

News from Switzerland

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WELLINGTON SWISS CLUB

Sunday, 5th November: Spring Walk

We meet at the Cenotaph at 10 a.m. Bring your own sausages. In case of bad weather cancellation over 2ZB.

Oktober u. November-Ausgabe:

Saturday, 2nd December: Christmas Social

8 p.m. at the Brooklyn Hall.

Sunday, 3rd December: Children's Christmas Party

3 p.m. at the Brooklyn Hall.

Basketball: Starting Monday, 30th October, 6.30 p.m., at Wellington South Intermediate School.

Tennis: Starting Sunday, 29th October, 9.30 a.m. at Hataitai Tennis Courts.

News from Switzerland

POPULATION OF SWITZERLAND

According to the latest figures of the Federal Statistics Bureau, there were 5,953,000 inhabitants in Switzerland at the beginning of this year. The population has therefore increased by about 73,000 in the space of a year. Among the cantons, Zurich has the biggest population with 1.051 million inhabitants (1966: 1.039 million), followed by Berne with 970,000 inhabitants (960,000). The third canton, Vaud, comes far behind with 486,000 inhabitants (479,000).

The canton with the smallest population is Appenzell, where the figure of 134,000 has not varied since the previous year. Among the towns, Zurich comes first with 433,200 inhabitants as opposed to 435,300 the previous year, followed by Basle: 212,800 (212,200); Geneva: 169,700 (174,500); Berne: 166,000 (165,900); and Lausanne: 134,800 (134,300). (OSEC)

EXPANSION OF THE SWISS TOURING CLUB

At the beginning of the summer, the Swiss Touring Club, the biggest automobile association in Switzerland, recorded the registration of its 500,000th member. The 200,000th member had been recorded in 1954, the 300,000th in 1957 and the 400,000th in 1963. The Swiss Touring Club protects the interests of motorists, motorcyclists, cyclists, campers and nautical sports enthusiasts. Today 57.8% of the motorists in the country belong to this big association. (OSEC)

A NEW TRADE FAIR IN BASLE

FAWEMA 68, the first specialised machine-tools and tools fair, created by the Association of Swiss Machinery and Tool Dealers, will be held in Basle in the halls of the Swiss Industries Fair at the end of next year (from November 15th to 24th, 1968). This fair, which will take place every four years, will show most of the Swiss and foreign made machine-tools and tools for metal working (with or without the removal of material). The organisers want to give an overall view of the production of this branch at this fair, thus giving the widest possible choice to the specialised trade. Already some 88,000 sq. ft. of exhibition space has been reserved. (OSEC)

GENEROUS BEQUEST TO FACILITATE U.S.-SWISS CULTURAL EXCHANGES

A Swiss citizen, Mrs Frieda Berta Ratner-Tanner, who died this spring, bequeathed the sum of 150,000 dollars (about S.Fr. 648,000) to the Institute for International Education in New York. A special fund will be created with this amount, the interest on which will be used to enable American students to study in Switzerland and Swiss students to go to the United States to study.

AUTOMOBILE CALL SERVICE RUN BY THE SWISS POST OFFICE

Almost 14 years ago the Swiss Post Office decided to introduce an automobile radio call service for motorists. At the beginning of 1958, thanks to the combined efforts of the Swiss Post Office and industry, the scheme was far enough advanced for an automobile call service to be started north of the Alps. As from next year this service will be available to motorists throughout Switzerland. Naturally it is not a system enabling motorists to telephone while driving, but one allowing any telephone subscriber in Switzerland, through a special exchange, to let a driver know by means of a signal clearly visible in his car that he is wanted on the phone. The driver then stops at the nearest public call box where he dials a special code number and is immediately put in touch with the person calling him.

At present some 3,000 subscribers are connected to the Swiss automobile call service. They are divided into the following categories of profession: tradesmen, representatives, reporters, etc. 40%; builders and transport concerns 23%; public departments (police, public utilities, etc.) 17%; maintenance departments 10%; doctors and veterinary surgeons 5%; taxi drivers 5%. Three-quarters of all receivers are installed in private cars and light vans, the remainder in lorries of over 1.5 tons. Every day an average of 1,500 calls is put through. (OSEC)

OFFICIAL CHECK ON MEDICINES IN 1966

The Intercantonal Office for the Control of Medicines, in Berne, is responsible for examining all pharmaceutical products that manufacturers or importers wish to introduce on the Swiss market, to ensure that their ingredients are not dangerous, that their effects correspond to those promised in the advertising literature and that the required standards of safety and purity, etc. are observed.

