

1 Party plans for 1st August celebrations

7 Swiss homage to Sherlock Holmes

8 Thierry Fischer's farewell to Wales

London 2012

OPEN HOUSE ON SWISS NATIONAL DAY

Glazier's Hall, Switzerland's venue for London 2012, is this year's venue to celebrate Swiss National Day in London. Celebrities, dignitaries, Olympic athletes and the public will party together until late into the night on the 1st August.

This 'paint-the-town-red' spectacle will not be restricted to Glazier's Hall, an old butter wharf on the south bank of the River Thames, but will spill out onto the surrounding squares, roads and alleyways, where revellers can enjoy the very best of Swiss culture and cuisine.

3,000 square metres of one of London's top riverside locations will be transformed into a Swiss playground. Alphorn players and accordionists from Gsteig-Bruegg will entertain the crowds, as will Blues' singer Philipp Fankhauser, who is expected to take to the open air-stage as night falls. Johnny Copeland has called Fankhauser 'one of the Blues'

futures' and John Lee Hooker was a fan. After countless concerts and twelve albums, Fankhauser truly understands how to wring the joy

“

Revellers can enjoy the very best of Swiss culture and cuisine

from the sorrow of the Blues. And not forgetting the festivities' backdrop of the Olympic Games, a large screen in the courtyard outside Glaziers Hall will bring live TV coverage of all major events at the various stadiums.

This special day will also mark the 100th anniversary of the construction of the Jungfrau Railway. There will be



3,000 square metres...will be transformed into a Swiss playground

opportunities to learn more about the pioneering technical achievement of the construction of Europe's highest railway station, as well as learn about

life and culture in the Bernese Oberland-Jungfrau region.

For up-to-date information: www.houseofswitzerland.org/event

Business

British Swiss business celebrate

The British Swiss Chamber of Commerce (BSCC) beat off stiff competition recently to win the 2012 COBCOE (Council of British Chambers of Commerce in Europe) Chamber of the Year award, which was presented at the Council's Annual Gala Dinner in London.

Guest speaker, Dame Julia Cleverdon, who the Times newspaper recently listed as one of the 50 most influential women in Britain, presented the award at the prestigious Royal Automobile Club in front of 170 distinguished guests. An independent panel of judges selected the BSCC as the winner from COBCOE's 41 members.

The Council highlighted in particular that the BSCC had 'become a point of reference for all member chambers in (the COBCOE) network' and praised its 'all-round strategy based upon strong financial management, with an extensive events programme both in terms of quantity and quality.'

"We are delighted to receive this award which recognises the hard work and dedication of those involved with the Chamber," commented Alexis P. Lautenberg, President of

the BSCC, after receiving the award. The scheme is widely regarded as a positive way to recognise the collective efforts and achievements of COBCOE's members.



Alexis P. Lautenberg, President of the BSCC receiving the award from Dame Julia Cleverdon DCVO CBE

Editorial

Dear Readers,



It is now a year since our first issue of the Swiss Review. Our main brief then was to re-engage with the expat community, mainly through the numerous Swiss Clubs that span the width and breadth of the UK. Many of you jumped at the opportunity to keep us all up-to-date with your activities.

We have now made a start at including younger readers with our Chinder Egge (Kid's Corner). But, we need input from you. Any ideas as to how best to engage the younger community would be much appreciated.

Otherwise, find out why Britain's most famous fictional sleuth has been immortalized in ice on the Jungfrau-joch, Europe's Best Sommelier serves up five facts about Swiss wines and Thierry Fischer who for the past six years was Principal Conductor of the BBC Wales Symphony Orchestra shares some unforgettable moments from his time there. **Andrew Littlejohn**

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Politics

Swiss-EU ties: model or accident?

At the end of last year at an EU Summit in Brussels, Prime Minister David Cameron vetoed a German-French proposal to save the euro. Many British EU-sceptics welcomed his decision and the question of how the relationship between the United Kingdom and the EU should look was widely discussed in Britain. The case of Switzerland and its position outside the Member States was often portrayed as a potential source of inspiration. It was against this background that the New Helvetic Society invited Mr Urs Schmid, Minister at the Embassy of Switzerland in London, to speak about the Swiss approach towards the EU.

