

## The 50th anniversary of the I.O.C. seat in Lausanne

On the 10th April 1915, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, and Baron de Blonay, vice-president of the International Olympic Committee and member for Switzerland, were received by the mayor, Mr. Maillefer and members of the Municipal Council in the town-hall in Lausanne. Signatures were exchanged, setting up in the city the world administrative centre and archives of modern Olympics. Until that time, the International Olympic Committee had no definite centre. A regulation dating from the beginnings intended it to move every four years to the country where the next Olympic Games would be held, although it was thought of as being in Paris where Baron de Coubertin had his residence. Owing to its neutrality, its position in the heart of Europe, Switzerland was indicated as the ideal country to establish a centre for a vigorously growing Olympic Movement. Baron de Coubertin wrote in this regard : "Delightfully situated on the shores of the lake, crowned by forests, provided with every imaginable possibility in the way of sport, Lausanne was the best conceivable place for the establishment of the administrative centre of the Olympic Movement."

Lausanne is, as is well known, the capital of the canton of Vaud, one of the Swiss cantons situated on the shores of lake Lemman. "Lausanne was, in turn, a Roman city, a cathedral city, a centre of social pleasures and of business, autonomous and captive. Thus were formed its characteristic picturesqueness, the strenuous spirit imbuing it with the fascination one feels despite the modernity of recent changes."

And changes there certainly have been between the establishment of the International Olympic Committee seat in the magnificent Mon-Repos park and our day. In this connection, let us quote the bantering remark of Pierre de Coubertin who, in his "Olympic Memoirs", devotes to Switzerland important comments : "Such a country was predestined to play a notable part in the Olympic Movement, but first had to be convinced of this. And one does not wrong its children by reminding them that it is easy to obtain from them only that which they are really willing to give." With the passing of half a century, it is particularly pleasing for us to observe how much the Municipality of Lausanne has given the Olympic Movement by granting the unique privilege of establishment in the very building where it receives its guests.

Until Spring 1964, the International Olympic Committee archives lodged in the third floor of this mansion. Since then, thanks to the kindness of Mr. Georges-André Chevallaz, mayor of Lausanne, of Mr. Alfred Bussey, municipal finance councillor, and other councillors, thanks also to the good offices of ex-chancellor Otto Mayer, the International Olympic Committee has enjoyed the advantage of an additional floor, put entirely

at its disposal, where are grouped the secretarial offices, a large conference room and the Olympic Library. The archives and Olympic Museum remain on the third floor of this building where, we may recall, Pierre de Coubertin lived.

The Olympic Museum has been added to during successive Olympic Games and is composed of eight rooms in chronological order : the Hellenic room, the Pierre de Coubertin room where certain of his personal possessions are preserved, notably his writing-desk, work table, arms, decorations and writings ; three rooms devoted to Games of the modern era, illustrated by numerous photographs, posters and documents ; the International Olympic Committee members' room, a room devoted to Olympic Winter Games, and finally, the Bonacossa room (from the name of a former Italian member), where there is an important collection of stamps issued throughout the world on the occasion of the various Olympic Games and the original trophies of prizes awarded each year by the International Olympic Committee.

It is fitting to mention here Mr. Gustave Apothéloz, vigilant curator and organizer of the museum for more than twenty five years, and Mr. Numa Roux, efficient guardian for the last year of the mansion and I.O.C. headquarters of Mon-Repos.

On the occasion of the meeting of the International Olympic Committee Executive Board and the International Federations, the fiftieth anniversary of our seat in Lausanne was the subject of particular ceremony. On this occasion also, there was the official presentation of a model of Olympia by the National Olympic Committee of Germany. We cannot do justice to this event without quoting passages from the inaugural address by Mr. Willi Daume, president of this committee :

"I feel truly happy to have so fine an opportunity to present to the International Olympic Committee this token of friendship today of all days. This is the occasion for that generous and magnificent city of Lausanne to receive thanks for the splendid hospitality it has extended to us for over half a century. The Olympic Movement has yet another home, its original centre in Greece : Olympia. The magnificent Greek nation has given the world the great Olympic Games, but not only that : it also gave us both a truly great idea of world peace and that of optimum personal happiness of man by combining the culture of the mind with that of the body.

"Modern Greece, too, is the country of a liberal nation which has permitted other nations to do research in classical Greek soil, to excavate and unearth the grand monuments of early Greek culture, and to enjoy the happiness of free scientific research activity. The German nation

has had the special privilege of working in the district of Olympia itself. Headed by the famous German archaeologists Curtius and Doerpfeld, scientists began in the past century with the excavation of the grandiose holy Zeus district, which was nearly completed before work began on the adjacent stadion joined with the Altis by a lofty archway. This great task has now been fulfilled by the German sports world.

"The German Archaeological Institute in Athens and its branch in Olympia have conducted the required archaeological excavation work with scientific skills and care. It was most gratifying to find in the stadium under the seven-metre layer of earth the richest archaeological treasure trove ever unearthed in Greece. The German Archaeological Institute headed by Professor Kunze, ably supported by Dr. Mallwitz and their co-workers, has made the design for this model. With scientific precision it is based on the finds and the writings of Pausanias that have come down to us, and so the holy district of temples and the stadium with its facilities present themselves here in their state of archaic times.

"I should not conclude without emphasizing that most significantly Olympia is not only a museum : thanks to the initiative of the Greek Government and the support of the late Professor Diem, an Olympic Academy has arisen <sup>1</sup>, where young scientifically interested sportsmen from the whole world, who are destined to be sports lea-

ders of their nations, will meet every summer to study the spiritual heirloom of the classical Olympia and the knowledge of modern sports sciences.

"In presenting this model to Avery Brundage, the president of the International Olympic Committee, I should like to give thanks to the City of Lausanne for according us so worthy a location for our present in this museum. It is my fond wish that many Swiss young people will get a first glimpse here of this early centre of Greek and, therefore, European culture, and that the visitors of this museum from the whole world will derive pleasure and encouragement from this model. May the International Olympic Committee regard this present as a token of friendship and thanks for the spirit of understanding which particularly in the arduous postwar period it has again and again proved to feel for the problems of our country, and that it has found good solutions truly in keeping with the spirit of the Olympic idea. German Olympic youth is most grateful to you, Mr. president and all members of the International Olympic Committee."

This ceremony was followed by a reception at Mon-Repos, and by a dinner offered to the International Olympic Committee and the International Federations by Lausanne Municipality in one of the celebrated castles of Vaud, the castle of Oron. The reception and dinner were honoured by the presence of Mr. Paul Chaudet, federal councillor, one of the "seven wise men" who preside over the destiny of the Swiss Republic.

<sup>1</sup> Now presided over by Mr. Jean Ketseas, member of the I.O.C. for Greece. (Ed.)

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