

*My Lord and my God,
take from me everything
that distances me from you.
(The prayer of Brother Klaus)*

*Mi Herr und mi Gott,
nimm alläs vo miär,
was mich hinderäd zu diär.
(Gebät vom Brüader Chlais)*

Annual Report 2024

Contrasts

We were recently in Flüeli-Ranft, for the third time this year, as guests at the Hotel Paxmontana. The area above Lake Sarnen at the entrance to the Grosse Melchaa valley has become familiar to us. Flüeli and the surrounding area are still characterized by agriculture, even if the towns down by the lake are gradually becoming suburbs of Lucerne. But history and culture are still present everywhere. May it stay that way!



Obere Ranftkapelle

Franca has turned 75, just think! She is still sooo young! The celebration also took place in the Paxmontana, in a smaller circle than before. The trip to and from central Switzerland was accompanied by snowdrifts after I had just had the summer tires fitted. The outward journey was barely manageable, on the way back I had to turn around at Hirzel and take the detour via Zurich.



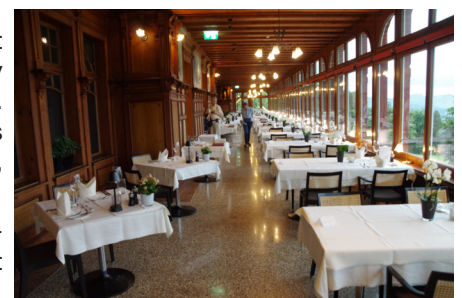
Hotel Paxmontana

Flüeli, the birthplace and home of the Swiss national saint Niklaus von Flüe, still lives from agriculture and industry, as well as a little tourism, partly fed by pilgrimages to Brother Klaus. Everything is quiet, there is no religious souvenir hustle and bustle, even if you can find a modest and largely tasteful selection in a small shop in the Ranft Gorge below. The pilgrims go down the steep path and later back up again more or less laboriously (depending on their age!), mechanical means of transport are only reserved for severely disabled visitors. I have never seen one.



Geburtstag im Grossen Salon

Anyone arriving in the village by post bus or private car will find themselves directly opposite the saint's house and, at a reasonable distance but still quite close, rises the elongated, five-storey building of the Paxmontana, which was built almost 130 years ago as the Hotel Nünalphorn. Without the Ranft saint, the hotel would probably not exist, and its sheer size represents a huge contrast to the modest and more than 500-year-old farmhouse. Sitting in the wonderful "veranda" at the lavishly laid table, you sometimes feel a little guilty when you think of the man in Ranft who was constantly fasting. Would we have displeased him or would he have been aware that it is not given to everyone... I am always reminded that the paths are different and that there is not just right and wrong. And again about the "Pax": despite its size, on closer inspection it seems delicate in its Art Nouveau architecture.



Paxmontana: Die Veranda

And while we are on the subject of Brother Klaus: St. Fiden, isn't that that dull St. Gallen suburb with OLMA halls? I got to know it differently after many decades, with beautiful houses from the abbots' time and a baroque church. In the autumn, Maja Bösch, a church musician, performed the meditations she had composed on Brother Klaus' prayers with a youth and adult choir, accompanied by organ and dulcimer. Very touching, very impressive!

For the first time in the Tonhalle Zurich! We attended a concert by the Capriccio Baroque Orchestra with Mozart and Haydn. Hopefully it won't be just one time.

For decades, operetta performances have been part of the annual program in the Principality of Liechtenstein. In 2024 it was "The Csárdás Princess" (Emmerich Kálmán) in Balzers. In 2025 it will be the Bird Seller in Vaduz. Hopefully! Beautiful music, stage design, costumes, good soloists and choirs... what more could you want!

In late summer I received an invitation to an exhibition by Christoph Speich, the butcher's son from Matt, who lives as an artist in Austria near Vienna. He had been able to solve the mystery of his brother Jakob for me (Annual Report 2021). Now in Mollis he juxtaposed pictures from his new and old homeland, rolling hills and rugged walls. One picture depicted his parents' house, which is familiar to me. The house was a mystery to me: it seemed to have hardly any openings, windows at most suggested. Was it a safe castle or a kind of cage



1. August-Feier in Flüeli: Messe mit Jodelchor

for the artist? Or both? (<http://www.christophspeich.com>)

On the road

We were well over the national border once, on the river/canal trip from Kiel to Hamburg and on to Berlin. You wouldn't expect it: the nature along the waterways was impressive, the big cities seemed far away. Then of course the technology: a boat lift, a lift with a cabin in the shape of a giant bathtub, the navigable bridge over the Elbe and of course the locks, also gigantic structures. Then the culture: the view of the Elbphilharmonie, the old Elbe tunnel, the Autostadt Wolfsburg and finally Potsdam and Berlin...

