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THE MAKING OF AN EXHIBITION

ANYONE who has ever been involved in setting up a show, a display, an exhibition, knows that when one gets near the opening one experiences a feeling of panic – how is it ever going to be ready on time!

This is what it felt like at the Earls Court exhibition hall on the day before the start of the 1983 Ski Show.

The eleventh Daily Mail International Ski Show opened on November 12, and on the day before, it was just glorious chaos. An incredible mess everywhere, stalls being erected, crates being unpacked, workmen hammering and sawing and loudspeakers blaring away.

It is not patriotic prejudice if I say that the only stands practically ready were the Swiss ones, a double row of red and white stands with roofs, and a floor covering of rush matting squares in the gangway between them.

Of course, for the Swiss the planning started early in the year. In spring, the Swiss National Tourist Office contacted all the regional tourist offices and enquired whether they wanted to

take part.

They were informed of the rental per stall, the cost of publicity material and relevant organising details.

The regions then got in touch with individual resorts. This time, those taking part were the Grisons, the Bernese Oberland Jungfrau region, Gstaad and the Saanenland, the Alpes Vaudoises, a sub-region of the Vaud Tourist Office.

The standard basic structures, that is, the simple prefabricated stands, are available from the SNTTO in Zurich for all exhibitions.

For the London show they were transported by lorry through a Swiss transport company and handed to international carriers on arrival here. These delivered them to Earls Court when they were required.

The equipment includes the floor mats, the electric lamps and electrical switch installations. The furniture is rented from a firm here specialising in exhibition furniture.

The four workmen from Switzerland, assisted by some members of the SNTTO in London, started erecting the stands at the

beginning of the week, and a good, neat job they made of it.

The publicity material for the various stands was collected in Zurich and brought over by trucks. It included large mounted posters and plenty of handouts.

But back to Friday and the pre-opening atmosphere. The impressive Thomson artificial ski slope seemed to be ready.

It looked like a huge honeycomb and is actually made of a series of brush-like strips comprising PVC filaments held by stainless steel wire in a stainless steel strip. Each strip is bent to form the zig-zags which make up the pattern. These slopes were first introduced in Britain in 1960, and the first and most important British manufacturers, the largest in the world, are Dendix Ski Slopes in Chepstow, Gwent.

On that particular day before the opening of the Ski Show at Earls Court, it was difficult to move about. An amazing collection of articles on skis barred one's way at the bottom of the slope – a dining table set for a meal, a wheelchair, a tandem, armchairs, a canoe and a bath tub.

They proved to be the requisites of the "Dangerous Sports Club" to practise later for the St Moritz Classic ski race in March 1984. (The grand piano used in the same race last year was not yet in evidence).

Every now and then, there was a presentation of a kind, a group of skiing experts making a fast and attractive descent (landing on an air cushion), a choreographed ski and apres-ski fashion show, a few youngsters limbering up – and later in the afternoon the dress rehearsal of the Ski Fantasia, featuring acrobatic skiing by the Peter Stuyvesant snow ski team.

This was advertised as a "lavish theatrical event, using sophisticated laser lighting and sound and dramatic special effects".

It was all that, and the skiing was undoubtedly very acrobatic, and the "dramatic effects" startling and the noise deafening.

The man in charge of the Fantasia is a Swiss, Jack Luder of Eglisau, (Bernese by origin). The team, I was told, consisted of three Canadians, one Britisher and five Swiss.

At that time, the organisers expected 100,000 visitors during the nine days, and by all accounts the show was a success. Not only all the skiing and dancing and fashion shows, but also from the commercial angle with some 100 exhibitors advertising resorts and selling skiing equipment.

On the following Tuesday, there was a workshop for the travel trade, at which all the national tourist offices took part. Switzerland offered raclette and the appropriate white Swiss wine.

Switzerland did no commercial transactions at the show at all. The representatives of the various regions advised and informed on winter sports resorts and facilities, on holidays and travel: "Switzerland – Winterland-Swissairland".

