



Eggberge History

Pre-Christian

The first traces of human occupation in Eggberge go back a long way: a flint arrowhead has been found from the period 2800 to 2000 BC.

From 1300

The first settlements in the Eggbergen date back to the 14th century, as farming families from Muotathal, Schächental, Bürglen and Spirigen come in the summer months to farm the alps. Since the river Reuss meanders untamed through the valley floor, it is rendered unusable, therefore people live on the edges of the valley.

1860s – Tourists discover the Swiss mountains

In 1863, Thomas Cook leads a group of tourists through the Swiss mountains for the first time. This marks the beginning of an era of mountain tourism, which attracts adventurous international guests to the picturesque Alpine landscape. With the expansion of the Gotthard railway in 1882 and the road network (Axenstrasse 1864, Klausenstrasse 1900), tourism picks up speed.

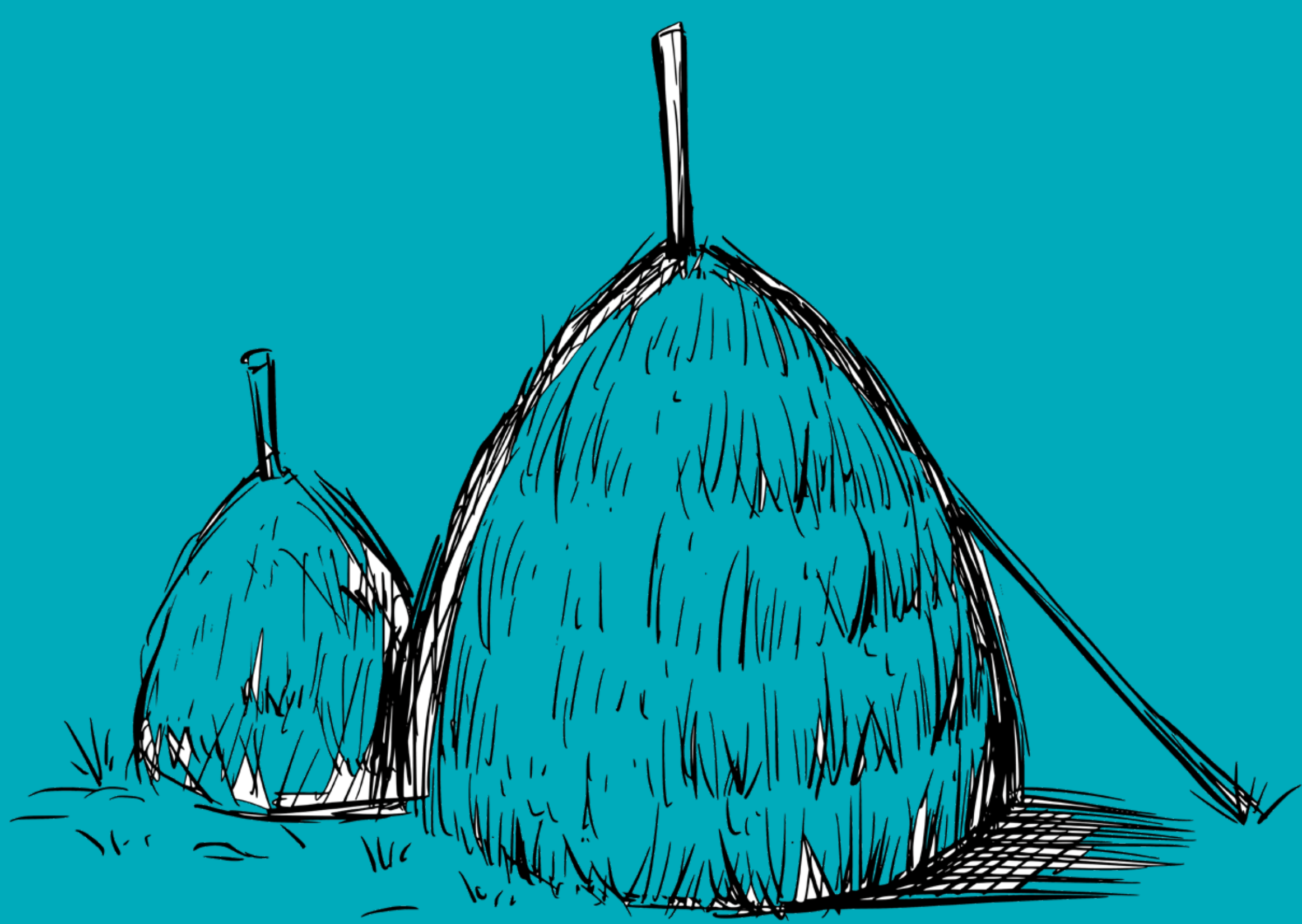
At this time, Uri is a poor canton, many people therefore left their homeland or are sent to America to find a better life there – sadly, some even make the journey with the Titanic! The wealthy tourists bring new sources of income to Switzerland's rural regions and the local infrastructure is also growing.

