

# The first of August with the Swiss in Bournemouth

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## THE FIRST OF AUGUST WITH THE SWISS IN BOURNEMOUTH

The Swiss National Day Celebration in Bournemouth carried the mark of internationalism, and perhaps precisely for that reason, it was so very Swiss. It was organised by the Anglo-Continental School of English, by now not only well-known but positively famous, and no wonder, for it is an excellent language centre in most pleasing surroundings and with extremely high standards. During the peak period this summer, the school had 3,100 students in Great Britain, 350 in London, 350 in Oxford and 2,400 in Bournemouth. A large number of these were Swiss, and in fact, some 2,500 Swiss students attend courses at the ACSE in the course of one year. Perhaps this accounts for the high standard of the National Day Celebration every year; it is not difficult to find suitable and enthusiastic organisers amongst such large numbers.

For many years, ACSE have arranged 1st of August Celebrations, first outside the school and several times on a boat. But since the school has its own suitable hall accommodating 500 or so, the event has been staged at the school itself. For many years, Mr. G. Scheller, Administrative Director of the school, was in charge of the arrangements, but this time, Mr. G. Oetiker, Director of Studies, took over. In charge is not exactly the right term, for every year, a committee of students is appointed, and its members are allocated the various sections (decoration, entertainment, sideshows, etc.), and this results in a different show every year. The general pattern, of course, remains, i.e. entertainment by the school choir, a folklore group and some individual items by students, a patriotic address, dancing and refreshments. But generally, it is a *young* and lively, yet very Swiss show.

This year, the Guest of Honour was none other than the new Ambassador. Monsieur and Madame Keller and their son, the Mayor of Bournemouth and the Mayoress, as well as the Director of Publicity for Bournemouth and Mrs. J. Robinson, and the Editor of the "Swiss Observer" were invited guests of the school. In addition a number of prominent Bournemouth personalities, not least from the local Swiss community attended. The Principal Director of ACSE, Mr. F. Schillig, Honorary Swiss Vice-Consul, welcomed the chief guests.



The main address was given by the Ambassador who put the accent on youth. He told of his own first stay in Bournemouth as a young boy and referred to Bournemouth as a centre for young people. He said how impressed he was by the happy spirit prevailing which showed nothing of the present tendency of students who revolt against an affluent society, a society in danger of

getting depersonalised and dehumanised by progress in technology and science. In Switzerland, there was still direct democracy, and the country had some built-in shock absorbers. But in these somewhat uneasy times, it was important to keep our identity, and even more vital to realise our responsibilities. We had been dealt a lesson in humility recently that we were unable to sign the Charter of Human Rights owing to our women not yet having been granted suffrage and on account of some other inequalities. Things in Switzerland moved slowly — there had been no wars to accelerate them. The Ambassador also referred to the precious links between Great Britain and Switzerland.

His Worship, the Mayor, expressed thanks for the Ambassador's words and his and his town's pleasure at having so many Swiss and other students as most welcome visitors.



*The Mayor of Bournemouth in the centre with Madame Keller and the Administrative Director on his left. On His Worship's right the Vice-Consul and Principal Director. Next to him the Swiss Ambassador and the Mayoress. The Editor of the "Swiss Observer" is on the outside. Next to her and in the second row are some of the Bournemouth Swiss residents.*

The speeches were framed by music and singing, first by the Giess Sister, the Yodellers from Eiken, accompanied on the accordion by Kurt Kim, whose brisk and happy tunes were much appreciated. The ACSE Choir, about 35 strong and conducted by Mr. Alan Williams, a master at the school, sang in several languages, "Das Wandern ist des Müllers Lust", "Le Vigneron", "Aprite le Porte" and the "Lincolnshire Poacher". It was difficult to guess what nationality the singers were, for their accents were almost pure, and as to their sense of music, they and their capable conductor can but be congratulated.

The second part was given over to light entertainment; some sketches, a Spanish guitarist and a "Casanova of the Keyboard" and several solo singers delighted the audience. The rest of the evening was devoted to dancing.

Food and drink were not lacking either, and they could be had in the Hall, but also in a highly original Ticinese Terrazzo Restaurant and a *Jägerstube*. A Swiss sausage and roll at midnight were provided for everyone.

The atmosphere was a happy and congenial one, possibly enhanced by the original *décor*. The photo speaks for itself, and the usual cantonal flags, at most celebrations of this kind a *sine qua non*, were absent, yet the paper *lampions* down the side of the Hall were decorated with the cantonal crests, so that the *Kantönlicheist* was not thwarted in any way.

