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lanterns and the national costumes and a big supper is prepared.

As darkness falls, everyone gathers on the hilltop, lighting their way with the lanterns and carrying the fireworks which will be let off as a grand finale. The village pastor steps forward and delivers a patriotic speech. The men's choir strikes up with stirring traditional songs and then from all the neighbouring villages comes

the sound of firecrackers and the light of the bonfires flares up, blazes brightly and finally dies away to a soft, red glow.

As we go back home to sit round the kitchen table, drinking to the glories of Switzerland with a home-made liqueur, I feel proud and humble to think that I have been accepted into this circle of simple, hard-working people.

TOURIST NEWS

Ski-ing without tears

Like to learn Langlauf ski-ing in Switzerland? It can be done only half an hour's drive away from Berne's city centre. The ski-touring and cross-country instruction centres at Schwarzenbühl, Riffenmatt and Ottenleuebad will again be in operation this winter.

And you don't even have to own your own equipment — it can all be rented on the spot. Following last year's successful introduction of a floodlit trail for night ski-ing at Riffenmatt, Schwarzenbühl now offers the same facility. At Ottenleuebad there are weekend and family courses, ski-touring weeks and guided ski tours. Another attraction is the 30-mile Langlauf network, double tracked and clearly marked along the entire route.

Graubunden is tops

The Graubunden area is the most popular tourist region of Switzerland, according to a report just released by the Swiss Hotel Association.

The report, based on 1974 statistics, shows that 6.5 million overnights were spent in Graubunden by Swiss and foreign tourists.

Next in popularity was the Lake Geneva region (5.4 million), followed by Berne (4.1 million), the Valais and Central Switzerland (each 3.6 million), Zurich and Ticino (each 3 million), Northeast Switzerland (2.2 million), Northwest Switzerland (1.9 million) and the Freiburg-Neuchatel-Bernese Jura region (841,000).

Hotel incentive

Switzerland's Ambassador Service Hotels group is offering free accommodation — to guests first paying for at least nine nights at any of the group's 80 hotels.

The decision to launch the scheme on nationwide basis was approved at the group's recent annual assembly in Basle,

and follows its successful introduction among ASH hotels in the Valais region of Switzerland.

The only condition is that the nine paid nights must be spent at at least five different hotels.

Under the scheme each guest is issued with a Hotel Pass at the first ASH hotel in which he stays. The pass is stamped every time the guest stays one night in one of the group's hotels, and after nine stamps have been collected the 10th night (bed and breakfast) comes free.

The Hotel Pass is valid for two years from the first date stamp.

ASH executive manager, Dr. Peter Kuehler, said it was hoped to launch the nationwide scheme — to be called Ambassador Tour — in early 1976.

Lausanne in a holiday mood

The 18th International Exhibition of Tourism and Holidays will be held at the Palais de Beaulieu in Lausanne from 28th February to 7th March, 1976. Larger and more varied than before, this popular exhibition promises to be particularly brilliant and will include all the traditional sectors: camping, caravans, gardening tools and accessories, swimming pools, etc.

Among the many attractive features of this event, mention should also be made of a large nautical sector, an exhibition of photographic and movie equipment, and a tourist section, where visitors will be able to dream and make their choice among the many tempting suggestions each more exciting than the next.

More snow

SNOW 75 — the first international exhibition devoted exclusively to the world of winter sports, which closed in Basle last month — is to become an annual event in the Swiss city.

Originally planned as a five-day event, SNOW 75 was later extended into a nine-day exhibition and attracted more than 60,000 paying visitors.

Said exhibition director Dr. Frédéric P. Walthard: "Despite some

gaps, understandable with a new event, we consider SNOW 75 to have been the successful realisation of a new exhibition idea — and one that can certainly be developed in the future.

"SNOW 75 was of particular importance at a time when increasing difficulties are facing tourism in all countries. At SNOW 76 the tourism sector will be enlarged."

Nine countries were represented at SNOW 75, and increased participation is expected next year.

SNOW 76 will be held in Basle from 23rd to 31st October.

Lugano invites

The southern Swiss resort of Lugano has announced a series of "rock-bottom rates" for hotel guests this winter.

Weekly arrangements up to the end of March cost from Sw.Fr. 120 for bed and breakfast, from Sw.Fr. 180 for half board and from Sw.Fr. 210 for full board. Children between seven and 12 years have a 30 per cent reduction and children under seven a 50 per cent reduction.

