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REGIONAL NEWS

OCEANIA

Please note:
Next Editorial Deadline
11 January 2022



ROLAND ISLER
REGIONAL EDITOR | OCEANIA
COUNCIL OF THE SWISS ABROAD | AUSTRALIA

Editorial:

Dear readers, dear compatriots,

due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, the Congress of the Swiss Abroad planned to be held in Lugano, had to be postponed for the second time in a row. The meeting of the Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA) – this year being the constituent assembly of the newly-elected Council – which is usually held at the same time as the Congress, was conducted online. Read more about it in this issue. I would also like to draw your attention to the survey conducted by your CSA delegates. It is your opportunity to let them know what is important to you as a Swiss Abroad living in Oceania. A full report of the meeting can be found on the CSA Oceania website: <https://bit.ly/3tzeZUR>

The next edition of the «Swiss Review» will not contain regional pages. This edition is therefore the last one this year to include the «Regional News Oceania». Please take note of the following dates for next year:

<i>Edition</i>	<i>Editorial deadline</i>	<i>Publication date</i>
■ 1/22 February	Tue, 11.01.22	Fri, 04.02.22
■ 2/22 April	Tue, 08.03.22	Fri, 01.04.22
■ 3/22 July	Mon, 06.06.22	Fri, 01.07.22
■ 4/22 August	no regional edition	Fri, 05.08.22
■ 5/22 October	Tue, 13.09.22	Fri, 07.10.22
■ 6/22 December	no regional edition	Fri, 09.12.22

Please send your submissions by the above deadline to risler@csa-oceania.org. I look forward to hearing from you! Contact: +61 (0)412 935 565.

Stay safe and keep looking out for each other! Ed

2021 'Swiss Art' Laneway Exhibition

The 'Swiss Art' Laneway Exhibition is an initiative by the Swiss Club of Victoria to add art to the world-renowned vibrant Melbourne laneway culture. The idea was to use the Duckboard Place façade of the Swiss Club building as a canvas and to utilise eleven bricked-up window recesses to showcase contemporary Swiss art by artists that are Swiss, are of Swiss heritage or have a connection to Switzerland.

With the help of the Swiss Consulate in Sydney, the Swiss Club was able to connect with artists across Australia. The final eleven curated pieces

represent different art disciplines across photography, fine art painting, sculpting, ceramics, art installation, tattooing and printmaking.

The 'Swiss Art' Laneway Exhibition was officially opened on 15 May and will be open to the public for 12 months. Thereafter, the Swiss Club will commission another eleven artists to showcase their work. If you know any artist that might be interested, please contact Patrick Rychner on patrick@swissclubvic.com

The opening was well attended and a great success. Present were some of the artists, Brigitte Heller from Central Victoria, Edmond Thommen and Andre Braun from Sydney, Helen Müller who arrived from Tasmania, Pierre-Andre Ceschin and Nicole Lötscher from the Mornington Peninsula and Natalie Schell from Melbourne, plus many club members and friends.

Other artists, whose work is on display, are Joe Felber, Dorothée Heibel, Jessika Steiner and Christian Roth.

See more here: <https://bit.ly/3hpaojj>



Deputy Consul-General Didier Boschung (left) and Hon. Consul Manuela Erb with artists and SCV organisers Barbara Kündig and Patrick Rychner (right)



The existing team of Oceania delegates to the Council of the Swiss Abroad has been re-elected unopposed

Over the past six months, the election of the Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA) for the term 2021-2025 was held worldwide. The constituent assembly of the new Council took place virtually over two sessions on 20 and 23 August. A full meeting report can be found on the CSA Oceania website <https://bit.ly/3tzeZUR>

The re-elected team representing Oceania is delighted and honoured to be able to continue serving the community. Please get in touch with them – they are here to listen and are dedicated to improve what matters to the Swiss Abroad in Oceania – see the survey next page. To contact the Australian delegates and find out what motivates them, go to www.swissallianceaustralia.org/csa-election-2021/



Peter Ehrler (NZ)



Peter Canziani (NZ)



Carmen Trochsler (SA)



Roland Isler (VIC)



Beat Knoblauch (NSW)



Katja Wallimann Gates (QLD)

Delegates in New Zealand

The two representatives on the Council of the Swiss Abroad representing New Zealand were chosen from among members of the four regional Swiss Clubs – Auckland, Hamilton, Taranaki and Wellington. **Peter Ehrler** and **Peter Canziani** (Deputy) were re-elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Society of New Zealand, held on 6 June 2021.

