

Grandkidlet # 26.25 Interns@Rüdesheim, St. Goar, & Schönbург–12 Jul 2026

Chaperoning five interns through Rüdesheim made the day feel like a blend of mentoring, sightseeing, and gentle herding. We started along the river, where the interns—equal parts curious and wide-eyed—took in the vineyards climbing the hillsides and the steady flow of Rhine traffic. The boat ride toward Burg Rheinstein gave us time to point out landmarks, answer questions, and enjoy their reactions as the castle appeared above the cliffs like something lifted straight from a medieval illustration. Walking through the fortress, we balanced giving historical context with letting them explore, watching them connect the place with the stories they'd only read about.

The gondola rides up to Germania became the highlight, a quiet ascent over the vineyards with the Rhine stretching out below in silver curves. The interns talked less here, taking in the view, and we could feel the moment settling into their memories. At the top, the Niederwalddenkmal stood in its commanding pose, and we guided them through the overlook, making sure each had time to wander, photograph, and simply absorb the panorama. It was one of those days when we weren't just supervising—we were helping young explorers experience the Rhine Valley the way it deserves to be experienced: slowly, attentively, and with a sense of wonder.

Please describe chaperoning 5 Interns at Rüdesheim on the river, to Burg Rheinstein, and up the gondola to Germania in 2 paragraphs > Copilot

St. Goar sits along one of the most dramatic bends of the Middle Rhine, a place where steep slate cliffs, terraced vineyards, and river traffic all seem to converge into a single postcard view. The town itself feels compact and welcoming, with narrow lanes leading up from the waterfront and the constant backdrop of Burg Rheinfels towering above. Riverboats glide past throughout the day, giving St. Goar a sense of movement and connection, yet the town keeps a quiet, with almost old-world rhythm. From the riverbank you can see the Loreley cliffs just upstream, adding a legendary touch to the landscape.

Above the town, Rheinfels dominates everything—a sprawling ruin that once was the most formidable fortress on the Rhine. Exploring its tunnels, ramparts, and wide courtyards gives you a sense of the scale of medieval power in this valley. From the castle walls, the view across to St. Goarshausen and Burg Katz is unforgettable: castles facing each other across the river like sentinels from another age. St. Goar blends history, scenery, and Rhine culture in a way few towns can, making it one of the most atmospheric stops in the entire valley.

Please describe St. Goar in 2 paragraphs > Copilot

Schönburg rises above Oberwesel like a stone crown, its towers and battlements perched on a steep slope overlooking one of the most beautiful stretches of the Middle Rhine. The castle's warm reddish stone, terraced vineyards, and commanding river views give it a romantic, storybook presence. Approaching it from below, you feel the layers of history—medieval fortifications, noble residences, and centuries of Rhine trade passing beneath its watchful gaze. The climb up is rewarded with sweeping panoramas of the valley, where barges glide past and the river bends between cliffs dotted with other castles. Inside the walls, Schönburg blends restored spaces with atmospheric ruins, creating a sense of both preservation and authenticity. Courtyards, narrow stairways, and lookout points invite exploration, while the castle hotel and restaurant add a welcoming, lived-in charm. From its ramparts you can see Oberwesel's fortified walls and the distant silhouette of the Loreley, making it clear why this stretch of the Rhine has inspired legends for generations. Schönburg feels both intimate and grand—a place where the Middle Rhine's history, scenery, and quiet magic come together in a single unforgettable setting.

Please describe Schönburg in 1 paragraph > Copilot



Please create a horizontal row of emojis with no descriptions for the above text > Copilot

