



# Switzerland



NEWSLETTER OF THE SWISS-AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

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Summer 1996

## The Society's Spring Luncheon

— Sandra Tengowski, Secretary

Our Spring Luncheon Meeting was held on April 27th 1996 at Seven Springs Mountain Resort, RD 1, Champion, Pennsylvania in the Alpine Room. It was a bright sunny day, but a little cool. I think all who attended had a good time. Lunch was very good and the cheesecake for dessert was delicious. We were honored with 11 members of the Pittsburgh Helvetia Maennerchor singers who proceeded to do a program. They also told us about the 100th Year Festival which will be here at Seven Springs July 18, 19, and 20 1997.

Then we had our meeting. President Bruce Kuenzi called it to order about 1:40 p.m., Secretary Sandra Tengowski read her report plus the Treasurer's report for Florence Jacob. Then Membership Secretary Trudy Kuenzi gave her report. We talked of old and new business, also the next event — the August 3rd Picnic at North Park. Hope to you there! Be looking for your invitation. For those that need rides, call someone you know. The meeting was adjourned approximately 2:00. Then we watched the video "700th Year of Switzerland." After the meeting some of us either shopped or took in the sights (or both) at our leisure.

## Membership Report

— Trudy Kuenzi, Membership Secretary

Our total membership to date is 191 members. We welcome Jacob and Mary Jane (Oeler) Laban and John and Marlise Partilla as new members of the Swiss-American Society of Pittsburgh. We wish to thank Mary Jane Laban who has accepted the task of setting up our Newsletter. We are always looking for new members. I will be happy to contact them. One of our new members, Ueli Grüter has returned to Switzerland.

Since our December meeting the following members have passed away: Robert W. Lienhard, Dr. Klaus Hoffman, Roland Roehrich and Mabel Muntyler. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to their families.

## Notes from Your President

— Bruce Kuenzi, President

It was noted at the Board Meeting on 31 May 1996 that included in the cost of the August First celebration is the fee for the Pavilion, whether you select the catered dinner or bring a basket. The county now charges \$225.00 which averages about \$2.00 per person.

*Driving volunteers may be needed.* We would like to make sure that everyone has an opportunity to participate in our events. As our group gets older some members may find transportation to be a problem, particularly with events at some distance. Other members are finding room in their cars since their children are grow. They have expressed that they would be happy to provide a ride for someone or two. If you would like to be on a ride provider list or need a ride — please contact a Board Member.

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*The North American Swiss Singing Alliance* will be hosted by the Helvetia Maennerchor of Pittsburgh. The Saengerfest is of particular significance as it is the 100th Anniversary. It will be held at Seven Springs Resort from 17-19 July 1997. Plan to attend. Groups from throughout North America will compete in traditional Swiss music. Opportunities to help facilitate this event will surely arise. Workers, helpers and patrons will be needed. The Swiss-American Society of Pittsburgh has pledged to help.

*Nationality Rooms Committee.* We have set up an independent account for the Nationality Rooms Committee. Currently we have \$995 outside of our regular account earmarked to be used, eventually, for a Swiss Nationality Room. A great number of members have expressed interest in a Swiss Nationality Room. The following are some facts to consider as we start:

### **An Introduction to the Nationality Rooms Program**

The University of Pittsburgh's famous twenty-three Nationality and Heritage Classrooms are unique in the world. Gifts from the ethnic groups who helped to build Pittsburgh, the rooms are glowing artistic tributes to their cultural heritage's which stem from the Far East, Middle East, Africa, Eastern and Western Europe. The Rooms design often originated with architects living abroad. Artists came from Prague Warsaw, Athens, and Ghana to decorate the walls and ceilings with gold leaf, earth colors, wood and stone sculptures or murals representing events or enduring values of that culture.

From the inception of the nationality Rooms Program in 1926 until the completion of the Irish Classroom in 1957, the following principles governed the creation of the rooms, assuring a basic commonality of purpose, authenticity, and cultural, non-political, emphasis:

1. A Nationality Room must illustrate one of the outstanding architectural or design traditions of a nation that is recognized as such by the United States Department of State.
2. The design of a given historical period must be cultural and aesthetic; not political. The period depicted should be prior to 1787, the date of the United States Constitution, with emphasis on cultural roots.
3. To avoid political implications in the room, no political symbol is permitted in the decorations, nor a portrait or likeness of any living person.
4. The only place a political symbol may be used is in the corridor stone above the room's entrance.
5. No donor recognition may appear in the rooms.
6. Most architects and designers of the rooms have been born and educated abroad. This has been instrumental in insuring authenticity of the design.

### **Symbol at Swiss Abroad Place**

The following article is from the Magazine for the Swiss Abroad "Swiss Review", February 1996. The donors' plaque at the Swiss Abroad Place is what our organization contributed towards for the 700th Anniversary year celebration of Switzerland. We can be proud to be a part of this.



### The donor's plaque at Swiss Abroad Place reads -

"PLATZ DER AUSLANDSCHWEIZER PLACE DES SUISSES DE L'ETRANGER PIAZZA DEGLI SVIZZERI ALL ESTERO PLAZZA DALS SVIZZERS A L'ESTER"

Swiss Abroad Place in Brunnen has now been enriched by an evocative symbol. A granite block was unveiled in the presence of many prominent figures. The plaque is attached to it and describes the history and purpose of the Place and also list the donors.

