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The Apprentice Yodeller



Why would a young man join a group of older and very experienced Swiss yodellers when he was born and educated in Auckland and is a descendant of a family who, for more than 6 generations, have lived down under?

I first noticed Frederick Conquer when the Swiss Kiwi Yodellers were performing at a function in Hamilton. Curiosity got the better of me and I contacted Frederick to find out.

This gregarious, intelligent young man's life took on a new dimension when he found himself looking for an overseas adventure after finishing college. He opted for a student's overseas exchange with AFS, studying in Liestal, Basel-Landschaft, living with a wonderful host family whom Frederick now considers his Swiss relatives.

Liestal is just outside of Basel and dates back at least to Roman times. Like many small Swiss cities, it has the most amazing feel which Frederick enjoyed immensely. The tangible history, the people, and the old town were captivating.

Whilst living with his host family (Marion, Gerhard, Julian, and Gregor) he lapped up the cultural differences, taking part in festivals and events across Switzerland: like Fasnacht, l'Escalade, Sechseläuten, Zibelemärit and many others. When studies allowed, (or sometimes even if they didn't) he explored every Canton in Switzerland and enjoyed skiing, hiking and swimming in the Rhine.

He also enjoyed cooking and made good use of Betti Bossi recipes as well as introducing his host family to NZ foods such as pavlovas and anzac biscuits (although he did have to have a major hunt in food stores for the golden syrup!!!).

Eventually Frederick returned to NZ and completed a Bachelor of Commerce and a Diploma of Languages in German at Auckland University before beginning work at Fonterra in Global Supply Chain. "I love cheese, and it was of no surprise to anyone that I decided to work for a dairy company."

Frederick has mostly lived in rural settings and currently lives rurally on the edge of Auckland. "It makes for a long commute but I enjoy living there," he said.

In 2015 he decided that he wanted to spend a bit more time around Swiss-German language and also had an interest in music. Attending the Auckland

Swiss Market, he heard the Swiss Kiwi Yodellers - here was an opportunity to fulfil both his wishes.

"What better way than joining the yodel group, an interesting and unusual group/type of music, but I have really enjoyed it. I sing first tenor with Kurt, who has been very helpful with the singing, Albert and Oscar with the alphorn. All of the group have been very welcoming and supportive. Remembering the lyrics is tricky but my grandmother is a music teacher and has been a lot of help as her musical ear is well tuned!"

"The rehearsals," Frederick tells me, "are a bit sporadic due to the lifestyles that the Auckland Swiss Yodel group lead with many of the retired members travelling and thus unavailable for regular rehearsals."

Frederick's wish is that more people like himself whatever age, whatever background, with an interest in different forms of music and singing, come join the group.

At 24 years of age, Frederick has many years of yodelling and alphorn playing ahead of him. You never know, he may eventually end up in Switzerland furthering the skills he is learning in NZ.

Compiled by Heidi Wehrle

Sources: <https://www.facebook.com/Swiss-Kiwi-Yodel-Group-146962265371734/>
<http://yodelgroup.wixsite.com/swiss-kiwi-yodellers>

Yodelling earmarked for UNESCO World Heritage status

Switzerland plans to request alpine art of yodelling added to UNESCO list of world's protected "intangible heritage"

The alpine art of yodelling may soon be awarded UNESCO World Heritage status if Switzerland gets its way. The Swiss government has announced a list of eight traditions it wants added to the World Heritage list.

Yodelling may seem a strange addition to a list that currently features the Taj Mahal, the historic centre of Rome and Stonehenge but it follows in the footsteps of the Argentinian tango, the Mediterranean diet and falconry, all of which have already been given World Heritage status by UNESCO.

Originally, the World Heritage list was reserved for buildings, monuments and sites of natural beauty but in 2003, UNESCO agreed to start adding "intangible heritage", and since then a number of more eccentric choices have been added to the list.

Source: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/>
By Justin Huggler, Berlin

To see what else is on the list view
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BMMC48u55K8>

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the Bauernfasnacht (farmers' carnival). Afterwards, only this second carnival was celebrated in Basel. Today, the Carnival of Basel is said to be "the only Protestant carnival in the world".

Fastnachtkuechlein

(Oehrli or Chnaeublaetze) translated Carnival Cakes (Ears or Knee patches)

Recipe

2 Eggs
4 Tbsp Cream
1 pinch salt
2 Tbsp Sugar
250-300g Flour



Beat eggs, salt, sugar and cream together. Add flour and knead together on a board until the dough has air bubbles. Add only enough flour so that dough is of smooth consistency and easy to pull apart. Let the dough rest for half an hour in a warm room and then cut into bite size pieces. Roll these out until paper-thin and continue to make thinner by pulling between fingers or best done over your knees (hence where the name Knee patches comes from). Lay these thin pieces out on cotton sheets to dry and then cook in a deep pan of very hot cooking oil until golden brown. It is easiest to use two wooden sticks to scrunch up and turn in the cooking oil. Once cooled sprinkled with icing sugar and they ready to eat or store in a dry air-tight container.

My Mum has made these for many years, starting in the early years of settling in Hamilton and then for about the next forty or fifty years. She used to make about 50 at a time and store them in biscuit tins in the hope they would last for several weeks.

In the last few years one of our Hamilton Club members Rinaldo Rust together with his wife Gritli have made them and brought them along to our annual picnic - see photo. For many people this has brought back fond memories of having them in Switzerland where you can buy them at the local supermarket or bakery if you don't want to go to the trouble of making them yourself. *Compiled by Anita Zuber*

