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SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

“Welcome” to the re-appearance of the “*Swiss Observer*. ” How true it is that one only really finds how useful and important an object is when one is deprived of it for some time.

The Swiss Observer has been missed badly not only could we not read all the tidings of the Swiss Colony, usually so faithfully reported in your paper, but the home news that we normally read in its columns, if at times belated, made up for the scanty news most of us receive from home.

I sincerely hope that the troubles of the Swiss Observer and the printing works are now over, that difficulties regarding publishing and finance have or will be overcome and that we shall see our own Swiss paper again regularly.

Much has happened in the Swiss Mercantile Society since the last issue appeared, besides the damage to Swiss House reported fully in this paper elsewhere. Many of our members have had their business or private property destroyed or damaged and yet we must be thankful that so far we have not heard that any of our members or their families have suffered bodily harm.

The Day School is closed but the Employment Dept. is now at Swiss House and the activities of the London Section has gone on almost as usual.

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on February 8th at 2 p.m. at Swiss House, when I hope a large number of members and friends of the Society will come to receive the Annual report, the accounts for 1940 and to elect the Council and Committee for the present year.

If ever there was a time when we should stand together it is now and I earnestly appeal to all members for continued support for the S.M.S.

J. J. BOOS, President.

SWISS RELIEF CENTRE.

Since the bombing of Swiss House which was the Home of the Relief Centre, the work of the Institution although greatly handicapped, has continued.

We have been able to assist a great number of our Compatriots, thanks to the generous Members of the Colony who have kindly given them a temporary home. Other help has been given to many others.

After a long and difficult search, we have found a new home for the Relief Centre, away from the bombing area. It is beautifully situated in the heart of the country between Potters Bar and Hatfield and has accommodation for twenty guests. The Colony will be pleased to know that the Pensioners of our Home for Old People are now comfortably installed there, in company with other compatriots who enjoy a temporary rest after their trying experiences.

The Rest Centre still has accommodation for any Swiss who may be deprived of his home or who may have become in other ways a victim of war conditions.

The Relief is free for those who have no means, but if there is available accommodation, the Matron, Miss M. Beglinger, will be pleased to make arrangements at very reasonable terms with the Members of the Colony who desire a temporary rest.

The address of the country Home of the Relief Centre is:— “Westfield,” Kentish Lane, Hatfield, (Tel: Toll Hatfield 2086).

All enquiries for assistance should be made to:— Mr. Th. Ritter, Swiss Home, 31, Conway Street, Fitzroy Square, W.1. (Tel: Euston 2173).

We wish to express our gratitude to all those who by their generous donations, have made it possible to give such welcome and needed assistance to our compatriots in distress.

Mr. Th. Ritter will thankfully receive all further donations of money and clothing.

The Committee.

NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE.

Owing to lack of space a report on the Annual General Meeting held on January 18th has been held over and it is hoped to publish it in our next issue.

SINGLE COPIES OF S.O.

The present issue of the Swiss Observer is posted to the latest addresses in our possession and we sincerely hope that every copy will be received safely. Owing to prevailing restrictions, we have to point out that we cannot post spare or propaganda copies unless these copies are prepaid (3d. each).

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Saturday, February 1st, at 12.45 p.m. — City Swiss Club — Monthly Meeting at Brown’s Hotel, Dover Street (nr. Green Park Station) followed by a Lecture by Mons. J. Girardet on “The Economic Situation in Switzerland.”

Saturday, February 8th, at 2 p.m. — Swiss Mercantile Society Ltd. — Annual General Meeting — at Swiss House, 34/35, Fitzroy Square, W.1.

Saturday, February 15th, at 1.30 p.m. — Nouvelle Société Helvétique — Monthly Meeting — to be followed by Dr. H. W. Egli’s lecture: “Switzerland and the War,” at Swiss House, 34/35, Fitzroy Square, W.1.