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# REGIONAL EDITION

UNITED KINGDOM | IRELAND

## Editorial

As we step into a new year, we mark a significant anniversary—150 years of Unione Ticinese (UT), a historical part of Swiss presence in the UK. Like many enduring Swiss clubs in the UK, UT embodies a profound sense of community, nurturing and caring for each member. In our conversation with UT president Emilie Martinoni, she detailed UT's ability to maintain a balance between upholding tradition and embracing innovation—a guiding principle that could inspire clubs in an ever-changing landscape. This edition of the SR bears testament to the commit-

ment of numerous individuals to our culture and traditions. From the resounding Alphorn melody at the London Lord Mayor Show to the performances of the singer Alessia, who not only dedicates herself to producing high-quality music, but also supports mental health initiatives. We will also cover the various initiatives undertaken by clubs and associations to celebrate Christmas within their local community. They generously share Swiss traditions while extending support to those in need. I wish everyone a joyous New Year, and kindly remember to promote the SR among the Swiss citizens in the UK and Ireland.



GIOIA PALMIERI,  
«UK & IRELAND PAGES»

## London:

### Guilds of Zurich greeted by an alphorn at the Lord Mayor's Show



Frances  
Jones.

On Saturday 11 November 2023, Professor Michael Mainelli was inaugurated as the new Lord Mayor of the City of London. The event was celebrated with 'the world's oldest and longest unrehearsed parade', according to a BBC reporter.

Its three-mile route was a magnificent procession of over 2,000 people, represent-

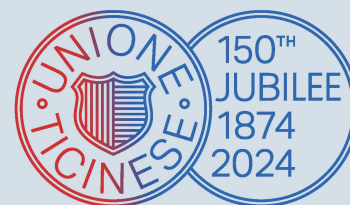
ing the armed forces, a variety of trades and professions, many community organizations and groups from other countries too. The new Lord Mayor wants to focus on international economic partnerships during his one-year tenure, so it was appropriate that alongside displays from number of the Livery Companies of the City of London,

many of which date back to the middle ages, he had invited a pageant of representatives from the equally historic Swiss craft organizations, the Guilds of Zurich.

In the bright morning sunshine about 100 Swiss participants in historic costume, with their colorful Guild flags, paraded through the streets, soaking up the atmosphere and acknowledging the cheers from the many thousands of spectators who lined the entire route. On arrival at Mansion House, the home of the Lord Mayor, they were greeted not only with a friendly wave from the Lord Mayor on his balcony but also with a cheery melody on the alphorn provided by London-based alphorn player Frances Jones, who serenaded them on their way from the pavement alongside. It was a unique sight and sound, and a memorable event, all filmed live on BBC One.

After the Swiss guests had moved on, the BBC reporter spoke to Frances about her instrument, and had a blow on it, but with minimal success: it was a fun episode, but highlighted the skill that is required not only to play an alphorn but also to make it look so easy!





## 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UT: Preserving tradition, pioneering the future



For this historic anniversary, we interviewed Emilie Martinoni Hoogenboom, president of Unione Ticinese (UT), whose efforts have contributed to making of this jubilee the largest and most engaging celebration in UT's 150-year history.

*Emilie, as president, how are you working to build engagement between UT and its members?*

Reflecting on the history of UT, I note its adaptation through various crises over the years that were needed to avoid the association's disappearance. A crucial moment was the inclusion of women in 1955 and adaptation has continued over time, with constitutional reforms, digital updates and innovation. These changes are crucial to actively engage individuals within an evolving society. The 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary will be a time to evaluate how to stay current and meet the members' needs. We offer a diverse programme combining traditional and innovative events, collaborating with other associations and institutions to reach a wider audience. Our aim is for every participant to feel welcomed and involved, hopefully

translating into new members for UT. Excluding the pandemic period, which limited in-person events, we've seen a significant increase in new memberships over the last two years, which has been extremely encouraging and motivating for our ongoing efforts.

*What has your experience as UT president given to you?*

It has been so far an incredible opportunity to meet remarkable individuals and to cultivate authentic connections that I believe will last in long-term. It has also allowed me to deepen my understanding of the rights and responsibilities of Swiss abroad and reflect on my own origins.

