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TOURIST NEWS

OLTEN HONOURS A MOUNTAIN RAILROAD PIONEER

Let not one say that technique and culture are strangers. The builder of the Vitznau-Rigi Railroad, Niklaus Riggenschach, was motivated by human and cultural idealism when he said that he wanted to lead all the people up to the mountain tops so that they might behold the sublime beauty of our country. The Historical Museum of Olten has arranged a commemorative exhibition at Olten's City Hall to honour this mountain railroad pioneer and give insight into his character.

Niklaus Riggenschach 1817 to 1899) spent part of his successful working life in the rail capital of Olten in the vicinity of the entrances to two Jura tunnels, where major traffic arteries meet. He was a member of a Basle family, and having completed his education as an engineer and mechanic, he collaborated in Karlsruhe (Germany) on the construction of the first locomotives for Switzerland which ran from Zurich to Baden starting in 1847. Upon his return to Switzerland, he first worked in Basle, and from 1856 on as manager of the railroad machinery workshops in Olten.

By 1871 his system of cogwheel railroad for use on steep slopes had found such great acclaim on the Vitznau-Rigi Railroad that it became the prototype for numerous other mountain railroads in Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, Germany, Portugal, France, India and Brazil with very steep gradients, which were also constructed according to Riggenschach's plans. There is a statue of Niklaus Riggenschach in Vitznau and he was made an honorary citizen of Olten, Aarau and Trimbach and councillor in the canton of Solothurn. In France he was accorded the great honour of membership in the "Institut de France".

(SNTG)

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF YOUTH ORCHESTRAS

International Youth who play music . . . who sing . . . and who dance . . . creative youth from the continents of Asia, America and Europe . . . will meet together in Lausanne, Switzerland, for the third International Festival of Youth Orchestras from 27th July to 8th August.

Eight symphony youth orchestras from Singapore, the United States, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland and Great Britain, an English girls' choir, and a youth ballet company from America, will live together in special dormitories, eat together in the huge restaurant of the Palais de Beaulieu, will give performances each evening in the Theatre

de Beaulieu, and afterwards will dance together in the Festival discotheque club.

In this way through the creation of superb music, dance and song, all of these young people will get to know each other's way of life and they will learn the meaning of tolerance, respect and above all . . . UNDERSTANDING FOR THEIR FELLOW-MAN.

Dr. Thor Heyerdahl renowned for his beliefs in international understanding amongst men, will open the Festival at an inspiring inaugural ceremony on 27th July. Dr. Heyerdahl will spend 4 days at the Festival meeting and talking with the young musicians. A scientist of great imagination and vigour, Dr. Heyerdahl has won honours from 12 different countries including the Royal Patron's Medal of the Royal Geographical Society of Great Britain, awarded by Queen Elizabeth.

World famous celebrity guest conductors: Walter Susskind, Rudolf Schwarz and Janos Sandor will rehearse, inspire and conduct some of their works at the concerts. The best musicians are auditioned to form the International Festival Youth Orchestra of 1971 which will give the final concert of the Festival on 7th August. This concert which truly embodies the ideals of the Festival, will be conducted by Walter Susskind with Fou Ts'ong as the celebrity guest soloist. The concert will be repeated on 8th August in Zurich at a Gala Evening.

Donovan, the internationally famous folk singer is making his first appearance in Switzerland on behalf of the International Festival of Youth Orchestras Foundation. He will be appearing on Saturday, 31st July at the Palais de Beaulieu, Lausanne, in a Gala Variety Concert with the young musicians participating at the Festival.

Seminars and master classes will be given by world famous teachers such as Professor Max Rostal and major musical scholarships awarded.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FESTIVAL

A Festival discotheque club where every evening a VARIETY OF INTERNATIONAL SHAKES are performed by these young people aged 11-23.

The Singapore Youth Orchestra playing Chinese music with Chinese instruments.

The Czech Youth Orchestra wearing national dress and performing Czech folk dances.

The California Youth Symphony playing "JUMPING JAZZ". The Louisville Jefferson group playing "Mississippi Showboat Tunes".

An International Soccer Tournament!

Tours of the beautiful villages and towns of Switzerland where the young musicians will give concerts both before, during and after the Festival.

With so much grumbling about

"youth" today, it is worth noting that all these young people are working hard at raising well over 2 million Swiss Francs to get themselves to this third Festival.

Of international interest:

THE 52nd SWISS NATIONAL AUTUMN FAIR

For the 52nd time, the Swiss National Autumn Fair will be opening its gates at the Palais de Beaulieu in Lausanne from 11th to 26th September, 1971. This big annual Swiss economic event, mainly featuring consumer goods, is distinguished on the international level by its invitations to foreign countries trading with Switzerland to be guests of honour in Lausanne with exhibitions of their own.

Following Mexico and, last year, Chile, this year a new Latin American guest, Argentina, is preparing to display at the Lausanne Fair the greatest products of its agriculture and industry, while within the framework of economic co-operation Madagascar will be putting on a similar display. On the national level, the official participation of the canton of St. Gall emphasises the importance that the country places on good relations within the Confederation. Finally, the official exhibition of another guest of honour, the World Wildlife Fund, is one of the events put on by this big international institution to commemorate its tenth anniversary and promises to be a great success.

Visitors from abroad may obtain information on the facilities granted them from all Switzerland's official representatives in their country of residence or origin.

Within the framework of the worldwide campaign of information launched by the institute to commemorate its tenth anniversary, the World Wildlife Fund is taking part as guest of honour in the 52nd Swiss National

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Autumn Fair, to be held in Lausanne from 11th to 26th September, 1971.

