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The Obwald Landsgemeinde Will Stay

A strong majority of Obwald citizens have voted to preserve their Landsgemeinde. Differing from their compatriots from Schwytz and Uri, who have recently abolished the Landsgemeinde in their Canton, they rejected an initiative launched following the confusion which marked the 1973 Landsgemeinde. That Landsgemeinde was troubled by disputed counting of votes and ended with the citizens voting a 10 franc credit in complete disarray.

The sponsors of the initiative claim that the Landsgemeinde, at which citizens elect officials or vote on issues submitted to them by the Great Council (Parliament) on a show of hands, should be replaced, as in the great majority of cantons, by the ordinary voting slip. The Great Council had in fact supported the initiative and the Half-Canton's State Council (Executive) had called for an adaptation of the Landsgemeinde to modern conditions. It was the fourth time that the people of Obwald had rejected calls for the disappearance of an institution which is still considered as one of the most picturesque traits of Swiss democracy. In the 18th century, there were over 80 Landsgemeinde in the country. The only cantons which still hold them are Obwald, Nidwald, Glaris and the two Appenzell Half-Cantons.

Valais: World's Largest Narrow-Gauge Railway

A new tourist attraction in Canton Valais is the 1706-yard long narrow-gauge railway to the new Emosson Dam. From the scenic coaches passengers have marvellous views of the Mont Blanc massif. The trip starts at Le Chatelard, which can be reached by train or postal coach from Martigny. Passengers travel first on the funicular railway to the former Federal Railways power station reservoir and then up the world's narrowest narrow-gauge railway (gauge 23.58 inches) to beneath the 175-metre high dam. Accommodation is available in the nearby resort of Finhaut.

English Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts Visit Switzerland

The Swiss Transport Museum in Lucerne, until 28th September, played host to a unique exhibition: The world's 22 most beautiful Rolls-Royces. The vintage cars exhibited represented the models of the years 1905 to 1975. They are almost exclusively owned by private collectors and came to Lucerne from England with their proprietors at the wheel. Incidentally, the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club of Great Britain arrived in Switzerland for a six-day tour of the country on September 20th — riding 10 old-timers.