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UK Six for Bern

Nominations have now closed for the positions of UK delegate and UK deputy delegate to the Council of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA). But an election will not, after all, be necessary. Jeffrey Long, president of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom (FOSSUK), the body which oversees the appointments, told the *Regional News-UK* that only three nominations had been received for the three delegate posts and, similarly, only three nominations had been received for the three posts of deputy delegate. All that therefore remained to be done was for FOSSUK to formally ratify the appointment of all six nominees – at its annual general meeting held in London in June.

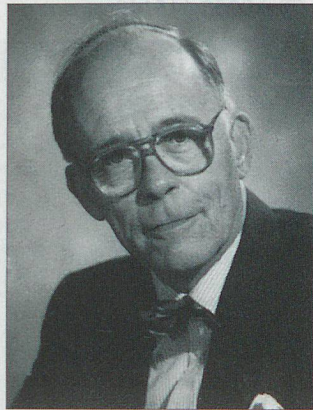
Because of an increase in the size of the Swiss population in Britain, the OSA decided to increase the United Kingdom's representation on the OSA council from two to three. Both of the two present UK delegates, Giuseppe Broggin and Bernard Simon, have been appointed for another term of office.

Broggin was born in Losone (TI) and has lived in London since 1967. An architect by profession, he is also president of the Unione Ticinese. He first became a deputy delegate, and then a full delegate, to the OSA in 1981 and for some years now he has also been a member of the OSA's executive.

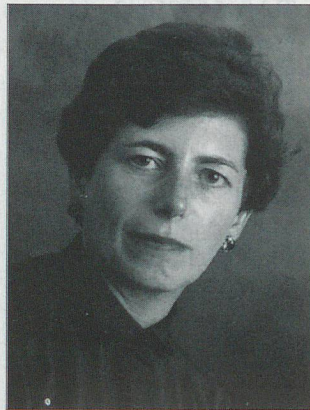
Bernard Simon, a native of Basel, has lived in England since 1954. Now retired, he was previously a manager with Ciba-Geigy and has long since been – and remains – a stalwart of the Manchester Swiss Club. Simon has served as dele-

gate to the OSA since 1982 and is also a member of several of the OSA's working parties.

Broggin and Simon are joined as delegates by Dr Ursula Ditchburn, who, since 1982, has served as Simon's deputy. A native of Zollikon (ZH), Ursula Ditchburn has lived in the



citizen of Eptingen (BL), has had a fascinating and peripatetic career. She worked in Paris, before, briefly, coming to London in 1962 to work for the Football Association. After short periods in Spain and Switzerland, she then returned to London in 1963 to work for the president of



Four from Six : Bernard Simon, Rosemarie Breitenstein (top), Margrit Lyster and Giuseppe Broggin (bottom).

UK since 1959 and for many years she was president of Dunfermline Swiss Club.

While the three delegates are all well-acquainted with the OSA council, the three deputy-delegates are all new-comers – and, interestingly, all women. All three, however, also have considerable experience with the affairs of the Swiss community in the United Kingdom.

Rosemarie Breitenstein, a

FIFA – a job which required travel across the world. Because of her long absences from London, it was only in 1983 that she began to take a closer interest in the affairs of the Swiss community in Britain, joining the Schweizerische Frauenverein and the New Helvetic Society, a society of which she is now secretary.

Ms Breitenstein is joined

as deputy delegate by another Londoner, Margrit Lyster. A citizen of Engelberg (OW), she left Switzerland thirty years ago and has since busied herself both professionally and socially with the Swiss community in Britain. Since 1977 she has been employed as the social worker at the London Swiss Welfare Office for young people. Mrs Lyster is also an active member of the Swiss church, a council member of the New Helvetic Society and the 1st August Committee and, alone among the delegates and deputy delegates, a member of the editorial committee of the *Regional News-UK*.

