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Main Feature

FAMOUS SWISS BELLS RETURN TO LONDON

Leicester Square is best known for its Hollywood blockbuster film premieres and the latest red carpet celebrity sightings. However, the red carpet was recently laid out for a totally different kind of celebrity. The long-awaited and much-loved Glockenspiel had returned to the heart of London.

There was a party atmosphere in central London as crowds gathered on a cold, late-November afternoon to celebrate the return of the Glockenspiel, one of London's most admired tourist attractions. Dignitaries were flown in from Switzerland, six Alphorns sounded across the West End and to the great amusement of the crowds, traditional, bell-playing folklore groups from various parts of Switzerland paraded around the square in their haunting masks, some dressed in tunics dating back to Napoleonic times.

Urs Eberhard, Executive Vice President of Switzerland Tourism was

thrilled by the turnout. "This shows how welcome the Glockenspiel is and how much people were looking forward to having it back," he told the Swiss Review.

The original clock that rang out from the corner of the Swiss Centre was gifted in 1985 by the people of Switzerland and Liechtenstein to the City of Westminster on its 400th anniversary. But the centre was demolished, along with the clock, in 2008, so a hotel could be built.

Adolf Ogi, a past President of the Swiss Confederation, said the re-inauguration of the Glockenspiel was the best advertisement Switzerland could ask for. "It's a wonderful business card to have in the middle of one of Europe's most influential cities," he said, "The Glockenspiel is a constant reminder for those who know Switzerland and may spark interest from those who have never been there." The new, 10m high steel structure



features a procession of moving figures against a traditional Swiss alpine backdrop, 27 bells, the coat of arms of the 26 cantons and 4 Swiss Jacomas representing the 4 regions with their individual languages.

The original Glockenspiel gave pleasure to Londoners and visitors for more than twenty years, and with an

estimated 50 million people visiting the square annually, Eberhard is looking forward to this sight and sound experience in the heart of the capital pulling in the crowds as before. "Even London tour buses used to make a point of stopping here on the hour to let people witness our Swiss Glockenspiel," he said. "I am sure the same will happen again this time."

How the Glockenspiel came to London

by Albert Kunz

In the 1980s, Leicester Square had become more and more run down and the level of petty crime and drug dealing was on the increase. Many visitors to the West End stayed away and business suffered heavily. With the help of the City of Westminster, additional security guards were employed and Leicester Square became again a safer place. But families still avoided going there.

I was Director of the Swiss National Tourist Office UK (now Switzerland Tourism) at the time and felt the area was badly in need of a new attraction. I had the vision of putting a Glockenspiel on the façade of the Swiss Centre building, which had been on the corner of Leicester Square since 1965. However, our first planning application was turned down by the City of Westminster because they "did not want Disneyland in Leicester Square". I later found out the City of Westminster was preparing to celebrate its 400th

anniversary in 1985, and that the borough was made up of 23 wards. What a coincidence!

Swiss National Tourist Office put in a new planning application indicating that each individual bell on the Glockenspiel would bear the coat of arms of one of the 23 Swiss cantons, as well as the name of each of the 23 wards of Westminster. The document also stated that Switzerland and Liechtenstein would present the Glockenspiel as an anniversary gift to Westminster.

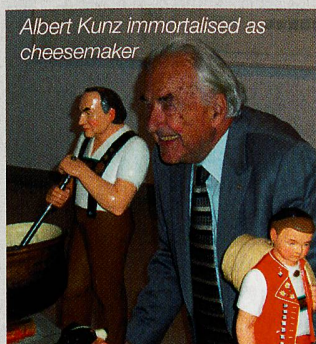
To my delight, planning permission was granted under the condition that Switzerland would be responsible for the maintenance, repairs, overhaul and refurbishment of the Glockenspiel. Swiss Centre Ltd. agreed to pay for all these costs, while Switzerland Tourism acted as guardian of the Glockenspiel.

