

News from the colony

Objektyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1965)**

Heft 1479

PDF erstellt am: **19.09.2024**

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NEWS FROM THE COLONY



Dr. H. W. Egli.

NOUVELLE SOCIÉTÉ HELVÉTIQUE

London Group

At a Council meeting of the London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, the President, Dr. H. W. Egli was re-elected President for another year. By the same token, Mr. P. Bessire (Vice-President), Mr. L. S. R. Asch (Hon. Treasurer) and Monsieur P. Bringolf (Hon. Secretary) were affirmed in their respective offices.

The Council, elected at the Annual General Meeting, consists of the following additional members: Mr. R. Baumann, Mrs. P. Bessire, Mr. R. Friedrich, Mr. H. G. Grueninger, Mr. A. Kunz, Mrs. M. Meier, Mr. W. Renz, Monsieur J. Revilliod, Mr. J. Schmid, Mr. M. Schneebeli, Mr. and Mrs. A. F. Suter, Monsieur E. Tosio and Mr. M. Wiesendanger.

SWISS HOSTEL FOR GIRLS

The Ninth Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Hostel for Girls was held at 9-11 Belsize Grove on May 19th, under the chairmanship of Mr. J. P. Christen, the President of the Company.

On opening the meeting, the President asked the members present to stand up in silence as a last tribute to Mr. Etienne Cottet, a staunch friend of the Hostel, whose death had occurred a few days before.

Mr. Christen then expressed how sorry everybody was at the thought that Miss Rosie Preiswerk would soon be leaving the Hostel to return to Switzerland. She had shown not only great competence and tact in her daily task but also indefectible courage in the running of a large house continuously under repair.

After the reading of the Secretary's and Warden's report, and the presentation by the Treasurer of the Balance Sheet and Accounts for 1963, the Council of Management was re-elected in corpore under the presidency "pro tem" of Mrs. Mariann Meier.

Here are some extracts of Miss Preiswerk's topical report for the year 1964:

"As usual we took care of a few girls in conjunction with the Welfare Office. Their mental state or bad behaviour caused quite some upheaval and worry, the more

so as we have little means of controlling the movements of our residents. Bad influence is contagious and we sometimes had to press for a speedy solution to re-establish order and a normal atmosphere.

"Our two blind residents left us after completing their course at the S.M.S. Both have since found good employment in Switzerland and we are glad to have had a small share in making their stay here a happy and profitable one. The contact with the two handicapped girls was an enriching experience for all of us.

"A few older residents were asked to leave the Hostel as it was felt that they could now manage on their own and make room for the young newcomers whose parents were most anxious to put them up at the Hostel and not just in digs.

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"Our Christmas celebrations, New Year's Eve and a very successful Fancy Dress Ball in February were highlights in our programme. The monthly dances were replaced by a few individual parties for which a group of girls took the entire responsibility. This formula proved very satisfactory as it gave the girls a welcome opportunity to display their various talents.

"The Nouvelle Société Helvétique and the Unione Ticinese continued to hold their regular meetings and a few special functions. The Frauenverein also had its annual meeting again at the Hostel, followed by a lunch. If it were not for shortage of staff we could have a few more functions of this kind.

"The fight against the dry rot went on and we had the builders in for most of the year. There are still traces of the mess and dirt they left behind. The Welfare and the Hostel Office were temporarily removed to other rooms and several bed-rooms were out of use for a prolonged period.

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"Throughout the last year we have been looking out for a successor to the Warden. Just before Christmas Mrs. Ena Pozzy, a Swiss national brought up in Great Britain, came to our rescue and replaced me during my two months leave. We were all hoping that she would, at least temporarily, take over from me, but to our great disappointment it proved that for reasons of health she could not envisage doing so. I am deeply grateful to her for having enabled me to have a carefree holiday and to have made the three months during which we shared the responsibility for the Hostel, so much easier for me. I am very sorry they have come to an end.

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"Our endeavours to find a successor are going on, in England as well as in Switzerland, where Madame Daeniker is still taking an active interest in the affairs of the Hostel. It is significant of our present times that no one seems to want a living-in job. We may be compelled to re-think the whole set-up of the Hostel. A younger Warden will no doubt bring new ideas as to how to meet the needs of our rapidly changing world and have a different approach in coping with present-day mentality.

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"Soon after the arrival of the new Ambassador, Madame de Fischer expressed the wish to be shown over the Hostel. This interest which she has kept alive during the whole year, is highly appreciated."

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