

Regional news : Southern Africa

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!KHWATTU, a San-Swiss partnership

Swiss anthropologist Irene Staehelin stands at the centre of the San Culture and Education Centre that is gradually opening its doors to become a remarkable heritage and tourist destination in the Western Cape. A mere hour's drive from Cape Town, !Khwattu is situated on a 850 ha nature reserve with majestic views over the Atlantic sea in the west and Table Mountain in the distance. The farm buildings have been beautifully renovated to house a Photo Gallery with historical and contemporary San photographs, a stunning 60-seater restaurant, conference facilities, and a top-quality Bushman crafts shop.

!Khwattu's mission is to promote and protect the San culture. The San or Bushman people of Southern Africa have suffered a cruel fate over the centuries: from an estimated 150'000 to 300'000 hunter-gatherers in pre-colonial times, tens of thousands perished from hunger and disease as they were chased off their land, as game was replaced by sheep and cattle and as they were savagely persecuted by European settlers. Men were shot on sight or imprisoned; women and children were taken into a life of forced labour on farms. While these original inhabitants of Southern Africa were forced away from their lands and means of subsistence, they also lost many of their skills and virtually stopped an age-old tradition of painting on rocks. Forced to speak the languages of their conquerors, their own idioms vanished into oblivion, together with a rich heritage of songs, myths, dances and medicinal skills. In an ironic twist of history however, the Bushman people became the most researched group in modern anthropology. For obvious reasons, most of this research is out of reach to the contemporary San people, who struggle with poverty, malnutrition and widespread racial discrimination.

The Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA) is

a regional San-owned organisation and safeguards their physical and cultural survival. Starting in 1997, WIMSA, with the assistance of the South African San Institute (SASI), searched for a tourism and training site. In 1999, Irene Staehelin bought the site that was to become !Khwattu and set up a Swiss foundation exclusively dedicated to the renovation of !Khwattu and related San development projects. WIMSA and UBUNTU Foundation are the joint owners of !Khwattu, which became the only San-owned and operated heritage centre in the Western Cape. In honour of the Bushmen, the farm was renamed !Khwattu, a term for water hole in the language of the extinct/Xam people.

Presently, 20 adult San and their children live at !Khwattu as trainees. Through education, they strive to keep their languages alive and to give their children the option of making a living in a traditional way in the crafts and tourism sector, or by entering mainstream modern development. By being a tourist and rural conference destination, the San are challenged with by running a real business in order to generate the much-needed revenue to sustain a project of this magnitude.

A visit to !Khwattu will combine a learning experience and personal support of a development project with a most enjoyable day in an invigorating, unspoilt West Coast setting.



EFTA-SACU trade deal concluded

Pending a legal review, the free trade agreement between the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) was finally concluded and should be signed in the first half of 2006.

The agreement will focus on trade in industrial goods, fish and processed agricultural goods. Separate bilateral agreements between EFTA countries and SACU include concessions in selected agricultural goods. In services, investments, public procurement and intellectual property, further negotiations are foreseen at a later stage.

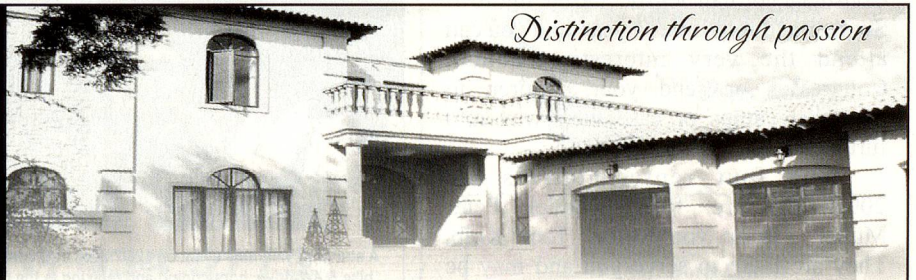
The EFTA agreement, the first with African partners outside the Mediterranean region, will largely eliminate discriminations of EFTA states that resulted from the EU-South African free trade agreement (in force since January 2000). For SACU, the free trade agreement marks the first such deal concluded as a customs union.

Both parties are confident that the EFTA-SACU free trade agreement will contribute to a mutually beneficial deepening of trade and economic relations and constitute an important element in the overall relations between the EFTA countries and SACU.

In 2005, trade volume between Switzerland and the SACU countries (Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, Swaziland, South Africa) reached some CHF1'750 mio. with a trade surplus in favour of the SACU countries.