As quite a number of sponsors declared they would not support a project with moving parts, which

would "pack up after a relatively short time", I promised I would personally make sure the Glockenspiel would function in prime condition as long as I lived. We collected over one and a half million Swiss francs in sponsorship money from the cantons and private and official Swiss organisations to pay for the costs.

The Glockenspiel soon became a major landmark of London in a part of the city visited by as many as 50 million people per year.

Albert Kunz, former Director of the Swiss National Tourist Office UK.



Albert Kunz immortalised as cheesemaker

Editorial

Dear Readers,



Happy New Year! Our first issue of 2012 is again packed with fun pictures and fascinating stories from all corners of the UK. A great start to the year, and there is much to look forward to...

As the Swiss Church begins its series of celebrations to mark 250 years in London, one former minister reflects on his time in the capital when Swiss-British relations were surprisingly strained. Restaurateur Philipp Mosimann reveals the gastronomic delights planned for the House of Switzerland at London 2012. And we visit an otter sanctuary in the north of Scotland, where a young orphan cub is given a second chance.

For our younger readers, there is the "otter challenge", where a cuddly and cute toy otter cub could be yours at a click of your mouse. There are also details of how you and your family could review a beautiful collection of Swiss alpine legends for our next issue.

Andrew Littlejohn



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Education

Cardiff becomes a hub for Swiss students

As many as 40 students from universities in Basel and Bern visited the Welsh capital in the autumn to strengthen ties and encourage more academic collaboration.

Coinciding with the Euro 2012 qualifier between the two nations, it seemed only fitting that the 15 students from Bern University of Applied Sciences should challenge their Welsh counterparts to a friendly 90-minutes on the local football pitch.

The group of young people was also invited by the Football Association of Wales (FAW) to watch the Euro 2012 qualifier at the Liberty Stadium in Swansea. Prior to the match, they got to see the Swiss National team in training and even met their favourite players, not to mention the Swiss National Coach, Ottmar Hitzfeld. For a first visit to Wales, the home crowd received a big thumbs up.

The Bern programme was developed by Dr Tudor Williams and Glamorgan University's Faculty of Business and Society in partnership with the Consulate of Switzerland in Cardiff.

The second Swiss visit had a more academic feel to it. About twenty

students from the University of Basel were in the Welsh capital to attend a week-long intensive study course in Sociology, Media & Sports Management.

Tim Lewis, the programme coordinator, used to lecture in sports science at Basel University and since his return to Wales five years ago it has become tradition for a group of Swiss students to attend his courses in Wales.



Welsh students challenge their Swiss counterparts

Culture

Wales celebrates the life and work of Paul Sacher

For the first time in the UK, a major international perspective on the life and works of legendary Swiss conductor Paul Sacher will be held in the Welsh capital between the 16th and 18th March. The focus of this Sacher Perspective will be a two-day conference, hosted by Cardiff University's School of Music, studying the world-renowned manuscript collections of the Paul Sacher Foundation in Basel, the richest repository of compositional materials in the world. Manuscripts, sketches, correspondence and

other material from the Foundation will be used to explore ways in which the music of the collection's composers can be interpreted.

Additional highlights of this first UK celebration of impresario and champion of new music, Paul Sacher, includes an exhibition of facsimile material from the Basel Foundation and a live BBC Radio 3 concert with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and conductor Thierry Fischer playing major works commissioned by Sacher.

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A Day in the Life of...

YOUNG NESS IS GIVEN A SECOND CHANCE

British-Swiss conservationist, Grace Yoxon, runs the International Otter Survival Fund (IOSF) with her husband on the Isle of Skye, off the west coast of Scotland. The couple have been working with otters for more than 18 years and as Grace explains, every day brings something new. We join her shortly after picking up an abandoned otter cub at the Scottish Society for the Protection of Animals.

My first job this morning was to clean and feed our newest arrival, a young female cub called Ness, who was found at Ardgay in Sutherland. She is about four months old and at the moment she lives off salmon, but we will soon be weaning her off that and on to more economical white fish! The otter hospital is next to our house, so it is handy when the cubs are small and have to be fed several times a day.

