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NEWS from the COLONY

LONDON SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Forty six members, their wives and guests attended this year's Annual Dinner at the Dorchester Hotel on Friday, 22nd February, which once again proved to be a great success. Following the cocktail hour, during which there were some animated discussions (not all on philatelic matters) the party sat down to an excellent dinner. The palate being well satisfied and spirits raised by some excellent wine, Mr. David Paschoud, President, proposed the loyal toast and a toast to Switzerland and then treated us with what he called his first ever speech in front of an audience. In his own inimitable and humorous way he made everybody laugh from beginning to end, helped by some good-humoured heckling by some of the members. He paid tribute to some members of the committee for the help given to him in organizing this function as well as for the work they had done during his first year as President of the Society. He was especially pleased by the great number that turned up this evening to support him on this occasion and he hoped they were enjoying themselves as much as he was.

Mr. H. C. Gay, winner of this year's Cup Competition, was presented with the Silver Cup, as well as a small replica for

his success the previous year. During coffee time some ladies circulated round the tables selling raffle tickets, which brought in a most satisfactory amount to help out the Society's funds. Whether the success was due to the charm of the ticket sellers or the attractive prizes displayed on a separate table I cannot say, at all events the tickets went like hot-cakes and soon the tables were covered with them in all colours.

There followed the traditional auction in aid of charities, ably handled by Mr. M. Uehlinger. This proved to be equally successful and some lively bidding for about 25 philatelic items resulted in a collection of £54 which was supplemented by a donation of £6 by one of the guests. The total of £60 thus collected will be donated in equal shares to the Swiss Benevolent Society and the Marie Curie Foundation for Cancer Research. Mr. Rothlisberger, Hon. Treasurer, expressed his thanks, on behalf of the Society as well as on behalf of the two charities, for the generous support given by all present and mentioned that both collections must have broken all records in recent years.

Thus came to an end another most successful annual event in the calendar of the London-Swiss Philatelic Society and the new President, Mr. Paschoud, must

have been well pleased with the enthusiastic support he has received on this, his first occasion in the chair.

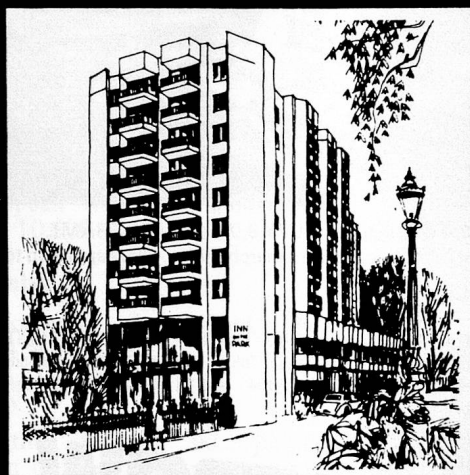
E.M.H.

Dinner Dance of the Yorkshire Swiss Club

On Saturday, 2nd March, 1974 members and friends met at the Mansion Hotel, Roundhay Park, Leeds, for a social function, for the first time tried out in this way and it is to be hoped that this may be the beginning of a long series of similar happy events. The hotel, set in a lovely park, received us in a most pleasant way and we felt quickly at home and the meeting of many old friends, of new acquaintances, the animated chats during aperitifs soon created a warm and congenial atmosphere which would stay with us for the whole evening. We were particularly glad to meet our new Vice-Consul Mr. Wegmueller and his charming family who represented our Consul General and Madame Born, unable to be with us this particular evening.

As we moved on to the inviting dining-room we could admire the nice set-up, the tasteful flower-decorations and table-flags, all enhancing the Swiss character of the evening, so more so as our dear veteran member Mr. Paul Lerch appeared in a most attractive Bernese