Hotels are also offering a "special surprise" arrangement for honeymooners.

The rates include unlimited travel on lake steamers and some other local transport undertakings.

For details contact Lugano's tourist office direct.

School moves

The Swiss Hotel School in Lausanne — established in 1893 as the first hotel school in the world — has moved into new Sw.Fr. 30 million premises.

The new premises are at Chalet-à-Gobet, six miles from Lausanne city centre, and were completed 18 months after the laying of the foundation stone.

When the original school opened 82 years ago, it had 27 students. Since then 18,000 students from 95 countries have been taught in Lausanne, and the new premises can take up to 450 students at any one time.

The new four-storey premises include 28 class and study rooms, a language laboratory, library, a

demonstration kitchen and training restaurant, a self-service restaurant, banquet/conference rooms and a bar.

There are also underground parking facilities, wine cellars, recreation and sports facilities, accommodation for 160 students and enough space for a further 200 rooms if necessary.

Swiss Economics Minister Mr. Ernst Brugger has described the new Swiss Hotel School as "a crowning achievement". In a message to the Swiss Hotel Association, which runs the school, Mr. Brugger said the new school would fulfil "an important mission in helping the Swiss hotel industry maintain its prominent position against fierce international competition".

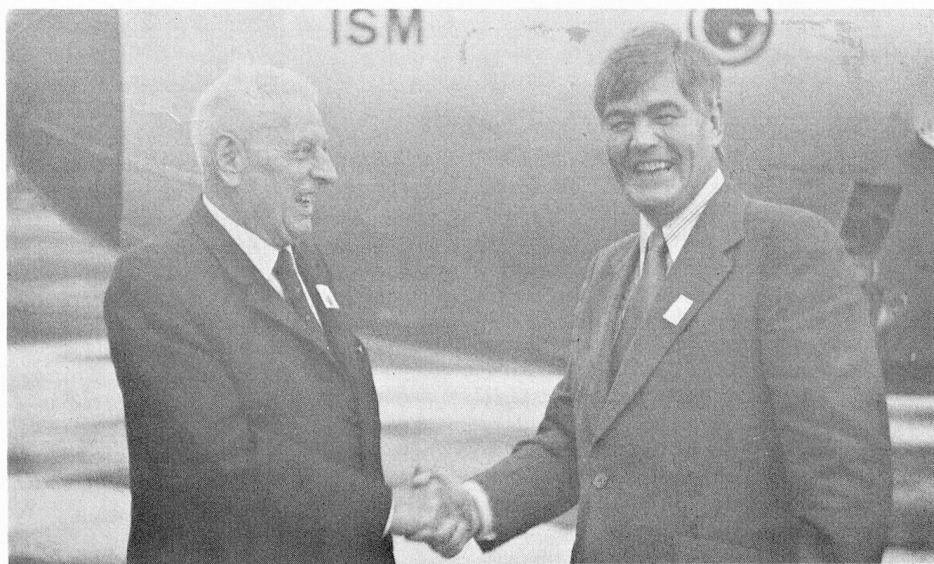
LOWER SWISS FARES PROPOSED

Dan-Air, which operates a scheduled air service between London and the Swiss Capital, is seeking approval to charge lower fares on its London-Berne route.

Dan-Air operates the HS 748 on its London (Gatwick)-Berne route because restrictions due to the short runway at Bern-Belpmoos airport prevent the use of larger commercial jet aircraft such as the BAC 1-11. Because the scheduled flight time is 45 minutes longer than if the service were flown by one of its BAC 1-11 jets, Dan-Air would like to compensate passengers with a 15% lower fare differential. The lower fares, if approved, would result in a saving of £12.40 on the present Economy return

air fare and £8.90 on the Monthly Excursion fare.

The Company states the present fares, fixed by IATA, are higher than they need be and Dan-Air contends it can still profitably operate the route with lower air fares. The Swiss Government has already indicated that it would give favourable consideration to Dan-Air's application and the Carrier now waits a decision by Britain's Civil Aviation Authority as to whether the proposed lower fares may be charged.



Dr. Eugen Dietschi (left), 79, who helped found Balair half a century ago and was a board member for 39 years, meets present director Mr. Heinz Moser.

Celebrations in Basle marking the 50th anniversary of Swiss charter airline Balair have been attended by two of the aviation pioneers who co-founded the company — Dr. Eugen Dietschi and Mr. Paul Joerin.

