EDITORIAL

It is now urgent for all the Swiss citizens registered to the Embassy to cast their vote for the local candidates to the Parliament of the Council of the Swiss abroad.

In this issue, you will find the candidates’ profiles and useful information to support your choice. Eight people have stood up to take on this significant role. Two of them, Franz Muheim and Loredana Guett-Wyatt, have already been active representatives to the OSA parliament, while for the other five candidates, this is the first election.

This year, the Swiss community in the UK has the opportunity to vote online for their OSA Delegates. We are one of the first communities of Swiss abroad to enjoy this privilege. This great chance has been made possible thanks to the initiative of Ané-Mari Peter, FOSSUK’s secretary, and her digital and print agency on-IDLE. The procedure is smart and easy. Either post the voting slip on page 3 or vote via the FOSSUK website.

EMBASSY NEWS: SETTLED STATUS

Reminder – Your residence status after Brexit: what you need to do before the 30 June deadline. The final deadline for registering for settled or pre-settled status under the UK’s EU Settlement Scheme is fast approaching.

While 16,550 Swiss citizens currently residing in the UK have already secured their residence rights after Brexit, many citizens still need to register before the final deadline on 30 June 2021. We would therefore like to use this opportunity to kindly remind you of the importance of applying for settled or pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme. This will allow you to continue living, working and studying in the UK.

Whilst you are still required to apply if you are married to a British citizen, you cannot and need not apply if you have British or Irish dual citizenship. For those who already obtained ‘Indefinite leave to enter or remain’ (ILR) prior to 2002, we recommend that you still consider applying under the EU Settlement Scheme.

SURVEY & ELECTIONS: HAVE YOUR SAY

Not only is it time to vote for your UK CSA (Council of the Swiss Abroad) Delegates to represent your views, concerns and successes for the next four years, we are also conducting a survey to hear from you first hand.

Go to www.swiss-societies.co.uk/survey (it’ll only take 5 minutes), and let us know how best to serve and address your issues and experiences. Only by taking part can we fashion our agendas – from the Embassy to Swiss Clubs to Delegate priorities.

ANÉ-MARI PETER

For further information on the Scheme, on how to apply and where to get help, please visit the UK government website or the Brexit FAQ on the Embassy’s website: www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families www.eda.admin.ch/london/brexit
ELECTION OF UK DELEGATES TO SERVE ON THE COUNCIL OF THE SWISS ABROAD (CSA) 2021–2025

Have you ever wondered how the Swiss who live abroad participate in and find out about which laws and policies will affect you? They are Delegates who represent the Swiss nationals who live and work in the UK on the Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA). The UK has an allocation of five elected Delegates, based on the number of Swiss nationals living and working in the UK. Two of the Delegates are voted in by the Swiss Clubs who are members of FOSSUK at the next AGM in June, and three of the elected Delegates are voted in by the Swiss community. These are the eligible candidates who are standing for election to be voted in as a UK Delegate for the next term.

All candidates are on Facebook in the UK groups. Now it is your opportunity to vote!

Find out more about each candidate from short video interview clips at swiss-societies.co.uk/elections or facebook.com/ukswiss

ALEXANDRE LUCA ABBUEHL
LIVERPOOL

Profession: Singer-Songwriter and Healthcare Professional
Member of: N/a
Summary: Born in Italy to Swiss parents we moved from Bern to Lucerne to Basel via Biel. I moved to Liverpool at 18 to pursue my dream of becoming a musician and now perform as 'Alex Luca'. My priority is supporting people who need advice in navigating through life in the country I now call home. I want to find ways to help our community who now face the same increasing challenges and rapid changes with Brexit and the pandemic that I do, as a Swiss living abroad.

Why: I first completed a music degree and worked as a musician until Covid hit. I re-trained and now work in frontline Healthcare. These experiences have given me an extensive understanding of the challenges people face when living abroad, from financial hardship, to navigating the benefits system, to immigration. Today Swiss in the UK face unprecedented challenges. I want to bring together the Swiss community in the UK and make everyone feel like they can always count on support and advise from their home country.

