

Press release
26 October 2011

Dream routes, places of yearning, experiences to touch and feel...

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1. The exhibition concept

Orange-coloured turbans in India or ice-blue bobble hat in Scandinavia – the Erwin Hymer Museum will captivate you with its vivid and enchanting celebration of the world of mobile travelling. The two-storey edifice covering an area of approximately 10,000 m² is a museum of cultural history and technology. Within these walls, the cultural-historical background as well as the technological development of mobile travel are brought to life from a traveller's perspective. Consequently, the focus is placed not on the company's history but rather on the people who explore the world in their caravanning vehicles. How and where does a person want to travel when freed of the fetters of fixed accommodation? What yearnings draw him to the far reaches of the globe? What are his dream routes and destinations? The answers to these questions provide the common thread of the journey through the exhibition, just as founder Erwin Hymer would have wished. "For more than 15 years it was my wish to erect a museum featuring historical caravans and motorhomes. And as I see how my dream has taken shape, I am very happy. A marvellous museum, even for children, not only focussing on vehicles, but also on the concept of mobile travel", comments Erwin Hymer on the day the museum was opened.

10 years ago the non-profit Erwin Hymer Foundation was established in order to make the Erwin Hymer Museum possible. And now, on Saturday, October 29, following many years of planning and designing, the museum in Bad Waldsee will open its doors – while extending an irresistible invitation to join in the travel. The exhibition is designed for young and old, for the entire family. Together we start out on our journey along the dream routes of the world to faraway destinations. Visitors learn about the cultural-historical background of mobile travel, immerse themselves in the history of the pioneers, absorb exciting facts about technology, production and design and experience the places of yearning of their time.

Visitor guidance

The concept behind the idea and the guidance system through the exhibition are simple and, for the visitor, quickly comprehensible, while retaining a frequent element of surprise and novelty. Five basic elements give the exhibition its structure: The dream route illustrated by painted floor markings, the walk-in places of yearning visible from a distance, the realistic scenarios along the dream route to the

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places of yearning, the developer stations with workshop atmosphere and the vehicle exhibition with its fittings and accessories. Different legs of the dream route are differentiated by colour, as are the realistic scenarios and the places of yearning, keeping visitors informed of their momentary location at all times.

The transparent arrangement of the exhibition allows a view of other routes. The visitor is free to follow or deviate from the dream route. He can walk any way he likes and yet always finds an easy way back to the route through the museum.

Preparing for travel

Just beyond the museum's ticket counter the life-sized figure of founder Erwin Hymer welcomes the visitor and invites him to set out on a journey. He carries a small motorhome under his arm, from which a stream of images displaying holiday photos flatters. Visitors are drawn away from the travel images towards the multimedia departure tunnel. There, they encounter a young and an old couple, as well as a family with children, all of them busily packing their suitcases. A multimedia show with live character - visitors want to join in the packing and set out on a long journey!

Travelling along the dream route

At the end of the departure tunnel the view opens and they are standing at the beginning of the dream route. They begin their journey ascending the imposing Alpine route into the mountains, transported back in time to the thirties. Historical vehicles going back to the time of the first caravans wind up the steep Alpine pass to lofty heights. The gleaming summits of the Ötz Valley Alps give an idea as to where the journey is taking us. The Alpine route leads the visitors to the upper level of the exhibition. Arriving at the peak, where the summit cross and summit guestbook are, of course, indispensable, visitors catch sight of the characteristic symbols of the Alpine region – larger than life and stylised, the realistic scenarios. They impart valuable information on cultural history. But they are also the invitation to independent exploration and discovery of amusing and sometimes odd facts relating to those dream destinations. Who has ever played “La Montanara” on cowbells...

