

Protecting "Swiss made" brand divides opinion

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Anna Louise Riebli

1924 - 2009

Anna Riebli was born on 26th July 1924, the second oldest of nine children. She was born in the small town of Sachseln, central Switzerland. Anna still has six siblings alive in Switzerland. In 1950, aged 26, Anna married Josef Karl Riebli from Sarnen, Obwalden. Together they were blessed with four children: Joe, Beatrice, Peter and Johanna. They farmed in several places around Switzerland, before they embarked on the long voyage to the other side of the world - immigrating to New Zealand in 1965. This was a big undertaking with young children and teenagers, going to a country speaking a foreign language. Warea was home for the first three years in New Zealand, and then they moved to Auroa Road, Otakeho, for six years. From there they progressed to farm ownership, purchasing a farm on Mountain Road, Midhirst.

Sadly Sepp and Anna lost their son Peter to cancer in 1981, and in 1988 Sepp died very suddenly, leaving a big gap in Anna's life. With both Joe and Beatrice living in Switzerland, Johanna was the only child left near her. Over all these years and up until her death, Johanna has taken wonderful care of her mother; something Anna truly appreciated. Anna sold the farm at Midhirst and moved to Stratford where she lived on Margaret Street for six years, and then on Page Street until she moved to Elizabeth Resthome in 2005 and then later the hospital, where she passed away on 15th February 2009.

Anna returned to Switzerland five times over the years to visit family and friends. She was an active member of the Stratford Croquet Club for many years, and also the Catholic Women's Prayer Group. Both Sepp and Anna enjoyed the Taranaki Swiss Club, and attended many functions. Upon Sepp's untimely death, Anna continued to participate in the Club's activities and functions, enjoying many bus trips away and playing cards. Her great passion was jassen, but failing eyesight put an end to her participating in these games. Sepp and Anna started the 'Trachtentanz' group in Taranaki many, many years ago, and thoroughly enjoyed their time encouraging people to attend the practices.

Anna is survived by her three children, Joe and Beatrice in Switzerland and Johanna in Mahoe, Taranaki; 13 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

The Taranaki Swiss Club and the Swiss Society of New Zealand extend their deepest sympathy to Johanna, Joe, Beatrice and their families.

Protecting "Swiss made" brand divides opinion

Moves to tighten regulations that protect the reputation of Swiss made goods have thrown up a host of complications following a vast consultation.

The government wants to replace vague laws with concrete rules to crack down on abuses of "made in Switzerland" and Swiss cross labels. Consumer groups have welcomed the idea, but business leaders want flexibility.

The consultation threw up the proposals that 60 per cent of manufacturing costs should be in Switzerland and that food products should be made of at least 90 per cent home-grown ingredients to qualify as Swiss made.

The Consumer Protection Association wants to see for example an end to Swiss branded cheeses containing milk from Polish or German cows.

However, food giant Nestlé did not think that the origin of raw materials made much of a difference to consumers.

The Swiss Business Federation, *economiesuisse*, agrees with the principle that the reputation of Swiss goods needs protecting, but warned that raw materials not available in Switzerland should be taken into account when defining the Swissness of products. The 60 per cent manufacturing benchmark would also include research and development costs.

The authorities want to amend trademark rules concerning the use of the Swiss cross emblem as a marketing tool. This practice is outlawed, even though some firms have ignored the ban for decades. The proposed change would allow the use of the Swiss cross, while reserving the public coat of arms for official federal use only.

Swiss Army Knife manufacturers Victorinox, which has used the Swiss coat of arms for nearly 100 years, said it would resist such a move. Automobile association Touring Club Switzerland (TCS) estimated rebranding would cost up to SFr 13 million if the coat of arms was removed from its logo.

Under current legislation the Swiss cross may not be registered as a brand nor put on products that are sold commercially.

Reality shows that there is frequent abuse of the present system, in particular because the "Switzerland" brand does not exist in the legal sense.

For both Swiss and foreign consumers, "Swissness" brings to mind "a healthy, well-ordered, efficient world", according to a 2006 government report. It also has connotations of "precision, meticulousness, reliability and thoroughness". "Swissness" is also a synonym for innovation, exclusive products and excellent services. It refers to a country that is "rich in various cultures, cosmopolitan and open to the world".

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