

**THE 52<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
SATURDAY 20<sup>th</sup> MAY 2017 AT 14:00  
AT COIN STREET, SOUTH BANK, LONDON SE1 9NH**

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT**

**FOSSUK COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Giuseppe Broggin	FOSSUK Committee
Claudine Gerber	Hon Secretary FOSSUK
Loredana Guetg-Wyatt	President of FOSSUK
Camilla Ghislanzoni	Hon Treasurer FOSSUK
Margrit Lyster	OSA UK Delegate
Franz Muheim	OSA UK Delegate
Joelle Nebbe Mornod	Membership FOSSUK
Ané-Mari Peter	Media FOSSUK
Alexandré Tissot	Vice President of FOSSUK & OSA UK Delegate
Gioia Palmieri	Swiss Review

**DELEGATES**

Peter Barber	Unione Ticinese
Rose-Marie Breitenstein	Frauenverein / La Causerie
Sandra Glauser	Swiss Club Manchester
Lisa Hall	Frauenverein / La Causerie
Walter Isler	City Swiss Club London
Ruth Muheim	Swiss Club Edinburgh
Jean-Pierre Payat	City Swiss Club London
Daniel Pedroletti	New Helvetic Society
Marc Peter	Swiss Benevolent Society, New Helvetic Society
Ruth Muheim	Swiss Club Edinburgh
Suzanne Egloff	Swiss Benevolent Society

**GUESTS from the UK and Switzerland**

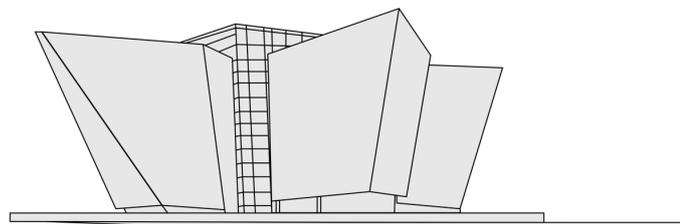
H.E. Ambassador Dominik Furgler	Hon. President FOSSUK
Sarah Mastantuoni	Directrice Organisation des Suisses de l'étranger
Christoph Roithner	Vice Consul Swiss Embassy London
Peter Zimmerli	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

**OBSERVERS**

Francesco Bernasconi, Alison Broggin, Simon Burgherr, Giulia Cassut, Nathalie Chuard, Marion Chuard, Vincent Croset, Christina Brandao, Madame Hyam Furgler, Sarah Grand-Clément, Jean Isler, Sidela Leon, Rob Nebbe, Gioia Palmieri, Hans Martin Senn, Kathrin Weder, Jessica Yang,

**MINUTES**

Ané-Mari Peter (**AP**)



1. **WELCOME**

The FOSSUK President, **Loredana Guetg-Wyatt (LG)** opened the 52<sup>nd</sup> AGM at 14:00, welcoming everyone present, in particular those who have travelled from afar to London and introducing herself. **LG** thanked the last year's overall event partner, **UBS**, the AGM sponsors, **Skincode** for the generous goody bags and **Faulhaber, on-IDLE** and **Bisbino Gin** and the AGM organisation sub-committee without whom the AGM would be impossible. A special mention and thank you was extended to the unwavering support of the Swiss Embassy. **LG** briefly reviewed the programme outlining the principles of how the UK OSA Delegates elections were administered by a neutral sub-committee and the Swiss Embassy and that the election outcome would be announced.

**H.E. Ambassador Dominik Furgler** thanked FOSSUK and Embassy staff for the hard work not only in running the successful OSA UK Delegate elections, but for their initiatives and support in forums and being anchors of the Swiss Community in the UK. As his last AGM, it is with heartfelt thanks and a tinge of sadness that he and **Mrs Furgler** are attending, but are looking forward to building stronger community ties in their next posting to Prague, using the UK as a shining example of an active and engaged Community, in no small part with the leadership and initiatives provided by FOSSUK. He urged the Swiss community to continue to exercise their right to vote in upcoming referenda, and to reach out to the newly elected OSA UK Delegates on the important upcoming issues of e-voting, bank accounts for Swiss expats, and of course, Brexit and its implications, which he will elaborate on in his post-AGM talk with the latest status update from the UK Home Office.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies received from:

