

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: - (1957)

Heft: 1288

Artikel: Something better than a new year's resolution?

Autor: [s.n.]

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-686261>

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SOMETHING BETTER THAN A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION?

When I was a young girl I used to make far-reaching resolutions at the turn of the year. I fervently hoped and earnestly endeavoured to keep them. As I grew older it dawned on me that somewhere through the year I gave up the struggle — with some sooner, with others later — and when another New Year's Eve came along I was no nearer the goal than twelve months earlier. Gradually I realized that there was little value in a plan of this kind which added nothing to the betterment of myself or mankind in general, but which, on the contrary, made my conscience a trifle blacker each year. So now I strive every day to do my best, not always with great success, but at least I try to do what I can. I do not want this to sound like patting myself on the back, for I know only too well that my new system is no nearer perfection than the old one. But it does help me throughout the year to get things done which I might otherwise put off and then add to a list of glorious resolutions never, alas, to be accomplished.

When I attended the last general meeting of the *Swiss Benevolent Society* at the end of October I felt acutely how much one could still do to help, but also how much we owe to some of the members of the Executive Committee who week after week, year after year devote their free time and energy to the affairs of the SBS and thus to the good of our compatriots. One of these loyal workers, Mr. M. Rothlisberger, was congratulated by the chairman, Mr. Sommer, on his 25 years as hard-working Assistant and later Hon. Treasurer of the Society. Mr. Rothlisberger told us of how the number of subscribers had fallen during the year and this at a time when sums spent on casual relief to our poor fellow-countrymen had gone up by a considerable amount and the pensions alone paid in the first nine months of 1956 had nearly reached the £3,000 mark. At the same time the covenanted subscriptions had brought in less than over the identical period in 1955.

When the President, Mr. F. G. Sommer, informed the meeting of the progress of the Swiss Hostel for Girls I realized that there, too, were men and women who have been and are giving unstintingly of their time, efforts and energy in the interest of the Colony and our young compatriots from home who would primarily be the beneficiaries of the new hostel. As

Mr. Sommer proceeded to tell of the difficulties with builders and building, authorities and documents, increased costs and dwindling reserves it became clear to the members that the Colony owe Mr. Sommer and all those who have worked with him quite a debt of gratitude.

Mr. Sommer told the committee that the hostel would definitely be ready for occupation shortly, and by the time this report goes to press the opening date will be announced.

The meeting also elected two new pensioners to increase the total to 65 and decided to review the name of the Society in its translation to "Fonds de Secours Suisse", "Schweizerischer Hilfsverein" and "Società Svizzera di Beneficenza".

It was a long meeting which also had its sad moments when the Chairman reported the death of one of the members, Mr. J. Bachofen, and serious illness of two other members. So when I left I felt in a thoughtful mood which prompted me to write my usual report in a different way. I cannot help thinking that if men like Mr. Sommer, Mr. Rothlisberger and others who devote their leisure to the benefit of the Colony made wonderful New Year's resolutions which were dropped half-way through the year, if not earlier, they would not achieve so much that is valuable. And surely there are things which we can do to relieve their work and worries, if only slightly? We may feel like resolving now to help the Swiss Benevolent Society in the future. But would it not be better if we started to act straight away? There are still well preserved clothes and household articles which we never use any more — so why not post or take them at once to 31, Conway Street, London W.1? Let us send our subscription early this year — it will save the Society many worries. And then there is the seven years' covenant which those who pay standard rate of income tax can sign. This will enable the SBS to claim from the Inland Revenue the 8/6 tax paid by us for every pound that we give to the Society, and this at no extra cost or inconvenience to us.

The much needed Swiss Hostel for Girls will be a reality in a short while thanks to the Swiss Benevolent Society who paid for it so handsomely. The generous Sandoz Legacy has been vastly reduced through this and the Society need our support more than ever. It is not only the financial contributions that are needed but above all the loyal support by all members of the Colony in order to continue to show

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the splendid solidarity which has been the hallmark of the SBS for so many years.

So let us do what we can and do it soon. But if some still prefer New Year's resolutions maybe they will put the Swiss Benevolent Society at the top of the list and perhaps they are lucky enough not to flag before their good intentions have been put into action.

Mariann.

RECORD CHRISTMAS TRAFFIC FOR SWISSAIR.

On each of the two days December 22nd and 23rd, 1956, Swissair has carried over 600 passengers from London to Switzerland, a record traffic for single days during the winter season. Five extra flights have been operated on each day to Zurich or Geneva in addition to normal services.

Altogether Swissair has been operating 22 extra flights from the U.K. to Switzerland over the Christmas - New Year period.

OUR NEXT ISSUE.

Our next issue will be published on Friday, January 25th, 1957.

We take the opportunity of thanking the following subscribers for their kind and helpful donations over and above their subscription: Willy Fischer, E. Berner, J. Clement, H. F. Frutiger, E. Gallizia, E. A. Muller, Willy Allenspach, C. J. Bernheim, W. Wagner, M. Gedet, J. Zimmermann, Anglo-Swiss Screw Co. Ltd., W. Walter, H. W. Schneider.

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