

**Zeitschrift:** The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK  
**Herausgeber:** Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom  
**Band:** - (1971)  
**Heft:** 1614

**Artikel:** News from the land  
**Autor:** [s.n.]  
**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-686613>

### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. [See Legal notice.](#)

**Download PDF:** 14.03.2025

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**

1789 and is one of the oldest in France. The Swiss are particularly active in this city.

Imitating their French comrades, whose Lycée Revolution has been upsetting France, the schoolchildren of the secondary school "Le Belvédère" in Lausanne staged a massive demonstration to protest against the sacking of one of their teachers. The authorities relented and the man was reinstated in another school of the town.

In a message sent to the International Centre for the Rehabilitation of Political Exiles in Scheffnau, Germany, the Swiss Christian Democrat Party has supported the candidature of the Swiss Consul Chares Lutz for the Nobel Peace Prize. Mr. Lutz, who now lives in Berne, was in Budapest in 1944. He managed to oppose the design of the *Obersturmbannführer* Adolf Eichmann and save the lives of 50,000 Jews.

The first conference of "French-speaking ethnical minorities" was held in the third week of April in Geneva. It was organised by the Rassemblement Jurassien, who were the real cornerstone, and the French-speaking Belgians and Vaudois of Italy. According to the official communique, the meeting was highly successful and a second one was planned to take place in Liège, Belgium, in the spring of 1973.

The Editor of the "Swiss-American Journal" published in New York, Mr. Franz Xavier Amrein, died at the age of 71. He was found dead, bent over his typewriter in his apartment.



## Swiss Industries Fair Basle 17th-27th April 1971

The most outstanding show of Swiss quality products.

In 1971: participation of the groups transport and mechanical handling; boilermaking and radiator construction, oil firing and many more, such as watches, textiles, foodstuffs, etc.

Further information, leaflets, admission tickets and catalogues are obtainable from:

Swiss Embassy,  
77-81 Gloucester Place,  
LONDON, W.1. (Tel. 723-0701).

Swiss Consulate,  
Sunley Building, 18th Floor,  
Piccadilly Plaza,  
MANCHESTER (Tel. 236-2933).

# NEWS FROM THE LAND

(by courtesy of SNT0)

## A city of small theatres

In Berne anyone will easily find his way to the City Theatre which offers a diversified repertory of opera, operetta, ballet and plays. But it is also tempting to stroll through the centre of the city and to discover one or the other of the numerous smaller theatres. In any case it should be fun to look around and come upon one of the following "off-Broadway" stages: the "Atelier-Theatre" (Workshop Theatre), the "Keller-Theatre" (Cellar Theatre), the "Theatre am Käfigturm" (Theatre at the Cage Tower), the "Kleintheatre" (Small Theatre), "Die Rampe" (The Ramp), the "Theatre am Zytglogge" (Theatre at the Clocktower), the "Katakömbli" (The Little Catacomb) and the Puppet Theatre. They occasionally offer entirely new programmes that radiate their own charm or even are of literary value. Theatrical art can flourish even in a basement!

## New highlight in the Alpine village of Arosa

The Hotel Tschuggen, a luxury hotel nestling against the southern slope of the popular skiing mountain after which it is named, has been re-opened at the beginning of the winter sports' season of 1970/71. The impressive new building dominates the village scenery. Located at an altitude of 1,850 metres (6,610 feet) above sea level facing the sun, this hotel tries to follow the old Swiss tradition according to which the guest is king. In spite of a general shortage of help, there are 180 employees catering for 208 guests. The hotel is equipped with all modern

amenities, from an indoor swimming pool to a roof garden restaurant, all designed to make a stay here a pleasant experience. Including this new hotel, Arosa, one of the most popular mountain resorts in the canton of Graubünden (Grisons) offers its visitors 68 hotels and boarding houses with more than 4,200 beds.

