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The Swiss Society of New Zealand

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Held on Sunday, 1st June 2014 at 2pm
at the Swiss Club House in Kaponga, Taranaki

Present:

Our patron, Ambassador Marion Weichelt Krupski, and 67 members

Welcomes

- by Othmar Hebler, President of the Taranaki Swiss Club, to the presidents and to all members
- by President Tanja Latham-Zurbruegg, President of the Swiss Society of New Zealand, with special thanks to Marion Weichelt-Krupski and to the Taranaki Swiss Club.

Apologies

Hamilton: Rinaldo Rust, Beatrice Leuenberger,
Taranaki: Irene Biddle, Adrian Drummond
Accepted: Heinz Leuenberger, seconded Heidi Werder

Appointment of Scrutineers

Adrian Blaser nominates Herbert Stäheli, Trudi Fill nominates Alex Martin

Minutes AGM 2013 in Hamilton

Appeared in Helvetia and distributed today.

Moved Henry Werffeli, seconded Herbert Stäheli

Obituary:

Sadly, some of our members have passed away in this last year:
Taranaki: Margrit Suter

Wellington: Ruth Messmer

Hamilton: Stan Sweetman, Nick Brunner, Bert Flühler

Auckland: Heidi Black

Society: H Schicker, Whangarei

A minute of Silence was observed in remembrance of these members.

Presidents report (Tanja Latham-Zurbrügg)

Tanja thanked the Society committee as well as the 12 members of the Helvetia team, the club secretaries, the Embassy, Peter Ehrler and other contributors. We are proud to produce a modern 24 page magazine 6 times per year. A highlight was the 80th anniversary edition (December/January), which taught us a lot about past history of Swiss in NZ. We gave Susie our editor a special round of applause. Peter Deutschle is now doing the layout, thanks to him too. We are looking for new advertisers.

The Swiss.org website has been a great success, thanks to everyone who updates, and David Latham who maintains it. We are working on a new database for the Society and all the clubs, again under the management of David Latham. Again thanks to David, and to Nelly Steinemann for her input. We hope to go live for the next Helvetia edition, due 1st August. And last of all, thanks to all members. Please give your comments, suggestions, feedback to Tanja

Report was moved by Trudi Fill, seconded by Paul Amstalden.

Editor's Report (Susie Wood)

It has been a very successful year for our magazine. Thanks to all, particularly to David Latham who now has left the editorial team but works hard on our database, Peter Deutschle,

Sabine, and the whole Helvetia Team, the secretaries, our ambassador and the Swiss embassy, printers, mail distribution services.

Moved by Anita Zuber, seconded by Adrian Blaser

Treasurer's Report (Carmen Fitzi-Gordon)

from 31 March 2014

Full details are on record.

The report below was written by Carmen Fitzi-Gordon and was read by the President:

The Swiss Society made a profit for the year of \$5,264 compared to \$4,902 in the previous year.

Six issues of the Helvetia were produced and sent out at an average cost of \$1,870 per issue.

The Society has approximately 570 paying members, most of which are members of one of the affiliated clubs.

Advertising income has been steady and to date the Society has not been actively canvassing for new advertisers due to lack of time and a strong focus on producing a high quality Helvetia.

The bank balance has increased by \$5,885 in the current year. At the end of the reporting period two advertisers owed a total of \$244.00 and there were six society members with outstanding subscriptions.

Accumulated funds increased from \$63,765 in the prior year to \$69,029 in the current year.

Carmen Fitzi-Gordon, Treasurer – May 2014

The accounts have been audited by Vivien Roduit.

Moved Chris Hochueli, seconded Herbert Stäheli

Rifle master's Report : Ernst Lanz

Society games were well attended, thanks to all club rifle-masters and secretaries. There were 74 medal winners including triple and double winners. Full results to appear in August/ September Helvetia. There will be a new series of medals from this year, for five years. The theme is 'castles'. They will be presented at the 1st August celebrations. Thanks to competitors and riflemasters.

Report accepted, moved by Mark Kiser, seconded Henry Werffeli.

Delegate for Swiss Abroad's Report (Peter Ehrler)

This was Peter's first year. He has kindly been writing reports for most of the Helvetia magazines, and will continue to do so. Last August Peter attended a meeting in Davos, with 120 delegates from all over the world. In March 14 there was a meeting in Bern, Peter was represented by his Australian colleague. Summary will be published in August Helvetia. Good contact with colleagues from Australia is essential; there is a meeting with them coming up to discuss what's important for us Swiss in Australasia.

Auslandschweizer Gesetz (law for Swiss abroad) is now in Parliament, will be discussed during next few months.

