

## **Herzberg - a brief description**

Herzberg is an institution that is committed to adult education. House of education and encounter is managed by the privately owned Herzberg foundation and is supported in Herzberg association, which has approximately 300 members. The canton of Aargau also supports its cultural and educational activities in form of a notable annual contribution.

Based on the model of renowned Danish adult education centres, Herzberg was founded in 1936 by Fritz Wartenweiler, a pioneer in the field of adult education in Switzerland. Ever since then it has been a meeting place for people from all cultural, political, social and denominational circles.

At Herzberg, a variety of activities are organised which place an emphasis on inter-personal relationships, an understanding and awareness of our environment, and an exchange of ideas between different generations, cultures and ideologies. These activities are also intended to encourage tolerant behaviour, responsible thinking and action. The overall education concept according to Wartenweiler revolves around an occupation with music, graphic arts and handicrafts, the experience and appreciation of nature, and a confrontation with socio-political issues of our time.

Herzberg is open to all guest groups for professional and personal further education, and a comprehensive infrastructure is available for all events including modern conference facilities.

Herzberg is operated entirely in keeping with protection of the environment. Maintenance and cleaning tasks, as well as care of surroundings are carried out according to ecologically beneficial principles. In the kitchen, high-nutrition meals are prepared using only fresh home-grown products from biological cultivation and meat produced under fully humane conditions, much of it coming from Herzberg's own biologically managed farm.

Herzberg operates on a cost-covering basis, but is not a profit-making organisation. Ethical and ecological principles, together with due respect for the environment, are the common factor for all its activities. The members of staff work together harmoniously as a team, and they are included in the decision-making processes too. A sense of personal responsibility is promoted at all levels. Social security is guaranteed for all members of staff.

## **The new Herzberg building**

### **Rooms and facilities**

*Thanks to extensive renovation, the Herzberg is now an educational and conference centre, which offers an ideal infrastructure.*

It now provides the following rooms and facilities:

7 seminar rooms of different sizes

2 lounges

1 main hall (120 m<sup>2</sup>)

1 dining room (100 seats available)

1 cafeteria

All seminar rooms are equipped with modern facilities for seminars, etc., and are also designed to accommodate wheelchairs. There are three pianos and two grand pianos in those rooms, and a variety of games are available (inside and outside). As well there is a sauna, which can be used upon advance reservation.

Herzberg provides accommodation for up to 90 persons:

70 persons in the 40 rooms (most of them are double rooms)

20 persons in dormitory accommodation

In the new main building, 12 rooms are each equipped with a shower and toilet, and 3 of them are fully wheelchair compatible. In the annex are 7 rooms with shower and toilet and the rest of 18 rooms contain a wash basin (hot and cold water), and a shower and separate toilet are available for every three rooms.

## **New solar energy installations**

***Instead of simply shining directly onto the roof of Herzberg, the sun is now being put to good use: solar collectors have been installed to produce hot water, and solar cells for providing electricity.***

During the renovation process, the roof tiles of the main building were removed and replaced by a roof covering consisting of solar cells and solar collectors. This highly progressive roof construction demonstrates the enormous potential for energy production by using existing roof surfaces. The solar energy plant was granted financial support by the Federal Office of Energy as a pilot and demonstration project. New paths have been trodden here with regard to the solar energy technologies that have been applied as well as the mixed economy financing involving both private and public funds.

The solar energy plant has now been operating successfully for a full year, and not one failure has been registered to date. In order to evaluate the plant, the most important data is monitored constantly and can be called up via a telephone connection. Both the solar panels and the current inverters are relatively new products with which only very little experience has been made up till now in Switzerland, and this further emphasises the pilot nature of the plant.

