Regional news : USA

Objekttyp: **Appendix**

Zeitschrift: **Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad**

Band (Jahr): **34 (2007)**

Heft 5

PDF erstellt am: **27.04.2024**

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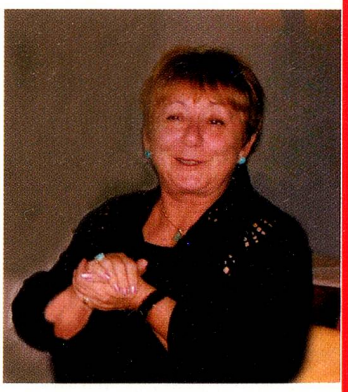
Editorial - Dear Readers in the United States



For some weeks now I have been editing the Swiss Review you are holding in your hands. It is the end of August. The last week, in typical Southern California fashion, the thermometer climbed to around 100 degrees every day. So you must forgive me, if I am not really in a mood to wish you a wonderful Thanksgiving and Happy Holidays! It was even worse when I contacted the regular advertisers already in July, making them aware of the fact that this was the time to prepare their Christmas ads! Who wants to think of Christmas in July?

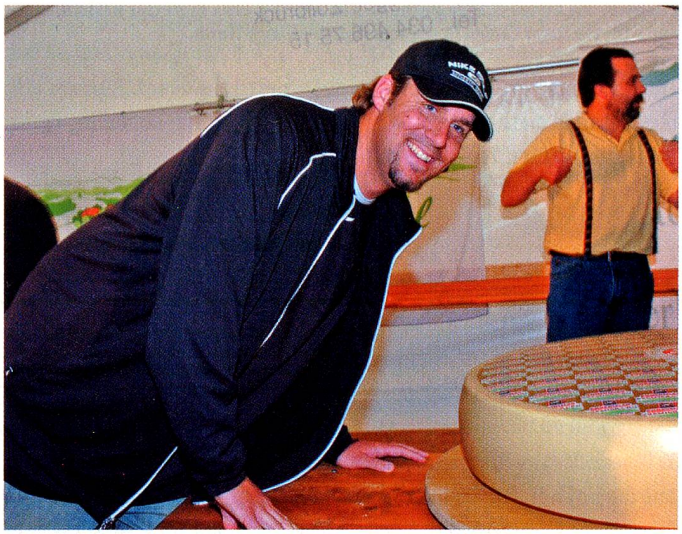
Change of subject: For this Swiss Review I received several articles regarding First of August celebrations. Only two made it into the pages. I believe that most of you are not interested in reading how other Swiss communities celebrate out National holiday, because I could write a generic article: picnic in a park, listening to the speech of the President of the Confederation, maybe somebody from a Consulate, maybe some songs, definitely Bratwurst. You might throw in a few alphorns here and there and that's about it. But I had an idea. Why don't you send me some of your best 1st of August pictures? Next year, in Swiss Review # 3/08, which should reach you towards the end of July, I will put together a 2-page centerfold with the nicest pictures and let you be the judge. Hardly any text, but probably a lot of red and white!

As for this Swiss Review, as usual, I hope you find the mix of articles to your liking. Next Regional News will be in # 1/08. And, I might as well say it: Happy New Year!!!

WAL BAUR, EDITOR, REGIONAL NEWS USA

Pennsylvania

Steelers Quarterback Ben Roethlisberger Becomes Honorary Member of Swiss Nationality Room Committee



When Ben Roethlisberger visited Switzerland last year, he obviously had to check out how Swiss cheese was made. Photo: Pittsburgh Steelers/Mike Fabus

Pittsburgh—Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger has become an honorary member of the Swiss Nationality Room Committee, which is in the process of raising funds for the construction of a Swiss Nationality Room at the University of Pittsburgh's Cathedral of Learning. The Swiss-American Society of Pittsburgh and friends of Switzerland sponsor the project. "We're delighted that Ben has agreed to join our committee as an honorary member," said Dr. Heinz W. Kunz, chairman of the Swiss Nationality Room Committee and Honorary Consul of Switzerland in Pittsburgh. "His endorsement of our efforts will go a long way toward making the Swiss Nationality Room a reality." Kunz continued, "There is a longstanding tradition of cultural groups in Western Pennsylvania designing and funding nationality rooms at the Cathedral of Learning. Most countries of Europe are currently represented by rooms, but Switzerland is a glaring omission given the impact made by individuals of Swiss origin in Pittsburgh and across the United States." He added, "We're now in a great position to change that."

Swiss architect Justin Rüssli, who also designed the Swiss Ambassador's new residence in Washington, D.C, has completed architectural drawings for the Swiss Nationality Room. The room design features a classroom of the 16th-century Zurich area furnished with wood tables, "Stabellen" chairs from that period, and a traditional Swiss ceramic oven. Construction of the room will begin once fundraising has been completed.

For more information about the Swiss Nationality Room project and the Swiss-American Society of Pittsburgh, see: www.swisspittsburgh.org.

An online tour of the Nationality Rooms is available at www.pitt.edu/~natrooms.

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Next Regional News

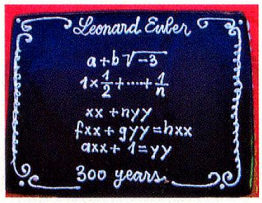
Swiss Review 1/08	
Deadline USA	Jan. 9, 2008
Approx. Arrival USA	Middle of March 2008
Swiss Review 2/08	
Deadline USA	Febr. 27, 2008
Approx. Arrival USA	Beg. May 2008

Switzerland's Gift to Science and Mathematics

The celebration of Leonhard Euler's 300th anniversary in Atlanta was a great success.

On April 27th 2007, the Consulate General of Switzerland in Atlanta celebrated together with professors, students and other interested people the 300th anniversary of the famous Swiss mathematician and scientist Leonhard Euler. A total of 80 people filled the hall and enjoyed an interesting presentation.

