

PCP Forum 36/2021: Marksmanship and Protection of Cultural Property

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Christoph Flury: Editorial. Marksmanship and Protection of Cultural Property

Dear reader,

As a young boy, I was always fascinated by the countless medals and wreaths that my grandfather had on display in a glass wall cabinet in his living room. I could hear the awe in his voice as he told me all about the figures and scenes depicted on these mementoes. While he was a passionate, proud and – judging by the number of medals he had – talented marksman, my own record in this field were somewhat less impressive. Although I took the *Obligatorisches* (mandatory annual shooting practice for all men in the Swiss military service) seriously, I never covered myself in glory; hitting the bull's eye was a rare feat for me.

As a historian, I appreciate the significant place that shooting and marksmanship have occupied in Switzerland through the ages. The Swiss National Shooting Association, founded in 1824, helped to forge a sense of national political unity, which was further consolidated by competitive shooting events and the emergence of local shooting clubs. However, there was a dark side to these developments: shooting festivals increasingly fuelled the simmering feud between liberal-radical and Catholic-conservative forces in the country. These tensions eventually spilled over and led to the *Freischar* campaigns and ultimately the *Sonderbund* War.

Nonetheless, the establishment of the Federal Constitution of 1848 came about, in part because of the efforts and events of the Swiss shooting clubs and societies which sprang up during that period, as well as the work of the Swiss National Shooting Association.

Besides their historical significance, shooting and marksmanship are an important part of Switzerland's culture and are tied to a great deal of popular traditions and customs, many of which are still observed today. Shooting displays are a feature of several religious and secular ceremonies, while a wealth of traditional costumes, flags and banners, as well as images and texts bear out how deeply rooted these practices are among large sections of the population. There are also quite a few entries in the Inventory of Living Traditions in Switzerland which have ties to these pursuits: *Abbayes de tir* (shooting societies in the canton of Vaud), the annual procession of the *Luzerner Hergottskanoniere* (the Lucerne cannoneers of God) and, of course, the canton of Zurich's traditional shooting contest *Knabenschiessen*, which dates back to the 17th century.

Shooting and marksmanship are practices that may also require the involvement of the Swiss civil protection system. Organisers of major events like the Federal Shooting Festival can request the deployment of serving civil protection personnel to perform duties on behalf of the community. An article in this issue of PCP Forum explains the criteria for this type of public service mission.

The rich tangible heritage associated with shooting and marksmanship are also a matter for cultural property protection specialists. They include immovable objects such as shooting clubhouses, as well as documents like shooting regulations and historical accounts of shooting festivals which are kept in archives and libraries. There are also movable objects in museum collections like weapons, flags, banners and paintings. A number of articles in this issue take a closer look at some of these artefacts. Enjoy!

This issue of PCP Forum is special for another reason: it is the last edition to be overseen by Rino Büchel, the outgoing head of the FOCP's Protection of Cultural Property Section. You can read a full tribute to him and his achievements on p. 94. On behalf of FOCP management, I want to thank him for his long and outstanding service and wish Switzerland's cultural heritage hotshot all the best for the future!

Jürg Stüssi-Lauterburg, Hans Luginbühl, Richard Munday: Switzerland's National Shooting Federation – a 200-Year-History

In the early part of the 19th century, Switzerland had yet to forge a national identity and define its place in the world. Despite a growing number of cantons, the federal structure as we know it today had yet to take shape. Riflemen created the spirit needed to realise this goal. In 1824, 228 men, prompted by match director Carl Ludwig Schmid-Guiot, founded the Swiss Shooting Association in Aarau. It is the predecessor of the present-day Swiss Shooting Sport Federation (SSV).

Over the years, hundreds of thousands of riflemen have given the country its flag and served it faithfully. Two presidents of the SSV, Johann Jakob Hess from the canton of Zurich and Henri Druey from the canton of Vaud, had a hand in Switzerland's adoption of its unofficial motto 'One for all, all for one' in 1836. The white cross on a red background has adorned all federal shooting festivals ever since.

