

*Je vais par le monde, emportant ma joie
Et mes chansons pour bagage
Je chante l'amour et je chante la foi
Je pars pour un très long voyage.*
(French scout song)

Je pars pour un très long voyage... (I'm leaving for a very long voyage)

When I started the journey on 8 July 1940, it was by no means certain that it would last a long time. Aside from the perils that life brings with it after all, the horrors of World War II threatened us. In Buchs we sat on the possible entry point of the most feared enemy, we were in the shot area of the stronghold of Sargans and the large rail yard would become target of air raids. The wooden houses that were usual here would have provided no protection. Nobody believed really in the evacuation plans; at worst we had to flee to the mountains. Where some thousand persons would have found shelter in the Alps of Werdenberg and where would they have found food? If somebody had thought about these problems? We came a hair's breadth away ... October 1, 1943, only a few kilometers distant, Feldkirch was as a „replacement target“ (instead of Augsburg) attacked: including 41 girls of a school about 200 deaths. Enormity and futility of war ...

So I was allowed to begin a long journey of life measured by human standards. I am still on the road. On July 11 this year, we celebrated 75 years that I have spent on this way. Most of the participants have been with me for decades and are dear and familiar to me. It is inevitable that one thinks of all those who have already completed their journey: the grandparents, the parents, many other relatives and many close friends. I miss them badly, but I'm grateful that so many people have remained closely linked to me.

Although I have wished explicitly no birthday gifts, a surprise awaited me that I hadn't awaited. With the support of almost all participants Elisabeth as an author and Jürg as a designer, photographer, etc. have presented a biography or to remain with the title, a travelogue; everything done in about three months, an enormous work that was more difficult by the physical distance between Saigon and Switzerland. Without today's telecommunications: impossible. Despite or perhaps because of the technical possibilities many nights were sacrificed so that at the end the many amateur pictures satisfied the professional and everything was exactly there where it belonged.

The birthday party took place again at Sennis, on a smaller scale than last time. We were in a dilemma: The old, familiar hotel at Sennis was twice home for our parties and now we liked to go there a third time. On the other hand for some of my friends the way up and the night at 1400 meters were too hard. According to my age and my way of life, it was not noisy, but I think (and hopefully also for the participants), a harmonious, friendly festival.

The Kurhaus Sennis, which was built in 1911 and thanks to the family Marty-Aschwanden still serves for its original purpose, reminds me of a sad moment in this year: The beautiful Kurhaus (Kurhaus = spa hotel) Buchserberg whose successive descent from the renowned hotel, owned and managed by Miss „Kätterli« Junginger, to the holiday camp of Schlieren and eventually to an asylum accommodation I witnessed, was demolished to make way for a couple of parking spaces. The rich Buchs has no sense for its few historical monuments. Buchs that calls itself proudly „City of Buchs“ now!

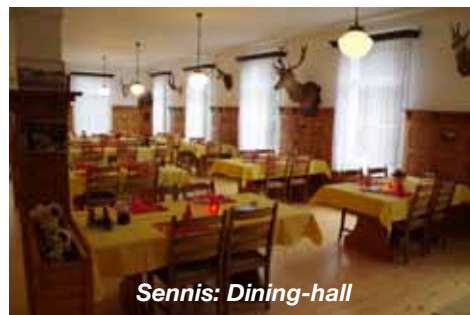
With the birthday related was a ride in the driver's cab of the Re 4/4 II no. 11199 from Arth-Goldau to Locarno, via the Gotthard route, pretty much the greatest feeling for the railroad fan. I won't give away who



1940: My mom and me!



Travel report 2015



Sennis: Dining-hall



Kurhaus Buchserberg

hasn't observed the gift ban. The already quite elderly Re 4/4 II (1969), two drivers from the old school, just the right environment for me. The fact that the trip back unofficially took place in the cab of an ICN (modern tilting train), I mention only in passing and under the seal of secrecy. Our other trips: We have travelled often, but as usual we stayed on the land routes, exceptionally we went by boat. In December of last year we were again at the Salzburg Advent Festival, with classical and popular music, perfectly arranged, yet very atmospheric. And the audience, thousands, many of them came from far away; there is a feeling of togetherness, although we had no costume of Salzburg. Also in December 2014 our second trip to Nuremberg took place; The main objective: the Christmas market in addition I visited the Germanic National Museum with its history of German-speaking countries.

