

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1970)

Heft: 1590

Rubrik: The Swiss Observer 30 years ago

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 17.01.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

NEWS FROM THE COLONY



Mr. Max Keller

PROMOTION FOR SWISSAIR'S GENERAL MANAGER FOR U.K. AND IRELAND

Swissair has decided to bring Europe into line with the regional management structure in effect in other continents by establishing a separate general management for Europe located in Geneva. It will be headed by Mr. Max A. Keller, who has been appointed general manager, Europe, from May 1. Mr. Keller, who for the past ten years has been the airline's general manager for U.K. and Ireland, will be succeeded in his present position on April 1 by Mr. Franz Fraefel, currently passenger sales manager at Swissair's Zurich head office.



Mr. Franz Fraefel

In his new function Mr. Keller will be responsible for the company's business in all countries of Europe except Switzerland, which is administered by separate local managements, and Greece, which comes under the general manager, Middle East.

Mr. Keller has been with Swissair since 1946, and from 1948 to 1954 was

manager for Belgium and district manager, Dusseldorf. After a short period at head office he was appointed sales manager for U.K. and Ireland in July, 1956 and promoted to general manager for U.K. and Ireland on January 1, 1960. He is 46, married, with two boys.

Mr. Keller was very active in the Swiss community in the U.K. He was one of the initiators of London's Swiss Centre and is a Board member of Swiss Centre Ltd., the company administering it. He was president of the City Swiss Club in 1963/64, and is at present Vice-President of the Swiss Hostel, London, and Secretary of the Swiss Economic Council for the U.K.

Mr. Fraefel joined Swissair in 1947 and was in the U.K. from November, 1950 to March, 1957, first in London as chief accountant and from 1953 to 1957 as district manager for the North of England in Manchester. In the following four years he was district manager, Calcutta, and from 1961 to 1965 Swissair's manager for India and Ceylon in Bombay. He took up his present head office post early in 1965. He is 45, married, with two children.

THE SWISS OBSERVER 30 YEARS AGO

Browsing over the Swiss Observers published in the first three months of 1940, one realises that the war had badly perturbed the life of the Colony. Although the meetings of the City Swiss Club, the Nouvelle Société Helvétique and the Swiss Mercantile Society were still faithfully held, many of the members had been called back to Switzerland and attendance at the meetings had therefore diminished. The January meeting of the City Swiss Club hadn't been publicised (an experimental suggestion) and very few people turned up. Due to this lack of representation, an important topic, the investment policy of the Club, was deferred to a later meeting. The Club met again in February, and heard Mr. P. B. Tustin speak on the subject of "Food and Health". It was decided at this meeting to invite the new Swiss Minister. Monsieur Walter Thurnheer, who was succeeding to Monsieur Paravicini, should be invited as guest of honour to the following one in March. Members turned up in exceptionally great numbers at that meeting, which was held as usual at Pagani's restaurant. The dinner was excellent and concluded by two speeches, a welcoming address by Mr. Louis Chapuis, the President, and a deeply-felt answer by the Minister. Monsieur Thurnheer was elected Honorary President at the meeting which followed the dinner. £100 was voted to the fund of the poor Swiss of London. The evening ended with a patriotic sing-song and a Ministerial hand-shake to everybody.

The Nouvelle Société Helvétique held, as usual, its Annual General Meeting in January. Mr. A. Fred Suter was re-elected as President of the Society. He conducted the proceedings, addressed the meeting and proposed to send a letter of thanks and good wishes to Monsieur Charles Paravicini, who had sent a kind letter of farewell to the Society. When business proceedings were over, Captain Bernard W. Sigerist made an exposé of his "Recent Experiences with the Swiss Army", dwelling on the new weapons recently introduced in the field and, in spite of the technicality of his conference, managed to capture the keen interest of his audience. The Nouvelle Société Helvétique met again in February at Swiss House, but there is unfortunately no record of the event. In March, members could participate in a "causerie" on "Things in General", directed by Mr. Henry C. Balser.

At its January meeting, the Swiss Mercantile Society heard a highly interesting and amusing talk by one of its members, Mr. B. St. Regensburger, on his holiday spent riding through Ireland on horse-back. The Annual General Meeting was held as usual in February and the details of the proceedings were faithfully reported in the Swiss Observer by Mr. Walter Burren. The constitution of the Council for the financial year 1940 was as follows: Mr. J. J. Boos, Chairman; Mr. W. Meier, Vice-Chairman; Messrs. R. Chappuis, Ch. Chapuis, G. E. De Brunner (Trustee), O. Grob, E. Hardmeier, M. Heilingner, G. Jenne, L. W. Krucker, J. J. Pfaendler, A. C. Stahelin, A. Steinmann. The March meeting was unfortunately not recorded in the Swiss Observer.

