

Historical utilisation of wood in the Schneeberg Region/Lower Austria

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1. Introduction

Around the Schneeberg, due to the existence of extensive woodlands and the lack of arable land, farmers specialised on producing wooden goods, both semi-manufactured and completed, for the surrounding settlements including Vienna. Historical data from the 14th century on until the middle of the 20th century is proving this specialisation. Many wood-working techniques have changed little through the centuries but have become obsolete within the last 70 years. Luckily in Gutenstein, near the Schneeberg, there is a museum, the Waldbauernmuseum Gutenstein, dealing exclusively with these specialised “wood-farmers”. Founded in the mid 1960’s its focus lies not only on collecting regional wooden goods, but also collecting all the tools, gauges, models and jigs necessary to manufacture the goods, making the Waldbauernmuseum a unique institution. Although the 87 year old co-founder of the museum, Hiltraud Ast, has written several books and directed 26 films dealing with wood utilisation, there is still a lot of archive-material to be worked off with her and secured in a database. This database, consisting of word files with descriptions of wood-working techniques, pictures, details about historical trading and oral history, is already online but has not yet been completed (www.holzverwendung.at).

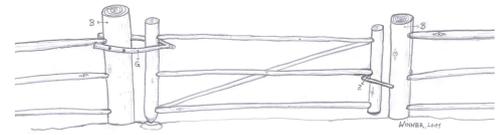
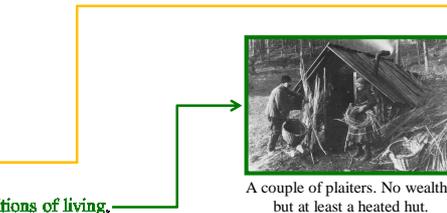
2. The Base of the Database

About 200 Word-files (see 3.), dealing with different wood related topics, based on oral history and literature review, are supplemented with information from the following sources. In addition, these files are grouped into 23 categories (see 4.).

Initial File

- + Book of Arrivals
- + Objects
- + Object Card Index with Drawings
- + Analogue Photographs of all Objects
- + Photo-Archive „Volksleben“: Objects in use, **Insight into conditions of living, Documentations of wood-working techniques, etc.**
- + Notes of oral history told by informants
- + Scientific Filmlibrary
- + IMDAS Software based Archive
- + Literature Review

Database File



Sketch of a self closing gate, pivot-mounted on a stone, held by the croch G (for Gädernhalsn) attached to the large diameter post B (for Bagstall). The naturally grown hook Z (for Zaunhagl) stops the falling gate. A directive from the municipality of Klamm, dating back to the 1540, is describing such a type of gate : „item, die gätter sollen aufgehengt sein, wans ainer aufthuet das si nach im zuefallen.“ „The gate shall be constructed in a way that it shuts itself after being opened“ (WINTER, 1886, N.ö. Weistümer. Vol. 1, p. 323, Z. 24-25)



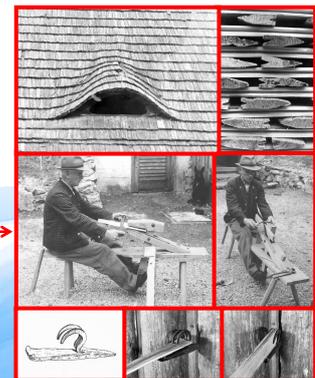
Different techniques of tapping pines and a two-man plane for manufacturing a device to guide the resin into the cup .

3. The Database Files

The files are structured (Definition, Use, Production, Trade and Transport, Additional Informations, References, Informants) and *crosslinked*.

4. Categories

- 1 Collecting
- 2 Fuelwood
- 3 Natural Crooks
- 4 Forest Industry Byproducts
- 5 Cleavage Products
- 6 „Zeugholz“ (Toolhandles, Furniture, etc.)
- 7 Timber for Buildings
- 8 Timber for Bridges
- 9 Wood for Cellars (Wine, Beer, etc.)
- 10 Shipbuilding
- 11 Wood for Power Machines
- 12 Wood for Work Machines
- 13 Logging, Waterconstructions, Mining
- 14 Holed Wood
- 15 Products made up of Wood
- 16 Plaiting and Fences
- 17 Sawmill-Products
- 18 **Wooden Transportation Devices**
- 19 The Wheel
- 20 Clamping Devices
- 21 Wooden Bearings
- 22 Models, Jigs, Calibres
- 23 Auxiliary Devices



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Zaun	
Dient der Einfriedung und Abgrenzung von Grundstücken und besteht aus Zaunspfählen (Bagstall) und verschiednerartig zusammengesetzten Zaunfeldern. Eine Spezialform des Zaunes ist das Geleige für Wild. Als Bagstall kann auch ein lebender Baum dienen.	
Gatter	
Besteht entweder aus verschiednerartigen Stangen oder aus einem Holzverband der mit der Gädernhalsn am Bagstall drehbar befestigt ist. Das Gatter verschiebt bzw. öffnet einen Durchgang durch einen Zaun.	
Herstellung	
Zaunfeldern aus waagrecht Holz:	
1) Stangenzaun, genagelt (Abb. 1) oder gebunden (Abb. 2)	
2) Schwarzlingzaun, genagelt aus einem Nebenprodukt des Sägewerks (Abb. 3)	
3) Bretterzaun, genagelt	

4. Conclusion and Outlook

The importance of individuals collecting and preserving local items and local oral history can not be underestimated. The challenge to hand over the knowledge to generations to come can not be stressed too much either. Industrialisation made a lot of long-lasting wood-working techniques and technologies obsolete leaving tales of ingenious craftsmanship of the wood-farmers around the Schneeberg untold and unwritten. The Waldbauernmuseum Gutenstein has preserved many of these tales, including the tools, and the content of the database will help to reapply these techniques if necessary. Interested readers and users are invited to comment and improve the database „Datenbank Gutenstein“ @ www.holzverwendung.at and www.waldbauernmuseum.at.