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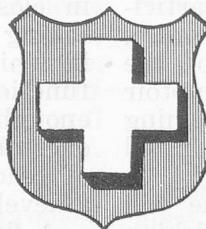
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# HELVETIA

MONTHLY  
PUBLICATION  
OF THE



SWISS BENEVOLENT  
SOCIETY IN  
NEW ZEALAND (INC.)

GROUP NEW ZEALAND OF THE NEW HELVETIC SOCIETY

17th YEAR.

SEPTEMBER, 1953.

AUCKLAND.

## NEWS OF THE COLONY

### Swiss Social Club 1st August Celebration in Kaponga.

This year's 1st August celebration of the Club was held in a little different manner to other years. We started off with a banquet in the evening, which was expertly prepared and served by our compatriot, Mr. J. Leuthard, New Plymouth.

Mr. and Mrs. L. Abbott, the chairman of the Kaponga Town Board, and Mr. and Mrs. F. Lemm, the local police constable, were our guests of honour; otherwise it was reserved for club members and their families only. About 240 people attended and enjoyed themselves thoroughly until the cows called again in the morning.

Amongst our visitors from outside the district was Mr. B. B. Zurcher, from Palmerston North, who in his 80th year, is a very keen supporter of the club, and also three young compatriots from Christchurch, who, we hope, liked this evening with us; we sure did enjoy their music and yodelling very much.

In his speech the club's president expressed his appreciation about the great amount of goodwill enjoyed by the Swiss people amongst the New Zealand community, which was earned the hard way by our elders through sincere work and straight-forward business dealings. Mr. Abbott, in reply, thanked the Swiss people for their support whenever they were called upon, and promised the use of the new town hall free of charge on the first season as soon as it is built, which very nice gesture will be very much appreciated.

—W.R.

The United Nations Association Social Club of Wellington entertained in quick succession on two Sunday evenings, its numerous members and friends of some 30 different nations with a programme on Switzerland. On August 30th, five Swiss films were shown which were greatly appreciated, and on September 13th a small group of young Swiss gave a "variете" perform-

ance consisting of songs, accordion, mouth-organ playing, and, announced by cowbells, an improvised "Alphorn" (a most ingenious contraption consisting of a washing machine funnel on a long piece of garden hose) was blown, for which the player earned much applause. Also his "Fahnen-schwingen" was a novelty to this gathering and proved most effective. The entire programme was arranged by H. Ittensohn and the other performers, among whom were two girls in national costumes, who looked most attractive.

## NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND THE 34th LAUSANNE NATIONAL FAIR

In Switzerland each year two great trade fairs provide a decisive stimulus to the economic life of the country: the National Fairs of Basle and Lausanne. To the foreigner, Berne is the traditional and political capital of the country, Geneva the city of great international organisations, and in Zurich he can see an eloquent demonstration of the growth of a small country, but at Basle in the spring and at Lausanne in the autumn he will find the great commercial centres of the country. It is in these two towns, one in the German speaking part of Switzerland, the other in the French speaking part, that manufacturers regularly display and concentrate in one vast exhibition the main achievements of Swiss industry.

The 34th Lausanne National Fair, a source of economic information, a stimulus of the market and providing a true picture of the work of a nation, will be opening its gates from September 12th to 27th, 1953.

A few figures will suffice to show its importance: it covers an area of over 1,000,000 sq. feet, possesses 16 halls, is divided into 20 groups and displays the products of 2,250 exhibitors from all the Swiss cantons. On a scale in keeping with the size of the country, it is the most complete and the most instructive object lesson in agriculture, industry, trade and craftsmanship, that is to say, the basic elements of an economy closely bound up with world trade.

This trade fair, which is national in character, regularly invites one foreign country to participate with a display of its own. After France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Morocco, the Belgian Congo and Tunisia, the Swiss Comptoir will have the privilege this year of welcoming as its official guest the Republic of the United States of Brazil.