2015 I started with a trip to Vienna. The goal was a number of museums in Vienna: Technical Museum, Natural History Museum, Museum of Art History, Albertina, Army Museum ... a pretty concentrated program. Franca remained at home; her back, her hips and knees do not love museums!

In memory of a trip with mom and Fritz Flesch we drove to the Amalfi coast in spring. Is amazing how the old seaport is placed in the mouth of a narrow canyon! From the hotel we followed the life in the cathedral square, the morning cleaning procedure, mule transport of construction materials, the invasion of the tourist crowds, the nightlife in the many restaurants. To my horror Franca longed back to the wide plain of the Rhine Valley considering the scary narrow and winding little roads in the mountains of the Amalfi coast. Consider: World Heritage Site Amalfi Coast, one of the most beautiful areas in the world !! We survived his test for the ability to drive without any damage. The rear window broke at the foot of Mount Vesuvius because of a small carelessness practically at a standstill!

Finally, we spent a week on Amrum. We traveled by train and by boat; from Zurich to Hamburg in the sleeping car. Our VW van, which has already a stately age of 17 years, served as a holiday vehicle for Anni (southbound) and Juerg (northbound).

Twice we were guests at the Hotel Engel in Sachseln (at this time we didn't know that the beautiful, hospitable house was the scene of an eerily macabre crime a little more than 75 years ago, which led to the last execution in Switzerland according to civil criminal law in 1940). The one time we went to the theater production of the Cantonal School Sarnen („Bloody Honey“, a criminal-funny musical with many too-human insects), the other time the „Folk Culture Festival Obwald“ in „Gsang“, folk music at a high level, this time with Vietnamese participation.

The warm summer invited to swim in the natural waters. Again and again I went by train and bike to the old Rhine at Diepoldsau and with the S4 to the Lake of Walenstadt at Mols, sometimes twice a day. Walks were rather rare. On the Montalin I was, on the Alvier and with Franca on the Margelchopf. On the way back she made a bad move and felt down very spectacularly, fortunately without serious consequences. Yes, in my age we feel the joints, even though I can be happy to descend 1,000 meters without too much discomfort.

Several times we were guests of family and birthday celebrations. In Lungern the 75-years-old Koks (me!) was present, when the just 18 years old Klemens did the first steps into adulthood. In perfect weather, the small birthday party sat outdoors, chatting, enjoying balancing on the slack line and jumping on the trampoline and to feast on the buffet. And I met friendly people that I actually knew since a long time, but had never seen. So a wonderful day! Tangga vilmoöl, Klemens! (Swiss dialect: Thank you very much, Klemens)

Others became 75 too. So it was inevitable that we met in St. Gallen



Start of the St-Gotthard-trip



Museum of Natural History Vienna



Amalfi



Mule instead of helicopter!



Vietnam and Switzerland in „Gsang“

with the school graduates of 1959, in Buchs with the contemporaries of 1940. The St. Gallen organizers had provided an extensive program on the way: Würth House Rorschach, Oberberg Castle at Gossau and Textile Museum, St. Gallen. In Buchs we meet every year at Corpus Christi, this year with an aperitif at the castle of Werdenberg and lunch at the Country Side Restaurant Werdenberg. And then: exchange of childhood memories!

The dark clouds didn't miss. On April 23, my cousin Walter Stauber died after prolonged suffering. He was my family memory. Many things I didn't know or what I had forgotten he was able to complete. He, who had spent his whole life in Oftringen and Zofingen, kept a secret love for his grandparents' home Sevelen. Even in old age, he regretted that he had been too young at that time to take over the house of the grandparents. In some way he replaced for me the brother I never had. Not even four months later the wife of Walter Stauber, the younger son of my cousin, lost her mother in a very sad way.

