

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: - (1976)
Heft: 1724

Rubrik: News from the colony

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Birthdays and Anniversaries

It gives us great pleasure to announce the 80th birthday of Mr. Max G. EHRSAM, of 10 Almond Road, Bicester, Oxon. It will take place on 14th December. When asked about his work and interests, he was far too modest to tell us anything. But we know he retired at the age of 72 and has since done some relief management in his late company (Crest Hotels Ltd). He also does some gardening. We hope he may continue to enjoy his retirement and send him and his family best wishes for a happy birthday.

Mr. F. Burri will be 64 on 2nd December and Mrs. C. Renz will have her birthday on 3rd of the month. Mr. H. Suter will celebrate his 88th birthday on 12th December and Mrs. L. Reutlinger will have her birthday on 21st. Mr. C. A. Fuchs will be 84 on 26th December, and on the last day of the year, it will be Mrs. E. Crack's birthday and Mr. E. C. Schmid will be 82.

Congratulations and best wishes all round, also to any other readers who may be celebrating birthdays and anniversaries before the new year.

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Obituaries

JOHANN J. WETTER

It is with great regret that we announce the death of Mr Johann Jakob Wetter of 37 Southside, Dalmeny Avenue, London N.7.

He was born at Teufen (Appenzell) in 1890. He went to school locally and then studied at the *Verkehrsschule* in St. Gall and later at the *Ecole de Commerce* in Lausanne. He came to England in 1911 and worked for some years for a firm of general merchants in London. After the first world war, he started his own sewing machine business which he carried on until 1968 when he retired.

Mr Wetter, a bachelor, joined the Swiss Mercantile Society in 1911 and remained a member up to the time of his death.

We express our deep sympathy to his brother, Mr John C. Wetter, of 8 Carew Road, Northwood, Middlesex, and his sister and brother in Switzerland in their sad bereavement.

He had been in indifferent health for some time, then had a fall and broke a leg. He was transferred to the Royal Northern Hospital where he died.

SHEILA ANNE ACKERMANN

It is with great regret that we have to inform our readers of the death, after a protracted illness, borne with fortitude, of Sheila Anne Ackermann, beloved wife of Louis and adored mother of Martine and Gabrielle.

The death occurred on 24th October 1976 at St. Joseph's Nursing Home, Beaconsfield.

A funeral Service followed by private cremation took place on Monday 1st November at Beaconsfield.

We extend our sincere sympathy to Mr. Ackermann and his daughters in their sad loss.

Important announcement

Tickets for the wine-growers' festival at Vevey, which will take place from 30th July to 14th August, are now available and can be ordered in advance from the Swiss National Tourist Office. Please ask for application form from SNTTO, Swiss Centre, 1 New Coventry Street, London W1V 3HG. Telephone 01-734 1921.

NEWS FROM THE COLONY

GOING BACK TO MORAT

The Swiss community in Great Britain sends two delegates (Dr. H. R. Bolliger for the North and Mrs. Mariann Meier for the South) to the Commission of the Swiss Abroad in Berne, the "Little Parliament" of the Swiss abroad. At the A.G.M. of the Federation (responsible for electing and sending them) it was decided that the report usually given at a Nouvelle Société Helvétique meeting should, by way of experiment, be made available to a larger section of the Swiss community.

This meeting for the London Swiss societies was held at the Swiss Embassy on 21st October, and some 60 people attended. The President of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, Mrs. Mariann Meier, opened the meeting by welcoming the President of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the U.K., Mr. Bernard Simon, and a number of representatives of Swiss societies as well as members of the Swiss Embassy. Mrs. Meier then gave a detailed report on the Assembly of the Swiss Abroad at Morat at the end of August, on the work of the Solidarity Fund and the Commission on Information, as well as the work of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad and its secretariat in Berne. (A general report on Morat has already appeared in the *Swiss Observer*.) She was thanked for her work and her report by Mr. Simon, who was seconded by Mr. Paul Bessire. Her report was apparently satisfactory to the audience, and not many questions were asked. But there is no doubt that anyone who wanted to be informed had an excellent chance. M.G.

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IF IT IS TRUE IT IS DEFINITELY NOT NICE!

In our November edition there was a photograph of a girl called Salina. My wife and I had the pleasure of meeting and talking to her on a recent holiday in Italy where Salina works during the summer months as a courier on coaches taking day-trippers to Venice.

She is multilingual, intelligent, sensitive and keen to talk to her foreign visitors.

However, as indicated in the caption last month, the story she had to relate to me was disturbing even if there is only an element of truth in it. I would like to think that her story was a complete fabrication but that would be to call Salina a liar which I do not think she is.

More probably the story has been passed on by word of mouth and become somewhat embellished in the process as stories have a habit of doing.

Before I summarise her tale it should be pointed out that she did not know that I am Swiss or that I have any connection with the Swiss community in this country.

We were discussing her job and her way of life after I had made the point that her job kept her away from her husband and her home for many hours of the day. She was not too worried because she rested in the winter and anyway her job meant that she could only go home at weekends and then only sometimes.

We were discussing the thousands of foreign tourists she has "in her care" each season and although one can never classify or generalise about people the conversation was drifting in that direction.

