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REGIONAL EDITION

UNITED KINGDOM & IRELAND

Editorial

The last few months have been especially notable with many significant events for the Swiss Community. In May, 5 new representatives were elected to the Council of the Swiss Abroad, from a total of 13, mainly young, candidates. Their fresh presence, combined with the skills of experienced members of the Council, will be essential in building a future for the so-called 5th Switzerland. Their enthusiasm to participate in the life of the Council should remind us that we also have a role to play in supporting their commitment.

■ *This was the aim that inspired our delegates in August during the CSA Congress in Basle, where many substantial issues were carefully considered. In September, an important change emanated from the Embassy and in this issue we are honoured to carry a special welcome message from the new Ambassador, Alexandre Fasel, especially for Swiss Review readers.*



GIOIA PALMIERI,
«UK & IRELAND PAGES»

Basle: UK well-represented at 95th Congress of Swiss Abroad



Vincent Croset, Nathalie Chaurd, Loredana Guetg-Wyatt, Franz Muheim

Organised by the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA), the Congress of the Swiss Abroad (CSA) is the annual meeting of Swiss citizens living all around the world.

The Congress takes place each year in a different area of Switzerland and is attended by some 400 compatriots from around the world. This year the Council's appointment was in Basle from 18th–20th August, where the delegates met around the theme 'Inland- und Auslandschweizer: eine Welt!' ('Swiss at home and abroad: one world'). The CSA met for the first time since the election of its members for the 2017 to 2021 period with over 50 newly elected delegates. The UK is now represented on the CSA Executive Board with Franz Muheim being elected as a board member for the next four years. This will allow Swiss citizens living in the UK to increase their influence in the Organisation, which is important at this time of considerable uncertainty over Brexit.

Find out more: www.aso.ch

CSA: The UK delegates' feedback after the meeting

Franz Muheim

The meeting featured a podium discussion with a proponent and an opponent of reform '2020' for the AVS (AHV) and pension funds (2nd pillar). The reform will strengthen the AVS and those Swiss living abroad, who have paid or are paying into the AVS, will benefit from it. Taking all arguments into account the CSA decided to support reform '2020' with a large majority: 80 yes, 22 no and 8 abstaining. It is very important for those who are registered to vote to participate in the pension '2020' referendum which will take place on 24th

September, 2017. The CSA is still angry with the Swiss banks who are asking prohibitive fees for bank accounts for the Swiss Abroad.

In May 2017, a motion by National Councillor Roland Büchel was narrowly voted down (by 3 votes). Since then two new motions have been submitted. Both of these obtained support across all parties and have a realistic chance of being accepted in the two Councils. At the Congress, Federal Councillor Alain Berset stated that a pragmatic solution should be sought.

Loredana Guetg-Wyatt

This was my first year as a Delegate, although in 2016 I participated as a guest. As per last year, I remain truly impressed by the commitment of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA), the Department of Foreign Affairs and the National Councillors towards us, as well as the Swiss, that for whatever reason, now live abroad. The Congress was well structured and touched on themes of relevance; debating e-voting, pension reform and easier and affordable access to Swiss bank accounts. I was pleased to meet delegates from all over

the world and share common challenges and experiences. During the four days many ideas were discussed and I am now looking forward to bringing these initial thoughts back to the Swiss living in the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, my main priority as a Delegate and FOSSUK President remains to raise awareness of the OSA and FOSSUK. This is to ensure that all the Swiss in the U.K are aware of the support provided by both organisations and their concerns and challenges are understood, acknowledged and duly represented.

Vincent Crosset

My first CSA conference as a UK delegate was very positive and I was pleased to see the CSA opening up to younger people! I felt lucky to meet Swiss politicians who seemed to care about our concerns. My proposition to have National Councillors representing the Swiss abroad was well received. I will work together with a few other delegates to present a more concrete project at the next meeting.