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Places of yearning – the world's dream destinations

The Alpine route is the first stage of a journey along the dream route which takes us to a total of eight places of yearning in the mobile world. The places of yearning are oversized symbols representing a particular dream destination. Being visible from a considerable distance they give the exhibition a clear structure. The eye-catching forms are instantly discernible: a larger-than-life mountain panorama rising into view after the final pass of the Alpine route, a luminous yellow sea shell marking the Italian route, an orange turban depicting the route through India, a blue folding kayak towering above the ceiling, beckoning to follow the Baltic Sea route, a sand-coloured pot of Moroccan mocha celebrating the descent into the valley, a crimson wigwam signalling the North American route, an ice-blue bobble hat symbolising the Scandinavian route and a pink kite fluttering over the Atlantic. All flanked by realistic scenarios and historical vehicles. The walk-in places of yearning are not to be understood as travel destinations but rather express the yearning for adventure, for remote and exotic places, or the appetite for experience, travel...

The places of yearning at a glimpse:

- The Alps in the thirties: a challenge for man and automotive technology, for example, the Stelvio Pass...
- Italy, the German dream of the fifties: the Lido, Rimini, Venice, when spaghetti and ravioli were still deemed exotic dishes...
- India in the sixties and seventies: on the hippy trail to the country of spices in a converted Volkswagen bus. Famous musicians searched for inspiration, the Beatles, Jimi Hendrix...
- The Baltic Sea, the dream destination of many former GDR citizens. Not everyone was lucky enough to get hold of a coveted camping site card on the Baltic Sea. Camping became an expression of individuality...
- Morocco, the way to the desert: oriental atmosphere, bazars, mosques, beach, desert and imposing mountains were the magnet of the eighties, drawing many to the Maghreb states of North Africa...
- North America, magnificent landscapes, the feeling of vastness, freedom and nature, Indians who travelled with large tents...
- On to Scandinavia for winter camping in the cold beauty of the north. Technological progress makes it possible...

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- The Atlantic, wild, rough and stormy, was always a place for individualists. Wave riders made their way here as long ago as the fifties...

The places of yearning possess their own particular materiality: whereby construction and design become the symbols of camping - steel constructions covered with soft and elastic fabrics. Inside, the visitors are immersed in an imaginary, stylised room and are transported to the place of yearning being presented. Meticulous decorations, as well as light, audio and video installations create an unforgettable, special atmosphere. Each place of yearning reveals its own special and distinctive character, its own ambience and is always good for a surprise.

- Experience a day and a night on the beach in the sea shell of Italy while relaxing in a deckchair. Light and sound installations evoke mental images of Italy.
- In India the Ganesha temple comes to life by activating the sacrificial bowls; jungle atmosphere, ancient Indian music, Bollywood, rock in the VW bus...
- Explore the Baltic Sea in a kayak from under the surface, discover strange beings living there by looking through viewers...
- Imagine yourself in the Moroccan coffee pot, lean back on thick cushions and begin to dream. The oriental ambience and a film are an invitation to travel.
- Perch on western saddles in the wigwam of the North American route, and fly over the Grand Canyon. The film is projected onto a piece of stretched cowhide. The tent "sky" with its display of Stars & Stripes creates an overwhelming feeling of space.
- The ice-blue bobble hat marking the Scandinavian route extends a chillingly irresistible invitation. While sitting in the warmth, the observer looks through a frosty caravan window onto the icy-cold polar landscape of the North Cape. A constantly changing sky with northern lights, clouds and sun, transforms the landscape. Nearly hidden in the three dimensional diorama the visitor can discover well camouflaged inhabitants, for example, the arctic fox.
- Under the kite soaring over the Atlantic the visitor is transformed into a daring surfer and can feel the wind blowing in his face.

In 80 caravans around the world

Those unusual and individual vehicles “drive” or stand along the dream route: caravans, motorhomes, automobiles or trailers. Each tells its own distinctive story. Many of the vehicles can be viewed in detail, some can even be entered to experience. Meticulous details embellish and breathe life into many of these exhibits. They give the impression that the owner has just stepped out of his vehicle. The sight of familiar parts and accessories from childhood invokes images and memories in the mind of the observer. One was always at home, even on the road. Much of what used to be modern has made a comeback and is able to inspire even the younger generation of visitors.

The exhibits pertaining to the early days of caravanning are especially revealing of the incredible inventiveness and meticulous ingenuity of travellers from days gone by. More than 80 vehicles illustrate the advances in caravanning from the early thirties to the eighties. The vehicle exhibition begins chronologically but is no longer bound by a time sequence after the valley descent to the ground floor.

