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Switzerland in the UK

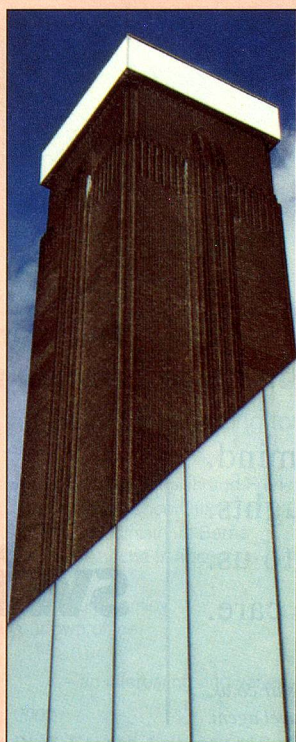


The Swiss Light that shines over London

During the long dark winter evenings Londoners have been able to fully appreciate Switzerland's unique contribution to the capital's skyline – the Swiss Light that now caps the Tate Modern, which was opened by the Queen last year.

Paid for by the Swiss Government, the light was designed by Basle architects Herzog & de Meuron with artist Michael Craig-Martin.

It stands atop the giant chimney (*right*) that towers above the massive structure of the former Bankside power station – dominating the south bank of the Thames – which once produced power for most of the city. It had been derelict for 14 years until the Swiss team transformed it into what is now one of London's most exciting landmarks.



Frs. 11m earmarked to 'sell' Switzerland to the UK and USA

Britain and the United States of America are to be subjected to a Swiss Government sponsored 'charm offensive' – in an effort to repair the damage done to the image of Switzerland by the wartime activities of Swiss banks.

A new body called Presence Switzerland has been set up to raise the country's profile abroad, with the UK and the US being priority targets. A third country – probably India or Brazil – will be chosen by the middle

of this year. The scheme has been allocated a budget of Frs. 11 million in its first year, with a total of Frs. 45 million available over the next three years.

The man in charge of the campaign, Paul Reutlinger, said: "We should show the different facets of our country, and we have a lot of very good things we can show.

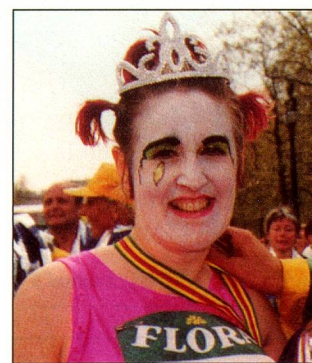
"But we should also talk about the new modern Switzerland where we have very important things in the high-tech field."

Marathon could win church £10,000

The Swiss Church could benefit by more than £10,000 following the London Marathon, which this year is being held on Sunday, April 22.

FOSSUK president Jeffrey Long came up with the idea of using the marathon to raise money for much needed major renovations at the church. He managed to obtain a charity 'gold bond', entitling the church to enter five runners every year for the next five years.

