

At long last sense prevails on the Rigi

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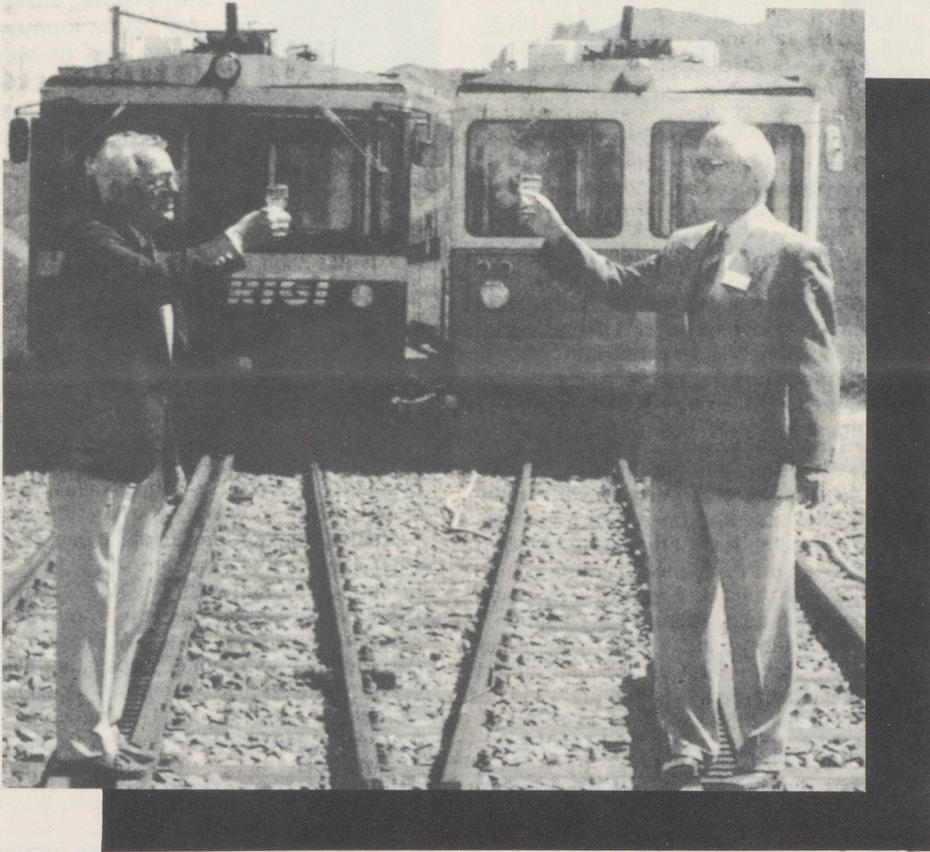
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AT LONG LAST SENSE PREVAILS ON THE RIGI

After over 100 years of operating their separate railway lines, the Boards of Directors of the ARB (Arth-Rigi-Bahn) and the VRB (Vitznau-Rigibahn-Gesellschaft) have at long last decided to amalgamate, a move that should bring sizeable savings to both railway lines which, for years, were embroiled in a tough competitive battle with one another.

This picture shows the inauguration of the first ever rail connection between the two lines at Rigi-Staffel from where both lines used to run parallel to one another to the summit.



NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

GOTTHARD, MORE POPULAR THAN EVER

The Gotthard tunnel is attracting more and more traffic, 5.77 million vehicles in fact in 1991 against 5.69 million in 1990. Strangely enough more vehicles travelled North than South: 2.93 million against 2.84 million. Every day of the year, some 15,800 vehicles travelled through the tunnel.

GENEVA'S NEW "METRO"

After Zurich, Geneva will also have its own Underground. The canton will spend over a billion Swiss Francs over the next 12 years to build an underground railway line right through the centre of the city and underneath the lake.

For a canton with just over 300,000 inhabitants, it is a huge undertaking. But at least it is expected that this new transport system will eventually reduce the pressure on the famous Pont du Mont Blanc, the main artery across the harbour which quite often is totally congested.

THE SWISS LOVE CATS

According to a recent survey, almost every second household in Switzerland

owns an animal. Tallying more than a million, the cats are by far the favourite pets. In second position are birds, primarily budgies. In every tenth household lives a dog.

Two-thirds of cat owners admit that their pets are allowed to roam throughout the whole apartment. Dogs are not so lucky. More than half of the dog owners do not allow their pets on their beds or chairs. Most dogs are small, just on 5 kg, the most popular being the basset hound.

INSURANCE FEVER

The Swiss is the highest insured person in the world, with an average annual premium of CHF3743 - beating by a large margin the Japanese and the Americans. But do not believe that his is simply because the Swiss are very prudent. It is rather through ignorance that they double or even triple their insurance covers, because with so many different types of insurances to choose from, it is difficult to know what you are insured against or whether you are covered at all. The insurance field has become a jungle where the ordinary citizens have great difficulties in finding their way.

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