

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: 1619

Rubrik: News from the colony

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NEWS FROM THE COLONY



SWISS NATIONAL DAY COLLECTION

The Swiss National Day on 1st August is less a festival than a commemoration. Remembering the foundation of Switzerland 680 years ago does not call for great words, even less for self-praise and self-satisfied reflections. There is much the Swiss people may be thankful for, but one must also remember that freedom is not a gift to which one is entitled—it is ours by the grace of God, and it calls for sincere personal stocktaking and for determining ways and means of expressing personal thanks by giving whatever active help lies within our power.

One small, but important manner, is our contribution to the Swiss National Day Collection. With our gift we express solidarity and true patriotism.

This year's collection is in aid of the nation's health. The funds collected will help organisations and institutions in their nation-wide effort to raise the health standard of the people, not only their endeavours to combat diseases of all kinds, but also to spread better information of how to prevent illness, providing much needed money for research, helping the invalid and assisting those recovered from long spells of sickness to find their way about in society.

The following Swiss organisations will benefit from the collection: Cancer League, Multiple Sclerosis Society, Rheumatism League, Association fighting Tuberculosis, Central Office for Combating Alcoholism, Society for Preventive Medicine, Pro Infirmis (Help to the Disabled), Orthopaedic Clinics, Invalids' Society. Thus not only the medical fields, but also social welfare will benefit.

Last year, the collection in Great Britain realised over £330 towards the total collected in Switzerland of nearly 4 million francs. 3.3 million of this was given to women's work, and next year's collection will be in aid of the Swiss Abroad.

The easiest way we can contribute in the United Kingdom is by buying

the badge pictured above. These emblems will be on sale at Swiss functions especially First of August Celebrations, and the cost will be 20 new pence. They may also be had from the Embassy and Consulates. Donations are also welcome. The cause is a worthy one, and our contribution barely a sacrifice.

(MM)

YOUTH SUMMER CAMP 1971

The Secretariat for the Swiss abroad will be organising another summer camp for young Swiss between 16 and 25 years.

It will take place from 18th July to 7th August, 1971. The cost will be S.Fr.180—and most of the activities (touring, walking, sport, etc.) will be in the Canton of Graubünden. Details are mentioned in the "weltschweizer" of May 1971 and are also obtainable from the Secretary of the Swiss Club Manchester or direct from the following address:

Jugenddienst des Auslandschweizersekretariats de NHG, Alpenstrasse 26, CH—3006 Bern.

FORMER AMBASSADOR IS 70

We wish to congratulate the former Ambassador to Great Britain, Monsieur Béat de Fischer, on becoming 70 on 22nd July. He now lives in retirement in Berne.

Monsieur de Fischer was born in 1901, a citizen of Berne. He studied at the Universities of Berne, Fribourg, Munich and Paris and obtained a degree of *Docteur en droit* of the University of Berne in 1926. After various periods of training in industry, both in Switzerland and abroad, he entered the service of the Federal Political Department in 1929. He was posted to the Swiss Legation in the Hague in 1932 and successively to Buenos Aires, Warsaw, Bucharest, Riga, Helsinki, Bucharest and Cairo. In 1949, the Federal Council appointed him Minister to Egypt and three years later, he was accredited to Ethiopia, and in 1954, he was sent to Portugal as Swiss Minister.

In 1959, Monsieur de Fischer was appointed Ambassador to Austria, and in February 1964, he came to London as Head of the Swiss Diplomatic Mis-

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sion to the Court of St. James's. For 2½ years he and Madame de Fischer, as well as their three young daughters, stayed in the British capital and took part in the Colony's activities.

We wish Monsieur de Fischer a memorable birthday and many happy returns of it.

(MM)

MENTAL ABERRATION!

Although we were present at Mr. Th. Dudli's exposé at the June meeting of the Swiss Mercantile Society, we somehow managed to report in the last issue that he had been speaking at the *Anglo-Swiss Society!* There can't be anything Freudian about this slip. To all those members of the Anglo-Swiss Society who thought they had missed a good function, as indeed it was, we apologise and shall do our best not to describe this Society's next event under the heading of "Anglo-Swiss Society".

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

The following couples will be celebrating wedding anniversaries within the next few weeks: Mr. and Mrs. W. Pellet on 16th July (1918), Mr. and Mrs. W. Scheddler on 17th July (1935). On 27th July, Mr. and Mrs. F. Dela-loye (1913), and on 11th August Mr. and Mrs. V. Bataillard (1919).