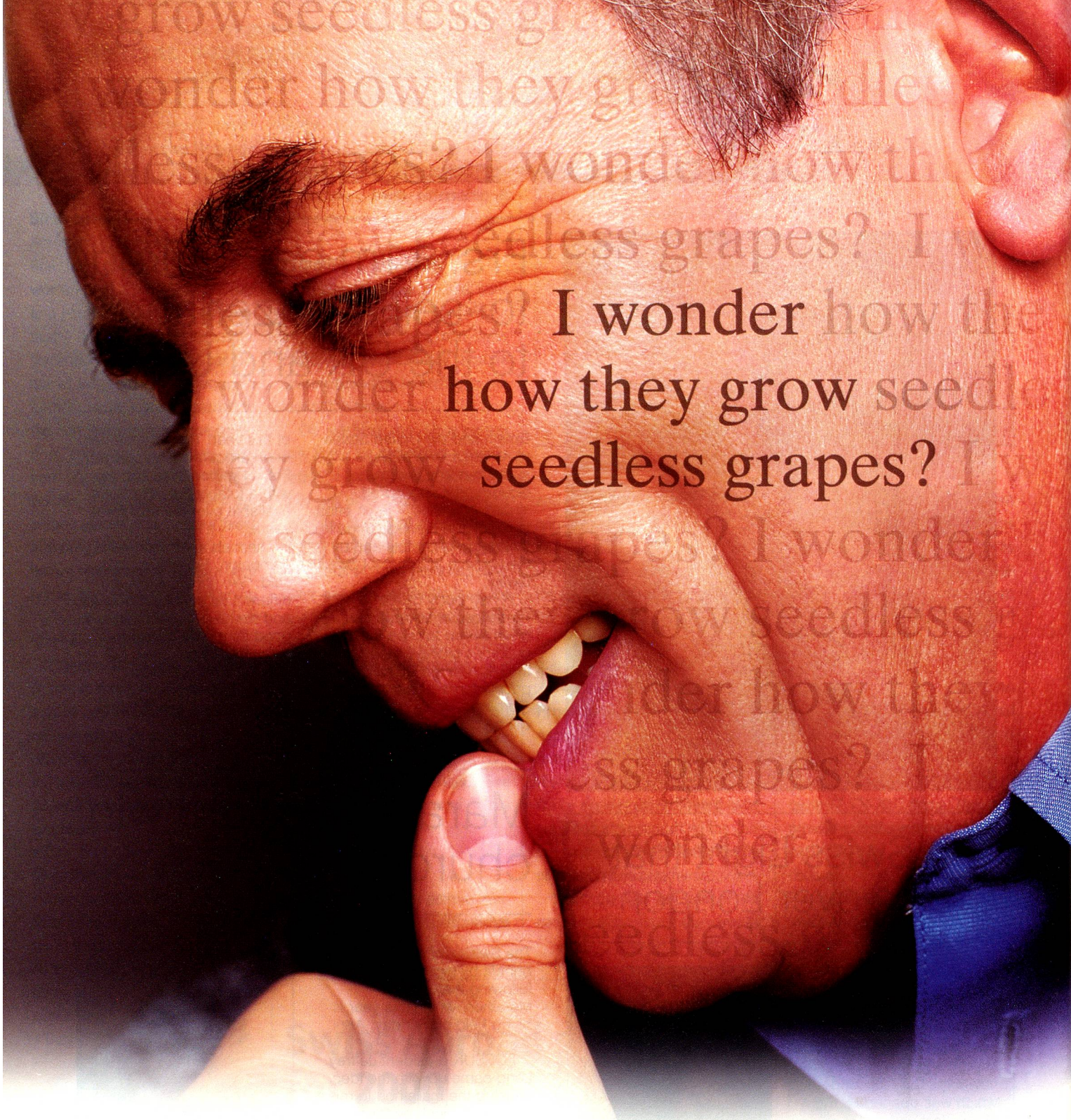
The Swiss Church team consists of Jeffrey Long's daughter, Julie Harrison of York, who has completed the marathon twice, dressed as a fairy (*pictured above right*); Pierre Cloux of Credit Suisse First Boston, who ran his last marathon 16 years ago; Norman Collenberg of Zurich, who has run in the New York marathon; Jacques Pasquier, the French chef at the Swiss Embassy in London; and Victor Trocki, who is running



for the first time. A variety of other fund raising and promotional events will also be held in conjunction with the marathon.

Sponsorship forms can be obtained from the Swiss Church, 79 Endell Street, WC2H 9DY (tel: 0207 836 1418). Donation cheques should also be sent to the same address, made out to 'Swiss Church'.

All donations will be acknowledged in a future issue of the Swiss Review.



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Can Swiss know-how help restore confidence in UK's ailing railways?

Passengers comfortably cocooned in the luxury of a high speed Swiss intercity express could well give a wry smile when turning the pages of Swiss Federal Railways' latest magazine, Via.

For the magazine paints an all-too-rosy view of Britain's railway system, in which the SFR are planning to invest between 100 and 150 million francs.

Expectations are that it will be a very profitable venture for the Swiss. The cover of the magazine even goes so far as to describe the UK as 'Treasure Island.'

But the article couldn't have appeared at a more inappropriate time. As copies of the magazine were being displayed in Swiss railway carriages, over in the UK the railways were plunging into a PR disaster.

A survey conducted by Mori for Railtrack and the train operating companies found that "the chaos and disruption has almost certainly done lasting and perhaps irreparable damage...It has led to a change in travel patterns for many users, some of whom will not return for some time, if ever."

Prime minister Tony Blair expressed passengers' frustration when he said: "It is absolute hell travelling on the railways at the moment."



Will trains like this rejuvenate Britain's rail system? A Swiss intercity express speeds effortlessly over the snow drenched alpine landscape

And UK rail supremo, the deputy prime minister John Prescott, promising a £60 billion investment in modernising Britain's railway, said: "I want to see people back on the railways. If they are reliable and modern, people will come back."

Will Swiss money, and even more importantly Swiss know-how, help to restore confidence in Britain's trains?

