



# SWISS HERALD

**July/August 2025 Edition**

Swiss Society of Vancouver

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Vincent Van Gough: Sunflowers

## **WE ARE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS....**

It is time to prepare for the 2025 Swiss National Day Celebration that will be held at the SCMRA Chalet on Saturday July 26th.

SCMRA will once again be running the event in cooperation with the Swiss Society.

This large celebration needs your help to have a successful event for the greater Swiss community.

Please sign up as a volunteer for the Swiss National Day Celebration!

We need you... and we would love to have you join our list of volunteers for this year's event!

More information on page 4 & 5 of this issue.

## OBITUARIES

### Urs Fricker



Urs Fricker, beloved husband of Juliet Fricker, passed away on January 13th, 2025, after a long illness. A dedicated musician, traveler, and community leader, Urs was a founding member and longtime president of the Vancouver Dorfmusik, a Swiss-style brass band he helped grow from a five-member group in 1983 to a vibrant ensemble of over 20 players. Urs officially retired as president on August 1st, 2024 — Swiss National Day.

With Juliet by his side, Urs organized concerts, recruited musicians, managed finances, and hosted joyful gatherings. The couple traveled to over 70 countries, creating photo books and YouTube videos and slideshows after each trip, sharing their experiences through their dedicated YouTube channel.

Although the 40th anniversary of the Dorfmusik was marked quietly due to COVID, Urs's passion for music never wavered. He leaves behind an extensive music collection, now passed on to the band he

loved so dearly. His warmth, dedication, and creativity will be deeply missed.

He is survived by his loving wife Juliet and the many friends and musicians whose lives he touched. Laura Iwan has succeeded him as president of the Vancouver Dorfmusik, continuing the legacy Urs helped build over four decades.

Elke Porter

### Francois Emanuel Freyvogel ( From the North Shore News)



Francois Emanuel Freyvogel passed away on the morning of Wednesday, June 4, 2025, surrounded by his family. He was 88.

Born in Neuilly-sur-Seine, France, on October 13, 1936, Francois lived a richly adventurous and international life. The son of Alfred Freyvogel and Emmy Staehelin, he was raised in Basel, Switzerland, during and after the Second World War, later embarking on a career that spanned the globe from the

trading floors of New York to the grain fields of Canada, and from the ports of Marseille to the mountains of British Columbia.

A passionate fencer, equestrian, and devoted family man, Francois met the love of his life, Nina Preiswerck, at the Southlands Riding Club in Vancouver, where they both kept horses.

They married in 1962 and shared more than 59 extraordinary years together, blending business, family, and a deep connection to the land. Their journey took them to Milan, Basel, New York, Toronto, and ultimately back to Vancouver in 1974, where they co-founded Freyvogel-Preiswerck Ltd., a company representing Western Canadian newspapers and publishing their own farm papers.

In 1980, Francois and Nina purchased a small farm in Ryder Lake near Chilliwack, which they named Elk Lake Farms. There, they raised Highland cattle and Norwegian Fjord horses, becoming an active part of the local farming community for nearly four decades. Francois thrived in this environment, where his love of nature and history came together with Nina's boundless energy and adaptability. They were grateful for the stewardship and friendship of their long-time caretakers, Wayne and Lynda Raymond.

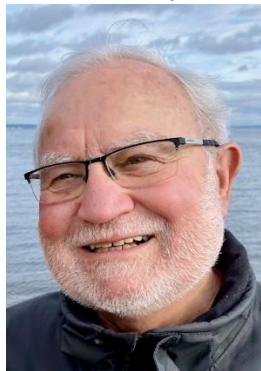
Francois was predeceased by Nina in 2021. He is survived by his sons Jean-Luc and his wife Claire; Andreas and his wife Nathalie, his cherished grandchildren Sean, Sara, Matthew, and Sophie, and his beloved great-grandson Rowen, as well as his sister Mireille and his brother Alphonse (with his wife Adrianna). He will be remembered for his boundless curiosity, deep sense of history, sharp wit, and unwavering devotion to those he loved.

