

NEWSLETTER

Historical Association Liechtenstein



Historický spolek
Liechtenstein

NO.1 AUGUST 2020 CZECH REPUBLIC

PRINCE JOHANN II OF LIECHTENSTEIN: 180TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

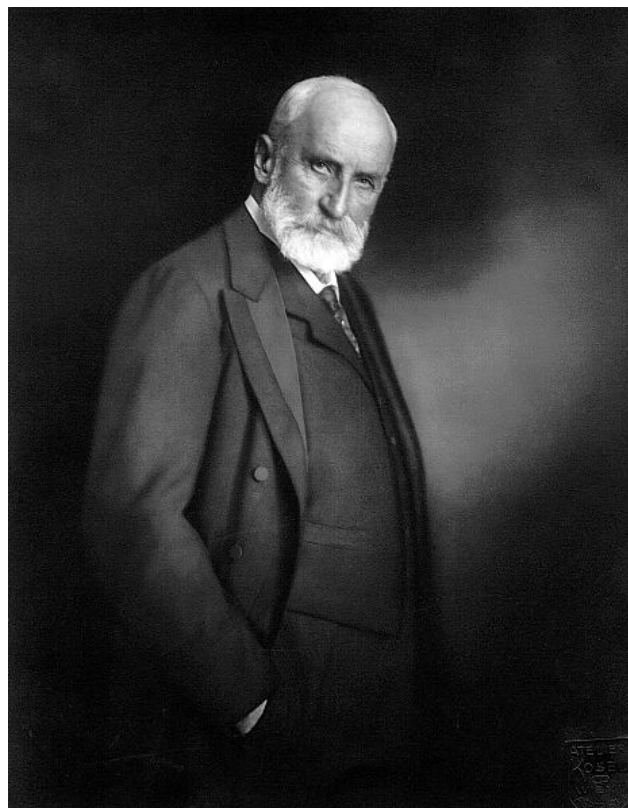
One of the greatest European patrons of his time, Prince Johann II of Liechtenstein was born at Lednice chateau (Moravia, Czech Republic) on October 5, 1840. He received a top education in national economics and technology from the universities in Vienna, Bonn, Karlsruhe, Brussels and Paris.

In 1858, while studying in Germany, he took over the family from his father, Prince Alois II (1796-1858), but before completing his studies, he entrusted his mother princess Francis, born Countess Kinski, to the government. After her death he left his mother's suite at the Lednice chateau reverently unchanged, so we can still see it in its original form today.

Thanks to his intelligence, excellent knowledge of economics, culture and social feeling, as well as his diplomatic skills, he did an excellent job as a ruler. As an excellent economist he managed his estates in Moravia, Bohemia and Austria well and contributed to the improvement of the economic situation in Liechtenstein by supporting the introduction of light industry. He was not interested in a political career, he preferred the administration of entrusted assets, science and art. As early as 1862 the emperor granted him the Order of the Golden Fleece.

List of donations and foundations of various institutions by prince Johann II is extremely long. E.g. in 1873 he founded a fruit and wine school in Valtice and in 1895 a Higher School of Fruit and Horticulture in Lednice. In 1912 he created the "*Institute for Plant Breeding of Prince Johann von Liechtenstein of J. G. Mendel in Lednice na Moravia*". In 1985 the institute became the Faculty of Horticulture of the University of Agriculture in Brno, today Mendel University.

Considerable attention of Johann II devoted to art and history. He had his tutor Jacob von Falcke and the director of the family gallery Johann Dallinger von Dalling write and reorganize family art collections.. He also considered building a new art gallery in Vienna near of Hofburg (its plans have been preserved).



He focused mainly on valuable works of Italian and Dutch art from the 14th to the 16th century. He bought many Italian panel paintings and sculptures from the Renaissance period, wedding chests so-called *cassone*, and Italian majolica for the princely collections. He also admired 18th-century Venetian painting and collected the first collections of European porcelain. He supported contemporary art and artists by buying their works or paying them study trips abroad. He donated large sums to archaeological research.

The prince also contributed to the repair and romantic reconstruction of a number of monuments owned by his family. E.g. in 1886 he began repairing Šternberk Castle in Moravia and later Vaduz Castle in Liechtenstein and the "*cradle of the family*" gothic Liechtenstein Castle located south of Vienna.

