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NAMED TRAINS OF FRANCE

Author; Derek Wilde

60 pages, 210mm x 148mm. Price £3.95 post paid in UK or add 50p per copy for overseas from Mr A Hart, SNCF Society, 14 Keats Close, Earls Barton, Northampton NN6 0PR. Sterling cheques (GBP) only accepted, payable to The SNCF Society.

The author has made it a long-term labour of love to research all the named trains that have run within France and over a hundred different names, mainly official but also some unofficial, have been identified which are listed alphabetically. In each case the origin of the name is given together with the start and end points, the periods during which the train has operated and in most cases additional information and comment. Whilst this is essentially a book devoted to France, those named trains running to Bâle (Basel) and Geneva are included in the main body of the text. There is a very comprehensive appendix listing for completeness the international trains originating or terminating in France or passing through France but both originating or terminating in other countries. Here there are many references to Switzerland but as only the end stations are shown it is not always apparent that the train may pass through Switzerland. The book has colour covers and centre spread and is illustrated with black and white photographs throughout. Unfortunately in some cases the quality of reproduction leaves a little to be desired but this is outweighed by the subject matter. This is an excellent publication and well worth its modest cost. It is thoroughly recommended and a very commendable effort by our friends at the SNCF Society.

CHERNEX

Editors Note: Paul Russenberger was sitting in the train on page 28 when the photograph was taken.

The following three books have one thing in common; they are all written or edited by friends! However, they provide very different outlooks on Switzerland's Railway Scene. First a look at "Bahn 2000", the greatest revolution on the Network in 90 years. Then a lot of statistical information and finally a historical look at what is a rarity in Switzerland: steam engines!

GMH

MEHR ZUG FÜR DIE SCHWEIZ

Editors: Christian Kräuchi and Ueli Stöckli. Published by: AS Verlag, Buhnrain 30, CH - 8052 Zürich. Language: both German and French editions are available. 272 pages, no less than 465 illustrations in full colour. 9 x 12 inches, hardback. German text version: ISBN 3-909111-06-8. French text version: ISBN 3-909111-07-6. Price SFr 98 or Euro 59,80.

Then we have the Bahn 2000 odyssey. "Mehr Zug für die Schweiz - die Bahn 2000 Story, compiled by Christian Kräuchi and Ueli Stöckli. This is a big book for a big occasion. The Bahn 2000 project will totally transform the Swiss timetable. It involves the first really major new railway construction in 90 years, since 1913, when both the Lötschberg route and the lines into the Lower Engadin were opened. The Editors, Christian Kräuchi and Ueli Stöckli have compiled a series of articles by different authors, most of them having held key posts in their respective fields during the long realization of this monumental work. Because of this, they obviously are able to give not only a competent, but also a very personal insight into the complexities of this monumental project. It is fascinating to read, how all the many very different components finally fall into place in such a huge undertaking. Christian Kräuchi has been connected with the SBB Press Office right through the time major works for Bahn 2000 were carried out: from 1989 as editor and 1995-2001 as its leader. Since 2002 he is the press officer for the infrastructure division. He has become a friend, even though he did not always appreciate my very personal way of leading up to a question at press conferences! Ueli Stöckli was responsible within the SBB for the planning and realization phases of Bahn 2000.

The articles cover almost every aspect of the long process of constructing major new sections, as well as hundreds of improvements to the existing railway network. Everything from idea, via conception, political debate, setting out, dealing with protests, construction, testing, fitting everything into the network and

future use is covered. The story of the new tilting trains, so vital to increasing the speed on sections that could not be upgraded, is also told. A special goodie is included with this book: a very large foldout-plan of the 2005 graphical timetable, showing how everything connects, as well as the hourly departure and arrival times at most stations. As stated before, this is a big book in every way.

GMH

BAHNPROFIL SCHWEIZ 05 / LE RAIL SUISSE EN PROFIL 05

Author: Hans G. Wägli. Published by himself at: Diplory Verlag, CH – 3308 Grafenried.

Languages: German and French throughout. 142 pages, 10" x 4", soft back. Obtainable post free to the UK by sending a £20 note in an envelope direct to the publishers address above.

Please print your name and address clearly!

First of all, the statistics. Hans Wägli's book "Schienennetz Schweiz" has been the definitive bible of the Swiss Railway Network. It is a mine of statistical information on gradients, lengths of tunnel and bridges as well as track layouts of stations. It is profusely illustrated and it is just about perfect. The only thing wrong with it: it was too big and far too heavy to carry around with you on your trips. But now Hans Wägli has published himself a 10" x 4" pocket version of his Guide: "Bahnprofil Schweiz 05". It contains all the pertinent statistical information, as well as the gradient diagrams for all the Swiss Rail lines (SBB, private companies and mountain railways) in a slightly reduced form, which is still, however, readable. Information on the stations is included, like on which side of the track they lie, which is important in planning photography. The track layouts are also included, which for Zürich and Basel are very impressive! It also contains the actual (not tariff-) distances between the stations, information that has been missing from the official Swiss Timetable for some time now. The best thing about it is, that it only weighs 8 ounces! I carry it in my bag! The 142-page booklet has French and German text throughout. It is very much up to date and includes the new lines and routes built for the totally new 2005 timetable. And in case you had wondered, the publisher's name "Diplory" comes from a one or two axle bogie, with a central swivelling carrying fork on top. Light and secondary railways use them for transporting long objects, like logs and steel beams! Hans Wägli himself is not only a long time friend, but also a big fan of the Swiss Railway Society and is occasionally spotted wearing its tie, like to the AGM of "Eisenbahn Amateur"!

