

REGIONAL NEWS

OCEANIA



ROLAND ISLER
REGIONAL EDITOR – OCEANIA
COUNCIL OF THE SWISS ABROAD – AUSTRALIA

Editorial:

This is the last issue of the 'Swiss Review' for 2025, and the Festive Season is upon us. It is a time when many of us start to think about New Year's resolutions. A Google search provides the following explanation: *"New Year's resolutions are personal goals to improve your life, such as focusing on health and fitness, financial stability, personal growth, or relationships. Common resolutions include eating healthier, exercising more, losing weight, saving money, and reading more."* It's common knowledge that our resolutions often fizzle out like a comet and produce fleeting results at best. Maybe the way to success is not to stake the goals too high and give yourself rewards for every milestone reached in achieving them. I wish you all a very happy Festive Season and that 2026 will have plenty of rewards for you in stall.

On another celebratory note: looking back we had two Swiss associations celebrating a significant birthday this year – **SwissCham** turned 40 and the **Tanzgruppe Alpegruess** in Sydney celebrated its 30th anniversary (see also the interview with Dr. Astrid Perry-Indermaur). The celebrations will continue in 2026: the **Swiss Club of South Australia** and the **Swiss Society of Queensland** will both commemorate their 60th anniversary and the **Swiss Club of New South Wales** will be a century old in February!

Given how much the world has changed since their founding days, it is truly remarkable to see how strong these clubs are still going. A testimony to the loyal members and hard-working committees!



Movetia places young students and graduates from universities abroad as language assistants at Swiss host schools. As native English speakers, they enrich language lessons and can offer an insight into the culture of their home countries. Because of their own inter-cultural background, Swiss abroad make ideal bridge-builders. In turn, they gain valuable work experience while getting to know their parents' or ancestors' homeland.

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What people think about our programs:

"Moving to Switzerland is a great adventure. It's amazing to meet my family over here and to feel connected with my roots. I am enjoying improving my German and Swiss German skills, and being immersed in Swiss culture. I highly recommend the language assistant program. It is an incredible way to grow both personally and professionally."

Georgia Bagge from New Zealand working at a vocational school in Schaffhausen

"The language assistant program is giving me the chance to reconnect with the culture, language, and community that shaped my family history. I am excited to contribute to the education system in a country I consider part of my identity, while bringing in the international perspective and experiences I gained living overseas."

Christina Mills from Australia working at a vocational school in Zurich

Got questions, concerns to raise? Contact the Australian delegates to the Council of the Swiss Abroad:

➔ <http://bit.ly/41QSc9C>



“Hurdles are for jumping”

Interview with Dr. Astrid Perry-Indermaur OAM

“Hurdles are for jumping,” said Dr. Astrid Perry-Indermaur. It’s a motto that has guided her 40-year career as a domestic and family violence activist and advocate for migrant and refugee communities.

What began as conversations around the family dinner table in her small Swiss village of Würenlos (AG), blossomed into a lifelong commitment to social justice.

Astrid views her career as a series of fortunate coincidences. But there’s a clear thread running through it all. From her early days as a social worker in Switzerland, she went on to manage multicultural health services in Sydney. For the past decade, she has led Settlement Services International’s (SSI) Women, Equity, and Domestic and Family Violence team. Through it all, her unwavering focus has been improving the lives of women and children from migrant and refugee backgrounds.

When Astrid arrived in Australia in 1983, she found her qualifications weren’t recognised. So, she embarked on a social sciences degree and then a PhD in Sociology. It was this education that profoundly shaped her approach to addressing domestic and family violence.

“Helping individual women and children overcome hurdles to get support is crucial,” Astrid said. “But as a sociologist, I understand these hurdles are deeply ingrained in the system. They block access to help for countless other women and children. “To make a lasting difference, we have to change the system itself.”

The path toward systemic change is neither short nor straight. But Astrid remains motivated by small successes. “I work for the small changes, because, eventually, they add up to big changes.” And there have been notable advancements, fuelled in part by a national conversation on domestic and family violence in recent years.



Collaborating with a coalition of organisations, Astrid played a pivotal role in ensuring the needs of women and children from migrant and refugee backgrounds were included in the ‘National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children’. She also helped secure funding for settlement organisations to deliver tailored prevention programs and support services.

