



2015 Smucker Family  
Heritage Tour to Europe





*The 2015 Smucker Heritage Tour on our second day in Europe as we were hosted by Hans and Lydia Flachsman-Baumgartner.*

Verna Beiler, 223 Osceola Mill Road, Gordonville, PA 17529  
 Sandra S. Flory, 2201 Woodview Road, Kinston, NC 28504; flory1@earthlink.net  
 Waneta Freeman, 785 Reynolds Road, Lewisville, NC 27023; wf52@live.com  
 Fannie Frey, 1001 East Oregon Road, Lititz, PA 17543  
 Ann L. Hawk, 15811 Bayshore Dr., Huntersville, NC 28078; 704-875-0578; jarlhawk@roadrunner.com  
 Gayle Hostetler, 5344 Congress Road, Wooster, OH 44691  
 Karen A. Howe, 215 N. Cummings Ave., Glassboro, N.J. 08028-1216; howejak1@comcast.net  
 Andrew & Judith (Smucker) Kaufmann, 138 Dorothy Drive, Bryan, OH 43506; akaufmann1@roadrunner.com  
 Esther Kern, 26 Rostherne Cr., London, ONT N6E 1Y2; eagle.spirit@rogers.com  
 Lemar & Lois Ann Mast, 219 Mill Road, Morgantown, PA 19543; mast@masthof.com  
 Jim & Sally Morrison, 446 Shannon Dr., Wadsworth, OH 44281; jim26480@gmail.com; sallyshop1@yahoo.com  
 David & Velda Rohrer, 9829 Rohrer Road, Orrville, OH 44667; dvrohrer@zoominternet.net  
 James M. & Joanne G. Smoker, 3435 Bull Road, York, PA 17408-9755; jjsmoker@verizon.net  
 Levi & Wilma Smoker, 6599 Pinecliff Grove NE, Calgary, AB T1Y 7K8  
 Richard Smoker, 327 Templevale Place NE, Calgary, AB T1Y 4V8  
 Ron & Janet Smoker, 5146 Laurel Lane, New Holland, PA 17557; rlschmucker@comcast.net  
 Donald Smucker, 61 N. Peoples Road, Stanton, MI 48888; smuckerd@msu.edu  
 Donald M. & Jane D. Smucker, 489 Warren Road, Coldwater, MI 49036; DJSmucker@aol.com  
 Frank C. Smucker, 900 - 37<sup>th</sup> St., Boulder, CO 80303; smuckerf@comcast.net  
 Glen & Lois Smucker, 2429 Paradise Road, Orrville, OH 44667; glenloissmucker@earthlink.net  
 Jeff Smucker, 23378 US 20-A, Archbold, OH 43502; smucker@ACM.org  
 Kenneth Smucker, 73 Elmwood Place, Athens, OH 45701; kasmucker42@gmail.com  
 Maria Elena Smucker, 897 Salem Ave, Hagerstown, MD 21740; smuckerm@yahoo.com  
 Sam Smucker, 638 S. Cloverdale, Los Angeles, CA 90036; samuel.smucker@gmail.com  
 Samuel & Diana Smucker, 7233 C.R. 23, Archbold, OH 43502; dsmucker@rtceexpress.net  
 Ted Smucker, 3303 Middleboro Rd., Morrow, OH 45152-9493  
 Janice Smucker Street, 540 Mohawk Dr. #18, Boulder, CO 80303; jestreet344@msn.com  
 Sue Steffy, 125 Briar Hill Road, Lititz, PA 17543; hisgrace@ptd.net  
 Pauline Yoder, 1708 S. 12<sup>th</sup> St., Goshen, IN 46526; suitcase@bnin.net

*Photo on front cover: Reformed Church in Beatenberg, Switzerland, where Schmackers still worship God today!  
 Thank you to all the tour participants who provided Journal entries and photos for this Journal!*



*Our first stop in Germany after arriving at the Frankfurt Airport was at Heppenheim where we enjoyed walking the streets and then ate lunch at the Cafe Fachwerkstuben.*

**Tuesday and Wednesday  
October 6-7, 2015**

*Wellkommen* to our 2015 Schmucker, Smucker, Smoker Tour of Germany, Switzerland, and France (briefly). After a quiet but wonderful lunch for over half of our group at Masthof provided by Lemar and Lois Ann, we loaded into five vans bound for Newark Airport.

We arrived safely and had a smooth flight albeit little sleep. We were well fed with dinner and breakfast served by the airline staff. How many meals did we eat in 24 hours?

We arrived at Frankfurt, Germany, in less than seven hours and found the remaining part of our group waiting for us. There are now 39 of us from 10 U.S. states and two provinces in Canada.

We climbed aboard our bus “home” for the next 12 days and were welcomed by the owner of the bus company who had driven from Luxembourg just to welcome us! Plus, we met our trusty bus driver Stefan!

Lois Ann shared the magic word for our trip: Flexibility! And then we set off for Heppenheim. Lemar led a devotional on Psalm 100 and commented on the difficulties our ancestors had in making their trek across the ocean.

Dorothea (German friend of Sam Smucker) gave us a lesson on German phrases—*Danke Schön!*

Upon arrival at Heppenheim, we explored the town and had a delightful lunch at Fachwertstube. The afternoon was filled with heavy breathing and snoring as we made the three-hour trip to Triberg in the Black Forest which is also the cuckoo clock capital of the world! Some







*Willi Bächtold welcomed us to the Täuferzimmer in the Schleithem Museum. Michael Sattler met here with other German and Swiss Anabaptists in 1527 to write the Schleithem Confession of Faith—first one for the Anabaptists.*

of those clocks are now making their own trip to the U.S. Some of us also enjoyed a workout climbing the rather steep hill to see the beautiful waterfalls on the top edge of the town. We saw some unusual birds, even a black squirrel who refused to be photographed.

Dinner was served at 6:00 p.m. in the charming Parkhotel Wehrle where we slept that night. The salad, chicken, lentils, and dumplings were picturesque as well as delicious. Most of us did not linger very long over our black forest cake and were euphoric about the soft bed awaiting us! *Guten Nacht!*

~ Waneta Freeman

**Thursday, October 8, 2015**

Colossians 3:17: “Whatever you do, whether in Word or deed, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus, give thanks



to God the father through Him.”

This morning started off with a very professional breakfast buffet in Triberg. Impressive! When we left on the bus, we were led in a devotional by Sue Steffy using Romans 8:14-17 stating that we are God’s children of the heavenly Father.

Lois Ann then shared a short history of the Reformation and the role that infant baptism had in the beginning. We learned about the many persons who were tortured,



*Rhine Falls at Schaffhausen*



burned at the stake, and drowned because of their faith.

The Schleithem Confession of Faith was written in 1527 when both German and Swiss Anabaptists gathered together at Schleithem with leader Michael Sattler. This confession of faith outlined the basic point of faith for these early Anabaptists.

Lois Ann also read the “Ten Commandments of a Traveler” and then distributed a map to everyone on the bus showing the area around Zurich where we will be visiting the next three days.