Some trips within Switzerland were also new territory. From Flüeli we drove over the Glauenberg to the Entlebuch and then to the Emmental. We had a quick lunch in the Chuderhüsi. We looked at the historic Würzbrunnen Church, formerly a pilgrimage church to St. Wolfgang, now a popular wedding church.

Blessing pictures... are probably no longer very modern. But the women from Heinzenberg and their friends (men too!) have reinvented them and, like previous creations, exhibited them in the Urmein Church. The initiator (and also an artist herself) is Regula Caviezel, her daughters Margreth and Ursina contribute pictures that express their view of "Blessing". Once I cycled up the Heinzenberg to Urmein on an e-bike, another time Franca and I took the post bus up, which eventually took us to the Glaspas, where we were delighted to meet Ursula and Andrea Hitz. I'm excited about the next exhibition, which is already planned!

You don't often drive through Dürrenmatt's famous tunnel immediately after Burgdorf these days, but when you do and luckily you usually see daylight again, you find yourself in romantic forest valleys through which the train winds its way and then soon passes a friendly and stately village called Wynigen. There I visited my old Scout friend Funka, who has lived there for a long time with his wife Therese. He is familiar with the area and its inhabitants and was able to show me some of the gems in the village and the hilly landscape around it. Around their house there are signs of his blacksmithing skills and in the wider area there are small hydroelectric power plants that he, as a long-time specialist for SBB power plants, looks after together with other volunteers.

Hiking, cycling, swimming

The days of hiking in the mountains for hours seem to be over. I'm no longer drawn to it and my performance has probably decreased. So I look at the Alvier and the Margli from below. I'm still out and about on my mountain bike, which has been converted into an e-bike, but more gently. What I still can't stop doing is swimming; in summer, especially on the old Rhine, although, to be honest, I also do shorter distances. Now, in the cold season, I drive to Chur and swim in the 50-meter air dome.

Farewells

As we get older, we have to say goodbye more and more often to people who have accompanied us on our journey through life for a longer or shorter period of time. From my generation, I am now the last of the descendants of Georg and Margreth Giger - Beusch, Sevelen. In the summer, my cousin Ruth, daughter of Aunt Ursula, known as "Urschi", died. I didn't see her very often in the past. She grew up in Winterthur and for that time Winterthur was a long way away. I associate Ruth with the memory of an unforgettable journey. She had married a young Rhine boatman, Karl Meier, who had just been entrusted with his first ship, the Columba, actually a canal ship with Schottel propulsion (SSL = tug barge), by the Swiss shipping company AG. I don't remember how it came about, but I was allowed to take the trip from Basel to Essen with my friend Mugga. Rhine shipping up close! It was the last days of the tugboats. We admired the mighty tugboats that pulled their barges carrying several thousand tons behind them, such as the "Unterwalden" with its 4000 horsepower. We tried to make ourselves useful on board, but not always successfully! I remember a broken pump handle that did not withstand our efforts. We then had to look for a workshop in Essen that could weld the piece back on.

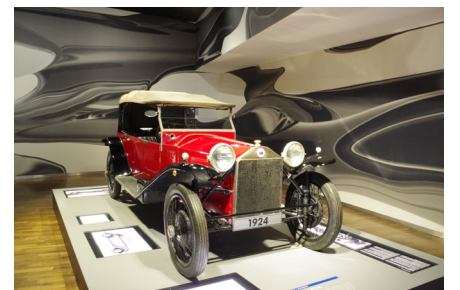
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Chr. Speich: Elternhaus des Künstlers in Matt



Schiffshebewerk



Autostadt Wolfsburg



Urmein, Segensbilder (Margreth Caviezel)



Urmein, Segensbilder (Ursina Caviezel)

A number of colleagues are also no longer with us. I'm thinking, for example, of Gabriel "Gabi" Peterli, head of the lower high school, German scholar, artist, commander of a fusilier battalion (Füs Bat 287?), a versatile, friendly man, always modest, approachable and humorous.