Switzerland's entrée into the UK rail network will be through a 50/50 partnership with Laing Construction, currently majority shareholder in Chiltern Railways, who are bidding for the franchise to run the Thames Trains and Wessex Rail routes, linking London with the Midlands, South Wales and the South West. However rail unions in Switzerland have doubts about the viability of the enterprise. They call it a "financial adventure with unlimited risks."

But Swiss Federal Railways are not going into it just for the money. They also think it will give them valuable operating experience for the day when railways in Switzerland will also become deregulated.

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UK passenger groups are claiming that rail fares in the UK are now among the most expensive in the world.

The standard open return fare on the 320km line between London and Manchester, which has gone up 50 per cent in less than two years, is now £150.

The fare for a journey of the same length, from Geneva to Altdorf, costs £65 – or just over £32 for the many Swiss who benefit from half-price tickets.



How to contact the editor

Reports of Swiss society activities and coming events, and articles and correspondence for the 'Switzerland in the UK' section of the Swiss Review, should go to the editor, Derek Meakin, at Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP. Tel: 01625 855 000; fax: 01625 855 111.

His email address is: dmeakin@swissinfo.org.

Enquiries regarding advertising should go to Jeffrey Long, 30 Finsbury Drive, Bradford BD2 1QA. Tel/fax: 01274 588 189.

● The 'Switzerland in the UK' supplement appears four times a year. The deadline for the next issue containing UK news, to be distributed in June, is April 21.

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- **Swiss Club Inverness:**
Carmen Rose, Inverness (01463 711 098)
- **West of Scotland Swiss Club:**
Shula Spain, Glasgow (01413 395 828)

Northern Ireland

- **Swiss Club Northern Ireland:**
Yvonne Robinson, Belfast (01289 0621 149)

Manchester

- **Swiss Club Manchester:**
Huldi Broadhurst, Wilmslow (01625 537 877)

The Midlands

- **Midlands Swiss Club:**
Glynne Roberts, Lichfield (01543 250 737)

Wales & the West

- **South Wales Swiss Club:**
Ruth Thomas, Swansea (01792 423 504)
- **Bristol Swiss Club:**
Trudy Soper, Bristol (01454 775 042)
- **Schwyzclub South West:**
Charlotte Burrows, Taunton (01823 333 717)
- **Torbay Swiss Club:**
Max Singer, Torquay (01803 842 355)

The South

- **Southern Area Swiss Club:**
Vreni Rudkin, Farnborough (01252 547 948)
- **Wilhelm Tell Group:**
Trudi Bryant, Poole (01202 731 720)

East Scotland

- **Aberdeen Swiss Club:**
Catalina Hood, Aboyne (01339 887 392)
- **Fife Swiss Club:**
Heidi McGhie, Rosyth (01383 412 635)
- **Swiss Club Edinburgh:**
Trudi Bott, South Queensferry (01313 313 366)

North East & Yorkshire

- **Swiss Club Tyne Tees:**
Nelly Scott-Niederberger, Jarrow (01915 190 956)
- **Yorkshire Swiss Club:**
Anne-Marie Vanal, Leeds (01132 754 304)

Greater London & the South East

- **City Swiss Club:**
Jürg Risch (01296 715 175)
- **New Helvetic Society:**
Christine Mathez (0208 203 3484)
- **Unione Ticinese:**
Christiane Barber (0208 348 3751)
- **Cercle Feminin Romand:**
Elena Bertin (0208 205 0172)
- **Cercle Genevois:**
Anne-France Girod Wallace (0207 712 697)
- **Frauenverein Swiss Church:**
Maria Kitsis (0208 202 0425)
- **Swiss Church Mothers' Group:**
Marianne Fisher (0208 520 1250)
- **Swiss Rifle Association:**
Urs Schaerer (0208 850 8884)
- **Swiss Club East Kent:**
George Smith (01843 601 314)
- **West Surrey Swiss Club:**
Peter Crozier (01932 347 479)
- **East Surrey Swiss Club:**
Renée Boyce (01737 215 591)
- **Twickenham Ladies:**
Annemarie Locher (0208 898 4299)

There are also two offshore clubs

- **Swiss Club Guernsey:**
Trudi Ferbrache (01481 248 188)
- **Swiss Gibraltar Association:**
Thomas Rickli (0035 044 145)

If there is no Swiss club near you and you would like to meet other Swiss who may be living in your area, contact Jeffrey Long on 01274 588 189

Global warming threatens Alps

British experts on global warming have warned that some of the most popular alpine skiing resorts are under increasing pressure from landslides.

Average temperatures in many resorts have risen by 1°C over the last 15 years, melting the permafrost that holds mountain surfaces together.

