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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

At some time or another we have all probably heard of the Solidarity Fund for the Swiss Abroad. I know of at least one Swiss Club that has been paying a small annual levy to this fund for many years.

But many of us don't really know anything about it, so what is this fund actually for??

The Solidarity Fund (now renamed Soliswiss) was originally set up as a non-profit organisation in 1958, aimed specifically to assist Swiss citizens living abroad, for two basic reasons:

- to allow establishment of a personal savings scheme in Switzerland
- to provide insurance in case of loss of livelihood overseas, if due to war, civil unrest or political coercion (but not from any personal debt incurred).

The Swiss Confederation guarantees Soliswiss unlimited assistance in such cases of loss of livelihood. In this way, members have maximum protection, as the State's guarantee means that Soliswiss is always able to completely fulfil its obligations under any circumstances.

All Swiss citizens, as well as any Swiss legal entities, such as businesses or organisations (eg Clubs), can become members of Soliswiss. Currently, there are about 8000 members (both individuals and groups) throughout the world. The insurance of livelihood is still the central task of Soliswiss, but over the years this has been broadened. Now, a whole range of products in the area of savings, and health and provision insurance are being proposed.

Recently, correspondence was received from Soliswiss, explaining that they were offering a new variety of services, besides just the savings scheme and loss of income insurance. These have been especially designed to meet the needs of today's Swiss citizens living abroad. They include Pension, Education, Future and Family packages. If anyone would like any further information about Soliswiss Insurance, please contact me as I do have some pamphlets available.

My thanks to all Society members who have paid their subs for 1999. About 50% have been paid so far -

and those still outstanding will find a reminder with this *Helvetia* issue. Prompt payment would now be appreciated. Thank you also for some of the very positive comments received. Any feedback from members is very valuable.

And welcome home to the many people who have missed some of our winter weather here while visiting family and friends in Switzerland over the past few months. I hope you all had a good time.

Finally, I would like to comment on an anonymous letter received, dated 26 August, with a Taranaki MC postmark. The letter raised a possibly valid point, but unfortunately, without knowing the identity of the writer, the issue cannot be properly addressed. Therefore, I would like to ask the person concerned to contact me, either by phone (07 843 7971) or in writing (44 Montgomery Cres. Hamilton), so that this matter can be discussed and resolved. Any conversation would, of course, be in complete confidence. Thank you.

- Spring flowers are currently in full bloom, so hopefully we will all soon be enjoying some great summer weather. I wish everyone a happy month. With kind regards, Beatrice

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Correction

A sincere apology is extended to everyone who took an interest in the July-'front-cover-competition', showing the picture of Ascona. - However, on the front page of the August-Sept. Issue we printed the word LOCARNO as the correct answer. This was of course incorrect and should have read ASCONA. Most entries to the July competition were correct as was the entry of the winner, Rose Marie Schuepach, of Opouri Valley, Marlborough.

Editor.

Your Corner.....

We have had the first day of spring and the warmer weather should be just around the corner! For you keen gardeners we would like to share some 'environment friendly' hints and also some suggestions for companion-planting.

- Try growing lettuce and sunflowers together; the lettuce acts as a mulch to keep the soil moist and the tall sunflower shades the heat sensitive lettuce.

- Garlic planted near raspberries, loganberries or boysenberries will enhance the flavour of the berry.

- Grow aromatic plants e.g. marigolds, nasturtiums, peppermint or sage around cabbages for their insect-repellant powers.

- Grow lemon balm around an orchard - its white flowers attract bees for better pollination.

- Plant lettuce, radishes and spring onions with potatoes - they mature long before the tuber crop is ready to dig.

If any readers have handy hints that work for them, please send them in to us and we will share them with others. Thank you!

Doris and Trudy.

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