

IMCZNEWS



MARCH 2013

EDITORIAL

Springtime is Ski Time

The calendar for 2013 is already filling up with a variety of interesting events and activities. I am happy to see so many members speaking at the "Stammtisch Special" events and sharing their expertise and knowledge with the club. This also shows what an interesting and inspiring group of members of the IMCZ are.

Finally what makes me happiest is that turnouts which have been excellent with a good 20-30 at every Stammtisch. This was one of my wishes for 2013 - increased participation which already seems to be fulfilled. So 2013 has started off on a perfect note – not to mention the good number of new members and the mix of professions is ideal. In short what we stand for: international men of different backgrounds connecting together. Indeed springtime is coming on a happy note.

Andy Habermacher, President



IN THIS ISSUE

PAGE 1

- Editorial
- Future Events
- New Members

EVENTS P.2

- ## • Members' News

HEALTH P.3

- **Cholesterol and Alzheimer's – good or bad?**

SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY P.4

- **The Q-MATIC Story**

BUSINESS / FINANCE P.6

- **Austerity or growth?**
Why both camps are wrong

SPORTS P.8

- From the SLOPES...
HASLITAL IN THE
BERNER OBERLAND
- From the LANES...

HUMOUR P.10

- **Various**

PUZZLES P.12

- **Sudoku**

TIDBITS P.12

- Member's Marketplace
- IMCZ Rates
- Corporate Space

FUTURE EVENTS

- **THURSDAY MARCH 07, Ermano Bassi** former GM “Hertelendy Kastyé” in Hungary shall give us his impression and experiences, whilst walking the pilgrim’s path from the city of Zug to Santiago de Compostela in Spain.
Title of the speech, “Walk to your soul”
- **WEDNESDAY MARCH 20, Bowling**, at the [White Line Bowling Centre](#)
- **WEDNESDAY MARCH 20, Joint Stammtisch with ZIWC**
- **THURSDAY APRIL 4, Danilo Bertocchi**, leading a discussion on: “Climate Change”
- **WEDNESDAY APRIL 17, Bowling**, at the [White Line Bowling Centre](#)
- **THURSDAY MAY 02, New Members Reception** with food & drinks; Place to be advised.
- **WEDNESDAY MAY 15, Bowling**, at the [White Line Bowling Centre](#)
- **SATURDAY MAY 18-25 Visit Amhuinnsuidhe Castle in the Isle of Harris**, Scotland, see the midnight sun, surrounded by eagles, whales, otters and deer. Enjoy fascinating salmon fishing. IMCZ members receive 50% discount www.amhuinnsuidhe.com
- **THURSDAY JUNE 6, Marius Zimmerman**, “A better Way to start your own Business”.
- **WEDNESDAY JUNE 19, Bowling**, at the [White Line Bowling Centre](#)
- **WEDNESDAY JULY 17, Bowling**, at the [White Line Bowling Centre](#)
- **WEDNESDAY AUGUST 21, Bowling**, at the [White Line Bowling Centre](#)
- **SUNDAY AUGUST 25, IMCZ Summer Barb-B-Que**, Siehbacksaal in Zug, same place by the lake as last year.
- **WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 18, Bowling**, at the [White Line Bowling Centre](#)
- **WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 16, Bowling**, at the [White Line Bowling Centre](#)
- **THURSDAY NOVEMBER 07, New Members Reception** with food & drinks; Place to be advised.
- **WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 20, Bowling**, at the [White Line Bowling Centre](#)
- **WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 11. Bowling**, at the [White Line Bowling Centre](#)



IMCZ

Introducing...new members

THE IMCZ WELCOMES:

Lance Rütimann

Lance is originally from Canada and had moved to Switzerland in 1981. Since then, he has been back to Canada for a few years and also worked two years in Germany. Since 2005 he has called Steinhausen home, but also lived quite some time in and near Stäfa. Lance has a wide schooling background ranging from Electronics Engineering, Business Administration, Marketing, General Management and last year Philosophy + Management. He entered into the building technologies branch over 25 years ago with Cerberus AG, and has held a number of management positions during his career. Today, he is a Senior Manager for Industry Affairs within Siemens Switzerland in Zug. During the warmer times of the year, Lance likes to take off on his motorbike, even if it is only for a half hour after work.



Andreas Poncini

Andreas was born and grew up in Ascona, Tessin. He holds a Masters degree in marketing from and fluently speaks Italian, German and French. He moved from Zurich to Zug in 2006. He has been working since 1989 as a strategy advisor in a freelance capacity. His speciality is in business relationships between Swiss and Italian companies. In the same capacity, he worked for SME (Small and Medium Enterprises) as well as multinational companies. Since 2011 he is president of the board of directors of KE Storatex AG in Reiden. He is single and enjoys cycling and travelling in the summer, reading literature and playing chess in the winter.



Gary Bull

Gary is from Cape Town, South Africa but he and his family have been living in various countries in Europe for the past 16 years. Prior to moving to Switzerland in 2008, Gary and his family lived in Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary. Gary has been with SABMiller (2nd largest global brewer) for 27 years and has had many varied and challenging roles over this period in multiple locations. At this time Gary heads up the Finance department at SAB Miller's Global Procurement Company in Zug. Gary holds a B.Com degree from the University of Cape Town and is a Chartered Accountant. He is a keen skier, an ok mountain bike rider, an avid traveller, a regular runner and most importantly father to 3 wonderful children.



