

Kapellbrücke in Lucerne

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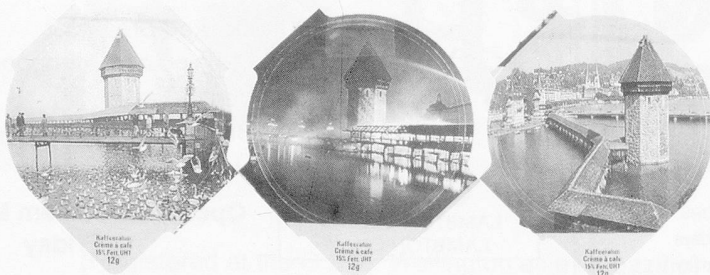
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KAPELLBRÜCKE IN LUCERNE

At the end of June all restauration work should be finished including the "Wasserturm" after the terrible fire that almost destroyed the bridge some 10 months ago (17 August 1993). During the repair work, some interesting facts came to light. Archeological research has now shown that the bridge had originally been built in the 14th century and that certain wooden beams still dated back to the original construction. It appears that the bridge had never been completely rebuilt, although during its 650 years of existence, it had undergone more than 15 different restauration and repair jobs. Before the fire, 40% of the wooden structure dated back to the 17th and 18th century. Workmen took advantage of the repair work at the "Wasserturm" to remove some 800 kgs of pigeon droppings. Over the years the tower had been used as a prison, an interrogation and torture chamber and a city archives. According to the investigation into the cause of the fire, it appeared that the fire first started in a boat anchored underneath the bridge. As a result, the Lucerne city Council has now banned all moorings under the bridge. With this decision, an old historical tradition disappeared as the mooring of boats underneath the bridge had been part of the city life for more than 100 years. As a donation towards the repair costs, the PTT had printed 10 million special stamps, charging an extra 20 cts per stamp. Unfortunately, that effort turned into a flop as only 2 million stamps were ever sold. The total amount collected from this action was therefore only 400,000 SFR, whilst the total repair costs were more than 3 million SFR. But the "Kapellbrücke" fire has been a hit with the collectors of "Kaffeecrème-deckeli", a new craze that is sweeping through Switzerland. A set of 10 different pictures of the bridge, before, during and after the fire, have been printed and snapped up in no time.

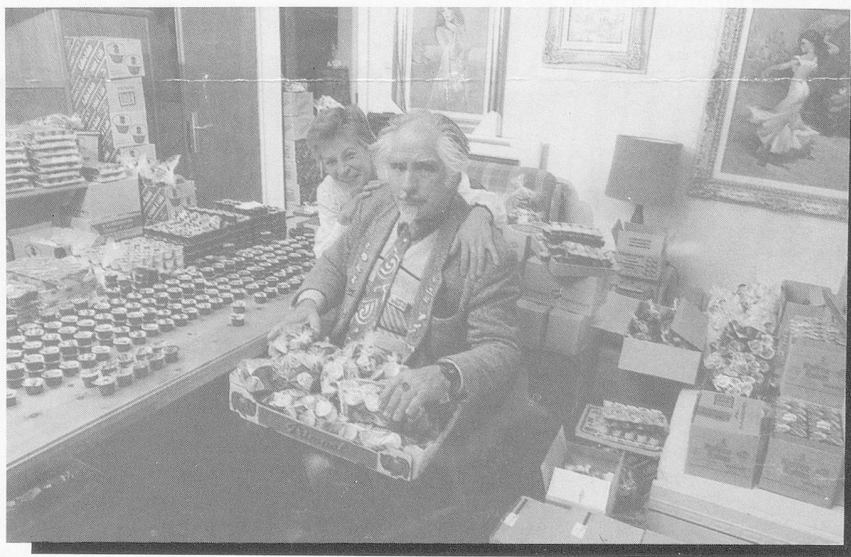
Three of the 10 pictures are reprinted here.



KAFFEECREMEDECKELI

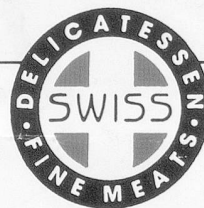
The collection of these tiny lids that cover the little crème containers has reached fever pitch in Switzerland. The craze called "Deckele" in the "professional" jargon has already hit more than 100,000 people. They even have an association now called "Club Kaffee-Doppelcrème" with headquarters in the Emmental. The aim of every collector is to possess complete sets of each subject. These sets vary between 20 and 60 different pictures all featuring the same subject. Some of the collectors have assembled over 100,000 different subjects. They spend every minute of their spare time to collect, clean and sort out these precious little aluminium lids. Like stamps, car number plates and many other collectors' items, com-

plete Kaffeecrème-deckeli sets can command big money, up to 4500 SFR a set. So collecting these little lids is not only a hobby, but has also become a lucrative business for some. Some collectors have given up their jobs in order to devote all their time to this new craze. Although the collection of Kaffeecrème-deckeli has gone on for many years in the past, the real craze has only started some 4 years ago. And the more people get interested in it, the more sets and subjects have been put on the market as a result. So the race is on and the dairy factories and the aluminium lid manufacturers are laughing all the way to the bank. Who cares about the crème inside the container, it is the lid that sell the product! Crazy!!



Kaffeecrème-deckeli everywhere. A real invasion that spills over into the living room and takes over the whole house. Collectors spend days and whole nights working on their precious collections. To the true collector, separating the lid from the container is a meticulous job. You cannot simply peel off the lid, it might break or get damaged. The trick is to empty the container from the bottom, then to cut off the lower part of the container. The lid with the remaining part of the container is then soaked overnight in petrol and then in hot water until the lid peels off by itself. Next step is to flatten the lid with a hot iron and only then is it ready to be put into an album.

A long job and a lot of crème wasted (unless you are a great coffee drinker) to get to this result.



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