Professor Walther Hofer, president of the Council of the Foundation, referred to the important role played by the Swiss Abroad Place during the 700th anniversary celebrations. On August 1, 1991, the festivities reached one of their high points with the reception of the entire Federal Council by the Council for the Swiss Abroad and several hundred of our compatriots from all over the world.

Since then, — as part of the Way of Switzerland — it has been visited every year by many walkers from within Switzerland and abroad. In 1998 the Place will once again be used for commemorative events during the celebrations marking the 150th anniversary of the establishment of the federal state.

Antonella Bettata, a member of the Council for the Swiss Abroad, stressed the importance of the Place for young Swiss Abroad. Even though most of these are well rooted in their countries of residence, they still find here a symbol of Switzerland which brings them into contact with their country and the values of their forefathers.

In conclusion, Jean-Jacques Cevey, president of the Organization for the Swiss Abroad, referred to the dual significance of the Place. It is a symbol of the solidarity of our countrymen abroad with Switzerland, and it also reminds those of us who stayed at home of the vital contribution which the Fifth Switzerland makes to our country in so many ways.

### First of August Badge

"The Swiss Review" has published an article about the First of August badges we have been buying at our picnics for many years. The proceeds have always gone to the Pro Patria Foundation. It is nice to know the history of this organization and that it is deserving of our support. Trudy Kuenzi's historic Pro Patria Badge Collection will be on exhibit at our picnic.

### First of August Badge: a Symbolic Button

— "The Swiss Review"

The 77th national day badge in the form of a simple button may seem banal, but it is very symbolic and incorporates technical precision. The button is also redolent of everyday life. It should encourage us to look for the special in the mundane. It is directly targeted towards saving valuable small historical buildings throughout the country — barns, baking and oven houses, mills, sawmills, bridges, chapels, etc. — which is the main purpose of this year's August 1 national collection.



Since 1923 the First of August badge has been a symbol of Swiss unity and solidarity. The revenue from it goes to the cultural and social works of the Pro Patria Foundation. Increasingly the Swiss Abroad have also benefited from it. Until 1991 Pro Patria was the main financial backer of the Organization for the Swiss Abroad. In 1994 it earmarked Sfr 800,000 to promote Swiss schools abroad.

You can buy the First of August badge at any Swiss embassy or consulate. If there should be any supply problem, those interested can also apply directly to: Pro Patria, P.O. Box, CH-8023 Zurich, SWITZERLAND. Telephone 41 1 251 79 50; Fax: 41 1 251 75 13.

### 1996 Officers of the Society

The 1996 Officers of the Swiss-American Society of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania are:

*Bruce Kuenzi, President*  
*Charles clandon, Jr., Vice-President*  
*Sandra Tengowski, Secretary*  
*Florence Jacob, Treasurer*  
*Trudy Kuenzi, Membership Secretary*

Directors are: *Sam Gerber, Hans Meier, Evelyn Ruffing and Ronald Saffron.*

### World Wide Web

Some addresses that might be of interest to members of the Swiss-American Society of Pittsburgh

<a href="http://www.ska.com/trade/">http://www.ska.com/trade/</a>	CS Trading . Index
<a href="http://www.sk-creation.ch/">http://www.sk-creation.ch/</a>	S.K. Creation Index
<a href="http://www.olsen.ch/cgi-bin/exmenu">http://www.olsen.ch/cgi-bin/exmenu</a>	Currency Converter
<a href="http://www.city.net/">http://www.city.net/</a>	City.Net (Maps of major cities)
<a href="http://www.nzz.ch/folio">http://www.nzz.ch/folio</a>	NZZ Folio (Neue Zürcher Zeitung)
<a href="http://www.tages-anzeiger.ch/">http://www.tages-anzeiger.ch/</a>	Tages-Anzeiger (Newspaper from Zürich)
<a href="http://www.zueri.ch/">http://www.zueri.ch/</a>	Zürinfo - Willkommen in Zürich
<a href="http://www.SwitzerlandTourism.ch/">http://www.SwitzerlandTourism.ch/</a>	SWITZERLAND WELCOMES YOU !!
<a href="http://www.admin.ch/">http://www.admin.ch/</a>	Confoederatio Helvetica - Swiss Confederation
<a href="http://www.swisscom.ch/">http://www.swisscom.ch/</a>	Swisscom (Swiss companies)
<a href="http://www.halcyon.com/swissweb/">http://www.halcyon.com/swissweb/</a>	The National Center for Swiss-American Studies, Inc.
<a href="http://www.usaswiss.org/">http://www.usaswiss.org/</a>	Northwest Nexus
<a href="http://www.world.ch/radio">http://www.world.ch/radio</a>	Radio Zürisee (24 hour live radio in Swiss German)

Submitted by Heinz W. Kunz, Ph.D.  
 Consulate of Switzerland

There will be a reunion of the descendants of VALAIS IN Cordoba, Argentina. The reunion starts October 17, 1996.

Contact: AGROPACION DE VALESANOS  
 CHACABOCO 465  
 5000 CORDOBA  
 ARGENTINA