Delegates in Australia

With the use of e-voting, the elections four years ago set a precedent for the direct election of the Australian delegates to the Council of the Swiss Abroad. In fact, Australia was one of only two countries that was able to conduct the elections in such a democratic way.

Since then, e-voting has been suspended in Switzerland, which meant that different ways needed to be found, still ensuring these elections were as democratic as possible and giving as many Swiss citizens in Australia the option to elect their representatives.

It was not an easy task, made even more difficult by the pandemic which impacted

greatly on the postal service and with it, the timely delivery of the «Swiss Review», which was the vehicle by which the election was organised.

End of June was the deadline for ballots to be received by the ‘Swiss Alliance Australia Inc.’ – the umbrella organisation of Swiss associations in Australia – which was responsible for conducting the election. As it turned out, the outcome was in some ways a foregone conclusion as no one else other than the current delegates applied to stand for election, the result being that the current team of delegates has been returned unopposed for another term.

Nevertheless, many hundreds of votes were received, which is a welcome endorsement and vote of confidence. The team of **Roland Isler**, **Beat Knoblauch**, **Carmen Trochsler** and **Katja Wallimann Gates** sincerely thank all those that have voted!

“The mission of the CSA Oceania is to represent the Swiss Community in Oceania, and to support and defend their interests as Swiss citizens living abroad.”

CARMEN TROCHSLER, MEMBER OF THE OSA EXECUTIVE BOARD

Elections for the Executive Board of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) were high on the agenda at the CSA meeting in August – see report here <https://bit.ly/3tzeZUR>

We are proud to announce that our colleague **Carmen Trochsler** did not only win a seat but did so with the clearest margin of all the contestants. As far as we know, this is the first time ever that a CSA from Australia has been elected to the OSA Executive Board.

Warmest congratulations, from the CSA Oceania Team



Carmen Trochsler attending the Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Bern in 2018

And just like that, the Tokyo Olympics were over

It was one of the most uncertain, unpreceded and unlikely-to-go-ahead Games ever and many people were dreading them, because of the effect it might have on the COVID pandemic in Japan. Those fears fortunately did not come true. Hard-working volunteers, determined organisers and resilient athletes managed to put on an Olympics that gave the world hope after a pretty hopeless 18 months. Sport ultimately managed to knock the coronavirus out of the headlines – at least for a while.

The president of the International Olympic Committee, Thomas Bach, reminded us that there were so many times these Games very nearly didn't go ahead at all – but "for the first time since the pandemic began, the entire world came together. Sport returned to centre stage. Billions of people around the globe were united by emotion, sharing moments of joy and inspiration."

For Switzerland these Games were the most successful since the Helsinki Olympics in 1952. Australia enjoyed its equal-most successful Games in history. New Zealand too, was bringing home more medals than ever before and even

Rank	Team	TOKYO 2020			Total
		Gold	Silver	Bronze	
6	Australia	17	7	22	46
11	New Zealand	7	6	7	20
24	Switzerland	3	4	6	13
59	Fiji	1	0	1	2

Fiji, our tiny island neighbour of just 900,000 is featuring on the Olympic medal tally!

Switzerland and Oceania did well, and so did the Swiss Abroad. Three of the Swiss medals were won by expatriates, Nikita Ducarroz who lives in the USA and Monaco-resident Belinda Bencic. These athletes have covered themselves in glory, but at the top is one that has not won a medal at all – Cedric Dubler, son of Swiss Yodel & Folklore Group Baerg-Roeseli president Gabriel Dubler. The image of Cedric pushing on his team mate Ash Moloney to win a bronze medal in the decathlon has instantly become one of those iconic Olympic moments. His selfless act, his dedication and true sportsmanship are worth more than any gold medal. As one news headlines said: "In these times we all need a Cedric Dubler in our life". We are all very proud!



**HAVE
YOUR
SAY**

The newly-confirmed Australian and New Zealand delegates to the Council of the Swiss Abroad are conducting a survey.

As representatives of our region they would like to identify the topics that matter to the Swiss Abroad and set priorities to focus on for the next four years.

