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Ski Exhibition in London

An unprecedented Winter Sports exhibition was held in early September at the Horticultural Hall, Westminster. Sponsored by the Daily Mail and an association of Swiss resorts from Canton Vaud, the exhibition offered a panorama of skiing material and Winter Sports opportunities. It was a small exhibition with few exhibitors. Three ski-import and equipment firms and five ski-shops showed a moderate variety of skis, bindings, boots and apres-ski wear. It was interesting to note that a Scottish firm named Vielhaber, with their factory in Dunkeld, Perthshire, produced skis at very interesting prices (as low as £22). This firm was the only British ski manufacturer to exhibit for all we know, it is probably the only British firm in specialising in skis. Other cheap skis were the German-made "Blizzard" also selling for under £30. The better known makes, such as Head (Austria) start at £37 and the luxury Rossignol (France) go well beyond £100.

Ski technology has made impressive progress with the development of plastics and new epoxy resins. One cheap pair consisted of no less than seven layers of plastic, glass fiber, trimmings and surfacing. Expensive pairs were assembled in a yet more sophisticated way. Wooden skis .now belong completely to the past and plastic or glass fiber seems to be taking over from steel. Bindings have also changed completely. None of the modern devices incorporate the cable which used to be attached to the boot. Skiing footwear look increasingly as though it was designed for astronauts. Boots cost on average between £30 and £40.

Short skis, which made their first appearance for no longer than a couple of seasons about twelve years ago, are Some skiing schools re-appearing. for beginners. advocate them Ski instructors at the Exhibition had them on their feet as they taught children how to climb an artificial slope keeping knees well bent and their skis parallel. Among those instructors present were the Swiss ski champions Jean Daniel and Michel Dätwyler, and Willy Favre. We saw the latter of the three, who won a Silver Medal at the 1968 Winter Olympics in giant slalom, show a trembling girl how to stand on her feet on the 15ft high slope, the surface of which looked like the bristles of a hard nylon brush.



A slot machine allowed one to test one's skills at slalom. The device was similar to those machines used for testing one's driving reactions. Instead of a driving wheel, one stood on shifting boards in lieu of skis and had fixed batons. The score-board was graded from 0 to 36 gate-misses. Missing the gate less than eight times attested to an "olympic standard". Missing it from eight to sixteen times meant "a good attempt", missing it from sixteen to twenty-four times called for "more practise". The remainders were just "eliminated". This in fact was the lot of all those trving themselves on the machine.

Many of the best known tour operators had a stand. Among them were Clarksons Snowjet, Global, Swiss Travel Service and Thomson. Skiing holidays can still be cheap. Inghams of Putney advertises a 4-day skiing "*minispree*" in Austria or Yugoslavia for only £19. Otherwise, the cheapest one-week skiing holidays on offer begin at about £40. The Highland & Islands Development Board advertised inclusive holidays to the Spey Valley, Scotland's best known Winter Sports Resort from as little as £24.00.

Skiing is still considered in this country as a pleasure for the rich. The purpose of this exhibition was to dispel such an idea. It is true that a stay at the Palace at St. Moritz is within the reach of only a prosperous few, but no one need enjoy the delights of Winter Sports and apres-skiing at *that* cost.

Cheap holidays in Switzerland are still possible

by W. Stettbacher

In a recent issue of the Swiss Observer it was suggested that even a sinking \pounds could be turned to advantage when buying tickets for certain flights.

My wife and I are travelling a good deal nowadays (we spent 4 of the past 9 months in Majorca and 2 in Switzerland and Northern Italy) and irrespective of the state of the pound, we always try to be selective and pick out hotels which are both good and cheap.

Spain is still the cheapest place for a winter holiday in Western Europe, and for this reason, tens of thousands of old people, mostly Germans, but also Britons and French (and for the most part pensioners) are spending the winter months in Majorca. For six successive winter seasons, we have been staying at the same Palma Hotel; we normally have a room on the 9th (top) floor, with a magnificent view over the harbour, the town of Palma, and part of the island. The food is excellent and plentiful, and yet, the cost for 2 persons, with private bath and lavatory in the room, everything included, was only 500 Pesetas a day! Just a little over £3.

