



autumn | winter 2024

NEWS LETTER

Czech-Liechtenstein Society

Member of Europa Nostra



Members of the association meeting HSH Hereditary Prince Alois at Vaduz Castle. © Photo by: editors

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About trees and more

Written by Richard Svoboda, the castle manager of Valtice Castle and a member of the board of the CLS

I read somewhere, and I'll just paraphrase it because I don't know where to find the exact source, that advanced civilizations are recognized by the fact that adult men plant trees which will not shade them from the scorching sun.

I know it's more of a parable, but the older I get, the more I find myself returning to the idea in my thoughts. Also, inspired by that sentiment, I try to plant trees from time to time, presumably to show my advancement in civilisation and perhaps also to demonstrate the environmental awareness that is somewhat inexorably required in our

times. For I consider it, unlike the overexcited leftist green lunatics, to be an essentially conservative and universally right-wing value. In the back of my mind, I secretly and selfishly hope that I will still see the tree crowns, and therefore the desired shade. But I rarely say this out loud, I might be ridiculous for the Almighty. Especially as there are more and more people with whom I will not plant a tree anymore, though I would pay anything for that.

In fact, I consider planting of two chestnut trees on the Dominican Square in Brno twenty years ago as one of the undoubtedly positive acts of me as the mayor of the city. This was done with a group of small schoolchildren. The chestnuts - and the children of that time, too, I am sure

- have grown up nicely. Just like the memorial lime tree that we planted with friends in October 2018 in the Valtice Castle Park. It was a hundred years after the establishment of the republic, the Czechoslovak one, which we still claim and refer to, even though ours today is smaller and completely different after a turbulent and eventful century.

To be a proper memorial lime tree, it had to be accompanied with some letters in stone - who and, above all, when and why. It is not quite easy to simply rejoice without some shame in the former Liechtenstein castle park over the founding of the republic, whose builder, first the foreign minister alongside Masaryk, later even the second president after him, signed the expropriation decree for the park and everything around it.

It is not easy to simply rejoice without a certain sadness, also because a few metres from that lime tree the Iron Curtain was erected after the last terrible war, cutting apart the former Liechtenstein dominions and the ancient broader homeland of our ancestors, the Central European, Imperial and Royal, monarchist homeland in the Danube lowland, causing wounds to Europe that are still healing slowly. Moreover, I make no secret of the occasional feeling that it is difficult to see our ostentatiously plebeian republican democracy up close and not feel a persistent nostalgia for the former monarchy.

And so in October 2018, we had a trilingual sentence carved in stone under the lime tree that we planted it to honour the work of our ancestors. Because good work worthy of respect can comprise many things, great and small, and decent people will eventually agree on what good is. The problem is that often a leader doesn't ask the people anymore because he thinks he himself knows the best what good is.

Surely, we can find nice words under another lime tree, which we planted in the same park a little further away with members of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society this year, on the occasion of the half-round anniversary of the renewal of diplomatic relations between our smaller Czech Republic and the even smaller, but somehow permanent and nicely the same, Principality of Liechtenstein. I'm sure we will also find some words for good memory and goodwill under that lime tree.

We look to the past through these memorial trees, reflect on the present and probably also want to say something to the future.

In the meantime, after I had started this somewhat rambling treatise on greenery and other things, I read a text on the internet about the production of French cognac. The region that gave its name to cognac, by the way, also belongs to the story of the founding of the Czechoslovak Republic, but I don't want to write about that. Nor is there space here to go into a long discussion on the poetry and great tradition of the process during which hot vapours full of aromas and flavours slowly liquefy in a copper 'swan neck' and drip, still as a clear liquid, into an oak barrel. The cognac is then aged there for many years. The alcohol that evaporates during maturation is said to be a tribute to the angels. But I was struck by the paragraph saying that, although there are many courses, books and schools where you can learn everything about distillation in detail, each cognac house, even the smallest one, each individual producer, has its own little secrets and experience handed down over generations, which gives the final product its unmistakable taste and uniqueness.

It seems to me that distilling wine and planting trees are actually very, very close. That both are part of the same civilizational definition, consisting of a thousand similar, traditional and small hereditary truths. And that the hook, the divine detail, is only and precisely in those truths and little secrets, which are passed on in the planting of trees, making of cognac, and many other things.

There are many things unique that we must pass on, even though we may not enjoy the shade, nor the century-old cognac that perhaps right now, this year, someone is putting into a barrel, and, somehow, by the way, without any grand and ancient gestures, as poet Kainar would have written, passes it all on to his son, daughter, grandson, granddaughter.

So let's take care of this handing over, so that our world, our civilization code does not dissolve like a tribute to angels from leaky oak barrels...