Francois asked that in lieu of flowers, friends and family remember him in their own way, perhaps with a walk in nature, a toast to old-world charm, or a moment of gratitude for a life well-lived. For those wishing to donate, contributions may be made to the Vancouver Foundation (Freyvogel-Preiswerck Fund):

<https://www.vancouverfoundation.ca/give/donate/fund/freyvogel-preiswerck-fund>.

## **Hanspeter Meier**

Dear Friends,



We said goodbye to Hanspeter “Hampi” on Saturday and are heartbroken by his passing. He was my loving husband, our caring dad, kindhearted father-in-law, fun-loving Grospapi, good-natured brother, brother-in-law, uncle, and generous friend. We will miss him sorely: his quiet presence, his sense of humour, and his deep interest and gratitude for the people around him. He knew how to recognize, appreciate, and enjoy the simple things. We will forever hold him in our hearts.

As you may know, earlier this year he was diagnosed with a rare disease called amyloidosis. By the time of his diagnosis, the disease was already advanced and affecting his day-to-day life. Nevertheless, he never gave up

hope that the treatment would allow him to continue to do the things he cherished most: spending time with his loved ones and taking care of his beautiful garden. He planned summer vacation and grew tomato seedlings. He painstakingly planted potatoes, three neat rows, and was especially looking forward to having for the first time ever a whole bed of colourful zinnia. He showed such strength and determination even as the disease affected his quality of life. He was hospitalized very suddenly. Still hopeful, he continued to engage with the world, following family activities, garden progress, news, and sports. Once in palliative care, he courageously endured until his chosen end. And until the very end, he was concerned with our well-being. We had the privilege to accompany him on his way and are thankful that his suffering is now over. Everytime we eat a garden potato or tomato, we will think of him and how he is still nourishing us. And we look forward to the zinnia, some are blooming already. He left us with these beautiful gifts in addition to all the memories.

Thank you for your friendship and support, Rita, Kim, and Adrian



## SWISS NATIONAL DAY July 26<sup>th</sup> 2025

*Hosted by the SCMRA in cooperation with the Swiss Society of Vancouver,*

**Venue: Chalet of the Swiss Canadian Mountain Range Association**

**4141 Quarry Road, Coquitlam, B.C.**

2 km on the gravel road and then a left turn into our paved driveway



**ENTRANCE FEE:** \$10.00 (16 and under are FREE)

1:00 PM	Gates Open
4:00 PM	Bar and Grill Open
4:00-7:30 PM	Helicopter Rides
5:30-7:00 PM	Entertainment by Silverstar
7:00-8:00 PM	Dorfmusik and Vancouver Swiss Choir
8:00-8:30 PM	National Anthems and Official Ceremony
8:30-10:00 PM	Entertainment by Silverstar
9:30 PM	Lampion Parade
11:00 PM	Event Bar Closed

***\*\*No open flames/ No Candles***

**\*\* FREE OVERNIGHT CAMPING/RV PARKING\*\***  
(reduced tenting area from previous years)

*NOTE: Due to our liquor license: **all alcohol on the property needs to be purchased from our bar***

***\*\*\*CASH and Debit/Credit now accepted\*\*\****



# VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED ....

...to assist at the Swiss National Day Celebration on July 26, 2025!



This can be a nice social affair and a chance to meet new people

Please sign up as a volunteer for the Swiss National Day Celebration!

**We need you...** and we would love to

have you join our list of volunteers for this year's event!

There are all kinds of opportunities to volunteer at this wonderful yearly event, and it is a great way to meet people who you may not otherwise meet during the course of the celebration.

A shift is two hours long and can be carried out in various capacities throughout the event such as: the entrance gate; assisting with parking; selling of food-and beverage tickets; grilling sausages and preparing plates; handing out coffee and pastries; children's games and the lampion parade.

