

Swiss consul's visit to Taranaki

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SWISS CONSUL'S VISIT TO TARANAKI.

Appreciation of the cordial relationship that existed between Swiss nationals resident in New Zealand and the New Zealand people was expressed by Dr. Schmidt, Swiss Consul, in acknowledging the welcome extended to him and Mrs. Schmidt and family by civic representatives at a ball held in the Manaia Town Hall on July 18.

The function was attended by over 400 guests and the speakers were Father Breen, parish priest, Mr. L.A. Walters, chairman of the Manaia Town Board, Mr. F. Mourie, chairman of the Waimate West County Council, and Mr. G. Meuli, on behalf of the Swiss communities of Taranaki.

Father Breen, in welcoming the consul, said it was regarded as a great compliment that Dr. Schmidt should accept the invitation to visit Manaia. Everyone, particularly the Swiss people, appreciated his presence. He was welcomed not only by the people of the town and district, but also by those from all parts of Taranaki who were present to do him honour. He thanked those who had worked so splendidly in the organisation of the ball, which was one of the most successful ever held in the district, and the patrons for their attendance.

Mr. Walters, on behalf of several local bodies and the residents of the town and district, said the townspeople were proud to have such distinguished visitors in their midst and the hope was expressed that their stay would be a memorable one. The Swiss people had proved themselves worthy settlers in Taranaki and their relationship with New Zealanders had always been of the best.

Speaking for the Waimate West County Council, Mr. Mourie expressed similar sentiments of goodwill and paid tribute to the manner in which Swiss nationals resident in the district worthily upheld the high traditions of their country.

A handsome bouquet with red and white streamers, the Swiss national colours, was presented by little Freda Hermann to Mrs. Schmidt and the gathering united in singing "For They are Jolly Good Fellows."

Pleasure at the friendly relations existing between the Swiss people resident in New Zealand and the people of the Dominion, which he hoped would always continue, was expressed by Dr. Schmidt, who was accorded an ovation when he rose to speak. He said he was overwhelmed at receiving such a fine welcome and expressed his appreciation of the opportunity to meet so many of his country people.

The hall presented a colourful scene with its scheme of decorations carried out in ferns and greenery and bright lights under the supervision of Mesdames A. Engelberger and J. Byrne, Miss M. Hermann and Messrs K. Hermann, Engelberger, R. Bishop and F. Rodgers, who also arranged the decorations in the supper room. The arrangements for the serving of supper were in the hands of Mesdames Engelberger, Byrne, Satler, J. Granville, O. Steiner, Hermann and E. Vine, Misses M. and A. Steiner, F. Engelberger and Hermann. Music for dancing was provided by a Swiss orchestra consisting of Mrs. E. Gopperth (piano), Messrs. A. Engelberger, F. Schuler, A. Mier and C. Brant, also a novelty orchestra. The M.C.'s were Messrs. R. Bishop and L. Hughes.

During the evening Miss M. O'Donoghue gave an Irish Jig and tap dance; also the Sean Truibhas and Highland Fling.

Dr. and Mrs. Schmidt led a graceful demonstration of the Swiss waltz of which they were declared the winners, and a waltzing competition, judged by Mr. A. Mathis (Hamilton), was won by Mrs. Warren and Mr. J. Kaiser. Other dance winners and competition winners were as follows: Lucky hat, Mr. T. Miller and partner; dance novelty, Mrs. Mathis and partner; Swiss ham and sauce, Mr. T. McGuire (New Plymouth); box of tools, Mr. D. S. Scott (Auroa); side of Swiss bacon and flavouring, Mr. C. Benton (Auroa); dinner set, Mr. A. Baldwin (Manaia).

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Dr. Schmidt is greatly indebted to the family Dahinden, Oeo, as well as Mr. G. Meuli, Okaiawa, for their splendid hospitality accorded to him and his family during their stay in Taranaki. Thanks are also due to all the Swiss and others, who made this great event for him and his family a very memorable one, for their wholehearted reception.

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