

News from Switzerland

Objektyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand**

Band (Jahr): **24 (1961)**

Heft [2]

PDF erstellt am: **24.05.2024**

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NEWS FROM THE CONSULATE

The Consulate advises that Mr W. A. Sollberger, Vice-Consul, accompanied by Mrs Sollberger, left New Zealand on February 7th, 1961, on his return to Switzerland.

Mr Hans Schaerer has joined the Consulate-General and will take over the duties performed by Mr Sollberger.

Mr Schaerer is accompanied by his wife and two children.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

HAMILTON SWISS CLUB

The next evening will be held on the first Sunday in March in the Riverlea. The Dutch orchestra will play for you so bring your partners. The Manawaru Ramblers will also entertain you.

The Society Shooting Competition will be held on the 18th or 19th March at the residence of Mr and Mrs Risi, in Ngaruawahia. The Steinstossen competition for the Society Trophy will take place at the same event.

To make the day still more interesting a barbecue for Bratwurst and the Kegelbahn will be in action. Please bring your family and make it a real Swiss day. All details and the formation of the groups will be discussed at the Riverlea evening on the 5th March.

WELLINGTON SWISS CLUB

On March 12th, we shall have our last picnic for this season. We will meet at the Cenotaph (corner Bowen Street) at 10 a.m. Our destination is the "Games Farm" and we hope that many are able to attend.

CHRISTCHURCH SWISS CLUB

February 25th: Picnic to Motukarara with "Kegelbahn" and other entertainments.

March 28th: Big "Chilbi" under the direction of Fritz Wangler, with rifle shooting, darts, ball games, etc. There will be lots of lovely prizes to be won. Proceeds of the evening will go to the funds of the Christchurch Swiss Club.

SWISS SOCIETY SHOOTING COMPETITION

18th & 19th March, 1961

Will all members desiring to compete in the above competition please contact their president.

The annual Steinstossen Competition for the Swiss Society Trophy can also be held at the same event. Team of three competitors, each 3 shots. For the single Trophy the highest aggregate result counts.

NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

AN INSPIRED ECONOMIC DECISION

Many Swiss enterprises dealing with construction material at the end of last year, communicated to Federal Councillor Mr Wahlen, head of the Federal Department of the Public Economy and who is now Switzerland's president, that they would not make any price increases until December 31, 1961. By this measure, which was taken for the first time in 1957, the industries concerned intend to contribute to maintaining the price of construction at its present level and to help fight inflation. Such a decision made quite freely by the building trade enterprises, merits an honorable mention.

MILLIONTHS OF A MILLIMETRE

Some time ago, the 11th General Conference on Weights and Measures, which comprises delegates from 32 Governments, adopted a new definition of the metre, as it considered that the existing international prototype no longer defined with sufficient precision the unit of length. This important decision has led to the installation, at the International Office of Weights and Measures of Sevres (France), of a photo-electric interferential comparator, an apparatus possessing the greatest precision, developed and manufactured by the "Societe genevoise d'instruments de physique" (Genevese Company for the manufacture of physical instruments). This apparatus required nearly four years of research and experiment, which represents more than 80,000 hours of work for a large team of specialists. This comparator, the construction of which honours Swiss industry, is an apparatus which is unique, at present, in the whole world; it renders possible the measurement of the distance between square lines with a precision of a few millionths of a millimetre.

AUTOMATIC TYPING SOON?

A machine which types automatically, under dictation, that is what the phonetograph must be. The inventor of this apparatus, Mr J. Dreyfus-Graf, has been pursuing his researches for several years, within the framework of the Institute of Physics, attached to the University of Geneva. It is by means of an extremely careful analysis of the phenomenon of sound, that the inventor succeeded in first identifying and then codifying the sounds which form the French language. When this had been done, it was then necessary to communicate this code to the typewriting machine, i.e. to imagine a system of control which would put the keyboard into operation, in response to specific impulsions, in such a way that only those keys that were required, would be affected. This result has been attained in the third prototype which was recently presented to the Press; certain defects which cause errors have still got to be eliminated, but it is hoped that it will shortly prove possible for the inventor to put an apparatus on the market which will be capable of meeting all demands. Of course, the phonetograph is not capable of solving orthographical problems and it is in a phonetic script that it records the messages dictated to it.