Apart from the Swiss skiers in the acrobatic team, a Swiss alphorn player, Pierrot Damay from Verbier, was there, attired in the brown suit, white stockings and black hat of the Valaisan – a peaceful sound in the incredible hubbub on the eve of the opening when the press was introduced to all aspects of the "Most spectacular Ski Show ever".

As I left, I wondered whether it would all be ready on time – it was!

Mariann Meier



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Red Cross and the Falklands conflict

IN the annual report of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva we read that, during 1982, the activities of the ICRC in Latin America were marked by the institution's involvement in the Falkland Islands conflict.

Throughout this war, the ICRC conducted large-scale protective activities on the basis of the mandate conferred on it by the Geneva Convention.

From the beginning of the crisis that arose between Argentina and Great Britain over the Falklands, the ICRC reminded the two sides of their obligations and offered its services to intervene on behalf of civilians, sick or wounded combatants, the shipwrecked and prisoners of war, and to take the necessary steps to protect the civilian population.

No intervention was necessary with regard to British soldiers and some civilians captured by the Argentine forces when they landed, the prisoners having been released via Montevideo, where they were handed over to the British authorities.

Then in May and June, the ICRC took part in several operations. ICRC delegates, including doctors, took charge of Argentine prisoners; they talked to them on various ships and then handed them over to the Argentine authorities via Montevideo. ICRC delegates visited and registered every one of the prisoners and accompanied them to the place where they were handed over.

On June 12 alone, a team of six delegates including two doctors went aboard the British ship "Norland" which was carrying 1,013 Argentine soldiers captured during the battles of Goose Green

and Port Darwin.

Between June 19 and 26, 9,896 Argentine prisoners of war were taken care of by the ICRC. The delegates remained present on the Falkland Islands until the last were released. The total reached some 12,000 men. As usual, the ICRC sent confidential reports drawn up by the delegates to the British and Argentine governments.

The ICRC also assisted civilians. At first they were only able to send help to civilians in need on the coast of southern Argentina, but later they succeeded in reaching the islands aboard a British hospital ship.

But before establishing a neutral zone, a cease-fire had come into force, and work could proceed unhampered.

An expert also visited the four British and two Argentine hospital ships at the request of both parties to check that installations complied with the Geneva Convention.

The mission concluded that identification of medical transport facilities might be improved.

During the whole conflict, the ICRC worked closely with the Argentine Red Cross and the British Red Cross. The ICRC provided the former with a vehicle and equipment for use as a blood collecting and transfusion unit, with first aid posts and teaching material.

The value of the aid supplied to the Argentine Red Cross by the ICRC amounted to Sfr. 133,000.

Valuable work was done by the ICRC Tracing Agency in Buenos Aires. It registered over 11,600 prisoners visited by delegates. Thus the Agency was able to send full information regarding prisoners of war, the wounded and the dead. They were also able to forward personal belongings found on the bodies.

The Central Tracing Agency in Geneva also worked in close co-operation with the national information office opened in London by the British government at the outbreak of the war.

A team of eight delegates, including three doctors, was sent

from Geneva to carry out humanitarian tasks aboard the hospital ships, ships transporting prisoners and in the islands.

Three delegates were attached to the ICRC regional delegation based in Buenos Aires. Eleven delegates were thus at work in the theatre of military operations in the Falklands war.

The activities of the ICRC in the South Atlantic conflict were only a small part of the work of this great humanitarian institution. With the theatres of war in the Lebanon, Iran and Iraq, conflict in El Salvador and Nicaragua, in Africa and Asia, the need was great. In Europe, help was given in Poland.

Altogether 37 countries benefited in 1982 from ICRC material and medical assistance, consisting of 51,878 tons of material worth Sfr. 183 million.

The ICRC is one of three components – the other two being

the League of Red Cross Societies and the 130 recognised National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies – making up the International Red Cross.

