

# News from the colony

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# NEWS from the COLONY

## CELEBRATION AT BOURNEMOUTH

Anglo-World Travel, a dynamic and expanding travel organisation founded in Bournemouth by a compatriot, Mr. Gustav Scheller, its Managing Director, recently celebrated its tenth anniversary. The occasion was marked by a Reception and Dinner at the Highcliff Hotel, Bournemouth, on 14th December, and by an Open House the next morning.

Founded in 1963, Anglo-World Travel began as a travel department for the Anglo-Continental School of English in Bournemouth. In 1967, Mr. Scheller branched out on his own and has never looked back, despite some precarious times. Nearly two years ago, we reported on the inauguration of the company's new premises in Oxford Road, near the centre of Bournemouth. Some fifty employees work in a model, three-storey concrete and glass block, handling over 40,000 inbound tourists a year in addition to dealing with ordinary holidays abroad. But the mainstay of the firm's business is to cater every year for thousands of foreign tourists who come on package tours to Britain. Anglo-World Travel organises these tours and sells them to operators abroad. The speeches delivered during the Anniversary Dinner amply underlined the expertise required in organising and selling such tours efficiently.

About eighty employees with their husbands or wives and many company friends filled the banqueting hall of the Highcliff Hotel. Its Manager, Mr. Alan Williams, officiated as Announcer. Mr. and Mrs. Gustav Scheller were the last to enter the hall amid the applause of all those present. A woman pianist was rolling soft chords and providing a pleasant background to the hum of lively conversations.

Shortly after he had offered the Royal Toast, Mr. Scheller rose again as the first of a series of speakers who included a former executive of the firm, Mr. Richard Baxter, now Manager of British Isles Holidays, British Airways Travel Division, and his colleague Mr. A. Moorer, Holiday Travel Manager of British Airways-BOAC. Other speakers spoke on behalf of the British Tourist Authority, the City of Bournemouth and the Anglo-World Travel staff.

Having begun his address by referring to the gloomy news on the economic front, which would be another hurdle for his company to overcome, Mr. Scheller emphasised the importance of the occasion in the light of the company's achievements during the ten years of its existence. He welcomed many of his guests, and particularly those who had helped him during the early days of the company. He recalled that in its first year of operation, it had catered for only 500



*Mr. Gustav Scheller presented with a plaque to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of his company.*

package tourists as against 40,000 today. Visibly moved, Mr. Scheller thanked his staff for their devotion and their preparedness to work long hours. He particularly thanked a close friend from Zurich, Mr. René Pfister, who had helped him out of a very bad financial patch in 1967, and stressed the help received all along by his wife. "Behind every successful businessman is a woman", said Mr. Scheller, who spoke of the understanding, patience, love and confidence inspired by his wife in the management of his undertaking.

Among the speakers to produce the most laughter, Mr. Richard Baxter, an early-day collaborator of Mr. Scheller had the advantage of many Anglo-World reminiscences he could draw upon. His experiences amply showed how tour operators and couriers often required the gift of improvisation. It also showed that there were some tricks to the game. Prices had gone up too. Mr. Baxter recalled that, in his time, Anglo-World charged £15 for an inclusive week in Bournemouth. But Cook's charged even less - £12. "We weren't as good negotiators in those days", said Mr. Baxter wryly.

Dinner was followed by entertainment by the staff and dancing in another hall. Three young Anglo-World Travel managers sang an "Ode to Anglo-World", a lady staffer sang two songs, and two other male employees produced amusing stories before giving way to a modern band. The dance ended at 2 a.m.

The next day, all friends of the company who had come to Bournemouth for the occasion were invited to view the premises. Helpful members of the staff were at hand to show you round the modern and functional offices and explain the operations of the firm. A colour-slide programme in the Board Room was devoted to a highly profitable and fast-expanding line of business: organising holiday English study courses for foreign students.

Anglo-World Travel is certainly one of the leading individual ventures launched in Britain by a Swiss. It is

certainly helping to promote both the British image abroad and the Swiss image in Bournemouth. But more importantly, it is contributing to Britain's foreign exchange situation by partaking in the growth of a tourist industry worth millions of pounds to the nation. We wish Anglo-World continued success for the future.

P.M.B.

## HIGHCLIFF HOTEL

The Highcliff Hotel, which played host to the Dinner and Ball marking the 10th Anniversary of Anglo-World Travel Ltd., has an interesting history. As you will see on the back-cover page of this publication, it is owned by the family of Mr. Robert Wild, formerly of Zurich and now living in Surrey. The Wild family hail from Alsace, but Mr. August Wild, father of the present owner and originator of the family's many hotel interests, became a Swiss citizen after having worked many years in Zurich and been one of the youngest ever managers of the *Baur au Lac*. The Highcliff Hotel, which stands some 70 feet above the sea on Bournemouth's West Cliff area, was built 99 years ago. It was bought in 1944 by Mr. August Wild, whose portrait dominates the entrance lobby. In that same year, the Labour Party held its first executive meeting, a practice which the Central Committee has continued ever since. I understand that the leaders of the Labour Party meet at Bournemouth every year before Labour's Annual Congress.

