



G.M.S. d 79 d.



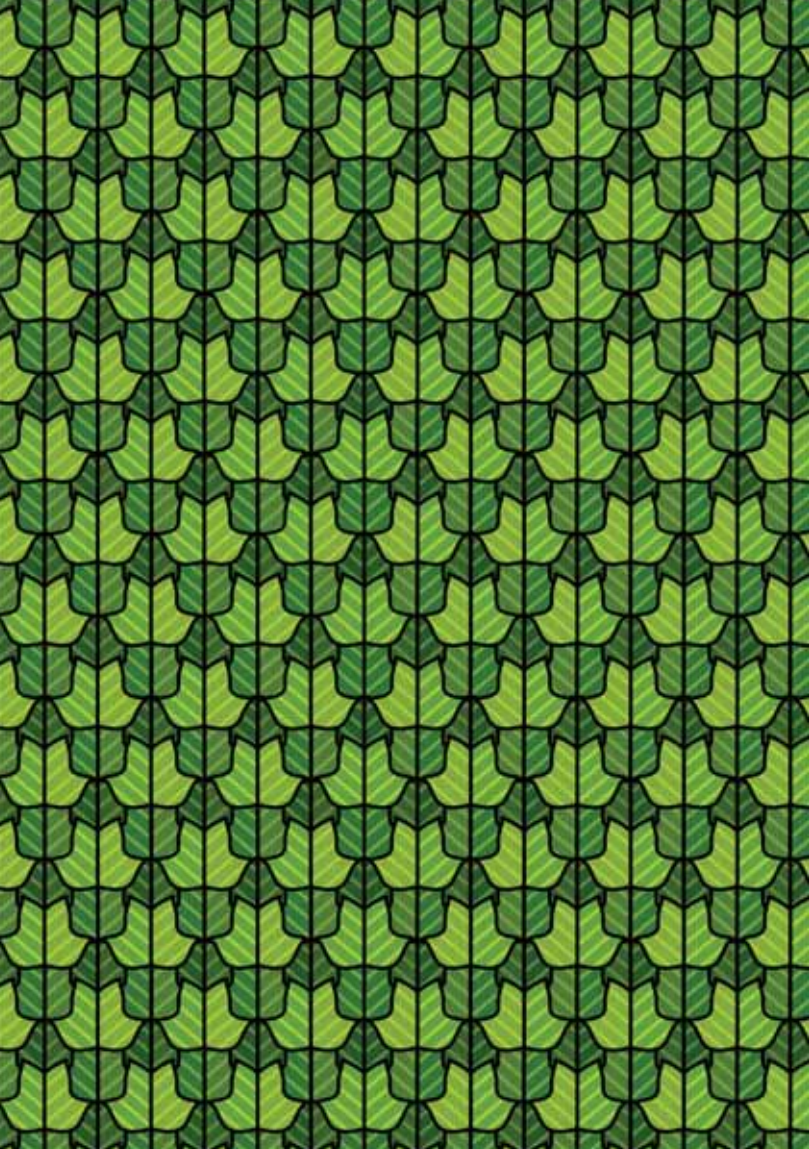
# ONE HUNDRED AND TEN TIMES ABOUT ŠOŠTANJ IN ONE PARAGRAPH



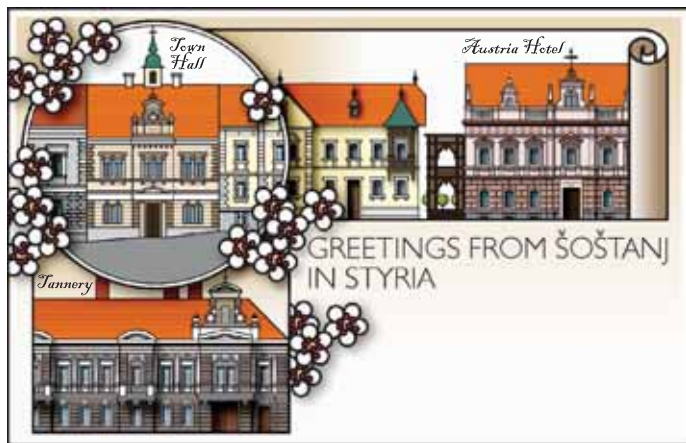
Šoštanj







Municipality of Šoštanj  
2020



*The oldest known Šoštanj postcard  
was sent in 1897.*

# ONE HUNDRED AND TEN TIMES ABOUT ŠOŠTANJ IN ONE PARAGRAPH

On 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of the Acquisition of City Rights



*The ceiling rosette from the Villa Mayer*

The modernist building of the Municipality of Šoštanj was planned as a palace of the District People's Committee in 1952 by the architect Janez Treznj. The renovated Liberty Square in front of it is dedicated to pedestrians and events.



*The Šalek Valley is certainly one of the most beautiful in the whole Slovenian Styria. The capital of this valley is a nice market town, Šoštanj.*

*Dr. Josip Vošnjak, Recollections, 1906*

*Walk around the world with clear eyes and open ears and you will enjoy half of the beauties life has to offer.*