Your input will help to not only identify issues but also enable the delegates to take a well informed approach.

<https://forms.gle/UtZcubJ7AsaW4LGK7>

A diamond jubilee: Switzerland and Australia celebrate 60 years of diplomatic relations

Switzerland and Australia are celebrating a diamond jubilee this year – 60 years of diplomatic relations. But what does that actually mean? The arrival of thousands of Swiss immigrants to Australia in the 19th century required the establishment of consular representation in Sydney and Melbourne as far back as the 1850s. So, the relationship between our peoples date back much further than the diplomatic relations between our states.

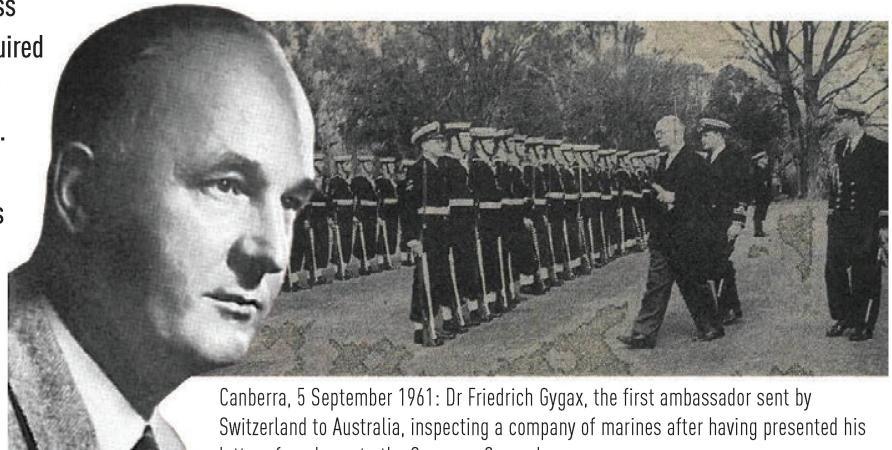
However, it was on 5 September 1961 when the Swiss government accredited its first Ambassador to Australia: Friedrich Gygax arrived by ship and presented his letter of credence to the 15th Governor-General of Australia, William Philip Sidney, 1st Viscount De L'Isle.

In honour of this important event, and to mark the diamond jubilee celebrations of a thriving partnership, the National Carillon in Canberra was illuminated in red and white on Sunday, 5 September this year (see picture below).

This is certainly a moment to reflect on the strength of our partnership, to celebrate, and to be proud of the many contributions of Swiss citizens to Australia and vice-versa. Six beautiful stories for 60 years of diplomatic relations have been published on the website of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs <https://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home.html>. The stories remember Sophie la Trobe who brought Swiss wine-makers to Victoria, the Antarctic pioneer Xavier Mertz, the hidden Swissness in the Sydney



Australia + Switzerland
60 years of diplomatic
relations 1961-2021



Canberra, 5 September 1961: Dr Friedrich Gygax, the first ambassador sent by Switzerland to Australia, inspecting a company of marines after having presented his letter of credence to the Governor-General.

Opera House, Swiss democracy exports to Australia, a joint Nobel Prize in medicine, and an impressive indigenous Australian arts collection in Switzerland.

Have a look at the Facebook page of the Embassy and the Consulate General (facebook.com/Swiss_EmbassyCanberra), and at our brand new Twitter account (@SwissEmbassyAUS) to discover many more stories, including those from our Honorary Consuls who have portrayed Swiss compatriots throughout the country.

On behalf of the Embassy of Switzerland and the Consulate General, thank you all for having contributed to this relationship over the past six decades, and for your ongoing commitment to the Swiss-Australian partnership.





Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Consulate General of Switzerland in Sydney

New Honorary Consul in Darwin

The Consulate General is pleased to announce the appointment of Mrs. Sonia Paspaley as the new Honorary Consul of Switzerland in Darwin. Mrs. Paspaley is a dual Swiss and Australian citizen. She grew up in Switzerland and has been living in Darwin for the past 16 years. She has worked in various positions in Tourism Marketing and Tourism Events, and for a number of years she was part of the International-Market Operations team with Tourism NT. For the last few years, she has supported her husband in his family business in Darwin. She assumed her duties as Honorary Consul on 1 June 2021.

