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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY, LONDON

The Society held its Annual General Meeting at Swiss House on Wednesday, 19th February, the Chairman, Mr. A. Jaccard, presiding.

It was with deep regret that the Chairman announced the deaths of two members, Messrs. J. J. Huber and H. Schwander, who had joined the S.M.S. in 1927 and 1914 respectively, the latter having retired to Switzerland some years ago.

In the opening remarks of his report on the Society's activities during the past year, Mr. Jaccard referred to the economic position of this country and the effects of fiscal and other measures on our members, particularly those engaged in the import trade.

The special efforts to recruit new members to swell the ranks, particularly with younger members, had not met with the desired success. Although thousands of compatriots come over here annually, the great majority are students or trainees and relatively few stay here for a long period, whilst only a small minority become resident. Efforts in this direction will, for the sake of continuity, be nevertheless pursued vigorously and it is hoped that assistance in this direction from our parent association will in due course bear fruit.

COLLEGE — In the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of the Education Committee, Mr. J. F. Carlen, his report on the activities of the College was read by Mr. Jaccard.

In order to keep abreast of other leading educational establishments, the Committee decided in the course of the year to install a language laboratory. After having studied various systems in operation, the one by Aveley Electric was given preference, and this new aid to learning is already proving popular and successful with the students.

The number of students attending the day courses rose once again during 1968 and reached a monthly average of 285, compared with 277 in the preceding year, a figure which must be considered a maximum with the accommodation available at Swiss House.

A total of 693 students was admitted during 1968, and of these 438 sat for the diploma examination, 418 of whom were successful.

At the external examinations of Cambridge University, the College also had a record number of entries. A total of 68 candidates presented themselves for the Certificate of Proficiency examination, and no fewer than 312 students sat for the Lower Certificate; of these 42 and 234 respectively were successful.

Apart from intensive courses of study, the curriculum again included special lectures by representatives of Swissair, the National Coal Board, British Transport, the British Iron & Steel Federation, a talk on North Sea Gas, as well as lectures on a variety of subjects by members of the teaching staff of the College.

A programme of full-day excursions to places of cultural and historic interest such as Windsor, Oxford and Cambridge Universities, Arundel and Warwick Castles, Canterbury and Coventry Cathedrals, etc., was supplemented by class visits to the City of London's famous Exchanges and commercial undertakings.

There was also a welcome increase in the number of enrolments for evening courses over the previous year,

with 49 classes and 910 students, as against 45 and 877 respectively in 1967.

With an intensive syllabus, a certain amount of relief from studies is necessary. Although there is no lack of distraction in London, organised socials and dances are preferable for young people and the College again arranged a limited amount of entertainment, as well as visits to theatres, etc.

In the field of sports, tennis was again taken up on an organised basis. An important aspect of the reintroduction of this sport was that it induced a number of students to join tennis clubs in London and thereby enabled them to widen their circle of English friends.

The College football team, up to the end of 1968, were able to hold their own in the West End (London A.F.A.) Intermediate League, composed mostly of teams from well-known firms and commercial undertakings. This sport in particular brings many of our students into contact with English friends through the social activities connected with some of the games.

The College continued to issue its own publication, the "SMS Student", edited by Mr. G. Tier, Dr. Phil., which, apart from College notes, contains articles contributed by students and teachers. This magazine forms a close link between College and students, past and present, the former thereby maintaining contact, however tenuous, with the S.M.S.

In accordance with arrangements made with the *Schweiz. Kaufm. Stellenvermittlung*, the Society continued to provide information and advice to students of the College and other compatriots seeking commercial employment in this country. Thanks to this advisory service, the S.M.S. were instrumental in 62 young people obtaining employment with a variety of firms here during 1968.

The College during the period under review employed a full-time teaching staff of 16, all of British nationality. To them, as well as to the secretarial staff, the Chairman expressed thanks for their continued good work and devotion to duty.

Swiss House, apart from the Society's own classes, continued to provide accommodation in the evenings to various other Swiss societies and institutions for their meetings and also to serve as an examination centre for the Cambridge University Local Examinations Syndicate.

Estimates were obtained for electrical rewiring of the premises as well as oil and gas-fired heating installations, a decision in connection with which had been deferred, pending clarification of the future tenure of Swiss House.

Concluding his report, Mr. Jaccard expressed appreciation of the support received from the Swiss Ambassador and his staff. Thanks, he said, were due to the *Bundesamt für Industrie, Gewerbe und Arbeit* in Berne for their continued financial assistance which enabled the Society to keep the tuition fees within the means of the less affluent but very desirable students. The Society were also grateful to the Swiss firms and individual donors for their annual contributions, going back in some cases to the foundation of the College in 1922.

The Chairman acknowledged the invaluable support received at all times from the Headquarters of the SKV as well as the Swiss Commercial Employment Office in Zurich.

In conclusion, Mr. Jaccard thanked the Trustees, the Members of the Council and the Committees for their loyal co-operation and the members generally for continued support of the Society's activities.

ELECTIONS — Proceeding with the election of the Council and the Committees for the financial year 1969, Mr. O. Grob, Hon. Member and past President, was elected temporary Chairman. He thanked the outgoing members for their valued services during the past year and was pleased to announce that Mr. Jaccard had agreed to continue in office as Chairman of the Council and President of the Society, in which he had served with distinction for a number of years. He proposed his re-election for the ensuing term of office, which was carried with acclamation.

