

Society and social scene

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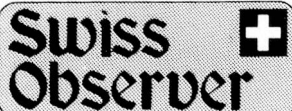
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Archbishop Heim is seen here with the Swiss Ambassador and his wife.

A Swiss pro-nuncio for London

THE Roman Catholic community in Britain last month welcomed the removal of a long standing anomaly which has existed in the diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the United Kingdom.

Pope John Paul II personally announced the news that diplomatic relations between the two were to be elevated to ambassadorial status. A statement released from the Vatican said "The Holy See and the United Kingdom, desirous of further promoting the mutual friendly relations already happily existing, have jointly decided to raise the British Legation to the Holy See to the rank of Embassy and to establish in London an Apostolic Nunciature."

This means that Swiss-born Archbishop Bruno Heim, the Vatican's representative in London, becomes a pro-nuncio, fully restoring relations which were interrupted 500 years ago by the Reformation.

Last month another Archbishop – of Canterbury – was visiting Switzerland. Dr. Robert Runcie was calling on international organisations in Geneva during the last week of February.

During his visit, he was invited to be principal speaker at a dinner organised by the Cercle des Amitiés Internationales of Geneva at the Intercontinental Hotel.

Mrs Bea Sigerist

IT IS with deep regret that we announce the death on Boxing Day of Mrs Bea Sigerist, of 1, rue de Chillon, Apt, 23, 1820 Teritet-Montreux. She died after a very long and patiently borne

illness in her 93rd year.

Bea and her husband, William Bernard, were well-known in the London Swiss community during the many years of their residence here. Before the war Mrs Sigerist was president of the Women's Group (at that time called "Nähverein) of the German-speaking parish of the Swiss Church in London.

She was in Switzerland when war broke out and was unable to come back until the end of hostilities. Mr and Mrs Sigerist retired to the shores of the lake of Geneva nearly 17 years ago, but they left behind many friends.

It is we who today send our heartfelt sympathy to Bernard Sigerist in his great loss, and we wish him the same courage and fortitude to bear his sorrow as he showed in looking after his invalid wife for so many years.

Scottish programme

WEST of Scotland Swiss Club's programme includes:

Friday, March 19, 7pm. Visit to the Automobile Association headquarters, Fanum House, Erskine Harbour, Erskine. Tea and biscuits will be available.

Friday, April 23, 7.30pm, at 7 Hughenden Terrace.

Programme to be announced later. Würstli, weggli and tee.

Friday, May 14, 7.30pm, at 7 Hughenden Terrace. Annual general meeting followed by cheese and wine party.

Saturday, June 12, at Garden Cottage, Chryston. Barbecue.

Funding a nest egg

IN MARCH the Swiss communities in London and Manchester will have the pleasure of welcoming the manager of the Solidarity Fund for Swiss Abroad, Mr Benito Invernizzi. He and his wife are coming from Berne

Combined events are a success

THREE events took place last month in which the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, the Swiss Mercantile Society and the Unione Ticinese worked together.

On January 13 a presentation was made to the retiring secretary of the SMS, Mr Walter Burren, at Swiss House. At the same meeting Mrs Mariann Meier gave an illustrated talk on Sark, the most unusual of the Channel Islands, which has no taxes and no cars.

On the following evening nearly 60 members of the NSH and the Unione Ticinese attended the première at the London Mime Festival of the famous Swiss clown Dimitri. The evening was a great success, for the great mime is not only a most accomplished acrobat, juggler and musician, but a most sensitive and endearing artist.

There was another mixed membership evening on January 24 when a talk was organised by the NSH at the lecture hall of the Swiss Embassy.

Mr Werner Kreis, a Swiss architect established in London, gave a fascinating talk, supported by two slide projectors, on "Architectural thoughts between London and Bellinzona". He talked of the great architectural traditions in the Ticino, both vernacular and more sophisticated, and referred to many well-known Swiss architects such as Botta and above all the great Le Corbusier.

All three meetings suffered from the rail strike, but attendances were nevertheless gratifying. Apart from the organised features, companionship and friendly chats came into their own at the SMS before the meeting when members could make use of the canteen at Swiss House, and on the other two occasions at supper at the Swiss Centre after the theatre and the meeting at the Embassy.

More combined events are planned in the interest of all the societies and to make it easier for the organisers.

THE ARTS

THE Zurich-born painter Jacqueline Reäl will have an exhibition of her paintings at Gallery Margaret Fisher, 2 Lambolle Road, London from March 12 until April 2.

Previously she has had exhibitions in both the Galerie Donschig and Galerie Commercio in Zurich and earlier this year she exhibited in Hamburg.

Although she finds it difficult to speak about her own work, she sums up her feelings in this way: "Kunst beginnt, wo Worte fehlen - sie erweitert unser Bewusstsein. Malen bedeutet für mich eine Art Meditation."

★ ★ ★

There will be an exhibition of lithographs by Alberto Giacometti entitled "Paris sans fin" from March 1 to March 20 at the MacRobert Arts Centre Gallery, University of Stirling.

★ ★ ★

Professor Yves Bridel, considered to be one of the foremost authors in French-speaking Swiss

literature, continues his lecture tour of Great Britain until early March.

He will give three lectures at the University of Lancaster. On March 1 his subjects will be "Ramuz et la Suisse" and "Giraudoux: La Guerre de Troie n'aura pas lieu" and on March 2 he will lecture on "Satre: Le Diable et le Bon Dieu."

His final appearance will be at the Swiss Embassy, London, on March 3 and invitations for this are available from the Embassy (01-732 0701 ext 248).

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PIANIST Lennart Rabes, who has in the past organised many concerts for the Swiss community in London, is to play a major part in the Deal Summer Music Festival which will be held in August of this year.

He will open the festival with a piano recital on Sunday, August 8 and will also be involved in lectures and master classes. He will concentrate during the festival on the late works of Liszt.



Swiss visit for Archbishop Runcie:

specially in order to attend meetings in the two cities.

On Wednesday, March 10, Mr Invernizzi will address the annual general meeting and dinner of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, and the following day he will give a talk to the Swiss Club in Manchester. The latter meeting will cover various problems concerning Swiss residents abroad.

The Solidarity Fund is a unique institution, an insurance against loss of livelihood due to political upheavals. At the same time it offers a way of saving for a nest-egg in Switzerland. In addition

to the cover which you can choose from three categories, you get back your contributions with interest.

Much information has been published in the course of nearly 30 years. Yet the fact that membership is still rather small seems to indicate that people don't quite understand the immense advantages of joining the Fund.

Mr Invernizzi's visit will give an excellent opportunity of learning all about this unique insurance scheme. So please make a note of the two dates.

Mariann Meier