In 1852 Prince Johann II offered the Úsov chateau and its district for the establishment of the first forestry school in Moravia and Silesia (later a forestry and hunting museum).



Prince Johann on a white pony, Friedrich von Amerling 1845, Liechtenstein. The Princely Collections

In 1903 prince Johann II declared the first nature reserve in Moravia, in today's protected landscape area of the Jeseníky Mountains Šerák-Keprník - then so-called „*Liechtenstein Forest*“ (172 hectares). It was located between Šerák and Keprník on the territory of today's National Nature Reserve and its purpose was to protect a unique mountain forest, with highlands with interesting and characteristic plant species. In 1909 he declared a protection regime in Javořina, which consists of forests of a primeval character below Velká Javořina, the highest peak of the White Carpathians.

In the 1990s, one of the first ski associations was established in the Old Town, thanks to a passionate tourist and factory owner Herman Buhl. Already in 1907, preparations began for the construction of a mountain hut on the southeastern slope of Králícký Sněžník at an altitude of 1,375 meters. For its construction, Prince Johann II provided a land for a symbolic rent of 4 crowns a year.

The cottage was opened in 1912. It had a dining room on the ground floor and two large rooms, 11 rooms on the first floor and a shared dormitory for 90 people in the attic.

The prince proved his patronage many times during his life, not only as a buyer of paintings and sculptures for the prince's collections, he donated many works of art to public institutions or paid for their purchase. E.g. he donated more than 40 paintings to the Academic Gallery in Vienna, donated Austrian Gothic panel paintings to the imperial collection and donated more than fifty paintings by Viennese painters to the collections of the city of Vienna. From the Czech lands let us mention his gift to the Provincial Museum in Prague to which he donated paintings by Franz Halse and paintings by Dutch masters of the 17th century or donations of tapestries, paintings, ceramics and other works for the Silesian Landes Museum in Opava (the prince significantly supported also the construction of its new building).

These donations were a matter of conviction and education for the top leaders of society at that time, when prince donated enormous funds or donations of works of art, collections of natural products or the entire library to the benefit of provincial museums or galleries.

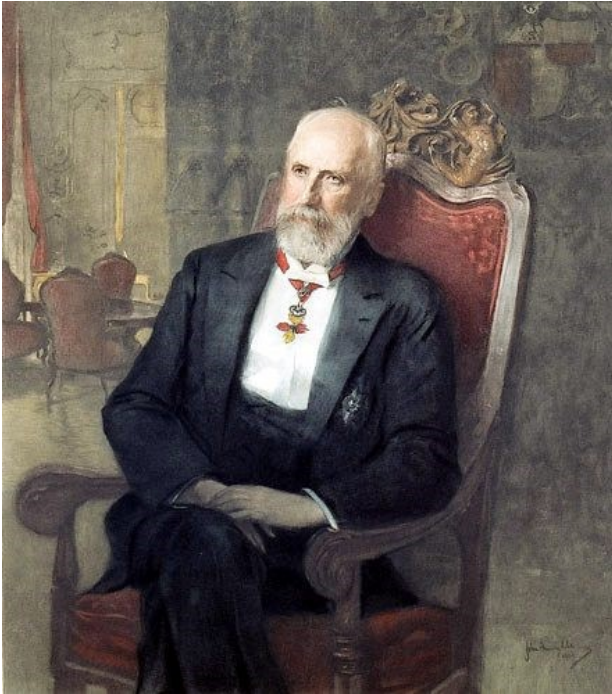
Prince Johann II also supported many buildings on his estates and beyond. E.g. he had built a church and a school in Poštorná, another church was built in nearby Katzlsdorf. He was one of the initiators of the establishment of the Wine School in Valtice, financially supported the local construction of the town spa (1911–1912) or introduced a telegraph and telephone in Valtice (from 1 April 1910). In 1909 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the reign of Prince Johann II of Liechtenstein a modern so-called jubilee hospital in Valtice with 100 beds was built at his expense.

He built another large hospital in the years 1909-1912 in Krnov (Jägerndorf). After October 1918 its name, *Fürst Johann II. von und zu Liechtenstein - Krankenhaus der Stadt Jägerndorf (mit Öffentlichkeitsrecht)* could no longer bear.



