

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 35 (1972)
Heft: [11]

Rubrik: News from Switzerland

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NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

MOUNTAIN CLIMBING AND MOUNTAIN RAMBLING

“Those who never saw the mountains, don't know what they've been missing” is a sentence of Sir Arnold Lunn in one of his mountaineering books. Sir Arnold Lunn must have encouraged quite a few young Englishmen to take up mountain climbing not only by his books but also because he was an active alpinist himself. But one fact must be kept in mind: mountain climbing has to be learnt. One can either follow an experienced mountaineer as pupil or then follow a course in a mountaineering school. Already more than thirty years ago Arnold Glatthard began holding climbing courses at his mountaineering institute, Rosenlauri, at Meiringen. Thousands of budding alpinists from Switzerland and abroad learnt the art of mountaineering in the “climbing garden” and in the ice at the foot of the Wetterhorn mountain. Today the thirteen mountaineering schools (Alpenstein, Arolla, Davos, Fiesch, Grindelwald, Kandersteg, Klosters, La Fouly, Les Martinets, Meiringen, Pontresina, St. Moritz and Villars) all belong to the “Schweizerischer Verband der Bergsteigerschulen” (Swiss Union of Mountaineering Schools). The training programme was assimilated — if you followed the beginner's course in one school, you could continue in one elsewhere the following year. But daily excursions and mountaineering weeks are also organised in other mountain resorts by fully qualified mountain guides. Mountains certainly look superb from an aeroplane. But one could no doubt add that “everything would be for the better if people went more often to the mountains”.

THE BOOK ON RAMBLING “SCHANFIGG-AROSA”

On the front of the new Kümmerly & Frei rambling book, “Schanfigg-Arosa” — No. 30 in the “Green Series” — is a picture of the Prättschalp at Arosa depicting in the foreground gnarled branches exposed to a raw climate and in the background, the Mederger-Flue slightly covered by clouds and the Tiejler-Flue mountains. As Heinrich Tgetgel, the compiler of this publication, explains in the introduction, the No. 9 of the Swiss rambling book series, “Chur-Arosa-Lenzerheide” was divided into two parts according to the wishes of the Grisons Rambling Association — firstly, “Chur-Lenzerheide” (No. 9) which we will deal about in another part and “Schanfigg-Arosa” as the new No. 30. The first twenty-five descriptions of routes concern the Schanfigg with its interesting side valleys and furthermore, there are eleven descriptions of the region around Arosa. The four long-distance rambling

tours consist on the one hand of a big six-day circular tour round the Schanfigg when one can equally choose a shorter four-day trip; on the other hand, one can go through the Arosa mountains staying the night at the Ramozhut, Valbella and Tschierstschen; furthermore, there is a trip from Langwies to the peak of the Weissfluh mountain and into the Parsenn region.

A BENEFACTOR FOR THOSE SEEKING REST

The community of Unterenstringen has just recently elected the bailiff of the convent of Fahr, Father Hilarius Estermann, as leading honorary freeman of the community before the city gates of Zurich. The convent, an exclave of the canton of Aargau within the community boundary of Unterenstringen, belongs to the abbey of Einsiedeln. It is there that forty nuns run a school for women farmers and occupy themselves with embroidery and with the production of all sorts of sweets and mysterious medical potions. What is of special interest here to the holiday and recuperation-land is the reason for conferring the freedom of the city on this bailiff, who, by the way, lives in Einsiedeln. Unterenstringen bestowed this honour because the entire cloister territory, making up a third of the community together with the "Franzosenschanzen" and the ruins of the Glanzenberg castle, will be preserved as a recuperation region. As more and more land becomes divided up, benefactors who have put land at the disposal of the public for recreational purposes also obtained the freedom of the city of the entire country.

MONTREUX CASINO

Since the destruction by fire on 4th December 1971, the former Casino at Montreux has been replaced by a small Casino on the first floor of the Montreux Pavillon, opposite the Montreux Palace Hotel. Apart from the gaming room, there is a nightclub with orchestra and show.

