

History of the Hofgut Sternen



The past history of the Hofgut Sternen, formally known as the “Wirtshaus unter der Steig” is closely linked to the opening up of the road through the “Höllental” (hell’s Valley) into the Black Forest. The situation of the St. Oswald Chapel (dating from 1148) suggests that an earlier road probably went past this chapel and on through Hell’s Valley.

It was most likely not more than a dirt path and very dangerous. In 1734 the town of Freiburg tried to force the government (at that time this part of the country belonged to the Austrian Empire) to improve the road but this did not happen until 1754/55, when a better route was built as a post route and for the transport of goods.

In May 1770, the Hofgut Sternen has its greatest hour with the arrival of the bridal train of Marie-Antoinette. This bridal train consisted of 21 elegant coaches, 36 wagons and 450 horses. Marie-Antoinette, the daughter of Maria-Theresa, the Empress of Austria, was on her way to Paris from Vienna to marry King Louis the XVI of France. This bridal train in the grounds of the inn must have been a sight to see.

Other “stars” stopped at the famous Hofgut Sternen in the following years – e.g.- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe stayed twice and indeed the inn played an important role in the international tourism of the time, with visits from such personages as the Emperor Napoleon III or the English poet, Anthony Trollope.

With the coming of motorisation for each and everyone of us, the distances and the dangerous curves and gradients have become less and have lost their horrors.