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The North's last Consul General says goodbye

The last of a long line of Swiss Consul Generals serving the North of England, Hans-Ulrich Tanner, leaves at the end of the year to take up a new post in Capetown. At the same time the Consulate General in Manchester will be closed and relocated to Edinburgh.

His final National Day celebration, held in the garden



Off to South Africa: Consul General Hans-Ulrich Tanner and his wife Yvonne

of the official residence, attracted a large number of the great and the good from many parts of the region.

In his wide ranging speech the Consul General described many parallels between current thinking in Switzerland and what he called "English common sense."

He went on: "In Switzerland there is a great yearning for a stable foundation which the coming generations can build on. Everything is designed for eternity: the education system, public health and social welfare. Everything in Switzerland must be screwed down, riveted and nailed in place twice over.

"The price of this solidity is our exemplary behaviour, our complacency, our mediocrity."

On the subject of relations with Brussels he told his audience of civic dignitaries and leaders of industry: "Swiss scepticism towards Europe has much to do with this rather measured approach. And not least with the fact that many Swiss do not see why we should abandon a model which has served us very well until now.

"We have our doubts, we sit

back and watch, and we wait. Solutions are only sought when we really start to feel the pain.

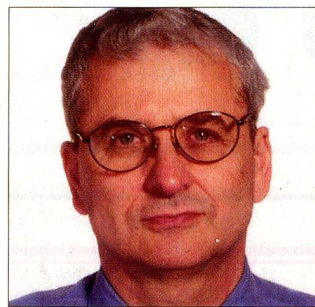
"The English - it appears - demonstrate a similar kind of pragmatism when it comes to national emblems. It seems you are as far from adopting the euro or giving further powers to Brussels as Switzerland is with regard to a closer relationship with the European Union."

Meet our new man in London

London's new Consul-General is Hans-Jürg Doré (right). From St Gallen, he joined the Swiss foreign service after working in banking and insurance.

His last posting was as Swiss Embassy Counsellor in Zagreb, following a career which has taken him to places like New Orleans, Hong Kong and Dubai.

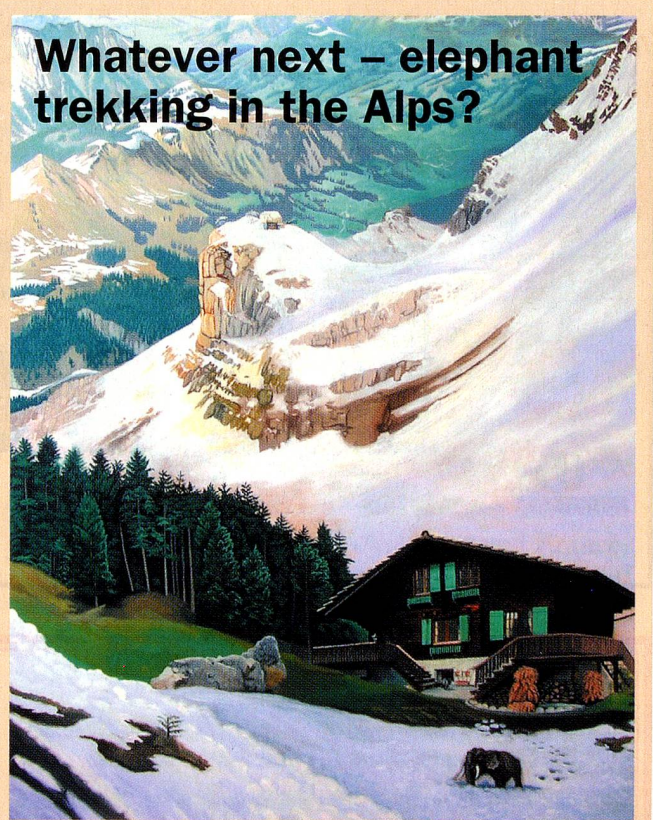
He is married, with three adult daughters.



New health card for British and Swiss living in the UK

The EU has introduced a new credit card shaped health insurance card which both Swiss and British citizens resident in the UK can use to get reduced cost medical treatment when visiting Switzerland.

To apply, all you need do is phone 0845 606 2030, or go online to: www.dh.gov.uk/travellers.



Whatever next - elephant trekking in the Alps?

