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LONDON SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY. Annual General Meeting,

I have long ago lost count of how many functions I have attended in the Swiss Colony during the last twenty years. Apart from the merely social ones, I have also been present at a good many monthly and annual meetings of the numerous Swiss Societies in London, many of which have often been very tedious affairs and were soon forgotten.

However, this Meeting will linger in my memory for a good long time for various reasons, which I am only too happy to relate.

On Saturday, January 21st, 1950, the Annual General Meeting of the London Swiss Philatelic Society took place at the Glendower Hotel, Glendower Place, S.W.7, and this Meeting was preceded by a Luncheon.

To lunch or dine at the Glendower Hotel is always an event, and the *Menu* which was served was excellent both as to quality and quantity and can match any West-End *de luxe* Hotel. The cellar as well came up, or even exceeded, all expectations.

This was the first time, that I had come in close contact with this very active Society, which numbers amongst its members, I am glad to say, many personal friends.

As the very efficient Hon. Secretary of the Society, Mr. A. Gotz, has put his notes at my disposal, I will publish them hereafter, and I will confine myself to a few general remarks.

Never before have I taken part at a Meeting, where such a friendly spirit prevailed, and so much humour and good fellowship was in existence.

The many witty remarks made by members and officials of the Society, caused an atmosphere of almost riotous hilarity, and my face literally ached from laughter long after I had left the Glendower Hotel.

According to the report of the Hon. Treasurer, who is not only a faithful keeper of the purse, but also a great humorist, the accounts for the past year showed a deficit. In any "normal" Society this would be a matter of grave concern to the members, not so in the London Swiss Philatelic Society, this announcement by the Treasurer was received with peels of laughter. (I wish I could laugh away the constant deficits of the "Swiss Observer", I would be a far happier man), and to crown it all this Treasurer had the "audacity" to declare, that he was satisfied "with the auditors",

it was not revealed whether the auditors were equally satisfied with him.

In all my long experiences, I have never yet carried away anything but a headache from any of the Meeting places, but on that memorable Saturday, I left with a table lamp, a tie, a pot of honey and a "Päckli Stumpfen", the three former items won in the tombola.

Not bad for a "beginner", and if I should again be asked to one of their Annual General Meetings, I shall come "prepared".

These are some of the reasons, why this function will always be remembered by me, as one of the most pleasant affairs, which I have had the privilege or duty to attend, and I take this opportunity to express to the President and the Members of the London Swiss Philatelic Society my gratitude for this really enjoyable afternoon.

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Report of the Hon. Secretary, M. A. Gotz.

... After luncheon had been served, the President, Mr. F. Streit, gave a short address of welcome to all present, mentioning, among others, the official guests of the Society, Mr. W. B. Haworth, Assistant-Editor of "Stamp Collectors' Fortnightly", Mr. A. Stauffer, Editor of the "Swiss Observer", accompanied by Mrs. Stauffer, and Mr. Bossert.

He finished his address by extending hearty thanks to the Schmid family for again having looked after the Society's "interior" well-being in such a splendid manner. The President also mentioned that the proceeds of the Raffle would this year be for the benefit of the Society, to cover a deficit in the accounts.

At 3.45 p.m. the Annual General Meeting began. The President, after surveying last year's activities of the "London Swiss", which is making steady progress, expressed his thanks to the Committee Members who had supported him most loyally, and he expressed the hope that all Members, old and new, would continue doing their best for the Society.

After the approval of the minutes of last year's A.G.M. read by the Hon. Secretary, Mr. E. A. Gotz, the Hon. Packet Superintendent, Mr. E. M. Huber, addressed the meeting with a report on his last year's activities. He stressed the fact that the sales of stamps had dropped from £182 to £103 for which he blamed the lack of suitable material handed in for circulation. Mr. Huber finished his lucid statement by saying that it was really a great pity that this branch of the Club's activities had recently suffered so much owing to lack of support on the part of the Members and he appealed to them for livelier co-operation in the new year.

Then followed the report by the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. G. Wahl, who referred Members to the Balance Sheet which had already been distributed. In his inimitable style, enlivened by many humorous asides, Mr. Wahl explained the various items of the accounts giving Members the reasons for the small deficit of £12.13.0. He concluded by saying that if the Society's capital had thus been reduced by a few pounds, the Club had gained in amenities, such as the Bulletin, displays and competitions.

The President announced the result of the raffle which amounted to £14.14.0, thus wiping out the Society's deficit for 1949, and leaving a balance of £2.1.0 towards the amount to be contributed later on to the Swiss Benevolent Society.

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After declaring that the Hon. Treasurer had discharged his duties in an excellent manner, Mr. Streit asked Mr. E. Miller to propose the adoption of the accounts. He was seconded by Mr. O. Grob, our first Hon. Treasurer, both gentlemen making a few suitable comments on the accounts.

