

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 29 (1966)
Heft: [1]

Artikel: Message from Mr E. v. Graffenried
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-942275>

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Message from Mr. E. v. Graffenried,

Swiss Ambassador, residing in Canberra and also accredited in
New Zealand.

On our first official visit to New Zealand, in October last, my wife and I were most happy to meet our Swiss community in Wellington, to call on the President of the Swiss Club of Hamilton, and to spend an evening with the Committee of the Swiss Club in Auckland. These first contacts were a great experience for us, and we look forward to a further trip, which will also take us to the South Island, in the course of this year.

Many things have indeed greatly impressed us: the various Swiss communities in different parts of New Zealand, some third and even fourth generation; their spirit of enterprise; the position so many of you are holding in a variety of professions; but, above all, the many links of friendship you have established in New Zealand, a country of great inspiration and many opportunities. Our two countries have much in common; in general outlook, in their way of life, and we all appreciate the friendly hospitality extended to us. Relations, in trade and otherwise, indeed go a long way back and have continually developed to a considerable level. As you know, a Consulate had been established 1912, first in Auckland, since 1937 in Wellington, until the opening, in 1963, of an Embassy.

There is one wish I should like to express: Give us your views, your ideas and suggestions for future activities, within our communities, but also for further contacts with your New Zealand friends, in the interest of still closer links between our two countries. On our part, the Embassy in Wellington will do its best to give every possible assistance. We also hope to obtain further films, which have again proved so successful quite recently, and shall encourage visitors from Switzerland, whether engaged in business or in cultural and other fields, to get in touch with us and to take an interest in your life.

May I also congratulate the "Swiss Society of New Zealand" on its valuable work, its cooperation with the New Helvetic Society at home, and especially on its monthly publication "Helvetia," which contributes a most valuable bond. I should also like to encourage the research into the life and conditions of Swiss communities, Swiss Clubs and prominent compatriots since the early days of immigration. Such a compilation, to which many of you could contribute valuable information, would surely be of great interest, here and at home.

I thus hope to meet as many of you as possible during my tour of office.

E. v. GRAFFENRIED, Ambassador.