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Ski, Snow and Winter Sports, will surely take a special place in the colourful round of Basle exhibitions. "Snow" is not a new trade fair for winter sports articles, but a new type of topical and comprehensive information and publicity event for all branches of winter sports, with interesting demonstrations and technical conferences, and is directed to both the general public and the specialists.

Within the framework of the Basle Autumn Fair, an **Autumn Market** is taking place on an area of 25,000 m<sup>2</sup> in the halls of the Swiss Industries Fair from 25th October to 9th November, 1975. About 750,000 visitors are expected at this regional sales fair with a comprehensive supply of consumer goods.

**Igeho**, the 6th International Exhibition for Industrial and Institutional Catering, Hotels and Restaurants is on the

programme from 13th to 19th November, 1975. This trade fair which is held every two years in close collaboration with Swiss and international trade associations is recognised as an internationally leading event and has a world-wide power of radiation.

The chain of events will be closed in 1975 by the **Swiss Furniture Fair**. This is the fourth of its kind and lasts from 27th November to 1st December, 1975. Admission is restricted solely to members of the trade.

Our ramble through the heavily-laden exhibition calendar shows that lively use will be made of the hall complex ramble though the heavily-laden exhibition calendar shows that lively use will be made of the hall complex in Basle with its exhibition area of 170,000 m<sup>2</sup>, thus making Basle an exhibition city of European importance.

one time or another prior to the French Revolution. Nine sovereign democracies and seventeen dependent territories had a constitutional *Landsgemeinde* in the middle of the 18th century.

In the Canton of Grisons, district *Landsgemeinde* are still in existence today. They elect periodically the district authorities and the deputies to the Cantonal Parliament.

The old *Landsgemeinde* enacted legislation and made all elections on the Cantonal level. The electors also had to settle questions of welfare, moral policy and road building. They had to set the guidelines for economic relations and alliances with other countries and decide on peace or war. The competence of the old *Landsgemeinde* was so vast that meetings often lasted several days or even weeks. In the Canton of Schwyz, for instance, the *Landsgemeinde* was called together twenty-four times during the year 1764. Such time-consuming deliberations in turn endangered the system itself; through the years the *Landsgemeinde* concept had to overcome many issues such as denominational splits, fights for absolute power by a few influential families and attempts at corruption and riots.

The Helvetic Republic (1798–1803) put a temporary stop to the *Landsgemeinde* type of democracy. Napoleon's enthusiasm for the Swiss peasant's democracies resulted in the re-establishment of the *Landsgemeinde*. However, many of them became increasingly subject to political and social snags. After the creation of the Federal State in 1848, the *Landsgemeinde* remained the highest authority for election and legislative matters in six Cantons.

Each *Landsgemeinde* has its own character and its own traditions. Equal political rights granted in recent years to women in the Canton of Glaris as well as in the Half-Cantons of Obwald and Nidwald have brought significant changes to these citizens' assemblies. The *Landsgemeinde* of the two Half-Cantons of Appenzell are still open to men only.

In four Half-Cantons, the *Landsgemeinde* is held on the last Sunday in April; in Glaris, on the first Sunday in May. In Appenzell Ausserrhoden, the *Landsgemeinde* is held on even years in Trogen, on uneven ones in Hundwil. The other *Landsgemeinde* are always held in the same place; in Glaris and Appenzell Innerrhoden in the central square of the capital, in Nidwald in the enclosed square of Wylen an der Aa. In 1973, Obwalden transferred the meeting place from the venerable Landenberg to the square in front of the arsenal of Sarnen, so as to accommodate the newly enfranchised women.

Until the end of the old Confederation, those who were taking an active part in the *Landsgemeinde* had to appear armed. The weapon was . . . and remains to this day in the *Landsgemeinde* of Appenzell . . . a sign of honorability. Voting age was sixteen, in some places

## THE LANDSGEMEINDE

In the Swiss Canton of Glaris and the Half-Cantons of Appenzell Innerrhoden, Appenzell Ausserrhoden, Nidwald and Obwald, direct democracy is exercised through the political institution "*Landsgemeinde*" (literally translated "Rural Community", i.e. community meeting). The *Landsgemeinde* is the reunion of all citizens who have the right to vote and are eligible for office. The *Landsgemeinde* is called annually to deal with governmental affairs. Some three per cent of all Swiss voters live in regions having the *Landsgemeinde* system of democracy. Numerous visitors from other parts of Switzerland and from abroad traditionally also attend as spectators the *Landsgemeinde*.

The *Landsgemeinde* is not only the original form of democracy but it is also the basis of the Swiss Confederation as an independent nation. The three

"Waldstätten", Uri, Schwyz and Unterwald (the founding "member states" of the Swiss Confederation) are said to have discussed and approved at public meetings the various articles of association and regulations of the 1291 Alliance. Known decisions of the *Landsgemeinde* of Schwyz date back to the year 1294, of Glaris to 1387 and of Appenzell to 1378 and 1403. In those regions, the *Landsgemeinde* is older than the State itself. The *Landsgemeinde* was the supreme political authority in the rural states of the old Swiss Confederation. All honourable men were entitled to attend the *Landsgemeinde* of Uri, Schwyz, Obwald, Nidwald, Glaris, Zoug and Appenzell (both Rhoden). In certain cases attendance was mandatory. Apart from those sovereign regions, *Landsgemeinde* "with limited powers" were functioning in certain territories at

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even fourteen. Deliberations were often preceded by religious ceremonies, homilies, a silent prayer, hymns sung together and a general oath. The relation between political, military and religious life is still evident nowadays, especially during the traditional opening ceremony: the site of the Landsgemeinde is decorated with banners; there are flag bearers in historical uniforms, cornucopia bearers, drummers and honour guards; the members of Government wear black great coats; the wording and the singing call for votations or elections from the ushers. However, the importance of the Landsgemeinde rests less in those outward forms than in direct participation in political decision-making by the electorate.