By this time, we had arrived at the German and Swiss border where the bus was taxed 22 francs per day in Switzerland.

Then we stopped at Schleithem to visit the museum with an entire room designated on Anabaptist history. An original copy of the Schleithem Confession of Faith is at this museum.

Then we were on our way to Schaffhausen where we stopped to see the magnificent Rhine Falls, the largest waterfalls in Europe. This was a brief stop because we were enroute to Hans and Lydia Flachsman-Baumgartner’s home for lunch. And what a lunch! Homemade mountain soup was made outside over a woodburning stove with a

large kettle on top! Homemade apple juice, dried pears, and homemade wheat bread was also served before a delicious dessert made of chestnuts and whipped cream! We felt special!

After lunch, some of us visited the orchard with Hans while others enjoyed Lydia’s impressive worldwide collection of nativities. Warm fellowship at this home was appreciated!



*Lunch stop at Hans and Lydia’s house!*



*Our wonderful bus driver Stefan (on the left) with the cook who made our lunch at Hans and Lydia’s home.*





*We stayed at the Kloster Kappel for two nights—on the right is where we ate our evening dinners and morning breakfasts.*

A drive around the city of Zurich brought us to Felsenegg where we all boarded a cable car and went up to overlook the city of Zurich and Lake. Beautiful!

Another 30-minute drive and we arrived at the interesting Kloster Kappel to lodge for the next two nights. This place originally was a monastery more recently turned into a conference center. Most of us enjoyed walk-

ing around the property enjoying listening to the cowbells ringing on the cows, walking through the large gardens, and then finding the well-lit cellar where we enjoyed dinner made from vegetables grown on the property. Then off to bed, although I hear some enjoyed visiting and talking in the coffee shop!

*- Sandra S. Flory*



*Spectacular views as we went by cable car up to Felsenegg overlooking Zurich and the lake.*





*Our morning devotional was held in the Kloster Chapel.*

### Friday, October 9, 2015

At 7:30 a.m., we were eating breakfast in “the cellar” of the Kloster Kappel. Outside the sky was gray and overcast with cowbells ringing in the distance. The gray sky was soon forgotten with the emotion-packed day.

First, was the spread of breads, cheeses, sliced meats, fresh fruit, yogurts, various multi-grain cereals, and beverages to energize us for the day.

By 8:30 a.m., we had gathered in the church for our daily devotional led by Donald Smucker. He reflected on his family heritage and the faithfulness of our forefathers, bringing the first Bible translated into German to America.

Christian Schmucker III was Donald’s direct line with descendants settling in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania. After having ten children, his wife died and he was left with their care. He wanted to have a mother for his children, so he travelled 100 miles away to Somerset County where there was another settlement of Anabaptists. He had a horse with white markings and saddled it up for the long trek. He prayed for his future wife and upon arriving at a fork in the road, he asked the Lord to lead him. Turning to the left, he stopped at the first house. Two single sisters lived here: Kristine and Fannie. They invited him for lunch and told him about the providence of God.

Fannie was 19 years younger than Christian and did most of the farming, but lacked domestic skills. However, three different times she had had a dream that involved a horse with white markings. And in her barn, was a horse

with those same white markings!

Christian returned home, but later came back to ask Fannie to marry him. Christian’s son, Isaac Smucker (dropped the “ch” in Schmucker) became the bishop of the first Amish church east of Goshen, Indiana. Later, he started the Maple Grove Amish Mennonite Church in Topeka, Indiana.

Another son, Jonathan, became one of the bishops in Nappanee, Indiana.

Our Anabaptist forefathers lived by Jesus’ teaching in the Sermon on the Mount s recorded in Matthew 5. They took God’s Word literally and desired peaceful and harmonious relationships. They believed in being “doers of the Word.” We certainly need to be in awe of what they did for us. Don ended with a prayer.

Maria led us in singing “Open My Eyes” and “Trust and Obey” after which Waneta led “Great is Thy Faithfulness” and “Oh for a Thousand Tongues.” At the end of each refrain, we could hear the reverberation of the hymns. It was like the “sound grew!”

At 9:00 a.m., we were on the bus singing “Happy Birthday” to Karen Howe, and then singing “Happy Anniversary” to Gayle Hostetler (her husband is at home), and also sang “Happy Anniversary” to Levi and Wilma Smoker for their 58th anniversary! A special day for these four persons!

We drove to the walking center of Zurich city—banking center of Switzerland and the city of cathedrals! We walked along the Limmat River to the Fraumünster Cathedral built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. This city was the birth-





*Plaque in Zurich signifying the site of where Felix Manz and Hans Landis were martyred for their faith. The Grossmünster is in the background.*

place of Anabaptism in 1525. Along the river we saw the stone plaque placed in 2004 to commemorate where Felix Manz, the first Anabaptist martyr, was drowned, and Hans Landis, the last Anabaptist martyr, was beheaded in 1614 across on the other side of the river. Felix Manz's mother was standing nearby praying that Felix would stand firm and not recant.

As we walked across the bridge and along some narrow cobblestone streets, we saw a mural on a building showing the city of Zurich as it appeared in 1568. Next to it was the Wellenberg Hotel—using yet today the same name as the Wellenberg Prison that existed in the middle of the Limmat River where Anabaptists were imprisoned.

We walked along the Froschauer-Gasse where Christoph Froschauer wrote the Bible by hand—this Bible was carried to America by some of our immigrants, and used alongside the Christopher Sauer Bible.

We stopped at the house where Conrad Grebel lived and saw a plaque on the side of the house stating that he lived here between 1508 and 1514, and then again from 1520 and 1525.

Nearby was a miniature model of the Zurich city during the Reformation time showing that it had a wall surrounding the city with a moat at certain points.

As we continued on our walking tour, we passed a house where Lenin lived from February 21, 1916, to April 2, 1917. He was one of the leaders of the Russian Revolution.



### *Walking up to the Anabaptist Cave*



Nearby was a Spanish shop built in 1524—a year before the Reformation began. The streets were narrow with electric buses and street cars everywhere. All of the cars were late model expensive cars.

The Grossmünster Cathedral has two towers whereas the Fräumunster only has one tower. The Grossmünster has massive bronze cast doors depicting the Reformation story on one and Biblical stories on the other. No photos were permitted in the Cathedral. A statue of Charlemagne built in 1450 was in the cellar.

Across the street and around the corner was the statue of Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531) holding a Bible in one hand and a sword in the other. Conrad Grebel and Felix Manz were disappointed that Zwingli took this stance.

Then we enjoyed an hour free time on our own walking around, shopping, enjoying the Limmat River, with everyone back on the bus on time!

From Zurich, we headed to the village of Hegnau/Vokletswil and stopped at the Beck-Fischer Bakery for our lunch break. The Herr family lived here in the 1400s, later moving to Germany before coming to America. Lois Ann had pre-ordered a special loaf of bread with raised dough letters “Herr” on top and it was presented to Joanne Smoker since she was a Herr descendant.

