

**Zeitschrift:** Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand  
**Herausgeber:** Swiss Society of New Zealand  
**Band:** 64 (1998)  
**Heft:** [4]  
  
**Rubrik:** Society Annual General Meeting

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cantonal and federal affairs. Maybe there is an element of "glorification of the past" in these words, but in today's Swiss society, as in others, it has become commonplace for young couples to ask themselves if the family's income allows any children at all. Despite one of the highest per-capita incomes in the world, the average Swiss family finds it hard to make ends meet. The struggle with very high living expenses, the general need for mothers to work for financial reward, peer pressure for families and children alike and modern day expectations as well as the need for the children's best possible education are all contributory factors working against families in a world that demands equal opportunities and finds little purpose in sacrifice of self. Perhaps the most disturbing factor during the lively discussions in Switzerland was the fact that a sizeable slice of Swiss society thought that couples choosing to have a family should carry the financial burden alone, or abstain from having children. Much food for thought, don't you think?

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By now, Clubs will have all completed their AGM's, some with only minor changes, and others with larger changes to their committee structure.

Over the past twelve months, a great number of Club events have taken place around the country so that members and friends have been able to come together on these many occasions to take part in and enjoy a whole variety of "Swiss" activities.

This, of course, could not happen without the hard work, commitment and dedication of the committee members and helpers, many of whom have already given many years of service to their respective Clubs. These people give so much of their time to ensure the success of the functions we all enjoy, and I'd like to encourage all members to attend and support as many Club events as possible.

At the end of this month, members from all over New Zealand (it would be great to see someone from the South Island) will once again be coming together for the Society

AGM, this year being hosted by the Taranaki Club. It seems such a short time since we last met here in Hamilton last June. I have certainly enjoyed my first year as President; I've been very lucky to have had the guidance of both several people who were part of the Society committee some 15 to 20 years ago, and also a great team of people on the current Society committee.

I now look forward to seeing everyone at the upcoming AGM, and hope to see a record number come along for what I am sure will become a weekend we will enjoy immensely. With kindest regards and my best wishes,

Beatrice

## SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday 31 May 1998, commencing at approx 2.00pm, at the Taranaki Clubhouse, Kaponga

### AGENDA

- 1 Welcome by the President
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Minutes of the last AGM, 1/6/97
- 4 Matters arising from the Minutes
- 5 Obituaries
- 6 President's Report
- 7 Matters arising from the President's Report
- 8 Editor's Report
- 9 Matters arising from the Editor's Report
- 10 Financial Report
- 11 Matters arising from the Financial Report
- 12 Delegate for Swiss Abroad's Report

- 13 Matters arising from the Delegate's Report
- 14 Riflemaster's Report
- 15 Matters arising from the Riflemaster's Report
- 16 Setting of Subscriptions for the 1998/99 year
- 17 Election of Officers (President/Vice President/Secretary/Treasurer/Editor)
- 18 Election of Society Committee
- 19 General Business
  - Rule changes
  - Club reports
  - Other
- 20 Setting of date and venue for 1999 Society AGM
- 21 Meeting Closure

### MOTION

That the following rule be added to the Statutes in order to acquire tax exemption status with the IRD:

14. Withholding Tax Exemption Status Requirements

- a. No part of the organisation's income or funds is to be used or be available for the personal use or gain of any member or an associated person of any member.
- b. In order to prevent forfeiture of tax exemption status, no alterations may be applied to Rules 13.b or 14.a.

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**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF  
THE SWISS SOCIETY, HELD AT THE GLENVIEW MO-  
TOR HOTEL, HAMILTON, ON 1 JUNE 1997, AT 2.00 pm.**

Herbert Staheli welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to Hamilton for the meeting. Hans Fitzi thanked Herbert for the welcome and in turn welcomed everyone to the AGM, especially those people who had travelled long distances - from Wellington, Auckland, Taranaki, Kawerau, and noted that no one was here from Christchurch who have left the Society.

**Present:** Hans Fitzi (President), Werner Stebler (acting Treasurer), Henry Sigerist (Editor), Heidi Fransen (acting Secretary), and approx. 63 members.

**Apologies:** Peter Schüpbach, Arthur and Heidi Müller, Hans and Sylvia Enzler, Kurt and Jennifer Leutenegger (Auckland); Bill Miles (Hamilton); Don and Laura Hiestand (Taranaki); and André Schleicher (Wellington). Moved: Hans Fitzi, Seconded: Herbert Staheli

**Minutes:** The minutes of the previous meeting were taken as being read, having previously been published in the *Helvetia*. Moved: Heinz Leuenberger, Seconded: M-T Melville-Schöpfer

**President's Report:** The President reminded everyone that last year's AGM had been held in Newmarket, Auckland, and thanked the organisers for their work. He thought it had been enjoyed by everyone who was present. Hans Fitzi then asked everyone to stand in a moment's silence for all the members who had passed away during the year. They included: Eugen Hübscher, Valerie Mathys, Bob Keller (Auckland); Philys Meier, Don Luond, Walter Niederberger, Daniel Butler (Taranaki), Walter Kaspar (Wellington).

