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REGIONAL NEWS

OCEANIA



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

Editorial:

“Knowing that things can always be worse, but hoping there’s nowhere to go but up” – with that in mind, I wish everyone a happy, healthy and positive 2023!

We’re all longing for getting together again, sharing in person and enjoying each others company. The recent Oceania Swiss Club Presidents’ Conference that finally was able to go ahead after a two-year delay is a good indication that things are improving.



Oceania Swiss Club Presidents’ Conference

Canberra, 18-20 November 2022

The Swiss Alliance Australia Inc. – the Umbrella Organisation of Swiss Associations in Australia – together with the Australian members of the Council of the Swiss Abroad, organised the 4th Oceania Swiss Club Presidents’ Conference. Host was the Embassy of Switzerland in Canberra.

It was attended by representatives of Swiss organisations from Australia and New Zealand together with distinguished guests, Laurent Perriard (Deputy Director General of the Consular Directorate at the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs), Caroline Bichet-Anthamatten (Swiss Ambassador to Australia), Viktor Vavricka (Swiss Ambassador to New Zealand), Filippo Lombardi (President of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad),

who joined the discussion online, and newly-appointed Consul General, Conny Camenzind.

The conference’s aim was to strengthen the links between the representatives of the Swiss organisations in Oceania and provide a forum for networking and information exchange. Thank-you to all participants for the fruitful interactions!

Our gratitude goes to the **Ambassador and staff of the Embassy of Switzerland** for the most generous hospitality everyone was able to enjoy. Sincere thanks also to the following for their support of this event:

Lindt Chocolates – www.lindt.com.au/

Curaprox – curaprox.com.au/shop/

Just Australia – just-australia.com/



The conference participants from around Australia, New Zealand and Switzerland



For a full report and many more photos go to the website of the Swiss Alliance ➔
www.swissallianceaustralia.org/events

Consular Information

Dear Swiss compatriots,
dear Swiss Review readers in Australia

The last three long years of Covid have proven difficult for all of us individually and as a community globally. I am glad that travels are again possible and that we all can move around fairly free. Hopefully, you had or will soon have a chance to catch up with your loved ones or friends anywhere on this planet.



In October 2022, I have arrived from Chengdu/China where I was posted as the Consul General of Switzerland taking over from my predecessor, my former Consul General in Toronto and friend, Bernadette Hunkeler Brown. The ominous first 100 days are filled with a lot of new encounters. I was lucky to be part of the Swiss Alliance Association's Meeting in Canberra which gave me an opportunity to meet many Swiss Club and other associations' presidents. I took part in several annual or end-of-year functions having enriching conversations with Swiss living in Australia for so many years or being of Swiss descent hearing their stories why and how they ended up Down Under. I met some of our Swiss business community and Australian partners. It was so far only a fraction of the 26,000 registered Swiss living in Australia and an excellent chance to get a first glimpse of our strong community. I am sure I will be meeting many more once I start traveling to all corners of this beautiful country.

My journey with the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA has certainly been diverse. During the last 33+ years. I started in Berne followed by New York, Seoul, Washington DC, Cape Town, Dar es Salaam, Ramallah, Baku, Toronto, Berne, Bangalore, and Chengdu. I also worked on short assignments in Canberra (1995), Dhaka, Antananarivo, Beirut and Sochi during the Winter Olympics. Now I am very glad to have landed in Sydney.

Furthermore, my team has seen two more changes. Andrea Köppel Nko'o, Consul and Head of Chancery, has arrived from Tokyo in August 2022 and Jérôme Charbonnet, Deputy Consul General, joined the team in December 2022. Both have at least 20 years of experience with the FDFA. Our goal as a team is to continue serving the Swiss community in all consular matters. Feel free to contact us through the usual means of communications and you shall receive a timely answer to your queries.

CONNIE CAMENZIND | CONSUL GENERAL OF SWITZERLAND, SYDNEY



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
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Confederaziun svizra

AUS: The Consulate General celebrated 30 years at the Westfield Tower, Bondi Junction

On 7 December 1992, the Consulate General moved from the Edgecliff Centre to its current location on the 23rd floor of the Westfield Tower 2 in Bondi Junction. The office view of the Sydney CBD (Central Business District), Harbour Bridge and the famous Sydney Opera House is breathtaking!



With about 26,000 Swiss registered at the Consulate General, Australia hosts the seventh largest Swiss community worldwide.

