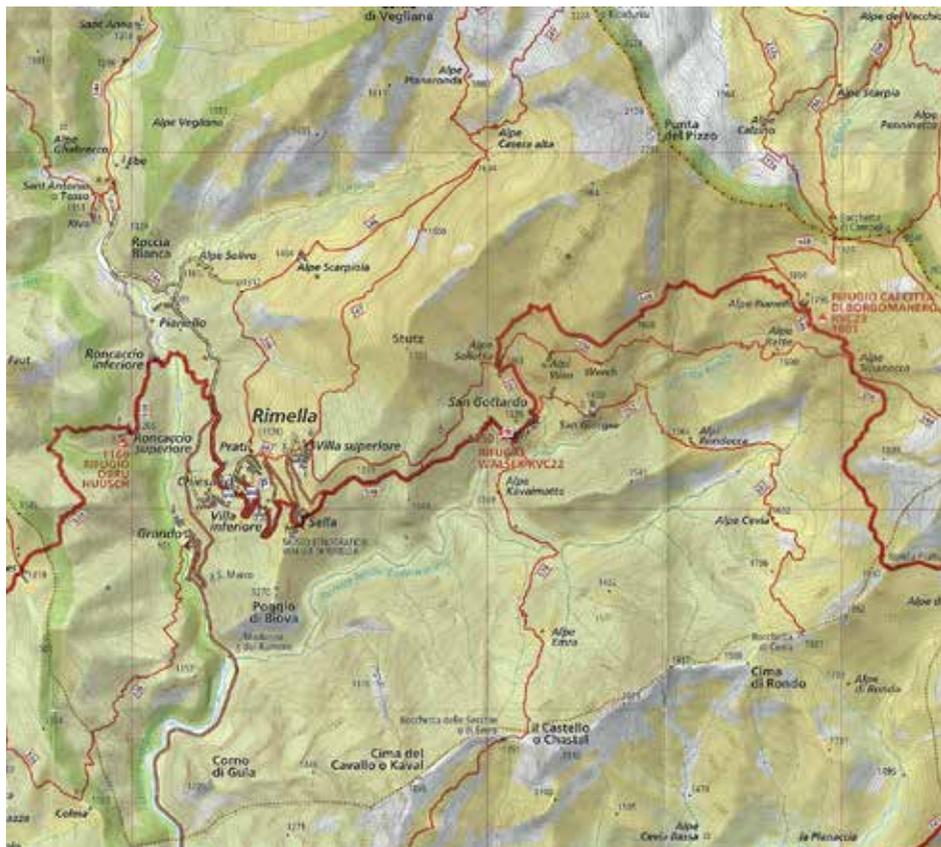


Municipality of Rimella

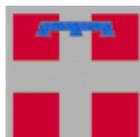
# Rimella and its Walser

In the search of an ancient population,  
its culture and history  
through ancient houses and churches





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**REGIONE  
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# Museum G.B. Filippa

Giovanni Battista Filippa, born in 1778, conceived and built the Museum of Rimella.

The Filippa, from 1807 to 1811, did military service and took part in the Napoleonic war campaign in Spain. Discharged in 1812, for serious illnesses, he died in 1838 at 61 years. He endowed the community of a "cabinet of antiquities and rare things", where he collected and classified specimens of numerous fossils, coins, books, in order to inform a community, where the majority of members would spend his life within the confines of the valley, about what was happening outside

the country in the world. The collection continued after the death of Filippa to the interest of Don Gaudenzio Cusa.

The material is mainly divided into two categories: the first includes things to look like paintings, prints, medals, weapons, ornaments and a rich collection of coins from the V-IV century BC to 1900; the second includes books, parchments (the oldest dates from 1396), ancient documents and catalogs. The Museum of G.B. Filippa is open to public tours during the summer months and by appointment.



# The home heirs Vasina

The ethnographic museum, the ethno-linguistic archive, the Walser Documentation Centre and the Rimella Walser Study Centre are located in the house of Vasina heirs inhabited until about forty years ago by Felicita Vasina and probably until 1930 by his family who then built a stone house a little further upstream.

It's a typical Wlaser house of Rimella built on three floors, to climb on the ground with access directly from the outside. The ground floor was used as a stable (der Gadu), the median plan was where the family lived in the the kitchen (tsvirhüüsch) while the upper floor was used as a barn (der schtädäl).