Her contact details are:

Consulate of Switzerland in Darwin

Email: darwin@honrep.ch

Tel.: +61 8 8982 5435

(visits by appointment only)

The teams at the Embassy in Canberra and at the Consulate General in Sydney wish Mrs. Paspaley all the best in her new function and look forward to working with her.

The Swiss Confederation, the Embassy in Canberra and the Consulate General in Sydney take this opportunity to also thank the former Honorary Consul in Darwin, Mr. Peter Bendel and his wife Marlise for their commitment, all their help and support since 2005 and wish them all the best for their future endeavours. Mr. Bendel resigned from his function and they have, for the time being, relocated to Switzerland.

For all consular matters or in an emergency please note that the Consulate General of Switzerland in Sydney is always your primary point of contact.



Consul-General of Switzerland, Bernadette Hunkeler Brown (left) with newly-appointed Honorary Consul, Sonia Paspaley

Community News and Events

NZ: Swiss Society of NZ

The Swiss Society of NZ held their Annual General Meeting in Hamilton on 6 June 2021. As the committee of the Swiss Society remains the same for four years, there were only the Swiss Abroad delegates to elect. We are so fortunate that both Peter Ehrler and Peter Canziani had made themselves available for re-election. We are very grateful to them both, especially Peter Ehrler who contributes a huge amount of time and effort towards the pension issue and also with matters regarding the Council of the Swiss Abroad. Thank you both for your contribution to the Swiss Society; we really appreciate it!! Our Ambassador, Mr Michael Winzap, gave an interesting and informative speech, as did Peter Ehrler, and there followed discussions on a variety of subjects. Our grateful thanks to the members of the Hamilton Swiss Club for organising the weekend. The Taranaki Swiss Club looks forward to hosting the Annual General Meeting next year in Kaponga.

NZ: Auckland Swiss Club

Auckland Swiss Ladies Choir looking for new members!

Do you like singing some of the songs you grew up with? Do you like having a relaxed chat in Swiss German now and then? Join us for our get-togethers twice a month on a Tuesday night in Glenfield.

Our biggest event of the year, **Swiss National Day**, went off in a huge way at the Danish House on 31 July. To say we were packed is an understatement, with over 110 enjoying our Fondue evening.

We enjoyed the presence of our Ambassador Michael Winzap, and his wife Marina and also hosted a number of 'Jungbürger' from around Auckland and up north who had taken up their full citizenship over the last few years. The Club was very happy to host them and their parents on our National Day. Following on from Saturday, we opened the

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Swiss Farm on Sunday for our traditional Bonfire night on the true 1st August.

NZ: Taranaki Swiss Club

Our popular **Anniversary Shoot** was held on 3 July with a good crowd. The shooting and keglen is always well-supported, but the delicious dinner is the real reason everyone attends!

Our **Swiss National Day** celebrations were held 31 July with a wonderful attendance, especially from our younger members. We were spoilt with Swiss music and singing, a fabulous tombola (raffle). Many thanks to everyone who attended and helped make the evening the success.

Upcoming Events:

18/10: Trudi Ott Belt Shoot and Championship Shoot at 1pm. Juniors most welcome!

21/10: Keglen at 7.30pm. Heaps of fun and plenty of chatting and laughter!

4/11 & 18/11: Keglen...come along and enjoy this Swiss sport!

21/11: Ted Napflin Memorial Shield and Championship Shoot.

25/11: Christmas Shoot/Keglen from 10am. Children's activities, pot-luck lunch, an appearance from Father Christmas and prize-giving...come along and have some fun!!!

NZ: Hamilton Swiss Club

Playing cards has continued to be a popular event, with 32 players on 24 June, followed by 30 players at the final evening on 9 July. Over the five evenings, we had a total of 164 players, with 26 people attending at least four times and therefore eligible to compete for an overall prize.

Swiss National Day was celebrated on 1st August, which hasn't happened for quite a few years. Our lunchtime function was held at the Matangi Hall on a beautiful sunny day – could have been a day for a picnic. Herbert welcomed just over 100 guests that had booked for the function. Many thanks to the committee and all the helpers for their tireless efforts – some never having a chance to sit down and enjoy the day.

Upcoming Events:

18/9: **Fondue Evening** – may need to be postponed due to COVID restrictions, please check with the club.

