

# Swiss Girls stranded at Gatwick

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ment of Swiss pastries and Swiss wines, some of them (in particular the Dezaley "Les Embleyres" 1970) had never before been tasted in Britain.

Miss Islington, the local beauty queen, added charm to the atmosphere of this smart north London restaurant. A man in alpine garb played sweet central European melodies on a cithara. The waiters were dressed in Swiss costume, which had apparently been found in London without the assistance of the SNT0, one of whose most important tasks is to supply "Swiss do's" with the appropriate appertunances. In this instance, it had supplied the Swiss flags.

Frederick's have had several previous similar national fortnights all with the same versatile chef. A British fortnight is planned next on the programme.

### Literary prize to a compatriot

A large photograph of our compatriot, Mr. Pierre Savoie, appeared on the front page of the "Streatham News" of 5th May. Mr. Savoie, who has supplied many articles to "The Swiss Observer" and is currently writing our "Cathedral" series, won a literary prize for his "Sketch Map Book of the World's Great Religions". The award is the "Janay Literary Award for the best work of non-fiction" (educational and instructional) for 1971/72.

Born in 1890, the son of a pharmacist, Mr. Savoie was educated in Geneva but later trained in England, volunteering for service in the British Army in 1916. He was wounded in 1919.

In 1920, he joined the Pathe Films studio as a title artist and for eight years he held the position of arts director of this organisation in London. He was later put in charge of the arts department of British Instructional Films Ltd., a subsidiary of Pathe. Mr. Savoie left Pathe in 1951 to do freelance art work, mainly illustrating science and educational books.

Mr. Savoie has been a widower for ten years. He has two sons and three grandchildren.

The Janay awards were presented at the Annual Janay Authors' Convention on 3rd June at the Dolphin and Anchor Hotel, Chichester.

Now retired, Mr. Savoie writes because he finds it "a fascinating hobby and pastime". We should like to congratulate him most sincerely for this great achievement. Which writer has won a major literary distinction at 82 for a work written at 82?

### Swiss writer speaks at the Embassy

An invited attendance heard a Swiss writer, Jean-Pierre Monnier, expound his views on "French-Swiss literature today" and his conception of the novel, on 3rd May at the Embassy. Mr. Monnier was born in 1921 at Saint-Imier and studied literature at Neuchatel, where he now teaches. He has published five novels, two of which ("La clarté de la nuit" and "L'arbre du jour") have been translated into German.

### Consular promotion

A circular letter issued in April by the Swiss Consulate General of Manchester informed us that the hitherto Consulate of Manchester has been upgraded by the Federal Council "with the consent of Her Majesty's Government" to the status of Consulate General on 1st April. We should like to congratulate General Consul Rolph Born on his promotion.

Another consular promotion which was passed unmentioned in these columns is that of Mr. Th. Dudli, who was promoted from Vice-Consul to Consul last January. There are now two Consuls in London.

### SWISS GIRLS STRANDED AT GATWICK

It is not often that the Swiss Embassy is mentioned in London's

evening papers. The two most notable cases in recent years arose when the Rev. Ian Paisley tried to storm the Embassy and later, when a 1,000 lb. unexploded bomb was found in the foundations of the old Legation. This time, the headlines referred to the Embassy in conjunction with the plight of two au pair girls freshly arrived in England during the first railway work-to-rule.

The two girls, German-speaking and on their way to a job at Windermere, in the Lake District, had just landed at Gatwick. They decided that they would hitch a ride to London because of the difficulties of transportation. They were by no means reckless or ignorant, and had carefully weighed up their decision. A Mini with three boys stopped by the kerb and offered to give them a lift. The girls stacked their luggage in the small vehicle and squeezed themselves inside.

Shortly thereafter, the Mini developed a fault and stopped. Everybody out and push. The girls wisely insisted on first putting their belongings on the roadside and then participating in reviving the Mini. Questioned on their excessive circumspection by the youngsters, the girls replied: "We don't know you. It's very easy for you to speed off with our luggage".