There must have been a very gifted artist, for the murals of alpine scenery were not only very decorative but extremely artistic. Last but not least, as a specially

charming touch, there were two girls in Vaudois costumes, who accompanied each speaker to the stage and back — how much more pleasing than the lone walk up! Perhaps that was the key word, consideration and pleasure, regard for guests and participants, out to please everyone: the elderly residents who don't frown on folklore, the young students teeming with enterprise and vitality, a celebration devoid of false patriotism, which left an impression on all those whose privilege it was to attend. MM

### “SORTIE DES DOYENS”

#### Happy Summer Outing

The traditional *Journée des Doyens* of the Swiss Church in London took place on Saturday 22nd June, a great day to remember.

We were expected at 11 a.m., but from 10 a.m. people arrived, some with friends, others with daughters or cousins, to take part in the outing organised for the older members by the Rev. A. Nicod and Mr. Godet year after year.

But first of all, who are the *doyens*? They are Swiss, but have been in England so long that most of them feel more British than Swiss. Their ages vary between 60 and 70.

After a picnic lunch in the Church Hall at Endell Street, everyone found a seat in the bus, and at noon exactly, off we went. Unfortunately, it was pouring with rain, but nevertheless, everybody was happy. Having passed Waterloo Bridge, we already started singing, mostly in French, but there were some English and even Italian songs as well.

The group of elderly people was accompanied by a few young members of the Church, who had given up their free Saturday for them.

After a two hours' drive, we reached Sevenoaks in Kent. Just outside the town, we stopped in front of Knole Castle, estate of the Sackville Family, and administered partly by the National Trust. In the middle of an immense park stands erect one of the largest castles in England, the earliest foundations of which date from 1281.

We followed our guide through many sitting and drawing rooms, and bedrooms where this king or that queen had spent a night. Each of these rooms looked more beautiful than the others. We saw the most valuable paintings, treasures and China brought from the most remote countries, presents offered by Napoleon to the Third Duchess of Dorset.

Nowadays, the castle belongs to Lord Sackville-West's family who actually live in part of it. A close relative of the present owner, Mrs. Sackville-West, has written a chronicle about the Castle and its owners through the centuries.

After a very interesting visit, everybody went back to the bus, and off we drove into the country. Half an hour later, we stopped in front of the “Old Barn” where we were offered a delicious tea.

Before going back to London, we had a short Meditation, sang hymns and thanked God for the successful excursion.

It was still raining, but everybody had forgotten about it. The journey took us back to London, and we sang many old songs and tunes everyone remembered. Everybody was happy, thankful for this unforgettable day.

Thank you to all those who have organised and made this outing possible. We are looking forward to next year!

Marie-Thérèse Noir.

### BIRTHDAYS

The following readers will be celebrating their birthdays soon: Mr. H. Kriesi on 15th September, when he will be 79. Mr. W. B. Sigerist (La Tour-de-Peilz, Vaud) will be 77 on 23rd and Mr. Charles Chapuis 87 on 24th September. Mr. M. Rothlisberger will be 69 on 25th of the month. To them and any other readers whose birthdays will fall within the next fortnight, we wish many happy returns.

\* \* \*

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. H. Humbel of 23 Dukes Avenue, Edgware on the occasion of their 30th Wedding Anniversary on 24th September 1968.

### “SWISS OBSERVER” PUBLICATION DATES

The “Swiss Observer” is published every second and fourth Friday of the month. Our next issue will appear on 27th September. We shall be glad to receive all articles and reports by Tuesday, 17th September. Short news items only can be accepted later.

Our next issue but one will be published on Friday, 11th October. All contributions for that number should be to hand not later than Tuesday, 1st October.

**Please : At the moment of going to press, about 100 subscriptions are outstanding. We should appreciate it if all readers who have not yet paid up would kindly do so immediately. Thank you !**

### SUCCESSFUL SWISS INDUSTRIALIST IN KENT

*We reproduce the following item from the “Kentish Times” (26th July):*

#### New Overall to resist Acid

“After official tests, a new type of acid-resistant industrial overall is now in production at the Rowden-road Beckenham, factory of M. Nixon and Co., whose parent company is Airguard, Ltd., of Fulham.

“The company, part of the Airguard group for some 15 years, manufacture gloves and overalls for major industries, including engineering and food producing factories.

“In addition to the Admiralty, R.A.F. and the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, the firm supply the G.P.O., the Ministry of Supply, the Greater London Council and other local authorities.

“The firm, who draw most of their labour from the Beckenham area, are turning out a tremendous number of industrial gloves and overalls to keep pace with steadily increasing home orders. The manufacturing programme and distribution policy is personally led by the dynamic personality of the firm's chairman and managing director, Mr. W. W. Landauer.

“A Swiss national, Mr. Landauer played a large part in the creation of industrial clothing manufacture in this country some 33 years ago.

“Nixon's buy most of their material, which is woven and spun in Lancashire. When the gloves and clothing have been made they are transported direct to head office, from where country-wide delivery by transport and post is undertaken.”