



FREULER PALACE STATEROOMS

MUSEUM DES LANDES GLARUS | FREULERPALAST | WWW.FREULERPALAST.CH

THE FREULER PALACE

The splendid residence of Captain of the guard **KASPAR FREULER (1595-1651)** from Näfels is one of the most significant Swiss secular buildings of the 17th century.

Built between 1642 and 1648 on the outskirts of the village of Näfels in canton Glarus, the impressive staterooms from the 17th century in this majestic home still remain to this day. With the sale of the house in the years 1840/1841 the movable inventory in the rooms was lost. Due to the foresight of the municipality of Näfels and their awareness of the significance of conservation, these staterooms can still be shown today exceptionally well preserved.

This round tour takes you through nine reception rooms and living rooms in which the inner enclosing walls are predominately from the 17th century.

THE GARDEN HALL

The Garden hall/Sala terrena is an often found example of room space in the European autocratic architecture of the 17th century. It was used in the summer months as a banqueting hall.

The baroque stucco decor which was probably realised by an artist from northern Italy makes a festive feature. In the recesses of the vaulted arches the four cardinal virtues are displayed with their characteristics: Prudence with a mirror and a snake, Temperance with jugs, Justice with scales and Fortitude with pillars.

Limestone from a local quarry was chosen for the floor. Black marble was imitated with a finish. During the restauration period from 1937 to 1942 the stone slabs were laid anew and the fireplace surroundings were reconstructed more simply.

It is unknown for what the owner Kaspar Freuler (1595–1651) who commissioned the building and his family used this hall. After the acquisition of the Palace by the municipality of Näfels in 1840/41 the hall was temporarily sublet as a storeroom for flour. Since the beginning of the 20th century it has been used for exhibitions and functions.



RUDOLF ZINGGELER
PICTURE OF THE GARDEN HALL
1932
Inv.Nr.: MdLGI 09560

ENTRANCE HALL AND STAIRCASE

On entering the house by the splendid entrance portal you notice the artistic continuation of the dynamic facade in the entrance hall. The vaulted ceiling is supported by wide pillars and formed by pointed arches. The floor of earthenware slabs from the period of the original construction enhances the room with additional colour.

Two portals with richly decorated doors lead the way to the rooms on the ground floor. The keystones in the door frames show the heralds of the families of the builder/owner Kaspar Freuler, his first wife Margareta Freuler Hässi and his second wife Anna Freuler Reding.

The tracery on the balustrade adorns the stone staircase. In the centre of the staircase there is a rope winch which was used to pull up goods to the attic.

STUDIO SCHÖNWETTER
FREULER PALACE
CORRIDOR ON THE GROUND FLOOR
AROUND 1940
inv.no: LAGL Fot 1-33_2-2

THE GREAT HALL

The decor of the Great Hall is superior to the other staterooms in the Palace. The room is illuminated by three windows, whose recesses are decorated with cornucopias, dragon heads and rhombuses of stucco marble. The floor of earthenware slabs from the period of original construction is laid in an octagonal ornamentation. The room's defining panelled ceiling shows linear patterns and tendril decoration inlays and variously shaped carvings.

There is no documentation on the interior decoration or on the function of the hall in the 17th century. After the sale of the house in 1840/1841 to the municipality of Näfels the room was used for the storage of corn or for the ceremonial laying out of the deceased from the citizens' asylum at that time in the house. At the beginning of the 20th century the historical association already used the Great Hall for the presentation of their collections.

Today in the Great Hall summer music concerts and lectures are held.



RUDOLF ZINGGELER
PICTURE OF THE GREAT HALL
1932
inv. no.: MdLGI 09559

THE CHAPEL WITH BAY WINDOW

This small elevated sacred space is on the south side of the Great Hall. A wooden lattice from the construction period separates the sacred space from the secular room. The lancet windows are a contrast in style to the baroque stucco. As in the Garden hall this was probably the work of the same northern Italian artist. The room served the inhabitants of the Freuler Palace as a prayer room. After the consecration in year 1667 Mass could be read. The chapel stands under the patronage of the holy Francis and the holy Joseph. Up to the present day once a year a Eucharistic celebration is held to bless the chapel.

