



Switzerland



NEWSLETTER OF THE SWISS-AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

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SASP 2025 EVENTS

August 2	<u>Swiss Independence Day Picnic</u> Richland Park Barn
August 23	<u>Nationality Room Council Centennial Birthday Party</u> (see page 2)
December 7	<u>Nationality Room Open House</u> Pitt Cathedral of Learning
December (Date TBA)	<u>Christmas Luncheon</u> Teutonia

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President's Report

Grüezi mitenand!

Switzerland traces its history back to the Bundesbrief signed in 1291 among Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden. Our Society, of course, cannot claim the same longevity; Pittsburgh, after all, was founded only in 1758--by which time the Swiss Confederation was more than 450 years old. In looking through the Society's archives, however, I was surprised to learn that there has been a formal organization of Swiss immigrants in Pittsburgh since at least 1903. That original group was called the United Swiss Brothers of East Pittsburgh and, at one time, was active and prosperous enough to purchase a headquarters at 1513 Electric Avenue that they proudly called the Schwyzer-Huusli.

It is not clear to me what happened to the United Swiss Brothers of East Pittsburgh or their headquarters (the original Schwyzer-Huusli burned to the ground and was replaced by a larger location on Fillmore Road). Nor is it clear to me how our Society succeeded the United Swiss Brothers of East Pittsburgh to represent Switzerland and its friends in the Pittsburgh region. What is clear to me is that organizations like ours persist only as long as there is the will behind them. And the Society has been blessed for many years to have an active group of volunteers whose love for Switzerland is expressed in the energy they devote to this organization.

As we come together once again to celebrate 1. August, I remember and thank those who came before me as President of the Society and have ensured that Swiss in Pittsburgh have a place to gather for more than 120 years.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,
Joseph Schaeffer

2025 Swiss Nationality Day Picnic

We will again meet at the Richland TWP Barn to celebrate Swiss Nationality Day (*in Switzerland commonly referred to as "Erste August", or August 1st*). The picnic will take place on Saturday, August 2nd. Please join us for authentic Swiss food, games, and a performance by the Swiss Singers. The registration form and more details are found at the end of this newsletter.

Nationality Council Centennial Award Fund Birthday Party

2026 will mark the 100th birthday of the Nationality Rooms at the Pitt Cathedral of Learning! This "Birthday Party" event will kick-off the Nationality Rooms and intercultural Exchange Programs Centennial Commemoration year in 2025-26 and will raise funds for the Nationality Council Centennial Award Fund. The party will take place on Saturday, August 23, 2025, from 4-6 pm in the Croghan-Schenley Ballroom and the Nationality and Heritage Rooms in the Cathedral of Learning.

Registration for a \$10 ticket will provide guests a choice of regular, gluten free, or vegan cake, coffee, tea & lemonade and access to the Nationality and Heritage Rooms. Guests who visit the most rooms during the course of the event will be eligible for small prize items related to the Nationality and Heritage Rooms. A silent auction will be held, and guests can purchase tickets for a variety of prize baskets.

All proceeds from the event will support the Nationality Council Centennial Award Fund and provide opportunities for Pitt students to pursue global learning experiences around the world.

Member Spotlight:
submitted by Walter Schaller

I am a first generation Swiss on my father's side.

My father Josef was born in 1926 in Zeneggen, a small mountain village in Oberwallis. Being one of 14 and the oldest male, he was expected to leave as a teenager to work and send money back home to help the family financially for a while. Working in the hotel business, he worked many places throughout Switzerland; then England, Bermuda and Montreal. With the grand opening of the Pittsburgh Hilton in 1960, which was supposed to be just another stop in a world travel adventure, he met and fell in love with Maria Ammer a native Bavarian at the Teutonia Männerchor. They ultimately decided to remain in Pittsburgh, raising a family here.

Josef was very proud of his Swiss heritage and we were very fortunate to have made many trips to the homeland and to connect with our many relatives. Fortunately, his granddaughters enjoyed many years with their Opa and are very fond of their Swiss ancestry as well. They share his interest in cultures and a desire for world adventure. Hence, they live currently in Colorado, Florida, and Australia but have traveled to six of the seven continents already. Their goal is to visit all seven continents eventually.

Zeneggen is in Canton Valais. Please see the Living Traditions feature on pages five and six to learn about Cooperatives in Valais.

