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Although these gentlemen are not the ones featured on the record so well reviewed by Mrs Meier opposite, they should add "atmosphere". Photo by courtesy of SNTO.

IN PRAISE OF THE ALPHORN

A chance for Swiss abroad and music lovers

In May 1974, Dr Brigitte Geiser (Berne) gave a talk to members of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique in London on "The Alphorn, a musical instrument — not only a tourist attraction". It was a revelation to many. Recordings and slides helped to illustrate not only the interesting history of the Alphorn, but also the beauty and scope of the instrument. A record has come out "In praise of the Alphorn" ("A la gloire du cor des Alpes", "Zur Ehre des Alphorns"). Claves Verlag, 3600 Thun, Switzerland, CLA DPf 500, stereo, SFr 25.

In the quarterly magazine II/III 1975 of the International Liszt Centre for 19th Century Music, London, we read the following appreciation of the record. It is reproduced by courtesy of the ILC.

"It brings many interesting examples of Alphorns, Büchel and Tiba playing, the music ranges from 1767 to today, written by many eminent composers such as Leopold Mozart, A. L. Gassmann, Xaver Schnyder von Wartensee and Etienne Isoz.

"Many composers travelling in Switzerland were inspired by the wealth of Alphorn music, to name but a few, Johannes Brahms, G. B. Viotti and Franz

Liszt. Even Beethoven used an Alphorn melody in his sixth symphony.

"On this record, which is of the highest technical quality, one can hear a "Kuhreihen" written down in 1797 by G. B. Viotti, and an "Alphorn-Weise" which Brahms put down on a postcard on 12 September 1868 which he sent to Clara Schumann. There are improvisations — improvisations still play a very important part today, not only on the organ — and performances in the mountains, splendidly recorded with natural echo on the Rosenfluh near the Stockhorn. There are an Alphorn Trio and Quartet, a Nidwaldner Bicheljuiz and a demonstration of the Tiba, this instrument is played here for the first time in 30 years.

"One virtuoso and artist of the Alphorn must be mentioned: Jozsef Molnar, his playing is really superb. On this record he plays "Le Ranz des vaches fribourgeois" which is really outstanding, "Dr Meiringer" and the "Récitatif et Prière pour Cor des Alpes et Orgue" by Etienne Isoz, which is quite a modern work.

"As the first side gives demonstrations of the capabilities of the Alphorn, the second brings three larger works, the above mentioned by E. Isoz, a "Sinfonia pastorella con un corno pastorito" by

Leopold Mozart (played by Josef Breijza with the Camerata Berne), and an "Alpenlied auf Rigi Scheideck" by Xaver Schnyder von Wartensee for male voice choir and Büchel, performed by the Männerchor Thun, Angelo Lottaz plays the Büchel, and the conductor is Theodor Künzi. This is a really splendid performance, and one has especially to admire the diction of this choir; every word is clear!

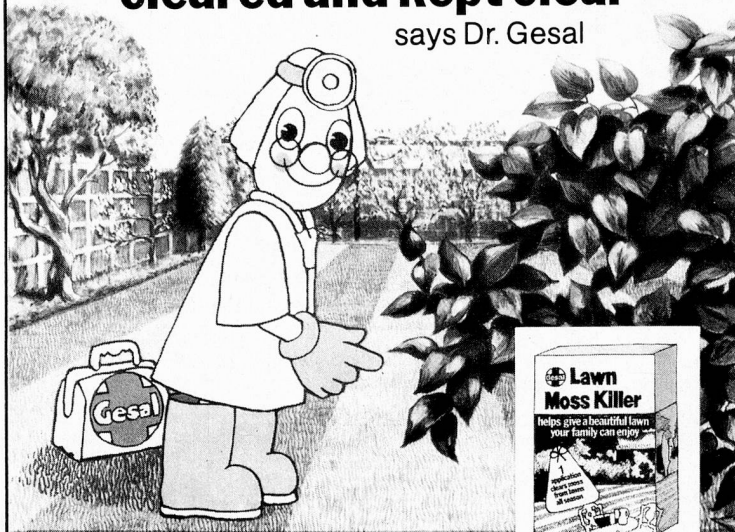
"Six attractively illustrated pages give a splendid introduction and history in three languages (German, English and French). The text is written by Dr Brigitte Geiser, who also compiled the music and had the idea to produce this record. There is a facsimile of Brahms' postcard, and there is a series of pictures showing how an Alphorn is made.

