

Swiss Benevolent Society

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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

Report for the Year 1965

In this our 96th Annual Report, we are giving you as usual a survey of our society's activities during the year 1965 for the relief of compatriots in need in London, in the South of England and in those parts of the Midlands within the consular district of the metropolis. This is to say that our helping hand stretched from London to Deal and Ramsgate in the South East, to Bournemouth and Torquay in the South West, then on to Bath, Birmingham and many other places including, of course, all London districts and the Home Counties.

290 people in all were assisted by us, comprising 32 couples with 33 children, 65 widows and widowers with 12 children, 70 lone women and 46 lone men, compared with a total of 274 in 1964. We granted 346 interviews and dealt with 2,425 applications.

The number of pensioners, i.e. people in receipt of a regular weekly grant from us, changed very little. We lost 11 through death and elected 7 new ones during the twelve months under review, the total number on our books at the end of the year being down 4 to 64. Thus, in all, 75 pensioners received assistance from us compared with 71 in 1964.

Our basic rates of assistance, exclusive of allowance for rent which is additional, were raised on the 5th April 1965 from 66/- to 78/6 a week for a single person and from 107/- to 128/- a week for a couple, following corresponding increases in National Assistance Board grants.

TOTAL RELIEF PAID, including casual relief, children's holidays in Switzerland under the "Pro Juventute" scheme (3), grants to aged compatriots towards holiday and convalescence at the seaside or in the country (4), repatriations (14) and our contribution to the Welfare Office for Swiss Girls in Great Britain, amounted to £6,199 as against £6,225 in 1964.

Under the care of the committee of the "Home for Aged Swiss", 4 elderly compatriots were maintained in homes in London.

Regular pocket money allowances were made to 11 patients of Swiss nationality in homes for nervous diseases in England.

Unfortunately, our accounts ended again in a heavy deficit:—

	1965		1964
PAYMENTS	£14,013	...	£13,911
RECEIPTS	£9,640	...	£8,940
DEFICIT:	£4,373	...	£4,971

Whereas administrative expenses and our outlays for our premises at 31 Conway Street show little difference from year to year, maintenance of our premises at 9-11 Belsize Grove leased to the Swiss Hostel for Girls cost us for the second year in succession over £4,000 in major structural repairs rendering necessary through dry rot. However, this trouble has now been dealt with by a firm of experts in conjunction with our architects and the guarantee we hold should give us adequate protection for the future.

In view of this situation, the Swiss Authorities had increased their subsidy for 1964, paid in 1965, from 8,000

to 9,000 Swiss Francs and we are glad to say that they have maintained it at the same figure for the current year. We wish to record here our grateful appreciation of the Federal and Cantonal help.

Subscriptions and donations showed a welcome increase thanks to the gifts of £200 from the City Swiss Club 100th Annual Banquet and Ball 1965 and £106 from the Société Culinaire Suisse which closed down years ago and whose remaining dormant funds were lately made over to us. Donations "In Memory" of departed friends contributed handsomely too, a gesture which is deeply appreciated by us.

From the end of September 1964, the rent received from the Swiss Hostel for girls for 9-11 Belsize Grove has gone up from £1,500 to £2,000 per annum under the renewal lease negotiated with them. From the economic point of view, this means that our society is still making an appreciable contribution towards this welfare institution of the Colony, even after allowance is made for a possible supplementary payment by the Hostel depending on certain contingencies.

Since a number of years we are helping compatriots here in receipt of the Swiss Old Age Pension (AHV/AVS) by handling this benefit for them and paying it out on a weekly basis. Some 25 recipients have found it convenient to take advantage of this service.

Our CLOTHING DEPARTMENT has been very active as usual, dispensing garments, shoes, hats and other articles for wear and for the household, besides food. For Christmas 117 parcels were distributed benefiting 132 people. We take this opportunity of expressing anew our sincere gratitude to all donors, *Frauenverein, Réunion de Couture*, firms and individuals for their very helpful gifts towards this action.

GUARANTEED CONTRIBUTIONS UNDER DEED OF COVENANT went up by £20 to £817 in 1965 and the tax refund, based on figures for 1964 (up £90 on those of 1963), rose £56 to £499. We commend this form of subscription, which brings us valuable additional benefit at no extra cost to the subscriber.

The ADMINISTRATION of the society's affairs is vested in the Executive Committee, who meet normally on the second and fourth Monday of the month at 31 Conway Street to hear the secretary's report and to take decisions on all matters of importance, the day-to-day business being in the hands of the secretary, Mr. Jules Zimmermann, assisted by our collaborator, Mr. Walter Ziereisen. Our thanks go to both of them for their faithful services.

Special thanks are due also to Mr. and Mrs. Ziereisen for the care they take of our Clothing Service during the year and bear the brunt of our Christmas Action. Our gratitude goes too to Mrs. Raulin, Madame Tosio, and Mrs. Bachofen for their kind co-operation on this occasion, not forgetting the help which Mrs. Bachofen so willingly gives us with transport whenever it is needed.