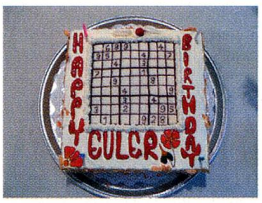
Joe Albree's lecture was an indulgence for the audience. The Professor of Mathematics at Auburn University in Montgomery, AL, told about Euler's adventures and about some of the 800 theses Euler wrote during his lifetime, especially his letters to a German princess.



Professor Joe Albree cut the birthday cake together with Professor David R. Stone and with the Swiss Consul General in Atlanta, Ulrich Hunn.

Thereby Albree explained complex detailed mathematical thoughts of Euler. The presentation was well prepared for the general audience as well as for mathematicians.

The local Atlanta Broadcasting Company PBA was present with a camera during the evening and recorded the event. PBA will also make an online-streaming on its webpage.



After the lecture of Joe Albree, the birthday cake with an Euler-decoration was cut and served together with champagne. The attendees discussed about Euler's "Swiss Gift to Science and Mathematics" and some studied the comprehensive twelve Euler-Posters, which decorated the reception area.

The event was a success for both the Swiss Consulate and the ThinkSwiss program, with the greatest contribution being the efforts of Professor Joe Albree, who supported the Swiss Consulate in all matters. Thank you very much!

For more information and pictures go to www.thinkswiss.org

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Swiss Wheelchair Athletes in Atlanta

This summer brought two important sporting events to the Atlanta area.

On June 26th wheelchair-racing athletes from 11 different countries competed in the world championship 5K meet in Cedartown, Georgia. Switzerland was very well represented by several wheelchair racing athletes and the trainer from "Rollstuhlsport Schweiz".

The Swiss wheelchair team, from left to right Beat Bösch, Marcel Hug, Sandra Graf, Simone Buess and Sandra Hager. In the back row Consul General Ulrich Hunn, Marie-Claire Hunn and Paul Odermatt, the trainer from "Rollstuhlsport Schweiz"

This year, for the first time, not one drop of rain fell during the race, which contributed to the great atmosphere and attracting a lot of local residents to watch and cheer the racers on. Marcel Hug finished in third place with an excellent time of 10:10.6.

On the evening of July 3rd the Swiss athletes enjoyed a southern BBQ at the residence of Swiss Consul General Hunn and his wife and prepared for the annual 4th of July event in Atlanta: the Peachtree 10K Road Race, which took place the next morning at 7 a.m. About 55,000 runners and 120 wheelchair athletes participated in this big sporting event. The Peachtree Road Race is the world's largest 10K race and like every year, the organizers, athletes and spectators were very pleased about it. The Swiss Marcel Hug was forth of the wheelchair racers.

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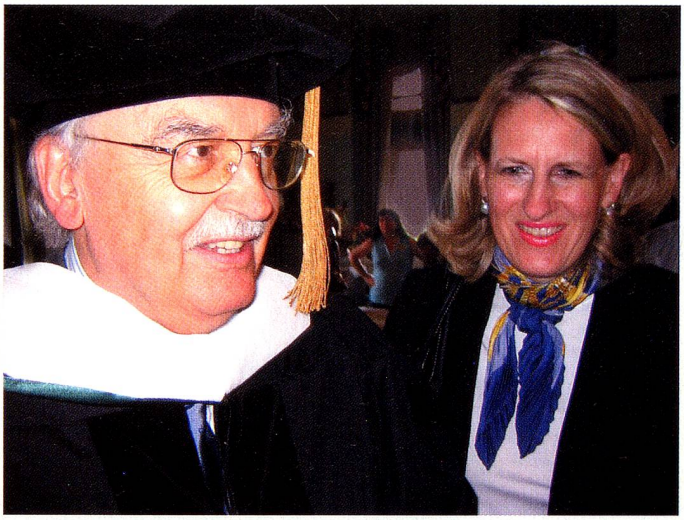
Farewell to Consul General Hermann Buff with an Honorary Doctorate Degree

After five years at the helm of the Consulate General of Switzerland in Chicago, Consul General Hermann Buff finished his term of office at the end of May 2007. He returned to Switzerland to enjoy his deserved retirement after over 40 years of service for the Swiss Government.

Prior to his departure, Mr. Buff was selected to be the 2007 Commencement Speaker at Roosevelt University of Chicago. At the same time, Roosevelt University awarded him an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters, honoris causa, for his leadership and the service and engagement the Consulate General provided to Switzerland and the Chicago community over the length of his tenure as Consul General in Chicago. The Consulate General is proud and pleased that this special degree was bestowed upon Mr. Buff.



Consul General Hermann Buff and his wife Sylvia at the Roosevelt University where he was the commencement speaker and received an honorary doctorate degree

In his Commencement Speech in the beautiful Auditorium Theatre on May 11, 2007, Mr. Buff's advice to the graduates of Roosevelt University was heartfelt and genuine, when he said that perseverance, love for family and friends and the willingness to "go the extra mile" in all endeavours should be guiding principles on their journey through life. He also reminded the audience that getting to know the world, other cultures and mores would be vital ingredients to understanding our global world better and keeping it peaceable.

It is the first time in the history of the Consulate General of Switzerland in Chicago that a Consul General was given the privilege to be the Commencement Speaker at a major university and that he was awarded an honorary doctorate degree. Congratulations to Mr. Buff on both accounts!

We wish Mr. Buff and his wife Sylvia a good start in Switzerland and trust that Chicago will always be a special memory for them.

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Swiss Day on Daley Plaza

On August 1, 2007, Chicago marked **Swiss Day on Daley Plaza** under the auspices of the Consulate General of Switzerland. Swiss Day on Daley Plaza was organized with the collaboration and participation of the following Swiss organizations: Lucerne Committee of the Chicago Sister Cities International Program, Swiss-American Business Council (SABC), Swiss Benevolent Society of Chicago, Swiss Club of Chicago, United Swiss Societies of Chicago, and Swiss International Air Lines.