*by Fran Saleški Finžgar*

Foreword

DEAR READER



*Prof. Darke Menih,  
the Mayor of the  
Municipality of Šoštanj*

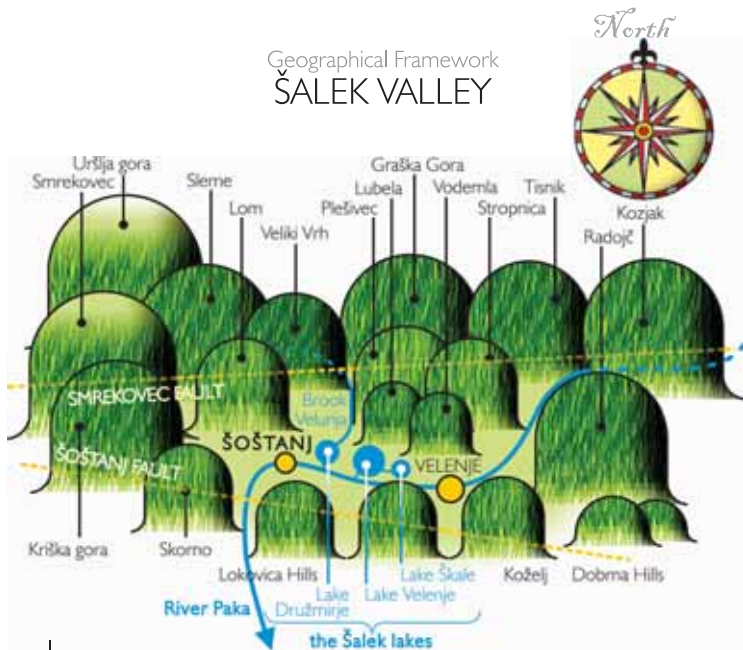
I am glad that you are leafing through this booklet in which the municipality of Šoštanj is presented in the anticipation of the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the acquisition of city rights of Šoštanj. Like the vivid illustrations presented, vivid life is with us. We are proud of our history and rich heritage. We are also proud of the present time we are shaping. Travel pleasantly through space and time — welcome to Šoštanj.



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## Geographical Framework ŠALEK VALLEY



Šoštanj is a town in Styria in the Šalek Valley. The valley was formed by the sinking of the ground (for 1,000 metres) between two tectonic faults 2.5 million years ago. The bottom of the valley measures 8 x 2 kilometres. The river Paka flows along the valley floor pushed by the northern tributaries along the southern edge of the valley.

*The Šalek Valley is (beside the Ljubljana Moor) tectonically the youngest in Slovenia.*

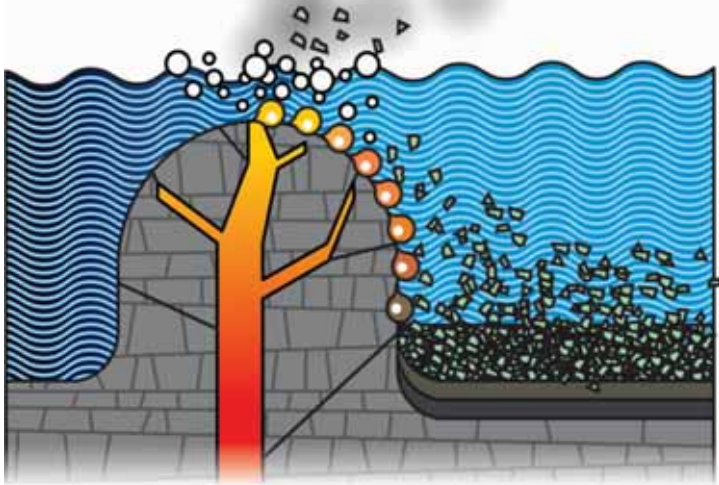
## Geographical Framework MUNICIPALITY OF ŠOŠTANJ AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES



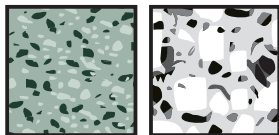
The municipality of Šoštanj comprises the western part of the Šalek Valley. It measures 95.6 km<sup>2</sup>. There are about 8,700 people living in nine local communities. The municipality was formed by a reform of the local self-government in 1994, which brought fresh energy to the town.

*The municipal holiday is the 30<sup>th</sup> of September.*

Geological Features  
SMREKOVEC VOLCANISM

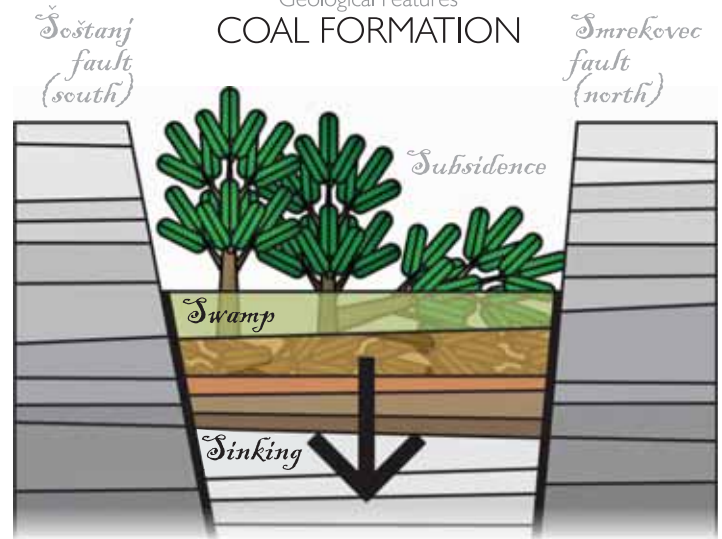


3 About 20–30 million years ago, there was volcanic activity at the junction of the African and European plates under the sea level. At the crack in the direction Šoštanj–Velenje –Vojnik, lava flows erupted and solidified. Dust, ash, and lava spewed to the surface in volcanic explosions. Tectonic shifts were breaking and raising newly formed rocks — green andesitic tuff and “rye” granodiorite.