7/11: **Family Walk** at the Wairongomai Loop track south of Te Aroha. For queries on the day ring Anita 0274985170.

5/12: **Family Christmas Party** – at Newstead School, from 11am for the children to do some crafts and activities and will be followed by a BBQ lunch around midday.

For information, email anita.zuber@swiss.org.nz or phone 0274 985 170 or Beatrice bea.leun@xtra.co.nz or 07 8437971.




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...in Taranaki...



...and the Fraser Coast

ACT: Canberra Swiss Club

Unfortunately, not much has changed with our Swiss Club due to COVID. Sometimes it looks like it is getting better and the next day it gets worse and we are back to the same old situation. We are still going with the ACT government recommendations with groups of people and events.

The committee is working hard behind the scene to get events organised as per our usual calendar.

Swiss National Day was cancelled the second time in a row. There was a small group of Swiss Club Members that had gotten together at a venue. Most of us celebrate 1st August at home with families.

I hope everyone is safe and doing alright in the current lockdown situation. Let's hope that we get out of the lockdown soon and can meet and greet friends again.

NSW: Swiss Yodlers of Sydney

While we Yodlers have not been able to perform and enjoy the company of each other and others, we keep our confidence for the future nurtured by the camaraderie among our club members despite difficult times. At present we cannot anticipate when singing resumes but we 'stand by and stand ready'.

Recently our Honorary Member Housi Kaufmann passed away just one day short of his 96th birthday. We miss his presence in our midst but more so warmly retain him in our hearts.

For any enquiries, please contact Alois Kretz (President) 9419 7277; or Sepp Engesser (Conductor) 9659 6232.

NSW: Swiss Community Care Society (SCCS NSW)

Unfortunately, due to the present 'world order' in NSW, I have nothing to report. With planned activities of the past months cancelled and future ones on hold I suggest that you check our website www.swissccs.org.au for possible happenings in the last quarter of 2021. It is important that we remain optimistic despite the pandemic. The world famous clown Charlie Rivel (1896-1983) once said: "The optimist may be wrong as often as the pessimist, but he lives a happier life."

I also like to remind Swiss people living in the country that our Rural Coordinators would be happy to hear from you, be it just to get to know each other or to perhaps help you to sort out a problem. Everybody is also welcome to give me a call, wherever you live in NSW. Regula Scheidegger, (02) 9743 5323

Our Rural Coordinators are:

Central Coast:

- Gerhard Moser, (02) 4322 3588
gerhard@homeloanguru.com.au
- Peter Meury, (02) 4388 4809
petermeury@bigpond.com
- Rita Schaad, (02) 4956 2272
maritah1@optusnet.com.au

Armidale:

- Heinz Hauptli, 0417 446 542
heinz.hauptli@bigpond.com

Coonabarabran:

- Herbert Würsch, (02) 6842 8278

Wagga Wagga:

- Elisabeth Rorrison, (02) 6931 9090
jrer@ozemail.com.au

Cobar:

- Werner Muehlethaler, (02) 6836 2091
werner@exemail.com.au

Bathurst:

- Johann & Ruth Geissmann, (02) 6337 4103
geissmann@bigpond.com

Orange:

- Monika Rickli, 0419 435 917
monika.rickli@hotmail.com

Blue Mountains:

- Elizabeth Bizzini, 0408 414 863
bizzini1@hotmail.com

North Coast:

- Hans Schaffner
hschaffner@bigpond.com

NSW: Cercle Romand

In May, over 40 members gathered at Fagan Park in Galston to join in our 'Raclette at the Park' event. It was a perfect autumn day where a delicious cheese meal in good company was enjoyed by all. Since, COVID-19 has again thrown a spanner in our calendar with all planned events cancelled.

The committee organised the AGM 2021 remotely via Zoom, a first for the Cercle Romand. On 22 August, 14 members participated including a special guest, Consul-General Mrs Bernadette Hunkeler Brown.

Urs Haemmerli and Martha Leonard, after many years in the committee, decided to not continue in their committee position. The president, Anne Resplendino, highlighted the valuable contribution and dedication that Martha and Urs made during the many years in their various committee position. Katja Berger was elected as new committee member. All other

committee members were re-elected in their current position with Marcel Diebold taking the treasurer position vacated by Urs.

