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REGIONAL EDITION

GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND

7989

Editorial

Welcome to the last regional edition of 2014. As you will see we have changed the design of these pages. As a result of the new format for all regional issues we have had to alter our running order and shorten features, so apologies in advance to those who contributed to this issue and may be disappointed to find their story shortened or not appear at all in these pages. We hope you enjoy the read.

■ *The Swiss have been well-represented over the summer at some of Britain's most prestigious music and theatre festivals. Young Swiss pianist Louis Schwizgebel made his debut at the*

Proms in August and Swiss writer-performer Sebastian Michael showcased his latest play on passion, power and possession at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

■ Arthur Broadhurst, Honorary Consul for Switzerland in Manchester steps down this year after flying the flag for the Swiss community in the North of England for almost ten years. In the first of our new series about honorary consuls, Arthur describes how already as a thirteen year old in the late 1950s he was bitten by a Swiss bug, which has stayed with him until today.



ANDREW LITTLEJOHN,
«UK & IRELAND PAGES»



Delegates cast their votes at Council meeting

Politics: Banks top agenda at Council meeting

The main talking point at this year's meeting of the Council of Swiss Abroad (CSA) focused on the right of expats to hold on to a Swiss savings account. About 90 delegates from all corners of the globe attended the meeting in Aarau in August, a day ahead of the Congress of Swiss Abroad, which took place in neighbouring Baden. The four delegates representing Great Britain and Ireland attended both events.

It soon became clear at this year's council meeting that there are still grave concerns about the Swiss banking system and its continuing efforts to close the accounts of those who no

longer live in Switzerland. During the one-day session numerous complaints were voiced about the unfair way some expatriates had been treated by the banks. The story of a pensioner living in Prague who could not receive his pension because he no longer had a Swiss bank account made the national evening news. Many felt expats were being used as "collateral damage" in the struggle on taxation.

As a result of discussions, a resolution will now be submitted to the Swiss Federal Council asking the mainly state-owned Post Finance to accept requests from all Swiss abroad to open and maintain savings accounts.

FRANZ MUHEIM (WITH ADDITIONAL REPORTING FROM GABRIELLE HOGAN-BRUN)

Baden: The highs and lows of IT

More than 300 expats gathered in Baden for the two-day Congress of Swiss Abroad, which looked at the challenges of information technology and electronic voting.

The e-Democracy panel discussion was particularly relevant as Switzerland prepares to go to the polls next October. Swiss abroad registered in fourteen of the twenty six cantons will be able to vote online in the next parliamentary elections. This was seen as disappointing for the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) which had hoped to see all 155,000 registered expatriates using this format by then. However, progress has been made as only four cantons offered e-voting in the last parliamentary elections.


The panel discussion, 'Youth and Online Networks' was lively and engaging. The line-up included the UN Youth Delegate for Switzerland and representatives from the youth parliament. There was plenty of good advice for the 'silver surfers' amongst us and perhaps most interesting was the evident power of social media to engage young people in politics.

ALEXANDRE TISSOT & MARGRIT LYSER




Panel members, Youth and Online Networks

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LE GRUYÈRE
SWITZERLAND 

Theatre: Swiss artist takes on Shakespeare's sonnets

This year's Edinburgh Festival Fringe has been described as the most successful to date as it broke the 2 million ticket barrier. This 3-week celebration of the arts attracts performers from as many as fifty countries. This year Switzerland was represented by Swiss writer-performer Sebastian Michael who showcased his latest piece, *The Sonneteer*. The play, which features the sonnets of William Shakespeare, is about passion, power and possession. Swiss Review reader Janine McNeil was captivated from the start.

The story portrays the relationship between Shakespeare and his patron Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton, and switches to the modern day love affair between an academic and his rich student, and back again. A change in lighting signalled the era in which events unfolded.

The stage was simple – just two rectangular blocks – used to the maximum effect and a 'sheet of translucent paper' hanging at the back of the stage



Sebastian Michael and Tom Medcalf in a scene from *The Sonneteer*

Photo by Tim Booth

as a 'window' to another dimension of the story telling.

The beautiful language of the Sonnets was delivered in an intriguing way – it was unclear if we were being addressed directly or were only being permitted to eavesdrop.

The intensity of the play increased and so did the emotions which were tangible at times, especially when Shakespeare experienced the loss of his 11-year-old son and was encouraged to transform his grief into writing.

Shakespeare's words although

written so many centuries ago still resonate strongly, as important and vivid today as they were then.

