

Press release

Leinfelden-Echterdingen, 22.1.2009

Company portrait

Our history

Our family business celebrated its 80th anniversary in 2008. The natural cosmetics manufacturer is now in its third generation, managed by Wihart Teuffel, the grandson of founder Walter Rau.

But let's take a look back to when the company was founded. Anthroposophist Walter Rau established the "Feinseifenwerk WALTER RAU" ("WALTER RAU Fine Soap Works") in 1928, a risk in a crisis-shaken economy. The offspring of the Stuttgart-based family business "Vereinigte Seifenfabriken" ("United Soap Factories"), Rau wanted to continue the soap-making tradition of his parents. But this was not enough – He wanted to manufacture more than the curd soap popular for washing clothes in those days. Rau's idea: A gentle, natural soap for body care.

This idea was teamed with a special fascination – Rau was inspired by the unique harmonising medicinal properties of the Speick plant, Lat. Valeriana celtica, which had been prized for centuries.

It became his vision to harness the benefits of this almost forgotten plant. Walter Rau discovered that the Speick plant has a calming effect on the central nervous system while simultaneously stimulating the vegetative nervous system.

From this idea and fascination emerged a unique product: Speick soap. This natural, extra-mild soap was a cosmetic revolution – for body care, as opposed to washing. Rau did not however want the holistic philosophy behind his product to be limited to its manufacture and sale. Rather, the entrepreneur shaped the whole company according to his anthroposophic principles. Rau wanted to create something of value for people out of his fascination and ideas – anthroposophy and its holistic understanding of human and nature. Employees received further training during "factory hours", working mothers were offered company childcare and local recreational facilities were developed for factory employees.

The company continues to work according to these principles today. "Being seen as a person; being given the opportunity to grow and to learn" – employee development remains important for Wihart Teuffel today. The founder's grandson can see just how important it is that "tradition has future" through the two alpine farming families in Carinthia, Austria, who harvest the wild-growing Speick plant. The family farm has been taken over by the next generation and with it, the Speick harvest – by hand, as it has been for centuries.

PRESS CONTACT

SPEICK Natural Cosmetics

Walter Rau GmbH & Co. KG Speickwerk

Gudrun Leibbrand (Head) / Anna Handschuh

Tel.: +49 (0)711 1613-129/-119

Email: gudrun.leibbrand@speick.de / anna.handschuh@speick.de

Benzstraße 9

70771 Leinfelden-Echterdingen, GERMANY

www.speick.de

At about 1,800 metres above sea level, high up in the Nock Mountains, the Speick harvest represents an important source of income.

The partnership with the Speick alpine farmers and the Nock Mountains National Park shows how values can be realised in a practical manner. Employees of the family business who have visited the Nock Mountains and the alpine farmers that harvest the Speick plant left with an awareness of the finite nature of natural resources, as in the alpine ecosystem of the Carinthian Nock Mountains, and how “being human” is inextricably linked to the natural universe.

Speick natural cosmetics today. The continuation of an 80-year-old vision, combined with an awareness of the environmental and social fabric which weaves together the family business, two alpine families and the Nock Mountains Region. With responsibility for the future.

Our products

“The toll of time is growing. Unhealthy, high-stress work practices, polluted water, air contaminated with dust, gases and acids, not to mention radioactivity, which may become a key problem in the future – all of this causes harm of an exceptional nature and affects our skin to varying degrees. Our food supply has also been damaged, such as by pesticides, mineral fertilizing practices and preservatives.”

These observations of our founder, Walter Rau, sound like an analysis of current environmental issues – but were written in 1958. This awareness was enough to motivate Rau to develop natural cosmetics.

Our goal remains the same today: To develop natural cosmetics that nourish and care for the health, vitality and natural beauty of every person. We use raw materials from biologically regulated cultivation whenever the quality and quantity is available. We work with natural fragrances, essential oils and only with natural preservatives. We also produce our own plant extracts. We never test on animals or contract third parties to do so. Our products range from the classic, aromatic Speick Natural skin care to Speick Men and Speick Woman through to fruity, fragrant Speick Thermal cosmetics.

Behind our products are real stories, such as the fascinating cultural history of the Speick (Lat. *Valeriana celtica*) medicinal plant. Discover more about this unique plant and its century-old history spanning the orient and the occident.

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Our region

A small family company, we produce near Stuttgart as we have for over 80 years with everything from one source – from product development to shipping. We are one of the very few German soap manufacturers and still carry out some steps of the manufacturing process by hand, as we don't want to leave each individual production process to machines.

Environmental and social criteria play a key role in the selection our raw materials and packaging. We aim to principally work with partners from the region to avoid long transport distances, as well as to strengthen the local economic system.

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