

1st August celebrations ; First August celebrations in Taranaki

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1st AUGUST CELEBRATIONS

On the occasion of the 665th Anniversary of the Swiss Confederation, the New Zealand Minister of External Affairs, on behalf of the Government and people of New Zealand, sent a message of "Friendly greetings and goodwill" to the government and people of Switzerland. In this message the opportunity was taken to express the belief that the firm bonds of friendship that have characterised the relations between Switzerland and New Zealand will be strengthened still further in the years ahead.

On Monday, July 30th, the Swiss Social Club in Taranaki, of which Mr. John Steiner is the able President, held a most enjoyable banquet and dance in the Kaponga War Memorial Hall. This function, at which a very large number of our compatriots gathered, was attended by our Consul-General, M. P-H. Aubaret, and M. W. A. Sollberger, Chancellor of the Consulate. Also on July 30th, fifty-seven people from Hamilton and the surrounding districts, headed by Mr. W. Risi, gathered to celebrate the 1st of August, and spent a very happy time together.

On July 31st, the Consul-General and Mme. Aubaret gave a reception at their home for members of the New Zealand Government and the Diplomatic Corps, and on August 1st they entertained our compatriots living in and around Wellington. A film, just received from the New Helvetic Society, was screened, showing the main events which took place in Switzerland during 1955.

FIRST AUGUST CELEBRATIONS IN TARANAKI.

Taranaki's very active Swiss Social Club celebrated in traditional manner the anniversary of the founding of the Swiss Confederation, by a function at Kaponga, on Monday, 30th July, 1956.

It was just 665 years ago at Ruetli that representatives of three Swiss Cantons took an oath to unite for the common defence of their liberties, thus laying the foundation of the present Swiss Confederation. Today's 22 Swiss Cantons were vividly remembered by each of their Cantonal Flags bedecking the dance hall in Kaponga's new War Memorial Hall.

The ceremony commenced with a lavish banquet, the numbers present taxing to the utmost the spacious accommodation of the hall's supper room.

Seated before an immense backdrop of the Swiss National Flag were guests of honour, the Swiss Consul-General in New Zealand, M. Pierre Henri Aubaret, and his Chancellor, Mr. Walter Sollberger.

President of the Swiss Social Club, Mr. John Steiner, in an opening speech, welcomed members and visitors from many parts of New Zealand and expressed the particular pleasure of the Swiss community that they were afforded an opportunity of meeting their Consul in this new land of their adoption.

In replying to the speech of welcome, Mr. Aubaret expressed his pleasure and surprise to be addressing such a large gathering of his compatriots. After having spent many years in the Swiss Legation in London he was again happy to be his country's Consul in this far-off English-speaking colony of New Zealand.

He commended the part his compatriots were playing in the public and civil life of this country. M. Aubaret spoke with pride of the long-standing friendships and associations his country has had with Great Britain and her colonies over such a long period, and spoke of new agreements which had recently been negotiated with Great Britain and the Dominions.

Mr. Walter Sollberger, Chancellor to the Consulate, also spoke, thanking the club for its invitation to be present, and expressing his admiration for the organisation responsible for this excellent function.

The welcome to visitors and guests was replied to by Dr. E. Russell, of Napier, who said that though he wasn't Swiss, he had spent a considerable time on vacation in Switzerland, and among the Swiss settled overseas, and held them in the highest regard, particularly in respect to their sincerity and hospitality.

At the conclusion of the banquet, the official toast to the Queen was given, and whilst still standing, those present joined in song with the Swiss National Anthem.

Dancing then followed in the gaily bedecked dance hall. Music, typically Swiss, was provided by members of the Social Club, dancing continuing to a late hour. The dance floor reflected a true Swiss atmosphere with many dancers, young and old, in Swiss national costume.

During the evening, the Swiss Consul-General and his Chancellor were afforded the opportunity of meeting and conversing with all present individually.

The opportunity was also taken of presenting the Zurcher Cup for the first time to this year's winner of the card series, Mrs. Josephine Kaiser and Mr. Walter Fluhler. Prizes were also presented for second place to Mrs. J. Schmid and Mr. Martin Steiner, Jr. Third place winners were Mrs. Cyril Riddick and Mr. E. Napflin.

It is worthy of note to mention that this function was one of the first to be held in Kaponga's new War Memorial Hall, because the Swiss community of Kaponga have a particular interest in this hall, in as much that it was as a result of a Queen Carnival to raise the money necessary to build this hall that the Swiss community set up their own committee, elected a Swiss Princess, and set out to win the carnival in a convincing manner, installing their Princess as Queen Pauline (Schupfer) of the Carnival.

This fine hall stands today as testimony to the magnificent effort of the Kaponga and Districts Swiss community in the interests of the people they are living amongst.

JOHN STEINER,
President
Swiss Social Club (Inc.).

PASSPORTS

The Consulate wishes to draw the attention of all compatriots to the fact that, even if at the present time this document is not needed very often, particularly if no voyage outside of New Zealand is contemplated, a VALID passport is the only legally recognized identification document of a Swiss citizen abroad. Moreover, only a passport, the validity of which has recently expired, can be renewed without difficulty. It is felt that these facts, coupled with experiences

made during the last few months by the Consulate, make it desirable to recommend very strongly that all compatriots take the necessary steps to renew their passports before or immediately after the expiry date.

NOTICE

A new Law concerning the reparation of damages and prejudices caused by national socialistic persecution has been passed by the Federal Republic of Germany. Swiss citizens interested are invited to get in touch with the Consulate without delay.

NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

"HOME" FOR SWISS NATIONALS LIVING ABROAD—DURRENAESCH

The "Home" for Swiss nationals abroad has now been opened. One thousand eight hundred and fifty-four feet above sea level, it is situated on the idyllic wooded hills between the Wynen Valley and the lake valley (lake of Hallwil). It is easily accessible from Aarau, and Zurich, Basel, Berne and Lucerne are only 20 to 40 miles away. A fruitful idea has thus been transformed into reality with the aim of helping our fellow citizens in foreign countries to maintain and strengthen their close contacts with Switzerland. The "Home" has been established in order to offer many Swiss nationals abroad—there is room for 50 guests—

a "pied-a-terre" in the homeland.

It is intended not only as a holiday centre, but also to help further the feelings of solidarity among our countrymen through its "esprit de corps" and the many and varied services that it is capable of rendering.

The "Home" in Durrenaesch is not just a hotel where one can spend one's ordinary holidays at advantageous prices. It is much more than that for it promotes the necessary contact between Swiss nationals abroad and the land of their fathers by arranging a

"Home" holiday in the country,

a new type of holiday in a Swiss village. This contact, indeed, forms part of that experience of the homeland which is longed for by all Swiss who live abroad—particularly the young ones—and which mainly helps to keep alive the good Swiss spirit in far-off places.

This ideal aim is served by the practical arrangement of a stay at the "Home" which is open to all Swiss nationals abroad irrespective of origin, language or religion. In addition to plenty of free time during which each guest may