



**THE 51th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SATURDAY, 21st MAY 2016 AT 14:00
AT THE BALMORAL HOTEL, EDINBURGH**

MINUTES**PRESENT****FOSSUK COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Loredana Guetg-Wyatt	President of FOSSUK
Camilla Ghislanzoni	Acting (Interim) Treasurer FOSSUK
Franz Muheim	OSA UK Delegate
Margrit Lyster	OSA UK Delegate
Joelle Nebbe Mornod	Membership FOSSUK
Ané-Mari Peter	Media FOSSUK
Thomas Rast	OSA UK Delegate
Alexandré Tissot	Vice President of FOSSUK & OSA UK Delegate

DELEGATES

Rose-Marie Breitenstein	Frauenverein / La Causerie
Walter Isler	City Swiss Club London
Daniel Pedroletti	President, New Helvetic Society
Marc Peter	Swiss Benevolent Society
Carmen Rose	Swiss Club Inverness
Angela Schweiwiller	Manchester Swiss Club
Hans Schweiwiller	Manchester Relief Society
Freddie Wyser	President, Swiss Club Edinburgh

GUESTS from the UK and Switzerland

Hermann Aebischer	Consul General Embassy London
Peter Mueller-Mc Dougall	Honorary Consul General
H.E. Ambassador Dominik Furgler	Hon. President FOSSUK
Eleonora Gherardi	Honorary Consul Gibraltar
Remo Gysin	President, Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA)
Franziska Hewitt	Honorary Consul Belfast
Hans Schweiwiller	Honorary Consul Manchester
Peter Zimmerli	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
Ron Butlin	(guest)?

OBSERVERS

Trudi Bott, Elizabeth Davies, Pat Denzler, Muriel Dorthe, Delphine Hoarau, Jean Isler, Marie-Florence MacDonald, Ruth Muheim, Doma Payat, Jean Pierre Payat, David Rose, Alec Lamb-Schulthess, Ursula Lamb-Schulthess, Hans Martin Senn, Astrid Steed, Jill Shanks, Irene Woerz

MINUTES

Ané-Mari Peter (**AP**)



1. **WELCOME**

The FOSSUK President, **Loredana Guetg-Wyatt (LG)** opened the 51st AGM at 14:05, welcoming everyone present and introducing herself. **LG** thanked the sponsors and those involved in organising the AGM, in particular Edinburgh Swiss Club, and the Honorary Consul General for being such generous hosts and the planning of the exciting programme. A special mention and thank you was extended to the unwavering support of the Swiss Embassy.

H.E. Ambassador, **Dominik Furgler**, welcomed everyone present and expressed delight at a short formal session with many informal talks. The Ambassador appreciated the non-London venue of this AGM, and thanked LG, the FOSSUK committee and Edinburgh Swiss Club for all their efforts. The Ambassador urged those present to keep an eye out for the event later in the year initiated by FOSSUK. A warm thank to the all the guests, and in particular Mr Gysin (OSA) and Mr Zimmerli (FDFA) who travelled from Switzerland.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies received from: [please check the list!]

Guiseppe Brogginì	Unione Ticinese & FOSSUK
Madam Hayam Furgler	Swiss Embassy
Claudine Gerber	Secretary, FOSSUK
Noelle Dowd-Leitch	FOSSUK
Andrew Littlejohn	Editor, Swiss Review UK & Ireland Pages
Ruth Thomas	Honorary Consul Wales
John Williamson	Southern Area Swiss Club

3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

With thanks to **Alexandr  (AT)** for taking the minutes.

There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the AGM 2015 in London, which had been previously circulated, and approval was proposed by **Dani l Pedroletti** and seconded by **Freddie Wyser**. The motion carried unanimously.

4. **PRESIDENT’S ANNUAL REPORT**

LG noted that there are many issues amongst Swiss Clubs, however did not want the report to be too dark, but two issues need highlighting.