Bill Lichtensteiner

Bill is a British/Swiss dual national who was born in London and first came to Switzerland at the age of 7 when he first became integrated into the Swiss culture and school system. Since then Bill has moved back and forwards between Switzerland and UK more times than he cares to remember but has now been in Steinhausen, Zug for the past 9 years. Bill is married with 4 grown up kids who all live on the South coast in the UK. Bill's background is in Electronics and Software Engineering but his career has also included many commercial and marketing roles. Bill holds a BSc in Electronic Engineering and a Diploma in Marketing. Bill now works in Zug for Landis+Gyr, the Toshiba owned, market leading Smart Grid and Smart Metering solutions provider. His global role as Director of Communication Technology means he is travelling around frequently, coordinating between Landis+Gyr's R&D centers. Bill enjoys many sporting activities including all forms of winter sports and water sports, golf and racket sports. Bill looks forward to socializing and keeping fit with the other IMCZ club members.



Reto Wüthrich

Reto is Swiss, born and bred in Lucerne. He trained as a cook and worked in the gastronomy trade and managed a pub for four years. However, as the age of 31 in 1993, he made a radical change of direction and trained for insurance and financial services. He worked since for several insurance companies. For the past six years he has been working for the top health insurance company SWICA. He regularly advises private persons and corporations for the best health insurance schemes. He is looking forward to making new contacts and friends at the IMCZ, and of course to practice his English. His hobbies include travel, motorcycling, and fitness training.



Stephen Trickett

Steve is from the United States and holds a BS in Health Physics and an MBA in Technology Management. For the past 10 years Steve has worked in the energy sector managing nuclear radiation protection and industrial safety programs at Nuclear Power Stations, performing corporation wide audits and quality inspections for leading US energy companies such as Exelon, First Energy and PSEG. Steve moved to Switzerland in November, 2012 and with his wife Mariya now lives in Zug. Steve is a dedicated triathlete (bike, swim, run) and has participated in many races in the United States including marathons and Ironman competitions. Steve is interested in continuing his career in Europe and making new friends to share cycling and running with. He is looking forward to a half Ironman distance race in Rapperswil this summer.



Tim Harms

As a young Australian Engineer, seduced to the snow covered "hillocks" of this fine country ... Tim still finds himself still here after some 20 years. Professionally, he is specialised in the radio and telecommunications field, with many years spent internationally underways in the broadcast, ATC (Air Traffic Control), and secure digital radio communications fields, but now pretty much office-bound as a product manager. He enjoys a nice bike ride along the lake, a hike, and many other things, but most of all sailing on his own old wooden ship "Angela" (all of 18ft !) here on the lake of Zug. In the winter there is still enough work to do on the old lady who has reached the ripe old age of 50 ;-).



REMEMBER
The Stammtisch
every Thursday evening
18:00-20:00

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IMCZ

BOARD MEMBERS

Board Member bios are posted under the following link: <http://www.imcz.com/Board.asp>. Go ahead and check them out!

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Cholesterol and Alzheimer's – good or bad?

Contributed by IMCZ member Remo P. Jutzeler van Wijlen, Head R&D Sponser Sports Food Ing. Appl Food Sciences, MAS Nutrition & Health ETHZ

It is not surprising that, when one of the most booming industries is the sale of cholesterol-lowering drugs, just about every disease under the sun would be pinned to cholesterol. The more diseases blamed on cholesterol, the more profits generated by the sale of cholesterol-lowering drugs and low Cholesterol food. Cholesterol is also blamed for causing Alzheimer's disease (AD). However, little is known about the relationship between cholesterol and AD. There is even a hypothesis, described below, which claims that cholesterol protects the brain from AD.

The weight of the brain is only 2% of the body's weight, yet it contains 25% of the body's total Cholesterol. In fact Cholesterol is both necessary and central for the functions of the brain. Hence, it is neither surprising nor unreasonable to assume that it is somehow "involved" in any brain disorder. However, the dubious notion that cholesterol is "involved" in the formation of amyloid plaques, a hallmark of AD, does not hold. There have been some studies which claim potential benefits when the (normal) Cholesterol levels were lowered, but in fact, there wasn't a casual proof of it.

Furthermore, it is also quite clear that the neurons (brain cells) are "involved" in AD. However, no pharmaceutical company is starting to push drugs that reduce the number of brain cells.

AD is physically characterised by so-called amyloid plaques and neurofibrillary tangles. The amyloid plaques are made up of a peptide (a peptide is a fragment of a protein) called "beta-amyloid". The tangles, on the other hand, are primarily composed of a protein, which forms tangles when it is hyper-phosphorylated. The plaques exist on the outside of cells, whilst the tangles exist on the inside of cells. While it is true that the accumulation of amyloid plaques are a universal hallmark of Alzheimer's disease, it does not necessarily follow that they are the primary cause of Alzheimer. Beta-amyloids

could be, for example, formed as a relevant or irrelevant by-product of other damage, caused by AD or some other disease. On the other hand it could quite possibly be also the opposite: some sort of neuro-protective mechanism as a response to a certain disorder or damage. There are in fact many other pathological signs, including the rapid destruction of certain fatty acids and proteins involved in synapse formation. One recent study on mice with AD-related genes found that changing the amount of dietary DHA, an omega-3 fatty acid abundant in the brain, resulted in modulating and changing a great deal of the physical pathology and the cognitive deficits in them.

