



English museum guide



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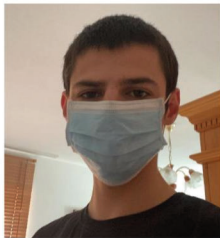
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Dear visitor of the museum Erding,

We would like to ask you a question: What do you really know about Erding and its history? Maybe you know that our brewery produces the largest amount of top-fermented beer in the world. Perhaps you have also heard that the Therme Erding is the world's largest thermal bath.

But what do you know about our past? And about this city's fascinating development since the Middle Ages?

This over 160-year-old museum maintains a collection of over 50,000 objects such as books, furniture, historic paintings, and much more!

In this museum guide, which was created by the students of the "Projekt-Seminar Englisch" of the Anne-Frank-Gymnasium Erding with their teacher in the years 2019-2020, we want to bring you closer to that past, by guiding you through six exhibitions of the Museum Erding, which can be visited in any order you like.

As an assignment in our junior year at school, we - that is a class of ten students of the Anne-Frank-Gymnasium Erding - compiled this guide. The goal of a Project Seminar class is a realistic work simulation preparing the participating students for a real-life project, with financial and time limits. This results in a product, in our case this brochure, which emerged from a collaboration with the Museum Erding. We hope that you will find this guide helpful and learn something new about this city and its surroundings that you did not know before.

History continues to unfold as we live our daily lives, and thus the work of this museum is never done. This guide was created during the worldwide Corona crisis in 2020, which changed how we lived and worked, probably in many ways permanently. School closures forced our project group to work remotely and communicate digitally; will education ever be the same again? The Museum Erding continuously collects meaningful contemporary artifacts to capture the present for future generations – who knows, someday this guide may be expanded with a chapter for the Corona crisis exposition.

We hope you will have as much fun with this guide as we had working on it.

For each standing exhibition there is a floorplan for better orientation. An overview plan for the location of the individual departments on the ground floor and upper floor can be found on pages 3 and 4

The special exhibitions are not permanent, and thus not included in this guide.

They depict further interesting aspects of Erding such as its districts, history and people who describe their experiences. Be sure to leave adequate time for this fascinating section of the museum.

