

# Musings on the English language

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Dear friends,

Here are the Jass results from 16.03. 2007

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2	Tony Manser	4013	
3	Andrew Iten	4011	
4	Vreni Ruedi	3955	
5	Hansruedi Wolf	3944	
6	Lynne Dunphy	3919	
7	Louis Wallimann	3826	
8	Marie Theres Melville	3806	
9	Heidi Wilson	3746	
10	Molly Gianotti	3716	
11	Hans Iten	3653	
12	Syd Melville	3635	
13	Hilda Iten	3551	
14	Nelly Steinemann	3405	
15	Marcel Ruedi	3293	
16	Adrian Blaser	3278	

Thank you all for coming and for bringing items for supper and prizes.  
Hans Iten,  
Convener.

#### Coming Events

Saturday, 5 May: Candlelight Dinner at the Farm. Please book in advance with Edith. Ph. 444 6972.  
Dinner will be served at 7.00 p.m., no doubt it will be delicious.  
Cost: \$30 per person.

Friday, 18 May Jassen at Ponsonby. 7.30 p.m. We hope to see you all there.

19 & 20 May Hamilton Shooting Week-end at the Swiss Farm. (Auckland).

Saturday, 26 May Stammtisch at the Farm.

Monday, 28 May Committee Meeting at 7.30p.m. at Edith's, 5 Glen Vista Place, Glenfield.

2,3&4 June (Queen's Birthday Weekend), Swiss Society AGM in Wellington and the Wellington Club's 50th Anniversary! Let Heidi Wilson know if you will go there and want to travel with others, maybe on a bus. Let us know early, also if you need accommodation.

Friday, 15 June Jassen at Ponsonby, 7.30 p.m.

Saturday, 16 June Fondue at the Swiss Farm.

Saturday, 30 June Stammtisch at the Farm.  
Auslandschweizer-Kongress in Genf vom 17.-19. August 2007

If you wish to attend, contact me as soon as possible. I have the forms for the Kongress, the Hotel reservation and the Children's Programme during that time (if required), it is for children aged 8-14 years. You would have to register by July 6, 2007.

Heidi Wilson, Secretary.

## Musings on the English language

Let's face it - English is a crazy language. There is no egg in eggplant nor ham in hamburger; neither apple nor pine in pineapple. English muffins weren't invented in England or French fries in France. Sweetmeats are candies while sweetbreads, which aren't sweet, are meat.

We take English for granted, but if we explore its paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig.

Why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing, grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham? If the plural of tooth is teeth, why isn't the plural of booth beeth? One goose, two geese. One index, two indices?

Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend, that you comb through annals of history but not a single annal? If you have a bunch of odds and ends and get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?

If teachers taught, why don't preachers praught? If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat? If you wrote a letter, perhaps you bote your tongue?

Sometimes I think all the English speakers should be committed to an asylum for the verbally insane. In what language do people recite at a play and play at a recital? Ship by truck and send cargo by ship? Have noses that run and feet that smell? Park on driveways and drive on parkways?

How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, while a wise man and wise guy are opposites? How can overlook and oversee be opposites, while quite a lot and quite a few are alike? How can the weather be hot as hell one day and cold as hell another?

Have you noticed that we talk about certain things only when they are absent? Have you ever seen a horseful carriage or a strapful gown? Met a sung hero or experienced requited love?

Have you ever run into someone who was combobulated, grunted, ruly or peccable? And where are all those people who ARE spring chickens or who would ACTUALLY hurt a fly?

You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it out and in which an alarm clock goes off by going on!!!

English was invented by people, not computers, and it reflects the creativity of the human race (which, of course, isn't a race at all). That is why, when the stars are out, they are visible, but when the lights are out, they are invisible. And why, when I wind up my watch, I start it, but when I wind up this essay, I end it!!!!

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