

**Zeitschrift:** Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad  
**Herausgeber:** Organisation of the Swiss Abroad  
**Band:** 41 (2014)  
**Heft:** 3

**Anhang:** Switzerland in the UK & Ireland

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Top Story

## STUDY OPTIONS IN SWITZERLAND

The Swiss Embassy in London was transformed into a hub of learning excellence in May as educational experts from Switzerland met with more than 90 people, the majority of whom were parents and their teenage children from the expat community, to discuss the opportunities for young people continuing their education in Switzerland.

Dr Lutz Berg, head of Science, Technology and Higher Education at the Embassy, chaired the session. He began by setting out the main difference between the education systems in the UK and Switzerland. "There is no vocational 'gold standard' in the UK," he said, "Two-thirds of young people receive a vocational training in Switzerland compared to one-third in the UK, but only 30% of those students do apprenticeships."

With what appeared to be a reference to the high cost of some courses outside of Switzerland, Dr Berg closed his introduction by reassuring the audience that Swiss courses were good value for money. "International students are not a business," he said, "We don't sell expensive courses."

Tuition fees in Switzerland are relatively low and there are opportunities for international students to receive cantonal grants. Although as Fiona Scheidegger, co-director of 'educationsuisse' explained, accessing the money could be difficult and time-consuming. "We have 26 Cantons with 26 different policies. Imagine you want to study in Lausanne, but your canton of origin is Zurich."

“

**We don't sell expensive courses**

Educationsuisse helps international students fill out the necessary forms and, in general, integrate smoothly into this new system.

Philipp Gutzwiller represented the "business world" and had an obvious passion for vocational training. "Thousands of Swiss companies offer apprenticeships," he told his attentive



© Daniel Pedroletti

audience, "and there are 400 well-paid careers to choose from."

However, Gutzwiller warned this route was "not a walk in the park". "You are thrown into a professional life at 15," he said, "There are no lie-ins or late nights with friends. You are 3-and-a-half days at work and one day in the classroom."

Anders Hagstroem, Director of Global Educational Affairs of ETH Zurich was the final member on the panel and described the necessary requirements to study in Switzerland. It soon became clear that as there were only a small number of degree courses in

English, students would have to be fluent in a 2<sup>nd</sup> language.

The bilingual element, especially the level of language ability required, sparked a lively Q&A session following the speeches. Further informal discussions continued late into the evening over canapés and Swiss wine.

All presentations can be viewed on the FOSSUK website [www.swiss-societies.co.uk](http://www.swiss-societies.co.uk)

Education

### Swiss students get a taste of working life in Belfast

In our previous issue, readers were introduced to a new and innovative vocational training programme between Switzerland and Northern Ireland (NI). Clélio Kaufmann and João Rodrigues were two of this first group of young Swiss learners from the Canton of Vaud to take advantage of this scheme in Belfast. Here they described their experiences and first impressions.

**Joao Rodrigues:** I think they were quite surprised by our ability level. If you want to succeed in your professional life in the UK you have to go to university. For us in Switzerland the apprenticeship and the professional education are more important.

**Clélio Kaufmann:** It was very different, because in Switzerland I was in a technical school and in NI it was only for work. In the beginning, it was very difficult because the

company didn't have the software I needed. But I knew not to give up and finished my placement with success.

**What was your greatest learning experience?**

**JR:** The English of course! Working is a great way to learn fast, because talking is a must, not a want when you are in an office. I don't think that would have happened if I had chosen to go to a British school.

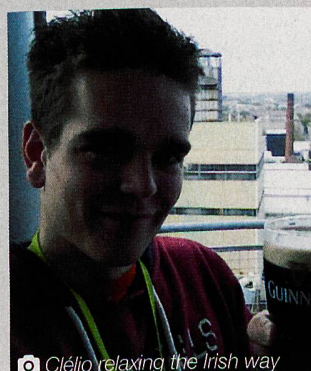
**CK:** I increased my skills, am more independent and have learned to solve problems in a different country and language. I am able to speak confidently with people and work constructively in a team.

