



  
**HOFGUT STERNEN**  
*The Black Forest Village*

***EXPERIENCE 700 YEARS OF HISTORY***

*From medieval horse station to the Black Forest Village*



## THE “OLD ASCENT”

*The most important traffic route through the “Falkensteiner Tal” (valley of Falkenstein) in medieval times was the Alte Steige (old ascent), which avoided going through flooding-prone Löffeltal.*

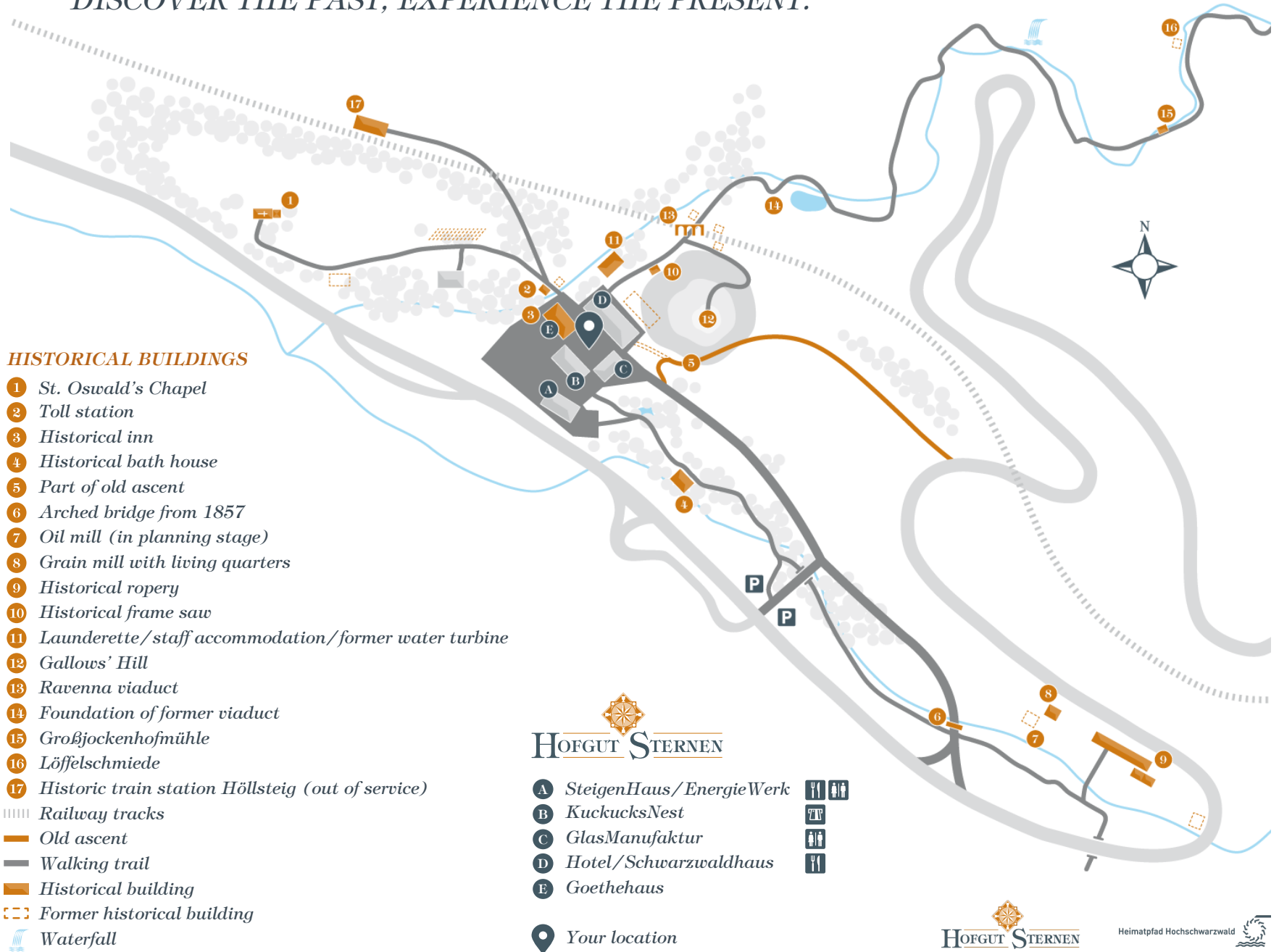
*That’s why most transports in the early Middle Ages passed through here – including documented use of draught animals pulling carts and carriages since 1306. To make the ascent of the “Alte Steige” 2-8 additional horses per carriage were required which caused the construction of stables and introduction of road maintenance crews. These stables were created at the inn below the ascent (now: Hofgut Sternen) and at the now defunct inn above the ascent. These two inns also served as temporary homes to haulers and roadmen. Subsequently other trades and crafts started to settle, such as blacksmiths, wainwrights and saddlers.*