Follow and meet the UK OSA delegates through social media:

f www.facebook.com/ukswiss
 @FOSSUK

Nathalie Chuard

Attending the Congress of Swiss Abroad for the first time was a great experience; I've met so many interesting Swiss citizens from around the world and was inspired by the content over the two days. The drive and energy of the YPSA members (Youth Parliament of the Swiss Abroad) impressed me, that's why I would like to support them in my role as delegate of the CSA and promote the establishment of youth groups across the UK. I believe it's important that the OSA starts to work closer with the YPSA, as they are the future of us Swiss abroad.

Agenda: Important issues for the Swiss abroad

Swiss bank accounts: Will Swiss people living abroad be allowed to hold a Swiss bank account under the same conditions as those who live in Switzerland?

E-voting: Could Swiss citizens living abroad have access to the e-voting system when it comes to vote? At the moment only eight cantons allow Swiss citizens abroad to use this system. They are: AG, SG, BS, BE, FR, GE, LU and NE.

AVS 2020: Delegates of the Swiss Abroad Council have voted to endorse a reform of the country's old-age pension scheme, which will come to a nationwide vote on the 24th of September.

London: The OSA election

On the 20th of May, during the FOSSUK AGM in London, five new delegates were elected as representatives to the Council of the Swiss Abroad. For the first time, they were elected under a new system in accordance with FOSSUK Bye Laws. Out of the 5 delegates representing the Swiss Community in the UK: 2 delegates were nominated by Swiss Clubs and 3 delegates were elected by the Swiss Community at large, by postal vote. This year the participation was especially high with almost 400 votes received for the 13 candidates seeking election for the OSA Council.

The election was organized by members of the FOSSUK committee. The final result was announced in the presence of the Swiss Ambassador Dominik Furgler, the representative of FDFA Peter Zimmerli and the director of OSA Sarah Mastantuoni.

RESULTS:

13 candidates
 164 voting slips
 388 votes received
327 valid votes*

Franz Muheim: 74 votes
Loredana Guetg-Wyatt: 51 votes
Nathalie Chuard: 38 votes
Alexandre Tissot: 34 votes
Vincent Crosset: 31 votes

*46 votes to withdrawn candidates, 15 void votes

A special thank you to the candidates who have participated in the election:

Salome Bucher, Simon Burgherr, Sarah Grand-Clément, Noelle Dowed Leitch, Christopher Morillon, Jean-Pierre Payat, Dominik Weiss, Thadshagini Thayalalingam



Candidates waiting for the result



London: The 52nd AGM of FOSSUK

The 52nd AGM of FOSSUK took place on the 20th-21st of May. The edition was brilliantly organized by its president Loredana Guetg-Wyatt with the support of many association members. More than 50 guests from the Swiss community, club representatives and authorities were welcomed in the evocative venues of Coin Street Neighbourhood Centre.

After the President's opening greeting, the microphone passed to Camilla Ghislanzoni, the incumbent FOSSUK treasurer, who organized the CSA election together with Ané-Mari Peter and Claudine Gerber (see CSA elections pag II).

The AGM gave members the opportunity to thank the former FOSSUK President, Margrit Lyster and Joe Broggin, both former OSA delegates, who have volunteered for the Swiss community in the UK for many years (see page V).

The FOSSUK committee acknowledged the work of Camilla Ghislanzoni (treasurer) and Claudine Gerber (secretary) who left the committee after years of tirelessly and professionally contributing to its growth and development. Gioia Palmieri, a professional journalist, has recently taken over the leadership of the Swiss Review UK following the retirement of Andrew Littlejohn, whose tremendous work for the magazine was praised by all attendees.

The AGM also provided the opportunity to bid farewell to the Ambassador, Dominik Furgler and his wife Hayam, who have

successfully run their office in London for the last four years. In his speech, the Ambassador reassured citizens about the commitment of the Swiss authorities towards them in relation to Brexit by outlining the strategy adopted by the Confederation. Finally, the Ambassador expressed his gratitude to the Swiss Diaspora in the UK by offering a delicious aperitif, which included a wine selection by Swiss Alpine Wine company.

