

Impressions from Kaponga, Hamilton and Auckland

Autor(en): **Risi, Walter**

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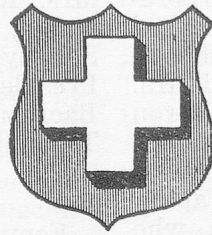
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HAMILTON

IMPRESSIONS FROM KAPONGA, HAMILTON AND AUCKLAND

My wife and I were very lucky to be able to be present at three very impressive 1st August Celebrations. The first one in Taranaki on 29th July, in Kaponga, was a real "coming home" for us and we were very moved by the warm welcome we received from everybody. Apart from the very highly esteemed visit to the Taranaki compatriots of our Vice-Consul in New Zealand, Mr. W. Sollberger, the highlight of the evening was the presence of our oldest Swiss member in New Zealand, the 103 years young Mr. Zinsli from Waitara. Mr. Zinsli demonstrated to everybody's joy and surprise in a really good speech his outstanding memory and fitness. He said that on 20th August next he will be celebrating the 80th year of his arrival in New Zealand, and that he is not in a hurry to die yet. Besides Mr. Zinsli, another honoured guest was Mr. B. B. Zurcher from Longburn, Palmerston North. Mr. Zurcher's age is 84 and of these years he has spent 65 in New Zealand. In his speech, Mr. Zurcher said that he owes a lot to New Zealand, and that he is proud to be here.

The highlights of the Hamilton Celebration on 1st August, in the Riverlea were the variety and abundance of items. The "Fahnenschwingen" by Joe Egger, the songs and yodelling by the Rust family and by the newly-formed choir, the magnificent acts by Mr. and Mrs. Studer and the lovely handoergely playing by Mr. Oettli. As a whole the atmosphere was of more modern type and reflects great credit on the organising ability of the President, Mr. Arnold Biland, and Mrs. Biland.

In Auckland on Sunday, 4th August, I was greatly impressed by the patriotic feelings, the friendly pioneer atmosphere and trying to make do with what was available, especially in the way of providing for the children. The highlight of that function was the speech given by Dr. Kaegi emphasizing the point that not the good times, but the lean and trying periods are bringing the best out in mankind. He ably demonstrated from

the history of Switzerland that hardships and oppression united the peoples spiritually and materially.

The manner in which this event was celebrated may have differed from place to place, but all had one thing in common; the feeling of a family relationship; everybody was proud of being Swiss and it was moving to see how second and third generation descendants tried to keep up and make new acquaintances. My thanks must go to Club Presidents, Messrs. John Steiner, Arnold Biland and Max Bachmann, who with their complimentary visits are greatly fostering this excellent relationship, not only within their respective social centres, but also from one district to another.

WALTER RISI.

President of the Swiss Society in New Zealand (Inc.).

SWISS NATIONAL DAY OBSERVED BY TARANAKI SWISS SOCIAL CLUB

Following the high standard of former years, the celebrations for this 666th anniversary of the founding of the Swiss confederation was held by the Swiss Club in the Kaponga War Memorial Hall on Monday, 29th July. Whereas in other years the banquet was held in the supper room, this year's function was held in the main body of the hall as the numbers present would have been too large to accommodate in the supper room.

The hall was tastefully decorated and pride of place was given to the Club's most prized possession, a complete set of Cantonal flags. The stage itself was surmounted by a huge Swiss National Flag. Before the banquet commenced, early arrivals were entertained by a screening of coloured slides taken by Dr. A. Russell of Napier at the Taranaki Club's picnic at Te Ngutu last summer.

At the conclusion of the banquet, President John Steiner welcomed the guests and visitors, especially the Vice-Consul, Mr. Walter Sollberger. Mr. Sollberger addressed the gathering and also