P.S. In the yard next to the stables of the Valtice castle, which were painted and built by the builder Ospel for His Serene Highness Anton Florian, we planted six walnut trees this autumn. In the place where they had once grown. A traditional Valtice variety. Also, for the future, so that when they scold us, I hope just a little and nice and kindly, for what we did wrong, are nicely shaded in the hot yard at midday. And perhaps we will still live to enjoy that shade too. ■

To Vaduz! Prince Alois received the members of the association.

Written by: editors

The 13th of June 2024 can hardly be described in the history of the association as anything other than a „sharp start“. The task was clear: to set off from Prague, Brno, Vienna or Opava in the morning and to be present at the Vaduz Castle for an audience no later than at five o'clock in the afternoon. By car from Prague, this means travelling approximately 615 kilometres, from Brno 785 kilometres and from Opava or by train even more. But all the participants arrived on time. The rare and kind reception of the members of the association by HSH Hereditary Prince Alois opened the gates to an expedition that is remembered as a success.

His Serene Highness Prince Alois thanked the pilgrims for their participation in the activities of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society which increase the knowledge about the Principality, as well as about the historical trace that his family left in Moravia, Silesia, Bohemia and today's Austria. Visitors' questions to the hereditary prince were mainly focused on the political system in Liechtenstein, the successful economy of the small country and his personal relationship to his family roots in the Czech Republic.

Where HSH Prince Alois left off after the „sharp“ afternoon start of the members, Thomas Zwiefelhofer, Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic in Vaduz and former Deputy Prime Minister of the Liechtenstein government, continued the next morning: in a factual presentation he described



The trip began with a visit to Vaduz Castle, where the members of the association were received by HSH Prince Alois. © Photo by: editors



Petr Svoboda, chairman of the association, presents His Serene Highness Hereditary Prince Alois with his grandfather's personal correspondence with Prince Karl Alfred from the summer of 1945. © Photo by: editors

the structure of the current Liechtenstein economy, where twenty thousand people from Switzerland, Austria and Germany come to work every morning. Forty thousand inhabitants of the principality cannot work alone to achieve the success of a high value-added economy, an economy based almost half on innovative industry. The presentation by Thomas Zwiefelhofer, also a member of the association, then went viral in the following days and was requested electronically by a number of members.

An example of Liechtenstein's industrial success is the company HILTI, one of the global leaders in professional construction tools, nowadays mostly prefixed with "accu-", as well as fastening systems, special anchors and the like. That is why a visit to the so-called HILTI City, which impresses at first sight with its distinctive character, was also on the programme. It is a world unto itself. With a nursery for the children of employees, an impressive research centre, and its own design and culture.



Zbyněk Šolc presented His Serene Highness Prince Alois with a publication about the Brno City Museum. © Photo by: editors

However, the other two “must-see” stops also boast their own culture and design: the new Liechtenstein brewery, whose easy harmony of metal structures with wood, which refers to craft barrels, is more reminiscent of modern buildings in the “cool districts” of large European cities, and the Liechtenstein Parliament, a story for the architectural textbooks. While the brewery is a good place to eat and drink (though some conservatives in the group loudly reminisced about Pilsner Urquell), there are several messages layered in the parliament. The first is spontaneous: almost everyone liked the modern, burnt brick buildings of the parliament and the provincial archives. The second is budgetary: ambitious construction even here, in thrifty Liechtenstein, exceeded the planned budget many times over (which still did not threaten the overall positive result of the state budget in the years in question). The third is political: Liechtenstein is a „small state“. Factually and philosophically. There are twenty-five deputies, they all work normally, and if they cannot come, a substitute elected in advance in regular elections steps in. And the vote? Basically, it is not permissible to abstain, you have to be either for or against. Governing without excuses.

A trip to Malbun, visit to the cathedral, museum or galleries. All of these and other similar program treats were enjoyed by the members of the association individually or in groups. Those who want to know the details must ask the participants themselves. What is certain, the third day of the expedition, June 15, did not favor any outdoor activities. It was raining so hard that the water washed away the determination of all those who



Lecture by Thomas Zwiefelhofer, Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic in Vaduz. © Photo by: editors

had hoped for a memorable hike in their hiking boots.

Fortunately, on the eve of that rainy end, the members of the association had a dinner together in the oldest inn in the country, in a place with a wonderful atmosphere, the Hotel Löwen. It was a great evening!

A social one.

Eloquent. Spontaneous. Any observer would dare to say that everyone present had no thought at all of the fact that they were 615, or 785, or even much more kilometres from home. Indeed, many of the tour participants said it out loud in different words: Liechtenstein, its ruling Princely House and the Czech Republic are actually very close to each other.

The Czech-Liechtenstein Society's expedition to Liechtenstein from 13 to 15 June 2024 was observed by Michal Růžička. ■



Members of the association in front of the modern Liechtenstein parliament building. © Photo by: editors



A walk through the princely vineyards below Vaduz Castle. © Photo by: editors

Their illustrations dominate collections of royal families. At home, the **Bauer brothers** are unknown

Written by: editors

Although their illustrations dominate the collections of royal families around the world, almost no one in the Czech Republic had any idea about Joseph, Franz and Ferdinand Bauer until recently. But that is about to change. The importance of the three natives of Valtice, whose timeless three-dimensional drawings and watercolours of plants and animals are often valued by experts at more than a hundred thousand euros, is the subject of the first ever book written in Czech. It is the brainchild of artist Zdeňka Žďárská Benešová and her four students.