Resuming the Chair, Mr. Jaccard announced that due to extreme pressure of business, Mr. J. F. Carlen felt unable to carry on as Chairman of the Education Committee, but had expressed his willingness to continue to assist in the capacity of Vice-Chairman of that Committee. Mr. Jaccard expressed thanks to him for the efficient and able manner in which he had served the College as Chairman during the past three years and for his offer to stay on as Vice-Chairman.

He was pleased to announce that Mr. F. O. Hausermann had agreed to take on the Chairmanship of the Education Committee and that all the other members of the Council and the Committees had declared their willingness to stand for another term of office. There being no further nominations, they were declared duly elected as follows:—

Council: Chairman: Mr. A. Jaccard; Trustees: Messrs. J. J. Boos, H. Knoll, L. W. Krucker, F. G. Sommer; Members: Messrs. J. W. Bonjour, F. Burri, J. F. Carlen, R. Chappuis, O. Grob, F. O. Hausermann, E. M. Huber, J. E. Schneider, R. Senn, F. Streit.

General Purposes and House Committee: Chairman: Mr. A. Jaccard; Vice-Chairman: Mr. F. O. Hausermann; Hon. Secretary: Mr. J. E. Schneider; Hon. Treasurer: Mr. R. Senn; Members: Mrs. M. Meier and Messrs. H. Andrea, W. Schedler, F. Vaterlaus, J. Weibel, E. Zwicky.

Education Committee: Chairman: Mr. F. O. Hausermann; Vice-Chairman: Mr. J. F. Carlen; Members: Messrs. J. W. Bonjour, F. Burri, G. Hediger, O. Luterbacher, M. Schneebeli, L. A. Simon.

Press Reporter: Mr. W. Burren; *Delegate to the N.S.H.:* Mrs. M. Meier.

W.B.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We wish to thank the following subscribers for sending donations in addition to their subscriptions:

Mrs. A. Bachofen, Mrs. R. Brooks, Mrs. H. Chiverton, Mrs. M. P. Delaney, Miss W. Gattiker (Kilchberg, Zch), Mrs. E. Gledhill, Mrs. E. Lyons, Mrs. M. Pettavel, Mrs. E. H. Stroud, Miss G. Wasem, Mrs. C. M. M. Winkelmann and Messrs. W. F. Baer, E. von Bergen, M. Christin, S. Dreyfuss, C. Fruh, O. Grob, K.S.G., A. Hofmann, E. Hofstetter, G. Keller, L. W. Krucker, A. G. T. Luminati, E. A. Muller, O. Roethlisberger (Prangins, Vd), O. Rohn, J. W. Siegenthaler, R. C. Symes, J. Weibel, F. Zimmermann.

We are most grateful for their kind and welcome support.

LONDON SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY HONOURED

Mr. R. A. G. Lee, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the 1970 International Stamp Exhibition, will be visiting the London Swiss Philatelic Society on 28th of March and giving them a display from his vast and unique collection. This time, it will be Commonwealth, and all who know the quality of the material which Mr. Lee collects, can expect to be delighted with material seldom seen in club displays.

Mr. Lee's reputation in the philatelic world is a household name. His collection of G.B. was awarded the *Grand Prix* at the Vienna International Exhibition in 1965, and he was given numerous Gold awards at other times. He is one of the signatories of the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists, and among the many offices which he holds, are those of Secretary to the Expert Committee of the Royal Philatelic Society, being also a Member of the Council and a Fellow of that Society. He is President of the National Philatelic Society, of the Great Britain P.S., of the Middlesex Philatelic Federation, and he has been a collector for fifty years!

The Society is indeed honoured to have such a distinguished speaker as their guest, and anyone interested in attending the meeting should contact the President of the Society, Mr. W. Burren, at Swiss House, 35 Fitzroy Square, W.1, for further details. Telephone: 01-636 2892/4.

A.G.

SWISS BANK CORPORATION

The Swiss Bank Corporation announce that after writing off 14,215,974 Swiss francs, the net profit for 1968 amounted to 94,368,870 francs, as against 65,062,708 the previous year. Total assets amount to 16,879,990,702 Swiss francs (13,490,906,321 in 1968).

At the General Meeting to be held in Basle on 7th of March, 1969, it was proposed to make a contribution of 2,500,000 francs to the Pension Fund (same) and to place 40,000,000 francs to Special Reserves (22,000,000 last year). It is proposed to pay a dividend of 16% (as against 14%) and to carry forward 8,105,738.39 francs as against 7,676,368.68 the previous year.

BIRTHDAYS

On 15th March, Mrs. A. V. Berti will be 79 and Mr. F. Conrad 73. On 17th, Dr. H. W. Egli will have his birthday, as well as Mr. Raymond Chappuis who will be 73. Mrs. Nina Pfaendler will be 81 on 29th March. On the same day, our much younger compatriot and well-known pianist Albert Ferber will be celebrating his birthday; he is giving a piano recital at Queen Elizabeth Hall on 12th March.

Many happy returns of the day and best wishes to all these as well as any other readers whose birthdays fall within the next couple of weeks.

"SWISS OBSERVER" PUBLICATION DATES

The "Swiss Observer" is published every second and fourth Friday of the month. Our next issue will appear on 28th March. We shall be glad to receive all articles and reports by Tuesday, 18th March. Short news items only can be accepted later.

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