Other Societies to have met at that period were the "Schweizerbund", which held its Annual Dinner and Ball on April 19th, the Union Helvetica Club which organised its Old Friends Dinner and Dance on March 28th. The Swiss Benevolent Society held its Annual General Meeting on 27th January. Mr. A. C. Nussbaumer, returning to Switzerland, resigned as President and left his post to Mr. Anton Bon, who was unanimously elected. The following officers were appointed for 1940: Vice-Presidents: Messrs. Baume, Gambazzi and Gamper; as Stewards: Messrs. de Cintra and A. Rueff; as Hon. Treasurer: Mr. Rothlisberger; as Hon. Assistant Treasurer: Mr. Favre and as Hon. Assistant Secretary: Mr. Hilfiker. The members of the Finance Committee were Messrs. Dr. de Wolff, Gamper and Rothlisberger.

The most important Colony event of the beginning of 1940 was the arrival of the new Swiss Minister, Monsieur Walter Thurnheer. After having known Monsieur Charles Paravicini (the "Paras", as they were affectionately

called) this new arrival meant quite a change!

His first appearance in a Colony function was at the AGM of the Swiss Benevolent Society. Madame Thurnheer visited the Home for the Elderly Swiss on February 3rd and returned a month later. This gesture won her the immediate friendship of the Colony. The new ambassadors of our country were greeted in a festive way by 900 members of the Colony at a reception at the Dorchester Hotel on March 2nd.

At about the same time, the German-speaking half of the Swiss Church in London welcomed its new pastor, Pfarrer Stutz, who made a most moving introductory sermon at St. Anne's Church, Gresham Street, and was welcomed by Pasteur Pradervand.

So much for the life of the Colony. The late Editor, Mr. Alfred Stauffer, was a particularly alert reader of newspapers and managed to reproduce features on Switzerland coming from the most varied sources. The most important Swiss event of the day was the death of Federal Councillor Guiseppe Motta, who had been at the helm of Swiss Foreign Policy for over twenty years. The "Unione Ticinese" took the initiative of celebrating a requiem Mass for the rest of his soul at Westminster Cathedral. It was read by the Rev. A.

Lanfranchi. The Swiss Observer reproduced numerous retrospects of the deceased political leader, one of them came, of all papers, from the "Irish Independent". Leading journalists such as Léon Savary and Pierre Béguin filled many Swiss Observer columns in the past and the Editor visibly favoured the "Tribune de Genève" and the "Gazette de Lausanne". He found interesting articles on Switzerland in such publications as the "Economist", "Lancet", the "Glasgow Herald", the "Financial News" and many other periodicals in English. Arnold Dolmetsch, the celebrated Swiss musician, died in March and the Swiss Observer reproduced obituaries taken from the "Birmingham Post" and the "Catholic Herald".

A French-speaking Swiss, Marcel Pilet-Golaz, succeeded to Guiseppe Motta and this too was the subject of one or two lengthy editorials reproduced in the Swiss Observer. With the war, Swiss neutrality became more than ever a subject of debate and this was reflected by a series of at least four articles on the theme by political specialists, the longest one being a proper thesis on "Neutrality and its Critics" by Emile Cammaerts, taken from the March number of the "Contemporary Review".

A TOUR AT GEIGY'S

The day after my visit to the Clayton Aniline Company (see last issue) was misty and wet. This didn't discourage me from undertaking a long exploration of the centre of Manchester. When my feet were sufficiently worn and soaked, I hailed a taxi on the Piccadilly Pizza, and drove through the interminable sprawl of Manchester on my way to the premises of another important Swiss company in Great Britain.

The headquarters of Geigy (U.K.) Ltd. are in the pleasant Mancunian suburb of Heald Green, next to Manchester Airport. The buildings are very low and sprawl across a garden estate. They are fairly modern (they were bought from the British Rayon Research Association when Geigy moved over from the north of Manchester) and lie near to the Manchester plant of the Ferranti Company.

Mr. B. Simon, President of the Manchester Swiss Club and responsible for employee relations at Geigy's, kindly explained to me how his mammoth company operated.