Below: a view of Zeneggen, Josef Schaller's hometown



Above: Hotel Alpenblick in Zeneggen
Middle: Josef Schaller
Below: Aerial view of Zeneggen



For more info on Zeneggen:
<https://www.valais.ch/en/destinations/region-visp-moosalp/zeneggen>

Swiss Nationality Room at the University of Pittsburgh to Add Third Portrait to Back Wall-Albert Gallatin

The Swiss Nationality Room Committee, at the urging through recent years of former SNRC Treasurer Philip Bottonari and others, has agreed in principle and has received approval from the University of Pittsburgh to add a portrait of Albert Gallatin to the middle of the back wall of the Swiss Room.

The current Swiss Room back wall has portraits of the Swiss Johann Pestalozzi, the founder of modern educational philosophy for children and kindergarten, and the Swiss Jean-Jacques Rousseau, of Geneva, who upheld the rights of man and education for all. These portraits are drawn by illustrator and SNRC committee member Fred Carlson in the style of the famed Swiss portraitist Hans Holbein with the accompanying printing of the subjects' names that Holbein made famous. The framing for the two portraits was commissioned and paid for by our recently deceased former Chairman Dr. Heinz Kunz. The portraits have graced the back wall of the Swiss Room since the dedication in April 2012.

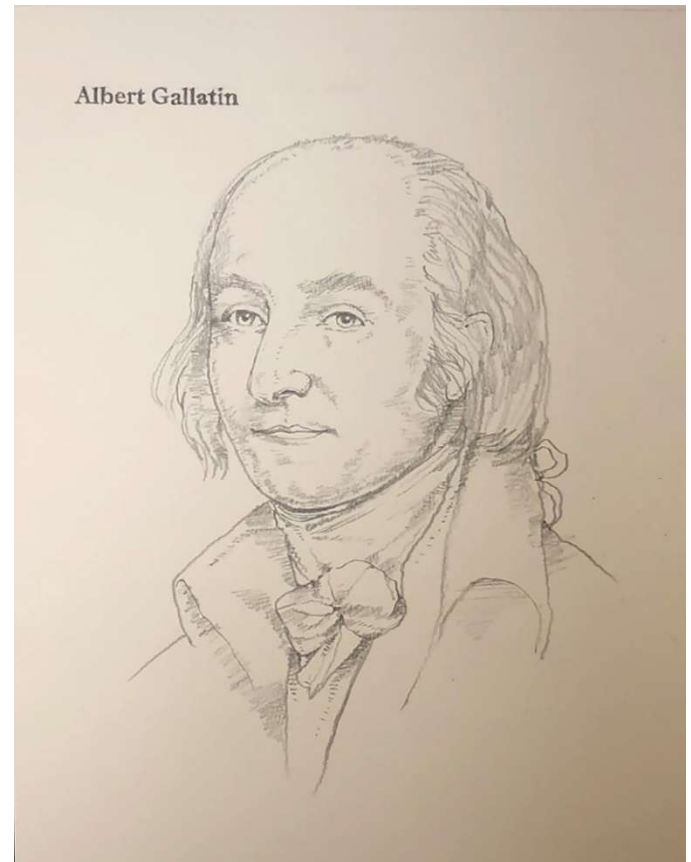
Recently, Fred had time to complete the proposed portrait of Gallatin and has identified framing to match the other frames used in the room from Boxheart Gallery in Bloomfield. Fred expects to be able to bring the framed drawing to the Swiss National Day picnic on August 2.

There has been a perfect space between the two existing portraits for doing this portrait of Gallatin. Gallatin was a Swiss from Geneva (b. 1760) who immigrated to the United States in 1780 and served the United States in numerous roles, his most important his role as Thomas Jefferson's Secretary of the Treasury with the negotiation the Louisiana Purchase from France. He also had property south of Pittsburgh in Friendship Hill, so there are lots of Swiss-American and western PA connections to Gallatin. His biography is

imposing and will be featured on a shelf in the display cases of the Swiss Room.

The Gallatin portrait's addition to the room will be featured in celebration of the NRIEP 100th anniversary Heritage functions during 2026, and the SNRC with the partnership of the NRIEP anticipates hosting a program on Gallatin's life in the fall of 2026.

-by Fred Carlson/SNRC member



Swiss-American Society of Pittsburgh Facebook Page

Please follow our newly created Facebook page: **"Swiss-American Society of Pittsburgh"**

We will always be looking for new subject matter to post there - please send any submissions to Joseph Schaeffer (josephschaeffer@gmail.com), and stay tuned for new content!