The third deputy-delegate is Sylvia Sweeney-Buergisser, currently vice-president of Dunfermline Swiss Club. Born and brought up in Dunfermline, she is the only second-generation Swiss among the British contingent to the OSA – but her Swiss connections are impeccable. The very first meeting of Dunfermline Swiss Club was held in her father's home. A Senior Lecturer in Learning Resources at West Lothian College, Mrs Sweeney is an accomplished linguist and has served as an interpreter at Eurosummits. 'It is very important,' she noted, 'for the Swiss community in Scotland to develop a high profile, with issues such as inward investment and the EEA now being debated.'

FOSSUK chairman Jeffrey Long welcomed the appointment of Britain's six and hailed them as 'a very good team'.

The team of six will have a chance to live up to Long's (and the UK Swiss community's) expectations at the next OSA congress, which will be held in Montreux in August.

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Swiss Review-

Regional News-UK

Tel 0224 272999

Dr David Ditchburn

***Swiss Rifle Association**

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***Swiss Welfare Office**

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Margrit Lyster

Torbay

Tel 0803 842355

Max Singer

***Twickenham Ladies**

Annemarie Locher
227 Fulwell Pk Ave

Twickenham TW2 5HD

Tyne Tees

Tel 091 536 1047

Nelly Scott-Niederberger

***Unione Ticinese**

Tel 081 741 4224

Giuseppe Broggin

West of Scotland

Tel 041 956 5127

Mrs M-T Cramer

Yorkshire

Tel 0535 569121

Janina Clough

** denotes organisation
based in London area*

Obituaries

*We regret to announce
the recent death of three
friends of Britain's Swiss
community. Jean W
Bonjour, a member of the
New Helvetic Society
and Swiss Mercantile
Society has died at the
age of 94. Giuseppe
Eusebio, former presi-
dent of the Unione Tici-
nese, died some time
ago, but readers of the
old Swiss Observer may
remember his regular
contributions about life
in the Ticino. Ernesto
Thalman, Swiss
ambassador in London
from 1976 to 1979, died
in Bern soon after his
79th birthday.*

Around and About

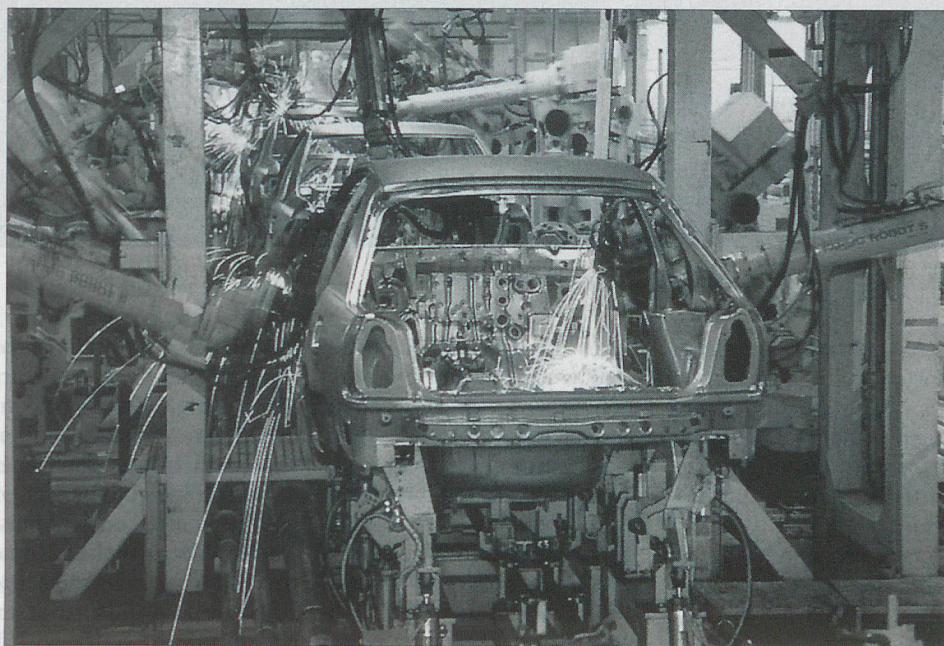
Tyne Tees

By a margin of two votes the Tyne and Wear Club, as was, has changed its name to Swiss Club Tyne Tees – reflecting its southward expansion into the Teesside area. At its recent AGM the club also elected, for the first time, a vice-president: Mrs Ursula Quick-Schirman from Darlington. She will also act as

Both Primeras and Micras are manufactured at Sunderland, with over 90% of the cars destined for export. Germany is the largest export market, though many cars are also sent to Switzerland and some even to Japan.

