

Family History Notes

Fall 2021

Zentner Houses – Elm, Zurich and New Glarus

Four Zentner homes will be explored – three in Switzerland and the Zentner farmhouse in rural New Glarus. The oldest of these four structures is the *Zentnerhaus* of Elm, Canton Glarus (pictured below). It was built in 1799 and is the largest wooden chalet in the village. The *Zentnerhaus* is a *Doppelhaus* (duplex) with side-by-side residential units. The house was built in the village center across from the church and cemetery. Although known as the *Zentnerhaus* the home was not built by a Zentner but by Kaspar Freitag (1745-1830). Evidence of Kaspar Freitag being the builder can be seen yet today in decorative window grills on the exterior where there is a “K” and an “F” and the year 1799 found in the iron scrollwork. Today the ground floor of the *Zentnerhaus* is also home to a retail bakery and the former apparel shop, *Didi’s Lädeli*, is now Elm’s visitor information center.

Kaspar Freitag was an influential man in Elm and in the canton. He served as the head of the village (*Tagwenvogt*) and was one of nine men (*Neunerrichter*) on the canton’s Court of Nine (*Neuergericht*). Freitag was married to another Elm native, Anna Marti, and they were the parents of 14 children – nine



who lived to adulthood and five who died as infants or children. A chart showing the children and selected descendants of Kaspar and Anna (Marti) Freitag is included with this newsletter. This chart will assist readers navigate the typically interwoven Elm relationships and repetitive use of names such as Kaspar, Nicolaus, Werner, Verena, Barbara and Anna Maria. Two Freitag daughters, Barbara and Verena and their descendants, are explored in more depth.

Barbara Freitag married Niklaus Zentner. Their son Kaspar Zentner (1811-1887) served as Elm’s village president (*Gemeindepräsident*) and was a village historian who wrote about Elm history in his extensive *Chronik*. Kaspar Zentner lived in the chalet in Elm built by his grandfather and namesake, Kaspar Freitag. And subsequently the home has been known as the *Zentnerhaus*.

Verena Freitag, the other Freitag daughter to be specifically mentioned, married Jakob Elmer of Elm. The Elmers lived in the area known as Hinterauen up the valley from Elm. Their home, also a *Doppelhaus*, was known as the *Elmerhaus* Hinterauen. Jakob Elmer also served as *Gemeindepräsident*. The youngest of Jakob and Verena (Freitag) Elmer’s children was daughter Anna Maria who immigrated to New Glarus in 1847 with her husband Wernet Elmer. And thus Kaspar Zentner of the *Zentnerhaus* was the first cousin of Anna Maria (Elmer) Elmer of New Glarus – both being the grandchildren of Kaspar Freitag.

Kaspar Zentner of the *Zentnerhaus* had several children of whom two sons will be mentioned – Nicolaus (a name also spelled Niklaus/Nicholas/Nikolaus) and Gilg. Nicolaus (1837-1888) immigrated to New Glarus in 1864 and married Euphemia Elmer in 1866 (wedding photo here courtesy of their descendant Nick Zentner). Euphemia was the daughter of the aforementioned Wernet and Anna Maria (Elmer) Elmer. And thus Nicolaus and Euphemia were second cousins – both being the great-grandchildren of Kaspar Freitag.



Nicolaus and Euphemia (Elmer) Zentner began the Zentner homestead on Zentner Road in 1866. They had five children -- Anna Maria (Mrs. Thomas Zweifel), Caspar, twins Barbara and Verena (Mrs. Henry Z. Duerst), and Werner L. married to Maria Legler. Daughter Barbara died at 5 months. In the 1880s, the Zentners built their farm home pictured here. The home exhibits

the characteristics of the Italianate style -- a low-pitched roof, the decorative brackets (or corbels) underneath the roof cornice and the arched porch mimicking an Italian loggia.

The Zentner farm was to become a multi-generational farm and in 1966 it had the distinction of being designated a Wisconsin Century Farm – a source of pride for the Zentner family. At some point after the death of Nicolaus Zentner in 1888, his wife Euphemia built a home in the village and lived adjacent to the homes of her older brother Werner Elmer and younger brother Nick Elmer. Nicholas and Euphemia Zentner's elder son Caspar Zentner and his wife Susanna née Disch (pictured below) took over the farm and became the second generation stewards. The third generation on



the farm was Ernst (Red) Zentner and his wife Hilda née Hoesly. And for a period of time in the 1960s fourth generation Carlton (Tex) Zentner and his wife Mary née Zoia and family lived on the farm. The



Carlton Zentners moved from New Glarus to pursue careers in education and were the last of the Zentner family residents. However the family retained ownership of the farm into the 1970s. Today the Zentner house is owned by David and Sharon Sippy who have updated and maintained the home in splendid condition. The Sippys also moved the former Frick home in New Glarus to their land and operate it as the Rose Hill Country Inn (see *Family History Notes* Spring 2019).

