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Soon after arriving in Australia and taking up my post in Canberra in 1985, I met Ms Susanne Wegmann and learnt that she was engaged in research for a book on Swiss immigration into Australia. I welcomed her endeavour since, to my knowledge, there existed no written history of Swiss settlers in Australia.

Switzerland is a multicultural country with four national languages (German, French, Italian and Romansh). It is interesting to note that each language group has made a contribution to the development of Australia. During the 19th century several hundred French speaking winegrowers and over two thousand Italian speaking gold-diggers settled in rural Victoria. Later, several hundred German speaking farmers, tradesmen and professionals arrived and settled throughout Australia. Since the first World War Swiss immigration has been dominated by German speaking tradesmen and skilled workers who have mainly settled in Sydney and Melbourne.

The Swiss contribution to the development of Australia has been great, not least of all in the arts. In fact, the very first contact between the two countries can be traced back to a painter, Johann Wäber (John Webber). He was born in London but grew up in Switzerland, mainly in Berne. Johann Wäber was the first Swiss to set foot on the Australian continent, when he accompanied Captain James Cook as an illustrator on his third voyage, and rested in Van Diemen’s Land (Tasmania) for a short time. Other Swiss painters who have contributed to the development of Australian arts include Louis Buvelot, Nicholas Chevalier, and the contemporary Sali Herman.

Another important contribution to the development of Australia was made by two Swiss migrants, Henri Tardent and Heinrich Spondl, who were involved in moulding the first Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia. Their contributions are still of considerable importance to the life of all Australians.
I congratulate Ms Susanne Wegmann on her achievement of compiling the first history of Swiss immigration into Australia. She has succeeded in spite of adverse circumstances thanks to her untiring efforts. I wish her book the success it merits and hope that it will encourage further research into the fascinating topic of Swiss settlers in Australia.

Alfred R. Glesti
Ambassador of Switzerland to Australia

Canberra, 1988

Sources and Acknowledgements

In 1982 the Swiss authorities granted me access to confidential records held by Swiss consulates in Melbourne and Sydney in regard to my Ph. D., which has been accepted by the University of Zurich. This provided an invaluable wealth of data as an estimated 90% of Swiss migrants are recorded at consulates due to the obligation of men between 20 and 50 years of age and the expectation of the rest to do so. Therefore I am most grateful to the Department of Foreign Affairs for their unique permission. Sincere thanks also go to all staff of the embassy and the consulates particularly in Melbourne, who offered competent advice and answered innumerable questions.

Before leaving for Australia in 1983, research commenced at the Federal Archives and Library in Berne as well as at libraries in Zurich, Basle and Lausanne. A good introduction to the research proved to be the material provided by the Embassy for Australia in Berne and statistical figures compiled by Charles A. Price at the Australian National University in Canberra.

In Australia friendly assistance was given by libraries and offices for statistics in all state capitals to aid me in coping with documents and naturalization records. Extensively used were particularly the facilities of Melbourne's La Trobe, State, Baillieu and Hargraves libraries as well as Sydney's Mitchell Library.

A special thank you must go to the following persons listed in no particular order other than alphabetical, who permitted me to use data gathered for their personal publications and offered their expertise in various subjects: Dr Max Brändle (Brisbane), Frank Cusack (Bendigo), Prof. Ken Dutton (Newcastle), Dr Joseph Gentilli (Perth), Mig Guyer (Sydney), Barney Hutton (Mt Macedon), former Consul for Switzerland Curt Mahnig (Melbourne), Peter Pluess (Sydney) and Dr Colin Thornton-Smith (Melbourne).

In a survey one hundred Swiss families were interviewed in Melbourne. Representatives of Swiss companies, societies and
clubs in all state capitals have spent valuable time in answering my many and varied questions. It was the warm welcome of these persons as well as numerous descendants of early migrants throughout Australia that made my research not only possible but also most gratifying. Although they are not mentioned personally my sincere thanks must go to them.

To write this book in English would have been impossible without the assistance of a native Australian, Cliff Imer who is a descendant of an early Swiss winegrower. He is an experienced family historian and spent many hours correcting and improving the manuscript in a most effective way. The friendship of Cliff and his wife Norma was a decisive encouragement to continue work at times of uncertainty and doubts.

Finally the publication of this book would have been much more difficult without a subsidy from the Swiss government through Pro Helvetia in Zurich and a grant from the Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad of the New Helvetic Society in Berne. This financial support largely resulted from a strong personal commitment of the late Ambassador for Switzerland to Australia, Alfred R. Gleisti who sadly passed away in Canberra on the 22 August, 1988 only a few days after composing the foreword to this book.

To all these individuals and authorities I am most grateful for their assistance. Naturally any errors or tendentious interpretations remain the author's sole responsibility.

**Introduction**

**Who are the Swiss?**

In 1985 the Swiss government granted fundings for scientific projects contributing significantly to the definition of the Swiss identity. Why would a nation, whose boundaries have remained unchanged since 1815 for a longer period than those in most other countries, feel the necessity to spend a considerable amount of money to discover its common ground? Some answers may be found in the country's diversity and multicultural character.

Switzerland's 5.5 million resident citizens differentiate into four language groups. Three in four speak Swiss-German dialects in the country's eastern, northern and central districts. French speaking persons in western Switzerland contribute one fifth, Italian speaking citizens of the southern part of the country almost 5% and the Rhaeto-Romansh speaking people of the southeastern Canton Grisons 1% of the total Swiss population. German, French and Italian are the three official languages, which appear on all federal laws and published documents of primary importance to the federation. However, local dialects are distinctly different from the corresponding written languages. This applies in particular to Swiss-German, whose dialects are often mistakenly referred to as «Swiss» by English speaking people, and Rhaeto-Romansh, which is split into five linguistic sub-groups. Only in the mid-1980s would the Rhaeto-Romansh people agree to a common written language, which is the major precondition for a potential future recognition as the fourth official Swiss language.

Religion is no more unifying than language, as the country's population is almost evenly divided into Roman-Catholics and Protestants with Old-Catholic and Jewish minorities. Italian-Swiss are Catholics apart from Protestant enclaves in Grison's Val di Poschiavo and Val Bregaglia. The other language groups are equally divided within the religions, although Catholic strongholds may be found in Central Switzerland and Protestant concentrations in industrialized urban areas of the Central Plateau.
Switzerland's dimensions of 41 300 square kilometres would make it fit comfortably into Tasmania and its topographical features are comprised of 60% mountainous Alps, 30% fertile Central Plateau and 10% hilly Jura. Apart from few exceptions all major towns and industrial zones are located on the Central Plateau where more than half of the country's inhabitants live. Those residents raise Switzerland's population density to 154 persons per square kilometre, a figure eighty times over the Australian average. However, resident numbers decrease sharply in the rather inaccessible Alps, whose occupational base is vested in tourism, small farms as well as arts and crafts. Outwork particularly for the watch, electronics and textile industries in addition to grazing are the basic sources of income in the Jura.

Everyday life, culture and politics rate in importance in descending order from communes to cantons and finally the confederation. For example it is up to the commune to care for its needy citizens; police and schooling are administered by cantons; defence, customs and postal services are federal responsibilities. Road construction concerns all three governmental bodies depending on size and importance.

It is mainly at the communal level, where direct democracy is practised, as each eligible citizen may vote at regular assemblies on matters, such as the commune budget, the width of the main street's footpath or whether naturalization may be granted to a foreign applicant. Cantonal and federal votes are required four times a year to question the citizen's attitude on various matters. Past issues included accession to the United Nations, speed limits or the women's right to vote which was only granted on a federal level by a majority in 1971. Questions on subjects may be put forward by the electorate itself through initiatives backed by a sufficient number of supporters. Swiss democracy is most visibly exerted in small communes and cantons where citizens are allowed to raise questions personally in common assemblies. Being an immediate part of influence contributes to the strong attachment of Swiss people towards their native or living place rather than the whole nation. This attitude has not contributed to a unifying quality.

But even a definition of the Swiss on grounds of citizenship is a tricky matter. Swiss are citizens of their communes rather than the federation, although their communal affiliation conforms with the frame of federal civil law. Citizenship in Switzerland isn't automatically granted to Swiss born children with resident parents of foreign nationality, which contrasts with corresponding regulations in most other nations including Australia. On the other hand there are Swiss dual-citizens of fourth and fifth generations, who have never visited their ancestors' country! To add to the confusion, Swiss women may still lose their nationality through marriage, whereas wives of their countrymen are granted their husbands' citizenship automatically. Until 1985 children of Swiss women with foreign fathers could acquire their mother's citizen-
citizenship only if the parents were residents in Switzerland at the
time of birth. However, by 1990 equal rights for men and women
will be fully enforced by planned law alterations concerning
citizenship thus contributing to a somewhat easier way to define «Swiss» in the future!

For this book it seems appropriate to describe a Swiss as a
person holding Swiss citizenship and having spent the most formative
years of childhood and adolescence in Switzerland. Only a
couple of personalities mentioned fail to meet the full criteria by
having spent only a short time in their fatherland. They were
nevertheless included due to their demonstrated strong affinity
towards Switzerland.

Emigration – a Traditional Part of Life
Temporary emigration from areas of today's Switzerland date
back prior to the Helvetian league formed by the founder cantons
Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden in 1291. Half a century earlier
mercenary of these cantons fought for the Abbot of St. Gall.
During the next six centuries Swiss soldiers of rural origin and
their officers who usually had an urban background fought for
European sovereigns. The French King Louis XIV (1638–1715) for
instance is reported to have employed some 100'000 and Napoléon (1769–1821) some 90'000 Swiss troops.

Several Swiss officers commanded soldiers from all over
Europe in their own regiments which were offered for hire
to foreign monarchs. One of the best known, the de Meuron Regiment,
fought for the British King in Canada in 1812 and it was
decorated for its discipline and courage. The Meuron family
belonged to the monarchic élit of the French-Swiss town
Neuchâtel, which was Prussian sovereign territory from 1707 to
1805 and again from 1814 to 1848. Incidentally one of the de
Meuron descendants, Mrs Sophie La Trobe, became the first
Swiss settler in Melbourne in 1839 and Victoria's first First Lady.

However, cantonal troops dispatched on official missions in
international conflicts stopped effectively after the Battle of Marignano in northern Italy in 1515, where the Swiss suffered terrible
losses. This event heralded Switzerland's neutrality, and recruit-
ment of Swiss mercenaries was eventually outlawed in the con-
stitution of the Swiss confederation in 1848. The only exception
tolerated thereafter were the traditional Swiss guards at the Vati-
can in Rome.

Seasonal migration was an important part of life for centuries
particularly from villages in Switzerland's alpine valleys. During
the summer months the small farms gave employment for the
whole family, but in autumn the men frequently left the country.
They supplemented their income by working in various trades and
they also trained youngsters as their apprentices. This tradition
of «job inheritance» explains the dominance of one or two
trades in those villages as well as the resulting close ties with
European regions. Chimney sweeps from Intragna in the Cen-
tovalli and Vogorno, Corippo and Mergoscia in the Val Verzasca
of the Italian speaking Canton Ticino were in high regard in
France, Austria, Hungary and Poland until the 1870s. Poschiavini
from the Canton Grisons specialized in shoe repairs in France and
Italy. But probably the most frequent occupation during autumn
and winter months was offered by the building industry par-
ticularly to the Ticinesi. Most of the skilled workmen of the Valle
Maggia for instance were either bricklayers, masons or stone-
masons. A few of those builders eventually became noted archi-
tects, such as Borromini who decorates the Swiss 100 franc bill or
Solari who supervised the construction of the Kremlin in Mosc-
ova in the late 15th century.

-seasonal migration quite often resulted in temporary settle-
ment with intended repatriation after retirement. One of the oldest
settlements abroad was in Venice, made up by a large contingent
of migrants from the Canton Grisons. In 1380 they were
granted the city's citizenship and privileges in return for free
passage across Grison's passes. This agreement lasted until 1764!
A high proportion of Grison's population became confectioners at
first in Spain and later in northern and eastern Europe. After their
return they built majestical residences in foreign styles in their
secluded locations of the Val di Poschiavo, Val Bregaglia and
Engadine. In the late 18th century it became fashionable for the
European landed gentry to employ Swiss cheese makers and
dairymen, who were recruited in the southern valleys of Canton Berne and other rural areas in Central Switzerland.

Organized permanent settlement abroad was a common means by cantons to ease overpopulation. For instance in 1711 some 700 French-Swiss families originating from Neuchâtel and adjacent areas were encouraged to leave for Prussia by an official invitation of King Frederic I of Prussia and by a supportive local government. A similar proposition, made by Czarina Catherina the Great from Russia in 1763, was effectively opposed by the cantonal authorities. Nevertheless six decades later 26 families from the French speaking Canton Vaud left to settle permanently in Chaba on the Black Sea where they developed viticulture under the guidance of Louis Tardent from the Ormont Valley.

The first overseas settlement was founded in the mid-16th century by Huguenots from Geneva. Persecuted for their faith they emigrated to Brazil and created their «Nouvelle Genève». However, by far the largest number of Swiss migrants settled in the United States especially during the 19th century. Travel agents advertised and organized cheap trips to New York. Regrettably the consequences of poor travel conditions and insufficient care after their arrival often proved fatal for these penniless hopefu1s. The Swiss government had to step in and consequently in 1888 it forbade advertisements of emigration without a special permit. This law is in force to date, however, it didn't hinder some communes handing out to their unwanted citizens one-way tickets bound for New York at the turn of the century. Increasing industrialization and restricted migration within Europe had contributed to overpopulation and unemployment in rural areas.

Many of the migration movements of Swiss have been traced and described in numerous publications. However, until now few authors have taken an interest in Swiss settlement in Australia. This book is the first to present a comprehensive review of their imprints «Down Under» from the early beginnings to the present by means of assorted individual experience, historical documents as well as personal contacts. Personalities with far reaching bearing on Australia's development found special appreciation.

However, it is not my intention to compile a complete listing of all Swiss who have made a lasting impact particularly among the contemporary migrants. Their role in the country will be judged by history. Therefore, with one exception, no living migrant will be mentioned by name.
I. The First Swiss in Australia

An Explorer in Van Diemen’s Land
With this traditional background of migration it isn’t surprising to find a few adventurous Swiss accompanying famous explorers despite their country’s lack of oceanic access. An outstanding role concerning Australia was played by Johann Wäber, known as John Webber.

John Webber, born in London on 6 October, 1750, was one of eight children of his Swiss father Abraham Wäber and his English mother Maria née Quandt. As his sculptor father was unable to support the whole family, young John was sent to Berne at the age of six, where he was brought up by one of his aunts. Trained as a landscape painter John was awarded a scholarship by the Berneese guild of merchants, which allowed him to continue his studies at the Academie Royale in Paris. When Captain Cook was looking for an artist to illustrate the planned report on his third voyage to Australia in 1776, John Webber was appointed one year after his return to London.

Webber became the first Swiss citizen to touch Australian soil, when in 1777 Captain Cook’s fleet landed at Bruny Island in Van Diemen’s Land (today’s Tasmania). Consequently 63 out of some 200 of Webber’s drawings and paintings were added to the official travel account thus shaping the European imagination of the Pacific region considerably. Webber’s portrait of Cook, which is regarded as one of the best ever to be produced, fetched almost half a million dollars when sold in Melbourne in 1963. John Webber died as a famous and rich bachelor in London in 1793.

The First Settlers in New South Wales
Very little is known about the start of Swiss settlement. The first known migrant was Alexandre Nathey from the Canton Vaud, who was 24 years old when he arrived in Sydney in 1833. Unfortunately no further information is to be found on this French-Swiss settler.
Swiss educators and tutors of the children of wealthy English families were among the early visitors to the young Australian colonies. One of them, a native of Lausanne, who’s name is unknown, accompanied the family of John MacArthur’s brother-in-law on their journey to Sydney and nearby Camden around 1850. His diary had been published with the title «Un jeune Suisse en Australie» in Geneva in 1852 and thus became the first account of Australia published in Switzerland.

This young French-Swiss traveller told how surprised he was to find a group of German-Swiss ladies manufacturing butter and cheese on MacArthur’s station in Camden. Because of the language barrier the compatriots were unable to communicate leaving questions as to how these dairy specialists found their way to Australia. However, according to the customs of European monarchs and large landowners of the 19th century it was quite fashionable to employ milkers and cheese makers mainly from the alpine areas of the Canton Berne. It seems to be plausible that John MacArthur caught up with new trends while staying in his European exile after the Rum-Rebellion in Sydney in early 1808. As a consequence it is possible that the first Swiss employees reached Camden as early as in the late 1810s coinciding with MacArthur’s return to his station after his exile had ended in 1816.

The young traveller also met a few countrymen from the Canton Geneva in Sydney as well as some colonists in the capital’s vicinity. One of these pastoralists could have been Etienne Bordier-Roman (1821-1861), who together with his French friends ran a cattle station in Richmond on the Hawkesbury River near the Blue Mountains.

Bordier was the son of one of the leading merchant families in Geneva. After his studies of sciences at the University of Geneva he left for Paris in 1841 and eight years later for Sydney. Accounts of his voyage and the first couple of years in the colony may be found in his diary, which was eventually published with the title «Journal d’un colon d’Australie» in Geneva in 1863. Unfortunately he didn’t include the fortunes of other Swiss countrymen in his book.

Tempted by the colonial gold-discoveries and a corresponding lack of farm labourers Bordier and his partners sold their station in Richmond and tried their luck presumably in the Armidale gold-fields. In the mid-1850s this man in stature but large in optimism returned to Sydney and became acquainted with a few wealthy French entrepreneurs. They lived in the predominantly rural area of Hunter’s Hill, which soon afterwards was to be developed into one of Australia’s first suburbs. Bordier managed to convince the French businessman Didier Joubert to financially back his project of importing prefabricated houses from Europe to be installed in Hunter’s Hill. In consequence he left for Europe, bought four different model houses at an exhibition, hired German labourers and sent the component parts from
Hamburg to Sydney. The houses were duly erected in Hunter’s Hill and Sydney’s first jetty was built nearby to facilitate commuting to the city for the owners to be. Unfortunately they didn’t sell at all probably due to their high price in comparison with Australian houses, which meanwhile had become quite readily available. Consequently in 1856 Bordier had to declare his bankruptcy owing his main creditor Joubert thousands of pounds. The four houses were on the market for several years before being sold by the Frenchman.

Bordier left Australia after this traumatic end of an ambitious project and settled in Paris, as his family in Geneva had obviously broken with its adventurous but unsuccessful son. He died unmarried in 1861 only a couple of years after having left Sydney.

The oldest Swiss community in Australia grew steadily. A high proportion of French and Italian speaking Swiss in New South Wales settled in Sydney and adjacent rural areas. Distinct concentrations of countrymen remained confined to the Italian-Swiss community in Hunter’s Hill. Outside the capital and surrounds the Swiss settlement pattern was widely scattered with small clusters in the triangle between Bathurst, Mudgee and Orange as well as in the area of Wagga Wagga.

Compared with the overall occupational characteristics of Swiss immigrants in Australia during the 19th century, only a relative small number of tradesmen settled in New South Wales. However, the proportion of one in four people working as professional, merchant or in other service industries was surprisingly high. This included a protestant minister and the Catholic father Pierre Marie Treand from Lausanne, who was working in the parish of Mascot-Botany around the turn of the century.

For reasons to be discussed in the next two chapters New South Wales couldn’t match Victoria’s popularity among Swiss migrants until after World War I. Only then the «Premier State» and Sydney in particular attracted higher numbers to form the largest of Australia’s Swiss communities.

II. Swiss Winegrowers in Victoria

The Beginnings of a Typical Chain-Migration

The most important Swiss migration into Australia started only some five years after the foundation of the first permanent settlement in Victoria in 1834. It was initiated by the appointment of Charles Joseph La Trobe as superintendent for the Port Phillip District, as Victoria was called before 1850. La Trobe had spent several years in the Swiss town of Neuchâtel, where he married Sophie de Montmollin. The de Montmollin family belonged to Neuchâtel’s aristocratic elite and was related to other members of the high society, such as the de Pourtalès family. Young Count Louis de Pourtalès was educated at a boarding school in Vevey on the shores of Lake Geneva. There he became a good friend of John MacArthur’s son William, who gave favourable descriptions of his native place in far-away Australia. During his stay in Vevey MacArthur became very fond of the sight of extensive vineyards along the slopes, which was reflected in the establishment of an extensive pioneering vineyard at Camden near Sydney.

La Trobe’s appointment to an unknown district in little known Australia was obviously quite exciting for Neuchâtel’s people. Hubert de Castella describes the reaction in his book «John Bull’s Vineyards» (1886, pp 13–14) as follows:

«In a small community, such as Neuchâtel was fifty years ago, the departure for the antipodes of a lady belonging to one of the oldest and richest families of the town, created a sensation.»

