

# Swiss Mercantile Society

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Our present arrangements with the Swiss Hostel for Girls, which provide for the payment to us of an annual rent of £2,000 plus supplement depending on certain contingencies, will expire on the 29th September, 1967. Progress has been made on a renewal lease for seven years, on revised terms more in keeping with reality, but still representing an appreciable subsidy on our part in support of this very worthy enterprise.

We handle the Swiss Old-Age Pension (AHV/AVS) for a number of our compatriots, who prefer to receive it through us on a pro-rata weekly basis in advance, along with our regular allowances, rather than in a lump sum near the end of the quarter.

Our Clothing Department has continued to dispense wearing apparel, also household goods as well as food, during the course of the year. 115 parcels were distributed under our Christmas Action, which benefited 130 people. And here we wish to express our very sincere gratitude to all individual donors, to the "Frauenverein", the "Réunion de Couture", the firms, who have so helpfully and generously contributed to this annual event in our activity. Mr. Ziereisen's very efficient handling of this exacting work and the kind co-operation by Mrs. Raulin, Mrs. Tosio and Mrs. Bachofen are gratefully acknowledged here too.

The Guaranteed Contributions under Deed of Covenant dropped by £12 to £805 in 1966, mainly through death, but the higher standard rate of income tax resulted in an increase of £69 to £568 of the refund to us by the Inland Revenue. As so often before, we again commend this form of subscription for its additional benefit to us, at no extra cost to the donor. For example, an annual subscription of £5 5s. paid by the donor is worth £8 11s. 5d. to us at the present standard rate of income tax, the difference of £3 6s. 5d. coming to us from the Inland Revenue as a refund on the tax paid by the donor.

Our Administration is vested in the Executive Committee elected annually by our General Committee. The Executive meets normally on the second and fourth Monday of every month at 31 Conway Street to hear the secretary's report on the day-to-day business and to take decisions on all matters of importance. Our thanks are due to our secretary, Mr. Jules Zimmermann, and to our assistant secretary, Mr. Walter Ziereisen, for their faithful services.

We are indebted to Monsieur F. Ansermoz, Social Counsellor of the Swiss Embassy, and to Consul E. Tosio for their regular and welcome attendance in turn at our Monday meetings, ensuring as it does a very helpful contact for us with the Embassy.

One of our Hon. Joint Auditors, Mr. J. Koch, of the Swiss Embassy, has left London and Mr. Jean-Marie DéBoeuf, also of the Swiss Embassy, has been elected Hon. Joint Auditor in his place. We are grateful to those gentlemen and to our other Hon. Joint Auditor, Mr. J. Katz, of the Swiss Bank Corporation, for giving us their time and experience in carrying out their voluntary duties.

We continued to be represented on the committee of the Welfare Office for Swiss Girls in Great Britain by our secretary, Mr. Jules Zimmermann, who is one of their two Vice-Presidents.

In conclusion, it remains for us to repeat that our society's purpose is to assist Swiss citizens, temporarily or permanently resident here, who may be in need of help. All cases brought to our notice are considered with every sympathy.

Our grateful thanks go to the federal, cantonal and municipal authorities at home, to the Swiss Embassy in

London and its officials, to the Swiss churches, the Swiss societies and to all our subscribers, firms and individuals, who have so kindly and generously sustained our efforts. We hope that we may count on their continued practical goodwill and, where possible, on their increasing material support. The need, as we have shown in these pages, is greater than ever.

We also wish to record our appreciation of the help of the "Swiss Observer" in giving free publicity to our reports and appeals.

Finally, we wish to express thanks to the British authorities for the kind hospitality we enjoy in this country.

On behalf of the Committee:

X. SPECKERT,

*President.*

Honorary President: Monsieur Olivier Long, Swiss Ambassador; Honorary Vice-President: Mr. F. G. Sommer. Executive Committee: Mr. X. Speckert (President), Messrs. J. Oertli, M. A. Rothlisberger, M. Schneebeli (Vice-Presidents), Mr. M. A. Rothlisberger (Hon. Treasurer), Mr. D. E. Bonnet (Hon. Assistant Treasurer), Mr. J. Zimmermann (Secretary).

### SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

The Monthly Meeting of the Society, held at Swiss House on Wednesday, 11th October, was well attended. Among those present, the Chairman, Mr. A. Jaccard, particularly welcomed two members who recently completed 50 years' membership viz. Mr. F. G. Sommer, Trustee and Hon. Member, and Mr. F. Streit, a member of the Council. Unfortunately, the other two veterans, Messrs. W. Jent and O. Gasser, were unable to be present.

In offering congratulations and thanks on behalf of the London Section to them for their long and faithful support, the Chairman paid a special tribute to the great and unselfish services rendered to the Colony by both Mr. Sommer and Mr. Streit, who in their various spheres of activity had devoted a great deal of time and energy to the causes they had long espoused. The Chairman also extended very best wishes to Mr. F. Streit, who on this very day was celebrating his 40th wedding anniversary.