Rearing orphaned otters is a long process, as they would normally stay with their mothers for 12-15 months and we have to release them at the same age. Human contact is kept to a minimum as they will not survive in the wild if they become used to people.

I had been out of the office for a week, so there was a lot of catching up! I was pleased to see an email from Tabea Lanz, a Swiss student, who recently completed her MSc at Edinburgh Napier University.

**“
Seeing the otters
swim off as truly
wild animals
is an amazing
experience**

She did an otter survey on the island of Raasay, next to Skye, for her dissertation. As my mother is from Winterthur I was delighted to have her here and have the chance to speak a bit of Schwyzerdütsch! Tabea wrote about her work in Austria with Prolutra, a non-profit organisation, which would like to bring the otter back to Switzerland. There were also a lot of emails to do with our international projects,



Feeding time for young Ness

before our own dinner, and then there would be one more feed before bed.

Tomorrow is another day and we plan to set off early to check camera traps at three sites, which monitor our local otters in the wild. Things are never the same at IOSF, so who knows what else will happen.

IOSF is a charity inspired by watching otters in their true natural environment in the Hebrides. The organisation was set up in 1993 to protect and help the 13 species of otter worldwide, through a combination of compassion and science. Because the otter lives on land and in the water and is at the peak of the food chain, it is an ambassador species to a first class environment. We support projects to protect otters, which will also ensure a healthy environment for all species, including our own.

For more information on IOSF or to adopt one of the otters in care, go to www.otter.org or contact me at grace@otter.org

Competition

The Otter Challenge

Are you under 10 and would like to win one of these realistic looking Plush otters? IOSF has very kindly donated two of these cuddly toys. Answer the following question correctly and you will have the chance to win one of these incredibly cute Plush otters.

Q1: How many species of otter are there in the world?



Email your answers to:
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Swiss Clubs in the UK

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Manchester Swiss Club

We celebrated Christmas at the beginning of December with our annual Samichlaus Tea Party. 30 adults, 16 children and 3 infants sat down to a delicious afternoon tea provided by the committee, followed by games for the children. Our thanks to Julie Baker and her daughter Rachel for keeping the children entertained.



Playing pass the parcel

Father Christmas turned up to the delight of the children and spoke to each individual child. All of the youngsters received a bag of goodies and sang a song or recited a poem, even the youngest ones.



A special moment for one young member

North Wales Swiss Club

North Wales Swiss Clubs celebrated the Samichlaus season twice this year.

Festivities started with a Cheese Fondue Plausch on Saturday 3rd December at the home of Martin and Ghislaine Pikes (1st & 2nd on the right) in Mynydd Llandigay.



There was a further Fondue Plausch the following week at Glyn Valley Hotel in Glyn Ceiriog, where owners Markus and Heidi Imfeld greeted club members with their usual festive cheer.



North Wales now benefits from two Swiss Clubs (Caernarfon and Llangollen). Both are keen to welcome any new members and Llangollen, which is near the English border, also looks forward to linking up with expats in the Wrexham and Cheshire areas.

Please contact

Beatrice Schlegel or
Ruth Thomas Lehmann
(Honorary Consul)

via the Swiss in Wales website
www.swissinwales.org

Southern Area Swiss Club

"It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good" was certainly true for the Southern Area Swiss Club. St Peter's Church, our usual club venue, is undergoing essential repairs (death-watch beetle has struck), so we returned to our favourite old haunt, the Elles Community Centre in Farnborough, for our annual Christmas Party.

Traditionally, each club member brings whatever food they like, savoury or sweet, and these are shared. It's amazing how this loose arrangement just works!

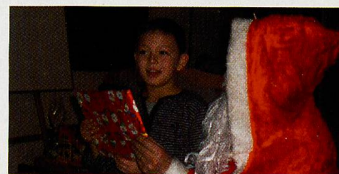


Among the guests were two Austrian friends. Everybody received a present – this year a tin of shortbread. Conversation flowed endlessly, so the games stayed in their boxes.



