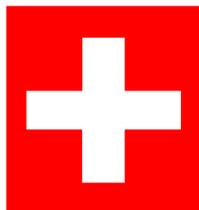

The Times of Campello

Volume 1 Issue 3

February 2001

August 1 Swiss National Day



I experienced my first Swiss National Day last year and many of you who read the last newsletter contacted me and introduced yourselves. It was a pleasure to meet you all and make your acquaintance and I hope it won't be long before we meet again.

1 August 2000 dawned sunny and bright high on the mountain slopes of the Leventina Valley. In the kitchens delicious cakes and deserts were baking in readiness for donation to the cake and desert stall later that day.

Campello's public parking area had been cleared of cars and volunteers were erecting trestles and benches in readiness for the evening. A large bonfire had been built by the roadside at the entrance to the village and would be the location for the fireworks display later that day.

After I had made a few cakes (not easy to calculate cooking times at high altitude) and a simple lunch, Tony and I ventured for an afternoon stroll. We were staying at Cari d'Int and we walked down through Cari Croce where their celebration was a lunch followed by games of Bingo. As we walked back up the mountain the distant sounds of the Tannoy reached us calling out the numbers.

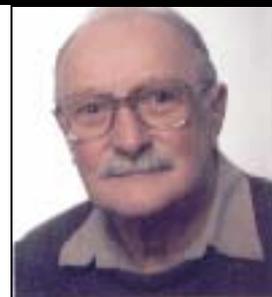
We made our way into Campello at 6.30 p.m on a beautiful warm summer evening (not many of these this year in either Switzerland or UK!), and purchased our ticket that entitled us to a plate of delicious stew served with polenta followed by local cheese, some of it made in Cari, together with Ticinese bread freshly delivered that morning.

The tables were set with wine and "fizzy pop" and working hard were the chefs of the day, Ugo and Mauro Diviani and Italo Giavera. All afternoon they had been cooking and stirring 17 kilos of commmeal cooked with 67 litres water in a large cauldron and were heating 30 kilos of stewed beef. At 7.00 p.m the meal was served by Ugo, Mauro and Italo and their hard working band of helpers (too numerous to name) to about 160 people. There was a cacophony of noise as we all ate and talked our way through the meal with a short break for us to buy our deserts from the cake stall - what a choice! Here there was a delay as we queued to point out "some of these please and some of those" before making our way back to our tables, plates loaded to savour them all - delicious!

There followed a number of games of Bingo with prizes for whole lines and a full house and then two raffles. Full marks to Pinetta Brentini who kept us all in order and called the numbers, and to Milena Diviani, Margherita Diviani and their helpers who sold the tickets and distributed the prizes.

At 10.00 p.m the bonfire was lit and we could see other such fires glowing in the dark on the hillsides on both sides of the Leventina Valley, together with their fireworks. The Campello fireworks augmented the display, to everyone's delight, as we gathered around the glowing fire. Slowly people left to make their way home whilst others lingered to talk, tidy things away, or just watch the dying embers.

It had been a beautiful day and I was proud to have been part of it. Thank you to everyone who contributed and worked so hard to make it such an experience. I can't wait for my next 1 August in Campello!



Who am I?

My name is Victor Farrent and I am the son of May Diviani, who was a great grand-daughter of Pietro Maria Diviani (of the Sebastiani branch). Pietro was born in Campello in October 1824 and arrived in London, England in around 1850.

I was born in London 1928, where I lived with my German wife, Adele, and where our two sons Martin and Karl were born in 1960 and 1963.

In 1973 we moved to Lengerich, Germany. This is Adele's home town, and where our sons attended grammar school before studying and going to live in Bonn and Bietigheim-Bissingen, respectively.

We first visited Campello in 1993 when we stayed with the Brentini's at the Ristorante Tre Cervi. We were warmly received by Olga (nee Diviani) Schweingruber and her husband Andre and Olga's sister Odette. We have also had the pleasure of meeting with Milena Diviani at her home in Bellinzona.

We look forward to the re-union in 2003 and not only hope to see these friends again but to meet and make friends with other members of the family.