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Video and Book Reviews

Ae8/14 Cab ride - Zurich to Buchs - MITV Ltd.
Price £19.95. See ads for address.

Those who are addicts of the cab ride video will find this very much to their liking. Even the tunnels are included for those who may wish to 'drive' the train to a timetable reference. But those who are not normally so keen on the cab ride should consider this video very carefully.

The unique Ae8/14 is far removed from its normal operating area as it takes over a 16 coach 'Orient Express' rake for part of its journey from Paris to Venice. There are some archive shots of the loco and its experimental sisters with a brief history but for me, the film was made particularly interesting by the description of the lines joining and leaving the route at junctions and of features en route. Interior shots in the cab are an added attraction.

The usual high quality MITV attention to detail and film quality is maintained. There is one geographical slip but I doubt whether it will be spotted.

I am not a cab ride fan but I certainly enjoyed this.

AJP

Clouds on the Brienzer Rothorn by Peter Arnold - 64pps, B5 profusely illustrated. Price £10.00 inc. P&P (UK), Plateway Press, PO Box 973, Brighton, BN2 2TG, (Add £1 worldwide.)

I must declare an interest in that some of my photographs are in the book but this in no way colours my view that this publication, by one of our members, is one of the best of its kind I have seen.

It has the merit that the text is concise and well written and has been meticulously researched. It is embellished by diagrams and tables. So often, such books might deter the non technical reader. Not so in this case for I found it a 'good read' and any prospective visitor to the line should not only study Chapter 12, "The route described", but also look at the recently MITV video (reviewed in the December 'Swiss Express').

The print quality and production is of a high standard. Good value and well recommended.

AJP

Swiss Rail Lines - Montreux-Oberland Bernois Railway: Leslie Heath; Heath Publishing Services, 7 Pauline Gardens, Billericay, Essex, CM12 0LB. 60pps. A5 portrait; 3 colour, 96 b&w. ISBN 1 898399 01-8. £8.50 post free UK.

This book is the first in a series on Swiss railways from the author. It is subtitled 'A photographic guide to the Locomotives, Railcars together with some of the Rolling stock and stations', which summarises its contents well. A short but comprehensive history of the line precedes a pictorial journey from Montreux to Lenk. A selection of the line's stock is then pictured, including both external and interior views. A current stock list completes the book, with an indication of the current use of each of the power units. The author does not pretend to be an expert, acknowledging technical advice from Beat Feller on the basic information included in the book.

The book brings across the diversity of the MOB very well. Not unnaturally, the Panoramic Express in its many varieties takes pride of place, but the remainder of the fleet is well covered, with additions to last summer being included. The main stations are well covered, but the line's spectacular scenery only appears as a backdrop to the trains. The photographs (all uncredited) are well chosen and presented; colour is restricted to the covers. The fleet list includes a wealth of detail, including (for those with a penchant for minutiae) what the chassis of the Panoramic fleet originally ran under and the advertising livery carried by the many vans. For the casual reader, an explanation of the stock codes is given for the passenger stock, but is omitted for the goods stock.

From the reviewers viewpoint, the most annoying omission is the rubbish train from Saanen to Wimmis (a chance to show off the MOB's 'green' pedigree as well as the rollböcke in use). Other lines in the MOB group and future developments are mentioned in passing.

A worthwhile and pleasing study of an interesting line.

NJF