

Switzerland in the UK

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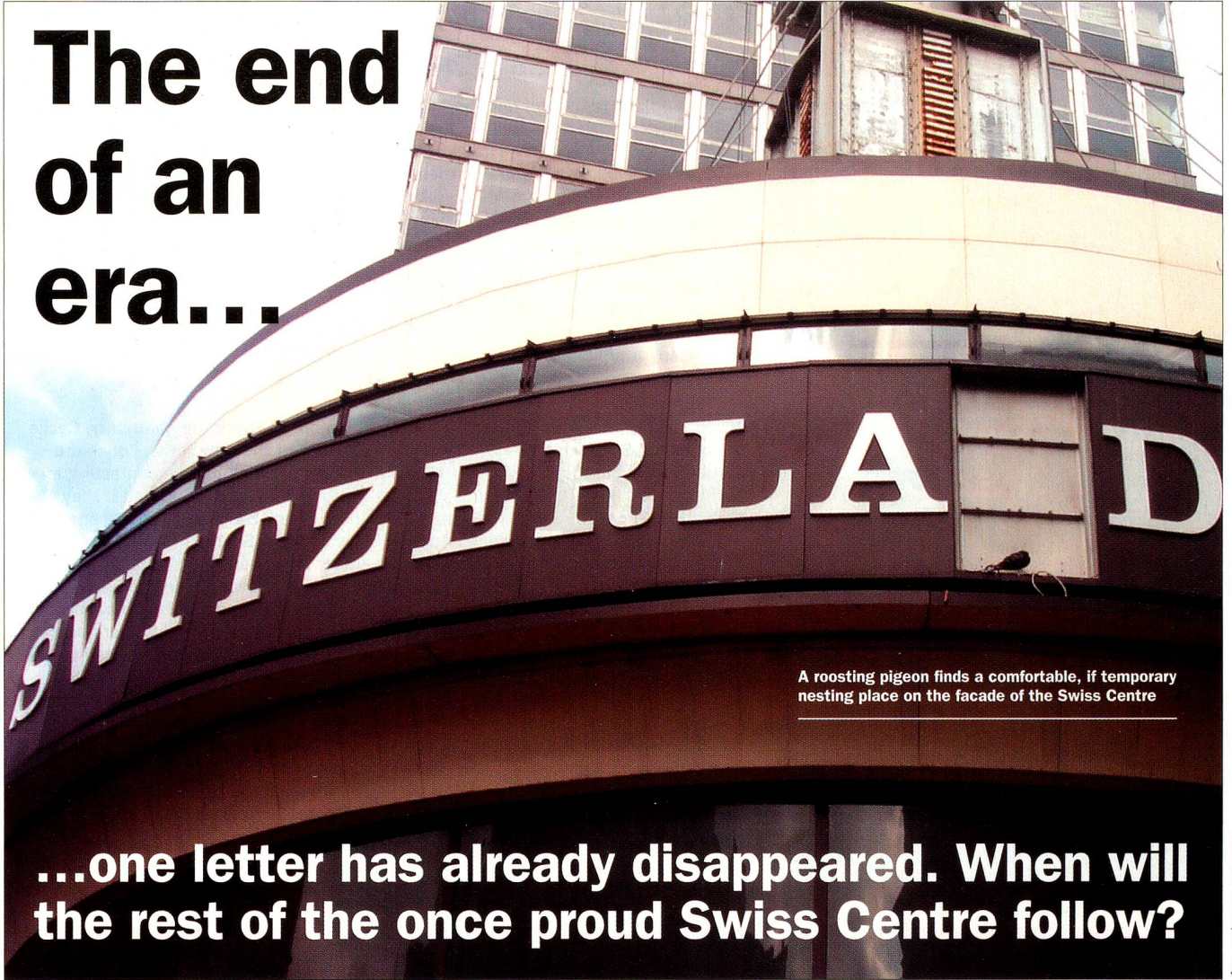
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The end of an era...

A roosting pigeon finds a comfortable, if temporary nesting place on the facade of the Swiss Centre

...one letter has already disappeared. When will the rest of the once proud Swiss Centre follow?

PICTURES: Dominique Farney

For years it has been THE icon of Switzerland in the UK, proudly dominating busy Leicester Square in the very heart of London.

But now the Swiss Centre as we've known it is facing its last days. Already a letter has dropped off the word SWITZERLAND on the face of the building.