Had it not been for a great family tragedy in the second half of the eighteenth century, the world might have been deprived of three famous illustrators. Joseph, Franz and Ferdinand Bauer lost their father, the leading Liechtenstein painter Johann Lucas Bauer, a favourite of Prince Joseph Wenceslas, when they were young boys. These three of his five dependent children were shortly

WHO WERE THE BAUER BROTHERS?

- Joseph, Franz and Ferdinand were born in Valtice into the family of the leading Liechtenstein painter Johann Lucas Bauer in 1756, 1758 and 1760.
- They were still children when their father died, and were taken into the care of physician and botanist Norbertus Adamus Boccus, the Prior of the Convent of the Brothers of Mercy in Valtice.
- Boccus recognized the boys' great talent and artistic gifts and used them to create his three-volume herbarium, which he created for medical and botanical purposes.
- Later, the boys also contributed to a unique collection of botanical illustrations in fourteen volumes. The publications of the Hortus botanicus, or the Liechtenstein Codex, are currently housed in the Liechtenstein Garden Palace in Vienna. This fantastic work contains 2,748 faithful watercolour illustrations of plants, some of which are now extinct. The first volume of the codex was written in 1776, the last in 1804. The brothers began work on it when Joseph was fourteen, Franz twelve and Ferdinand just ten years old.
- All three graduated from the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts and later became sought-after botanical painters of the nineteenth century for their precision.
- Johann Wolfgang Goethe reportedly called them the Michelangelos of botanical art.



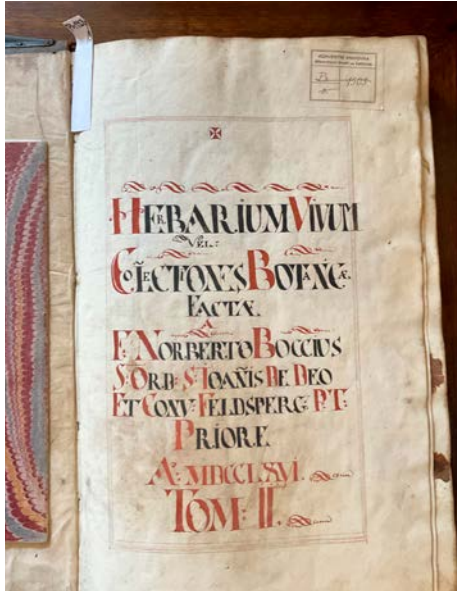
The legacy of the Bauer brothers brought students from the South Moravian region to the Natural History Museum in London.
© Photo by: Zdeňka Žďárská Benešová

afterwards entrusted to the care of the prior of the Convent of the Brothers of Mercy in Valtice, the physician and botanist Norbertus Adamus Boccus.

And it was then that the story began to unfold at the Liechtenstein court in Valtice, which brought a trio of gifted boys to the top of the world's botanical art. The watercolours and drawings of the Bauer brothers are treasures in the art collections of the Princely House of Liechtenstein, the British royal family and museums in New York, London, Oxford, Vienna and Vaduz.

These works, often of incalculable value, dominated by a unique watercolour herbarium of fourteen volumes called the Liechtenstein Codex, are almost unknown in the Czech Republic. A new book for young people is intended to introduce them. The book is being developed by Zdeňka Žďárská Benešová, an artist and teacher at the Mikulov Primary Art School, and four of her students - Veronika and Klára Kružíková and Maria and Anastazia Komarová.

„People will learn more about the brothers' lives and their work, as well as about their travels, because each of



Three-volume herbarium of Father Boccius.
© Photo by: Zdeňka Žďárská Benešová

them worked at a completely different place in their adult life," said Žďárská Benešová, who with the girls went to Vienna, London and Vaduz in search of the Bauer brothers' footsteps.

Joseph became painter to the Prince of Liechtenstein and director of his collec-

tions in Vienna. Franz was an expert in the use of the microscope and a botanical painter at the court of King George II of England. And Ferdinand went on voyages of discovery to Australia and Greece, where he documented the local flora and fauna.

THE BAUER BROTHERS IN VALTICE

- In Valtice, people can find out more about them in the Lu & Tíree Chmelar Herb Garden, run by Přemysl Krejčířík, or in the National Museum of Agriculture.
- Prior Boccius is buried in the local cemetery.
- The original three-volume herbarium of Prior Boccius is kept in the Convent of the Brothers of Mercy in Brno, where it was discovered for the botanical world by Mikulov native Milada Rigasová.
- Other enthusiasts can also contribute to the creation of the first Czech-language book about important Valtice natives, which has been already supported by the town of Valtice and the New York-based Friends of Czech Greenways Foundation. This can be done through the transparent account no. 670100-2224823857/6210.
- It is worth mentioning that South Moravian children are also involved in the book's front cover. They paint exactly the same pots that the Bauer brothers created for the first herbarium of Father Boccio.
- In Valtice, a street was named after the Bauer siblings – "Tři bratři" ("Three Brethren's" street).

