



2023

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Barbara Müller

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Recommended Citation

Müller, Barbara (2023) "Annual Report of the Swiss Chapter, Switzerland," *Swiss American Historical Society Review*. Vol. 59: No. 1, Article 14.

Available at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/sahs_review/vol59/iss1/14

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Annual Report of the Swiss Chapter, Switzerland

by Barbara Müller

The Friends of the Swiss American Historical Society annual meeting was held at Basel, Switzerland, on September 7, 2022. It began at 11:30 AM with a motion by Barbara Müller, President of The Friends of the Swiss American Historical Society and Vice President of the Swiss Chapter of the Swiss American Historical Society, to approve the minutes from last year's annual meeting. It was seconded and approved. The minutes from the meeting held on September 8, 2021, in Zurich, Switzerland include:

- Draft Minutes for the annual meeting on September 3, 2020, were approved.
- A gift and thank you were extended to Bill Gasser for his work as treasurer. He was replaced by Kurt Morf.
- Treasurer's Report: A "Summary of Financial Accounts, August 31, 2020, to August 31, 2021" was distributed to all present. The financial outlook is positive. Books for the society will be reviewed later as it was not possible to do this prior to the meeting. To that end, Willi Müller and Christian Daeniker were voted as auditors. The Treasurer's Report was approved.

The next topic was the concern about membership, primarily due to deaths and cancellations. As of 2022, The Friends of the Swiss American Historical Society has 41 members. Barbara asked those present to spread the word and encourage new folks to join. The society welcomed the new Vice President who came to the meeting from the U.S., Thomas Quinn Marabello, and Yvonne Sandoz, a professional archivist who lives in Basel.

The 100th anniversary of the founding of the Swiss American Historical Society will be in 2027. Planning will begin in the next few years to celebrate this important milestone.

Barbara mentioned that Swiss Radio had contacted the society for information on the civil War. She then mentioned that we are looking for books to publish in the U.S. We also encourage new members and those

considering becoming members to submit articles anytime for the *SAHS Review*. Next, Barbara mentioned Luca Criscione who was present at the meeting as he has received a grant and will be doing research on Swiss immigrants in the Rocky Mountains. Luca is pursuing a PhD in history and teaches at a gymnasium. Barbara announced that Lyla Taylor from the American women's group would like to partner with the society for an event next year.

After these announcements, it was moved and approved that all officers would serve another three-year term. Those officers are Barbara Müller as President, Mary Brunisholz as Vice President, Kurt Morf as treasurer, and Regina Lanford as Secretary. Members were encouraged to consider stepping up to a leadership position when elections are next held in 2025.

Kurt Morf then gave those present the financial report and the auditor's report was approved. Barbara Müller then put forward a motion that was approved for Thomas Marabello to review with Kurt Morf the society's financials for the past year so he can share that with the Swiss American Historical Society when they have their annual general meeting on October 8, 2022, in Washington, D.C.

Mary Brunisholz, Vice President of The Friends of the Swiss American Historical Society asked if there had been any discussion of no longer printing the *SAHS Review*. She expressed how she liked receiving a hard copy of it. Thomas Marabello indicated that we have no plans to discontinue publishing the *SAHS Review*.

The business meeting then concluded and we all took a tram to have lunch at Rubino Restaurant. After that, we were given a guided walking tour of the old city of Basel, including the house where Erasmus lived, the Murus Gallicus—Der Keltenwall (excavated ancient Celtic wall fortification) and the Basel Münster, a medieval Catholic cathedral that became a Protestant church during the Reformation.

The group then went across from the church to the Gymnasium am Münsterplatz, Switzerland's second oldest gymnasium that dates to 1589. Famous graduates include Jacob Burckhardt and Friedrich



Former Swiss Ambassador to the U.S., Dr. Martin Dahinden, makes a point during the discussion on democracy today in Switzerland and America.

Nietzsche. We gathered in a classroom there to hear from Dr. Martin Dahinden, former Swiss ambassador to the U.S. and René Roca, a history teacher, on the topic of Switzerland and the USA: Sister Republics. Both men gave great insights into democracy and similarities and differences between the governments and current politics of Switzerland and the U.S. It was mentioned that the American Founding Fathers read works by Swiss philosophers and Roman history, and that we have similar historical foreign policies of not getting involved in wars and other country's affairs (the U.S. ended its long standing practice of neutrality after the Pearl Harbor attack during World War II). Those present asked thoughtful questions and offered their own insights. Both speakers were presented with a bottle of wine as a thank you for their attendance and remarks. The meeting then adjourned around 17:45 PM. The meeting was attended by 15 people.

*As reported by the Vice President of the U.S.
Mr. Thomas Marabello*

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