

# Swiss Mercantile Society

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new ski run Furgg-Furri. A new garni hotel has been opened: the "Holiday Apparthotel" (60 beds). The Hotel Christiania garni (70 beds) has been extended and can now offer 150 beds and a large indoor swimming-pool with sauna, fitness centre, mini-golf and tennis facilities.

*Text and pictures  
by courtesy of SNTO*

## ALL-INCLUSIVE WINTER HOLIDAYS IN SWITZERLAND 1973/74

Some 21 British tour operators are this season organising all-inclusive winter sports holidays to 46 Swiss resorts. A special brochure is available from the Swiss National Tourist Office listing resorts, minimum prices, mode of travel, and names and addresses of the tour operators concerned.

## First Ever Self-service Tow in Switzerland

A self-service ski-tow not requiring an attendant has just been installed at the winter sports area of *Stoos* (3,900 feet a.s.l.) in Central Switzerland. This amazingly easy system is foolproof and trouble-free. The skier just has to catch hold of the bar which reaches him automatically at the correct horizontal seating position.

# NEWS from the COLONY

## SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

### Annual Dinner and Dance

How glad those in charge of the S.M.S. must be that they did not cancel the Annual Dinner and Dance on Saturday, 2nd February, when the national emergency made things somewhat uncertain! But they knew they could rely on their members and friends to support them, and though there was not exactly a record attendance, the turn-out was splendid. A happy mixture of friendliness and just that bit of formality which is right for a function of importance in the Colony, prevailed throughout the evening. The Orchid Suite of the Dorchester Hotel made an excellent venue. It was also a happy innovation that the President and Mrs. Jaccard and the Society's Hon. President, the Swiss Ambassador, received members and friends on their way from the cocktail lounge to the dinner.

According to tradition, grace was said by one of the Swiss Ministers, and until the toast master called for the loyal toasts, eating and chatting went on merrily.

All too often nowadays the

after-dinner speeches at social functions are cut down to such an extent that they consist of a funny story or two and a cursory and global welcome of guests and ladies. Nobody wishes to have the monumental speeches back which used to be customary at the Colony's major functions. But the way the President managed to welcome all the guests and give a small *tour d'horizon* in a very humorous and friendly way, seemed to all present a very happy medium.

The great event in the life of the Society's College at the moment is the rebuilding in Fitzroy Square. The President referred to the tribulations repeated moves to temporary premises brought on staff and secretariat. And it speaks well for the Education Committee and its Chairman, Mr. F. Haeusermann, the teaching staff headed by Mr. A. W. Makin, M.A. (Principal) and Mr. L. Cane, B.A. (Vice-Principal), and the office staff under Mr. W. Burren, that not one single hour of tuition has been lost.

Another important event in the Society was the final acceptance of the S.M.S. as a charitable institution. Mr. Jaccard pointed out that this did not mean competing for alms with the Swiss

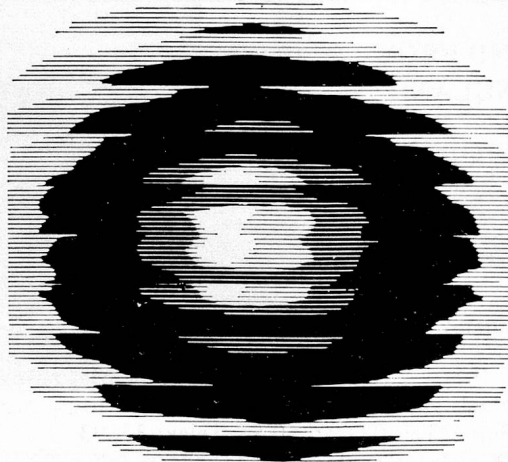
Benevolent Society, but exemption from paying tax on investments. The success is due to the initiative of Mr. O. Grob and the know-how and perseverance of Mr. S. Stray, a Chartered Secretary. Both were present with their wives, and in Mr. Grob's case, the family.

This is actually a feature of the S.M.S. Dinner and Dance – the presence of the second generation. This covers at least one case where the daughter of an old and valued member, herself a grandmother, attends with her English husband year after year. This all adds to the friendly and rather intimate atmosphere.

But much as the younger generation and new friends were welcome, the old faithfuls were not forgotten, such as Honorary Members and their wives, i.e. Mr. Walter Burren, Mr. Raymond Chappuis and Mr. Oscar Grob (both Trustees).

The President also touched on lighter matters, such as the annual football match against the "Times" team, and he welcomed the Vice-President of the "Times" football section, Mr. John Gard. The annual competition for the Lints-Smith Cup has been going on for

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many decades, and whether the College win or lose – as in 1973 – the event is always a happy one.

Welcome as always were the Ministers of the Swiss Churches, this year the Rev. U. Stefan and his wife, and – a newcomer – the Rev. M. Languillat and his sister.

The Society was happy too, to have the presidents of at least two other Swiss societies present, Mrs. Mariann Meier of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique and Mr. E. Tangemann of the City Swiss Club. Whilst it was a new experience for the latter, Mrs. Meier attended for the ninth time, also as a member in her own right and wife of the late Walter Meier, President and Hon. Member. Mr. Jaccard welcomed her as delegate on the Commission of the Swiss Abroad, representing G.B. South.

