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# REGIONAL NEWS

## OCEANIA

Please note:  
Next Editorial Deadline  
8 March 2022



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

### Editorial:

Dear readers, dear compatriots,

We've all heard the saying, "may you live in interesting times". Well, the past two years were surely way too interesting and most would gladly opt for a more normal, more welcoming and less restrictive 2022!

So, let's dive into this first issue for the year: Clubs report about ongoing pandemic restrictions and how they come to grips with it; Australia farewells the ambassadorial team of Yasmine and Pedro Zwahlen and welcomes Caroline Bichet-Anthamatten as the new Head of Mission; we learn about the first Swiss Abroad to see Oceania...and more!

Happy New Year  
Es Guets Neus  
Bonne Année  
Felice Anno Nuovo

Swiss  
Community  
CSA Oceania



Please take note of the following «Swiss Review/Regional Edition Oceania» dates for the remaining issues for this year.

Edition	Editorial deadline	Publication date
■ 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](mailto: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

These pages can reach over 20k readers in Oceania. If you have an interesting story to tell or are interested in advertising with us, please contact the editor [risler@csa-oceania.org](mailto:risler@csa-oceania.org)

## New Book: Swiss Settler Stories – Migrant experiences in Aotearoa, New Zealand

Why would a number of Swiss choose to leave a country considered one of the most beautiful and peaceful in the world and, in recent times one of the most prosperous, to rebuild their lives in a country as far away as possible from their homeland?

The answer to this question can be found in *Swiss Settler Stories*, a collection of the experiences of 37 Swiss families and individuals who have settled in New Zealand since the mid-1850s.

Through the narratives, which cover different periods in the history of both countries, we learn about the varied backgrounds of these Swiss settlers, their motivations for migration, and the values and attitudes that have enabled them to succeed in this country while still maintaining strong cultural ties to their homeland.

*Swiss Settler Stories* will be of interest to all migrants to New Zealand who will be able to identify with many of the experiences of these Swiss, and the problems and challenges faced living in a country that is not your homeland. It will also interest those wanting to know more about one of the European ethnic groups making up New Zealand's culturally diverse population.

JOAN WALDVOGEL is a first-generation New Zealander. Of Swiss parentage, she grew up in the Swiss community in Taranaki. Joan has a PhD in Applied Linguistics and has worked as a teacher and social researcher. This is her second book about the Swiss in New Zealand. Her first book, *Swiss Settlers in New Zealand*, is a history of Swiss settlement in New Zealand and was published in 2018. It is available from the publisher, [www.peterlang.com](http://www.peterlang.com) and internet websites such as Amazon.

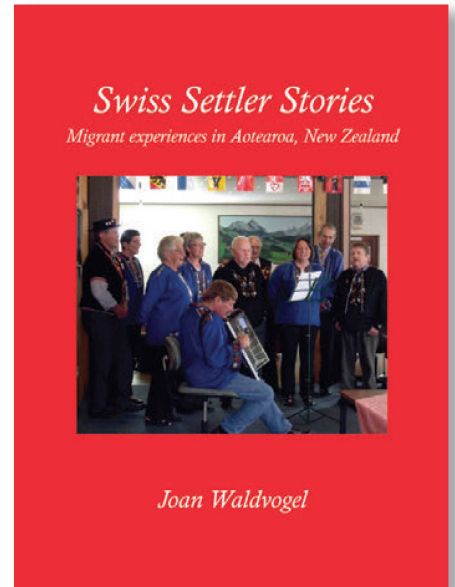
### *Swiss Settler Stories – Migrant experiences in Aotearoa, New Zealand*

ISBN 978-0-473-58896-0

\$NZ 40 RRP. Price subject to change and does not include postage & handling.

Order from Joan Waldvogel [forestbird@extra.co.nz](mailto:forestbird@extra.co.nz)

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## Farewell of Ambassador Pedro Zwahlen and Ambassador Yasmine Chatila Zwahlen

