



floramedia CONGRESS NEWS



2003
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SWITZERLAND

A few information about the Garden Centre Congress Switzerland – Presented and produced

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Wednesday, August 27th

Visit of the Famous Flower Island Mainau on Lake Constance

Highlights of the Day



Sonja Countess Bernadotte of Wisborg and Gloria Beck, President IGCA

Sonja Countess Bernadotte of Wisborg welcomes delegates attending the International Garden Centre Congress to her famous Mainau, the flower island on Lake Constance. The Mainau island is run by a private limited company (GmbH). Mainau Island has 220 members of staff all year round and employs more than 400 people from April to September. As a private firm with no public subsidies, Mainau works on private enterprise guidelines.

Previously a visit to the Garden Centre Max Schwarz was scheduled. This Garden Centre caters specifically to passionate gardeners.



The complete Japan delegation

Customers are offered a wide range of products in a spacious area in a rustic setting.

Last but not least: the visit of the Garden Centre Hauenstein, Rafz. This was the main centre of five

Garden Centres in the Hauenstein Group. Hauenstein is at the same time one of the largest nurseries in Switzerland, its range covers a very large selection of plants, fruit trees and ornamental shrubs and trees – more than 3000 varieties.



Two Davids (Symons/Danning) under the English flag



South Africans in front of a flower sculpture, Michael Rahner and Nick Stodel



The forest spirit of Mainau



Janet and Tony Blake (UK) in front of the Oriental secrets



Gloria Beck and the Hauenstein Team in Rafz



Dynamic bird feeding on the lake side: Graham and Susan Spears



Sweden and Germany: Kerstin Billbäck and Claerens Jacobsen, Gerhard and Cornelia Kruse



Joan Bordas: Spain is different!



...and another picture



Warm welcome at Max Schwarz AG, Villigen



l. to r.: Mr. Jean-Paul Hubert and his wife, Ambassador Switzerland/Liechtenstein, Mrs. Gloria Beck, IGCA President, Mr. Sandro Faivre, Sales + Marketing Director FELCO, Sponsor and responsible for the event

Editorial

Garden Centres – an industry with future prospects!

Despite the current economic slump, it is evident that proprietor-operated garden centres have remained unaffected by the decline in retail business. In the case of major distributors, the garden centre sector seems to have become the only one with potential for growth. Gardening is simply considered to be chic. People are proud of bouquets of flowers or fresh lettuces out of their own gardens. A reduction in working hours created time for hobbies, and the introduction of daylight saving time also provides us with extra hours to devote to our gardens. If this trend should continue then the horticultural industry should be safe for the foreseeable future. Staff training that is regulated by the trade associations also plays its part in ongoing development. The exchange of ideas and experiences between association members strengthens both individuals and groups and contributes to never-ending progress. Cooperation within the associations will increasingly be imposed, should the ever-ravenous state recognize the sector's bounty and endow it with more and more administrative restrictions. It will be then that the association for industry-specific matters will have to get involved and make its presence felt. The reduced VAT rate in respect of plants is already being firmly targeted by a few tax-hungry civil servants. To counter this, the beneficial service needs to be taken into consideration that the garden centres offer to a broad cross-section of the public. The mind-improving effect of gardening has long been known and it is pleasing to learn that the garden centres are supporting the construction in the Canton of Neuenburg of the first European training facility for gardening therapy. The association members are stepping into a further area of responsibility for the easing of future social problems by placing increasing importance on the employment of older and disabled people in the gardening sector. However, this task ought both to be recognized and rewarded. May the garden centre thrive, flourish and blossom out!



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Dr. J. Alexander Baumann, SVP member of the National Council, Kreuzlingen TG



“Do You Speak Schwizerdutsch?”

