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Graubünden Diversions

by Mike Polglaze

Photographs by the author

Although our ultimate destination was Millstättersee, near Spittal in southern Austria, the most direct route was via Filisur! On our way down we ran into heavy rain near Ulm and it kept up until we reached Filisur. We had a short break as we climbed up through thick clouds on the Lenzerheide Pass where the summit was above the clouds, but we soon returned to rainy weather as we dropped down to Tiefencastel.

The object of this diversion was to make the walk from Preda to Bergün. We went to bed with fingers crossed as the rain continued to pour down.

The next morning was misty and damp, but not raining as we boarded the 09:15 from Filisur. I had found some leaflets about the walk that stated it took two stunden! Not if armed with cameras and notebook. The distance is 8Km and drops 400m, or in old money, 5 miles and about 1200 feet! From Preda the path is easy to follow, being clearly marked by posts carrying a picture of a *Baby Krok* pointing the way. Every now and then there are boards giving information about the line's history and construction. Some carried timetables as well.

The route down to the spirals and Albula bridges is fairly easy going. We got there in time to watch Ge4/4^I 602 *Bernina* making light work of the seven coach *Bernina Express*.

The area abounds with wild raspberries - very nice. The pathway got rougher around the Rugnax Tunnel area and with heavy overnight rain was somewhat wet. It was around that area that Mavis suddenly went base over apex when she trod on a tree root. Apart from a couple of grazes she was OK, but in falling her camera opened and she lost 19 shots off a 36 exposure film.

Apart from the wonderful scenery there was a continuous stream of trains up and down the valley to keep our interest going. We ate our packed lunch on a scree slope opposite Muot and watched one train heading in the up direction formed of seven Fad hauled by a Ge4/4^{II}. The formation was: Loco, 1 Kieswork Untervaz, 1 RhB in grey, 3xRhB in red/brown, 1



The signs used on the footpath feature the distinctive *Baby Krok*.

RhB in a new colour scheme and another Untervaz. The one in the new colours, I think it was 8722, was a light grey with a yellow band across the top with the number on the left and the logo and RhB in full on the right. Numbering and lettering was in red. This set returned, loaded, through Filisur at around 20:30, hauled by a pair of Ge4/4^{II}s.

By lunchtime we were under clear blue skies and warm sunshine. The Bemo van was spotted on a train near Bergün. After 4 stunden we reached Bergün and a very welcome cup of coffee. It was a most enjoyable walk and, despite Mavis bouncing off a root, I would recommend it to anyone. If we had a moan, it was that, as older walkers, a few more seats along the route would have been welcome.

Whilst on the walk a "down" passenger train overtook us with a car flat, complete with one white car on it. Later on, whilst waiting for our train back to Filisur, an up passenger came through Bergün and on the rear was a car flat with a single white car. The wagon was painted grey but the drop sides were green with similar style lettering to the Fad, but in grey. Can anyone confirm this as it was past me before I



noticed it and the camera wasn't ready?

On our arrival at Filisur, the station was crowded with people, cameras, lights etc. It turned out that a Swiss TV crew from Zürich had been filming. They even had a complete train, headed by 621, parked down the siding at the Thusis end. I wondered if the white car on the wagon was part of it. By 18:00 the station had returned to normal and I managed a few hours gricing in the warm sunshine.

On the next morning it was raining again as we left to drive over the Albula pass. It didn't stop until we were between Landeck and Innsbruck, only to catch us up at Söll where we stopped overnight. The rain kept going all night and we finally lost it when we reached the southern side of the Tauern Mountains. I think Someone picked the right day for our walk!

A few notes were made during our short stay in Switzerland.