*With the end of the Middle Ages traffic increased even more with the introduction of mail services and multiple passages of armies including the storied retreat of the complete French forces through “Val d’Enfer” by Moreau in 1796. Unforgotten is the visit by Marie-Antoinette, daughter of the Austrian emperor, on the way to her wedding with the French King Louis XVI. She passed “the Inn under the ascent” with 52 heavily decorated carriages on her way to Paris in 1770.*

*The “Alte Steige” (old ascent) and Hell’s Valley became of special significance as a main trade route for Black Forest Glass and Clock Manufacturers in the 17th and 18th century.*

*With the construction of the modern road in 1857 the “Alte Steige” finally lost its function which it had kept for centuries.*

# DISCOVER THE PAST, EXPERIENCE THE PRESENT.



## HISTORICAL BUILDINGS

- 1 St. Oswald's Chapel
  - 2 Toll station
  - 3 Historical inn
  - 4 Historical bath house
  - 5 Part of old ascent
  - 6 Arched bridge from 1857
  - 7 Oil mill (in planning stage)
  - 8 Grain mill with living quarters
  - 9 Historical ropery
  - 10 Historical frame saw
  - 11 Launderette/ staff accommodation/ former water turbine
  - 12 Gallows' Hill
  - 13 Ravenna viaduct
  - 14 Foundation of former viaduct
  - 15 Großjockenhofmühle
  - 16 Löffelschmiede
  - 17 Historic train station Höllsteig (out of service)
- ||||| Railway tracks  
 — Old ascent  
 — Walking trail  
 — Historical building  
 - - - Former historical building  
 Waterfall

## HOFGUT STERNEN

- A SteigenHaus/ EnergieWerk
  - B KuckucksNest
  - C GlasManufaktur
  - D Hotel/ Schwarzwaldhaus
  - E Goethehaus
- Your location



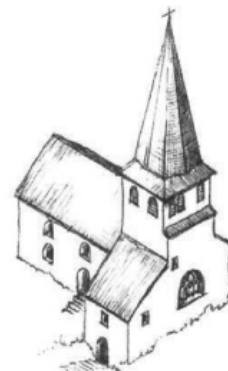
Original building  
(1148)



Development of the sacristy  
(1208)



Gothic extension  
(Mid-14<sup>th</sup> century)



Development of the tower  
(1674)



Baroque extension  
(1719)

## ST. OSWALD'S CHAPEL

*In 1148 the local chapel was consecrated by bishop Hermann of Constance. This consecration marks the oldest documented proof for regional settlement by the House of Falkenstein.*

*During the 13<sup>th</sup> century, St. Oswald's Chapel became a subsidiary of the church of Breitnau before it eventually was affiliated with the church Maria in Hinterzarten.*

*Despite all the changes in affiliation, the chapel retained many rights and was maintained through regular church services until*

*1798. Throughout its existence the chapel experienced some changes and extensions but the cemetery which was in use until 1863 can still be seen next to the charnel house.*

*To this day the charnel house displays the human remains of locals who were buried at St. Oswald. It became a necessity because of the soil which was too bad for a larger cemetery.*



