

News from the colony

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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

CHRISTMAS PARTY IN MANCHESTER

For many years now our Club has organised a Christmas Party for the benefit of the children of our members and we always look forward with great expectation to this particular afternoon, when we meet in a most cordial and warm family atmosphere. On Saturday, 14th December, we gathered again in the Midland Hotel, on one of the rare occasions when the grown-ups feel at some disadvantage and our youngsters have it all their own way.

We all enjoyed excellent Christmas-fare after which the Ladies of the Committee distributed the crackers, starting thus a noisy and most entertaining interlude. Eventually we moved, everybody armed with his own chair, to the neighbouring room, where a shining and brilliantly decorated tree was awaiting us. It was very moving and sometimes amusing to observe the longing and impatient looks of the little ones concentrating on a fine array of parcels of all sizes which lay under the tree and whose final destination was quite obvious. Whilst awaiting Father Christmas, a young girl at the piano led the singing of some well-known carols until interrupted by a knocking at the door.

Well, there he was, Father Christmas, to be greeted with thunderous applause and introduced to us by our President. Everybody was so pleased to see him, although some of our children must have looked forward to this moment with some trepidation and foreboding, and this being so they tried very hard to convince the white-bearded Saint how well they had behaved during the past year. It must have been most gratifying for him, and a source of satisfaction to their parents, to listen to the great variety of songs and poems and even the most modest and sometimes incomplete efforts were rewarded by a packet of sweets and words of encouragement. Although it was indeed the day of the very young, some elderly people were not forgotten; quite contrary to well established customs a grown-up member was presented with a special gift, notwithstanding the fact that he was unable to recite or sing. For this he apologised and Father Christmas lent him a sympathetic ear. Our Consul and Madame Brunner were delighted to accept the lovely silver cigarette case, a further proof of their popularity and the great esteem in which they were held by all of us. It was with sadness in our hearts that we saw Father Christmas leaving on his busy and farflung errands, and we all hope to see him again next year.

The second part of the afternoon was devoted to the sharing-out of the individual gift-parcels to our children, and it is wonderful to think that nobody was forgotten and how most of them received just what they had always longed for. Here again our most sincere thanks must be expressed to the wife of our President and the Ladies of the Committee for the real hard work they had put into this successful effort. By now it was considerably darker outside and many were thus convinced to take leave. So we returned home, grateful and with happy memories which will last for a long time.

E.B.

Have you joined the Solidarity Fund yet? An excellent scheme for saving and insuring at the same time. Transferred in sterling — paid out in Swiss francs later. Apply to Swiss Embassy in London or Consulate in Manchester.

NOT SUPERSTITIOUS

The Swiss Club met on Friday, 13th December

A *Fondue Bourguignonne* has become the traditional Christmas Dinner of the Swiss Club (Schweizerbund). In a way it is not unnatural that they should choose something unusual, for it is not all that long ago that one was able to enjoy an excellent meal at their former own Club rooms in Charlotte Street. And there is no doubt that the Montana Hotel serves an excellent meat *Fondue*, not to forget a good drop of Swiss wine.

But it was neither food nor wine which induced the nearly forty members and friends to sing many friendly and popular Swiss songs. For the Swiss Club has a firm reputation for good singing voices, and this year's Christmas gathering supported the claim, though two of the best-known singers and old members were missing, Mr. E. Luterbacher and Mr. and Mrs. F. Delaloye. The President, Mr. V. Berti, read their messages and welcomed a few old and new members, among the latter the Swiss Consul and Madame F. Adams.

The songs went on for a long time, and the hour was late when the happy party finally broke up, looking forward already to the next meeting.

MM

NEW EMBASSY APPOINTMENT

Mr. Franz Bischof who joined the staff of the Swiss Embassy in London in May 1967, has been given the title of Vice-Consul as from 1st January.

Mr. Bischof joined the Federal Political Department in 1945 and served with the Swiss Embassies and Consulates in Ankara, Istanbul, Budapest, Dakar, Sydney and Canberra.

He is the Secretary of the London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique and also of the Council of Management of the Swiss Hostel for Girls.

Best wishes in his new appointment!

SWISS BANK CORPORATION

The Swiss Bank Corporation, London, is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. H. Jauslin to the rank of Deputy Manager, as from 1st January.

Messrs. A. E. Bickerton, A. E. Ford and D. G. Frost are similarly appointed Sub-Managers.

BRITISH BROWN BOVERI

Escher Wyss Steam Turbine Business

In accordance with the agreement reached in February 1968 between the Swiss firms Brown Boveri & Co. Ltd. and Escher Wyss Ltd., all steam turbine activities of Escher Wyss have been taken over by Brown Boveri as from 1st January.

In the U.K., British Brown-Boveri Ltd. has, from the same date onwards, taken over the steam turbine activities from Escher Wyss (U.K.) Ltd. This comprises tenders, orders and maintenance of existing plant.

