



# Switzerland



NEWSLETTER OF THE SWISS-AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

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## Swiss Nationality Room News

by Fred Carlson, Vice-Chairman, Nationality Room Committee

It's official! This past December 15, 1998, the gift bequest that officially begins the Swiss Nationality Room project was given to Pitt's Chancellor Nordenburg in a ceremony at the Cathedral of Learning. This amount, totalling \$5000.- signifies an important official step in the history of the Swiss of the Western Pennsylvania region and specifically, many members of our society who have desired this recognition for decades. In February, another \$7000.- was sent to our building fund at Pitt. All monies sent from our Society for the Nationality Room project are specifically earmarked for future design and construction expenses of the room. Of course, the generosity of our community all during the fundraising efforts of the past year is much appreciated by all Swiss in the region.

The publicity surrounding our desire to create our room committee has brought in many talented people to conceptualize, oversee, and lead fundraising efforts to see this project through to completion. At press time, the following people have said "yes" to the call to dedicate some time to this project: Heinz Kunz/Chairman, myself, my wife Nancy Flury Carlson, Walter Schaller/Treasurer, Pat Heer, Vera Koeppel Ducruet, Evelyn Ruffing, Alex Bally, Catherine Hebert, Edith Bottanari, Fran Hoffman, and Edward Graf.

In February, at the invitation of Consul Kunz, the Swiss Room Committee and Room Director E. Maxine Bruhns met with the Swiss Embassy cultural attache Ms. Hanna Widrig, to inform her of the room project and the dedication of the Swiss community to complete the room. Many points of discussion included Swiss government assistance, possible conceptual directions, the identification of design and building and funding sources both here and in Switzerland, and some long term planning considerations. Room

321, which was chosen to be the future home of the Swiss Room, and all the nationality rooms were toured by Ms. Widrig.

In March and April, the committee canvassed its members to obtain viewpoints on conceptual directions for the room design. Dr. Kunz is presently preparing an edited summary of these submissions for distribution to the appropriate interested parties. Soon, it is expected that a visual presentation of the future room design will be completed, enhancing the prospects of corporate fundraising. In May, Dr. Kunz addressed a luncheon of the Nationality Room committees at the University Club that pointed out the unique qualities and challenges that the Swiss Room project would expect.

As readers from the Swiss-American Society of Pittsburgh, we hope you share our enthusiasm for the continued pace of this project. As Vice-Chairman of the Room Committee, I encourage all of you to be generous in your donating to the picnic Silent Auction, contributing generously to the auction bidding, and buying lots of raffle tickets for the tombola! And in conclusion, as President of your Swiss Society, I urge you to send a contribution through the mail if you cannot attend the picnic or the auction on July 31. Please see the forms enclosed in the newsletter concerning the auction, the donation form, and the picnic and please call me with any questions you may have about this important enterprise concerning Swiss culture. ♦

## Christmas Luncheon

### *Fred Carlson*

The luncheon format was a big hit for the Swiss-American Society as we were treated to delightful cuisine, a 75 gift tombola table, Christmas decoration par excellence, and the traditional recap of the years' events. The 1999 Board of Directors was announced: Frederick H. Carlson/President, Frank Gloor/Vice-president, Nancy Flury Carlson/Secretary, Walter Schaller/Treasurer, Trudi Kuenzi/Membership Secretary, and Directors Koni Ostertag, Al von Arx, Rosan Habegger, and Charles Claudon. We were also treated to guests Hans and Marianne Rauer of the Alliance of Germanic Societies, many new members of the club, and the news that many of the honorary consuls from around the US had been very generous in giving to the Swiss Nationality Room project after hearing Dr. Kunz' comments at the November consuls meeting in Washington, DC. The proceedings went so well that we have booked Tambellinis again for our December 4, 1999 Christmas luncheon! And congratulations for Dave Vissat, society member employed at Blattner-Brunner advertising, whose beautiful Christmas luncheon poster won a prestigious 1999 Addy Award from the Pittsburgh Ad Club! Congratulations, Dave! +

## Membership Report

### *Trudy Kuenzi, Membership Chairman*

Currently, our membership totals 193! We have 7 new members and regretfully announce the passing of George Cline and Tanya Ostertag. We happily report the landmark 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of Rose Lienhard-Stager at the Concordia Lutheran Home in Cabot, PA, on May 7, 1999. She is the first woman in the Swiss Society to reach this milestone. She enjoyed her party which included relations, friends, and members of the Swiss-American Society of Pittsburgh. Hans Meier added his Swiss songs and yodeling to the festivities, and a letter of acknowledgement from Ambassador Jacques Reverdin was received, along with a certificate from the President of the US. It is noted that Fred Henzie from our Society reached 104 years of age and knew something about every member of the club. +

