

THE FOUNDING OF SWAROVSKI OPTIK

The desire for perfection and the joy of experimentation

In 1935, Wilhelm Swarovski, son of the original founder, was 17 years of age. Already an avid hobby astronomer, Wilhelm's passion "to be closer to the stars", as he himself described it, awakened his ambition to build his own, improved binocular. With access to the specialized glass production and finishing technologies already used to manufacture jewelry stones in his father's factory, Wilhelm managed to develop a novel prism fabrication and grinding process that he applied in constructing his first 6x30 binocular. Wilhelm went on to found SWAROVSKI OPTIK KG in Absam, Tyrol, in 1949 thus laying the foundation stone for a sport optics company with a global reputation. His company's first serial product, the Habicht 7x42, is still an industry standard in the field of hunting optics and continues as ever to be produced by SWAROVSKI OPTIK in the best tradition of its founder.

The beginning - passion for improvement

Wilhelm, the eldest son of Daniel Swarovski, was enthusiastic about the natural sciences and keen to experiment like his father. What gave him the idea of constructing binoculars and finally establishing Swarovski Optik in Absam?

Hobby astronomer - the enthusiasm to see into the distance

In addition to the natural sciences, Wilhelm had another hobby: astronomy. The enthusiasm to see into the distance and the interest in physics gave him the desire to construct his own binoculars. The first sketches and self-calculated prototypes with optical glass from the factory's own production were made as early as the 1930s. Grinding the prisms and lenses is a fine art that Wilhelm acquired by hand. He carried out various grinding and polishing tests in his apartment. His willingness to experiment knew hardly any limits, even his wife's silk stockings were not safe from his experiments.

The factory in the forest is built

After the turmoil of the Second World War had subsided somewhat, the demand for gemstones in Wattens increased again and Wilhelm was able to think about the continuation of his former plans. However, there was not enough space in the company for several production divisions - even the abrasives production was already planning a move - so Wilhelm had to look for another location. Said and done! He found suitable premises in Absam. A large property with garages offered a lot of space but little comfort. Due to a general lack of material, the halls could only be renovated in the most basic way, the sanitary facilities initially resembled latrines and an open truck had to suffice as a

shuttle bus for the employees. However, people were happy to have a job. Soon after the start, around 170 employees were working for Swarovski Optik in Absam.

Production started

The new and changing times also went hand in hand with new market needs: the demand for consumer goods such as eyeglass lenses had increased enormously. Lucky that some of the same machines were used to manufacture binocular optics and spectacle lenses. According to the information in the trade license, which proves the founding of Swarovski Optik with “Factory production of all types of optical glasses, especially spectacle lenses and frames, as well as the associated components and optical devices and apparatus”, production could finally begin.

The world belongs to those who can see beauty.

Experience the moment!

SEE *THE* UNSEEN.

www.swarovskioptik.com

SWAROVSKI OPTIK

SWAROVSKI OPTIK, headquartered in Absam, Tyrol, is part of the Swarovski group of companies. Founded in 1949, the Austrian company specializes in the development and manufacturing of long-range optical instruments of the highest precision in the premium segment of the market. The binoculars, spotting scopes, rifle scopes, and optronic instruments are products of choice for demanding users. The company’s success is based on its innovative strength, the quality and intrinsic value of its products, and their functional and esthetic design. The appreciation of nature is an essential part of its company philosophy and is reflected commendably in its environment-friendly production and its long-term commitment to selected nature conservation projects.

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