South Wales Swiss Society

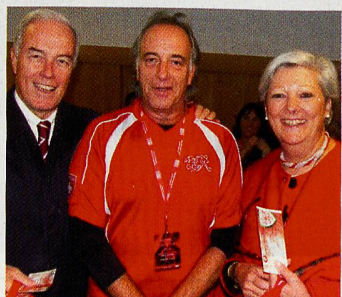
Rowan Brown receives his present from Father Christmas (Siôn Corn) who made a brief appearance at this year's annual Christmas event in Ty Tawe, Swansea.



Half-time at the Liberty Stadium in Swansea during the Euro 2012 qualifier between Wales and Switzerland. Thanks to the Football Association of Wales, some of our members were permitted for the first time to watch the match in a segregated area from both Swiss and Welsh fans, who looked very confused as our small group cheered on both teams.



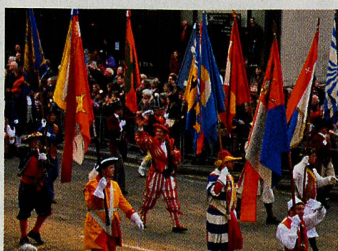
Prior to the match Anton Thalmann, Ambassador of Switzerland and his wife joined South Wales Swiss Society President Gerry Allin and fellow supporters at a pre-match reception at the Liberty Stadium.



Snapshot

Zurich Guilds bring flair to London's streets

Keen to strengthen ties between guilds in Zurich and the City of London, Lord Mayor David Wootton invited about 200 representatives from approximately 18 Zurich guilds to take part in the Lord Mayor's Show in November. Photos: © Swiss Embassy



Timeline

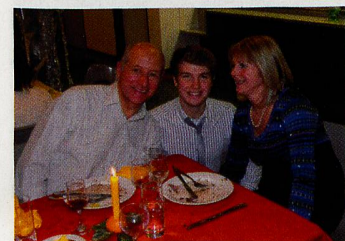
The major public artwork, Timelines, by Swiss artist Daniela Schönbachler stands in Regent Street at the heart of London's West End. Open to interpretation by the viewer, the artwork creates the illusion of naturalistic environments, yet is formed from contemporary materials and technologies.

Swiss Clubs in the UK

CLUB NEWS · CLUB NEWS · CLUB NEWS · CLUB NEWS ·

New Helvetic Society

As is usual in December, the Genevans and their friends celebrated L'Escalade at the Swiss Embassy. After a three course meal of delicious and traditional Genevan dishes, about 50 people sang the Cé qu'è l'aind and the chocolate marmite filled with marzipan vegetables was broken and eaten in the old traditional way. The event was organised and sponsored by the Cercle Genevois and the New Helvetic Society.



Yorkshire Swiss Club

A jolly Christmas lunch was enjoyed by both old and new members at the Crown Hotel Boroughbridge, N.Yorkshire. Once again, a special member spoiled each of us with her delicious home made "guetziis".



Infos:

Yorkshire Swiss Club meets 3 times a year in different locations for lunch.

Our next meeting will be on March 24th for the AGM followed by a cheese fondue. Swiss National Day will be celebrated in early August.

Contact:

Club Chairman, Evy Wardill
(wardill124@btinternet.com)

Swiss Club News

Many thanks for all your contributions to these pages.

The UK pages of the Swiss Review are published four times a year – in January, April, June and October – so there are plenty of opportunities for your club to feature in these pages. Suggested story ideas, photos and news item are always welcome.

(See page 8 for contact details)

Edinburgh Swiss Club

And on his way back to the North Pole, Samichlaus even managed to persuade his reindeer to stop for half an hour, while he greeted the children of Swiss Club Edinburgh.



Edinburgh's Honorary Consul General Peter Mueller-McDougall in conversation with members.

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Medals galore for Swiss skills

Switzerland once again showed it has some of the most skilled young people in the world by walking away with 17 medals at WorldSkills 2011, which was held at London's O2 Arena in October. Only the heavily-industrialised nations, Korea and Japan, could outshine Switzerland's impressive line-up of medals.



