

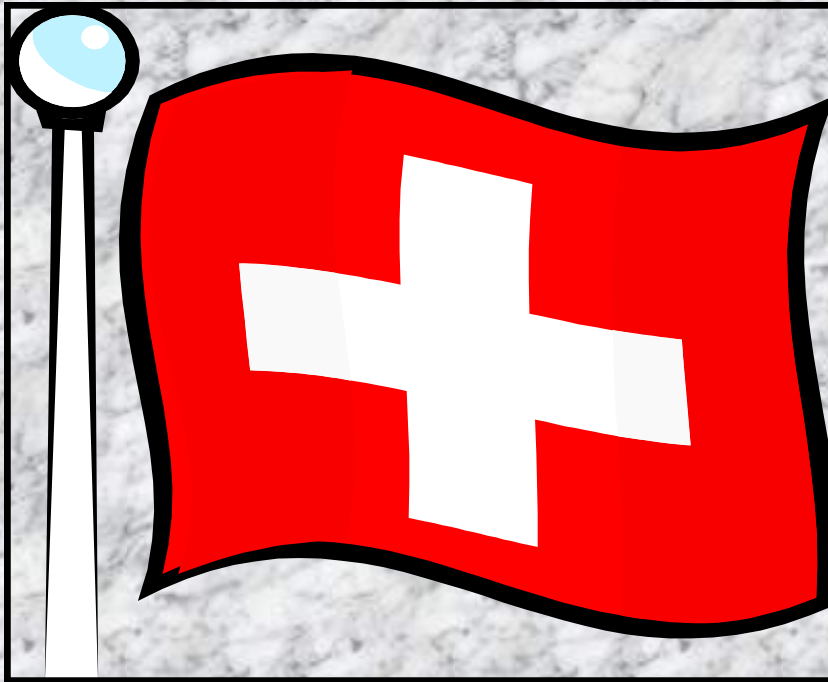


Lanark Rocks

lanarkcurlingclub.org

Season 2014-15

Issue 3



SCOTTISH

EDELWEISS TOUR 2014

Curling tour to Bavaria and
Switzerland



The Magazine of Lanark Curling Club

President: Anne Hood

Presidential Musings



SCOTTISH EDELWEISS TOUR 2014

It was with great delight that Jack and I joined the above tour from 27 September—11 October 2014. This tour was organised by Gordon Gilchrist (Lesmahagow CC) and 17 curlers from Scotland plus 2 Canadian curlers embarked on this tour. The Scottish contingency departed from Hamilton Ice Rink and we drove to Hull to pick up the ferry to Zeebrugge. It was on this first leg that we noticed that perhaps Gordon's timing can be a little bit out. We thought the ferry was sailing at 7 pm (perhaps a little earlier at 6pm?) so we arrived at the ferry terminal at approximately 5.15pm. Our driver walked to the reception area then came running out with custom officials—apparently the boat was waiting for us! The officials jumped onto our bus to inspect our passports whilst the driver was told to follow a car, with the revolving yellow light on its roof, at speed to the boat. We were then told to get off the bus immediately and get onto the boat—the driver stated he had the last space in the hold and he barely had time to switch the engine off and engage the handbrake before the ship's back door closed and the boat was off! We made it—just! A pleasant night of amiable companionship followed.

The following morning Gordon told us that it would take approx 7-8 hrs to drive to Fussen in Bavaria. This would be the longest drive of the tour so we settled down for such a journey. However, 12 hrs later, we were still on the road and Gordon had to telephone to our hotel to inform them we would be late. The hotel told us that they would be closed but they would leave the hotel open: our keys would be waiting for us at Reception and to simply make ourselves at home. This wouldn't happen in a city! We arrived just after midnight and everything was waiting for us—lovely.



Our hotel in Fussen
with our tour bus.





We woke up the next day to a beautiful day—above was our first group meeting. Our itinerary for today was a free morning with a guided walk (by locals) in the afternoon.