No, it's not a runaway from the Knie Circus. This unexpected view of Les Diablerets, complete with elephant, comes from the brushes of Swiss artist Natasha Kissell, now living in London, whose work will be on show when a new gallery, Eleven, opens in Belgravia this month. Natasha's family still live in the castle in Elgg, Zurich, they have occupied since the 12th century.

Switzerland in the UK has its own Internet site, continually bringing you up to the minute news of the latest events as well as major stories from the most recent issues and links to other interesting sites in both the UK and Switzerland. To access it go to: www.swissreview.co.uk



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The online magazine for Swiss living and working in the UK



The Swiss Review web site, updated daily, includes a complete calendar of Swiss club events being held during the year. Club presidents are asked to send all details to: editor@meakin.net

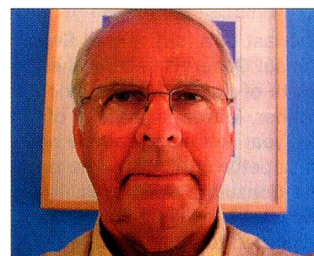
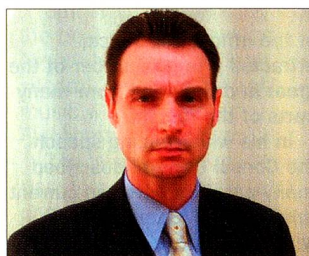
New faces join FOSSUK top team



A musical greeting for delegates Joe Broggni and Margrit Lyster as they arrive in Broadstairs for the FOSSUK AGM

A former secretary of the City Swiss Club, Alfred Zbinden, now head of the wealth management division of UBS in London, is the new vice president of FOSSUK.

At the recent AGM Freddie Wyser secretary of FOSSUK and president of Edinburgh Swiss Club, was elected delegate to the Council of the Swiss Abroad. Edgar Studer of the Southern Area Swiss Club and Dr François Gilardoni of the Unione Ticinese became deputy delegates. A dual national, Nikolaus Frei, London based director of a large global insurance company, has also joined the committee.



Newcomer Dr François Gilardoni (left) becomes a deputy delegate to the Council of the Swiss Abroad while secretary Freddie Wyser (right) is a new delegate

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To learn more about the Club and/or receive a membership form, please contact: Julie Streader, City Swiss Club, c/o Arbutnot Banking Group PLC, Arbutnot House, 20 Ropemaker Street, London EC2Y 9AR

Telephone: 020 7012 2400 www.cityswissclub.org info@cityswissclub.org

Support local Swiss clubs urges Ulrich Hunn

A farewell message from the Swiss Consul General in London, who is leaving to take up a new post in Atlanta

I have thoroughly enjoyed my posting as Consul General at the Swiss Embassy in London during the past four and a half years and the job has given me a great deal of satisfaction.

My wife Marie-Claire and I have had the privilege of meeting many members of the Swiss colony in the UK, especially through the numerous Swiss clubs.

We certainly will remember their joyful gatherings in and around London. They were much fun, with good meals, wine, singing and many interesting conversations.

You might have heard of the current re-positioning of FOSSUK (Federation of the Swiss Societies in the UK).

Jeffrey Long and the FOSSUK committee have done a remarkable job over the years. I wish to thank Jeffrey and his crew for the countless hours he has spent serving the Swiss clubs in the UK, and liaising between the Swiss community in this country and the

authorities in Switzerland.

Nevertheless, it is time for a change, for new ideas and young energy. The newly elected FOSSUK committee will introduce these, and it deserves your full support. I hope further common projects between the Swiss associations will be possible.

Highlights in the past, such as the banners painted by each club or the great support of Baerli von Toggenburg's multi-media-show about his bicycle ride from India to the Toggenburg in Switzerland should serve as encouragement for further interesting and club-bonding events.

Through the Swiss associations in the UK you can not only stay in closer touch with your "old" home country but, even more importantly, get to know many interesting people with an interest in Switzerland.

The clubs are a perfect meeting place to make new friends with similar interests. Marie-Claire and I have made

many new friendships through our participation in club events which will not end with our departure.

With this in mind, I invite all of you who are not yet members of one of the 30 or so Swiss associations in the UK to participate in one of their events.