**Thank you in advance for doing whatever you can to get volunteers to come forward for the 26th.**

***Persons on the official Volunteer List do not pay the entrance fee!*** 😊

Please call **Elisabeth Rechsteiner** at **604-375-9802** (leave a message if phone is not answered) or send an e-mail to [elisabethrechsteiner54@gmail.com](mailto:elisabethrechsteiner54@gmail.com)

or

**Peter Schalle** at **604-435-6159** [globuscontract@gmail.com](mailto:globuscontract@gmail.com)

Please indicate your preference of work area and the time you can volunteer and we will do our best to accommodate you! Shifts start at 1:00 PM at the Gate and Parking and at 3:30 PM for the other stations. ***We look forward to hearing from you!***



**Great opportunity to see the area from above!**  
**Please register on their website:**

<https://skyhelicopters.ca/swiss-national-day/>

# CHOIR CONCERT MAY 24<sup>TH</sup>, 2025

## Photos:

Karin Kapp, Christina Lips and  
Peter Schaele



The Vancouver Swiss Choir joined up with the Metro Vancouver Mandolin Orchestra to host the annual Swiss Spring Concert on May 24th at the All Saints Anglican Church on Royal Oak in Burnaby. The church continues to be a beautiful venue for our voices and the music performed there.





We had a guest group the "Helvetia Trio" of Dubravko Pajalic (piano), Christina Lips and Sonja Essinger (flutes) performing 8 familiar songs to which the crowd sang or hummed along.



We saw many of our Swiss members who brought their friends, grandchildren and children to enjoy the songs and jodels. The Mandolin Orchestra

brought their talents and accompanied the choir on the final song "Let there be peace on earth".

Afterwards we all gathered for a social where there were plenty of sandwiches and sweets but of course the coffee ran out too quickly! Thank you to our conductor Dubravko Pajalic who guides us with patience to sing our best. We are looking forward to new members and returning members in the fall.



Any inquiries please contact Theresa Weltzin at 604-574-9069. We will see you at the 1st of August Swiss National Holiday festivities on July 26th.

Theresa Weltzin, [tweltzin@telus.net](mailto:tweltzin@telus.net)



# VANCOUVER DORFMUSIK

## Dorfmusik Annual Concert Dedication

Written by Robert Toren

Since the end of our concert season last year, Vancouver Dorfmusik suffered two blows. The first was the retirement of Urs Fricker as our long time President and a member of our trumpet section. Urs took over from Martin Russenberger, our first President. With Martin, and others, Urs was a founding member of the Vancouver Dorfmusik.

For many years Martin invited the band members and their family to come to his farm in Sumas for a BBQ and play for the cows. Urs continued that tradition, without the cows, inviting everyone to a BBQ at his home in Richmond.

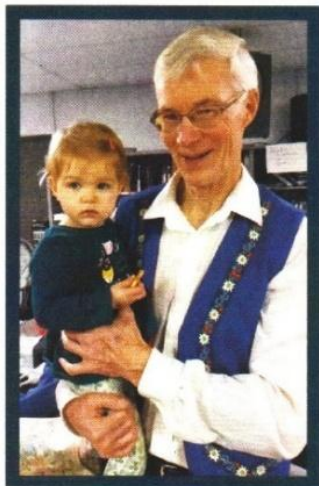
Urs was involved in every aspect of the band. He coordinated the yearly series of concerts, he managed the music library and added to it through his many trips back to Switzerland. He and his wife Juliet arranged for pieces of our concerts to be recorded and put on You Tube as well as arranging for the band to record for CD's. For years he has been Mr. Dorfmusik.

Sitting in the Trumpet section was our long time Treasurer Brian Asselstine. Brian was always smiling, and ready to help out with anything that needed to be done. He was to be our next President. As the band was preparing to start rehearsals last September, we received the news that Brian had passed away shortly after returning home from a vacation in the Maritimes. We were devastated but we all pulled together to carry on and keep the music going.

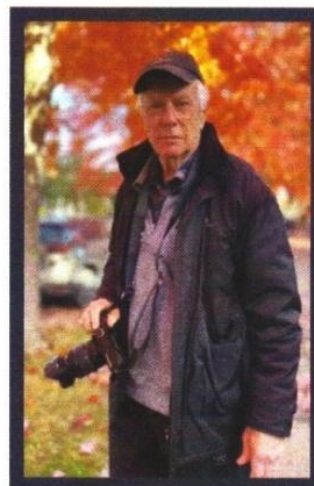
Urs passed away in January.