**What have you enjoyed most about living in Ireland?**

**JR:** The pubs! You don't know Belfast until you've been to Kelly's for the Irish music. And I love the Ulster fry up! I

will make my own potato bread in Switzerland thinking about the good moments I had in Northern Ireland.

**CK:** The landscape. Giant's Causeway for example was very interesting and beautiful. And of course, the people. Everybody I met was warm and friendly.



© Clélio relaxing the Irish way

Editorial

**Dear Readers,**



Education is again on our minds in this issue. We get a first-hand account of working life in Northern Ireland for two young learners from the Canton of Vaud and educational specialists from Zurich and Berne offer advice to those interested in continuing their higher education in Switzerland.

For football fans, there is no need to be disheartened about not getting to Brazil for the World Cup. If you are in London, there are several opportunities to cheer on your team with fellow supporters.

Manchester Swiss Club hosted this year's FOSSUK AGM, so it seemed only appropriate to invite their president, Juerg Bentele, to conclude this issue with a fascinating historical account of how the Swiss came to settle in the North West of England during the Industrial Revolution.

**Andrew Littlejohn**

Congress of Swiss Abroad

# UK DELEGATES PREPARE FOR BADEN

Readers of this journal may have left Switzerland some time ago. Whether or not you plan to return there at some point, or indeed move on to another country, you are likely to have one thing in common: you want to be sure your government offers a coherent and coordinated policy approach regarding the rights of all Swiss citizens.




There is a continuing need for information and exchange. In August, ASO delegates for the UK will attend the 92<sup>nd</sup> Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Baden. The Swiss Review will report on proceedings in the next Regional Issue in October. In the meantime, if you would like a question to be raised at this year's international gathering, please contact your UK-based representatives.

The discourse on migration continues. Should someone who has decided to move abroad still receive support? Recent bilateral agreements have done much to scaffold our international mobility needs, which includes education and work prospects.

However, there are still disparities in the treatment of binational Swiss families regarding their rights in Switzerland; challenges facing returners in need of social benefits; problems with recognition of foreign diplomas; hurdles with new tax laws faced by Swiss bank customers living abroad. What is more, with ongoing consulate closures around the world it will become more difficult for some to obtain the support they need.

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Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

**Embassy of Switzerland in the United Kingdom**  
Regional Consular Centre London

**Personnel changes:**

**Susanne Hemund**, Consul and Head of the Regional Consular Centre London, left for Pakistan to head the Chancellery at the Swiss Embassy in Islamabad. Her successor **Tiziano Pedrioli**, Consul, arrives from Paris in June.

**Margrit Ledermann Prestofelippo**, Consul General, leaves in July to take up the same functions at the Swiss Embassy in Buenos Aires. Her successor **Hermann Aebischer**, Consul General, arrives from Berne in August.

**Are your Swiss travel documents valid?**



Please book your appointment for a new passport and/or ID card in good time, and ensure you arrive punctually. Let us know in advance if you need to cancel the appointment.

**Are you a Swiss resident in Ireland?**



The Regional Consular Centre in London is your point of contact for all consular matters such as travel documents, births, marriage and death certificates, change of address, etc.

[www.eda.admin.ch/rcclondon](http://www.eda.admin.ch/rcclondon)  
[rcclondon@eda.admin.ch](mailto:rcclondon@eda.admin.ch)  
Tel. +44 (0)20 7616 6000 (option 2)



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Sunday: 12 noon to 10:30pm

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# SWISS NATIONAL DAY LONDON

Celebrate **Swiss National Day**

at University College London  
on **Saturday 19 July 2014 from 4 pm till late**

This year's attractions will feature:

Music, food and beer from the cantons of Saint-Gallen and Appenzell  
The Giggle Doctors  
Special activities for children  
Music to dance the night away  
And much more



Join the Swiss community and friends of Switzerland and enjoy traditional Swiss food and wine.

All are welcome.

