



# SWISS HERALD

**November/December 2020 Edition**  
Swiss Society of Vancouver  
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*Christmas will be different this year. It might be quiet, you might not have visitors, there might be less presents underneath the tree, you might not cook a turkey or bake a Christmas cake.*

*Look around you and look outside and discover places near you. You might notice things you've never seen before and wonder.*

*It might not be so un-eventful after all.*

*Wishing you joy and happiness for these unusual holidays and a Happy New Year to look forward to. Stay healthy and keep smiling! Christina Lips*

# OBITUARY

The Swiss Society of Vancouver lost a dear member:

## **Silvia Elisabeth Kinvig**

November 13, 1956 - October 20, 2020 (63 years old)

Silvia was a member of the Swiss Choir and took on the Presidency of the Choir from 2014 to 2019.



A virtual Celebration of Life was held on November 6<sup>th</sup> and I learned that Silvia grew up with four brothers in Aadorf near Frauenfeld.

Silvia studied to become a nurse. Later she went to Canada as an au-pair and met her future husband there. They went to Switzerland and started a family. After Steven was born 1983, they decided to return to Canada and James, their second son was born 1986.

Silvia ran a daycare from 1985 to 2009. During that time they divorced and Silvia raised the boys on her own.

At the celebration of life one of Silvia's sons mentioned their various camping trips even all the way to Alaska and all the other adventures they had together.

He described her as a devoted mother and a happy grandma. She was dearly loved by all the family members; family was the most important to her. She was so proud of her three grand-daughters Jaida, Vanessa and Cloe and spent as much time as possible with them.

Silvia was selfless, taking care of so many others.

The last few years she worked at the Mediated Learning Academy, spending school-time with Kyla, a girl with special needs.

She had International Students and in her spare time looked after a plot in the community garden. In her spare time she was sewing, knitting, walking on the dam, reading, and travelling. Her cooking was fabulous.

Silvia had mentioned to me last year that she had been painting with pencil-crayons and she showed me pictures she's created within the past few years. I was very astonished and amazed by her talent. I knew she had a gentle and high voice in singing, but she was also a visual artist! She was very modest and shy about that.

When I heard about Silvia's diagnosis of pancreatic cancer this Spring I was shocked and didn't want to believe it. I was so hopeful she would make it. She had been determined with the choir and positive for the future in all aspects. She fought her illness with dignity and patience and didn't feel pity for herself. Sadly she lost the battle and died Oct. 20 at the hospice.

I am very sorry Silvia couldn't enjoy more time with her family and enjoy her future retirement. I'm sure she had lots of plans for that. I will not forget her and I'll be thinking of her, especially when I'll knit or when I hear an angelic soprano voice.

Silvia was an extraordinary woman and will be missed thoroughly by her family as well by many friends, colleagues and her Saengerfreunden.

Christina Lips



2014 at the Christmas Market



2016 with Consul Jerome Charbonnet

At Consul General Urs Strausack's Fare-well Party

## A few memories of the events Silvia participated in.



2019 at Glacier Spring Cabin



2019 at a Christmas  
Concert for the  
Rutishausers



First of August 2020  
Sing-Along with the  
Choir



# CHOIR REPORT

written by our late Choir member and past President, Silvia Kinvig

One of the last things Silvia ever wrote, it may be unfinished.....

*Dear friends,*

*From the bottom of my heart I would like to thank you all. Some came to visit just to keep me company. Others shopped and ran errands. Some cooked, cleaned up my kitchen or stayed the night. The phone calls and the concerns I got filled my heart with gratitude. Your love has made me the person I have become. Special thanks goes out to Donna, who has been standing by my side all these years. She was a good friend for many years. Thank you to you all for being a part of my life. You each put smiles on my face, countless, countless times. Silvia*



**One of Silvia's many pictures she drew.**

**Andrea Flukiger, President writes:**

Silvia passed away on October 20, 2020 after a short battle with cancer.

I miss her. For 10 years I sang almost weekly beside Silvia.

Her Celebration of Life was on life stream November 6<sup>th</sup> and can be watched at [www.dignitycanada.com](http://www.dignitycanada.com)

This beautiful poem was used during her celebration of life and it reflects so much on Silvia.

**For the Garden of your daily living:**

Plant three rows of peas: Peace of mind, Peace of heart, Peace of soul

Plant four rows of squash: Squash gossip, Squash indifference, Squash grumbling, Squash selfishness

Plant four rows of lettuce: Let us be faithful, Let us be kind, Let us be patient and Let us really love one another.

And no garden is a complete garden without turnips.

Turn up for meetings, Turn up for service, Turn up to help one another.

