



Ecomuseum of Textile Industry

In the area of Perosa Argentina, where the Chisone Valley and the Germanasca Valley merge, industrialization started from the second half of the 19th century, when, thanks to the particular geographical position and the entrepreneurship of two foreign families, the German Gütermann and the Swiss Abegg, a silk factory for the working of floss and a cotton spinning mill were founded.

Bolmida spinning mill started in 1835, while in 1883 Gütermann silk spinning mill and Jenny & Ganzoni cotton spinning mills were founded. These two mills were built on pre-existing ones and they deeply improved and changed the working process.

The social and territorial changes that the new industrial settlements bestowed on the Valley were not painless and brought to the eradication of an age-old way of life, turning the eminently peasant community into a working-class one. The new way of life made urban transformations necessary, changing the look of the town as structures (such as council houses, houses for white-collar workers, boarding schools and public buildings such as kindergartens, sports fields, after-work activities, etc...) necessary for acceptable life-conditions for the workers were built. Workers came at first from the town and the neighbouring valleys, but at the end of the 19th century, they started coming from afar and, having found a permanent job in Perosa Argentina, they started dwelling there or in the environs for good. Thus, a high population increase followed, and subsequently new buildings for housing and social purposes were constructed.

The Ecomuseum of Textile Industry in Perosa Argentina enhances the heritage issuing from the century-old presence in the town of this kind of manufacture and it is divided into two structures:

- a) the Documentation Centre and Association* site, in which, through a variety of panels, photographs, documents, machinery, one can discover the history of the factories in Perosa Argentina and of the productive process;
- b) the external visiting track, which leads the visitor through the town streets - with nine explanatory panels in four languages, towards the discovery of the quantity and quality of the changes that the settlement of the textile factories had caused in a built-up area at the bottom of the valley: not only through the presence of industrial structures, but also through the construction of public buildings such as council houses, boarding schools, kindergartens, after-work activities, hydroelectric stations.

The track "From thread to thread" starts from via Chiampo 16, at the office building within the former Gütermann crafting area. It then moves on through nine stages in the streets of the town, where panels which describe the various points of interest are positioned. The track is about 2 km long and it is accessible through a self-guided tour, thanks to a brochure that can be downloaded from the website or that can be obtained from Perosa Argentina Tourist Office – telephone: **+39 0121 803 610**, where you can also book a guided tour.

Both of the tours end at the Association main seat, where you can register and deepen your knowledge by looking at the exhibit and at the archives.

School groups can visit also the air-raid shelters and the hydroelectric power station.

Approximated visiting time:

self-guided tour 1h30', guided tour 2hrs, air-raid shelters and hydroelectric power station 3hrs.

* *Ecomuseum Association of Industrial Activities at Perosa Argentina and Chisone & Germanasca Valleys.*

The Association was born on 4th May 1996, and it stemmed from a Committee involved in a project of a museum and an archive of the industrial activities at Perosa Argentina and Valleys. The Committee was founded in 1995 by a group of people with a common purpose: the desire of collecting, preserving and using all the heritage of industrial activities at Perosa Argentina (i.e. documents, mainly textile material and evidence) so that it could be displayed and used by local people and by anyone who might have interest in this kind of topics.