PRAYER CHAIR This prayer chair originates from the possessions of the family Freuler and was able to be reinstalled in the mobile inventory of the Freuler Palace after a donation by the family in 1948.

Workshop unknown
Prayer Chair
around 1750
inv.no.: MdLGI 07372

ALTARPIECE The small format of this picture indicates that it was not commissioned for this chapel. Probably owner Kaspar Freuler purchased this painting during one of his visits to France as Captain of the Guard for the chapel furnishing.

Unknown
The adoration of the Shepherds
oil on wood | after 1550
inv.no.: MdLGI 09557

CANDLEHOLDER Both of these filigree iron candleholders are florally richly embellished. In each of the arms on the wall is the writing MARIA and IHS as a short form of the name Jesus.

Workshop unknown
one-armed wall features
wrought iron | around 1650
inv.no.: MdLGI 09561
MdLGI 09562

THE REGIMENTAL GALLERY

This representative room next to the Great Hall is characterised by the floor with lavish inlays and the panelled ceilings. It is likely that the walls in this room were simply covered with wood in the 17th century and were to be furnished, as related by the traveller Hans Conrad Escher in 1688 with 'exquisite tapisserjen' hence tapestries. It is unknown, if this plan had a successful outcome. After the sale of the property in 1840/1841 to the municipality of Näfels this room was used as a meeting room for the municipality councillors, as a teachers' flat and for the presentation of the collections of the historical association. This room has been used since 1984 by the regional museum of Glarus as space for the permanent exhibition. The museum had the walls decorated with silk wallpaper. The fireplace surroundings were rebuilt in 1940.

The main design element of the room was in the 17th century a frieze of probably 28 equal sized portraits. Presumably as Kaspar Freuler had spent many years as Captain of the Swiss Guard in France, he had knowledge of the French picture galleries which were back in fashion and with this portrait gallery in Näfels he followed the style.

Little information is provided by historical sources on those portrayed, who were all Captains in the Swiss Guard regiment in the service of the French monarchy. All of these portraits except for three have gone missing.



RUDOLF ZINGGELER
PICTURE OF THE LARGE MEETING
ROOM OF THE MUNICIPALITY
COUNCILLORS OF NÄFELS
1932
inv.no.: MdLGI 09553

**ULYSSES VON
SALIS-MARSCHLINS
1594-1674**

Officer from canton
Grisons in the
service of the
French¹



**FRANÇOIS
DE BASSOMPIERRE
1579-1646**

Intermittent
regimental owner
of the Swiss Guard²



**PETERMANN
DE FÉGELY
1593-1661**

Officer from canton
Freiburg in the
service of the
French³



**KASPAR GALLATI
1535-1619**

Officer from
canton Glarus in
the service of
the French⁴



**JOHANN LUDWIG
VON ERLACH
1595-1650**

Officer from canton
Bern in the service
of the French⁵



**KASPAR FREULER
1595-1651**

Colonel of the
guard from
canton Glarus in
the service of
the French⁶



**JEAN-ANTOINE
DE REYNOLD
1580-1638**

Captain from
canton Freiburg
in the service
of the French⁷



**HANS JAKOB
VON DIESBACH
1559-1627**

Officer from canton
Bern in the service
of the French⁸



**JOHANN MELCHIOR
HÄSSI
1610-1653**

Officer from canton
Glarus in the service
of the French⁹



**SEBASTIAN
VON DIESBACH
1626-1702**

Officer from canton
Bern in the service
of the French¹⁰



**HANS FRANZ
VON WATTENWYL
1590-1655**

Officer from canton
Bern in the service
of the French¹¹



**JACQUES DE FÉGELY
1556-1624**

Officer from
canton Freiburg
in the service of
the French¹²



**MELCHIOR
VON MONT
-1661**

Captain from
canton Grisons
in the service
of the French¹³



**WOLFGANG
DIETRICH
VON REDING
1593-1687**

Officer from canton
Schwyz in the
service of the French¹⁴

1. artist unknown
reproduction
on loan from the Rätischen
Museum, Chur
inv.no.: H1993.6

