



# HISTORY

1300

## **Borders and possession**

As early as the High Middle Ages, the mountain valley was already being used to link Glarus and Schwyz with the other original cantons. Various incidents and occurrences would indicate that the people of Schwyz were more tightly organised than the people of Glarus thanks to their market cooperatives.

On that side of the ‚Prageis‘, a stronger sense of togetherness developed internally, and a remarkable drive externally. This explains, at least in part, why the Schwyz people crossed the natural boundary of the watershed at the Pragel Pass at an early (but not precisely determinable) time, occupied the rear side of Richisau and pushed on over the Charetalp valley to beyond Rossmatt. On the other hand, there are documents that show that, between 1322 and 1331, the people of Glarus sold sections of the Silberer Alps, which at that time still belonged to Glarus, to the Muotathal monastery. All this happened at a time when the increased production of livestock, hides, cheese and butter was becoming vitally important in terms of trade - and soon in terms of exports as well. It is therefore not surprising that these transgressions of natural boundaries would later give rise to disputes. The ‚Glarner Bundesbrief‘, or Federal Charter of Glarus, of 1352 mentions the place ‚uf Bergern - the Pragelpass‘ for future arbitration proceedings between Glarus and Schwyz. In 1983, Fritz Stucki extensively documented the squabbles concerning alpine rights in the Klöntal Valley in Volume 1 of ‚Die Rechtsquellen des Kantons Glarus‘ (‚The Legal Sources of the Canton of Glarus‘). In 1417 and 1418, even the Tagsatzung (Federal Diet of Switzerland) itself was involved in these border issues and alpine disputes.

In the 17th century, the disputes over the ‚Märchen‘ flared up once more. With the arbitrators from Schwyz and Glarus unable to come to an agreement, the Landammann (chief magistrate) of Uri, Johann Franz Schmid von Bellikon, issued an amicable ruling in Einsiedeln in 1672, declaring that the alpine areas of Brunalpel and Euloch be divided or ceded to Glarus in return for annual rental payments. With the ‚Marchsteine‘ of 1678 and the ‚Marchenbrief‘ issued in 1680, the border was settled once and for all. In addition to the Alps of the Silberer, of which there are recordings dating back to 1322, various Klöntal Alps are mentioned for the first time in documents and ‚Alprodels‘ (Alp lists) on the following dates: Aueren in 1350, Rossmatt in 1421, Vorauen with Chlüstalden and Schlattalpli in 1494, Richisau in 1531, Saggberg as well as Ochsenfeld and Dejen in 1547, Güntlenau and Seerüti in 1552, Herberig in 1567 and Planggenalpli in 1710. From around 1300, when 25 Glarus Alps were still owned by Säkingen Abbey and at least as many by free communities, countless mutations - via real estate trading and exchanges - were recorded, and a large number of pasture lands, which had

broadened due to being cleared, were divided into several Alps. Today, ownership is clearly defined: the municipalities of Glarus, Netstal, Riedern and Ennenda, as well as corporations, Axpo, private individuals, foundations and the Swiss Confederation own property/land in the Klöntal Valley. Oberlänggenegg, with its combination of military and alpine farming, belongs to the federal government (as do other areas), Vorderrichisau to the Melchior and Katharina Kamm-Menzi family foundation, and thanks to the generosity of the company Fritz+Caspar Jenny AG's Ida foundation, the former Hotel Klöntal was able to be turned into a guesthouse for the Niederurnen school community's holiday camps. The question of allocating the Klöntal Valley to a municipality first came about in 1875, namely when the cantonal constitution was intended to be revised, but remained unresolved following the constitutional revision that was adopted in 1887. The impetus for the arrangement we still see today came in 1899, when the cantonal building department ordered the formation of the Eggliruns Corporation. In the process, it was determined that the unclear constitutional situation could only be remedied if the Klöntal was assigned to a 'Tagwen' (see <https://www.glarusfamilytree.com/worth-knowing>). After Riedern had renounced their claim, the advantages and disadvantages of Netstal and Glarus were weighed against one other. After thorough legal examinations and taking into account previous administrative regulations and the geographical location, the governing council came to the conclusion that the Klöntal Valley should be put under the control of both the Glarus Tagwen and the political municipality of Glarus. The people of Netsal could not accept this decision and appealed to the cantonal parliament. In the community at the foot of Wiggis peak, people were furious, exclaiming: 'Now the people of Glarus have stolen the Klöntal Valley from us!' But despite this, on 15 October, 1902, the cantonal parliament legally and definitively assigned the Klöntal Valley to the Tagwen Glarus with a vote of 37 to 16. On occasion, the people of Netstal will still - albeit light-heartedly - refer to the legend of the 'stolen Klöntal'.

### Schwyzers, Russians and the Glärnisch combat group

The Schwyz people crossed the Prigel in an early period, though it is no longer clear exactly when, and occupied the rear Klöntal Valley, almost as far as Richisau. Thanks to documentation from the journey, it is known that, on 8 April, 1388, the Schwyz people sent reinforcements - 30 men in total - over the Prigel. They camped for the night in Richisau, and just a few hours later, four of these first Klöntal visitors, whose names have been handed down, had fallen on the battlefield of Näfels: Ueli Watwiler and Gander from Uri, Rudi Schelbert and Jenni zum Bach of Schwyz. Yet they pressed forwards via the Karren Alps into the Braunalpeli above Dreckloch-Rossmatt, as well as into Euloch above Brächalp. These takeovers by the Schwyz people resulted in two lawsuits in 1421 between the region of Schwyz and the Glarus Alp holders. There is speculation (and speculation only) that these were levies on the Schwyz people for their support during the Battle of Näfels in 1388 against the Habsburgs. In any case, the territory that was lost remains in the hands of Schwyz even today.



1388

1486

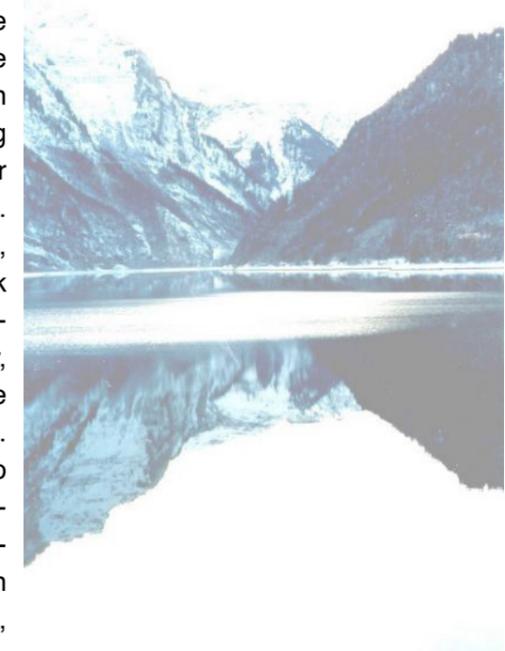
### First mention

The origin of the name 'Klöntal' is still uncertain today. Its first verifiable mention was in 1468, in the chronicle of the 'Landschreiber', or 'head clerk of the chancery', Rudolf Mad, in which he reported a hard autumn and winter '...und was so vil schnews umb den berg, das man uf Einit noch in Kloentel mit moecht gevaren.' At that time, the name Klöntal probably referred to the region behind the lake, which did not hold much significance until its development in the 19th century. The region in front of the lake was known as 'Seerüti' until the early 20th century. Around 1800, there was a district called 'Seerüti-Klöntal' in the canton's cadastre, and around 1901 people were still making reference to the Seerütistrasse, which was then absorbed by the state of Glarus.

1535

### The Klöntal Valley as a hunting ground

Along with fishing, hunting has been of great importance in the Klöntal Valley since time immemorial. In the early days, it was very important in terms of both people's diet and the fur trade. Even today, it is still evolving as part of a developmental sport and game hunting process that is appropriate for the modern age. As early as 1535, the first laws were being passed that created areas closed to hunting, such as the Glärnisch area in 1560. Other than these areas, the hunting grounds were open to free citizens. In 1876, a permit fee was introduced for the first time after the chamois population had fallen sharply. It is also said that wolves and bears used to roam the Klöntal Valley in earlier times as well. The presence of the latter is supported by place names such as Bärentritt (with 'Bär' being the German word for 'bear'), and thanks to Rudolf Mad's aforementioned chronicle, we know that wolves are supposed to have torn people apart in the exceptionally cold winter of 1571. The alpine ibex was also present in the area in centuries gone by. In 1550, a steinbock was shot in the Glärnisch area. After a long period during which the main animals being hunted were chamois, deer and marmots (as well as foxes, rabbits and badgers), the red deer arrived from the east, after being absent from the region for some time, and settled in the region once more in the late 1940s and early 1950s, culminating in a royal stag being shot on the Richisauer Schwammhöchi in 1956 for the first time since the animal's reintroduction to the region. Campaigns carried out by the canton of Schwyz in 1962, 1968 and 1971 lead to the ibex also making its way back to the Klöntal Valley. On 12 May, 1968, a 9-year-old steinbock was observed in the vicinity of Oberlänggenegg. Today, depending on the season, a larger number of ibex can be found between Wannenstöckli, Ochsenkopf and Wiggis. Hunting and game stocks have always been susceptible to major fluctuations - with the two large federal hunting reserves on the Glärnisch, which totaled 13 km in size and existed from 1926 to 1963, playing a not-inconsiderable role in this regard. But poaching certainly had an influence as well, especially up to and during the First World War!