Following the meeting, Mr. G. Hediger showed a colour film compiled from the Society's summer outings back to 1958, when a party of members and delegates from Switzerland visited Cambridge on the occasion of the Society's 70th anniversary. These outings have since become a popular annual feature and included venues such as Woburn Abbey, Luton Hoo, St. Albans and Hatfield House, Rye and Winchelsea, Hever Castle, Waddesdon Manor, etc. The film brought back memories of sunny days spent in beautiful surroundings and the congenial company of friends, some of whom, alas, are no longer with us. Interspersed with these familiar scenes were extracts from films of Continental holidays, a journey along the Rhine Valley and the Black Forest, as well as some nostalgic Swiss scenery, including very fine shots of the Rhine Falls in all their majestic glory.

Holidays of a different kind, but obviously very popular these days with the masses in search of the often too elusive sun in these climes, were portrayed in a very colourful film of the Costa Brava, taken and shown by the Principal of the College, Mr. C. Slade.

To the background accompaniment of Spanish tunes, we saw much of this picturesque coast, with its numerous sandy beaches bathed in glorious sunshine. There were

shots of rugged cliffs standing sheer against the deep blue waters of the Mediterranean and areas of sub-tropical vegetation in the hinterland. Equally fascinating were some of the fishing ports with all sorts of craft tied up to the quay or at anchor.

A special feature was the folk dancing with all the locals joining in their colourful garb to the rhythm of a typical Catalonian Sardana tune.

Finally we saw some of the holiday abodes and villas which spring up like mushrooms along this favourite coast.

Thus ended a most enjoyable evening with a vote of thanks to those who had provided it.

W.B.



J. J. BOOS, K.S.G., 80

It is with great pleasure that we announce the 80th birthday, on 6th November, of Mr. Jean-Jacques Boos, K.S.G., of Flat 4, Eaton Gardens, Hove, Sussex.

Mr. Boos was born in Basle where he was educated. After 7½ years with Electrical Works Alioth, Muenchenstein (later Brown Boveri & Co.), he came to this country in 1910. He was appointed Manager's Secretary with Schorsch Electrical Company. In 1914, he returned to Switzerland to serve with the Army as Quartermaster Sergeant. On his return a few months later, he joined Millns Electrical Company as Partner and Secretary, where he made a most successful career.

J. J. Boos took a great interest in the affairs of the Swiss Colony. He joined the Swiss Mercantile Society in 1920, and during the following 27 years, he was one of the most active members and held several offices: Hon. Secretary, Secretary of the House Committee, Vice-Chairman of the Council, Chairman of the House Committee. From 1939 until he vacated the office to the late Mr. Walter Meier in 1947, Mr. Boos was President of the Society, a position he held with great distinction. He was an Honorary Member both of the S.M.S. and the Parent Society in Switzerland.

In 1924, he joined the City Swiss Club, and he was a member of the Committee of the Council for the Study of Swiss Problems, of the Swiss Relief Centre, the Fête Suisse Committee, the 1st August Committee and the Swiss Economic Council, etc. Together with Col. Anton Bon, he was responsible for organising the Swiss Catholics in London, and for obtaining for them their own Chaplain. In recognition of his work, H.H. the Pope awarded him a Knighthood of St. Gregory the Great.

Mr. Boos was not spared misfortunes; he lost two wives and a daughter. But like the true Christian he is, he bore the tragic losses with courage. He now lives in retirement on the South Coast, and we wish him many happy returns of the birthday. He may have the great satisfaction that he has served conscientiously and valiantly for a large part of his life, and his many friends hope that he will be given a few more years of good health. Bless him!

MM

#### MRS. LAURA DENISE CAMPART †

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of Mrs. L. D. Campart, of 33 Heathfield Park, N.W.2. She died on 14th October at the age of 90. Laura Denise Héritier was born at Mollondins (Vaud) on 3rd April 1877. As a small child, she came to this country where she spent her long life. She married Mr. Césaire Campart to whom she was a constant companion in his activities in the Swiss Colony. He was born in Geneva on 1st January 1875 and was an engineer by profession. He joined the Secours Mutuels in London in 1904, became Vice-President and later President, an office he held for 24 years. He was created Honorary President in 1948.

In the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, he became Honorary Secretary in 1916 and remained in that position for 36 years, a most painstaking and loyal servant. He held many more offices in the Colony and was a member of a number of societies. The little "Black Book" which he started in aid of the Swiss Children's Annual Christmas Party still makes the round to collect contributions. He died in October 1952 at the age of 77.

Now his faithful companion of many years has left us too, mourned by a grandson who flew from Johannesburg to attend her cremation at Golders Green on 20th October. We express our sympathy to him in his bereavement, though he, like her many friends, are grateful in the knowledge that she has left peacefully to join her husband.

MM

#### PERSONAL

We have heard from Switzerland that The Rev. Doris Voegelin who is well remembered from the time of her ministry with the German-speaking community of the Swiss Church in London, has been appointed Minister at Gelterkinden-Rickenbach-Tecknau (Baselland). At present she is in the Grisons. We wish her every success in her new Parish.

#### ANNIVERSARIES

We have great pleasure in announcing the Golden Wedding of Mr. and Mrs. Leon Jaeggi, sen., of 26 Woodville Road, Golders Green, N.W.11. Mr. Jaeggi was 78 on 7th July and lives in semi-retirement, having been a well-known figure in catering. The celebration took place on 20th October, and we wish the couple many more years of happiness.

Dr. H. W. Egli and his wife, actress and artist Miss Selma Vaz Dias, are celebrating their 31st wedding anniversary on 6th November. Congratulations! There are no birthdays to report, but we wish all our readers whose birthdays fall within the next fortnight, many happy returns.