GMH

A 3/5, TIGERLI, ELEFANT & CO

Author: Christian Zellweger, with help from the SBB Historic archives. Published by AS Verlag, Buhnrain 30, CH - 8052 Zürich. Language: German. 160 pages, 195 illustrations in b/w and colour, 9 1/2 x 10 inches, hardback. ISBN 3-909111-09-2. Price SFr 54 or Euro 32.

Last but certainly not least is a new book written by another friend: Christian Zellweger. He has already written a book on one of the items in the SBB Historic collection, the RAe TEE. Now he has written a book about the Steam Locomotives in the collection. Steam locomotives had rather a short-lived history in Switzerland. Coal and oil deposits are almost nonexistent and as two world wars cut the Swiss off from imports, electrification was pushed to the limit right from the start. All the more so, as hydroelectric power is one of the few natural resources that we do have. But we did have steam locomotives in Switzerland; we even build some famous ones! Some of them still survive today in the collection of SBB Historic. Christian Zellweger tells us their stories: starting with the famous A 3/5 No. 705, which is 100 years old this year. A large part of this book is dedicated to this engine. But there are also sections on eleven others, like the "elephant" C 5/6, the "little tiger" E 3/3, the "hay bag" Eb 3/5. Then the Ec 2/5 "Genf" of 1858, the "Limmat" of the Spanish bun railway Baden-Zürich, the CZm 1/2 steam railcar of the Uerlikon-Bauma Bahn and the Ed 2x2/2 Mallet. Not forgetting the famous steam-driven rotary snowplough of the Gotthard Bahn. All illustrated with historical, as well as current photos. The one unfortunate thing about this book is, that it is written in German only. Get your dictionaries out!

GMH

EISENBAHNATLAS SCHWEIZ

Published by Scheers & Wall, 2004, 96 pages, 28 x 24 cm, hardback, ISBN 3-89494-122-7.

Readers who are familiar with Scheers & Wall's excellent Eisenbahnatlas Deutschland will not be surprised that they have produced another great product – they may be surprised that this new Atlas is even better. Whereas Germany was mapped at a scale of 1:300,000, Switzerland is rendered at 1:150,000. Consequently, the Swiss maps are both more attractive and contain more detail. Indeed, the Eisenbahnatlas Schweiz contains an astonishing amount of information. All lines, open and closed, are shown. Federal and private railways are distinguished; each type of electrification indicated; standard and narrow gauge; adhesion and rack shown. Gradients are indicated. Tunnels and viaducts are shown. Distances and heights are included for each station. Major geographical features are also mapped, as are cantonal borders. Locations of railway museums and facilities and even major factories are shown. Kursbuch numbers are given beside each line. Dates of closure of lines are included. All types of mountain railway are included. Beside each map is a summary of non-Federal railways, mountain railways and closed lines. Former train ferries and present steamboats are indicated.

Even more details than on the main maps are included in enlargements of major centres – Basel, Schaffhausen, Zurich, Luzern, Bern, Lausanne, Geneva, Montreux-Vevey, Aigle, Locarno and Lugano. These enlargements, which are at 1:50,000, include the tramway networks. There are separate overview diagrams of each tram system. Also included are small overview maps of Switzerland summarising the locations of private railways, narrow-gauge railways, rack railways, mainline service frequencies, routes of panoramic trains, and locations of historic trains and steam boats. The maps are completely up-to-date – indeed they show in detail the Mattstetten-Rothrist line opening in December 2004. They also show projects, such as new lines or track duplications, now underway or planned. The volume includes a location index, a list of tunnels, and a list of railway companies with postal, telephone, fax, internet and email contact details. Similarly, there is a listing of historic trains. Almost all of the German text and explanations is also given in English (and French and Italian). The volume is fairly light and thus ideal to have when travelling in Switzerland. It is equally ideal for studying Swiss railways at home. Every reader will learn new things about Swiss railways.

The Eisenbahnatlas Schweiz is that rare type of book which, once obtained, one wonders how one ever managed without it. It is recommended unreservedly.

Burkli

TPC 2: THE AIGLE LINES : AL – AOMC - ASD

DVD produced by MITV. R/t 54 Minutes. For prices see the adverts in this magazine. Available from MITV direct or through SRS Sales. MITV's website is www.mitv.co.uk

This DVD is a companion to TPC 1, which covered the BVB line out of Bex. j16

It is a first class production which covers the three metre gauge lines out of Aigle in turn, in the form of a trip up the AL, followed by a trip down the AOMC, then a trip up the ASD. The link between the top of the AL and the top of the AOMC is subtle and easily missed. One minute you are on the mountains above the AL, next you are going down the cable car at Champéry to catch the AOMC train.

The photography is excellent but just a few of the shots seemed clipped, which is a bit surprising as MITV are usually good at letting each scene run its course. It can have been no easy task fitting all three lines into a 54-minute programme. As usual, Malcolm Brown's commentary is informative but never obtrusive.

Most of the recording was done in bright sunshine but some parts of the trips are covered in winter and many of the snow scenes are superb. The camera views switch between lineside, from the train and aerial shots and are apparently of the same train as it progresses on its journey. I often wonder how they manage this.

It should be noted that the accent is on the area through which the lines run and some of the places of interest along the way. The three trains featured are of modern stock, which your reviewer considers are relatively unattractive; older, and perhaps more interesting, stock features hardly at all.

If you are looking for a cavalcade of interesting metre gauge stock you will be disappointed but for an armchair ride on some of the most delightful railways in Switzerland this could not be beaten.

Hafenmund