4.1. As a community we need to innovate and encourage younger members. It is very difficult to get new members. LG introduced an annual round table with all Presidents – with thanks to sponsorship organised by **AT** – for ‘brainstorming’ and community bonding. An example of the necessity is that the *Unione Ticinese* is on the verge of stopping, and need urgent help in not just getting new members, but committee or contributory members. Even as president, at 40+ **LG** is a second generation Swiss – but, together, we must find new ways to attract members, whilst maintaining traditional values.

4.2. Sponsorship as FOSSUK has now sought and maintained, ensures that events are free to attend. Younger people are likely to attend other events (non-Swiss), but if events can remain free, they may attend. It has been shown that the forum initiatives are not just valuable, but hugely popular with the most recent Tax event completely over subscribed. These initiatives will be continued as they work.

There were no further matters arising from the Annual Report with approval proposed by **Marc Peter** and seconded by **Freddie Wyser**. The motion carried unanimously.



5. OSA UK DELEGATES' REPORTS

AT highlighted the main themes of the past year: 'Educating Citizens', the contentious issue of OSA's position on immigration and the Geneva Chancellor's presentation on the real challenges of e-voting. The formal position is simply too slow considering that 50% of votes being electronic as the ultimate goal. A milestone was the creation of the *Youth Parliament of the Swiss Abroad* which helps in involving the Swiss living and working abroad in the political process. The debating skills of young adults were showcased, covering important topics, and showing just how important proper debating skills are. Delegates were shown video clips created by young adults for young adults with a resonating message on YouTube highlighting what tactics to employ to encourage young people to participate in the political process – what happens if you don't participate in the political process? Amongst under 30's, less than 30% vote.

There were no further matters arising from the OSA UK Delegates' Reports with approval proposed by **Rosemarie Breitenstein** and seconded by **Walter Isler**. The motion carried unanimously.

6. FINANCE

Presented by **Camilla Ghislanzoni (CG)** on behalf of **Ramona Leopold** (resigned) who noted that a new Treasurer has to be elected today.

- a. To adopt the Income and Expenditure Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2015.
CG presented the Accounts, previously circulated, and highlighted incorrect expenditure on the report and the generous sponsors: OSA Delegates waived travel expenses to Switzerland, the website hosting is fully sponsored and Skincode is a long-term website sponsor. The last Forum was sponsored by Alpine Wines and Skincode. Approval of the Income and Expenditure Accounts was proposed by **Daniël Pedroletti** and seconded by **Freddie Wyser**. The motion carried unanimously.
- b. To receive the Hon. Auditors' Report and appointment of the auditors for 2016.
The Honorary Auditors' Report has been received. **CG** stated that *Joseph Bonello* has agreed to be the 2016 Auditor. Approval of the Auditors' Report was proposed by **Freddie Wyser** and seconded by **Franz Muheim**. The motion carried unanimously.
- c. To accept the Budget for 2016.
CG presented the 2016 budget which had previously been circulated. Approval of the Budget was proposed by **Daniël Pedroletti** and seconded by **Margrit Lyster**. The motion was passed with no abstentions and no concerns raised.
- d. Membership subscription 2016
CG expressed gratitude to all Societies for their continued support and positioned that Membership Subscription of £1 should not be changed. **Marc Peter** proposed retaining the £1 fee for 2016 and **Delphine Hoarau** seconded. The motion unanimously accepted.

7. FOSSUK FORUM 2016

AT noted that the previous two Forums on Education and subsequently Tax Planning were both over-subscribed and informed attendees that the next Forum will be **joint** event supported by multiple Societies and the Swiss Embassy London on the 3rd of November at the Royal Society of Medicine at 1 Wimpole St. The moderator will be **François Voeffray**, Embassy of Switzerland and confirmed speakers are **Anja Wyden Guelpa**, State Chancellor, Republic and State of Geneva; and **Davide Wüthrich**, President of the Youth Parliament of the Swiss Abroad (YPSA). Other speakers from the University of Lausanne or possibly a political scientist are being sought. **AT** is also in discussion with Peter Barber of *Unione Ticinese* to discuss new membership ideas.