Swiss Day on Daley Plaza. **Photo by Regula Bowling.**

Swiss Day on Daley Plaza featured a Swiss Information tent, which offered visitors a vast array of information about Switzerland as a tourist, business or education destination, and about the Swiss organizations and the Swiss community in Chicago. Not only were brochures and hand-outs available, but many volunteers were on hand as well to answer audience questions. Entertainment was provided by the *New Glarus Folklore Group* and the *Sam Burckhardt Quartet*. It was obvious that the audience enjoyed the mix of folklore (Alphorn, Yodel, and Talerschwingen), jazz and swing. For the Swiss amongst the audience, it was particularly moving to see the Swiss flag rise as the New Glarus Folklore Group sang the Swiss National Anthem.

Swiss Day at Daley Plaza was an attractive platform for all par-ticipants to introduce their organizations to the Chicago audience. Swiss International Airlines offered a round trip ticket for two to Switzerland in the Swiss Sweepstakes. This gesture proved to be a great draw at Daley Plaza. The program was moved along with competence and charm by our compatriot Ernie Brauchli as Master of Ceremony.

For a few hours on August 1, Daley Plaza was transformed into a "Swiss" Plaza beautifully framed by a large "Switzerland" banner, the Swiss Flag, the Swiss Information Tent and the stage with Swiss entertainment. Together with perfect weather,

New Glarus Folklore Group and Sam Burckhardt Quartet
Photo by Isaline Georgi

Swiss Day on Daley Plaza turned out to be a beautiful event.

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Young Swiss Rowing for US and Swiss Teams

Jane Imfeld is the daughter of Mark and Verena Mulder of Grapevine, who are members of the Swiss Club of Dallas and North Texas. Jane's passion is rowing, and this year she was able to earn several rewards, fruit of her hard training. Together with Kristen Youngs of the Dallas Rowing Club, Jane won the women's youth lightweight double at the U.S. Rowing Youth National Championship near Cincinnati, June 6-8, 2007. All the races were 2,000 meters. Jane and Kristen had not been defeated during this last rowing season, even though both have been rowing less than two years.

140 teams were represented from 29 States with 287 boats. In the lightweight women's double, Dallas Rowing Club easily won, clocking a 7:49.05. The Dallas boat crossed the finish line more than 13 seconds ahead of second place. The battle for the silver medal, however, was very tight as Holy Spirit High School edged out California Yacht Club by 0.05 seconds. This was Jane's second trip to the Nationals. Last year she placed second in the Women's Youth 2X. She has one more chance to participate and says she will return in 2008.

Jane's next goal was to make the Swiss Junior National Team for a trip to the "Coupe de la Jeunesse" (Youth Cup) in Varese, Italy. "See Club Biel" and coach Anne-Marie Howald had agreed to host Jane while in Switzerland. See Club had several regattas for which to prepare. The first one was the Greifensee Regatta. Rowing for See Club Biel, Luci Kunz and Jane rowed to a third place in the Elite Women's Doppelzweier (2X). and 4th in the Doppelvierer Elite Frauen (Quad). In the Swiss National Regatta 2007 on the Rotsee, Jane and Luci finished second in the Doppelzweier (2X) and Doppelvierer (Quad) in the Junior Women's 17-18 years old group.

Then came preparations at the Swiss National Rowing Center in Sarnen. All of the Swiss Junior National Team members were there. This was the first time that Jane and Chantale Rosset from "Club Aviron Vesenaz" had rowed together after having competed against one another in the Swiss National Regatta. Finally, with all the preparation complete, the team departed for Varese, Italy where a group of 12 European Nations was competing. Jane and Chantale finished third in their heat, sending them to the A Finals, where they finished 6th overall on August 4. The next day they finished 2nd in their heat, and again finished sixth overall.

Jane returned home after having said good-byes to her host family, her host club, and her coach. She is looking forward to her Senior year at Grapevine High School, Texas, and is hoping to return to Switzerland next year to compete in the "Under 23" group in the lightweight Single and Double after competing for Dallas Rowing Club in various regattas this next season.

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Jane Imfeld, Coach Ashlee Branan, and Kristen Youngs (from left) hold their National Championship trophy and wear their medals proudly after winning their race on East Fork Lake Reservoir in Batavia, Ohio, near Cincinnati. **Photo by Verena Mulder**

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Book Review

Historical Dictionary of Switzerland

by Leo Schelbert

Leo Schelbert's Historical Dictionary of Switzerland is the 53rd entry in the Historical Dictionaries of Europe series published by Scarecrow Press, and it is a model for future works.

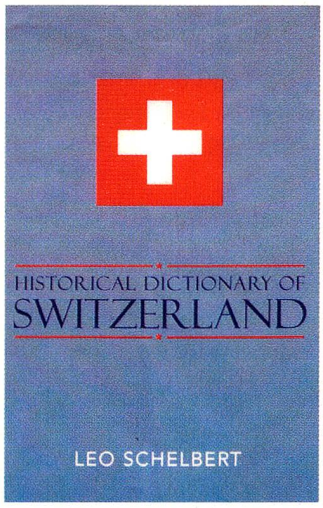
Too often these reference works are mere compilations of topics and people extracted from textbooks with limited interpretive perspectives that focus, for example, on the economic or political realms. Schelbert, emeritus professor of history at the University of Illinois at Chicago, has produced a work distinguished by its breadth and depth, the result of a more comprehensive analysis which acknowledges with Jacob Burckhardt, the 19th c. Swiss historian, that the discipline of history is "a form of Bildung, that is, of an interpretive grasping of the complexity of human affairs, shaped by change that derived from the complex interaction of multiple forces." (p. 54) Schelbert's Dictionary is a reconstruction of the history of Switzerland from its earliest beginnings (the Chronology begins in 130,000 – 8000 BCE) to the present time which examines all aspects of its social whole over time – the economic and political realms and also the religious and intellectual and social and environmental realms as they are shaped by forces from within and without, the result of its enmeshment within Europe and the global community.

