

# REGIONAL EDITION

## UNITED KINGDOM & IRELAND

### Editorial

First of all, I would like to wish all our readers a very happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all our advertisers and contributors to these pages during the past year.

The Swiss Review tries to represent the Swiss community the length and breadth of the UK and Ireland, but we often end up focusing on the larger conurbations, as this is where the bulk of the expat community is concentrated. If you are in one of the more outlying regions e.g. the north of Scotland or the west of Ireland we would love to hear from you.

■ Now to our first issue of 2015 and we start with Switzerland's national instrument. The alphorn is an ur-instrument. There is nothing much to it – just a simple piece of wood. It could be described as the voice of Mother Earth. It is this appeal that takes alphorn player, Frances Jones to solstice gatherings, stone circle events and to ancient burial grounds, where she helps create a primeval atmosphere with the haunting sound of the alphorn.

■ And we hear how Switzerland has maintained strong cultural, political and social relations with Scotland since Edinburgh closed its Consulate General's post almost four years ago.



ANDREW LITTLEJOHN,  
«UK & IRELAND PAGES»



Ambassador  
Furgler opening  
the energy  
policy workshop

### Politics: Swiss and UK leaders discuss energy policy challenges

2014 was a challenging year for the energy sector in Europe. There were growing threats of supply instability as a result of geopolitical tensions in producing and transit regions, and in October, European leaders agreed a policy framework for the new EU 2030 climate and energy targets.

A centre piece of the framework is the binding target to reduce EU domestic greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% below the 1990 level by 2030. This target will ensure that Europe is on the cost-effective track towards meeting its objective of cutting emissions by at least 80% by 2050. With this in mind, the Swiss Embassy in partnership with

Chatham House hosted a high-level policy workshop in November on “Implementing the energy future in a challenging (geo)political context - Dealing with energy policy challenges in the UK and Switzerland”.

High-level industry leaders, policy makers and academic speakers discussed how the UK and non EU member Switzerland would deal with the challenges and insecurities ahead. The aim of the one-day workshop was to identify opportunities for strategic co-operation in implementing the energy future

This event formed part of the on-going Swiss-UK dialogue in the field of “sectoral policies” and was a follow-up to a three-day study tour.

### Feature: A century of L'Escalade

In December 1602, during a cold and moonless night, the Duke of Savoy, Charles Emmanuel, attempted to take Geneva by surprise and suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of its citizens.

In 1914, a group of professional men from Geneva who were living in London formed a committee to organise the annual celebration of this historic event, L'Escalade, so named because some of the Duke of Savoy's men had scaled the walls to gain access to the city but were defeated.

Nowadays, the New Helvetic Society – in conjunction with the Cercle Genevois – carries on that tradition. In December, 40 Genevans and friends of Geneva gathered at the Embassy of Switzerland in the presence of the Ambassador of Switzerland, H.E. Mr Dominik Furgler and Mrs Hayam Furgler, to mark 100 years of this annual celebration.

Following a delicious three course meal, guests witnessed the smashing of the chocolate marmite (cauldron) filled with marzipan vegetables, while reciting ‘Ainsi périrent les ennemis de la République’ (Thus perish the enemies of the Republic). This refers to how Catherine Cheynel, better known as Mère Royaume, poured boiling hot vegetable soup on soldiers climbing up the walls of the city.

DANIEL PEDROLETTI

Events organised by the New Helvetic Society are open to all

For further details, visit  
[www.newhelveticociety.org.uk](http://www.newhelveticociety.org.uk) or  
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**LE GRUYÈRE**  
SWITZERLAND 

## Culture: Creative industries get a stronger presence online

The UK has an extraordinary range of talented Swiss people working in the creative industries. To celebrate the rich cultural exchange between the UK and Switzerland and the fact that stories about the Arts are the most frequently visited on the Embassy of Switzerland's Facebook page, the Embassy's Cultural Section launched a highly successful portrait series last year showcasing Swiss personalities in the creative industries.

ch-creative heads is a Facebook album of short interviews with artists, curators, designers and academics from various disciplines and from all over the UK. The launch on Facebook has proved to be a success, reaching out to over 2000 people.

During 2015, the Swiss Review plans to introduce readers to a few of these "Creative Heads".

London is obviously very attractive to creative talents, but the Embassy hopes new faces will also emerge from other regions around the country.

