

Weibsbilder – Women make history

Introduction:

The popular narratives in historical education are revolving around men. The man in his roles as a warrior, a ruler, a politician, a revolutionist, an achiever, an artist and cultural spearhead. These are deeply ingrained ideas in our society, encouraged through Hollywood and historical events like renfairs, living history and reenactment events throughout different eras of impression, in which often military themes take the spotlight. Women's history on the other hand seems to only gain attention with the fight for equality during the early 20th century.

But what about the decades and centuries before that? Were women able to write and make history? If yes, then how? We aim to answer these questions with the multi-period living history event "Weibsbilder. Women make history" from 23rd - 25th of May 2026 at Geschichtspark Bärnau-Tachov. For this event, we are inviting motivated living historians who would like to present women's lives throughout history.



Goal of the event:

together with our interpreters, we would like to

- offer a platform to high quality living history - for exchange about issues transcending eras of impression,
- create a Think-Tank to discuss currently relevant societal issues within living history,
- present the results of our work to the public at an annual event. The first events took place at Geschichtspark Bärnau-Tachov in 2024 and 2025 and were a great success in the eyes of everyone involved.
- and gain new impulses for further questions and projects through our exchange.

Subject matter:



The role of women seems to stand back behind those of men in history and historical research. That is also the case in many living history events, where women's impressions do not enjoy a lot of spaces in which they thrive and women often only have supportive roles.

With this event, we want to give women interpreters the spotlight and offer an insight into all the possibilities of women to make history, or their limits in this pursuit. Different questions will be presented. What made a woman a woman? How was gender expressed to the onlooker, for example through fashion, mannerisms and styling? What was their position in society, which career paths were available to them? How did they advance innovation and societal developments?

We are also interested in gender roles and the transgressions of these roles: How were women supposed to be living? Where did they break out of gender roles? Which roles were only available to women? Where did women take men's positions? How do historical gender roles influence our modern understanding of women?

Another topic that we are interested in, are women in historical science and living history and how they can influence historical narratives.

The impressions:

Central subjects of impression will of course be household, family and childcare since these were the most dominant occupations in women's everyday lives.

Topics like

- Legal positions of women,
- Women's crafts, women's professions and women's guilds,
- Religion and clerical positions, women saints and women as religious leaders,
- Women's education and the upbringing of young girls,
- Sexuality and relationships,
- Childbirth and pregnancy,
- Medicine, body hygiene and cosmetics,
- Clothing and jewellery



could be a red thread through all presented ages of impression. We welcome impressions **from the mesolithic age to contemporary history and impressions from all different countries and cultural backgrounds.** The choice of topics is up to participants.



Furthermore, we would also like to present women's lives outside of norms:

- Women in politics and positions of power,
- Crossdressing, homosexuality and trans identity
- Women in military environments and in war
- Women in marginalised communities (poverty, entertainment industry, sex work, religious and ethnic minorities)

You can find more infos on all the possibilities of interpretation in our Topic inspiration sheet. Let us know in case you are not part of our Facebook group!

Methods:

A mix of interpretation methods will offer visitors a diverse and captivating educational experience. We would like to give our interpreters the control over which methods they think are most suitable for their own projects.

For example:

- Demonstrations of historical crafts, for example from different areas of textile processing
- Displays of items from historical material culture
- Historical cooking
- Show and Tell as an item for the visitor programme, like for example a dressing scene or a fashion show
- Everyday tasks in action like laundry, cleaning, childcare, games and leisure activities
- First Person-interpretation and role play as an item for the visitor programme
- Handouts and fact sheets or posters
- Music and dance performances



On our **gathering day** (the event will not be announced to visitors for this day, but everyday visitors of the park will be present) we want to offer workshops from interpreters for interpreters to learn new crafts and skills or to gain new knowledge. This day will also be beneficial for exploring the museum and networking between interpreters to make new friends and gain new impulses.

We also plan to offer a space for a little **soiree** in which talks about more theoretical contents can be presented to participants, visitors and possibly other enthusiasts via online streaming in the modern facilities of the museum. You have a talk you would like to contribute? Let us know!

What we offer:

- **A platform for high quality living history:** All participants are united by their interest in historical science and archeology and in good quality impressions as well as an honest and critical understanding of historical sources. We want to give you the opportunity to also ask socially relevant questions in an environment appreciative of scientific methods.
- **Exchange with your peers:** We want to grow together, learn from each other and get creative together. Our multi-period multi-cultural concept allows for a view beyond our own noses. We also encourage exchange before and after the event via our facebook group “Weibsbilder - Frauen in Geschichte und Living History”.
- **A unique venue:** Geschichtspark Bärnau open air museum has loads of space for all of your ideas and projects. In addition to a little lake and creek, as well as large lawn areas, builder’s stations and vegetable- and herb-gardens, the museum has houses in the style of early, high and late medieval settlements of the region. All houses are fully functional and have fireplaces and can occasionally be used for your impressions (we would like to ask you to check in with us in case you are interested in using one of these facilities since there is a system for the use of houses in place) we have ample space for your tents and stalls.
- **Room for participation:** We invite you to create this event together with us! You have ideas for talks or programme items? New ideas for interpretation methods? Suggestions for our organisation team? We take your ideas seriously and want to make this an event for everybody!
- **A friendly and engaged organisation team:** Our team of voluntaries as well as the team from Geschichtspark Bärnau want you to enjoy the event and to make it a great success with your kind support.
- **Good infrastructure:** the museum offers space for a couple of dozen people within its houses (a large community room in the attic of the tavern building fit for everybody with historical sleeping equipment), straw for your straw sacks and toilets as well as a shower. The museum grounds can be reached with wooden hand wagons and offers lots of parking space. Firewood is also available.



What we hope for:

- **Good living history:** working with historical and archeological sources and scientific papers should be usual practice for you.
- **A creative project:** We welcome unusual impressions and encourage you to develop new or long held ideas and new aspects of your impression addressing our leading questions as mentioned above.
- **Active engagement:** The event stands and falls with your incredible work and your motivation to learn from each other and bring your skills and experience to the table.
- **An environment of respect and equality:** We are all connected by the same idea, to make living history more interesting and diverse. We can only achieve that through friendly and respectful exchange and an atmosphere of mutual support and growth.



We look forward to receiving your registration via weibsbilder@gmx.at !

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