Even as a young man, founder Erwin Hymer was fascinated by vehicles. At the early age of 17 he built his first “Motorrädle” (little motorcycle), which is also an exhibit in the Erwin Hymer Museum. In 1957 he built his first caravan, the “Ur-Troll” (original Troll) prototype, followed by his first motorhome in 1961, called the “Caravano”, based on a Borgward model. Both are part of the permanent exhibit.

Excerpt of the show vehicles:

- AIRSTREAM 31` SOVEREIGN OF THE ROAD 1969, USA
- AUSTERMANN Knospe, 1961, D
- BOGASCH, Eigenbau (self-built), 1986, GDR
- CAR CRUISER, 1932, GB
- DETHLEFFS, Wohnauto (camper), 1931, D
- DETHLEFFS Globetrotter, 1953, D
- ERIBA, Prototyp “Ur Troll” (original Troll), 1957, D
- HYMERMOBIL 620 D, 1977, D
- KNAUS, Schwalbennest (Swallow’s nest), 1961, D
- NAGETUSCH, Brillant, 1963, DDR

- PIEPER W 360, Eigenbau (self-built), 1986, DDR
- SCHÄFER Suleica G 500, 1970, D
- SPORTBERGER Land-Yacht L6, 1953, D

The museum's wealth of attractions, comprising the Erwin Hymer collection, donations and permanent loans, adds up to a total of more than 200 exhibits, caravans, motorhomes and vintage automobiles, as well as motorcycles and accessories.

Pioneers, technology, design, production and the future

Who made mobile travel possible? Who were the pioneers of mobile travel? How is a caravan or motorhome designed and constructed? What were and are the technical challenges? How important are design and materiality? What does the future hold in store? Questions which the visitor can delve into deeply at each developer station. The developer stations are presented as stylised workshops. Large workshop shelves give the rooms their character. Interior panels mounted to the shelves allow the visitor to read and collect information or view illustrations. The developer stations provide detail and depth to the history of the pioneers, technology, design, production and future of mobile travel. The shelves contain numerous exhibits, such as models, historical accessories, newspapers and documents, but also include modern and future-oriented items of interest. The interactive stations give visitors numerous opportunities to solve problems and challenges themselves. These are, for example, multimedia puzzles, a mechanical chassis model, interactive production line models, etc.

Smile please!

Holiday photos and postcards are part and parcel of a journey. Photo stations in front of large travel motifs enhanced with witty and amusing details, invite the visitor to dress up and take comical pictures of himself and his family. The cameras are triggered by the admission tickets which can be inserted into the camera's scanner. Take 15 seconds to pose and...smile please!

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Leisure lawn with cinema

A green lawn with deckchairs underneath the Alpine pass beckon to rest and relax for a while. Here the visitor can browse through photo albums using the iPad or watch travel documentaries on the screen. The auditorium, equipped with the latest media technology, provides space for reading, lectures and special events or just the space required to relax and collect one's thoughts.

Discover the world

The stormy Atlantic route culminates in the midnight-blue globe room. The visitor encounters three gigantic floating atlases with 3D effect, filling the room! In luminous blue and slowly rotating while a stream of images revolves around the equator, accompanied by spherical music, creating a nearly sacred atmosphere. The globes are the highlight and conclusion to an exciting exhibition. Visitors can activate the terminal in front of each globe using their admission tickets. The previously taken photos from the photo stations then appear among the photos streaming past. A big aha at seeing oneself travelling around the world. The visitor sets the globe in motion using the touchscreen and is free to rotate it or zoom in and activate travel routes while collecting ideas for his next journey. With the urge to set out immediately on his journey, the visitor leaves the exhibition or begins his travels anew along the dream route within the Erwin Hymer Museum...

2. All about the museum

The journey continues

Visitors may continue their journey in a culinary sense in the "Caravano" restaurant. International dishes awaken the longing for the exotic and the novel. The restaurant is named after Erwin Hymer's first motorhome, the "Caravano".