*Oligocene, Miocene*

Geological Features  
COAL FORMATION



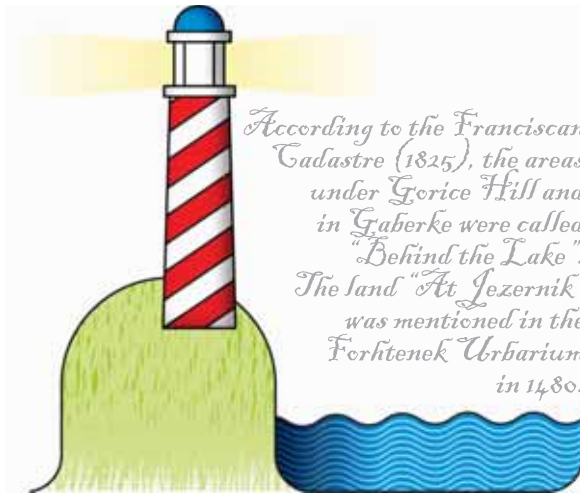
4 A swamp was formed in the subsidence area between the Šoštanj and Smrekovec fault about 2.5 million years ago. Lush trees in the subsidence area were dying and falling into water where they didn't weather, but the area was evenly sinking. The accumulated organic woody substance was charred into a layer of coal, up to 160 metres thick. There is still up to 300 metres of upper layer above the coal.

*Pliocene, Pleistocene*

*One of the thickest individual coal layers in the world*



## 'PUSTI GRAD' CASTLE-LIGHTHOUSE



- 5 According to the legend, there was a lake in the Šalek Valley a long time ago, and Šoštanj Castle was then supposed to be a lighthouse. Old people used to say in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that there had been a lake long ago and it would be again if there weren't any masses for that purpose at St. Michael's in Družmirje. The church was demolished in 1975, and the most fertile part of the valley was flooded by Lake Družmirje.

## ST. HERMAGORAS AND FORTUNATUS DIG THROUGH PENK GORGE

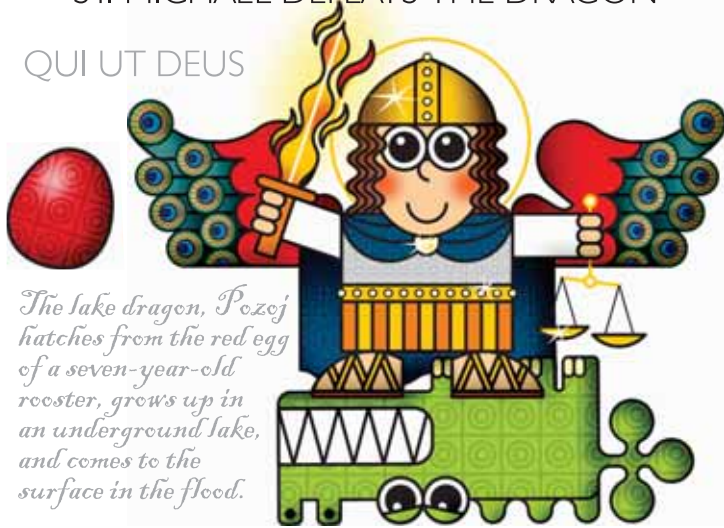


- 6 "When there was still a lake in the Šalek Valley, the convicts, Hermagoras and Fortunatus, were told that they would be released if they dug through the hill, so that the lake would drain away. And they did that — Penk Gorge was formed." In gratitude, the convicts are supposed to be depicted on the main altar of the St. George's Church in Škale and become saints.

St. Hermagoras and Fortunatus are in fact Aquileia martyrs to whom the town church in Šoštanj is dedicated.

Legends of the Lake  
ST. MICHAEL DEFEATS THE DRAGON

QUI UT DEUS



*The lake dragon, Pozoj hatches from the red egg of a seven-year-old rooster, grows up in an underground lake, and comes to the surface in the flood.*

7 The upper layer of coal peaked out of the ground in many places in the Šalek Valley. Coal was once not known as a fuel but as a medicine — it was called “dragon’s blood” — and where there was dragon’s blood, there must have been a dragon too. The dragon was defeated in the Šoštanj part of the valley by St. Michael, depicted as a painting on the ceiling of St. Michael’s Parish Church in Družmirje.



Michael: lat. Qui ut Deus = hebr. miKa’el = Who is like God?

Historical Milestones  
STONE AGE



*Palaeolithic stone tools from Morn Cave*

8 In Morn Cave in ‘Hudi potok’ (Angry Brook) Gorge 6 kilometres west of Šoštanj, the traces of human existence from the Stone Age to the end of antiquity were found: stone tools, metal objects, coins, ceramics, and a dwelling on almost 400 piles. The cave had been a hunting station; centuries later, people sought shelter in the cave in times of crisis.



1



3

### Historical Milestones ANTIQUITY



2

*In Šoštanj, two Roman coins were found, first (1), from the time of the Emperor Valerian (253-260) and second (2), from Maximinus Thrax (235-238). Under St. Ulrich's Church in Gaberke a third coin (3) of the Empress Galeria Valeria (315) was found.*

9 The Šalek Valley was inhabited in the time of antiquity. There was a settlement on the terrace above the valley bottom next to the Roman road. Two Roman coins were found in Šoštanj, five in Zavodnje (perhaps brought there later), nine in Morn Cave, where an ancient refuge on piles was found. The remains of an ancient building and ceramics were found under St. Ulrich's Church in Gaberke.

The depiction of two coins from the time of both emperors is symbolic.

### Historical Milestones DRUŽMIRJE – (S)TRESIMIR



Roman cooking pottery

Terra Sigillata



The depiction is symbolic – the fragments of the pottery found do not allow the reconstruction of the vessels' shoppes.

