

# SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA

## HISTORY, 1860-1960

William Penn's agents located some Swiss as desirable prospects for his 'Greene Countrie Towne' in Pennsylvania, which he was about to found in 1682. Further research is expected to clarify if they went along on his first or second trip.

Philadelphia was laid out on an area of two square miles, bordered by the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers, Vine and South Streets. By 1854, it covered 129.7 square miles, absorbing the suburban communities within, then established as city and county limits, as 'hub' of a fast-growing fringe of 3,420 square miles with a combined population of 460,000.

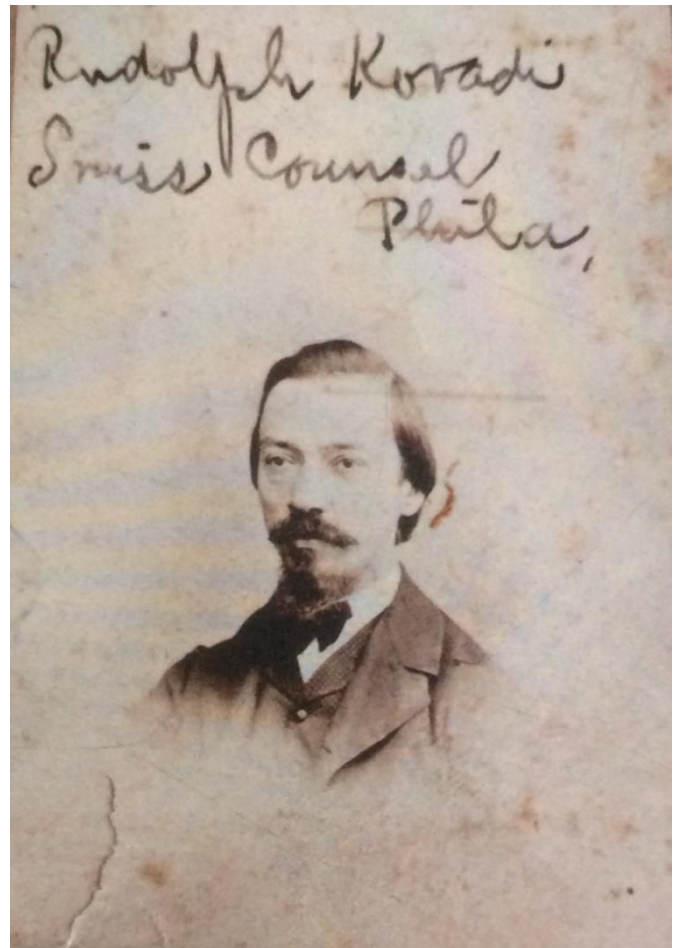
The city, at the census of 1860, counted 565,529 heads. The census of 1950 gives the city 2,071,605 inhabitants, with the Swiss absorbed among the 1,604 'miscellaneous.' The state recorded 3,015 Swiss.

The trolleys of the '5th and 6th Street Railway' made their first runs 1858. Consul Rudolph Koradi (since 1857) probably used them for his business trips as well as errands of mercy.

There were no immigration restrictions then, and many Swiss landed at this port, or came from New York or other States, sometimes with inadequate funds to continue on, or to tie them over during unemployment. Others became indigent due to illness or other misfortunes.

Consul Koradi, having discussed the problem with his compatriots for some time, called a meeting for September 14, 1860, on which occasion the Swiss Benevolent Society of Philadelphia was organized. In the pamphlet issued November 12, 1915, when the Charter of December 4, 1865, was amended and improved, the following are listed as 'founders and first members':

C. T. Amsler, Treasurer	J. J. Reutlinger
H. Ducommun	E. Richard
G. Gigon	C. Rieder
A. Herzog	C. Speiser
D. Jackson	J. Steinegger
C. Jacot	W. P. Uhlinger
H. Jacot	J. S. Vuilleumier
W. Itschner	J. Waldner
R. Koradi, President	J. Walter
J. Langenecker	J. Wild
C. Maron	P. J. Wildberger, Secretary
J. Mayer	A. H. Wirz
S. Murset	J. W. Heuberger
Myers, Claghorn & Co.	J. Wohnlich
J. Paravicini	J. Wittenberger
C. Peneveyre	M. Yauchler
A. Pequiot	J. J. Yauchler
C. Pequiot	



*Rudolph Koradi, Swiss Consul to Philadelphia (undated)*

The four initial directors-at-large are not designated. But to each was assigned a definite task, a policy which was carried on for long years, growing steadily more laborious as the people spread into an ever-widening area.

Each of those four assumed to take care of the needy Swiss in one of four districts. Meeting places were changed when current locations became too inconvenient.

Residences of the early members, as far as they could be ascertained, were very much confined to what has become 'center city' or 'downtown.'

The cornerstone of City Hall was laid 1872. Electric street lighting made its debut in 1881, when also Broad Street Station was inaugurated. The first electric trolleys (Catherine and Bainbridge) came only in

1892, and the Reading Terminal opened 1893. Yet, already 1880, Swiss were located as far as East Walnut Lane and Morton; 3541 North 17th; 67th and Woodland; 2534 Fairview Ave.; 3200 Ridge; 1786 Ellsworth.

Some sort of Protocol was kept since the inception of the Society. Until those earliest records are recovered-if ever-we must content ourselves with the information gleaned from the yearly reports since 1867 and the Minute Books, starting with the Annual General Assembly of January 6, 1863. Secretary Wirz notes that President Koradi gave a retrospect of 1862 as reported in the 'Secretary's Debates for the year.' The 'debates,' it is remarked, shall henceforth be held in English, as the language of the country.

But language difficulties prevailed for some years, as is evidenced 1864, when J. J. Yauchler requested to drop the clause, arguing that the language should be decided at every meeting. C. Jacot, of the French minority, thought they might need an interpreter. For the time being P. J. Wildberger's motion was adopted, allowing the board members to use their preferred idiom.

As late as 1904, the invitations to the assemblies still were executed in German, probably in long-hand, as in October of that year, it was resolved to take recourse to 'printed invitations in English,' as one effort to bring more people to those events. The by-laws, as adopted December 15, 1915, still hint that the directors were at liberty in matters of language, as they specify that the Recording Secretary shall, if possible, be acquainted with both French and German.

The minutes for the Board Meeting of September 22, 1880, asserts that A. H. Wirz handled the Minute Book of the Society from its founding to 1863, also the Charter, to Consul Rudolf Koradi for safe-keeping. In 1907, the latter document was to be taken to City Hall. It was not found among Mr. Koradi's effects.

Instead, there was the application for same, 'duly executed and signed, also by city authorities.' The Recorder of Deeds declared this document as 'the genuine Article,' and Treasurer Schmid took it into his care. In 1915, it was resolved that the Charter 'has become cumbersome and burdensome,' bringing about some amendments in adjustment to the changed times. This was followed by similar improvements to the by-laws, which were re-designed in 1960, awaiting approval by the Annual General Assembly 1961.

The Charter declares as object of the Society relief, 'so far as its means will permit, the urgent

necessities of poor and honest natives of Switzerland, either by contributions of money and provisions, or by procuring employment for them. It is not a society for mutual assistance, but of general benevolence.'

This principle has been conserved, and it is natural that needy Swiss in this area received precedence, since practically all funds are from here. From 1864 on, the Federal and Cantonal Governments approved requests for assistance at least in some measure while the Society was struggling along. Fifty years later it was resolved not to ask for aid from Switzerland anymore, except perhaps in an emergency. And there occur cases involving considerable sums, when it is warranted to ask for a canton to help along. Even now, the membership dues alone would not suffice. But occasional generous gifts, legacies and rents and interest on capital have boosted the assets to a point that assistance beyond a token contribution can be allocated. This situation is also due, in part, to various other factors, of course.

The 'plethoric' condition of the treasury was considered as temporary by the President in 1863. And soon there would be far greater demand for disbursements, 'owing to the Condition of the Country.' The first legacy, by Johann Gustav Ith, yielded \$208.23 in 1869. Another, by the late Chas. Peneveyre, \$950.00 in 1876.

When the Consulate General in Washington submitted a needy case in Charlotte, N.C., the appeal was found to be 'against the Spirit of the Constitution' and 'our duties,' indicating that the early by-laws imposed restrictions. In his report for 1866, President Koradi remarked: '... The late rebellion in this country, now happily ended, contributed its share (to increased assistance) by the financial disturbance it created, to embarrass the action of the members, and to tax to their utmost the exertions of the Board of Managers, who from patriotism and without the least benefit to themselves, tried to devise means to enlarge the efficiency of the institution ....' Dr. Henry E. Dwight came up with the recommendation to make use of printed pamphlets, to be mailed 'to all well-to-do Swiss and other Houses in New York and Europe,' as our ability to render aid was now only a fraction of the amounts needed in 'really meritorious cases.'

Due to financial reverses, several members resigned 1867, and the President offered to see if our SBS could be affiliated with others of greater wealth, which would allow to 'send out West all such able-bodied and willing poor as cannot be



helped here, . . . a great boon to our countrymen.' An opposing opinion alleged that such commitments 'nearly ruined more than one society,' and that the only way to prosper required never to overlook an opportunity to enlist new members. Dr. Dwight suggested in 1868 that an employment bureau would be of utmost benefit.

At the Tenth Anniversary (December 6, 1870), President Koradi remarked about this 'festival' that it was no occasion to boast about achievements, but 'faithful performance.' In compliance with the charter provisions, the directors resolved (1871) to call in all outstanding loans, and to invest \$1000 in a solid mortgage. Semi-annual general assemblies were suggested to facilitate acquaintances and to exchange ideas. The project was adopted, but had soon to be dropped because of poor attendance. The President's Annual Report for 1873 referred to the current 'monetary crisis' and 'considerable stoppage of business,' which was bound to tax the Society heavily. The Swiss Maennerchor gave a benefit concert for the sbs in 1874, producing \$66.70. A Christmas Fete, 1875, also by the Maennerchor, yielded \$85.00.

The Swiss Centennial Headquarters Society set itself up at 1340 Girard Avenue (1876), with the committee of the sbs headed by President Koradi, with instructions to 'consult for due congratulations from one Republic to another via an expressive manner,' but not involving funds of our organization. The Exhibition brought many Swiss from all parts of the States to Philadelphia, expecting to find work, but became applicants for assistance. The Swiss Centennial Headquarters Society, however, received many compatriots during the Exhibition. When it terminated, many exhibits were donated to the sbs, for which a lottery was arranged in conjunction with a concert by the Swiss Maennerchor, netting \$278.00. In the same year, Chas. Pénéveyre testated \$1000.00 to the sbs.

The total value of the exhibits donated to the sbs was estimated at \$700.00. To convert the remainder into cash, another lottery was decided upon for Easter Monday, April 22, 1878, with the drawing after a concert by the Maennerchor, which 'rendered their best in excellent trim.' The proceeds amounted to \$513.00, thanks to a great deal of work by a devoted committee.

A 'Committee of Respectable Citizens of the City of Philadelphia' invited the sbs to a meeting at St. George's Hall, Southwest Corner, 13th and Arch, to act upon a 'report' by which 'idleness and begging may be suppressed, and worthy, self

respecting poverty be discovered and relieved' at least expenses to the sbs. It also was disclosed that a report on the 'Sociétés Suisses de Secours à l'Etranger' listed 73 such associations, without Philadelphia. Their Journal was to receive our annual reports.

An official seal had been under consideration for some time, as it was required to be affixed to important papers. One of the submitted designs was adopted October 16, 1878, and it still serves the Society.

A ball, organized by the Swiss Festival Society of Philadelphia, netted the sbs \$300.00 (1878).

Henry Müller, a brewer, bequeathed \$250.00 to the Society (1883).

