

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 12 (1985)
Heft: 4

Anhang: Local news : Great Britain

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Local News – Great Britain



I heard everything A Christmas Story

I walked slowly, a little unsurely, down the broad shopping street, which seemed to be stuffed full of humanity. People pushed me. I pushed against people. There was a smell of roast chestnuts. In a corner, a Salvation Army choir sang the old traditional Christmas carols in shrill, tremulous voices. The air was bitterly cold. A few snowflakes whirled in the wind. I pulled my fur hat further down over my ears. The ground was as slippery as an ice rink. I had to be careful, my thin white stick was not made to support my weight. Impatient mothers dragged their children along behind them, some crying, others excited by the bright lights in the streets, and the colourfully decorated shop windows. Shuffling footsteps of old people, tired of the hustle and bustle. The rush of cars, the clang of tram bells, the smell of coffee, the scent of pine needles, barking dogs, the murmur of voices, the ringing of church bells, all merged together.

"Miss, can you spare a few coins, I am so hungry". It was the thin voice of a young girl next to me, whispering, expectant. My hand brushed her woollen coat. Was this a white lie to satisfy a material Christmas desire? Out of festive generosity, I slid two francs into her outstretched hand. I heard her beg from other people, urgent and demanding, until she was far away. A short time later, I sat, leaning forward, in the impressive nearby church. It was filled with different sounds, with gentle organ music, creaking wood, monotonous prayers, the rustle of turning pages, and flickering candles. There was a glow before my sightless eyes. Suddenly I heard the cling of coins, then the sweet loud voice of a young girl, fervently declaring: "Here is your birthday present, Jesus, I didn't forget you!" I felt my way quickly forwards. Impulsively, I put my arm around her tiny shoulders. My face was lifted to the holy statue. "We are hungry for you", I heard myself saying.

U. Langley



BIRTHS

Congratulations to:
Mr. & Mrs. Susi Pritchard-Traber
on the birth of their son Martin on 24th
October 1985.



Christmas message from the Swiss Ambassador

As the year draws to a close I wish, on behalf of my wife and myself, to extend to all readers of the "Swiss Review" and their families all my very best wishes for a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. We are glad to have met more of you in the course of 1985 and hope there will be many opportunities for such encounters during the coming year.



* Best wishes for Christmas *
* and a happy, prosperous *
* New Year to all our readers. *
* The Editor *

Unique Bell Blessing in London

An age-old Swiss custom was carried out on the streets of London on Monday September 9th with the blessing of a 225lb bell.

The bell is part of a £400,000 glockenspiel, a gift to London from the people of Switzerland to mark the 400th anniversary celebrations of Westminster City Council. The 10ft high and 35ft long glockenspiel will be erected at the Swiss Centre, in Leicester Square.

The ceremony on Monday morning followed a Swiss tradition where new bells are paraded through the streets of the village to the church to be blessed. The bell, bearing the coat of arms of Westminster and Switzerland, was carried through the City on a Victorian dray decorated with flowers and drawn by two Shire horses, from Young's Brewery, called Hercules and Goliath, who, weighing two tons each and standing over 19 hands high, are the biggest in the country.

Also on the dray was a traditional Swiss Alpine horn blower, to symbolise the Evensong, and a flag thrower, to symbolise the blessing of the soil and invoke God's protection.

First stop on the tour was Westminster Cathedral, where the bell was blessed by Monsignor Canon Frederick Miles. Then it moved on to the Methodist Central Hall, for a blessing by Rev. Doctor R. John Tudor, before arriving at Westminster Abbey where it was blessed by the Dean of Westminster, the Very Rev. Dr. Edward Carpenter.

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The Bell was then placed in safe-keeping until it is put in position on the glockenspiel, which will be officially opened in November.

Background Notes on Glockenspiel

The Glockenspiel, which will be erected at the Swiss Centre, in Leicester Square, is the first of its kind to be built for centuries. It will consist of 25 bells, four bell ringers and a large musical clock, which will and show the phases of the moon, the days of the week and the signs of the zodiac, as well as telling the time accurately!

Apart from chiming in the hours, the bells can play pre-programmed tunes or can be played manually with a keyboard.

The glockenspiel will "wrap around" the Swiss Centre, at first floor level, on the corner of Leicester Square and New Coventry Street.

As there are 23 wards in the City of Westminster and 23 Cantons in Switzerland, 23 of the bells will bear the coat of arms of a canton and a "twinned" ward.

The official unveiling of the glockenspiel will be at 11.45 a.m. on Wednesday November 20th.

During 1986 a frieze of 22 moving figures will be added to the glockenspiel. It will represent the ascent of the village cowherds, with their cattle, goats and dogs, to the alpine pastures.

