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NEWS FROM THE COLONY



V. BERTI
Chairman, Swiss Presidents' Assembly

On the occasion of the Presidents' Assembly, which took place on 3rd March 1962 at the Swiss Embassy, Mr. V. Berti, President of the "Schweizerbund" (Swiss Club), was elected Chairman of the Assembly for 1962/63. Mr. Th. von Speyr (President of the City Swiss Club) was elected Vice-Chairman, and Mr. O. P. Béguin (President of the Consistoire of the Swiss Church), Hon. Secretary.

* * *

Mr. V. Berti was born in London in 1917, of Swiss parents. The family Berti, who hail from the canton of Ticino, are well known in the Swiss Colony, and Mr. Berti's late father, Mr. C. Berti, was for many years President of the Unione Ticinese, whilst his mother had been President of the ladies' section of the Unione Ticinese until its amalgamation in 1955.

The new Chairman was educated at the St. Aloysius College, Highgate, and started his business career in the catering trade with his father. This occupation, however, did not appeal to him particularly, and he took up clerical work with a film distributing company.

After having received his discharge from the British army in 1941, for reasons of health, he was engaged on the clerical side of aircraft production.

At the end of the last war he took a position with a large textile firm in their costing department, and finally joined, in 1948, the Swiss Bank Corporation, with which Bank he is at present.

Mr. V. Berti is a very active member of the Unione Ticinese. In 1942 he was elected a member of the Committee, acting for three years as assistant secretary, after which he took over from his father the post of Hon. Treasurer, which the former had held for seventeen years.

We wish Mr. Berti a successful and pleasant year of office.

A. F. SUTER 80 Years Old

On the 22nd of this month, Mr. A. F. Suter, of "Lueg-is-Land", Lower Kingswood, Surrey, celebrated his 80th birthday, and thus joins the small circle of octogenarians in our Colony.

We tender him our sincere congratulations, wishing him "very many happy returns of the day".

Mr. Suter arrived in this country in 1902, and three years later started business on his own account. He married in 1907, and his first wife presented him with a daughter and four sons. She was killed in an air-raid in 1944, and Mr. Suter himself was in hospital for eighteen months as a result of the incident. He subsequently married a charming compatriot of ours.

After having seen service in the First World War with the Bat. 71 in the Ticino, he felt — after his return to London — the need of closer association with his countrymen, and joined the London Group of the "Nouvelle Société Helvétique" in 1918. Two years later he was appointed Hon. Treasurer, and in 1928 President, in succession to Mr. Jean Baer, relinquishing the presidency in 1947.

Mr. Suter has always taken a lively interest in the Colony. He was at one time a member of the City Swiss Club, and the Swiss Economic Council. He is also a member of the Imperial Institute Consultative Committee, and a Rotarian.

ST.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS TO MR. R. SAHLI

Our compatriot, Mr. R. Sahli, will this year celebrate his 85th birthday, and we tender him our best congratulations. He was born in Berne in 1877 and came to this country in 1897.

We reproduce, by courtesy of the editor of the *Sunday Express*, an article which appeared some time ago under the heading "Off to Balmoral again goes Mr. Sahli".

"I report this week on a man who must be the Queen's most regular guest at Balmoral — yet probably the least known of them all. He is Mr. Robert Sahli, 85-year-old chiropodist employed by a London hairdresser's in Bond Street.

"While members of distinguished families receive invitations to spend a few days at Balmoral — those more favoured may even be asked for a fortnight — Mr. Sahli can always rely on a full month's holiday there each year.

"Short, snowy-haired, and with twinkling eyes, Mr. Sahli has worked for the same firm for more than 50 years.

"He has given professional advice to Queen Mary, King George VI and his wife, Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret. And in 1946 the King expressed the wish that he should always be invited to Balmoral at holiday times. This is a wish the Queen has never failed to observe.

"Each year, Mr. Sahli, now a widower living in a semi-detached house at Wanstead, London, receives a

letter from the Queen inviting him to come to stay with them. It is an honour which he cherishes.

"Mr. Sahli is much loved by his colleagues and clients at the hairdressing salon. His old-world charm — he always wears a black coat, stiff winged collar and diamond tie-pin — his energy, and his sense of humour have made him extremely popular there.

'He looks forward to his holiday very much indeed,' says a member of the staff. 'He is very proud of his friendship with the Royal Family and looks on Balmoral as a sort of second home.'

UNIONE TICINESE

Thirty members of the Unione Ticinese gathered in the palatial lounge of the Swiss Hostel for Girls on Sunday, 4th March, for the 88th Annual General Meeting of the Society.

The President, Mr. Peter Jacomelli, welcomed the members and immediately thanked Madame Daeniker and her Committee for making the Hostel available to the Unione Ticinese for its meetings.

After the minutes had been read and approved, the Committee's Report for 1961 was given by the Secretary. Mr. F. De Maria reported that financially the year had been a success and that the funds of the Society were in a very good state despite all the calls that were made on them during the year. The total of Sick Benefit paid out to members had been very high, but nevertheless the Dorchester Dances continued to bring in a good profit and the Society was able to pay its way without drawing upon capital. A very popular feature of the year had been the distribution of Merlot Wine, a total of 550 bottles was bought by members and the Secretary hoped that there was no connection between this item and the high amount of Sick Benefit!

In thanking the Committee for their hard work during the year, the President said that 1961 had been a difficult year for the Society, since, after the summer months, it had been impossible to arrange any social functions owing to the uncertain position of the Schweizerbund. Another feature had been the decline of the Corale to some dozen members due to some having returned to the Ticino and some having married. However, the President looked to the future with confidence and hoped that as many members as possible would support the programme of activities that would be sent to them in the near future.

The elections to the Committee for 1962 resulted as follows:— President: Mr. Peter Jacomelli; Vice-Presidents: Miss C. Polti and Mr. V. Berti; Secretary: Mr. F. A. De Maria; Assistant Secretary: Miss A. Bozzini; Treasurer: Mr. J. De Maria; Collector: Mr. F. Bassi; Members: Mrs. L. Bruni, Miss A. Gianelli, and Messrs. J. Diviani, J. Pedretti, L. Bruni, F. Allegranza, C. Rosselli and Z. Bianda.

F. A. DeM.

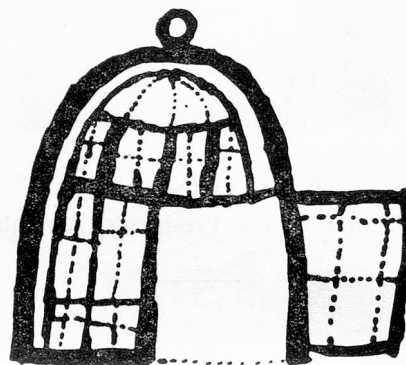
OUR NEXT ISSUE

Our next issue will be published on Friday, 13th April. We take this opportunity of thanking the following subscribers for their kind and helpful donations over and above their subscriptions: Mrs. M. Affentranger, A. F. Frikart, W. Weber, G. Roesch, J. H. Buechi, A. Maeder, Dr. E. M. Bircher, W. Walter, F. Magnin, Mrs. E. Dean, L. A. Poltera, H. E. Messmer.

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