During July, we were in Macugnaga, a famous Italian mountain resort, situated at the foot of the Monte Rosa, only about 2 Kms from the Swiss border, as the crow flies. The first settlers in Macugnaga were German-speaking Swiss from the Valais. Many of its inhabitants have Swiss names, as do some of the neighbouring hamlets. Even the town hall is called "Gemeindehaus". Macugnaga's mountain scenery every bit as grand and majestic as Zermatt's, and became famous in the early 1860's when many prominent Englishmen, including Whymper, the conqueror of the Matterhorn, started to explore the Swiss and Italian Alps. Our Hotel was the "Albergo Passo del Turlo", built as far back as 1862, and family-run. We were treated as members of the family, the cooking and everything else was superlative, and we have already booked a room for July and August 1974. Incidentally, Peron, the Argentinian statesman, stayed at that hotel in June as the guest of the Italian Government.

This holiday cost us much less than anticipated – approximately 20 Swiss francs a day per person!

My aim was to climb the Matterhorn from there for the 4th time to celebrate my 70th birthday, but there were heavy snowfalls in July ruling out a climb on the Matterhorn. Many would-be climbers of the Matterhorn were killed this summer through falling stones and I hope to try again next summer. In August, we moved to Davos.

Every time I come to Switzerland I find that prices have gone up again.

A lunch or dinner in any ordinary restaurant or hotel in Davos can cost anything from £2 to £4 excluding drinks. For a glass of tea, you pay the same price everywhere - Fr. 1.40. Apparently, in this land of supposed free enterprise, the owners of tea-rooms and restaurants get together and fix the price. In Klosters, the price charges rose to Fr. 1.50. Half-litre bottles of grapefruit, non alcoholic cider, orangeade and the like cost Fr.2.

Many are asking themselves if Switzerland is not pricing herself out of the tourist market, but according to figures just published, receipts from Tourism were up by more than 10 per cent during 1972.

It remains to be seen how things will develop this year after the depreciation of the dollar and the pound. Americans are still arriving in great numbers but are spending undoubtedly less than before. On the other hand, the Germans come in greater number and also the Japanese, who are said to be great spenders.

We had a wonderful 3-week holiday in Davos, enjoying perfect weather. This stay turned out to be far cheaper than I had expected thanks to a German friend who introduced us to the "Blaukreuz Ferienheim Seebuel in Wolfgang", Davos. This is primarily a holiday home intended for member of the Blaukreuz (Blue Cross) organisation. But provided accommodation is available, non-members can also be admitted on the condition that they are life-long teetotallers. As we both dislike alcohol of any kind, this didn't present any difficulty.

This Ferienheim is beautifully situated on the shores of lake Davos and managed by a Mr. Kummler-Siegrist, who seems to be good at every thing. He is a prize-winning pastry cook, sausage-maker, expert farmer etc. and manages everything to perfection. We paid 28 Francs 50 per day and person, a truly remarkable price for Switzerland. Members of the Blue Cross were paying even less. There is a great variety of non-alcoholic drinks, cakes and pastries available, all at half the cost of what is charged elsewhere. It is gratifying to find places that still put Christian principles into practice. I hesitate however to recommend this Ferienheim for the simple reason that one has to book a long time ahead. All the rooms are already booked for the whole of 1974.

The Co-op society has a very attractive restaurant at Davos-Platz. The food and drinks served there are first class and their cost if about half of what one pays elsewhere. But most of the time this restaurant was half empty while the more (concluded on p. 18)



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MR. EUGENE ULMANN, 70

We have great pleasure in reporting the 70th birthday of Mr. Eugene Ulmann, of 19 Eldon House, Sloane Avenue, London, SW3. Mr. Ulmann, "Gene" to his friends, was educated at the Handelsshule in Zurich and at the Ecole de Tissage in Lyon (France). After working for a little over a year at the Zurich head offices and mills in France of well-known Silk Manufacturers the Baumann Aelter & Co., he was transferred to their London office in January 1925. After two years, he was put in charge of their tie fabric division and promoted a year later to the post of Manager of the London Branch.

At the end of 1929, the Board of the Company decided in the face of a world crisis in the textile trade to liquidate their concern and sell their mills in Switzerland, France, Germany and Latvia.