Scientists believe this brings a greater risk of rockfalls, landslides and floods. And they are worried because many alpine villages, roads and railways are built directly below high altitude permafrost zones.

Dr Charles Harris of Cardiff University is coordinating a European research project called Permafrost & Climate in Europe (Pace).

He told a conference of the Royal Geographic Society: "If these degrade there could be an increased frequency of slope failures, landslides and rock falls,

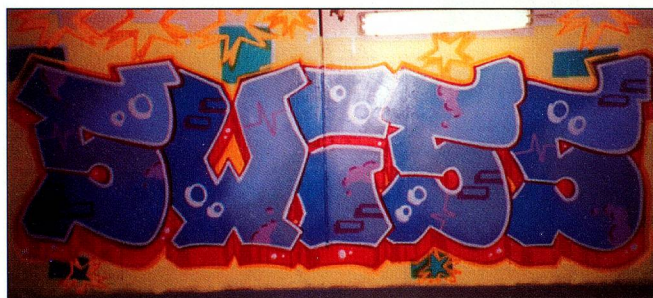
with rivers and railways blocked. There are even frozen rock slopes that are so unstable they could fail even before the thaw."

The scientists were put on the alert when a borehole above St Moritz showed ground temperature has risen between .5°C and 1°C in the 15 years since it had been sunk.

"If the temperature inside

the mountain is only -2°C at the moment, then it will not take long to defrost," said Dr Harris. "The combination of ground temperatures only slightly above zero, high ice contents and steep slopes makes mountain permafrost particularly vulnerable to changes."

Other boreholes have now been sunk in order to assess longterm trends.



■ When the Swiss Embassy decided to hold a disco for young Swiss in the Embassy garage they realised the rather dull surroundings needed brightening up – so they invited some graffiti artists to help out. This is part of the colourful result.

Briton lands top job with Swiss bank

Luqman Arnold has a reputation among bankers for being a globetrotter. But now, at the age of 50, he seems to have finally settled down – as the first British citizen to get to the top of one of the world's biggest banks.

Five years ago he joined the 70,000 staff of UBS, was made chief financial officer two years ago, and now, as president of the group executive board, is the bank's second in command.

He was born in India, where his father was a British civil servant, and went to boarding school in England.

Mr Arnold describes his wife as "very independent" – she has her own career, running a group of Thai restaurants in London.



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Do you live in Herts or Northants?

Two readers have written to the editor asking if they can be put in touch with other Swiss in their locality.

Christine Winstanley lives in Hertfordshire. She writes: "I now have a little daughter who was born last April and I am very interested to discuss certain issues of bilingual education (English-Swiss German) with Swiss people who are in the same situation."

And Simone Lewis, from Northamptonshire, who describes herself as "a lonely Swiss", would love to hear from fellow nationals.

Interested readers in these areas are asked to contact the editor of Swiss Review at Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP.

passengers in 2000 was an increase of 11.4 per cent over 1999. And it attributes its achievement largely to the remarkable success of the no-frills airline Easyjet, especially with its services between Geneva and the UK.

The company now comes second in passenger numbers to Swissair and its affiliates, with a growing number of flights now linking Geneva with Luton, Liverpool, Stanstead and Gatwick.

Easyjet claims 80 per cent of its passengers are first time flyers who, without its cheaper prices, would not have used this form of travel.

This summer another four new next-generation Boeing 737-700s will join the fleet in order to cater for the ever growing demand – part of an order for 32 Boeings. Current plans are for a fleet of 44 aircraft by 2004.

The photograph of Prince Andrew in the last issue of Swiss Review was taken by Wolfgang Amadeus Brühlhart. We regret that the name of the outgoing president of the Swiss Church, Edith Crack, was given as Elisabeth Crack.

FOSSUK seeks candidates for OSA Council elections

The Council for the Swiss Abroad, which plays an important role in putting the views of Swiss living overseas to the Swiss Government, ends its four-year term in office this spring.

The UK is represented on the Council by three delegates and two deputy delegates, and elections will be held shortly to fill these positions.

The Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK (FOSSUK) is now inviting nominations from Swiss nationals who are:

- Well acquainted with the Swiss community in the UK
- Fluent in French or German (the languages used in Council meetings)
- Willing to give time to participate in Swiss club, FOSSUK and other Swiss community activities
- Able to attend two Council meetings held in Switzerland each year, and three to four FOSSUK committee meetings and its AGM

The three current delegates

are Ursula Ditchburn, Joe Brogginini and Rose-Marie Breitenstein, with Margrit Lyster and Nellie Scott-Niederberger as deputy delegates.

