

Forthcoming events

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FORTHCOMING EVENTSHAMILTON SWISS CLUB

Our next evening will be held on Sunday, February 21st, in the Riverlea. Once again we have engaged the full Dutch Orchestra. Please bring your partners.

WELLINGTON SWISS CLUB

A Picnic will be held on March 13th. We will meet at 10 a.m. at the Cenotaph (corner Bowen Street). Please keep this date free and have an enjoyable day with us.

AUCKLAND SWISS CLUB

Owing to the Picnic in Mercer on the last Sunday in January, there will be no club evening in February. The next meeting will be held on the first Tuesday in March and we will have some big surprises for you. There is also to be a farewell party for the retiring President, who is leaving for Switzerland and the Olympic Games—isn't he lucky?

NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND*THE NEW FEDERAL COUNCIL*

Petitpierre, Federal President and Minister of Politic and External Affairs.

Tschudi, Minister of Internal Affairs.

Von Moos, Minister of Justice and Police.

Chaudet, Minister of Defence.

Bourgknecht, Minister of Finance and Customs.

Wahlen, Minister of Trade and Commerce.

Spuhler, Minister of Post and Railways.

From this seven councillors no fewer than four have been elected to the head of our Government as a result of the recent general elections. These are Messrs Tschudi, Von Moos, Bourgknecht and Spuhler. In the next issue of the *Helvetia* we will give you a few details of their activities before they came to this high post.

SWISS MACHINE FOR SAUDI ARABIA

A big gas turbine—one of the most powerful in the Middle East—is to be inaugurated by the Aramco, in 1961. This turbine will render possible a better utilisation of the resources in oil of Saudi Arabia. Manufactured in Switzerland by a firm in Winterthur, it will have a dimension of 19.4 yards by 8.3 yards and will be capable of developing a capacity of 14,500 HP. It will serve to run three compressors, which will be able to compress about 60 million cubic feet of gas per day. These gasses, either in a compressed or liquid form, will be re-injected into the oil-fields in order to preserve the pressure necessary for the extraction of a larger quantity of crude oil.

SWISS DELIVERY TO AUSTRALIA

On the 13th November, 1959, the imposing Narrows Bridge in Perth, Western Australia, was solemnly inaugurated and handed over for public use. This bridge which spans the Swan River is equipped with about fifty light-metal Light Standards, 33-39 feet high, which carry big fluorescent lamps. The powerful illumination gives the bridge a very special and highly modern look. These Light Standards (except for the electrical parts) have been manufactured specially for the said bridge by the Swiss firm ALUMINIUM S.A., of Menziken.

*THE PROGRESS OF TELEVISION
IN SWITZERLAND*

Since the 1st of January, 1959, the number of subscribers to television in Switzerland has increased from 50,300 to 78,700 in round figures, thus going up by 28,400 new sets. The previous year, there had only been 18,930 subscribers. Thus, at the end of 1959, there was, on an average, one TV set per every 66 inhabitants. At this rate, it may be anticipated that the number of TV licence holders will have attained the figure of 100,000 in 1960.

Out of the 78,700 subscribers to television, about 72,600 are private persons and 6000 are collective licence holders (restaurants, hospitals, sanatoria, etc.). There are 55,700 subscribers in German-speaking Switzerland, 17,000 in the French speaking parts and nearly 6,000 in the Tessin.

*PEASANT CRAFTWORK STILL
THRIVING IN SWITZERLAND*

Wood carving, which still brings in an appreciable income to the populations of certain mountainous regions in Switzerland, such as the Bernese Oberland, for example, is maintaining its position pretty well. According to the most recent statistics, it provides employment for 435 persons, of which number 200 are independent master wood-carvers, 158 workmen and 40 workers who do the carving at home. Care is being taken to find new models, which are more adapted to the taste of the customers of today. But, certain of the classical souvenirs continue to be greatly appreciated, more particularly by the foreign visitors. Another rustic branch of craftsmanship which continues to exist in the Canton of Appenzell, is that of the cutting out of brass ornaments, which are intended principally for the decoration of the leather collars to which cow-bells are attached, and which are also used to decorate the herdsmen's leather braces. It is true, however, that this rustic art, which demands a great deal of taste, as well as skill, is now only being practised by a single craftsman, the heir to a tradition which has been preserved and fostered in the same family for 130 years.

*NEW RADIOTELEPHONIC NETWORK
FOR THE POLICE OF BERNE*

The police of the Canton of Berne (Switzerland) have just become the possessors of a new radiotelephonic network, of a very modern conception and very high efficacy, which has been produced by the firm of "Autophone," of Soleure. In