Tiziano Pedrioli	Consul Embassy London
Hermann Aebischer	Consul General Embassy London
Eleonora Gherardi	Honorary Consul Gibraltar
Noelle Dowd-Leitch	FOSSUK
Franziska Hewitt	Honorary Consul Belfast
Andrew Littlejohn	Editor, Swiss Review UK & Ireland Pages
Peter Mueller-Mc Dougall	Honorary Consul General Scotland
Carmen Rose	Swiss Club Inverness
Hans Schweiwiler	Honorary Consul Manchester/ Manchester Relief Society
Ruth Thomas	Honorary Consul Wales
John Williamson	Southern Area Swiss Club
Carla Maurer	Swiss Church London

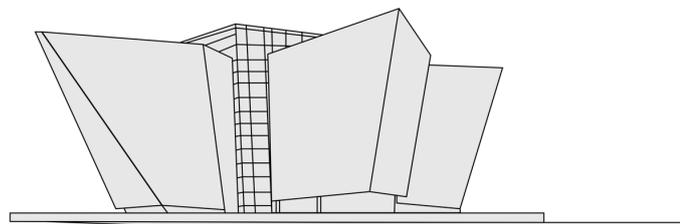
3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

With thanks to **Ané-Mari Peter (AP)** for taking the minutes.

There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the AGM 2016 in Edinburgh, which had been previously circulated, and approval was proposed by **Ruth Muheim** and seconded by **Lisa Hall**. The motion carried unanimously.

4. **PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT**

**LG** noted that it has been a successful year for FOSSUK with the organisation prepared for maintaining our values whilst innovating our image and modus operandi. **LG** highlighted that without the support and commitment of the FOSSUK Committee, especially in light of the fact that most are in full-time employment and still provide a valuable contribution.



Key aims can be outlined as attracting new sponsors to subsidise Forums and the AGM; organising Forums that are relevant to the Swiss Community; finding ways and helping members to attract new members (possibly younger and looking to incorporate social channel groups); introducing yearly Swiss Club Roundtables to address progress and hear about issues; maintaining sub-committees for organising different elements/functions performed by FOSSUK; and building a stronger social media presence with support from a new website (which from now on will maintain a UK-wide cross-club- and -cultural events calendar).

Highlights and key issues raised in the past year:

- 4.1. As a community we need to innovate and encourage younger members. It is very difficult to get new members, compounded by Brexit leaving many Swiss nationals unsure about their status in the UK. Annual round tables with Members will contribute new ideas and collaboration.
- 4.2. The UK Delegates attended the OSA Spring meeting and Autumn Congress in this important 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, where a renewed focus has been to expand on unity – “Swiss in the World: Global Mobility”. **LG** thanked the previous OSA term UK Delegates, **Margrit Lyster**, **Franz Muheim**, **Thomas Rast** and **Alexandre Tissot** for their invaluable service to the Swiss Community and clearly communicating the issues being discussed and raising inputs and concerns from the wider Community at OSA meetings.
- 4.3. Sponsorship for FOSSUK has now been sought and is being maintained, which ensures that events are free to attend such as the Youth Event Forum (supported by Skincode and sponsored by UBS). It has been shown that the forum initiatives are not just valuable, but hugely popular, in particular amongst younger people. These initiatives will be continued as to date, they work and reach out to the larger Swiss Community who are not always engaged with or members of Clubs.
- 4.4. Thank you also to the Swiss Embassy London and in particular **General Consul Hermann Aebischer** and **Consul Tiziano Pedrioli**, as they endorse our initiatives and continue to provide their invaluable expertise to the FOSSUK Committee members. **LG** also thanked **H.E. Ambassador Furgler** for taking a personal interest and wishes him and **Mrs Furgler** every success in their new posting.
- 4.5. Last, but not least, a special thank you for their decades of service to the Swiss Community, their personal support of **LG**'s presidency and fond farewell to **Margrit Lyster** and **Giuseppe Broggin** who are both resigning to officially retire. Also with thanks for their contribution and with regret **LG** accepted the resignations of **Claudine Gerber** and **Camilla Ghislanzoni** from the FOSSUK Committee.