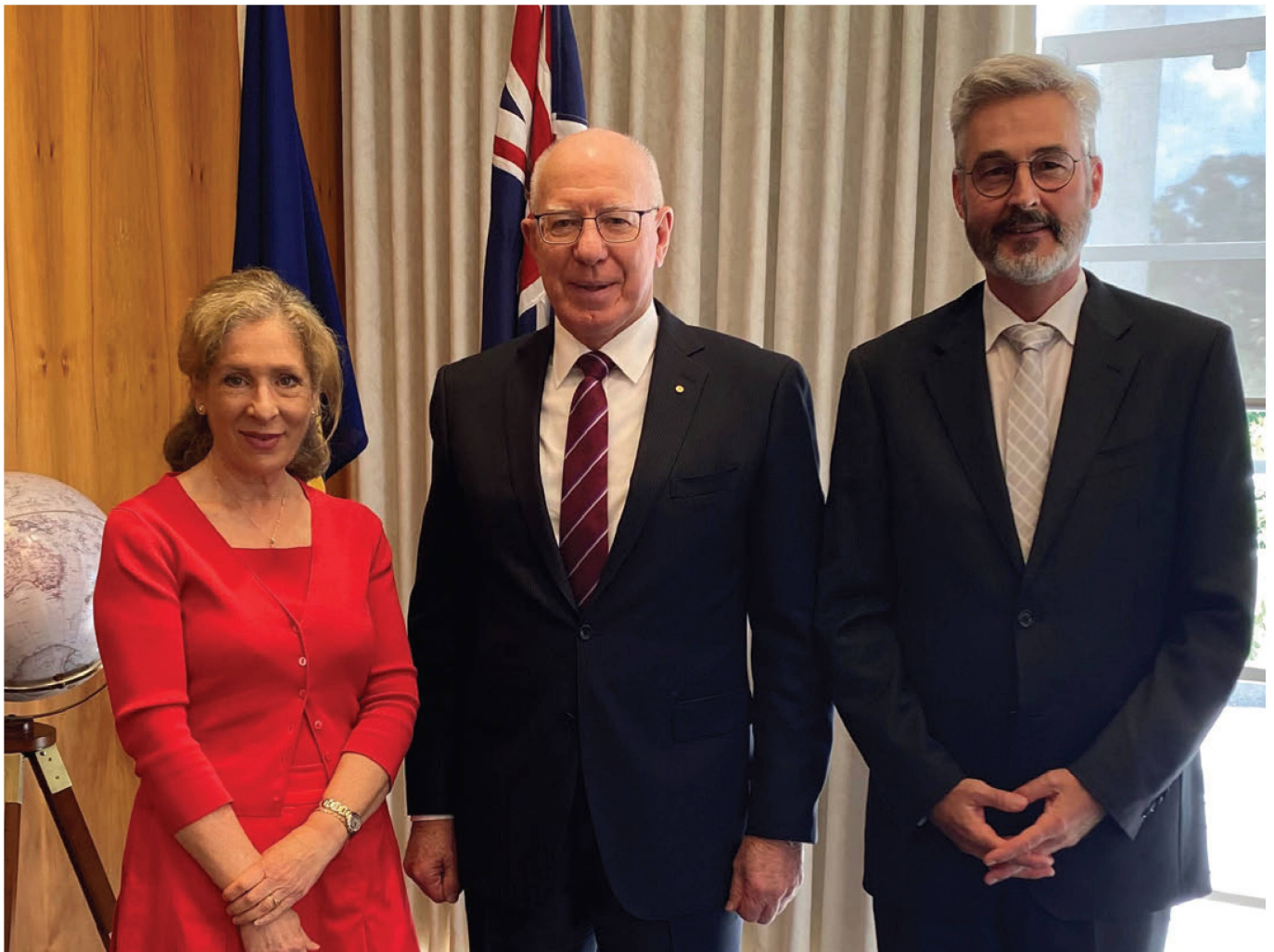
After five years at the helm of the Swiss Embassy in Canberra, it is time for us to move on in our diplomatic lives.

We were thoroughly impressed by every encounter with the Swiss community, individuals, businesses, artists, scientists, entrepreneurs, musicians, families! We met you in Hobart, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra, but also in places like Alice Springs, York or Coober Pedy! We were moved by each encounter in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, in Port Moresby and in Port Vila.

It has been an awesome honour to represent Switzerland downunder and in the Pacific. We wish you good health and happiness and the very best for your future endeavours, and we wish our successor good fortune and best of success!

Sincerely,

*Pedro Zwahlen and Yasmine Chatila Zwahlen*  
Ambassadors



The Governor-General of Australia, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) farewelling Ambassadors Pedro Zwahlen and Yasmine Chatila Zwahlen in Government House, Canberra.

