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OLD TIME FIRE FIGHTING

Well into the 19th century, it was appropriate for any bride to include in her dowry not only bed linen, table cloths and napkins, but also a fireman's bucket. This oldest form of fire fighting equipment was simply a part of a bride's contribution to a new household. Some of the most primitive buckets were made out of leather or material. In case of fire, a lookout, high up in the church steeple, called the inhabitants by means of an old-fashioned megaphone.

All these items can be seen in a special museum in Basle dedicated to fire fighting dating back to the 13th century. One of the most unusual items is a tricycle dating back to 1899 and used by the Basle fire brigade to allow its men to reach the seat of the fire in absolute record time.

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EX-FEDERAL COUNCILLOR BACK IN PRIVATE SECTOR

Elisabeth KOPP, the first woman Federal Councillor, who was forced to resign her position following alleged misuse of privileged information, has returned to the private sector and is now working in her husband's law practice. Her daughter and son-in-law are also working in the same firm. So the law firm Kopp & Partner has become a real family affair.

CENTRAL COMPUTER

Switzerland also has its "Wanganui Computer". Since January all serious traffic infringements are registered in a central computer so that it will now be easier to take actions against motorists who repeatedly flaunt the traffic laws. Big brother is watching you in Switzerland too...

The Life Insurance Company "VITA", a subsidiary of the "ZURICH" will change its name to "ZURICH LEBEN". We thought you might be interested in case you have a life insurance with this company.

BATA SHOES

Switzerland's best known shoes have actually a foreign origin. Thomas BATA, born in 1876, was a Czech. He was not only the first to produce shoes by machines, but he also built next to his factories whole housing estates for his workers, complete with gardens, parks and shops. One of these typical housing estates still exists in Möhlin (Aargau).



The Bata factory in Möhlin as it existed in 1960. Today, sadly, the manufacturing of shoes at this plant is at a standstill.

THINKING ABOUT RETIRING?

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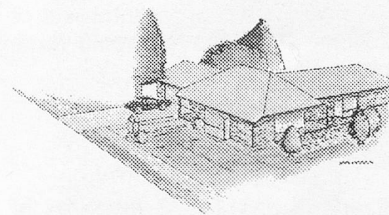
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