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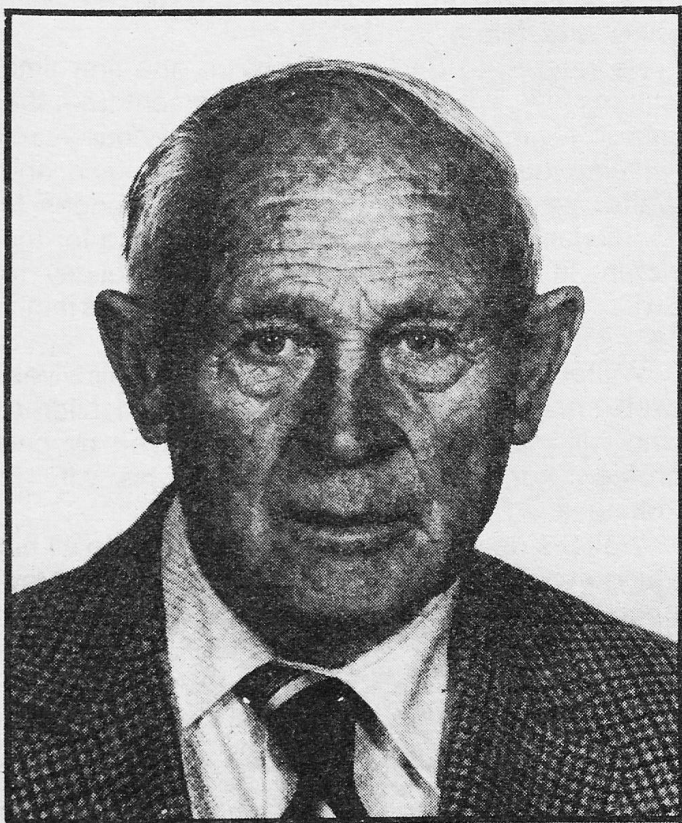
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OBITUARY

Mr Walter Risi, Editor of the Helvetia.

It was sad news to hear on November the 11th that Walter passed away so suddenly at the age of 76 years.

Walter and his family immigrated from Switzerland in 1939. He first worked as a general farmhand for Mr Fred Sattler of Kapuni. From there they shifted to Glen Road and then to Ohangai where they stayed for many years. In 1954 he took over the Mountley Pigbreeding Stud, one of the biggest Studs in the Southern Hemisphere. His breeding ability brought him many championships on different shows all over the Country. As a judge he was very well known in New Zealand and also in Australia.

Walter Risi was the Founder of the Taranaki Swiss Club in 1952 and their first President. In 1957 he became President of the Swiss Society of New Zealand until 1962. He also was a member of the Editing Committee of the Helvetia until 1976 when he took on the job as Editor.

Walter was a down to earth Swiss, it can be said he was a real Ideal Swiss. A bit reserved in his approach but when you got to know him he was a man with integrity, selfrespect and wisdom, a self educated man. In his Editorials he always tried to give some of his knowledge and experience to the readers of the Helvetia.

To the three sons and their families our deepest sympathy.

President and Committee of the Swiss Society of
New Zealand.

R.D.

On the 11th November, 1982, Jakob Walter Risi died suddenly at his home in Tamahere near Hamilton.

A very large congregation gathered at the Catholic Church in Cambridge for the funeral service, with Requiem Mass, conducted by Father Wall who travelled especially from Otaki, near Wellington to hold the service in honour of his close and long-standing friendship with Walter. He met Walter while serving as a Maori Missionary in Taranaki. Father Wall told the Congregation about the devotion Walter always had for the Church, and the big and willing helper he was whenever people were in difficulties.

Walter was put to rest at the Hamilton Lawn Cemetery next to his wife, Maria, who died in 1974.

