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Your Corner...

Quiz from October Issue:

Unfortunately, we received only very few responses to our Quiz in last month's *Helvetia*.

Yes, some of the questions were quite difficult and, of course, it also coincided with the school holidays! So, the deadline for receiving your answers has now been extended for a further month, to 15th November. It doesn't matter if you can't find the answers to all of the questions - just do as many as you can. Remember, besides the winners, all entrants will receive a consolation prize. You will find the questions in the October *Helvetia* on page 4 (if another copy of the quiz is required, just call Beatrice on 07 843 7971). Write your answers (don't forget to number them) clearly on a sheet of paper and include your name, address, age and school class. Send your reply to:

Quiz on Switzerland
Swiss Society of New Zealand
P O Box 4035
Hamilton East

to reach us by **15th November**.

We really look forward to receiving lots more entries. **Good luck !!**

Re-election of Swiss Abroad Council

(as reported by our Swiss Abroad Delegate, Heinz Leuenberger)

The Swiss Abroad Council can look back on numerous successes. Among the more pertinent was the right to vote in federal elections and referenda by postal vote (e-mail is presently being looked at, too). Also of importance is the inclusion of the Swiss Abroad into the Federal Constitution (Art.40), as well as the continuation of the voluntary AHV/IV, and of course the 'Swiss Revue'.

These remarkable achievements point to the importance placed on the Swiss Abroad Council (ASC), popularly known as the "Parliament of the Fifth Switzerland". The Council specifically concerns itself with Swiss foreign policy and makes sure the Authorities and the general public are aware of the matters that are under their consideration.

Therefore, the ASC fulfils a very important mission in the interests of **all** Swiss Abroad. **All** compatriots

Member's Profile

Patron - Taranaki Club

Dominic and Laura Hiestand

Don was born in 1917, in Bäch, Canton Schwyz, on the shores of the Lake of Zürich.

His father was a "Berufsfischer" (fisherman), which brought in the income for the family. His was a big family of seven boys and one sister. After doing an apprenticeship as a joiner, Don didn't see much of a future for himself in Switzerland, with a wage then of Fr 1.25 per hour.

In 1939 he decided to emigrate to New Zealand. Mrs Kaiser and Louis Ehrler were on holiday in Switzerland, and they gathered up 28 young Swiss for this big emigration to their 'new country' - New Zealand.

As a single man, Don worked in a few places - at first for a relation, Joe Hiestand, at Oeo Road. His next job took him to Stevenson's in Manaia Road, and then he moved on to Alf Kalin in Normanby. This is where he met Lora Burkhart.

Lora also came from a big family of nine - two boys and seven girls. The two were married in 1943, and started sharemilking - first for Lora's brother, Joe, on Mangawhero Road, for three years, and then they shifted down to Pihama.

In 1961, they bought their own farm in Awatuna, where they still are now. They brought up their own large family of four boys and three girls.

interested in maintaining their rights can take part, through one of approx 750 Swiss Societies spread around the world, to elect a new Council. The seats are allocated to countries or groups of countries, according to the number of people registered with Embassies and Consulates. Between Autumn and Spring 2001 (Sth Hemisphere), the Council will come up for renewal for the third time. It's up to compatriots to defend the interests of the "Fifth Switzerland" by taking part in the election of **their**

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Laura and Dominic Hiestand

Don and Lora are very loyal members of the Taranaki Swiss Club, which they joined in 1952. For many years Don served as an executive of the Club, and Lora did all the floral arrangements for Club functions, and always gave a helping hand in the kitchen.

Don was a leading helper during the building of our Clubhouse in 1980/81 - he spent hundreds of hours on this building, and all for no charge.

We wish Don and Lora all the best for many years to come. R.D.

representatives. *Swiss Revue* 6/00 will carry a feature regarding the upcoming elections and you can also visit the website: www.aso.ch

New Format of Seat Allocation

Starting with the term of office 2001-2005, there will be three extra seats. Two will go to France and the third to Egypt/Asia minor. France has just under 150,000 registered Swiss. The allocation of seats for Deputy Delegates has also changed. Previously, the number of Delegates and Deputy Delegates was the same, but under the new system there will be two Deputy Delegates per country or region of countries, irrespective of the number of Delegates. So, under the new arrangement, New Zealand will be entitled to one Delegate, as well as **two** Deputy Delegates.