**Field and settlement names**

The first written mention of the name Klöntal can be found in the records of the Glarus Landschreiber Rudolf Mad. As a contemporary, he reported severe storms and heavy snowfall in the winter of 1468/69. The names ‚Clontal‘ and ‚Clontaler See‘ can be found on Aegidius Tschudi’s map of Switzerland from 1538.

The ‚Klontal‘ spelling appears on the ‚Zürichgau‘ map in Johannes Stumpf’s ‚Schweizer Chronik‘ (‚Swiss Chronicle‘) from 1548. The two headwaters of Lake Klöntal are called Klön or Chlön. The name ‚Klön‘ has not yet been linguistically classified, but is probably pre-German. It is possible, but not proven, that the initial sound of Chlön-glärnerisch was pronounced ‚Chlü‘ (akin to ‚klue‘ in English) - the High Germansound shift from ‚k‘ to ‚ch‘ (with ‚ch‘ being akin to a hissing sound - see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FnFQdLOjiZ4>) was completed between the 7th and 8th centuries. The outflow of Lake Klöntal is called Löntschi (Löneschen, Lönschen). This name - like all the major rivers and streams of the Glarus region - is of Celtic origin. A few names, such as Gampel (from the Latin ‚campus‘ - ‚field‘), Saas (from the Latin ‚saxum‘, Rhaeto-Romanic ‚sass‘ - ‚rock‘) and Prangel (from the pre-Roman ‚bargia‘, Rhaeto-Romanic ‚bargell‘ - barn) are of Roman origin. Alemannic field names are common. Names such as Schlattberg indicate that early settlers would free up new living space using axes and fire; Schwammhöchi is the place where trees were ‚flooded‘ - that is to say they died off as a result of having their bark removed. Other names such as Planggen, Dräggloch or Faulenkopf point to the shape of the land. Auli, Vorauen, Seerüti and Brunalpeli refer to their being located on the water. Other property names are identical to those of their first owners, such as Güntlenau (Au des Gundilo) and Richisau (Au des Richwin). The typical Alemannic convention of naming single farmsteads and ‚treusiedlungen‘ (‚faithful settlements‘) after the first - or subsequent - owner continued into the following centuries. Names of mountain areas such as Kubliberg, Lüttschgenberg, Simmenberg, Hüsliberg or Hophanberg have also found their way into today’s documents and maps.


**Iron ore mining in the Klöntal Valley**

At the end of the 1560s, it was believed that promising layers of red iron ore had been found at the ‚Glärnischwänden‘ in the Klöntal valley. An association was formed, headed by Michael Bälde (who would later become Landammann) and his brother Fridolin. On 24 April, 1569, at their request, the mining rights of 1527 were renewed for the area in the Klöntal Valley. At the end of the 1560s, it was believed that promising layers of red iron ore had been found at the ‚Glärnischwänden‘ in the Klöntal valley. An association was formed, headed by Michael Bälde (who would later become Landammann) and his brother Fridolin. On 24 April, 1569, at their request, the mining rights of 1527 were renewed for the area in the Klöntal Valley. 16 October, 1571: A concession contract is issued to the mining company, and the very next day a public proclamation is issued to protect

the majority of Klöntal forests - this was because they had learned from their experience with the mine at Guppen and were wary of the large-scale consumption of wood.

The mining and smelting of iron ore in the Klöntal Valley probably began in May 1572. Right from the very first year, 1573, the ‚Isenherren‘ were paying 80 pounds for the transport of pig iron on Lake Zurich, while freight wages for iron mined on the Gonzen only amounted to 69 pounds. But in 1582, Michael Bälde complained that the three shipmasters from Zurich, Schwyz and Glarus, who were responsible for all freight traffic on the lake, had granted the ‚Flumser Herren‘ (the ‚lords of Flums‘) an exceptional tariff, while he and his partners were having to pay the full price from Ziegelbrücke. However, the request was rejected because the Flumser ships would always take grain with them as return freight. In 1584, Fridolin Bälde sued Melchior Suter, who had lost one of ten bundles of iron while transporting them to Ziegelbrücke. Between 1584 and 1586, Heinrich Schwogkoffner, a char-burner from South Tyrol, had to repeatedly put forward claims in order to assert his right to his wages. For almost two decades, it seems as though business was busy and booming - until the ore deposits began running out. There were negotiations with ‚Meister Hans dem Schmelzer‘ (‚Master Hans the Smelter‘), who was withheld pay due to allegedly violating his contract, disputes arose with property owners; in short, they suffered multiple frustrations and financial losses, and the Bälde brothers began trying to sell the ironworks. See Iron mining II.


**From the mule track to the road into the Klöntal Valley**

Maintaining a public connecting road was a difficult task, especially since the property owners were obliged to do so. But the construction and maintenance of the bridges and footbridges were the responsibility of the Tagwen. According to a judgment from 1662, in addition to the Glarus, Netstal, Riedern and Ennenda Tagwen, the ‚Herren Alp-, Berg- und Rietgenossen im Klöntaler-Tal‘ also had to contribute financially towards roads and bridges. In approximately 1750, the Seerütiweg corporation was formed, which was tasked with maintaining the road for a length of 6.15 km until 1952. From 1867, the state began transferring the corporation 500.00 Swiss Francs a year (at a daily rate of 1.0 to 1.50 at the time) ‚on account of the carriage/coach traffic‘. Additional contributions were levied through the so-called ‚Eiszoll‘



(,ice toll'), which was introduced because carriages carrying ice hauls were putting an extraordinary amount of strain on the road. Despite the difficult topographical conditions and the never-ending struggle against floods, avalanches, gullies and rockfalls, the mule track and the road were constantly being improved by the communities and private individuals who had come together as part of the Seerütiweg Corporation. Between 1841- 1843 and 1868-1872, the route was successfully extended up to Vorauen. Further developments and the extension to Richisau came in 1881, and in 1888 the Richisauer Corporation, founded in 1880, received 12,000 Swiss Francs of state funding to help redevelop its section from the Sulzbachbrücke to Richisau.- . Since then, applications for the canton to take over responsibility for Klöntalerstrasse always found themselves rejected by the Landsgemeinde (cantonal assembly).



The triumphant arrival of the car after the Second World War brought about an increase in the levels of private transport: on a Sunday in the summer of 1949, as many as 700 motor vehicles rolled into the Klöntal Valley, while the PostBus service transported 630 people. It was at this point that the Seerütiweg Corporation wanted to finally rid itself of responsibility for the road. In 1952, forestry commissioner Fritz Oppliger wrote: ‚This road has been unable to cope with today’s traffic for some time now. The local population is being inconvenienced by the dust from the many vehicles that are of varying suitability regarding the road. People are now fearing for their health and their safety.‘ Furthermore, in 1940 the Landsgemeinde decided on a loan of 1,005,000 Swiss Francs for the expansion of the Klöntalerstrasse and the Corporation accepted the route cut contribution of 91,400 Swiss Francs that had been imposed upon it. In 1953, the Landsgemeinde gave its approval to the canton taking over the road. The canton has been responsible for paving the road and keeping it in good repair ever since. This year-round maintenance also benefits school-age children, who are brought to Glarus and back every day by the school bus that was introduced in 1955 in order to provide practical support to mountain farmers. Proof that the canton’s takeover of the road was justified lies, among other things, in a traffic census from 1988: every Sunday in June and August, 4500 and 5900 motor vehicles passed Staldengarten in both directions respectively. Since 1962, the hiking trail along the Löntschi has been expanded by various organizations in such a way that it is now possible to take the path into the Klöntal Valley by foot via an idyllic route off the main route.

From 1911 to 1913, the municipality of Glarus built the Saggbergstrasse, with the entire construction process now being a highly regarded model for modern forest management. This Klöntal Valley development was also opened to tourist traffic in 1920 and leads over what is probably the most beautiful vantage point, the Glarnus Schwamm-



höchi. After a hike down to the lake, you will reach a path that is equal parts magnificent, romantic and - especially in summer - teeming with unique flora; this path leads via Güntlenau and Bärentritt into the far side of the Klöntal Valley. The Tschachenstrasse runs out from the site, along the Chlön and through the protected alluvial forests; this is still under the control of the eponymous corporation and may only be traversed if you have a special permit. The Tschachenstrasse ends at the bridge over the Chlön. It is at this point where a road to Chlünstalden and into the Rossmatt Valley up to the hut village of Chäseren begins. On the other side of the valley, the military built the Alpstrasse from Schwallenli via Ralli, Ratlis to Unter- and Oberlängenegg. A hiking path that was planned by surveyor Wild and built by students leads from upper Schwallenli in the direction of Richisau - this path was restored as part of Sternenweg (,star trail') 91.