With the death of Walter Risi a whole era in the history of the Swiss colony of New Zealand has passed. He was called "Father Risi" by all New Zealand Swiss. Walter knew the history of the Swiss Colony dating back to the first settlers in Taranaki in the middle of the nineteenth century, and he wrote many articles in the Helvetia about the different families and their descendants. Also his many Editorials in the Helvetia showed his vast knowledge and understanding of human nature.

Jakob Walter Risi was born on the 25th July, 1906 in Buochs, Schwyz, in Switzerland, as the oldest of three children - two boys and one girl. He married Marie Theresia in 1931 in Switzerland and their marriage was blessed with three boys, and in 1939 he emigrated with his wife and family to New Zealand. They arrived in Taranaki in August of that year, shortly before the outbreak of World War II. Walter worked first as a farm-hand, but progressed after a few months to a share-milking job in Kapuni.

Walter was a great patriot and with his strong personality was soon the centre of the Taranaki Swiss Community. In 1952 the Taranaki Social Club was formed and Walter was duly elected as President and held the position until he moved to the Waikato to take over the Mountley Pigbreeding Stud for the New Zealand Dairy Company. He was always interested in pig breeding and this was a great opportunity to show his capabilities to the best advantage. For Walter, personally, the move to the Waikato was a difficult decision to make as he had been resident in Taranaki for over fifteen years, and the District had become his second home, with the Swiss Community his Big Family. From the farm in Ngaruawahia he soon made his mark in the Pig Breeding Industry. He was the first breeder to introduce the Landrace pig to N.Z., with its tremendous implications to the pig industry. Soon his pig stud was the show-place for the Industry, and one of the biggest studs in the Southern Hemisphere. His stock won many Championships on different shows all over the

country. Walter was also a person very much sought after as Judge at different shows in the Country. He was called twice as Judge to Australia for the Royal Shows.

In the Waikato he was soon well-known amongst his Compatriots and he helped many a new arrival find his feet in a new and strange country. In 1956 Walter was one of the Co-Founders of the Hamilton Swiss Club, and he acted as Vice-President of the Club until 1966, after which he was President for one year. For his great service to the Hamilton Swiss Club he was honoured with Life Membership. Until his death he was in charge of the Jass Evenings of the Hamilton Swiss Club, and nothing was too much for him when it was for the benefit of the Club. Many memorable picnics were held at the property in Ngaruawahia.

From 1957-1962, he was President of the Swiss Society of New Zealand, and also in 1957 he was elected on the Editing Committee of the Helvetia, thereafter to become Editor in 1976, which position he retained until his death. It was this job which kept him mentally alert and helped him to a great degree

to find a purpose in life again after the sudden death of his wife, Marie, in 1974.

He retired to Switzerland twice, the first time with his wife in 1973, after his retirement from the farm in Ngaruawahia. A period of thirtyfour years had elapsed since he had seen his home-land, and Walter was astonished at the many changes in Switzerland some for the better and some for the worse. In 1979 he went for another holiday to Switzerland, with the thought in mind that this might be his last visit to the place of his birth.

Walter leaves a family of three sons, their wives, twelve grandchildren and six great-grandchildren, who will miss him sadly. He is survived by one brother, Adolf Risi, who lives with his wife in Puketaha.

Walter's death is an irreplaceable loss to all his friends and the whole Swiss Community of New Zealand. To his family and relations we extend our deepest sympathy.

MAY WALTER REST IN PEACE.

Hamilton Swiss Club and Editing Committee. E.S.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS AUCKLAND SWISS CLUB

The Auckland Swiss Club holds its great annual Picnic on the 20th of February 1983. This ever popular event will be held again at our farm at Kaukapakapa.

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As usual there will be the medal and prizegiving to our sharpshooters from the Shooting Club.

We are looking forward to seeing you there. For information about it or just a chat phone anyone listed under Auckland Swiss Club inside the front page.

