

Basic Copy Culture

## **Experiencing the Culture and History of the Appenzellerland**

*The cultural history of the Appenzellerland is just as rich in details as it is imposing. It all begins with the influential Zellweger Dynasty during the peak times of the textile industry, continues with the Grubenmann buildings and culminates in the Biedermeier era. The Appenzellerland has a lot to talk about. Insights into all of these cultural and historic facets are available at a large number of museums.*

### **The Zellweger Century in Trogen**

The village of Trogen with its stone palaces offers exciting insights into the culture of the Appenzellerland. The imposing buildings were erected between 1700 and 1850 by the textile trading family Zellweger. It characterized the life and work in Trogen for several generations. «The Zellweger Century», is a diverse and publicly accessible program featuring an exhibit and listening paths. It provides insights into the fascinating world traveling back in time. The point of departure is the so-called laundry room on the edge of the Municipal Square, which introduces guests to the area's history. From this starting point, visitors have the opportunity to follow listening tracks that lead into the community house with rococo stucco work, into the textile foyer with fabric patterns and into the Laurenz Zellweger room. The latter, in a contemporary manner, presents the importance and the network of the Zellweger family. The discovery tour through the village's center also includes the church and other houses that are characteristic for the village.

[jahrhundertderzellweger.ch](http://jahrhundertderzellweger.ch)

### **The Textile Industry in the Appenzellerland**

For several centuries, Eastern Switzerland was considered the leading region of Switzerland's textile industry. Weaving, spinning or embroidery were activities that went on in nearly every building. In circa 1800, Appenzell Ausserrhoden was the most populated canton of Switzerland. Besides the Zellweger family in Trogen, the Wetter and Tanner families in Herisau as well as the Schläpfer family brought the trading in linen to prosperity. At the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the linen trade was replaced by the cotton industry. As of this point in time, the spinning of cotton yarn and the weaving of cotton towels expanded from the city of St. Gallen to the Appenzellerland, to the Toggenburg and the Rhine Valley – and provided an additional income also to many of the small farm operations. Through the

beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the textile industry was the most important sector for instance in Rehetobel.

The one-hour listening tour in the former textile village of Rehetobel provides insights into the former local businesses, building activities and social history. On audio listening tracks, people who lived in the day and age and their offspring allow visitors to take a voyage into the times of weavers, embroiderers and producers.

[textildorf.ch](http://textildorf.ch)

### **Zeughaus Teufen**

The Zeughaus Teufen, which was renovated in 2012, houses the Grubenmann Museum. Various representatives of this master builder's family from Teufen dominated the timber construction industry – not only in the Appenzellerland, but in all of Switzerland. No fewer than nine churches (Grub, Bühler, Speicher, Rehetobel, Herisau, Stein, Hundwil, Teufen and Trogen) in the canton of Appenzell Ausserrhoden were built or converted under the direction of the Grubenmann family. Their bridge and roof structures with incredible widths have experts still in amazement today. Models, drawings, plans as well as audio and video documents of this successful dynasty of structural artists are shown in the Zeughaus. Special exhibits and events are hosted on the first floor of the museum at regular intervals, covering subjects such as lumber, building and culture. Two rooms are also reserved to permanently exhibit the paintings of Hans Zeller from Teufen.

[zeughauseufen.ch](http://zeughauseufen.ch)

### **Building Culture in the Appenzellerland**

Four different types of farm buildings exist in the Appenzellerland.

**Tätschhaus:** A flat gabled roof with a low roof incline. The main façade points towards the south east.

**Heidenhaus:** Similar to the Tätschhaus. The roof has been installed in the direction to its drainage, so that the gutters run lengthwise across the house's façade.

**Kreuzfirsthaus:** The stable points 90 degrees to the roof ridge of the residential building.

**Weberhaus:** Home without a stable but with a weaving cellar.

### **Lesegesellschaften (Reading Clubs) in the Appenzellerland**

Culture in the Appenzellerland also includes the Lesegesellschaften. Most of them were established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Their primary purpose was to share concerns about the public and political interests. Even today they serve the promotion of culture and knowledge, are a political platform or an independent forum for fact-based political debates.

[Report on the Lesegesellschaften in the Appenzellerland \(Author: Jolanda Spengler\)](#)

### **Fun Dialect**

The dialect in Appenzell is quite different. The nasal pronunciation of the vocals, the «swallowing» of the «R» and the frequent use of archaic terms make it unique. These one-of-a-kind signs are also instantly recognizable in the jokes that are being told in Appenzell. They are even part of the UNESCO cultural heritage. Humor must have genetic roots among the people of Appenzell. For instance, the «Appenzell joke experience» with the joke hiking trail between Heiden and Walzenhausen introduces people to the mystery of the «listig-träfen» (smartly funny) joke. Appenzell poet Julius Ammann was already compelled by the joking end of the language of Appenzell. His first collection of poems, which dates back to 1922 entitled «Dar i nüd e betzeli? Appenzeller Spröch und Liedli» was published in five editions and released as a whole under the title «Appenzeller Spröch Liedli».