Last year this laboratory tested in all 1,667 pharmaceutical specialities. Out of the 1,619 routine examinations, 207 products (13%) were not up to standard. Out of the 859 preparations submitted for the first time, 170 (20%) had to be rejected, generally because the products had not been given satisfactory clinical trials. Another frequent cause of rejection was that the products did not fulfil the effects promised in the brochures; finally in certain cases the exorbitant prices charged also led to rejection. (OSEC)

CHOCOLATE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION IN SWITZERLAND

In 1966, the consumption of chocolate in Switzerland was the highest in the world with 18 lb per inhabitant. During the same year, the Swiss chocolate industry, which employed 6,700 workers, produced some 58,540 metric tons of chocolate, i.e. about 1% more than the previous year. Of this quantity, about 14,000 tons, valued at S.Fr. 78.5 million, was exported, while imports, which increased by 49% compared with 1965, amounted to 1,730 tons. (OSEC)

SWISS VOLUNTEERS FOR DEVELOPMENT

The Swiss Volunteer Corps for Development, founded in 1964, represents one of the most active sectors of Swiss technical co-operation. Recently the hundredth volunteer for development left Switzerland, in a group of 12 young men and women on their way to Dahomey, Nepal and Rwanda on missions of assistance and education. The hundredth volunteer, a young chemist's assistant from Lausanne, will spend two years in Dahomey doing rural assistance work and teaching sewing and hygiene to the women of a village. (OSEC)

AT ZURICH-KLOTEN INTERCONTINENTAL AIRPORT

At the beginning of August, the Argentine airline company Aerolineas Argentinas inaugurated a weekly return flight from Buenos Aires to Zurich via Madrid. The number of airline companies with a regular service calling at Zurich-Kloten airport is now 37. (OSEC)

INDUSTRIAL ELECTRONICS IN BASLE

INEL 67, the 3rd International Salon of Industrial Electronics, will be held from November 14th to 18th, 1967, in the halls of the Swiss Industries Fair in Basle. Nearly 400 exhibitors from 15 countries in Europe, America and Asia will occupy a net exhibition area of approximately 93,000 sq. ft. The number of firms represented will be higher still, having risen from 600 in 1965 to 675 this year and giving a concise picture of the production of 17 countries, first of which comes the United States of America with 162 firms represented, followed by Switzerland (155), the German Federal Republic (152), Great Britain (95), France (35), Japan (15), Italy (13), Sweden (12), the Netherlands (9), Denmark and Austria (8), as well as six other countries.

INEL 67 is limited to industrial electronics and is divided into eight main groups: components; measuring technique; control, regulating and automation instruments; power electronics; telecommunications; appliances for the manufacture of electronic products (a new section); electronic applications, and trade literature. (OSEC)

SWISS ENGINEER HONOURED IN THE UNITED STATES

Stephan Kudelski, the Swiss engineer who invented the famous professional tape-recorder "Nagra," has just been awarded the Samuel L. Warner Memorial Gold Medal of the American Society of Cinema and Television Engineers, on the occasion of the 102nd twice-yearly Technical Conference and Exhibition of Equipment in Chicago. This great distinction was awarded him for his achievements as designer of a synchronised tape-recorder, of a completely new kind, guaranteeing exceptionally stable running speeds, under the most varied conditions. (OSEC)

INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF SHEEP

According to the last annual report of the Swiss Sheep Breeding Federation, the number of sheep in Switzerland last year topped the quarter of a million mark, a figure that has not been exceeded for over 70 years. In 1886, there were 447,000 sheep in Switzerland, this number falling as low as 184,754 in 1931. Since then the number of sheep has again increased and last year amounted to 266,754, owned by slightly over 22,000 farmers. This increase is not due however to an improvement in sheep breeding methods in Switzerland but rather to the growing tendency to put sheep out to graze on mountain pastures that are too steep for mechanised haymaking and would otherwise remain unproductive. Swiss sheep last year produced well over a million lb. of wool. (OSEC)