

Swiss Holiday Scene

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Swiss Holiday Scene

Compiled by the Swiss National Tourist Office

SHOOTING events are among the most important of Switzerland's autumn traditions, and the Zurich boys' shooting contest, held over the second weekend in September, is one of the biggest. Its origins go back to medieval times.

At the Albisgütli butts 53 targets are in continuous use on Saturday and Sunday afternoons and on Monday morning. The best boy marksman is honoured with the title of "King" of the contest.

A strange tradition is still marked at the beginning of September every year in the town of Aarau. The stream that runs through the town is dammed to allow the bed to have its annual cleaning. When the job is completed, the stream is led back into its channel with much merrymaking.

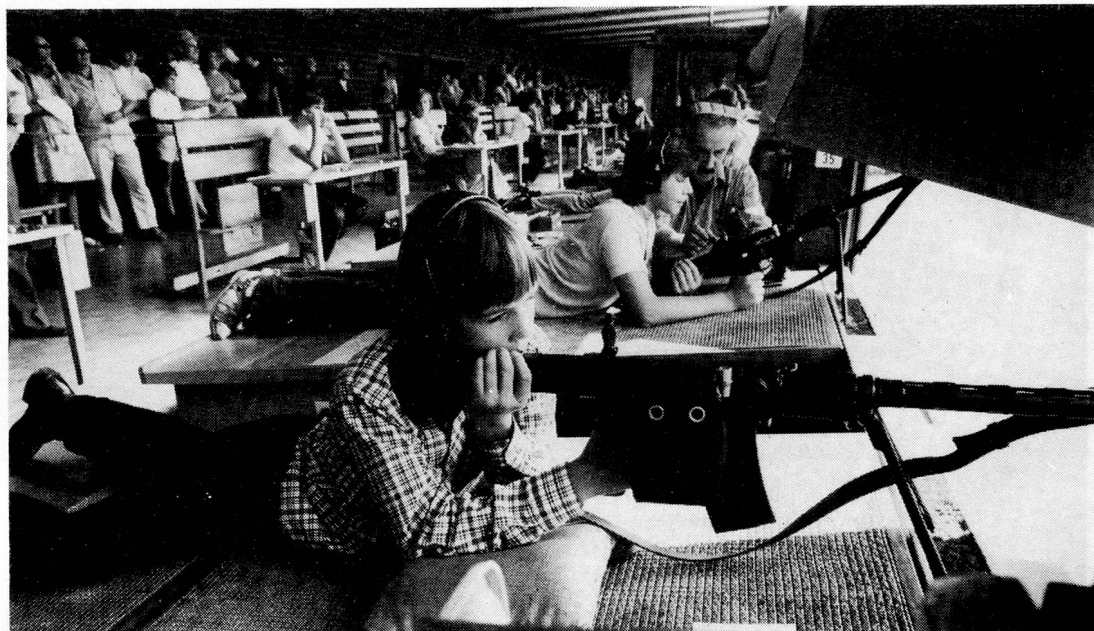
The return of the water is welcomed by an escort of youngsters, with singing, music and a lantern procession.

In the high Alps there are more shepherds' festivals this month. One, the "Schafscheid", is a ceremony at which sheep are returned to their owners after the summer grazing. Among the places where this colourful event can be seen is at Riffenmatt, near Guggisberg, on the first Thursday of September.

In the Justis valley near Merligen and at Sigriswil above the lake of Thun they celebrate their traditional "Käseteilet", linked with the driving down of cattle from the alpine pastures towards the end of September.

The precise date is fixed by the local presidents and stewards, the men who look after the economic side of things of the four alps of the valley.

Farmers who possess mountain rights assemble with their families on the "Spycherbärg", with its four cheese storage huts, each belonging to one of the



Young marksmen prepare for action

Who will be King of Albisgütli?

alps, where the cheeses are piled up in "lots".