ANDREAS FELLER
LONDON

Profession: Entrepreneur, COO
Member of: New Helvetic Society, Unione Ticinese London
Summary: Young. Dynamic. Dedicated. Brexit has brought much uncertainty, which should be dealt with in a proactive and efficient manner. I’m a good listener, open minded, and believe that my personal and professional experience will help me achieve our goals. I value the Swiss community in the UK and want to actively contribute to our well-being as a strong community abroad, with our interests well represented.

Why: It is in our common interest to maintain a strong connection with our home country especially after Brexit, with our voices and concerns represented. As a start-up business owner I understand the challenges faced when living abroad and would like to use my communication and negotiation skills to ensure the Swiss in the UK are being heard. It is important to participate and my agility, dynamism and passion for politics will ensure important issues are raised and addressed.

LOREDANA GUETG-WYATT
POOLE

Profession: Non-Executive Board Member, CEO and International Business Risk Consultant
Member of: New Helvetic Society (President), Unione Ticinese, Swiss Community.org
Summary: Born in Locarno, with my father from Savognin – that explains my surname! I came to the UK in 2004 to found a UK branch of an international company. I have 20+ years experience in Business Risk Consulting for FTSE 100 and have held several positions as non-executive Director. Currently, the CEO of an International Charity, President of New Helvetic Society and FOSSUK Treasurer. Married to Jonathan and we have a son, Lawrence.

Why: I have many connections and a deep understanding of the issues that Swiss in the UK face. It is my priority to bring together the Swiss community in the UK and make everyone feel like they belong, and the pandemic that I do, as a Swiss living abroad. It is in our common interest to maintain a strong connection with our home country especially after Brexit, with our voices and concerns represented. As a start-up business owner I understand the challenges faced when living abroad and would like to use my communication and negotiation skills to ensure the Swiss in the UK are being heard. It is important to participate and my agility, dynamism and passion for politics will ensure important issues are raised and addressed.

MICHELLE HUFSCMID
OXFORD

Profession: PhD in Medieval History at the University of Oxford, gaining business experience
Member of: Oxford Swiss Society, Swiss Friends of Oxford University
Summary: I grew up in Bern and studied in Zurich and London and live with my partner Sean in Oxford. Through campaigning against Brexit, membership of the Swiss Social Democratic Party and Oxford’s Swiss Societies and working as a first responder to sexual assault and mental health crises for 3.5 years, I understand people’s difficulties and future hopes. Open-minded and energetic I would like to bring my experience to how relations between the UK and Switzerland should be like in future.

Why: First, I want to continue to advocate for safe e-Voting, which requires a broad consensus and a multi-party coalition. Second, I want to bring the concerns of Swiss in the UK to Bern, with a focus on the younger generation e.g. ensuring Swiss students qualifying for the lower ‘home’ fees at UK universities. Third, I want to keep an open ear for the needs of the Swiss during the economic and political aftermath of Brexit and the Coronavirus pandemic.

Find out more about each candidate from short video interview clips at swiss-societies.co.uk/elections or facebook.com/ukswiss

Alessandro Luca Abbuehl
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Alessandro Luca Abbuehl
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VOTING SLIP: UK Delegates to the COUNCIL of THE Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (CSA)

I vote for:

Candidate 1 

Candidate 2 

Candidate 3 

Candidate 4 

Candidate 5 

Declaration:

I, Firstname __________________________  Surname __________________________ (Capital Letters) 

D.O.B. __________________________ 

Signed __________________________

am registered at the Swiss Embassy London and aged 18+

To be received no later than Thursday 20th May 2021 by post to: 
The Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK (FOSSUK) 
75 Brokesley Street, Lincoln House 
London E3 4OJ 

Note that Copies/Printouts of this Voting Slip are acceptable, as long as they are completed and signed by hand. The voter’s name as the voting slips should be the same as the registration name at the Embassy and consequently the same as on the Swiss Review.