(This is a summary of the presentation for the New Helvetic Society)

Switzerland is at the heart of Europe and the EU and its 27 member states are by far the most important partners of Switzerland. This is due not just to the EU's political and economic weight, but also to Switzerland's geographical and cultural closeness to the countries of the EU.

Specific political and economic circumstances led Switzerland to

remain outside of the European integration project, which started after the end of the Second World War. It could, however, not ignore the ever growing importance of the EU and had to find solutions to overcome the threat of discrimination and obstacles to market access for its economy. A first step was the Free Trade Agreement in 1972 between Switzerland and the EU. But it was soon clear this was not enough. Membership of the European Economic Area (EEA), which seemed at first to be a perfect solution, was rejected by popular vote in 1992. A feasible way out was finally a sectorial approach through specific bilateral agreements. Today the intensive relations between Switzerland and the EU have been formalised in about 20 "main" agreements, including the so called "Bilateral I" (1999) and "Bilateral II" (2004), as well as more than 100 further technical agreements since the late 1960s; new ones are currently under preparation.

As a consequence of the increasing market access of Switzerland to the ever-expanding EU, the latter also expected Switzerland to share the burden, which derived from the transition of the former communist states of Eastern Europe and their integra-

tion into EU structures. As a result, Switzerland autonomously supports projects and programmes in the new EU states with a total amount of CHF 1,257 billion. Switzerland also assumes its responsibility towards Europe by participating in military and civil peace building efforts in the Balkans, or by way of constructing the New Transalpine Rail Link, an important contribution to the proper functioning of the Single European Market which is at the same time environmentally sustainable.

In its report of September 2010 on the Evaluation of Switzerland's European Policy, the Swiss Government concluded that under the present circumstances the bilateral agreements were a suitable solution for safeguarding Switzerland's interests in Europe, namely preserving its freedom of action, its prosperity and its values. Additionally, on various occasions the chosen approach has been approved by the Swiss electorate and therefore enjoys a high degree of democratic legitimacy.

The continuous evolution of the EU and its legislation however exposes Switzerland to the risk of discrimination as a non-EU-member and calls for a continuous adaptation of the bilateral relationship and for new negotiations. It may be concluded that the bilateral approach of Switzerland to the EU has

its roots in specific circumstances, which come at a price. It may therefore not easily serve as a point of reference for other countries.

Mr Urs Schmid, Minister at the Embassy of Switzerland in London



© Daniel Pedroletti

A Day in the Life of...

MARIO FURER, RETAIL TREND SCOUT

A day in my life is all about discovering new products, services and in-store promotions within the FMCG sector (FMCG: fast moving consumer goods).

A large part of my work is to act as trend scout for European retailers. As I live in London, the birthplace of most European trends in the grocery market, I can share my knowledge with European companies interested in launching products into the UK market or simply looking for inspiration. One of our major customers is MIGROS, Switzerland's biggest retailer. With its 800 stores and 80,000 employees, it is comparable in size to Sainsbury's in the UK.

My day usually starts with 'desk research', which means a thorough check of my RSS reader, which is set to scan the internet for interesting articles about product innovation. One Water – an ethical water producer – has just announced it will now be available in Boots, Waitrose, Ocado and Booths. Although this brand has been available in Tesco and Morrisons for a while, the new listings underline its market success. The company's concept of investing a majority of its profit in water infrastructure in Africa seems to resonate well with UK

consumers. After a quick check to see if anything similar already exists in the Swiss market, I prepare a short brief for this "new" product. The success of One Water in the UK is evident and I hope the idea will resonate well with my contacts in Zürich.

“
The ready meal sector (in Europe) has an 'astronaut-food' reputation

Desk research has its limits which is why I need to regularly hit the stores myself. As London has a very broad spectrum of different retail formats, I sequence my retail tours carefully and visit different parts of London every day.

