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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

NOUVELLE SOCIÉTÉ HELVÉTIQUE

The Annual General Meeting of Nouvelle Société Helvétique, London Section, took place on 20th March last, at the Swiss Hostel for Girls, Belsize Grove, London N.W.3.

Mr. M. Homberger, the President, was in the chair, and he was able to welcome a fair gathering of members and friends. The business of the evening — Annual Report, Treasurer's Accounts and elections — was conducted in record time, so much so that — which surely is remarkable on such an occasion! — the President was almost embarrassed to have to close the meeting long before the time scheduled.

The Society could look back on a fairly active year and the Committee had been successful in being able to arrange a variety of lectures which took place during the year under consideration.

Professor W. R. Schweizer fascinated a large audience with an extremely interesting survey of "Swiss Graphic Art from 1750 to 1850", supported by the exhibition of two dozen or more pictorial examples, early in the season a member of the Society offered some "Notes on the British and Swiss Constitutions and their Histories". Then we had the pleasure of a talk by Mr. du R. Aberdeen, F.R.I.B.A., on "Contemporary Architectural Design" illustrated with lantern slides, a lecture as pleasing as it was instructive. A month later the fare was "Language and Expatriation", presented by Mrs. Mary Hottinger, the well-known translator, and lovely fare it was. Now while all these had some direct or indirect connection with Switzerland, the lecture by Inspector Goodson on "The British Policeman, Your Friend and Servant" provided a sort of détour. It showed also that some policemen are excellent lecturers. The same thing must be said of Veterinary Surgeons, as everyone will agree who had the pleasure of hearing Mr. G. E. Joss talk on his experiences in the air in the company of animal cargo. "The Transport of Animals by Air" was the title of his talk, which was not only interesting but also highly amusing. Last but not least, Commissioner Dorothy Muirhead gave a talk on "The Salvation Army and Social Service". This reporter was unfortunately unable to hear her but heard complimentary reports from those that were there. There were also two Film shows during the year.

The Annual Report was accepted, and so was the Treasurer's Statement of Accounts. The latter did not show any great increases in the riches of N.S.H. but was good enough for the Treasurer, Mr. Asch, to propose that the membership subscription for 1962 should remain at £1. Before the President attempted the next item on the Agenda, the election of the Council, he had to inform the meeting of the departure of the Hon. Secretary, to take up a new position in the federal administration in Bern. Mr. A. L. Chapuis was an assiduous and always friendly officer and the best wishes for his future accompanied him from London. Happily, with the help of H.E. the Ambassador, we were able to recruit another member of the Embassy to act as Hon. Secretary, namely Mr. P. Bringolf. Another member of the Council, Mr. J. Furger, also left for home. The President proposed that in his place Mr. M. Schneebeli, Manager of the Regent Street Branch of the Swiss Bank Corporation, be nominated

Nouvelle Société Helvétique

(LONDON GROUP)

Monday, 16th April 1962, at 7.45 p.m.
at the Swiss Hostel for Girls
9 Belsize Grove, N.W.3

OPEN MEETING

Monsieur Félix Ansermoz, Labour Counsellor of the Swiss Embassy in London, will present Alain Tanner's film on **C. F. Ramuz**, and speak (in French) on some aspects of the life and work of our great Swiss writer.

After an interval a short new film on the **Training of Medical Personnel in Tanganyika** by the Swiss Tropical Institute will be shown.

This Meeting has had to be fixed for Monday, 16th April in order to enable members to attend a first recital in London of the Swiss pianist Nils Sailer on the 17th at Wigmore Hall at 7.30 p.m. The Swiss Hostel regrets that on this occasion the usual refreshments cannot be provided.



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This was agreed to. Thereupon the election took place, all those nominated being elected. Thus, the Council for the current year consists of:—

Messrs. L. S. R. Asch, R. Baumann, P. Bessire, Mrs. P. Bessire, Messrs. A. C. Boller, P. Bringolf, J. H. Büchi, W. H. Egli, M. Schneebeli, Miss A. Gretener, Messrs. M. Homberger, A. Kunz, Mrs. M. Meier, M. H. Mock, Miss R. Preiswerk, Messrs. W. Renz, J. Revilliod, and M. Wiesendanger.

Mr. Homberger indicated that he would relinquish the Presidency because he was due to leave London for Switzerland in mid-year. Those who have worked with Mr. Homberger during the past year will be very sorry to lose him, but we are glad we shall have his company in the Council at least for a few more months.

To bridge the gap between the termination of the business meeting and the Annual Dinner, cocktails were served and those present had a chance to meet and to chat in little groups.