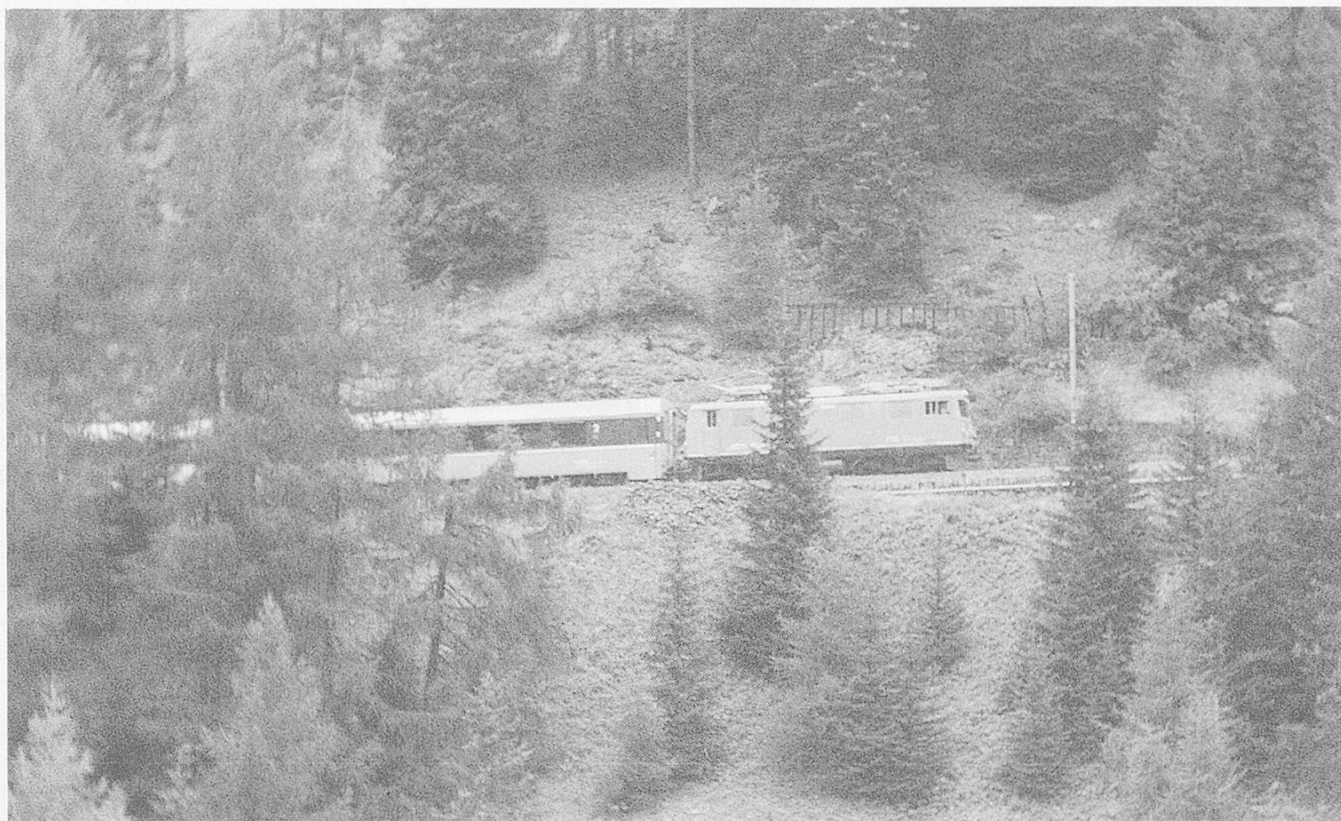
On 25 and 26 August the seven coach *Bernina Express* was made up of all new stock, I think the formation was 3xB, 1xBD, 3xA. These coaches are higher and appear to be wider than the older stock. On 25 August the

down train was hauled by Ge4/4^I 606 *Kesch* and on 26 August both up and down trains were hauled by Ge4/4^I 602 *Bernina*. Both locomotives were seen on the following mornings working G4507, 06:21 Chur, due to depart from Filisur at 07:08; quite a change of duty! The G4507 formation on 26 August was Ge4/4^I 606 *Kesch*, D4233, B Bustype, Z98, 6x4-wheel flats of round timber, 1x4-wheel flat of building blocks and Tm91, later seen at Bergün. On 27 August Ge4/4^I 602 *Bernina* hauled a similar formation except it had 2x4-wheel flats with swap bodies of building blocks and again Tm91 on the rear.

On the morning of 26 August a down freight ran through Filisur around 7.20, hauled by Ge4/4^{II} 611 *Landquart* and Ge6/6^{II} 701 *Raetia* plus four empty bogie flats. 701 was running with its pantographs down and I did wonder if it had failed or something. However, the next morning, at about the same time 701 ran through light engine in the same direction. Is it a return working for a Ge6/6^{II} from the previous evening? 701 was no doubt running dead on 26 August as they would hardly



These three photographs of the *Bernina Express*, appropriately hauled by Ge4/4^I 602 *Bernina*, were taken from the same spot.





Above: Scenic detail on the Albula line near Muot.
 Below: Going under one of the Albula viaducts.



require 4000+ hp to haul four empty bogie flats downhill. Can the Ge6/6^{II} and Ge4/4^{II} classes work in multiple?

