



**MUSEE INTERNATIONAL
DE LA CROIX-ROUGE
ET DU CROISSANT-ROUGE**
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A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

"Everyone is responsible to everyone for everything."

Dostoevsky's words greet our visitors in the entrance hall of the Museum, where they are engraved, a reminder of the universal nature of humanity.

This is the principle on which the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is based and we feel that it is particularly important to bear it in mind today, when the need for humanitarian action is greater than ever before.

Our Museum depicts acts of human solidarity in such a way as to inspire hope and provoke reflection. We do not wish our visitors to be mere spectators of other people's suffering. Rather, we have sought to show that nothing can be achieved by adopting a resigned attitude.

We thus hope to convince you that in a world of political, economic and climatic upheaval it is always possible to act and that everyone can do so.

A very warm welcome to the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum!

Roger Mayou

THE PERMANENT EXHIBITION

To relieve, assist and protect: such are the aims of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Since it was first set up in Geneva in 1863, the Red Cross has steadily grown throughout the world, giving help to those in greatest need with no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum relates the extraordinary saga of these millions of men and women who have placed themselves in the service of mankind.

The Museum presents facts without sitting in judgment. Its mission is to preserve the **Red Cross heritage** and to promote a certain idea of human **solidarity** by depicting the work of the world's first humanitarian organization in such a way as to inspire hope and provoke reflection.

An original display of photographs, films, writings and unusual objects provides a fresh look at the evolution of interventions in case of conflicts and natural disasters. Modern audiovisual technology is used to heighten the emotional impact of the exhibition, which leaves no one indifferent. Visitors are not considered as mere spectators of other people's suffering but are encouraged to think and to act. They too can help build a peaceful world in which human dignity is a value cherished by all.

The **Today** area is entirely devoted to the Movement's current work in the field. The main spheres of activity are described by means of five interactive modules that use concrete examples to explain how the Red Cross responds to urgent needs in such areas as disaster relief, the rehabilitation of mine victims and the protection of political prisoners. The modules are placed around an **information lounge** where visitors can obtain news from the field and gain a better understanding of humanitarian action by viewing reports and testimonials on Red Cross work.

At the end of their tour, visitors can explore topics of interest to them in greater depth at the **Café Dunant**, a multimedia area equipped with computer terminals that provide access to the Museum's CD-ROM "Straight Talk" (see p. 8) and to the Web sites of many other humanitarian organizations.

Temporary!

The original document of the 1864 Geneva Convention has been exhibited in the Museum since 7 June 2002. On loan from the Swiss Federal Archives, it has more than symbolic value. It lays the foundations of international humanitarian law and is at the origin of the present Geneva Conventions, adopted in 1949 and supplemented in 1977 by two Additional Protocols. Switzerland is the depositary of these treaties.

THE TODAY AREA: A CONCRETE EXAMPLE

The Today area comprises five modules, each of which covers one of the main types of activity carried out by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

- Overcome: disaster relief
- Improve: social-welfare programmes
- Rehabilitate: aid for mine victims
- Protect: action on behalf of prisoners
- Link: restoring family ties

A detailed description of the Improve module is given below.

Improve Social-welfare programmes



Concept

The issues dealt with in this module concern the whole world and not only disaster-prone or politically unstable countries and regions. Problems such as AIDS, homelessness and poverty also affect Switzerland and other Western countries.

Presentation

Special sound and lighting effects are used to create the atmosphere of a city. This module speaks to the imagination of young people in particular. By opening doors cut out in a wall-sized map of the world, visitors can learn about programmes being carried out on every continent.

Subject

Economic upheaval is leading to the collapse of social-welfare and public-health systems in a growing number of countries. States can no longer meet the basic needs of millions of people. In these conditions, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies play a vital role by setting up innovative programmes to improve the social and economic conditions of underprivileged communities. These programmes, examples of which are depicted in showcases behind the world map, rely on the active participation of everyone concerned.

Junior health workers programme for street children (Philippines)

Poor children are one of the most vulnerable groups in urban areas. Those who live in the streets face very harsh living conditions and are exposed to all kinds of infectious diseases. In Manila alone there are between 50,000 and 75,000 street children out of a total population of 8 million.

The Philippine National Red Cross has created a comic-strip hero, **Captain Red Cross**, who leads a crusade against major public-health threats such as cholera, diarrhea and AIDS. Street children help draw up the scenario. A programme has been set up to encourage these children to become junior health workers and to pass on to their friends basic notions of hygiene and first aid which they acquire from nurses. As part of this programme, street children can obtain medicine from community pharmacies in exchange for recyclable objects which are later sold to waste-processing plants.

THE MUSEUM'S COLLECTIONS

The purpose of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum is to serve as the memory of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and to preserve its heritage. To that end it has acquired a number of unique collections which trace the Movement's history.

Over 10,000 documents have been entered into the database since the creation of the Museum, including major collections from the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Thanks to its dynamic acquisition policy and the many gifts it receives, the Museum regularly adds to its collections. It was recently presented with the four well-known diagrams drawn by Henry Dunant between 1877 and 1890.

