

Report from our Delegate to the Swiss Abroad

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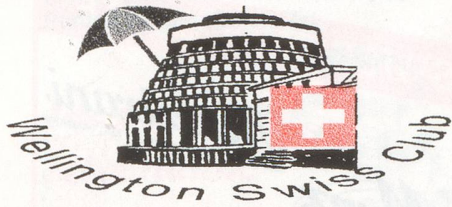
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Forthcoming Events

Don't forget **1st August** on Petone Beach and **8th August** in the Swiss Club: Bernese Evening! For details read your invitation!

Our August walk will take place on September 05, 1998. We meet at 10.00 am at Pass of Branda (southern End of Inglis Street, Seatoun) to walk along the **Eastern Walkway**. Transportation back to the start of the walk will be provided. After the walk a visit to the Marine Laboratory in Island Bay (Address 396, The Esplanade) is suggested. For further information please contact Franz Schneider on 476 7805 or 472 15 93.

Report from our Delegate to the Swiss Abroad

Last year I reported on the Federal Council's proposed changes to the voluntary AHV / IV Insurance scheme, changes that would have been very detrimental to most compatriots living abroad and interested to start or to continue paying into the scheme on a voluntary basis.

- Thanks to the Swiss Abroad Organisation (SAO) intervention, a timely rethink was initiated. According to the latest information to hand, the scheme will now not be scrapped as was proposed. The Federal Council recently presented new initiatives. The following improvements have been presented for discussions:

- 1) In states that do not have reciprocal Social Insurance agreements with Switzerland (e.g. New Zealand) there will be no time constraint to enter into the voluntary AHV / IV.
- 2) The present level of contributions will continue to be based on the income realised in the country of domicile.
- 3) For the dependents of compulsorily insured people as well as for Students, new proposals within the existing scheme are being researched.
- 4) Any person over 50 years of age at the time the revised scheme be-

Upcoming Swiss Cultural Events in New Zealand

(As indicated by the Swiss Embassy, Wellington)

Mario Botta Architecture 1980-95

A photographic retrospective of the work of the famous Swiss architect, Mario Botta, during the period 1980 - 1995.

Auckland **31 July - 21 August 1998**
Faculty of Architecture, The University of Auckland Architecture Building, 26 Symonds street, Auckland

"Joli n'a qu'un oeil"

This photographic exhibition of three Swiss photographers, Anne-Marie Grobet, Charles Weber and Robert Müller is part of the *Fotofest 98* exhibition. The first two both swap images of the countryside in the way that travellers swap tales, while the latter, an employee of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, whose life-long fascination landscape photography has been fostered by the travels involved with his job. His particular source of inspiration has been the interplay of light and shadow, and the textures of the Namib Desert.

Embassy of Switzerland, Wellington

Changes to the line-up of personnel and to some duties.

Mr. Walter Simmen

Head of Mission and Chargé d'Affaires a.i. - No change to duties.

Mr. Franz Schneider

Deputy Head of Mission - As before with the addition of trade enquiries.

Mrs Nadine Studer Weckerle - As before - due to leave NZ mid-Oct. 1998

Mrs Françoise Killias Zillweger - Has now left New Zealand.

Mrs Louise Hemmingsen Beale - As before.

Mrs Gabriela Von Känel Fyfe - Part-time secretary replacing Mrs. Killias Zillweger.

Mr Ivan Eyre - Leaving the Embassy at the end of August 1998.

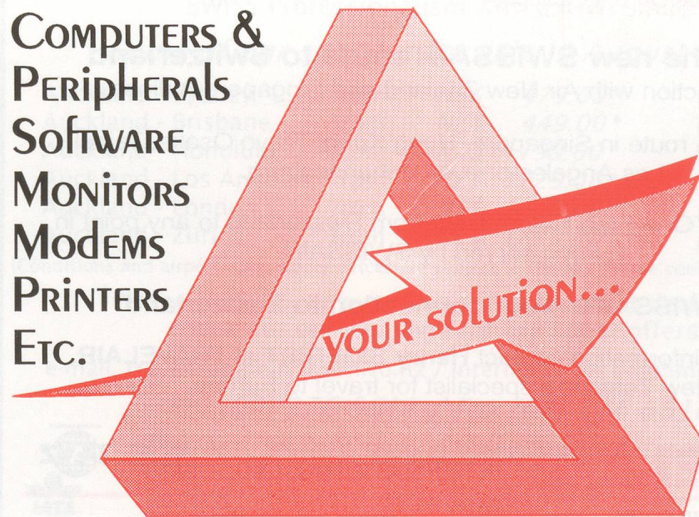
comes law, including countries that have reciprocal agreements, can enter the voluntary AHV / IV up until retirement age. Several problems have yet to be sorted out and resolved. Since the definitive reforms have not yet been finalised, the SAO has not taken an official stand but is very active behind the scene to preserve the interests of the "Fifth Switzerland".

- The SAO has never been against AHV / IV reforms as such, it has however been fighting for a number

of years for a revision that incorporates the legitimate needs of present and new emigrants. In particular it points out the fact that two thirds of insured women, including in countries with reciprocal agreements, have not adequate insurance possibilities. It can also reasonably be expected that some compatriots may, through no fault of their own, become dispossessed and may need some form or other of benevolent funding.

H. Leuenberger.

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