A brief look at the entry on "Religion" provides an example of Schelbert's thorough approach. It first profiles Switzerland's pre-Christian Celtic, Germanic, and Roman heritage and then traces the slow, uneven acceptance of Christianity after it was introduced by Roman legionaries in the 5th c., in part due to its geography, until a gradual fusion of religious expressions emerged as the dominant culture of the European Middle Ages.

What follows is a detailed outline of the tumult caused by the Reformation in Switzerland that at times resulted in armed conflict and culminated in a brief civil war in 1847 when victorious Protestants transformed the Confederacy into a Confederation. Swiss Catholics responded by creating parallel institutions to those of the Protestant cantons, including youth and labor organizations, Gymnasia, and a university, until the 1920s when they again became full participants in the Confederation's political and cultural life.

Professor Schelbert identifies forces such as anticommunism, ecumenism, and secularism as well as the introduction often by newcomers of non-Christian faith traditions as factors that have diminished Swiss denominational conflict though at times also have created new tensions which regional and national organizations and institutions work to resolve.

Throughout this entry as with all others, Schelbert highlights



relevant places, topics (the entry on "Catholicism" is a must-read), and people that refer to other entries to deepen understanding.

In the 103 biographical entries, almost a third of which are women, Professor Schelbert conveys the individual's unique response to the challenges of her or his historical moment. The entries include famous Swiss citizens – Ansermet, Barth, Einstein, Hesse, Jung, Klee, Kübler-Ross, Küng, Piaget, Rousseau and Spyri, among others – and the unfamiliar: Maria Sybilla Merian who in the 17th c. became a natural scientist and illustrator of specimens she collected in Europe and in South America; Regula Engel-Egli, mother of 21, who occasionally disguised herself as a soldier to fight alongside her officer-husband including at the battle of Waterloo and who later wrote about her experiences; Marie Pouchelin-Goegg who left her first husband, a merchant, absorbed the revolutionary ideas of her second husband, and became an advocate in the 19th c. for women's legal, economic, and educational equality; Henry Dunant who initiated the Red Cross movement, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the Geneva Convention of 1864, in part the result of an accidental visit to a battlefield in Italy in 1859; Mari Sandoz, who grew up on a Nebraska homestead in the early 20th c. and argued as a historian and novelist for the cultural equivalence of the American Indian as well as the greed and violence of white culture; and Tariq Ramadan, a contemporary philosopher and Islamic theologian who works as his father did to assist Muslims living in the West to accommodate its secular culture and also to preserve their religious and cultural identity.

Leo Schelbert seamlessly weaves together the strands of his complex interpretive perspective into a reference work accessible to the general reader as well as the specialist. Along with the four Maps (that are too small to be easily read, my only criticism); the 19-page Chronology; the 42-page Introduction; the 10 Appendixes; and the 410-page Dictionary, the Historical Dictionary of Switzerland includes a thematically arranged and current 82-page Bibliography. Schelbert's Dictionary is an example of the historian's craft at its best.

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New York

- Switzerland gets great marks
- New investments from the U.S.
- Sustainable Energy on the rise

The Economist and Financial Times rank Switzerland as a leading country for innovation and Biotech

According to a new report from the Economist Intelligence Unit (May 2007), Switzerland ranks 2nd after leader Japan among the world's most innovative nations. And the Financial Times reports that biotechnology companies have been flocking to list on the Swiss stock exchange over the past year, giving further weight to the country's reputation as the natural home of the drugs industry.

Ernst & Young's European Investment Monitor 2006 on Foreign Direct Investments in Europe puts Switzerland at 8th place with 136 projects, compared to 93 the prior year .

Newcomers from the U.S include:

- Ohio-based Diebold, Inc, which has announced the establishment of its new EMEA headquarters in Geneva.
- From Massachusetts, Varian Semiconductor Equipment Associates Inc. has approved a plan to establish operations in Schaffhausen and
- Highland Capital Inc. has announced the launch of its European headquarters in Geneva.
- From California, Intel is joining Switzerland's STMicroelectronics to form a new company to produce flash memory chips, and
- Applied Materials, Inc., has agreed to acquire privately held HCT Shaping Systems SA in Cheseaux near Lausanne.
- CHS Inc, a grains, food and energy company based in Minnesota, is opening a grain marketing office in Geneva.

Louis Palmer's "Solar Taxi" at the site of the European Sustainable Energy Forum in Lucerne.

Photo: Martin Holladay.

Switzerland takes a leadership position in sustainable energy production.

A "green" country in terms of electrical energy generation, with 60% supplied by hydro and 40% by nuclear, Switzerland is actively involved in developing new ways to achieve energy efficiency. These efforts were the focus of a media tour hosted in July by LOCATION Switzerland. The weeklong event drew 26 journalists from the United States and 11 other countries. Highlights of the tour included Bertrand Piccard's Solar Impulse™ project to travel nonstop around the world on a solar-powered plane; the sendoff of Louis Palmer's "Solar Taxi" on its round-the-world trip, and Martin Vosseler's "Sun 21," a motorized boat powered by solar energy that recently completed a trans-Atlantic voyage in New York.

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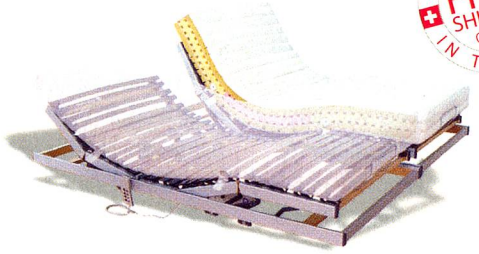

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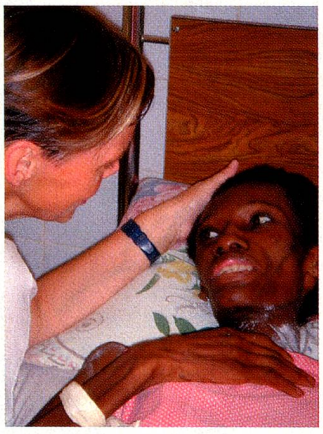
In Africa, people infected with the HIV/AID virus, often become outcasts and have no hope of being admitted to a hospital – besides being too dreadfully poor to afford treatment. Shunned they are left to perish miserably. Uncounted children are orphaned and left to fend for themselves.