The ceremonies at Basle Airport were also attended by Swiss government officials, local government representatives from Switzerland, West Germany and France.

Inn on the Park. After dark

Apart from being quite the most beautiful hotel in London, the Inn on the Park is also quite the most perfect rendezvous. It's the place to meet after dark, after theatre, after a hard day's work, after anything. It also lets you start any evening as you mean to go on. In style.

Cocktails



There's the military splendour of the Vintage Bar. Or the Four Seasons Bar, just large enough to ensure that the only thing that's crushed is the ice in your drink. And speaking of comfort, the Inn on the Park has one of the few really civilised lounges left in London.

In fact, such is the attraction of

starting or concluding any evening at the Inn on the Park, that people naturally wish to spend the middle of it with us as well. For these discerning people we have a delicious alternative.

Lounge



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The Vintage Room is that rare thing. A sophisticated night spot where you can dine like a king and dance with your hands around your partner, not your ears. Live music and

very much alive atmosphere till 2a.m.

For those for whom gastronomic pleasures are to be taken seriously, there is the Four Seasons Room.

The Four Seasons Room

Unquestionably, this is one of Europe's finest restaurants. Created by people who know about good food for the remaining few who really appreciate it. The service is pure magic and the ambience pure Inn on the Park. Try it. After dark.

Inn on the Park



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SHOP DUTY FREE

Berne Airport at Belpmoos now has a duty free shop. Intended for passengers using the Berne-to-London flights operated by British airline Dan-Air, the new shop stocks a wide selection of cigarettes, alcohol and perfumes.

FAIRS AND EXHIBITIONS IN SWITZERLAND DURING THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1976

Situated in the heart of Europe, at the intersection of the most varied cultures, Switzerland is connected to the whole world by a large number of different means of communication. This ideal position, plus its long-standing tradition of liberalism and openness to international trade, has given Switzerland the privileged reputation of a "test market" for the whole of Europe, with regard to both consumer products and investment goods.

It is not surprising therefore that Swiss fairs have gained increasingly in importance and prestige, both on the European and world levels. Among events of international interest announced for the first three months of 1976, let us mention the following:

- 24th January – 1st February – Geneva: International Motor Show – UTILITY VEHICLES.
- 25th – 28th January – Zürich: ORNARIS – Fair for Interior, Handicrafts and Boutique Fashion.
- 15th – 17th February – Zürich: SEHMOD – Swiss Purchase Week for Men's Fashion.
- 25th February – 4th March – Basle: IFM 76 – International Fair for Mechanical Handling.
- 28th February – 7th March – Lausanne: International Exhibition for Vacationing.
- 7th – 8th March – Zürich: International Shoe Sample Exhibition.
- 11th – 21st March – Geneva: International Motor Show – PASSENGER CARS.
- 13th – 21st March – Zürich: Swiss Boat Show.
- 14th – 17th March – Lausanne: SERATEX – Week for Purchase of Textiles.
- 25th March – 4th April – Basle: Art and Antiques Fair of Switzerland.
- 23rd – 27th March – Basle: DIDACTA/EURODIDAC – European Educational Materials Exhibition.
- 27th March – 4th April – Lausanne: Furniture Exhibition with competition for "Swiss Creators".
- 28th – 31st March – Zürich: Swiss Buyers Week for Winter Sporting Goods.

ANIMALS AS THE CENTRAL POINT

As opposed to Berne, Geneva and the Grisons, Basle has no animal in its cantonal coat of arms. Animals however, have always enjoyed particular sympathy in this City. The Basle Zoological Gardens

with its world-wide renowned breeding successes, as well as the Basle Langen Erlen animal park are deeply anchored in the consciousness of every inhabitant.

Is it, therefore, surprising that the exhibition centre, Basle, gives its special attention to animals? The new international trade fair and information show on the relationship between man and animals "Animals and Man", which will be held for the first time from 22nd to 30th May, 1976 in the halls of the Swiss Industries Fair, has, already after the first announcement, not only awoken the interest of national and international animal protection organisations, but has also found sympathy among the general public.

With its numerous accompanying events, such as an international dog show, a horse-jumping competition, the INTER-CAT international cat show, the "Animals and Man" exhibition will be a point of attraction for all who have anything to do with animals or who love animals. But the trade fair itself can offer a wide range of special displays and special events. Among other things, for example, on the subject of "Agricultural Animal Husbandry" which will be accompanied by a teaching show "Agricultural Building", or on the question of apiculture.