UNIONE TICINESE Outing to BLENHEIM PALACE – Sunday 15th September 1985

We need not have worried that the dismal weather of this past summer might have ruined our outing – September 15th was a lovely, sunny day (if a little on the breezy side) and the whole thing was a great success. Some thirty adults (including member Mr. J. A. Piffaretti with his wife and a couple of friends all the way from Cardiff!) and half a dozen children attended. Some had brought a packed lunch, and braving the wind, had a picnic by the lakeside (quite idyllic, if rather blowy, I was told!). Others had a buffet lunch in the delightful Indian Room Restaurant overlooking the Water Terraces.

Afterwards Mr Peter Barber guided us on a most informative tour of the Palace, made all the more interesting by many anecdotes about the formidable Sarah Churchill, wife of the 1st Duke of Marlborough and great friend (for some years, at least) of Queen Anne. And who better qualified, having recently had the task of cataloguing her letters, at the special request of the present Duke.

We were closely followed by one of the dragon-like ladies who act as guides, who at first did not seem too keen to let a stranger take over the guiding, and was probably waiting to pounce on him if he had made the slightest mistake! – but after a while her attitude changed drastically: she appeared to be taking in every single word with keen interest, and probably has since enlarged her guiding repertoire!

After tea various groups went for walks in the beautiful park – a delightful way to bring a most enjoyable day to an end.

V. M. Ossola

SCHWEIZERCLUB PAIGNTON UND UMGEBUNG sucht immer noch einige juengere Mitglieder mit Kindern um unserem Club von 26 Mitgliedern aktiv zu unterstuetzen. Jede Anfrage wird sehr geschaeztzt. Also kommt und schaut wie wir es lustig haben.

Organiser: Katrin Owen

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Swiss Club Bournemouth Anniversary of the Swiss Independence Day

Marking the Anniversary of the Swiss Independence Day, Mr. Rudy Müller, President of the Swiss Club Bournemouth and also Honorary Liaison Officer of the Bournemouth-Lucerne Twinning Association, arranged a Dinner Party at the Ocean Hotel.

Consul Claude Duboulet, from the Swiss Embassy in London and his wife, were Guests of Honour.

Mr. Terry Franks, the new Chairman of the Twinning association, Councillor Cyril Dyer, also Member of the Association and many Members of both Organisations attended the Party and made acquaintances.

Mr. Müller, a Citizen of Lucerne knew the late Mayor Matthias Luchsinger and most Councillors in Lucerne from his school Days, as well as the Anglo-Swiss Club, which all came in useful, when Bournemouth twinned with Lucerne in 1982.

Mr. Müller called on Mr. Franks, who took over the chair of the Twinning Association Bournemouth recently. Mr. Franks asks every society and Club to co-operate, and make the Twinning a success. Amongst many other plans, he has made a provisional Flight – and Hotel Arrangement for a "Eight Day Visit to Lucerne's Carnival" in February 1986. There are 40 seats for booking.

The Dinner Evening ended near Midnight, after Discussions in French, German, Italian, English and Schwyzerdütsch, with promises to meet again.

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Swiss Club Manchester

"The traditional Bowling/Barbecue Event was held by the Swiss Club Manchester at the President's house in Brainhall. Approximately 50 members and guests attended, 32 of which entered the bowling competition won by a Dutch guest, Mr. Bart, followed with a popular runner up, Mrs. Sonja Fisher.

Forthcoming events are the Raclette Party on 21st November 1985 and the children's Christmas Party on Saturday 14th December 1985.

Anyone interested in joining more regular social get-togethers should apply for Social Memberships of the Brainhall Park Lane Tennis Club where a number of Swiss already regularly meet for a Jass. Application forms can be obtained through Mrs. Joselle Gould, Tel 0625 874033".

STOP PRESS

Solidarity Fund

To all Presidents and Members of Swiss Clubs in the UK. A video on the Solidarity Fund is available accompanied by a very informative talk by Mrs. Mariann Meier. Please contact her: Tel 01-624 5360

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Swiss Review

Deadlines for your contributions and illustrations:

1/86 18.1.86

2/86 27.4.86

Editor's address:

Mrs M. E. Hall-Zeller

27 Redway Drive

Whitton TW2 7NT

Tel: 01-894 2114



Gret Schwab

Everybody knows her – everybody loves her – and everybody got her help and advice at some time or other during her long stay in London. She is one of those people everybody can call on with their worries and be sure to get her immediate care and understanding. Nothing was ever too much for her if she was needed – be it the au-pair girls with problems in their jobs – The Welfare office – The Benevolent Society and many others – I don't even know all she was involved in. But I do know that she worked very hard and gave all she has got to the Mothers Group.