*What was Canton Ticino's response to the celebrations of UT's 150 years?*

It was indeed a touching response! It engaged people from across the whole Canton, involving people from valleys to cities, which highlights a deep emotional connection with emigration stories. Speaking with people, one can feel the sentiment in their tales of relatives or ancestors who had to leave Ticino to seek a better future. There is a profound impact related to emigration from Ticino, a theme deeply felt at various levels. The Jubilee is an occasion to

remember those who left their homes and contributed to the rebirth of the Canton of Ticino, besides influencing London's economic development. Carlo Gatti is an example of this, but today many others are continuing this tradition of exporting the 'Ticinesità', making a significant contribution both in London and at home.

*What are the highlights of the celebration program for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UT, and why was it structured this way?*

The central theme for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary is the connection between the past, present, and future. We will begin by commemorating the emigrated ticinesi, honouring Stefano Gatti, the founder of the society with a floral tribute, and his uncle and more famous Carlo Gatti, who is buried in Ticino, to acknowledge the fundamental role they had in establishing the ticinese colony in London, where the UT had its cradle. Subsequently, we will visit the Metropolitan Archives to delve into the association's history and to focus on contemporary Ticino, with Swiss Italian artists showcasing their works. Additionally, in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce of Canton Ticino and the London Chamber of Commerce, we will include an event dedicated to business innovation.

The culmination will be on February 10<sup>th</sup> with a gala dinner at the Swiss Embassy, where a starred Ticinese chef will prepare some typical dishes from our region. We'll have music from Sara Murer and Luca Fellaz, while an official delegation from Canton Ticino, including the President of the State Council Raffaele De Rosa, State Councillor Norman Gobbi, the President of Grand Council of Ticino Nadia Ghisolfi, the vice President Michele Guerra and others, will join the celebration.

GIOIA PALMIERI



UT members at the SND in London.



## February 2024: 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations of the UT

### Thursday, February 8<sup>th</sup>

#### MORNING

Round Table on Ticino's innovation. Focus: Artificial Intelligence, MedTech, and Pharma. Organised by Ticino Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

#### AFTERNOON

Visit and floral wreath laying – grave of Stefano Gatti, UT founder, Kensal Green Cemetery.

### Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup>

#### MORNING

University College London Hospitals visit with Cantone Ticino authorities.

#### AFTERNOON

London Metropolitan Archives tour: Viewing of UT artefacts follows presentation by historian Peter Barber on Ticino's emigration history.

Showcasing works by young Ticino Artists: music, animated films, theatre.

### Saturday, February 10<sup>th</sup>

UT Anniversary Celebration hosted at the Swiss Embassy in the UK, featuring drinks, dinner, and music from Ticino.

For more info: [utlondon.org/150th-jubilee](https://utlondon.org/150th-jubilee)

### Thursday: Exploring Ticino's innovations in London's economic event

On February 8<sup>th</sup>, a joint economic event by the Ticino Chamber of Commerce and the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry will spotlight Ticino's emergence as Switzerland's second most innovative region.

Attendees can expect deep dives into digital health, AI's impact on business, and corporate social responsibility in pharma. The day concludes with a panel discussion and networking lunch, fostering cross-border collaborations. This event aims to unveil Ticino's innovation landscape, showcasing its transition to high-tech, sustainable industries while providing a platform for professionals to connect, paving the way for transnational business alliances.



UT President Emilie Martinoni (center) and UT committee member Loredana Guetg-Wyatt (far left) pictured with Ticino's artists Nabila Dolfini and Martina Greenwood.

### Ticino: A scholarly legacy for young students

In honouring its 150-year history, UT aspired not only to celebrate the past but also to create a meaningful legacy for the future.

Thanks to the generous contributions from sponsors and dedicated individuals with ties to Ticino, the UT proudly established a scholarship initiative. This scholarship, valued at approximately 5'000 CHF, aims to support students in pursuing their educational endeavours in London. This legacy embodies UT's commitment to nurturing the aspirations of young Ticinese individuals, fostering their growth, and perpetuating a tradition of aiding those seeking to enhance their professional and academic skills in the UK.

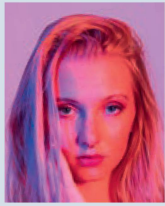
### Friday: Bridge the historical and the contemporary heritage of the club

A collaboration between the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) and UT has been set up to celebrate both the history and heritage of UT and the emerging innovative talent of Swiss Italians in London.

It is scheduled for February 9<sup>th</sup>, at the London Metropolitan Archives, where the UT historical documents have been preserved since 1874. The event aims to establish a significant historical arch: esteemed historian Peter Barber, OBE, will elucidate the organisation's storied past, while young artists from the Swiss Italian community in London will present their innovative works. With Bindu De Stoppani, Screenwriter and Film Director, Simone Giampaolo, Director of Animated Films presenting the premiere of his latest work, 'Bad Dinosaurs.' Actresses Nabila Dolfini and Martina Greenwood will stage a performance themed around emigration, premiering excerpts from a specially commissioned piece for the UT150, accompanied by musical interludes by singer and songwriter Leti.