Swiss Church

BRITISH PEER PUTS SWISS IN A LATHER

London's Swiss Church celebrates its 250th anniversary this year. More than 50 pasteurs – French and German – have preached to the Swiss Colony in London since records began in 1762. One of those was Marcel Dietler who served the community during the 1960s. It was a period of great economic woe in the UK and in some quarters a challenging time for Swiss-British relations. But as Marcel explains, a good sense of humour went a long way in those days.

I was the minister of the German-speaking congregation from 1963 – 1973. It was the time of the soap war between Britain and Switzerland. Pound sterling had been devalued under the Wilson government in 1967. It looked like the UK might have to depend on the banks of 'little Switzerland'? A bitter pill for many! Conservative peer Lord Arran who was also a columnist at the London Evening News, wrote about his fear of the financial 'Gnomes of Zurich', who hardly used soap and only occasionally washed, taking over London's financial institutions. A series of articles written in this vein led to Arran becoming one

of the most hated men in Switzerland at that time. To me, however, he was merely demonstrating the art of British black humour on the Swiss banks. It all amused me greatly.

“

The Conservative peer had become our great soap enemy

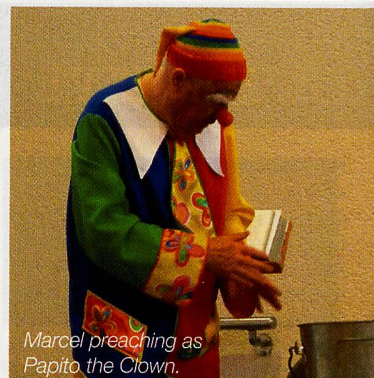
These articles were also the source of long discussions in the Swiss Colony between the Embassy and the Church. On one occasion, planning the traditional Swiss Church Bazaar, I suggested I would invite Lord Arran to sell soap on behalf of the church. Everybody found this highly amusing, but nobody actually expected me to get in touch with him.

When I joyfully told the committee at the next bazaar meeting that Lord

Arran had indeed agreed to sell soap, it was met with anger and some members threatened to boycott the church event, unless the invitation was immediately withdrawn. Lord Arran was very disappointed with this reaction and it led to another dose of his sarcastic British humour against the Swiss. This time he wrote about "the annual shooting of hundreds of stray cats by parliamentarians on the Bundesplatz in Bern." Owing to his Swiss tales, the Conservative peer had become the great soap enemy.

However, behind the scenes the enemy proved to be an even greater Swiss friend. Whenever I needed help from the British authorities I would just call his Lordship. Once we had a Swiss student who had been robbed, sadly on Christmas day. The young man was particularly upset that lots of precious photos from his years living in Canada had been stolen. Lord Arran appealed through his newspaper for the robber at least to send back the very personal pictures. Although the photos were never returned, the young student felt greatly comforted that the famous soap warrior had made such an effort to help him.

Rev Marcel Dietler



Marcel preaching as Papito the Clown.

250 years Swiss Church

Diary dates:

Celebration weekend

19th May, 6.30 pm

Fundraising Event at the Swiss Embassy

20th May, 11.00 am

Festive Service at the Church

London 2012

4th August, 11.00 am

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To reserve tickets and for more information, contact: info@swisschurchlondon.org.uk.

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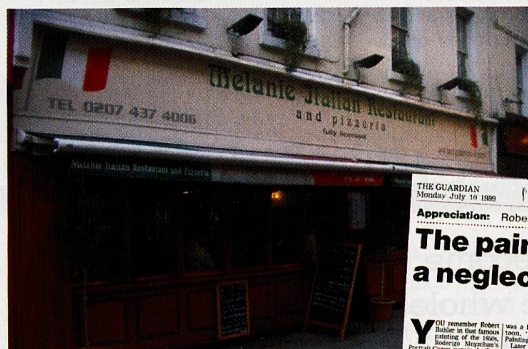
Research

ROBERT BUHLER: A MUCH-ADMIRED PAINTER

The editorial team was recently contacted by Swiss Review reader, Peter Miles, who is researching the life and work of the Swiss-British artist, Robert Buhler. To move on to the next phase of his research, Peter asked if he could make his project known to the expat community in the hope the name of this distinguished artist might jog some memories and lead to new sources of information. We were pleased to oblige.