8. **SWISS REVIEW**

Margrit Lyster (ML) read a statement on behalf of Andrew Littlejohn who could not attend the AGM (with apology) thanking Marc Peter's contribution to the layout design and encouraging Members in particular outside of London to submit Club activities. Of importance is the upcoming 2017 elections of new UK Delegates to OSA where interest from readers will be wholly encouraged. **ML** showed the Swiss Review UK Pages Issues 01 and 02 of 2013 reminding attendees of the previous elections procedure. **Franz Muheim (FM)** requested that expectations from a potential Delegate be highlighted, as well as the fact that Edinburgh Swiss Club has a new website. **AP** noted that all possible information on the Elections will be available on the FOSSUK website and promoted on social media channels in addition to the normal Swiss Review publications highlighting the process, eligibility and expectations from candidates and voters.

There were no further matters arising from the Swiss Review with approval proposed by **Rosemarie Breitenstein** and seconded by **ML**. The motion carried unanimously.

9. **RESIGNATIONS AND ELECTIONS OF FOSSUK COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Resignation: Treasurer: Ramona Leopold

CG was proposed by **Rosemarie Breitenstein** and seconded by **ML**. The motion carried unanimously for **CG** to assume the role of Hon. Treasurer of FOSSUK with no abstentions and no concerns raised.

10. **AGM 2017**

LG announced that the next AGM will take place in London as is protocol, however with a shift in venue to The Shard – a new building in traditional London – which will hopefully encourage more young adults to attend.

11. **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

Hermann Aebischer brought to our attention that it is in everyone's interest to be reachable by the Embassy – please check the registration list and ensure that your details are up to date so that you can stay informed of news and events that affect you directly. On a similar note, **Joelle Nebbe Mornod**, noted that Members need to ensure that contacts to their Society need to be kept up to date and that the leadership have a duty to inform their own members of important events and matters arising.

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

ML and the FOSSUK Committee specifically singled out Andrew Littlejohn for his enormous efforts and thanks for producing the Swiss Review UK Pages.

Franz Muheim re-introduced the UK Delegates to OSA, noting their knowledge and contribution to issues that directly affect the Swiss living in the UK. He also requested ideas for a Brunnen image for the upcoming OSA meeting.

ML reiterated the importance of taking the upcoming CSA elections seriously, informing Society members and that UK-specific information will be published in the upcoming Swiss Review issues.

LG announced that a special Committee meeting will take place regarding the Elections and that Members should not give up their right to vote so freely.

Franz Muheim requested that the new Edinburgh Swiss Club details are represented on the FOSSUK website and that a new Edinburgh "Stammtisch" will take place on the 1st Wednesday every month – a new informal initiative which has been successful with 10 – 15 attendees per event.

The 2016 FOSSUK AGM closed at 15:00 hrs.



RECESS

SPEECHES

H.E. Ambassador Dominik Furgler highlighted the severe budget cuts in the Foreign Office resulting in developmental staff reductions and that London has now also taken over Irish Consular services. The Swiss Embassy London will continue to support FOSSUK initiatives – it is vital that that Swiss in the UK exercise their right to vote – currently the UK vote is lower than the average worldwide. Many votes impact directly on Swiss expats, and with 35,000, the UK has the chance to make a real impact. We must encourage young people to engage politically and to vote, for example, Swiss National Day London, Mr **Aebischer** visited Wales, and the Honorary Consuls do a large amount of (thankless) work with very limited resource, all in an effort to foster the community. Migration and Free Movement will be a massive issues that really affect the Swiss living in the UK.

The guests from Switzerland, Remo Gysin and Peter Zimmerli talked about the role of the Swiss Abroad, the issues facing OSA, funding implications on consular services, the role and duties of the Embassy and the Federation with a strong focus on Young Adults, Federation information dissemination channels and the FDFA.

Franz Muheim spoke about his work at Edinburgh University and CERN in Switzerland, through a short film 'the power of 10'.