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Editorial, - an Introduction

Some 12 months ago I agreed to the request from the president of the Hamilton Swiss Club that my name should go forward as the future editor of our Society publication HELVETIA.

With the election as part of the AGM on June 1., confirming my appointment, my term of duty has arrived.

Your past Editor, Henry Sigerist, deserves a public word of thanks from me for the introduction to the task ahead on a more technical level. A Public word of thanks also to the willing friends which have offered their help on the "Editing Team" for the HELVETIA. They are all respected members of the Hamilton Swiss Club; Joe Staheli, Charlie and Ruth Waldvogel, Bert and Josy Flühler, Heinz Leuenberger, Uli Elmiger, Doris Rust and Trudy Wilson.

- As a team of willing "helpers to the cause" we are part of the Society Committee and are as such assured of the cooperation needed from your Society's new President, Beatrice Leuenberger.

- The production of such a modern and appealing HELVETIA as you have enjoyed for the past few years will be a challenge to us all.

A short introduction to myself takes us back to 1935, the year of my birth in upper Toggenburg, Switzerland. A precarious but very happy youth as child number four in a wholesome family of solid parents and grandparent had built-in benefits of a lasting nature. Growing up in a rural small-farming-setting of natural beauty with Christian ethical foundation, good solid primary and secondary schooling, the support given and received to and from family, friends and neighbours during years of austerity and happiness paralleled with a strong sense of responsibility,

the camaraderie in gymnastic-, shooting- and singing clubs, a successfully concluded apprenticeship in a community office of administration and finally military training (Rekrutenschule). 1956 was the year of emigration for myself with my Parents to join two of my Brothers already in New Zealand. (An older Brother with family and Sister followed later)

New Zealand, Aotearoa, new country of choice, new challenges, new friends, new language, new mentality, new workexperiences, embarking on dairy farming life lasting against all expectations for close to 40 years! Healthy homesickness during the early years shared with many new friends and Swiss compatriots the acquaintance of wonderful Kiwi farming employers saw my love for the "old country" grow as well as the love for the "new and generous country of our choice". A memorable occasion to have been associated with the Hamilton Swiss Club as a founding member! Marriage to Margrit (Gritli), my Wife in 1960 and the growth of a family of one son and three daughters. Dual citizenship, the many years of happiness shared with Swiss- and Kiwi friends, family life on the land near Hamilton and Te Awamutu has brought my Wife and myself to semi-retirement at Te Pahu in the shadow of mount Pirongia, living on a life style block in a rural setting as part of our son's family farm.

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PRESIDENTS REPORT, JUNE 1997

A month has now passed since our 1997 AGM, and the "handover" of the Society's affair to the Hamilton Club.

- Did we know what we were getting ourselves into??

Well, I think yes, more or less!!

Most certainly, we have been kept very busy in our various new roles, the main task being that the HELVETIA is put together on time to reach all your mail boxes in early July.

Possibly, a few of us will have some sleepless nights, at least until we see the end product, but then again, I'm sure we'll all be very happy with the results. The great efforts and abilities of our Editor, Rinaldo Rust, together with his team of helpers, will ensure this.