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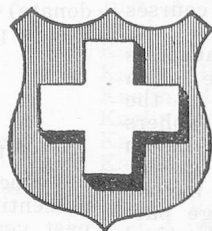
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HELVETIA

MONTHLY
PUBLICATION
OF THE



SWISS BENEVOLENT
SOCIETY IN
NEW ZEALAND (INC.)

GROUP NEW ZEALAND OF THE NEW HELVETIC SOCIETY

16th YEAR.

DECEMBER, 1951.

AUCKLAND.

GREETINGS FROM THE CONSUL

My Dear Compatriots,—

Another year has elapsed. Some Swiss have acquired New Zealand citizenship and I feel sure that they will make good citizens, but I am also certain that in their hearts they will not forget their antipodal homeland.

I am glad that in spite of the naturalisations and a few departures, the number of Swiss living in New Zealand has increased by 84 new arrivals in 1951, who will soon feel at home, as there is scarcely another country in the world where living conditions and freedom are so near to what they have been accustomed to. Let us hope that they will be happy and that all of them will subscribe to the "Helvetia," which is in need of more income, as the printing of the bulletin is costly.

The year 1951 has been very kind to New Zealand, and to Switzerland as well. Our industries were worked to full capacity and consequently there was no unemployment. If it were not for the avalanches which claimed so many victims and plunged many families into grief, 1951 would be remembered as a blessed year.

There has been a lot of talk about a forthcoming gruesome war; but the New Zealand and the Swiss Nations have enjoyed peace. True enough, war clouds are menacing, but if there are reasons for anxiety, there are just as many reasons to be almost certain that the year to come will not bring the catastrophe so much feared by all mankind.

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

H. BLANCHARD,

Consul.

NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

Following the catastrophic disaster of the avalanches in the winter 1951, the news that another calamity has overtaken the canton of Ticino has stirred the minds of the Swiss people. The conditions in the Calanca valley are desperate and it is considered that a catastrophe of such an enormous extent has never been known in human memory. Not only is the valley completely cut off from all traffic, but the mere existence of the inhabitants is threatened. With a very small exception all the bridges in the valley are destroyed. The road has at several places (at one place for a distance of several hundred yards), been washed away right down to the bare rock. Houses as well as industrial buildings have fallen victims to the raging element.

A Committee "Pro Calanca" has been formed from representatives of the valley, which has asked the authorities for sufficient assistance of troops to help in the restoration of communications, clearance and safety

measures. As the catastrophe has caused an almost complete destruction of the fertile meadows and pastures, the existence of the whole agricultural population of the valley has been ruined. Those working in industrial undertakings have equally been robbed of their livelihood, as the places of their activities are no longer existent and it is feared that the whole of the population eventually will have to emigrate, if assistance of the most lasting character is not at once forthcoming.

For more than a quarter of a century Neuchatel, charming capital of the Swiss canton of the same name, has celebrated its famous wine festival year by year with a programme that grows in scope and brilliance. This year it is being held on Saturday and Sunday, September 29th and 30th. On the Sunday afternoon the traditional procession will wend its way through the streets of the old town. More than a thousand people will be taking part, as well as numerous carriages gaily decorated with flowers, with spectators having their share of the fun with confetti fights. As usual visitors from the rest of Switzerland and many parts of Europe will be in Neuchatel for the Festival, and everyone is hoping for the fine weather that traditionally accompanies the event.

Special trains took to Zermatt on July 30th some of the many friends of Otto Furrer to pay their last respects to the celebrated Valaisan guide, Alpinist and skier. Otto Furrer, who was 48, was killed on the Italian side of the Matterhorn, which he had climbed more than 180 times, when a rope snapped and he fell 280 feet to his death. Everyone in the valley was present at the funeral of the man who had spent his life working for the development of Zermatt. Alpine guides carrying 80 wreaths preceded representatives of Alpine Clubs from all over Switzerland, Italy and France. At the cemetery Dr. Franz Seiler, a native of Zermatt and president of the Swiss Hoteliers' Society, gave the funeral oration. Among others who spoke in tribute was Arnold Lunn, founder of the Khandahar Club, who two years ago presented Otto Furrer with the Club's coveted diamond badge.

Some of the most valuable stamp collections in Switzerland will be on view at Lucerne's Museum of Art (Kunsthhaus) from September 29th to October 7th on the occasion of the Swiss National Philatelic Exhibition. The value of the exhibits is more than ten million Swiss francs (£817,000) and will include many old and rare stamps from Europe and countries overseas. Switzerland's leading stamp collectors have also been invited to take part in a special competition.

A selection of photographic art from nearly every country in the world will be on show in Lucerne next year. A vast World Photography Exhibition has been arranged there for May 15th-July 31st, 1952, and there

is the possibility at the same time that an international trade fair for photographers and opticians will be held as well as a number of technical courses given by specialists.

The exhibition will be organised under the auspices of the Lucerne authorities with the assistance of a number of technical organisations. Hundreds of the best works by professional and amateur photographers from all parts of the world will be presented in an entirely new form.

Sites already chosen for the different events include the Congress House (Fine Arts Museum), a large part of the square in front of the station, and the Festival Hall.

NEWS OF THE COLONY

The Swiss Shooting Club in Stratford has the following members:—P. Amstalden, P. Fluhler, F. Gwerder, J. Kaiser, D. Luond, K. Nolly, L. Nolly, T. Napfli, A. Risi, J. Schelbert, A. Schuler, F. Suter.