The May Board Meeting, 1884, discussed a union of all benevolent societies of foreign nationalities to give better assistance to immigrants. The establishment of a Pennsylvania Commission for Immigrants, similar to one in New York, also was under debate, as was the creation of an institute in Philadelphia with functions like those of the Castle Garden State Institute in New York, for the benefit and protection of immigrants of different nationalities. In January 1885, Minister Frey proposed a Swiss Central Bureau for procuring employment for Swiss nationals. Agreement in principle was asserted, but local pursuit of the matter revealed 'great obstacles' due to little encouragement by employers. In this connection, it was noted, placement of our people was getting some assistance from the German Bureau of Employment.

Notice was taken by the Board in November 1886, of an agreement between France and Switzerland, whereby the French Railroads would transport Swiss emigrees of moderate means at sharply reduced rates, and this would also apply to returnees in similar circumstances. Already in 1870, the sbs arranged with the C & A RR, to 'ship' our charges to New York for \$1.00. The Annual General Assembly 1889 took cognizance of a report that the Swiss Government was organizing a Bureau of Supervision of Emigration for the control of 'Emigration Agents in Switzerland,' and to learn conditions in countries whereto Swiss generally emigrate. In the previous year, Consul Koradi announced, 7619 Swiss emigrated, which figure dropped to 7131 in 1889. No Swiss landing at this port was refused admission by the Immigration Commissioner. A 'Union of Presidents of the different Societies for the Relief of Immigrants at this Port,' was founded, to secure protection and facil-



ities by United States Federal Law. Two new bills on Immigration were before Congress 1890, 'one with rather severe conditions and hardship.' The 'Head Money' was to be increased to \$5.00, 'without directions to use at least part for the benefit and assistance to poor immigrants.' It was hoped, the bill would not be adopted.

The Grütli Society of Philadelphia 'summoned' all Swiss associations of Philadelphia to a 'Grand Celebration' on August 2, 1891, of the 600th Anniversary of the foundation of the Swiss Federal Government (respective the foundation of the first Constitution of the Swiss Government), which the directors approved, though 'not in corpore.' They also concurred with the assessment of every member in the several organizations of 25¢ as guarantee. When a profit of \$502.00 was produced, the \$20.00 were refunded, while the proceeds were laid at interest, for future use.

Up to 1896, the directors personally attended to the collection of dues, but then concluded that it had become too cumbersome a task due to the widely dispersed membership. The job was assigned to John F. Volet. As reward he was to get  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the dues from new members, and 10% on old bills.

One Herman Alfred Streuli died at Plainfield, N.J. in February 1897, and left the sbs a legacy of \$1000.00. Having 'long been a member of the Society,' he probably is identical with the A. Streuli who became a member of the Board 1865, and officiated as Treasurer for 1868. The name disappeared from the records after 1869, his last year as director.

In spring 1898, because of the bank crisis, Secretary Ragatz was looking around for mortgages as safer investments than bank deposits. Finding nothing, his offer was accepted to keep the available cash for two months, with 4% interest. Two months later, when a mortgage matured, \$1500 were to be invested either in U.S. Bonds 'or other valuable papers, as recommended by the Drexel Bank.'

Albert Streuli left for Switzerland in 1900. His donation of \$1000.00 to the Society prompted the President's comment that it was the duty of every member to give as liberally as possible, and to increase the membership by inviting friends to join. At the same time, once more a movement was in progress trying to consolidate the international benevolent societies, to organize a system and get views of delegates of various organizations, from which much benefit was expected.

The system for compensation to the collector was amended 1904. He was now to receive \$20.00 annually, payable quarterly.

The minutes for May 31, 1904, record a gift of \$1378.12 from the firm of Schaefer & Koradi (book store).

The U.S. Treasury Bonds 1877/97, 4%, of which the sbs had 24, were recalled in the fall of 1905. They were to bring \$105  $\frac{1}{8}$  per hundred. A list of available mortgages was scrutinized. The respective locations were not considered as favorable. But the home of a member, Emanuel Vogt, in Ambler, worth better than \$10,000, was approved for a mortgage of \$5000.00, at 5%, for five years. To raise the additional cash needed, 3 shares each of North American and Alliance Insurance were to be sold, and the balance withdrawn from the psfs deposit.

Efforts continued in Congress during 1905, to restrict immigration, but were as yet 'without material results.' There was a Conference of Charities and Correction at Horticultural Hall in May 1906, but there is no report on achievements.

One Johann Eschmann, St. Louis, Mo., left \$1600.00 to various Swiss Benevolent Societies throughout the country. Philadelphia's share was \$125.00. Taxes imposed against the sbs were lifted 1913.

The collector of dues is dispensed with 1916. Notices of dues are henceforth handled by mail. The sum of \$1300.00 was invested in Swiss Federal Mobilization Loan Bonds. In 1919, there is an investment of \$500.00 in the 5th Liberty Loan. The sum of \$50.00 was bequeathed to the Society in memory of Mathias Hefti (1928), who had been a member since 1874. And the brothers J. H. and R. Gallati, who held \$2900.00 worth of Swiss Club Bonds, gave them to the sbs. This face value boosted the assets at that time, however, in 1933, they had to be scaled down to \$26.54, with a resulting loss of \$2873.46.

For the period 1915/46, there were legacies from C. Maron; Theo J. Goldschmid; Gottlieb Roth; Caspar Becker; John H. Gallati; Marie E. Hefti; Albert Peter; H. Giger; Jennie Miehle; Pia Lena Fuchs. In 1948, rents and interest produced \$1330.75, and there was a legacy of \$500.00 from Mr. Theodor Ammann. The sale of a property in 1950, realized \$5021.32. Legacies from Dr. Emil Bindschedler, Mrs. Margaretha K. Schell, Frieda Stebler, helped the cause along 1953/55. When Mr. Robert J. Freitag passed away 1958, with a membership of 57 years, we received \$1000.00 in



his memory, and the year following the very generous gift of \$5000.00 by Mr. and Mrs. A. Bart-schi is recorded, as well as \$100.00 from the late Charles Autenrieth.

The membership fluctuations, of course, also affected the income from dues. For many years, there is no actual statement of membership, which is, of course, not totally reflected by dues paid, nor do we know of early established minimums. It is certain, however, that contributions and gifts were often larger and more frequent than now. Comparable figures in the early reports up to 1875 indicate considerable changes up and down, both in contributions and assistance rendered. It must be assumed that there always were a number of delinquents, rarely mentioned in the minutes, any time, even when such names were ultimately removed from the records. Only since the printed annual reports contain membership lists could the actual gain and loss be established in this department. An endeavor has been made to construct a record for every member since 1860. But, aside of removals without report, spelling of last names at variances are confusing enough to prevent positive identification in every instance.

For the purposes of this condensed report, membership and assistance rendered are here brought together. Another has first been prepared, following the history of the Society in chronological sequence, which treatment is preferable, containing greater details, with background comments to explain the changing times and conditions, which are here held to a minimum.

From the initial 34 names, the membership dropped to 25 by 1865, contributions still averaging \$5.90 per member. In the latter year, lodging tickets make their appearance, and inquiry was made with the 'Industrial Home,' to send there occasionally needy Swiss overnight. Also membership of Americans, some of them 'highly influential in various position in Society,' is gratefully acknowledged, and 'Lady Members were received with great demonstration of approval.' The hard times dug into the treasury. Already for February 1866, 55 cases, with \$114.00 were reported. The charges for bath, supper, bed, breakfast for our destitute at the 'Nurses' Home' and 'Industrial Home' were 40¢. Because of the continuing excessive demands during that summer, the Board resolved that single men and those 'in the country for some time' and in good health, were to be

eliminated from assistance. Solicitor Dittman received thanks for 'rescuing from punishment' a Swiss 'accused and condemned innocently of a criminal offense.' It was deplored that, 'notwithstanding the spirited interest' of the members, 'benefactions were small in amount as compared with those of larger Societies, particularly our older sister society in New York.' It was at this time that it was resolved 'to register the names of the native places and cantons of those aided, and to appeal to the Governments of those Cantons which were largely represented by applicants, for a yearly contribution.'

The Annual General Assembly 1867, at 'Muller's,' 341 North 4th, took cognizance of the outbreak of Yellow Fever in the South, the Society taking a 'leading part in alleviating misery of our countrymen in those States.' One may deduce that a collection was made to supplement \$67.60 from the treasury, representing the first 'flagrant' case of disregarding the established policy to assist only Swiss near at hand. It was a noteworthy precedent, and the Society never again shirked compassionate aid in calamities far and wide.

To conserve the funds for meritorious cases, the Board decided in January 1868, not to give assistance for treatment of 'immoral diseases.' The first Life Member was recorded in October 1868, in the person of John Jordan. The same meeting reacted negatively to a suggestion from the sbs in Boston, to exchange the names of unworthy applicants, and looked for a home for a nine-year-old boy. The Annual Report for 1868 came up with 102 paid-up members, and assistance rendered in 261 cases.

The Swiss streams and lakes went on a rampage in spring 1869. A letter of appreciation from the Federal Council was read in June, acknowledging the 'last remittance' of 4000 francs, with a total of 17,695 francs collected by the Society's committee in this area.

The end balance moved up into four digits for the first time in 1869, even with assistance to 370, averaging \$1.50 per case. And there were noteworthy donations of food (Kiefer), shelter, medicaments, medical attention, and work obtained in some instances. Dr. Dwight suggested that a bed be retained in one hospital as 'a great comfort to the suffering Swiss,' but Mr. Koradi expected this to be beyond our means. The French Society for Mutual Aid received thanks of the sbs for generous assistance rendered that year, with expression of hope that this collaboration may endure.



A record number of applicants received succor in 1870, with many others dismissed. Among the latter were non-Swiss, unworthy people, single men, who had to 'give way' to women and children. Still others received private assistance, and some were given transportation to New York.

One Mr. Schmidt, 203 Quarry Street, offered meals for 15¢ to people recommended by the sbs, and supper, lodging and breakfast for 50¢ (1871). A special meeting allocated \$100.00 to Mr. Koradi for quick transfer to the most needy in Chicago, Consul Endriss reporting that most Swiss there lost everything in the conflagration, and were grateful for any help.

The Meeting of February 1872 took notice of the prevalent smallpox, with increased demands for help from the Society. The 'Old Men's Home,' it was revealed 1873, requested \$150.00 to admit a person. This was considered too much for the man in question, 'too uncertain a character,' but another boarding and lodging house was located for him. The President's Report for that year emphasized the 'monetary crisis' and considerable 'stoppage in business,' which were bound to tax the Society heavily. Indeed, assistance rendered jumped to 622 cases, with \$786.45, which records were to be broken anew only two years hence. At least, the membership too had risen to 116, which record was not upset until 1922.

In 1876, Bernhard Speiser offered meals for 5¢, 10¢, 15¢ for needy Swiss. In and around Philadelphia, between 4000 and 5000 francs were collected to help the victims of inundations in Switzerland, with the 'Swiss Centennial Headquarters Society' splendidly collaborating.

Asked to join the Winkelried Foundation, President Koradi opined in November 1877, the sbs could not join in a body, but the low 'fees and dues' for life insurance were attractive to individuals. The year was called one of 'extra urgency,' with a 'dull state of business.' There had been many young Swiss among the applicants, while, on the other hand, contributions fell short.

An appeal from New Orleans (1878), for relief to the awful consequences of the Yellow Fever in Louisiana, was answered with a check for \$100.00. There was a consistent loss in members, now at 72, with assistance still high, with 572 cases, \$695.70, or almost \$10.00 per member. But there was enough side-income to close the books with a gain of \$335.67. The members were requested to notify the Society of employment opportunities. And gratefully acknowledged were gratuitous ser-

vices of the physicians, Drs. J. Schwartz, Jos. F. Koerper, G. Winkler, E. Dwight; of the apothecaries Henry Cramer, L. Koch and E. Heming; the solicitors and legal advisers E. T. Whitman, F. Ditman and J. G. Rosengarten.

To reciprocate favors of the German nationality group, some underprivileged German children were invited to the Christmas Party 1879, the gifts consisting mostly of clothing.