Nowadays, the Consulate General in Sydney is in charge of consular matters for the entire Swiss community in Australia, as well as for the Swiss living in the Pacific Islands of Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The Trade Point Australia office and the Switzerland Tourism office are also part of the Consulate General. Currently the entire team consists of 14 colleagues, all being Swiss nationals.

In Australia, Switzerland is today represented by the Embassy in Canberra, which was established in 1961 and celebrated 60 years of diplomatic relations last year, by the Consulate General in Sydney, as well as by the Honorary Consulates in Adelaide, Brisbane, Darwin, Hobart, Melbourne and Perth.



Greetings from the team of the Consulate General in Sydney!

AUS: Mobile Passport Station visits

The team of the Consulate General in Sydney is planning the following sessions with the Mobile Passport Station:

Schedule for 2023:	Schedule for 2024:
Perth May	Brisbane March
Adelaide October	Hobart October
Darwin October	Melbourne October

Registered citizens of the respective areas will be contacted by e-mail prior to the visit with detailed information regarding dates, venues and procedures. Please ensure that the Consulate General has your up-to-date personal data and e-mail address.

The Consulate General aims to provide this service to the Swiss Community on a rotational basis, visiting all territories and states within a two-year period.

FDJP: Passport online application service

Did you know? You can also give your biometric data while staying in Switzerland at the passport office of your choice. If you wish to do so, apply online for your identification documents and state in your application under remarks which passport office in Switzerland you would like to visit and the dates of your stay in Switzerland. After reviewing your application and the green light from the passport office in Switzerland, we will inform you how to proceed.

Swiss citizens are entitled to a passport and an identity card. Swiss travel documents are produced in Switzerland. The current biometric passports contain a chip on which your fingerprints and an image of your face are stored electronically. You can apply online for your identification documents. Once your application is checked, you receive an invitation to record your biometric data at the competent Swiss representation (for Oceania that is Sydney or Wellington). Check the expiry date on your current passport and identity card and leave enough time to order new ones.

Online application via the website of the Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP) ➔

www.ch-edoc-passantrag.admin.ch/#/antraggesuch?request_locale=en

AUS: Swiss Alliance Australia (SAA) Community Calendar

Swiss Events in Australia

As an additional service to the Swiss community in Australia, the SAA has created an events calendar on the SAA website. Our aim is that it will become the ultimate go-to place for anyone that is interested to find out about Swiss community events in Australia.

Who is it for? It is for all Swiss associations, clubs, groups – big or small – or individuals in Australia, irrespective whether they are members of the SAA or not. Everyone is welcome to post their non-commercial Swiss community event on this calendar free of charge.

Anyone can go ahead and post their event without having to contact us, or asking us to put it up on their behalf. Simply click on the date field you want or the + sign at the top to open an event field. Entering the information is simple and self-explanatory. A posting will not be visible straight away. We get notified and have to approve anything saved on the calendar in order to prevent any misuse.

The success of this tool depends on people using it – those that have something to advertise, and those that want to look up what the Swiss community in Australia is doing. So please, go ahead and make it your own.

Information/questions: Roland Isler – risler@csa-oceania.org

Go to the website of the Swiss Alliance Australia ➔
www.swissallianceaustralia.org



Swiss Alliance Australia Inc.
Umbrella Organisation of
Swiss Associations in Australia

OCEANIA: Digitalisation of Swiss Club Records in Australia and New Zealand

The CSA Oceania is appealing to all Swiss Clubs in Oceania to embark on a **Digitalisation Drive** of their records. In order to ensure a professional approach to this process and to make easy access available for later research, we are looking for dedicated professionals to work out guidelines and supervise implementation of this process on a voluntary basis.

In the same vein, we want to mention the project of an **E-Library of Biographies** of Swiss Migrants in Oceania. Again, specialist knowledge is sought to come forth to set guidelines. We think that achievements of the Swiss Abroad have largely been underrated or barely recognised – the value-added component of the Swiss Abroad to the benefit of Switzerland is great. Time to rebalance the verdict.

For further information please contact the following CSA delegates:

Beat Knoblauch – beatek@ozemail.com.au

Carmen Trochsler – ctrochsler@csa-oceania.org

Community News and Events

NZ: Taranaki Swiss Club

On 20 November the Ted Napflin Memorial Shield was contested in the small bore shooting, as well as participants being able to shoot the Championship Shoot. We had another great muster of shooters taking part and it was wonderful to see the shoots keenly contested. After the final tallies were done, the winner of the shield was Marianne Drummond scoring 100, with husband Adrian and sons Daniel and Richard all achieving 99 points!