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KOUSII OMER KOKOU-TCHRI 
EPSOM

Profession: Talent Manager / Campaigner 
Member of: City Swiss Club 
Summary: As a former councillor in Epsom Borough Council and part of multiple British and Swiss Societies for 20+ years I have witnessed creation, successes and shortfalls. I hope to have the opportunity to bring forward the successes from these past and present societies. The future is about building from the past to create a brighter future. My family is from Bassa Engadina in the Canton of Graubünden. My wife, Katja, my two daughters and son have always held the importance Swiss Romansh traditions as heritage is a legacy. 
Why: The aftermath of Brexit and COVID-19 calls for changes in legislation and politics in the UK. The challenging social and economic situations must be tamed by a thoughtful lobbying for the Swiss in UK. 

Rebuilding will need strong voices to give impactful messages that represent and encourage a fruitful future for our Swiss Community. My experience in politics, as a local leader, and in the social-political scene in UK means that I have extensive knowledge and a unique viewpoint which is an advantage.

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JONATHAN MING 
CHESHUNT

Profession: Strategy Manager in the Travel Industry 
Member of: Ecole Hoteliere de Lausanne 
Alumni Stamm Great Britain 
Summary: I have lived in 14 different places in 4 countries and truly embrace the benefits of multi-cultural living, arriving in London in 2014. I believe I could support Swiss in the UK due to the fact that I have a very extroverted personality and a pragmatic approach towards problem solving thanks to my background in hospitality and working in the travel industry. I now live in Hertfordshire with my family (and a beautiful little Schweizermeitli). 
Why: I came to London young, straight after the Ecole Hoteliere de Lausanne with a few pounds in a bank account. I had no clue what I was doing and struggled to find my footing. The Swiss community always shared knowledge and gave me the support I needed. I would love the possibility to give back and support the next generation of people who are drawn to the UK to make sure they can make the most out of the opportunity.

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FRANZ MUHEIM 
EDINBURGH

Profession: Professor of particle physics 
Member of: Swiss Club Edinburgh 
(Vice-president), Swiss Community.org 
Summary: As a Professor at University of Edinburgh, I regularly travel for research to CERN, Geneva. My strong interest in politics led to 2 terms as a Delegate, serving on the Executive Committee, President of FOSSUK and membership of the Grünliberalie. I regularly comment on social media keeping our community reliably informed. I work to ensure Swiss politics pay attention to the Swiss Abroad and that we are not discriminated against exercising our political rights. 
Why: I am a regular interviewee, contributor and commentator in Swiss and on social media and through my role on the OSA Executive Committee and Green Party candidate I have successfully communicated the concerns of Swiss living in the UK during the Brexit and the Settled Status agreement negotiations to the Embassy and the FBA. I actively pursue e-Democracy, which is in its infancy in Switzerland. Re-election will allow me to represent, with honour, our 37,000 Swiss living in the UK at the highest level.

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LAKSHMI SUNDARAM 
LONDON

Profession: Global health and gender equality expert 
Member of: N/a 
Summary: I believe I have the energy, passion and experience to effectively represent the interests of Swiss people in the UK. As an OSA delegate, I want to help change outdated perceptions of Switzerland, and to represent a vision of a vibrant, multicultural and forward-looking nation.
Why: I have spent my life trying to change the world, and believe I have the energy and experience to effectively represent the interests of Swiss people in the UK. In doing so, I want to champion a modern and multicultural vision of Switzerland. As a Swiss student in the UK in the 1990s, I had to register with the police and couldn’t work, and I want to do my part to ensure the Swiss are not forgotten in the post-Brexit era. Since becoming a parent, I also want to help my children build stronger ties to our home country.I have been a part of Swiss communities in Rwanda, the US and the UK, and know how precious this link to home can be.

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Supported by Swiss Club Edinburgh 

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Dr Frances Jones is the leading alphorn expert in the UK. As a passionate ambassador for the instrument, she is frequently invited to perform, give talks on and teach the alphorn not only throughout the UK and in Switzerland, but also in many other countries in Western Europe, besides far-flung corners of the world including Taiwan, Guatemala, Peru and Bolivia.

Frances has been featured on UK TV, BBC Radio and Swiss Radio. She loves playing for weddings and parties, she has also enjoyed playing at many events for His Excellency the Swiss Ambassador to the UK, including playing her alphorn for a private party given by the rock singer Sting, for the Queen of Jordan and during many other official occasions and festivals. She completed a PhD, that has been recently published, about the substantial influence of the alphorn on Classical composers.

