

A word from the President

Welcome to the first 2012 edition of the New Helvetic Society's Newsletter. Although the festive season is starting to fade in our memories, it is not too late to wish you all a Happy New Year.

In this issue, you will be able to reminisce about some of our 2011 activities and I trust that you will conclude as I do that 2011 was a vintage year. Concerts were among our most popular events as we brought to you musicians who perform at a very high standard and are highly regarded in the music world. The two films on show provoked interesting debates among members. Lectures, forums, walks and more were all part of a diverse and interesting programme. We certainly did not neglect the social side of the New Helvetic Society.

At our AGM, the membership unanimously accepted the increase of our subscription fees thus showing that it approves of what the Council is doing and that it was good value for money. It also agreed to invest in a brand new website which is attractive and promotes our society on the world-wide web. I was pleasantly surprised to see that the Swisscom website, Bluewin Multimédia page, under the title: Communautés suisses à l'étranger: annoncer la couleur en ligne, mentioned two sites from outside Switzerland, one in the USA and ours with a positive comment. I thank you for your support.

You will not have failed to notice that this issue comes with a new look and I am convinced that it will have a similar impact as our website. And, as with our website, this new design was created by Marc Peter, our very own PR man.

We have made space for your positive comments, constructive criticism and more. Please make good use of it.

We are sometimes perceived as an exclusive society whose membership is solely limited to Swiss citizens: far from it. Our events as well as our membership are open to anyone who has an interest in Swiss matters.

I look forward to seeing you on many occasions in 2012.



Daniel Pedroletti

www.newhelveticociety.org.uk
info@newhelveticociety.org.uk

Address:
New Helvetic Society
16–18 Montagu Place
London W1H 2BQ

Future Events

Next Event


■ 16 February 2012

Film Night 'Home' at the Swiss Embassy



NEW HELVETIC SOCIETY

Thursday 16 February 2012 at 7 pm



HOME

Film Night: Thursday 16 February 2012 at 7 pm, at the Embassy of Switzerland, 16-18 Montagu Place, London W1H 2BQ

This film simply portrays a family living in a motorway section. The parents and the children live a happy life until the motorway reopened without much warning. This has a profound effect on their lives.

This portrait of family life is painted without voyeurism or sentimentalism. However it does not fall into any kind of conventional documentary as it is in turns very emotional, comical, realistic and surreal. It is a kind of anti-road movie.

This critically acclaimed film invites you to draw your own conclusions.

Various critics have described it as "A masterpiece, one of the most beautiful films in the history of Helvetic Cinema" "Home is a revelation" "A first successful film, comical and dramatic, satirical and eerie" "Home is an enchanted tale, a deeply moving fable"

This film has been nominated and has won awards at various film festivals.

French spoken with English subtitles.


Refreshments will be provided

If we would like to attend the film nights on Thursday 16 February 2012 at 7 pm.
Fee: **free for members**, £10- per person for non-members.

Name(s): _____
Address: _____
Email: _____
Tel.No.: _____

As booking is essential, please return this slip with your cheque made payable to:
New Helvetic Society by **Monday 13 February 2012**
to New Helvetic Society, c/o Swiss Embassy, 16-18 Montagu Place, London W1H 2BQ
Please note: no tickets or confirmations of booking are issued and fees cannot be paid at the door.

New Helvetic Society, 16-18 Montagu Place, London W1H 2BQ
Website: www.newhelveticociety.org.uk | Email: info@newhelveticociety.org.uk



Future Events

■ 19 April 2012

AGM at the Swiss Embassy starting at 7 pm.

■ May 2012

The Council is planning a concert.

■ 9 June 2012

FOSSUK AGM at the Swiss Church.

■ 1 August 2012

Swiss National Day celebrations at the House of Switzerland.

■ September 2012

Forum co-hosted with other Swiss societies.

■ 8 December 2012

Escalade at the Swiss Embassy

Details of the above events are published as soon as they are available.
Members are personally informed by email or post.

One to One

Marc Peter, our Designer answers Daniel's questions

I was born in *Roggwil* (population under 4000), approximately equidistant to *Zürich, Bern & Luzern* and grew up in the same boring place

My parents were *fair and kind* - and are still very much alive

I became a *Designer* because I like to bring order and structure to messy elements (however, my lovely wife, Ané, will beg to differ...)

When I hear the word *Switzerland*, I think of *only 23kg of luggage on the return flight, oh, and family*

On my next trip to *Switzerland*, I would like to *bring back all my Xmas presents*

My favourite activity/lies when in *Switzerland* is to *catch up on all the gossip with my friends and work colleagues*

My hopes are "We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars."
Oscar Wilde

I settled in *London* because of *LOVE*



My favourite *Swiss food* is *Party-Filet in a mustard sauce and Knöpfli* (home-made of course)

My favourite *London thing* is *walking from Tower Hill along the Thames to Embankment*

I am good at / enjoy *Creating ...onPaper, ...onScreen, ...inKitchen*

I am not good at / do not enjoy *haggling, queuing - it's either worth it or not*

My hobbies are *cooking, walking, reading and having a good time with friends*

My favourite *Swiss personality, artist, author, musician* is/ are *Emil* because *he turns everyday situations on their head with hilarious results*

I would like the *New Helvetic Society* to *have all events pre-booked and sold out*

My motto is *Go Big or Go Home*

Past Events (April – May 2011)

14

APR 2011

AGM 2011

The AGM was well attended and was followed by a meal enjoyed by all.



19

MAY 2011

Jazz night with Eclectica

At our Council meeting I foolishly volunteered to write a piece on the Eclectica concert, which was to take place later in the month. It was foolish because I am no jazz buff and I shall not be able to discuss the finest points of their ensemble; nor describe how the musicians respond to one another, go their separate ways and come back together again, nor the quality of the sound they produce, which is just beautiful.



