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# Editorial



Here I am again, it's Saturday and I'm "plugging" away at this issue. I wonder where the time goes? Everytime I complete an issue I think that I'll have plenty of time until the next one is due — when I turn around it's already that time again!

Once again I find myself in a position of asking for contributions. I can't believe that there's nothing going on in the

US of A?! So far I have published everything I've received and had to struggle to fill these four pages.

One time I received a complaint that not all states are represented equally and sadly enough I had to reply that contributions are scarce, thus leading to representation of only those who are willing to participate. Again, these pages are for you, the Swiss in the United States. If you want to be heard — turn in your contributions. Stand up and be counted!

Gertrud Jeffries

1430 Cape Cod Way

Concord, CA 94521

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## Guest Editorial

Editor's note: This letter was sent to me in response to my Editorial in the #3/93 edition of the *Swiss Revue*. I was very touched, and who knows, some of you out there have similar experiences. So here it is.

### Homesickness for Switzerland?

What a relief to know that I'm not the only one who has been afflicted by this torment off and on for so many years.

No Swiss I ever met abroad admitted to suffering from this malady that, if one has it, cannot be cured. In fact, locally, the Swiss appear to look upon their "former Swissness" as a kind of illness which they are trying to hide. Perhaps not all, but many.

Perhaps I've been homesick most of my life because I left too young and not entirely by choice. I left my mother behind and joined a father who was and remained a stranger. We first moved to Berlin, right after the war. He worked there — not as a soldier. He was an American citizen and we lived in relative luxury, with every privilege among the surrounding rubble. During that time I

nearly died with longing for what I considered to be my homeland.

We moved to Washington, D.C., where I found an abandoned railroad track and followed it with such longing for Switzerland that I imagined if I'd keep walking long enough, I might magically be transported back to my home again.

I finished school in Japan, where the homesickness was somewhat diminished by so much exotic diversion. But during the many years of living in numerous US cities — including lovely San Francisco and warm Honolulu — a nagging longing for my homeland has remained with me.

If I had to do it over again, I'd never leave. Honolulu has palms, the "oceans blue," the grand and green mountains, but they haven't stilled all the pain.

# Concert in connection with the Oskar Reinhart Exhibit

## to be performed by the American Symphony Orchestra in New York

On March 11, 1994, the American Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Leon Botstein, will perform in the Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center, New York. This concert was designed in collaboration with the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Consulate General of Switzerland, New York, to be a parallel to the art of the Oskar Reinhart Collection which will be exhibited at the Metropolitan from February 10 to April 24, 1994.

The program was carefully selected in order to have the pieces of music closely relating to the painters — mainly from Germany and Switzerland — shown in the exhibition. The concert will start with two compositions by Ludwig van Beethoven and Felix Mendelssohn, featuring the poem "Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage" by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. The counterparts in the exhibit are paintings by artists like J.A. Koch, who settled in Rome in the first half of the 19th century and became famous for paintings of "he-

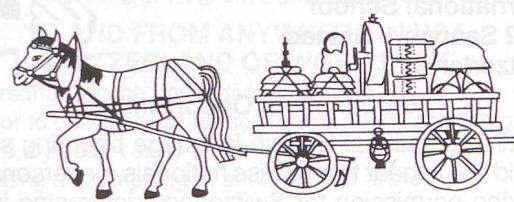
roic" Italian landscapes.

The choral piece, "Nänie," after a poem by Friedrich Schiller, composed by Johannes Brahms, was first performed in Zurich in 1881. It was dedicated to the memory of Anselm Feuerbach, a painter whom many considered the outstanding genius among the German artists living in Rome at that time. His works are also included in the exhibit.

"Four Tone Poems after Arnold Böcklin" by Max Reger recall the tremendous popularity which the painter from Basle enjoyed at the turn of the century. The Oskar Reinhart Collection is the owner of various important oil sketches by this master. Last, but not least, the concert of the American Symphony orchestra will feature the "Italian Suite" by Joachim Raff, a Swiss who spent much of his life in Leipzig and whose work is rarely performed in the United States.

For more information call: (212) 581-1365.

**Dr. Lukas Gloor**  
Consulate General, New York



It's the cozy feeling of belonging, the feeling of safety and Gemütlichkeit that I miss; the convivial festivals, the walks through fields and up mountains, the sense of true freedom that I felt there — and not here. But no, there's no turning back. My children are here and so are my grandchildren. But I'm a tree poorly transplanted.

