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REGIONAL EDITION

UNITED KINGDOM & IRELAND

EDITORIAL

I've been positively impressed by the New Year Speech of the President of the Confederation, Simonetta Sommaruga. She chose her favourite boulangerie as the set of her video to underline how good life can start by valuing simple things and daily experiences.

'My bakery gives us a good example, how to make life better for others too: in this place, we look each other in the eye', she says.

■ *This reveals to us that our personal choices, professions and relationships are connected to the good of others and ultimately*

of the entire world. For this reason, despite the different political scenarios ahead of us, in these pages, we can find an example of how single people or communities events, activities and encounters can make a difference, on how 'looking each other in the eyes' has brought something good. So, let's keep getting involved in living with this awareness.



GIOIA PALMIERI,
«UK & IRELAND PAGES»

Happy New Year to everyone!

CARDIFF: CONSUL GENERAL VISITING THE COMMUNITY IN WALES

The Consul General's visit to Wales was Manuela Ferrari's first visit out of London to visit a Swiss community in the region. We went to visit the very interesting Royal Mint with her.

The Royal Mint in Llantrisant, near Cardiff was chosen by the South Wales Swiss as a special South Wales Swiss Community event in September 2019 on the occasion of the visit to Wales by Manuela Ferrari, Consul General at the Embassy in London.

After a buffet, providing time for socialising and getting to know a number of new Swiss in Wales, the group was given a most interesting tour of the Mint's Exhibition.

The Royal Mint is the world's leading export mint, making coins and medals for an average of 60 countries (except Switzerland) every year. However, its first responsibility is to make and distribute United Kingdom coins as well as to supply blanks and official medals. The Royal Mint was opened by the Queen in 1968 in readiness for the introduction of the decimal coinage and can produce 90 million coins and blanks a week – almost five billion coins a year.

RUTH THOMAS-LEHMANN
HONORARY CONSUL OF SWITZERLAND FOR WALES



The South Wales Swiss Community had a great day at the Royal Mint in Llantrisant. It was one of the largest gatherings of the local community to date.

EMBASSY NEWS

LONDON: BREXIT UPDATE

Switzerland and the UK have taken further steps in recent months to ensure continuity in their bilateral relations after Brexit. On 31 October 2019, Switzerland and the UK signed a transitional agreement for social security after the UK leaves the EU. The agreement is part of Switzerland's 'Mind the gap' strategy. It remains in force until 31 December 2020 and ensures social security coordination between Switzerland and the UK whatever the circumstances of a UK exit from the EU.

The Conservative Party won the general election on 12 December 2019 with a solid majority of 80 seats. At the time of writing, it is highly likely that the UK will be leaving the European Union at the end of January 2020 based on the deal struck with the EU. At the beginning of February, the UK will enter a transition period, which according to the Withdrawal Agreement Bill should last until the end of 2020. The bilateral agreements between Switzerland and the EU will continue to apply between Switzerland and the UK during that period.

Looking to the future, Switzerland and the UK will be leading discussions to identify further potential themes of mutual interest and deepen the scope of agreements concluded so far.



RIGHTS OF SWISS CITIZENS IN THE UK AFTER BREXIT ('SETTLED STATUS')

- Swiss citizens residing in the UK on the date the UK leaves the EU will be able to **carry on with their lives just as before**.
- However, Swiss citizens and their family members **have to register** for a new residence status under the EU Settlement Scheme, to receive what is known as **settled or pre-settled status**.
- You...
 - ... cannot apply if you have UK-Swiss dual nationality as you already have full residence rights.
 - ... do need to apply if you are married to a British citizen but do not have British citizenship.
 - ... do not need to apply if you have Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) but we recommend that you do as you will have additional benefits.

