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*From the editor*

Hi Everyone,

I hope you are enjoying the summer! Tobi and I have been lucky enough to have a couple of friends from Switzerland visit us over the festive season. It is always great to see old friends and to share our new lives in New Zealand with them. To our delight, our friends arrived bringing goodies... a little chocolate (Cailler Branche) for Tobi and some cheese (Gruyere surchoix) for me. Mmmh fein. When they left, their bags laden with the goodies they had bought on their trip, I was reminded of what a great place New Zealand is.... To our astonishment even the Swiss bring chocolate and cheese home with them! The chocolate was Whitakers dark almond and L&P flavoured while the cheese was Kapati blue. I hope you and your families were able to enjoy some of the good things New Zealand has to offer over the festive season and school holidays just passed.

As a member of the Auckland club, I have been lucky enough to participate in a number of recent club events. The club walk at Fairy Falls was a particular highlight for me. It was a beautiful, sunny day and I enjoy few things more than walking in the woods with friends. I hope you enjoy reminiscing over past events in the club news pages (see page 14). I know I did. A special shout out and a giant THANK YOU to all the club secretaries, presidents, committee members and volunteers who assist in the running of these events. The organising, baking, mending and cleaning up is truly valued by all who attend. As always, thank you for your efforts.

In this edition of Helveita, on page 12 and 13, there is a very special story depicting the journey Irene Knowles and her family took as they travelled to New Zealand by ship in 1969. I have heard that her story may resonate with a number of Helvetia readers and I want to thank her very much for sharing with us. It is much appreciated. If you have a special story you would also like to share with Helvetia readers please don't hesitate to contact me.

This edition highlights a number of things to see and do in the Verzasca Valley.

Travel "bucket lists" are becoming more and more popular these days and I have been told that this region has now made its way onto a number of buckets lists from members of the Helvetia team. The region fascinates us and we hope you enjoy reading the articles we have put together for you. If the Verzasca valley suddenly ends up on your travel bucket list, then know you are in good company.

Warm Regards,

Victoria

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