

News from Switzerland

Objektyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand**

Band (Jahr): **27 (1964)**

Heft [10]

PDF erstellt am: **13.09.2024**

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NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

ADVERTISEMENTS ON SWISS TELEVISION

In order to keep viewers and boost numbers, a TV company has to offer a high quality of entertaining and well-produced programmes. Now quality and diversity are not to be had for nothing, they cost a lot of money in fact. In Switzerland, the number of subscribers has increased fairly rapidly and the most optimistic forecasts have all been exceeded, but those in charge of Swiss TV were reluctantly forced to admit that only advertising could provide the extra funds required by the present high cost of programmes. In addition, there was the risk that a number of big Swiss firms might start advertising on certain foreign channels which adopted sponsored programmes some time ago.

Advertising will therefore be permitted on Swiss TV from January 1st, 1965, subject to a number of restrictions. Advertising interludes may not last longer than 12 minutes a day. They will have to be broadcast between 7 p.m. and 8.30 p.m. and will be prohibited on Sundays and holidays. No permits will be granted for advertising alcoholic drinks, tobacco or medicines. The same applies to "indirect advertising." This means that at sports meetings, for example, the camera must not remain aimed for a long time at the name of the firm that provides refreshments for the competitors, even though free, and that the announcer may not rhapsodise at length about the kindness shown him by certain local tradesmen. Nor will any advertising of a religious or political nature be allowed.

These new broadcasts will be under the control of a limited company, 40 per cent of whose shares will be allotted to the Swiss Radio and Television Broadcasting Company, and another 40 per cent to the Company for the Promotion of Television. These two companies will each have four of the twelve seats on the board of directors, the remaining 20 per cent of the shares and the last four seats to be divided among various big economic associations.

TV advertising will perhaps provide the most effective means of reducing the number of brochures and leaflets which daily fill our letter boxes to overflowing. (OSEC).

INFRA-RED RAYS IN THE SWISS RAILWAYS

In order to simplify the smooth running of the railways in the event of heavy falls of snow or severe frost, as well as to cut down the cost of clearing the tracks of snow, the Swiss Federal Railways have just installed for the first time a large number of infra-red heating units for points, worked by propane gas. The gas is fed through a network of plastic pipes from a central tank. The Swiss stations at Brigue, Vallorbe, Airolo, Chur and Sargans are equipped with a total of 180 units of this kind. (OSEC).

1965—THE YEAR OF THE ALPS

Zurich.—Next year has been declared "The Year of the Alps" for two reasons. It will be just 100 years since the first English guests spent the winter in Switzerland, and it will also mark the centennial of the first successful climbing of the Matterhorn. It was in 1865 that Johannes Badrutt, a St Moritz hotelier made a wager with several English summer guests that the winter in St Moritz was even more brilliantly sunny than the summer season. The Britons spent three months at Badrutt's hotel, free of charge—and thus Switzerland got its start as a winter vacationland.—As to the Matterhorn, the mighty mountain withstood all attempts to conquer it for ten long years, until the Englishman Edward Whymper succeeded in scaling its heights on July 13, 1865. Among other things, the celebrations in 1965 will commemorate important works of literature which have been written about the Swiss Alps by such authors as Albrecht von Haller, Horace Benedict de Saussure, Ruskin and Melville. The early pioneers of mountaineering will be called to mind, as well as the great mountain-guides of past and present. Stress will also be placed upon the Alpine climate, which is so beneficial to body and spirit alike. Its effectiveness stems in part from the constant alternation between warmth and cold. Unlike that of the southern regions, the Alpine air acts as a tonic which stimulates people to movement, to taking long hikes, and thus leads to healthful fatigue and rejuvenation.

THE ROAD ALONG THE WALENSEE DEFINITELY OPEN

Weesen.—Immediate contact with the greenish-blue lake and the towering range of the Churfirsten is offered the tourist who from Lake Zurich drives along the scenic Walensee road to the Rhine valley and to one of the many beautiful mountain resorts in the Grisons. This new stretch, part of the Swiss national highway system, shortens the trip considerably since it helps to avoid the sinuous road over the Kerenzerberg. Temporarily opened in December last year, the Walensee road (9 miles) was definitely opened for through traffic in July. In the meantime, a considerable amount of work had still to be accomplished; the junction between the lake shore and the Kerenzerberg roads now involves no level crossing, and the sidewalks are protected by railings. Everything is provided for safe driving and even the "mountainous" part allows a speed of 60 miles p.h. with general traffic rules applying to the rest of the road.

SWITZERLAND IN BOOKS, PICTURES AND STORIES

Zurich. — A complete colour-slide lecture in Switzerland may now be purchased at any bookshop. Issued jointly by the Swiss National Tourist Office in Zurich and the publishing house "Rencontre" in Lausanne, it is the volume "Switzerland" in the series "The Picture Book of the World." The informative introduction and the commentaries to the 36 slides were written by National Coun-

cilman Peter Durrenmatt, of Basel, who is also Editor in Chief.

In the nearly 600 pages of his book "La Suisse en 365 anniversaires" (published by Editions du Panorama, in Bienne), author George Duplain sets out to prove that, in Switzerland, the anniversary of at least one historic occasion may be celebrated every day of the year.

Two examples: On November 25, 1286, the first authentically documented group of Walsers (immigrants from what is now known as Canton Wallis or Valais) who had come from southern Alpine valleys and wandered northwards, received permission to settle in the Rhine Valley, in what is today known as the Grisons. And on February 27, 1907, in Vienna, there occurred the first meeting between Sigmund Freud and the 32-year-old Zurich psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung. — The Valais is a region rich in ancient customs and manners.

Adolf Fux, well-known author from the Valais, demonstrates his extensive knowledge of those more in the three tales which the publishing house Gute Schriften, of Bern, has just brought out in a single small volume: "The Silver-Plated Vineyard" (Der versilberte Weinberg), "The Drunken Village" (Das trunkene Dorf) and "The Little Ring of Sandulin" (Das Ringlein von Sandulin).

An easy-to-comprehend survey of Swiss history "from the Ice Age to the Common Market" has been published in English by the Schweizer Spiegel Verlag, Zurich. It is B. Bradfield's "The Making of Switzerland."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Returning from the London Commonwealth Conference, the **Hon. Sirimavo Bandanaraike, Prime Minister of Ceylon**, stopped over in Switzerland to visit the Swiss National Exposition and the Swiss Hotel Training School in Lausanne. Mrs Bandanaraike then continued on to Zurich where she wished to do some shopping besides renewing earlier contacts with the Swiss National Tourist Office. The Prime Minister, who at the same time is acting Minister of Tourism, was particularly interested in questions of organisation and advertising.

Laugh a little . . .

A man gets out of his car at the bowser station, asks for benzine and adds that he has some business to attend to, but would be back again shortly: "Please fill up the car in the meantime."

After a quarter of an hour he returns and asks the attendant: "How much did she take?" "300 gallons." "Are you mad?" "Oh, no, I could have put in more if the windows had been up."

—NEBELSPALTER