The basement and ground floors are bearing structures in

stone and wooden partitions; only the third floor is entirely of wood with perimeter walls made of load-bearing horizontal beams stuck orthogonally (blockbau).

The galleries, as is typical in the architecture of houses of Rimella, are closed by vertical timber framed almost at full height.

Characteristic of this house are the chràfu, sort of hooks obtained from the bifurcation of the branches that were used to scatter the hay for faster drying.

The house, now owned by the municipality of Rimella, was the subject of a careful and complex restoration.



# The Ethnographic Museum

It is the museum of the man and his mountain. that highlights the characters and the core values of the experience of the material life into its surroundings.

The museum explores the culture of the mountain of Rimella with its ingenious technology and versatile preserved virtually intact until the beginning of our time by allowing for centuries the material survival of the Walser community.

The topics covered are: the milling business (which

is mainly realized in the Grondo fraction), extraction, transportation and laying of stone , the agricultural cycle (the pasture, hay, fertilization of peeling fields tree ....), work in the woods.

It is not neglected issues related to food, to natural remedies against disease.

The museum exhibition uses both material culture, both panels of ethnographic documentaries with direct testimonies of the people of Rimella.



# The ethno-linguistic archive

Thanks to the law n. 482/99 "Regulations concerning the protection of historical linguistic minorities" the Municipality of Rimella has created the Archive ethnolinguistic Walser "which also includes a specialized library on Walser language.

The documents collected are a database in electronic or paper form in informatic and paper of all existing materials on Walser language, understood both in technical and linguistic sense, both literary.

The Association Centro Studi Walser Rimella (Study Center Walser Rimella) was founded in 1988 to safeguard the ethnic and linguistic heritage

of Rimella. since 1990 publishes, annually, the magazine "Remmalju" on the reality of Rimella

The CSWR involved in all initiatives aimed at promoting the oral and written language of the Walser, which include the Ecomuseum management and Walser library, providing contribution to the promotion of historical, archival, bibliographical and cultural promoted by "Municipal Administration for the protection of the Walser language".

The Walser community



# Ancient Houses and Churches

## Path 1



Media difficulties - not recommended with rain

(Chiesa, Villa Inferiore, Grondo, Roncaccio Superiore, Roncaccio Inferiore, Pianello, Riva, Sant'Antonio, Sant'Anna, Chiesa)

From the square in front of the parking, passing between the eighteenth-century Parish church dedicated to St. Michael and the Ossuary Chapel and Museum G.B. Filippa, you take the old path and borders the Parish house.

Continuing you cross the provincial road and, going back for a few meters, continue the cobbled path downhill to Villa Inferiore.

Further along the provincial road is again cross and go down to the Fractional Church of Grondo dedicated to St. Ambrose.

Being next to the Oratory, on the right, you switch between a Walser house and one of the old mills of Grondo on the left.

Continuing on the right you will come across another building of interest that has the typical "lobie" of Rimella.

After crossing the bridge over the Landwasser continue.

Right along the river, shortly after taking the steep path to Roncaccio Superiore Crossing old beech woods, you proceed towards the Natural Park Alta Valsesia. With steep ramps stone you will come to the village.

Upper left Roncaccio you descend to Roncaccio Inferiore on the route of GTA. Then take the path to Pianello.

You come to the stream alongside a former mill and is wading climbing towards Pianello. Reaching left the paved road, cross the Rio Scarpiola.

After the bridge on the right, the ruins of an old lime kiln.