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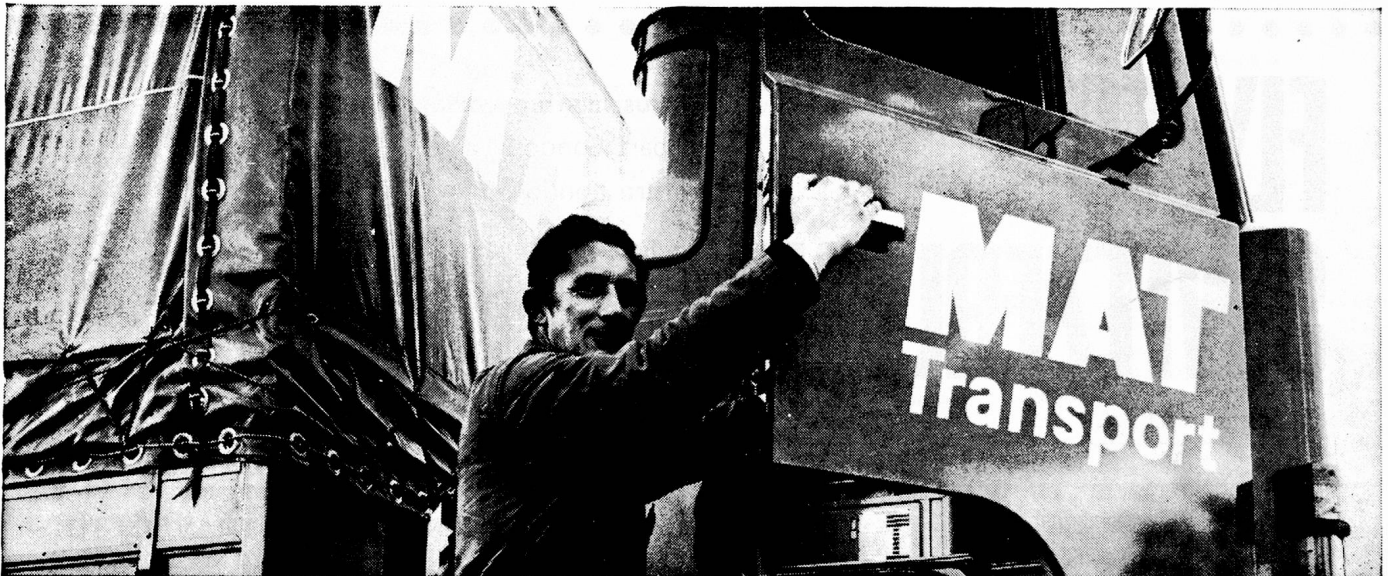
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Sennen Tracht. After grace was said everybody sat down to a hearty and well chosen dinner helped along by a good choice of wines and other drinks. At the coffee, our President Mr. Ermanno Berner invited the company to join him in the toast to Her Majesty the Queen to be followed by the toast to Switzerland.

In his short address he stated at once that this evening was meant to be an informal and friendly one and that he had hoped that our Consul General and Madame Born could have been with us, but this could not be so. Just back from Switzerland and after a short stay in hospital he had to take things easier for a little while and was also busy preparing for their departure to Chicago. Our Club had made them a presentation and lecture was given of his letter, good words indeed, and we know that he will always remember us with affection. A hearty welcome was extended to our new Vice-Consul Mr. Wegmueller and his family who were representing him, and the wish expressed that this evening may prove a particularly happy one to them and that their stay here in the North be a long and pleasant one.

He had then a few cordial words for the very efficient Secretary of our good friend Mr. Richard Mueller of Messrs. Sandoz, Horsforth, so also for Mr. and Mrs. Weber. Between themselves they formed an excellent team, doing specially important work for our Club, through their generosity helping greatly towards the funds of it, and expressed our thanks to them.

We would have liked very much to see also our Immediate Past President,

Prof. I. P. Inebnit and his wife Lucille, founder of our Club and for many years presiding quite successfully over its fortunes. He formed the wish that they may for many more years grace with their presence our functions and manifold efforts. A Club of our type and brand has still a useful task to perform and we are always deeply moved when our thoughts wander back to the very source and origin of things.

Our President brushed shortly on some humorous aspects in the life of our earliest ancestor, the Société Suisse de Bradford, which was formed in 1865 to be followed by the Swiss Club of Bradford, many active and successful years standing to their credit until they were succeeded by our own Yorkshire Swiss Club. It is for us all to make certain that the future works for us but this can only be achieved by massive, enthusiastic and continuous efforts by all its members and other compatriots living in our parts.

He appealed for the generosity of everybody when buying tickets which may assure them of some good prizes, to be seen on a side table, a most impressive sight, and helping so towards the funds and expenses of the Club. Before concluding he wished to announce the engagement of our member Miss Jane Shaw to Mr. Ian Hale and the young couple were very warmly congratulated by everybody present. He wished then for a happy continuation of the evening and his words were well received.