The cholesterol-Alzheimer's hypothesis assumes that there is a positive correlation between cholesterol levels and beta-amyloid production. But considerable evidence indicates that beta-amyloid is a by-product of protective mechanisms. If this is true, it could be that more primary causes of AD pathology occur first, and then beta-amyloid accumulation is a result of the brain's self-defence against it. One interesting observation is that AD-related pathology occurs in Down's Syndrome patients, but not until middle-age. In this case, it is clear that degeneration occurs before the deposition of amyloid plaques and other outward manifestations of AD-related pathology. Furthermore, a precursor to beta-amyloid increases in response to damage being done to the brain, whether by aging, diet and environment, or genetic defects. This also suggests that the beta-amyloid accumulation in AD may be a secondary by-product of a protective response to damage.

Furthermore, hypercholesterolemia may involve a dysfunction of (LDL-)cholesterol receptors: on the one hand, extracellular cholesterol levels increase because they cannot be received into cells, and on the other, the absence of properly functioning LDL receptors could be causing other problems. Such a dynamic situation could induce some studies to wrongly identify the problem as resulting from high (extra-cellular) cholesterol, rather than a more specific defect of receptors, or even a deficiency of intracellular cholesterol.

It has been established in Alzheimer research that the LDL receptor-related protein, or LRP, is responsible for eliminating beta-amyloid from the brain. But

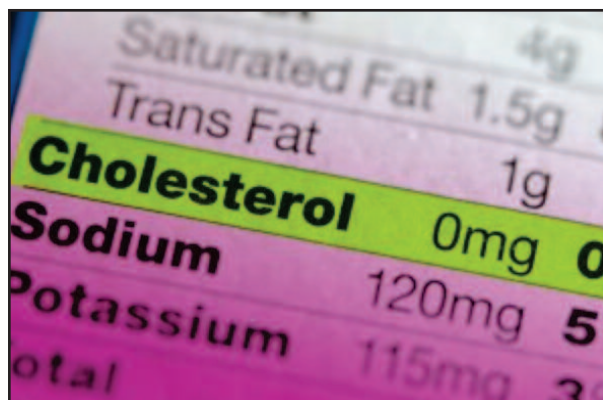


it is also responsible for bringing cholesterol into cells. Thus, a deficiency or dysfunction of LRP could be a third factor which results in both increased free brain cholesterol and increased beta-amyloid. Some studies might mistakenly conclude that the high cholesterol levels caused the high beta-amyloid level, when the two were actually coincidental. In addition, it would also be possible to mis-associate the increased free cholesterol with a negative effect in the brain, when it is actually an inability of the cholesterol to exercise its own positive effect in the cells, due to the defect in its receptor. Cholesterol is



the limiting factor in the ability to form synapses and for nerve growth per se, and is also essential to the regulation of that growth, so that synapses form properly and in the right places.

I hope this was not too heavy to digest. But it may help you to more easily "digest" your next high-cholesterol cheese fondue, bacon and eggs, and alike...;-)



The Q-MATIC Story

Contributed by IMCZ member Holger Infeldt

During my long life as a sales agent I have come across a very large variety of products and services. Starting in the textile and garments industries, then delving into medical equipment, I finally found myself looking for agents for small and medium Swiss companies' (KMU's) products in the Scandinavian countries and agents for Scandinavian products in Switzerland. The scope of products was unlimited.



However, one day it dawned on me that one product that was widely used in Sweden and many other countries was conspicuously absent in Switzerland and so it ought to have huge potential. The product in question being the numbered tickets system for customers waiting in line to be served. I knew the system primarily from banks and post offices in Sweden. Considering the large number of banks in Switzerland I was surprised that nobody had thought of introducing such systems in Switzerland. So I asked the leading manufacturer in Sweden - Q-MATIC - if they had no representative in Switzerland. The answer was 'no'. They had come to the conclusion that Switzerland was a hopeless market. But if I wanted to try, they were happy to let me do so.

So, I contacted a number of firms in similar business and they confirmed that Swiss customers wanted to stand in line and fight rather than stay calmly waiting with a number in their hands. I also contacted some banks and the Swiss Railways, telling them about the benefits and the great success of the Swedish system both in Sweden and in many other countries. The answer was always the same: Don't you have any Swiss references? We want to see the system. So I ordered a big demonstration unit from Q-MATIC and made an appointment with the Swiss Railways in Lucerne.

This time luck, a necessary component in any business, was on my side. They were looking for a system, similar to others used abroad, to install in their travel offices, which were rather crowded with customers. They had already compiled the required specifications and had already received the first offer, which I was

told, met most but not all their requirements. They invited me to make an offer using the Q-MATIC system. The offer not only met, it even exceeded, all their requirements. What is more, it was considerably cheaper than the offer they had received from the competition. So within days I received an order for the first Q-MATIC system in Switzerland, intended for the SBB's new Travel Office in Basel.

Now, with a Swiss reference, other SBB Travel Offices were bound to follow suit. However, I was very keen to take the PTT, The Swiss Post, on line. However, they proved to be a much more difficult nut to crack. I persistently knocked on various doors in Bern but to no avail. Once again one day, luck came my way. When picking up my mail one bright morning at the local post office in Steinhausen, there was a sign saying: "We want to be better! Do you have any suggestions?" Of course I had one. I talked to the Post Office manager and he agreed that I install a trial system in Steinhausen, provided I did not make any holes for the installation, and provided I could take everything away if they so wanted after the trial period, without leaving any traces. And of course provided it did not cost anything. In 1993 the Swiss Post finally agreed to let Steinhausen use a Q-MATIC system.

