

Summits on the Air (SOTA) – Summit report

HB/LU-028 – Sonnebergwald – 800 m.a.s.l. – 1 point

August 26, 2017

by Markus, HB9DIZ

Sonnebergwald is somehow my own summit! I've been living in Lucerne ever since, and the hills in the west have been a recreational area for our family and especially for us children. So I've been on that hill countless times.

To be precise: this hill is simply "Sonnenberg" in German. "Sonneberg" is Swiss German, our dialect, and "Sonnebergwald" the nearest name on the federal map next to the summit. Since our dialects change every few kilometers, it's more or less impossible to write them down without dropping a clanger. So don't be surprised to find many summits in the SOTA database with several similar names. And you'll certainly find someone telling you: "You can't write it that way". So simply look it up in SOTA maps or let Google maps show it to you, and don't care too much how to write it.

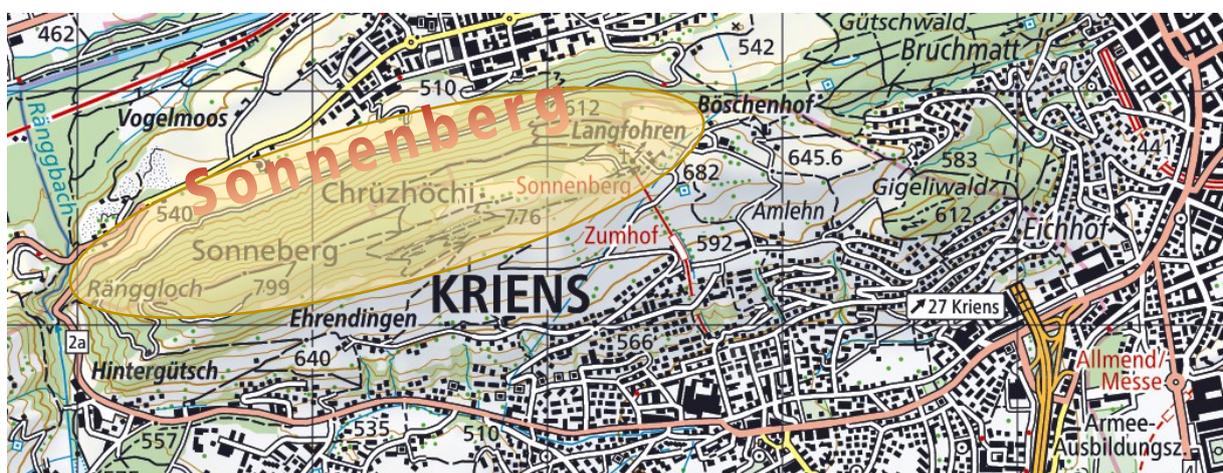
The spelling may be important only then, when you plan to activate it. You won't see any signposts "Sonnebergwald" on the streets and won't be able to buy a ticket to Sonnebergwald either. Look out for "Sonnenberg" instead.

The translation is promising: Sonnenberg means "sunny mountain". Since its exposition is south, you'll have sunshine there all day long and a beautiful view to the nearby Alps of central Switzerland (only out of the forest for both, of course).

How to activate

Sonnenberg is located just west of Lucerne and north of Kriens. Its summit is on the western side of a long ridge of about 2500 meters. Since the activation zone is quite large, you can activate already at "Chrüzhöchi" unless you're a hardliner activating always and only at the real summits, hi.

The activation zone starts at 774 m.a.s.l, since Sonnenberg measures only 799 m according to the most recent federal map. 800 m is from former maps.



How to get to the trail head

There are several options, and all involve some easy hiking. It's helpful to know that Sonnenberg is located not in Lucerne, but in Kriens.

A good starting point or trail head for all is the parking lot for hikers nearby Hotel Sonnenberg. The hike to the activation zone starts at the end of parking and takes you about 13 minutes, with a hiking distance of 750 m and an ascent of 85 m.

By car: Parking lot/trail head: [47.044845, 8.271846](#)

Ask Google for "Hotel Sonnenberg, Kriens" resp. click on the link above. Don't use the part of the parking that is reserved for the hotel guests. You can shorten your way up to the hill by driving to the end of the parking.

By public transports:

There are two possibilities. One is to take bus #10 at the central railway station of Lucerne and drive to the other end of the line at "Obergütsch" (11 minutes, CHF 4.10 full fare or CHF 3.10 at reduced rate, one way). There is a small trail from the end of the bus line to the trailhead mentioned above of about 1400 m (ascent 105 m, 25 minutes), see Google Maps or the federal maps of Swisstopo for further details. The trail can be muddy after rainfall.