Most of us took a walk (there were many walking routes) that run alongside lovely lakes and the meadow flowers were still in bloom.





Our walking guides were locals, and curlers, who turned up in traditional costume. What a lovely touch.....

Fussen is a lovely village but there was a case of 'déjà vu' as we walked through it. It wasn't until later that I learnt that Fussen was where they filmed 'The Great Escape' so I need to watch the film again, taking my eyes off Steve McQueen and James Garner, in order to concentrate on the beautiful scenery.



Our first evening saw our first curling game (you may have been wondering when I was getting to the curling report). We played in Garmisch and that was when we discovered who we were playing against in Bavaria. We were presented with a Bavarian curling list of ex-national champions: ex-world champions: ex-senior champions: ex-European champions etc.....it was a list of Who's Who in curling. As you can imagine we emerged as runners-up but it was a very pleasant and enjoyable experience. The Bavarians made us feel so welcome and couldn't do enough for their Scottish /Canadian guests.



Gordon leaving for his first curling match—we were to discover also that Gordon has a fascination for hats!



Our 'tour gifts' were a tartan box, with RCCC tartan onto which we pinned our tour pin and club pin. We also provided a RCCC ladies coaster. Our tour pin showed a curler delivering a stone but without a brush—in the left hand was a glass of spirit (to show the friendly side of this game/tour)



In Garmisch our host was Rainer Schopp who, together with his sister Andrea, have plenty of curling titles between them. We played against Andrea (7 times European champ: twice World champ and European Mixed champ (playing with Rainier)).



Gordon wearing his best curling outfit for the first match and, above, introducing Rainier to the friendship cup (Quaich)



Our second day saw us curling in Fussen itself where we met the Kapp family—yes, brothers Andy and Uli who were European champs and medallists at world curling level also.



Ice rink at Fussen





Let the friendly games continue





The friendship cups continue to be exchanged—thank goodness Gordon has stamina for alcohol!

Both Garmisch and Fussen provided excellent cuisine with traditional Bavarian delicacies which was washed down with local beer. You can see the barrel of beer that was brought in for consumption at left of photograph above!

Our sincere thanks go to our Bavarian hosts who certainly gave us the 'red carpet' treatment. We all had a great time.

Our next stop was Zug, Switzerland and—en route—we would stop at the famous Neuschwanstein Castle (reputedly being the castle that Walt Disney based his on) but, sod's law, this was the only day that we had poor weather. Never mind—it was a lovely trip.



To be continued in next edition—next stop, Switzerland.





Lanark Rocks

lanarkcurlingclub.org

Season 2014-15
Issue 4

Scottish - Edelweiss Tour 2014 (Part 2)

**Switzerland - here
we come.**



The Magazine of Lanark Curling Club

CONTENTS

A swiss viewfront cover

Presidential Musingspage 3 –16



President: Anne Hood

Presidential Musings



I hope you have had a lovely Christmas holiday and that Santa was generous to you all.

My computer screen went 'kaput' several weeks ago but Jack has now fixed it so I am now able to continue with our recent curling tour and provide the report re the tour visit to Switzerland. I hope you enjoy it.

Following our Bavarian visit we travelled to Zug, You know sometimes, when you're travelling, you just pull into a side cafe en route and find out what an unintentional superb choice that was? Well, it happened to us—we were requiring some lunch so we just pulled off the road and found this cafe which looked like a dilapidated Swiss hut. Sitting outside were 3 elderly men who were chatting over their litres of beer—as, it would seem, was their daily routine. When we all arrived (20 of us) we packed out the place and the staff were faced with an unforeseen large order. Two young girls (children of the women running the cafe) were playing in the yard and we're convinced they were sent to the local shop/farm to buy more produce to meet our orders. However, the sun was out and we were more than content to sit outside sampling the local beverage alongside the three elderly men. We had the cheapest meal ever (!) - and what a feast it was. (Note the wagon wheel as well as the satellite dish) - the family lived above the cafe)..