Lotti Hausamann Latrous, married to a Business Executive, stationed in Abidjan, capital of the Ivory Coast, could have lived a life of luxury. What she discovered in the city's Adjouffou slums turned her life around.

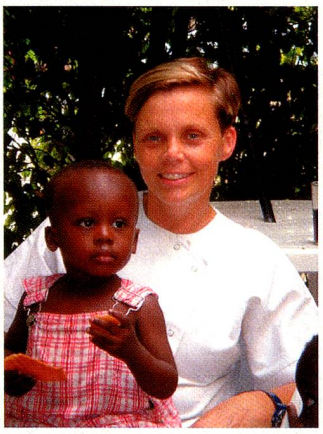
Hardly had they established the hospital when the Latrous' were transferred to Cairo. The family appealed to the company to let them stay – to no avail. Lotti held counsel with the family; her understanding husband and children decided she should stay in Abidjan to continue her work, and they would juggle their time between Abidjan and Cairo. Lotti therefore tearfully calls herself an egoiste for shortchanging the time with her family.

For her miraculous, selfless work, the people of Switzerland voted Lotti Latrous "Woman of the Year" in 2004 and so did people in Germany in 2005. In addition, Lotti Latrous received the Adele Duttweiler Award.

Lotti Latrous holding Emanuel



Comforting Emilie



With HIV positive Mohamed

With her husband's help, she established a small hospital, "Le Centre d'Espoir" (The Center of Hope), where the sick were cleaned, clothed and given medical treatment. If help came too late, she held and comforted the dying until they left this world.

Swiss author Gabriella Baumann-von Arx spent weeks with Lotti in Abidjan and wrote two books about her work which became instant bestsellers.

Young German film maker Stephan Anspichler made a documentary film on Lotti Latrous. On a shoestring budget, he and his cameraman worked weeks in Abidjan. The result is a sensitive documentary of life and destiny in a region where aids is so rampant.

The film had its World Premiere in Los Angeles with Lotti Latrous, her husband Aziz Latrous, daughter Sarah, Stephan Anspichler, film maker, Gabriella Baumann-Von Arx, author, personally attending. After the screening, the audience quietly rose and gave Lotti and Anspichler a standing ovation.

DORIS RITZI

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Pictures taken from Lotti's Web-site

Vitus

Fredi Murer's Film 'Vitus' Up For Oscar Consideration

Switzerland entered this wonderful film for Academy Award consideration in the category «Best Foreign Language Film».

Fredi Murer's tale is about a young boy Vitus, who plays classical music like a virtuoso. In addition, at Kindergarten age, he reads books and encyclopedias, plays chess and is a genius at mathematics. His parents realize they have a prodigy at their hands and anticipate a brilliant future for him.

Particularly his mother wants Vitus to be serious about his career. But Vitus prefers to be in the workshop with his Grandfather (played by Bruno Ganz) who also induces in him an interest in flying airplanes. As both the boys parents work, a young baby sitter, Isabelle, takes care of him. Vitus adores her. His Mother is concerned that the boy's feelings for Isabelle might rise above friendship. She fires her and takes over the babysitting herself. Vitus is crushed and begins to rebel. One day when he falls on his head, he feigns having lost his precious gifts. His parents are devastated. But quietly, he uses his mathematical gifts to work the stock market and creates a stunt.

Ultimately, Vitus realizes his precious gift and finds his way back. He pursues his destiny in classical music and even learns to fly an airplane. On October 7, 2004, at the age of 12 Vitus is the star soloist playing the piano concerto in A-Minor by Robert Schumann with the Zurich Chamber Orchestra. The audience is stunned at the technical ability and the musically mature and perfect rendition of the small boy and thanks him with a standing ovation.

Anyone who has seen this film will wonder whether Vitus really and truly played this concert. He did. Murer had been looking around Musical Academies for a young boy who plays piano above average and who would also be a fine actor to understand the complexity of this film. It was a stroke of luck when he found Teo Gheorghiu from the Zürcher Oberland who fit the bill.

The film is spoken in Swiss German with English subtitles.

DORIS RITZI

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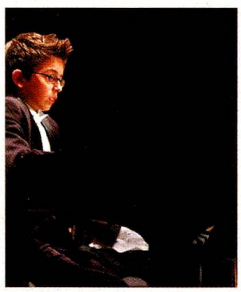
All pictures taken from the web-site of the film



Teo Gheorghiu as Vitus

Bruno Ganz as the grandfather

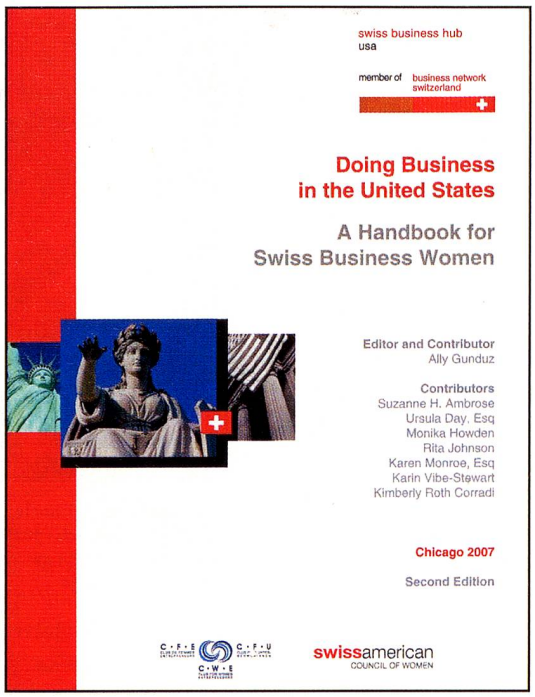
Scene from the film

Teo Gheorghiu plays with with the Zurich Chamber Orchestra

Cultivating Switzerland's Growing Competitive Edge – Swiss Women

In recognition of the powerful economic potential and value of Swiss women and the positive role they play in the future of Switzerland's development and international trade, Swiss Business Hub USA together with OSEC Business Network Switzerland and its partners launched an initiative to encourage and support Swiss women interested or involved in international trade.

