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Adieu Ambassador: Muheim Quits

The Swiss ambassador to the UK, Mr Franz Muheim, has announced his departure: he will be leaving towards the end of the year and heading for retirement after a stint of more than five years in London. As yet there is no word as to who is successor might be and an embassy spokesman informed the Regional News-UK that it might be a few months before the Department of Foreign Affairs in Bern nominates a replacement.

Below, Mr Muheim writes a farewell letter to the Swiss community in Britain, for whom his period of office will be indelibly remembered for the festivities which he promoted to celebrate Switzerland's 700th anniversary in 1991.

But Mr Muheim's time in London has also coincided with the efforts of many in Switzerland to prod the country into closer cooperation with the wider European and world community. This, of course, has been largely unsuccessful.

The consequences, and especially the economic consequences, of Swiss isolationism were commented upon by Mr Muheim in a speech at the 1st August celebrations in London. 'So far,' he said, 'things do not look to bad, but we already sense that the interest in new and innovative investments



Ambassador and Mrs Muheim

may decline, which would be a very worrying phenomenon should this trend be confirmed.'

As far as the UK specifically was concerned the ambassador noted that it is becoming increasingly difficult for Swiss citizens to obtain work and residence permits - and this he attributed directly to Switzerland's refusal to join the European Economic Area.

Politically, however, the ambassador was more

scathing. Switzerland was absent from the main negotiations on the future of the continent. 'We are being perceived,' he added, 'as a country which is unable to provide an intellectual and conceptual input on matters which do concern us.'

It will now be up to his successor to make the best of the difficult circumstances which the Swiss people have forced upon their politicians and diplomats.

Dear Readers,

The post of Ambassador to the Court of St James, which I am leaving after a stay of five and a half years, is one of the most fascinating a diplomat can dream to occupy. This was true even at the time of Mozart's Don Giovanni...

These were very full, very interesting years, and very important ones as well, given the historic developments we have witnessed in the world,

particularly in Europe, during this period. The United Kingdom is one of Switzerland's most important partners and it was particularly rewarding to exchange views and, in some cases, to co-ordinate our actions with the British government. We have no bilateral problems, but many problems of common concern to discuss together, in particular with regard to European integration.

My wife and I will fond-

ly remember many events we have either initiated or been associated with during our stay. I am thinking in particular of the successful Swiss Festival of 1991 and of the fabulous fair at Battersea Park in London, which was attended by more than 8,000 compatriots and British friends of Switzerland. I am also very pleased to leave behind two new institutions, the Swiss Cultural Fund in Britain and the Swiss Business Forum,

both of which, I trust, will prove to be useful instruments for the strengthening of the links among the Swiss who live in this country and between our two countries.

I thank the Swiss community for its great co-operation and wish all of its members and their families well in their future endeavours and activities.

**Yours sincerely,
Franz Muheim.**

**Deadline
for next issue
4 November
1994**

Diary

5 November YORKSHIRE

Annual luncheon, Sandal Restaurant, Bradford. Details from Club President J Long, Tel 0274 588 189.

19 November MANCHESTER

Annual dinner/dance at Stanneylands Hotel, Wilmslow. Details from Club President Marianne Reuter, Tel 0260 273681.

19 November LONDON

Swiss Rifle Association: Annual dinner/dance and prize giving. Details from Club Secretary Urs Schaefer, Tel 081 850 4117 or 081 850 8884.

2 December FARNBOROUGH

Christmas party at Elles Community Centre. Details from Club President Vreni Rudkin, Tel 0252 547948.

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(Telephone 0171 387 3608).