From 1

900 – the river Reuss is tamed

In the years 1900-1912 the river Reuss is finally canalized up to the lake mouth, after it had already been canalized between Attinghausen and Altdorf in 1850-1863. This increases the agricultural area and promotes arable farming as well as the settlement of industrial enterprises (e.g. Datwyler). Altdorf and Flüelen are connected via tram in 1906.

In 1902, Eggberge is mentioned in a travel guide. Local mountain tourism is boosted with a suggested route over the Eggberge in "Uri: Land and People along with a practical travel guide for Alpine friends" (translated from German).



1930s-40s – the first passenger cable cars in Uri

The new passenger cable cars (Haldi 1926, Ratzi 1932, Brüsti 1948, Biel 1951) make it easier for farming families to work in the mountain regions and at the same time promote mountaineering and skiing. Many of the early cable cars run on petrol engines (often from the VW Beetle) or with a counterweight system.

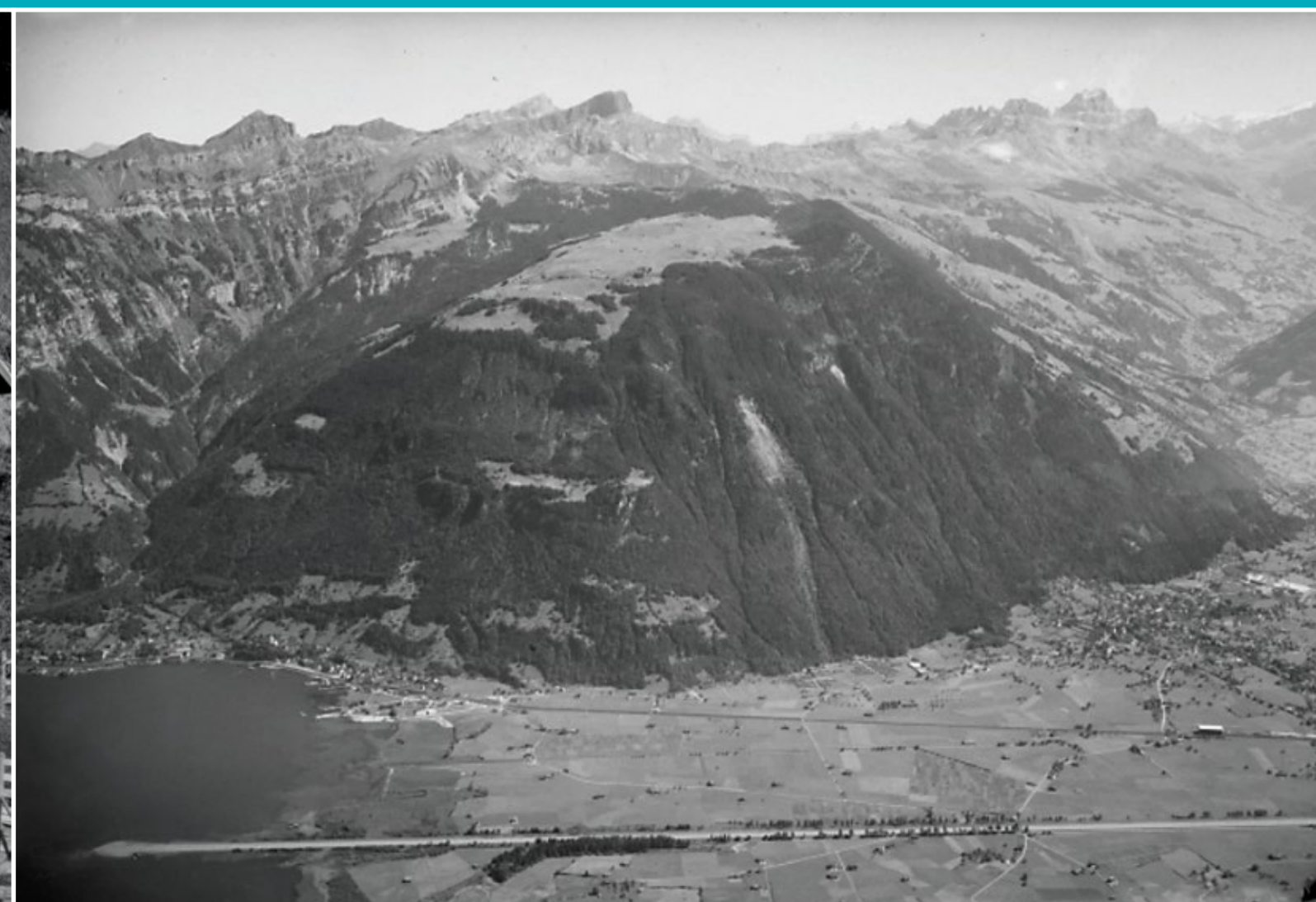
1942 -Eggberge transport cable car "Schiffli" is a milestone

Initiated by Franz Planzer, the transport cable car opens. The first farming families are now settling in the Eggberge all year round. A second transport cable car, which leads up to the 'Kreuzhang', brings the material further up to the farms.

The mountains are attracting more and more people and tourists. In the late 1940s and 1950s, further mountain railways, hotels, restaurants, hiking trails and outdoor adventures are built around