For further information visit [www.swissnationalday.co.uk](http://www.swissnationalday.co.uk)

Swiss National Day London  
c/o Embassy of Switzerland  
16 - 18 Montagu Place  
London W1H 2BQ



Feature

# SWISS SHOW OFF THEIR AIR FLEET

The Red Arrows won't be the only aerobatic display team celebrating an aviation landmark at this summer's Royal International Air Tattoo at Fairford. The Patrouille Suisse, in their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, along with an F-18 Hornet and Super Puma helicopter, will also be there to delight spectators.

This year's Royal International Air Tattoo will feature more than 200 aircraft from around the globe and a seven-and-a-half hour flying display. There are even a number of unique joint flypasts planned, helping to earn the Air Tattoo a reputation as one of the greatest air shows in the world.

The team fly six F-5E Tiger IIs painted in a bright colour scheme that incorporates the red and white of the

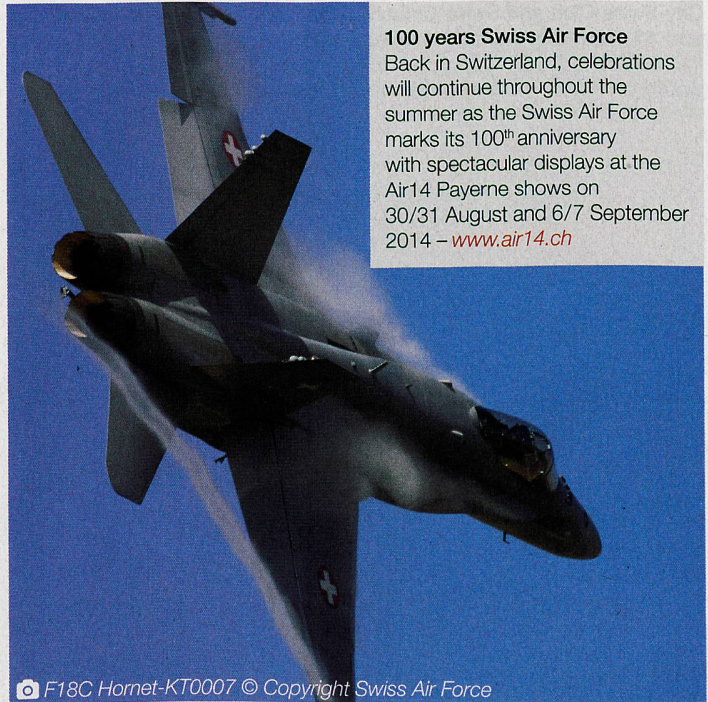
“  
The pilots are famed worldwide

Swiss national flag. The pilots, who are all volunteers from various frontline squadrons, are famed for performing precise formations at high speed.

**Royal International Air Tattoo, Fairford** (Patrouille Suisse, F/A-18 Hornet and Super Puma Displays)  
Date: 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> July 2014  
[www.airtattoo.com/airshow](http://www.airtattoo.com/airshow)

**RAF Waddington International Air Show** (F/A-18 Hornet Display)  
Date: 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> July 2014  
[www.waddingtonairshow.co.uk](http://www.waddingtonairshow.co.uk)

**International Air Day, Royal Navy Air Station, Yeovilton** (F/A-18 Hornet Display)  
Date: 26 July 2014  
[www.royalnavy.mod.uk/yeovilton-airday](http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/yeovilton-airday)



**100 years Swiss Air Force**  
Back in Switzerland, celebrations will continue throughout the summer as the Swiss Air Force marks its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary with spectacular displays at the Air14 Payerne shows on 30/31 August and 6/7 September 2014 – [www.air14.ch](http://www.air14.ch)

F18C Hornet-KT0007 © Copyright Swiss Air Force

## The Swiss clock legacy

It is nearly two years since the House of Switzerland opened its doors to over 250,000 visitors during the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

To commemorate its legacy and the strong ties that have been built up between Switzerland and the London Borough of Southwark (where the House was located), a special ceremony will take place at Borough Market on 25<sup>th</sup> June to unveil a new "SBB Swiss Railway Clock" in the heart of the market.