## RAVENNA VIADUCT

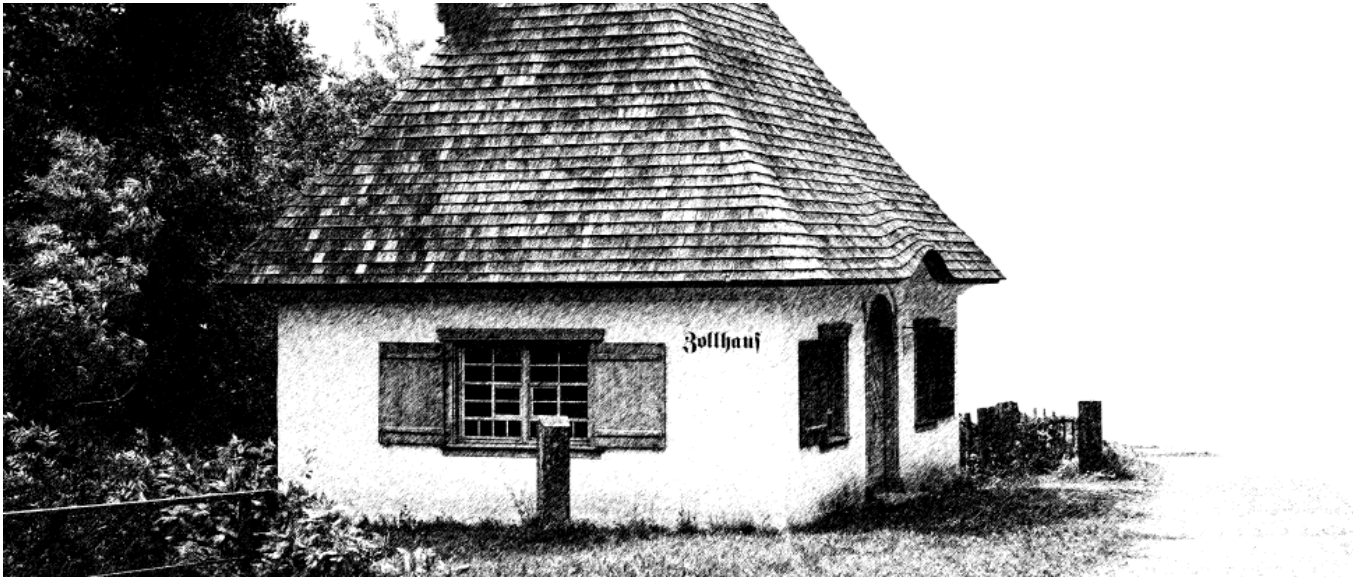
*Today's stone arch bridge (length 224 m, height 36 m, ascent 12 m) resembles the second bridge built in 1926/27. It replaced the first bridge, a steel construction on stone pillars from 1885 which bent across the Ravenna creek about 30 m further up the valley (depicted below).*

*The old bearings can still be seen through the trees on the sides of the valley.*

*During World War II, the bridge was target of many bomber attacks. By using barrage balloons, sight was hindered and the bridge was never hit, while the surrounding terrain including St. Oswald's Chapel suffered severe damage.*

*Shortly before the end of the war in 1945 the three middle pillars were blown up by retreating German forces.*

*Reconstruction through a local company occurred in 1947 / 48 under supervision by the French occupation army.*