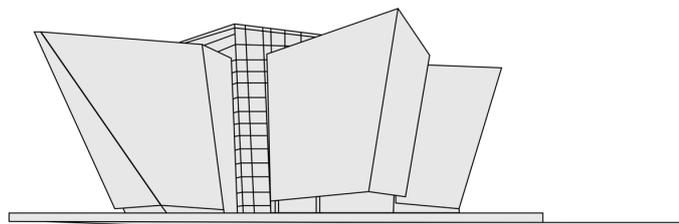
There were no further matters arising from the Annual Report with approval proposed by **Marc Peter** and seconded by **Rosemarie Breitenstein**. The motion carried unanimously.

## 5. OSA UK DELEGATES' REPORTS

**AT** stated that this is a seminal year for OSA, celebrating 100 years and the start of a new term for Delegates. Over 50 new delegates will be appointed from all over the world, providing a real opportunity for global input on matters affecting the Swiss living abroad.

Key matters highlighted:

- 5.1. An announcement that it would take at least another 2 years for Parliament to adopt to consider adopting two initiatives put forward that would grant the Swiss Abroad enhanced access to the Swiss Banking system.



Broad agreement was reached to support a 'Post Bank' initiative for persons living abroad, however only from certain countries.

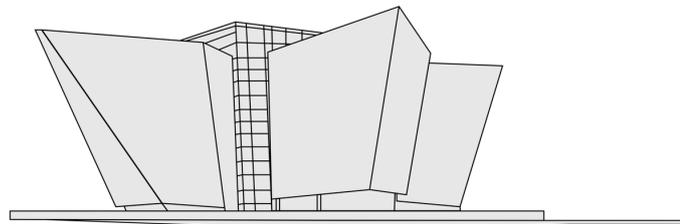
- 5.2. A working group was announced that would return with critical findings at the OSA Delegates meeting in August 2016 in Bern regarding the financial and time challenges to bring forward representative Delegate candidates in their country.
- 5.3. Budget cuts to the Swiss Review were announced as an overall part of a plan to find CHF400,000 in annual savings – this includes the closure of overseas embassies.
- 5.4. OSA will continue to remain politically neutral so that it does not take a partisan position support one political party or platform over another.
- 5.5. There is a renewed ambition to actively promote and contribute by the Youth Parliament, linking in to the evolution of global mobility amongst the Swiss.
- 5.6. OSA's political priorities will focus on access to Swiss bank accounts, wider implementation of e-Voting and access to Health Insurance.

There were no further matters arising from the OSA UK Delegates' Reports with approval proposed by **Peter Barber** and seconded by **Lisa Hall**. The motion carried unanimously.

## 6. FINANCE

Presented by **Camilla Ghislanzoni (CG)** who announced her resignation with thanks to the FOSSUK committee for their support and announced the welcome return of **Daniel Pedroletti** (if elected) to the FOSSUK Committee. **CG** further noted that a Treasurer has to be (re-)elected today.

- a. To adopt the Income and Expenditure Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2016.  
**CG** presented the Accounts, previously circulated, and highlighted particular:
  - special mention must be made of the continuing decline in income from corporate membership payments, in particular, City Swiss Club went down from £162 to £115 and New Helvetic Society, from £170 to £77 – combined account for a gap of £140;
  - 2016 Arrears: a Swiss Club Manchester, payment sent in January 2017 for £81, as membership letter sent by email did not reach them – in future it will be sent by post as per request;
  - OSA Delegates waived travel expenses to Switzerland, but are budgeted for to accurately reflect the financial position of the organisation – the expenses recorded amount to £2,922.42 – with 5 Delegates for this term, it is clear that seeking further financial sponsorship is pressing concern;
  - the FOSSUK website hosting is fully sponsored by on-IDLE, however the balance of £1,250 for the website development cost incurred in 2016 was now settled;
  - the Youth Forum was sponsored by UBS and supported by Skincode with goody bags – Skincode is a long-term website sponsor and will continue this year;
  - the New Helvetic Society's Centenary was sponsored by UBS, with funds and sponsorship arranged via FOSSUK
  - FOSSUK organised a presidents' roundtable with ten participants, the cost being only £150 after kind donation of Blancpain for the location and the chef Sayuri-San, for an extraordinary meal;
  - this AGM received donations in kind from Swiss Food Box with 2 boxes, Alpine Wine, the President and the Treasurer with drinks on the Friday evening;
  - as agreed at last year's AGM, FOSSUK Committee expenses would be recorded even if unclaimed to reflect an accurate financial position – the registered committee travel and accommodation expenses amount to £1,091.95;



