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LONDON SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY CHALLENGE CUP IS BACK!

A total of 46 people enjoyed good food, good wine and, above all, excellent company when they attended the London Swiss Philatelic Society's annual dinner at the end of February.

Even the venue was new, Mr. Glück, proprietor of Fleet Street's Presscala club had been entrusted with the catering arrangements. He was asked to choose the menu — a not inconsiderable compliment when one considers that the Society's outgoing President, Mr. David Paschoud, is himself in the catering business.

Nobody could have criticized Mr. Glück's impeccable choice — the fish, the entrée and the sweet were all superbly prepared and elegantly served by friendly and willing staff. Mr. Glück is, it is rumoured, shortly to open another eating establishment somewhere in London. It should do well!

But down to business — what there was of it. It is none too easy to describe the business side of the event simply because there wasn't too much of it and what there was, was conducted in a deliciously informal manner.

In his address LSPS President David Paschoud paid tribute to members and guests who included Consul and Mrs. Keller from the Swiss Embassy.

Mr. Paschoud also had a special word of welcome to Mr. Adolphe Schmid who, as readers will doubtless remember, celebrated his 90th birthday recently. Mr. Schmid, looking many years younger than he is, obviously enjoyed the occasion as much as everyone else present.

Special greetings and congratulations on their recent marriage, were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Michael Jones. Mrs. Jones (see report in this issue) was better known as Sylvia Streit, secretary of the 1st August Committee.

Mr. Paschoud continued "This is my last year as this Society's President although I have only myself to blame for the fact that I must relinquish my office. It was I who introduced the rule that the President must retire after three years! I also stuck my neck out by reintroducing the annual challenge competition after this event had been in 'limbo' for a few years. My optimism was justified — we had one of the best attendances on record.

The winner, to whom I have the honour of presenting the cup was, once again, Miss Alma Gruenberg who is, incidentally, a member of the Royal Philatelic Society. This is the seventh time Miss Gruenberg has won the cup — an achievement unique in the Society's history.

Mr. Paschoud concluded by thanking his committee — Miss Gruenberg

for her work as secretary, Mr. Roethlisberger for his hard work in keeping the Society's accounts in order and Mr. Huber, Hon. Packet Secretary for his help with various tasks — including the writing of the Society's newsletter.

And an interesting aside — Mr. Paschoud, a keen philatelist for many years (and woe betide anyone who calls a philatelist a 'stamp collector') informs me that there are 7,200 franking offices in Switzerland. He wants a postmark from each and every one of them! A daunting task but we wish him luck.

The next items on the agenda were the traditional stamp auction, with lots so expertly and lovingly prepared by Mr. Huber. The editor is no expert on stamps so suffice to say that the first item on offer — a Jane Austen commemorative first day cover went for £1. The bidding for the rest of the sometimes quite rare

items on offer was fast and furious and resulted in some delighted customers — and, perhaps, some slightly perplexed wives?

The final item, the raffle, also deserves mention. There were some quite splendid prizes and, much to her embarrassment, Mrs. Barbara Sommer (the editor's wife) won one of them. The quite beautiful candle beautifies our home.

To conclude LSPS treasurer and President of the Swiss Benevolent Society Mr. Roethlisberger gave a short address of thanks. "The raffle realised £53" he pointed out and added "this will help us to close our books on the right side."

"The auction resulted in a quite splendid £50.35 — half of which will be donated to the National Spastics Society and the other half to the Swiss Benevolent Society. WGS



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