The membership was encouraged to contribute funds for decorating Tell's Chapel on Lake Uri. The collection brought 260 francs.

Note was taken at the Annual General Assembly of 1881, of the larger numbers of immigrants, Swiss and others. Many were young, robust men, and good workers, but totally ignorant of English. For the first time in many years, the Society sustained a loss, amounting to \$224.63. The unusual number of applications from destitute immigrants had the treasury almost depleted by February 1881. St. Mary's and the German Hospital reported caring for 'large numbers of Swiss' that year, and asked for contributions. The applications remained many, the funds low, the dues slow. The October Meeting constituted a Committee of Relief for victims of the Elm Landslide (Tschingelnberg), also several floods, to collect funds from Swiss and other friends. The response was 'hearty and liberal,' Consul Koradi reported at the General Meeting 1882, producing over \$1800.00, for which he brought thanks from the Federal Government and the people.

For some time the Directors were occupied with the case of three Swiss, convicted to 15 months in the Western Penitentiary under the Tramp Act in Lebanon County. Solicitor Rosengarten's report was unfavorable, and the matter was dismissed. Another legal case developed almost simultaneously. In this case the man was committed to the Eastern Penitentiary for 14 years, 8 months, for a serious offense in Adams County. He claimed innocence. Mr. Oberer's preliminary investigation was encouraging, and Solicitor Rosengarten was put on the case, who engaged another attorney in Harrisburg. An appeal was made to other Swiss societies to help defray the costs, with the sbs willing to assume one-third. A pardon failed in June, but in December the man's release was effectuated, prompting Governor John F. Hartranft of Pennsylvania, a member, to convey his appreciation for the Society's successful effort, in which, however, he himself had taken an active interest.



When the United Silk Weavers of Paterson, N.J., applied for assistance in April, 1883, to tie them over their strike, the directors found such aid to be beyond their province. But the following month, an appeal from New York, to contribute to the Swiss House which was to be founded, the Board came through with \$100.00. This was partly in recognition for the collaboration of our sister society in New York in numerous instances, relieving us of many cases. Also, application was made to the Pennsylvania Institute for the Deaf and Dumb, Philadelphia, for the admission of a 13-year-old girl with those afflictions. She was declined as 'not a proper subject,' but help was obtained for her from the Training School for feeble-minded Children in Delaware County.

When in 1885, New York urged further contributions to their Swiss Home, the Board granted another \$50.00, noting that the Society was relieved of some charges, who were admitted at that home. A conflagration destroyed much of Gross Fetan in the Lower Engadin in the fall of 1885. The appeal for help was referred to 'people of the Grisons as proper parties to make a collection,' and there is no report on results obtained.

A collection on behalf of the Winkelried Foundation, benefitting 'wounded defenders of their country and their families,' made during the summer of 1886, yielded \$160.00.

For the first time in four years, there was again a small surplus (\$131.24) over expenditures. The assistance had jumped to \$825.81 for 905 cases in 1883; \$776.25 (961) in 1884; \$669.00 (914) in 1885. Now it was down to \$503.40 (667), and the book balance stood at \$4156.91. The membership fluctuated in the eighties.

The workers of Belgram & Meyer, Paterson, N.J., sent \$51.05 in September 1887, supplemented by \$61.16 from 'sundry' Swiss in that town, collected for the workers of Zug, which had suffered damages to the extent of 1 million francs from an inundation. The local collection reached \$540.00 by later November. The sbs, Chicago, asked for a Black List of 'unworthy and malicious applicants.' Philadelphia judged it impractical and injurious. It was agreed, however, to notify other Benevolent Societies in 'flagrant cases.'

Three exceptionally sad cases came up in September 1888. A family from Bethlehem arrived with very little means on its way to Switzerland, and received \$10.00. A woman took care of five grand-children while her son-in-law was hospitalized for eleven weeks. The sbs contributed \$4.00

monthly toward her rent. An old, infirm couple had long been helped by our Mr. Kuehne. By the time they were admitted to the 'Little Sisters of Charity', the woman died. A collection for the flood victims in Uri produced \$656.65.

Disaster struck Johnstown, Pa. on May 31, 1889. A letter of June 24, read to the directors on the 27th, told of 111 resident Swiss there. The inundation, caused by the bursting of the large reservoir, took the life of G. Voegtli. Sixty-four lost everything, and the others sustained damages. Subscriptions from all the Swiss in the country were sought. By July 31, \$296.50 had been collected here, and the Swiss Government sent 5000 francs.

Refusing able young men, or holding them short in 1889, held the cases of assistance down to 580, with \$512.00.

A collection was approved in June 1890, for the sufferers from 'Fire and Water at Gampelen, Tiefenkastel, Broc, Rütli' (Rütimoos, St. Gl.), as well as for the Tell Monument at Altdorf. By the end of December, \$332.75 were raised for those victims and \$76.25 for the monument. Locally, President Koradi commented at the General Assembly 1891, the year was about the same as 1889, but the receipts shrunk. Most of the applicants were farm-hands, let out in winter.

There were more disasters in Switzerland in 1891, with heavy losses caused by fire and water, prompting Minister de Claparède to appeal for help for Meiringen (completely destroyed), Rebstein, Ladix and Scamischo. Moreover, a railroad accident at Münchenstein took a toll of almost 100 people, and there was another at Zollikofen. A general depression was noted, except for the farmers, who reaped bumper crops. There was the usual, generous response.

In April 1892, the German Society thanked for six orders of coal filled by the sbs. An appeal from Swiss in Hamburg, Germany, where the Cholera raged, was rejected on the grounds of distance. At the General Assembly 1893 it was noted that the City Mission helped with groceries and coal for several women with children.

The home governments raised their contributions for 1894 to a total of 750 francs. It was by far the worst year for the Society, processing 1122 cases with \$821.50.

In 1895, a Swiss in Idalia, Colorado, asked for help to local Swiss farmers to buy seeds. Investigation with the county clerk brought word that there were nine Swiss families. The assistance



received from other Swiss societies was not enough. The directors allocated \$10.00 from the coffers, and \$1.00 each out of their own pockets. Assistance was given to a neighborhood movement to get a Swiss couple into a home. The 'Samariter Herberge,' a society, offered bed, bath, coffee for 10¢. Tickets worth \$3.00 were bought.

From the minutes of May 31, 1899, we learn that Mrs. George Hungerbuehler had been dispensing 'assistance money.' As she was selling her business, she wanted to be discharged and Mr. John Volet took over temporarily.

While the Minute Books gave us 'End Balances' for the years 1879/87, these were then omitted until 1902. The membership had dropped to 68 in 1892, in 1899 again stood at 82. For that year, the lowest number of cases since 1879 is recorded with 502, disbursing only \$381.28, reflected by the highest gain since 1883, \$226.86. There was, Mr. Koradi commented at the Annual General Assembly, January 30, 1900, a decrease in immigration, and improved business conditions, while there also was a 'great demand for volunteers in the southern wars.' The applicants in 1899 had consisted mostly of elderly people. Assistance in 1902 dropped further to \$385.00 for 448 cases; the membership stood at 84, and the books were closed with \$6771.93 in the Treasury.

In Willow Springs, Mo., a Swiss father of five, aged 2½ to 10, lost his wife in childbirth. He had a small farm. The crops had failed. His application for help was endorsed by the mayor. Consul Buff in St. Louis 'partly confirmed' the man's situation, and the Board sent \$5.00.

The year 1903 had started out well, President Koradi remarked at the AGA, January 27, 1904, but a sharp increase in assistance occurred later. 'The interruption and discontinuation of many establishments may continue for months,' he opined. The Swiss in the USA were generally well off and in demand for their abilities and general knowledge. And the immigrants were mostly energetic and enterprising young men, seeking a larger field of operation. Elderly people were now those most affected by the reverses. As the new year went on, business did further deteriorate. Assistance was on the increase. 'Several old, some crippled, men have been aided—not enough to keep them.' Mr. Koradi advocated more liberal help. Several should be placed in homes to get proper care. Assistance rendered went up to \$518.25, with 642 cases. And business was anticipated to stagnate into 1905, due to presidential elections.

'No hat was passed around' for contributions to the Schwyzer Kantonalschuetzenfest (April, 1905), and the year ended in routine fashion, as did 1906. On February 5, 1907, C. A. Baumgartner was elected as Distributor, 'an old resident, knowing the Swiss, with more time than most others.' He was a member since 1889, elected a director at the previous AGA, and could arrange days and hours to receive applicants to suit himself.

An elderly couple was found to be more or less crippled, he from a trolley accident in the fall of 1906. They had signed away further claims on the traction company. They needed a home, which would cost about \$400.00. The Philadelphia Society, their church and the sbs each pledged \$50.00, if the balance could be raised. The sbs contributed \$25.00 toward a new leg for a butcher. Another woman, earning a little money sewing, got assistance toward acquisition of a steel jacket she needed for support. When a widower in Bucks County asked for \$40.00 to send his three children to relatives in Switzerland, he was advised to apply to the Bucks County Almshouse to take care of his off-spring, as they were born here. Another couple was assisted throughout the year of 1907, but their condition worsened, and he died in fall. The Society agreed to pay \$2.00 monthly toward her rent. The total cases for the year remained at 393, requiring \$374.28. There were 99 members, and the assets rose to a net worth of \$7982.50.

The applications, however, took a sharp upturn in December 1907, the General Assembly 1908 was told, and they were to soar to 792 in the new year, due to 'a severe money stringency.'

The Society was willing to help one party with \$15.00, if enough money could be raised otherwise to send him to Switzerland. Very sick with TB, it was not considered wise to leave him with his large family. He ultimately was taken to a sanatorium in White Haven, and help extended to his family.

Consul Walther started as Distributor in October 1909. Dr. Kindig diagnosed the sickness of a Swiss patient as spinal consumption. He had been in this country 24 years, since 1900 in Philadelphia. A butcher, he was then a convalescent from typhoid, and suffered with rheumatism. Wanting to return to Switzerland, he was given \$5.00. Another man, who had received \$3.50 from the sbs in the years 1895/1905, turned out to be a 'professional beggar.' When he died (before December 1909), he left \$14,000.00. But most of the



482 cases assisted in 1909 went to elderly people.

The sbs New York was petitioned in May 1910, to take our destitute who need a home. The reply declared that it would be unconstitutional, but they would try to change it. A later communication said that they are limited to a 30 mile radius, and to acquiesce requests from Philadelphia would create a precedent.

Cloudbursts in Switzerland, 1910, caused disastrous floods. The sum of \$200.00 was allocated at once from the treasury, of which \$50.00 à fond perdu, the balance to be covered, if possible, by a collection, which netted about \$400.00. This was all the more appreciated, since there had been two bad years. The Swiss in all of Pennsylvania contributed \$1000.00.

On the occasion of the 50th Anniversary, Mr. Koradi pointed out that during his tenure as president for 48 years, the Society had disbursed \$25,000 of assistance money, probably with thousands more, given in kind by generous benefactors collaborating with the sbs.

Funeral expenses for the destitute, often provided by the Society, sometimes with refunds from insurances or appreciative relatives, still generally ran only about \$20.00.

Also 1911 was quite uneventful. The Board gave \$30.00 to the Society for Organizing Charity in appreciation of aid received, and \$5.00 were approved for the Chapin Memorial Home for Aged Blind.

Financially, 1912 was the best year for the Society in a long time. There were \$318.00 in dues, and nearly \$700.00 in other donations, while assistance rendered dropped to 273 cases, with \$446.47, and the book balance reached \$9677.90, for a gain of \$523.58.