My name is Peter Miles and I am a London-based journalist with Swiss and British nationality. Having grown up and begun my journalism career in Bern, I came to London in July 1989 to work for the BBC World Service at Bush House.

While leafing through the Guardian newspaper on one of my very first days in the new job, I noticed an obituary of an artist I had never heard of before, but whose name looked distinctly Swiss: Robert Buhler. I remember thinking that the umlaut on the letter "u" must have got lost somewhere along the way, and – reading on – discovered that Buhler's parents had indeed been Swiss. Born in London in 1916, Buhler established himself as a distinguished painter of portraits and landscapes, and went on to become a respected teacher and member of the Royal Academy of Arts. One of the main reasons I was so fascinated with his story was



The shop front today in Old Compton Street (left), Guardian obituary 1989 (below)

The painter as spy: a neglected talent

YOU remember Robert Buhler? In that famous obituary of the artist, written by the Guardian's art critic, the late John Russell, in 1989, it was stated that Buhler was a Swiss-British painter, and that he had been born in London in 1916. But what if he was not Swiss-British, but Swiss-German? What if he was not born in London, but in Bern? What if he was not a painter, but a spy? These are the questions that I have been asking myself since I read the obituary. I have been looking for answers, and I have found them. Robert Buhler was a Swiss-German painter, and he was born in Bern in 1916. He was not a spy, but he was a very talented painter. He was a member of the Royal Academy of Arts, and he was a respected teacher. He was a distinguished painter of portraits and landscapes, and he went on to become a respected teacher and member of the Royal Academy of Arts. One of the main reasons I was so fascinated with his story was

my own background: I was born to a British father and a Swiss-German mother, and we've all moved between our two countries.

I was also intrigued by a reference to Robert Buhler's mother Lucie, who ran two newsagents, which doubled up as coffee bars. The first one was in Charlotte Street and lasted from the mid-1930s until it was damaged by a Second World War bomb in the early 1940s. The café was known as "Madame Buhler's", and it was popular with the art and literary crowd of Fitzrovia. In 1942, Lucie Buhler opened a new establishment in Old Compton Street, in the heart of Soho, finally retiring and handing over the café in the mid-1950s.

Work commitments during the past twenty years have meant the project has had to take a back seat. But I am happy to say I have resumed my research and am now hoping to jog some memories. I am particularly keen to hear from anyone who knew Lucie Buhler's two newsagents-cum-coffee-shops or has photos of them, and of course from anyone who knew Robert Buhler himself.

Please contact me at peter.miles@firenet.uk.net or on 07910 109 436.

Swiss Embassy

Swiss delegation in Wales

On Monday, 21st of November Mr Fabrice Filliez, Economic Counsellor and Mr Thorsten Terweiden, Head of Swiss Business Hub UK met with Mrs Edwina Hart AM, Welsh Minister for Business, Enterprise, Technology & Science.

The meeting which was held over lunch included discussions about a variety of topics, ranging from Tourism to Defence. The Welsh Business Minister expressed her interest in learning from Swiss experiences and best practices, for example in the area of waste management. It was agreed to continue the dialogue. The Swiss Business Hub UK is planning to put a focus on Wales during an information event for Swiss exporters planned in the autumn of 2012.

The meeting was arranged by Ms Ruth Thomas Lehmann the Swiss Honorary Consul in Wales.

For more information contact: Swiss Business Hub UK, Embassy of Switzerland, London W1H 2BQ



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Five minutes with...