And it is expected that it will not be long before the bulldozers move in.

But the big question mark hovering over the venerable building is exactly what will take its place.

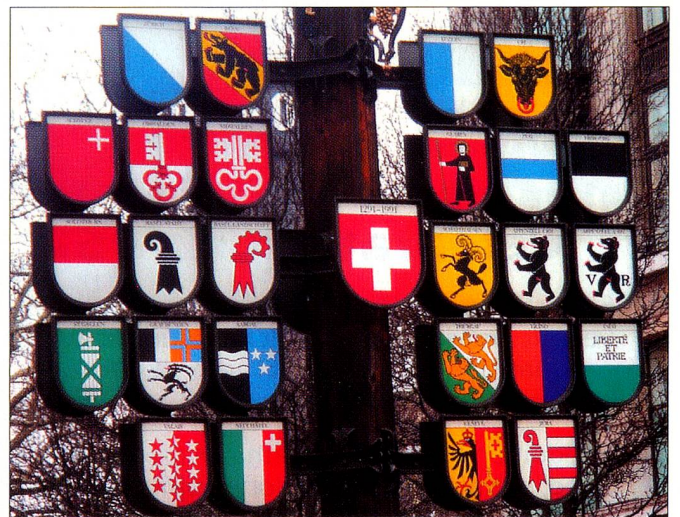
Its future has been under discussion over the last two years, with the views of the new owners not in line with

those of the planners and some Westminster councillors, who have radical ideas on how to revitalise Leicester Square.

The only thing that is almost certain is that the famous Glockenspiel will become part of the new Swiss Court. And there are hopes that the colourful array of cantonal shields will join it there.

As for the rest of the 44 year old building, it may be turned into an hotel, with a cinema, nightclub, restaurants and retail shops.

A new planning application is now being prepared for submission to Westminster City Council and it is hoped planners will make a decision before the summer.



The cantonal shields that may be given a new home in relocated Swiss Court

Switzerland in the UK has its own Internet site, continually bringing you up to the minute news of the latest events as well as major stories from the most recent issues and links to other interesting sites in both the UK and Switzerland. To access it go to: www.swissreview.co.uk

SWITZERLAND IN THE UK
 Friday 26 September 2003
 UK Time: 13:23:49 AM
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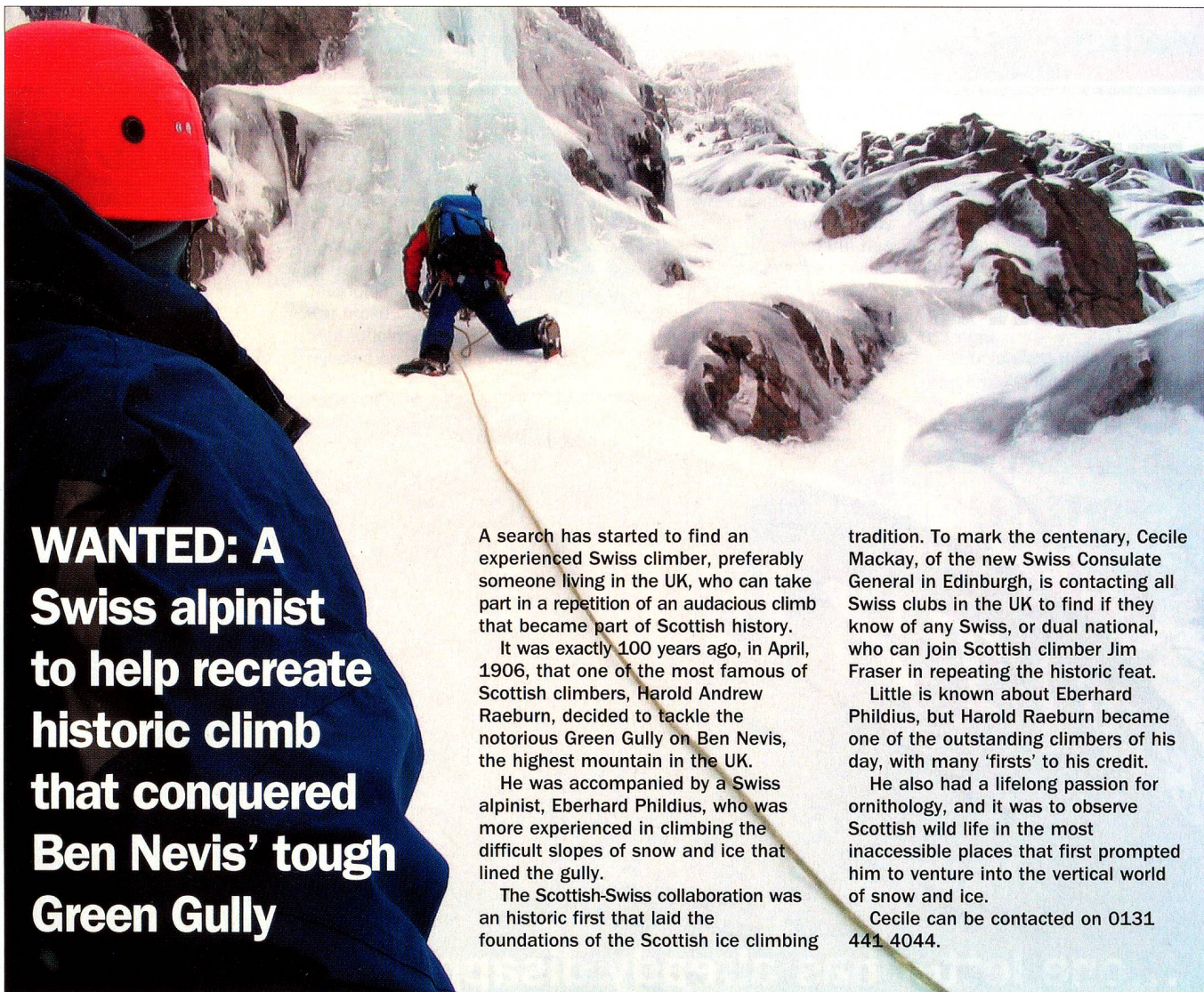
The online magazine for Swiss living and working in the UK

