

...from weaving, living and the mists of time – a village for all seasons...

Permanent Exhibition – Herxheim Village Life in the 19th and 20th Centuries

“...nearly every house had a loom...”

is how a schoolbook describes economic conditions in Herxheim towards the close of the 19th century. The cultivation and production of tobacco became the central focus of village life soon after that, and older people recall:

“...half of Herxheim was a cigar factory...”

Until the middle of the 20th century the village of Herxheim, situated in the heart of the southern Rhineland-Palatinate, was one of the most important cottage industry centres in the Palatinate (Pfalz). Other localities were home to the production of clothing and linen goods, brushes, wicker goods, straw hats and shoes. In Herxheim commercial crops were cultivated, harvested and sold at a considerable rate alongside traditional agricultural methods. The weaving mill and then, most especially, cigar making were initially linked to the cultivation of staple crops and then to tobacco farming. Until 1954, Herxheim was Germany's largest tobacco-farming community and today the Palatinate is still one of the country's major tobacco-growing regions.

Until the 1950s, an agrarian economy such as this determined how people in the village lived, worked, thought and felt. Many once modern tools, equipment and products have now disappeared and few people still remember how it used to be. Herxheim and other villages in the southern Palatinate and Alsace still look typically rural in architectural terms – historical half-timbered houses and tobacco sheds – with some of the fabric of historical buildings and interiors lost through demolition and rebuilding work.

This presentation goes on the hunt for evidence: we rummaged through attics and cellars, pored over photo albums, sifted through archives and interviewed contemporary witnesses – you will find out all about local features, personalities and structures.

The exhibition comprises the following stations:

- Multimedia and information guide
- Exhibition area 1: Cultivation of staple crops and weaving
- Exhibition area 2: Tobacco-farming and cigar manufacture
- Exhibition area 3: House construction and interior furnishing

Herxheim Museum also offers a variety of theme-based programmes and events that can be booked in advance. Enjoy the exhibition!

For further information go to: www.museum-herxheim.de