Furthermore, there is a small animal show, dog demonstrations (including guide dogs for the blind), information about riding as therapy, an information stand about keeping pets (where, for example, the new Swiss laws governing the protection of animals will be explained), or information can be obtained about the duties and tasks of the huntsman.

In addition the trade fair will be supplemented by a series of congresses and meetings. Thus, between 22nd and 30th May next year, animals, and at the same time man's relationship with them, will be central theme in Basle.

A CENTURY OF SPORT IN SWITZERLAND

Die Schweizerische Landesbibliothek – the Swiss National Library – in Berne is staging a special exhibition from 29th January to 18th March, devoted to the theme: "Education and Sport in Switzerland from 1876 to the Present Day".

The exhibition gives an insight into the legislative aspects of school gymnastics and sports activities in Switzerland – activities which over the past century have been largely influenced by parliamentary and government decisions. The exhibits include numerous photographs, diagrams, posters and other documentation, past and present.

SCOTTISH ART SAVES SWISS ALPS

The Swiss Alpine Museum in Berne is staging until 1st February an exhibition devoted to the Greina region – an area of Switzerland with a special alpine scenery all of its own. Situated between the

Bleniot in the south and the Somvix further north, the Greina Pass is so isolated and untouched, that its landscape has often been compared with that of the Arctic.

As a transport and communications route, it still stands very much in the shadow of its famous neighbours in the west – the Gotthard and the Lukmanier Passes. A group of artists led by Scottish architect Bryan C. Thurston, so inspired by these pure and primitive surroundings, have allowed their works to go on exhibition in support of landscape protection measures in Switzerland. After Berne, the exhibition goes to Zürich and Lugano.

FALSE ALARM AT THE CATHEDRAL

The Berne Fire Brigade recently raced to the city's Cathedral in answer to a fire alarm call. But there was no fire. The Cathedral's newly-installed automatic alarm had been set off deliberately to find out just how quickly fire-fighting equipment could reach the scene in the event of a real outbreak.

It took a fraction over two minutes. The automatic alarm had been installed because of increasing concern that if a blaze ever did break out in the Cathedral, may of the city's – and Switzerland's – most valuable treasures would be lost before the fire brigade could get there in time.

WEEKENDING IN SWISS CITIES

Weekend city excursions are gaining in popularity, so why not spend a winter weekend in a Swiss city? Berne, for instance, can be enjoyed "à la carte" for three days.

This all-inclusive offer covers room and breakfast and a set of vouchers for museums, exhibitions, night clubs, a trip up the nearby Gurten, etc. (Sw.Fr. 78 to Sw.Fr. 175). The Chur weekend pass with two nights' accommodation and cultural events can be had from Sw.Fr. 40 to Sw.Fr. 76. Geneva offers room and breakfast for two, three or four nights, a sightseeing tour of the city and a dinner in a typical restaurant (two nights from Sw.Fr. 135 to Sw.Fr. 229 in a luxury hotel).

Lausanne has a similar arrangement at Sw.Fr. 89 to Sw.Fr. 165. Lucerne's motto is "Give your wife a treat", the idea being to spoil her with a Friday to Sunday stay in the city, including entry to museums and dancing spots and other facilities as well (Sw.Fr. 58 to Sw.Fr. 125).

St. Gall runs a theatre weekend with a book of cheques (from Sw.Fr. 58 bed and breakfast to Sw.Fr. 95 with full board). Or what about "Art and Culture in Winterthur", with three days in which to see the Oskar Reinhart Foundation, the "am Römerholz" picture gallery, Kyburg Castle and Mörsburg (Sw.Fr. 85 to Sw.Fr. 139)?

And then there's Zürich – a city well worth getting to know on a three,

four or five day visit (three days from Sw.Fr. 80 to Sw.Fr. 158). Should you be feeling the call of the South, try a week's winter holiday in Lugano or Locarno. Brunnen has a different idea: Two or seven nights with a trip up the Stoschs plus lessons in alphorn blowing or root carving (two days from Sw.Fr. 89 to Sw.Fr. 173 with full board in luxury hotel). The SNTU in London will gladly supply further details.

SKI CIRCUIT FOR HASLIBERG

Yet another attraction has been added to the Hasliberg holiday district in the Bernese Oberland. The two extensive ski-ing fields of Käserstatt and Mägisalp-Planplatten are this winter being integrated into one ski circuit by the opening of a chairlift.

