THE MUSEUM OF LOCAL HISTORY IN MINDELHEIM

A wealth of exhibits reflects the history of the noble town lords, the bourgeois culture and the rural background of the town of Mindelheim from the 15th to the 20th century. The collection includes religious art, together with folk art, arts and crafts, tableware, jewellery, bourgeois interiors and a collection of toys.

Having passed through the door of the Franciscan Holy Cross convent, you will find yourself surrounded by Mindelheim's town history. The museum is almost 100 years old and is not only the oldest museum in the town, but has already been through several moves and has a further move to come. The building which houses the museum is almost as old as the exhibits themselves. The guest wing of the Franciscan Holy Cross Convent contains over 20,000 exhibits, including those in storage.

The Baroque rooms and corridors have their own special charm, allowing the noble town lords and the town itself to come alive before a rural backdrop. The convent was founded in 1456 by six burghers’ daughters from Mindleheim and continues in an uninterrupted tradition until today.

A wide, old, creaking, wooden staircase leads to the first floor. On the way up, the visitor is impressed by an altarpiece of considerable size representing the Madonna and Child with St. Anne (“Anna Selbdritt”). It shows St Anne, mother of the Virgin Mary, with Mary and her son Jesus painted in vibrant colours. This work is by a painter from Mindelheim, Anton Germiller (1682-1750), and originally hung in the former pilgrimage church of St Anne, which was endowed by Georg von Frundsberg, Father of the landsknechts, following a vow taken in 1526. To the left and right of the portrait are six outstanding sculptures of saints created by Franz Ignaz Buder for the same church.

Bourgeoisie and bourgeois living

On the first floor, visitors will see evidence of the town's history and its rulers, gathered from various burghers’ houses in Mindelheim. Original rooms, including two alcove rooms showing a dressing room and bedroom as well as original furniture, give an impression of bourgeois living in past centuries. Portraits of medieval and modern town lords provide information on the history of town rulership.

Religious art

Lovers of religious art will enter their own domain on the 2nd floor. Evidence documenting the piety of earlier times, including six fine sculptures created between the 15th and 18th centuries, as well as a very rare collection of “bozzetti” (three-dimensional designs for sculptures) are displayed in one of the rooms. In the next room, visitors experience traditional customs, crafts and trades amidst a fine collection of household goods and jewellery. Fine faience tableware takes its place between cut glass and painted glassware, rural earthenware and examples of pre-industrial and industrial mass production. This collection is complemented by peasant furniture and other documents of folk art. Portraits of local farmers and their wives deserve special attention, particularly with regard to the changes in traditional clothing.

From doll’s house to housewife

A separate room houses a rich collection of toys from the town of Mindelheim – all the heart desires for adults and children alike. Of particular interest are the doll’s houses, which were used in the 18th and 19th centuries to prepare young girls in a playful manner for their later life as a housewife, together with miniature shops, which were also made for boys to play with.

The Museum of Local History is temporarily closed