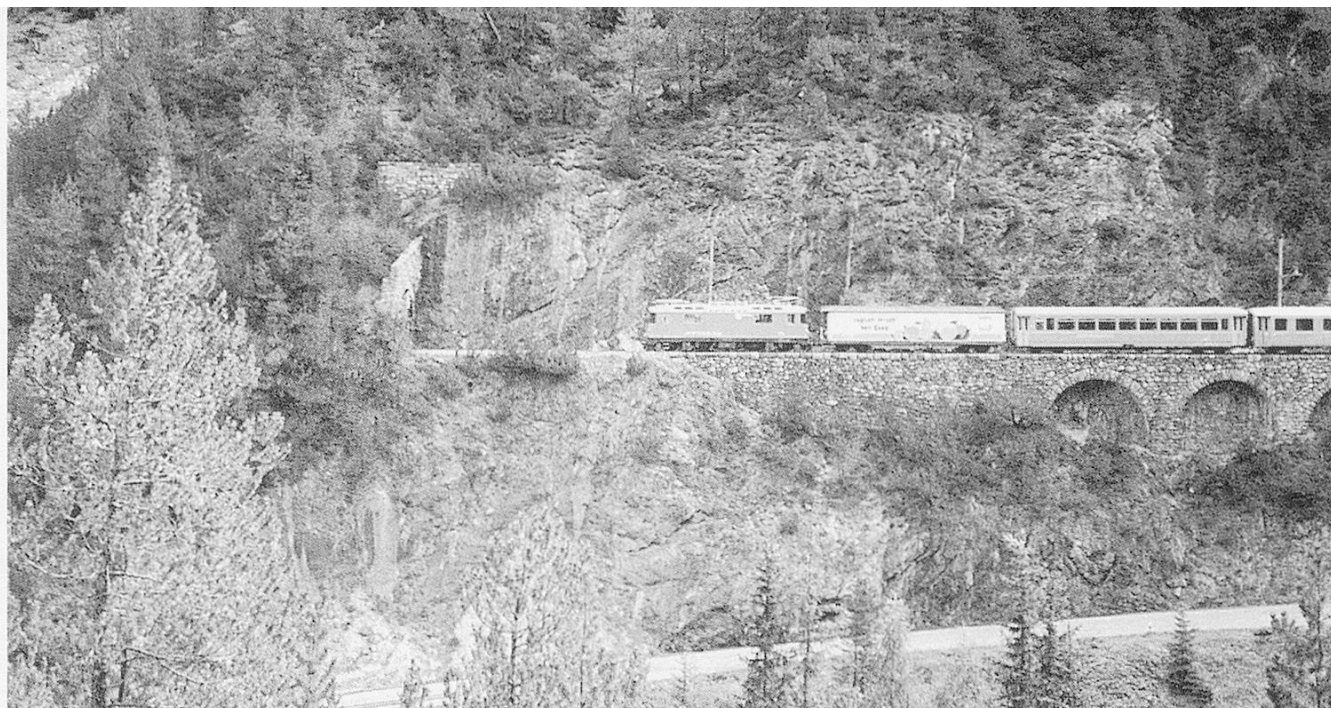
Confirming Glenn Allen's *News from Graubünden* (Swiss Express Sept.93), I didn't see any Uce in the old livery but an up freight in the afternoon of 26 August included a FO Uce formed in amongst a string of RhB Uce.

Two Ge6/6^I *Baby Kroks* were seen on up freights, both ran through Filisur at about 8.30. On 26 August it was Ge6/6^I 415 hauling 1XGb, 3XR-w with timber and Haik 5134 *Commerciale Baumaterial*. On 27 August Ge6/6^I 413 was in charge.

On the subject of Haik vans, the following were noted:

- | | |
|------|--------------------|
| 5170 | <i>Calandabrau</i> |
| 5176 | <i>Volg</i> |
| 5162 | <i>Co-op</i> |

The vans belonging to the various food chains seem to have regular evening workings out of Chur. I noted the same in 1990. The 17:52 Chur conveys a *Co-op* Haik, the following 18:52 often has a *Usego* van. It may well be a coincidence that they were running on these trains whenever I have seen them.



"Down" passenger train approaching Muot.

The Davos-Filisur Pendelzugs, were formed as follows on 26 August:

Set 1: BDt1721, AB1515, AB1510, B2337,
Ge4/4¹ 607 *Surselva*.

Set 2: BDt1731, B2340, AB1517, B2339,
Ge4/4¹ 605 *Silvretta*.

In both cases the locomotive propelled the train from Davos. On the same day the 08:55 arrival from Davos was a non-pendelzug set worked by Ge4/4¹¹ 624 *Celerina/Schlarigna*.

Although we drove from Bregenz to Chur along the N13 I didn't see a single SBB train. Most unusual!

Society Notes

The attention of members is drawn to the following points:

If a member takes a layout to an exhibition *not* organised by the Society (and this in effect means anything but the AGM), then he should ensure that the organisers provide insurance cover for his layout and stock both at the exhibition and during transit to and from the venue. This is normal practice, and involves the layout owner providing a schedule of models and their replacement value, if you are not asked to perform this check, and if you are not assured in writing of insurance cover, decline the invitation.

We would draw all Member's attention to the final paragraph of Rule 3, which states that members may not use the name of the Society for personal gain. This includes obtaining footplate rides or access to Railway Works etc. Swiss Railways often welcome interested enthusiasts, but it is necessary for individuals to make their own approach through the company's headquarters if they wish to go beyond the very relaxed public boundaries. In many cases station and train staff will offer

access to restricted places to an interested passenger on an informal basis. Having been granted such privileges, it is of course, quite in order to mention afterwards that you are a member, but your membership card is not to be regarded as a pass. The Committee give notice that if any member is known to have misused his membership in this fashion, it may exercise its discretion to terminate membership of the individual concerned.

The Constitution was amended at the AGM to include two additional officers. A reprint will be made in due course, in the meantime would members add to Clause 4, line 3, after "Editor" "Publicity and Exhibitions Officer, Sales Officer".

We would apologise for the very late delivery of Membership Cards to many Members. This was entirely due to the Post Office which succeeded in mislaying a complete batch. The only good thing was that they didn't lose them but if any Member has not yet received his card would he write to the *NEW* Membership Secretary, **B.J.Hemming, 3 Little Heath Road, Chobham, Woking, Surrey GU24 8RP.**