The Consulate was now authorized to spend \$20.00 to \$25.00 for funerals of worthy, destitute Swiss (1913). On appeal from the Swiss Consul in Cincinnati, \$100.00 was assigned to the flood victims out west. \$25.00 were donated to the German Lutheran Home in Mt. Airy. A Mr. Herzog became Distributor. One charge had assigned her insurance, worth \$85.00 to the sbs. Her funeral was paid from that fund, from which \$25.00 were also used for the burial of another Swiss, who had succumbed after an operation at Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, but who had resided here, and was reported to be destitute. An old lady was helped with \$25.00 to get into the German Lutheran Home, supplementing \$179.00 of her own. But she was reported to be 'a trouble-

some party,' who was clamoring to get out again. She soon did, and refund was made in November.

Also the year 1913 ending favorably, with a gain of \$484.44, and assistance still down to 273 cases, the Society resolved to desist from further assistance from Swiss cantonal governments, as previously reported, except in specific cases. Mr. Herzog was willing to stay on as Distributor, with a remuneration of \$8.00, but Theo Bauer took over, free of charge.

Two Swiss were found in the House of Correction in 1914. Upon their release, the sbs helped them to get to New York, and the Swiss Home reported them as 'bad characters.'

There were 102 members listed for 1914, but only 72 were paid up. Fortunately, interest and gifts brought almost \$500.00. Assistance climbed to 497 cases, with \$635.46, and the books closed with a deficit of \$385.19, as there also was a donation of \$500.00 to the Swiss War Relief, which was followed up with another \$250.00 in 1915, which year terminated satisfactorily for the sbs. The paid-up membership jumped to 105 (\$385), with direct assistance down to 397 cases (\$440.10).

This department remained uneventful for some time. President Vuilleumier reported to the Annual General Assembly, January 29, 1919, 'that assistance provided was almost exclusively to very old, the sick and crippled,' with 211 cases (\$321.50). Membership was on the rise again, with \$409.00 paid in dues, and a gain of \$710.65 recorded for 1918.

The Board Meeting of April, 1919, allocated \$750.00 for Swiss War Sufferers. In August, the 'Verein geschaedigter Auslandschweizer' got \$100.00, and Messrs. Kaufmann and Ammann were designated as a committee to start a collection, which was to net \$220.00. By the year's end, there were 126 members on the books. Aside of \$409.45 (201 cases) paid out in assistance, indicating higher allocations because of rising costs and readier funds, the Society had responded to an appeal from Minister Dr. Hans Sulzer, with above-recorded results. Extraordinary income is not stated, but the books show a gain of \$969.89, balancing at \$12,355.10, according to the Minute Book.

In March 1920, a list was established for contributions to help the Swiss who lost everything in the Russian Revolution. An appeal from a Swiss in Germany in October, produced a food draft for \$15.00, and the Schweizerverein Stuttgart received 2000 Marks. The Swiss in Russia re-



ceived \$500.00, and an equal sum was allocated for German children.

Another \$100.00 was assigned to the Swiss in Russia in 1921, tabling at the same time requests from the Stauffacher Verein and the Stuttgarter Swiss Society.

Hard times were stressed at the Annual General Assembly, January 26, 1922, resulting in much excess labor, and bringing 24 applications for assistance from young immigrants in 1921. Living expenses 'still' were above pre-war level, with prospects of improvements in 1922, though not assured. The membership stood well with 110 paid up (\$395.00). While assistance was given in only 246 cases, the sum soared to \$749.00, highest on record since 1884. The gain for the year remained at a scant \$58.15. Assistance was given to still fewer people in 1922, but somewhat greater allowances are observed, and the Treasurer's records would, no doubt, shed light on the circumstance that, in spite of reported extra-revenue, the balance dropped to \$11,353.50.

The records for 1923 reveal a donation of \$100.00 to the Relief Fund for Swiss Authors. Assistance had been rendered to 44, with \$684.00, 25 of the charges getting monthly allowances. There were 123 members.

To a plea from the Swiss Government (1924), for Relief for the people of Someo (Ticino), which was covered by a landslide, the directors responded with a donation of 500 francs. There are very few cases in which money was lent in amounts greater than \$20.00 or \$25.00. The integrity of Jacob Graber must have been well-known, for he was granted \$100.00 to bring his family from Switzerland, agreeing to pay back \$1.00 a week. Commensurate with the higher living costs, the monthly allowances were mostly \$5.00 instead of the earlier \$2.00, or \$10.00 instead of \$8.00, and total assistance climbed for the first time to \$1068.00 (230 cases), yet still leaving a gain of \$306.37.

At their meeting in February 1926, the directors took no action for the benefit of survivors of an avalanche at Bosco (Ticino), as the circumstances were not clear, but \$20.00 were allowed in April. A man of 80 was assisted to get into the Home of the Little Sisters of the Poor, and part of the funeral expenses for him were paid in February 1927. There were now almost regular donations of \$25.00 each every June to the Lutheran Orphanage, the Protestant Home for the Aged, and the Little Sisters of the Poor, all places which had been helpful on occasions, and might serve again.

Except for a donation of \$50.00 for the flood victims in the Grisons, the directors had few special cases to handle in 1927. But there was a family in Westfield, Pa., left destitute by the father, who tried to get them deported to Switzerland. They were assisted several times until February 1928.

An exceptional case concerned a veteran of World War I. It had its inception in 1924, and he was to remain a charge off and on until 1941. Consul Knup got Congressman Darrow interested in the man, and got the assurance that everything would be done to 'render justice.' But he was not very coöperative, and at one time was reported to be well enough 'to peddle again.' When Vice Consul Rohrbach took over, the case occupied him monthly until April 1941, when he reported work had been found for the man's sons. When they failed to report, the case was dismissed. For comparison, a case in Allentown broke out in February 1930, to terminate only with the man's demise in March 1952. After he lost his job, he never seemed to have found work again, and his meager savings were used up. Throughout the long years of assistance rendered him, he probably never once failed to acknowledge receipt of it with a letter or card.

No money was assigned from the Treasury for a bust of Henry Dunant in the new Red Cross Building in Washington (1930). But the President's report for that year indicated a shrinking membership. It was to be the first step on a downward trend. There had been 132 paid-up members (\$607.00) in 1929. Now there were 120, still with \$522.00. By 1933, there were only 80 paid-up members, not to rise above the 100-mark again until 1955, with a corresponding decrease in dues taken in. On the other hand, by 1932 the assistance rendered reached a record of \$1235.00 (372 cases), yet, thanks to sound investments and special gifts now and then, deficits were held to the years 1929, 1930, 1932, 1933, 1940, 1947 and 1949. Assistance too dropped gradually to an all-time low of \$160.00 in 1944, to jump back to \$1105.00 in 1947, and \$1090.50 in 1948, with a new decline to \$180.00 in 1953. The records from 1932 on emphasize new uses to which the funds of the SBS were put, and the Board's actions always gained the approbation of the General Assemblies, even if, sometimes, some gifts were first put under discussion, which is as it should be.

The 'Verband für das Blindenwesen, St. Gallen,' benefitted to the amount of \$25.00 in June 1931.



The one really bad year, the worst in the Society's history, was 1933, when the Swiss Club Bonds from Mr. Gallati had to be written off. If 1940 produced another decrease by \$942.46, at least it was caused by the pressing needs at home, when \$1000.00 were donated to the Swiss War Relief Fund, which proves what can happen, and how soon we would have to tap capital funds in case of recurrence of dire necessity.

One of our compatriots was long helped by a private family. In 1934, he had to be placed in the Shelter for Homeless Men, and helped with a small monthly allowance, reporting in 1945 that he was getting along with a pension. He disappeared in 1956. Mr. Rohrbach found him after some search at Wills Eye Hospital. While endeavors were being made to place him in a home a year later, he died.

In 1936, \$50.00 were allocated for the relief of Swiss victims at Johnstown, Pa., and an equal sum for others, through the American Red Cross. The decrease in demands on the treasury for local needs justified the action particularly, President Reichling held. The State Pension had begun to reach some of our old beneficiaries. Others had obtained work and could support themselves. 'Very meager immigration of young Swiss' continued. He was not very optimistic about the general situation. 'If business in general keeps on improving, as we all hope, there is no doubt that we will see more young Swiss again, in the near future, particularly as the conditions in our Home Country seem to be getting from bad to worse. As long as the frictions between the leading European countries cannot be ironed out, there is only faint hope that the general anxiety can be lifted, and business improved.' But also 1937 goes down in the annals of the SBS as 'uneventful.'

A particularly pathetic case was brought before the Board by Vice Consul Rohrbach in February 1938: He found a Swiss woman in deplorable condition as virtual prisoner of a half-brother. She wanted to go home, and credit up to \$150.00 was granted. But in 1939, efforts were made to place her with the Little Sisters of the Poor, as the best solution, and a monthly allowance granted until she would benefit from the Old Age Pension. In 1940, she was boarding with a private family. To move her belongings, it cost \$3.50! She was brought to Mrs. Hodecker, a former nurse, who also cared for a Mr. Gyger, with the help of \$50.00 monthly from the SBS.

At the AGA of January 31, 1940, President

Reichling commented: '. . . we may look forward to an appeal for financial assistance from our beloved mother country before long, in which case our Treasury as well as our individual members will be called upon to help carry the enormous financial burden, which dear old Switzerland has to endure on account of this new uncalled-for war in Europe.' Already in February, Consul Rohrbach advised the directors that the Legation had opened a list for contributions to the Swiss Relief Fund, for which \$500.00 were allocated at once, then duplicated two months later, when Consul Rohrbach mentioned the dire, urgent needs. Dr. Carl Bruggmann, Minister of Switzerland in Washington, expressed the appreciation of the Swiss Government for the Society's quick and generous contributions.

The enumeration of cases receiving direct assistance was dropped from the Annual Reports about that time (1941). The low marks of 77 members are registered for 1947 and 1953. Since then the membership went slowly but steadily up. For 1942, there are on record: \$25.00 to the American Red Cross; \$100 each to the Refugee Children in Switzerland, the International Red Cross, and the Swiss Soldiers' Relief Fund. In 1943, donations were made to the American Red Cross, the International Red Cross, the Motta Fund and the Swiss Refugees. The Motta Fund was oversubscribed, and a Foundation created with the surplus, for the benefit of large, needy families, in the spirit of the illustrious deceased.

Direct assistance remained in low figures in 1944, with new appropriations for the American, International and Swiss Red Cross, and to the Swiss National Donation.

March 2, 1945, was set for the Swiss Evening at Town Hall, organized by the Joint Committee of the Philadelphia Swiss Societies, as benefit performance for the International and American Red Cross, with consent of the latter, since we very strongly felt the International Red Cross deserved support too. It was a good presentation, which yielded \$2103.20, equally divided between the two charities, and our effort earned us a Certificate of Merit. The above figure represents total revenue. The expenses, amounting to \$1267.42 were fully covered by donations by all Swiss societies and generous contributions from businesses and individuals.

A member of the colony for some years had to be committed to the Norristown State Hospital in April 1945, where he has been a patient ever since.



His is probably the most time-consuming case Consul Rohrbach ever encountered, and for long periods his illness made him difficult and irrational. Be it also recorded that another member, Miss Elise Spuehler, a nurse and resident at Norristown, has given much time and effort in the case, giving Mr. Rohrbach at least some relief with it. The unfortunate patient was long considered incurable. Yet, with the development of new treatments and medicaments, he has lately made a remarkable come-back. He has been helped throughout these years to the best of our ability and in the interest of the patient.

Direct assistance was once again on the increase in 1946 (77 cases; \$684.00), and special contributions were made to the American Red Cross, the Swiss National Fund, for the Swiss Abroad, General Guisan Fund, totalling \$200.00. Still the books closed with an increase of \$313.21, for total assets of \$13,745.21. In 1947, donations went to the American Red Cross, the Swiss National Fund, and the Pestalozzi Foundation, with reduced revenues, creating a loss of \$548.46.

A plea for assistance to help a man to travel around the world got, of course, a negative reply, but 111 cases of assistance took \$1030.50 in 1948. Consul Rohrbach led a discussion on the problems of repatriating Swiss citizens from the war-torn countries, and the sbs responded favorably to the idea as a humanitarian undertaking and task of solidarity. The Consul's question, if the Society might reconsider help from the Federal Government, was answered in the negative.