2. artist unknown
reproduction
on loan from the
Bernisches Historisches
Museum
inv.no.: H/12992

3. artist unknown
reproduction
on loan from the
Musée d'art et
d'histoire Fribourg
inv.no.: MAHF 5638

4. artist unknown
Museum des Landes
Glarus
art collection
inv.no.: 00218

5. artist unknown
reproduction
on loan from the Burger-
bibliothek, Bern
inv.no.: portrait doc.1272
photo.: Gerhard Howald

6. artist unknown
Museum des
Landes Glarus
art collection
inv.no.: 00988

7. artist unknown
reproduction
on loan from the Musée
d'art et d'histoire Freiburg
inv.no.: MAFH 2006-263

8. artist unknown
reproduction
on loan from the Burger-
bibliothek, Bern
inv.no.: portrait doc.8303
photo.: Jürg Bernhard

9. Carette
Museum des
Landes Glarus
art collection
inv.no.: 05873

10. artist unknown
reproduction
on loan from the Burger-
bibliothek, Bern
inv.no.: portrait doc.83

11. artist unknown
reproduction
on loan from the Burger-
bibliothek, Bern
inv.no.: portrait doc.6742
photo.: Gerhard Howald

12. artist unknown
reproduction
on loan from the
Musée d'art et
d'histoire Fribourg
inv.no.: MAFH 1968-030

13. artist unknown
reproduction
on loan from the Rätischen
Museum, Chur
inv.no.: H1994.2

14. artist unknown
reproduction
on loan from the
Staatsarchiv Schwyz
inv.no.: SG.CV.10.12

STATEROOM I

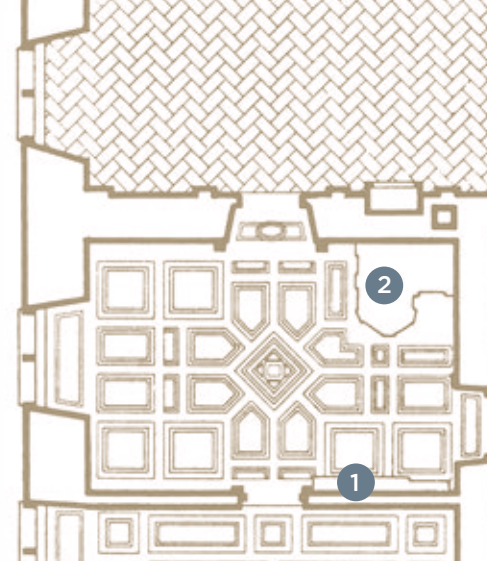
The status and wealth of the builder/owner is impressively displayed in the splendour of this room.

The inlay flooring, the panelling and panelled ceilings are features of the original state at the time of construction. This representative room is completed with a splendid sideboard and a tower stove.

The decoration in the inlay in the panelling is brimming with floral ornamentation. As in the Garden hall on the ground floor the four cardinal virtues together with their attributes are depicted in the upper section. The year 1647 over the door shows the date of construction. The central element of the colourful inlay in the floor is a square that surrounds a dog resting on cushions. The panelled ceiling is designed on 3 levels and shows carved pine cones, four atlases and cherubs.

After the purchase of the house by the municipality of Näfels in 1840/1841 the President of the municipality received many purchase requests for this room and the adjacent panelled room. During this time in many Swiss stately buildings panelling and panelled ceilings were being sold and re-installed in other houses. At the municipality meeting of the citizens of Näfels it was decided not to sell both these rooms despite the difficult financial situation.

Today both these panelled rooms are in the possession of the Gottfried Keller foundation that in 1936 bought these rooms so that they are henceforth preserved in the original location.



