

Short history of the Stubai Valley

Early history and settlement

From place and field names as well as soil findings, the oldest clues to the history of settlement can be found long before written records. Prehistoric pottery and bronze objects were found on the slopes on both sides of the Ruetz in the foremost part of the valley. They are dated to the early Bronze Age (ca. 1800 to 1300 B.C.) and to the subsequent Urnfield Period (until 1000 B.C.). The Muiggnbichl near Telfes and the Zauberbichl near Schönberg were therefore already inhabited by the Raetians, who were overlaid by migrating Celts in the La Tène period (450 to 250 BC). The Breon tribe, named by the Roman poet Horace, was defeated by the advancing Roman legions in 15 BC. The soldiers were followed by Roman settlers, which is indicated by numerous Romanesque/Latin place and field names up to the alpine region: e.g. Gleins (collina/collis "hill"), Tschaffinis (ad cavinas "meadow near the caves"), Tschafalles (ad cavalles "horse pasture"), Pfurtschell (forcella/furca, "saddle"), Kampl (campiglia/campus "field"), Falbeson (val busana "blind valley"), Ranalt (rovina alta "high debris flow"), Schangelair (camp angulairu "angular field"), Kartnall (cortinale) "farm" resp. "enclosed piece of land", Fagschlung (fossa longa "long ditch"). At the end of the 6th century A.D. the land conquest by the Bavarians began and with it, especially in the front Stubaital, the overlapping with the German language. Hermann Ignaz Bidermann reports in 1877 that, according to a legend, the German-speaking population was still unable to communicate with the Romansh-speaking Stubai in the rear part of the valley in the High Middle Ages. The name of the valley appears under the designation "inter Alpes ad Stupeia" ("within the mountains in the Stubaital") around 993/94-1005 for the first time in a tradition note of the high diocese of Freising.[6]. Later documented designations are Stubei, Stubaie, or Stubay.

Ecclesiastical and political development

The first church building was probably erected in early Christian times in Telfes, which was the ecclesiastical center of the valley for centuries. Church services in Mieders and Fulpmes are documented as early as 1389. In 1515 Emperor Maximilian, who was often hunting in the rear valley, had a chapel built in Neustift. The church buildings that stand in the center of each village today can be traced back to the priest and church builder Franz de Paula Penz from Telfes and were built around the middle of the 18th century.

A separate court Stubai under the rule of the Counts of Tyrol is first mentioned in a document in 1326.[8] The seat of the court and thus the political and administrative center of the valley was initially also located in Telfes and moved around 1690 to Mieders, where it existed - with interruptions - until 1923. Since 1869 the political administration has been in the hands of the district administration of Innsbruck.

Economic development, history of tourism

Schönberg's location at the entrance to the Brenner Pass, over which the Romans built the first road, gave this village considerable importance early on. Roman soldiers moved here to the north, then Germanic tribes to the south, emperors and popes used this central Alpine crossing. Thus it became an important trade route, from which the people alongside profited.

In the rest of the valley, as in many places, an agrarian structure dominated for the basic supply of the inhabitants and the payment of taxes to ecclesiastical and noble landowners. With one exception:

first reports from the 14th century point to the blacksmith's trade in Fulpmes. It is not certain whether the - moderately successful - Stubai mining led to the metal trade. It was rather the other way around. Tools were produced above all, but also tower clocks and later mountain sports equipment. The products were first distributed by means of back carriers, and from the 17th century onwards on carts. In 1904, the Stubai Valley Railway took over their transportation.

The forerunners of tourism, today's most important branch of the economy, can be seen in the hunting trips of Emperor Maximilian in the 16th century, the pilgrimages to Maria Waldrast from the 17th century and the summer visitors to Schönberg and Mieders in the 18th/19th century. The "Bauernbadln" (public spas) in Mieders, Medraz and Bärenbad also attracted visitors early on. In the middle of the 19th century, mountain tourism developed, which continues to this day. The Austrian Alpine Club trained locals as porters and mountain guides and built huts (the first was the Dresdner Hütte in 1875) and trails. Father Franz Senn, co-founder of the German Alpine Club, spent the last years of his life in Neustift and is buried in the local cemetery.

Each improvement of the traffic development (Brenner Road, Brenner railroad, Stubai Valley railroad, valley road and regular bus service, Brenner motorway) brought more visitors to the valley. Tourist activity shifted from the mountains to the valley, where inns and hostels sprang up. The two world wars caused deep caesuras, but since 1945 there has been a continuous upswing. Ski tourism only became a noticeable factor with the construction of the lift from Fulpmes to Froneben in 1960. After the construction of the Stubai Glacier Lift in 1973, overnight stays in the winter half-year began to overtake summer.

(Source Wikipedia)