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Swiss Societies

FOSSUK WELCOMES NEW BLOOD

This year's FOSSUK AGM was a busy affair navigated with precision and great aplomb by President Margrit Lyster. As Andrew Littlejohn reports, more than 50 expats, delegates and dignitaries gathered at the Swiss Embassy in London four weeks earlier than originally planned to witness the inauguration of four delegates to represent the UK in Switzerland at the Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA) and to bid farewell to Ambassador Anton Thalmann and his wife, Dominique, following their successful three-year posting in London.

Most of the morning of the 48th FOSSUK AGM was set aside for the CSA election. This year the Swiss expat community had the unique opportunity to elect 2 new delegates to the Council. A further two were elected by the Swiss clubs. All four delegates will serve until 2017.

12 candidates from around the UK, some of whom had come along to the AGM to witness the outcome of the vote, had put themselves forward for the election. From the 152 public votes cast, it soon became clear Alexandre Tissot (Binfield, Berks) and Gabrielle Hogan-Brun (Bristol) had gained the

clear majority. They join FOSSUK President Margrit Lyster, who was elected for a fourth time and the third of the new delegates Franz Mueheim, who had received the full support of Edinburgh Swiss Club.

Peter Mueller-McDougall, Scotland's Honorary Consul General spoke proudly of Mueheim's success, which he described as "a success for all of us who live in Scotland and supported Franz in his campaign."

The atmosphere was jubilant as all those attending the AGM made their way to the embassy's dining room for a three-course, silver-service lunch, sponsored by Ambassador Thalmann, who thanked the Swiss diaspora in the UK for its support during his three years at the embassy.

The Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (ASO) was well-represented as it always is at the UK's AGMs and the afternoon session opened with speeches by ASO Vice-President Jean-Paul Aeschlimann and the organisation's Director Rudolf Wyder, who also announced his retirement this year.

The highlight of the 2nd part of the afternoon was Peter Barber's pres-



Photo by Mare Peter

entation, "Preserving the Past for the Future". The well-known historian and President of the Unione Ticinese offered useful advice about how Swiss Clubs and Societies should best-preserve existing historical and valuable material. Barber began by describing how club members could assemble their archive and who might be best-suited to take on that responsibility.

Full details of Peter Barber's speech "Preserving the Past for the Future" can be found on the FOSSUK website: www.swiss-societies.co.uk

Embassy News

Welcome Message from Ambassador Dominik Furgler

It is a great pleasure to introduce myself as the new Ambassador of Switzerland to the United Kingdom. Arriving at the Embassy in London after four fascinating and eventful years as Ambassador in Egypt prompts a mix of memories and anticipation; I already worked at the Embassy in London as Head of the Economic Section from 1997-2001, but of course much has changed in the intervening years and I am looking forward to discovering new aspects of life and society across the UK.

I am also greatly looking forward to reacquainting myself with the large and diverse Swiss community across the UK. The 30,000 Swiss citizens registered as living in this

country do great work at all levels to promote cultural and commercial exchanges and in their own ways, act as ambassadors for Switzerland and embody the enduring friendship between our two countries.

The Swiss Review is an excellent way of maintaining links between domestic affairs and the Swiss communities abroad, and I am pleased that we have a specific "Embassy" section in these pages to let you know what we're doing here in London. We are always keen to hear your views, and you can also contact us via Facebook and Twitter, where you'll find further information about our events and activities.

[facebook.com/swissembassyuk](https://www.facebook.com/swissembassyuk)
twitter.com/swissembassyuk



Photo by Daniel Pedroletti

Editorial

Dear Readers,



The Swiss community has spoken and four new delegates, two of whom were voted by you, will represent your interests at the Council for Swiss Abroad (CSA) for the next four years. Aware of the importance of their role in the community, all four attended the recent CSA conference in Davos and give us a flavour of the main talking points within Switzerland's "fifth canton".

The sun shone in most parts on the 1st August, which brought out hordes of families and friends, as we join Swiss National Day revellers in all corners of the UK and Ireland.

90 is an age that rings out in this issue. The post-war years saw many Swiss leaving their homeland to make a new life for themselves in the UK. In celebration of their 90th birthdays, we hear from two 1st generation Swiss emigré about their motivation to set up home in austere Britain more than sixty years ago.

