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HAMILTON SWISS CLUB

A most successful Picnic was held on the farm of Mr and Mrs Scheidegger, in Matamata. Glorious weather in perfect surroundings brought over 150 adults and children, who kept the Kegelbahn and the Schuetzenstand busy throughout the day.

The Swiss flag, the continuous noise of the shooting, the Handoergelers in the background, the taste of the Bratwuerste and the specially baked Buerli made this like a real Sunday in Switzerland. Even visitors from Auckland favoured us with their presence.

Prize-winners were as follow.—

Kegeln: 1st, Willy Mueller.

Shooting: Ladies, 1st Mrs Reichmuth, 2nd Miss Nyffeler. Men, 1st B. Bolli, 2nd A. Schuler, 3rd T. Zuercher, 4th Joe Weber, 5th O. Reichmuth.

Our sincere thanks go to Mr and Mrs Scheidegger for the use of their farm, to Mr and Mrs Bachmann who personally brought their famous Bratwuerste all the way down from Auckland and then did all the work grilling them, to the Handoergelers Harry Schuler, Mrs Stone and A. Imlig, and of course the Committee members and ladies who made such a perfect job of their assignments.

—A.B.

CHRISTCHURCH SWISS CLUB

The Christchurch Swiss Club wishes to extend to all the Swiss throughout New Zealand their best wishes for a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

HAMILTON SWISS CLUB

The club's usual Social evening, held on the first Sunday each month, will not be held in January.

The Combined Auckland-Hamilton Picnic will be held in Mercer on the last Sunday in January, 1961.

Keep this date free. Full particulars in the next Helvetia.

RECIPE FOR CHRISTMAS

STRAWBERRY PUNCH

1½lb strawberries.

¾ pint rum.

10oz sugar.

Juice of one lemon.

½ pint water.

Crush strawberries in a porcelain dish. Pour rum over strawberries and let stand for three days, covered, in a cool room. Then pass strawberries through a sieve, add sugar and lemon juice; pour over this boiling water. Cover and let get cold (in a refrigerator, if possible). Serve punch in glasses.

—H.B.

NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

SWISS TAKES OVER GREEK HOLIDAY PARADISE

Professor Gerassimos Patronikolas, a brother-in-law of Aristoteles Onassis, has announced that his Miramare bungalow hotel on the island of Rhodes and a similar hotel city now under construction at Corfu will soon be taken over by the well-known Swiss hotelier, Jack Gauer. Professor Gerassimos, who is an outstanding Greek physician and health resort specialist, emphasised that he turned down several million-dollar offers from interested parties in the U.S.A. in order to give his preference to an experienced hotelman from Switzerland, the cradle of tourism. In doing so he expects to help Greece develop its tourist business and make it a solid factor in the country's economy. Jack Gauer is the managing owner of the world-famous Hotel Schweizerhof in Berne.



FILM STUDIO IN ZURICH

For the past quarter of a century, the Swiss film production industry, although still modest in size, has felt the need for a studio for the shooting of films, and although various projects have been elaborated, these have not been realised up to now. It is probable that this deficiency will be remedied very shortly, as a company has just been formed in Zurich for the purpose of building such a studio. This is to comprise two large halls of 65ft by 98ft and all the necessary ancillary buildings. The building of this studio is estimated at 3.5 million Swiss francs. The requisite share-capital of 2 million francs, contributed by various groups which partly represent film producers, is in Swiss hands to the extent of 70 per cent.



POPULARISATION OF "FONDUE"

All those foreigners, who appreciate good food, and who have stayed from time to time in Switzerland, are acquainted with the "fondue," that delicious savoury cream which is composed mainly of melted cheese and which is eaten, very democratically, out of a common pot called a "caquelon," into which everyone dips a bit of bread affixed to the end of his or her fork. In order to popularise the "fondue" in Switzerland herself—for this delectable dish is not known in all the various parts of the country—whilst at the same time advancing the sale of cheese, the Swiss Union for Trade in Cheese recently placed at the disposal of the Swiss Army 1000 "caquelons," 1000 small spirit cookers for preparing the dish on the table and 6000 special forks. Thanks to this initiative, more than 100,000 "fondues" have already been served, within a very short space of time, to the Swiss troops.

LITTLE-KNOWN SWISS INDUSTRY RECEIVES ROYAL PATRONAGE

Recently, a Swiss firm which manufactures fancy paper for the wrapping up of presents, received an order from the Royal Court, in Great Britain. This order, coming as it does from a sphere which by tradition is known to appreciate good taste and quality, is a great compliment paid to the excellency of the products in question. Since it first started to export its products 10 years ago, this firm has succeeded in introducing its specialities in 48 countries, on all the Continents of the globe. This is really quite a remarkable result, when one knows that the articles in question, being of a high quality, are subject to heavy custom duties. It was in 1930 that this firm began to produce this paper for wrapping up Christmas and other presents, goffered and printed in as many as six colours, with gold or silver decorations.

Such paper is bought chiefly by big department stores, by retail shops and by manufacturers of packaging articles. The collection is renewed every year and certain designs are reserved, exclusively, for specific customers. This same firm also specialises in the manufacture of rolls of paper for lining drawers and cupboard shelves; these are made either in plain colours or else are decorated with original designs. They can be washed with warm water and soap and the colours do not fade as a result of exposure to light or sun. These articles are also greatly appreciated both in Switzerland and in other countries, as making excellent covers for school-children's copy books and text books.



