

Frank de Maria

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1969)**

Heft 1567

PDF erstellt am: **27.06.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-692045>

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FRANK DE MARIA
New Ticinese President

We have a novelty in the Swiss Colony — a Headmaster President. The Unione Ticinese elected Mr. Frank de Maria as their new leader at their A.G.M. a few weeks ago, in succession to Mr. V. Berti whose services have been much appreciated.

Frank de Maria was born in 1928, son of the late Peter de Maria and his wife Irene, *née* Darani. He had his early schooling at St. Ignatius College, Stamford Hill and later at St. Edmund's College, in Ware, Herts. He was trained as a schoolmaster at St. Mary's College, Strawberry Hill, qualifying in 1953, when he was appointed to secondary school in Chelsea. In 1957, he was appointed Deputy Head of St. Charles R.C. Primary School, Kensington, and became Headmaster in 1963 (440 boys and girls from 5 to 11). He continued training by part-time study at London School of Economics from 1957 to 1962 and was awarded a Bachelor of Science Degree in Economics. From 1962 to 1964, he studied at London University Institute of Education and was awarded the Academic Diploma in Education in 1964. After a rest of a few years, he returned to the Institute and is now reading for a Master of Arts Degree in Education.

Frank de Maria joined the Unione Ticinese Committee in 1953. He became Secretary in 1956. He is also a member of the Swiss Catholics Committee. His main hobby apart from "work" is golf — playing to a handicap of 13 at Worthing Golf Club.

We wish him a successful term of office.



LEO WERNER KRUCKER †

In our last issue we announced that Mr. L. W. Krucker would be 73 on 11th April. It was not to be. On a trip to Eire where he had some farming property, he suffered a severe heart attack in the early hours of 30th March and died.

Leo Krucker was born in the Toggenburg village of Bütschwil where his father Arnold ran a successful saddler's and upholsterer's business. No doubt, this is where young Leo developed his first interest in leather and materials. Small wonder that he went in for an apprenticeship in this field. Coupled with his intelligence — he achieved three "very goods" in his diploma in St. Gall, a thing which happens only every fifty years or so — his skill enabled him to make a successful start in his trade. He went to France and returned to Switzerland at the outbreak of the first world war. Not for long, though, and the beginning of the new year already saw him in Germany, Freiburg first, then the School of Art in Berlin-Stralsund where he went in for window dressing. In 1916, he returned to Switzerland for military service. In between spells of army duties, he worked in Lugano for which he had a soft spot all his life. (He owned considerable property in the Ticino and the adjoining parts of Italy).

It was in 1919 that Leo Krucker came to England. He visited the "Ecole Internationale" in Herne Bay and moved to London the following year. He started his own business in 1924, and his firm, manufacturers of high class evening handbags became one of the most important in the trade. A Krucker bag, be it of delicate *petit point*, bright brocade, fine beads, of gold or silver kid or tapestry was a treat to behold and a pleasure to own. His beautiful Chinese embroidery bags were especially distinctive, perhaps all the more so since Mr. Krucker's ample knowledge of Chinese art showed itself in the expert use of design and material. Royalties in this country and abroad still use his bags; he was engaged in considerable export trade and supplied all big ocean-going liners on the seven seas. He himself was a great traveller, especially since his retirement a short time ago.

Leo Krucker was well-known in the Swiss Community, member of City Swiss Club, Nouvelle Société Helvétique, Schweizerbund, Rifle Association, Catholic Committee, and above all most actively engaged in the running of the Swiss Mercantile Society where he held many offices and rendered much valuable service for which not only the S.M.S. in London, but the Mother Society in Switzerland awarded him Honorary Membership.

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