But the most historic meeting at the Highcliff took place in 1940, when the new war-time Government Coalition headed by Chamberlain and including Morrison, Bevan, Attlee and MacDonald met in a basement room known as the *Churchill Room* and decided that Winston Churchill was the man required to lead the nation under the dramatic circumstances of the time. It was from the Highcliff Hotel that the coalition sent a telegram to Churchill asking him to take charge of the Government. A glorious chapter of British history was thus opened at the Highcliff Hotel.

## COMPATRIOT TAKES UP IMPORTANT POST AT BRITISH MUSEUM

The Trustees of the British Museum have appointed Dr. E. Sollberger, FBA, a Swiss who has taken British nationality in 1967, to be keeper of Western Asiatic Antiquities in succession to Dr. R. D. Barnett, who retires in January.

Dr. Sollberger is 53 years old and specialises in Cuneiform studies, particularly Sumerian. He joined the British Museum as an Assistant Keeper in 1961, and has been Deputy Keeper since 1970. Formerly he was Principal Keeper and Acting Director of the Musée d'arts et d'histoire at Geneva.

### Farewell-Party of the Swiss Consul-General of Manchester

Being in Leeds on the occasion of the Lord-Mayor's Ball on the 18th December, 1973 our Consul-General of Manchester and Mrs. Born gave a farewell luncheon party at the Queen's Hotel in Leeds to the Committee-Members of the Yorkshire Swiss Club.

Mr. Rolf Born expressed his deep regret to have to leave this Country where he had made so many good friends, to take up his new appointment as Consul-General in Chicago, U.S.A.

Our Immediate past President Prof. J. P. Inebnit responded with a few appropriate words and was followed by Mr. Karl Kaegi, the Club's honorary Treasurer who forwarded to him also the good wishes of the Club's President, Mr. Ermanno Berner, at present in the Hospital in Blackburn, slowly recovering from a severe surgical intervention. He continued by thanking our Consul-General, also in the name of all the Yorkshire Swiss for all the selfless help he had given to them, the interest shown in

their many problems and wishing both "bon voyage", good health and many satisfactions in their new sphere of activities.

K.K. and E.B.

### PAUL LEHRIAN

We have the sad duty of reporting the death of Mr. Paul Lehrian, one of the most distinguished caterers of the Colony. Mr. Lehrian, of 6 Sherrock Gardens, Hendon, N.W.5, was eleven days away from his 76th birthday when he passed away on 28th August after a period of ill health. Mr. Lehrian had retired at the age of 70 after 55 years of service in the hotel and catering business. His wide career began at the Schlosshotel, Waldhaus Flims, and the Suvretta House in St. Moritz, Born in Lausanne, Mr. Lehrian came to Britain in 1914.

He held posts at the Monico Restaurant in London and the Metropole Hotel in Brighton. He became head waiter at the Carlton before working from 1917 to 1921 with the Canadian trade mission in France. For a time he was assistant manager of the St. Petersbourg Hotel in Paris.

Back in London in 1922, Mr. Lehrian worked at the Ritz, became in charge of the Grill Room of the Carlton (15 years). For 21 years he managed the "Ecu de France" and became a director in 1940. In 1958 he was appointed manager of the Charing Cross Hotel, a position which he held for five years before ending his career as assistant to the General Manager of British Transport Hotels.

Mr. Lehrian was a director of Wild Hotels Ltd (Royal Court, Sloane Square and Highcliff, Bournemouth). He was a member of the Réunion des Gastronomes and exclusive holder of the title of

"Officier du Mérite Agricole".

Mr. Lehrian was interested in the Union Helvetia right from his arrival in this country until the Club was closed in Gerrard Street. He was a member of its various committees and President of the London branch. His son, Mr. G. P. Lehrian, is the General Manager of the Grosvenor House, Park Lane. To him and to his family we should like to express our deepest sympathy.

P.M.B.

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We have recently been told of the death at the end of April of Mr. Ernst Eha, at the age of 87. A former and active member of the Swiss Colony, Mr. Eha was in Basle at the time of his death.

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### PROMOTIONS AT THE EMBASSY

With the turn of the year, the following promotions at the Swiss Embassy in London have become effective: Dr. F. Birrer to the rank of Counsellor of Embassy (Cultural Affairs). Mr. F. Adams to the rank of Consul General.

Mr. F. Roberts to the rank of Consul.

Mr. R. Born, Consul General in Manchester, has been appointed Consul General in Chicago and will be replaced as head of the representation in Manchester by Consul General H. Jaques.

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY: Friday, 30th January, Auction.

SWISS CLUB EDINBURGH: Tuesday, 29th January, Fondue Party at the Hartmanns at 8 p.m. Tuesday, 26th February, 8 p.m., Beer evening at the "Ski Lodge Lounge", Fairmilehead.

UNIONE TICINESE: 17th February, Centenary Dinner.

ANGLO-SWISS SOCIETY: Thursday, 31st January, 7.30 for 8 p.m. Orchid Suit, Dorchester Hotel, Dinner with expose on "Oil" by Mr. Peregrine Fellowes. Dinner jacket.

I am interested in buying a Swiss stamp collection or accumulation lots of older issues. Offers with full details to: Mr. E. M. Huber, 10 Linton Lawns, Golf Links Road, Ferndown, Dorset.

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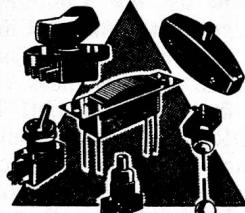
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