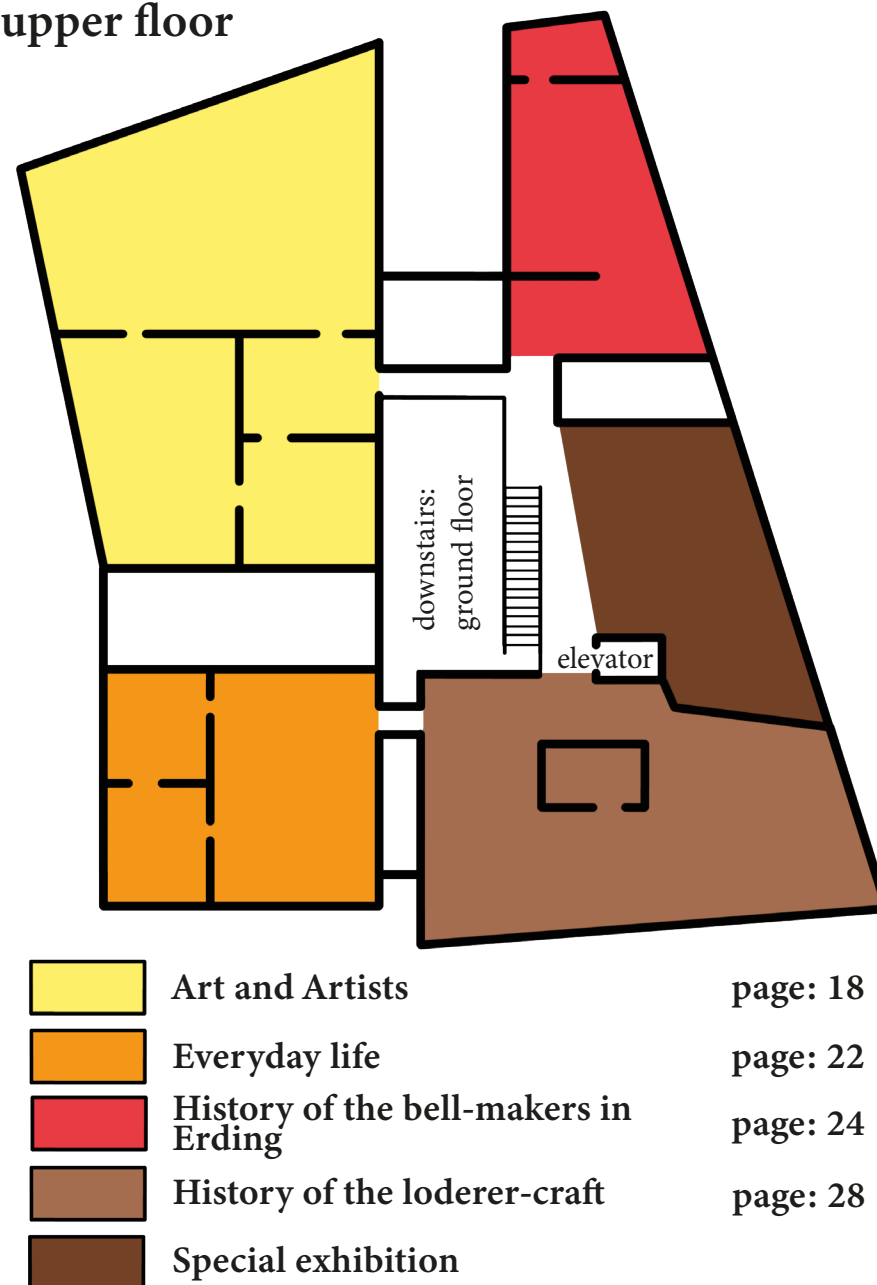
ground floor



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upper floor



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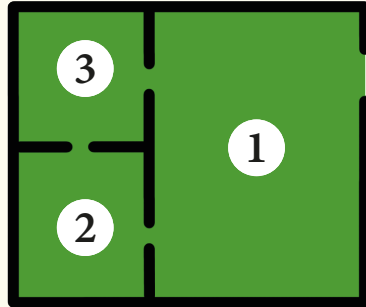
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Archaeology

Have you ever wondered how long the humankind has been roaming and building houses in Erding? It's been over 7,000 years. This room, the 'Showcase of Archaeology', describes the development of life and landscape in and around Erding.



Prehistory and landscape

Starting at the door, you go straight through the room and then turn to the right. In front of you there should now be a long wall starting with the prehistory and the landscape back then. There are three different sections: the Tertiary, the Quaternary and the Holocene.

The first period started around 54 million years B.C. During this time the landscape developed through the shift of plates and the application of soil and sand layers. Due to that, we now have sources of hot water. Using these sources, the thermal bath in Erding is filled and heated today.

Tusk elephants are among the first animals that lived in our district about 10 million years ago. Looking down, you can see some of their remains, fossils such as molars, whirls and humerus.

During the Quaternary, there were mammoths, of which fragments like their tusks are displayed in front of you. These were found in a gravel pit near the Kronthaler Lake, located in the north of Erding.

The Holocene is the period from 10,000 years B.C. until today. On the one hand, areas around Erding became covered in forests, therefore animal species such as mammoths became extinct. On the other hand, due to the increasing forestation, other species developed, such as elk. If you look down, you can see an elk antler found in the moor of Erding.

Neolithic Age

The end of the wall depicts a new era: The Neolithic Age. Starting with the Early and Middle Neolithic era that began about 7,500 years ago, humans became sedentary and started to pursue agriculture and animal husbandry. All of this has been discovered through excavations in many districts of Erding such as Schwaig and also in the district of Freising.

In the Münchshöfen Culture (4,500-3,800 B.C.) the resident population worked with copper for the first time ever; its popularity was based on the influence of the Balkan. In front of you there are different showcases containing various artefacts, such as arrowheads, work tools and pottery jars. They were all found nearby and some even in sandpits. After travelling and exploring, this population settled down in areas near the Alps. Their food supply was then fully covered by fishing, hunting, pasture farming and agriculture.

Surely you have heard of Ötzi, the man found in the Italian Alps. He lived during the Altheim culture that directly followed the preceded epoch and ends around 3,300 B.C. Next to the main door you can see a picture of the settlements that were built on rich mineral soils while agriculture also developed further. In Erding there were villages whose remains were found in 1949 due to construction works. It was a big area with fertile land on which a nursery has been built.

The last part of the Neolithic Age is the corded ware-and Bell Beaker Culture until 2,300 B.C. There are hardly any existing remains of the first period, apart from a few objects like a dagger or a stone axe lying in the showcase above the skeleton. This remnant is actually a relic from the Bell Beaker Culture. It is a twenty-five-year-old male person who was found in Oberding with his pectoral collar next to his body.



Skeleton of a young man from the Bell Beaker Culture from Oberding (2,300 B.C.)

Bronze Age and Urnfield occupation

If you walk past the coffin, you can see some artefacts made of the then newly discovered raw material: bronze.

The lighted silhouette of a woman standing in the window shows ornaments of a buried female. They are in good condition and were found in the district of Freising.

On the next wall in front of you there are some weapons, tools and jewellery which date back to the Bronze Age (about 1,500 years ago).

For the production of bronze several ingredients are required: copper (90%) and tin (10%). Back then, copper was usually traded and bought in rib ingots, of which you can see some originals in the showcase. All in all, there were 796 rib ingots found in Oberding (about 82-kilograms (about 182 lbs) of copper).

This time period was later on also called the Urnfield Occupation because after their death, people were cremated and their ashes placed in an urn and buried (bottom box).



The copper rib ingots for the production of bronze from Oberding (buried around 1,700 B.C.)

