

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 74 (2008)
Heft: [7]

Artikel: The legend of William Tell
Autor: [s.n.]
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-943665>

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: 12.12.2025

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

HELVE^{TI}IA

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

August/September 2008

The legend of William Tell

At a time soon after the opening of the Gotthard Pass, when the Habsburg emperors of Vienna sought to control Uri and thus control trans-alpine trade, a new bailiff, Hermann Gessler, was despatched to Altdorf. The proud mountain folk of Uri had already

length. He ordered him to shoot an apple off his son's head with his crossbow; if Tell were successful, he would save his life, but if he failed or refused, both he and his son would die.

The boy's hands were tied. Tell put one arrow in his shirt and an-

– unfamiliar with the lake – begged Gessler to release Tell so that he could steer them to safety. Gessler agreed, and Tell cannily manoeuvred the boat close to the shore, then leapt to freedom, landing on a flat rock (the Tellsplatte) and simultaneously pushing the boat back into the stormy waters. Determined to see his task through and use the second arrow, Tell hurried to Küsnacht. As Gessler and his party walked along on a dark lane called Hohle Gasse on their way to the castle, Tell leapt out, shot a bolt into the tyrant's heart and melted back into the woods to return to Uri. His comrades were inspired by Tell's act of bravery to throw off the yoke of Habsburg oppression in their homeland, and to remain forever free.



Rütiwiese on the Urnersee

joined with their Schwyzer and Nidwaldner neighbours at Rütli in pledging to resist the Austrians' cruel oppression, and when Gessler raised a pole in the central square of Altdorf and perched his hat on the top, commanding all who passed before it to bow in respect, it was the last straw. William Tell, a countryman from nearby Bürglen, either hadn't heard about Gessler's command or chose to ignore it; whichever, he walked past the hat without bowing. Gessler seized Tell, who was well known as a marksman, and set him a chal-

other in his crossbow, took aim, and shot the apple clean off his son's head. Gessler was impressed and infuriated – and then asked what the second arrow was for. Tell looked the tyrant in the eye and replied that if the first arrow had struck the child, the second would have been for Gessler. For such impertinence, Tell was arrested and sentenced to lifelong imprisonment in the dungeons of Gessler's castle at Küsnacht, northeast of Luzern. During the long boat journey a Föhnstorm arose on the lake, and the oarsmen

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Editorial/President's report	2
Bodensee Bulletin	3
Swiss Club News	4-7
Sisterly love rejuvenates old hotel	8
Children's Page	9
Life is more beautiful in Zurich	10
Ecstasy used to treat Swiss trauma victims	11
Making a splash in Lucerne	12
Scientists unlock sleep mysteries	13
The Föhn – friend and fiend	14
Alarm sounded over chemicals in sunscreens	15
The Teufelsbrücke	16