„Each chapter will end with a comic strip from the present day. It will tell the story of the five of us and our journey to discover these important Valtice natives,“ continued the artist, who learned about the Bauer brothers thanks to landscape architect Přemysl Krejčířík. For ten years she led botanical painting courses in his Herb Garden in Valtice.

The main purpose and mission of the book, which is accompanied by rich illustrations by the girls, is not only to popularize the little-known history of Valtice, but also to motivate young people and children to travel and love nature and botany. „The book will also include QR codes. The girls are preparing various small animations that will be linked to. In addition, we would like to use the QR codes to lead people to websites across the world where they can read more about the Bauer brothers,“ revealed Žďárská Benešová.

The authors are aiming to publish the book, whose mentor is Hans Walter Lack, a Berlin professor of botany and one of the greatest experts on the life and work of the Bauer brothers, in May next year. „I met the Bauer



In the Natural History Museum, the students could touch and repaint the brothers' works. © Photo by: Zdeňka Žďárská Benešová



Franz Bauer was known to admire orchids.
© Photo by: Zdeňka Žďárská Benešová

brothers in London in 1974. At that time, only a few experts knew about them in bits and pieces, and that got my attention,” recalled Lack, who has authored several monographs on the trio of siblings. None of them, however, has been translated into English.

He first visited the Monastery of the Brothers of Mercy in Brno in 1983. „It was an unforgettable visit. They welcomed me very warmly and allowed me to look into the herbarium of Prior Boccia,” said the renowned Berlin botanist, who discovered a number of previously unknown drawings by the Bauer brothers during his later research in Valtice.

The resurrection of the legacy of the siblings, who started working on the world-renowned herbaria as children, is not to end in Valtice only with the publication of a book. The establishment of a new tradition of spring festivals with workshops, a commemorative plaque on the family home or the Convent of the Brothers of Mercy, and souvenirs are also in play.

Richard Svoboda, the castle manager of the Valtice castle, is considering a museum or permanent exhibition, which could be opened in the renovated Belvedere castle. „It is in the embryonic stage of thinking, but we really thought about commemorating Prior Boccia and the Bauer brothers. They were very important figures of Valtice. We would probably aim for any concrete implementation by year 2027,” he specified.

Publications dedicated to the Bauer brothers can also be purchased in the castle bookstore. However only in English. „Not much is really known about them here, even though Ferdinand, for example, was the first Central European to reach Australia with an important British expedition and actually painted the first Australian natural history. He is considered to be literally a giant figure in their local history,” said the castle manager.

He attributes the reason why their fame did not reach back to the Czech Republic to post-war events. „They belonged to the community of German-speaking people. That is to say, to a world that to some extent left our history together with the Liechtenstein family after 1945. And only now we have the time to rediscover it,” Svoboda noted. ■

WHAT IS THE LIECHTENSTEIN CODEX?

- It is a watercolour herbarium in fourteen volumes, which depicts all known plants with an almost three-dimensional impression, which were intended to help botanists and physicians in their work.
- In the eighteenth century, the only way in which plants could be depicted in a way that would be recognisable for medical purposes was to paint them precisely as so-called scientific illustrations.
- The brothers' work was complicated by the fact that plants only bloomed at certain times. And also by the fact that in the Baroque period it was necessary to work on their colouring only in daylight, because candlelight alters the perception of colour. Therefore the Bauer brothers devised a colour coding system that allowed them to paint the plants later. Today it's called painting by numbers.
- The codex was kept in the pharmacy of the Brothers of Mercy in Valtice until 1799. Only then it went as a gift to the reigning Prince Alois I Josef, who in return permanently financed hospital beds in Valtice through his foundation.
- It now belongs to the Liechtenstein collections and is stored in the archives of the Liechtenstein Garden Palace in Vienna.

The story of the Bauer brothers comes to life. Symbolically. Thanks to the sisters from Moravia

Written by: Iva Haghofer

Sisters Veronika and Klára Kružíková from Valtice, together with Marie and Anastazie Komarová from Lednice, have been working on a book about the brothers Joseph, Franz and Ferdinand Bauer intensively for the second year. The first ever publication in Czech about these world-famous and virtually unknown botanical painters is expected to reach the readers next spring. The editors of the Newsletter followed four talented students to their art workshop in Valtice. „We still do not understand how it is possible that such exceptional and talented brothers have escaped the attention of all of us,” the girls agree during the interview.

There are four of you. But there were only three Bauer brothers. How did you break them down?