Many preconceptions about Japanese styles of management and work

latitude in determining the way in which they undertake their tasks. No one has a specific job description and work rotation is routinely practiced. Over 99% of the workforce hails from the north-east, but only 3% of the job applications come from women. (There are 35 women on the assembly line.) The work-



Sunderland's Nissan factory

joint secretary with Trudy Wade and Arthur Howard, following the resignation of Elisabeth Herbert-Ebner.

Before the name change, the Tyne and Wear Swiss Club organised a fascinating tour of the Nissan car factory at Sunderland. The factory, which began to manufacture cars in 1986, is now one of the most highly integrated car production plants in the world, encompassing a wide range of processes. In addition to the stamping and welding of car bodies, and the painting and final assembly of cars, the plant also manufactures engines and aluminium cylinder heads.

were dispelled during the club's tour of the press shop, body shop and trim and final assembly line. For a start there are no group exercises and no communal singing. Neither is the plant fully automated: the body shop, for example, is only 80% automated. But there are tea breaks: one was called during the tour, though workers finished the job they were doing before taking their break.

The conditions of work and the character of the workforce attracted much comment from club members. Employees are organised into teams which have a considerable degree of

force is, however, very young with an average age of only 27. Although the AAEU is recognized only 47% of the workforce is unionized. Everyone was greatly impressed by the cleanliness of the plant – a far cry from the dirty and dingy image which is usually associated with industry.

All in all, as the length of the question session demonstrated, this was a particularly interesting and successful event and the club is greatly indebted to the Nissan company and to club member Sir Horace Heyman for arranging the visit.

Unione Ticinese

Three lectures on matters with Ticino connections will be held in the autumn in the lecture theatre of the Swiss Embassy in London. On 23 September Dr Mario Grassi will speak on the *Ticino Today* (postponed from 13 May). On 14 October Nicholas Turner (Deputy Keeper, Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum) will deliver an illustrated lecture on the life and career of the Roman Baroque painter *Pier Francesco Mola*, who was born in Coldrerio (TI) in 1612. And on 25 November Dr Peter Barber and Peter Jacomelli will deliver another illustrated talk on *Ticinese Restaurants in Britain at the Turn of the Century*.

Meanwhile, in June, the Union Ticinese's most senior member, Claudia Polti, celebrated her 90th birthday. Born in Olivone (TI) on 22 June 1903, Claudia went to school in her home village. She came to London on 13 June 1922 to work in the catering trade as a waitress. During her long and successful career she worked for many prestigious organisations, such as the RAC, the Guards Club, the Turf Club and the Connaught Rooms. She joined the Unione Ticinese in 1940 and was an active member of its ladies committee until 1955, when the ladies' section was merged with the main society. She then became a member of the committee, on which she served for many years, at one stage as a vice-president. The Unione extends its warmest congratulations to her.

■ Valeria Ossola

Tourist Review

by Heidi Reisz

Olympic city Lausanne is the site for one of Switzerland's newest tourist attractions. Earlier this summer Lausanne threw open the doors of a new museum dedicated to the spirit and history of the Olympic Games. Incorporating a 250-seat cinema, study centre, library and countless exhibits tracing the history of the olympiad and highlighting memorable sporting achievements from games around the world, the museum opened to visitors on 23 June.

Lausanne, situated on the banks of Lake Geneva, has been home to the International Olympic Committee since 1915, the year in which the first Olympic Museum was also established. Since then the museum has had two other homes, the last closing in June 1992.

Over the last eight months the museum authorities have been establishing the collection in its spacious new home near Lausanne lakefront on the quai d'Ouchy. The museum is set in a public park containing sculptures and other works of art.

The museum's collection has developed from the first exhibits donated by Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the second president of the IOC, from 1896 to 1925. Other presidents, individuals and national olympic committees have given additional exhibits over the years.