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ASO FOR YOU

The ASO was founded in 1916 by the Neue Helvetische Gesellschaft with the objective of strengthening Swiss expatriates' links with Switzerland, thereby enabling them to play a part in the national life and politics of their country of origin. In 1918, the first Congress was held, which laid the foundation of the successful annual Congress held in different parts of Switzerland in August each year.

A permanent Secretariat was set up after the end of the World War I. Since 1957, it is located at Alpenstrasse 26 in Bern. The Secretariat, headed by Dr Rudolf Wyder (Director), includes over 20 people. This team provides you with a wide range of specialist services, ranging from administering the Swiss schools abroad, helping in Social Security matters, to education for your children in Switzerland. At the last count, the ASO serviced almost 800 Swiss Associations worldwide, and its Parliament, the ASR, which meets twice a year in March and in August, is the legitimate and democratically elected voice of over 600,000 Swiss citizens living abroad.

The Swiss Review is the official organ of the ASO and ASR. It is produced specifically for the 600,000 registered Swiss Abroad. The total print order is some 360,000 per issue in five languages, making it one of Switzerland's largest magazines.

Through the good efforts of the ASO and its Parliament the ASR, the interests of the Swiss Abroad (also known as the Fifth Switzerland) were entrenched in the Swiss Constitution in 1966 (Article 40), and since 1992, voting for all "franchise-registered" Swiss Abroad has been possible by mail. Soon this will be widened to enable secure E-Voting from Abroad.

You have a unique opportunity, not offered to any other nationality in the world. You have four Representatives and a Director/Secretariat in Bern that are there to serve you as an Auslandschweizer in any way that is required. By registering at the Consulate you can help decide the future of Switzerland four times a year, and you can attend the very interesting annual Congresses or send your children to specialist camps or ease their way into further education in Switzerland.

The four representatives for 2005-2009 are: Rolf Schudel, Peter Müller, Gabor vonMoricz, Toni Kolb. They are there to serve you and may be contacted in any matter at the co-ordinates below.

PRO HELVETIA NEWS

CAPE TOWN INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR from 7-20 June 2006 at the Cape Town Conference Center, including Swiss books. Swiss authors, Katharina Faber and Alain Claude Sulzer will also attend. For more info: www.swissbooks.ch, www.pro-helvetia.ch/capetown, www.capetownbookfair.com.

LUCAS NIGGLI, PERCUSSIONIST IN RESIDENCY from 19 June- 8 July 2006. The percussionists will work together in Durban for two weeks and create music that will be performed at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown and in Maputo, Mozambique. For more info: www.lucasniggli.ch, www.marinopliakas.com/steamboatswitzerland.

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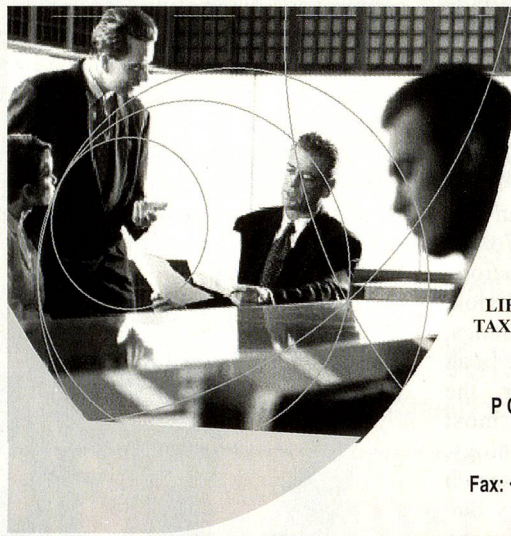
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Swiss Club East London

A stunning Valentine event on 12.02.2006 at Gladstone Farm included farm-style braai party, clay pigeon shooting, motor bike & 4W-drive, horse riding and relaxing in the nature with wildlife. Many thanks to the excellent hosts Dave & Susan.

Delegates of ASO Auslandschweizer-Organisation Organisation of the Swiss Abroad for Southern Africa

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Swiss Club Info & Forthcoming Events

JOHANNESBURG

Swiss Society Helvetia
31 Moerdyk Ave, Vorna Valley, Midrand
Tel/Fax 011 805 3039
Restaurant Tel 011 805 3040
swissclubjhb@whoswho.co.za

Pétanque at Rivonia Country Club; for details call Duncan 082 956 7864 or Lorinda 083 440 0327. Senior Swiss Circle meets every second Saturday of the month for lunch; for details call Andy Tischhauser 011 672 1753/082 719 3389. The Club's various societies hold regular meetings. Ask for your name to be placed on the mailing list of the Club newsletter.

