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ALPINE CRYSTAL GOES TO MANCHESTER

Swissair open new daily service

In the early hours of 11th December 1948, Swissair opened the route Zurich-Manchester. It has taken 21 years to take a new step in the Switzerland-United Kingdom air traffic service. A long gap, one may think, but not really surprising when one considers that the U.K. lines were of the earliest Swissair trunk routes in Europe. The event which took place when this summer's flight schedule was started, was the *daily* connection between Zurich and Manchester, officially inaugurated on 22nd April.

In 1948, it was a DC-3 which made the trip twice weekly, today it is a DC-9 which flies *via* Rotterdam. On



the first flight, Zurich's Mayor Dr. A. Luechinger, took a pewter can to Manchester's Lord Mayor, Miss Kingsmill-Jones. When Zurich's Municipal President, Dr. Sigmund Widmer, travelled to Manchester on 14th April, he carried a magnificent piece of rock crystal from the Uri mountains. He was received by the Lord Mayor, Alderman Harold Stockdale, J.P., and the Lady

Mayress. In 1948, two attractive Swissair hostesses presented the Lord Mayor with a beautiful Neuchâtel pendule. Swissair's gift this year was a modern Atmos clock, presented by the Company's Chairman, Dr. Walter Berchtold.



The Swiss party included the Consul General of Great Britain in Zurich, Mr. A. Cedric Maby, the Town Clerk, Dr. Willy Bosshard, the Manager of the Cantonal Aviation Office of Zurich, Mr. Emil Egli, and a number of radio, television and newspaper men. The Atmos clock was presented at a dinner in the quaint setting of a 17th century inn in Cheshire. The stay in Manchester included a visit to Jodrell Bank (Nuffield Radio Astronomy Laboratories) where Sir Bernard Lovell showed the visitors round personally, a visit to the aqueduct which links the Bridgewater Canal with the Manchester Ship Canal and a reception given at Prestbury by the Swiss Vice-Consul, Monsieur W. Zellweger (Manchester).



The weather was no more than reasonable in Manchester, but then no higher praise could be given either to that prevailing in Zurich a week later when the Manchester delegation returned the visit. Mr. M. Keller, U.K. Manager, was host, and the stay included a day trip to Lucerne. At a luncheon at the famous historic guild house "Meise", the Lord Mayor presented Zurich's Municipal President with a fine silver salver.

So now the daily direct air link with the North of England and Switzerland is in full swing. It used to take four hours, and today, including the touchdown in Rotterdam, the trip can be accomplished in two hours and twenty minutes.

The service operated by Douglas DC-9-32 twin jets, provides accommodation for 12 first class and 77 economy class passengers. Flights leave Manchester daily at 8.40 a.m. and arrive in Zurich 11.15 a.m., where they connect with services to many European destinations and also with Swissair's long-haul routes, notably to the Middle and Far East and to Africa. The return flight to Manchester leaves Zurich daily at 6.50 p.m. and arrives at 9.30 p.m.; even day trips to Switzerland are therefore possible for businessmen from the north of England. Meals present no problem, as breakfast is served on board on the outward journey and dinner on the return.

To serve the holiday market, Swissair will in addition operate twice weekly night tourist flights between Manchester and Zurich from 1st June to 15th September. The all-cargo service between the two cities, run jointly with BEA, has recently been increased to four return flights weekly.

MM

Pictures :

- 1) The Lord Mayor presenting a silver salver to Municipal President Widmer at the "Meise".
- 2) Swissair President handing an "Atmos" Clock to the Lord Mayor.
- 3) Happy party! From left to right: Mr. A. Kunz, the Lady Mayoress, the Lord Mayor, Swissair's U.K. Manager Mr. M. Keller and Vice-Consul Zellweger and his wife.

NUFENEN — NEW ALPINE PASS ROAD

It is hoped that work on the new Nufenen Pass Road linking Bedretto in the Ticino with Ulrichen in the Goms valley (Rhone Valley) will make sufficient progress to allow its opening by July or August this year.

(S.N.T.O.)