Below are the results obtained on October 14:—J. Kaiser, 69.3 points; T. Napfli, 96.1 points; F. Suter, 95.2 points; K. Nolly, 93.2 points; J. Schelbert, 92.0 points; F. Gwerder, 90.0 points; A. Risi, 89.1 points; L. Nolly, 83.1 points.

GENERAL MEETING OF SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

EXTRACTS OF REPORT.

We are pleased to report that the Annual General Meeting, held on October 31st, was well attended by members from Auckland and surrounding districts.

Minutes.—Last year's minutes, read by the secretary, were duly confirmed and approved by the meeting.

Balance-sheet.—This was presented by the President (Mr. A. Peyer) to the meeting and was unanimously adopted as carried. The full balance is shown below.

Election of Committee.—The old committee being available for re-election, all previous members were again elected. To give some younger compatriots opportunity to get conversant and to gain experience with committee-matters, an additional three "executive members" have been added, the full team being now as follows:—

President: Mr. A. Peyer.

Vice-President: Mr. F. Steyer.

Secretary: Mr. E. Merz.

Executive members: Mr. A. Moosberger, Mr. E. Straumann, Mr. W. Fierz, Mr. E. Gilgen, Mr. H. Gilgen.

BALANCE SHEET.

September 30th, 1951.

October 1st, 1950:—	Dr.	Cr.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
By Balance Carried Forward		631 15 8
Subscriptions, 1950-51		130 19 8
Subscriptions, 1951-52		4 10 0
Donations		25 12 9
Collections Swiss Badges		5 10 0
Interest Bank Account		14 9 8

EXPENSES.

To Printing of "Helvetia"	104 10 0
Posting of "Helvetia"	21 8 6
Christmas Gifts	1 17 0
Swiss Observer	1 1 0
Stationery	0 16 0
General Postage	3 4 6
Exchange on Cheques	0 8 3
Social Security Tax	1 1 9
	£134 7 0

October 1st, 1951:—

Balance at Bank	663 11 5
Cash on Hand	14 19 4
	£812 17 9
	£812 17 9

To All Members.—We wish to remind members that the annual subscription fee of 15/- (or more if willing to donate) has become due at closing date of our balance. Please pay early and save us extra work and expense.

ANNUAL REPORT

1st OCTOBER, 1950-30th SEPTEMBER, 1951.

Once again your Committee takes the pleasure of presenting the Annual Report and Balance Sheet. The past year has been quiet. No calls have been made on our funds for any financial assistance, on the contrary, the Society had the fortune to have a sum of money donated by the father of a deceased member.

We are sorry to say that we have lost 11 members through death or resignation, on the other hand 26 compatriots have joined the Society during the year. The membership list now totals 221.

General Expenses remained about the same as last year £8/8/6, 1950 £11/13/4. The printing of the "Helvetia," however, has risen to £125/18/6.

Now, if readers will bear with me a while longer I would like to right some misconceptions that apparently exist regarding the Society and its Committees. It has come to our notice, for instance, that we, the Committee, do nothing but hoard the moneys collected. If so far no calls have been made for financial assistance, well, that is our good fortune, and if there have been cases among our countrymen that needed assistance, let me assure you the Committee had no knowledge of them. I may intimate, however, that this year there are already two cases where financial support was given.

It has also been said that the Committee squanders the funds on entertainments. This misconception no doubt has arisen because there has existed in Auckland, since 1951, a Swiss Social Committee, but, unfortunately, owing to the small numbers of compatriots here, some of us have to act on both Committees. Banking accounts, however, are kept strictly separate, and in different hands. Incidentally, owing to lack of interest, no social functions were held during the last two years and the Committee was practically non-existent, but now, with the influx of new blood, we hope that past activities will again be taken up.

Any organised social functions among our compatriots must of necessity be locally arranged, and the S.B.S. as a country-wide organisation cannot give any financial assistance. Paragraph 2 in the Rule Book will make this clear.

I hope I have been able to clear any misfeelings some of our members may have had and that they will give us their wholehearted support in the future.

In conclusion, I wish to thank my Committee and especially Mr. Merz and the Swiss Consulate for all they have done for our Society.

A. PEYER,

President.

MEMBERSHIP LIST

Patron: The Swiss Consul, Wellington.

President: A. Peyer, 48 Moa Rd., Auckland, W.3.

Vice-President: F. Steyer, 1525 Gt. North Rd., Avondale.

Secretary: E. Merz, P.O. Box 85, Auckland, C.1.

Executive Members: A. Moosberger, 129 Crummer Rd., Auckland, W.2; E. Straumann, 35 Hollywood Ave., Auckland, S.E.3; W. Fierz, 38 Rose St., Auckland, W.2; E. Gilgen, P.O. Box 2875, Auckland, C.1; H. Gilgen, P.O. Box 2875, Auckland, C.1.

Amlehn, L., Mt. Wellington Highway, Ellerslie, Auckland.

Amrein, J. P. B., Te Kuiti.

Amstalden, G., 5 Toko Rd., Makahu, R.D., Stratford.

Arnet, Jos., Springdale, Waitoa.

Arnold, Joe, Henwood Rd., Bell Block, New Plymouth.

Aufdermaur, C., 104 Clyde Road, Wairoa, H.B.

Bachman, Jost, P.O., Opotiki.