

# Swiss Abbeys

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# SWISS ABBEYS

## ROMAINMOTIER ABBEY

The Church of Romainmotier, in the Orbe district of Canton Vaud, is dedicated to Saint Peter. It is the ancient church of an important monastery of remarkable proportions, famed in the middle ages and one of the oldest churches of Switzerland. It forms a Latin cross, with three naves, one transept and a choir. Its architecture follows in essence the Roman style of the Order of Cluny. Several parts of the edifice date from the 10th and the 11th centuries.

At the beginning of the 14th century, the choir was transformed and ornamented with a Gothic window. The vast *narthex* (long vestibule) preceded by a Gothic porch, is also one of the most remarkable features of this church.

The tower rises above the centre of the transept. Its low body is surmounted by a slender spire.

The church contains many sculptures, representing mainly religious figures. Particularly worthy of attention in the choir is the Monument of the Prior Jean de Seyssel.

This venerable church has undergone important renovation work during the past few years.

Situated in the lower part of the town, the Convent on which the church of Romainmotier once depended, was enclosed within wall which have mostly disappeared today. Several of its towers have been demolished. Lying on the banks of the river Nozon and visible within the enclosure is an imposing castle which probably served as residence to priors and visitors to the convent, whose cloister was situated between the castle and the church. The cloister was demolished at the time of the Reformation.

According to tradition, the convent was founded by Saint Romain, a native of Franche-Comté, under the pontificate of Innocent I. In 753, the Pope Etienne II consecrated the church under the patronage of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. He gave the monastery the name of *Romanum*

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*monasterium*, hence the name Romain Môtier.

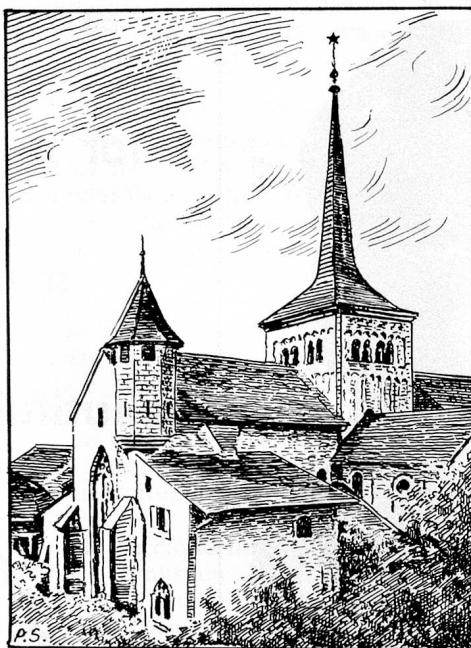
During the Bernese conquest of 1536, the convent placed itself under the protection of the Lords of Fribourg. But despite their efforts and long negotiations, they had to disclaim their protectorate over the convent for a share of the plunders... Berne took the rest.

Some of the monks accepted the Reformation. Others left for Franche-Comté. The Grandson reformer Jean le Comté held pastoral functions at the convent from 1554 to 1567.

Romainmôtier then became the chief town of a bailiwick whose first bailiff was Adrien of Bubenberg. To this bailiwick was annexed the Abbey of Lake Joux (1566), of which there is nothing left except the ancient tower. It is the tower of the actual church.

In 1589, Romainmôtier received the status of a city, and on 27th January 1798, when the Revolution had swept into western Switzerland, declared itself free from Berne and joined the Lemanic Republic.

*Pierre Savoie*



## BIRTHDAY AND ANNIVERSARIES

The following couples have just celebrated, or will be shortly celebrating their wedding anniversaries. Mr. and Mrs. F. Burri on 2nd May (27th), Mr. and Mrs. W. Flory on 16th of the month (37th), Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Senn on 18th May (27th) and the Rev. and Mrs. H. Spoerri (Rueschlikon) on 19th May.

The following readers are celebrating their birthday this Spring. Mrs. J. Uden

was 85 on 6th May and Mr. A. C. Boller (Saint-Prex, Vd.) 74 on 8th May. Mrs. Linhardt (the oldest Swiss in Dunfermline) was 83 on 11th May and Mrs. A. Sommer celebrated her birthday on 15th of the month. Mr. A. Haenggi will be 82 on 20th and Mr. W. Schedler 69 on 24th May.

The Swiss Ambassador, Dr. A. Weitnauer, will have his birthday on 30th May, the same days as Mr. A. Zullig (66).

To all these readers and any others who are celebrating anniversaries and birthdays in May, we send congratulations and best wishes.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY:** Friday, 18th May, AGM and Auction. Friday, 29th June, Members Evening.

**SWISS CLUB LIVERPOOL:** Friday, 4th May – Jassevening at the St. Hilary Hotel, Wallasey, Wirral.

**NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE:** Thursday, 17th May, 7.00 p.m. OPEN MEETING at Swiss Hostel for Girls, 9 Belsize Grove, NW3. Talk in English by Dr. H. R. Boeckli, Editor and Parliamentary Correspondent of the "St. Galler Tagblatt" on "WHAT'S IN STORE IN SWITZERLAND. All Swiss and their friends welcome.

Thursday, 21st June, 7.00 p.m. at Swiss Hostel for Girls. Talk in English by Dr. Carlo Jagmetti, Press Attache at the Swiss Embassy, "MEMORIES OF A STAY IN VIETNAM". Dr. Jagmetti was Charge d'Affaires at the Swiss Embassy in Saigon for two months at the end of last year. All Swiss and their friends welcome. The talks will be illustrated by slides.

**ASSEMBLY OF THE SWISS ABROAD** – will be held this year in St. Gall from 17th to 19th August. Please reserve the date. Details will be given later.

**ANGLO-SWISS SOCIETY:** Silver Jubilee Dance at the Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, London SW6 on Tuesday, 12th June at 7.45 for 8.00 p.m. Dinner jacket optional. Please send tickets at £3.50 before 8th June to the Secretary.

**CITY SWISS CLUB:** Card Evening at the Dorchester Hotel (Stanhope Room) on Tuesday, 22nd May at 6.30 for 7.00 p.m.

**SWISS CLUB EDINBURGH:** Tuesday, 29th May, 7.30 a.m. at Binn's Corner, Edinburgh. Meeting for the *Maibummel*.

**SWISS RIFLE ASSOCIATION:** Shootings at the Long Siberia Range at Bisley on the following Sundays: 13th May, 3rd June, 17th June and 1st July.

**LANDSGEMEINDE OF THE SWISS OF THE NORTH:** Sunday, 17th June at Hebden Bridge.