

<b>Zeitschrift:</b>	Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
<b>Herausgeber:</b>	Swiss Society of New Zealand
<b>Band:</b>	54 (1988)
<b>Heft:</b>	[1]
<b>Rubrik:</b>	Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Society of New Zealand

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# MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SWISS SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND

**Held in Auckland at the Danish Reception Lounge, Parnell, June 5, 1988 at 2 pm**  
The president, Mr A. Schleicher, welcomed the Charge d'affaires, Mr F. Wyss, honorary members and members.

**Present:** Mr A. Schleicher, president; Mrs L. Napp, editor of the *Helvetia* and acting secretary/treasurer; Mr H. Scherrer, riflemaster and Mr H. Messmer, delegate of the Swiss Abroad, and 56 other members with voting rights.

**Apologies:** Miss I Bernold and Mr and Mrs C. Schuler, Taranaki; Mr and Mrs Bert Fluhler, Hamilton; Mr and Mrs M. Fuhrer, Mrs L. Sutherland, Mrs M. Sorensen and Mr P. Fischer, Wellington; Christchurch Swiss Club committee.

**Appointment of Scrutineers:** Mr R. Dudli (nominated by L. Chamberlain/seconded by B. Maechler) and J. Wildhaber (nominated by M. T. Melville-Schoepfer/seconded by K. Glauser).

**Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting:** Were read by Mrs L. Napp and found correct. Moved by A. Binder, seconded by L. Chamberlain. All in favour.

**President's Report:** Mr Schleicher mentioned that the committee held three full meetings during the year and otherwise made frequent use of the phone to discuss business. He then asked all present to rise for a moment of silence as a mark of respect for all those members who died during the year.

He expressed his concern at the fall in membership. He thought it was ironic that people of his generation came to New Zealand in search of a better future and that their offspring are now returning to Europe for the same reason. He informed the meeting that six issues of the *Helvetia* and four issues of the *Swiss Review* were published during this committee's first year in office, that the *Swiss Review* was published in and distributed from Berne as of this year and that through the good offices of the Embassy we were still receiving 160 extra copies for distribution to members not registered at the Embassy. He pointed out that these copies were for those people who lost their Swiss nationality through no fault of their own and that Swiss nationals who chose not to register at the Swiss Embassy should not really get a copy through the society.

Mr Schleicher mentioned that no requests for financial assistance were received and he reminded club members to notify the society if they know of any compatriot in need. He went on to say that the financial position of the society was sound; increases in printing costs and postage of the *Helvetia* were balanced by an increased income from advertising for whose continued support Mr Schleicher expressed his gratitude. He mentioned Mr Fetscherin's visit to the clubs in November which provided the opportunity for members to become better informed about new legislation affecting them. On the subject of the fundraising campaign for the Place of the Swiss Abroad, Mr Schleicher reported that at a special meeting in January the committee decided to leave the fundraising activities to individual clubs. Mr Schleicher wrote to 18 Swiss firms in New Zealand, explaining the project and asking for contributions. In conclusion, Mr Schleicher thanked his committee for their co-operation.

The president's report was moved to be accepted by R. Dudli, seconded by W. Unternahrer. All in favour.

**Treasurer's Report:** Questions were raised as to the substantial increase in postage. As the size of the envelope determines postage, folding it in half should bring costs down. This approach will be tried with the next issue. Clarification was asked for concerning an expense item "printing general". The amount of \$401.15 was spent on

overprinting the Taranaki return address with the Wellington one and for a set of films for the local pages of the first Berne issue of the Swiss Review. We now have to pay for that. Mr H. Luenberger moved and Mrs M. T. Melville seconded that the report be accepted. All in favour.

**Subscriptions:** Mr Schleicher proposed that the subscriptions stay the same for another year. Possible increases in printing costs should be offset by the tax exemption we become eligible for with the change of rule 13b. The accumulated funds should be able to cope with any call for financial help. Mr R. Dudli moved and Mr E. Gilgen seconded that the subscriptions stay the same. All in favour.

**Helvetia Report:** The editor, Mrs L. Napp, admitted that in the past she had seriously undervalued the work done by previous editing committees. The frustrations of the job came from three main areas; Communication with printer in distant Stratford, unpredictability of arrival of printed issue, difficulties of getting own lay-out ideas across. The transfer of the printing of the Swiss Review to Berne resulting in a far too long interval between deadline at the Wellington Embassy and the scheduled arrival of the finished magazine and the additional delay in the actual arrival. (The first issue should have arrived in February and it arrived in March and the second issue was due end of May and finally made it by the — The lack of contributions from members and the fact that there is no feed-back from readers. In conclusion, she thanked everybody who did send items for publishing. Mr Dudli reported that people had mentioned to him that they missed the "this and that" column, recipes and jokes. Mrs Napp promised to reinstate these items and would ask members to send in recipes again. Mrs R. Messmer moved and Mr H. Staheli seconded that the report be accepted. All in favour.