'Everything is conjecture, except the words' was the subtitle of the play. At the end an appreciative audience was left with food for thought and the lingering beauty of the words.

JANINE McNEIL

To find out more about Sebastian Michael and his work:

www.sebastianmichael.com

Louis Schwizgebel poses for photographer Marco Borggreve

Music: Young Swiss pianist's star shines brightly

Louis Schwizgebel was brought to my attention when I attended the Swiss Ambassador's Award Concert Tour in the Cosmo Rodewald Hall, Manchester in 2008 when he gave a stunning recital the day after his début at the Wigmore Hall. After the concert, I met him and his father to congratulate him and encourage him to enter the Leeds International Pianoforte Competition. Aged 17 he had already been a prizewinner at the Geneva International Music Competition.

In 2012 he won Second Prize at the Leeds International Piano Competition performing at the Finals concert in Leeds Town Hall transmitted on BBC 4. Since then, he has been described as 'a pianist with a profound gift' by the Guardian (August 2013) and 'an insightful Musician' by the New York Times (May 2013). Louis is a BBC New Generation Artist for 2013 to 2015. You may have seen him on BBC television give his Proms debut this summer with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain at the Royal Albert Hall. In his interview before the concert, he expressed his delight to be performing with so many talented young musicians. He has now performed around the world and his engagements will continue to take him from the United Kingdom, his native Switzerland to Leeds, Vienna, New York, China and Japan.

I was particularly delighted to catch up with Louis this summer when he performed at Leeds Town Hall with the Orchestra of Opera



North as part of the Tour de Proms Concert. (Celebrating the Tour de France Grand Départ).

Louis Schwizgebel records for Aparté, his solo disc: *Poems* was released in 2013. In November 2014 he will release his first album with orchestra: *Beethoven Piano concertos No 1 & 2* with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Thierry Fischer.

FRANÇOISE LOGAN MBE, VICE-PRESIDENT, LEEDS INTERNATIONAL PIANO COMPETITION

1: Swiss National Day in Ireland

Close to 500 people joined the Swiss Club in Dublin and the Embassy to celebrate Swiss National Day. Thank you all for sharing such a special moment with us.

Celebrations at the Swiss Embassy in Dublin



2: Swiss Club Edinburgh

Our National Day celebrations took place at the home of Denis and Marjorie Robson in the quaint, little town of Innerleithen in the Borders. Intermittent showers did nothing to dampen the spirits of the 30 or so present. The idyllic surroundings were wonderfully complimented by a feast of bratwurst, cervelats and other fine fare, beautifully prepared by club members. The event was attended by some of the founders of our club and Peter Mueller, General Consul of Switzerland in Scotland played our national hymn on his bag pipes when the time came to hear our President's address. Towards the end we sang Happy Birthday to Suzanne Henderson who has supported Swiss Club Edinburgh since its inception in 1960 and was celebrating her 88th birthday. All in all it was a great afternoon.

Suzanne Henderson, founding member of Edinburgh Swiss Club, turns 88



Manchester's children lead the way with their lampions



Revellers penned in, but still having fun



3: Swiss Club Manchester

After rain on the first Saturday morning in August, the weather improved and we were lucky to have a fine evening for our National Day celebrations at the Brookdale, as long as you avoided the 'auto-watering' from the hanging baskets!! After listening to

A homely affair in North Wales



President Burkhalter's speech and singing the national anthem we all went outside, following the children's lampion procession. The fire took a while to properly ignite due to the heavy rain earlier on. The firework display, organized by Ian and Julie Baker was terrific. Some of us sang Swiss songs, which, as many of those attending commented, always takes us back to our roots.

4: Southern Area Swiss Club – Swiss National Day

The sun shone, the hall was decorated appropriately and the fare was traditional and plentiful. We listened to the church bells of Lucern, followed by the Swiss President's speech and national anthem. More than 40 took part in the afternoon's festivities, the best turnout for years.

5: North Wales

We had a healthy turnout at this year's National Day celebrations and partied well into the night. Even the weather improved for the occasion, but not before our wonderful host Emlyn set up a pizza-cum-BBQ tent at the bottom of the garden, just as a precaution!

Only the beard gives away the passing of time

6: Yorkshire Swiss Club

Yorkshire's club members celebrated Swiss National Day with a Fondue lunch in the Village Hall in Newton-on-Ouse. Memories were refreshed from our archive photo-albums featuring one of our members, then as a young boy with his mother and sister, wearing Swiss national costumes, which his mother had made. Time passes and he is now one of our oldest Swiss members, originally from the canton of Solothurn.