The SSV has had 48 presidents to date: 46 men and two women (Rita Fuhrer and Dora Andres). The mandatory annual shooting practice for all men in Swiss military service (*Obligatorisches*), the largest annual shooting festival in the world, the *Feldschiessen*, stand shoulder to shoulder with shooting sports.

Lugano, Altdorf and Lausanne all have a monument to William Tell, Switzerland's symbolic figure of freedom. Yet, the most meaningful monument to this folk hero can be found in the hearts of the Swiss people.

Pascal Aebischer: Federal Shooting Festival In Lucerne.

The 58th Federal Shooting Festival (ESF) will take place in Lucerne from 11 June to 11 July 2021. ESF 2020, also known as LUZERN 2020, will be the sixth time that the city has hosted the event (1832, 1853, 1901, 1939 and 1979). The COVID-19 pandemic meant that the festival had to be postponed by a year. Due to the public health situation, it is also still not clear whether concerts and public viewing during the European Football Championship will go ahead as planned.

For Lucerne, there is no time like the present! Thanks to a sustainable concept and a great deal of flexibility, ESF 2020, which is set to attract as many as 30,000 shooting enthusiasts, should be a sure-fire hit. Rather than spending money on building a temporary structure for the event, the organisers will invest in existing shooting ranges and in doing so provide local sport shooting associations with valuable support. The organisation of this large-scale national event would not be possible without the Swiss army and civil protection service.

Regula Berger: The Swiss Shooting Museum in Bern.

Following the 31st Federal Shooting Festival in Bern in 1885, a decision was taken to create a 'shooting room' (*Schützenstube*) to collect, display and preserve shooting trophies. It opened in 1887 in the *Hallerhaus* building in the centre of Bern. Later, the collection was relocated to the *Bernische Muster & Modellsammlung* in the city's *Kornhaus*. In 1894, the collection moved again, this time to the Museum of History Bern. A decade later, the Swiss Shooting Association (SSV) took over the patronage of the *Schützenstube* and constructed a purpose-built facility in *Kirchenfeld* to house the collection. In 1939 the Swiss Shooting Museum finally opened its doors.

The permanent exhibition traces the history of shooting and marksmanship in Switzerland, from the founding of the Swiss Shooting Association in 1824 to the evolution of these practices to a modern sporting pursuit and Olympic discipline. The artefacts on display tell the stories of leading

figures from the shooting community, document traditions both past and present, recall competitions and sporting achievements, and explore social and political developments in Switzerland. Every year, temporary exhibitions bring new insights and enliven the museum.

In recent years, efforts have focused on ensuring that the museum is run according to professional standards. Innovation is the driving force behind the museum's current projects and work.

Guido Schenker, Jonas Häne: Weapon Collection Of the Altes Zeughaus Solothurn (Interview).

The *Altes Zeughaus* (old arsenal) was built in 1609–1614. Until 1798 it served as a storehouse for the armoury and weapons of local burghers and the mercenary trade. Much of the museum collection dates from this period, including its internationally renowned armoury collection that boasts as many as 400 suits of armour. The collection also includes a plethora of cut and thrust weapons, pole arms, firearms, ordnance, flags, uniforms and other accoutrements. More information on the museum's collections can be found online (sammlungmaz.so.ch/).

Given that the handling, acquisition, storage, conservation and care of museum artefacts is also of interest to protection of cultural property efforts, Guido Schenker, who was then the chief PCP officer in the canton of Solothurn, interviewed two members of the *Altes Zeughaus* staff in advance of the shooting-themed PCP Forum. Claudia Moritzi, a historian and director of the museum, and Sandra Nicolodi, a research assistant in the collection/exhibition department kindly agreed to take part. Jonas Häne, who was an intern at the Monument Preservation Office at the time, assisted with the interview. Mr Schenker retired in mid-2020.

Thomas Antonietti: The Lötschental Grenadiers Of God.

With their distinctive historical costumes, the Lötschental Grenadiers of God (*Herrgottsgrenadiere*) bring a very special touch to the Feast of *Corpus Christi* procession, the Benediction Sunday procession (which is held on the Sunday after *Corpus Christi*), and various dedication services.

