Dear readers,

2013 was an emotional year for South Africa. Madiba has passed on and the nation is left with a big vacuum to fill. The legacy he leaves behind is worth so much more if all South Africans and the South African government truly honour it. It is up to us to make South Africa a better place and it starts in our own personal environment. Let’s make it happen, let’s make Madiba proud.

All the best,
GISELA PIERCEY
Editor Swiss Review Southern Africa

The President of the Swiss Confederation, Mr Ueli Maurer, represents Switzerland at Nelson Mandela’s memorial service

On the 10th of December the President of the Swiss Confederation Ueli Maurer joined the 90 heads of states and many government representatives and eminent persons to commemorate the life and achievements of former South African President Nelson Mandela, who passed away on December 5.

He was welcomed by one of his South African counterparts, Minister for State Security Siyabonga Cwele, and expressed his condolences to South African leading personalities like Gwede Mantashe, Zweli Mkhize (General Secretary and Treasurer General of the ANC, respectively) and Lindiwe Mazibuko (leader of the Parliamentary Group of the Democratic Alliance). After the Memorial Service at FNB Stadium in Soweto, broadcasted in the entire world, President Maurer stayed in Pretoria to pay his last respects to Nelson Mandela, as his remains lay in state at the Union Buildings on 11th of December. Until the passing of Mr Mandela, Switzerland had usually sent

former heads of state in order
to honour late former heads
of state. With regard to Mr
Mandel, it was therefore an
exceptional gesture, that an
acting head of state came to
pay his respects to a late
former head of state. This also
shows the importance given
by the Swiss Government to
Mr Mandela’s achievements.

E-voting draft presented
in March

Following in the footsteps of
the Honorable Peter Müller
and Rolf Schudel, I am
writing my first official
Swiss Review article.

Looking back at the two
meetings held in March and
August, one has to admit
that while some topics were
not materially important to
Swiss living in Southern
Africa, the importance of
networking and in
particularly networking

with the Bernese officials is
of utmost importance in
order for us as
representatives to support
and advice our people. Of
great significance are of
course the hot topics of E-
voting and the proposed law
on Swiss Abroad
(Auslandschweizergesetze).

Following is a short
extract regarding E-voting:
”Der Bundesrat hat die
Aufgabe der Wassenaar-
Klausel im Rahmen des Vote-
Electronique beschlossen.
Schweizerinnen und
Schweizer, welche in Ländern
leben, welche das Wassenaar-

Abkommen nicht
unterzeichnet haben, wurden
durch diese Klausel von
elektronischen Wahlen und
Abstimmungen
ausgeschlossen. In Zukunft
werden Auslandschweizer,
welche in diesen Ländern
leben, auch elektronisch
wählen können, sofern ihre
Stimmgemeinde diese
Möglichkeit anbietet. Die
Auslandschweizer-
Organisation freut sich über
diesen Entscheid, welcher
jenen Auslandschweizern, die
E-Voting am dringendsten
brauchen, erlauben wird, am
politischen Leben ihres
Landes teilzunehmen."

Regarding the law on
Auslandschweizer, it was announced that the draft version will most probably be presented at the March 2014 meeting in Bern. The important aspects are:
- Consolidation of all Auslandschweizer interests in one department
- Elimination of discrimination of Auslandschweizer
- Furtherance of mobility of Auslandschweizer

Slow progress on Auslandschweizer bank account issue

Another very interesting debate is what appears to be the unjustified handling of Auslandschweizer bank accounts / holdings by Swiss Banks. This matter is receiving attention from the ASR, but due to constant pressure from the USA and certain EU countries against the Swiss banking industry, progress is slow.

Last but not least, I wish to take this opportunity and once again thank Peter Müller, who represented Southern Africa in the ASR for 35 years, and Rolf Schudel for their outstanding contribution as ASO Delegates to the Auslandschweizer and their families.


MARCIE BISCHOF, mwbischof@telkomsa.net

Three new Swiss music CD releases

ASO in Bern regularly receives new releases of amongst others, Swiss music collections. As your former delegate, ASO has passed some of these on to me for my comment during the past few months.

The three I have before me are:

1. Moitié – Moitié by Les amis de la Gruyère
   There are some 16 songs and dances on this CD, some new, others rewrites of original compositions. A pleasant recording which would more admirably suit a Swiss community abroad with some French-speaking Swiss.

2. Mosbluebä : Vo früener bis hit
   This is a collection of 29 songs and dances, most of which have previously been recorded throughout the years as the title suggests. Again, a recording which should please most Auslandschweizer clubs.

3. Ruedi Rymann: Zur Erinnerung an einen grossartigen Jodler und Menschen
   A collection of 3 CDs containing 47 songs originally performed by the legendary Ruedi Rymann who has won many awards particularly for his „Dr Schacherspepli“. Three wonderful CDs which can be highly recommended.

   These CDs, of which the undersigned has only 1 copy, may be obtained, on a „first come, first served“ basis from: Peter Müller, sargro@bluewin.ch or P.O.Box 123, 5103 Wildegg, Switzerland, by any of the Swiss clubs who are active in the 11 Southern African countries which our Consular District represents.

