

# This and that

Objektyp: **Group**

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

Band (Jahr): **84 (2018)**

Heft [5]

PDF erstellt am: **30.06.2024**

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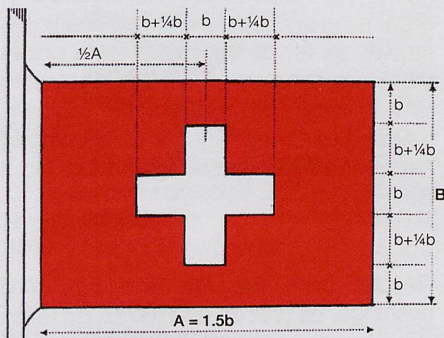
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## This and That

Only sports and the ocean can make the **Swiss flag** rectangular.

A landlocked country like Switzerland can have a merchant navy, too. A special rule applies when it comes to flying the Swiss flag on international waters, however. During World War II, a special Swiss naval ensign was adopted with 2:3 proportions to conform to the shape of the rectangular ensign usually used by maritime powers. The Olympic Games are another place where you can see the rectangular version of the Swiss flag.



Optically variable ink (OVI) is an anti-counterfeiting measure used on many major modern banknotes, as well as on other official documents (professional licenses, for example).

The ink displays two distinct colours depending on the angle the bill is viewed at. The United States fifty-dollar bill, for example, uses colour shifting ink for the numeral 50 so that it displays copper at one angle and bright green in another. Colour-shifting inks reflect various wavelengths in white light differently, depending on the angle of incidence to the surface. An unaided eye will observe this effect as a change of colour while the viewing angle is changed. A colour copier or scanner can copy a document only at one fixed angle relative to the document's surface.

One major manufacturer of OVI is A highly secretive Swiss company called **SICPA** (Société Industrielle et Com-



Today, over 150 billion banknotes in over 100 countries are protected with SICPA's staining inks and post-printing varnish solution. These functional inks are designed with a specific purpose in mind: prolonging banknote lifespan and to be an effective crime deterrent.

merciale de Produits pour l'Agriculture) located in Lausanne, Switzerland. It is a worldwide leader of security inks recently employing 3,000 people in 37 countries but there is currently and as of March 2018 still ongoing corruption probe in Brazil and a contract, valued at several billion \$, has been voided. In the wake of that, SICPA announced that up to 850 employees would be fired there, plus up to 150 in Switzerland, circa a third of its estimated workforce. Watch this space!!!

### Starbucks

have ties with a Swiss Company. In a sleepy village amongst grazing cows you will find Thermoplan, the maker of Starbucks machines. Having started out with just 20 employees, they are now making coffee machines for around 21,000 Starbucks shops throughout the world. Thermoplan AG develops and manufactures coffee machines for the foodservice and catering industry worldwide. The company also offers milk frothing/foaming and cream whipping machines, and related accessories. Thermoplan AG was founded in 1974 and is based in Weggis, Switzerland. It has approximately 300 employees. The family enterprise is globally active and supplies customers in 72 countries. The commitment to quality «Made in Switzerland» is for the employees of Thermoplan more than a promise – it is a conviction. Approximately 80% of the components installed in these machines are Swiss made.



### Montreux home to Freddie Mercury

Freddie Mercury and Queen really loved Switzerland. They even purchased a recording studio outside Montreux on the shore of Lake Geneva. After living in hectic London for a few years, Freddie Mercury (1946-1991) came to Montreux for a festival. He fell in love with the serene, beautiful surroundings and eventually decided to call this place his home.

During Queen's time in Montreux, a total of seven albums were recorded, including their last one – "Made in Heaven". As a reminder of the band's fantastic

lead singer, there is a statue of Freddie on the lake shore in Montreux (featured on the cover of their last album).



### Shipwrecks of Lake Geneva

The exhibition at the Musée du Léman, or Museum of Lake Geneva, in Nyon, concentrates on 15 of the 30 wrecks that have been located at the bottom of the lake. They range from a 15th Century wooden flat-bottomed boat, found by accident during dredging work, to the steamer, Le Rhône, which sank in 1883, with the loss of 14 lives. Le Rhône is too big, too fragile and lying at too great a depth to be brought to the surface, but some of its fittings have been restored and are part of the exhibition. "The Rhône was one of three steamers to have sunk in the lake. They are all very well preserved, and they are very different from the steamers that go on the lake nowadays. These wrecks are important because they are the last known examples of certain kinds of ships. We have no written information about these boats from the time - the only way of finding out about them is from these wrecks.

It is thought that the reasons why there have been so many boats found in the lake is the fact that its shores have always been well populated and therefore many of the shipwrecks have been due to the number of boats on the lake, as it is not an especially treacherous stretch of water.

One of the problems with shipwrecks is that people always assume they contain treasure, and Lake Geneva is no different. Many useful artefacts have been looted by divers. One of the purposes of the exhibition is to open a dialogue between historians and divers.

As well as fragments of the wrecks, the exhibition contains photographs, works of art depicting wrecks on Lake Geneva, objects salvaged from the wrecks such as the bell of the Rhône, and films of the salvage work.