Winter visitors are being offered a variety of special ski weeks. For skiers there is a one-week arrangement from 3rd January to 25th April (Sw.Fr. 319); emphasis is on ski-touring from 8th to 28th February (Sw.Fr. 265), while langlauf weekends are being held from 3rd January to 31st March.

Youngsters can learn the art of ski acrobatics from 12th to 18th January and from 15th to 20th March (Sw.Fr. 362) and for non-skiers there is a walking programme throughout winter (Sw.Fr. 270). Incidentally, on 8th and 9th January the international ladies' ski races, a world cup event, will be held on the Hasliberg for the first time.

CRANS-MONTANA – HOURLY CHARGES FOR SKI-ING

This winter the winter resort of Crans-Montana in Canton Valais, set on a sunny terrace above the Rhône Valley, is introducing a novel system under which skiers pay for their sport by the hour.

A deposit of 35 francs is paid in at the bottom station for a day ticket. When the ticket is handed back, the "unused" hours are refunded.

No charge is made for children up to the age of six accompanied by adults. Only full hours are charged for, so it's actually possible to ski for 2 hours 59 minutes for the price of two hours!

NEW SNTU BROCHURES "WINTER OFFERS 1975/76"

The Swiss National Tourist Office has just issued six brochures giving such information as which Swiss resorts are providing new attractions this winter or are offering economy-priced between-season holidays and where package holidays are available for skiers, langlauf enthusiasts, curlers, ski acrobatic fans, non-skiers and so on.

The brochures dealing with the regions of Grisons, North-East and North-West Switzerland, Central Switzerland, Bernese Oberland, Jura, Lake of Geneva and Ticino and Valais are obtainable from the SNTU, Postfach, 8023 Zürich.

32 CURLING RINK FACILITIES IN SWITZERLAND

Switzerland has 32 indoor curling rink facilities, nine of them in the winter sports resorts of Adelboden, Champéry, Flims, Grindelwald (in the newly-opened sports centre), Gstaad, Kandersteg, Leukerbad, Wengen and Wildhaus.

A new five-rink hall was opened at Lausanne-Ouchy in September. The Swiss Curling Association now has 7,500 members belonging to 200 clubs; one-fifth of them are women.

SLEDGING IN THE SNOWS OF SWITZERLAND

Switzerland's most popular natural sledge-run is a three-mile stretch from Preda to Bergün in the Albula Valley of Canton Grisons. New facilities in the Canton are the Scharmoin-Lenzerheide sledge-path (three miles) and the Flond-Ilanz sledge-run (about two and a half miles).

The resorts of Braunwald, Davos, Les Diablerets, Engelberg, Grindelwald, Kandersteg, Mürren, Nods-Chasseral, Sils, Sent, Val St. Imier and Zuoz also have extended runs.

A tourist attraction that has become a tradition is international toboggan racing at Preda on 21st and 22nd December. Among resorts which organise night sledging or sledge racing for visitors are Davos, Engelberg, Les Diablerets and Saas Fee.

The horse-drawn sleigh rides at Arosa and into the Val Roseg in the Engadine are also well-known attractions.

ST. MORITZ READY FOR WINTER

In St. Moritz the snow is down, the pistes have been prepared and everything is ready for the annual invasion and hurley-burley that starts with the opening of the ski season.

Facilities provided to meet the long catalogue of visitors' requirements are even more numerous this winter. Among them are a new langlauf and ski-touring centre run by Olympic medal winner Albert Giger.

In January there will be racing on the bob run, the Cresta run and on the Lake of St. Moritz and the horse racing and show jumping weeks will start with the concours hippique which opens on 20th January.

The events include international race meetings on the frozen Lake of St. Moritz and the finale will be racing on 15th February for the Grand Prix of St. Moritz.

The resort is also staging another major event for the first time this winter. It is the European wooden-stone curling championships from 23rd to 25th January, when players from 15 countries will be competing in the Olympic Ice Stadium.

The racing season will be rounded off by the Engadine ski marathon on 14th March, when thousands of langlauf enthusiasts will be demonstrating their

prowess over the 27 mile route from Maloja to Zuoz.

RAPPERSWIL STAR SINGING

The ancient tradition of star singing was revived a few years ago in the medieval township of Rapperswil on the Lake of Zürich. On the fourth Sunday of Advent a group representing angels, Mary and Joseph, the shepherds and the Magi make their entry into the town, followed by asses, sheep, horses and camels from the Knie Circus.

