

Restoration of the “Stadt Luzern” commences

On Sunday 21st October 2018 ps ‘Stadt Luzern’, the flagship of the SGV fleet, was made ready for its final cruise on the Vierwaldstättersee, from Luzern to Flüelen and back, before its general restoration (see ‘Swiss Express’ No.135, P27). SGV expected a large number of passengers and the ds ‘Unterwalden’ was provided as a relief ship. Hundreds of enthusiasts joined the ‘normal’ passengers on board. It was foggy at Luzern, but after Brunnen the sun shone. How beautiful was the Urnersee! There were people on board from regions far away from central Switzerland. I met two influential women with British passports! Magdalen Mary Pember-ton has published a book of poetry in German (“Veduten I-V: Lyrische Impressionen der Schweizer Reisen 2011-2015”) and Cathy Lewer is the principal of an English Language school at Sarnen (‘My English, Sarnen’). Cathy and Maggie are regular passengers on our steamers and along with everyone else they were enjoying some nostalgic feelings as it would be more than two years without the Flagship. It was also a special day for the flagship’s crew, particularly its Captain, Kuno Stein. He is due to retire at the end of the 2019 season, so when ps ‘Stadt Luzern’ returns to service in 2021 he will be on board – but only as a passenger! The final day in service of ‘his ship’ was also his last day as Captain on board the 90-year-old ship. All the passengers congratulated him and many gave him presents. The final autumn timetable day was also the last day in service for the original boilers. Bruno Stein and Danial Tresch operated them with feelings of gratitude and nostalgia! The association Dampferfreunde Vierwaldstättersee has organised a CHF4m fundraising effort to support the renovation costs (which will exceed CHF12m). Volunteers on board both steamers sold souvenirs and called on the passengers to contribute toward the flagship’s renovation costs. More details can be found on www.dampfschiff.ch. When at around 17.00 hours the ps ‘Stadt Luzern’ arrived back at Luzern its passengers said goodbye to both the ship and its crew until 2021. (MG)



Sunshine welcomes ‘Stadt Luzern’ on its final visit to Flüelen for more than two years. Photo: Mario Gavazzi