Former Consul Kunz (in Germany) visited with the directors at their monthly meeting in February 1949, on his mission in the United States to raise \$20,000 to finance a committee to exert pressure on the Federal Government and the Inter-Allied Commission for the release of funds to destitute Swiss in European countries. About half-a-million francs were tied up, representing German investments in Switzerland, seized or tied up by the Allies after the war. Half of the raised funds was intended to re-establish Swiss. J. c. Schoop was charged to head a committee soliciting contributions from the resident Swiss (the Joint Committee had had to be abandoned), and the collection produced \$841.00. Assistance to the needy still stood at \$906.00 that year, and, without exceptional contributions, the year ended with a deficit of \$284.71. The membership, now at 90, was to decrease steadily until 1953 to a low of 75. Fortunately, the needs for 1950 dropped

to \$655.00, permitting to recoup \$173.88 on the books. The next year was even better, with assistance down to \$258.55, and with the sale of a property, net worth of the Society went up by \$3111.65.

A number of special cases of recipients in the future years could be enumerated, but the pattern of assistance rendered has been established. However, it developed that where we were giving regular monthly support, state agencies would deduct such amounts from pension grants. This could not be our intention, and the directors decided to change our donations to more practical gifts as needs were ascertained, with direct cash at irregular intervals. Certainly, pensions in themselves were, and often still are, too small in themselves to provide bare necessities to destitute people, and the purpose of our assistance was meant to supplement the state contributions.

Direct assistance in 1952 amounted to \$228.29, and \$395.00 were assigned to four local homes and the Red Cross. The 81 members (there also were nine life-members) paid dues totalling \$413.00, and the books closed just about even, with \$16,257.60.

In 1953, direct assistance took a further drop, with special donations to three local homes, \$200.00 for the Swiss flood victims in Holland, and \$50.00 to the Swiss National Fund, the books showing a gain of \$570.37.

Direct assistance in 1954 required \$420.00, and \$50.00 each went to the Swiss National Fund, the Zwissig Memorial, with \$115.00 in smaller sums to other worthy causes, still leaving an increase of capital of \$1730.38. Perhaps because of an appeal made at the AGA 1955, to recruit new members, this department showed a gain of 25 for the year, to 106. Assistance requirements remained low, and contributions were allocated to the three 'regular' local homes, the Swiss National Fund, and the United Fund, for a gain of \$1178.40, to \$19,736.75.

The 109 members paid in \$500.00 in 1956, and besides the three homes, there were donations to the Swiss National Fund, the Kinderdorf Trogen, the United Fund, and for Hungarian Relief.

As the President reported at the end of 1957, for the sbs the year was one of 'business as usual.' Still, there was another gain in membership to 114, and the assets went up to \$20,244.37. And the 99th year recorded \$404.70 in direct relief, and \$455.00 to other various meritorious organizations and institutions, and there were 141 paying mem-



bers on the books, among them seven life-members. The net worth of the sbs rose to \$27,567.96.

Up to 1879, we have some figures only for seven years of that period, in round figures, assistance rendered amounting to about \$3300.00. On this basis, a conservative estimate for the 19 years might be about \$9000.00, with gifts from businesses and professionals, in coal, victuals, medications, medical services not included, and declining to zero in the last century. Again in round figures, direct assistance from 1879 to 1959 inclusive ran about \$45,500, and other donations about \$17,000, for about \$72,500.00 in cash donations to the needy and other worthy causes since 1860. In 1879, reference is made to a booklet, paying tribute to some of the 'most energetic early members, already deceased.' Perhaps it is natural that a comparatively small membership narrows the choice in directors and officers available. However that may be, there are many in the sbs who have been 'energetic' for long periods. We will here attempt to review the minutes, yielding such information, and cite discussions on matters not involving monetary transactions.

When the Charter was revised in 1915, Sections 3, 4 and 5 were stricken off, and this reading was adopted as new Section 3:

*The Society shall be managed by a board of Directors consisting of 15 members, elected annually, of whom at least 10 shall be Natives of Switzerland. Said Directors shall elect annually from their members, a President, a Vice President, a Recording Secretary, a Financial Secretary, a Treasurer, and such additional officers as may from time to time be provided for by the by-laws.*

For 1860/62 we have only the names of the four officers: President Rudolf Koradi; Vice President C. Pénéveyre; Secretary A. H. Wirz; Treasurer C. T. Amsler (1860/61); P. J. Wildberger (1862/1867). For the years 1863/1907 there were ten directors-at-large. Four of them were assigned with the task of taking care of the needy in their respective districts.

The Annual General Assembly of January 20, 1864, was held at 'Kiefer's House,' 206 Branch Street. President Koradi was satisfied that the Society would succeed in spite of the small number of members. The operating expenses for printing amounted to \$5.50.

Eight days before the next AGA, the members were to indicate if they wanted dinner at \$1.00, with half a bottle of wine. 'A motion to make the next Election secret in the future was lost.'

For the Annual Meeting of 1865, 'Paravicini's House,' 1012 Sansom, was selected. The ensuing 'rebellion in this country' was to affect also the sbs adversely, but the President remained undeterred, and recommended steps to be taken for a charter, which, it was hoped, 'would bring greater support from home.' Enlarging of the Board to 15 was ordered at that time, but the actual number remained at 14 until 1907, as stated above. The Constitution of 1865 was to serve intact until 1915, while the by-laws were revised 1879, to make suitable adjustments in line with changed conditions. It also was resolved to assess the Board Members with a fine of 50¢, if absent from a meeting at 8:30 p.m., unless for valid reasons. With one or two exceptions, when the Board Meetings were held at Mr. Koradi's office, they took place at 'Paravicini's.'

The AGA of December 5, 1865, acknowledged hard times, which continued into 1866, and the mere token-assistance was deplored. Treasurer Wildberger commented: 'It is the desire of the Board of Directors of this Society, through a judicious management of its affairs, to secure a fund, with a yearly income, and thus to have a moderate fixed income for the future years.'

The AGA 1867 was held at 'Muller's,' 341 North 4th Street. In March 1868, the Treasurer was required to give surety. President Koradi vouched for him for the current term, and one of several directors continued to do so for many years. At the end of that fiscal year, H. Ducommun admonished the directors to 'pitch in harder' to recruit members, while P. J. Wildberger voiced an opinion which has been reechoed at intervals since: Why accumulate funds? They should be used. As Treasurer, he was 'astonished' at the 'large balance' (\$902.26). But even then President Koradi countered that recent collection of dues would soon be expended.

At the Tenth Anniversary, AGA December 6, 1870, the small deficit accrued that year was attributed to the circumstance that several cantons omitted their refunds because of 'still extant' suffering at home from the past inundations. P. J. Wildberger considered it a 'sacred duty' to acknowledge all the illustrious President had done for the Society.

On September 18, 1873, again P. J. Wildberger addressed the Board, asking to give some thought to the forthcoming Centenary of the République, and how the resident Swiss could most appropriately express the 'sympathy of the oldest for the



greatest democracy.' Later, a committee, headed by Consul Koradi, was formed, to 'consult for due congratulations from one Republique to another, via an expressive manner,' but without touching the funds of the sbs.

J. J. Yauchler started his first term as Treasurer 1873, to serve 19 years in that capacity. The Swiss Maennerchor offered to hold a concert for the benefit of the sbs, but when it was suggested that the occasion should be used to recruit more members for us, the offer was withdrawn, only to be re-instated after further consideration.

The locale for the AGA, December 15, 1874, was 'J. Bourquard's House,' 413 Locust Street. Two years later it was at the 'House of Gus. Walther,' 412 Library Street.

In November 1877, delegations from the Gruetli Verein and Swiss Maennerchor called on the Board of Directors of the sbs to discuss plans for a Swiss National Festival in 1878. The meeting had started on a sad note, official condolences being expressed to Consul Koradi in the loss of his wife.

The presence of 'Gentlemen of the Philadelphia Press' is recorded for the Annual General Assembly, December 18, 1878, held at 'Bourquard's Hall.' The Society's activities were published in the English and German-language newspapers of Philadelphia for many years and the General Meetings advertised.

The already-mentioned booklet, brought out at the time of the revision of the by-laws in 1879, said of Chas. Pénéveyre, the first Vice President (†1865), that he was 'ever ready to assist with private means where those of the Society were not sufficient.' Then there were John Mayer and Henry Ducommon, 'faithful and efficient members of the Board of Managers' and Theo Amsler, first Treasurer, who had returned to the Old Country. John F. Hartranft, the later governor of Pennsylvania, joined the sbs in 1879.

'Bloechlinger's Hall' 506 Vine Street, was the locale for the AGA of December 17, 1879. The accent was still on the 'dull times.' 'Elegant membership certificates' were ordered, particularly as a gesture toward non-Swiss subscribers, contributing 'from motives of pure charity and friendship.' Fifteen firms were listed for that year.

The next Annual Meeting was moved up to January, and the books closed with the calendar year. The Assembly of 1881 took place at John F. Volet's, 257 South 6th Street. The prospects at

home continued poor, Mr. Koradi reported, while there was optimism in the United States.

The Board Meeting of September 1881, noted the passing of President Jas. A. Garfield. In November, Vice-Consul Werner Itschner was mentioned for the first time. A year later, the Board was advised of the arrival in Washington of Minister Col. Emil Frey, and the several societies were asked to form a committee of three to discuss a reception for him. Wirz, Oberer, Péquiot were designated for the sbs. And at the next Board Meeting it was recommended that all members take part in the Bi-Centennial Celebration of Pennsylvania, October 23/26, 1882.

Delegates from all other local Swiss associations (Gruetli Verein; Schweizer Maennerchor; Swiss National Festival Society), as well as the press were present at the AGA of January 17, 1883, at which time President Koradi deplored the impetus given immigration by misleading reports from the United States. The Reception for Minister Frey, held November 22/23, 1882, is mentioned without further elaborations.

Mr. Koradi's completion of 25 years as Consul at the end of the year was celebrated with a memorial of his accomplishments, signed by the officers of the several Swiss associations, '... in appreciation of eminent services as Consul, to his fellow-countrymen, his love and patriotism for our fatherland, for ardent endeavor to elevate the Swiss Benevolent Society to a high standard and prosperous conditions, by which he acquired the love and esteem of his countrymen, Citizens of his Consular District and Representatives of foreign nations in the United States.'

In April 1883, the Maennerchor appeared at the Board Meeting, to serenade President Koradi, who responded with an eloquent address. At the end of this term, J. J. Yauchler, Jr., was presented with a 'handsome piece of Swiss Art' in appreciation of completing his 10-year tenure as treasurer. He was to stay until 1893. Julius L. Progler was a prominent member of the colony, with membership in all Swiss societies. He was memorialized by the Board in March 1884, following his demise. He had joined the sbs in 1876, and been a member of the Board since 1877.

Early in 1885, the Board took favorable notice of a letter from the 'Nordamerikanischer Grütli Bund', urging all Swiss and their societies to take part at the 'Grand National Swiss Festival,' July 9/12, 1886, at New York, celebrating the 500th Anniversary of the Battle of Sempach. Over



the signature of one G. A. Glaus, Philadelphia, there appeared in the 'Amerikanische Schweizerzeitung' for September 26, 1885, an article on 'The Swiss in Philadelphia,' complaining of their mode of business, and disapproving in 'a rather damaging manner to the sbs.' The Board Meeting of September 23, 1885, found the accusations to be unwarranted and without foundation, and so advised the 'Amerikanische Schweizerzeitung.'

August H. Wirz passed away August 3, 1886. He was one of the founders, served as Secretary until 1875, when he became Vice President, which office he held until his death.

General regret over the departure of Minister Frey was expressed in June 1888. A 'nicely bound address, signed by about 180 members of all Swiss societies, was presented to him on the 21st, at 717 Spring Garden Street.' His successor, Minister de Claparède, arrived November 12 from New York, and was 'suitably welcomed.'

