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So read the notice on Bergün station. This we saw when making a quick trip to the village before dinner after arriving on Thursday and quickly unpacking our luggage at the Hotel Grischuna, Filisur. It looked worthy of a visit and Sunday morning was thus pencilled in on the flexible itinerary.

Various localities had notices detailing the festprogramm and details of all train arrivals and departures at Bergün throughout the period of the fest. were given.

Thus it was that we found ourselves on Sunday at a flag bedecked Bergün station at 9.15 waiting for the fest. to begin, as advertised, at 9.30. A line of vans and departmental coaches, including Gbk-v vans carrying Mobil Pfister, Eugenio and Zürich Relax liveries, was parked on the siding by the loading platform.. These it appeared would be used for sales areas or stores for the sales stands and refreshments stalls situated in front of them. The ubiquitous tables and forms were in evidence with some under cover. At first sight it appeared this might be another of the 'here we are; have a beer and bratwurst and make the best of it' celebrations. However this was proved not to be the case at this very well organised event under the direction of the Albula-Bahn-Club and the RhB Bergün/Bravuogn.

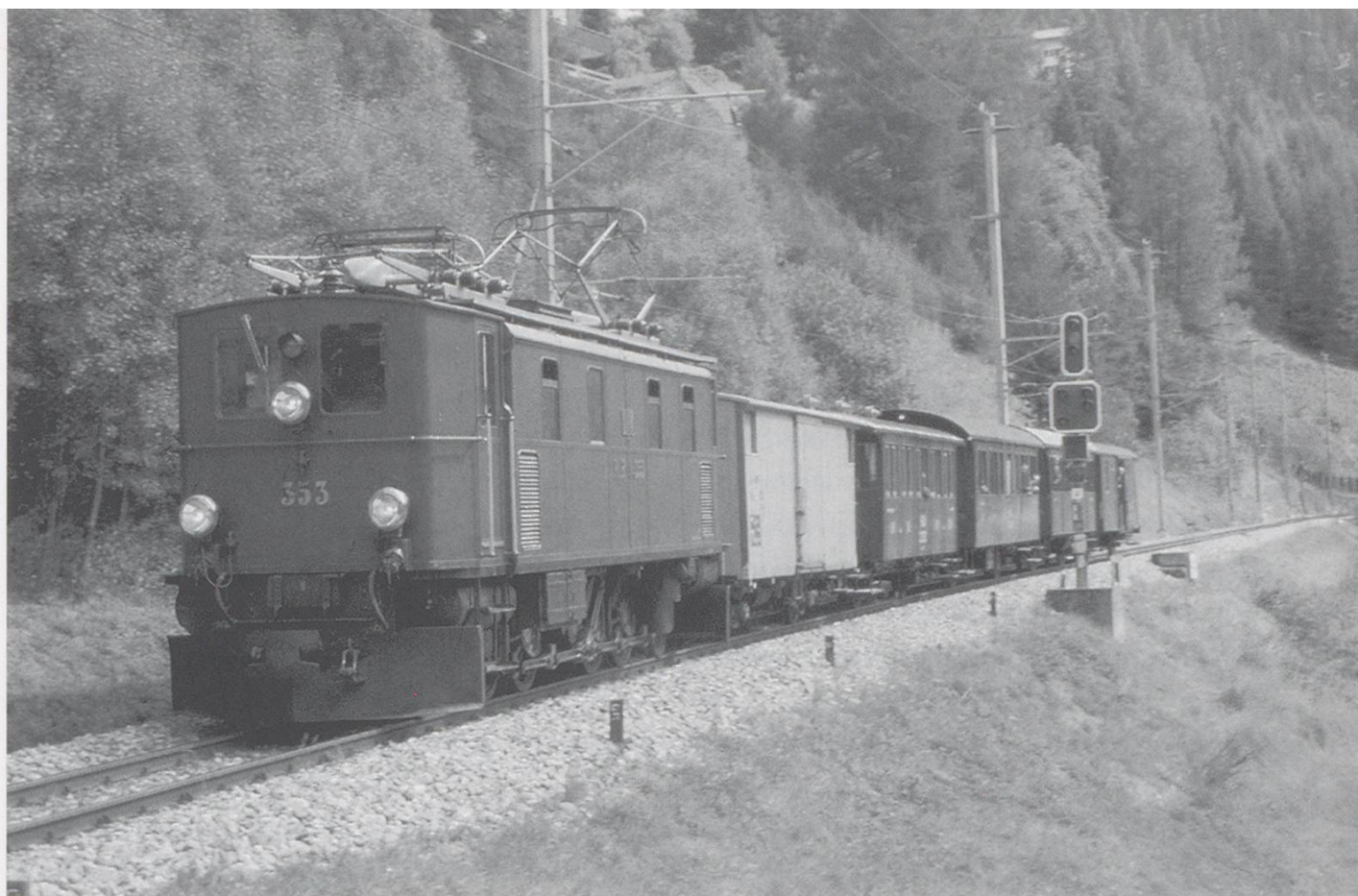
A large scale coal-fired model of a RhB G4/5 steam loco was being prepared and tested on a large circuit of track of approx. 71/2" gauge. The loco was numbered 130 - the last in the prototype series being 129! A walk down the to the last van of the still empty stalls revealed two forlorn seated figures who sprang to life in greeting and were Sue and Chris from MITV. A short visit to

Bergün was destined to last until late into the evening

The biennial festival gradually unfolded as stalls from Mark Sports - Bergün, PRModellbau - Fideris and various RhB and Albula-Bahn-Club souvenirs and refreshments stands opened. A quartet seated under the awning of the loading platform provided pleasant music.

