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NEW VILLAGE SQUARES

Due to new road constructions and building regulations, many Swiss villages have lost their good old village squares (Dorfplatz), the places where everybody met and everyone knew everyone else, where all the shopping was done and where the local and homely pub (Beiz) was situated.

Today all this has gone in many villages, or has it? Look closely at the picture. It shows a beautifully "preserved" village square with old houses and plenty of space to walk around. Wrong. The picture shows a totally artificial village square complete with huge underground car park and modern neo-traditional houses built in concrete instead of wood.

Town planners all over Switzerland decided that if there was no village square or if the village square had disappeared, then create a new one

from scratch through clever planning and design to try to recapture the old traditional village atmosphere. Whether these artificial "Dörfli" within a village will succeed, only the future will tell.

MOTORWAY STICKERS

Anyone who has travelled by car on the Swiss motorways recently knows that to do so you must ensure that your car has on display an appropriate motorway sticker which has to be renewed annually at a cost of some 40 SFR. If your car does not have such a sticker, the fine could be quite hefty.

It should therefore not come as a surprise to anyone that the police has already come across faked stickers which had been reproduced on sophisticated photocopy machines. Only very close scrutiny by the police revealed that these stickers were not the real McCoy. Another

trick is for motorists to "weaken" the glue on the stickers so that they can easily be removed and re-used on another car.

"Dörfli" within a village. The new village square of Breiten in Hombrechtikon (ZH).

TOBLERONE'S AMAZING APPEAL

The design of the famous Toblerone Swiss chocolate is now 88 years old. It was in 1908 that Tobler, for the first time, produced that exquisite combination of chocolate, honey, almonds and nougat moulded into this by now so famous triangular shaped bar with each piece of chocolate reminding you of your beloved Swiss mountains.

In 88 years, the product never changed which is certainly the best proof that formula and design were spot-on right from the start. Today over 20,000 tons of Toblerone are exported worldwide every year, a confirmation that people are just as keen on this delicacy as they were 88 years ago.

FAREWELL

Look out for next month's special Helvetia magazine. It will be the last one coming to you from Auckland and from your present Editor. Starting with July, the magazine will be produced by members of the Hamilton Swiss Club.

THANK YOU

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