

# HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Founder : E. H. SPIRO

## NEWS LETTER

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No. 1

JANUARY 1977

31st YEAR

## THE PIONEER AVIATORS

As announced by the PTT in their 1977 programme of new issues 4 stamps will appear on 27th January, portraits of four well-known Swiss aviation pioneers and their aircraft: OSCAR BIDER with a Bleriot monoplane, EDUARD SPELTERINI in front of a balloon basket, ARMAND DUFAUX with a DufaUX biplane and WALTER MITTELHOLZER with a Do-Merkur seaplane. Brief biographies of these intrepid aviators are given below.



Oskar Bider 1891-1919

**OSCAR BIDER.** Born on 12th July at Langenbruck. Went to the Argentine in 1911 in quest of a free and independent life as a farmer, but his interest in aviation soon made him return to Europe, where he acquired his pilot's licence at the Pau flying school. Bought a Bleriot monoplane and one month later, on 24 January 1913, was the first to cross the Pyrenees from Pau to Madrid. Made Bern his headquarters and took his plane to numerous air shows and meetings in aid of the

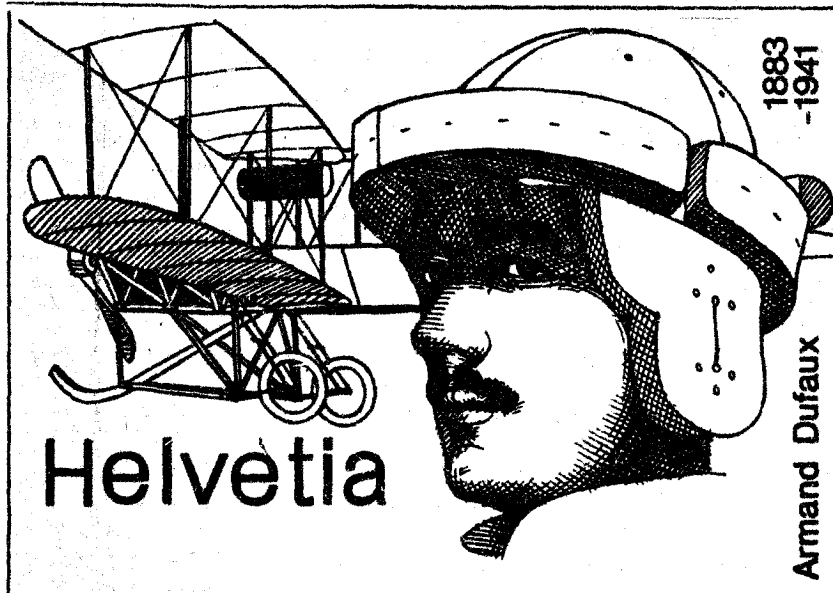
National Aviation Fund and was widely acclaimed. When, on 13 July 1913, he succeeded in crossing the Central Alps from Bern to Milan for the first time, his name and craft became the symbol of Swiss aviation. Was appointed chief pilot and flight instructor of the newly formed Army Flying Corps in World War I. Resigned his commission in 1919 to initiate civil aviation plans. Was killed in an aircraft crash at Dübendorf on 7 July 1919.



Eduard Spelterini 1852-1931

**EDUARD SPELTERINI.** Born on 2 June 1852 at Bazenheid/Kirchberg, St. Gallen as Eduard Schweizer, later known as 'Captain' Spelterini. Went to school in Lugano and studied music in Milan and Paris with the aim of becoming an opera singer. Reasons of health and impressions on chance trip by balloon led him to abandon music and train as an aeronaut. His first ascent in 1880 was followed by hundreds more at home and abroad. Toured countries of Europe and Africa as a 'balloon artist' with great