The traces of residence from antiquity to the Middle and New Ages were found in the area of the so-called 'Falkov Klošter' (Falk's Monastery). The Slavs settled in the middle of the valley on the north bank of the river Paka – the village Družmirje was formed, mentioned as Tresimir (1309) and Stresimir (1311). Centuries after the village formation, Šoštanj Castle was built on the south edge of the valley and under it a settlement – Šoštanj.

10

Historical Milestones  
FIRST MENTIONS

Schönnstain

... *Satz hawa ze Schönnstain*  
und fünf Hoffstat in dem  
Markt gelegen ...

Marcht

... *Stumpfen hunde* dar  
darnach in dem fünf und  
funfzigste von dem sand Agnesen tag

*The first mention  
of the market town  
Šoštanj on St. Agnes  
Day in 1355*

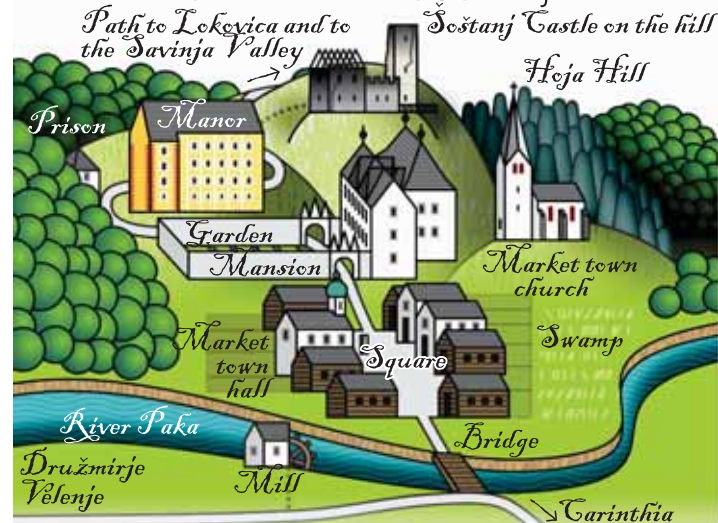
*The coat of arms  
of Šoštanj noblemen*



- 11 Free Šoštanj noblemen were mentioned between 1189 and 1268. They mastered the north part of the Šalek Valley, where they built their castles, Kacenštajn and Šoštanj. The Šoštanj Castle was named after the original castle in Bavaria — the castle later gave its name also to the settlement under it. A judge in Šoštanj is mentioned for the first time in 1348 and Šoštanj as a market town in 1355.

*Markt Schönnstain*

Historical Milestones  
SETTLEMENT ŠOŠTANJ



The settlement Šoštanj was formed — as a competitor to the nearby market town Velenje — on the shelf above the river Paka, where this one meanders away from the castle hill. The path descends here into the valley. The path used to connect the Savinja and Šalek Valley across the Lokovica Hills — before the road through Penk Gorge was built. The path crosses Šoštanj Bridge and leads through Zavodnje to Carinthia or through Družmirje to Velenje.

Historical Milestones

## FRIDERIK II COUNT OF CELJE RESTORES MARKET RIGHTS OF ŠOŠTANJ



*Market rights included,  
for example, regular fairs,  
a judge, a mandatory path  
through the market town, a  
toll, and a monopoly on salt  
trade.*

- 13 The settlement Šoštanj was elevated to a market town and was given market rights most likely already by Vovberg or Žovnek noblemen; however, documents have not been preserved. Friderik II Count of Celje restored market rights of Šoštanj with the first known privilege document from the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 1436. The rights were confirmed also by further Lords of Habsburg provincial lands. The market town was the centre of life, trade, and crafts.

Historical Milestones

## TURKISH INVASIONS



- 14 The first known Turkish invasion into the Šalek Valley is from 1473, when the Turks were returning from Carinthia and a column of about 8,000 prisoners and many cattle was moving through the valley for several hours. Some of the churches were walled up and turned into forts where the peasants retreated with their cattle and property. The church in Družmirje was supposed to be fortified with walls and towers.

Historical Milestones  
PROTESTANTISM

*"Mass is nothing and your ears need to be plugged when you hear the church bells."  
Jurij Veršec, a Protestant chaplain in Forhtenek*



15 In 1528 a church visitation discovered that Protestantism had taken root in the Šalek Valley — Lady Altenhaus from Forhtenek Castle forced people to attend services of the Lutheran chaplain in the castle chapel. A serf, who had given money for a catholic mass, had to pay her a florin. The nobles of Šoštanj and the town judge, Andrej Kinde, were Protestants. Protestants are also mentioned occasionally in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Historical Milestones  
PEASANT REBELLIONS

*Rebels captured Šoštanj Castle and destroyed it.*



16 In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the relations between peasants and landowners in Šoštanj became tense due to new measures, including increased forced labour, violations of old rights, etc. Peasants were complaining, and in 1635 a peasant rebellion broke out in Šoštanj. The only armed struggle of rebels with the imperial troops had taken place near Šoštanj Castle. After the rebellion, 24 prisoners from the Šalek Valley were punished.

Historical Milestones  
WITCH TRIALS



*With the soil  
from the graveyard,  
she murdered two people.*

17 In 1677 the executioner judge Johann Georg Franz von Vill judged the witch Marina Ferlin before the Šoštanj regional court of noblemen, as she was supposed to cause diseases and to take away masculinity. Punishment: beheading. In 1674 people from Šoštanj complained to a church supervisor that their vicar Matija Usar made annual hailstorms which killed all crops.