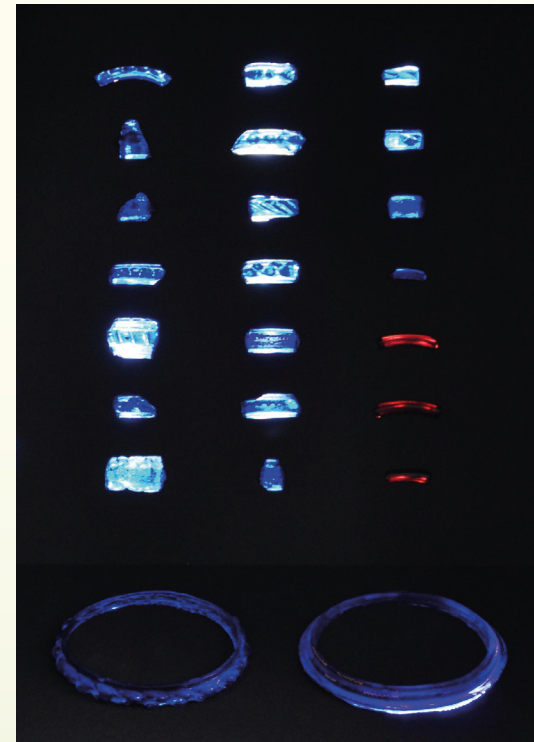
Iron Age

Beginning with the Hallstatt Age (800-450 B.C.), the Iron Era was marked by considerable transformation and progress. The new material called iron resulted in the emergence of new social classes. The rich had big manorial courts, for example in Eitting, and the poor lived in huts. Due to the new raw material, bronze was only used for the making of jewellery and vessels.

A fluid transition into the Latène Period followed in which the population finally received a well-known name: the Celts. They settled along the Danube and made iron weapons. In front of you there are different pieces of jewellery such as anklets in all forms and shapes.

Under the magnifying glass in the next showcase, some gold and silver coins from the late Iron Age are presented. The coin-production was influenced by mediterranean handcraft, such as glass handicraft and the manufacture of ceramics on pottery wheels. In the lighted showcase you can see some beautiful blue and violet glass bracelets, of which the two undamaged ones came from graves in Oberding and Zustorf.

Why the Celtic culture in southern Germany declined long before the Romans actually arrived in southern Germany, remains an unresolved mystery.



Glass bracelets from the Iron Age from the district of Erding (220-100 B.C.)

Roman Era

Walking through the door we now reach the era of the Romans. In the middle of the 1st century A.D. the province Raetia was formed and for the next 400 years the area around Erding was under Roman rule. This time has left its mark on people's way of life until today, for example in home construction or agriculture. In the cabinets you can see bricks and fragments of the masonry that belonged to various villae rusticae. The floor plans of these houses were found in six towns in the district of Erding.

Due to several civil wars and border disputes, the Roman empire was weakened and successfully attacked by the Alamanni. Similarly, the province Raetia was ravaged: the villae rusticae were damaged by the intruders and almost entirely eradicated including their owners.

On the left-hand side in front of the door there is a showcase that contains a small golden object that looks like a half-moon and has the size of a ring. It is a crossbow brooch marking the deceased person as a Roman civil servant and a soldier.



A golden crossbow brooch from the late Roman period (350 A.D.)

This one and many more were found in one of the industrial parks of Erding. The jewellery lying on the turntable is from a grave of a woman and they are made of glass, gold, silver, iron and many other materials.

Early Middle- and Merovingian Age

Going to the next and last room of this section you can see several photographs and drawings on the walls. They show excavations like the one in 1965 in the showcase to the left of the door. Some children were playing on a construction site when they accidentally found one of the biggest antique cemeteries (480-720 A.D.) of southern Germany. It included about 2,200 graves of the early Middle Ages. Based on the tombs and their contents, it can be concluded that the population consisted of many different cultures from all over Europe. In the end all these cultures became one: the Bavarian.

Moreover, right next to the door you can find many kinds of jewellery, weapons and woven materials originating from several graves. There is also a horse saddle from the grave of a wealthy person. It was found in Bergham, but unfortunately got into the hands of grave robbers back then. Despite this fact it can be said that the buried lady was from a rich household but it is a mystery why she was buried in such a poor region far away from the land of her origin, the area of the black sea.



Various artefacts from the early Middle Ages (1st quarter of the 7th century A.D.) discovered at the Klettham burial site, near Erding

Town Development and the history of Erding

Introduction

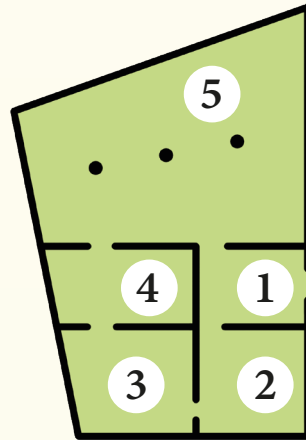
The theme of this exhibition of the museum is the dynamic development in the last 150 years and the multifaceted history of Erding in the last 800 years.

We will take a good look at the last 150 years, and how ever-increasing mobility and growth in population, have led to Erding becoming a major county town.

Opened in October 2013, this exhibit, spread across five rooms, takes you from the first recorded use of the name Ardeingas – Altenerding in 788 through the historical milestones which helped form Erding into what it is today.

In the first room a four-minute big-screen film welcomes you to Erding and provides impressions about its people, places, and street corners as well as the surrounding area, exciting your interest to explore the town further.

The primal safe from Reichenkirchen that is made from the wood of an oak tree (cut in the year 1330) and reveals the early wealth of the district of Erding



First mention of Erding

Start with Erding's timeline by turning left into the historical rooms. Here you will find details about Erding's beginnings, from the settlement by the Ardeingas – people of the Ardeo – living in the Altenerding area, to the foundation of the town in 1228/1231 by the Wittelsbachers. Forty pictures of Erding spanning 350 years, around 135 postcards with impressive views in and around Erding and a number of amazing exhibits show how marvellous the life of the early Ardeingas must have been.