Photography and the cinema were born at the same time as the Red Cross. The Museum's collection of about 15,000 **photographs** from Red Cross theatres of operation throughout the world constitutes exceptionally valuable material for the study of humanitarian action.

As for the **film** collection, it comprises about 950 titles. Those from the Federation cover the period running from the 1930s to the 1980s and include educational films on health care and first aid, documentary films on programmes for refugees and disaster victims and films produced for promotional and fundraising purposes.

Special attention is given to **posters**, which are the main means used to propagate the Red Cross ideal. The Museum has acquired about 3,000 posters and its collection is constantly expanding. It also has a remarkable collection of Red Cross **stamps**, medals and insignia.

A great variety of other objects (first-aid items, armbands, uniforms, sculptures, etc.) have been collected as well. The most striking of all are undoubtedly the various **objects fashioned by prisoners** and given to ICRC delegates. They silently attest to the creative spirit of men and women deprived of their freedom and to the humanitarian work of delegates in the field.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum holds various types of events throughout the year.

Temporary exhibitions

Whether they focus on specific issues, historical events or current Red Cross activities, temporary exhibitions are used to broaden the range of topics dealt with in the permanent exhibition or to examine them in greater depth.

The following exhibitions are among the most representative of those put on in recent years: "The camps", "All about blood", "Side by side or face to face", "Carl de Keyzer - Zona", "Help", "War – Etats-Unis, Afghanistan, Iraq".

Temporary exhibitions often travel to other museums.

Summer concerts

Every year from mid-June to mid-August, daily concerts are held in the central courtyard of the Museum. Thanks to the generosity of artists from various backgrounds, who perform for free, no admittance fee is charged. However, money is nevertheless collected to **fund a humanitarian project** set up by Musique & Vie, an association which supports music schools in Haiti and Mozambique and also purchases musical instruments for the New Delhi School of Music. The concert season is organized in cooperation with the **Conservatoire populaire de Musique de Genève** and **Musique & Vie**.

Conferences and round tables

Public lectures are given on humanitarian issues and other subjects of topical interest. Over the past years about 85 lectures have been held at the Museum by such eminent speakers as Bernard Kouchner, Nicolas Bouvier, Claude Torracinta, Robert Badinter, Jean Lacouture, Serge Klarsfeld and Régis Debray.

WELCOMING YOUNG VISITORS

More than **half the visitors** of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum are under 25. Knowing how difficult it is for young people to find their bearings in today's world, the Museum has designed a special programme for them.

A one-hour visit based on dialogue with a staff member of the Museum introduces young people both to the Red Cross world and to the world of humanitarian action in general. It acquaints them with the **basic principles and values of international humanitarian law** and encourages them to **think** and to **act** by showing them that everyone can help build a peaceful world where respect is shown for human dignity.

Thanks to the Museum's interactive displays, young people can explore topics of interest to them in greater depth. Both in the Today area, which provides the latest news from the field, and in the multimedia area, where visitors can surf the Net and view the Museum's CD-ROM, young people are given honest answers to the questions they may have about difficult and sometimes distressing subjects. What can be done to assist the victims of landmines or natural disasters? How can families separated by war be brought together again?

A **continuous training programme** has been set up to encourage teachers to bring their pupils to the Museum. During a visit specifically designed for them, teachers are shown how the Museum can help them achieve their teaching objectives, in particular by adopting a more concrete approach to the various humanitarian subjects dealt with.

If the future of mankind depends upon young people, so does the future of humanitarian action. The Museum strives to raise the younger generation's awareness of the problems facing the world today and of the need for human solidarity in the hope that they, too, will feel concerned.

THE BUILDING

Important dates

The idea of building a museum was launched in 1975 by Laurent Marti, a former delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Later, a competition was held and **three architects** were chosen to build the Museum: **Pierre Zoelly** (Zurich), **Georges Haefeli** (La Chaux-de-Fonds) and **Michel Girardet** (Geneva).

The first stone was laid by Raissa Gorbatchev and Nancy Reagan on **20 November 1985** and the Museum was inaugurated on **29 October 1988** by Otto Stich, President of the Swiss Confederation.

Description

Half buried in the hillside below the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the building is both discreet and fascinating, like the history of the Movement. A concrete trench leads into the central courtyard, over which two emblems are extended. The overall design is meant to reflect the delegates' fieldwork, much of which is carried out far from the eyes of the world.

The Museum has a surface area of **3,640 sq. m.** spread out over **three levels**. The **exhibition surface area** is **2,065 sq. m.**, including **215 sq. m.** for **temporary exhibitions**. There is also a restaurant, an auditorium and a shop.

The initial **layout**, designed by **Roger Pfund** and **Nicolas Bouvier**, is in harmony with the architecture of the building. It takes a historical approach to the Movement that relies greatly on modern audiovisual technology.

As for the **Today** area, it was set up in 1999 by the architects **Alexandra Gübeli** and **Yves Milani** (Zurich), who gave a new interpretation to the architectural sobriety of the building. Five luminous glass panels stand out in the semi-darkness, using images, texts and special lighting effects to suggest the subjects dealt with in the five modules.