A touching farewell was that of Ruth Portmann in Sursee. Not long ago I met her on board a steamer on Lake Lucerne. We shared a passion for the old steamships. We exchanged letters about our boat trips until I found out that Mrs Portmann was so ill that she no longer wanted to live. Her wish came true...

If anyone was a symbol of scouting in Chur and Graubünden, it was (besides Wolf Seiler) Kurt Rüedi, "Hai", dentist in Chur. Among other things, he was corps leader in Chur and cantonal field master of the Graubünden cantonal association. But he was also a musician, especially a jazz musician, a man of many talents. If he needed someone for a leadership position in the Boy Scouts, he would use the opportunity to convince a victim when he was sitting in the dentist's chair and couldn't say anything! Hai leaves a gap, even if he no longer performed any Boy Scout functions due to his age.

Family

We have often been invited, whether to a performance by our grandchildren or their birthday or simply to a meal, in Zurich or Churwalden. Thank you everybody!

Birthdays

Birthdays? They inevitably repeat themselves year after year. So I would just like to remind you of two exceptional ones. Göni (Anni's father-in-law) turned 70 and celebrated in the Schützenhaus Fehraltorf. The average age of the guests was relatively low (if you count the children) and the company was accordingly lively. Thank you Wilma and Göni for the invitation! That weekend, the SBB was doing construction work in the Zurich area and replacing trains with buses. So we decided to take a taxi back to Wetzikon. A Mercedes electric vehicle, how classy! The SBB then promptly declared the S-Bahn train to be an IC3, which saved us having to change trains until Sargans.

Eva Koprio-Hitz turned 80. I experienced 56 of them more or less intensely. Now she was able to celebrate her festival surrounded by her quite large family and friends. She was obviously happy to see all the familiar faces around her.

Future

We don't have any big plans (anymore!), but rather, as they say, we take things day by day. It would be nice if I could give you a similar report to this year in a year's time. However, the Salzburg Advent singing in December 2024 is firmly planned... hopefully health and ÖBB will cooperate! And, who knows, another river cruise? Or Amrum?

And now I wish you all a good 2025 and hope that we will see each other again in good spirits next year!

Walter



Ruth und Rolf an Bord der SSL Columbia



Wie alt ist Elisabeth geworden?



Romantik in Haltinners Garten



Göni Haltinner ist 70 Jahre alt!



Die achtzigjährige Eva mit Tochter Salome

Annual Report 2024

*Everything you do,
be done in love
1 Corinthians 16.11*

Dear relatives, friends and acquaintances

"Everything you do, be done in love" is the motto for 2024. Walter and I watched the service on this topic from the Frauenkirche in Dresden on January 1st. In addition to the pastor and the priest, two women and a man spoke on this topic. In October they lived with this Bible verse for a week. Their examples were practical. I decided to stick to this motto in 2024. This is easy for me in the household. It becomes more difficult when something falls on the floor and I have to pick it up. When I bend down, I remind myself of the motto for the year. There are people whose behavior causes me trouble. I can't love them (yet?). I have made it a habit to bless them when I think of them.

In 2024, we also had to say goodbye to people we love. In January, Dori left our world at the age of 105 1/2. While I was studying in Fribourg to become an auxiliary and special needs teacher, I lived with Dori and Andreas (my brother's godfather) in Bern. When Dres died, I visited Dori regularly. She spent the last 10 years in the retirement and nursing home in Köniz. I was invited to her 100th birthday.

A week later, Walter and I drove to Sils in the Engadine. There we said goodbye to my secondary school class teacher. I was always in touch with Aldo Camenisch. After his retirement, he and his wife moved to the Fex Valley. Walter and I visited him and his wife there a few times. His wife died on his 90th birthday. Walter and I visited Aldo twice more in the Fex Valley. Both times we were invited to lunch at the restaurant in Fex. Aldo received our annual report, I wrote to him for his birthday and we spoke on the phone together. The last phone call took place before Christmas 2023. At the beginning of January he died in the cantonal hospital in Chur within eight days.