We are always very glad to see Monsieur F. Ansermoz and Consul E. Tosio attend our Monday meetings regularly in turn and we are grateful to them for preserving a very

useful close contact between the Swiss Embassy and our society.

At our Annual General Meeting on the 18th April 1966, Mr. Koch, of the Swiss Embassy, and Mr. Katz, of the Swiss Bank Corporation, were elected as our new Honorary Auditors in the places of Mr. Stauch (Swiss Embassy) due for transfer to another post abroad and of Mr. Simon (Swiss Bank Corporation) who is moving out of London. We wish to record here our appreciation of their services and to welcome their successors.

By common consent, the Committee of the "Home for Aged Swiss" has ceased as a separate entity and its members have joined our General Committee. It will be recalled that the Home as such had to be evacuated in 1940 because of the air raids on the metropolis during the second world war and it has not been re-opened. Elderly compatriots prefer to stay where they are, with financial assistance from us, and the few who are no longer able to fend for themselves are placed by us in suitable homes, as the case may be.

Our society has joined the recently created Federation of Swiss Societies in Great Britain.

In view of our close association with the Welfare Office for Swiss Girls in Great Britain, opened in 1950 under the auspices of the Swiss Embassy in London, the "Amies de la Jeune Fille", the "Katholischer Mädchenschutzverein", both of Switzerland, and our society, we are represented on its committee by our secretary, Mr. Jules Zimmermann, who is one of their two Vice-Presidents.

In CONCLUSION, we wish to state once again that our aims are to assist Swiss citizens temporarily or permanently resident within the consular district of London who are in need of help. All cases brought to our notice are considered with every sympathy.

We offer our grateful thanks to the Federal, Cantonal and Municipal Authorities at home, the Swiss Embassy, the Swiss Churches, the Swiss Societies, and all our subscribers, firms and individuals, for their great kindness and generosity in support of our endeavours. We hope that we may count on their continued practical goodwill in order that we may carry on with success the great relief work entrusted to us.

We are indebted too to the "Swiss Observer" for the free publicity they give us.

And last but not least, may we express thanks to the British Authorities for the kind hospitality we enjoy in this country.

On behalf of the Committee:
X. SPECKERT, *President*.

Nouvelle Société Helvétique

London Group

Monday, 26th September, 1966,

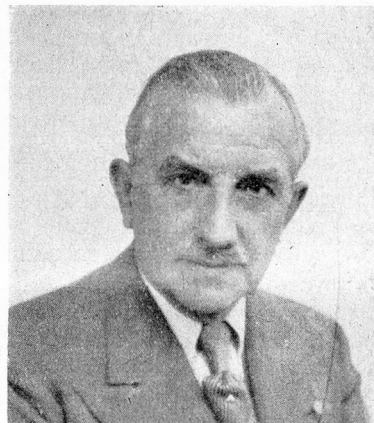
at 6.45 for 7.15 p.m.,

at Swiss Hostel for Girls, 9 Belsize Grove, N.W.3.

GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATION

with recital by Albert Ferber.

Details see members' circular. Owing to limited accommodation only members' bookings for themselves and personal friends can be accepted for the Dinner.



CARLO CHAPUIS 85

One of the best known personalities of the Swiss Colony will be celebrating his 85th birthday on 24th September: Mr. Charles L. Chapuis, of "Ya Mieux", 3 Broomhills Road, West Mersea, Essex.

Born in Lausanne, young Carlo, an orphan, came to England at the age of ten with his brother Louis in December 1891. When he left school four years later, he started his business career in the firm of his uncle H. Comoy, pioneer of the Briar Pipe Industry in England. By hard work, he rose to the top and became a Director of that firm of which his late brother Louis was Chairman and Managing Director.

Carlo has always taken a great interest in the work of the Swiss community. He served on many committees where his wise counsel was much appreciated. In 1911, he joined the City Swiss Club of which he was President in 1930. Three years earlier, he had joined the Swiss Mercantile Society where he rendered valuable services in various capacities, and he was elected an Honorary Member in 1918, a distinction well deserved.

Mr. Chapuis is an ardent Freemason and Past Master of the Helvetica Lodge, and he is a founder member of the Finsbury Rotary Club.

He also gave his services freely to a number of British organisations, such as the National Savings Movement, Air Training Corps Committee and the Advisory Committee and the Advisory Board of the Ministry of Labour. He was awarded the British Red Cross Medal after the first world war.

In 1917, he married a compatriot of his, a cheerful and attractive young Vaudoise. Germaine and Carlo have been an extremely happy couple, and it is to both of them that their friends extend heartfelt wishes on the great day. May they be blessed with good health and many more years of contentment.

Many happy returns, Carlo!

BIRTHDAYS

The following special birthdays will take place within the next few days:

12th September: Mrs. Th. Ritter (91), 15th September: Mr. H. Kriesi (77), 23rd September: Mr. W. B. Sigerist (75). We extend our best wishes to these friends and any others of whose birthdays we are not aware.