Historical Milestones  
MARIAN  
COLUMN

*Our Lady  
of Lourdes:  
- a blue ribbon,  
- a rosary on her  
right arm,  
- hands in prayer  
on her chest,  
- a golden flower  
at her feet.*

*"I am the  
Immaculate  
Conception."*



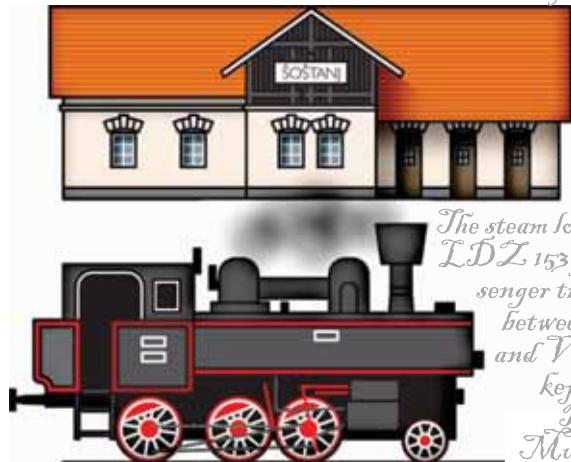
*Main  
Square  
  
Made by the  
stonemason  
Franz Grein  
from Graz*

18 In 1892 a Marian Column was erected in the middle of the square by the owners of the tannery, Franz Woschnagg and his wife Maria. According to folk tradition, in memory of the terrible flood when the Paka had flooded the lower part of the square up to the point where the column was then set up — Mary would have protected the square.

The column was torn down in 1952, and set up again in 1990, and then moved to its original location during the renovation of the square in 2020.

Historical Milestones  
RAILWAY

*Railway stations  
were built according  
to a unified plan.*



*The steam locomotive  
LDZ 153 for pas-  
senger transport  
between Celje  
and Velenje is  
kept by the  
Railway  
Museum in  
Ljubljana.*

- 19 The railway line Celje–Šoštanj–Velenje was open in 1891. Mihael Vošnjak and Daniel von Lapp, who was the owner of the Velenje Coal Mine, were credited for it. The journey from Velenje via Šoštanj to Celje was an hour and three-quarters up to two-and-a-half-hour trip. The most demanding part was through Penk Gorge, where bridges and a tunnel were built. The railway was a great incentive for the industrial development of the valley.

Historical Milestones  
ŠOŠTANJ BECOMES A CITY

*On the 27<sup>th</sup> of May  
1911, his Majesty  
Emperor Franz  
Josef I signed  
the decree grant-  
ing the market  
town Šoštanj  
city rights.*



- On the 28<sup>th</sup> of June 1911, Šoštanj was solemnly declared a city. Hans Woschnagg received the most credit for that feat. His tannery was developed into “a world-important company”. He also encouraged the communal development of Šoštanj, which was at that time the most important settlement — “the metropolis” of the Šalek Valley with a court, a notary, a solicitor, hotels, and taverns.

20

*Francisus Woschnagg*





Historical Milestones  
MONUMENT  
TO THE FALLEN  
IN WORLD WAR I

*After World War I, Šoštanj was in the hinterland of the battles for the northern border; there was an improvised hospital and the first headquarters of "the Carinthia Detachment" in the town hall.*

21 The most notable monument to the fallen in World War I in the Šalek Valley was erected in Zavodnje. The plan for the square obelisk was drawn by the academic sculptor Ivan Napotnik. In World War I, the valley suffered. Boys and men went to the battlefield, and there were breakouts of dysentery and "Spanish flu". In addition to the requisition of cattle, hay, wheat, and potatoes — bells were taken from the churches as well.



Historical Milestones  
FIRST PARTISAN ATTACK  
ON ŠOŠTANJ

*The Torch Monument under Gorice Hill stands near the place, where partisans burnt the saw of the German mayor Streinigg during the attack.*

*Out of revenge, the occupiers shot 10 hostages two days later.*

*The 8<sup>th</sup> of October is the Holiday of the Local Community Šoštanj.*

*The monument was designed by L. Kompan and made by the local man F. Lubec.*

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of April 1941, World War II started in Slovenia. The first partisan Styria battalion attacked Šoštanj on the night of October 8<sup>th</sup>, 1941. Partisans ruled the town for two hours, caused some damage to German occupiers, and withdrew without victims. The first partisan attack on a town in Slovenia resonated and boosted the confidence of Slovenian patriots.

22

Historical Milestones

## SIGNATURE OF PARTIAL GERMAN CAPITULATION IN WORLD WAR II

*Topolšica, the 9<sup>th</sup> of May 1945*

*Colonel General Alexander Löhr*



23

In the building of the former surgery in the spa park in Topolšica, there is a room dedicated to the memory on the partial capitulation of German army. For the Slovenians, World War II ended here. The capitulation of the German forces for SE Europe was signed in Topolšica on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May 1945 by the German Colonel General, Alexander Löhr — his pistol is also in the collection.

Market Town Heritage

## ŠOŠTANJ COAT OF ARMS

*The author of the drawing of the coat of arms is the academic painter and graphic artist Ludwig Kofel from Graz. In 1954 it was published in the book, Styria Provincial Coats of Arms.*



24

The coat of arms of the Municipality of Šoštanj includes half of a black eagle (a symbol of Habsburg noblemen) and three red heart-shaped stones on the hill. This is the “speaking” part of the coat of arms: Šoštanj was in German named Schönstein, which means “a beautiful stone”.

10626

The oldest known depiction of the two-part coat of arms is on the market town seal from 1626.

The reconstruction of the original colour scheme of the coat of arms, applying the colours from the market town banner.



