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**UNIONE TICINESE SEZIONE FEMMINILE.****Annual General Meeting,****held at Swiss House on the 6th February, 1949.**

The Annual General Meeting of the Sezione Femminile of the Unione Ticinese was held at Swiss House, on Sunday, the 6th February, 1949, at 4 p.m. Mrs. C. Berti, Acting President, was in the Chair.

The Minutes of the last Meeting, held on the 19th December, were read, confirmed and signed.

The balance sheet for the year ending 1948/9 was presented to the Meeting, and approved.

Mrs. Berti expressed her appreciation at seeing such a large number of members present; it was indeed gratifying to note that the Society was so enthusiastic and flourishing.

In her review of the events of the past year, the Chairman referred to the irreparable loss sustained by the Society by the death of their dearly beloved President. Mrs. Lunghi-Rezzonico will always be remembered with deep affection as she was much more than a President — she was a sincere friend to all. As Founder of the Sezione Femminile, her advice was invaluable and her energetic interest was a source of inspiration to each one of us. Her departure is sadly felt.

In conjunction with the men of the Unione Ticinese, the Sezione Femminile had organized several very successful Tea Dances at the Dorchester Hotel. These were becoming increasingly popular, the demand appearing insatiable. The whole of the profits from one of these dances had been allocated to the Men's Section, as a joint contribution towards the cost of their Monument erected on the graves at Kensal Green.

The Acting President reported that the Corale was thriving enthusiastically under the new leadership of Mr. Peter De Maria, and that in addition to the part it played in perpetuating the beautiful traditional folk songs of Ticino, it had proved an outstanding social success.

Mrs. Berti thanked the members and their many kind friends for the hard work and support towards making the Christmas Bazaar the usual very successful event. This function had now become an integral part of the Christmas festivities.

The Chairman was very pleased to report that the combined profits of the dances and the bazaars had now built up the Reserve to a figure in excess of the original target and that, as a result, the long-scherished ambition of the formation of a Benevolent Scheme was now a practical reality.

Summing up, the Chairman thanked the Secretary, Vice-Secretary, Treasurer, the Committee and the Members for their loyal co-operation during 1948.

On the retirement of the 1948/9 Committee, Mrs. J. Eusebio took the Chair and on behalf of the Society, said a few words of appreciation and thanks to the Acting President and to the retiring Committee for all their untiring efforts throughout the year.

The result of the voting was as follows:—

*President*: Mrs. C. Berti; *Vice-President*: Mrs. C. Abate; *Secretary*: Miss I. Abate; *Vice-Secretary*: Mrs. F. McKenna; *Treasurer*: Miss S. Morosi; *Committee Members*: Mrs. L. Berti, Miss L. Bonetti, Mrs. L. Bruni, Mrs. J. Eusebio, Mrs. I. Milli, Miss E. Salmina; *Entertainment Committee*: Miss I. Abate, Mrs. L. Bruni, Mrs. F. McKenna.

Mrs. Berti, in again taking the Chair, thanked Mrs. Eusebio for having conducted the Meeting during the election, and also the members for the confidence they had shown in electing her President.

J.A.

**UNIONE TICINESE.****Annual General Meeting.**

February is a month that it not without hope; hope borne from the fact that the season may do its worst, but the days are counted anyhow and the milder weather of spring, tra-la, will soon be here. At this time of the year too, most societies, having drawn up their accounts and discovered how better, or worse off they are through their endeavours during the past year, draw fresh hope from the promise that a new year holds out. And so the ranks are marshalled anew, filled are the gaps in the leadership and new plans laid for a further successful twelve months.

Successful was indeed for the Unione Ticinese the year 1948, as the Secretary, Mr. Peter De Maria, in a clear yet detailed report (it proved to be a swan song) duly pointed out at the well-attended Annual General Meeting held at Swiss House on Sunday, February 6th. The four main social functions had been so well supported that in spite of large outlays in benefits, not excluding the erection of a memorial in Kensal Green cemetery, the accounts could be closed with a balance on the right side. Since the end of hostilities the inroads made into the various funds during the war years

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have been largely made good. As a good economist, he warned that when making comparisons with past result the diminished purchasing power of money should be taken into account, and that when looking into the future, the change of conditions from a sellers' to a buyers' market is not to be overlooked. A large anonymous donation had also played a part. The Society, through its Committee and Members had loyally collaborated in the various functions in the Swiss Colony, notably on the occasion of the 1st August celebration, while in its turn the Unione acknowledges the co-operation received from sister societies, particularly the Swiss Mercantile whose tenants we are. Representatives had been sent to two important events at home. Mr. De Maria further paid a tribute to Dr. Felice Gianini, the honorary central President of the "Pro Ticino" for 25 broken years of editorship of the association's bulletin, "Ticino."

