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NEWS FROM THE COLONY



The magician jumps off the stage to prove a point to his audience

CHRISTMAS PARTY FOR THE CHILDREN OF THE COLONY

An annual event which is perhaps unknown to many Swiss in the London area is the Christmas party offered every year to the children of the Colony. It is true that a function like this, intended as it is for children, can't be expected to be the year's highlight for a generally ageing Colony. One may be tempted to question whether the crowd of children of various shades of brown and pink—some with frizzy hair, others with slitted eyes—who were assembled on the first Saturday afternoon of the year in the St. Mary Hall of the Y.W.C.A. Headquarters had anything to do with the Colony at all.

However, all of them were of Swiss blood. They are the living proof that the Commonwealth community in London has a liking for our au pair girls.

Countless Swiss girls who come to Britain to look after the children of a prosperous family eventually tend to have offsprings of their own begotten by their British, Indian, Pakistani or West Indian husbands. Although some have problems and often rely on the help of the Swiss Benevolent Society, most seem perfectly happy with life spent in a Stoke Newington terraced house rather than in the cosy comfort of a flat in the suburbs of Zurich or Basle.

Keeping track of them and sending out invitations for the Colony's Christmas Party for children has for many years been the responsibility of Miss Elizabeth Hoffmann, a pillar of the Swiss Church. This year she sent out over 120 invitations. The weather discouraged some parents from making the journey to Gt.

Russell Street but the response was almost as general as last year's when 129 children came to the party.

The organiser of the event is Mr. Maurice Rothlisberger. He is in charge of the necessary fund raising. Paying for a magician, renting the premises, borrowing a film, buying presents for the children and offering them a generous tea with cakes and ice cream comes to about £150. Every year the cost increases relentlessly and this time Mr. Rothlisberger had to draw on his reserves to meet with the expenditure. Proceeds from the traditional

collection carried out at the City Swiss Club and donations from societies, companies and individuals fell at least £30 short of the required total.

After an introduction by Pastor Alexandre Nicod, the children were entertained by their magician friend, Mr. Jack Crosbe, whom many had met at the last two Christmas parties. Mr. Crosbe knows how to deal with children. Interspersing a bit of banter here and a little spoofing there, warming up his young audience with an occasional sing-song, he elicited the children's lively interest. Those in the front row screamed gleefully when they claimed to have caught the magician "cheating".

As in the past, Mr. Crosbe ended his performance by drawing pictures at a beguiling speed. He would begin by drawing a broom and end up with the sketch of an old road sweeper with a bristly moustache, or build the picture of a dog on the image of a heart which eventually outlined the dog's muzzle.

The children were then treated to a set of three cartoon films. Last year, they had been offered mountain films by courtesy of the Swiss National Tourist Office, but the organisers thought this year that a little money was worth spending to give their young minds something more inspiring than alpine vistas. This film show had an excited response from the young audience, which rushed to the tea tables as soon as it was over.

Mr. Gabriel Godet, 82, appeared in his Father Christmas attire and told a short Christmas tale before proceeding with the distribution of presents. A retired member of the Consistoire, Mr. Godet has played the part of Santa Claus in front of generations of children. What better way to launch children on a prosperous New Year?



After the show, a wide choice of goodies

PRO JUVENTUTE HOLIDAYS

Every year PRO JUVENTUTE organises a holiday for children of Swiss nationality aged 7 to 15 and living in the U.K., provided there is sufficient demand. This year these holidays will start in the second half of July and are scheduled to finish at the end of August.

Various schemes are offered:

a) free board and lodging with Swiss families for a limited number of children (7 to 15 years of age) whose parents are unable to pay either the whole or part of the cost;

b) board and lodging at full or reduced prices in a recognised children's home for the 7- to 11-year-olds (exceptionally, 12-year-olds also);

c) holiday camps for children from 12 to 15 years old whose parents are in a position to pay the whole or part of the costs;

d) children (7 to 16 years old) who are in the happy position of being invited to stay with relations or friends in Switzerland are welcome to join the party for the journey both ways;

e) children in need of recreation facilities, special care or medical treatment may also be accepted on certain conditions.

In cases where parents would value such holidays for their children but are not even in a position to defray the cost of the journey, the Swiss Benevolent Society would endeavour to provide the necessary funds. A request to this effect should be included in the application, which should be sent in writing by *March 15th at the latest* to the Swiss Embassy, 16-18 Montagu Place, London, W1H 2BQ.

