

Farewell to Peter and Dagmar Graf

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in the evening, at night and on Sundays. This leaves him no time for even a few days off, nor much time either for socialising for that matter. Most of his spare time is devoted to your magazine. So next time you enjoy a Club fondue evening, a Club sport competition or a Fasnachtsball, spare a thought for your Editor who is most likely furiously typing into his computer the results of your Club's shooting competition!

So there you are, the full story behind your magazine. It is a good, interesting but very demanding hobby. But your Editor gets the moral satisfaction that in a small and unassuming way, far away from fanfares, limelight, glory and honorary titles, he can perhaps bring some pleasure into your homes and possibly contribute a little towards a closer unity amongst the Swiss in New Zealand.

SWISS SOCIETY AGM

As most of the Clubs have reported on it (see under Club News starting on page 6) we abstain from a further report. Only one puzzle for all those who did not or could not attend: The duration of the AGM. Depending on which report you read, the AGM lasted 25 minutes, 30 minutes and 45 minutes. What happened to the Swiss watch precision? Or were some of the attendants sporting not-so-accurate Japanese watches????

Whatever! The main news from the AGM is that you will from now on receive 10 issues of the Helvetia Magazine each year. Therefore, as from now, the two months where no magazine will be issued will be August and January.



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FAREWELL TO PETER AND DAGMAR GRAF

Diplomats come and go, that is the nature of their employment. Some are quickly forgotten, but others leave a long lasting impression behind. Peter GRAF is certainly one of these diplomats who we will keep a pleasant memory of long after they have left our shores.

After 5 years in his position in Wellington, Peter and his wife Dagmar have left us for a new post in Teheran. In many ways Teheran is certainly a more important mission than Wellington but on the other hand, life in Iran will most likely not be as pleasant and easy going as in New Zealand.

Peter and Dagmar are quite aware of that, but Peter, the good humoured optimist as he is, can always wring out a good point out of a bad situation. Peter's comment was "Life may not be as pleasant in Teheran as in Wellington, but at least we are only a few hours away from Switzerland, so we can always go there for a weekend if we need to emerge ourselves again into western civilisation." We will miss Peter's down-to-earth sense of humour.

It was your Editor's sad pleasure to farewell Peter and Dagmar at Auckland Airport on their departure to Teheran. Just a last, quiet drink in the Airport bar and a friendly but solid Swiss hand-shake to send them off on their way. However they appreciated this quiet sending-off after the tumultuous one they had in Wellington where half the Swiss Club turned up at the airport with music and cow-bells.

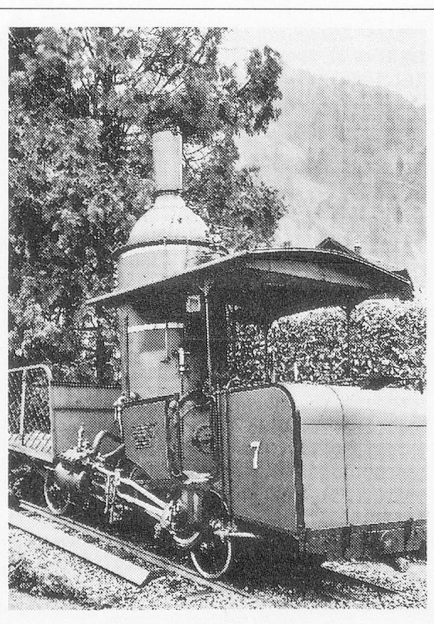
We wish them both good luck in their new position.

RIGI RAILWAY LIKE IN 1871

In 1996, as part of the 125 year celebrations, the last cogwheel steam engine in the world will be put back into operation to again carry steam engine enthusiasts up the Rigi.

The Vitznau-Rigi-Bahn is the world's oldest cogwheel railway and until 1937, when it was electrified, all transport was done by steam engines. The 1996 celebrations will be held under the lucky number 7.

Originally 7 locomotives, of which number 7 is still alive, had been built. The maximum speed was 7 km per hour. Engine number 7 was put into operation on a 7th. of March. The start of the celebrations will be on May 7 1996 with the official ceremony taking place on May 14 1996. A maximum of 700 tourists per day will be able to use this mode of transport from the past and for this privilege, they will have to pay a "steam engine surcharge" of SFR 7.- (these Swiss really think of everything to make some extra money...)



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Steam engine number 7 will again puff up and down the Rigi. It weighs 15 tons. These locomotives, because of their peculiar looks, were quickly and irreverently nicknamed "Fahrende Schnapsbrennerei". Looking at the picture, you must admit, there is some similarity. In 1939 engine number 7 had been on display at the National Exhibition (Landi) in Zurich and since 1959 its home has been the Transport Museum in Lucerne.