

Swiss Mercantile Society

Objekttyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1975)**

Heft 1702

PDF erstellt am: **27.04.2024**

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6th April — Town Hall, Huddersfield, 3 p.m. — Tuesday, 8th April — Lavenham, 7.30 p.m. — Wednesday, 9th April — Royal Festival Hall, SE1, 8 p.m. — *Geza Anda* conducts the English Chamber Orchestra and plays the piano part in concertos by Mozart (K.453) and Beethoven (No. 3).

Thursday, 10th April — Purcell Room SE1, 7.30 p.m. — *Peter Hummel* (flute) and Harold Lester (harpischord and piano) play works by J. S. Bach, C. P. E. Bach, Devienne, Silcher and Beethoven.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

NOUVELLE SOCIÉTÉ HELVÉTIQUE:

Thursday, 20th March, Annual General Meeting and Dinner. Prince of Wales Hotel, de Vere Gardens, Kensington, W.8. The AGM begins at 6.30 p.m. and the Dinner at 7.45 p.m.

Thursday, 17th April, 7 p.m. Swiss Hostel for Girls, 9 Belsize Grove, N.W.3. Talk (possibly illustrated by film) by Mr. R. A. Ramseier, First Secretary, Swiss Embassy, on the "Experiences of a Swiss in India". All Swiss and their friends welcome.

SWISS CLUB LIVERPOOL: Swiss Carnival on 8th March. Annual General Meeting. Buffet at 7.00 p.m. at the Dresden Hotel, Bromborough.

SWISS CLUB MANCHESTER: Thursday, 6th March, Annual General Meeting at 8.15 p.m.

YORKSHIRE SWISS CLUB: Annual General Meeting on Monday, 10th March at the Leeds Council of Social Services, St. Marks Ave., Woodhouse Lane.

CITY SWISS CLUB, Tuesday 18th March, Family Evening. Tuesday, 15th April, Annual General Meeting.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY: Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, 12th March at 7.15 p.m. at 34-35 Fitzroy Square.

SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY: Wednesday, 26th March, Film Show at Swiss House.

ANGLO-SWISS SOCIETY: Architectural visit to Switzerland from 21st to 28th September.

SECRETARY — Swiss-German, English and French-speaking Secretary wanted by the Swiss Welfare Office and the Swiss Benevolent Society. German and English shorthand essential. 5-day week. Please apply to 31 Conway Street, London W1P 5HL.

WANTED: Stamp collections, especially Switzerland, France and Great Britain. Offers to E. M. Huber, 10 Linton Lawns, Golf Links Road, Ferndown, Dorset.

CORRECTION

An unfortunate error appeared in our report (14th February) on the departure of two members of the Embassy. Dr. Juerg Iseline, who was until early February, First Collaborator of the Ambassador, married in 1950 and not in 1955 as was erroneously stated. Mr. Fritz Adams, our departing Consul General has two boys and a girl, Daniele, 11, and not three boys as stated.

Another member of the Embassy shall be leaving London shortly, he is *Dr. Franz Birrer*, Cultural Attaché. We shall be reporting more in detail in a forthcoming issue.

CONCERT AT WIGMORE HALL BY WELL-KNOWN YOUNG MUSICIANS

Alfred Knüsel (cello), and Russell Lomas (piano), will be performing at Wigmore Hall, 36 Wigmore Street, London W1, on Tuesday, 11th March, 1975, at 7.30 p.m.



Alfred Knüsel

Alfred Knüsel, born in Lucerne, is a popular artist in Switzerland and broadcasts regularly. His studies of his chosen instrument have been in great depth and from reports he has obtained great intensity of tone and he possesses extremely expressive 'cantilena' and virtuosity which enables him to tackle the trickiest of passages with elegance.

Russell Lomas (piano), was born in Manchester. He studied at the Royal Manchester College of Music and from there has progressed through diplomas and specialised courses to become one of the top-flight young accompanists.

Their programme will include: Sonata No. 3 in G major by Boccherini; Suite No. 2 for solo cello by Bloch; Sonata Op. 255 (first London performance) by Alan Hovhaness; Sonata in F major Op. 5 No. 1 by Beethoven.

Seating enquiries: Telephone: 01-935 2141.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

The Swiss Mercantile Society held its Annual Dinner and Dance on Saturday, 1st February, at the Orchid Suite of the Dorchester Hotel. It was, as usual, a friendly function with many

known faces. Attendance seemed to be slightly down on previous annual dinners with eight or nine tables spaced out across the Orchid Suite, the scene of so many Swiss functions over the years. Dr. Albert Weitnauer, our Ambassador, who is Honorary President of the Society, honoured the evening with his presence and greeted the guests, together with Mr. A. Jaccard, President, and Mrs. Jaccard at the entrance of the opening reception.

