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EDITORIAL

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS ALL BACK TO FRONT

For many years the "tradition" has been for the Swiss Society's AGM to be held during Queen's Birthday Weekend at the beginning of June.

Considering that all the Swiss Clubs, who actually form the Swiss Society, are holding their own individual AGM's

during April or May, the date of the Swiss Society's own AGM is rather peculiar to say the least. Traditions are notoriously hard to break. But tradition or no tradition, from a practical and logical point of view, the present situation is totally back to front. It is a bit like putting the cart in front of the horse to coin a popular phrase amongst our many farming members. With such an arrangement, it is mighty difficult to move forward. The same applies to the Swiss Society.

To understand the problem, you have to look first at the rules that govern the Swiss Society. One of the Society's objects under the rules is "To encourage the formation of provincial branches and affiliations who would organise their local functions independently of the parent body. A Branch elects its own Committee and looks after its own affairs within the Rules of the parent Society. As the parent body, the Swiss Society is called upon to make decisions from time to time which obviously must affect all its members, such decisions must also have an impact on the individual Swiss Clubs as a whole. By placing the Society's AGM after the Clubs' AGMs, an awkward situation has been created whereby any decision taken at the Swiss Society's AGM becomes often difficult to implement immediately by the individual Clubs because, by June, they already had their own AGM and, in accordance with their own rules, they may not be able to follow suit without calling for an extraordinary General Meeting which no one is keen to do.

Failing this, the decision of the Swiss Society can only be implemented by the Clubs at their following year's AGM, in other words some 10-11 months later. It is clear that such a cumbersome way of conducting business is ridiculous and contrary to the interest of all members.

Accordingly, it seems logical to do away with an old outdated tradition and to advance the Society's AGM to a date as early as possible in April, certainly before any of the Clubs' AGM's. In this way any decision reached at the AGM of the Swiss Society can then be tabled at each Club's own AGM. This way of conducting business would be much more logical and far more efficient even if some old traditions have to be broken. At least the horse would find itself in front of the cart again....

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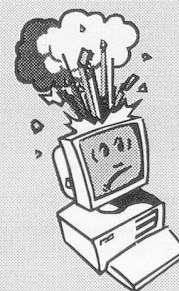
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Following a request from one of our readers who does not wish to be mentioned by name, we will from now on publish the address of our Embassy in Wellington in the Helvetia magazine.



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QUESTIONNAIRE

You may remember that last month we ran a questionnaire in the Helvetia whereby the Committee of the Swiss Society asked the readers a few questions about the magazine. By the time of finalising this present issue 15 replies have been received, not a great response but then that was to be expected. The Swiss are no different from anyone else. Everyone has an opinion but few take the trouble to express it in writing when invited to do so. To those readers who returned their questionnaire: many thanks for your co-operation. We will publish the results in the next issue.

EMBASSY OF SWITZERLAND

We all know that there is a Swiss Embassy in Wellington. But how many Swiss in New Zealand know who works there and what each person's functions are? Here is the report we asked the Embassy to supply for enlightenment of all our readers:

WHO IS DOING WHAT AT THE EMBASSY

Head of Mission is Ambassador **Dr Ernst THURNHEER**

The duties of the other staff members broadly include the following although these are added to from time to time.

Deputy Head of Mission is **Mr Peter GRAF** who deals with trade enquiries, relations with the universities and art and culture, as well as special consular affairs.

Mrs Erika GROSSENBACHER is Head of Chancery and deals specifically with AHV, social security, assistance to Swiss tourists and settlement in Switzerland.

Mr Jean-Philippe AMMANN deals with registration, military, passports, civil status and visas.

Mrs Marianne WALTI, transferable secretary from Switzerland and **Mrs Louise BEALE**, local secretary deal with correspondence, tourism, phone calls and public relations. Mrs. BEALE deals with the Ambassador's programme and appointments and also liaisons relevant to art and cultural projects.

There are seven staff members working at the Embassy including the driver.

Please do not address your correspondence to a specific person at the Embassy in order to avoid it not being dealt with during the absence of the addressee. Visitors' hours are from **8.30 am to 12.00 noon** Monday to Friday. Outside these hours an appointment can be arranged by phone.

We sincerely thank the Swiss Embassy for supplying us with the above information which will certainly interest many of our readers.

COMMENTS

FROM MR PETER GRAF from the Swiss Embassy about the report supplied by the Auckland Swiss Club concerning a recent speech given by Mr.

SWISS SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND (INC) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday 5 June, 1994 at 2.00 pm. To be held at the Club House, Kaponga, Taranaki.

AGENDA:

1. Welcome by the President
2. Apologies
3. Reading of the Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting
4. Matters arising from the Minutes
5. President's Report
6. Matters arising from the President's Report
7. Financial Report
8. Matters arising from the Financial Report
9. Editor's Report
10. Matters arising from the Editor's Report
11. Delegate to the Swiss Abroad Report
12. Riflemaster's Report
13. Matters arising from the Riflemaster's Report
14. Setting of subscriptions for the 94/95 year
15. Appointments of Scrutineers
16. Election of Officers - Editing Committee - Delegate to the Swiss Abroad
17. General Business and setting of the date and place for the next Annual General Meeting and handing over to the new Committee

MOTION:

The number of Helvetia magazine issues to be increased to 12 per year and subscription to be \$25.00 per year per family or per single member.

OTHER EVENTS:

Sunday 5 June in the morning: Cowbell competition.

Sunday 5 June evening dinner with entertainment at the Club House.

Any members wishing to attend the AGM and requiring accommodation, please contact any Committee member of the Taranaki Swiss Club as soon as possible.

Bodenmüller (see Helvetia April issue, page 7). I would like to point out some facts relating to the speech given in Auckland recently by Mr Bodenmüller. These appeared in the April edition of "Helvetia" and need correcting.

- The 17 billion gross national deficit should read 17 billion public deficit (equal to the deficit of the Federal Government, all cantonal governments as well as all the communal governments).

- Switzerland is not yet the soccer world champion but will take part in the World Championship.

- AHV for Swiss abroad - 100 million, and not 100,000 million, more is paid in pensions than is received as contributions.

- The "Ratgeber für Auslandschweizer" should be ordered directly from: Service for the Swiss Abroad, Bundesgasse 18, CH-3003 Berne, Switzerland..

NOTE TO SECRETARIES

Next issue of the Helvetia magazine: June 1994. All contributions must be in by 15 May. Many thanks for your kind cooperation.



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