At the age of 97 years my colleague Dr. Gion Deplazes, old vice-principal, teacher of German language, writer and promoter of the Romanesque (Reto-Romanche) (Sursilvan) language, died. I appreciated his quiet, unassuming manner, his clever, humorous and often a bit ironic votes in the discussion. I also appreciated Heinz Karrer, feared physicist and dear colleague, who passed away in late June. In January Marianne Walter / Plisch lost unexpectedly her husband Chlaus. Chlaus, dentist, publishers, book designers, etc. has, although cadet in his youth, supported Plisch in her scouting activities. He was still full of plans ... Who would have thought that his „letschte E-pfänz-Kaländer 24 Dezämber“ of 2014 (advent calendar) would really be the last!

Quite by chance I came across a message that called me to half a century Scoutism. With 99 years, died Michel Menu in March of this year, Scout Commissioner of the Scouts de France from 1947. He met in his opinion at a slackened scout level that gave no impulses especially to the older scouts. His answer were the Raiders, still located within the squads and groups, but highlighted by technical and intellectual knowledge and skills, „Elite Scouts“, if you will, a knighthood of the modern age. They were also the founders of „patrouilles libres“, groups in towns and villages where no divisions had emerged, as „scout-driven core“. Menu demanded a lot from his raiders, but the idea might inspire. His book „Raider Scouts“, which has greatly influenced me, appeared in 1949. My first, battered copy has accompanied me on many walks, and is found still in my Scout library. Menu called out to his raiders:

Rester debout, quand les autres s'assoient,	<i>Remain standing, when others sit down,</i>
Sourire quand les autres serrent les dents.	<i>smile when others clench their teeth.</i>
Donner sa flotte quand ils ont soif,	<i>Giving his drink when they are thirsty,</i>
et son coeur quand ils n'en pas.	<i>and his heart when they have not.</i>

and to the leaders:

Si tu critiques, ils démolissent	<i>If you criticize, they demolish</i>
Si tu marches devant, ils te dépasseront.	<i>If you go ahead, they surpass you.</i>
Si tu Donne ta main, ils donneront leur peau.	<i>If you give your hand, they will give their skin.</i>
Et si tu prie ... alors, ils seront des Saints.	<i>And if you pray ... then they will be Saints.</i>

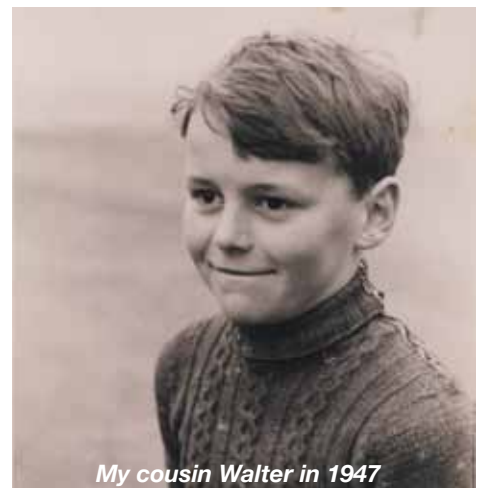
The Raider, embedded in the spirituality of French Catholicism, emphasized the development of the individual within the community. This created a conflict with the growing collectivism in the Catholic SdF, ten to fifteen years earlier than in Switzerland. The Raiders were a success, and success creates envy. In the interest of the matter Menu capitulated finally, and there arose the Pionniers with the philosophy of the „Chantier“ (construction site), in which the group took precedence. Menu has, as I have just learned, not completely abandoned his idea,



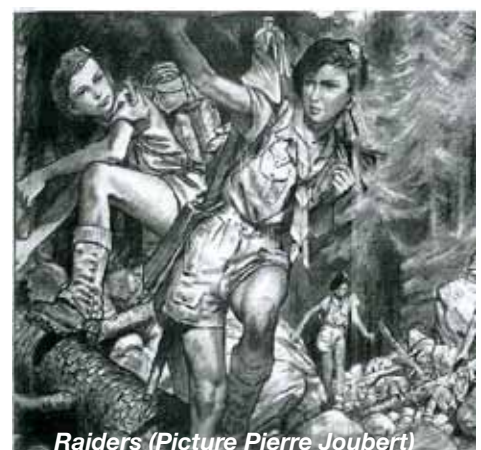
Steil ist's auf den Margelchopf!



