

City Swiss Club

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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

CITY SWISS CLUB

Annual General Meeting

Still the biggest and most successful Swiss society in London and one of the oldest, the City Swiss Club, is going as strong as ever in its 112th year, although to this day it has no premises of its own and usually meets only once a month. There have been two Swiss clubs in the full sense of the word in the distant past: the Union Helvetia off Shaftesbury Avenue, whose members belonged mainly to the catering trades, and the Schweizerbund in Charlotte Street, originally a working men's club. Both disappeared in time owing to insufficient support as the influx of Swiss hotel and restaurant staff, artisans and craftsmen dwindled after the first world war when work permits were introduced and difficult to obtain. The Union Helvetia was offered to the Colony after the second world war for a few thousand pounds freehold and on long term credit. It was impossible to rouse the necessary united support. Then the rented premises of the Schweizerbund became gradually too dear to be kept going for the relatively few Swiss who were actively interested.

The City Swiss Club also had hopes some 50 years ago to acquire premises of its own for which it collected a fund of about £5,000. But the scheme was never pushed home, although the necessary additional funds could probably have been raised amongst the many wealthy members of the Club without undue difficulty. The lack of interest can only be explained by the fact that most middle-class Swiss in London were, and still are, happy to cultivate close contacts with the English community in their clubs for good business and family reasons, and therefore quite content to meet their compatriots once a month or more often as members of other societies. Distances from home and traffic conditions are another impediment.

Seen in this light the City Swiss Club is serving the needs of its members quite adequately without the heavy burden of premises of its own by its monthly meetings at dinner, sometimes with prominent personalities as guest speakers, sometimes with card games to follow, once or twice a year with lady guests present, apart from the Annual Banquet and Ball and the traditional Summer Dance outside London. The Club is doubly fortunate in the enjoyment of the hospitality of the Dorchester Hotel for its functions on privileged terms. If, nevertheless, it has difficulties in recruiting an adequate succession of younger members, this is a problem shared by all societies due to the small trickle of new arrivals in our Colony, apart from the

considerable turnover of short term *stagiaires*.

The excellent choice of the new Committee at the Annual General Meeting of 29th April has already been reported in the S.O. The forceful personality of Mr. A. Kuhn in succession to Mr. Nater fit him admirably for the presidency, aided by Messrs. W. E. Bion as Vice-President, H. J. Keller as Hon. Treasurer, G. A. Ronus as Hon. Assistant-Treasurer, L. F. Ackermann as Hon. Secretary, L. F. Jobin as Hon. Assistant-Secretary and H. Jauslin as additional member. There has rarely been a stronger team to steer the affairs of the City Swiss Club.

The Club's finances are as always in shape. Despite the usual donations of £210 to the Churches and the Swiss Benevolent Society and the subscriptions of £105 to the Federation of Swiss Societies, the "Swiss Observer", etc., the excess of income increased last year from £558 to £681 raising the liquid balance to £1,956. Thanks largely to the expert investment guidance of Mr. R. J. Keller as Co-Trustee of the Club House Fund, these last few years it has now risen to £7,247, an increase of £509 over the previous year. In seven years the capital value of the Fund has risen by no less than £2,389 and the net investment income rose from £91 to £232 p.a. as a useful contribution to the Club's income covering all the donations. Mr. Keller has now retired from the trusteeship which he shared with Mr. E. H. Burnier and Mr. M. Gédet, but he has promised his successor, Mr. E. Tangemann of the Union Bank of Switzerland, that he will continue taking an interest in the management of the Fund.

The meeting closed with a lengthy discussion on the Forum of Switzerland with the planned addition of a room exclusively reserved for the use of the Colony, the Swiss *de passage* and the *au-pair* girls. The meeting confirmed the previously given undertaking of contributing the Club House Fund if and when the scheme becomes reality on conditions satisfactory to the trustees and the Club.

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PERSONAL

We wish to express our sincere sympathy to Consul G. Brunner, Swiss Consulate, 64 Baker Avenue, Grindlays Chambers, Salisbury C.I. Rhodesia. He lost his wife suddenly due to an accident, and their many friends in Great Britain grieve with him and their daughter in this tragic loss. During the years Consul and Mrs. Brunner spent in Manchester, they made a great impact, and their departure was much regretted. Mrs. Brunner's attractive and charming personality will be remembered with affection by all those

who had the privilege of knowing her.

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Our old friend Prof. F. T. Wahlen, former Federal Councillor, was awarded honorary membership by the Swiss Red Cross, when the organisation met for their delegates' meeting at Zermatt. He retired from the Council of the Swiss Red Cross at the same meeting. Congratulations!

* * *

There is only one special birthday within the next fortnight, and we send Mr. Jakob Vogel our best wishes for the 2nd July when he will be 88. Mr. and Mrs. F. E. Brunner of Edgbaston, Birmingham, will celebrate their 52nd wedding anniversary on 7th July. Many happy returns of the day!

JACK ZIMMERMANN †

We deeply regret to announce the death of Mr. Jack Zimmermann of 35 Emu Road, Battersea, S.W.8. He was born on 15th June 1887 and hailed from Bolligen, Berne. He came to this country in 1902 and has been married to his wife Daisy for 66 years.

Jack Zimmermann had been Head Porter at the Artillery Mansions Hotel, S.W.1, for many years.

We express our deep sympathy to his wife and family in their sad bereavement.

ARNOLD BRUN †

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of Mr. Arnold Brun, of 17 Church Hill, Purley, Surrey. He died on 31st May at the age of 76. Although a citizen of Geneva, he was born in London — a true Cockney. But he kept his Swiss passport all his life. He studied in Leipzig and later went to La Chaux-de-Fonds to learn the watch trade. He came to London at the beginning of the first world war, and later went to Berlin and Stockholm where he worked for a time at the Swiss Consulate. It was there that he met his Vaudoise wife. They came to London in 1924 when they settled down, and Mr. Brun has been in the watch trade ever since.

When he died, he was one of the oldest members of the City Swiss Club and of the Consistoire of the Swiss Church. He spoke several languages fluently, including Spanish, Swedish and Russian. His hobby was philately.

Arnold Brun was greatly respected for his integrity and his modest ways; his reputation for straight dealings was firmly established. His friends mourn his death and express heartfelt sympathy to his wife and son, daughter-in-law and two grandchildren.