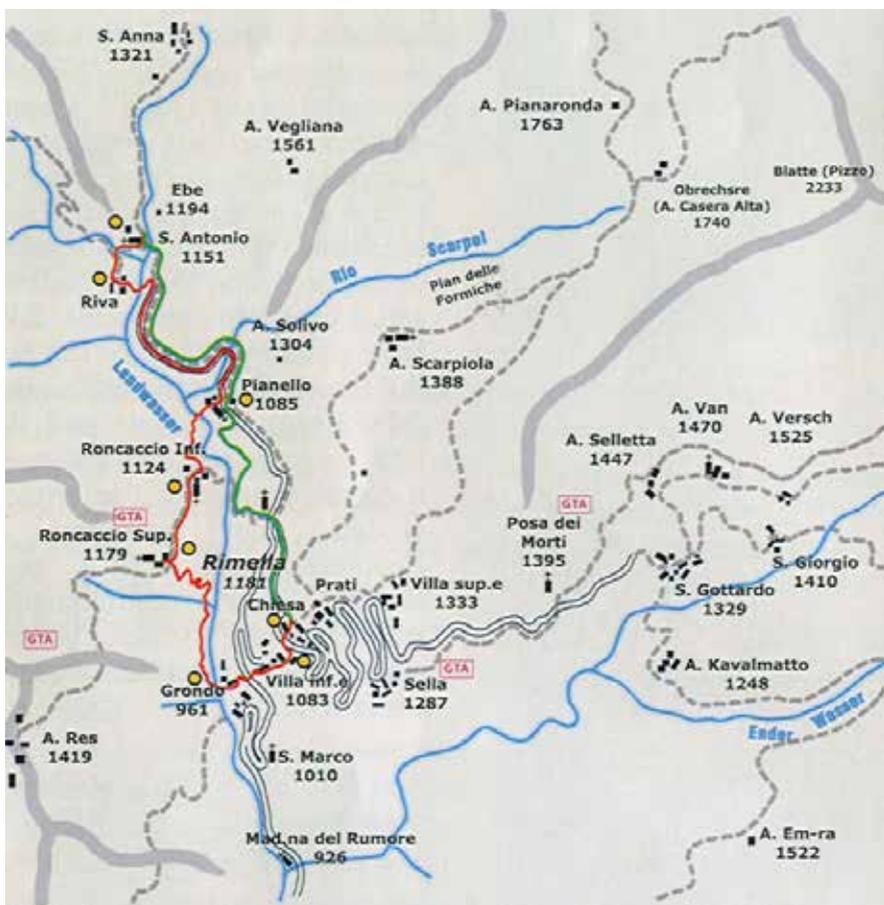
You advance to the bridge for the Riva fraction, after which you reach the Chapel of Santa Liberata. Once at Riva Fraction, continue crossing the Rio Bach, whose path leads to the homonymous mountain pasture and Rifugio CAI Alpe Helo and, beyond Dorchetta, to Bannio in Valle Anzasca.

Go straight instead and you come to Saint Anthony. After visiting, the village continue along the right bank of the Landwasser on the trail to the hamlet of Sant'Anna.

Across the river you can see the houses of Ebe, hamlet now abandoned and you will reach the nucleus of the village, the first and second nucleus are separated by a 5 minute walk and the latter begins the ascent

to the group of houses around the oratory dedicated to the Virgin Mary and St. Anne.

From this point begins the return journey to Sant'Antonio, from which you exit turning left towards the Napoleonic period bridge crossing it and returning to Pianello, passing the Church of Painello and continuing into the woods until you cross the path of GTA returning to the Church.



# Ancient Houses and Churches

## Path 2



easy

(Chiesa, Sella, San Gottardo, San Giorgio, Wan, Selletta; Posa dei Morti, Villa Superiore, Prati, Chiesa)

From church they walk about 250 meters along the carriage, before the cemetery you go left towards the old barn still intact with the overhang cantilevered front of circular stone pillars.

Returning to the starting point, follow the signs along the old cobbled path to the Sella fraction.

Even today, Sella is one of the intact and best-preserved villages. You enter the village along on the left "Robbo house", now restored, dated 1593.

At the junction Sella Low, with the path to Hubal promontory now covered with plants, which juts into the Enderwasser.

To the left the trail to a paved road to San Gottardo and continues halfway up watching on the other side the steep and craggy slope of Mount Kaval.

Past the votive chapel called "scisskaplu", after which goes down to the valley in Balmacco,

the GTA trail, you can see San Gottardo, which you reach in a few minutes.

The trail climbs gently in costs; having crossed the stream reaches San Giorgio.

Crossing the mountain pasture to the top and then going in the opposite direction to the destination, you can reach the pleasant and scenic pastures of Van and Harness, then grafted in the GTA trail, which, after a while, come to the historic town of Posa of the Dead.

From the vantage point you can see, between the two branches dell'Enderwasser, the cluster of mountain huts of Kaval, erroneously indicated by tradition as one of the oldest settlement nuclei.