## Feature: Making a difference

A few months ago the Swiss Review was contacted by one of our readers with a compelling idea for a new regular series:

*"I was wondering if there was an opportunity of running stories of how we Swiss are punching above our weight and adding so much to the countries we live in. This could be in business/faith/charity/civic duties etc. Reason I mention this is that I am always impressed when I meet fellow Swiss and how they are almost all adding massive value to the country in which they live often due to the Swiss values, experience and education they have?"*

As our readership is not limited to 1<sup>st</sup> generation Swiss, our new series is open to all those of Swiss descent. Our first contributor is Dame Claire Bertschinger, an Anglo-Swiss who came to the public's attention in 1984 following a TV report about the famine in Ethiopia. Claire's work there as a disaster relief nurse for the Red Cross became the inspiration for Live Aid, the historic international pop concert that helped raise millions for famine relief in Africa.

In 2010, to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Live Aid, Claire spoke to [swissinfo.com](http://swissinfo.com) about the day-to-day challenges for a young nurse on a remote feeding station in Ethiopia.

"I remember one day I was selecting who could come in [to the feeding centre] and I was only able to take 60 or 70 on that particular day. There were thousands needing help. And I thought how on earth am I going to choose which ones can come in and which can't?"

The following is an excerpt from Nicolas Feldmeyer's interview. The Swiss artist has been in the UK since 2009 and is perhaps best known for his Woven Portico, which received extensive press coverage during the London Festival of Architecture in 2012.

### Best cultural thing to do in the UK?

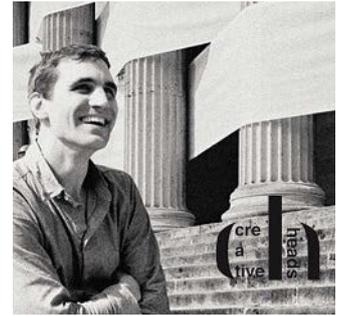
Go to the free museums. Or to the pub, if that is considered cultural.

### What is your favourite English word? Why?

'Oh dear'. It expresses a calm and composed response to events reaching from dropping a cup to finding your house destroyed by fire.

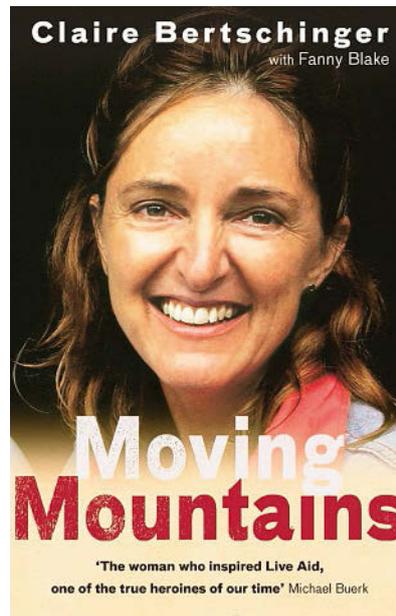
### What is your most British trait? What have you adopted from the British culture?

I say 'oh dear'.



Nicolas Feldmeyer alongside his Woven Portico

To find out more about Switzerland's 'Creative Heads' living in the UK, go to the Embassy's Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/swissembassyuk](http://www.facebook.com/swissembassyuk)



Claire Bertschinger's memoir, 'Moving Mountains'

Photo © Claire Bertschinger

This weighed heavily on my mind, because we could manage to feed the mother or father and a child, but what about the rest of the family? I knew they would die within a week or ten days because there was no food at all in the area. So Live Aid and the whole aid programme that followed were vital to the survival of thousands of starving and poverty-stricken people in Ethiopia."

Nowadays Claire lectures at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM)

where each year she trains 130 specialist nurses in tropical medicine. This is a unique course as it now includes additional studies focusing on the community care of Ebola patients and the risks involved. 65 of Claire's students graduated in February. They are all prepared to travel to countries affected by Ebola. One of those trained was Will Pooley, the British nurse who contracted Ebola in Sierra Leone and has managed to survive. 400 staff members from the LSHTM have volunteered to help tackle the Ebola crisis.

*If you know of somebody you would like to nominate as a contributor to this series, please contact: [editor@swissreview.co.uk](mailto:editor@swissreview.co.uk)*

### London: City Swiss Club Ball triumph

The biennial City Swiss Club Ball held at Claridge's (one of London's most elegant hotels) in November was an outstanding and splendid event much enjoyed by all.

