

City Swiss Club

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today than it did four years ago.

On hearing that our Churches intend to solve their urgent accommodation problem jointly, that the Swiss Mercantile Society has an equally pressing accommodation problem for the College, being aware of the unsatisfactory aspects of the present premises of the Swiss Hostel for Girls and fearing that the Forum project at the Swiss Centre might have to be dropped, I suggested last autumn to all concerned that a unique opportunity existed for a joint building of real distinction costing less for each participant than would separate solutions. The possibilities of proceeding along this path are being examined closely and urgently at present.

Since our last AGM our main Delegate from the South, Mrs. M. Meier, has attended two meetings of the Commission in Berne, a Council meeting of the Solidarity Fund and two meetings of the Information Committee of the Auslandschweizerwerk. Dr. Bolliger and Mr. Hartmann from the North have attended one meeting of the Commission each.

The financial problems of the "Swiss Observer" had reached a point by the end of last year where the Chairman of its Advisory Council, Mr. G. Keller, felt compelled to issue a most urgent appeal for increased support on the part of the Colony to ensure the continuance of the paper beyond the end of June. Endorsing this ap-

peal, I urge all member Societies to re-examine all possible ways of helping. I am inviting Mr. Keller to the forthcoming AGM in case a discussion of his appeal is desired and I shall propose the admission of the Advisory Council to full membership.

H. W. Egli
Federation President

THE CITY SWISS CLUB AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the City Swiss Club, which took place in the Stanhope Suite of the Dorchester on 26th April, enjoyed a record attendance including the presence of the Ambassador.

The Secretary read the Minutes of the last meeting, some new members were elected and four old ones, who had just served 50 years of membership in the City Swiss Club were added to the list of Honorary Members. These four personalities were Mr. P. Bessire, Mr. E. Werner, Mr. J. Steiner and Mr. A. Schorno, all of whom had been members since 1920. Mr. Paul Bessire was the only one present. He stood up to thank the President and members for their kind attention and reminisced on the past of the City Swiss Club. He evoked the time when French was the Club's official language and when the two linguistic groups were separated into the "right" and the "left", as the German speakers sat on the right of the President and the French to his left. In the

event, the German-speaking minority grew into a majority and English came to be the official language of the City Swiss Club.

Mr. Bessire further recalled the palmy days of the Club, when it used to meet at Pagani's and hold regular cinderellas with attendances of 500. He was warmly acclaimed. Mr. A. Kuhn then rose to pass the year under review. There had been three dinners with speakers and two card evenings. The Summer Dance, the Annual Dinner and Ball, the Soirée Familiale and the Christmas Dinner had all been very successful. Mr. Kuhn, however, deplored the insufficient turn-up at some meetings. In particular, only 12 members had come to hear an expert speak on the highly topical problem of pollution.

Our President had furthermore noted the presence of no more than a dozen members at the Annual Ball, the immense majority of the attendance being their guests. Five members had been lost through death or departure, but as six new members had been accepted, the overall membership had remained level and stood at 225.

Mr. Kuhn said that after two years tenure of City Swiss Club's Presidency it was time for him to retire. The role had "taught him patience, tolerance, understanding" and curtailed his ambitions. Mr. Kuhn said that he no longer wished to become President of Switzerland!

CITY SWISS CLUB

"Informal Dinner Dance"

FRIDAY, 25th JUNE, 1971
at The Thatched Barn,
Barnet By-Pass, Herts.

COCKTAILS AT 7.30 p.m.

DINNER AT 8 p.m.

DANCING UNTIL 1 a.m.

DRESS
INFORMAL

TICKETS £3

FROM L. F. JOBIN, 10 KELVIN DRIVE, ST. MARGARETS, TWICKENHAM, MIDDX.

The time had come for the Treasurer's Report. Mr. H. J. Keller presented a concise and clear report in which the important features of the newly separated Ordinary and Charity Funds and those of the Club House Fund were resumed in a nutshell. The Auditor, Mr. Ernst Tangemann, pronounced the time hallowed auditorial phrase, namely that the published accounts gave, in his opinion, "a true and fair view of the state of the Club's affairs on 31st March, 1971". As income had considerably exceeded expenditure, it was not felt necessary to increase subscription fees.

Mr. Edgar Bonvin took the chair *pro tem* and expeditiously handled the election of the new responsible members of the Club, who included many new names, as the following list shows: Committee: President, W. E. Bion; Vice President, E. Tangemann; Treasurer, H. J. Keller; Assistant Treasurer, F. Fraefel; Secretary, L. F. Ackermann; Assistant Secretary, L. F. Jobin; Additional Member, H. Jauslin. The Trustees of the Club House Fund were Messrs. E. H. Burnier (Treasurer), L. A. Chapuis and B. E. Jaeggi. The Auditors will be Mr. F. Augstburger and Mr. P. Gut, and the Press Reporter continues to be PMB. Mr. Bonvin invited the Meeting to acclaim our retiring President.

The debate on the Club's donations was animated by a member, Mr. L. A. Chapuis, who felt strongly that more should be given to the Churches and the Swiss Benevolent Society. The newly created Charity Fund of the City Swiss Club had received £691.71 from the Tombola of the Annual Banquet and Ball and a transfer of £491.70 from the Ordinary Account. Of this impressive total, £50 had been allotted to each of the three Swiss Churches and £100 to the Swiss Benevolent Society. There thus remained £933.20 of unused funds, which prompted an indignant Mr. Chapuis to suggest giving £150 to each of the churches and £300 to the Swiss Benevolent Society.