To begin with, the quartet Eclectica is, I think, an unusual combination for jazz musicians: Lizzie Ball – violin and vocals; Nicolas Meier – acoustic nylon guitar; Pete Oxley – acoustic nylon and steel guitars; and Bernard Gregor-Smith – cello. No percussion, no double bass. And then, not belying their name, they gave us a truly varied programme including a number of original compositions by Nicolas Meier and Pete Oxley (two world premières among others), arrangements of songs by Joni Mitchell, Stevie Wonder and the Beatles, and a lively Hungarian czardas which got most feet tapping happily. Their enthusiasm was simply contagious.



Marie-José Lindon



Past Events (June – September 2011)

09
JUN 2011

The Blitz, London at War. A guided walk through the City of London

A very entertaining and knowledgeable gentleman was our guide. Most of the historical sites relating to the Blitz have been destroyed. However, he made these past events come to life again and as bonus he gave us a comprehensive history of the City. We even discovered that one park boasts a banana tree that bears fruit every year.



23
JUL 2011

Swiss National Day London

The New Helvetic Society is a major sponsor of this event and quite a large number of our members enjoyed the celebration.



07
SEP 2011

Direct Democracy and the Swiss Abroad

This forum was co-hosted by FOSSUK, New Helvetic Society, City Swiss Club and Unione Ticinese. A panel of Swiss politicians debated if the Swiss abroad can really intervene in the political decision-making process and what their party intended to do for the Swiss abroad during the next legislation. Only time will tell if they will defend the interests of the Swiss abroad. It was followed by a lively questions and answers session.



Past Events (November – December 2011)

17

NOV 2011

Concert with Lorna Anderson and James Lisney

These two internationally known musicians – soprano and pianist – performed music by Franz Schubert to a delighted audience. Nicholas Charles Lewis & Co generously sponsored this concert. Nicholas Lewis is a longstanding member of our society



10

DEC 2011

L'Escalade



The New Helvetic Society and the Cercle Genevois have merged. For the past two years, both societies have come together to commemorate L'Escalade, the celebration of an important historic event, which took place in 1602 in Geneva. We shall keep the tradition of celebrating this important event and smashing the Marmite each December. Last year's celebratory dinner was based on old Genevan recipes.

Members' Corner



Time to rejoice

Amelie Anouk Higgin was born on 6 April 2011, the first grandchild of Geneviève Higgin, who says: she is a joy and we are really loving being grandparents. Congratulations to both the parents and the grandparents. Geneviève was a very active member of the New Helvetic Society Council for many years.

The Society is pleased to welcome the following members:

Ané-Mari and Marc Peter	Kate Child
Christine and Richard Jarvis	Maria Kitsis
Joyce Etter	Claudette and Markus
Margrith Pike	Winkler - van Arx
Denise Brahm	Angelika Bishop
	Cecile Mackay

Time to remember

It is with sadness that we inform you that the following members have passed away

Mrs Ginette Ficker, mother of Linda and Isabelle
Mr Wilfred Hall, husband of Lisa
Ms Julie Beranger

We offer our deepest sympathy to all bereaved families.

You write, you say

On a perfect day last summer my husband, a friend and myself were in Crans-Montana, Valais. The sun was shining and there was not a cloud in the sky. Whilst we dined we were entertained with music from a quartet playing Swiss accordions, a band playing popular melodies as well as a trio playing Alpine horns. For me, this was the highlight as I had never heard music played on three horns and it was magical.

A local gentleman asked me if we had been up the mountain to Plumachit and taking his advice we took our car and headed upwards. What a marvellous drive, clean crisp air and the beauty of the Alps. We passed ramblers, grazing cows, mountain streams and of course an abundance of wild flowers. We stopped at the small restaurant at Plumachit for a coffee and gazed out over the valley to the mountains on the other side. It truly was a wonderful day and one that will remain as a perfect memory of Switzerland at its best.

Marian Kermanshahchi-Colomb



Last But Not Least



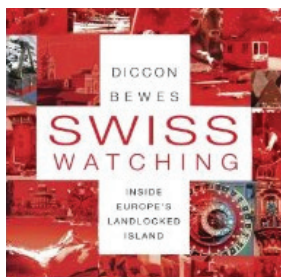
In need of a secretary

The Council of the New Helvetic Society is looking for a secretary. Is there anyone willing to spare a few hours on a voluntary basis to write the agenda and the minutes of our meetings that take place about three times a year? A computer-literate person who could also contribute to the working of the Council would be ideal. Interested? Please contact the President at info@newhelveticociety.org.uk



NHS or NSH

It is often asked why we use the abbreviation NSH for the New Helvetic Society when logically it should be NHS. Without being presumptuous, we do not want to compete with the well-known institution cherished by the British people. The original name of the society is La Nouvelle Société Helvétique hence the NSH abbreviation.



SWISS WATCHING

Inside Europe's Landlocked Island

by Diccon Bewes, published by Nicholas Brealey.

This is a fresh look at Switzerland and its people through the eyes of a British travel writer who has settled in Berne. It is written with humour reminiscent of Bill Bryson, which makes it easy to read, and at the same time gives a wealth of information about our landlocked island. *Swiss Watching* is a must-read book.



COMPETITION

Name the Swiss town where you can find this gate.

Prize: A book and a bottle of Swiss wine.

Send your answer with your name and details to our usual postal or email addresses.

The winner will be drawn from the correct answers.

Deadline: 24 February 2012

facebook

Facebook

Please join us on Facebook and invite your friends to do the same: www.facebook.com/NewHelveticSociety