

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 74 (2008)
Heft: [1]

Titelseiten

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 12.08.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

HELVETIA

Magazine for the members of the Swiss Society of New Zealand Inc
Helvetia is in its 74th year

February 2008

Fasnacht in Switzerland - Morgestraich in Basel

Fasnacht in Basel is one of the country's best known and most extravagant traditions. When the carnival gets underway in the early hours of the morning (the Morgestraich) the streets of this northern Swiss city come alive



with the sound of drumming, flute-playing and marching by masked and costumed figures.

Lötschental mask

The Lötschental in Canton Valais is famous for the Tschäggättä tradition, which takes place in February. Young unmarried men and boys roam the streets of the villages of the valley, wearing demonic masks and tunics made of sheep or goat skins, and ringing bells. The name refers to the black and white colour of these tunics: "tschäggättä" means "piebald" in the local dialect. By tradition the Tschäggättä wear gloves smeared with soot, and take the occasional swipe at anyone they meet (particularly young women). The masks are handcarved, and each one is different. They normally feature crooked teeth and bulging, uneven eyes. It is said that they reflect the untamed nature of the valley. They have also been inter-

The Morgestraich traditionally starts on the Monday after Ash Wednesday, at 4 am precisely. Although the Fasnacht tradition can be traced back to the 14th century, the Morgestraich was first given official approval in 1835. Participants would march through the city with torches and now with lanterns. Today, all street lighting is turned off in the city during the Morgestraich, to make way for the procession of large decorative lanterns.

The day continues much in the same vein, with music, processions, and plenty of noise. In addition, some cafés and restaurants provide a forum for the Schnitzelbank tradition: participants get up and spout satirical verses about a subject of their choice.

preted as an expression of anarchy and rebellion in a peasant society that was largely dominated by the church.



Like this tradition, many of the costumes worn at the carnival reflect current affairs and events.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Editorial/President's report	2
Bus-board Bulletin	3
Swiss Club News	4-8
Memories are History	9
School bags are a pain in the back	10
Children's page	11
Nostalgic chairlifts	12
Avalanches beware	13
More Europeans in Switzerland	14
Bio gas plant	15
Neighbourhood Street Party	16
Walti and his Isebähnli	17
Winterzauber in der Schweiz	18
Wily foxes embrace city life	19
Blaze guts guild house in Zürich	20