The other possibility is to take Kriens-Sonnenberg-Bahn (KSB). It starts at the foot of the hill and ends just nearby Hotel Sonnenberg (cf. the red line on the map on page 1). Take bus #1 at the central railway station of Lucerne and take it in the direction of "Kriens, Obernau" until bus stop "Kriens-Busschleife" (12 minutes, CHF 4.10 full fare or CHF 3.10 at reduced rate, one way). The bottom station is at 5 minutes hiking distance from the bus stop. Kriens-Sonnenberg-Bahn is a very nostalgic blue-white funicular. Once in the top station, it takes you 5 minutes to the mentioned trail head, or follow the yellow hiker sign posts showing "Chrüzhöchi". If you love it (like I do), you'll tolerate the support fare of CHF 12 for both ways resp. CHF 8 for one way (2017, no reductions like half fare card or GA card accepted). It's licensed, so don't panic if the wooden cabin creaks loudly on its way!

Important: please check the timetables of both options for the date of your planned activation. The bus line is operated in winter and summer, but the funicular runs mostly from April to October.

By foot:

There are several possibilities to hike from the valley already. Please check the common tools for hiking in Switzerland:

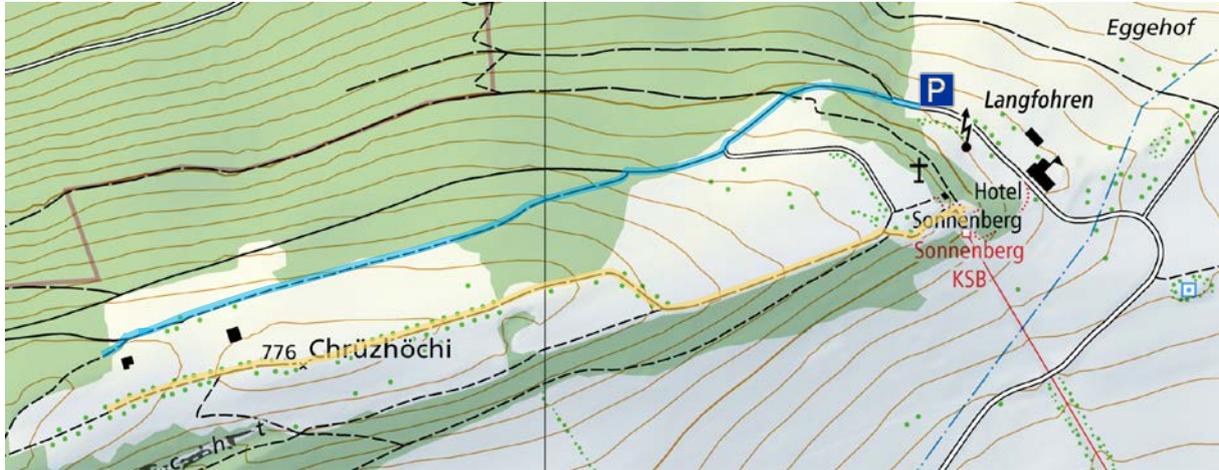
- The official maps from the federal office Swisstopo: <https://map.geo.admin.ch/?lang=en> (a zoom level of 1:10'000 and a switch to satellite images are available, and an additional layer for hiking trails can be activated)
- Switzerland Mobility, a touristic application with layers for hikers, based on the federal map: <https://map.wanderland.ch/?lang=en&bqLayer=pk&resolution=100&E=2663606&N=1197011&layers=Wanderland>

Official hiking trails in this height segment are marked with yellow sign posts and yellow marks.

