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## SOCIETY AND SOCIAL SCENE

# London's first Swiss ambassador dies

### Dr Armin Daeniker

IT is with deep regret that we announce the death on January 14 of Ambassador Dr Armin Daeniker.

He died at his home in the Seniorenheim Egghoelzli, Berne, where he settled a few years after the death of his wife in 1978.

Dr Daeniker was born in Zurich on February 24 1898, and he studied law at the universities of Zurich, Geneva, Berne, Berlin and London, taking his degree in his home town. He joined the Federal Political Department (today's Department of Foreign Affairs) in 1925 and held posts in many parts of the world.

In 1948 Monsieur Daeniker was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to India and Thailand and in 1953 to Sweden. While still accredited there he was head of the Swiss Delegation of the Neutral International Commission for the Exchange of

Prisoners of War in Korea (1953-4).

Early in 1955 the Federal Council appointed Dr Daeniker Minister to the Court of St James's, and two years later he became the first Swiss Ambassador in London.

For nine years, Monsieur and Madame Daeniker worked in London, and they left a mark not only as representatives of their country but also as active participants in the life of the Swiss community here.

Madame Daeniker, a lawyer in her own right, was particularly interested in the Swiss Hostel for Girls, but she also took an interest in the Welfare Office and the British Pestalozzi Village at Battle.

Both she and her husband did an admirable job during the Swiss Fortnight in London in 1959.

When Monsieur and Madame Daeniker left London in the



*Dr Armin Daeniker*

autumn of 1963 they left behind many friends. During Madame Daeniker's long illness, her husband was her constant com-

### Othmar J. Brunner

WE deeply regret to announce the sudden death on December 13 of Othmar Brunner, of 9 Priory Mansions, 90 Drayton Gardens, London.

Othmar Brunner was born in Winterthur on January 14 1923. After school he spent three years at the commercial department of the Technikum in Winterthur. Having got his diploma, he worked with a couple of firms in his home town, although the war meant many months in the Swiss army in which he became a lieutenant.

In 1949 he left for the Gold

Coast (British West Africa) to take up a job with the Swiss-African Trading Company which later merged with the United Africa Company, part of Unilever.

After working in Kumasi he was transferred to Accra, and that is where he met Helen Torti, also from Winterthur, who was on her way to Johannesburg working as a stewardess with Pan American Airways. They were married in Accra in 1954.

After seven happy years they left the Gold Coast, which had by then become the independent state of Ghana.

Soon after their return to Switzerland, Othmar Brunner's attention was drawn to an advertisement in which a businessman in London was looking for a successor. He was none other than Mr Bernard Sigerist, well known in the London Swiss community.

In 1962, the Brunners moved to London. For some years Othmar worked with Mr Sigerist whose main business was with the St Gall Canning Company. When he retired to Switzerland Othmar Brunner took over the firm which he expanded successfully.

## THE ARTS

AFTER a successful exhibition at the Crafts Council in London, **Pierre Degen's** jewellery is now touring:

February 19-March 23, Stoke-on-Trent (City Museum and Art Gallery).

April 9-May 8, Gateshead (Shipley Art Gallery).

May 18-June 25, Belfast, N. Ireland (Arts Council of N. Ireland Gallery).

July 8-July 31, Londonderry, N. Ireland (Orchard Gallery).

August 9-September 3, Leeds (Temple Newsam House).

★ ★ ★

An exhibition on **Adolphe Appia's** life and work, prepared by the Pro Helvetia Foundation, is at Lyttleton Circle Foyer, National Theatre (South Bank) (open Mon-Sat, 10am-11pm) until March 5.

Appia was born in Geneva in 1862 and died practically unknown in 1928. He was, however, a remarkable pioneer who revolutionised stage design and laid the foundations for the modern conception of scenography.

He was the first to underline the importance of three basic elements in the theatre: the actor, the sets and the lighting.

★ ★ ★

An exhibition of **Alberto Giacometti's** views of Paris, "Paris sans fin", shown first at the

Serpentine Gallery in London in 1981, and which has been touring Britain since, will be shown as follows:

March 3-16, Leicester (Leicester Polytechnic Kimberlin Exhibition Hall).

April 9-30, Walsall (E.M. Flint Gallery).

May 16-June 3, Birmingham (King Edward's School).

June 20-July 9, Bridgwater (Bridgwater Arts Centre).

The exhibition will later visit Taunton, Birmingham, Ayr, Rochester and Aberystwyth.

★ ★ ★

**Helen Keck-Spoerri's** paintings and prints will be shown for the first time in London from March 18-31 at the Margaret Fisher Gallery, 2 Lambolles Road, NW3 (near Swiss Cottage). Open Mon-Fri, 12 noon-6pm, Saturday, 11am-4pm.

★ ★ ★

**Charles Dutoit** will conduct the Philharmonia Orchestra on Sunday, March 20, 7.30pm, at the Royal Festival Hall. Programme: Ravel, Prokofiev, Tchaikovsky.

Charles Dutoit lives mainly in Montreal, where he conducts the Symphony Orchestra. He has made several recordings in recent years which have been much acclaimed, especially of works by

Ravel.

He conducts regularly in London and will return here in April to conduct the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and in June to conduct "Faust" at Covent Garden.

★ ★ ★

**David Josefowitz** will conduct the London Soloist Chamber Orchestra on Thursday, March 31 at 7.45pm at Queen Elizabeth Hall. Programme: Haydn, Tchaikovsky, Schubert.

★ ★ ★

**Tamas Vasary** will be the piano soloist with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra for the RAF Anniversary Concert on Friday, March 18 at 8pm at the Royal Festival Hall. Programme: Rossini, Tchaikovsky, Liszt, Strauss, Elgar.

★ ★ ★

Professor **Jeanne Hersch** of the University of Geneva and Professor **Gerhard Huber** of the Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich, will give lectures during a symposium on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Karl Jaspers, philosopher and psychiatrist.

The event is organised by the British Society for Phenomenology in conjunction

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panion, and after she died nearly five years ago he felt the loss all the more as they had no children of their own.

In Berne, too, he had given his services to various institutions. For a short time, he was president of Helvetas. He was also a council member of the Pestalozzi Foundation and, above all, of the Winston Churchill Foundation.

Impaired hearing made social life gradually more difficult for Dr Daeniker but he enjoyed with enthusiasm books on art, music and modern literature, too. He enjoyed excellent health right to the end.

When I visited him last year I found him extremely well informed on all kinds of topics, and not least on the Swiss community in Great Britain to which he remained greatly attached.

We have lost a loyal friend but we shall remember him for his friendly and unpretentious ways and his quiet sense of humour.

**MM**

His hobbies were collecting old maps and books on Africa – on which he became something of an expert – and curling. He played regularly at Richmond and Streatham ice rinks as well as competing in Scotland, Switzerland and other European countries. He was a member of a number of Swiss societies too.

It was after a game of curling against Scotland at Streatham ice rink on November 23 that Othmar slipped on a piece of wet wood in the car park and broke his leg.

As the fracture did not heal

properly, an operation became necessary. This took place on December 13, but he died suddenly due to a pulmonary embolism.

His friends and business associates will remember him as a kindhearted and gregarious man who was always ready to give a helpful hand and to enjoy a good get-together.

Our heartfelt sympathy goes to his wife, Helen, in her sad bereavement. May she find some consolation in the knowledge that their friends will remember Othmar with affection.

**MM**

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