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SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

The Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Benevolent Society was held at Swiss House on Monday, 22nd March 1965, and was well attended.

In the absence of the Swiss Ambassador, Monsieur B. de Fischer, Hon. President of the Society, prevented by a previous engagement, the Swiss Embassy was represented by its First Counsellor, Monsieur M. Heimo, present also the Swiss Consul, Monsieur E. Tosio.

It was a meeting out of the ordinary and not without a certain sadness inasmuch as it marked the retirement of Mr. F. G. Sommer from the presidency, which he had held since 1954 and which he now felt very reluctantly compelled to give up for reasons of health, age and travelling distance.

In a prepared message, read out by Monsieur Heimo, the Swiss Ambassador conveyed to Mr. Sommer his and the Federal Authorities' great regret at his relinquishing his distinguished and devoted activity, adding that he had served the community and taken a leading part in the creation and establishment of the Swiss Hostel for Girls. With words of appreciation also to Mrs. Sommer, the Ambassador expressed thanks to Mr. Sommer and best wishes for a happy retirement. These sentiments were echoed by Monsieur Heimo and by the assembled members of the society. On Mr. Speckert's proposal, Mr. Sommer was acclaimed Hon. Vice-President of the society in recognition of his great services.

Mr. Xavier Speckert, hitherto one of the society's three Vice-Presidents, was unanimously elected to succeed Mr. Sommer as President. To fill up the vacancy created by Mr. Speckert's elevation to the presidency, Mr. M. Schneebeli, Sub-Manager of the Swiss Bank Corporation and member of the General Committee, was unanimously elected a Vice-President.

The various committees were all re-elected for a further term of office and Mr. L. S. R. Asch, who for some time had taken an active interest in the society's work, was elected a member of the General Committee.

Outstanding in the annual accounts for 1964, presented by the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. M. A. Rothlisberger, as reflecting the usual unchanged relief activity of the society, was the sad fact of the continuing and mounting deficit (£4,971 last year). The prospect of ever diminishing assets and ultimate danger of impairment of the society's aims was a matter of the gravest concern to the Executive Committee. Admittedly, a large part of this deficit had arisen from exceptional and unavoidable maintenance and renovation work during the last few years and extending yet — though it is hoped finally — into 1965 at the society's premises at 9-11 Belsize Grove leased to the Swiss Hostel for Girls. This additional heavy burden on the society's funds had induced a welcome gesture of help by the Federal Authorities in the shape of a small exceptional supplement this year to their last year's increased subsidy. Nevertheless, a not inconsiderable part of the deficit remained directly attributable to the yawning gap between Income and Payments on the society's traditional workings.

This unfortunate situation prompted both the retiring President, Mr. Sommer, and the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Rothlisberger, to make a strong appeal at the meeting for greater financial help. Many subscribers, they said, had answered earlier calls by the society for more realistic support, in line with a changed economy, but a wider response was now urgently needed from the colony.

S.B.S.



J. C. WETTER,
President,
Swiss Rifle Association.

SWISS RIFLE ASSOCIATION

Annual General Meeting

The months of March and April are the months when almost all of the Swiss Societies and Institutions render the accounts of their activities during the past twelve months.

There is little change to report about these meetings which take place; they follow an almost stereotype pattern. The respective presidents or chairmen render a survey of the activities of their societies or institutions, the treasurers announce either a surplus or a deficit (mostly a deficit) which, however, nobody seems to take very seriously, and finally thanks for services rendered are generously handed out to the various officers in charge.

The Swiss Rifle Association (founded in 1923) held its Annual General Meeting on Friday, April 2nd, at the Glendower Hotel, Glendower Place, S.W.7.

Mr. J. C. Wetter was in the Chair, and there were about twenty members present (the smallness of the attendance was due to illness, absence from London, and a Meeting of another Swiss Society taking place the same evening). Mr. F. Magnin, Hon. Secretary, read the minutes of the last General Meeting, and Mr. H. Straub, Hon. Treasurer, presented and explained the accounts which close with a small deficit.

The President gave a survey of the activities of the Association during the past year. He stated that by the end of 1964, the Association numbered seventy-eight active members. Seven shooting practices were held at Bisley during the year, and 4,880 rounds of ammunition were used (1963: 6,130). This decrease is due to the fact that in 1963, the members went through intensive training for the Federal Shooting Competition in Zurich.

According to the presidential report there will be eight meetings at Bisley in 1965, namely 25th April, 9th and 23rd May, 13th and 27th June, 29th August, 12th September and 3rd of October. In 1964 medals have been won in the following competitions:

Zürcher Kantonal-Spezialstich competitors: Peter Fischer, 56 points; Marcel Bucherer, 55 points; Lucien Jobin, 54 points; Jack Wetter, 52 points.

Fernwettsschiessen, St. Gallen, competitors: Marcel Bucherer, 90 points; Peter Fischer, 89 points; Lucien Jobin, 77 points.

