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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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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.

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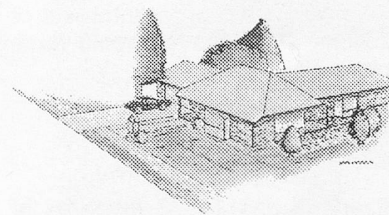
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