

MEDITERRANEAN

SIGGY AND HEATHER | TRIP AROUND THE MEDITERRANEAN | FRIDAY, 5 APRIL 2013



Freiburg

After sleeping in till 8am (warm doona plus sleeping bag plus peejays) we had a quick breakfast and jumped on our bikes to “do Freiburg”. I must admit where we camped (Littenweiler) is not very inspiring. The brochure makes it look like the park itself is in a rural area but the ride in to Freiburg central took only 3 minutes. It was still very cold.

Freiburg has trams and a old central area where no vehicular traffic is allowed. The riding of bikes was not even allowed in the city centre. It was busy like most central parts of any city. As we walked closer in we began to see why this town is so fabulous. Cobbled stones, narrow side streets and wonderful architecture. We locked our bikes up on the outskirts and walked around. One of the old city entrances is still standing. The Munster, Freiburg’s central old town cathedral, dominated. Fabulous. This place really rocks!!! We were very surprised.

Built in the 13th century, the Munster is a work of art. It was thankfully not touched during WWII. Freiburg itself did suffer much other damage however. We spent quite a bit of time admiring the inside of this magnificent church.

The square around the church was filled to capacity with an outdoor market.



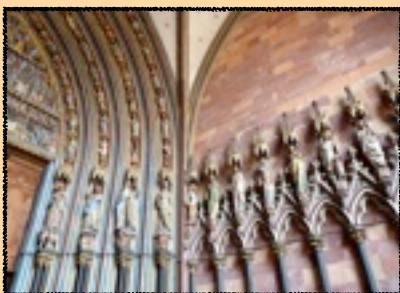
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Our Trip so Far

We had always planned to visit Freiburg on our way down to the countries on the Mediterranean Sea. I wanted to check Freiburg out as part of my heritage research. A map of where we have been will be included in the next newsletter.

After Freiburg we aim to go to Switzerland and Lake Constance. We hope we can see some of the Swiss uplands but the cold weather may mean this area could be closed to traffic. It has been seriously cold weather here.

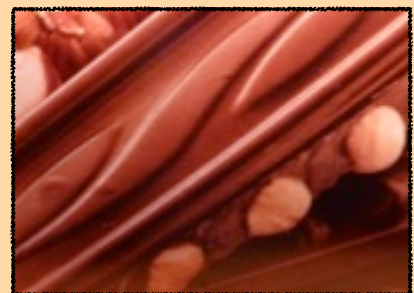
After Switzerland the plan is to see Slovenia and then Croatia. We are reading furiously about places of interest to visit but our biggest dilemma is how to get from Croatia to Turkey/Greece. We hear so many bad stories about going through Bosnia and Albania and have also been told that going inland through Serbia is a little risky too. It may have to be a ferry from Croatia to Italy and then on to Greece that way. Decisions, decisions.



FREIBURG MUNSTER The entrance to the church is very, very ornate. Everything is carved completely out of wood.



KEEPING WARM We are surprised how warm it is in the churches we have visited. Such a huge open space surely should get freezing with all the hot air rising. Maybe there is more hot air in the church than we think?



FOOD We have eaten very well on our trip and are not craving anything. The Belgium chocolates are divine. Swiss chocolate next. Yum yum. Tea? Just passable!!

Ebnet, where my grandfather was born, is still essentially in open country with farms all around. Really lovely.

Buskers (great music), hot German food (sausages etc which we just had to sample), an amazing array of flowers, fresh produce and lots of carved wooden products (Black Forest wood). There were also lots of outdoor restaurants but the majority of customers were inside keeping warm.

We took a quick look in a number of electrical stores to purchase a replacement GPS (with lifetime maps of all of Europe) and the the latest Panasonic TZ41 camera I wanted back in Australia. I was able to surprisingly negotiate the prices down substantially - evidently people don't haggle here much.

We went back to get our bikes and walked them back to the marketplace to purchase some food supplies before riding home, cold but happy. It is easier to hang shopping bags on a bike handle than to carry them around.

Freiburg was an great surprise. We absolutely loved it.

After a brief cup of tea and biscuits in the van it was time to explore the land of my ancestors.

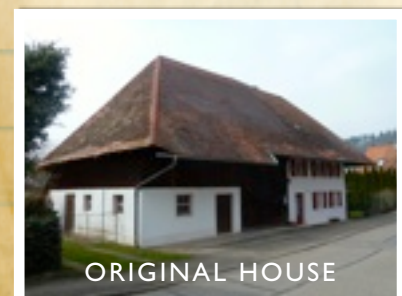
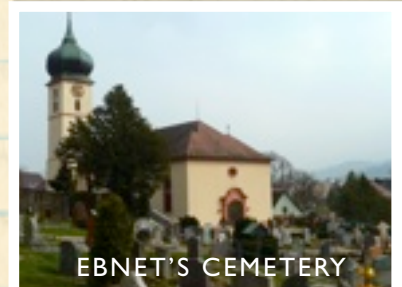
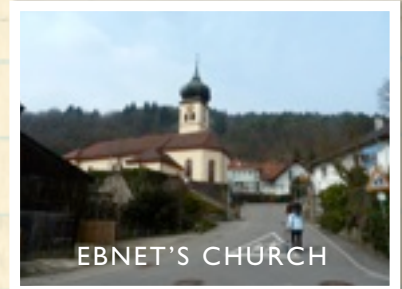
My grandfather was born in Ebnet, near Freiburg. We were camped a short distance away so we rode on over to sample its ambience.