On behalf of the Swiss community in Australia, Papua New Guinea and the Pacific, we thank Ambassadors Pedro Zwahlen and Yasmine Chatila Zwahlen for their engagement with the community which was always very much appreciated. We say farewell and wish them the best of luck and success in their personal life and professional career. At the same time, we extend a warm welcome to Ambassador Caroline Bichet-Anthamatten and her family, and wish them an exciting and rewarding time in Canberra. *Ed*



## New Head of Mission at the Swiss Embassy in Canberra

The Embassy of Switzerland in Canberra is pleased to announce the arrival of its new Head of Mission, Ambassador Caroline Bichet-Anthamatten, who addresses the readers of the Swiss Review – Regional News Oceania:

“I am very honoured and happy to represent Switzerland to Australia – and proud to be the first woman holding this position – as well as being ambassador to Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

I arrived in Australia on January 1, 2022 together with my husband and our four children and we felt warmly welcomed and immediately at ease. Hailing from Geneva, the sight of the spectacular Jet d’Eau in Canberra upon arriving in the Bush Capital brought up fond memories of home. I feel fortunate having an opportunity to re-connect with this multicultural country that I first visited during my studies and its unique cultural and natural heritage.

The bilateral relations between Switzerland and Australia are not only excellent but also have a remarkable potential for development. The forthcoming opening of the Australian Embassy in Bern shows the growing closeness of our two countries and I am looking forward to contributing to its intensification. I’m also keen to get to know the members of the Swiss community in Australia and to support them, together with the team of the Embassy, the Consulate General in Sydney and our Honorary Consuls, especially in this complex period. Faced with the challenges of our time, it is more necessary than ever to work closely together. You can count on my commitment.”

*Caroline Bichet-Anthamatten*  
Ambassador



In honour of our new Ambassador’s home canton, here is a culinary delight from Geneva — bon appétit! *Ed*

### Helvetic Kitchen: Tarte aux poires à la genevoise



If you’d like to try another of Andie Pilot’s recipes, you can discover many more delicious Swiss specialities on [www.helvetickitchen.com](http://www.helvetickitchen.com)

This buttery pear and raisin tart was traditionally served during Geneva’s Escalade celebrations.

I discovered the recipe in one of my favourite Swiss cookbooks **Kochkunst und Traditionen in der Schweiz** from Mondo Verlag. It is easy to make — the hardest part is slicing slippery pears — and its buttery crust and juicy filling make it irresistible.

#### RECIPE

- 1 package puff pastry dough (around 250g); 100g ground almonds; 1 tbsp sugar; 1 tbsp cinnamon; around 8 large pears, sliced; 150g raisins; 30ml walnut oil; shot of wine or Williams; 100ml cream; 2 tbsp sugar
- Preheat oven to 220 C / 425 F / gas mark 7.
- Line the bottom of a 26cm springform pan with parchment paper.
- Roll out the dough and line the pan. Keep the tart shell cool (preferably in the freezer) until you have the filling ready.
- In a bowl, mix together the ground almonds, sugar and cinnamon.
- In another bowl, mix together the sliced pears, raisins, and oil.
- Sprinkle the puff pastry base with the ground almond mixture, then add the pears.
- Pour over the wine or spirit, plus the cream, then sprinkle with sugar.
- Bake in the bottom half of the oven for about 30 minutes or until the dough comes away from the side and the pear mixture is bubbling.
- ★ The juicier your pears, the juicier this tart will be.
- ★ If you don’t have walnut oil, you can use another nut oil, or just a neutral oil like canola or sunflower.



## The first Swiss Abroad in Oceania

John Webber (Johann Wäber, 1751-1793) accompanied Captain James Cook on his third voyage (1776-1780) around the world as the expedition's artist – and thus became not only the first Swiss citizen but the first Swiss Abroad to set eyes on the islands of the Pacific.



John Webber's father, Abraham Wäber, was a Swiss sculptor who moved to London, changed his name to Webber, and in 1744 married a Mrs Mary Quant. John was the second of six children and probably the eldest surviving. When John was six, his parents sent him to Bern to live with his father's sister, Rosina Wäber. He must have shown ability in art, for at sixteen he was apprenticed

to a leading and popular landscape artist in Switzerland, Johann Aberli. He spent three years in Aberli's studio, and then stayed four years in Paris, where he studied drawing and oil painting at the Académie Royale. Eventually he returned to London to work and to continue his studies at the Royal Academy.

