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From the Editor/President

A very happy 2013 dear Helvetia Readers! May the New Year bring you much joy and most of all, good health. Special thoughts are with those of you who are experiencing a difficult time of life - we wish you well.

This year, I was wondering - probably like most of you - whether to make any New Year's resolutions or not, and have come to an answer.

This summer, we have visitors from Europe and endeavour to show them the best of New Zealand. As it happened, we had the opportunity to attend a comedy evening with Tim Shadbolt (Mayor of Invercargill) and Gary McCormick. This seemed like the ideal entertainment for our visitors.

Tim Shadbolt related the story of when he enlisted for Mayor of Waitakere City many years ago. This only cost \$100 and Tim was up for a bit of fun - definitely nothing serious. When queried by two TV crews on his policies that day, he was lost.

He did not know what a policy was, let alone what his policies might be. Spotting an old concrete mixer in the back of his garden he cried out: "Using the mayoral limousine to pull my concrete mixer!"

The next day, Waitakere City Councillors passed a bylaw, forbidding tow bars on mayoral limousines, just in case. Three weeks later, Tim was voted in against all expectations and started his tow bar-less mayorship.

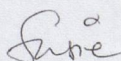
Our visitors left in the middle of the show, as they could not understand the New Zealand "slang".

Lesson: Nothing seems to happen as planned anyway. So much for New Year's resolutions!

Despite of the time of year, we have a full 24-page Helvetia, thanks to the many enlightening articles and contributions we have received. We intend to introduce the Helvetia team to you more closely over time.

With great pleasure, we welcome back Carolyn Lane, a longstanding contributor to the Helvetia. We also welcome Flavio Milan, Deputy Head of Mission of the Swiss Embassy for the first time.

A Toast to 2013!



Word from the President

I hope you had an unforgettable festive season with your family and friends, and enjoyed a wonderful start to the new year. Life is getting back to normal for most of us - working on this issue of the Helvetia has definitely brought me back to reality...

This is already the 4th issue we've done and the Helvetia wheels are well greased now. We are lucky to have such a large and dedicated Helvetia team who contribute articles - thank you so much, you are all doing a tremendous job.

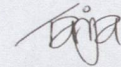
The 1st December saw the launch of our brand new swiss.org.nz website. Hours and hours of work have gone into producing the website, and writing all the bits and pieces for every page. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed to the creation of such a fine website!

During the month of December, we had 661 visits in total to our site, and believe it or not, 97 of them were directly from Switzerland!

Since we have had a few of the 'older' generation ask what all this 'www' is all about, my darling husband has written a small introduction to the World Wide Web. That topic reminds me of an essay my 7-year old had to write at school a few weeks ago. The teacher wanted to know what they believed in - so students would write about God, Santa, the tooth fairy etc. Luca came home from school with his article called "I believe in Google" - somehow that day I felt that certain parts of my raising children were failing...

I wish you all a most wonderful, successful and happy 2013 with lots of laughter, sunshine and beautiful memories.

Yours,



Swiss Society of New Zealand Inc.

Patron	H. E. Dr Marion Weichelt Krupski
President/Secretary	Tanja Latham-Zurbruegg, 45 Kinross Street, Blockhouse Bay, Auckland 0600. Ph 09 627 8777. E-mail: latham@zurbruegg.co.nz
Vice President	Marcel Ruedi, 25 Beverley Crescent, RD 1 Whangarei 0179 Ph 02 7490 1836. E-mail: ruedi@orcon.net.nz
Editor	Susie Wood, PO Box 65206 Mairangi Bay Auckland 0745. Ph 09 4736098. E-mail: editor@swiss.org.nz
Treasurer	Carmen Fitz-Gordon, 2 Coldham Crescent, St. Johns, Auckland 1072. Ph 09 528 0903. E-mail: c_and_ian@xtra.co.nz
Riflemaster	Ernst Lanz, 23 Hawaiian Parade, Arkles Bay, Whangaparaoa 0932. Ph 09 428 5687. Email: lanzfamily@slingshot.co.nz

Delegates to the Swiss Abroad Conference in Switzerland

Delegate	Othmar Hebler, 9 Larlin Heights, RD 15, Hawera 4675. Ph 06 278 6878
Deputy Delegate	Emanuel Zust, 41 Cheltenham Drive, Kapiti Village, Paraparaumu 5032 Ph 04 905 0017

Secretaries of the Swiss Clubs

Auckland	Heidi Wilson, 53 Rothesay Bay Road, Rothesay Bay, Auckland 0630. Ph 094789751. E-mail: heidi.wilson@hotmail.com
Hamilton	Anita Zuber, PO Box 24061, Hamilton 3253. Mob 027 498 5170. E-mail: zuber@xtra.co.nz
Taranaki	Marianne Drummond, 508 Salisbury Road, RD 24, Stratford 4394. Ph 06 7628 757. E-mail: littleacres@xtra.co.nz
Wellington	Odile Stotzer, 24 Fitzherbert Street, Alicetown, Lower Hutt 5010. Ph 04 586 3095. E-mail: odilestotzer@gmx.net

Swiss Government Representatives

Embassy of Switzerland	Level 12, Maritime Towers, 10 Custom House Quay, Wellington 6140. E-mail: wel.vertretung@eda.admin.ch Website: www.eda.admin.ch/wellington
Consulate of Switzerland	Peter Deutsche, 3 Marine Parade, Herne Bay, Auckland 1011. Ph 09 366 0403. E-mail: auckland@honrep.ch