

**Zeitschrift:** Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand  
**Herausgeber:** Swiss Society of New Zealand  
**Band:** 38 (1974)  
**Heft:** [1]  
  
**Rubrik:** Hedy's corner

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Easiest way to get there is from Morrinsville, past the fertiliser works to Kiwitahi. Hope to see the whole clan there!

If in doubt about the weather please listen to Radio Waikato.

— R. E. W.

### **TARANAKI SWISS CLUB — ANNUAL PICNIC**

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The Annual Picnic of the Taranaki Swiss Club will be held at Te Ngutu Park, Okaiawa on Sunday, February 10th, commencing at 10.30 a.m.

Visitors will be very welcome.

— R. W.

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### **E-R-R-O-R . . .**

We apologise for the misprint in our membership list last month.

The secretary of the Taranaki Swiss Club being Mr Raymond Waldvogel, 6 Corbett Road, New Plymouth, R.D. 3.

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### **N-O-T-I-C-E-S . . .**

*WASHASHA* Mrs Weber, the wife of our past Charge d'Affair in New Zealand and at present ambassador in ~~wheelbarrow~~, has forwarded more copies of her booklet regarding the early Swiss settlers in New Zealand. They are available at the same price of 50 cents (which will be donated to the Swiss Society). Please contact Arnold Biland.

The telephone number of the president of the Taranaki Swiss Club has been changed to 8767 Manaia.

### **★ HEDY'S CORNER**

What exactly is yodelling? The second generation of Swiss can hardly be expected to give an answer to this question.

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 a rural festivity where the old customs are still alive, or whether it is heard in a simple, wainscotted inn or in an auditorium of one of the world's greatest theatres: it never fails to produce a remarkable spontaneous effect. It is as if a bit of unspoiled nature has become audible.

Technically speaking, yodelling is based on repeated, rapid changes from chest-voice to falsetto and back again. Its musical character is founded on these sudden changes of register. The

vocalised melodies of yodelling consist in a kind of figuration on a simple harmonic basis. This figuration is generally attached to folk songs in simple verse 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 folk song. In such cases it is freer and is then called "Natur yodel". In the case of the true, traditional Swiss Yodel (Natur Yodel) it can be traced back to rows of tones such as found in early music (I do not want to get technical about this). In this the 'Natur Yodel' differs from the yodel which goes with a folk song. And, of course, Natur Yodel is always improvised and never written down.

The origin of yodelling shows that it goes back to primeval musical tradition. Its early stages are found in the 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. 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, for an emotion opposed in spirit to the words of the prayer breaks out in the pure vocalised yodel.

To hear yodelling in such spontaneous and untarnished circumstances is a rare and happy experience for the listener.

In effect, the yodel is fostered in Switzerland today by its own organisation. Yodelling festivals are held annually and at these festivals old customs are kept alive and are nurtured. In the severely judged contests knowledge of the origin and history of yodelling is crucial.

Yodelling is, however, exposed to abuse, when it is deliberately used as a tourist bait, the same watering down as the fascination which occurs when traditional costumes are employed in revues or ballets. In this case the artistic spirit of simple people loses its meaning and therefore its life. In this age of technology and science yodelling is a means for remaining linked to the more simple and primeval epochs of the human race.

Pro Helvetia information and Press Service (condensed) article written by  
Dr Hans Curjel.

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