Swiss Review: How did you fall in love with this special instrument and why?

Dr Frances Jones: Well, back in 2004, my husband spent a week in Geneva for his work. As a present he brought me a CD of alphorn music. It was wonderful and I listened to it over and over again. Soon after that I had a ‘big’ birthday, asked for my own alphorn – and that’s how it all began. My son designed me a website, www.AmazingAlphorn.com, through which I get invitations to play and teach alphorn from all over the world.

SR: How many times a year do you normally go to Switzerland in order to perform the alphorn?

FJ: I spend every summer in Switzerland, from around mid-July to the beginning of September. I give lots of performances while I’m there, and I am an alphorn tutor for an annual alphorn course held in beautiful Dientigtal in Berner Oberland. I’ve played in huge gatherings of alphorns in amazing locations – on Männlichen at the foot of the Eiger with 100 other players, and up above Nendaz, VS, with 120 players – these are wonderful experiences, especially for an English alphorn player. In Switzerland I now have a large number of alphorn-playing friends and colleagues, who invite me to play regularly in groups with them. My Swiss alphorn-playing friends welcome me into their community and I feel honoured to be accepted there. They love the idea that an English classical musician is championing something that is so special for them – the voice and soul of their land.

SR: What contribution does your new book make to the literature about the alphorn? Is this the first comprehensive book of this kind written in English?

FJ: Yes, this is the first book about the alphorn in English. It shows how much the alphorn has influenced not only visiting composers, but writers too. It shows how much the instrument is the unchallenged ambassador for the Swiss landscape, or you could say, the voice of the mountains themselves.

SR: Can you explain to us why you decided to produce a book for children?

FJ: I was surprised that no-one has ever written down the story of the actual use of the alphorn as it used to be, calling cows in the mountains. A young boy accompanies his uncle to the alp, and experiences this delightful world. The text is bilingual English / German. A Swiss friend has painted 17 beautiful full-page illustrations.

Further information can be found on her website, www.AmazingAlphorn.com

CHALLENGE – WIN A BOOK FOR CHILDREN

The first three children to answer these two questions correctly, via email, will receive a copy of the book ‘Uncle Ruedi’s Alphorn’ written by Frances Jones. Write to swissreviewuk@gmail.com mentioning ‘Alphorn’ in the email subject, your child’s name and address.

–What is an alphorn made of?
–Which animal do you call with an alphorn?

Further information can be found on her website, www.AmazingAlphorn.com
ONLINE CAMPAIGN: THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN’S VOTING RIGHTS

This year, International Women’s Day has an historical resonance in Switzerland.

2021 marks the 50th anniversary of women’s voting rights in our country, reminding us how recently this basic right was acquired and how urgently the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women need to be publicised and celebrated.

The Swiss Embassy is working together with the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs / Presence Switzerland and various Swiss Embassies around the world on the project «Women of Switzerland – A Country in 50 Portraits (Social Media Campaign)» 08.03 – 31.12.2021.

More info here: www.houseofswitzerland.org/swissstories/history/swiss-women-polls. Please look out for more news on the Swiss Embassy’s social media channels following the hashtag #WomenOfSwitzerland

SWISS CHURCH: A HOPEFUL YEAR 2021

We are grateful for the projects that we are still able to do at our church in Covent Garden.

TACKLING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

In January, Camden youth Ryan Moshwe has joined our team for a General Business Administration internship. The internship is part of our collaboration with Camden Council and Camden Giving Grant ‘Pathways into Employment’.

ARTISTS IN RESIDENCY SPRING 2021

We have chosen the project ‘Writers Lab – Collaborative Theatre Creatives’ for the Spring Art Residency 2021. From March to May a group of emerging stage writers will have access to the church to develop and share their work.

