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100 Years Chur-Arosa



Alan Conway and Tony Cutler give some further views of the anniversary weekend

Following on from Mario Gavazzi's excellent article in Swiss Express 121 we would like to highlight some additional points from the weekend that was very well organised by the Rhätische Bahn. The celebrations were mainly based around Arosa where the new station and footbridge were officially opened on the Saturday morning. None of the stations en-route took part, although at Chur Allegra No.3505 was being used as a "Lok" simulator, while several sales and display stands were located just inside the station building from the Arosa platform. The main focus was a Snowdome at Arosa that featured displays and a video screen (that at times needed screening from the sun) showing the story of the line. There were also the usual food and drink market stalls and an area where these products could be consumed. A horse drawn post coach was also giving rides around the area.

There were three special trains hauled by Ge4/4^{II} locomotives,

a nice touch on a mainly Allegra-operated line.

The 'Edelweiss Arosa Express', which ran two return trips daily, was featured in the March magazine. The driver wore his pilot's uniform while driving and also made announcements from 'the cockpit.' Sabrina and Stephanie, the flight attendants, told us that they thoroughly enjoyed their two days on the train handing out Beberlei cakes, water or apple juice, and that it was a different dimension compared with the aisle in their aircraft. Negotiating doors and bridging plates between coaches (not to mention the open one), as the train swept round the sharp curves on the line, was obviously a total change!

The 'Alpine Classic Pullman Express' had Pullman Cars formed this service which also ran two daily returns was hauled by No.625. This train was naturally very popular. It included the famous piano-bar-car and was a superb way to enjoy the Arosa line.



ABOVE: Ge 4/4^{II} 627 has been added to the fleet of 100 year liveried locomotives and celebrates the Chur-Arosa centenary.*

LEFT: The Pullman special headed by Ge4/4^{II} 625 Küblis stands in front of the new station.**

BELOW LEFT: The steam snow plough was hard at work in the sidings.**

RIGHT: En route on the Lightzug. The huge lights showing out of the centre coach illuminate the view at night. The panoramic coaches were almost but not quite in total darkness, hence a little bit of internal reflections in this shot.*


BELOW RIGHT: The secondary platform's lack of cover provides interesting underfoot conditions for a full trainload of passengers.**





The 'Lichtzug' (Light Train) was formed of four Bernina panoramic carriages with two either side of a centre door car, in which was mounted huge coloured spotlights that shone out lighting up the countryside. This service ran one return trip on Saturday evening and was lightly loaded on the Chur-Arosa leg where most, but not all, internal lights were turned off. It was very full on its return trip when all the lights were off. Some small battery operated candles in glass pots were handed out to each table on leaving Arosa, but unfortunately all you could hear was the sound of these pots sliding around on the tables! Highlight of this trip had to be the famous Langwies viaduct, which had its structural elements illuminated with strip lighting that really stood out in the dark. The Sunday working of the "Lichtzug" only ran in service from Arosa after the stock worked-up empty during the late afternoon. Loco No.627,

repainted in 'Arosa 100' livery, along with No.623 in 'RhB 125' livery double headed this train. This did mean that it was difficult to obtain decent photographs, but on Monday No.627 could be seen during daylight hauling the Pullman Cars back to Landquart.

There was a children's trip featuring the character 'Cla Ferrovia' and this was hauled by Ge 4/4' No.610 that had been in storage at Landquart so it was nice to see it back in service. It hauled the short historic green coaches from Chur to Litziruti. On the Sunday it stabled at Langwies and its empty stock working back to Litziruti to pick the children up was advertised as a service train – needless to say we took full advantage along with a local enthusiast! Incidentally, Ge 4/4" No.624 has received a livery giving thanks for having 50,000 'fans' on Facebook that features a montage of various faces. 



ABOVE: Ge 4/4^{II} 625 with the Alpine Classic Pullman stock crosses the Langwies Viaduct on Sunday 14 December bound for Chur.*

LEFT: This 5 hp Post Bus has no traction problems in the icy conditions.**

BELOW LEFT: The first opening ceremony took place at the foot of the stairs to the footbridge; passengers for the Chur train had the option of using the lift to footbridge level.**

RIGHT: While the second dedication ceremony continues on the footbridge, Ge4/4II 625 Küblis waits to leave on the 1216 Pullman service to Chur.**

BELOW RIGHT: Ge 4/4 II 610 at Chur arrives to form the kids special on the Sunday.*

* PHOTOS: Alan Conway
** PHOTOS: Nick Freezer