The clock has been donated by Mondaine, the famous Swiss watchmaker who produce a range of timepieces based on the iconic design first created by Swiss railway employee Hans Hilfiker in the 1940s.

The clock will be the same as the one seen at railway stations across Switzerland and will be a permanent reminder of the co-operation and friendship between Switzerland and Southwark that was so evident during the Olympic Games.

The ceremony will be attended by HE Ambassador Dominik Furgler and the Worshipful Mayor of Southwark, and will also feature a performance by young Swiss musician Heidi Happy. To accompany the clock, a special poster design "dialogue" has been organised between students of Camberwell College of Arts, University of the Arts London and Zurich University of the Arts. These posters will be displayed in Borough Market and other sites in Southwark after the launch event.



## CHUK Swiss Cultural Events in the UK

25.6. – 13.7.2014

### SWISS ARCHITECTS

AT LONDON FESTIVAL OF ARCHITECTURE 2014

An exhibition about *public building in Switzerland* complemented by a *panel discussion in cooperation* with the London Metropolitan University.

Venue: Cass Faculty of Art, Architecture and Design, Central House, Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7PF

Support: Presence Switzerland

18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> July 2014, 8.00 pm

### SEBASTIAN MICHAEL

THE SONNETEER

This new play on power, passion and possession featuring some of the sonnets of William Shakespeare will have two special London Previews before it opens at Edinburgh Festival Fringe (1–23 August).

Venue: London, The Landor Theatre Fringe, 70 Landor Road, London SW9 9PH



14<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> October 2014, 7.30 pm – Save the date!

### SWISS AMBASSADOR'S AWARD 2014

TRIO RAFALE

Trio Rafale was founded in Zurich by Maki Wiederkehr (piano), Daniel Meller (violin) and Flurin Cuonz (cello), and has already won numerous international awards and prizes. The name Rafale stems from the French *gust of wind*.

Venues: 14.10.: London, Wigmore Hall

15.10.: Cardiff, RWCMD

16.10.: Edinburgh, Balmoral Hotel

17.10.: Belfast, Queen's University

Supported by: Pro Helvetia, Swiss Cultural Fund, Swiss Embassy, PRS



Sport

# WORLD CUP FEVER GRIPS LONDON

City Swiss Club, the Swiss Church and St. Moritz restaurant warmly invite readers to come together to watch the Swiss games during the World Cup and have a bite to eat.

The event is free to attend, but spaces are limited. For more information about availability contact Sabrina at City Swiss Club [sabrina.cityswissclub@gmail.com](mailto:sabrina.cityswissclub@gmail.com)



## Sunday, 15 June 2014

Switzerland vs. Ecuador  
16:00 for 17:00 (kick-off)  
Venue: St. Moritz Restaurant  
161 Wardour Street, W1F 8WJ



## Friday, 20 June 2014

19:00 for 20:00 (kick-off)  
Switzerland vs. France  
Venue: Swiss Church London  
79 Endell Street, London WC2H 9DY



## Wednesday, 25 June 2014

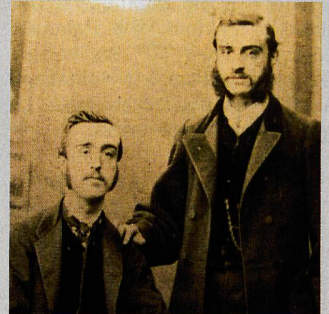
20:00 for 21:00 (kick-off)  
Switzerland vs. Honduras  
Venue: St. Moritz Restaurant  
161 Wardour Street, W1F 8WJ



Hopp Schwiz! Allez la Suisse! Forza Svizzera! Hopp Svizra!

## Ticino Town to screen in London

Over the past year I have acted as consultant and co-ordinator in London for Michelangelo Gandolfi who created and produced a documentary, Ticino Town, which is about the history of the Ticinese community in London, for Radiotelevisione della Svizzera Italiana (RSI). It features interviews with several members of our club, Unione Ticinese.