The decision to leave home for Australia must have been a difficult one for Mrs La Trobe despite the encouragement of her relative Count Louis de Pourtalès. On 24 March 1839, Mr and Mrs La Trobe together with their little daughter Agnes left Europe on board the «Fergusson» for Sydney, where they arrived four months later. After receiving instructions La Trobe and his family continued their journey to Port Phillip Bay, which they reached on 1 October.
In the same year on 9 August the ship «Mary» had left Plymouth for Sydney. On board were the two Belperroud brothers Alexandre and Jean, both being skilled winegrowers from Cornaux near Neuchâtel. They had cleared two thirds of their father's debts to this commune and intended to repay the rest after their return within eight to ten years time. Only three days after the arrival in Sydney Jean married an Irish girl Catherine Staunton, who was his junior by eighteen years. As fully paying passengers the Swiss winegrowers were recorded on shipping lists only on rare occasions prior to 1850 (e.g. the La Trobe family was such an exception). Therefore this marriage to one of the listed migrants just after arrival is the only lead as to whom the first winegrowers were. After the marriage these new migrants travelled overland to Melbourne arriving in late December 1839.

This chronology clearly shows that the first winegrowers had decided to leave for Australia only shortly after La Trobe's appointment as Superintendent of the Port Phillip District. The Belperroud brothers, having left Switzerland before the La Trobe family arrived in Melbourne, were the first initiators of other Swiss immigration into Australia. This is contrary to the view expressed by most Australian authors to date that La Trobe's invitation to Swiss vigneronniers resulted in the establishment of the wine industry in Victoria. However, it remains uncertain that the Swiss would have succeeded without La Trobe's support. Not being British subjects rendered the purchase of land much more difficult and expensive, as the new settlers were not eligible for Crown Land. La Trobe refers to these difficulties in his letter to John MarArthur's son James at Camden in a letter written on 9 March, 1840:

«Some months ago 3 of the good Neuchâtelois, seduced by the knowledge that we were here (Neuchâtel is Mrs La Trobe's native town) came out to cultivate the vine here, with the purpose of engaging a large number of their fellows to follow in case they found their prospects favorable. The country & climate they find everything they could wish but the enormous price of land has taken them quite aback - They had only brought out hundreds & it requires thous-
ands. You know I have no power. They are still undecided what to do - but I hope to get them the rent of a Govt reserve or some other advantage to engage them to persevere."

While searching for a solution of their financial problems regarding the purchase of land, these pioneers had to look for other sources of income. The Belperrouds first worked on a bridge construction site across the Maribyrnong River on the outskirts of Melbourne. Later on they planted their first vineyard at the Plenty River, but the project was unsuccessful. To overcome the difficulties Jean Belperroud offered French lessons in an advertisement in the «Port Phillip Gazette» on 10 October, 1840. Nevertheless their reports back home on opportunities for wine-growers in the new country must have been favourable, as a few other experienced winedressers from the Neuchâtel region arrived within a couple of years. In 1842 Frédéric Brequet and David Louis Pettavel planted their first vineyard «Neuchâtel» at Pollock’s Ford 15 kilometres west of Geelong. In the same year the Belperroud brothers started their vineyard «Berramongo» in nearby Ceres. The land was cultivated on leases of 14 to 50 years. In order to finance some of the initial expenses of establishing a vineyard they turned to orchards, vegetables and nurseries, which offered a balanced budget within three to four years. Wine production at Pollock’s Ford began in 1848 and it was Victoria’s first wine together with the vintage at Ryrie’s station in Lillydale.

Because of their desire to acquire the right of owning land, Pettavel and Brequet went through all the trouble to become denizens. Denization required the approval of the Secretary of State in London and they were gained through petitioning the governor of the colony. It seems likely that the two Swiss would have gained La Trobe’s support as they were two out of only twenty aliens, who were ever granted denization in Australian colonies. After the new Act of Naturalization came into power in 1849, denization became obsolete as naturalized persons not only received the right to own land, but also acquired all the rights of natural born British subjects with the exception of becoming executive or legislative councillors. This last discrimination was dropped in 1858.

La Trobe’s support for the Swiss wasn’t limited to official matters as is proven by his introductory letter for James Dardel to Mr Gunn in Hobart in May 1847. Dardel went to Van Diemen’s Land (today’s Tasmania) to procure grafts for a large garden in St Kilda. This letter has been written «in great haste» as La Trobe states at the end, and it indicates that his backing of the Swiss was imposed by the winegrowers upon him he being an influential husband of one of their compatriots, rather than by a personal interest in the development of the colonial wine industry.

During the next forty years over hundred Swiss earned their living as vinegrowers in the Geelong area. Most of them were young, skilled and well educated bachelors originating from Neuchâtel and adjacent districts with David Louis Pettavel and James Dardel being the most prominent promoters of this typical chain-migration. The early settlers employed later migrants and they often leased or handed over some of their properties as part of the newcomers’ wages. Besides the vineyards they continued to cultivate orchards and crops experimenting with different plant varieties. Most of their equipment and vine-grafts were imported from Switzerland and France during the early years.

In the 1850s and 1860s considerable proportions of the products of the Geelong vineyards, orchards and gardens were sold to passing gold-diggers or were carted to the goldfields of Ballarat and Daylesford. At Daylesford they found a good market for wine amongst the «Italians», as Charles Tétaz wrote in one of his letters to his family in Switzerland probably unaware that his customers were compatriots from the Italian speaking Canton Ticino.

Gold-discoveries not only resulted in thirsty throats, but they also caused some trouble. One October night the two Belperroud brothers and three of their men sat at the fireplace at home. Their discussions came to an abrupt halt when two intruders forced their way into the house and searched for money and valuables while holding the five men at gunpoint. August Hinke, a native of Silesia in Germany, resisted and was promptly shot dead. With army experience behind them the Belperrouds scared the offenders off but couldn’t prevent their escape. Des-
pite rising rewards from £100 to £300 for their apprehension the criminals were never brought to justice.

The products of the winegrowers were also sold at local markets, and the construction of the new railway lines to Ballarat and Colac provided new customers for fruits and home-baked bread, which Louis Imer reportedly sold during the 1860s and 1870s.

The wine industry boomed in quantity and quality. In 1863 the first public auction sale of bulk-wine was held in Geelong, and already in 1857 Jean Belperroud won a prize for his wine in the Paris exhibitions. Several more prizes and awards were to follow in Victoria and Europe. Geelong’s landscape was imprinted by the wine industry initiated by the Swiss and covered an area spreading from the township of Lethbridge along the Moorabool River and the Barwon River to Pyansford, over the Sarrabool Hills as far south as Waurn Ponds and Mt Duneed. All these vineyards produced wine of a high standard and they were proof of the successful experiments with different vine varieties and the skills of their proprietors, who were also excellent businessmen. Most of them would have carefully looked after the bookkeeping, as did Martin Buchter, who noted all expenses including his losses when playing cards with his Swiss friends. James Dardel often carted his dried fruits up to Ballarat, where they would fetch higher prices than in Geelong, and as he didn’t feel like paying bridge-toll when leaving his property, he bought a piece of land on the other side of the Moorabool River and built his own ford.

Despite the personal success the winegrowers failed to overcome a generally bad reputation of colonial wines, which resulted from damaging practices at other vineyards, e.g. dilu-
tion or inappropriate storage. Some Swiss wine merchants, such as Abraham Gascard in Melbourne and Auguste Tétaz in Ballarat, vigorously promoted their countrymen's products and qualities but without any lasting success. Therefore it appeared as a nice gesture, when the government in Melbourne celebrated the announcement of Victoria's independence from New South Wales with wine from Frédéric Amiet of Pollock's Ford in November 1850.

Geelong's wine industry came to a sudden halt in the late 1870s. On 3 December, 1877 the «Geelong Advertiser» reported the discovery of the grape louse Phylloxera Vastatrix. By early 1879 the disease had affected the majority of the vineyards in the Geelong district, which is shown on the plan attached to the «Report of the Secretary for Agriculture on the Inspection of Vineyards under the Diseases in Vines Act 1877». In a desperate attempt to stop the outbreak and to protect other vine growing areas the Department of Agriculture ordered the removal and burning of all the vines around Geelong. No vineyard was allowed to be replanted for a period of four years, which was later extended to ten years. The opposition against the government decree remained discreet despite the demoralizing impact and it was solely confined to a vigorous fight for higher compensations.

In 1888 Frédéric Immer and Frédéric Marendaz replanted some of their vineyards at Waurn Ponds claiming a legal right to do so. However, despite the encouragement and moral support from their countrymen they failed to revitalize a second boom of Geelong's wine industry. Their failure reflects a development rooted well before Phylloxera. Signs of a troubled industry were noticed by the Secretary of Agriculture on his visit to the area in 1879, when he reported to have found a number of large neglected vineyards. Except James Dardel all of the most prominent promoters of wine making had died. David Louis Pettavel was buried in 1871 (the 500 attendants underlining his popularity). Frédéric Brequet died in 1872, Alexandre Belperroud in 1875 and his brother John in 1883. Many of the winegrowers still alive had reached an advanced age and none of the following generation was able to successfully fill the gap. The majority of the former vigneron tried their luck by investing the government's compensation in extensions of their orchards and gardens. Others left the affected area altogether and started farming particularly in Gippsland. However, the loss through Phylloxera proved too heavy for them to recover and none of them died as a wealthy man.

Only one of the original vine plants prior to Phylloxera was saved by hiding it in a shed. This vine was later replanted and it still ornaments a portal of the former vineyard «Neuchâtel» at Ceres. This plant, a few intact stone houses with wine cellars, several ruins and some French road names are all that remain visible from the early activities of the Swiss winegrowers in the Geelong area.

A few road names of former local French-Swiss winegrowers are among the most conspicuous remaining traces of last century's activities at Waurn Ponds near Geelong. Some of the historic vineyards were partly replanted by their new proprietors in the 1970s and 1980s.
Prosperous Vineyards in Lilydale*

A second settlement of Swiss winegrowers started with the arrival of Adolphe de Meuron, a nephew of Mrs La Trobe, and Paul de Castella in Melbourne in 1849. These two friends had learned about the promising prospects of the sheep and cattle industry in the Port Phillip District while staying in London for English studies. They managed to convince their fathers to back their planned cattle station financially, which was facilitated by the parental knowledge of the presence of the supportive La Trobe family. In Melbourne the two young men were accommodated at La Trobe's home «Jolimont», named after an area outside Neuchâtel, where Mrs La Trobe's parents owned land. Very soon de Meuron and de Castella got in touch with influential personalities in the colony and eventually took over the station «Yering», part of the Ryrie property near Lilydale, some thirty kilometres north-east of Melbourne. In 1838 the Ryrie brothers had planted Victoria's first vineyard probably from cuttings provided by the MacArthur family at Camden, and they were helped by James Dardel from Neuchâtel to produce the first wine seven years later labelled «Château Yering». Dardel continued his assistance for the Ryries while setting up his four «Paradise Vineyards» at Batesford near Geelong.

In the early 1850s two other nephews of Mrs La Trobe, the two brothers Baron Guillaume and Samuel de Purys, and Paul's older brother Hubert de Castella arrived in Melbourne. Hubert was a naturalized Frenchman, who gave up a career in the French army for an adventurous life in Australia.

None of these new settlers had any farming background or any experience with the production of wine. Nevertheless they started successfully with sheep and cattle fattening during the gold-rush era. After overcoming financial problems due to the purchase of their stations partly at auctions around 1860 the de Purys and de Castella brothers started or expanded their vineyards.

In 1854 they were joined by Joseph Clement Deschamps and his three sons. Deschamps was an experienced viticulturist of French origin, who grew up in Peseux near Neuchâtel. After an unsuccessful start at Kyneton, north-west of Melbourne, he set up a vineyard for each of his sons in Lilydale in the early 1860s. They were certainly more than welcomed by the de Castellas and de Purys, who relied upon their expertise in viticultural matters.

Similarly to Geelong the Lilydale group encouraged mainly Swiss and French specialists as well as labourers to emigrate in order to work on their properties with Hubert de Castella being the most prominent promoter. There is no clear indication of how many Swiss migrants were finally working in Lilydale. But as one part of the township Lilydale was then called «Little Neuchâtel» quite a number of people originating from that French speaking area must have been working in these vineyards.

In contrast to the leading Swiss winegrowers around Geelong the de Castellas and de Purys paid all their employees wages. This provided little incentive to remain permanently as only a small number of Swiss labourers actually settled in Lilydale, and most of them didn't engage in viticulture but in more traditional farming. One of them, John Burgi from Canton Berne,
became an innovative orchardist and cultivator of berries. Descendants of his numerous children still work on the property at Lilydale.

Guillaume de Purys «Yeringberg» and Hubert de Castella’s «St. Huberts» developed into Lilydale’s most successful vineyards. Their products won prizes in Melbourne as well as in Europe above all in France and they experienced their most glorious days in the late 1870s and early 1880s at a time, when their Geelong counterparts were destroyed by Phylloxera.

But even during those years of success, viticulture, though most important, didn’t create the only source of income. Hubert de Castella experimented with quite different agricultural products, such as cheese. A story is told that he employed a cheese maker from Gruyère in Canton Fribourg, where the de Castella family originates. Their Lilydale grazing area facing the Great Dividing Range resembled the scenery of Gruyère. However, despite being produced with an identical name in similar surroundings the cheese didn’t turn out well because of differences in herb composition on the pastures. This was the excuse of the cheese maker for his boss anyway. The experiment was abandoned, but the locality name remained on the maps.

Both estates, «St. Huberts» and «Yeringberg», were enterprises of considerable size. At each approximately 25 persons were permanently employed, a figure which tripled during the vintage period. Besides viticulturists the gentlemen proprietors engaged other tradesmen in their forges and cooperages, where the required tools and vats were manufactured. At home private tutors educated the children, whereas cooks and servants were running the households and looked after the occasionally quite numerous and distinguished guests.

The Deschamps family diversified in a similar way by operating a cooperage, which provided casks for vineyards all over Victoria, and they sold vine stakes as well as fencing posts. The youngest son, Clement, had a distillery producing up to 1500 gallons of brandy a year. Louis Deschamps opened his «Wine Hall» in Lilydale in 1878, which was one of the few places besides cafés in Geelong and Melbourne, where their wine could be

bought, Hubert de Castella traded his wine at his own «St. Hubert’s Wine Cellar» in Collins Street in Melbourne.

These prosperous days in Lilydale didn’t last very long despite Phylloxera having spared the vineyards in the Upper Yarra Valley. Increasing difficulties in marketing the wine, financial problems partly as a result of the banks’ collapse in Victoria in the early 1890s, ageing proprietors and finally the effects of the fungus mildew in the mid-1910s gradually diminished the part of income stemming from wine sales. Hubert de Castella sold «St. Hubert’s» to his partner Andrew Rowan in 1890 losing thousands of pounds and returned to Switzerland. At «Yeringberg» the last vines were pulled out in the early 1920s.

An area once renowned for its beautiful wines became dominated by the dairy industry. «St. Hubert’s» was eventually pulled down and «Yeringberg» partly destroyed by a fire. But surviving stables and wine cellar at «Yeringberg» still bear testimony to past glorious days.
Viticulturists in Other Vine Growing Areas

In the 1860s a few winegrowers originating from the Neuchâtel area left Geelong in order to establish vineyards at Rutherglen. Probably a dozen families settled along the Murray River in northern Victoria. Unfortunately they were hit by Phylloxera before their vineyards had reached their peak. Nevertheless the Swiss stayed in the area and engaged in other agricultural activities. However, the lack of achievement, fame and enthusiastic leadership may explain why very little is known about them.

At about the same time as the newly arrived winegrowers at Rutherglen another Neuchâtelois, Aimé Louis Ruedin, planted his vineyard at Huntly near Bendigo. His income was supplemented by selling fruits from his orchards. Apart from him no other Swiss winegrower is known to have come to this area. However, in the late 19th century a few viticulturists settled in the Goulburn Valley as did Frederick Egli in Tabilk and in western Victoria like Charles Apothélois in Great Western.

Social Background of the Migrants

It may be surprising to see such a large number of mostly well educated and skilled young men leaving home for a little known country in the antipodes. Furthermore most of them did arrive with their family’s financial support providing the means for the passage and initial investments.

None of the quite numerous documents, which the winegrowers have left behind, explains the reasons for their emigration clearly. Seventeen years old Charles Tétaz was just tired of his native Boudry near Neuchâtel without further details. Some of his letters back home point to the unwillingness of the teenager to work as hard in the parental vineyards as his father requested. Furthermore there may have been room for just one son to inherit the family’s property, which encouraged the emigration of the remaining more adventurous sons. This seems to have been the deciding factor, which transported Martin Buchter from Thayngen in Canton Schaffhausen to Geelong. He wrote in a later letter to his brother that he was meant to look after the estate at home. Over-population, crop failures and in later years the devastation...
of European vineyards by Phylloxera were the main reasons for the emigration of the early Swiss settlers in the Geelong area.

Such arguments hardly applied to gentlemen migrants like the de Castellas and de Purys. In Europe ordinary citizens had started to undermine the privileges of the ruling elites. Democracies were formed, such as the Swiss outlined in the 1848 constitution. This followed Switzerland's only civil war in 1847, when conservative Catholic cantons fought the establishment of a democratic nation. Paul de Castella was involved in this war lasting three weeks. As his engagement destroyed all his prospects of preferment in government service, Paul was sent by his father to England to learn the language in order to find a post in banking or commerce.

The social turmoil concurrent with the new democratic system has to be stressed as one of the major reasons leading to emigration the more so as many of the migrants belonged to leading families in their home towns. It must have been comforting for the concerned parents to see their sons settling in a colony where monarchy was still little challenged.

Having left home by their own free will most of the winegrowers tried to stay in regular contact with their families. However, their enthusiasm in writing letters was seldom returned by their parents leading to resentments. Jules Tétaz reacted by telling his cousin Charles to write back home that his family need not worry if the Geelong post office were to collapse suddenly! He, Jules, would certainly not be among the casualties as he had stopped going to the office and asking for letters in vain! Charles promptly carried out the order hoping that their relatives in Boudry would get the hint.

**Engagement in Public Life**

With this social background it must have been rather natural for many of the winegrowers to engage in leading positions of public life. Guillaume de Pury was president of the Shire of Lillydale nine times and Louis Deschamps was an officer in the same shire. Hubert de Castella promoted emigration to Victoria by publishing enthusiastic reports on colonial life. In 1881 he tried unsuccessfully to convince Sir Henry Parkes, Premier of New South Wales, to invest £2000 a year in a book to be written in English, French, Italian and German in the respective countries to stimulate the immigration mainly of farmers into Australian colonies.

Hubert de Castella and Guillaume de Pury recruited migrants during their trips to Europe and newly arrived settlers particularly from Switzerland were readily employed in the Geelong and Lillydale vineyards. Guillaume de Pury was Honorary Consul for Switzerland from 1875 to his death in 1890 and the leading French-Swiss were active founding members of the benevolent Swiss Society of Victoria from 1879 onwards.

The aristocratic background of Swiss winegrowers was also reflected in the attitude towards the Royal Family in London. Queen's Birthday always meant respectful celebrations and the assassination attempt on the life of the Duke of Edinburgh in Sydney in 1867 was vigorously condemned. Later in the year when the Duke passed Geelong he received a loyal and glorious salute from the Swiss. It was with enormous pride that Charles Tétaz and his uncle David Louis Pettavel showed the Duke their vineyard «Prince Albert» and corresponding wine cellar and the royal guest was pleased to receive a gift of their wine.

The impact of the Swiss winegrowers on the development of the Colony of Victoria has been remarkable especially when considering their small number. Their success may be attributed to the arrival in a very young colony, the good education and above all the enthusiastic endeavour of their leaders.
III. Italian-Swiss Gold-Diggers

The Start of an Exodus
Around 1850 life in alpine valleys, especially in the Italian-speaking Canton Ticino, was far from being enjoyable. A series of crop failures had substantially reduced the food reserves. The German-Swiss landlords had withdrawn under the banner of democratization in Switzerland by taking their money with them and leaving behind a little socially organized population with inexperienced governments. But even worse were the impacts of the trade ban imposed by the Austrian monarchs upon Switzerland. It effectively stopped the intense trade between the Canton Ticino and the neighbouring Lombardy. Additionally the Austrians had forced those Ticinesi, who had been working mainly in Venice, to repatriate within a few days. The majority of the concerned people originated from the two adjacent valleys, Valle Maggia and Val Verzasca, in the hinterland of Locarno. By setting back home they dramatically enhanced overpopulation and corresponding food shortages.

It was during those days of desperation that the two adventurers Giovanni Antonio Palla from Cevio and Tommaso Pozzi from Coglio returned to their native Valle Maggia on 7 August, 1854. They had left home only a couple of years earlier, so that even children could remember these penniless migrants. Now they came back as rich men from an unknown place called Jim Crow in Victoria of far away Australia having thousands of Swiss francs in their pockets. Palla and Pozzi had made their fortunes by picking up gold at Jim Crow (today’s Daylesford/Hepburn Springs) where, according to new rumours, the yellow metal was laying on the ground like pebble stones at home. This story quickly spread from village to village in the Valle Maggia and proceeded to the neighbouring valleys Val Verzasca, Val Onsernone and the district of Locarno.