However, today I have organised a two-day market tour for MIGROS managers to some of the UK's largest food retailers. Their brief is to find inspiration in the 'ready meals' sector here.

The UK market is the most advanced in terms of these products. Marks &

Spencer has driven the market and still leads today. The freshness and quality of the products combined with an affordable price is astonishing for anyone from mainland Europe, as the ready-meal sector there usually has an 'astronaut food' reputation.

I like to use public transport on these tours. Clients initially find it strange we are not travelling by taxi. I always explain that apart from time-saving aspects (the Tube is almost always quicker, especially in rush hour) a journey amongst stressed Londoners, as well as climbing escalators plastered with colourful ad campaigns, is better than any school book exercise. It can open participants' minds to the market.

The Swiss group had already come up with more than 85 new product ideas they were keen to explore, so with a budget of £15 each, I sent them to stores in Oxford Street to buy their own dinner. Weighed down by a wide selection of ready meals and wine, we set about preparing their dinners in the kitchens of a renowned cookery school. The overall feedback was encouraging. The Swiss team



Mario Furer is managing partner of A Day in the Market (ADITM), a boutique agency, which specialises in organising professionally guided market tours for FMCG companies and retailers around the world.

was impressed by the huge choice of products available, their freshness and the success of the UK's salt reduction scheme. Swiss companies are struggling to reach a consensus to reduce the salt content in food products.

With this real-life "Day in the Market" experience, the MIGROS team can start planning the future of Swiss ready-meals. And as market leaders, they can drive product innovation and lead the category in Switzerland.

Books

Peter Stamm in London

Swiss novelist Peter Stamm was interviewed by novelist and literary critic Adam Thirlwell at Lutyens & Rubinstein Bookshop recently.

Stamm was in London to discuss his most recent novel 'Seven Years' ('Sieben Jahre'), which has been translated into English by Michael

Hoffman. The discussion included a conversation on the importance of the theme of memory to the novel. Some very insightful questions were asked by the audience, which included staff from Stamm's UK publisher Granta, local Ladbrooke Grove residents and Swiss expatriates living in London.
Tara Spinks

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Swiss Clubs in the UK

CLUB NEWS · CLUB NEWS · CLUB NEWS · CLUB NEWS

Manchester Swiss Club AGM

Manchester Swiss Club's AGM committee holding forth!



We had a good AGM meeting and the committee were voted in again for another year. Our finances were all in order and there were no complaints about any of the past year's events. Four club members will attend the FOSSUK AGM in June.

The Archives and silverware.



During the meeting, our President referred to our trophies and the archives and suggested members read some of the club's minutes dating back to 1874.

The social part of the AGM.



In order to entice members to attend an AGM, the committee provides a delicious buffet which makes the evening more of a social event.

Southern Region Swiss Club AGM

Southern Region Swiss Club held its AGM on the 30th March.



A pretty routine meeting was enlivened by a short presentation about FOSSUK by Alfred Zbinden and Margrit Lyster.



Torbay Swiss Club AGM

The AGM was held at the Cat's Whiskers in Torquay. The club is in a good financial state and the monthly outings for the year were discussed and confirmed at the meeting. They include an art course, boat trip, Rosemoor visit, raclette evening and Sunday lunch.



Geoff Rose (president of the Torbay Swiss Club) and Ruth (his wife) being presented with a bouquet of flowers and wine at the club's AGM, as a thank you for the work done during the year.

New members are always welcome. Please contact, Geoff on 01626 778469

Unione Ticinese

On 18th February about 40 members, ages ranging from 11 to nearly 90, turned up for a highly enjoyable Carnevale at the Embassy.



Manchester Swiss Club

73 members and guests gathered on Saturday 24th March for our raclette event at the Brookdale Club, Bramhall. The food was delicious, as can only be expected, and this time three of our young apprentices showed off their raclette skills!