- THE FOSSUK Natwest bank account has been closed and a new single current account opened with HSBC that includes access to online banking.

Approval of the Income and Expenditure Accounts was proposed by **Daniel Pedroletti** and seconded by **Walter Isler**. The motion carried unanimously.

- b. To receive the Hon. Auditors' Report and appointment of the auditors for 2017. The Honorary Auditors' Report has been received. **CG** stated that *Joseph Bonello* has agreed to be the 2017 Auditor.

Approval of the Auditors' Report was proposed by **Walter Isler** and seconded by **Daniel Pedroletti**. The motion carried unanimously.

- c. To accept the Budget for 2017. **CG** presented the 2017 budget which had previously been circulated.

Approval of the Budget was proposed by **Daniel Pedroletti** and seconded by **Marc Peter**. The motion was passed with no abstentions and no concerns raised.

- d. Membership subscription 2017  
**CG** expressed gratitude to all Societies for their continued support and positioned that Membership Subscription of £1 should not be changed.

**Ruth Muheim** proposed retaining the £1 fee for 2016 and **Lisa Hall** seconded. The motion unanimously accepted.

## 7. OSA DELEGATES 2017 – 2021

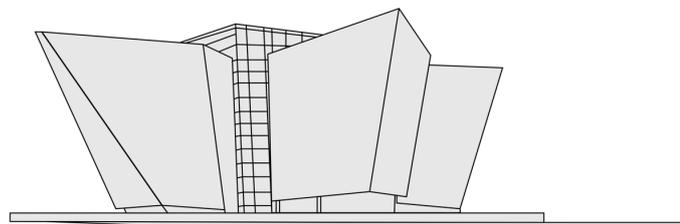
**CG** noted the success of the elections with a large number of candidates and votes. Elections for the new UK Delegates were run over the past 6 months through social media, the FOSSUK website, Swiss Review UK Pages, e-news bulletins from the Swiss Embassy London and letters to Presidents of our corporate member clubs & societies. **CG** presented a brief overview of the elections protocol, reiterating that due to an increase in the Swiss expats resident in the UK, that 5 Delegates will now represent OSA for the next term – 3 from FOSSUK Corporate Members, and 2 from the overall electorate. Candidates' eligibility were independently verified by the Swiss Embassy London – to stand as a candidate, you have to be a Swiss National resident in the UK and registered to vote in Swiss referenda and valid voting slips were counted in camera at the Swiss Embassy London by the elections sub-committee, consisting only of individuals who were not also standing in the election, guaranteeing impartiality.

The election results: 164 voting slips received | 388 votes received of which 327 were valid | 13 candidates had stood for election.

And congratulations to the new UK Delegates to OSA for the 2017 – 2021 term:

- **Nathalie Chuard**
- **Vincent Croset**
- **Franz Muheim** (Swiss Club Edinburgh endorsed)
- **Loredana Guetg-Wyatt** (New Helvetic Society endorsed)
- **Alexandre Tissot** (City Swiss Club endorsed)

Each new UK Delegate was invited to and briefly introduced themselves to all present.



