

Battle of Morgarten Celebration

On 14th November over 500 Swiss and friends of Switzerland travelled to Lower Hutt to celebrate the battle of Morgarten in 1315, the conquest of Aargau in 1415, the battle of Marignano in 1515 and the Congress of Vienna confirming Swiss neutrality in 1815. As well as wintery temperatures, the sounds of the Swiss Kiwi Yodlers welcomed us all to the beautiful grounds of the Swiss Residence. After a warm welcome (amongst icy winds) by Juerg Bono and Roland Schuetz, we were all treated to the finest Swiss foods – Cervelat, Bratwurst, Raclette, Appenzeller, Landjaeger, Swiss cookies and to warm us up: Nespresso coffee and Swiss wines.

Carts drawn by St. Bernard and Bernese mountain dogs as well as Sackgumpe, bottle fishing and the helium balloon competition entertained the many kids that joined the function. There was continued entertainment

for the adults too: air rifle shooting, alphorn, flag throwing, accordion music, more yodelling and heaps more. Young and old enjoyed the wonderful Swiss atmosphere and the 18/19-year olds even had a “Jungbuergerfeier”.

At 7pm, just as the feet started to get really cold, we all huddled together to listen to our generous host, the Ambassador David Vogelsanger, explaining to us the meaning of the various historical events that we came together to celebrate on that day. In between the anthems Barbara Kuriger, MP for Taranaki-High Country, Trevor Mallard, MP for Lower Hutt and the Hon. Louise Upston, MP for Taupo, Minister for Land Information and Minister for Women delivered their speeches.

After some more coffee, wine and cookies everyone waited with anticipation for their raffle ticket number to be drawn out of a hat – by now our



toes had well and truly turned into icicles... Another highlight of the day was the bonfire that was lit when it was dark – yet another very traditional thing to do in our home country – as well as a perfect opportunity to warm up!

It was as Swiss as a day in New Zealand can be! The Ambassador, his wife Laura and his staff at the Embassy, as well as the Wellington Swiss Club put in a tremendous amount of effort to make this a simply wonderful and special day, which we will remember for a long time.

On behalf of the Swiss Society of New Zealand I would like to thank every single person who helped in any shape or form very much for their contribution – it simply was a perfect Swiss Day!

Tanja Latham-Zurbruegg