In the last part of the afternoon, Peter Zimmerli, delegate to FDFA and Sarah Mastantuoni, Co-Director of OSA made their speeches. Mrs Mastantuoni presented the OSA's priorities for 2017:

to make the Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA) more representative during the forthcoming legislative period, by increasing the presence of young people; to improve the provision of information for the Swiss abroad, taking full responsibility for publishing the Swiss Review, including printing and dispatching abroad. OSA also intends to carry out an analysis of the requirements of the Swiss abroad with regard to old-age and survivors' insurance and invalidity insurance.

The afternoon ended with the exhibition of two Swiss artists. Sandra Roduit, a painter based in London, showed her artworks and Francesco Bernasconi, a young film director, presented a short video from his Sir-Taki Production accompanied by some collages and pictures exhibited in the hall.



Enjoying the aperitivo



Fossuk's committee



Sir-Taki works, picture by Muphovi



Ambassador Furgler

Next AGM

FOSSUK has announced that the next AGM and social weekend will take place in the bustling and culturally eclectic city of Belfast. The activities will span three days, from **18th-20th of May, 2018**. The presence of representatives from the Swiss Embassy, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and from the Organisation of Swiss Abroad has also been confirmed.

More details will be provided later in the year.



Skincode sponsored the AGM

Swiss events in the UK

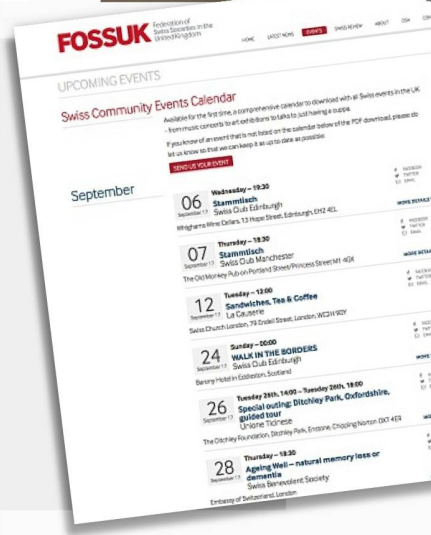
Available for the first time, a comprehensive calendar to download with all Swiss events in the UK.

You can download the PDF version on FOSSUK WEBSITE:

www.swiss-societies.co.uk and send your events to enquiries@swiss-societies.co.uk

Join the conversation

www.facebook.com/ukswiss
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Embassy News: Welcome Message from Ambassador Alexandre Fasel

It is a great pleasure to introduce myself as the new Ambassador of Switzerland to the United Kingdom. After my appointment as Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations in Geneva and a short stint as Deputy State Secretary in Berne, arriving at the Embassy in London recalls a previous stay in the UK, as I spent part of my student days at Oxford. Looking ahead, I feel a great sense of anticipation at discovering new aspects of life and society across the UK.

I am also looking forward to acquainting myself with the large and diverse Swiss community across the UK. The 35,000 Swiss citizens living in this country, each and every one in their own way, promote cultural and commercial exchanges and thus contribute towards the enduring friendship between our two countries.

Today, strengthening these bonds is of paramount importance. As preparations for the UK's departure from the European Union are

under way, we are working hard to ensure clarity and continuity in the post-Brexit UK-Swiss relationship. The Swiss Government's 'mind the gap' strategy aims to prevent any legal gap when the UK's exit from the EU is complete, given that the relationship is currently governed mainly by Switzerland's bilateral agreements with the European Union. As these agreements will no longer apply to the UK they will need to be replaced with new bilateral agreements between Switzerland and the UK. Be assured that the interests of the Swiss community in the UK are being taken fully into account in this process, and we are monitoring the situation intently and making representations wherever necessary.

The Swiss Review is an excellent way of maintaining links between Switzerland and its communities abroad, and I am pleased that we have these regional pages to keep you up to date on what we are doing here in London. We are



always keen to hear your views, and you can also contact us via Facebook and Twitter, where you will find further information about our events and activities.

www.facebook.com/swissembassyuk
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Farewell: Thanks to Ambassador Dominik Furgler

In September, the former Swiss Ambassador to the UK, Dominik Furgler, will step into his new role as Ambassador to the Czech Republic. We would like to express our gratitude to him, his wife Hayam and to his collaborators, for the dedicated way in which they have carried out their duty to the Swiss community and for the cultural and social works run by the Ambassador's staff.

