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REGIONAL NEWS

CANADA

Next Submission Date:
February 22, 2018

Editorial

Happy New Year to you and much enjoyment, inspiration and social cohesion through your Swiss organization in 2018 and beyond!

♦ By the time you read this editorial, you probably received your envelope for the Federal vote on March 4. Besides the *Federal Decree on the 2021 New Financial Regime*, the hotly debated *Abolition of Billag fees initiative*—or "Say yes to abolishing radio and television fees"—comes to vote. The information obligation of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation (SRG) especially via the platform swissinfo.ch which can be heard throughout the world is essential for the Swiss Abroad to exercise their political rights. The Executive Board of

the *Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA)*—just like Parliament and Federal Council—opposes the initiative. Be sure to exercise your privilege and vote on this important topic and every other vote and initiative.

♦ March 31 is another important deadline. Are you Swiss, born abroad, a current university student or recent graduate, and interested in a paid internship in Switzerland as of this fall through June 2019? As a native speaker of English, German, French, Spanish or Italian you can apply to work as language assistant at a grammar or vocational school in Switzerland. For more info on this paid internship go to: www.educationsuisse.ch and www.movetia.ch.



SILVIA SCHOCH
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Cultural highlights

Text: Erica Claus



From Calgary to Zürich: Café Odeon guestbook surfaces in Canada

Opened in 1911, art deco café/bar Odeon on Zürich's famous Bellevue square made history once again. Numerous artists, actors, intellectuals and other greats signed the guest book for Odeon host Helen Otto-May, providing a fascinating glimpse into the city's cultural life between 1917 and 1932. The guest book recently surfaced on Canadian appraiser Erica Claus' desk in Ottawa, who assisted May's Canadian descendants to return the valuable treasure to Zürich. (ed.)

Tages Anzeiger newspaper described the Café Odeon Guest Book as a 'unique document of the Zürich Kaffeehauskultur that no one knew existed'.

Surfacing recently in Calgary, the unassuming, leather gilded *Gäste-Buch* contains musical scores, signatures, drawings, paintings and poems by Swiss and international greats, creating a dynamic portrait of Zürich's art scene between the World Wars.

The existence of the '*autograph hunter's dream*' was long forgotten. Known only to the Canadian granddaughter of the original Odeon owners, Werner and Helen Otto-May, she safeguarded it as a treasure for three decades before contemplating what to do with it.

The most internationally known signature and sketch is by *Augusto Giacometti* (1877-1947). The famous Swiss painter maintained a studio above Café

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Augusto Giacometti (1877-1947), Abstraction, Watercolor and Pencil, 10 April 1923, © Christie's Images Limited (2017)

continued from page 1

Odeon as early as 1915. **Otto Pilny** (1866-1936), Orientalist painter, drew a detail from his painting "Sklavenmarkt" (Slave Market); **Emil Huber** (1883-1943), military painter, inked a caricature of an officer and a soldier; **General Ulrich Wille** (1848-1925), controversial head of the Swiss armed forces in WWI, signed the book during a break of his weekly Jass game; composer **Leo Fall** (1873-1925) from Vienna inscribed bars of his Operetta, "Die Rose von Stambul" (The Rose of Stambul); **Leo Leuppi** (1893-1972), Swiss artist and founder of the avant-garde artists association signed a self-portrait sketch; **Albert Steinruck** (1872-1929), German silent film actor, made his mark; and **Frank Guarante**, trumpeter and Director of the New York jazz & dance band, "The Georgians" wrote an affectionate dedication to the Café owners.

I was introduced to Café Odeon by my Uncle Bruno in the 1970s, and when the legendary guest book appeared on my desk for appraisal I knew it belonged in Zürich. After months of emails with the Art Director of Christie's Zürich Office, it appeared as Lot 19 in their October 2017 auction with a pre-sale estimate of CHF20-30,000. It took two minutes of bidding until the auctioneer lowered his hammer, calling the sale at CHF42,000. Swiss TV and newspapers enthusiastically reported the return of this significant historical document. Hans-Peter Keller, Christie's Art Director, said that "*This guestbook is part of the city's history and it found its way now into a very nice private Swiss collection*".