### Borders and alpine disputes

As early as the High Middle Ages, the mountain valley was already being used to link Glarus and Schwyz with the other original cantons. Various incidents and occurrences would indicate that the people of Schwyz were more tightly organised than the people of Glarus thanks to their market cooperatives. On that side of the ‚Prageis‘, a stronger sense of togetherness developed internally, and a remarkable drive externally. This explains, at least in part, why the Schwyz people crossed the natural boundary of the watershed at the Prageis Pass at an early (but not precisely determinable) time, occupied Hinter Richisau and pushed on over the Charetal valley to beyond Rossmatt. On the other hand, there are documents that show that, between 1322 and 1331, the people of Glarus sold sections of the Silberer Alps, which at that time still belonged to Glarus, to the Muotathal monastery. All this happened at a time when the increased production of livestock, hides, cheese and butter was becoming vitally important in terms of trade - and soon in terms of exports as well. It is therefore not surprising that these transgressions of natural boundaries would later give rise to disputes. The ‚Glarner Bundesbrief‘, or Federal Charter of Glarus, of 1352 mentions the place ‚uf Bergern - the Prageispass‘ for future arbitration proceedings between Glarus and Schwyz. In addition to the Alps of the Silberer, of which there are recordings dating back to 1322, various Klöntal Alps are mentioned for the first time in documents and ‚Alprodels‘ (Alp lists) on the following dates: Aueren in 1350, Rossmatt in 1421, Vorauen with Chlünstalden and Schlattalpli in 1494, Richisau in 1531, Saggberg as well as Ochsenfeld and Dejen in 1547, Güntlenau and Seerüti in 1552, Herberig in 1567 and Planggenalpli in 1710. From around 1300, when 25 Glarus Alps were still owned by Säckingen Abbey and at least as many by free communities, countless mutations - via real estate trading and exchanges - were recorded, and a large number of pasture lands, which had broadened due to being cleared, were divided into several Alps. Today, ownership is clearly defined: the municipalities of Glarus, Netstal, Riedern and Ennenda, as well as corporations, Axpo, private individuals, foundations and the Swiss Confederation own property/land in the Klöntal Valley.

Oberlängenegg, with its combination of military and alpine farming, belongs to the federal government (as do other areas), Vorderrichisau to the Melchior and Katharina Kamm-Menzi family foundation, and thanks to the generosity of the company Fritz+Caspar Jenny AG’s Ida foundation, the former Hotel Klöntal was able to be

1672 – 1680

**1750**

turned into a guesthouse for the Niederurnen school community's holiday camps. In 1983, Fritz Stucki extensively documented the squabbles concerning alpine rights in the Klöntal Valley in Volume 1 of 'Die Rechtsquellen des Kantons Glarus' ('The Legal Sources of the Canton of Glarus').

### Seerütiweg Corporation

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**1788**

### Logging and timber rafting

According to the report on Klöntal from 1788 by Franz Joseph Büeler, logging and timber rafting were hard, even dangerous, trades. The felled trunks would be cut up into three-to-four-foot-long (1 Glarus foot = 30.68 cm) 'Blütsche' (logs) or into eighteen-to-twenty-one-foot-long 'Trämmel'. These were dragged down into the valley by horses and mules in winter. The 'Blütschen', or 'little logs', however, were rafted via the Chlön into the lake, where they were dragged to form a ring of trunks up to 500 cords (1 old cord of wood = 2.91 m3) in size. Then, in Seerüti, 'about 50 men had to cast off the wood in the water and move it on its way', namely from the then wild Löntsch to Riedern (to the so-called Flözerplatz), to Netstal and sometimes to Linth. Before that, the most gruesome work took place in the narrow Büttenentobel, where the wood would often get stuck in the Löntsch river, and a raftsman had to abseil down for double their daily wage... Due to the laborious and arduous nature of this method of transport, felled wood would be burned down to coal in advance in Klöntal and then transported onwards in sacks. Particular field names still refer to this method of processing today. Charcoal burning was carried out until 1860 and timber rafting until 1886.

**1799**

### The march of General Suvorov

It is almost a rite of passage for schoolchildren from Glarus to learn about the Russian General Suvorov, and that he supposedly sunk his treasure at the Bärentritt waterfall so that he could keep moving his weakened army forward faster. The idea is a romantic one, and may have persuaded a few people here and there to think they could somehow find this treasure using diving goggles or an extra strong fishing rod. Treasure or not, one thing is certain: Suvorov never passed by the Bärentritt - the path led along the other side of the



lake. But the historical memory of Suvorov is worth reading up on nonetheless. After the victories of the French troops against the lords of old Bern and the central Swiss, the entire territory of Switzerland was occupied (or liberated - depending on one's political standpoint) in 1798. The Helvetic Republic was proclaimed, which guaranteed political equality, freedom of religion and freedom of the press for its citizens. During the War of the Second Coalition (1799-1802), Austria, Russia and Great Britain, together with other allies, tried to put revolutionary France back in its place and retake areas (Northern Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, left bank of the Rhine) that had been under French influence in recent years. The republican accomplishments in the heart of Europe were a thorn in the sides of the monarchs. It wasn't long before the coalition of allies was able to celebrate its first successes. The French were ousted from Zurich by the Austrians in the First Battle of Zurich, while the Russian general Suvorov was able to achieve success in Northern Italy. In the second half of 1799, the foreign armies began to concentrate their efforts entirely on Switzerland. The coalition's plan envisaged Suvorov invading Switzerland from Italy, driving the French out of the Gotthard Pass and Urnerland and then occupying the Schwyz area with the troops of General Hotze (a Swiss in the service of the Austrian forces), as well as uniting further allies so that they could use their combined strength to defeat the French army under General Masséna. On 15 September, Suworow reached the tavern south of Monte Ceneri in Ticino with around 21,000 men (number uncertain). From here, he set out with 650 mules, around 1,500 Cossacks and 25 light mountain guns towards the Gotthard Pass, where he encountered the French for the first time on 24 September. While Suvorov was successful against the French (who were taken by surprise), by this point he had already lost 1200 men. In keeping with the plan, his army continued to advance, repeatedly engaging in battles with the retreating French. The Schöllenen Gorge between Andermatt and Göschenen was fiercely contested, and a monument commemorating Suvorov's alpine campaign is situated there today. On 26 September, the Russian army reached Altdorf. The fastest route to Schwyz would have been the sea route from here. However, all the ships had been taken away by the French army, which dominated the lake basin with its flotilla. The Axenstrasse didn't exist yet. And so Suvorov decided to reach Schwyz and his allies via the Kinzig Pass and the Muota Valley. The army, badly exhausted after three days of fighting, decamped the next morning and trekked, hungry and rain-soaked, across the Kinzig Pass to the Muota Valley. It was here that Suvorov spoke with the cheese merchant Sebastian Schelbert, who had just returned home via Zurich from a business trip in southern Germany. Schelbert told Suvorov about the defeat of his allies in Zurich and of the Linth, where General Hotze had fallen. Suvorov was in a hopeless situation. His army of less than 20,000 men was trapped in a valley and up against the might of Masséna's army, which boasted over 60,000 men. The plan that had been prepared was no longer viable. With this in mind, the Russian general decided to push forward to his allies in Austria via the Pragel Pass and the Kerenzberg Pass. The wounded were left behind in the Muota Valley. The shoes and socks of the approx. 1,000 captured French soldiers were taken away to help carry Suvorov and his men through the rain and the snow across the Pragel Pass. But the French were already waiting for them in the Klöntal Valley. More fierce fighting followed, resulting in heavy losses. One can appreciate how grueling the fighting in the Klöntal Valley must have been by reading a report from the French

general Mortier, who pursued Suvorov on 5 October, 1799 with his demi-brigade and captured around 100 Russians along Lake Klöntal, as well as coming upon 1800 rifles, eight cannons and a large number of mules and horses that Suvorov's troops had left behind. The Russians were still able to fight their way towards Netsstal in Glarus, but they could not break through the French barrier at Näfels. The bridge over the Linth and the route over the Kerenzerberg were blocked. The Russian army was broken, starving and without ammunition. The only option left was to retreat via the Panix Pass. The Russians, pursued by the French and embroiled in fighting, fled to Elm, and then in the early hours of 6 October, they moved from there across the already snowed-over Panix Pass to Chur, where they at last found sufficient food once more. 6,000 Russian soldiers lost their lives during this month. Many of the survivors arrived in Chur sick or injured. The region of Glarus has been plundered by the foreign armies marching through and so was bereft of food reserves. The starving Russians stole the fruit from the trees, dug in the fields for potatoes and stole pigs, cows and poultry. As the pastor Marcus Freuler reported on the period that followed: 'A great many people were forced to leave their homes upon authorisation of the government and to migrate to other areas of Helvetia, with their starving bodies resembling death itself.' Cantons that had been spared took in children from Glarus to help them recover. In the first five months of 1800, 1,200 children left their family homes and were taken to Basel, Bern, Solothurn and Romandy. Upon arriving in a town, the half-naked children were led to the marketplace. Compassionate residents would choose one 'Ferienkind' ('holiday child'); this process continued until all the children were in someone's care.

### Restaurant in Vorauen

As early as 1810, the Glarus merchant Johann Rudolf Marty, who worked in Riga, had a brick-built restaurant constructed in Vorauen, on the western shore of the lake. In 1856, the municipality of Netstal acquired this restaurant.