The evening began with a champagne reception and a chance for the 176 guests to mingle and greet old friends. The ballroom sparkled and beautifully-decorated floral displays gave an elegant finishing touch to the tables. There was an impressive selection of auction lots, which included an 8-day 1<sup>st</sup> class rail pass in Switzerland, a dinner for two at Mosimann's and an Enjoy Switzerland luxury travel experience.

This was the first time the City Swiss Club had held an auction in aid of a charity. We are proud to say that we raised £11,000 for the Theodora Children's Trust.

Heartfelt thanks to HE the Swiss Ambassador, Mr Dominik Furgler, the generous sponsors, the staff at Claridge's and the hard working Ball committee of the City Swiss Club.

LOUISE BLACK

A DEDICATED AND LOYAL CITY SWISS CLUB MEMBER



Revellers dance the night away

Members gather in London's oldest Swiss restaurant



LOUISE BLACK

### London: Fondue à discretion at St Moritz

Members of the City Swiss Club and their guests recently tucked in to a delicious cheese fondue at London's oldest Swiss restaurant, St Moritz. After drinks and tasty canapés of Sbrinx rolled in air-cured beef, the merry crowd retired to their tables.

Whilst the aroma of owner Armin Loetscher's delicious fondue wafted through the restaurant, we attempted a quiz to guess how much cheese the St. Moritz restaurant used during a year. Prizes were at stake. And how surprising – 3111.15 kgs! Members from the New Helvetic Society, Unione Ticinese and the British Swiss Chamber of Commerce had also been invited to encourage closer collaboration between the groups. The jolly atmosphere was enhanced when Armin played his wonderful accordion.



Young and old enjoy Fair at Swiss Church

### Church News: Hundreds enjoy Swiss Church Fair

The Christmas Fair at the Swiss Church in London takes place every other year and is an important meeting point for Swiss people. It has also become one of our major fundraising activities, which helps secure the future of our soon-to-be independent church. At our event in November, it became clear early on that the Mothers' Group Swiss Christmas Biscuits and the Raclette were by far the most popular purchases. The children were kept busy with the craft corner and were the centre of attention when they drew the tickets for the raffle. It was all made possible through the tireless work of volunteers to whom we are very grateful. All in all, this year's fair was a huge success and we raised over £6300 for the work of the church.

MATT STONE; COMMUNITY AND OUTREACH WORKER

### Edinburgh: The Hidden Treasures of Edinburgh Botanics

A group of members of the Swiss Club Edinburgh gathered on a glorious sunny afternoon in early autumn at the John Hope Gateway, which is the West Entrance of the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh.

Mark Newman, a member of the Swiss Club Edinburgh who works at the 'Botanics', had very kindly agreed to give us a tour and a talk of the garden.

We set off clockwise and enjoyed ambling along the paths. Mark was very knowledgeable and our walk was filled with interesting information. We got to study a fossilized tree, admire some amazing Monkey Puzzle trees, climb through the Alpine section of the garden, as well as admire the Art Sculptures by Andy Goldsworthy, which were scattered around the grounds.

The enjoyable afternoon concluded with a delicious tea on the terrace of the John Hope Gateway Restaurant.

JANINE MCNEILL

Strolling through the gardens



### 1: Manchester Swiss Club

Manchester Swiss Club, celebrating the winner, president Juerg Bentele, and runner-up (fair-and-square!), six year old Darius, of our now traditional Bowling Day, which took place in the lovely garden of club member, Jacqueline Lowe. As always, the tasty Bratwurst BBQ and many merry chats with old and new members were equally as important as the friendly competition.

As ever, we look forward to welcoming members and their guests to our forthcoming events, details of which can be found in the 'Calendar of Club Events' below.

ERIKA WOOD

Victory for Juerg and Darius



Raclette on the menu in Taunton



### 2: Taunton Swiss Club

All is well with Taunton's Swiss club. We had a very enjoyable gathering on Swiss National Day in one of our member's gardens and at the end of November, 33 members met to enjoy our annual raclette lunch. What I enjoy most about our club is its varying age range, from new-born to 93 years old! We all get on so well and are a jolly lot!

CHRISTIANE GREENING

Happy families in North Wales



### 3: North Wales

We all enjoyed our very special Christmas event at the Penrallt Baptist Church in Upper Bangor. The afternoon was made even more special, as we were joined by Peryn Clement-Evans, artistic director of the Ensemble Cymru, who gave a short presentation

Master chef Edgar with his flans



about the running of a performing arts charity. And of course, Samichlaus made his customary visit towards the end of the day, which meant the children went home happy and looking forward to Christmas.