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Obituaries

*Heidi Dobbie, a long-serv-
ing and loyal member of
Dunfermline Swiss Club,
died recently. Rosie
Preiswerk died in Basel in
June, aged nearly 90. Her
resolute character, kind-
ness, devotion and wit
made her admirably suited
for the post of warden of
the Swiss Hostel for girls in
London from 1956 to 1966.*

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Around and About in London

'Humanitarian Challenges in a Changing World: an ICRC View' was the theme of a lecture by Dr Peter Fuchs, Director-General of the International Committee of the Red Cross, given in London in the early summer. The lecture and subsequent dinner were organised by the City Swiss Club and the British-Swiss Chamber of Commerce. The work of the Red Cross organisation world-wide is only too well known in these times of war, famine and disease, with the concomitant problem of millions of refugees. Dr Fuchs gave just a few examples of the Red Cross's work, such as making wells and distributing food in Somalia to help over one million people and six million cattle to survive; visiting prisoners of war in many parts of the world; and dealing with five million letters. The cold war may be over, but the new order is not yet established and Fuchs wondered whether the United Nations Organisation is capable of creating this new code of international ethics.

Events organised by

other Swiss societies in London included an outing to Woburn Abbey by the Unione Ticinese and the Cercle Genevois and the annual barbecue at Hurstpierpoint. There were also a number of annual general meetings - that of the Swiss Church took place at Whitsun, followed by a family service in English and lunch, while the Swiss Mercantile Society's was held in June. The former home of the SMS College, Swiss House in Fitzroy Square, is now a Bell Language School.

'The Discovery of the Alps by British Artists' was the title of a lecture given by Jerry Lovatt, librarian and custodian of pictures of the Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club. This meeting, held at the embassy, was organised in conjunction with the Anglo-Swiss Society. Also at the embassy, the cultural section supported by the New Helvetic Society, organised a reading in German by the Swiss writer Frederike Kretzen and a full-day symposium

in French on Blaise Cendrars, the Swiss avant-garde author.

Recent musical events included the City Swiss Club giving its members a chance of attending an open-air concert at Kenwood House on Hampstead Heath, while a concert took place at the Swiss Church in July under the auspices of the embassy and the New Helvetic Society. The Trio de Genève, all young musicians, performed old and modern music on violin, cello and piano.

As for the visual arts, the London-based Swiss Laurent Lourson exhibited 'Prints of Chelsea Today' to coincide with the Chelsea Festival. 'The Gold Weaver', Lucie Heskett-Brem from Luzern, showed exquisite gold jewellery at Bentlet's, the antique jewellers in Bond Street. And 'From Caspar Friedrich to Ferdinand Hodler: a Romantic Tradition' was the title of an exhibition of German, Austrian and Swiss paintings from the Oskar Reinhart Foundation in Winterthur. [MM]

German Saturday Schools

The German Saturday Schools in London have been in existence for six years. They are a non profit-making association of parents and are organised in six areas of London. The objective of the Saturday schools is to further children's knowledge of the German language and to give instruction in regional studies and cultural and traditional subjects. Qualified teachers give lessons on Saturdays from 10.00 am to 12 noon. The children talk, sing, read, write, play, paint and make handicrafts on many different topics from all the German-speaking countries. The schools are located in Bayswater, Croyden, Ealing, Hendon, Islington and Richmond. Further details can be obtained from Mrs Renate Wright, Chairwoman, Association of German Saturday Schools, Tel. 071 229 3740.

Swiss Radio International

Swiss Radio International (SRI), the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation's external service has started the process which will lead it to establish a future-orientated world-wide radio presence. For almost sixty years now SRI has been familiar to innumerable listeners in every continent as the provider of the quickest and most direct route for maintaining contact with Switzerland. SRI will continue to fulfil all this role in the future. Nevertheless, the SRI of the future will be different and new, a modern radio enterprise focusing on its audiences to contribute a specifically Swiss input to a rapidly changing and competition-orientated world. SRI has launched the phased implementation of a new strategy which will take it from conventional to digital production, from 'rendezvous' broadcasting to continuous programmes, from shortwave to satellite transmission. On 2 May the French round-the-clock satellite channel was launched, followed on 6 May by the English-language programme. German- and Italian-language programmes will follow by the summer of 1995 at the latest. All four programmes are broadcast initially to the whole of Europe via ASTRA and ETEL-SAT and subsequently to other continents via further satellites.



Gottfried Locher has now been in London for some months - but for those who do not already know, he is the new minister at the Swiss Church in London. Gottfried was brought up in canton Bern. Following school and military service he travelled in Chile and studied in Montreal, before returning to his theological studies in Switzerland. His wife, Barbara, is a teacher.