The new conference centre, now under construction, will be opened in 1973. It is near the Montreux Palace Hotel and the Pavillon. The four floors will provide accommodation for exhibition and conference rooms with seating capacities from 25 to 1750 persons including the most up-to-date technical equipment.

The new Casino, now in the planning stage, will be scheduled to open in the spring of 1975. The new Hotel Continental with over 300 beds should be ready by the same time.

THE WORLD'S OLDEST ORGAN

The Cathedral of Valere near Sion in the Valais possesses the world's oldest organ still in use. It was built in the 14th century. The decoration is in true gothic style. Every summer organists of international fame give concerts in this cathedral.

HISTORIC BOOKS

The most artistically outstanding book-store in Switzerland can be found in the stately hall of the Abbey Library at St. Gallen dating from the mid-18th century. Temporary exhibitions of treasures from the former Abbey Library with its galleries, vault painting, stucco and inlay work are admired by visitors from all over the world. At present on view are the "St. Gallen Manuscripts", handwritten documents originating from the abbey site itself in St. Gallen. They date from the early Middle Ages and are of outstanding importance in the development of literature and typography.

Lesser known is the collection of books at the All Saints Museum in Schaffhausen. The major works of the former Schaffhausen Abbey Library are kept in a special room here. The manuscripts and early prints date from the 8th to the 16th centuries and practically all the work listed in the first catalogue (issued about 1096) are still in existence.

In order to see rare books of our own time one must visit the Swiss Gutenberg Museum in Berne. This is housed in the historic Corn House vaults which themselves comprise a popular restaurant. In honour of the inventor of the art of printing, the "Finest Swiss Books of 1970" are currently on display in the museum.

NIGHT FLIGHT BAN AT SWISS AIRPORTS

The Swiss Federal Department of Transport has amended the Operating Concessions for the airports of Zurich and Geneva by a night flight ban to enter into effect on November 1, 1972 (between 22:00 and 06:00 hours). The following general operating restrictions will apply:

- * Reduction of flights which form the object of a special permit or have to be approved as scheduled operations.
- * The noise reducing approach and climb-out procedures.
- * The noise limits for night flights.
- * Limitation of traffic to defined preferential runways.

In addition to this the airports will be closed to line traffic from midnight; delayed departures or arrivals will be tolerated until 00:30 hours.

The Airport Management may, for important reasons, grant exceptional permits also after 00:30 hours. In the morning, landings are allowed from 05:00 hours and departures only from 06:00 hours.

The same rules apply to non-line operations and unscheduled flights of scheduled carriers. The Airport Management may tighten the curfew period by setting the beginning one hour earlier and let it end at 06:00 hours.

The ban for private aircraft traffic is to be decreed by the Airport Management.

HOLIDAY COURSES AND HOLIDAY CAMPS IN SWITZERLAND

Universities, secondary state schools, quite a number of private institutes and individual people are organising summer holiday courses for further education and above all, for languages during the summer holidays in entire Switzerland. Subjects are manifold in approximately 150 courses for children above 6 years and adults. In the morning, there are two to three hours of lessons (French, German and English are especially in demand); games, sports and excursions are reserved for the afternoon. There are also cooking and sewing courses for girls; one can also take literature, drawing and art courses or simply go over subjects where one is weak at school.

The visitor to the canton of Fribourg can count folklore among its special features. It is true popular art derived from old traditions and not at all the usual tourist "show". Last year a noteworthy get-together of folklore groups was held at Romont. This year a similar meeting took place in the enchanting small town of Bulle in the district of Gruyeres. Groups from Spain (Andalusia), Czechoslovakia, Italy (Calabria), France (Vosges), Austria (Tyrol) and Switzerland (Grisons, Appenzell and Valais) sang and danced there. Children's drawings were exhibited and typical dishes from the region of Gruyeres were offered in different restaurants.

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