Off to the Anabaptist Cave near Baretswil, we heard that university students (Conrad Grebel, Felix Manz, Georg Blaurock) started the Anabaptist movement, but it continued and spread throughout the countryside like the area we were traveling through. Pockets of Anabaptists sprung up all over the place among the farmers. The movement grew by leaps and bounds.

When our bus dropped us off at a farm, we walked up a path to the Anabaptist Cave. According to my pedometer, we hiked about 4,500 feet to reach the cave and took us from 2:00 p.m. to 3:50 p.m. when we returned.



*Joanne Smoker was surprised to receive a loaf of homemade bread made in the bake shop at Hegnau where her Herr ancestors lived before descendants migrated to Germany and then to America.*

Once we arrived at the stone cave where Anabaptists are known to have gathered in secret to worship, Sue Steffy led us in a solemn time of worship remembering our forefathers who gave their all in order to follow Jesus. She reminded us of Matthew 5:11: “Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.” “Rejoice and be glad for your reward in Heaven is great, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” Sue asked, “Would you say, ‘Yes?’” Sue then sang a Reformation song with words as follows:

He who would follow Christ in life  
Must scorn the world’s insult and strife  
And bear His cross each day  
For this alone leads to the throne  
Christ is the only way.

Christ’s servants follow Him to death  
And give their bodies, life, and breath  
On cross and rack and syre  
As gold is tried and purified  
They stand the test of fire.

Renouncing all, they choose the cross  
And claiming it count all as lost  
Even home and child and wife  
Forsaking gain, forgetting pain  
They enter into life.

After a prayer, we sang several songs together including “Gott ist die Liebe” in German. We ended with the Doxology. On the front of the cave, there was a small waterfall which would drown out the singing of the Anabaptists to keep it from going down through the Valley.







*We visited and shopped at the Ernst Schmocker Souvenir Shop in Luzern!*



*Driving through the Susten Pass and seeing the majestic Swiss Alps above the clouds was an a gift from God!*

Then we were off for a 50-minute drive to Hirzel, the home of Johanna Spyri who wrote the book *Heidi*. Hirzel was also the home of 46 of the 182 Anabaptists in 1633 living in the canton of Zurich. These included Landis, Bauman, and Brubacher families. Hans Landis, the last Anabaptist martyr, lived here at Hirzel. In fact, the Reformed Church in Hirzel was built with money received when the Anabaptist properties were confiscated.

Behind the church was an immaculate cemetery with many flowers at each tombstone. All European cemeteries

can only use wooden coffins and no vaults. After 25 years, family members have the option to renew the cemetery plot, but then after 50 years, the bones are removed, placed in a bag, and reburied, since the plots are re-used. Toward the back of the cemetery, we found a simple stone with the name: Oskar Schmukle, 1913-1995.

We arrived at the Kloster Kappel at 5:40 p.m. and had dinner at 6:20 with a choice of either vegetarian, veal, or fish. Ulrich Kuratli and his daughter, friends of Lois Ann, joined us for dinner and then offered beautiful





Swiss calendars and notecards for purchase. They were oil paintings done by Ulrich's wife, Susanna, who just in the past month was moved to a health care facility due to dementia.

This ended a very emotional, somber at times, action-packed beautiful day in Switzerland.

- Pauline Yoder

**Saturday, October 10, 2015**

Our day started with breakfast at the Kappel. This monastery was started in 1185 with the monks raising corn, vegetables, and baked bread. The bread was sold for support, and after Sunday mass, it was distributed to the poor.

Devotions was led by Jim and Joanne Smoker in the Monastery chapel and ended with the Lord's Prayer with each English petition echoed in Pa. Dutch by Jim. What a great way to start the day! The singing echoed in the chapel!

After boarding our bus, we headed toward the town of Einsiedeln to see the large ornate cathedral first built in 934. It was inspired by the life and death of Meinrad, the Hermit, a monk who moved to the mountainous wilderness for prayer and meditation. He had two pet ravens/crows who accompanied him on each of his journeys. On January 21, 861, two men accosted him and killed him. According to legend, the ravens persued the two thugs making a ruckus all the way back to Zurich. Fellow monks, noticing the pet ravens were alone, retraced Meinrad's steps and found him dead.

The ravens had implicated the two men by the persistent ruckus. The men were arrested, tried, and executed for the murder of Meinrad. The ravens are now immortalized by two black carved ravens in one of the high arches in the cathedral's sanctuary.

The cathedral was beautiful and reverant. A small chapel at the opposite end of the main altar was built at

the site of Meinrad's retreat. It is called the Lady Chapel because of a prominent black Madonna statue. The statue was originally white, but years of candle soot stained her black. At one point, the statue was cleaned, but the parishioners had grown accustomed to seeing it black, and by popular demand, paint once again made it a black Madonna.

At first the work the of the monk was to teach locals to farm, but the high altitude was hospitable only to pastures. The monks also had a scriptorium which is where

a reader would read several sentences while other monks would write those sentences on paper producing books. Now there is a coed school with 300 students here. There are 63 Fathers and 26 Brothers. It is well-known for horse breeding—horse meat is considered a delicacy!

As we traveled to Lucern, we heard some interesting facts. The large tree(s) on the top of the pasture hills are planted to attract lightning in order to protect the cows. Lemar also pointed out a Swiss Air Force base where the airplane hangers were carved into the side of the mountains. Lemar explained that the odd-shaped blocks of cement stacked along side the road were designed to keep Hitler's tanks from entering Switzerland. From one way, the tanks could negotiate them, but turned the other way, the tanks were stopped.

It was cloudy and 50 degrees when we exited the bus to enjoy 2.5 hours of shopping and eating lunch. The first exciting shopping stop was the Schmocker Souvenirs Shop on Leopoldstrasse located at the base of the cities'

large St. Leodegar Catholic Church. The store was owned for many years by Ernst Schmocker, but now has a new owner. The Schmockers in this area were well-known for their woodcarving. The cash register was kept busy as many persons bought Swiss knives, small cow bells, and a few of the remaining hand-carved pins and earrings that Ernst Schmocker had carved from cow bones.

**List of Mennonite/Amish surnames spotted during our last two days in Switzerland**

*compiled by Sue Steffy*

Aebi	Meier
Aeschlimann	Moser
Adler	Mosimann
Autsberger	Otto
Bachtold	Reist
Bartschi	Rothlisberger (OK,
Beck	this one probably isn't
Berger	Mennonite, but isn't
Bigler	there a famous football
Bischel	player?)
Bitchi	Rufenacht
Brechbuhl	Schenk
Bucher	Schmidt
Buchmann	Schmitte
Buhler	Schmocker
Fankhouser	Schneider
Frei	Schumacher
Friedli	Shantz
Gerber	Shirk
Haldemann	Sommers
Hartmann	Stahli
Hess	Stettler
Hofstetter	Stucki
Hircshi	Summers
Huber	Viessman
Hubler	Vogele
Jutzi	Weber
Kraenbuhl	Wengen
Lauber	Widmer
Lehmann	Witwer
Liebengut	Zaugg
Liechti	Zimmerman
Lowen	Zwecher





After boarding our bus, we headed for our hotel in Brienz along a beautiful lake. The ride was gorgeous as we kept going up and up above the clouds and around hairpin turns and through many tunnels through the Susten Pass. As we broke through the clouds, the sun was shining and we finally got our first glimpse of the magnificent snow-covered Alps! We stopped at the top at 7,450 foot altitude at a great lookout. The view was spectacular.

