

President's message

Objektyp: **Group**

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

Band (Jahr): **64 (1998)**

Heft [2]

PDF erstellt am: **24.05.2024**

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English in Swiss schools.

In the light of these developments the question of which language will be used in the longterm future, (let's say about 30 years hence) among different speaking parts of Switzerland, is a valid one. The director of education of the Canton of Zürich thinks that all 3 major languages, German, French and English will be used, that a typical Swiss culture will remain, but he also thinks that Switzerland will be part of a global world and therefore English will be used as a global language. Time will tell !!

President's Message

On seeing the cover of this year's first issue of the *HELVETIA*, it was delightful to see that stunning, full colour picture of the Zytglocke and Marktgassee in Bern, one of my most favourite sights in, for me, the most beautiful city in Switzerland. I say this with more than a little bias however (although the choice of picture was coincidental!), as I spent several years working in Bern during the time I lived in Switzerland. I don't think I ever tired of walking around the "Altstadt" (old part) of the city, with its worn cobbled streets, the buzz of the open market place on a Saturday morning, or a relaxed and peaceful stroll under the lovely old archways on a Sunday afternoon (minus any Sunday trading!), trying

to imagine the many previous generations over the centuries who had walked those same worn paths. I'm sure many of you feel the same about your "own" local towns or cities with the same sort of sentiment!

But now, back to the cover picture. It was correctly identified by all entrants (but I am hoping for a few more responses from this month's issue!), and no doubt the addition of colour helped. This came about because the Printing firm we use now has a colour printer, and to trial this, we were given a special, heavily reduced price. However, we're now back to black and white, at least until a final decision is reached, as although the colour pictures are very eye-catching, the cost increase would involve at least \$1,000 extra annually. Therefore, your thoughts and input would be most welcome. Another change on our front page is that our Society is now in its 64th year, making next year our 65th anniversary, a milestone which I feel should be commemorated or celebrated in some way. For this, any ideas would also be much appreciated and perhaps then discussed at our upcoming AGM.

I hope everyone has coped well with the extreme heat that this summer has brought us, and that all Clubs had enjoyable and successful annual picnics during February. I wish you all my best wishes for the coming month.

with kind regards

Beatrice.

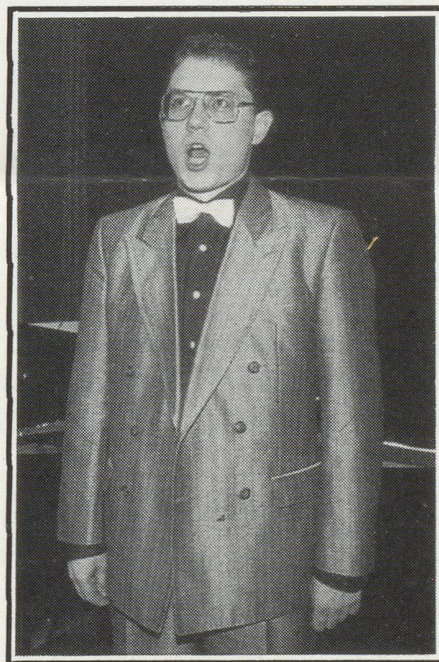
A World Record

On 16. January this year a young lawyer, Michael Sauser, from Zürich in Switzerland had his name included in the Guinness book of records. This young man found a challenge in learning and singing most of the world's national anthems. At the Olympic museum in Lausanne he sang his way through 188 anthems in their original language in just 6 hours.

In answer to the question how it was possible to learn so many songs he said that he contacted all embassies around the world and asked for text, phonetic transcriptions and tapes of the respective anthems. Only 3 or 4 countries have not answered his appeal. Mr. Sauser says that he found 6 different types of anthems:

1. in honor of a ruler
 - God save the King..
2. historic development
 - the Marseillaise
3. beautiful landscape
 - Norway, Sweden, Canada
4. revolutionary songs
 - South America
5. Propagandist anthems
 - Communist Countries
6. Proclamatic
 - proclaiming the country's policies in the anthem.

Mr. Sauser offers his singing services at patriotic functions and hopes for a job at the 2000 Olympiad in Sydney.



Michael Sauser in action.

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Whose Job is it?

This is a story about four people called:

Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it. Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it. But Nobody did it. Somebody was angry about that because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought that Anybody could do it, but Nobody realised that Everybody wouldn't do it. Eventually, Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done !!!

(contributed by a Society-member)