To each mountain right is assigned one "lot" — the yield of one cow throughout one summer. Generally this amounts to five cheeses weighing

between 20-30 lbs.

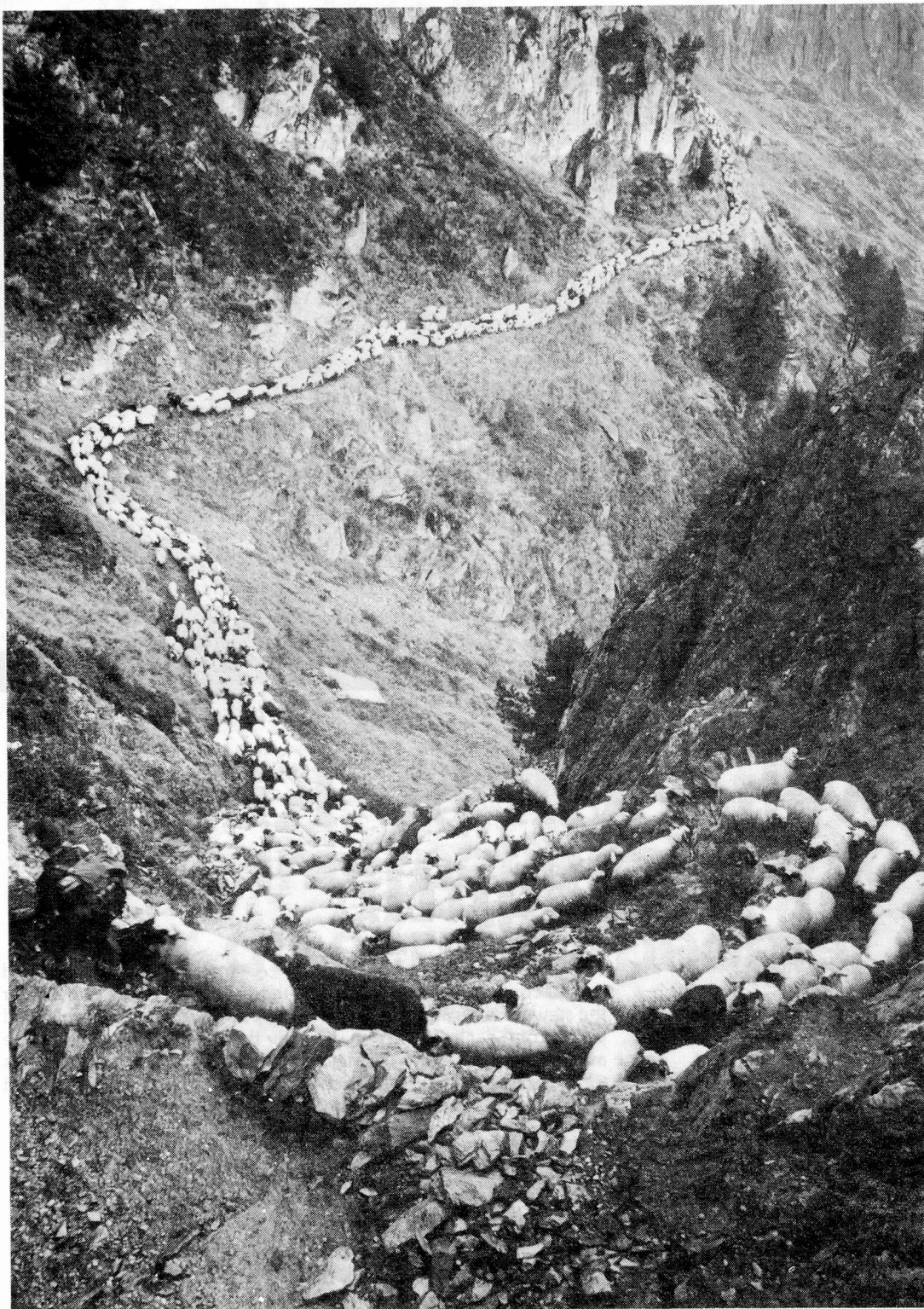
First comes a short speech by the steward, who announces the yield from each alp. Then to avoid unfairness a draw is held to apportion the share of each owner of mountain rights.