Andrew Littlejohn

Congress for the Swiss Abroad

MESSAGE FROM DAVOS

Davos was the destination of this year's Congress for the Swiss Abroad. "Switzerland vs Globalisation" was the main theme of the two-day event. Prior to the Congress the newly constituted commission met for the first of its statutory meetings.

More than 100 delegates from all over the world, and Switzerland, attended, including the four from Great Britain: newly elected Gabrielle Hogan-Brun, Alexandre Tissot and Franz Muheim, and re-elected Margrit Lyster, who encouraged her new colleagues to jot down highlights from their first OSA Council meeting.



a bank account. Some delegates appeared to feel they were not treated as members of the Fifth Switzerland but were being punished by the banks for living abroad.

Gabrielle Hogan-Brun

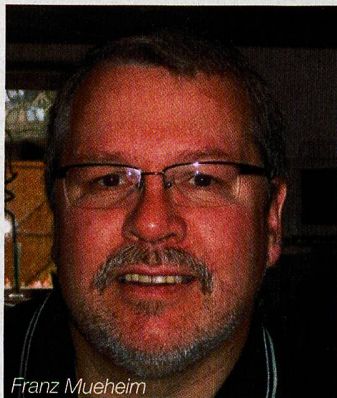


Legislation

On the first day, we discussed the proposed new Legislation for Swiss Persons and Institutions Abroad. The CSA agreed on a response to the green paper, which requests several amendments to the proposal:

1. The duty to immatriculate with the Swiss embassy or consulate of the country of residence needs to be kept. Switzerland must know where the Swiss abroad live.
2. The CSA should be explicitly mentioned in the new law.
3. The Swiss Abroad should be allowed to vote in the community where they have the biggest connections and not only where they lived last.

Franz Mueheim



To comment on any of these topics please send an email to editor@swissreview.co.uk

French tensions

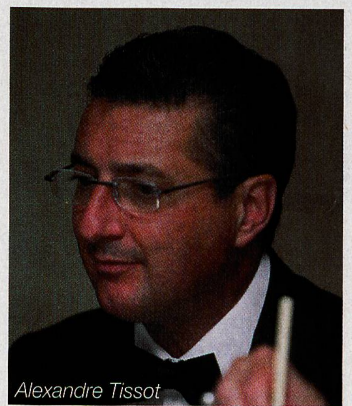
The Council Meeting covered a large number of agenda points, including confirmation of the Council Members. There was tension with the French contingent that led to the incumbent French Council Member stepping down for re-election.

An agitated President of the Council instructed the group from France, in no uncertain terms, to return with a unified position at the next session in March 2013. This unfortunate incident was allegedly triggered by 'political intrigues'. For me, the message was clear: Politics has no place in our organisation and that such 'games' simply should not be tolerated.

I also attended the workshop on Globalisation of Institutions, given my graduate degree in International Economics from the LSE, and was impressed by the quality of the panel members. For me, however, the undertone of these sessions was almost apologetic for the lack of progress in preserving, let alone, enhancing our rights as

Swiss Abroad. During a short break prior to the opening of public events, I strolled to a nearby cafe and found myself in pleasant conversation with delegates from Montreal, Toronto, Copenhagen, and Minneapolis. When 'work' topics did arise it generally was to express frustration with the loss of rights for the Swiss Abroad in terms of Swiss bank accounts and health insurance. What would be taken away next?

Alexandre Tissot



Banking woes

A major point of concern for many delegates from around the world was the changes in banking practice that have resulted from the recent financial crisis. Many told of accounts being closed by their bank at short notice.

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The undertone of these sessions was almost apologetic

This situation was then made worse for some people who found it difficult to open new accounts in other banks. Those who were allowed to keep their accounts were often told that they had to pay significant monthly charges. There was real anger, particularly when it appeared that the Swiss government was unable or unwilling to assist the Swiss abroad to express their links with Switzerland through



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Feature

SBS THROWS ITS ANNUAL PARTY

The Senior Swiss Citizens' annual Tea Party at London's Embassy was a great success again this year. More than 30 local Swiss compatriots celebrating their 80th, 85th and 90th birthdays in 2013 accepted the invitation from the Swiss Benevolent Society London.

