



Switzerland

NEWSLETTER OF THE SWISS-AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PITTSBURGH, PA

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FALL 1993

Our New Members

Our total membership currently numbers 207. New members that have been added to the rolls are

Ms. Susan Gray
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Abbey
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Schaefer (from Morgantown, VA)

We wish to congratulate member Betty Jane Beringer on her betrothal to Mr. Charles Stenger, making him a new member of the Society. Our sympathies go to Mrs. Mary Marti on the recent loss of her husband Frank.
Trudy Kuenzi, Membership Secretary

Forthcoming Events

Look for flyers giving details of the following two events in December:

1. Samichlaus Party

Again this year we will have a Samichlaus Party for children and adults at the Faculty Lounge of the Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh. The date is December 18, 1993. We will again have the Kinderchor for entertainment, a Samichlaus,

and homebaked cookies.

2. Our traditional Christmas Luncheon will be held this year again at Tivoli's.

3. Spring Meeting

Unfortunately, our questionnaire in the Summer issue of the Newsletter had only limited response: a total of 7 were received. This is not a very good sample to base changes on. We are now planning to have the meeting in the last week of April. A special feature of the meeting is likely to be a visit by Ambassador Roger Baer, the new ambassador with responsibility for the New York consular district, to attend our meeting. Look to the Spring 1994 Newsletter for details.

August 1st Picnic

While not a record crowd, more than 160 members and guests took part in our 1993 celebration of the founding of Switzerland on August 1st at the Rose Barn in North Park. The weather was favorable and a good time was had by everybody. Special events were the playing of the recorded message to Swiss in foreign countries by the President of Switzerland, Mr. Adolf Ogi, games for children and adults, the

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT:	ROLF KUEHNI, 2634, Woodmont Lane, Wexford, PA 15090	412 935-9627
VICE PRESIDENT:	JOSEPH GIGANDET, 5852 King School Road, Bethel Park, PA 15102	412 835-2223
SECRETARY:	PAT HEER, 12600 Ridge Road, North Huntingdon, PA 15642	412 863-6950
TREASURER:	FLORENCE JACOB, 5415 McCandles Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15201	412 781-1375
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY:	TRUDY KUENZI, 207 Churchill Road, Turtle Creek, PA 15145	412 823-1867
DIRECTORS:	WILLIAM ENGLERT, BRUCE KUENZI, TIMOTHY MADAMMA, CONRAD OSTERTAG	

now famous Steinstossen, a Waltz and Polka Competition (see below), and for the first time a Lampionumzug (candle-lit paper lantern parade) for children. The latter is a tradition in Switzerland, together with a bonfire (which is not a possibility in North Park). Ambassador Heinz Kunz went, following a suggestion, to extraordinary measures to bring in a supply of traditional paper lanterns in time for the picnic. At twilight, they were distributed to the children, the candles lit and those of us who grew up in Switzerland had an experience not had in many a year: the sight of earnest and joyful children parading with lanterns celebrating the founding of the old country.

Steinstossen and Waltz and Polka Competition

Steinstossen (stone throwing) proved to be very popular again this year. Forty-ne people participated in a record breaking competition. The new record throw (12.325 kg stone) in the men's division of 21'4" was made by T. McBurney. Rosemary Gubser broke her own record throw of last year, to repeat as best in the women's division. Last year Ms. Gubser's throw (5.7 kg stone) measured 16'5", this year it measured an amazing 18'6". (For comparison, the record throw at this year's Unspunnen festival in Switzerland, the grand daddy of Swiss Steinstossen events was 12'6". The stone, however, weighs 93.5 kg or 206.1 lbs).

Arthur and Franziska Rudolf waltzed their way into first place as winners in the waltz contest. They were awarded a bottle of wine for their efforts. In the polka competition, Bill Englert and Gloria Sutter demonstrated some fancy footwork to win first place and a bottle of wine. The music was provided by the Ed Hrabel Band and Consul Heinz Kunz and Conrad Ostertag served as judges.

Pat Heer

Bus Tour to Freedom Hill

A pleasant, enlightening and fun bus tour, organized by Pat Heer, was made on October 9 to Freedom Hill, the home of Swiss emigré Albert Gallatin. Look to the next issue of the Newsletter for a more detailed report.

Business Visit by Ambassador Roger Baer

Mr. Baer, newly in charge of the New York consular district, and his deputy Consul Eric Dardenne made a business visit to Pittsburgh on October 13/14, 1993. They met with city officials and officials of the University of Pittsburgh. On the evening of October 13 they held a reception in the Pittsburgh Athletic Club to which some 50 guests had been invited.

Handbook for Swiss Abroad (Ratgeber für Ausland-Schweizer)

The Swiss Government recently issued a new handbook for Swiss abroad. It contains important and up-to-date information on many questions of importance and provides many addresses and phone numbers for sources of additional, more detailed information. The 123 page paperback is available from Eidgenoessische Drucksachen und Materialzentrale, CH 3000, Switzerland

Non-Profit Custom Tour to Switzerland and Liechtenstein

Evelyn Ruffing (412-539-2171) is organizing a tour to Zürich, Lucerne, Interlaken, French Switzerland, Basel, St. Gallen, Appenzell, Liechtenstein from Saturday, June 11 to Sunday June 26, 1994. It is possible to extend your stay abroad on a personal basis. Reservations must be made by December 1, 1993. Contact Evelyn for details.