24 NEWS
 • Switzerland news, views, of the world of the Swiss abroad
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Welcome to the new 'Switzerland in the UK' web site. Here you can find news for

SWISS REVIEW

The Swiss Review web site, updated daily, includes a complete calendar of Swiss club events being held during the year. Club presidents are asked to send all details to: editor@meakin.net



**WANTED: A
Swiss alpinist
to help recreate
historic climb
that conquered
Ben Nevis' tough
Green Gully**

A search has started to find an experienced Swiss climber, preferably someone living in the UK, who can take part in a repetition of an audacious climb that became part of Scottish history.

It was exactly 100 years ago, in April, 1906, that one of the most famous of Scottish climbers, Harold Andrew Raeburn, decided to tackle the notorious Green Gully on Ben Nevis, the highest mountain in the UK.

He was accompanied by a Swiss alpinist, Eberhard Phildius, who was more experienced in climbing the difficult slopes of snow and ice that lined the gully.

The Scottish-Swiss collaboration was an historic first that laid the foundations of the Scottish ice climbing

tradition. To mark the centenary, Cecile Mackay, of the new Swiss Consulate General in Edinburgh, is contacting all Swiss clubs in the UK to find if they know of any Swiss, or dual national, who can join Scottish climber Jim Fraser in repeating the historic feat.

Little is known about Eberhard Phildius, but Harold Raeburn became one of the outstanding climbers of his day, with many 'firsts' to his credit.

He also had a lifelong passion for ornithology, and it was to observe Scottish wild life in the most inaccessible places that first prompted him to venture into the vertical world of snow and ice.

Cecile can be contacted on 0131 441 4044.

CITY SWISS CLUB
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Celebrating its 150th Anniversary in 2006

Founded in 1856, the City Swiss Club offers an interesting programme of events throughout the year. It provides an excellent forum at which to meet people drawn from a wide variety of occupations and including a cross-section of staff and management at many of the Swiss companies operating in the UK.

In addition to several informal evenings held throughout the year at the St. Moritz Restaurant in Soho, we also have occasional joint events with other Swiss clubs and societies. The highlight of the year is our popular annual Banquet and Ball at Claridge's – this year a Gala Ball to celebrate our 150th Anniversary will be held on Saturday, 25 November. Traditionally we hold our AGM and dinner at Mosimann's Club which is always very much enjoyed by our members.