(An article about a similar multi-generational farm/farmhouse house built by John and Anna Maria (Elmer) Tasher is found on page 6.)

While Nicolaus Zentner immigrated to New Glarus, his brother Gilg (1843-1914) remained in Elm. Gilg was married to his second cousin Katharina Elmer (also a descendant of Kaspar Freitag through his daughter Verena (Freitag) Elmer.)



In 1892 Gilg Zentner purchased the spring at Gschwend just above Elm. The rust-colored waters from the spring were long-believed to have healing and curative properties. Gilg had the foresight to have the spring water analyzed and it was found to be high in iron. The spring's mineral water was piped to a small *Kurhaus* (bath or health spa) containing just four private cabins. The health spa succeeded and in the years 1896-98 a new and larger *Kurhaus* was built (pictured). The new facility had characteristics of the Eastlake style and elements

of the *Jugendstil*. Elm's mineral waters drew international visitors. Gilg Zentner died in 1914, the same year in which WWI hostilities began. The war brought an end to many of the spa visitors.



Elm's mineral water was also sold in glass demijohns. A new chapter of the *Kurhaus* began in 1929 when its owner, Oskar Schärli, added lemon peel oil to flavor the mineral water. Elmer Citro, Switzerland's popular soft drink was born and it remains a favorite soft drink in Switzerland today. The photo at left was recently taken in a Zurich supermarket. The large and modern Elmer Citro bottling factory was built adjacent to the *Kurhaus* property. The *Kurhaus* closed long ago but still operates as a retirement and nursing home for the elderly (*Altersheim* and *Pflegeheim*). The

contemporary photo at right reveals that the *Kurhaus* has been stripped of its one-time grandeur.



Gilg Zentner had a son Kaspar Zentner who married Anna Elmer of Elm and who in turn had a son Gaspar René Zentner (1919-2013). Gaspar was born and raised in Oberuzwil, Canton St. Gallen and visited Elm on numerous occasions. Gaspar became an engineer and banker which took him to England, Spain and Eastern Europe. Zentner married an Italian widow, Savina Rizzi Masieri.



Savina Zentner had an interesting backstory. She had been married to up-and-coming Italian architect Angelo Masieri. Angelo and Savina had admired American architect Frank Lloyd Wright and asked personally him to re-design their pre-nineteenth century family property on Venice's Grand Canal. Sadly, Angelo died unexpectedly in a 1952 auto accident while in America to consult with Wright. Savina then asked Wright to design the Masieri Memorial in remembrance of her husband. But conservative Venice rejected Wright's plans in 1954. Instead Venetian architect Carlo Scarpa, a Masieri

associate, completed the memorial project gutting the Masieri property but leaving the exterior intact.

In the 1960s, Gaspar and Savina Zentner asked architect Scarpa to design a home in the vicinity of Zurich's Dolder Grand Hotel. Scarpa was also an admirer of Wright and Wright's influence can be seen in the Zentner's residence (pictured on previous page). And like Frank Lloyd Wright, Scarpa designed the home's furniture and fixtures. The Zentner home is known in Zurich as Casa Zentner and is still owned by the family of Gaspar and Savina.

Gaspar Zentner maintained a strong bond with Elm over the years. He had donated substantial funds to purchase the meadow immediately south of the Elm church to prevent further development. The PRO



Elm foundation, of which Gaspar was a charter member, also received generous funding from Zentner for various Elm organizations. When Gaspar died in 2013 it was his wish to be buried in the Elm cemetery. Although never a resident of Elm, he was welcomed "home" by a large number of local mourners.

Elm, Canton Glarus is the only village in Switzerland where the Zentner family surname originated. The family coat of arms is shown at left and features green branches with leaves and red berries. However the surname can also be found in Germany, other central European countries and Russia. In Poland and Russia the name may indicate Jewish origins. American bandleader Simon "Si" Zentner was the son of a Polish Jew Sam Zentner born in Warsaw. Wikipedia states that the word Zentner is derived from the Latin *centenarius/centum* meaning hundred. A *Zentner* in German is the word for a weight of 100 units (like our hundredweight) of various products or crops.