Market Town Heritage  
MARKET TOWN SEAL



This is an earlier form of the market town coat of arms before the eagle was added to it.

- 25 The market town seal dates probably to the early 17<sup>th</sup> or late 16<sup>th</sup> century. There are three stones in it and the inscription GMSS ('Gemeiner Markt Schönstein Siegel' — Šoštanj Market Town Seal). The stones themselves are not heart-shaped, but the coat of arms with a volute ornament is heart-shaped.



*Two market town seals are kept by the Provincial Archives in Graz.*

Market Town Heritage  
MARKET TOWN BANNER AND PARTISAN

G. M. S. = Gemeiner Markt Schönstein  
127 x 144 cm



- 26 The market town banner from 1791 is on display in the Joanneum Museum in Graz. An imperial eagle with a sword and a sceptre, and white stones on the grass are depicted on a red background. In 1857 the market town Šoštanj submitted its partisan to the collection of the Historical Association for Styria in Graz. Both market town insignias were worn in a procession when walking along the market town border.

*One of the oldest preserved market town banners*



The path went through the hole at the spindle of the Marof Smithy. They crossed the Paka river with poles.

Market Town Heritage

PATH ALONG  
MARKET TOWN BORDER



- 27 The path evokes the memory of the area under the authority of the market town Šoštanj, where market rights were applied. Until 1848 people of Šoštanj walked along the border every seven years in a ceremonial procession together with a market town judge, a banner, a partisan, and attendants with drums and whistles. After the procession, the youth were included in the community of Šoštanj. The boundary stones ● were marked with letters “GMS”.

Market Town Heritage

OLD MARKET  
TOWN HALL



*Alms-house  
Magistrate*

*People in the  
alms-house had  
to pray a rosary  
for their benefactors  
and for the whole market  
town twice a day.*

- 28 It is not known where the medieval town hall stood. The present town hall was once an alms-house that accepted two poor market town people each. The chaplain, Podhrastnik left his property to establish an alms-house in 1700. There is a clock tower with two bells on the roof of the building. The bigger bell, that strikes by the hour, was poured in Ljubljana in 1572 by the foundry worker, Lienhart Giesser.

*The inscription on the bell is probably  
the oldest public inscription in Šoštanj.*

1572  
LIENHART GIESSER

Market Town Heritage  
MARKET PEACE ARM

*The wooden arm with a sword,  
that threatened farmers at fairs,  
supposedly rotted a long time ago.*

*Dr. Josip Vošnjak  
Recollections, 1906*

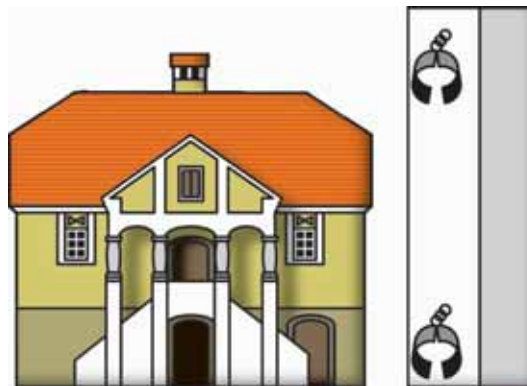


29

A wooden arm with a sword was placed on the market town hall or on the pillory on fair days: a sign of market peace and a symbol of judicial authority — a town judge could punish those who did not obey the rules. A town judge collected tolls, took care of paths and footbridges, inspected chimneys and weights, controlled bread weights, watched out for the fire on fair days, and also watched that boys did not fish.

The depiction is symbolic.

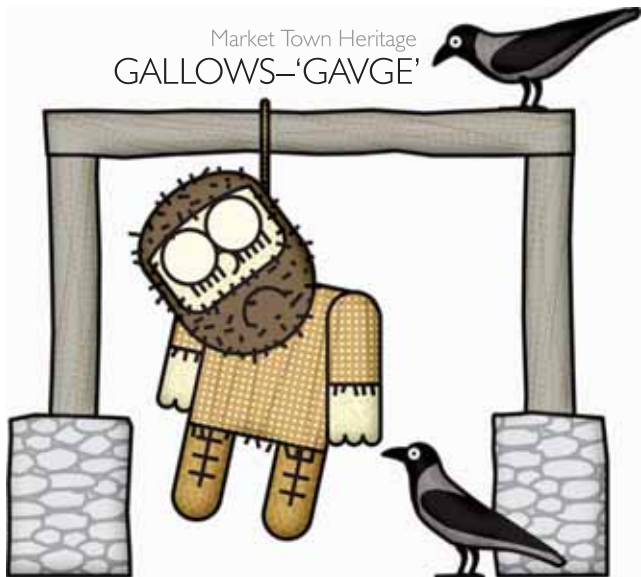
Market Town Heritage  
PILLORY—'PRANGER'



30

A town judge could convict a culprit to the pillory. A stone pillar stood in the main Šoštanj square, in front of the former market town hall. It had an iron ring at the top and at the bottom to lock a culprit who was then exposed to public ridicule. In 1873 the columns for the remodelled staircase of the St. Michael's chaplaincy house in Družmirje (demolished) were made from the pillory.