1 SIDEBOARD The three part sideboard is a permanent fixture and represents in an excellent way the splendid cabinetry from the middle of the 17th century. The sideboard was not primarily used for storage space in this room but rather as a piece of furniture for the presentation of silver and pewter. The faucet and the sink were replaced in 1940.

Unknown workshop
sideboard | around 1645

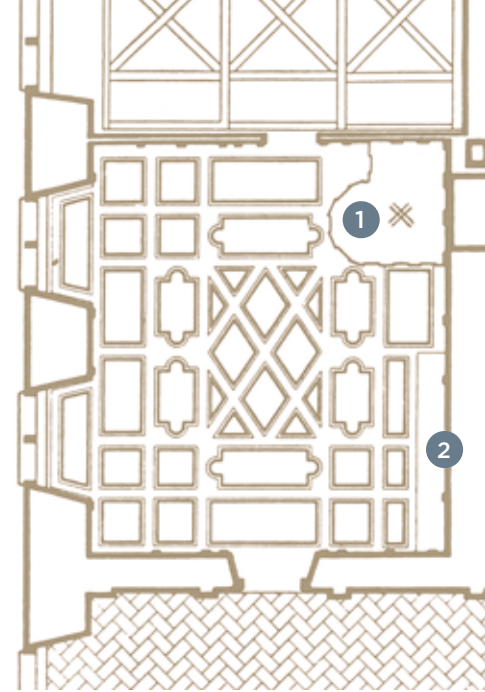
2 STOVE The tower stove from the Pfau workshop in Winterthur has a signature on the left outer side. The paintings on the stove depict nine muses which as a special effect do not carry their attributes but musical instruments. Hunting scenes, ancient Gods and below on the right a dog are depicted on the wall coverings of the stove.

Workshop Hans Heinrich Pfau
tiled stove with seat | around 1647

STATEROOM II

The modestly fashioned lime wood panels use only a few design elements: pilaster strips, pilasters and arches define the appearance. The inlay was made with stained ash. Some inlaid work was replaced with oak during restauration in 1888. A distinctly structured panelled ceiling with walnut friezes surrounding maple panel fillings defines the horizontal end of the room. The inlay flooring was restored by Hans Leuzinger in 1941 according to the original design.

It is unknown for what the family Freuler used this room. After the purchase of the house by the municipality of Näfels, the municipality administration department worked here. In 1936 the Gottfried Keller foundation bought this room so it was preserved in the original location.



1 STOVE The tower stove with seat can be attributed to the Pfau workshop in Winterthur. The paintings depict representatives of society from the Roman Emperor to the farmer and hunting and battle scenes from the Old Testament.

Workshop Hans Heinrich Pfau
(attributed)
tiled stove | around 1645

2 WEDDING CUPBOARD

The married couple Hässi-Tschudi gave the bridal couple this cupboard on the occasion of the marriage of their daughter Margareta to Kaspar Freuler. The inscription on the front records this event:

“HER OBERSTER FRIDLI HÄSSY ALLT
LANDAMAN ZU GLARUS UND / FRAW
REGULA HÄSSIN EIN GEBORNE
TSCHUDIN SIN EGMAHEL 1619 / HER
HAUPTMAN CASPAR FRÖUWLER
UNND FRAUW MARGARETA
FRÖUWLERIN EIN GBORNE HÄSSIN
SIN EGMAELL.”

The cupboard was removed from the house due to an inheritance or a sale and in 1947 was once again acquired. The feet and the rim were additions in the 19th century.

Unknown workshop
three-door cupboard
around 1615
inv.no.: MdLGI 03343

ROOM WITH CABINET

The panelled ceiling, the doors and the inlay flooring belong to the original features of both rooms. There is nothing documented on the wall panelling from the construction period. The walls were decorated with wallpaper in the middle of the 20th century, which was replaced in 1991 with a material wall covering and in the cabinet with strip panels. The inlay flooring reveals a rose in the centre and on the window side barely visible an opening. If the lid in the floor is lifted, access is gained to a small self-contained space, of which there is no documentation on the utilization in the 17th century. Presumably both rooms were used as an office.