**Delegate of the Swiss Abroad:** Mr H. Messmer reported on the possibly busiest year in the history of the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad. Law changes affecting Swiss abroad had to be communicated to the four corners of the world - hence the visit of Minister Fettscherin. He announced that the 1988 Conference of the Swiss Abroad is to take place in Glarus - Nafels on September 2-4. The theme: The fifth Switzerland and the World of the Media of Tomorrow. As co-ordinator of fundraising efforts for the Place of the Swiss Abroad he was able to mention that the funds stand at \$1000, raised mainly in the Wellington area by club activities like the House Concert and by contributions from individuals. He encouraged other regions to emulate this effort. He speculated that lack of identification with the cause was the reason for the subdued enthusiasm. He felt that after studying the information available he now could honestly say that the idea of connecting the Place of the Swiss Abroad with the new walkway round the Urnersee appealed to him. Having that special place in Brunnen would make the 400,000 Swiss living abroad much more visible to the Swiss at home. He urged everybody to rally behind the fundraising campaign. Mr K. Clauser moved and Mr L. Chamberlain seconded that the report be accepted. All in favour.

**Riflemaster's Report:** Mr H. Scherrer explained that the balance in the bank was so high, because some medals had not been paid for yet. He expected the medals to arrive before August 1 in time to be awarded to members at First of August functions. Moved by W. Unternahrer, seconded by H. Messmer. All in favour.

**Election of Officers and Editing Committee:** Mr Schleicher stated that all committee members and members of the editing committee were available for re-election. Mr F. Wyss took the chair and proposed an "in globo" re-election to which he received unanimous approval.

Mr H. Messmer warned that at the next Annual General Meeting he would give up his position as delegate of the Swiss Abroad.

**Motion to Change Rule 13B:** Mr Schleicher reiterated the background to the rule change and submitted the final text as supplied by Mr G. R. C. Smith, solicitor, Kaponga for acceptance to the meeting. On the basis of this text, the Inland Revenue Department had agreed to grant the society tax exemption.

13(b) If upon the winding up or dissolution of the club whether voluntarily or by the Registrar of Incorporated Societies or otherwise there remains after satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities and property whatsoever the same shall not be paid to or distributed amongst the members of the club but shall be given or transferred to some other society or societies within the Dominion of New Zealand having objects similar to the objects of the club such gift to be determined by the members of the club at or before the time of dissolution and in default thereof by the High Court of New Zealand.

Moved by R. Dudli, seconded by H. Messmer. All in favour.

Mr H. Messmer extended the society's thanks to Messrs R. Dudli and C. Schuler for their efforts in this matter.

#### **GENERAL BUSINESS:**

**Cowbell Competition:** Mr Schleicher announced that the Bell was in for another spell in Taranaki. Mr R. Dudli accepted the bell and thanked Hamilton for a good, close contest.

**Fundraising for the Place of the Swiss Abroad:** The general feeling expressed was that the Society should organise fundraising and that the sum collected should be sent to Switzerland as coming from the Swiss Society of New Zealand as a whole.

A raffle was suggested by various people. When it was pointed out that it was against New Zealand law to run a raffle with the proceeds going to the cause abroad, Mr A. Muller suggested that the raffle be organised in Switzerland and offered to look into it. Mr Schleicher thought there would not be enough time for a Swiss organised raffle before the September deadline, but that it could come into effect for the second stage of the campaign which raises money for the development of the site. Mr Machler wanted to know what would happen to the money collected if the target of Sw. Fr. 1,500,000 was not reached by September. Mr Messmer answered that the response in Switzerland itself and in other countries has been so favourable that this just could not happen. Mr Benkert suggested that the AGM could decide to donate a sum from the accumulated funds. Mrs R. Messmer pointed out that the meeting could not vote on something that had not been put in the agenda. Mr H. Messmer thought that donations should be voluntary. Finally it was decided that if clubs wanted to organise fundraising functions they should do so and that if individuals wanted to contribute then that was up to them. And that for the second stage of the campaign the Swiss organised raffle may come into play.

Mr R. Dudli thanked the Auckland club for their hospitality and the Hess family for having the Taranaki club on Saturday night. Mr H. Staheli on behalf of the Hamilton club also expressed his thanks to the organisers of the AGM and Mr and Mrs Hess for having the Cowbell competition at their place. Mr A. Schleicher extended his thanks to the host club and accepted the offer of the Hamilton club to organise next year's AGM.

The meeting closed at 4.30 pm.

The financial report will be printed in the August issue.