The International Committee of the Red Cross consists of Swiss citizens. The Assembly, under the presidency of Mr Alexandre Hay, is made up of 19 men and three women. The Executive Board of six includes the former Swiss Ambassador to London, Olivier Long and the former head of the Swiss Women's Auxiliary Service, Miss Andrée Weitzel.

The annual report for 1982 (received a short while ago) consists of some 130 pages and makes impressive reading. It is an institution Switzerland may be justly proud of – millions of sufferers owe relief to it and its founder Henri Dunant.

Mariann Meier

"IN spite of a year that brought both bereavement and illness to members of the ageing Dunfermline Swiss Club hard work kept the meetings going", writes Ursula Ditchburn.

"In April, they joined members of the Glasgow club for dinner at the Swiss-owned Roman Camp Hotel in Callander. It is intended to meet all the Scottish clubs in Linlithgow during 1984.

"A visit to the Fisheries Museum in Anstruther proved most interesting and the annual dinner was bound to be a success, because honorary consul Dr Hansjürg Wirz from Edinburgh addressed the meeting and last but not least because every single member helped to provide a splendid meal".

The following members were

either re-elected or elected, and Mr and Mrs Eugster, the retiring treasurers were thanked for all the hard work they had done for so many years: Dr U. Ditchburn (president) Mrs M. Bürgisser (vice-president) Mrs F. Adams (secretary) Mrs E. Vogel (new treasurer) Mrs U. Cant (auditor).

Programme for 1984:

Feb 15: Theatre visit.
April 14: Film show.
April 18: Annual dinner.
May 14: Skittle evening with Edinburgh.
May 16: Talk.
June 17: Excursion to Linlithgow Palace.
Aug 1: National Day celebration.
Sept 15: Visit to Edinburgh Festival.
Oct 17: Monthly gathering.
Nov 14: Annual general meeting.

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SOCIETY AND SOCIAL SCENE

Anniversary celebration

TO celebrate the 110th anniversary of the Unione Ticinese's foundation, its committee is organising a special event to commemorate the occasion.

It will take place on Friday, February 3, at the Swiss Centre Restaurants, Leicester Square, London, at 7.30 for 8pm.

There will be a Ticinese-style buffet supper at £10.50 a person (children under 10 free, from 10-14 half price) with a wide choice of dishes, two musicians from Ticino and other entertainment.

There will also be a raffle with marvellous prizes.

Admission will be by ticket only, allocated on a first-come first-served basis. For more information contact the Society's Hon. Secretary Mr Diego Poglia, 150 Lonsdale Drive, Enfield EN2 7ND (Tel: 01-363 1591).

Birthdays

MR Willi Renz, of Steinwischstrasse 2, 9052 Niederteufen, Switzerland, celebrated his 85th birthday on January 2. On the same day, Mr Carl Nater, of Villa Guardamunt, 7500 St. Moritz, Switzerland, was 75. Mr E.P. Locher, of 104 West Hill, Putney SW15 2UQ, was 90. On January 14, the former Swiss Ambassador to London, Monsieur Ernesto Thalmann, of Anshelmstrasse 8, 3005 Berne, celebrated his 70th birthday.

Mr J. M. Bader, of 25 Charnmouth Court, Charnmouth Road, St. Albans, Herts, was 70 on January 16.

Mr J.W. Bonjour, of 72 Shirley Avenue Croydon, Surrey, will celebrate his 85th birthday on February 23.

We wish these friends and anyone else of whose special birthdays we are not aware, many happy returns.

MM



THE London Office of the Swiss Bank Corporation was again invited to enter a float in last year's Lord Mayor's Show.

The two previous occasions on which the Bank has participated in this event were in 1975 and 1978, when their floats gave great pleasure to participants and spectators alike.

It was particularly appropriate that the Bank should take part this year, as Dame Mary Donaldson GBE, the first female Lord mayor in the history of the City and the 656th in a distinguished line, is the member for Coleman Street ward, where the Bank's London office is situated.

Jolly good Show!

The central theme of the Show was "It's people that matter" and the Swiss Bank float depicted a paddle steamer similar to those which ply on Lake Lucerne.