Bavaria's coat of arms from 1806-1835



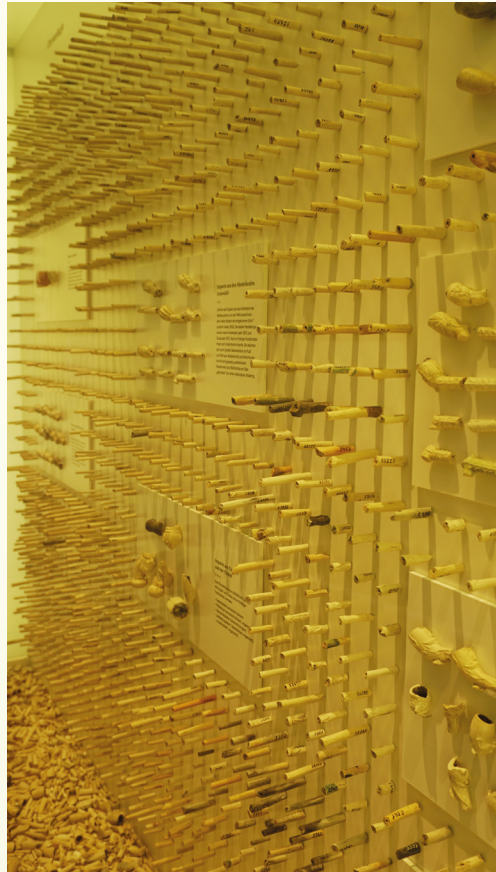
Boundary stone of the year 1678 which marks the truce all around the city of Erding. You can see a ploughshare ("ard") on this stone. This is the municipal coat of arms of Erding since 1313.

Town Development and the history of Erding: Rooms 3 & 4

Economy from 16th to 19th century

The next section exhibits objects related to the different economic factors which played a role from the 16th to the 19th century, especially livestock and grain trading, beer brewing and a curious consumption of tobacco products.

These objects will also further acquaint you with the people of Erding. This town profited handsomely from having the second biggest wheat-marketplace (Schranne) after Munich from 1750 until 1850. In addition, six local brewers with their delicious beers were able to thrive due to the town's substantial population. A display cabinet contains 5.000 pieces of broken clay smoking pipes that were found around Erding and prove how popular smoking in the 17th and 18th centuries must have been. But because of the high risk of fire, smoking in public buildings or restaurants was prohibited. People would be prosecuted for breaking this law and sentenced to wear the Shrews' fiddle on market day while being confined to the pillory.



Collection of clay pipes and fragments from Langengeisling (16th/18th century)

Guilds

Also originating from this time are exhibits from over 50 guilds which contrast with the workplace of a seamstress displayed to the left of this exhibit in a separate room.

Various guild signs used throughout Erding



Recent Times

The last and largest part of the section, the so called “Neue Zeit” (recent times), begins with Erding gaining a train station, an Army base and an international airport. Their establishment brought changes to the economy, architecture and social life. These changes started in 1870, more than 150 years ago.

In 1872, the train connection from Erding to Markt Schwaben doubled the speed of travel to Munich and opened up a whole new world. This made the creation of the military air base sixty years later possible, and again another sixty years later the connection to Munich airport viable.

Dividing this time into shorter periods, you see the following developments: from 1870 to 1920, five decades of digging up peat in the mossy area, creation of a park in town (“Stadtpark Erding”), introduction of electricity and the first World War with 113 fallen soldiers from Erding. A key event during the middle part of development during the following 40 years from 1930 to 1970 was the building of the military air base in 1935/36. In the 1950ies it became Erding’s biggest employer with more than 3,000 soldiers and about 4,500 civilian employees (US-Army in Erding Air-Depot: 1945-1957; since then Bundeswehr Airbase “Fliegerhorst”).



The figurine of a Star-Fighter-Pilot with his complete uniform, together with his original ejector seat, is an impressive exhibit from the “Bundeswehr” period.

The Second World War left Erding in a miserable state. The city of Erding was bombed by the United States Army Air Forces on 18th April 1945 and over 120 people died.

The town subsequently coped successfully with an enormous influx of German refugees from Eastern Germany and Eastern Europe.



Collection of Weißbier glasses from the brewery Erdinger Weißbräu

The discovery of a thermal spring in 1983 while drilling for oil was the starting point for the now highly successful thermal baths “Therme Erding”. Thriving international businesses have developed in Erding, such as software developer and reservation system operator Amadeus.

The private brewery Erdinger Weissbräu is the largest wheat beer brewery and exporter in the world with around 171 million litres beer per year. Erding is the only place where the beer is brewed and exported to over 100 countries all around the world. The subsidiary Fischer’s Stiftungsbräu produces Lager beer. In the centre of Erding is the Erdinger Weißbräu inn, the old brewery building of Erdinger Weißbräu where you can enjoy traditional Bavarian food and of course Erdinger Weißbier.

The journey through Erding’s history ends with its promotion to a major administrative center (“Große Kreisstadt”) on 1st January 2013.

The data about Erding displayed on monitors spread within this section of the museum show how the developments described above made Erding grow into a town of more than 38,000 inhabitants. This section also describes other important aspects of this community: politics, economics, society, culture, education, health, religious beliefs and leisure. These aspects are not only illustrated by historical documents and collected items but also through short films, interviews and comments from Erding’s residents.

For hundreds of years, so many people have been travelling to Erding and settling here. We were given a miraculous mix of cultures and people, developing Erding into a wonderful town with the historic centre near the museum.

