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Autor: Leuenberger, Beatrice
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Past President's Final Message

Having just held the Society AGM in Taranaki at Queen's Birthday Weekend, I have included the contents of my annual President's Report to the meeting in my final message to you here.

And as this is my final President's Report, after holding the office since 1997, it is an opportune time to reflect also on the past five years.

The Society has once again run smoothly and successfully over the past 12 months, and during the year we've been kept busy with the usual jobs of producing the Helvetia and Society administration.

Back in 1997, our Society had a total of 494 members - now, as at the end of March, we have a total net increase of 34 members (taking into account members that have also been lost). And in line with the trend, overall membership again increased slightly over the last year - by a total of six members.

By the end of March 2002, the Society had a total of 528 members, of which 18 are honorary, leaving 510 who paid a \$25 annual subscription. And even this figure has already increased since by about another six members, which goes to show that there is still a lot of interest in the Society - greatly helped by a magazine up to the standard of the Helvetia - both by new arrivals from Switzerland, as well as second and even third generation Swiss in New Zealand.

Total Household membership numbers for each Club at the end of March were: Auckland - 133, Hamilton - 124, Taranaki - 110, Wellington - 63, as well as 98 members of the Society only, and do not belong to a North Island Club.

I would like to thank in particular these 98 "Society Only" members throughout New Zealand for your continued support of the Society through your subscriptions. As long as we can maintain a membership base at the current level, our Society will be in a healthy state to carry on with its main purpose of being able to keep the Swiss community throughout New Zealand in touch and informed.

Throughout the past year, our front page competitions have continued to be popular, with between 8 - 12 entries each month, and I'd like to thank everyone who participated and sent in entries. Prior to Christmas, in the Your Corner segment, we asked children to draw and send us a Christmas scene - and each of those who participated received an advents calendar filled with chocolates.

My one wish for the future of the Swiss Society is that we can continue to nurture and encourage the interest and participation of our younger generation in the Swiss Society.

Once again, I would like to thank to a

number of people for their input into running the Society, especially at this point where we have reached the end of our five year term.

Firstly, to our Editor, Rinaldo Rust, for his ongoing commitment to producing our Helvetia, to which I already alluded in my message last month. So thank you, Rinaldo, for the large amount of work, time and effort that you have given to our Society's magazine.

Thank you also to the people who always regularly met to pack the Helvetia ready for postage each month - Ruth, Charlie, Helen, Joe and Bert. When we received the printed pages from the Printer, the sheets were only folded and still in three separate piles (or four in the case of 16-page issues). These pages firstly had to be collated and stapled, the address label was attached, and then the magazine was folded into thirds, sellotaped at the ends, and made up into bundles, ready for delivery to the Post Office. And because we always stapled the 600 issues ourselves, we saved approx. \$90 per month (which we would otherwise have paid the printing firm). For 10 annual issues per year, this translated to \$900 per year, or a staggering \$4,500 saved over the past five years!!

(We're going to have to do something about still coming together each month as we'll all really miss these regular gossip sessions!!)

I hope many of you have taken the opportunity to try one or other of the many recipes which appeared on our "Your Corner" pages. Thank you to both Doris and Trudy for the many interesting and informative articles and ideas provided over the past five years.

Finally, my thanks go to everyone who has supported me over the past five years - I have very much enjoyed being President of this Society, and I feel very proud to be able to hand over an organisation which is in a very healthy state, and wish everyone in the Taranaki Club who will be involved in the future running of the Swiss Society my very best wishes and every success.

And so I would like to send to all of our many members and readers my very best wishes and grateful thanks for your support over the past five years, and hope that you will continue your support of our Swiss Society well into the future, and wish you further enjoyment in receiving and reading your Helvetia magazines.

Goodbye and kindest regards to you all
Beatrice

New President's Report

Hello everyone... as you may not be aware, the running of the Swiss Society of NZ changes every five years between the Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington and

Taranaki Swiss Clubs... and now it is the Taranaki Swiss Club's turn. We certainly have a very hard act to follow!! On behalf of all Swiss Society members, I would like to thank the members of the Hamilton Swiss Club for all the time and effort they have put into running the Swiss Society and publishing the Helvetia magazine. All subscribers have thoroughly enjoyed reading the magazine. Grateful thanks to you all !!

My name is Marianne Drummond, a name that sounds VERY Swiss!! My parents emigrated from Switzerland in 1965, with my Dad coming from Aarberg in canton Bern, and my mother from Chavornay in canton Vaud. I am very fortunate that my parents taught me both languages from an early age, and am fluent in speaking both French and German. I have been to Switzerland on several occasions, and attended a Home Economics school in Morges, however, I have not otherwise lived there. I enjoy visiting Switzerland, but New Zealand is my home.

I have belonged to the Taranaki Swiss Club for many years, and have been Treasurer for about eight years. I thoroughly enjoy Swiss tradition, and am fortunate that my husband, Adrian (who is a New Zealander), has actively taken part in all the Swiss Club activities.

After 18 years, I have recently resigned as a Bank Officer with TSB Bank, and together with Adrian we have decided to take up a career in dairy farming, working as 50/50 sharemilkers for my parents. It will be a big change for both of us, but we are looking forward to the challenge of working together.

The Taranaki Swiss Club is looking forward to compiling the Helvetia magazine for the Swiss Society members, but realise that we will also have a lot of hard work ahead. Should any of you have any queries regarding the magazine, please do not hesitate to contact one of the executive. We welcome your thoughts and ideas, and hope that you will continue to enjoy reading this magazine.

On behalf of our new executive, we thank the Hamilton Swiss Club very much for agreeing to publish this issue.

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