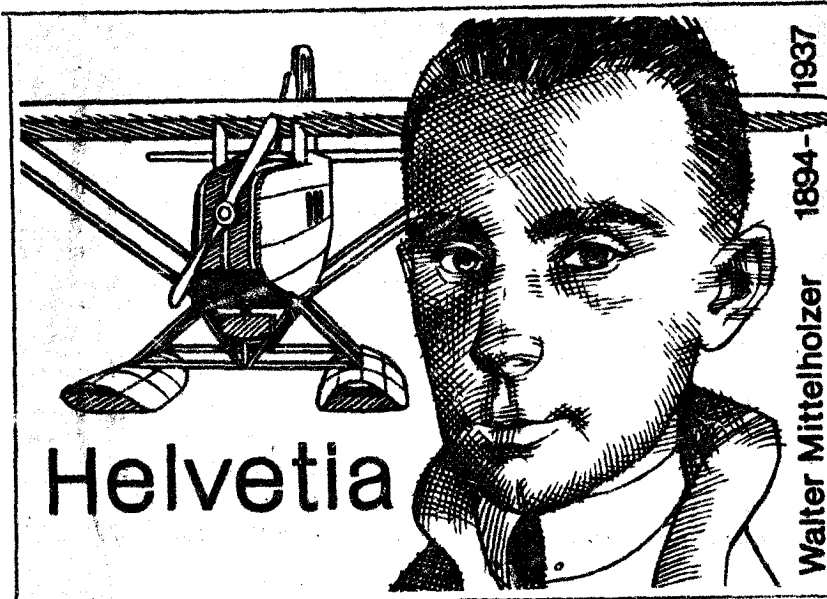
success in Cairo, St. Petersburg and Zürich. The aerial photographs he took on these trips are considered outstanding even by present day standards. In Switzerland he became known above all for his daring flights across the Alps, the first of which, from Sion in 1898, took him far into France and like many of his other trips served scientific research purposes. The advent of the aeroplane ended his career and he retired to Zipf (Austria), where he died on 16 June 1931.



**ARMAND DUFAUX.** Born on 13 January in Paris. Took interest in aviation as a student and with his brother Henri, a painter, experimented with various types of airscrew and wing, completed preliminary designs for a helicopter (1905) and set out to develop a lightweight internal combustion engine. The brothers established an aeroplane and propeller works near Geneva, where they built their own flying machines.

After a number of setbacks and failures they succeeded in producing their first really air-worthy craft, the Dufaux biplane (1910), which was to be-

come the most popular model of Swiss design for some years. Armand himself gave an impressive demonstration of its airworthiness by flying it the full length of Lake Geneva on 29 August 1910. When the factory was sold at the outbreak of World War I Henri returned to painting and Armand opened a workshop in Paris where he made aircraft components and designed fighter planes as a sideline. In 1918 he, too, gave up aviation and turned to other fields of engineering. Died in Geneva on 17 July 1951.



**WALTER MITTELHOLZER.** Born on 2 April 1894 at St. Gallen. A photographer by trade, he began his brilliant aviation career by joining the Army Flying Corps in 1915, acquiring his pilot's licence two years later. After the war he and his former flight instructor, Comte, founded the first Swiss airline, which in 1920 merged with other companies into Ad Astra Aero. Mittelholzer ran its aerial photography division until, in 1931, he was appointed managing director and chief pilot of Swissair, formed by a merger of Ad Astra and Balair. Became

widely known for his pioneer flights across Spitzbergen (1923), to Persia (1924/24), to Africa (1926/27: first north-south crossing; 1929: Kilimanjaro), and to Abyssinia (1934), some of which are described in his travel books. He died in a mountaineering accident in Austria on 9 May 1937.

**Designer:** Kurt Wirth, Bern. **Steel engraving:** Karl Bickel Jr., Walenstadt  
**Colours:** 40 Rp. 3 colours: red/violet-blue/black  
 80 Rp. " blue/violet/black  
 100 Rp. " yellow-brown/olive/black  
 150 Rp. " bluish-green/brown/black

**Printing & paper:** Rotary line engraving by the PTT Stamp Printing Works, Bern on white paper with luminous substance and violet fibres.

**Stamp size:** 36 x 26 mm. (33 x 23 mm.) **Form cylinder:** 4 sheets (1-4) of 25 each

A special commemorative cover will be available for the whole set and a simple First Day cancel will be used: '3000 BERN - 27.1.77 - AUSGABETAG'. Folders and collection sheets will be available.

# PUBLICITY STAMPS - Series I.

The first set of Special (Publicity) stamps will also be issued on 27th January. Comprising 3 values the details are:

20 Rp. 100 Years of the Blue Cross. This Society, founded at Geneva in September 1877, has been untiring over the last 100 years in its efforts to fight alcoholism and to care for alcoholics. The design shows an alcoholic receiving treatment, together with the Blue Cross emblem.