The General Assembly of January 29, 1889, held at Rud. Grossmann's, 463 North 3rd Street, was advertised in the Public Ledger and the Philadelphia Record. Minister Alfred de Claparède came to Philadelphia March 25, strictly on business, but he was to be 'properly' received in June, if possible, when he would be passing through on his way to Switzerland. There is no follow-up on this report. After the meeting of November 26, the directors repaired to Caspar Büchi's Hotel, 229 North 2nd Street, to take farewell of John F. Volet, who was leaving town to open a business in New York. Since he joined the sbs in 1866, he had rendered the Society outstanding services. He was on the Board since 1870. He re-appears on the Board 1891/1904, officiating for many years as collector.

The October Meeting (1889) had taken official notice of the death of J. F. Hartranft, Governor of Pennsylvania, occurred on the 18th, and resolved:

*That while in the death of this noble man the whole community mourns the loss of a Citizen of the highest type and most sterling character, whose services in Peace & War will never be forgotten, the Members of the Swiss Benevolent Society deplore his demise, the loss of a friend and fellow-member, whose noble and effective efforts for the relief of an unfortunate Country man will forever form one of the most conspicuous features in the records of our Society. That we therefore shall always preserve for him a thankful and sacred remembrance and that we wish to express to the members of the family of*

*our deceased friend our sincere sympathy with their heavy and deplorable loss, together with our earnest wishes for their continuous welfare.*

Mr. Koradi had declared the Governor to have been 'greatly instrumental' in obtaining the release from prison of a Swiss after establishing his innocence (1882).

At the AGA of January 26, 1891, the Swiss Maennerchor presented Mr. Koradi with a 'beautifully engrossed and colorate Certificate as Honorary President.'

J. J. Yauchler resigned in April 1892, because of ill health and old age. The treasury had been in his capable hands for 19 years. He was succeeded by J. C. Hungerbuehler. G. E. Oberer had become secretary in 1877, taking over from A. Schlaginhausen. He too resigned, and the two gentlemen were celebrated with 'suitably engrossed resolutions' and gold rings. Ulrich Ammann was secretary for the next two terms.

In April 1894, a communication from the 'Patriotenbund der Schweizer in Amerika' proposed to organize all Swiss societies in the States to be at the disposition of the Swiss Government in case of war. The matter was tabled, pending reaction elsewhere, and does not re-appear.

The General Assembly, January 31, 1895, was told that Minister Chas. L. Javel was to leave Washington for Berlin on the day following, and Dr. J. B. Pioda was expected to replace him soon. The latter was to visit Philadelphia July 29/30, with a reception at Lier's Washington Place.

Treasurer J. C. Hungerbuehler resigned in September 1897, due to failing health. John H. Ragatz completed the term, and served five additional years. At the Annual Meeting of January 27, 1898, there were congratulations from Federal Councillor Emil Frey and M. de Claparède, celebrating what the secretary called '1897, one of his considerablest years as Consul—his 40th as such,' for Mr. Koradi.

A special Directors' Meeting was called for September 15, 1898, to eulogize John C. Hungerbuehler, who had passed away on the 13th. He had been a director since 1877, succeeding A. H. Wirz as Vice President in 1886 until his death, and at the same time served as Treasurer 1893/97. Mr. Itschner's resignation as Vice-Consul was approved by Washington in October.

The Directors resolved in December 1902, to defray the expenses for the General Assembly of January 27, 1903, out of their own pockets. Emphasis was on the 'continued prosperity.' Dur-



ing the proceedings of that meeting, Mr. Koradi was honored by a standing ovation, with one of the best attendances in many years.

For October 29, 1903, appears the notation that the Treasurer's Report conforms with the Secretary's. There had been no election of a financial secretary. That office was not officially recognized until 1908, inaugurated by H. c. Saalenbach. The Annual Report for 1903 was the first to be printed.

The Board Meeting of October 28, 1904, noted a wide choice available for election as directors: R. Freitag; J. Hoch; Dr. B. Kindig; Wm. Messmer; J. H. Reichling; H. c. Saalenbach; Chas. Schaeppi; Conrad Simler (Simmler); Erg. Schmid; John Thommen; Ad. Tschopp; Carl Tschopp; A. Wattenhofer. There were to be printed invitations in English for the next General Meeting, instead of just post cards, and the directors would again bear the cost. Business was anticipated to remain 'disturbed for most of the coming year, due to presidential elections.'

For the first time in years, President Koradi was absent from a Board Meeting, which, for many years now had almost always been held at his office at 4th and Wood. Unable to attend November 28, 1905, due to illness, and also vp Becker being absent, Ulrich Ammann was asked to take the chair. Mr. Koradi still had not recuperated for the Annual General Assembly, January 30, 1906, over which Mr. Becker presided. Mr. Koradi returned to the chair March 1, 1906. Mr. Saalenbach asked for notices of the Board Meetings five days in advance, but Mr. Koradi found this 'too far ahead' for him, never knowing what might come up. The year remained uneventful, but the directors were summoned to a special meeting January 14, 1907, at Math. Schmid's office, 1308 North 6th Street. 'Our old and beloved president, founder and benefactor of our Society,' Mr. Rudolf Koradi, had passed away, to be buried on the 16th, with pall bearers from the sbs. Messrs. Becker, Ragatz, Volet, Gus Walter, Schmid, Rohrer, were to have the honor.

The General Assembly, January 29, 1907, was presided over by vp Becker. Tribute was paid to the late president, who had guided the destinies of the Society in exemplary manner and with highest dedication, in profound regret and sorrow. As in some previous years, the Swiss Maennerchor offered some appropriate songs.

Mr. Caspar Becker became second president. Gus. Walther was given the vice presidency. George Hallauer stayed on as secretary, and

Math. Schmid as treasurer. The last Wednesday of each month now was set aside as meeting day. Math. Schmid offered his office for these gatherings.

The Board Meeting of September 25, 1907, took cognizance of the new Consul, Christian Walther, who, although at no time a member of the Board, invited it to meet in the future at his office in the Drexel Building, not to further impose on Mr. Schmid. He seems to have been in attendance at most meetings there. On November 27, directors Becker and Schmid were designated as representatives of the sbs, to meet with those of the other Swiss societies to organize a reception for Minister Dr. Vogel. The January Meeting noted poorer attendance by the directors since they were moved to the Drexel Building, an 'inconvenient location,' and preference was given to Mr. Schmid's office.

Mr. H. c. Saalenbach became the Society's first Financial Secretary. Also at the General Assembly of 1908, Mr. Schmid pointed out that the by-laws called for quarterly general meetings. The vote was for semi-annual gatherings.

The reception for Minister Vogel took place before the directors met in March 1908, at the Bellevue-Stratford. The semi-annual General Assembly was held at the Swiss Maennerchor Hall, attended only by 'one or two' outside the directors. The German Societies were to parade October 6, in conjunction with the dedication of the Pastorius Monument in Germantown, executed by J. Otto Schweizer. The Annual General Assembly, January 29, 1909, drew only twelve directors and six members-at-large. It was voted to hold only the regular Assemblies in the future, and when it convened January 26, 1910, at the 'Deutscher Klub', 532 North 4th, it recorded 45 present, 'inclusive 12 ladies.'

On November 6, 1910, the 50th Anniversary of the sbs of Philadelphia was commemorated at the German Club, with 60 members and 24 of their ladies present. The banquet cost \$1.25. President Becker reminisced about the history of the Society, and pointed out that during his tenure as president, Mr. Koradi had paid out \$25,000 in assistance money. Of the three surviving founder-members, Werner Itschner was present. C. Maron and A. Péquinot were too infirm.

Mr. Ulrich Ammann's office, 121 Chestnut Street, became the Society's official address in February 1911. The Corresponding Secretary, Dr. Hans Ernst, who had succeeded George Hallauer 1909, passed away suddenly in September 1912. Mr. E. Hediger served to the end of the term, and



remained in office for 10 years thereafter. Possibly since the Market Street Subway-Elevated opened in 1908, Consul Walther's office was found to be more accessible. Numerous monthly meetings had been held there recently. When he resigned in September 1913, these sessions were to be at the Swiss Maennerchor and Turnverein, which, 'for various reasons,' was not always available, and the Board turned to the German Club.

Ulrich Ammann, Treasurer since 1911, member of the Board since 1895, passed away unexpectedly in November 1913, and Math. Schmid stepped into that office pro tem. He was retained for 1914.

At the General Assembly, January 28, 1914, further contributions from the Federal and Cantonal Governments were dispensed with. In March, Dr. Chas. Vuilleumier was asked by the Legation to become Honorary Consul, but he could not do it 'for the glory,' and asked about an Expense Account, ready to take \$400.00. In May, a committee was instructed to 'ask for a Consul under the old conditions,' and if not agreeable, 'for a Consul for the Port of Philadelphia.' The Swiss Government settled in favor of Dr. Vuilleumier, then Vice President of the sbs. Only 16 members responded to a call for a special meeting in June, on which occasion President Becker is said to have pointed to a 'dispute at the last AGA, over election of directors and officers,' though conducted according to the by-laws. The offered amendments were to be properly worded by a committee consisting of Messrs. Saalenbach, Ammann, Freitag, Knup and Reichling, and submitted to Percy Wilcox, Esq., before presentation at a special meeting to be called in September, when again only 16 were present. Section Two, on the election of new members was re-phrased. The constitution of the Board and Officers was modified as already reported. Several old Sections were eliminated, condensing them into one practical paragraph. Before a final vote on December 3, 1915, the proposals were to be advertised in the Philadelphia Gazette and Public Ledger, and the members to be duly notified in advance.

Dr. Chas. Vuilleumier became President in 1915, and was to be in the chair for almost twenty years, ably assisted by the new Vice President, J. H. Reichling for the same period, and destined to succeed to his colleague, to conduct the Society until 1952. This remarkable team was joined in 1922 by Ernest F. Muller as Recording Secretary until 1944, and Hans C. Saalenbach as Financial

Secretary in 1925, to stay in that office until 1949. Mr. Jacob Knup, Sr., accepted the Treasury 1920/1932, followed by J. Otto Schweizer 1932/1950.

The Meeting proposed for December 3, 1915, failed, as no quorum was present, and it was re-scheduled for December 15, when 13 members appeared, and resolved to accept the by-laws as amended. Space restrictions do not permit to list them here, but they will be in an expanded version. Werner Lindt and J. Fleischmann were elected to the Board at the AGA 1916, for Fred Fiechter and C. A. Baumgartner, who resigned. The current officers were all retained: E. Hediger, Corresponding Secretary; Theo Ammann, Financial Secretary; Andrew Erny, Treasurer. In June 1916, Dr. Rudolph Kindig passed away at the age of only 51. Early records don't mention him, but it was stated that Dr. Kindig assisted applicants from the sbs for 25 years in most generous manner. Dr. J. C. Hungerbuehler, Jr., was asked to take his place as the Society's physician. The July meeting resolved to publish 'a history of the Society and members with larger donations . . . at the next AGA.'

In the 1890's, a Swiss Hall Association was under discussion, but failed to bring results. The matter was revived in June 1918, with the consideration of a common home for all Swiss societies. Messrs. Reichling, Fleischmann, Kaufmann, Schweizer, Ammann were the delegates of the sbs. A proposed constitution was read in August, with an affirmative vote by the Board, if the project should be materialized. The societies were to be assessed 50¢ annually for every member. The Board of the Swiss Hall Association announced agreement in September that all member-associations should meet at the hall of the Swiss Turnverein, and the directors met in the SHA Hall, 10th and Montgomery, for the first time in December.

Fifty-five members were present at the Annual Assembly, January 29, 1919, again at the Hotel Majestic, with dinner at \$2.50, and music for \$10.00. Many members, men and women, were reported to be in the Army or Red Cross. The Assembly 1920 was held at the Manufacturers' Club. The same Board and Officers were retained.