Start the application process here:

www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families

For more information please visit our Brexit FAQs at:

www.eda.admin.ch/london/brexit

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www.eda.admin.ch/london/brexit

**SWISS
BENEVOLENT
SOCIETY** FOUNDED
IN 1703



If you know of a Swiss citizen unable to complete the application and not able to rely on family members, please contact the Swiss Benevolent Society on:
swissbenevolent.org.uk/i-need-help
 telephone 020 7836 9119
 (Tuesdays and Wednesdays only)

IMPORTANT NOTE: SBS RECENTLY REGISTERED AS ADVISOR BY OISC

To support the Swiss Community in the UK, the Swiss Benevolent Society has recently been approved and registered as Advisor by the OISC (Office of Immigration Services Commissioner) to help Swiss Citizens through the Settlement Scheme application process.

Please think whether there are any Swiss citizens in your networks who might not have easy access to digital resources and share this information with them, or put them in touch with SBS through other means if they need help.

WORLD'S TOUGHEST PATROLLING TEST: THE SWISS ARMY PATROL AWARDED WITH GOLD MEDAL

Serdena 17 Swiss Army Patrol was awarded the first Gold medal of this year's Cambrian Patrol at Sennybridge, South Wales as the world's toughest patrolling test marks its 60th anniversary.

Exercise Cambrian Patrol is an annual event, organised and run by Headquarters 160th Welsh Brigade. It is a 60 km patrol over challenging Welsh terrain, within a fully immersive tactical scenario and any team of 8, with basic soldiering skills, good leadership, navigation and bags of grit and determination can excel. They also have a live enemy and the Welsh weather to contend with! Many see it as the ultimate patrolling challenge.

This year the Swiss Army patrol Serdena 17 were amongst 34 countries and amongst 130 patrols entered, taking up on the challenge. The two-day patrolling mission is a mind-and-muscle sapping 60km, carrying full personal kit and equipment weighing in at some 50 lbs. The exercise is both mentally and physically demanding, testing all the basic military skills of a modern-day soldier whilst enhancing their leadership abilities, levels of endurance and determination in this topographically very challenging terrain. Not all the participants take the ideal route to finish the course. Some patrols only achieve 10–30 kilometres, because they are unable to orientate themselves in the difficult terrain and at night or if fog and rain make the vision difficult. Depending on how they have dealt with all of the challenges they are awarded points, for which they will



either gain the top gold medal, a silver, bronze or certificate finish. The Swiss Patrol were well prepared having trained hard for a year in Switzerland.

The Serdena 17 Swiss Army patrol's success in winning Gold was honoured at an Award Ceremony at Sennybridge which was attended by Colonel (GS) Martin Lerch, the Swiss Defence Attaché of the United Kingdom, Ireland and the Netherlands and Ruth Thomas-Lehmann, Honorary Consul of Switzerland for Wales. The Swiss Army Patrol was also invited to a reception at the Embassy of Switzerland in London to mark their success in Wales.

The Serdena 17 Swiss Army patrol at the Award Ceremony with Colonel (GS) Martin Lerch and Ruth Thomas-Lehmann, Honorary Consul of Switzerland for Wales.

CARDIFF: ENGLISH TRAINING FOR 50 SWISS NATIONALS TO IMPROVE LANGUAGE SKILLS

Celtic English Academy in Cardiff has been successful in signing a substantial contract with SECO, the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, to deliver English training to Swiss nationals in need of improving their English language skills to further their career prospects in Switzerland.

It is anticipated that for the next two to five years up to 50 Swiss nationals will study English in Cardiff and experience Welsh life and culture every year. The value of the contract is CHF 1.8m (GBP £1.4m) and the contract for the first 2 years.



The first four Swiss students, with the Swiss Honorary Consul in Wales, Rt. Hon. Lord Mayor of Cardiff, Cardiff Council and The Head of International Affairs, Welsh Government.

MANCHESTER: AMBASSADOR'S AWARD CONCERT WITH AKMI DUO

This year's Award went to the Switzerland-based AKMI Duo, with French saxophonist Valentine Michaud and Lithuanian pianist Akvilé Sileikaité. They met while studying for their Masters at Zurich University of the Arts, where their friendship and passion for modern and contemporary music inspired them to form the AKMI Duo.