To learn more about the Club and/or receive a membership form, please contact: Julie Streader, City Swiss Club, c/o Arbutnot Banking Group PLC, Arbutnot House, 20 Ropemaker Street, London EC2Y 9AR.

Telephone: 020 7012 2400 www.cityswissclub.org info@cityswissclub.org

British galleries the lure for Swiss artists

Art galleries in London and other major British cities are popular venues for Swiss artists, who find them ideal for exhibiting their works to appreciative visitors.

Among them has been distinguished woodcarver Stephen Schmidlin, whose *Dreaming of Football* exhibition has been on display at the Air Gallery in London's West End.

Its dynamic centrepiece was a wooden model of his 10.5 metres high statue created to mark FIFA's centenary. The opening night was attended by a number of UK soccer stars and top FA officials.

The Ikon Gallery in Birmingham is currently showing some impressive woodcut prints by Franz Gertsch. This exhibition is one of the highlights of the city's cultural year and remains open until May 14.



A symbol of world football: Schmidlin's sculpture to mark the centenary of the FIFA.



Two examples of Gertsch's work: *Schwarzwasser* and (inset) *Dominique*. Both are woodcuts incorporating handmade pigments on special Japanese paper.



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: Charter House, 1-3 Charter Way, Macclesfield SK10 2NG. Tel: 01625 442 707.

His email address is: editor@meakin.net.

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 24.

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Events at the Swiss Church

- ◆ 3 May Parent & Toddlers' Group 10-12am
- ◆ 7 May Service in French & German 11am
- ◆ 14 May Evening Prayer in English 6pm
- ◆ 17 May Parent & Toddlers' Group 10-12am
- ◆ 17 May Concert with Janiculum 7.30pm
- ◆ 21 May Family Service in English 11am
- ◆ 4 June Pentecost Ecumencial Service in German & French 11am

The Swiss Church in London
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Spiritual home for the Swiss in the UK since 1762

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With a thunderous roar and a burst of fire, the long silver shape seemed to tremble slightly, then its great weight rose slowly, majestically, into the night sky.

The date was March 11 this year. The time: close to midnight.

And the purpose of the Ariane rocket as it disappeared into the blackness was to catapult into earth orbit a powerful new communications satellite that would effectively double the capacity of Swiss TV's broadcasts from space. It is now nine years since

Swiss TV channels started being transmitted via satellite, but takeup by the public has been slow. All that is now about to change.

Today there are just 396 subscribers in the UK, out of 4,000 across Europe.

But interest is beginning to grow, and will be given a further boost by the latest satellite, which offers much wider coverage and substantially better reception giving DVD quality pictures.

And this is only the beginning of a new push to attract many more subscribers.

Said Hans Strassmann, SRG SSR's technical director: "By doubling the satellite bandwidth at our disposal we can also prepare for the introduction of Dolby sound and associated digital services."

In addition to a set-top box to convert the satellite signal and feed it to your TV set you will need a Sat Access card costing Sfrs. 50.–, plus an annual subscription of Sfrs. 120.–.

For this you will be able to receive the seven national television channels – SF1 and SF2 (German), TSR1 and TSR2 (French) and TS1 and TS2 (Italian) as well as a Romanche channel – and 16 Swiss radio stations.

You will also be able to receive many other European programmes transmitted by the Astra satellite.

To obtain your Sat Access card contact SRG SSR at Case Postale 2015, CH-8052 Zurich, or ring 0041 848 88 44 22, or email info@broadcast.ch.

You can also find out more information by looking at www.broadcast.ch. This site also contains an application form which you can print out and send directly to Zurich.

Beaming seven channels non stop: SF1, SF2, SF1, TSR1, TSR2, TS1, TS2
PLUS a further 16 radio stations!

369 Swiss families in the UK can now receive Swiss TV

Perched on a Zurich rooftop, the massive dish that uploads programmes to the satellite, in geostationary orbit high above the earth

What you will need...

To receive Swiss television programmes in the UK you will need:

1. Satellite dish with double LNB
2. Digital set-top receiver with Viaccess
3. Sat Access card (pictured right)
4. Your normal TV set

Installation is straightforward and can be done by your local satellite engineer, who will also be able to advise on a suitable set-top box.



This footprint map shows that the whole of the UK can receive Swiss TV programmes using a normal 90cm dish, although an 80cm one is normally recommended.

