

O C T O B E R 2 0 1 1

# Castle's NEWS

CASTLE'S ENGLISH INSTITUTE - IHR SPRACHPROFI SEIT 1979

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## FROM THE DESK OF NICK GIBBONS



As I write these few words, I can see thick fog outside. People often have the wrong impression about the weather in

England – the Brits have been enjoying the same spell of fantastic weather as we have – only without the morning fog! This last weekend the beaches were crowded and the temperature hit 29°C. A large part of my job is spent organising trips to England for school groups from all over Switzerland. September/October is the peak time for such trips so I am glad that they are getting such good weather.

Here in Zug we are now well into the new semester. Although we have the usual English and French courses, it is our German programme which has seen the largest growth this year and we are delighted to have a dedicated team of six qualified German teachers to look after our needs, mostly teaching new recruits to international companies here in Zug.

Also as a reminder, we have new courses starting at the end of October, listed below. Check our website ([www.castles.ch](http://www.castles.ch)) for more information.

I hope you like our newsletter, which we plan to issue three times a year. My special thanks goes to Heidi Newitt, another full-time teacher at Castle's, who has taken on the responsibility of producing the newsletter.

## NEW COURSES STARTING FROM 31 OCTOBER

### **English:**

Anfänger, 1. Semester  
Mon 20.00-21.50h  
CHF 740.-

Cambridge Advanced,  
1. Sem  
Wed 20.00-21.50h  
CHF 770.-

BEC Vantage, 1. Sem  
Thur 18.00-19.50h  
CHF 770.-

### **French:**

Cours commercial  
Wed 18.00-19.50h  
CHF 770.-

### **German:**

Beginner, 1. Semester  
Wed 12.15-13.30h  
CHF 580.-

*Many more classes and  
levels are still open! Please  
check our website for more  
information.*

**NEW!**

**Buy your English  
study materials  
online from the link  
on the Castle's  
website!**

# Castle's Teacher Spotlight: Andy Badcock

*Andy Badcock is a teacher whose face is known to many of our students. As a full-time teacher at Castle's, he has taught at all levels from Elementary to Proficiency, and his experience in the classroom is evident to students and other teachers alike.*



*So, Andy, how long have you been an English teacher?*

Goodness me! Longer than I care to remember. Let's see, I qualified in 1992 and have been teaching ever since. I'll let you do the maths.

*Did you work as a teacher somewhere else before joining Castle's?*

Yes, I worked in a reputable school in Torquay, where I'm from, for many years and I worked in Bahrain for a while.

*What did you study in school? Did you always know you would be a teacher?*

In school I was always good at languages—at my school we had French and Spanish (and Russian was an option!) and, of course, English. However, boys were encouraged to specialise in sciences and I dropped languages at 16. Quite ironic in view of what I do now.

I knew from a young age that I wanted to be a pro-tennis player, but during the careers interview the counselor asked me for a “back-up plan,” in case my tennis career didn't work out. Being a smarmy teenager, I flippantly replied, “Oh, I'll become a teacher...”

*What kind of other jobs have you had in the past? Do they affect the way you teach in any way?*

Well perhaps unusually, I was a ferryman for several years, giving safe passage to foot-passengers across the River Teign.

Hmm...does it affect the way I teach? Well, if a class is “acting up” a bit, I do imitate my old boss's voice. He could “bark an order” when needed!

*Do you have any embarrassing moments from the classroom?*

Err...yes...quite a few. There was one time when a new pair of trousers split right up the backside, so I couldn't see, but the class was giggling through the whole lesson. Finally, they told me what they were laughing at. It was especially embarrassing, because there were eight students in the class—all of them young women!



Another embarrassing experience was with a new class. A mobile phone went off during each of the first three lessons and we discussed how this wasn't fair for the teacher or the students. When a phone went off in the fourth lesson

in a row, I sternly looked round at everyone, before realizing it was mine!!! Oops.

*And, finally, most of your students already know that you're a huge fan of sports. What's your favourite sports team, and why?*

It's easy to say ManU (Manchester United), but at the moment it has to be the England cricket team, which is the Number 1 Test Side in the World.

## REVIEW: ENGLISH LEARNING WEBSITE

[WWW.FLO-JOE.CO.UK](http://WWW.FLO-JOE.CO.UK)

This is an ideal, award-winning website for any student preparing for the Cambridge PET, FCE, CAE or CPE exam. It offers exercises and advice for candidates taking those exams. A large proportion of the website is free but there is extra material available at a charge of just £20 for 13 weeks (approx. CHF 30.-). It covers all parts of each exam, including Speaking and Listening.

# Adventures Abroad: Interview with Graziella Wolf

*Graziella Wolf is currently a student at Castle's English Institute. In order to improve her English quickly, she booked two different trips to a school in England. This is her experience:*

*Where did you go to study English?*

I've been to England twice through Castle's, both times to the Eastbourne School of English. Each time was for three weeks, the most recent in May 2011.

