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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

HAMILTON SWISS CLUB

Fondue Evening - October 3, at 7.30 pm at the Eureka Hall, with the Jay Es Band playing Laendler and Swiss music. Please bring your own Fondue sets clearly marked.

TARANAKI SWISS CLUB

September 20 - Club Championship Shoot at 1 pm.

October 18 - Trudi Ott Belt Shoot.

WELLINGTON SWISS CLUB

This year's National Day Celebration on August 1 started off in quite a different way. At 6 pm about 30 children, many parents and friends watched as the bonfire was lit. While the adults stood by the fire, the children went for a walk through Fuhrer's garden, each carrying a lampion. The weather was kind to us and we enjoyed being outside.

Gradually more adult guests arrived and were greeted with a glass of Gluhwein. Once everybody was seated we listened to the speech by the federal president, Mr P. Aubert. Afterwards we sung the Swiss national anthem. A splendid buffet dinner and dessert helped to make the celebration even more successful. (Our special thanks to Karl Signer and Jurg Stucki for their involvement). After dinner, the "Jungburgerfeier" took place. One of the participants, Marianne Schleicher, will tell you in her own words what happened: F.S.

For the first time in the Wellington Swiss Club's history, the "Jungburgerfeier" was celebrated in conjunction with the first of August commemoration. It signifies the transition from a young Swiss into adult citizenship with all the rights and duties that go with it. On this occasion, the president of the club, Hansueli Rickli, presented three 'Jungburgers' with a set of books about Switzerland. Each set contained four beautifully illustrated, well written (fortunately in English), books pertaining to specific subjects: History and institutions, the landscape, the economy and cultural life.

The three young people presented with these gifts were: Marianne Schleicher, Beatrice (Trixli) Collis-Katz and Martha Hardegger. For us, this small but significant tradition has stimulated our interest for the Swiss traditions and given us a sense of recognition and worth. We felt this was a wonderful way to involve the younger members of the club and let them know they are not forgotten. We hope that this "Jungburgerfeier" will become a regular part of the National Day celebrations.

I would like to say thank you, to all who were involved in the successful celebrations of August 1. M.S.

Later the club president Hansueli Rickli announced the medal winners for 1987. The "Jungschutzenscup" went to Michelle Kung. The evening finished off with lots of time to talk and listen to some Swiss music. To everybody's surprise there was even a performance on the beautiful Alphorn. Mr Wyss, our Charge d' Affaires, played two nice melodies and we all could join in humming. Thank you very much for this special "intermezzo"; Mr Wyss.

On behalf of the club members and friends, we would like to congratulate the committee for trying out new ideas and for making them into a huge success. We can't recall ever seeing any event so well supported. F.S.

For the video of "Ueli der Knecht" and "Ueli der Pachter" on the last club evening, August 8, about 30 members gathered at the clubhouse. Although the two films together took four hours, everyone present forgot about the time and really enjoyed the whole evening to the fullest.

On August 22, 20 keen men and women competed for the Fritz Adams Cup, which was won - in a very close contest - by Max Fuhrer. About half the competitors finished within 100 points of each other.

Forthcoming Events:

September 26 - Berner Evening, 7.30 pm at the clubhouse.

October 10 - Club Evening.

OBITUARY

Karl Kunz passed away at Basel, Switzerland, on July 11 at the age of 58, while on holiday with his wife Jeanne.

Karl came to New Zealand in 1950, worked at various places and settled in Wellington. He was a foundation member of the Wellington Swiss Club.

Karl left the country again and returned in 1959, with his wife Jeanne. In 1961, their son Jean-Michel was born and the family took part at the activities of the club. One of Karl's hobbies was travel and the family had various trips to Switzerland.

In May this year, Karl and Jeanne returned to Switzerland for a family reunion, where he suddenly died.

We will always remember Karl as a quiet, unassuming and kind man. To his wife, and son and daughter-in-law, we offer our deepest sympathy.

R.M.



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SWISS BURGHERS PLAY GOD IN MORAL SPECTACLE

Einsiedeln, (Switzerland). — In keeping with a tradition of religious drama that spans eight centuries, the people of the Swiss town of Einsiedeln, are enacting a 17th century religious play on a grand scale in the main town square.