Walter Zentner

In 1979 a Swiss immigrant by the name of Walter Zentner arrived in New Glarus where he remained for the rest of his life. He was 67 years old and had already lived in the United States for several years. Walter was "introduced" to New Glarus in an article penned for the *Capital Times* by local freelance writer Ray Barth. Walter explained to Barth that he came to New Glarus because of Walt Disney. Zentner said that he had yodeled for Disney at Disneyland in about 1964. And Disney mentioned that a yodel club could be found in New Glarus, Wisconsin – something Disney likely knew from his "Adventures in Dairyland" – a 1956 production which featured New Glarus yodeler Ernst "Red" Zentner. Walter Zentner claimed that Disney had played a New Glarus recording for him which was broadcast throughout the park -- possibly Red Zentner yodeling in the song "Teach Me How to Yodel".

Walter Zentner (1912-1997) was born in Canton Zurich, Switzerland as Oswald Walter Zentner. His father and grandfather were also named Oswald and who hailed from Elm, Canton Glarus. Walter's mother, Susanna Lina Itschner, was a native of Canton Zurich. His parents divorced when Walter was just 5 years old and his father remarried almost immediately.

Walter became a gardener at a resort hotel in Caux, Canton Vaud, Switzerland. After WWII the resort was purchased for the Moral Re-Armament group as a center of reconciliation for Europeans, particularly Germans and French. Post-war leaders such as Konrad Adenauer and Charles De Gaulle were visitors there. Zentner claims to have entertained them with his yodeling and harmonica-playing. Walter also worked in the resort's dairy and became expert at yogurt-making. The Moral Re-Armament group had a site located on Mackinac Island in Michigan. Walter was sent there to establish greenhouses. Eventually, Walter went to Chicago where he was employed at the Ball Seed Company, North America's leading wholesale distributor of horticultural supplies. After he retired from Ball he moved to New Glarus. Walter remained a gardener and supplied bedding plants to locals. Eloise (Klassy) Kuenzi remembers Walter since he was a good friend of her parents, Paul and Doris (Sherven) Klassy. She said that Walter Zentner was a simple and humble man who was an ardent gardener. Perhaps his only extravagance was buying the best gardening tools. Eloise said he was "a dear man".

Area Zentner Families

Besides the Nicolaus and Euphemia (Elmer) Zentner descendants and immigrant Walter Zentner, there were a number of other Zentners families in the area – all with roots in Elm, Canton Glarus. Perhaps the largest Zentner family with numerous descendants is the family of Oswald and Susanna (Babler) Zentner. Tragedy hit this Zentner family in 1879 when father Oswald was killed when he slipped on an icy path and fell over a mountain slope above Elm. And two years later two Zentner sons died in Elm's landslide (*Bergsturz*) of 1881. Susanna and her 9 remaining children immigrated to Green County in 1882. That same year mother Susanna married widower Dietrich Stauffacher of the Town of New Glarus. Five of the Zentner children – Hilarius, Oswald, Fred, Regula (Mrs. Karl Bindschaedler), Susanna (Mrs. Fred C. Elmer) -- remained in Green County. Two daughters, Elsbeth (Ellen; Mrs. Albert Steffen) and Maria (Mary; Mrs. Herman Butts) moved to Minnesota. And two sons, Johann Heinrich (Henry J.) and Samuel, moved to Minnesota and later to Renwick, IA. Oldest son Hilarius married Margareth née Zentner and they began the homestead farm in Section 36 in the Town of New Glarus.

The last of the Oswald and Susanna (Babler) Zentner children to pass away was Susanna (Mrs. Fred C. Elmer) who died in 1969. She is shown here in a 1945 four-generation photo. From right-to-left:



great-grandmother Susanna (Zentner) Elmer, grandmother Maria (Elmer) Bandi, great-grandson Allen J. Fjelstad and mother Pauline (Bandi) Fjelstad. Susanna was a child of about 3 years when her father died in a mountain accident and not yet 5 years old when the landslide occurred in Elm and two of her older brothers were killed.

Oswald Zentner (the one who died in a fall) also had three brothers, Hilarius, Johann Ulrich and Johann Peter, who immigrated to America.

They are buried in Pennsylvania, Washington and Illinois, respectively. Oswald also had a niece, Barbara (Zentner) Wichelt, who immigrated to the New Glarus area with her mother.

Rudolf Zentner and wife Elsbeth Stauffacher immigrated to America in 1853. They farmed in the Dutch Hollow, Green County area. Both are buried in the Dutch Hollow Cemetery.