Veronika: I'm the youngest, but I'm paradoxically devoted to the oldest, Joseph. Masha has Franz and Nastya has Ferdinand. And Klara writes the texts to all this. It came naturally.

You've studied a lot about the brothers in two years. What interested you the most and why?

Marie: Franz worked mainly in London, at the Kew Gardens, which we visited together with other places connected with the Bauer brothers. I was very interested in Franz's microscopic drawings with absolutely detailed cross-sections. And also his enthusiasm for orchids. He was literally passionate about tiny things. And he loved chemistry and biology. He studied, for example, the natural phenomenon called red snow, caused by snow algae in the polar regions. He was interested in it not only from the view of botany but also chemistry.

Veronika: Joseph was also a very interesting person. He studied ancient monuments and statues in Rome for several years. While working on the book, I enjoyed drawing pictures to characterise the city, and at the same time learning more and more about Joseph, who was later the director of the Liechtenstein Princely Collections at Rossau in Vienna.

Anastázíe: Ferdinand was the most well-travelled of all the brothers, and he went to Australia with a ship expedition to capture the animals and plants there. It's very interesting that he only sketched and numbered everything along the way. And he finished and coloured it in



Upper row left to right: Anastázíe Komarová, Zdeňka Žďárská Benešová, Klára Kružíková; **lower row left to right:** Marie Komarová, Veronika Kružíková © Photo by: editors

by numbers only in London. Most typical is his depiction of a kangaroo and fascinating fish. I can reveal that these two symbols also appear as part of the composition on the cover of the book (smile).

If you had to describe them in one word. What were the Bauer brothers like?

Klára: Brilliant. They remembered colours perfectly, like Ludwig van Beethoven remembered sounds, even though he was deaf. They were very talented.

Have you tried their timeless and now popular paint-by-numbers?

Anastázíe: Yes. But we couldn't find a system in it. After all, no one has deciphered it yet, so we don't know how they actually proceeded. Scientists in London are still looking into it, one author is trying to decipher it. If, for example, the 27 was just pink, one would discover the system. However, in one picture, the colour twenty-seven is both pink and green. It's strange.

In the Czech Republic, people who are interested in botanical illustration know about the brothers. How about in London, where they left a truly indelible mark?

Marie: Probably similar. There is an epitaph in the church cemetery that says Franz was born in Valtice, but we haven't found his grave. We asked the guides at Kew, but they didn't know anything about the brothers either. It would be nice if we could change that with a book and draw attention to them.

You also visited the Natural History Museum in London. What was it like to touch the works of the Bauer brothers?

Marie: We saw all the drawings close in their original form with their scientific notes. It was incredible. We even touched them without gloves, we just had to wash our hands beforehand. We were provided with pencils and could take notes and redraw. And no one was limiting our time. We only saw a fraction of their work, yet it was an incredible amount of work. Perhaps they did nothing else but draw.

Apart from London, you also went to Vaduz, Vienna and to the Brothers of Mercy in Brno because of the legacy of the Bauer brothers. Is there anything else you would like to see?

Klára: We would love to see the original Codex Liechtenstein in Vienna in the Liechtenstein collections. That is our dream (smile).

Are you aware that you four are actually rediscovering these brilliant and almost forgotten artists for the contemporary world? How does it feel?

Anastázie: Incredible. Even more incredible that nobody knows about them. They did so many things. And it's amazing that we can now spread that around.

Do you still remember when and how you found out about the Bauer brothers?

Veronika: I was still in elementary school. I was in Zdeňka Žďárská Benešová's art class. One day we went on a trip to Vienna, to the zoo, where we drew flora and fauna together with children from the Merry School in Vienna. It was there that we first discovered who the Bauers were and that they came from Valtice.

How did the idea to create the first book about the Bauer brothers in Czech come about?

Klára: Suzanna Halsey from the Friends of Czech Greenways Foundation in New York approached Zdeňka with the idea.

Marie: And Zdeňka approached us, her art students, with whom she has been working since we were little kids. Each of us is interested in something a little different. Nastya and I studied at the Secondary School of Art and Design in Brno. I studied motion design, which means



Students worked on the first Czech book about the Bauer brothers mainly during the summer holidays.
© Photo by: Zdeňka Žďárská Benešová

animation and advertising. So I thought, because I was close to it, that the book could be in the form of comics, more for children and using QR codes. Each of us just came up with something interesting. For example, Nastya is very interested in illustrations.

Will it be a book for children?

Marie: Definitely not. It will be for adults as well. And for everyone who will have a spare moment and will want to read a fairy-tale story of three talented brothers. Especially in Valtice and its surroundings it is extremely important that not only children know about them.

At what stage of creation are you?

Anastázie: We are approaching the final stage. We have finished the digital drawings that we did on tablets. We are missing a few illustrations, graphics and we have to proofread the texts.

Have you thought about what's next when you finish the book? Would you like to continue the Bauer legacy?