ERICA CLAUS IS AN ART APPRAISER BASED IN OTTAWA, ACCREDITED MEMBER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF APPRAISERS, AND FOUNDER OF ERICA CLAUS AND ASSOCIATES



Emil Huber (1883-1943), Officer and Soldier, Gouache, 13.11.1917, © Christie's Images Limited (2017)

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Consul General of Switzerland in Vancouver, Pascal Bornoz, and Ms. Jolanda Wingeier

Swiss Club Saskatoon Members at the Annual General Meeting in October 2017

Saskatoon Swiss Club Saskatoon

Our AGM was held on October 23 at the Cave Restaurant in Saskatoon. We were honored to be joined by the Consul General of Switzerland from Vancouver, Pascal Bornoz. Mr. Bornoz was able to meet our members in a casual dinner setting. He addressed the club in a short speech after supper. He informed us there were about 435 registered Swiss in Saskatoon and encouraged us to register our children with the Consulate in Vancouver before eligibility rules change. What a difference from the large numbers of Swiss in British Columbia! Mr. Bornoz also reminded us of the services that the Consulate offers to the Swiss Abroad.

The Executive for the coming year are Elisabeth Eilinger, President; Emil Eigenmann, Vice President; Georg Nievergelt, Treasurer; Heinz Buchmann, Secretary; and Rosa Nievergelt, Social Convenor.

Our Santa evening was held on December first at McClure United Church. This was a cold potluck as usual and we enjoyed platters of cold cuts, cheeses, salad, buns and more, with lots of delicious desserts. Of the fifty-two members who attended, eighteen were children which kept Santa very busy when he stopped in to hand out bags of goodies. It was great to see all the families, many of whom were made up of three generations, and we welcomed a new family to our club that evening as well: Caroline Frey and husband Nelson.

The dates for upcoming events such as the Raclette lunch and Jassabend- are being set at the time of this release. If you are not on the mailing list and would like to receive information about upcoming events, please contact the club at swissclubsaskatoon@hotmail.com or call Elisabeth Eilinger at (306) 665-6039.

ELISABETH EILINGER

Vancouver Swiss Canadian Mountain Range Association

We concluded another successful, accident-free outdoor shooting season. One of the highlights was the September Open House with close to one hundred people trying out their shooting skills at the different ranges. The annual Schuetzenfest was another event with record participation. We were delighted to welcome three guests from Switzerland and enjoyed our visitors from Edmonton, Calgary, California, Kamloops, Courtenay and Bowen Island. To host an event like this requires great participation and help from many volunteers, all of whom set a great example of how it's possible to balance time and contribute to our wonderful club. This is what makes us so special and we hope more people continue to step up and show what we have to offer.

Special thanks to Markus and Christine Spycher on their 35th year running our office, and to all the range officers and helpers who made the weekend run smoothly and safely!

The Samichlaus party was held on December 2 with fourteen youngsters privileged to meet the man of the season and share smiles and secrets with him. Everyone enjoyed the evening. The Gluehwein warmed our insides and the wonderful baking filled our tummies. A big thank-you to Santa and all his helpers.



The 10m indoor shooting is well under way. The annual 10m Schuetzenfest takes place on March 4, 2018. Everybody is welcome to participate! Please check our website for program changes and more info: www.scmra.ca.

MARLIES BAUMANN



Edmonton Edmonton Swiss Mens' Choir

The Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir hosted another successful Winzerfest on Saturday, November 11, 2017 at St. Basil's Cultural Centre in Edmonton. Celebrating Canada's 150th Anniversary of Confederation, the program featured music of remembrance and celebration. We also gathered to honour the courage and devotion of the brave men and women who made the supreme sacrifice for their country.

Highlights of this year's event included awarding two recipients of the Erwin Baumann Scholarship to Mona Holton and David Rossel. In support of her pursuit of excellence in choral conducting, Mona has been the choral music educator, vocal coach conductor and collaborative pianist at Memorial Composite High School in Stony Plain, Alberta since 2007.

In recognition of his composition of "Freude in Ehren" for our choir and significant contributions to our music-library to support Swiss music in Canada, David Rossel was our guest conductor. Directing various choirs and ensembles in Switzerland, he is vice-conductor of the award-winning „Männerstimmen Basel“. He is also a freelance composer and arranger.

Bearing the name of our now Honorary Member Erwin Baumann, who

was for many years the Honorary Swiss Consul in Edmonton and the choir's first President, he was a significant driving force in the formation and operation of our choir.