We now dedicate this Concert to our long-time friends and band mates, Urs and Brian.

The Dorfmusik Concert took place May 25 th at the Polish Friendship (Zgoda) Society Hall.



**Brian Asselstine**



**Urs Fricker**





Our special guests were the Anemos Greek Dancers' Group. The dancers encouraged the audience to join them.







Photos: Peter Schaele, Christina Lips

Sandwiches, desserts, coffee and tea were included in the price and an open bar was offered. We had a great crowd of people and our special guests were Consul General Thomas Schneider with his wife.

We were honoured to have Julie Asselstine (Brian Asselstine's wife) visiting with her daughter Elan, two grand-daughters and her son Julian.

## Dorfmusik at the Scandinavian Midsummer Festival, June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025



Once again the Vancouver Dorfmusik was the opening band at the Scandinavian Midsummer Festival. This time it was quite chilly and it rained, but luckily it got better throughout the day.

Robert Toren, our trombone player, announced our pieces. He and his wife Elfi were in charge of the entire music program for both days.





It's always a pleasure to play there and afterwards enjoy all the stands of the different countries. Not to forget the excellent food that's offered in the main building.

Photos and Text:  
Christina Lips



## EUROPEAN FESTIVAL SUNDAY, MAY 25<sup>TH</sup>, 2025



Our president Peter Schaele had a very busy weekend. Saturday he was the MC at the choir concert, Sunday morning he represented Switzerland at the European Festival and Sunday late afternoon he attended the Dorfmusik Concert as the Master of Ceremony.



# JUNGBUERGER-FEIER MAY 31<sup>ST</sup>, 2025



About 20 Jungbuerger in the age of 18 and 19 followed the invitation of Consul General Thomas Schneider and his wife at their house in West Vancouver. Consul Silvana Renggli welcomed all the young Swiss and said a few words about the consulate. In attendance were also members of the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce, a representative of the Swiss Canadian Mountain Range Association and Christina Lips from the Vancouver Swiss Society. They all introduced their field of expertise. David Gsponer from the Vancouver Dorfmusik played the alphorn and taught some brave ones how to play a garden hose. A great event with good food and goodie bags at the end.

## FEES FOR ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE SWISS HERALD

### Fees for design:

To make minor adjustments: Free

To make major changes to an ad: \$ 25

To create a new ad: \$ 50 – 100

### Deadlines for sending in ads or articles:

20<sup>th</sup> of August, October, December,  
February, April and June.

### Fees for advertisement:

Ad Size	One Issue	Six Issues
One full page	\$ 150	\$ 825
½ Page	\$ 90	\$ 495
1/3 Page	\$ 60	\$ 330
¼ Page	\$ 40	\$ 220
Business Card (5 Lines)	\$ 20	\$ 110



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Los Angeles, California 90025

## Annual General Meeting March 30, 2025

### Summary

40 members of the Swiss Society of Vancouver attended the AGM held at the Edmonds Community Centre in Burnaby. Special guest Consul Silvana Diego Renggli represented the Swiss Consulate. She welcomed everyone and praised the SSV board for all their work. She reminded everyone about the elections for the Organization of the Swiss Abroad and the two candidates running. The Swiss consulate has been sending emails to all registered with them about the new process wherein every Swiss abroad can now directly vote for their representative on the OSA.

### Highlights:

- Financial Statements for 2024 were circulated and reviewed. The Society is in a positive position with respect to finances and has several GICS for the funds generated from the sale of the Mt. Baker cabin in 2020.  
The sale of this cabin generated an audit of the society. This required the Swiss Society of Vancouver to go back as far as 2013 for taxes owing. All owed taxes have been paid. Our tax filings in the USA and Canada are completed. Any future taxes will be handled by a local accounting firm. (Side note: *The Mt. Baker Cabin new owners have renovated it and it is available on AirBnB to rent*).

The auditors completed a review of the 2023 and 2024 financial statements as required by our bylaws. Thank you to Peter Brunold and Barbara Wirsching.