Market Town Heritage  
GALLOWS—'GAVGE'

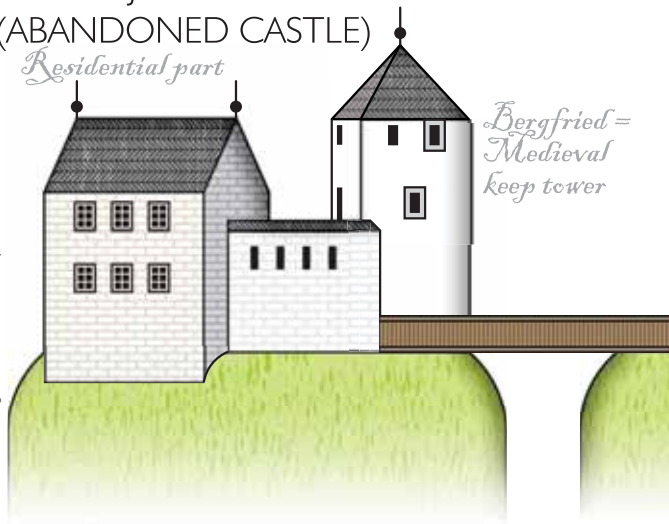


31 The gallows, on which Šoštanj noblemen hung convicts in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century, stood under Gorice Hill; this part of the hill is called 'Gavgec'. The gallows are also marked on the military map from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Today there is a cross nearby and a monument to the victims of the massacres, which took place there after World War II.

*Folk tradition mentions 'gavge' (gallows) also in the Sentsforjan Ditch.*

Castles, Mansions  
ŠOŠTANJ CASTLE—'PUSTI GRAD'  
(ABANDONED CASTLE)

*Residential part*



*Bergfried =  
Medieval  
keep tower*

From the Romanesque design, a part of the 'bergfried' (keep tower) and some remains of the residential part are preserved. A reconstruction according to the drawing from the Vischer map from 1678.

The castle got its name 'Pusti' (Abandoned) after it had been abandoned. Before that it had been named Šoštanj Castle, whose name was then also given to the market town. It was probably built in the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century and was explicitly mentioned in 1318. The Counts of Celje destroyed it during the fights with the Habsburgs, and it was probably abandoned in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

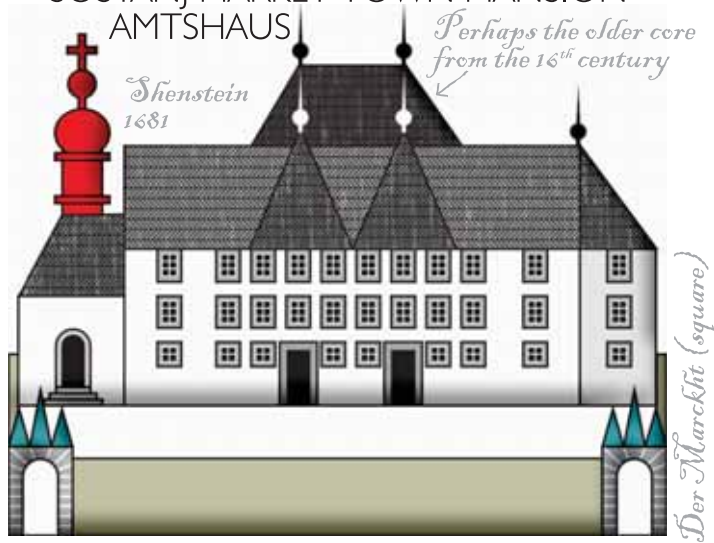
32



*A black dog guards  
the treasure in the castle ruins.*



Castles, Mansions  
**ŠOŠTANJ MARKET TOWN MANSION—  
 AMTSHAUS**



33 In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, a luxurious mansion was built for the seat of Šoštanj noblemen, just above the market town square, replacing the old demolished Šoštanj Castle on the hill. It was a big renaissance building with a chapel, yards, a garden, and the walls with double doors. The mansion was largely wooden, and it burnt along with the market town square in 1734.

ŠHENSTEIN

Castles, Mansions  
**SCHRATTENBACH COAT OF ARMS**



The walls of the Šoštanj mansion garden stood once at the upper part of the square. A stone slab with the coat of arms of the family Schrattenbach and the year 1677 can be seen above the metal door. It was probably then when one of the building phases was finished. Schrattenbach Counts ruled in Šoštanj from 1658; and from 1681 to the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Thurn–Valassina Counts ruled. After them, the third Šoštanj castle building is named Turn Manor.

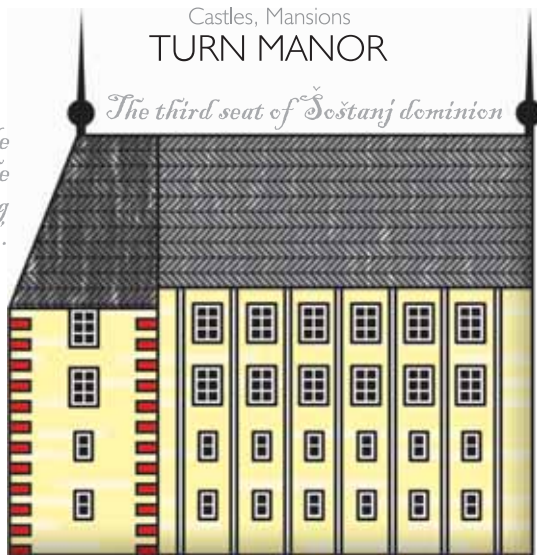
34



Castles, Mansions  
TURN MANOR

*The third seat of Šoštanj dominion*

*People call the building 'gršina'.*



*Janisch 1885: In the nobleman's tract there were twelve bedrooms, a dining room, a kitchen, and a chapel; and in the residential tract, nine bedrooms, a coachman's chamber, stables for eight horses, a carriage storeroom, a wood warehouse, and a kitchen. Room for 2,000 buckets of wine in the cellar under the larger tract. A bowling alley and a veranda were added to the nobleman's tract.*

35 The oldest part of the building, the tower, was to be built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. When the market town mansion burnt, the seat of estate was brought to the manor.