Prince Johann's hospital in Krnov (Jägerndorf)

At his own expense or with the help of a significant donation, he supported the construction of many kindergartens, municipal and higher schools, town halls or churches on his estates.



Prince Johann II of Liechtenstein, 1908, József Árpád Koppay, Liechtenstein. The Princely Collections

The prince also financially supported the publication of books on history and art. He donated a total of 58,000 gold crowns to archeological research in Asia Minor. Prince Johann II improved working and salary conditions for his employees and helped many people and charities with financial donations.

He spent about 7 million Austrian crowns a year on charity for charitable purposes, which was a very high amount for its time (today about 40 mio. EUR). This would correspond to the information that on the 50th anniversary of his reign, the Central Accounting Office calculated that Prince Johann II „Good“ donated 73.5 million of the then Swiss francs to charity and gifts.

Prince as head of state

At his instigation Liechtenstein Castle near Vienna (the "*cradle of the family*") was romantically rebuilt, and Vaduz Castle in Liechtenstein was also romantically renovated. Johann II gave the Principality of Liechtenstein a modern constitution in 1862 (it was changed in 1918 and 1921), reduced taxes and in 1868 abolished its army. Four years later a railway was introduced to Liechtenstein. In the second half of the 19th century, the prince supported the development of light industry in Liechtenstein (especially textiles) with tax breaks that attracted foreign investors.

During the First World War the prince maintained neutrality and after 1918, instead of Austria-Hungary, he began to focus on Switzerland. Since October 27, 1919 it has represented the principality in those countries in which it has no embassies.

Four years later, in 1924, Liechtenstein concluded a customs and economic union with Switzerland, and the Swiss franc replaced the Austro-Hungarian crown as the national currency. The citizens of Liechtenstein lost almost all their savings after World War I because they had them stored in hyperinflation-depreciated Austro-Hungarian currency. The state treasury was also without money.

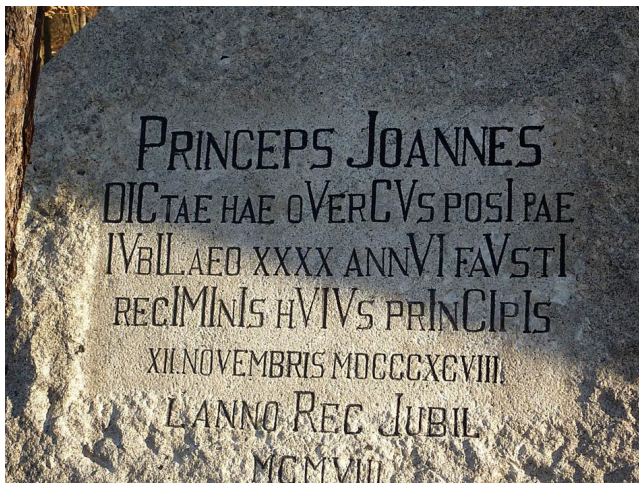
Prince Johann II gave a helping hand to his suffering country. He lent interest-free 500,000 Swiss francs to the Liechtenstein government. In addition he imported food from Switzerland at his own expense, which was distributed free of charge to the inhabitants of the principality. The prince also co-financed the construction of flood defenses around the Rhine in the 1920s. As the family's income from Czechoslovakia decreased significantly due to the first land reform (about 60% of the land was seized), prince Johann did not hesitate to sell some family jewelry (probably the original golden princely crown from the 17th century) to obtain the necessary foreign exchange.

Prince Johann II issued the first Liechtenstein postage stamp in 1912. Until then the services of the k. und k. Post offices of Austria-Hungary were used. As a result of the disintegration of the Habsburg monarchy after World War I, Liechtenstein concluded a postal union agreement with Switzerland in 1920. This gave it the opportunity to issue own postage stamps.

Johann II became the longest reigning European monarch. He ruled his country for a full 71 years, 3 years longer than Emperor Francis Joseph I, 7 years longer than Queen Victoria and three months longer than the longest reign in Europe - King Louis XIV of France. His long and successful rule was commemorated by the so-called jubilee stones, which were built on all estates on the occasion of 40 years of his rule (there are about a hundred of them in the Czech Republic). Ten years later tables adding to the government's 50th anniversary were added. After the establishment of Czechoslovakia no more celebrations were held, the republic did not wish the nobility. Prince Johann II called „the Good“ remained single, and he dies on February 11, 1929 at Valtice chateau.