A retrospective of the modern Olympic Games from their reestablishment in 1896 to modern times are among the features of the museum, which will fascinate the thousands of visitors, from dedicated sporting fans to armchair spectators, it is preparing to welcome.

SWISS CHURCH Bazaar will be held in London on 6 November 1993.

URSULA & RENE Greminger and family - herzlich willkommen in England. Viel Glueck wuenscht Euch Anne-Marie & Michael.



Modern Geneva: end point for medieval pilgrimage

Switzerland has looked to its historical role as the crossroads of Europe and created a range of holidays with the aim of rediscovering the country's ancient, cultural routes.

A new brochure, *Ways to Switzerland*, traces the routes carved across the country by distinct cultures - visitors can tread in the footsteps of Roman legionaries, the pilgrims of St James or a nomadic tribe. Another journey links legendary sites which have played major roles in Swiss history.

Each path weaves its way through towns, countryside and mountains and can be broken down into easily manageable, accessible segments. Some journeys are more physically demanding than others and range from relaxing walks to mountain hikes. On most routes tired walkers can turn to bicycles, trains, cars and in some cases even river-steamers.

Hungry visitors will find the country's reputation for hospitality undiminished. The tradition founded cen-

turies ago lives through the 26,000 inns and restaurants as high as 11,500 feet above sea level.

Lured to a watering hole by a welcoming sign, travellers may find themselves in the garden of a comfortable inn, a cosy parlour or a cool grotto furnished with long stone tables. Culinary specialities include fondue, air-cured meats, risotto and bratwurst as well as wines and mineral waters produced by various regions.

Routes of discovery include four Alpine passes conquered more than 2000 years ago by Romans forced to traverse the mountains for the shortest link between Rome and the distant Rhine region. Today the relics of five centuries of Roman occupation - entire amphitheatres, rutted paving, milestones and bridges, dating back as far as 100 BC - can still be seen.

Later history saw medieval paths carved by pilgrims drawn for 1000 years from all over Europe to the legendary tomb of St James at Santiago de Com-

postella in the far north of Spain. Modern day visitors can take on the mantle of pilgrims and tread ancient paths which head for Geneva and still lead to monasteries, chapels and ancient inns.

The Great Walser Route provides an insight to the lifestyle and culture of an old nomadic tribe which tamed the high Alpine valleys. The Walsers were tough and inventive - they built stone and timber homes, cleared forests, laid out irrigated terraces and set their own laws. Visit modern-day Walser settlements and hear a snatch of the dialect still spoken today.

The Swiss path, created in 1991 to commemorate the 700th anniversary of the Swiss Federation, provides a breathtaking introduction to magical scenery. Set around the basin of Lake Lucerne, it visits mythical and historic sites which make up the fabric of the development of Switzerland.

The brochure *Ways to Switzerland* can be obtained from the Swiss National Tourist Office in London.

Letters

The French and FOSSUK

Sir,
I write in reply to Mrs F R Cobb's remarks in her letters (*Swiss Review* 2/92 and 2/93) regarding the absence of Swiss from the French-speaking part of Switzerland on the FOSSUK committee and as delegates on the council of the Swiss Abroad.

To dispel any misunderstanding, I should like to make it clear to your readers that these positions are open to any Swiss having the necessary qualifications. Invitations to submit nominations of suitable candidates were sent to all affiliated societies and, to my knowledge, were received by a number of French-speaking members.

I regret to inform you that no nomination has been received for a *Suisse Romand* for election as delegate or deputy delegate to the OSA. However, there are vacant positions of secretary, treasurer and for two members on the FOSSUK committee. Any *Romands* interested?

Yours sincerely,
J Long,
(President, FOSSUK),
London.

Regional News-UK

The editor welcomes readers' views and comments, as well as reports from Swiss clubs and societies. Letters and articles for the next issue of the Regional News-UK, to be published in October, should be forwarded to Dr David Ditchburn, Department of History, University of Aberdeen, King's College, Old Aberdeen AB9 2UB (Tel 0224 272999; Fax 0224 272203) by 20 August 1993.

