

Charles Gysin †

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objekttyp: **Obituary**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): **- (1957)**

Heft 1300

PDF erstellt am: **30.04.2024**

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CHARLES GYSIN †
President City Swiss Club

Pitiless death is rending large gaps in the ranks of the older members of the Colony.

On Sunday, June 30th, Mr. Charles Gysin, of 23 Fitzalan Road, Finchley, N.3, passed away peacefully, after a serious operation at the Hendon District Hospital, in his 68th year.

The news that our friend has left us was received with consternation. Barely a month previous to his untimely demise he had presided over a social function of the City Swiss Club in apparently good health, and nobody had the slightest inkling of the impending tragedy.

The London Swiss Colony, and particularly the City Swiss Club, as well as the *Consistoire* of the *Eglise Suisse*, of which he had been President since 1950, have suffered a grievous loss.

Charles Gysin joined the City Swiss Club in 1915. Thirty-six years after his admission (1951) he was elected to the post of Honorary Secretary and in 1955 became its President.

During his years in office he had rendered conspicuous services. Those who attended the Centenary Banquet and Ball of the Club in November 1956, will, no doubt, remember how efficiently he presided over this unique festival.

He was a gifted speaker, witty and tactful, and an excellent organiser. Proof of his capabilities in this direction he gave when, in July 1947, he organised on behalf of his firm the launching of the M.V. "General Guisan", which took place at West Hartlepool in the presence of the General and Madame Guisan.

Charles Gysin spared no efforts in making the meetings and social functions of the Club as interesting as possible, efforts which unfortunately were not always appreciated enough by the members, causing him at times some disappointment. The writer, in the capacity of Press Reporter, can testify to the zeal and energy with which he worked for the benefit of the Club, and if to-day the City Swiss Club enjoys an unblemished reputation, not only in the Colony but also amongst our English friends, it is in no small manner his merit. In the

annals of the Club he will leave an honoured name, and beyond his last resting place we thank him for the services he has rendered, services which will not soon be forgotten.

* * *

Charles Gysin, who hails from the canton of Geneva, was born in Marseilles in 1889, and when still a child went to live at Antwerp, where he completed his studies.

In 1909 he returned to Marseilles to join the firm of Hübscher & Co., an old-established Swiss concern dealing in the grain trade. Two years afterwards (1911) he was sent to their Genoa branch and in 1912 to Nicolaieff (Russia), where an agency was founded. Early in 1914 he was transferred to their London Office.

At the beginning of the first world war (August 1914) Mr. Gysin was called up and for several months served with the 10th Infantry battalion (Geneva).

On returning to this country, and on the voluntary liquidation of his firm, he occupied several posts in the grain and seed trade until January 1927, when he was appointed a Director of the European Grain Agency Ltd., which was established in London on 1st January 1927 and is now called the European Grain and Shipping Agency Ltd.

In 1939 at the outbreak of the second world war Mr. Gysin was entrusted by the "Kriegs Transport Amt" in Berne with the task of acting as *homme de confiance* to deal with and keep this office informed regarding questions relating to freights, shipping in general, and more especially concerning the, at the time chartered, Greek fleet, the use of which the Swiss Confederation had acquired when the international situation became ominous.

In 1955 he retired from the firm to which he had rendered great services, which were much appreciated.

* * *

In this sad hour of taking leave from the dear departed our thoughts go out to his wife and his two sons; foremost to his life's companion, who has for 39 years shared sorrow and joy, and who has nobly played her part in the many duties which his official position entailed.

Although our friend has gone now to a fuller life — alas, much too early — and although he will be sadly missed, there remains the memory of a man who has played his part well, he was a good Swiss, he served his country and his fellow compatriots faithfully, and we who remain behind are proud of him and will always remember him with affection and gratitude.

FAREWELL, DEAR FRIEND!

ST.

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The service which took place at the *Eglise Suisse* on Thursday, July 4th, was conducted by the Rev. C. Reverdin assisted by the Rev. H. Spoerri of the *Schweizerkirche*. Amongst the numerous congregation were the Swiss Ambassador and Madame Daeniker, and Monsieur J. de Tribolet, 1st Counsellor of Embassy.