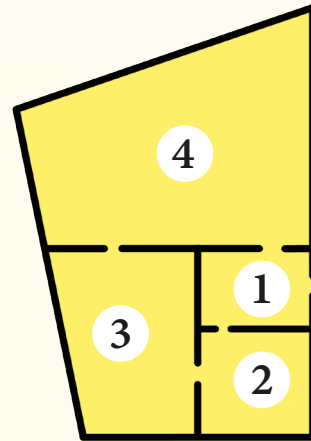
Art and Artists

Even though the museum does not primarily collect artwork from Erding, many pieces by local artists are on display. The artwork can be categorised into three types: folk art, church art and “the fine arts”.

On the left side of this room hangs an archery target from 1775, in the middle stands a late Romantic wooden carving of Christ riding a donkey on Palm Sunday (in about 1330), and on the right is Ganymede.

Please go through the left door to enter the next room.

The shepherd Ganymede, “the most beautiful of mortals”, was kidnapped by Zeus to Mount Olympus to work as the cupbearer of the Gods. His attributes are the eagle and the water jug. The sculpture was created in 1925 by Josef Wackerle (1880-1959). He was a sculptor, teacher and artistic director of the porcelain factory Nymphenburg in Munich. The sculpture is a majolica, which means it is made of clay covered with a tin glaze. For a long time this sculpture stood in the wedding room in the town hall of Isen.



Folk art

Folk art encompasses anonymous artistic products of cottage industry prior to serial production. On the right you can see the important moments of Christian life: baptism – first communion – confirmation (left), wedding (middle), death and funeral (right). To the left are lucky charms and things of daily use with religious motifs, such as a wardrobe.

In the middle of the room you can see objects for religious devotion at home. Prayer books and rosaries are sometimes still used today, but in the past people also used many other things such as wax tapers or pictures of relics.

Formerly, there were 66 pilgrimages in the district of Erding. Besides souvenirs you can see reproductions of miraculous images and votive pictures of the five most important pilgrimages on the wall opposite to the entrance

Wardrobe: Franz Seraphin
Löflard, Erding, 1798

The pictures on the door show the holy trinity at the top left and the miraculous image of Dorfen at the top right. At the bottom left is St. Joseph and at the right St. Ursula. The frame bars around the paintings and the front drawers are typical for the workshop in Erding.



Church art

In this room numerous works of art from churches and chapels are on display. The names of most of the artists are unknown. On the left, sculptures of Saints of the late Gothic period (1350-1500) are exhibited, such as St. Benedict or St. Erasmus.

The Winged altar shows the Passion story and is the main object in this room. Six of the eight panels have been preserved, which are shown in their reconstructed arrangement. Unfortunately, some of the paintings on the backside panels are not distinguishable.

The panels are originally from Gars am Inn, but how they came to Erding is unknown. A series of copper engravings by Martin Schongauer served as a model for the painting.

Next to the entrance door are two paintings which show biblical scenes: "The judgement of Solomon", painted by Friedrich Aurstorffer on the left, and "The Holy Trinity" on the right. The paintings and the sculptures of five holy bishops to the left side of these two paintings date back to the Baroque and late Baroque periods (approx. 1650-1730).



Busts of the four Evangelists: wood, Christian Jorhan the older, 1761

To the right of the door to room four stand the busts of the four evangelists. They were most likely created for the chapel of the clerk of the court's house at Schrankenplatz in Erding. The four Evangelists are identifiable by their symbols:

Matthew: angel/human, Mark: lion, Luke: bull, John: eagle

The fine arts

In the 19th and 20th centuries artists in Erding and its surroundings created significant works of secular art. Painters and draughtsmen lived in the city, and other artists, such as sculptors for example the famous Franz X. Stahl, Magda Bittner-Simmet and Hiasl Mayer-Erding, preferred the area around Erding.

There is a separate museum about F. X. Stahl in Erding nearby – ask the museum staff for further information.

The "fine arts" also include the works of goldsmiths, such as the Wilm and Wandinger families from Dorfen, and architecture, which includes a model of the wooden construction of the Erlöserkirche in Erding-Klettham (built in 1963 by the architect Hans-Busso zu Busse). Exhibits of the sections dedicated to acting (window near the exit), music (in the other windows) and famous literature written in the district of Erding (on the shelf) are also shown.

On the ground floor you can visit the interesting art collection of Rudolf L. Reiter (1944-2019), an important artist from Erding.

Originally the sculpture of Eirene, goddess of peace, stood on the roof of the town hall in Isen. She has a laurel wreath on her head and holds the peace wreath over the market with her right hand. Hammer and pliers in her left hand are attributes of "industry" thus denote industrialization. Due to major damage in 1998, the original was separated in the middle for the new casting and reassembled in 2014. It is important to know that the artist was also involved in designing and creating the famous golden "Peace Angel" in Munich.

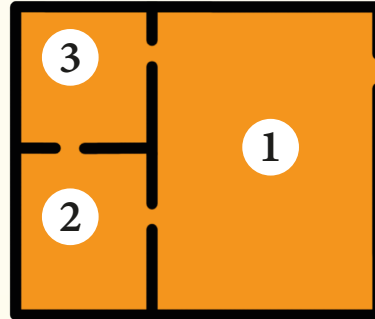


Everyday life

Life stories of 2014

Because every day is composed of 24 hours, this section of the museum represents a modern staging of the everyday life of 12 people, from the moment of getting up to going to sleep, in 12 short films.