From September 12th to 27th, Lausanne will be the centre of attraction for all those wishing to see the achievements of Swiss workmanship, at this trade fair which, moreover, constitutes one of the most noble and authentic traditions of the country.

### SWISS INDUSTRY AND PROSPECTS OF USING ATOMIC ENERGY

Switzerland possesses no uranium ore, the only natural fissile material making possible a nuclear chain reaction, that is a reaction which, in given conditions, maintains itself. The lack of materials indispensable to the construction of a reactor or nuclear pile has not however prevented this country from devoting all its attention to the theoretical and experimental study of the fundamental problems raised by the industrial use of atomic energy.

Extensive research work has been undertaken by university institutes and Swiss industry. The Swiss Commission for Atomic Energy (C.S.A.), set up in 1946, immediately organised several teams of research workers who have done some very useful work under its expert guidance. Basic research remains the prerogative of the universities and institutions such as the Geneva Laboratory recently set up by the European Council for Nuclear Research. Industry, for its part, founded, in December, 1948, the Industrial Commission for Atomic Energy, an institution which will be called upon to take some important decisions.

Shortly after the end of the Second World War, the Swiss firm of Brown, Boveri and Co. gathered together a group of young physicists who took an active part in the work of the university institutes. Some years later, the physicists were joined by some engineers in order to work out a project for an atomic power plant. The preliminary work done so far has shown clearly that the machines of a thermal power station using nuclear fuel would not be very different from the usual steam or hot gas turbines.

This did not in any way lessen the interest shown in the problems of nuclear energy and a wish for closer collaboration led, in March, 1951, to an agreement between the Swiss firms of Brown, Boveri and Co., Sulzer Bros., and Escher Wyss.

The original team which had been joined by a theoretical physicist from the C.S.A. and a chemist from Ciba, manufacturers of chemical

products, has been increased in size. Working in close collaboration with C.S.A. it is undertaking preliminary studies for a power plant in which a nuclear reactor would take over the functions of a boiler. This may appear simple enough at first sight, but the difficulties to be overcome are such that there can be no question of reaching this final stage by rushing through a development which can only be long and costly.

A first decision on a matter of principle was taken by C.S.A. in July, 1952, when it was decided to build a reactor in Switzerland in order to make possible the experimental study of the elements of an industrial pile of high power. The problem of obtaining supplies of materials in which trade is not free will however be less difficult to solve than that of financing the project, for the minimum dimensions of the plant, determined by the laws of nuclear physics, will call for the investment of several tens of millions francs.

Experts abroad are unanimous in predicting the commercial application of nuclear energy by the end of the century, i.e., at a time when it might be more economical to produce nuclear fuel than to mechanise coal mining any further. By taking an active part in this development and the study of numerous technical and physical problems not yet solved, Switzerland is making sure that it will not be left behind in the production of all the many apparatuses that will be required by the new thermal power plants.

### OUR FATHERLAND (Continuation)

**Lucerne:** The earliest record of Lucerne is as a tiny fishing village where, before the invasion by the Romans, a little church was built close to the spot where the Reuss flows out of the lake. From these small beginnings gradually emerged the medieval town, whose ancient walls with their towers and battlements still stand, as silent witnesses of the old times. Through storm and stress the citizens fought their way to make it an assured place in a more modern world.

Lucerne combines so many attractions in itself, its situation and its views, that volumes might be filled with its praises. The Reuss is spanned by a fine modern concrete bridge and by two old wooden covered bridges which are highly picturesque and curious. Inside these bridges, on the sides and the roofing, are well preserved paintings of local city history and biblical scenes, all executed in native style. Near by is the old town hall with its unique collection of weapons and banners.

The Lion of Lucerne, erected in 1821 to the memory of twenty-six officers and 760 soldiers of the Swiss guard who fell to a man, defending Louis XV at the Tuilleries on August 10th, 1792, is a monument 26 feet in length, chiselled in the face of the rocky cliff 60 feet in height. It repre-