

HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Founded in 1946 by Edward H Spiro

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No. 1

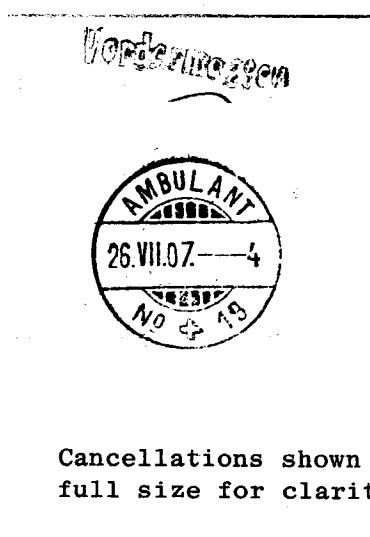
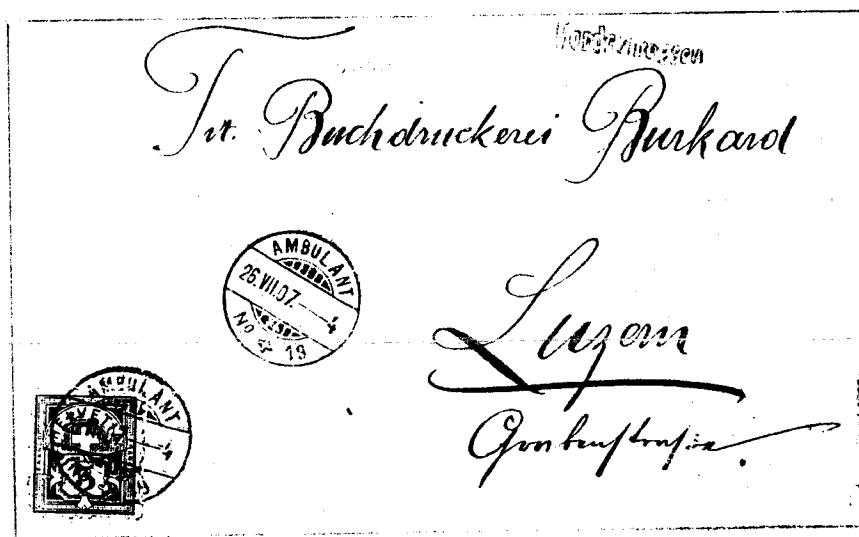
January 2004

A TPO MYSTERY

from Phil Vaughan

This cover, dated 26.VII.07, entered the mail system at "Vordermeggen" - straight-line cancel - but why and where was it put on TPO No. 19?

Vordermeggen is a boat station on Lake Luzern, one stop out from Luzern and it is not on the railway line. The cover is addressed to Luzern and has a Luzern receiving mark on the reverse. It could be assumed that if it was put on a boat inward bound for Luzern it would never have been carried by rail. If, however, it was put on an outward-bound boat was it put off at Meggen, which is on the railway line, and put in the TPO for the short journey to Luzern? But TPO No. 19 did not run through Meggen at that time, it ran between Luzern-Olten-Basel and return! The TPO cancellation clearly shows train No. 4, and it is not an abbreviated train number as it shows the spaces for four digits. Information to the Editor please.



Cancellations shown here full size for clarity

DIRECT CONTACT. As was advised in the article that appeared in the October Newsletter headed "The Improving Benefits of Society Membership" a number of our members had indicated that they would like to establish direct contact with other members sharing similar collecting interests or living locally. Those members will find included with this edition of the Newsletter details of like-minded members. If there is any information that requires correction do please let me know for incorporation in a revised list. Similarly, if there are any members who now feel that they would like to be included please drop me a line. The information contained in this list should not of course be passed to anyone whose name does not appear on it.

Peter Vonwiller - Honorary Secretary

THE NEW LETTER RATES 1.1.2004

M Rutherford

A big rise in the lowest category; Inland A & B go up by 11% & 21%; Foreign rates go up, but not for the lowest steps in Priority and Economy; Maxi remains unchanged. Specifically: A & B go from 90c to 100c and 70c to 85c, to encourage more A mail.

LSA; Lettre Assurance is no longer different in appearance from LSI, to baffle the thieves. Only the receipt shows the higher fee, for CHF 500.- coverage, as before. This since 31.03.03. This service is not used very often today.

