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A Summary of the Founding of the Swiss Club of N.Z.

We are keeping this article about the founding of the first Swiss Club to be followed by an account of the founding of the Swiss Society in 1932 and then the Taranaki Swiss Club in 1951. The Hamilton and Auckland Swiss Club in 1956, to be followed by the Wellington and Christchurch Swiss Clubs, on this last page on consecutive issues in order to give the people the opportunity to cut it out and keep it for reference.

Amongst my collection of old time Swiss I have come across a most interesting Minute Book of the first Swiss Club that was founded in Taranaki in 1910. It has been given to me some 20 odd years ago by the late Mr Martin Steiner, who was the first and only President of that Club. I hope that you find it interesting and most valuable in studying the history of our forbears. You will notice that the same thinking is still with us and I hope that we are a bit more advanced in persevering of our goal. For the benefit of our second and third generation of Swiss I will translate the script, which is German, however, I must keep the first part in German as it more accurately conveys the truer meaning of it to the reader.

PROTOKOLL BUCH DES SCHWEIZERVEREINS TARANAKI

Anlaesslich der Steigerung von Schumacher und Muller, welche am 28ten July 1910 stattfand, in Riverley fanden sich mehrere Schweizer zusammen und es wurde von Andreas Huber die Anregung gemacht einen Schweizerverein zu gruenden, zwar nicht zur Befoerderung von allgemeinen Trinkgelegenheiten, dessen Nachteile nie etwas Gutes erblicken lassen, sondern um in der Not fuer einander mit Rath und That einzustehen, nach dem Sprichworth "Alle fuer Einen und Einer fuer Alle". Es wurde sofort eine Commission gewaehlt, welche aus drei Mitgliedern bestand, wie folgt: Martin Steiner, John Steiner, C. J. Schumacher. Am 31ten July fand die erste Commissions Sitzung statt und es wurde beschlossen saemptliche Schweizer zu einer allgemeinen Versammlung einzuberufen.

Wieder erwarten fanden sich erfreulicherweise 28 Schweizer auf die ihnen zugesandten Einladung bei John Steiner ein und alle waren sympathisch mit dem Gedanken besehlt "Ihr Schweizer, Ihr getreuen, des Vereins sollt ewig ihr Euch fruen, denn Einigkeit im frenden Land wird geschuetzt von Gottes Hand".

The date is 4th August 1910, at John Steiner's residence, Manaia Road. John Steiner opened the meeting and said that he hoped that a sickness and accidents insurance could be set up for all the members. However, Andreas Huber said that in his opinion this was a little frightening for young people and he thought a universal Benevolent Fund would be better and he said that members should think in this direction. Then out of the middle of the meeting Schumacher said that if a new Club was formed, it was important to give it a name and state the purpose for which it was formed. John Elsener then said that he thought that today's meeting should be convened again later on and the commission would have to find a suitable name.

Franz Huber supported this motion and because of the many that were here he thought a Committee could be elected now. John Steiner then said that in his opinion "Schweizer Verein" would be suitable. Then with unanimous approval they proceeded to elect a Committee, as: President, Martin Steiner; Vice-President, Charles Schicker; Secretary, C. J. Schumacher; Treasurer, John Steiner; Member of Committee called Beisitzer, Andreas Huber. Everybody was jubilant and Franz Huber moved that a letter be sent to Switzerland to be reported in some Swiss newspapers, but this was postponed for next meeting.

Coll. Van Erberli made the offer of his music to the club, free of charge, which was most gratefully accepted. Vice-President Charles Schicker thanked the members present for coming along and most sincerely thanked the Treasurer, Mr John Steiner for having us for a most enjoyable evening with three "Lebe Hoch".

At midnight 12 o'clock, 4th August, 1910.

2nd Meeting, three days later on the 7th August 1910, also
on John Steiner's residence on the Manaia Road.

This meeting was to set up rules. Several new names are coming to the fore and voicing their opinion. Colleague Kaufmann is of the opinion that "We have a good President but we must start this meeting at 8 o'clock sharp." Coll. Franz Huber enticed the members to live up to the Motto. He said that all of the members must look at one another as brothers. Try to get as many as possible to these meetings as it would not be easy for all of them to attend all meetings.

President M. Steiner then asked the meeting to elect Auditors and Scrutineers. Coll. Franz Huber moved X. Wyss and Pr. Steiner moved A. Schicker as auditors and Coll. A. Kalin moved Siegfried Butler and John Elsener as scrutineers, which all of them got elected. The annual Subscription was set at 2/6 and the monthly subscription at 1 shilling per member. Coll. Gisler then moved the combination of Paragraph one with Paragraph two. (Am sorry I haven't any of the rules). Coll. D. Chamberlain moved admittance of Lady members free of charge.

(To be continued in October)