What's happening at the AGM weekend

Preliminary details have now been announced of plans for this year's annual general meeting of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK, and associated activities.

The event marks the stepping down of Jeffrey Long, who has been president of FOSSUK for the last 17 years and the election of his successor.

The weekend in Exeter opens with an informal dinner on Friday, June 10 at a riverside restaurant, The Mill on the Exe.

The following morning is free, and visitors are invited to visit Exeter's 850 year old cathedral, walk along the quayside of the Exe, or take a leisurely stroll through the city's beautiful gardens, which have many historic features.

The AGM itself starts at 1pm in the Barnsfield Theatre. It will be attended by embassy and consular staff in the UK, as well as visitors from Switzerland.

Afterwards Swiss Artists UK will be holding an exhibition of members' work, together with a reception hosted by the group's president, Annelise Vogel.

The official dinner will be held that evening in the City Guildhall, and will be followed by a tombola.

The Sunday excursion will be to the region's top tourist

attraction, the Eden Project, which contains the world's largest conservatory - the tropical biodome, which is 240m long, 220m wide and 50m high and contains more than a thousand different plant species.

• The same month FOSSUK holds its weekend in Devon, over in Switzerland members of the extremely active Federation

of Anglo-Swiss Clubs will be enjoying their own get-together. This year the event will be hosted by the Swiss Hotel School in Lausanne.

In October they will all be meeting again when they travel across the Alps to Piedmont for their autumn weekend, including a golf tournament and a visit to the Turin Slow Food Festival.

New Consulate General opens on May 18

Leading members of the Scottish and Swiss governments will be in Edinburgh on May 18 for the official opening of the newly created Consulate General.

The opening ceremony is part of one of a number of events designed to increase the awareness of Switzerland in Scotland, which the Swiss Embassy says will be aimed at "intensifying relations in the political, economic, cultural and scientific fields."

The cultural programme includes an

exhibition at Edinburgh's Doggerfisher Gallery until June 3 of works by Swiss artist Franziska Furter, as well as a concert given at St Cecilia's Hall on June 10 by the Tecchler Trio, the winner of this year's Swiss Ambassador's Award.

The Zurich Ballet is also expected to perform at this year's Edinburgh Festival.

As part of the upgrading from Honorary Consulate, Bruno Widrig has now taken over as Scotland's first Swiss Consul General.

Have you an event coming up? For maximum coverage send all the details to: editor@meakin.net

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Swiss family tradition helps win top prizes for Edgar Themans and sons

His mother's family were well known farmers in Canton Lucerne. So it was not surprising that when Edgar Themans bought his own farm in Shropshire more than 50 years ago he was determined to follow in the family tradition.

And with the help of his two sons, Marcus and Peter, he has turned Wenlock Edge Farm, in the Valley of the Bees, into a centre of excellence that has

won many national awards.

Over the last five years they have had a non-stop run of successes, culminating at the end of last year with winning the Gold in the National Great Taste Awards for their home cured back bacon.

And already they have won more awards this year for their bacon and traditional pork sausages.

At one stage Edgar, who is a

prominent member of Manchester Swiss Club, had 2,500 pigs on his farm – until he realised how dependence on selling to supermarkets was ruining his business.