Diary date:

Saturday 30th June
Come and join us for our day at Chester Races

For information please contact Sandra Glauser on: the.glausers@btinternet.com

Diary dates:

June 17th: BBQ – Canterbury chez Grooms

September 23rd: UT-Outing

October 20th: Castagnata at Swiss Embassy

For any information, please contact: Joe Broggin
Telephone: 020 8741 422
Email: joebroggin@aol.com

Annual FOSSUK Forum

Switzerland/UK bilateral banking agreement and implications to Swiss nationals resident in the UK

The new tax agreement between Switzerland and Great Britain will be the timely subject of an event planned later in the year. FOSSUK, the City Swiss Club, the New Helvetic Society and the Unione Ticinese will be hosting this event supported by the Embassy. Eminent speakers will take to the platform.

For details please go to the above Societies' websites

When: Tuesday 25th September **Where:** Swiss Embassy, London

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Children

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Your Voice

Ella Salden

Ella Salden is 6½ years old and is one of the youngest members of Swiss Club Manchester. She has a younger brother and sister.

What do you see when you look out your bedroom window?
Birds! I love watching the different birds that come into our garden.

What do you love doing?
Art and cooking. I also love dancing and singing. I enjoy gardening too; I help my Mum sometimes & have just started an after school club on gardening.

What causes you stress?
My sister being very silly, or when I'm really tired.

When were you last in Switzerland?
March 2012.

What did you most enjoy about your trip?
Skiing every day and swimming a few times too.



When are you happiest?
I am happy most of the time.

What is your favourite subject at school?
Maths.

What would you most like to change in the world?
Make everyone's garden bigger.

If you had one wish what would it be?
To be good at doubling and halving in my maths lessons.

About Swiss National Day

August 1st, Switzerland's National Day, is only a few weeks away, so it'll soon be time to get out your candle lampions and pester your parents to get the barbecue ready for your Cervelat sausages.

Do you know why the first day of August is so important for Switzerland? Well, this was the day in 1291

when three Alpine cantons swore the oath of confederation, an act which later came to be regarded as the foundation of Switzerland. The representatives of Schwyz, Unterwalden and Uri met on the Rütli field, high above Lake Lucerne, to swear a bond of brotherhood, and agree to come together if their freedoms were threatened by outside aggressors.



Competition

Are you under 12? Will you be celebrating Swiss National Day? Would you like to win one of our four disposable cameras, so that you can take your own photos on this special day?

Just match the text to the 4 languages of Switzerland below.

1. Schweizer Bundesfeier
2. Fête nationale Suisse
3. Festa nazionale svizzera
4. Fiasta naziunala Svizra

- A. Italian
- B. Romansch
- C. German
- D. French

Send your answers to Andrew in the Swiss Review office.
Email: editor@swissreview.co.uk
Tel: 020 7372 3519

Embassy

Ambassador visits the Channel Islands

The Ambassador's four-day official visit to Guernsey and Jersey earlier this year reaffirmed the importance of the links between Switzerland and the Channel Islands. Ambassador Thalmann and his wife received a warm welcome from the Lieutenant-Governors of Guernsey and Jersey.

Discussions with the Bailiff and the Chief Minister of both islands, senior government officials, regulatory authorities and business leaders

focused on bilateral relations, the global economic and regulatory developments, and the impact of the new EU rules on third jurisdictions. The party also met members of the Swiss community in both Jersey and Guernsey. 219 Swiss nationals are registered on the Channel Islands, which also includes Alderney. The Ambassador was accompanied by the Embassy's Economic Counsellor, Fabrice Filliez, and the Honorary Consul of Switzerland to the Channel Islands, Albert Good.



(from left: Fabrice Filliez, HE General Sir John McCall, Lieutenant-Governor of Jersey, Mrs Good, Lady McCall, Mrs Thalmann and Ambassador Thalmann / © Swiss Embassy).

Swiss Seasoning

This everyday seasoning is a special blend of herbs and salt which enhances the flavour of your food without smothering it.

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The Seasoning is made in Switzerland and is an old family recipe that has been handed down from one generation to the next. The original inspiration for the seasoning came from Joseph Baeriswyl, a chef from Basle.