DEPARTING FRIENDS

It was in 1952 that Monsieur and Madame Félix Ansermoz arrived in London to begin a career which firmly bound them to this country and the many friends they made in the 16 years of residence here. They are leaving us now, Monsieur Ansermoz retiring prematurely from the services of the Confederation in order to take up some other work with the British Quaker Movement at Tananarive in Madagascar. It was there that the young Vaudois who had studied at the Universities of Lausanne and London and who had worked as tutor in America for six years (he also holds a doctorate in American Literature), served for two out of the eight years in the service of the Society of Friends. He was in charge of a school and looked after the boys' section whilst his wife, who had had similar training, was head of the girls' department. Following their stay abroad, the Ansermoz returned to Switzerland, where he was Secretary of the International Quaker Centre. The next six years were spent in the Federal Political Department in Berne. In 1952, he was appointed Chief of the Labour and Welfare Section of the Swiss Embassy in London, and ten years later, Monsieur Ansermoz was promoted to Counsellor.

It was only natural that he should be actively engaged in the foundation and running of the Swiss Hostel for Girls, of which he was Honorary Secretary. He was also a member of the Swiss Benevolent Society and of the Welfare Office for Swiss Girls in Great Britain (both since 1952). Monsieur Ansermoz was a member of the Swiss Rifle Association, and both he and his wife most loyal members of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique. Madame Ansermoz was very active in religious and social spheres, especially with the YWCA and the International Travelers' Aid, and she has at all times been a staunch supporter of her husband, not least in his efforts to retard the aging of the Swiss Community and in helping young people to feel at home here. Many young people owe their work permits to the efforts made on their behalf by Monsieur Ansermoz and his Department.

May we hope that one day our friends will be back here? In the meantime we wish them God-speed and a happy retirement even if — typically — it will still be full of, we hope, rewarding and satisfying work.

MM

NEW BABIES

It is with great pleasure that we announce the arrival of a son Andreas to Mr. and Mrs. A. Mehr of 58 St. John's Road, Wembley, Middlesex. The little brother to Markus was born on 27th November. We send congratulations and best wishes to the young family.

* * *

We have great pleasure in announcing the arrival of another grandchild to Dr. E. M. Bircher, Bissone (Ticino). The little baby girl, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Bircher, is the sixth granddaughter and seventh grandchild of Dr. Bircher, and we extend best wishes and congratulations.

"SWISS OBSERVER" PUBLICATION DATES

The "Swiss Observer" is published every second and fourth Friday of the month. Our next issue will appear on 24th January. All articles and reports should be to hand by Tuesday, 14th January. Short news items only can be accepted after that date.

Our next issue but one will be published on Friday, 14th February. All contributions for that number should be in not later than Tuesday, 4th February.

OBITUARY

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the death of **Mrs. Germaine Chapuis** of "Y'aMieux", Broomhills Road, West Mersea, Essex. She had been seriously ill and died at Colchester Military Hospital on 13th December, aged 74. The Chapuis had celebrated their 51st wedding anniversary in hospital. The funeral took place at the Colchester Crematorium on 19th December, with the Rev. A. Nicod officiating.

Carlo and Germaine Chapuis retired to Essex a few years ago, but before that time, they had been a very popular couple in the London community. How well we shall remember the graceful Vaudoise with her genuine charm and sunny smile, always ready to give a helping hand, quietly, efficiently and unobtrusively. Her activities in the Swiss community were many. Our deep sympathy goes out to her husband in his grief. May it be some consolation to him that all those who had the privilege of knowing his wife, will keep a warm memory in their hearts.

* * *

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of **Mrs. E. C. Schmid** of 35 Shirley Drive, Hove 4, Sussex. She died shortly before Christmas, and we send our sincere sympathy to Mr. Schmid and their daughter Yvonne in their sad bereavement.

BIRTHDAYS

We have just heard that Mrs. Helena Rittmeyer celebrated her 69th birthday on 28th December. We have already mentioned two special birthdays in our last issue, the 70th of Mr. W. Renz on 2nd and the 80th of Mr. J. Christen (Oberwil/Zug) on 3rd January, but we mention them again because the exact dates were omitted. Our wishes were none the less sincere, as are those for Mrs. Helene Tschuy who celebrates her 68th birthday on 16th January, and to Capt. T. D. Richardson, O.B.E., who will be 82 on the same day. Many happy returns to them all as well as to any other reader whose birthday falls within the next fortnight.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We wish to thank the following subscribers for sending donations in addition to their subscriptions and/or for taking out or renewing gift subscriptions for friends or old-age pensioners:

Miss B. A. Bujard, Mrs. H. A. Clarke, Mrs. S. E. Degerland, Mrs. D. Huber, Mrs. D. Payne, Mrs. Ph. Walker, Monsieur le Consul Brunner, The Rev. P. Wipf (Sissach, BL), and Messrs. W. Allenspach, G. R. Bernhardt, P. Bessire, J. Bonjour, F. Bovet, R. Friedrich (Ebikon, Lucerne), H. Furger (Zurich), W. Galli, N. H. Leuzinger, C. Nater, R. E. Zurbrugg.

We are most grateful for their kind and generous support.

The Editor would also like to express her sincere thanks for all the kind and encouraging messages, good wishes and presents. She was deeply touched by her readers' kindness and reciprocates their wishes for a happy new year.