On the slackline



My cousin Walter in 1947



Raiders (Picture Pierre Joubert)

but transferred to the level of adults. He founded the „Goums“, who take multi-day marches of silence and contemplation in secluded areas. The Goums, as well as to a certain extent the Raider, have survived their creator. I dedicate this song whose first chorus provided the idea for this text to the memory of Michel Menu:

Unissons nos voix avant de nous quitter.
Je vais parcourir d'autres lieux,
La vie est si douce et le monde si beau,
Entonnons ce dernier adieu.

Refrain

Je vais par le monde, emportant ma joie
Et mes chansons pour bagage
Je chante l'amour et je chante la foi
Je pars pour un très long voyage.

Je vais par les villes et je vais par les champs.
Mon cœur ne connaît pas la haine,
Mes poches sont vides et je lance mes chants
Qui sonnent très haut dans la plaine.

*Join our voices before we leave.
I will go through other places,
Life is so sweet and beautiful the world,
Intone this last farewell.*

Chorus

*I go around the world, taking away my joy
And my songs for baggage
I sing my love and I sing my faith
I'm leaving for a very long voyage.*

*I go by the towns and I go by fields.
My heart does not know hatred,
My pockets are empty and I run my songs
That sound high in the plain.*

*And if I meet death on the way,
Mowing down the ranks of beggars,
Yes, I'll be ready as a true paladin
I will say my last goodbye.*

Et si je rencontre la mort en chemin,
Fauchant parmi les rangs des gueux,
Oui, je serai prêt comme un vrai paladin,
Je dirai mon dernier adieu.

Dernier Refrain

Je vais par le monde, emportant ma joie
Et mes chansons pour bagage
Je chante l'amour et je chante la foi
Je pars pour mon dernier voyage.

last Chorus

*I go around the world, taking with me
my joy
And my songs for baggage
I sing my love and I sing my faith
I leave for my last voyage.*

The Raiders of Menu have accompanied me for over 50 years. The book of my colleague Jon Nuotclà „In Davos and Berlin“ on the other hand did not appear until 2015 and is about the time of my childhood and the time just before WW II. Peetsch (Peter), the Davos peasant boy and Lena, daughter of a German (Nazi) doctor get to know as children. Children friendship becomes love. But the two cannot escape the political tensions, which are particularly manifest in Davos. The end of the war 1945 separates them suddenly and permanently. Lena will see Peetsch after 50 years again when he is found dead after a futile search for her on a Berlin park bench. Both have lived a life of its own for fifty years, without ever having left the other, parallel lives, so to speak. The years in Davos and those in Berlin are described so minutely by Jon, as if he had been the observer in the background. My reading in 2015!

Now, dear friends and family, I thank you for the many contacts, encounters, conversations and emails. I wish you all a quite long journey on this earth, not necessarily with empty pockets, but with a song that sounds in the plain. And we try not to embitter the heart with hatred and evil thoughts!

Good luck, happy holidays and health and happiness in the New Year wishes you

Walter / Koks



On SS Blüemlisalp (Lake of Thun)



Burning winter (Burgerau/Buchs)



Alvier (View against north)



Galferbühl with Alpstein



Pinöggel is with us!

Good angels protect you

In the first class I woke up sometime in the night. Then I saw two angels. One stood at the bedside of my brother, the other at my bed. My mother came into the room and turned on the light. The angels were gone.

During puberty I declined angels. I found, they belonged to the Catholic Church. Evangelical Christians did not need them. In the books of P. Anselm Gruen I found new access to them. At the same time I discovered glass angels in the window of the bookstore Provini in Chur. On special occasions I give angels made of glass.

