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Paul Amstalden

21 July 1930 – 24 July 2017

Dad was born in Ennetburgen, in the Canton of Nidwalden on the 21st of July 1930. He was the long-awaited son of Agnes and Gregor who had been married four years before. He was an only child, but as a youngster Dad lived across the road to his beloved cousins and relished their company until he was nine years old when his family moved to New Zealand. For Dad, leaving Switzerland meant leaving behind these cousins who he was very much attached to for an unknown country on the other side of the world. This proved to be very difficult for him.

After a six-week ship voyage, along with many other Swissies, Dad and his parents arrived in Wellington in 1939.

A group from Taranaki picked them up from Wellington and they ended up share milking in South Taranaki. Because he couldn't yet speak English Dad was dropped down two classes at school, but once language was no longer a barrier he caught up quickly and enjoyed himself. When he finished school, he would have loved to have gone to university but was needed at home to help on the farm. It was during these years that Dad often played the piano accordion, which he enjoyed, and was an active member of the Taranaki Swiss Club.

After a few years working for his parents, Dad worked for one season in the Glover Road dairy factory before heading off for his big OE with his old schoolmate, Jimmy Monk.

They headed off by ship across the Pacific, through the newly opened Panama Canal, and over to Europe where in Switzerland he met Christine.

He persuaded Christine into moving out to New Zealand in 1962 where they married in Hawera on the 7th of July that year. They started their farming life together in South Taranaki and 15 months later their first child, Paul Jr, arrived. Had Dad known then that this would be the first of seven children he may have stopped at the one. Luckily, they were good young Catholics and the rest of us eventually came along one by one. The second was Rosemary who was born in 1966 and it was after this that Dad and Mum bought their farm on Skeet Road in Auroa. While they were here, two more children arrived, Greg in 1968 and David in 1971. After eight years, the family packed up and shifted to Lepperton,

to a bigger farm with far more hills that were reminiscent of their childhood growing up in Switzerland. Here they stayed from 1974 right through until 2006, and this is where the rest of the children, Liz, Helen and Anne-Marie, were born.

While Paul Jr looked after the farm in the mid-80s, Dad worked at Bedford's Home Decorating store in Waitara for a few years, which he enjoyed. Then Paul Jr and Rosemary decided to head overseas, so Dad took over the farm again.

After Dad retired from farming in 1990, he got to go on a fabulous three-month trip to Switzerland in 1991. He spent lots of time over there catching up with family and even met a distant relation from Brazil also called Paul Amstalden.

He spent the next decade relaxing and being involved in various activities, including re-kindling connections with the Taranaki Swiss Club. He was secretary of the Swiss Club for several years, and also became part of the editing team of the Helvetia magazine. They

enjoyed attending many Swiss Club functions, and appreciated many trips away to the other Swiss Clubs.

Then in the late 1990s Dad and Mum sold the family farm but kept the house with two and half acres where they were kept busy with a number of grandchildren, who also have their own memories of Grandpa.

They stayed here until 2006 when they moved into Bell Block. Here Dad settled to a comfortable and relaxing armchair from which he enjoyed sharing stories from his past with his grandchildren, and watching them grow. Slowly, the years caught up with him and, a few months ago, Dad moved into Maida Vale Rest Home where he was well looked after and Mum could visit him every day. Dad passed away peacefully on 24th July with family around him and Mum holding his hand.

Liz Churches

The Taranaki Swiss Club and the Swiss Society of New Zealand extend their deepest sympathy to Christine and the Amstalden family.

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