Valtice chateau on a postcard (beg. 20th cent.)



Jubilee stone of prince Johann II from Liechtenstein, Vyžlovka near of Kostelec nad černými lesy (Central Bohemia)

JUDR EMIL SOBIČKA HERO OF CZECH BAR CHAMBER

On Friday September 18, 2020 in Brno the Czech Bar Chamber organized the opening of the exhibition **Lawyers Against Totalitarianism**. The exhibition follows on from the exhibition that took place in September 2019 in Prague.

Among the heroes fighting against totalitarianism is the leading Prague lawyer JUDr. Emil Sobička (1908-1990). During the Nazi occupation he fought against the Nazi regime, during the Prague Uprising in May 1945 he fought with a weapon in hand on the barricades.

In the years 1945-1948 he represented the reigning prince Francis Joseph II. of Liechtenstein in disputes concerning the illegal confiscation of property of neutral principality's citizens and even the head of state. His uncle professor František Weyr, co-author of the first Czechoslovak Constitution, the first dean of the Faculty of Law and rector of Masaryk University in Brno, and one of the pillars of Czech law, whose legal theory is still taught, also helped him with this.

JUDr. Sobička almost succeeded in repealing the confiscation decrees in 1947, but the court proceedings was postponed by communists "indefinitely". The unsustainability of the confiscation of the property of citizens of the neutral state was aware of the Ministry of Finance and Foreign Affairs in February 1948,

It is not surprising that the law firm of JUDr. Emil Sobička was among the first to be illegally abolished after the communist coup in February 1948. In 1954, he was sentenced in a fabricated trial to 20 years in prison for espionage. He was released in 1960 and then worked in the labor professions. He was fully rehabilitated after 1990.



Liechtensteins' lawyer JUDr. Emil Sobička

110TH ANNIVERSARY OF PRINCE KARL ALFRED

110 years ago on August 16, 1910 the younger son of Prince Alois of Liechtenstein (1869-1955) and Elizabeth Amalia the Archduchess of Austria (1878-1960) was born. Karl Alfred (August 16, 1910 - November 17, 1985) was born as the third of eight children and as the second son. His older brother and future reigning prince Francis Joseph II. (August 16, 1906 - November 13, 1989) was born on the same day as Karl Alfred, but six years earlier.



Prince Karl Alfred of Liechtenstein

When the reigning prince Francis Joseph II. moved to Vaduz after the Anschluss of Austria (March 12, 1938) to express his disagreement with this annexation and strengthen the position of neutral Liechtenstein vis-à-vis the so-called Third Reich, together with the Cen-

tral director of the Administration of Liechtenstein Estates (based in Olomouc) JUDr. František Svoboda, he helped persecuted employees and their families, preventing the dismissal of Czech workers.

When the communist Minister of Agriculture Julius Ďuriš, together with the Minister of the Interior Václav Nosek (also a communist), falsely described the citizens of Liechtenstein as Germans, the property of 39 citizens of neutral Liechtenstein was illegally confiscated by abusing president Beneš's decrees that did not legally affect them. This happened in contrast to the citizens of German nationality of Switzerland, Sweden, the allies or even the citizens of Austria, who even fought for Germany and were Germans.

In cooperation with the leading Prague lawyer JUDr. Emil Sobička prince Karl Alfred sought to repeal the confiscation decrees. In the summer of 1947, the Supreme Administrative Court even prepared for the repeal of confiscation decrees, but Minister of Agriculture J. Ďuriš enforced the postponement of the court's public hearing "indefinitely". After the communist coup in February 1948 prince Karl Alfred was forced by the authorities to leave Czechoslovakia.

Later prince studied medicine at the University of Vienna, which he graduated with honors. On February 17, 1947, he married Archduchess Agnes of Austria in Vienna (1928-2007). They had three sons (Dominik, Andreas, Gregor) and four daughters (Alexandra, Maria-Pia, Katharina, Brigitta).

The most famous of them in the Czech lands is Her Serene Highness Maria-Pia Kothbauer Princess of Liechtenstein who has been the ambassador of Liechtenstein to Austria and to the UN offices in Vienna and the OSCE since 2000. Since April 11, 2011 she has also been the Ambassador for the Czech Republic (based in Vienna).