The first phase of the initiative began with the publication of "Doing Business in the United States: A Handbook for Swiss Women". The publication received great interest and support from Swiss women, women's organizations, businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs. While the handbook can be used by all, segments of the report specifically focus on opportunities only available to women in the United States. Since its publication, the handbook has been in great demand leading to the publication of a second edition launched in March 2007.



The second phase of the initiative to encourage and support Swiss women in international business, was followed by three conferences in Zurich, Lausanne, and Geneva. One of them was held at Banque Cantonale de Genève, in Conches, Switzerland on March 12, 2007, in partnership with the Swiss American Council of Women, Femme Entrepreneur, and the Geneva Chamber of Commerce. It was a very successful half-day. Over 85 participants had the opportunity to meet senior level American and Swiss trade officials and business contacts. Interactive presentations focused on strategy and skill building to meet the unique needs of Swiss women business owners interested in doing business in the United States.

In a global, fast paced market, one always needs to find a competitive edge. The role of Swiss women in international trade presents Switzerland a unique and progressive edge that offers a win-win situation for all involved. These initiatives reflect Switzerland's progressive trade promotion policy to employ all its resources to compete successfully in a truly global economy.

The 2006 edition of the handbook can be downloaded free of charge from www.swissbusinesshub.org, with click on "Know How", then "Industry Information".

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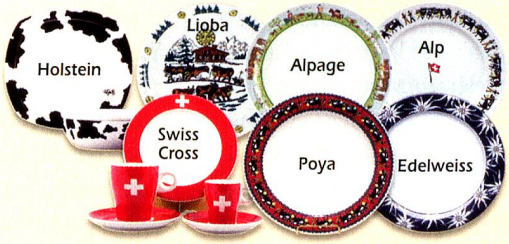


Langenthal China - 7 patterns available

Wisconsin

Squeezebox Night

Turner Hall of Monroe's second monthly "Squeezebox Night" in the Ratskeller Restaurant drew in a whole ensemble of toe-tapping instrumentalists, including four accordionists, two guitarists, a bass player, banjo player and an auto harpist, not to mention a room full of diners enjoying the music of the informal jam session. One of the accordionists, Steve Palm of Machesney Park, IL, noted "there is nothing like this in the Rockford area and was well worth the drive to play". Another accordionist, 91-year-old LeRoy Wuethrich of Monroe, had no trouble keeping up with his younger counterparts, especially on the old Swiss tunes. Bass player Margie Schilt, also of Monroe, nostalgically pointed out that she is pictured in Turner Hall's entryway playing bass with the legendary Rudy Burkhalter accordion school band, and here she is, 75 years later, again playing bass with accordionists at Turner Hall.

Sponsored by the Swiss Heritage Series of the Turner Hall of Monroe, Squeezebox Night is intended for all ability levels and all types of accordion-like instruments, providing people an opportunity to re-acquaint themselves with the instrument in a fun and non-threatening way, as well as offering veteran players a chance to come together and share different playing styles. Squeezebox Nights are scheduled for the third Tuesday evening of each month starting at around 6 pm.

Having a great time, from left to right: Margie Schilt (you can only see her hand playing the bass), Hedy Wuethrich - guitar, Ted Peterson - guitar, LeRoy Wuethrich (91 years old!) - accordion, Judy Frazier - autoharp/accordion, Del Heins - accordion, Steve Palm - accordion, Jerry Hastings - banjo

A special lighter menu is available in the Ratskeller the evenings of the accordion jam sessions. Turner Hall of Monroe, the only Turner Hall of Swiss origin left in the United States, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit Swiss heritage and community center and is listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places. It is smoke-free and handicapped-accessible.

More information is available at www.TurnerHallofMonroe.org.

DEBORAH KRAUSS SMITH
SwissHall@TurnerHallofMonroe.org
608-328-4838

Oregon

Portland Sängerfest July 17 – 20, 2008

Yodeling and Alphorn playing stars to shine in Portland, Oregon

Fred Burri brought his lively yodeling style to people throughout the world with appearances on television, radio, live stage and a historic 18 years at the Matterhorn in Disneyland – California.

Shirley Abbott Clark began her singing career at age 12 with her mother, Betty Abbott. They performed throughout the Pacific Northwest, Canada, California, Ohio and Wisconsin.

Lisa Ward – Dillier quickly established herself as a premier yodeler. For years she was the featured yodel soloist at Oktoberfests in Oregon and Hawaii. Lisa has made several recordings and has performed on radio and television.

Sandy Gernhart performs both the inherited styles of Swiss Yodeling as well as combinations of traditional favorites with novel technique. Sandy has made several recordings and has performed on a motion picture sound track.

Peter Rosenast was born in Switzerland and moved to Oregon in 1970. He has an exceptionally strong and beautiful voice and yodels with intense emotions. His "Nature" yodels are sung without verses and show his vocal range and dexterity.

Annelies Caprez started singing with the Seattle Alpenroesli. When Starbucks opened in Zürich, Annelies was asked to yodel at their corporate headquarters in Seattle. Annelies is a charter member of the Enzian Swiss Ladies Choir.

Thus far, **42 Alphorn players** have indicated an interest in coming to the Portland Sängerfest. They hail from 6 states: Washington, Oregon, California, Minnesota, Utah and Virginia as well as Vancouver, Canada. They will attend a workshop lead by Swiss master alphorn player **Heinz della Torre** and perform at the yodeling and singing concert July 18, 2008 and at the Cedarville Park Festival on July 19, 2008.