Funding

The initial cost (**24 million Swiss francs**) was covered by **private and public funding**, with no need for help from the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

The Today area (1999) was entirely financed by a donation of one million francs from the Jubilee Foundation of the CREDIT SUISSE GROUP.

PUBLICATIONS

(on sale at the Museum shop)

General catalogue

The general catalogue presents the various areas of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum, explaining the historical and other topics dealt with in each of them. Profusely illustrated, it also contains photographs of objects not on display. It is an excellent souvenir of your visit to the Museum.

Available in English, French and German (Sfr. 23.-).

Catalogues of temporary exhibitions

Catalogues have been published for many temporary exhibitions, "The camps", "side by side or face to face", "Carl de Keyser - Zona", "War – USA, Afghanistan, Iraq", to mention but a few.

CD-ROM

"Straight Talk", a playfully designed and comprehensive CD-ROM, takes you on a virtual tour of the Museum and provides a great deal of information on the Movement.

"Straight Talk" stars five teenagers who share the same concerns as our young visitors. They take part in a television show for which each of them has shot a documentary film that he or she must present and discuss. The young reporters ask frank and perceptive questions on the Movement's humanitarian activities. As they talk, pictures, statistics, documents and Internet links appear on the screen.

Presentation box with four versions (English, French, German, Italian) costs Sfr. 25.-.

THE MUSEUM IN FIGURES

- **29 October 1988** **Inauguration** of the Museum. The first stone was laid by Raissa Gorbatchev and Nancy Reagan on 20 November 1985.
- **2 October 1999** Opening of the new **Today area** and of the **Café Dunant**, a multimedia area.
- **1'215'000** Number of **visitors** from the date of opening. On average, 70'000 people of every nationality visit the Museum every year.
- **51%** Proportion of visitors between **15 and 25 years** old who visited the Museum in 2001.
- **880** Number of **summer concerts** put on together with the Conservatoire Populaire de Musique de Genève and Musique & Vie.
- **40** Number of temporary exhibitions organized by the Museum, either alone or in cooperation with like-minded institutions. These exhibitions keep the Museum in tune with developments in the humanitarian world.
- **83** Number of **lectures** held on issues of topical interest.
- **550'000** Number of **meals** served in the Museum since 1988.
- **38** **Average age** of staff members.
- **45** Number of **volunteers** in charge of guided tours (over 1'000 per year in ten different languages).

WHAT THEY THOUGHT OF THE MUSEUM

Visitors

- "J'ai 12 ans. C'est la deuxième fois que je viens, et ça me fait toujours réfléchir. Je désire sérieusement rejoindre une organisation pareille."
- "El museo estuvo excelente! Ahora voy a ayudar a la Cruz Roja."
- "This was a truly remarkable museum. One of the best I have ever seen. Quite moving."
- "I thought of my grand-parents and for some reason tears came for the first time in years. Thank you."
- "Un musée qui met les yeux en place!"
- "A phenomenal display that makes people think twice about comfort at home. Thanks, Red Cross. You have made me think a lot about the world as it is."
- "Ein ganz grosses Dankschön! Das Museum hat mich sehr berührt."

Press

- Los Angeles Times: "A milestone in the history of museology."
- Neue Zürcher Zeitung: "Dieses Mahnmal der humanitären Geste tritt nach aussen äusserst bescheiden auf. Im Innern zeigt es in einer Auge und Gemüt packenden Weise den Werdegang der Rotkreuz-Idee..."
- Fodor's Guide: "Of the 635 museums in Switzerland, this is one of the seven you simply can't miss."
- L'Hebdo: "Sobre et claire, jouant élégamment avec les transparences, chaque "boîte" s'adapte à son contenu tout en privilégiant la réflexion plutôt que le spectaculaire."
- Le Temps: "Le visiteur va découvrir un espace presque mystérieux mais chaleureux, convivial et intime; un espace plongé dans la pénombre, éclairé par cinq chambres où sont abordés autant de thèmes."

GENERAL INFORMATION

Opening hours

From **10 a.m. to 5 p.m.** except Tuesday
Closed on 24, 25 and 31 December and on 1 January.
Access for disabled visitors.

The restaurant is open every day (on Tuesday, from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.).

Telephone numbers, fax, e-mail

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- Visitors service: + 41 22 748 95 06
- Rental of auditorium or restaurant: +41 22 748 95 06
- Fax: + 41 22 748 95 28
- E-mail (press): c.liardon@micr.org

Internet

www.micr.org

Admission rates

- Adults: Sfr. 10,--
- Group: Sfr. 7,-- per person
- Children (ages 12 to 18), students and retired, unemployed or disabled people: Sfr. 5,--
- Schools: Sfr. 5,-- per pupil (one accompanying adult free of charge per 10 pupils)
- Commented visits: Sfr. 60,--

How to get there

- To the Museum from Cornavin railway station: 15min.
Bus 8 (direction OMS or Appia) - Appia bus stop

Rentals

Auditorium, meeting room, restaurant (for special events, seminars, cocktail parties and banquets).