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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

SWISS CLUB MANCHESTER

The Manchester Swiss Club met again at the Cottons Hotel Knutsford for the much-cherished 1st August Celebration. The event attracts more people with each successive year, and nearly 300 attended this traditional event. For many years, our Committees have tried to widen the circle of compatriots and friends and it was gratifying to see so many Clubs represented at this eminently national affair. The *Zuzug* from the Yorkshire Swiss Club was considerable, along with the Liverpool Swiss Club and some friends from Edinburgh who had come a long way to pass these few hours with us. Again we were pleased to welcome our Consul and Madame Brunner, both of whom show so much sincere attachment to us. The absence of "Madame la Presidente" was very much regretted by us all and we sincerely hope that she will soon be amongst us again, and our very warm wishes go to her for a quick and complete recovery.

To this year's function particularly great interest and sparkle was given by the presence of the "Yodler Club Niederlenz" and the "Ländler-Kapelle Zoge am Boge", the result of contacts with their Leader Dr. E. Wydler, through the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad in Berne. Dr. Wydler, an E.T.H. Zurich Pharmacist, is a well-known personality who had always an interest in the Folklore Music and became a member of the International Folk Music Council in London, having taken part in the International Eisteddfod at Llangollen some years ago. This Swiss Group comes from the area of the Hallwilersee in the Canton of Aargau.

Compatriots and their many friends assembled around the *apéritifs*, in friendly and lively conversation until our active and energetic Hon. Secretary, Mr. Simon, ushered us to the tables, seat accommodation being almost at a premium. There we enjoyed a really good and true Swiss meal, consisting in the main of outsize *Schueblig* very artistically bedded in salad and generously accompanied by an excellent white Swiss vintage wine. This was followed by a well-chosen sweet of which some of us surreptitiously enjoyed an additional portion, followed by a good coffee.

The official programme was very ably opened by our President, Dr. Jaggi, who in his own inimitable way welcomed everybody present, mentioning in a special way our Consul and Madame Brunner, our many English friends who are now annual visitors, such as Major E. Nicholson, President of the Manchester Rifle Club, just back with treasured cups from the Bisley competition and a close friend of the Geneva "Arquebuse" and then our star guests from Switzerland led by Dr. Wydler, whose *Yodler-Club* and *Ländler Kapelle* entertained us the whole evening with folksongs and music, creating thus a most friendly atmosphere and *Heimat-Stimmung* which might have given us a strong impression of being in Switzerland. Our President explained to us the meaning of this 1st of August after which he asked our Consul to address us.

This he did, in the three main languages of our country, earning our main applause when he spoke in Italian, which proves again how much we love and cherish the minorities amongst us. He expressed his pleasure at seeing so many compatriots and friends of Switzerland at this celebration. He passed on the best wishes of the Swiss Ambassador in London and thanked the Committee

of the Swiss Club for the careful organisation of the meeting, and the Swiss musicians for having come to Manchester to entertain us with their songs and music. He then stressed that our nationality was a precious inheritance and that every citizen may contribute, by his fidelity and his activity, to safeguard and develop the prosperity of our country and to show a favourable image of Switzerland abroad. He referred to signs of unrest in our country and pointed out that the big majority of our population is convinced that only clean ways of democratic procedure can lead to a harmonious development of our institutions.

His words were warmly applauded and we could sit back again and finish what had to be finished but not before having been presented by a brand-new edition of "Die Weltwoche" for the Swiss abroad, handed to us by a most accomplished and well dressed *Zeitungs-Verkäufer*, as we know them in any small town; it was difficult to believe that under this superbly disguised person was our beloved Secretary. If he had not already a job, any newspaper organisation may have been tempted to offer him one.

Leaving our tables we assembled in the open, around a huge bonfire, to us a symbol of freedom and to be entertained by a well organised display of fireworks. Our Hallwilersee Yodellers led the singing and never has our National Anthem "Tritts im Morgenrot daher" been sung so faultlessly and enthusiastically. This short outdoor-intermezzo was concluded with other well-known and loved songs from home, all this under a most impressive and star-studded sky. Gradually we re-assembled in the hospitable rooms of our lovely hotel and invited by the irresistible tunes of our *Ländler Kapelle* old and young, mostly young, danced until late into the night, helped along by a continuous supply of refreshments. The writer shall never know how long, because he had eventually to leave on the long trek to his Yorkshire hills, hours away. As he will, certainly many others also will treasure the impressions of this evening and coupled with thanks to our active and enterprising Committee hoping that soon again a similar event may be organised for them, and this not in the too distant future.

* * *

The numerous Swiss Group consisting of the "Yodler-Club Niederlenz" and the "Ländler Kapelle Zoge am Boge" led by Dr. W. Wydler had quite a busy time with us in the North of England. Before our function at Knutsford, they visited the Clayton Anilin Company Limited where they had lunch, and in the afternoon they were entertained in the Bramhall residence of our Consul Monsieur Brunner. The day after, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Themans and by our Vice-Consul and Madame Zellweger they chose the lovely County of Yorkshire, visiting the Sandoz-Works at Horsforth near Leeds, conducted by Mr. A. D. Ferns and Mr. R. Mueller, after which they had lunch at the Craiglands Hotel at Ilkley. On the return journey, they could admire the famous ruins of Bolton Abbey and reach Manchester via Keighly, Hebden Bridge (the place of our *Landsgemeinde*), Todmorden and Littleborough. We hope that our dear friends from Switzerland enjoyed their stay with us and may remember us in the years to come, knowing that also in distant lands they can always find a little Switzerland and warm-hearted friends.

E.B.