ARCHIVES

Being a cornerstone of the Swiss community in the UK, the Swiss Church holds historic documents dating back 300 years. We are working to making them broadly available for the Swiss colony in London. Do donate, please visit: www.swisschurchlondon.org.uk/donate

REVEREND CARLA MAURER
CARLA.MAURER@SWISSCHURCHLONDON.ORG.UK
WWW.SWISSCHURCHLONDON.ORG.UK
@SWISSCHURCHLONDON

HANDWASHING SAVES LIVES: IT’S THAT SIMPLE THANKS TO GRAVIT’EAU

It is shocking to realise that at the onset of the pandemic, a staggering 3 out of 4 children were in schools lacking basic hygiene in countries with the greatest risks of health and humanitarian crisis due to COVID-19. But there is a low-cost and simple solution.

Gravit’ea is a mobile handwashing station designed for water-scarce and crisis settings which, compared to other systems, reduces water use by up to 99% per handwash – all without chemicals or electricity. Gravit’ea was co-designed by Terre des hommes Foundation in partnership with the University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland (FHNW), SKAT Consulting Ltd, MARTIN Systems, Cesvi Foundation and RANAS. Applauded as ‘Outstanding’ by the Korean World Water Challenge 2020, Gravit’ea has now won a prestigious Elharga Humanitarian Innovation Fund’s (HIF) Journey to Scale grant with the support of Terre des hommes UK (TdH UK). We are proud to forge relationships with prestigious partners such as Elrha and to raise global awareness of – and increase access to – this life saving innovation for some of the world’s most vulnerable populations.

Elrha HIF has invested £580,000 to increase the reach of Gravit’ea. In the next 15 years, Gravit’ea could reach up to 2.5 million people daily across 10 countries in Africa, the Middle East and Europe. This cannot come at a more critical time. COVID-19 has starkly demonstrated the importance of life-saving hygiene practices and the urgent need to increase access to safe, easy-to-use and sustainable handwashing facilities.

For more information about TdH UK visit: www.tdh.uk or email us at ukoffice@tdh.ch

Gravit’ea is a mobile handwashing station which reduces water use by up to 99% without chemicals or electricity.
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NEW PATIENTS WELCOME

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73 New Bond Street, London W1S 1RS
020 7499 9806 smile@HolfordCuraden.com www.HolfordCuraden.com

JOB OPPORTUNITY: LOOKING FOR YOUNG SWISS LIVING ABROAD

The Movetia program team is looking for young Swiss expatriates from the English-speaking regions. A stay in Switzerland working as a language assistant is the perfect way to gain teaching experience while getting to know the parents’ or ancestors’ homeland. Afterwards, the option is to return to your own country with a set of specific qualifications, continuing training in Switzerland or becoming permanently employed.

Movetia places young students and graduates from universities and colleges from abroad as language assistants at Swiss grammar schools (Gymnasium) and VET schools.

More info: movetia.ch/en/lap-incoming

The most important points at a glance:

Employment duration: 1 school year, August/September to June/July (depending on canton)
Workload: 12 hours or 16 lessons a week
Salary: approx. CHF 3,200 gross per month (around CHF 2,600 net)
Preferred fields of study: English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, educational science, teaching at upper secondary schools
Host region: French- and German-speaking Switzerland

INFORMATION

Obituaries of Swiss citizens living in the UK recently passed away will be regularly published in the last issue of the Swiss Review. Please send an email to editor@swissreview.co.uk with all the information.
Although Covid 19 has prevented members of the Unione Ticinese from gathering for their regular celebratory meals, it has not stopped them from meeting and enjoying themselves in different ways. Over the past few months, we have had an experimental quiz and, later in November, a concert of baroque music, just for ourselves. Two professional violinists, Florenza De Donatis from Locarno, and Andrea Rognoni from Cremona, playing together as 'A Due Violini', performed for us direct from Ascona.

A few weeks later the New Helvetic Society and our club combined, organised a San Niccolao party for children as we had last year – this time virtual but again we can report it has been well attended. With these successes behind us, we – or rather, our President, Emilie Martinoni Hoogenboom, for it is she who has taken the leading part in organising most of our online activities – got still more ambitious. From the very beginning our constitution, in its successive forms, has always contained a clause stipulating that we celebrate the date of foundation on 8 February 1874.

So, on 8 February this year about 50 participants were honoured to hear our Honorary President, Mr Ambassador Fasel, giving us the latest news about the consequences of Brexit before he toasted the future of the Unione Ticinese.

