

# The History of Helmbold Mohair

The small village of Oberweid is situated amongst the picturesque Rhon mountains of Germany and it was here that Adolf Helmbold was born on the 18th September 1872, son of a poor farmer.

As a young man, Adolf attended a weaving school in Chemnitz, Germany and it was here he received his first training in the manufacture of textiles. He went on to work for several textile mills on the Rhine River, before deciding to return home to the little village of Oberweid where he founded his own company, A. Helmbold Weaving Company.

It was in a rented premises that the first mohair fabrics were manually woven. Adolf bought his first mechanical weaving machines between 1905 & 1910. The machines were second hand and driven by water.

It was not long before the first wool & mohair fabrics manufactured by the Helmbold company were exported into neighbouring countries as well as Germany. In 1910 the machines were converted to petrol engines so that the quality and quantity of fabric could be increased. With support from the bank & personal funds, Adolf built his own weaving factory in 1912 and with 8 new machines, they were now able to weave double plush fabrics (i.e. the method where 2 rolls of fabric are woven at once).

In these early days they manufactured many fabrics had outlets for their product all over the world & even imitation Persian Lamb fabrics to Canada.

including Velveteen, Wool, Cotton & Mohair. They exported coloured printed plush to Africa &

During 1912 to 1914, the whole of the Rhon the weaving machines became however before Adolf Helmbold was the active forces during World War I from this period, the weaving mill ceased

valley was connected to electricity and electrically driven. It was not long called to the Army and served in 1916 to 1918. For the duration of production.

In 1938 Adolf Helmbold died and left Ludwig & Karl, who continued through the war years. It was during became impossible to get hold of weaving artificial silk fabrics. It was not they began re-manufacturing mohair the silk fabrics as they had become

his business to his two sons manufacturing plush fabrics this period that Mohair fibre and they instead started until the end of World War II that fabric, but also continued with popular with the toy industry.

In 1948 Karl Helmbold died and this left own. As East Germany was under limited management responsibilities. Things by the end of the 1950's the impart of mohair by the end of the 1960's was stopped altogether on the manufacture of artificial silk

ing to run the company on his unist rule, he was given only e difficult for the company as mitted by the government and n had to concentrate solely



## Read this fascinating story.....

On the 15th April 1972, the Communist Government forcibly took over the Helmbold factory, after 72 years of being run and funded by the Helmbold family. In the following years they manufactured fabric but had to conform to the government's requirements. They were forced to produce only synthetic plush, machines were thrown away and the experience of the employees was ignored.

In 1985 Ludwig Helmbold died. He died an angry & frustrated man due to the government's actions and the result of 2 generations under oppression of the communist state. The future for the Helmbold factory did not look good.

Then came the fall of the Berlin Wall and with it the reunification of Germany, the impossible became once again possible. A re-starting of the Helmbold weaving tradition in Oberweid. In the Spring of 1990 the daughter of Ludwig Helmbold, Edeltraud Neuberf and her husband Manfred Neuberf (both engineers), organised a petition to claim back her father's factory from the government. Since January 1991 Helmbold Ltd has been managed by Edeltraud Neuberf with the support of her sons, Stefan & Burkhard.

They once again began to manufacture fabrics made from natural fibres e.g. Mohair, cotton, wool, alpaca for the toy and clothing industries. The Helmbold name continues successfully and their fabrics are exported all over the world. Adolf Helmbold would certainly be a very proud man today. Beary Cheap are the exclusive Agents for Helmbold in Australia.

**Beary Cheap**

**Bear  
Supplies**

ABN 94 052 530 211

**PO Box 2465**

**Burleigh Heads QLD 4220**

**Ph 0500 833397**

**Fax 0500 833393**

**International Customers:**

**Ph (61) 7 55 203 455**

**Fax (61) 7 55 203 411**

**Website**

**[www.bearycheap.com](http://www.bearycheap.com)**

**Email**

**[sales@bearycheap.com](mailto:sales@bearycheap.com)**

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