"Swiss Observer" publication dates

Objekttyp: **Group**

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

Band (Jahr): **- (1968)**

Heft 1552

PDF erstellt am: **29.03.2024**

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SWISS GALA NIGHT IN SURREY

In the course of my duties as Editor of the "Swiss Observer" I attend Swiss mornings, Swiss afternoons, evenings and nights. Sometimes, especially with smaller organisations, not only the organisers and the majority of the participants, but also some of the food is Swiss. Other times, a Swiss club arranges the events for Swiss members and friends but otherwise, everything is English, the food, the music, the cabaret.

At the Burford Bridge Hotel near Dorking in a lovely part of Surrey, on Saturday, 27th July, 90% of the 260 partaking of the dinner were non-Swiss. On the other hand, thanks to co-operation with the Swiss National Tourist Office and Swiss Centre Restaurants, food and entertainment were very Swiss indeed.

On arrival in the large Tithe Barn Ballroom, we were greeted by a galaxy of Swiss cantonal flags (hung very correctly), rows of red lampions with the white cross as befits a First of August Celebration. For this is what the evening was to be. The band was British, but did they make a valiant effort to play genuine Swiss *Ländler* music! Dancing went on throughout dinner, which did not interfere with culinary enjoyment, as individual dishes arrived at lengthy intervals only, which meant that one had about a dozen courses, counting the main dish, followed by Thurgau potatoes *au gratin* ten minutes later and by spinach and beans another waltz away. This was because of overcrowding, and that simply frustrated the willing staff's efforts and efficiency. The only other criticism from the few Swiss and some of the British diners was that a mere two Swiss wines of no more than mediocre quality were available and then not in sufficient quantity. But having said that for the sake of fairness, I can devote the rest of my account to unqualified praise. The organisers including the management of the Burford Bridge Hotel (one of the Trust Houses) may be congratulated on their initiative and enterprise.

The food, when we got it, was excellent, starting with peaches in Johannisberg wine, or "Bündnerteller" or "Glarner Anggechnöpflisuppe", and "Luzerner Chugelipastetli", followed by "Chämigrauchti Burehame im Teig", or "Entrecôte Château Chillon" or "Vallée de Bagne" chicken stuffed with sliced cheese and ham, and ending with Swiss cheeses and nutty Valaisan rye bread, and "Zuger Kirschtorte" or "Framboise Valaisanne". But why do I bother to enumerate all these delicacies — a great many of my readers must know them already from their visits to the Swiss Centre Restaurants in Leicester Square where they and a large number of other Swiss specialities may be had, and with a first class drop of wine. For it was Swiss Centre catering that provided the food (*not* the wines) and their chefs who prepared it. The Manager, Mr. O. Gontersweiler, was at the "Swiss Table", together with Mr. and Mrs. J. Schmid of S.N.T.O.'s Publicity Department, Mr. and Mrs. D. A. Ward of Swiss Travel Service, the Editor of the S.O. and a number of prominent guests.

The entertainment was provided by the Giess Trio, no strangers to this country. Two smart yodelling sisters in their colourful national costumes and the accompanying accordionist were given a great reception by an appreciative audience who lustily joined in some community singing. The Corale of the Unione Ticinese gave a convincing performance of old and new folk songs from the South of Switzerland. The whole entertainment was pieced together by the indefatigable master of publicity, Mr. Albert Kunz, Manager of the Swiss National Tourist Office in London. Those who saw him in Victorian attire during the Sherlock Holmes re-enactment, will have no difficulty in believing that he looked absolutely genuine in his Unterwaldner *Tracht*, and even his accent seemed to have acquired a Nidwaldner lilt. He told jokes and made cracks, introduced the alphorn competition and supervised the draws, all in his inimitable style.

Correct answer: Valais

The winner in the GRAND SWISS HOLIDAY COMPETITION — SEVENTH SECTION — was drawn in the presence of a solicitor and members of the Press. The first prize, a month's holiday in Switzerland, including travel by Swissair — was won by Mr. M. W. Creasey, 145 Copse Hill, West Wimbledon, London S.W.20. All winners of consolation prizes have since been notified. Incidentally, entry forms for the last section of the competition may be had from Swiss National Tourist Office, Swiss Centre, 1 New Coventry Street, W.1.

2,343,866 Nights

A cryptic heading, no doubt, and it would need a very clever person to guess the meaning. In fact, it was the correct answer to the last question in a Swiss Holiday Competition "*How many nights were spent in Switzerland by British visitors during 1967?*" A staggering number, and the winner, Mrs. Fromberg from North London got remarkably near the exact figure. She deserved the prize of a Swiss Holiday, given by the "Swiss Travel Service" Agency in London.

It was an altogether happy evening, with an exhilarating atmosphere of friendly companionship and Helvetico-British good will. "Aprite le Porte" we sang, loud and clear, in community (words from the Swissair booklet "Let's sing with the Swiss") and "let's open the doors" we say to continued Anglo-Swiss understanding and friendship. *MM*

"SWISS OBSERVER" PUBLICATION DATES

The "Swiss Observer" is published every second and fourth Friday of the month. Our next issue will appear on 23rd August. We shall be glad to receive all articles and reports not later than Tuesday, 13th August. Short news items only can be accepted after that date.

Our next issue but one will be published on Friday, 13th September. Contributions should reach us by 3rd September, but if at all possible, by 18th August so as to enable the Editor to deal with them before her departure for the Assembly of the Swiss Abroad.

CITY SWISS CLUB

Will Members please note that
NO MONTHLY MEETINGS
will be held until 24th September