It ran along these lines — the British are courteous and reserved but rarely speak any language other than English, the Germans are sometimes arrogant and demand a lot of attention, the French always compare everything unfavourably with their own country and so on and so on. All rather tedious stuff which we have all heard before.

"So what about the Swiss?" I asked her. Salina frowned: "Oh yes, they are different. They are not too bad when they come to Italy — it is in their homeland that they can be so objectionable."

"What makes you say that?" I asked. "Quite simple," she replied, "they

do not like foreigners in general and Italians in particular." My reaction was at first one of scepticism and then one of curiosity. "Surely," I said, "Switzerland has a fine reputation as a tourist country and Swiss hospitality and standards of service are probably second to none."

"Oh yes," said Salina sadly, "they are good to tourists but very bad to their 'Gastarbeiter'. My own brother works in Geneva in a big hotel and has many friends among the Italian community there. They all complain of harassment and in particular that gangs of youths had spat at them, jostled them and, on one occasion, beaten them up in the streets."

This I could not accept at face value and made the point that another of Switzerland's attributes is that, in general, law and order prevail in the streets. But Salina was adamant. "This sort of thing has been going on for years," she said, "but seems to be getting worse." In particular, harassment, in her opinion, becomes more prevalent when initiatives on the levels of foreign workers in the country were being discussed or voted upon.

I choose not to elaborate further on this harrowing conversation with this pleasant young lady. I simply hope that the story, if even only partly true, reflects a few isolated incidents and not a rather nasty turn for the worse in the Swiss character. Racial intolerance is nasty, dangerous and uncivilised wherever, whenever and for whatever so-called reasons it manifests itself. It ill behoves the Swiss.

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13.15-13.45	feature programmes	15.15-15.30	
15.30-16.00		18.00-18.15	
21.00-21.30			

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09.00-09.30	9560, 11775, 11950, 15305 kHz (31.38, 25.48, 25.10, 19.60 m)
13.15-13.45	9735, 11745, 11870, 15430 kHz (30.82, 25.54, 25.27, 19.44 m)

Middle East

15.30-16.00	9590, 11870, 15430 kHz (31.28, 25.27, 19.44 m)
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Africa

11.00-11.30	15140, 15430, 17830, 21520 kHz (19.82, 19.44, 16.83, 13.94 m)
15.30-16.00	9590, 11870, 15430 kHz (31.28, 25.27, 19.44 m)
21.00-21.30	9535, 9590, 11720, 11870 kHz (31.46, 31.28, 25.60, 25.27 m)

Consumer expenditure trends in Switzerland

According to the calculations of the Federal Statistics Bureau, in 1974 the average Swiss spent Sw.Fr. 12,800 on the purchase of consumer goods as opposed to Sw.Fr. 7,350 in 1968. For the period 1968-74, private consumption accounted for 57 per cent of the gross national product; it remains therefore the main item of macro-economic demand, even if its share has constantly declined since the beginning of the fifties, when it represented 70 per cent of the national product.

Between 1968 and 1974, private consumption steadily developed both in nominal value and in real terms. After a slight falling off in real terms during 1974, this trend continued in 1975. On average, during the last few years, the growth amounted to about 10 per cent of current prices and a little more than 3.5 per cent at constant prices.

The trend differed greatly from one type of expenditure to the next; indispensable expenses increased less than others. In real value, there was a growth of 5 per cent and more for the groups of expenditure involving above all services (holidays abroad, insurance, cleaning, heating, lighting).

The annual growth oscillated

between 4 and 5 per cent for the home fittings group, body care, further education and leisure. On the contrary, the increase remained somewhat lower than average for foodstuffs, rents (about 3.5 per cent in both cases) and clothing (2 per cent). Owing to the drop in the price of cars, the expenditure on transport fell slightly in 1973 and 1974. Finally, it should be noted that expenditure in the field of beverages and tobacco remained unchanged.

SWITZERLAND'S POPULAR PARLIAMENT

The Swiss parliament will meet in Berne from 29th November to 17th December for its regular winter session. Parliament meets four times a year and the proceedings are always open to the public, allowing Swiss and foreign visitors alike the opportunity to see Swiss democracy in action. A major topic on the agenda will be the government's proposed budget for 1977.

In between the four annual sessions the parliamentary buildings themselves are also a popular tourist attraction, with free guided tours by multilingual guides.

Our Programmes

Dateline (Monday to Friday)

SBC's weekday survey of international and Swiss affairs.

Saturday

The Swiss Cantons (1st and 3rd Saturdays)

Our tour continues through the 25 "states" which make up the Swiss Confederation.

The Swiss Shortwave Merry-go-Round (2nd and 4th Saturdays)

The DX scene: Bob Thomann and Bob Zanotti keep you up-to-date on international radio around the world.

Sunday

Switzerland à la carte (1st Sunday)

SBC's new food magazine. From the culinary arts in Swiss history and culture to modern research and the food industry ... with Swiss recipes and country restaurants in between!

Insight (2nd Sunday)

Continuing SBC's documentary series on organisations that serve the public.

Sunday Supplement (3rd Sunday)

In-depth expansion of specially selected subjects first introduced to SBC listeners on our Dateline current affairs magazine.

Jazz Panorama (4th Sunday)

The world of international jazz.

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