NEW NEEDS, NEW TECHNIQUES

The increasing development taking place in road traffic has brought about the development of new techniques, especially in the matter of road signals. A Swiss firm in Brugg (Aargau) has achieved considerable renown both in its own country and on foreign markets for its motorised machines for the application of paint for the marking of roads. This same firm has now begun to manufacture tiny glass beads which, when mixed with paint or strewn on to still fresh paint, produce a reflecting effect which renders the demarcation lines and the road signalling much more visible during the night, when they are illuminated by the headlights of motor vehicles. These glass beads for road marking are made in various sizes, in accordance with the use to which they are going to be put, and their diameter varies from 1½ m.m. to six hundredth part of a m.m. This is the first time that this product is manufactured in Switzerland; formerly it had to be imported from overseas.

EUROPE'S MOST UP-TO-DATE ALP

What is an Alp? Contrary to what is generally believed in Anglo-Saxon countries, it's not a snow-capped mountain peak but a sort of summer residence for Swiss dairy farmers and cowherds in the midst of lush green Alpine pastures. Some 6000 feet above sea level, on the outskirts of the tiny mountain village of Obersaxen above Ilanz, the "first city on the Rhine," is the "Vorderalp" which is said to be the most modern Alp in Europe. It is a model dairy farm accommodating some 120 model cows and featuring such new-fangled devices as Switzerland's biggest mechanised milking stable, a fully automatic collecting and distributing centre for liquid manure and a complete network of milk pipelines. While the cows are looked after with scientific efficiency, the men also get their share. Their working quarters, bedrooms and social rooms are of ultra-modern design.

ELECTRICAL MACHINING OF METALS

During the last few years, the electrical machining of metals has taken on considerable dimensions. The machining by means of electro-erosion, i.e. the wearing away of matter through the action of electric sparks, without any contact, was already well-known. Electro-erosion is used more particularly in the manufacture of parts of tools made of hard or extra-hard alloys. The Ateliers des Charmilles, in Geneva, have participated to a great extent in the development of this method by putting on to the market their "Eleroda" machines, of which there now exists a model possessing a great capacity. This same firm has also perfected, subsequently, a process of electrolytical machining, which can be applied to various planing, rectifying and sharpening machines. This process calls for a completely new technique, based on a localised and controlled dissolution of the metals by electrolytical means; the operation of this process is closely allied to the various classical sharpening and rectifying techniques performed by means of grindstones.

WINTER AT PILATUS-KULM

The historical Hotel Bellevue, near the peak of Mt. Pilatus, Lucerne's scenic landmark, was destroyed by fire a few weeks ago. It had been the only year-round guest house open also to winter visitors to this world-famous summit. This part will now be played by the modern, more comfortably furnished Hotel Pilatus-Kulm. The aerial cableways from Kriens, on the outskirts of the city, to the mountain peak are now undergoing their annual overhauling but are expected to commence winter service on November 12. Meanwhile the cog-wheel railway from Alpnachstad will continue to operate, snow conditions permitting. The two aerial cableways open up the northern slope of Mt. Pilatus, including the Frakmuntegg Ridge, to skiers. During the winter season sport tickets at substantially reduced fares will be issued.

PRINCE AND PRINCESS VISIT SWITZERLAND

Their Seren Highnesses Prince Rainier and Princess Grace of Monaco paid their first official visit to Switzerland recently. Arriving in Geneva by aircraft the princely couple proceeded, accompanied by their suite, to Berne, where they were received by the Swiss Government.

SWISS PREFER CITY LIFE

Contrary to the wide-spread opinion that the Swiss are a nation of Alpine herdsmen, latest statistical figures show that the attraction of Switzerland's cities has increased further in the last decade. One out of every three Swiss now lives in a city of over 30,000. No less than 1,104,000 of Switzerland's five million inhabitants are residents of the five leading cities, Zurich (population 436,000), Basel (205,000), Geneva (174,300), Berne (164,800) and Lausanne (123,300); 412,700 more live in the eight medium-sized cities of Winterthur (78,900), St. Gall (74,700), Lucerne (67,300), Bienne (57,200), La Chaux-de-Fonds (38,100), Fribourg (33,800), Neuchatel (32,500) and Schaffhausen (30,200).

SWISS SPAS CATER TO WINTER SPORT FANS

Three of Switzerland's 21 well-known medicinal spas—Leukerbad in the Valais, Rietbad in the Toggenburg and Scuol (Schuls) in the Lower Engadine—in the forthcoming winter season will enable their visitors to combine the blessings of watering cures with the pleasures of winter sports. Each of the three resorts has at least one ski-lift or aerial cableway, and also for non-skiers there are plenty of sport and leisure facilities. "Hot water bottle pushers," for instance, will find well tended curling rinks at Scuol and at Leukerbad—both resorts also have official Swiss skiing schools. At Scuol no less than 20 different curling matches are scheduled for the 1960-61 season. Four spas without winter sport facilities—Baden and Rheinfelden in Canton Aargau, Stabio in the Ticina, and Heustrich in the Bernese Oberland—also remain open during the winter.

EXPATRIATES' COLONY

David Niven, the celebrated film actor, is the newest addition to Switzerland's expatriates' colony from Hollywood. He is reported to have bought a patch of land at the fashionable mountain resort of Gstaad where he intends to build a chalet. Another famous local land-and-chalet owner is the Aga Khan. Over 50 new chalets, most of which in the picturesque Bernese Oberland style, have been built at Gstaad in 1960.

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NO. 1 CHOCOLATE EATERS

Chocolate, one of Switzerland's most famous products for export, is mainly for domestic consumption, it is revealed from industrial circles. Four fifths of the annual output averaging 41,000 tons is consumed by the Swiss themselves, making them, with an annual per-capita ration of 1.5 pounds, the world's No. 1 chocolate-and-candy eaters.

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