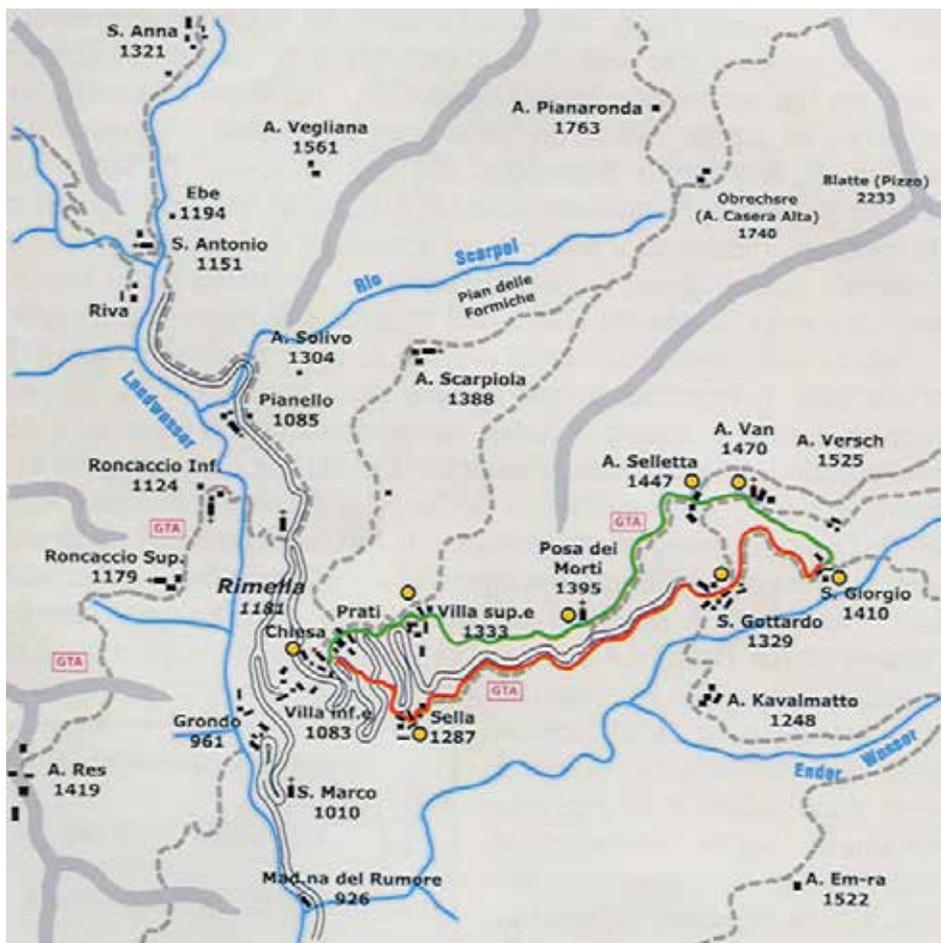
The path continues towards Villa Superior floor, while, after a few hundred meters that of G.T.A. descends to the left up to the road.

Maintaining altitude and,

passing over the village Sella, it changes slope, reaching the oratory of Villa Superiore.

The tour ends at the end of the stone staircase, in front of the Parish Church of St. Michael Church in the hamlet.

Crossed the fraction passing next to the Chapel of Our Lady of Einsiedeln, and you descend on the ancient paving stone up to Prati Fraction.



# The History of Rimella

## THE MIDDLE AGE

The history of Rimella begins in mid-thirteenth century in a rugged landscape. The resort is nestled between the mountains in a side valley of the river Mastallone.

The territory consists of two valleys, the longest one of the Landwasser (mainstream), which stretches from north to south for seven kilometers and is joined at the Chapel of Liebu Frouwa tsum Schteg ("Noise Madonna") with the Enderwasser (water inside), which runs for four kilometers to the east. In this environment in the middle of

the thirteenth century went from Switzerland, a small group of those peasants and shepherds.

They was of lineage German language in the framework of economic, political, social and religious, which occurred in Europe around 1000, colonized the canton of Valais, they had to migrate past the Alpine ridge

## THE MODERN AGE

Through a study of notarial documents kept at the Civic Museum in Rimella dating from 1396 to 1556, in this age considerably increased the number of households.

Partly in continuous relationship with the primitive settlements, part to immigration from neighboring territories; also articulates the dislocation in the villages, in pastures and streams; a representative console that exercised his tenure at the City Residence in village Church governs the community.