If you like the relaxed and friendly ambiance become a member and make new friends. You will find the club contacts on the web pages of the Embassy, FOSSUK or the Swiss Review

Thank you to everyone who made our stay in the UK such a memorable and enjoyable one. A very special thank you to Regula Marsh-Hilfiker and Erika Symes, my two PAs, and colleagues in the Embassy. Without them my assignment in London would have only been half the fun.

All the best to you all and, for those of you who join one of our Swiss associations for the first time I hope you enjoy your new membership.



How to contact the editor

Reports of Swiss society activities and coming events, and articles and correspondence for the 'Switzerland in the UK' section of the Swiss Review, should go to the editor, Derek Meakin, at Creative House, Snape Road, Macclesfield SK10 2NZ. Tel: 01625 442 707.

His email address is: editor@meakin.net.

Enquiries regarding advertising should go to Jeffrey Long, 30 Finsbury Drive, Bradford BD2 1QA. Tel/fax: 01274 588 189.

- The 'Switzerland in the UK' supplement appears four times a year. The deadline for the next issue containing UK news, to be distributed in March, 2006, is February 3, 2006.

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300 defy bombs for National Day celebration

Despite the terrorist attack on the capital two days earlier, 300 Swiss and friends of Switzerland travelled to Golders Green to attend this year's National Day get-together.

A highlight was an auction of a dinner for two at Mosimann's exclusive Gourmet Club, which raised £250.

Numerous other prizes were on offer. Among the many donors were Switzerland Tourism, Swiss International Airlines, the Swiss Embassy, Darwin Airline, Appenzeller Beer, Rhodes House Hotel, Sherlock Holmes Hotel, R&B Wines, Lessiter's, Cheese Hamlet, Betty's of Harrogate - and Swiss dentist Dr Louis Guenin.

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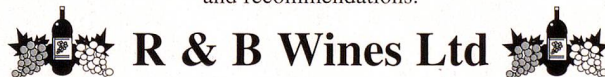
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The mysterious Peter Stieler unmasked

By Derek Meakin, who also took the pictures



A formal reception on the manicured lawn of the Hotel Zermatterhof

As a cavalcade of colourful characters paraded through towns and villages across Switzerland, crowds gathered by the roadside and housewives peered curiously through bedroom windows, gazing in wonderment at yet another example of how those eccentric English can lose their traditional reserve when they are outside their own country.

They came in all shapes and sizes – the large and the small and the tall. Well endowed titled ladies festooned with silks and satins, portly top hatted lords, ramrod straight military men, even a heavily built London policeman in his thick winter uniform perspiring under the relentless rays of a sweltering Swiss sun.

What they all had in common was the moment in history they epitomised, as though they had stepped straight through a timewarp from the world that only existed back in 1895. More to the point they had all materialised directly from the pages of the stories of Sherlock Holmes.

For this was the Sherlock Holmes Society of London making an affectionate pilgrimage to the places that had once been visited by the great detective himself or by his famous creator, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Each one represented a well remembered character – a pageant of villains and victims whose exploits had gripped not only the Victorians at home but readers all round the world ever since.

They were not only extremely colourful but all displayed an intimate knowledge of Sherlock Holmes lore, spending hours discussing with each other the finer points of the most mysterious cases. In short, these barristers, university lecturers, engineers, auctioneers and computer buffs were as far removed as possible from their day jobs as could be imagined.

The wide-eyes Swiss were, of course, lapping it all up and joining in the fun. Everywhere they went they were enthusiastically greeted by folklore groups, mountain guides, yodellers

and brass bands. And as Mr Holmes had had the foresight to carry with him a batch of letters bearing the greetings of the Lord Mayor of Westminster for formally presenting to the mayors of the towns they visited, there were plenty of opportunities for patriotic speeches and the handing round of copious quantities of vin d'honneur.

But merging into the back of the crowd at these events, trying to look inconspicuous in a vivid orange suit and an equally fluorescent bowler hat, was one character who even the most diehard Sherlockian might have been hard pushed to name as a central character in the stories. Press him on his identity he would only mutter under his breath: "Peter Steiler, owner of the Englischer Hof in Meiringen. I speak excellent English. I worked three years as waiter at the Grosvenor Hotel in London." And with that he would melt into the crowd.