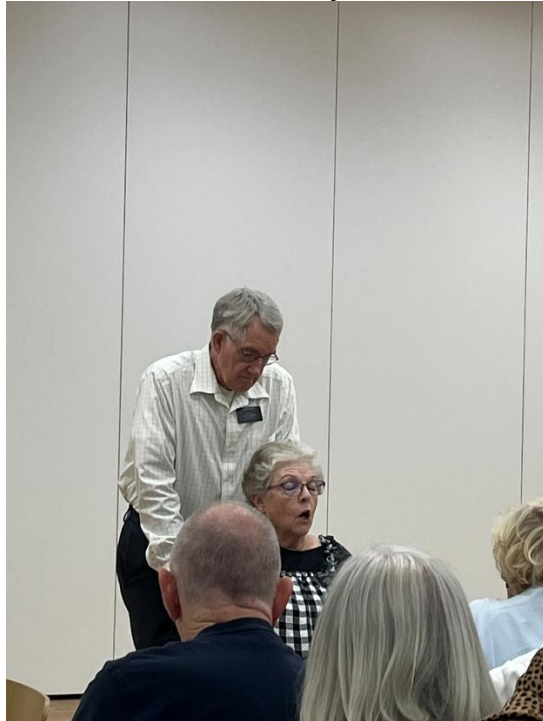
There were 13 images captured from the internet, which I uploaded to ECA Mission Google Photos, this week: Elder and Sister Otterson in Switzerland; Elder Pixton and his son going home (there are also 6 photos from his going home party); 2 photos of Avalyn in Costa Rica; a Cedar City sunset; 4th of July fireworks; Elder Skidmore and his bike; Steve Shirts and the Cedar Community Band; Colby's message about testing my link; 3 views of a hummingbird; Sister Wright's birthday photo; a political note; Aunt Sara and Sage; and a Smithson Valley competition. The most visually attractive are the sunset, hummingbird, and Halle's birthday photo:



Sage singing Annie caught my attention, as did Smithson Valley social media competition & goodbye:



On Monday, 6th of July 2026, we got to the office at 8:45. I finished putting together the pdf for last week's [Grandkidlet #26.27](#), which did not get sent until the next morning. I took my guitar in and put it in the office and went downstairs for the Workforce Devotional. This was led by the ABC Team (Accounting, Budgeting, and Compliance). They pointed out how sometimes we live beneath our privilege. They also pointed out how God is in relentless pursuit of His children. Davide's meeting pointed out there will be a meeting of Self-Reliance Specialists on September 26th in Rome. This fits with Claudia's potential 4-Lenses Workshop scheduled for the 24th of September. We will see what happens. There is a lot of discussion in Italy about the Mentoring Program, and how leaders want the program to be Priesthood lead and tied to ministering. Ether's meeting was more tense. There was a lot of thought tied to the way the conversation went. Among other things, Grandma and I were released from going to the Institute Welcome Center on Tuesday evenings. I was asked to do several large AI projects tied to schools to support the Perpetual Education Fund. I wrote in my notes: "I will not fight, to do it my way." We worked until 6:00 PM and then went down to Elder Pixton's farewell. I sang to him and his son: "No One to Call Me Son." Elder Pixton also sang a song about being wild in his youth, and he played the guitar for "Till We Meet Again." Elder and Sister Platt are going home for medical consultations because of pain from her fall and a cracked pelvis. We feel blessed we have not had any serious problems with our falls:



I fell asleep about 11:00. Grandma typically stays up later than me. I typically get up before she does.

Tuesday morning, I worked on an application I do not expect to be accepted for. I figure if you do not ask, you are guaranteed to have a "No" response. Elder Skidmore did the AJS Meeting. Ether joined us for the first time. He noted we had too many Senior Missionaries for 2 Clients. The big issue is everyone wants to comment, and this drowns out the voice of those we are attempting to help. Then we went to Sister Walch's Best Practice Meeting. There was an interview scheduled with a potential Intern for the architects. The person applying forgot to show up. This is not a good way to start an interview.

Wednesday I started to document who was involved in the AJS WhatsApp group, and what everyone had uploaded to the site. Took a break at noon for Come Follow Me based on 2 Kings 2-7. There was a good discussion, specifically around "fear not" and "there are angels around about you to bear you up" (see D&C 84:88). Again, we feel we have been very blessed.

We had a great call with Michelle gateau in France in the afternoon. She has moved, quit her accounting job, is going to take a 10-day vacation, and is using a government program to lease a car. All good things. William Gay attended the AJS Group, and he covered for me in the evening, while I went on a Ministering visit with Dorus to Simon. They are both computer nerds, and I believe I helped them both refocus on their testimonies. My phone fell out in Dorus' car, and we had to go pick it up. William will also cover for me next week, when Grandma and I are with Aunt Audry, Izzy, and Lauren.

