

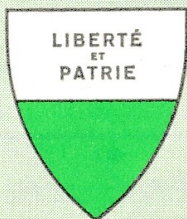
# The Big Day!!

The week leading up to our wedding was bittersweet. We were looking forward to our new life together as husband and wife, but we knew that it would mean the end of our time at L'Abri with all the dear friends we had made. We would miss the rich stimulation that lectures and discussions provided. Our final week at L'Abri in 1971 fell on the same days of the week as the celebration of our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2021. We enjoyed Christmas on Saturday, surrounded by friends and great music. We worshipped with our church family at the L'Abri chapel on Sunday.

Before our church marriage on Thursday, 30 December, we needed to submit to the required civil ceremony on Monday, 27 December. Our banns had been published and apparently no one objected to our marriage. So, we went up to Villars with Udo, who would provide translation for us. The official before whom we appeared was a very proper Swiss gentleman. He made sure that we understood the serious, binding nature of the commitment we were making. He then conducted the ceremony, having us repeat vows that were more substantive than those found in many wedding ceremonies today. He then filled out the Livret de Famille, which not only contained the official record of our marriage but also instruction on maintaining a healthy marriage. As you can see, the Swiss official had a beautiful, flowing hand.



CONFÉDÉRATION SUISSE  
CANTON DE VAUD



LIVRET DE FAMILLE  
DES ÉPOUX

*Maffion - Mc. Benzie*  
Délivré le *27 décembre* 19*71* sur la base de  
l'inscription du vol. *7* page *13* n° *16*  
du registre des *marriages* de l'arrondissement  
de l'état civil d. *Villars 101er*





Mariage célébré à

Villars / Ollon

le 27 décembre 1971

entre

Epoux

Maffier

Paul Rees

état civil

célibataire

origine

ressortissant des Etats Unis de  
l'Amérique du Nord

né à

Canandaigua (U.S.A.) le

fils de

Maffier Clyde A.

et de

Brothg E. née Rees

Epouse

Margaret Eleanor

née Mc Kenzie

état civil

célibataire

origine

ressortissante des Etats Unis de  
l'Amérique du Nord

née à

Seattle (Washington) le

fille de

Mc Kenzie Selmar Daniel

et de

Mathilda Eleanor, née Haggover



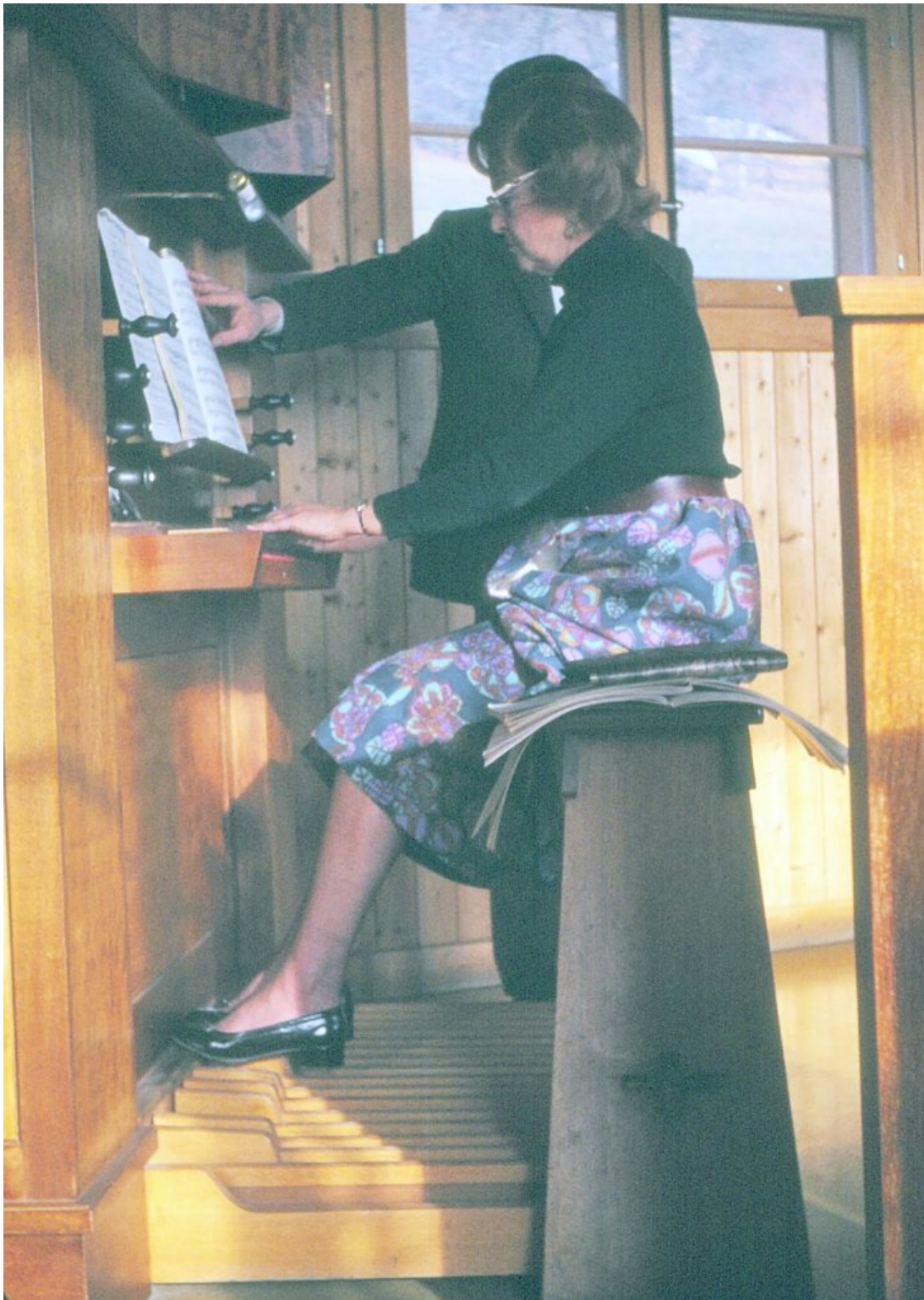
L'officier de l'état civil :