But a little detective work from anyone with only a very elementary knowledge of the

methods of Mr Sherlock Holmes would soon have broken the cover of this implausible

mustacheed hotel keeper who was continually flitting around, popping up at every critical moment and seemingly exerting a controlling influence on everything that was going on.

Stripped of his disguise he turned out to be one of the best known members of the Swiss community in the UK – and has been for the last half a century.

Stand up Albert Kunz, head of the former Swiss National Tourist Office in London and the man credited with doing more than anyone else over the years to promote Switzerland as a top holiday destination.

Even in retirement, he was still showing that he has certainly never lost his touch.



Taking the waters in Leukerbad: Dr Watson, Sherlock Holmes – and Peter Steiler



The party gather on the Gornergrat as Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson make friends with local St Bernards



Beseiged by an army of goats, the party is offered a welcoming vin d'honneur in the village square of Leukerbad

Events at the Swiss Church

- 12.11. Baith Jaffe Klezmer Concert 8pm • 19.11. Swiss Bazaar 3pm
- 20.11. Service in English with Swiss Violonist Rahel Leiser 11am
- 4.12. Service in French and German with Anima String Quartet 11am
- 11.12. Advent Evening Service with the Ealing Abbey Choir 6pm
- 18.12. Family Christmas Service with Father Christmas 3pm

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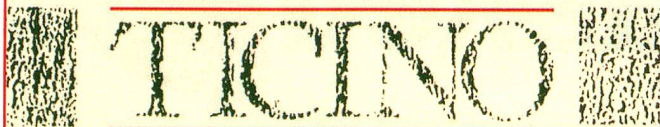


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Rose-Marie steps down after 12 years' service on the Council of the Swiss Abroad

One of the best known figures in the Swiss community in the UK, Rose-Marie Breitenstein, is no longer a member of the committee of FOSSUK. Here she recalls memories of the many years she has devoted to looking after their interests as a delegate to the Council of the OSA



Rose-Marie Breitenstein: An opportunity to gain an insight into issues affecting the Swiss Abroad

The 12 years I had spent as one of the UK delegates on the Council of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA), representing the Swiss Community in Great Britain, had been very rewarding for me and I treasure pleasant memories of the time.

The "Parliament of the Fifth Switzerland" which meets twice a year looks after and defends the interests of the Swiss living abroad. Some 80 to 90 delegates from all over the world and from Switzerland itself attend the one-day sessions.

Prior to my election in 1993 as a deputy delegate I had participated in two congresses, or assemblies as they used to be called, of the Swiss Abroad and thus had gained some knowledge about the activities of the OSA.

My first Council meeting took place in the beautiful town of Montreux. The then President of the OSA was Jean Jacques Cevey, a former National Councillor and Mayor of Montreux.

He was an eloquent speaker, both in French and German. Meetings did tend to go on and often some heated arguments were aired which kept us on our toes.

I remember a lively discussion on a wording in French of a proposed amendment to the Federal Constitution – needless to say that the version in German seems to have caused no problem!

More recently, repeated proposals to make English an official language of the OSA have been argued at large, and no doubt, they will be raised again in the future.

It was an eye-opener to listen

'Many thanks for everything, Rose-Marie'

On behalf of the FOSSUK committee Erika Richardson-Meier has sent a warm letter to Rose-Marie thanking her for her efforts and energy as a delegate, and her tireless work as committee secretary. In it she said how much Swiss people and their families had benefited from the efforts she had made on their behalf, and how "skillfully and naturally you managed to integrate your Swiss roots into your chosen life in England."

to problems which our fellow citizens have to face in countries such as Nigeria where there was an almost total lack of communication which their delegate made us aware of at regular intervals.

Then there were the Swiss in Algeria who had lost their livelihood during the crisis in 1962, and in recent years, the Swiss in Argentina suffering hardship due to the country's financial upheaval.

In March 1999 Dr Georg Stucky took over the presidency. He, too, had been a National Councillor.

His great achievement was the introduction of the vote by correspondence for the Swiss living abroad for which he had campaigned for a considerable time and which is still his hobbyhorse.

He conducted meetings with a fine sense of humour and kept arguments short and to the point.

The subjects which had appeared regularly on the agenda were the subsidies for the Swiss Schools Abroad, bilateral agreements, health insurance and voluntary AHV/AVS revisions with which we had dealt at every meeting until 2001, and the maintenance and development of a number of various services provided for the Swiss Abroad, including consular representation.