Marianne Buchli was an organist in Zizers for 41 years. I met her through Walter. She was the wife of one of Walter's colleagues. Ernst Buchli was my class teacher during the year in which I attended type C at the cantonal school in Chur. Marianne and Ernst were the first outsiders to find out about our engagement. When Marianne became a widow, I called her three or four times a year for the first few years, later it was once or twice.

I worked for Klara and Emil Hobi during my summer holidays when I was teaching in Wiesen. They had six children. The oldest and youngest boys were very disabled. The older lived at home, the younger was in a home. I was the girl for everything. I cooked, learned to rake (hay), went to therapy with Emil (son). Unfortunately Klara fell ill with cancer and died when all the children were still at school. I never lost contact with the family. Emil said goodbye to this world in the same room where he was born in 1931 by the light of a stable lantern.

In September, the farewell to my confirmation pastor Stefan Jäger took place in St. Martin's Church in Chur, where I was confirmed 59 years ago. Stefan Jäger was pastor in Herrliberg for 15 years. During this time, I had no contact with him. After his retirement, he came back to Chur. Contact was re-established. Through Stefan Jäger, I found my faith in sixth grade. In 2003, he helped me accept same-sex relationships in a conversation. For the last six years, he lived in the retirement and nursing home in Unterterzen, four of them with his wife. Walter and I visited him and his wife three times in the home before Corona.

Walter and I only found out about three farewells afterwards.

Giovanni Zanetti, the 4th - 6th grade teacher in Passugg-Araschgen, died before his 80th birthday.



Jahreslosung



Quaderschulhaus



Martinskirche

I have been in contact with Johanna Arpagaus, who supported me during the time I was leaving my mother, for the last 20 years. Since 2016 she lived in the anthroposophical retirement home in Hombrechtikon. I wrote to her on her birthday and she received our annual report. The last birthday letter came back with the note "deceased".

Ruth was Walter's cousin. She lived in Bonndorf in the Black Forest for many years. Around 2016 she came to Uezwil. Walter and I visited her. Ruth's apartment had stylish cupboards, chairs and tables. We also got to know her son, daughter-in-law and older granddaughter. As Ruth's health was getting worse, she went to the retirement and nursing home in Wohlen. I called her every now and then and she thanked me for the annual report and cards. In September I could no longer reach her by phone. Walter called the reception of the home and found out that she had died in July.

We celebrated my 75th birthday with the extended family at Flüeli-Ranft in Paxmontana. Elisabeth surprised me with a Power Point presentation, Anni with a book. Both contained pictures from my childhood, pictures from her childhood and pictures of our grandchildren. In February our daughters spent their sports holidays with their families in Churwalden. Anni brought pictures from her childhood with her, in which she was photographed with her siblings. Marc, Stella and Ladina recreated these pictures. I was very happy about this. Thank you Elisabeth, thank you Anni! Thank you Marc, Stella and Ladina for taking part!

A week after my birthday, Walter and I took the train to Kiel. We had booked a boat trip with Thurgau Travel from Kiel to Berlin via Hamburg. The trip was accompanied from Basel to Basel. For the first time, we traveled on a ship that had two decks instead of three. The ship stayed at a port at night and did not leave until the morning. I liked the trip on the Elbe, the Elbe Lateral Canal and the Elbe-Havel Canal best. The bridges were low. If the ship passed under a bridge, the wheelhouse had to be lowered. The passengers who were on the sun deck had to sit down. The canal was lined with trees on the left and right, and there were a few houses to be seen. There was usually a footpath and cycle path next to the canal. I have fond memories of visiting Autostadt Wolfsburg and the museum, where we admired cars, from the earliest vehicles to the most modern ones. I was particularly fond of the VW vehicles. After a week, we took the train from Berlin back to Basel.

On January 4th, Walter and I visited the Mariastein monastery near Flüh, near Basel. We walked along the long, gently sloping corridor and climbed down the steps to the pilgrimage chapel. We also visited the monastery church. I was pleased that the decorated Christmas tree was still there. In the monastery shop, I bought a book in which there is a blessing for every day of the year (366).

During the sports holidays we went to Neuhausen and visited the Smilestone rooms (model railway). Walter and I spent seven hours there. I was also fascinated by the trains that travelled through various Swiss landscapes. It was particularly exciting to watch trains crossing or when a train travelled on an upper bridge and at the same height on a lower bridge.