Meinrad Zentner of Elm immigrated to the United States as a single young man in 1912. He married twice – first to Maria Emelia Benziger and after her death to Emma Gerber. Meinrad and his first wife had five daughters born in New Glarus and Belleville who all learned to sing and yodel. And Meinrad had three children by his second marriage before he died in 1939. Anna (Zentner) Olsen of Evansville, a daughter from Meinrad's first marriage, recently died in May of 2021. And Viola (Zentner) Schwend of Monroe, daughter from Meinrad's second marriage, died in 2020. Anna and Viola were perhaps the last remaining children of an Elm immigrant who settled in Green County.

Several Zentner families lived in the New Elm settlement near Oshkosh and were among the original settlers of that Glarner settlement. These families included Fridolin and Barbara (Rhyner) Zentner, Johannes and Anna Barbara (Rhyner) Zentner and Joachim and Rosina (Zentner) Rhyner. The Find-a-Grave website lists 159 Zentner graves in Winnebago County, WI compared to 59 Zentner graves in Green County, WI and 17 Zentner graves in Kossuth County, IA (Renwick settlement). These Iowa graves appear to largely belong to the aforementioned brothers, Henry J. and Samuel Zentner, and their wives and descendants.

Johannes Zentner, an Elm native and teacher at Braunwald, arrived in New Elm with his ~7 year old son Rudolf, leaving his estranged wife behind in Canton Glarus. Father Johannes returned to Switzerland leaving the young boy Rudolf with relatives in New Elm. At age 15, Rudolf enlisted in the Union Army serving in the Wisconsin 2nd Infantry which formed a large part of the famed Iron Brigade. Rudolf mustered out in 1864 at age 18. Rudolf married and raised a family in Adams County, WI.

Heinrich Zentner came from Elm to Monroe where he married Anna Blumer in 1882. They had two sons and then divorced in 1890. Swiss records say Heinrich Zentner returned to Switzerland and another online resource said he remarried and died in the State of Georgia.

Several early immigrant New Glarus women were born into Zentner families. They included Katharina Zentner (Mrs. Martin Disch), Margareth Zentner (Mrs. Hilarius Zentner) and Margareth Zentner (Mrs. Paulus Schneider) who died one month after giving birth to her 16th child in 1901. That child was Alma Schneider (Mrs. E. Robert Wittwer) who was then raised by Casper and Emma (Eichelkraut) Elmer.

Johann Caspar Zentner was born in Elm in 1884 and immigrated to Utah in 1910. He became a member of the LDS Church in 1913 and married Amy Dean in 1915. They raised a family of four sons and two daughters. A son William Zentner and his wife Delpha visited New Glarus in the early 1970s looking to locate other Zentner branches.

The Tasher Farm and Farmhouse

A possible “twin” to the Zentner farm house (pictured on page 2) is found on County Highway G south of Mt. Vernon. Like the Zentner house, the Tasher house was built in the Italianate style in the 1880s by John and Anna Maria (Elmer) Tasher. Anna Maria was a sister of Euphemia (Elmer) Zentner. The Tasher home and Zentner home appear very similar -- both have windows and front doors similarly positioned and a two story kitchen extension at the rear of the house. The two homes appear to be mirror images of each other.



The Tasher farm is a multi-generational family farm which continues to be owned by the Tasher/Rhiner family. The farm history started with Johann Täscher (John Tasher) a native of Canton Graubunden and his wife Anna Maria Elmer, a native of Elm, Canton Glarus. The Tashers were pioneers in the breeding of purebred Holstein Cattle. Their Holstein herd began in 1884 with the purchase of a \$225 bull (\$6200 in 2021 dollars). Anna Maria Tasher, like many dairy farm wives was a cheesemaker and one source credits her with making the first Swiss cheese in



Dane County. The family farm passed to John and Anna Maria's son Werner Tasher followed by Werner's daughter Eva and her husband John Rhiner (Rhyner

originally). And they were followed by their son Gene Rhiner and today by Gene's sons Marc and David. Like the previously mentioned Zentner farm, the Tasher/Rhiner farm was recognized as a Wisconsin Centennial farm in the mid-1960s.

Colonel Harold J. Zweifel

While recently enjoying the historic atmosphere of San Antonio's Menger Hotel I noticed photographs of Teddy Roosevelt and Carrie Nation on their walls. Roosevelt used the Menger Bar as his headquarters when recruiting volunteers for his "Rough Riders". And Carrie Nation use her trademark hatchet to damage the bar itself (the repair to the bar top is still visible) to demonstrate against the evils of alcohol. Considering all of this history, I wondered whether San Antonio had any Glarner connections.



