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St. Margrethen Reconstruction

Situated close to the Swiss-Austrian border, St. Margrethen Station was opened in 1858 when the line to Chur was built, but the connection with the Austrian railway system did not take place until 1872 with the opening of the line from Lauterach. At that time the surrounding region was predominately agricultural, but the railway brought industrial development in its wake.

St. Margrethen is now home to numerous industries, which bring considerable freight traffic to the SBB, not merely from the Swiss firms, but from over the border in Austria as well.

In addition it is well served by EuroCity expresses, with well known trains such as the *Bavaria*, *Gottfried Keller*, *Schweizerland* etc. It is also a haunt for the Re4/4's fitted with modified pantographs to permit working over Austrian and German metals. With a normal tally of 136 trains each day, it is an extremely busy station, the more so since it is the terminal point of several Austrian services. In addition, the AlpTransit project envisages even greater importance for St. Margrethen as a nodal point in the East-West services. The present station, with its old fashioned track level platforms is simply not up to the work it is called upon to perform at present so, from this summer until 1995 the station is being rebuilt. Through services will use a new raised island platform, provided with subway access with both steps and ramps and extended to 420m in length, serving tracks 2 and 3. Track 1, with a 320m platform, will be used by terminating Austrian services as well as local traffic to and from St. Gallen. As well as the new platforms, the approach turnouts are being realigned to permit higher speeds, and there is a proposal to double the tracks in the St. Gallen direction. A projected plan of the rebuilt station, based on a diagram in the SBB Magazine, is given alongside - there may well be detail differences by the time it is complete.

A new electronic centralised control system is to be installed, replacing the 1907 signalling. This will eliminate the four existing boxes. Freight handling facilities are to be modernised with the creation of a Service Centre.

