

News from the colony

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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

AT THE SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

Once again, the lecture room was filled to capacity when the Chairman, Mr. R. Chappuis, welcomed the members and friends present at the Monthly Meeting, held at Swiss House on Wednesday, 8th November.

There was an encouraging increase in the membership roll, three new members being added to the list by the election of Messrs. A. Burkhalter, F. Conrad and P. Hofstetter.

The meeting heard with interest the Chairman's announcement that a new lease had been signed last month, securing the Society's tenure of Swiss House for a further twelve years.

Following the meeting, two colour films were shown by courtesy of the Swiss Embassy. Consul E. Ribi suitably prefaced the first film "Où en sommes-nous?" by giving a résumé of the latest press report on the aims, organisation and scale of the Swiss National Exhibition, to be held in Lausanne in 1964. In view of its general interest, this excellent outline of Switzerland's vast undertaking is being published in extenso in this issue.

The film itself was an introduction to the Exhibition, showing how out of the chaos of the last war an entirely new economy was being rapidly built in Europe and how Switzerland's industries were constantly being modernised to keep in step with, or if possible ahead of, their powerful neighbours and competitors. Finally we had a glimpse of the site and early preparations where the results of Switzerland's tremendous efforts will be on show in three year's time.

This was followed by "Porcelaine Suisse", a film produced by the Porcelain Factory of Langenthal. Perhaps few in the audience had an idea of what extremely fine and artistic ceramic pieces and sets are being produced in our country, apart from porcelain for industrial purposes, such as insulators capable of taking up to the highest voltages. It was in fact a revelation of how an industry of this nature, which still depends to a great extent on manual skill, can at the same time make use of the most modern devices of mechanisation and scientific processes. If this was a fair example of what will be exhibited at Lausanne, it is indeed a pleasure in store.

"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Even business men must relax sometimes, and what better way than by song and music. As an agreeable climax to the evening, the Swiss Male Choir entertained us with a few songs from their repertoire. If it was stated that the Choir had recently lacked practice, this in no way detracted from their fine performance, which was thoroughly enjoyed and highly appreciated by all present. In fact, the audience, at the conductor's invitation, joined with gusto in "Ihr Berge lebt wohl".

The musical programme would not have been complete without a few homely Swiss tunes on the accordion, which were provided by Messrs. Gandon and Ott.

A vote of thanks to all who had contributed towards a most successful evening, moved by Mr. O. Grob, was cordially endorsed by all present.

W.B.

AT THE CITY SWISS CLUB

The second Extraordinary Meeting of the City Swiss Club, dealing with matters of the Club House Fund, took place on Monday, 30th October at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1, about fifty members being present.

Mr. M. A. Keller, Vice-President, in the absence of the President, took the Chair and greeted Monsieur H. Gallusser, Secretary at the Swiss Embassy, and Consul E. Ribi. He acquainted the Meeting of the loss through death of two members, Messrs. R. Hangartner and W. Meier, asking the members to honour their memory by a silent tribute.

After the Minutes of the first Extraordinary Meeting had been read and accepted, Mr. Keller opened the discussion regarding alterations of the rules in connection with the Club House Fund. Mr. Jules Zimmermann gave a concise history of the Fund since its inception, and Mr. E. Luterbacher (Hon. Treasurer and one of the Trustees of the Fund) and Mr. X. Speckert (a former President of the Club) explained legal matters involved.

After a prolonged discussion it was decided that former subscribers to the Fund should be informed that the Club intended to make a certain income from this Fund available for the Club, and ask them for their consent.

Close of the Meeting 10 p.m.

Press Reporter City Swiss Club.

HAZEL SCHMID AT THE WIGMORE HALL

On Thursday, 7th December, at 7.30 p.m., Hazel Schmid will be giving a recital at the Wigmore Hall. The programme will include works by Purcell, Arne, Boyce, Wolf, Debussy and Poulenc.

