

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Society of New Zealand Incorporated
held on Sunday 5th of June 2022 at 2.00pm at the Taranaki Swiss Club club house, Kaponga, Taranaki

Present: Ambassador Michael Winzap (Patron of the Swiss Society), Adrian Blaser (Honorary Consul) and 54 members.

Welcome President Othmar Hebler welcomed all present to the Annual General Meeting, especially our Ambassador, Michael Winzap.

Apologies- **Hamilton** – Vitus and Rae Achermann, Heinz Leuenberger, Beatrice Leuenberger, Walter and Anita Zuber, Willetta Staheli.
Wellington – Trudi Bruhlmann.
Auckland – NIL
Taranaki – Walter Seifert, Terese Orchard, Leo and Doreen Zehnder.
Society Only – NIL

Moved Vreni Kull, seconded Trudi Fill-Weidmann.

Address by Ambassador

Michael Winzap advised that he will, sadly, be leaving New Zealand for Switzerland at the end of September, having completed his three-year term. He has appreciated the enthusiasm of Kiwi-Swiss in their clubs, and thanked everyone for keeping up Swiss culture and traditions. Both he and Marina feel they have been short-changed as Covid has disrupted their stint in NZ, including the repatriation of 1,100 Swiss stranded here with the help of the Blaser family. There are only three people from Switzerland working at the Embassy. The main issues they deal with include Superannuation (no flexibility at the moment because the NZ government would lose approximately \$500,000,000), e-voting, Presidents' conference in Canberra, and the mobile passport station (not sure where this will be held). He thanked the Club presidents and committees for their enthusiasm organising so many functions.

Appointment of Scrutineers

Othmar Hebler nominated Herbert Staheli and Henry Werffeli, seconded Peter Canziani.

Minutes of the AGM held on 6th June 2021 in Hamilton were available on the webpage of the Swiss Society of New Zealand or could be posted out upon request, as advised in the Helvetia magazine. It was moved by Adrian Blaser and seconded by Fidel Good that the minutes were a true and correct record.

Matters arising – NIL

Obituaries – sadly several members of our Society have passed away in the past year.

Hamilton - Leo Rust (Founding member), Gritli Rust, Maria Meier, Joe Staheli, Karl Waldvogel, Jakob Lengenhager and Arthur Riddell

Wellington - NIL

Society Only - NIL

- Auckland -** Hans Iten, Peter Vogel, Heidi Muller (Founding member, Life member of the Swiss Society and who, with her husband, donated the Cowbell for our competition), Valerie Mason and Waldemar Meyer-Schlapp.
- Taranaki -** Bertha Kuriger, Joe Fohn, Edwin Fuglistaller, Alby Schuler, Kathleen Zehnder and Fred Neuburger.

Othmar asked that everyone present please stand for a minutes' silence in remembrance of these past members.

President's Report

Othmar advised that he was surprised that we're already half way through our term as office holders of the Swiss Society, compiling our great magazine the Helvetia. It has been wonderful to have contributions from Nelson, Christchurch and Dunedin and we encourage all Swiss groups to provide us their news. He thanked the following: our committee and helpers for compiling, designing and packing the magazine, Peter Ehrler for his dedicated efforts as our Delegate to the Swiss Abroad who will be attending the Congress of the Swiss Abroad on our behalf in Lugano in August, Adrian Blaser as Swiss Consul in Auckland for his terrific work, the Embassy staff for their great support of our Swiss Clubs and groups, Michael Winzap our Ambassador for his amazing work for the past three years and unfortunately he leaves our shores later in the year, and last but not least to the volunteers of the Swiss Clubs and groups who work tirelessly to organise functions and events for their members. Welcome to new office holders of the Swiss Clubs, and a huge thanks to retiring Auckland Rifle Master, Henry Werffeli, after many years of dedicated service. Thank you all for attending this AGM and the functions over the weekend, and we hope that you enjoy the friendship of fellow Kiwi-Swiss from the various Swiss Clubs.

