

New Swiss stamps

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VISIT OF OECUMENICAL PATRIARCH

His All Holiness Athenagoras I, Archbishop of Constantinople, Oecumenical Patriarch and Spiritual Leader of the Eastern Orthodox Church, visited Switzerland recently. Subsequently he came to the U.K. to visit the Archbishop of Canterbury (9th-14th November).

The Patriarch was greeted at Heathrow Airport London by the Archbishop of Canterbury and other Church dignitaries on 9th November on arrival from Geneva by special Swissair Coronado jet flight SR 2812. He was accompanied on the flight by several other dignitaries of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

The visit was part of a goodwill tour of Europe which had already taken the Patriarch to several East European capitals, to see the Pope in Rome and the World Council of Churches in Geneva. From London the Patriarch flew back to Istanbul via Zurich. Swissair had been entrusted with making the travel arrangements by special flights for His All Holiness and his entourage for the entire European tour.

WINTER EVENTS IN SWITZERLAND

A new booklet is out giving details of what happens in Switzerland this winter in the fields of culture, folklore, trade and international events as well as in sports. It also contains a preview of the next summer season. "Switzerland Winter 67-68" may be had free of charge from the Publicity Department of the Swiss National Tourist Office, Swiss Centre, 1 New Coventry Street, London W.1. Telephone : (01) 734-1921.

NEW SWISS STAMPS

The recent increase in Swiss postal rates has obliged the Post Office Department to issue new postage stamps and a new postcard. The four new stamps, intended for parcels (denominations of 70 centimes, 2 francs, 2.50 francs and 3.50 francs), continue the historic monuments series. They are printed on copperplates of the rotary presses belonging to the Post Office Department and have been on sale since 18th September. On the same date, the Post Office Department issued 4 new commemorative stamps; in denominations of 10 centimes and 20 centimes, on the occasion, respectively, of the 50th anniversary of "Swiss Week" and the 50th anniversary of the National Old Age Foundation; a 30-centimes stamp to commemorate the opening of the San Bernadino road tunnel and a 50-centimes stamp for the 75th anniversary of the International Rail Transport Office (1893-1968). These four stamps are printed in rotary-photogravure by the Courvoisier Press of La Chaux-de-Fonds. [O.S.E.C.]

To this we should like to add that the new increases in postal rates, the first for over four decades, cover inland postage; letters now cost 30cts. (20cts. for local mail) and postcards 20cts. Every household received a leaflet giving details of the new rates and of the considerably higher compensation rates to be paid in future for lost mail. Bulk rates are lower: From now on, there is no more *Porto-freiheit* (exemption of postage) for authorities and public offices. It has taken sixteen campaigns to get this decision through Parliament. Mail to and from the Forces and parcels sent to alleviate suffering in catastrophes are still exempt. The PTT expect to get 10m. francs more in revenue.



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