

SWiss Mercantile Society

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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

CITY SWISS CLUB

Annual Banquet and Ball

On Friday, 24th November, the City Swiss Club in collaboration with the Swiss Economic Council held its 102nd Annual Banquet and Ball at the Dorchester Hotel.

Although the response had not been as good as last year, the beautiful ballroom of the Dorchester was comfortably filled. The members of the Club and their friends and guests enjoyed a really delicious dinner, and as a little incentive before dinner, there was a free bottle of wine on each table for which the guests drew lots. This surely was a very welcome surprise for the winners at each table.

After the loyal toasts had been presented, the President of the City Swiss Club, Mr. Carl Nater welcomed the guests, in particular H.E. The Swiss Ambassador to the Court of St. James's, Monsieur Olivier Long and Madame Long. He also extended his warmest welcome to the Guests of Honour, Lord and Lady Wakefield of Kendal. Lord Wakefield has, of course, very close associations with our home country and it also President to the Ski Club of Great Britain, an organisation which has contributed a tremendous amount to popularise Switzerland and the Alps, particularly during the ski-ing season. Mr. Nater also mentioned that the proceeds from the Tombola which was held later in the evening were going to the Swiss Benevolent Fund and to the Swiss Churches in London, which surely must have made it easier for many unlucky ticket buyers.

Monsieur Olivier Long then spoke of the close ties that exist between the U.K. and Switzerland and I am sure he spoke from our hearts when he said that the worldwide relations which Britain enjoyed would be a great asset to any combination of the European Community that exists or may come into existence over the next few years.

Lord Wakefield of Kendal then thanked the C.S.C. for the invitation which they had extended to him and his wife and said that he truly regarded our country as his second home. He also said that both countries had so much in common, not least the fact that we were both in an "island situation", which he said accounted for the fact that we often thought in the same line on important world problems.

After Lord Kendal's speech we were entertained by Arthur Salisbury and his Orchestra and by the charming ladies of the Ivy Colman Carnivalettes. The dance floor was never empty after that, and the Tombola which was held at midnight produced some wonderful prizes for the lucky winners. Amongst many valuable things there were a lady's gold bracelet as the first prize and a gentleman's Omega gold watch as a second prize.

After that dancing continued until 2 a.m. We all thought it was a really wonderful ball, and our sincerest thanks go to the organisers who did a marvellous job.

RG.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

There was a good attendance at the Monthly Meeting of the Society, held at Swiss House on Wednesday, 8th November. The Chairman, Mr. A. Jaccard, announced that no fewer than three members, namely Messrs. J. J. Boos, Hon. Member and Trustee, W. Pellet and H. H. Baumann, were celebrating their 80th birthday within the space of one month, and offered all of them heartiest congratulations and best wishes for continued good health and many more years of happy retirement.

Following the official proceedings, Mr. John Weibel, a member of the Committee, gave a most interesting talk on "Numismatics".

During the many years he has indulged in his favourite hobby, Mr. Weibel acquired an expert knowledge of the subject and is today a Fellow of the Royal Numismatic Society, a Council member of the British Numismatic Society as well as a Committee member of the London Numismatic Club and of the Swiss Numismatic Society.

Giving a broad outline of the subject of his talk, he stated that the term numismatic did not simply imply collecting and amassing coins. It embraced a large field of study, including history, in the dating of finds, heraldry with coats of arms and metallurgy in determining whether precious coins were genuine or counterfeit. A host of other angles came into it in ascertaining the origin and period of specie, including geography, religion, geology in the study of the origin of metals, whilst zoology played a role with animals which no longer existed. Etymology was also useful to the numismatist in the study of names; thus "sterling" derived from Easterling, coins made by artists from the East, "penny" from denarius, a Roman coin, while "dollar" was a corruption of the German "Thaler", which in turn had its origin in Joachimsthal.

Whilst a lot of parallels could be drawn with philately, the great difference from numismatics lay in the question of storage, which in the case of coins took up a great deal of space.

In view of the values involved, it was, however, necessary for both numismatists and philatelists to deposit their collections with a bank, which often prevented the owner from being able to browse through his treasures.

Mr. Weibel showed a series of slides, depicting superb coins back to the Greek and Roman eras, from which, as well as his interesting comments, the audience could gain an even clearer picture of the immense field which had to be covered in the history of coins.

He also displayed coins of 22 Swiss cantons with their coats of arms, which attracted the close attention of all present. He further showed a set of Swiss Talers as well as a piece of eight and other items of special interest.

The Chairman, on behalf of all present, expressed thanks to Mr. Weibel for having provided a most interesting and instructive evening.

W.B.

IN MEMORIAM

In loving memory of my beloved Husband Frank Seiz who died on 26th December 1964.

Loved and remembered always.

His wife Kathleen.

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