Anastázie: Yes, I would like to show their work to the public also later. And I would like to continue to spread awareness about them. Maybe through social media, which are followed by a huge number of young people in particular. ■

You can financially support the book about the Bauer brothers using the QR code.



Valtice, Vienna and Vaduz. The autumn belonged to events strengthening mutual relations

Written by: editors

Planting of a memorial tree was the highlight of the busy weekend of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society in Valtice



Members of the association planted a memorial tree in Valtice.

© Photo by: editors

A balanced combination of nature, culture and exercise awaited the members of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society, who took part in joint activities on the weekend of 12 and 13 October. The rich programme started with an excursion through the floodplain landscape in Hohe-
nau, Austria, which is managed by the Liechtenstein company

Guts- & Forstbetrieb Wilfersdorf. The guide Richard Kemper gave an engaging talk about the specifics of the management of the landscape around the dead arm of the Morava River and showed those interested the local bird sanctuary.

The next morning the representatives of the association went to the Valtice castle park. With the help of the castle manager Richard Svoboda, they planted a memorial tree to celebrate the fifteen-year anniversary of the restoration of diplomatic relations between the Czech Republic and the Principality of Liechtenstein. Each of the participants added his or her hand to the work and made the end to a successful weekend. ■

Daniel Herman attended the meeting of honorary consuls in Vaduz

The current situation and trends in the fields of politics, economy and culture, as well as interesting discussions at meetings of people holding important positions in the society, filled the meeting of Liechtenstein's honorary consuls, which took place in mid-September in Vaduz and other places in Liechtenstein. Among the consuls from eleven countries, the representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also welcomed a participant from the Czech Republic, Honorary Consul Daniel Herman. In a wide-ranging discussion, the consuls learned about the current foreign policy priorities of Liechtenstein, which cooperates closely with neighbouring Switzerland and Austria, as well

as with the European Union. These priorities include supporting Ukraine in its fight against Russian aggression. This was followed by a tour of selected Liechtenstein companies and institutions. The programme concluded with a concert by students of the Liechtenstein Academy of Music in the newly renovated historic Hagen-Haus in Nendeln. ■



Honorary Consuls at the meeting in the Principality.

© Photo by: Daniel Herman

The conference in Vienna discussed the past and future of Czech-Liechtenstein relations

In mid-October, three distinguished guests gathered in Vienna for a panel discussion on the topic Czechia & Liechtenstein: common past and strong future to explain the historical development of Czech-Liechtenstein relations and to predict their future direction. The event was jointly organised by Club Alpbach Liechtenstein and Club Alpbach Czechia & Slovakia. The panel discussion was led by:

- HSH Princess Maria-Pia Kothbauer, Ambassador of the Principality of Liechtenstein to Austria and the Czech Republic,
- Daniel Herman, Honorary Consul of the Principality of Liechtenstein in the Czech Republic,
- Thomas Zwiefelhofer, Honorary Consul General of the Czech Republic in Liechtenstein. ■



The conference in Vienna attracted many students from both countries. © Photo by: editors

Review:

A new book about Karl I Liechtenstein

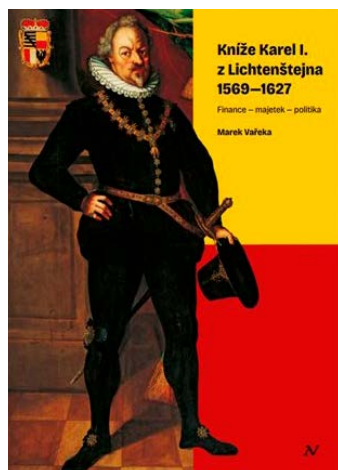
Written by: Ing. Pavel Juřík

Prince Karl I Liechtenstein (1569–1627) has been one of the most debated personalities of the post-Battle-of-the-White-Mountain Bohemia since the mid-19th century. Although many historians have focused on him, the public has until recently learned few facts about him, but even more fictions.

Now, a more complete picture of Karl I Liechtenstein has been presented in a book by Marek Vařeka, PhD, **Kníže Karel I. z Lichtenštejna 1569–1627. Finance – majetek – politika**, published by the Vedita publishing house. The book has 742 pages and several dozens of colour and black-and-white illustrations and introduces mainly the financial and property issues. Its strength is the use of sources from Czech and foreign archives and detailed work with these sources.

Karl I is presented in the book as an intelligent, capable and decisive man with a broad outlook who also worked with information from abroad. He inherited a large fortune and got an even larger one by marrying Anna Černožorská of Boskovice (his brother Maxmilián acquired the other part by marrying her sister Katerina). Thus, before 1600, the Liechtenstein family became one of the richest families in Moravia. Karl I managed and expanded this property in a very modern way for his time. The author provides a lot of evidence of this.