The final breakthrough occurred when the Q-MATIC system won the competition for the supply and installation of equipment in around 300 post offices all over the country. From there on one did not have to explain to a prospective customer what Q-MATIC was all about. It was "just like in the post office".

The banks, which were my primary target right from the start, proved to be much more difficult to convince. Their argument was that they wanted their customers to feel that they are being treated personally and not treated "like numbers", except of course if they had a numbered account! In the end, very few banks have agreed to use Q-MATIC.

And what could the Q-MATIC system do? It was much more than a system where you press a button and a numbered paper ticket is issued. From the very beginning (late 70's) the system was run by a very small but powerful computer long before the PC era. It was programmed by a talented student and offered the possibility of choosing between various buttons to have tickets issued in



different number series, so that you could choose for instance whether you wanted to queue for 'domestic travel' or 'international travel'. In a bank you could choose whether you wanted to queue for the first available teller or rather queue for the teller where your personal banker was on duty, even if you had to let a later arrival jump the queue.

Not known to many, the present system used by the Swiss Post connects all the post offices which have a Q-MATIC system with the headquarters in Bern on line. A supervisor in Bern can see at any time, in say the main Zurich Post Office in Sihlquai how many customers are waiting, what the average waiting time is and how many tellers are open etc. Additionally, the expected waiting time,

for new customers, is shown when they press the 'Ticket' button. Of course, in addition to the ticket number, the name of the post office and time and date, other information can also be printed. For example in a multiple series environment, the type of service required, e.g. Domestic Travel or International Travel etc.

With the onset of the Internet, many more applications can be implemented, as required. One can look up, for example, the expected waiting times in various Post Offices and decide which one to go to.

All in all the Q-MATIC systems installed throughout the Post Offices in Switzerland have contributed in no small way, to increasing their efficiency and improving customer satisfaction.



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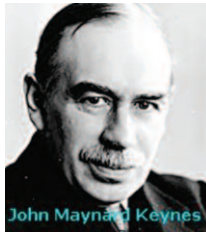
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Austerity or growth? Why both camps are wrong

Contributed by IMCZ member David Kauders

There are two opposing groups of economists, Keynesians and Ricardians. In the 1930s J M Keynes found that credit creation led to economic growth. His modern disciples are adamant that credit creation is the answer to sluggish economies. Ricardians believe that extra credit is counterproductive, because it brings extra debt service costs. Certainly, debt levels are at historic highs today, thanks to eighty years of Keynesian economics.



John Maynard Keynes

There is also a third group of economists who believe that everyone's behaviour can be predicted, and therefore modelled. A fourth, tiny group recognises that none of the theories work. I hope to shed some light on the debate.

The fiscal cliff negotiations in America were based around the extent of spending cuts or tax rises needed to balance the books and keep debt under control. This is austerity. In Britain, the coalition government has made austerity its central *raison d'être*. Austerity politics have also arrived in Southern Europe and Ireland.

Austerity is the opposite of Keynesian economics, which recommends that governments should stimulate weak economies with credit, then take away the credit once the stimulus has worked. Since the 1930s, the orthodox creed has been to stimulate whenever recession appears, but the other side of Keynes's theory, namely that the credit should be withdrawn once the stimulus worked, has been largely forgotten. Japan is desperately seeking a Keynesian solution, whereas in America, Britain and much of Europe the debate is about austerity.

In order to understand why both the austerity and growth camps are wrong, I would like to introduce a number of concepts, some familiar, others less so, then see how they link together.

1. "Capitalism avoids its fetters by escaping into the future"

This is the opinion of the Slovenian Philosopher Slavoj Žižek, in his book *The Year of Dreaming Dangerously*.

As a general statement, it's been true for centuries, but I question whether it's true any longer. The key issue is the extent to which further expansion of credit can be used to create growth.

2. The product life cycle

No product (or service) lasts for ever. The Wells Fargo stagecoach was destroyed by the railway; CDs were destroyed by the Internet.

How does the product life cycle affect money? Early barter systems and stores of value were replaced by a precious metal coinage. Then in the 14th century, the early Italian bankers separated credit and debit, starting a long evolution. By the start of the 18th century, paper money had emerged (England's South Sea Bubble and John Law's Mississippi scheme in France a couple of years later both had their origins in the transition from precious metal money to paper money). Today the world is going through another major transition, from paper money to book-entry electronic money.

But there is another aspect of the evolution of the early financial system: nobody wrote the rules. **Evolution** is the key word. In today's world, society tries to deny evolution. With the possible exception of Switzerland, politicians make sweeping statements about their demands, then set their retinues of civil servants and regulators to work on implementation. It's worth remembering that those early Italian bankers had no European Commission writing hundreds of pages of directives for them, no House/Senate compromise Bills containing tens of thousands of clauses saying precisely how the financial system should work. Those early bankers just made it up as they went along.

Today, rules ossify the system and act as a barrier to evolution.

3. The life span of businesses

This is quite short. Who now remembers Drexel, Enron, LTV, Pan Am, Fokker, Swissair, Barings, Laker, or Lancashire Cotton?

Investment managers love indices, and make long term comparisons using them. The fact that index components change because businesses die and an unchanged index would tell a somewhat different story, is quietly forgotten. But it matters for our fourth concept:

4. The capital market cycle

All capital markets oscillate between extreme undervaluation and extreme overvaluation. The cycle is periodic, lasting up to eighty years - it can only be understood by those who choose to learn from history. The school I went to made students in the sixth form (age 16+) do one fun subject unconnected with examinations. I chose history. My interest in economic history probably stems from a project on the impact of canals on the industrial revolution in England.

