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# REGIONAL EDITION

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## UNITED KINGDOM | IRELAND

### Editorial

Dear readers, in this second issue of 2023 you will, first of all, read about the exciting story of Sarah, who last year took on the personal challenge of swimming through the English Channel.

What Sarah did for charity actually reflects a love for water and a passion for swimming that comes from her childhood memories, when she was a little girl learning to swim in the river Aare with her mum. Sarah's story is moving because it allows us to understand how our past and our origins can help us take steps forward. Sarah is an inspiration for all of us who have different stories: the link

with Swiss culture is not just something confined to the past, but an opportunity to fully experience the present and be open to new adventures. This is evident also from the other articles featuring this issue: a new students club in Edinburgh, the story of a woman growing up in a London hotel, the events organised by the various clubs, or the enthusiasm with which a Swiss club's member watched a theatre show (*Arms and the Man* on P7).

I invite you to read this issue by keeping this positivity in mind. Thank you!



GIOIA PALMIERI,  
«UK & IRELAND PAGES»

### Challenges:

## Crossing the English Channel thinking of the River Aare's waters



Sarah Doughty-Schatzmann was born in England in 1973 after her Swiss parents moved to the UK in the 1960s. She swam the English

Channel as part of a 6-lady relay team last year on 14/8/2022. The distance is 22 miles straight across but with the currents, they travelled about 32 miles. As a team, they raised over £10,000 for the UK charity Aspire – for people with spinal injuries.

### *Swiss Review: Sarah, how did this work?*

**Sarah Doughty-Schatzmann:** We set off at Midnight on the 14<sup>th</sup> from Samphire Hoe beach near Dover and landed at Wissant, France at 14.43. The night conditions were challenging as you can't see where you are swimming and couldn't hear much when you were in the water. We each swam for an hour and then rotated to the next swimmer. I was swimmer number 5 and swam for one hour in the dark and then one hour during the day. We all swam to the

shore at Wissant beach to the applause of locals on the shore!

### *SR: How did you train for this challenge?*

**SD:** I started training for the event a year before. A major part was acclimatising to cold water by swimming without a wetsuit in the channel in February when the water was 8 degrees. In order to be able to swim the channel as a relay, you need to pass a qualifying swim of 90 minutes swimming in the water of fewer than 16 degrees, come out for an hour, and then go back in for another hour of swimming.

### *SR: Where does your love for swimming come from?*

**SD:** I have always been a keen swimmer. My mother, Antoinette Schatzmann-Kaeser, who is 82 in November, still swims a mile a day. She learned to swim in the River Aare and credits the fast-flowing river with why she's such a strong swimmer. The River Aare is still very important to us as a family today and we regularly visit the family home in Aarau to see relatives.



Landing on the shores of Wissant Beach, France. Sarah on the far left.

## Liverpool: Remo Forrer represents Switzerland at Eurovision 2023

Remo Forrer, winner of the show 'The Voice of Switzerland' in 2020, is going to the Eurovision Song Contest (ESC) for Switzerland. Broadcaster SRF announced in March that it will be the 21-year-old musician from Hemberg (SG) flying the Swiss flag in Liverpool, at the 67<sup>th</sup> ESC.

'For me, it's the music equivalent of the Champions League and an enormous honour.' The singer was also successful in Germany, according to Radio SRF information. Remo also won the format 'Show us your voice' on RTL. On this occasion, judges praised his exceptional voice, which balances power and tenderness. That may explain his affinity for musicians like Lewis Capaldi, Ed Sheeran and James Arthur. A talented multi-instrumentalist, Remo first learned the accordion but has since moved on to the piano.



Remo Forrer is a 21-year-old musician from Hemberg (SG).

The ESC is 'something of the greatest thing you can do,' Forrer said to the SRF. The semifinals will be held on May 9<sup>th</sup> and the finals on May 13<sup>th</sup>. The Swiss participant has been chosen by 100 selected viewers and a 20-strong international jury. As with the Grand Final of the ESC, the vote from members of the public and the jury vote were each given a 50% weighting, with the scores ultimately going in favour of Remo and his song.