The President informed the Meeting that the old committee was prepared to carry on, and it was re-elected *en bloc*. Mr. A. Stauffer was confirmed as Press-Reporter of the Association. Mr. J. C. Wetter warmly thanked his

colleagues on the committee for the support they had so spontaneously given him during his year of office. Mr. O. Grob, who acted as president *pro tem* during the elections, thanked the outgoing committee for the sterling work they had rendered. A hearty vote of thanks to the committee was proposed by Mr. Adolf Schmid. This concluded the Meeting.

The members then adjourned for an excellent dinner, and were joined by H.E. the Swiss Ambassador, Monsieur Beat von Fischer, to whom the president extended a hearty welcome.

*A. Stauffer,
Press Reporter, S.R.A.*

"SWISS SECURITY IN THE NUCLEAR AGE"

How is Switzerland's security affected by the development of ever more terrible weapons of destruction? How is our home country adapting its defence arrangements and policy to the new and ever changing world situation? These agonising questions, uppermost in our patriotic hearts, will be discussed and answered at the next Open Meeting of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique (details see advert.) by a highly qualified Swiss speaker, Dr. Kurt Gasteyger, Director of Programmes, Institute for Strategic Studies (London). Formerly an official lecturer to the United Nations at Geneva, he has taken up this important post in London at the internationally famed Institute, directing its programs of strategic studies, only a few months ago. Let us give him a rousing welcome in our Colony — assured as we are of a most interesting evening.

E.

PERSONAL

The City Press carried an announcement on Monday, 12th April, that the Directors of Messrs. Erwin Brecher & Co., Merchant Bankers, have appointed Mr. Hermann Knoll, senior Manager of the Swiss Bank Corporation in London for ten years until his recent retirement, as full-time Executive Chairman. We wish Mr. Knoll every success in his new activities.

ANGLO-SWISS SOCIETY AND SWISS CLUB (SCHWEIZERBUND)

The reports of the Dinner of the Anglo-Swiss Society on 5th April and of the A.G.M. and Dinner of the Swiss Club (Schweizerbund) will appear in the next issue.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We wish to thank the following subscribers for sending donations above their subscriptions and for taking out or renewing gift subscriptions: Madame Sophie Wyss, Monsieur G. Franel and Messrs. F. Delaloye, G. P. Edwards, G. Friberg, C. A. Fuchs, A. J. Gomiero, F. Heller, E. Hofstetter, H. Humbel, P. E. Lequint, L. L. Portmann, R. R. Schmid, H. W. Schneider, E. F. Schwenker, H. Tanner (Thalwil), C. E. Weber (California U.S.A.), A. Wirz. We are most grateful for their kind and welcome support.

"THE FORTRESS OF PEACE"

Expo Defence Film in London

In the sector "Vigilant Switzerland" at the Swiss National Exhibition last year, a film was shown about Switzerland's defence. This film has now been given a new introduction with a touristic slant, but is otherwise shown in its original form. It will be running for a few weeks as "The Fortress of Peace", together with another film, at the Royalty Cinerama Theatre in Kingsway, London.

THE "SWISS OBSERVER" THIRTY YEARS AGO

The issue of 6th April 1935 carried an extensive illustrated report on "The Achievements of two Juras-siens" Messrs. R. Marchand and L. Jobin. There were over two pages (twice today's size!) of reporting on the Foyer Suisse in Bloomsbury, including five huge photos. An article by Dr. Schindler "England — a Model?" was published in that and subsequent issues, to be followed by readers' opinions.

On 13th April we read that the new Federal Councilor was Mr. H. Obrecht. One and a half pages were dedicated to the Dinner and Ball of the Unione Ticinese at Pagani's under Mr. O. Gambazzi's chairmanship. The Davos Ice Hockey Club had been playing in London several times.

On 20th April we heard that the new President of the City Swiss Club was to be Mr. J. Billeter in succession to Mr. H. Senn. At the A.G.M. of the Gymnastic Society it was decided to revive the ladies section (under the leadership of Miss H. Deloff) and the veterans' group (under Mr. A. Isenschmidt). At that time Mr. J. Christen was President and Mr. H. Knoll leader of the Society. The Swiss Salvation Army Band had visited England, and Sir Arnold Theiler, eminent veterinary surgeon, had received an honorary degree of Dr. of Science in South Africa. There was an article by Dr. Gerhard Schürch (*at present at the head of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad and Chairman of the Commission*) "Auslandsschweizer in Gefahr — Ihre Probleme-Unsere Aufgaben".

The last issue of the month carried an interesting report on the lecture by the famous Swiss pilot Walter Mittelholzer, arranged by City Swiss Club, Swiss Mercantile Society and Nouvelle Société Helvétique.

Nouvelle Société Helvétique London Group

Thursday, 13th May, at 7.45 p.m., at
Swiss Hostel for Girls,
9/11, Belsize Grove, N.W.3

OPEN MEETING

Talk in English by Dr. KURT GASTEYGER
on

"SWISS SECURITY IN THE NUCLEAR AGE"

All Swiss and Friends are Welcome