Dinner tonight was salad, cheese fondue, and a mixed fruit bowl—after a number of persons walked the streets of the town, walked up to the waterfalls, and walked along the lake.

- Judy Kaufmann



### Sunday, October 11, 2015

After a night in the quaint Hotel Brienzburli in the town of Brienz by the glacial lake, Brienz Sea, that is surrounded by mountains, we traveled a few miles to the Ballenberg outdoor museum. The sun came out, but the peaks were still in the clouds. The elevation here is over 2,800 feet. During our time here, we toured beautiful authentic houses and barns typical of the area.

When back on the bus, Pauline Yoder led us in devotions as we traveled to our next adventure.

While approaching the Jungfrau Mountain via the







Susten Pass and into the Lauterbrunnen Valley, we were in awe of the grandure of the box canyon, the snow-capped peaks 1,300 feet high, contrasting with the fall colored trees. Also amazing were the long thin waterfalls falling from the cliffs. This area is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one can understand why. Also to our amazement, we saw several hang gliders descending from the heights. We sure were eager to ride the cable car, oh my, there were two different ones to get to our hotel at what seemed like the top of the mountain in the town of Murren. We had wonderful sunny views of the Alps for the night. Cows were in the pasture, but in late afternoon were led through the streets to the barn for milking.

We enjoyed another delicious dinner at Hotel Aplenruh. Then afterwards the beautiful dark sky revealed itself in all its sparkling splendure.

It was a day I'll remember forever.

*- Joanne Smoker*

**Monday, October 12, 2015**

This morning it was still dark when we walked through Murren (elevation 5,374 feet) to catch the tram up to the restaurant that was in the George Lazenby James Bond movie. He is the Bond nobody knows. The peak is called Schilthorn and is 9,744 feet. In advertisements, it is called Piz Gloria or Wonderful Peak.





The first gondola lifted us from the lingering early morning shadows and then the second one raised us up into a circle of mountain peaks that were beginning to glow with dawn light. From the second gondola, Richard spotted an ibex silhouetted on the ridgeline above us. As we rose higher we saw more, one of which was a ewe with two lambs.

When we began our uplifting journey it was below freezing at the restaurant, but while we were there the temperature rose to 34 degrees, a heat wave! Far below us, we could see the tiny dots of the houses at Murren. The restaurant rotated in a circle. To the south was a ring of bare rock and white-capped mountains. It looked like a frosted moonscape. To the north, a sea of white bumpy quilt batting extended to the horizon. The “islands” we could see were actually mountain tops, probably the Jura Mountains.

After breakfast, some of us went outside where we could see Mount Blanc, the highest mountain in Europe. Had it had been clear to the north, we could have seen Beatenberg and maybe even Germany.

We had to cut our gazing time short in order to make the tram and at the second tram we sat and waited, and then waited some more while a helicopter installed a snow making machine. Shucks...I could have gotten my picture taken with James Bond!

Much more quickly than we had ascended, we sailed back down through the beautiful scenery that looked like a postcard in the morning sun. By the third tram, we were below Murren and back in the morning shadow. The fourth tram dropped us past a single person wide



*Walking up the main street in Murren where we slept overnight.*

suspension bridge and a waterfall, both of which were nearly 9,000 feet above the valley floor.

Our next stop was up an adjoining valley at Grindelwald, a lovely little ski vacation town at the foot of two mountains: Wetterhorn and Shreckhorn and where Immigrant Christian Smucker had lived for a time. Many chalets were scattered over the green slopes at the foot of the mountains. Those who were interested in retail therapy had a wonderful time checking out the little shops that lined the main street.

On our way back down through the valley, the sun was high enough to chase the shadows away. The train paralleled our drive and it was on to Interlaken where lunch and more retail therapy awaited! We invaded the city and after lunch reassembled at the bus stop where we boarded in a record four minutes.





## *Reformed Church at Beatenberg, Switzerland*



The town of Beatenberg is strung like a necklace along a small ridge above the Thun Sea. The climb was filled with switchbacks and hairpin turns and we emerged from the trees to a wonderful view of the mountains and the sea below.

Our first stop was the Reformed Church, a very plain sanctuary made of clean, unfinished wood and surrounded by wonderful flowers. An exploration of the cemetery found Schmoker names, but they were new graves, not ancestors. The existence of so many graves proves the strong Smucker connection to Beatenberg. From the church we could see the Eiger, the Monk, the Jungfrau, and even Junfrauoch. Below us, on the Thun Sea, boat wakes looked like fingernail clippings on a blue carpet.

We dropped those off at the hotel who did not wish

to walk to the Schmoker farm in order for them to meet their van ride. It seems the distance from the ground to the van step was vertically challenging. Accompanied by giggles which soon escalated into guffaws and belly laughs, each one hoisted themselves inside the van. By the time the door was closed, even the driver was laughing. It must have been very entertaining because the return trip to the hotel was free!

Stefan drove the rest of us to the narrow, one-lane road that led to the Schmocker farm. Cows lifted their heads to check us out as we walked uphill and we passed underneath another gondola ride.

The Schmoker family—Erika, Ueli and Melanie—welcomed us in matching blue Swiss shirts and wide





**Smucker Family Heritage 2015**

Im Christian Schmocker, wohnhaft in Grindelwald und Beatenberg, ein Angehöriger der Täufer, verliert die Schweiz anfangs der 1750-er Jahre in Richtung Amerika. Seine Nachfahren in den USA und in Kanada kommen regelmäßig zu Familientreffen zusammen. Einige von ihnen besuchen Anfang Oktober 2015 die Schweiz und kamen auch nach Beatenberg. Christian Schmocker hat einige erbe. Als Täufer, viel- leicht als Prediger, wirkte er im Berner Oberland, wahrscheinlich auch im Emmental. Ein Christian Schmocker soll im Gefängnis von Trachselwald gewesen sein. Um 1752 ver- liest Christian Schmocker die Schweiz und reiste über Frank- reich und Deutschland nach Amerika. Dort liess er sich im Staat Pennsylvania nieder. Sein Haus sollte heute noch und wird als Museum und Gemein- desaal genutzt. Im Jahre 1776



Wurde Christian Schmocker in die Armer eingeworfen, um auf Seiten der noch britischen Kolonien gegen Grossbritannien für die Unabhängigkeit zu kämp- fen. Als Täufer verfolgte er den Militärdienst – einer der Gründe für seine Auswander- ung – er kam im Gefängnis, ihm drohte die Todesstrafe! George Washington, der spätere Präsident, soll eingegriffen und ihn und andere in Zivilisten