## The "Titlis Express" of the Lucerne-Stans-Engelberg Railroad

From January 31 to March 28, 1971 the Lucerne-Stans-Engelberg Railroad added on Sundays a special rapid train from Lucerne to Engelberg, called the "Titlis Express". This train leaves Lucerne at 8.09 a.m. and Engelberg at 5.25 p.m. Thus it provides a connection with the "Innerschwyz" (Central Swiss) Sports Train from Basle to Göschenen. In the evening this special train is reserved for holders of sports tickets.

## Lenin's hair was too short . . .

According to local gossip, two revolutionaries called Lenin and Trotsky were once denied admission to Zurich's most famous literary cafe, the Odéon, because "their hair was cut much too short". More than five decades later, one has tried in vain to keep "longhairs" out of this place of informal meetings. They have "occupied" the same marbletop tables where once upon a time celebrities of such different calibre as Mata Hari, Toscanini, Franz Lehar and James Joyce are said to have sat, meditated or chatted. In order to lure back some of the real literary people and introverted reading men who had apparently stopped patronising it, the famous cafe has created a new room shortly before its sixtieth anniversary. It is one flight up and the romantic art nouveau period

## THE ZURICH GROUP

ZURICH INSURANCE COMPANY  
(a limited Company incorporated in Switzerland in 1872)

THE BEDFORD LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY LTD.  
(an associate member of the Life Offices Association)

THE BEDFORD GENERAL INSURANCE COMPANY LTD.  
(a member of the British Insurance Association)

UNDERTAKE ALL  
CLASSES OF INSURANCE  
BRANCHES THROUGHOUT THE U.K.

HEAD OFFICE:  
FAIRFAX HOUSE, FULWOOD PLACE  
HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.1

[Telephone 01-242 8833

GROUP RESOURCES EXCEED £500,000,000

was revived in this place where one may have a cup of coffee or a glass of kirsch, indulge in quiet discussions, enjoy a game of chess or read a newspaper. All the world's important newspapers, ranging from *The New York Times* to Moscow's *Izvestia* are available to readers free of charge.

### The Middle Ages lingering on the main road from Paris to Lausanne

Ten years ago the Swiss travel writer Katharina von Arx and her French husband and colleague Freddy Drillhon acquired the Priory in the historic little town of Romainmôtier, known for its monastery. The dilapidated structure dating back to the 8th century after Christ is a historic building of unique importance. In the meantime, Mrs. Drillhon has made great personal sacrifices to restore this medieval residence not far from the main highway and railroad line from Lausanne via Vallorbe to Paris. She writes from there: "Forgotten by the world, Romainmôtier rests in its valley. Once upon a time it was at the crossroads of the oldest highways of our continent—from north to south, from east to west. Though not richly endowed by nature with soil, snow or sunshine, nevertheless tourism is the only hope for this valley. Romainmôtier offers solitude, a trip back to the Middle Ages, arts and crafts, gastronomy. With this we are trying to re-awaken Romainmôtier . . ." The dreamy little medieval village already has been opened up to tourism: in the lovely Priory there are impressive banquet rooms; in the country inn called St. Romin there is "Jambon à l'os et saucisson vaudois" (ham on the bone and local sausage) and other typical dishes, and almost every day tourists arrive by bus from Lausanne and Geneva.

### 27th International Music Competition in Geneva, 1971

The 27th International Competition for Musical Performers will be held in Geneva from September 18 to

October 2, 1971. It will include the categories of voice (this time only operatic singing), piano, cello, oboe and horn. As usual, young artists from all countries are eligible: pianists, cellists, oboists and wind instrument players 15 to 30 years old; female singers 20 to 30 years old; male singers 22 to 32 years old. The total amount of prizes and special prizes is Swiss francs 64,000—(about US \$ 15,000). The competition is again organised in co-operation with the Geneva studio of the Swiss Radio and Television Company and the "Orchestre de la Suisse romande". The regulations and programmes of the 27th International Competition for Musical Performers have already been published and may be obtained by interested parties free of charge from the Secretariat (Palais Eynard, CH-1204 Geneva, Switzerland). The deadline for registration is June 30, 1971. The list of the members of the jury, again to be composed of internationally prominent masters, will be published at the end of March.

