

John M. Frei †

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THE SWISS CLUB AT THE EDGWAREBURY COUNTRY CLUB

It was a surprise to members of the Swiss Club (Schweizerbund), and a very pleasant one, to have a summer dinner arranged for them at the Edgwarebury Country Club in Elstree. Applications came in fast to the enterprising Committee headed by Mr. V. Berti (President), Mr. J. Schmid (Hon. Secretary), Mr. L. S. R. Asch (Hon. Treasurer). And so on Friday, 9th August, nearly 40 members and friends travelled out to Hertfordshire. If their expectations were too optimistic, it was only on account of the weather, for the old-world manor house and the magnificent grounds were hardly disappointing. It is impossible to say from what period building, decorations or furniture date, for it is all a considerable mixture, yet contributing to a very pleasing background for a friendly get-together. Dinner was served in the members' dining room, old silver candlesticks decorating the polished tables. The meal was good, and the atmosphere most congenial.

Coffee was hardly drunk when the first song rose to the Tudor ceiling — has one over known a Swiss Club gathering without fine singing? Ticinesi, Romands, Schwyzertütsch, and German words — language no object — and when the dining room had to be cleared, the reputation of a near-professional choir had already preceded the party into the lounge where the dartboard was left by Country Club members in a hurry to make room for the Swiss choral group. The voices of the older members may no longer be quite so lusty and enthusiastic, but when it comes to third and fourth verses — the older generation won't easily be beaten. The singing went on — we do not know for how long, as the writer left, deeply touched by the kind gesture of a rendering for her benefit of "Happy birthday", twenty minutes premature but accepted with grateful thanks like the warm hospitality of this small, but still very lively Club which refused to be beaten by adverse circumstances and carries on the proud name.

MM

BIRTHDAYS

The following readers will be having their birthdays in the near future: Mr. G. Godet will be 77 on 28th August. Mr. A. Schmid, formerly of the Glendower Hotel, will have his 82nd birthday on 2nd September. Mr. C. Fairweather will be 78 on 7th, and Mr. J. G. Michel 60 on the 8th September. We wish them and many other readers who will be celebrating their birthdays within the next few weeks many happy returns.

We have just learned that Mrs. Nora Towers of 75 Albion Road Stoke Newington, N.16. will be 70 on 10th September. She is well known in the Swiss Church, a member of the Consistoire and a great friend of the young. We wish her a happy birthday and hope she will soon have fully recovered from her accident. The best of luck!

Reading through the S.O. of 30 years ago recently, I discovered that Mr. Paul F. Boehringer was 60 in August 1938. It is with gratitude that we remember the founder of the "Swiss Observer" who, in 1919, put our Colony paper on its feet. He would have been 90 this summer, and we send our special greetings to Mrs. Boehringer who is still enjoying fair health on the Sussex coast.

JOHN M. FREI †

As we announced previously, we deeply regret the death of Mr. John M. Frei, of 33a Orchard Avenue, Shirley, Croydon, on 14th July. He was born on 7th December 1890, a farmer's son of Watt-Regensdorf (Zurich). Having done his initial military service, he went to Barcelona in 1911, and two years later he came to this country. His first position was with the famous Whisky Distiller's John Walker & Sons Ltd., and next he joined the Standard Supply Agency. Mr. Frei founded his own firm of Boyden & Co Ltd., in 1925, and the second world war brought business to a standstill. He worked in the Special Division of the Swiss Legation, and after the war, he resumed business as Boyden of Croydon, Tile Merchants. The firm became the largest single producer of glazed ceramic tiles in the U.K. He has been taking things a little easier of late, but he still went to business every day and visited customers.

After the first war, he married Miss Grace Grey, and they had two girls and a boy. It is to them that we extend our deep sympathy in their bereavement. It is gratifying to know that his son John who joined the firm in 1948, will continue in his father's business as Chairman of the Company. Mr. Frei lost his wife in 1966, having enjoyed a very happy marriage. One of the highlights of their life together had been a cruise to South Africa in 1958/9.

John Frei took an active part in the Swiss community. He joined the Swiss Mercantile Society in 1919, and thus he would have qualified for the Veterans' distinction next year. He was a member of the General Purposes and House Committee of the S.M.S. In 1950, he joined the City Swiss Club, and he was a loyal supporter of the Swiss Benevolent Society, also of the Swiss Church and many other organisations.

For twenty years, he was a member of the Helvetica Lodge, occupying the chair in 1965, in his 75th year.

A large circle of business friends, neighbours and fellow countrymen mourn his death. He was a cheerful character who was always ready with a joke. He enjoyed his cigar and his *Stumpen* and a game of cards (*Jass*). His great kindness and generosity will long be remembered.

MM

OBITUARIES

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of Mr. Harry Schaellibaum, lately of Altersheim Saentisblick, 9104 Waldstatt, Appenzell. He was born on 2nd May 1879 in St. Gall and came to this country as a young man. For almost 60 years, he was in business here, and his address was in Goldsmith Avenue, Acton. He was a member of several Swiss societies and subscribed very early to the S.O. He died at Waldstatt on 8th July, aged 89, and we extend our sincere sympathy to his family.

* * *

We announce with deep regret the death of Miss Constance Rougemont, formerly of 25 Courtfield Gardens, S.W.5, and lately at G.B.I. Northwood, Manor Park Road, Chislehurst, Kent. She has been an old and faithful subscriber to the "Swiss Observer" and when still in London, took an active part in the Swiss Church and their activities.

IN MEMORIAM

12th August 1967. VERMOT, GEORGES, La Chau-de-Fonds and Havant in Hampshire.

In remembrance of his sincerity, generosity and good humour.

Deeply missed — Joan.