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fellow Swiss citizens

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General Business:

1. Club Reports: Club Representatives - Marianne Benkert, Taranaki; Roland Schütz, Wellington; Herbert Staheli, Hamilton; and Ernst Gfeller, Auckland - gave brief reports on the past year's activities in their Clubs.

2. Rule Change: The motion was put to add an Addendum to:

Rule 4, Subscriptions. 4.c. That "All Clubs must pay to the Society at least 50% of Society Subscriptions, which they must collect annually from their members, on behalf of the Society, by 30th September; a further 30% by 31st December; and the final balance outstanding by 15th March, each year. The first two payments shall be calculated, based on total members, exclusive of honorary members, of the previous financial year; and the final payment on the current financial year."

Beatrice explained the reason for this rule - because the Society was sometimes not paid its subscription payments from Clubs until the end of the year, causing cashflow difficulty. Each Helvetia edition cost approx. \$1500, and the Society required a regular income to meet ongoing expenditures. Some discussion followed - one concern was that a club may then pay too much if membership numbers dropped. But this could be corrected in the final 30% payment. And a club with 100 members would have to lose 30 of these for overpayment to occur - an unlikely situation - but the Society would then reimburse the difference.

Moved: Beatrice Leuenberger; *Seconded:* Marianne Benkert **Carried**

3. Web Page: Edi Brändli (Auckland Club) explained the "The Homepage of Swiss Emigrants in New Zealand - <http://www.Swiss.org.nz>". The website he set up in November 1997, and Edi would sponsor it through his business, EGB Electronic Services, for Society and Clubs. Edi explained the purpose and functions of the website - how it worked, uses and advantages. Society and Clubs would each have an e-mail address. The meeting was asked if the web site should be accepted, with the motion: That "The Society approve the use of the Website offered".

Moved: Edi Brändli; *Seconded:* Peter Fischer **Carried**

The Society and each Club would be responsible for what appeared on their respective web-pages. Beatrice thanked Edi for generously providing and sponsoring this internet tool and latest method of communication. Edi also welcomed any constructive ideas for improvements or change.

Venue for next Meeting: Ernst Gfeller, Auckland Club President, invited all members of the Swiss Society to meet in Auckland at Queen's Birthday Weekend, 2000, where the Auckland Swiss Club would be pleased to host the next Annual General Meeting.

Meeting Closure: Beatrice accepted the invitation from the Auckland Club to host the next meeting, as well as sincerely thanking and congratulating the Wellington Club committee and members for holding a successful AGM this year, with probably a record attendance of 80 people. Finally, Beatrice thanked all members present for their attendance and participation, and declared the 1999 AGM closed at 4.15pm.

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An Announcement from the Swiss Embassy in Wellington



Dear Friends Fellow Swiss Citizens

Appropriately it rained on my arrival. My predecessor, Mr. Simmen, however, waved the drops away with a warm smile and a wave of his hand and with these gestures I felt at home in this new country, and ready to take on the many duties of a Swiss ambassador in Wellington.

On this my first official day, I would like to convey to you and your families the Swiss Federal Council's greetings and best wishes, as well as mine. A special greeting goes to the young generation of Swiss citizens whom I encourage to seek closer ties with their fellow countrypeople both here and in their country of origine.

It is my intention to begin visiting the various parts of this country in the near future. I then hope to meet the different chapters of the Swiss Society of New Zealand and thus bring these greetings to you in person. This will give me an opportunity to obtain from you an in-depth view of your achievements here. Through your insights I shall reach a better understanding of New Zealand and thus look forward to these meetings.

There is surely no need to remind you that, as in the past, we at the Embassy stand ready to assist you in all matters requiring official attention as well in strengthening your links with Switzerland.

With kind regards;
Your Ambassador,
Silvie Matteucci.