Remo is already looking forward to his journey to Liverpool, and all it's going to entail: 'The Eurovision Song Contest is the biggest music event there is, and I find it incredibly inspiring to be in a place where all the participants share the same passion for music'.

The project 'Eurovision Song Contest' 2023 will be released in Switzerland by SRF, RTS, RSI and RTR.



## Embassy: For Swiss citizens with pre-settled status in the UK

If you hold pre-settled status in the UK, you can apply for settled status as soon as you have five years' continuous residence in the UK and meet the relevant conditions. Your pre-settled status does not expire until the date stated in the letter you received from the Home Office, but you can apply to switch to settled status as soon as you have lived in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man for five years in a row (known as 'continuous residence'). Please visit the UK government websites for full details on how to switch from pre-settled to settled status and how to view your immigration status.



## Embassy News: Changes at the Honorary Consulate in Gibraltar

On 1 January 2023, following his appointment by the Federal Council, **Andreas Businger** succeeded Eleonora Gherardi as Honorary Consul in Gibraltar. Swiss-born Mr Businger has lived in Gibraltar since 2017 and is the CEO of Turicum Private Bank.

The Embassy would like to thank **Eleonora Gherardi** for her loyal service as Honorary Consul in Gibraltar from 2014 to 2022.

- ➔ <https://rebrand.ly/settledstatus>
- ➔ <https://rebrand.ly/immigrationstatus>

Remember that you must apply to the EU Settlement Scheme again, before your pre-settled status expires, to stay in the UK!

## Unione Ticinese: A piano concert 'Behind The Scars'

The new young leaders of the Unione Ticinese are organising some very interesting evenings, different from what we had in the past and very enjoyable. In December, for San Nicolao we enjoyed a masterclass with Oscar short listed and BAFTA nominated Simone Giampaolo.

He took us through the creation of his animated film and showed it in full. This was followed by a panettonata, during which San Nicolao himself made an appearance, for the delight of our little guests. At the beginning of February, for the 149<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our Unione,

we had a concert given by Margherita Torretta, a young Italian pianist who partly trained in Lugano at the Conservatorio. Margherita took up piano as an adult, after suffering severe burns from a house fire.

The arts, and in particular playing the piano, helped her through her recovery. The passion for the visual arts as the photography, led her to collaborate with the famous British photographer Sophie Mayenne for the world campaign 'Behind The Scars' with the aim of witnessing a feminine beauty that deviates from the

We know there are many Ticinesi in London who do not know we exist. We would like to encourage them to join us: the membership is very modest (£25.00) and we provide many activities for people of all ages. New memberships would really help us to continue offering high-quality events and gathering for the whole community. Please get in touch with us:

[www.utlondon.org](http://www.utlondon.org)  
[facebook.com/UnioneTicinese](https://facebook.com/UnioneTicinese)  
[twitter.com/UnioneTicinese](https://twitter.com/UnioneTicinese)

models of aesthetic perfection imposed by today's society. We are grateful for these new very memorable evenings.



Margherita Torretta piano concert for the project [behindthescars.co.uk](http://behindthescars.co.uk).



President of UTL Emilie Martignoni and clubs members with Margherita Torretta.

## Swiss Church in London: 'Time, Talents... and Money'

What does the Swiss Church in London (SCL) mean to you? More or less than the price of one coffee per month?

On my desk, I have a professional report from our Chartered Surveyors, highlighting the physical condition our church. The survey is carried out every five years, and helps us to plan maintenance and to set our budget. At the back of the report necessary expenditure is colour coded from red (urgent – work required now) to green (desirable within next five years). It is likely that we will declare a loss for 2022 – it was a tough year. The staff, volunteers, trustees, members and friends all worked incredibly hard. However, with less grant funding, and restrictions for commercial hire still in place, our income was adversely affected. And, of course, we had to cope with 10% inflation. Should we be pessimistic? I don't think so. We are very fortunate to have Revd Harry Ching as our Interim

Minister while Revd Carla Maurer is on leave. Slowly, folks are returning to Sunday services. La Causerie and the Muttergruppe are back meeting at church. At Easter, we will welcome a confirmation group from Switzerland. There is an exciting programme of music and arts events over the spring.

