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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

ANNETTE WEISBROD AT THE CITY SWISS CLUB SOIREE FAMILIALE AT THE DORCHESTER HOTEL

It is not often that the City Swiss Club invites the ladies to attend one of its monthly re-unions. One, therefore, would have expected that there would have been almost a stampede to book seats for a "Ladies' Night" at the Dorchester. This pious hope did not, however, materialise, on Tuesday, 27th February, when the highlight of the evening was a piano recital by that well-known and charming Swiss pianist, Annette Weisbrod, who, I am delighted to say, only recently scored a remarkable success at her recital at the Wigmore Hall. The attendance on 27th February numbered barely 80. It may well be that the unfavourable weather conditions had something to do with the poor attendance. However, those who felt that they should, by their presence, show some appreciation of the laudable efforts the committee of the Club is continuously making to ensure the attractiveness of the meetings, spent a most enjoyable and delightful evening.

Towards the end of an excellent dinner, and after the customary Toasts had been proposed and honoured, the President, Mr. Th. von Speyr, welcomed the company and especially the ladies and members of the Swiss Embassy. He then introduced Annette Weisbrod, the guest of honour of the evening, who is no stranger to the musical world either in this country or in Switzerland, having appeared on several concert platforms with no mean success.

Aged twenty-five, she is the daughter of the renowned artist, Richard Weisbrod, known by his exhibitions of paintings at various picture galleries in the West End. She was born in Blackburn and educated at Huyton College, Liverpool, where she studied under Harold Craxton. Moving to the Zurich Konservatorium, she became a pupil of Adrian Aeschbacher and Hans Linder. Since then she has given recitals as soloist and in Chamber Music Ensembles in London, Zurich, Basle, and the North of England. On two occasions she has also played with the St. Gall Symphony Orchestra.

The programme which she had chosen was befitting the occasion — a conventional one; it included works by Handel, Bach, Beethoven, Schumann, Scriabin, Ibert, Debussy, and Chopin. The wide range chosen by the artiste catered for almost everyone's taste. The programme for such an evening was almost too generous and was, no doubt, quite a strain on this young and enthusiastic artiste. To each composer she brought the right range of dynamics and the right style. The playing had authority, and pleasure was the outcome. It was the close interpretation of fine technique and refined interpretation insight that made her performance so impressive. Handel's "The Harmonious Blacksmith" was rendered with poetry and grace. In the Etudes Op. 8, No. 3, 5 and 12, of Scriabin, she showed a keen sense of the rhythmic spacing of music. In Beethoven's "Eccossaises", Debussy's "La Cathédrale Engloutie", and "L'isle Joyeuse", the music was there in all its noble proportions. All items on the programme were played with splendid strength, assurance and well-balanced musicianship.

Annette Weisbrod is indeed a very capable artiste with plenty of musical feeling, her fingerwork was a delight to behold.

It was a memorable and most enjoyable evening indeed, which, as the President rightly said before closing the evening, when he thanked the artiste for the great pleasure she had given us, "will linger in our memories for many a day".

ST.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY



R. CHAPPUIS,
President.

The Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Mercantile Society (Limited by Guarantee) was held at Swiss House on Wednesday, 14th February, the members present being welcomed by the Chairman, Mr. R. Chappuis.

The accounts for 1961, as presented, were adopted, and the auditor, Mr. Robert P. Huxley, F.C.A., was reappointed.

Reporting on the Society's activities, the Chairman stated that the past year had again been one of steady and satisfactory progress. The monthly meetings had generally been very well attended and the programme of lectures and film shows, which he detailed, had been varied and attractive. The membership also had been well maintained and at 31st December was as follows: 25 Honorary Members, 223 Active Members, 14 Corresponding Members, and 48 Contributing Members.

The College also had another very successful year and, in his report, the Chairman of the Education Committee, Mr. A. Jaccard, was pleased to record that the average attendance had risen from 191 in the previous year to 195 in 1961, the number of students enrolled being 496, compared with 463 in 1960.

In view of the considerably increased expenditure in rent and other overhead expenses, the Committee had reluctantly been compelled to increase the fees from £28 of £32 for a 15 weeks' course, with effect from the summer term 1962.

The scholastic programme had followed traditional lines and was, as usual, made more attractive by excursions to places of cultural and historical interest as well as visits to commercial undertakings and produce exchanges, Lloyd's, the Stock Exchange, etc. The College football