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# NEWS FROM THE COLONY



**MR. ROBERT J. KELLER**  
An active life

Mr. Robert J. Keller has recently been unanimously elected as Hon. President of the Advisory Council of the "Swiss Observer". By creating this new title for him, the Council not only wanted to honour the man who had, during so many years, so ably guided it through difficult periods. It also wanted to keep his name firmly linked to the Colony's publication, whose interests he has always held at heart. Even if he is no longer the active Chairman who presides over the Council's meetings, it is comforting for his successor to know that, if the need arises, he can still approach him for his wise guidance.

Officially Mr. Robert J. Keller lives now, after 43 years of active work in the City of London, in semi-retirement on the shores of Lake Léman. But, of course, those who know him, realise that this is a formula, behind which Mr. Keller is still very active, travelling forward and backward between his new abode of Pully and Nyon, where a firm of investment advisors have been shrewd enough to secure his knowledge and experience. He also keeps a flat in Wentworth and comes over to the United Kingdom from time to time to see his daughter Anna as well as some of his many old friends.

The latter ones are innumerable. No wonder since Mr. Keller has played a very active part in the life of our Colony: as Committee member and Vice-President of the City Swiss Club, as promoter and Vice-President of the Swiss Economic Council, as supporter of the formation of the Institute for Swiss Trade Promotion, as Treasurer of the Eglise Suisse de Londres Bi-Centenary Appeal Fund—to name only some of the offices he has held as well as some of the many services he has rendered to the Colony as a whole.

Robert J. Keller hails from Weinfelden in the Thurgau and his early in-

clinations led him to gain banking experience as well as knowledge of languages in Dietikon, Geneva, Milan, Herisau, Zürich. In May 1927 he came to London and joined a Merchant Bank which soon appointed him Secretary. Another private bank then gave him an executive position: a bank with American and British interests. From 1941 to '43 he was in the USA on behalf of British interests to liquidate and recuperate assets particularly connected with Scottish whisky distilleries. October 1943 saw him back again in the United Kingdom. Thereafter he has acted as Managing Director to Whisky Companies in Northern Ireland and Scotland. Frequent business trips led him, between 1946 and 1953, to the USA and to Canada, but he retired from the whisky business when an American Company took over the Scottish interests.

In Spring 1954 he opened a Representative Office for the *Crédit Suisse* in the City and a new stage in his career began. In 1956 he became a Fellow of the Institute of Bankers. He also represented Continental Banks in London in the Committee of the Overseas Bankers Club and is the Founder Captain of its Golf Society, golf being his main hobby.

Personally I have had two encounters with Robert J. Keller in Switzerland, apart from our numerous London meetings. The first was in Sils in the Engadine, where he spent a holiday in the hotel "Alpenrose", whereas I was in the "Edelweiss". A telephone call from London for "Mr. Keller from London" brought both of us from the dinner table—but, of course, it was meant for him. Another time we met in a hotel in Meyriez, outside Murten, where I spent a night and where, after dinner, we got together. It was also there that I met Mr. Keller's wife whom he so tragically lost some years ago.

The Swiss Observer's Hon. President has led a very active life. It is, no doubt, the sincere wish of all those who know him that he should continue to do so for many years to come. As his successor in the Chair and, I am sure, speaking on behalf of all the members of the Advisory Council, I would like to thank him for all the services he has rendered our publication.

*Gottfried Keller*

## SWISS CATHOLICS IN LONDON

The Annual General Meeting to cover 1969 was held on Sunday, 12th April 1970, at the Clubhouse of the Westminster Youth Club, 48 Gt. Peter Street, S.W.1.

After opening prayers, the Chairman Mr. Oscar Grob, K.S.G., extended a warm welcome to all present. He thanked Mr. J. R. Gächter, Secretary of Swiss Embassy, for having honoured us with his presence representing

the Ambassador and Madame René Keller.

We mourn the loss of Mr. Jean Jacques Boos, K.S.G., who died on the 18th May 1969 in Hove, our much loved and highly esteemed co-Founder and former Chairman. The funeral service was held on 22nd May 1969 at St. Ann's Church followed by the interment at St. Pancras Cemetery, East Finchley.

We are truly indebted to our former Chairman and it is safe to say thanks to his initiative and energy we have the Swiss Catholic Mission in London.

He will always be remembered by all of us as great champion of our cause and we shall treasure his memory very highly indeed.

In recognition of his services to the Church in particular for Swiss Catholics in this country His Holiness Pope John XXIII appointed him a Knight of the Order of St. Gregory the Great.