Planzeren, Planzer family with visitors ⁹⁸



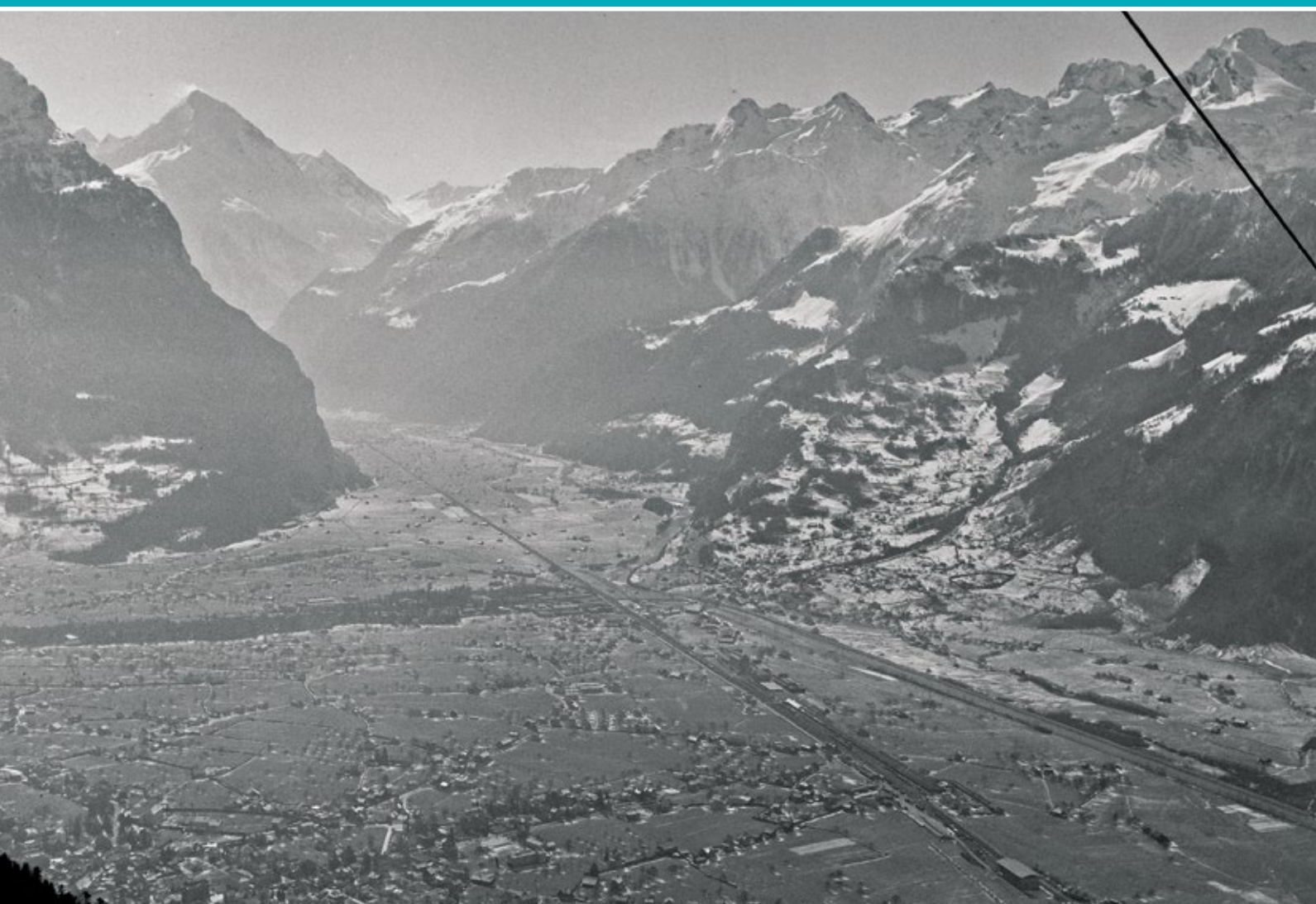
View of Eggberge from Gitschen, ca.1950s



Farm on Planzeren, with Bristen in the background



Farm at Selez, Schächental ⁹⁹



View of the Reus valley & Altdorf



Farmers take a break at Fleschsee



Farmers at Ober-Eggberge



Transport 'Schiffli' (ship), Planzeren to Eggberge ⁹⁶

SOURCES:
Staatsarchiv Uri/Fotoarchiv Aschwanden (alle nicht markierten)
⁹⁸Staatsarchiv Uri/P-153
⁹⁹Staatsarchiv Uri/Fotoarchiv von Matt
⁹⁶Staatsarchiv Uri/P-238
⁹⁷Felix Muheim Archiv
⁹⁵Karl Gisler



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Uri. 1950s-60s – Construction of a passenger cable car

In 1955, the first public cable car for 4 people runs up to Eggberge. At the same time Berggasthaus Eggberge is built and opens (see photos). Thanks to the good accessibility, more and more people are moving to the Eggberge 'sun terrace', many of whom are from Altdorf and the surrounding area, who invested in the cable car.

Last but not least, the cable car also brings a lot of joy to the school children: many children go to school in the valley. No more struggles hiking so far to Altdorf, Flüelen or Bürglen, or getting homesickness from staying away for weeks or months in the valley with friends & relatives.