On May 31, Vanessa was confirmed in the church in Chur Masans with four other young people with disabilities. Minister Astrid Weinert designed by means of the picture book „Good angels protect you,“ a solemn service. One of the girls delighted us with a solo dance. Vanessa's mother Rina, who grew up as a catholic in Peru, looked with a lot of empathy for a confirmation verse for her daughter. Also on the confirmation image selected by her she found deep thoughts.

This year I celebrated „Golden Confirmation“. At some place in Switzerland they held a religious service for Golden Confirmation on Palm Sunday. I visited one such in Azmoos. On 11 April 1965 (my confirmation) it was my desire to feel God's will in my life and to follow Him. 50 years later, I may say that I started since then every day with his blessing

My church home I found in the local church. My roots are (partly still) in Araschgen. Average monthly worship takes place there. As long as Martin Domann supervises the parish Steinbach and the travel by car or public transportation to Araschgen is not too cumbersome, I would like to attend services there.

In Gretschins is a beautiful late Gothic church. In the nineties Walter and I assisted some Easter services in this church. Since Christmas 2014, Daniel Hanselmann, who grew up in Buchs and has been minister in Chur for 14 years, is minister now in the parish of Wartau. In his worship, the liturgy has a great importance. There is a lot of singing, the prayers of intercession are confirmed with a Kyrie. To Gretschins Walter comes to church too. Even to Azmoos he accompanies me often.

In 2015 some dear friends and acquaintances became fifty years old. In December 2014 I was with Vanessa for one hour at Elisabeth Guber's 50th birthday in Buchs. Claudia in St. Peter celebrated in February, in March she was followed by Rina and a neighbor on Holderweg, in July Ruth at Sennis and Claudia in Scotland reached the age of fifty and in October Walter and I were invited to Marlene and Ueli's birthday. They celebrated together hundred years.

Sixty years we celebrated with Wilma and Göni in Pfadiheim next to the zoo in Zurich; at Andy's sixtieth in Konolfingen Walter and I were eating Indian food for the first time .

Twenty years old became Sarina. Again, I was at the Kreuzgasse in Buchs. Sarina, then aged 18 months, had a brain tumor. This birthday was celebrated with great gratitude.

86/87 we celebrated with Pinöggel (her scout name) in August (birthday in November) on the Schneggabödali. In January she was in the hospital Grabs with pneumonia. The prognosis of the doctors was undetermined. Pinöggel recovered. Now she must be supplied with oxygen day and night. She is cheerfully, taking each day as it comes, and enjoyed the meeting of her recovery wholeheartedly.

Martha Hodel has invited us for 6 December for their seventy years. We are thinking of you in Dresden. We had booked the Christmas market before her invitation.



Walter reached 75 years on July 8. Family, relatives and friends met at Sennis on July 11 for dinner. We stayed at the beautiful mountains and enjoyed the warm and beautiful weather the next day.

Elisabeth dwells still in Vietnam. On June 27, she and Andrea came to Switzerland. Andrea flew back on July 7, Elizabeth on 13th. On his birthday she wanted to give Walter a book titled „75 Years Papa“. It should contain chapters on his childhood and youth, about Scouting and family, passions and holidays. Elisabeth in Vietnam, the albums and documents in Switzerland. She asked the invited guests, whether they (strictly voluntary) could provide pictures and text for the book. A big challenge was the pedigree. A lively mail contact developed. Relations searched for data and names of ancestors and descendants (Thank you Doris and Ruedi!). About a thousand questions were answered by friends. Elisabeth wrote most of the texts. They relied, inter alia, on our annual reports. Christmas and New Year Elisabeth will spend in Vietnam. In the beginning of 2016 she comes to Switzerland for a few days.

