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## LOCAL NEWS - SOUTH AFRICA

Dear Compatriots,

Having arrived in South Africa just over a month ago, I welcome this opportunity given me by the "Swiss Review" to address a few words to the Swiss community in South Africa.

A head of Mission under whom I served at another posting a few years ago once said that the ultimate function of any Swiss Ambassador should be to act as a sort of "super-consul", whereby he meant that the Embassy too should give highest priority to the needs and problems of the Community. I remembered those words when I landed at Jan Smuts Airport to take up my appointment.

What little I have been able to see of the Swiss community in South Africa has impressed and delighted



me. What impressed me are the dynamic qualities of its members, and their cohesion at work as well as play. What delighted me is the variety of the activities of the Swiss organisations and the exceedingly friendly welcome

I received from those people and groups I have already been able to meet. For this I am most grateful.

I wish to repeat here, to a larger audience, what I have already said in a smaller circle: my door is always open, do come and walk through it. We have a tradition in our diplomatic and consular service that we always try to help. Nevertheless we also have to accept the fact that only too often our practical possibilities are very strictly limited.

It is my intention to meet the greatest possible number of Swiss organisations and people as time goes on. Meanwhile "viel Glück und machet's guet".

C.H. Bruggmann  
Swiss Ambassador.

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### Staff Changes at the . . .

#### Consulate General of Switzerland, Johannesburg.

Miss. H. Portmann has been transferred to the Consulate General in New Orleans, and is being replaced by Miss. B. Erismann.

#### Consulate of Switzerland, Cape Town.

The Chancellor, Mr. P. Hof, has already left Cape Town in August, 1978 in transfer to the Head Office in Berne. He will be replaced by the Mr. P. Graf, presently in Berne, who will take up his duties by the end of November, 1978.

Miss. U. Gnos has already left for Switzerland after the completion of her assignment.

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IN

**SOUTHERN AFRICA (1652 - 1977) (325 YEARS)**

COMPILED BY F. ERNST & K. SCHEURER

PUBLISHED BY THE SWISS SOCIETIES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

Many have read our appeal for information on the Swiss in Southern Africa but only FEW have reacted. However, to those who have assisted so far many thanks. Meanwhile a little publication has been produced which is available from the address below at a cost of R0,50c (high value stamps acceptable.. Even this support will enable the further research into the activities of the many Swiss who have landed, lived and enjoyed their stay in Southern Africa.

Many interesting details have already been found, yet many more are still beyond our reach. That is where we require your HELP!! We are looking for a wide variety of information helping us find:

- tracing back South Africans



whose origin might generations back have been swiss

- Swiss and descendants of more recent years (i.e. turn of the century)

- photo material, letters, pictures, etc., giving information on conditions of the times.

- information on specific activities of the actual Swiss

Clubs in Southern Africa.

- information on activities of Swiss outside the various Clubs.

- information on Swiss descendants living in areas outside the big centres (information on these activities are indeed extremely scarce).

From this short list, it will become obvious that we are

presently tapping every possible source. At present no information is unimportant.

Therefore don't be SHY.

contact us under:

**SWISS CHRONOLOGY:**

P.O. Box 3626, Johannesburg, 2000.

or Telephone: F. Earnst at: 724-6427 or 725-3019 at Jhb.

*We have just been advised by SWISSAIR that they have introduced a favourable, reduced rate for the transportation of household goods from South Africa.*

*For further information, please contact:*

*Mr. J.P. Cano at 975-4979.*

# Gape Town Calling

## **Forthcoming Functions**

Although the period between December and February is usually fairly quiet at the Swiss Club, Cape Town, there are quite a number of interesting functions planned.

### **Baenze Jass.**

This traditional card game for prizes will be held on the 6th December, at 20.00 hours in the Clubhouse.

### **Christmas Tree.**

The Christmas Tree is a function for young and old alike. This year it will be held on Saturday, 9th December at 20.00 hours in the Clubhouse.

André Robert and his team will provide the tree with its dramatic lighting effect and the children will perform

songs, dances, music and recitation before Father Christmas pays his annual visit. Each child will receive a small gift from Father Christmas.

### **Sylvester Party.**

This party was such a success last year that it has been decided to make this an annual event.

At 20.00 hours on Sunday 31st December, members who have pre-booked and paid for this party will gather at the Clubhouse.

A sumptuous buffet provided by the five-star Heerengracht Hotel will be the fare, while the whole hall will be decorated with streamers, balloons and other decorations.

A special "Sylvester punch" which was so popular last year will be included as will a half bottle of champagne per person, at midnight.

The price per person all-inclusive is R8,00 and only booked and paid-for reservations can be confirmed. All enquiries to P.O. Box 2279, Cape Town or phone: 22-8917.

### **Brewery Visit.**

On Thursday 11th January at 3p.m., the Club will visit Ohlsson's Cape Brewery in Newlands.

After a tour of inspection, a brewer's breakfast will be served in the Tavern.

### **Businessmen's Luncheon.**

The business luncheons have been extremely popular in



1978. The first meeting in 1979 will be held on Wednesday 24th January at 12,30 in the Heerengracht Hotel.

#### **Annual General Meeting.**

The 56th Annual General Meeting is scheduled for Thursday the 15th February,

1979, in the Clubhouse at 8p.m. All are welcome.