Drey

Margaret: "A last minute detail needing some thought was decorating the chapel. Keeping it cheap, simple, *and* pretty was paramount. Since our wedding was barely a week after Christmas, someone suggested that poinsettias probably would be on sale at the local Migros (Switzerland's largest supermarket chain). Udo went off to investigate. It was a remarkable sight to behold his little Citroën 2CV filled with red poinsettias toiling up the road! I went out and scrounged interesting greens and 'seed fluffs' from the verge and arranged those with the poinsettias. The chapel looked pretty sweet! Paul can talk more knowledgeably about our music selections."

We left most of the musical selections up to Gini Andrews, a L'Abri worker who was a concert pianist. She made the little Flentrop organ in the L'Abri chapel sing! Two pieces that we especially wanted were the Purcell Trumpet Tune in D for the processional and Widor's Tocatta as the recessional. The venue could not have been more beautiful. One wall of the L'Abri chapel is built of large windows facing out onto the Swiss Alps. Because it was a Thursday, Udo's message for our wedding was a required lecture for students.





Bruce (my best man) and I walked to the chapel together before the start of the service. We were very thankful that Franky Schaeffer offered to take the pictures of the ceremony, otherwise we would have had only our memories of that day.



The service began with Purcell's Trumpet Tune in D. I was overwhelmed seeing Margaret process down the aisle, realizing that I was really marrying this lovely lady.





Udo gave a wonderful message on the Biblical basis of marriage from the Book of Genesis. Udo pointed out that God's work of creation was not complete until He had made a human partner for Adam. Udo stressed that Margaret and I were creating something unique with our relationship, a lifelong work of art in which we would delight in each other's uniqueness. He

emphasized the need to forgive each other in light of the great forgiveness that each of us had received in Christ. He encouraged us, when confronted with challenges, to work together to find solutions unique to us. Our marriage relationship must demonstrate our trust in Christ and the reality of His grace.



Dr. Schaeffer led us through our marriage vows. Even though both of us were excited and confident that our marriage was blessed by God, we both experienced our knees knocking as we entered into what we knew was a lifelong covenant.





Margaret had asked Natasha, the elder daughter of Udo and Debbie, to be the ring bearer, a charge she carried off beautifully.



Dr. Schaeffer pronounced us man and wife, and we left the



chapel as a married couple. We stood outside the chapel and greeted people as they filed out.







A favorite picture from our wedding day is of Edith Schaeffer, clearly tickled by something that had been said as people filed out of the chapel.



Many in the community of L'Abri worked together to provide a lovely reception for us in Gentiana, the chalet in which we had lived. It was a touching outpouring of love. Once the reception was over, Margaret and I headed off for our honeymoon. I will share a bit more about our last week in Switzerland and our return to the US in my next post.

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## **Preparing for the Big Day**

As I mentioned in my last post, once Margaret and I made the decision to marry, we had to go into high gear to complete all the legal requirements to marry in Switzerland. One of our first steps was a trip to the US Embassy in Bern. Because of the amazing post bus and train system in Switzerland, this was just a day's outing for Margaret and me. We had to appear before a consular official and swear under oath that neither of us were currently married to someone else. We were given the documents that we would in turn present to the Swiss officials in Villars, starting the clock for the remaining legal requirements.



