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## Walter & Agnes Steiner's 70th Wedding Anniversary

More than 150 family and friends, both Swiss and kiwi, attended their anniversary luncheon held at Pat and Lynda Steiner's home

Walter's parents, Anton Steiner and Elisa (nee Betschart) came to New Zealand from Central Switzerland and were unable to return to Switzerland due to the outbreak of WW1. Walter was born January 28th, 1917, the 4th child of 7.



Bride and groom

Agnes, one of 8, is of Irish-English descent. Her family has been in NZ since the early 1800s. She grew up in Devonport.

Walter and Agnes were married on 12th June, 1940. Agnes took to farming life, and being farm employees became their lifestyle for the first 20 years. During this time Kevin, Denis, Monica, Patrick, Gemma, Edward and Loretta were born.

Walter and Agnes bought their first farm at Taupiri and added Gregory, Anton and Gerard to the family. They moved to a Huntly farm and in 1983 they moved into town, to retire.

Not that they ever really retired! They were still a very busy couple. Agnes' cooking abilities range from traditional kiwi tucker to Swiss baking treats. Walter with his tractor and baler has been spotted around town for years doing odd jobs for small lifestyle block owners. The tractor, much to Walter's disappointment, had to be sold recently. A grandson has bought it to restore it to its former glory.

Walter and Agnes have also been active in the Hamilton Swiss Club. Walter made and donated many wood carvings towards Swisscard evening prizes. They both enjoy Swiss traditions, music, food and playing Swiss cards. You could often hear the sound of yodelling or Swiss dance music playing as you passed their home.

The family have increased to include 47 grandchildren and 47 great-grandchildren - with 4 more known

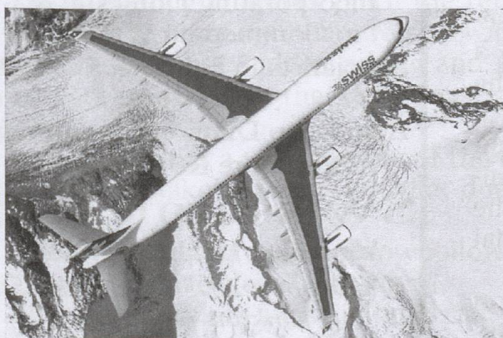
to arrive by early 2011. They enjoy attending the weddings, baptisms and other celebrations of their grandchildren and greats. Although Walter and Agnes never visited Switzerland they enjoy hearing from and about the grandchildren who are living and working overseas.



Agnes and Walter holding hands

Since January of this year, 2010, Agnes & Walter have left their own home and now live with Edward & Kathy where they have their own self contained end of the house. The anniversary brought together all ten of their children. Many smiles were had by all and Walters teasing and wit kept everyone on their toes. While a family photo was being taken outside, it started to rain. Walter climbed quickly inside through the window instead of walking round to the door, still showing great agility when needed!

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