

THE «SCHUPPEL»: «ROLLI» AND «SCHELLI»

The actual origin of the custom is interpreted differently. Many believe that it developed from the custom of St Nicholas. Some attribute it to an ancient fertility cult, others believe it is a demon or carnival custom. Pagan or begging customs are also conceivable. Each type of Chlaus forms its own groups, known as «Schüppel». A «Schüppel» consists of two «Rolli» and several «Schelli». The «Schelli» have one or two bells on and represent «Mannenvölcher» with hats. The «Rolli», also known as «Rolliwiiber», wear a braces-like leather frame with eight or thirteen round rollers (bells). From the early hours of New Year's Eve, the «Chlausenschüppel» parade from house to house throughout the day. Each group has its «Strech», its chosen route. The «Vorrolli» leads the way, followed by the «Schelli» and finally the «Noerolli». They line up in a circle in front of their chosen house, start ringing and rolling rhythmically and sing three or four «Zäuerli». At the end, they wish the residents a Happy New Year. In the evening, the Chläuse parade from one pub to the next, delighting visitors from near and far with their rolls, bells and choruses.



«Beautiful Schüppel», Source: ATAG

THE «WÜESCHTE» (THE UGLY)

An old form of Silverstchlausen has been somewhat forgotten over the centuries. As early as the 17th century, so-called «Lompechläus» were already on the move. They were dressed up in old, broken clothes or old sacks and rags, primarily to drive away evil spirits. Some also travelled as begging rags. Over time, the «Lompechläus» were no longer welcome, and later the «Wüeschte» emerged. The «Wüeschte» wear terrifying larvae, which are often made with cow horns and animal teeth. Their «Groscht» (robe) is made of hay, straw, fir brushwood and other natural materials. They have a shaggy appearance and can appear demonic.



«Lompächläus» around 1920, Source: Brauchtummuseum, Urnäsch



«Ugly» Rolli (Rollewiib), Source: ATAG



«Ugly» Schelli, Source: ATAG

THE «SCHÖNE» (THE BEAUTIFUL)

The «Schöne» developed around 1880. The beautiful Rollenwiber (Rolli) wear women's costumes and large, often wheel-shaped 'Huube' (bonnets) richly decorated with pearls. They depict scenes from everyday life and customs. They often wear their women's larva with a «Blüemli» (flower) in the corner of their mouth. The Schelli wear colourful, velvet jackets and breeches as well as bearded male larva. Their hats are also elaborately decorated and depict traditional and everyday scenes.



«Beautiful Schuppel» from Herisau, Source: ATAG



«Beautifol Rolli» with flower, Source: ATAG



«Beautifol Schelli», Source: ATAG

THE «SCHÖ-WÜESCHTE» (THE BEAUTIFUL-UGLY)

The «Schö-Wüeschte» (the beautiful-ugly) first appeared at the beginning of the 1960s. They are a newly created form of forest lice, using collected materials such as pine and fir cones, bark, moss, fir whiskers and snail shells. This makes them a mixture of the «Schöne» and the «Wüeschte» - the «Schö-Wüeschte». Their hats are decorated with carvings, stuffed forest animals and birds. As with the «Wüeschte», the «Groscht» (robe of the Chläuse) consists mainly of natural materials, but these are arranged very artistically and ornamentally.



«Beautiful-ugly Schuppele», Bildquelle: ATAG



A «beautiful-ugly Rolli»,
Source: ATAG



A «beautiful-ugly Schelli»,
Source: ATAG