In 1776, Webber's work at an exhibition caught the eye of the Swedish botanist Daniel Solander, who had accompanied Captain James Cook on the first voyage of exploration to the Pacific. Solander knew that the Admiralty was still looking for a suitable expedition artist for Cook's forthcoming third voyage. He met Webber to sound out his interest in the task, and then recommended him to the Admiralty for the job.

John Webber was twenty-four years old when he was offered a place as expedition artist on the explorer's third Pacific voyage. It must have seemed an amazing opportunity to an artist in the early stages of his career. And indeed, that voyage became a launching pad for the direction of Webber's work for the rest of his life.

Webber's appointment was a success. He was popular with his shipmates, and his work was appreciated too. He was obviously an assiduous and enthusiastic worker. He penned, crayoned, and water-coloured his way around the world, producing a large volume of material – from lightning quick field sketches, to worked-up drawings, to complete compositions. He amply fulfilled his task of making an accurate record of landscape and 'memorable scenes', as well as doing competent portraits.

One of his first tasks on the expedition's return to England in 1780 was to complete the portrait of James Cook he had begun in 1776, which he then presented to Cook's widow. The Admiralty employed him for several years making oil paintings based on his drawings. These were the illustrations for the official account of the voyage. He then supervised the engravings made of the pictures to enable them to be printed and published.

Webber's reputation as an artist was thoroughly established by his work from this voyage. His representation of Pacific places continued to fascinate an audience with a thirst for the exotic. One outcome was his involvement in the creation of stage scenery and costumes for the 1785 London stage spectacle loosely based on Cook's voyages.

For the rest of his life, he made regular tours drawing landscapes in Britain and Europe. He continued to do portraits and paint compositions based on the drawings of his Pacific travels, such as his painting of Ship Cove. He was one of the first artists to make and sell prints of his own works. He was made a full member of the Royal Academy in 1791 – a distinction in those days for someone who was regarded primarily as a landscape artist. He died from kidney disease in 1793 at the age of only 42, leaving 'a considerable fortune'.

Sources: Museum of New Zealand; Dictionary of Canadian Biography



John Webber: Sketch of a possum, Tasmania, 1777.  
State Library of Tasmania

Above – Johann Daniel Mottet; Portrait of John Webber, 1812 (Detail). Bernisches Historisches Museum

John Webber: Ship Cove, Queen Charlotte Sound, New Zealand, circa 1788. Museum of New Zealand



# Community News and Events

## NZ: Swiss Society of NZ

The Wellington and Taranaki Swiss Clubs will battle it out in the semi-final of the Cowbell Competition on 26 February in Wellington, and the Auckland and Hamilton Swiss Clubs will play in the other semi-final in a few months' time. The final will then be contested on 5 June in Kaponga, as the Taranaki Swiss Club will host the AGM of the Swiss Society of NZ.

This is a wonderful way for the members of the various Swiss Clubs to mingle, have a chat, catch up with old friends and make new acquaintances. We would love to have members from the South Island attend, however we are aware of the extra commitment and cost involved. Should anyone be keen to attend this fabulous weekend in Taranaki please email [marianne.drummond@swiss.org.nz](mailto:marianne.drummond@swiss.org.nz) for further information.

## NZ: Taranaki Swiss Club

New Years' Eve was held at the Swiss Club together with the Campervan Club and attracted a bit of a smaller crowd than previous years. However it was a fun evening with great musical entertainment and some good stories read out. We saw the Old Year out, and look forward to a New Year with a bit more 'normality' and the ability to hold more functions under our Traffic Light system.

### Upcoming Events:

**3/3 & 17/3:** Keglen at 7.30pm; always lots of fun, a good chat and trying to achieve good results in the 9-pin bowling.

**7/3:** The Annual General Meeting of the Taranaki Swiss Club will be held at 7.30pm; come and hear what happened in the past year and what there is to look forward to in the new one.

**20/3:** The Championship and Society shoots will be held from 1.00pm. Come along and give this 'Swiss' sport a go.

## NZ: Hamilton Swiss Club

Happy New Year to everyone. We hope you had a wonderful Christmas break and have had a great start to the New Year.

Unfortunately, our planned Christmas function had to be cancelled. About two weeks before the function Waikato was in level two with lots of uncertainties ahead of us. The committee consensus at the time was to cancel the function. Within a week we found out we were going to the Orange Traffic Light system early December.