BEATRICE SCHLEGEL

### 4: Southern Area Swiss Club

Club member, Edgar, proudly showed off his self-made cheese & herb mini flans at our recent Christmas party. I joked with Edgar's wife that surely she was the chef. "Not a bit of it!" she said. Apparently all she does is clean up after him! Our special thanks go to President Berni Curtress and our secretary Karin Prier, who not only played a major part in organising our Christmas do, but also contributed greatly to the success of the Swiss Church Christmas Fair. Happy New Year from Southern Area Swiss Club to all other clubs around the country.

JOHN WILLIAMSON

### Yorkshire Swiss Club

The annual Christmas lunch took place at the Crown Hotel in Boroughbridge. It was as usual an enjoyable occasion. Our A.G.M. will take place on March 7<sup>th</sup> 2015 in Bradford and we hope to be able to welcome new participants.

EVY WARDILL, PRESIDENT

## Diary: Calendar of Club Events

#### Manchester Swiss Club

When: Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> February  
Raclette Party at Brookdale

When: Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March  
AGM in Prestbury

When: May date tbc  
Mai Bummel: A walk round Marple Locks. This flight of 16 working locks

was built in 1805 to connect the Lower and Upper Peak Forest Canals. They are the second deepest in the country and raise the canal 209 feet.

When: June date tbc  
Guided tour and lunch at the Plaza Stockport, one of the UK's surviving cinemas from the 1930s.  
[www.stockportplaza.co.uk](http://www.stockportplaza.co.uk)

#### Southern Area Swiss Club

When: Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> March @ 7.30pm  
AGM and Social at the Elles Hall, Farnborough. [www.saswissclub.org.uk](http://www.saswissclub.org.uk)

#### Swiss Club Ireland

When: Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup> of April 2015  
Visit to National Garden Exhibition Centre, Kilquade, Co. Wicklow.  
[www.gardenexhibition.ie](http://www.gardenexhibition.ie)

**Music:** Alphorn – the Voice of Mother Earth

It is normal for me to be asked to play my alphorn in the UK for events that promote Swiss products, for Swiss parties, for Swiss weddings and the like. Sometimes, though, more unusual requests come my way.

The alphorn is the voice of Switzerland, of course. But it's also an ur-instrument, just a tree, really, no plumbing, no strings, just a simple piece of wood. And this gives it an appeal for those wishing to celebrate a solstice, or to have an event in a stone circle, or to revere some ancient burial mound on a remote muddy hill of which we Brits are so very fond! Preferably when its wild, wet and windy too: that all adds to the primeval atmosphere. Ah – and dark. Or dusk. Or sunrise.

Like the opening of the Glastonbury Festival. This event is not only about loud music, it embraces hippie, druid, green and healing ethics. It is huge: the specially erected perimeter fence is 10 miles long and attendance is limited to 170 000 people. I was invited to open the Festival. I began by playing some haunting alphorn phrases by the massive bonfire in the stone circle. That was followed by Calling the Directions: a High Priestess invites the spirit of the East to come to look after the assembled people and bring peace and harmony to the gathering. This is repeated, more or less, to the spirit of each direction. After each invitation, I improvised a short, atmospheric alphorn call. The crowd erupted in tumultuous cheers after



Frances with her ur-instrument

each call. Extraordinary! In the increasing darkness, there followed ceremonial lighting of a vast straw labyrinth, a 20-minute display of dancing with flaming brands, the burning of a giant wicker phoenix, and a massive fireworks display to close.

FRANCES JONES

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**News:** Swiss Quality in the UK

The idea, for the “Swiss Quality UK” (SQUK) online platform, was born at the end of 2013, when two Swiss owned businesses “River View Relocation” run by Sidela Leon and “coANDco UK” – tech company – run by Christoph Burgdorfer found it difficult to find Swiss businesses in the UK online.

A few weeks later, the idea became a reality and in spring 2014 SwissQualityUK.com went online. By the end of the year, more than 20 businesses had joined the platform. It was a pleasant surprise to discover just how many

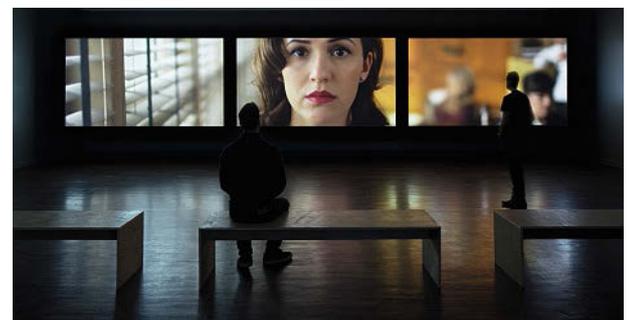
Swiss entrepreneurs there are in the UK, covering a range of professions from restaurateur, creative services, furniture maker, even filmmaker and wine merchant.