Electronic voting has been an issue. NZ has been lucky to be able to participate, because of an electronic barrier that NZ complies with. Soon all Swiss abroad will be able to participate, except if their host country does not allow this. All Swiss abroad are encouraged to vote, in order to have an influence.

There has been no improvement in Swiss Banking. Banks are not prepared to accept Swiss abroad. The only exception is Post Finance.

Swiss Bank Secrecy (Bankgeheimnis) has been crumbling. Switzerland is very likely to implement a law that all banks have to automatically send statements of their clients to tax departments of all countries. This could be as soon as 2017. *Moved Heinz Leuenberger, seconded Peter Canziani.*

Setting of Subscriptions 2014/15

Remain at \$25 per year.

Moved Matthias Seifert, seconded Trudi Fill

Swiss Society Presidency Term

Amendment from five to four years.

This has been discussed with all the clubs. Hamilton kindly accepted to take over in 2016. An amendment to the Society rules is not needed, as the five year term had never been part of the rules.

Moved Martin Beskid, seconded Fidel Good.

Election of Officers

All committee members are standing for re-election:

Tanja Latham-Zurbrügg, Marcel Ruedi, Nelly Steinemann, Carmen Fitzi-Gordon, Susie Wood, Ernst Lanz.

They were unanimously re-elected, by raising hands.

Moved Richard Wehrli, seconded Adrian Blaser.

Club Reports

Taranaki

Othmar Hebler: Taranaki has over 300 members. They are looking back onto a good club year. Over 200 members attended the recent fondue. They would like a bit more participation in the skittles and the shooting.

Wellington

Roland Schütz. Wellington has had a few changes, they are trying to bring issues under control. Looking forward to Bernese evening, Taranaki will be sent an invitation.

Auckland

Adrian Blaser. We have around 150 members; some of them are individuals, many are families. We had some changes in the committee during the year, Sabine took over as secretary from Heidi Wilson. Jürg Amacher was gladly accepted as a new member. Hans Iten left after many decades, but remains in charge of the Jass. Nelly Steinemann is on Sabbatical whilst working for Swiss Society. We have a successful chefs group after Edith Hess had left last year. Highlights of our calendar are the National Day celebration (this year a Sunday brunch), and Santa. The Swiss Market day 3 weeks ago was a great success once more. We have regular Jass evenings, Pub nights, Shooting events, and many of us are involved in Helvetia writing.

Waikato

Herbert Stäheli. 20 delegates are here. Highlights of the year were Ruahapehu weekend, together with Auckland. They had Card evenings, fondue, 1st August, Picnic, medal competitions and more. Same number participated as in other years. The committee gained Rösli Schürman, and lost Ursula Häfliger.

General business

Ambassador's role as the patron of the society:

Last year there had been a discussion patron should attend. The ambassador had not been introduced to the Swiss Society.

It has been agreed that the Swiss Society needs to inform any new ambassador of their role. Tanja will take care of that when Mr Vogelsang will take over.

Marion Weichelt-Krupsi replied, that she had been surprised to hear from Tanja what had been expected. Marion will brief her successor.

Heidi Wehrle asks whether the distribution of the Helvetia magazine in electronic format would be an option. She was concerned about the large amount we spend on printing and posting.

Tanja replied that we do have a PDF version, 3 people are getting this. Marcel confirms he is receiving it via email. Nelly points out that with the new database people can receive both at the same time.

Nelly took down names of further people who elect to receive their Helvetia electronically. Three members would like to only receive it electronically, whilst five others would like both the PDF and the paper version for the time being. At this stage there is no reduction in society membership fee for those who elect to receive it electronically.

Herbert Stäheli thanks the committee for all their work.

The meeting closed at 3pm

Date and Venue for Society AGM 2015
Sunday 31 May in Wellington

I am researching Swiss settlement in New Zealand with a view to writing a history of the Swiss in New Zealand.

To assist with this research I would very much like to hear from you if

- you have access to diaries or letters (preferably translated into English) written by Swiss who arrived before 1945 about their experiences in New Zealand

- your family has lived in New Zealand a long time and a history of the family has been written

- you were born in Switzerland and you are prepared to answer a questionnaire related to your own experiences in migrating to New Zealand. This questionnaire is mainly ticking boxes and takes about fifteen minutes to complete. I can either send it by email or as a hard copy with a self addressed envelope. I will donate \$5.00 to your nominated Swiss Club or charity if yours is one of the first 200 completed questionnaires received.

I would also like to hear from anyone who has done or is doing similar or related research or who knows about the Helvetia settlement in South Auckland.

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