

News from Switzerland

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SWISS PRODUCTS ON DISPLAY AT N.Z. TRADE FAIR

Switzerland will be represented at the New Zealand International Trade Fair '67, to be held in Wellington between August 17th and September 2nd, 1967. The Swiss Court is occupying 1600 sq. ft. of floor area in the lower level of the Wellington Show Building. The displayed goods will show to the public some outstanding items reflecting the best Swiss products. Ten different makes of the most finest Swiss watches will be displayed with a total value exceeding \$16,000. Other products of the world-famous Swiss precision Industry will include an automatic precision lathe, an injection moulding machine, movie cameras and projectors, sewing machines and electrostatic spraypainting equipment. The Swiss Textile Industry is well represented and will display some of the latest creations in fabrics, both cotton and silk, plus a most attractive selection of printed handkerchiefs. A special attraction will be the Swiss Tourist Stand where a projection of coloured Swiss scenery films will invite the public to stay in Switzerland during their next trip through the continent.

August 29th has been set aside as Swiss National Day, and on this occasion some special movies will be shown in the Show Building Theatrette. The Swiss Court will be attended by a charming Hostess (Miss Gaby Mueller), dressed in National costume (kindly lent for this occasion by one of our Swiss compatriots in Hamilton). Miss Mueller will distribute to every visitor of the Court a little Swiss Flag as a souvenir.

The Swiss Court has been organised in conjunction with the Swiss Embassy by an Organising Committee comprising three Swiss compatriots residing in New Zealand (Messrs N. Zoelly, H. Erb, L. Eichmann) and Mr F. G. Dobbs (N.Z. Agent for the Horlogere) and with the support of the following Swiss organisations: Swiss Office for development of Trade (OSEC), Swiss Watchmakers Federation (FH), Swiss Air Transport Ltd (Swiss-air), and 36 Swiss firms represented in New Zealand through their N.Z. agents.

—N. Zoelly.

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The Swiss Fleet: A Few Figures

At the end of last year, the Swiss merchant fleet numbered 32 vessels with a total capacity of 281,615 DWT (Dead weight tons) as opposed to 31 vessels and 267,297 DWT at the end of 1965. It comprised 9 ships between 1 and 5 years old, 8 from 5 to 10 years old, 10 from 10 to 15 years old, and 5 from 15 to 20 years old. The average age of the fleet was therefore 9½ years. At the same time, the total crew of all these ships numbered 973

men, of whom 589 or 60.54% were Swiss citizens (1965: 963, of whom 600=62.31% were Swiss).

Since the institution of the Swiss maritime register in Basle in 1941, 80 ships have been registered, 48 of which have been removed from the register down through the years, either because of being sold abroad or through loss.

Finally, it is interesting to know at which European ports Swiss ships load and unload their cargoes. Below we give the number of Swiss ships that called at the ports mentioned in 1965, with the corresponding figure of 1950 when the Swiss fleet comprised 20 vessels only, indicated in brackets. In decreasing order of importance, the ports were as follows: Genoa 82 (49), Marseilles 62 (69), Rotterdam 48 (12), Bremen 32 (0), Antwerp 31 (21), Hamburg 28 (10), Dunkirk 11 (1), Amsterdam 5 (6) and Trieste 1 (0). (OSEC)

Swiss Transport Museum in 1966

In 1966 the Swiss Transport Museum received 340,000 visitors, i.e. 3% more than the previous year. Many organisations took advantage of the possibility of using these premises to hold congresses and conferences. Last year there were 109 such meetings with a total of 8500 participants, the most important being the European Conference of Transport Ministers, which was held from May 24th to 26th and attended by ministers from 18 countries. For the plenary session on May 26th, those taking part were driven through the streets in procession from their hotel to the Transport Museum in the Museum's veteran cars. In addition, the Swiss Transport Museum organised 16 special exhibitions last year. (OSEC)

The Swiss Crystal Collector

During the last few years, the search for and collecting of crystals and other minerals found in the mountains have become a real hobby that is growing more and more popular. A Swiss Association of Crystal and Mineral Collectors was recently founded in Switzerland, thus replacing the amateur group founded in the Bernese Oberland twelve years ago.

The purpose of the association is to establish a bond of interests among crystal collectors and scientific institutions, as well as to organise mineral markets, further the mineralogical knowledge of its members, etc. This Association publishes an illustrated review entitled "Schweizer Strahler - Le Cristallier suisse" four times a year in German, and containing at least one article and summaries of the main articles in French. On reading this publication one is really surprised to realise the tremendous vitality of this movement in the search for and collecting of minerals, as well as of the various groups, activities and markets. (OSEC)

Great Safety in a Small Device

Wall sockets for electrical appliances, especially when located near floor level as is so often the case in modern buildings, are known to be very dangerous for small children. A number of parents are therefore obliged to cover these sockets with adhesive paper or tape, etc., a precaution which is far from being 100% safe.