PASTOR MARCEL DIETLER TO LEAVE LONDON

When this issue reaches readers, the Rev. Marcel Dietler, who has been for ten years Assistant Minister and then Minister of the German-speaking Swiss Church in London, will have given his last sermon from the pulpit of the Eglise Suisse in a healing service jointly held by the two Swiss Protestant parishes. This service was to take place on Sunday, 28th January at 11 a.m.

Marcel Dietler leaves us to continue his ministry in the highly active parish of Nidau, in the suburbs of Biel. There, he will lead a rather different kind of life with the four other ministers who are also attached to a parish which belongs to the Cantonal Church of Berne.

Endell Street was Marcel's first parish. He left a lasting impact on many members of the German-speaking community. He started valuable work with young Swiss married women and established in Britain and organised regular meetings for them.

The later stages of Marcel's ministry in London have been marked by what one can call a spiritual revival which was not unconnected with his renewed belief in the healing mission of the church. He has exercised this belief in a number of healing services which revived a tradition abandoned by the parish since the days of Pastor Claude Reverdin.

We wish him, his wife Vreni and his children the very best for this new phase of their life.



MR. B. SIMON TO LEAVE MANCHESTER

Members of the Manchester Swiss Club have been informed in a circular letter of the imminent departure of their former President, Mr. Bernhard Simon, who for 15 years had been working with Geigy and then Ciba-Geigy at Manchester. Mr. Simon, who has been a pillar of the Swiss Colony of the North during these years will move to London where he will doubtless continue to be a valuable asset to Swiss business and to the Swiss community. We wish him, his wife and their children a most happy stay in the capital city.

SWISS CHURCH

SERVICES EN FRANCAIS: à l'Eglise Suisse, 79 Endell Street, W.C.2, tous les dimanches à 11h15 et 19h00.

PERMANENCE: chaque jeudi de 15h00 à dimanche du mois, matin et soir.

SAINTE-CENE: le premier et troisième 18h00.

REUNION DE QUARTIER: huit veillées en automne et au printemps: voir "Le Messager".

CLUB DES JEUNES: tous les dimanches de 12h00 à 22h30, tous les jeudis de 15h00 à 22h30.

REUNION DE COUTURE: le 2e mardi du mois.

LUNCH: tous les dimanches à 13h00.

VISITES: sur demande.

PASTEUR: A. Nicod, 7 Park View Road, London, N.3. Téléphone 01-346 5281.

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SERVICES IN GERMAN: at Eglise Suisse, 79, Endell Street, W.C.2, every Sunday at 10 a.m. Sunday school takes place on the first and the third Sunday in the month for children of all age groups. Children assemble in the church with their parents who attend the normal Service. Services also at John Southworth Centre, 48 Gt. Peter Street, S.W.1 every Sunday at 6.30 p.m.

HOLY COMMUNION: every first Sunday of the month at evening service only. On major feasts at morning and evening services.

CONSULTATIONS: every Wednesday 4-6 p.m. at Eglise Suisse.

DISTRICT GROUP S.E.21 and SERVICES OUTSIDE LONDON: see "Stimme."

"KONTAKT" (Youth Group): every Wednesday 4-10 p.m. at Eglise Suisse. Supper at 7 p.m. Programme at 8 p.m.

WOMEN'S CIRCLE: every first Tuesday of the month from 12 noon onwards at the Eglise Suisse.

MOTHER'S REUNION: third Wednesday in the month, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Eglise Suisse.

VISITS: by request.

MINISTERS: Pfr. M. Dietler, 1, Womersley Road, N.8. Tel: 01-340 6018 and Pfr. U. Stefan, 3, Womersley Road, N.8. Tel: 01-340 9740.

SWISS CATHOLIC MISSION: John Southworth Centre, 48 Great Peter Street, London SW1P 2HA.

Sundays: Holy Mass at 6.30 p.m. with sermon in German, in the Club hall, ground floor.
(2nd floor at the same time, Protestant service in German).

CONSULTATIONS AND CONFESSIONS: by appointment.

SERVICES EN FRANCAIS: Notre Dame de France, 5 Leicester Place, W.C.2, on Sundays, 10.00, 11.00, 12.15, and 6.30 p.m.

SWISS CATHOLIC YOUTH CLUB: Open every Sunday from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. (48 Great Peter Street). Discussions, dance, lectures (with members of other denominations), Sunday services and refreshments. See programme "Die Stimme."

During the week: open according to programme of the English Youth Club.

RESIDENCE OF CHAPLAIN: Paul Bossard, Swiss Catholic Mission, 48 Great Peter Street, (2nd floor), London SW1P 2HA. Telephone: 01-222 2895

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