The arguments in favour of such a gesture had already been brought forward at the previous AGM. Basically, the guests at the Annual Ball gave their money to the Tombola on the understanding that its proceeds were to be devoted to charity. This principle has naturally been accepted by the City Swiss Club, but it felt that the lean years should be provided for and that, for this reason, the Churches and the Swiss Benevolent Society should be given regular but moderate donations. Mr. Chapuis refuted these arguments and saw no reason to fear a lean year. However, he was defeated by the general feeling of the Meeting and by Father Bossard, who said that the churches didn't need more money at present, but that they would gladly avail themselves of City Swiss Club generosity the day they had to acquire

new common premises. In the end the Meeting agreed to give the churches £75 and the Benevolent Society £150.

Much of the latter part of the evening was spent in discussing ways of reviving the life of the City Swiss Club. Mr. Jauslin made a dramatic appeal for new suggestions, or for explanations which would help to stop diminishing attendances. From a membership of 225 he estimated the average attendance at monthly meetings to be 20 or 30. That meant that only 10 per cent of members took the trouble to take part in their Club's activities. The suggestion was made to merge certain activities with the Anglo-Swiss Society. This would ensure that a minimal attendance would honour distinguished speakers. This was turned down emphatically by a vocal member.

Others suggested bringing ladies to the monthly meetings with speeches liable to interest them. Our new President, Mr. Walter Bion, emphasised the need for introducing more young people to the Club. Others noted the necessity of maintaining the general level of membership, remarking that it wasn't indicated to introduce hippies and au pairs to the Club. Father Bossard chipped in by urging the Club to impress upon the Swiss authorities to inform all young Swiss leaving for England on what was awaiting them.

The debate was lively enough, but led to no particular decision on forthcoming arrangements with other societies. An idea brought forward by Mr. B. Jaeggi to publish a list of members and their addresses found acceptance. The communication thus afforded could foster greater attendances.

(PMB)

THE VALAIS ON AN ASSAULT OF THE BRITISH TOURIST MARKET

A party of twelve tourist personalities from the Valais left for London at their own expense, where they stayed for three days and met over 180 travel agents. They showed them films and brochures on the possibilities of their canton and invited them to Raclette parties and receptions at the Swiss Centre every evening. They launched a competition consisting of wording an appropriate slogan on the Valais. Most of our London readers received the competition slip in their last copy of the S.O. It was a mock Swissair ticket-cover with a wonderful two weeks for two in the Valais on offer as a first prize.

The party consisted of the President of the Valais Tourist Office, its Director and Public Relations Manager, the Director of the Publicity Office for Agricultural Products of the Valais, and representatives from the individual resorts. Those who had their man in London were Crans-sur-Sierre, Evolène, Goms, Leukerbad, Martigny, Montana-Vermala, Saas-Fee, Sion, Zermatt and Arolla. The Furka-Ober-

alp Railway was furthermore represented by its Chairman. These people (many of them hotel owners) had already organised similar campaigns in Cologne and Paris with great success. They found that there was a regain of British tourism in the Valais but that potential was far from exhausted.

THE UNIONE TICINESE AFTERNOON BALL

The Unione Ticinese held its No. 1 annual event, the Afternoon Dance, on Saturday, 2nd May. The Dorchester's ballroom was full of young and old, obviously not all from Ticino. In fact guests made up the majority of the lively attendance, and as long as the Ticinesi of London remain as generous the Annual Dance of the "Unione" will be bound to thrive.

The most charming aspect of this unique Swiss event was the abundance of children on the dance floor and the informality of the atmosphere. The festivities lasted from 4 p.m. to 11 p.m. Our Consul, Mr. F. Adams, was guest of honour, as well as the Ticino representative at the Embassy, Mr. C. Jagmetti. Both were accompanied by their ladies. A tombola was organised. It raised enough to balance the cost of the afternoon and bring a little extra to Unione Ticinese funds.

HARVESTING IN THE NORTH . . .

As in every year past there comes a time for our Swiss communities to assemble their Annual General Meetings and cast back a look on the year's activities much depending on the drive of the respective committees and the support received by the members, making thus the final point. It is also the time when the finances of the clubs are discussed; plans for the future laid down; the time when any member may voice his or her approval or disapproval of any aspect of the club's life and activities and have a say in the election of the new committees. This year's delay in convening such meetings were unavoidable and due to the unreasonable and long drawn-out postal strike, but we can derive some satisfaction to think how well we were able to out-ride this unnecessary storm.

It was for the *Yorkshire Swiss Club* to start this policy-making period by assembling on Tuesday, 6th April, 1971 at the British Council House in Leeds. This club is known for their informality when holding this type of function and the agenda not containing any controversial matter, was quickly dealt with. Our President, Prof. Inebnit, started by welcoming everybody present, in particular our long standing friend Dr. H. R. Bolliger our representative at the "Auslandschweizersekretariat" and we shall refer to him further on. He invited stronger support for our two papers, the "Swiss Observer" for the Swiss resident in the United Kingdom and the "Echo" which is the mouth-piece of the Swiss world