But yes, we need financial support from the Swiss community in the UK. If 1,000 people were to donate £30 each this year, the £30,000 raised would pay for a lot of this year's maintenance. You can give securely via our webpage. All donations are gratefully received.

COLIN MCINTYRE; TRUSTEE – CONSISTOIRE SWISS CHURCH IN LONDON

Donations:  
<https://swisschurchlondon.org.uk/church/donate>

## Book presentation:

## 'Living in Hotels' a memoir by Helen Wallimann



*The New Helvetic Society has organised an event on 25 April with Helen Wallimann presenting her memoir: 'Living in Hotels: Brown's in London – The Savoy in Cheltenham'.*

From my earliest infancy I had always lived in hotels: from 1942 to 1945 at Brown's Hotel in London, and from November 1945 until 1963, when I started work in London, at the Savoy Hotel in Cheltenham.

The book begins with a brief account of how my father, who grew up in a rural village in Central Switzerland, became the manager of one of London's most prestigious hotels, and how he and his growing family lived through the war years in London. Here, already, certain events are seen through the eyes of a child.

The largest section of the book is devoted to life at the Savoy Hotel in Cheltenham during the years from 1945 to the 1960s. We never had a private apartment in the hotel, nor did our rooms have private bathrooms. We had no more privacy than the guests. As my mother, with six children, could not keep an eye on all of us all the time, we enjoyed considerable freedom, both in the garden and

in the hotel. As a result, we came into regular contact with an unusually wide range of people. We were in daily contact with the staff: dishwashers, porters, chambermaids, waiters and waitresses, gardeners, housekeepers and office staff. We knew several of them quite well, saw them at work and sometimes helped them. So we knew their jobs, just as we knew how our father earned his living. Besides the staff, we knew the guests, especially the many long-stay residents whom we saw daily. We observed them with interest and were sometimes amused by their peculiar habits. They often chatted with us –

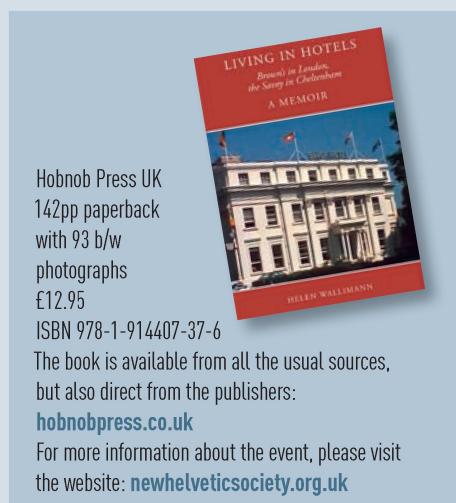


The author's father was the manager of one of London's most prestigious hotels.

most people like little children – and sometimes even gave us presents.

For this account, I have relied largely on my own memories of childhood and adolescence. However, I have also included information I had from my parents (verbally, from diaries and letters and from the memoirs they wrote for their children) and from my brothers and sisters. I found information about many of our hotel residents and staff in electoral registers and indexes of wills and administrations, census returns, newspaper articles, ship passenger lists, and in the internet in general. Most of the photographs come from the Savoy Hotel archives or from collections left behind by my parents.

HELEN WALLIMANN



## New Helvetic Society: The AGM hosting a motivational speaker and a Swiss photographer

On the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023 the New Helvetic Society hosted its Annual General Meeting at the Swiss Embassy in London. The AGM followed a Presentation by Neil Heritage, Motivational Speaker, first double amputee to successfully climb the Matterhorn and a Photo Exhibition by Fiona Bunn-Schroeter, British/Swiss Alpine Landscape photographer.



## Scotland: Officially founded the new Edinburgh University Swiss Society



Helena Eckert (President), Ali Eldridge (Vice-President), Luisa Dickenmann (Secretary), Tegan Williams (Social Media Manager), Ruby Rose (Social Secretary), and Nathaniel Cartier (Social Secretary).



The goal of the club is to start connecting local Swiss students to other students interested in Swiss life.

In Scotland, the new Edinburgh University Swiss Society 'Swiss Soc' has been officially founded this January 2023 by the following students: Helena Eckert (President), Ali Eldridge (Vice-President), Luisa Dickenmann (Secretary), Tegan Williams (Social Media Manager), Ruby Rose (Social Secretary), and Nathaniel Cartier (Social Secretary).