40 Rp. Vintage Festival at Vevey. This traditional festival of Vevey, held every 25 years, is the highlight of historic folklore of Western Switzerland's wine-growers. From 30th July to 14 August tens of thousands of visitors will come to the shores of Lake Geneva to watch and join in this gay and colourful event with its processions, music, dancing and games. It is being held for the last time this century.

80 Rp. 'JUPHILEX 77', Bern. Young people from all over the world are expected to take part in this Youth Philatelic Exhibition to be held in Bern from 7 - 11 April. Its aim is to promote co-operation and friendship and to draw attention to stamp collecting as an exciting and instructive hobby. The gaily coloured balloons in the design are to convey the carrying of the 'JUPHILEX' news in all directions. The 15 year-old designer, Daniel Froidevaux, was the winner of the Fund for the Promotion of Philately competition.

Designers: 20 Rp. Claude Mojonnet, Neuchâtel - Patient and emblem - 3 Colours: grey/dark blue/dark grey

40 Rp. Bornand, Gaeng & Monod, Montreux - Sun-shaped Bacchus head (official festival emblem) - 4 colours: red/yellow/dark brown/gold

80 Rp. Daniel Froidevaux, St. Blaise - Balloons carrying mail - 4 colours: light blue/dark blue/green/red

Printing: Multicolour rotogravure by Courvoisier S.A.

Paper: White, with luminous substance, without coloured fibres.

Size: 36 x 28 mm. Form cylinder: 2 sheets (A & B) of 50 stamps each.

Four special envelopes will be available, with appropriate vignettes, one for each value and one for the set. The same First Day cancel will be used as for the portrait stamps. Folders and collection sheets will be available as usual.

## MITTELHOLZER COMMEMORATIVE FLIGHT

Details of the special flight being organised by the Transport Museum in Lugern have now been released. The route of this flight, which will be on 13th February '77, in a DC-6B aircraft, and follow that of Mittelholzer's epic African flight and will be from Zürich via Cairo, Nairobi, Cape Town and Gao (Mali), with special cancellations at each place. Commemorative covers will be available at 40 Rp. each or Fr.1.60 for the series. Each cover must bear at least 2 x 150 Rp. Mittelholzer stamps - to be issued on 27th Jan. - advance sales on 24th. Covers to be marked with the required cancel, otherwise all will go to Cape Town. Orders to Bern accepted to end of January.



WE'RE CATCHING  
OUR BREATH!!

We have just passed through an unprecedented boom selling period of rarities and unusual items. However, we can assure prospective visitors to 'STAMPEX' that they will not be disappointed with what will be on offer - HLK is such a miser with his stock that he can always find something extra when needed!

'STAMPEX' 1977 - March 1st to 5th

STAND 30

## H.L.KATCHER

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## MAIL CARRIED FROM SWITZERLAND TO THE U.K. DURING WORLD WAR II

By L.M.C. DUTTON

Part XXI

No.	Owner	Date on Postmark	Place of Origin	Destination	Postage Applied	Airmail label/env.	German cen. lab. (Ident <sup>n</sup> Letter)	Colour Wash
88	E.I.W.	?	Montreux	Sunningdale	50c.	Yes	2a (b)	?
89	E.I.W.	?	Payerne	Mossley	50c.	Yes	2a (b)	?
90	A.R.T.	1.V.43	Zürich	New York	Fl.-	Yes	2a (b)	None
1.V.43 C.p.a.l'e: An alternative to the route via Germany for airmail								
7.V.43 British forces capture Tunis.								
91	C.R.	11.V.43	Geneva 11	Andover	50c.	Yes	1a (b)	Front brown (horiz.) back blue (diag.)
13.V.43 Allied forces capture the whole of North Africa.								
92	G.C.G.	14.V.43	Stein	Peulla (Chile)	90c.	Yes	2a (b)	
92A	LMCD	17.V.43	Oberhofen	Radnor (USA)	F.1.20	Yes	2b (b)	None
93	LMCD	27.V.43 (VI ?)	La Chaux-de-Fonds	Dublin	50c.	Yes	None	None
94	A.R.T.	9.VI.43	Adelboden	Cambridge	50c.	Yes	2b (b)	Blue (diag.)
95	R.B.	15.VI.43	Zürich 1	Otford (Kt)	50c.	Yes	2a (b)	?
96	A.E.	22.VI.43	Sembrancher (VS)	Bath	50c.	Yes	2a (b)	Very weak
97	A.E.	22.VI.43	Montana-Vermala (VS)	Bath	70c. (1 stamp)	Yes	2a (b)	Blue (weak)
97A	LMCD	23.VI.43	Oberhofen	Radnor (USA)	Fl.-	Yes	3 (b)	Grey (diag.)
98	E.I.W.	25.VI.43	Pompaples (VD)	Manchester	60c.	Yes	3 (b)	Blue (vert.) (weak)
10.VII.43 Operation 'Husky' - the invasion of Sicily.								
98A	R.B.	12.VII.43	Bern of	Reading	50c.	Yes	1a (b)	-
99	LMCD	21.VII.43	Biel/Bienne	Worthing	50c.	Yes	3 (b)	Blue (horiz.)
100	E.I.W.	23.VII.43	Pompaples	Manchester	60c.	yes	1a (b)	Blue (vert.)
25.VII.43 Mussolini is arrested, and a new Italian Government is formed								
28.VII.43 Letter from Churchill to Roosevelt mentions 74,000 British P.O.W.s								