## Grooving through life: Alessia's journey in disco-pop harmony



London-based and Swiss pop artist Alessia and her band 'The Crazycats' have been making waves with their tunes steeped in funk nostalgia. Led by Alessia's vibrant energy and musical prowess, the band has been on an exciting journey, recently culminating in their upcoming EP, 'Modern Disco Girl', produced by the renowned Will Hicks. Their single 'SPICY' has already garnered significant attention, marking just the beginning of their musical ascent.

*Alessia, what inspired the fusion of funk and disco in your EP, 'Modern Disco Girl,' and how do these influences shape your musical identity as an emerging artist?*

Growing up with my mother, who had me at 40, shaped my musical journey. Her '80s influence introduced me to Disco icons. Thanks to her, I have tried all different kinds of music styles. This upbringing instilled an inexplicable sense of being part of something bigger in my music. Presently, Disco-pop feels right, though I have diverse songs in store. Stay tuned for more musical surprises!

*Collaborating with Grammy-winning producer Will Hicks for your EP is impressive. Could you share a standout moment or a key lesson learned during the recording process that impacted your music?*

Entering the recording session with Will was nerve-wracking, but the collaboration was enlightening. It affirmed my understanding of music production and boosted my confidence in my musicality. Getting approval from someone like Will was fascinating, especially when he embraced my idea of adding a guitar solo to 'SPICY'. Now, that solo is my favourite part of the song, giving it a Southern American touch.

Info: [booking@alessiaartist.com](mailto:booking@alessiaartist.com) Website: [www.alessiaartist.com](http://www.alessiaartist.com)



*You've been described by industry professionals as a 'rare gem'. How do you infuse your performances with this bright energy, and what message or feeling do you hope listeners will take away from your music?*

I've battled depression for years and contemplated suicide in 2017, a struggle I've kept hidden until now. Embracing this vibrant energy stems from emerging from darkness; it's my unshakeable spark. I am hoping to attract people who like to dance and celebrate life. Because life is too short to be grumpy. I also aspire to show there's more than perpetual sadness, offering support via [booking@alessiaartist.com](mailto:booking@alessiaartist.com). I'll host mental health/music classes at BIMM University, sharing experiences through live performances and EP promotions. My upcoming releases are: 'Electricity' on the 25<sup>th</sup> January and the EP 'Modern Disco Girl' on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March.

GIOIA PALMIERI

## Scotland: Swiss artist Nat Cartier unveils latest track release!

Nat Cartier, a dynamic performing artist, producer, and songwriter, joins forces with Aberdeen-based Scottish artist Florence Jack for an electrifying release on January 12<sup>th</sup>: 'Read the Room'. This highly anticipated single, a year in the making, embodies the essence of a lively

radio hit, promising a contagious energy. Their dedication recently earned recognition at the Scottish Music Industry Conference, where four music professionals provided valuable feedback on the track – a special moment for the duo. While this release marks a significant

milestone, Cartier hints at more projects on the horizon. Nat extends an exclusive invitation for feedback on their sneak peek track, 'Read the Room', offering a glimpse into their musical chemistry.

Info: [www.cartiermusic.com](http://www.cartiermusic.com)



## Swiss Church: The Big Give Christmas Campaign and the homeless breakfast

In 2023, our Big Give Christmas Campaign raised an incredible £14,649.70, supporting our weekly Breakfast on the Steps for 70 homeless individuals. OSA delegate Andreas Feller-Rys leads this vital effort. We are deeply grateful for the generous contributions.

*New leadership team.* We are delighted to announce that the Swiss Church has a new leadership team: President Daniel Everett and Co-President, Katrin Frey. Katrin is also the church's Safeguarding Officer and Marriage Registrar. Also new to the Board of Trustees is Lindsey Wiercioch, a Californian artist based in London and Newcastle.

*Swiss inspired Art Programme 2024.* The Art Programme at the Swiss Church is going from strength to strength thanks to our two Arts Coordinators, artists Lizzy Drury and Diane Chappalley, who joined the team last year. In 2024, collaborations with Goldsmith's Design Department and London College of Communication promise artist residencies, exhibitions, performances, and screenings. We are very excited to be hosting an opera inspired by Swiss Artist-Dancer Sophie Taeuber-Arp (July), and our annual fundraising Ballet Gala in September.