## **Photovoltaics: solar electricity**

Surface area, 50 m<sup>2</sup>

Max. Installed capacity, 5.94 kW

Estimated annual output, 5,000 kWh

Module type, GPV 110 W

Swedish modules with cells made by Siemens

Current inverters: 3 x SMA 1800 Master-Slave

Operator: ADEV (Working Group for Decentralised Energy Supply), Aarau

Costs, including measurement system, Sfr. 124,000

Financing: ADEV Aarau, Sfr. 50,000  
Town of Aarau, Sfr. 50,000  
Federal Office of Energy, Sfr. 24,000  
(Pilot & demonstration plant)

For us, energy and environment are not simply items in our educational programme; rather they are part of a fundamental ethical approach, which we put into practice in our daily work. This strategic objective is apparent from our image, projects, staff training and information for guests. Protection of

the environment is an integral part of our management practice. The central theme for Herzberg's 1995 programme, "Education and environment", remains an urgent priority.

Guest orientation  
Staff orientation  
Environment and society orientation

## Ecology

### Solar collectors: solar heat

Surface area, 42 m<sup>2</sup>  
Estimated annual output, 21,500 kWh  
Type of collector: Hedingen (selective)  
Storage capacity, 2 x 1,500 litres  
Supplementary heating: oil heating in winter  
Electrical heating in summer

Operator: Herzberg

Costs: Sfr. 66,000

Financing: Canton of Aargau  
Federal Office of Energy (Energy 2000)  
Herzberg Foundation

### Praiseworthy sewage connection

#### *The method of sewage and wastewater removal from the Herzberg property was also designed to protect the environment.*

Due to the distances involved, a conventional connection of our property to the public sewage system would have cost us approximately 50 percent more. Aargau measurement and engineering office of Ackermann and Wernli (our President!) made use of its knowledge of the area to draw up a low-cost alternative. Existing drainage systems plus a disused Eternity water pipe were used for this purpose. Wastewater is now transferred to a pump shaft, where solid matter is then reduced to small particles. This innovative system was awarded the SIA "1994 Priisnagel Prize", a special award for contemporary works in the fields of architecture, technology and ecologically beneficial design. In its report, the jury ascertained that the project called for a high degree of research work and co-ordination, and demonstrated in an exemplary manner how a basically undesirable task can be solved through creative thinking and unconventional methods.

### Future and Tradition: Fritz Wartenweiler

Historian Hanspeter Mattmüller describes Fritz Wartenweiler as "one of the greatest Swiss thinkers of the 20th century . . . a truly well-informed intellectual." He is regarded as a pioneer of adult education, an outstanding psychologist, a forceful thinker and brilliant dialogist. He was cosmopolitan, a tolerant and strong-willed person, a man with pioneering insights and a distinctly networked form of thinking.

Fritz Wartenweiler always kept a close watch on world events and acted according to the principle, "think globally, act locally". He was well ahead of his time; his ideas are now more relevant than ever. In 1973 he turned his house into a centre for helping drug addicts. He was one of the first people in Switzerland to occupy himself with racial problems, drew attention to the inequality between industrial

nations and the third world, between the rich and poor people, and he fought constantly for peace. He insisted on the conservation of nature and consistently lived a corresponding lifestyle.

He strove for an overall unity, which he also demanded as an educator in his adult education programme. At Herzberg, it is intended to continue to attempt to put these principles into practice in the day-to-day work, whilst avoiding any idealisation of Wartenweiler or giving rise to a personality cult. His ideas and deeds continue to provide a major impulse for us.

## The Herzberg farmyard

***With his farmyard in the immediate vicinity of the former adult education home, Fritz Wartenweiler endeavoured to bring about a closer mutual understanding between workers and farmers, between town and country. The farmhouse was built in 1952.***

Oswald and Natalie Pfäffli took over the operating rights to the Herzberg farmyard in 1984, and run it strictly according to biological principles. The Herzberg farmyard supplies the kitchen with its own milk, quark and sour milk, plus a certain amount of grain, potatoes and meat. With this type of agriculture, much importance is attached to preserving the correlations between landscape, climate, soil, growth and ripening agents, and the balance between flora and fauna in the farmyard environment. A great deal of attention is also paid to producing fruits in a manner which promotes the formation of humus, as well as to using fertilisers which preserve the fertility of the soil. Artificial fertilisers or chemical/synthetic insecticides are entirely avoided.