I have not been going for a walk in the morning because my right knee has been hurting. I also have a lot of projects I am attempting to get my arms around. Thursday morning, I did not get to any of my projects before it was time to leave. We got to the office about 8:10 and got the keys for the van and got it ready for everyone to get in. Stephen, Vitalina, Max and Natalia, and Meriam joined Grandma and I for the Intern outing to Rüdesheim. It was a very busy day.

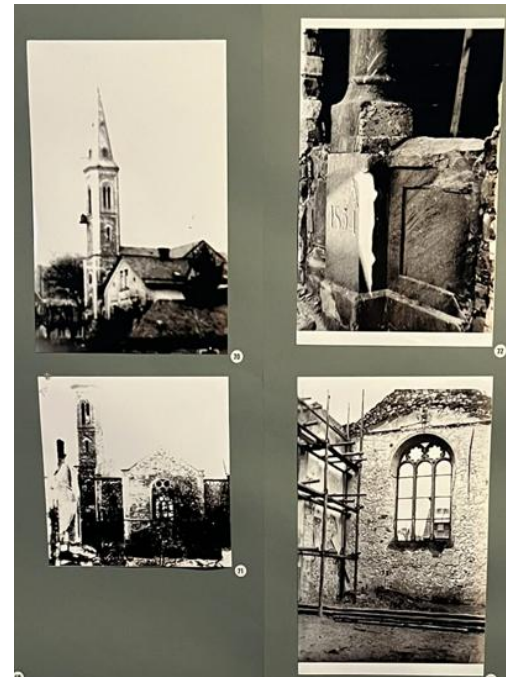
Gathering at Phoenix Haus:



In Rüdesheim:



The ski lift at Assmannshausen broke, so we adjusted our plan. We visited a church in Rüdesheim. There were a lot of photos of what it looked like after Allied bombing.



Then we took the boat to Burg Rheinstein, where I took quite 106 photos. Here are some of my favorites:



Intern Natalia from Spain and her husband Max from Germany: Intern Stephen from Chicago:



Intern Miriam from Minnesota:



Intern Vitalina, Ukrainian national rowing champion:



After touring Burg Rheinstein, we took the boat back to Rüdesheim and ate lunch. Then we took the gondola up to see the Germania Monument commemorating the formation of Germany. Germany became a unified nation-state on 18 January 1871. This was after the U.S. Civil War.

Overlooking the Rine River from the Germania Monument:



The Rhine River Valley:





We took the gondola back down to Rüdeshheim, where we had gelato and funnel cakes. Then we drove everyone back to the Institute Gathering Place for their Institute Class. Vitalina had to take the train home for her BYU Pathway's Class. At Institute we talked to several missionaries. Then we filled up the van with diesel, took it back to the office and vacuumed it out. I was very tired and was asleep by 11:30 PM.

As we drove our car from Phoenix Haus back to the Apartments Thursday night, we discovered the main intersection, which we have used almost every day of our mission, is closed for construction. The road has differentially compacted at the intersection by the Weller Auto Dealership and is bumpy. They closed this intersection for about a month. I predicted, about a year ago, it was getting so rutted at the intersection they would be fixing it. This impacts how we go to the office, and how we go to church and the temple. One of the other missionaries posted the photo to the right on Friday morning. We got to the office about 9:00, taking a new and different route.

I spent most of Friday working on the AJS WhatsApp Group data and presentations dropped there. We did have a nice interview with Natalia. Brother Fingerle, from Family History, introduced us to Elder Neville at lunch. He has written a couple of dozen books about The Book of Mormon, some of which Grandma has read. I was asked to explain swhchs.org, which I did. It was a fun conversation, because of all the residual questions. At one point he said he likes the approach of multiple working hypotheses. In the late afternoon we went to the temple and did sealings for 7 sons and 3 daughters between Grandma and me. Elder Meiser was the sealer. When we got home I did some more work for when I teach Psalms 1-2, 8, 19-33, 40, & 46 at Come Follow Me on August 19th. I also sent a link to the Interns where I placed the photos I took of our trip on Thursday.