The uniforms are a combination of those once worn by local men while serving in foreign armies and early Swiss army uniforms. The most striking feature is the scarlet tunic with the white epaulettes and white crossed holders for swords and cartridge bags. Equally eye-catching are the plumed caps. The Grenadiers' headwear varies by rank: officers and officer cadets wear a cocked hat; the men at the front of the procession wear bearskin hats, while those bringing up the rear wear caps once worn by the Swiss army.

The participation of soldiers in historical uniform in these processions is probably a legacy from when Swiss men served in foreign armies. For centuries, the Lötschental provided a steady supply of young fighters.

Philipp Messner: Shooting Festival Posters Through the Ages.

Cantonal, regional and national shooting festivals feature on quite a few of the posters in the Basel School of Design (SfG) collection. Their design reflects the prevailing poster trends at the time they were created.

During the late 1800^s historicism was still the dominant aesthetic in Switzerland. By the end of the first decade of the 20th century, it had given way to a radically new aesthetic movement, spearheaded by young artists such as Burk-hard Mangold, Emil Cardinaux and Cuno Amiet. The 1920^s saw a shift away from painterly, illustrative posters towards a greater focus on lettering and its

design. The equal treatment of the image and lettering in poster design was integral to the development of 'Graphic Design', which was emerging as a field in its own right during this period.

The roots of the SfG poster collection go back to the applied arts specimen and model collection started by the *Gewerbemuseum Basel* (museum of applied arts and design). When the museum closed in 1996, its holdings passed to the SfG.

The collection, comprising around 100,000 posters which are mostly Swiss in origin, is listed as an object of national importance in the Federal PCP Inventory.

Ulrike Sax: The 1842 Chur Prize Pavilion.

The preservation of the Chur Prize Pavilion from 1842 is nothing short of a miracle given the temporary nature of this type of ceremonial architecture. In the 19th century commissions like these offered architects an opportunity to experiment. The works they have left behind impressively document the evolution of architectural style during the 1800^s. For example, certain features of the 1842 Prize Pavilion draw on the neo-Gothic repertoire of forms which was growing in popularity at that time. What is particularly innovative about the design is that the pavilion was built to display not only shooting festival prizes but also the flags of the participating shooting clubs and cantons, thanks to a towering frame that was added to the roof.

When the Federal Shooting Festival was over, the prize pavilion was translocated multiple times and used for different purposes. In 2017 an analysis of its condition showed that urgent renovation was needed to preserve this historical monument for future generations to enjoy. Only a few elements (e.g. the studs, friezes and fragments of the masonry) were found to be part of the original 19th century structure. However, they played an essential role in the sensitive restoration of the pavilion. Since its reinstatement in the city's redesigned *Rosenhügel* park, the prize pavilion has proved a popular venue for public and private events.

Marco Sigg: The 1869 Federal Shooting Festival in Zug.

Shooting festivals have a long tradition in Switzerland. However, the nature of these events has changed over time. The earliest festivals were primarily a vehicle for raising the profile of the leading townsmen and as a demonstration of economic clout; later, they served primarily as military training exercises. In contrast, today's festivals are largely sporting events. Regardless of the different purposes they have served over the years, these shooting matches have always had a strong folk festival element. With the *Ancien Régime* at an end, the tradition began to experience a revival in 1824. During the 19th century, shooting festivals were important political platforms for the warring (radical) liberals and conservatives. In the course of the nation-building process, shooting festivals drew heavily on heroic tales from the Old Swiss Confederacy. The historical collection of the *Museum Burg Zug* features several artefacts from the 1869 Federal Shooting Festival in Zug which bear this out, e.g. references to the 1422 Battle of Arbedo and the heroic men of Zug who valiantly fought in this conflict.

The article also captures the sheer scale of past shooting festivals, such as the 1869 festival. Organised by the town's shooting fraternity, the *Schützengesellschaft der Stadtgemeinde Zug*, and presided over by the president of the cantonal council Karl Merz, the event ran from 10 to 21 July 1869; on some days it attracted as many as 40,000 visitors. For the actual shooting match, a purpose-built festival site was set up on the commons directly behind the town's railway station. It included an impressive festival hall which could hold up to 4,000 people, a roughly 240-metre-long shooting stand, and a 23-metre-high, three-storey prize pavilion.