Music: Swiss Ambassador's Award

This year's award goes to **Christoph Croisé**, an exciting young Swiss cellist who has won many prestigious awards, including a Gold Medal with Honours at the First Berlin International Music Competition in April, 2017. Furthermore, he has performed as a soloist with several distinguished orchestras. Christoph plays a Goffriller violoncello made in Venice in 1712 and is accompanied by Alexander Panfilov, an acclaimed young Russian-born pianist.

Dates:

16.10.2017, 7.30pm Edinburgh, The Balmoral
 17.10.2017, 7.30pm London, Wigmore Hall
 18.10.2017, 7.45pm Cardiff, Neuadd Dora Stoutzker Hall
 19.10.2017, 7.30pm, Belfast, The Duncairn Centre for Culture & Arts
www.swissculturalfund.org.uk

London: Staff Changes

Ambassador Alexandre Fasel arrived in September accompanied by his wife Nicole Fasel-Rossier. Ambassador Fasel is taking over from **Ambassador Dominik Furgler** who had held the post of Head of Mission over the past four years and will now head the Swiss Embassy in Prague. As well as a change of Ambassador, we have welcomed three new diplomats to the Economic Section this summer: **Alexander Renggli**, **Stefanie Küng** and **Felix Schwendimann**. In addition, **David Kilian Beck** takes over from **Denis Charrière**, who retired at the end of May, as Head of the Culture Section.



Conversation: Reminiscing on a long involvement with the Swiss community

Margrit Lyster (ML) and **Giuseppe Joe (JB) Broggin** voluntarily served their local community in the UK, working tirelessly to highlight and promote the rights and needs of the Swiss living abroad. After over 50 years of service, the time has come for them to enjoy a well-deserved rest. We would like to recall some of the most important moments and events that marked their vital service to our community and to thank them for all the precious work they undertook from which we all continue to benefit.

JB: Margrit, between the two of us we have spent nearly 80 years being actively involved with the UK Swiss Community! Our paths first crossed at a Nouvelle Société Helvétique event where we subsequently both served on the Committee for numerous years. In 2011, you Margrit were elected President. In 1979 I was invited to join FOSSUK which I served for 38 years to date.

ML: At that time I was working as a social worker for the Swiss Welfare Office and later the Swiss Benevolent Society. I loved being in a position to support compatriots helping them to make a difference in their lives. I joined the FOSSUK Committee in 1990. What year did you first become an OSA Deputy-Delegate?

JB: In 1989, and four years later I was elected as a full Delegate and subsequently invited to join the OSA Executive Board, a position I held with great pride and commitment for 26 years. I was part of several important policy decisions, namely 'The right to vote by correspondence for Swiss citizens abroad', 'Access to the voluntary AHV scheme' (although only until the Swiss Confederation signed bilateral treaties with the EU in 1992), followed by 'The enabling of

spouses of Swiss citizens and those born abroad to a Swiss parent, to obtain Swiss nationality'.

Much has changed since I first joined the Swiss community in the UK. The main challenges for FOSSUK and Swiss Clubs up and down our adopted nation lie in the quest for an image reappraisal of aims and objectives, along with the search for a rejuvenation of committees at all levels.

ML: I followed you to Bern four years later in 1993 and remained a delegate till March this year. I shall sorely miss being part of an organisation concerning itself with issues regarding Swiss ex-pats worldwide. I shall miss the debates and the exchanges and ultimately the achievements. However, I won't forget the countless opportunities, enriching moments and encounters I have had over the years through my involvement with the Swiss Church, the 1st August Committee and the Swiss National Day Committee as well as many non-Swiss organisations. Joe, I am sure you feel the same and share my hope that our successors will be able to enjoy as enriching a time as we have.

JB: The unforeseeable repercussions that Brexit will have for the country as a whole will shape the future of our compatriots in the UK for many years to come. I have a unique emotional cocktail of memories. I am honoured to have been part of the wider Swiss community, of friendship past and present, of having visited towns and venues in the UK and in Switzerland and for having been part of many successful and unforgettable causes and events. I am forever indebted to all those past and present who supported me in all my endeavours in favour of the Swiss community at large.