### Upcoming Events:

With Covid still very much the current topic it is very uncertain what will happen to our functions this year, especially over the next few months. The following dates are planned but whether they will go ahead is still uncertain. A decision will be made in the next couple of weeks and a newsletter will be sent out to our members early February. If you are in doubt, please check the website calendar for confirmation or contact us on the numbers below.

**12/2:** 50 metre medal and trophy shooting competition.

**13/2:** Annual family picnic to be held at Newstead School, 11am.

Please note, this is a week earlier than usual. If this event goes ahead, then it is most likely you will need to show your vaccination pass.

**1-3/4:** Ohakune hiking weekend.

For information, please email [anita.zuber@swiss.org.nz](mailto:anita.zuber@swiss.org.nz) or phone 0274 985 170 or Beatrice [bea.leun@xtra.co.nz](mailto:bea.leun@xtra.co.nz) or 07 8437971.

## ACT: Canberra Swiss Club

I hope everyone had a merry Christmas and I wish everyone a happy New Year and all the best in the future.

It was looking promising for the club with all the events taking place again. But then Covid started to spread again and take over our freedom. We had no chance but to cancel all the events again. What a shame...we were looking forward to meeting all the members and families again!

We had our AGM in November online for the first time. Surprisingly it went very smooth and fast. But you can't compare it with sitting together with everyone and having a beautiful dinner meal afterwards. Hopefully next year we can hold the traditional meeting again.

The new committee is meeting very shortly to work out all the events for the year.

The next bigger event will be our annual trip to Durras North for the Canberra long weekend in March. It's very pleasant to stay right at the beach in the cabins. Saturday night we have our Raclette evening under the stars. There is lots of eating, drinking and talking. Singing a few Swiss songs before dessert is pretty common. It's a great weekend, please make sure you book the cabins early as they book out fast.

Let's hope that the weather will hold up, so that we can do the bushwalk, beaches and play a round of golf. If it is raining, we will have to play Jass and talk a lot!

Stay safe.

*Christoph Heiniger, President*

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## NSW: Swiss Community Care Society (SCCS NSW)

As I write this we are, once again, in Covid turmoil. It seems to be 'same, but different': vaccinate, keep your distance, stay outdoors and sanitise.

Last week I got the booster shot and I now feel quite confident of not catching the nasty virus. If I do, it hopefully shouldn't affect me too much. As mask wearing becomes normalised (again!), and we follow the constantly changing restrictions, I hope that you feel the same, because in my opinion we should just start living with the virus.

It was great to be able to go ahead with our Christmas Luncheon last year. About 90 members and a few non-members had a wonderful time. Enjoying the company of friends was surely the main emotion felt that day.

We hope that we can have more events this year. As dates have not yet been set, we ask you to keep checking

our website ([www.swissccs.org.au](http://www.swissccs.org.au)) for information or wait for your invitations to arrive. They are always sent out well ahead of the functions or excursions. For a spontaneous get together you may like to come to our monthly Casual Lunch at the Concordia Club in Tempe. Every third Friday there are three to four tables reserved for the Swiss. Just turn up from 12 noon.

*Regula Scheidegger, (02) 9743 5323*

Our Rural Coordinators are:

### Newcastle:

■ Rita Schaad, (02) 4956 2272  
[maritahl@optusnet.com.au](mailto:maritahl@optusnet.com.au)

### Gosford:

■ Gerhard Moser, (02) 4322 3588  
[gerhard@homeloanguru.com.au](mailto:gerhard@homeloanguru.com.au)

■ Peter Meury, (02) 4388 4809  
[petermeury@bigpond.com](mailto:petermeury@bigpond.com)

### Armidale:

■ Heinz Hauptli, 0417 446 542  
[heinz.hauptli@bigpond.com](mailto:heinz.hauptli@bigpond.com)

### Coonabarabran:

■ Herbert Würsch, (02) 6842 8278

### Wagga Wagga:

■ Elisabeth Rorrison, (02) 6931 9090  
[jrer@ozemail.com.au](mailto:jrer@ozemail.com.au)

### Cobar:

■ Werner Muehlethaler, (02) 6836 2091  
[werner.muehlethaler@exemail.com.au](mailto:werner.muehlethaler@exemail.com.au)

### Bathurst:

■ Johann & Ruth Geissmann, (02) 6337 4103  
[geissmann@bigpond.com](mailto:geissmann@bigpond.com)