*What was your stay in May like?*

Well, I had a very good experience with my host family last time, so I asked for them again this time. And I knew some of the teachers at the school, too. I felt very comfortable there.



*How many students were in your class?*

There were 12 students, very international. There were students from Japan, China, Spain, Switzerland, South Korea, and the Czech Republic. They were all very kind and friendly.

*What kinds of activities did you do, outside of school?*

I went with some of the other students to London and Brighton. We had shopping trips and a trip to the bowling alley to play a few games. We also sometimes had a beer at the pub—the other students were easy to get along with.

*Can you tell us a bit about your classes and teachers?*

I had two teachers for the morning session, Mark and Graham. Mark was very friendly and funny, but I liked Graham very much because he drew special pictures on the board

and wrote the word underneath to remember it better, and he explained things very well.

I also had a private teacher named Nicola. She gave very good explanations and helped me with any problems I was having in understanding the more difficult parts of the grammar. We also laughed together a lot and she was very easy to talk to.

*Let's talk about your first stay in England. Was that very different?*

I first went to England in September 2010, and it was my first time abroad without my family. I spent a lot of time alone, although I met a lot of new people and I was always surrounded by the English language and culture. The second time I went to England, it felt like I was going home.

*What can you tell me about your host family?*

On my first visit, the school arranged my home stay, and I was very pleasantly surprised by how warm and friendly the host family was. It was a couple--Joanna and John--and staying with them was a wonderful experience. Joanna is also a "motherly" type, like me, and they both had a great sense of humor. The food at their house was wonderful, as well!

For my second visit, I arranged to stay with Joanna and John directly, and I still keep in touch with



*Graziella (c.) with John and Joanna*

them from time to time. It was a good experience, too, because they couldn't speak any other languages, so it forced me to practice my English.

*Were there any other students staying there?*

Both times I stayed with Joanna and John, they had one other student staying with them. Both times it was a Japanese student, which was also good, because we could share stories about each other's country. I learned a lot of interesting things about Japan.

*And would you go to England again, if you had the chance?*

Absolutely! It's like a second home to me now.

## IMPORTANT DATES

OCT 10 - 21  
Autumn Break

DEC 22 - JAN 6  
Christmas Break

JAN 3  
Deadline for  
March Cambridge  
Registration

FEB 3  
End of Autumn  
Semester



## “LIKE A NATIVE”: NEW STUDY ABROAD LOCATIONS

### ENGLISH: INTERNATIONAL HOUSE ABERDEEN, SCOTLAND

Aberdeen—You can find the best of everything in Aberdeen, from the latest designer fashions to traditional Scottish crafts. Indulge in good food, great entertainment, a vibrant bar and club scene and festivals and events to suit all tastes.

### SPANISH: INTERNATIONAL HOUSE MONTEVIDEO, URUGUAY

Montevideo has the rare privilege of having more than twenty kilometers of beaches within the city itself. IH Montevideo is only minutes away from downtown and offers a wide variety of services such as restaurants, shopping centres, parks, cinemas, sports clubs and beautiful beaches.

### FRENCH: IFALPES

#### ANNECY AND CHAMBÉRY, FRANCE

Annecey is a magnificent town with lots of history as well as shops, restaurants and cafés. Summer and winter, you can enjoy the lake and its beaches and outdoor sports including hiking, cycling, skiing, parascending and roller-blading.

Chambéry, the historical capital of the county of Savoie is a town rich in culture with its wide pedestrian avenues and many shops. Chambéry is also perfect for nature lovers and outdoor people.

### ITALIAN: INTERNATIONAL HOUSE MILAN, ITALY

Milan has something to offer everyone and is an ideal destination: near the sea, mountains and lakes. Milan is a lively, multicultural city. There is a wide variety of cafés, theatres, restaurants, cinemas and art galleries, and cultural events are organised daily in the city.

### GERMAN: INTERNATIONAL HOUSE HEIDELBERG, GERMANY

Heidelberg has a justified international reputation as one of Germany's top tourist destinations. The city's urban development, its university life, many fine restaurants, shopping opportunities, cultural offerings and wide variety of annual events all contribute to the worldwide popularity of the city.

*Check our Study Abroad catalogue or contact us at [info@castles.ch](mailto:info@castles.ch) for more locations and information.*

## Cambridge Exam Study Tips

### • Writing Paper:

- Do your homework regularly, eg one or two writing tasks every week is much more productive than giving your teacher a dozen texts just before the exam.
- During the Writing Test, make sure you answer the question fully. Highlight the significant parts of the question and make sure you answer all the parts.

### • Speaking Paper:

- Arrive for the Speaking Test at the time given in your timetable. It is not necessary to turn up earlier.
- Listen to the questions asked and if you don't understand, you can ask for repetition. However, the examiner cannot explain any words.