Big Give Christmas Campaign raised an incredible £14,649.70, supporting weekly Breakfast for 70 homeless individuals.

*Samichlaus / Räbeliechtli.* Our recent Swiss Family Christmas welcomed twenty families for crafts, Samichlaus, and Räbeliechtli carving in Covent Garden, a heart-warming event made possible by our dedicated volunteers.

Follow us on Instagram [@swisschurchlondon](https://www.instagram.com/swisschurchlondon) or visit our webpage [www.swisschurchlondon.org.uk](http://www.swisschurchlondon.org.uk)

## XMAS: 'Samichlaus in the Woods' event for the Swiss in South Wales

Once again, the South Wales Swiss held their annual event to celebrate 1<sup>st</sup> of Advent and the tradition of St Nicholas at the magical Penllengare Valley Woods near Swansea.

It was nice to see that the number of participants increased from last year. New families with their children, some of whom are now the grandchildren of our original Swiss in Wales members, joined us this year for the traditional walk to our adopted tree, which the children love to decorate before taking our annual photo shot. However, the main attraction always is 'Samichlaus' with his big bell and bag full of presents for the children.

This year, we also held a raffle. The Penllengare Valley Woodland Trust is in the process of finishing a couple of educational wildlife projects.

The Swiss in Wales were pleased to donate the proceeds of our raffle to the Penllengare new Wildlife Centre fund.

RUTH THOMAS



New families with their children joined this year for the traditional walk to meet Samichlaus!

## London celebrates L'Escalade: The Genevan traditions persists

One of the most significant events on the Genevan calendar is L'Escalade, commemorating the pivotal event of December 1602.

It marks the Duke of Savoy, Charles Emmanuel's failed attempt to surprise Geneva, resulting in a resounding defeat by its citizens. For over a century, Genevans and friends have honoured L'Escalade in London. December 2023 saw 70 attendees gathering at the Embassy of Switzerland for a delightful meal. The evening culminated in the traditional smashing of a chocolate marmite (cauldron) filled with marzipan vegetables. Children joyfully shattered it while reciting 'Ainsi périrent les ennemis de la République' (Thus perish the enemies of the Republic), symbolizing Catherine Cheynel's defence of the city by pouring boiling vegetable soup on soldiers scaling its walls.





Keeping up the traditions with Raclette and a visit from Samichlaus and the elves.

**Wilhelm Tell Group:** Thanks to Trudy Briant, club's president for 38 years

Trudy Briant, the stalwart of Bournemouth Wilhelm Tell Group for 38 years, deserves immense praise for her outstanding dedication to maintaining the club's vibrancy.

As she passed the torch to committed members Sandra, Julian, Abi, and Kelly, the group celebrated its Raclette Evening with special festivities, including a heartfelt 'thank you' to Trudy. Amidst delightful homemade treats, language switches added charm. Lucky raffle winners and dedicated helpers ensured a memorable Christmas, pointing towards a promising future for the club.



There are about 40 active members in the club.



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Club President Trudy Briant (second from the right).



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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:

f @ukswiss  
t @FOSSUK



## Swiss Club Edinburgh's annual dinner: A celebration of culture and community



Individual name cards painted by Euan Cameron.

On Saturday, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the Swiss Club Edinburgh held its traditional annual dinner at the Bruntsfield Hotel. President Franz Muheim warmly welcomed over 30 attendees.

Euan Cameron skillfully crafted individual name cards for the occasion. The evening featured an outstanding four-course menu. Entertainment started with Swiss authors Regi Claire reading a poem and Ron Butlin sharing a passage from his new novel. The celebration of Swiss culture followed, highlighted by Nat Cartier's performance of his song 'Zytreis.' Secretary Sepp Jans graced the event with the song 'Dr Schacher Seppeli,' accompanied by Franz on the accordion. The evening concluded with everyone joining in singing Swiss folk songs in Swiss German, French, and Italian, accompanied by Franz and Euan on the guitar. It was a truly delightful evening, creating cherished and enduring memories.

[WWW.SWISSCLUBEDINBURGH.CO.UK](http://WWW.SWISSCLUBEDINBURGH.CO.UK)

### 1: Southern Area Swiss Club

On Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 23 members took part in a delightful Gschwellti und Chäs lunch at Basingstoke Canal Centre in Mytchett. The afternoon concluded with an assortment of home-made cakes, making it a lovely gathering enjoyed by everyone.