### Inns and scheduled ships

Up until the early 19th century, alpine dairy farmers and farmer's wives would - either voluntarily or involuntarily - afford Klöntal 'visitors' makeshift accommodation. This changed quickly, however, and most of the guest establishments listed below can look back on more than 100 years of tradition. In 1895, Ivan von Tschudi also praised the Staldengarten Inn 'with its wonderfully fresh fount' at the entrance to the Klöntal Valley. The inn appears on a postcard that was stamped in 1928, showcasing its two-storey extension that had just been built. From Saggberg, the Glarus Schwammhöchi was once dominated by the alpine hut that was built in 1908 to serve as a concert hall and gambling room. The Schwammhöchi mountain inn, bu-

ilt by the municipality of Glarus, has stood here since 1959. And on the Obersagg, the Glarus-Riedern school community has maintained its holiday home, which was built by the architect Josef Schmid-Lütschg, since 1909. At the eastern end of Lake Klöntal, the municipality of Netstal built the Seerüti inn in 1862, which was rebuilt by the architects Streiff [&] Schindler in 1911 under the name 'Rhodannenberg' following the damming of the lake. The new 'Gasthof-Hotel Rhodannenberg', or 'restaurant-hotel Rhodannenberg', by the architects Zweifel and Leins, was opened in 1984, situated in a slightly elevated, set-back position. As early as 1810, the Glarus merchant Johann Rudolf Marty, who worked in Riga, had a brick-built restaurant constructed in Vorauen, on the western shore of the lake. This building, which was acquired by the municipality of Netstal in 1856, had to make way for the reservoir and was rebuilt further inland in 1913 by master builder Rudolf Stüssi-Aebli with the support of Motor AG. The Hotel-Restaurant Vorauen was renovated in 1958, at the same time as the electrification of the Klöntal Valley, and a pavilion that was designed by architect Walter Schlumpf was added. On 19 October, 1993, Netstal sold the restaurant to longtime tenant Hans Peter Freuler. On the far side of Vorauen, the municipality of Netstal even had a bath house for spa therapy and whey treatments built in 1870, which was run as a branch of the 'Glarnerhof' hotel in Glarus. After being damaged in a fire towards the end of 1883, the house was rebuilt as the Hotel & Pension Klöntal (Klöntal Hotel & Guesthouse). On behalf of the Ida Foundation, architect Hans Leuzinger oversaw the conversion of the building into the Niederurnen holiday home, which was opened in 1925. In 1885, Ernst Buss described the 'Gasthaus Klöntal im Platz' ('Klöntal im Platz inn') as a friendly guesthouse for ordinary people and an excellent staging post for mountaineering activities. This inn has been owned by the Freuler family since 1924. During the summer, the 'Alp Chäseren' also plays hosts to guests. This location is the starting point of the path to the Glärnischhütte of the SAC's Tödi section. An initial shelter point for about 10 people was built on the southern slope of the Usser Fürberg in 1867. In 1885, architect Hilarius Knobel rebuilt the new Glärnischhütte in the Firenplanggen. This was subsequently expanded by Hans Leuzinger in 1931 and refurbished by architect Jakob Jenny in 1985. According to the historian Heinrich Spälti, a whey treatment house has existed in Richisau since about 1830. In any case, Oswald Heer mentioned this mountain house for Scottish cures, which was used extensively by the people of Glarus in Vorderrichisau, in 1846. It was completely rebuilt in 1857 by the old Netstal master builder Jakob Stähli-Bauhofer. His son Fridli Stähli also ran the new Richisau sanatorium from 1874. After a fire in August 1915, the first spa building continued to be used until 1986. The new 'Gasthaus Richisau' ('Richisau guesthouse') building was completed by the architects Kamm + Kündig in 1987, followed by the staff building in 1993. With people beginning to holiday more and more, the Neue Glarner Zeitung (a newspaper) and Lake Klöntal also began being used for tourism purposes. On 30 June 1889, the first steamboat, with space for 12 people, touched down on the water here. It belonged to M. Brunner-Legler, owner of the Glarnerhof and the Klöntal Hotel [&] Guesthouse. A one-way trip from Rhodannenberg to Vorauen or vice versa cost 50 centimes. In 1892, Alfred Strehler from Wollishofen announced that he would be sailing an 18-seater naphta steamboat on the lake every Sunday during the Swiss Federal Shooting Festival in Glarus. The construction of the power plant led to disruptions to shipping. On 28 June, 1912, however, the 9 metre long motor boat Magda, which boasted 10 horsepower and a capacity of twenty people, began

operating on the reservoir again. In 1914, one of Anton Cavelti-Kohler from Riedern's ships could also be seen on the water. A one-way trip would cost 1.00 Swiss Francs, while a return trip would cost 1.50.-. In 1917, the saloon boat Teil, which had previously crossed Lake Lucerne and was described as 'a boat with double cabins and all appropriate comforts and conveniences', was put into service. In 1929, C. Brandenberger from Glarus advertised motor boat trips, as did E. Gübler from Ennetbüchli in 1930. Anna Leuzinger from Netstal also sailed a 'Kursschiff' (a regularly scheduled ship) for a substantial period, and by the end of the fifties, Peter Pecka of Glarus and his motor boat Prigel was the last scheduled ship captain left on Lake Klöntal. The number of private boats has risen to around 150 today, and the speed restriction of 15 km/h has been in effect since 1962.

### Richisau spa house

There was already a small Scottish/whey treatment sanatorium established in Richisau from as early as the 1830s. It consisted of a simple 'Sennhütte', or 'milk station', that offered the predominantly local guests space for overnight stays. The landlord was also an alpine herdsman and dairyman, a combination that is an obvious one. In the beginning it was mainly men who submitted to such cures, staying for a few weeks and sharing a sleeping area in the hay with the herdsman. Since such activities were not seen as appropriate for women, special mountain cabins were later built to accommodate a number of spa guests, enabling women to also partake in such spa treatments. The immediate surroundings, the maple trees, the Alps and the view of Lake Klöntal lent the spa a very special charm, leading to an increasing numbers of guests from outside the canton around the middle of the 19th century. Getting there was made much easier when the mule track was developed to become a small road in 1840 and 1853. The number of guests rose steadily as a result, which is why a larger inn, providing space for around 50 guests, was built in 1856. The actual spa house was then built in 1874. This period is recognised as the heyday of the Richisau spa house. Guests came from Palermo and St. Petersburg to visit the idyllic Klöntal Valley. At the stations in Netstal and Glarus, there were always carriages ready to transport the spa guests to Richisau. At the turn of the 20th century, the Richisau spa house was well furnished in accordance with contemporary expectations concerning comfort. In addition to new bathrooms, there was a post service and telephone in the house. Nevertheless, the spa house saw a steady decline in visitors after the turn of the century.

Around the middle of the 19th century, the Richisau spa house had been something of an insider tip for nature lovers and connoisseurs, mainly because of its seclusion that left it free of the hustle and bustle of a large spa town. On the other hand, those looking for a spa house that offered a swimming pool, tennis court, bowling alley and large so-



cial events such as balls, spa concerts and the like - somewhere you would go to be seen - would be in the wrong place. The trend away from relaxation and towards amusement and pleasure may have contributed to the decline of the Richisau spa house. In 1915, while the owner was away, a fire destroyed the house, sealing its fate. The cause of the fire was unclear. There was speculation at the time that an employee had started the fire at the behest of their absent landlord, with the supposed reason being that it was no longer worthwhile for him to make investments into the business that were long overdue, but that it was very much worthwhile for him to collect the fire insurance money. The Richisau guesthouse continued to operate out of the old house that had been built in 1856 - until the 1980s, in fact. In 1987, under the direction of architect Peter Kamm, the community of heirs built the new Richisau guesthouse, which is open during the summer months.

### Expansion and redevelopment of Prigelstrasse

Between 1841 and 1843, the first expansion of Prigelstrasse into a road to Vorauen took place. A second expansion of Prigelstrasse was carried out between 1868 and 1872. In 1880, the Richisauer Corporation was founded for the purposes of redeveloping its section of Prigelstrasse from the Sulzbachbrücke to Richisau. Further developments of Prigelstrasse and the extension to Richisau came in 1881. In 1888, the Richisauer Corporation, founded in 1880, received 12,000 Swiss Francs of state funding to help redevelop its section from the Sulzbachbrücke to Richisau.-. Since then, applications for the canton to take over responsibility for Klöntalerstrasse always found themselves rejected by the Landsgemeinde (cantonal assembly).



### The largest ice rink far and wide

A sheet of ice covers Lake Klöntal every winter. Ice sports are said to have been popular here since the mid-19th century. Nowadays, the lake is opened up for skating when the ice is at least twelve centimetres thick. In the winters of 1992/93 and 1994/95, the thin ice meant skating on Lake Klöntal was completely forbidden. In 1989, on the other hand, people were able to skate on the ice for a full nine weeks. In 1996, the area was humming with activity from 15 January to 7 February: extra PTT courses run by the Niederer company, the Rhodannenberg inn's sausage and raclette stand by the shore of the lake, spot lighting installed by lake warden Bruno Steiger from 19:00 til 22:15. Also, in December 1949, the members of the Niederurnen ice hockey club, founded in 1948, travelled to Klöntal, along with their bikes and all their equipment, for



training, strengthened by a selection from the Glarus ice skating club. Between 26 December, 1971 and 4 February, 1972, what Felix Stüssi described as the ‚biggest and most beautiful ice rink far and wide‘ made it possible to hold five championship games and even for HCN to achieve promotion to thesecond division.