Dominik Furgler. During the afternoon tea guests were informed about the work of the Society and opportunities to receive financial support.

The group of expats was especially interested in the Society's visiting service to compatriots in their homes. As in the previous two years this event was a huge success.

Foto: SBS Welfare Officer, Petra Kehr Cocks, in conversation with guests.



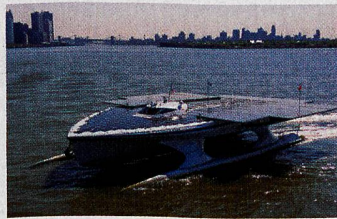
The event was heralded as particularly special as this was the first opportunity for the older Swiss generation to meet the newly appointed Ambassador,

Clean, green PlanetSolar impresses audiences

The world's largest solar boat, MS Turanor PlanetSolar recently made London its final port of call following the PlanetSolar DeepWater scientific research expedition along the Gulf Stream.

for science and education, and for four months it acted as a scientific research platform for the University of Geneva (UNIGE) and an educational platform for schools.

This was the first time the impressive catamaran had demonstrated its objectives as a scientific research vessel and the applications of solar technology to a UK audience.




The PlanetSolar has spent a large part of 2013 as an ambassador

Embassy news

Swiss identity documents

As mentioned in the previous issue, the Regional Consular Centre in London is experiencing a big increase in applications for Swiss identity documents (passport and/or identity card). To avoid lengthy waiting times and stressful situations, please ensure that you apply for a new identity document well ahead of the expiry date of the current document. For further information please visit www.eda.admin.ch/rcclondon,

 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Embassy of Switzerland in the United Kingdom

and click on the section, "Identity documents for Swiss citizens." Telephone 020 7616 6000.

Additional news

Denis Charrière returned to London as Head of the Culture Section after three years as Head of the Cultural Section at the Swiss Embassy in Paris.



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Swiss Clubs in the UK & Ireland

CLUB NEWS · CLUB NEWS · CLUB NEWS · CLUB NEWS

Swiss Club Manchester

Once again our Committee and their co-opted family members had worked hard to set up a festive hall, build a magnificent bonfire and organise fireworks and delicious food from POSH-NOSH (not forgetting to order the essential sausages), making sure that we could all have a great time.

Juerg, our president, welcomed around 60 members, guests and children and acted as an excellent master-of-ceremonies throughout the whole evening. The youngest generation of Helvetians did not pay too much attention to the lovely "Address to the Swiss Abroad" by the Swiss President, nor our rendition of the National Anthem, but very readily abandoned their i-pods and pads for the traditional lanterns and the procession to the bonfire and the very pretty firework display!

John Plumb kindly gave the Club copies of Heidi Miller's song booklet (Jetzt wommer eis joedele), and John Higham accompanied us on his accordion, cleverly picking up the melodies just by listening to us, so - in the glow of the blazing fire - we were producing a quite respectable sound and revelled unashamedly in memories of our childhood and homeland.



Midlands Swiss Society

Members of the Midlands Swiss Society particularly enjoyed the lantern parade at the federal day festivities in Sutton Coldfield. 27 members attended and brought dishes to share including barbecued roast loin of pork, Bratwurst, baked potatoes and several speciality salads, all homemade. The evening was a great success as always and concluded by listening to the president's address to the Swiss Abroad.



Southern Region Swiss Club

Club members enjoying their 1st of August supper on a glorious summer's afternoon; Cantonal flags add colour to the occasion.



Swiss Club Ireland

The 1st of August celebration took place at the Swiss Embassy in Dublin. 500 guests listened to Ambassador Beat Loeliger's farewell speech, as well as an address by Geoff Loane, head of mission for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in the UK and Ireland. It was a good occasion for friends and acquaintances to meet and enjoy the generous hospitality. A good time was had by all.



Swiss Club Edinburgh

The Edinburgh club enjoyed another splendid afternoon in the beautiful garden of Angus and Marie Florence McDonald in Oldhamsstocks, East Lothian. Amongst the guests were four members whose combined age is not far off 365 years. (r-l) Martha Hodge, Nelly Robson, Suzanne Henderson and Tildi Marshall, the latter three are founder members of the Swiss Club Edinburgh.