Further we learned with deep regret of the death on 28th April 1969 of the Rev. Father A. Lanfranchi, our beloved Chaplain from 1942 to 31st December 1959. The funeral service was held on 1st May 1969 in Poschiavo. A Memorial Mass was celebrated by our Chaplain at St. Ann's Church on 4th May 1969.

Prayers were said for the repose of their souls and for all the members who have died since our last AGM.

The Chairman stated in his report that the year 1969 can be recorded again as one of steady progress in the activities of the Swiss Catholic Community, in which both permanent and temporary residents in the Swiss Colony took an active part.

We thank the former Editor of "The Swiss Observer", Mrs. Mariann Meier and Mr. Pierre-Michel Beguin, the present Editor and the publishers for accepting our appeals and reports on our social activities during the year.

The Chaplain, the Rev. Father Paul Bossard said the following in his report:

The more important the vernacular becomes in the Life and the Liturgy of the Church, the more evident is the need for immigrants to have a centre which offers them the service of their Church in their own language until they are integrated into the parish life of the new country. Therefore your Chaplain sees himself simply as a servant to the thousands of Swiss people, especially the youth who live in or come to the United Kingdom and who wish to accept the service of the Church through him. His task is to be available and not to enforce his presence on anybody; to conduct the Divine Service, organise a Social Service and inform people of the facilities offered by himself and also by nearly 300 Catholic parishes in London alone.

## Divine Service

The year 1969 will probably enter history as a milestone for the Swiss Colony, since it has brought the Protestant and the Catholic community very close together. The mutual friendship of the ministers which has existed for quite a time has greatly influenced their communities, resulting in a very close co-operation.

In June our Protestant brethren of the German language again lost their place of worship and gratefully accepted our offer to use St. Ann's Church for their Sunday-evening Service, and afterwards to join our social evening at the Westminster Ballroom. In return they offered us the use of their parish magazine 'Gemeindebote' and changed its name to 'Die Stimme' which means the Voice of both communities. They also offered us the use of their church and church hall, the Eglise Suisse, as far as it was possible and we have gratefully accepted the Wednesday afternoon and evening meetings. With that we have probably become the first community in which Catholics and Protestants use the same church, the same parish magazine and the same social facilities. Once started we could not help but organise a regular ecumenical service each Saturday evening at 6.30 as a preparation for Sunday. As we do not wish to brush away fundamental differences in a superficial way, we have decided to dig to the roots in prayer and obedience to the word of Christ and joyfully expect that He through his Holy Spirit will complete what He has started so well: The final Unity among Christians.

## Social Service

The ecumenical approach in the Divine Service must greatly affect the social service, because they belong together and indeed this has happened. The programme for the Youth Club has become richer and the attendance has greatly increased.

On Sundays the meetings, discussions, excursions and dances provide an increased interest and sometimes we fear a definite lack of room. For Tuesday evening a swimming pool has been booked and afterwards we meet the Westminster Catholic Youth Association at Gt. Peter Street, S.W.1. On Wednesday evening we are invited to the Eglise Suisse to meet the Kontakt-Group of the Protestant community and enjoy the hospitality with lively discussions, filmshows and suppers. On Thursday evenings those interested in photography attend a photo club, make portraits, develop their films and enlarge the pictures. They were able to decorate the new Club hall at the Eglise Suisse with first-class photographs. On Saturday evening, after the ecumenical service we meet at 48 Gt. Peter Street and discuss problems of importance, especially those which affect human life and christian attitude in the world of today.

Our affiliations with the Westminster Cathedral Youth Association opens the door for those young people who wish to join an English youth club and gives them the opportunity to make use of the extensive amenities i.e. club & conference rooms, bar and television.

Thanks to the generosity of Mr. Rhonus of The Dorchester, Mr. Baz-

zani of The Hilton and Mr. Bonvin of the Montana Hotel, the Christmas services with the following parties and social activities were a great success again and helped many young people over the feastdays.

Further the Chaplain has tried to keep his house open and if necessary the church as well for young Swiss people who were in difficulties and it can be said that the hospitality has never been misused. On the contrary boys and girls have made themselves useful in helping wherever it was possible and have even redecorated the house from top to bottom.

I should also mention the former and the present housekeeper, both trained nurses who were a great help and not only cared for the material welfare but gave also many a girl in distress a chance to talk and ask for advice in matters where it is difficult to talk to a man.

## Information

If you have to offer something, people must be informed and there lies the greatest difficulty for our activity, because most young people who come to London have no idea about the institutions which offer them advice and help. Therefore we have composed our information material in such a way that Protestants and Catholics alike can receive the cards and see what social and spiritual services are open to them in the colony.