FOSSUK in Birmingham

This year's annual general meeting of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom (FOSSUK) was held in Birmingham. Among the many attending was Dr Hans Egli (95), who jointly founded the organisation forty-five years ago. Embassy and consular staff were also present.

The two main speakers from Switzerland were Rolf Bodenmueller, head of the service for the Swiss abroad at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, and Rene Lenzen, of the secretariat of the Swiss abroad in Bern. The former stressed the difficult financial status of the Confederation, the political perspectives of Switzerland and matters concerning Swiss abroad, such as taxation at source, acquiring property in Switzerland and the identity card long-wished for by compatriots living abroad. Mr Lenzen spoke about the voluntary old-age and invalidity insurance.

The Regional News-UK of the Swiss Review was also the subject of discussion. FOSSUK delegates were encouraged to seek advertisements and donations and to send short reports of events. A lack of funds means that the regional pages might have to be published less regularly. In the meantime FOSSUK has appealed to the federal authorities for a tempo-



FOSSUK president Jeffrey Long and Barbara Locher drawing prize winners at the FOSSUK meeting in Birmingham. The prizes were sponsored by the Swiss National Tourist Office.

rary subsidy.

A more convivial note was struck at the civic reception which was hosted by the lord mayor of Birmingham, followed by dinner with entertainment provided by the Toni Frunz Band from Sarnen (OW). There was also an opportunity to see the city during a sight-seeing tour and an outing to Cadbury's World of Chocolate.

Next year's FOSSUK assembly will be hosted by the Scottish Swiss clubs in June 1995. [MM]

OSA in Lenzerheide

This year's Organisation of the Swiss Abroad meeting was held on the Lenzerheide in August. The UK's three delegates (Bernard Simon, Joe Brogini and Ursula Ditchburn) attended together with deputy delegates Rose-Marie Breitenstein and Margrit Lyster.

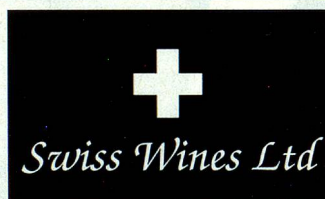
The UK representatives agreed that the proposed abolition of the voluntary AHV/IV would have serious implications on Swiss abroad. It was therefore suggested that a working party of specialists be appointed to study alternative reforms of the voluntary insurance scheme.

The UK delegates were also concerned about a dis-

crimination against Swiss abroad if the proposed revision of the Lex Friedrich (which governs the acquisition of property in Switzerland by foreigners) came into force, whereby the conditions for acquisition of property in Switzerland would depend on an applicant's status and place of residence, rather than on his or her nationality. Swiss abroad would thus be treated on the same basis as other persons not resident in Switzerland.

The question of affiliation of foreign sections of Swiss political parties to umbrella organisations, such as FOSSUK, was discussed

Continued on page V



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Bishop's Yodelling Send-Off

The retirement of David Jenkins, the controversial bishop of Durham, was marked by a ceremony at Durham Cathedral, at which a trio flown from Switzerland performed. According to the Northern Echo the bishop's face 'truly lit up' when the jodlerduett Fredy Kunz and Xavier Baetting sang 'On Top of the Mountain', accompanied by accordionist Karl Kohler. Two thousand balloons were then released from the Palace Green, each bearing the message 'You can't keep a good God down'. Members of the Swiss Club Tyne Tees were also present, as was Joseph Koch from the Swiss embassy. Mr Koch later joined members of the club in an evening celebration at the Three Tuns Hotel in Durham.

N Scott-Niederberger

OSA in Lenzerheide (Continued)...

and it was agreed that such bodies should remain apolitical - though this would not prevent individuals joining a party.

The working party on Europe, of which Bernard Simon is a member, has completed its work and is to be replaced by a larger body which will gather information on discrimination against and restrictions on Swiss within the EC. Joe Broggini, meanwhile, attended several meetings of the OSA's executive committee; Margrit Lyster attended a meeting of the Solidarity Fund; and Rose-Marie Breitenstein, as vice-president, attended a meeting of the Friends of the Organisation

of the Swiss Abroad. Ursula Ditchburn made representations on behalf of Pro Patria regarding support given by the organisation to Swiss schools and about a museum on the history of the Swiss abroad in Geneva.