And now she is leaving us! Like any other loyal wife, she has to follow her husband who was posted to Rome.

We shall miss her terribly – and I am sure she will miss going to the Swiss Church on every third Wednesday in the month to be with the Mothers. I think I speak for everybody who knows her when I say:

THANK YOU GRET FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE FOR US!

We shall never forget you and hope you will come back and see us whenever you can. We wish you and your husband good luck and happiness in Italy!

ARRIVEDERCI!

Heidi Miller
und die Mültergruppe



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Hon. Secretary.

Forthcoming Events

January, 30th 1986 at 7 p.m. Swiss Embassy Lecture Hall, a talk by Monsieur G. Hentsch, Chef de Cabinet at (C.E.R.N.) on Switzerland's Nuclear-energy policy. ("Why does Europe accelerate particles?")

February, 26th 1986 (Programme to be confirmed)

March, 19th 1986 AGM and Annual Dinner. 1986 brings the 70th Anniversary of the NSH in London, a very special occasion.

April, 24th 1986 (Programme to be confirmed)



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Swiss Club Edinburgh PROGRAMME FOR 1985/6

Monday 27th January 8 p.m. AGM at the Albany Hotel, 39 Albany Street, Edinburgh. Any matters you would like to bring up or have discussed can be included in the Agenda. Please ring up the President or Secretary if you have anything.

Monday 24th February 8 p.m. FONDUE PARTY at Mrs. Henderson's who has again invited us to come to her home. We always have a great time there and we are very grateful to the Hendersons for all their hard work. Please let Mrs. Henderson know if you are coming by Friday 21st February, so that she can do the shopping. Tel: 031-445 1125. As always cost will be shared.

Monday 24th March 8 p.m. INFORMAL TALK by David Whittaker about his experiences as a VET. Nelly Robson has invited us to her house for this event, 14 Dalhousie Road, Esbank, Dalkeith. Tel: 031-663 4482. We thank both Nelly and David for their willingness to entertain us.

Monday 21st April 8 p.m. Meet for a DRINK AND CHAT at the Albany Hotel.

Swiss Club Dunfermline

Congratulations to Mr. Emil Schönenberger, who celebrated his 90th birthday on Monday 14th October. Members from all three Scottish Clubs, including our new honorary Consul, Mrs. Gertrud Drysdale met on the 15th October in Dunfermline to celebrate the occasion. Mrs. Mariann Meier travelled all the way to Scotland to give a most interesting talk on the Solidarity Fund. Later on she brought back many happy memories to our elderly Swiss by taking them on a conducted tour (by slides) of Switzerland. Everyone agreed that if you are able to reach the ripe old age of 90 in such good spirits and such a happy frame of mind as Mr. Schönenberger has managed to do it is worth following his example.

U. Ditchburn-Bosch

West of Scotland Swiss Club Glasgow

1st August Celebration

Our annual Barbecue took place as usual in the lovely grounds of Garden Cottage at Chryston, hosted by Mr. & Mrs. Hogarth. Songs, Lampions and a grand Bonfire added to a memorable and most enjoyable evening.

Programme 1986

17/1/86 Theatre Outing

14/2/86 Talk on Lighthouses

21/3/86 Slide show on Aden

18/4/86 Concert Outing

16/5/86 Annual General Meeting

Venue of events: 7, Hughenden Terrace, Glasgow at 7.30 p.m.

New members and friends very welcome.

Secretary's address: Mrs. M. T. Cramer 79, Breval Crescent, Hartgate G81 6LS.

NOTICE

Are there any Swiss living in South Glamorgan - Wales interested in forming a Swiss Club? or come together informally from time to time?

Please write or phone: Johanna Wathan 4 Flanders Road, LLANTWIT MAJOR Tel: 2957 S.Glamorgan/Wales.

Yorkshire Swiss Club

"The Yorkshire Swiss Club takes to the water yet again".

As last year about this time, club members met at a private lake near York. The weather was not quite as warm as last time, but about 30 of us had a most enjoyable day with a barbecue lunch. Unfortunately as our little yacht, bravely flying its little Swiss flag took to the water, the gusty wind decided to blow with more force and turned the boat over. So we had two very wet and cold young members. They spent the rest of the day more like Scottish Lairds resplendent in tartan travel rugs around their loins!

We all kept warm playing team games, finishing with "Give us a clue!"

A lovely time was had by young and old alike. We now look forward to the Autumn Luncheon at the Sandal Restaurant in Bradford on the 19th October. Then a Dinner Dance at the West Yorkshire PTE Club in Leeds in November.

S. Besson-Burrows

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Great Portland Street, Warren Street*