The conversion to the Catholic faith opened up a new career for Karl, from supreme judge in Moravia to



Book cover „Kniže Karel I. z Lichtenštejna 1569–1627. Finance – majetek – politika.“ © Marek Vařeka

supreme Hofmeister to Emperor Rudolf II. The proceeds from the estate enabled him to provide large loans to the emperor, and the emperor could not do without them and without his advice. Although he had to leave Prague Castle because of a love affair, the Emperor soon called him back. And because Karl I was also a diplomat, he was able to extinguish the impending war with Gabor Bethlen in Moravia. He also recog-

nised in time that Rudolf II's political career was over and sided with his brother Matyas. In the interests of the lands of the Bohemian Crown, in 1608 he managed to arrange for the cooperation of the Catholics with the non-Catholic opposition (in the person of Karl the Elder of Žerotín

and others) and thus made Rudolf's deposition from the throne possible.

The most criticized part of Karl's life is his presidency of the tribunal over the „rebels“ in 1621. But he had no choice, even though he repeatedly asked in vain to be removed from this position. Ferdinand II saw in Liechtenstein a cable and loyal official and politician and had no one to replace him. Another criticism is directed at Karl's role in the mint consortium from 1621–1622. In this section the author presents previously unknown and detailed information from Karl's accounts. These show that the inflationary coinage was deliberately ordered by Emperor Ferdinand II to weaken the opposition in the country. The participants in the consortium profited from this, with Prince Liechtenstein having the smallest share.

Marek Vařeka's book is a very valuable contribution to the objective knowledge of the activities of Karl I Liechtenstein, especially in the financial and property spheres. But it also brings new information from his private life and politics. Therefore, this book will certainly be welcomed by all historians and those interested in the topic of the House of Liechtenstein. ■



The princely crown that Prince Karl commissioned as a symbol of his princely power. It was a symbolic crown without any other meaning. © The Princely Collections. Vaduz – Vienna.

Unique outdoor exhibition about Liechtenstein educated across the country

Written by: editors

This spring, a traveling exhibition called “The Liechtenstein family: 800 Years of Sustainability” hit the road. Twelve panels mapping the family’s activities not only in the Czech lands first visited Opava, from which they later continued on to fourteen more stops. This unique project gave the public an insight into the achievements that the Principality still draws on today.

The title of the exhibition may have seemed presumptuous at first impression. The term sustainability is often overused nowadays, and some global companies hide behind their “sustainable strategies” the negative impacts they have on our planet. However, the Liechtenstein family are backed by a wealth of evidence from ancient history and the present, and can therefore proudly claim this term. Indeed, the thriving forests under Liechtenstein’s stewardship, the monuments that flourish in the hands of the princely family, and the establishment of the first agricultural and wine-growing schools are proofs that the Principality has never forgotten future generations when making decisions. The travelling exhibition presented these stories in detail on twelve exhibition panels.

The Liechtenstein family are often perceived in our country only through the Lednice-Valtice area or other monuments, but the legacy left by this princely family in our country goes far beyond the knowledge of the general public. Therefore, it is never a bad thing



The opening of the travelling exhibition took place in Opava in the presence of distinguished guests and the media. © Photo by: VENKU Gallery



During the summer the travelling exhibition stopped also in Valtice. © Photo by: VENKU Gallery

to remember that some Liechtenstein traces often accompany us every day and have made an indelible mark in our history. The aim of the travelling exhibition project was to present these facts in a popular way and to reach out to citizens who have not yet come across these stories from the past.

The travelling exhibition began its journey through the country in Opava and it was a truly festive opening. The ceremony was attended, for example, by the mayor of the city, Tomáš Navrátil, or the honorary consul of the Principality of Liechtenstein, Daniel Herman. “Opava and the whole of Silesia, but Opava in particular, is very closely linked to the history of the presence of the Liechtenstein family on the territory of the Czech Republic since the seventeenth century. In the coat of arms of the Principality of Liechtenstein there is the black Silesian eagle, which is also in the coat of arms of the Czech Republic. And this heraldic symbol, this uniqueness shows how closely the history of our two countries is linked,” Daniel Herman replied to a media question about why the travelling exhibition started its journey in Opava.

The exhibition aroused public interest at the first stop, and therefore nothing prevented it from moving to other locations. In the end, it stopped at a total of fifteen locations. When it completed the last part of its journey in Křtiny at the end of October, it was stored away from the winter frosts so that it could set out again next spring to educate the public throughout the Czech Republic. ■

With sincere sorrow and sympathy, the Liechtenstein Family follow the **tragic events in the Czechia**

Prince of Liechtenstein Foundation in the Czech Republic, press release 18 Sept 2024

Princess Tatjana of Liechtenstein spoke today on behalf of her father, the reigning Prince Hans Adam II. and her brother, the Hereditary Prince Alois, about the severe flooding in the Czech Republic:

“Our thoughts and prayers are with every victim of the floods and we hope the towns and the communities find the strength to overcome the damage and despair at the end. Our family remember well how the people of the Czech Republic fought the floods in 1997, 2002 and 2010. The Principality of Liechtenstein has a long history of the severe flooding on the Rhine river, so we know very well how difficult it is to recover. The Princely family and the Prince of Liechtenstein Foundation will follow the situation closely and will decide at the right time where it could offer a meaningful help. The reigning Prince Hans Adam II. and the Hereditary Prince Alois offer special compassion to the historic regions developed

by their ancestors and hope for their sustainable future when the water recedes.”

