

# News from the colony

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## MRS. ARNOLD STAHELIN

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of Mrs. Catherine Helen Stahelin, *née* Clark. She died at the home of her son John, 54, Junction Road, Norton, Stockton-on-Tees, on Teeside, on 15th January.

Kate Stahelin, as she was known to her friends, came from Farneth near Dunkeld in Perthshire. Before her marriage to Arnold Stahelin in France in 1919, she worked in the Post Office Savings Bank in London. The young couple went to Switzerland where their two sons John and Charles were born in 1920 and 1922 respectively. In 1923, the family returned to their home in Thornton Heath, Surrey.

Her husband Arnold Charles was born in 1891 in Zurich. He trained as a

silk expert and came to this country in 1914, but returned to Switzerland to do his military duties when the first world war broke out. He had worked with Ducharne & Cie, a leading firm of silk manufacturers in Lyons, and on his return to London, he was appointed manager and later managing director of the London branch of Ducharne & Cie. He retired in 1962.

Arnold Stahelin was an active member of the Swiss Mercantile Society whose President he was from 1925 to 1928. He was closely connected with the formation of the Society into a company limited by guarantee. He was made an Honorary member both of the SMS and the mother Society in Switzerland in recognition of his sterling services. He was a well-known personality in the Swiss community and much respected for his clear thinking and integrity. He was also a very keen Freemason and held high offices.

They were a well-matched pair, Kate and Arnold, and he was very proud of his wife's Scottish descent. His friends often considered his wit as being akin to that of North of the Border. They were both members of the London Perthshire Association. Although Kate was not as prominent as her husband in the Swiss community, she was much liked and respected. The death of Arnold at 74 on 7th February, 1966 was a great blow not only to her and her family, but also to the Swiss community.

Mrs. Stahelin's great hobbies were gardening and embroidery as well as bobbin lace making. In her later years, she was a rather reluctant traveller, but she kept her interest in Swiss affairs. She spent a happy 80th birthday with her sons and grandchildren at the Swiss Centre in London. It is to her family that we express our deep sympathy. She has

now gone to join her husband, and we shall remember them as the remarkable couple they were.

MM

## FRANK CONRAD

We have the sad duty of announcing the death of *Mr. Frank Conrad* at the age of 78 on January 1st. A former member of the Helvetica Lodge, the City Swiss Club, the Swiss Mercantile Society, the Swiss Rifle Association, the Secours Mutels and one-time President of the Swiss Male Choir, Mr. Conrad was a well known and active member of the Swiss community in this country. Mr. Conrad was compelled by declining health to retire over a year ago to a Hotel in St. Gall. His widow is also in Switzerland living in a hospital.

Born on 15th March, 1896, a citizen of Bermgarten (Aarau), Mr. Conrad came to this country in 1921. He managed a firm in Belfast where he acted as agent for a variety of textile goods. He also ran his own agency in London for embroidered goods and handkerchiefs. He leaves a widow, a daughter and two sons and many grand-children. To them all we extend our most sincere condolences.

P.M.B.

*We have just learned that Mrs. Conrad also died shortly after her husband's death.*

## Political Rights for the Swiss Abroad

On 15th November, the London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique held a discussion on the draft law regarding political rights for the Swiss abroad. A 45-page report issued by the special commission set up by the Federal Council, was summarised by the Society's President, Mrs. Mariann Meier, who led the discussion.

Members present were unanimous in their opinion that political rights should only be granted to those Swiss who pay taxes in Switzerland and/or do military service. The Swiss community in Great Britain is in the minority with this attitude, and the two delegates to the Commission of the Swiss Abroad have repeatedly voiced that opinion. They are by no means alone, but unfortunately, the report gives the impression that all Swiss abroad are in favour.


It was realised at the meeting that the wheel cannot be turned back, and

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that most likely political rights will be granted in the near future. But members regretted that if the draft law is accepted and Swiss resident abroad are permitted to take part in federal plebiscites provided they are in Switzerland at the time, three classes of Swiss abroad would be created, viz those who have the time and the money to travel to Switzerland in order to vote, those who live near Switzerland's frontiers and the "have-nots" whose circumstances would never or only rarely permit them to take part in a plebiscite. The meeting was of the opinion that, in the interest of equity and equality voting by post should be possible. Naturally an effort would have to be made, and previous registration with the Swiss Embassy or Consulate would be essential.

The meeting expressed concern about absolutely impartial and neutral information regarding federal plebiscites. It was taken for granted that all information should be brought to the communities by the "Review", in Great Britain the four special numbers of the "Swiss Observer". A great deal of responsibility will fall on the Swiss editorial committee to ensure impartial information.

Members were also unanimous that on no account must Swiss communities abroad be used for political agitation and party-political propaganda.

The discussion was followed by a short report on the Assembly in St. Gall, given by the two London delegates to the Commission, Mrs. M. Meier and Father P. Bossard.

MM

## YORKSHIRE ACTIVITIES

The Yorkshire Swiss Club inaugurated the year 1974 with a traditional family gathering at the Leeds Council House and Social Centre in St. Mark's Avenue, Leeds, on the evening of Tuesday, the 8th January. Members and friends flocked together in good numbers at this very friendly and hospitable place - made for this occasion even more inviting, thanks to very tasteful decorations provided by some members, the main theme being "Switzerland". All this was much appreciated by those of our members who had to drive a long way over storm and rain swept moors.