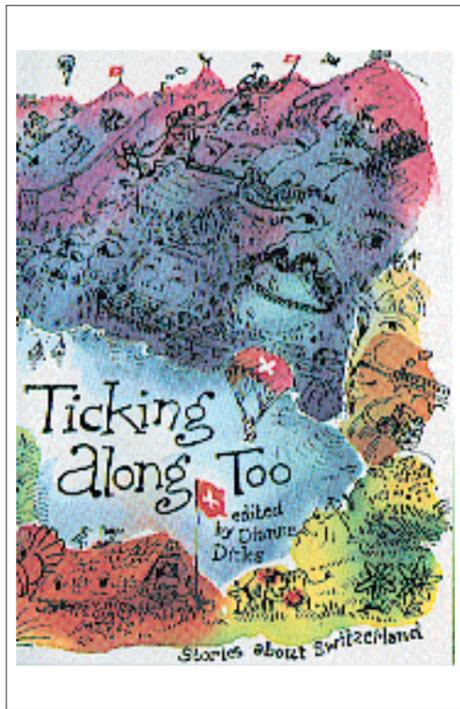
“It took a whole year for me to see through the mist of Schwizerdutsch”

I once read a story about a Russian linguist who spoke many languages. He was having a nightcap in a pub in Irkutsk when he overheard men chatting in a strange language he had never heard. He listened intently but could not recognise it, to his disgrace. Curiosity took him over to ask them. Those men had been speaking Schwizerdutsch, of course!

It was a blessing to read this, balm for the pains in my neck trying to keep my head above Swiss water. If a world-famous linguist has trouble with Swiss German, why shouldn't I? But then, my trouble does not end here. It begins. For I live where this strange language is spoken.

Schwizerdutsch, as I understand, has historical origins and stems from the medieval German language, an ancestor of present High German. It is not just a countryish dialect of 'Good German'. The real trouble with Schwizerdutsch is that there is no Standard Swiss German. 'Candy' is *Däfi* in Basel, *Züttli* in Zurich, *Dröpsli* in Lucerne, and *Suisserli* I don't know where. In the Basel area where I live, there are dialects of the city and of the rural area, the latter further differentiated in upper and lower. I wouldn't be surprised to learn there is a middle one too. The Basel dialect involves not only a certain pronunciation but also the many customs and attitudes that go with it. For instance, real Baslers are supposed to greet you with "*Gnetenoobe*" (good evening) from 2 p.m. on, which seems, even without summertime, a bit untimely to me.

Local dialect is a proud heritage and means of identity for Swiss people. The autonomy of cantons and communities is reflected in the dialects spoken. You'll hear Swiss say, "He is a real Basler," "He is clearly a Berner," or "He must come from somewhere in the north-eastern region." The Swiss can distinguish the slightest accent. A local dialect is rooted so deep in those born and raised here that 'foreigners' can usually be spotted the moment they open their mouths.



"Do You Speak Schwizerdutsch?" by Masako S. Uzawa is from the book "Ticking Along Too; stories about Switzerland" published by Bergli Books, Basel, ISBN 3-9520002-1-3. To order see www.bergli.ch. Reprinted here with permission of the publisher.

I play guessing games with my Swiss husband at times, but with little success. I can tell a Berner with his slow and distinctly Bernese accent. I still have trouble being able to spot a Basler even though I have been around this town a long time. Basel is so cosmopolitan. I can hit or miss with the dialects of a few other cantons. This summer we were in Hammerfest, Norway, to see the midnight sun. In a small remote restaurant, we overheard the people at the next table. "Swiss!" I said. "Yes, from Aargau," my Swiss husband elaborated. You do hear Schwizerdutsch in the most out-of-the-way places on the globe!

Schwizerdutsch is a spoken language, rarely written. I once collected Basel Fasnacht verses but I could neither read nor make sense out of them. You can only learn Schwizerdutsch by listening. My pseudo-Schwizerdutsch is the concoction of many teachers; my children (with Basel-Stadt and Basel-Land accents), my in-laws (with Lucerne accents), and my neighbours and friends from various other regions. My husband has long given up on me on this subject in order to save our marriage. Since I have a Japanese accent and, besides, a Southern drawl which I picked up in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, I am apparently a difficult case. I get myself tangled up in all kinds of communication problems. When I speak Schwizerdutsch and my listener looks confused, I try to switch to High German. When this sounds too high-brow, I have to give up and speak English. I have a feeling that the Swiss prefer my English to my 'Good German'. This problem inhibits somewhat my chances of developing any linguistic talents in this multilingual country.