The Annual General Assembly of January 26, 1921, though celebrating sixty years, brought only 18 members together. Changes in the by-laws of the Swiss Hall Association were debated in February: 1. The Turnverein and Maennerchor



to elect six Board Members each, already disapproved by three member-associations. The respective number then was set at five, with three for the others, as heretofore. 2. The Pro-Capita Levy to go to the Building Fund; other profits in three parts to the Turners, Maennerchor and Building Fund. 3. In case of dissolution, funds to be divided on pro-capita basis effective for that year. 4. Dissolution to be by majority decision, not as heretofore, by 4/5. There are no particulars about paragraph 7 of those by-laws, said to be rejected by the Gruetli Verein, the National Festival Society and the Maennerchor. The English version of the constitution of the Swiss Hall Association was ratified by all members June 22, 1922.

The AGA 1924 brought the largest attendance in the history of the Society to date, with ninety people, and it was noted with pleasure that young people were taking a keen interest in its activities.

In February 1924, the Schweizer Turnverein petitioned for dissolution of the Swiss Hall Association, which was rejected by the Board of the SBS. The STV stepped out in March, renting a hall of its own at 527 Girard Avenue. The dissolution of the SHA was effectuated in 1925, with assets transferred to the new Swiss Club, which too was not destined to survive a decade. It acquired the property at 1412 North 16th Street. The Swiss Consulate moved in, and a meeting room was offered to the Directors of the SBS, free of charge. They liked their new habitat so much that they decided not to dispense with the monthly meetings for July and August, as heretofore. In May, the passing of Mrs. Bourquin Krusen was noted. Though a member for only eight years, she did a great deal for the Colony, and especially among the young girls.

On September 18, 1929, the Board was advised that the Schweizer Turnverein was opening its new hall October 12. There had been unsuccessful negotiations to bring them under the roof of the Swiss Club.

Consular Secretary Tobler left Philadelphia in February 1930. For his many services rendered, the Board presented him with \$25.00. At the dinner at McAllister's, 80 plates were served before the AGA 1931. Although only his brother John was a member of record, the death of Rudolph Gallati was mourned in June, as loss of a great friend. John was to pass on in 1933, at the age of 99.

If the General Assembly 1932 still brought 63

members together at McAllister's, that of 1933, at the Swiss Club, was attended by only 43.

January 1933 marked another milestone in the Society's History: After devotedly serving as Treasurer since 1920, Honorary Consul J. Knup resigned as Treasurer, due to ill health. He had been installed as representative of the Swiss Government in this district in May 1929, following Dr. Charles Vuilleumier, who had served in that capacity with great distinction. The treasury was given to the illustrious J. Otto Schweizer, and he was to retain it until 1951. When J. Kimmerle had to relinquish his directorship in fall 1933, Consular Secretary Maurice J. Rohrbach was appointed in his stead. He had arrived recently, destined to become truly the most outstanding personality of this Colony, with a distinguished career. In 1953 he was to become the Society's fifth president, and now, as Consul General and Honorary President still is tireless investigator and distributor of record.

The end of the Swiss Club was announced September 20, 1933, and the Board Meetings henceforth transferred to the Schweizer Turnverein. Director Theo Baur was released as distributor, and Carl Gaehler took over this function. Mr. H. C. Saalenach was persuaded to stay on as Financial Secretary.

Mr. Rohrbach was officially welcomed by the AGA, January 31, 1934. His predecessor, Carl Lutz, who had been a director since 1926, was transferred to St. Louis.

J. H. Reichling presided over the Directors' Meeting of November 21, 1934, advising the Board of the passing of our revered President, the Reverend Dr. Charles Vuilleumier. As Mr. Reichling put it in the Annual Report for that year: 'The funeral services of Dr. Vuilleumier in his former Church at 10th Street and Snyder Avenue, were particularly impressive; it seemed that everybody, whoever came in contact with the mild-mannered, fatherly former Pastor wanted to pay his last respects to this noble character, and the Church was therefore entirely too small for this occasion. In behalf of the Swiss Consulate as well as of the Swiss Benevolent Society, Mr. M. Rohrbach paid a last tribute to our beloved and highly esteemed past president, Dr. Chas. Vuilleumier, whom we shall always keep in our memory as a shining example.' In deference to the deceased, a quiet Annual General Assembly, attended by 56, was held January 30, 1935, at the Swiss Turnverein. Two new members were elected on the



Board, as Theo Baur had resigned, aside of the replacement for Dr. Vuilleumier: J. Fleischmann and J. c. Schoop.

Until 1960, the Annual Meeting only elected the Board, which immediately afterwards would convene to elect the officers. In 1934 it was a matter of course that J. H. Reichling was honored with the chair, after his twenty years of devoted services as Vice President. Mr. J. Knup, Jr., became Vice President, but, because of other heavy engagements stayed in office only three years, superseded by Jacob Fleischmann, who was to succeed himself until 1952. J. Schoop remained a director-at-large until then, to hold the vice presidency 1952/54, and to become the Society's sixth president in 1955.

The AGA of January 29, 1936, held at Weber's Hofbrau, marked the Society's 75th Anniversary, attended by 85 members and friends. As Mr. Reichling pointed out, there had been only three presidents before him; three vice presidents had served more than ten years, as did three Recording Secretaries, with a Financial Secretary for 14 years, and another eleven, and 15 directors had tenures of twenty years and over.

A few days prior to the Annual General Assembly, again at Weber's Hofbrau, with 89 people present January 27, 1937, another outstanding member of the Society and indeed the Colony was carried to his last resting place: former Honorary Consul Jacob Knup, to whom the President paid his respects as a member of 28 years standing, and serving as director and officer for over twenty. Mr. Reichling concluded his remarks with a befitting tribute out of 'respect and admiration to a wonderful woman, the devoted wife of our esteemed deceased friend, Mr. Knup, whom she has nursed and comforted in his hopeless sickness for almost two years.' It is cause for very special joy to note that this beloved lady is still with us.

In deference to non-members attending our dinners in conjunction with our Annual Meetings, it was tried again on January 26, 1938, to hold the business session before the meal. But, while 89 people appeared for the dinner, only very few members were in time for the assembly itself. In the course of the new year, we lost 'our two oldest members, both as regards membership and age,' Mathias Hefti and Julius Hess, the latter at the venerable age of 91. Director Egli resigned in 1939, returning to Switzerland, and Mr. Alfred Knup took his place on the Board.

Consul Rohrbach, inspired founder of the New Helvetic Society, Pennsylvania Chapter, advocated the creation of a Joint Committee of the Philadelphia Swiss Societies February 21, 1940, to facilitate collaboration in combined efforts, and to serve as a clearing house for scheduling events by the several associations, each with non-conflicting interest. Each organization appointed two delegates, and they, in turn, chose John c. Schoop as president of the Joint Committee. Its initial function was devoted to the collection of contributions by individuals to the Swiss Relief Fund. The year had to account for the loss of five members, among them J. Habisreutinger, a member since 1911, and Carl Gaehler, one of the particularly efficient directors since 1926, beloved for his exceptional sense of humor. The Society is forever indebted to Consul Rohrbach especially for taking over at that time as investigator and distributor. The matter has come up for discussion almost every year, but this appears to be the most practical solution. In some instances assistance was given by directors in investigations. The AGA 1941 elected Hans Fitzi to the Board in place of Mr. Gaehler. His determination at the end of 1959, not to permit re-nomination, was greatly regretted, both as a friend, and because he rendered valuable services in many assignments.

Because of complications due to war restrictions, the AGA of February 9, 1943, was held without dinner, and the Meeting, required to be held on the last Wednesday in January, had to be postponed due to particularly inclement weather. Frank Schillig dropped out as director, bringing in P. H. Reichling in his stead, with no change among the officers.

As a gesture of solidarity, the New Helvetic Society agreed to co-sponsor the Annual Meeting and Dinner of the SBS, 1944, and this has become traditional. It is in part responsible for a later decision by the SBS, to separate the annual dinner from the date of the general assembly. The other consideration was the official date for this meeting, its attendance suffering on occasion from stormy weather. A separation of the two functions also was welcomed as an opportunity for the membership to get together twice, instead of only once a year.

With the year 1944 terminated the outstanding services of Recording Secretary Ernest Muller, who retired after 22 years in office. He was duly memorialized, and the Society presented him with the desired easy chair as a small token of apprecia-



tion. Mr. Alfred Knup accepted the office for the ensuing year, and he and Mr. P. H. Reichling were to alternate for seven years thereafter.

In September 1944, J. C. Schoop, director, and president of the Joint Committee, outlined a contemplated program for the 1945 Red Cross War Fund as contribution from the Swiss nationality group, and the directors voted to subscribe to the effort. Mr. Schoop now represented the Swiss nationality group in all civilian war efforts organized by such groups, as well as before the War Manpower Commission (in our case, discrimination against Swiss in war plants here was non-existent!). The other agencies were: Red Cross; War Chest; United Nations Council (Treasurer, Intercultural Committee); International Institute (Advisory Board); I Am An American Day.

The outstanding event of the year in the Swiss Colony was a Testimonial Dinner to Mr. J. H. Reichling on November 30, at the Philadelphia Rifle Club, on which occasion he was duly honored for his long, dedicated services for the benefit of all Swiss. On the other hand, the Society deplored the loss through death of another director, Carl Vosseler, who had served on the board since 1926. As replacements, Adolph Kotsch and Otto Kessler were elected new directors.

In the President's Report for 1946, Mr. Reichling commented, among other things, on the changed conditions since the origin of the Society 86 years ago, and for half of which time he had been a member. 'About 50 years ago we had as many as 14 Swiss Societies in Philadelphia, and a Swiss Colony of nearly 2000 members. On account of changed business conditions, mostly caused by two terrible wars, the immigration of young Swiss has melted down to a very small number and the societies to just a few. . . .'

Theodor Ammann had joined the Society in 1906. He was a director-at-large 1913/15; 1926; Financial Secretary 1915/25. Although he moved away, he remained faithful until his passing in October 1947. The AGA 1948 was 'celebrated' with a Bratwurst Supper at the Turnverein, only 17 attending, in contrast to the Annual Dinner in April, at Weber's Hofbrau, with 129 present, again with the collaboration of the NHS.

The AGA 1949, again with only 19 members in attendance, adopted an amendment to the Dissolution Clause of the SBS, to the effect that, if this should occur, archives, funds and other possessions should go to the competent Consulate of

Switzerland in trust, for disposition and use at its own discretion, preferably in favor of destitute Swiss of the Philadelphia district.

The Board of Directors remained intact, but Mr. Saalenbach resigned as Financial Secretary, which office he had attended to in exemplary manner since 1925. Mr. Adolph Kotsch was elected in his place, and is still serving. F. G. Stuermer, a popular member since 1915, passed away in July.

Because of the Society's unhappy status, the Board Meeting of June 1950 declined to celebrate its 90th Anniversary in fall. This was reversed when John E. Weber came forth with an attractive offer, and assurance from the other local Swiss societies of their participation. J. C. Schoop was assigned to review the purposes and activities of the SBS, which he prefaced with comments about our great heritage in humanitarian efforts by our Mother Country.

That same year the SBS deplored the loss of three members of long standing: Mrs. Bertha Kindig (1910); Mrs. M. Fiechter (1926) and Mr. John J. Fiechter (1926). It also marked the retirement of our grand old man Mr. J. Otto Schweizer, Treasurer, in office since 1933. His outstanding contributions in service were duly memorialized. Mr. Jacob Knup, Jr., became the new Treasurer, and still holds that office.

The directors decided to hold the Annual Dinner of the SBS in conjunction with the New Helvetic Society's Annual Meeting and Dinner, April 11, 1951. The steaks were being served when smoke drifted into our room at Weber's Hofbrau. There seemed to be no cause for alarm, as we were removed from the fire toward the other end of the rambling building. But a few minutes later the premises had to be cleared, and burned down before many of our people could get their hats and coats. This disastrous fire marked the end of our many social gatherings at that place, where happy hours were spent in congenial atmosphere.