(SNT0)

## Tourist items

### Berne and its Museums

Berne's several museums belong without doubt among the major attractions of the federal capital, and this winter they are preparing again for numerous visitors as evenings draw in. The *Naturhistorische (Natural History) Museum* is known throughout the world for its comprehensive exhibition of African, Northern and especially native Swiss mammals and birds. Bernese history, Swiss artefacts and mementos of travels and adventure in far-off lands are to be found in the *Berne Historisches (History) Museum*. Records of the old city and Republic of Berne, which militarily became of continental importance for some time, find their climax in the 15th century Burgunderbeute (Booty) which is here displayed, having fallen into the hands of the Bernese after the victory of the Confederation over Charles the Bold of Burgundy. The affiliated museum in *Schloss (Castle) Oberhofen* (open in Summer only) on the Lake of Thun is putting on special displays of urban and rural domestic interior decoration in regularly changing exhibitions. The collection of the *Berne Kunstmuseum (Art Museum)* covers Bernese and Swiss art from the Middle Ages to the

Renaissance, and European works from the 14th to 16th, and 19th to 20th centuries. Since 1952 the museum has administered the Paul Klee Foundation, which includes a large part of the estate left by Klee and has made the Museum a place of pilgrimage for lovers of modern art. The *Kunsthalle* offers above all a series of exhibitions of modern art from Switzerland and abroad: its displays of avantgarde production in painting, sculpture and graphic art have facilitated new contact with the general public, aroused discussion and promoted a wider understanding of art. The history of Alpine research, the development of mountaineering and mountain tourism, records of famous climbers, the animals and plants of the Alps and Alpine geology exhibits are all to be found in the *Swiss Alpine Museum*. In the same building on Helvetiaplatz the *Swiss PTT (Postal) Museum* provides the visitor with an insight into the past and present of the postal service and telecommunications and presents selected exhibits from its valuable collection. The *Swiss Schützenmuseum (Marksman's Museum)* is rich in documents about the history of shooting matches in Switzerland and shows the development of hand and small-bore guns from the old flintlock pistols to the modern precision carbine. The development of printing is treated by the *Swiss Gutenberg Museum* — as one might expect from the name of the museum in the Kornhaus (Cornhouse). It displays the development of the printer's art from the middle of the 15th century through selected and select original prints.

### Art Scholarships for Young Swiss

The Gewerbemuseum, in the Kornhaus, Berne, is again staging an exhibition of applied art by young scholarship-seeking Swiss. The Swiss Federal Scholarship for Applied Art is aimed at promoting Swiss artists up to the age of 40 and at furthering their training. Total value of the scholarships is up to Sw.Fr.8,000. The Berne exhibition will last from 21st February to 16th March and features the work of some 200 young artists including exhibits made from wood, gold, silver, clay, paper, textiles and other materials.

### Ski-ing Winter also in the Ticino

The Ticino is getting just as popular for its sunny, snow-clad regions in winter as for its lush, tropical vegetation. The ski-ing areas of Airolo, Cari, Nara, Campo Blenio and Bosco Gurin (for day and weekend excursions) all lie at a height of over 3,000 feet. Moneto (Centovalli), Cardada (above Locarno), Alpe de Neggia (Gambarogno) and Monte Lema (Malcantone) are also idea for ski-ing. Monte Tamaro, on the southern side of Monte Ceneri, with its aerial cableway, chairlift, ski-tows and mountain hotel, has snow until April. Day tickets in all resorts run from ten to fifteen francs. Package ski-ing weeks are available at the brand-new Hotel Origlio Country Club (near Monte Tamaro) up to 22nd March. One week costs Fr. 540 (for adults) and Fr. 370 (for children up to sixteen years).

### A New Winter Sport in Switzerland — Ski Acrobatics

Ski-acrobatics or "hot-dogging" (ski ballet originates from USA) have also caught on in Switzerland. This new art is being taught by the Valaisan, Art Furrer, on the *Riederalp* from 9th to 22nd March (cost of an all-inclusive week Fr. 595). A course in ski-acrobatics is being held for the first time this winter at *Davos* until 9th January. "Hot-dogging" has also become a competitive sport. The Second International Contest in Ski-Acrobatics is being held at Hoch Ybrig on 2nd March. The contest will be divided up into two parts: imaginative ski-ing and free jumping. The jury will be watching out for the following essential points: originality, harmony, rhythm and control. The Swiss finale in ski-acrobatics will be held on 5th and 6th April.

### Winter Camping in Canton Vaud

Camping has become considerably important in the canton of Vaud. The record of one million overnight stays in 1972 rose by 10% in 1973. Some of the 46 camping sites belonging to an association are equally open in winter. These include the sites at Barbolesaz, Les Mosses, Leysin and St. Cergue, Les Cluds-Ste-Croix and Le Sentier in the Jura.



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