

An M.B.E. to Mary Helen Ellis

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objekttyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): **- (1967)**

Heft 1519

PDF erstellt am: **29.04.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-690161>

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AN M.B.E. TO MARY HELEN ELLIS

As we announced in the last issue of the "Swiss Observer", an M.B.E. has been awarded to Mrs. F. Ellis (née Daepf) of 39 Limes Road, Folkestone. This great honour was bestowed on our compatriot in recognition of the tremendous work which she has done as a welfare worker for Kent Council of Social Service in the ports of Folkestone and Dover. It is not only the authorities that are grateful for Mrs. Ellis's devoted application in looking after immigrants whose papers are not in order, but countless young Swiss and other aliens owe her a debt of gratitude for looking after them when they were in distress. The people she helps include au pair girls who have lost their jobs, people who have lost their passports or tickets, penniless immigrants who are refused landing in England.

At first, Mrs. Ellis worked on a voluntary basis, but the work took on such proportions that official help was needed, and she became Honorary Organiser of the Committee for the Welfare of Migrants of Kent Council of Social Service. It is in no small measure due to her efforts that the Home Office has taken an active interest, and it is mainly thanks to her initiative that a grant of £6,000 (spread over three years) has been given to the work of the Committee by the Trustees of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. With this, a home for stranded aliens has been opened at Dover.

Mary Helen Ellis (53), was born in Berne, and since early youth, she has been interested in social welfare. She came to this country in 1932 and went to Selly Oak College to learn English and do Social studies before doing a course at the "Soziale Frauenschule" in Zurich. She met her British husband at a students' camp in this country. They got married in 1936 and have two daughters (26 and 20) both doing sociology.

For many years, Mrs. Ellis helped Miss Wolfer at the Welfare for Swiss Girls with individual cases and joined the Committees of the Welfare Office in 1958. She became President of the Welfare Office in 1926 in succession to Mrs. W. Meier when the latter took on the editorship of the "Swiss Observer". It is, therefore, from personal knowledge that the writer can vouch for the devotion and energy Mrs. Ellis puts into her work.

We extend our congratulations to Mrs. Ellis and hope her wish will come true, that the honourable award to her will help her to get more assistance and support in her work.

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THE NEW AMBASSADOR RECEIVES THE SWISS PRESS

Monsieur Olivier Long, the newly appointed Ambassador of the Swiss Confederation to the Court of St. James's, presented his credentials to H.M. the Queen on 24th February. The same afternoon he received the correspondents of the Swiss Press in London to discuss various questions of importance to both countries.

Prior to his departure from Switzerland, the Geneva Council of State and Administrative Council of Geneva gave a farewell reception to Monsieur Long, thanking him for the excellent co-operation during his term of office as leader of the Swiss delegation with EFTA in Geneva. At the same time, the authorities welcomed Sir John Coulson, new Secretary-General of EFTA. Also present were Ambassadors Eugene Melville (Great Britain) and René Keller (Switzerland), permanent representatives of the two countries with the international organisations in Geneva.

SWISS CLUB (SCHWEIZERBUND)

A lively discussion on the Swiss Centre formed part of the Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Club, held at the Glendower Hotel, S.W.7, on Friday, 24th February. The keen interest shown by all present proved, if proof were indeed needed, that the Club is much concerned in all things Swiss in general and in the creation of a Swiss Social and Cultural Centre in particular, even though the present membership stands only at a few dozen.

The President (Mr. V. Berti), assisted by the Hon. Secretary (Mr. J. Schmid) and the Hon. Treasurer (Mr. L. S. R. Asch), presented their reports. They were thanked for their work in keeping the Club going, and Committee and officers were re-elected, as were the Hon. Auditors.

A number of faithful old friends were unable to attend, but even so a handsome number sat down to the excellent meal provided by Mr. F. Schmid of the Glendower Hotel.

One of the features of the "Schweizerbund's" meetings is entertainment provided by one or other of the members. Whilst Mr. Delaloye was not present to give away a few spicy details he knows about some of his fellow members (he and his wife attended the wedding in Scotland of one of their grandsons), secrets were revealed this time by one of the members who showed considerable skill in reading hands.

It was said in December that the usual community singing had been lacking at the Christmas Dinner. This time, under the stimulus of Mr. Luterbacher's yodelling, community singing was resumed with fervour and determination, and young and old enjoyed many a familiar tune, until breaking up the party could no longer be put off.

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