

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK
Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom
Band: - (1975)
Heft: 1704

Rubrik: Swiss Mercantile Society

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articles free of charge, but the hope is expressed that in due course future contributors can be remunerated. One third of the space – the first issue has 32 pages – will always be reserved for readers' contributions, which they are asked to send in "on any topic of their choice" and written "as they please, even as poetry".

The least that can, so far, be said about this *Readers Paper* is that in the present time of Press concentration and small newspapers dying this is both an interesting and daring experiment in co-determinative journalism. For whoever contributes his 50 francs can, as a

member of the society, take part in its meetings and can assist in electing editors and determining editorial policy. Some very topical problems are touched on in the first edition: 'Democracy in the Swiss Army', 'Women in Politics', 'Does Switzerland contribute enough to Development Aid?', 'Kissinger's Foreign Policy' – to mention only a few of them. The paper stresses that it does not owe allegiance to any political party, or financial group, in short that it is totally independent. Its first number gives one the impression of a leftish trend. Its further existence is guaranteed if 5,800 supporters part with 50 francs and, in

addition, if at least 1,000 copies at 3 francs a piece are sold in the bookstalls. One of the declared aims of the paper is to "work for humanitarian and democratic alternatives in society, economy and state, where present mentalities and existing structures do not correspond any longer to the needs of the individual and of society as a whole".

Advertisements, it is stated, "are not on principle refused, but whether they are accepted or refused will be decided in each single case".

Whether the new publication can live, and perhaps even grow, remains to be seen within this year.

NEWS FROM THE COLONY



APOLOGIES

We apologise to our readers for the dreadful mix of copy which appeared in our last issue. Part of the article on "Efficiency" by Mrs. Gee Lebon was inadvertently printed with the article "A Premiere by the Lake", by Mrs. Yole Bowman and vice versa. We hope that readers will have managed to piece the puzzle together and made sense of the two stories. We also apologise to the two contributors whose works have been so appallingly mangled.



Concert at the Wigmore Hall

It was a pity that the quality of the performance by the Swiss cellist *Alfred Knuesel* and the British pianist *Russel Lomas* at the Wigmore Hall on Tuesday, 11th March, wasn't matched by the strength of the audience. The Wigmore Hall was about a third full. The first two rows appeared to be reserved to an invited audience. The next few rows were taken by students coming apparently from the various schools of music of London, and behind them members of the general public were sprinkled across the hall.

There was, however, nothing particularly dramatic about the poor attendance. Most Swiss artists who have made their London debut in the Wigmore Hall have had to contend with a diminutive attendance. This is the lot of

all unknown artists, and the Wigmore Hall is not always a stepping stone to fame. This rather lugubrious building with its garish and old-fashioned decorations often marks the end of the London ascent of budding artists.

But Alfred Knuesel and Russel Lomas were hardly that at all and their virtuosity found a loud echo among the young musicologists who had come to appreciate them. Their performance of Beethoven's piano and cello sonata in F major (Op 5, No. 1) was brilliant and loudly applauded. London's premiere performance of Sonata Op 225 by the American composer Hovhanness was particularly well noticed and the two musicians visibly translated Anglo-Swiss friendship into the harmony and entente of their performance. Alfred Knuesel had a remarkable instrument which students went to examine after the performance. It was a pity that its rich sounds were lost to the thousands of concert-goers who missed the evening but we hope that Mr. Knuesel and Mr. Lomas will one day become a duo of international recognition.

SCHWEIZERBUND

The AGM season among London's Swiss societies began with that of the Schweizerbund (Swiss Club). It took place in the congenial setting of the Presscala Club, Fleet Street, under the good care of Mr. John Albert Gluck and son. Mr. Virgil Berti, the President, raised the problem of the Society's Centenary Celebrations in 1979. He said that with the rapid flight of time, this was not as far away as it seemed. He called on ideas for the future celebrations and suggested that we prepare for these financially by raising the annual subscription fee from £1 to £2 as from next year.

The meeting was followed by drinks at the club bar, and it was a pleasure to meet several guests and members never seen at other Swiss gatherings in London. Dinner was simple and generous. Mr. Gluck moreover brought from his cellar an excellent claret. In his welcome address, Mr. Berti mentioned the presence of Vice-Consul Werner Reutlinger and Mrs. Reutlinger, who were representing the Embassy. He read a letter from Mr. Fritz Adams,

departing General-Consul, in which he regretted his absence and wished the Society a prosperous future. Mr. Berti asked the attendance to stand in silence in remembrance of Mrs. Emily Delaloye, a regular member who died at the beginning of the year.

Although the Swissair song books had been distributed by Mr. Jurg Schmid, the Secretary, there was no singing that night. But that certainly didn't reduce the pleasure of a very friendly function.

P. M. B.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

The 1975 Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Mercantile Society took place on Wednesday, 12th March, on the top floor of a renovated Swiss house in the presence of a great many members. The meeting was opened by the President, Mr. André Jaccard after a get-together in the Canteen. Much of the proceedings were devoted to an examination of the accounts. These were far more complicated than hitherto because of the separation of the Swiss Mercantile Society into the Society proper, now a registered charity, and the Swiss Mercantile Society Ltd., a company handling the business side of the SMS, namely the school of English. This has undergone a complete face-lift during 1974, the year under review.