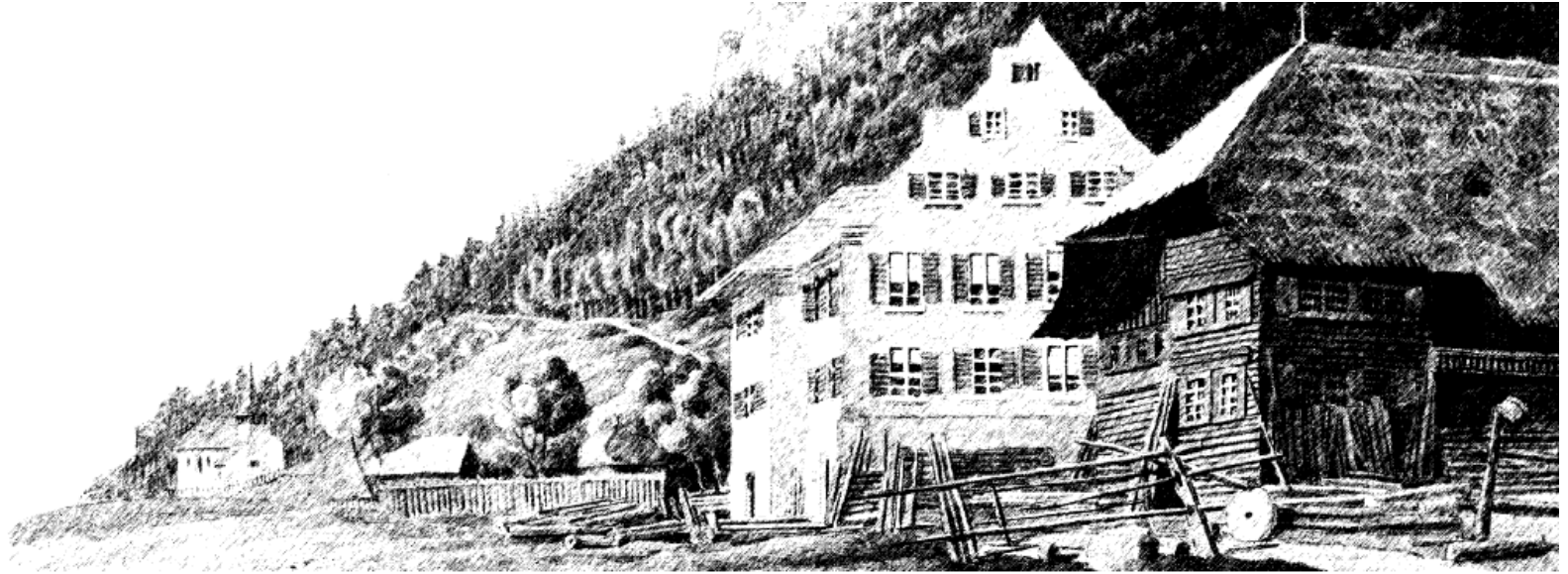
## *HISTORIC TOLLHOUSE*

*The trail through Hell's Valley and the "Steige" (the old ascent) with its 13% gradient had to be kept in good shape, therefore a bridge toll and road duty system was established in the 13th century and a tollhouse was built at the "Wirtshaus unter der Steig".*

*By order of the local government the landlords of Hofgut Sternen became toll and tax collectors. They were in charge of the valley-trail and the "Steige" and employed the roadmen. Furthermore they kept stables for additional horses to pull the carriages.*

*Additionally to the government and the duke or earl in charge the hotel landlords were given some share of the toll earnings.*

*Today's building, constructed by the "Heimatpfad Hochschwarzwald e.V.", is a reconstruction built in the 1980's based on historic documents about toll stations from the 18th century.*



## *THE LANDLORDS BELOW THE “OLD ASCENT”*

*The former inn below the “old ascent” was probably associated with three larger fiefs which belonged to House Falkenstein – the ruling family of the area. In the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century these fiefs were consolidated into Hofgut Sternen.*

*According to Hinterzarten church chronicles, the first known innkeeper was Wehrlin Müller in 1446. He was charged with “bet leutten” (medieval German: to bed people) and paid accordingly. Starting in the 16<sup>th</sup> century the innkeeper was given additional duties. Regularly he invited local reeves for reporting, payoffs and judicial duties.*

*When German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe visited Hofgut Sternen in 1779 the innkeeper was named Markus Vogt. In 1806 the esteemed Faller family became connected to Hofgut Sternen by marrying into the Vogt family. The last innkeeper who died in 1917 was also part of the Faller family and until today his grave can be seen at St. Oswald’s Chapel. One year after his death, the whole estate became state owned.*

*Finally in 1985 all of the lands and buildings were bought by the Drubba family, who still owns it today.*



## *ANCIENT CRAFTS UNDER THE “OLD ASCENT”*

*Continually increasing traffic in medieval times required the establishment of several crafts and services at every rest stop such as the “Inn under the old ascent” (today: Hofgut Sternen). E.g. traces of Blacksmiths in the Falkensteiner Tal (valley of Falkenstein) can be dated back all the way to the 12th century. Horse shoeing, fixing broken wheel rims and welting of torn chains were daily business.*

*With more settlements in the valley, more craftsmen set up workshops. Ropemakers, saddlers and cobblers were needed at the horse changing stations. Ripped harnesses were renewed, saddles fixed and tattered shoes repaired.*

*Around 1830 the existing saddlers and cobblers have to make room for a Spoon forge with tin coating facility. A keg maker followed shortly afterwards and worked and lived here for two generations.*

*Characteristic of local life under the old ascent were the many saws and sawmills. Mills and bakeries were part of daily life at that time – although the according sites and buildings are not preserved.*





## *ROPERY / ROPE-LADDER*

*To help travelers on the arduous way up on the “old ascent” towards Hinterzarten, the “Inn under the ascent” (today’s Hofgut Sternen) supplied horses and harnessing services. Due to this, many craftsmen settled in the vicinity, such as ropemakers, saddlers and cobblers.*

