

Quince squares (Quitten Pästli)

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Swiss Taranaki Families - a little sleuthing please

Put on your best Sherlock Holmes hat - and read on....

Once upon a time (from 1903 till at least 1909) Lena and Joe from Taranaki wrote a series of post-cards to their sister/sister in law, Anna Arnold, in Switzerland. She was in Baar, Canton Zug, and at other times the postcards were forwarded to her or addressed to her in Fribourg, Heustrich-Bad Berner-Oberland, and Neuzingen.



Lena wrote in English, and Josef in German - so we might perhaps deduce that Annie was a Kiwi-Swiss, and perhaps Lena was New Zealand-born. On one occasion (1904), Tony Adler added his greetings. During the time the post-cards were written, Lena and Joe had at least three babies. There was a boy (Raymond John) in 1905, which took the family to six at that time (3 boys, 3 girls). There was a girl born 16 May 1907, and another baby boy, possibly in 1909. Another older girl was called Elise.

There's one other card with the bundle, which Bruno Boeckli got as a set. (The story about how Bruno got these is in page 3.) It's dated Matamata 1929, the envelope is missing so we don't know who it's addressed to. It starts "Dear Auntie" and is signed by "your loving niece Elsie".

Is there perhaps a connection there that meant it ended up with the "Anna/Lena/Joe" postcards?

So - who were Lena and Joe? Is their family still part of the Taranaki Swiss community? Was Annie Lena's sister or Joe's? Did Anna come home? Was Arnold her maiden name, or married name? What happened to her?

Are these postcards perhaps a part of your family history?

Let me know, and let's see if we can piece together some more of the story.

Phone me on 04 905 0017 (before 1 May), or if it's after that, email Carolyn.lane@vodafone.net.nz or drop a note to Carolyn Lane, Holiday Camp Idyll, 9423 Altenrhein, Switzerland.

Rare shrew found in Switzerland



Specimens of the world's smallest mammal have been caught in Switzerland, more than 100 years after they were last seen in the country. Retired zoology professor Peter Vogel captured and released seven Etruscan pygmy shrews (*suncus etruscus*) just north of Chiasso in the canton of Ticino, close to the Italian border. On average the shrews weigh only 1.8 grammes, making them the lightest known mammal. They have not been observed in Switzerland since 1895, near Lugano.

Vogel found them living in dry walls in disused vineyards - conditions he described as "a paradise for shrews". He had to design a special trap for them, since they are too light to trip commercially available ones. The animals are about four centimetres long and can flatten themselves so as to squeeze through slits only three millimetres high.

Vogel first looked for the shrew in Ticino 45 years ago. He said they were certainly "very rare" in Switzerland, although they live in the Mediterranean region. Given the difficulty of tracking them down, it is hard to say how rare they are in that area.

from swissinfo

Have you got quinces? Then you probably make quince jelly. And the leftover fruit pulp makes very good jam, or

Quince squares (Quitten Pästli)

Pulp of 1kg quinces
 ½ Tbs lemon juice
 850g Jam sugar



Boil all for 4 minutes, then spread on baking paper on an oven tray.

Dry in a warm place for about three days, then cut into the shapes you like; cover in sugar and dry for another two days, then store in an airtight container. Separate the layers with baking paper.

En quete!