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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

ANNUAL DINNER OF THE LONDON SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Following half an hour of cocktails and meeting friends it was in high spirits that some 50 or so members, their wives and guests, sat down to the traditional annual dinner in the Stanhope Suite of the Dorchester Hotel. The excellent menu came up to our usual high expectation and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Our President, Mr. W. Burren extended a warm welcome to all present and particularly singled out Mr. R. A. G. Lee and Mrs. K. Goodman, President and Vice-President of the Middlesex Philatelic Federation, who were guests of the Society.

Mr. Burren then briefly referred to the Federation Convention which is this year being organised by our Society and expressed his grateful thanks to all those who had already put in a great deal of work in preparing for this event, and he particularly mentioned Miss Grunberg, our Hon. Secretary, on whose shoulders fell the bulk of responsibility in this considerable task. He was also pleased to announce that Miss Grunberg had just been awarded a silver medal for her entry of "Switzerland" at this year's STAMPEX. This news was greeted with great acclamation.

Mrs. K. Goodman then presented the Cup to the winner of our own annual cup competition, who was none other than Mr. Gay, and who with his entry of "Phosphor Graphite" issues had well deserved the award. A replica cup was presented to last year's winner, Miss Grunberg.

Brisk selling of raffle tickets by four ladies produced the magnificent sum of £50 which will benefit the Club funds and which was particularly welcome this year in view of the considerable expenditure anticipated in connection with the forthcoming convention. Mr. Burren thanked all those who had so generously contributed by buying large numbers of tickets, as well as the donor of the magnificent and varied prizes.

Last but not least it was Mr. Uhlinger's turn to proceed with the usual auction of a number of stamp lots, which again had been donated by members of the Society. The proceeds amounting to £26.50 will be equally divided between the Swiss Benevolent Society and the Spastic Society. Mr. M. Rothlisberger, our Hon. Treasurer, expressed his appreciation of this result and on behalf of both charities thanked those who had generously contributed the stamps as well as those who had bought them. As a past Treasurer of the Swiss Benevolent

Society he was particularly pleased to be able to hand over this donation and took the opportunity of informing the gathering that since these auctions were started by the late Mr. F. Streit no less than £417 had been contributed to their funds.

Mr. Burren, in concluding the meeting, expressed his personal thanks to all for their support in coming to this function and helping to make it such an enjoyable and successful evening.

(EMH)

MIDDLESEX PHILATELIC FEDERATION

The 22nd Annual Convention of the Federation will be held on Saturday, 8th April, 1972, at the Polytechnic of London, New Cavendish Street, W.1. (close to the G.P.O. Tower—nearest Underground station Warren Street). The organising Society this year is the LONDON SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY who have their headquarters at 35 Fitzroy Square, W.1.

Doors will open at 2 p.m. and the official opening ceremony will be performed at 2.30 p.m. by the Swiss Ambassador in London, Dr. A. Weitnauer. The main event will be the Bishop Cup Competition which promises to have a record number of entries from the 31 member societies of the Federation. Awards will be made for the best entry in each of three classes: "Stamps", "Postal History" and "Thematics", and the Bishop Cup will go to the overall winning entry.

No entrance fee will be charged, but a comprehensive programme will be on sale at 10p. There will also be a number of stamp dealer's stands, as well as philatelic competitions, raffles and other side-shows. It is hoped that the G.P.O. will provide a special stand and that mail posted at the Convention will be cancelled with the P.O. Tower postmark.

Refreshments will be available at moderate prices.

AGM OF THE SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

The Society held its 83rd Annual General Meeting at Swiss House on Wednesday, 16th February. Unfortunately, the attendance was affected by the black-out, but those present were glad not to be plunged into Cimmerian darkness during the proceedings.

In opening the meeting, the Chairman, Mr. A. Jaccard, extended a cordial welcome to Monsieur C. H. Bruggmann, Counsellor (Economic & Labour) at the Swiss Embassy.

The Chairman was pleased to announce that, after lengthy negotiations,

the Society had acquired the freehold of Swiss House, contracts having recently been exchanged.

The accounts for 1971, as circulated, were deemed to be satisfactory and were approved unanimously.

In the preamble of his report on the Society's activities during the past year, Mr. Jaccard referred to the economic difficulties as well as the labour problems besetting this country. He also dealt at some length with the issues involved in Britain's decision to join the European Economic Community.

The programme of activities had followed traditional lines, the monthly meetings being followed by lectures on topical subjects, with ensuing discussions, slide and film shows, etc. At the end of January, the Society held its Annual Dinner and Dance at the Dorchester Hotel, a very successful and enjoyable function. The summer family outing to Hughenden Manor, formerly Benjamin Disraeli's, the Earl of Beaconsfield, Home at High Wycombe, was favoured by excellent weather. The visit was preceded by a luncheon at the Little Abbey Hotel, Great Missenden, in a picturesque part of Buckinghamshire.

College. In the absence of the Chairman of the Education Committee, Mr. F. O. Hausermann, the report on the College was read by the Secretary, Mr. W. Burren.

The scholastic year again embraced three terms of 15 weeks' duration. Full use was made of all the available space and with an ever-growing waiting list, many of the applicants wishing to enter during the summer months had to postpone their entry or even seek admission elsewhere.

A total of 676 students were admitted during 1971, with an average attendance of 282 for the year, compared with 670 and 272 respectively in the previous year.

There was a welcome increase in the number of students sitting for the diploma examination, the total of candidates being 473, as against 413 in 1970. Of these 439 or 93% were successful and the high standard set for these examinations was fully maintained.

The evening classes, which are attended by young compatriots in employment here, were generally well attended with a total of 33 classes and 595 students, an average of 18 per class, compared with 38 classes and 716 students and an average attendance of 19 per class in the previous year. The syllabus included courses in English Language, Commercial Correspondence and Shorthand, as well as preparatory courses for the Cambridge University Lower Certificate in English