The menu was excellent and had a distinct Dorchester flavour with a traditional fish dish as starter. The menu read as follows: *La Bordure de Sole au Pernod, Le Riz Pilaff, Le Fricandeau de Veau à la Moutarde, Les Nouilles à l'Emmental, Le Brocoli au Beurre, Le Savarin à l'Ananas au Kirsch, Le café, Les Petits Fours*. This description in French gives the idea of a rather fancy and exotic meal, but like all restaurant menus it tends to enhance on paper something that was not all that different from an ordinary Sunday lunch.

Shortly after the toasts to the Queen and to Switzerland, Mr. Jaccard rose for his welcoming address and spoke as follows:

"With the exciting events which attended the ceremonial re-opening of Swiss House last November still fresh in our minds, I think it is most pleasant to meet again in a less formal atmosphere and it is, therefore, in a relaxed mood that I welcome you tonight on behalf of the Swiss Mercantile Society.

"The explanation for the fall in attendance in contrast to last year's bumper presence of members and friends, far from being due to lack of effort on our part to attract support, may be found in the economic uncertainties besetting us at present and we can only express the hope that these will be resolved in the not too distant future.

Before turning the page on the subject of Swiss House I must, however, refer once again to the part played by the Ambassador, our Honorary President, who has kindly agreed, once again to honour us by his presence.

"It has fallen to me on more than one occasion to express our thoughts on Dr. Weitnauer's share in our enterprise, which testifies to his close and warm interest, not only in our aims but also in the rising generation whose broadening of experience will assist them in the shouldering of their responsibilities as future leaders of the Swiss economy.

"The support which Dr. Weitnauer has felt able to give us in bringing to fruition a desire, long dormant but finally brought to realisation will link his name indissolubly with Swiss House and our deepest gratitude is therefore due to him for his valued assistance.

"This function, which is usually marked by good spirit and fellowship is tonight tinged with a certain melancholy due to the imminent departure from this country of two very popular members of the Embassy staff, Monsieur J. A. Iselin, Ministre Plénipotentiaire and Monsieur F. Adams, Consul-General, which will leave a great void in the colony.

"Monsieur Iseline, deputising for his chief, has been guest-of-honour on two occasions during his stay in England. Of engaging personality and feeling at home among compatriots he had no difficulty in captivating his audience with his ready wit, once gently pulling our leg for the high number of passes at our end of term examinations.

"Madame Iselin graced our table with her company on both occasions and supported her husband admirably by just being her charming self.

"I understand that returning to Berne for a spell is a little like going back to school. That being so I hope Monsieur Iselin that the discipline will not prove too irksome and that you will get on with the headman and also that it will serve as a springboard in the furtherance of your career.

"Monsieur Adams, by the nature of his functions, came very much in touch with the colony with which he identified himself closely.

"Unsparring in his efforts and giving freely of his time he once, in the company of his son, represented the Embassy at the *Times* Football Cup match against the College team and I believe that he enjoyed the experience as he has done the many times that he and Madame Adams have attended this function.

"Madame Adams, equally generous in her contributions to the life of the colony, has achieved what many would give their eye teeth to emulate, almost the front page of one of the national dailies, when her photograph, which did not entirely do her justice, appeared on the day following the church bazaar.

"Monsieur Adams, you are going to a land of plenty. If you should consider following the example of some of your predecessors who send a duplicated letter to their friends once a year to keep in touch do you think, in view of our present economic plight, that you could attach to your message a leg of New Zealand lamb?

"Our thoughts go with you, ladies and gentlemen, coupled with our best wishes for success and happiness in your new sphere of activity.

"From the Embassy as well, I welcome Monsieur W. E. Reutlinger, Consul, and Madame Reutlinger, who have become fast friends and supporters of our activities.

"It is always a pleasure to welcome someone new to the Society and it is therefore with particular pleasure that I greet Mr. B. Simon, President of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the U.K. accompanied by Mrs. Simon.

"A very interesting name this, with roots in several European countries. England had her Sir John Simon, K.S., a great advocate and parliamentary debater and minister, who rose to become Lord Chancellor and was raised to the peerage in 1941; in Germany the late and unlamented Kaiser had a foreign minister, von Simon; France has produced the great chef André Simon who carved a reputation for himself in England; and

Geneva gave birth to Michel Simon, a great hulk of a man with a mane of red hair who made his name in the French cinema in the inter-war years. As I was saying, a most interesting name with something to live up to.