Schedule of Covers

Period V : February 1943 - December 1944

Part C

No. in blue indel. pencil (P) or blk h. stamp (H/S)	No. top LH corner in pencil	No. bot. LH corner in pencil	British cen. seal (P.C.90 Type)	British censor No.	Arrival Date	Other Marks on Cover
933(P)	1313/1	7299/1	1B2	1,196		T(iii) h/s. Pmk is 'Visitez Montreux' slogan. A.E. has same slogan on cover pmkd 5.IV.43; P.C.90 seal covers date. T(i) h/s. Date unclear; 7170 and 31/2 are separate; 7170 goes under Ger. seal. T(i)h/s. Blue stains on back 'I.C.' in ink on P.C.90 label. N.Y. meter mark.
717(P)	1341/2	7170 31/2	1A1	2474		
319(P)	1324/1	7126?/5/1	1D	6149.	21.VII.43	
going via London or New York is to go via Chiasso 1 to Genoa and be taken by Swiss ships to Lisbon						
667(P)	1299/2	7269/14/2	1A	44		None
?	?	?	Trinidad	A E8719	7.VII.43	T(iii) h/s. 'Lisbon' h/s 21.V.43; Santiago h/s 5.VII.43. Peulla h/s. 'By airmail via Lisbon' typed by sender. P.C.90 label at l.h.s; GPO sealing tape at bottom; Irish S.P.I censor label at r.h.s. No. 88. Commercial mail
897(P)	2327/2	?181-19/2	1A	2006	10.IX.43	T(i) h/s. Thick 'I.C.' h/s on P.C.90 seal
None	None	None	1K1	6819		-
795(P)	2301/1	7495-12/1	1A7a	3600	-	T(i) h/s. 51-2107-G.W.D. on P.C.90 label
14(P)	114/1	7 <sup>24</sup> / <sub>25</sub> /1	2	834	-	T(i) h/s
284(P)	1319/1	7 <sup>24</sup> / <sub>25</sub> /1	1A1	2474	-	T(i) h/s. 'Via Zürich-Stuttgart' added on front in very different writing from address. Letter has 1319 at top l.h. corner in pencil. 'Via Stuttgart' written by sender; rubber stamp 'Taxe reclamé ... Fr 20cts Basle 2' (20 in violet pencil). Strong blue streak on letter which has 1318 at top l.h. corner. Cover was posted on same day as Cover 74, both have '284' and 7
284(P)	1318/4 + 1B1	7 <sup>24</sup> / <sub>25</sub> /4 + B1	1E1	2743	-	T(iii) h/s.
334(P)	None	7317-26/1+4B	1A	2020		'Ab' in blue; 'I.C.' in ink on P.C.90 seal; 'v Basel' in same writing as '5g.'
421(P)	None	7297/29-1+1F	1A3 1A3	1695 1695		None
6 (P)	509/2	?-14/2	2	2354		None
428(P)	None	None	1A	1293		None
548(P)	1379/1	7462/26/1	1A	3442		
under General Badoglio. in Italy. These were later interned in Switzerland.						