### Paul Klee in Winterthur

The name of an artist with a magic sound draws attention to the spring show of the Art Museum in Winterthur. The admirers of Paul Klee's art are used to enjoying the exhibits of the Klee Foundation at the Art Museum in Berne. This time, however, they will be happy to have an opportunity of getting to know the collection "Paul Klee and his painter friends" in Winterthur which is being looked after by the artist's son. This Felix Klee collection is a very important lead toward the knowledge of a very special sphere within the creative art of the early 20th century. An unusual radiation always comes forth from Paul Klee who was born in 1879 in Münchenbuchsee near Berne and died in 1940 in Muralto in the Swiss canton of Ticino. This radiation still goes on and will now fascinate the Winterthur Art Museum's visitors who, until April 18, will be able to admire so many precious works of art.

### Centennial of Vitznau-Rigi Railroad, Europe's first mountain railroad

Mount Rigi, in 1353 for the first time mentioned in a document, is one of Central Switzerland's most famous look-out points. Already in the nineteenth century a number of celebrities have climbed this mountain, among them crowned heads and famous composers, such as Carl Maria von Weber and Felix Mendelssohn; some writers and poets, among them William Wordsworth, Alexandre Dumas (Senior), Victor Hugo, James Fenimore Cooper, Rodolphe Toepffer, Mark Twain and Alphonse Daudet expressed their admiration for this mountain in their travel reports or their poetry. Niklaus Riggenbach (1817-1899), an engineer, one hundred years ago built Europe's first cogwheel railroad on the slopes of Mount Rigi. Thus this pioneer proved that it was definitely possible to overcome gradients of 25%. The invention was named after him—in technical circles one still talks of the "Riggenbach system". With his first locomotive equipped with an upright steam boiler the railroad line from Vitznau to Rigi was inaugurated on May 21, 1871. The length of the railroad is 6.8 km. (about 4.2 miles). It enables visitors to climb, without any effort, from the shores of Lake Lucerne (Lake of the four Cantons) to the summit of the mountain which is 1,300 m. (4,265 ft.) higher. In 1882 the horizontal steam boiler was introduced. In 1937 electricity replaced steam. Already during the first year of operation more than 60,000 passengers used the steam trains which in slang were called booze distilleries because of their steam boilers. Today the annual number of passengers of the Vitznau-Rigi railroad only is in excess of 450,000. Many excursionists reach the summit also via the Arth-Rigi Railroad and more recently via the aerial cableway from Weggis to Rigi-Kaltbad. As ever, the Rigi is a favoured place for excursions and longer visits for those who want to leave the clouds and fog below them and get



(“Punch”, 17th February, 1971)

into the sun in order to do some hiking up there or just rest and, as in olden days, experience the magnificent spectacle of a sunrise above the Alps.

### Gstaad preparing for the 21st century

One of the most elegant indoor swimming pools and also one of the most interesting ones from the technical point of view in any Swiss mountain hotel was recently inaugurated at the world famous Palace Hotel in Gstaad, the rendezvous of international

celebrities. At the same time with the swimming hall with its futuristic forms, artificial sunlight and bubbling fountains there was also opened adjacent to it a nightclub called the Green Go, equally surprising due to its original architecture and to its name. Plans are also afoot for the construction in the near future of the "Residence Palace" which is to be a pyramid-shaped building leaning against a mountain slope. It is to offer luxurious apartments on an annual rental basis with all the amenities of hotel life.

