

# The "Swiss Observer" thirty years ago

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## THE "SWISS OBSERVER" THIRTY YEARS AGO

The first issue in June 1937 reported the opening of the Swiss Pavilion at the International Exhibition in Paris. An advert reminded us of the *Réunion d'Eté* of the City Swiss Club to be held at the Brent Bridge Hotel — the all-inclusive price of the ticket was the huge sum of 7/6. There was an article on "Life in a Swiss Sanatorium" and nearly three pages (today's size) of forthcoming events in Switzerland.

The next issue had a report on the 400th anniversary of the University of Lausanne. In answer to a telegram sent by Federal Councillor Motta to the Pope on his 80th birthday, a note was received from His Holiness, in which he wished His Excellency and the whole Federal Council "*dauernde Fülle göttlicher Erleuchtung und Gnade*". It carried an advertisement reproduced from a Bernese paper, in which a "*Reifer hübscher Schweizerbengel sucht Bekanntschaft mit reichem Ausländerengel zur Gründung irdischen Glückes*". Some stinging remarks regarding such blatant prostitution accompanied the reproduction.

On 19th June we read that the National Council defeated with 107 to 2 votes a Motion tabled by National Councillors Tobler and Duttweiler regarding the prohibition of Freemasons' Lodges in Switzerland. An article in French elucidated points in the Swiss Constitution. A report on a lecture on politics by the eminent historian Dr. G. P. Gooch (S.M.S.) took up several columns. It is interesting to note that much of what Dr. Gooch prophesied, later became an only too sad reality (Czechoslovakia's fate, Austria, Axis combination, Russia, etc.).

The last issue of June 1937 elaborated on "Berne in Flowers" and on the 68th "Fête Suisse" in London, at which most of the entertaining had consisted of musical items, both classic and popular. Four Swiss films were running at six London cinemas each at that time. Under Church news we read that Hans Gerschwiler had been confirmed by Pfr. Hahn of the Schweizerkirche, a youngster who was to become a champion skater.

## SWISS TRAVEL HOSTESSES AT YOUR SERVICE

An organisation has been created in Zurich, which calls itself "International Escort Service". It offers the services of educated, widely-travelled and linguistically talented young women as companions and travel hostesses for business groups, families or individuals. Thirteen different services are offered at hourly, half-day or all-day rates. They include an airport service, at which the hostess takes care of all necessary travel arrangements; another service in which the hostess accompanies the traveller from the airport to the city by limousine, and remains at his disposal for two hours for information, city sight-seeing, shopping, etc; a travel-companion service in which the hostess drives a rented car for long journeys in Switzerland or in Europe; a secretarial and interpreting service (all of the hostesses are fluent in at least three to four languages), and finally a kind of companion service whereby the eloquent and knowledgeable hostesses accompany foreign visitors on shopping trips, to the theatre, lectures, exhibitions and athletic events. The name "International Escort Service" is already legally registered in 31 countries and it is expected that this new kind of traveller service, while originating in Switzerland, will achieve considerable success abroad.

[S.N.T.O.]

## RECENT DEATHS IN SWITZERLAND

The following deaths have been reported from Switzerland:

- Romain Pittet (62), Fribourg, Vicar-General of the diocese of Lausanne, Geneva and Fribourg; author of many scientific works.
- Dr. iur Leonhard Jenni (81), Geneva, originally from Ennenda/Glarus, founder of the Swiss League for Human Rights; for the last few years, he worked mainly to bring families together who had been separated by the Iron Curtain.
- Miss Adèle Buache (101), Chailly/Lausanne; former private teacher in many countries of Europe and the Near East.
- Judge François Esseiva (62), Fribourg, former Director of the Cantonal and University Library; Hon. Senator of the University.
- Friedrich Gammenthaler (79), Wasen/Emmental, former *Zeugschmied* and *Burgerschreiber* of Sumiswald; active in many public offices; well-known amateur actor in Franz Schnyder's Gotthelf films.
- Prof. Hans Erlenmeyer (67), Basle Professor of Anorganic Chemistry at Basle University; made a name for himself in isotope research.
- Ernst Lais (70), Riehen/Basle, until 1945 member of the management of the Union Bank in Switzerland; then leading position in the private banking firm of La Roche & Co.; member of the Commune Council of Riehen from 1933 to 1955; promoter of the boy scout movement.
- Prof. Dr. Pierre Decker (75), Lausanne. Prof. at Lausanne University and eminent surgeon; President of Swiss Society for Surgery, of the Swiss League for Cancer Research, and Council member of the Swiss Academy of Medical Sciences; organiser of the Health Pavilion at the EXPO 1964.
- Mrs. Hermine Meidinger-Hummel (92), Basle, widow of one-time Chief Engineer of Machine factory Alioth at Muenchenstein; for many years in Berlin and France; since 1900 in Basle again where her husband founded his own electro-technical firm; purchased Castle Wartenfels near Lostorf, which she kept up after her husband's death; supported many charitable and social institutions; Honorary Citizen of Lostorf.
- Dr. phil Hans Rhyn (79), Berne, *Gymnasiallehrer* in Berne; well-known writer and poet.
- Dr. med. André Nicolet (65), Berne, well-known surgeon; President of International Surgeons' Federation for many years; Chief Surgeon at Tiefenau Hospital; initiator of Sonnenhof Nursing Home where he died during an operation.
- Eugen Schellenberg (88), Buerglen (Thurgau), since 1922 Manager of the "Kammgarnspinnerei"; had great interest in educational matters; for many years president of the Thurgau "Handels- und Industrieverein".
- Dr. med. Adolf von Beust (78), Berne, *Oberbahnarzt* and Chief Medical Officer of the Federal Administration; before 1924 he had his own practice in Zurich.
- Ernst Wehrle (Buchs/SG), former station master of Buchs; *Bezirksschulrat*; he had a stroke during a meeting of the Educational Council of the Werdenberg district.

[A.T.S.]