The news of gold-discoveries in New South Wales and Victoria had reached Switzerland already a couple of years before the return of Palla and Pozzi. On 1 June, 1851, Louis Chapalay, a businessman from the French speaking Canton Vaud living in Sydney, informed the Swiss authorities in Berne about the gold-discoveries of Bathurst in New South Wales. He expected a large number of Europeans to be attracted to the gold-fields and offered the Swiss Government help for his compatriots if necessary. By 1855 Chapalay had become the first Swiss consul in Australia. One year after his first letter Chapalay sent another report on the economic state and the impact of gold in New South Wales. Extracts were consequently published in Ticino newspapers in May 1853. This triggered a zealous propaganda for voyages to Australian gold-fields by travel agents with headquarters in German speaking Switzerland. However, only a small number of Ticinesi could initially be convinced to leave for the antipodes.

The return of the successful Palla and Pozzi must have been most welcome for the travel agents, as the two were the living proof of getting rich in a short time in Australia. Who would not have been tempted to leave the family and home for two or three years in order to solve financial problems once and for all?

Speculative business had become the favourite spare-time occupation among the few already rich Ticinesi. They lent money for the passage to Melbourne securing for themselves a good share in the profits of all future gold sales. But the most important supportive financiers were the communes. Their leaders concluded that it would be wiser to invest public money by providing the potential gold-diggers with a few hundred francs for the journey to be paid back with interest later, rather than to support their struggling citizens indefinitely without any realistic prospect of return.

Switzerland’s leading travel agents located their Locarno outlets in the beautiful Promenade on the shores of Lago Maggiore and built up their often doubtful practices. Competition among them must have been extremely strong as they found several ways of cutting costs and offering advantageously prized places usually on German ships which left Hamburg. The travel agents were even prepared to advance part of the travel fee in exchange for a fair share in their customer’s expected fortunes.
The agents, after realising that hardly any of their customers could read or understand the German written contract, quickly capitalized on the situation. For example, one agent sold tickets for half the price on the condition that his clients pay the rest after the arrival in Melbourne by their work within two years. The Ticinesi, who were only too eager to leave the ship and to continue the trip to the goldfields, felt trapped by their contracts.

Another agent sold tickets to Sydney, which were in reduced demand and thus cheaper in contrast with those issued to Melbourne. He even misled his customers falsely believe that their destination wasn't much farther away from Jim Crow than the favoured port in Victoria. Reality must have come as a shock to the 85 Ticinesi among the passengers of the «Daniel Ross». The ship from Hamburg arrived in Sydney in late April 1855 after a journey of 150 days, which was almost twice as long as intended. Far away from Jim Crow the Italian-Swiss had to look for work without knowledge of the English language. They finally found employment offered by English settlers, sympathetic to Swiss people or by big companies engaged in road and railway construction. During this difficult period Louis Chapalay proved most supportive.

But even meaner was the practice to sell tickets to Australia without specifying the exact destination, though those ships were bound for Sydney. Those 176 Italian-Swiss passengers on board the Dutch «Heilige Ludwina» were initially convinced they had paid for a trip to Melbourne but actually they ended up in Sydney Harbour in October 1855 after a most troublesome journey. The ship's departure from Belgium's Antwerp was delayed by efforts of the passengers to increase the food supply which, however, remained scarce throughout the voyage. During the first few weeks the third class passengers refused to eat mouldy biscuits, and later out of Cape of Good Hope they were forced to pay additionally for the rotten food. When they finally arrived in Sydney after 149 days of near starvation their friends and relatives couldn't recognize them. It might have come as a little comfort that the ship's captain Lommerse was eventually prosecuted for his criminal behaviour. Once more Louis Chapalay, now Swiss Consul, proved to be very helpful. He advertised in the «Sydney Morning Herald» in order to find jobs for his unfortunate compatriots. The stranded Ticinesi consequently found work with a considerable number of them being employed in Hunter's Hill. There a few wealthy Frenchmen had started to build up a new suburb now renowned for its stylish sandstone houses. A few Ticinesi eventually managed to join their relatives in the Victorian gold-fields.

News of dramatic voyages, such as that of the ill fated «Heilige Ludwina», probably would have stopped any further exodus even if there had been any potential migrants left. From 1854 to 1856 almost 2000 Ticinesi had left for the now famous Jim Crow, among them only three women. The gold-diggers were men of a wide age span and included teenagers like the cousins Alessandro and Abbondio Quanchi, both 14-year-olds and originating from Maggia as well as 69-year-old Francesco Gianini from Mergoscia in the Locarno district. Most were natives from Valle
Maggia and adjacent valleys. They only spoke Italian and a considerable proportion was illiterate. Some had learnt a trade, such as mason, stonemason, carpenter or chimney sweep, but more than half of the migrants were semi- and unskilled farmers or labourers.

The gold-diggers had left behind a population of women, small children, disabled and old persons, who had to cultivate the small properties in the rugged alpine valleys in order to survive. The number of work related accidents increased dramatically. Children suffered severe body deformations imposed by the hard work and only few babies, mostly illegitimate, were born for several years. This catastrophic disruption in strictly Catholic communities caused by the men’s migration to Victoria is still remembered in local songs as well as by old paintings in churches and along the ways of the Cross.

Where is the Gold?
Although the voyage of the «Heilige Ludwina» remained unsurpassed concerning poor service, hardly any of the passages would have been considered a pleasure trip by the Ticinesi. Burials of their compatriots and boredom during the up to 175 days on sea must have severely shaken these people, who were used to hard work and close family ties. Setting foot on land in Melbourne was therefore welcomed with great relief. After purchasing provisions they soon left the capital of Victoria in order to pick up the gold at Jim Crow and to return to their waiting families in Ticino as quickly as possible.

Jim Crow turned out to be a tent city spreading over a large area and sheltering a huge population of not always helpful and honest fellow gold-diggers. Searching for the precious metal meant very hard and often dangerous work. Good food was scarce and expensive, diseases as a result of malnutrition and accidents were commonplace. The nearest Roman-Catholic priest, who had to be paid for his services, resided in Melbourne meaning a three-day-trip one way. For comfort they relied upon fellow Ticinesi as most of them were ignorant of the English language.

The cultural influence of Irish is eminent in their tombstones in Catholic cemeteries, where many Ticinesi are buried. The grave of Andrea Lafranchi (1839-1897) who ran the «Swiss Mountain Hotels» at Bramfied near Daylesford, is situated at Eganstown.

Only a very small number of Ticinesi struck it lucky because the claim of gold lying around like pebble stones proved to be illusory. Most of those who were successful had left home in early 1854 and returned in late 1857, just the way all had dreamed of. However, the later arriving majority soon came to realize that they couldn’t make a living out of their discoveries even when forming and working in small co-operatives. Taking up a regular job without support and English speaking ability was hardly an option. Therefore many of them started farming on a small scale and sold whatever they could dispense with to luckier fellows. Their search for gold continued as a part-time or spare-time occupation rather than as a full-time job. Consequently within a few years their interest was absorbed by dairy farms and no longer by fights for better working conditions in the gold-fields.
Nevertheless news or rumours of new lucrative gold discoveries always attracted a considerable number of Ticinesi, thus dispersing to Castlemaine, Ballarat, Bendigo, Maryborough and other gold-towns of that period. Some even left Australia altogether and tried their luck in the gold-fields of New Zealand and North America or joined the Ticinesi farmers in California. Others managed to return to Switzerland by borrowing money for a second time. Finally, a few fortunate ones were able to organise their families’ reunion in Victoria.

Despite these later migratory movements the Daylesford area remained the centre of the Ticinesi settlement in Australia until the early 20th century. It was here that Stefano Pozzi (1833–1922) from Giumaglio developed into probably the most enterprising Swiss gold-digger by becoming the manager and one of only three shareholders of the Long Tunnel Mine. Pozzi belonged to the few lucky ones, who went back to Switzerland after a couple of years, married a local girl and returned to Australia in order to settle down. But the majority of the migrants couldn’t afford holidays overseas and they found their Catholic, generally more young and Irish wives in the mining colony.

Impact of the Ticinesi
A surprisingly large number of Ticinesi stayed in the goldmining business all their lives despite the experienced frustrations. They usually engaged in contract work as miners, carters, wood-splitters and other unskilled jobs for the big mining companies. They were badly paid and were among the first to be dismissed during economic crises. On several occasions, when the next short-lived boom failed to materialize quickly, they were without means and their struggle for survival continued right up to their deaths.

Besides operating farms, which in later years often included small vineyards, groceries and hotels were the most popular alternatives to mining. The three Pozzi brothers from Giumaglio for instance started a bakery and grocery at Jim Crow in 1896. This was only one year after the last of them, Leonardo, had arrived. They put up their tent shop a few metres away from Battista Righetti’s grocery and were proud of enticing away their compatriot’s customers. Their fresh bread seems to have been very popular particularly among the other Ticinesi. However, seven months after opening the successful shop burnt down, thus destroying goods and cash. The Pozzi's reopened in a slab-house, which was a luxury at that time. Unfortunately, this courageous investment was not rewarded by a corresponding income. Business in general had slumped in the gold-fields around Daylesford forcing the miners to buy on credit. Leonardo Pozzi (1831–1908) then decided to leave the family business to take over a hotel at Mt Franklin near Hepburn Springs together with two partners. After another economic downturn and the discovery of gold at nearby Yandoit, Leonardo opened the «Yandoit Hotel», where he eventually got caught selling drinks without a licence. But the lure of gold remained and the next business slump caused him to close down and to try his luck as gold-digger once again.
One might assume that most of the financially successful Ticinesi left Australia for Switzerland or at least for the United States like Pietro Sartori from Giugamagio did and as Leonardo Pozzi would have liked to do. After having failed in Yandoit’s gold-fields he moved to the South Island of New Zealand in 1865, where he continued his elusive search for gold and worked later as a publican. A bady speculated sale of his hotel left him just enough money to return with his family to Melbourne and to start all over again in 1890, being 59 years of age by then. Leonardo took up the trade of a gunsmith and orthopaedist, which he had learnt as a young man in Lausanne. His business in Fitzroy (a suburb of Melbourne) was a “very fair one, but not a fat one” as he characterized the situation himself. Even his invention of a pen-feeder, enabling its user to write “200 to 400 words and about eight lines of music with one dip of the pen”, resembled his efforts in the gold-fields of little success.

The right to buy land and to acquire the licence to sell alcoholic drinks in their hotels were the major reasons behind naturalizations. After 1901 the age pension became another incentive for an Australian citizenship. A high proportion of Ticinesi had to rely on welfare institutions once they were disabled or too old to work as they often lacked a supportive family. Despite working hard all their lives, many failed to succeed and at the best they received credit for their fine character as did 86-year-old Giuseppe Gaggioni from Gordevio after his death in Melbourne.

The impact of the Ticinesi mainly remained confined locally, most apparently to the Daylesford area and to nearby gold-towns. A few will be remembered for their activities in public life, such as Michele Bedolla from Russo, who was a justice of the peace, council president of the Mt Franklin Shire and vice-president of the Daylesford hospital, or Giacomo Monotti from Cavigliano, who was a health inspector in the Mt Franklin Shire.

Despite their large number, the Ticinesi left behind few visible traces, such as the beautiful sandstone houses in Sydney’s suburb Hunter’s Hill. Andrea Lafranchi’s Swiss Mountain Hotel at Blampied on the Midland Highway between Daylesford and Creswick, the old Sartori house and a picturesque chapel in Yandoit as well as several headstones in Catholic cemeteries. However, a respectable number of descendants carry on their Italian-Swiss names all over Australia. In family histories and local talks of the old times it will be remembered, how the Ticinesi used to gather in the hotels of their friends in order to play the songs of their native alpine valleys, how they used to cook their meat all day to avoid contamination, or how they lamented on all the money wasted by the government for the Crown.

More Italian-Swiss Settlers in Victoria

There was another group of 200 to 300 Italian speaking settlers to arrive in Victoria. They all originated from the Val di Poschiavo, a narrow valley in the south-eastern part of the Canton Grisons. At first glance there are many parallels between the emigration of the Poschiavini and the Ticinesi. Both areas, facing south, were strongly influenced by adjacent Italy, they are separated from the
rest of Switzerland by the at times closed passes San Gotardo (Ticino) and Passo di Bernina (Val di Poschiavo), and their predominantly rural population had a long tradition of migration to Italy in general and to Venice in particular. Therefore it seems to be logical that the Poschiavini would have heard about the gold-discoveries in Victoria from Ticinesi friends in Venice. However, a closer look at the migration patterns puts the too simple combination in doubt. The Poschiavini were not headed for Jim Crow but for the Sandhurst gold-fields (today a suburb of Bendigo). They emigrated over a period of half a century with marked peaks in the late 1850s and early 1860s rather than the confinement to a couple of years of the Ticinesi. Furthermore most of these migrants were aged in the twenties including some newly married.

The people from the Val di Poschiavo were obviously unaware of the Ticinesi exodus and of the fact that other areas had also been affected by the economic downturn. This is confirmed by a surprised Giovanni Mini, who wrote in a letter back home before departing Hamburg in 1859, that, unlike the general belief in Poschiavo that only Poschiavini were emigrating, he found a large number of families waiting to leave Europe.

The Austrian blockade against Switzerland from 1848 onwards didn't have the same catastrophic effects on the Poschiavini as on the Ticinesi. The Val di Poschiavo had always maintained close ties with the Grisons and particularly with the adjacent region of the Upper Engadin. Being located in a transit area the Poschiavini profited from an agreement between the Grisons and Venice from the 8th century, which included working permits in the southern trade capital. This close relationship lasted until 1776, when Venice quitted the agreement and forced the Poschiavini to leave the town within a couple of days. Some repatriated and others resettled in other Italian towns or elsewhere in Europe.

But up to date it still remains a mystery as to how the news of the Victorian gold-discoveries had reached this secluded valley with such a long tradition of migration. Had Louis Chapalay's report on the New South Wales gold-fields been published in a local newspaper and initiated the trip of an adventurer to Australia thus triggering the coming chain-migration? Or did one of the seasonal migrants pick up the news in an European town? There is even no clear evidence, who the first Poschiavini gold-digger was. It could have been Giuseppe Dorizzi (1812-1892), who left home for Australia in the 1850s as did Giovanni Semadeni. The latter proceeded to Australia via Reggio Emilia in Italy. Semadeni struck luck and soon returned with a small fortune to his native valley. But feeling that he was still too young to settle, he left first for France and later for Switzerland, where he ran a confectionery shop. Knowing of Anglo-Saxon preferences for sweets through his experience in Australia, Semadeni later set up a confectionary business in Brighton, England and thereby starting a series of famous Poschiavini cakeshops and cafés.

The young Poschiavini seem to have travelled in small groups to Australia. Martin Buchter from Thayngen in Canton Schaffhausen, who became a winegrower in Geelong, mentioned 22 Poschiavini accompanying him on his trip from Liverpool to Melbourne in early 1858. He was anything but impressed by his compatriots. Buchter describes them as being dishonest, aggressive, greedy and dirty men with just one exception, who evidently shared his own misfortune of being seaman! This could have been an indication of the poor and pronounced rural background of these Italian-Swiss. Nevertheless, the majority of Poschiavini emigrants to Australia seem to have been able to write and read Italian in contrast to the Ticinesi.

The Poschiavini headed for the gold-fields in the Bendigo area and planned to repatriate as rich men within a few years time. Similarly to the Ticinesi, only a few, such as Giovanni Semadeni, were lucky enough to see their dreams realized. But their glorious stories told in hotels and cafés proved to be more effective than the odd warning letter sent back by less fortunate countrymen still struggling overseas. This created a rosy picture of Australia in the Val di Poschiavo. It kept the chain-migration going until the abrupt stop imposed by the first World War. The positive picture of Australia drawn by the Poschiavini strongly contradicts its lasting bad reputation in the Canton Ticino.
A considerable number of less fortunate Poschiavini settled in Bendigo's suburbs or spread to other gold-townships in the area between Maldon and Dunolly. Several became farmers, grocers and publicans, which reflects their lack of chance to learn a trade because of a missing industrial base in the Val di Poschiavo. Carlo Lardi opened his grocery in Wandiligong near Bright, and his daughter Adela became a well known nun, who died at the age of 102 in Melbourne. Giovanni Mini ended his career as gold-digger in Bendigo after 14 years and moved to Sydney, where he and his brother worked as gold-acceptors. By the late 19th century Sydney had attracted some 20 Poschiavini, who were fairly successful as stone-masons, carpenters, wine-growers or pastry-cooks.

IV. Imprints from the Tropics to Antarctica Until 1914

The Swiss Community in Colonial Victoria
Apart from the Italian-Swiss and a few French-Swiss an unknown number of German-Swiss had been attracted to the gold-fields. The gold-diggers had dramatically increased the number of the Swiss community in Victoria which, after Sydney, made a second official representation necessary. In 1856 Achille Bischoff was appointed the first Swiss vice-consul in Melbourne. Only one year later he reported to the government in Berne that an estimated 4500 compatriots were living in Victoria, split up into 2500 Ticinese gold-diggers, 1500 French-Swiss wine-growers and 500 German-Swiss miners. This exaggerated number was probably compiled by including Italians, French and Germans as well. But the miscalculation didn't fail to impress and Bischoff was promptly promoted honorary consul in 1857.

Bischoff was one of the few Swiss businessmen living in Melbourne and was descended from one of the most influential banker families in Basle. Consequently he counselled his countrymen in financial matters as he reportedly did in the case of Paul de Castella by convincing him to invest in risky land deals in Lillydale. This contributed to de Castella's difficulties and Bischoff's return to Basle. Samuel Rentsch from Berne succeeded him as consul in 1859.

Two years after Baron Guillaume de Purly had become the third consul for Switzerland, a matriculation register for Swiss citizens was introduced in 1877. Together with the naturalization records and the minutes of the Swiss Society in Victoria, the register forms the most conclusive source for the characterization of the Swiss community in Victoria prior to World War I. These documents show a marked change in the composition of the community around the turn of the century.

During the 19th century Swiss migration to Victoria had been dominated first by the French- and later by the Italian-Swiss.
Most of them engaged in primary industries and had therefore settled in rural areas. This contrasts with the German-Swiss who, apart from a group of winegrowers from the Canton Aargau who had joined their compatriots in Geelong and Lillydale, didn’t leave Switzerland in chain-migrations. However, they did exceed the number of their French and Italian speaking counterparts by the turn of the century resulting in a change in the professional composition, as tradesmen, businessmen and tutors were increasingly displacing semi- and unskilled labourers as well as farmers and viticulturists. Consequently the majority of the Swiss community were German-Swiss living in Melbourne, when the first World War effectively stopped any further migration.

People living in the countryside are usually more prominent and better documented than their counterparts residing in anonymous urban environments. Nevertheless most of the Swiss in Victoria, who came to fame, may be found in Melbourne, where they actively mixed with the British high society not least because of La Trobe’s association.

Mrs La Trobe’s nephew Adolphe de Meuron and his friend Paul de Castella, while staying at Jolimont in 1849, met several influential people including the family of the former Governor of Norfolk Island Colonel Joseph Anderson. Eventually Paul fell in love with Elizabeth Anderson and they got married. Her brother Acland became a good friend of Paul, thus securing a lasting relationship with Melbourne’s élite.

In 1852 James Pfund from Thun in Canton Berne left both home and his fiancée Elise Tschaggeny for Australia. He brought with him a letter of introduction to Paul de Castella, whom he joined at Dalry in Lillydale. James got a position as government surveyor and architect presumably through Paul’s connections. Meanwhile Elise went teaching in England, and it was not before 1863 that they were reunited in Melbourne with marriage to follow one year later. Mrs Pfund (1833–1921) soon turned to education again and ran the renowned boarding school Oberwyl in St. Kilda from 1867 until her retirement in 1885. In the mid-1870s the Pfunds had bought a holiday house at Mt Macedon some 50 kilometres north-west of Melbourne, thus following the trend of
Nicholas Chevalier was another well known artist, who seems to have capitalized on his compatriots' connections with the elite in Melbourne. In 1828 Chevalier was born in St. Petersberg, where his Swiss father was an overseer on the estate of a Russian nobleman. He took up painting under J. S. Guignard during his six years in Lausanne and was later educated in architecture in Paris and Munich before proceeding to London. In late 1854 Chevalier left for Melbourne in order to settle some investment affairs for his father and to meet his brother Louis, who was working in the gold-fields. Although his stay was planned for a short period he met and married Caroline, the daughter of the well known painter Sir David Wilke, in 1855 and thus became a long-term resident in Melbourne.

Chevalier is best known in Australia for his cartoons in the Melbourne «Punch» and for his work in the «Illustrated Australian...»

Nicholas Chevalier was a welcome guest at de Castella's «St. Hubert's», where he depicted Mount Munda in ca. 1860. Hubert de Castella himself would have liked to become a painter and he remained a supporter of the arts throughout his life (courtesy La Trobe Collection, State Library of Victoria, Melbourne).
News», One of his lithographs depicts the view from «St. Hubert's» in Lillydale thus indicating his connection with Hubert de Castella. Chevalier's most outstanding contribution to Australian art was his introduction of chromolithography.