### The Löntschwerk

A prerequisite for the industrialisation of Glarus was the hydropower used to drive machinery. In order to achieve a regular flow from the Löntsch in winter, the Netsal spinning company Spälty built an initial canal between 1856 and 1859 at the outflow of Lake Klöntal, which seized the water at Güntlenau and steered it into the Löntsch. Between 1895 and 1898, the Löntsch Corporation, which was founded in 1893, then built a second, lower-lying canal and a mechanism through which the lake could be dammed by 45 cm. At the beginning of the 20th century, 18 companies were using this so-called Panama Canal. Prior to that, Glarus, Riedern and Ennenda had been intending since 1892 to exploit the slope of the Löntsch up to the weaving mill in Auli by means of an electricity plant. However, there was initially a lack of planning and financial resources needed for this municipal works. The initiative committee formed in 1898 began conducting evaluations and studies together with the applied electricity company ‚Motor‘ in Baden. Jakob Oberholzer was brought in to serve as a geological consultant. In 1904, Motor AG and its then director, engineer Agostino Nizola from Lugano, presented the „ingenious“ project:



1. the largest possible damming of Lake Klöntal by a 217-meter-long earth dam at Rhodannenbergr, overflow tower with basic drainage tunnel into the Löntsch, 740 meters west of it at the Ruestelchopf head of the water reservoir, in the 4.13 km long pressure tunnel driven into the Wiggis rock 7 metres below the original level of the lake, process water reaches the surge tank at a rate of 20 cubic metres per second; from here, it flows in iron pressure lines to the turbine building in Netstal, which is 329 meters lower down. - 2. Utilization of the entire slope of the Löntsch, from the lake to Netstal in one step and thus - in return for compensation of equal value - the elimination of small waterworks and commercial operations. - 3. Combination of the Löntsch plant as a peak load power station for operation in winter (high-pressure accumulation station) with the low pressure run-of-river plant ‚Beznau an der Aare‘, which was also built by Motor AG and put into operation in 1902. On 31 October, the municipalities of Glarus, Riedern and Ennenda granted Motor AG the license to utilise the hydropower of the Löntsch. The water rights of the municipality of Netstal were supplanted by contract on 7 May, 1905. The latter also granted permission to exploit Lake Klöntal up to a spot height of 848.2 m above sea level. The largest accumulator station in Switzerland before the First World War was built by Motor AG between 1905 and 1908, and work on the dam continued until 1911. Commissioning was carried out on 1 July, 1908 by Kraftwerke Beznau Löntsch AG. On 1 October, 1914, ownership of the plant passed from this company to the newly founded Nordostschweizerische Kraftwerke AG (NOK). In 1915, the governing council of Glarus gave NOK authorisation to increase the height of the dam by 1.5 metres. Today, the usable lake volume is 39.8 million

cubic metres. After more than 60 years in operation, the Löntsch power plant was rebuilt from 1971 to 1982, but without any significant changes to the overall concept from 1904. A part of the pressure tunnel, the surge tank, pressure shaft and pressure lines, control centre with underwater channel and the 50 kV outdoor substation were reconstructed. Two vertical-axis Francis turbines, each with an output of 30.7 MW (1 MW equals 1000 kW) and an intake capacity of 10 cubic metres per second, are installed in today’s headquarters, as is a horizontal-axis Pelton turbine with an output of 4.4 MW at 1.4 cubic metres per second - the maximum possible generator output is 60 MW with the two main engine groups at full load. The technically updated power plant is operated remotely from the Grynau substation. An agreement was made with the licensing municipalities for them to waive their ability to assert their right to repurchase the Löntsch plant until 2038. Peter Schlittler-Bartel © Baeschlin Bücher AG

### Glaciers from 1862 to 1953

In the winter of 1862, when Gabriel Leuzinger of Netstal (1827-1891) went onto the black and frozen Lake Klöntal - which was not mingled with or covered in a layer of snow - and sawed ice into square pieces, took crystal-clear blocks of ice with him to Netstal and kept them will insulated until the summer, people laughed at him. But by the 1870s, Lake Klöntalersee was already considered the best ice reservoir in Switzerland. During long cold spells, it was occasionally possible to break off ice from frozen ponds and lakes situated on the Swiss Plateau; however, fluctuating temperatures made regular ice extraction impossible. Lake Davos, on the other hand, froze over every winter, and from 1890/91 it was possible to load the ice, which was also clear and only rarely interspersed with snow, onto the Rhaetian Railway near the lake: there are records of commercial ice pulling taking place here from 1878 /79 to 1938. Glaciers at Lake Klöntal soared from being part of a modest trade to being part of an impressive industry. Between autumn and spring, more and more people were engaged in extracting, transporting and trading the ice. Large ‚Gletscherhütten‘ (‚glacier huts‘) along the lake (as well as in Glarus and Netstal) also served as inventory and supply units. The blocks of ice were brought to Netstal and Glarus in wagons and transported by train to not only Zurich and Basel, but also to Frankfurt, Cologne, Paris and Marseille. In March 1873, the Neue Glarner Zeitung reported: ‚This year’s extraordinarily mild winter has helped many of our workers line their pockets, for over the last three months in Netstal alone, 100,000 centners of ice have been dispatched to all corners for tidy sums. With its very own (white) gold rush, Lake Klöntal has become a bonafide California. Everybody wants to strike it rich... Mr. CA Bauer in Zurich (an ice exporter) is paying up to 6,000 Swiss Francs a week in labor and transport costs in Netstal alone.->. In 1877 it was written that, ‚Thanks to the persistently mild winter, ice exports have increased significantly. In Glarus alone, at least 2000 wagonloads, each containing 200 centners of ice, have been shipped all over the world, resulting in total revenue of over 300,000.‘ On 26 February of the same year, it was reported that: ‚According to a count that was undertaken, an enormous total of 306 wagons, including 105 carriages and pairs, were on the road today. Several hundred labourers are hard at work with ice saws and loaders. The return of colder skies means the large-scale

exploitation of ice can continue. Last Thursday saw 250 horses being used... long rows of wagons can be seen stretching from the Löntschbrücke at the outflow of the lake and all the way into Güntlenau... in Glarus and Netstal combined, there were over 500 draught animals on the roads.' Faced with this amount of movement, the police implemented a one-way traffic rule. Depending on its quality, a centner of ice cost between 30 centimes and 1.50 Swiss Francs, free of all charges at the railway station. It is interesting that ocean liner companies also made use of Klöntal ice, with this being because it is said to have been cheaper than ice from northern countries. Entrepreneur Thomas Hösl's statement shows that, in 1898, it was not just the ice sawers (daily wage of 4.00 to 6.00 Swiss Francs) or the carters (up to 15.00) who were earning a living from extracting ice. In just one good winter, he made a net profit of 22,000 Swiss Francs. - Ice exporters also included Melchior Kamm in Netstal, Farbmüller Oertli in Riedern and Adlerwirt Streiff in Glarus. Regulations were then introduced, and from 1877, in addition to the ice toll of 2 to 5 centimes per centner, a road use charge of 1.00 for one-horse carriages and 2.00 for carriages and pairs began being levied. The distribution of this revenue - which amounted to 11,676 Swiss Francs between 1879 and 1895 - was disputed between the corporations and the regions, because maintaining the roads cost many times as much. Damage to the roads was mainly caused by the brake chains - the so-called 'Kretzer' - that were attached to the sleigh runners when descending. A court case arose involving the municipality of Netstal, which 'regarded the lake - and therefore the ice, too - as property of the municipality'; for that reason, they issued a 'Rechtsbot' (legal statute) - albeit without success. After the damming of the lake and the emergence of ice machines and cold storage in the 1930s, the demand for Klöntal ice steadily decreased. 10,000 centners of ice were delivered in 1940 and 5,000 in 1948, mainly to the depots of local breweries. From 7-10 January, 1953, the final haul, which amounted to 3,000 kilocentners, was delivered to the ice cellar of the Wädenswil brewery in Glarus.

**1862**
**Wirtschaft Seerüti - Rhodannenbergr**

At the eastern end of Lake Klöntal, the municipality of Netstal constructed the 'Wirtschaft Seerüti', or the 'Seerüti public house', in 1862. After the damming of the lake, the public house was rebuilt by the architects Streiff [&] Schindler in 1911 under the name 'Rhodannenbergr'. The new 'Gasthof-Hotel Rhodannenbergr', or 'restaurant-hotel Rhodannenbergr', by the architects Zweifel and Leins, was opened in 1984, situated in a slightly elevated, set-back position.


**1865**
**Glarus textile industry**

The textile industry once dominated economic life in the canton of Glarus and, in its heyday, employed up to a third of the entire population. Crises and competitors that were able to produce the same products and materials much more cheaply

led to decline and near-ruin. The Glarus textile industry came into being in the 18th century and developed rapidly thanks to the large number of workers available, but also thanks to the large volumes of water that were needed to wash out dyed and printed cloth and to drive the machines. The industry hit its peak in 1865: almost a third of the 35,000 inhabitants of the canton were working across 22 printing works and 24 spinning and weaving mills. Both trading companies in Glarus and the manufacturers themselves took care of the worldwide distribution of the printed materials (= fabric prints) and were opening up new markets all the time. From 1870 things began to go downhill, which affected the entire textile industry, but above all the textile printing works, which were almost entirely dependent on exports. Today, only a handful of weaving mills and a single textile printing works remain in Glarus. The brightly printed Glarus fabrics were part of Eva Bärtschi's childhood on the Burgstrasse in Glarus. She often stood on the walkway in the 'Wuer', the bank reinforcement, and looked in amazement at the coloured water - waste water that came from the textile printing works: the Linth would be red, then blue, then green or even violet. Thanks to a new process, which Paul Bättig, an employee of Mitlödi Textil AG, had told her about, fabric printing was set to be awakened from its slumber and revived. She wanted to develop a textile product - 'woven, printed, sewn and sold in the canton of Glarus'. In Elisabeth Knobel, she found the ideal business partner. Three local textile companies are working together to produce the new Glarus fabrics. The pattern now used comes from the inventory of Freuler Palace in Näfels - the Glarus State Museum, to be precise. It can be found in the model book for the years 1832 to 1843 from the Egidius Trümpy company, Oberdorf, Glarus. The motif is a west-east liaison and shows native wild roses in connection with East Indian rolled palm leaves. Further information and products from the collection can be found at [www.glarner-art.ch](http://www.glarner-art.ch)

**1867**
**Club hut on the Glärnisch**

During the summer, the 'Alp Chäseren' also plays hosts to guests. This location is the starting point of the path to the Glärnischhütte of the SAC's Tödi section. An initial shelter point for about 10 people was built on the southern slope of the Usser Fürberg in 1867. In 1885, architect Hilarius Knobel rebuilt the new Glärnischhütte in the Firenplanggen. This was subsequently expanded by Hans Leuzinger in 1931 and refurbished by architect Jakob Jenny in 1985.

