

President's message

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border'. Never mind, it will be the cuckoo that remains the fascination and moreover cuckoos are known to fly in all directions and across many a border.

President's Message

In last month's *Helvetia* I wrote about the high interest the Swiss Government holds regarding its citizens abroad, and the role Swiss Clubs hold within their communities.

In 1995, a Working Committee, titled "Swiss Clubs", was established by the Council for Swiss Abroad. The role of this group was to research the make-up, functions and goals of clubs worldwide, in order to know how best to offer the necessary aid and support required by these organisations, as well as to how to form new clubs where there are currently none.

This was done by sending questionnaires to Swiss Clubs throughout the world, of which just half were returned. Through answers received, it was discovered that this action was long overdue, and concluded that many of the existing Clubs were in need of a variety of levels of guidance and assistance.

The information received was collated and presented in a report on the finding of Swiss clubs worldwide, divided into four categories:

1. Statistics
2. Problems within the Clubs
3. Ideas and Recommendations
4. Clubs into the Future

I have translated and summarised this important document, and will begin this month with the first category.

1. Statistics

Overall individual Club membership varies from between 20 - 600, over 75% being Swiss Nationals. Many Clubs are "ageing" - average age is increasing, many Clubs having the majority of members over 60. Most Club Committees are made up of at least half being Swiss citizens, aged along the lines of their Clubs. The average term of service is 1-4 years.

In most places, individual regional clubs are formed. Normally, a small membership fee is collected and then the cost of functions is often low or subsidised for members.

Only a small number of Clubs, mainly those with high membership or a large urban base, own high assets, both wealth and property.

The majority of Clubs organise 5-10 functions annually, and most of the rest offer regular monthly events.

Communication to advertise functions is normally made through official publications or newsletters, by invitation, or by word of mouth. Most Clubs or Swiss organisations produce a variety of regular publications of many sorts. This work is normally done within a relatively small budget.

New members are often found through contact with Embassies or Consulates, but recent restructures and reductions of these diplomatic posts means that Clubs must begin finding new and innovative methods to locate new arrivals to invite them to join their local club.

So - food for thought. Where do we fit within these statistics, both as a Society and as individual Clubs?

Next month - a look at further categories researched, beginning with the Problems clubs face. In the meantime though, I wish an enjoyable March. Regards.....Beatrice
PS. My thanks to the Auckland Club for the get well card following my recent further surgery. I appreciated your kind thoughts and good wishes.

SWISS BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Over the past few months, many responses have been received from members for inclusion in our proposed Society business directory.

But we still want more !!

So, if you own, run, or work for any business, anywhere throughout New Zealand, providing goods or services, which could then be supported by the Swiss Community or Tourists, then don't miss out - please let us know immediately!

For a small fee, we will advertise basic details of your business in a directory, which can then be used by residents and tourists to locate "Swiss" businesses throughout the country. If enough responses are received, the directory will be prepared within the coming months.

To be included, write to:

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Beatrice Leuenberger
44 Montgomery Crescent
Hamilton.
or fax 07 843 7941.

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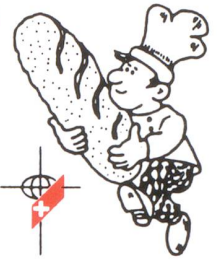
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Your Corner.....

We are grateful to Heidi Wehrli of Matamata for her gallant efforts in composing 'a **Society Member's Profile**' on her Father Joseph (Sepp) Arnold of Hamilton.

A very prominent and long-standing member of the Hamilton Swiss Club, Sepp Arnold is of course the husband of Alice and the Father of a great family including Son Peter, 'Oberjodler' of the Swiss Kiwi Jodel Group of Auckland.

Thank you Sepp for allowing us a glimpse back into your life.

Doris and Trudy.