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From the editor

Dear Helvetia Readers

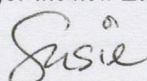
Spring is in the air. It's the small things that give so much pleasure - the many coloured cherry blossoms that are emerging everywhere, flourishing camellias and magnolias, and of course also the green leaf buds that are now breaking through. I know the farmers among us will have been really busy with lambing and calving - we wish you the very best for this busy time of year.

Unfortunately, there ain't too many lambs and calves in the great smoke of Auckland! But we do have some other pleasures. Many members of the Auckland Swiss Club recently enjoyed the wonderful performance of the Faust Quartett of Switzerland, playing an eclectic selection of music to an enchanted audience. Simone Roggen, daughter of Osci Roggen, who plays first violin in the quartet, has grown into a first class musician and an amazing young woman. I do hope some of you made it to one of the many performances throughout New Zealand.

The Helvetia team is very pleased to welcome new Ambassador David Vogelsanger and his wife Laura to New Zealand, and to print his first message to Swiss Society members in this issue of the Helvetia. We look forward to meeting him and his wife when the occasion arises.

Alas, this spring issue of the Helvetia also brings me to the end of my stint as the Editor. I have to step down for health reasons and take things more slowly for a while - something that's not really in my genetic makeup! I will have to learn to be a human being rather than a human doing, as they say. However, I am delighted to remain on a re-shuffled Helvetia team and make ongoing contributions, and of course help the new Editor as much as possible with her/his new role. Being the Editor of the Helvetia has been very enjoyable, at times challenging, but overall hugely rewarding. I am amazed how much more I now know about Switzerland and hope this may be the same for you. Most importantly, I thank you all for being such gracious and kind readers. Big thanks also go to the Helvetia team members, club secretaries and the President Tanja for their wonderful support, something I also intend to provide for the new Editor.

Uf Widerluege,



From the president

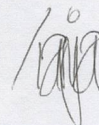
Dear Helvetia Readers,

The sun is out, the heater is off and I feel I can finally wake up from my hibernation. The veggie seedlings are planted and I'm determined to harvest my first tomato before Herbert in Hamilton does... This is a bit of a 'cheesy' Helvetia issue (and I really can't stand cheese at all!) but all these inspiring articles about Gruyère make me want to go and visit that region.

Wellington is lucky to have a new Swiss resident - our new Swiss Ambassador Dr. David Vogel-sanger. On behalf of the Swiss Society I welcome Mr. Vogelsanger and his wife to New Zealand and hope they will have a wonderful and unforgettable stay in our beautiful country. I am sure we will have a prosperous relationship with our new Ambassador and hope to have many interesting and inspiring articles in our future Helvetias.

One door opens and sadly another closes... it's with a twinge of sadness that we farewell our wonderful Editor Susie Wood - the Helvetia would not be what it is today if it wasn't for you Susie and you can be ever so proud of what you have achieved. Luckily for us, Susie is still staying in the Helvetia team to make sure things don't fall apart completely. But the reins will hopefully be handed over to a new editor soon - we just have to do a tad more arm twisting... On behalf of the Swiss Society I would like to thank Susie very much for her tireless effort and huge amount of work she has put into our Helvetia over the last couple of years. We could not have started off as well as we did without her! Susie, we wish you only the very, very best on your future path.

Yours,



Swiss Society of New Zealand Inc.

Patron	Vacant
President	Tanja Latham-Zurbrugg, 45 Kinross Street, Blockhouse Bay Auckland 0600. Ph 09 627 8777. Email: tanja.latham@swiss.org.nz
Secretary	Nelly Steinemann, 8 St.Ives Terrace, Mairangi Bay, Auckland 0630 Ph. 09 479 4038. Email: nelly.steinemann@swiss.org.nz
Vice President	Marcel Rüedi, PO Box 1026, Whangarei 0140 Ph 02 7490 1836. Email: marcel.ruedi@swiss.org.nz
Editor	Susie Wood, PO Box 65206, Mairangi Bay, Auckland 0745 Ph 09 479 1996. Email: editor@swiss.org.nz
Treasurer	Carmen Fitz-Gordon, 2 Coldham Crescent, St. Johns Auckland 1072 Ph 09 528 0903. Email: carmen.fitz-gordon@swiss.org.nz
Riflemaster	Ernst Lanz, 23 Hawaiian Parade, Arkles Bay, Whangaparaoa 0932 Ph 09 428 5687. Email: ernst.lanz@swiss.org.nz

Delegates to the Swiss Abroad Conference in Switzerland

Delegate	Peter Ehrler, 46 Wesley Ave, Frankleigh Park, New Plymouth 4310 Ph 06 753 3441. Email: pehrler@clear.net.nz
Deputy Delegate	Peter Canziani, 30 Herekietie St, Turangi 3334 Ph 07 386 7775. Email: canziapex@xnet.co.nz

Secretaries of the Swiss Clubs

Auckland	Sabine Wyss, c/o ASC 157B Colwill Rd, Massey, Auckland 0614 Ph 027 930 1392. Email: sabine.wyss@swiss.org.nz
Hamilton	Anita Zuber, PO Box 24061, Hamilton 3253 Mobile 027 498 5170. Email: zuber@xtra.co.nz
Taranaki	Marianne Drummond, 508 Salisbury Road, RD24, Stratford 4394 Ph 06 7628 757. Email: littleacres@xtra.co.nz
Wellington	Nathalie Leamy, 6 Shrimpton Way, Newlands, Wellington 6037 Ph 04 461 6541. Email: wellingtonswissclub@gmail.com

Swiss Government Representatives

Embassy of Switzerland	Level 12, Maritime Towers, 10 Custom House Quay, Wellington 6140 Email: wel.vertretung@eda.admin.ch Website: www.eda.admin.ch/wellington. Phone 04 472 1593
Consulate of Switzerland	Peter Deutsche, 3 Marine Parade, Herne Bay, Auckland 1011 Ph 09 366 0403. Email: auckland@honrep.ch