And to conclude your garden you must have some time, time for each other, time for family and time for friends. And in closing, water your garden freely with patience and cultivate love, there is much fruit in your garden because always remember you reap what you sow.

On a Saturday in October almost all active choir members were able to meet once more in Abbotsford . This time in Dorli's shop, which gave us lots of room for distance and shelter from the elements. The live practice showed that the zoom meetings bear fruits and hopefully we can meet again in December (following the guidelines from the Health Authority ) for a live rehearsal.

We are planning to make a "Virtual YouTube Christmas concert ". We will keep you in the loop. The choir continues to have weekly zoom meetings on Thursday evenings and we have practice files on Google drive for our homework. Now you can join the choir from home. Please contact me if you are interested. (You do need an electronic device).

With Saengergruss

Andrea

[andreaflukiger@gmail.com](mailto:andreaflukiger@gmail.com)

## SENIORS

Due to Covid 19 the popular Senior's Christmas Luncheon had to be cancelled too.

This might give you the chance to think about the future of this event.

If you have any suggestions for changes of location, menu, entertainment or date please contact Edvige Weingand: [edvigeweingand@telus.net](mailto:edvigeweingand@telus.net) or 604-953-1963.



## WELCOME TO DAYA!

Aio Haeberli, our vice-president, his wife Prabjit and big brother Arjun are happy to announce the birth of their baby girl Daya.

She joined their family November 16<sup>th</sup> at 1:05am at Surrey Memorial Hospital. She was three weeks early but weighted a whopping 2871 grams.

Congratulations to the whole family!



## WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!



Are you stuck at home on your own and would like to talk to someone of the Society Vancouver?

Here are a few members who would love to hear from you:

Thomas Alkalbassi, Cloverdale: 604-576-6119

Christina Lips, North Vancouver: 604-984-9036

Dorli Meier, Abbotsford: 604-853-0890

Anne-Marie Spaeti, Agassiz: 604-796-0357

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# WESHALB DAS CHRISTKIND IN DER SCHWEIZ WOHT

von myswitzerland.com

Hoch über dem Bodensee, ganz im Osten der Schweiz, liegt das Dorf Wienacht. Verträumt, ruhig, märchenhaft. Einmal im Jahr – zur Vorweihnachtszeit – erwacht der Ort. Dann haucht das Christkind, welches hier wohnt, der Gegend Leben ein.



## St.Gallen

Die Metropole im Osten der Schweiz wird vor Weihnachten zur Sternestadt. Ganz in der Nähe liegt das Örtchen Wienacht. Hier lebt das Christkind.

Es ist windig in Wienacht. Die alten, würdevollen Häuser trotzen der kalten Luft. Die dünne Schneedecke hüllt das Appenzellerland in ein winterliches Gewand. Der Nebel trübt die sonst gigantische Aussicht auf den Bodensee. Es herrscht eine einnehmende Stille im 450-Seelen-Dorf. Das ist hier oben das ganze Jahr so.

## Das Versteck des Christkinds

Jemand, der sich in dieser Stille am wohlsten fühlt; jemand, der die Geborgenheit, die Abgeschiedenheit und das raue Klima Wienachts zum Leben braucht, ist das Christkind. Es lebt zurückgezogen in einem einfachen Häuschen und ist wie jedes Jahr zur Vorweihnachtszeit äusserst beschäftigt. Auch heute nimmt es einen beachtlichen Stapel Briefe aus seinem Briefkasten. Alle sind adressiert mit «An das Christkind, 9405 Wienacht» und sie kommen aus aller Welt. Aus Japan, Brasilien, Deutschland.

## Vom Posthalter zum Christkind

Willi Würzer war lange Leiter der Poststelle Wienacht-Tobel. So heisst der Weiler ganz genau. Wegen dem Namen schickten Schweizer schon immer Weihnachtsbriefe an das Christkind nach Wienacht-Tobel. Durch das Internet verbreitete sich die Geschichte weiter und heute schreiben Menschen aus der ganzen Welt Briefe an den Pensionär.

Sorgfältig öffnet das Christkind jeden einzelnen Brief und liest. Das Christkind existiert. Dass wir irgendwann aufgehört haben, daran zu glauben, ist nicht nur schade, sondern vor allem falsch. Denn hier sitzt es. Sein bürgerlicher Name ist Willi Würzer. Der Mann ist pensioniert und besitzt den Schweizer Pass.