Another important change was made at the beginning of 2003, but nobody seems to have noticed it either. Until then the Price Zone 1 covered Europe and the Mediterranean countries, but then these nine countries, from Syria to Morocco, became part of "Rest of the World", - Price Zone 2. However, there are still some curious results about: the French disown Corsica; the Italians accept Sardinia, but not San Marino; the SP have not accepted Cyprus and Malta as being part of Europe.

Inland Express rates have gone up a little, but not for the cheapest. Although now a separate company from the SP, postage stamps are still accepted either in full, or in part, payment.

INLAND								FOREIGN					
Type	Size	mm	g	A	B	LSI	LSA	g	Zone 1	2	Zone 1	2	
Standard:	B5	20	100	1.00	.85	5.-	8.-	20	1.30	1.80	1.20	1.40	
								50	2.20	3.20	1.80	2.50	
								100	3.30	4.50	2.50	3.00	
Midi:	B5	20	250	1.30	1.10	5.-	8.-						
Large:	B4	20	500	2.20	1.80	5.-	8.-	100	3.60	5.00	3.00	3.50	
								250	6.20	8.50	4.00	5.50	
								500	11.50	15.00	7.00	8.50	
Maxi:	B4	20	1000	5.00	4.50	6.-	8.-	500	13.-	19.-	8.-	10.-	
								1000	21.-	33.-	12.-	18.-	
								2000	32.-	45.-	21.-	32.-	
								PRIORITY		ECONOMY			

Reproduced as received by fax, to avoid errors, Ed.

Foreign Registration, additional 6.-, coverage CHF 150.-

Zone 1:Europe Zone 2:Rest of world.

INLAND: COD: 15.- additional, up to CHF 10 000.

Express: This is a separate company from letters and parcels.

	Blitz	Sonne	Mond
1000 g	19.50	18.50	14.80
Handed in by:	Noon	Noon	Closing
Delivered by:	17:00	21:00	9:00 next day

Liechtenstein: The above applies to all categories, except Express (new rates not seen).

In our sale on 12th March 2004 we are auctioning the largest collection of

SWISS POSTAGE DUES ON COVER

Any collectors wishing to receive a complimentary copy of the catalogue - which will be available approx. 6 weeks before the sale - please contact us at:

LONDON STAMP EXCHANGE LIMITED
 PO Box 74
 HEATHFIELD
 East Sussex TN21 8PZ


Tel:01435 862540; Fax:01435 865200; e-mail: auctions@proudlse.co.uk

The catalogue can also be found on our website at:

www.LondonStampExchange.stampcircuit.com

Swiss Post Charge for Immediate Standing Order Despatch

Following the resolution passed at the Society's 2003 Annual General Meeting, the Chairman wrote to the Head of Swiss Post Stamps and Philately, protesting on the Society's behalf on the imposition of this charge. The following reply has been received which is far from satisfactory and members should draw their own conclusions.



Swiss Post
Stamps & Philately
Ostermundigenstrasse 91
CH-3030 Berne

Telephone +41 31 338 06 09
Fax +41 31 338 22 95
stamps@post.ch
www.post.ch/philashop

Yellow Account 30-611812-2

Helvetia Philatelic Society
Mr Claude Mistely
"Beach Dene"
15 Hollymeoak Road
Chipstead
Coulsdon
Surrey CR5 3QA
Great Britain

Your reference Claude Mistely
Your message of 21 November 2003
Our reference PST/sk
Contact person
Date 5 Dezember 2003

New Standing Order Delivery Options

Dear Mr Mistely

Thank you for your letter dated 21 November 2003.

The Stamps & Philately unit of Swiss Post would like to comment as follows:


The advantage is clear. With a standing order you will not miss out on any stamps. We have decided to introduce a fee – assuming the customer wishes to have the products delivered – because the costs for packaging material and postage for the four annual issues we send to our customers in Switzerland and abroad have risen sharply in recent years. This move will also save some five tonnes of packaging material, which will also benefit the environment.

