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Word from President and Editor

Dear Readers,

Here we are on the cusp of another Christmas School Holiday. On 29th October we put out our donated Christmas decorations at Cambridge Lion's Shed, a large op shop where I volunteer, and the customers were ecstatic. In October!!! – say no more.

How many of you visit recycle centres and op shops when holidaying overseas? Well I did. I visited 4 places while on holiday in Switzerland last September. The Altdorf 2nd hand upmarket clothing shop dealt only in well-known brands, Stans's Brockenhäus looked like our Briscoes and the 2 recycle centres collected batteries, fluorescent tubes etc all NEATLY packed in individual areas and surrounded by immaculately swept concrete paths and loading bays. One manager, while holding a broom, told me that they sweep constantly and take great pride in their workplace. You may have noticed by now that it fascinates me this recycling movement. Won't bore you with more on that.

Immigration rules and regulations seem to be a worldwide topic and Page 19 has an update from Le News about Switzerland's latest decisions.

While on holiday I met up with Anita and Walter Zuber who spoke of their Gotthard Tunnel Experience and you can read about this in this issue.

By the way while in Switzerland my brother Kurt and I became Godparents to my brother Peter's CD "A Jodler". How many can wear that title!!! The occasion took place in Alpnach Dorf Kirche and I hope to report on this in next issue.

While looking for some interesting articles I came across Wil's Jungwacht (youth group) and their dedication to upholding St Nicholas traditions. I found it fascinating and very informative. Hope you do too.

The Jelmoli Maerlitram on our front page brings a different Christmas experience to many children. Wish I could go on it, I am sure many of us would love to transport ourselves back to being 4-10 years old... if only for this ride.

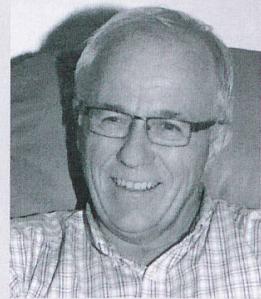
I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. See you in 2020

Take care



Dear members

It's the last day of October and I have been reminded that my December report is due. Have you started your Christmas shopping yet? If not, it's probably time to think about it.



The year has been another good one for me and I hope for you too. I got a bit deflated when the All Blacks crashed out of the World Cup Final but we can't have everything. Alice Robinson, you probably haven't heard of her, made up for it by achieving the first World Cup giant slalom win for New Zealand.

What did you think of the last edition? Another lot of great articles were presented and I especially enjoyed Walter's Story. I was reminded that we have a total change of leadership at our Embassy in Wellington and our Ambassador Michael Winzap introduces himself in this issue.

The feedback from CSA is ongoing and I am very pleased to report that pressure is now coming from a number of other countries for New Zealand to change Article 70 of the social Security's Act. Keep on reading the progress in this issue.

In November we have our first official Committee meeting for the Oceania Swiss Presidents Conference to be held in October 2020. We have made quite a bit of progress and some of our Swiss Clubs have made significant contributions towards the running of the event and I would like to thank everyone involved in making these decisions.

Here is a bit of a different topic I want to raise with you. You might have read that the Swiss Review for April 2020 will only be available online. Looking at the reasons for this, I am pretty convinced that this will become a permanent feature at some stage in the near future. This prompted me to have a closer look at our own situation and the results were quite alarming to say the least. Our annual membership fees amount to just under \$15000.- per annum. Our accounts show that to March 18 we spent \$14700.- to get the Helvetia on your table and by March 19 this came to \$16600.- for the year. It is very obvious that this is not sustainable and one of two things will have to happen. We either raise the membership fees or opt for online publishing and save money as well as a mountain of paper. The second option will eliminate most or all of the printing and posting costs that make up about 80% of the Helvetia costs as recorded in the annual accounts. Such a change may have significant impacts on some of our members and I therefore urge you to raise your views on this with me direct or your club to ensure your views are noted. There is an opportunity for clubs to help their members with access to the magazine without incurring too much cost. Challenging times ahead, but I am convinced we will manage them. I look forward to the feedbacks.

With the Festive Season at our doorstep, I take the opportunity to thank you all for your support during the year.

On behalf of your committee, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and All the Best for the New Year.

Take care

