



## 85 Years Helios Club Thun (HCT 1934 -2019)



On Monday morning 24<sup>th</sup> September 1934 at 20.30 o'clock, the Helios Club Thun (HCT) was founded in the "Pension Lachen" in the small city of Thun (about 45.000 inhabitants and about 20 km east of Bern).

Among the founding members were also Edi Fankhauser and Werner Zimmermann (see Focus August 2019).

The purpose and goal of this meeting were the foundation of a local section of the "Schweizer Lichtbund" (slb, later renamed as ONS).

The decision was taken to raise a membership fee of 4,- CHF. In addition, the acquisition of a piece of land was discussed. The aimed site was located just outside of the city of Thun, in the municipality of Oberhofen, on the right-hand bank the Lake Thun.

1936 was the time: the site could be purchased at a price of 1.200 CHF.

In 1939 the slb Thun was renamed "Wochenendclub ONS Gruppe Thun".

A further change of name followed in 1961. Since then the club is named "Helios Club Thun (HCT)". During the same general assembly in 1961 it was decided to sell the "Paradiesli" to the foundation "die neue zeit" (dnz in Thielle, for 2.353,20 CHF). However, the site was operated and maintained under a lease contract still by the HCT. This continued till about 2014. Lack of interest of the club

members and various storm damages lead the board to recommend the club members to dissolve the lease contract with the dnz foundation. After the foundation of the SNU-UNS (Schweizer Naturisten Union) in 2004 the final separation from the ONS took place. Now the HCT is an independent club within the SNU-UNS.

Since 2010 the current treasurer of the HCT holds the same position in the Central Committee of the INF-FNI. The club activity moved more and more to the winter half-year.

In 2001 the club assembly decided to share 25.000 CHF in the renovation of the indoor pool at Oberhofen. Since then, the fitness centre Oberhofen is at our free disposal every Sunday, from beginning of October till end of April, from 18.30 - 21.00 o'clock

Rolf Hostettler, Treasurer of the HCT  
Sources: Various Minutes of the HCT

[www.heliosclub-thun.ch](http://www.heliosclub-thun.ch)



# PORTRAIT - GIANFRANCO RIBOLZI



Among the pioneers of Italian naturism is the important figure of Gianfranco Ribolzi, a naturist since 1964, an aeronautical engineer and former deputy director at Fiat, he was also one of the co-founders of the Club „Le Betulle“, located in the municipality of La Cassa in the province of Turin, together with Tomaso Operti and Guido Ragazzi. Subsequently, after the premature death of Tom Operti, he assumed the direction of the club together with his wife Luisa Mussa with whom he shared and shared all the battles that the Italian naturist movement has supported and supports for the affirmation of the naturist idea in Italy.

He participated in the foundation of UNI (Unione Naturisti Italiani), that is to say his transfer from Switzerland to Italy in 1969 with the then inseparable Tom Operti and Guido Ragazzi with whom he has always promoted the nude-naturist vocation of UNI. This clarification is very important because the most dangerous enemy of naturism is never the sincere and declared adversary, but rather that textile or semitessile intruder who pollutes the purity of the movement by striking it in its essential connotation, integral nudity.

Gianfranco Ribolzi was elected to the highest position of the Italian Naturist Federation back in

June 17<sup>th</sup> 2001, after the likes of Daniele Agnoli, Claudio Ranieri, Tom Operti, Carlo Consiglio, etc. followed. His was the longest presidency in the history of the federation, and the profuse energies and his all-round commitment, which saw him travel the world to represent our movement, gave prestige and great visibility in Europe and in the world to Italian naturism, both in participating in world congresses organized in countries even far away (Brazil, New Zealand, etc.), and for its organizational skills: we remember, in fact, the organization of innumerable petanque tournaments, the “International Youth Gathering „From 18 to 23 May 2004 at the Club Le Betulle, the 33<sup>rd</sup> Swimming Gala in Turin in 2004 and the 32<sup>nd</sup> World Naturist Congress in Isola Capo Rizzuto in Calabria in 2010, for the first time hosted in Italy etc.