[More about the joke path](#)

### **Biedermeier Village Heiden**

The Biedermeier era is the time between 1815 and 1848. During this epoch, people in Europe longed for normalcy, peace and safety – after the wars with Napoleon at the helm had left behind traces of horror in all of Europe. The Austrian and Prussian governments feared excesses they were familiar with from the French revolution and restricted in particular the right to assemble, to speak and the liberty of the press. The people reacted by focusing on internal values, such as family, tradition and artwork. At the heart of everyday life was a societal life within a small domestic circle.

In 1996, the club Biedermeier-Fest Heiden was established. Its objective is to make the Biedermeier village Heiden famous well beyond the region and country through its activities. One of the highlights of the club is the Biedermeier Festival, which takes place every four years. During the festival, people wear the magnificent costumes of the Biedermeier era.

[biedermeier.ch](http://biedermeier.ch)

## **Museums**

Placing tradition, culture and everyday life within everyone's reach: this is the objective of the museums of the Appenzellerland. As diverse as the small country between the Lake of Constance and Alpstein is, so are the experience centers that tell its story.

### **Appenzeller Customs' Center, Urnäsch**

Focuses on the practised traditions and customs in the Appenzellerland and provides intimate insights into the Alpine lifestyles, farmers' living rooms, the world of costumes, traditional workshops and folkloristic art.

[museum-urnaesch.ch](http://museum-urnaesch.ch)

### **Visitor Center Children's Village Pestalozzi, Trogen**

In five lively exhibits all over the village, different historic and current aspects on the subjects of «Paths to Peace» and «Sustainable Education» are presented in a contemporary and playful way.

[pestalozzi.ch](http://pestalozzi.ch)

### **Puppet Theater Museum, Herisau**

A large number of marionets and handheld dolls are exhibited in lovingly designed rooms in an old house on the Schmiedgasse in Herisau. Kurt Fröhlich is the director of the museum. He collected all of the dolls presented by the property. Children can actually try to play with some of the dolls themselves or listen to enthralling fairytales.

[figurentheatermuseum.ch](http://figurentheatermuseum.ch)

### **Henry-Dunant-Museum, Heiden**

At the heart of the Dunant-Museum is the life and work of Red Cross founder Henry Dunant, who spent his final years in Heiden.

[dunant-museum.ch](http://dunant-museum.ch)

### **Zellweger Century, Trogen**

Visitors gain closer insights into the houses on the Community Square (Landsgemeindeplatz) in Trogen, the people who built them and lived in them and their connection to local and global events and stories. The audio-guided tour «Zellweger Century» takes a look at the lives of the Zellweger textile trade dynasty between 1700 and 1850 – via audio, video and the written word.

[jahrhundertderzellweger.ch](http://jahrhundertderzellweger.ch)

### **Museum on the Village Square, Gais**

The museum presents testaments of the village's development, such as printed graphics and water colors of the village between 1750 and 1900, when dairy spa traditions were in full bloom in Gais.

[gais.ch](http://gais.ch)

### **Museum Heiden, Heiden**

The main topics inside the museum in Heiden are spa town stories, habitat culture and personalities.

[museum-heiden.ch](http://museum-heiden.ch)

### **Museum Herisau, Herisau**

The historic museum of the canton Appenzell Ausserrhoden offers insights into the everyday life, politics and culture of days gone by. Moreover, the museum has a room dedicated to Robert Walser, who spent the final years of his life in Herisau.

[museumherisau.ch](http://museumherisau.ch)

### **Museum for Life History, Storage Space**

The museum shows alternating exhibits of documentations, biographies and the achievements of extraordinary personalities who hail from the canton of Appenzell Ausserrhoden as well as the region.

[museumfuerlebensgeschichten.ch](http://museumfuerlebensgeschichten.ch)

### **Museum Wolfhalden, Wolfhalden**

The museum in Wolfhalden presents hundreds of objects that were witnesses of the living and working culture between 1650 and 1950 in Wolfhalden and proximity.

### **Doll Museum Waldfee, Wald**

A collection of more than 10'000 objects provides insights into the amazing diversity of doll forms and materials. They were collected over the years by a flight attendant.

[puppenmuseum.ch](http://puppenmuseum.ch)

### **Schützenmuseum (Shooters' Museum), Trogen**

The museum offers a collection (2000 objects) of historical weapons, champion's cups and insignias of the shooters' activities in Ausserrhoden.

[museumtrogen.ch](http://museumtrogen.ch)

**Bicycle Museum Rehetobel, Rehetobel**

A collection of historical bicycles along with objects from two centuries. From the beginning of the era of the bicycle to present times. Some of the bicycles are available for try-outs.

[velomuseum-rehetobel.ch](http://velomuseum-rehetobel.ch)

**Zeughaus Teufen, Teufen**

The primary focus in the museum is on the history and works of the Grubenmann farmers' family from Teufen, on paintings by Hans Zeller, a painter from Appenzell as well as special exhibits and events related to topics such as timber, building and culture.

[zeughausteufen.ch](http://zeughausteufen.ch)

Detailed information and museums in the  
canton Appenzell Innerrhoden

[museen-im-appenzellerland.ch](http://museen-im-appenzellerland.ch)

**For more information on the topics and offers from the Frontal to the Back Land:**

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**Information on available options in the Canton of Appenzell Innerrhoden (Interior Land):**

Appenzellerland Tourism AI

[appenzell.ch](http://appenzell.ch)