Once the life span of businesses is removed from consideration, the capital market cycle is easy to discern (fig. 1). At its peak asset prices are high, price to

earnings ratios are high, dividend yields are low, and everyone believes you should be fully invested. Doubters are rubbished. The business and finance pages only quote those giving reasons for belief.

At the trough of the cycle, asset prices are low, dividend yields are high, price to earnings ratios are low. Nobody wants to know!

The change from peak to trough involved a loss of 73% in London 1972 to 1975, 89% on Wall Street 1929 to 1932. During those falls, share prices rose on most days but when the falls came they were severe. Dividends were cut in cash terms, so that rising dividend yields were no compensation. What happens is that the share price fall comes first, because markets discount the future, then the dividend cut comes later. And by the way, nobody had any clever methods for playing the declines.

At a market peak, everyone who could possibly buy has bought. Excepting weak holders, people don't sell early in the declines. Most sell at much lower prices.

5. The long economic cycle

This was first postulated by a Russian agricultural economist, Kondratyev, who foresaw the depression of the 1930s. He also said that capitalism would recover, which was not what we would now call politically correct, so his last days were spent in Siberia.

The long economic cycle is driven by the accumulation and destruction of credit claims. In the expansionary phase, banks lend more, so asset prices rise providing more security, and the fractional credit system means that money feeds on itself. When the cycle turns, banks lend less, asset prices fall, people have less income to service their debts, and further sales depress prices. This, of course, is going on today in some parts of the world.

When the 2008 crisis arose, banks created credit, lending it out, thereby driving asset prices up. The American housing market crash destroyed the surplus credit.

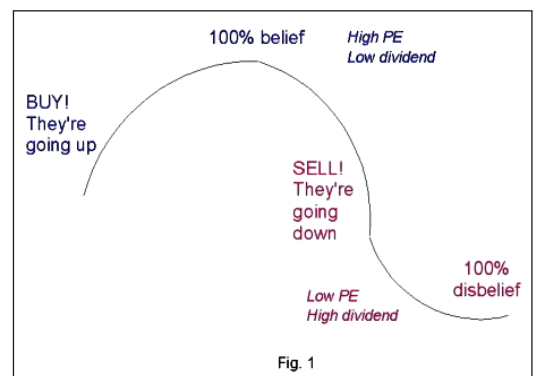


Fig. 1

6. Elliott's wave count

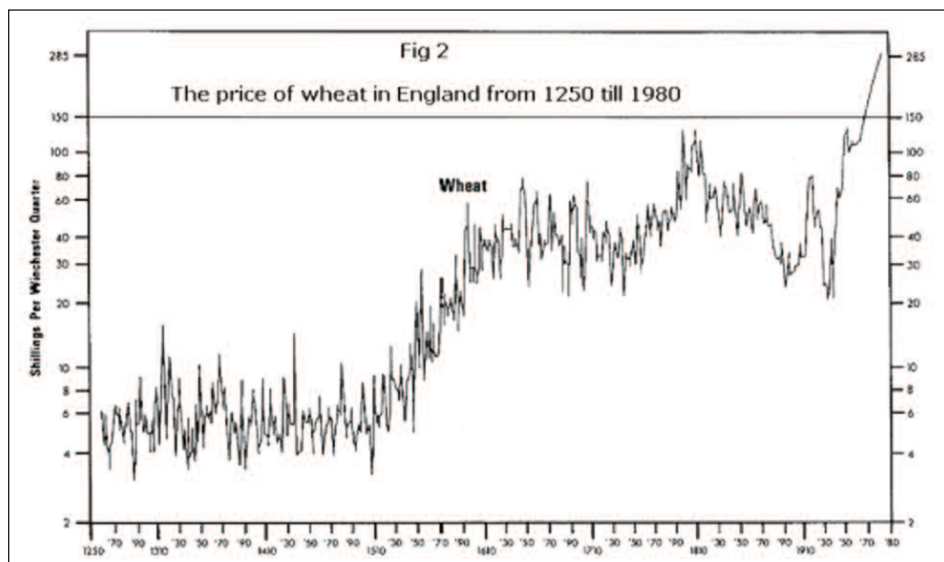
R N Elliott was a mathematician whose work *Nature's Law* explained the nature of the ebb and flow of prices in capital markets. We make a little use of Elliott's detailed relationships in predicting the course of prices over a future period of a few months and over longer periods. What Elliott discovered is that the duration and amplitude of each drive in prices, each wave, bears a relationship to previous and future price movements that is described by the Fibonacci series, in which each number is the sum of the two preceding numbers:

$0 + 1 = 1$
 $1 + 1 = 2$
 $1 + 2 = 3$
 $2 + 3 = 5$
 $3 + 5 = 8$
 $5 + 8 = 13$
 $8 + 13 = 21$ etc.

Gradually, the ratio of each number to the preceding number tends to the Fibonacci ratio of 1.6180339887 – the golden ratio in art, the optimum search relationship in computer search algorithms, the ratio of each wave to the relevant preceding wave in capital markets.

Now let's look at very long term price trends. This data (fig. 2) goes back before the Act of Union, so we can thank the English for their obsession with record keeping: most countries only have economic data for one or two centuries. The chart shows the price of wheat using a logarithmic price scale, and you can see how the separation of debit and credit freed the price to start rising, and also how long price cycles followed.