PHILIPP MOSIMANN

The big countdown to London 2012 has started. As many will know, the House of Switzerland takes up residence in Glaziers Hall, an old butter wharf on the south bank of the River Thames, for more than three weeks before and during the London Olympics. Trendy Swiss gastronomy will be one of the highlights in Glaziers Hall and the prestigious Swiss caterers Mosimann's will provide the hospitality. In an interview with Swiss Review, Philipp Mosimann, Managing Director at Mosimann's in London, talked about past Olympic experiences, his family's strong ties with the Prince's Trust and the playful culinary twist Mosimann's plans to bring to the Olympic experience.

Philipp Mosimann: We want to create a fusion of Bernese, Swiss and British specialties during London 2012. There will be something for everybody from bratwurst to roesti, chocolates to fine dining. As well as a Brasserie Swiss in Glaziers Hall, we plan to transform the Mug House, a unique Victorian-style pub nearby, into a rustic Bernese chalet with traditional dishes, like fondue and raclette, on

the menu. There will also be a 'grab and go' option offering good quality convenience foods in the style of neighbouring Borough Market.

“

We have become used to the whole Olympic circus

Swiss Review: This sounds like a massive project. Are you used to catering on such a large scale?

PM: We started catering for the Olympics in Beijing in 2008. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) asked for our help to make sure everything functioned with regard food supplies. Ensuring top quality dining for their invited international guests was of paramount importance. We could offer this thanks to our many years of experience in the Far East. We also catered for Vancouver 2010,

so we have become used to the whole Olympic circus.

SR: What are some of the challenges taking on such a high-profile event?

PM: Of course the logistics play a huge part. Our biggest involvement will be once we are on site and setting up all the crockery, equipment, the back of house storage and production because there won't be much prep time. We will need to cook slightly differently as well, so it will be a challenge for our staff. We will also employ students from local universities and hotel schools, as well as from catering colleges in Switzerland. A couple of candidates from the Prince's Trust's "Get into Cooking" initiative will also be on board. It is very exciting.

SR: Mosimann's has had a long association with the Prince's Trust, why this particular charity?

PM: My father started the link with the Prince's Trust many years ago. It is a very proactive charity that really makes a difference to young people. Through the "Get into Cooking" programme we have witnessed many young people, who had lost their way a bit, suddenly setting up their own catering businesses or working for Michelin-starred restaurants in London. One young man became such a valued member of our kitchen brigade we took him to Buckingham Palace when we cooked for HRH Prince William and Miss Kate Middleton's wedding.

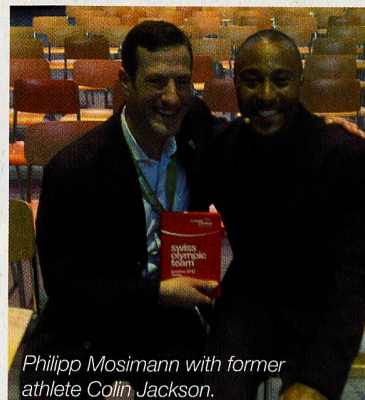
SR: Finally, what are you most looking forward to about London 2012?

And finally...

The Swiss Review is looking for two families who would be interested in reviewing "Alpine Legends of Switzerland" a book filled with entertaining Swiss folktales of heroes, heroines, villains and brave mountain people.

Alpine Legends of Switzerland

Contact: editor@swissreview.co.uk and contribute to the next issue of the Swiss Review.



Philipp Mosimann with former athlete Colin Jackson.

PM: The excitement and the buzz of everybody being here enjoying themselves and, of course, Switzerland winning a couple of medals!

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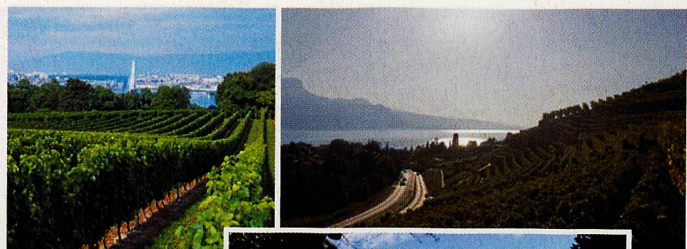
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