In occasion of their concert in Manchester, the two young ladies wore highly symbolic suits, a butterfly dress and a delicate floral one which precisely reflecting the style of the performance. Indeed, the audience had the impression of following the pirouettes and the joy of a butterfly while listening to the saxophone's melody. The pianist was instead more delicate and moderate, taking on the appearance of a flower guiding the butterfly's journeys and waiting its resting. The pieces chosen for the concert's programme showed the two musicians' attitude to play joyful music as well as evoking life's struggles: from Leonard Bernstein's Sonata for Clarinet and Piano to complex William Albright's one for Saxophone and Piano. The concert continued with a piece of music especially written for the AKMI Duo by Kevin Juillerat 'L'Etang du Patriarche', to be concluded at the end with a more famous one inspired to Carmen's tune (melody/armony).

It has been a real pleasure experience, as to be in a colourful spring garden while outside the winter is coming.

GP



AKMI Duo with the Swiss Ambassador, the Honorary Swiss Consul in Manchester Hans Scheiwiller and lady Edith Conn OBE, Deputy Lieutenant of Greater Manchester.

Find out more about Duo AKMI:

www.valentinemichaud.com or [f/akmiduo](https://www.facebook.com/akmiduo)

HARROGATE: SWISS AT THE ROAD CYCLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

The jewel of Yorkshire, Harrogate, provided an impressive backdrop for the finish line of the 9-day UCI (Union Cycliste Internationale) Road World Championships on 27th September 2019.

The Mens Road World Title was won by Mads Pedersen of Denmark, with Switzerland's Stefan Küng taking the bronze medal. The event was hosted at Harrogate's Conference Centre. The evening of Wednesday 25th September was the domain of the Swiss, where in the 400-seater Auditorium the route for 2020 championships which will take place in Switzerland from 20 to 27 September was unveiled. Competitors will climb from Aigle over the Col La Petite Forclaz through to Martigny, a 19.4 kilometre circuit that includes 478 vertical metres.

The 45-minute long Swiss presentation described the route and interviewed cyclists on their thoughts about the circuit; the rest of the evening was dedicated to the enjoyment of Swiss canapés, raclette and Swiss wines. A number of chefs came over from Switzerland, bringing with them 8 raclette machines and 26 cheeses. The ambiance was enhanced with the atmospheric alphorn-playing of the UK's own alphorn player, Frances Jones, in full Swiss costume, and a St. Bernard who enjoyed lots of hugs and photo opportunities. The evening was supported by Swiss Tourism UK and the Swiss Embassy of London.



GLASGOW: INAUGURATION OF 'THE LANGUAGE HUB'

The new Language Hub was recently founded by Michèle Gordon and Zurich born Andrea Wieler Goodbrand.

It is a social enterprise within and for the local community of Patrick in Glasgow and beyond. Officially opened in September, The Language Hub offers support for businesses and also incorporates a multi-lingual library for families and schools.

PETER MÜLLER-MCDougall
HONORARY CONSUL GENERAL

For more information please visit:
www.thelanguagelhub.co.uk



From L to R: Sandra White, MSP for Glasgow Kelvin; Andrea Wieler Goodbrand, Director The Language Hub C.I.C.; Michèle Gordon, Director and Founder The Language Hub C.I.C.; Patrick Grady, MP for Glasgow North; Peter Müller-McDougall, Honorary Consul General

SWISS CHURCH LONDON: A WINTER DIARY AND THE NEXT APPOINTMENTS

8 December: Christmas tree baubles being decorated by children and parents, and turnip lanterns carved. Samichlaus and Schmutzli eagerly awaited. Swiss Christmas songs sung. Then, warmly wrapped up to face the chill of a winter afternoon we parade through Covent Garden.

15 December: Church full for the annual Christmas concert. The wonderful Icosa choir fills the church with joyful sounds. Afterwards,

mulled wine and mince pies; conversation with old friends. Out into a chilly, rainy night.

Every Tuesday: 8am to 10am – Breakfast on the Steps provides food and a peaceful space in the church hall for up to 30 homeless visitor guests, provided by Community worker Josh Kelly and his team of volunteers. There is a desperate need for sturdy winter footwear for the homeless. Our annual Shoe Bank Appeal helps by raising funds to buy shoes. Donations

via: <http://bit.do/ShoeBankAppeal>

January 2020: Busy organising arts events. Andy Palfreyman's autumn photo exhibition 'Looking Down' was a big success. Now we are planning the annual Swiss Church-Goldsmiths College Exhibition for March.