Army Blast

Sir,
As a reader of the *Swiss Review* and a veteran of the Swiss army I have a contempt against those who spread defeatism in our country. The army is an integral part of Switzerland, its proper defence for generations. In my opinion those who want to abolish the army are nothing short of Quislings and miserable defeatists, not worthy to be called *Eidgenossen*. How many times has our army stood up against possible superior might, to preserve our freedom and security? A true *Eidgenossen* is a soldier and proud of both it and of our forefathers who gave their lives for a just cause. Let those who want to ruin our country be anathema.

with federal greetings,
Paul Eugster,
Wirral,
Cheshire.

Facts, Myths and Money

Sir,
Mrs Vreneli Inwood-Bryner's letter (*Swiss Review* 2/93) cannot go unchallenged.

Firstly one is surprised how hard the eternal myth of 'freedom-loving mountain peasants struggle for independence' dies. Even to contemplate the concept of sovereignty for the thirteenth century is a gross anachronism. 1291 and all that is little more than a romantic vision which can be conveniently revived in times of a national emergency (cf. the *Landi* of 1939).

The second hard-to-die myth refers to Switzerland's uniqueness in the world. Yes, Switzerland is unique in a sense, but not more or less unique than, let's say, the United Kingdom, Finland, Chad or Pakistan. Every country has a unique

history, unique social structures, etc. and it is high time that we Swiss acknowledge this.

It should also be remembered that a claim to uniqueness is often little more than a thinly veiled expression of superiority. I find it unfortunate that facts have to give way to patriotic myths (by definition stories that explain the past but are not true) in a discussion of last December's referendum.

The facts are - and here the Bern government, the Swiss captains of industry and many young Swiss and Swiss abroad will agree - that the voters have done themselves a considerable disservice: by saying NO to EEA they excluded their country from the largest common market and prolonged the recession, they denied their parliament and government an active role in shaping the future of our continent, they deprived their scholars and students of exchange schemes, additional funds and equal access to universities of excellence abroad.

Mrs Inwood-Bryner, at least as far as her name suggests, is married to an EC national and lives in cosmopolitan London and is therefore little affected by all this. I, on the other hand, a young doctoral student with single Swiss nationality, have to bear the sad consequences of 6 December. May the day come when even we Swiss care a bit less for the old myths and a bit more for the future of the younger generation!

Vive l'Europe!

Yours sincerely,
J R Schwytzer,
Cambridge.

Snide

Sir,
I do not wish to become involved in the Meier/Wraight/Geiger disagreement, which, judging on the basis of the last contribution,

is becoming somewhat tedious.

In the interest of fair play, however, I would guess that Mr Geiger does not receive payment for his book reviews, which puts him in the same category as Sir John Wraight. In these circumstances I am sure that Mr Geiger does not deserve the snide remarks scattered throughout Mrs Meier's letter.

Yours faithfully,
D Raphael,
Powys.

B & B at Claridges

Sir,
I should like to congratulate the committee of the City Swiss Club for the organisation of a banquet and ball at the Claridges. It is encouraging to see that it is still possible to part with old habits and regain tradition at the same time.

I was impressed by the way we all were personally welcomed by the president on arrival. This gesture, together with the excellent and attentive service provided by the hotel staff, made us feel comfortable straight away. The combination of delicious food and first class entertainment, band and show, made it an evening to remember.

The club's decision to welcome all Swiss and friends of Switzerland to their ball made it possible to meet new faces and I hope that this will continue in the years to come.

I already look forward to next year's ball at the Claridges, when I shall certainly bring some friends along.

Yours sincerely,
Christoph Ziegler,
New Barnet,
Hertfordshire.

Due to pressure of space other letters have been held over to the next issue. Ed.

The Quiet Pioneers

This year the Swiss National Tourist Office in London celebrates its centenary year. In the first of a series of articles on the history of what is now London's most famous foreign tourist office, and a tourist attraction in its own right, Heidi Reisz traces the SNTO's early years from 1893 to the Second World War.