I assume Ebnet was a tiny hamlet in my grandfather's day. I was pleased that it has not been totally swallowed up by Freiburg's expansion. Tractors still travel through the main street and although there are some newer buildings, many of the old barns and farmhouses still exist. We saw an grand old house labelled - Ebnet Sloss. I can imagine my grandfather peering over it's walls when he was a child. The houses in Ebnet butt directly on to rural land. We rode around the quiet local streets and I felt quite at home imagining how my grandfather must have lived and enjoyed this place growing up as a child.

We happened upon Ebnet's local church so we checked out the attached cemetery. The church itself, and its surrounds were beautiful. We found a number of graves with grandfather's surname (Muller) but no evidence of my great grandparents Emile and Elisabetha. We know my grandfather actually died near Berlin in Luckenwalde.

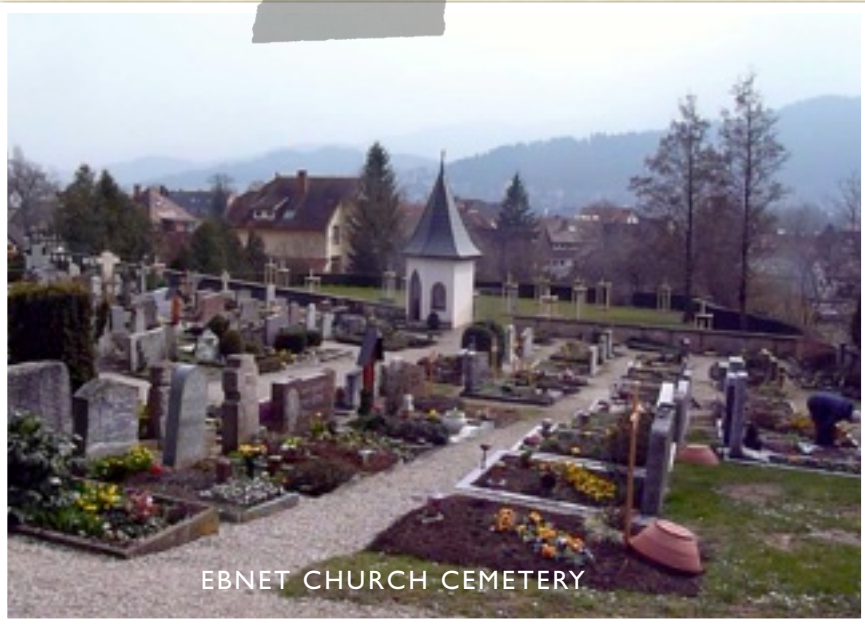
It was time to reflect and simply enjoy the moment before riding slowly back along the river. I imagined that members of my family had, at one time or other in the past, walked on the very ground that we had ridden our bikes. Wow. A very emotional day.

EBNET

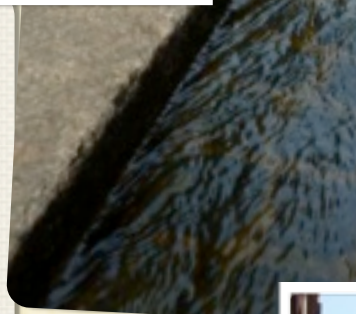
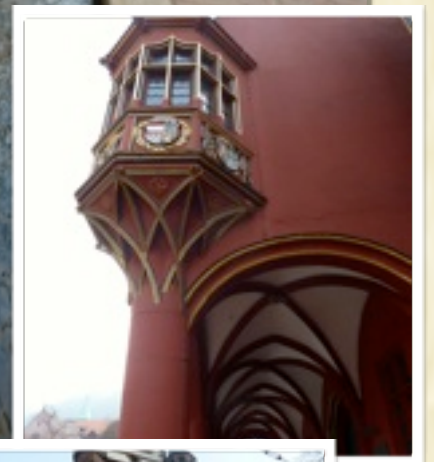




PHOTOS



EBNET CHURCH CEMETERY



FREIBURG IS ONE OF THE FEW PLACES IN THE WORLD THAT HAS A DELIBERATELY PLANNED PUBLIC COOLING SYSTEM. THE RIVER IS DAMMED UPSTREAM AND THE WATER IS REDIRECTED INTO THE TOWN CENTRE VIA A SERIES OF SMALL CHANNELS. YOU CAN SEE THE WATER RUNNING FAST THROUGH THE MAIN CITY CENTRE STREETS. THE WATER IS CLEAN AND IT DEFINITELY HAS A COOLING EFFECT - VERY INNOVATIVE AND SIMPLE. NOT THAT WE NEEDED IT TODAY! KIDS ALSO USE THE WATER TO IN AND HAVE TOY BOAT RACES.