But this year is Jubilee Year for the Society and when opening the meeting the President, Mr. Carlo Berti, in moving words commemorated our departed founding members who had met on the 8th February, 1874, to establish what had proved itself through 75 eventful years a leader in the social life of the Ticinese community.

In such circumstances it was fitting that for the election of the new Committee (operation Kingmaking) the chair should be taken by our Socio Benemerito Oscar Gambazzi, in spite of some reluctance on his part owing to poor health. Not all offices could be filled automatically and some polling had to be resorted to. These were the chosen few:— *President*, C. Berti — *Vice-President*, P. De Maria — *Secretary*, E. Berti — *Vice-Secretary*, P. Jacomelli — *Treasurer*, V. Berti — *Collector*, L. Biucchi — *Members*: F. Bassi, L. Bruni, G. Diviani, G. Eusebio and L. Jacomelli.

General regret was evoked by Mr. P. De Maria's intention to give up the Secretaryship which he had discharged for eighteen consecutive years in a most distinguished and efficient manner. There was, therefore, enthusiastic response to Mr. V. Berti's proposal that Mr. De Maria be nominated a "socio benemerito" of the Unione Ticinese.

Before this deserved recognition of loyal service, the meeting had approved unchanged the sickness benefits, the admission of one contributory member and the usual donations to the Fonds de Secours and various hospitals. Finally the President read a letter received from our Minister, M. Henry de Torrenté, in which he acknowledged receipt of the Resolution passed by the joint meeting of December last concerning the Swiss Old Age and Survivors Insurance and stated that it had been transmitted to the competent authority in Switzerland.

After the President had given assurance that plans will soon be made for a suitable celebration of the 75th Anniversary, the Meeting was declared closed.

To end we would like to extend hearty congratulations to Mr. Carlo Berti, not only on his confirmation in the Chair but also for the fact that including the Sezione Femminile, five members of his family now fill the major offices which the Ticinese community can bestow and this is no doubt a tangible token of appreciation for the Berti's willing efforts when there is something to be done for the Canton Ticino. Bravo.

J.E.

## SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

The Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Mercantile Society (Limited by Guarantee) was held at the Swiss Club, Charlotte Street, on Wednesday, February 16th.

The meeting, which was preceded by a supper, was attended by about seventy members, including several past Presidents and Veteran Members, to whom the Chairman, Mr. W. Meier, extended a cordial welcome.

The Secretary, Mr. J. J. Schneider, read the notice convening the meeting and the auditor's report.

In presenting the accounts for the period under review, the auditor, Mr. Robert P. Huxley, A.C.A., stated that these were modelled on statutory lines to comply with the Companies Act 1948. The increased educational activities were reflected in both income and expenditure, which showed a marked upward trend. It is anticipated that the deficit, as in previous years, will be covered by a subsidy receivable from the Swiss Government. Turning to the Balance Sheet, the auditor stated that the assets had remained practically unchanged and that the Society's financial position could be considered very sound and liquid, the investments being readily convertible.

Surveying the activities of the past year, the Chairman gave a comprehensive review of the outstanding events, the 60th anniversary of the S.M.S., the 75th Jubilee of the S.K.V. and the 25th anniversary of the College, as well as the Monthly Meetings, which have already been fully reported in the Swiss Observer.

At the close of the year, the Society was composed of 23 Honorary Members, 286 Active Members, 60 Contributing Members and Donors, and 20 Corresponding Members. There were 21 admissions during the year and 8 resignations, 5 of which were transfers to Swiss Sections.

Reviewing the activities of the College, the Chairman stated that with the completion of bomb damage repairs, which had made additional class rooms available, the maximum number of students which could be accommodated at Swiss House had been admitted last summer. As in the previous year, three courses of 15—16 weeks' duration were held, for which about 400 students in all were enrolled.

The curriculum was varied and the teaching staff had been increased to seven fully qualified lecturers.

Of the 169 students who sat for the diploma examination, which is open to advanced students only and a severe test in the whole range of subjects taught, 124 of 73% were successful.

Mr. E. Steiner, a Trustee of the Society, attended the examinations regularly and thanks are due to him for his continued interest in the work and progress of the students.

There was a further increase in the demand for evening classes, mostly from Swiss girls in domestic employment. It was possible to make the necessary arrangements for them at Swiss House, the majority of the classes having been in the care of teachers at the College. The subjects taught included English in the various stages, commercial correspondence and shorthand. In all 25 classes were held with a total of 345 students in attendance.

The Employment Department continued to render valuable services to Swiss men and women seeking employment in this country and overseas. The importance