I would like to observe that there have been five Kondratyev long wave cycles since the separation of credit and debit, all associated with economic expansion. What should follow are three long cycles associated with contraction. This puts the endless difficulties in Japan into context.



7. Lessons from Japan

After twenty-three years of drift, the message from Japan is simple, though unwelcome.

- All policy options fail. Japan has been round the cycle of monetary policy, fiscal policy, and political reform twice, and is just starting out again with monetary policy.
- The economic malaise is persistent
- Political change achieves nothing
- Right wing nationalism prospers

8. The limits of the financial system

Now I'm going to add my own theory to the seven concepts above.

The world has already borrowed as much as it can afford – witness Japan, Greece, Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Cyprus, Spain, Britain (which has a consumer debt problem), America (household problem). Hence the Keynesian stimulus no longer works.

Worse, the authorities are desperately trying to inflate their way out by pumping credit. If this worked, debt burdens would rise and the problems would deepen. Thankfully, the five central banks indulging themselves (Federal Reserve, Bank of England, ECB, SNB and Bank of Japan) are failing miserably to create inflation. Why are they failing? Because the existing debt burden is far too high!

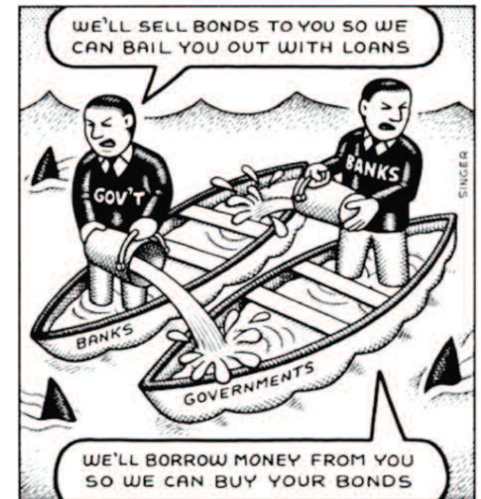
Enter austerity policies to pay down the debt. What happens? If austerity succeeds, there must be less work, so existing debts cannot be serviced, therefore further decline ensues. This is exactly as foreseen by Kondratyev and is happening now in Greece and Spain.

Whichever way you turn, growth or austerity, there is no solution: Japan really does lead the way.

This means that the financial system that emerged in the fourteenth century has reached end of life. The world is up against a financial system limit, resulting from the separation of debit and credit seven centuries ago.

Since neither austerity nor growth (via stimulus) can help, what alternatives are there?

Let evolution work its magic, to give us a successor to debit and credit. Stop writing rules, stand back and let nature take its course. But this means severe losses for some, as banks have to be allowed to fail. It also means that politicians have to admit they are powerless, which they will never do.



Shared ownership schemes – Streetcar in the UK, Mobility here in Switzerland, are good examples.

In the book, I describe a concept that I call *Communislam* – a friendly merger between Communism and Islam.

To close, I'm going to introduce one further concept. It will help you as events unfold.

9. There are no absolutes in the financial system today.

There's no gold standard, no precious metal standard. Imagine ships floating on the ocean, and you have the financial system: all values are relative. Banks give an illusion of certainty, but it would be more accurate to say that your bank deposit is as valuable as the bank's loans. Asset prices have been pumped up by endless doses of the stimulus drug, which as we have seen is not working. Given that asset prices are so high, the best strategy is to find the safest way to guard your capital base so as to have the cash to buy when the public panic, no matter how many years in the future that may be. And perversely, the safest asset is the promise of the largest government to honour its debt. Hence the key role of the US Treasury bond market.

David Kauders is a director of Kauders Portfolio Management AG. *The Greatest Crash: How contradictory policies are sinking the global economy* can be obtained as an e-book (9781907230356 epub format), from Amazon for Kindle, or in print (9781907230318). Copies of the hardcover edition are available from David.

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HASLITAL IN THE BERNER OBERLAND

The main ski resort in the Haslital is Meiringen-Hasliberg. It is a good-sized ski area with interesting runs, both above and below the tree-line. The views are fantastic and it's quite family-friendly.

Contributed by our sports editor Joseph Dow

- **Location:** Close to the Brienzersee around Interlaken. The resort lies on a terrace above the town of Meiringen, less than 2 hours via SBB from Zug (Zug – Luzern – Brünig-Hasliberg, bus to Twing).

- **Scenery:** Beautiful! The biggest close mountain is the jagged Wetterhorn at 3'701m. Further in the distance are other tall peaks, one of which I'm still trying to identify ... When I was there, a sea of fog blanketed the valley below, making the peaks appear to be floating in the sky.

- **Runs:** There are three main sectors to the ski area: the area above Käserstatt, the area above Mägisalp, and the area under the Alpen Tower on Planplatten. It is very easy to move between all these zones. The main pistes above Käserstatt have a nice pitch to them and you can rip off some speedy runs with the fast 6-person chairlift. I also enjoyed the black run #17 from the Alpen Tower. Since it is rated black, fewer people attempt this run and the snow is better than on the surrounding red runs. There is also some skiing below these areas on trails cut through the trees around Bidmi, which has a nice children's bunny slope area, too. The kiddies can ski with Skihäsliland and go to the Muggestutz ski trail to follow the adventures of a little dwarf. Hasliberg has a good amount of vertical drop at approximately 1'350m from the top of lift at Hääggen to the bottom at Reuti and there are 60km of groomed pistes.

- **Lift System:** Relatively modern with some drag lifts. There are 17 lifts in all, including 1 tram, 4 gondolas and 4 chairlifts.