And indeed I found a New Glarus connection. New Glarus native Harold John "Dutch" Zweifel retired from a distinguished military career in 1973 and settled in San Antonio where he lived with his wife Maxine for the rest of their lives.

Harold Zweifel (1919-2010) had a deep family history in New Glarus. He was the descendant of immigrants Jost and Verena (Zopfi) Zweifel – Jost being one of five immigrant Zweifel brothers documented by Alice Zweifel in 1972. Harold was raised on the Jost Zweifel homestead farm about two

miles west of New Glarus on Highway 39. The farm passed to Jost and Verena's son John S. Zweifel and wife Barbara née Streiff, followed by their son Fred S. Zweifel and wife Pauline née Alder. Fred and Pauline were Harold's parents. Pictured above is the Legler School in 1927 attended by Harold Zweifel (lower right) and his sister Viola (second row right behind Harold). Harold's sister Viola (Zweifel) Truttmann was a lifelong rural New Glarus resident (see photo in the following article.)

Harold attended New Glarus High School graduating in 1936. He attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison and while there enrolled in the Madison Flying School. Upon graduation from UW, Zweifel joined the U. S. Army Air Corps as a flight instructor and would spend the next 30 years in military service achieving the rank of Colonel. His career milestones included 1375 combat flying hours. He was to receive 4 distinguished flying crosses and a bronze star. In WWII, Zweifel "flew the hump" – routinely flying from India to China over the Himalayas. This airlift route is considered the most dangerous route of WWII claiming 600 aircraft. Zweifel also served in Korea and Viet Nam.



Zweifel was qualified to fly 19 different military aircraft. In 1960, Zweifel set a speed and distance record flying from the Philippines to the U.S. (without refueling) in less than 12 hours. He achieved 18,000 accident-free flying hours – a feat achieved by less than 1% of air crews.

After retirement from the Air Force, the Zweifels retired in San Antonio where Dutch remained connected to flying. He was a Federal Aviation Agency examiner participating in 3500 FAA flight qualification and requalification tests and over 3000 FAA written pilot tests.

Harold's obituaries mentioned that he possessed boundless energy and humor and provided guidance and leadership. His leadership was said to command both fear and respect. The remembrances at the time of his death also mentioned his Swiss heritage and milking dairy cows in his youth. Harold Zweifel and wife Maxine are buried in the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery in San Antonio.

Besides the aforementioned Zweifels, Harold Zweifel family tree included great-grandfather Iron Brigade soldier Fridolin Streiff. Harold was also descended from original 1845 New Glarus settlers Hilarius and Anna (Hefti) Wild. He was acquainted with two great-grandmothers – Barbara (Wild) Streiff and Barbara (Zweifel) Wild Hoesly (see photo below). Harold's maternal grandfather, immigrant Jacob Alder, was the cheese maker at the Walnut Grove factory in Section 27 of the Town of York. And Harold's parents Fred S. and Pauline Zweifel were both direct descendants of Swiss Reformer Ulrich Zwingli (see *Family History Notes* Spring 2013 descendancy chart).

Five Generations

This five generation photograph was composed just a short time after the birth of Sylvan and Viola (Zweifel) Truttmann's daughter Janet (later Mrs. Jon Novak) in 1941. From left: baby Janet's great-



grandmother Anna Margaret née Wild (Mrs. Jacob Alder later Mrs. Emanuel Streiff), grandmother Pauline née Alder (Mrs. Fred S. Zweifel), mother Viola, and great-great grandmother Barbara née Zweifel (Mrs. Hilarius Wild later Mrs. Jost Hoesly).

Barbara Hoesly was an honored figure in the New Glarus centennial celebrations of 1945-1946. At that time she was one of the oldest New Glarus area residents and the daughter-in-law of original colonists, the Hilarius Wilds. Barbara had been born in Glarus, Canton Glarus in 1853 and immigrated to Galena, IL before marrying farmer Hilarius Wild, Jr. of New Glarus in 1874 and after his death to hardware merchant Jost Hoesly in 1907.

South Carolina's Glarner Minister

While recently visiting Charleston, SC I had the opportunity to see the Biggin Church ruin and cemetery (pictured below) near Moncks Corner. Two hundred years ago the pastor of this country church was the Rev. John Jacob Tschudy, a second generation Glarner-American. Tschudy was born in Philadelphia in 1778, the eldest son of immigrant Martin Tschudy (#165 Schwanden) and his wife Barbara Adams.