Our last hope for a get together is our year-end dinner planned for 4 December 2021. Of course, this will depend on our health authority to grant us some freedom.

All details for each activity are published on the club website: www.cercleromand.com.au where location, time and booking information can be found.

Le Cercle Romand...que du bon temps

FB : Cercle Romand Sydney

QLD: Yodel Choir & Folklore Group 'Baerg-Roeseli'

Early June we performed wonderfully for our Senior Citizens' Annual Lunch, just two weeks before the next lockdown.

Now, in September, the weather is perfect, the nights are fresh, and the days are glorious. The COVID restrictions are easing again, and we've just returned to rehearsals. After a 10-week silence some of us decided to get together and defrost their throat for a surprisingly good sound.

Singing is wonderful, stay healthy and happy. To join contact Gabriel on yodel@swissclubqld.org.au or 0435 570 241.

VIC: The Swiss Festival

The SF committee is planning a special edition of the popular



Swiss Festival in Melbourne as soon as gatherings are permitted again. In the meantime, please stay safe and we will keep you posted.

VIC: The Matterhorn Yodel Choir

Being a Melbourne based community group, COVID has severely impacted both our practice sessions and our scheduled events. Sadly, after all the planning the greatly anticipated 1st of August Celebration had to be cancelled for the second year.

Fortunately the enthusiasm to resume practice sessions and to once again operate as a happy, supportive and interactive group has not waned. Bring on the 'new COVID normal'!

You may find that during lockdown you have discovered that you can sing! Maybe you feel the need to be part of a choir where you could enjoy the wonderful camaraderie that the Matterhorn Yodel Choir can offer? We accept all ages and abilities. Even if you just want to come along once or twice to see how it is, you will be welcomed.

Contact Conductor Chris on 0428 427 434 or President Erwin on 0400 850 816

Stay safe and keep singing!



The Swiss Society of Victoria's purpose is to assist fellow Swiss in Victoria, old and young, who need financial or personal support. If you are experiencing difficulties, or you know a Swiss who does, please contact us.

We are here to help.

Registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ABN 41 419 264 380)

<https://swissocietyvic.org/>
Patrick Albert – M: 0449 999 645
E: admin@swissocietyvic.org

VIC: Swiss Club of Victoria

The Swiss Club of Victoria is on the lookout for a new service provider to run the restaurant. After completing the planned renovation of parts of the restaurant, we're intending to re-start the restaurant in mid 2022 with a new operator. So, if you know of anybody that is interested in taking on this role and filling the big shoes that Roger Moullet has left after 21 years of running the restaurant, please contact the Swiss Club Committee on info@swissclubvic.com.au

We believe that this is a fantastic turnkey opportunity for anybody (preferably Swiss or somebody that can converse in one of the four Swiss languages) that wishes to make a successful living in hospitality without having to invest upfront capital.

Upcoming Events:

Hopefully, by the time you read this, we're no longer in lockdown. Please check swissclubvictoria.com for updates about the latest events and news. Provided there is no lockdown, we're open every Wednesday night for Member Nights and every first Thursday of the month we have Band Nights with the 'Kappelle Grüezi Mittenand'. The bar will be manned and run by Committee Volunteers. As the restaurant is currently not being operated on a regular basis, you can order food from any of the surrounding restaurants. We're looking forward to welcome you back to the club

WA: Swiss Club of Western Australia

This year's 1st of August celebration was a great success despite the weather. There wouldn't have been many other clubs in Australia to be able to celebrate without COVID restrictions.

Please follow our Facebook Page 'Swiss Club of Western Australia' to keep up-to-date with all the events we have planned and subscribe to our Newsletter through our website www.swissclubwa.org

Thank you to all that have been able to attend our club events, from the Fondue Nights, Samichlaus, Club Picnics, Swiss Menu evenings at Restaurants, our Swiss National Day celebrations at the club's property at Gidgegannup etc.

If you are not a member, please look up our website and join through it. Every event we offer, there are discounts for our members and additionally you get to enjoy camping at the club's 30-acre property in Gidgegannup. For instance, the children of members are getting a free bag at the Samichlaus/Père-Noël, compared to the cost of \$15 per child if you are a non-member. At most events we offer a \$10 discount for members, so by paying your annual fee, you are benefiting greatly.

For further information please contact the president, Adrian Lehmann on president@swissclubwa.org