The panels you can see when entering the room tell the stories of people with different jobs and living situations in the modern era: a grandmother, a fashion house owner, an artist, a nursery teacher, a primary school teacher, students (waiter/waitress), a volunteer, a Turkish shop assistant and a baker. In the next part of the room the day in the life of people from two different social classes is described.



A day in the life of a working-class family around 1950

With hard physical work, the worker tries his best to provide the family with money and therefore with food. He gets up in the morning, washes himself quickly using the bowl shown and a small amount of soap (1), and puts on his work clothes. His wife on the other hand oversees the household. She does the washing in a small basin (1) and irons clean clothes (6). Her next job is to prepare lunch for when the worker comes home, which consists mostly of soup and bread. In the afternoon it is time to play with the children and their handcrafted toys, like a bow and arrow (1), wooden airplane (2) or a paper boat made from newspaper (4). When the men get home, it is their time to relax. They take a seat in the living room with a beer (7) and listen to the radio (6) or read the news (2).



Housework: Washing-Sewing-Ironing, Erding, 1950ies

A day in the life of an upper middle-class family before 1900

No one really knows, but sources say that the day of a bourgeois lady starts with getting herself ready in the morning. Washing herself is the first thing she does (1). After that she gets dressed and perfumes (5) herself as a final touch. Once dressed, a trip to the market for fresh fruit and a trip to the baker's is required. For this shop she has a special basket. This can be seen down to the right of the toilet. For the next few hours, it is time to take care of her children and make sure they are prepared for their future life when they leave home. Of course, there is also time for play, as you can see some toys above the basket. In the afternoon a tea party takes place. The table is set for only two people though. The cutlery is very ornate and posh compared to a worker's household. In the evening the family spends time together and plays games (1 & 3). As you can see, the room is also decorated in a very religious manner (8).



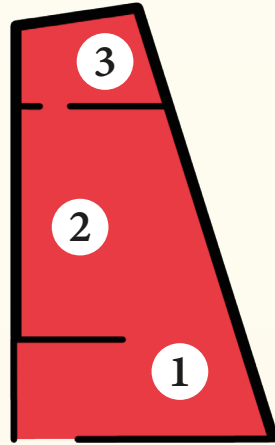
Interior for a tea party in Erding, 19th century



Children's toys: Necessity is the mother of invention, Erding, 1950ies

History of the bell-makers in Erding

Bells have been cast since the 5th century. The first bells that created only a single reverberated sound were replaced by bells that were produced using the same technique in the Middle Ages, namely the production by 90% copper and 10% tin which is still used today.



History of the bell-founders

The trade of bell-founding in Erding was dominated by three generations of the family Bachmair from 1850 to 1936. Joseph Bachmair opened his foundry on the very site of the current museum. Thanks to outstanding quality his bell-foundry gained fame and importance and sold its bells to churches all over the world. In 1873 he cast the Ave Maria bell for Nazareth as his 215th bell.

After World War II the company, headed by Karl Czudnochowsky since 1936, expanded and created the biggest bells in the world, employing over 100 workers. The bell-foundry in Erding sold over 8000 bells across all countries and continents, including Montserrat near Barcelona.

The most famous work is the “Jubilee Bell”, which was made in 1958. It was cast for the 800th anniversary of Munich and placed in Sankt Peter, the oldest parish church in Munich, nicknamed “Alter Peter”.

With its weight of 7 tons, it is the heaviest bell ever cast in Erding.

In 1971, the bell-foundry of Erding was closed. All the church bells, which had been molten during World War II to create weapons of their copper, had been replaced so there was no more demand for church bells.

*View of the bells
and the museums
carillon*



The process of bell-founding

Casting a large bell is a difficult and long process which takes several months of preparation during which no mistakes must be made. If even a small error occurs, the bell no longer sounds as it should. The bell-founders are exposed to very high temperatures. However, they must work with extreme precision.

Step 1:

In an earth pit, the mold for the interior shape of the bell is built of bricks, then covered with clay to shape the interior of the bell.

Step 2:

To give the bell its look, the first part of the mold is first covered with the so-called "false bell" (also made of clay) which is separated from the first part by a layer of grease, to look exactly as the finished bell should look.

Step 3:

After that, the created stencil is covered by a second layer of grease and clay. A fire is maintained inside the mold to dry the different layers throughout the manufacturing process.

Step 4:

When the clay has dried out, the second layer of clay and the "false bell" are removed.

Step 5:

Now, the second layer (which looks like a cap) is set over the first part of the mold.

Step 6:

The earth pit is filled with earth to resist the pressure and heat of the molten metal.

Step 7:

In the resulting cavity the 1000 degrees hot bronze is poured for the real bell.

Step 8:

After the metal has cooled down, the mold is excavated and removed and the tone of the bell is tested.

When the bell was finished, it was transported to its new owner.



Model of a bell casting mold, combining many steps from the production of a mold for the manufacture of bronze bells

Try your hand at composing music ringing the bells

Every bell has its own tone, depending on its size and shape. In the little room behind the glass door, you can test some of them. You can carefully strike the bells to play your own compositions.

If you need inspiration, you can listen to famous bells at the multimedia stations. Enjoy!

When you walk through the city after your visit, you may pay attention to the ringing of the bells in town. Almost all bells in Erding were also cast here.