Invited by the government and the management of the Fair to make use of the international show window represented by this big economic event on the shores of the Lake of Geneva, the "World Wildlife Fund" will participate with an official exhibition showing the work accomplished so far on all five continents. Visitors will be able to see for themselves the aims of this great scheme, so beneficial to humanity through its protection and safeguarding of that invaluable, irreplaceable asset—nature.

ZERMATT REVISITED

by Werner Stettbacher

My wife and I were on holiday in Zermatt during the second half of June 1971.

Some eight or nine years ago, the Press all over the world reported that Zermatt was in the throes of a typhus epidemic, because of contamination of drinking water through typhoid bacilli. Some of my Continental business acquaintances in London—all non-Swiss—impressed on me at that time that Zermatt would now be finished for ever as a holiday resort. I laughingly replied that human memory was notoriously short and that the alpine enthusiasts would always return to Zermatt.

I was last in Zermatt six years ago. Since then, Zermatt has changed beyond recognition, doubled in size, and the prices of hotels, and all sorts of sports articles sold in local shops must also have at least doubled. Before giving some details, I would like to reproduce what the *Tagesanzeiger* wrote on the 17th June, 1971:

"In den Touristen Zentren stehen sich nicht nur Wachstumsfanatiker und Bremser, Spekulanten und Heimatfreunde gegenüber, sondern die pole-

The official character of this event will be emphasised by important ceremonies, in particular, on Saturday, 11th September, the Opening and Press Day of the 52nd Lausanne Fair. Escorted by his daughter, H.R.H. Princess Beatrice, Prince Bernhard of Lippe, Honorary President of the World Wildlife Fund, will preside over the plenary session in one of the big hotels in town, and then inaugurate the exhibition in the presence of a delegation of Swiss government officials, the diplomatic corps and leading personalities of this great and vital international institution.

mischen Baelle werden auch zwischen einzelnen Regionen gespielt. In einer Sendung des Westschweizer Fernsehens soll das harte Wort zum 'Kanton Graubünden, in dem es nach dem Mist des Goldenen Kalbes stinkt', gefallen sein—was auf der Gegenseite Formulierungen wie "Touristischer Amoklauf im Wallis 'Raubmentalität' und der gleichen ausgelöst hat. (Zeitschrift "Natur und Mensch" Mai 1971).

Below are details of some prices charged, without comment:

Hundreds of apartments (*Eigentumswohnungen*) are now for sale, at prices ranging from Frs. 150,000 to 200,000. In addition, one has to pay several thousand francs per year to defray the cost of the caretaker, and other expenses.

In the local sport shops, mountaineering boots are for sale at prices of up to Fr. 238.

The most up-to-date ski-ing boots cost Fr. 475 to 550.

An Eastman Kodak coloured film (transparencies) costs Fr. 19.90 as against around Fr. 16 in a top shop in Zurich.

A chemist offered two tooth-brushes at so-called half price, i.e. Fr. 2.90 for two, while a similar tooth-brush in the local Migros is priced at 70 centimes.

A small glass of tea costs anything from Fr. 1.20 to 1.50; the Migros Restaurant charges 70 centimes.

A season ticket for 6 days, valid for the cable railways and ski lifts in the ski-ing region between the Matterhorn and Monte Rosa, costs Fr. 180.

Any skier injured in that area can be brought down to Zermatt for a fee varying between Fr. 25 and 80.

Private ski lessons cost Fr. 22 per the hour, Fr. 50 for half a day, and Fr. 90 for a whole day.

For a meal a la carte in any of the better restaurants, you may well spend 30 to 40 francs including drinks;

one hotel, owned by the Commune of Zermatt, charges Fr. 17.50 for Crepe Suzettes for two.

A bookshop in the main street of Zermatt was offering some of the best known alpine books at prices ranging between Fr. 30 and 90. One evening, I saw the books being taken out of the window. The next day, the same books re-appeared in the window, marked up in price, by roughly 10%. Whymper's "Scrambles amongst the Alps", which has probably been in existence for 100 years, and which I brought before the war for 8 or 10 francs, was priced at Fr. 33. When it re-appeared in the shop, the price was Fr. 33.50. If a shopkeeper dared to do such a thing in Spain, he would be thrown out and the shop closed.

During the period 1923-1939, and after the war, I knew nearly all the Zermatt guides of my generation, but alas, many are now dead, either because of fatal accidents while climbing, or through natural causes.

Most of those still alive, and who at one time welcomed the rapid development of Zermatt, and the building of cable railways, for economic reasons, are now thinking differently. They blame the land speculators for driving up the price of land, making it impossible for them or for their sons to build houses of their own. They are also bitter because their savings, acquired through hard and dangerous work, are now being fast eroded by inflation, and they quite rightly are blaming the authorities in Berne, and the parliamentarians for this, as they are too cowardly to put a stop to ever increasing expenditure and wage increases.

Prices charged in Zermatt would be even stiffer if Migros had not built a large shopping centre and restaurant, which is spotlessly clean, and supplies meals, pastries and non-alcoholic drinks at half price or thereabouts. The Migros no doubt exercises some stabilising influence on prices, and numerous apartment dwellers and locals are now shopping there.

While most of the good class hotels, particularly now that the season is beginning in earnest, charge anything from 50 to 90 francs a day for a room, full board with bath, I would place on record that at the Hotel Gornergrat, a good class hotel opposite the Railway Station, the fourth largest with 130 beds, we were only paying about 25 francs a day for full board and an excellent room with bath. Not only was the food served plentiful, varied and superbly cooked, but all the staff including the waiters were exceedingly friendly. We went there through the auspices of the "*Hotelplan Aktion schoener leben*", and all being well, we intend to go again to Zermatt next summer.

I am naturally against the sort of profiteering that is going on in re-

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