Agostino and Stefano Gatti, c. 1870 – private collection (William Gatti)

As the production of the documentary progressed, Michelangelo's superiors got increasingly enthusiastic about it. As a result, it was allowed to grow in length and, in addition, an English-language version was authorised.

The Italian version had its premiere in the cinema in Acquarossa the day before our 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in February.

We plan to screen the English version at the Embassy on Saturday

27<sup>th</sup> September. I do hope as many of you as possible will come to see this revealing story of how many of your ancestors first arrived in this country, and, not least, what has happened since.

Peter Barber  
Presidente dell' Unione Ticinese

### An invitation from:

## NEW HELVETIC SOCIETY

The New Helvetic Society is a Swiss cultural club based in London that organizes a wide range of events with a Swiss connection.

Apart from jazz and classical concerts, film shows, visits to museums and social gatherings, we provide a forum for discussing issues concerning Swiss nationals resident in the UK. We offer an opportunity for people to exchange views on social, political and cultural developments taking place in Switzerland.

Whether you are a Swiss national or have a special interest in the social and

political culture of Switzerland, the New Helvetic Society will give you a unique opportunity to meet with like-minded people.

Our Autumn/Winter programme will feature a guided tour of Kenwood House in Hampstead, a Jazz Concert, an event on IT security and we will celebrate the Escalade in December. Most of our events are held at the Embassy of Switzerland.

Have a look at our website [www.newhelveticsociety.org.uk](http://www.newhelveticsociety.org.uk) and join us at one or more of our events. Just download the flyer and return it to us with your details by the stated deadline. Or better still become a member.

Daniel Pedroletti,  
President of the New Helvetic Society



Daniel Pedroletti

## SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

FOUNDED IN 1703



WE HELP SWISS CITIZENS LIVING IN THE UK WHO NEED FINANCIAL OR SOCIAL SUPPORT

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Mrs Petra Kehr Cocks (Welfare Officer)

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[www.swissbenevolent.org.uk](http://www.swissbenevolent.org.uk)

Miscellaneous

# CLUBS AND CULTURE · CLUBS AND CULTURE · CLUBS

## Southern Area Swiss Club

Club members were pleased to share the company of the outgoing consul, Margrit Ledermann, at this year's AGM. After the formal business was over, one of our members Heidi Cameron demonstrated the art of "Scherenschnitte".



Our skittles evening in May was enjoyed equally by both winners and losers. Here, the happy losers with organiser Karin Prier keeping score.



Our traditional January lunch, which was held this year at the Frensham Pond Hotel.



## Swiss National Day in Ireland

As every year all Swiss compatriots will be invited to participate at the National Day Reception which this year will be hosted by Ambassador Marie-Claude Meylan on Thursday, 31<sup>st</sup> July 2014, at 6.00 pm and will take place in the garden of the Swiss residence at 8 Ailesbury Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.



Invitations will be sent out closer to the date.

An invitation from:



UNIONE TICINESE

Unione Ticinese always welcomes new members interested in Ticino culture, history, way of life, politics and gastronomy. For more information call Vice-president, Joe Brogginini on 020 8741 4224. Our application form can be found at: [www.utl.org.uk](http://www.utl.org.uk)

## In Memoriam

Ernst Schwaller passed away earlier this year at the age of 90 in his beloved Yorkshire home. Switzerland was written through Ernst and he never forgot his happy days in Solothurn.



In a long and illustrious career in catering, Ernst worked at the elegant Savoy Hotel in London and the strikingly beautiful Palais in St Moritz. He later established the pioneering Swiss restaurant, The Old Manor House, in Knaresborough, Yorkshire in 1965. Ernst received an honorary MCMI catering

award, which enabled him to complete his career as lecturer in catering at Bradford College.

He was predeceased by his wife Pat and is survived by his children, Peter, Martin and Dawn and by his grandchildren Fred and Rosie.