There was no request for financial benevolent assistance from any Society member. The balance sheet showed a profit, and Hans thanked people for supporting the Society with advertising. This has been Auckland's last year in office, and the five years have passed very quickly. Hans Fitzi thanked Peter Schüpbach for the "new look" *Helvetia*; Henry Sigerist, the Editor, whose editorials were always most interesting; Carmen Fitzi for her job as Secretary/Treasurer, though unfortunately she left to work in Switzerland; Werner Stebler for taking over the work as Treasurer; and Syd Melville for auditing the accounts. Hans enjoyed working with the above committee and thanked members of the Auckland Club for helping with the folding and posting of the *Helvetia*.

He wished the Hamilton committee all the best for a successful five year term in office.

**Financial Report:** The report was printed in the May *Helvetia*, but a few things were found to be incorrect. The actual profit for the year ended 31/3/97 came to \$2052, which came about due to the Society receiving subs from an additional 28 members and advertising income had increased by about \$860, giving an overall increase in income of \$1500. The cost of postage and labels had increased by about \$230, but printing costs were \$1000 less than the previous year. The overall effect was \$600 less expenditure, therefore more profit. Rinaldo Rust asked how the printing costs had been reduced. Werner Stebler replied that there had been one less issue printed than in the previous year. Beatrice Leuenberger thanked Werner for a job well done at such short notice. The financial report was moved to be correct by Beatrice Leuenberger and seconded by Marianne Benkert.

**Editor's Report:** Henry Sigerist thanked the staff at the Embassy for supplying material for the *Helvetia*. Thanks

was conveyed to the Club secretaries and Riflemen for prompt dispatch of reports. Henry also thanked the advertisers for their financial assistance. He stated that he was disappointed that several advertisers had withdrawn their adverts during the year due to no support from readers. They said that because of the small circulation, it was not possible to generate sizeable business. Henry felt that advertisers supporting the Society should expect a small return from members. The Swiss community should support one another and really should prefer Swiss above anyone else. Other ethnic groups stick together, so why not us? As a single editor, Henry was handing his job over to a team of editing people in the Hamilton Swiss Club, and said that on the basis that two or three heads were better than one, the *Helvetia* produced would surely be of a higher standard than the magazine which he produced! Hans Fizi commented that the new editor would find out in time the tremendous work load which Henry did on his own with no interference or help from a committee. Hans thanked Henry for offering his own time, and agreed with Henry that advertisers should be supported.

**Report from Delegate for Swiss Abroad:** Heinz Leuenberger reported on the following issues: Pension/Old Age Funding - important for those eligible to subscribe now, as the system is changing. We are fortunately dual citizens and can take part in a second scheme. Important to start now, especially those under 51. Emigrants who have not at some stage paid in will surely be excluded in the near future. Finance in Berne is precarious. Those in NZ over 65 (men) or 60 (women) who have been paying into the scheme are receiving good returns, a ratio of 3:1. The Government wants to level this out. Voting - The Swiss Abroad organisation is concerned at the low level of registrations for voting rights, only 15% of Swiss worldwide. NZ has only 7.6% of eligible residents registered. Heinz said that his family was registered until two years ago, it seemed too complicated, but he may now reconsider. Changes are coming to the voting and registration system, and info will come from the Embassy. Solidarity Fund - joining means paying towards a savings system, as well as assurance against adversity, which is not so important in NZ. The latest service is a worldwide accident and insurance scheme. Internet - cheaper to read Swiss newspapers than a subscription if you have a computer. More information available. Heinz moved his report for adoption and this was seconded by Herbert Staheli. Hans Fitzi commented that it was nice to have a report from Switzerland for once and thanked Heinz.

**Riflemen's Report:** A balance sheet was distributed. Peter Rust stated that medal competitions were well supported, and said it was pleasing to see younger members participate. New rules have meant smoother running of competitions. Any additional shooting rules required can be advised to Peter.

**Election of Officers:**

**PRESIDENT:** - Beatrice Leuenberger, nominated by Herbert Staheli, seconded by Hans Fitzi  
- Rinaldo Rust, nominated by M-T Melville Schöpfer (Rinaldo declined nomination)  
Beatrice was duly elected.