Jürg Richter, Marcel Häberling: Swiss Shooting Thalers and Medals.

Commemorative coins, medals and jetons were not a common feature of Swiss shooting festivals in their early days. The medal tradition, as we know it today, dates back to the 18th century. Given the high costs involved, the creation of these exquisite works of arts were entrusted to only the best and most highly skilled craftsmen. Some of the finest examples are the shooting medals and thalers awarded to the winning marksmen.

From 1842 to 1885, ornately crafted shooting thalers, with a monetary value, were minted to commemorate the Federal Shooting Festival. Not only are these thalers attractive, cultural mementos of important historical events, they also bear messages for the Swiss citizenry. Around the edges of the first thalers minted in Chur in 1842 and in Glarus in 1847, the inscription reads: *EINTRACHT MACHT STARK* (Unity Is Strength). This motto was an expression of the prevailing desire for brotherhood and togetherness.

Even more striking than the thalers are the magnificent medals which were created for a host of shooting-specific events. A closer look at these small artworks, which are the result of complex minting processes, reveals surprising details, such as depictions of historical events, cultural traditions and economic achievements.

From the plaster mould to the stamp engraving right up to the final multistep embossing process, the exquisite craftsmanship required to produce these objects was unmatched.

More than 2,000 different shooting thalers and medals have been minted since the late 1700^s. Every region and canton of Switzerland have their own examples that reflect their particular culture, language and realities. The 19th and early 20th centuries were the golden age of medal art. Shooting thalers and medals from this period offer fascinating glimpses into Swiss history and culture.

This Fetzer, Martin Hannes Graf: Shooting-Inspired Names.

The practice of shooting is documented in narrative sources, but quite a few proper names, especially names of localities, also reference this time-honoured tradition. They provide many linguistic clues to past connections between the given locality and sporting or competitive shooting pursuits.

Certain place names reflect the social and festive aspects of shooting, while a number of surnames can be traced back to the institutionalisation of marksmanship which began in the late Middle Ages.

Of course, the rich detail of narrative historical sources is more helpful when reconstructing the culture of shooting during the pre-modern era. Nonetheless, proper names and their strong local references (as well as their sheer volume) help to advance our understanding of this age-old practice.

Hans Schüpbach: Examples Of Shooting In Literature.

There is perhaps no literary figure who has been more appropriated by the shooting movement than William Tell. Not only have many quotations from Schiller's drama found their way into the general vocabulary but they also featured heavily in shooting festival speeches.

Shooting has been both glorified and critically explored in and with literature. These include works documenting the politically turbulent period of 1840–1850, as well as literary depictions of the federal shooting festivals in Chur (1842), Basel (1844) and Aarau (1849).

The article draws on a few examples of early literary accounts of journeys taken to shooting festivals, and shines a light on the pursuit and practice of shooting in mid-19th century based on descriptions in seminal works by the Swiss writers Jeremias Gotthelf (pen name of Albert Bitzios) and Gottfried Keller (*Eines Schweizers Wort an den Schweizerischen Schützenverein, Der Herr Esau, Das Fähnlein der sieben Aufrechten*).

These make clear the important role that shooting played in forging a sense of community and national sentiment in Switzerland during the years that preceded the establishment of the 1848 Federal Constitution. These sources also reflect the political struggle between radicals and conservatives during the Regeneration period.

Stefan Grus: Marksmanship and Germany's Intangible Cultural Heritage.

In Germany shooting, marksmanship and archery are more than sporting or recreational pursuits. They are practices that are associated with a host of customs and traditions which are cultivated and practiced in myriad different ways by shooting clubs throughout the country.

Many of these customs, rituals and practices have barely changed since the Middle Ages. Every year, German regions hold their own shooting festival. The centrepiece of these events is the *Vogel- und Königschiessen*, a popinjay tournament where the winning marksman is crowned the king. Other traditions and customs which are integral to these festivals are the parade and winner's banquet (*Königsmahl*), as well as honour goblets, cups and trophies.

Around two million people in Germany belong to a shooting club. In 2015 Germany officially recognised shooting-related customs and traditions as part of the country's intangible cultural heritage.