1957 – Eggberge has its first ski lift, and the first snow groomer in the region. Opened in 1957, the lift – powered by a petrol engine and equipped with wooden cable masts – provides easy access to winter sports in the Eggberge for the first time. In addition, Eggberge becomes the first ski resort in the region with a snow groomer: lift operator Hans Bissig uses a Hürlimann tractor equipped with tracks for this purpose. In 1967, Eggberge and Andermatt are the first ski resorts in Uri to use Ratrac snow groomers.

1958 – Planning for a chapel
In 1958, the Eggberge Chapel Association was founded. Franz Planzer-Muheim donated a plot of land, Josef Utiger made the plans for the modern chapel – it was to be in unity with the Rophaien mountain (notice that its shape is influenced by the mountains shape?). For the time being, a wayside shrine was erected, so that the services can be held outdoors in good weather, while in bad weather they are held in Berggasthaus Eggberge. The Marian-chapel was consecrated on Advent Sunday 1968.

1965 – Electricity arrives!
Petrol lamps in the stable, no fridges, no washing machines, ironing with coal iron... It's a good thing that the potentially dangerous life without electricity comes to an end. The infrastructure is also growing: the capacity of the cable car increases to 15 people, the ski lift is retrofitted with an Oehler electric motor, the power grid is expanded and the village receives a new sewage treatment plant.

From 1970 onwards – Mountain safety and harmony with nature

The farmers of Eggberge come together to improve access. What was still a steep path in the 1970, 40 years later, in sometimes difficult stages, a forest track is created. The forest road, which requires a permit and is still very steep, is only for farmers and emergencies. The route is popular with tourists who mountain bike, hike or sled down into the valley to Altdorf.

In the course of landscape conservation, as with all of Switzerland, plans for the further development of the mountains are put on hold – in Eggberge also the early idea of a second gondola lift to the Hüenderegge is forgotten.

In 1983 the Firebrigade that has existed since 1968 in Eggberge is officially established. A fire in 1993 destroys the 1st skilift and in 1995 leads to the building of a Firedepot. Eggberge resident volunteers train together to help in emergencies and are on call as a first response.

The canton of Uri is a cable car Eldorado: in its heyday, it had 70 cablecars – Today there are still 36! Increasing or maintaining tourism is very important because it provides financial support for the maintenance and modernisation of cable cars – especially at a time when small regions are struggling to keep up with rising expenses and the high costs of modern testing and certification.

The cable car and gentle tourism with sporting and culinary attractions make the Eggberge a heart of the Uri mountain landscape. This includes, for example, the "Wildheuerpfad" between the Eggberge and Oberaxen: Guests can get an idea of the tradition of strict and dangerous "wild haymaking" while hiking, when farming families mow the hay on the steep slopes below the Rophaien.

Today, around 85 people have Eggberge as their main residence, 50 of whom live in small settlements and scattered farms on the Eggberge all year round. Fun activities in Eggberge include a ski club, a children's theatre group and events by the Erlebnis-Eggberge association (founded in 2020). Various establishments provide guests with delicious and varied foods, and there are a variety of accommodation options.

The meadows are still cultivated by families whose ancestors moved here many years ago. The children still walk from their farms to the cable car every day on their way to school and sometimes need ski, hiking and school boots to do so! The families work hard to mow and bring in the hay and milk the cows – they tend to the mountainous landscape that tourists wander through and enjoy.



1968 Marien-Chapel under construction ¹⁰



Cablecar bottom station under construction 1954-5 ¹⁰



1968 Firebrigade Eggberge, together in "Rütteli" ¹⁰



Local children and families from Eggberge come together, many of whom still live here ¹⁰



1st journey of the cable car (decorated with flowers) 1955 ¹⁰



Opening ceremony of the cable car, at the mountain station, 1955 ¹⁰



The skilift, which opened in 1957. ¹⁰



Early aerial photo, ca. 1960. Berggasthaus Eggberge, cable car station & the surrounding area. ¹⁰



First guests enjoying the restaurant terrace (notice the unfinished terrace construction!) ¹⁰

