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ASO news

Australian Swiss Club Presidents Meeting in Canberra

Beat Knoblauch, ASO delegate from Australia organised the first ever meeting of the Australian Swiss Club Presidents with the assistance of the Swiss Ambassador for Australia, Marcel Stutz. The meeting was held at the Swiss Embassy in Canberra where Ambassador Stutz gave us the "red carpet" treatment. Through my association with Beat Knoblauch as the ASO Delegate for New Zealand, he invited me to participate and I was thus able to give them a brief rundown of how the Swiss clubs and the Swiss Association is organised in New Zealand. A total of 31 participants attended the meeting.

We had an informal dinner with our partners on Friday evening and the official meeting was held on Saturday with dinner provided by the Swiss Ambassador at his residency. On Sunday we visited the Floriade garden exhibition in Canberra and also had a guided tour through parliament buildings.

As this was the first ever meeting of the Australian Swiss Club Presidents, many of them hardly knew each other and because of the infrequent communication between each other, exchange of information between the clubs is not as widespread as it is here in New Zealand. The participants also realised that they have to find efficient ways to communicate the messages from the ASO to the Swiss community in Australia, inform the Swiss community concerning services and assistance available and for that purpose, the Swiss Club Presidents have to be better informed and improve communication with each other.

In retrospect I have come to the conclusion that many Swiss Abroad lack information and don't really know where to obtain the information they require. This, to a certain extent also applies to the Swiss community here in New Zealand. However, the advantage here in New Zealand is that we have such a strong connection between the individual clubs. This in my opinion was very good thinking and planning way back when the clubs were founded and when the Swiss Society of New Zealand was formed. With the magazine "Helvetia", the on-line information available on the Swiss Society of New Zealand's home page as well as all the information on the Swiss Embassy website, most of the information one would need is available, you only need to know where to find it. Nonetheless, we shall endeavour to inform you even more in the future.

Interesting was the information given to us by Mr Steinmann, the Swiss Consul General from Sydney. He mentioned that for the new biometric passport and identity cards, there are only four (4) mobile machines world-wide which are available to issue the documents. They have to be rented for a given period every year and the Consulate tries to accommodate all areas in Australia as well as New Zealand.

Some of the other speakers at the meeting were: Christian Froehlicher. He is in charge of the German program of the government-owned SBS Radio station. SBS Radio broadcasts in 74 different languages. The Swiss German broadcast is included in the German program every Sunday night. It is available and can be heard on the Internet.

Heidi Gmür. She is the NZZ (Neue Zürcher Zeitung) correspondent stationed in Sydney, Australia and is responsible for the Pacific region. She gave us a briefing concerning her work

as a correspondent. She is one of 40 correspondents the NZZ has stationed worldwide. Interesting to know is that there is no other reputable newspaper in the world that has so many correspondents permanently stationed all over the globe.

Peter Ehrler
Elected Council Member of the Swiss Abroad
representing New Zealand.

Canberra, 27 September 2014

New OSA Youth Offers in Switzerland

The Organisation of the Swiss Abroad offers various opportunities to enjoy Switzerland. Young Swiss from all over the world enjoy the exciting programmes prepared by the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA). You too can have an unforgettable holiday or select one of our training schemes in your second homeland.

You can go in for the sports of your choice at our OSA camps. Experienced, qualified instructors will be there for you. During the camps you can work on exciting projects involving films, media, music and artistic creation. You'll meet lots of young people with interesting backgrounds and form long-lasting, international friendships.

Sports camp Belalp

Join us on our first Winter Sport Holiday Camp in the beautiful sun trap of Wallis! Indulge in lots of sport and have fun in the winter wonderland in the heart of the Belalp.

- 14.02. - 22.02.2015
- from 15 years old

Snow Sports in Davos

This camp is a unique opportunity to discover the super skiing area of Davos/Klosters: with its 6 mountains and 300 km of runs spread over 85 descents, it is one of the largest Alpine winter sports regions.

- 04.04. - 12.04.2015

Discover Switzerland

For two weeks you will go on individual tourist excursions on a theme (e.g. water, history, transportation) and get a closer look at all the diversity of Switzerland. The trips suggested by the OSA are among the most popular and will take you to the Alps, the Mittelland, to town and country. You will post on our blog your travel journal as well as the pictures you shot.

- all year round, for a maximum of two weeks
- from 16 years old

German course in Bern

The German classes take place in the morning. Twice or three times a week joint activities in the afternoon are organised by the course instructors aiming to get to know Switzerland, its people and culture.

- 05.01. - 16.01.2015
- from 15 years old

For further information and enrolment please visit <http://www.swisscommunity.org/en/youth/leisure-offers>