

Swiss Club Birmingham

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ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

The Annual Meeting of the Swiss Benevolent Society took place at Brown's Hotel, Dover Street, W.1, on Monday, 25th March, 1946. Before the meeting started at 6 p.m., Col. A. Bon, the President of the Society, kindly offered tea to the members, a generous gesture which was very much appreciated by everyone. The Swiss Minister, Monsieur P. Ruegger, was amongst the guests but had to leave before the President opened the official part of the meeting. Col. Bon welcomed Dr. Escher, Counsellor of Legation, and the handsome number of members of the various committees. In his short address he pointed out that more difficult times had started for the Society as some unemployment had already set in, specially amongst the older and less capable people. This fact was also shown in the accounts. The sum spent on casual relief had increased considerably even without taking into consideration the distribution of victory and 75th Anniversary grants. Repatriations to Switzerland had again started, mostly of aged and sick people. As every year the pensions and the item of "grants for holidays for needy Swiss in failing health" appeared under expenses. Of special interest under income was the sum of £540 being refunds of income tax on covenants. The Society are particularly grateful to a large number of subscribers for signing that undertaking which enables the S.B.S. to claim from the Inland Revenue the income tax paid by subscribers on the amount of their annual contribution. Hope was expressed that more subscribers would do this in future.

Quite a fair sum appeared under repayment of assistance which, though small compared with the total amount spent on relief, nevertheless showed that some at least of those whom the Society had helped repaid when it was possible. There was again an income on the house at 31, Conway Street, mainly consisting of rent. All the surplus had been put aside for repairs when they could be carried out. The 75th Anniversary Fund had almost reached the target of £1,000, which was considered very creditable. The money left over from the Swiss Relief Centre was transferred to the ordinary funds of the Benevolent Society.

It was also interesting to note that the S.B.S. still acted as agents for the Swiss Government for paying out military allowances to dependants of men serving in the Swiss Army. The President pointed out that in 1945 the Society had crossed the line of £100,000 paid out for relief since 1870, which is certainly a great achievement. He thanked all the subscribers and donors for their help and expressed his satisfaction that the Society had been able to come through the war years without difficulties. Thanks for this, of course, were also due to the untiring efforts and valuable assistance of all the members and staff.

From the Secretary's report it could be learned that there are still about two dozen certified mental cases on the books of the Society and that great efforts are always made to repatriate difficult cases before they get certified. Three new pensioners were elected to bring up the number to 70.

The members were very glad to hear that the President was willing to stand again for office and he was unanimously elected. The Committee were also ap-

pointed as before, with one resignation from the House Committee, viz., that of Mrs. B. Sigerist. Mr. R. Mordasini, Swiss Consul, and Pfarrer H. Blum were elected as members. Before the meeting ended at 7 o'clock it was decided that, when considered advisable, the Society would help sick and poor Swiss children in England to travel to Switzerland where they could enjoy a holiday under the Pro Juventute scheme.

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NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE. London Group.

The monthly meeting of the Group was held at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, on Tuesday, April 16th, when the audience received a very interesting talk on "Newspaper Production in Great Britain" by Mr. Robert Prew, late Editor of the "Daily Mail." The speaker gave us a very comprehensive survey of the enormous industry of English newspaper production of to-day, mainly from the economic point of view, and particularly stressed the point that the organisation owed its rapid growth to private enterprise entirely. A very animated discussion arose from Mr. Prew's wise and authoritative talk, during which he informed us of the striking differences between the English, the American and the Continental Press. Our thanks are due to Mr. Prew, as well as to his friend, Col. Bon, who brought the speaker in touch with us.

Dr. Arnold Latt will be in London on April 26th and he will speak on Anglo-Swiss Cultural Relations to the Royal Society of Arts at 1.45 p.m. on April 29th. The Colony is heartily invited to attend. Dr. Latt will visit Birmingham on the 2nd of May, Manchester on the 3rd, and Dumfermline, Scotland, on the 4th, after which tour we hope to arrange a special meeting in London to have our good friend among ourselves.

SWISS CLUB BIRMINGHAM.

The Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Club Birmingham took place at the Midland Hotel, Birmingham, on Monday, April 15th, 1946.

The following Committee was elected: President, O. Wuest; Vice-President, F. Beer; Hon. Secretary, P. A. Duvoisin; Hon. Treasurer, M. A. Kloetzli; Relief Officer, F. E. Brunner.

A special welcome was extended to our dear friend and President for many years, Peter Brun, who attended the meeting after a long absence owing to illness. His many friends in London and elsewhere will be glad to hear that he has made a wonderful recovery, and hopes to be well enough to attend our Spring Outing to Malvern on May 5th, where we hope to make the acquaintance of the Swiss Minister, Dr. P. Ruegger, and to meet once more our Honorary Member and late Consul, Mr. A. Montag.

All Swiss in the Midlands and elsewhere are cordially invited. The address of our Secretary, P. A. Duvoisin, is 46, Farran Road, Northfield, Birmingham 31.

M.A.K.