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## HAPPY CHINESE NEW YEAR

### GONG XI FA CAI



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#### President's Message

The Committee of the Swiss Association of Singapore is proud to announce that the initial membership drive on December 10, 2006 was a success. This success was only possible thanks to the efforts made by all committee members, their partners, representatives of the Swiss Embassy in Singapore and the Swiss Association's many supporters.

The auspicious beginning of the Association at the end of 2006 has carried over into 2007. The first official event organized by the Committee of the Swiss Association was a visit to Faessler Gourmet, followed by a series of introductory courses to "Jass" (Swiss National Card Game) and Mahjong (Chinese Game).

The Swiss Association programs for the year 2007 promise to be varied and entertaining. In addition to the standard programs, special activities and events will be staged such as the wakeboarding, inline skating and bowling. And please mark your calendars for the inaugural event of the Swiss Association which will be held on Saturday, May 19, 2007!

I very much look forward to meeting all of you at one of the Swiss Association's forthcoming events.

On behalf of the Committee, I wish you and your families a happy and prosperous Year of the Pig.

Luzia Kappeler

#### Fassler Gourmet Tour

On January 17, 2007, the Swiss Association took a tour of the Fassler Gourmet factory, its first tour of the year. President Luzia Kappeler and Vice President Katrin Draemann Barothy plus eleven members were greeted at the front door by Mr. Martin Fassler. To our delight, at the entrance to the building was a large statue of a dairy cow reminding us of our homes in Switzerland.

Inside the factory and past a short entrance, Mr. Fassler guided us into a freezer stocked with finished salmon products. As we proceeded through the factory, we were shown whole frozen salmon and filets of salmon, and then observed the processes of salting, smoking, slicing, marinating and packaging. At this time of year, the employees of the factory are busy preparing for Chinese New Year. We were pleased to hear that Fassler products were also available in Switzerland.

After our tour, we were invited to Mr. Fassler's office where a table was prepared with an assortment of Fassler products which we had an opportunity to taste. Mr. Fassler also offered us red wine, coffee and tea to accompany our tasting. Prior to leaving the factory we had the opportunity to purchase some of the Fassler products.

### Mahjong Lessons

Four weeks ago 20 Swiss Association members arrived at 8 Caldecott Close for the first of several lessons in learning the game of Mahjong.

Our very attentive teacher, Xiaoyi, introduced us not only to a new game played with small square tiles with numbers and symbols marked on them, but also a new vocabulary of "cracks", "chows", "pongs" and "kongs". The game set is made up of bamboo sticks, circle dragons, winds and flowers. We have learnt what it means to "build a wall", "sit on the East" and "win a fan".

### Singapore Art Museum Tour

On Wednesday, January 31, members of the Swiss Association visited the Singapore Art Museum (SAM) for a private guided tour of the Chen Wen Hsi Centennial Exhibition. There were 15 members and 2 guests in attendance. Our private tour guide was Sandra Berrick, an artist herself and an expat who has been living in Singapore for 20 years. Sandra began our tour outside the SAM by pointing out the beautiful architectural features of the building. She informed us that the SAM is the former St. Joseph's Institution, a Catholic boy's school. In 1987, the school relocated to a larger building and the SAM was officially opened in January 1996.

Thanks to the Swiss Association Committee and Mr. Martin Fassler for giving us the opportunity to discover the salmon story.

Swiss Association Member  
Jilda Demiryen

The goal is to create a Mahjong of sets of three or four tiles in a sequence of numbers or a set of one or more suits. We are now able in some varying abilities to "chow", "pong" and "kong".

At this stage, we are learning to score a very curious method of points, where not only does the winner gain points but also picks up minus points from their opponents to win.

Thanks to our hostess for offering the lovely surroundings and refreshments, Xiaoyi and Cornelia for their instruction, and "Heads Up" to the students for enthusiasm in making Mahjong a great success.

Swiss Association Member  
Fleur Dickinson

Once inside the museum, we began our tour of Chen Wen Hsi's exhibition. Ms. Berrick tracked Chen Wen Hsi's creative development and described his influence on the Singapore art community. She showed us works from notable periods in his artistic life that included traditional Chinese ink and Western oil painting and his experimentation with the Fauvist and Cubist styles. We were shown many examples of the artist's favourite subjects, including landscapes, birds, monkeys, still-life studies and abstract compositions.

We finished our tour in the Auditorium, the former school's chapel. At the front of the auditorium, in the place of the original stained glass window, is Philippino artist Ramon Orina's glass installation, a more modern and contemporary window to the classic architecture.

Ms. Berrick finished our tour with a story about the chapel's original stained glass window. It is said priests of St. Joseph's removed and hid the window during WWII to protect the window from damage. When the SAM was being renovated, it was decided to reinstall the original window. Attempts to locate the window were unsuccessful. The whereabouts of the original window remain a mystery to this day.

Swiss Association Member  
Mary Mapp

### Editor's Notes

If you have anything you would like to contribute to the next Swiss Association of Singapore Newsletter, please email it to me at [editor@swiss-sg.org](mailto:editor@swiss-sg.org). All submissions are welcome.

Mary Mapp