The costumes worn by the crew and passengers ranged from the corduroys and stout boots of the alpinist complete with skis and rucksacks to the floral shirt of the American sightseer bedecked with cameras.

The day of the procession was fine, although a bitter wind made all the participants and spectators

wear their thickest clothes.

After enjoying a traditional English breakfast of bacon and eggs, the crew and passengers on the float took up their stations ready for the start of proceedings at 11am.

There were 52 floats and over 5,000 people taking part in the procession whose traditional route takes it from the Guildhall to the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand, where the new Lord Mayor is sworn in.

As ever, the Lord Mayor's coach, drawn by six horses, was the centrepiece of the pageant. When the procession made its triumphant way past the Bank offices in Gresham Street the Swiss Bank float was greeted by cheering and waving from over a 100 members of staff and their relatives assembled in the Bank-ling Hall.

In the evening, at a dinner given by the management of the Bank to all those who had played any part in the venture, one of the principal guests was the City Pageantmaster who is responsible for the organisation of the Show.

Lennart Rabes recital

LENNART Rabes, well-known expert on Liszt and concert pianist, will give a piano recital at the Wigmore Hall, 36 Wigmore Street, London W1, on Sunday, January 29, at 3.30pm.

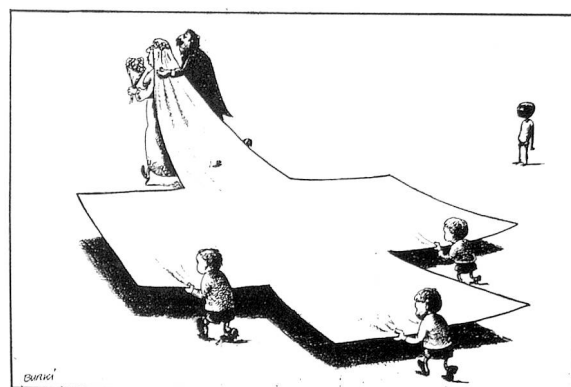
He will play works by the Swedish composers Mankell and Rangström, and Chopin. The

second part of the concert will be devoted to works by Liszt.

Lennart Rabes, though Swedish by birth, has been a great friend of the Swiss community in London, in particular of the Swiss Church. His many friends will want to make a point of attending his recital.

MM

The Swiss say yes – and no



*Easier for children of Swiss mothers –
but no change for refugees* – courtesy 24 heures

SWISS citizenship rights are to be revised as the result of nationwide voting on two controversial government proposals.

In the first vote, the Swiss electorate supported overwhelmingly a government recommendation aimed at securing equality of treatment for men and women in acquiring Swiss nationality.

But another move aimed at helping certain categories of foreigners obtain Swiss citizenship more easily was defeated.

Acceptance of the first proposal (by a majority of almost 61 to 39 per cent) will mean a new article in the Swiss constitution.

It guarantees that in future the child of a Swiss mother and a foreign father will receive Swiss citizenship automatically – regardless of where the child is born.

Until now, Swiss citizenship has been acquired automatically only by the children of Swiss fathers. The child of a Swiss mother received citizenship only if the mother was Swiss – and if the child was born while the parents were resident in Switzerland.

But the new legislation will also mean that foreign women marrying a Swiss will lose one privilege enjoyed until now – they will no longer be entitled automatically to Swiss

nationality.

A foreign man marrying a Swiss woman has never been able to obtain such citizenship in this way, and the revision of rights means that in future no foreigner – man or woman – will be able to obtain automatic Swiss nationality by marriage.

In the second ballot, Swiss voters rejected by 55 to 45 per cent a government move to facilitate naturalisation for three categories of non-Swiss – young foreigners brought up in Switzerland, refugees, and stateless persons.

Voters turnout at the pre-Christmas polling was 35 per cent.