**1868 - 1931**
**Glärnischhütte**

- Bei der Abbildung handelt es sich um Hütte 3, nach 1931
- 1868 Glärnischhütte 1 SAC (Hütte unter dem Stein)
- 1885 Glärnischhütte 2 (als Winterhütten in Hütte 3 [&] 4 noch vorhanden)
- 1931 Glärnischhütte 3 Neubau in Stein, eingeschlossen Hütte 2)
- 1987 Glärnischhütte 4 Erweiterung der Hütte 3)



1870 – 1883

**Spa house - Klöntal Hotel & Guesthouse**

On the far side of Vorauen, the municipality of Netstal had a bath house for spa therapy and whey treatments built in 1870, which was run as a branch of the ‚Glarnerhof‘ hotel in Glarus. After being damaged in a fire towards the end of 1883, the house was rebuilt as the Hotel & Pension Klöntal (Klöntal Hotel & Guesthouse). On behalf of the Ida Foundation, architect Hans Leuzinger oversaw the conversion of the building into the Niederurnen holiday home, which was opened in 1925.

1875 – 1899

**Allocation of Klöntal Valley to municipality I**

The question of allocating the Klöntal Valley to a municipality first came about in 1875, namely when the cantonal constitution was intended to be revised, but remained unresolved following the constitutional revision that was adopted in 1887. The impetus for the arrangement we still see today came in 1899, when the cantonal building department ordered the formation of the Eggliruns Corporation. In the process, it was determined that the unclear constitutional situation could only be remedied if the Klöntal was assigned to a ‚Tagwen‘ (see <https://www.glarusfamilytree.com/worth-knowing>). After Riedern had renounced their claim, the advantages and disadvantages of Netstal and Glarus were weighed against one other. After thorough legal examinations and taking into account previous administrative regulations and the geographical location, the governing council came to the conclusion that the Klöntal Valley should be put under the control of both the Glarus Tagwen and the political municipality of Glarus. The people of Netsal could not accept this decision and appealed to the cantonal parliament. In the community at the foot of Wiggis peak, people were furious, exclaiming: ‚Now the people of Glarus have stolen the Klöntal Valley from us!‘



1885

**Klöntal im Plätz inn**

In 1885, Ernst Buss described the ‚Gasthaus Klöntal im Plätz‘ (‚Klöntal im Platz inn‘) as a friendly guesthouse for ordinary people and an excellent staging post for mountaineering activities..

1889

**Scheduled boats I**

With people beginning to holiday more and more, Lake Klöntal began being used for tourism purposes. On 30 June 1889, the first steamboat, with space for 12 people, touched down on the water here. It belonged to M. Brunner-Legler, owner of the Glarnerhof and the Klöntal Hotel [&] Guesthouse. A one-way trip from Rhodannenbergl to Vorauen or vice versa cost 50 centimes. In 1892, Alfred



1893

Strehler from Wollishofen announced that he would be sailing an 18-seater naphta steamboat on the lake every Sunday during the Swiss Federal Shooting Festival in Glarus. The construction of the power plant lead to disruptions to shipping.

**Skiing over the Pragel for the first time**

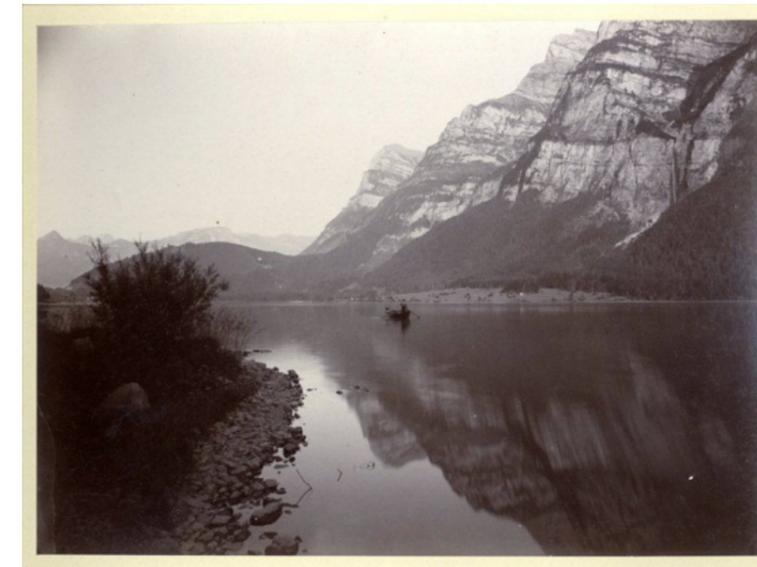
Glarus is the birthplace of Swiss ski sports. Before the ski club was founded on 22 November, 1893, Christof Iselin undertook a winter trip over the Pragel Pass on 28/29 February, 1893 along with SAC friends from Glarus and Winterthur. Three of the pioneers were equipped with Norwegian snowshoes (skis), while one was using snow tyres that were common at the time. The test turned out in favour of the skis. In 1903, 1904 and 1905, the ski club even organised ski races from the Muota Valley to Glarus via the Pragel Pass and the Schwammhöchi. In 1946, the editor-in-chief of the sport, Colonel Carl Erb, picked up on the idea. In 1947, the ‚Pragellauf‘ (‚Pragel race‘) was held again - but with the involvement of military patrols for the first time. In 1949, 283 individual competitors and 16 patrols lined up at the start of the race. Andermatt native Franz Regli achieved the best time (1 hour and 33.34

minutes), the fastest military patrol (Wallisers R. Zurbriggen) took 2 hours and 12.47 minutes, which included the shooting competition on the Schwammhöchi. Celebrated in the press as the ‚biggest race in Central Europe‘, this ski competition was held five times and had to be postponed six times due to either a lack of snow, too much snow, danger of avalanches or heavy rainfall. These numerous postponements eventually led to the definitive cancellation of the famous winter Pragel race.



1900

**Klöntalersee**



**Pragel discussions II**

1860, 1864, 1872 and 1890 saw frequent motions from one side or the other regarding the issue of ‚Pragelstrasse‘. They failed each time because of the priority given to inner-cantonal road construction - Axenstrasse and Gotthard for the people of Schwyz, Klausen and Kerenzer for the people of Glarus.

A joint submission was made to the federal government on 31 October, 1900. In the summer of 1902, the flag was raised proudly above the town hall in Glarus when officials from both cantons gave cause for renewed optimism following a joint inspection. Subsequently, cost estimates and projects were drawn up again - like in 1913, 1915 and 1927. In 1934, the attempt to have Pragelstrasse included in the Swiss alpine road programme failed. After a ‚Pragelbahn‘ (‚Pragel tram‘) had already been discussed in 1906, it was suggested in 1911 and 1912 that public transport be run between Brunnen and Glarus over the Pragel Pass. Two applications for concessions were submitted to the Federal Council.

One involved an electric tram (the E.Frote and Co. company from Zurich), the other ‚a track-free motorway for running buses‘ (Römer [&] Isler company from Zurich). Despite there being a consultation in which Glarus decided in favor of the electric tram, these projects never went any further. When, in 1939, the federal government approved 70 percent subsidies for a Pragelstrasse, which the representatives of the two cantons in Bern had campaigned heavily for, the people of Glarus counted on the goodwill of their neighbors and extended the rear section of Klöntalerstrasse up to the cantonal border. On 30 November, 1947, the people of Schwyz agreed to the construction and maintenance of a 4.6 metre wide Pragelstrasse - and then nothing happened. From 1970 to 1974, the Schwyz Pragelstrasse was constructed by a number of military engineers. After the commander of Reduit Brigade 24 had commissioned his staff in 1968 to look into a connecting road from the Muota to the Linth, Brigadier Claus Cramer initiated cooperation with civil authorities based on the positive results of his internal feasibility study and in agreement with the commander of Geb AK3. The project for the 8.6 km long and 3.5 metre wide road, which was not intended for tourism purposes, stemmed from the Schwyz road construction office. The developer was the Oberallmeindkorporation, and the contractors were WK (reservists) and EK (‚Einsatzkommando‘, or ‚task force‘) troops. The construction was supervised by Chief Forester W. Kälin, operational management was overseen by the Brigade’s chief of military engineering, Lieutenant Colonel Härtsch, and by the Commander of ‚Genie-Abteilung‘ (Military engineers division) 64, Major H. Rauch. Over those four years, the military put in 102,914 man hours and 14,675 machine hours. The Blick headline from 18 September, 1974 read: ‚Pragelstrasse finished - and no one wants it anymore!‘. On 2 October, 1974, corps commander Fritz Wille handed over the road to Schwyz Landammann Xaver Reichmuth on the Pragel Pass. In the same month, doctors in Schwyz, with the support of their colleagues in Glarnus, began to oppose the expected final expansion of Pragel and the ‚coffee tourism‘ that