What's on: Dec 7th Christmas gathering
For more information call: 01924 49 59 29 or 01347 848 473

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Are your Swiss travel documents valid?

Please book your appointment for a new passport and/or ID card in good time, and ensure you arrive punctually. Let us know in advance if you need to cancel the appointment.



Are you a Swiss resident in Ireland?

The Regional Consular Centre in London is your point of contact for all consular matters such as travel documents, births, marriage and death certificates, change of address, etc.

www.eda.admin.ch/rcclondon
rcclondon@eda.admin.ch
Tel. +44 (0)20 7616 6000 (option 2)

Sport: Swiss get a taste of Touch Rugby

Touch Rugby is a relatively new game and I had never heard of a Swiss National Touch Rugby Team before. I wasn't even aware that rugby was a sport played in Switzerland. So I was fascinated when it was brought to my attention that a large Swiss delegation would be competing at the 2014 European Touch Rugby Championship in Swansea, which is also where I live. 52 teams from 16 nations were welcomed by the First Minister of the Welsh National Assembly at the beginning of the championship in August.

I went to welcome the Swiss team as they prepared to take on the Welsh. Despite all the cheering and support for the Swiss team we lost. However, this did



Swiss team in good spirits despite losing to Wales

not dampen spirits. The Swiss were in great form and mood, enjoying the competition, the challenge and the great location on the playing fields of Swansea University right next to Swansea Bay. In addition, and a bonus, Wales was enjoying Mediterranean-style weather.

RUTH THOMAS-LEHMANN, HONORARY CONSUL

To find out if there is a Touch Rugby team near you go to:

www.playtouchrugbyleague.co.uk

Party-goers enjoy a round of bingo

Feature: Swiss Benevolent Society hosts its annual tea party

In July, the Swiss Benevolent Society hosted its Annual Senior Citizens' Tea Party at the Swiss Embassy in London. The event has been gaining in popularity over the past three years with now over 70 guests attending.

Brief welcomes were extended by Ambassador H.E. Dominik Furgler and the President of the Swiss Benevolent Society, Alan Martin, who also explained the various ways in which the Society helps the Swiss expat community here. The Society's Welfare Officer, Petra Kehr-Cocks, was on hand to refresh existing contacts and to make new acquaintances. In addition, representatives of the Consulate and some of the charity's trustees were there to ad-



dress any formal issues and ensure everybody had a good time.

After a toast to the birthday guests with sparkling Swiss wine, everyone tucked into sandwiches, petits fours and cakes. This was followed by a quiz and a session of bingo. The party closed with a sing-a-long of a selection of popular Swiss songs and on leaving each guest received a bag of Swiss 'goodies'. A wonderful time was had by all.

ALAN P MARTIN
PRESIDENT OF THE SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

Comments from party goers...

"I rarely manage to get out, so the afternoon was an enormous treat for me..."

"The songs reminded me of happy times from my childhood..."

Impressions from the Swiss National Day Event in London, Photos by Daniel Pedroletti



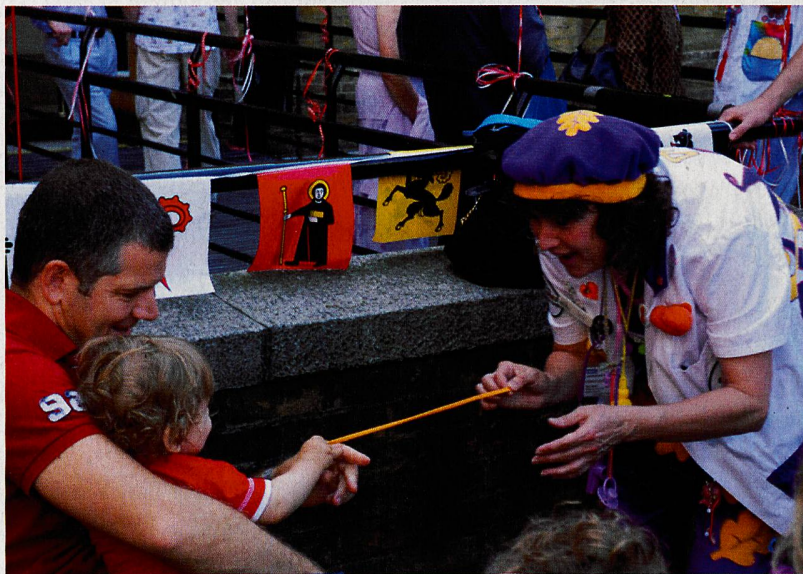
Feature: 20 years of joy

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Theodora Children's Trust, the charity dedicated to bringing fun and laughter to children in hospitals, hospices and specialist care centres across the country. As many as half a million youngsters have been introduced to the charity's popular professional performers, better known as the Giggle Doctors, and chuckled at the hilarious antics of Dr Faffy, Dr Wonderpants and Dr Dotty among others.