John Jacob was considered "a poor boy of promising genius." Under the patronage of wealthy Maryland gentry, John Jacob received a liberal education at St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree. He then was appointed Assistant to the Professor of English and Grammar. In 1807, Tschudy was ordained a deacon and in 1809 he was ordained a priest in the Episcopal Church.

Tschudy's religious career led him to South Carolina. For most of the remainder of his life, he was

associated with the St. John's Parish at Berkeley, South Carolina. At St. John's, Tschudy began ministering to white parishioners as well as the slave community. One of his early reports showed a communicant total of 12 white persons and 3 "persons of colour". By 1817, Reverend Tschudy had increased his focus on the religious education of blacks and gave public notice that "on every Sabbath after the divine service [he] would instruct such blacks at the place of public worship, as were desirous of being made acquainted with the way of attaining everlasting happiness, and who brought [him] written assurances from their owners, that it was with their consent."

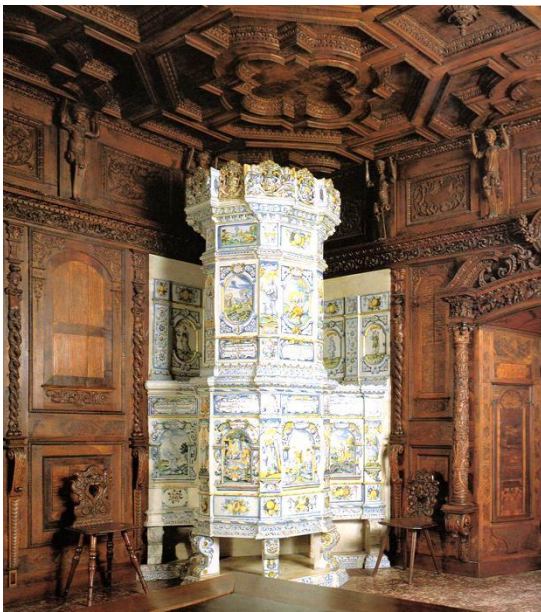


Tschudy commented that his insistence upon the written permission of the owners was “to impress forcibly upon the minds of the slaves that they ought to do nothing without the approbation of their masters.” Tschudy exhibited a paradox of the time among the Southern clergy -- caring for the spiritual need of the slaves, yet apparently condoning the practice of slavery. The Southern clergy tended to mirror the region’s acceptance of slavery. However, it has also been stated that while the clergy made peace with the plantation system, it was an uneasy and ambivalent peace.

Rev. Tschudy’s parishioners included the wealthy brothers John and Isaac Ball. The Ball Brothers owned over 1100 slaves on numerous plantations. The Ball slave holdings were recounted in the 1998 non-fiction work *Slaves in the Family* by descendent Edward Ball. Of Tschudy’s churches, the Strawberry Chapel is still standing, however only the ruins of the nearby Biggin Church survive following a fire in 1886. Rev. Tschudy is buried in the Biggin Cemetery.

The Tiled Oven or *Kachelofen*

The elaborate tiled oven or *Kachelofen* has been used for home heating for centuries. These handsome pieces suggest a time when affluence was displayed by the elegance of the home’s tiled ovens. Monochrome and polychrome tiles provided the elegant exterior. The ovens were fueled with wood from behind or from the side. The four basic parts of the oven design included the large substructure held off the floor by pedestals or decorative feet, the tower, the tile cladding on the adjacent walls and a small built-in seat (*Ofensitz*). These small seats were used by family members to warm and dry themselves. Examples of these ovens can be seen in Switzerland, in New York City and in New Glarus.



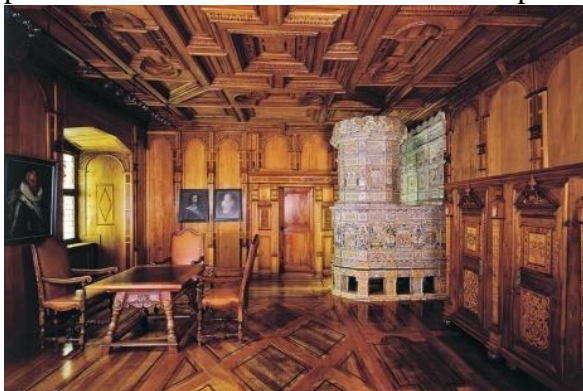
prominent von Capol (or Capaul) family. In 1885 the room was bequeathed to the State Museum of Berlin and later sold and transplanted to the Metropolitan in 1906.

The Met’s recreated room displays magnificent wood carvings on the walls, ceiling and furnishings. The windows are deeply recessed and contained stained and leaded glass panels. The single most imposing object in the room is the *Kachelofen*.