Among the deceased that year were again two old members: Carl Rahm (1909), and Jacob Fleischmann (1911/32, 1934/51), director-at-large 1916/28, 1935/37, vice president 1938/51. His devoted services were duly eulogized by the President. J. C. Schoop was to fill the vacancy 1952/55.

The AGA 1952 elected J. Otto Schweizer and H. C. Saalenbach to Honorary Directors in appreciation of their long, dedicated services. O. Kessler resigned from the Board, and four new directors received unanimous votes: John Doess, Carl



Gasser, Francis Schaefer, Karl Tschopp. Mr. Schaefer has earned the thanks of the Society for serving now as 'Realty Committee of One' for several years. The new year developed badly with the early demise of the wife of President Reichling, beloved in the entire Colony, followed in June by the untimely death of our Recording Secretary, Alfred Knup. During the year, too, President Reichling had moved to Bethlehem, and so, after 19 years as vice president and an equal number of years as head of the Society, relinquished his office at the AGA 1953. His exceptional stature and remarkable services were memorialized by Consul Rohrbach, and, with a standing ovation, the Assembly made him Honorary President. The subsequent Director's Meeting elected Consul Maurice J. Rohrbach to the chair, and P. H. Reichling was returned as Recording Secretary, the Society enjoying his services to this day.

A Committee of eminent Philadelphia Swiss and Germans set the Testimonial Dinner for J. Otto Schweizer, celebrating his 90th anniversary, for March 27, 1953, and the occasion was declared as Annual Dinner for the sbs. Funds had been raised to defray the expenses for a splendid biography of Mr. Schweizer by Prof. Jonkers. From the surplus of the collected funds, a 'J. Otto Schweizer Memorial Fund' was created, available for events with cultural purposes.

A special note of sorrow pervaded the AGA of 1955, because of the death of our beloved J. H. Reichling at the age of 86; Consul Rohrbach paying him a richly deserved tribute. Because of his heavy duties and commitments, Mr. Rohrbach did not feel he could carry on as President. The new Board, composed the same as for 1954, greatly regretted his resignation, and in his place elected John C. Schoop to the chair, with Ernest Federer as Vice President. In appreciation of his outstanding, unrelenting services since his arrival here, the Hon. Maurice J. Rohrbach was made Honorary President with a standing ovation, repeated by the adjourned Annual Meeting, when the announcement was made.

The Society's best wishes were extended to Mr. J. Otto Schweizer on his 92nd birthday March 27, 1955. He was to pass away before the year's end. At the AGA 1956, President Schoop remarked: 'He has left to posterity a legacy of innumerable works of art, historical monuments, symbolical and allegorical reliefs and statues, henceforth to be acclaimed as classics. As a man and friend he has

no peer.' A tragic death also robbed us of Alphons Meier, member since 1925, while on a visit in Switzerland, and the sudden passing of John Doess, a director since 1952, was much deplored. At the Annual Dinner, October 20, 1955, at the Silver Lake Inn, as usual assisted by the New Helvetic Society and delegations from the Turnverein and the Helvetia Association, members of fifty years and over were presented with a commemorative plate: Schweizer Turnverein (1902); Robert J. Freitag (1902); Carl Tschopp (1902); H. C. Saalenbach (1903). Another party of merit should have been included: Dr. J. C. Hungerbuehler. His omission is regretted, and came about by a confusion of his name with his father. Dr. Hungerbuehler passed away just recently.

The sbs collaborated with the other local Swiss associations in a reception for Minister de Torrenté, February 15/18, 1956. In September, Consul Rohrbach explained the functions of the Swiss Solidarity Fund to the directors, and has taken every pain to acquaint us with its benefits on many occasions since.

The AGA 1957, brought together 73 members and friends, at the Turners' Hall. A member of the Board for twenty years, John Freudiger decided to retire, and was released with heartfelt thanks for his long services. Dr. Alfred Senn became his successor. The Executive Board remained intact, and is the same in the Centennial year. The Annual Dinner attracted 71 members and friends.

The Annual Meeting, January 29, 1958, at the Turnverein, saw a record crowd of over 150, because pictures taken by participants of the highly successful NHS Swiss Flight 1957, were shown. This meeting decided to celebrate our Centennial in fall, rather than at the next General Assembly, since the founding date is September 14, 1860.

The Monthly Meeting of June 6, 1958, took special note of the elevation of the Swiss Consulate of Philadelphia to a Consulate General, and congratulated the Honorable Maurice J. Rohrbach for his 25 year tenure here and his elevation to Consul General. The Colony sponsored a Commemorative Dinner of the occasion, which came off at the Philadelphia Cricket Club on December 6. The president of the sbs, perhaps longest associated with Mr. Rohrbach, and still here, became the main speaker, reviewing the remarkable record by his untiring efforts for the Swiss in his consular district. May it be further recorded in this con-



nection that the City of Philadelphia honored the new Swiss Consulate General and Consul General Rohrbach with a reception and splendid exhibition, featuring also several cultural Swiss programs for the duration. At the Annual Dinner, November 1, much enjoyed at the Silver Lake Inn by 77 guests, the 50-year membership of Mr. J. J. Kaufmann was commemorated. But 1958 also had its adverses, the Society having to deplore the loss of five, among them one of our dearest and oldest members, Robert J. Freitag, whose 54-year membership was recognized in 1955. He served as director 1905/07, and 1912/21. Also Dr. Ernest Vuilleumier, who joined in 1915, and was a director 1920/21. Though having moved away many years ago, he remained faithful to the SBS.

The Board of Directors was confirmed for 1959, with one exception. The resignation of Mr. Frank Birchler was offset with Mr. Paul Blattler, and this composition is now active in our Centennial Year, again with one exception, due to the resignation of John Hans Fitz, as previously recorded. Newly elected was Mr. Fritz Langenegger, Vice Consul. Upon his departure, the Directors voted for Mr. Otto Gritti, Consular Secretary, to take his place.

The impressive record of unusually long tenures as directors and officers is given elsewhere in our Centennial Booklet, but we must specifically mention a case of special merit: Our esteemed Consul General, the Honorable Maurice J. Rohrbach,

who has guided the destiny of our Colony since his arrival here in 1933 with great distinction. It is not within our province here to review the multitude of his activities and achievements in Philadelphia, which were commemorated at the Testimonial Dinner for him. Only the heavy duties of his office could prompt him to relinquish the presidency of the SBS in 1955, after only two terms. Otherwise, his dedicated services to the cause of the Society certainly remain unparalleled even with due recognition of all his illustrious predecessors. From the start, he performed the most important functions as an investigator, and since Carl Gaehler passed away in 1940, he also attended to dispensing the monthly allocations. Even if this be the logical arrangement under prevailing circumstances here, aside of doing these tasks, it is the indefatigable dedication of the Consul General to the welfare of the Swiss Colony which renders his services so outstanding. It was *faute de mieux* that the Society elected Mr. Rohrbach as Honorary President in 1955.

As this last chapter is being written, our Centennial Year still is in progress. What it will bring is as yet in the realm of undisclosed destiny, and the Society's history for 1960 remains conjecture. But, whatever its fortunes and misfortunes, the President has his dedicated committees working to bring about a memorable celebration of the Centennial, now set for Saturday, September 17.

JOHN C. SCHOOP



# SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

## OF PHILADELPHIA

### MEMBERSHIP LIST 1960

Bartschi, Arnold	Fleischmann, Lois, Miss	Kotsch, Adolph, Jr.	Schneider, Frieda, Mrs.
Bartschi, Arnold, Mrs.	Freitag, Robert J., Mrs.	Kotsch, Adolph, Jr., Mrs.	Schneider, Hans
Baumann, Otto, Mrs.	Freudiger, John	Langenegger, Fritz	Schneider, William
Beer, Thomas, Dr.	Freudiger, John, Mrs.	Langenegger, Fritz, Mrs.	Schneider, William, Mrs.
Bentele, Patriz	Freudiger, John, Jr.	Lendenmann, John	Schnurr, George
Birchler, Frank	Freudiger, John, Jr., Mrs.	Lerch, Emil	Schoop, John
Birchler, Helen, Miss	Gamper, Oscar	Lerch, Emil, Mrs.	Schoop, John, Mrs.
Blattler, Paul	Gamper, Oscar, Mrs.	Lips, Walter E.	Schweizer, Antonin B.
Blattler, Paul, Mrs.	Gasser, Charles	Lipp, Cecile, Miss	Schweizer, Turnverein
Bodmer, Jakob E.	Gasser, Charles, Mrs.	Meier, Ferdinand F.	Senn, Alfred, Dr.
Bodmer, Jakob E., Mrs.	Gossweiler, Rudolph, Mrs.	Meier, Otto	Senn, Alfred, Mrs.
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Briner, Andres, Dr.	Gritti, Otto	Meyer, Herman	Snow, Philip, Mrs.
Brugger, Emma, Miss	Gritti, Otto, Mrs.	Muggler, Emil	Sollberger, Walter
Brugger, Ida, Miss	Guerry, R. C.	Mueller, Ernest, Mrs.	Steck, James
Brugger, L., Mrs.	Haesler, John	New Helvetic Society	Stevens, Louisa, Mrs.
Burger, Eugene	Hauser, Frank	Oggenfuss, Hermann, Mrs.	Stoll, Arnold
Christen, Paul	Hertach, Henry	Peyer, Frank	Strickler, Hermann
Concordia, Vincent	Hug, Hans	Peyer, Frank, Mrs.	Stroehle, Adolf
Delattre, André, Mrs.	Hungerbühler, J. C., Dr.	Reichling, P. Henry	Sulger, August, Dr.
De Paoli, Jules	Hunziker, Hans E.	Reichling, P. Henry, Mrs.	Truempy, Alfred
Diebel, Emma, Miss	Hüppi, Vernon F.	Reichling, George, Dr.	Tschopp, Carl
Doess, John	Jemian, S. C.	Reichling, William	Tschopp, Karl A., Dr.
Doess, John, Mrs.	Jemian, S. C., Mrs.	Reichling, William, Mrs.	Van Heek, William
DuBois, Lloyd	Kaeslin, Gabriel	Rey, Walter	Van Leeuwen, J.
DuBois, Lloyd, Mrs.	Kaufmann, F. H.	Robbi, Max	Van Leeuwen, J., Mrs.
Dürst, Fritz	Kaufmann, F. H., Mrs.	Rohrbach, M. J., Hon.	Vogel, Fred
Dürst, Peter	Kaufmann, Jacques	Rohrbach, M. J., Mrs.	Vosseler, C. P., Mrs.
Duvoisin, Chas.	Kessler, Otto	Rosset, George	Vuilleumier, Carl, W.
Duvoisin, Chas., Mrs.	Kessler, Otto, Mrs.	Ruetschi, Paul, Dr.	Vuilleumier, Carl W., Mrs.
Eisenring, Alphonse	Kimmerle, Louis, J.	Saalenbach, Hans C.	Vuilleumier, Charles, Mrs.
Federer, Ernest	King, Emilie, Mrs.	Sailer, Gustav, A.	Weber, John E.
Federer, Ernest, Mrs.	Knup, Alfred, Mrs.	Savage, Rosa D., Mrs.	Weber, John E., Mrs.
Fiechter, Fred	Knup, Alfred, Jr.	Schaefer, F. H.	Wild, Henry
Fiechter, Nellie, Miss	Knup, Jacob, Mrs.	Schaefer, F. H., Mrs.	Wild, Paul
Finckh, Theo. J.	Knup, Jacob, Jr.	Schell, Caroline, Miss	Zwald, Nicholas
Fitzi, Hans	Knup, Jacob, Jr., Mrs.	Scheuermeyer, Emil	
Fitzi, Hans, Mrs.	Knup, Jacob, 3rd	Schillig, Sophie, Mrs.	