Although Mr. Ulmann had signed a contract with the firm expiring in 1934, he asked to be released and decided to start on his own as an agent for tie and tailoring fabrics in London. His principals agreed and offered generous compensation. Mr. Ulmann kept a London office and a staff of six travelling salesman and clerks. He rapidly obtained agencies from Swiss, German, Austrian and Italian weavers. His sphere of activity included, besides trade within the UK, shipping-trade to Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

Not long after having started on his own, Mr. Ulmann was asked by some friends to start a silk mill in the Scottish woollen town of Galashiels. Concerned about the unemployment in the area. two woollen weavers, two woollen spinners and a woollen dyer pooled £5,000 each enabling Mr. Ulmann to found a new company, Galavale Silk Fabrics Ltd. That was in 1931. Mr. Ulmann went to Zurich and bought 52 second-hand looms and the necessary auxiliary machines from the liquidation of his old employers, Baumann Aelter & Co. He engaged two old friends as Factory Manager and Designer. One of the woollen weavers put a suitable weaving shed at the disposal of the new company. As soon as the looms were installed, Mr. Ulmann brought over



from Switzerland (mainly from Höngg) 18 Swiss girls as weavers, warpers and winders to train local labour. Most of the girls returned home after one year but a few remained and married Scotsmen.

Mr. Ulmann's activities were now divided between his agency work and his factory. In the early fifties he bought all the shares of Galavale Silk Fabrics from the original founders. The firm was merged in 1963 with Dumfermline Silk Mills, a much larger mill in Dumfermline. This ,venture only lasted three years as, with many others, it had to close owing to fierce competition from abroad.

Following this, Mr. Ulmann's interest in weaving was limited to woollen fabrics for ties and scarves. He founded a new company, *Scotlane & Co. Ltd.*, which is today managed by his son Ron and exports to 25 European and overseas markets.

Mr. Ulmann's offices are at 103 Whitecross Street, just north of the City. Several trading companies employing a staff of 20 and selling fabrics for over 10 million ties every year and housed in the Whitecross Street premises. These companies represent, among others, the fabric factories of Krefeld (Germany) and the firms of Schiel (Austria) and Rhodia (Feance).

Since the war, Mr. Ulmann has been a senior partner in a Tie Manufacturing Company in Epping. This compact little factory employing sixty people and equipped with ultra-modern machines produces a wide range of ties selling under the trademark *Trend*.

In August 1928 Mr. Ulmann married Miss Daisy Woodhurst, who was his secretary. Their marriage has been blessed with two children, Muriel, born in 1930 and Ronald, born in 1933. Each of the children have three offspring so that Mr. and Mrs. Ulmann have five grandsons and one granddaughter. Mr. Ulmann has furthermore been a member of the City Swiss Club, Swiss Mercantile Society, Swiss Rifle Associations and Nouvelle Société Helvétique. He has also been twice Master of the Anglo-Swiss Helvetica Lodge.

We wish him many more years of health and prosperity.

THE SWISS OF BRITAIN IN 1943

1943 - the most crucial year of the war. A year when the battles that were to mark the turning of the tide were fought. For the Swiss of Great Britain, it was above all the third year of the war and another period of material hardship but also of hope and good cheer. The activities of a then thriving expatriate community, drawn closer than ever before by the barriers which the war had put between them and the homeland, were nevertheless reduced by restrictions of all kinds. Rationing and transport difficulties prevented most societies from holding their usual dinner functions. Their normal meetings were held without dinners - or when these dinners took place, they were frugal and abided by the Government's appeal for a limit of "food devouring" gatherings. But the third year of the war began

with the City Swiss Club making an exception to this self-discipline by staging a farewell luncheon for Mr. Charles de Jenner, Counsellor at the Legation. Despite the war time restrictions, a hundred Swiss assembled on 2nd January, 1943, at the Dorchester Hotel, including strong representation from the a Legation. Among those present were the then Minister, Mr. Walter Thurnheer; Mr. Girardet, Mr. de Rahm and Dr. Presswerk (Head of the Special Division in charge of German and other enemy affairs). Representatives from the defunct Swiss Choral Society, Union Helvetia and Swiss Club Birmingham were also present.