At exactly six o'clock the singing and the bagpipe-playing star singers leave the city gate and also process to the main square, where the Nativity play is performed on the Castle steps.

TICINO IS FINE IN WINTER

It can be really warm in Canton Ticino in winter, and at the same time there's plenty of snow in the high regions. So why not try winter holidays in the south for once? There's a wide variety of holiday offers in the canton known as "Switzerland's sun lounge".

Ascona is offering "riding holidays" – seven nights with half-board, six days' horse-riding instruction and rides cost between Sw.Fr. 445 and Sw.Fr. 620. In the Blenio Valley all-inclusive ski weeks covering accommodation, meals, ski instruction and ski pass are available over Christmas/New Year and at carnival time.

Langlauf ski-ing is also possible. Vogorno-Berzona in the Verzasca Valley also offers "Christmas and New Year in Ticino". This includes seven days in a holiday apartment, ski instruction on the Cardada (5,400 ft) and use of sauna and keep-fit facilities.

A studio for two to three people costs from Sw.Fr. 290 to Sw.Fr. 430. Of course the cities of Lugano and Locarno, which offer winter holidays with excursions, also figure prominently on the list of Ticino resorts.

ON NARROW SKIS IN THE GANTRISCH REGION

The Gantrisch Langlauf Centre Association is this winter again running three instruction centres for ski-touring and langlauf in the Schwarzenbühl, Riffenmatt and Ottenleubad region – about half an hour by road from the Swiss capital.

An illuminated night trail is open for use at Riffenmatt and Schwarzenbühl between 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. from Tuesday to Friday. In Ottenleubad weekend courses, ski-tour weeks and guided tours are arranged on request.

SECOND SKI SCHOOL IN VERBIER

In the Canton Valais winter resort of Verbier healthy competition has been provided by the opening of a second official ski school. For demanding skiers Verbier has a skirama with 61

transportation facilities extending as far as La Fouly, Super Saint-Bernard and into the Aosta Valley.

An innovation this winter is the gondola lift from Le Châble in the Val de Bagnes to the Télérverbier lower station.

AND ON THE BRIGHT SIDE . . .

There are some who say the Swiss have no sense of humour. Perhaps these contributions from Mrs. Frances Boo will raise a smile. Does anyone else have any Swiss jokes they might like to share?

WGS

The people of Berne have a reputation (undeservedly I'm sure) of being slow. If they laugh aloud in church on Sunday it is because they have just understood a joke told to them the night before.

There were three farmers sitting in the village café sharing a bottle of wine. Suddenly a cow wandered down the street past the window.

After a few minutes the first farmer

said, "That was Rudi's cow."

Ten minutes elapsed and the second farmer said, "You're wrong you know, it was Heinrich's."

Fifteen minutes later the first farmer said, "I tell you it was Rudi's."

Finally, after yet another pause, the third farmer said, "Look here you two, if you don't stop this argument, I'm going."

A young Bernese was going to make his first parachute jump. He had been instructed to count up to three, then pull the ripcord.

Watchers below were horrified to see him plummet to the ground. They rushed to his aid just in time to hear him gasp "three" with his last breath.

CULTURAL EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, 11th February — Purcell Room, 7.30 p.m. — The programme of Willem Brons's piano recital includes *Sept pièces brèves* by Honegger.

FRIDAY, 13th February — New University of Ulster, Coleraine, 8 p.m. — Monday, 16th February — *Swiss Embassy, 16 Montagu Place, London W1, 6 p.m.* — (for free tickets, please apply to the Cultural Counsellor's Office, Tel: 01-723 0701, ext. 232) — Tuesday, 17th February — University of Kent at Canterbury, 5 or 5.30 p.m. — Wednesday, 18th February — University of Cambridge German Society, 8.30 p.m. — Thursday, 19th February — University of Sussex, Falmer, 5 p.m. — Friday, 20th February — University College of Swansea, afternoon — The writer *Jürg Federspiel* gives readings from his works, in German.

TUESDAY, 17th February — Wigmore Hall, 7.30 p.m. — The pianist Alan Brown plays, among other works, 4 *Preludes* by Frank Martin.

SATURDAY, 21st February — Wigmore Hall, 7.30 p.m. — *Margret Luginbühl* (contralto), *Martin Trüb* (baritone) and *Heidi Rohr* (piano) give a performance of *Lieder* by A. Campbell Allen.



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