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Charlie Schuler

1918 - 2008

Charlie was born to Swiss Immigrant parents, Karl and Matilda Schuler at Kaponga on 8th October 1918, and has a younger sister, Tilly. At the age of seven, Charlie started school at Kapuni, unable to speak a word of English. In 1926 Charlie and his mother returned to Switzerland for eighteen months to catch up with family, where he attended school in Grindelwald. Upon arriving back in New Zealand, Charlie returned to Kapuni School and completed his education at fourteen to work on the family farm milking cows for his parents.

In 1933 they purchased the farm on Palmer Road, where Charlie and his dad worked hard to get it in top order. The Kapuni River ran through their farm and was a source of good quality concrete shingle. Charlie sold the odd load to locals, and also started to do some concreting jobs with a hand mixer. He really enjoyed this and left the milking to Tilly and her husband Cyril. He then put a petrol motor on the hand mixer to make work easier, and this was the start of his business.

On 11th November 1944, Charlie married Doreen Watts and they were blessed with five children - Faye, Judy (who sadly pre-deceased her dad), Neil, Ian and John. Both Charlie and Doreen worked hard at their business, and in 1973 Neil joined the business. Charlie never really retired; he just slowed down over the last few years. He liked nothing more than to go out to the workshop to make concrete products, and to give the boys the odd tune up!!!

A big part of Charlie's life was the Taranaki Swiss

Club, of which he was a Life Member and Patron. He was also a Life Member of the Swiss Society of New Zealand. Along with several others, Charlie was the driving force behind the building of our Club house at Kaponga, which was opened in 1981. Charlie enjoyed the companionship of their friends at the Swiss Club, including playing jass, and they hardly missed a Club function. For many years Charlie undertook all the maintenance jobs at the Club house, and many years ago allowed the Swiss Club to use their land on Opunake Road for the "Karabiner" shooting. Charlie spoke 'schweizer-deutsch' very well, and until the end enjoyed conversing in the dialect. Together with Doreen they enjoyed travelling, especially to his beloved Grindelwald, and also took great pleasure in our Club trips away. Charlie's love for Swiss food, especially sauerkraut, sausages and chocolate, were well-known, as was his fondness of schnaps!!! Charlie was a very loyal, dedicated and generous Club member who will be sadly missed.

He was honoured with a Guard of Honour by many members of the Taranaki Swiss Club in their traditional, colourful costumes, the singing group sang the Swiss National Anthem and Othmar played the Alphorn. A large crowd gathered to farewell him, and he was laid to rest at the Kaponga cemetery.

The Taranaki Swiss Club and the Swiss Society of New Zealand extend their deepest sympathy to Doreen, Tilly, Faye, Neil, Ian, John, Viv (Judy's husband) and their families.

Two concerts you should not miss

Christina Kunz from Aarburg, Switzerland, an accomplished harpsicordist and organist, will give two organ and harpsicord concerts:
Sunday 15th February 2009 at 5pm in Wellington, on the new organ of St Paul's Lutheran church
Wednesday 18th February 2009 at 8pm in Nelson in the Anglican Cathedral.

Christina Kunz will play compositions from Johann Pachelbel, Dietrich Buxtehude, Joh. Christian Bach, Joseph Haydn,
Maria Theresia v. Paradis and Georg Friedrich Haendel.

Rev Franz Murbach, Richmond Nelson, will give short introductions to the different pieces.

It is the second time that Christina is giving us the pleasure to play in New Zealand.
She is currently giving concerts in Switzerland and Germany.

She is also the initiator and promoter of the extensive project,
the "Mozartweg", showing how Mozart and his family travelled through Switzerland.

Her husband, Peter Hohler-Kunz, is taking part at the New Zealand Open Chess Tournament in Queenstown, end of January.
Patron of both concerts is our Ambassador, Dr Beat Nobs.

They will be followed by a "verre de l'amitie" and the possibility to talk with the artist.

Tickets are available at the door: \$ 15, concessions \$ 12.
In Nelson you can also book through the Nelson School of Music.