- **Food:** On the mountain, there are a handful of restaurants, including the 360 degree panorama restaurant at the Alpen Tower. However, to avoid the crowds, I ate lunch at an open-air place at the bottom of the lift at Hääggen. Maybe I was just starving, but the bratwurst was one of the best I've had!

- **Conclusion:** A nice, relaxing area, easy to reach for a day from Zug.



Next month: The Four Valleys from Veysonnaz to Verbier.

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As I wasn't feeling very well, I decided not to play and settled in to watch the others play. One other person did not turn up, so we were left with only six eager bowlers playing.

The two wine winners were Otto Steuri for first place and new arrival Jean-Pierre Lamaudiere for the second. He had a blinder of a last game with 4 strikes! Everyone else played very hard, especially Adrian Lüdi who failed to get the wine, just two more pins would have done it! What pressures in the last few balls.

Contributed by IMCZ member Stephen Butterworth

First Name	Surname	Game1	Game2	Game3	Bowled total	overall_avg	handicap	STRIKES	SPARES	Split
Otto	Steuri	196	141	175	512	145	44	6	16	
Beat	Züger	135	150	144	429	133	54	4	13	2
Adrian	Lüdi	129	130	157	416	117	67	7	7	5
Dan	Rabil	132	132	92	356	128	58	6	6	2
Jean-Pierre	Lamaudiere	106	102	140	348	118	90	7	4	2
Rolf	Ekman	108	79	110	297	120	89	2	5	3
First Name	Surname	Game1	Game2	Game3	Handicapped	overall_avg	handicap	STRIKES	SPARES	Split
Otto	Steuri	196	141	175	644	145	44	6	16	
Jean-Pierre	Lamaudiere	106	102	140	618	118	90	7	4	2
Adrian	Lüdi	129	130	157	617	117	67	7	7	5
Beat	Züger	135	150	144	591	133	54	4	13	2
Rolf	Ekman	108	79	110	564	120	89	2	5	3
Dan	Rabil	132	132	92	530	128	58	6	6	2



Blonde Jokes

DISNEYLAND

Two blondes were going to Disneyland. They were driving on the Interstate when they saw the sign that said Disneyland LEFT. They started crying and turned around and went home.

CAR TROUBLE

A blonde pushes her BMW into a gas station. She tells the Mechanic it died. After he works on it for a few minutes, it is idling smoothly. She inquired, "What's the story?" He replied, "Just crap in the carburettor" She asks, "How often do I have to do that?"

SPEEDING TICKET

A police officer stops a blonde for speeding and asks her very nicely if he could see her license. She replied in a huff, "I wish you guys would get your act together. Just yesterday you take away my license and then today you expect me to show it to you!"

RIVER WALK

There's this blonde out for a walk. She comes to a river and sees another blonde on the opposite bank "Yoo-hoo!" she shouts, "How can I get to the other side?" The second blonde looks up the river then down the river and shouts back, "You ARE on the other side."

AT THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE

A gorgeous young redhead goes into the doctor's office and said that her body hurt wherever she touched it. "Impossible!" says the doctor.. "Show me." The redhead took her finger, pushed on her left shoulder and screamed, then she pushed her elbow and screamed even more. She pushed her knee and screamed; likewise she pushed her ankle and screamed. Everywhere she touched made her scream. The doctor said, "You're not really a redhead, are you?" "Well, no" she said, "I'm actually a blonde." "I thought so," the doctor said, "Your finger is broken."

KNITTING

A highway patrolman pulled alongside a speeding car on the freeway. Glancing at the car, he was astounded to see that the blonde behind the wheel was knitting! Realizing that

she was oblivious to his flashing lights and siren, the trooper cranked down his window, turned on his bullhorn and yelled, "PULL OVER!" "NO!" the blonde yelled back, "IT'S A SCARF!"

WATCH DOGS

A girl was visiting her blonde friend, who had acquired two new dogs, and asked her what their names were. The blonde responded by saying that one was named Rolex and one was named Timex. Her friend said, "Whoever heard of someone naming dogs like that?" "HELLLOOOOOOOO.....," answered the blonde. "They're watch dogs".

DUMMIES

A young ventriloquist (a performer who projects voice into a dummy) was doing a show. With his dummy on his knee, he started going through his usual dumb blonde jokes, when a blonde in the second row stood on her chair and started shouting: "I've heard enough of your stupid blonde jokes," she screamed. "What makes you think you can stereotype women in that way?

What does the color of a person's hair have to do with her worth as a human being? It's people like you who keep women like me from being respected at work and in the community and from reaching our full potential as people. It's all because you and your kind continue to perpetuate discrimination against not only blondes, but women in general and all in the name of humor." The embarrassed ventriloquist began to apologise, whereupon the blonde yelled: "You stay out of this. I'm talking to that little b*st*rd on your lap."

Zen Teachings

No one is listening until you fart. Always remember you're unique. Just like everyone else. Never test the depth of the water with both feet. If you think nobody cares whether you're alive or dead, try missing a couple of mortgage payments. Before you criticize someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticize them, you're a mile away and you have their shoes. If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is not for you.

Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach him how to fish, and he will sit in a boat and drink beer all day.

If you lend someone \$20 and never see that person again, it was probably well worth it. If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything.

Some days you are the bug; some days you are the windshield.

Don't worry; it only seems kinky the first time. Good judgment comes from bad experience and most of that comes from bad judgment. A closed mouth gathers no food.

There are two excellent theories for arguing with women. Neither one works.