Hazel Schmid, whose family is Anglo-Swiss, was born in Zürich, but has lived in England since her early childhood. She started her musical training at the Guildhall School of Music and worked with Winifred Radford (with whom she still studies).

Later she won a free place at the National School of Opera. She won a French Government Scholarship which enabled her to study in Paris with Pierre Bernac, and two further awards — from the National School of Opera and the Arts Council — have given her further periods of study with M. Bernac.

"A Swiss Centre Proposed"

We read in the Daily Telegraph:

Another scheme for redeveloping the old Stagg & Russell site in Leicester Square has been put to London County Council. It proposes using the site, which is bounded by New Coventry Street, Wardour Street, Leicester Street and Lisle Street, as a Swiss Centre.

Behind the proposal, which has been submitted by David Du R. Aberdeen & Partners, architects, is a consortium of Swiss firms. The centre would include an exhibition hall, with shops, restaurants, offices and car parking.

The site is owned by Mr. Charles Clore's company, City & Central Investments, which has earmarked it for an 11-storey building incorporating shops, offices, a bowling alley and a beer garden. Mr. Clore bought the site for £750,000.

PERSONAL

H.E. the Swiss Ambassador, Monsieur Armin Daeniker, gave a cocktail party on 6th November in honour of the Canton of Vaud's tourist delegation, who were in London for their annual visit.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the passing away on November 15th of Mr. R. de Cintra, an obituary will appear in our next issue.

We deeply regret to announce the death of Dr. G. Kullmann, formerly Assist. High Commissioner for refugees; and Mr. George Adolphus Berenger, of 16 Bittacy Rise, London, N.W.7, at the age of 69.

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ROBERT HANGARTNER†

It is with deep regret that we announce the passing away, on 20th October of Mr. Robert Hangartner, managing director of Messrs. Compton's Ltd., shipping and forwarding agents, of Cap House, Long Lane, London, E.C.1, at the age of 67.

Once again death has taken from us a man who belongs to the "old guard" of the Colony. The deceased was born at Altstätten in 1894, where he spent his childhood and his early school-days. Later on, he finished his education at the "Verkehrsschule" in St. Gall. In 1911 he joined the shipping and forwarding firm of Imobersteg & Cie, and was posted to their Chiasso office. He rendered excellent service for the company in Switzerland, so much so that early in this century he was sent to London to take charge of, and re-organise, the branch office in that City; this was a great responsibility for so young a man, but he justified the trust placed in him and was highly successful.

Upon the splitting up of Imobersteg as one firm into two separate companies, viz., Hans Imobersteg and Karl Imobersteg in 1920, the London office was closed, but the deceased was authorised to take over the representation of Hans Imobersteg & Cie in London and to form his own company for this purpose. This was done in April 1921, and the firm became known under the name of "Compton's Ltd."

Owing to his responsible position, which involved much travelling, he was unable to take an active part in the work of the Colony, but in former years he was often seen with his wife at social functions of the City Swiss Club, of which he had been a member since 1911. He also, at one time, took a keen interest in the Swiss Sports meetings. Two years ago he lost his wife, and the shock of this severely affected his health; within four months he had to enter hospital for a major lung operation, from the effects of which illness he never fully recovered.

His many friends in the Colony will keep him in affectionate remembrance. We extend our deepest sympathy to his two sons in their bereavement.

ST.

OUR NEXT ISSUE

Our next issue (Christmas issue) will be published on Friday, 15th December 1961 (one issue only). We take this opportunity of thanking the following subscribers for their kind and helpful donations over and above their subscription: H. Trepp, C. B. Adam, F. J. Meier, Mrs. W. Habersaat, T. Schurch, H. Waibel, P. H. Aubaret, Paul Bessire, W. Preiswerk, Miss Gladys S. Moore, A. M. Themans, Mrs. Mariann Meier, Eric Goodbehre and N. H. Lenzinger.