Taunton and Somerset Swiss Club

Taunton and Somerset Swiss Club had an extra special reason to celebrate on August 1st, as this was also the club's first anniversary, which now has more than 40 enthusiastic members - the oldest of whom is over 90, the youngest a recently born baby boy!

Chairman Christiane Greening Knoepfli has done a super job bringing the Swiss together in the south-west For more details contact: 01823 327308



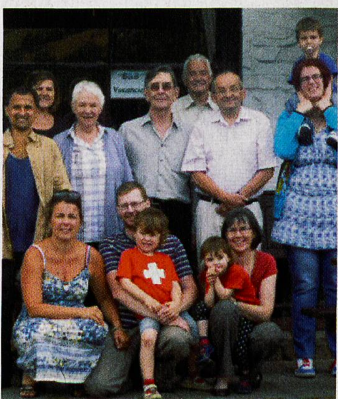
Yorkshire Swiss Club

Approximately 25 members and friends of the Yorkshire Swiss Club met for a Fondue lunch at the Newton-on-Ouse Community Hall, near York to mark Swiss National Day. The room was decked out with Swiss flags, garlands and Swiss posters. Club President, Evy Wardill, welcomed everyone to the event.



North Wales Swiss club

A great day was had by all at the Swiss festivities in the Glyn Valley Hotel, Glyn Ceiriog, North West Wales, which was hosted by the hotel's owners Markus and Heidi Imfeld.



Dates in Wales:

North Wales

The next Fondue/Raclette event for St.Nicolas Day in North Wales will take place on the 7th December from 1 pm to 5pm at Penrallt Baptist Church, Gwynedd, LL52 2EU

<http://www.penrallt.org/findus/index.php>

Please bring your own food to prepare and cook on site. There will be a raffle and hopefully a visit from St. Nicolaus. So any parent who would like their child to receive a present, please bring one ready-wrapped for St Nicolaus on the day!

Press release from West Surrey Swiss Club – August 2013

West Surrey Swiss club celebrated National Day at the Scout Centre in Bookham, our favoured venue for some years now.

46 adults and 6 children enjoyed specially imported Swiss Bratwurst and Cervelat from the BBQ, accompanied by a variety of salads and followed by a sumptuous dessert buffet, supplied by the members.

Next year will be our 20th anniversary, so we hope to welcome everyone again, including some new faces, especially young people and families, to ensure continuity for the next 20 years!

Anyone interested in participating in our activities should contact Ruth Crozier, President westsurreyswiss@aol.com or on 01932 347479.



Miscellaneous

CLUBS AND CULTURE · CLUBS AND CULTURE · CLUBS

Manchester Swiss Club

On a lovely sunny day in September, Manchester Swiss Club held its annual Bowling & Bar-B-Q. 36 Adults and 4 children took part; age range one to eighty nine! We all had a great time.

This year's cup winner was Ian Baker, second prize went to his daughter Rachel and third prize was won by Ella Salden whose dad Richard won the cup last year! Talk about keeping it in the family!

Diary dates:

Tuesday 5 November:
Tour of Media City in Salford

Sunday 8 December
Samichlaus Christmas Party

End of January:
New year's Lunch

Saturday 8 March
Raclette Party



Swiss Ambassador's Award Concert

Concert tour debuts in Belfast

Joseph-Maurice Weder, is a gifted young Swiss pianist who recently graduated with distinction at Basel University of Music. He has already successfully performed as a soloist with several distinguished international orchestras.

Weder is the first award winner to perform in Belfast. The programme features established works from the classical repertoire and a contemporary Swiss composer:

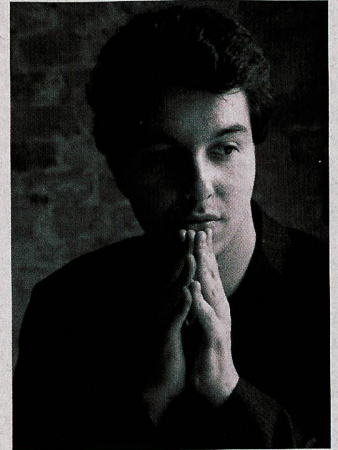
Franz Schubert:
Piano Sonata in A minor, D784
Heinz Holliger: "Elis"
Johannes Brahms:
Piano Sonata No.3 in F minor, Op.5