In 2021 Dr. Astrid Perry-Indermaur was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for service to the community through migrant and women’s organisations, and in 2025 received the Premier’s Lifetime Community Service Medal for her commitment to serving and empowering the NSW community.

Editor: Astrid, in what way, if at all, has your upbringing in Switzerland and the country’s humanitarian tradition played a role in inspiring you to pursue a career in community service?

Astrid: I was exposed quite early to the humanitarian work of Henry Dunant and Heinrich Pestalozzi in their different fields through the values learnt from being a Scout Leader but also in my first apprenticeship to become a ‘Heimerzieher’. Switzerland’s voting system that forces you to think

about social issues was also critical in developing my focus on social justice. At the time equal rights for women was a big topic of conversation in Switzerland.

Editor: Your professional career and community engagement are truly inspiring. What is your vision for the next decade?

Astrid: At the macro level I would like to see increased social cohesion, that is welcoming of diversity and embraces our First Nations people more strongly. At the more micro level I want to see a skilled, bilingual domestic and family violence workforce across all government and non-government services that also includes a strong focus on prevention and attitudinal change. Such a transformation requires true commitment, but the impact on families would be extraordinary.

Editor: Your community engagement does not end with what you do every day professionally. You are also quite involved in the Swiss community as a member of the Swiss Dance Group ‘Alpegruess’. How did that come about?

Astrid: The call for a dance group in Sydney came from Bethly Denzler and Hans Moser, who felt that the Swiss Community in Sydney could do with a second folkloric group to compliment the Swiss Yodlers. I responded to the call for a meeting to form such a group because of my children. I wanted to share more of the Swiss culture with them and I always loved to dance, like my mother.

Editor: The Dance Group has been celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. That is a wonderful milestone. What does the future look like for the group?

Astrid: The group is active and engaged in supporting Swiss events. While we all get older, we do also have some younger members, and the group has grown recently. We can also choose dances that are not as physically demanding compared to when we were younger. Overall, the future of the group looks bright and we always welcome new members.

Editor: Thank you Astrid!



“The uncomfortable space – that’s really where I feel the magic happens...”

David Gemmet is a HSG alumnus (University of St. Gallen) and is now based in Perth, Western Australia, where he works as a management advisor and serves as Co-President of the HSG Alumni Australia Club.

After completing his Master’s in Information, Media, and Technology Management at HSG, he followed his path to Australia and has since made it his home — both professionally and personally.

Follow the link to the podcast, where he talks to Kajsa Lilly, about what led him to move across the globe, how he maintains a connection to the HSG community, and how bridging cultures can lead to a richer, more meaningful experience of life.

➔ <https://bit.ly/4pooQJ9>



Swiss Sayings: Lost in Translation

“Reda wia eim dr Schnabel gwachsa isch”

Being one of my grandfather’s favourite sayings, I remember hearing it often, when I was little. Making the link between beak and mouth early on, I checked every morning whether my mouth had changed into a beak overnight as my grandfather explained, it means speaking in your own dialect rather than a standard language.

As I found out much later, this saying also has another meaning, namely “*sich unbeschönigt äussern*”. It appears that it was used as early as the 16th century by Luther to explain how people express themselves in front of a surprised prince, namely freely, without inhibitions and truthfully.

Presumably my grandfather had reason to use this saying so often because there’s such a marked difference between *Mundart*, the spoken local Swiss-German dialect, and standard German, the written language in Switzerland. Variety is the spice of life!

Beatrice Schegel

1/800 000



The Fifth Switzerland is a colourful, varied and multilingual puzzle with well over 800,000 pieces. Today’s puzzle piece is ...

... **Susanne Brigitte Burger aka Sue or Susy, 75, in New Zealand, since 2000. Pensioner, used to be an office administrator, accountant and PA. She and her husband live with a four-legged companion: Her name is Candy.**

In which location or country would you say, ‘This is my home’?

My home is now New Zealand. We have even moved into a so-called Retirement Village, which will be our last home as long as we live.

Is it possible to have several homelands?

Yes, in my opinion certainly. I have lived in Switzerland for 50 years and I felt home in various parts of Switzerland. All these memories and experiences came with me to New Zealand. They are all part of me and have for sure some influence on me living now in New Zealand.

How and when do you show your Swissness in your everyday life?

