

Recent deaths in Switzerland

Objekttyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1969)**

Heft 1561

PDF erstellt am: **09.08.2024**

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At Martigny, they commemorated a terrible tragedy of 150 years ago, when part of the Giétroz Glacier broke off, blocked the Mauvoisin lake and thus prevented the waters from flowing away naturally; the most awful floods devastated the whole valley from Bagnes to Martigny on 16th June 1818. A happier event was remembered at Sierre: the centenary of the first train arriving at 30 km p.h. or just over. With the advent of rail and motor traffic, horse and mule have had to take a backseat. A village like Savièse, once renowned for its excellent mule stock of over 250, now has three of these animals only.

Another item from our description at the beginning is fruit. The Valais vegetables and fruit have quite rightly an excellent reputation. Who does not know of the luscious apricots, strawberries, peaches, tomatoes and asparagus, not to speak of the grapes and the Valais wines! But weather and bad planning often mean disaster, and the growing production brings increasing problems. Eight years ago still, tomato production was about 5 million kg a year, and by 1966 that was doubled. The total fruit and vegetable production amounted to 68,710 tons in 1966, whilst in 1934, it had been a mere 8.8 million kg. Last December, there were still 14m. kg in the Valais cool stores, carrots, celery, cabbage, onions, apples and pears. By May, the stock of apples still reached a million, mostly "Golden Delicious". This year, the apricot harvest reached over 10m. kg and the authorities had to subsidise with 200,000 francs; the Swiss market absorbed 300,000 kg a day, but it needed 500,000 in order to stabilise the position. For tomatoes and apricots, the Confederation had to pledge support in order to save the surplus. The worst worries were caused by a glut of Williams pears; the normal harvest is some 5m. kg, and this year, some 12 million were produced. The largest part went to the distilleries. In the Vétroz plane near Sion, 4000 fruit trees were felled in October, whose produce it was no longer possible to sell.

The Valais authorities have other worries too. The budget for 1969 estimates a deficit of over 19m. francs, expenditure expected to be in the neighbourhood of nearly 311m. The total cost of the Chavalon thermal power station will amount to 250m. francs. The first part was inaugurated at Vouvry last year. It is operated by oil transported by pipe line from the Colombey refineries. The hospital St. Maria at Visp needs a big subsidy to renovate and expand, and in Sion, an electronic centre was installed.

The industrial development of the Canton has made progress, and within 15 years, some hundred undertakings have been improved, one milliard francs invested and work created for an extra 3,000 people. In 1951, there had been only two watchmaking shops; now there are thirty.

Finally, a few items of news from Communes: The Cantonal Parliament has finally agreed to the fusion of the two Communes of Bramois and Sion; the former has only 900 inhabitants. At Brigue, the old "Napoleon" barracks have been put under protection (Monument Act). The Martigny "Comptoir" showed an increase of visitors of 30% over last year — 65,000 people went to see this Valais Fair. To mark the Roman origins of Martigny, the municipal authorities of Rome have presented the town with a bronze statue of a Roman she-wolf.

Sembrancher's new school and the Val d'Illiez's renovated church have both been inaugurated. The foundation stone for a new Protestant Church in Sion has been laid, and the Sion authorities are trying to find a new site for the *gymnasium*, the old building being inadequate.

(Compiled by the Editor from news received by courtesy of Agence Télégraphique Suisse and "Basler Nachrichten").

RECENT DEATHS IN SWITZERLAND

The following deaths have been reported from Switzerland:

Miss Traute Carlsen (81), Zurich, well-known actress who appeared successfully at the Zurich Play House Theatre until recently.

Dr. iur. Adolf Boner (67), Lucerne, President of the Federal Insurance Tribunal; originally from Laupersdorf (SO); lawyer at Balsthal; member of the Cantonal Parliament from 1933 to 1959; for 20 years in the National Council (from 1939); elected to the Federal Insurance Tribunal in 1959; Colonel of Artillery.

Dr. h.c. Friedrich Oederlin (88), Winterthur, prominent member of the Sulzer concern; he joined the company in 1911, member of the management since 1930; he was awarded the honorary doctorate by the ETH in 1942 (technical sciences).

Dr. Herman Bleuler (77), Kuesnacht, chief teacher of history and German at the Zurich Cantonal School from 1932 to 1957.

Roger Châtelain (59), Geneva, from Reconvilier; Chief of the finance department of the International Telecommunications Union in Geneva, which he joined in 1930.

Robert Kurt (54), Solothurn, lawyer and notary; since 1953, *Stadtammann* of Solothurn.

Youssef Beidas (56), Lucerne, former Manager of the Intra Bank in Beirut, who had defrauded his bank by several tens of million Swiss francs; he had been wanted all over the world and had finally been arrested in Lucerne a year ago, but had been ill practically ever since, and that was the reason why he had not been handed over; his wife has expressed thanks to the federal and cantonal authorities for the fair and just treatment received; he leaves some interesting memoirs.

Dr. med. Philipp Sarasin (80), Basle, well-known psycho-analytic expert, a personal student of Freud who introduced him to the art of psycho-analysis; President of the Swiss Society for Psycho-analysis and member of the international board; for 45 years consultant for nervous diseases in Basle.

Luigi Manazza (72), Meisterschwanden (AG), well-known music teacher and composer who taught some 4,000 pupils; he composed several hundred pieces played by bands all over Switzerland; in 1925, he founded an *Unterhaltungssorchester* with his five small sons, which later became known as "Kurorchester Mario Manazza".

Fritz Frey (105½), Niedererlinsbach (SO), the oldest citizen of the Canton of Solothurn.

Dr. Karl Mueller, Breitenbach (SO), *Amtsschreiber* of the Thierstein district.

Prof. Oskar Wyss (52), Chur, theologian and priest; teacher of Greek and Latin at the Mariahilf College in Schwyz.

Alfred J. Fuchs (84), Basle, former General Manager of Hoffmann-La Roche in charge of the financial department.

Ernest Willy Meyer, Geneva, former delegate to the Red Cross and for 15 years head of foreign relations in the UNICEF organisation in Paris; as high official he had been sent to the Congo and Hungary, and recently he was stationed in Dakar.

Gustave Moppert (80), Geneva, well-known surgeon; during the war, he was medical officer-in-chief of the first Army Corps. [A.T.S.]