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President's Message

To all our readers I send a warm welcome to 1999. I hope you enjoyed the festive season, ready to tackle the year ahead of us.

Recently, I was once again reminded of the role of our Society on a global scale. We often hear of the 'Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad' (Auslandschweizer-Sekretariat), but many of us don't really know the function of this organisation behind its very long and impressive name.

The Swiss Government holds the interests and well-being of its citizens living abroad in high regard, and this office exists to foster the continuation of this principle. One division, responsible for managing relationships with Swiss Abroad Organisations (Auslandschweizer Organisationen), produces a quarterly newsletter, ASO-Info, which is sent to Swiss organisations and institutions worldwide. I have translated the following Editorial of the December 98 newsletter (4/98), written by Mr René Lenzin, Head of Information and Publicity for over 6 years:

"Information to and from Swiss organisations and institutions abroad is one of the most important responsibilities of the secretariat. Citizens abroad, as well as the variety of Clubs, portray a significant perception of Switzerland to the world. Club representatives must be well informed of the activities and responsibilities of the secretariat, so that this can be passed on to members. They must also have some general knowledge of events and happenings in Switzerland, to be able to act as 'ambassadors' for Switzerland, and to present a positive image of our native country. The latter, in particular, has increased in importance over recent years, which is why the Swiss Clubs remain extremely valuable. Regular socialising, together with upholding Swiss activities and traditions, are of course necessary and important elements of Club life. However, I believe there should also be worldwide encouragement to develop initiatives leading to cultural exchanges, as well as a better understanding and higher awareness of Switzerland. For example, why not form a 'Friends of Switzerland' committee? This may seem to be a demanding suggestion, but it is probably the only way in which Swiss Clubs and

organisations can exist long term. Clubs must not only offer members the attraction of Swiss activities and camaraderie, but must also act as an effective body which is active in portraying and representing our country."

Other articles in the newsletter further discuss the role of Clubs overseas; and membership of an organisation which has been set up to promote the interests of Swiss Clubs worldwide, which I will tell you more about next month.

The Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad is organising camps for children aged from 7 - 14 years from all over the world during July and August. Here they can share adventures, as well as learn about their native Switzerland.

Meantime, I wish you all a continued enjoyable New Zealand summer.

Regards,

Beatrice

SWISS BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Thank you to everyone who has sent us their business details for the planned directory. Your response has been encouraging, but we still want to know of many more businesses to enable the directory to be produced.

So, no matter how big or small your business is, let us know about it and we will then pass the information on to the rest of the Society.

To be included ph 07 843 7971 or fax 07 843 7941, or write to: Directory, Beatrice Leuenberger, 44 Montgomery Crescent, Hamilton. We look forward to hearing from you

Your Corner.....

Like our Editor recently, both Trudy and I have been asked to take part in a multi-cultural day at school, teaching children aged between 5 and 13 about Switzerland - preferably 'hands-on'.

I wondered how qualified I was, being a second generation Swiss, however the children enjoyed making a Swiss flag, completing a word-find and of course sampling Swiss cookies and chocolate!

It's nice to be able to pass on some Swiss culture to others.

For those of you who have an abundance of courgettes/zucchini here's a recipe for a loaf to try. Can be buttered and freezes well.

Regards, Doris and Trudy.

ZUCCHINI LOAF

3 eggs
¾ cup oil
1 teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon baking powder
3 cups flour
1 cup chopped walnuts
1 and ½ cups sugar
2 cups grated zucchini
3 teaspoons cinnamon
1 teaspoon baking soda
2 teaspoons vanilla essence

-Beat eggs until light and fluffy, add sugar and oil and beat until thick. Add zucchini, sifted dry ingredients and vanilla. Lastly add walnuts. Bake in 2 lightly greased tins lined with paper.

Cook in a moderate oven for 1 - 1½ hours.

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