There was also a surprise brewing at this year's event. Our Musical Director, Elizabeth Anderson, was honoured for her significant thirty year contribution to the Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir. Under her musical direction, the choir has made enormous leaps forward, finding and refining its style and greatly enlarging its repertoire. Thank you, Elizabeth, for your continued commitment, dedication and leadership!

Special guests at Winzerfest 2017 included: Vital Grandin School Choir, Mr. Andreas Bayer, Honorary Consul of Switzerland, Erwin Baumann and ProCoro Canada Artistic Director, Maestro Michael Zaugg.

Our plans for 2018 include but are not limited to: **Saturday, May 5:** "Run for Music" at Whitemud Park; **Saturday, June 9:** "Landsgemeinde" with Edmonton Swiss Society at the Ol' MacDonald's Resort at Buffalo Lake. **Thursday, June 28–Sunday, July 1:** NASSA (North American Swiss Singing Alliance) Sängerfest 2018 in Holy Toledo.

Please check our website at www.esmca.ca for more details and other events and for more information on how to join us.

You may "like" us on Facebook under "Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir," or enter our name into YouTube to see and hear one of our performances.

MARTIN STAUB



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Guelph Swiss-Canadian Club Guelph

What a memorable 40th year the Swiss Canadian Club of Guelph has had! We hosted many annual events such as the Wine and Cheese, Summer BBQ, Cheese Fondue and Christmas Party. We also visited the Halton County Radial Railway and had our 40th Year Anniversary Luncheon.

This New Year we are starting off with some refreshing changes including several new members on our board. Over the years we have had many new members join us and we are happy to have over 75 members in our club with a wide range of ages from toddler to senior.

During 2018 we will host our annual events along with some new ones. We look forward to seeing you. If you are not already on our email list, please email swisscanadianclubguelph@gmail.com for the bi-annual newsletter and event reminders. You can also check us out on Facebook (Swiss-Canadian Club Guelph), or at our website: <http://guelphswisscanadianclub.webs.com>.

RINA THOMA



Thames Valley Thames Valley Swiss Club

It has been a busy few months. On September 10 the Swiss Farmer Band hosted the Seniorentreff, entertaining an appreciative group of long time members with music, food and socializing. Featuring a guest choir from Thun, the Jodlerstubete drew a large crowd in Milverton in October. Well done, Schweizer Jodlerfreunde! As has been the custom for many years, the evening of our "GV" in November started with a delicious cheese fondue, followed by a smoothly run agenda of business items. November 18, the Swiss Farmer Band presented an evening of wonderful entertainment. It was a delightful concert with a great variety of tunes, a light meal, specialty desserts, the popular raffle, and hours of dancing! A lively and enthusiastic crowd wooed Santa with songs and poems on December 3. It was great to see around seventy children with their parents and grandparents at this pre-Christmas celebration and last event of the year!

The executive thanks all of you who came out to our various events this past year. Because of you, 2017 was another memorable year! We wish you a happy and healthy 2018 and look forward to seeing you on: **Feb. 23/24:** Metzgete Legion Hall Milverton; **April 8:** Swiss Theater Community Centre Wellesley; **April 14:** Swiss Canadian Get-Together Rec. Complex Milverton; **May 27:** Brunch Rec. Complex Milverton; **July 9/16:** Motorcycle Tour; **July 29:** Bundesfeier Monkton; **September 15:** Jodlerstubete Rec. Complex Milverton; **November 3:** Generalversammlung; **November 17:** Swiss Concert Farmer Band Rec. Complex Milverton; **December 2:** Adventsfeier Legion Milverton. More info at www.swissclubthamesvalley.com.

PIA HAECHLER



Depuis plus de 50 ans, certains des plus grands groupes européens, de même que de nombreuses PME, ont compté sur Lette au Canada pour leur offrir des compétences du plus haut niveau et une approche pratique à la résolution de leurs problèmes.

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Toronto Swiss Club Toronto—Theatre Group

“It’s a whole lot of fun: practicing and performing together,” says Walter Brunner, artistic director of the Swiss Club Toronto’s Theatre Group. He’s referring to the comedy plays in Swiss German that a group of twenty lay actors perform every April in the cities of Toronto, Wellesley (previous years Moorefield) and Ottawa. For over 35 years, an enthusiastic and cheering Swiss-speaking audience appreciates it!