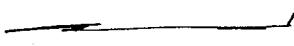
Would you like to continue receiving the stamps with each issue but avoid paying the fee? We then recommend that you increase your standing order or that you cancel it and order the stamps you'd like using the appropriate order form supplied with each issue of Focus on Stamps. If the value of your order is at least CHF 15 we will not charge for postage.

We hope that you will find this information useful and hope to continue serving you as one of our valued customers.

Yours sincerely

Swiss Post
Stamps & Philately
Sales & Customer Service


Peter Stadler
Head


Susanne Kammer

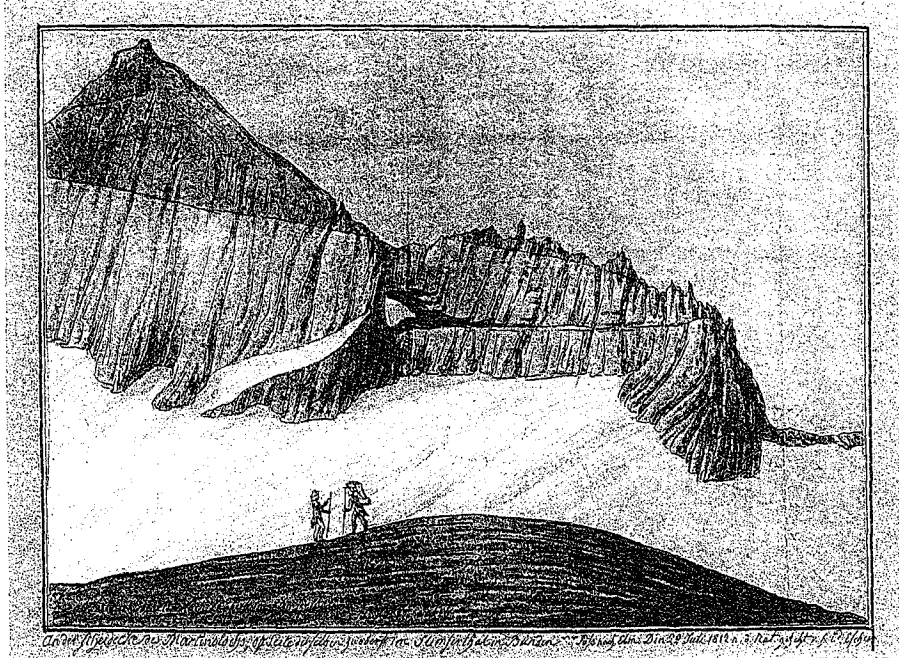
115 48 en (201 640) 12001 UK

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE MARTIN'S LOCH ABOVE ELM

M Rutherford

On the 22nd of July 1812 Hans Conrad Escher made one of his numerous Alpine paintings, which illustrate the possible new UNESCO World Heritage site (see DYK p95 of December 2003, and also p55 of July 2003). Geologists estimate that 20 m years ago the older darker rock of Africa rode over the younger, lighter rock of Europe, and this sharp line noticed by Escher is still clearly visible.

The 1942 PJ 30c stamp (Z No. 104) reminds us that he is best known for his work in straightening the Linth river between the lakes of Walensee and Zürichsee, thus draining the marshes and eradicating malaria (1807-1816). Therefore he could attach the noble "von" to his name, as shown on this stamp.



Our Packet Secretary, Don Symonds, thanks members for their Xmas Greetings and reminds them that the packet levy (15p) is payable by all members each time a packet is received.

Henry Towers enjoyed Bob Medland's article on p96 in December 2003 and would like to know who should be approached to get an expert attestation (not that he has anything in that category). He would also like to know how much does a paper thickness measure cost?

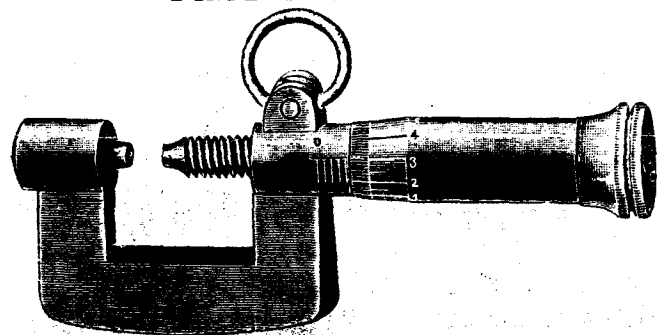
The measure shown is advertised in the Zumstein Specialized Catalogue of 1909 so such things must still exist. The price then was 10 francs when there were some 25 francs to the Pound Sterling, gold of course, not paper! Ed.