## What's On

### Yorkshire Swiss Club

Various activities are planned for the future and we look forward to welcoming members and non-members to our Fondue and Entertainment event to celebrate Swiss National Day on the afternoon of the 2<sup>nd</sup> August at Newton-on-Ouse. For more information please tel. 01347 848 473.

### Midlands Swiss Society

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June: Visit to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas with a walk for those who wish and an evening meal on return.

Please feel free to contact the Chairman, Graham Baker on 02476 411 736, or e-mail [bakerperrin@gmail.com](mailto:bakerperrin@gmail.com) Members and non-members welcome.

### Southern Area Swiss Club

2<sup>nd</sup> August: Swiss National Day Celebration, Time: 5pm for 5.30pm

Location: Darby Green Centre, Yateley

### Unione Ticinese

19<sup>th</sup> August: National Swiss Day Celebrations

30<sup>th</sup> August: Outing to Brighton

27<sup>th</sup> September: English screening of 'Ticino Town'

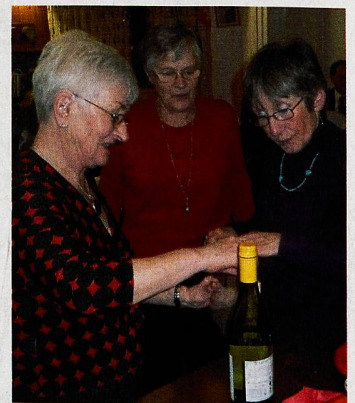
25<sup>th</sup> October: Castagnata

### Edinburgh Swiss Club

The Swiss Club Edinburgh met at the South Queensferry Boat Club recently for their annual Fondue evening.

With stunning views of the Forth Road Bridge on one side, the Forth Rail Bridge on the other and the small, but quaint, South Queensferry harbour in the foreground, the twenty five members who gathered to enjoy a very 'gemuetlich' evening of fondue, Swiss music and conversation couldn't have asked for a more pleasing venue.

Freddie Wyser



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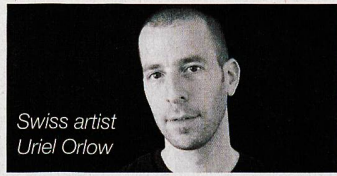


Language Teaching

Culture

# LIMERICK CELEBRATES EVA INTERNATIONAL

Every two years EVA International, Ireland's Biennial of Contemporary Art, works with guest curators to create a twelve-week programme of exhibitions and events that animate Limerick City. Pro Helvetia is supporting the inclusion of Swiss artists Ingo Giezendanner "GRRRR" and Uriel Orlow.



Swiss artist Uriel Orlow

tion and performance at Limerick City Gallery of Art, as well as various other locations in the city centre. A series of public events has been arranged together with outreach/education projects to help complete the 2014 City of Culture celebrations.

**Eva International:**  
Limerick City until 6 July

This year's project, AGITATIONISM, will showcase works by Irish and international artists selected from more than 2,000 proposals from artists in no less than 96 countries. The artists chosen for Eva International 2014 will show in a variety of different media including video, sculpture, painting, installa-



Eamonn O'Mahony/Studioworks  
Ingo Giezendanner's exhibit at EVA International 2014

Exhibition

## War from the Victims' Perspective

To mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the First Geneva Convention and the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of diplomatic relations between Ireland and Switzerland, the Embassy of Switzerland in Ireland organised a tour in May of "War from the Victims' Perspective - Photographs by Jean Mohr" at the Gallery of Photography Ireland in Dublin. This important and thought-provoking exhibition was produced by the Musée de l'Elysée, Lausanne and the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

a series of events on Humanitarian Action, can also be viewed in Galway (expected in June) and in Cork (expected in the autumn).

**Further information** will be posted on the Embassy website [www.eda.admin.ch/dublin](http://www.eda.admin.ch/dublin) closer to the date.

The photographed photographer, Jerusalem, 1979  
© Jean Mohr, Musée de l'Elysée



Jean Mohr (1925) was a committed defender of human rights and is one of the best representatives of humanist photography. His images are known for their graphic qualities and, just as importantly, for their great sensitivity.

