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Editor's Report for the Swiss Society AGM 2017

Dear Readers a reminder that minutes of AGM 2016 and the agenda and weekend programme for Swiss Society AGM 2017 at Hamilton on 3-4th June can be found on page 12-13 of the April – May Helvetia. See you there.

What a roller coaster year it has been. My time as Editor elect began well before Hamilton Swiss Club's tenure of Helvetia publication began. I am still extremely grateful to the outgoing Auckland team for all their help and support and I am grateful for every meeting I attended pre June 2016.

For the first 3 issues my head felt as if it housed a woolly cloud rather than a brain as I grappled with image sizes, their clarity, words per page, dropboxes, timetables, content, which pages would be colour and which not and of course how best to use my computer (sadly I am a 2 finger typist). At the first few meetings the Helvetia team laughed at me when I appeared with my miniature Helvetia template on which I would have written colour/black and white page etc. I still use this system - perhaps like a child would use a comforter. I still grapple with all these issues but from a more knowledgeable platform!!! I now have up to 6 windows open on my computer screen and flit from one to the other. Old hat for some of you but very new to me!!!

Helvetia secretary Anita Zuber visited me often in the early days to reassure me that each issue was coming together nicely. I am pleased to report that I have now graduated from these meetings with Anita.

My team has been very helpful in feeding me articles, testing recipes etc. Proofreaders are sometimes given short notice for their jobs and they have always delivered (thank goodness).

To all of my small but dedicated team must go a big "THANK YOU" ... that includes you Peter Deutsche. It must be said that during the first 4 issues I clung to Peter like a limpet and although I am no longer that clingy I do rely heavily on his expertise as it is Peter who ultimately brings the items alive and gives me hints and advice where needed.

To Club secretaries a big THANK YOU as well. Thank you for accepting the earlier deadline as it makes my job a bit easier. Every issue has the last minute changes and no matter how organised one is the late changes are frustrating as articles are removed and others introduced and fillers needed to complete the page.

As for our readers, I hope that you have enjoyed our first year's issues. The life stories we have published have been processed by the families and they have enjoyed gathering their family history.

I am running out of life stories some whom I have approached for their stories think it is too early for them to contribute even though they are knocking on the door of their eighth decade!!

If anyone wishes to have their family's life story published let me know.

I constantly think about the content of the Helvetia, especially with internet's ability to bring you news whenever and from wherever you wish. I try to find more obscure articles from Switzerland, whether I am successful is unknown. I have no way of knowing how many of you actually read the Helvetia as feedback is almost non-existent.

Perhaps we should reduce the Helvetia size to just include Club News, personal experiences (not found on internet) and Embassy and political news that affect us swiss abroad directly e.g AHV.

This would save time and money. What do you the readers think? Email me your thoughts: cwehrle@ihug.co.nz

Heidi Wehrle Editor.

Swiss Embassy News

It is our pleasure to inform you that the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) is providing Swiss nationals residing abroad with an online desk for consular services.

With the online desk you can enter your own data and changes yourself at any time or place.

You can also view your data at any time, order consular services and pay for them by credit card via ePayment.

The desk can be accessed on the FDFA website www.eda.admin.ch under 'Online desk' and on our website www.eda.admin.ch/wellington under "services -> registration".

You can register with the online desk in two ways that ensure protection of client data:

- Two-factor-authentication via SMS to a mobile telephone number
- SuisseID (digital identity card - Information on Suisse ID is available on www.suisseid.ch)

To register successfully, please make sure to use the same e-mail address and mobile phone number that you communicated to the our Embassy.

The online desk has a responsive web design and can be used with a PC and all mobile devices (laptops, tablets and smartphones).

It is planned to expand the services offered via the online desk on an ongoing basis and hope that with this innovation Swiss nationals residing abroad will be able to communicate even more easily with the Swiss representations abroad.

If you have any questions concerning the online desk, please contact us.

Embassy of Switzerland

Phone +64 4 472 15 93

E-mail wel.vertretung@eda.admin.ch

Did you know that you can rent a guinea pig?

Not only Swiss people, but also their pets can be the happiest in the world. In Switzerland, guinea pigs are considered to be social animals. The owners are therefore obliged to have two pets at the same time so that a single guinea pig does not feel lonely. Special guinea pig matchmaking agencies offer to get your widow or widower guinea pig a companion if you do not want to purchase a new one. In case your other guinea pig dies too, you can bring the rented one back and get out of the purchase cycle.