**SECRETARY:** Ruth Waldvogel, nominated by Beatrice Leuenberger, seconded by Rinaldo Rust.  
Ruth was duly elected.

**TREASURER:** There were no formal nominations, and Beatrice Leuenberger said that the job could be shared between the Secretary and President. The rules had been checked and this

stated that the Society committee consist of at least five members (5.a) and that a nominee of the committee can carry out the duties of Treasurer (5.d).

**VICE-PRES:** Bert Flühler, nominated by Heinz Leuenberger, seconded by Heidi Leuenberger. Bert was duly elected.

**EDITOR:** Rinaldo Rust, nominated by Heinz Leuenberger, seconded by Josie Flühler. Rinaldo was duly elected.

Rinaldo Rust thanked everyone for their confidence in him. He stated that it would definitely be a team effort. He also thanked Henry Sigerist who had invited him to Auckland and introduced him to the job. His hard work was truly appreciated.

**SOCIETY COMMITTEE:** Beatrice Leuenberger moved that the officers would be co-opted, this was seconded by Marianne Benkert.

**EDITING COMMITTEE:** Hans Fitzi said that the editing committee could also be co-opted.

**Report from the elected President:** This report was printed in full in the July 1997 Helvetia, and included the nomination of Hans Fitzi and Henry Sigerist as Honorary Society members, being seconded by Herbert Staheli.

Hans Fitzi thanked Beatrice for her report and said that he too was proud to have a woman President. Women are of course equal to men. However, Carmen Fitzi had once read that it would be 476 years before women would be treated equally in business. Of course, this would not apply to any of us! Hans said that traditionally the new President took over the running of the meeting, but Beatrice had requested that he conclude his final meeting.

There were two motions tabled:

1) Honorary membership - this was accepted unanimously.  
2) That the medal fee be increased from \$3 to \$4, moved by the Riflemaster, seconded by

Marianne Benkert - this was also carried unanimously.

Every four years the positions of Delegate for the Swiss Abroad comes up for re-election.

Heinz Leuenberger was nominated by Rinaldo Rust, seconded by Herbert Staheli

M-T Melville-Schöpfer was nominated by Hans Fitzi and seconded by Margrit Dudley

#### **General Business:**

1) Walter Seifert invited everyone to attend the AGM in Taranaki next year on 31 May 1998.

2) Heinz Leuenberger said it was important that the secretary send the names of the Swiss Abroad delegates to Berne before the end of June or the positions would be waived.

3) Henry Sigerist thanked everyone for the honorary membership. When he first took on the job as editor, he

intended to produce a magazine everyone could be proud of. He hoped everyone enjoyed reading it. He kindly offered to help the new committee and if the need arose he would be at their disposal. He said that he was sure that in a month or two they would do as good a job as he did.

4) Maya Beddie-Geiser said that at Labour Weekend Wellington would be celebrating its 40th anniversary. Everyone was invited. Hans Fitzi suggested tentative programmes be sent to all the clubs.

5) Joe Kennel said that the Helvetia should only be sent to financial members. He often received three in one month, two being for family who are now overseas. Beatrice said he may mean the Swiss Revue but that it was intended to check names and addresses. Henry Sigerist stated that when the database was taken over from Carmen Fitzi, it was very difficult to follow. Often names were doubled up, but this had been tried to be eliminated. Rural deliveries were also difficult addresses and often returned as unknown. Uli Elmiger suggested that people write to Switzerland if they change address for the Swiss Revue. Bert Flühler said there would always be some problems when people don't advise address changes, or even paid subs.

6) Charlie Waldvogel stated that we have just nominated two new honorary members, and we should have some document or certificate to record this. Heinz Leuenberger thought this would be a good idea. Beatrice said the new committee would look into this.

7) Hans Fitzi wondered if the Steinstossen competition should be changed to something else, as it was very one-sided for some clubs. The general feeling was to leave the Steinstossen competition as it was.

8) There being no further business, Hans Fitzi thanked Hamilton Club for the meeting, venue and entertainment etc. He wished everyone an enjoyable evening and looked forward to meeting again next year in Taranaki.

The meeting was closed at 3.20 pm.

#### **Special Request from our "2-Ladies-team"** **Your Corner....**

We are planning to compile an article on **Immigration Issues** for Swiss citizens wanting to emigrate to New Zealand and would love to receive comments from recent immigrants. Your experiences and comments about immigration and gaining citizenship in New Zealand would be very helpful. We'll do our best to translate contributions written in German and we promise confidentiality.

Thanking you in anticipation:  
Trudi and Doris.

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