There really is very little more to say about it except **TRY IT!**



This great combination of ingredients truly enhances the flavour of your food and is now available in the UK from:

www.myswissseasoning.co.uk

Wales

PAUL SACHER PERSPECTIVES

The legacy of Swiss conductor and patron of the arts Paul Sacher was the subject of a concert, exhibition and conference ("Sacher Perspectives") at Cardiff University's School of Music on 16-17 March, part of a collaboration between the Embassy, Cardiff University, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and BBC Radio 3.

Paul Sacher (1906-1999) was one of the last century's great patrons of 20th century music and commissioned more than 200 works by the world's leading composers such as Stravinsky, Honegger and Bartok.



HE Anton Thalmann (middle) and Mrs Thalmann (far left) and the Honorary Consul of Switzerland in Wales, Ruth Thomas-Lehmann (next to Ambassador)

Arts

Swiss design Serpentine Pavilion

The Serpentine Gallery in London's Hyde Park has launched its 2012 Pavilion, designed by internationally-renowned Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron and China's most controversial contemporary artist, Ai Weiwei.

The design team responsible for the celebrated Beijing National Stadium, which was built for the 2008 Olympic Games, has come together again as part of the London 2012 Festival, the culmination of the Cultural Olympiad. It is also the twelfth of the Serpentine's annual commissions.

This year's installation takes visitors beneath the gallery's lawn to explore the hidden history of its previous Pavilions. Eleven columns characterising each past Pavilion and a twelfth column representing the current structure will support a floating platform roof 1.4 metres above ground.

The Pavilion is Herzog & de Meuron and Ai Weiwei's first collaborative built structure in the UK and is open to the public until 14th October. A major exhibition of the work of Yoko Ono can also be seen there.



A model of the 2012 Pavilion

Business

Bern-based airline surpasses expectations

SkyWork managers and staff flew to London recently to celebrate the success of the regional carrier's service between London City airport and Bern. More than 11,000 passengers have travelled between the two capitals in the airline's first year, making this twice-daily route the carrier's star performer in 2011.

The company has also strengthened its network out of the Swiss capital in the past twelve months. There are now 25 routes to eleven countries to choose from and traffic volume has increased by 85%. One year ago 400 passengers used the airline weekly. Today that number is nearer four and a half thousand. And in line with the

expansion programme employee numbers have more than doubled, from 70 to 164.

"I think our passengers see we are really putting our heart into the company," CEO Tomislav Lang told the Swiss Review, I am passionate about the product. We all are and I think our passengers appreciate that."

And how can the UK look forward to a share of this success?

"We are already flying our larger aircraft to London," said Lang, "but there is still some potential. A third service during the day could be the key to the next step."



Birthday cake for SkyWork CEO Tomislav Lang (right) (photographer - Jiri Benesch)

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Arts

SHERLOCK ON ICE

British artist John Doubleday recently worked 15-hour days at a constant minus three degrees Centigrade in the Ice Palace on the Jungfrauoch to transform a two-metre high block of ice into a sculpture of the Victorian sleuth, Sherlock Holmes.

Complete with hat and pipe, the master detective is now immortalized in ice at over 3500 metres above sea level. The ice creation comes in advance of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London's pilgrimage to the Bernese Oberland in September and coincides with the centenary celebrations of Europe's highest-altitude railway, the Jungfrauabahn.

John Doubleday has a longstanding association with Sherlock Holmes. He sculpted the only public seated statue of the famous detective at Meiringen close to the Reichenbach Falls, where Holmes is said to have had his final confrontation with his nemesis Professor Moriarty. A second Sherlock Holmes bronze statue can be seen at Baker Street Tube Station in London.

Up to 70 members of London's Sherlock Holmes Society, each dressed in 19th century costume and representing a character from Arthur Conan Doyle's novels, are expected to take part in the September pilgrimage.