There was a chance to learn about the Society’s history before the prize-winning folk-song duo Tacalà sang to us from Ticino. Finally there was the traditional prize draw, the tickets for the event also serving as tickets for the draw. We missed the shared meal and the human contact – but we can honestly say that Covid-19 has filed to daunt us! And we are preparing further virtual activities.

PETER BARBER

THE SWISS RAILWAYS SOCIETY: PUBLIC TRANSPORT LOVERS ALL AROUND THE WORLD HAVE THEIR CLUB AND MAGAZINES

The Swiss Railways Society (SRS) was formed in 1980 to bring together those interested in Swiss railways, both prototype and models. The SRS was founded in the UK and to this day the majority of its members (very nearly 1,200 at the end of 2020) live in the UK. The Society’s original focus was on Switzerland’s railways but, over time, the remit broadened to cover other forms of public transport and, of course, the scenery.

Indeed, there are many members whose technical knowledge of railways is slight but who love Switzerland in general and use public transport to see what the country has to offer the visitor.

The product that reaches all SRS members is Swiss Express which is a quarterly magazine, in colour and A4 format, provided free to members. It provides information, photographs, and easily understood technical data about new developments, as well as historical articles, not just on railways but other forms of public transport too. Over the last 10 years the Society has produced a series of books about Switzerland. There are 7 travel guides (A5 format) which between them cover the country.

There is a series of large (A4 format) books. These comprise a book about Swiss Lakes and one about the various forms of public transport up the mountains; a book about the postbuses and another about trams & trolleybuses; and two books about Swiss electric locomotives (one on SBB, the other about the various other companies). A book is in preparation, due for publication in November, about Swiss steam locomotives since 1900. The books are available to non-members as well as members. Details are at www.swissrailsoc.org.uk/shop

The SRS has seven local Branches in England where members can meet (pre-Covid), mostly monthly, and listen to talks or look at photographs usually about Switzerland. The Society normally holds an Annual General Meeting (AGM) each spring.

The 2021 AGM is scheduled for 24 April but because of Covid, it is likely to take place via Zoom. Again, more information on our website. In normal times the formal AGM, often held in Derby, is run in conjunction with an exhibition comprising some model railways and stands run by some retailers – mostly books, DVDs and model railway equipment.
HELVETIC KITCHEN: SCHINKENGIPFELI / CROISSANTS AU JAMBON

120 g Quark or sour cream
100 g ham, finely chopped
handful chives, finely chopped
salt
pepper
1 tsp mustard
the zest and juice of half a lemon
around 300 g puff pastry
1 egg, separated

Preheat oven to 200 C.

In a bowl, mix together the Quark or sour cream, ham, chives, seasonings, mustard, and lemon.

Roll out your dough into a circle. Slice into eight wedges and brush with egg white. Add the filling to the middle of the wedge, then roll it up.

Place on a parchment-lined baking sheet, then brush with egg yolk.

Bake for about 20 – 25 minutes, or until the pastry has puffed and the outside is golden.

If you’d like to try it for yourself, recipes for this and other Swiss specialties can be found at www.helvetickitchen.com

YORKSHIRE: AN EPIC 190 WALK CHALLENGE FOR CHARITIES

Jeffrey Long MBE, former FOSSUK and Yorkshire Swiss Club’s president for 17 years, recently set out on an epic walking 190 miles challenge in aid of The Royal British Legion and Support Our Paras, The Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces Charity.

These 100 miles are for the Legion to mark their centenary in 2021, plus a further 90 miles for Support Our Paras. The former paratrooper from Bingley – who turns 90 in October – has raised more than £300K for charity over the past 14 years and attracted celebrity endorsement along the way.

BEATRICE SCHLEGEL: LOST IN TRANSLATION

“Rendre un service d’ours”

Bears have already been known as strong but dim-witted creatures since the Middle Ages and in the 17th century, the French poet Jean de la Fontaine wrote the tale of a bear and his friend, who accidentally gets killed because the bear tries to kill a fly on his nose with a stone while he was sleeping. The saying ‘En Bärendienscht leischta’ is likely to originate from the French original as is the English equivalent ‘Render a bear’s service’ meaning to do more harm than good with the best intentions.