The display of this Swiss documentary photographer's work, including

Horticulture

## Plyn forest design wins at Chelsea Flower Show

Newly qualified garden designers Daniel Auderset from Berne and Nicole Fischer from Munich bravely took on the world's horticultural elite recently and won a silver gilt medal for their first ever show garden at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in London.

show how they can be used effectively in a garden. We also want people to be aware that pine species are in decline in warmer areas of Europe."

Daniel Auderset and Nicole Fischer met while studying Garden Design at the esteemed Inchbald School of Design in London. The two graduated in 2013, and now run their own garden design businesses.

Nicole and Daniel created "The Extending Space" conceptual garden design, which was inspired by the diverse and beautiful landscapes of the protected Plyn Forest region in the Swiss Valais.

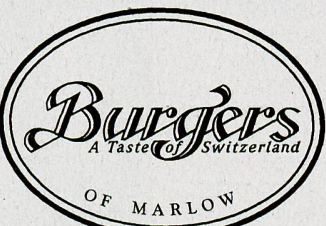
"The garden highlights how, by playing with dimensions, the spirit of a large and varied landscape can be captured effectively within a contemporary and minimalist design," said the Swiss-born designer.

Although the distinct microclimates within the Plyn Forest region offer a diverse range of plant species, the main message was to demonstrate the splendour of pines.

"Within the garden the pines are a focus as we want to highlight their beauty to gardeners in the UK and




Gardeners Daniel Auderset & Nicole Fischer



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History

## THE BRUTAL AND BOLD SWITZERS

"Where are my Switzers?" (Hamlet IV,v). As the literary world celebrates the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of William Shakespeare's birth, the Bibliothek am Guisanplatz (formerly the Swiss Military Library) in Berne quotes the Bard in an exhibition highlighting a lesser-known aspect of Swiss-UK relations: Swiss soldiers who served in the British Army from 1700–1900.

The Swiss were reportedly among the most sought-after mercenary forces for half a millennium. Documents show that Swiss soldiers fought under the English flag already in the royal succession wars of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, known as the War of the Roses. These were not officially recognised regiments, but rogue mercenaries (Reisläufer). It is estimated that well over a million Swiss mercenary soldiers fought on the battlefields of Europe.

The last Swiss mercenary unit to be founded was the British-Swiss Legion which served the British in Crimea in 1855. The soldiers were dismissed in 1856 without having fought.

Swiss soldiers fought for the British Empire in almost every part of the world – whether as officers in Egypt, military doctor in Crimea or governor of Ceylon. However, the highest military decoration was not given to a high rank officer but to an orphan from Burgdorf, Christian Ferdinand Schiess (1856–1884). At the age of 15, the teenager fought with the French in the Franco-Prussian War and then joined British soldiers in South Africa against the Zulus.

This was the orphan from Burgdorf who received the famous Victoria Cross at the age of 22.

### "Where Are My Switzers?"

Swiss Mercenaries in English Service (1700–1900)

Where:  
Bibliothek am Guisanplatz, Berne

When:  
until 27<sup>th</sup> June



Colonial Infantry Helmet & Weapons (1871–1888)



Officer's uniform (British Swiss Legion, 1855)

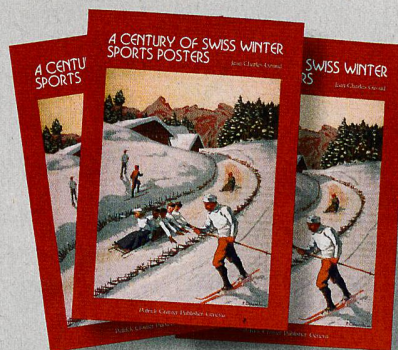
## Homage to Swiss winter sports

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Switzerland witnessed the flourishing of two movements that seemed, at first glance, diametrically opposed: winter sports and artistic posters. The country's geography and climate were highly propitious to the development of winter sports; and its talented artists, with their energy and drive, gave rise to a highly creative environment in which artistic posters thrived.

