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30 years on the air cargo scene

MISS Geraldine Nichols (pictured above) completed 30 years' service in Swissair's London cargo department on November 13.

In the early 1950s she was secretary and assistant to Walter Steinmann, now retired, then Swissair's UK cargo manager.

She helped him in a variety of duties other than cargo within the small London office and gradually built up the cargo reservations section into an efficient unit.

She was formally appointed cargo reservations supervisor in 1967, adding, some years later, duties as local cargo instructor.

Over the years Miss Nichols built up an enviable reputation for her knowledge of cargo rates and regulations which she uses effectively to train other Swissair staff and run courses for forwarding agents.

In 1977 Swissair reshaped its UK cargo organisation, creating a London sales and reservations unit located at Unitaire Centre near Heathrow Airport.

At that time Miss Nichols decided to remain with UK cargo sales at the Swiss Centre offices and became sales assistant to the cargo sales and marketing manager for UK and Ireland, at present Mr Rolf Weiss.

She is also responsible for the correct application of tariffs and continues to combine her function with that of instructor.

When asked, as one of the longest serving women on the London air cargo scene, to what she attributes her success from the beginning in a largely male environment, Miss Nichols says:

"Playing attention to detail, being patient, remaining friendly and helpful whatever the problem and being able to work against the clock."

Swiss Holiday Scene

GENEVA'S new exhibition and conference centre opens on December 18.

Situated between the inter-continental airport and the main city, it will have direct links from the motorway network which connects Geneva with the rest of Switzerland, France and Italy. By the mid-'80s, a new railway station will be built, connecting the exhibition and conference centre to the airport and the main railway station.

The 8th International Commercial Vehicles Show (January 22 to 31) will be the first event to be organised in the new centre, followed by no fewer than 13 events during 1982.

The centre will house three halls of 16,000 sq metres, an open-air area and several other large rooms of various dimensions, amounting to a total exhibition surface of 66,500 sq metres.

The enormous conference hall with a seating capacity for 2,000 people can be divided into three self-contained units, each air-conditioned and fully equipped with interpreters' booths, special lighting, and sound and projection installations.

A grand foyer will contain spacious reception areas, offices, lounges, bars and boutiques, as well as a travel office, car hire desk and a Press and telecommunications centre.

Besides the numerous service bars in the various exhibition and conference areas, the plans for catering include a large dining area seating 2,000 guests, and an exclusive gourmet restaurant for a maximum of 100 people. Centralised catering facilities will provide full buffet service for entertaining in selected areas as well as on exhibition stands.

Big turn-out at ski show

LAST month's International Ski Show, held at London's Earls Court exhibition centre, featured a complete Swiss section, situated in the centre of the hall, highlighted with hundreds of brilliant bulbs giving the impression of a starlit winter village scene.

The area was divided into stands of various ski regions all of which were manned by Swiss

Conference centre is a showpiece

representatives. The 50-strong delegation from Switzerland included directors of tourist offices and transport organisations and an après-ski and folklore band as well as "Grindelwaldi" – a St. Bernard dog on skis.

The Swiss National Tourist Office and Swissair were prominently represented to give information on all aspects of travel and winter holiday resorts.

Ready for the winter

NEW transport installations due to be completed for the coming winter season are:

Fiesch – Skilift Blatz. Length 320 m, difference in altitude 50 m.

Lenzerheide – Chairlift Rothorn Gipfel. Capacity 600 persons p/h, 2685-2855 m altitude.

Melchsee-Frutt – Skilift Erzegg.

Capacity 1,000 persons p/h, difference in altitude 260 m.

Morschach – Aerial cableway Morschach-Stoos. Capacity 150 persons p/h, 802-1276 m altitude.

Veysonnaz – Aerial cableway Piste de l'Ours. Capacity 800 persons p/h, 1477-1810 and 1810-2127 m altitude.

During the summer months, many transport installations were improved in comfort, capacity and speed.

Bicycles for museum

AS a result of alterations taking place in the Road Traffic Hall at the Swiss Transport Museum a new section for motorbikes and bicycles has been opened.

About 50 bicycles are displayed in chronological order, including the world's first motorbike, built in 1894.

Events of the month

Dec 4, 11	Ottenbach	«Schnabelgeissen» («Spräggelen»), ancient custom
Dec 5	Fribourg	St. Nicholas procession and market
Dec 5	Rapperswil	Arrival of Santa Claus
Dec 6	Hallwil	«Klausechlöpfe», youth festival
Dec 6	Zurich	Wollishofen: «Lichtkläuse», procession
Dec 7	Martigny	Bacon market
Dec 12/13	Geneva	«Escalade», historical festival
Dec 12 – Jan 3	Lausanne	Palais de Beaulieu: Fair and festival
Dec 18	Weinfelden	«Bochse Nacht», traditional schoolchildren's and popular festival
Dec 20	Rapperswil	Old town: Star singing, procession with animals, nativity play
Dec 20	Lucerne, Wettingen	Star singing
Dec 24, 31	Rheinfelden	Sebastian Fraternity well singing
Dec 25	Kandersteg	«Pelzmarti», ancient custom
Dec 26	Bad Scuol	«Pan Gronds», ancient custom
Dec 29	Samstagern	«Haageri», ancient customs
Dec 30	Meiringen-Hasliberg	«Übersitz», ancient custom
Dec 30	St. Gall	«Römpel», ancient custom
Dec 31	Bergün	New Year's Eve singing «Chant da Stegla»
Dec 31	Geneva	«Restauration», historical festival
Dec 31	Laupen	«Achetringle», ancient custom
Dec 31	Leukerbad	Serenade to play out old year
Dec 31	Lötschental	Wiler: «Dreikönigsrössli», ancient custom
Dec 31	Schwarzenburg	«Altjahrsesel», ancient custom
Dec 31	Grächen, St. Niklaus VS	New Year singing
Dec 31	Appenzell region, Stäfa, Wald	«Silvesterkläuse», ancient custom



ABOVE: A herald in period costume reads the news of Geneva's deliverance. LEFT: A tasty symbol of the "Escalade" – a giant cauldron made of chocolate.

Geneva's night of revelry

Swissair train links cities

IN order to meet peak demand around midday, Swissair has introduced a train between Basle main station and Zurich airport to connect with midday flights.

Only passengers holding air tickets are accepted on this train, and a Swissair hostess is on board to collect flight coupons.

Basle passengers going via Zurich pay the normal Basle fare but luggage can only be registered as far as Zurich.

DECEMBER 12 has been a great day for the people of Geneva for nearly 400 years, and this year again they will be letting their hair down and celebrating in traditional style.

And all because of the exploits of the legendary "Mère Royaume" – the hot-tempered housewife who saved the city from a fate worse than annexation.

The "Escalade" glorifies what happened on that December night in 1602, when the beleaguered citizens repulsed a final effort by the Duke of Savoy, urged on by the Pope, to take the city.

Two thousand mercenaries – Italian,

Spanish, Savoyard and French – made a surprise attack. In the darkness they started scaling the city's walls, but frightened geese raised the alarm and the attackers were bombarded with anything that came to hand.

In the case of "Mère Royaume" it was a cauldron of scalding hot soup. Hence the richly decorated chocolate cauldrons which are given pride of place in the windows of the city's confectioners today.

The festivities are more than a patriotic holiday, for the historic event is now an excuse for noisy carnival processions, led by costumed torch-bearers.

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