As British colonialists made history in the Third World by striking out across unchartered lands, so the Swiss embarked upon a quieter pioneering expedition that has led to the develop-

Cook had led its first package tour to the land of stunning scenery and clockwork railways. Other tour operators followed as they realised the appeal that Switzerland had for well-to-do travellers. Its standards of service were unsurpassed. The comfort of its hotels and hostels suited the most discerning. The railways were so clean and punctual as to suit the most fastidious. And there was the attraction of stunning ranges of mountains which had not been explored in living memory.

In *Miss Jemima's Swiss Journal*, the diary of the par-

panies, a process which was finally completed in 1902 when the Swiss Federal Railways were formed.

The London office thus lost its regional bias and began to market journeys in the whole of Switzerland. At about the same time, a member of the Swiss parliament, Dr Alexander Seiler, tabled a motion calling for the creation of a central office for the promotion of tourism. It was his vision to promote the qualities of Switzerland and her many blessings rather than just sell railway tickets.

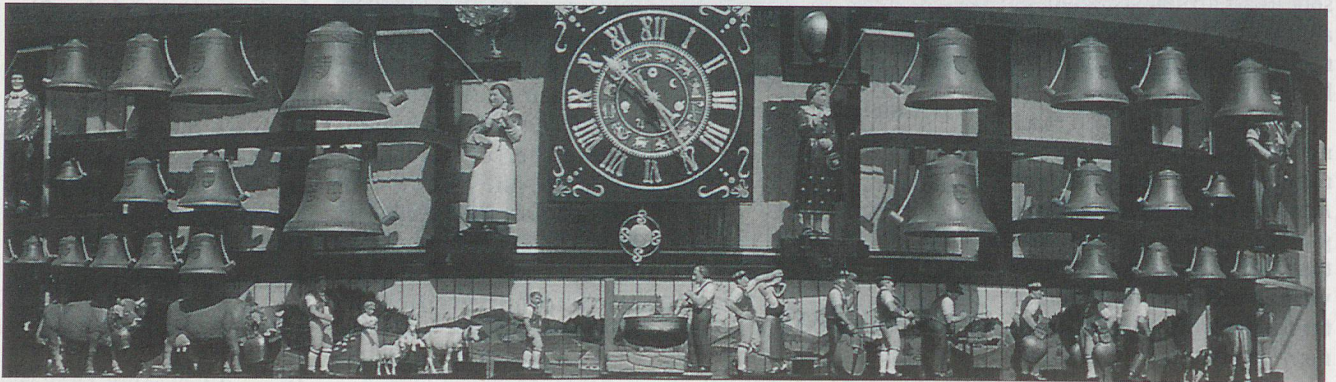
While Europe's attention

by Heidi Reisz

tourist office members were on the committees that set the timetables every year.

In 1921 the first post bus made its inaugural journey through the passes of Grimsel and Furka. This trip was the first step to bring cheaper road travel to those who aspired to travel and was to change the type of holidays that people took in the future.

In September 1939 war broke out again. The office in London's Lower Regent Street worked calmly and efficiently to refund everyone's money on unused tickets and, when everything



The Swiss National Tourist Office in London : now a tourist attraction in its own right.

ment of an industry that now employs nearly 10 per cent of Switzerland's people and earns more than SFr20 billion per year.

That quiet expedition was the opening of a small corner of Switzerland at 118 Regent Street, London. The date was May 1893. The pioneer was the *Syndicat des Intérêts de la Suisse Romande et du Jura-Simplon* - cantons who had the foresight to sell their railway services to a sector of British society that was obsessed with exploration.

Small though the original office was, it was to be the foundation block on which Switzerland built its successful tourist industry. Thirty years before, Thomas

participant of the first Thomas Cook journey in Switzerland (later to be published in 1963 as part of the centenary of the first conducted tour of Switzerland), one is confronted by the paradox of the quaint social mores of the 19th century travelling class and their cheerful disregard for physical discomfort in their search for adventure. How many modern women would consider crossing rock-strewn glaciers and traversing sheer mountain faces while respectably corsetted, skirted and coiffed?

Five years after the first tourist office was opened, a Swiss national referendum voted to nationalise the major private railway com-

pany was focused on the First World War, those involved in Swiss tourism did not lose sight of their long term objectives. In 1917 the National Association for the Promotion of Tourism was founded as an autonomous body. A year later it opened its registered office in Zurich under the name of the Swiss National Tourist Office. It became associated with the Automobile Club and the *Association des Office Suisses de la Circulation Routière* and sat on the committee studying the future impact of air travel in Switzerland.