After his return from extensive travelling in New Zealand in 1867, Chevalier was introduced to the Duke of Edinburgh in Melbourne. The Duke was obviously impressed and invited him to a voyage to Tasmania and subsequently to join him on his return trip to England in 1869. Chevalier settled in London enjoying the support of the Duke and his mother Queen Victoria. In 1882 he became the London adviser to the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Following his death in 1902 and at the request of his widow a selection of his work is on permanent exhibition at that gallery.

**Louis Abraham Buvelot**

Louis Buvelot ist probably the best known Swiss in Australia although he had spent only his last 23 years in this country. Buvelot was born in Morges at the Lake of Geneva on 3 March, 1814. He was educated and trained as a painter in Lausanne and Paris before emigrating to Brazil in 1835, where he stayed in Bahia and Rio de Janeiro for 17 years. Bad health forced him to return to Europe together with his wife and daughter, and he started an unsuccessful photography business in Vevey. After a side-trip to India he was appointed head of the department of arts at the «Ecole Industrielle» in La Chaux-de-Fonds, the second largest town in Canton Neuchâtel, in 1855. A couple of years later Buvelot exhibited his paintings in Neuchâtel and on this occasion met fellow-painter Albert de Meuron, who was a friend of Hubert de Castella. It is suggested that Buvelot even got in touch with Charles Joseph La Trobe who, after the death of his wife Sophie and his return to Europe, had married his widowed sister-in-law Rose, née de Montmollin in 1855.

These acquaintances seem to have stimulated Buvelot's decision to emigrate to Melbourne, when he started to suffer from health problems again. In November 1864 he left Switzerland together with his friend and later second wife Julie Béguin and arrived in Port Phillip Bay on 18 February, 1865. For the first two years he ran a photographer's shop in the then rather ill-reputed Bourke Street. But after Sir James Smith, the art critic from the «Argus», discovered some of Buvelot's paintings behind Louis' shop-window, things started to improve and Buvelot moved to the better La Trobe Street. He stayed there until 1873, when he finally settled in his house «Ma Retraite» in Fitzroy.

It took Buvelot five years after his arrival to make a living from his work as a painter. Although the experienced artist was well known in Europe his fame didn't last long in Switzerland. He was more successful in Australia, where he is still celebrated for his introduction of the plain-air technique. His landscape paintings depicting an inspiring and at times romantic nature were a welcome departure from the threatening and hostile character of earlier colonial artists. Buvelot often travelled in Melbourne's
cultivated hinterland and he was a frequent guest at Mr and Mrs Pfund's place at Mt Macedon and above all at Guillaume de Pury's «Yeringberg» in Lilydale. As Buvelot never learnt to converse in English he naturally kept close contact with French speaking people interested in art. Fortunately his wife could speak English and therefore often acted as an interpreter for his students.

Buvelot's area of activity remained confined to Melbourne and surrounds apart from visits to Victoria's Western District in 1868 and to Gippsland in 1881. His most successful years were the early 1870s, when he was a teacher at the «Artisan School of Design», when he became a member of the Victorian Academy of Arts and when he won a gold medal at the International Exhibition in London in 1872. By the early 1880s his eyesight had faded to an extent that gradually he had to stop painting. Louis Buvelot died in 1888 and is buried in Melbourne's suburb of Kew.

George Theodore Adam Lavater
Besides Chevalier and Buvelot C.T.A. Lavater was another migrant from the French speaking Canton Vaud, who achieved a prominent position in Victoria. He was born in 1831 in Lausanne, where he spent his first years of childhood. After the death of his mother and later his father, his stepmother brought him to England. Educated in Jersey and London Lavater took to the sea at the age of 14 and received a certificate from the Board of Trade six years later. In late 1851 Lavater, newly promoted to second officer, arrived on board the «Hoogly» in Melbourne. He couldn't resist the lure of the Victorian gold-fields and shortly after New Year he decided to leave his vessel to try his luck in Bendigo and Ballarat. Lavater belonged to those miners, who burnt their licences during the protests leading to the Eureka Stockade in 1854.

Eventually Lavater joined the administration of the Victorian Railways in 1863 and was appointed chief accountant some ten years later. The first highlight of his career came in the form of a bronze medal awarded for design in military engineering in an exhibition in London in 1867. But even more prestigious was his nomination for the «Secretary to the Commissioners of Centennial

International Exhibition in Melbourne» in 1888. This position temporarily released him from his obligations with the railways.

Although having spent only a few years of his childhood in his fatherland, Lavater remained attached to Switzerland and was an active founding member of the Swiss Society of Victoria. His fluency in English and French was very valuable in the Society's administration. As a secretary for many years Lavater compiled faultless English texts in the annual reports as well as on invitations to social functions.

Scattered Settlers in South Australia
The first Swiss settlers in South Australia may be traced back through naturalization documents to the late 1840s, when 20-year-old merchant Emil Ammann from Canton Schaffhausen and 42-year-old farmer Carl Sutter from Chur arrived in the colony. Generally the migrants from Switzerland came alone or in small groups. But although the majority was German speaking, they seldom joined the German settlers in the Barossa Valley as did the Gilgen brothers from Canton Berne. Friedrich Gilgen, an engineer, arrived in Adelaide in 1876 and probably encouraged his brother Rudolf, a cabinet maker, to follow him with his young family a couple of years later. Both brothers were gifted musicians. Rudolf is remembered as the first conductor of the Tanunda Town Band as well as the founder of a brass band at his later place of residence in Sutherland. His talents included compositions of band music and manufacturing of violins. On the other side Friedrich made his name as the first conductor of the Nuriootpa Town Band from 1881 to 1886.

Fourteen years after Friedrich's death in Sutherland, where the two brothers had farmed, an intriguing report on Australia's first motor-car was published in «The Australian Cyclist and Motor-Car World». The article, dated 21 January, 1904, tells the story of a Friedrich Gilgen, who had built a steam engine driven carriage with three wooden wheels and iron tyres. This noisy vehicle is said to have transported a band of eight musicians and its builder to guide Prince Albert and Prince George (later King Georg V) to the station of the Angas family in Angaston near
Nuriootpa in 1881. The royal guests are reported to have greatly enjoyed their ride in the carriage during their visit, and the local population also seems to have been very excited by the invention. However, any further development of this first Australian motor-car was prevented by a ban imposed because of its noise frightening the horses. Mysteriously the 1904 article remains the only source of evidence of the car's existence. No other corresponding reports in contemporary newspapers can be found and there is no mention in the detailed diaries of the two princes.

Similarly to Victoria the Swiss in South Australia settled mainly in rural areas, although many of them had learnt a trade or were businessmen. But unlike the migration of the winegrowers and miners in Victoria, these Swiss originated from a wide range of areas and their settlement was very scattered and hard to trace. Another difference concerns their pronounced mobility by moving on after having spent a few years in other colonies as did Samuel and Verena Hochuli. This couple, originated from Reitnau in Canton Aargau, had first lived in Rockhampton, Queensland for eight years before leaving for Port Adelaide in 1885, where they ran a grocery and hardware shop. For some Swiss South Australia turned out to be a transit colony before moving on to other destinations. For example the three Voumard families from Tramelan in the French speaking part of Canton Berne arrived with their wives and a total of 26 children in Adelaide in 1875. One family stayed and settled on a farm in Crystal Brook, but the others went on the Heathcote and Shepparton in Victoria. Although all Voumards were trained watch-makers only the latter engaged in the traditional profession of his hometown.

An increasing number of immigrants arriving in Adelaide in the late 1870s led to the establishment of an official Swiss representation in form of a vice-consulate in Adelaide in 1879. However neither the Vice-Consul James Page or his successor Eduard van Senden were Swiss immigrants themselves and the representation was closed in 1918.

**Heinrich Spöndly**

Like two of the Voumard brothers Heinrich Spöndly, known as Henry Spondly, didn't stay in Adelaide for long after his arrival in 1879. For the next five years he taught at primary schools in five different townships of rural South Australia. But shortly before his 30th birthday in July, 1884, he left without notice and joined the Swiss Society of Victoria in Melbourne seven months later. Soon afterwards Spöndly was on the move again setting up a private school at Kiama on New South Wales' south-east coast and settling later in Sydney after having married in 1891.

In Sydney he became a member of the Harbour Trust, where he seems to have gained experience as a statistician. His expertise in financial matters as well as his knowledge of the Swiss constitution might have led to his appointment as a consultant to the New South Wales' delegates to the Australasian Federal Convention held in Adelaide in 1897. Spöndly seems to have been a member of the Finance Committee, which drafted the corresponding sections of the bill for the future Australian constitution. Following federation in 1901 when the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics was created, Zurich born and University of
Jakob Leutenegger, who started a manufacturing and importing enterprise that is still run by his descendants.

Early censuses show a rapidly growing Swiss community in the 1870s when the Swiss were also offered free passages. The first census of 1871, listing Swiss born residents separately, shows 169 persons, but ten years later their number had increased to 407. In 1886 a maximum of 526 Swiss were recorded, a figure not to be surpassed until 1966. The Swiss community in Queensland had indeed reached the size of her sister colony in New South Wales and about one third of that in Victoria. Expecting further growth the authorities in Berne decided to set up an official representation in Brisbane and appointed Jakob Leutenegger first Consul for Switzerland in late 1889. However, Queensland's popularity among Swiss migrants steadily declined afterwards and several, such as Samuel Hochuli who went to Adelaide, left for other colonies. At the end of 1933 the consulate was superseded by a consular agency.

Only a few isolated accounts from early Swiss settlers and visitors in the colony are in existence, but those of Godfred Bucher are unique. In a series of drawings this German-Swiss, probably originating from Lucerne, described his arrival in the colony in September 1880 and his first encounters with the exotic environments of the Australian bush, gold-mining and life at the «Mountaindale Station» in the Burnette district. Bucher's last drawing depicted a lonely grave in the outback and is dated 2 April, 1881. Unfortunately his imaginative diary left no further information on his personality or his career.

Henri Alexis Tardent
In contrast to Bucher the career of the skilful writer Henri Alexis Tardent is exceptionally well documented. He was born in the alpine village Ormond-Dessous in the French speaking Canton Vaud on 1 March, 1853. Henri's life, which was to develop as probably the most influential Swiss immigrant in Australia, had already started in grand style when his mother delivered him on snow. This shocking incident may have contributed to his later decision to move to the warm climate of Queensland! But already
before his birth the thought of emigrating to Australia and to the Victorian gold-fields in particular had circulated in the Tardent home. His father had lost all his stock of cattle through an epidemic thus ruining the family. However, his mother opposed these migration plans successfully.

Henri Tardent earned his own living at the age of ten, but as a passionate bookworm he spent his spare time reading. Six years later he obtained a tutorship in Poland and kept this position for almost three years. A later journey of his brought him to Russia, where he heard about distant relatives living in Chaba on the Black Sea. During his first visit he promptly fell in love with a cousin causing him to stay in the area. But before getting married he finalised his studies with a degree obtained at the University of Odessa. Tardent passed his exams in Russian, Latin, German and French in a record time of one year. This entitled him to a senior position in education. He became a professor at a distinguished college in Nikolayev, where he and his growing family had settled temporarily. In the 1880s Tardent started to suffer from diphtheria which threatened the permanent loss of his voice. His doctor advised him to change the profession as well as the climate. Although besides teaching only farming appealed to him, he refused good offers by his distant relatives to join these viticulturists in Chaba, primarily for political reasons as he foresaw upheavals against the autocratic regime. After careful consideration Tardent decided to emigrate to Australia, because:

«... it is inhabited by a free people with a religious background; because social, economic and agricultural prosperity prevail there; because land is fertile and cheap and the climate one of the best in the world.
Finally also because Australia was the dream of my father's youth and because I am happy to realise the ambition of him who has been my best friend on earth.»

(Tardent Family History & Genealogy by Jules Tardent, Brisbane, 1982, p. 178)

Henry A. Tardent (1853–1959) became the most influential Swiss settler in Australia due to his involvement in moulding the Commonwealth's constitution (courtesy of Joan Gowen, Brisbane).
In 1901 Tardent, a founding member of the colony's Labour Party, stood as a candidate for the Queensland Parliament in the Burnette district but lost by a narrow margin to his wealthy conservative opponent. After having moved back to Toowoomba he became secretary of the local Labour Party and edited his own newspaper «The Toowoomba Democrat and Downs Agriculturists» from 1904 to 1908. After a brief stay on the Atherton Tablelands as first managing director of the «Tableland Examiner» Tardent finally settled in Brisbane.

However, it was Tardent's political engagement on a federal level, which made him the most influential Swiss migrant in Australia. Already in 1891 he had been consulted by the Federal Convention with regard to a detailed description of the Swiss constitution. Tardent's suggestions were to include the «Referendum», the right to confirm or challenge federal legislation, and the «Initiative», the right to propose constitutional amendments put forward by a specific number of sympathetic people. After extensive discussions the Convention settled for the adoption of the constitutional referendum in the future constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia.

At the same time Tardent was asked for detailed information on the Swiss militia army, which he provided after having translated the material sent by a friend from Lausanne into English. The report eventually lead to a visit of an Australian delegation to Switzerland in order to obtain a direct insight into the Swiss system of defence. In 1911 the Citizen Military Force was finally introduced in Australia, but soon dropped after vehement opposition from the population.

In 1928 Tardent was consulted once more, this time by the «Royal Commission on the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia». His recommendations concerned provisions in the constitution for the legal representation of minorities in the Senate, and the reforms were ultimately realised.

During the part of his life in Queensland Henri Tardent remained an inexhaustible writer. He was a periodical journalist for several Australian newspapers and the correspondent in Australia for the French «L'Illustration» as well as the Swiss «Revue de
Genève» and the «Gazette de Lausanne». His published works cover a wide range from biographies on artists, such as the painter Ellis Rowan, scientific essays like «Science as Applied to Agriculture» to historical accounts, e.g. «In Freedom's Cause, Australia's Contribution to the World War». In early 1929 Henri Tardent was awarded the distinction of «Officier d'Academie Française» for his services rendered to French literature, science and art. He received this prestigious decoration only months before his death at his home «Ormonts» in Brisbane's suburb Wynnum on 6 September, 1929.

The «Greatest Liar on Earth» Starts His Career in Perth

Traces of whom the first Swiss settlers in Western Australia were point to people from the Canton Zurich. Unfortunately information on these pioneers is vague but it is thought that they might have come as early as the 1850's. Confirmed, however, is the first application for naturalization of a Swiss citizen in the colony in July 1875. 28-year-old Louis Grin from Gressy near Yverdon, Canton Vaud, and then living in Southern Cross, Western Australia, was unsuccessful as his occupational record wasn't up to the standard required. Also his application was considered to be written in a too arrogant style. The authorities certainly were not to regret their decision when 23 years later Grin enjoyed an astonishing career as Australia's Baron Münchhausen and thereby gained the reputation of the «Greatest Liar on Earth».

In 1874 Henri Louis Grin (also spelt Grien and Green) had arrived in Perth as a butler to Sir William Cleaver Robinson, Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony of Western Australia. At Government House he met several explorers who returned from exciting expeditions to the Centre and eagerly he absorbed their tales like an addict. However, his appointment as a butler lasted only a few months and he started a new career as an adventurer in Southern Cross. Late in 1876 he headed north in his own cutter from Fremantle.

Grin resurfaced some months later near Cooktown on Cape York Peninsula claiming that he had been ship-wrecked in the Arafura Sea. He then made his way to Sydney engaging en route in various enterprises such as gold-digging and as a phony medical practitioner on the Palmer River, photographer in Fort Douglas and finally as a cook on board a pearler's lugger. In Sydney he introduced himself to several Swiss businessmen and on various occasions he succeeded in having them finance his ambitious but fruitless projects. But the more failures he recorded the more determined he became to attain fame and wealth.

By 1898 he had worked his way to London leaving behind in Sydney his penniless wife with five children as well as two children who had died as a result of malnutrition. Under the cover of a fictitious identity, a French nobleman named Louis de Rougemont, he told the publisher of «Wide World Magazine» a most amazing story, skilfully mixing and exaggerating his own Australian adventures with fiction and the tales of reputed explorers. He was such a convincing story teller that it took the journalists, scientists and explorers in England, Australia, France and Switzerland several months to prove him a liar, dreamer and plagiarist. However, finally they were able to convince the excited public, that de Rougemont was not ship-wrecked in the Arafura Sea, that he had not been living among cannibalistic aborigines on Victoria River in the Northern Territory for thirty years, and that he had not reached Southern Cross by crossing the desert.

In 1899 de Rougemont's fictitious adventures were published as a book by Heinemann and found a ready market. But after his hoax had been uncovered and lost its fascination hardly anything was heard of Grin again and he died penniless in London on 11 June 1931. Remaining deceitful to the very end he had arranged to be buried under yet another name - Louis Redmond, as he was last known in London's poorhouse.

More Gold-Diggers and Farmers in Western Australia

The gold-discoveries at Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie in the 1890s attracted a few Swiss first from other colonies and later direct from Switzerland. From Victoria several sons of Italian-Swiss gold-diggers arrived, and some of them were later joined by their ageing parents, such as Josef Mazzucchelli from the Val di Poschiavo. He had immigrated in 1859 and settled in the gold-
town of Stawell in western Victoria thus following his two brothers, who were among Martin Buchter’s irksome fellow passengers one year earlier. Josef was reunited with his children in Coolgardie in 1900, where he died nine years later. One of Mazzucchelli’s sons started a jeweller’s shop in Perth, which is still run by his descendants.

Another Swiss to arrive in his advanced life in Western Australia was Jules Gascard from the French speaking town of La Neuveville in Canton Berne. Previously he had bred horses and camels in Ballarat and exported them to India until he became aware of the economic potential of the prospering Murchison district in Western Australia. At an age exceeding 60 years Jules moved to Nannine and Cue in the mid-1890s and started a transport business. His horse coaches linked the inland towns with Geraldton on the coast. Gascard’s herculean body proportions were apparently quite impressive and left a respectful mark as did his sturdy but irksome fellow passengers one year earlier. Josef was reunited with his children in Coolgardie in 1900, where he died nine years later. One of Mazzucchelli’s sons started a jeweller’s shop in Perth, which is still run by his descendants.

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In the 1930s Pierre Bonhôte together with one of his daughters took the ferry across Bass Strait for a visit in Melbourne. Although originating from the Neuchâtel area, he didn't associate with his French speaking compatriots on the mainland (courtesy of Nina Jackson, Kingston, Tasmania).

fully as he had returned to Victoria shortly after in 1899. He then took over the «Pensione Suisse», which was the most prominent boarding house among the Swiss in Melbourne for many years. Giuseppe followed just prior to the first World War and settled in Dunolly, Victoria.

Hobart seems to have been an attractive place for Swiss teachers at the turn of the century, when Hermann Ritz took up the position as a professor at the University of Tasmania and Marie-Catherine Harper became a tutor in French. Ritz, originating from St. Gall, had arrived in Victoria two decades earlier, where he had worked, according to his claims as a «professor» at schools in Melbourne and Ballarat at the remarkable age of 19! He remained a member of the Swiss Society of Victoria until his death in Hobart in 1916. Marie-Catherine was originally a governess employed by an English family, whom she had accompanied to Tasmania. She died as an old lady in Hobart in the early 1950s.

Only a few isolated French-Swiss reportedly migrated to Tasmania, such as the two cousins Pierre and Ernest Bonhôte from Peseux near Neuchâtel. Arriving in Woolnorth in Tasmania's north-west in 1887, 19-year-old Pierre worked for the Van Diemen’s Land Company, for which he had applied when working on a farm in Germany. He eventually settled in Wynyard, where he ran a produce store for local farmers and actively engaged in public life. Pierre’s enthusiastic descriptions of Tasmania led to the emigration of his cousin Ernest, who first settled in Smithton in 1900 and later took over the management of the «Grey Brothers Timbermills» general store in Marrawah on the north-west coast. Like his cousin he was engaged in public life as secretary or president of various committees.

Adventurous Days in Antarctica

Although Henri Tardent may have been the most influential Swiss in Australia, the distinction of the most adventurous belongs to Dr Xavier Mertz (1882–1913), a lawyer from Basle. Mertz applied successfully to Douglas Mawson in March 1911 to participate in the planned Australian Antarctic Expedition (AAE) scheduled later in the year. Mertz was a Swiss champion in cross-country skiing and in ski-jumping as well as an experienced alpinist. Apart from holding a Ph.D. in law he was an engineer and had managed his father's machine factory for a couple of years. Mertz qualified well and was accepted, being the only non Anglo-Saxon member of the team.

Xavier Mertz and Lieutenant Belgrave Ninnis were in charge of the transport of the husky-dogs from Europe to Australia, where they joined the rest of the expedition. On 2 December, 1911, the party left Hobart on board the «Aurora» and arrived at Cape Denison on 8 January, 1912, where they built their Antarctic base, known as Mawson's Hut. During the first ten months the team became familiar with the harsh conditions, scientific experiments were conducted and skiing techniques perfected. The preparation period also left Mertz plenty of time to improve his English, which was anything but perfect and thus subject to amusement. His mates used to teach him indecent language, which he used readily without comprehending its significance. A few celebrations, such as «Mid-Winter» on 21 June or «Swiss National Day» on 1 August provided a welcome change to every-
day routine. Naturally on 1 August Mertz was in charge, and in a room decorated with the Union Jack and Swiss Cross he served a three course meal of Swiss specialities starting with soup and closing with «Lacklerli» biscuits from Basle.

