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Word from President and Editor

Dear Readers,

What a few months it has been what with the drought and coronavirus we have had plenty to be concerned about and in both situations the rural and the urban folk have been affected with many running out of water and being put on restrictions. Now those who cough are looked at suspiciously as are those with green lawns!! The inevitable arrival of coronavirus had me doing my first internet shopping before NZ's first case of coronavirus was announced. As I looked after my grandchildren in Tairua and Coromandel, I punched my order in and had it delivered to my rural address in Cambridge. I love the digital ability to do this.

Now for matters at hand.

I enjoyed putting this issue together as it gave me a chance to relive some of my September 2019 trip which centred around attending my brother Peter Arnold's celebrations for his CD launch. This trip also led to 2 other articles in this Helvetia: Musenalp and Schniye Platte.

While compiling this issue and trying to find Easter articles I came across a 700-year-old swiss tradition that takes place in Ferden, you can find this article on Page 5 of this issue.

While sitting with my friend Erika Elmiger, she mentioned the Waschschiffe that she used to see berthed on the River Rhine in her hometown of Schaffhausen. My brain went into overdrive and another article for the Helvetia was born.

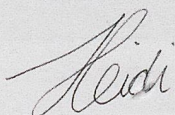
Then from the old to the very new: Robotic Raclette Machine. It is a fascinating read. This can have one looking at the future in panic or wonderment.

Hans's mention, in his report, of Internet verses hardcopy of Helvetia invites you to send your thoughts on a thorny issue. Remember readers it is just a proposal not a decision that has already been made!!

My husband Richard has no problem having a cup of coffee with his laptop on hand to read the Helvetia. After all he reads the Herald, Blick and other articles on line.

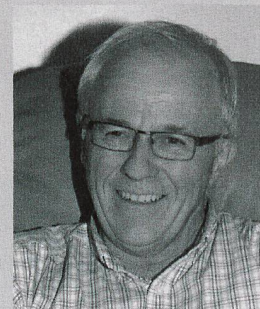
But I realise that this is not how others may wish to read our amazing Helvetia. Whichever way you read it, take a break and enjoy this issue.

Regards



Dear members

What a summer we had up and down the country. Whilst it was very enjoyable earlier on, even us townies started feeling the pinch with severe water restrictions enforced in most urban communities. Of course our farming friends are much worse off. One only has to look at the country side. Spare a thought for our neighbours, the aussies, who now luckily have a flooding scenario to deal with! Not sure if it is indeed lucky but certainly a great relief for them.



By now most of you had an opportunity to meet our new Ambassador during his travel around the Swiss clubs. Unfortunately I was away when he was in Hamilton but I look forward to meeting him soon. I had very positive feedback from all corners and I encourage you to go along and meet him if you have the opportunity.

The last Helvetia was packed with stories again, thank you Heidi, I enjoyed the front page story from the almost forgotten part of Switzerland. Having grown up on a mountain farm myself, I also read the report about the Swiss farmers with much interest. I know my parents could not have brought up a family with 6 siblings without some government help and I for one believe that Switzerland gets great dividends from the work the "landscape gardeners", as they are referred to in the article, do. Can you think of a country with such challenging landscapes that presents itself as well as Switzerland? Let me know if you think there is one, unfortunately New Zealand is well behind on that front. Let me go back to my comments in the last magazine, about the cost of getting the Helvetia to you every two months. With the magazine costing us more than the subs we pay, it is very obvious that we will have to take some action to rectify this. At the upcoming AGM we will propose to offer two options of membership; one will include a hard copy of the Helvetia as supplied now. The sub for this will be proposed at \$30 per annum. The other option will be a membership with electronic Helvetia at an annual subscription of \$15. This should bring us back into the black and the email version will subsidize the hard copies for 12 months when the whole issue will be reviewed again. Let's hear what your thoughts are so we can take these to the AGM.

The other project we are working on is the CSA Oceania Presidents Conference. I am delighted to tell you that our Ambassador has agreed for the Embassy to sponsor a major part of our costs for the event. Taranaki, Hamilton and Auckland Clubs have also made generous donations toward the event. This will now allow us to plan a great conference without too much cost for the conference participants

That's it from this corner. There is only one more report to come from me before the handover. I had a talk with Othmar Hebler (Society Vice President) at our Picnic Day and he assured me that they are ready to take over the tasks of looking after your Society affairs. I am very confident that they will do a great job.

Bye for now