For the election of Officers for 1950, Mr. L. Jobin was invited to take over the temporary Chairmanship which office he had undertaken most competently at previous A.G.Ms. Mr. Jobin thanked the outgoing Committee for their loyal services to the Society and having their consent, he proposed their re-election for another year. This was seconded by Mr. P. Whiles and carried unanimously.

The new Committee is as follows:— President: Mr. F. Streit, Vice-President: Mr. W. Burren; Hon. Secretary: Mr. E. A. Gotz; Hon. Treasurer: Mr. G. Wahl; Hon. Packet Superintendent: Mr. E. M. Huber; Members: Messrs. D. Paschoud, D. A. Sanderson and M. Waloff. The two Auditors: Messrs. D. W. Langley and A. Rueff having agreed to continue their task in 1950, were duly re-elected, and were thanked for their past services.

The newly re-elected President, thanked Mr. Jobin for having taken the chair during the election of the Officers for 1950. The Hon Secretary read a letter from Mr. A. Bingham, now residing in the country, offering to resign as he could no longer take an active part in the "London Swiss Philatelic Society."

The President, after stressing the fact that Mr. Bingham had been one of our oldest and most faithful

Members, suggested that the links between him and the Society should not be severed. He therefore proposed to make him a Corresponding Member which proposal was approved by all the Members.

The assembly also learnt with deep satisfaction that our Member, Mr. H. Epprecht, now residing in Switzerland, had sent to the Hon. Secretary a donation of £5 and a quantity of stamps for the benefit of the S.B.S.

Now followed the presentation of the *Challenge Cup* and after a few introductory remarks by the President, Mr. W. B. Haworth addressed the meeting by informing everyone that he felt like a friend at a family gathering. Amidst prolonged applause, he presented the Cup to last year's winner, Mr. J. Beken who, in replying, expressed the hope that a larger number of Members would enter for this year's cup competition.

After this the Replica Cup was handed to Mr. E. Miller, the 1948 winner of the annual Challenge Cup Competition.

Mr. F. Streit took this opportunity of pointing out the fact that in both competitions, the winners and runners-up had been English Members, and he asked in a jocular manner: "Where are the Swiss?" Back came the lightning answer — provoking thunderous laughter — at "Adam and Eve" which, of course referred to a certain refreshment place where some of our Members adjourn after a strenuous monthly meeting!! May the Recorder of these Minutes be pardoned for bringing in this jocular interlude in an otherwise serious report, as it illustrates most beautifully the jolly and friendly atmosphere which reigned throughout the afternoon.

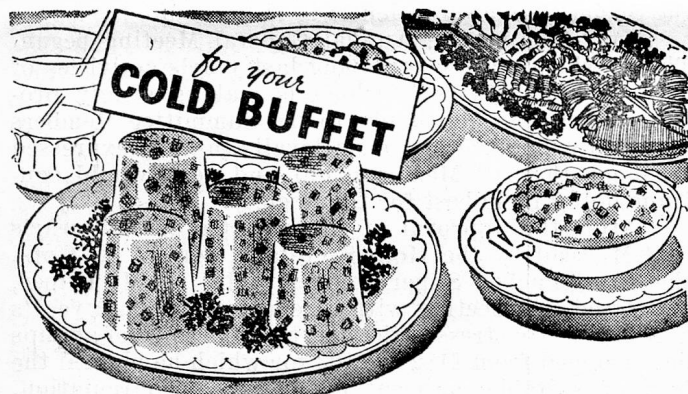
As on previous occasions, the meeting closed with an "Auction" for the benefit of the Swiss Benevolent Society. It should be mentioned *en passant* that the success of both Raffle and Auction was primarily due to the generous gifts by Members who, year after year, have done their share anonymously towards making a success of these two functions. Mr. G. Wahl, in his most persuasive manner, acted again as Auctioneer, and he was ably supported in his strenuous task by Messrs. W. Burren, W. Fuchs and E. M. Huber.

The total sum for this excellent cause amounted to £28.7.6, which is all the more gratifying as the proceeds of the Raffle had been dedicated to the "London Swiss Philatelic Society." Our Member, Mr. M. A. Rothlisberger, who is the Hon. Treasurer of the Swiss Benevolent Society, expressed his warmest thanks for the generosity of the members, friends and guests of our Society.

Before the close of the meeting, we were privileged to listen to a humorous address by the congenial Editor of the "Swiss Observer", who informed the assembly that although his connection with philately consisted solely of stamp licking, he had thoroughly enjoyed the free and easy manner in which this gathering was conducted. It should be recorded that our guest, in addition to winning three handsome prizes at the raffle, also won a packet of "Stuempfe" to compensate him for a similar packet of Swiss cigars he had missed by the skin of his teeth at a recent Swiss Church Bazaar.

The President closed the proceedings at 6.30 p.m., and this Annual General Meeting will long be remembered by all those who were present.

E.A.G.



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