The goal of the SQUK-Team is to become one of the main search-platforms for people looking for Swiss quality, services and products within the UK.

Take one example: someone is looking for a Swiss contractor for flooring, bespoke interior design or cabinet making. Searching through pages of Google’s search engine can be very time consuming. Instead SQUK offers a directory, which will take users directly to a Swiss contractor e.g. Philipp Haag from Haag Interiors. He is a Swiss-educated craftsman living and working in the UK.

Swiss Quality UK connects Swiss businesses or products promoted by Swiss people or Swiss educated people to an ever-growing market in the United Kingdom!

SQUK TEAM



**Arts:** Swiss filmmakers make their mark in Dublin

The Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) in Dublin is hosting a major exhibition, ‘Sound Speed Marker’ by Teresa Hubbard and Alexander Birchler until the end of May. The two artists have been working collaboratively in video, photography and sculpture since 1990. The exhibition features the recently completed trilogy of Texas-based, movie themed films: Grand Paris Texas (2009), Movie Mountain (2011) and Giant (2014). Each component of the trilogy interweaves and unpacks layers of cinema history. The work of these two filmmakers invites suggestive, open-ended reflections on memory, place and cinema. There is the opportunity to discuss the exhibition with the artists at IMMA on the 7<sup>th</sup> March. The exhibition is being sponsored by Pro Helvetia and supported by the Swiss Embassy in Ireland.



## Fashion: Swiss fashionistas converge on London

The Embassy of Switzerland showcases works by students of the two principal fashion universities in Switzerland, HEAD Genève and IMD Basel, during London Fashion Week 2015, which runs between the 20<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> February. The aim of both centres of education is to support its students as they develop their own vision of fashion and give shape to that vision. The young designers are encouraged to reflect their thoughts on individualism in society and the idea of the body as a means of communication.

One of those representing Switzerland is Swiss-Peruvian designer, Mikael Vilchez who studied at HEAD Genève and now lives and works in Paris.

## Travel: Mosimann's pops up on legendary Pullman

Pop-up restaurants are relatively new to the UK, but have already become a favourite eating experience for many diners, partly because of their quirkiness – chefs can be found serving up their culinary delights out of the back of caravans, at festivals and even in old disused factories – and the focus on serving local and seasonal produce.

So it was with great anticipation as I set off on a clear, but cold, night in November to join almost 100 other guests on the final evening of a new series of pop-up fine dining events on board the legendary Belmond British Pullman, the sister train of the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express. Throughout the year, five award-winning celebrity chefs had prepared sumptuous,

7-course seasonal tasting menus on board these luxury dining carriages, all of which was reminiscent of the golden age of train travel.

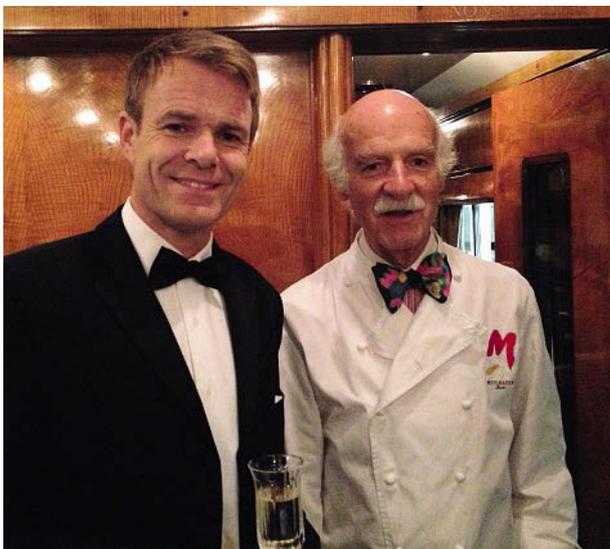
Cooking for guests on this particular evening was Anton Mosimann, famous for his 'Cuisine Naturelle' and a favourite chef with politicians, royals, celebrities and captains of industry. For one evening, the Belmond British Pullman had become one of the most exclusive places to dine in London with each course specially designed to complement the various Lanson Champagnes served during the dinner.