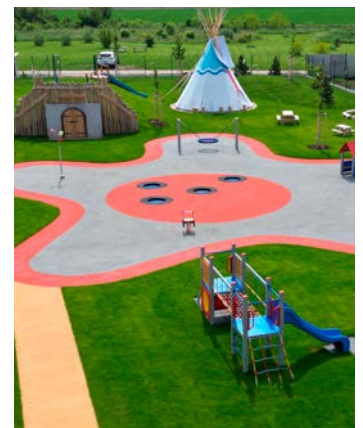
“Not long ago,” Michal Růžička, spokesman for the Prince of Liechtenstein Foundation in the Czech Republic, added to Princess Tatjana’s words, “the family promptly provided help after a devastating tornado in the village of Hrušky, which was able to use the foundation’s money to reconstruct the garden of its only kindergarten. The Liechtenstein government then contributed to Moravská Nová Ves to repair its church after the tornado, and after the floods in 2002, it sent funds for part of the reconstruction of the Agnes Convent in Prague, as well as for the drying of rare books in the custody of the Czech National Library.” ■

AFTER THE TORNADO, THE GARDEN OF THE NURSERY SCHOOL CAME TO LIFE AGAIN. THANKS TO THE LIECHTENSTEIN FAMILY

The devastating tornado that hit several villages in the Břeclav region three years ago did not pass the nursery school in Hrušky. In addition to the building, the element completely devastated the children’s favourite garden. Immediately after the event, the Liechtenstein family made contact with the municipality and looked for ways to help as efficiently as possible during the difficult days. The consensus was to rebuild the garden, combining recreation with education. The Princely House provided CZK five million for the project.

The garden’s classic play elements were supplemented by a natural area with mature trees, a teepee and a fireplace. The project also included raised beds, which the little gardeners help to cultivate. In a natural way, they learn things like where water comes from in nature.

It is worth mentioning that the Liechtenstein family had already contributed to education in the village in the nineteenth century when they built the local school. „It seemed logical to us to remember this responsibility of our ancestors and to be equally responsible to you today,” Prince Constantin explained two years ago.



© Photo by: Archive of the Municipality of Hrušky



Princess Tatjana Liechtenstein © Photo by: editors



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27/9/2024 - The popular Lednice-Valtice Music Festival returned once again with its ninth edition, under the theme “The Musical Alchemy of the Masonic Garden.” This year’s program featured works by renowned composers who, in their music, referenced the intellectual stream of Freemasonry, from the Enlightenment to almost the present day. The grand opening took place on September 28 in the Castle Riding Hall in Valtice, where one of the world’s most acclaimed violinists, Maxim Vengerov, performed. He was accompanied by the Prague Philharmonia under the baton of the renowned Czech conductor Vojtěch Spurný. The festival’s program, however, did not end with this opening concert. Until October 12, audiences enjoyed a rich variety of performances. Additionally, there was an exciting lineup of side events, including lectures and creative art workshops for students. ■



1/9/2024 - If you still have the energy to explore new places at the end of summer, Wilfersdorf Castle will certainly not disappoint you. Located just across the Austrian border, the building has been continuously owned by the Liechtenstein family since 1436, and their legacy is still evident in the castle today. The heart of the castle is a permanent exhibition about the history of the princely family, which includes, for example, a replica of the princely crown or a unique Liechtenstein family tree. In addition to presenting art and history, the castle also serves as the administrative centre for the princely estates in the Weinviertel region, which include the famous princely court cellars known for their renowned white wine. Although it is a monument on Austrian soil, the castle also offers guided tours in Czech. Wilfersdorf could thus be an ideal suggestion for your weekend trip. ■



4/11/2024 - At the end of October, Adam Lessing offered students of the Prague University of Economics and Business insights into the daily activities and challenges of a banker working in a global private bank. Lessing, a board member of LGT Private Bank Austria—part of the world’s largest private banking and asset management group owned by a princely family—traveled from Vienna to Prague at the invitation of the local student organization, @investorsclub.prague. Dozens of students attended his lecture, captivated by LGT Bank’s personalized approach, which tailors client asset management precisely to individual needs. Students were also intrigued by how risk attitudes and global challenges of the future are deeply embedded in decision-making. Lessing’s presentation resonated with these future experts in economics. Many even accompanied him from the lecture hall to a nearby pub, where he continued answering their questions and discussing topics, they hadn’t had time to cover in the formal session—all in a relaxed and informal setting. ■