

Book reviews

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**Schienennetz
Schweiz and
Bahnprofil
Schweiz
CH+**

**- the ultimate
collection of
statistics and
historical
facts about**

all the railways of Switzerland.

Author: Hans G. Wägli. Published by AS Verlag A.G., Buhnrain 30, CH-8052 Zürich. Languages: German and French. Main book (Schienennetz): 176 pages, 250 photographs mostly in b+w. Format: 8 x 10 inches, hardcover. Reference booklet to take on trips (Bahnprofil): 208 pages, 4 x 10 inches soft cover. Sold together in a cardboard cover. ISBN 978-3-909111-74-9 Price in Switzerland: CHF148 or €98. Internet: www.as-verlag.ch

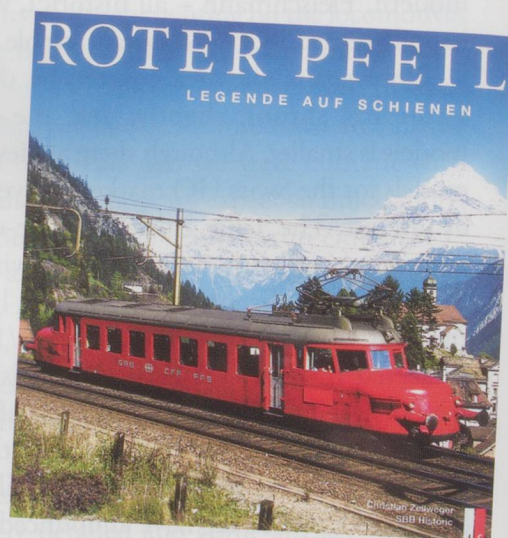
This is an expensive set but what you get is quite phenomenal: all the statistics and historical facts about all the railways in Switzerland. The companion "Bahnprofil" gives profiles and very detailed descriptions of all Swiss railways and even some across the border, hence the CH+. There is so much information in the books, I cannot list all the headings, just a representative sample. The main book, the "Schienennetz" contains the following main chapters: opening and closing dates; double-track lines; electrification; funiculars; trams in the major cities; traffic between different gauges; names and initials of the companies (12 pages!); bridges; tunnels; abandoned tunnels; bibliography; graphic maps. The reference booklet "Bahnprofil" carries the subtitle "a technical travel companion", and that is exactly what it is, as this slim book should be in your pocket or bag whenever you are travelling! The several hundred profiles each carry not only the graphic illustration, but over forty further technical details of trackside interest: system of electrification or diesel or steam traction; gauge; which system of rack; tunnels and bridges; signaling (including ETCS 2); station layouts; length, rise and fall (in %) of gradients. And still more: bridges and tunnels are listed separately in more detail, as are the exact layouts of forty main stations. Texts in both books are often quite critical - but always based on a profound knowledge of the pertinent facts. As it has become common practice for companies to juggle facts and statistics this made a lot of additional research in archives and on site necessary giving the reader an incredible amount of information, saving

hundreds of hours of research! It is highly recommended for professionals, scholars and as a reference book for club libraries. The Author, Hans G. Wägli, takes a keen interest in our Society and actually has worn the SRS tie on several official occasions! The Publishers list him as a "Railwayman". This is spot on. His whole career has been with the SBB: starting as station-apprentice, serving in a graded position, moving on to librarian and press-officer. Then he became project leader of the "150 Years Swiss Railways" festivities. Until his retirement in 2006 he was responsible for Culture, Partnerships and... Statistics! As a Council member for the "Chemins de Fer du Kaeserberg", he shows a heart for model railways. He has also been a personal friend of the reviewer for a long time! Well done, Hans, Thank you! 

**Roter Pfeil
(Red Arrow -
a legend on
the rails)**


Author:
Christian
Zellweger,
SBB Historic.
Published by
AS Verlag A.G.,
Buhnrain 30,
CH-8052
Zürich.


Language:
German. 144 pages,
172 photographs (Mostly in sepia and b+w, plus
one-third in full colour).
Format: 9 x 9 inches, hardcover.
ISBN 978-3-909111-77-0
Price in Switzerland: CHF54, or €32.
Internet: www.as-verlag.ch



Unlike the British RAF flying team, the Swiss Red Arrows were fast, lightweight railcars, based on the French "Micheline" and "Bugatti", also the German "Gläserne Zug" and "Fliegender Hamburger".

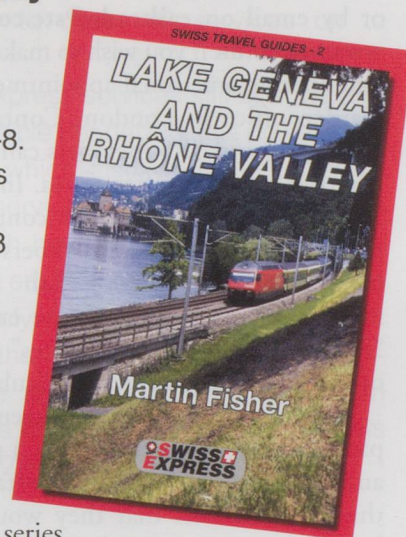
Some members may count themselves fortunate in having seen one, however more than a dozen were built, (all were red!), and the book describes all types. The first series appeared 1935/37. They were single 4-axle units with the famous long "noses" at both ends. Nine units were built, seven electric, plus two diesel ones that were later converted to electric traction. A few of these units survive today in various ownerships and states of repair. The second series, two three-part diesel units, appeared in 1937/38, with sloping fronts and known as the "Schienenblitz" - Track-Flashes. These survive in storage and in various states of repair. Thirdly came the most famous one, a double-unit with noses specially built for the Swiss National Exhibition of 1939. Winston Churchill used this unit for his tour of Switzerland in September 1946, after which it became known as the "Churchill-Pfeil". With