DEPARTMENT OF STATE - UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
 CONSULAR CASH RECEIPT  
 AND  
 RECORD OF FEES **No. B0691776**

1 - NAME (FAMILY, FIRST, MIDDLE) — PRINT. DO NOT WRITE MC KENZIE Margaret Cleaver			
2 - VISA SYMBOL OR TYPE OF SERVICE adm. oath			
3 - COLLECTIONS		4 - NATIONALITY	
TARIFF ITEM NUMBER (A)	AMOUNT		5 - FOREIGN SERVICE POST Ben
	US CUR. (B)	FC EQUIV. (C)	
45		STR. 10.-	6 - DATE Dec 6, 1971
			7 - RECEIVED BY (SIG.)
			8 - SERVICE PERFORMED BY (INIT.)

FS - 543 6/62

ORIGINAL - APPLICANT'S COPY

3

DEPARTMENT OF STATE - UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
 CONSULAR CASH RECEIPT  
 AND  
 RECORD OF FEES **No. B0691777**

1 - NAME (FAMILY, FIRST, MIDDLE) — PRINT. DO NOT WRITE MATTIN Paul Rees			
2 - VISA SYMBOL OR TYPE OF SERVICE adm. oath			
3 - COLLECTIONS		4 - NATIONALITY	
TARIFF ITEM NUMBER (A)	AMOUNT		5 - FOREIGN SERVICE POST Ben
	US CUR. (B)	FC EQUIV. (C)	
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In addition to all the legal steps we needed to take to marry by the end of December, there were many practical details to arrange. I was going to be wearing a "Swiss style" wedding shirt made of fine wool, sewn by a local seamstress. Margaret will share about plans for her wedding dress. There will be pictures of our wedding attire in my next post. "So, the idea of a wedding dress was overwhelming! What style? What could I

afford? Where would I procure such a garment? Fortunately, there were several women who had no trouble at all giving good advice, which I was fervently grateful to receive. Dear Barb Boles not only suggested a style (very simple) and material, she went with me to purchase the yard goods AND volunteered to sew it all up! We chose a lovely fine ivory wool and green and gold embroidered trim. The sartorial splendor came together wonderfully thanks to loving hearts and willing hands!"

Another important part of our preparation was to make transatlantic calls to our respective parents, a process which was more complicated then than it is today. The reactions were vastly different. My parents were quite pleased, even though they were not going to be able to attend the wedding. They were delighted that I was going to be marrying a Christian woman. When Margaret called, her dad was not at home. Her mother kept saying things like, "What will I tell your father?" It is true that I was not a great catch. I was a college dropout, ex-hippie and ex-druggie.

In a letter introducing herself to my parents, Margaret wrote this. "First of all my parents were taken aback and not a little dismayed to find I was really serious about marrying Paul. As an only child, they had many plans and dreams for me to fulfill. Sadly for them, I have pursued none of their goals nor fulfilled any of their plans. Then for me to announce plans to marry was really the final blow. My ancient and dear mother sounded, over the phone, as if she were saying last farewells to a young and beautiful wench about to take the veil. Hardly the case!"

We knew from previous L'Abri weddings (including the one I had been part of) that Edith Schaeffer simply adored weddings. Once we announced our intention to marry and had zeroed in on



a tentative date of December 30, she (with her daughter Debbie) went into high gear. She started running around like a mother hen as she planned the most beautiful wedding that our meagre budget could afford. Fran and Edith also announced that their wedding gift to us would be a few nights in an elegant Swiss hotel in the valley—actually St. Christophe in Bex (where we had gone to the restaurant on our first real date). A truly generous gift!



Winter came to Switzerland with a vengeance. We received about three feet of snow over the course of a couple days. If our little corner of Switzerland was a picture postcard in spring, summer and fall, it was over the top now. For a time, the main road from Villars down to the Rhone valley was closed due to the heavy snowfall. I decided to visit a friend from L'Abri who was in the hospital in Aigle. I borrowed a sled and had

the ride of my life, descending about 3,000 feet in altitude over the course of six miles. I had to be careful about picking up too much speed because of the hairpin turns on the way down. I arrived at the hospital and propped my sled to the side of the front entrance. I got inside and asked for the room number of my friend. The woman at the desk gave me the room number but then asked me to please move my "voiture" (vehicle) from the entrance! After my visit, I got a ride up the newly plowed road on a post bus, which had a rack on the back for skis and sleds.