

# Obituary : Nikolaus Amrein

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# Obituary

## NIKOLAUS AMREIN

Nikolaus Amrein, our oldest compatriot, died in the St. Joseph's Home in Auckland on March 19th, aged 93. Nikolaus was a devoted Catholic and it is significant that he died on St. Joseph's day—the Catholic religion's Patron Saint—for a peaceful death.

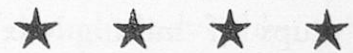
Nikolaus Amrein hailed from Schwarzenberg, Kt. Luzern. He arrived in New Zealand in 1902 after sampling the world. His first place of call after leaving Switzerland was France and then Spain and Italy, South Africa, Argentina and the United States. In each of those countries he worked for a while and then moved on. He related to me once that his first task when he came to a new country was to learn its language properly, and in doing so he often stayed up by candle light until 2 in the morning. So it came that he mastered seven languages fluently.

He was an engineer by trade and when in the United States the mechanisation of agriculture was just beginning to boom. He was successful to perfect several patents for the ripper and binder. No doubt if he had stayed there he might have become one of those self-made men. However, his wanderlust pressed him on to greener fields. Here in New Zealand he worked as logging contractor and bridge builder in Taranaki until he eventually settled down to a more peaceful farming life. His engineering skill stayed with him though. He was the St. Joseph's home handy man, looking after the kitchen machinery. He could complain bitterly that some people would not pay enough attention to the oiling of the apple peeler and he had to repair it too often.

With the passing of Nikolaus Amrein the Swiss Society has lost one of its most colourful pioneer characters. —W.R.

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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS



### SWISS SOCIETY

#### Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Society will be held in Taranaki on June 9th in the Normanby War Memorial Hall Supper Room at 8 p.m.

TRUCTANDA: President's Report; Presentation of Balance Sheet; Fixing Subscription for the coming year; Election of Officers; General.