

Business news

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BUSINESS NEWS

A HOSPITAL HEATED BY SOLAR ENERGY

The new "Pays-d'Enhaut" hospital (45 beds) has just been opened at Château-d'Oex, a Swiss tourist resort. Its originality lies in the fact that 400 m² (over 4,000 sq. ft.) of its roof is covered with solar captors, which represents the largest surface of this kind in Europe for a building of this type. The two-storey building is topped with pyramids, the seven biggest of which measure 16 metres a side and have their south and west faces equipped with captors. The heat collected and transmitted to exchangers can be stored and heat all the water supply for the hospital, as well as the water for its swimming pool, at the same time ensuring its ventilation. Among other interesting installations, mention should first of all be made of the system lighting the corridors, the medico-technical unit and the back of the rooms by means of glazed surfaces fitted on top of the north faces of big pyramids. Finally, each room has its own built-in veranda which helps, while keeping the rooms cool, to give the hospital a less austere look.

BRAKE FOR CROSS-COUNTRY SKIS

Inventions are not always produced by specialists but sometimes also by ingenious minds faced with a very special problem. A Swiss amateur cross-country skier for example, has just invented a brake to avoid travelling too fast downhill and having to make too big an effort when going uphill. The "Frindski", as this new brake is called, is composed of two injected aluminium toothed rods, joined together and fitted on the skin behind the boot. The device pivots round an axis and a wing nut makes it possible to adjust the distance between the end of the brake and the ski. Depending on the angle chosen, the serrated edge digs more or less deeply into the snow. Consequently, the ski is braked when going downhill and grips when going uphill.

THE LATEST GEM CREATED BY A SWISS WATCH FACTORY

The latest creation of the oldest watch factory in Switzerland and the world (1755) remains in the tradition of the master-watchmaker artists who devoted their lives to striving after technical and aesthetic perfection. The "Kallistá" watch (a Greek word meaning "the most beautiful") houses the flattest movement in its category in the world. The bracelet, the dial and the back of the case are

decorated with a selection of 118 matching emerald-cut diamonds (130 carats). The watch case has been carved out of a solid block of gold. On the back of the case, the painter R. Moretti has drawn two profiles, one feminine and the other masculine. The creation of this masterpiece took 6,000 hours of work over a period of 20 months.

A HEAT FLOW METER FOR MEASURING THERMAL INSULATION

In order to contribute to the campaign against wastage of energy, a Swiss engineering company has just put on the market a device for measuring the quality of thermal insulation, detecting cold spots, improving knowledge of materials and thus calculating heating energy requirements. Simple to use, portable and economic, the heat flow meter K-Therm is equipped with a small very thin plate-like non-insulating probe with a very short response time, which rapidly detects the flow of heat through the wall, and two thermometers measuring the inside and outside temperatures. The difference in heat is indicated on the device by means of a potentiometer. A digital display gives the coefficient of thermal insulation k directly. By moving the probe over the wall's surface, cold spots and defects in insulation can be detected.

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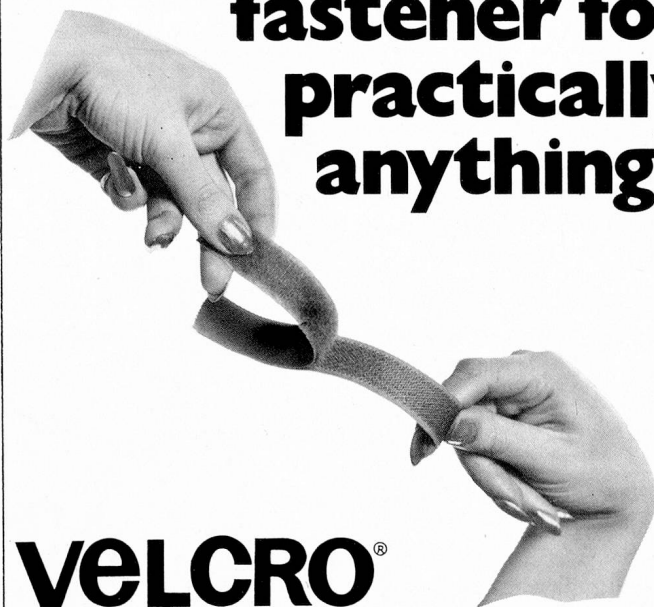
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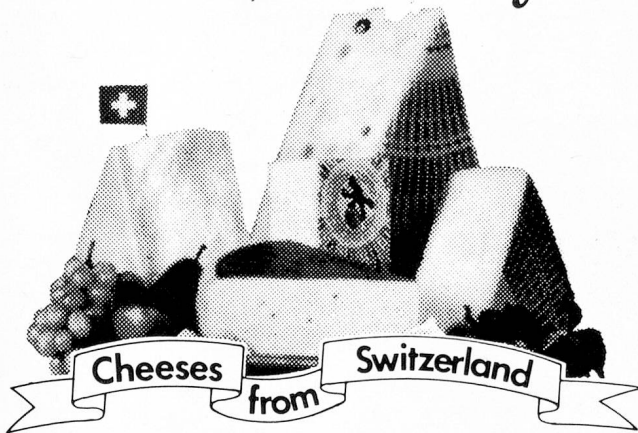


