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our first Helvetia was a learning curve, at least for Heidi always knew what she was doing and gently nudged me in the right direction, too. I'd like to thank all the good people who generously offered their help and even more generously offered to continue to support us:

- Petra Press for looking after the addresses and for printing the labels
- Craig Press for his interview
- Carolyn Lane for her Bodensee News
- Sandie Simons for the Children's page
- Paul Werthmüller for his contributions (more to come)
- Theres Scherrer for choosing a poem
- And many others who sent articles, newspaper clippings, made suggestions, showed interest and support. Not everything made it into this Helvetia, but there are a few more to come...

You may have noticed that our Helvetia is photocopied, not printed. We checked out various options and decided this was the most economic, the quickest and the most practical for us. However, in photocopying, a 'spot colour' (i.e. just one colour apart from black) is considered to be a colour copy, and colour copies are prohibitively expensive. We hope you are happy with four full colour pages and the rest in black and white.

Spring is in the air, even if we have a bit of a "Biiswind" around here. The longer days and the sunshine invite us to get the garden ready; in amongst the weeds I found quite a few plants I had forgotten I had. Well, the weeds must have protected them from the cold and the wind; they look happy. Now they have to fend for themselves. Maybe a good crop of weeds isn't so bad, after all. *tb*

A gentle reminder

To Society Only members: Your subscription of \$25 for the Helvetia is now due. Most Society Only members have already paid; if you haven't, would you please do so in the next few days to ensure you get all the Helvetias this year.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to you all! I'm sure you are all looking forward to warmer spring weather, and more outdoor activities.

I have been recently preoccupied with the reasons why the Wellington Swiss Club hasn't won the cow bell competition since 1999. All of this focused analysis seems to take place at my kitchen table or while washing the dishes. No doubt, you are surprised that the kitchen sink is often my source of inspiration and creative thinking.

I would like to see more of our members (irrespective of age) actively involved and participating in the different Swiss Club and the Swiss Society activities. As a result, I would like to know from the wider membership in the form of an open discussion, whether there is any interest to include other events or activities apart from the national Cowbell competition.

A suggestion would be to include other creative and recreational activities, which may increase Swiss cultural awareness. This could include traditional or contemporary Swiss/New Zealand design, art and crafts, or a fashion show, such as the shining example by the golden girls of Taranaki. Another consideration is activities specifically for children. These alternative activities could take place during the national Swiss Society AGM held on the Queen's Birthday weekend.

This is meant to be an opportunity to discuss your views or suggestions and forward them to me directly either via email, correspondence (see contact details below) or through your individual clubs. I look forward to hearing from you.

Uf Widerluage
Roland

Swiss Society of New Zealand

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