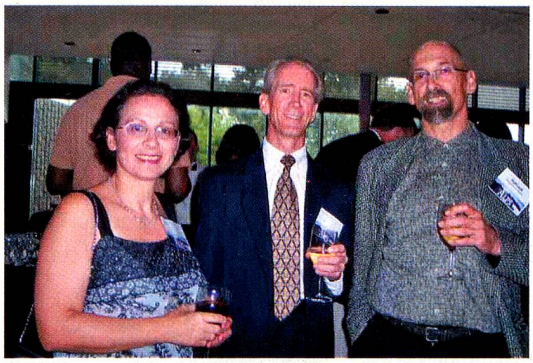
For a detailed schedule of events, tickets, hotel accommodations and other information please visit the festival web site: swissfest2008.asharperfocus.net
or write to
Swissfest2008, P.O. Box 1955, OR, 97339.
Hotel reservations may be made by calling 1-800-996-0510, before June 16, 2008. Be sure to ask for the "*Swiss Singers*" special rates.

BOB ULRICH, FESTIVAL PRESIDENT
bobulrich@earthlink.net

Texas

- Ambassador Ziswiler, Consul General Hunn and Swiss Tourism Group visit Houston - Nomination of New Honorary Consul

Consul General Hunn opened the proceedings by introducing Ambassador Ziswiler. The Ambassador continued with an inspiring speech in which he highlighted



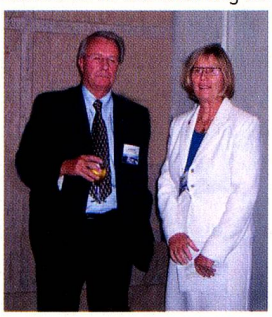
Eleonore Orgish, Scot Orgish the Swiss Trade Commissioner and Rolf Laub

the contribution the Swiss have made since the 19th century in all walks of American life. In particular the speech focused on local interest mentioning George H. Hermann, who was born in Houston in 1843 to parents who had immigrated from Davos. Mr. Hermann was a wonderful Swiss benefactor who donated land that made it possible to build the Texas Medical Center and the beautiful Hermann Park as well as numerous city sites on which stand various civic structures including our City Hall. The Ambassador also made mention of Henry Rosenberg who made his fortune in the railroad and banking businesses. The family founded the Rosenberg Library in Galveston, the oldest and still one of the most impressive in Texas. The town of Rosenberg, on the outskirts of Houston, is named in their honor. The achievements of so many more Swiss make it impossible to detail all of their histories although the Ambassador did mention one of our favorite film stars, the part Swiss, Renée Zellweger, a native of Houston.

Mr. Ziswiler then announced the opening of the new Honorary Consulate in Houston. He introduced the new Honorary Consul, Margherita Young-Zellweger. Ms. Young-Zellweger, in brief remarks, expressed her gratitude at being nominated for such an honor. She outlined her duties and responsibilities and her commitment to discharging these duties to the best of her abilities. Also she encouraged everyone to visit her beautiful native country with all of its diverse attractions.

President of the Swiss American Society Marie-Theres Fischer Odermatt and Susanna Nicollier

Mr. Alex Hermann of Swiss Tourism then continued by discussing the work of his group in New York and around the country to promote travel to Switzerland. He introduced members of his team in attendance and then went on to present the film, "The Alps." The IMAX film about an ascent of the Swiss alpine peak Eiger was wonderful. A special treat was the attendance of John Harlin III, the mountain climber who was featured in the film. At the termination of the showing we were treated to his personal comments. He told of his father's death on the Eiger some decades before and his personal quest to conquer the mountain along the same route on which his father had perished. It was an extremely touching and emotional narration. At the conclusion Mr. Harlin graciously answered numerous questions form a genuinely riveted audience.



Ambassador Urs Ziswiler and Honorary Consul Margherita Young-Zellweger

Many thanks to all the people who made the evening memorable as well as to my husband, other family members and friends for their support.

TEXT:
MARGHERITA YOUNG-ZELLWEGER
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HOUSTON, TEXAS
margrityoungzellweger@gmail.com

FOTOS: YOLANDA KLYHONS

Florida

Report from the Swiss American Club of WS Florida

Tropical Storm Barry rushed through the area in time for the weather to completely clear up for the club's family picnic on Sunday, June 3. Some members arrived early at Wiggins Pass State Park in North Naples to mark the parking and picnic areas, and to do a little decorating. The flags of the Swiss cantons were hoisted between two palm trees, and snowy-white cloths soon covered the tables.

One by one members arrived, toting their coolers with whatever they were going to fix for lunch. Bratwurst, knockwurst, steaks, chicken, corn on the cob - you name it, it was being grilled. The children ventured out into the higher than normal surf and had a great time. Some members took an after lunch stroll on the beach.

1st of August: Anna & Eric Babor busy helping Walter Heierli and Werner Christinger

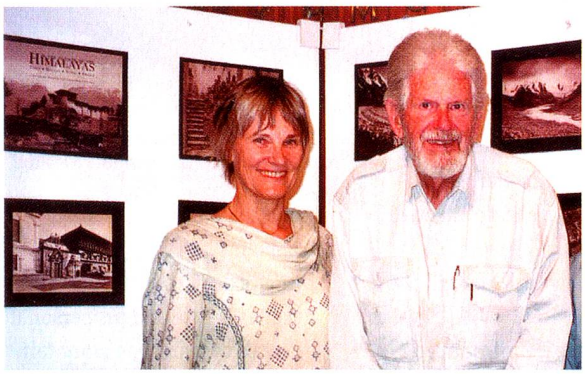
In July club members were invited for a game of golf in Punta Gorda, followed by a wine cocktail at the Swiss Connections + , a chocolate shop owned by a member couple. Dinner followed at a local restaurant where awards for the afternoon golf game were being handed out.

