

Location: Kirchzarten

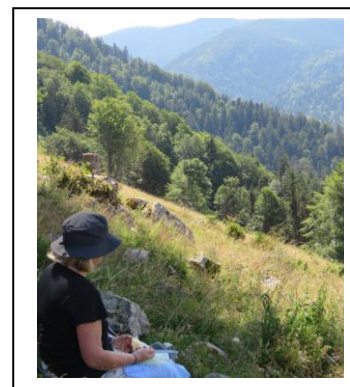
After the usual Joseph hearty breakfast, we set off on our walk to Kirchzarten on a sunny beautiful day with panoramic views over the valley. We got to talking about what have been the highlights so far. One of mine is the amount of brightly coloured plants that are in abundance in this region. In the forest we have come across holly hocks and foxgloves, not sure if they are native to the area but here are some examples of what look like native plants to the area.



The walk was a gradual climb up over the mountain which gave us plenty of time to enjoy the views of which there were many. We managed to take a short cut by mistake which cut a km off the distance. But the dilemma, we came out 400 meters uphill from the planned rest stop which included a café just on a road in the middle of the forest, what to do, go back down then have to climb back up? We decided to push on and after a short climb came down on the other side to this spot for our first break, who needs a hot drink?

This part of the walk was one section of the Camino walk Himmelreich Jakobusweg which starts in Hufingen and tracks down to Basel via Freiburg, a distance of 154 km's. For the heartier walkers you can then connect to the Via Francigena near Besancon and onwards to Rome for a total distance of approximately 1550 Km's.

This small Camino would be a lovely 10 day walk; lots of nice places to stay and the hills and mountains not too high. Also, significant parts of it are wheel chair friendly.



As we got closer to Kirchzarten we came down out of the hills and could see this fairy tale



village off in the distance. The village, Oberried, was nestled in a valley with forest on each side. It looked magical but alas as it was well off our walk we could only enjoy the long-range views as we enjoyed our lunch of fresh fruit and cheese rolls.

In Alpersbach we met fellow Australian's doing the same walk. This is one of those stories where fact is stranger than fiction, they live in Darlinghurst Sydney a mere two streets from our son Leigh. Gundo and Liz are also keen walkers. Both of them are fluent in German as Gundo's mother was

German. His is the classic refuge story having walked with his mother from Romania through two countries to safety after WW II. He eventually immigrated to Australia, where all indications suggest that he has been a model citizen. Perhaps a salutary story given the current political debate about immigration in Australia.

Gundo has a website called sydneytrainwalks, if you are ever in Sydney and looking for walks that you can get to and from by public transport.

This is Carol with Gundo and Liz as we were waiting to catch a bus to different walks, we were heading for a hilltop town called St Peters. St Peters at one stage was just a religious community but it has been de canonised (if that's the correct word for the process) and is now a community with a very big church.



As we were walking around the village I noticed this front cover of Der Spiegel. The Trump visit

has been across the whole media in Europe and we have even heard Americans discussing Trump at the breakfast table. USA citizens are usually proud of their own, but the word impeachment has been used a few times. I guess the Trump supporters are not the type to travel to small German villages.

Trump's reception in Germany is quite a contrast to the reception of JFK in Berlin who famously said 'All free men, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin. And therefore, as a free man, I take pride in the words, 'Ich bin ein Berliner!' Apparently, the word Berliner translates as donut with jam but why should we worry about US presidents getting things wrong. We stocked up on supplies and headed off on the Passions of Christ walk back to Kirchzarten.

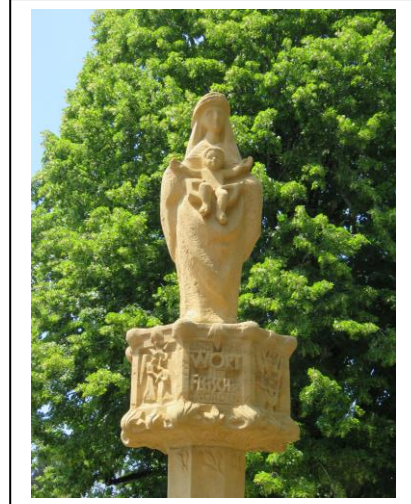
Our first destination was St. Märgen over the hill from St Peters with superb views of the valleys



beyond. The church is called 'Mariä Himmelfahrt' (Assumption of Mary) church. Like most things associated with Mary, the symbolism is much more restrained as evident by the



church itself. There was also this ceramic sculpture outside the church. The church is a mecca for pilgrims who flock to the church to partake of the local pilgrim cake. The cake is like a trifle, but the jelly is replaced with cream cheese. This is what it looks like



It also tasted pretty good as well but between the two of us we couldn't finish it.

### ***Saving the world one frog at a time (a continuing story).***

As we walked along a gravel path Carol came across this frog. Concerned for its safety she shooed it off the path into the undergrowth. It was a very small frog which had adapted to hiding amongst stones and pebbles, in contrast to this frog we came upon later which has adapted to hiding in pine needles.

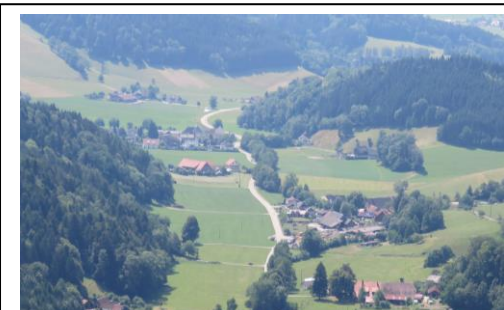


Also, amongst the pine needles and the periphery of the forest floor, somebody had made a display of ceramic gnomes and their hiding places. Here are a couple of examples of this very compelling folk art.

Over the years Carol has been not been very understanding of the things I bring back from my travels (my owl collection would be an

example), and she also has the same attitude to this folk art. But I would put forward the thought that it is good taste, and good taste alone, that possesses the power to sterilize and is always the first handicap to any creative functioning.

After leaving the gnome village we came upon this view of the valley below.



Tomorrow we leave for Freiburg a 16km walk across the ridge then down into the small city. I am hoping to add to my owl collection. As we are in the world of clocks, an owl with a clock would be a nice addition to my collection.

