

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 78 (2012)
Heft: [5]

Nachruf: Obituary : Doreen Jessie Schuler : 7 June 1923 - 7 April 2012
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In the Taranaki Daily News one of our readers found the following article:

"Call for Maori language to be mandatory

Support for compulsory teaching of te reo in schools is gathering momentum in Taranaki. Trade Minister Tim Groser has called for the Maori language to be made mandatory for all school children in a bid to offer them different cultural perspectives. At Stratford Primary School the concept was already in practice. Principal Kelvin Squire said it was a natural by-product of globalisation. He said a te reo class was already compulsory for his students because it was "an essential learning area. It's about engagement with our country and it's also building on the children's brain development," Mr Squire said. **"Why should New Zealand 5-year-olds be any different to the Swiss who can speak Swiss-German, German and Austrian?"**

However, he said along with any commitment to teach te reo to all students, there needed to be a commitment to resource it. The Maori language is part of the country's school curriculum but there is no hard and fast method to teaching it. -

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I don't want to enter into the discussion whether Maori should be taught in New Zealand schools or not. What struck our reader, and me, too, was that Swiss children are supposed to be fluent in three languages. Swiss children start school at seven, and as far as I can remember they are far from fluent in German, let alone in Austrian(!). They go to school to learn German, and even after nine years at school they (we!) are not all fluent in German - whereas New Zealand children are fluent in New Zealandian, Australian, English, American, Canadian at the tender age of five. That doesn't mean they shouldn't learn Maori... tb



Doreen Jessie Schuler

7 June 1923 - 7 April 2012

Doreen Jessie Schuler was born on 7th June 1923 to Harry and Isabella Watts at Manaia. Doreen loved school and attended Okaiawa School, but did not have the opportunity to attend High School as her help was needed on the farm. This was about the only regret in her life. The Watts family moved to Palmer Road in 1937 to take up a sharemilking job and that was the start of a lifelong connection with the area. When Doreen was sixteen she developed a medical problem with her right leg which resulted in an amputation of the leg above the knee. This must have been a terrible thing to happen to a young 16 year old girl, but, if anything, made her become a very strong and determined young woman. She never let her disability be an excuse.

The Schuler family also lived on the Palmer Road and had a handsome young son, Charlie, who took Doreen's eye and as time went by they got to know each other and love blossomed. Charlie and Doreen were married on 11 November 1947. A new house was built on the Schuler farm and Charlie and Doreen lived there for 63 years until they purchased a unit at Brydon Court, Hawera, in 2008. They were blessed with five children - Faye, Judy, Neil and the twins Ian and John -, 13 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren (and one more on the way).

Doreen was very proud of her Scottish heritage, and in 1970 together with Charlie, they made the trip to Scotland to make contact with many of her aunts, uncles and cousins. They travelled extensively and this opened the way for many of the family to also make the trip to Scotland and catch up with distant relatives. Another country they enjoyed visiting was Switzerland where Charlie's parents were born. Doreen loved travelling and enjoyed many trips overseas with Charlie.

Charlie was a very keen member of the Taranaki Swiss Club, and Doreen enjoyed being part of the Swiss community. She loved the music, singing, playing cards, the food, many trips away with the Swiss Club, and the friendship of the Swiss people. Doreen was the loyal and dedicated secretary of the Taranaki Swiss Club for twenty-four years, and was honoured with Life Membership for her most valuable contribution to our club. Charlie and Doreen were committed Taranaki Swiss Club members, who contributed a great deal to our club - building and maintaining our clubhouse, committee members, keeping minutes, hosting Swiss visitors, supporting raffles ... the list could go on and on!!! The Swiss Club played a big part in Charlie and Doreen's lives and it was something they enjoyed together. A good number of the family spent the day at the annual Swiss picnic in February, with Swiss Nana (as Doreen was known to her great-grandchildren). They all appreciated watching the Swiss wrestling, eating Swiss sausages, enjoying the music and being together.

The Taranaki Swiss Club and the Swiss Society of New Zealand extend their deepest sympathy to the Schuler family on the loss of Doreen, a loved mother, mother-in-law, nana, and Swiss Nana.