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Part of the Swiss Avenue – at the World Travel Market

FOR the first two years, Switzerland did not take part in the World Travel Market at Olympia in London. In 1982, the Swiss joined, immediately making a hit under the motto "Switzerland – it's worth it!"

Some 30 stands made the "Swiss Avenue" special, and distinction was added by a huge mobile hanging from the lofty ceiling of the exhibition hall.

The decision to take part was more than justified when, as Mr Albert Kunz, Director of the Swiss National Tourist Office in London, stated: "We found that the WTM was an excellent venue for meeting important representatives. We were impressed by the interest of the visitors in the various aspects of our country."

"The fact that the Swiss stand was elected the best national stand was an extra bonus, but commits us to obtain a high standard for future exhibitions in the WTM which now has top priority in the SNTO promotional programme".

So at the WTM 1983,

Switzerland was present with an exhibition area of 360 square metres, nearly 25 per cent more space than last year.

More than 180 exhibitors on 30 stands including regional and local tourist offices, transport undertakings, hotel groups and incoming tour operators, were present to renew acquaintances and to make new contacts in the holiday and business travel industry.

The Swiss island was easily identified by a giant mobile similar to last year's.

It was put up by six Swiss workmen, assisted by helpers of the Olympia staff.

For eight days the Swiss crew had put up the uniform stalls and 14 metric tons of material – no small matter!

The Swissair coffee shop, so popular last year, was again well patronised by Swiss exhibitors for business discussions. The excellent coffee was accompanied by "Biberli" and chocolate. Swissair was advertised as "the world's greatest skilift".

Last year's World Travel Market was written up in the Swiss

Observer at some length. We shall refrain from general cover apart from just a few remarks.

The WTM 1983 lasted from November 30 to December 4. The first three days were for trade and press only. Saturday and Sunday were devoted to the World Holiday Show – a lively event when the whole family could tour the world in a day.

The stands in the various halls and galleries were of incredible variety and national costumes were much in evidence.

One could see cigar rollers from Havana and Wedgwood pottery demonstrators, Antigua's Carnival Queen and Calypso King were in attendance, and a Bermudan policeman complete with helmet and Bermuda shorts kept watch.

Stately homes of Britain and the Folies Bergères from Paris exhibited, Sealink and the Savoy Hotel and airlines and tourist boards from the world over.

There was plenty of entertainment, both on the stages and on individual stands, from national dances, singing gondoliers and

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steel bands, the Lichfield Cathedral Choir, from belly dancers to the NatWest Jazz Band.

Competitions were held and Father Christmas made an appearance.

Diplomats and mayors of foreign cities visited the exhibition, and many personalities, including Shirley Bassey and Dan-Air's Leslie Wilcock, the current Miss Gatwick.

Madam Tussaud's was represented with all the other family entertainment owned by the company (Warwick Castle, Wookey Hole Caves, Chessington Zoo etc). In fact, the press reception on the eve of the opening day took place at Madam Tussaud's in Marylebone Road.

It was most disconcerting to enjoy your drink with the famous and the notorious looking over your shoulder in the Conservatory, and later to enjoy supper in the Grand Hall with Royalty in attendance.

The opening ceremony of the WTM was performed by Lord Lyell, Government spokesman for

# world in and!

Trade and Industry. This was followed by a presentation of awards to the winners of the International poster of the year competition.

The Swiss National Tourist Office won second prize for two posters depicting winter scenes, one showing the picturesque village of Waltensburg and the other cross-country skiers near La Brevine in the Neuchâtel region.

Lord Lyell presented the award, a plaque, to Mr Walter Leu, Managing Director of the SNTO, Zurich.

In the Cavalcade of Nations on the central stage, children of 40 countries, all in national costumes, paraded and then threw their national flags into a witch's cauldron.

Six guards' trumpets played the fanfare, and when all the flags were in the pot, the witch's magic wand turned the cauldron into a globe with all the countries marked with their flags.