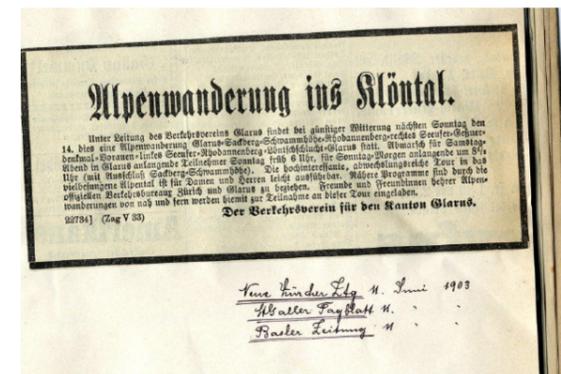
would follow. From 1975 civil authorities tarmacked the surface, and in 1976 the road, which is 1550 metres above sea level and leads over the Pass, was opened up to tourists as well. Because of the constantly increasing level of traffic, the people of Glarus did not agree at all with the road being open continuously. However, the Schwyz authorities were of the opinion that their neighbours were forced by law to accept traffic from the Pragel. An ETH report supported the people of Glarus’ stance. Since 1978, the 800 meter stretch of road between the canton border and Richisau has been closed to motorized through traffic on Saturdays and Sundays. On 3 October, 1981, the Swiss Federal Tribunal ruled in favor of this weekend driving ban in Glarus. Peter Schlittler-Bartel

**Allocation of Klöntal Valley to municipality II**

The people of Netstal could not accept the decision of 1899, which subordinated the Klöntal Valley to the municipality of Glarus, and lodged an appeal with the district administrator. In the community at the foot of Wiggis peak, people were furious, exclaiming: ‚Now the people of Glarus have stolen the Klöntal Valley from us!‘ But despite this, on 15 October, 1902, the cantonal parliament legally and definitively assigned the Klöntal Valley to the Tagwen Glarus with a vote of 37 to 16. On occasion, the people of Netstal will still - albeit light-heartedly - refer to the legend of the ‚stolen Klöntal!‘



**Alpine hike into the Klöntal Valley**



**The construction site of the reservoir dam**



1909

**Construction of Glarus holiday home on Saggberg**

Glarus-Riedern school community has maintained its holiday home on the Obersagg, which was built by the architect Josef Schmid-Lütschg, since 1909.



**‚Rhodanneberg‘**

After the damming of the lake, the public house that was built in 1862 was rebuilt by the architects Streiff [&] Schindler in 1911 under the name ‚Rhodannenbergl‘.



**Scheduled boats II**

After shipping was interrupted due to the construction of the power plant at the end of the 19th century, on June 28, 1912, the 20-seater motor boat Magda began operated on the reservoir once again. In 1914, one of Anton Cavelti-Kohler from Riedern’s ships could also be seen on the water. A one-way trip would cost 1.00 Swiss Franc, while a return trip would cost 1.50 Swiss Francs. In 1917, the saloon boat Teil, which had previously crossed Lake Lucerne, was put into service. Other captains tried their luck, but regular shipping on Lake Klöntal came to an end with Peter Pecka from Glarus towards the end of the 1950s. The number of private boats has risen to around 150 today, and the speed restriction of 15 km/h has been in effect since 1962.



**Restaurant in Vorauen II**

1913 – 1993

This restaurant in Vorauen, which was acquired by the municipality of Netstal in 1856, had to make way for the reservoir and was rebuilt further inland in 1913 by master builder Rudolf Stüssi-Aebli with the support of Motor AG. The Hotel-Restaurant Vorauen was renovated in 1958, at the same time as the electrification of the Klöntal Valley, and a pavilion that was designed by architect Walter Schlumpf was added. On 19 October, 1993, Netstal sold the restaurant to longtime tenant Hans Peter Freuler.



**The Post has arrived**

On 15 June, 1914, two yellow PostBus coaches left Glarus for the Klöntal Valley. ‚The PostBus horn sounded and the first concessionaire, coachman Heinrich Marti, banged his wheel and cried: hop on, hop on!‘, read the newspaper report. Up until 15 September, one could have traveled to Vorauen every day in an elegant landau: Glarus from 09:15, Hotel Klöntal at 11:30, with taxi stations in Riedern, Staldengarten and Rhodanneberg. Price for one-way ticket: 3 Swiss Francs.-. At the same time, in 1914, an accountable Post repository with the place name Klönthal was set up in Vorauen and a traveler registration office was set up in Rhodanneberg. After the mobilisation, the post offices were initially dissolved and the ‚Pferdepost‘ (‚horse mail‘) was discontinued. In 1927, the postal carriage connection to the Klöntal Valley was resumed. Gottfried Büttler drove the first PostBus, a coach with 18 seats and a canvas roof since 1928. In the first year of operation, 4200 passengers were registered. In 1935, Karl Enz took over the PTT license, and the number of passengers increased to 4462 in 1937. Only the one in Vorauen was reopened as a post office in 1941 with the now common spelling Klöntal, the postal code 8750 was added in 1964 and then the office was unfortunately closed on 16 October, 1993. The PostBus has been going through Richisau since 1948. From 1969, the Niederer company from Filzbach held the PTT concession. The number of daily routes from June to October has increased tremendously, especially during the summer holidays. Martin Oswald has been a friendly stage-coachman to the Klöntalpost for 29 years, which the connection between the two being as strong as that between the lake and the valley. In 1995, together with his colleagues who take over for him or reinforce the routes with additional vehicles, he transported a total of 31,612 passengers back and forth on time and without any accidents.



**Fishermen and friends of the Klöntal Valley**

The problems of fishing management, fishing methods and fishing gear, as well

1921

as the changing legislation that arose in increasing numbers after the lake was dammed, encouraged the association of fishermen to form an interest group. This group was born in the fishermen's home between Sulzbach and the lake that was built in 1921. This wooden house was the first non-commercial building in the whole of the Klöntal Valley. It still stands behind the campsite and triggered the construction of holiday homes, which was stopped when the spatial planning law came into force. However, the 'Association of Klöntal Fishermen' was not officially founded until 17 June, 1928 in the Rhodannenbergn inn. Its first president was Hans Wild, the first secretary was the recorder for the municipality, Jean Müller. In the fishermen's home they hatched the plan to merge with trader Adolf Graf, manufacturer Heinrich Streiff-Voegeli from the bleachery and director Schaffner from the thermal baths. 24 men decided to promote fishing in the Klöntal Valley and to represent the interests of fishermen and boat owners vis-à-vis the canton, the municipalities and the NOK. Over the years, tens of thousands of whitefish, trout, pike and pike brood were introduced, with whitefish and trout from the hatchery placed in 1893 on the ground floor of the town hall (!) in Glarus, the pike from the Gäsi and the hatchery in Weesen. The catch yields fluctuated greatly. There were extreme numbers between 1934 and 1994: Fish species: Trout Pike Whitefish Relig Total amount min. 32 74 50 1070 1226 kg.

min. 60 174 29 190 453 amount max. 245 216 8237 3816 7114 kg. max. 245 331 778

422 1776 With the large increase in fishing as a pastime, the emerging mass tourism and the expansion of campsites, the association has been taking care of keeping the water and the landscape clean since 1961. In 1965, the statutes were changed and the association was renamed 'Fischer und Freunde des Klöntals' ('Anglers and Friends of the Klöntal Valley'). The bustling activity for 'The Klöntal Valley, today, tomorrow and in the future' allowed the number of members to grow to 300 by 1969. In the canton, the speed for boats was limited to 15 km/h. Their greatest success is the 'Clean Klöntal - help out!' campaign, which has been carried out from 1970 to the present day. To this end, notice boards and rubbish bins procured by the association display this slogan, along with the 'lake cleaning' that is carried out. The number of members has since grown to 600. For the approx. 120 active fishermen, the problems with lake in terms of use by tourists and the electricity industry are the same today as they were in the past. For example, the targets set with the renewal of the concession in terms of dam heights were not achieved

because ecology and economy could not be reconciled. Other postulates have been fulfilled or are still disputed today. There are also frequent disagreements among fishermen and experts about management (e.g. pike or trout lakes).

**Fishing 'in the most beautiful fjord in the world'**



'This is the most beautiful fjord in the world!' This was the exclamation of a well-travelled Polish general in exi-

1912

le in the late summer of 1952, when he looked down on Lake Klöntal from the Glarner Schwammhöchi. Originally there were supposedly only cottids and trout in the Klöntal Valley. Later, concerted efforts were made to add pike, bream, perch, whitefish, swallows, greenfinches and minnows. Pike shooting, mentioned in the Trumpy Chronicle in 1774, was permitted until the end of the last century.

**Klöntalersee**

1932

**Credit for the extension of Klöntalerstrasse**



In 1940 the Landsgemeinde decided on a loan of 1,005,000 Swiss Francs for the expansion of the Klöntalerstrasse and the Corporation accepted the route cut contribution of Swiss Francs that had been imposed upon it. -

**Construction of the cable car from Richisau to the Gutentalbogen**

The valley between the Gotthard and Gonzen fortresses near Sargans has always played an important role in the national defence of Switzerland. Before the Second World War, Colonel Karl Brunner drew attention to the importance of a road connection from the Muotatal Valley to the Linthtal Valley. When the reduit was occupied according to the Rütli report from 25 July, 1940, the absence of this road was clearly evident because a possible closure of the Linth plain would have made the connection from one reduit part to the other very difficult. The Glärnisch combat group, formed at that time under Colonel Baeschlin from Glarus, built a cable car from Richisau over the Prangel to Gutentalboden in 1940 as an emergency solution, which at least improved the supply of material and ammunition. With dynamic spatial defense forming a core element of 'Armee 95', the reduit idea has now become obsolete. The remains of the large cable car station to the rear side of Richisau have survived to this day as something of a monument.

