

# Society and social scene

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# Golden celebration for the Bessires

MR and Mrs Paul Bessire recently celebrated their golden wedding anniversary.

Paul Bessire came from Bienne to Britain as an 18-year-old language student, intending to stay for a year or so. He is still here.

It was in April 1930, in the Swiss Church in London, that he married Antoinette Schüpbach (of the Neuchâtel branch of the old Emmental family), daughter of the then general manager of the Crédit Lyonnais in London.

They still live in the house in Barnes where they raised their two daughters. One daughter is married in the USA and the other in Wales, each with two children.

The Bessires know all about war in England and its hardships. After having built up his own business in the twenties (Mica import and export, export of telegraph poles from Sweden), Paul Bessire lost everything during the war and had to start again from scratch.

This time he ventured into industrial diamond tools and electrical components. He did seem to have a nose for developing new ideas, as for instance the first press for razor blades.

In his quiet and unassuming way, Paul Bessire has always been very active in the Swiss community. He is a member of



Paul and Antoinette Bessire on their golden wedding day.

the City Swiss Club, the Swiss Mercantile Society, the Swiss Economic Council, the Nouvelle Société Helvétique and supports the Swiss Rifle Association.

He also was a member of the Consistoire of the Swiss Church until he retired at 70. For many years the "réunion de paroisse" was held at his home. In 1920

he became a Sunday school teacher and remembers 80 children attending Sunday school at the Swiss Church.

Mrs Bessire always supported her husband in all his interests and helped with the sewing circle and with organising the children's Christmas parties at the Church.

She was Barnes district organiser of the Women's Royal Voluntary Service for nine years and has been a member of the organisation since 1938.

Mr and Mrs Bessire regret that their days of skiing, riding and other sporting activities are over, but they still find plenty to occupy them. They both are keen gardeners and just don't seem to be the kind of people who get bored easily. In spite of advancing years, they both are very sprightly.

We wish them many more years of health and happiness together.

MHM

## Christmas appeal

THE Swiss Benevolent Society and the Swiss Churches will, as in the past, make an effort again this year to render the festive season a bit easier and more pleasant for compatriots who for many reasons are in no position to provide for themselves and their families the little extras which one associates with Christmas time.

In order to do this they again need the help of members of the Swiss colony, who in the past have been most generous by donating both money and new clothing and food.

Gifts in kind should be sent to the Swiss Benevolent Society, if possible not later than November 25. Cash donations or cheques and postal orders may be sent to the following addresses: Swiss Benevolent Society, 31 Conway Street, London W1P 5HL; Eglise Suisse de Londres, 79 Endell Street, London WC2H 9AJ; the Rev. U. Steiner, 1 Womersley Road, London N8

9AE; the Rev. P. Bossard, John Southward Centre, 48 Great Peter Street, London SW1P 2HA.

## Everyone will be welcome

THE Yorkshire Swiss Club is holding a luncheon on Saturday, November 15 at the Old George Hotel, West Garforth, on the Selby Road side of Leeds.

The reception is at 12.30 to meet the Consul General and Mrs Karli, and the Chancellor, Miss Suter. This will be followed by lunch at 1 pm.

There is a choice of menu at £3.80-£4.00 which, from last year's experience, can be fully recommended. The last gathering was a most happy one and club members would be pleased to see any Swiss and friends who would come and join them this time.

Further information from Mrs Lilian Baumann. Tel: Leeds 862078. It is really necessary for the organisers to know how many will be going.

## Olivia Mona Züllig

THREE days after returning from holiday and one day before her 75th birthday, Mrs Olivia Mona Züllig, died suddenly and unexpectedly of a heart attack in Barnet General Hospital on September 21.

Olivia Züllig was the wife of Albert M. Züllig, from Egnach/TG, 47 Mandeville Road, Southgate, London N14. Their marriage of 45 years had been an extremely harmonious and happy one.

Through her husband's activities as a member of the Swiss Mercantile Society, the City Swiss Club and the Helvetica Lodge, Mrs Züllig made a number of friends and always was fiercely proud to be Swiss by marriage.

We extend our sympathy to Mr Züllig.

MHM

## NHS holds autumn meeting

JOINTLY with the Swiss Mercantile Society the Nouvelle Société Helvétique held its first autumn meeting at the Swiss Embassy when the main topic was the report on the 58th assembly of the Swiss Abroad in Lugano.

Mrs Mariann Meier, president of the NSH and delegate for the South of England to the OSA, reported on this year's meeting, emphasising the importance for all Swiss abroad to take an active interest in the organisation.

There were no further developments in the citizenship question regarding children of Swiss mothers and foreign fathers to report.

She said that the Solidarity Fund now stood at Sfr. 3 million, but membership was still not satisfactory. It was worth

bearing in mind that contributions to the fund provided a safeguard against loss of livelihood as well as being a good way of saving for old age.

The meeting remembered with a moment of silence Mr Henri von Gunten, a well known member of the NSH, who had died suddenly while on holiday in Switzerland.

To round off the evening a short film of the queen's state visit to Switzerland last May was shown. Since the film was minus sound track, Bill Hamilton of the BBC provided his own commentary and also gave his personal impression of the event.

On November 13 Mr Theodor Haller will give a talk to the NSH on the theme "Do newspapers tell the truth?"

MHM