

## The last Night Watchmen of Europe

For 33 years, from 22:00 to 02:00, Renato Haeusler has gazed out at the view from Lausanne Cathedral and wondered vaguely: Who is on the streets below? Where are they going? And does anyone realize he is high above them, **squirreled** away inside the **belfry**?

squirrel 松鼠; 贮藏

belfry 钟楼; 钟塔

Haeusler, 61, is one of the world's last Night Watchmen and probably the closest thing we have in the modern age to a real-life character from The Lord of the Rings or Game of Thrones.

The last in a long line of watchmen, who have been manning this post since November 1405, he **steadfastly** maintains a longstanding medieval tradition — pure and simple — to safeguard the city's cultural heritage. **Ironically**, he has not worn a watch for more than 40 years yet copes stoically with his decades-long nightly **vigil**.

steadfastly 踏实地; 不变地

ironically 讽刺地

vigil 守夜; 监视; 警戒

"I'll have to stop when I'm 65, but I'd prefer not to think about that," he said. "It'll be too painful. Too emotional."

Another Night Watchman **adhering** to tradition is Horst Lenner in Bavaria, Germany. Fulfilling a childhood ambition to become tower keeper of Nördlingen 10 years ago, the retired journalist maintains a half-hourly shout of "So G'sell so" ('Hey, buddy, hey!').

adhere 坚持; 附着

Of course, Lenner has moved beyond his first adolescent "Sword in the Stone" fantasies and he is now a representative of the city and extended arm to the tourist office.

In unprecedented days like these, one question **lingers**: Who do the last Night Watchmen watch when no one needs to be watched? To a remarkable extent, the cities of Lausanne and Nördlingen have stuck to the past at the height of the Covid-19 lockdown.

linger 徘徊; 消磨

In spite of Covid-19, the story of the Night Watchmen is alive and well. And it is tradition at its most touching.