Margrit Lyster

Margrit was born and grew up in Zürich where she also trained as a social worker. In 1964 she married Christopher Lyster and moved to London. They have two daughters. Margrit began her involvement with the Swiss Community around 1975 as a member of the Committee of the Welfare Office for Swiss Girls in Great Britain, later Swiss Welfare Office. In 1977 she became the Organisation's Welfare Officer and, after its merger with the Swiss Benevolent Society, she remained their Welfare Officer till early 2009. Over the course of time, Margrit has served on the Committee of the New Helvetic Society, the Swiss Church, the 1st August Committee, later the Swiss National Day Committee. In the early 90's she joined the FOSSUK Committee and served as its President from 2011 to 2015. For 24 years Margrit was a OSA UK Delegate. Margrit feels very privileged to have been so closely involved with the UK Swiss Community for over 40 years – a time she found most fulfilling and informative.

Giuseppe Joe Broggin


Joe was born in Losone (TI) in 1940. He graduated as an architect. In 1968 he moved to London and married his English wife Alison, with whom he had two daughters. Soon afterwards, he joined several London-based Swiss clubs and societies, initially as an ordinary member with the Nouvelle Société Helvétique whose committee he served on for several years. In addition, Joe joined the Unione Ticinese Londra and from 1991 until 1994 he was at the helm of the Unione as President and then as Vice President to date.

From 1979 until August 2017, Joe was a member of FOSSUK's Committee. In 1989 he was nominated first as an OSA Deputy-Delegate, then four years later he was elected as a full Delegate and subsequently invited to join the seven strong OSA Executive Board in Bern, a position held with great pride and commitment for 26 years until August 2009.



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FOSSUK WEBSITE

You can find all the information at one place, Club info, events, ASO news can now all be found in one place with the click of a mouse! Go to:

www.swiss-societies.co.uk



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1: Swiss National Day in London

About 250 Swiss compatriots and friends from across the UK travelled to the Swiss Church in London on 1st August to celebrate Swiss National Day. The Ambassador Dominik Furgler and his wife Hayam attended the event and addressed the gathering. The event was organised by the Swiss Church with the generous support of Mosimann's and Alpine Wines, as well as many dedicated volunteers. Swiss Church organist Peter Yardley-Jones played the National Anthem on the Swiss-built organ. The Swiss Church has said it would be delighted to organise a similar event next year if the Swiss community wished to do so.

REV. CARLA MAURER, SWISS CHURCH IN LONDON

250 compatriots gathered



Enjoying Swiss food



Pictures by Jan-Christof Telford

2: Taunton and Somerset Clubs

Taunton and Somerset Swiss Club is a very lively and fun group of Swiss (young and old) living in Taunton and the surrounding area. The President, Mrs Christiane Greening (nee Knoepfli), did a marvellous job organising the event for the local community. We had a wonderful celebratory lunch that included Swiss cervelats and salads. There was also a wide selection of desserts. I think the Swiss know how to enjoy good food!

CAROLINE RAINFORD

Bockwurst and tea



Some young Swiss members

3: Swiss Club Manchester

Around 50 members of the Manchester Swiss Club gathered at their usual venue in Bramhall to celebrate our National Day. After the scrumptious meal of traditional food and after listening to our current President's address to the Swiss abroad, we sang (unaccompanied!!) our National Anthem and then young and old proceeded outdoors, carrying dozens of lamps, to sing in all our national languages around the blazing fire. A pretty firework display expertly done by Julie and Ian rounded off the successful evening and everyone returned home inspired by the merry tales and memories of our fellow-countrymen.

SWISS CLUB MANCHESTER

An afternoon of Swiss traditions



Many cantons and Swiss flags



4: Southern Area Swiss Club

The Southern Area Swiss Club celebrated the 1st August at the Darby Green Centre in Yateley near Camberley. 36 adults and 7 children attended. Everyone contributed to our buffet and we ended up with a splendid feast. The club supplied the sausages (bockwurst), tea and coffee. We also had a raffle which was very popular. Last but not least, for the first time we had a live transmission of the speech of the Bundespräsident.