To put the show on the road year-after-year requires commitment and a great deal of skill. *“A sense of humour helps, too,”* says Walter and continues: *“we try to do a good job, but don’t take ourselves too seriously.”*

Everything is a team effort, from selecting the play in a first read-through in November to the weekly re-

hearsals beginning in January. Design, lighting and set-up of the portable stage including doors, windows, panels, two by fours, shelves, furniture and are packed into a van and transported to the local performance halls. The remaining actors car pool.

Rehearsals take place in the basement of an actor’s home this year since the class room at the private school used in previous years isn’t available any longer. *“That may have its advantages,”* says Walter smilingly. *“While we only paid rent in boxes of Swiss chocolate at the school, we had to be out by 9pm sharp which meant everyone had to take their coffee break on the fly. Now we can enjoy a glass of wine together and brainstorm after the rehearsal.”* All actors are native-speaking Swiss. A

couple are retired, others work at a bank, in IT, retail, tool and die. Two have taken acting classes and all of them learn from each other, audience feedback, going to plays together & the internet.

Balancing the budget has become a challenge due to astronomical hall rental increases. *“For the convenience of our Toronto audience we stay at Estonian House since it is well-known and easily accessible,”* says Walter. It means reducing the performances to a Sunday matinee.

Local Swiss clubs chip in to help with the cost of the event which draws audiences of 150. In Toronto, HUH Import also supports the group and offers popular Swiss foods such as Latwerge, Bischofberger Biberli, cheese, jams and more during intermission.

This year’s comedy is called *“Miss Sophie’s Erbe”* and revolves around an inheritance in an aristocratic setting. Of course, nothing is straight forward and the audience can look forward to another fun-filled afternoon of Swiss entertainment by the dedicated Theatre Group who has as much fun delivering the play as the audience has watching it!

SILVIA SCHOCH



Toronto Swiss Club Toronto—Theatre Group

«Miss Sophie's Erbe»

«schwarze» Komödie in drei Akten von Andreas Wening
Schweizerdeutsche Bearbeitung: Peter Waber

The play is in Swiss German and performed by the Theatre Group from Toronto at the following dates and locations:



Wellesley, Sunday, April 8, 2018 at 1 pm

Rec. Complex. Contact Urs Egli at aliceegli@yahoo.ca, Tel. (519) 595-2456

Toronto, Sunday, April 22, 2018 at 2 pm

Estonian House, 958 Broadview Ave.

Contact Maggie Hess Tel (905) 508-8014
email walter.brunner@sympatico.ca

Ottawa, Saturday, April 28, 2018 at 7 pm

contact your local Swiss Club.

The Theatre Group is looking forward to seeing you at one of the performances. We hope to make it an exciting event for everyone. **Important:** In Toronto we will have a single performance on Sunday afternoon. Drinks, lunch and Nussgrüpfel are available. For more details please contact your local Swiss Club representative or call Maggie Hess or Walter Brunner at (905) 508-8014.

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Early winter is a good time to get together, celebrate the year end and start off the Holiday festivities. At this year's *Ottawa Valley Swiss Club Children's Party*, about thirty children and their families gathered early December to decorate Gingerbread cookies with gusto, to crafted secret Santa containers, and to listen with rapt attention as children in the Swiss community shared their singing and musical abilities in the *Talent Show*. Much anticipated

Santa and *Schmutzli* arrived and all children received their special present.

The *Swiss Seniors Club* also celebrated with a *Christmas luncheon* earlier that day. Delicious food was served and everyone enjoyed listening to the talented voices of the *Montagna Singers*, singing festive melodies.

Earlier in the fall, our *Swiss Choir* hosted the traditional "Metzgete" dinner and dance. The event was once again a sold-out success.

The surprise guest performers, *six Alphorn players*, wowed the audience to a standing ovation.

We welcome everyone to join us at our upcoming events: *OVSC Annual General Meeting* February 2, 2018; *Montagna Singers Spring Dance* April 14, 2018; *Toronto Theater Group Swiss German Play* April 28, 2018. For more information, please visit our website at www.ottawavalleyswissclub.ca.