Furthermore, we must not forget the fact of no small importance, which before being elected president of the federation was the secretary of the same from 1997 to 2001, the year of his election, with unanimous vote, as president of the maximum Italian federal body. And on that occasion, in his letter of thanks for the trust given him by the Board of Directors, Gianfranco Ribolzi pointed out that he would be the president of all.

His wish was to coordinate shared solutions, something he has always done not only with will and transparency, but also with determination and consistency to enforce the guidelines dictated by those who preceded him. In his letter of intent, in fact, Gianfranco recalled some thoughts borrowed from Jacques Dumont (who was at the time President of the French Naturist Federation) and shared by him. And that is that it is necessary „to beware of both too much liberalism and too much sectarianism, regardless of whether this happens by friends who are dear to us, therefore armed with good intentions, or by others who would like to revolutionize what is not revolutionary: nature.

Tolerance and respect for the freedom of others are not sufficient reasons to force naturism to accept everything from those who tend to abuse our conquered naturist freedom.

Gianfranco Ribolzi, in the 16 years of his presidency of the highest Italian federal position, fought with all his strength and within the limits of his possibilities, whenever there were openings in Parliament for our movement, for the approval of a proposal of law for the regu-

lation of naturism. If it has not succeeded, the fault is not his but from the slowness and blindness of our politicians who have not known the economic potential of naturist tourism. He also deserves credit, having become the sole owner of the Le Betulle Club in 1996, of never having succumbed to the lure of a favored optional nudism, in the fallacious hope that this trick could attract more people into naturist structures.

In a recent interview in September 2018, issued to a national newspaper, he recalled the difficult moments lived at Mirafiori that he managed to overcome thanks to his ideal of life, naturism, which is a philosophy that teaches respect, not just of nature, but also of themselves and others. The journalist recalls in the article what was stated by Kant, namely that „the nude is indecent only for the indecent“, a concept reiterated also by Pope John Paul II over two centuries later.

His pragmatism and pragmatism are highlighted in the interview where he says that in the last half century too much confusion has been made about the true principles that inspire naturism. And this happened because of those who practiced it without rules.

Nudism without rules and without checks on free beaches must be fought because it lends itself to provocateurs, exhibitionists and molesters. Often, even during heated discussions, he is always keen to point out, referring to the famous „Manifesto“ by Fabiana Martini on digital communication, that: „Ideas can be discussed. People respect each other,“

A lover of nature and a great sportsman, the Fiat engineer practiced rowing at a competitive level, cross-country skiing and walking, and, in addition to work, his life was practically all dedicated to naturism together with his inseparable companion Luisa Mussa, just think that he began his naturist adventure back in 1964, then just twenty years old, to the now famous „Ile du Levant“, an island off the French Riviera, which has remained a paradise for naturists.

The Turinese Ribolzi, by virtue of his contacts with naturists, associations and European federations, is not only a leading figure at national level but is also known worldwide, having had the ability to maintain interpersonal relationships not only formal but also of friendship and active collaboration with those who share his own ideals, his own goals, his own commitment to realize the philosophy of life represented by naturism which at the beginning seemed only a utopia.

Currently he continues to manage the Club Le Betulle, together with his wife Luisa (who is president of the Uni, while he is its secretary), and is the editor of the magazine „InfoNaturista“ since the release of the first issue in 1997.

The magazine, besides of course talking about naturism, it represents the synthesis of his thought that seems to reflect another of the ideas of Fabiana Martini where he writes, at the first point of the aforementioned „Manifesto“, that: „I say and write only things that I dare to say in person“.

Pino Fiorella

## LE BETULLE Villaggio Naturista

Near the Alps, at 25 km from the center of Turin, 20 minutes from the airport Caselle. Caravans, plots for Recreation Vehicles and tents, completely equipped bungalows, caravans with chalet.

Pool, solarium, jacuzzi and sauna. Clubhouse restaurant, petanque, mini-tennis, table tennis, Volleyball. Mountain bike circuits and trails in the Park Mandria.