Performance dates

21 Oct Edinburgh (Main Council Chamber, City Chambers)

22 Oct London (Wigmore Hall)

23 Oct Belfast (Great Hall, Queens



University, Belfast – part of the Ulster Bank Belfast Festival)

25 Oct Cardiff (Dora Stoutzker Hall, Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama)

Ticket sale for all locations:
www.swissculturalfund.org.uk

CHUK Swiss Cultural Events in the UK

16 October 2013 – 9 March 2014

THE EY EXHIBITION: PAUL KLEE

This is the UK's first major show for over a decade at London's Tate Modern. Rediscover Klee's extraordinary body of work and see it in a new light. Paintings, drawings and watercolours from collections around the world will be reunited and displayed alongside each other as the artist originally intended, often for the first time since Klee exhibited them himself.

Venue: Tate Modern, Bankside, London SE1 9TG



Paul Klee *Fire at Full Moon* 1933 Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany

Until 2 November 2013

MARIANNE FLOTRON MOMENTOUS TIMES

Marianne Flotron with new and recent projects in a group exhibition explores the past (the 1913 Dublin Lockout), examines the present (2013), and speculates about the future (2113) conditions of labour and the role of representation in shaping work and workers' rights in Ireland.

NORTHERN IRELAND, Centre for Contemporary Art CCA, 10-12 Artillery Street, Derry-Londonderry, BT48 6RG

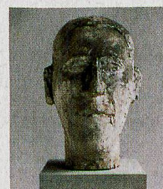


Until 5 January 2014

HANS JOSEPHSOHN SCULPTURE AND DRAWINGS

This is the first major indoor and outdoor UK exhibition of sculpture and drawings by the late Zurich based artist, Hans Josephsohn (1920–2012). It follows recent and forthcoming exhibitions at Hauser & Wirth, London and Modern Art Oxford.

Venue: Yorkshire Sculpture Park, West Bretton, Wakefield WF4 4LG



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We help Swiss citizens living in the UK who need financial or social support. Because charity begins at home.

You can help us in helping them.

Donations welcome!

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Email: info@swissbenevolent.org.uk

Website: www.swissbenevolent.org.uk

Social history

THE GROWTH OF THE SWISS DIASPORA

Our feature, "The Untold Story Told" in our last issue, which focused on the challenges faced by 1st generation Swiss émigrés mid-20th century in the UK, may have prompted some of our readers to explore their own family histories. To mark their 90th birthdays, Marti Noack and Bernard Simon sat down with family members to recount how they came to be part of the Swiss diaspora in England.

Marti Noack has been a member of the Southern Area Swiss Club for almost 35 years. The following is an excerpt of Marti's journey to the UK, as recorded by her daughter Helen Ball.

Marti Noack (born Keh) was one of 12 children who grew up in a 400-year-old farmhouse in Oberegg, Canton Appenzell, with a view of the Austrian Alps. Sounds romantic, however it was anything but, as life, although simple, was extremely tough. All the girls (5) shared one bedroom. There was ice on the inside of the windows for many months and as the house was north-facing, the sun didn't reach them for a full two months each year.

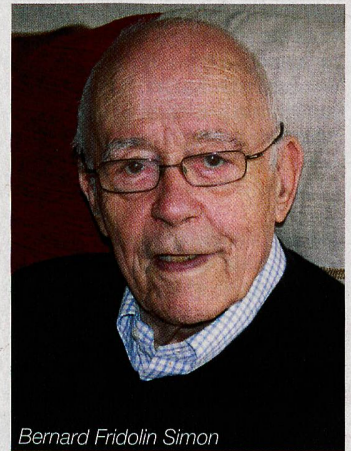
Shoes were a luxury: once the snow had melted the children went barefoot to keep the shoes for the winter. Chilblains were a constant fact of life.