The Edinburgh Swiss Soc is a separate local entity that is in active contact with the Swiss Club Edinburgh! Their goal is to start actively connecting local Swiss students and any other students interested in Swiss life. They have already organised two events: a flat-party social and a hike across the Pentlands – which were both well attended – and preparing for many more including their upcoming Cheese Night!

It is the start of an exciting journey for the new Swiss Society of Edinburgh University, and the committee is always looking for innovative ideas, funding and ways to collaborate with other Swiss entities around the country – do get in touch at: [swisssoc.uoe@gmail.com](mailto:swisssoc.uoe@gmail.com)

## Swiss Railways Society: The exhibition stand to the Festival of Model Railways

The Swiss Railways Society took our exhibition stand to the Festival of Model Railways at Alexandra Palace, North London over the weekend of 18–19 March 2023. A full report of the two-days meeting will be published in the next issue of the Swiss Review in May.

The Society members have written a wide range of books about Swiss railways, lake steamers, post buses and other forms of transport and these were on sale on the stand, together with our range of English language Swiss Travel Guide books. These offer a guide to the various Cantons describing what to see and how the visitor could travel around whilst there.

Our AGM will be held in the Conference Suite at the Aston Court Hotel, Park Street, Derby, DE1 2SL on Saturday 29 April 2023, from 10:00–16:00 hrs. There will be a small supporting model railway exhibition and Swiss railway films will be shown during

the morning. Non-members may attend but will be asked for a donation of £2 on entry. More details can be found on our website: [www.swissralsoc.org.uk](http://www.swissralsoc.org.uk)

HYWEL REES, SECRETARY, SWISS RAILWAYS SOCIETY



### Southern Area Swiss Club: Dates for our events

We had our committee meeting and our next events are as follows:

*Saturday 22.04.2023: Swiss Cake Fest 2.30pm  
Darby Green Hall – GU17 0DT*

*Tuesday 06.06.2023: Skittles 7pm for 7.30pm  
Jolly Farmer, Blacknest – GU34 4QD*

*Saturday 29.07.2023: 1<sup>st</sup> August; 5pm  
Darby Green Hall – GU17 0DT*

*Saturday 07.10.2023: Gschwellti und Käse and tea/coffee and cake; 1pm  
Darby Green Hall – GU17 0DT*

*Saturday 02.12.2023: Christmas party 1pm  
Darby Green Hall GU17 0DT*

*Sunday 28.01.2024: Sunday Lunch; 12.30pm for 1pm  
Côte Farnham – GU9 7LL*

### London: Volunteers for the Swiss National Day

*Dear Compatriots,*

The Swiss National Day event will be back on 23 July at the German School in Richmond and a full programme will be shared here in due course.

At this stage, this is merely an appeal to find volunteers to help us run the day as smoothly as possible. Various roles available. Please send an email to [sdn.volunteers@outlook.com](mailto:sdn.volunteers@outlook.com) if you want to learn more.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



### Swiss National Day London 2023

**DATE: SUNDAY 23 JULY 2023**

**VENUE: THE GERMAN SCHOOL, RICHMOND**

**JOIN OUR FRIENDLY TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS  
TO MAKE THIS YEAR'S EVENT THE BEST YET**

**Can you help us on the day?**

- Different roles available
- Allocated time slots
- 1 virtual meeting ahead of the event

**YOU MAKE IT HAPPEN!**

**GET IN TOUCH >>**

**[SND.VOLUNTEERS@OUTLOOK.COM](mailto:SND.VOLUNTEERS@OUTLOOK.COM)**



To get informed about the latest from the Swiss clubs and community living in the UK and to get in touch with the UK OSA delegates, please visit the website [swiss-societies.co.uk/](http://swiss-societies.co.uk/) and FOSSUK's social media:

[@dukswiss](#)  
 [@FOSSUK](#)

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## West Surrey Swiss Club: The provoking performance of the 'Arms and the Man'

Our first event of the year was a Saturday matinée on 7 January at the Orange Tree Theatre in Richmond preceded by a pub lunch at the Orange Tree pub next door. We watched a thought-provoking performance of 'Arms and the Man' by George Bernard Shaw.