Rail travel was still the most important means of transport and the importance was reflected in the fact that

was settled, most of the staff returned to Switzerland for the general mobilisation, except for the manager, Mr Ernst, and one colleague who stayed to make travel arrangements for those who had to travel in such hazardous times.

The first floor of the tourist office was taken over by the Red Cross and the basement became an air-raid shelter. By a strange coincidence, just as Switzerland remained untouched by the ravages of war, so the London SNTO remained unscathed - the only undamaged building in the area was ready for the expansion of tourism after the war.

The SNTO Centenary Celebrations *by Mariann Meier*

London's Leicester Square resounded with sights, sounds and smells of magical Switzerland on 11 May when the Swiss National Tourist Office celebrated its London centenary. Roy Castle officially opened the day's proceedings, which included competitions and musical events. Would-be William Tell's tried their skill with the crossbow and Alphorn blowers serenaded one another from the top of the Swiss Centre and a nearby building. Pilatus Alphorn – at 110 feet and 88 lbs the largest alphorn in the world – also put in an appearance. From 5.30 p.m. the Capital FM Roadshow added to the party atmosphere, with DJs providing live commentary on the many activities in Leicester Square. And there was also a special jubilee banquet...

Just how relative time and age are was vividly brought to my mind when, as a guest of the Swiss National Tourist Office, I attended the jubilee banquet for the SNTO. There were over 300 of us (some 100 from Switzerland) seated at cantonal and United Kingdom regional tables in the venerable Banqueting House in

Whitehall, designed by Inigo Jones, the first purely renaissance building in London, completed in 1622, with a splendid ceiling painted by Rubens.

King Charles I walked out of the window of the building to be beheaded in 1649 and in 1660 King Charles II celebrated his restoration in the same place. The fire in 1698 marked the end of the ceremonial significance of the Banqueting House. Wren converted it into a Chapel Royal. It was not until 1963 that it was redecorated in its original colours and opened to the public.

When I arrived in England in 1932 it was a museum to the Royal United Services Institute, which I visited soon after my arrival. At much the same time I first came across the London office of the Swiss Federal Railways at 11b Lower Regent Street. Suffering from home sickness, I was delighted to have that first contact with Switzerland, even before developing contacts with the (then) legation, the Swiss Church or any Swiss society. That first affection for the SNTO has lasted all along. Never did I imagine, though, that one

day I should be among the illustrious crowd of British and Swiss personalities at the centenary banquet.

No wonder I felt both nostalgic and proud to be at the gala dinner in May. I was fully aware that not many were present who had known the SNTO for 61 out of 100 years. I knew the managers Ceresole and H O Ernst and, from 1960, Albert Kunz (much applauded at the dinner) who was in charge for two decades and more. I followed from Lower Regent Street to the Strand and then to the Swiss Centre. For many years, too, I have worked with their publicity department, writing, giving talks and doing public relations work. As I was listening to the eminent speakers I felt just a little elated to have played an ever so tiny part in the activities of the SNTO in London.

These were aptly brought to mind in speeches by Walter Leu, director general of the SNTO; Dr Cyril Nemeth, lord mayor of Westminster; Peter Brooke, Secretary of State for Heritage; Dr Otto Piller, president of the Council of States; and Jean-Jacques

Cevey, president of the SNTO.

Once more the relativity of time came to the fore in the various addresses, with the Secretary of State dwelling on the relations between Britain and Switzerland. He referred to the history of the venue but then again to this century, to Churchill and his famous speech on Europe in Zurich. Mr Brooke ended his partly anecdotal speech by looking forward to the 200th anniversary.

No doubt, there will be changes. In fact the first was announced by Joseph Buehler, the present director of the United Kingdom and Ireland office of the SNTO, in a short farewell address: he is leaving to take over the SNTO in New York.

