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**Autor:** Brühlmann, Trudi

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Autumn has come a bit early - but now I hope it'll stay for a while, and we'll get many more golden days.

Summer was busy for many, with family and friends visiting, and winter will be busy again - at least for those who want to escape it and spend some weeks or even months in Switzerland and elsewhere in the northern hemisphere. A lot of thought goes into packing, and buying presents, and planning the itinerary!

I stay here in winter, and I look forward to some time with my silent friends, the books I've accumulated over the years. I've read most of my books, but friends have sent me some new ones, and visitors left books behind, for me to read and to pass on.

A second reading of an old friend can hold surprises, too. A while ago I came across a book that was a bestseller when it appeared, warning of all sorts of grave misfortunes in the near future. Well, the then near future has arrived, and with it the author's predictions have come true. However, mankind seems to be adaptable to a surprising extent, and disaster hasn't struck, or rather we found a way to live in it quite comfortably and obliviously of the losses.

One of my silent friends had disintegrated into separate leaves, and I ran the risk of losing half of it to the Northerly. A kind friend has given me a new copy, and I can read in the garden again, without having to chase pages all over the section.

Another of my silent friends went awol and had to be replaced by a new copy; I'm so pleased to have it again, can read it again, cherish it, think about it, lend it to Swiss friends here who will appreciate it, too - and who will give it back once they have read it.

I like my silent friends - and they don't mind if they have to sleep while real friends come for a cup of coffee.

Trudi

*I hoffe dir heit aui e schöni  
Oschtere gha, u die Zit gnosse für  
Erholig u wie me seit "recharge  
the batteries", u itz muesi no chli  
plagiere, mir hei nämlich z  
Wellington di ganzi Zit sunnigi u  
fascht windstiui Tage gha, wo d  
Mueter abgreised isch am  
Ziischtig het si nid emau chönne  
chlage wägem Luft z Wellington. I  
hoffe fescht, es wird no chli so  
bliibe.*

While summer is now coming slowly to an end, social activities in the various Swiss clubs are just beginning to take momentum. The first big event of our social and cultural calendar is the national Swiss Society AGM, to be held at Hamilton Swiss Club, on the 30 May 2009. I would like to

extend our thanks to the host, Hamilton Swiss Club, who are busy organising this fun-filled national event, including the final of the Cowbell competition. I would like to encourage the wider membership and friends around the country to attend this event, as it is a good opportunity to meet our wide network of Swiss compatriots throughout the North Island, in the same place, at the same time.

I look forward to meet you all, and hear about all the activities planned for the coming year.

Have a safe journey and drive carefully.

*Uf Wiederluege*

*Roland*

### Swiss Society of New Zealand Inc.

Patron	Ambassador Dr Beat Nobs
President	Roland Schütz, 35 East Street, Petone, Lower Hutt 5012 Ph h 04 568 6772, w 04 568 5737. Email: moehau2@iconz.co.nz
Vice President	Max Führer, 8 Curacao Place, Grenada Village, Johnsonville, Wellington 6037. Ph 04 478 0003.
Secretary/Editor	Trudi Brühlmann, 401 Marine Drive, Mahina Bay, Eastbourne, Lower Hutt 5013. Ph 04 562 8019. Email: bruhlmann@xtra.co.nz
Treasurer	Heidi Amelung, 32 Hinau Street, Eastbourne, Lower Hutt 5013 Ph 04 562 7568. Email: gravure@xtra.co.nz
Riflemaster	Mark Kiser, 140 Pukengahu Rd, RD 23, Stratford. Ph 06 762 2922

### Delegates to the Swiss Abroad Conference in Switzerland

Delegate	Heinz Leuenberger, 33 Russell Terrace, Putaruru. Ph 07 883 8537. Email: heileun@clear.net.nz
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### Secretaries of the Swiss Clubs

Auckland	Heidi Wilson, 53 Rothesay Bay Road, Rothesay Bay, Auckland. Ph 09 478 9751. Email: heidi.wilson@hotmail.com
Hamilton	Anita Zuber, PO Box 24061, Hamilton 3253 Ph 07 856 2414, mob ph 027 498 5170. Email: zuber@xtra.co.nz
Taranaki	Marianne Drummond, 508 Salisbury Road, RD 24, Stratford. Ph 06 7628 757. Email: littleacres@xtra.co.nz
Wellington	Isabelle Richter, 121B Brougham Street, Mt Victoria, Wellington. Ph h 04 384 7373, w 04 471 1594. Email: partymonster@gmx.net
Embassy of Switzerland	Level 12, Maritime Towers, 10 Customhouse Quay, Wellington 6140. PO Box 25004, Wellington 6146. Ph 04 472 1593, Fax 04 499 6302. Email: wel.vertretung@eda.admin.ch Website: www.eda.admin.ch/wellington
Consulate of Switzerland	Peter Deutschle, PO Box 302239, North Harbour, North Shore City 0751. Ph 09 366 0403. Email: auckland@honorarvertretung.ch