27 November saw the Christmas Shoot being held, with participants able to either shoot or skittle. Father Christmas made an appearance. He thoroughly enjoyed hearing the children sing and Margaret read a lovely story. Father Christmas generously gave all the children a little bag of lollies before leaving. Prize giving for the adults was then had, with everyone receiving a prize. This was another lovely, social day and it was absolutely wonderful to see so many children come along with their parents. Thank you all for coming, and grateful thanks to Father Christmas for making the time to come to the Swiss Club in his busy schedule.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

2/2 & 16/2: Kegeln recommences for 2023 at 7.30pm, and Heidi looks forward to seeing you all again!

11/2: We will be hosting the Wellington Swiss Club in the semi-final of the cowbell competition and we look forward to our members supporting us for this event. A dinner will be offered for a small charge followed by a social evening with the Wellingtonians.

12/2: Our popular annual picnic will be held on this day ... everyone is looking forward to it because we were unable to hold it last year. There will be Swiss wrestling (schwingen), Swiss food and music, a fabulous Swiss tombola (raffle) and plenty of activities for everyone ... what more could you want?!

2/2 & 16/3: Keglen again from 7.30pm ... please come along!

4/3: The Annual General Meeting of the Taranaki Swiss Social Club will be held at 7.30pm. Please come along to hear what happened during the past year and what's in store for the coming year.

11/3: The 12th Australasia Jass Tournament will be held at our club house and we look forward to many

local members participating, as well as a contingent from Australia. For more information please contact Marlies on 027 828 9014 or heblers@xtra.co.nz. We are looking forward to hosting this event, which will culminate with a dinner and prize giving on the Saturday evening. We will require numbers, so please ring Marlies or Marianne on 06 7628757 to book in ... even if you just wish to come to the dinner and social evening.

19/3: Championship and Society Shoots will be contested from 1pm. Do join in!

NZ: Hamilton Swiss Club

Our Family Christmas Party was held on 4 December at the Newstead School. We were very lucky with the weather as it was a perfect Waikato summer day with blue sky. It was one of the few nice days since end of October. People arrived gradually and a few of the younger children sat down to do some Christmas crafts and decorate gingerbread men, Christmas trees and stars. This is always a lovely activity for the little ones. This year we had only about a dozen children under 10 and a few teenagers but we definitely had a good turnout of adults – young and not so young. Around midday everyone enjoyed the grilled bratwurst and cervelats and a cold drink. After lunch



Busy Santa visiting the Taranaki children...



...and on to Hamilton to hand out more goodies.

raffle tickets were sold and soon it was time to welcome Santa and his young helper. Heidi and her girls played some lovely Christmas carols that everyone joined in and then Santa handed out his gifts to the little ones. Thank you very much Santa for making time to come and visit our group of friendly faces. After this there was a very special presentation made to Hans Vetsch who is the outgoing Rifle-master after more than 20 years of service. Thank-you Hans for doing this job so well and rounding up the troops whenever there was a shooting event planned. It was then time to draw the raffles. Thank you to everyone who brought along prizes – always a very big selection to choose from. Congratulations to all the many lucky winners. After this, coffee and biscuits were served. Again, thank you to all those who brought along a lovely selection of home-made baking that everyone enjoyed. Beatrice was again very busy sorting out sausage orders from the Swiss Deli and thanks to her for doing this once again. Many thanks to all the helpers throughout the day.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

18/2: 50 metre Swiss Society Shooting Competition. Epp's farm, 1101 Taotaoroa Rd, Cambridge, 9am to 12 noon.

18/2: Meet the new Swiss Ambassador, Mr Viktor Vavricka, 7.00pm at the Matangi Hall. There will be an introduction followed by a discussion mainly on the Swiss political system. The Common Law group will also be joining. It is also likely the Ambassador will be at the picnic. Any further information needed, please contact Willetta on 027 24 90 003.



Hans Vetsch and Herbert Staheli

19/2: Annual Picnic to be held at the Newstead School from 11am to 3.30pm.

For any further details or information about functions or membership, please contact: Beatrice Leuenberger: 021 29 28 254, bea.leun@extra.co.nz; Anita Zuber: 027 498 5170, anita.zuber@swiss.org.nz; Herbert Staheli: 021 962 708.