We arrived in Zug later on that evening to find our hotel located beside the train and bus stations—I observed how both timetables complimented each other ie people got on/off the bus and walked over to the next platform to get on/off the train—yes,, some countries do have integrated transport policies! Another observation I made was that there was a lovely flower shop located in the square with displays of flowers on the pavement—were these flowers taken inside the shop at night? No—the goods remained on the pavement all night and were not touched—oh, what a lovely thought if this could happen in Glasgow? (nae chance!) However, back to the curling.....

Our first curling match was in Kussnacht where we arrived at 9 am for coffee then 10 am curling followed by lunch.



As you can see,
Jack is paying
attention to what is
happening (hmmmm)

Gordon's headwear is
rather more subdued
today!

It must be the hang-
over!



The afternoon included a visit to the Swiss Army Knife Factory (Victorinox) which everybody opted for —6 of the group constructed their own swiss army knife (under supervision) and this turned out to be a fascinating visit. I left with a swiss army knife which incorporated a nail file: a pen: toothpick: blade and tiny scissors. Some of the local curlers then took us on a guided walk around the lake before we headed for a Fondue evening.



Arriving at the Victorinox factory

Anne with Andre and Jim (from Canada) who had curled with Alistair Mackintosh and Bill Jackson when they went on the Rotary Canadian Tour—small world, isn't it?



The swiss army knives are worth a lot of money and show the finest example of precision engineering.

A drink before we take a guided walk alongside the lake.—well, what else would you expect us to do?





Our Kussnacht host wearing the Scottish cap and Hamilton sweatshirt—being introduced to the Quaich by Gordon.



The next day we went curling at Luzerne.— what a beautiful ice rink. It was encased in wood so the smell of wood resin was strong. I was told that this is how ice rinks should be constructed ie wood absorbs moisture so best conditions for curling ice prevail.



The Swiss national wheelchair team were at the ice rink to practice—so gave us a game.

I remember asking my opponent if she was a champion—she said “No but I currently coach the Swiss Ladies team”. Well, there was no answer to that eh?





One of the wooden bridges at Luzerne.

The next day we were to travel up the mountains to Engelbert. As you know, jack and I are skiers so we love the mountains: snow: good weather and stunning scenery and, boy oh boy, did we get it that day. What a feast for the eyes as we arrive at the ice rink in Engelbert.





A lovely 3-sheet ice rink at Engelbert (with mirrors—at back of photo).

Anyone for tennis? We had lunch outside (right of tennis courts) where we ate, drank and basked in the sunshine. Our host giving us a box of local produce after she experienced the 'friendship Quaich' from Gordon—our host enjoyed the 'Rusty Nail' drink!!



Our last day of the Swiss-German tour saw us back in Zug where we had a full day programme ie Welcome drinks at 9.45 am: curling at 10 am: lunch: curling at 2 pm: Draw the Shot at 4.30 pm: dinner at 6pm followed by prize-giving.



Hey—I found a new drink that certainly invigorated one in the morning! At the bottom of the canister it said 'Bombastic Natural Feeling' - well, it certainly was different!!

What you find in vending machines in Switzerland is quite something!

All ready to rock and roll.





After lunch a local 'oompah' band entertained us.

Jack is hoping to be on 'Strictly Come Dancing' next year!



Now here is a piece of information you may not know. Jim Morrison (Hamilton's Dev Officer) is a drummer and joined in with the band. Jim used to be the drummer for the group Marmalade (for those old enough to remember).

Then, our bus driver revealed he was the former keyboard player for The Sensational Alex Harvey Band— didn't we have talent on board! However, Jack's dancing is omitted here.





The Ice Man servicing the hack area. Now, there is something we never see Lockhart doing at Hamilton.

By now you may be thinking “When will she finish?” I am glad to report that we are nearing the end of the tour as we travel into Swiss-French ie Lausanne, Neuchatel and Geneva.

