

Welcome

Dear Club members - The year has reached its midpoint, and we have had another set of events and activities since the last newsletter. This includes the annual general meeting of the Club on the occasion of a visit to Google in Zurich, our traditional annual bike tour around Lake Luzern, and a visit to IBM Research in Rueschlikon. As always, we welcome

new ideas and feedback and look forward to ever more members actively participating in our Club!



Martin Hahn

Past Events

Google Visit & Annual General Meeting, Zurich (27 March 2010)

Following a lunch at nearby Juan Costa restaurant, we were met at the rather dull-looking exterior of Google's research center in Zurich by the vivacious leader of the tour, MIT-er Shannon Maher (EECS '78), who is an Engineering Director there. Once inside, the architecture blows one's mind. The 61(!) attendees were taken around the center, which has two tower blocks of about 8 and 5 stories respectively.

Each floor has its own character, but one thing is common throughout - the idea of close interaction with colleagues coupled with the chance to escape. Most workspaces are open-plan, with talking between colleagues encouraged. Refreshments are around all over the building (at no cost), so ice-cream or coke breaks are common, and again, conversation is encouraged. Color schemes are bright, almost childlike, and differ from one area to another. Going between

floors can be via firepoles or slides (if you're going down!) or by more conventional ways. Getting away from it all is easy too, with massage rooms, a giant restful aquarium room, a jungle room, etc.

After the tour, Shannon gave us a review of what Google does and some ideas of what the future will look like. The future is bright - even chrome-bright, with Google's new Chrome web browser system, which competes with IE, Firefox, etc., and claims to be faster, easier, safer.

All in all, a most fascinating view of the cutting edge of infotech that is used by everybody!



Howard Hornfeld



Annual Pentecost Bike Tour, Lake Lucerne (22-23 May 2010)

For the past five years, each year over the Pentecost weekend we have circumnavigated a Swiss lake or two. The original idea for this year's trip was to pedal around the whole of Lake Luzern, but due to a hilly terrain, we decided to bike counter-clockwise around half of Lake Luzern (with the help of a ferry) on the first day, stay overnight in Küssnacht, and bike around Lake Zug on the second day. As luck would have it, the weather cleared up just in time and we had beautiful, sunny skies and comfortable temperatures the whole time.

All MIT alums (and friends and family) are invited to participate; typically we have a group of about 20 people of various ages

and cycling experience. The idea is that no one is too young, old, fast, or slow for this trip. This year we had 15 riders (plus a 2 year old in a bike trailer and one veteran drove the support car) - the youngest was 6 years old, and the oldest was, um, about 10 times that.

We're already starting the planning phase for next year's trip, so please get in touch with us if you want to join or have suggestions for a location.



Jonathan Claman



IBM Research Center visit, Rüschiikon (25 June 2010)

We started with a charming lunch at Restaurant Moosegg in Rüschiikon. A brief walk brought us to the IBM Research Lab, which is located in a rural residential area that overlooks Lake Zürich.

Dr. Dieter Jaepel started the presentation with an overview of IBM Research Zürich. The lab employs over 320 people, representing more than 30 nationalities. One example in the area of computational science is the application to the biotechnology area, which explores protein folding through simulations of potential bindings. Dr. Rolf Alenspach, who leads research on the physics of nanoscale systems provided a fascinating overview of the current research

focus in this area. Nanotechnology is found in three categories (accidental, passive, and active nanotechnology). IBM Zurich is taking the lead in nanowire devices, in which silicon is grown to be ultra-thin and uniform. Following this intriguing presentation, we went on a tour of Industry Solutions Lab data center, including supercomputers used in the computational sciences. Overall, it was an absorbing tour of IBM and various cutting edge technologies.



Sheila Ohlund



Future Events

Kandersteg Hike (4-5 September 2010)

Join us for a weekend in the Bernese Alps, starting from Kandersteg. Our overnight hotel is the Berghotel Schwanden. The hiking times are about 3-4 hours per day, but can be shortened to about 1-2 hours.

The tour is for everyone, including families. Please contact me (only few rooms left) at tillman@alum.mit.edu.

Geneva Observatory visit (November 2010, tbc)

Our next technical visit will be to the Geneva Observatory, one of only two in Switzerland. The Observatory is an active research center, attached to the University of Geneva, but on a separate site near Versoix. The special expertise of the observatory is exo-planets. The date

is Saturday 6 November, and as usual we will meet for lunch for those who wish, at the Auberge du Lion d'Or in Versoix. There are trains from Zürich and Basel to arrive on time and depart with plenty of time to get home. More details in the flyer which will be sent closer to the date.

Feature

Howard Hornfeld (VP Events)

We continue our features of the current board members. In this issue we portrait our VP Events.

Born in the lower parts of New York City, and my dad being a pharmacist, meant that I would grow up a juvenile delinquent making magnesium explosives and joining a gang - the Glendale Angels, in fact. We "owned" the local roller-skating rink, and don't anyone dare to! But the chemistry of Dad's place got into my bones, so I went to a technical high school in Brooklyn, did well, and got into MIT. Twelve years later I got my first chemist job, loved it but didn't fancy Wilmington,

Delaware, so my wife (of 8 months) and I quit our jobs, came to Europe and finally found a job in chemical Basel. A couple of years later we landed in Geneva, where to this day we still live and do all sorts of stuff, from fusion energy promotion to professional theatre production. I was one of the founders of the MIT Club of Switzerland, and am active with it still.



Howard Hornfeld

Updates

Local Group: Zurich

We continue our monthly gatherings for members from the Zurich area. With the temperatures finally becoming decent, we are meeting in outdoor places for casual after-work drinks. All members and their friends and spouses are welcome.

If you are not already on our Zurich mailing list, please email me at elke.hodson@wsl.ch. Our website is at: http://groups.google.com/group/mit_zurich.

Elke Hodson

Event: JAC Conference, Rüschlikon, 1 October 2010

Dear MIT Club of Switzerland. As President of the International Joint Alumni Conference (JAC), I take pleasure in inviting the MIT alumni community to the 2010 conference. Meet 250 business leaders and access latest business thinking at Switzerland's premier business conference. Among the 20+ distinguished speakers are 8 CEOs, 5 Ambassadors and 1 Dean

(INSEAD). Please visit www.jac-conference.org for more information.

Attached is an invitation with further details. We look forward to seeing many of you again this year.

Benno Marbach

Impressum

MIT Club of Switzerland

Website: <http://alumweb.mit.edu/clubs/switzerland/> (currently undergoing re-development)

Email: switzerlandclubpres@alum.mit.edu

Facebook: www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=62565487029 (please email rope01@yahoo.com in case of questions)

Zurich Group: http://groups.google.com/group/mit_zurich (please email elke.hodson@wsl.ch in case of questions)

Board

Michael Helke (President)
Martin Hahn (VP Communications)
Howard Hornfeld (VP Events)
Sheila Ohlund (VP Members)
Hans Hagenbuch (VP Finance)

Eva Krug (Advisor)
Donald Tillman (Advisor)
Nicolas Haenni (Auditor)
Hans Herriger (Auditor)

Alumni Info

As per November 2008, there are 377 alumni in Switzerland. Undergraduate degree holders have grown to 24%. Graduate degree holders in Management are the largest group overall (16% of all degree holders). Senior Executives and Civil Engineering follow (10% each). For undergraduates, Electrical Engineering (9%) and Computer Science (3%) with Chemical Engineering (3%) retain the top spots.