Putting the final touches to the impressive ice sculpture

Consumer

5 Facts about Swiss wine

The world's greatest wine tasters were in London recently to judge over 14,000 wines for the internationally-acclaimed Decanter World Wine Awards. Amongst the line up of star judges was Swiss sommelier Paolo Basso who was voted Europe's Best Sommelier in 2010. Basso started his

career as a wine steward in several gastronomic restaurants in Switzerland. Here he shares a few facts and figures about Swiss wines:

1 In an average year, approximately 120 million litres of wine are produced on 9,000 farms.

2 Roughly 58% of wine produced is red, 42% is white.

3 Blauburgunder is the most popular red wine (51%) produced, Chasselas (64%) is the favourite white.

4 Less than 2% of the total wine produced in Switzerland is exported.

5 Europe's highest vineyard rises to a record 1,150m in Visp, canton Valais.



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Five minutes with...

THIERRY FISCHER

Swiss conductor Thierry Fischer took up his title of Principal Conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales in 2006. Now six years on, he has left the Cardiff-based ensemble to become Music Director of the Utah Symphony Orchestra, his first appointment in the US.

Ahead of his move to Salt Lake City, Fischer, who began his musical career as Principal Flute in Hamburg and at the Zurich Opera, told Swiss Review about his future plans, the basic differences between running an orchestra in the United States and in Europe and his favourite moments from his six years in Wales

Swiss Review: What additional responsibilities will you now have as Music Director?

Thierry Fischer: I am completely in charge of the orchestra's vision on all levels; from orchestral programming to the marketing department, development, education and touring. No decision is taken without my approval. I have much more the feeling this is

entirely my orchestra and I will develop its unique sound.

SR: Will you be able to take the same risks the BBC, a public broadcaster, might have allowed?

“

My only regret is I never learned Welsh

TF: Yes absolutely. You can do wild things in America as well. At the BBC I was able to do fantastic programming, which no other organisation would have permitted. We did the Dutilleux festival, huge projects like Messaien's "Transfiguration", the complete Oratorios by Berlioz, and a series of commissions by Paul Sacher. The BBC had both the capacity and the necessity, being a Public Radio orchestra, for us to do that. In America, it's very different, everything is of course possible, as long as you manage to get public support!



Thierry Fischer conducting © Kosaku Nakagawa

SR: How will your work with young people continue in Utah?

TF: Classical music has unfairly gained a dusty image. It is sadly seen as reserved for the elite, or old people. Our education department has the second biggest budget of the entire company, the orchestra brings 20,000 kids to the Abravanel Hall every season, and gives over a hundred concerts every year in schools within the State. We also have a campaign to increase the number of concert-goers under 35 by 30%.

SR: Who were your mentors, the people who influenced you as a young man?

TF: Definitely my flute teacher, the legendary Aurèle Nicolet. Swiss choral conductor Michel Corboz was a big influence, as was Nikolaus Harnoncourt, the conductor with whom I was so fortunate to work very intensively, first of all at the Zurich Opera as principal flutist and then with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. It was during this time I conducted an orchestra for the first time.

SR: How did they contribute to your success?

TF: They opened the doors of my own creativity, made me aware of my own fragility and taught me to accept things the way they are, as well as giving me, directly or indirectly, the courage to develop my own ideas. Only strong mentors can tell you the

truth about who you are and help you develop your own tools to develop as an artist.

SR: What have been some of the highlights of your six years in Wales?

TF: I thoroughly enjoyed the North Wales orchestra tours to Aberystwyth and Llandudno, all places I'd never been before. It is an artist's duty, and especially a national orchestra's mission, to perform in the provinces. I will also, of course, remember the very high quality of all the players in the orchestra. Working with Welsh singers, where there is such a huge singing tradition, was exceptional. I am a Berlioz freak and to perform three Berlioz oratorios with Welsh choirs was thrilling. I also loved the Welsh scenery, the sea – I am a keen jogger and often went to St David's Head on the west coast for a run and a pub lunch. I will take with me a bubbly champagne of memories! My only regret is that I never learned Welsh.

Impressum

How to contact the editor

Reports of Swiss society activities, news, coming events, correspondence, articles and advertising for the 'Switzerland in the UK' section of the Swiss Review, should go to the editor:

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