



## the Heimatbrief

A Newsletter Magazine of the German-Bohemian Heritage Society

Celebrating the GBHS' 21st year

Vol XVII No. 3

September 2006



Society Members Dressed in Tracht for the Goosetown Dedication



## **“How I got involved with Hostau (Sudetenland)”**

by Stefan Stippler, Ortsbetreuer of Hostau

*[Editor's note: This is the 2nd half of his story. The 1<sup>st</sup> half appeared in the last issue.*

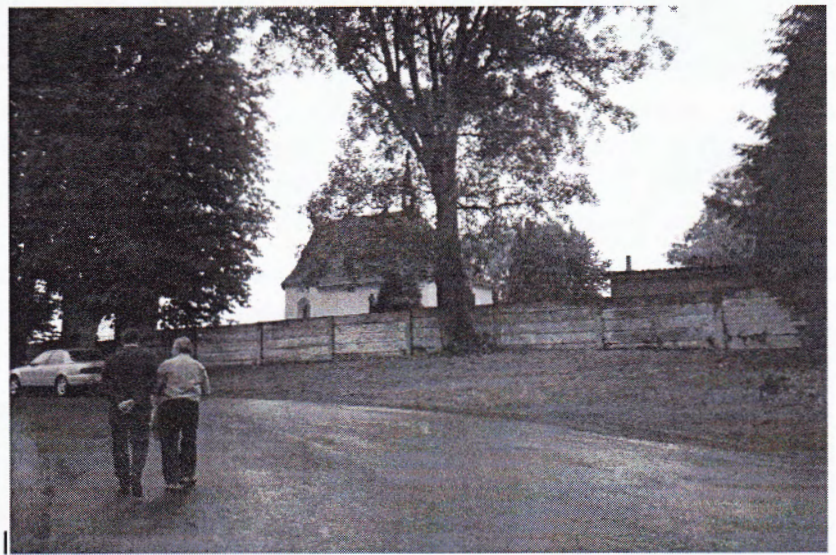
*In the 1<sup>st</sup> half, Herr Stippler describes a 2003 trip to his grandmother's Sudetenland hometown of Hostau.*

*He describes touring the town's St. James Church and are now on their way to the church cemetery.]*

On the way down from the church to the cemetery we stopped at another property, which belonged once to our family. My grandmother's father was born here. Finally we reached the cemetery. On the one hand it was a great fortune, that the communists have not replaced half of the graveyard after 1946. But on the other hand these old German graves were in rather bad shape. The trees were not cut, and the lawn was high. However, we were able to find five old family graves with ancestors on my grandmother's mother's side. Luckily we had a kind of map, so were able to locate the tombs. An old German had developed that map 15 years ago. The oldest couple was one of my great-great-great-grandparents, one born in 1820 and the other in 1824.