Southern Area Swiss Club also hosted a Christmas party on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, at Basingstoke Canal Centre in Mytchett. The event boasted a fantastic turnout, offering guests delightful company, delicious food, and a successful raffle, making it a memorable evening for all attendees.

BERNI CURTRESS [BERNI@NBTSC.PLUS.COM](mailto:BERNI@NBTSC.PLUS.COM)

performed at the highest standard – matched only by the enthusiastic applause of an international audience in their thousands.

BEATRICE SCHLEGEL

### 3: Festive 'Treff' in Liverpool-Chester

On November 26<sup>th</sup>, Swiss expats in Liverpool and Chester came together for a Swiss Treff, resembling a pre-Christmas celebration. The event was delightful, and there are hopeful plans to reunite the local community again in February/March for another enjoyable gathering.

KARIN EVANS [KARIN.MARY.EVANS@GMAIL.COM](mailto:KARIN.MARY.EVANS@GMAIL.COM)



Southern Area Swiss Club (SASC).



SASC Christmas party.

### 2: North Wales Swiss Meetup in Rhos on Sea

On December 10<sup>th</sup>, the North Wales Swiss community gathered in Rhos on Sea for a meetup hosted by Karen and Graham Jones. The event unfolded in the cosy ambience of their St. Davids Apartments, fostering a warm and inviting atmosphere for all attendees.

This year's theme was all about stories, and, of course, 'William Tell's story' had to be told. Under the leadership of Lt. Col. Aldo Werlen, the Band

### 4: The Midlands Swiss Society

The Midlands Swiss Society, a small close-knit club, gathers informally a few times a year to connect with Swiss fellows. Our recent gathering on December 6<sup>th</sup> 2023, featured a delightful Samichlaus luncheon at the Boot Inn, Lapworth. For those who desire to join us or reach out, please contact Erika Berry-Tritten at [erikabtritten@gmail.com](mailto:erikabtritten@gmail.com)



North Wales Swiss meetup.



Festive 'Treff' in Liverpool.



## 'Swiss Electric Locomotives': Success at National Model Railway exhibition in Birmingham

The Swiss Railways Society took our stand to the National Model Railway at the NEC Birmingham over the weekend of 25–26 November 2023.

Our team met the members, enrolled some new ones and sold many copies of our new book entitled 'Swiss Electric Locomotives', as well as our transport orientated visitor guides to Switzerland. We were very pleased about how things went and we hope to repeat the experience next year.

HYWEL REES, SECRETARY

NEC Birmingham.



## Angelica Kauffman's life and work exhibition

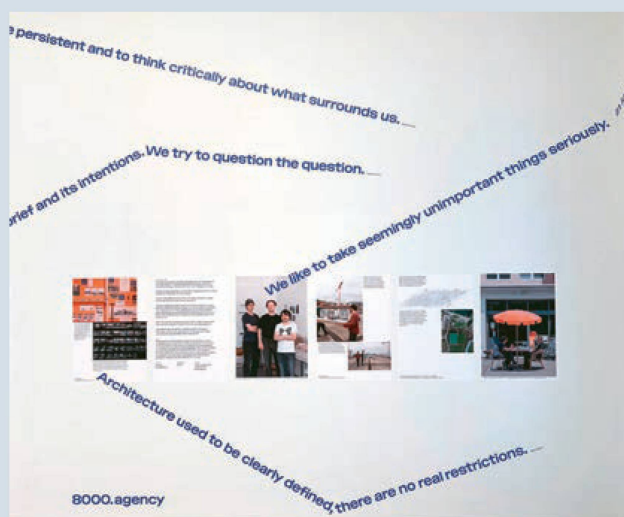
Angelica Kauffman was one of the most celebrated artists of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In this major exhibition, the Royal Academy of Arts will trace the Swiss artist's trajectory from child prodigy to one of Europe's most sought-after painters.

This exhibition will cover Kauffman's life and work: from her roots in Grishun, Switzerland and her childhood in Italy, over her rise to fame in London, her role as a founding member of the Royal Academy and her later career in Rome where her studio became a hub for the city's cultural life. 1 March – 30 June 2024. Royal Academy of Arts, London.

## Drawing new lines: Voices in Swiss architecture

Bringing together photography, collages, posters and drawings, this free display presents an expanded idea of architecture in Switzerland today – one which links it to art, landscape and performance.

This display features five Swiss architecture studios and projects and is born from the afterFORM series of talks with the Architecture Foundation. Extended until 4 February 2024. Royal Academy of Arts, London.



### 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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### Next Issues

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