"Mr. Simon is not something in the City but at Ciba-Geigy's, a name which may sound a bell to some of you. He graduated to London from Manchester and if I mention this it is purely as a matter of interest, without *arrière-pensée* for in Lancashire there is a saying that what Manchester does today, London will copy tomorrow.

"When I had known Mr. Simon but a short while we met by accident at a hotel in Troon, Ayrshire. Time being short I did not have a chance to ask him whether he was there to play golf or merely playing truant.

"As a recently-elected President of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the U.K., he has the opportunity of infusing fresh life into, and giving a new sense of purpose to, an organisation composed of a hotch-potch of societies with diverse interests, whose sole function at the moment consists in taking note of and the rubber-stamping of decisions taken and policies laid down at high level by the *Nouvelle Société Helvétique* in concert with the Commission of the Swiss Abroad.

"Would you, therefore, think it presumptuous on my part, Mr. President, and consider that I might be treading on somebody's toes if I were to suggest a slight switch in emphasis in the Federation's endeavours for the good of the colony, thus sustaining the interest of member societies and stimulating the attention of their delegates to the A.G.M. of the Federation.

"In any event I wish you, Mr. Simon, and your committee, every success in the years ahead.

"Some of the pastors being otherwise engaged, the Swiss Churches have been able to provide only a token representation on this occasion, which we are nevertheless pleased to welcome in the persons of Mrs. Ursula Stefan, representing the Rev. U. Stefan, and Father Bossard, who is slowly becoming a veteran member of the colony.

"It was at this stage of the proceedings last year, when I had hardly mentioned the name of a well-known person who is also among us tonight, that my flow of eloquence was interrupted by the exuberant shouts of a certain party. May I take this opportunity of reminding the person in question that this is not Speakers' Corner or the House of Commons and the interruptions will be frowned upon.

"Having said this, it gives me great pleasure to welcome, as usual, Mrs. Marianne Meier, President of the *Nouvelle Société Helvétique*, and South of England delegate on the Commission for the Swiss abroad, who is, of course, a member of long-standing of the S.M.S.

"I have become increasingly aware over the years of how thinly-scattered are

the members of the S.M.S. among the numbers making up the participants to this annual gathering. This, I suppose, is the tribute we have to pay to advancing years and we may yet have to introduce an equivalent to the Queen's shilling to attract new faces.

"Undeterred this evening by this erosion I salute the following Honorary Members: Mr. Walter Burren and Mr. Oscar Grob, Trustee, and their ladies, who also support our monthly meetings, an example we should be happy to see others follow.

In these days filled with uncertainty it is very satisfying to have a teaching staff on whom we can rely and for this we are indebted in a large measure to Mr. A. W. Makin, Principal, present tonight with Mrs. Makin, as well as Mr. L. Cane, Vice-Principal, to whom we extend a warm welcome.

"At this juncture I usually make a reference or two to the college, but in view of the surfeit of Swiss House we have had of late I shall spare you that ordeal on this occasion and simply record again our appreciation of the Confederation's financial support of the college's activities.

"There is, however, one other small body of people, the administrative staff, headed by Mr. W. Burren, our secretary, and his two assistants who deserve special mention for their sustained hard work, which helps the whole system tick.

"I should also like to take this opportunity of thanking the Trustees, the members of the council and other committees, with, in the forefront, Mr. O. Häusermann, Chairman of the Education Committee, for the support they have given me in the past year, not omitting, of course the members who are the backbone of the S.M.S.

"My last and most pleasurable duty is to address a welcome to all those unnamed guests and alluring ladies, without whose presence this function could not have been held and I would ask the members of the Swiss Mercantile Society to charge their glasses, be upstanding and drink the health of the guests and the ladies."

The reply was given by the Ambassador, who in a short and witty address remarked that he could think of several other well-known people with the name Simon. He mentioned the two Saint-Simons of French history, one known for his cynical 17th-Century chronicles and the other for his idealistic and communalist ideas on society. Mr. Simon replied for the Guests. He passed briefly on the theme of his name and also mentioned the problems of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the U.K., of which he is President.

The tables were then moved to the side of the hall. Fresh drinks were brought in, and the first sounds of the Orchestra completely changed the scene as the dancing got going until midnight.