Flims is just over the mountain from Canton Glarus. And the features of the Met’s Swiss Room are very reminiscent of the formal rooms found in the Freuler Palace (*Freulerpalast*) in Näfels, Canton Glarus. The Freuler Place was also built in the 17th century and contains its original wood paneled rooms, inlaid floors, elaborate coffered ceilings and multi-colored tiled ovens in two rooms (pictured here and on next page).



The Freuler Palace's ovens are built upon pedestals and crowned with ornate tops. The oven designs possess architectural features such as pilasters, gables, cornices, and sixteen-sided towers. The tiles themselves depict such topics as the four seasons and stories from the Bible. The oven tilework in the Freuler Palace as well as the oven found in the Metropolitan Museum are the work of the Pfau family of Winterthur, a multi-generation family of master tile painters.



Green County immigrant Johann Ulrich Elmer recalled the Flemish-blue tiled *Kachelofen* in his boyhood home at Brumbach, Matt, Canton Glarus. He recalled climbing on the stove's *Ofensitz* to warm and dry himself after hunting chamois. When J. U. Elmer immigrated

with his family in 1849 to Shook's Prairie, he could only afford a \$5 metal wood stove with a broken door. But he knew that this stove provided better wood-burning efficiency than an open fireplace. And availability of wood was important factor when living on a prairie where wood was not readily available. The days of Brumbach and its gracious tiled stove were now in the past.



The beautiful *Kachelofen* pictured at left is found in the Old Swiss House Restaurant in Lucerne. The historic restaurant has been operated by the Buholzer family for many decades and is located in the vicinity of Lucerne's Lion Monument. In 1949 the proprietor's daughter, Gertrude "Trudy" Buholzer, was working in the restaurant. She caught the eye of an elderly American who asked her out that very evening. The American was August Anheuser Busch, the beer baron of St. Louis. He and Trudy married in 1952 and they became the parents of seven children. Trudy acted as one of the hostesses to President Harry S. Truman when he visited Grant's Farm, the Busch estate

outside of St. Louis. While this was a distinct honor, it may not have been a challenge for Trudy as she had attended finishing school, spoke several languages and had long entertained guests at her family's restaurant.



Trudy (Buholzer) Busch (pictured left) had several uncles – Xavier, Ernst and Alois Emil Buholzer – who had immigrated to Green County, WI. Klondike Cheese Factory operator Alvin X. Buholzer and Father Robert E. Buholzer were Trudy's first cousins.

And if you live in the Midwest, you need travel no further than New Glarus to see the attractive tiled *Kachelofen* found in the dining room of the Chalet of the Golden Fleece (pictured right). The vibrant dark green tiles blend perfectly with the wood-paneled dining room – perhaps the most harmonious of the Chalet's various rooms. Sandy Blum of the Chalet Friends group provided this photo of the oven believed to date to 1760.



The era of the *Kachelofen* is not over. Today modern versions are frequently found in new European homes. As seen in the photo below, todays ovens are sleek and contemporary. The continued



popularity of the *Kachelofen* is based in its efficiency as a home heating source. A small amount of wood is required to provide continuous radiant heat for an entire evening. These masonry headers have extremely high (95%) wood burning combustion efficiencies. Heat transfer efficiency falls within the range of 80 to 85%. This is considerably higher than the efficiency of metal stoves and fireplaces. The enclosed fire box eliminates the danger of smoke and sparks.

Glarner Presence in Central Florida

I have written about the Trimpi (originally Trümpy of Ennenda, Canton Glarus) family of New Jersey who were involved in Central Florida real estate investments. And I have mentioned Florida-born educator Fred Wild (of Mitlödi, Canton Glarus ancestry) who has a Sebring elementary school named for him. Here at our Ridgewood Lakes communities, Tschudy, Luchsinger and Elmer families have been counted among its residents.

John Zweifel's miniature White House (pictured) is open daily to visitors in nearby Clermont, FL.



Zweifel and his wife Jan duplicated the White House in miniature down to the smallest detail. John was the grandson of Nick and Kathryn (Kundert) Zweifel of New Glarus (Nick Zweifel being the grandson of Nick and Euphemia Zentner mentioned on page 2). Sadly, both John and Jan Zweifel passed away in 2020 but the Miniature White House exhibit continues to be operated by their children.

A new Glarner presence in Orlando can be found in two new Läderach Chocolatier Suisse shops located in the Florida Mall and the Mall at Millenia. Läderach, as you may recall reading in the Spring 2021 *Family History Notes*, is a premier Swiss chocolate manufacturer based in Canton Glarus (Ennenda and Bilten). They have taken leases on numerous Godiva Chocolate brick-and-mortar stores in the U.S. And the new Läderach outlets in Orlando are likely former Godiva stores.

