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A truly memorable Federation meeting

THE 19th annual meeting of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK held at the Swiss Embassy was special on several counts.

Firstly, the Federation celebrated its 35th anniversary, having been created as Presidents' Assembly in 1949 by Dr H.W. Egli, the late Raoul de Cintra and Walter Meier.

Secondly, the president of the Organisation of Swiss Abroad, Prof Dr Walther Hofer, attended the meeting for the first time. He brought greetings from the executive of the "Little Parliament of the Swiss Abroad", the Commission (ASK).

Prof Hofer said that he had been living abroad himself, for over a year in the USA, and for nine years in Berlin. He was therefore familiar with many problems facing his compatriots

outside Switzerland.

He mentioned the Assembly of Swiss Abroad was held in Basle in conjunction with the Swiss Industries Fair, the Muba. This was by no means a novelty he said, as the first eight Assemblies from 1919 to 1926 had been held in Basle with the Muba.

He stressed the importance of Swiss foreign trade and the valuable contribution and constant efforts thousands and thousands of Swiss were making.

Prof Hofer also mentioned the ever greater sacrifices Swiss abroad had to make in a time of rapidly growing political and economic difficulties.

He reiterated some of the successes of the ASK during the past year, in particular with regard to the citizenship campaign and the AHV, and he thanked Mrs

Meier for her valuable work as delegate for 22 years.

He announced that next year, the Assembly would again take place at the end of August, at Interlaken or Gstaad, and he hoped to see a larger delegation from Britain than this year.

The third reason why the meeting was special was the fact that the president, Mr Bernard Simon, was in the chair for the last time, as he was relinquishing his office after 10 years.

He welcomed the Swiss Ambassador, Monsieur Charles-Francois Pictet, whose first AGM as hon. president it was. He thanked him for his interest and also for his and Madame Pictet's hospitality.

Next, he greeted the two Consuls, Monsieur Charles Glauser from Manchester and Monsieur

Claude Duboulet from London, but above all the Minister at the Swiss Embassy, Monsieur Claudio Caratsch.

He thanked him for all his help during his years in London and wished him success in his new post.

Apart from Prof Hofer, Mr Simon welcomed another guest from Switzerland, Mr Marcel Ney, director of the Secretariat in Berne – no newcomer to the Swiss in Britain.

Mr Ney later made an impressive appeal to purchase 1st August Badges which this year were sold in aid of institutions benefiting Swiss abroad, such as schools, the Secretariat of Swiss Abroad and the Solidarity Fund.

The president extended a welcome to the hon vice-president, Dr H.W. Egli and the large number of presidents who had come from many parts of the UK, though unfortunately quite a few members were ill or absent abroad. Still, the meeting was very representative and able to deal with the business expeditiously.

The minutes, the president's and treasurer's reports, as well as that of the auditors were accepted with thanks.

Though all four delegates to the commission (Mrs Mariann Meier and Mr Joe Broggini for the south, and Mr Bernard Simon and Dr Ursula Ditchburn for the north) were present, it fell to Dr Ditchburn to report on the work of the commission and the ASK meeting in Basle.

Mrs Meier, as member in her own right of both the Council of the Solidarity Fund and the Com-

Thank you, Mariann . . .

THIS report would not be complete if I did not add a special tribute to Mariann Meier on the occasion of her retirement as a member of the Federation and particularly of the Federation's committee.

As the past president, I have had the pleasure and privilege to work closely with Mariann on many a topic.

Her tireless efforts and devotion, her genuine desire to help the cause and the aims

of the Federation cannot be overstated.

Indeed readers of the *Swiss Observer* have each month proof of her stout support in providing a stream of interesting articles and information.

For all this and for her genuine friendship I wish to record my personal heartfelt thanks, coupled with the hope that Mariann will be able to continue for many years to come to give us, in the Colony, the benefit of

her wide experience in the many fields of activity she is still engaged in.

I am pleased to know that Mariann will still be involved in the work of the Commission on Information to and from the Fifth Switzerland as well as a member of the Council of the Solidarity Fund.

