



Altjahrswochen and Übersitz im Haslital

Last week of the old year and Ubersitz

The last week of the old year in the Haslital starts during the night of the 25th to 26th December and extends to the second last working day of the year. This tradition is an ancient custom of Celtic origin. The last night onto the last working day of the year, in which the locals "Trychle", is called "Ubersitz".

The origins of Trychlen lie in the pre-Christian period, when the inhabitants of the mountain valley Haslital tried to keep the evil spirits away from their villages during the longest nights of the year.

The various Trychel groups banish all the evil spirits from the Haslital with their impressive parades through the various villages. From day to day the groups grow larger and more powerful in order to reach their peak at the "Ubersitz". On this evening, the Trychler of the surrounding villages Willigen, Hausen, Iisenbolgen, Unterbach, and Hasliberg meet with the Meiringen Trychler. Depending on the village that they are from, the Trychler are masked and dressed, or wear the "Mutz" (traditional vest). Each village has its own group and Trychelmajor.

Even today, every Hasli-Trychler knows that he has to banish the evil spirits with his magical sounds, which follow a precise rhythm. However, this rhythm is not comparable to a military march. It compels imperiously to a slow sliding step, while the upper body rhythmically swings the bell or Trychel. This nocturnal hustle and bustle goes up and down town for hours on end.

The Trychelmarsch is in the blood of every real Oberhasler from childhood onwards. Although several thousand visitors from near and far fill the streets of Meiringen, the Altjohrswoche (last week of the old year) cannot be compared to a carnival week or similar events with bells.

The "Trychlen" and "Ubersitz" are and always will be something unique.

Annual review "Ubersitzler"

Another tradition is the "Ubersitzler"; the special newspaper reports on the deeds and misdeeds of the past year and settles differences with friend and foe. In the form of rhymes, stories from last year are brought up anew. The stories are mostly witty anecdotes, cheeky allusions, or angry slander. However, the names of the addressed are usually interchanged in themselves, so that one can only find out who it is with some creativity.

Another big discussion is triggered by the name "Ubersitz". Many tourists and foreigners speak, because of their dialect, about Übersitz, which makes a Hasler's hair stand on end!

"Ubersitz" in the villages of the Haslital

Meiringen

On the "Ubersitz" most Meiringer Trychler transform into female folk. In addition to the Trycheln (bells), the foremost rows consist of drums and are the ones that set the pace. Ahead of the Trychel group, the so-called "Huttewybli" clears the path for the group. The history of "Huttewybli" is about a hundred years old. Once a woman (wybli) picked up her drunken husband with her backpack basket (hutte) and carried him home. On the December 27th, the Trychler path leads along the Kapellen to the cemetery, where they stand still during

two marches in order to commemorate the deceased. The Meiringen group also Trychels past the nursing home, so that the elderly people that aren't that good by foot anymore, can also experience and see the Trychel groups.

Hausen

The Hausner are, like the Meiringer, Schattenhäblier, and Innertkirchler, disguised as Boozeni. With drums as the pace maker and the Huttewybli as a front woman the Trychel group strides through the village. Additionally, a Schnabelgeiss (beaked goat) leads the group. Children and adults who dare to stand on the open road are startled by the beaked goat or have their headgear picked off their heads.

Schattenhalb (Willigen)

Most of the Schattenhalb group disguises themselves into old women. However, in the Schattenhalb group women are not allowed to Trychel or drum. It is said that sometimes women smuggle into the Trychel group and of course are not recognized, because they are disguised just like everyone else. Also the Williger put a lot of value on that the ratio of drums to Trycheln is right. The group is supported by two beaked goats, one small and one big, as well as a Huttewybli. In Schattenhalb the first sounds of the last week of the old year can be heard on December 26th.

At the "Ubersitz" the Schattenthalber are first in Willigen itself, then later they go to the village Meiringen.

Isenbolgen

The Isenbolgner make their masks and costumes exclusively from natural materials. Also with drums setting the pace, the so-called Wurzelmandli (rootboy) and Wurzelfroueli (rootgirl) lead the way. The Isenbolgners, like the Schattenhäblier, do not start Trychling until December 26th. One can recognize the Isenbolgners from their large Baslerdrums and their special and slow pace.

Unterbach

The Unterbächler Trychle in a traditional "Mutz" (bernese costume) with Trycheln and bells but without drums. At the "Ubersitz", under all the "Boozeni", they are hard to be missed.

Hasliberg

Hasliberg places more emphasis on the sound of their Trycheln, so the whole group consists of beautiful Trycheln. They wear their civilian clothes during the whole last week of the old year as well as during the "Ubersitz". On the Hasliberg they also walk with drums; however, during the "Ubersitz" in Meiringen they are without their drums.

Gadmen

A small group in white shirts, that's clearly the Gadmer.

In the last week of the old year they are in a different place every evening, from Obermaad to Hopflauenen. One day before the official "Ubersitz" the Gadmer come to Meiringen. They are the only group wearing a white shirt (Eintragshemd). It is a traditional shirt that farmers used to wear when going to work in the hilly areas to carry down the hay, that they mowed, wrapped in nets, back to their barns.

The Gadmer can not only be recognized by their white shirts, they also have a very special step, the so-called intermediate step. After each bell chime, an additional step is taken.

Guttannen

The Guttanners start to Trychel on December 25th at midnight in Boden, near Guttannen. They are dressed in normal clothes, with drums, Trycheln and bells. Guttannen is the only municipality that has New Year's Day Trychlen on January 1st. The Trychel group, with exclusively bell chimes, starts at 9:00 AM and moves through the whole village of Guttannen. From 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, the community of Guttannen offers a New Year aperitif at the Hotel Bären.

Innertkirchen

The Innertkirchner stay within the Kirchet (pass leading to Innertkirchen) in their village during the "Ubersitz" and come to Meiringen with the 8:30 AM train (Meiringen-Innertkirchen-Bahn) the morning after the "Ubersitz". They stand out with their black Basler drums and their big, black Schnabelgeiss. They are dressed as "Boozeni" too.



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