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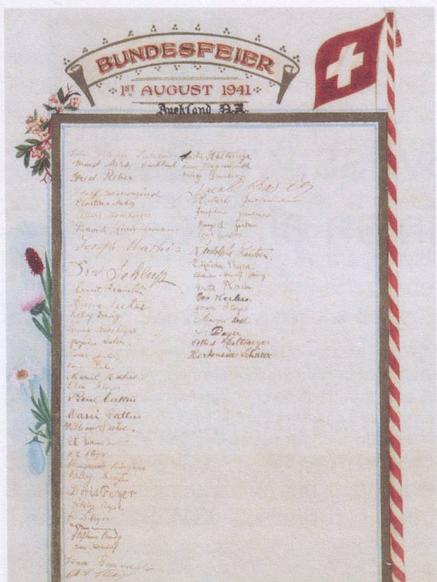
The Auckland Swiss Club turns 60

I was tasked with looking back at the club's history. I will try to summarize a few facts and I was lucky enough that Emil Tellenbach found some old brochures to help me along. When the club celebrated its 40th birthday the following information was printed in the magazine:

Max Bachman was the founding president for the Auckland Swiss Club Inc. as it is known now. The club started by him making the first Cervelat and Bratwurst in New Zealand and selling them in Blockhouse Bay. They started to play Jass and have 'Kaffee-Schnapps' before, during and after the Jass. That was the start of the new club. There was a club before the 2nd World War and some people were still around from that time when this version of the club was founded. The new club handed over the names of the 26 members as well as the bank account with still £56.00 in it. The following members were voted into the committee: Vice President was Tony Sidler, Doris Peyer was secretary and Arthur Mueller Treasurer. There were many more helpers in the committee and at events. The monthly club meetings were held at the old Epiphany Church Hall at the end of Karangahape Road. The 1st of August menu was Sauerkraut and Schueblig. The group was rather small to start with but everyone chipped in and helped.

More and more Swiss people arrived by boat monthly and the club started to grow. The picnic was held at Dr & Mrs Ferdy Kagi's farm on the Bombay Hills. People came from as far away as Tauranga and the club grew and grew.

Following is a summary of Max Bachman's first newsletter around 1956:



Doris T Binder, the president around the 40 year celebration wrote the following notes that I try to summarize here:

Doris writes that she can think back as far as the forties and the war years and the reasons for Swiss expatriates to meet was to celebrate the national day and the odd other event to be amongst Swiss and share stories. On the 1st of August of 1941 a painting was presented to the Club by the late Albert Halmeyer and signed by all people present (remark by the writer: I assume that's the picture on the big wall on the farm in Kaukapakapa that is now quite washed out, we will attempt to refresh it in the near future). As previously noted Max and Elizabeth Bachmann were the forces behind the new club with the help of many more recently arrived immigrants in the fifties. The first social gathering was in October 1956. The club was officially formed on the 3rd of November 1956.

In the 1960's the club was able to purchase the farm in Kaukapakapa. In time they built the shooting hut and range, then the first chalet. At the time of the 40 year celebration, the club could name the following groups as their own: the shooting section, the men's yodelling group, the Jass group, the childrens dance group.

What about now in 2016?

Since then the chalet has been extended and a covered hall added, with a kitchen container, after the first lot of pine trees were harvested. This invaluable addition means that we can now cater for up to 150 people at the farm without any problems.

At some point the Guggemusik was formed. At present there are only very few Swiss members left but the Auckland Guggemusik is still going strong. The Yodlers went to many Yodelfestivals in Switzerland and performed well. The shooters represent the New Zealand shooting section at the Swiss Shooting Championships with very nice results

lately, as we had very stable mentorship by Henry Werffeli over 26 years. The Jass section meets 10 times a year and has between 14 and 24 people turning up every 2nd Friday of the month. Of the groups mentioned by Doris Binder, only the Children's Dance Group doesn't exist anymore.

The many different committees over the years always strived to put together an interesting program for all age groups.



About 8 to 10 years ago - with a new wave of younger families joining - we tried to put some more events on for families and we continually try to adapt our program to the needs of our members. After all, the committee is here for our members.

To make attending functions easier we also make use of the fantastic facility of the Danish House in Penrose. Easy access from the motorway and good parking make this facility very easy to use.

And we can't continue without mentioning the Auckland Swiss Market. We have just had our 8th edition and every year Tanja Latham-Zurbruegg, who organises it all, manages to get new and exciting stuff happening. Judging from the comments that people need to park miles away we can only say that this is a highlight in the club calendar.

I personally have now been involved in the committee for a decade and I will step down from this role in 2017. I feel that I need to concentrate on my family first and that new ideas and blood is needed to bring the club forward.

Happy Birthday Auckland Swiss Club and long may it continue.
Adrian Blaser, President
Auckland Swiss Club, May 2016