The village church (Villa Ecclesiae) was also the center of religious life for the presence of the Parish of St. Michael the Archangel



Church (1518), the Cemetery (1431) and Square (526 l). In addition to Villa Ecclesiae and Rondo (San Gottardo), arose Villa Superiore (1451), Sella (1470), Roncaccio (1484), Grondo (1537). In this age, despite the harshness of the work, the

24 notaries in Rimella, in the '700 there were 20 prelates rimellesi, 37 between notaries and also lawyers, doctors, veterinarians, chemists, pharmacists, captains, engineers, writers, painters and sculptors. Many homes were equipped



obstacles posed by the economy agro-forestry-pastoral and living conditions often at the limits of survival, the population rimellese, supported by a deeply felt religious and community spirit, creates a culture rich and original witnessed by the number and beauty of sacred buildings and the architectural characteristics of the houses for residential purposes.

with carpentry and even today, there are testimonies of cabinet making.

In 1703 there were 214 families with 1062 inhabitants, in 1801, there were 1,175 inhabitants, in 1831 the highest population growth with 1381 inhabitants, but fell in 1943 to 362 inhabitants and 148 inhabitants in 2000.

## **THE CONTEMPORARY AGE**

In this age there is a high number of educated people expressed by the company Walser; in '500 there were

The contemporary age opens with the 800. Rimella inhabited by people who governs with

appropriate civil and religious structures, with a church among the most beautiful in Valsesia, a number of other sacred buildings.

Of three functioning schools, as well as a cultural tool of exception for those times, the Museum of G.B. Filippa.

Active also the agro-pastoral activities, albeit insufficient to sustain all, and artisanal, with sawmills and mills, and commercial.

By contrast, the lines of communication were inadequate, often dangerous, and was the highest emigration rate in neighboring countries and abroad.

To the 800 manuscript "illiterate in the municipality of Rimella" Peter Peco testifies the high level of literacy of the population.

From 1848 to 1881, the percentage of illiterates had dropped from 39% to 26%, an increase especially for the female sex; By comparison, in 1881 the illiterate in the Kingdom of Italy were 67%, Turin 34%, 41% in Novara, 1'88percentage in Cosenza.

The age instead closes at the end of the twentieth century with an image of a different sign of the country, characterized by depopulation, the closure of local schools and the slow but inexorable decline of the language.



# Culture and society

The Walser people arrived by successive migration of family clans of small and medium size, and when the resources of the place colonized scarce, younger people moved in search of new horizons.

The Walser brought with them their own cultural heritage, customs, traditions, customs and their Germanic language.

Particularly harsh was the status of women in society rimellese.

It was up to the woman raising children, the conduction of the house, the work of the summer fields and look after the cattle in winter when many men emigrated to work as artisans in Northern Europe.

In winter, they also occupied various craft activities, such as packaging of "scoffoni" (typical footwear), spinning hemp, weaving and knitting, and the typical Valsesian puncetto (needle lace).

Many homes were equipped with carpentry and there were skilled cabinetmakers, and also many of the fields of tools, like in the neighboring valleys, were built on site

(from wood sleds and gneiss transport or manure, panniers for the transportation of hay, firewood and gneiss, buckets for milking, churns for cheese and wooden rakes).

The rimellese society was based on a system of work and each family was obliged to a certain number of hours of work for public works according to the size of the household. In 1300, the inhabitants of the individual fractions were a form of "Common Consular Instructions".

No longer had the heads but a community of Attorney represented up to 1394 the community at the Confraternity of Orta San Giulio.

Poverty and hardships did not prevent the rimellesi from '500 to' 700 to develop and care for school and education and to provide for the spiritual needs of people and materials,



in particular for low income through forms of brotherhoods and oratories.

The population came quickly to take advantage of all the resources of the valley with an agro-forestry-pastoral niche economy that allowed, on the one hand a complete autonomy from the outside world but only to a limited number of rimellesi: in fact, reached a total of over 1300 inhabitants, from 1600 until the present century it became necessary for many seasonal

emigration.

The men emigrated, during the winter months, in the countries of Northern Europe: Switzerland, France, Germany and Scandinavia. For many emigrations became permanent, as evidenced by the registrar of the northern European countries, especially Switzerland and France.

The rimellesi work in the building and in crafts



# Architecture and Art

The Walser of Rimella buildings retain many of the architectural features of former valleys.

These are buildings on a stone pedestal elevate a wooden structure whose solidity is guaranteed by interlocking angle of the beams, said to "block-bau": this allowed that the buildings were also built on the steepest slopes, leaving the few land flat or better exposed to the fields of rye, potatoes and barley.