8. **ELECTION OF THE FOSSUK COMMITTEE (chaired by Peter Barber)**

**LG** thanked Peter Barber for stepping in to manage the elections of the FOSSUK Committee.

Resignations:

Hon Treasurer:	Camilla Ghislanzoni
Hon Secretary:	Claudine Gerber
Editor Swiss Review UK & Ireland Pages:	Andrew Littlejohn
OSA UK Delegate & FOSSUK Committee:	Margrit Lyster (ML)
OSA UK Delegate & FOSSUK Committee:	Giuseppe Brogгинi

New Appointments:

Hon Treasurer:	Daniel Pedroletti
Editor Swiss Review:	Gioia Palmieri

Re-Appointments:

Loredana Guetg-Wyatt	President FOSSUK
Alexandre Tissot	Vice President FOSSUK
Joelle Nebbe Mornod	Membership FOSSUK
Ané-Mari Peter	Media FOSSUK

Re-election and new appointments to the FOSSUK Committee was proposed by **Peter Barber** and seconded by **Suzanne Egloff**. The motion carried unanimously.

9. **SWISS REVIEW**

**LG** read a poignant retirement statement on behalf of Andrew Littlejohn who could not attend the AGM (with apology) thanking Marc Peter's contribution to the layout design and the Swiss community, in particular outside of London who submit Club activities, news and photos.

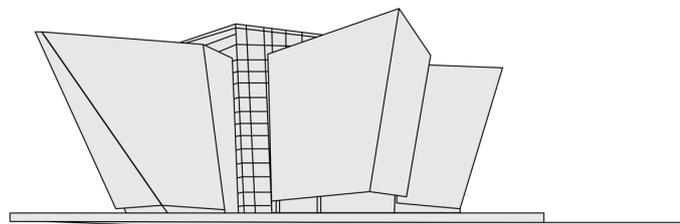
**LG** introduced and welcomed the new editor, **Gioia Palmieri (GP)**, who introduced herself, outlining her vision, commitment and passion to continue to produce an exciting and informative publication. **GP** stated that as a newcomer to the Swiss Community in the UK, she was looking forward to getting to know the Clubs and the larger community.

**LG** reiterated that the UK & Northern Ireland Pages are held as a 'gold standard' by Bern and mentioned the FOSSUK Facebook group as a new channel to share news and activities, in addition to it being another tool that will be used by FOSSUK for community outreach and sharing relevant news and information with the larger Swiss Community.

**AP** presented the look-and-feel of the updated FOSSUK website ([www.swiss-societies.co.uk](http://www.swiss-societies.co.uk)) to an appreciative audience. **AP** noted that a printed version of the now **communal Swiss events calendar** have been placed in the goody bags, and for Members to share with their clubs the establishment of this events calendar on the FOSSUK website. **AP** urged members to submit upcoming events whenever they are confirmed through email or via the contact form.

10. **FOSSUK PROJECTS FOR 2017**

**LG** thanked the sponsors that made it possible, and reviewed the **Swiss Clubs Roundtable** (Gathering of Presidents) that took place in November, where a welcome outcome of discussions were a commitment by clubs to foster better collaboration, the outcome of which has been joint events, in particular between the New Helvetic Society and the City Swiss Club London.



It is an aim to have an annual round table to continue to seek collaborative projects and events supported by more than one club and ideally sponsored financially.

**AT** briefly outlined the success of the over-subscribed '**Youth Event**' held in November: Engaging Young Swiss Adults in the Swiss Political Process. Speakers focused on the themes of voting rates, emphasised how every vote makes a difference, talked about not 'giving away' the right to vote so easily, and who to approach with issues and questions and how to get involved. **AT** thanked UBS for sponsorship of the event.

**AT** mentioned the **upcoming talk** by H.E. Ambassador Furgler on Brexit, hosted by the New Helvetic Society, the Ambassador's Award Concerts in Autumn, and a reminder to look out for the publication of the Unione Ticinese's **Castagnata** and New Helvetic's **Escalade** in early December.

FOSSUK will in due course publish details of the **next forum**, possibly this Autumn, which will most likely be a New Helvetic Society event welcoming the new Ambassador, and feature a talk with an updated status for Swiss nationals living in the UK on Brexit negotiations.

**AT** confirmed that with a sub-committee now established, the **FOSSUK constitution** will be reviewed and submitted to Members for review at next year's AGM.