### Direct air ferry service from London to Basle

The British airline Transmeridian Air Cargo Ltd. is planning to introduce next summer a direct air ferry service for automobiles and freight to Basle and Geneva. The company whose head office is at Stansted in Essex already has applied to the British civil aviation authorities for a permit to run this line. The service's starting points would be Stansted as well as Gatwick Airport, located about 30 kilometres (about 20 miles) south of London. If



# SWISS BANK CORPORATION

(a Company limited by shares, incorporated in Switzerland)

#### Principal London Office

99 GRESHAM STREET,  
P.O. Box No. 114,  
LONDON EC2P 2BR  
Tel. 01-606 4000

#### West End Branch

SWISS CENTRE,  
1 NEW COVENTRY STREET,  
LONDON W1V 8BR  
Tel. 01-734 0767

(Savings Account facilities available)

SOCIÉTÉ DE BANQUE SUISSE  
SCHWEIZERISCHER BANKVEREIN  
SOCIETÀ DI BANCA SVIZZERA

Offices throughout Switzerland  
in New York and San Francisco

FOR *Your*  
WORLD  
TRANSPORT

(ANYTHING - ANYWHERE)

**WORLD TRANSPORT**

20/22 EMERSON STREET  
LONDON S.E.1.

AIRPORT OFFICES:  
LONDON BIRMINGHAM  
MANCHESTER YEADON GATWICK



*Ask /*  
**WORLD TRANSPORT**

*first!*

Tel: 01-928 6996 . Telex: 28401

**AGENCY LIMITED**

Specialized Regular Groupage Services

GREAT BRITAIN - SWITZERLAND and ITALY  
and VICE VERSA

BRANCHES: BASLE · MANCHESTER · BRADFORD · BIRMINGHAM · HULL · SHEFFIELD · LIVERPOOL  
LEICESTER · STOKE

all goes well, the flights are to begin in June, that is at the starting time of the real mass exodus of British motorists towards the European Continent.

### Art lover's stroll through Winterthur

While strolling through the Markt-gasse (Market Street) at Winterthur, a street where no cars are permitted, the open colonnade of the "Rathaus" (not to be confused with the monumental "Stadthaus" or city hall, built outside of the Old City by the famous architect Gottfried Semper) catches our eye. The excellently renovated group of buildings with a neo-classical front and a charming shopping arcade along the main floor has found space in beautifully panelled rooms for a collection of paintings endowed by a citizen of Winterthur. It comprises about 70 pictures, mainly by Dutch and German masters of the 17th to the 19th century. In the hall on the upper floor we discover an important collection of watches and clocks. It shows the development of the watchmaker's art, ranging from Gothic iron clocks to elegant wall clocks and watches of the 18th century. — The Art Museum ("Kunsthalle") is on the second floor of the former "Waaghaus" (weighing house) on the same Market Street. A striking building because of its late Gothic windows and bright red colour, it was built in the 16th century and originally served as the town's commercial and social centre. Today it contains a puppet theatre, a public reading room and the exhibition hall of the "Kunsthalle" (Art Museum). At present there is a display of pictures by the Zurich artist Karl Hosch. — However, we must not leave Winterthur without jotting down the three main sights for our next visit to the city: the impressive gallery of the Oskar Reinhart Foundation with collections of German and Swiss paintings; the lovely museum of local history at the "Lindengut" with historic interior decorations and other historic antiquities and, a little outside the city, the most famous collection of Oskar Reinhart at "Rom-erholz" with masterpieces of European painting of the great periods.

### SWISS SPECIALITIES

SAUSAGES  
CHEESE  
CHOCOLATES  
HERO CONSERVES  
BISCUITS  
ROCO CONSERVES

go to

**BARTHOLDI'S**

Charlotte Street, London W14

Telephone: MUS (636) 3762/3

ALSO FIRST CLASS MEAT

# THE SWISS OCEAN-GOING FLEET

*Articles about the Swiss Navy seem to come back recurrently in the columns of this paper. Readers will, we hope, forgive us for printing this article received by courtesy of OSEC (Office Suisse d'Expansion Commerciale) because it is uncommonly rich in detail, and will forever rebut those who still think that the Swiss Navy is a myth!*