- Susanne Wilson, our membership chair, nominated Aio Haberli to be an honorary member of the SSV. The members present voted unanimously to endorse Aio's nomination.
- The budget for 2025 was presented and approved by those present. The budget forecasts spending approximately \$34,450.00 on various activities and operations for the year.
- The directors reported on the activities of the SSV.
- Susanne Wilson gave a comprehensive overview of the membership and the number of members in each category (Single, Family, Seniors, etc.)
- Christina Lips provided an update on the Swiss Herald newsletter. She was able to report about many events that had not happened since before Covid. She thanked the many folks who have sent her photos and also are involved in printing and mailing the Swiss Herald to all the members who don't have email or have paid for the printed copy (Susanne Wilson) and for it being posted on the SSV website and emailed out to everyone. (Aio Haberli)
- Aio Haberli reported on our social media facebook page and the website. We continue to get more "likes" and viewers and have added the calendar of events to the website.
- Karin Kapp reported on the activities of the Vancouver Swiss Choir. She thanked the SSV for the continued ongoing financial support. The choir held two concerts and sang at four additional venues including the Seniors Christmas luncheon and the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce's Christmas Social.
- Lotti Frowein reported that the 2024 Seniors Christmas Luncheon was very well attended and successful. She plans to coordinate a couple of local events for seniors and other SSV members to join in this year.
- Elections – all positions were filled by acclamation. See page \_\_\_ for the list of the SSV Executive.
- Under New Business, a motion was passed to have the executive review the current bylaws with respect to the section on the dissolution of the society, and review any potential amendments to ensure they are in accordance with the Society's Act. The executive is to report their findings at the next AGM.

After, we adjourned to enjoy coffee, tea, sandwiches and many baked treats brought in by the executive.





## CALENDER OF EVENTS

Date	What kind of event	Where
Sat, July 26, 2025	Swiss National Day Celebration 3:30 pm - ??	Swiss Canadian Mountain Range Assoc. Coquitlam
October 2025	Filmnachmittag	
November 2025	Filmnachmittag	
November 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2025	Choir Christmas Concert 2 – 4:30 pm	All Saints Anglican Church Burnaby
Sunday, Dec. 7, 2025	Seniors' Christmas Luncheon 10:30 – 2 pm	Holiday Inn North Vancouver
	Waldweihnacht	

## LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS.....

who visit seniors who turn 90, 95 or 100, bring them some flowers and a card on their Birthdays and spend time to chat.

It would be great if we had a few volunteers in all the different cities or districts of the Lower Mainland.

Please let **Susanne Wilson**, know if you're interested:

[membership@swiss-society.org](mailto:membership@swiss-society.org)

778-908-5906



FIVE MINUTES AFTER YOU LEAVE THE HOUSE



"Be ready to stop, I hear the train whistle eight miles away! ... hey hit that cat! ... ooo, I wonder what's in that tin can ... how long until I can ride in the front seat again?"

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Title	Name	Email address	Number
President	Peter Schaele	<a href="mailto:president@swiss-society.org">president@swiss-society.org</a>	604-435-6159
Membership	Susanne Wilson	<a href="mailto:membership@swiss-society.org">membership@swiss-society.org</a>	778-908-596
Seniors	Lotti Frowein	<a href="mailto:lmfro@gmail.com">lmfro@gmail.com</a>	
Advisor	Karin Kapp	<a href="mailto:karinkapp@yahoo.com">karinkapp@yahoo.com</a>	
Advisor	Christina Lips	<a href="mailto:ch.lips@live.com">ch.lips@live.com</a>	604-928-9097
Advisor	Elisabeth Rechsteiner	<a href="mailto:elisabethrechsteiner54@gmail.com">elisabethrechsteiner54@gmail.com</a>	604-375-9802
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Consul	Silvana Renggli	<a href="mailto:vancouver@eda.admin.ch">vancouver@eda.admin.ch</a>	604-684-2231

## OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION

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Swiss Canadian Mountain Range	Rene Zollinger	<a href="mailto:scmra.president@gmail.com">scmra.president@gmail.com</a>	
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