A small festival is held, and then the alpine folk make their way down to the valley, followed by the cattle. The cow with the best yield from each alp is specially spruced up and decorated.



Celebrating Käseteilet in the Justis valley

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THE thin white line winding its way high over the valleys shows that the sheep are returning from the alpine pastures for shearing. While, right, the flower-decked cattle take a more decorous route to the same destination.



The eleven year task is ended

SEPTEMBER 5 sees the opening of the longest road tunnel in the world, piercing the massif of the St. Gotthard for a length of 10 miles and linking Göschenen in central Switzerland with Airolo in the Ticino.

The giant task has taken 11 years, with 500 workers excavating more than 1.5 million cubic yards of rock — at a height of 3,500 feet above sea level. The cost has totalled Sfr. 686 million — which is Sfr. 380 million more than was estimated when work started in June, 1969.

Tunnellers faced many unexpected hazards, such as hewing rock at a temperature of more than 90°F.

Until now there have been two ways of making the Alpine crossing — over the St. Gotthard Pass, which started as a mule trail in the 13th century and can only be used in the summer, or through the St. Gotthard rail tunnel, opened 98 years ago.

Taking a car through the rail tunnel costs Sfr. 30. But the new road tunnel will be toll-free.

With the new tunnel, and the Seelisberg Tunnel along the south-west of Lake Lucerne which opens in December, a driver in a hurry can clip up to two hours off the journey from the Germanic north to the Italianate south.

But what he gains in time he will miss in beauty. For the route through the heart of the mountains will deprive him of some of the most spectacular scenery in the world.



Antiques and camera fair

CAMERA collectors, photo enthusiasts and movie fans will again meet at Lichtensteig to attend the fifth Swiss Photo Antiques and Camera Fair during the weekend of September 27/28. Again, the traditional market-place of the Toggenburg area will be host to thousands of visitors from Europe and overseas — all of them speaking the universal language of photography.

The two-day programme starts on Saturday afternoon with the second camera exchange meeting held for its members by the international Club Daguerre collectors' society.

The day's public programme will include a speech by Mr Theo Kisselbach, one of the most distinguished Leica experts and well-known author of many books on photography. He will present the fascinating story of "Oskar Barnack and the evolution of the Leica camera". The author will illustrate his speech with colour slides.

The programme can be enjoyed again the next day, on Sunday afternoon.

There is also an attractive collection of early cameras, open to the public, where many of the famous history-making Leica models can be admired. Camera fans who are awaiting

FOR the first time in Switzerland it is now possible to rent an old barn where families of four to six persons can find self-catering accommodation.

One such "rustico", as the barns are called in Italian, is available for six people in the village of Linescio; two other "rustici" are on offer for four and six people

respectively at Menzonio. Both villages are situated in the wild Maggia valley, some 25 miles from Locarno.

The rent per week is between Sfr. 210 and 420 according to size and season.

Further information: Ente turistico di Vallemaggia, 6673 Maggia/Switzerland. Tel: (093) 87 18 85.

the latest hits of "Photokina 80" will be delighted to find them demonstrated by Leitz experts at their special information centre.

The actual Photo Antiques and Camera Fair starts early on Sunday morning, when over 80 exhibitors set up their treasures. Here's a great chance for everyone to swap or sell some of his gear, too, or to find the missing piece of equipment he has always been after.

Further information: Verkehrsbüro Lichtensteig, Postfach 59, 9620 Lichtensteig/Switzerland. Tel: (074) 7 16 94.

Scenery from horseback

RIDING in the heart of a bountiful nature far from highways and cars has always attracted keen horsemen, but such places are not easy to find near urban centres.

