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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

TO SWISS LIVING IN AND AROUND CHELTENHAM

With the formation of a Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom it was felt that it would be helpful to have a Swiss Society in the area which would be affiliated to the Federation and thus officially represented.

To find out if there is a desire and enough interest to form and support a society, it is proposed to arrange a meeting to discuss the matter.

Would those interested kindly send their names and addresses to

Mr. A. P. Wallimann,
Savoy Hotel, Bayhill, Cheltenham;
or Mr. J. Brunner,
The Firs, Ashley Road, Battledown, Cheltenham.

ANNETTE WEISBROD AT THE WIGMORE HALL

I believe the first public appearance of Miss Annette Weisbrod in London was when she played to the Swiss Colony at their "Fête Suisse" in 1960. She was then barely in her 'twenties, and the impression she left behind was that of great talent, much enthusiasm and dedication, as well as modesty and charm.

Soon afterwards, she gave her first recital at the Wigmore Hall, and that, too, was extremely well received. Miss Weisbrod also gave a recital at a City Swiss Club *Soirée Familiale*, and since then news of her success in this country and abroad has steadily come in.

Annette Weisbrod was born in Blackburn of Swiss parents and began to play the piano at the age of four. Most of her musical training she received in Switzerland, and she was awarded the Concert Diploma in 1961, playing the Ravel Concerto in G major with the Basle Symphony Orchestra under Paul Sacher.

The programme of her latest recital at the Wigmore Hall on 28th March would have been no sinecure for many a more experienced artist than Miss Weisbrod. To open a concert with Bartok's "Six Dances in Bulgarian Rhythm" (Mikrokosmos, Book VI) needs courage, for he is not an easy composer to warm up with. Personally, at the best of times, I can enjoy him with my intellect only, but not with my heart. Ravel's "Miroirs" which followed Bartok, touched me more; "The Times" critic said that Miss Weisbrod had "served the music faithfully, but without the brilliance that is needed by the protective surface of the composer's emotional world". If brilliance was lacking, it was more than made up, for me at any rate, by the youthful sincerity and complete application with which Miss Weisbrod played the French master.

My patriotic side was particularly pleased that three pieces by our Swiss composer Arthur Honegger were included, and I was a little annoyed that some of the critics did not even mention him and Miss Weisbrod's skilful rendering of the very difficult compositions.

The second part of the concert was devoted to Schumann. Experts consider that his "Kreisleriana" demands an interpreter of exceptional qualities. To judge

from the great enjoyment the audience had in general, Miss Weisbrod is no doubt equipped with a good many of these already. Once maturity enables her to expand emotionally, there is no doubt that she will equal many of the great exponents of Schumann's art. His "Toccata" which ended the programme, showed unmistakably that she is already well on the way. I wholly support "The Times" music critic who said that in it she gave her best performance of the evening.

We wish Annette Weisbrod success in her promising career and are looking forward to the treat of hearing her again in the future. MM

OBITUARY

We announce with deep regret the death early in April of MR. JEAN JORDAN, aged 75. For many years he lived in London and was well known in the Swiss Colony, especially in the Catholic Community and the City Swiss Club for whose Centenary Ball, Mr. Jordan came over to London from Switzerland, where he was spending his retirement (Neuchâtel). In his business life, he had been Manager of the Stafford Court Hotel in St. James.

We express our deep sympathy to his sister in her sad bereavement.

* * *

We also announce with deep regret the death of MRS. R. GREENFIELD, *née* Voegelin. She was well known in the Colony when she was in charge of the Union Helvetia Registry Office in Gerrard Place, W.1. She also acted as Secretary of the Union Helvetia Society until it closed down in 1950. Her father had been steward on the ill-fated Titanic and lost his life when the boat sank.

(A.B.)

PERSONAL

We apologize to Mr. Raymond Chappuis for two errors which appeared in the birthday wishes published on 25th March. He was born on 17th (not 13th March) 1896 and came to London in December 1919 (not 1920). We can assure Mr. Chappuis that the mistakes did not weaken our good wishes.

BIRTHDAYS IN MAY

6th May: Mrs. J. Unden (78); 8th May: Mr. Ph. Schmid-Ruedin (77); 24th May: Mr. W. Schedler. We extend our best wishes to these readers of the "Swiss Observer" and to any others whose birthdays are not known to us.

A special message of good wishes is sent to Mr. and Mrs. Gustave Friberg, of 255 Kennington Road, London S.E.11, Mrs. Friberg celebrated her 72nd birthday in February, and Mr. Friberg will be 75 on 15th May. Many happy returns!