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TOURIST NEWS

STEAMING THROUGH SWITZERLAND

For enthusiasts of the good old days of steam, this summer will again provide many opportunities of discovering Switzerland by steam train. Popular are the Blonay-Chamby (Museum Railway), Brienz-Rothorn (the only line with scheduled services), Balsthal-Oensingen ("Chluser Schnäggi") and Vitznau-Rigi Kaltbad routes or a round trip on the "puffing" Rhaetian Railway from Landquart via Klosters, Davos, Thusis and Chur. Other alternatives are the steam train trip in the Waldenburger Valley, in the Emmental, on the Schynige Platte, from Brig to Zermatt, through the Appenzell region by "Amor Express" or even on the miniature steam train in the Schinznach tree and plant nursery. All steam trains in Switzerland are listed in the booklet "Steam in Switzerland 1979" published in English only by the Swiss National Tourist Office.

OPENING OF ZÜRICH AIRPORT RAIL LINKS

Zürich's Kloten Airport, the biggest in Switzerland, will be directly linked with the country's rail network from 1st June, 1980 — two years earlier than expected.

The new double-track line will result in frequent services from the airport to the industrial and commercial centres of the country and to the holiday resorts. The direct express trains Geneva-Lausanne-Berne-Zürich-Winterthur-St. Gallen/Romanshorn and vice versa will all stop at the airport. Chur, Lucerne and the Gotthard line will each have one fast train daily in each direction. There will be an additional shuttle service between the airport and Zürich Main Station, thus making a total of 50 trains daily. The journey time is ten minutes. Special trains can be arranged for large groups providing direct connections from and to the airport.

NEW: REKA HIKING PASS FOR CANTON SCHWYZ

Reka hiking passes are available this season for Appenzell, Jura, Emmental, Toggenburg and — a newcomer — for Canton Schwyz. This variety-filled walking region offers 190 miles of railways and 125 miles of motor roads, 16 cableways, two lake navigation routes, 850

marked footpaths and mountain paths and a choice of 83 inns and hotels. The pass covers overnight stays with breakfast and free use of all public transport services in the region. Two days with one overnight stay costs Sw.Fr. 44, four days with three overnight stays Sw.Fr. 104 and seven days with six overnight stays Sw.Fr. 188. The pass is obtainable from the Schweizer Reisekasse (Neuengasse 15, CH-3001 Berne), at Swiss Federal Railways information and travel offices and at various postcoach offices.

CHILDREN IN THE SWISS NATIONAL MUSEUM

As a contribution to the "Year of the Child", the Swiss National Museum in Zürich has extended its guided tours for children. They are now held every second Wednesday and Friday afternoon and are devoted to the themes of "Cooking and eating in ancient times" (March), "Needle, thread, cloth and scissors" (May) and "Myths, legends and facts" (July), while in April there will be special guided tours for physically handicapped children and in July for blind youngsters.

RE-OPENED: BALLEMBERG OPEN-AIR MUSEUM

The Swiss Open-Air Museum of Rural Building and Home Life, Ballenberg, near Brienz in the Bernese Oberland, is open to the public again from 1st April to the end of October daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. following its successful first season (in the first five months after opening in May last year, it had 130,337 visitors). At certain times, old crafts such as linen weaving, chipwood box making, basket weaving, baking, etc. are demonstrated. There is a postcoach connection for every train that stops in Brienz (Brünig Line Interlaken-Meiringen-Lucerne). Guided tours by request (Tel. 036 51 14 42).

NEW MAP OF SWISS YOUTH HOSTELS

In co-operation with the Swiss Youth Hostel Federation, the Swiss National Tourist Office (SNTO) has published a new list of all youth hostels in Switzerland. On the front is printed a map of Switzerland showing the location of the 199 places where youngsters can find accommodation. On the back are mentioned detailed information about all the youth hostels and useful travel hints. The list is available from the SNTO or the Swiss Youth Hostel Federation (Schweizerischer Bund für Jugendherbergen, Postfach 132, CH-8958 Spreitenbach).



Blonay—Chamby Railway