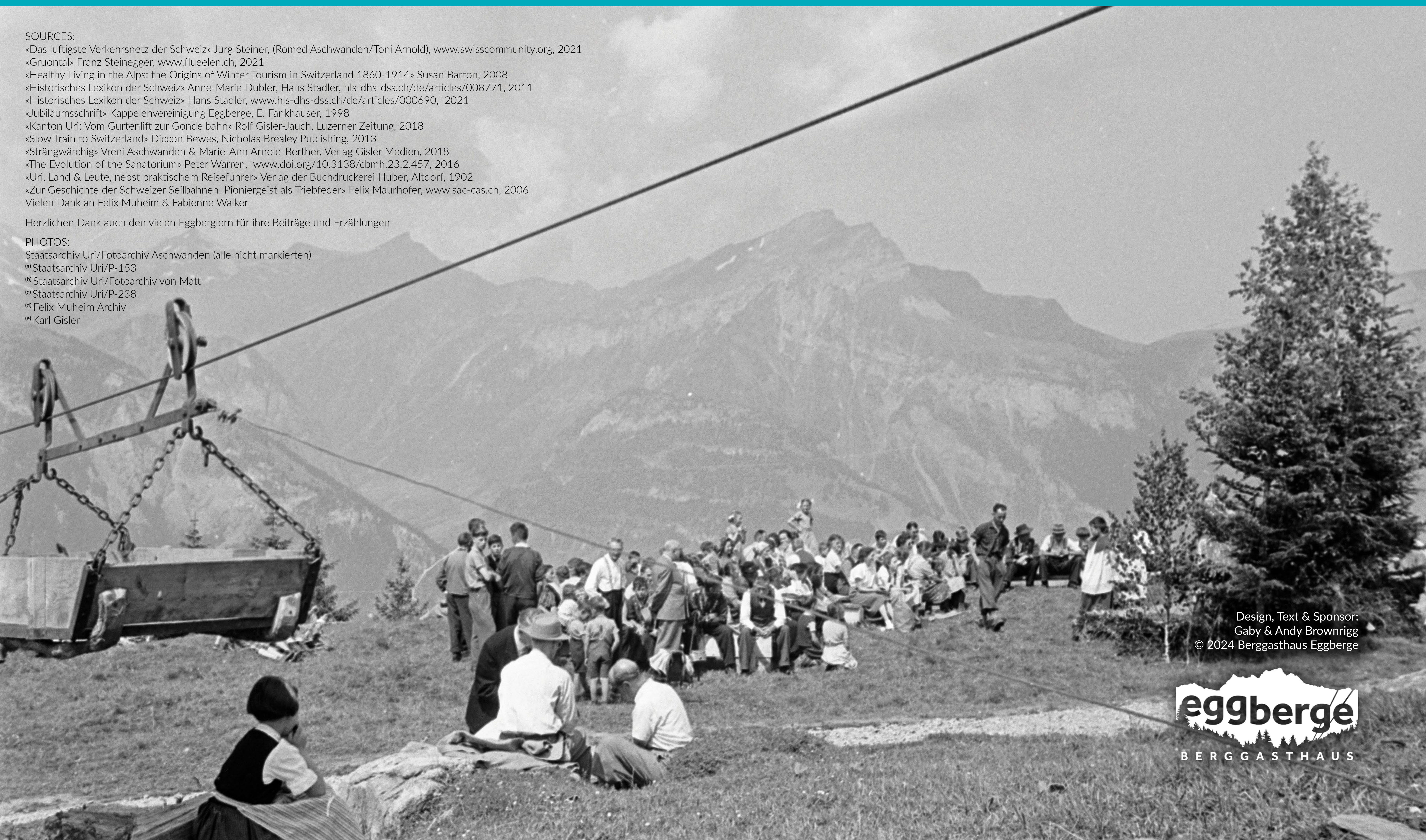


Berggasthaus with old Eternit Fassade in 1960 before the extension 'Saal' is built ¹⁰

SOURCES:
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PHOTOS:
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