

# Swiss National Day

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objektyp: **Article**

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

Band (Jahr): **11 (1945-1946)**

Heft 9

PDF erstellt am: **13.09.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-942837>

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The traveller, quite enchanted with this singing, asked the boy if he learnt that at school. "No fear," the boy replied, "it needs a better ear for music than that".

Of course, I do not mean to say that yodeling is confined to Appenzell, and I think there are not many Cantons without their yodels. The Canton Berne seems to take pride of place, and its yodels quite often come to us in New Zealand over the air. When the peace celebration was held on the Pilatus, we were fortunate in getting a very good broadcast and some beautiful yodels of Unterwalden and other Central Cantons could easily be recognised. A local friend of mine, a New Zealander, who had travelled on tour through Switzerland many years ago, used to tell me that in the Bernese Oberland the people there were that religious, that on a Sunday after church they would congregate in the street and sing hymns. They took the yodels to be hymns of exceptional beauty.

Now we have to come back to the Canton of my birth and its yodels. Here the yodel, or as we call it "Zauren" has its uses. An old Swiss friend of mine a resident of New Zealand of over 50 years, told me once that when milking cows in Switzerland, they used to hum a yodel and that the cows, quite enchanted with charm of the melody would let down the milk much easier. Even cows can be endowed with an ear for music, a fact which is even recognised in this country. I have been on farms here in New Zealand where a radio set was installed in the cowshed.

This is one of the practical uses of the yodel. Many years ago I read in a Swiss publication of its use of a different kind altogether. In the alpine regions where cows and goats grazed during the summer months and where the men are practically cut off from the outer world, a man may become a victim of sickness or an accident without being able to send for help. So it is the custom of these alpine dwellers to go about sunset before their hut and give a loud yauchez or a short yodel which will be answered by the next say "Alp A" and perhaps "B" and "C". That means that everything is all well, but if such a reply does not come forth those mountaineers know that something is amiss and that it is their duty to investigate.

The charm of the yodel has also attracted the musical ear of other countries, but the quality of their production can never reach the Swiss standard. Bavaria, Tyrol and other states with their germanic mother tongue, have their way of yodels. These, although original and melodious, are something quite apart from our style, but other countries have in latter years copied our yodel but they are not and never will be up to our standard.

W.U.

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SWISS NATIONAL DAY.

The Wellington Swiss community will hold their celebration on Saturday August 10th in the Clubrooms of the N.Z. Educational Institute, Evening Post Building, Willis Street, as before.

Invitations will be sent to all compatriots in the Wellington district and we shall be very glad to see any countrymen who happen to be in Wellington on that date.

In Auckland there will be a gathering at the Overseas League Rooms in Queen Street, on August 3rd, as already announced.

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NEW MEMBER;

We are pleased to enrol another new member - Mr. F. Steiner, Cussen Road, Tatuani, Morrinsville.