tables between the seats and a very small kitchen, it survives today and can be rented as a unit with catering. Finally, two double-units with "normal" fronts were built in 1953 and scrapped in 1979/85. After the war the units were well used for excursions and charters. The book records that on Sunday, the 4th of August 1951 no less than six Red Arrows were riding around Switzerland: the "Churchill-Arrow"; one of the "Schienenblitze" (converted to a double-unit) and four single units. The author has done a good job in collecting an impressive amount of photographs and drawings of the various types however, with a small but interesting subject, some material has inevitably been published before. For readers with a working knowledge of German, the book is a good read, while others will enjoy the comprehensive collection of recent and historic photographs on a very interesting subject which, together with the scale drawings, form an invaluable source of information for modellers. Christian Zellweger is the author of three other books written for SBB Historic and published by AS Verlag and he edits the quarterly historical magazine on Swiss Railways "Semaphor". 

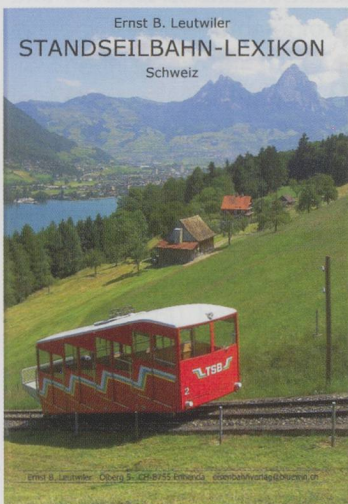
cable hauled toboggans that are no longer in use. To help locate the operations, maps are printed in the end papers. Anyone with an interest in funiculars will be fascinated by the extreme variety of them in Switzerland as well as following their development from the early wooden cars, through 1930s styling to modern efficient cars with goods platforms. Despite the text being exclusively in German, it is clear and easy to follow. The accompanying DVD shows fully the Braunwald Bahn, with fascinating sequences (in black and white) of the development of this system, right up to the present day cars, and shorter sequences of other Seilbahnen. The commentary is spoken in slow clear German, and again is easy to follow with a rudimentary grasp of the language. A significant book – not cheap – but will be welcomed by anyone with an interest in these marvellous machines. This indispensable guide will become THE reference book to the amazing variety of Swiss funiculars. Leutwiler Verlag also produces two DVDs on Swiss funiculars, as well as a range of books. A listing and a discount voucher is also included with each book. 

Swiss Travel Guides No. 2 – Lake Geneva and the Rhône Valley

Author: Martin Fisher (SRS Membership Secretary): ISBN 978-0-9563436-2-8. Published by the Swiss Railways Society. Paperback A5 size. 48 pages with numerous colour illustrations. Price: £7.00 by mail order from Society Sales, or £6.00 from our stand at exhibitions.



This is the second in a series of pocket sized booklets that is intended to cover all of Switzerland. The first book has proved to be a successful publication. Volume 2 starts by defining the region and the various ways of travelling there from the U.K., following this with information on fares and ticketing. Starting with the City of Geneva, the author takes us along the main line to Brig, and also up to the southern end of Lake Neuchatel including the SW stretches of the Swiss Jura, describing the towns and travel possibilities along the way. The guide is clearly written with details of most of the sights and travel opportunities in the area. There are also thumbnail sketches of the smaller transport operations that will be encountered in the area. However, it is not just a book for transport enthusiasts but its broad scope will also appeal to the many different types of traveller to Switzerland. There is a wide selection of photographs from the collections of both the author and his SRS colleague David Stevenson and the book concludes with a useful Bibliography together with outline details of some hotels SRS members have used when in the area. A recommended addition to your library. 



Standseilbahn – Lexikon Schweiz.

Hard back, 24.5 cms X 17.5 cms. 176 pages. Many illustrations both colour and black and white on all pages. German text. Comes complete with a 46 minute DVD. Published January 2011 by Ernst B. Leutwiler Verlag, CH-8755 Ennenda, Switzerland. ISBN 3-9066816-5.

Price in UK: £58 (includes delivery directly from Switzerland). Make cheques out to Mr. R. Smith (who acts as the publisher's UK agent) and send to: 'Rhus', Banff Road, Keith, AB55 5ET.

This is a major work, detailing 90 of Switzerland's funiculars (Standseilbahnen). Since the first funicular in 1877 (Lausanne – Ouchy) Switzerland has led the world in this form of transport, but this is the first time that they have all been reviewed in one book. It is a heavyweight in more ways than one at 750g. This is not just for its size, but also the high quality heavyweight gloss paper used throughout, which gives an excellent reproduction of the 355 photographs. In alphabetical order from Allmendhubelbahn through to Zürichbergbahn some 78 funiculars are given a fully detailed description with data panels, historic and modern photos, and some with tickets as well. Twelve more are briefly described with a photo in an appendix. Not all funiculars were built for public transport, some were for freight, industrial or personal use and these private ones are listed as well. There is also a brief section at the back on the Schlittenseilbahnen, large