(To be continued)

From our ever-vigilant news-hound, MICHAEL RUTHERFOORD, come the following items:

## DAY OF THE STAMP '76 IN GLARUS

The special cancellation shown has a diameter of 32 mm. (as usual) and was used by the Mobile Post Office at the Exhibition and Bourse. It shows Saint Fridolin, who also forms the main part of the cantonal flag and insignia. He was the wandering Irish monk who founded the monastery at Säckingen on the northern bank of the Rhine east of Basel in the 5th century. The territory of Glarus later was owned by this powerful monastery and so his figure was used in all religious festivals and thus became part of the Canton's coat-of-arms. St. Gallus was another of the group of Irish monks who brought Christianity to northern Germany and Switzerland, the city and canton of St. Gall being named after him.



As usual a souvenir cover and card were issued by the Philatelic Society of Glarus, both showing an early postal seal. The cover is toned grey on the inside, which - unfortunately - tends to turn pink when kept in plastic (PVC ?) FDC albums, as I have learned to my cost. This is now being investigated by Biella, the main Swiss album makers.

### THE NOT-QUITE-SO "ILLEGAL" SWISS CANCELLATIONS

The Swiss magazine "Philatelica" in the December 1976 issue has obtained some information from the PTT to throw some light on this mysterious affair.

These cachets are used only at the official PTT stand at the specific exhibition to 'cancel' anything or any Swiss stamps (including those of the International Offices) bought at the stand or beforehand. The main purpose is, however, the cancellation of the stamps stuck into the appropriate page of the ubiquitous "passports", which have become the latest gag at international exhibitions, having a page per represented postal administration.

Covers thus cancelled cannot be sent through the mails and the loose washed stamps are worthless. Red was used for the first of these and apparently black for the others. They are about 40 mm. long as is usual for all Swiss cachets used by the Mobile Post Offices etc. (See 3 illustrations below).

The PTT states that future cachets will not be published in the official PTA Bulletin. The next will be for the 'AMPHILEX' Exhibition and others will follow.

A strange story, and illustrates the pressure under which a 'correct' administration is placed to keep in fashion.



Esposizione mondiale di filatelia  
Milano 14-24 X 1976  
Servizio filatelico delle Poste svizzere



INTERNATIONALE BRIEFMARKEN-MESSE  
ESSEN 29.10.-1.11.76  
SCHWEIZERCROSSPOST

### COMMEMORATIVE CANCEL

25 Years of the Swiss Thematic Collectors Society will be celebrated in Glattzentrum-bei-Wallisellen from 25-30 January '77.

The special cancellation depicts John. J. Scheuchzer (1672-1733) and reads '8301 GLATTZENTRUM-bei-WALLISELLEN - 25 Jahre Schweiz. Motivsammlerverein 26-30.I.77'.

### PICTORIAL TOURIST CANCELLATION

As from 26th January:

8833 SAMSTAGERN - Sonnenterrasse über dem Zürichsee (K.661)

Make a note to visit 'STAMPEX - Royal Agricultural Hall - Mar. 1st - 5th.

### 'JUPHILEX' 77.

Slogans for the Junior Philatelic Exhibition in Bern in April are being issued in all 4 official languages, that in Romansch (always the rarest) emanating from 7050 Arosa. It reads: 'Exposizium filatelica internaziunale per i giovani - 7-11.IV.1977'.

### PICTORIAL SLOGANS

As from 26th January:

MUNSINGEN - im Aaretal - Aufstrebend und gästlich  
AARBERG im Berner Seeland - Einzigartig


Several interesting articles in hand for future issues ... but don't relax your efforts!!

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Compiled by M. Thompson

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**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

 An 'X' in the box indicates that your renewal subscription for 1977 is outstanding at date of posting. Please send promptly.

**NUMBERS ISSUED**

The following figures for 1975 have just been released by the PTT:

<b>EUROPA (CEPT) 1975</b>	30c.	19,234,000
	50c.	10,019,000
	60c.	10,129,000
<b>PUBLICITY STAMPS 1975</b>		
Aid for the Handicapped	15c.	10,086,000
The Helping Hand	30c.	20,271,000
European Heritage Year	50c.	10,216,000
Cent. of Fischer Post	60c.	10,016,000
<b>PRO JUVENTUTE 1975</b>		
	10 + 05c.	10,947,000
	15 + 10c.	8,844,000
	30 + 20c.	17,101,000
	50 + 20c.	4,203,000
	60 + 25c.	4,639,000

The above P.J. figures include the stamps from 370,209 booklets.