BERNADETTE CURTRESS

5: The North Wales Swiss Society

We celebrated the National Day on the 15th July this year, as welcome guests of Martin and Ghislaine at their house in Mynydd Llandigay. We also welcomed a guest living in Wallis, Debra, who supplied us with 40 cervelats! A truly Swiss celebration!

BEATRICE SCHLEGEL

6: Swiss Club Edinburgh

The Swiss Club Edinburgh celebrated its National Day on the 6th of August. The event took place at Saughton Hall Community Centre and was very well attended. As customary, we ate grilled sausages (cervelat and bratwurst) and people were able to taste salads and desserts contributed by members. We even had a cake decorated with little self-made Swiss flags. The event was a nice opportunity for old friends to catch up and new people also attended.

RUTH MUHEIM

7: West Surrey Swiss Club

Our regular National Day event was held at Ripley Village Hall. This event is the highlight of our calendar, with Swiss sausages and a firework finale. We were honoured this year by a visit from the Consul General, Mr Hermann Aebischer, who gave us some very encouraging words in addition to reading the Presidential Speech before the National Anthem was played.

RUTH CROZIER

SBS: Citizens' anniversary party

On 8 June 2017 the Swiss Benevolent Society UK welcomed a group of Swiss citizens in honour of their birthdays (80th, 85th, 90th and onwards), to celebrate at the Society's annual Afternoon Tea Party held at the Swiss Embassy. It was wonderful to celebrate their birthdays together and to see everyone enjoying the entertainment, Swiss wine, English High Tea and new acquaintances. We, the Trustees, were delighted to listen to the many beautiful stories of all the compatriots who attended (the largest turn out so far 77 guests!) and their Swiss history of how they came to live in London. We have already received a flurry of thank you messages; and on behalf of the Swiss Benevolent Society, we must sincerely say the pleasure was ours.

SUZANNE EGLOFF,

CHAIRMAN SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY



Port Sunlight: A pleasant day out together

A dozen members of Manchester Swiss Club enjoyed a great day out at Port Sunlight, the fascinating village built by Lord Lever in 1888 for the large workforce of his soap factory. On our walk we were amazed at the variety of architectural styles of the many cottages and the provision of a church, school, theatre, lyceum, as well as an inn, a bank and even a leisure complex with an allotment and a heated pool, all set in beautiful parkland and gardens.

Lady Lever's Art Gallery is truly a treasure which visitors marvel at as much nowadays as she must have done over one hundred years ago. Lunch at the Gallery Restaurant with the merry chatter with friends and a rest for our feet refreshed us all until we returned home, full of many nice 'new' memories.

SWISS CLUB MANCHESTER

6 Oct: Fundraising dinner for the Swiss Church

Globally renowned food business Mosimann's, founded by Swiss chef Anton Mosimann, will host a fundraising dinner at the Swiss Church London on 6 October 2017, 7pm.

After a welcome drink, a three-course meal will be served. There will also be a cash bar.

Meet old and new friends in our wonderful grade II listed building, renovated by Swiss architects Christ&Gantenbein, and support the Swiss Church's charitable work reaching out to the homeless in the Covent Garden area, visiting the elderly and organising family activities.

For more information, or if you would like to purchase a concession ticket for £100, please contact the Swiss Church office 020 7836 1418 or email info@swisschurchlondon.org.uk



28 Sept: Swiss Benevolent Society seminar

Dementia, SBS autumn seminar in London 'Ageing Well: Dementia Or Age-Related Memory Loss?' is the title of the autumn seminar organized by the Swiss Benevolent Society for Swiss citizens and their families/friends living in the UK. It will be held on 28 September 2017 at the Embassy of Switzerland in London and it will explain everything about dementia, including the difference between normal memory loss due to ageing and signs of dementia. Registration is requested.

AGEING WELL
DEMENTIA OR AGE-RELATED
MEMORY LOSS?

Further information:
jeannette.crosier@swissbenevolent.org.uk

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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