How many centers of Valsesia Rimella also gave a significant contribution to the Fine Arts.

The construction of many religious buildings gave the impetus to the development of architecture, painting, sculpture, cabinet making and stucco decoration.

By notarial deeds of the '500 and '600 it is that the house was designed on three levels: a stable or cassina, to keep the cattle, the house of seals with the fireplace on the floor with his "pioda" (hértblàttu) to warm up and cook, and finally the peat to store hay and twigs.

They are made of masonry; the last two to the third in a block-bau wood, the eventual fourth floor was the result of cant. The houses are in part still existing old to three floors and in part to four.

Every village had a building constructed on wedges for storage of grain and moisture away from the animals.

The common elements that distinguish the "Walser house" of Rimella are essentially two: its location in the canton and the composition of its balconies (lobie).

The house is primarily perpendicular to climb on the bank in which it supported with totally crossed the first floor and partially the second, where the house want fire.

The plan on the first level is open on the front of the house, the second is laterally accessible where it opens at ground level, on the third floor, which is accessed upstream, offers the view one floor.

If there is a fourth floor, attainable by a ladder from lobia below or with

stone staircase, sometimes perpendicular to the front and beyond the road.

The first and sometimes the second floor are made of masonry.

Only on the third floor (the barn), and sometimes the second, it is made entirely of wood to block-bau, with load-bearing horizontal beams wood to support the robust construction of the roof.

The horizontal frame is all of raw wood (larch as the block-bau) always means in logs, just slicked on the decking which extend on the sides in support of lobia, and that, for greater stability on the ground floor are supported by pillars round in small pieces or, only if the lobia is not more than one meter in width, to be put into diagonal struts collected at the base of the underlying masonry or stone supports set vertically.

The lobia surrounding the house from several sides; closed by vertical wooden partition full height, sometimes leaving a gap of no greater than 20-30 cm, it is composed of slats fir that protect the facade of the house.

The stone roof gable and little projecting, extending, in the higher side spire with a canopy that covers the last lobia and is open above until the climax to ventilate the barn.



# Informations

The UNI EN ISO 1400 - A way to excellence. Since 2007 Rimella, along with the other four municipalities of Valmastallone can boast the prestigious Certification acclimatized, award recognizes a pristine environment and rich cultural traditions and the will to work together with the aim of preserving and start the territory towards management excellence of its environmental characteristics.

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G.B. Filippa Museum  
Frazione Chiesa  
c/o Municipality of Rimella

Walser Museum  
Frazione Sella  
c/o Municipality of Rimella

Centro Studi Walser di Rimella  
Frazione Sella  
www.centrostudiwalserrimella.it

Ass.Tur.Pro Loco di Rimella  
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## **OSPITALITY and CATERING**

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Il Bucaneve Rent a Room  
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Rimella is a small country located on the 1000 meters high mountain in the southern slope of Monte Rosa, where, nearly 800 years ago a small group of pastors farmers from Valais has initiated a community Walser subject of increasing interest to scholars, especially linguists, given the documentary value of the ancient language tittschu rimellese.

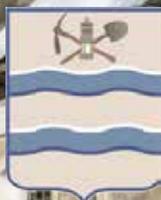
This migration is part of the displacement context of Walser people through the so-called "high streets"; it seems that they took place because in the Middle Ages the Alps there were favorable climatic conditions with a long hot brackets, between the advance of the glaciers, which had characterized the second half of the first millennium and the so-called Little Ice Age that, since 1800, pushes downstream flaps of glaciers and again makes difficult the transalpine communications.



Ts Remmaljer Terlie ìsch gwörtut en 2004 v`r esw`ts tiöt z bruhu ts Remmaljertittschu en d briv` tsch Gmenj und v`r wélts mànglut.

Tiödis `schiöhe d gwéne tsch paìs und d àltu `schacche. Tiödis schribu biéher v`r grése. Ts Remmaljer Terlie öich kracchut d tittschu schiöl v`r d Remmaljer lit und v`r dei d`s walljunt lérne z schpallu, leschu und schribu ts tittschu.

The language desk of Rimella was born in 2004 to deal with the use of the language of Rimella in documents and for those needs. They do research on the traditions and history of the country. They also write books for children and for adults. The desk also prepares tittschu language courses for rimellesi and for all those who want to learn to speak, read and write the tittschu language.



Municipality of Rimella