On 9 November, 1912, Mawson, Ninnis and Mertz left Cape Denison eastwards along the coast for the most ambitious journey of the expedition. Ninnis and Mertz had been chosen because they were particularly familiar with the handling of the two husky teams indispensable for such a risky undertaking. After 35 travel days and some 500 kilometres east of Cape Denison tragedy struck. Ninnis noiselessly vanished in a large crevasse taking with him on his sledge most food supplies, tent, ice-pick, spade as well as mast and sail. Put into a desperate situation Mawson and Mertz decided to return immediately by taking the shortest possible route. However, after having run out of the remaining reserves they had to rely upon their dogs as the source of food. The dog livers, which were not quite as tough as the meat and of a surprisingly large size, became their basic diet. Unfortunately they were unaware of the livers’ enormous Vitamin A content and its corresponding poisonous effects. Mertz was first to suffer and eventually he died on 7 January, 1913, after a delirious day in the emergency tent some 160 km away from Cape Denison. Mawson proceeded by enduring unimaginable hardship and reached the base on 8 February, only to see the «Aurora» leaving the Cape.

Adverse weather conditions prevented the ship’s return to pick up Mawson and the crew of six, who had been left behind to await the sledge party. The team therefore had to spend a second winter in Antarctica. They used some of the time to commemorate their comrades by carving a plaque, which was erected near the hut in spring. Additionally Mawson named two glaciers after the brave men, each being located near their icy graves. But Mawson could never understand the cause of Mertz’s death and why he himself had escaped the same destiny, as the poisonous effects of excessive Vitamin A were discovered only after he passed away in 1938. His explanation was that Mertz, who was almost a vegetarian, was unable to absorb the sudden high intake of unaccustomed food.
Australian Connections of a Patrician Family

There are few Swiss families as widely known as the de Salis. Several family members have held prominent positions and considerably influenced the course of history in Switzerland and particularly in their home Canton Grisons. The family originates from the Val Bregaglia, another Italian speaking valley, which is reached from St. Moritz via the Maloja Pass.

Their name may be traced as far back as the 10th century and many de Salis have been knighted by European emperors, such as Peter de Salis from Soglio. He was the envoy of the then independent Grisons to the Court of Queen Anne in London in 1709 with regard to an agreement to grant free passage across the Rhaetian Alps. This was the start of a personal friendship with the Queen and her successors George I and George II. Peter became a citizen of Chur, the capital of the later Canton Grisons, and was made a Count of the Holy Roman Empire by Francis II of Austria in 1748. His descendants settled in England but kept close ties with their canton. Peter's son Jerome II for example built a house in Bondo in the Val Bregaglia, where his great-grandson Jerome IV was brought up. The latter's son William spent six years in Sydney for the «Great Calcutta Merchant House of Jardine Matheson & Co.», and the establishment of regular monthly postal services between Sydney and London in the mid-1840s was largely due to his efforts. After his return to London in 1848 William actively contributed to the moulding of the constitution awarded to the Australian colonies in 1852.

William's younger brother Leopold had migrated to New South Wales a couple of years earlier in 1840. He first farmed in Gundagai and later settled in Tharwa near Canberra, where several of his descendants became locally noted personalities. Two of Leopold's sons named their homes «Soglio» and «Bondo» after the villages in the Val Bregaglia thus evidencing the strong ties with their family's origin.

Around the turn of the century a member of another branch of the de Salis family settled in Australia. Ulrich de Salis, born in Grisons' capital Chur in 1871, emigrated to Hobart and started farming. The unfortunate death of his wife following the birth of their second child in 1907 caused him to leave Australia for New York, where he left no trace and it is thought that he died in 1913. However, his children remained and grew up in Tasmania where several of their descendants are still living. In 1928 a member of a third de Salis branch emigrated to Australia. 28-year-old Pierre de Salis, born in Andermatt in Canton Uri, settled in Sydney, where he worked as a businessman and where he died in 1977 leaving a wife and two sons.

Although most de Salis living in Australia would have lost their Swiss citizenship, they keep at least loose contact with their European relatives. Some travel the long distance to take part in the traditional family gatherings either in England or Switzerland. Also as members of a very special «club» they regularly receive the family's newsletter from Switzerland.

It is worth mentioning that Governor La Trobe's eldest daughter Agnes, who had accompanied her parents to Port Phillip in 1839, married another Pierre de Salis in Neuchâtel. Pierre also originated in the village of Soglio. Agnes is commemorated by a street named in her honour in Jolimont near where the La Trobe family lived in Melbourne.
V. Social Organizations

Growth of the Swiss Communities in Australia

Australia's popularity among Swiss migrants has grown significantly in comparison with other potential destinations overseas during the last 150 years. This follows an insignificant beginning. Even the considerable numbers of French-Swiss winegrowers and Italian-Swiss gold-diggers, although of some importance for Australia's development, left only a local impact. They remained isolated events in an epoch of strong migratory movements from all parts of Switzerland. During the 19th century Swiss emigration was clearly dominated by people settling in Russia, Algeria, Argentina, Brazil and above all in the United States and Canada. Australia was then generally very little known resulting in the limited interest of migrating to the antipodes despite the incentives of Tasmania in the 1850s and Queensland in the 1870s of offering free passages.

It was not before periods of drastic immigration restrictions in northern America that migration to Australia found a broader interest as an alternative. This situation first arose in the mid-1920s when early implications of the world-wide depression resulted in rising numbers of unemployed persons in Europe and Northern America. Those problems arose in Australia a few years later thus making this country initially a promising prospect. A considerable number of Swiss migrants arrived in the antipodes during the years 1924 to 1928, which is reflected in corresponding census peaks particularly in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria. When the depression caught up with Australia around 1930 many of the newcomers repatriated as a consequence.

A similar situation with a different background but a longer lasting bearing emerged in the 1960s. Involved in the Vietnam War the United States took up large contingents of refugees and drastically limited other categories of immigrants. At the same time the Swiss became eligible for free passage to Australia. Additionally the travel time had considerably shortened by using the greatly improved airline services available. The annual influx of Swiss born migrants reached a proportion never experienced before. These settlers were obliged to stay and work for at least two years and many of them indeed repatriated after a couple of years. But in maintaining a liberal immigration policy up to the early 1980s in contrast to other preferred countries, such as the United States, Canada and New Zealand, Australia became the favourite destination. Migrants from all over Europe, including Switzerland, continued to add to Australia's population.
Australia's proportion of all the Swiss living abroad increased from 1.6% in 1960 to 2.7% in 1970 and to 3.2% in 1983. According to records held by Swiss consulates, Australia hosted the seventh largest Swiss community world-wide in the early 1980s behind France, United States, West Germany, Canada, Italy and Great Britain. In Australia Switzerland is now represented by the embassy in Canberra, established in 1961, by consulates general in Melbourne and Sydney and by consular agencies in all other capitals.

Within Australia the largest Swiss community prior to World War I was confined to Victoria and afterwards to New South Wales. Queensland always held their third position followed by Western Australia and South Australia until 1961. Tasmania, then in sixth spot, recorded early Swiss settlers in the last century but it failed to attract larger numbers despite similarities of topography and climate. Today's figures of the southern state compare with those of the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory, which gained momentum only after the second World War. In line with the history of Swiss settlement in Australia, it isn't surprising therefore to find the first social organisations in the two strongholds of Victoria and New South Wales.

**Benevolent Societies**

From the 18th century most urban Swiss communities of considerable size worldwide have founded benevolent societies. Their members were usually wealthy businessmen and tradesmen committing themselves to help countrymen newly arrived and/or in need.

Australia's benevolent Swiss societies in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide were all founded in the late 1870s. Unfortunately only the minutes of the Swiss Society of Victoria (SSV) report uninterrupted the social life and corresponding changes of the local community since its foundation on 17 April, 1879. These minutes also give some sporadic accounts of the sister communities in the neighbouring states. Regarding the Swiss Society of South Australia and the first Swiss Society of New South Wales, the respective references in the SSV records are the only proof of their existence. Less than two years after the foundation of the SSV an agreement with the societies in Adelaide and Sydney was proposed and accepted, which enabled members moving from one city to another to join the local society without paying new entry fees.

The Swiss Society of South Australia seems to have struggled from the beginning. As early as September 1882 they proposed «a kind of federations» to the SSV. This alliance was accepted and the two societies, although staying independent to some degree, seem to have worked together closely. At the turn of the century, however, names of members living in South Australia started to be noted on the membership lists of the SSV, thus indicating a closing down of their society.

The first Swiss Society in New South Wales didn't succeed either. An entry in the SSV-minutes on 13 June, 1888, refers to the collapse of that first organization. But ten years later it was founded a second time. Henry Spondly remained its secretary until the activities had to be suspended once more in 1903 caused by the apathy of the Swiss community. It was not until 1907 that, according to the last society's rules, the required number of twelve interested Swiss could be found to start all over again. The third Swiss society now operated under partly changed provisions. Swiss citizenship was no longer a precondition to be eligible for membership and the society stressed social functions in order to foster additional interest. The Swiss Society of New South Wales was transformed into the Swiss Club of New South Wales in 1926 encouraged by the success of the newly formed Swiss Club of Victoria a couple of years earlier. A relief fund was administered for the support of needy Swiss.

In the late 1970s the foundation of yet another independent, Sydney-based organization was initiated. Starting its activities in 1979 The Swiss Benevolent Society, renamed Swiss Community Care Society in 1987, offers financial help, gives legal advice, and its members visit lonely Swiss in hospitals and homes. This new approach seems to be well suited to a community with a growing number of ageing members.
Swiss Society of Victoria (SSV)
The SSV was the only organization to enjoy a satisfactory interest by its Swiss community in the early days. Its foundation seems to have been initiated by the then acting Swiss Consul Guillaume de Pury from Neuchâtel in early 1879 and close contacts with the Consulate in Melbourne have been maintained ever since. On 17 April, 1879, twenty-one French-, German- and Italian-Swiss were present at the constituent meeting and joined the society as founding members. Within six years the membership consisted of a record 136 persons which has not been surpassed to date. The early success reflects the pronounced need for a social organization to cater for expatriate Swiss during this period.

Membership numbers fluctuated greatly afterwards. In 1897 a minimum of only 27 persons were registered but the numbers recovered to a second peak of 131 members thirty years later due to a new wave of immigration in the pre-depression years. The figures stabilized at a level of about 50 persons in the decades after World War II.

Until recently the SSV consisted of equally represented town and country members. The latter paid reduced fees and in the last century they were almost exclusively comprised of either Italian- or French-Swiss thus balancing the urban German-Swiss. Nowadays only a couple of the society's members are not German-Swiss.

The SSV has two major objectives which haven't changed noticeably since its foundation:

a) «To give advice to Swiss newly arrived and to support any Swiss in Victoria, who is really in want of help and worthy to receive assistance.

b) To promote national feeling and good fellowship among the Swiss in Victoria.»

An Assistance Committee elected annually pursues the first objective. In early times they organized free accommodation and meals at one of the Swiss boarding houses in the city. In other cases assistance was given in form of employment particularly in the vineyards of Lillydale or by presenting train tickets enabling the holder to look for a job in a better suited rural destination.

Further support was given by improving the applicant's chances to start his own business or to apply for a job. In one instance support meant handing over a second-hand black coat to aid a person's request for the position of a clerk. Another time the SSV purchased wire thus enabling a newly arrived Swiss to make his living by manufacturing coat-hangers.

The SSV also made donations to private hospitals and homes which entitled it to nominate patients of its choice. First recipient was the Melbourne Hospital in 1891 followed by nine other institutions in Victoria's capital. Between 1885 and 1924 a hospital in Daylesford received annual donations as did a hospital and two asylums in Bendigo from 1891 to 1898, an asylum in Castlemaine in 1891/92 and a home in Adelaide in 1925. These contributions indicate the necessary assistance mainly for the ageing Italian-Swiss particularly in rural Victoria.

The reasons, why Swiss got into such desperate situations that they approached the SSV for help, were as varied as the ways of resulting assistance. For many Italian-Swiss the benevolent society replaced their lack of social security, work care and health insurance at least until they got their age pensions after being naturalized. Urban residents often got into a desperate situation through unemployment resulting in alcohol addiction, family problems and in rare cases suicides. Sometimes the applicants were just very unfortunate like a commercial agent from St. Gall. He and his family had arrived shortly before the Second World War. When he went to take up an offered job, he was told that it was no longer available. On the way back home from the disappointing presentation he was robbed of his purse containing all his money of £ 15. An article on his misfortune appeared in the «Herald», and the SSV immediately helped out not only with some cash but also with assisting him to gain other employment.

Other Swiss migrants were simply too lazy to work. Usually these applicants were supported for a limited time to give them another chance to look for a job. Even worse, one of the applicants told the Assistance Committee a fictitious story of having been robbed in Flinders Street. However, it turned out that the «victim» himself had a keen interest in old ladies' purses and he was
eventually arrested. Another sponger was financing his journey around the world by applying for assistance at local Swiss societies telling always his same heart-rending story. Once arrived in Australia he successfully used this method in Adelaide. But his intentions were unveiled and the society’s warnings arrived in time in Melbourne and Sydney to prevent any further donations. Because of non-compliance with the rules, a number of applications to the SSV were rejected, as the persons, most of them of German origin, were unable to prove their Swiss citizenship.

With the gradual improvement of Australia’s social security requests for SSV-support declined in Melbourne. Only a few cases were recorded in the period following World War II, and one might expect an adjustment to changed needs similar to the Melbourne example of the Swiss Community Care Society.

Of no less importance to providing assistance was the second objective of the society, to promote national feeling among the Swiss. Weekly social gatherings in one of the Swiss boarding houses and later in the society’s premises were institutionalized already on foundation day in 1879. Six months after the first general meeting members organized a picnic for all Swiss and their families. This outing proved to be very successful and was repeated annually until replaced by a banquet held in late spring. On 1 August, 1891, the day of the 600th anniversary of the Swiss Confederation, the Federal Council in Berne declared the introduction of the National Day of Switzerland. The SSV decided to commemorate this event with a banquet and invited all Swiss to attend. National Day became the focus of the social life during the year and it has been celebrated in various ways ever since.

To further strengthen the interest in Swiss culture and recent events in Switzerland, the SSV opened a library with books, periodicals and newspapers in German, French and Italian. Four years after the foundation a Musical & Gymnastic Section of the

The Swiss National Day was first celebrated on 1 August, 1891, thus commemorating the 600th anniversary of the Swiss league. For that occasion the Swiss Society of Victoria organized a banquet and sent invitations to all known Swiss.

Dear Sir,

The first day of August next will be the anniversary of the foundation of the Swiss Confederation. On that happy day, 1 August, 1815, the Federal Council of Berne, in a solemn act of national celebration, decreed that henceforth every August should be a National Day.

The society, therefore, have decided to celebrate this event by a banquet, in order to maintain this day as a national holiday.

To that end, the following members have been chosen to serve as the banquet committee:


The banquet will be held at the French Club, 6000 South Melbourne, on the 1st of August, 1891, at 6.30 p.m. Tickets may be obtained from the Secretary, 239 Florence St., Melbourne.

Yours sincerely,


The banquet committee.
SSV was formed, for which the society ordered some song books in German and French from Switzerland.

There were lengthy discussions among the Swiss on the publication language of the society's annual reports besides English. They had to be presented in one of the national languages in order to receive subsidies from the Swiss government. In the early days the majority of the leading members of the society spoke French. But, being generally well educated and having a good understanding of their compatriots' languages as well as English, the French-Swiss generously disclaimed their rights. Consequently the society printed its reports in German and on two occasions in Italian. This reflects the shift towards a German-Swiss majority in the community as well as the full-hearted collaboration and the difficulties of reading English of the Italian-Swiss.

Throughout its existence the SSV was vitally concerned with the events and developments in Switzerland. In 1881 a motion was put forward urging the Swiss government to buy land abroad in order to resettle the country's surplus population. This idea departed from the practice of several communes to get rid of unwanted persons by providing them with a one-way ticket to New York. It took the Swiss Consul in Melbourne considerable diplomatic skill to stop this well meant but unrealistic memorandum. Close ties between the members of the SSV and the fatherland were demonstrated by donations sent to Berne in order to mitigate the hardship of the population following severe floodings in 1910 and shortages of all commodities during World War I.

The major recent event concerning the promotion of Swiss identity was the initiating and subsequent sponsoring of the Swiss School in 1975. This free school for children of Swiss parents is held on Saturday mornings in Melbourne at the Swiss Club. Its aim is to pass on some basic background on culture and language.

Social Life in Rural Victoria
Surprisingly the winegrowers in Victoria never established a formal social organization of their own despite the considerable size of this community. Rather the settlers in Lillydale met privately or at the SSV and Swiss Club in the city. Their counterparts in the Geelong area used to gather in the «Pension Suisse» at 11 James Street in Geelong run by Auguste Tétaz around the turn of the century and later taken over by the Swiss Just family. On rare occasions members of the Swiss Club of Victoria travelled to Geelong in order to present lantern slides from Switzerland in the boarding house, and the Swiss Consul used to stay in the «Pension Suisse» to meet his numerous countrymen.

In a similar way the gatherings of the Italian-Swiss gold-diggers usually had an unofficial character. Their Swiss and Italian Association in Daylesford gained some public exposure when they staged scenes from the legendary Swiss hero «Wilhelm Tell» story for a fund raising procession in 1875. However, the establishment of the SSV in Melbourne may have rendered the association obsolete after 1879.

With the concentration of the contemporary migration to Melbourne the Swiss communities in rural Victoria shrank rapidly. In the early 20th century the remaining settlers usually joined the Swiss organizations in the capital or held local private meetings.

Clubs in Melbourne
Australia's first Swiss Club was founded in Melbourne. According to the SSV minutes, the society patronized the foundation of the «Social Club Helvetia» on 1 January, 1890. «Helvetia» took over the responsibilities for social events and organized yearly festivities, such as the Swiss National Day in co-operation with the SSV. Due to financial difficulties the club handed over its money to the SSV trustees only two years after the foundation and eventually closed down around 1896.

The succeeding Swiss Club of Victoria was founded in 1899 and remained independent from the SSV. To raise the community's interest in membership, the club published a monthly journal «Edelweiss» containing news from Switzerland, travel accounts from Swiss all over the world as well as the annual reports of the SSV. It may be assumed that the club was dissolved shortly after the journal ceased publication in 1904.
A third attempt to establish a social club coincided with the first migration wave following World War I. The new Swiss Club of Victoria, founded in 1924, started promisingly. One of its major objectives was to rent a suitable room, where the members could meet at any time, and soon a locality was found in Flinders Lane. The club was moved to Spring Street in 1941, but since the 1970s it has been located in Flinders Lane again.

Due to a rising interest sub-groups were formed within the club's patronage, such as the Folk Dancing Group, the fencing club Le Cercle d'Escrime, the Rifle Club and the Soccer Club until the early 1960s. However, these activities gradually ceased in contrast to the Yodel club Edelweiss which remained popular. Formed in 1953 it still holds a prominent position in the Swiss community. Ladies' Luncheons have been organized four times a year since 1975 in the club's fully licensed restaurant in order to reduce isolation and promote friendship among women.

The second independent Swiss club Matterhorn Society was founded in 1970, primarily to incorporate the wrestling club Schwengverein and the Yodel choir Matterhorn. The Schwengverein claims to be the only wrestling club with weekly training sessions outside Switzerland. Social activities in its premises in Caulfield emphasize the preservation of Swiss culture. Corresponding to the composition of the members, Swiss-German is the spoken language. This largely excludes English, French or Italian speaking persons.

The Trachtengruppe Schwyzergrruessen, also called Australian/Swiss Society was established in 1985. It aims to encourage the wearing of traditional Swiss costumes on social functions. Other objectives are to care for countrymen particularly elderly migrants and to preserve Swiss dialects. The latter was successfully demonstrated in the staging of a Swiss farce in 1986, which was well received by the Swiss community. Up to date the society consists exclusively of lady-members. This contrasts with the other social organizations where men are usually more actively involved.

A further social organization is the society of former students of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich and Lau-
sanne, Gesellschaft ehemaliger Polistudenten, usually referred to as GEP. This voluntary organization operates in Switzerland as well as in numerous cities all over the world including Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney. As Swiss citizenship is not required, many non-Swiss joined after its establishment in 1967, among them several Polish and Hungarian refugees of World War II. Apart from its social gatherings the GEP gained importance by an agreement with the Australian Government in the early 1970s, which recognizes the members' Swiss degrees as equal in value to those obtained at Australian universities. The settlement was reached after long and at times fierce discussions with Australian officials. The allied SUG (Swiss University Graduates) has only a small number of members in Melbourne and is more active in Sydney.