**Sights:** Venaria Royal Palace and Park, St. Michele Abbey, Rivoli Castle, Mole Antonelliana, Egyptian Museum, Piazza S. Carlo, Basilica of Superga.

Via Lanzo 33 - 10040 La Cassa (TO) - Italy,  
Tel/Fax +39.011.984.29.62 - Tel +39.011.984.28.19  
Mail: [info@lebetulle.org](mailto:info@lebetulle.org)

[www.lebetulle.org](http://www.lebetulle.org)





# 70 years French Federation of Naturism

The French Naturism Federation is delighted by the beauty of the international naturist swimming gala that was held for the first time in its history in Paris, the weekend of 18 to 20 October. Organized by a hand of master by the Association of naturists of Paris, more than 300 people answered the call of the sport. The unique opportunity to show the fraternal community that unites naturists all over the world.

French naturists overflow with energy and initiatives to make naturism a way of life. Bowling sessions, whirlpooling, hiking are in the programs of various regional associations throughout France. And French naturists through the local fabric participate in many expositions around the well-being.

To celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the French Naturism Federation in 2020, a festive meeting is planned at the headquarters in Paris on Friday, February 14, 2020. An anniversary that will resonate in the presence of the Ffn at the three largest French tourism fairs:

**in Lille, from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> of January** for the Tourism Fair and nature activities Tourissima;



**in Lyon from February 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>** for the Mahana Tourism Fair and finally **in Paris from March 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>** for the World Tourism Fair. On the menu, discovery of the naturist structures of metropolis and outside districts, initiation to naturism, something to win and more surprises.



Salon du tourisme  
et des activités nature  
**Tourissima**

**Lille**  
**17 > 19 JANVIER 2020**  
GRAND PALAIS

Salon  
du tourisme  
et des activités nature



# The “Panties War” after the German Reunification



In the times of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR, 1949-1990) naturism and nudism were a common way of life and a carefree fact. Many people spent their leisure time at the dredge lakes or went camping at the coastal beaches of the Baltic Sea, where they bathed naked.

At first the authorities did not like this attitude. But for the citizens of the GDR it was a silent protest against the daily bringing into line during the other daily life.

In 1954 the government at that time wanted to introduce a general ban on naked swimming on the complete coast, but without success. This, because the authorities were afraid that the international reputation of the nudist scenes in East Germany would be harmed.

But the reaction of the population was:

## PROTEST LETTERS, PETITIONS AND NAKED RESISTANCE

After two years there was an “Order to regulate the public Open Air Pool”. Public nude bathing was declared as legal on designated beach sections.

As consequence nude swimming became a mass movement. There were no associations, no statutes, no membership fees.

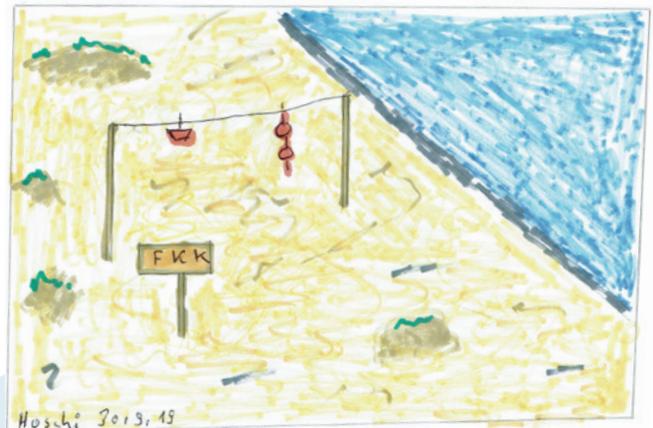
After the reunification in 1990, however, many signs on the Baltic Sea beaches were simply turned over by some “better Wessis”. This induced that suddenly the better beaches were attributed



to the textile zone, and that now only the less attractive sections were left to the naturists.

This episode entered the recent German History as the “Panties War”.

Rolf Hostettler  
Source: DDR-Museum, Berlin



## Info Focus February

Deadline to remit articles: 20<sup>th</sup> January  
Release of Focus latest: 05<sup>th</sup> February



# Merry Christmas