At Les Diablerets, in the Vaudois Alps these rides are

easily accessible and well within the capabilities of all visitors. A high altitude riding school in addition to offering riding lessons, organises conducted group treks which are a lovely way of getting to know the charms of an alpine district where nature is still completely unspoiled.

Hang-gliding for beginners

VILLARS in the Vaudois Alps recently inaugurated a hang-gliding centre. During the summer the centre arranges courses for beginners in particular, enabling the most intrepid to learn the rudiments of this thrilling aeronautical sport.

Courses are available until October, and perhaps even in winter if there is sufficient demand. They are designed to enable students to obtain the Swiss Hang-Gliding Federation's licence.

A special training slope with a

drop of 130 feet has been set aside for the gradual teaching of basic techniques, from the first contact with the hang-glider to the first turns and the landing.

Theoretical courses on flying techniques, the performance of the gliders, meteorology, etc., will also be given at the centre. Arrangements have been made too for dual instruction on a two-man hang-glider. This will give the novice a better idea of the peculiarities of "thermic" flights under the close supervision of an instructor.

New hotels for Berne

TWO new hotels are opening in Berne this year. The four-star Hotel Sternen open in Muri this month. It has 96 beds, and all rooms are equipped with bath or shower. Then on December 15 the four-star Hotel Ambassador (150 beds) will be inaugurated. It is perfect for conference and congress business, as it is equipped with a large hall seating up to 235 and has simultaneous translation facilities. All rooms have private bath/shower.

Hotel Sternen, Thunstrasse 80, 3074 Muri-Bern/Switzerland. Tel: (031) 52 02 01. Hotel Ambassador, Seftigenstrasse, 3007 Bern/Switzerland. Tel: (031) 45 41 11. Telex: 32333.

FURTHER DETAILS

about any of the items reported here can be obtained from Swiss National Tourist Office, Swiss Centre, London W1V 3HG. (Tel: 01-734 1921).

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These are the flights operating until October 31st.

On all of them you can be assured of good service in the Swissair manner:

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(Note all departures one hour earlier from 26th October)

To benefit from the APEX fare it is necessary for you to book and pay for your ticket at least one month before departure. Also tickets are only available for a minimum stay of 7 days (or within 7 days if travel is on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday or Saturday with the return journey on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday of the following week).

The maximum stay is 3 months.

For full details please see your Travel Agent or contact your local Swissair office.

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Glasgow Phoenix House 78 St Vincent Street
041-248 6491
Dublin 54 Dawson Street
0001 778173

Swiss Holiday Scene

A RANGE of interesting railway events will be organised at Interlaken from September 26 to October 5, representing steam, diesel, accumulator, direct current and alternating current.

For all these kinds of traction engines will be on show, including the oldest steam locomotive in Switzerland which is still in running order and dates back to the year 1874.

The Swiss Federal Railways will display an exact replica of the first railway in Switzerland, the "Spanisch-Brötli-Bahn". The narrow-gauge steam locomotive G 3/4 No. 11 ("Heidi") will be running in the romantic Lutschinen valley on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

On each of these days there will be two round trips in trains with up to five antique triaxial cars each. During these excursions the workshops of the Bernese Oberland Railways are open to visitors.

On Sundays the cog-wheel steam engine of the Schynige Platte Railway will be pulling an antique car up the Schynige Platte, from where one enjoys a unique view of the mountains.

For those interested in the technical side of railways there will be excursions to Mürren in the Lauterbrunnen-Mürren Railway's old motor rail-car and up to the Jungfrauoch in the historic "Rowan" composition. Guides will offer explanations concerning the technical aspects of the respective operations.

Tourist excursions are also on the programme. For example an



individual trip to Domodossola (Italy) and a trip by steamboat and cogwheel steam train up the Brienz Rothorn.

In the Casino-Kursaal at Interlaken there is a railway exhibition featuring demonstration layouts, models in every gauge, information and exhibition stands and special shows.