How the cantons voted

Citizenship equal rights men/women

| | Yes | No | Per cent | |
|------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Zurich | 195,920 | 114,534 | 63.1 | 36.9 |
| Berne | 145,343 | 95,744 | 60.3 | 39.7 |
| Lucerne | 34,323 | 25,935 | 57.0 | 43.0 |
| Uri | 3,778 | 3,397 | 52.7 | 47.3 |
| Schwyz | 10,401 | 10,982 | 48.6 | 51.4 |
| Obwalden | 2,556 | 2,614 | 49.4 | 50.6 |
| Nidwalden | 3,503 | 2,847 | 55.2 | 44.8 |
| Glarus | 4,034 | 3,338 | 54.7 | 45.3 |
| Zug | 11,544 | 7,158 | 61.7 | 38.3 |
| Fribourg | 19,285 | 14,482 | 57.1 | 42.9 |
| Solothurn | 34,719 | 26,377 | 56.8 | 43.2 |
| Basel City | 31,565 | 16,102 | 66.2 | 33.8 |
| Basel Land | 26,649 | 13,537 | 66.2 | 33.8 |
| Schaffhausen | 18,121 | 10,630 | 63.0 | 37.0 |
| Appenzell Innerrhoden | 6,106 | 4,335 | 58.5 | 41.5 |
| Appenzell Ausserrhoden | 1,383 | 1,328 | 51.0 | 49.0 |
| St. Gallen | 44,513 | 24,670 | 64.3 | 35.7 |
| Graubunden | 20,963 | 11,222 | 65.1 | 34.9 |
| Aargau | 47,954 | 35,573 | 57.4 | 42.6 |
| Thurgau | 26,997 | 14,525 | 65.0 | 35.0 |
| Ticino | 30,427 | 23,058 | 56.9 | 43.1 |
| Vaud | 52,177 | 34,206 | 60.4 | 39.6 |
| Valais | 27,767 | 28,136 | 49.7 | 50.3 |
| Neuchatel | 22,054 | 13,377 | 62.2 | 37.7 |
| Geneva | 44,448 | 21,213 | 67.7 | 32.3 |
| Jura | 6,361 | 3,348 | 65.5 | 34.5 |
| Switzerland | 872,891 | 562,668 | 60.8 | 39.2 |

Easier naturalisation

| | Yes | No | Per cent | |
|--|----------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 156,503 | 155,254 | 50.2 | 49.8 |
| | 103,131 | 137,789 | 42.8 | 57.2 |
| | 27,902 | 32,462 | 46.2 | 53.8 |
| | 2,859 | 4,253 | 40.2 | 59.8 |
| | 7,856 | 13,593 | 36.6 | 63.4 |
| | 1,948 | 3,236 | 37.6 | 62.4 |
| | 2,318 | 3,957 | 36.9 | 63.1 |
| | 2,604 | 4,759 | 35.4 | 64.6 |
| | 8,172 | 10,561 | 43.6 | 56.4 |
| | 13,519 | 20,168 | 40.1 | 59.9 |
| | 25,493 | 35,682 | 41.7 | 58.3 |
| | 24,960 | 22,849 | 52.2 | 47.8 |
| | 20,541 | 19,972 | 50.7 | 49.3 |
| | 14,197 | 14,875 | 48.8 | 51.2 |
| | 4,135 | 6,319 | 39.6 | 60.4 |
| | 995 | 1,686 | 37.1 | 62.9 |
| | 31,410 | 37,692 | 45.5 | 54.5 |
| | 16,557 | 15,618 | 51.5 | 48.5 |
| | 31,863 | 52,031 | 38.0 | 62.0 |
| | 20,180 | 21,350 | 48.6 | 51.4 |
| | 21,459 | 31,891 | 40.2 | 59.8 |
| | 38,793 | 47,496 | 45.0 | 55.0 |
| | 22,309 | 33,640 | 39.9 | 60.1 |
| | 18,843 | 16,175 | 53.0 | 47.0 |
| | 20,443 | 45,043 | 31.2 | 68.8 |
| | 5,547 | 4,154 | 57.2 | 42.8 |
| | 644,537 | 793,045 | 44.8 | 55.2 |