Situation begnadigt haben. Das alles hat mit Donald Rupp Smucker beim Nachreisen im Kopf. Dessen erzieht Donald und seine Frau Jane gehören zur Reisegruppe von rund 60 Nach- fahren ihres Christian Schmocker, die auf der „2015 Smucker Family Heritage Tour to Europe“ im Oktober auch nach Beatenberg gekommen sind. Donald erzählt weiter, dass die Familienforschung unter den

Nachkommen in den 1970er- Jahren intensiviert wurde. Aus der meist mündlichen Über- lieferung wurde eine fundierte Recherche der Familienge- schichte. Es wurde beschlos- sen, für eine Family Reunion alle bekannten Nachfahren von Christian Schmocker anzu- schreiben und einzuholen. Viele haben Leute als ererbt werden „gefunden“. Es kamen über 5'000 Smuckers, Smuckers, Schmuckers und Smokers, die Schweizweise variieren. Seither findet jeweils alle fünf Jahre ein solches Familientreffen statt, immer in einem anderen Staat der USA. Die Smuckers sind nämlich in den verschiedensten Staaten der USA und Provinzen Kanadas wohnhaft.

Natürlich besuchen die Smuckers verschiedene Schauwund- lungen in der Schweiz: Rhein- fall, Ballenberg, Bern, wichtige Orte der Geschichte der Täufer im Emmental (Täuferversteck, Gefängnis in Trachselwald und eben Beatenberg, was ein Besuch bei Familie Schmocker im Haberhaus auf dem Programm stand. Schmocker offerieren bei prächtigem Herbstwetter ein schmackhaftes Agrot im Freien. Die einheimischen Produkte Käse, Wurst, Brot, Zäpfli, Milch haben alle Smuckers aus Nord- amerika begeistert. Viele von ihnen haben nun einen Maß frische Milch getrunken. Das

Hilft in stürmischen Zeiten: Ihr lokaler Hausexperte



Wir Sie aufpassen haben, schützen wir.

GVB

Article published in Beatenberg about our visit.

### Smucker Family Heritage 2015

Schmocker Christian, living in Grindelwald and Beatenberg, a member of the Täufern in Switzerland, left in the early 1750s for America. His descendants in the United States and Canada meet periodically for family reunions. Some came to Beatenberg the beginning of October.

Christian Schmocker has experienced a lot. As a Täufer, perhaps as a preacher, he worked in the Bernese Oberland, probably also in the Emmental. A Christian Schmocker is also said to have been imprisoned in Trachselwald. In 1752, he left and traveled through France and Germany to America and settled in the state of Pennsylvania. His house still stands and is used as a museum and community hall.

In 1776, Christian Schmocker was drafted into the army to fight alongside the still British colonies against Britain for independence. As a Täufer, he refused military service—one of the reasons for his emigration—he went to prison, he was threatened with the death penalty! George Washington, the future president is said to have intervened and pardoned him and others in a similar situation.

All this was told me by Donald Rupp Smucker at dinner in the Hotel Dorint. Donald and his wife, Jane, are traveling with 39 descendants of this Christian Schmocker, who have come on the “2015 Smucker Family Heritage Tour to Europe” in October, also to Beatenberg. Donald goes on to explain that the genealogy was intensified among the offspring in the 1970s. From mostly oral tradition, there is a depth of research of family history. It was decided to write to all known descendants of Christian Schmocker to invite them to attend a family reunion. Many more people than expected were “found”. There were more than 5,000 Smuckers, Smuckers, Schmucker,

and Smokers—the spelling varies. Since then, such a family reunion takes place every five years always in a state of the United States. The Smuckers are, in fact, living in various U.S. states and Canadian provinces.

Of course, the Smuckers are also visiting various attractions in Switzerland: Rheinfall, Ballenberg, Bern, important places of the history of the Anabaptists in the Emmental (a Täufer hiding prison in Trachselwald) and just as well Beatenberg where a visit to family Schmocker in Haberhaus was on the agenda. Schmockers offered in the magnificent autumn weather a hearty aperitif outdoors. The local produce cheese, sausage, bread, braided bread, milk have inspired all Smuckers from North America. Many of them have been drinking for the first time fresh milk. This, in turn, has Schmockers from Haberhaus quite surprised!

During the joint dinner, I learned more about the reasons why family history is so interesting for Smuckers. Again and again I heard: “If had Christian Schmocker failed or if he had died for some reason earlier . . . then none of us would be here!”

It has impressed many when they think of how much more onerous the journey was in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. They departed from their familiar surroundings, friends, and relatives, and set out for a world far away, unknown, without much knowledge of what to expect, how to receive, and whether they would be received. It was mpt easy to start from scratch to build a new life and learn a new language.

Many descendants of Immigrant Christian Schmocker are avowed and active Christians, and religion is important to them. So the trip to the “old country” is also a spiritual one. Faith and the cohesion of the family are important values. Sue, a young woman tells us why she came on the tour to Europe: “It’s like going back to myself, to my roots, I want to find out where I came from and who I am. It is the desire to get home.”

And Sam, from Los Angeles, is quite overwhelmed by nature, and enthusiastic about culture and history of Switzerland. “I will certainly come back to these places another time to get to know them better.” Sam is especially impressed by the landscape, the calmness, and how relaxed people are here. He signed up for the trip without great expectations, but now it has gripped him and he wants to know, to see more, and experience more in the homeland of his ancestors!

The Schmockers from Beatenberg found the encounter with their—perhaps distantly related—namesakes from overseas also very interesting. As hospitable as Americans and Canadians are, the Beat Berger Schmockers were invited to return visits. They industriously exchanged addresses.

On their website, there are sssfamily.org regular newsletters with interesting family stories and pictures.

- Verena Moser, [www.beatenberg.ch/zytig](http://www.beatenberg.ch/zytig)





smiles. They had prepared for us a beautiful table spread with cheese, sliced sausage, chipped dried beef, cheese and fresh baked bread. After our warm climb, we appreciated the drink of fresh milk, water, juice, and white wine.

The cows were out to pasture, but the barn was open. The men folk were very interested in the farming practices and asked all kinds of questions about machinery and operations. The 25 hectares support an equal number of milking cows that are a Simmental and Red Holstein cross. The calves were super cute and very friendly. One came right up to me to get its head scratched. Feed is mainly hay that is harvested on the slopes above the farm and supplemented with purchased grain and minerals. They pasteurize milk on







*The Ueli and Erika Schmocker family at Beatenberg with children Melanie, Andrea, and Marcel.*

the farm and sell milk both privately and to a processor. The milk was a lovely creamy yellow and very thick. The Schmokers also have a small flock of chickens for egg production.

