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serving food please contact Vreni on 07 855 3294 or email [Anita.zuber@xtra.co.nz](mailto:Anita.zuber@xtra.co.nz). We are always looking for extra helpers, especially during the hours of 12.30 and 2pm.

All Hamilton Club members should receive a newsletter/calendar either via post or email early February.

For further queries please contact Beatrice on 07 8437971 or Anita 0274 985170. AZ

Well done Hans, on finishing the Round the Lake Taupo Cycle Classic of 160kms. The condi-



Hans Vetsch, Hamilton Swiss Club Riflemaster

tions were not the best with gale force winds making life on a bike very difficult. Maybe some more of our Swiss friends are up for the challenge in the future? V.A.

## Wanted to Buy

A large Swiss cowbell please. We have Swiss heritage and have recently holidayed in Switzerland. We would love to purchase a cowbell to display in our home. Pat Steiner 07 828 8598, 027 240 9059. Email: [oldlnp@xtra.co.nz](mailto:oldlnp@xtra.co.nz)

## Robert Blattler

1930 - 2011

Robert Blattler was born in Hergiswil, Nidwalden. He was the 4th of 11 children, growing up on a mountain farm. At the age of 7 Robi and his 9 remaining siblings lost their mother and the young baby sister due to complications at childbirth with her 11th child at home in the deep snow. They then had to grow up under the strict command of an aunt. He was a farmer, from an early age spending summers looking after stock on Alps and helping on the home farm during the rest of the year. The home farm property was split between Robert and his brother Jakob, my father.

After about 20 years Robert sold his part to Jakob and immigrated to New Zealand in 1972. He worked his way up from labourer to share-milker in Tirau, Putaruru and later bought his own farm in Waihou (near Te Aroha).

Bad knees forced his early retirement. He bought a town house near the mountain of Te Aroha. Robert enjoyed his many friends and was always a happy companion to many of us. He hardly ever missed events organised by the Hamilton Swiss club and would travel for miles to play Swiss cards, often until late into the night. He was often invited to meals and talked about it in great details afterwards as he appreciated it so much. It was always fun to visit Robi and he was proud to serve his own home brew with Kaffi on these occasions. Robi said that he did not want to be buried in New Zealand. In 2006, he decided to sell up everything and booked himself into a lodge in his old home town of Hergiswil where he could spend the rest of his life near his 5 remaining siblings and old school friends. Many of his Kiwi-Swiss friends have since visited him there and staff at the lodge confirmed to me that these visits have always put the spark back into Robi, they were his highlights. His health deteriorated slowly and he spent his final days with kidney failure in Hospital.

*Anna Blattler, Te Aroha*

## Zurich hotels and their Ramadan guests

Hoteliers in Zurich have been taking lessons in how to cater for Muslim guests during the holy month of Ramadan as they are keen to please their fasting and free-spending guests. Zurich Tourism got together with Muslim organisations in the city to arrange a series of workshops. High on the list of topics was catering for guests who do not eat or drink between sunrise and sunset during Ramadan and require specially prepared meals.

Dietary requirements do not end at when Muslim visitors are allowed to eat. Islamic law also prescribes what food is permissible (Halal), which excludes the meat of carnivorous or omnivorous animals and of those that were not slaughtered in the correct way.

Zurich Tourism has drawn up a list of hotels that are prepared to meet these culinary requirements and offer other Ramadan-friendly services.

The main reason for Zurich's efforts is the spending power of holidaymakers from oil-rich and largely recession-proof countries.

*swissinfo*