How to get to the activation zone

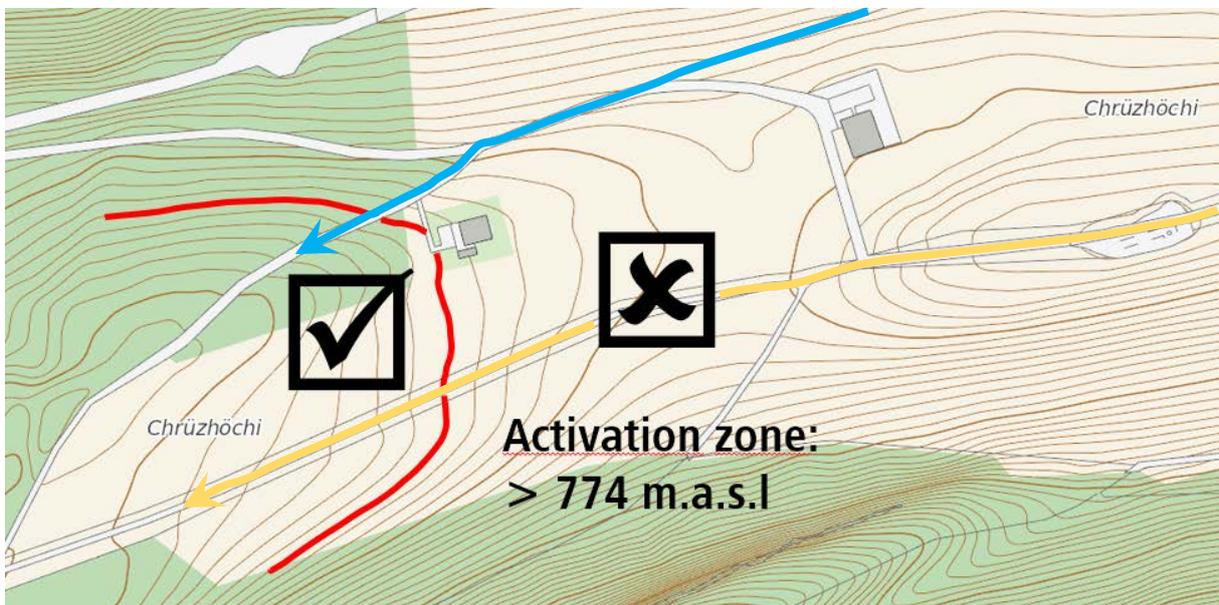
There are two main trails from the area near the top station of the funicular and the hotel to the beginning of the activation zone with several possibilities to switch from one trail to the other.

I prefer the BLUE one at the end of the parking lot. Those taking the KSB funicular might prefer the YELLOW trail.



Please be aware that the nice location "Chrüzhöchi" with the big cross, the benches and the marvelous view to the Alps (marked 776 above) is not within the activation zone, since there is a saddle between Chrüzhöchi and the main summit located outside the activation zone for a few meters.

Check this map to see the border of the activation zone:



So, choose your preferred activation place between the red line and the real summit much more westwards.

In case you should not be in a hurry resp. in the urgent need to activate several other summits on the same day, enjoy this beautiful and peaceful location, if weather conditions and the weight of your SOTA backpack encourage you to do so, hi.

What else to be said

Having joined the SOTA programme in May 2017, I had activated any summit only once. HB/LU-028 is the first exception, since it is my home hill and because I like Sonnenberg that much. I loose only 1 point for the second and further activations, but others get a chance to have it in their Swiss SOTA collection and realize maybe once a SOTA complete. I can concentrate on getting more Summit to Summit QSOs, so there is always a reason to do even the one-pointers.

Hotel Sonnenberg is an unofficial meeting point of the local Radio Club of Lucerne, HB9LU, the regional unit of the Swiss amateur radio club USKA. We have official meetings each third Friday of a month, but many of them meet at Hotel Sonnenberg on Sundays from around 1000 to 1130 hours (local time) for some coffee and further discussions. And you know: being silent is the last thing we do! So simply show, and ask at the cafeteria, if the radio amateurs are here. In case I should be present there, I will pay your coffee if you are going to activate HB/LU-028 that day and can show your SOTA backpack, hi. Sonnenberg is also one of our repeater locations.

Doing a "Sonnenberg complete" is a nice and easy hike along the whole ridge. There are some long stairs down to the main road in the west and even further down to the Ränggloch gorge once you've met the real summit of Sonnenberg. Calculate around 3 hours hiking time between the public transport connection points.

Useful internet resources

- Timetable for all public transports in Switzerland: www.sbb.ch/en/
- Website of the local Radio Club of Lucerne, HB9LU: www.hb9lu.ch (in German only)
- Website of the Sonnenberg recreation zone: www.erlebnis-sonnenberg.ch (in German only), and the link to the timetable of the funicular: <http://erlebnis-sonnenberg.ch/index.php?id=10>
- Website of Hotel Sonnenberg: www.hotelsonnenberg.ch/en/
- HB9SOTA, the Swiss Chapter of the SOTA programme: www.hb9sota.ch
- Summit page of HB/LU-028, Sonnebergwald resp. Sonnenberg, in the SOTA database: www.sota.org.uk/Summit/HB/LU-028
- Map with the most precise contour lines (1 meter!) for the LU region (Canton of Lucerne): <http://www.geo.lu.ch/map/grundbuchplan/> (cadastral map, choose "Basisplan" in the "Hintergrund" menu in the upper right corner of the map to display the contour lines)

Enjoy your activation – returning home safe and sound is not difficult here!



Sonnenberg hill seen from south, with the town of Kriens in the foreground (Source: Wikipedia).

Important Disclaimer: In no case will the author of this report be liable for any direct or indirect damage resulting from the use of information of this report.