This famous personality who was born in Dublin in 1856 finally found commercial success with this play written around 9 years later. It is a comedy of social satire, bordering on farce, set during the Bulgarian-Serbian war around 1885 written by a man who was not only alive at the time but was committed to socialism and anti-war beliefs. One of the main protagonists is Captain Buntschli, a very pragmatic Swiss professional soldier who apparently when questioned, confessed he joined the Serbian Army because 'it was the nearest!'. The Serbs are defeated and Buntschli is seen on the run and seeking sanctuary in our young heroine's bedroom who, after some hesitation, hides him under a large fur on her bed. He admits to being hungry and asks for chocolates and then devours several chocolate creams. Claiming to be a very experienced soldier and prefers to carry chocolates in his uniform pocket since they are more valuable than bullets. This astounds the young lady since her suitor, Sergius, is a swaggering cavalry Major. He is quite the opposite of Buntschli seemingly inspired by the glory of war and death and romantic love whose feelings are mirrored by his lover Raina as well.



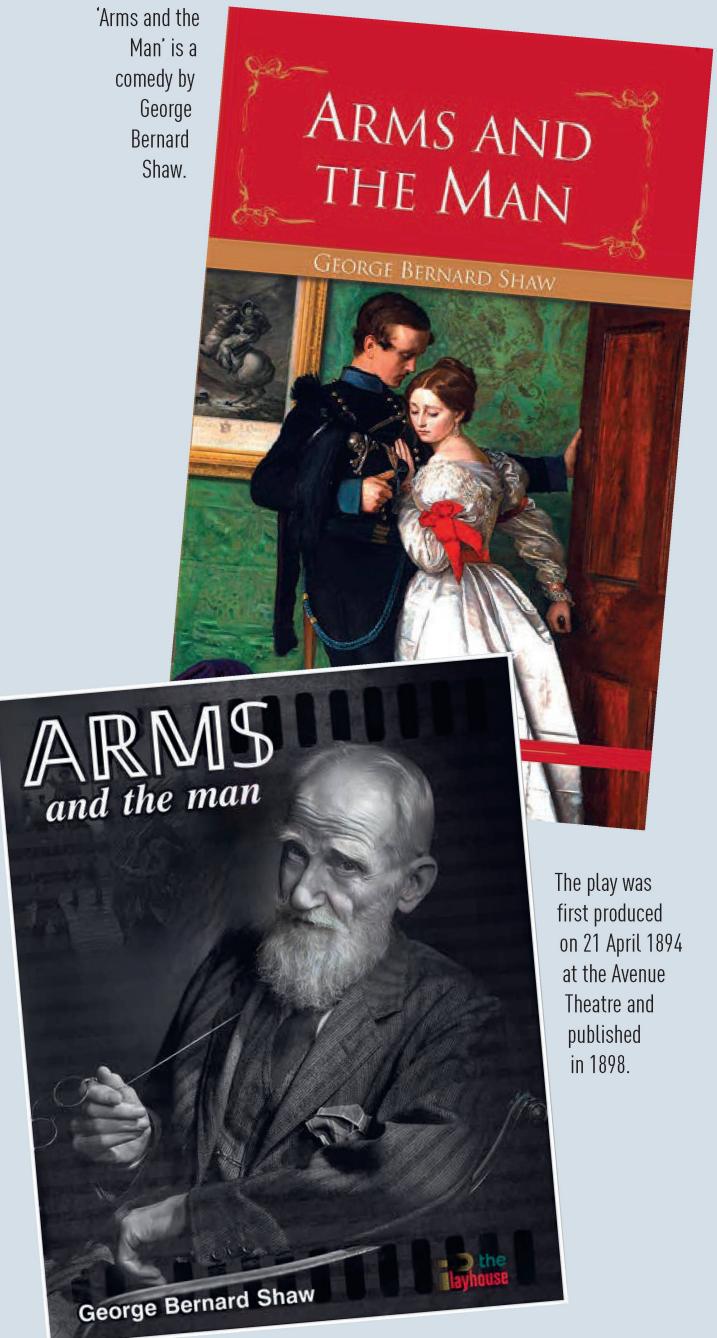
'Arms and the Man' at the Orange Tree theatre.