Moved Othmar Hebler, seconded Herbert Staheli.

Editor's Report –read by Marianne

Terese Orchard advised that we're now half way through our term and it continues to be a challenging but rewarding experience. She thanked all our members for the positive feedback we're receiving. She thanked everyone who contributed articles and photos for each issue, as she knows how quickly two months comes around! A big thanks to Peter Ehrler for his input, as well as the team at the Embassy for keeping us all updated with news from Switzerland. Many thanks to all the club secretaries for their round ups each issue, even when many events were cancelled due to Covid. Hopefully this year will see all plans and preparations come to fruition. To all the advertisers, thank you very much for supporting our magazine. We are blessed to have a great committee helping in the background writing interesting stories, recipes and news articles and getting the magazine posted and e-mailed. I think Amanda and I have really hit our stride over the last year and have a pretty well-oiled machine in the way we get everything together and get it onto the pages. I am very thankful for her design talents, her dedication and her second set of eyes. I look forward to the next year of putting out more top-quality issues for you all to read.

Moved Marianne Drummond, seconded Othmar Hebler.

Treasurer's Report

The accounts have been reviewed by an independent party in April 2022 which showed that nothing had come to the reviewer's attention that caused her to believe that the Financial Statement did not give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Swiss Society for the year ended 31 March 2022. The Society made a profit of \$3,520.00 compared to a small profit of \$180.00 the previous year. Many thanks to Adrian Blaser for arranging the refund of the Novatel deposit. We produced six issues of the Helvetia magazine, now in full colour, have attracted several new advertisers as well as bigger advertisements thanks to Amanda, and also a small increase in paying membership from 635 to 640 (Society Only 95, Auckland 115 (3 life), Hamilton 146 (6 life), Wellington 59 (1 life) and Taranaki 236 (1 life). It is pleasing to note that the Society Only membership has increased substantially, and I would like to thank Peter Ehrler for promoting membership to our Swiss Society to people he speaks with. Huge thanks to Alison Turner from Baker Tilly Staples Rodway for her efficiency, wonderful help and professional advice as reviewer for the Society.

Moved Marianne Drummond, seconded Anne-Claire Kung.

Rifle Master's Report

Mark reported that he has just received all competition results, with numbers a little lower than previous years due to some clubs not holding some of the sporting disciplines due to Covid. Competition numbers were: Auckland 24, Hamilton 19, Taranaki 67 and Wellington 3. Last year we replaced the medals with certificates with all clubs purchasing prizes for the winners, and it appears that these were well-received.

Moved Mark Kiser, seconded Peter Canziani.

Delegate to Swiss Abroad Report (OSA) Peter Ehrler

Peter Ehrler thanked the Ambassador and Swiss Society committee for their compliments. This year he has had 4 – 5 virtual conferences. He will be attending the Swiss Abroad conference in Lugano in August. It will be difficult to get any progress on the Superannuation issue; however he will continue to pursue this. The Banking problem is still current and he promoted the Banque Cantonale de Geneve for Swiss Abroad as their fees are quite low – don't go with on-line bank options being advertised. The President's Conference will now be held from 18 – 20 November 2022 in Canberra, Australia.

Moved Peter Ehrler, seconded Adrian Blaser.

Setting of Society Subscriptions 2023/2024

Othmar considers that the Swiss Society of New Zealand remains in a good financial position and moved that subscriptions effective from 1 April 2023 remain the same.

Moved Othmar Hebler, seconded Fidel Good.

Election of Officers

Office holders are usually elected for a four-year term; however our constitution states “that the committee shall be elected annually”. It was moved that the committee be re-elected en-bloc.

Moved Herbert Staheli, seconded Peter Ehrler.

