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The Path of Switzerland

by C.Elliott

There have been many activities and creations during 1991 to celebrate the founding of the Swiss Confederation 700 years ago. While most will provide us with happy memories, hopefully one will be with us for many years to come; the Path of Switzerland.

The Path goes from the Rütli meadow around the Urnersee to Brunnen and has a total length of 35km, which can take upward of 15 hours to complete. Those who feel that this is simply too far need not despair, there are a number of places where buses, boats and trains meet the path, so a shorter walk is quite feasible.

From the path one can see boats on the lake as well as the Gotthard main line. From Seelisberg, high above the lake, wonderful views may be had, as is the case on the other shore of the lake on the stretch between Morschach and Sisikon. For those who prefer to be near to things, the Path from Fluelen to Tellsplatte and Sisikon meets the railway a number of times.

As with all walks in the mountains, a good pair of shoes is a must. You will find the stretch from Bauen to Fluelen flat, and Fluelen to Sisikon undulating, while Rütli to Bauen and Sisikon to Brunnen both have steep paths, although public transport is available to the summits.

The path has been divided in length among the 26 Cantons in order of their admission to the Confederation. The length of each Cantonal section is in direct proportion to the number of its inhabitants so that each and every Swiss citizen is represented on this path by a 5mm length. This has resulted in the most populated Canton, Zurich, having a length of 6089m and Appenzell Innerrhoden, the least populated, a length of just 71m.

Next time you are in Central Switzerland with surplus energy and are not certain how to use it, go along the Path, enjoy the surroundings and think of the events, both historical and transportational, that have gone before.