And unexpected Glarner comes to Ridgewood Lakes in the form of an ingenious piece of equipment called the Menzi Muck. A Menzi Muck is a versatile walking excavator (also known as a spider excavator) used on uneven and challenging terrain – from Florida swamps to Swiss mountain slopes. In the case of Ridgewood Lakes, the Menzi (pictured at right) was used in August to clean out the canals which drain our numerous lakes and ponds. The canals become choked with vegetation which impedes the drainage. The photo (on next page) shows a Menzi Muck excavating atop a Swiss mountain.



The original Menzi Muck was developed by Ernst Menzi (1897-1984), a Swiss native with Filzbach, Canton Glarus roots. From the Menzi company website – “*Ernst Menzi was not just a genius inventor, he was also a born entrepreneur. He was a strongly influential figure in the history of the Menzi Muck walking excavator. Thanks to the success, his thoughts and ideas live on beyond his death to confirm Ernst Menzi's position as an inventor and forward-thinking entrepreneur.*”



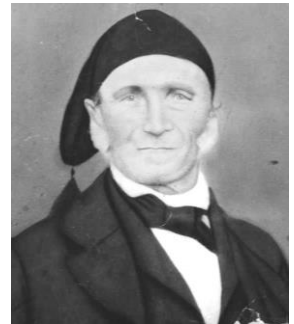
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Menzi is a family name with origins in the Canton Glarus villages of Filzbach and Mühlehorn. The four generation family-run Menzi meat market (*Metzgerei*) can be found in Mitlödi. The Menzis are known for their Glarner meat specialties such as *Chalberwurst*, *Netzbraten*, *Schüblig* and *Rauchcervelat* all based on old family recipes. And they produce Glarner *Trockenfleisch*, a Canton Glarus version of the famed dry beef of Canton Graubünden.

The family name Menzi was never commonly found in New Glarus. Maria Magdalena née Menzi and her husband Hilarius Ackermann of Filzbach were among the original colonist group of 1845. However, the Ackermanns reportedly settled in the Pittsburgh, PA area. Matt and Anna Maria (Menzi) Baumgartner married in Green County in 1890 and settled in New Glarus where many of their 14 children were born. The Baumgartners later moved to Madison, WI. Matt and Anna Maria are buried in the New Glarus Swiss Reformed Cemetery.

Melchior Durst

Melchior Durst (originally Dürst) was born in Diesbach, Canton Glarus in 1804. He married Rosina Schiesser and they had 9 children over a period of 20 years. Melchior's three sisters and their families – Margaretha (Mrs. Fridolin Hoesly), Anna (Mrs. George Legler) and Magdalena (Mrs. Balthasar Durst) – were all members of the original New Glarus settlers of 1845. A brother Niklaus Durst and his family arrived in New Glarus in 1846. After the death of wife Rosina in 1863, Melchior and most of his children immigrated to America. A daughter Margaretha married Fridolin Legler III in New Glarus in 1869 and they farmed in Legler Valley. The 1870 census finds Melchior in Valley Falls, KS living with a Legler nephew. He later made his way to the State of Oregon where his sister Margaretha Hoesly lived. Melchior and several of his children made Oregon their home. Melchior died there in 1885. Pictured is Melchior sporting his tasseled cap or *Züttelchäppli*.



Trivia Answers

The previous newsletter asked the following two trivia questions – 1) What do the villages of Montpelier, VT and Glarus, Switzerland have in common besides both being capitals in their respective state/canton? And 2) what does the capital village Glarus have in common with 13 other Swiss Canton capitals (e.g. Lucerne, St. Gallen, Zug, and Schwyz)? The first answer is that the villages of Montpelier, and Glarus are the smallest capitals by population in the United States and Switzerland, respectively. Montpelier has a population of about 7500 and Glarus has a population of about 6000. Glarus has been recently marketing itself as “*Der Kleinste Kantonshauptstadt*” – the smallest canton capital in Switzerland. The second answer is that Glarus is the capital of the Canton of the same name. And 13 other cantons (Lucerne, St. Gallen, Zug, Schwyz, Zurich, Bern, Geneva, Neuchatel, Appenzell (Innerrhoden), Basel (Stadt), Schaffhausen, Fribourg and Solothurn) all have capitals with the same name as the canton. In the United States, Oklahoma City, OK is the only state capital which contains the name of the state.