Confronted with the needs of trade and advertising, the two movements combined their forces and produced, for more than a century, thousands of posters – many of which, on account of their high quality, pay homage not only

to winter sports but to the beauty of the mountains and the artistic genius of their creators.

In order to make these exceptional art works better known, the Geneva-based publisher Patrick Cramer in collaboration with Jean Charles Giroud (curator of the poster collection at the Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire de Genève) has brought out a book, *A Century of Swiss Winter Sports Posters*, packed with more than 150 colour illustrations entirely devoted to this genre. For the first time, the reader is not only able to enjoy these posters, but also to appreciate their great variety and understand their fascinating evolution.



**A Century of Swiss Winter Sports Posters**  
Price: £40  
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For more information,  
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Meet the Presidents

**JUERG BENTELE, MANCHESTER SWISS CLUB**

In order to find out about the history of the Swiss Club Manchester one has to go back to the Industrial Revolution (18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries) in the North of England.

The birth of the Swiss Textile Industry at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was mainly achieved by British-made machinery. Steel and engineering played an important role in its expansion. The name of the Schaffhausen steel and engineering company, Georg Fischer, springs to mind. Swiss engineers and industrialists came to the UK, some to study, others to stay.

The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century saw the establishment of several Swiss-owned factories in the

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Activities such as 'balls' and 'excursions' had to be missed because of the war

Manchester region, including the chemical works of Brunner Mond & Co in Cheshire (later to become part of ICI) and the chain maker Hans Renold Ltd in Salford.

The Swiss Club Manchester was formed on the 6 November 1850. Sadly, there is little information about these early years. However, there appears to have been a second Club in existence under the name Schweizerverein "Alpenrösl" Manchester and

indeed we have a guest book proving its existence covering the period from 1887 to 1890.

Some of the most interesting and revealing entries were written during the Great War. The Annual Report of the Swiss Club Manchester of 1915 describes a drop in membership numbers due to members having to return to Switzerland the previous year for military duty. The report also records that activities such as 'balls' and 'excursions' had to be missed because of the war. Instead a number of social entertainment functions were held including musical evenings.

Clearly in the times before rapid communications and TV, the Club performed a very important role in keeping the Swiss community together by providing good entertainment. There were concerts and several other spin-off clubs, such as a Gymnasts Club (Turnverein), Tennis Club and a Rifle Club, and of course the Swiss Relief Society. A library was kept at the Grand Hotel in Manchester. Switzerland's national card game, Jass, played a very important part in club activities. The Midlands Hotel in Manchester, which was run for many years by a Swiss, Mr Cottet, was the regular venue for many of the events. Indeed the club's centenary was celebrated there on the 11<sup>th</sup> November 1950. Dieter Senn's cousin, Gustav Senn, founder of Selectus Ltd., was the President at the time.

Today the Club is just as important as it was in its early years and its 117 members continue the tradition with many activities, including such annual favourites as the Raclette Party, Bowling and BBQ, the National Day celebrations, cultural events and Christmas gatherings for our younger family members.



Juerg Bentele with his wife Barbara



Swiss National Day

Whilst the requirements for club activities may change in future, there is clearly a continued role for a 'club' as a central focus for the still quite large Swiss community in this corner of North West England.

Juerg Bentele, President,  
Manchester Swiss Club

**And finally...**

Edelweiss Air launches new air link between the Scottish capital and Zurich.

As of May 2014, Edelweiss Air, a sister company of Swiss, increased its flights between Edinburgh and Zurich. The service will now run every Monday and Friday and bookings can be made on the Edelweiss Air website.

**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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**Design**

Marc Peter – on-IDLE Ltd  
www.on-idle.com

The Swiss Review, with its 'Switzerland in the UK' supplement, is published six times a year (four with the UK supplement) in February, April, June, August, October, December. The deadline for the next UK issue is 12<sup>th</sup> September. Date of publication: 15<sup>th</sup> October

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