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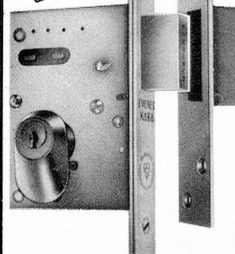
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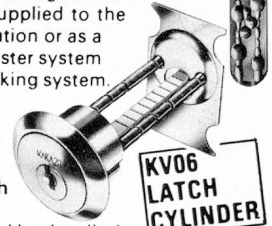
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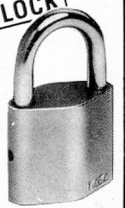
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NEWS IN BRIEF

The Swiss furniture factory *Rüttiman Co. Ltd.* will shortly deliver two million francs' work of cupboards and furniture to a big hotel in *Saudi Arabia* belonging to an American chain.

The precision electronic weighing machine "PC 4400" developed by a Swiss firm won the "IR 100 Award 1979" in Chicago. This instrument forms part of a series (Mettler Delta Range) which indicates weights very precisely, even of heavy objects. The prize founded by the American periodical "Industrial Research Development" is awarded each year to 100 new products which are technically outstanding for their originality, utility and importance.

On the occasion of its 50th anniversary, the Soviet travel agency *Intourist* awarded honorary diplomas and commemorative badges to 16 representatives of the Swiss tourist agencies *Kuoni, Hotelplan, Lavanchy, Cosmos, Popularis* and *Danzas*, for their long and successful cooperation in the development of tourist relations between Switzerland and the USSR.

One of the two winners of the *Erasmus 79* prize in the Swiss daily newspaper *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, one of the oldest independent newspapers in the country. It was awarded the prize for the variety of subjects dealt with, as well as for the considerable space it sets aside for

opinions of all kinds. The prize was instituted by Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands in 1958. It is awarded to personalities or institutions that have made a particularly important contribution to Europe. The other prizewinner is the German weekly *Die Zeit*.

For the first time since 1973, the proportion of foreign workers compared with the working population in Switzerland increased in 1978 to 22.8 per cent compared with 22.5 per cent in 1977.

THE SWISS WELL PROVIDED WITH HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES

Today, refrigerators and television sets are found in almost all Swiss homes. As a matter of fact, at the end of 1978, 93 per cent of all Swiss households had a refrigerator and 89 per cent a TV set. Among other widely-used appliances, let us also mention small electric heaters of under 5 kW (83 per cent). Next come electric cookers (73 per cent), deep-freeze units (42 per cent), electric boilers (35 per cent), dish-washing machines (21 per cent), washing machines (13 per cent) and fixed heating appliances over 5 kW (2.7 per cent). The latter consume the most electricity per unit (13,000 kW during the hydrological year 1977/78). It is interesting to note, however, that the annual overall consumption of electricity (745

million kW) by high power fixed heating installations is at present less than that of all refrigerators and deep-freeze units (1,130 million kW) in spite of the fact that, during the course of the year under consideration, these two types of appliance consumed 370 kW and 450 kW respectively.

TELEPHONE SYSTEM: SWITZERLAND RANKS THIRD IN THE WORLD

From the world telephone statistics, recently published by the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T), it appears that, at the beginning of 1978, Switzerland with 65.9 telephones for every 100 inhabitants came third among all countries in the world for the number of telephones per head of the population, behind the United States of America (74.4) and Sweden (71.7). In addition, among the towns in Europe with over 100,000 inhabitants, Zurich also comes third with 107.7 telephones per 100 inhabitants, after Stockholm (118.5) and Paris (111). In Switzerland, there were over 4.14 million telephones compared with 423 million in the world as a whole. By far the largest number were in North America and Europe with 41.6 per cent and 36.6 per cent respectively. Let us note however that only one out of every 15 people on earth has a telephone.