"This record is a very important and unique documentation of the Alphorn, important because it shows that the Alphorn is not only a folklore instrument, unique because such a record has never been produced before. This is the result of co-operation between the Swiss Nationalfond, who financed the research project "The Musical Instruments of Switzerland" (of which Dr Geiser is in charge) and of the Swiss Radio.

"This record is a must for every

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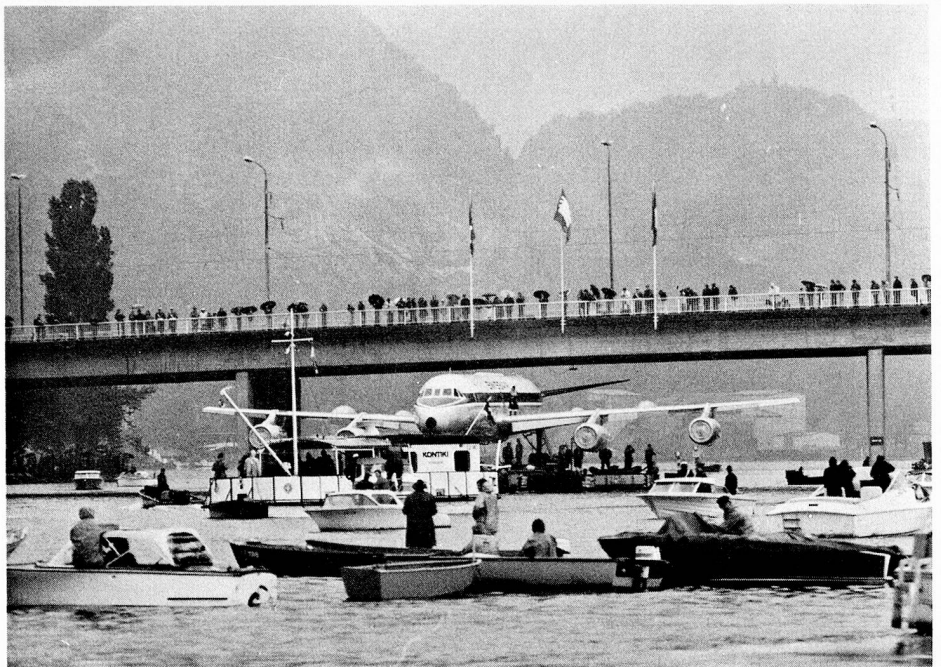
“Heimweh-Schweizer”, but the recommendation cannot stop there; for everybody interested in horns at large, or even just interested in music, this record is a necessity.”

There is a second record compiled by Dr Brigitte Geiser, “The Zithers of Switzerland”. It is a selection of many unusual zithers from many parts of rural Switzerland. The record is issued by Ex Libris EL 12 208 stereo, and its quality is excellent. At the end of the illustrated introduction, Dr Geiser writes “. . . one starts to listen again to the sound of the zither as it is a symbol of a bygone time and life style for which we long”.

MM

SNOW 75 – First Show from the World of Winter Sports

The Swiss Industries Fair in Basle is organising the world’s first winter sports show, Snow 75, from 25 October – 2 November 1975.



This dramatic picture is reproduced by courtesy of the Swiss Museum of Transport and Communications, Lucerne.



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A Swissair Coronado has crossed Lake Lucerne – on water.

The aircraft, a gift from the airline to the Lucerne Transport Museum, was transported across the lake on special floats by Swiss Army units. The operation was begun at four o’clock in the morning and completed in less than four hours.

Most difficult part of the crossing was the floating of the aircraft under Acheregg Bridge, where the wing tips and roof of the plane had a clearance of only one metre.

The Coronado CV-990 was one of seven withdrawn from service by Swissair last year.

Between 1962 and 1974 it flew more than 35,000 hours, and in 1969 flew Pope Paul on a visit to Geneva.

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