Rose-Marie Breitenstein, who is also secretary of FOSSUK, told Swiss Review: "The position of delegate offers an exciting opportunity and challenge for a Swiss abroad to look after the interests of his or her compatriots in the 'Parliament of the Fifth Switzerland.'"

Nominations have to be submitted by April 14, and the election will take place during the FOSSUK agm, to be held at the Swiss Embassy in London on June 9.

The 150 members of the newly elected Council will meet for the first time during the Congress for the Swiss Abroad in Davos in August.

Further details are available from FOSSUK president Jeffrey Long on 01274 588189 or by email: fossuk@ukgateway.net.

Special get-together in Durham

Swiss living in the North East will shortly have an opportunity to find out for themselves how the Council for the Swiss Abroad operates.

Swiss Club Tyne Tees is organising a special meeting which is to be held at 1pm on Sunday, May 13, at the County Hall, Old Elvet, Durham.

One of the delegates to the OSA – which looks after the interests of the Swiss Abroad in the 'Parliament of the Fifth Switzerland' – will give a detailed presentation about the work of the delegates, achievements of the OSA and issues affecting the Swiss Abroad. Consul General Max Inhelder will also be present to answer questions.

Anyone wishing to attend should phone 01915 190 956.



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Coming events

Swiss Club Tyne Tees:

Meeting at Three Tuns Hotel, Durham (March 31 and April 28); Annual General Meeting (May 13). Details from Nelly Scott-Niederberger on 01091 519 0956.

Torbay Swiss Club: Coffee morning (March 1, April 5, May 3, June 7, July 5); AGM followed by quiz (March 21); Skittles evening (April 18); Coach outing (May 16). Details from Max Singer on 01803 842 355.

West of Scotland Swiss Club:

Stammtisch at Café Gandolfi, Glasgow (March 26, April 30, June 25); Kinderklub, Ostergottesdienst and Egg Hunt, Hughenden Terrace, Glasgow (April 15); Annual general meeting, Hughenden Terrace, Glasgow (June 6). Details from Shula Spain-Gayer on 0141 339 5828.

Manchester Swiss Club:

Raclette evening at Wilmslow Parish Hall (March 10); AGM at Wilmslow Parish Hall (April 26); Tour and lunch at the Lowry Centre, Salford (May 21); Midsummer lunch (June 21); Swiss national day at the Brookdale Club, Bramhall (July 28).



Ticinese celebrate San Nicolao

The Unione Ticinese ended its busy social programme for the year with the traditional St Nicholas get-together.

Santa, in the person of Tristian Preston, was in his usual generous mood, and did not forget the club's honorary president, Swiss ambassador Bruno Spinner, to whom he presented a book describing the club's 125 year history.

Readers with connections to the Ticino who would like to know more about the club should contact the president, Christiane Barber, on 020 8348 3751.

Schweizerclub spreads the net

Although members are mainly Swiss German, the West of Scotland Swiss Club is seeking more members from the French and Italian speaking parts of Switzerland who would like the opportunity to converse in their mother language.

For more information about the club and its varied programme of events contact Shula Spain-Gayer on 0141 339 5828.

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■ Joining the South Wales Swiss Club in Cardiff for their barbecue was FOSSUK president Jeffrey Long (left), pictured with Ruth Thomas and Rolf Brown. Prospective new members of the club should contact Ruth (01792 423 504), Rolf (01685 871 148 or Gerry Allin (01792 428 879).

Date for your diary

First of August Celebrations 2001 on Saturday, 14th July 2001 in Golders Green

For further information contact: firstaug@which.net

Edinburgh club's 40th birthday

At a get together in Leith 65 members, friends and guests helped Edinburgh Swiss Club celebrate its 40th birthday.

President Trudi Bott gave a special welcome to Consul General and Mrs Inhelder, Jeffrey Long and Rose-Marie Breitenstein from FOSSUK and Consul Alan Stewart and his team from the Consular agency in Edinburgh.

After enjoying the birthday cake baked and decorated by Ursula Ross, guest speaker Dr Ursula Ditchburn, one of the delegates to the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad, recalled the club's beginnings and the friendship between Edinburgh and the Dunfermline club, of which she is a former president.

She paid tribute to the late Otti Hartmann who together

with a small group of Swiss citizens living in Edinburgh had founded the club.

Three of the founder members were present: the first president, Helen Reid, together with Suzanne Henderson and Nelly Robson.

Dr Ditchburn presented the club with a specially decorated trophy to be awarded at their skittles evenings.