### Orange:

■ Monika Rickli, 0419 435 917  
[monika.rickli@hotmail.com](mailto:monika.rickli@hotmail.com)

### Blue Mountains:

■ Elizabeth Bizzini, 0408 414 863  
[bizzini1@hotmail.com](mailto:bizzini1@hotmail.com)

### Ballina:

■ Hans Schaffner  
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## NSW: Cercle Romand

The Cercle Romand end of year dinner gave our members the opportunity to meet at the Little Snail Restaurant in the heart of Darling Harbour. Luckily the omicron virus had not invaded our shore yet, which allowed us to enjoy the night free of worries. This mood was reflected among the many people enjoying an evening out in Sydney.

These days, we have become used to rapidly changing situations. It is again with hope, that we are organising our next event on 27 February. Our traditional 'Pétanque & Brunch at the Park' will be held at Ballast Point Park, Birchgrove. This gathering is open to anyone related to the Swiss community and it is an opportunity to meet new people.

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

The committee thanks all its members for supporting our club and looks forward to seeing you in the coming months.

**Le Cercle Romand...que du bon temps**

**FB : Cercle Romand Sydney**

## SA: Swiss Club of South Australia

For over 55 years, the Swiss Club of SA has been organising traditional Swiss events to preserve and promote the Swiss heritage and friendship, and last year was no exception – despite Covid, we hosted three main activities.

In January, we attempted to organise an event under the auspices of the Consulate General of Switzerland – the proposal was to hold a Jungbürgefer in a ceremony to recognise young Swiss coming of age. The Consulate sent out letters to 18 young Swiss, inviting them to attend the event at the new Pilatus offices at the Airport. Preparations however were cut short by poor response rates.

We do hope to be able to hold the event this coming year, and we encourage you to promote it with people you know, by word of mouth – coming of age as a Swiss citizen abroad is an important milestone, and a visit to Pilatus is a unique opportunity to understand one of the success stories from Switzerland. We thank Pilatus for accepting to host the event, and look forward to working with them this year.

Our traditional Fondue night was held at the Austrian Club, as we have done in past years. The fondue itself was unfortunately not a raging success, but the atmosphere was great, with live music and great raffle prizes.

One of the events we organise is the 1st of August celebration – this event was rescheduled twice, and finally cancelled: Covid-related restrictions became more and more strict after the lockdown in July, making it impossible to hold an event with over 20 people on a private property. We hope to be able to hold the event at Colombo Farm, and build a huge bonfire.

We held our traditional Würstli Brötli event at Kuitpo Forest, together with our AGM, where the committee for this year was elected – Victoria Tobé is our Vice President in charge of communications, Markus Hugenschmidt has retained the position of Treasurer, and Marlene Guillaume is continuing as

Activities Manager. We are thrilled that Maya Schnider has decided to make a comeback as Secretary after a few years' break, replacing Daria Gutteridge, and we thank Daria for all her efforts over the last two years. It would be remiss of me not to mention the many hands who help us with the running of the Club – Sybille Faeh-Kümin is managing our Social Media, and Marinette Cachin and Herbert Galle lent a hand in the preparation of the events.

Our latest event was the traditional Samichlaus event at Morialta Conservation Park in December, increasingly popular with both young and not-so-young, and it was pleasingly attended by a growing number of children.

We are excited to announce that we were awarded a grant as part of the Expand Together Grant program offered by the Multicultural Affairs section of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The package is for a portable Bose S1 Pro public address system. This equipment will be of great assistance at club events, both to play music and make announcements.

As mentioned above, we are a club whose aim is to organise traditional Swiss events – we encourage all Swiss in South Australia to come and pay us a visit at one of our events. Visit us at [www.swissclubsa.com.au](http://www.swissclubsa.com.au) or email us on [info@swissclubsa.org.au](mailto:info@swissclubsa.org.au)

*Henri Guillaume, President*

## QLD: Fraser Coast Swiss Group

Our monthly lunch on the 15th of each month in different Restaurants are ongoing. All year we had no restrictions until the QLD border opened in December and now we have the same situation and restrictions as in most other states. So far no reports of serious cases of Swiss in our area.

