

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK
Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom
Band: - (1964)
Heft: 1450

Rubrik: City Swiss Club

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CITY SWISS CLUB

Apart from the Annual Banquet and Ball and a summer outing, it is not very often that the ladies are asked to attend a function of the City Swiss Club. It was, therefore, very gratifying that so many came to the Dorchester Hotel on Tuesday, 18th February, thus making it a really happy family party.

After cocktails and dinner had been served, the President, Mr. M. A. Keller, extended a cordial welcome to the company — numbering about 120 — and especially to the ladies. He greeted the following gentlemen from the Swiss Embassy, Monsieur Jean de Stoutz, First Counsellor of Embassy, Monsieur G. von Salis, Secretary, and Mr. and Mrs. E. Tosio, Consul. He informed the gathering that Monsieur de Stoutz had just been appointed Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to the Republic of Israel, congratulating him on his promotion.

A double programme of two coloured films, featuring "The Swiss Daulagiri Expedition 1958", and "Captive River" (the story of the Kariba Dam) were thrown on the screen. Both coloured films gave a fascinating record of human endeavour and achievement. The audience shivered with those valiant conquerors of the world's highest peaks, in a blinding blizzard. (The Swiss alps in comparison look very modest), and felt uncomfortably hot whilst watching the building operations of a great dam under tropical heat amidst vast stretches of sand and jungle.

Both films were acknowledged with loud applause. It was indeed an interesting evening in every respect, enhanced by the presence of the fair sex. The next outing with the ladies will be on Friday, 3rd July, at "Great Fosters", Egham, Surrey.

ST.

Press Reporter C.S.C.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at Swiss House on Wednesday, 19th February, the Chairman, Mr. A. Jaccard, presiding.

In reviewing the accounts for 1963, which had been circulated, the Chairman was pleased to state that the Society could look back on another year of satisfactory working. The accounts, as presented, were duly adopted.

In his report on the Society's activities during the past year, the Chairman gave pride of place to the memorable 75th anniversary celebrations last October. The monthly meetings, which were generally followed by lectures and film shows on topical subjects, had, on the whole, been well attended. The membership had remained steady, the number of new members admitted being almost equal to the losses suffered through death and departure from this country during the period under review. At the end of the year, the Society numbered 24 Honorary Members, 223 Active Members, 14 Corresponding Members and 44 Contributing Members.

The Chairman of the Education Committee, Mr. A. Faes, was pleased to report that the College had had another record year, the number of students admitted being 573 (341 male and 232 female) compared with 540 (314 male and 226 female) in 1962. The average attendance per month had risen to 230 from 218 and 195 in 1962 and 1961 respectively, whilst the average length of stay had remained at approximately 18 weeks (exclusive of holidays) as for some years past.

The curriculum and the programme of lectures, excursions, socials and sport had followed traditional lines, improvements and alterations being made where possible and deemed necessary.

Out of a total of 348 candidates, who had presented themselves for the diploma examination, 336, or 96% were successful, compared with 333 candidates and the same percentage of passes in 1962.

The attendance at the evening classes, which had fallen for the first time after many years in 1962, showed a welcome recovery last year when 861 enrolments were received compared with 825 in the preceding year, the total number of classes held being 46 as against 48 in 1962.

At the examinations of Cambridge University held in June and December, both day and evening class students achieved satisfactory results. Out of a total of 52 candidates, 29 received the coveted Certificate of Proficiency in English, whilst of 247 candidates, 171 were successful at the examinations for the Lower Certificate in English. These results again compared very favourably with those of other educational establishments.

The College maintained a full-time staff of 12 to 14 teachers, to whom, as well as to the administrative staff, thanks were expressed for devoted and loyal service.

With the assistance of the employment advisory service provided by the Society under an arrangement with the "Schweiz. Kaufm. Stellenvermittlung", no less than 43 of our young compatriots had been able to obtain clerical employment in this country on completion of their studies.

The activities of the House Committee were mainly concerned with internal redecoration of the premises and renewals. The Chairman, Mr. L. W. Krucker, in his report stated that the heating system had been overhauled and augmented where necessary and that the classroom furniture was being modernised. Swiss House continued to provide accommodation to various other Swiss Societies for their meetings and again served as a centre for the external examinations of Cambridge University.

In conclusion, Mr. Jaccard expressed thanks to the Swiss Ambassador, and his collaborators for their continued interest in the activities of the Society and the College. He also warmly thanked National Councillor A. Meier-Ragg, General Secretary of the SKV, as well as the staff at Headquarters in Zurich for their ready advice and assistance in all matters affecting the welfare of the SMS in London and its College. He further gratefully acknowledged the subsidy received annually from the Swiss Government (BIGA) as well as the donations to the Education Fund from contributing firms and donors. He expressed appreciation to his colleagues on the Council and the Committees, as well as all the members, for their loyal support and co-operation. The report as presented was adopted with thanks to those who had compiled it.

Proceeding to the elections, Mr. Jaccard reported with regret that Mr. A. Faes, who had been a member of the Education Committee for a number of years and during the past year its Chairman, was unable to seek re-election as he was shortly returning to Switzerland in order to take up a high executive post in his firm. Whilst congratulating Mr. Faes on his promotion, he was sorry that through his departure the College was losing the services of a very able Chairman who had shown keen initiative during his relatively short term of office. Unfortunately, the present as well as an earlier Vice-Chairman of the Education Committee were unable to assume the office of Chairman due to other heavy commitments and Mr. Jaccard expressed