Being accurate and punctual is very much appreciated here in New Zealand business but not everybody lives by it. Having these traits of accuracy and punctuality means that sometimes one has to be very

tolerant in order to avoid too much stress – just keep smiling!

Do you ever feel like a foreigner when you visit Switzerland?

Reading the newspapers and watch TV reports, I think I might feel like a foreigner. However, I’ve never been back to Switzerland since 25 years and I’m not going to.

Do you have any specific expectations of Switzerland?

To be quite honest, yes, the expectation that I’ll be able to receive the AHV till the end of my life because I have paid into this solidarity fund all my working life and then another 14 years from New Zealand, based on the income we generated through our businesses.

Are people in New Zealand aware of Switzerland and, if so, in what way?

Yes, most of them know where Switzerland is (from their overseas experience) and don’t mix it up with Sweden ... all rave about the beautiful country, the chocolate and the special cheeses – astonishing as New Zealand has some real great cheese varieties too – and the train connections all over. But everybody realises that Switzerland is a relatively expensive country to travel in.

My favourite memory of Switzerland ...

... is the walk from Grütschalp to Mürren on a mid-September sunny day – have a coffee half-way and travel back with the railway late afternoon.

More: www.revue.link/puzzle3

Community News and Events

NZ: Taranaki Swiss Club

Member, Swiss Society of New Zealand Inc.

The Singing Group has performed at several Rest Homes and invited Maida Vale Retirement Village to our Club house several weeks ago. It is always such a pleasure to give our audiences a touch of Swiss culture and traditions, and they certainly appear to enjoy it!

On 5 November we held another Senior's Social day, attended by just under sixty members and friends, with about fifteen helpers and Singing Group members also attending. We provided a hearty lunch, a variety of entertainment and then afternoon tea. It was such a pleasure seeing people mingle, enjoying each other's company, and appreciating the entertainment. We are very grateful to everyone for coming along and also to our amazing helpers who ensure the success of the function, enjoyed by all.

Our new toilet facilities are near completion, and they look amazing. We're happy to now have accessible toilets and changing facilities for babies, together with the unisex toilet block. What an incredible improvement this has made to our club house. Many thanks to all those who helped in any way to ensure that this project goes ahead; we are truly appreciative of all your efforts.

Kegeln has recommenced for the year, with between 15-20 people coming along to enjoy a chat, a laugh, participate in the nine-pin bowling and savour a lovely

supper. It really is a social evening with plenty of fun! It's great to see three generations of one family, the Dettlings, come along. If anyone is keen to join in, please just come or ring Heidi Werder for further information.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

5&19/2: Kegeln starts again for 2026. Come along and join the fun!

8/2: Our terrific picnic will be held from 11.00am. Come along to participate in the Schwingen (or for most ... enjoy watching the young and young at heart taking part in this Swiss sport), enjoy a barbecued cervelas or / and bratwurst, some cold beverages, and ice creams.

2/3: Our Annual General Meeting will be held at 7.30pm. So come along and see what happened in the past year and what we have to look forward to in 2026.

5&19/3: Kegeln again ... come and join us, you won't regret it!

15/3: The small bore shooting will be hosting the Championship and Society Shoots, so come along and give shooting a go. Juniors are most welcome, and will be given free coaching by our talented members. Most of the shooting competitions are handicap shoots, so everyone has the opportunity of winning some of the coveted trophies ... why not try it out?

NZ: Hamilton Swiss Club

Member, Swiss Society of New Zealand Inc.

The Fondue lunch was held on Sunday 21 September, again a lunch-time function



Hamilton Swiss Club – Family walk

which brought along just over 90 people including young families as well as some of our very long-standing members in their nineties.

Social card evening was held for the second time early October – a few less than last time but another enjoyable evening with lots of chatter as well as some serious cards followed by a lovely selection of supper.

Family walk was held on Sunday 2 November at the newly upgraded Blue Springs walk near Putaruru. 14 members gathered in perfect weather condition for the 4.7km walk.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

14&15/2: Annual Picnic and Club Shooting Competitions. Check the Helvetia magazine for further details.