The play exposes the ridiculous attitudes of the military upper classes of the day and equally ridiculous romanticism associated with it via the amusing plot in which Raina is able to see the rather artificial feelings of a 'higher love' she has for Sergius whilst he realises he has more down to earth feelings for their vivacious servant who is looking to better herself! Raina comes to the conclusion that she actually has more in common with Buntschli and calls him 'her little chocolate soldier'. In the finale Sergius jilts Raina in favour of the servant whilst Buntschli, discovering that Raina is older than he realises and therefore eligible, faces objections from the family regarding how an ordinary soldier like him with a low social position can support their daughter.

The hilarious climax then comes when Buntschli discloses to them his recently acquired inheritance without actually mentioning the hotels. He reads from the inventory prepared in detail in the Swiss manner in addition to uttering the famous line, 'My rank is the highest known in Switzerland: I am a free citizen!'. Buntschli goes on to list his assets which dwarf those of the Bulgarian family namely, 300 servants, 200 horses, 6 palaces, 10,000 teaspoons, knives, forks etc which causes the father to say 'Are you the Emperor of Switzerland?'. The happy couple is betrothed and Buntschli looks at his watch and says he must leave at once and will return promptly in two weeks with the wedding plans. He departs leaving the astounded family and the last words are from Sergius who says 'What a man!'.

PETER CROZIER

'Arms and the  
Man' is a  
comedy by  
George  
Bernard  
Shaw.



The play was first produced on 21 April 1894 at the Avenue Theatre and published in 1898.

## Embassy: The Wales Week London 2023

Wales Week London is the annual showcase of activities and events that celebrates and promotes Wales, in London and around the world. It took place over the fortnight around St David's Day, from 19<sup>th</sup> February to 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

Switzerland and the UK are enriched by very diverse cultural and linguistic heritage. It is important to protect language as our main tool of expression and to support this vector of identity for generations to come.

Ambassador Markus Leitner, in the presence of The Rt Hon David TC Davies MP, Secretary of State for Wales, invited to an event that showcased Romansh from the southeastern part of Switzerland and drew parallels with Welsh in how the languages are fostered and maintained. The programme was aimed at sharing how an endangered language and the importance of technology in fostering the concept of 'unity in diversity' can be preserved.



© FDFA – The speakers on the images are Ambassador Markus Leitner and Secretary of State for Wales David TC Davies.

## Leeds/London: Awakening, Europe Film Festival 2023 – 5<sup>th</sup> edition

In Short Europe was first organised on 31.1.2020 ('Brexit Day') at the Romanian Cultural Institute in London as a celebration of European cinema and our shared values and culture with the UK.

For the 2023 edition, the festival is partnering up with LEEDS2023 and the EU Delegation to the UK and planning to present the festival in two locations: in Leeds in April 2023 and at the Institut français in London in May 2023.

The programme will be curated in 3–4 blocks of screenings across 2 days accompanied panel discussions (Q&A) with the filmmakers, industry events and workshops.

The following film has been selected to represent Switzerland: OLDSCHOOL, by Yasmine Bahechar. Somewhere in Geneva, a friendship between a group of girls has been forged between the Rhône and the Arve, right where the two rivers meet and mix

homogeneously. A departure can turn things upside down. There are those who leave and those who stay. Those who leave, leave behind memories. Those who see people leaving, keep the memories.

OLDSCHOOL is a short film written and directed by Yasmine Bahechar. In 2020 she completed a Bachelor's degree in filmmaking from the Geneva University of Art and Design (HEAD – Genève), with honours for her film OLDSCHOOL (2020).



<b>Leeds</b>
21–22 April 2023
Hyde Park; Picture House
<b>London</b>
12–13 May 2023
Institut français (TBC)
<b>Info</b>
<a href="http://europe.org.uk/eunic-events/category/film/">europe.org.uk/eunic-events/ category/film/</a>

© OLDSCHOOL –  
by Yasmine Bahechar.

### IMPRINT

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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[www.on-idle.com](http://www.on-idle.com)

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### Next Issues

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