**Clubs in Sydney**

As mentioned earlier the Swiss Society of New South Wales was superseded by the Swiss Club of New South Wales in 1928. Similarly to Melbourne one of their initial objectives was to find a permanent central meeting place. Subsequently the club purchased a house in George Street for their gatherings and it remained in occupation for several decades until the premises were sold in order to finance a holiday house in the alpine resort of Jindabyne in the 1970s. The club then met at the German Club and later in Swiss restaurants in Sydney. Regrettably their house in Jindabyne didn't succeed and was sold at a great loss in 1987.

Unlike their counterparts in Melbourne alternative clubs emerging in Sydney remained independent from the Swiss Club but to a great extent they shared the same members. The Gymnastic Club and its branch, the Yodel Club, started activities in 1928. Although operating by rules its founder and first president wasn't aware of the Australian provision of compulsory registration of the organization with the authorities. Therefore the club was illegal until an unforgettable event ten years later, when the president's crowded van full of noisy junior gymnasts attracted the attention of policemen in King's Cross. The constables threatened him with court action but because of the president's
good reputation the charges were dropped. The club was registered and continued enthusiastically with official blessing.

Due to a lack of interest among newly arrived migrants and ageing of the active members the Gymnastic Club was dissolved in the early 1960s, but the Yodel Club still plays an important part in the Swiss community. The high artistic standard of their singing was acknowledged by excellent marks at the Federal Yodelling Festival in Switzerland in 1984, where they participated together with the yodelling club Edelweiss from Melbourne.

Later founded and still active organizations are the Senior Citizens Club, the Small Bore Rifle Club and the French-Swiss Cercle Romand. They all are of a more casual character but cater for special needs. The Rifle Club conducts weekly training sessions and organizes the yearly riflemen's meeting open to all members of the community. The Senior Citizens Club fosters contacts between elderly Swiss in periodical but informal meetings thus reducing for the migrants problems of ageing and isolation.

As the early winegrowers in Victoria failed to form a club of their own, the Cercle Romand is the only pure French-Swiss organization ever to be established in Australia. In recent years French speaking Swiss in other Australian capitals repeatedly complained about the dominance of German speaking members in all the Swiss organizations. For these linguistic minorities it means that they can adapt either by talking Swiss-German or, what is usually much easier, to communicate in English. Both alternatives lack the relaxation of an environment of one's own native language and they don't offer much incentive to actively participate in an ethnic club. Despite a demonstrated need in the 1970s a recent effort to establish a French-Swiss club failed in Melbourne and was never attempted in smaller communities of other capitals. This makes the Cercle Romand in Sydney the more successful by keeping going over ten years. Their quarterly gatherings, where only French is spoken, remain popular among long established migrants as well as newly arrived families. This in itself contrasts with the general pattern of lack of interest expressed by young Swiss.

**Clubs in Small Communities**

Swiss clubs in the smaller Australian capitals have emerged from informal gatherings held in the years between the two World Wars. In Western Australia it started with regular visits of Swiss to Emil Brändli from Wädenswil in Canton Zurich and his wife Anna, who lived in Roelands, some 20 kilometres east of Bunbury. During the school holidays many Swiss parents sent their children from Perth to the country location in the south, where they enjoyed the company of the six Brändli children. The contacts eventually resulted in the foundation of the first unofficial Swiss Club in Perth in 1936. National Day celebrations were regularly held...
from then onwards. Following the Second World War three of the well established families, including the Brändlis, initiated the introduction of an official Swiss Club in 1949. The club rented a room in East-Perth for one evening each month, where «the men played cards, drank beer and swore» and «the women knitted or sewed», as one of the founding members recalls!

A few years later the first official Swiss clubs in Hobart (1952) and in Adelaide (1953) were founded. Adelaide seems to have emerged in a similar way as the club in Perth. However, it was a newly arrived group of settlers from eastern Switzerland who set up the organization in Hobart. All three clubs discontinued their activities in the late 1950s or early 1960s, as the post-war migrants were too busy being engaged in pursuing personal activities. Furthermore the interests of the new settlers largely differed from the needs of the pre-war migrants, and alternative ethnic clubs, in particular German and Austrian, attracted many Swiss.

The next wave of club foundations started in 1965 with the official establishment of the Swiss Society of Queensland, although informal gatherings had been held on a casual basis since the 1920s. Financed by the society the «Swiss News Queensland» publishes honorary contributions, mainly in English and up to six times a year. In 1966 Adelaide formed a new and this time successful Swiss club, and one year later a growing community in the Australian Capital Territory formed the Canberra Swiss Club.

In 1971 a new social organization in Tasmania replaced the former Swiss club. The Swiss Australian Society of Tasmania concentrates on cultural and social activities and also includes a choir. The Hobart based society remains open to all interested persons, which departs from the practice in Melbourne and Sydney. Membership in those Swiss Australian Societies is gained by invitation only. However, the common aim of all societies is to intensify the cultural, commercial, scientific and educational contacts between the two countries.

The present Swiss club in Perth was only established in 1976, but due to its continued success it is now in 1987 considering the purchase of its own club house. The latest addition to the chronology of club foundations is the Swiss involvement in the Swiss-Australian Club on Queensland's Gold Coast in 1986.

All the active clubs up to date have included provisions for benevolent services in their rules and the organization of social meetings with the National Day of 1 August being the central event. Most clubs incorporate a choir or yodel group and yearly outings are common. Adapted to local conditions and interest, their activities include hiking weekends in Tasmania, amateur theatricals in Adelaide or tennis games in Brisbane. But playing cards, smoking cigars and enjoying the local beer have yet to be replaced as the most common and favourite activities at the weekly or monthly gatherings preferably held privately in Swiss restaurants.

However, despite big efforts of the committees of the Swiss clubs, the motivation of younger as well as newly arrived members of the community to become actively involved, remains a problem. A clue to the roots of that apathy may be found in Darwin. This town is the only Australian capital without a Swiss club, although its community is comparable in size with Hobart.
Vague attempts have been made to set up a social organization but unsuccessfully, as most of the potential members preferred unscheduled meetings whenever they felt like it. Being obliged to find a president and a secretary, having to act according to rules and to write and read minutes were further deterrents. Nevertheless their «compulsory» annual National Day celebrations, held at the home of the honorary consul, always enjoy great popularity. They are indications that the Swiss at the «Top End» aren’t so very different from their countrymen in the cooler south.

VI. Economic Contributions

First Contacts
The first trade contacts between Australia and Switzerland can be traced back to the 1840s, when the early winegrowers in the Geelong area imported from their homeland vine-grafts and tools. By the time of the Australian federation in 1901 the import business was well established. Among the products were victuals, watches, straw goods, silk and cotton fabrics as well as machinery especially for the textile industry. Colonial trade relations were usually maintained by agents based in London, but after federation new contacts were increasingly established directly with Australian partners.

However, only a few Swiss companies, such as Nestlé, trading in the last century have maintained continuous links with Australia. Most of today’s represented Swiss enterprises established their contacts only after federation and following trade facilitations. This was reflected in a report published in Zurich in 1902 on newly emerging prospects of extended trade relations with the antipodes. It stressed promising opportunities particularly for Swiss engineering works, but it also strongly advised interested entrepreneurs to become first familiar with the English language and the different working conditions, which according to the author Max Huber, occurred in several points.

Nestlé
Nestlé’s chronicle of its early days reads almost like a fairy-tale. It all started in 1867 when chemist Henri Nestlé living in Vevey on the shores of Lake Geneva invented a milk product for premature babies. This product was an immediate success and sold worldwide like the later condensed milk and chocolate.

Despite the difficulties in the mid-1870s, when an extended dockers’ strike in Melbourne hampered the unloading of Nestlé products, Australia proved a booming market for the company. Condensed milk was in high demand in a country with extensive
isolated rural areas and hot summers. Following the turn of the century Australia had become Nestlé's second largest export market with a turnover of 200,000 cases of condensed milk annually.

Partly due to increased import duties Nestlé started to produce condensed milk in Australia and purchased for that purpose the then largest condensed milk factory in the country in 1906. This included two condenseries, the larger one being situated in Toogoolawah 120 km north-west of Brisbane, with 1400 cows on seven dairy farms. After having established the head office in Sydney in 1908 Nestlé built up a factory in Dennington west of Warrnambool in Victoria shortly before World War I.

The company's later expansions were achieved in several ways. New products were developed, such as powdered instant coffee and full cream milk powder with a long shelf life in the 1930s, licences for products and marketing were granted, and above all mergers with companies of the food industry proved very effective. Shortly after the second World War the Swiss company Maggi joined the group and started its Australian production of convenience food in 1951.

In 1971 another Swiss company merged with Nestlé, Ursina and consequently its Australian subsidiary in Tongala in northern Victoria. Tongala Milk, as it is known, started production in 1950 set up by well trained Swiss staff. The decision to establish an Australian subsidiary may well have been influenced by the then chairman of Ursina's board of directors, Louis de Castella who was a son of the gentleman-winegrower Hubert de Castella. Hubert's first son François chose the planned dairy's location in Tongala as he was familiar with the area through one of his earlier vineyards nearby. François' eldest son initially administered the dairy, which produced mainly milk, milk-powder, butter as well as cheese and these later complemented Nestlé's production range. The Swiss employed in Tongala subsequently left the new company or joined Nestlé elsewhere.

In the mid 1980s Nestlé Australia Ltd employed 2400 persons including a considerable number of Swiss migrants, particularly chefs, and the company recorded an annual turnover of half a billion dollars.

**Hanro**

In the mid-1920s the Swiss textile company Hanro established its Australian subsidiary Hanro-Bendigo Knitting Mill. It followed as a consequence of protective policies world-wide with high import duties on imported merchandise in the aftermath of World War I. In 1925 Hanro's export market had come to a near standstill above all in the British Commonwealth including Australia.

Due to the recommendations of Hanro's representative in Australia and the then Swiss Consul in Sydney, Eugen Bloch, the company considered setting up a subsidiary «Down Under» in
order to supply its well established clientele. It was found that a partnership with a manufacturer in Bendigo was the most promising project and finally Hanro's new enterprise started production in early 1927. For that purpose Swiss born architect Bill Böckli from Melbourne was commissioned to build the new factory, highly specialized machinery was shipped from Switzerland to Victoria and employees of the parent company were encouraged to accept five year contracts to help organize the manufacturing.

For the people in the company's town Liestal in Canton Basle-Country, ignorance of Australia must have been profound. When it came to recruitment for the required personnel one of Hanro's interested staff reportedly looked in vain for the home of kangaroos and eucalypts on a very detailed European map! Nevertheless minor and major problems were sorted out and in November 1926 twenty-six personnel, including the managing director of the Australian subsidiary Carl Handschin together with his family and 18 female employees, left Switzerland. On their arrival in the Port of Melbourne the Hanro group was greeted by several unknown countrymen, who had recognized their «square heads», which according to the unexpected welcome committee were unmistakable signs of Swiss origin!

In Bendigo the arrival of these migrants who were hardly able to make themselves understood in English, obviously created quite a sensation among the locals. Australian authors liked to stress the fact that Hanro had sent 22 Swiss women, but in their excitement they miscalculated the actual number of the ladies and forgot about the few male specialists as well as the director.

Feeling the effects of the economic depression the knitting mill initially struggled. The subsidiary became profitable only after the increased demand due to World War II revived business. The involvement of Swiss personnel phased out in the early 1930s, when ill health forced Carl Handschin to return to Switzerland and also most of his compatriots soon repatriated disliking the harsher leadership of the Australian successor. However, a few remained and settled in Melbourne and Adelaide. Josef Gehrig, a foreman with Hanro, later established Marquise Knitting Mills in Melbourne, which is still run by his son and maintains close ties with the Swiss textile industry. Hanro-Bendigo was sold in 1967 after having lost the majority of its shares.

**Representations of Other Swiss Companies**

Probably encouraged by Hanro's undertaking in Australia three watchmakers and their families left Waldenburg in Canton Basle-Country in 1930 and started together the Swiss Watch Company in Bendigo. But it was the availability of gold for their watches that attracted them rather than the presence of another Swiss company. They manufactured watch cases and assembled them with imported works from Switzerland. The enterprise was never really successful because of Australia's economic crisis and later personal problems between the partners. Eventually all three families repatriated prior to the second World War.

Along with the build-up of the Swiss food, textile and machine industry went the establishment of the service industry.
Zurich-Australian Insurance for instance was created as a subsidiary in 1921 with its head office in Sydney and branches in all state capitals except Hobart. Prior to 1982 the company was known as «Commonwealth Assurance Corporation».

Since World War II Swiss industrial interests in Australia increased with the country’s development. The expanding Australian heavy industry enticed a number of Swiss engineering works. Sulzer delegated a permanent resident engineer for service works in 1951 and opened a branch office in 1963. This company was involved in the construction of power stations for the Snowy Mountains Scheme in close collaboration with another Swiss giant, Brown Boveri in the 1950s. A boom in the building industry in the same period created the right market conditions for Wild, today’s Wild Leitz in Sydney, a specialist company supplying instruments used for surveys, drawing and in laboratories.

The construction of four new oil refineries encouraged the Swiss chemical industry to start their Australian operations. Ciba opened a sales office in Sydney in 1948 and took up its local production of plastics, dyestuffs and agricultural chemicals in the early 1960s. In 1971 the parent company of Ciba merged with Geigy, another Baale based manufacturer of chemical products, to become Ciba-Geigy. Geigy had opened its sales office in Sydney in 1946 and by 1966 its Australian made agricultural chemicals entered the market. Roche established its Australian subsidiary in 1954 and specializes now in marine pharmacology. Another well known Swiss manufacturer of chemicals, Sandoz, opened its subsidiaries in Melbourne and Sydney in 1956 and later started to produce dyestuff and plastics. In 1979 Sandoz took over the producer of milk products, Wander, whose subsidiary in Burnie is the only Swiss company in Tasmania.

Consequent upon the increased trading activities between the two countries Swiss forwarding agents entered the Australian market in the late 1950s and early 1960s, as did other service industries like banks and insurance companies. By the mid-1980s most major Swiss companies were represented in Australia by a wholly owned subsidiary, as majority share holders of an Australian company, with a branch office or at least through a local agent.

**Economic Imprints**

In many of the post-war Australian industrial projects Swiss involvement can be traced, such as Brown Boveri’s engineering participation of the ski-tube in the Snowy Mountains and Von Roll’s knowhow in the construction of the mono-rails at the Gold Coast, Brisbane’s Expo 88 as well as in Sydney. The external guy-cables of Sydney’s Centre Point Tower were manufactured by a Melbourne based company established by a Swiss engineer under licence of BBRV Zurich. Epoxy resins supplied by Ciba-Geigy are bonding the shells of the Sydney Opera House. Zellweger-Uster provided Australia with the first ticket vending machine in Melbourne and with the money acceptor for the first automatic petrol station in Brisbane. One of Australia’s largest travel companies, World Travel Headquarters, is Swiss controlled.

On several occasions multinational Swiss companies became involved in controversies. For example in the late 1970s Nestlé’s marketing policies of baby food in the Third World came under close scrutiny. Nabalco, jointly owned by Alusuisse and its Australian partners, was drawn in the 1980s into an ongoing legal battle due to its mining operations of bauxite on Gove Peninsula in the Northern Territory. The chemical industry regularly attracts criticism in connection with alleged health hazards caused by their agricultural and pharmaceutical products. This applies in a similar way to the controversies surrounding the closely guarded bank secrecy by Swiss banks.

However, the general perception of Swiss industrial activities in Australia is positive due to high standards of quality and reliability of Swiss products and service. It has become quite common to identify and market diverse products with the label «Swiss» irrespective of their origin.

«Swiss cheese» terms all cheese with large holes, whether manufactured as the original Emmental in Canton Berne, or in Austria, Sweden and even Tasmania. This forced producers of
other Swiss cheese varieties to create exotic names in order to avoid confusion. A Swiss born cheese maker of Exton in Tasmania sells his Gruyère style cheese as Heidi cheese thus associating his product unmistakably with his native country. «Swiss» in the Australian language also seems to substitute superlative expressions for tastiness and health without having a corresponding equivalence in Switzerland. There, «Swiss chocolate» flavoured milk drinks are just chocolate drinks, «Swiss mueslis» common on Australia’s breakfast tables are unknown in variety and frequency on their Swiss counterparts, and Swiss visiting Australia are surprised to learn that their Dr Vogel has created a well known bread for the people «Down Under».

Watches are certainly the best known Swiss export products apart from food, and watch-makers from the French speaking valleys of the Jura Mountains settled in Australia for over a century. Their work was marked by precision and reliability as well as full after-sale service. These aspects best sum up the strategy of multinational groups and small businesses under Swiss control, although it usually means initially higher costs. The preference for quality, an eagerness to meet commitments and a compelling desire for punctuality are characteristics found in most Swiss migrants and often passed on over later generations.

However, these positive features of Swiss and their descendants also often mean a lack of readiness in taking the risks associated with building up large enterprises. Europe Strength Food based in Melbourne is probably the only commonly known company, which has been built up from scratch by a Swiss confectioner together with Australian partners.

VII. Contemporary Migration

Innovators of the 1920s and 1930s
The end of the first World War initiated the immigration of predominantly tradesmen and pastry-cooks in particular. Swiss cake-shops mushroomed in Adelaide, Brisbane, Geelong, Melbourne, Sydney and Perth. They were famous for their multi-layer-cakes of unsurpassed height and fanciful decorations, their delicious home-made pralines and their meringues. Milk-shakes, the latest fancies from Europe, proved very successful in Australia especially after Swiss born Gustav Bosshard from Melbourne had invented a mixer to produce «milk-champagne» with dif-
ferent flavours and a forerunner of today’s shakes. A similar drink was created by Paul Künzli in Perth and labelled «aerated milk».

In the mid-1920s Perth was Australia’s Swiss pastry-cook capital, triggered by the arrival of Franz Bernet in 1928. Bernet quickly became enthusiastic about the potential of the sweets industry in this isolated city, and he subsequently recruited six young and well trained pastry-cooks from Switzerland for his shop in 1928. However, the success of the enterprise was short-lived. The Swiss migrants, who were used to working hard and long hours, ran into vehement objections from the local trade union. Additionally Bernet had overestimated the market, rendering him unable to further employ and pay the countrymen he had brought to Western Australia. After an argument the Swiss walked out on Bernet and four of them found work in Melbourne and Geelong. The remaining two headed for the Western Australian gold-fields. One of those was Paul Künzli from Muhen in Canton Aargau, who successfully saved money while working in Boulder enabling him to buy his own café and cake-shop on his return to Perth. His innovative decorations on cakes are still remembered by now elderly customers.

Hairdressing was another popular occupation among the migrants of the '20s and '30s. These tradesmen were attracted to Melbourne and to a lesser extent to Perth. Similarly to the pastry-cooks, they built up a high reputation through their innovative work. This included permanent waves, first offered by a French-Swiss hairdresser in Melbourne’s suburb of Toorak and attracting customers from as far away as Sydney. The same salon was the first in Australia with a large front window, through which the activities could be observed from the outside. It created quite a sensation at that time as many ladies were embarrassed to be seen with curling-pins in their hair.

A noteworthy group of migrants heading for Sydney in 1930 consisted of half a dozen skilled embroidery specialists. They were sent to start embroidery fabrication for a Sydney based company run by a Swiss, W. Pfanner, in close collaboration with the renowned manufacturer Sturzenegger from St. Gall. This coincided with the common practice of Swiss companies until recent years of sending specialists to Australia charged with the establishment of workshops and thus considerably enhancing the proportion of skilled tradesmen among the migrants throughout the country. Many of these specialists, usually young bachelors, repatriated after completion of their missions. Therefore the Swiss community in Australia at large transformed into a provisional and mobile settlement, which was reflected in prompt complaints of the Swiss clubs in Melbourne and Sydney on the high rotation rate of their members.

Among the contemporary Swiss migrants to Australia few were farmers or farm-hands. This group preferred the rural areas of Argentina and after the second World War found new opportunities in the United States, Canada and New Zealand. One might assume that the Australian climate deterred larger contingents. However, those Swiss farmers who actually came didn’t favour known similar conditions in Tasmania but those of Queensland. The tropics particularly Gordonvale south of Cairns later attracted sugar-cane farmers originating from the eastern part of Switzerland. Other Swiss established banana plantations on both sides of the border between Queensland and New South Wales as well as around Coffs Harbour in the latter state.

Swiss farmers settling in Australia apparently turned to the cultivation of exotic crops thus departing from their traditional Swiss products. Dairy, fattening and tillage were too risky according to dissuasive reports by the Swiss consulates. However, the negative judgement on investments into Australia’s primary industry failed to deter Charles Brunner becoming innovative in forestry. Due to the short supply of raw materials preceding World War II this manufacturer of wooden chests pioneered the plantation of Pinus Radiata for his enterprise in Sydney.