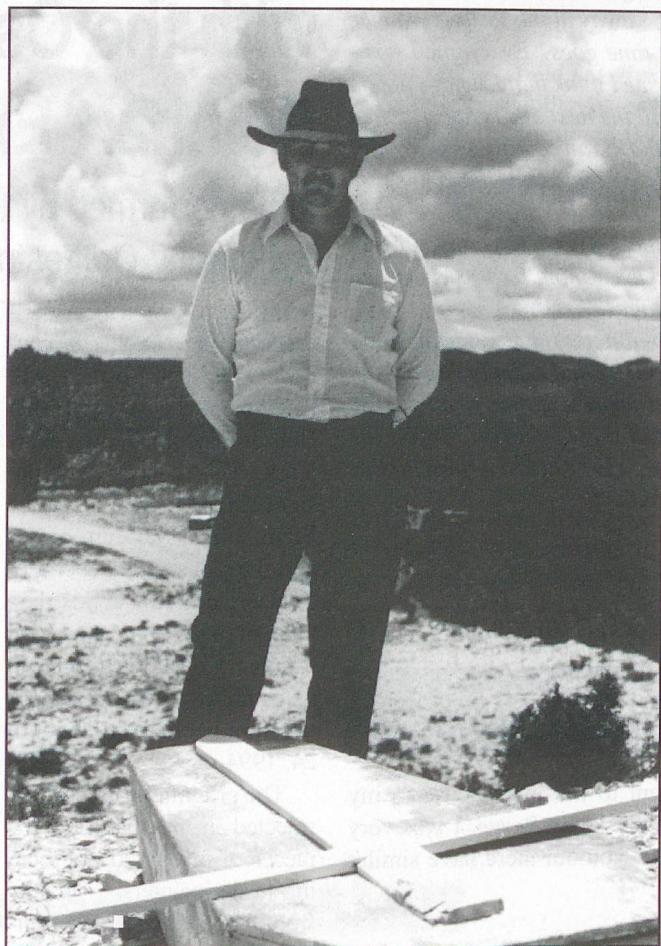
**R.T., Hawaii**

# Tracing Back the Destiny of Swiss Immigrants

Have you ever heard of a place called "Vaud" in New Mexico? Probably not. Not even Erdmann Schmocker, the president of the Swiss-American Historical Society knew that this place existed — until Stéphane Goël drew his attention to the ghost town in the desert. Recently Stéphane Goël completed two years of meticulous research on a group of Swiss from the Lake Geneva region who came to the United States in 1891 and named their new home in New Mexico "Vaud." The result of this research is a 73 minute documentary film, "A L'Ouest du Pecos."

It was pure coincidence that led Stéphane Goël to the discovery of Vaud. During another film project on Swiss settlements in the United States, he noticed the name of a valley in New Mexico called Pecos. In his home town of Lausanne used to be a neighborhood named Pecos, and he remembered his grandfather who said, "C'est le meilleur vin à l'ouest du Pecos."

Goël was curious to find out if there was a connection between the two names, and to his own surprise he discovered the tracks of the Vaudois immigrants. Like many other Swiss, they had left their native country out of economic need.



Scene from the documentary "A L'Ouest du Pecos"

Lured by an advertising propaganda that promised them a land where milk and honey flow, the otherwise skeptical Vaudois decided almost overnight to take their families all the way to New Mexico to start a new life.

Although they were disappointed by what they found

when they arrived there, the newcomers kept up their spirits and started laboring the soil. However, after an unusually hard first winter, followed by drought and epidemics in the spring of 1892, their optimism gave way to resignation and most of those who survived decided to return to their home country, where they were met with scorn and derision for believing the Pecos valley dream. The natives of Lausanne consequently named the poorest neighborhood in the city "Pecos" (the Béthusy high school now stands there), and Romands coined the expression "c'est le meilleur... à l'ouest du Pecos" for food and other things they ironically referred to as "good."

This seemingly short episode in the history of Swiss emigration evoked tremendous reac-

tions in the Swiss press at the time and provoked several interventions in the Federal parliament. Private Swiss banks had heavily invested in the Pecos project and some of them went bankrupt. The promoters were blamed for the failure.

Goël's documentary is a fascinating portrait of the Swiss immigrants to the small settlement south of Eddy, NM. He combines pictures, newspaper and letter testimonies from that time with interviews made with descendants of the unfortunate venturers. The circle between past and present closes when Goël focuses on the family of Roy Rayroux, a descendant of the Vaudois immigrants living in Carlsbad, NM. Roy's teenage daughter learns the secrets of the Pecos valley herbs and plants from an old native Indian woman.

Stéphane Goël does not simply want to document the destiny of the Emerys and Cuénods and all the other families that took part in the Pecos adventure. "I try to make the Swiss aware that a century ago their ancestors were in the same situation as all the refugees that now go to Switzerland," he explained to the *Swiss American Revue*. "And people find out with surprise that so many Swiss emigrated in the 19th century because they had to."

Goël has just found a distributor for his video film in Quebec, Canada.

Contributed by:

Karl Vonlanthen

*Swiss American Review*

**John F. Kennedy  
International School  
3792 Saanen – Gstaad  
Switzerland**

## Employment Opportunities

Small international English-language boarding school would like to hear from Swiss nationals, or persons with working permission for Switzerland, interested in full-time employment starting in September 1994.

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William Lovell, Director Phone: (030) 4-13-72  
FAX: (030) 4-89-82



### Submission deadlines:

Number 2/94: 2/28/94

Number 3/94: 5/03/94

Number 5/94: 8/14/94

Number 6/94: 10/24/94

These are tentative dates!

# Swiss American Review

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## Cultural Events and Lectures in 1994

Lectures at University of California, Berkeley (Doe Library):

**February 10, 1994**

Swiss Watches

by Antoine Simonin

Mr. Antoine Simonin is an expert on complicated watches. He is a graduate of a Swiss watchmaking school and has over 30 years of experience in the watchmaking trade.