LIECHTENSTEIN SUBMITTED A COMPLAINT TO THE CZECH REPUBLIC

On 18 August 2020, the Government of Liechtenstein decided to lodge an intergovernmental complaint with the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg in order to assure its country's sovereignty that is currently not sufficiently respected in the Czech Republic.

The background is the current judgment of the Supreme Court, which again denied Liechtenstein nationals their fundamental rights on the grounds that they should be considered Germans as a result of the application of the 1945 decrees of the President of the Czechoslovak Republic. Their re-application in 2020 amounts to a clear disrespect for Liechtenstein's sovereignty and the personal identity of its nationals.



Liechtenstein has opposed this and, emphasizing its sovereignty, uses as a remedy the intergovernmental complaint enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights.

The inadmissible designation of Liechtenstein nationals as persons of German nationality since 1945 has been repeatedly used in Czech legislation as a basis for judgments to their detriment. The subject of the current legal dispute are judgments and measures taken by Czech administrative authorities and courts, which have been taken since 2014. The Prince of Liechtenstein Foundation received a lawsuit from the Czech authority without prior notice, which eventually led to deletion. Ownership of these lands has existed for centuries and was confirmed by the cadastre in 2013. This was justified by a demonstrably false claim that prince Francis Joseph II declared his German nationality in accordance with the decrees of the President of the Republic. The Czech courts have stated that they do not have jurisdiction to accept evidence that this was not the case, even though the evidence was available in a paper form.

In its final decision of 20 February 2020, the Constitutional Court of the Czech Republic did not correct this unacceptable procedure in which Liechtenstein citizens are treated as Germans. In 2020 the incorrect application of the decrees of the President of the Republic of 1945 and the erroneous designation of Liechtenstein citizens as ethnic Germans were confirmed. The attitude and procedure of the Czech authorities and courts has consequences for more than two dozen other proceedings against Liechtenstein citizens. This means for them that in connection with property in the Czech Republic from before 1945, they cannot assert their claims because they are considered as Germans.

In the case of other neutral states, such as Switzerland, the Czech Republic has been willing in previous decades to negotiate bilateral solutions on open issues of a similar nature. However, there have never been talks with Liechtenstein on open property issues.

The Prince's House supported the government's decision. *"The attitude that the Czech Republic currently taken towards Liechtenstein and its nationals is not characterized in the very fundamental areas by the respect with which equal sovereign states in Europe - in accordance with international law - have to act."*

HSL CELEBRATES TENTH JUBILEE



Pavel Juřík, Chairman

The Historical Association Liechtenstein (HSL) was established in December 2009. In 10 years of its existence its members have organized or proposed dozens of events throughout the Czech Republic. In the first place it was the first international conference on the Liechtenstein family, which took place in 2010 in Olomouc. This was followed by exhibitions in Mikulov, Kostelec nad černými lesy, Opava, Hodonín, Brno or Kolín.

We had the honor of organizing a number of visits by members of the princely family to the Czech Republic, whether it was the opening of exhibitions, the presentation of publications or visits to monuments. A number of publications, dozens of articles written by our members in professional and daily press, lectures at conferences, the HSL Newsletter and more than 400 articles on the association's website have always provided true and up-to-date information on the history and present of relations between the Czech Republic, the Liechtenstein family and Liechtenstein. The work of the Chairman of the Association was awarded in 2011 by the *Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Principality of Liechtenstein*.

In many cases the research and its presentation by the members of the association proved to be beneficial even for the princely family. E.g. discovery of unknown information about an extraordinary patron of the Baroque period, Duchess Maria Theresa of Savoy, or scope and importance of the artillery reform of Marshal Joseph Wenzel of Liechtenstein for the Czech lands and the entire monarchy.

In the coming years, HSL will continue to support research of a common history. The 400th anniversary of the arrival of the Liechtensteins in many of Czech and Moravian towns and the Duchy of Krnov (2022-2023) and others provide a lot of interesting topics.

260th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF FIELD MARSHAL JAHANN I OF LIECHTENSTEIN

On June 6, 2020, we commemorated the 260th anniversary of the birth of one of the most important and most famous public figures of the Liechtenstein family, Field Marshal Johann I Prince of Liechtenstein (June 26, 1760 Vienna - April 20, 1836 Vienna). After the untimely death of his brother Alois I in 1805 he became head of the family and the Principality of Liechtenstein.