**FEBRUARY MEETINGS**

LONDON - Wed. Feb. 9 - LANDSCAPE ISSUES - All Members  
LEEDS - Sat. Feb. 19 - NEW MEMBER SHOWS

**DID YOU KNOW?**

..... that Zumstein will not catalogue the new parcel label I mentioned last month. They consider them to be franking labels to be put on letters anywhere, as they are already cancelled with date and place of issue. I can only concur, but an interesting item to have. The minimum value would be SFr.1.-, for a parcel under 1 kilo.

..... that the definition of a parcel inside Switzerland is if the weight is over 250 g. Below that weight it is a letter at the standard rate of 40c. If a letter exceeds B5 in size, 250 x 175 mm., or is thicker than 2 mm., the price is 70c.

..... that I got the definitive version of the 1976 booklet just after Christmas. It is green with the Zumstein advert on the back cover in the same way as the previous salmon coloured version.

..... that only Pro Juventute booklets can be put on a standing order from the Philatelic Bureau in Bern.

..... that 2 series of each stamp issue is the minimum one can put on a standing order from Bern, but for this one gets a very nice New Year card, which always contains a real stamp, cancelled in Bern. This year it was the wonderful 80c. 'Europa', with matching design on the cover.

..... that for those with spare multiples of SFr. 175.- lying around there was recently a unique chance to get rid of them.

The firm Philmail, which specialises in such things, produced a very special FDC on 4.10.76, the day when the first of the new series of Swiss banknotes appeared. The note was for SFr. 100.- and carries the picture of the Swiss-Italian architect Borromini. Onto such notes a 30c. stamp of 1969 (Z.473) showing the same picture of Borromini was stuck and then cancelled on the 4th. The limited edition was apparently sold out within 10 days. At least we will always be worth SFr. 100.-!!

..... that apparently at recent auctions (with record sales) and at bourses, the number of foreigners was large, especially from the UK and USA, indicating that many consider stamps a very good investment in those countries with high rates of inflation. Swiss inflation is now less than 1% per year.

..... that I find there are 26 Swiss stamps illustrating sports (Question No. 55). From the specials 12, Air 3, PJ 3, PP 6, Premiums 2. Note that alphorn blowing is classed under music, not sport!

..... that Question No. 56 concerns the special cancellation shown on page 87 of the 'News Letter'. Compare this carefully with the stamp (Z.520) to find an interesting error.

M.R.

LONDON GROUP: Hon. Sec. Mrs. E.J. RAWNSLEY

At the meeting held on 12th January Mr. A. S. Newall presented a magnificent display of Swiss Aerophilately, covering every means of conveying mail by air and including many rare and unusual items never seen before, and every item in superb condition: from balloon and zeppelin mail, pioneer air shows, Pro Aero etc., followed by a large selection of special and first flight covers.

It would be impossible to do justice to this display in the small space available and as Mr. Newall was kind enough to provide a copy of his accompanying notes, these will be published next month, the vast amount of new issue news having taken up most of our pages in this issue.

FROM THE SECRETARY

Once again I wish to thank the very many members who sent Christmas Greetings - too many, alas, for individual acknowledgment, but greatly appreciated. These good wishes are heartily reciprocated and will spur me on to maintain and if possible improve our efforts in the year ahead.

*E. J. Rawnsley*

MR. RAUCH would also like to thank members for the many expressions of Good Will and Good Wishes which he has received.

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NORTHERN GROUP: Hon. Sec. Mr. R.A. HOYLE,  
6, Limes Ave, Huddersfield Rd. Halifax.

At the Dec. meeting in Leeds ten members combined to present a fantastic array of material comprising 'UNUSUAL ITEMS'.

Mr. Wilson - Nachnahme covers and cards with the special circular cancels: fore-runners for the B.I.R. on cover: Bodensee ship marks and Provisional issues on cover with varieties.

Mr. Gilchrist - Red Cross tracing labels on cover: Internment Camp cover with photograph: soldier stamp cards: folders with PTT trial prints & various Red Cross items.

Mr. Eastwood - selection of unusual covers and cards including postage due items and a PTT folder of 1945 War Disabled miniature Red Cross sheet.

Mr. Highsted - a galaxy of material including Helvetia Republic; Zeppelin mail; PTT official cards; Kocher stamps; Geneva sorting office marks; PTT test labels; an official UPU identification card; official wrappers for stamps & booklets - and even a record in the form of a postcard which can still be played.

Mr. Johnson - an unusual letter of 1843 from Thun to Ireland with many cancels & markings.