**Haus #115, Hostau**



**Cemetery Entrance**



**Cemetery**

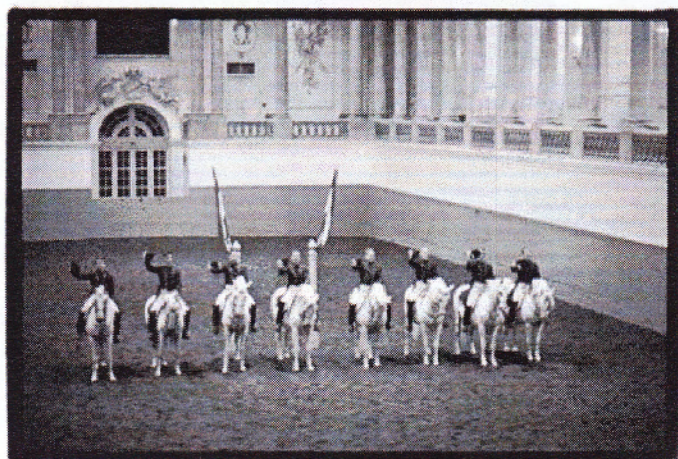


**Dietz Marker**

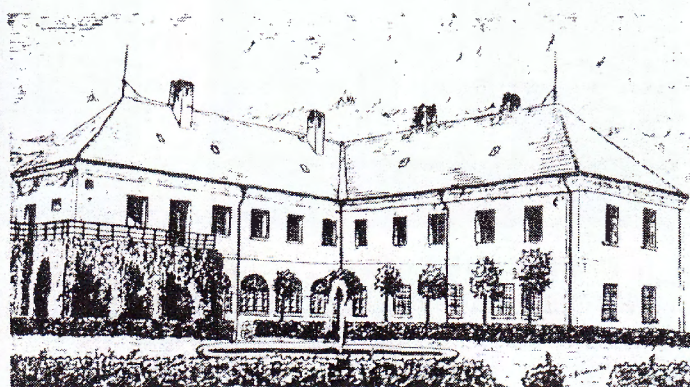


After returning home, I was always thinking about these old, still existing graves of my ancestors. My decision was clear, I wanted to save them. After several calls and correspondence I was able to repurchase all these graves for only \$25 for the next ten years. Last year in early September there was an appointment with a stonemason there at the cemetery. We agreed to have the three single tombstones put together to one sepulcher. A ledger should cover the new tomb. After cleaning at one burial place there was only the frame left, the tombstone had surprisingly disappeared. We were told that five years ago it was still there. Even here a ledger was arranged, and the tombstone of our fifth grave should get its new position here. The new realization is surely enrichment for the German pitiable section.

There is one interesting historical fact regarding Hostau, the so-called rescue of the Lipizzaner horses. Have you ever heard about the Imperial Spanish Riding School in the Hofburg in Vienna? The Viennese Spanish Riding School is the only institute of the classic art of riding, which maintains and practices the renaissance tradition of classic schooling. In 1562 Emperor Maximilian II brought the Spanish horses to Austria and founded a royal stud farm in Bohemia. During the Second World War the Imperial Spanish Riding School in Vienna and the stud farm in Piber were put under the control of the agriculture ministry in Berlin. Lipizzaner mares and foals from Piber as well those from the Italian stud farm at Lipizza and another farm in Montenegro were transferred to Hostau. With the beginning of World War I a stud farm had been established there at the castle of the Prince of Trauttmansdorff in Hostau. Towards the end of the war the entire Lipizzaner population of Europe was threatened by destruction. In a secret operation carried out jointly by American and German troops, the horses were spirited away from the front line and housed temporarily in Bavaria. Subsequently the Lipizzaners were transferred to St. Martin near Schärding in Upper Austria, where the Lipizzaners from Vienna had already been cared for. Following the signing of the Austrian State Treaty in 1955 the Lipizzaners returned to Vienna and Piber.



**Imperial Spanish Riding School Vienna**



Hostau  
Das ehem. Trauttmansdorff'sche Schloß

**Castle Hostau**

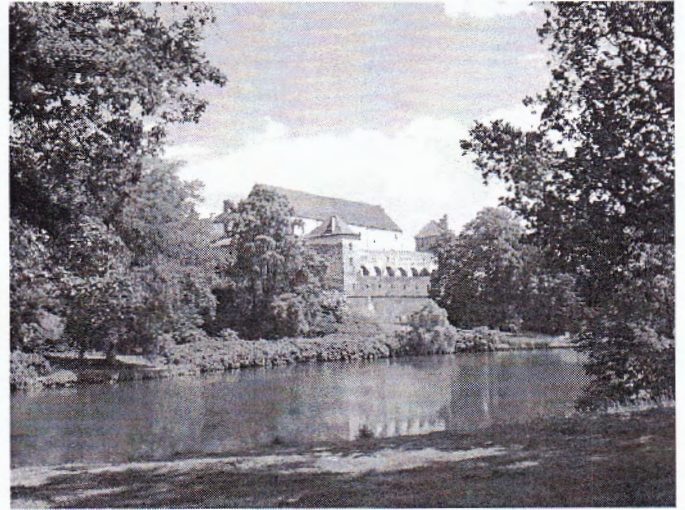
The just-mentioned noble family of Trauttmansdorff had its main castle in Bischofteinitz. The small town, which is located along the Radbusa River, arose in the 14th century near the early Gothic Episcopal castle. It was later rebuilt into a Renaissance chateau. The 98 acres, natural-landscape park with the Gloriet, the Loreto Chapel and the Widow's House are also remarkable sights of this castle. A series of ancient citizen homes with Baroque shields and the St. Peter and Paul's Church are the dominant features of the picturesque town square in Bischofteinitz. In 1547 there was a big fire in town and the castle was damaged, too.



The count Maximilian of Trauttmansdorff an imperial diplomat had bought the manor for a slight amount in 1623. The chateau was in the possession of this aristocratic family until the year 1945, when the state became its owner according to the Czech President's decrees. For its enormous historical value, the whole