On our walk on the bridge over sudring.
Sudring is totally closed

Saturday Andrea went for a walk while I did the vacuuming and fasted an extra hour. I followed this longer fast up with eating too many breadsticks and butter cookies on the drive to St. Goar and Rheinfels Castle. Oh well! The biggest church was closed because of vandalism. Rheinfels Castle is big. Here are some of my favorite photos (I uploaded 253 photos this week, including several descriptions of history):



HISTORY OF DEMOCRACY AT RHEINFELS CASTLE

From 24-26 September 1948
29 high-ranking politicians
and functionaries met at
Rheinfels Castle.

Their goal: to make fundamental
cross-party recommendations
for the work of the Parliamen-
tary Council that served to "activate
democracy".



Eröffnung des Parlamentarischen Rates, Bonn 1. September 1948.
(Quelle: Bestand Erna Wagner-Helmke, Stiftung Haus der Geschichte)
Opening of the Parliamentary Council, Bonn 1 September 1948.
(Source: Erna Wagner-Helmke Collection, Foundation Haus der Geschichte)



Links: Unterstaatssekretär im Foreign Office Mr. Mayhew im Gespräch mit Mr. Parke-
r, oben: Im parlamentarischen Rat sprach Prof. Dr. Theodor Heuss spricht.
(Quelle: Bestand Erna Wagner-Helmke, Stiftung Haus der Geschichte)
Left: Undersecretary of State in the Foreign Office Mr. Mayhew in conversation with Mr. Parke-
r, above: In the Parliamentary Council in 1948, Prof. Dr. Theodor Heuss speaks.
(both pictures from: Erna Wagner-Helmke Collection, Foundation Haus der Geschichte)

The Western occupying powers had instructed the
eleven West German minister-presidents to call an
assembly for the constitution of a western state.
This would have formally established the division
of Germany, which had already been completed
in 1948. After several conferences in the Hotel
Rittersturz near Koblenz and at the Niederwald
hunting lodge near Rüdesheim, the minister-
presidents agreed with the occupying powers that
the establishment of the western state would
merely be a provisional arrangement in terms of
space and time. A draft constitution drawn up by
representatives of the countries and experts on
the island Herreninsel in Chiemsee, served as a basis
of the Basic Law for the Parliamentary Council
meeting in Bonn on 1 September.

In the immediate post-war period, politics was
"naturally" a man's job. With the provisional mayor
of Berlin, Louise Schroeder, there was at least one
woman in the front row in Koblenz. Women were
mostly present as secretaries or companions in
the Niederwald hunting lodge and on the island
Herreninsel in Chiemsee. In the Parliamentary
Council, only four of 65 deputies were female.
Therefore, it is hardly surprising that three weeks

after the constitution of the Parliamentary
Council, 29 men met in Sankt Goar to talk about
the "activation of democracy". With Theodor
Heuss (later the first Federal President of the
Federal Republic of Germany), Thomas Dehler
(FDP, later Federal Minister of Justice) and Walter
Strauss (CDU, later State Secretary in the Federal
Ministry of Justice), three of them were also mem-
bers of the Parliamentary Council. All others were
invited as external experts and party representa-
tives. What was remarkable about the conference
was the direct meeting of people who had been
persecuted by the Nazi regime with people who
had worked in the National Socialist state. This
Sankt Goar Circle discussed suggestions for the
drafting of the Basic Law.

Unlike in the previous meetings of the minister-
presidents, it was not primarily about fundamental
questions of the statehood of the western state,
but about practical aspects of state organization.
One important topic was to draw lessons from the
destruction of the Weimar Republic. The Sankt
Goar Circle stated that a stable democracy needed
above all a government capable of acting.
This signaled their support for the planned

"constructive vote of no confidence", according to
which a government can only be overthrown by
parliament if at the same time there is a majority
for a new government. In addition, they emphasized:

**"The opposition in
Parliament is to be seen
as a necessary function
in a democracy."**

The dual commitment to a strong government
and a strong opposition was an important signal
for the work of the Parliamentary Council and
a fundamental affirmation of parliamentary
democracy. Because it came from a conservative
circle that had close ties to big business, this sup-
port was particularly valuable, since it was exactly
these circles that had denied support to the young
Weimar Republic, which was perhaps the greatest
birth defect of the first German republic.