(Swiss Abroad report continued on page 11)

It is up to the four Clubs to discuss the matter at their respective AGM's (and Society members) and make appropriate nomination(s) to the Society secretary in good time so that such nominations can be suitably published in the *Helvetia* at least one month prior to the election weekend in early June. I feel it's absolutely essential that AGM participants are aware of who the nominees are so that they are able to make an informed decision as to whom they are asked to vote for!

Note: When I was first elected as Delegate, I had little knowledge of procedures of the Swiss Abroad Organisation. This was not least because over the years very little information about the Organisation was forthcoming, albeit the *Swiss Revue* was a good source of information. Yet, as is often the case - you read through (any) publication, put it aside, and then forget about it! However, if you become interested in something new, you learn about it fast. The one thing I then learned very quickly was that my election for this position, although by no means 'illegal', was not carried out strictly according to the current procedure, as in 1989, the OSA put on statute that elected Delegates and Deputies serve a *four* year term of Office. Prior to this, they were elected on a *yearly* basis. Our Society, through lack of knowledge or information about this statute, continued with the status quo, which may have caused the incumbent some displeasure at the time. This was, of course, unintentional. *Heinz L.*

Swiss President Resigns from Politics

The Swiss Defence Minister and President, Adolf Ogi (58), representing the 'Swiss People's Party' will step down on 31 December, at the end of his one-year mandate as President. He has been Defence Minister for five years, beginning his Cabinet career in 1987 as Minister of Communications, Transport, and Energy. Ogi has twice been President - a largely ceremonial position rotated annually among the seven members of the cabinet. After a 13-year cabinet career, he said that, like a sportsman, he was stepping down at the "highpoint" of his career, and wanted to spend more time with his family. Both houses of parliament will meet in December to elect a successor, which will take several weeks to decide. Fourteen names were already put forward by the party shortly after the resignation was announced. Although the People's Party received the largest share of the vote in the last general elections in October, Ogi is still its only representative in the Cabinet, while the other three parties each have two ministers.

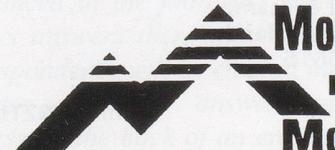
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Update on Swiss Olympic Results

Following the article in last month's issue on early Olympic successes, the hopes of the Swiss delegation were indeed fulfilled! Switzerland was able to celebrate its biggest medal tally since the Helsinki Games of 1952, with a total of nine medals.

The gold and bronze in the women's triathlon, as well as the silver in the women's individual fencing tournament, preceded several further achievements in the first week. The previously male dominated sport of fencing brought a second silver medal, this one in the women's team épée event. A great achievement!

Perhaps the biggest surprise was the third silver medal, won by Michel Ansermet in the men's rapid-fire pistol event. The 35-year-old actually made it to Sydney only as a "wild card" entry, because several countries didn't fill their allocated places!

Yet another silver went to the men's single sculls rower, Xeno Müller, (second, of course, to our own gold medalist, Rob Wadell). Although a potential favourite, he was delighted with his second placing after initially thinking he had even lost out on the bronze medal!

In the second week of the Games, mountain biker, Barbara Blatter, won Switzerland's fifth silver medal, not quite able to hold on for the gold after leading for over half of the race.

Twenty-four hours later, this time in the men's mountain biking, Christoph Sauser came in third to win the second bronze medal - a 'small' consolation after race leader and gold medal favourite, Thomas Frischknecht, finished a 'disappointing' sixth place.

The sixth and final silver medal went to an elated Swiss show jumping team - well deserved after a 76-year wait for an equestrian team medal.

But, besides the one gold, six silver and two bronze medals, another major achievement is that of the 102 Swiss athletes who competed in Sydney, more than half finished in the top twelve of their sport.

So, congratulations to the Swiss Team for a great result!!

Embassy Staff Required

Gabriela is leaving us to take up new challenges in the field of Natural Therapies and therefore, the following situation is becoming vacant:

Secretary

60 - 100 % (to be determined)

- Telephone and reception duties
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- Registration of Swiss Citizens
- Answer tourist and general enquiries about Switzerland
- Variety of tasks within the Embassy Chancellery

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