The charity is the brainchild of Swiss brothers André and Jan Poulie and was set up as a thank you to their mother Theodora who had cheered up André on a daily basis during a period of his childhood, where he spent a lot of time in hospital. The brothers wanted to share their mother's legacy of fun and laughter with other children in similar situations. Dr Charlotte Wilson has worked for the charity since 2012 and was appointed Chief Executive earlier this year.

What is most rewarding about your job?

I adore waking up in the morning knowing that I'm going to help the charity continue to make life better for over 32,000 sick, disabled and terminally ill children every year. It feels like a big responsibility, but the amazing feedback we get from the children and parents is enormously motivating.



Giggle doctors in action

Photo by Walter Isler

Fundraising has always been a vital part of a charity's survival. What have been some of the highlights of fundraising events over the years?

One example that springs to mind is Kerry McCarthy, who organised a party for her 2 year old daughter Ava. Kerry had taken her daughter to hospital after Ava fell seriously ill. Doctors diagnosed cancer and Ava was to start treatment immediately. Kerry was there by herself, as her husband was away on business. She was heartbroken for her little girl. At that very moment, and out of the blue, in walked a Giggle Doctor...it was Dr Bananas. Dr Bananas turned the tears of sadness into tears of laughter and Kerry decided that no matter how ill Ava was, they would stay positive. The Giggle Doctors visited Ava throughout her chemo and months of treatment. Ava has now recovered. As a thank you, Kerry threw a party to raise money for the Giggle Doctors.

What are the charity's aims for the next 20 years?

Our long-term aim is for every child in hospitals, hospices and specialist care centres to be visited by a Giggle Doctor. At the moment 29 Giggle Doctors visit youngsters in 22 health centres up and down the country. In the next 20 years, we hope to at least triple the number of children we see and further raise the awareness of the charity.

THEODORA Children's Trust
Giggle doctors for children in hospital

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Some tickets are still available on our homepage
www.cityswissclub.org/events/view/ball-1
Tickets are on a first come first served basis

We hope to see you at the above event, it will be an extraordinary evening once more

For the organizing committee:
Walter Isler, Hanna Reinartz, Ursule Thurnherr

See photographs from the last Ball
www.cityswissclub.org/events/view/ball

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Visit www.theodora.org.uk for more information

THEODORA Children's Trust
Giggle doctors for children in hospital

Arts: Henry Moore and his very special Swiss friendship

Henry Moore is best known for his semi-abstract marble and bronze sculptures, which can be found in countries around the world as public pieces of art. He is perhaps less well-known for his drawings. Yet due to a meeting with the highly-regarded Swiss gallerist Gerald Cramer more than fifty years ago, Henry Moore was inspired to put together an extensive portfolio of prints, more than 100 of which can be seen for the first time at the Sims Reed Gallery, London.

The exhibition, 'Henry Moore and Gerald Cramer: 25 years of art and friendship' celebrates the special relationship between artist Henry Moore and publisher Gerald Cramer, which gave birth to so many of the most important prints made by Moore throughout his career.

Gerald Cramer, a successful and distinguished gallerist based in Geneva, first approached Moore in 1961 to ask for a drawing for the gallery's annual stock catalogue. The two soon became friends and Cramer introduced Moore to the great intaglio printer Lacourière. Although Moore had at that point made very few prints, Cramer encouraged him to devote serious attention to printmaking and Moore embraced the idea with enthusiasm. This friendship continued for another 25 years until Moore's death in 1986 and produced hundreds of prints.

The exhibition includes Cramer's personal copy of every print he worked on with Moore, each inscribed by the artist with a dedication to Cramer. Together this group of over 100 individual works and portfolios creates a comprehensive, but also very intimate and revealing, portrait of their

fruitful working friendship.