The Sankt Goar Circle was instrumental in correcting
this historical mistake for the Federal Republic.

Conferring in ruins



In the devastated post-war
Germany of 1948, it was not
easy to find a suitable confer-
ence venue. It was even more
difficult for the conference
participants from Germany,
which was divided into occu-
pation zones, and from a Berlin,

which was sealed off by the blockade, to travel to Sankt Goar
and get a hotel room. Even a one-way train journey from Stutt-
gart to Sankt Goar cost 19.40 D-marks, which was unaffordable
for most in view of the currency reform on 20 June, when each
citizen initially received only a bounty of 40 D-marks, plus
20 D-marks in the following month. A lorry was therefore
organised for those travelling from southern Germany. For a
seat on the loading platform, a contribution towards expenses
of 6 D-Mark for the one-way ticket and 9 D-Mark for the return
journey had to be paid.

In Sankt Goar, there were only a few individual hotel beds avail-
able, because about one third of the living quarters available in
the town and 90 percent of the accommodation establishments
had been confiscated and occupied by the French military
authorities. Nevertheless, it was possible to accommodate the
29 conference participants in different houses.

Übersetzung / Translation: David North Parsons







We visited several interesting churches in St. Goar and in Oberwesel:



This church was locked, because of vandalism:



We realized this week that most of the people who attended these churches could not read and write. Thus, all the statues and paintings. This was how they learned the gospel:



The above is in a very small church on the Oberwesel City Wall (Mutter-Rosa Kapelle):

