

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK
Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom
Band: - (1946)
Heft: 1045

Rubrik: London Swiss Philatelic Society

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LONDON SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The Society held its third Annual General Meeting at the Glendower Hotel, South Kensington, on Saturday, January 26th.

A cordial welcome was extended to the members by Mr. F. Streit, President. He deeply regretted the absence for health reasons of the Vice-President, Mr. J. J. Schneider, and the Hon. Secretary, Mr. F. G. Ebbutt. Messages of good wishes for a speedy recovery were tendered to them on behalf of the meeting, and greetings were sent to Mr. P. F. Boehringer, Hon. President, who was unable to attend.

In reviewing the activities of the past year, the President expressed satisfaction with the steady progress achieved. Innovations in the form of displays, auctions and a quiz at the Monthly Meetings had had a salutary effect on the attendance and there was every reason to be proud, both as regards the quality and the quantity displayed.

Six new members were admitted during the year, bringing the total membership up to 70, a modest number compared with some of the well-known stamp clubs. Nevertheless, the Society renders a useful service to its members, many of whom are very keen philatelists who own fine collections, as was evinced by their displays. It has also promoted an excellent spirit of comradeship among Swiss and English collectors.

The Chairman concluded his address by thanking all who had helped to further the aims of the Society, in particular the Committee members through whose untiring efforts the Society had managed to keep going during most difficult and anxious times. With a gradual return to more normal conditions, the Society intended to embark on a more ambitious programme, which would in due course be drawn up by the Committee.

From the accounts under review, ably presented by the Hon Treasurer, Mr. O. Grob, it could be seen that the volume transacted by the Exchange Club did not fully come up to the previous year. There is, however, every reason to hope that with the intended speeding up of the circulation of exchange booklets, the current year should show a considerable increase. The new booklets, of standard size and with the Swiss coat of arms imprinted, have found favour both with members in London and the Provinces. The accounts, which showed a favourable balance, and were duly approved by the auditors, were unanimously adopted.

The Chairman announced with regret that the Hon. Treasurer, M. O. Grob, and Mr. K. E. Ammann, member of the Committee, did not seek re-election. On behalf of the Society, he expressed appreciation to both gentlemen for their valuable services rendered during the three years of the Society's existence.

Under the temporary Chairmanship of Mr. L. Jobin, the Committee for the year 1946 was elected as follows:—President: Mr. F. Streit; Vice-President: Mr. J. J. Schneider; Hon. Secretary: Mr. Fred. G. Ebbutt; Hon. Treasurer: Mr. W. Fuchs; Hon. Packet Superintendent: Mr. W. Burren; Members: Messrs. E. A. Gotz, E. M. Huber, P. Jacot and G. L. Wahl.

This concluded the official part of the meeting and the members then adjourned to the dining room, where an excellent meal was served. The proprietors, Mr. and Mrs. Schmid, once again earned the thanks of

their co-philatelists for the excellent manner in which they had looked after their welfare.

The remainder of the afternoon was spent with an exchange of philatelic knowledge and an auction, very ably conducted by Mr. G. L. Wahl. The stamps were kindly donated by some of the members and the proceeds, which amounted to over £15, were handed to the Swiss Benevolent Society.

Thus came to a close a most pleasant and enjoyable afternoon.

W.B.

INSTALLATION AT THE SWISS CHURCH IN LONDON.

In our old war-scarred Church in Endell Street, tastefully decorated with flowers for the occasion, a bilingual Service was held on Sunday, 20th of January, dedicated to the formal installation of the Rev. Herbert Blum, who had accepted a unanimous call of the Consistoire to serve as Pastor of the German-speaking Community. It was a solemn, and at the same time simple, ceremony of a truly Swiss character, and the presence, amidst a large congregation, of the Swiss Minister, M. Paul Ruegger, and of M. Escher was a signal honour for our Church and a fitting augury for the success of the work undertaken by Pastor Blum in our Colony.

Pastor Pradervand, who spoke first, extended a very cordial welcome to his new colleague who, like himself, had left the genial environment of a flourishing country parish at home, to come to England with his family and share with him the work of ministering to the spiritual needs of a large number of our compatriots in London and, in a wider sense, in Great Britain. He was followed by the venerable President of the Consistoire, M. Alfred Brauen, who, in a few words in German straight from his heart, welcomed the new Candidate and informed him, in the name of the Consistoire, that, on the strong recommendation of the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches, he had been duly elected to the office of Pastor to the German-speaking community and was therefore authorised, in that capacity, to exercise his ministry.

The Swiss Minister, M. Paul Ruegger, then rose to address the congregation. Speaking in German, as the official Representative of our Home Authorities, he paid a gracious tribute to the courage and untiring activity of Pastor Pradervand during the strenuous war years and conveyed to Pastor Blum in eloquent words his sincere goodwill and best wishes for the success of his work in the Swiss Colony of London.

Pastor Blum, in a brief address from the pulpit, expressed his deep gratitude for the warm welcome extended to him by all and pledged himself to fulfil his calling, with the help of Almighty God, to the best of his ability and in a spirit of harmonious co-operation with his colleague. Having responded to the call to come to London, he in his turn called upon all those whom he had come to serve, to give him their full and loyal support in the exercise of his ministry.

The beautiful rendering by the Swiss Male Choir of two well chosen songs contributed much to the uplifting ceremony and left a deep impression on all who were privileged to be present.

B.J.S.