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SA: Swiss Club of South Australia

The Swiss Club in South Australia celebrated its last event for 2022 with our Samichlaus event, with an attendance of over 40 people, including a dozen children. This year, we chose the event to be held at the Montacute Community Hall. The children were delighted by Samichlaus who happened to be present on his travels around the world, together with Schmutzli. And during that time, parents enjoyed brunch and catching up with each other.

Thank you to all those who helped make this a successful event!

This event was the first that our new committee has organised (see photo). The new committee who was elected at the AGM consists of our Vice President Victoria Tobé, our Treasurer Markus Hugenschmidt, our Secretary Maya Schnider, our Events Coordinator Regula Muller, our Communications Officer Sibylle Faeh, and our Jack of all Trades Marc Rychener, and yours truly as President.



Our Swiss Club is all about get-togethers among friends and people from the same area of the world, who don't necessarily meet otherwise.

We have a lot of fun as a virtual, itinerant and vibrant Club, and our aim is very much to promote our traditional events. Our next event will be the very popular Fondue Night, on 29 April 2023, at the Austrian Club in Prospect.

We welcome you to our events and look forward to catching up with you soon!

Tune in to our Swiss Radio program: 5EBI (103.1FM) every Saturday, from 6pm to 7pm ACST (<https://5ebi.com.au/programs/swiss/>) for traditional Swiss music.

And for further details of events, how to become a member (especially if you have just arrived in South Australia) or getting in touch with our business partners, head to our website www.swissclubsa.org.au or email us at info@swissclubsa.org.au

HENRI GUILLAUME

QLD: Fraser Coast Swiss Group

Our Samichlaus/Christmas celebration was again held at Silvia and Emil's property. Even though some regulars were unable to attend, we still were 22 participants judging the lovely Grittibänze.

Every 15th of the month we meet for lunch at different locations. For details contact organiser Cecile Scherrer on 0409 286 326, cecile.sch70@gmail.com. We welcome anyone coming to Hervey Bay area.

Wishing all a happy, healthy and exciting 2023!



NSW: Port Macquarie Region Swiss Group

At the end of November, we had a lovely BBQ up at the dam and everybody had a very enjoyable and relaxing time.

Our next get-together will be a BBQ/picnic on Sunday 12 March at Rainbow Beach. Please put a note in your diary and further details will follow by email.

If you have not already been in touch with me and would like to join in, please send me an email to SwissHastings@yahoo.com

Looking forward to hearing from you. ANITA FOSTER

NSW: Swiss Yodlers of Sydney

We are happy to have signed off 2022 having enjoyed a good year despite fewer opportunities to meet and sing. At the recent end-of-year Annual General Meeting, cleverly combined with a true Swiss style BBQ, we and our spouses/partners once again experienced the warm hospitality of our President Alois and his wife Bronwen. The statutory formalities were over and done with within one hour! The important social interaction (with fine food and plenty of drinks!) lasted for the rest of the afternoon. Most pleasing, two new members, Beat Birchmeier and Daniel Hofmann, were welcomed into the Club boosting the number of active singers and Alphorn Players to a respectable 19.

The next few months will be set aside to get the Choir into shape for the forthcoming visit to the 'Eidgenössisches Yodlerfest' in Zug mid-June

We invite anyone interested in singing to join us for an informal 'come and see for yourself' at Chatswood, where we practise every Monday Night from 7 to 8.30pm with a drink and chat afterwards for those who want to engage and appreciate the camaraderie with songs still in their heart. Please also note, that it is not too late to join us for the trip to Zug as a new member where the Club would support you with a subsidy towards travel costs

To discuss please feel free to contact:
President, Alois Kretz 9419 7277
Conductor, Sepp Engesser 9659 6232
Treasurer, Karin Attewel 8964 4434



The Choir with retired Consul General Bernadette Hunkeler Brown and Ambassador Caroline Bichet-Anthamatten

NSW: Swiss Community Care Society (SCCS NSW)

In the past year I have had several experiences of 'Networking' in regards to our care activities. The lines to me or from me stretched to the Swiss Consulate and as far as Perth, the north of WA, and Queensland. You guess it, there were cases of hardship which required attention. SCCS Queensland usually operate on their own, but it is officially a subsidiary of SCCS NSW. This means that we have contact with each other if a certain case needs more than just a little attention. SCCS Queensland is doing a fantastic job, not only in Brisbane, but 'up the coast' too. They are often busy with elderly Swiss, especially people who have decided to make the move to the warm North for their retirement years.