Our Vice-Consul Mr. Wegmueller brought us the good wishes of our Consul General saying also how happy he and his

family felt to be amongst us this particular evening.

By then an excellent band had taken up its position and its inviting tunes soon lured more and more couples to the dance-floor and the remaining few hours passed only too quickly by such pleasant physical exercise, sometimes of a most amusing and exciting character, by friendly and animated conversation and pleasant refreshments to be concluded with the usual good-byes and au-revoirs. Everybody eventually left, with a kind thought for the Committee which through sheer imagination and hard work had made such a happy evening possible and at the same time encouraging them to organise something similar next year.

E.B.

SWISS GASTRONOMIC EVENING AT LEEDS

A Swiss Gastronomic Evening was held on 22nd February at the Post House Hotel (a member of the Trust House Forte Group) at Bramhope, Leeds. A truly Swiss, four-course dinner was presented by the Maitre Chef of the Roof-top Restaurant of the St. George's Hotel, London. It is the second season that the Post House is playing host to internationally known London hotels and restaurants featuring the famed gastronomic regions of Europe. The menus are chosen and prepared by the Maitre Chefs of the hotels concerned in collaboration with the Post House's own kitchen brigade. The meals are complemented with the finest wines of the region.

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The St. George's Hotel, which is in Langham Place, next to the West End BBC Headquarters, is managed by Mr. P. R. Spittler, a Swiss hotelier and restaurateur who has been a resident in Britain for more than ten years. The Summit Restaurant of the St. George's will be presenting typical Swiss specialities in the near future.

J.S.

A VISIT TO THE KENSINGTON HILTON

The employees of the new Kensington Hilton were surprised to see a group of visitors who differed somewhat from their usual clientèle. On Sunday, 17th December, the youth group of the French-speaking Swiss parish toured this magnificent 640-room hotel opened only six months ago under the guidance of Marcel Christinat, Assistant Minister at the Swiss Church. A French girl called Françoise working at the reception let the party into the various departments of the hotel, which was relatively empty (about 40 per cent occupancy) owing to the off-season. The occupancy figure will rise to over 80 per cent by the end of March

and be accounted for mainly by indefatigable parties of Japanese on a tour of Europe with their heavy and costly camera kits. Françoise explained that the Americans were also important customers. But the hotel also expected many French and German guests, and even a few Swiss!

The au pair girls who constituted nearly all the party were delighted to see trim little rooms equipped with automatic breakfast and drinks dispensers, all of which were constantly monitored by a central computer. Despite their small size, the cost of spending a night in one of these rooms amounted to three times the weekly pocket money of the country lasses who viewed them with wondrous eyes! The group was then shown round the reception and its ultra-modern electronic room monitoring system. Françoise explained that to achieve complete automation of the room control system, which includes such things as occupation, payment and cleaning, all that would be required is a television camera in each room which would allow the Reception to know at any one time whether they were ready for cleaning and inspection. This would

save additional labour. As a matter of fact, such a system will eventually be installed. Attesting to the manpower saved by the introduction of this electronic gadgetry is the fact that a staff of about 200, or one person for three rooms — much more than in more ancient hotels — is enough to keep the Kensington Hilton operating. Not only is it enough to keep it operating, but also to make it very profitable right from the start.

The visit ended with a visit to the kitchen and its almost exclusively

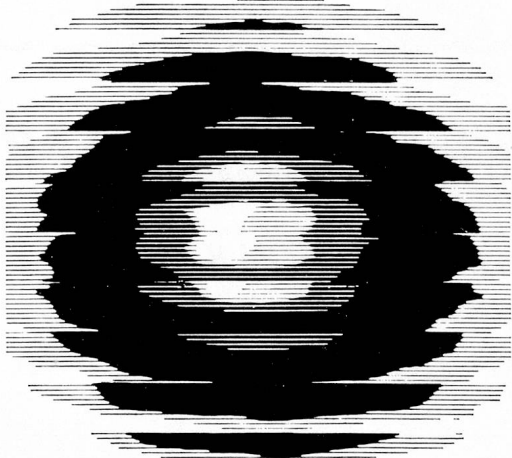
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