The President regretted the absence of the auditors to present the figures but managed remarkably well to explain the financial situation of the school. A balance sheet and a profit and loss account may be something familiar to many. In fact, such documents are presented to members of every society at every AGM. But as far as I am concerned, these lists of figures remain Chinese to me, and for this reason I will not attempt to report on them. Suffice it to say that the school's expenditure in 1974 totalled £101,884 against £68,285 in 1973. This expenditure was not covered by receipts and a deficit of £39,946 had to be carried to the general fund. With the various transfers and federal donations to the school, the deficit was converted into a loss of about £6,000.

Mr. Jaccard explained that the enormous increase in expenditure was in part due to rising costs, particularly in

respect of teachers' salaries, and also to the exceptional circumstances of 1973 and last year, during which teachers and students were successively moved to Bedford College, in Regent's Park, the Ashburnham School in Fulham, and the Coopers' School at Mile End. During this time, Swiss House, for which the SMS had obtained a freehold two years earlier, was being completely overhauled. Work on Swiss House lasted seven weeks longer than planned (and would have probably lasted much longer were it not for the urgent prodding of the SMS organisation). This incurred extra costs as expensive premises had to be let from the Inner London Education Authority.

After more than a year's absence from Swiss House, everything came back in order last September when students and staff could at last reintegrate the Fitzroy Square premises which were ceremoniously opened on 1st November in the presence of many high officials from Switzerland.

Details were supplied by Mr. F. O. Hausermann, Vice-President of the SMS, on the College's activities during the year under review. He said that 638 students were admitted last year and that average attendance lay at 253. A total of 401 students sat for the diploma examination of whom 383, or 95 per cent, were successful (a remarkable achievement by any standards!) Mr. Hausermann reported on the many social and educational activities offered to the students. These included excursions to Windsor Castle, to Coventry Cathedral and Warwick Castle and to the Dagenham car factories. The

SMS college football team, after a somewhat lack-lustre season, finally defeated *The Times* in the annual cup

match by three goals to two and brought the Lints-Smith Cup back to Swiss House. Earlier, Mr. Jaccard had referred to



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a temporary lull in student recruitment. This had upset budget predictions. But an expected rise in new arrivals and an increase in fees (from £110 to £150 for a 15-week term) was planned to help balance the College's budget. It was noted that fees had increased two-and-a-half times in sterling terms in less than two years. Set against the fall of sterling with respect to the Swiss franc, the increase wasn't as large as apparent at first sight. Mr. Jaccard also noted a dramatic fall in the employment activities of the Society. This was due to a drop in job opportunities and, especially, to the conditions set by potential candidates for jobs in Britain who were not prepared to remain for more than six months or so.

The meeting ended after nearly two hours on the vexed problem of Mr. Jaccard's succession as President. Mr. Jaccard, who has assumed the presidency and its responsibilities for twelve years, has resigned. He was officially thanked by Mr. Oscar Grob, Trustee and President *pro tem* who offered him the Certificate of Honourship and a token which the outgoing president was invited to spend on a mahogany table.

When these proceedings were over, members received voting slips with an empty space beside the box labelled "President of the General Purposes and House Committee". It seemed at first that they were invited to name a new President out of the blue. Mr. Grob explained that the normal procedure of first naming a President in the Committee had to be altered because no candidate could be found despite the most

strenuous efforts. Members were then made to understand that, given this situation, the outgoing President had accepted to remain as acting President until the problem of his succession was settled. Mr. Jaccard later stressed that he really wished to hand over before a year and all members sympathetically agreed to this. Ageing societies all have the greatest difficulties in finding officials prepared to devote time and trouble in organising monthly meetings and supervising the general affairs of the Society. The SMS, which would surely have had no problem in finding itself a President 20 years ago, is not alone in that respect.

The upshot is, therefore, that Mr. Jaccard remains as acting and temporary President. Before he regained the Chair, the President *pro tem* took particular pains to assure Mrs. Jaccard, who was one of the three ladies present, that everything would be endeavoured to unburden her husband of the duties of the SMS presidency.

Accepting the gifts and the thanks of Mr. Grob, Mr. Jaccard had earlier mentioned all the help and support he had received from his wife in leading the SMS and its College through the difficult times of 1973-74. It is said that behind every successful man there is a loving and helpful wife. This is surely true of a successful President as well.

P. M. B.

LONDON SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

A somewhat smaller number than usual of members and guests assembled at

the Stanhope Suite of the Dorchester Hotel, in London, on Friday, 28th February, to partake in the Annual Dinner of the London Swiss Philatelic Society. However, the saying goes that "what is lacking in number is made up in quality" and certainly the old stalwarts of the Society with their wives and friends were present as usual at this important function in the calendar of the London-Swiss philatelists.

Following cocktails in the ante-room the gathering sat down to an excellent dinner consisting of Quenelle de Poisson with rice, tranche de veau roti avec chambon with broccoli and pomme pure, and ending up with a delicious rum savarin and fruit salad. All very enjoyable and much appreciated. Whilst coffee was being served some ladies passed round the tables selling raffle tickets for the benefit of the club funds, and no doubt encouraged by the large table full of interesting prizes donated by some members of the Society all the tickets were soon sold and the sum of £30 was handed to the treasurer.

After the customary toasts to H.M. The Queen, and Switzerland, the President, Mr. David Paschoud, extended a hearty welcome to all present and particularly welcomed the guest-of-honour, Mr. A. Jaccard — President of the Swiss Mercantile Society — and Mrs. Jaccard. Amid a number of noisy interruptions the President tried to pay tribute to some of the "workers" of the Society, particularly our industrious Secretary, Miss Alma Grunberg, but also to the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Rothlisberger



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