Living Traditions in Switzerland

Lebendige Traditionen / Tradition vivantes / Tradizioni viventi / Tradiziuns vivas

Cooperatives in Valais

A cooperative is a working or ownership collective in which the members have rights and duties as set down in statutes and regulations. While members' duties include participating in the work of the cooperative and assuming official functions, their rights include the use of goods and facilities owned by the cooperative.

In Valais, cooperatives arose out of medieval farming guilds. For centuries, these cooperatives governed agricultural life in Valais with rules and regulations, in particular pertaining to the use of common goods such as water, forests and alpine pastures. The cooperatives were responsible for constructing and maintaining collective infrastructure such as water channels, roads, alpine machinery and ovens. In spite of today's changed environment, the cooperatives in Valais still fulfil important legal, economic, ecological and social functions.

A key issue for the cooperatives has always been the challenge of finding a balance between optimal use of resources and their sustainability. The joint administration and use of common goods helps to save on costs and strengthens cohesion among the members, reinforcing the sense of responsibility for the common good. These ecological and social functions give the cooperatives potential for the future.

Below: Grands-Plans ob Verbier: Shepherds drawing lots for milking, 1945 © Max Kettel/Mediathek Wallis, Martigny



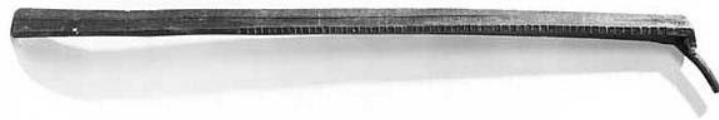
© Médiathèque Valais - Martigny

living traditions cont'd – Cooperatives in Valais



© Médiathèque Valais - Martigny

Above Alp Thyon: End of the alpine summer, ca 1935 © Raymond Schmid/Mediathek Wallis, Martign
Below : Savièse: Alpscheit, a wooden document from an alpine cooperative, 1839 © Geschichtsmuseum Wallis, Sitte



For more information on the Living Traditions in Switzerland, go to www.lebendige-traditionen.ch

**SWISS-AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PITTSBURGH
SWISS NATIONALITY DAY PICNIC REGISTRATION FORM**

Saturday August 2nd
at the Richland Park Barn in Bakerstown
1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Schedule of Events

Price

1:00 p.m.	Social Gathering	\$20.00 – Age 13 & over
2:00 p.m.	Games & Activities	\$10.00 – Picnic Only (without Buffet)
3:00 p.m.	Schweizer Männerchor Helvetia	FREE – Children 12 & Under
3:30 p.m.	Buffet Luncheon	
4:00 p.m.	Tombola	

Things to Bring:

- Tombola Prize Donations to benefit the Swiss Nationality Room Scholarship Fund. We especially appreciate authentic food or prizes which are related to Switzerland in some way!
- If you wish, you can bring a side, snack, or dessert to share

Directions – Route 8 to Red Belt / Bakerstown, proceed North on Heckert Road at the stop sign, then turn right at Van Velsor Drive into the Richland Township Park

PLEASE RETURN THE BELOW REGISTRATION FORM, BY MONDAY JULY 28, WITH YOUR CHECK PAYABLE TO THE SWISS-AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PITTSBURGH, to:

Lyndall Huggler
908 Fairview Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
lynbeth@msn.com

SASP SWISS NATIONALITY DAY PICNIC REGISTRATION FORM

Names:

Price (\$20 Buffet / \$10 Picnic / 12 & Under Free)

1. _____	\$ _____
2. _____	\$ _____
3. _____	\$ _____
4. _____	\$ _____
5. _____	\$ _____
6. _____	\$ _____
TOTAL	\$ _____

Leave a Swiss Legacy – in Pittsburgh!

Thanks to the generosity of many donors, the Swiss Nationality Room Scholarship has sufficient funding to allow the University of Pittsburgh to award one scholarship each year to help a Pitt student realize their dream of living and learning in Switzerland.

Yet there will undoubtedly be years in the future when the awarding of a larger or multiple Swiss Room Scholarships will be highly desirable given the quality and needs of our student applicants.

Consider helping to make that possible by including a gift to the Swiss Room Scholarship in your will.

Sample wording for your will: *I give and devise to the University of Pittsburgh – of the Commonwealth System of Higher Education, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15260, the sum of \$_____ to be used for the support of the Swiss Nationality Room Scholarship Fund.*

When considering charitable giving, you should talk with your tax, legal, and financial advisors.