News from the foundation governing the Auslandschweizerplatz in Brunnen

As you know, the undersigned is one of the Foundation members looking after this Auslandschweizer property since its acquisition 20 years ago. The site is the beginning and/or the end of „Weg der Schweiz“ which was inaugurated to celebrate the 700th Anniversary of Switzerland in 1991.

The property was originally acquired for +/- CHF 2 million from the adjoining Hotel Waldstätterhof.

Essentially it is part of the Brunnen Esplanade and serves as a well frequented public open space although it is in private „Auslandschweizer“ hands.

As a result of various rezoning attempts, it could be that the value of the land could be reduced as a result of it being essentially a public open space with various building restrictions.

The Foundation of which the undersigned is a member, is fighting to retain the value, yet at the same time, trying to co-operate with the wishes of the Brunnen Municipality. Needless to say, the dilemma of a public open space being in private hands, will have to be solved if one is to come to an agreement.

Peter Müller, sargro@bluewin.ch

Fighting to retain the value of the Auslandschweizerplatz in Brunnen

IMPRESSION

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Dear readers, for address changes please contact the official Swiss representation in your country.
Building Platforms for Creative Collaboration in the SADC region

Pro Helvetia Johannesburg has, since 1998, been investing in transnational collaborations, exchanges and joint projects among organisations and creative practitioners operating across the SADC region, with support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

They intend to use this year, 2014, to refresh and renew the existing approach in this area, with a view to providing a basis for medium to long term investments in networks and platforms that have a shared interest in building a stronger regional creative fabric.

In this context, they are inviting organisations that have either an established or emergent engagement in this area to propose a joint initiative or project that would involve partners in at least two other countries in the region, and which would in turn furnish a basis for developing plans for a more extended collaborative engagement over the ensuing 3-5 year period.

In 2014 they have the possibility to fund up to 4 initiatives on a modest scale (circa ZAR175 000) to develop and test possibilities for enabling future regional collaboration among organisations that would address one or more of three broad priorities that they think are important based on their past work in this area:

- The circulation and presentation of new work and creative talent across the region, building new markets and audiences
- The development of the professional capacities of creative practitioners and organisations
- Regional cooperation in the area of cultural policy research, advocacy and lobbying

Under this definition the SADC region is understood to include the following countries: Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Please feel free to lodge any inquiries via communications@prohelvetia.org.za.

SDC: Highlights of the coming years

The regional programme Southern Africa will combine both instruments of Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid. SDC will improve its articulation of its regional approach with its country offices, the global programmes and UN agencies active in the region and supported by SDC.

In view of the limited means of SDC, the concentration on two out of previously three domains of intervention will increase its efficiency and effectiveness:

- Agriculture/Food security: Increased resilience in food security in particular of smallholder farmers in SADC region with a focus on the promotion of a harmonised seed system, post harvest management and Disaster Risk Reduction.
- HIV/AIDS: Prevention of HIV/AIDS among young women and men and access to care and support to contribute to the overall goal of reducing HIV/AIDS incidence and vulnerabilities in particular among children and youth.

Goverance (equitable, responsible and accountable allocation and use of public resources in the two domains) and gender (agriculture women farmers, vulnerability of women and girls in HIV/AIDS) will be tackled as transversal themes.

In the regional Programme Southern Africa (RPSA) the approach will bring together regional policy interventions and their translation into selected countries where also interventions on the ground and pilots are taking place. The component in Zimbabwe will contribute to the regional objectives in agriculture/food security and HIV/AIDS.

Water, as key component of food and health security, will be also addressed. Part of the flexible budget will be allocated to health or governance issues in a broader perspective depending on the context’s evolution.

Beyond the RPSA, the Global Programme Climate Change will increase its mitigation portfolio focused on South Africa.
Our Clubs of Society:
Afro Gugge, Amicale Suisse Romande, Boccia, Skittling Club.
Associated Groups:
Swiss Choir, Swiss Rifle Club, Swiss Golf, S.N.A
Senior Swiss Circle meets every 2nd Saturday of the month for Lunch
Swiss Ladies meet every 4th Thursday of the month for lunch.
Swiss Rifle Club
Johannesburg:
We shoot every 4th Sat of the month, from 09h00. We normally shoot two different programs. This is done with Swiss rifles, provided by the club. For more info visit our Facebook site or call Daniel on 082-5699146.

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The club remains open every Wed and Thur for dinner. If you are not on the data base to receive the “catering newsflash” please contact the club at catering@swissclub.co.za or on +27 21 4348405. Active sub-sections are the Rifle Club, Cycling Club & Tennis Club. The ladies meet monthly – last Wed of every month. For more info contact info@swissclub.co.za or André Häberli, Membership & Advertising, Phone +27 (0)21 551 48 98, Skype andre.haberli, Fax +27 (0)63 532 80.02, Cell +27 (76) 933 03 04
Our newsletter is distributed via email and postage, regular updates can be obtained on www.swissclub.co.za

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