After the purchase of the house by the municipality of Näfels both the rooms were used by the municipality administration department. After 1980 the museum of canton Glarus held exhibitions in the rooms.

1 SAFE The married couple Kaspar und Anna Freuler Reding were extremely wealthy. The military enterprise required cash and securities for the settlement of transactions regarding the mercenary business. Both were kept in this safe. It originates from the first home of the Freulers and bears the inscription:

"16 HER HAUBTMAN CASBAR
FRÖÜWLER - FRAUW
MARGARETA HÄSSIN SIN
EHE GMAHEL 23"

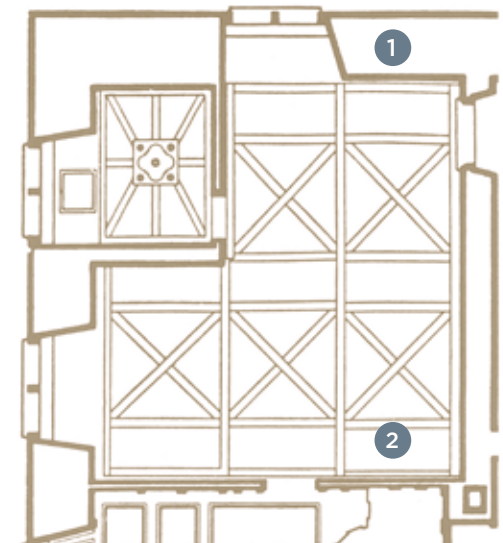
Unknown workshop
Safe | 1623
inv.no.: MdLGI 09235



UNKNOWN
**PICTURE OF THE ROOM
BEFORE RESTAURATION**
AROUND 1938
inv.no.: MdLGI 09563

2 STOVE This tiled stove originates from the house 'on the Letz' in Näfels, the home of General Nikolaus Franz von Bachmann 1740/1831 and bears his herald. It was removed from the Bachmann house during renovation work and replaced in this room.

Workshop Mathias Nehracher
tiled stove crowned with urn
Stäfa | around 1795
inv.no.: MdLGI 09554



PARLOUR

The walls of this small living room are covered with a three tiered panelling with inlay. The panels consist of two sections – the parts on the wall on the side of the hall originate as well as both doors and the sideboard from the first home of Kaspar Freuler and his first wife, Margareta Freuler Hässi. Therefore this woodwork is about 20 years older than the added panelling between 1643 and 1646. The remarkable simple floor is from the original building period.

This living room and all further rooms on the second floor were inhabited by a branch of the family Bachmann from Näfels from 1719 onwards. After the purchase of the house by the municipality of Näfels this room was used by the citizens' asylum.



1 PORTRAIT MARGARETA FREULER HÄSSI The portrait of Margareta Freuler Hässi (1599–1640) shows the daughter of the Glarner Landamann and wife of Captain Kaspar Freuler in a magnificent gown. Her head is covered with a mobcap with a net veil. The collar of many layers of lace is crowned with a string of pearls. The low-cut gown draws our attention to the valuable gold necklace. The insert of woven lace ribbons on which the gold chain necklace lays is an indication of a very wealthy young woman.

Unknown
portrait of Margareta Freuler Hässi
around 1620
inv.no.: MdLGI 00990

2 SIDEBOARD The narrow sideboard is a permanent fixture and bears the alliance herald of the family Freuler and Hässi and was made for the first house of Kaspar Freuler and his first wife Margareta Freuler Hässi. Evidently in remembrance of Freuler's deceased wife it was placed in this parlour after 1645.

Unknown workshop
sideboard | around 1620
inv.no.: MdLGI 09249

3 STOVE The tiled stove probably originates from the workshop of Caspar Ruostaler in Lachen. The Bachmann family presumably had it placed in this parlour in the middle of the 18th century. In doing so the stove base was kept from the previous stove. Above the stove seat is a family herald.

Workshop Caspar Ruostaler
(attributed)
Lachen | around 1750
inv.no.: MdLGI 09556



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DES
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