

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 14 (1987)
Heft: 2

Vorwort: Your SSA
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Cover picture

Museum of toys in Riehen (photo: Walter Studer).

The Glacier Express on the *Landwasser* viaduct in the Grisons.

Imprint

Swiss Review

Magazine for the Swiss Abroad

14th year of issue

Published quarterly in German, French, Italian, English and Spanish, in about 30 regional editions

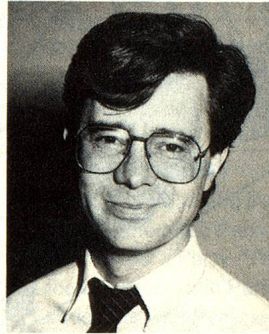
Printing: Berne, Paris, Lugano, New York, Melbourne, Wellington, Johannesburg, Buenos Aires

Total circulation: 232 200

Publisher, seat of central editorial offices and advertisement administration:
 Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad of the NHS
 Alpenstrasse 26
 CH-Berne 16, Switzerland
 Telephone 031 44 66 25
 Telex 912 118 asse ch
 Postcheck (Swiss national giro) account:
 30-6768-9

Editorial

Your SSA



The «Fifth Switzerland» is a many-faceted family in the process of constant change. And just as manifold are the tasks and expectations that the Secretariat at 26 Alpenstrasse in Berne strives to fulfil.

Did you hear the story of the St Bernard which, through our good offices, set out on the long journey to California and now lives (happily, we hear) in an American-Swiss family? The «case of the dog», which made the headlines in the Swiss press, is of course most untypical of our daily round of work but it does perhaps illustrate the wide spectrum of services that the Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad offers you. This ranges from information and assistance of many kinds, through advice on legal and social security questions, to skiing and hiking camps for young Swiss people from abroad.

The magazine you are reading does duty for the efforts which we – in close co-operation with the Service for the Swiss Abroad of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs – make to keep you informed of at least the most important happenings in your old homeland.

A further, central task of the SSA is to represent and safeguard the interests of the «Fifth Switzerland» vis-à-vis the Swiss authorities and the Swiss public. Whether it is a matter of citizenship, the right to vote by post or the legal position of the Swiss abroad in the old-age and survivors insurance scheme (AHV), we constantly strive to attain the attainable.

A not always simple, but always fascinating and rewarding job which the whole SSA team does with conviction and enjoyment.

Dr. Rudolf Wyder, Director of the Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad of the NHS.