Once again, thank you Mariann for all you have done on behalf of your compatriots.

Bernard Simon



During a reception at the Stationers' Hall in the City of London, Mrs Thatcher chats about her experiences in Switzerland, where she spends a short holiday every year. From left to right: Mrs Margaret Thatcher; Albert Kunz, Director, Swiss National Tourist Office; Sir David English, Editor-in-Chief, Daily Mail; Alwyn Robinson, Managing Director, Daily Mail.

mission on Information, reported on the meetings she had attended and drew particular attention to the Solidarity Fund.

The report by the fact-finding ad hoc Committee on Cooperation was accepted and the committee given a further mandate to continue its work.

The President then reported on the negotiations between the Federation, the "Swiss Observer" managing editor (unfortunately absent due to illness) and the authorities in Berne regarding the renewed incorporation of the "Review" in the S.O.

It was hoped to conclude an agreement soon and to resume quarterly publishing of the "Review" as part of the "Swiss Observer".

As mentioned before, the meeting was the last under Mr Simon's chairmanship. He thanked the members for their support and said that his work had been made more difficult due to being resident in Manchester and not in London.

The Ambassador took the chair during the elections. He thanked the outgoing president for his sterling work for the past 10 years. His successor was elected in the person of Mr E. Tangemann, hitherto vice-

president of the Federation. Mr F. Koch (president City Swiss Club) was the new vice-president.

The hon treasurer, Mr Albert Kunz, and the hon secretary, Mr Virgil Berti, were re-elected.

Mr Simon resumed the chair for the remainder of the meeting and proceeded with the election of the two delegates and their deputies to the commission.

This brings us to a further reason why the meeting was memorable: he announced the retirement of Mrs Mariann Meier after 22 years on the ASK, for well over a decade the only woman with 60 and 70 men.

She had been a member of the Federation for 26 years, first as president of the Welfare Office, then as editor of the "Swiss Observer" and then as president of the New Helvetic Society.

He thanked her for her devoted and effective work and announced that the committee would co-opt her. Mrs Meier then addressed the meeting, and her farewell speech earned her a standing ovation.

The company then adjourned to the residence where dinner was served. After an excellent meal, the Ambassador addressed the gathering and again mentioned the invaluable work

done by Mrs Meier and by Mr B. Simon.

Thus a memorable evening came to a close, and if members took Mrs Meier's words to heart, there may be a new beginning for the Federation with the societies taking a much more active part.

Mariann Meier

Mr Roland Mathez

IT is with deep regret that we announce the death on June 2 of Mr Roland Gaston Mathez, of 50 Vincent Court, Bell Lane, Hendon, London NW4.

Roland Mathez was born in the Jura. He worked in the Banque Populaire Suisse, Tramelan, and then for two years in a bank in Frankfurt before he came to this country in 1926.

He obtained a post in the Ionian Bank where he met his wife Ruth. It is there, too, that he became friendly with a well-remembered compatriot, the late Maurice Rothlisberger.

In 1933, he joined a firm of merchant bankers in the City and specialised in stocks and shares. Eventually he was based in Zurich.

Mr Mathez was closely con-

nected with the Swiss Church already at the time of Pasteur Hoffmann-de Visme, and later when Monsieur Pradervand was minister, followed by Pastors Reverdin and Nicod.

He was elected to the Consistoire of the Swiss Church in 1947.

In 1926, he had joined the Union Chrétienne de Langue Francaise, under Mr Alfred Brauen, who was president of the Consistoire and died in 1962 at the age of nearly 100.

Mr Mathez's great hobby was philately, and he was a keen member of the London Swiss Philatelic Society. He also belonged to the City Swiss Club, the Swiss Mercantile Society and the New Helvetic Society.

Many of his Swiss and British friends attended the cremation at Golders Green Crematorium on June 7 after a funeral service at Christ Church, Hendon. They were grateful to know that he did not have to suffer greatly, and although he died suddenly, the end was peaceful.