Field Marshal Johann I of Liechtenstein

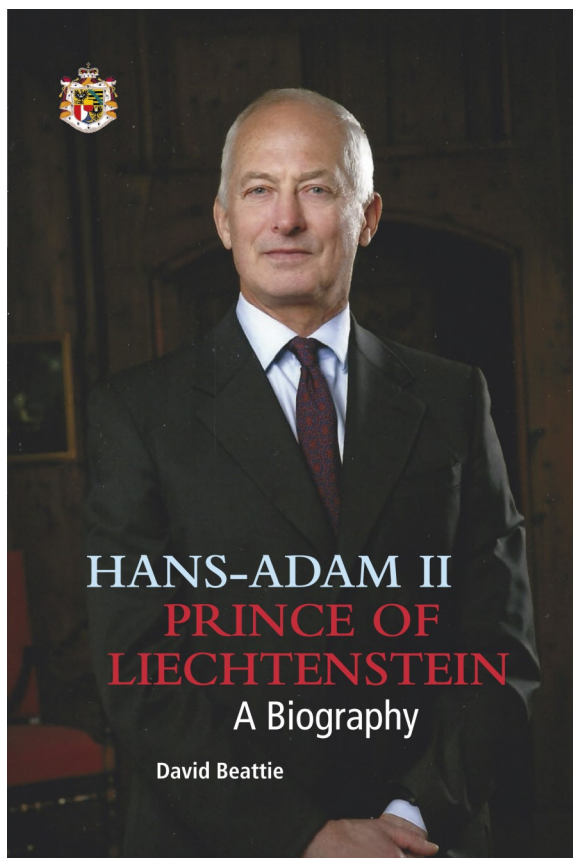
The prince was a great diplomat and an excellent military leader respected by his opponent French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte. He achieved many successes, for example in the battles of Württemberg, Rastatt, Wagram or Aspern.

He distinguished himself in the Battle of Austerlitz (December 2, 1805), where he prevented even greater losses of the Allies, caused by poor preparation and command of the battle, especially by the Russian tsar. After losing the battle, he concluded an armistice with France and the so-called Bratislava Peace and later also the Schönbrunn Peace.

His marriage with Countess Joseph Sophia zu Fürstenberg-Weitra was very happy and was endowed with 13 descendants. The prince continued the construction of the Lednice-Valtice Area and rebuilt and expanded the princely tomb in Vranov near Brno in the Classicist style.

A BIOGRAPHY: PRINCE HANS-ADAM II

On the occasion of the 75th birthday of the reigning prince His Serene Highness Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein (* 14. 2. 1945, Zurich) the van Eck Verlag publishing house in Schaan published his authorized biography.



The author of this interesting book is the renowned historian and former ambassador of Great Britain to Switzerland and Liechtenstein Davide Beattie. The book was published in English in April, and a German edition is being prepared. From its text we choose:

Despite his background, his successes did not come easily. For centuries the Liechtenstein family was at the center of the Habsburg monarchy to which provided warlords, statesmen, and diplomats. Thanks to their abilities, the family collected assets that they lost twice and restored again. This has enabled it to build the largest private collection of works of art in Europe, to promote agriculture and science, and to develop extensive social and charitable activities.

In 1945 the Liechtensteins lost almost all sources of their income, due to the confiscation of property in Czechoslovakia (based on the communist-abused president Beneš decrees). Property in Austria was damaged war and was part of the Soviet occupation zone for another 10 years (Neues Liechtenstein Castle near Vienna was looted and devastated by the Red Army and later had to be sold)... More in the book...

www.vaneckverlag.li

BOOK ON PRINCE FRANZ I

HSL arranged the Czech edition of the book by the professor of the University of Vienna Mag. Marije Wakounig „*Franz I, the Grandsigneur der Diplomatie*“. The biography of Prince Franz I provides hitherto unknown information about the Ambassador of Austria-Hungary in St. Petersburg, who sought to renew the alliance with Russia, and about his life after returning to Vienna or as head of family and state in 1927-1938. We will inform you about the date of the Czech edition by Lidové Noviny Publishing House.