COLIN MCINTYRE, SWISS CHURCH IN LONDON TRUSTEE

Church's webpage: www.wisschurchlondon.org



Swiss Church facade.



An arts exhibition.



Palfreyman photo from his Looking Down.



Samichlaus celebration.

UNIONE TICINESE LONDON: CASTAGNATA AND SAN NICOLAO FOR A MERRY END OF THE YEAR

Visit to the graves

Nerina Preston Abate, Christiane and Peter Barber visited the UT Kensal Green graves on Friday 20 September, and the St Pancras and Islington cemetery in East Finchley on 27 October. They laid flowers on the graves and assessed the amount of work needed to restore the Kensal Green graves and keep them in a good state for the next few decades. Most of the work will be done in 2020 on the earliest grave, and three new names, for

previous unnamed people, (Reginaldo Bruni (1854–1893); Giacinto Benedetti (1855–1894) and Enrico Malingamba (1870–1897) will be added.

Castagnata

Over forty people took part in our annual Castagnata that took place on the 19th of October at the Swiss Embassy in London! Thank you to Simona Regazzoni Kwenda, Consul, for making us all feel at ease at the Embassy. Thanks to the

incredible efforts of Christiane Barber and her team, who beautifully catered for the event!

Next 2020 appointments:

UT Anniversary Dinner
(previously known as CARNEVALE),
Sat 8th of February 2020.

UT Annual General Meeting
Sat 28th of March 2020.

For further information please check the website utl.org.uk or FB page facebook.com/UnioneTicinese

PARTY: SOUTHERN AREA SWISS CLUB

Our Swiss club enjoyed a very successful Christmas party with 43 adults and 5 children attending. As usual our buffets were delicious, the raffle had lots of prizes including our most beautiful table decorations which were also in the raffle.

BERNI CURTRESS

For more information about club's events please contact: sasc@nbtsc.plus.com



Children with San Nicolao.



The annual Escalade with NSH.



Castagne ready to be roasted.



People enjoying a rich buffet.

BOURNEMOUTH: THE WILLIAM TELL GROUP'S COMMUNITY

We are the Wilhelm Tell Group, Bournemouth and we meet for various events throughout the year. We usually organise the annual Samichlaus Raclette Evening, also Skittles, guided walk and tours, coach trip to Wells, Würstli evening, tea afternoons, and the 1st of August BBQ in the New Forest. The program for 2020 will be done by February and published in the next issue. We are also setting up a website. Meanwhile, if anyone would like to get more information can write to Trudy Bryant at this email address: trudybryant44@gmail.com

BERNI CURTRESS



SCOTLAND: ABERDEEN CLUB'S EVENTS

Around 25 members of all ages from the Aberdeen Swiss Club gathered for the traditional Samichlaus in Aboyne. They brought along traditional Swiss Christmas cookies from all over Aberdeenshire, Moray and the Highlands were delicious.

While some members made wreaths, others were busy forming decorating and backing a Grittibaenz or just having a chat with friends. But all of them were looking forward to the moment when the traditional cheese fondue, the lee sip of Kirsch and the fruit salad were served. Just another great event.

PETER LUEDI



If you are interested in the Aberdeen Swiss Club please contact our Secretary Erika Gill on jimbomoggie8@gmail.com

The next event will be the curling in March in Aberdeen. There is no special experience required and everybody is welcomed.



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You can find all the information in one place: Club info, events, ASO news, Brexit info, etc. with one click of the mouse! Go to: www.swiss-societies.co.uk



Swiss Review UK/IRL can reach about 30k readers. If you are interested in advertising with us please visit our website

www.swiss-societies.co.uk

1: SWISS IN NORTH WALES

Our meeting today was very successful as many people attended. Welcome to our group, we hope you enjoyed yourself and will come to the next meeting again!