It is operated by the Lerch GmbH company based in Biberach. This experienced culinary team also caters for events taking place in the museum from conferences through to private and business celebrations.

Preparing for travel

The museum shop's selection of books on cultural and technological history, travel guides and magazines promises visitors pleasant browsing. Souvenirs, little travel trinkets,

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amusing and useful items from the world of caravanning – there is something here for everyone's next journey.

My travel pictures

Fun with pictures in the museum shop: send your own postcard from Venice, India, the U.S.A. or the Atlantic coast with extra greetings from Bad Waldsee. Simply hold the admission ticket under the barcode scanner, view the photos on the touchscreen and print! Alternatively you may download the photos at home or send them directly via e-mail by clicking menu point "My travel pictures" on the museum's homepage and entering the barcode number on your ticket. The pictures are accessible for 4 weeks after your visit to the museum.

3. The museum building - the caravan window as architectural element

The light-flooded museum edifice belonging to the Erwin Hymer Stiftung visibly takes up the theme of caravanning even from afar. It consists of two building sections symbolising a standing and a lying caravan window. With its bright red borders, the main building depicts especially well the typical shape of a caravan window. The square with rounded corners is the typical shape of virtually all caravan windows.

The smaller, single-storey building is 75 metres long, 50 metres wide and 11 metres high with a backlit glass facade. The two-storey main building measures 60 metres in length and width and is 19 metres high. The east and west sides are designed with shiny, embossed, stainless steel facades. The facades to the north and south are completely glassed. The majestic glass surfaces allow visitors a glimpse of the exhibition from a distance. Insight and outlook - from inside the visitor has a view of Bad Waldsee and on a clear day he can even see the Alps.

In the upright caravan window constituting the main building, an area of approx. 6,000 m² accommodates the museum's permanent exhibition. Administrative offices, as well as conference rooms and special exhibition halls are situated in the mezzanine. The approx. 2,650 m² area of the one-storey section is a practical, modular design and is used for museum festivities and special exhibitions. The restaurant and museum shop are also situated here.

Architectural practice:

Bauart Liebel Kies GmbH

Joachim Liebel

Biberacherstraße 125

D-88339 Bad Waldsee

Realisation: Schertler Alge GmbH

4. Facts & figures

Establishment of the Erwin Hymer Stiftung (Foundation): December 2001

Museum cornerstone laid: June 2008

Move into administrative offices by museum management: May 2010

Erwin Hymer Museum opening: 29 October 2011

ERWIN HYMER MUSEUM

Exhibition team:

Susanne Hinzen, Susanne Rauss-Dangel, Markus Böhm, Andreas Krattenmacher

Museum workshop staff

Management/marketing assistant: Sibylle Kloos

Exhibition concept and realisation:

Agentur Milla & Partner GmbH, Stuttgart

Permanent exhibition area: 6,000 m²

Special exhibition and event area: approx. 2,000 m²

Museum shop design: Saal3, Mark Hellmann, Düsseldorf

Investment volume:

Museum building and grounds: 12 million euros

Permanent exhibition: 5 million euros

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Foundation museum:

The Erwin Hymer Museum is supported by the non-profit Erwin Hymer Stiftung (Foundation). The foundation was brought into being in 2001 by Erwin Hymer with the aim of promoting art and culture, in particular the promotion of cultural goods in the technical field, and the erection and maintenance of a museum for classic caravans and motor caravans.

The photo materials made available may be used free of charge for publication purposes if the source of the image is identified.

Image source: Erwin Hymer Museum / Milla & Partner

ERWIN HYMER MUSEUM

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ERWIN HYMER STIFTUNG (FOUNDATION) - a public foundation under civil law based in Bad Waldsee

Management Board: Carolin Hymer (Chair), Susanne Hinzen (Managing Director), Roland Bosch, Ludwig Vetter
Honorary Chairman: Erwin Hymer

Foundation Board: Dr. Andreas Schmauder (Chair), Prof. Karl Heinz Hänssler, Gerda Hymer

Responsible supervisory authority: Regierungspräsidium (Regional Administrative Council) Tübingen