PRETORIA

Swiss Embassy 012 452 0660
Swiss Society Alpina
Sonja Bosch, President
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boschse@unisa.ac.za
Margrit Müller, Secretary
Tel 012 348 3979 Cell 082 819 4181
tembo-mueller@freemail.absa.co.za

AGM on 24.2.06: Committee re-elected. Two new auditors, Erwin Lüthi and Elizabeth Bucher. Report on the 83rd Auslandschweizer Congress, which our Auslandschweizererrat (ASR) Delegate, Gabor von Moricz attended in Interlaken in Sep 2005, may be requested from gabor@bonvoyage.co.za. The 84th Congress to be held in Basel from 18–20 August 2006, with the theme "The importance of culture and its promotion". Please diarise: 10 June: Fondue Evening. 29 July: Swiss National Day Celebration. 25 November or 2 December: Christmas and Year End function. Please contact Marianne Balmelli (012 346 2773) if you are interested in a Jass evening; and Margrit Müller (012 348 39 79/082 629 71 75) if you are interested in a shooting event of the Swiss Rifle Club.

CAPE TOWN

Swiss Consulate General
Tel 021 418 3665
Swiss Social and Sports Club

Why not become a member of our club to keep updated on our events and receive our bi-monthly newsletter. Nick Eppenberger has the details: eppen@mweb.co.za

SWISS CLUB NATAL

Hanspeter Graber Tel/Fax 031 568 2457
Cell 083 262 6107 hansg@saol.com

Family social programme: 5 August, 16h00–21h00: Swiss National Day celebration at Hammersdale shooting range, family gathering with braai, lampion

procession, fireworks etc. 3 December, 12h00: Santa Claus Day at Hammersdale shooting range, family gathering with braai, games for children and Ruetli Airgun shooting competition for old and very young. Shooting programme: 6 May: Sections Wettschiessen. 3 June: Intertown. 1 July: St Gallen. 5 August, 12h00–15h30: Nachschiesen. 2 September: Interclub, 7 October: Städtewettkampf, last chance for Obligatorisch and Feldschiesen. 4 November: Handicap. 2 December: Team Shoot. Jass programme: Jass evening on every second Friday of the month, 18h30 for 19h00: Has turned out to be very popular at the Westville Bowling Club, and will be continued during 2006. Everybody most welcome. 8 December, 18h30 for 19h00: "Preis Jass" evening at the Westville Bowling Club with prizes for all participants preceded by a Christmas dinner.

SWISS CLUB EASTERN CAPE

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Ronnie Jucker Tel (w) 041 368 6141
Tel (h) 041 583 2927 Fax (w) 041 368 6145
Cell 072 341 5355 rjucker@netactive.co.za

East London

Tel (w/h) 043 736 1020
Email sc-el@brumann.li
www.brumann.li/sc-el

Please diarise: 30 July: Swiss National Day celebration. The Swiss club East London offers free adverts on its website.

SWISS CLUB FAR NORTH

Quentin Morel
PO Box 1620, Makhado 0920
Tel/Fax 015 575 1401 Cell 084 200 1129
quentinmorel@lantic.net

NAMIBIA

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AGM took place on 1 April, the annual events will be finalised after that, with the new committee.

LESOTHO

Heinz Schärer, PO Box 5, Morija 190
Tel +266 22 360 240 mpw@lesoff.co.za
There will be a Swiss National Day celebration, details to follow.

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EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Swiss Review readers,

As I am due to leave South Africa by June 2006, the Swiss Review is looking for a new editor of the Southern Africa pages of the Swiss Review. If you are interested or know an appropriate person for this job, please inform Edith Salamanca at the Embassy of Switzerland in Pretoria at Vertretung@pre.rep.admin.ch or 012 452 0660 before 5 May 2006.

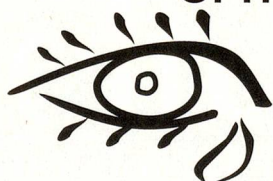
If you feel that you need more information about what this job entails, do not hesitate to contact me (see impressum).

Doris Leitner

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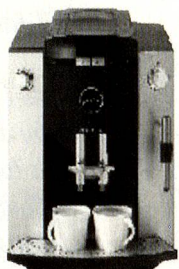
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