11. **TO ACCEPT ADDITIONAL ASSOCIATE AND CORPORATE MEMBERS**

**AT** presented the motion to accept the **British Swiss Chamber of Commerce** as a new **Associate Member**, with a particular emphasis on joint event initiatives and a focus on youth.

There were no further matters arising and the motion was seconded by **Rosemarie Breitenstein**. The motion carried unanimously.

12. **VENUE OF AGM 2018**

**LG** announced that the next AGM will take place outside of London as is protocol, with either Wales or Northern Ireland being considered. The definitive venue will be announced after talks conclude with the relevant Hon Consul Generals.

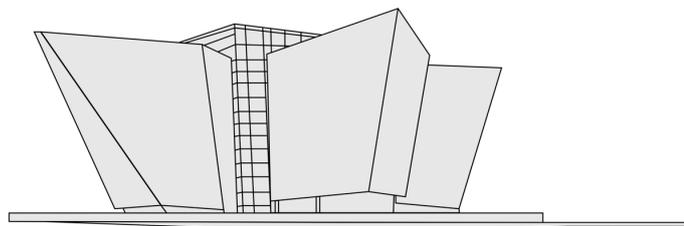
13. **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

**Suzanne Egloff** requested confirmation of how to access the communal Swiss events calendar, with AP reiterating that the most up to date version will always be on the website.

14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**LG** and the FOSSUK Committee specifically singled out **H.E. Ambassador Furgler, Andrew Littlejohn, Margrit Lyster, Joe Broggini, Claudine Gerber** and **Camilla Ghislanzoni** for their enormous efforts and thanks for their dedication and contribution to the community, with a special welcome to our new Swiss Review editor, **Gioia Palmieri**.

**Margrit Lyster** and **Walter Isler** informed the participants that paper copies of the Swiss Observer (former name of the Swiss Review) have been digitalised and are now available to read online. This is an extraordinary achievement and **LG** thanked both for their hard work in ensuring that future generation have access to past editions of the Swiss Observer online. **Peter Barber** outlined the importance of maintaining the history of the Swiss Clubs in the UK and members should be encouraged to ask family members or friends if they might have access to documents or historical records of clubs. These records should be passed to the respective clubs.



The 2017 FOSSUK AGM closed at 15:30 hrs.

RECESS

SPEECHES

H.E. Ambassador, **Dominik Furgler**, welcomed everyone present and expressed delight at a short formal session with many informal talks. The Ambassador thanked LG and the FOSSUK committee for all their efforts, stressing that FOSSUK has shown that it is an important link and stabilising force for the community. The Ambassador proceeded with a detailed talk about the current status of Swiss nationals resident in the UK with direct updates from the Home Office. H.E. Ambassador **Dominik Furgler** then bid farewell to the UK Swiss Community with fond anecdotes and a promise to return to London.

Peter Zimmerli, FDFA Delegate for Relations with the Swiss Abroad highlighted the severe budget cuts in the Foreign Office resulting in developmental staff reductions and closures of Embassies and Consulates in many territories. He reiterated that it is vital that that Swiss in the UK exercise their right to vote but is encouraged by the FOSSUK Forum initiative to involve the broader, and in particular younger community. He urged Swiss nationals to follow the FDFA and Embassy websites for factual information and updates about the status of Swiss citizens following the Brexit vote.

Sarah Mastantuoni introduced herself as a new Director at OSA and talked about the role of the Swiss Abroad, the issues facing OSA – in particular e-Voting, banking and parliamentary representation – funding implications on consular services, the role and duties of the Embassy and the Federation with a strong focus on Young Adults, information dissemination channels (Swiss Review and SwissCommunity.org) in its centenary year.

Speeches were followed by a view of a short introduction and showing of a short-film by **Francesco Bernasconi** a.k.a Sir Taki, a Swiss visual artist based in London and performance by folk musician **Silvy Vignola**.

Artworks by **Sandra Roduit** was displayed in the venue, with the artists present to meet the community and talk about their work and inspiration.

The meeting was adjourned with some attendees meeting for a social evening at a local pub.