Geigy employed 26,000 employees all over the world. Its main factories lay in Switzerland, in the USA and in Great Britain. The British Geigy facilities came in third position of importance and were centred at Heald Green, which housed the headquarters of most of the divisions of Geigy U.K. The actual production of Geigy in Great Britain could be divided into five divisions: agricul-

tural chemicals, dyestuffs and textile chemicals, industrial chemicals, pharmaceuticals and pigments. The company employed 3,000 people in Great Britain and, according to the prospectus, made a turnover of approximately £26 million in 1968. The main manufacturing centres were located at Trafford Park and Clayton in the Manchester area, and at Paisley in Scotland and at Macclesfield.

Mr. Simon explained that the bulk of dyestuff production was carried out at the Clayton Aniline Company (which is jointly owned with Ciba and Sandoz) and that Geigy also produced "pigments", which were not the same thing. Dyes are primarily used to colour the surface of threads and tissues whereas pigments are intimately linked to the substances they are intended to colour. Paints, inks and coloured plastics made use of pigments, whose most important factory in the Commonwealth was the Geigy plant at Hawkhead Road, Paisley. Among the so-called "industrial chemicals", Geigy produced the most sophisticated lubricating oils, such as those used in the engines of the "Concorde" airliner.

As we had to go to Bramhall and had about an hour and a half to spend, Mr. Simon suggested a drive towards Wilmslow and have a look at the Toxicology Department of the Pharmaceuticals Division and then drive on to the Hurdfield Estate above Macclesfield, where the ultra-modern pharma-

SWISS CHURCH

SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS: à l'Eglise Suisse, 79 Endell Street, W.C.2, tous les dimanches à 11h15 et 19h00.

SAINTE-CENE: le premier et troisième dimanche du mois, matin et soir.

PERMANENCE: chaque jeudi de 15h00 à 18h00.

REUNION DE QUARTIER: huit veillées en automne et au printemps: voir "Le Messager"

CLUB DES JEUNES: tous les dimanches de 12h00 à 22h30, tous les jeudis de 15h00 à 22h30.

REUNION DE COUTURE: le 2^e mardi du mois.

LUNCH: tous les dimanches à 13h00.

VISITES: sur demande.

PASTEUR: A. Nicod, 7 Park View Road, London N.3. Téléphone 01-346 5281.

* * *

SERVICES IN GERMAN: at Eglise Suisse, 79 Endell Street, W.C.2, at 10 a.m. At St. Ann's Church, Abbey Orchard Street, S.W.1. at 7.30 p.m.

HOLY COMMUNION: every first Sunday of the month at evening service only. On major feasts at morning and evening services.

CONSULTATIONS: every Wednesday 4-6 p.m. at Eglise Suisse.

DISTRICT GROUPS (W.4 and S.E.21) and SERVICES OUTSIDE LONDON: see "Gemeindebote".

SERVICES IN ENGLISH: every fourth Sunday at 7.30 p.m.

"KONTAKT" (Youth Group): every Wednesday 4-10 p.m. at Eglise Suisse. Supper at 6.30 p.m. Programme at 8 p.m.

SWISS Y.M.C.A.: see Forthcoming Events.

WOMEN'S CIRCLE: every first Tuesday of the Month.

MOTHERS' REUNION: 1st Wednesday in the Month, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

VISITS: by request.

MINISTER: Pfr. M. Dietler, 1. Womersley Road, N.8. Telephone 01-340 6018.

SWISS CATHOLIC MISSION: at St. Ann's Church, Abbey Orchard Street (off No. 25 Victoria Street), S.W.1.

SATURDAYS: Ecumenical Service at 6.30 p.m.

SUNDAYS: Holy Mass at 9 and 11 a.m. (in English). At 6.30 p.m. (mostly in German)

CONSULTATIONS AND CONFESSIONS: preferably on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays in the afternoon or by appointment.

SERVICES EN FRANCAIS: Notre Dame de France, 5 Leicester Place, W.C.2. on Suns. at 9, 10, 11 a.m. 12.15, 6, 7 p.m.

SWISS CATHOLIC YOUTH CLUB — Meeting every Sunday after Evening Mass (8-11 p.m.) at Westminster Ball Room, 30 Strutton Ground, S.W.1.

CHAPLAIN: Paul Bossard, St. Ann's Church, Abbey Orchard Street, S.W.1. Tel.: 01-222 2895.