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Word from President and Editor

Dear Readers,

Once again we are on the cusp of celebrating another Christmas and then farewell another year!!!

Where has the time gone? Do we even have time to read this *Helvetia*? If your answer is "yes" then you are in for a treat for we have many personal experiences that have been supplied by Hamilton Members: e-biking, Nendaz Alphorn Festival, Australia Jass Tournament, Coopers in Pakistan as well as, of-course, the news from all our busy Swiss Clubs.

Many of you will have seen Lucy the Swarovski Christmas Tree in Zurich. A friend of mine told me it was well worth the visit to see it in "the flesh". And Swarovski has more plans in mind for an Alpine Crossing spectacular this coming northern winter!!

As I write this report November is on the horizon and I must go now to wrap the 4 Christmas presents that I purchase every year (one for each grandchild). I am feeling a bit smug that I am soooo organised as it is not always so.

We keep Christmas as stress free as possible and gather on 24th of December to play games, enjoy some food, catch up and the day culminates in the lighting of the Christmas Tree Candles. We always have a bucket of water and a fire extinguisher nearby in case things go wrong....which reminds me of the year when Richard and I celebrated Christmas by ourselves and that year it was a smaller plastic version and it went up in smoke a few minutes after the lighting ceremony!!!

I take this opportunity to extend to you all a safe and very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

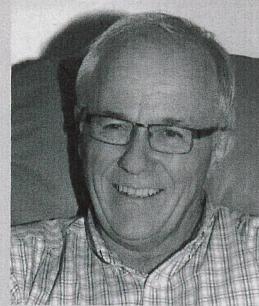
Grab a drink of your choice and enjoy the read.

See you in 2019



Dear members

Can I just start off with a "thank you" to Anna Blaettler, your Vice President, for filling in for me last time around.



Vreni and I spent two months in Europe and most of you would know that the European summer was extremely dry. We spent a month in Great Britain and Ireland from London to York, Edinburgh, up to Orkney Island, over to Isle of Skye, Londonderry, Killarney, Kilkenny, Dublin, down to Cardiff, Plymouth and back to London. From there we flew to Switzerland where we had a fantastic time with family and friends travelling to all corners of the homeland. Rain was the wish of most of the people we met on our journey. Will we be in for a similar "treat" this summer? Well, at this stage, it looks very much like a dry rather than wet Christmas.

Anyway, let's get on to some Society issues. Soon after our return, I attended the 2018 Oceania Swiss Club Presidents conference in Sydney. (What a mouth full!) This is my second conference and I believe the second conference for any NZ president to attend. All clubs except Wellington were represented and our Ambassador, Dr Vogelsanger was there to support us too. The contact between the Oceania Swiss Clubs has never been better and with Australia having 4 OSA representatives and us one, we have the opportunity to tap into more information we might be looking for from time to time. We are very lucky to have Peter Ehrler as our representative - he has given us more information than we ever had on OSA matters. However this may change one day.

The conference is held every two years and your delegates have decided to accept the invitation to host this event in 2020 in Auckland. This commitment comes with costs and efforts attached and I will address this separately with all clubs after our next Society meeting. As you can see there is always something happening.

I do hope you are all enjoying the *Helvetia*, there is plenty of work going into them and I would like to thank the whole team for their individual efforts into the running of the organisation.

What else is happening? Well Christmas is approaching fast and I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and the very best for the year ahead. I hope you will find time to relax and enjoy the festive season and everything that comes with it.

Best Wishes for the Festive Season

Your President

