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1992 - Centenary of the Brienz Rothorn Railway



After a construction period of less than a year, the first working train of the BRB climbed the 7.6km to the peak of the Brienz Rothorn on 31 October 1891. The official opening took place on 17 June 1892 and from then until 1914 steam trains had been running on a regular basis up and down the Brienz Rothorn. However, increased competition from other new railways in the Bernese Oberland coupled with the outbreak of World War I reduced the rail traffic to a point where it was no longer viable to run this particular service and the BRB ceased running on 9 August 1914.

The following events are planned for the Centenary year:

6 June-

25 October Photographic Competition on the theme *100 Years of the Rothorn Railway*

6-30 June Fares of 100 years ago Uphill SFr.10.00
Downhill SFr. 6.00
Return SFr. 16.00

17 June Official Anniversary Celebration and Inauguration of the new steam engine. Exactly 100 years previously, the first passenger train ran from Brienz to the Brienz Rothorn.

27 June Anniversary General Meeting of shareholders

11 July Hang Gliding on the Brienz Rothorn
Mountain Party on *Planalp*

11 September Demonstration of new steam locomotive for fans.

16 October Brienz/Entlebuch Evening on the Rothorn

1-25 October Monday to Friday: Anyone with the surname **Roth** or **Horn** may travel for a 50% discount. Tickets can be purchased (on proof of identity) at the Brienz Tourist Office. Hotels in Brienz will offer a 10% discount on their room rates.

Privatisation

The spectre of privatisation has reared its ugly head in Switzerland. The SBB has produced its own "White Paper" to set out its current position. Government subventions have averaged 14% per annum for the period 1987-90 and the SBB can no longer cover its operating costs from revenue. Moreover, it will have to find no less than SFr.2.4 billion to meet new and oppressive noise standards in the next few years, notwithstanding the introduction of much quieter rolling stock and noise shielding work.

Staff costs amount to 56% of expenditure and income per tonne from freight is 6% less than in 1973. Driver only operation and "market pricing" of IC services, more unmanned stations and reduction in "smalls" services would improve net results. Withdrawal of wagon load freight and the replacement of local trains with buses is thought not to justify the small savings that would arise, although an eye will be kept on the replacement bus services between Herzogenbuchsee and Solothurn. Even with these changes, a gap will still remain between income and expenditure.