PIA HACHLER

42nd Annual

Canadysli Dinner / Dance

February 24th, 2018 at 18:00h

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LIVE DJ

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Toronto Canadysli Masggeball instead of Morgeschtrach

Canadysli's usual venue for the traditional *Morgeschtrach* in February is being renovated.

Since no alternative venue which opens at 5:30 am, let alone serves wine and beer at such an early hour on a Saturday morning could be found, a *Costume Ball* will be held instead at the *Black Creek Pioneer Village*.

While Black Creek Pioneer Village Park is closed during the winter months, the banquet hall is open and we are even allowed to Make Noise!

For all further information, please see the poster on the left. All of us at Canadysli are looking forward to seeing you there!

ARNO SIGRIST

Montreal Matterhorn Swiss Club

In November, we held a brief fall meeting and dinner at Terra Mare Restaurant in Dollard-des-Ormeaux. As usual, we all enjoyed a delicious dinner.

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Friday, March 2, also at Terra Mare Restaurant. Invitations with all the details will be sent out in February.

As the Matterhorn Swiss Club will be celebrating its 65th anniversary in 2018, we are planning a special outing for July. We are sure that this will be a very enjoyable day. Details will be sent to members directly once they become finalized.

The club holds five to six events or outings each year, and we are pleased to say they are always well-attended. New members are always welcome. For more information, please see the Matterhorn Club section on the Federation website: www.fedesuisse.com.

WALTER SPIRIG

Medaille honorifique Canada 150



En novembre 2017, Philippe Magnenat (droit), Délégué pour l'Est du Canada, Québec et Provinces Maritimes de l'Organisation des Suisses de l'Étranger (OSE), a reçu la médaille honorifique Canada 150 pour son implication dans la communauté depuis son arrivée au Canada en 2002 du Gouvernement Fédéral député de la Chambre des Communes du district de Ste-Therese de Blainville. Toutes nos félicitations!

Bioforce Event in Toronto

On September 14, 2017, the *Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce Ontario* and the *Consulate General of Switzerland in Montreal* hosted an exclusive event in Toronto. About fifty people attended a talk titled "Bioforce - The Face of Freshness" by guest speaker Peter Gmünder, CEO of Bioforce Switzerland.

Mr. Gmünder and the audience were welcomed by Mrs Elisabeth Bösch Malinen, Consul General of Switzerland in Montreal; by Mrs Alexandra Soriano, President of the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce Ontario; and by Mrs Mackie Vadacchino, CEO of Bioforce Canada.

The cocktail following the talk, hosted in the buildings of Swiss Reinsurance company and sponsored by the Consulate General, was a great occasion for socializing.

The elaboration and manufacturing of Bioforce natural products are based on the lifelong work of Dr Alfred Vogel. Peter Gmünder briefly retraced the history of Dr Vogel (1902-1996), a Swiss pioneer in naturopathy, and founder of Bioforce in 1963. Dr Vogel is also the author of many books on health, wellness, and naturopathy. He remained an active public speaker until his late eighties. His best seller, "Der kleine Doktor" (The Nature Doctor), is translated in many languages. Bioforce products are now sold around the world.

Bioforce employs 145 people in Switzerland and about 500 all over the world. The processing plant of Bioforce is located in Roggwil (Thurgau, Switzerland), where it processes up to 350 tons of fresh plants in 24 hours. The

plants are turned into tinctures that can then be kept for a longer duration and serve in the preparation of the naturopathic remedies. The use of freshly harvested plants, such as echinacea, is one of the distinctive highlights of Bioforce products, in contrast with other brands that rely on dry products.

Peter Gmünder explained that one of the business and commercial strategies of Bioforce ("fewer, bigger, better") is to build in the twenty-five countries around the world where Bioforce is already present, rather than to expand indefinitely.

Among the driving values and guiding principles of Bioforce as a company are attention to health and to the environment, science and research, integrity, honesty in business, employee accountability,

long lasting partnerships, and financial independence. This general perspective of Bioforce is well in line with the holistic approach that many of its customers are seeking, looking forward to a healthy and balanced future based on tradition and backed by rationals.

Attendees left with useful gifts from Bioforce: a full size sample of the famous Echinaforce tablets, as well as pot of the delicious Herbamare salt.

FLORENCE PASCHE, OSA DELEGATE



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