This 'Palace on Wheels' was the perfect venue for such a sumptuous meal. The beautifully restored carriages were exquisite and the food first class. A memorable evening from start to finish.

"The starting point of my collection is a personal experience. One day I found a pink silk nightdress that belonged to my grandmother. I couldn't resist trying it on. I felt several sensations at the same time. I selected the strongest elements of this dress and the sensations that I felt to build a collection for men. It was essential to work directly with feminine codes of dress for women on a man's body. This work is the manifesto of this personal experience, the phantasmagorical situation, the interrogation about genders and my identity."

Mikael Vilchez focuses on gender and identity

© Mikael Vilchez



Anton Mosimann with Paul Beavis, managing director of Lanson International

## Sport: A perfect day for golf

The Swiss Golf Group's Trophy Day was held at Silvermere Golf Club in October. Once again we had beautiful weather, perfect for golf, although fallen leaves sometimes made it difficult to find one's ball!

Following a very enjoyable dinner it was time to present the trophies: the Marchesi Cup for the top Swiss was awarded to Marina Penna; the Volmond Beer Cup for the overall winner went to Fidelis D'Mello and the Appenzeller Beer Cup for the top lady was awarded to Frances Allwork.

The next get-together will be in the spring. All are welcome to join us on our very friendly golf days, which are held at various courses in the Greater London area.

Contact: Jeffrey Long MBE; Tel: 01274 560 780

## Meet the Honorary Consuls: The canny Swiss Piper

Almost four years ago the Consulate General's post in Scotland was replaced by an Honorary General Consul. Peter Müller-McDougall took up this new post. There are currently approximately 1000 Swiss people living in Scotland and the number of visitors from Switzerland is at a record high; about 100 000 in 2013/2014. There are 4 Swiss Clubs. Janine McNeill, Secretary of the Swiss Club Edinburgh, caught up with Peter during his busy schedule to find out how he has managed to maintain social, cultural, political and economic relations since arriving in Edinburgh.

Peter in "full swing"  
at a parade in  
Edinburgh 2014

*Janine McNeill: What were some of your highlights of 2014?*

Peter Müller-McDougall: I was



rather proud assisting Edelweiss Air in the launch process of its inaugural flight to Zurich last year. Aviation has always played a big part in my life. I worked for Swissair for a number of years. The "air bridge" between Switzerland and Scotland is vital for economic and cultural development...not to mention the importance of the tourism industry for both countries. I am looking forward to Edelweiss Air operating flights again from May for the summer season. Bookings can already be made online.

Being a piper myself, one of my personal highlights was giving the Stockbridge Pipe Band the opportunity to perform at the Tattoo on Stage concerts at the KKL (Culture and Convention Centre) in Lucerne.

*JM: How do you sell Switzerland to the Scots and vice-versa?*

PMM: I always try to make Switzerland the focal point, whether at social and cultural gatherings or meeting with political committees. It creates involvement and curiosity in each other's countries. I also assist the Embassy during high profile visits to Scotland and always enjoy the stimulating dialogue during these events.

Edinburgh, as well as other major cities in Scotland, has a very big interest in the economic area of e.g. greater Zurich and Basle. But equally, Swiss companies continue to thrive in Scotland. 469 jobs were created during the last 12 months. Most of the posts were High Value Added (HVA), which puts Switzerland at the top of being a valued business partner.

*JM: Do you have much contact with young people and if so, are they inter-*



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[www.dfae.admin.ch/rcclondon](http://www.dfae.admin.ch/rcclondon)  
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*ested in working or studying abroad?*

PMM: Always a highlight of the year is our presence at Jobfairs, where young school leavers get to ask all sorts of "direct" questions about possibilities to work and study in Switzerland. The younger generation experiences the cultural exposure as a very positive challenge and embraces the "social and global" aspects that come along with it. Scotland has top-rated universities with a huge number of courses on offer. I am rather disappointed though to see for example that Erasmus, the ever-popular European student exchange programme, has been put at risk and that the continuation of it is being questioned.

JANINE MCNEILL

### IMPRESSUM

HOW TO CONTACT THE EDITOR: Reports of Swiss society activities, news, coming events, correspondence, articles and advertising for the 'Switzerland in the UK & Ireland' section of the Swiss Review, should go to the editor:

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### Next Issues

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