We shall remember Roland Mathez's kindly personality with affection and express our deep sympathy to his wife and daughter in their grievous loss.

MM

THE annual spring outing of the Unione Ticinese was to Hatfield House, residence of Queen Elizabeth I before she came to the throne.

Its extensive gardens would have been ideal for a picnic, unfortunately the weather was most unwelcoming. It started to rain just as the first participants began to arrive, and later it became quite heavy – so the picnics had to be eaten in the cars!

Undaunted by the adverse conditions, well over 20 members and their families, including several youngsters, took part, and we were also honoured by the presence of the Swiss Consul in London and Madame Duboulet.

After lunch Mr Peter Barber was on hand to conduct us on a tour of the house, and although he was warned by an attendant that no guiding by unauthorised persons was allowed, he managed

in his usual knowledgeable and efficient way to point out the most interesting features of the apartments.

After the tour everybody proceeded (in the pouring rain!) to the cafeteria for afternoon tea, bringing a pleasant, if rather rain-soaked, outing to its end.

★ ★ ★

ONCE again Mrs Cynthia Parrott was the gracious hostess for the barbecue, now a traditional event, as she and her husband welcomed some 65 members with

their families and friends in the garden of their lovely house in Hurstpierpoint.

This time the weather behaved almost impeccably though the forecast, which was not very promising, kept quite a lot of people away.

Although persistent, if intermittent clouds now and again obscured the sun, we were able to enjoy alfresco the delicious meal, consisting of risotto – prepared by Mr Pietro Jacomelli – followed by steak, barbecued to perfection by our president, and a salad.

Although we were unable to go

strawberry picking we did not have to forego the pleasure of fresh strawberries and ice cream for dessert, thanks again to Mrs Parrott who had managed to pick 15lb of the luscious berries all on her own!

Mr Joe Diviani organised the raffle, for which various members had contributed prizes, and which raised approximately £50 for the society – not bad considering there were quite a lot of children, and far fewer adults than last year.

After lunch small and larger parties dispersed for a walk in the surrounding countryside, the

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bravest climbing the steep Downs.

Later all returned for tea and cakes, and it was nearly 6.30pm before the party began to break up, after what had been another successful and most enjoyable gathering.

Valerie Ossola

Active in Yorkshire

IT seems a while since I wrote about the activities of the Yorkshire Swiss Club, but we have not been altogether idle.

Recently we had a meeting at the Yorkshire Wolds Gliding Club and spent a most interesting and enjoyable evening. Approximately 50 members turned up, and 34 "went up".

The weather was sunny and rather windy but we were assured these were the best conditions for gliding.

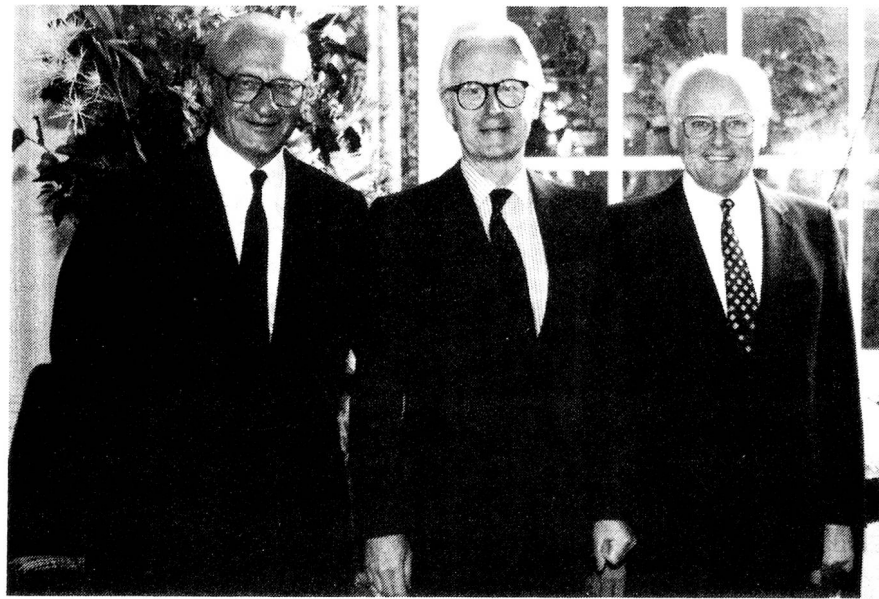
Many who had not booked to glide decided to do so after talking to and watching others.