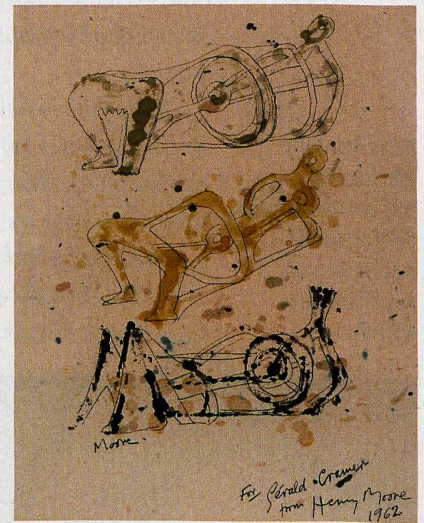
These Henry Moore prints, which are also for sale, have never been shown in public or put on the market before.

Place: Sims Reed Gallery,
30 Bury Street, London SW1Y 6AU

When: 28 November – 19 December

Three Reclining Figures Felt-tipped pen, pen and ink, 1962

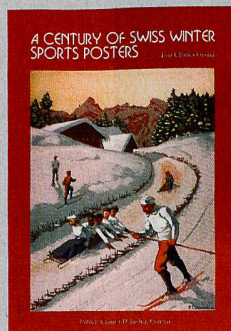
The Show Sheep Etching, 1974



CHRISTMAS COMPETITION

In the last regional issue, readers were introduced to the publication 'A Century of Swiss Winter Sports Posters', which is packed with more than 150 colour illustrations and shows a flourishing art movement from the late nineteenth century, where winter sports featured on artistic posters.

The Geneva-based publisher Patrick Cramer has very kindly made two copies of this beautiful coffee table book available to readers. If you would like to take part in the draw on the 14th November to win one of these books, send your details to the editor: editor@swissreview.co.uk OR write to Editor, Swiss Review, 81 Brondesbury Rd, London, NW6 6BB



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Meet the Honorary Consuls: Bitten by a Swiss Bug

Arthur Broadhurst, Honorary Consul for Switzerland in Manchester, steps down this year after almost ten years serving the Swiss expat community in the North of England.

Arthur has often been asked how he, as a Brit, came to be chosen for this role. This is something he has often asked himself, but then he reminds himself of his strong association with Switzerland that goes back more than 50 years.

I came to Switzerland with my secondary school as a thirteen year old in the late 1950s. What impressions I had! Overnight stays on the Jungfrauoch, Trummelbach Falls and Swiss food, not necessarily in that order. I did not want to return to normal UK school life. I had

been bitten by a Swiss bug – a nice one.

Years later my friend and I were holidaying in Cornwall. We met some Swiss girls, one of whom was Huldi Reist from Thun, and started a friendship which became more profound. Huldi and I married and I went on to spend every day for the next year at the Neue Handelsschule Berne, on an intensive German course.

The real UK link to Switzerland began after Huldi and I returned to Manchester in 1976 and I bought the business where I had trained.

Through the Swiss Club we met successive Consuls and Consul Generals who sometimes needed advice on local contacts and I helped.

Early in 2005, and much to the disappointment of the Swiss community, it was confirmed that Manchester

would lose its professional consulate, which began with Armand Guggenheim in 1917. But who would be the new Honorary Consul? To my surprise, great pleasure and disbelief it was me!

The duties of Honorary Consuls are to foster good relations with civic, educational and business communities in their local areas, as well as deal with enquiries for visas, passports and pension certificates. They are often seen as the eyes and ears of Switzerland abroad and have strong ties with Swiss clubs.

Most of an Honorary Consul's work takes place 'after dark' at the many receptions, meetings and dinners where we can 'fly' the Swiss flag. And we do.

There have been many highlights, but one must be the Ambassador's Award Concert in 2010 at Manchester Cathedral. I could see that it would be wonderful if the Swiss flag could fly from the prominent high cathedral tower. My initial requests were refused. After much negotiation the Swiss flag did fly on top of the tower, which made for a spectacular sight.

My colleagues at the Swiss Embassy are working toward the appointment of my successor. Whoever it may be, I hope the experience will be as much an important milestone in their life, as it has been in mine.

ARTHUR BROADHURST

Arthur Broadhurst with Françoise Logan MBE and her husband StClair Logan at the Ambassador's Award Concert in Manchester



Swiss Clubs: Manchester Ship Canal Cruise

13 members boarded a Mersey Ferry at Salford Quays this summer for a memorable cruise on the Manchester Ship Canal to Liverpool. Our excellent tour guide gave a running commentary about the history of the canal and how its construction shaped forever the city of Manchester and beyond.

The scenery switched between commercial and industrial sites, historic buildings, housing and open fields all culminating in the wide open space of the Mersey estuary and the approach to the historic Liverpool pier front and the Royal Liver Building.

DIETER SENN

Club members set off on their trip to Liverpool



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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