Mr. Alfred Stauffer, the Editor of

the Swiss Observer, reported the event in no less than five thousand words. He recorded the farewell speeches by the Minister, Mr. Louis Chapuis, President of the City Swiss Club, and by Mr. A. Suter, President of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique. Mr. de Jenner, who had been called back to the Political Department in Berne, recalled his eleven active years in London under Minister Paravicini, who was Switzerland's Ambassador to Britain for the 20 years until 1940.

The same month saw the AGM of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique. 120 guests were present at this made a speech on neutrality. Replies for the guests came from Dr. H. Revilliod, of Montreux, whose made a speech on neutrality. Replies for the guests came from Dr. H. Revilliod, of Montreux, whose wife was the daughter of the late President Masaryk. Many persons still alive today or whose memory is vivid among many residents were present at the meeting. Among them were the Rev. M. Pradervand, the Rev. E. Jornot, Father Lafranchi, Mr. C. Gampart, Mr. L. Chapuis, Mr. J. Boos, Mr. A. Indermaur, Mr. F. G. Sommer, Mr. W. Pellet, Mr. G. T. Kummer and Mr. J. Scheuermeier. We should mention that Mr. Pellet and Mr. Kummer were representing two other defunct Swiss societies: La Société Culinaire Suisse, and the Swiss Orchestral Society.

A month later, it was for the Swiss Mercantile Society to hold its AGM under the chairmanship of its President, Mr.

J. J. Boos. The school's teaching activities had been forced to a halt by the war for well over two years. But its Employment. Department was still in operation despite ever increasing difficulties. Mr. J.J. Pfaendler, who was in charge of this Department, had been able to place 271 of 268 applicants. Among the items under review was the future of the SMS premises at Swiss House, 34-35 Fitzroy Square, the lease of which had been terminated in March 1942. The meeting was told that after lengthy deliberations, a new short tenancy agreement for the retention of the premises had been signed in July 1942.

Finally, the Swiss Club Manchester held its AGM on 6th March. A voluntary luncheon had been held beforehand in the Grill Room of the Midland Hotel. The Meeting corresponded with the 90th Anniversary of the Swiss in Manchester the 60th anniversary and of the foundation of the Club. A number of doyens were present. Dr. Hans Renold, 91, a Swiss industrialist whose career unfolded in Manchester, was warmly welcomed. So were three others with over 40 years membership: Messrs. A. Bebie, J. R. Bickel and J. R. Steiner. The only surviving founder member, a Mr. R. A. Bosshard, with 60 years of membership to his credit, was given a special tribute. The Club reporter wrote: "The longevity of our compatriots in Manchester testifies to the soundness of the stock and would seem to belie the tales about the atrocious Manchester climate"

Several deaths were deplored during January and February. Mr. Max Theodore Newmann (formerly Neumann) an importer and fine musician, died at the age of 65. Mr. Oscar Weideli, who had owned a hairdressing salon in Wardour Street and later in Old Compton Street,

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MEMBER OF ABTA

passed away at the age of 64. He had come to Britain at the age of 20 and "remained Swiss to the bone".

Mr. E. Montag, Swiss Consul in Liverpool, received the Foulerton Award for 1943 from the Geologists' Association of London as recognition of his services to this Association. Mr. Montag already held an honorary doctorate from the University of Liverpool and the Medal of the Liverpool Geological Society. The Foulerton Award was handed to him by Professor H. H. Read, F.R.S. During his speech, the professor defined a diplomat as "a man who lies abroad for his country's good". Replying, Mr. Montag alternative: "A suggested another diplomat is a man who can persuade his own wife that the neighbour's wife looks shabby in a new fur coat".

During its March meeting, the Swiss Philatelic Society viewed a booklet published by the Swiss G.P.O. commemorating the first issue of stamps in Switzerland a hundred years earlier. The booklet with superb colour plates illustrating Swiss stamps issued during the previous century, had been presented by the Embassy.

The City Swiss Club held its AGM in April and elected Mr. Anton Bon as its new President. He succeeded Mr. Louis Chapuis. Mr. Bon was manager of the Dorchester and President of the Swiss Benevolent Society. That same month, the Swiss Mercantile Society heard an exposé on "Some aspects of Switzerland's economic position today" by Mr. E. de Graffenried, First Secretary of Legation and Commercial Attaché.