Due to the fact that the majority of Swiss Abroad were living in EU countries it was obvious that the Council concentrated on issues concerning Switzerland's presence in Europe, of which the bilateral

agreements, particularly the freedom of movement and its advantages and consequences, took utmost importance, preceded by the unsuccessful struggle to maintain the voluntary old age insurance.

The Council gave a leading opinion in favour of "Yes to Europe" in the 2001 Federal Ballot, "Présence Suisse" in 2002, and this year the participation of Switzerland in the Schengen/Dublin treaty.

On another matter, we listened with interest to the campaign reports of our fellow members who had ventured and failed as candidates in the elections to the Federal Parliament held in 1995, 1999 and 2003, and realising that there was little chance in the future of having a Swiss Abroad in the Parliament, accepted a proposal to set up a parliamentary lobby instead.

I also have lovely memories of some of the venues of our meetings, especially those in connection with the Congress of the Swiss Abroad.

They include the session we were privileged to hold in the Chamber of the National Council at the Federal Parliament in Berne, the warm welcome and hospitality we received in Lenzburg/Baden on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the Swiss Confederation in 1998, the enjoyable interlude at the Fête des Vignerons in Vevey, and the Day of the Swiss Abroad at Expo.02 in Biel.

The spring sessions took place in Berne, mainly in the historic Town Hall. There was one meeting held in Brunnen which gave us an opportunity to visit the Place of the Swiss Abroad, whose future use had been under discussion for some time.

What I liked about the work was that it gave me an opportunity to gain an insight of the issues affecting Swiss living abroad and current affairs in my home country.

The meetings gave us a chance to get our voice and opinions known in Switzerland and the Swiss Parliament. I enjoyed the camaraderie of my fellow delegates who regularly turned up, some coming from a great distance.



Attending her first meeting in Berne in 1993: Rose-Marie Breitenstein (centre) with the then doyenne of the Swiss community in Britain, Mariann Meier, and Dr Georg Stucky, now president of the Council of the Swiss Abroad

Venerable Yorkshire club celebrates 140 years

It's one of the oldest Swiss clubs in the world and now this venerable Yorkshire institution has celebrated its 140th birthday in style.

The event took place at the home of Françoise and Sinclair Logan in Yeaton, near Leeds. And proudly standing on the drive to greet them was their president's vintage 1950 MG, appropriately painted 30 years ago in the distinctive yellow of Swiss postbuses. Evie Wardill, who took over the presidency from Jeffrey Long two years ago, is sitting at the wheel in our picture.

The club, whose oldest member is 90 and the youngest

just four months, marked Swiss National Day with lunch in the ancient town of Boroughbridge, followed by a reception in the president's garden.

Their next event will be a Christmas lunch on Sunday, December 4, at the Boar's Head Hotel, Ripley.

"We are a small, friendly club, but many of us are getting elderly and we would really like to welcome new members who live in Yorkshire, either Swiss or lovers of Switzerland," said Mrs Wardill.

She asks anyone interested to contact her on 01347 848 473 or the secretary, Jenny Dransfield, on 01924 495 929.



A colourful touch of home: Some of the Yorkshire Swiss gather round their president's vintage 1950 MG, specially painted in the colour of Swiss postbuses

Jersey sharp shooters

Over in the Channel Islands there was a quick fire start to National Day with an exciting laser pigeon shooting contest. Taking up arms (right) are Swiss Consul Albert Good, event organiser Tracey Turnel-Jordi and the winner, banker Mike Dudli.

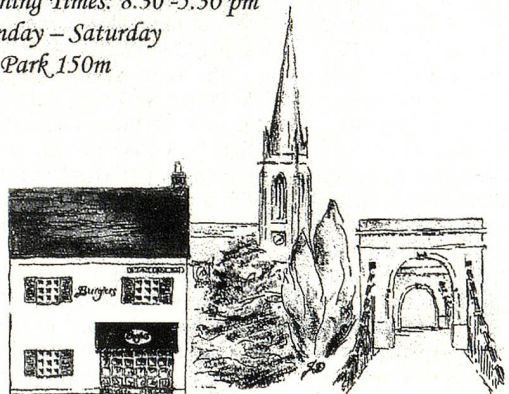
The mini golf was won by Charles Moser.



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