## Treasurer's Report

### *Walter Schaller, Treasurer*

Current account balance totals \$4010.14. At the March and June Board of Directors meetings, a dues increase was considered. Dues of \$5.- per family were noted as very low, compared to other Swiss societies as well as other organizations in general. Dues history: 1962=\$2.00 / 1975=\$3.00 / 1984=\$5.00. A quorum was not present in March but upon further consideration of various options and a quorum being present at the June meeting, a motion carried to raise dues to \$10.00 per family effective immediately. Reasons for raising dues included allowing more working capital for event planning, increases in postage, and the ability to consider future events beyond our traditional scope such as sponsoring musical and cultural events. +

## Helvetia, West Virginia

The second weekend in September is the traditional Swiss Festival weekend featuring bands, activities, and visitors from throughout the region to Washington DC and beyond. This year the dates for the festival are September 10-12, 1999. If you are interested in learning more about this fun-filled Swiss weekend contact Eleanor F. Mailloux, Swiss Village of Helvetia, Helvetia, WV 26224. (304)924-6435 for accommodations and meal reservations at the Hütte. Helvetia is 3 1/2 hours south of Pittsburgh, following WV routes 20 and 46 south of Buckhannon, WV. +

## SOMMERFEST is coming!

The Second Annual SOMMERFEST is coming to Station Square IC Light Amphitheater Friday August 27 through Sunday August 29, 1999. Many of our members enjoyed the German/Austrian/Swiss event last year and this year we are encouraging our members to register in groups of over 20 to get the 50% discount on admission. Please note the SOMMERFEST 99 supplement to the newsletter enclosed in this mailing. Many volunteers from the Swiss-American Society of Pittsburgh will be working as guides and information helpers at the fest. This year the theme is the capitals: Berlin, Vienna, Bern. If you have any questions concerning this event, talk to a board member at the picnic or call Fred Carlson. +

# ANNUAL SWISS INDEPENDENCE DAY PICNIC

WHEN: Saturday, July 31, 1999

WHERE: Rose Barn, North Park

SCHEDULE: 11:30 to 1:30 **Registration**  
12:30 to 3:30 **Children's and Adults' Games**  
Including Turtle Game and Steinstossen!!  
3:30 to 4:00 **Schweizer Maennerchor Helvetia**  
Will put you in the mountain mood!!  
3:00 to 7:00 **SILENT AUCTION** benefiting Swiss Nationality Room  
4:00 to 5:30 **Dinner and Speeches**  
Reflect on the anniversary of the Swiss nation.  
5:30 to 6:00 **Tombola**  
Donations will be appreciated!! Net Tombola proceeds support  
Nationality Room Fund.  
6:00 to 9:00 **Swiss Music**  
Music from all cantons - bring CDs and tapes if you wish.

MENU: **Catered Picnic:** Rouladen/Provencal, Spaetzli with Gravy, Green Beans,  
Zupfe/Butter, Fruit Bowl, Coffee/Tea

-or-

**Bring your own Picnic Basket**

Soft Drinks and Beer will be available for all.

COST: **Catered Picnic:** \$ 16.00/adult \$ 10.00/child  
**Picnic Basket:** \$ 5.00/adult \$ 2.00/child

WHAT TO BRING: Your own Pitcher, Glasses and Lawn Chairs, Tombola donations, cameras.  
Pets are not permitted.

HOW TO REGISTER: Send check payable to SWISS AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PITTSBURGH to  
Nancy Carlson, 118 Monticello Drive, Monroeville, PA 15146  
(412)856-0982  
by Saturday, July 24, 1999.

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## REGISTER BY SATURDAY JULY 24, 1999

**Names** (Please list the names of all persons attending):

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**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Dinners: \_\_\_\_\_ Adult Catered @ 16.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Child Catered @ 10.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Adult Basket @ 5.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Child Basket @ 2.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## Swiss Immigration Facts

information from

<http://www.usaswiss.org/swissweb/Swiss-Americana>

Recent estimates suggest that more than 400,000 Swiss immigrants have settled in North America throughout the last four centuries. Some 25,000 are considered to have arrived in what is now the US before 1776; another 25,000 arrived by 1820. During the next century, an additional 265,000 arrived and more than 85,000 have arrived since the US began its quota system for immigration. The Swiss component of the American mosaic is indeed significant.

As with other nationalities, religious motivations and economic reasons were the prime engines for movement to this nation. The first known Swiss on American soil was Diebold von Erlach (1541-1565) from Bern, who as a member of a French Huguenot contingent striving to gain a foothold on the southern coast of North America was killed in a skirmish with the Spaniards who had founded St. Augustine, Florida. There were Swiss craftsmen in the Jamestown 1607 settlement, and Swiss were early settlers in South Carolina, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. In 1710, Christoph von Graffenreid (1661-1743) led a group of Swiss and Palatine Germans to found New Bern, North Carolina.

