



PEOPLE OF BOHINJ AND LEATHER

The Technical Museum of Slovenia exhibition
People of Bohinj and Leather is on display
in Godec's House in Bohinjska Bistrica,
where a leather craft workshop was
operating in the first half of the 20th century.



Roš, a piece of leather imprinted with a number, from Sodja Tannery



In front of Sodja's House

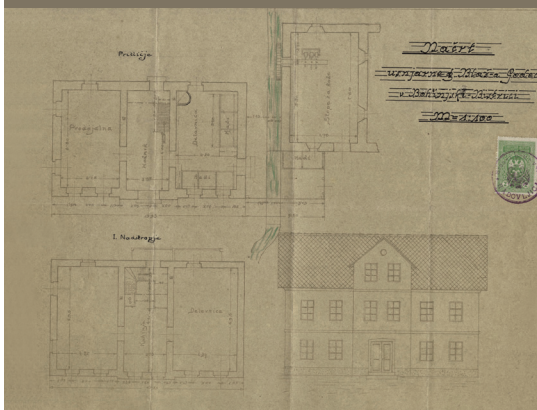
Sodja Tannery

At the end of the 19th century, Jožef Sodja, or Skalovec, from the upper part of the village tanned skins for the people of Bohinj.

After he died in 1902, his son Ivan Sodja continued the leather craft. In 1939, his son Nikolaj took over the business, but in 1944, he had to flee from execution to Carinthia. Both the workshop and the shop were confiscated after the war.

Godec Tannery blueprint from 1927

Godec's House



Godec Tannery

Jurij Godec, the first owner, arranged a leather workshop in his newly built house by the Bistrica brook around 1900. He trained his youngest son Tomaž Godec for a leather assistant, and in 1927, he took over the trade and managed it by the middle of 1941. He was caught by the Germans and shot as a hostage on 20 April 1942 in Mauthausen. His brother Blaž Godec started a business of collecting skins in the house after the war.



PEOPLE OF BOHINJ AND LEATHER

permanent exhibition of the Technical Museum of Slovenia

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Tannery and Shoemaking Tradition in Bohinj

Livestock breeding was well developed in Bohinj already in the past, which provided the raw material for the production of leather. The census survey from 1749 contains the oldest mentions of the tanner and shoemaker crafts found so far.

In the first half of 20th century, two tanneries were operating in Bohinjska Bistrica: Sodja and Godec Tanneries. Shoemakers and saddlers were the largest consumers of leather. Between 1890 and 1910, Bohinjska Bistrica with its 660 to 870 inhabitants was a true shoemaking village. More than 10 locals and also some foreigners worked in the field of shoemaking then. Also other villages in Bohinj had one or two shoemakers.

After World War II, two companies were making new shoes and repairing old ones: The Local Shoemaking Company Zlatorog in Srednja vas and The Local Shoemaking Company Triglav in Bohinjska Bistrica.

Leather men boots with nails, hand-made at a local shoemaker's at Brod in Bohinj, 1945.

From a Raw Skin to Leather

The manual leather making process in Tomaž Godec Tannery was first reconstructed in 1978 on the basis of tradition, preserved items and collected data from the former tannery. Tomaž Godec tanned beef and pork skins as well as game and small cattle skins. He used spruce bark and oak cupules as the tanning material. All procedures before, during and after tanning are presented in detail in panels and with different items. Certain tanner's activities are presented also with videos and photos on the computer screen.

Cylinder for leather ironing



Bark mill

Tool for leather softening



Tannery Tools

Tanners used different tools for their manual work, mainly knives. Their tools were valuable which is why they took good care of them. At this exhibition, you can see knives for tanning preparatory stages and knives for crusting.

Knife for hair removing



Removing hair



Knife for leather smoothing



Frizing stand



Frizing