We visited the Albert Anker exhibition "Anker and Childhood" at the Fondation Gianadda in Martigny in June. The next day we took the Mont Blanc Express to Finhaut. A wonderful carillon rang every hour. We found out that 23 bells rang. A baker donated these bells to the church over the course of his life.

In Giswil we wanted to visit the Obwalden folk culture festival. We stayed in Sarnen for two nights. Four hours before the concert was to begin the event was cancelled due to bad weather.

Apart from my birthday, we spent the 1st and 2nd of August and four days in October at Paxmontana on Flüeli-Ranft.

Sennis also received a visit from us. We arrived in time for the alpine church service and then walked to the Steina viewpoint. From Steina you can see Lake Walen, the motorway and the railway. Of course we had to wait until we saw a train. We slept in the mountain air for two nights. We visited the Luegi viewpoint on the second day. We reached it from Sennis in 1 hour and 40 minutes. It is higher up than Steina. Lake Walen is clearly visible. I could no longer see the railway. But from there you can see Lake Walen from Walenstadt to Weesen.



Johanna Arpagaus



Anni, Elisabeth, Ju



Ladina, Stella, Marc



Mein Geburtstag im Paxmontana



Elbeseitenkanal

We plan to spend December 6th - 8th in Salzburg to attend the traditional Salzburg Advent singing in the Festival Hall.

On June 1st we were able to attend the ballet performance in Witikon in which Ladina danced. Walter and I really enjoyed it. Elisabeth later gave us the video of this performance. On the video we saw the dancers up close. We discovered a lot of things that we hadn't noticed when we first saw them.

Ladina also plays the piano. I practice with her on Monday. She's not good at reading music. She has a very good ear. If she hears the piece she's practicing two or three times correctly, she can play it by heart. The beat is usually not right. We practice this together.

Stella plays the flute. We were invited to her concert in mid-June. Seventy flute students, including four adults, were divided into two groups. Some pieces were played by all seventy together, others were played by one group at a time. The pieces were short. The concert ended after 30 minutes. I could have listened for a long time. There's a video of this performance too. Unfortunately, it's only five minutes long. For her birthday, Stella got her own flute. Until then, she played on rented instruments.

In September, Walter went to the Malbun mountain hut on Buchserberg with Sascha, Marc and one of Sascha's scout colleagues and his son Aron. From there the four of them hiked across the Alvier to Sennis. On that Saturday the foehn was blowing. They had to fight against the wind. In Sennis they were expected by Anni and Stella and the mother of Aron and his two sisters. They stayed in Sennis for two nights. During this time they played by the stream. They hardly hiked anymore.

Marc plays floorball. He has two training sessions a week. Like his mother as a teenager, he makes sure that no balls go into the goal.

Jürg spent four weeks in Italy in the spring of this year. He ran the business from there. Sascha did the work that Jürg couldn't do from afar. Jürg had traveled to Italy to draw. Besides working in the business, he didn't have much time for that. From what I can see, he enjoyed the change.

Farewell

Let's assume we are standing on the shore of a lake. A motorboat is sailing in front of us, its destination being the other shore. On the ship is a person we love. He is being eagerly awaited on the other shore. But we know that he will not leave the other shore.

I have finished my part of the annual report. I wish you a peaceful Advent season, a blessed Christmas and a New Year in which you can accept every day as a gift.

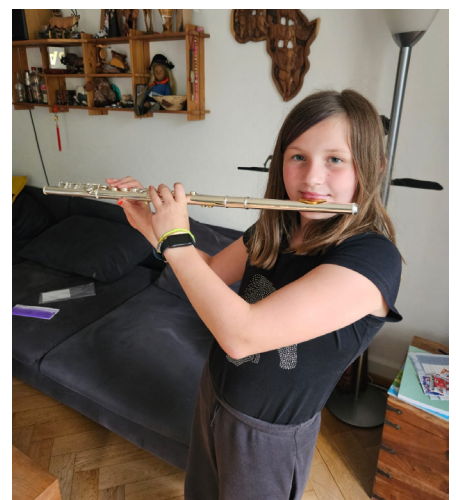
Franca



Blick auf Walenseesee von der Luegi



Ladina am Klavier



Stella mit Querflöte



Marc am Computer