Pride of place in the President's welcoming address was rightly given to the various members of the Embassy, above all the Swiss Ambassador, Dr. A. Weitnauer. Mr. Jaccard expressed appreciation of the ready help always given by the Embassy, and he welcomed the Economic and Labour Counsellor Monsieur B. von Tschärner, present with his wife. He congratulated Mr. F. Adams on his promotion to Consul-General and mentioned the two Consuls Reutlinger and Keller, both present with their ladies.

Right at the beginning of his speech, the President had referred to the Ambassador's masterly lecture at the Nouvelle Société Helvétique the previous week. In his speech as Guest of Honour at the S.M.S., the Ambassador again showed his gift of oratory when he enumerated the important features of the S.M.S. College. He said that the Society could justly be proud of the School's wonderful achievements. He envied the young people who had a chance of spending some time during their formative years in London. What a wonderful experience! The Ambassador then praised the College as a fine Anglo-Swiss venture, the staff being British, the students Swiss. For

once an undertaking relating to the two countries, which had nothing to do with tourism, gnomes or mountains. It enabled the teaching staff to get a realistic picture of the young Swiss, and in return they were able to provide the pupils with a part of English life so often neglected in Switzerland – one hardly ever thought of Britain as a centre of learning.

Dr. Weitnauer also praised the part the S.M.S. College played in the general context of European co-operation. He stressed that that could only be done through human contacts. The organisations were there, but what was really essential was that young people could travel in order to see what other European countries could offer. All this the S.M.S. College provided in an exemplary way. It was with pride that the Ambassador gave the toast to the Swiss Mercantile and its College.

Dr. H. W. Egli, as President of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the U.K., answered for the guests. He had earlier been welcomed by Mr. Jaccard as the "elder statesman" of the Colony. Nobody agreed with him when he said that the Federation and therefore he himself had failed when the Swiss Cultural Forum came to nothing. The reasons for failure were manifold, but certainly not due to lack of effort on Dr. Egli's part. Nevertheless he announced his wish to retire as President. In his wise, ponderous way, Dr. Egli referred to a possible future task of the Federation and expressed pleasure that such an important Society as the S.M.S. should be part of it.

The applause accorded to the three speakers was well-deserved, and a happy contented party of men and women left the dining room only to return later to a few happy and animated hours of dancing. Arthur Salisbury and his band provided the attractive music as they had done for many years – another pleasant feature of the S.M.S. Annual Dinner and Dance. It came to an end at midnight with the traditional "Auld Lang Syne", and all present showed their appreciation of the successful evening when they gave a special hand to the Jaccards. Bless them, and the best of luck to the S.M.S.!

MM

#### Yorkshire Swiss Club

It was on Tuesday, 12th February, 1974 that the members and some friends of the Yorkshire Swiss Club assembled at the Leeds Council House and Social Centre in St. Mark's Avenue, Leeds, for the Annual General Meeting.

Our President opened the proceedings by welcoming everybody present and gave then a short review of the events which had taken place during the past 12 months, on the whole a very pleasant, active and interesting year, auguring well for the future of our Club. He thanked his Committee for all the work they had done, the main burden lying as usual on our "Twin-Secretariat" represented by Mrs. Edith Lerch and Mrs.

Ruth Leathly and, of course, also our Honorary Treasurer Mr. Karl Kaegi.

Before proceeding to the election of the new Committee, the President wished to inform everybody present that for family reasons he may be absent in future from England for periods of up to 5 months, mainly during the winter months, and that this should be taken into account when choosing new officers. He then asked Mr. J. M. Lowe to act again as our election chairman and under his tactful lead and to the satisfaction of everybody present, the whole past Committee, including perhaps a part-time President, emerged re-elected.

It was now for our Honorary Treasurer Mr. Karl Kaegi to inform us of the financial situation and how this could affect, to a certain degree, some of our future activities. Thanks to two donations received during the year, the Club's funds have further risen which is quite an achievement in times of severe inflation and he was duly thanked for his very efficient work. We are also very much indebted for the generous help forthcoming from Messrs. Sandoz Products Limited in Horsforth, to Mrs. Pauline Hill, Secretary and to Mr. Weber for the preparing and printing of our circulars which for any Club could mean a heavy expense.

The President informed the Club, that owing to the absence of our Consul-General Mr. R. Born, our presentation to him will be forwarded through the good services of our new Vice-Consul Mr. Wegmueller. He concluded by stating that our future activities may move in a very similar way as in the past, the success of any particular function or effort depending on the support of our members.

This year's "Landsgemeinde" will pose some special problems for the organisers, firstly for the changed status of the Town of Hebden Bridge, being now part of the new Calderdale Metropolitan District, based in Halifax, and last but not least the financial aspect of it.

A most interesting evening was concluded with the serving of the traditional coffee and biscuits, and our good resolve to see us in good number at our Dinner-Dance, on Saturday, 2nd March, 1974, at the Mansion Hotel in Roundhay Park, Leeds.

E.B.

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