Who can help with a supplier of such a measure at a reasonable price? A nice item to have as a late present!

Philatelistische Bedarfsartikel.

Jedem Sammler empfehle ich zur Anschaffung:

Schraubmikrometer.



Unentbehrlich zur genauen Bestimmung der Papierstärke, speziell für Schweiz 1854-62. Preis: Oeffnung 10 mm Fr. 10. —, 15 mm Fr. 12. —.
Mit Rücksicht auf die großen Preisdifferenzen zwischen dickem und dünnem Papier macht sich diese Auslage in kürzester Zeit bezahlt.



This photograph shows John Mitchell and the Northern Group Chairman Cedric Dry, at the meeting on the 1st of November 2003. John came up for the day from London to show us his wonderful collection of the 1900 UPU issues. It was a really memorable afternoon. Tony Hoyle.

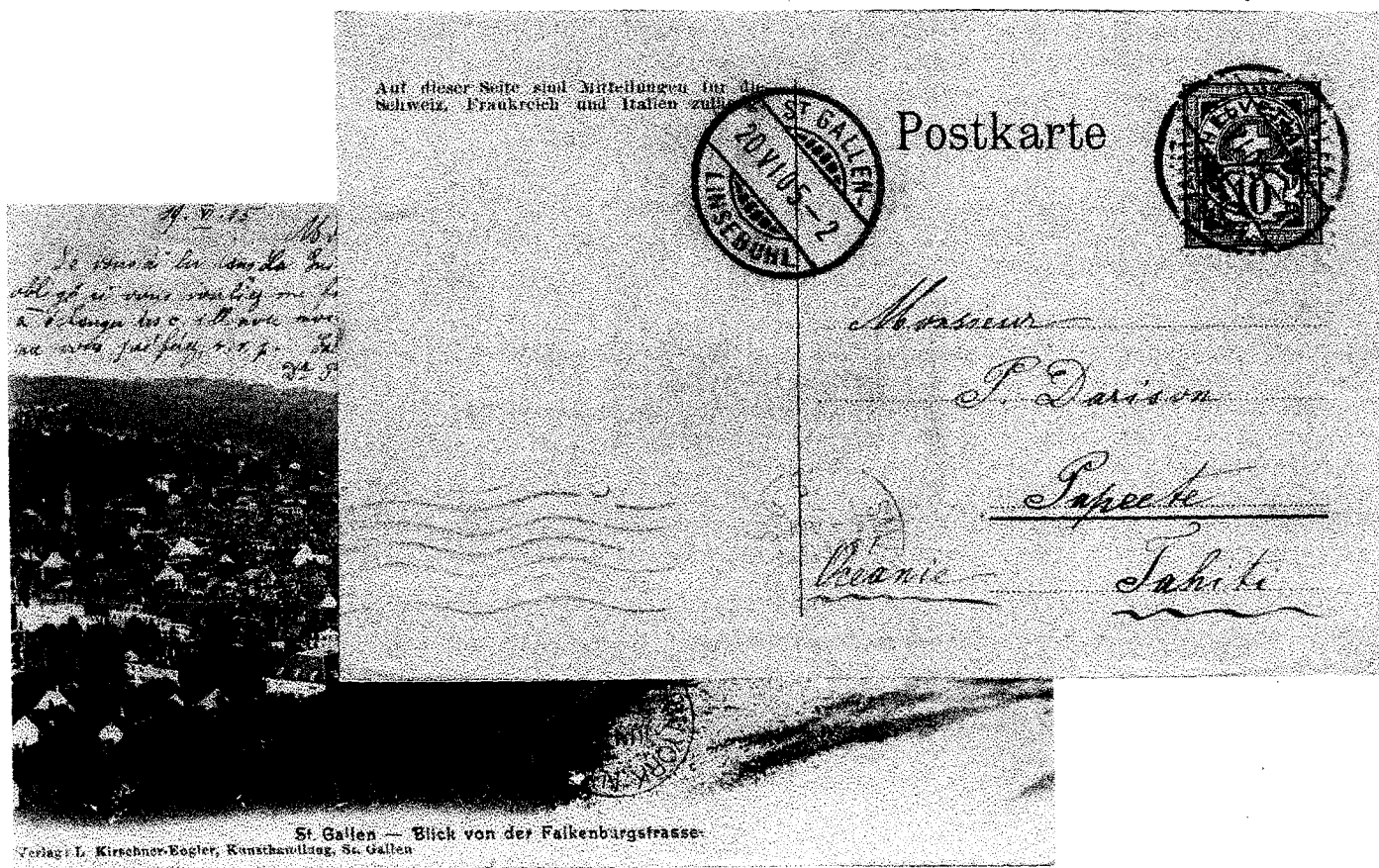
WHO NEEDS THE WEIRD WILD WEB when we still have postcards?

