

News from the colony

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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

STAMP SOCIETY CELEBRATES 25th ANNIVERSARY

The London Swiss Philatelic Society (Founded 1943) reached a landmark in its history when the 25th anniversary of its foundation was celebrated at the Meeting held at its Headquarters, 35 Fitzroy Square, W.1, on Friday, 27th September 1968. Members and their families were entertained at a buffet prior to the opening of the business session. There was a record attendance of over 50 people including Mr. R. A. G. Lee, R.D.P., F.R.P.S.L. (President — Middlesex Philatelic Federation) and Mrs. G. Goodman, F.R.P.S.L. (Vice-President and Hon. Secretary — Middlesex Philatelic Federation and Honorary Member of the Society), as well as several of the Society's original founder members.

The President of the London Swiss Society (Mr. W. Burren) said that the success of the evening had been very much beyond his most optimistic expectations, and he expressed the thanks of the Society to its Hon. Secretary (Miss A. Grunberg) for the way in which her idea had been carried out, and for the assistance in the catering given by the Vice-President (Mr. D. Paschoud). He said the Society was very much honoured to have such a distinguished guest as Mr. Lee at this function. Mr. Lee replied suitably — thanking the President and the Society for their kind hospitality, and congratulating the Society on achieving its 25th anniversary.

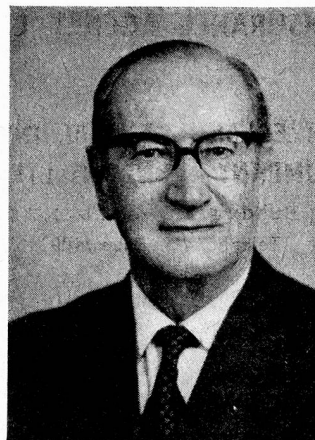
Following the celebrations, an auction of stamp material took place, conducted by Mr. M. Uehlinger, which led to some spirited (and, at times, rather light-hearted) bidding, and this rounded off an excellent evening's entertainment.

W.R.T.

“HE BUILT UP HIS FIRM WITH NUTS AND BOLTS”

This is the heading of an article in the “Maidenhead Advertiser” on 27th September, when the sale of a flourishing business concern was reported: Webb Condenser Co. Ltd. was taken over in 1929 by our compatriot Mr. N. H. Leuzinger. He guided the company from a small business to one of the most reputable concerns in its line of business (assembly of radio components for the trade).

Mr. Leuzinger was apprenticed to bankers in Switzerland and came to this country in 1919. He worked in several City banks and then took over Webb Condenser Company. In the lean years of the 'thirties, he added a stockholding department to his business, beginning in a modest way with nuts, bolts, screws and washers. He expanded the business, was blitzed in 1940 and evacuated to Maidenhead with two lorry-loads of salvaged items. He restarted his business almost from scratch and built it up successfully. He married Miss Wyatt in 1947, and she has been a close partner ever since, and a director of the company. Today, the firm has sizeable premises and 22 employees, and Mr. and Mrs. Leuzinger are going into well-deserved retirement. We wish them many years of good health and happiness.



HERMANN EUGENE MESSMER †

In a previous issue we announced with deep regret the death of Mr. H. E. Messmer. This obituary has been sent to us.

Born at Doerflingen (Schaffhausen) in 1890, Mr. Messmer came to England in 1909, but returned to Switzerland for military service during the first World War. Arriving back in London in 1919, he took up the agency for paper testing machinery of a Leipzig firm whom he represented until the beginning of World War II. During this period he built up important connections in the Paper Trade, including Government Departments at home and overseas, having become the leading supplier of precision instruments in this field. During the “Blitz”, however, his premises in the West Central District where he had commenced to manufacture and service these instruments himself, were completely destroyed with the total loss of plant and machinery. With the aid of the Ministry of Supply the most needed machines and tools were replaced under the Lease-Lend scheme and he was able to resume manufacture and servicing at a temporary address nearby. Due to his dynamic driving force, his enterprise grew from strength to strength with the acquisition of agencies in allied lines of leading manufacturers in Asia, the American and European continents. A few years ago, he transferred his works to larger premises in Islington and when he finally decided to retire to Switzerland in August, he could look back upon a highly successful career in at times difficult circumstances. The position in industry to which he raised his firm H. E. Messmer Ltd. is a tribute to his many achievements in his sphere of activity. It is, alas, an irony of fate that Mr. Messmer and his wife Alice Maud, whom he married in 1920 and who helped him throughout in his access to fame, should be deprived of reaping the fruits of their life's work, for he passed away at the Cantonal Hospital, Winterthur, on 13th September, following an operation. Mr. Messmer was interested in philately when time permitted, but due to the heavy demand on his services by his own business, he had little time to spare for recreational diversion. He was a member of the late Gymnastic Society, “Schweizerbund” and latterly of the City Swiss Club. The many friends who had the fortune to know him personally will keep his memory in good esteem.

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