

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: 1290

Rubrik: London Swiss Philatelic Society

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**ANNUAL LUNCHEON
OF THE LONDON SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY,
at the Glendower Hotel, Glendower Place, S.W.7.
on Saturday, January 26th, 1957.**

Post haste and full of emotion, after having attended in the morning the official opening of the Swiss Hostel for Girls, at Belsize Grove, London, N.W.3, I arrived at the Glendower Hotel in order to attend the annual luncheon of the London Swiss Philatelic Society.

Whilst, I would have liked to linger a little longer at Belsize Park to have a good look round, and especially to witness the unveiling of a tablet in honour and in memory of Monsieur Aurèle Sandoz, to whose generosity the Hostel has come into being, I did not have the heart to disappoint my old stamp collecting friends, who for the last few years have extended to me their generous hospitality.

On my arrival, the cocktail party, which preceded the luncheon, was still in full swing, although I had hoped — by careful timing — to escape this "ordeal", having already been "refreshed" at the Hostel at the kind invitation of the Swiss Minister and Madame Daeniker.

In the past I have met a good number of collectors of all kinds of objects, and I have always been struck by the congenial atmosphere which is so prevalent whenever they forgather, and the stamp collecting fraternity whom I met at the Glendower Hotel on that Saturday was no exception. After the company — numbering about 50 — had licked Martini's, gin-Italians and Sherries, instead of stamps, they adjourned to the dining-room where they partook of one of the famous luncheons for which the Glendower enjoys such a reputation.

Good company, good food and a drop of "the best", can you ask for anything better? No wonder then that by the time coffee was served the atmosphere had become what one may call "dense".

Whilst speech-making is not encouraged in this Society — for which I am truly thankful — something had to be said or it would not be in accordance with Swiss habits and customs, and, therefore, the President of the London Swiss Philatelic Society, Mr. F. Streit, extended a hearty welcome to the company and the invited guests. Amongst the latter were: Miss Eileen Evans, Public Relations officer of the British Philatelic Association, Mr. J. Dawes, President of the Greenford Philatelic Society and a judge at the last annual cup competition, and Mrs. Dawes, and Mr. A. Stauffer, Editor of the "Swiss Observer"; and Mrs. Stauffer.

It might be appropriate to mention here that at the General Meeting, which took place a few days previous to the luncheon, Mr. F. Streit was again elected President of the Society after he had relinquished his office a year ago, when he was made a Patron. For business reasons Mr. M. Uehlinger, who presided over the Society last year, found it impossible to carry on and once again our old friend Streit was "roped in", although reluctantly, as he told me, and without the "permission" of his wife, after having been previously President for twelve years.

Amongst the various objects of the London Swiss Philatelic Society, which includes a fair sprinkling of our English friends, is an annual competition for

which a challenge cup is presented to the winner. This year's winner was Mr. J. Beken, whose name I have seen engraved on the cup several times. A small replica of the cup went to last year's winner, Mrs. M. Uehlinger. The presentation was made by Mr. J. Dawes, who briefly referred to the pleasant relations which exist between Swiss and English stamp collectors. In conclusion, on behalf of the guests, he thanked the Society for the invitation extended to them.

The London Swiss Philatelic Society has unfortunately one thing in common with some of the other Swiss Societies, namely that their accounts invariably close with a balance on the "wrong side". To cover this deficiency they promptly introduced a tombola with attractive prizes, which resulted in the sum of £15.0.0 being collected, and thus the Society once again has a "clean sheet". It was a pity that it was impossible to produce a sheet of unperforated stamps — this would have been a boom to the Hon. Treasurer, and would have relieved him of his worries for a lifetime!

The members, both Swiss and English, are not only keen collectors but also kind-hearted people, so they also hold every year at their annual luncheon an auction of stamps in aid of charity. This year, as on previous occasions, Mr. and Mrs. Uehlinger were in charge of this auction, and their keen efforts resulted in collecting no less than £18.18.0, which amount was allocated as follows: £13.3.0 to the Reginald Bishop Fund, and £5.5.0 to the Swiss Hostel for Girls.

When the excitement had abated, a sumptuous tea was served, after which a most pleasant and successful afternoon came to its close. ST.



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