Jürg works in Sargans at Scantop. Clearly, Elisabeth asked him if he is taking part in the gift. He took over the formal and technical implementation and the cover design and illustration. At Pentecost he got all the texts and photos from Elisabeth. Our son is perfect, and he had his idea of how the book should be designed. He lacked still images and documents. In Walter's absence he rummaged through his albums, searched the floor in the slides for suitable pictures. His nights were short, on the weekends he spent three-quarters of the time on the computer. I was relieved when the book was sent to press (typical mother). The rainy August 1 spent Jürg with Walter and me at Sennis. We parents enjoyed being together and talking with our son and even played „Ludo“. He spent one week summer vacation with Dominique, a colleague, on the Baltic Sea. Our VW Transporter served them as a place to sleep. A long weekend, he was in Berlin and from December 23 - January 2 he dwells on Hiddensee, a Baltic Sea - island near Rügen.

Since January 17 Anni and Sascha live in a series of single-family homes at Staffelhof (Zurich). Anni has completed her courses as a trainer. Partially she works in this field. But she is also still working as a nurse. Marc is in the „why“ - phase. He can still not pronounce the „r“. He always asks „walum« (warum=why). Walum the leaves are yellow now? Walum is it autumn? Walum summer ended ...? On the playgrounds, he loves climbing on scaffolding or climbing nets. At Sennis I was busy in my room. When Marc's voice sounds through the house: „Nani, Nani“; it is music in my ears and in my heart.

Stella made her first independent steps a week before their first birthday. In May Marc and Stella were with us for four days and three nights during the holidays. Stella has difficulties to sleep. For me it was each time unique and beautiful when the screaming Stella felt asleep suddenly in my arms. On September 15 Stella was given to us a second time (in my view). On the playground, she suffered a febrile seizure. Febrile seizures do not have consequences. Stella ate a banana and Anni said she had choked and suffocated. She called the emergency when her daughter apparently was no longer breathing, the face changed color and became stiff. After five minutes, the nightmare was over. Arguably the worst five minutes in the life of our younger daughter.

On a Friday in April Walter and I traveled with the VW van direction Amalfi. Walter organized accommodations at lakes and the sea before driving. On the outward journey we stayed three times, just as on the way home. In Amalfi we saw on the Cathedral Square from the hotel room. Six nights we spent in the steep town that is built into the rock.



Elisabeth



Juerg



Marc

There were no cranes anywhere. Morning at five o'clock building material was brought to the Cathedral Square. Donkey transported it from there to the construction site. At seven sand and bricks were gone. The place was cleaned for the tourists. I felt brought back 200 years. On our wedding day we stayed on Lake Bracciano in a romantic room with fireplace.

From 29 August to 5 September we were at Amrum. Walter knows that Amrum is like a second home for me. I thank him warmly at this point that he makes this vacation possible.

From 2 to 8 December we will be in Meissen and Dresden and visit the Christmas markets. In 2005, we spent a day in Dresden. Now we have more time to visit this city.

In May I had to pick up at the post office a registered letter. At home, I gave Walter the letter with the words: „I do not open this letter. Sender is the city of Zurich. I am not aware that I was there with the police in touch. Maybe it also has something to do with godmother Cilli.,” The latter was the case. Cilli bequeathed me in her will, which she has written several years prior to her entry into the nursing home, an amount of money. It pleased me enormously that she had thought of me. How grateful I am that I have visited Cilli in their last year of life regularly.

Dori in Bern fell in July at her home for the third time since 2008. This time, his right thigh broke lengthwise. Since August, she lives in a nursing home. She enjoys my visits.

44 years after our graduation at the teacher training college two colleagues organized a class reunion. 44 years ago we stood at the beginning of our teaching, now we are at retirement age. End of August ten alumni met at eleven o'clock on the St-Martin Square in Chur. Some of them I knew immediately, others not at all. We took an aperitif in the square, changed the restaurant for lunch. Since the group was small, I learned from each, where he / she worked. In one or two years, we want to meet again.

If you get this report, we are in the season of Advent. Christmas is around the corner. I wish you for both silence, contemplation and inner peace.

With angels I began my report 2015. Angels may complete this report now. Analogously are the words of Anselm Grün, which I give you on your way in the New Year:

*I wish you dear reader,
that you will be an angel for people who are in need.
And I wish you,
that you meet an angel, if you are in need.*

Franca