Generally speaking, you aren't learning much when your lips are moving.

Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it.

We are born naked, wet and hungry, and get slapped on our ass ... then things just keep getting worse.

Speaking good English

- I hear what you say ... *actually means*, "I disagree and do not want to discuss it further".
- With the greatest respect ... *means*, "I think you are an idiot".
- That is a very brave proposal ... *means*, "You are insane".
- Quite good...*means*, "A bit disappointing".
- I would suggest...*means*, "Do it or be prepared to justify yourself".
- Oh, incidentally / By the way ... *means*, "The primary purpose of our discussion is".
- I was a bit disappointed that ... *means*, "I am annoyed that".
- Very interesting ... *means*, "That is clearly nonsense".
- I will bear it in mind ... *means*, "I have forgotten it already".
- I am sure it is my fault ... *means*, "It is your fault".
- You must come for dinner ... *means*, "I am just being polite, it is not an invitation".
- I almost agree ... *means*, "I do not agree at all".
- I only have a few minor comments ... *means*, "Please rewrite completely".
- Could we consider some other options ... *means*, "I do not like your proposals".



WWW.SELECTIONS

by IMCZ member David Harris

All web sites included in this series are offered in an unbiased way and do not always reflect my personal views; the reasons for bringing them to your attention are that I found them interesting, perhaps offering another point of view and definitely worthy of note.

TRIPLE KITE FLYING

www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=nr9KrQN_lIq

Romancing The Wind with Ray Bethel. Flying one kite with skill is a challenge – to fly three kites at the same time is serious stuff. Ray Bethel achieves this with apparent ease – note that he has a kite in each hand and one attached to his waist.

EUROPEANA – EUROPEAN CULTURE

www.europeana.eu/portal/

Europeana enables people to explore the digital resources of Europe's museums, libraries, archives and audio-visual collections. It promotes discovery and networking opportunities in a multilingual space where users can engage, share in and be inspired by the rich diversity of Europe's cultural and scientific heritage

HOT CANS

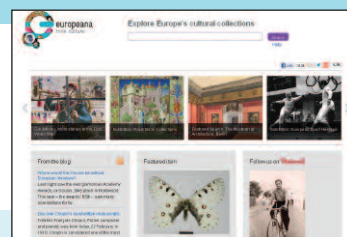
www.hot-canshop.com and www.hotcan.com

In January we brought you news of Chill Can drinks – this month we bring you news of the Hot Can food.

WORLD WIDE WORDS

www.worldwidewords.org

English language is forever changing. New words appear; old ones fall out of use or change their meanings. World Wide Words tries to record at least some part of this shifting wordscape by featuring new words, word histories, the background to words in the news, and the curiosities of native English speech.



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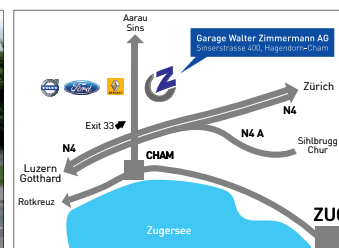
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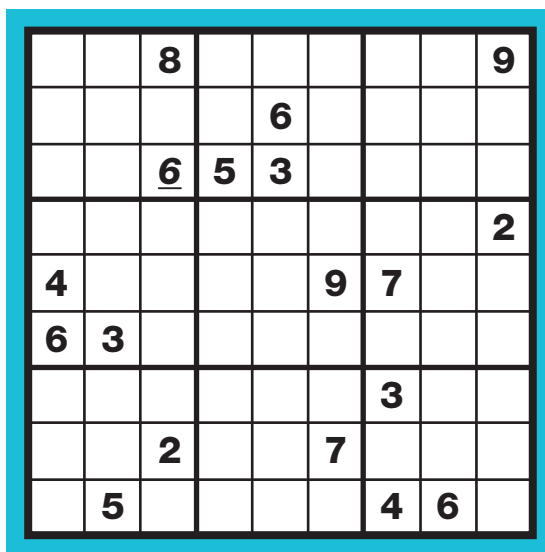




Sudoku

The participation in the February puzzle was reasonably high but there is only one winner. According to the hat Paul Laireiter won. Congratulations Paul. You are the lucky winner and your drinks during the next Stammtisch you attend are on the house.

This month's puzzle was a truly diabolical one, which took me more than one hour to solve. However to make it less difficult, I added an addition digit to the dues which makes it demanding but soluble. If the Einsteins of the Club want to test their skills and be assured that their grey cells are still in top form, I recommend them to delete the 6 in row 3, column 3 (underlined) and then try to solve it with only 17 dues.



Solution February 2013 Puzzle

3	1	5	7	2	9	4	6	8
7	2	4	8	6	5	3	1	9
6	9	8	3	1	4	2	5	7
2	3	6	5	4	8	9	7	1
5	8	7	2	9	1	6	4	3
9	4	1	6	3	7	5	8	2
1	7	2	4	5	3	8	9	6
8	5	3	9	7	6	1	2	4
4	6	9	1	8	2	7	3	5

The winner shall be drawn from the pool of correct solutions received. His drinks during the next Stammtisch he attends shall be on the house. Please simply tell the waiter or waitress that your drink is on the house, he or she shall find their way to the Paymaster, that is yours truly or Max.

The easiest form, in which the solution is sent, is nine rows of nine numbers in a Word document, Excel or email. In every Sudoku, every digit between 1 and 9 occurs exactly once in each row, column and 3x3 square. Please send your answers to muthana@trasco.ch, on or before the last day of the current month.



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