CHRISTCHURCH SWISS CLUB

The Children's Christmas party will this year be held on Saturday December 4th at 1 p.m. in the garden of Riccarton House, Kahu Road, Riccarton, Christchurch. Frankfurters, bread rolls, wine and beer will be on sale and fruit juice will be available for the children. During the afternoon Father Christmas will arrive and distribute gifts and we will sing traditional German Christmas carols. Further details will be sent out in a newsletter or enquiries may be made to the Secretary phone Belfast 7165.

HAMILTON SWISS CLUB.

The Hamilton Swiss Club is holding its Annual Picnic on Sunday February 6th commencing at 11.00a.m. at Villigers Farm, KIWITAHU.

This is an invitation to all members and friends to come along and enjoy a very happy club day together. All refreshments will be available together with the usual Kegel competitions and Swiss music too!

Hamilton Swiss Club Society Sports Competitions, Shooting, Kegel and Shot-Put for medals will take place on Sunday March 13th also at Villigers Farm, KIWITAHU from 11.00a.m. to 3.00p.m. Refreshments will again be available. The Club urges all members to participate to make exciting and friendly competitions.

H.J.S.

WELLINGTON SWISS CLUB

- | | | |
|----------|----|---|
| December | 4 | Christmas Party |
| | 5 | Children's Christmas Party 1983 |
| February | 19 | Club Evening |
| | 27 | Picnic combined with Swiss Society Kegeln/Steinstossen Competition. |

NEWS OF THE COLONY CHRISTCHURCH SWISS CLUB

A considerable amount of confusion arose from the article printed in the October issue of Helvetia under the heading of the Christchurch Swiss Club about an informal Swiss National Day celebration. A number of Christchurch members wondered why they had heard nothing about it! The fact is that the gathering took place in Dunedin, although this was not mentioned in the article! Although Dunedin has no official Swiss Club a number of Swiss families and friends meet together once or twice a year for a National Day Celebration and perhaps a picnic in the summer. Anyone in the Otago area who may be interested in discovering more details should contact Mr E.A. Looser, 6B Runciman Street, Abbotsford, Green Island who organised the first gathering in 1978. The Christchurch celebrations were mentioned in the September issue of "Helvetia" and were held in the Old Stone House, Cashmere.

In September there was a successful film evening on Wednesday 15th with films of Switzerland being borrowed from Swissair and the National Film Library.

Frieda Looser.

HAMILTON SWISS CLUB. CHRISTMAS SOCIAL AND DANCE

Our Christmas Social was held on the 27th November 1982 at the Eureka Hall and was attended by 70 members. The evening commenced with the band "Rural Deliver" in top form, playing great dance music. Everyone entered into the swing of things and we saw lots of couples taking to the dance floor right from the start. We especially appreciated the Swiss songs the band sang and played during the evening. While the band took a rest, Suzanne and Erica Rufer entertained us with a few musical items on their accordians and we enjoyed a lovely singalong of Christmas Carols. Thank you girls!

We used the club's latest acquisition for the first time - a gas barbeque - to grill the supper. It proved an unqualified success and we expect to get a lot of use out of it in the future.

The evening came to a close around 1 a.m. Sunday morning and I hope everyone enjoyed the Social as much as I did.

U.H.

WELLINGTON SWISS CLUB

Our Car Rally took place on Sunday, 7th November. It was a dry, partly sunny day, (not to

speak of the wind!!) when we started at Percy Park. Our skills were tested in N.Z. Geography, Botany, Driving-test and mechanical knowledge. Later, we did some practice for the competition, "Steinstossen" and Shooting. We all tried to do our best but did not always succeed. Some got lost on the way, others tried to do it with speed, to arrive first and be placed last!! The main thing was, we all arrived at Whiteman's Valley. Not at Scherrers' Farmlet as you might guess, no we finished at the Golf Course, where we also found shelter from the wind. In a heated Hall, we have enjoyed our grilled lunch. "Are you not sorry, that you didn't come?" - Congratulations to the winner and co-pilot, George Westermayer and son Paul. - Many thanks to the organisers, Hans Glauser and Hans Kueng, it was good fun!