In the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, ministers led congregations in conflict with Swiss state churches to these shores, and people inspired by visions of the "land of never-ending possibilities" were openly encouraged by cantonal and communal governments to immigrate. Swiss Brethren and Sisters, Swiss Reformed, large numbers of Amish and Mennonites, and later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Swiss converts to Mormonism followed the pathway from Switzerland up the Rhine, through the Palatine region and came sailing to the United States. Many Swiss were misclassified as Palatine Germans at this point merely due to their German language, muddling the immigration figures as well as creating confusion for many Swiss interested in genealogy. Except for the Amish and Mennonites, most Swiss blended easily into the predominant culture. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, immigrants came to gain educational or work experiences and have decided to stay.

The 1990 census showed more than one million US residents currently claim Swiss ancestry. Undoubtedly the number is much higher due to the confusion with German immigration noted above. More than 60,000 Swiss citizens live in the United States, most being permanent residents. Just over 20,000 Americans live in Switzerland.

Although most Swiss either settled along the eastern seaboard in urban areas or in farming communities within a few days carriage ride of the coast, a number of homogenous Swiss settlements emerged further inland. These include: Vevey, Indiana; Highland, Illinois; New Glarus, Wisconsin; Sonnenberg and Chippewa, Ohio; Berne, Indiana; Madison, Iowa; many areas around Knoxville, Tennessee; Tell City, Ohio; Grutli, Tennessee; Bernstadt, Kentucky; and Helvetia, West Huttonsville, Cotton Hill, Kendallia, and New St. Gallen, all in West Virginia. Swiss settler Johann August Sutter struck gold in northern California and inspired many Swiss among the 300,000 who moved from around the world to California. Many Italian-speaking Swiss were attracted to Marin County on the coast and Stanislaus County in the central valley.

Later Mormon immigration included Swiss in Midway, Santa Clara, and Providence in Utah; Bern and Geneva in Idaho. From these areas many moved on to settlements in Arizona and Nevada. Swiss monastics founded St. Meinrad, Indiana; Conception, Missouri; and Mount Angel, Oregon. Swiss convents included Clyde, Missouri; Yankton, SD; and other locales in Ohio and Wisconsin.

Urban centers attracting industrious Swiss included St. Louis, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco, Paterson, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Portland, and Milwaukee. As with our own Swiss-American Society of Pittsburgh, these urban Swiss founded organizations that were adaptations of Swiss institutions, such as benevolent societies, choirs, rifle clubs, and lodges. Although the Swiss immigrants to the US have largely blended into mainstream society and did not usually meet obstacles derived from their ethnicity, Americans of Swiss descent are turning in increasing numbers to search out their roots, discovering in that quest the unique qualities that make Switzerland the true "Gem of Europe."



# YES!

I'd like to support the 1999 Fundraising Efforts for the Swiss Nationality Room. Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: **Swiss American Society of Pittsburgh Nationality Room Fund**

My Silent Auction Form is also enclosed

Return to:  
Swiss American Society of Pittsburgh  
118 Monticello Drive  
Monroeville, PA 15146-4837





**SWISS AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PITTSBURGH**  
**SILENT AUCTION**  
**ENTRY FORM**

What is a Silent Auction? How can I help the Swiss Society in their fundraising efforts in 1999? Well, read on and find out! A Silent Auction is a no-pressure, high reward fundraising technique that's also lots of fun. Fill out an item, good, service, or other auctionable entry on the form, and bring it or deliver it to the Swiss Picnic on July 31, 1999 at Rose Barn in North Park, where people will read about or look at the item on our auction table and write down their bid. As the afternoon goes on, we'll close off certain of the entries and the highest bidder on the sheet wins!

For instance, maybe you could donate a week of vacation time at your second home in the mountains. Our prospective bidder would pay the Swiss Society their winning amount, get a tax deduction, raise monies for the Nationality Room, and you would contribute a week of time to those folks as your donation. Maybe you could donate a few nights of babysitting to one of the younger families in the Society who would appreciate paying the going rate for that service as well as supporting the efforts of the fundraiser. If the kitchen is your second home perhaps some Swiss cookies might be baked for the event. The possibilities are as endless as our imaginations! Music lessons to a youngster? A Swiss wall decoration? Have fun and let us know what you'll be bringing forward on July 31, 1999!

Name of item/service

## Description

*(if you have more than one entry, please photocopy this form for each item)*

Name of donor: \_\_\_\_\_

City/state/zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Minimum bid accepted:

***Thank you for your time and donation!***