It took a whole year for me to see through the mist of Schwizerdutsch. I've learned it the hard way. My parents-in-law were determined to orient their Oriental daughter-in-law into the Swiss way of living. They spoke no English with me, though later I heard them converse with English guests in their beautiful royal English. It is considered good Swiss manners to speak the language of the person you are speaking to, but in my case learning to speak Schwizerdutsch was a prerequisite for me to be accepted in my husband's family. My mother-in-law gave me a few good lessons. There are three basic key words to open the narrow gate to this wonderland:

Ha is haben (have), gha is gehabt (had) and gsi is gewesen (been)

Those are the secrets of it all. Thus, ha gha is 'have had' which must be reversed to gha ha in subordinate clauses. You should say "*bi gsi*" (I have been), not "*I ha gsi*". It's a Swiss word puzzle. You are 'in' if you can do it.

When in Switzerland, do as the Swiss do! I have found that the slightest efforts to speak the local language are appreciated and complimented. So after I had my 'German for beginners' course behind me, I decided to have a try at learning the Swiss version of this language and take a course in Schwizerdutsch. I found several other brave, admirable foreigners gathered to adapt themselves to their host country. People from Germany living in Switzerland are reputed by many not to want to condescend to speaking this countryish dialect.

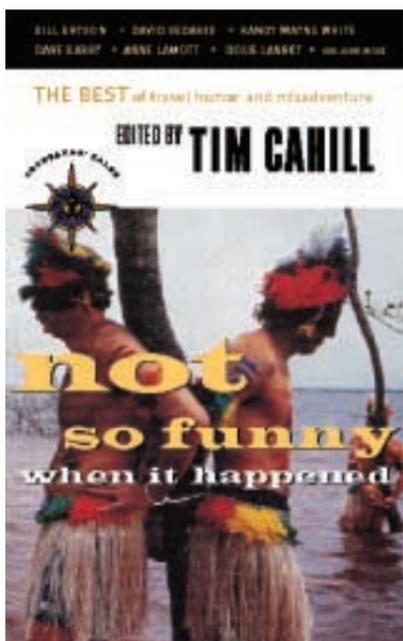
But most of my classmates were German couples who wanted to become naturalised citizens of this peaceful neutrality. I was also surprised to find some French-speaking businessmen in the class, since the French are supposed to expect the whole world to speak their language. There were also British people, Canadians, but no Americans. I was the only Japanese. There were no Italians – perhaps they knew better how to enjoy their evenings.

The German people had to learn to slur down their clear, fricative, staccato tones, into soft diphthongs and to sing folk songs. The French speakers had to be brain-washed to pronounce H as *Hinterem Huus bet's Hüener* (behind the house there are chickens). The English speakers had to work on their Zs: *Zyschtig Znacht zwüsche Zwölfli und Zawei* (Tuesday night between twelve and two). Being Japanese, I had to work on my infamous U and W: "*Lueg in die richtig Richtig, links und rächts*" (look in the right direction, left and right).

Besides, adjectives are most irregular. The degree of intoxication, for instance, goes like this: *beschwipst* is tipsy, *bsoffe* is drunk and *voll* is under the table. I've never forgotten one of my very first and most embarrassing lessons learned 30 years ago at dinner. My mother-in-law asked me graciously if I wanted another helping, I politely declined saying in my best German, "No thank you, I am voll."

I have come a long way since then and have become very fond of this curious language. I love its slow, folksy melodious tone, putting a Swiss 'li' at the end of names and 'gäll?' or 'oder?' at the end of sentences. Schwizerdutsch grows on you. It suits the Swiss – their faces, tempo, scenery and in fact the whole atmosphere in this country. Switzerland would not be the same without it. Now, neither would I.

Grüezi mitenand



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