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Editorial..

My Saturday night feeling.....

The editor's swansong.....

Even the most humble village newspaper that I receive from Switzerland, (printed in German) nowadays contains some or quite a few expressions in English.

It is no good being annoyed by this as I was for a long time, since we all know that some words in English are more descriptive than the equivalent in German or Swiss German.

However it can apply the other way round just as well with a word or short sentence in German being far more meaningful than the English equivalent. One of these words is the Swiss-German or German word *Vorfreude*, describing the joy of expectation. And this word *Vorfreude* has a lot to do with my Saturday night feeling I have just now writing

my last editorial. Saturday night *Vorfreude* is the feeling of having accomplished the demands of the previous days of the working week while looking forward to the good things of Sunday.

During the time of my growing up in Switzerland most everybody used Saturday to prepare for Sunday. It could have been looked upon as a 'Saturday culture'. The mother of the family would follow a routine of household chores set by generations before her. Specific duties were assigned to children and the husband. Everyone had their own routine of passing the day appropriately in view of the coming day of rest. - There was the house cleaning with polishing floors, cleaning windows and toilets, dusting the furniture. For children there were shoe-polishing duties, preparing enough

kindling and bringing in enough fire wood to last until Monday, cutting enough toilet paper from old newsprint to last the following week. School in those days finished at midday Saturday, so homework had to be attended to after the house duties. One of us children was usually assigned to make the long trip to the village for 'last minute' shopping at the 'Konsum', 'Usego', the Migros-travelling-van, and the butchers. - Even the main meal at midday followed an old custom and consisted mainly of 'Siedfleisch', (beef from old cow or ox, old animals that had come to the end of a useful life). Such a meal, a one-pot-requirement, was quick and cooked itself unattended leaving the housewife free to reign supreme in her Saturday household.

Besides cleaning up work place and tools used during the week, men finished all necessary jobs that would otherwise have to wait until Monday. Sometimes during the day (usually in the afternoon) men would devote the necessary time to the weekly procedure of shaving, the trimming of the moustache and cutting of fingernails, all in preparation for Sunday. The 'better to do type of patriarch' would make his way to the local barber and his income would probably allow him to quench his thirst in one of the many Pubs of the village before making his way home to a spotless household smelling of a mixture of 'Schmierseife (soft soap), floor polish, and Saturday-baking'. There was one job my Father never delegated to anyone and that was the cleaning of the kerosene storm lantern used mainly in the cattle stable devoid of electricity. Thinking back I can still see him in my memory carefully dismantling the glass mantle to clean it with newspaper from soot and dust, expertly trimming the wick and replenishing the lamp's reservoir with kerosene. Catholic people, especially children would feel compelled to go to confession in the afternoon, in order to approach Sunday with a 'clean slate'. By evening that Saturday night feeling was omnipresent and in our area it was customary for the church bells of both denominations of every village to 'ring in Sunday' at half past seven in the evening, lasting for 15 minutes.

My happy Saturday night feeling

SWISS SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND

PATRON: Mrs Sylvie Matteucci-Keller, Ambassador of Switzerland

PRESIDENT/TREASURER: Beatrice Leuenberger, 44 Montgomery Crescent, Hamilton, Ph.(07) 843-7971 Fax (07) 843-7941 bea.leun.rachel@xtra.co.nz

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RIFLEMASTER: Peter Rust, 4202 Pepepe Rd. Naikē, RD 2, Huntly 07 8266711

DELEGATES TO THE SWISS ABROAD CONFERENCE IN SWITZERLAND

DELEGATE: Heinz Leuenberger, 33 Russell Terrace, Putaruru, Ph/Fax (07) 883-8537

DEPUTY DELEGATES: Beno Noetzli, Normandy Road RD11, Hawera, Ph. 06272 6727
Roland Schütz, 35 East St. Petone - Wellington Ph. 04 568 6772

EDITOR: RINALDO RUST, 242 Te PAHU RD. R.D.5.

HAMILTON, Ph/FAX (07) 871-9946 E-MAIL: RINALDORUST@XTRA.CO.NZ

CLUB REPRESENTATIVES

AUCKLAND

SECRETARY: Trudi Fill, 51 Clifton Rd, Herne Bay, P.O Box 40152, Glenfield, Auckland, Ph/fax (09) 3764923, e-amil <weidfill@xtra.co.nz>

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EMBASSY OF SWITZERLAND: Panama House, 22 Panama St. Wellington, Ph. (04) 472-1593 or (04) 472-1594 Fax (04) 499-6302

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