A Geneva firm sells both at home and abroad, under the name of "Voltless" a small patented plastic device which effectively seals off electrical sockets when not in use, without either dirtying or damaging them; the "Voltless" is easy to insert and easy to remove, but holds firmly enough in position to resist the efforts of small children's hands. It is a gadget as effective as it is simple . . . it just needed someone to think of it. (OSEC)

A Photograph Unlike Any Other

The two American astronauts who went up in Gemini 12, James Lovell and Buzz Aldrin, presented President Johnson with a photograph of his ranch taken from Gemini 12 at an altitude of some 175 miles. The photograph had been taken the day before landing, while the spacecraft was flying over Texas. One can see a blue streak on it, which the astronauts identified as the President's ranch, as well as three blobs, which are the towns of San Antonio, Austin and Johnson City.

When the first attempts to obtain a good enlargement of the film failed, Nasa decided to use the Ciba Cilchrome-Print process which proved completely successful. This process—now called Cibachrome-Print—has been perfected entirely by Ciba Co. Ltd., manufacturers of chemical and pharmaceutical products in Basle, and introduced into Europe in March 1964. The process is based on the destruction of excess colours previously incorporated in the photographic emulsion. Cibachrome prints have a resolving power far superior to that of traditional processes. (OSEC)

60th Anniversary of the Swiss National Bank

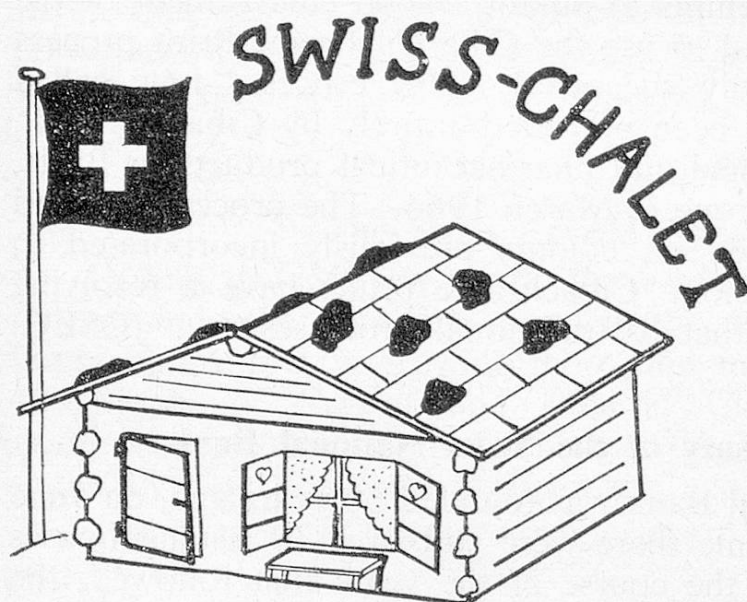
The Swiss National Bank was founded 60 years ago, on June 20th, 1907. At that time there were still over 30 issuing houses in Switzerland and, in the course of the years that followed, the National Bank took over all the notes that these establishments had put into circulation. Formerly the Federal Constitution authorised the cantons to issue banknotes but, in 1891, a revision of the constitution allotted this right exclusively to the Confederation. However, the new article in the Constitution could not come immediately into force and it was only after the acceptance by the Federal Government of a special law, several years later, that the new institute could start functioning. (OSEC)

Switzerland Builds the Biggest Steam Turbine in the World

The Tennessee Valley Authority, the leading electricity company in the United States, has ordered from the Swiss firm of Brown, Boveri & Co., a group of steam turbines, whose generator is capable of providing a maximum output of 1300 megawatts. This group of turbines, to be installed in a power house whose boilers will be heated by coal, is at present the biggest machine of its kind in the whole world. In 1959, Brown, Boveri & Co. had received an order from the same client for a turbo-group with two lines of shafts of 550 megawatts, which has been in operation for three years and has given complete satisfaction. The new group is to be delivered in 1971. (OSEC)

Swiss Foodstuff Retailers' Aid for Peru

Established in 1907, the Swiss Purchasing Company USEGO at Olten today comprises 4000 members which last year recorded a total turnover of S.Fr. 1.3 billion in retail sales, which corresponds to 13% of Switzerland's total consumption of foodstuffs. In order to celebrate its 60th anniversary, Usego has decided to start an agricultural and artisanal training centre at Ayaviri, in Peru. The necessary funds for this project will be supplied by Usego retailers. Swiss experts will go out to supervise the execution of this project on the spot. (OSEC)



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