All delegates, together with other visitors from the UK, attended the plenary session on the Swiss economy and commerce, which was addressed by Federal Councillor Delamuraz.

Further information regarding any of the above points may be obtained directly from the OSA delegates. The next meeting of the OSA council will be held in Bern on 4 March 1995.

[UD]



Swiss Consul General Ernst Keller with the Bishop of Durham at an earlier meeting of Swiss Club Tyne Tees.

Heading Home

It is not just the Ambassador Muheim who is heading home. Three other members of the UK Swiss community are also set to leave. At the embassy Livio Hurzeler, the cultural attache, has departed as is his colleague Felix Naef at the Manchester Consulate-General. Also heading for Switzerland is Eric Westacott, until recently president of the Midlands Swiss Society. Eric left Birmingham to take up a new job with Swiss Re(UK) in London, but has now been relocated to Switzerland.

CHEESES FROM SWITZERLAND

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Franz Heinzer's Favourite Recipe - SPAGHETTI WITH CHEESE SAUCE

Ingredients:

For the sauce:

- 10g (1/2oz) butter
- 100g (4oz) cooked or boiled ham, diced
- 2 large eggs
- 250ml (9fl oz) cream
- 40g (2 oz) Sbrinz SWITZERLAND
- 600g spaghetti
- 1 tbsp oil
- 30g (1oz) butter
- 50g (1oz) Sbrinz SWITZERLAND, grated
- 2 sprigs marjoram, snipped

1. Saute the ham gently in the butter until it becomes slightly transparent, then put to one side.
2. Beat the eggs and cream together and heat in a small pan, stirring constantly, until a thick sauce is formed.
3. Melt the cheese into the sauce, add the diced ham, remove from the heat and keep warm.
4. Place spaghetti into plenty of salted water, add the oil and cook till al dente. Drain well in a sieve and refresh with cold water. Drain thoroughly, then heat through well with butter.
5. Re-heat the sauce. Mix with spaghetti and arrange on pre-warmed plates. Sprinkle with Sbrinz and marjoram; and serve immediately.



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Letters

Girl Meets Boy ...Again

Sir,
'Simon Juan: artist in Devon.' I browsed through the 'Swiss Review' and came across this name. Simon was my very first boyfriend when I was 14 years old! We had a wonderful friendship but alas, we went our different ways. You could have knocked me down with a feather when I read the article. My son and I went to visit Simon and his wife in Barnestaple the other day and had a wonderful time with them. We were so sorry to have missed 56 years of friendship.

*Yours sincerely,
Stephanie Turner,
Poole,
Dorset.*



Stephanie Turner (left) and the Juans

Votes v. Directives

Sir,
Swiss direct democracy is, as far as I know, unique in the world. Can any of those urging EC membership explain to me what would happen when the Swiss popular vote conflicted with an EC directive - directives issued by appointed bodies and not even by the feeble elected European parliament? Do we really want to give up our democracy for this?

*Yours sincerely,
M Schneider,
Penzance,
Cornwall.*

Votes v. Dictates

Sir,
I would like to reply to J R Schwyter that there has always been some name calling between the different linguistic regions of Switzerland, including between the cantons of Romandie, but it was never nasty and on 1 August there was that wonderful feeling that we were all Swiss together. Myth or no myth,

people need something to believe in. Take everything away and you have a vacuum.

As for 'on s'entend bien mais on se comprend mal', is that not true of life in general, within families, neighbourhoods, social classes, political parties, towns, countryside, etc.? It is human nature!

Is the EC such a happy, friendly ship to join when every time their livelihoods are threatened French farmers and fishermen come out en masse and riot in the streets, destroying food from their fellow EC members' countries and from other European countries? Is it all that democratic when only three out of twelve countries gave their people a referendum over Maastricht?