At Lausanne we had a lovely meal at the lakeside—not only was it a ‘Eat All you can Eat’ ‘restaurant but it was also a ‘State how you wish your food cooked’ restaurant ie you decided what marinade you wished your food cooked with hence you chose the style of cooking ie Thai, Japanese, Chinese, BBQ etc..... I’ve never seen so many chefs cooking in different styles all at the same time. It was wonderful.

Lausanne had a gorgeous ice rink and I thought of Martin Yuill. Why? Well, you climbed up a floor to get to the ice rink and when you were curling you were overlooking the marina—stunning. I could just see Martin’s yacht moored there. It was at Lausanne that Jack and I met 3 Swiss curlers that we had met at Zermatt 2 years earlier—small world. It also meant that Jack and I were talked back into returning to Zermatt in 2016 for the Scottish Week—to be honest, we didn’t need much persuading.

Name your food and take your choice of cuisine!





Ice rink at Lausanne



Happy Birthday to Anne.



Hand-made swiss chocolates in the shape of curling stones were given to us all—aren't they lovely? I can tell you—they were damn delicious.



We all had a guided bus tour of Lausanne which included a brief visit to the HQ of the Olympic Movement. Well—we had to find the curling statue didn't we?



Have a fag, son?

In memory of Rhona's
stone of destiny win.

It looks like a posh
grave stone!





Cosy lunch.

We had mixed changing rooms at Neuchatel—most interesting and disconcerting (as it was only the elderly men who came into the 'ladies'.

At Neuchatel our French speaking host turned around and said “How’s it going China’s?” - he hailed from Gourrock. He then spoke in broad Scots that the French Swiss had no idea what he was saying to us. Neuchatel had a 3-sheet ice rink and the juniors wanted to play us so some of us had two games that day—however, we only played 4 ends against the Juniors. As all juniors are, they were only interested in playing the ‘big shots’ so they found themselves down in shots after 3 ends—nobody wanted to ‘granny’ the youngsters but they were taking their own shots out and we couldn’t do anything to stop this. However, their skip had a final stone to throw and, if done correctly, he would pick up a score of 5—he did it! Nobody was more pleased than us but we still won the game.

Jim presenting the youngsters with their medals.



Our last day of curling saw us in Geneva at a brand new sports arena—we were the first foreign team to play there. Getting to the arena proved slightly difficult as we were caught in rush hour traffic then couldn't find our way to the ice rink but, undaunted, we were with the police so when Gordon spotted a Geneva panda car we stopped the bus: Gordon jumped off and spoke to the Geneva police and presented them with a Scottish police badge and, lo and behold, we got a blue light escort to the arena. One of the curlers who was waiting to greet us looked quite perplexed as we arrived! We were told that the arena was new and still in the 'finishing process' so off I went to the changing room. I decided to pay a visit to the 'Ladies' so spotted a cubicle and entered only to discover there was no door—yes, finishing touches were still needed! It was a beautiful 6-sheet ice rink with electronic scoring boards that did the arithmetic for you.



Well, that was the end of the tour folks.

Jack and I had a great time—company was terrific: tour organisation was brilliant: curling was fun and enjoyable and the hospitality shown was immense.

As you would have read in the earlier issue, we had a little trouble with the timing of the ferry and we still faced this on the way home. Route maps and sat navs were checked and off we set for Zeebrugge. Timing was tight and as we approached the ferry terminal we could see the boat was there and we didn't have spare time and, guess what, there was a long queue of lorries waiting to enter the terminal. We were going to get caught up in this but our driver, and he said he did this unintentionally, approached the first roundabout and took it clockwise (ie British style). As we would have been caught in the queue if we took the roundabout anti-clockwise then we avoided any delay—off the bus we got: passports were checked and we made it to the ferry on time (just). It was at this point that we had discovered that Andre (from Canada) had left his curling shoes and trousers on the bus—we had dropped Andre and Jim off at their airport hotel the previous evening. Oh well, somebody had to deal with the postage.

If you ever get a chance of a curling tour then you should consider it—it is certainly an experience.

