

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: - (1971)

Heft: 1620

Rubrik: Swiss Church = Swiss Catholic Mission

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AN INSPIRING FOLK CONCERT

The small village of Minus, near Locarno, has produced one of the best folk choirs of Europe. They were fresh from the Llangollen Eistedfod folk singing contest, where they had won an honourable position, to sing for us at the Conway Hall on 8th July. This ensemble was remarkable for the melodiousness of its intonations and its rich rendering of well known and lively songs from Ticino. The choir, full of fresh lasses from Ticino country, was invited after their great performance to a reception at the Embassy where they sang again and offered beautiful books on their motherland to the Unione Ticinese, the Ambassador and the conductor of the Kinor Choir. This latter formation also produced itself at the same evening. It was a really professional choir, staggering in the variety of its performance—it sang Jewish, Italian, Yugoslav, English, Norwegian and Swiss songs, not counting a momentous Negro Spiritual. Its rendering of "Le Vigneron" was for us the highlight of the evening.

(PMB)

MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION TO SWISS PEOPLE LIVING ABROAD, FOR 1st AUGUST, 1971

Dear compatriots,

On this National Day, when Swiss people at home and abroad commemorate the foundation of Switzerland, 680 years ago, I should like, on behalf of the Federal Council, to send all compatriots abroad my cordial greetings and best wishes.

This year our National Day is being held against a very special background. Life in our national community has undergone a basic change with the conferment of full voting and election rights on the women of Switzerland. In the referendum of 7th February 1971, a significant milestone in the life of the Swiss people, the women of this country were granted voting and election rights at federal level, what was an impressive demonstration of confidence. On this first day of August, for the first time in the history of the Confederation, the women of Switzerland have taken their place in the ranks of voting citizens as fully qualified members with equal rights. Our country has emerged from this referendum united and strengthened, and we have every reason to be pleased with this development.

Another encouraging sign should also give us great satisfaction: the appeal made to the Swiss people in 1970, Nature Conservation Year, for the maintenance of a wholesome environment, on which the survival of mankind may well depend, has not

gone unheeded. The Swiss people have understood the needs of our time. At the communal, cantonal and national levels, increasing efforts are being made to follow up words with deeds and co-operate actively to preserve the world in which we live.

I feel that there is every reason for all of us to interpret these two facts as a good omen for Switzerland, from which we can draw strength and courage to go forward into the uncertain future.

For you, my esteemed compatriots in foreign lands, may this show that to us here at home it is of primary importance to preserve the genuine homely qualities and hospitality of our country, also and not least for you Swiss people living abroad who hope to visit Switzerland one day.

So I should like to invite you to celebrate this year's anniversary of the Confederation together with us. On this National Day, I feel the imperative desire to offer you my heartfelt thanks for the loyalty you have always shown to the land of your fathers and for the affection you cherish for the homeland. So, once again, on behalf of all of us here at home, let me convey to you and your families my heartfelt greetings and good wishes for your future health and happiness.

Rudolf Gnägi

President of the Swiss Confederation

DOCTOR HUGO RAST, 80

We have the pleasure of announcing the imminent 80th birthday of Dr. Hugo Rast, of The Stone House, 9 Weymouth Street, Portland Place, London, W.1. He will be 80 on 6th August. Owing to lack of space in this issue we shall be telling his life story in the next one, but in the meanwhile we should like to extend to him our warmest congratulations.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We should like to express our most sincere thanks to all those readers who have supported us by their donations and gift subscriptions. Our thanks are due to Mr. R. C. Jaeger, Mr. C. F. Gygax, Mr. J. P. Locher, Mr. J. Oertli, Mr. H. Tanner, Mr. P. E. Meister, Mr. E. Luterbacher, Mr. E. Hofstetter, Mr. O. Kaegi, Dr. H. Rast, Mr. H. Humberl, Mr. E. Kern, Mr. J. Scheiwiler, Mr. E. Hug, Mr. R. A. Strahl, Mr. W. Goldmann, Mr. W. Fischer, Mr. N. Furger, Mrs. M. Dreier, Mr. P. Jones, Mrs. S. E. Degerland, Mr. W. Zuber, Mr. F. Good, Mr. M. Schneebeli, Mrs. C. de Diesbach, Mr. F. Ferraris, Mr. H. W. Schneider, Mr. A. Kunzler, Mr. P. Bucher, Mrs. H. Chiverton and Mr. A. Burgisser.

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.

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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: a 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.