

# Obituaries : Andre Schleicher

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objektyp: **Obituary**

Zeitschrift: **Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand**

Band (Jahr): **82 (2016)**

Heft [6]

PDF erstellt am: **22.07.2024**

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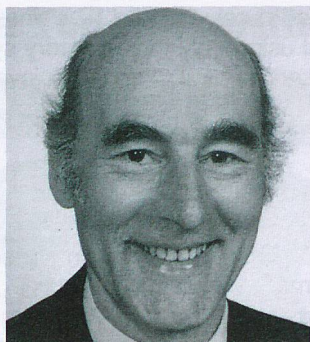
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## Obituaries



Andre Schleicher

21 May 1928 – 8 October 2016

Andre was born in Zurich, the third of four children and the only boy. He spent many years of his childhood with foster parents, not always happily. Despite this, he was very family minded and kept good relationships with his siblings and with his parents.

He did an apprenticeship as compositor (Schriftsetzer) which involved working in a printing firm and attending the Kunstgewerbe Schule in Zurich. A job exchange programme with Sweden started him on his travels which led eventually to New Zealand. In Wellington he worked for Whitcombe and Tombs (now Whitcoulls) He was very proud that for many years he was entrusted to set up and print the exam papers for Victoria University of Wellington, a task that required total discretion and great skills.

He married Pat in 1954 and set up house in Karori. Pat and Andre adopted two children, Franz and Marianne. When the Karori Shopping Mall opened in 1970, he took the opportunity to change direction: he rented the Café and ran it with Pat successfully for 11 years. He ended his working career at the Dairy Board, working nightshift, looking after the computer print-outs. He often said that was his best job. He retired in 1988.

Andre liked his weekly walks through the streets and parks of Wellington. In his sixties he climbed Mount Taranaki; descended into the Grand Canyon, which took 8 hours and then in great heat made the ascent. Another hobby was wine. He enjoyed a glass with dinner. Selections of good vintages were made for later consumption and stored in a purpose built cellar under his house.

After his divorce, he bought a house in Petone which was extremely handy to all amenities and also very cosy. This showed a lot of foresight as he managed to live there despite deteriorating health to the very end of his life.

Andre liked to travel back to Switzerland as well as to Las Vegas to visit his sister. He kept in touch with lots of friends in Switzerland. On one of his trips he tried to find Ruth, the girlfriend from his youth. Thanks to the Residents Registration System he could actually do this. Before Internet that meant to physically travel from place of residence to place of residence, call at the respective offices and

talk the staff into releasing the information. That is how he traced Ruth to Chur. Ruth eventually followed him to Wellington where they married in 2001.

On his voyage to New Zealand, he met a countryman, living in Taranaki, who introduced him to the Swiss Community. A lifelong friendship developed with the Charlie Schuler family and the Schleicher family spent many happy holidays in Kaponga.

Andre was a founding member of the Wellington Swiss Club in 1957 and over the years put a lot of time and energy into club activities. He was president of the club in 1980, president of the Swiss Society from 1987-1992. In 1991, he was in the ambassadorial party that travelled all over New Zealand celebrating the 700th Anniversary of the Swiss Confederation. Part of the festivities was the ceremonial planting of seven Swiss trees in the Wellington Botanical Gardens by various dignitaries, Andre amongst them. Ever after, he made sure on his walks through the Garden that "his" tree was not overshadowed by other trees, going so far as to do a bit of pruning.

He enjoyed jassen and until very recently attended our "First Sunday of the Month" Jass afternoons. He will be sadly missed.



Theresa Ida Scherrer

1934 – 2016

Theresa was born in Baden Switzerland on 23rd March 1934. She was an older sister to Verena and attended the local school during the Second World War. She was removed from school and home prematurely after contracting Diphtheria and hospitalized under quarantine for about five weeks. After this, as a precaution, she was not allowed home and was sent to Solothurn where she reluctantly enrolled in a course to learn dressmaking at 'Teresia House'. About three and a half years later she completed her apprenticeship with honours, only to learn she also had to complete a year of housekeeping with a family of her choice. This was a very happy time for her as the family she chose had seven children and the mother just happened to be the Aunt of her future husband. While working there she met John. From there she went to Salisbury, England as an 'au pair' for 12 months.

On her return to Switzerland she found work in a clothes shop, but not entirely satisfied, she

left and got a job selling sewing machines. She received training in Zurich and was sent to Austria, Luxembourg and Germany demonstrating sewing machines to sell. She excelled at this job, although one agent dismissed her for not having the correct speech etiquette while still learning, only to find out months later she was their best sales demonstrator and immediately reinstated her. Being a tall lady, he called her 'the Matterhorn'!

Meanwhile John had immigrated to New Zealand by boat in 1957 with a two year work visa and had become unwell. Theresa decided she wanted to be with him and booked her passage on a boat. The agent, who knew her as the Matterhorn, was so disappointed to be losing her, that he offered to pay for her to travel to NZ by Air, which was a big deal in those days, but only if she continued working for another six months. She did this and arrived in New Zealand in December 1960. She married John six weeks later. They built a house in Stokes Valley and had 4 children, Theresa, Paul, Anne and Michael.

As she had become a little homesick, a trip to Switzerland in 1969 with the whole family settled her and she was then happy to make NZ her home. Theresa made many friends in Stokes Valley and was very involved with the church, helping out wherever she could. In 1978 the family moved to a farm in Whiteman's Valley and built a Swiss Chalet style home. Every second year the Taranaki Swiss club would come to do their shooting competition with Wellington and Theresa provided them with many delicious Swiss cakes and biscuits. During this time she also started a yearly tradition of baking many Christmas cakes and traditional Swiss biscuits for family and friends. This became very popular.

In 1998, once most of the children had grown up and moved out, Theresa and John decided to downsize, moving to another house in Heretaunga, which they built. During this time, Theresa's involvement with the Wellington Swiss club continued and she became a very active committee member, helping with food preparation for many events. She spent most of her later years continuing her involvement with the church, cooking, baking and sewing for both family and friends.

Theresa's faith was most important to her. She was always very grateful for all that she had: her family, her home and her friends. She took nothing for granted and was thankful for everything. Her illness caused her to suffer a great deal in her last 18 months but she never complained and always tried to remain positive. Theresa and John have seventeen grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

She is greatly missed and will forever be in our hearts. May she rest in peace.

The Scherrer family.

*Members of the Wellington Swiss Club and The Swiss Society of New Zealand extend their deepest sympathy to the Schleicher and Scherrer families.*