On 5 December for Samichlaus we were invited for a Lunch with Roast etc to celebrate at Bin and Urs' big shed near the Maryborough Railway Station. After indulging the huge dessert buffet provided by all of us, we had the opportunity to visit their workshop where every customer's wish, small or big, in Australia or overseas, can be produced in fiberglass, from church dome roofs, waterpark creatures, boats, caravan...you name it.



Those who could not make it still had a Christmas celebration together with decorated table at the Taverne Restaurant.

Hoping all stays safe in the Hervey Bay area so we can celebrate Easter together in someone's garden.

Many are wishing to be able to travel also to Switzerland again to meet families or have visitors from Switzerland. Fingers crossed!

Contact the organiser, Cecile Scherrer, for details: [cecile.sch70@gmail.com](mailto:cecile.sch70@gmail.com) or 0409 286 326 or 07 4194 01 05





### VIC: The Matterhorn Yodel Choir

A happy and healthy New Year to all of you connected to Switzerland in one way or another.

We are an enthusiastic group, passionate about Swiss culture, in particular preserving and enjoying traditional Swiss song and music. Although 2022 is starting a little differently from our expectations, we still expect practice sessions to resume in February.

The choir endeavours to stick to the Swiss Yodel Federation guidelines. The aim of these guidelines is to preserve the original and unique Swiss style of yodelling. By aiming to stick to these rules, possible influences of modern slang and pop music are kept at bay. Otherwise our group is committed to community service, inclusiveness of a wide diversity and warmly welcoming.

We are very happy to welcome new members, so if you feel you would like to join us please call Chris on 9754 7380 or 0428 427 434

Stay safe and keep singing!

### Swiss Sayings: Lost in Translation

*Interesting sayings in our national languages, explained by Beatrice Schlegel – a professional translator and Swiss Abroad from Wales in the UK.*

#### “Bis denn goot no vill Wasser dr Rhy ab”

The river in this saying could be adapted to suit the relevant location of the speaker i.e. ‘Rhy’ could be replaced by ‘Limmat’ (for Zürich) or ‘Rhone’ (Wallis) etc. In English it would mean something along the lines of ‘It will be a long time until something happens’.

In Italian it can be translated as:

**“Ne passerà di acqua sotto i ponti prima che ciò accada.”**

And in French you could say:

**“D’ici là il en coulera de l’eau – sous les ponts.”**

Beatrice Schlegel, B.A.(hons), M.A., MCIL

info@beatservices.co.uk www.beatservices.co.uk

### VIC: Groupe Romand du Victoria

The Groupe Romand was founded in 1990 as a social club for French-speaking Swiss and other Francophones to meet and enjoy each other’s company in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. We are affiliated with the Swiss Club of Victoria but have our own membership structure.

The Group organises a number of recurring events like fondue or raclette evenings, picnics, pétanque afternoons, mini-golf days and the viewing of French movies and it is also active within the wider Swiss community. Sadly, all of these activities have been very much impacted by COVID for the past two years. We hope for an improvement in 2022!

New members, new ideas and new talent are always welcome. Contactez-nous!

Patricia Callegari-Medcalf, Présidente

T: 9583 2860 M: 0408 299 660

[secretairegrouperomand@gmail.com](mailto:secretairegrouperomand@gmail.com)

### VIC: Les Bavards – The ‘Chatterboxes’

This group started a few years ago on the request of a few German-speaking compatriots wishing to keep or improve their French and is convened by members of the Groupe Romand.

Every second and fourth Tuesday of the month (COVID permitting!), they meet at the Swiss Club, where they converse in French for an hour before enjoying a meal (optional).

For further details, please contact:

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### VIC: Swiss Society of Victoria

In a repeat from last year, due to COVID restrictions our Senior Noel celebration could not be held at the Swiss Club. It is particularly hard at this time of the year for our senior community members to be stuck at home and isolated from family and friends. With the support of the Swiss Society of Victoria, the ‘bakers’ from the Trachtengruppe Schwyzgruuss, as well as many other helpers, united to create some Christmas magic in form of gift bags filled with home-made cookies.

This initiative, known as ‘The Guetzli Drive’, truly made a big difference to the lives of many of our mostly elderly community members. The personal deliveries brought a welcome break from the social isolation and was a great opportunity to re-connect, apparently some of the visits led to a coffee or two and a good old ‘Schwätz’ (chat) over some delicious cookies.

Thank you to all involved – you know who you are – for living the community spirit and spreading some wonderful Christmas cheer!



**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 41 419 264 390)

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