**These are only a few of our highlights. For further information, please write to:  
P.O. Box 2279,  
or Phone:  
44-8405 or 22-8917.**

way flow and that Swiss Clubs and Colonies abroad should send back as much information as possible to Switzerland. Only this way could the Auslandschweizersekretariat be aware of the needs and aspirations of the Swiss abroad and try to do something about it.

Dr. Alfred Weber who is the newly-elected President of the Auslandschweizer Commission, in his address called on all Swiss abroad to examine the new draft Constitution very carefully especially as regards their rights and duties.

The next Tagung is due to be held in Porrentury over the last weekend in August 1979 and Peter Muller has recommended that any Swiss from South Africa who is visiting Switzerland at that time, should attend.

### **56TH AUSLANDSCHWEIZERTAGUNG AT EINSIEDELN.**

The 56th Auslandschweizertagung was held from the 25th to the 27th August at Einsiedeln.

Peter Muller, Swiss Club President of Cape Town was the only representative from Africa South of the Equator. He reported that the theme of

the Congress was "Information" and that congress delegates were given interesting addresses, reviews and demonstrations of the various information services available to Swiss abroad. It was stressed that information was a two-

Mrs. Emma Mutavdzic, the President of the Windhoek and South West Swiss Club paid a visit to Cape Town late in September. She was accompanied by her husband and son.

After several rounds of interesting discussions with the Consul, Mr. Walter Altenburger and the Swiss Club President of Cape Town, the Mutavdzic family spent a Sunday inspecting the Swiss Club premises at Green Point and Jonkershoek.

After watching tennis and football, on Sunday morning, a meal was enjoyed by the party at the Clubhouse and after a drive to Stellenbosch, late afternoon tea was organised under the oaks at Jonkershoek.

## **VISIT BY PRESIDENT OF WINDHOEK CLUB.**



### **INSPECTION OF SWISS CLUB PREMISES.**

Inspecting the Swiss Club facilities at Jonkershoek, Stellenbosch on a Sunday afternoon in September were (from left to right):

Mr. Walter Altenburger (Swiss Consul), Mrs. Emma Mutavdzic (President Swiss Club, Windhoek). Mr. Peter Muller (President Swiss Club, Cape Town).

# YODELLING IN SWITZERLAND.

Yodelling is one of the characteristic features of Switzerland known throughout the world. Whether it rings out in the silence of a remote Alpine Valley or resounds repeatedly in the course of rural festivity where the old popular customs are still alive, or whether it is heard in a simple, wainscotted inn or in the auditorium of one of the world's great theatres: it never fails to produce a remarkably spontaneous effect. It is as if a bit of unspoiled nature has become audible.

Yodelling is not confined to Switzerland. It is to be found in other Alpine regions: in the Tyrol - hence the term 'Tyrolienne' has been coined for a certain type of yodelling - and also in Rumania, in the Caucasus or even in the mountainous regions of China. In Switzerland, however, a unique variety in the musical range of yodelling has been attained, quite apart from the fact that in a few cases its development can be traced back to pre-historic times.

Technically speaking, yodelling is based on repeated, rapid changes from the chest-voice to falsetto and back again. Its musical character is founded on these sudden changes of register. The vocalized melodies of yodelling consist in a kind of figuration on a simple harmonic basis. This figuration is generally

attached to folk-songs in stanzaic form as a sort of free refrain. Wide interval jumps are typical, the register change taking place at these points. Yodelling, however, also appears as independent of folksong. In such cases it is freer. In the case of Swiss yodelling there are also unusual basic musical structures which are built up on the pentatonic scale or on the sequences of tones found in early Christian liturgical modes instead of on the structure of the folksong.

The origin of yodelling shows that it goes back to a primeval musical tradition. Its early stages are found in summons of the mountain herdsman to his animals, or in the outbreak of exultation of the lonely mountain dweller as he feels at one with the majesty of the mountains or in his signal call to distant neighbours. In early times, however, yodelling was also used to exorcise evil spirits and something of the aggressiveness and inflexibility of such a system of magic can still be traced in the yodelling of modern times. In the solemn Alpine evening prayer, which is still to be heard in some regions of Switzerland to this day, something of this old exorcism lives on.

In early Christian times yodelling had contact with liturgical choral music, whence comes the psalmodic melismatic element. Along with the religious aspect,

however, contact with old dance tunes introduced secular elements. It is in this way that the original yodel has changed in the course of centuries - even millennia - as is revealed by modern musicological and folklore research conducted in the Muotatal in the Canton of Schwyz and in Appenzell on the figuration connected with the folksong. Yodelling appears both in solo form and for several voices, and up to the present day has always retained elements of improvisation. The yodeller will sing free variations on several simple basic musical patterns.

The pronounced technique found in yodelling made it possible at an early date for those with especially endowed throats and powerful and controlled breathing to become true virtuosi of the yodel. Typical is the story of the Swiss yodeller who effortlessly bested a world-famous tenor in the Paris Opera in the thirties of the last century and sent his sophisticated audience into ecstasies.

(TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT EDITION OF SWISS REVIEW)

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