Jeff demonstrated the milking stool and Erika's lovely dahlias caught the eye of the gardeners among us. Several

folks talked to Happy, the rabbit, and checked out the row of large cowbells hanging on the back porch. On the side of the barn, a long row of plaques testified to the prize-winning nature of the Schmoker dairy. The Schmokers were very proud of the fact that in 2014 they won "Miss Beatenberg." Some of the smiling listeners assumed the pretty daughter was crowned queen of the town at some sort of festival. Turns out it was an award for the prettiest cow!

After photos and smiles, we waved goodbye and started our hike back down to the bus, passing the van on its way up to pick up the non-walkers. The Schmokers, including their two additional children, Andrea and Marcel, joined us for dinner at our hotel. Verena Moser, the editor of the town newsletter, also joined us. She intends to write an article about the Smucker-Beatenberg connection and our visit today.

**Tuesday, October 13, 2015**

It was goodbye to the luxurious Dorint Hotel with its spectacular view of snow-covered mountains and the town of Beatenberg, the sea below, and the new-found family of Schmokers who hosted us yesterday afternoon on their family dairy farm.



*Frescoes in the Erlenbach Reformed Church*





*Left: Pauline Yoder in the pulpit at the Erlenbach Reformed Church where Jakob Ammann and his parents attended church before they became Täufer. Above: Walking up to the church.*

Don led us in our morning devotions by asking the question “Where is the Kingdom of Heaven?” He responded with Matthew 2 and descriptions of the Kingdom being near, in heaven, within oneself, or among us, and being like yeast, the mustard seed, the treasure in the field, casting a net and being selective in the fish that were kept, the merchant selling all to buy the pearl of great price. Matthew 19 describes the difficulty of the rich to enter the Kingdom, and the blessing on the poor in spirit.

In 1752, Christian Schmucker, as an Anabaptist, had to leave this land, find a new haven from persecution and certain death, and in so doing knew and understood the cost. He leaves a rich heritage of faith for his descendants.

After leading a closing prayer, Don quipped that he was glad that Stefan did not close his eyes during the prayer while navigating some hazardous switchbacks on the road. Raindrops appeared on the windshield, and became a somewhat steady stream of light rain as we journeyed throughout the day.

Our first stop was Erlenbach where Jakob Ammann who founded the Amish was born in 1680 to Michael and Anna (Rupp) Ammann, who worked as tailors. He was baptized as an infant in a strict Reformed tradition

in the town of Erlenbach. We visited the charming little church which is being historically restored, revealing beautiful frescoes which portray the stories of the Bible. Because attendees were illiterate, they could look at the pictures while the priest described the scenes. We saw the font where Jacob was baptized. He had very little theological background, but was blessed by the Holy Spirit in understanding what he considered true teachings of the Bible. At this same time, about 60 families in Thun and Emmental were quite dissatisfied with the direction of Menno Simons, and included three main concerns:

1. Frequency of Baptism
2. Foot Washing
3. Shunning

In 1693, Jakob excommunicated Hans Reist, the other leader, and shocked all the Swiss Brethren (Mennonites). The disruption caused a major division, but interestingly in 1699, Jakob excommunicated himself and in 1700 attempted to confess and rejoin the Swiss Brethren, but Hans Reist said that it was too late and there were now too many differences between them.

Some of our group also visited the honey shop at Erlenbach and made some purchases.



## *Thun Castle*



Then we were on our way to the city of Thun where most of the group walked up to the Thun Castle to meander through five floors of exhibits giving the history of this area over the past 4,000 years! Swiss Brethren Anabaptists were imprisoned here including Brenneman, Erb, Kurtz, and Joder.



*Our friends at Steffisburg where we were surprised with an alphorn!*

Goodbye to Thun and hello to the next-door town of Steffisburg where we individually enjoyed buying items for our lunch that we ate outside the Steffisburg Reformed Church. Hans Joder met us at the church and gave some historical input and then surprised us with a friend who played an alphorn for us inside the church!

As we left Steffisburg, Lemar shared that most of the countryside in the valleys is where many Swiss Brethren (Amish) lived before being required to move to either the Alsace-Lorraine, Pfalz/Palatinate, or America.

We drove up and down the hills and again around hairpin curves until we reached Eggiwil where Engles, Shenks, Stauffers, Stoners, and Wengers lived as Swiss Brethren. We stopped at Eggiwil and some of us went to see the church built with funds acquired from confiscated property of the Swiss Brethren. Others of the group enjoyed some great prices at the grocery store and bakery.

Then it was on to Langnau where we would have stopped to walk through the cemetery to see all the familiar names, but it was raining. Instead, we drove on to Hotel Lüderenalp where we enjoyed another exciting drive to arrive where we would sleep for the next two nights. Another good dinner!

*- Esther Kern*

## **Wednesday, October 14, 2015**

This morning there was a beautiful fog nestled in the valley as we boarded our bus. The autumn colors were in full display.

We drove to the Trachselwald Castle that was erected in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and added on since then. The walls are 8 1/2 feet thick. The prison tower was built in 1641.



*One of the many beautiful Swiss homes with flowers everywhere!*





*Prison at Trachselwald Castle*

Prisoners would be hauled up by a rope around the body and under the arms and then come through a window several yards high. The tower was used through the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Our Anabaptist ancestors (Smucker, Brechbill, Hess, Mosimann, Leighty, and Sommers) were imprisoned there for their beliefs. In modern times, women were held there because of drug-related crimes. Being there was a humbling experience.

Our next stop was the cowbell factory—Glockingeresserei—where we learned that they were the makers of the cowbell purchased by the SSS Reunion attendees about 10 or 15 years ago.

We were surprised by a brief stop in Trub to see a sheep and goat show and competition in the town square. Some of us also visited the Trub Church. This is the







*Simon and Regula Fankhauser home where we saw the Täuferversteck.*

home of the Herschi, Habecker, and Schwartzentruber families.

Then it was on to the Kambly Swiss Cookie Factory. Whew, it's been a while since I had milk and cookies for my lunch. There must have been almost 100 different kinds of cookies that we could sample—what fun, but impossible to taste them all!

Simon and Regula Fankhauser welcomed us at their farm and told us the history and showed us the hiding place—Täuferversteck—in their barn where Anabaptists were hidden. She shared her touching testimony as well. Their house dates to 1608. What an informative exhibit that they have produced in their home to tell the Anabaptist story!

Then we drove to Affoltern to visit the cheese factory where some of us bought Emmentaler cheese to take back home. Back at Hotel Lüderenalp, we prepared for dinner with Simon and Regula. Ken Smucker treated us by playing his harmonica, and then Simon and his 17 friends presented a delightful yodeling concert just for our group! It was another full and busy enjoyable day.

*~ Joanne Smoker*

**Thursday, October 15, 2015**

Good Morning to the SSS family in Europe! As we leave Hotel Lüderenalp on top of the mountains, there is snow and fog in the valleys. Breakfast was delicious as usual. While we were finishing up eating our breakfast,



Waneta came in to lead us in our morning devotional doing a mime of the “treasure found the field.” Donald read Matthew 13:44 and Levi led in a prayer. Thanks, Waneta—this was interesting!