Committee Contacts: For any further details or information about functions or membership, please contact: Beatrice Leuenberger: p: 07 843 7971; e: bea.leun@xtra.co.nz mob/text: 021 29 28 254; Anita Zuber: mob/text: 027 498 5170; e: anita.zuber@swiss.org.nz; Herbert Staheli: mob/text: 021 962 708.

NZ: Swiss Society of New Zealand

The year in New Zealand usually starts with Sports events, the main one being the Society Games - Medal Competition. This is held in 4 disciplines: the Kegeln (bowling), Stein-stossen (shotput), Shooting, and Jassen (card game). Instead of a medal, a



Taranaki Swiss Club



Hamilton Swiss – Club Fondue lunch

certificate is given out to the winners with a small prize. This is held in each individual club between February and March. Anyone can take part, and to enter each category a five Dollar entry fee is enough to qualify. Visit our webpage swiss.org.nz to find out the dates of these events in your region.

The Taranaki Picnic Day in February each year is a highlight of the Swiss community social calendar. See Taranaki Swiss Club in this issue.

As we are still without a representative for the OSA (Organisation of the Swiss Abroad) council, we invite anyone from the wider Swiss community to come forward. If you are a Swiss citizen residing in New Zealand, speak one of the national languages of Switzerland and visit your homeland on a regular basis, then we invite you to put your name forward with a brief introduction of yourself. Send this to the facilitator of the elections, the President of the Swiss Society of New Zealand, Trudi Fill-Weidmann on weidfill@gmail.com. The tenure is for 4 years.

If you are interested in joining any of our regional groups, feel free to visit our website swiss.org.nz

ACT: Canberra Swiss Club

Member, Swiss Alliance Australia Inc.

In October we celebrated the **German Language Week** with handouts of Gruyère cheese and a BBQ of Swiss bratwurst and cervelat at the Family and Community Day. Other groups provided pretzels and cakes. Kids enjoyed crafts, face painting, and magic shows.

After lunch overlooking a golf course, those who attended the **Kafichränzli** in November were spoiled with a club-funded coffee and cake.



Samichlaus and Schmutzli visited the children again during our picnic, with Säckli full of goodies, and Gruyère cheese and Swiss bratwurst and cervelat for everyone.

QLD: Swiss Club Queensland

Member, Swiss Alliance Australia Inc.

The **Swiss Club Retreat** at Springbrook was held on 17–19 October and a group of very happy Swiss enjoyed bushwalking, roasting marshmallows at the campfire and playing games, including Jass.



The **Swiss Club Qld Annual General Meeting** was held on 25 October. Two of our members were honoured with the Honorary Life membership certificate for a well-deserved recognition of their years of dedication to the club: congratulations to Jakob Berner and Rita von Rotz! A big Thank-You to all our wonderful volunteers, we couldn't do it without you. We've also thanked Katja Wallimann Gates, who stepped down after eight years as our delegate to the Council of the Swiss Abroad and the Swiss Alliance Australia.

We've also enjoyed the **Swiss Community Care Society Christmas lunch** on 22 November and Santa visited at Seventeen Mile Rock Park on 7 December.

The regular social Jass gatherings at the Gallopers Club start on Wednesday, 7 January 2026 (held every fortnight). More info on www.swissclubqld.org.au/jass-group/



And a big Thank-You to our fabulous Swiss Club Qld committee for running the club. (L-R: Philippe Coquerand, Heather-Ann Briker-Bell, Nicole Berner and Nicolas Eugster)

After a well-earned break, we will welcome everyone back at the Easter Bunny visit on 29 March 2026.

Wishing you a joyful Festive Season, 'en guete Rutsch' and best of health for 2026!

For detailed info about all upcoming events: www.swissclubqld.org.au/events/. Also check out our events calendar for 2026 on www.swissclubqld.org.au/events-calendar/

Please refer to our website for more info about our club www.swissclubqld.org.au

NSW: Cercle Romand

Member, Swiss Alliance Australia Inc.

As the year sees the last of its days, lets have a quick recap of our main activities in 2025. Early in the year, we invited the Swiss community of Sydney to take part in our **brunch and pétanque tournament**. We had a good participation and 10 teams disputed the Paul Lambert trophy.

In May, the committee welcomed our members to the traditional **Raclette at the Park**. Cheese, a bit of wine, good company and beautiful surroundings, all contributed to a convivial outing.