Although situated in the heart of Europe over 300 miles from the nearest sea, Switzerland is still one of the shipping nations. We are not referring here to her shipping on the country's many lakes, or even to her river navigation on the Rhine, which started over 60 years ago, but to her ocean-going shipping. Compared with the big maritime powers, the Swiss ocean-going fleet is naturally minute; compared to the smallness of the country however, its size appears in a different light. In April 1941, in order to overcome the increasing difficulties which the country was coming up against in its efforts to obtain necessary supplies, the Federal Council decided to purchase and fit out a certain number of ships which together with the vessels belonging to Swiss ship-owners, were used to ensure the country's replenishment of vital supplies. In spite of many difficulties, this small fleet succeeded in bringing indispensable foodstuffs from overseas, in exchange for Swiss export products. At the end of the war, the ships belonging to the Confederation were sold to Swiss ship-owners. Numbering eight vessels at the time of its creation, today the fleet possesses 32 vessels sailing the seas all over the world; it has thus almost quadrupled in size in the last 30 years.

The right of countries deprived of their own seaboard to sail the seas under their own flag was recognised at the International Transport Conference in Barcelona in 1921. Swiss legislation submits navigation under the Swiss flag to the supervision of the Federal Political Department, which exercises it through the Swiss Office for Maritime Shipping in Basle, the only port for the registration of ships. Only vessels belonging to a company which can prove its capital to be purely Swiss in origin, which has its registered office in Switzerland and an effective management in the country are permitted to fly the Swiss flag. Consequently a Swiss ship-owner owning a ship jointly with a foreign ship-owner cannot sail it under the Swiss flag and has to register it in another country. The shipping company Suisse-Atlantique Co. Ltd. in Lausanne, for example, owns 4 ships sailing under the Liberian flag, in addition to 8 vessels registered in Basle.

Ship-owners are free to do what they like with their ships and may do charter work for foreigners; in time of war, however, their vessels would have to be played at the Confederation's disposal. Furthermore, the Confederation makes its contribution to the development of the national fleet by granting ship-owners loans in the form of maritime mortgages, sometimes amounting to as much as 75%, or by guaranteeing the loans granted by banks for the modernisation of fleets (construction and purchase of new vessels).

With 32 modern ships—their average age being about 12 years—with a total displacement of 300,000 dwt, Switzerland's ocean-going fleet comes 40th among the world's fleets. The biggest ship is the "Romandie", a 32,750-ton cargo-boat, while the smallest, the "Léman" is a coastal vessel of 440 tons, reserved exclusively for the shipment of wine in the Mediterranean. In addition to another ship of the same type and two refrigerator ships, the Swiss fleet comprises 28 cargo-boats, able to carry a limited number of passengers (12 at the most); half the 24 ocean-going vessels, whose tonnage varies between 3,000 and 32,750 dwt, run on regular services, while the other half act as tramp ships, that is to say they do not make regular trips but take cargo such as cereals, ores, etc., when and where it offers and to any port. The recent growth of Switzerland's private merchant fleet means that countries all over the world with direct access to the sea have had an opportunity of seeing the Swiss flag flying in one or other of their ports, whether in Canada, with a ship loading cereals, in Japan, delivering a cargo of phosphates from North Africa, or in Europe, unloading timber from the Philippines.

The Swiss, in spite of their reputation as a mountain people, also have the sea in their blood; in fact, over half the 920 men forming the crews of the 32 ships are Swiss. 120 other Swiss seamen are employed on foreign ships or ships belonging to Swiss ship-owners but not sailing under the Swiss flag. Like the fleet itself, the development of crews of Swiss nationality has progressed satisfactorily. In fact, to start with, crews were composed almost exclusively of foreigners, for the most part Germans and Italians, even though many Swiss had already served on foreign ships before the first World War. Today Swiss sailors occupy the most varied posts: on the upper-deck, in the engine-room, radio and supplies. Of the 32 ships, 12 are commanded by Swiss captains, while 15 deck officers