

A "Swiss Hall" at the British Pestalozzi children's village

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TICINO

In 1946, a plebiscite took place in the Canton of Ticino regarding women's suffrage. The proposal was defeated by 14,000 to 4000 votes. In the federal plebiscite in 1959, the Ticino voters had refused to support the vote for women by 18,000 to well over 10,000. Now, an Initiative has been launched to make the constitutional changes.

The Cantonal Government has given a subsidy towards the restoration of the Villa of Loverciano in Castel San Pietro, one of the Ticino show pieces of Lombardy architecture of the seventeenth century.

The Monte Ceneri Road has been completed, and vast sums are being spent on the Maggia Valley road, where a bus service is to replace the railway.

October was the month during which the anniversary of the signing of the Locarno Pact was commemorated. With the exception of Poland and Czechoslovakia, all the signatories of the original pact attended the celebrations. (ATS)



A "Swiss Hall" at the British Pestalozzi Children's Village

In 1959, a "Swiss Fortnight" took place in London and a few other towns in the British Isles. It was a magnificent undertaking to put Switzerland on show, and one of the efforts made was to raise money for a "Swiss Hall" at the British Pestalozzi Children's Village at Sedlescombe in Sussex: £10,000 was collected. Many were concerned in this splendid achievement, not least the Swiss Ambassador at the time and his wife, Madame Martha Daeniker. It was befitting, therefore, that the official opening of the Hall should be performed by Monsieur Daeniker who came to England especially for the ceremony.

It was a beautiful spring day on Saturday March 5th and the Sussex countryside was at its best. The grounds of the Children's Village extend for quite a distance, and much building is going on as four new houses are planned. Apart from the old and stately Manor House, there are several other buildings, notably the International House, perhaps the least attractive of all, a friendly wooden bungalow to house the Tibetan children, and now, at the highest point of the Village grounds, the new "Swiss Hall". It is a pleasant building constructed of red cedar wood. The centre tract forms the lofty meeting hall to seat 200, and it has a large stage at the far end. It is flanked on either side by cloakrooms, a kitchen and refreshment room, a storeroom and a reception hall. The whole floor area is 4600 square feet.

It has taken a long time to complete, but the result is very pleasing. The accumulated interest and further gifts have helped to increase the original sum to cover the cost. At the moment, the Hall will be used for tutorial classes as well as for large gatherings, but once the planned educational centre is ready, "Swiss Hall" will be the communal and cultural centre of the Village.

In the absence of the Trust's President, the Right Honourable The Lord Sainsbury, the chair was taken by the Chairman of the Council, The Rev. W. W. Simpson, M.A. He welcomed the guests, especially the Swiss Ambassador and Madame de Fischer, and, of course, Monsieur Daeniker. His Worship the Mayor of Battle and the Mayoress were present, also the founders of the British Pestalozzi Children's Village Trust, Mrs Mary Buchanan and Dr H. J. Alexander. Amongst the few Swiss visitors were the President of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom, Dr H. W. Egli, and the Editor of the "Swiss Observer". The Warden of the Pestalozzi Village at Trogen was unfortunately unable to attend owing to an accident.

The Chairman expressed gratitude for the Swiss gift and referred to the imaginative lead Monsieur and Madame Daeniker had given to the charity effort made in 1959. He much regretted Madame Daeniker's absence. The first children of the British Village were just going out into the world, and the fact that the opening of the "Swiss Hall" coincided with this, meant a decisive new chapter in the history of the Village.

The Warden of the Village, Mr F. Spencer Chapman, D.S.O., T.D., M.A., talked about the life of the Village and said that no new building had been opened since the Duchess of Leeds inaugurated the Tibetan House on United Nations Day in 1962.

Next, Monsieur Daeniker performed the official opening by raising the Swiss flag which had been draped over the wooden plaque above the entrance, and, back on the stage, he addressed the gathering of visitors, house parents, teachers and the attentive children of the Village.



~~~~~ News of the Colony ~~~~~

Auckland Swiss Club

On 30th July 1966 the Auckland Swiss Club held its 1st August Celebrations.

A truly festive atmosphere greeted the guests who came along to join in the common sentiment to remember the foundation day of our Fatherland.