The Independence Day celebration was moved to Sunday, August 5, which gave more members the opportunity to attend. Everybody gathered at a private beach club in Bonita Springs. The vice president offered a glass of Swiss wine for a toast, the speech by the Swiss President was listened to, and the first verse of the national anthem was being sung. Then bratwurst and knockwurst were expertly cooked and served with bread and mustard. Everybody had brought their own drinks, and everybody was having a great time. Swiss music played in the background until it was time to watch the sunset and pack up for the night.

TEXT: ROSMARIE STROTHER
PHOTO: SYLVIA WENGER
Rosmarief37@aol.com

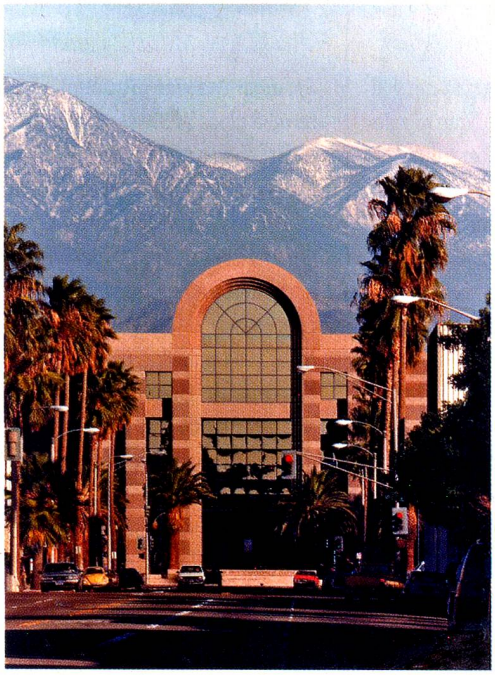
California

Los Angeles: Swiss Explorer and Architect Kurt Meyer



Kurt and Pamela Meyer at a book launch in New Delhi India (the publisher is in India), with some old photos from the book in the background

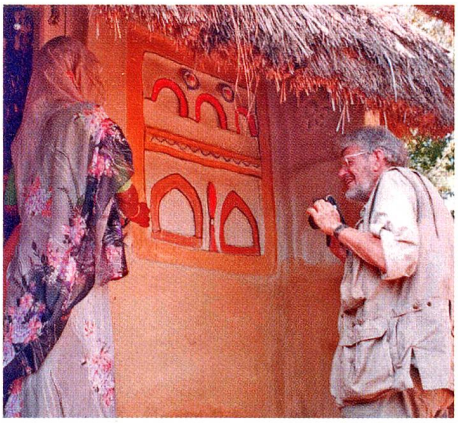
"There are two kinds of architects," Swiss-born and ETH-educated architect Kurt Meyer explains. "Some create sculptural monuments and others design to serve the needs and function of the structure." Kurt Meyer identifies with the latter. A man influenced by Le Corbusier, you detect architectural Zeitgeist. Post WWII the young architect immigrated to Pennsylvania, where he found the colonial style boring. A friend suggested new horizons in California. Meyer and his young wife journeyed Route 66 in an old Chevy, arriving in Santa Monica in 1949 with a few dollars to their name.



San Bernardino County Government building

Kurt soon joined an architectural firm. When colleagues suggested founding their own company, he became the architect-entrepreneur he is known as today. His signature buildings include the San Bernardino County Government Center, Redlands University core buildings, Huntington Beach City Hall, the Air Quality Control building in Diamond Bar and the Plaza de la Raza in Los Angeles. Deeply committed to his community, he was Chairman of the Los Angeles Redevelopment Agency under Mayor Tom Bradley and Chairman of the Board of the Southern California Institute of Architecture [SCI-Arc]. A Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, the Swiss architect continues to visit his creations, where occupants still praise his design.

Kurt explains that he is now in his second lifetime. As a boy in Zurich he was captivated by the Himalaya. At age 13, he was given a book for Christmas about Tibet, which he read in one night. He yearned to see the region for himself. In the 1970s, after the political climate eased, he made his first trip to "his" Himalaya. He knew he would return. Single again, one day he met Pamela Deuel, a writer. She too had toured the Himalaya. On their second date he gave Pamela a visa application for Nepal. In 1992 Kurt sold his architectural firm; the couple traded their comfortable life style for a jeep, tent and local guide and explored the Himalayas for the next nine years in search of local folk art. Invited by friendly farmers they pitched their tent in farmyards. One village wondered if Kurt might be a deity. Sharing Kurt's yen to explore, Pamela was the ideal partner and collaborator. They took photos and published books about the artistic Tharu culture of Nepal. Kurt explains: "Art has a different purpose in the Himalaya: the meaning is in its creation. The finished product is obsolete. I call it 'art without artists.' " When you hear Kurt talk, you want to listen. During the monsoon months, the couple went to Switzerland, England and the USA, to research and write up their findings. They collected rare photographs of the Himalaya taken around 1900 by Englishman John Claude White. Writing the story behind the images, the Meyers published the historic photos in their book: *In the Shadow of the Himalayas: Tibet, Bhutan, Nepal and Sikkim* (2005).



Kurt taking a photo of wall mural in a Nepali village

Pamela with a Nepali woman, both in native dress

Today the couple lives in Los Angeles, naturally in a Kurt-Meyer design. Their beautiful home radiates flair for color. Memories from their Himalayan explorations are mixed with Swiss cow bells. In the garden you find a Heidi fountain.

Some of us may remember Kurt Meyer as an active early member of the Grindelwald Ski Club. A co-founder was Swiss astrophysicist Fritz Zwicky of CalTech. The Swiss-American Club of Los Angeles was born, the pre-curser of the Swiss American Chamber of Commerce. Kurt Meyer is truly a Swiss pioneer who has left his mark in his second Heimat.

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San Francisco: INOUT Designers Exhibit at AIA SF

The young Swiss design group INOUT, based in Lausanne, brings an exhibit of their work that (re)designs urban landscapes. INOUT designers have partnered with the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects along with swissnex San Francisco to bring this unique exhibit to the West Coast.

AIA San Francisco
130 Sutter St, Suite 600
San Francisco, CA 94104
(Thursday, November 1, 2007
5:30 pm - Vernissage)

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