The first of the special trains was not until 10.30. The museum in Bergün was having three special half hour running sessions during the day of the HOm layout of Bergün to Preda. It was decided to view the first operation at 10.30. The last time I saw the model it was lacking scenery and trains had to be pushed over problem areas (the wiring still being developed). The model is now in a much more advanced stage with nearly all the scenery completed or in place and it ran very well. The whole layout can be walked round and whilst it may not have quite the same accuracy or detail as the well known models of Filisur, Disentis and now Preda it is a must for RhB fans and modellers who visit the area. (The museum has restricted opening times - see Model Shop Guide). One train on the layout seemed rather strange to me - a crocodile Ge 6/6 pulling a car carrying wagon (Sk1) three Aussichtswagen and another car carrier; the significance would reveal itself later. As the models stopped we made our way back to the station, which was much more crowded, and to Mark Sports stall at which MITV videos, amongst other things, were being sold and signed by Chris or whoever had the pen.

In the station was an historic train composed of Ge 4/6 353 and coaches C2012



RhB Ge 4/6 no.353 leaving Bergün for Filisur with historic train on 05/09/99

Photo. Dave Howsam

(newly restored), B2060, A1102 and D4052. Later in the day Xk9398 (a grey Gk) was added to the consist. Photographers - still and video - were everywhere but it was well organised and good humoured.

After the Ge 4/6 departed for Preda the light dawned as to why my "strange" train was on the museum layout - it was a model of the second special train which now pulled in to the station. The Railrider, plying between Preda and Filisur, offered a trip behind Ge 6/6 412 in one of three Aussichtswagen. As one is not allowed to travel next to the loco in one of these, for fear of sparks from the pantograph, the bogie wagon (Skl) is placed between the open coach and the loco; one at each end being necessary to allow for running round at Preda and Filisur. (We once walked all the way over from Davos to Langweis via the Strela Pass, on a trip organised by the Stolzenfels Hotel, only to find that our

reserved Aussichtswagen had been coupled next to the triebwagen and so could not be used. The air was bluer than anything sparks from a pantograph could have created.) After a suitable period of time in the station and innumerable photographs 412 too departed for Preda. As it shot over the level crossing it showed remarkable acceleration and turn of speed, catching out quite a few photographers.

Lunch, with a wider variety of food available than is the usual case, was next. A large number of enthusiasts were present including members of SRS as well as local families and tourists. After drinks and food, souvenirs were the most popular buy. I resisted all temptation at the PR-Modellbau stall.

After lunch instead of travelling on the trains, as intended, we had the pleasure of chasing and filming them with Sue and Chris. The first location was by the tunnel

just before Bergün (coming from Filisur). The festprogramm was invaluable with all the train times. A quick dash followed to photograph the Railrider on Viaduct 111 near Preda. Next stop was Preda and as Chris tried to squeeze the car through spaces too narrow we again had to hump equipment over fields and set up on ground where it was advisable to keep moving or you sank. This location was somewhat disappointing as it was by the spot where one of the RhB publicity posters was set but thanks to the new track layout the same effect could not

be obtained. Finally we went on to Preda station to await 353 and the historic train. While Sue did all the hard work, as usual, Chris and I analysed the track plan in detail!

It was back to Bergün, coffee and cakes, and a ride behind the model steam fired G 4/5 for Chris. After a last look round everything was packed up and we after a very pleasant drink and hospitality at Mark Sports it was time to return to Filisur.

A very well organised, friendly event which I thoroughly recommend to any one in the area in two year's time.

THE EDITOR IS STILL LOOKING FOR A PHOTOGRAPHIC EDITOR TO ASSIST IN ARRANGING PHOTO SPREADS AND SOURCING UP TO DATE AND OLD PHOTOGRAPHS. A REGULAR VISITOR TO SWITZERLAND WOULD BE IDEAL, SOMEONE WHO CAN TAKE GOOD SHARP PHOTOGRAPHS AND IS ORGANISED! REWARDS? NONE EXCEPT THE SATISFACTION OF HAVING DONE A GREAT JOB HELPING KEEP SWISS EXPRESS IN FRONT OF THE OTHERS. GIVE ME A CALL TO DISCUSS IT. TEL 01905 358440

Track and other workmen try to rerail the postal flat as described in Andy Nelson's article at Bergün in September 1999

Photo. Andy Nelson

