

Swiss Mercantile Society

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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

After the customary summer recess, the Society resumed its activities on 13th September, when the Monthly Meeting was held at Swiss House.

The Chairman, Mr. A. Jaccard, informed the meeting that His Excellency, the Swiss Ambassador, Monsieur Olivier Long, had kindly agreed to become Honorary President of the Society during his period of office in Great Britain, an announcement which was received with great pleasure by the members present.

With deep regret, the meeting learnt of the death in Switzerland, to where he had retired some years ago, of Mr. Ernest Wey, who had been a member of the Society since 1936. Mr. F. Streit, in a warm tribute to his former colleague, briefly recalled the career in this country and the personality of a departed friend.

The long and faithful support of members was again evinced at the Veterans' Meeting in Thun on 8th September, when no less than four members of the London Section were awarded the "Wappenscheibe" of the SKV in recognition of 50 years' membership of the Central Society, viz. Messrs. O. Gasser, W. Jent, F. G. Sommer, and F. Streit. Mr. Jaccard stated that Mr. F. G. Sommer had attended this function, together with Mrs. Sommer, and offered congratulations to all the four veterans, expressing the hope that they would be able to attend the next meeting on 11th October.

Reporting on the activities of the College, the Chairman mentioned that the autumn term had started on 11th September, with 112 new students and a total attendance of 302, a postwar record. He was pleased to record that enrolments for future entries were also well up on previous intakes and augured well for the future.

At the examinations of Cambridge University in June, 64 students of the College had obtained the Lower Certificate in English out of 105 candidates which, though representing a somewhat lower percentage of passes than recently, was still well above the overall average for the whole of the country. Particularly gratifying, however, were the results of the examination for the coveted Certificate of Proficiency in English. Out of 25 candidates, 15 were successful, of whom no less than 10 obtained a second and 5 a third class pass. Of the remainder, seven had failed in one subject only, in which they could take a supplementary examination. These results were approximately 20% higher than the U.K. average figures.

The Chairman congratulated the Principal, Mr. Slade, who was present, and the Vice-Principal, Mr. E. W. Makin, on the excellent results in the C.P.E. examinations, for which they had prepared the students.

Following the meeting, "Wild Wings", an award-winning film of Peter Scott's Wild Fowl Trust at Slimbridge, Gloucestershire, was shown by courtesy of British Transport.

This was a treat not only for ornithologists but also for nature lovers as well as wild and still life photographers. The main objects of the Wildfowl Trust at Slimbridge are observation and protection of rare and often beautiful species in their struggle for survival. The site of the Trust between the River Severn and the Cotswolds makes a picturesque setting at all seasons of the year and some of the fascinating wild fowl shown in the

film, including Chinese Mandarin Ducks, Red Crested Pochards and African Pygmy Geese fit well into this habitat. The film has plenty of action, as well as colour, featuring flocks of wild fowl in full flight, catching, ringing, etc. It should act as a powerful incentive to viewers to visit this unusual sanctuary.

Following the film, Mr. O. Grob, after a brief introductory talk, showed a series of colour slides taken during holidays in Minorca last summer. This smaller of the Balearic Islands with an area of only 264 square miles and a population of about 50,000, is as yet refreshingly undeveloped and largely unspoilt. The inhabitants are a friendly and hospitable people who are glad to see foreign tourists but not dependent on them. Minorca surprisingly is a self-sufficient, industrial island with a thriving export trade in shoes and leather-goods, jewellery, hand-hammered silver, marine engines and model boats. Its chief products are cheese, gin (6/- a bottle), liqueurs, lobsters and oysters.

From the visitor's point of view, it is a veritable paradise, where he can enjoy the grandeur of no less than 120 sun-drenched beaches.

Mr. Grob spent his holiday at Cala'n Porter, a cove like a Norwegian fiord, about half an hour from Port Mahon, the capital, which could first be reached direct by charter flight only as recently as 1958.

The photographs he showed truly invited one to visit this Mediterranean island before commercialisation and development will have raised its ugly head over what must be one of the few remaining ideal holiday resorts. The slides shown included a wide variety of scenery and ancient monuments, the most spectacular of which are the TAULAS, big T-shaped towers with uprights of sixteen feet not unlike those of Stonehenge, and reputed to be the oldest buildings in Europe.

Apart from Port Mahon or Pearl Harbour, with the finest deep-water anchorage in the world, the 3½ miles of which could shelter all the navies of the world, there were many slides of smaller, but very picturesque places with colourful buildings in Moorish style. Some of the shots with the azure skies reflected in the limpid waters of the rocky inlets had considerable technical merit, the pièce de résistance being a picture taken in the moonlight over a headland.

Finally, Mr. W. Stettbacher showed a number of excellent photographs taken on his recent alpine exploits which were greatly admired.

The Chairman, on behalf of the meeting, expressed thanks to all who had contributed to a most interesting and enjoyable evening.

W.B.

PERSONAL

We announce with great pleasure the marriage of Miss Tina Luminati, to Mr. Neil John Broomfield. The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Luminati of "Bernina", 20 St. Albans Avenue, Bournemouth.

The wedding took place at the Sacred Heart Church in Bournemouth on Saturday, 7th October, followed by a Reception at the Carlton Hotel.