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THE NEW SWISS AMBASSADOR TO GREAT BRITAIN

The Federal Council have appointed Monsieur Beat von Fischer as Ambassador to Great Britain in succession to Monsieur Armin Daeniker, who retired at the end of the year. There will be a welcome to Monsieur von Fischer in the next issue.

SCHWEIZERBUND (SWISS CLUB)

Some thirty members of the old Swiss Club met at the Montana Hotel in London S.W.7 for their Annual Christmas Dinner. Although the Club had to give up its premises in Charlotte Street some time ago, it has remained in existence, its main purpose being to preserve the name for the Colony. To judge from the carefree atmosphere reigning at the Christmas gathering, there is no doubt, however, that there is no sense of duty attached to this effort of keeping alive. On the contrary, the members and friends thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and the wish was expressed that one should meet more often. The genial President, Mr. V. Berti, was in the chair, ably supported by the efficient Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. Schmid, and the jovial Hon. Treasurer, Mr. L. S. R. Asch, a trio to whom the Club owes a great deal.

As one has become used to, food, wine and service provided by the Hotel Montana under its proprietor, Mr. E. Bonvin, were of excellent quality, and spirits rose accordingly. Many were the stories that circulated, and many were the good wishes expressed for the future of the Club and good health and prosperity of the members, last not least to the President, who had met with an accident and was badly handicapped by having his arm in a sling.

The party included a Trustee of the Club, Mr. F. Delaloye and his wife, the Vice-Consul Mr. F. Burgunder, the former Editor of the "Swiss Observer" Mr. A. Stauffer and Mrs. Stauffer, as well as the present Editor, Mrs. M. Meier. It was also gratifying to see that a number of young people were present, surely a good omen for the future.

Mariann.

N.S.H. CHRISTMAS GATHERING

The London Group of Nouvelle Société Helvétique held their Christmas Meeting in the charmingly decorated rooms of the Swiss Hostel for Girls. No lecture had been provided and members were able to indulge to their hearts' content in animated conversations with old and new friends, and a singsong accompanied on the guitar by the President.

Unknown to any but the management, however, a surprise awaited members between dinner and coffee. A young Swiss dancer, Vreni Reichenbach, a student at the Royal Ballet School in London, resident at the Hostel, gave a most accomplished performance of her art in a solo dance of her own choreography, based on "Variations on a Theme of Faust" by Gounod.

There can be no doubt that this young Swiss dancer and actress is very talented and will, in due course, make her artistic powers felt. Although Miss Reichenbach does not consider her training, which she only started in earnest in 1961, as finished, her gifts have already attracted the attention of ballet and theatre managers leading to an engagement for the winter season 1964/1965 at the Ballet Ensemble, Essen. Our compatriot has grace, a dancer's physique and strong determination. We salute in her a natural choreographic talent and we wish her well in her chosen career.

W.R.

COMMITTEE OF SWISS CATHOLICS IN LONDON

The drawing of the prizes for our Christmas Draw 1963 took place on the 13th December, 1963. The list of all prize-winners has been distributed to the various selling centres and all prize-winners have been individually informed of the result of the Draw.

Thanks to the generosity and support of all our friends we are very pleased to state that the sale of tickets and donations produced an income of just over £350.

Our very active Youth Club held their Christmas Eve Celebration at the very nicely decorated Westminster Ball Room, 30 Stratton Ground, S.W.1, on Tuesday, 24th December 1963.

The reading in our three National Languages of the Holy Gospel of Christ's Birth, a beautifully decorated Christmas tree, little gift bags, an excellent cold supper, created amongst the 135 young compatriots present a genuine Swiss "Weihnachtsstimmung", which was greatly enhanced by the singing of our beloved Christmas songs.

Our Christmas and New Year Service (Holy Mass and Sermon in English, German, French and Italian) was held at St. Ann's Church, Abbey Orchard Street, by our Chaplain, the Rev. Father Joseph Scherer, on Sunday, 29th December 1963, at 4 p.m.

This service was followed by the traditional Christmas and New Year tea party for children at the Westminster Ball Room, S.W.1.

Each child received a very nice present from Father Christmas and a gift bag containing Swiss Christmas cakes and chocolates.

Two young girls, Miss Jacqueline Gallo and Miss Elisabeth Smythe, gave a fine performance as ballet dancers, which was greatly appreciated by young and old.

Here again the lovely Christmas tree and the singing in our three National Languages of our Swiss songs gave great pleasure to all present.

This lovely children's party was followed by a Social Evening of our Youth Club.

*O. GROB
(Chairman.)*

NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE (London Group)

Tuesday, 14th January, at 7.30 p.m.
Livingstone Hall, 11 Carteret Street, S.W.1
(opposite St. James's Underground Station)

**OPEN MEETING
and FILM SHOW**

Dr. Hans Halbheer

Director of the AUSLANDSCHWEIZERWERK
will speak in English on
"Switzerland and the Swiss Abroad"
discussion invited;
to be followed by our

ANNUAL FILM SHOW

Swiss News Events 1963
Portrait de mon Lac

All Swiss and Friends are Welcome