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Editorial

One of my earliest childhood memories happened during a Swiss picnic.

The picnic for the Taranaki Swiss Club was still held at Te Ngutu Reserve near Okaiawa. It had been held there every year since the early 1950s right through until the 1980s when the club house was built. Before that the picnic was held a few times at Kaupokonui Beach.

I was four years old and I remember whooshing down the playground's big slide when something went wrong. The next thing I remember I was dizzily looking around for my Mum.

Not being sure if this was a true memory I confirmed it with her the other week. She said that I did tumble off the side of the slide and after I connected with the concrete she decided it was time to go home.

Apparently there wasn't a bump or bruise on my noggin but I was a little confused. Nope, I don't think she did take me to the doctor. Can things like that leave permanent damage? Might have to check that.

Still, now years later I smile when people

ask jokingly if I was dropped on my head as a child. I also have a convenient excess to do silly things.

Memories are funny things aren't they. Why did I remember falling off that slide? I can only assume it must have either been the first time I fell like that or it was traumatic enough for me to cling to the memory.

While it might not be the best memory of the Swiss picnics, it is the first and I can happily say the rest are far more pleasant. I even have fond memories of that same playground and like to recall time spent on the very cool swing it had. I wonder if it is still there? I haven't ever been back to the reserve since the picnics moved. Might have to wander down there sometime.

Kept safe inside my mind with various childhood memories are other picnicking images. They're filled with laughter, colour, and music. Sometimes I'm rushing around with my siblings and other kids, or riding the trailer being towed by a motorbike. Other times I'm watching the schwingen and hoping they don't get too close to me.

Although last year I did have to leap off my hay bale in order to miss being squashed as two heaving men came tumbling in my direction. My friend Amanda wasn't so lucky and did a wonderful tumble over the back of the hay bale she was sitting on. She got away uninjured as the blokes landed at our feet, and her pride didn't seem bruised either from the way she was laughing. Sorry Amanda, but I had to share with the group.

But by far, one of the best memories is the BRATWURST! These had a very special place in my heart from a young age and rank a close second to salami.

Well, I didn't make it to this year's Swiss picnic because I had to work, but I'm sure to make it to future ones.

Another thing which will undoubtedly leave me with some amazing memories is the job I've just landed. I'm so excited about it and just have to share it with you.

Last month I mentioned The Last Samurai and how many locals were feeling the economic benefits of the movie being filmed in our region. Well, I'm one more local to feel the benefits. Starting from Monday 24th February I am the camera assistant to the film's publicity photographer. I'm not yet sure about all my duties, but am really looking forward to seeing first hand how these big budget films are made and this unique way into the photography industry. Wish me luck!

Liz

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GOING TO SWITZERLAND?
My name is Heidi and I'm 11 years old. I would like to visit my grandparents and cousins in Switzerland. Is there anyone who could take care of me on the plane, even for one way?
I would like to stay 6-8 weeks in (June), July & August.
Thank you, Heidi Buchmann
Phone 07 871 9767



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