The **Cercle Romand raclette stall** at the Swiss National Day event in Castle Hill was popular, as always, and well supported by the Swiss community. The weather conditions did not make it easy for the team of volunteers that kept the stall running.

The year concluded with the **end of year Dinner** at Darling Harbour a few weeks ago.

The event calendar for 2026 is available on our website www.cercleromand.com.au with the first activity scheduled for 15 February 2026, **brunch and pétanque tournament**. This event is open to the Swiss community of Sydney.

The committee is wishing our members and friends of the Cercle Romand all the best for 2026. Good health, happiness and peace. Be kind to each other and see you in the new year.

NSW: Port Macquarie Region

We were having an early Christmas celebration at the end of November in Kew and I was excited to see so many happy and smiling faces. Everybody had as always, a wonderful time and it's just so nice to see friendships being formed.

Our next get-together will be on Sunday, 1 February, venue to be announced. Please keep an eye on your inbox for the invite. If you have not already been in touch with me and would like to join in, please send me an email to SwissHastings@yahoo.com. I am looking forward hearing from you.

ANITA FOSTER

NSW: Swiss Yodlers of Sydney

Member, Swiss Alliance Australia Inc.

As the summer season is upon us, the Swiss Yodlers of Sydney are taking a break for December and the Christmas season, before meeting together in the New Year to prepare and practice for the 2026 **Eidgenössische Jodlerfest**, taking place in Basel next June. It will come before we know it!!

We wish everyone a happy and healthy Festive Season and 'en guete Rutsch' into 2026!

DANIEL HOFMANN

NSW: Swiss Community Care Society (SCCS NSW)

Member, Swiss Alliance Australia Inc.

As I write this, I am hoping that our combined AGM/Volunteers Night at an Italian Restaurant in Gladesville will be as successful as last year. We are grateful to the people who visit elderly Swiss compatriots to bring them our Christmas present and good wishes for the new year. Some of our volunteers do that job as far away as the Blue Mountains, along the Central Coast and around Newcastle. All the volunteers are also SCCS members, and so it is quite handy to call the AGM on the same evening. I am also looking forward to the Christmas Luncheon which will be behind us by the time you read this. We hope that the committee's decision to change the venue was a good one.

Do you know that SCCS also organises very informal monthly get-togethers? Every third Friday we gather at the Concordia Club in Tempe for our **Casual Lunch**. It has become quite

President:	Regula Scheidegger	0432 031 085	rscheidegger49@hotmail.com
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If you live in country NSW you may like to get in touch with one of our Rural Coordinators:

Central Coast:	Peter Meury	0412 520 006	petermeury@bigpond.com
	Hans Lang	0425 206 534	hanslang57@hotmail.com
Newcastle/Hunter Valley:	Rita Schaad	02 4956 2272	ritama.schaad@gmail.com
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South Coast:	Monica Kampfer	02 4473 6608	mkampfer@bigpond.com

popular, with up to 25 people attending. Everyone orders and pays individually for food and drinks. The company is always quite jolly, and we are never short of serious or funny topics to chatter about. If you like to play a good game of Jass, this is possible too. Make notes in your diary on the first Fridays of the months. It takes place at the Concordia Club as well, at 12 noon. If interested, contact Felix on jasstempe@gmail.com. You can find out more about the SCCS and our activities on the website www.swissccs.org.au

With best wishes for the Festive Season and for 2026.

REGULA SCHEIDEGGER

SA: Swiss Club of South Australia

Member, Swiss Alliance Australia Inc.

As we start to bring a close to the year that was 2025 at the Swiss Club of South Australia, let's turn our attention to some of the main achievements of our club, the committee and the extended community. As well as running our usual events (like the pictured National Day Celebration), here at the SCSA we:

- Welcomed many new members.
- Held our biggest EVER fondue night with 170 people in attendance!
- Launched the *SwissConnect* Initiative, which so far has been focused on building connections with fellow fans of card games and board games.
- Piloted a *CommitteeConnect* meeting: a half-day session for the new committee to come together and get to know one another, work through the nuances of their new roles and plan out key dates for the year ahead.