*Simon Fankhauser with his yodeling club gave an appreciated concert at the Luderenalp Hotel.*

As we descended the mountain this morning, the valley is clear way below us. Lemar told us that the farm we were passing on the right was a Nissley farm at one time.

Because of some rain, we were flexible and decided not to get soaked by walking the streets of Bern. Instead, we stopped at a variety market called Jakob's Mart at Zollbruck. Everyone sure seemed happy with their purchases of yarn, lace curtains, food, gifts, etc.

Stefan said that Switzerland does not allow tractor trailers to drive at night or on Sundays—some coaches are also restricted on Sundays.



*Shopping for lace at Jakob's Mart!*







*Évelyne Boilau at the Tourist Office in Montbéliard explains the importance of the Mennonites who settled in this region and developed this “Mennonite cow.”*



*Riquewihr*

Our next stop was the Harley Davidson Store to the delight of Richard Smoker and many more of our group who enjoyed some retail therapy. The two happiest choppers for the day were Richard at this last store and Maria Smucker for the lace curtains!

Even though we choose not to drive downtown Bern, we at least drove past the bear pits, but could not see the bears—evidently inside on this rainy day. We also saw the Aare River where Anabaptists were placed on boats and shipped down the Rhine River to Holland. This river surrounds the city of Bern which is the capital of Switzerland founded in 1191.

Upon leaving Bern, we stopped at the first rest area for both food and comfort. Stefan said that the coach needed food (gas) so that we could continue our journey!

Jim Smoker, SSS Association President, then shared some information on the bus as we traveled on the autobahn. He told us about the upcoming plans for the SSS Reunion coming up in Lancaster County in July 2016. It will be held at the Lancaster Christian School east of Lancaster on July 14-17. More information will come later. There is also discussion for our tour group to enjoy a reunion, perhaps on July 14.

We drive through the French part of Switzerland passing through one tunnel after another. These new tunnels sure save us time compared to past journeys. We notice the different landscape with no more high mountains.

Stefan needs a break in Montbéliard, so we all get to stretch our legs and check out the town. Some of us ended up in the tourist bureau where the Director seemed really happy to share with us, taking our picture and asking if she could use the picture in her publicity, sharing literature, and telling us how important the Swiss cattle were that

the Anabaptists brought to this region. She even shared a commemorative coin and presented it to Jim Smucker as SSS President which he said will be auctioned off at the 2016 Reunion. Anabaptists who settled in this region included, Sommers, Gerber, Schmidt, and Zercher.

I was also presented with a generous donation of pink toilet tissue—quite unusual in their bathroom!

Our destination tonight is the beautiful town of Riquewihr arriving about 4:00 p.m. so that we would have time to explore and shop. Many enjoyed more retail therapy!

After some of us returned to our hotel room, we learned that Sam and Diane were in the hospital at Colmar for Diane to be checked on her breathing.

Our dinner tonight features the traditional Alsatian meal of sauerkraut, potatoes, and four kinds of meat (ham, bacon, and two sausages). We also had a salad and an onion tart for an appetizer, and concluded with a blueberry tart and whipped cream.

Thanks to everyone for a great day, so I will say good night!

*- Fannie Frey*

### **Friday, October 16, 2015**

We woke up in two different picturesque buildings—same hotel in Riquewihr, France, and were served another lovely breakfast. The town was surrounded by a zillion grapevines.

Our hearts were heavy though as we learned about Diane Smucker in the hospital, but as her spiritual family, we prayed for her complete recovery.

We enjoyed a leisurely walk to the bus and dropped Sam off at the Colmar Hospital. Gayle led us in an inspiring devotional from various New Testament scriptures focusing on faith, joy, and fellowship, and being more than conquer-





*Schowalter home at Ringweilerhof where Immigrant Nicholas Stoltzfus lived before coming to America. His daughter married John Smucker, son of Immigrant Christian Schmucker.*

ors. She then distributed personal cards for each one of us that also included a family photo. How very special!

While driving to Bitche, we traveled through villages that included combination names of German and French—the result of the French and German borders changing over the centuries.

Stefan pointed out an old restored high-speed train along the road. Lois Ann informed us that Braille, canning, buoys, and brassiers originated in France.

We wandered around Bitche finding lunch and taking photos especially of the old castle. Then back on the bus and it was not long at all when we entered Germany and the town of Hornbach. A few more kilometers and we arrived at Ringweilerhof—home of the Schowalter family and where Immigrant Nicholas Stoltzfus lived and worked before coming to America in 1766. (Nicholas Stoltzfus' daughter, Barbara Smucker, married John Smucker, son of Christian Smucker—ancestor of most of the tour group!)

What a wonderful visit we had at Ringweilerhof. We actually felt like we were in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania! What an immaculate farm! Peter and Karin Schowalter along with Peter's parents—Gerhard and Alfreda Schowalter—live here and were our hosts/ess. They showed

us their woodburning heating system and then served us three kinds of sweets, apple juice, and hot tea.

Would you believe that 200 piglets were just born that morning on the Schowalter farm, and that this happens every three weeks?











Sam Smucker inquired of the Schowalters about who owned the Ringweilerhof over the years and he was given the following surnames of owners back to the late 1700s: Röhr, Webe, Dahlem, Fuchs, and Schowalter.

We left through Middlebach, another nearby town. Many of the group got a few minutes of napping in as we could hear a little bit of snoring and some heavy breathing.

We arrived in Worms, Germany, and Lois Ann pointed out the Catholic Worms Cathedral which was

begun to be built in 1016 with six towers! Martin Luther was tried here in 1521 because of his heretical beliefs, and stated, “Here I stand, God help me!”

A huge monument stands near the cathedral with statues of other Reformation leaders (Peter Waldo, John Wycliffe, Jan Hus, and Martin Luther).

After settling in our more contemporary hotel located right downtown near the Cathedral, many of us set out to visit the cathedral and see the sights and spend some Euros.

Our evening dinner consisted of a salad, beef pot roast, spaetzle, a green vegetable topped with sauce, and a chocolate dessert. Rumor has it that some went next door to an ice cream cafe before calling it day #10.

### Saturday, October 17

Today was cloudy all day, but thankfully no rain. We left Worms at 8:35 a.m. A remark from the back of the bus: “We will be the last ones out of Europe—that is why we stay in the back!”

Ron Smoker led us in a devotional as we rode along the Rhine River sharing some history of Christian Schmucker sailing down the Rhine River in 1752. Christian died in 1782 in Pennsylvania.

The Christian Schmucker family traveled with oxen from France to the Rhine River where they boarded a boat. As they sailed along the Rhine, they were required to stop at most of the castles to pay a fee. One of the Scripture verses shared was, “For the Word of God is living and active.”

Sue Steffy led us in singing “Trust and Obey,” “What a Friend We Have in Jesus,” “Open My Eyes That I May See,” and “The Family of God.”