Our Hon Secretary has, at last, written to the Editor on a philatelic matter rather than on Society business! He has enclosed copies of this postcard originating from St. Gallen on the 20th of June 1905 and addressed to Papeete, Tahite, Oceanie. The sender, a Dr P Fischer of Mörschwil (now a suburb of St. Gallen), writing in French said he hoped to exchange postcards with P Darison. This was an extensive field of collecting 100 years ago, on a world-wide basis, was he successful?

Peter Vonwiller says that he assumes the 10c postage rate was that applicable at the time for "Treaty States", which he believes French Colonies to have been under the terms of the UPU. On the picture side is a machine cancel of New York dated some-time in June (less than 10 days following posting) while across the bottom of the address side is a machine cancel applied on 3rd July in San Francisco.

He says he assumes (always dangerous) that on leaving Switzerland the card would have entered the French Postal System for transportation to its destination. However, his enquiries to the France & Colonies Philatelic Society have drawn a complete blank. Presumably a steamer would have carried mail across the Atlantic to New York, and from there by rail across the USA to the west coast. What really intrigues him, having spotted the card in his wife's collection of illustrated cards of St. Gallen, is how it would have completed the last leg of the journey. Could there have been regular sailings down to the Pacific?

Presumably there can't have been a great volume of mail between Switzerland and Tahiti in the early days of the last century. It might just be that one of our members could throw some light on the subject. Our own interest apart, it would be rather nice to be able to pass any information back to the France & Colonies Society!



(It is interesting that the publisher, L Kirschner-Engler, is listed in the Käppeli catalogue of Swiss illustrated postcards and was an "art dealer". The card is an early 'divided back' type but could only have 'messages' written on the address side when going to Switzerland, France or Italy. There is a lot more to be discovered about postcards and their production than is at first thought. Publishers, and the photographers of the scenes, is a vast field for study with a lot yet to be found.

As there is not enough room left on this page for anything else it gives the Editor a chance to ask you for more material for the coming year. Don't leave it too late, there is a lot of your research that you could share with other people. I rely on you, don't rely on me to recycle old material. Ed.

Northern Group Report. It isn't often that one of our members presents two displays to the same group within the same year but this is what our current chairman, Cedric Dry, has done taking as his subject on both occasions some of the "classic" early issues of Switzerland. First it was the "Strubels", (refer to February, 2003 Newsletter) and now at the December meeting, for his Chairman's Display, he dealt with "Rayons and their forgeries".

In introducing the subject, Cedric expressed his sincere thanks to one of our members for the help and encouragement he had received when researching this complex topic. He then went on to outline the historical background to the Rayon issue which resulted in the decree of the 5th April, 1850 that Federal postage stamps should be introduced. So it was that the 2½Rp. "ORTSPOST" and "POSTE LOCALE" were issued a month later for use in the more populous areas of the country. In October of that same year RAYONS I & II appeared, to be followed in January, 1852 by the 15Rp. RAYON III. The Chairman's Display consisted of just ninety sheets but which covered the full range of these issues with the "Stones" used to produce them clearly indicated. Using modern technology to make enlargements, the many variations in the stamps were clearly illustrated. As was pointed out the Rayons were subject to many forgeries and both the genuine article and the forgery were often displayed on the same sheet clearly highlighted by a surround of two different colours. It was explained that the forging of this issue has always been evident because of the lithographic production of the stamps. In more recent years this has become big business and an increasing problem for philatelists since modern photo-lithographic techniques are being applied. Genuine forgeries - a contradiction in terms - should always carry on the reverse the word "Facsimile" or "Replik" and this was quite clear on some of the examples shown. Otherwise beware! Because of this problem, the Rayons were withdrawn from the 1st October, 1854, to be replaced by the Strubels which were less susceptible to forgery and all remaining stocks were destroyed. Whilst most of the sheets displayed individual stamps or grouping of stamps, there were quite a number of beautiful postally used covers and entires all of which, we were assured, were perfectly genuine. The limited number of sheets displayed gave those present plenty of time to examine and appreciate the depth of research put into this presentation by one who is a comparative newcomer to Swiss philately. The thanks of the meeting for what had been a most impressive display was expressed by Ian Gilchrist. D.C.