I was asked to speak for a few minutes about a possible 'Australia-wide Care Network' at the 4th Oceania Swiss Club Presidents' Conference which took place in Canberra in November. I suggested that we presidents and leaders of Swiss groups all make an effort to know of, and if necessary, talk to each other. Even the president or a member of a yodel choir or Swiss Club in another city may have the goodwill and energy to make contact with a newly arrived Swiss person and for instance invite him or her to their next function. We don't need a new 'Verein' to do that. I also mentioned our initiative with the Rural Coordinators. Though it doesn't look like they are very busy I find it most comforting to know that they would be a point of contact for Swiss in country NSW who wish to meet compatriots for whatever reason.

We are now looking forward to again pulling through with our events of the year. As soon as we know the details you can look them up on our website www.swissccs.org.au

With best wishes for 2023.

REGULA SCHEIDEGGER

President:	Regula Scheidegger	0432 031 085	rscheidegger49@hotmail.com
SCCS CONTACTS IN RURAL NSW:			
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NSW: Cercle Romand

45 years ago, on 12 December 1977, the Cercle Romand was founded. The objective of the club was to establish and maintain contact with Swiss-French and keep the French language alive. We celebrated successfully this milestone at our end-of-year dinner held on 4 December. Thank-you to our guests and to the **Embassy of Switzerland/Consulate General** for donating a special Swiss touch for our guests to wear proudly. Thank-you to Lindt Australia for the delicious chocolate donation. And special thank-you to Catherine for baking delicious Christmas biscuits for all to enjoy.

The committee has compiled the event's calendar for 2023 with our first on 26 February, our traditional 'Pétanque & Brunch at the Park' to 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.

The details for each activity are published on the club website: 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.

**VIC: Swiss Club of Victoria**

The first floor of our building in Flinders Lane will be renovated in the first half of 2023. As a result, there will be a state-of-the-art kitchen, a modern looking bar/restaurant and an area overlooking Flinders Lane. In February 2023 the committee will start looking for a manager who can run the Swiss Club restaurant. If you are interested or know someone who could be interested, please contact Barbara Kündig barbara@swissclubvic.com.au

UPCOMING EVENT:

The Club will celebrate its 124th birthday in Melbourne and its 50th birthday in Flinders Lane with a special dinner on 4 February. Everyone is welcome to join us for \$5 entry fee. Canapes and nibbles provided. Raffle tickets available. Dress code 70s.

VIC: SwissKids

The final SwissKids event for 2022 was held in December with the traditional Samichlaus event held at Jells Park. The event is popular with the Swiss kids who eagerly anticipate the arrival of Samichlaus and perhaps even more so, the infamous Schmutzli. The event was a great opportunity for parents and kids to meet up for the last time in 2022 as well as say goodbye to Mat Lorencak and his family who have hosted SwissKids for many years.

In 2023, SwissKids will take on a slightly different format with seven events proposed to include other Swiss groups to make for some larger cultural events as well as introducing three new conveners to offer both cultural and language experiences for the children. The events will be offered in English, French and Swiss-German and we are currently looking for an expression of interest for other conveners who may support the events with Italian and Romansch where possible. We look forward to seeing you all again in 2023!

UPCOMING EVENT:

12/2: Summer Barefoot Bowls (Pétanque) & Cervela. 12pm, St Kilda Bowls Club, 66 Fitzroy Street, St Kilda. For bookings and enquiries contact Claude Staub 0433 888 889 or claudes@swissclubvic.com.au

Go to the **Swiss Events Calendar** on the website of the **Swiss Alliance** to find information of all the events planned for 2023: www.swissallianceaustralia.org



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.

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<https://swissocietyvic.org/>
Susan Brealey – M: 0401 170 036
E: admin@swissocietyvic.org

REGIONAL NEWS OCEANIA

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risler@csa-oceania.org +61 (0)412 935 565

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1-January	Mon, 02.01.23	Fri, 27.01.23
2-March	Tue, 28.02.23	Fri, 24.03.23
3-May	Tue, 18.04.23	Fri, 12.05.23
4-August	no regional news	Fri, 11.08.23
5-October	Tue, 26.09.23	Fri, 20.10.23
6-December	no regional news	Fri, 08.12.23

Visit the umbrella organisations in Australia and New Zealand for community news and information, as well as links to Swiss Clubs, community groups, professional organisations and consular representations in Oceania:

www.swissallianceaustralia.org
www.swiss.org.nz



Swiss Alliance Australia Inc.
Umbrella Organisation of Swiss Associations in Australia



The Swiss Society of New Zealand Inc.
Established 1935