**Vorauen and Güntlenau campsites**

Around 1950, lone wolves would pitch their tents at the rear side of Lake Klöntal

1950

to enjoy weekends or holidays in the great outdoors. The number of gable tents, which were simple in design back then, increased rapidly. In 1951, the owners of the open-air dwellings organized themselves to found the ‚Zelt-Klubs Glarnerland‘ (‚Glarus Tent Club‘). A groundskeeper would ensure order was kept in Vorauen as much as possible. His most difficult task, and the one for which he would receive most criticism, was the maintenance and transfer of the latrines. The Sulzbach served as a washing area. The increasingly modern and luxurious tent complexes, to which caravans were added from 1964, occupied an increasing amount of space in front of the fishermen’s home and the neighbouring holiday homes. On the initiative of the ‚Association of Fishermen and Friends of the Klöntal Valley‘, and with the support of Glarus, Netstal and Riedern, a modest WC was built in 1962 - mainly through voluntary efforts by the members of the tent club and an interest-free loan of 10,000 Swiss Francs from the municipality of Glarus - along with a washing bay and septic tank. The infrastructure was constantly being improved and a kiosk was set up. Finally, the current house and its sanitary facilities was built in the forest behind the campsite. With the connection of the sewage pipe to the sewage treatment plant built by Glarus in 1993 for the lower part of the rear side of the Klöntal Valley, a big step was taken in terms of water pollution control. In Güntlenau, too, a sparsely frequented campsite, initially located directly on the lake, has since 1949 developed into a larger operation affiliated with the tent club. For many users, this place below the Chalttali is considered a special oasis of calm, with the gullies roaring here and there and during thunderstorms the elements of nature break through more than they did in the past. The infrastructure has also been constantly improved, and instead of simple gabled tents, perfected tent constructions are now available during the season around a purposefully furnished campground house. Modern camping has become an important part of the Klöntal recreation scene, even if, as in all areas of tourism in the Klöntal Valley, it can get very busy at certain times.

**The Klöntaler Bergschwinget**

At the annual general meeting of the Glarus-Mittelland wrestling club in 1955, it was decided to hold a Klöntal mountain wrestling event - instead of the autumn wrestling event that was tradition back then - for the first time in 1956 and later every two years.

**Introduction of the school bus**

In 1955, the school bus was introduced to serve as functional support for mountain farmers. Every day the bus brings schoolchildren to Glarus and back.

**Vespa gatherings**

1955

1955

1956

**Electricity at long last**

There have been telephones in the valley since 1889, with the bath houses being the first to receive them. But: ‚It may be seen as a quirk of fate that, in the same place where the waters of an entire valley flow together into a clear mountain lake, and from there, foaming and frothing, are chased through the pressure line into the turbines of the Löntsch power plant in Netstal to generate electricity, a entire section of the valley has lived for 50 years without the product being generated from its very own water‘. This was written in 1958 by the then editor of the Neue Glarner Zeitung, after many figures from the worlds of politics and business had gotten together in Vorauen the day before.

In three inns, 14 farms, 25 stables and 26 holiday homes, the oil lamps and stable lanterns were finally replaced with electric lighting.

**‚Schwammhöchi‘ restaurant**

Since 1959, the Schwammhöchi mountain inn, built by the municipality of Glarus, has stood here on the site of the mountain hut that was constructed in 1908.

**Hiking trail along the Löntsch**

Since 1962, the hiking trail along the Löntsch has been expanded by various organizations in such a way that it is now possible to take the path into the Klöntal Valley by foot via an idyllic route off the main route.

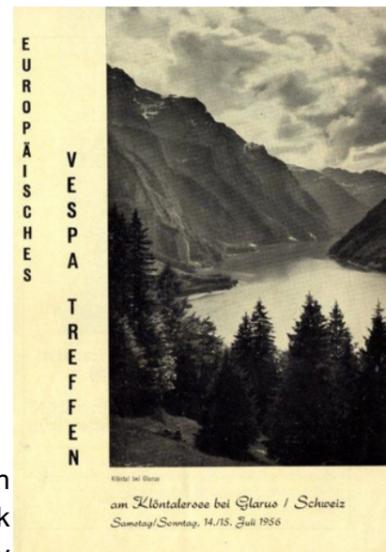
**Rhodannenberg‘ - new building**

The new ‚Gasthof-Hotel Rhodannenberg‘, or ‚restaurant-hotel Rhodannenberg‘,

1958

1959

1962



1984

by the architects Zweifel [&] Leins, is opened in 1984, situated in a slightly elevated, set-back position.



**The Prigel mountain run**

Since 1985, the Riedern ski club has been conducting the Prigel mountain run in August. Around 200 participants from all over Switzerland and abroad tackle the 23 kilometre long race. The demanding route is also part of the official Swiss mountain running championship SGVL.

**PRIGEL-CUP**  
Muotatal



**Agriculture**

The seclusion in winter is a characteristic feature of Klöntal agriculture. In addition, the climate is much harsher than it is in Glarus, for example. There is more rainfall. In winter, many buildings fall under the shadow of the Glärnisch for several months. From 1 November to 10 February, not a single ray of sunshine hits the keeper's house at Rhodannenberg, where the weather station of the NOK is housed. The farmhouses on the rear side of the Klöntal Valley are slightly elevated above the valley floor. But they also have very little sun in winter. Livestock farming is practiced in the Klöntal Valley. The milk is taken to Glarus twice a day in the summer and once a day in the winter. Today there are still six farms that operate in the Klöntal Valley all year round. Two other companies have their main focus here. In addition, three valley farms use larger areas in the Klöntal Valley. A total of 200 hectares of land are still used by these farms in the Klöntal, 10% of them as pasture land, the rest is mowed and mostly grazed from time to time. If the areas are taken into account proportionally, 260 livestock units are kept on the 200 hectares of usable area in the Klöntal (one livestock unit corresponds to a 600 kg cow). The Alps are an essential part of Glarus agriculture. The opportunity for summer grazing for a large portion of their animals takes strain off the farms. The feed yield of the meadows can be used as fodder in winter, the animals on the alps do not burden the valley operations during this time. Without alpine pastures, 15% fewer animals would be able to be kept in the canton of Glarus. The income base of farms would be correspondingly narrower. According to the alp register in 1962, a total of 8,515 kg of butter and 12,389 kg of raw butter were produced in the Klöntal Alps. In 1995, the Klöntal Alps produced 10,606 kg of butter 8 and 11,010 kg of whey butter. The changes are remarkably small, although otherwise much has changed in agriculture. The Planggenalpli is a special kind of alpine pasture. It is a 'Heualp' in the Herberig area. The lands are mowed and not grazed. Up to around 1770, 36 stacks were driven up the alps, since then there has been a cut in usage. The hay is lowered into the valley as hay

**Schneeschuh-Lauf**

1985

2000

2010

2010

2011

bales on ropes. In the Alpine register of 1962, the Heualp is listed as an area of 265 hectares (it should probably read 26.5 hectares). In a survey of the Heualpen on behalf of the cantonal office for environmental protection in 1990, it was found that an area of 25 hectares was still able to be mown. Of these, 8 hectares are still regularly mowed today.

Peter Zopfi © Baeschlin Bücher AG

**Social media**

Hotel Rhodannenberg is now on Facebook, too!



**Picture book Klöntal Dream Perspectives**

With this illustrated book, it was possible to capture the mysterious valley in pictures and make it come alive for more people. Panorama photographs illustrate the natural spectacle of the Klöntal Valley, historically and geographically well-founded texts accompany the images.



**The 'Ice Dream Express' is coming!**

The Ice Dream Express, also known as the 'Glanceboot', sells ice cream on Lake Klöntal. Starting at the Rhodannenberg, past the front and right side of the lake, as well as in front of and behind the Güntlenau campsite, to the fountains at the back.



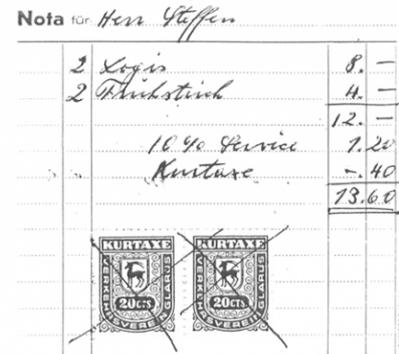
04/08/2011 Klöntal APP / Traumweg APP

2011

Over the years, a variety of recreational activities, such as the Dream Path ('Traumpfad'), have been created. On arrival in the Klöntal, guests select one of the three Dream Paths. Precise GPS tracking leads them from one information point to the next. Once they arrive at an information point, they will find out many interesting facts about where they are. Nearly 50 interesting locations await, with interesting information about Klöntal history and geology in store alongside general information.



**Old restaurant receipt**



**Hotel Rhodannenberg renovation**

The construction work on the Hotel Rhodannenberg continues! Thank you in advance for your understanding. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or suggestions. We look forward to welcoming you!



2014

2014