At Dinner the President was joined at the top table by our Hon. President, the Ambassador, and Madame Daeniker. The speeches after the Dinner were short but, like the food, excellent. Mr. Homberger paid a hearty welcome to Dr. and Madame Daeniker and members and guests. He thanked the Ambassador and his staff, as well as his Council, for their co-operation. Then he congratulated the Hon. Vice-President, Mr. A. F. Suter, who, two days later, could celebrate his 80th birthday. The assembly rose to drink to his "many happy returns" and then sang "Happy Birthday To You". The singing was sincere enough even if we were not all quite in tuneful "accord".

Mr. Suter thanked the President and the Diners with a few well-chosen words.

The Ambassador, as Hon. President, thanked Mr. Homberger for his work and in the name of all present wished him "God-speed" for the future.

Having eaten the dinner with "aufessendem Beifall" it remains for us all to say "thank you" to Miss Preiswerk and Miss Hagenbuch and their staff. The dinner was very good indeed, and so were the many snack-suppers we had during the year. As someone said in my hearing, "How do they do it?". Well, however they do it, thanks from us all. 9-11 Belsize Grove has become home from home for many of us.

JHB.

PRESS CONFERENCE

On the invitation of Monsieur Jean Revilliod, Counsellor in charge of Cultural and Press Affairs at the Swiss Embassy, a Press Conference was held at the Montana Hotel, Gloucester Road, S.W.7, on Tuesday, 3rd April, in connection with the 2nd Centenary of the Swiss Church in London.

The Press Counsellor invited Mr. A. Renou, Hon. Secretary of the Appeal Committee, to address the journalists present on the history and achievements of the Swiss Church in London, as well as the *démarches* made regarding an appeal for funds to be collected in Switzerland for building purposes.

Mr. J. P. Christen, Chairman of the Swiss Economic Council, addressed the journalists on the efforts made, and the result so far achieved, concerning the Appeal launched at home, having just returned from Switzerland, where he was in contact with influential personalities.

SWISS RIFLE ASSOCIATION Annual General Meeting

March is the month when most of the Swiss Societies and Institutions render the accounts of their doings during the past twelve months.

These meetings follow the usual pattern. The respective presidents give a survey of the activities of their respective Societies or Institutions, the treasurers announce either a surplus or a deficit, the members confirm or elect a committee, and finally thanks for services rendered are being expressed to the officers in charge.

The annual meetings are usually followed by a dinner, and in some cases preceded by cocktails, which is a good idea; in the first instance it shortens the proceedings as everyone is looking forward to some nourishment, and in the second instance it puts the members attending in a good frame of mind, also usually making many who intended to criticize the committee for real or imaginary shortcomings to desist, as it would be rather ungrateful considering that the very people they are going to attack are treating them *à titre gratuit*.

All the recent annual general meetings have passed without much excitement. Gone are the times when, as in pre-war times, tempers often used to rise to fever point, and in some cases even unparliamentary language was used. We certainly have mellowed down a lot!

Few changes have occurred in the leadership of our Societies, and resignations from committee membership have been rare, which is a good omen and goes to prove that everyone is willing and keen to do his bit in keeping the Colony going in spite of its shrinking, which is of such vital importance. The financial position, judging from the accounts rendered, has also improved, deficits have become fewer and smaller, and in some cases even a balance "on the right side" has been reported.

The Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Rifle Association was held on Friday, 30th March, at the Glendower Hotel, Glendower Place, S.W.7, and was attended by about forty members. Mr. Alfred Schmid was in the Chair. In opening the Meeting he informed the members of the sudden death, which occurred in London, of Monsieur Henry de Torrenté, late Swiss Minister in London, and Ambassador in Washington, asking the company to pay a silent tribute in memory of the deceased.

The president then gave a survey of the activities of the Association, saying that in 1960 the membership consisted of three Honorary Members, one non-active member (Mr. Willy Fischer) and sixty-four active and contributing members. In the course of the year, sixteen new members were admitted, and eight members resigned mostly through departure from this country; a very satisfactory state of affairs, the president said.

Eleven shooting practices were held at Bisley, and 4,570 rounds of ammunition were used (1960: 3,430). Altogether ten competitions were held.

The president's report was unanimously accepted. Mr. F. Magnin, Hon. Secretary, read the minutes of the last annual meeting, and Mr. H. Straub, Hon. Treasurer, presented the accounts, which close with a credit balance.

Mr. Schmid thanked the members of the committee for the help they had given him during his year of office, especially singling out Mr. J. C. Wetter, Vice-President, and Mr. F. Magnin for their always devoted and efficient services; he also informed the Meeting that the old committee, with the exception of Mr. H. Schmid, was willing to carry on. All the old members were re-elected. Mr. Ls. Jobin was elected to replace Mr. Schmid.