## Herzergreifende Wünsche

Liest Willi Würzer seine «Christchindli-Post», huscht immer wieder ein Lächeln über seine Lippen, er nickt zufrieden. Gegen 200 solcher Schreiben bekommt er seit über 30 Jahren vor Weihnachten. Er liest jeden einzelnen Brief, sortiert und beantwortet sie. «Mittlerweile sind es etwa 5000», sagt er. Die meisten sind bunt und von Kindern. «Die schönen Zeilen geben mir viel.» Die Wunschzettel sind allerdings nicht immer fröhlich. Briefe von Kindern, deren Eltern krank sind, gehen Willi Würzer am nächsten.

## Früher waren es Holzspielsachen, heute ist es «Technik»

Der Pensionär war früher Leiter der Poststelle in Wienacht. 2003 wurde sie geschlossen. Die Weihnachtspost landet trotzdem weiter in seinem Postfach und er führte weiter, was er immer tat vor Weihnachten. Er liest und beantwortet «Christchindli-Briefe». Die Wünsche haben sich über die Jahre verändert. Früher waren es hauptsächlich Holzspielsachen, heute wünschen sich die Kinder fast nur noch «Technik». Erfüllen kann er die Wünsche nicht. Er könne aber dazu beitragen, dass die Kinder «an so etwas Wunderbares wie das Christkind etwas länger glauben.»

## 700 Sterne

Manchmal verlässt Christkind Würzer seine Heimat Wienacht und steigt hinab in das nahe gelegene St.Gallen. Die Stadt wird im Advent zur Sternengstadt. 700 beachtliche Sterne leuchten über Flanierenden und tauchen den Weihnachtsmarkt, die Plätze und die ganze Altstadt in ein magisches Licht. Beinahe jede Schweizer Stadt trägt während der Zeit vor dem grossen Fest ihr individuelles Weihnachtskleid. Willi Würzer mag die entspannte Stimmung und lässt sich inspirieren von den Angeboten.

## 17 Meter hoher Weihnachtsbaum

Sein persönlicher Lieblingsort ist der Klosterplatz, das Herz des **Stiftbezirks**, der zum UNESCO-Weltkulturerbe gehört. Hier steht eine mächtige, 17 Meter hohe Tanne. Sie ist geschmückt mit Tausenden von Lämpchen und verleiht St.Gallen etwas Märchenhaftes. Fast unbemerkt schleicht sich Willi Würzer zum Weihnachtsbaum und hängt etwas an einen Ast. Was es ist und ob er das jedes Jahr tut, bleibt sein Geheimnis.



«Das Christkind kann nicht alles verraten», sagt er mit weicher Stimme und begibt sich wieder auf den Weg Richtung Wienacht. Dort wartet ganz viel Christchindli-Post auf ihn.

# Christ Child – Christkind

## Christkind mit Bilderbuch, 1845



In some parts of Germany, mainly the south east of the country, children write to the Christkind/Christkindl asking for presents. The letters to the Christkind are decorated with sugar glued to the envelope to make them sparkly and attractive to look at. Children leave the letters on the windowsill at the beginning of or during Advent.

“Das Christkind” translates as “The Christ Child” in English but Germans don’t think of the Christkind as the baby Jesus. The Christkind is often described as a young girl with ‘Christ-like’ qualities. In Switzerland it’s the Chrischtchindli who brings the presents and puts them under the tree.

## Weihnachten



Markt und Straßen stehn verlassen,  
Still erleuchtet jedes Haus,  
Sinnend geh’ ich durch die Gassen,  
Alles sieht so festlich aus.

An den Fenstern haben Frauen  
Buntes Spielzeug fromm geschmückt,  
Tausend Kindlein stehn und schauen,  
Sind so wunderstill beglückt.

Und ich wandre aus den Mauern  
Bis hinaus in’s freie Feld,  
Hehres Glänzen, heil’ges Schauern!  
Wie so weit und still die Welt!

Sterne hoch die Kreise schlingen,  
Aus des Schnee’s Einsamkeit  
Steigt’s wie wunderbares Singen –  
O du gnadenreiche Zeit!

**Autor: Joseph von Eichendorff**

## My Christmas Wish For You

My Christmas wish for you, my friend  
Is not a simple one  
For I wish you hope and joy and peace  
Days filled with warmth and sun  
I wish you love and friendship too  
Throughout the coming year  
Lots of laughter and happiness  
To fill your world with cheer  
May you count your blessings, one by one  
And when totaled by the lot  
May you find all you’ve been given  
To be more than what you sought

May your journeys be short, your  
burdens light

May your spirit never grow old  
May all your clouds have silver linings  
And your rainbows pots of gold  
I wish this all and so much more  
May all your dreams come true  
May you have a Merry Christmas  
friend

And a happy New Year, too.