“
I was amazed
by the resilience
of the people

Marti loved learning and remembers her sadness at leaving school on the eve of her fourteenth birthday to go into service to earn money for the family. When a deep romance failed because the young man she was courting could not bring himself to tell his family that he wished to marry a Catholic six years older than himself, Marti knew it was time for a change. In 1952, to counter her disappointment, she joined her good friend, Ines, who was happily working in service in the UK. Working as housekeeper/cook for the vicar of St. Michael's in Sunninghill introduced Marti to the English class



Marti Noack



Bernard Fridolin Simon

system, as well as kippers – she is not sure which shocked her more! At the International Club in Ascot, she met a charming German gentleman, Fritz, who walked her down the aisle in 1953. Marti joined the Southern Area Swiss Club shortly after it had formed in 1979 and has been a loyal member ever since.

Bernard Fridolin Simon was born in Basel in 1923. He first arrived in Manchester in 1948 representing the Swiss pharmaceutical company, Geigy. The following are highlights from an interview carried out by Bernard's daughter, Julie Baker, who began by asking her father about his first impressions of post-war Britain.

Bernard: Manchester and the surrounding area had been terribly affected by the war. But I was amazed by the resilience of the people and how they coped with rationing and the restrictions placed upon them. My Mother helped me out by sending food parcels. In 1954, Geigy sent me to Manchester on a more permanent basis and by this time the small organisation was starting

to grow rapidly and I was appointed Company Secretary. I stayed in the North of England until 1970 when the family and I were relocated to London for seven years. After this spell we returned to Manchester and it was good to be among old friends again. I retired as Personnel Manager in 1987.

Julie: How and when did you join the Swiss Club?

Bernard: Geigy encouraged its employees to participate in any Swiss organisation or interest, whether it be political or of social importance. On arriving in Manchester I registered with the Consulate who gave me information on the Swiss Club Manchester, which I joined in 1957. I spent many happy years on the committee and took on various roles including Secretary, Vice President and President (1961-63, 1970). Oh, and not forgetting the role of Father Christmas from time to time.

The full transcript of each of these family accounts can be found on the FOSSUK website (www.swiss-societies.co.uk), and click on: Swiss Review UK Pages)



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Blog

THE BUZZ IN BERN

There's no sport more Swiss than "Schwingen", or alpine wrestling, so the Federal Wrestling and Alpine Games Festival held at the end of the summer was the ultimate celebration of Swissness.

But despite the sport's long tradition, the wrestler eventually crowned Schwinger king – Matthias Sempach – is a thoroughly modern man. Media reported that the social-media-savvy 27 year old had gained 20,000 new Facebook fans overnight. Not bad for a butcher from Bern!

Another break with tradition could be on the cards. The Swiss Society for Public Utility (SGG), is leading efforts to have the "Swiss psalm", which dates back to 1841, replaced by something more contemporary. It's running a competition from January to June 2014 to find a new national anthem that still vaunts Swiss values, but without references to God.



Schwinger king 2014, Matthias Sempach © schaeererphotographs.ch

From the sublime to the ridiculous. Retailer Migros ran into difficulties when it tried to cash in on the craze for cronuts – a cross between

a croissant and donut. Ansel's, the New York bakery that invented the cronut, was reportedly furious. But Migros said it had registered the name

“
The cronut was said to be flying off Swiss shelves since its launch

in Switzerland and had in any case developed its own recipe. Available in four flavours the cronut was said to be flying off Swiss shelves in the first weeks since its launch.

Swiss youngsters might be advised not to develop a cronut habit, though. New research found that one in six Swiss kids was overweight. However, some comfort can be drawn from the fact that numbers of overweight kids are even higher in Britain and Spain!

Bernese blogger

Design

Art installation recycled into fashionable shoulder bag

Textiles by St Annes, a business venture within the mental health charity BITA Pathways, received an unusual request earlier this year from the Embassy of Switzerland. Reams of white fabric sheets, which the award winning Swiss artist, Nicolas Feldmeyer, had woven between the pillars of the Wilkins Portico, University College London last summer to create a stunning and memorable installation, were to be donated to this Birmingham-based charity.

The only criterion was that the fabric should be manufactured into a hand-made, limited-edition shoulder bag. With the help of Swiss fashion designer Yasar Spoerndli, 140 exclusive and very stylish "Portico bags" were manufactured out of 200 meters of PVC fabric and are now for sale, just in time for Christmas, at a cost of £20 plus P&P. All proceeds from the sale of the bags go to BITA Pathways.