As for Switzerland wanting all the advantages but none of the disadvantages, is that not what all the other countries are doing as well?

The free movement of people without control is a Utopian dream. For it to succeed governments should build sufficient decent, affordable homes for work-

ers and create jobs for all, which they do not do. The people of all the countries should love, understand and accept each other, which they do not do either. In these circumstances it is a recipe for disaster because there is nothing like a lack of housing, unemployment and poverty to create hatred and resentment between people of different countries.

If Switzerland did join the EC what would happen if some cantons refused to accept EC laws? Would the Swiss Federal Council have the power to force the European parliament dictates on the rebellious cantons? And what would become of our present system of 26 self-governing republics and our democratic right of referendum?

*Yours faithfully,
E Raed-Maerki,
Welling,
Kent.*

Midlands Mover

Sir,
A change in direction has meant moving away from the West Midlands and resigning my post as chair-

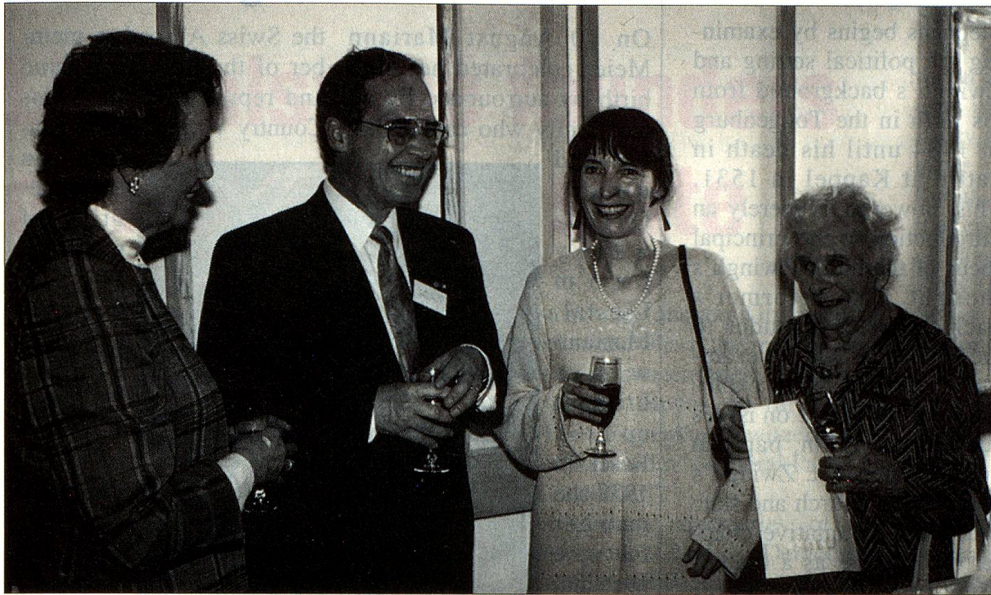
man of the Midlands Swiss Society. My members voted on giving me the position as honorary president for all my hard work and for establishing the society in 1988. I would like to thank them all for their support in the past and for the crystal glass they presented to me. I will miss them all very much but am confident that with their strong committee and the new chairman, David Tracey, they will have many happy events in the future.

*Kind regards,
Eric Westacott,
Elstree, Herts*

Regional News-UK

The editor welcomes readers' views and comments. Letters and articles for the next issue of the Regional News-UK, to be published in December, should be forwarded to Dr David Ditchburn, Department of History, University of Aberdeen, King's College, Old Aberdeen AB9 2UB (Tel 0224 272999; Fax 0224 272203) by 4 November 1994.

Swiss Artists in Britain: A Summer of Exhibitions



Hebden Bridge

As part of Hebden Bridge's Swiss Week in June, the Hanson Gallery of Contemporary Art devoted an exhibition to the work of Swiss artists in Britain. Among the works exhibited were ceramics by Kirsti Fattorini. Paintings were by Susan Bonvin, Ruth Moser and Catherine Imhof-Cadinal. The exhibition was opened by Ernst Keller, Swiss Consul General in Manchester. (Left: Consul General and Mrs Keller with Ruth Moser and her grandmother; below: 'Without Glass I' (oil on canvas) by Susan Bonvin.)