The world may be in turmoil, a hot and dangerous cauldron, but the future belongs to the new generation with all its hopes and

idealism.

As the presenter remarked: "Today the world is ours – it is theirs tomorrow", a theme also taken up by the only British air service to Berne – "Dan-Air flies into the future".

After the presentation of awards and the cavalcade of nations, Lord Lyell, accompanied by Lord Boyd-Carpenter, President of the WTM Advisory Council, and the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Kensington and Chelsea, visited various stands. Lord Lyell, on behalf of the Swiss National Tourist Office, was presented with an unusual gift.

An attractive lady in the colourful Grisons costume, handed him

Lord Lyell shows his delight at receiving the children's holiday voucher on behalf of the Swiss National Tourist Office. Also in picture are Mr Leu of the SNTO, Zurich; the Lord Mayor of Kensington and Minister Caratsch of the Swiss Embassy.

a voucher, printed on a poster, entitling him to nominate six deserving children to spend a holiday in Switzerland. A similar gift was presented to HRH Princess Alexandra last year.

It was later announced that these children would come from a Dr Barnardo's home in Scotland.

They will travel to Switzerland by the Swissair Airbus and Swiss railways to their holiday resort in the Grisons region.

"Health, Happiness, Hospitality and Holidays" are symbolised by the apple. Nearly four tons were distributed in the Interlaken area to thank the tourists and holiday makers in summer. And lovely red apples

were on the stand of the SNTO at Olympia, the main stall of the 30 regions and resorts representing Switzerland.

Though the stalls were uniform in shape and make-up, the décor was distinctively local. There was so much attractive scenery pictured on posters and handouts that it must have been difficult for any prospective holiday maker to choose.

The Swiss National Tourist Office does not only promote holidays, but also congresses and conventions. There has been a great increase in these. The



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# Golden Rose opens out

THE Golden Rose of Montreux – the international contest for television light entertainment – will feature several major innovations when it is staged in the Swiss lakeside resort from May 9 to 16 for the twenty-fourth time.

Since its inception in 1961 the

Golden Rose has been open only to "organisations which operate a national television service".

In 1984, however, the event will be open for the first time to private and independent film/television producers.

The move is intended by the

host organisation, the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation, to enhance still further the quality and competitiveness of the Montreux festival.

The private entries will be viewed by the international and press juries on the final screening

day, with a special award going to the most outstanding entry.

This year's Golden Rose – which for the first time will be held midweek-to-midweek – will also see an expansion of the Videokiosk.

The Videokiosk was introduced at the 1983 event to enable television organisations as well as freelance producers to commercialise their entertainment productions.

Another feature of the 1984 Golden Rose will be a seminar devoted in particular to the theme of television entertainment.

It is also hoped that the Golden Rose – which annually attracts hundreds of international media journalists – will this year be attended in person by leading show-business celebrities and some of the stars appearing in the programme entries.

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problems are that, initially, organisers prefer an airport town and huge hotels to accommodate congress participants on the spot.

The task of the SNTO is to convince them that at all times of the year, it is easy to hold a congress or an assembly in a smaller town or resort in Switzerland, where excellent facilities are available.

The World Travel Market, sponsored by Travel News and organised by Reed Exhibitions for

Business Press International, is fully supported by the British Tourist Authority.

When the 1983 show closed on the Sunday night, more than 22,000 trade visitors had passed through the gates, a 27 per cent increase over last year.

The Swiss National Tourist Office organises some 12 fairs and exhibitions abroad every year. For the Swiss it means Business with a capital B, for the country needs

the foreign visitors.

The SNTO is extremely successful in attracting large numbers every year. The 1983 WTM has been a success for Switzerland too. One of the reasons why the Swiss stands do not offer any entertainment at their stalls, is that it detracts from the serious side of promotion. Last year's motto still holds good "Switzerland – it's worth it!"

**Mariann Meier**

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