic black and white archive photographs of Swiss railway scenes. Colour predominates, most of the photos having been taken in 1992. The captions, in German and French for the most part give full details of the train and its location, oddly the cover picture, repeated immediately inside without any overlay, does not give a location, but most members will recognise the line between Lausanne and Montreux. There

are two further photos without any dates, one between June and July, the other - a shot of the long-departed Vevey trams crossing the SBB main line - at the very end, with a questionnaire concerning future policy. The

calendar measures 480 x 290mm and has a spiral back so that the leaves do not have to be torn off each month.

CJF

Venice Simplon Orient Express Over the Gotthard

by Sue Knight



Ae6/6 No.11414, *Bern* in red livery with chrome trim, one of the two locomotives that headed the VSOE over the Gotthard route last September

A unique event in Switzerland was the double heading of seventeen VSOE cars over the Gotthard route from Basel Hauptbahnhof to Chiasso last September. The locomotives for the task were specially rostered Ae6/6s sporting red livery and the chrome trim "moustaches" of the second series built between 1955 and 1958. The choice of these particular locomotives was dictated not only by their haulage power, needed to lift the seventeen heavy cars over one of the most taxing of Europe's main lines, but by the fact that in their striking red livery, they photograph well. This was an important consideration, since the SBB, in conjunction with all the firms who provide videos of Swiss Railways, were determined to see that the event was fully recorded for posterity.

The *Orient Express* had to be routed

through Switzerland on this occasion due to engineering works on its normal route through Austria. It was two hours late arriving at Basel, causing a headache for the SBB control staff and, much more to the point, consternation among the camera crews who had only a scant few hours of reliably daylight in which to video the event.

The two Ae6/6s, lead by 11414 *Bern*, left Basel just after 14:00, after two attempts to get the heavy train of 961 tons rolling. The age of the VSOE cars and the length of the train resulted in the brake compressors having to run almost continuously through the five and a half hours it took to reach Chiasso. As dusk fell, the two Ae6/6 uncoupled and an FS locomotive backed on for the rest of the journey through Italy.