2: SWISS IN SOUTH WALES

Great to see so many new Swiss in South Wales and their children joining us for our annual December event. 1st Advent buffet with lots of delicious homemade Swiss food at TyTawe Welsh Centre. The South Wales Swiss had first met in December in 1999. This is our 20th anniversary of Samichlaus celebration!

For further information about Swiss clubs in the Wales, please visit the website swissinwales.org

3: THE SWISS CLUB TYNE TEE

The Swiss Club Tyne Tees met in September for a lovely day in the Lake District. Two member families, Filkins-Merz and Latimer, hosted the event in their beautiful homes and spoilt us with lovely food and drinks. We would also like to thank the founder of the club, Nelly Scott-Niederberger for her generous contributions to the cost. She now lives in Cambridge and can't attend our events anymore but she is always in our thoughts.

For more information write to uquick58@gmail.com

URSULA QUICK

A new family from Rhos-on-Sea, Peggy (middle) and Doris (right) and her daughter Vicki, Milly and Luna.



Samichlaus was brilliantly represented by Eilian Williams also helped by Schmutzli (John Thomas).



Tyne Tee club thanks its founder Nelly Scott-Niederberger who moved to Cambridge.



An enjoyable gathering for old and young in Edinburgh.

West Surrey Club booked the entire restaurant for its dinner. The chef, Mohsinne, prepared an excellent 3 course meal.



5: WEST SURREY SWISS CLUB

Since our last report, we thoroughly enjoyed our final event of 2019 with our usual Advent Lunch at the award winning 17C Kinghams Restaurant in Shere.

More than 40 of us dined together with exclusive use of the restaurant. Pictured is one of the individual place decorations and the chef, Mohsinne, who prepared an excellent 3 course meal and a view of the restaurant. A full programme next year will include, a talk, skittles, various outings and a National Day celebration on 31 July.

For more information about club's events please write to westsurreyswiss@aol.com

6: SWISS CLUB MANCHESTER

Samichlaus at the Brookdale Club

What a fabulous event. Father Christmas, a little tired from his long journey, didn't believe his eyes when he met 20 excited children and 35 adults at the Brookdale Club. It took him about an hour to read the comments logged in his big book to each child, but he found it very enjoyable talking to the children as most comments were very positive! Luckily Father Christmas was bilingual as he had to chat to a couple of children in Swiss German! The children sang, recited or played a musical instrument for Father Christmas and they all received a bag of goodies. A big thank you to our Elf Laure and the Committee Members, who contributed massively to the success of this party.

Let's hope that Father Christmas will come again next year!

For more information please write to ftblum@gmail.com or visit facebook.com/swissclubmanchester

JÜRG BENTLE

Luckily, Manchester's Father Christmas was bilingual and had to answer a couple of children in Swiss German!



6

FLUMSERBERG 1957: A MEMORABLE WINTER

A Swiss Review's reader sent us some pictures recalling a special winter holiday spent with friends in Switzerland. This is his message for the ladies and people who were present:

'Greetings to everyone in the picture who I enjoyed a fantastic skiing holiday with us in Flumserberg back in January 1957. Wishing you all the best of health and happy memories from our skiing days.'

These photos were taken in January 1957 in Kurhaus Matzwiese by Mr Rene Keusch who now lives in Birmingham.



We have chosen a couple of pictures from the popular FB group 'Swiss in the UK' where many people usually share their love and passion for Swiss culture and traditions. During Christmas time many people try classic recipes and post their amazing Swiss homemade food.

Trudy Bryan from Bournemouth prepared special Grittibänz



Smells like a bakery in my house 😊 happy Samichlaustag 🥰🥰

Mia Stephenson baked a special recipe with her kids



Mia is from Hilterfingen am Thunersee but moved to Scotland when she was five. She is a mother of four fantastic children: Zander, Loki, Logan and Isaac. 'I really try to keep our Swiss traditions so that the children feel connected to their heritage'. Don't give up Mia and thanks for sharing!

IMPRESSUM

HOW TO CONTACT THE EDITOR: Reports of Swiss society activities, news, coming events, correspondence, articles and advertising for the 'Switzerland in the UK & Ireland' section of the Swiss Review, should go to the editor:

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mail: editor@swissreview.co.uk

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