

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 77 (2011)
Heft: [8]

Artikel: Award puts solar scientist in the spotlight
Autor: [s.n.]
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-943409>

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: 13.12.2025

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

CH/NZ in the Cloud for the Rugby World Cup

In the Cloud at Auckland's waterfront are 15 of the most innovative products New Zealand has to offer on display during the Rugby World Cup. One of them is the "ROUNDY" which are curved paper faced plaster boards, invented by Walter Hensch.

Walter was invited by NZ Trade & Enterprise to display the product (Roundy) in The Cloud along with the other 14 displays and to provide a 30 second video clip which NZTE describe as the coolest products in NZ. The clips run continuously on the big screen in The Cloud.

The display for Roundy was challenging, however this is a once in a lifetime opportunity to expose the ROUNDY to such a large and diverse audience. John Key opened The Cloud on September 2nd, and it was an incredible experience meeting many interesting people among them of course fellow inventors.

Walter is a builder. He arrived in NZ from Schleithem (SH) in 1974. He re-qualified as a car-

penter gaining his trade and advanced trade certificate in carpentry.



Walter and Roundy looking pretty smart

During his years of being self-employed he had repeated requests by clients to create curves or rounds into interior fit outs

using paper faced plaster boards. Walter took on the challenge and after about 3 years of research and development he developed his system for curving the boards down to a radius of 200mm. Today leading architects have incorporated the ROUNDY into their design, BNZ at centre port, Roxy Cinema, Maritime Tower at KPMG in Wellington to name a few. The system is patented in NZ and UK.

Margaret, Walters wife has taken on the task of Business Development, marketing /sales and promoting the ROUNDY globally. To date they have been to the UK, South Korea, and Australia promoting the ROUNDY. Roundy saves space, looks good, is far less prone to damage and is energy efficient as heating and cooling a building has a much better airflow with round corners, as confirmed by BRE (building research establishment) in England where Margaret was the guest speaker.

Please visit our website: www.roundy.co.nz

Award puts solar scientist in the spotlight

While children might try to start a fire using sunshine and a magnifying glass, scientists are looking into ways of concentrating and storing solar power.

Swiss professor Aldo Steinfeld has been especially inventive. The American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) recently honoured his work by presenting him with the biannual Yellott Award which goes to an individual who has made significant contributions to solar engineering.

Steinfeld is the head of the Solar Technology Laboratory at the Paul Scherrer Institute in Villigen as well as professor of renewable energy carriers at the Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich (ETH).

Dr Steinfeld is one of the world's leading experts in the emerging field of solar thermochemical processes, which are very likely to be an important path to achieve energy security and reduce greenhouse emissions.

Despite its growing popularity, solar energy does have some disadvantages. Its successful collection depends on the weather, and it is difficult to store. But Steinfeld and his team are developing solar technology that allows for the long-term storage and long-range transport of solar energy in the form of chemical fuels, to meet customers' energy demands whenever and wherever needed. One way of generating fuel is by harnessing and increas-

ing the heat of the sun's rays in order to trigger chemical reactions. For example, water can be split into hydrogen and oxygen, which can then function as energy carriers in a fuel cell. By concentrating solar radiation and capturing it in appropriate solar receivers, it is possible to deliver thermal energy at high temperatures to drive endothermic processes, which in turn implies higher efficiencies for the conversion of solar energy into electricity and fuels.

Switzerland may not be the sunniest place on earth, but it can still benefit from Steinfeld's research. Indeed, it should be possible to import solar power from sunnier places in the world.

from swissinfo