**Zeitschrift:** Helvetia: magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand

**Herausgeber:** Swiss Society of New Zealand

**Band:** 63 (1997)

Heft: [4]

**Artikel:** Sabrina, the 60 year old child

Autor: [s.n.]

**DOI:** https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-945328

# Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. Mehr erfahren

# **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. En savoir plus

### Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. Find out more

**Download PDF: 26.10.2025** 

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, https://www.e-periodica.ch



Sabrina, the eight year old child with a 60 year old body together with her best friend Shila.

# SABRINA, THE 60 YEAR OLD CHILD

Sabrina is the only child in Switzerland who suffers from an extremely rare illness which makes the body age some eight times faster than normal. In fact, there are only 26 known similar cases amongst children in the whole world.

Sabrina is eight years old, 99 cm tall and weighs just on 9½ kgs. She acts, behaves and thinks exactly like an eight year old child but her body is that of a person over 60 years of age.

Sabrina loves pop music, she plays her own key-board and often is naughty just like any little girl of her age would be.

Her illness became apparent when she was one year old: very large eyes, enormous hair growth and "old skin". By the age of 4 she had lost all her hair and since then she wears a wig.

It was by pure chance that her parents one day watched a programme on TV which talked about a similar case in the USA. So for the first time, Sabrina's parents realised that there were other children in the world with the same illness. It gave them some comfort to be able to exchange views and experiences with other families in the same situation.

Life expectancy for Sabrina is unfortunately not very good: around 15 years. By then her body would have reached the grand old age of over 100 years, her inner organs will have failed and her bones would have become extremely brittle. Sabrina is quite aware of her condition. She realises that there is no known cure for her illness and that she will not have long to live. So she makes the most of it and lives every day to the fullest.

Like every other 8 year old, she goes to school where everyone loves her and she is the mascot of Untervaz (GR) near Chur, the village where she live with her loving parents.

# **CHANGING CAREERS**

The times when young people used to learn a trade and stayed with it for the rest of their lives seem to have gone forever. In Switzerland today half the people no longer work in the profession or trade they had learnt and trained for initially. The change usually takes place before the person reached the age of 35. According to a study which extends over several generations, this tendency of changing professions and trades is increasing all the time.

# **POVERTY IN SWITZERLAND**

A recent study on poverty revealed that at least 10% of the people in Switzerland now live below the poverty line. Surprisingly, the hardest hit are not the retired and old aged people, but persons under the age of 40, mostly families with young children.

# CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

### THIS MONTH'S SPECIAL

Venison Salamis, Venison Sausages. Contact Appenzell Deer Farm Ph. 09 524-8899, Auckland.

# "YOUR" SWISS TIME SERVICE CENTRE

We restore and repair all top Brands Antique and Modern Watches and Clocks. We also pay you cash for your unwanted time pieces.

Swiss Time Service Centre P.O. Box 3751 Auckland, Fax and Phone 09/416 4858 10% discount for Swiss Club members.

# FOR SALE

Fitted bedsheets towelling stretch from Switzerland Sizes: single, queen and king, assorted colours

Ulric and Ruth Baumberger, R.D.4 Hamilton

Phone/Fax 07 829 5886.

23 year old Swiss Girl is looking for a job :

### "STAGIAIRE"

as **Glass painter**, **Au-pair or Farmstay** from January 1998 to September 1998 (monthly or longer)

ALL OFFERS WELCOME

To my person:

10 years ordinary school, 2 years Art School, 4 years apprenticeship as glass painter, 6 years experience in leading youth groups (ages 7-16), German/French speaking, English 4 years schoolknowledge and 3 months language school in NZ (Sep-Dec 97).

Contact: Irène Barmettler, Kappelenring 6/44 CH-3032 Hinterkappelen. Ph. 0041 31 901 2986. Fax 0041 21 729 8348



Fashion for the young. A new trend that even the young can afford.