R.M.

The Wellington Swiss Club's Fondue Evening was attended by a good crowd of members and friends and we were also very pleased to welcome Mr and Mrs Etienne. Mr Etienne, the new Charge d'Affaires, made a very interesting speech during the evening with some very complimentary remarks about the many Swiss who have settled permanently in New Zealand. The fondue was prepared by our president, Max Fuhrer, and was really delicious and there was fresh fruit salad with cream for afters. The highlight of the evening was the entertainment provided by Josef Rock, a visitor from Switzerland, who played the guitar and sang some very amusing songs, much to the delight of everyone. He soon had a sing song going afterwards, ably supported by Mr Wirth and this rounded off the evening very well indeed.

P.W.

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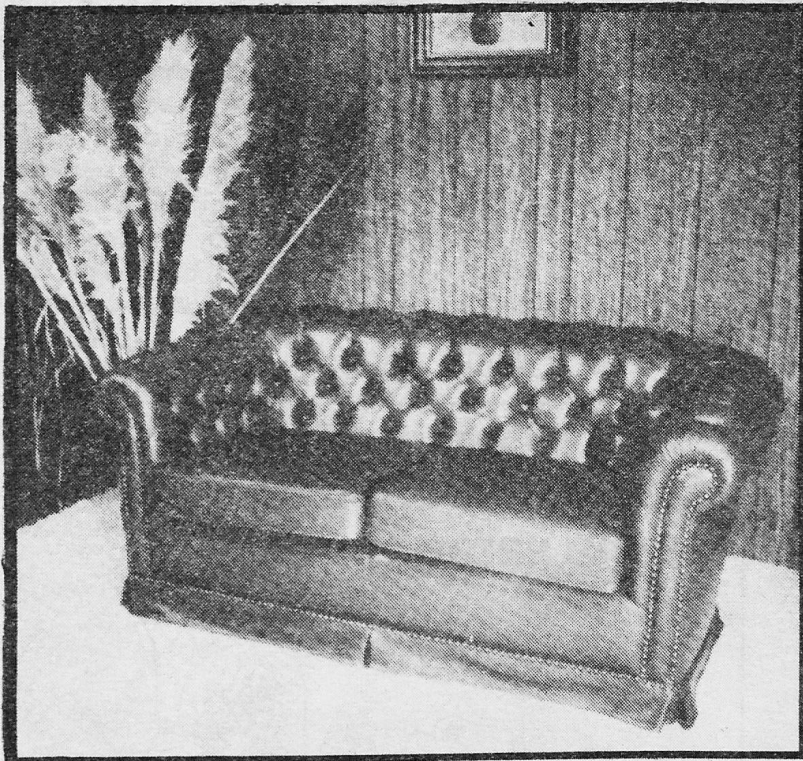


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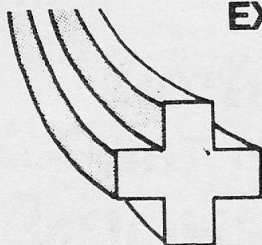
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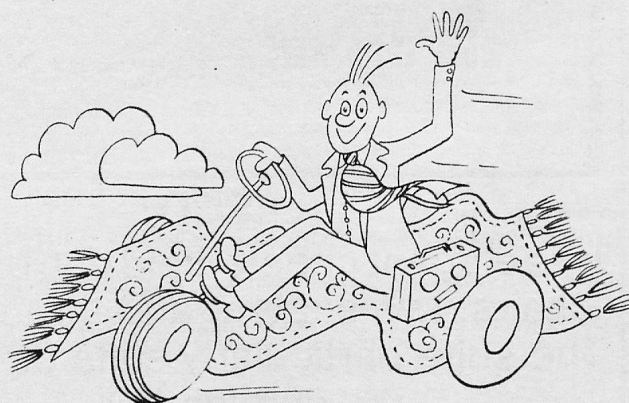
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