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MESSAGE FROM YOUR EDITOR

At Christmas and the New Year it is only natural that our thoughts should turn to absent friends and relatives and the land of our origin. Many of us will, of course, be spending the holiday in Switzerland but many will not. Common bonds will, I am sure, bind all together during the festivity.

To reflect personally for just a moment, I must offer my most sincere thanks to the many members of the Colony who have given me so much help, encouragement and support during the few short months I have been privileged to act as editor of the *Swiss Observer*. I have received many letters, all of which were much appreciated, and look forward to receiving many more in the future.

During my tenure in office it has been my sad duty to publish a number of obituaries. This sadness has, however, been partially offset by the knowledge that the *Swiss Observer* is still fulfilling what I see as its prime function – to provide news about the Colony and keep readers informed of some of the more important and interesting events which take place in Switzerland.

Looking ahead, I hope we can all continue to work together to help keep the *Swiss Observer* interesting. This can only be done with your help, each and every one of you. Please let me have your news, views and ideas and do, please, introduce your paper to as many people as possible.

All that remains is for me to wish you all a very happy Christmas and health, prosperity and tranquillity in 1976 and beyond.

May your God go with you.

WGS

Literary Honours for Marie-José

Marie-José Piguet was born in Gimel, Vaud, Switzerland, on 21st April, 1941. Her father was a member of a well-known watchmaking family from the Vallée de Joux, and a watchmaker himself. Her mother, who lives in Gimel, is a member of the Swiss family of De Bonneville.

Marie-José was educated at Aubonne and Lausanne. Trained first as a secretary in Commerce where she received a Diploma, then in the Cantonal Hospital of Lausanne where she became a SRN. She visited England where she taught French.

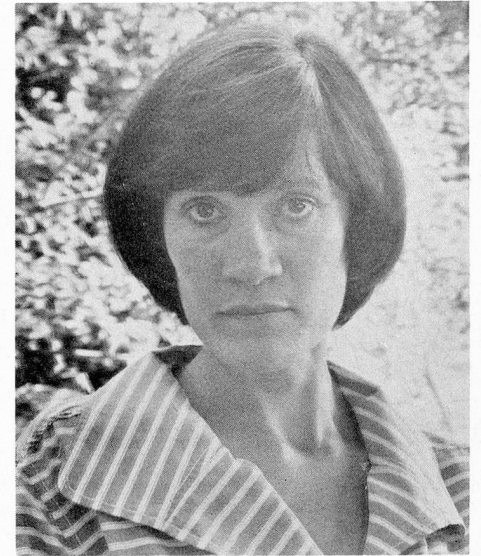
She is married to Lionel Knight, a painter and a member of an old Hampshire family, and a descendant of the novelist Jane Austen. They live in Cornwall.

In 1974 she had her first novel published – Reviens Ma Douce (Editions Bertil Galland, Vevey, Switzerland). This won the Prix Georges Nicole, a premier French-Swiss literary award, and this year the same book received the Prix Alpes-Jura, a French literary prize, jointly with Professor Jean-Christian Spahni for his book Les Indiens des Andes.

Apart from writing, her chief interests are exploring the countryside, gardening, and cooking after Mapie Lautrec.

A synopsis of Marie-José's book runs as follows:

Joëlle, the heroine, gets the urge to escape from her village, to tramp the world. She goes to Berne, works in Lausanne then England where she meets Mortimer. Her father dies. The fairies of her childhood haunt her. Her mother wants her to come back; Mortimer calls to her from England. She is torn between the forests and lakes of her Switzerland and the coasts and rocks of England. Mortimer's past remains a mystery until she discovers in a pond of his childhood the delicate trace of her own fairies.



Marie-José Piguet, a Swiss writer who has been honoured for her book 'Reviens Ma Douce'. Marie-José is married to artist Lionel Knight who is a descendant of Jane Austen.

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