

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 35 (1972)
Heft: [12]

Rubrik: Hedy's corner

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. [See Legal notice.](#)

Download PDF: 06.02.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

the last 23 years. He was 2nd in the world shoot conducted for all the Swiss Abroad in 1963.

His happy face and humorous nature will be greatly missed at the Swiss cabarets with which he helped such a lot. He would always oblige with a yodel in true Swiss style.

To his wife Kathleen whom he married in 1952 and his family of four, Peter, Annette, Pauline and John, we offer our deepest sympathy. —L.K.

* * *

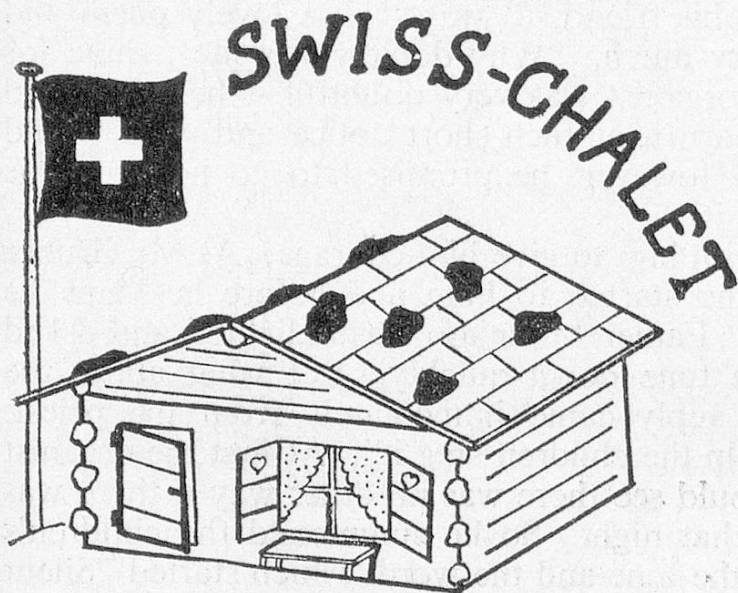
It was a big shock, upon his death, to everyone who had known Ted Napflin. After his arrival in New Zealand in 1948 he started off as a farmhand and in later years married a daughter of the late Arthur Kuriger and Mrs Kuriger and then began farming in the Kaponga district. He was a keen shooter and became a member of several clubs. He will be remembered for his ever cheerful nature.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife and family. —J.S.

★ HEDY'S CORNER

Dear Children . . . Do you happen to know the origin of the very well-known Christmas Carol "Silent Night"? It is most unusual so I thought you might like to hear about it.

Our story starts with a hungry mouse, and being winter time in Austria in December, it was a very cold mouse as well. It was



HOMEMADE cakes
our speciality

PROPRIETORS: MR & MRS BERT FLUHLER

OPEN
7 DAYS

Restaurant
and
Coffee-Bar

ENGLISH and
CONTINENTAL
MEALS

HAMILTON
270 Victoria Street
(Opp. Commercial Hotel)

Phone 82-305

searching for warmth and food. By chance the mouse noticed the open church door as it hurriedly slipped down the road of a small Austrian village. At the far end of the church stood the small organ and there the mouse found a cosy spot to get warm and it also found something to eat: the leather bellows (which blow air into the organ pipes to make them sound). They tasted quite delicious to a hungry mouse. It gnawed away quite a piece of leather, leaving a hole — a mouse-hole! This particular mouse-hole was so important that we even know the date when it was made — 23rd December 1818. The name of the village was Oberndorf and the church was St. Nikola.

As usual on the 24th the organist went to choose Carols for the Christmas midnight mass. He sat down at the organ bench, asked his assisting boy to start the bellows (it had to be done by hand, not by electricity as it is today). No sound came from the pipes. The organist, Mr Gruber, went to inspect what was wrong and discovered the mouse-hole. That meant there would be no music this night. Poor Mr Gruber was in a fix as he knew the congregation depended on him to lead the carols from the organ. There he stood, the poor man, wondering what to do as repairs would take many days. At this very moment the village priest, Father Mohr, came into the church. "What has gone wrong, dear friend organist, you look very worried?" he said.

"We shall have no organ playing tonight, there is a mouse-hole in the bellows", answered Mr Gruber.

As it happened Father Mohr had written a poem that previous night and showed it to his friend. It was such a lovely poem and Mr Gruber liked it very much. "Why don't you write a tune for it, Mr Gruber?" The organist was very doubtful if he could and if the children could learn it at such short notice and what would the people say to it? However, he promised to go home to his study and think about it.

Father Mohr went with him to give him courage. As Mr Gruber read the words again he started to hum and before he knew he hummed a lovely tune. Father Mohr too was delighted and asked his friend to write the tune down quickly. But what about the accompaniment? The reply came immediately from the priest: "Play your guitar to help the children sing it". At first the organist was shocked, but he could see there was no other way if there was to be even one carol that night. So he summoned the children's choir and taught them the tune and the words which started "Silent Night".

That night the children sang this brand new carol and the people in the church were much moved by the music and the words. Next day, Christmas Day, many people were already humming the tune in the streets. And from then on this carol has become more and more liked till it became the best known carol in many countries. And as you sing "Silent Night" this Christmas, think of the little mouse who started it all.