

It happened in the cantons of Fribourg and Neuchatel

Objekttyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand**

Band (Jahr): **29 (1966)**

Heft [7]

PDF erstellt am: **29.05.2024**

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charm of the festivals lies in their authenticity. There is nothing contrived, not an artificial note. People are dressed in traditional costumes, not in jazzed up versions created for the tourists. There is usually a parade with farmers carrying alp horns or swaying under the load of heavy cowbells; women carrying flowers or pitchforks or sitting in wagons and weaving rugs; children riding on horsedrawn carts piled high with hay. A few wagons carry the famous big round Swiss cheeses.

As the groups parade, some sing folk songs; a few play accordions. Intermittently a band plays. There are animals in the parades too: horses and even a few ponies, perhaps a small dog-drawn wagon carrying a cart of fresh vegetables and flowers. At the end of the procession there is traditionally a herd of Swiss brown cows and one solitary bull. After the parading and the formal competitive events, the contestants form small groups and retire to nearby cafes and restaurants for food and drink and for much more music. It is fun to mingle with these people, to enjoy their music and their friendly hospitality.

If your schedule does not permit taking in one of the major folk festivals, inquire locally for yodel groups. Perhaps they are having a concert or a rehearsal which you might attend. . . but as we mentioned at the outset, don't forget that **some** Swiss yodel; the large majority do not. (SNT0)

It Happened in the Cantons of Fribourg and Neuchatel

FRIBOURG

THE annual accounts of the Canton of Fribourg were very nearly balanced, slightly on the high side, at around 115 million francs, a good three million francs better than estimated. The accounts of the Municipality of Fribourg, too, ended favourably at something like 18 million francs.

The Fribourg Parliament confirmed Councillor of States P. Torche in his office. Monsieur Torche had to be replaced as Conseiller d'Etat, however. None of the three candidates received the necessary absolute majority in the first poll at the end of February. The second time, on March 13th, the Liberal Radical, National Councillor Paul Genoud, was elected. The February elections for the Commune Councils in the Canton was marked by a move to the Left. In the town of Fribourg, the Conservative Christian Socialist Party has lost its absolute majority which it had held since 1903 and has now only one member in the executive body of nine. In most Communes, voting participation was very high, and in many cases it was over 80 per cent of the electorate.

It was revealed at a press conference in February that Fribourg University, for the first time, counted more than 3000 students. The largest increase has been registered in the Faculty of Philosophy I, whereas the Theological Faculty showed a slight decrease.

The Hochschule of the University of Fribourg for 1965 amounted to a total of Fr.1,164,803—, a few hundred francs more than in the previous year.

NEUCHÂTEL

The annual accounts of the Canton of Neuchâtel for 1965 ended with a surplus of half a million francs, revenue standing at 93½m.

The electorate had to go to the poll on March 20th, and the four projects which were accepted reflect the main concern of the cantonal authorities: protection of the Jura Hills, vineyards and lakeshores (three-fifths of Neuchâtel territory will come under some sort of protective regulations); a credit of 8.6 million francs for ground amelioration and water mains; a credit of 48m. for improving cantonal roads; the purchase and construction of a building for the training college of Neuchâtel (1¼ million francs).

A speech laboratory is to be added to the Commercial College, and the capital of the Cantonal Bank is to be doubled.

The Neuchâtel Parliament accepted a resolution which requests the Federal Assembly to extend women's suffrage to federal level.

The Canton's population at the beginning of the year stood at 160,973; there are 5881 more women than men.

The 118th anniversary of the Revolution which led to the foundation of the Canton was celebrated as usual on March 1st.

The budget for 1965 of the town of Neuchâtel estimated a loss of nearly 2½ million francs. The accounts closed with a slight surplus, revenue standing at 44.8m. The movement against the construction of a national road along the lakefront continued its fight against the planned road which would separate the town from the lake.

La Chaux-de-Fonds is to have a training centre for nurses and auxiliary nursing staff. The electorate of **Colombier** rejected a proposal to build blocks of flats at reduced rents.

The school authorities of **Couvet** decided to introduce the five-day week for their school also during the winter. The population of **Le Locle** has increased by 142 to 14,858, including 3544 foreigners. The Commune of **St Blaise** celebrated its Patron's Day early in February. Apart from various kinds of entertainment, the young men and women citizens who have come of age are received into the adult Commune in a church service.

(Based on news received by courtesy of
Agence Telegraphique Suisse)