Holding its AGM at the end of April, the Swiss Benevolent Society recorded that it had given assistance to 558 countrymen during 1942. 27 of the people helped had to return to Switzerland for urgent reasons.

In early May, the Swiss Observer reported the death of Mr. Hans Renold, referred to above. An obituary notice recalled that he had studied at the Polytechnic School in Zurich, founded a company in Britain called Hans Renold Ltd. and been a pioneer in the precision-chain industry. He was the inventor of the bush roller type of chain in universal use today. He had also pioneered in industrial relations and been one of the first to introduce the 48-hour week and provide facilities, such as a canteen, an infirmary and a golf course, for his employees.

In that same month, the Swiss of Manchester went on their annual outing to the hills of Derbyshire. Those members who lived in Stoke had got up at 5 a.m. The Swiss Mercantile Society was without a speaker that month, but had a lively meeting enlivened with a discussion relating to the Society's plans. The President gave details of the Jubilee Meeting of the Mother Society in Basle. Arrival of air mail from Headquarters had enabled the President, Mr. J. J. Boos to with members latest supply the information from back home. At the June Meeting, the President reported on

the Delegates Meeting which had been held at Lugano on 7th May. As previously arranged, a debate was organised on the subject "A Target for Trade in Peace Time". It was introduced by Mr. Walter Vice-President. the He Meier, recommended the gradual institution of a world minimum standard of wages, putting an end to the difference in remuneration paid in different parts of the world for the same amount of human labour performed. As the most important single step that could be achieved to boost world trade, he called for a universal currency. In the words of the Secretary, Mr. Walter Burren, "a very lively and stimulating discussion then followed, in which a large number of members including the President took part. This most interesting debate was wound up by Mr. Meier, who answered various criticisms of his suggestions". At its June meeting, the City Swiss Club heard Mr. Wickham Steed, former Editor of the Times and Review of Reviews, make an exposé on Switzerland.

July was an uneventful month as far as Colony functions were concerned. The Swiss Observer of those months carried little news regarding the Swiss in this country. No event worthy of note took place before 1st August, 1943, at the Stoll Theatre, Kingsway, WC2. In about eight thousand words, Mr. Stauffer described how the Swiss of London celebrated the 652nd Anniversary of their country. The organising committee was chaired by Mr. A. F. Suter. The theatre was gaily decorated with large Swiss flags and the twenty-four cantonal escutcheons. The programme started with the singing of the patriotic song Eidgenossen Gitt zum Gruss by the Swiss Choral Society which was followed by a moving prayer by the Rev. Μ. Pradervand. Addresses were delivered by Mr. Suter and Minister Thurnheer. The first part of the programme was concluded with the rendering of two songs by the Swiss Choral Society: In einem kühlen Grunde and Dr Bärner Bär. The Editor remarked that all these songs were Swiss-German and that a "gesture to our French and Italian speaking minorities' would have been appropriate. He also added "I have nothing against the song In einem kühlen Grunde but with due respect I do not consider it suitable for

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such an occasion. We require something more lively and more typically Swiss". The latter part of the programme gave the Choir another opportunity to perform before a film by an amateur, Mr. J. Dahinden, was screened. It was about La Suisse Primiteve and therefore profuse in shots, Alphorns, folklore, Alpine yodellers, stocky and sun-tanned mountain people, full of the simple joys of life. The Editor complained: "We do not seem to get away from the cows. I have no grudge against them, quite to the contrary, I find them most useful specimens of the animal fraternity. But why must we, by hook or by crook, drag the animal world into our proceedings. It is not fair to them nor it is fair to all of those who do not yet include the four-footers in the circle of their personal relations."

The National Day celebration was very well attended in the North. Families from Lancashire, Cheshire, Staffordshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire assembled at the home of an unnamed Swiss family in Manchester and were treated to Basler Leckerli and gugelhopf. The 1st of August was also celebrated at Liverpool and Prestatyn. A walk was arranged by Mrs. Macquarie to the Wirral, the peninsula between the Mersey and the Dee. The party had tea at the "Green Lantern" and thoroughly enjoyed themselves despite the thunderstorm that broke out before the end of excursion. In Prestatyn, Mr. Montag, Consul for the Liverpool area, invited all the Swiss of his neighbourhood for tea.