*In 1736 ropemaker Christian Hensler together with saddler and cobbler Martin Hensler started their own businesses with construction of a 70 meter rope-ladder with a twin house in this location. The old foundations can still be seen towards the*

*southern end of the reconstructed 30 meter ropewalk. This building was constructed in 2003 / 2004 by the Heimatpfad Hochschwarzwald e.V. and shows how ropes were produced in the 19th and early 20th century.*

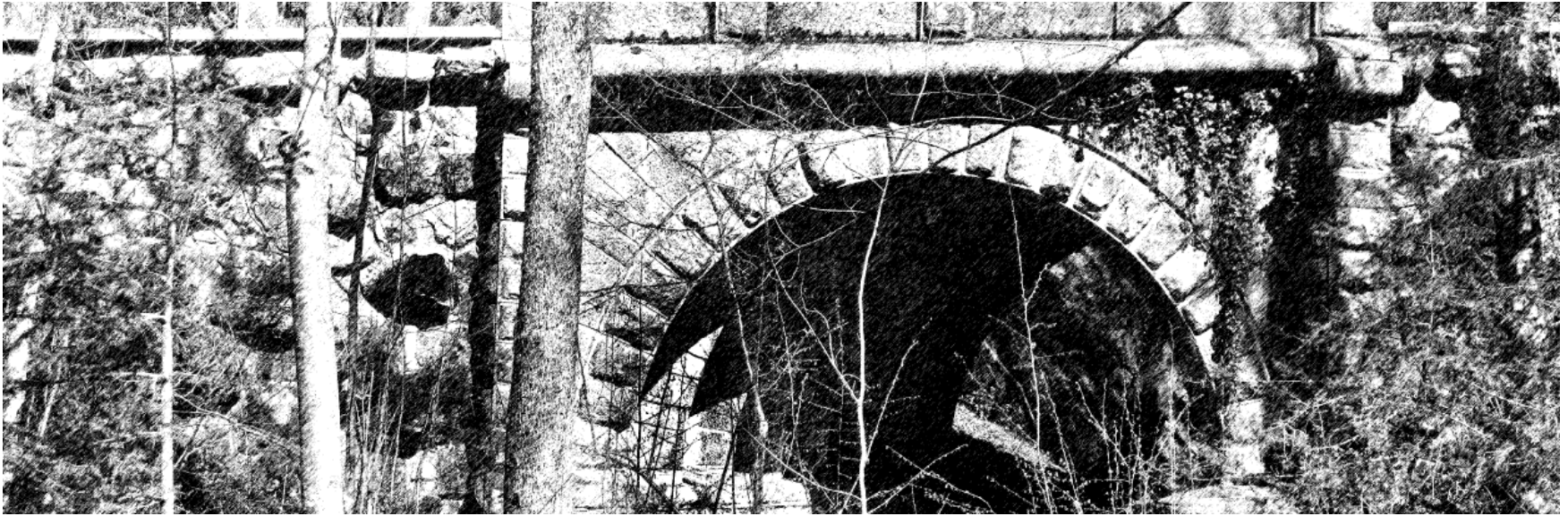
*Traditional materials for ropemaking were hemp and flax which were grown locally in the Black Forest and the Baar region. In the ropery you can see tools that were used to break the fibers and to hackle them.*



## ***BLACK FOREST GLASS***

*The history of glass production in the Black Forest can be dated back to the 12th century. Hardly any documents exist from these times, because early Black Forest glass factories moved shop frequently when timber in their vicinity became scarce. Generally glassblowers needed spots where the main ingredients for glass production could be found: silica sand, potash made of beech, and water. To produce 1 kg of glass a total of 200-250 kg wood were needed. Locally produced glass always had a slightly green color due to iron content in the local silica sand.*