An old school bell made of bronze, Erding-Heilig Blut, about 1930ies

An arrangement of bells to try out

History of the loderer-craft

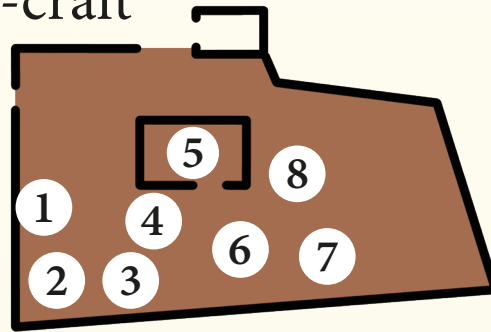
Modern examples

Stroke it, feel it, and even wear it. When you enter the room the first thing to see hanging in front of you is a collection of cloths. These modern imitations of historical textiles represent the variety of products from the loderer-craft. Their job was to produce a special type of woollen cloth named "loden". Loden, a robust and rough cloth made from wool is ideal for all weather conditions and up until the 14th century was mainly produced at home by women. Later, this trade was split up into two main sections: the cloth makers for fine cloths and the loderers producing coarse cloths. From then on working with wool was a job carried out only by men.

It is said that the first person to invent Loden material was Mr. Loden from Dresden, but many other sources prove that the word "Lodo" originated in the ancient German language and means a rough type of wool.

A look into the Loderer department

*In the background on the right:
historical uniforms made of loden
fabric*



Such material had already been produced and worn in ancient Pompeii. Roughly 1000 years later a very robust type of wool was developed in northern Germany. Later, Erding became a stronghold of loderers from the 15th until the 19th century.

The southern German area near the Alps was the leading producer of European Loden, exporting its products to Northern Italy and Turkey.



Loden Production

It takes several steps to produce one piece of loden cloth. As you walk through the room you will notice that everything is in the order of the following steps (station 1-8 in the same room).

The raw dirty wool must be beaten, sorted and washed, then plucked, and finally combed and groomed to make it loose wool that is suitable for spinning. After spinning, the next step is to join the yarn to the chain on the loom. Now the weaver shoots the weaving ship back and forth for hours, even days.

When the cloth comes off the loom, mistakes and creases must be fixed and removed. In the following step a dense piece of cloth is produced and can be coloured if that has not already happened.

Though at this point the loden is still not finished yet. All sorts of changes to the cloth, like softening, roughening, making the surface fluffier and shiny or shearing it are usually done in the next step.

In the following, the artisanal procedures employed up to the 19th century are described.

Sheep shearing (1)

To even be able to work with wool there must be wool. The first step is shearing a sheep. Due to its surface texture, wool is an ideal material for making Loden. Usually, the wool is sheared from a living animal because of its higher quality. At the beginning of June, the sheep are sheared for the first time of the year and therefore the quality of wool is ideal to work with.

The most popular tool for this step was a big pair of old-fashioned scissors which you can see hanging above the wool sample. Shearers aimed at cutting the wool off in one piece and had to be very careful, so the animals did not get hurt. After the shearing of the sheep, the wool was tied together into big bales and sold on the market.

A sample of perfect wool is lying on the floor to the right of the room when you enter.

Preparing the wool (2)

Raw wool, as it comes from sheep directly after shearing is a fleece containing sweat/oil, excrement and other kinds of dirt and mud. All these “extras” make up about 80% of the actual weight!

The first step is to remove dirt and sort the wool by quality. This task was mainly performed by women and children. After the wool has been sorted, it is washed. The oil from the wool could only be removed with either urine or soapy water.

After all these steps the wool had to be hung in baskets which were then placed in running water. For this stage the river Sempt was perfect, especially because of its soft water. In the end, the clean wool was hung out to dry in a shady place.

Since the wool was dried in big lumps, it was easy for wood or plants to get caught in it. To get rid of this debris the wool was beaten with a stick on a wool beating table which is the first machine on the right in this room. Even after the beating, the wool had some last pieces of dirt in it that had to be removed manually again like in the first step. The wool was then clean but still not ready for processing.

Wool beating table (2)

To loosen dust and dirt a special table and stick were used. The table is covered with a piece of felt for the dust to get caught in and not set free to the environment.

Additionally, to keep the dust from escaping into the room, the table is closed off at the bottom. The most ideal way to beat out the dust was to avoid hitting large areas of wool, so it did not turn into one big lump.

Wool bow (2)

This can be compared to an over dimensional violin bow. It was used to gently clean and remove dirt.

Grooming (3)

This was a very decisive step in the preparation for the spinning wheel. The handcrafted machine is a curved board covered with calfskin, in which fine wire hooks are embedded. A counterpart is attached to the buck.

Before processing the wool had to be joined back together as it had dried out during the previous washing procedures. This was done by sprinkling the material with oil. In this case rape oil was used, for higher quality tea tree oil could be used.

The next step was to take the wool out of the machine and place it on the table. The worker pulled the loose brush over it several times so that in the end the material piece was hanging inside. Once hanging inside, the wool was turned around up to four times and after that it was removed, and the next piece was placed in the frame.