Contributions in Arts

Migrant artists strongly influenced new directions and perceptions in Australian art with a noteworthy Swiss contribution, which had started in the 1860s when Louis Buvelot used his wide experience obtained in Europe and Brazil to form a new era in landscape painting in Victoria. A few decades later Sali Herman,
another experienced Swiss artist, became the main exponent of an even broader perception of landscape painting than Buvelot. In 1944 Herman was awarded the Wynne Prize for his «McElhone Stairs». It was his first Australian distinction of many to follow and the more remarkable, as the prestigious prize was awarded to a non-Australian for the first time. To add to the resulting criticism, Herman's street scene was inspired by Sydney's inner suburbs, which were generally regarded then as slums unworthy to be depicted and certainly not to be described as landscape.

Sali Herman was born in Zurich in 1898 the eleventh of nineteen children. Sali's father, Israel Hermann Jakubowitsch, was a Polish born Jew and a drapery salesman. After his death in 1914 the education of the numerous family was left in the sole hands of his wife Sahra Mirilia, born Malinski. The family name caused some irritation during the first World War when seven drafted Jakubowitsch brothers gave the authorities of the Swiss army some headaches. In order to avoid the picture of a «Russian» infiltration the army requested the soldiers to change their names, which they did by adopting their father's given name Hermann (spelt Herman in Australia) as their new family name.

Already during his childhood Sali Herman expressed his love for painting. This was suppressed by his father, who offered his son violin lessons instead. Sali responded by decorating the margins of his exercise books with drawings! Herman's turning point to pursue a career as a painter came during his stay in Paris from 1914 to 1916, when he met influential artists. On his return to Zurich he took up lessons in drawing and composing and exhibited his paintings for the first time in 1918. After his marriage he had to suspend painting and made a living for his growing family as an arts and oriental carpet dealer.

Anti-semitism and economic depression in Europe led to Sali's decision to follow his mother, who had settled in Australia some years earlier. In 1937 Herman with his second wife and his children from the first marriage arrived in Melbourne. Determined to become a full-time painter he studied at the George Bell Studio relying heavily on his teacher's French, as initially he didn't speak any English.

One year after his arrival Herman settled in Sydney, being attracted to its more European character. Subsequently he was engaged in contemporary art controversies by attacking the exclusive support of the «gum tree school» of art critics leaving very little room for acceptance of European artists and the subject of urban Australian landscapes. His artistic efforts of broadening the perception of landscape painting is reflected in the dominance of his street scenes. Sydney's inner suburbs of Paddington, Kings Cross and Woolloomooloo, provided Herman with scenes of lively character. Catching and reproducing this atmosphere «gave the artist something back» which remained his major pre-condition in selecting subjects.
Street scenes dominate Herman's work although he had several opportunities to depict different themes. During the second World War he was an official war painter stationed in Papua New Guinea and on the Solomon Islands. His post-war journeys took him to distant places all over Australia including Tasmania and Melville Island in the far north. Sali Herman's list of awards ranges from the Wynne Prize (four times), Sulman Prize (twice) to Esquire Officer of the British Empire and Order of Saint Michael and Saint George.

According to Sali Herman the best ever art critic in Australia was Paul Haeffiger (1914–1982), who wrote for the «Sydney Morning Herald» from 1941 to 1957. Haeffiger, born in Hamburg to Swiss parents, had already travelled extensively before settling in Sydney. There he trained as a painter at Sydney's Julian Ashton School. He deepened his artistic knowledge at the Westminster Art School in London but returned to Sydney in 1939 together with his wife and fellow-painter Jean Bellete. The couple subsequently engaged in the publication of the reformed «Art in Australia» until war-time conditions forced the cessation of the journal. Although Haeffiger kept working as an artist, and both the Art Galleries of New South Wales and Western Australia each purchased one of his paintings, his major contribution to Australian arts was his strong support of modernist ideas. Apart from backing migrant artists such as Sali Herman, he recognized promising talents like Sydney Nolan, whose style was initially attacked as being childish. Haeffiger lacked a sense of humour, but his competent, fair and constructive critiques were appreciated by artists. In 1957 Haeffiger moved to Majorca in Spain and spent the rest of his life either there or in Australia, France and Switzerland, where he died in 1982.

War-Time
During both World Wars the Swiss community was little affected by harassment from the Australian population despite traditionally close links between the German and Italian groups all over the country. Swiss had no necessity to go into hiding and they didn't anglicize their names for other than practical spelling reasons. Their only concession to a changed political environment was made by a more distinct use of the English language in public life and social gatherings. However, Germans and Italians, who tried to capitalize on the relaxed relationship between Australia and the Swiss community, didn't find shelter by associating themselves with the respective Swiss language groups.

Only one case was reported, where a Swiss born in Germany had been interned in Australia for alleged involvement with the German Nazis. He was freed after intervention by Swiss officials, who arranged his repatriation during the war. But the Swiss probably most exposed to Australian resentment against any Nazi or German identity was Karl Reber from Thun in Canton Berne, the last editor of the «Queensland Herald». The «Herald», which was the only remaining newspaper to be published in the German language after 1929 and before being joined by a Nazi propaganda journal in 1934, was forced to close down in 1939. It followed a government raid on its premises in Brisbane resulting in the confiscation of files, documents and all past issues.

Many of the Swiss migrants lost one or more sons on Europe's and Asia's battlefields after having been drafted into the Australian army in either war. Naturalized Swiss were recruited like all other Australians despite holding a dual-citizenship. A few settlers joined the Australian army voluntarily as friendly aliens in order to fight for freedom and to combat dictatorship as did Sali Herman.

Activities of Swiss representatives in Australia during the second World War were considerable, although only a limited number of new Swiss settlers arrived mainly from Asian countries. Switzerland, remaining neutral during the entire conflict, represented the interests of several enemy countries in Australia including Japan. Until the early 1940s an honorary consul general in Sydney, an honorary consul in Melbourne and an honorary consular agent in Brisbane were in charge. However, the alleged unsatisfactory treatment of Japanese war prisoners made it necessary to upgrade the services and a consul general was allocated to the office in Sydney with increased authority including the right to officially intervene on behalf of the internees. But
also the personal efforts of honorary representatives were highly appreciated. Henry Schaub from Basle and the Swiss representative in Brisbane courageously supported the interests of Italians. His actions are still remembered with gratitude by some of the elderly members of that community.

**Arrival of Swiss Born Displaced Women**

The first Swiss to arrive after World War II were generally delegates of Swiss companies. They replaced the few migrants that had taken the delayed opportunity to repatriate. But a larger group soon followed. At least 100 Swiss ladies, married to displaced persons originating in eastern Europe and particularly in Poland, arrived in Australia in 1950.

Switzerland being a neutral state midst a war-torn Europe attracted thousands of refugees. A large contingent of displaced persons mainly of Polish origin were accommodated in camps in and around Zurich. They were allowed to work and to continue their studies at Swiss universities but had to return to their camps at night. Due to social contacts many refugees married or were engaged to Swiss girls by the end of the war. When they married they lost their Swiss citizenship by automatically acquiring those of their husband according to Swiss civil law. However, they became de facto stateless persons due their husbands' refugee status. Civil servants, aware of this fact, warned the wouldbe wives of the consequences. Their well meant but at times indiscreet advices were all but well received by the engaged couples.

The large intake of refugees was considered an increasing economic burden. This caused the Swiss government to adopt a post-war policy to force young and healthy internees and their Swiss born wives to look for an alternative country. Little known Australia usually was their second or third choice and only then considered when job opportunities «Down Unders» looked promising or after their applications for the favourite destinations in northern America had been turned down for health reasons.

Those who arrived in Melbourne in 1950 were placed in camps in the countryside. Their search for individual accommodation proved very difficult, and employment was given in factories irrespective of their qualifications and former promises granted by Australian representatives in Switzerland. These circumstances as well as widespread Australian prejudices towards migrants rendered their initial adaptation difficult.

The impact of their forced migration left a lasting impression. The Swiss ladies were confronted by contrasting low living standards in Australia. For instance lack of sewerage in some areas came as a complete surprise to them. Yet some new neighbours and landlords in ignorance repeatedly asked them whether people in Switzerland used toilets at all. Other caring neighbours even found it appropriate to check whether the children of the migrants were dressed properly including panties by lifting the girls' skirts in the presence of the mothers. Nevertheless the usually well educated ladies quickly improved their English and learnt to appreciate the qualities of their host country and its people.

Psychological stress on the forced migrants was caused by the unexpected circumstances in Australia as well as by their disturbed relationship with their native country. For centuries Swiss people had emigrated of their own free will with the assurance of permission to repatriate at any given time. Similarly to the very poor and outcasts who had been deported to New York in the early 20th century, the ladies of the '50s were the only Swiss to be denied any later return. Their discrimination became even more obvious when they met Australian born wives and children of Swiss men, who were free to settle anywhere in Switzerland without having any knowledge of its language and culture. It may well be that one Swiss lady was the only exception to be allowed to return with her displaced husband, but only after providing medical proof of incurable homesickness with fatal consequences.

This inhuman handling of the ladies' situation provoked vehement discussions in Switzerland and eventually led to a major alteration in the Swiss citizenship law in 1953. From then onward the women were able to remain Swiss after being married to a non-Swiss, and the new law effectively eliminated any
future possibility of becoming stateless. The women already married were given the opportunity to regain their native citizenship. An estimated third of all wives of displaced men living in Australia applied and were promptly successful. The others still resented the unfair treatment received preceding their departure and contented themselves with the Australian citizenship for which they became entitled to at the same time.

Homesickness among the forced migrants was widespread and they kept in touch with each other, the majority having settled in Melbourne. By this time their husbands were quite fluent in Swiss-German due in part to their time as internees and they became active members of the Swiss Club of Victoria, rather than joining Polish, Czech and Hungarian organizations. Several of them also supported later arrived Swiss professionals in the attempt to have their degrees obtained at Swiss universities recognized by Australian authorities.

The Lure of Australia
The first significant wave of independent Swiss settlers in the post-war period was lured to the antipodes by the opportunities of the Olympic Games in Melbourne held in 1956. Landscaping and the building industry were expected to offer contract work, upon which the migrants intended to build up their own businesses. These professionals were joined by 36 Swiss chefs, recruited by Mr Myer, the head of Melbourne's renowned retail store. Myer, who was in charge of the Games' catering, had travelled to Switzerland in 1958 to engage the qualified personnel. They were among the first migrants to arrive by plane. Flying only during daytime their memorable journey took five days to complete. The nights were spent in hotels, the men and their wives being accommodated separately, although some of them were on their honeymoon.

Meanwhile the Swiss community was preparing for an appropriate reception of the athletes representing their homeland. The Swiss Club of Victoria organized a banquet and the Gymnastic Club in Sydney made reservations at the Games for its members in order to support the Swiss gymnasts, who then ranked among the world's best. However, Switzerland belonged to those nations who withdrew from the Olympics following Russia's occupation of Hungary. The resulting disappointment in the community was so great that the arrival of the only official Swiss athlete participating in an event preceding the Games remained unnoticed. He had left home more than one year prior to the opening ceremony to cover the long walking distance from Zurich to Melbourne! On his arrival he learnt about the absence of the team and the resulting cancellation of the flight scheduled to bring the Swiss athletes back home. For the transcontinental walker this meant looking for a job to finance his return. However, when the time had come he decided in favour of Australia and settled permanently.

Like this athlete most of the chefs became long-term residents. After the Olympics they dispersed throughout Australia and many eventually opened own restaurants. This fulfilled the common dreams of young tradesmen of owning a business, as comparable prospects in Switzerland without inheritance were much more difficult. Success stories from the United States and later increasingly from Australia stimulated the imagination of potential migrants.

A landscape architect, who arrived in Melbourne prior to the Olympics, had to be content with a job of pruning roses for old ladies. However, his fortunes soon improved when he took over the fabrication of dusters, which has earned him several export awards from the federal government since. Looking for new challenges he developed a solar heating system and was consequently nominated for a BHP award for the pursuit of excellence in 1987. In Brisbane a labourer invested his savings in buying land on the capital's south shore. The blocks were sold so successfully that the owner was able to finance a respectable and now thriving retail store. In the same city a businessman became the director of the Institute of Modern Languages at the University of Queensland. Together with a compatriot professor at the University of Tasmania he was actively involved in setting new standards for programs of interpreters in Australia.
Emigration or Extensive Honeymoon?

The overall number of Swiss migrants to Australia increased dramatically in the late 1960s and early '70s when they were eligible for free passages provided by the Australian government. This offer was linked with the migrant's obligation to stay and work in the country for at least two years otherwise repayments applied. Consequently this scheme became subject to vehement controversy as it was repeatedly abused by persons including those couples who married in Switzerland. They had their honeymoon on a ship to Melbourne and Sydney paid by Australia only to abscond after a few weeks through one of the harbours in the country's north. In the public opinion the government's immigration program had failed even more by the prompt return of Swiss settlers after their minimum term of two years. Consequently the Swiss belonged to those migrant groups, for whom eligibility for free passages was cancelled.

During the years from 1969 to 1971 more than 3000 Swiss emigrated to Australia, most of whom were fully subsidized. A population movement of such an extent had not been experienced by Australia's Swiss community since the arrival of the Italian speaking gold-miners in the 1850s. But the peak was short-lived and followed by the repatriation of an estimated 1000 persons in 1972.

This obviously low success rate of permanent Swiss settlers was a disappointing result for the Australian government, although temporary residences are the most common and distinct features of contemporary Swiss migration. A 1985 survey conducted in Melbourne showed that only 15% of all Swiss questioned, including the Swiss ladies married to refugees, arrived in the last 60 years with the intention of residing permanently. The rest expected to return after up to five years for those who arrived until the 1950s and up to two years for those who arrived more recently. Though many overstayed their intended period, more than one third of all settlers arrived in the last 60 years indeed repatriated and 10% left for a third country after 2–3 years. Another third moved on and settled finally in a different Australian state.
This pronounced temporary character of Swiss migration left its mark in the Swiss community in Australia. Swiss clubs find it difficult to attract newly arrived compatriots and to involve them in the active participation of the organizations. Newcomers usually prefer contacts with Australians to make the most of their intended short stay including improved comprehension of the English language as well as customs and culture. Mixing with compatriots is often limited to National Day celebrations and casual acquaintances. They prefer to distance themselves from their countrymen when selecting places of residence, which is reflected in the scattered settlement pattern. No concentrations of Swiss are to be found in Australia, neither in suburbs nor in rural areas. The explanation usually given for the lack of interest in each other sums it up, namely that they didn’t leave home just to meet other Swiss!

This Swiss attitude towards social contacts also explains the swift integration into the Australian society and a high proportion of marriages with non-Swiss. These characteristics additionally to their high standard of training and their willingness to work contribute to an image of ideal settlers. Australia even profits from the high repatriation rate qualitatively, as most unsuccessful migrants leave within a short period.

Repatriation is facilitated by the provisions of Swiss law to permit multiple citizenship. This makes it attractive for many undecided persons to apply for naturalization before they leave Australia so as to leave the door open for a possible later return. This definitely supports those who are confronted with difficult re-integration into Swiss society which is often more problematic than adaptation in foreign countries. Having become more used to a relaxed attitude towards life and work, coping with a society back home within closely monitored rules leads to frustrations and the recognition of Australia’s freedom in dealing with one’s own life. Therefore it is not surprising to learn that several short-term migrants of the early 1970s came back to Australia a second time and settled happily.

Even among the permanent Swiss settlers in Australia the question of an eventual repatriation remains unanswered often for decades in the search for the best of two worlds. A first decision is usually made when the children reach their school age, as most parents consider the Swiss educational system as superior to the Australian counterpart. A next distinct turning point arrives when the migrants approach retirement and are not willing to be buried in foreign soil. However, the realizations of their repatriation dreams are generally doomed after thirty or forty years in Australia, because friends and family would be missed, because the environment of the home country doesn’t match their memories any more, or even that their favoured golf is simply too expensive to pursue in Switzerland!

Latest Trends
After the cancellation of free passages in the mid-1970s the character of Swiss migration to Australia turned even more temporary. Professionals and tradesmen often left Australia after having obtained a fair impression of local working conditions, after having stilled their curiosity of culture and environment and after having improved their proficiency in English. This trend increased dramatically with the immigration restrictions imposed by the Australian government in early 1983 as a response to growing unemployment. In consequence most of the recently arrived Swiss were either highly qualified specialists under contract to a Swiss or an Australian company holding temporary visas. Others had been trained in one of the few trades still in demand, such as chefs.

However, there was still room left for other Swiss to apply successfully for permanent residency in Australia. A sense of adventure, the prospect of becoming self-employed and owning a house continued to be major reasons behind the decision to leave home. Among other reasons that have always played an important role in the consideration to emigrate were negative attitudes towards the compulsory Swiss military service for men. New environmental issues arose in the mid-1980s, such as air pollution, dying forests, nuclear power accidents and diminishing resources in Europe, which made Australia with its wide open spaces a particularly attractive destination. However,
threats of nuclear war have not influenced the Swiss migration to Australia unlike in war-experienced Germany.

The Swiss presence in Australia has been enhanced by a growing number of tourists due to dropping air-fares and advantageous exchange rates. During the 1970s Darwin became a favourite resting place for Swiss «hippies» arriving from South Asia and in need of travel money. As lonely as early settlers might have felt in the antipodes in the past, today's Swiss migrants are kept busy catering for friends and relatives especially when living in Australian cities with international airports. As the tourists are usually shown the positive faces of the country, they increasingly apply for permanent residency after their return. They add to a continuing Swiss interest in Australia as an alternative place to live in, if not permanently, at least temporarily.

VIII. The Swiss Community of the 1980s

Community Profile
The Australian census of 1981 shows a total of 6383 Swiss born persons, of which one third lived in Sydney and one fourth in Melbourne. These figures include the persons not holding Swiss citizenship and those who had not grown up in their native country during their most formative years. In order to obtain a more accurate number of Swiss migrants who correspond with the definition of being Swiss, census figures have to be corrected to an estimated 6000 persons.

However, proportional shares compared to census data remain unaltered. Slightly more than half of these migrants were male (56%) which is a considerably lower percentage than a century earlier when women accounted for 15% only of all Swiss. Changes in the sex-ratio of small communities were even more pronounced. South Australia recorded a male share of over 90% in the 1980s but only slightly below 50% in the 1970s and 1960s, which is a similar development to that in the Australian Capital Territory. There Swiss men appeared solely in the 1933 census, but they lost their numbers dominance to women in the mid-1960s. Though the highest female proportion of Swiss in Australia of 64% recorded in Tasmania's 1947 census may be explained by an unrepresentative number of listed persons, it certainly contrasts with corresponding figures further north. Limited prospects of employment in mining and hotel industries of Queensland and Northern Territory confined the women's percentage continuously to below 40%.

Approximately half of the Swiss working in Australia in the 1980s had been trained in service industries. Clerical employees including bookkeepers accounted for the largest proportion and replaced merchants, once the most numerous group. They are followed by employees of the hotel industry, particularly chefs. The high educational level within service industries is further emphasized by a high representation of professionally qualified
and technical personnel. However, the largest single group, that of automotive mechanics, is to be found in the manufacturing industry and is most popular among young Swiss migrants. Of similar importance though less numerous are employees of the metal and engineering industries. These blue collar workers comprise another half of the total Swiss workforce thus leaving an insignificant proportion of personnel working in the primary industry, such as mining and farming.

Occupational differences between the Swiss communities are created by the requirements of the Australian state. Clerical workers and professionals dominate Canberra's Swiss workforce due to the city's administrative and educational functions. Other characteristics are rather hard to explain. There is no plausible reason why almost as many hairdressers settled in Western Australia as in New South Wales. More than twice the number of Swiss chefs are to be found in New South Wales than in Victoria, although Melbourne boasts more renowned Swiss restaurants than Sydney, where many engage in catering services for large enterprises including airlines. This also applies to a lesser extent to bakers and pastry-cooks. On the other side half of all Swiss butchers in Australia are working in Victoria! In Hobart, Tasmania a high proportion of chefs has entered into teaching of their craft.

Conclusive evidence on the characteristics of a community is also reached by the absence of certain occupations. Apart from a small number of farmers and miners, religious welfare is under represented despite large numbers of Swiss settlers in Melbourne and Sydney, which would justify a more pronounced presence of clergymen. It may be explained by a professional difference between the countries. Unlike in Australia lay preachers rarely exist in Switzerland, where the majority of ministers and priests hold a master's degree in theology. Furthermore Swiss churches rely on the financial support of the government which is provided by a special church tax. Swiss congregations are not dependent on donations and voluntary work although they are both much appreciated.

Switzerland's population of 1980 consisted of 44% Roman-Catholics, 50% Protestants and 6% of no or other denominations, such as Jews and Old-Catholics. Among Protestants German-Swiss follow the principles of the reformer from Zurich, Zwingli, while French-Swiss follow those of Calvin from Geneva. Calvin corresponded extensively with the Scottish reformer Knox, who was the founder of the Presbyterian Church. As the religious views of the three reformers are similar in content, Protestant Swiss migrants in Australia affiliate particularly with the local Continuing Presbyterian Church. Influential Swiss settlers of the early days, such as Henry Spondly, became lay preachers of the original Presbyterian Church. Incidentally Spondly was a descendent of Zwingli and he was born in the famous parsonage beside the Grossmünster in Zurich. Today's Uniting Church attracts in turn a similar number of followers among the Swiss as the Presbyterian Church but the Lutheran Church, which conducts its services in German draws only small numbers of followers among the Swiss.