**March 14, 1994**

The Sister Republics: Switzerland and the United States from 1776 to the Present

by James Hutson

Mr. James Hutson lectured at Yale University and taught at Yale College and Graduate School.

**April 28, 1994**

American TV Serial and Swiss

Fairy Tales

by Louis Rosshart

Mr. Rosshart is "Swiss Chair" 93/94, Stanford University, Professor at the Institute for Journalism and Mass Media Research, University of Fribourg.

Lecture at University of Idaho, Moscow:

**February 11, 1994**

Swiss Watches

by Antoine Simonin

**February 16, 1994**

S. Corinna Bille

by Christiane Markward

Ms. Christiane Markward's

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## Cultural Events (cont.)

publications include some thirty articles, mostly on women writers with equal interest in French and francophone women (Swiss and Caribbean in particular).

### Cultural Events

**March 18, 1994, 8:00 p.m.**  
**and March 19, 1994, 2:00 p.m.**  
**and 8:00 p.m.**

101 Zellerbach Hall  
University of California  
Berkeley, CA 94720  
Mummenschanz Parade  
An all-new show from Switzerland's ingenious, mask-mime theater troupe. Mummenschanz is "one of the infallible pleasures of a very imperfect world," says the *Los Angeles Times*. "They have never been matched and they should never be missed."

### May 1994

Exhibition of the works of the Swiss artist Roberto Lauro  
Eleonore Austerer Gallery  
540 Sutter Street  
San Francisco, CA 94102

The concept of contrast plays an important role in Lauro's work. Like the interplay of light and shadow, his sculpture combines fragile, transparent glass with solid, heavy metal. Lauro is a well-known sculptor and painter in Switzerland. This is the third major exhibit of his work in metal and glass.

For more information call (415) 986-2244

# Swiss Club News

## Monroe Swiss Singers Celebrate 30th Anniversary!

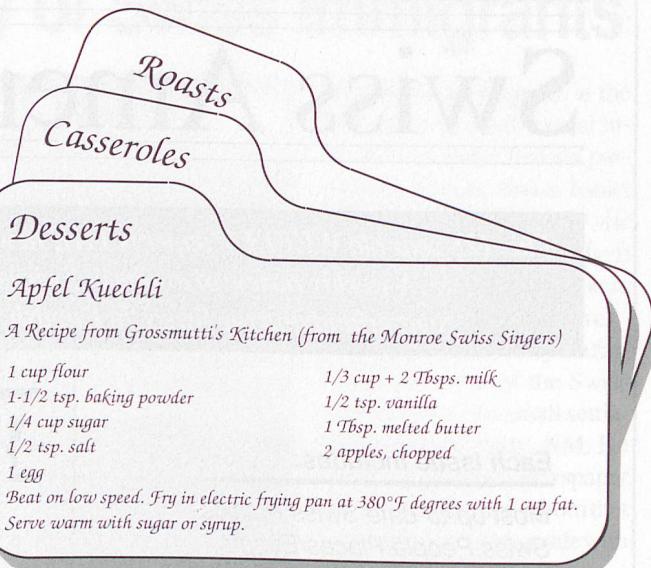
In February of 1963, women's voices were added to the dwindling membership of what was originally the Swiss Club Men's Chorus and a new group was born: the Gemischter Chor, Monroe. Although it wasn't until 1968 that the group's name was officially changed to "The Monroe Swiss Singers," those nine women and ten men became the nucleus and impetus for what has become nearly 50 members today. Of the original 19 singers 10 are still singing with the choir. All but one of the 19 charter members were natives of Switzerland.

The 10 charter members of the 1963 Gemischter Chor, Monroe were honored at the spring concert at the Monroe Arts and Activities Center.

For more information please contact the Monroe Swiss Singers, c/o N 4512 Cold Springs Road, Monroe, WI 53566-9345.

## Stückli Malheur at Swiss Club of Central Florida

It's no secret that the Swiss love their "pâtisserie," and not having had any in months or years, one might go a little over-



board when the chance to ingest this most delectable Swiss specialty presents itself. Scrumptious Crèmeschnitten or Napoléons...caused a stampede towards these treats with people grabbing several pieces for themselves. Well, there's room for improvement. Next year we're planning to be more civil about it all.

If you still feel like joining this club, call (407) 628-4790.

*Ruth O. Wack*

## Swiss Fair and Independence Day in Los Angeles

Despite the unusually cool summer in Southern California, August 1 turned out to be seasonally hot. The organizers of

the second Swiss Fair, held in the Swiss Park in Whittier, were prepared with a 60 x 60 foot tent. A large crowd gathered in its shade, enjoying various Swiss foods.

The official Independence day celebration opened with the American and Swiss National Anthems, followed by a speech by the Consul General of Switzerland, the honorable Mr. Kurt Welte.

After his speech, the festivities went on with singing and alphorn performances, as well as flag twirling and Talerschwingen.

The various booths from vendors and exhibitors featured everything from chocolate to crafts and much more.

*Jeannette Meier*



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