Having pushed the Mini a few dozen yards, the engine ignited again. The girls laboriously carried their luggage to the car and off they went. A short while later, the Mini stalled again and it was necessary to give it a second push. The two girls, probably believing by now that the car's troubles were real, agreed to step out and help start it up again.

Somehow, the girls managed to be the only ones outside the vehicle. No sooner had they begun to push it, than it zoomed away with a roar.

Our friends were left on the roadside deprived of their luggage, their clothes and their money. They were eventually driven to the Swiss Embassy with the help of the police and were greeted by the whole London Press. The Embassy notified their parents,

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and one of its officials put the girls up for the night.

The next day, the Embassy received letters from outraged members of the British public with messages of sympathy and money for the girls. Thanks to the generosity of the public, they had enough money to complete their journey and perhaps had a more favourable picture of the British!

#### KRAMGASSE

Shop windows in the Kramgasse in Berne will bear witness to the life of the Swiss abroad during the weeks before the 50th Assembly of Swiss Abroad next August. The Swiss of the North, under the guidance and inspiration of Prof. J. P. Inebnit, are putting up a tremendous contribution. They are exhibiting a huge, true-to-life model of the town of Hebden Bridge, the hills above the Calder Valley (Hardcastle Craggs), a real mountain stream activated by a pump, and, first and foremost, a gathering of Swiss attending their annual *Landsgemeinde* under the leadership of Prof. Inebnit.

This ambitious scheme is being carried out by the school children of Hebden Bridge. Prof. Inebnit has secured the full co-operation of Mr. David Fletcher, a Hebden Bridge Urban Councillor who has played a dominant role in staging the annual Swiss Weeks of this Lancashire town. Two years ago, he organised, in co-operation with Prof. Inebnit, an exhibi-

tion of paintings on the theme "Switzerland" in the Hebden Bridge Town Hall and later (if my memory is correct) at Chateau'd'Oex.

The planned size of the Hebden Bridge model was 2½ metres deep and 4 metres wide. A hitch has cropped up because the jewellery shop in the Kramgasse where the model is due to be exhibited has notified its promoters that it could only be 1.45 metres deep. This would require eliminating much of the moors above Hebden Bridge and probably the torrent. Prof. Inebnit, who was in Switzerland for a trial at Bienne in which he was to defend a conscientious objector, went to Berne to see how things were going.

Who pays for all this? There are fortunately limited material expenses. Cardboard, clay, glass fibre and cotton wool are not particularly costly hardware. Prof. Inebnit was sufficiently devoted to the project to give Mr. David Fletcher personal financial support to get the whole thing started. The greatest problem will be to get the model to Switzerland. I understand that it is built of one single piece and that negotiations are under way to obtain Swissair's co-operation.

APRIL 1972

*During our holiday to Switzerland, we travelled 1,682 miles. The car behaved very well, we had no troubles of any kind. During that week we came across all kinds of weather, from wintry conditions with heavy*

*snow storms and sharp frost in Switzerland, to heavy rain on our way through France.*

*We went for an outing to the Schilthorn. On that day the weather was perfect, clear with brilliant sunshine. Words would be impossible to find to describe our impressions in face of the scenery unrolling everywhere before us. This was nature in all its glory and magnificence. As far as the eyes could see, peak after peak, immaculate, reaching to the blue sky, inundated by a brilliant sunshine. Down in the valley, cotton wool-like clouds were floating, following the fantasy of the wind, sometimes rising, sometimes falling, in a variety of shapes, as if playing with the wind.*

*Except for the occasional noise of the cable car, the stillness was only broken by the cry of the choucass, one could not help wondering what those birds were doing in this land of snow and ice, and what they live on. A few daring skiers were practising their favourite sport and soon disappeared down the steep slopes in the fog which was gradually rising from the valley. We made the most of the sunshine while it lasted, sitting lazily on the restaurant's platform, feeling the heat of the sun, despite the fact that the temperature was well below freezing. We were glad to have our dark glasses without which it would have been impossible to enjoy this wonderful and unique panorama.*

*However, the clouds were still rising. By 3 p.m. we were engulfed in them. A thick fog spread over every-*

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