**By Kristen M. Sacardi**

# IT WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS



It was the night before Christmas, when all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;  
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,  
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,  
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;  
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,  
Had just settled down for a long winter's nap,

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.  
Away to the window I flew like a flash,  
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow  
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below,  
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,  
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer,

With a little old driver, so lively and quick,  
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.  
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,  
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name;

"Now, DASHER! now, DANCER! now, PRANCER and VIXEN!  
On, COMET! on CUPID! on, DONNER and BLITZEN!  
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!  
Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,  
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,  
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,  
With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof  
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.  
As I drew in my hand, and was turning around,  
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,  
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;  
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,  
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.

His eyes — how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!  
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!  
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,  
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow;  
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,

And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath;  
He had a broad face and a little round belly,  
That shook, when he laughed like a bowlful of jelly.  
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,

And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;  
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,  
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;  
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,

And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,  
And laying his finger aside of his nose,  
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;  
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,

And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.  
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,  
HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL, AND TO ALL A  
GOOD-NIGHT!

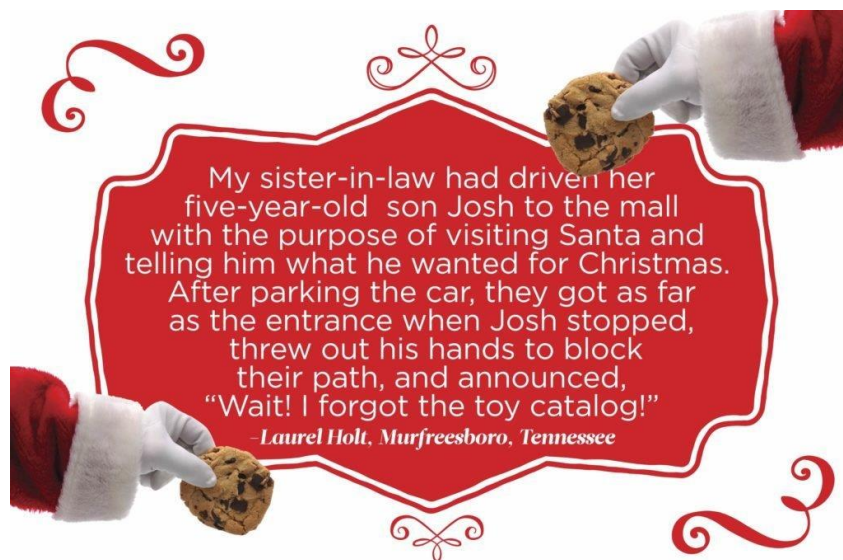
## Stories About Meeting Santa That Will Fill You with the Christmas Spirit



**A friend asked** me to dress as Santa to surprise her son. I went over to their house, changed into a Santa suit in the bathroom, and, to the delight of the little boy, came out with a loud “Ho, ho, ho!” After a half hour, I returned to the bathroom, changed back into my regular clothes, and exited the bathroom. The boy went in after me. He looked around for Santa. Then, reaching the only possible conclusion, he lifted the toilet seat and shouted, “Bye, Santa!” —*Kevin Cuddihy, Fairfax, Virginia.*

**My two granddaughters** had a visit from Santa (my son-in-law’s coworker). Santa asked the two-year-old, “So what do you want for Christmas?” Before the shy little girl could give an answer, her four-year-old sister gave it for her: “She wants me to have a Barbie doll.” —*Brenda Morris, Salisbury, North Carolina*

**Funds were tight** for my friend Jo and her husband. But Tinker, Jo’s five-year-old, was convinced that since he’d been good all year, Santa would bring him a bike. And not just any bike, but a rare yellow one. “Don’t worry, Mom,” he said. “He’ll bring it.” Jo’s sister and her five-year-old son lived with Jo, and as it happened that little boy was getting a red bike. On Christmas Eve, I told my mother the story of Tinker and the yellow bike. “You can’t let that happen!” she said. “That little boy won’t understand why Santa brought his cousin a new bike and not him!” Mom handed me a pile of bills. “Take this, and get him that bike.” By now it was late, and most stores were closed. I called the only place I knew that sold bikes. A man answered. I asked if he had any boys’ bikes left. “Only one,” he said. Then he added apologetically, “But it’s yellow.” —*Carole Martinez, New Orleans, Louisiana.*



My sister-in-law had driven her five-year-old son Josh to the mall with the purpose of visiting Santa and telling him what he wanted for Christmas. After parking the car, they got as far as the entrance when Josh stopped, threw out his hands to block their path, and announced, “Wait! I forgot the toy catalog!”  
—*Laurel Holt, Murfreesboro, Tennessee*



**Elisabeth Rechsteiner**

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