The National Gallery

The National Gallery in London staged a major travelling exhibition of Swiss art over the summer months from June until September. The paintings were drawn from the Oskar Reinhart Foundation in Winterthur, one of the most impressive and important European collections of German, Austrian and Swiss art of the nineteenth century. Oskar Reinhart (1885-1965) presented his extraordinary collection of Northern Romantic and Realist art to establish a museum in his native town of Winterthur. He hoped to 'lift the prestige of German art' in an era dominated by Paris and by collecting fine pictures from the German-speaking countries to offer a more balanced view of the history of European art.

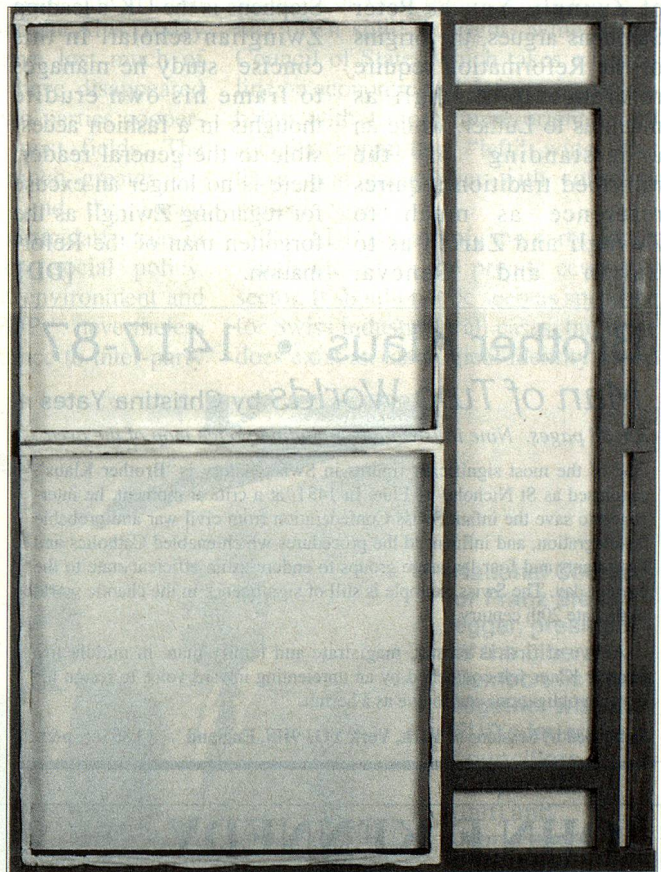
This rich pictorial tradition was represented in the London exhibition by some ninety paintings and forty drawings. The early sections of Romanticism included work by artists such as Caspar Wolf and Josef Anton Koch whose mountain landscapes celebrated the wonder of the Alps, and Carl Blechen who brought a Gothic touch to his views such as 'the Building of the Devil's Bridge'.

The diverse charms of the Biedermeier period in the

early nineteenth century affected artists from Scandinavia to Switzerland, including Jacques-Laurant Agasse. This Swiss artist's colourful pictures of daily life, and his proficiency at depicting animals, brought him great popularity in Britain, where he produced works such as 'Landing at Westminster bridge' and 'The Flower Seller'.

Among the later nineteenth-century artists featured in the exhibition was Ferdinand Hodler, whose studies were unmistakably modern in style, yet also imbued with visionary grandeur. His work demonstrated how the German-speaking culture of Europe embodied the enduring dream of the Romantic imagination: the longing for an ideal world found in both classical antiquity and in the Romantic response to nature.

The National Gallery's exhibition was one of several events staged on German Romanticism in London and Edinburgh. Another exhibition, 'The Romantic Spirit in German Art, 1790-1990', is on display at London's Hayward Gallery until 8 January 1995. For those who did not see the Oskar Reinhart collection, it is on display in Geneva until January 1995.



