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Philatelic Exhibition at Berne

An exhibition in honour of "60 Years of Pro Juventute Stamps" began on 6th December in Berne at the PTT Museum (Helvetiaplatz) which will no doubt be of interest not only to philatelists but also to the public. It will last until 4th February, 1973 and exhibit artistic and philatelic documents from 1912 to 1972. Posters, drawings, original sketches and printing drafts will also be included, beginning with first attempts at stamps with a Swiss German text right to the rose sketches for the 1972 Jubilee stamps. Opening times: 9-12 a.m. and 2-5 p.m. Closed on Monday mornings.

English Avant-garde artists in Berne's Kunsthalle

From 20th January, till 25th February, 1973, Berne's Kunsthalle will be putting on a joint exhibition of seven English artists who have never been brought together before and show a wide range of diverging tendencies of English art. The painter Tess Jaray is represented by her "colour field paintings", while Rose Finn-Kelley plans to raise a 10 x 15 yard flag on a 120ft. high pole on the Gurten. John Latham intends to mount a machine he calls the "Big Breather" in the entrance hall of the Kunsthalle. The machine transforms into sound the energy projections of high and low tide and the attractive

power of the moon in symbolic fashion every eight hours. Bob Law specialises in large black and white pictures (5 x 7 yards), while Allan Charlton—at 25 the youngest to take part in this unusual exhibition—will display his "minimal paintings", grey canvasses with geometric holes. Tom Phillips uses book pages, chalking on certain words to make new sentences and poems, while the rest of the page is brightly overpainted. Noel Forster paints his works on 50 yard long silk rolls two foot wide: in their full length they take up several exhibition rooms. Berne and its Kunsthalle seem to be preparing for an exciting and controversial artistic event.

The Romantic Brienzer-Rothorn steam locomotive to remain in service

Thanks to 2,000 shareholders, the Brienzer-Rothorn train will continue operating as the last mountain train running on steam. In all, 6,504 shares were brought even though it was advised in the prospectus that no profits were to be expected. As the Brienzer-Rothorn enterprise explained: "This is more out of sympathy for the old and Romantic steam engine era."

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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

SCHWEIZERBUND

The Schweizerbund's bi-annual gatherings are a welcome opportunity of knowing new places to go out and enlarging one's experience of places of gastronomic interest. Most of the recent Schweizerbund events have taken place in different inns and restaurants, often outside London. In December, it took place at the Edgwarebury Country Club, Elstree. Despite the clear indications supplied in the invitation form, it was not easy to find in the fog and the rain that prevailed over London on the night of 15th December. The first ever license endorsement that was inflicted on your Editor on the way (for driving at 45 mph) made this function begin for him under bad auspices. But the congenial company and the truly excellent food that was abundantly served to us for only £1.50 helped to forget this episode. About twenty-five members and guests were present and this could be considered as a very good attendance because several regular members were unable to come. In particular, the Club's President, Mr. Virgil Berti, was laid up with flu and Mr. Jurg Schmid officiated in his place.

Dinner was served in a vast wood panelled hall with timbers and oak furniture that lent this venue an atmosphere of country gentry that was reminiscent of all that is worthy and sturdy in English civilisation.

Mr. Schmid told us that it was Mrs. Delaloye's birthday and we accordingly sang a glorious Happy Birthday. He offered Mr. and Mrs. Fernand Delaloye a big creamy cake which they immediately proceeded to share out to the whole table. Mr. Delaloye also received a box of twisted cigars which he also generously shared out. Earlier, he had been invited to say a few words, which he did with characteristic dry humour amid the mirth and giggles of the attendance. Soon we began to sing, according to the wont of the Club, from the SNTU leaflets supplied to us by the President's deputy. We sang three or four Swiss songs, among which the inevitable La Haut sur La Montagne and Fa Mal i Pe, before we somehow fell short of inspiration. To revive us, a volunteer guest with a baritone voice offered to sing Roselein auf der Heide. This young Cambridge student delivered a fine performance with a crystalline voice and everyone forgave

him for not knowing every verse of Goethe's poem. He then sang "Roses of Picardy" and was immediately accompanied by a chorus of members familiar with this romantic serenade. With a good meal and some remaining traces of liquor in their blood, members separated for the long drive home through a misty night.

SWISS RIFLE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL DINNER

The most sporting Swiss dinner of the year was held as usual at the Gledower Hotel, and was greatly favoured by the cuisine of Mrs. Milani. This year's Dinner was noted for its particularly strong attendance of young people. They have flocked to the Club in recent years and are ensuring the survival of its regular activities.

Owing to a cold, or a sore throat, or both, our President Marcel Bucherer asked Mr. Peter Fischer to deputise for him and deliver the customary address. Mr. Fischer welcomed the guests from the Surrey Rifle Association with which the Swiss Rifle Association has maintained close links for a number

of years. He recalled that the Swiss marksmen had beaten the Surrey Club for the second year running after suffering a fifteen year spell of defeats. It had lost away against the Marylebone Pistol Club but got its own back at Bisley. The year had seen the usual eighth competitions and several new faces among the cup winners or runners up.