Prince Franz I in diplomatic uniform

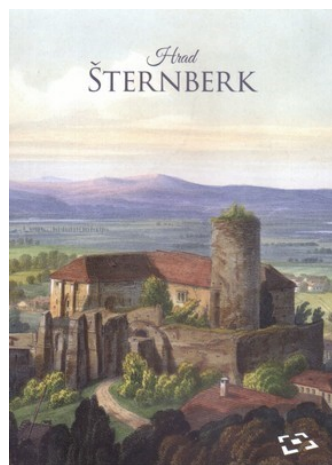
BOOK ABOUT MARIA THERESIA DUCHESS DE SAVOYEN

In October 2019 the Lidové Noviny Publishing House published a book about the life and legacy of a generous and patroness in Central Bohemia and in Vienna, duchess Maria Theresa de Savoyen (1694-1772), born the Princess of Liechtenstein.

The editor of this discovery title is Mgr. Petra Oulíková. The research of the life and work of the duchess, the born princess of Liechtenstein, was started by an exhibition about her life, which was prepared by Mr. Pavel Juřík for the Museum of the Town Kostelec nad Černé lesy in June 2011. As stated in the book's preface, after a requiem service for the Duchess and all members of the Liechtenstein family, celebrated by Dominik Cardinal Duka in Kostelec nad Černé lesy, the Archbishop of Prague expressed interest in her life, and a work for which she could be blessed.

The Historical Association Liechtenstein then addressed Professor PhDr Jiří Kuthan, DrSc with a proposal for professional research. Then the Czech, Moravian and Viennese archives have brought unexpected discoveries. The mentioned book contains significant information from the research.

www.nln.cz



BOOK ABOUT ŠTERNBERK CASTLE

Šternberk Castle (near of Olomouc) has been one of the most important manors in Moravia since the Middle Ages. At the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries, the castle with an extensive estate was bought by prince Johann Adam of Liechtenstein.

The uninhabited castle, destroyed by the Thirty Years' War, fell into disrepair until the second half of the 19th century, when it was then owned by Johann II of Liechtenstein who rebuilt it in historic forms. After the reconstruction, admired by a number of contemporary architects and art historians, the castle served as one of the family museums, in which the prince gathered an extraordinary art collection. Recall that Prince Johann II. entrusted the sensitive romantic reconstruction of Šternberk Castle to the same architect who rebuilt Vaduz Castle in Liechtenstein for him - Karel Gandolph Kayser.

The publication about the castle and chateau Šternberk near Olomouc, by the experienced author PhDr Michal Konečný, acquaints the reader with the history of the monument. The publication is supplemented by a number of photographs, period illustrations and plans and has a total of 216 pages (price 190 CZK). It can be purchased in the store or on the NPÚ website in Prague or at the Šternberk castle and chateau.

www.npu.cz

MARSHAL LIECHTENSTEIN'S ARTILLERY TRAINING GROUND NEAR OF TÝN NAD VLTAVOU „WAKE UPS“

The South Bohemian town of Týn nad Vltavou is restoring an important military monument of Czech-Austrian and European history. It is the area of the former artillery shooting range, which was built in 1748 by Field Marshal Joseph Wenzel of Liechtenstein (1696-1772), who was the commander-in-chief of the Imperial Artillery in 1744-1772.

A new generation of cannons and ammunition and new tactics were tested here before they were introduced in the whole army in 1757. Reformed artillery became the best in Europe and was quickly imitated by other states (Prussia, France etc.).

Near of Týn nad Vltavou the "Calvary" sculpture, which was built in 1753 by Empress Maria Theresa, is currently being restored (CZK 340,000). An educational trail and a cycle path are being prepared, which will take tourists and those interested in military history through a shooting range with a training fortress (three bastions connected by a curtain, a ravelin and a moat, approach trenches, a target of training shootings called Epolement and others). The works will be completed by 2022, when we commemorate the 250th anniversary of the death of Marshal Joseph Wenzel of Liechtenstein.



The Calvary sculptural group is now undergoing restoration (above), training fortress on the plan from 1766 (below)



The history of the shooting range and the later so-called Great Depot is reminded by the permanent exhibition in the Museum of Týn nad Vltavou Region .

In nearby České Budějovice the Armory Office and the General Staff of Artillery were located, and Rudolfov was the first artillery school in Central Europe, founded in 1744 by marshal Liechtenstein.