During "Rail-in 80" a garden train powered by a model steam locomotive (scale 1:4) belonging to the Waldenburg Railway and an additional locomotive will be in operation in the Kursaal park to add to the pleasure of both

adults and children. Weather permitting, evening rides in the romantic atmosphere of the illuminated park will be offered.

The Interlaken West Station will house a great exhibition of standard gauge rolling stock, including an Orient Express restaurant coach, an old saloon car from the Lötschberg Railway, famous mountain and lowland locomotives from the Swiss Federal Railways, special coaches from the Federal and private railway companies, as well as coaches where films are shown and model railways displayed.

Right royal holiday

THIRTY West Midlands children gave very special three cheers to the Queen on August 11 when they took off on a week's holiday in Switzerland by Her Majesty's choice.

The Queen is patron of the National Children's Home and nominated that organisation to receive the holiday gift when the Swiss National Tourist Office offered it during her recent State visit to Switzerland.

The children — aged from 11 to 15 years — left their Princess Alice Drive Home in Sutton Coldfield to fly on the newly-opened British Airways service to Zurich from Birmingham Airport.

The children had a full programme in the Ticino area, including visits to beauty spots, mountain walks and swimming in Lake Lugano.

And it is all for free

NO, there's no catch — there really are lots of things going for free in Swiss towns and holiday resorts. And the Swiss National Tourist Office has published a 68-page booklet "Free in Switzerland" to prove it.

This publication informs visitors where, at no cost at all, they can take part in guided walks, wildlife observation, mountain tours, sports programmes, and which alpine cheese dairies they can visit, as well as where free concerts, film shows, summer night festivals and local folklore evenings are held.

Local festivals in September

| | | | | | |
|------------|----------------------|--|------------|-----------------|---|
| Sept 5 | Brunnen | Yodelling evening | Sept 20 | Leukerbad | «Schafscheid», descent of sheep from the Gemmi |
| Sept 5-7 | Aigle | «Braderie», popular festival | Sept 20 | Schwarzsee | Zollhaus: «Schafeteil» |
| Sept 5-7 | Schaffhausen | 900th anniversary of Stetten | Sept 20/21 | Locarno | Grape festival |
| Sept 5-7 | Zurzach | Youth festival | Sept 24 | Emmental | Zäziwil: «Brächete», ancient custom |
| Sept 7/8 | Balzers FL | Commune sports festival | Sept 25-27 | La Neuveville | Wine festival |
| Sept 12/13 | Auvernier | Wine festival | Sept 26 | Wil | 80th anniversary of Wil FC |
| Sept 13 | Hasliberg | Mägisalp: «Chästeilet», popular festival | Sept 26-28 | Geneva | «Kermesse», fête |
| Sept 13 | Interlaken | Bödéli fête | Sept 26-28 | Weggis | Chapel festival |
| Sept 13/14 | Marly | «Bénichon», ancient custom | Sept 27 | Emmen | Country music rally |
| Sept 13-15 | Zürich | Zürich boys' shooting contest | Sept 27/28 | Neuchâtel | Wine harvest festival |
| Sept 14 | Einsiedeln | Grand «Engelweihe» | Sept 27/28 | Ponts-de-Martel | 125th anniversary of «Fanfare Sainte-Cécile» |
| Sept 14 | Engelberg | Waterfall and wood fête | Sept 27/28 | Ruswil | «Ruswilerfäscht» |
| Sept 14 | Gamprin, Oberbühl FL | Chapel festival | Sept 27/28 | Uster | Nossikon: fête |
| Sept 14 | Lötschental | Ferden: Procession and parade of «God's Grenadiers» | Sept 27-29 | Appenzell | Fair |
| Sept 14 | St.Gall | Theatre festival: «175th anniversary of St.Gallen Municipal Theatre» | Sept 28 | Adelboden | Tschentenalp: yodellers' fête |
| Sept 16 | | | Sept 28 | Emmental | Fankhaus/Trub: Niederenzi-Chilbi. — Oberburg: Hänselberg fête |