- Refreshed our logo and website – your one-stop-shop for all things SCSA, including events, sponsors and more. Make sure you check out the new added features and extensive resource page: www.swissclubsa.org.au/
- Designed a SCSA x Victorinox BBQ Fork – perfect for everything from sizzling sausages over an open fire to devouring a fondue, these beauties are now selling through the website.
- Evolved the Sponsor system – building from our changes last year, we created three clear levels of sponsorship. See the website for more information about who is supporting our club and how to get involved.
- Moved to an entirely online events ticketing system – no more can you pay at the door, instead you can manage your own refunds online or join the waitlist for sold out events and be notified when a spot opens up.

A big thank you to the whole team, for all the energy, smiles and ideas that you've invested in our club this year! We would also like to thank the event helpers and the family members who have given us such support behind the scenes. Finally, we would like to thank all the members who have contributed to the club during the year.

We hope to see you all back here with us next year, as we acknowledge and celebrate 60 years of the Swiss Club of South Australia!

If you have any questions, Nina Welti is our new President and will be reachable at this email: info@swissclubsa.org.au

JESS GYSIN-WEBSTER

VIC: Matterhorn Yodel Choir

Member, Swiss Alliance Australia Inc.

The Club just returned from a lovely holiday at Falls Creek. It was a mixed bag of weather. Sadly due to the cooler weather we were too early for all the wildflowers. We started off wearing T-shirts and ended up in long johns waiting for the snowplow to clear the



roads to allow us to leave. We expected some 'Snow flurries' so made the most of the good weather as soon as we arrived by taking in some walks according to our abilities and keenness on the day. On the cold days there were plenty of games being played, books read, chatting and knitting as well.

During September there were no performances for the choir, but the usual practices continued with the focus on improving for next year's performance in Switzerland.

On 12 October the Choir came to the city to the Swiss Club, singing at the Kaffeeklatsch which is always a very enjoyable afternoon for everyone.

The last performance for the year will be the Senior Christmas afternoon on 6 December once again at the Swiss Club. We look forward to this event as an occasion to reconnect with many older Swiss from around Melbourne.

The first Jass date for the year will be 28 February.

If you are reading this and think you might like to sing with the choir, please give Chris a call on 0428 427 434. You can come along and see whether it is something you might enjoy.





Your donations to the 'Swiss Review' are more important than ever

Reader donations, big and small, are already a great help to the 'Swiss Review'. Your generosity is now more important than ever, with the federal government having announced cuts to subsidies in numerous areas including the 'Swiss Review'. The scope to deliver the print edition of our magazine free of charge is becoming narrower. But with your help, we can safeguard the future of the 'Swiss Review' and continue to produce the independent quality journalism that our editorial team strives for.

Please show your solidarity and donate. Your support helps to secure the services offered by regional editorial offices in particular. Since this year, we have been publishing 'Regional News Oceania' five times a year instead of four, a service that has been very well received by readers in our region.

ROLAND ISLER – SWISS REVIEW REGIONAL EDITOR
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Exhibitions by Swiss Visual Artist – Patrick Rychner



Originally from Switzerland and now based in Red Hill, Patrick Rychner is a visual artist, photographer, and graphic designer. With more than 40 years' experience in design and advertising, his work is shaped by a strong foundation in visual storytelling, composition, and conceptual clarity.

Patrick's practice centres on fine art photography and experimental work across digital media and sculpture. His projects are narrative-driven, often exploring the human condition, the environment, and shifting perceptions of contemporary life. He sees photography as both an art form and a means of reflection, encouraging viewers to consider the issues shaping our world.

Through his practice, Mirro Photography, Patrick continues to create bold, thoughtful work that blends his graphic sensibility with his photographic eye.

Current and upcoming Exhibition:

Bloomastics:

Frankston Arts Centre from 24 Oct until 15 Feb 2026
<https://www.mirro.com.au/bloomastics>

Societal Exits:

Photographic Installation.
Frankston Arts Centre, 2nd April to 26 April 2026
<https://www.mirro.com.au/societal-exits>

What makes us tick:

Portraits of 100 Swiss living in Melbourne.
Swiss Club of Victoria, Lvl 2, Jan 31st to Feb 16



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REGIONAL NEWS OCEANIA

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Visit the umbrella organisations in New Zealand and Australia for community news and information, as well as links to Swiss Clubs, Community Groups, Professional Organisations and Consular Representations in Oceania:



The Swiss Society
of New Zealand Inc.
Established 1935

www.swiss.org.nz



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