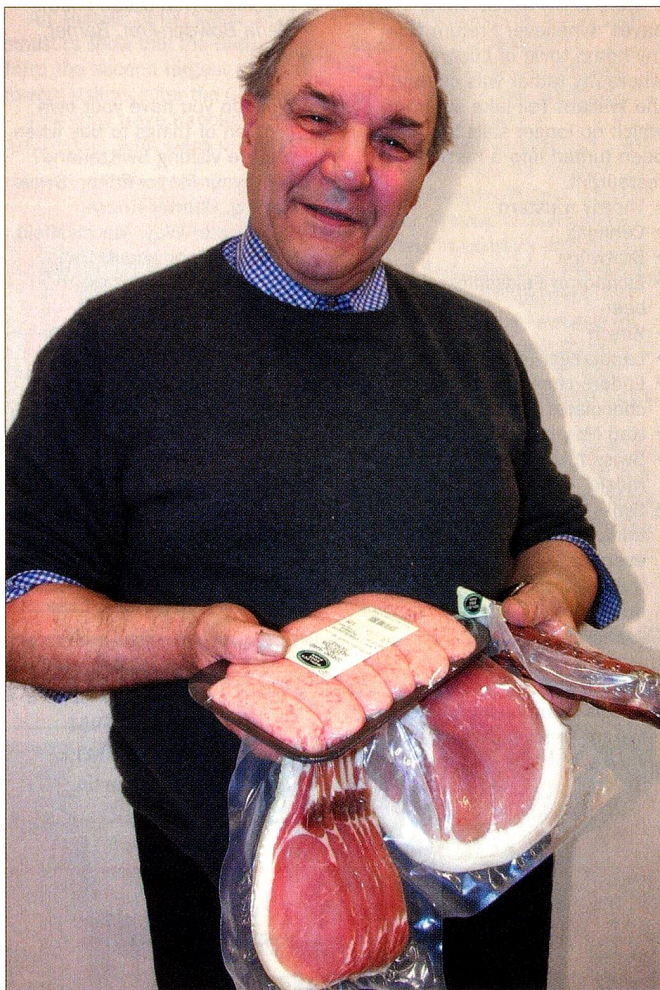
"The way they manipulate the market means a supplier can soon find himself with a one-way ticket to the poorhouse," he said.

Now, with 700 pigs, the Themans are specialising on curing their own meat from home reared stock and selling direct to the public, through their farm shop or by mail order.

Alongside the traditional British bangers are products based on their Swiss family recipes, such as Ticiinese specialities like prosciutto (air dried ham), pancetta (air dried streaky bacon) and bresabia, as well as bratwürst and landjäger.

And this year they will start making schublig.

To ensure authenticity they work closely with the Meat Technical College in Spiez.



Following in the family tradition: Edgar Themans and his prize meats

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Appenzeller beer helps Legion

Sales of Vollmond Bier from Appenzell, which Suisse Connection introduced to the UK last year, are helping to boost income for one of Britain's leading charities, the Royal British Legion.

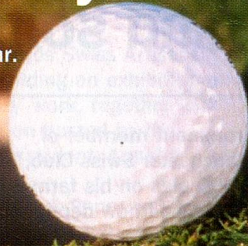
The speciality lager is only brewed on the night of a full moon from organically grown hops and barley and gets extra strength through intensive fermentation.

Says René Seidl of Suisse Connection: "We are very excited about being able to help the Legion in this innovative way."

It has been estimated that first year sales of Vollmond will raise at least £8,000 for the charity.

Swiss Golf Days

Last year's highly successful Swiss Golf Days are to be repeated this year. The date has yet to be finalised, but interested Swiss golfers, and friends of Switzerland, are asked to contact Jeffrey Long on 01274 588 189 for further details of this event.



What do YOU like to bring back from Switzerland?

The letter in the last issue of the Swiss Review in which Eric Haywood of Dublin wrote about the "must have" products he always buys when visiting Switzerland was of very much interest to me and, I am sure, countless Swiss living abroad.

I have lived in England for over 40 years, was chef at the Dorchester, then development and standards manager at British Airways, where my prime responsibility was for catering on Concorde.

Here is my list of "must haves" whenever I return from my home town of Lucerne, where my father was captain of the William Tell lake steamer, which no longer sails but has been turned into a permanent restaurant.

- Thomy mustard
- Cervelas
- Bratwürst
- Eichhof or Feldschlosschen beer
- Kirsch
- Landjaeger (dried sausages)
- Ladore chocolates and other chocolates
- Karl May books
- Swiss folklore and yodelling music
- Swiss francs – which I really think should be No.1 because every time I go to Switzerland the franc seems to cost more and more. – *Richard Schnyder, Camberley, Surrey*

Here is my list of "must have" products to be packed before I leave my beloved homeland. They are not in any particular order:

- Basler Leckerli

LETTERS

- Alpine calendar
 - Emmental cheese
 - Wild flower seeds
 - Cervelat
 - Stürzenegger nightwear and underwear
 - Dark chocolate
 - Graubünden air-dried meats
 - Special stamp and/or coin issues
 - Elco plain white cards with envelopes (red-tissue lined).
- *Maria Bowden-Frei, Barnet, Herts.*

- Well, do you have your own Top Ten of things to buy when you are visiting Switzerland? Send your list to: Editor, Swiss Review, Charter House, 1-3 Charter Way, Macclesfield, SK10 2NG, or email: editor@meakin.net

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