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First of August Celebrations

HAMILTON

The Hamilton Swiss Club Celebration was held on August 7th at the Riverlea Cabaret. The walls were decorated with Swiss posters, kindly lent by the Consulate, with flags and with lampions (lit electrically), the latter lent by the Auckland Swiss Club. The tables were made festive with centrepieces in red and white and at intervals little Swiss paper flags, standing upright. Our guests of honour were Dr Rossetti, our Consul General, and Mrs Rossetti, together with their son, Oskar. From Auckland we welcomed the Swiss Club president, Mr Kaegi and Mrs Kaegi. Both the ladies received a welcome token of orchids.

The newly formed Auckland jodel club also was our esteemed guests. By 9 p.m. the time of the official programme the hall was filled to capacity with compatriots. Walter Risi welcomed our guests and members and acted as M.C. Rufst Du mein Vaterland, sung by all opened the programme and very aptly, the Hamilton club president, Arnold Biland, then honoured in his speech, one of our truly great Swiss who guided our destiny during the Second World War, our late General Henri Guisan.

This address, which had been preceded by the reading of a condensed version of the Bundesbrief, very appropriately opened the way to the message then given by the Consul General, Dr Rossetti. In it he pointed out, that the moral obligation by which our early forefathers felt themselves bound and committed, was no less binding and committing today for our generation. For Auslandschweizer this would include the willingness to pull one's weight in Swiss local affairs and loyalty to the few official obligations toward one's homeland. A further community song brought this part of the programme to the end, Von ferne sei herzlich gegruesset.

Entertainment started with Jodel songs by Agnes Reichmuth (in lovely Tracht) Hans Oettli and Ernst Studer. Joe Risi then sang some popular tunes, accompanied by Hedy Biland. Fritz Scheidegger with his Talerschwingen brought our homeland close to us; he was supported by the above three jodelsingers and Heiri Oettli on the accordion. With "Schwung und Temperament" Hedy Biland (violin) and Heiri Oettli (accordion) played some popular numbers. Heidi and Mariann Oettli then delighted everybody with Swiss songs, accompanied by Heidi on her lute. The Auckland Jodelclub then gave all great pleasure with some songs.

After so many treats, a feast for the stomach was called for and the sucking pig with Schueblig and Haedoepfelsalat was excellent. So was the piping hot and strong coffee with Oepfelwaie and cream and patisserie. Then back to more entertainment.

Miss Scheidegger intrigued everyone with her items on the guitar - violin. There were more songs by Heidi and Mariann, more violin-accordion items and the Auckland singers also sang once more. The presentation of a humorous action song by Ernst Studer, Hans Oettli and Hans Meister with Hedy Biland on the piano, brought to a close a most successful programme.

Schulers Orchestra then started up with their accordions and the floor was cleared for dancing till the early hours of the morning. As this function was only for Swiss and their descendants, it was all run in the Swiss language. This function was easily the most successful our club has ever held and the president thanked all those concerned in making it such a truly memorable occasion, not least our compatriots who rolled along in such force.

A candid photographer took many snaps. The proofs can be seen at Kenley Studios, Ward Street 40. There are some excellent portraits amongst them. Proofs will also be on view for ordering at our next club meeting.

TARANAKI

The Taranaki Swiss Social Club held its 1st of August Celebration on Monday, 1st August, which was attended by 200 Swiss who all enjoyed themselves. Music for dancing was provided by Mrs T. Walker (piano), Jo Fohn, A. Engelberger, P. Ampstalden (accordions), F. Imhof (clarinet) and L. Kuriger (big bass). Items were contributed by Miss G. Holdener, Mrs Sutter, T. Napflin, P. Zimmerman and F. Gwerder.

WELLINGTON

When I received an invitation to attend the National Day celebrations, held at the Brooklyn Community Hall on July 30th at 6 p.m. I could not but help wondering what the evening held in store. What struck me first was the beautifully decorated hall; on the walls brightly coloured flags which, so I was told, represented the different cantons. On the supper tables there were large bowls of beautiful flowers.

The room was quite crowded, and I was introduced to the Consul General and to the Vice Consul, also a lot of Swiss. Dinner was served and consisted of a genuine Berneplatte (bacon, ham, tongue, Sauerkraut and boiled potatoes). After dinner we moved to an adjacent room. Mr Bischof, president of the club, welcomed everybody — in English and Swiss. He then explained, also bilingual, that we were about to witness a mime, acted by club members, portraying scenes from old Swiss history. With the clever use of a tape-recorder the audience was kept informed in English what scene was about to be seen, Mr Bischof giving the German version. Scene 1: Tell refuses to greet Gessler's hat erected on a pole. Scene 2: Shooting apples off Tell's son by his father. Scene 3: Ruetlischwur. Scene 4: Around an imitation bonfire on the stage all the actors stood; Mr Bischof then called on Dr Rossetti to say a few words, whereupon Dr Rossetti joined those on the stage. He pointed out the importance of the National Day, and said that all Swiss should at this time turn their thoughts to the early history of Switzerland, more particularly to the year 1291, when the actual foundation was laid.

The ancestors had shown great courage and strength in their fight for freedom and all Swiss people should uphold these qualities today. In conclusion he said: "Switzerland today is as close to us as we are to it and the Fatherland

will always help in any need." Mrs Trachsel in her lovely Bernetracht then brought the spirit of Switzerland close with two jodel songs, after which everybody joined in singing the Swiss National Anthem. Scene 5: Running commentary on the fact of the four languages spoken in Switzerland was acted on the stage by first a flagbearer of Schwyz (German speaking) then Fribourgh (French) then Graubuenden (Romanish) and lastly Tessin (Italian) walked onto the stage, carrying the flag. Then the fifth Swiss was mentioned, whereupon a flagbearer came with a flag, half New Zealand, half Swiss. The commentator explained that approximately 4 million Swiss lived dispersed all over the world, and around 900 of these were in New Zealand.

At the close of these scenes a very tasty supper was served and afterwards everybody had a chance to dance to Swiss music. All too soon midnight rived and it was time to go home.

Thanks should be given to the committee members and those willing helpers who made such a great effort toward making this such a successful evening. Special thanks should also be given to Mrs Trachsel for entertaining us so ably, and to Mr Fred Fluehler who had prepared for us such a delicious Bernerplatte. —W.B.

Regret, owing to lack of space above report had to be condensed. —(Ed.)

IMPORTANT

A.H.V.

The Consulate wishes me to remind our readers that applications for joining the Old Age and Survivors Insurance (A.H.V.) must be made before the end of the year. This is the last opportunity for people over the age of 40 to participate. Please contact our Consulate.

SOLIDARITY FUND FOR SWISS ABROAD

The recent disturbances in the Congo have proved disastrous for our Swiss living there. Unfortunately only very few were members of this fund and have therefore nothing to fall back on and have to start all over again.

We know we are living in a very peaceful land but do not say, this cannot happen to us — one never knows.

Even if we never have to make use of this fund in an emergency, do not forget by becoming member we indirectly help our less fortunate compatriots.

—Arnold Biland.

Have You joined the Solidarity Fund?

If not . . .

please contact the Secretary or
Swiss Consulate in Wellington
for details.

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