Jacqueline Real and Heidi Sauter, both originally from Zurich, were among the artists who contributed to the United Abstract Artists' Summer Exhibition held in London in July and August. Earlier in the year the Swiss sculptor Marcel Baettig, artist in residence, displayed some of his animal motif creations at South Hill Park, Bracknell, where he is artist in residence; and in August and September Laurent Loursion showed his calligrams inspired by Wilfred Owen's poetry at Prestatyn and Wrexham.

Book Review

W. P. Stephens, Zwingli: An Introduction to his Thought (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992; pp. xiii, 174; ISBN 0-19-826329-5; Ppbk ed., 1994, £9.95.)

Most people have heard of God and Christ; but in this irreligious age the third element of the Trinity remains an enigma to all but a few. Much the same might be said of that trinity of sixteenth-century reformers, Luther, Calvin and Zwingli. Even in this ahistorical age Luther and Calvin are familiar names (though not perhaps much more) but outside Switzerland few have heard of Zwingli. Yet, as Peter Stephens argues, the origins of the Reformation require reference to Zwingli as much as to Luther, while an understanding of the reformed tradition requires reference as much to Zwingli and Zurich as to Calvin and Geneva.

Stephens begins by examining the political setting and Zwingli's background from his birth in the Toggenburg in 1484 until his death in battle at Kappel in 1531. This, however, is merely an introduction to the principal focus of the book: Zwingli's thought. The reformer's back-to-basics attitudes to the Bible and God are examined, followed by an exploration of his stance on issues such as salvation, baptism and the Eucharist. Zwingli's approach to church and state precede a summative chapter on Zwingli as a theologian and reformer. Peter Stephens is the UK's leading Zwinglian scholar. In this concise study he manages to frame his own erudite thoughts in a fashion accessible to the general reader: there is no longer an excuse for regarding Zwingli as the forgotten man of the Reformation. [DD]

Brother Klaus • 1417-87

Man of Two Worlds by Christina Yates

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One of the most significant figures in Swiss history is 'Brother Klaus', canonised as St Nicholas of Flüe. In 1481, at a critical moment, he intervened to save the infant Swiss Confederation from civil war and probable disintegration, and influenced the procedures which enabled Catholics and Protestants and four language groups to endure as an efficient state to the present day. The Swiss example is still of significance in the chaotic world of the late 20th century.

Active at first as farmer, magistrate and family man, in middle life Brother Klaus felt compelled by an unrelenting inward voice to resign his existing obligations and to live as a hermit.

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Mariann Meier: Congratulations

On 10 August Mariann Meier celebrated her 80th birthday surrounded by all her family who came from far and near. Originally from Liestal, Mariann was brought up in Basel. In 1932 she met her future husband, Walter, at the City Swiss



the Swiss Abroad, a member of the Solidarity Fund and represented the Swiss Country Women's Association on the executive of the World Organisation in London for many years. A prolific writer since her early years, she edited the Swiss Observ-

Club in London. They married in 1935 and had four children. Walter, an eminent figure in the London Swiss community, died in 1961 at the age of 53. Mariann not only brought up her four children single handed but also found time to devote to various activities in the Swiss community. She took on offices in a number of societies and organisations, notably as president of the New Helvetic Society, a post which she held for fifteen years. She is still connected with almost every society in the London area. She was a delegate to the commission of

er. Mariann has a natural gift for communicating with people and with her immense knowledge of Switzerland and the Swiss she has provided an excellent public relations service for her country. An untiring worker and fighter for the rights of the Swiss abroad, her age does not deter her from continuing to take a close interest in the activities of the Swiss community: her motto is 'Keine Feier ohne Mariann Meier'. All her many friends join in wishing her many happy returns and continued good health.

Rose-Marie Breitenstein

JOHN F. KENNEDY INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

3792 Saanen/Gstaad, Switzerland

Employment Opportunities

Small English-language boarding school would like to hear from Swiss nationals or persons with working permission for Switzerland interested in employment for the coming school year which begins in September. Qualified and experienced teachers trained to teach in an English-language program for children 5-14, or persons interested in working as house parent, house assistant or cook should write to:

W. Lovell, Director, 3792 Saanen, Switzerland, Tel: 41 30 4 13 72, Fax: 41 30 4 89 82

