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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

SWISS CLUB MANCHESTER: Saturday, 14th December, Christmas Party at Ciba Geigy (UK) Ltd. Heald Green. Thursday, 30th January, 1975, Raclette Party at the Cottons Hotel, near Knutsford.

SCHWEIZERBUND (SWISS CLUB) 31st December, 20.30 for 21.00. Dinner at Bertorelli's Restaurant, 19 Charlotte Street (1st floor) London W.1.

SWISS CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY: Saturday, 4th January, 1975. 2 p.m. at St. Mary Hall, YMCA Central Club, 16-22 Gt. Russell Street, London WC1. All children in the Colony welcome. Parents who are not on the mailing list please contact the organiser, Miss Elizabeth Hoffmann de Visme. Tel: 01-348 1156.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY: Dinner and Dance, Dorchester Hotel, Saturday, 1st February, 1975.

Thursday, 23rd January, 7 p.m. Swiss Embassy, 18 Montagu Place, W.1, Nouvelle Société Helvétique, OPEN MEETING. The Earl of Selkirk will give a Talk on his connection with Switzerland, which has lasted over 60 years. All Swiss and their friends welcome.

The Swiss Bank Corporation, London, is pleased to announce that Mr. H. Grüninger has been appointed Deputy Manager, with effect from the 1st January, 1975.

CHURCHES CHRISTMAS PROGRAMME

French-speaking Parish

Sunday, 15th Dec. Service at 11.15 a.m. Wednesday, 25th Dec. Service at 11.15 a.m. (no meal). Wednesday, 25th Dec. Family Christmas Celebration. Sunday, 29th Dec. Service 11.15 a.m.

German-speaking Protestant and Catholic Parishes

Sunday, 22nd Dec. 4 p.m. Ecumenical Christmas gathering at the Eglise Suisse. Tuesday, 24th Dec. 6.30 p.m. Ecumenical Christmas celebration at the John Southworth Centre. Tuesday, 24th Dec. Midnight Mass with English local residents. Possibility to stay on premises overnight. Sunday, 29th Dec. No Service. Tuesday, 31st Dec. at 6.30 p.m. Ecumenical Service at the John Southworth Centre. New Year's Eve Vigil.

CITY SWISS CLUB 109th Annual Banquet and Ball

The French writer Maximilian, Duc de Sully, claimed in the 17th century that "People in England take their pleasures sadly after the fashion of their country." Nobody present at the City Swiss Club's Annual Dinner and Dance at the Dorchester on 15th November would agree with this quotation cited by the Swiss *Chargé d'Affaires* Monsieur le Ministre J. Iselin. Neither did he, of course, which was obvious from his whole speech which he gave in the absence on official duties of the Swiss Ambassador. He spoke about his and his wife's sadness at having to leave Britain shortly, after almost six years, and how they would miss their friends. This was the other side of the diplomat's interesting life in many different countries. He said they would be sorry to leave this hospitable country described by the American philosopher George de Santayana as "... the paradise of individuality, eccentricity, heresy, anomalies, hobbies and humour." As a citizen of Basle, the latter was not the least that Monsieur Iselin appreciated. He also paid tribute to his friend and guest of

honour, Sir Frank Figgures, and he praised the splendour of the occasion, the "professional calibre" of the men and the "beauty and elegance of their ladies".

Whatever may have changed in the course of the decades, the brilliance of the event certainly has not, though the absence of the men's full evening dress may be missed by some of the ladies. The numbers have gone down somewhat, but it is still the best-attended function of the resident Swiss community in London. There were two members and their ladies present whose membership goes back to over 50 years — Mr. P. Bessire and Dr. H. Rast — and they will no doubt agree that the many-course dinners of pre-war times (plus a cold buffet *à discretion* later in the evening) and the half-dozen extensive, often tedious, speeches are not regretted at all. This year there were only three speeches, not too long and to the point. The function has, for the past few years, been organised in conjunction with the Swiss Economic Council, whose President and Mrs. R. Suess were present.

Mr. E. Tangemann, the Club's President, welcomed the guests in a few well-chosen words. He regretted the forthcoming departures of Monsieur and Madame Iselin, the Cultural Counsellor and Madame Birrer and of Consul-General and Mrs. Adams. It used to be the custom to invite the presidents and their ladies of all Swiss societies as a matter of course. Since the Assembly of Presidents, predecessor of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the U.K., was founded in the 'fifties, its President is now invited to represent them all, as it were. Mr. B. Simon was unable to attend, but its Vice-President was there — none other than the Club's own President! He mentioned with pleasure that the President of the Swiss Club Manchester, Mr. P. A. Senn, had taken the trouble to come all the way from Cheshire to attend the Banquet.

The last speaker of the evening was Sir Frank Figgures, prominent Civil Servant and devoted friend of Switzerland's. He recalled the deep impression the *Landsgemeinde* in Appenzell had made on him, and he described in detail the open-air Parliament as an expression of deep-rooted democracy. Sir Frank's

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