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## Swiss Club News

### Saturday 21 January- Barbecue with Korpskommandant André Blattmann

The Wellington Swiss Club had the rare privilege of hosting the outgoing Chief of the Swiss Armed Forces, André Blattmann, for a barbecue with the club members.

Mr Blattmann presented a lively and heartfelt account of our national militia in the 21st century. He and his wife were on holiday in New Zealand, and are friends with the Ambassador David Vogelsanger who had served under his command.

At a little more than 100,000 conscripts, the Swiss Armed Forces are a fraction of their former size of 750,000. Lt General Blattmann explained that the focus for the military today is the protection of Switzerland's critical infrastructure drawing on advanced equipment and technology, including drones for surveillance and cybersecurity. To maintain the number of troops every year 18,500 recruits are needed, for nine years of service; expressions of interest are welcome. Of note is that the Armed Forces enjoy a very high level of popular support in Switzerland currently, a reflection of the turbulent world in which we live.

### 5 February: Jassen

It seemed to be still holiday time! We had a pleasant afternoon though and kept our brains active, playing three against three, with two packs of cards and a lot of surprises! Nice to have a new player; we hope you become a regular, Daniel!

### 11/12 February: Semi-Final of the Cowbell Competition and Taranaki Picnic

Saturday was the day of the competition. It didn't look too hopeful for us; what could the few of us do against all these young, strong Taranaki Swiss? Once again it was the Scherrer/Jordan family who got us off to a good start: "We" won the Bowling! Actually, the Scherrer/Jordans did it for us – thank you! In Shotput we lost against Taranaki; they won with a big margin. Then it came to shooting. The Scherrer/Jordan family did their very best, but so did the Taranaki shooters. Luckily, our president and the ambassador – though he is the ambassador for all Swiss in New Zealand, he is a member of the Wellington club – tipped the balance in our favour. Cards – well, luck or skill? Taranaki won. So now it was a draw, and the winner had to be decided by Uusjasse. Again: luck or skill? We won – which means we have reached the final, to be held on Queen's Birthday Weekend in Hamilton. We need a strong contingent, as competing in

Hamilton against Hamilton or Auckland won't be easy! After all this effort we had a sumptuous buffet dinner with I don't know how many delicious salads and cold meat and plenty of cheese and the best Gschweltli I had for a long time! After a few games of cards (and a little detour) we got home safely.

After a good night's sleep we were soon back at the hall for the picnic. The flags were flying, Zeno's flower baskets were beautiful; music (and the smell of Bratwurst and Cervelat) filled the air. The sawdust for the Schwingers and the hay bales for the spectators were ready, and there was time to meet old and new friends and catch up, and tombola tickets contained many words of wisdom and valuable and varied prizes. How many Lössli did you roll, Lisette?

Soon it was dinner time. The Taranaki women, young and old, had prepared lasagne for about 200 guests. How did they do it? They prepared it at home and warmed it up in just about all Kaponga kitchen ovens; hot lasagne arrived miraculously from everywhere. Many guests went back for a second (and third?) helping and there was enough for everybody – and yes, a great variety of salads again! Thank you all for the wonderful food, the great atmosphere – and thank you for all the work you put into it! And you did it all with a smile – no, with many smiles, young and old. We'll be back – and we'll try and learn how it is done...

### 19 February

#### Family Day was cancelled

This is the first time it happens since I am in Wellington. The beloved, long-awaited Family Day at Heinz and Trix Jaggi had to be cancelled due to the weather. That Sunday's weather was actually acceptable, compared to the horrible summer we had had so far, but the ground was full of water from the previous week's rain and the playground was slippery, forcing Heinz and Trix to make the executive decision to cancel this year.

## Future Events

**Jassen** Our next Sunday Afternoon Jassen are on 2nd April and 7th May; the usual players will be contacted. If you want to join us, ring Trudi on 56 28 019; we'll be delighted to have more seasoned jassers!

### Sunday 9 April – Eggs painting

We will colour eggs the traditional way, with onion peels. Registration is not necessary but it helps to let Odile know you are coming (wellingtonswissclub@

gmail.com) just in case we need to cancel the event unexpectedly. Bring eggs (raw!) and beautiful leaves to decorate.

### Sunday 30 April – AGM

An invitation will come soon. The more members present the more new ideas we can explore. We are happy to take suggestions for new events for the coming year and need new committee members.

### Saturday 20 May – Fondue

This will be our first fondue of the year! Children and friends curious to try our Swiss specialty are welcome. We will start the evening with a glass of mulled wine and end with some yummy dessert. Please register with Odile (wellingtonswissclub@gmail.com)

## Obituary



### Mavis Schuler

23 March 1922 – 13 January 2017

*Mavis was born in Eltham on the 23rd of March 1922, with her heritage being English and Scottish. In 1939 Mavis married Lou Schuler at the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Manaia. They lived for 22 years in Kapuni where Lou owned a concrete business. In 1961 the family moved to Hawera.*

*Initially Mavis' culinary and card playing skills weren't great. However with the older Swiss ladies at the time giving her recipes and tips, together with Mavis' determination to grasp these skills, she soon became an adept and proficient cook and Jass player. These pastimes she enjoyed for many years.*

*In 1984 Mavis, with her daughter Margaret, enjoyed an interesting and fabulous trip to Switzerland, and she also appreciated several trips to Australia.*

*Mavis' Requiem Mass was held at St Joseph's Catholic Church in Hawera, and she was then laid to rest with Lou and their son Raymond. Mavis leaves a daughter, Margaret; 5 grandchildren; 14 great grandchildren and 11 great, great grandchildren.*

*The Taranaki Swiss Club and the Swiss Society of New Zealand extend their sincere sympathy to Mavis' family.*