



## A Look Back in Time

The "Haus zum Rüden" [house of the hound] was built in 1348. The City of Zurich constructed the ground floor, an open arcade. Above this an association of noblemen built a tavern in which the Council occasionally met with approximately two hundred members between 1348 and 1400. The impressive feature of this tavern is the magnificent, eleven metre-wide curved wooden ceiling with the carved timber heads, which is today the "Gothic Room" Restaurant.

The association of noblemen continued to evolve and was first mentioned in 1401 as the tavern society of the "Herren zum Rüden" [Gentlemen of Rüden], which was part of the "Constaffel", a society that was founded during the "Zurich Craftsmens' Revolution" of 1336. At that time citizens of Zurich who worked as craftsmen were divided into thirteen guilds, whereas all citizens with a higher social standing than the craftsmen, that is noblemen, knights and rich merchants, joined forces to form the Constaffel. Since the 15th Century, the "Gentlemen of Rüden" have constituted the main group of the Constaffel, which acquired further groups of members depending on political, economic and societal circumstances, including those who were not accepted by the craftsmens' guilds due to their status as outsiders (e.g. beggars, hangmen). In the 16th Century, the "Gentlemen of Rüden" adopted the name "Adelige Gesellschaft" [Noblemens' Society]. In 1659 the Society had the top floors of the "Haus zum Rüden" demolished and erected in their place the originally rendered half-timbered house with the "Constaffel Room" and the small "Rüdenstübli", which today function as banqueting facilities.

In 1868, shortly before their dissolution, the "Noblemens' Society" sold the "Haus zum Rüden" to the City of Zurich. Constaffel and Zurich's guilds had lost their public law functions in 1866, but continued to exist as traditional societies. One such society, the Constaffel Society, repurchased the house from the City in 1936 and subjected it to extensive renovations.

Source: M. Illi, Die Constaffel, Zurich 2003 (Buchverlag NZZ).

Links: Gesellschaft zur Constaffel [www.constaffel.ch](http://www.constaffel.ch)  
Zentralkomitee Zürcher Zünfte [www.z-z-z.ch](http://www.z-z-z.ch)