On 17th July, Father P. Bossard will have his birthday, and on 21st July, Mr. J. Zimmermann will be 81, and Mr. B. Truninger (Zurich) will be 64 on 4th August. Mrs. A. Schmid of Glendower Hotel fame will have her birthday on 6th and Mrs. A. Bachofen will be 71 on 10th August.

Mr. Victor Bataillard of 20 Keyes Garden, Newcastle, will have a very special birthday on 2nd August. He will be 90. He is a mechanical engineer from the Federal Institute in Zurich and arrived in Great Britain in 1908. A very happy birthday to him and many happy returns to all our readers whose birthdays fall within the next few weeks.

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SWITZERLAND

*Ah, sweet land of sunshine strength
and might
From the valley low to towering height
Beauty joy and mystery
Tell me how you came to be
I will guess—and surely I am right.*

*When the wicked Lucifer did fight
With his Angels in the heaven's night
All the great foundations rocked
And a bit of heav'n was knocked
off, tho' Gabriel tried to hold it tight.*

*Then did all the angels look with fright
But they all agreed, that it was quite
Futile to regain this bit
So the great Archangel writ:
'Piece of heaven fallen out of sight'*

*See the lakes all shining bright
And the mountain peaks all tipped
with white
Land where first the Angels trod
Switzerland was kissed by God
That is why 'tis always bathed in
light.*

J.M.V.

(This poem has been sent to us by a reader and composed by his late wife.)



ERNST KUEBLER

We have the sad duty of announcing the passing away of *Mr. Ernst Kuebler*, of Sulzbergstrasse 6, Winterthur, at the age of 84. He was buried on Thursday, 1st July in the Rosenberg Church of Winterthur. Mr. Kuebler was a prominent Swiss of the North and is well remembered in Manchester. We should like to extend to Mrs. Kuebler and his large family our deepest sympathy.

FEDERATION OF SWISS SOCIETIES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

The following is a report on an extraordinary meeting of Presidents and representatives of member organisations in London, held on 30th June at Swiss House, Fitzroy Square, W.1.

As a number of important decisions were arrived at, which are of great interest to the Colony at large, this report has been sent to all Federation members and to "The Swiss Observer".

The meeting responded to this new Federation President to express its views on alternative possibilities left open after the probable abandonment of the original FORUM scheme at the Swiss Centre. Pending its formal announcement the consideration of alternative possibilities has become a matter of urgency, as Dr. Egli explained, in order to enable an appeal being made to the FORUM donors to leave part of the whole of their contributions, made or promised, standing

for the possible use of an alternative scheme to be pursued expeditiously.

The meeting responded to this new situation with an evident determination at least to fully explore what could be done, for which it promptly authorised the necessary steps and preliminary expenditure.

One possibility discussed was a possible request to Swiss Centre Ltd. to grant the Colony the free use of the so-called COLONY ROOM at the back of the FORUM as originally planned as a pied-à-terre for the young Swiss and meeting place for the Colony. It emerged that the Churches could no longer provide the promised supervision of such a room at the Swiss Centre because they have now found an interim solution of their problems elsewhere. This important condition for the running of the COLONY ROOM not being met the Meeting concluded that this possibility is not practicable. The President was asked to notify the owners accordingly and inform them of a RESOLUTION of the Meeting deploring the probable non-realisation of the FORUM scheme and expressing the hope that the interests and image of Switzerland will not be allowed to suffer by the alternative uses to be made of the premises in question.

The other possibility discussed at the Meeting concerns the JOINT SCHEME suggested some months ago for the solution of our various accommodation problems in one impressive building in a reasonably central position.

The essential minimum of the scheme would be a combination of the Church requirements with a COMMUNITY CENTRE for social and cultural use as planned in the FORUM but on a more modest scale. The main hall holding perhaps 250 persons with a stage and appropriately fitted out would be available to the Colony and its Societies as well as for concerts and exhibitions, etc. on week days. The CHURCHES would hold their Services in smaller rooms and in the main hall only when exceptionally large congregations are expected. As additional facilities for joint use a Canteen and Bar, a games room, etc. should be provided. The erection of some flats on upper floors for the pastors and a housekeeper should also be considered.

Everyone recognises that the Joint Scheme would of course benefit enormously from an eventual PARTICIPATION OF OTHER LIVE ORGANISATIONS, especially the Swiss Mercantile College and the Swiss Hostel for Girls, both of which are also in urgent need of improved accommodation. If they are willing they could join in the Scheme on the basis of owning and running their own parts of the building using shared services only as found convenient or more economical.