Some 200 local people from all walks of life are performing The Great Theatre of the World by 17th century Spanish dramatist Pedro Calderon de la Barca on an open air stage set against the magnificent backdrop of a baroque monastery.

Margrit Portmann, 78, is the oldest performer, having played non-speaking parts over 50 years.

"I was a member of the farmer's family (in the play) in 1937," she said.

"Since then, I've played one of the beggars. I've been in the play seven or eight times."

The play, a rich visual spectacle on the themes of life and death, good and evil, has been staged at intervals of roughly five years since 1924.

This year 400 volunteers are working behind the scenes.

URSULA'S ROLE

For Ursula Staub, a first-time performer who has one of the leading speaking roles in providing a running commentary on the action, the play has meant a heavy commitment.

Training and rehearsal began last September, and solo parts were allocated in December.

"We had two rehearsals a week until February and up to six a week since then, lasting three or four hours each," she said.

Her entire family is taking part.

Husband Markus, whom she assists in his veterinary practice, plays clarinet in the orchestra and their two children play peasant children.

"I find it very rewarding and I think it's a tradition worth preserving," she says.

Rene Zehnder of the town council says: "Einsiedeln's tradition of religious theatre goes back at least to the 12th century."

The Benedictine monastery, originally founded in the ninth century, drew thousands of Catholic pilgrims down the centuries and religious plays were performed for their edification.

Calderon de la Barca's play, first performed in Seville in 1675 begins with The Master (God) ordering that the earth be made into a stage on which humanity must enact the play of life.

Those still to be born are assigned roles as king, beauty, rich man, wise man, farmer and beggar and their lives are sketched.

A character named Mercy urges each to: "Love your neighbour as yourself, act fairly, because God is God."

Death finally comes to them all.

They are judged by The Master as to how they have spent their lives and rewarded with heaven, hell or purgatory.

The organisers of this year's mystery, or religious play, brought in professionals to take charge of direction, stage design and costumes but the production is otherwise an entirely local affair.

Music was composed by Daniel Meier, a monk at the abbey and former student of German composer Paul Hindemith.

Director Dieter Bitterli believes The Great Theatre of the World, with its avowedly Christian

message, still has much to say to audiences in a more sceptical age.

"It seems to me that the play shows how it can be possible to organise things from a non-materialist perspective," he said.

"It still has great relevance."

Bitterli and designer Marietta Eggmann have made full use of the sloping town square's natural advantages as a stage.

The abbey forecourt represents heaven, from which God and his hosts of brightly coloured angels survey the earth.

The earth is represented by a naturalistic stage set at the foot of the monastery steps.

The square's good acoustics made it possible to dispense with microphones, but actors with speaking parts still had nine months of professional coaching in voice projection.

The main problem has been heavy rain, which dogged several of the opening performances and forced the cancellation of one.

Bitterli says he tried to keep the production visually interesting, with plenty of colour and

movement as armies of beggars, courtiers, angels and devils swarm over the set.

"I've tried to portray it so that even people who don't understand German can follow what is happening," he says.

Bitterli's production and the cast's performance have received mainly favourable critical comment.

"The closed nature of the play's interpretation of the world and its endorsement of the existing order may have become alien to us," the leading German language newspaper Neue Zuercher Zeitung wrote.

"But Calderon's World Theatre still represents a challenge to reflect on the ultimate."

Thirty-five performances are planned from June until the end of September.

There is seating for over 3000 people and around 80,000 visitors are expected from Switzerland and abroad.

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DOWN

1. Ingredient of Sunday brunch? (13)
2. The paper it is printed in (8)
3. Shadowed by famous mountain (7)
4. Flower of Lucerne (5)
5. Toast (8)
6. Spiritual centre of 15 across (13)
9. Village named after educator (10)
14. Domestic animal (4)
17. Crossbow giant (4)
19. Form of energy (3)

ACROSS

1. Assembly of compatriots (13)
7. Nothing from nothing equals ? (4)
8. Capital's heraldic beast (8)
10. Female saint (7)
11. Much walked upon (5)
12. Spirit (5)
13. Tower-encircled place of gnomes (the Romans had a name for it) (7)
15. Capital for short (2)
16. Four down does it (7)
18. Four score (7)
20. Temporary dwelling (4)
21. Racketeer (13)