Our Ladies made their entrance, all heavily-laden with food-stuffs, savouries, cakes and sweets, some Swiss specialities attracting special attention, and soon the large buffet-table presented a most impressive sight. Some discreet music, in particular the well-liked laendlers, yodlers and other home-tunes contributed greatly to a friendly and congenial atmosphere.

Before starting on our basic treat consisting of pairs of large-size "Wuerstel" accompanied by potato-salad, our President welcomed everybody present, in particular our immediate past President Professor J. P. Inebnit and Mr. Paul Lerch - the latter back from a long illness and particularly happy to be again amongst us. We were also pleased to be

able to congratulate Dr. Colette Inebnit and her fiance, both very much touched by our sincere and warm feelings.

During the evening our members were reminded of our Annual General Meeting to be convened for Tuesday, the 5th February, 1974, and especially of our Dinner-Dance, a new venture, to be held at the Mansion Hotel, Roundhey Park, Leeds, on Saturday, the 2nd March, 1974.

Alas, this evening had to come to a close and we gradually left with good-byes and au-revoirs all round, with a feeling of thankfulness for the great effort of our Ladies who had made this function such an agreeable affair. Indeed a good beginning for what we all hope to be a truly "Happy New Year".

E.B.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**UNIONE TICINESE:** The Centenary Celebration, which had originally been planned for Sunday, 17th February, has been postponed and will be announced later.

**SWISS CLUB EDINBURGH:** Tuesday, 26th February, beer evening at the Ski Lodge Lounge, Hillburn Roadhouse, Biggar Road, Fairmilehead. 8 p.m.

**CITY SWISS CLUB:** Tuesday, 19th February. Dorchester Hotel. 6.30 for 7 p.m. Card Evening.

**NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE:** Thursday, 21st February. 7 p.m. Swiss Embassy, 16-18 Montagu Place. Filmshow.

Thursday, 28th March. Annual General Meeting and Dinner.

**SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY:** Friday, 22nd February. Annual Dinner at the Dorchester Hotel.

**SWISS BENEVOLENT FUND OF SCOTLAND:** AGM on Saturday, 2nd March, at 112 Hanover Street, Edinburgh, at 7 p.m.

**SWISS CLUB LIVERPOOL:** Card evening on 1st Friday of the month at the Dresden Hotel, New Chester Road, Bromborough, Wirral.

## CULTURAL EVENTS

Tuesday, 5th February, Royal Festival Hall, 8 p.m. *Martha Argerich* plays Ravel's Piano Concerto in G with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Andrew Davis.

Wednesday, 6th February; Saturday, 9th February; Monday, 11th February; Friday, 15th February; Tuesday, 19th February; Thursday, 21st February; Tuesday, 26th February. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, 7.30 p.m. *Silvio Varviso* conducts performances of *La Bohème* (new production).

Tuesday, 19th February, Queen Elizabeth Hall, 7.45 p.m. Symphony No. 4 (*Deliciae Basilienses*) by *Honegger* is one of the works performed by

the Bournemouth Sinfonietta under Theodor Guschlbauer.

*Cultural Events continued on Page 18.*

## CHRISTMAS AT LIVERPOOL

The Committee of the Liverpool Swiss Club under its new President, Mr. Stierlin, and with the expert support of its Honorary Secretary held a very enjoyable Christmas Dinner reuniting many Swiss scattered around Merseyside. This yearly event took place as usual at the Devon Doorway.

We had a happy and successful evening, enjoying as always the excellent Swiss wines. Old and new members mingled to exchange memories of days gone by. We talked of our dear homeland and its present problems. The pretty room had a real Christmassy look thanks to the lovely table decorations made by Mrs. Moor. We dined in style by red candlelight in a most congenial atmosphere. We were all pleased to be honoured by the visit of our Consul General and his wife, the genial Mr. R. Born, who were welcomed like old and valued friends.

But we were all stunned when Mr. Born mentioned in his speech that he would be transferred shortly to Chicago! There were many expressions of genuine regret at losing such a kindly Consul who had taken a deep human interest in all of us and was always ready to listen to the problems one had.

We all expressed to Mr. Born our sincere sadness at such an unexpected parting of our ways and with our gratitude wished him and his wife plenty of good luck and fruitful achievements in their long journey to the USA. We thanked him for his interest and kindness to each and all of us. He always seemed to bring a breath of our homeland whenever he arrived in our midst. We also tendered our thanks to the Committee whose efforts had made this happy meeting possible.

A big thanks is also due to our former President and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. H. Vollers, who so generously offered us hospitality of their large home for our meetings in the last few years. This has certainly helped to revive our club and brought many of our scattered members along. We are all grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Vollers to give us the opportunities to spend such friendly evenings together.

LM

## SWISS CHILDREN ENJOY A VERY SUCCESSFUL CHRISTMAS PARTY

The hundred children who took part in the Christmas Party some devoted members of the Colony had staged for them on Saturday, 5th January, showed by their glee and their laughter that the coal crisis didn't worry them in the least, and also that the efforts spent on organising the annual *Fête des enfants de la Colonie* were appreciated. Attendants at the various Swiss functions are reminded of this institution towards