To purchase a Portico bag, please visit: www.pathways.co.uk



Jeffrey Long celebrating in Richmond, North Yorkshire

Awards Ceremony

Freedom of Richmond for the RBL

44 Standards were paraded earlier this summer when the Royal British Legion was granted the Freedom of Richmond, North Yorkshire.

On the same occasion, Jeffrey Long M.B.E. and former

President of FOSSUK, was presented with a framed certificate, approved and signed by the President, H.R.H., Prince Andrew, the Duke of York, following his election as Vice President of St. James branch of the Royal British Legion.

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First Person Singular:

SWISS AUTHOR, ALEXANDRA LAVIZZARI

Alexandra Lavizzari, a Swiss author and artist living in the UK, recently published her latest novel 'Somerset', a thriller, written in German, which explores the ancient wassailing ritual of the West Country and combines it with a murder story. Here, Alexandra explains how a medieval apple ritual came to form the "core" of her novel.

When I moved to Somerset 4 years ago, I had no idea that my next novel would be a thriller set in the very village I was living in. I had previously published several novels, literary essays, short stories and poetry, but never thought that murder and mystery would be something for me... until, in the autumn of 2011, I witnessed how the apple tree in my garden collapsed under the load of its fruit, and later came to know that some Somerset villages still perform 'wassailings', an old fertility rite that encourages apple trees to produce plenty of fruit for cider-making by having a young girl pouring cider over their roots. The idea of wassailing caught my fancy and I started to imagine various storylines involving dark rituals and sacrifices.

"Only write about things you know" is advice I have always found useful, so I decided to set my thriller in present-day

“
The idea of wassailing immediately caught my fancy

Somerset and let my main character, Vera, a Swiss teacher on a sabbatical, live in the house where I currently live. Having three adult children myself I 'gave' Vera a daughter and developed parts of my story around a close, but not tension-free mother-daughter relationship in which Vera's growing fear for her endangered daughter induces her to investigate the strange deaths in the village.

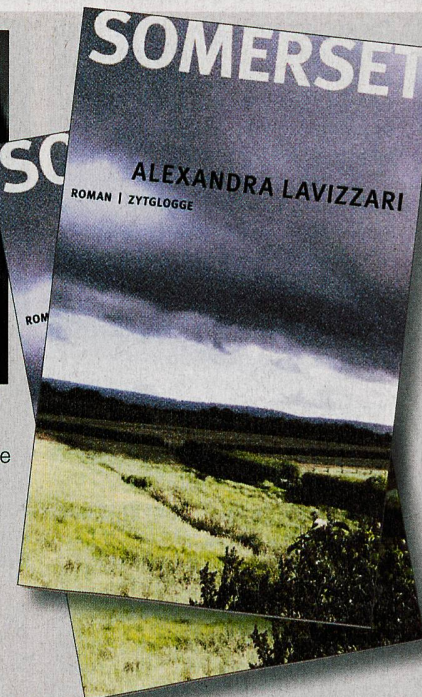
Writing a thriller sounds like fun, but it is also hard work demanding an iron



For more details about how to purchase Somerset contact the publisher:

Zytglogge Verlag, Schoren 7, Oberhofen am Thunersee, 3653 Switzerland

ISBN: 978-3-7296-0861-0
Price CHF 34.- / € 29.-

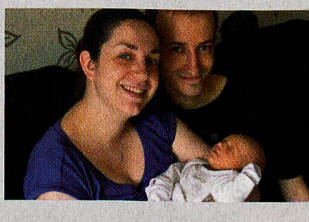


discipline. Since my publisher insisted on a tight deadline, it meant writing 7 hours a day, seven days a week over a period of more than 2 months – and

lots of lying awake at night thinking how to develop the various themes and make sure my characters behave like real people.

And finally...

Congratulations to first time parents Beverley and Mark Miell (Southern Area Swiss Club) who welcomed their son Adam into the world just 10 minutes after the birth of Prince George.



To be a writer has always been my dream. Not only, like this time, do I get away with murder and betrayal, but I also find fulfilment in inventing and crafting stories which then, hopefully, will be enjoyed by many readers.



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How to contact the editor

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