Going out into the cool spring evening air and the familiar noise of London traffic, the Swiss alps and other beautiful parts of Switzerland seemed a long way away. A good thing that there is such an excellent organisation as the SNTO in London to foster the age-old relationship between the British and the Swiss.

CHEESES FROM SWITZERLAND

Proudly presents a regular RECIPE SERVICE featuring a member of the SWISS ALPINE SKI TEAM

Daniel Mahrer's Favourite Recipe – ALPINE FARMER'S MACARONI

Ingredients:

- 4 medium-sized potatoes, peeled and diced
- 450g (1lb) short macaroni
- 300g (10oz) Gruyere SWITZERLAND grated
- 50g (2oz) Sbrinz SWITZERLAND grated
- 2-3 tbsp butter
- 1-2 onions, cut in strips or rings
- ½ bunch of parsley, chopped

1. Cook the potatoes, and macaroni separately in salted water until just tender. Empty into a sieve and drain well.
2. Place the potatoes, pasta and cheese in layers in a dish or arrange on 4 pre-warmed plates.
3. Saute the onions in the butter until they are golden brown, then spoon over the macaroni dish.
4. Before serving, sprinkle with parsley.



SERVES 4 PERSONS

SWITZERLAND

Book Review

Ursi Bools, Twilbee- kleines Paradies mit Dornen (Rueschlikon : Albert Mueller Verlag, 1987; pp 192. 29 Illustrations.)

Unterhaltsam und humervoll erzahlt die Autorin, wie sie in jahrelanger Arbeit ein vernachlaessigtes Anwesen mitten im Eden Forest in England in ein kleines Paradies voller Blumen, Tiere und Freude verwandelten. Schweres, das auch in diesem Leben nicht ausbleibt, wird mit steter Bereitschaft zum Lachen – auch ueber sich selbst – bewaeltigt. Ein tiefes Gluecksgefuehl entstroemt diesem heiteren Buch.

Als Ursi Bools, eine natur- und tierverbundene Schweizerin, mit ihrem englischen Lebensgefahrten auf ein trostloses, graues kleines Waldhaus, umgeben von verwildertem Land, mitten im Eden Forest stoest, wissen sie beide : genau hier wird unser Heim

sein, hier koennen wir unsere Traeume verwirklichen. Sie erwerben das kleine Anwesen und machen sich an die Arbeit. Zuerst kommen die Tiere – das heisst, als erstes wird nicht das Haus hergerichtet, sondern das von Unrat stotzende Land in Gaerten und Pferdeweiden verwandelt, damit Pferd 'Stutli' und Esel 'Ivo' aus der Schweiz heimgeholt werden koennen. Ein Hand gehoert schon zum Haus, ein Kaetzchen und ein Gaensepaar kommen dazu, und fuer die Menschen das Noetigste an Moebeln und Kochgeschirr... das kleine Paradies wird und waechst.

Kunterbunt purzeln die Erlebnisse mit der einst unreitbaren, heute aber braven Stutli, dem blitzgescheiten und von Schabernack strotzenden Esel Ivo, mit dem alten, tauben, aber uebergluecklich klaeffenden Hund Scruffy und dem wehrhaften Gaensepaar Papageno und Papagena

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durcheinander, und als Stutlis prachtvolles Fohlen Saska dazukommt, ist das Glueck und ist der Zirkus vollkommen.

Never a dull moment – es wird nie langweilig; dafuer sorgen auch allerlei englisch-skurriale Nachbarn, Invasionen durch freilaufende Schafe und Schweine, Kutschenversteigerungen, die hausfrauliche Unbegabtheit der Autorin.

Mit Humor und Zaehigkeit bewaeltigen die bei-

den jede auftauchende Schwierigkeit, stets offen fuer die haeufigen Augenblicke unwiderstehlicher Situationskomik. Aeusserst eindrucksvoll die Figur von Ursis Lebensgefahrte Walter, den nicht nur ein beträchtlicher Altersunterschied von seiner Gefaehrtin trennt, sondern der seine schwere Krankheit – multiple Sklerose – unermuedlich lebensfroh, oft ueber sich selbst lachend, aktiv und taetig bekaempft und wenn irgend moeglich ignoriert.

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