In the 1980s only one third of all Swiss settlers in Australia were Catholics, well below the Swiss average. This indicates a higher readiness among the Protestants to emigrate in these days and it certainly contrasts with the last century's exodus of Catholic gold-miners from the Cantons Ticino and Grisons. Today's Swiss Protestants and Catholics in Australia alike are confronted with a high variety of churches to choose from to become a member. A strong commitment expected in financial matters and voluntary work keeps their membership numbers below 50%. For most interested Swiss the choice of a suitable church is primarily based on convenience. They attend the church of their Australian spouses, perhaps the particular church offers good schooling for their children, or the church's location is simply nearby.

Only one in four of married Swiss migrants has a Swiss partner. The same proportion applies to Swiss women married to non-Swiss and the remaining half accounts for Swiss men with wives of different origin. This small share of Swiss couples underlines the diversity of the community, but it is also the result of a higher repatriation rate than among couples with non-Swiss partners. In most cases the return to Switzerland is caused by a feeling of isolation and loneliness in Australian suburbs and particularly
by homesickness of women. Two thirds of Swiss ladies questioned are prone to homesickness at least occasionally, which compares with less than one fourth of their male compatriots. Unfortunately the situation doesn't leave any real alternatives for Swiss women married to non-Swiss, as job opportunities for their husbands in Switzerland are very limited thus explaining their low repatriation rate. Among the male repatriates two thirds are bachelors while getting married in Australia almost seems to go hand in hand with their decision to settle permanently.

In the 1980s Australia's Swiss community was composed of one fourth of settlers who had resided here for less than five years thus also including temporary residents, from whom one in three will have repatriated after a stay of one to two years. Temporary residence of Swiss is most pronounced in Western Australia and Queensland reflecting the attraction of young single men in recent years to those states.

Contrary to the past the German-Swiss now clearly dominate their other language speaking countrymen. In the 1980s only 12% of the Swiss migrants in Australia were French-Swiss and less than half of one percent were Italian-Swiss, which compares with the figures of 20% and 4.5% in Switzerland. This lack of higher representation may be caused partly by a somewhat dubious reputation Australia still holds in the Neuchâtel area and particularly in the Canton Ticino. Nevertheless the high German-Swiss proportion seems to be a general Swiss trend, as even Canada with its French speaking province Québec didn't attract a substantial French-Swiss contingent. In the Cantons Ticino and Grisons a long tradition of emigration came to an end with the first World War. It was later repalced by migratory movements to German-Swiss industrial areas after the second World War, whereas destinations overseas including Australia were largely ignored.

The Language Dilemma
Which of these languages - English, French, German or Swiss-German dialect - should be spoken at home? This is an important issue and increasingly discussed by young parents since the Commonwealth government adopted new policies regarding the ethnic communities in the 1970s. Earlier the decision was made relatively easy, as all immigrants were expected to adapt to the Australian life-style as quickly as possible including learning the English language. Furthermore children tended to despise their parents for not being like their Australian play-mates and particularly for talking «funny» with a heavy accent or even in a different language. When immigrant parents tried to teach their mother tongue the youngsters usually rejected vehemently speech in any other language but English to avoid exclusion from their peer group. In families with both parents speaking Swiss-German this situation frequently resulted in the children understanding but also in their insistence of replying in English. French-Swiss migrants seem to have been less affected because their native tongue had always been accepted as a taught language in Australian schools.

Since the 1970s Australian policies have replaced a strict integration with a recognition of the ethnic heritage thus fostering bilingual education. Approximately half of the Swiss settlers who arrived after 1970 speak their mother tongue at home with a higher proportion of French-Swiss than German-Swiss. This difference is explained by the fact that Swiss-German dialects differ markedly from the official, written German and they are of little use for later application in Australia. However, the use of standard German is no real option as German-Swiss don't feel at home with this language.

The choice of languages spoken at home is naturally strongly influenced by the mother tongue of both parents. In the 1980s almost half of those families with Swiss parents spoke Swiss-German or French at home. Nearly as many used a blend of their mother tongue with English and only 12% chose English as their dominant communication language. This stands in contrast with those families of Swiss men married to non-Swiss wives. Two thirds used English as their conversation language at home and only 17% actively tried to conserve their native language. Swiss women married to Australians or other migrants tend to prefer
teaching their children their own language rather than English but not to the same extent as Swiss couples.

The choice of selecting the appropriate language is influenced by the parents' education. Swiss migrants with a tertiary background clearly outnumber their lesser trained compatriots in creating a bilingual environment for their children. Therefore the ideal family grouping to preserve Swiss culture for future generations is generated through Swiss couples with tertiary education who arrived in Australia after 1970. Unfortunately these families are rare so there is a lack of comprehension of the native language by the majority of the second generation. Though understanding some Swiss-German or French, they are no more fluent in speaking a foreign language than the average Australian. A resolute commitment of the parents is necessary to overcome rejection of the youngsters when entering school and being exposed to peer pressure. Some parents, who don't feel at ease with their own bilingual situation, may even be convinced that teaching the children a second language could harm their own personalities.

In a new trend children of Swiss migrants increasingly regret not having learnt their parents' language during childhood. This interest isn't caused by the liberal federal policy but rather by more frequent visits to Europe, where language deficiencies are experienced as severe handicaps. To the joy of their parents these children often take up language classes during their higher education.

Newly arrived migrants and visitors from Switzerland are invariably amused to hear the special mix of Swiss-German or French with English from their compatriots in Australia. However, they are subjected to adaptation processes themselves, as they are eager to learn the new language soon after their arrival. For three in four Swiss settlers English becomes the dominating language, which influences the native language to such an extent that newly arrived countrymen at times find it difficult to follow conversations. French is generally better preserved than Swiss-German and women tend to «dilute» their Swiss heritage less than men. The latter also applies for Swiss couples and for migrants of high education. It takes the average Swiss migrant no more than ten years to integrate entirely linguistically into the Australian society.

A linguistic aspect of social interest is the way Swiss address each other in their native tongue when meeting for the first time. Except for a few well defined occupational groups, such as builders or students, people in Switzerland address each other formally and by their family names. Swiss settlers in Australia are becoming much more informal and quickly adopt the relaxed local custom of using first names only. Being familiar with both ways, meetings of compatriots in Australia usually cause moments of uncertainty and embarrassment, as duration of residence as well as status of the other person has to be explored first. After a formal introduction and the recognition that the person vis-à-vis may be a long-term resident the discussions quickly switch to informal and Christian names are used. Concurrent with the use of the English language this behaviour indicates a fast integration into the local society. However, a more subtle analysis reveals that Swiss men are more inclined than women to become informal in their way of introduction probably due to the contacts made at their working places. French-Swiss are distinctly more conservative than their German-Swiss countrymen, and although they introduce themselves by their first names generally they still favour formal phrases even after a couple of decades of residence in Australia.

Perception of Australia

The average Swiss resident in Australia of the 1980s socializes with friends from a wide ethnic range. Associations with exclusively Australian friends are generally rare and found predominantly among newly arrived Swiss migrants who, however, tend to limit their social contacts with compatriots. Friends mainly composed from Swiss are rather found among well established settlers, which indicates that in later life migrants increasingly turn to their roots and to their countrymen who share similar problems.
One subject, which only a small number of Swiss migrants would discuss with their Australian friends, is cricket. When asked in the mid-1980s what they think of the game the answers of 100 families questioned in Melbourne ranged from «the most effective soporific» to «the most interesting sport in the world»! However, only one in five would reply in favour of cricket in contrast with the majority, who could happily do without. This ratio reflects the Swiss unfamiliarity with the games’ rules and tactics. Children rarely manage to convert their fathers despite their involvement as personal cricket «coaches», and the parents newly gained knowledge may eventually be just sufficient to follow their youngsters’ discussions. Even more scarce are fans of Australian Rules Football and rugby, judged to be too rough and inferior to soccer. Other popular sports, such as tennis and golf, are enjoyed by the Swiss as much as by the native population. Clubs may be joined within the first few months after arrival and the resulting social contacts often lead to lasting friendships. Beach activities appeal to Swiss migrants but rank second in favouritism behind hiking in mountainous areas, a traditional outdoor activity in Switzerland. It is in these localities that Swiss may meet higher proportions of countrymen than people of other nationalities.

Swiss are generally renowned for their tendency to disagree with each other leading eventually to compromises after lengthy discussions. However, there is little disagreement among those Swiss living in Australia about the local handling of industrial disputes. According to their opinion Australian unions are too powerful and they usually prefer not being obliged to join them. Furthermore they show little understanding in the frequency and causes of strikes as well as the handling of the disputes by the parties involved.

Swiss are used to solid industrial peace in their native country and only retired people now remember Switzerland’s last nation-wide strike in 1937. Minor disputes are scarce and resolved effectively at short notice and without major disruptions. Swiss entrepreneurs and managers in Australia with local employees proudly refer to similar achievements of good industrial relationships between the working parties of their companies. However, one result of the Australian unions – shorter working hours than in Switzerland – is highly appreciated and the local Swiss workforce definitely feels at ease with these conditions!

Conservation of Swiss Culture
Apart from unionism the Swiss seem to adopt quickly to their new social environment without hanging on to their former cultural identity. Nevertheless guests of these migrants at their homes would not be disappointed when looking for items related with Switzerland, and in only one out of five households would they fail to find any souvenirs on bookshelves, towels in kitchens or Swiss calendars hanging in family rooms and toilets! Sometimes a separate room is decorated with typical Swiss objects thus creating a retreat of special atmosphere. This visual impression is an obvious indication of a remaining attachment to Swiss culture.

An important aspect of cultural ties is the attachment to traditional food and dishes. Four out of five Swiss shop regularly at Swiss butcheries as well as cake-shops if given the opportunity and they visit at least occasionally restaurants run by their countrymen. Some 80% of Swiss own a special pot and equipment, which they usually brought with them from Switzerland in order to cook cheese-fondue. Swiss in Australia experiment at great length to figure out the right cheese mixtures for that purpose. Migrants of the 1950s found Australian cheese to suit their personal taste before imported Swiss cheese became freely available in metropolitan areas in the last decade, and used to their changed taste they have stuck to it. Younger settlers prefer to follow the original recipe and use mainly Swiss cheese. Swiss migrant couples particularly enjoy the constantly growing food variety in Australia during the last few years, which gives them more scope to prepare Swiss dishes. Australian wives of Swiss men quickly learn to include some traditional Swiss meals in their repertoire. In contrast Swiss wives married to Australians are those most likely to drop their cultural heritage of preparing dishes of their native country because their husbands conservatively prefer Australian food.
Well received by the Swiss community was the establishment of the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) on radio in 1977 and on television in 1980. The evening news service on SBS television has been greatly appreciated by more than half of all Swiss whose sets received the transmission. This may be explained by the international rather than national character of the news which corresponds well with similar type broadcasts experienced earlier back home. All capitals except Hobart and Darwin broadcast Swiss programs on their ethnic radio stations. As they are included in the service for German speaking communities, they don't take into account the Swiss multiculturism unfortunately. French-Swiss feel discriminated against especially because they also lack an alternative source of information in their language in a specially edited weekly newspaper for Swiss abroad.

Their German-Swiss compatriots are in a more fortunate situation and make use of the publications. One in two subscribes to an overseas edition of a newspaper or a magazine to keep themselves informed on current affairs in Switzerland. In particular newly arrived Swiss migrants are keen to preserve comprehensive communication links at least as long as they expect to repatriate. High subscriber rates are also found among persons approaching retirement, which is a period in life when new directions towards relatives and native country become imminent. French-Swiss usually rely on newspaper clips enclosed in letters sent by relatives to fill their information gaps.

Telecom's International Subscriber Dialling was welcomed by the majority of Swiss particularly by those who don't like writing. Nevertheless the postage paid for airmail letters takes a fair share in some family budgets. If Australia Post ever considered rewarding the most frequent writers of private overseas mail several Swiss who have sent over 200 letters annually from «Down Under» for decades should become eligible!

Having regard for a growing number of temporary migrants dispersed all over the world the Swiss government introduced a voluntary social security service in the 1960s, which was designed to facilitate integration after return. However, the scheme failed
to address more than a mere 14% of Swiss migrants living in Australia. This low success rate gives not only credit to the local social security but it also highlights the financial problems of most of the young families, who regard themselves as temporary residents and are simply unable to support both security schemes. Accordingly they decide in favour of the local solution. Participants in the Swiss systems consist mainly of migrants who settled in the 1950s and 1960s. They consider their contributions rather as a convenient investment than as a pure necessity after a potential repatriation.

Australia’s Swiss community is even less enthusiastic about the Swiss Solidarity Fund. Created exclusively for Swiss abroad the scheme aims to support affected members of political unrest and it is popular among Swiss in unstable countries, such as those in Latin America. Its minor importance in Australia is reflected in a very low contributing proportion of 2% of Swiss migrants questioned. The low number stresses the often tight financial position of young families but also may be interpreted as a vote of confidence in the country’s stability.

**Australian-Swiss or Swiss-Australians**

Naturalization is generally regarded to be the ultimate proof of the migrant’s adoption of a new cultural identity and is thus encouraged by the Australian government. However, this assumption is only partly justified especially when the settlers native citizenship is retained as it is by Swiss. Reasons behind obtaining dual-citizenship may be the reassurance of a later return to Australia as was the case for the “honeymooners” of the early 1970s after their repatriation. Other benefits associated with travel and job opportunities with Australian state or federal authorities. The largest naturalized group acquired Australian citizenship to receive the right to vote and to become eligible for official positions such as in state schools. Furthermore political involvement is very much part of Swiss life.

Naturalization in Australia doesn’t necessarily mean the loss of the migrant’s native nationality and dual-citizenship is tolerated. It may come as a surprise therefore to learn that the proportion of naturalized Swiss doesn’t exceed the corresponding figures of Austrians and Germans, who generally are not entitled to dual-citizenship. The renunciation of naturalization is at times psychological as many Swiss with a profound traditional, republican spirit cannot stand the thought of becoming a subject of the Queen of England due to gaining Australian citizenship. Others feel a dilemma of not being able to cope with moral loyalty to two nationalities. Having a secure status of permanent residency in Australia, the choice of keeping their nationality is made easy. A potential abrogation of Swiss citizenship is a lengthy and expensive process and has been recorded only in a few isolated cases since the last century. Only one in ten naturalized Swiss actually complies with the official government expectation that they identify more with Australia than with their native country.

A more accurate statement regarding the migrants’ true affiliation to chosen nationality is obtained by excluding multiple

![Newly arrived migrants usually prefer to distance themselves from their countrymen. This makes it difficult for Swiss clubs to recruit young members, who participate actively in their organizations. Yodel choirs, as above «Edelweiss» and «Matterhorn» at the yodel-mass in Victoria’s Dandenong Ranges, are composed mainly of mature aged community members.](image-url)
citizenship. Of the dual-citizens questioned 44% would decide in favour of Switzerland, 31% would prefer Australia and the rest would make up their mind if the situation really arose. These figures compare surprisingly with those in respect of Italian settlers, who are seen to integrate rather slowly. Length of residence in Australia has no bearing on the choice of Swiss migrants, however, women tend to prefer their native country more often than men.

Summing up the relationship of Swiss with Australia and with their native country one may generally conclude that these migrants adapt very quickly in their new social environment. They learn English rapidly and initially show a preference for Australians over fellow compatriots. This behaviour corresponds with the perception of Swiss migrants by Australians, which is an image Swiss are proud of. However, a closer analysis of their reactions on potential citizenship commitments, preferences of dishes and even decorations of their homes reveal a rather conservative attitude. Fully assimilated Swiss migrants are as rare as those who don’t integrate at all.

The assimilation process of Swiss itself is subject to change. The years after arrival having been dominated by a swift integration, so are displaced feelings exhibited in later stages of life. This turn of personal attitude and values is reflected in a growing interest in activities of Swiss clubs and it may explain why mainly settlers over fifty years of age take up prominent positions in local communities. It is usually during the period of retirement that women in particular realize that their roots are too deep to assimilate completely. Increasingly they get in touch with other Swiss migrants to share common problems unknown to their Australian friends. However, children who have been brought up during their parents’ first integration stage remain unaffected by these later re-directions of priorities and they feel very much Australian.

IX. Aftermath

Looking back to the last century changes in Australia’s Swiss community have been considerable. A hundred years ago the majority of Swiss migrants lived in rural Victoria, but today they usually settle scattered in the metropolitan areas of either Sydney or Melbourne. Early immigration was dominated by French speaking winegrowers and Italian speaking gold-diggers, whereas the twentieth century saw the arrival of predominantly German speaking tradesmen. Other contrasts are the former almost exclusive dominance of males and, apart from the gold-diggers, their intention to settle permanently or at least until their retirement. Now Swiss plan to stay for a couple of years only basically to learn English and the community’s sex-ratio is almost balanced. At first Swiss social organizations were founded with a strong emphasis on benevolent activities, but today’s clubs have shifted more towards conservation of culture and social functions.

Despite these differences several characteristics have remained unchanged. Swiss migrants enjoyed throughout a generally favourable reception by Australians. Apart from gold-diggers, who intended to repatriate as quickly as possible, adaptation to local conditions was considered important in order to become an integrated part of Australia’s society. Although today’s sex-ratio is rather balanced, the immigration of Swiss couples and families still comprises only a small proportion. This is reflected in the ongoing dominance of the English language at home.

The history of Swiss settlement in Australia is a typical example for the conclusion that the qualitative composition of the migrants as well as the time of their immigration are more decisive factors leading to a lasting impact than sheer numbers. Although the Ticinese gold-miners of the 1850s were the largest coherent
group of Swiss migrants ever to arrive in Australia and despite their clustered settlement, their influence remained short-lived and restricted to Victoria's Daylesford region and Sydney's Hunter's Hill. Only few of these Italian speaking Catholics were skilled tradesmen. But even more important was the coincidental arrival of unnumbered fellow gold-diggers of other nationalities from all over the world. The Ticinesi were absorbed by the mass, and this seems to be repeated with the contemporary migration of highly qualified Swiss settlers. On the other hand French speaking winegrowers from Neuchâtel and surrounds excelled better than most of the later Swiss in their imprint on Australia particularly in Victoria. Their compact settlements in Geelong and Lillydale consisted of skilled and determined specialists, but above all they had been well established in numbers and enjoyed the influence of high society before the masses of migrants arrived in the second half of the last century.

However, even the winegrowers' mark has been fading away during the past few decades. Without doubt the distinction of the Swiss contribution with the longest lasting effect on the Australian people belongs to Henri Tardent, a resident of Queensland around the turn of the century with his involvement in moulding the constitution of the Commonwealth.

On a more personal and subtle note the heritage of early Swiss migrants irrespective of their social status remains distinguishable among many descendants. It may be quite a comfort for contemporary Swiss settlers to learn that despite their own childrens' lack of interest in Swiss culture, third, fourth and fifth generation descendants seem to develop at times rather strong affinities towards Switzerland. Typical Swiss characteristics sometimes reappear after several generations even in physiology. Stunned descendants may encounter surprising situations, when during visits to their ancestors' country they are treated like fellow citizens and asked for street directions in an unfamiliar language. However, the most frequent passed on characteristics of heritage must be a passionate drive towards punctuality, a distinctive mark affecting Swiss indiscriminately independent of language, location and generation!

**Demographic Data 1981**

According to the Australian Census of 1981, 6383 persons born in Switzerland were residents of Australia consisting of 56% men and 44% women.

78% of all Swiss were living in capital districts with Sydney (32%) leading Melbourne (25%). In Queensland and the Northern Territory the majority resided outside the capitals. Corresponding figures accounted for 40% in Brisbane versus 60% in the rest of the «Sunshine States» and 29% in Darwin to 71% in the remainder of the Territory.

Some 14% were less than 15 years old and a similar proportion of 12% were older than 60 years.

Among all Swiss born persons 14% had been Australian residents for less than three years and 19% for more than 22 years. Australian citizenship was held by 61% of settlers having resided over three years.

Never married persons accounted for 18% of over 20-year-olds with a male proportion of 26% and a female share of 12%.

The majority (69%) were stated Christians, 2% non-Christians leaving 29% with no religious affiliation in Australia. The latter group was made up by 32% of men and 26% of women.

60% of the Swiss born population were working. Not included in the workforce were 26% of men and 58% of women. Their corresponding unemployment rates were 3% and 2% respectively.

Manufacturing (18%) followed by wholesale/retail (13%) employed the largest part of the male workforce. Primary industries including agriculture and mining recorded a minor share of 5% in Australia, but with higher proportions in some states: Northern Territory (30%), Western Australia (13%) and Queensland (12%).

Most of the employed women worked in the community service or in wholesale/retail, each accounting for 9%.
Within the areas of employment the majority of men stated trades and production (30%), professional/technical occupations (11%) and management/administration posts (11%). Less than 4% of men were farmers and less than 1% worked as miners. Among women clerical occupations (13%) dominated.


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