Our committee member, Mr Franklin Pape, who arranged the evening, was kept very busy.

We all gathered later in the club house to celebrate. It was indeed an experience, new to all of us, but we've had several requests already for a repeat.

Our president asked me to mention that the canal cruise was also a success. Last September the weather was cold and wet for the last cruise, but this time everything was beautiful.

The weather was warm and the "boat" furniture was re-arranged



In the centre, the Swiss Ambassador, Mr F. Pictet, with the Swiss Bank Corporation's retiring chairman, Mr H. Strasser on his left, and the new chairman, Mr F. Galliker on his right.

so the afternoon was like an informal party. I was unable to attend, but had several letters afterwards expressing appreciation and enjoyment.

**Lilian Bauman,
Sec, Yorks Swiss Club**

Chairman retires

MR Hans Strasser chose London for one of the receptions to mark his retirement as Chairman of the Swiss Bank Corporation and to introduce his successor, Mr Franz Galliker, who took over on July 1.

The reception, held at Carpenters Hall, London, was

attended by more than 200 guests, including leading figures in international banking, as well as commercial customers of London office, stockbrokers, money brokers, representatives of discount houses, and other personalities.

Guests also met Mr G. Streichenberg, general manager with responsibility for London office.

Mr Strasser's guests also included the Rt. Hon. The Earl of Inchcape, international adviser, Messrs U. Buhler, D. Linder, and P. Muller, directors of the bank, Mr W. Frehner, general manager, Mr W. Schick, central manager, and Mr A. Butz, manager attached to the general management.

Also present were senior executives of Swiss Bank Corporation International, as well as members of London office management.

Carpenters Hall is the home of one of the City's older liveried companies. The date of the foundation of the Brotherhood of Carpenters is not on record but there is evidence that it existed before 1333.

The first Carpenters Hall existed in 1428 and added to during 1550/1665.

In 1666, during the Great Fire of London, the halls of many

liveried companies were destroyed. Carpenters Hall, however, was lucky to suffer no damage as it was surrounded by gardens which acted as a fire-break.

A new hall was completed in 1880. Although it escaped damage during the First World War, it was severely damaged in September, 1940, and was finally destroyed in May, 1941, during later air raids.

The present hall, which preserves the main elevations of the old one, was opened in 1960, by the Lord Mayor of London.

During the morning of the reception Mr Strasser and London office chief manager, Mr R.E. Amstad, were received at Mansion House by the Lord Mayor of London, Dame Mary Donaldson.

In the afternoon Mr Strasser, accompanied by Messrs Streichenberg and Amstad, saw the Governor of the Bank of England, Mr Robin Leigh-Pemberton.

We wish Mr Strasser a long and happy retirement shared with Mrs Strasser. At the same time we offer our good wishes to the new chairman, Mr Franz Galliker.

**Adrian Suter
Swiss Bank Corporation**

100th birthday

MRS Margritha Zingg, of 5-9 Freeland Road, London W5 celebrated her 100th birthday on July 28.

On August 1, Mr and Mrs J.C. Wetter, of 8 Carew Road, Northwood, Middlesex, celebrated their Diamond Wedding. Mr and Mrs Wetter have gone back to Switzerland, but letters addressed to the Northwood address will reach them.

On August 9, Mrs Trudy Senn, of 1 Ebbisham Road, Worcester Park, Surrey, had her 70th birthday.

Mrs Mariann Meier, of 53 Priory Road, London NW6 3NE, celebrated her 70th birthday on August 10.

We send best wishes for enjoyable anniversaries to all these friends and for good health and happiness in the new decade.