The death was reported in the August issue of Mr. Max Albert Roth, a former receptionist at Brown's Hotel and Assistant Manager at the Dorchester. Employed as a courier for the Confederation a year earlier, he was killed in a flying-boat accident while returning from Washington with official despatches.

Mrs. Theodolina Meschini had also died at the end of the previous month (July) in her 80th year. She was the widow of Mr. Carlo Meschini, sole proprietor of Pagani's, a famous pre-war London restaurant which was the venue of innumerable Swiss functions.

The Swiss Catholics of England sent an appeal for funds to maintain the Swiss Catholic Chaplain and his work during 1943-44. The Swiss Church announced that a special service would be held on 3rd September to mark the British National Day of Prayer and added that the annual Swiss National Day of Prayer would be observed in London on 19th September.

The Swiss of Manchester held a farewell party at the Midland Hotel for Mr. Hirs, Vice-Consul, and his wife, who had been called to New York. The "Beveridge Plan" was the theme of a debate at the Swiss Mercantile Society's September Meeting. That same month Mr. P. Bornand, a member of the Consistoire, wrote to the Editor to stress that there wasn't any tension between the German and French-speaking halves of the Swiss Church. He claimed that the impression that such a division existed had arisen from the Editor's account of the 1st August Celebration in London.

To mark the "commencement of what is hoped will be a long period of active collaboration", the Ladies and Men's Section of the Unione Ticinese announced their first The Dansant at the Dorchester Hotel.

More deaths were regretted in August: Mr. Hans Schmid, an executive at Brothers in London Volkart and Winterthur died suddenly in Switzerland at the age of 43. Mr. John Lanz, a Swiss who had managed a dairy farm in Colnbrook, Bucks, for 30 years, died aged 68 following an accident.

Finally, the German-Swiss congregation lost the services of the Rev. E. Jornot, who had accepted the post of Minister of an orphanage in Chile.

(continued from p. 15)

expensive tea-rooms and restaurants were filled to capacity. Apparently, most people do not care how much they spend in times of boom.

Davos is an excellent place for excursions, rambling and climbing. I am told that more and more Swiss are again realising that to be healthy, one must do more physical exercise such as walking. It certainly seems to be the fashion at present, judging by what I saw at Davos. If one wishes to be "in", one must wear a track-suit. Indeed, I saw hundreds of persons of both sexes, all shapes and sizes, any age from 5 to 80, who were running (some painfully), walking or hobbling along in track suits. We also met more tourists than ever before on our hill wallks and climbs, but nine out of ten of them would take the cable-way or the chair-lift up the mountain and then walk down.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Nouvelle Société Helvetique: Open Meeting at Swiss Embassy, 16-18 Montagu Place at 7 p.m. on Thursday 4th October. The occasion will be a special one as Dr. Lorezn Stucki, eminent Swiss author and philosopher, will be guestspeaker. His theme: The Challenge of the Leisure Society.

Swiss Rifle Association: Last shoot of the year at the Siberia Range, Bisley on Sunday 7th October. 10.00 am to 5.00 pm.

City Swiss Club: Tuesday, 23rd October, 6.30 for 7 pm at the Dorchester Hotel, London, W.1. Orchid and Holford Suites. Guest Speaker: Dr. Alfred Schaefer, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Union Bank of Switzerland. He will speak on "Aspects of the International Currency situation and its possible effects on the Economy".



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- HOLY COMMUNION: every first Sunday of the month at evening service at John Southworth Centre. Every second Sunday of the month at morning Services at Eglise Suisse. On major feasts at morning and evening services.
- CONSULTATIONS: every Wednesday 4-6 p.m. at Eglise Suisse.
- DISTRICT GROUP S.E.21 and SERVICES OUTSIDE LONDON: see "Stimme."
- "KONTAKT" (Youth Group): every Wednesday 4-10 p.m. at Eglise Suisse. Supper at
- 7 p.m. Programme at 8 p.m. WOMEN'S CIRCLE: every first Tuesday of the month from 12 noon onwards at the Eglise Suisse
- MOTHER'S REUNION: third Wednesday in the month, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Eglise Suisse.

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