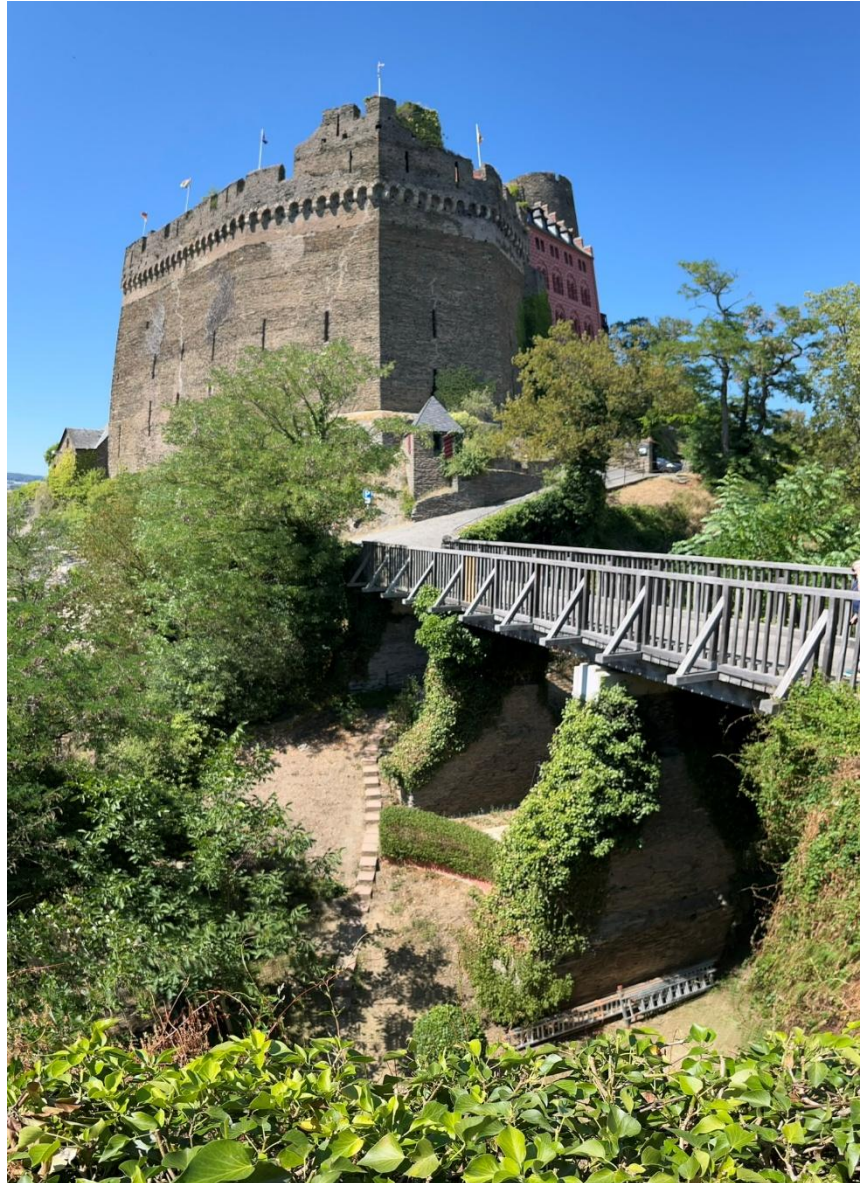


The church above is in Oberwesel, where we ate lunch and visited a couple of churches there before going to the castle.

The castle is now basically a commercial hotel with two high-end restaurants. Learned the City of Oberwesel has an agreement with the Huttmann family, who operate Hotel auf Schönburg (Burghotel Schönburg) and its two highly regarded restaurants.

They have a contract called a heritable building right (Erbbaurecht), which is a 99-year lease allowing private operation of historic property. The City of Oberwesel retains ownership of Schönburg. The operator is responsible for maintaining, restoring, and preserving the castle at their own expense consistent with heritage standards. Portions of the ground must remain accessible to the public. In return they have the right to run the Hotel and luxury suits built into the restored castle, the two first-class restaurants, event spaces for weddings, receptions, and cultural gatherings, and they can market the castle internationally and renovate and modernize interior spaces, subject to heritage oversight. They pay the city a yearly ground rent, and must pay for all restoration, modernization, and maintenance costs.

This seems like an important precedent for what I want to do with swchcs.org.



Most of the castle is taken up by the hotel and the two restaurants, and so there was not a lot to see. There are nice views of the city of Oberwesel and of the Rhine River Valley. On this Saturday trip. Grandma got 2 magnets.

I drove home and we stopped at Lindenhof to purchase some cheese and salami for Aunt Audrey, Izzy, and Lauren, who arrive tomorrow.

I was tired and so I had a nap before my call with Tracy. He is preparing for the possibility of investment. It will be interesting to see what happens before we go home in November. It feels to me like 26 years of laying a groundwork for significant investment is about to pay off.

Sunday, the 12th of July 2026, we did our exercises, had showers, and I wrote the preface to Grandkidlet 26.28. before we left for Choir practice. The choir sang a song before the meeting: “Jesu ist der Weg” (Jesus is the Way). Sister Jorgenson said she recorded it. If I get a copy, I will post it. There were two good Sacrament meeting talks. I captured a nice video of Karl Gotfried playing Hymn 72, “Praise to the Lord, The Almighty.”

Simon, whom Dorus and I Ministered to on Wednesday, taught Elders Quorum. Good job. I was able to set up to Minister to Manuel, the Elder’s Quorum President, and his family on Tuesday, the 21st at 6:00 PM.

It is only 9:15 PM Sunday evening, and all I have left to do on this is to proof this, upload the photos, make a pdf, capture the jpg image, upload the documents, and send the email to you all. Do you have a process, like this, which you regularly go through. I think it is important to develop processes like this, to keep ahead of the demands and keep up with projects important to me.

I hope you find projects important to you, where you can develop tools and processes to optimize implementation of those projects. Continue to have a great summer!

Love,

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Grandkidlets are posted at:
<http://www.walden3d.com/grandkidlet>

Address for [ECU Mission Google Photos](#)

Address for all our mission correspondence:
<http://www.walden3d.com/Nelsons>

Songs, many written for you Grandkids, are posted at: <http://www.psalmscountdown.net>