Mr. Cairns - his winning entry at Blackburn P.S. on Lake Lucerne Ship cancels with covers from Strubeli & Sitting Helv. perf. periods.

Mr. Swift - a map of 1673 and a selection of early covers with a variety of markings.

Mr. Moore - a large map on which were shown items of Swiss Used Abroad.

Mr. Hoyle - his 6 Stampex trophies.

Dr. Ritchie - a selection of covers with meter marks, newspaper wrappers, Pro Juv. covers and a telephone bill of 1910!

SWISS PHILATELY

Whither away in 1977. What new fields do you wish to explore? There are many to choose from:

POSTAL HISTORY / STATIONERY

TETE-BECHE & SE-TENANT

FLAWS & VARIETIES

AIRMAILS & FLIGHT COVERS

LAKE STEAMER MAIL

DAY OF THE STAMP CARDS & COVERS

RAILWAY STAMPS

SOLDIER STAMPS

All these and many more, as well as stamps of all issues, which should be completed as soon as possible.

Send your Wants Lists or ask for selections on approval.

**J.S.ARMSTRONG**

14, Low Lane, Torrisholme,  
M O R E C A M B E  
Lancs. LA4 6PN



# HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Founder : E. H. SPIRO

## NEWS LETTER



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No. 2

FEBRUARY 1977

31st YEAR

## SWITZERLAND IN THE AIR

A Short Record of Swiss Aviation and Airmail ... by A. S. NEWALL

In February 1704 an air balloon, made of paper with a cat as pilot, carried a letter which promised a gift for the finder of the missile. It flew from Lucerne to Meggen and represents one of the first efforts in the transportation of mail by air in Switzerland. The first aircraft, however, was constructed in that country by one Jacob Degen of Basel around 1800.

The 19th century air effort in Switzerland belongs almost entirely to the balloon. It culminated in the many flights of the untiring Capt. Spelterini, who flew hundreds of sortees in his balloons and he used to drop postcards (duly stamped), addressed to his friends, which were cancelled, if found, at the Post Office nearest to the place of drop. (The earliest known of these is dated 6.8.1892 and was cancelled at Gumlingen, Bern.)

In 1908 Col. Schaeck and Lt. Messner won the Gordon Bennett balloon race from Berlin (they flew for 72 hrs. 25 min. and landed in Norway). This victory brought the Gordon Bennett race to Switzerland in 1909 and the Swiss Post Office condescended to issue the first Swiss airmail cancellation. It was appended to letters which were never flown.

Still among balloons, in 1910 the city of Lucerne sponsored their own, the famous "Ville de Lucerne", which took the air and became the centre of attraction at many Air Shows throughout the country.

The same year witnessed the first Swiss aircraft exhibition in Rorschach. Also that year the famous Peruvian pilot Chavez flew over the Simplon in a powered aircraft. This was the age of the pioneers. Names like Grandjean, Nigg, Taddeoli, Rech, Borrer, Maffei, Favre, Kramer and the most famous of them all, Oscar Bider, who was honoured by the nation by a statue in Bern, right beside the UPU Memorial.

1913 saw the first precursors of the airmail stamp. The Air Day vignettes were issued by a number of Air Show organising Committees and officially recognised as a surcharge on covers flown at the demonstrations. 19 such Air Shows were planned. 15 were successful, 3 were abandoned due to bad weather (Altdorf, Hochdorf and Huttwil) and one because of a crash which cost the life of the pilot, Ernst Rech, at Olten. Genuine covers shown on these occasions belong to-day to the most coveted collection items.

The Air Show at Wasserauen on 21st June 1914 closes this chapter of Swiss civil aviation, for the First World War intervened, the Military took over, and when the War ended there was no longer any question as to the viability of air transport and airmail.

The first regular airmail service was opened between Zürich - Bern - Lausanne on 30.4.1919 and the first airmail surcharge stamp was issued for use on this flight. The Swiss P.O. overprinted Zum.113 50c. green for this purpose.

Similarly when the first international airmail service was opened between Basel - Frankfurt on 14.9.1920, the Swiss P.O. again obliged by overprinting Zum.110 30 c. to used as a surcharge on this service. These two stamps stayed in use until 1.3.1923 and were permissible on any airmail.

The period of first flights commenced. Almost every week saw a new line opened or trials of a new line taking place. The Post Office realised the