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Obituaries



Joseph Kaspar Kuriger

24 February 1924 – 14 August 2018

Joe was born on the 24th February 1924 at the Opunake Cottage Hospital. He was the fourth of his parents' eight children and was brought up on the family farm at Oaonui.

His father, Johann had been born in Egg, Einsiedeln, Schwyz and first came to New Zealand in 1903. His mother Rosa was born in Bennau, Einsiedeln, Schwyz.

Joe went to school at Oaonui and Opunake. While at school he became interested in bee-keeping, an interest that he followed for twenty years, and at one time he had sixty hives. His first paid job was at the age of 17 when he started work for his brother-in-law on a farm adjacent to the Egmont National Park at Awatuna. Joe spent some very happy years here helping to break in this bush farm which was heavy manual work, sometimes for 16 hours a day.

Joe's transport in those days was a bicycle and he covered many miles between home, work, church and dances. At a 1st August Swiss dance in Kaponga in 1946 Joe met Rosemarie Holdener, whose parents were also from Schwyz. They married in 1950 starting a wonderful 68 year partnership that was blessed with five children.

Joe and Rosemarie share-milked down the coast for a few years and then moved onto Rosemarie's family farm at Pukearue which they eventually bought and improved while also contracting around the district.

When they sold the farm, Joe worked for a while as a tractor salesman and then bought a grazing unit up Korito Rd. Most of Joe's twenty-one grandchildren can remember helping with the hay making there and being put to shame by the strength and fitness of their grandfather!

Joe enjoyed overseas visits including trips to Switzerland to meet relatives and bus trips with Rosemarie all around New Zealand, all the while maintaining an immaculate and productive vegetable garden. His greatest pride and pleasure, though, was his twenty-one grandchildren and thirty great-grandchildren.

Joe passed away on the 14th of August 2018, sadly missed by Rosemarie, and all his family.

Thank you to the Taranaki Swiss Club for your attendance and guard of honour and to Othmar for the alphorn music.

The Taranaki Swiss Club and The Swiss Society of New Zealand extend their deepest sympathy to Rosemarie and family.

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Dear Readers,

We, the Helvetia Team, wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