London Group Meeting Wednesday 10 December 2004

Messages of Goodwill for the Festive Season had been sent by the President and by Michael Rutherford. After updating members on developments following the discussions at the AGM (these are reported elsewhere), the Chairman introduced the subject for the evening;

Postal Stationery (Back of the Book)

Members responded nobly to the challenge of providing displays of material that is largely difficult to find. The Vice-Chairman, Eric Lienhard, showed a wide selection of receipts ranging from an item produced by the Helvetic Republic through to other 19th century documents in German and French and the later ones with a Tell Boy stamp imprint. There were also money orders and some private postal stationery. Bob Johnson produced an assortment of telephone cards and other PTT stationery pertaining to the telephone service including some telex forms. Peter Hobbs had sent photoprints of some very interesting stationery pertaining to the despatch of money to German prisoners of war in World War II through and in Switzerland. There was also a folding letter card which was doubling as a new type of business card. Douglas Houtris showed the pair of Industrielle Kriegswirtschaft overprinted cards and a few items of private stationery including an entire that unfolded to make a publicity sheet. The Chairman showed examples of stationery produced for aviation meetings in the 1920's and envelopes and cards from the 1929 Philatelic Congress. John Cordingley produced a card with special markings purporting to have been carried on the last journey of a horse drawn postal coach with a letter box, requesting further information on the markings on it. Don Symonds had sent some private postal stationery cards with assorted imprints. Fred Pickard showed some interesting revenue items and also material relating to performance of the Schiller play about William Tell. A wide selection of railway cards announcing the arrival of goods was shown by Derek Dowling, Bob Johnson and Derrick Slate. Derrick showed cards from the Gotthard Bahn, the railway between Kriens and Luzern, the EDT, the VHB and the SMB in addition to a full range of SBB cards from 1901 to 1969 including many pictorial ones. This was part of an extensive show which concluded the evening's displays. Other items shown included a telegraph waybill with stamps to the value of 8Fr.85c providing the franking including a block of 14 Helvetia with Sword 60c stamps, postal receipt forms from 1850 to 1956, postal collection money orders from 1876 to 1908 and some private postal stationery imprints. The evening was a great success with some outstanding material shown and contributions sent in the post by provincial members was a much appreciated innovation which it is hoped to repeat at future meetings. The Chairman gave an appropriate vote of thanks to all who had shown. CPM

SOCIETY MEETINGS - Following the 2003 AGM, suggestions have been put forward proposing amendments to the Society meeting's calendar in southern England as well as other changes aimed at reducing the Society's overheads. Adopting these suggestions could result in a restructuring of the Society, so they will be examined by your Committee. It is expected that a working party will need to be formed. As the London Group is likely to be most affected by any change, the Chairman gave a brief outline of what was suggested at the December meeting. It is hoped that the Committee will be in a position to present a firm proposal to the members later in 2004. CPM

Did you know?

M Rutherford

- that this year's PJ stamps are quite different from anything seen before, printed in the USA. Separation of the self-adhesive stamps is by wavy rouletting. Printing is four-colour offset and the design is, shall we say, modern. The stamps come in four formats: sheets of 20 (all four values, A & B for 2003 and 2004); blocks of four; booklets with two panes of six of each 85c & 100c for 2004; a curious pane of backing paper with all four values, but separated by a 6mm gutter (the "used" version is a travesty of CTO) - see *Focus on stamps* for more details. Figure 1 shows a fake block of four, ie, a combination not on sale as such; is this detectable? - try it for some fun; answer next month.