Repeatedly the parish priests in Switzerland have been addressed through articles and personal mail and have been asked to co-operate with us.

In addition we have organised

CITY SWISS CLUB

# "Informal Dinner Dance"

**FRIDAY, 26th JUNE, 1970**

**at GREAT FOSTERS, Egham, Surrey.**

COCKTAILS IN THE GARDENS AT 7.30 p.m.

DINNER AT 8 p.m.

DANCING UNTIL 1 a.m.

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charter flights to and from Switzerland at a greatly reduced price. This very often is the first contact with us, and also enables Swiss families and elderly people to afford a holiday with their relatives.

I apologise to the French and Italian Swiss for being unable to organise services and club facilities in their own language. I could only inform them of the facilities at the French and Italian Churches and by the Unione Ticinese.

Thanks to our ecumenical co-operation they have always been welcomed at the Eglise Suisse for the social and spiritual service.

Finally I wish to thank all who have through their work and benevolence supported and assisted our cause.

The Hierarchy of the Church, His Eminence Cardinal Heenan, Archbishop of Westminster, His Lordship Bishop Patrick J. Casey of Brentwood, the Swiss Bishops with their Dean, Bishop Johannes Vonderach who have constantly given their support and sympathy to our pastoral work.

His Excellency the Swiss Ambassador, Monsieur René Keller and Madame Keller and the members of the Swiss Embassy, who have always given us their most appreciated assistance.

Our friends and benefactors in the U.K. and Switzerland, especially the Committee of the Swiss Lenten Action, who have given us their financial and spiritual support.

The Chairman and the Chaplain were thanked for their reports.

Our Hon. Treasurer Mrs. K. A. Grob in her Finance Report said: With gratitude it can be reported that the late Jean Jacques Boos, K.S.G. left us in his will a legacy of £100 with this amount plus the proceeds of our Christmas Draw amounting to £341/6/4, so generously supported by all our friends: the contributions from 74 donors; the Church Collections; Income Tax recovered on

Covenants and the most welcome donation from the City Swiss Club of £50 we had a Total Income of £1,027/0/1, against our Expenditures of £864/0/3, resulting in a Surplus of £162/19/10 for the year.

The accounts were unanimously passed by the Meeting with thanks to the Hon. Treasurer.

The Chairman thanked the Chaplain, the Officers and Members of the Committee for their loyal support during the past year. He especially mentioned the good work rendered by our Hon. Treasurer Mrs. K. A. Grob, who acted, as in the previous year, as the Promoter of our very successful Christmas Draw.

The Meeting noted with regret the resignation of Mr. R. Voegtli from our Committee. The Chairman thanked him for his services rendered to us over so many years. Mr. Voegtli was our Hon. Secretary in 1952.

As all the other retiring members of the Committee had offered themselves for re-election the Meeting elected them unanimously for the ensuing year. Furthermore Mrs. I. R. Daetwiler and Miss E. Rüttimann were unanimously elected as additional Members of the Committee.

The final composition of the Committee for 1970/71 is as follows:

Chaplain: Rev. Father Paul Bossard; Chairman: Mr. Oscar Grob, K.S.G.; Vice-Chairman: Mr. E. Bonvin; Hon. Treasurer: Mrs. K. A. Grob; Hon. Secretary: Mr. E. P. Siegfried; Members: Miss C. Affentranger, Miss L. Bonetti, Mrs. E. Bonvin, Mrs. C. T. O. Clarke, Mrs. I. R. Dätwiler, Mrs. E. Käufeler, Mrs. F. McKenna and Miss E. Rüttimann; Messrs. L. F. Ackermann, G. Bartholdi, G. Bazzani, I. R. Dätwiler, F. de Maria, E. Eha, B. Frei, E. Frey, J. R. Gächter, P. R. Gut, P. Jacomelli, E. Käufeler and M. Schneebeli.

It was decided to hold again a Christmas Draw in 1970 instead of a Bazaar.

Finally the Chaplain thanked Mr. Grob for conducting the Meeting.

(ES)

### MESSAGE FROM BERNE

Some time ago, a special effort was made to convince more compatriots in Great Britain to join the Solidarity Fund of the Swiss Abroad. Please don't put the paper aside at this moment, thinking that you have heard it all before. Granted, you have, and perhaps you have joined in the knowledge that it is not only well worthwhile, but a wonderful way of showing solidarity on your part with all the unfortunate fellow-countrymen and women less lucky than ourselves, who have needed the Fund in order to start a new life away from troubles. In that case, perhaps you will try and convince somebody else to join.

### 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<sup>e</sup> 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.

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