Club Reports

Auckland – Neil Kaiser, Club President, reported that they had had a really good year, holding only a few events. The 1st of August was the biggest for years. They didn’t have Sami Claus day at the farm, but many Father Christmases delivered goodies to Swiss families. They have trapping lines at the farm and they’re hiring out the venue to different organisations which is a good source of revenue. Karabiner Shooting will cease soon. They have a new secretary and for the first time in a while a new vice president. Rifle Master Henry Werffeli, who did an amazing job, has retired after many years in office

Hamilton – Herbert Staheli, Club President, advised that their highlight was hosting the Swiss Society AGM and Cowbell Competition final together with the inaugural National Jass Tournament which was a great success. They had a successful 1st of August, but the Christmas function and picnic were cancelled. They held their AGM, the semi-final of the Cowbell competition and card evenings are currently underway with a good attendance. They’re looking forward to the 1st of August celebrations.

Wellington –Anne-Claire Kung, Club President, advised that they enjoyed a successful fondue evening. They’re trying to become more family focussed. Trudi Bruhlmann organises the cards well. They’re looking forward to their Fondue Evening on the 2nd of July. Personally, she is returning to Switzerland and this will be her last year as President.

Taranaki – Marianne Drummond, Club Secretary / Treasurer, thanked everyone for attending this AGM weekend and it was great to have members from all the clubs present. The club enjoyed a very successful fondue evening recently with 160 attendees; keglen evenings and card afternoons have been running, and we’re looking forward to our Anniversary Shoot at the beginning of July. Our picnic was, unfortunately, cancelled in February. We have a membership of around 350 and have enjoyed good participation at functions. We hope that everyone enjoys this weekend, mixing and mingling with members from other clubs.

General Business

Adrian Blaser moved that the Swiss Society of New Zealand make a donation of \$1,000.00 to the Taranaki Swiss Club to help with costs associated with organising this weekend. Seconded Peter Ehrler.

Marianne Drummond moved that Peter Ehrler be paid \$1,000.00 as he will be attending the 98th Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Lugano in August 2022. This was seconded by Richard Wagner.

Marianne asked that secretaries please update the database regularly when new information comes to hand. Obituaries have been edited from time to time to fit into the allocated space, and we would prefer people to restrict these to 300 – 350 words so that the editor or designer doesn't have to edit them.

Webmaster –Marianne thanked Shaun for his work with the new host provider and updating the information on the webpage.

Roland Schuetz – enjoyed the Bernese Oberland picture in the last magazine. He feels we should promote Swiss dialects and culture more, and incorporate this into the magazine.

Swiss Community – after completing forms we have been formally recognised as a Swiss Association by the Swiss Community (Organisation for the Swiss Abroad). **We had to declare the following:**

- More than 50% of our members are Swiss**
- The majority of committee office holders are Swiss citizens**
- Our President is a Swiss citizen**

We must advise the Swiss Community when one of these isn't complied with.

Hans Vetsch wrote an e-mail to Othmar and Marianne regarding a motion at the AGM:

Hans moved that the AGM considers and agrees to pay each club travelling to this event a sum of money from the Society account to help its' members to travel to this event (my suggestion is to pay \$500.00 to each of the three travelling clubs, and it will be up to each club committee to allocate this sum as they see appropriate to members attending the meeting). There was no seconder so this motion was defeated.

Herbert Staheli advised that Hans Vetsch had approached him regarding inviting two delegates from Christchurch, Nelson and Dunedin to the next AGM (more convenient as it's in Wellington) and looking to subsidise their costs. Everyone was in favour of trying to encourage our South Island clubs or groups to join us, and Peter Ehrler moved that the Swiss Society committee make every endeavour to encourage our South Island members to come north, seconded Richard Wagner.

For everyone's information the Estate of the late Lina Sutherland donated \$25,000.00 on the 1st of April 2022 (so next financial year) to the Swiss Society of NZ Incorporated specifically for the benefit of the Wellington Swiss Club. The funds have been transferred to the Wellington Swiss Club.

Anne-Claire Kung invited all members to the Wellington Swiss Club next year with the AGM being held on Sunday 4th of June 2023 at 2.00pm.

Othmar wished everyone an enjoyable evening and safe travels home.

Meeting closed at 3.15pm

Read and confirmed, 4 June 2023