**Front of Castle Bischofteinitz**

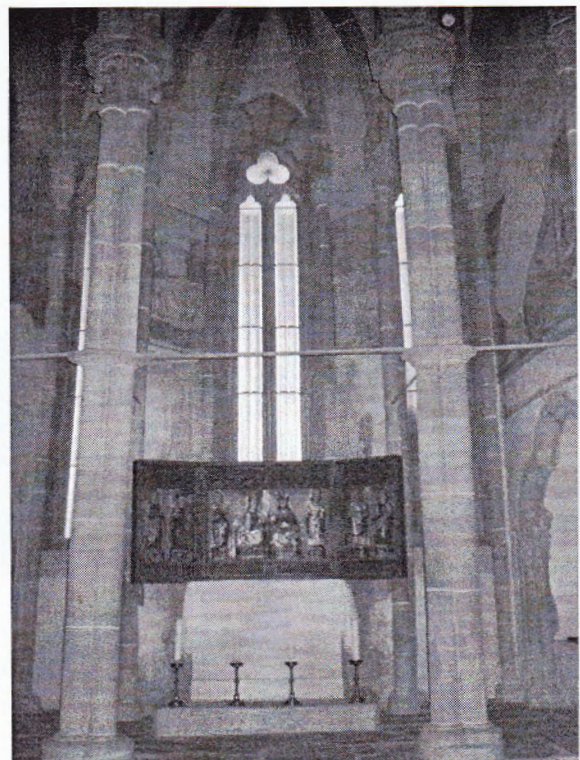


**Rear of Castle**

complex was declared to be a National Cultural Monument in the year 1996. The chateau is one of the most accessible monuments in the Czech Republic today. Additionally the European Union is now in process of supporting the restoration of the castle by its "pharo-plan". The castle itself offers four visitor circles and the total time of the visit is more than four hours. One tour shows the oldest part with the Gothic Episcopal chapel and the Renaissance way of living and its armory. Another one for instance portrays the living of nobility up to the beginning of the 20th century.

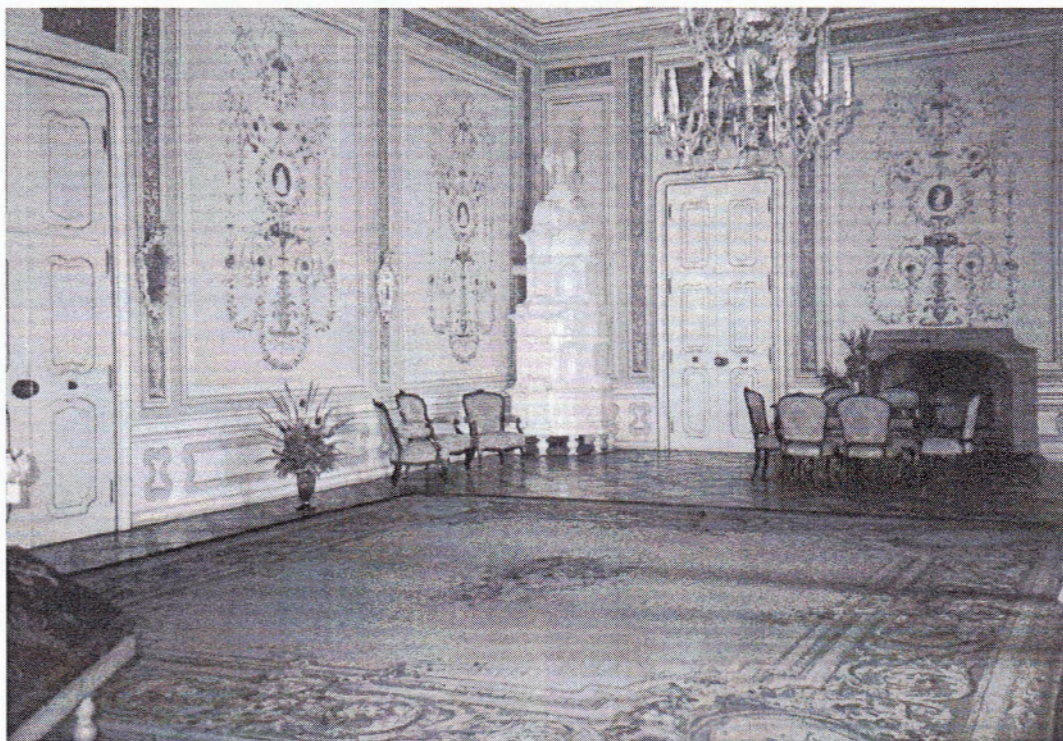


**Entrance to Renaissance Chateau**



**Chateau Chapel**





**Chateau Banquet Hall**

On the outskirts on a hill there is the late gothic pilgrimage church St. Anne of the year 1507. Inside there is still the empire-style tomb of the counts and princes of Trauttmansdorff. Unfortunately the church belongs to the property of the Czech state since 1945 and is in very bad shape.



**St. Anne Church**



**Tomb**

At present I am working on a new book about the history of Hostau, illustrated by photos of past and present times. I hope to get it finished and published for the next Hostau Reunion on October 22, 2006 in Dillingen (Bavaria).

Stefan Stippler