- that all stamps have the same wavy rouletting, 11/10½, ie, 17 x 15 "teeth". The booklet panes shown in *Focus on stamps* are incorrect in that they have the same wavy rouletting as the other formats.

- that the TPOs of the Rhätische Bahn have now been reduced in the 14th of December timetable change (all Europe) to two, or perhaps it is only one coach. Train No.5005 is a goods train leaving Chur at 5 am from Monday to Saturday and it travels through the new Vereina tunnel to St. Moritz, but is manned. In the evening the passenger train 590 leaves St. Moritz for Chur, picking up mail bags on the way, via the Albula route, but only Monday to Friday.

- that it seems likely that the two TPOs of the MGB (Matterhorn-Gotthard Bahn) are still being used: Brig-Zermatt and Brig-Oberwald.

- that I have now been sent a "SwissPostCard" by Karl Gebert and can add to the remarks on page 95 in the DYK last month. The card is beautifully printed, on one side only, but is C5 size, a double postcard, so may suffer a lot of damage in the post. It is posted from the SPI centre at Zürich Airport, Zürich 8058 and the rudimentary cds does have the correct date printed in - 11.12.2003. The electronic order for the cards can be placed from anywhere in the world via www.swisspost.com/swisspostcard. The picture can be selected from hundreds in the SP site memory, or a digital picture can be sent from a PC or handheld MMS. After sending the address and message (up to 288 letters) payment is made using a SP debit card or a credit card; CHF 1.20 for the card plus either A-post 1.00 internal, 1.30 Europe or 1.80 world.

- that last year 12 262 letters and cards were sent to "Father Christmas", "Samichlaus", or "Christkindli" from children, mainly in Switzerland, and about the same number were expected for 2003. Since 1950 the PTT, and now the SP, have answered all such letters, if an address can be found. The usual "Bethlehem" special cancellation has been used.

- that in 1911 the PTT introduced the Postage Paid (PP) system so that above a certain number (then 200, now 50) it was not necessary to stick on stamps, but they could be accepted at the counter and cancelled "PP" and the date. A great saving and very popular from the start. Now this system is being drastically changed, as was mentioned on page 15 of DYK in February last year; firstly by charging a nominal 3c per letter, and up to 10c for small quantities. Now it has been announced (very unclearly) that from 1.1.07 all such "PP" letters must have a computer-generated 2-D Matrix (see page 23 March 2003 Newsletter), or, in effect, be franked with an ordinary stamp, a return to the pre-1911 system for those without a computer. In other words they expect that by then those without a computer will not be interested in sending more than 50 identical letters at the same time, see figure 2.



Figure 1 - PJ puzzle

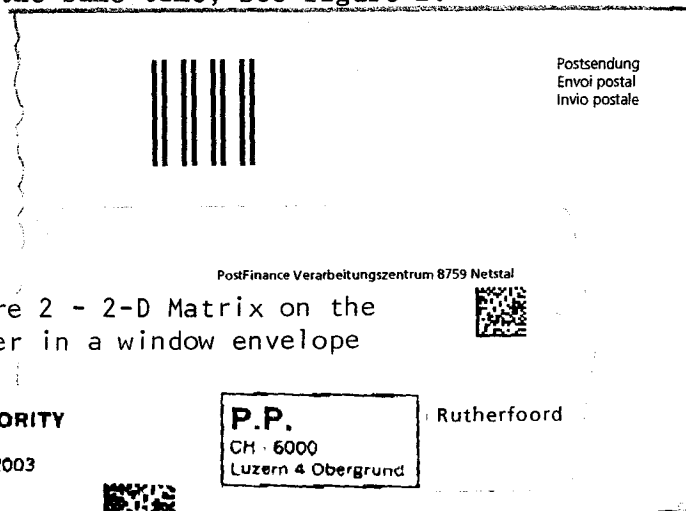


Figure 2 - 2-D Matrix on the letter in a window envelope

A-PRIORITY

15.01.2003

50283280

P.P.
CH · 6000
Luzern 4 Obergrund

Rutherford

DIE POST

and a computer version