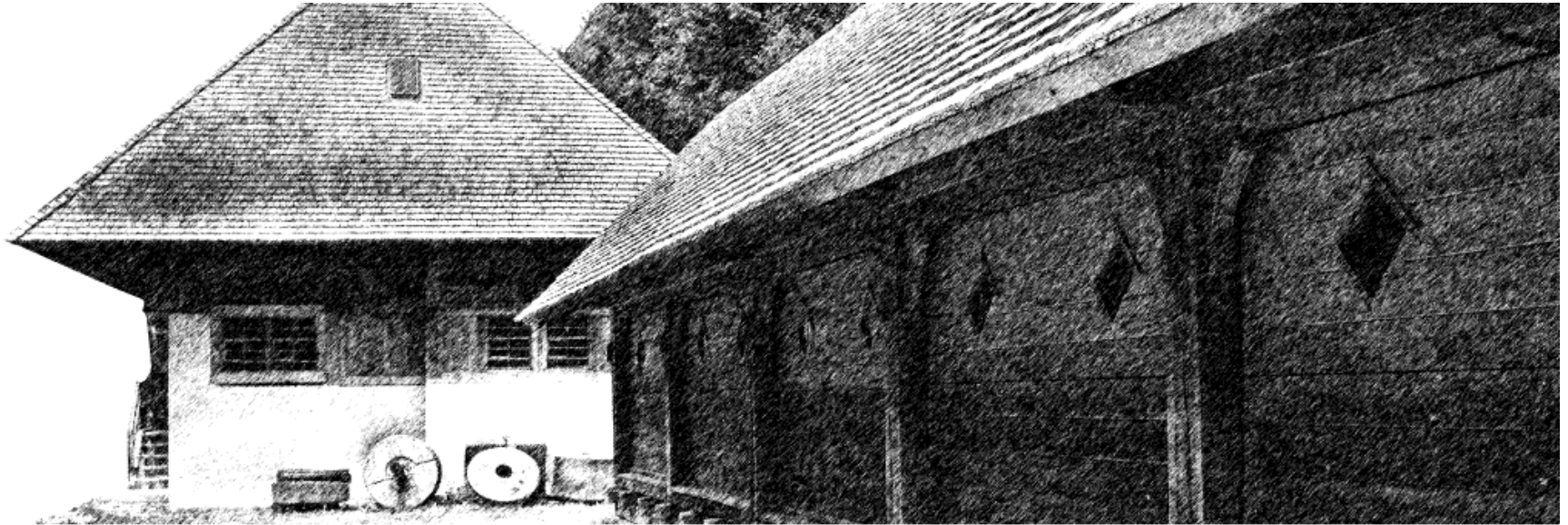
*The first glass factory in Hell's Valley can be dated to the 18th century – when glass industry in the Black Forest was already in decline – and had to be closed after only 9 years (1759 – 1768). 220 years later glass production was reestablished at the Hofgut Sternen. Today, once again, our glass artists (Glassblower and Glassmaker) are producing authentic and colourful Black Forest Glass with a combination of old craftsmanship and modern technology. This glass can be found in our GlasManufaktur by the name of “Sternen Glas”.*



## *ARCHED BRIDGE*

*There were many creeks that came crashing down into Hell's Valley which were already made use of by the medieval farmers of the Black Forest Highlands. These creeks were lined with mills, saws and other crafts. In the vicinity of the Hofgut Sternen 4 saws were being powered by Spoon's Creek (Löffelbach), Ravenna and their confluence: Hell's Creek (renamed later to Rotbach). The Rotbach is one of the creeks that flows into the Dreisam River which runs it's course through the city of Freiburg.*

*Until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, bridge construction only knew overarching by using stone arches. Due to the diagonal crossing of the road over Hell's Creek a shifted alignment of arches was built in 1857 and still stands today. This bridge is a prime example of masonry and its solid construction is absolutely capable of supporting modern traffic.*



## *GRAIN MILL WITH LIVING QUARTERS AND SEPARATE GRANARY*

*In order to make a presentation of bakeries and mills in Hell's Valley a historic grain mill was moved from Oberprechtal to the grounds of the ropery. This post-and-plank construction (18<sup>th</sup> century) features a dual grinding gear with two grind stones. On the top floor there are tools for separating / cleaning the grains according to 19<sup>th</sup> century standards: an aspirator, a trieur and hoist for sacks of grain.*

*The mill has always been water powered. Nowadays, water is being transported over a 220 meter stretch from the old retaining weir of the now defunct Löffelschmiede (Spoon's Mill).*

*The living quarters, mostly in their original condition, include two bedrooms, a parlour with a tiled stove and a kitchen with facilities to smoke meat.*

*Because of the high fire hazard from having open fires most farms / workshops would have a separate granary. These granaries were typically built with a raised floor for better circulation and to keep away rodents. Beside grains and seeds they would usually have a hidden compartment with important documents and one set of clothes for each member of the family.*