The distribution of prizes was organised by the Secretary, Captain Mathey. The array of boxes of chocolate, bottles of liquor and domestic utensils (one winner had an electric tin opener) was incredible for the relatively small membership of the Society. It reflected on the generosity of its members. Also of note were the finely made medals which practically all participants to the competitions collected. After the distribution of prizes came the Raffle, conducted by Mr. Armin Loetscher with the assistance of pretty Miss Christine Schmid, grand-daughter of the late Mr. A. Schmid of the Glendower, who picked the raffle tickets. There an equally impressive collection of prizes. Mr. Lucien Jobin won no less than three lots of kirsch and liquor. The raffle draw was followed by a merry bidding for a bottle of whisky won by a guest. A professional auctioneer, he suggested that his bottle should be put for auction a second time for the benefit of the Swiss Rifle Association. It fetched £20 after some close bidding and was carried away by a Mr. Callun Callun, a company director, who had come as a guest of Mr. Werner Trauffer. He immediately put it up for auction a third time. Bidding started again and stopped at £12.

Most members left shortly afterwards but a small party remained in the Glendower's dining room for more drinks and merriment until about 3 a.m.

(PMB)

ANGLO-SWISS SOCIETY

Our Ambassador Dr. Albert Weitnauer invited the members of the Anglo-Swiss Society to a reception on 13th December in the reception halls of the new Embassy, that model of interior design. A great many Swiss and British members turned up and a bustle of conversation lasted three hours beneath the vast Le Corbusier still-life that dominates the Residence Dining Room.

CITY SWISS CLUB CHRISTMAS DINNER

The Orchid Suite of the Dorchester had to replace the usual Stanhope Suite to accommodate all the members and guests of the City Swiss Club who attended the Christmas Dinner. The food was of rare quality. Dinner was enjoyed against a background of Swiss and Tyrolian music, played by a lone instrumentalist with a traditional costume. The toast to the Queen and Switzerland was followed a short while later by the screening of two films lent by the Swiss National Tourist Office. One was an informative description of Switzerland's advanced standard of living and technological expertise, the other

related the adventures of a tourist who grudgingly found himself compelled to learn the art of skiing. Both films were excellent. The second one was however of a rather weak humour but nonetheless produced strong laughter from the attendance.

NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE

The Common Room of the Swiss Hostel for Girls had very little room to spare on Thursday evening the 13th December, when a great many members and representatives from other societies turned up to enjoy a friendly get together and a harpsichord recital by the Swiss artist Gloria Vanoli. The programme included short and curt pieces by Bartok, preludes by Bach and works Couperin played with zest and a lively talent by a young and attractive artist. She was warmly applauded and congratulated by the President, Mrs. Mariann Meier, who promised her a present on behalf of the Society at the end of her performance. There followed a supper consisting of meat rolls and Swiss cookies, most of which had been prepared by the President. It was a particularly gay and successful NSH evening which lasted until 10.30.

THE LIFE OF THE SWISS IN BRITAIN THIRTY YEARS AGO

as read in the Swiss Observer from
July to December 1942

Special events

On Wednesday, 15th July, a party of volunteers from the City Swiss Club set out for "Westfield", the Hatfield home of the Swiss Benevolent Society, to clear timber that had recently been felled. They were answering the call of their President Mr. Louis Chapuis. An article signed by "Gallus" in the 24th July, 1942 issue of the Swiss Observer contains a picture of Messrs. E. Ulmann, A. Tall, L. Jobin, W. Deutsch, E. Suter, J. H. Berger, P. Moehr, W. Bachmann and W. Flory progressing in the grounds of "Westfield" armed with saws and pickaxes. Another picture shows them resting on a log, their tools on their knees and a bottle of beer at hand. On Saturday, 18th July, a second City Swiss Club party left for "Westfield" with Mr. Fer. Among those present were Messrs. Glauser, Guggenheim and Oltramare.

The Swiss National Day Celebration was held at Kingsway Hall, Kingsway, London W.C.2. on Saturday, 1st August. Coming after the 1941 Celebration, which had marked the 650th Anniversary of the Confederation and had been held at Central Hall, Westminster, the 1942 function was described by the Editor as something of an anti-climax. Apparently, there were flaws in the programme. The singing was not at its usual standard and the film "Landammann Stauffacher" was a disappointment. The soundtrack was cut for over an hour as a wire which had accidentally been severed was repaired. The screen was too small and the projector of insufficient power. But Mr. A. Stauffer stressed that the occasion was successful because of the splendid spirit of friendship and patriotism which had ruled over it. Mr. Pradervand, of the Eglise Suisse, had made a moving pat-

CERCLE GENEVOIS

About twenty Swiss and British residents with kinship or affective ties with Geneva gathered on 12th December at the home of Mrs. Hugh Overton-Binet to celebrate the traditional Escalade. The chocolate cauldron had not withstood the journey from Geneva and was badly cracked for the fist smashing ritual, which I understand was accompanied by the words: "Let the enemies of the Republic thus be broken." The event was particularly friendly and intimate and enlivened by the drinks which many in the party had supplied. The Embassy was represented by Mr. Serex and Mr. Nordmann, who had made a special point of leaving the City Swiss Club Christmas Dinner, held on the same evening, before it had ended to join the Cercle Genevois.