Grooming bench (3)

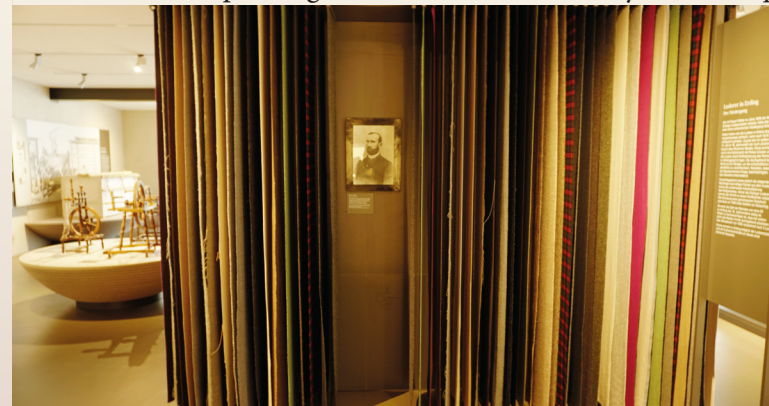
The wool is placed in between the grooming brushes made of very dense wires where it is combed into a fine fibre.

Hand grooming brush (3)

Turning wool into fine fibre can also be done by hand, which is then a much longer procedure but works just as well as the machine.

Spinning wheel (4)

Three different wooden machines in the middle of the room are all spinning wheels. The spinning wheel was used to wind yarn onto spools for the weaver.



Numerous modern fabrics showing the variety of wool textiles

Weaving (5)

In between the huge amount of hanging cloth pieces there is a small door to enter a dark room containing an exhibition about weaving. The big machine which you see immediately when entering the room was the most common weaving table.

Before a weaver can start on a new piece of cloth, extensive preparatory work is required. First the threads running along the loom must be wound onto a special chain in a certain order. Depending on the width and fineness of the cloth it consists of about 1000 threads. This was the case in Erding but in other places a single piece of cloth could even have up to 3000 threads or more. This chain is then soaked in glue.

Kneading and shrinking (6)

To produce loden the wool now needs to be checked again. Hardworking women's hands pull out knots and tangled thread and remove small objects with tweezers. To prepare for the next stage, the wool needs to be washed again.

Originally the material was kneaded with both hands and feet in big containers, later special mills were used. The cloth was placed in troughs filled with either soapy water, fouled urine or occasionally even with sheep or pig droppings.

After drying the weaver pulls every other thread out and ties them to the corresponding threads. From now on the weaving ship flies back and forth regularly reloaded with new yarn. The thread is then attached to the finished fabric so that it becomes dense and firm. The weaver watches the whole process closely, and in case something is damaged, he must repair it as fast as possible. A hard-working weaver can roughly finish 5m (5,5 yards) of cloth a day which means it takes him one week to finish a sheet of woollen fabric completely. Now colour can be added if desired and after inspection a lead seal is hung on it.

It was then beaten with wooden hammers. In these buckets the cloth is tossed around and with the addition of warm water turns to felt. This whole step could take up to 30 hours.

What happens to wool when it is washed too hot? That's right, it shrinks. In this case the wool loses about 30% of its original length and therefore is much shorter than at the beginning.

Roughing it up and shearing (7)

Simple Loden is ready for use after the following step which involves cleaning and shrinking it. The surface, however, is dull and without shine.

If it is to be refined, a cloth shearer is involved. This was done on a table like the one at the far left of the room. Before shearing, it is necessary to harden the material first. This was done with thistles since natural elastic hooks are best suited for this kind of job.

The damp pieces of cloth were hung over poles where the fragile wool hair was removed out of the fabric.

When needed the thistles were cleaned by a child.

However, the resulting surface was still very uneven and not nice to look at. The cloth was spread out and fastened on the scissors table where the cloth shearer came with a huge pair of lead scissors which weigh roughly 100 pounds and cut off excess hair. After being trimmed the cloth was washed again. It was then roughed up once more and cut with even sharper and heavier scissors. A high-quality piece of loden is roughed up up to 60 times and shaved up to five times!

Loderer-craft in Erding – The downfall (8)

The last three loderer craftsmen listed in the Erding directory in 1905 produced at home for their families only. When the last loderer craftsman Rupert Müller died in 1928, the trade came to an end.

Astonishingly, the trade market for loden in Erding lasted a long time and reached its peak in the 17th / 18th century. During this time the export market was ruled by Munich's dealers. They were able to receive the best prices for the Loden produce due to their good reputation as producers and tradesmen.

There were a couple of negative developments as well, which no one could influence. During the Napoleonic wars, sales decreased, and the workers hardly earned any money. However, this was not the main reason for the loderers' increasing impoverishment.

The main reason was that their customers demanded lower prices and therefore bought cheap import goods like cotton. Another development that led to the decline of Erding's loderer trade was industrialisation. Erding's small companies could not keep up and were not able to upgrade to bigger machines. The production in Erding then decreased and in the end came to a total standstill. As a consequence, all loden companies in Erding went bankrupt.

Epilogue

Thank you for your attention. We hope that you had fun during your visit to the Museum Erding and have learned a few things about our beautiful city. Please, remember the spectacular and original objects from the 7000-year-old cultural and economic history that you saw today.

You are welcome to take this museum guide home.

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www.museum-erding.de

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08122 408158

Opening hours

The Erding Museum is open
Tuesday to Sunday.

If you come in a group, please
announce your coming prior to
your visit.

The museum is closed on
the following holidays:

New Year's Eve
New Year's Day
Carnival Tuesday
Good Friday
May Day
All Saints' Day
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day



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