*Waiting for our boat to pick us up to cruise up the Rhine River past many of the same castles our ancestors did.*





*Don and Maria Smucker hiked up above the town of St. Goar to take these impressive photos right before we boarded our Bingen-Rüdesheimer Cruise!*

Judy gave us an update on Diane at the hospital with more tests. Sam is staying at a local B&B. She also gave an update on Phil (brother of Judy and the Smucker brothers) who is in the hospital with cancer.

We heard that Jim and Joanne, and Pauline Yoder are leaving our hotel early tomorrow morning for other airline flights. Pauline is flying home before flying soon to Russia for a mission trip, and Jim and Joanne are going to Wales. Don and Jane are spending a few more days in Europe by visiting Paris, France! Many of us thought we should hire Stefan to drive us all to France! He has been a super bus driver!

Whoops! Stefan missed his exit while Judy was sharing. He said that he was listening and had to interpret in his mind what was being said about Diane and Sam. He has such a *caring* heart!

Back to driving along the Rhine River . . . the Rhine has been an important waterway for many, many years and still is today! We noticed lots and lots of barges on this busy river.







Between Koblenz and Mainz, there is no bridge, so Stephan has to drive the bus across the Rhine on a barge while we take the Bingen-Ruedesheimer cruise for 2.5 hours to Ruedesheim. We board at St. Goar.

As we sailed on our boat, we saw the castles up closer—the Katz Castle on our left was built in 1371 and restored in the 1800s. There was even a splendid-looking castle on an island in the middle of the river. The beautiful well-kept vineyards along the banks of the Rhine River were placed between the small villages.

We got off our boat at 1:45 p.m. and walked across the street to our hotel after first claiming our luggage from Stefan who was waiting for us!











Dinner was served at 6:15 p.m. at Hotel Krone with Lois Ann presenting Stefan with a signed card and tip from everyone in the tour group. Some of us did some major re-packing of luggage because tomorrow most of us fly home! ~ Verna Beiler

### Sunday, October 18

Mixed feelings found most of us at breakfast this morning before boarding our bus for the last time and heading for the Frankfurt Airport. Yes, it is always good to return home again, but yet we had a good time together as a *family* and going home meant saying goodbye!

Glen Smucker shared in a morning devotional on the way to the airport and before we knew it, we arrived and had to say goodbye to Stefan! Thank you again, Stefan, for the excellent job you did for us while we enjoyed this trip—we enjoyed it in part because of your excellent driving!

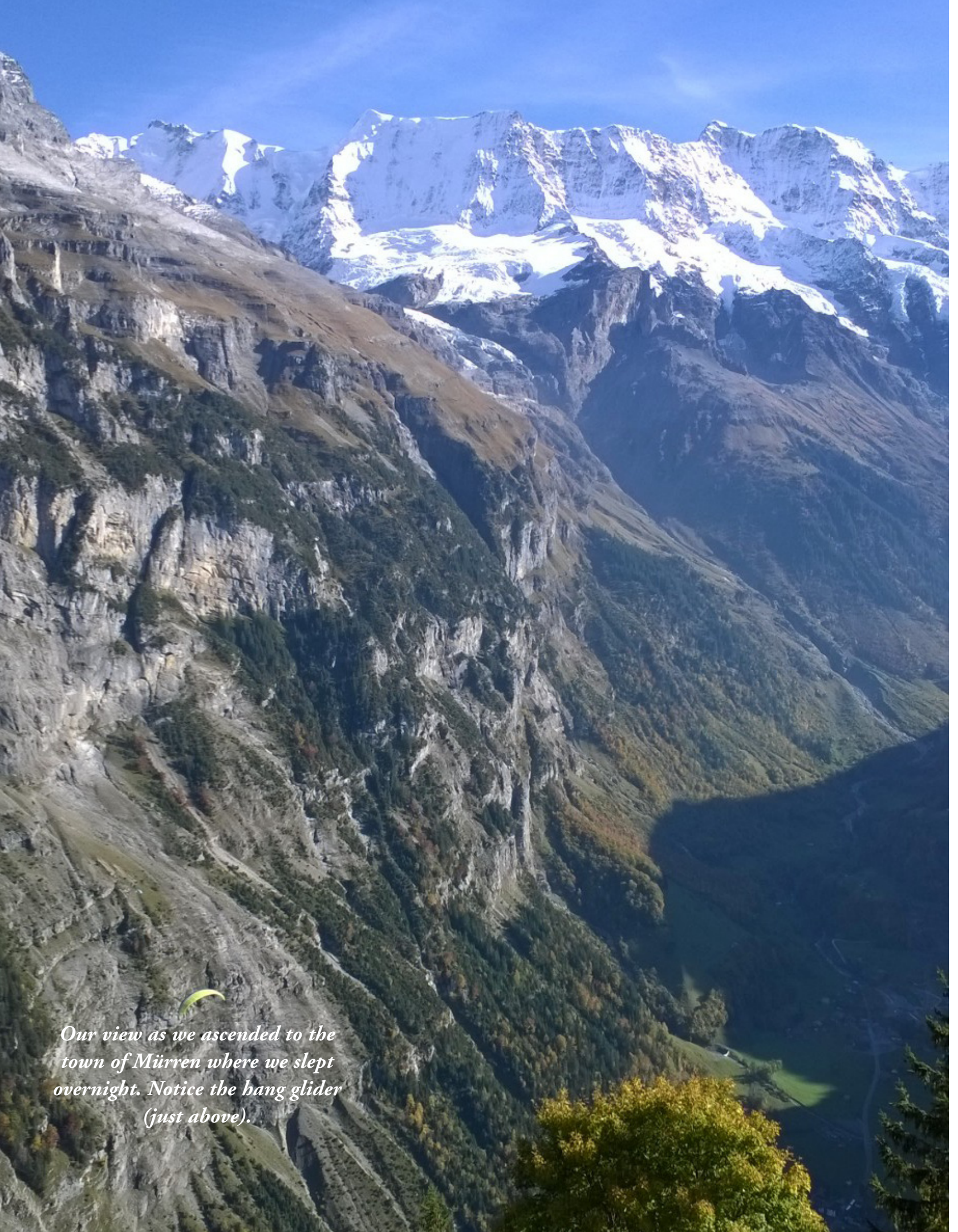
Most of us anticipated boarding our airline at 10:30 in the morning, but we actually did not board over four hours later due to a defective seal on a door. On the whole, there were not too many complaints from the waiting travelers—absolutely none from our group!

Due to this delay, we arrived in Newark later than expected and some of our group had to stay overnight instead of catching a flight that evening. Expecting to arrive at Morgantown at about 5:30 p.m., the group did not return until 10:00 p.m.!

It was good to hear that Sam and Diane were okay and making arrangements to fly home five days later on Friday! Thank you to each of you for all you did to bring generous gifts to share with friends in Germany, Switzerland, and France! You were also a *blessing* to both Lemar and I! It was a privilege learning to know each of you and we are already looking forward to seeing most of you at our reunion next year! ~ Lois Ann Mast







*Our view as we ascended to the town of Mürren where we slept overnight. Notice the hang glider (just above).*