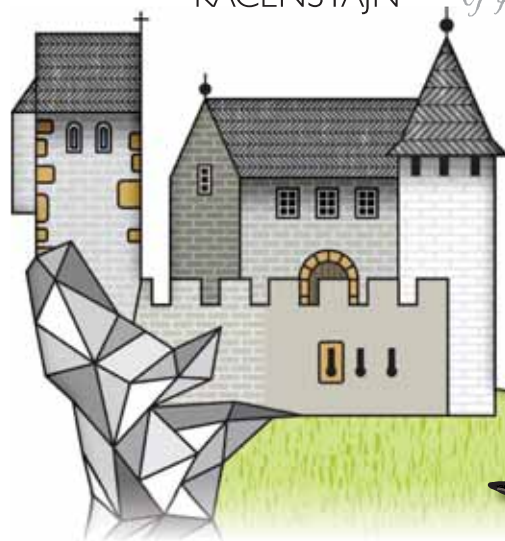
*A storeroom for the tithe had been there before.*

Castles, Mansions  
KACENŠTAJN

*Eberhard of Kacenštajn 1173 (?)*

*Florian*

*St. Florian's Church and Chapel stand on the site of the castle.*



Kacenštajn Castle is probably the oldest castle in the western part of the Šalek Valley and was built by the same family as Šoštanj Castle. It stood on a stone heap in the gorge, high above the brook, 3.5 kilometres from Šoštanj. Archaeologists found the remains of a round tower with 4-metre-thick walls and many arrowheads — an evidence of fierce fighting. The castle was ruined in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

36

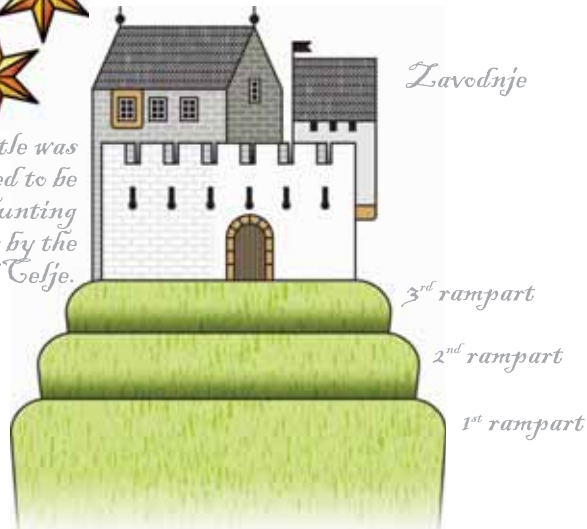
The depiction is symbolic — a round tower and a chapel are shown above the gorge.





Castles, Mansions  
ZAMBERK

*The castle was supposed to be used for hunting visits by the Counts of Celje.*



37 Žamberk Castle was built at the top of the hill above the village Zavodnje in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. From the castle, only three ramparts and few remains of the walls can be seen in situ. Castle ponds, a guard-house ('vahta'), and a castle orchard are preserved in folk memory. According to the legend, the castle was destroyed with one shot from the cannon by the Turks, or by an offended castle son who was driven from home.

The depiction is symbolic — three ramparts are shown.

Castles, Mansions  
FORHTENEK *Ravne*



The depiction is symbolic — the elements are taken from the Vischer Topography and the map of Styria.

38 At least from 1317, Forhtenek Castle stood at the top of the hill around which the brook Velunja meanders into the Šalek Valley. It had little cannons and a well in the castle yard. Fish were held in the pond. From the castle, it is supposed that an underground tunnel led to the Velunšek barn in the valley. A silver bell is supposed to be in the St. Lenart's castle chapel.

*In a mighty storm, lightning is said to have struck the castle and burned it. "A green man" was walking under the burning castle.*



Castles, Mansions  
**MAROF MANOR–GUTENBÜCHEL**

*Gut[t]/enbü[c]h[e]s  
 Guetenpichs  
 Galhoff*

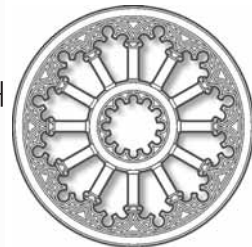


39 Gustav von Eder designed a multi-storey geometric park around the historicist mansion in Ravne at Šoštanj with wrought iron fences, lamps, a well, tin griffins and agaves, with a fountain, a pool, and a greenhouse. Before World War II, the mansion was a residence of rich industrialists, Baron Haebler and the Woschnaggs.

*The statues next to the entrance portal are the work of the academic sculptor Ivan Napotnik.*

*The mansion is fictitiously depicted in the Moč Collection.*

Churches  
**ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH CHURCH (demolished)**



A rosette from the Woschnagg's tomb chapel in the graveyard next to the church



*Družmirje*

*The baroque altars from the church are in the town church and in the new parish church.*

The church stood on the border of the cadastral municipalities, Šoštanj and Družmirje (Družmirje was a settlement core of the western part of the Šalek Valley). It was a vicariate of the Škale pre-parish in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. St. Michael is one of the saints, to whom churches were dedicated in places that had been Christianized. Due to sinking while mining under the church, it was demolished in 1975.

40

Churches  
ST. MICHAEL'S  
PARISH  
CHURCH  
(the new one)



*Skorno at Šoštanj*



41 St. Michael's Parish Church in Skorno was built instead of the old, demolished church in Družmirje. Its modern architecture exploits the rich construction possibilities of reinforced concrete. The presbytery is illuminated through the roof, and the nave through strips of stained-glass windows telling biblical stories. The main altar is from the demolished St. Michael's Church.

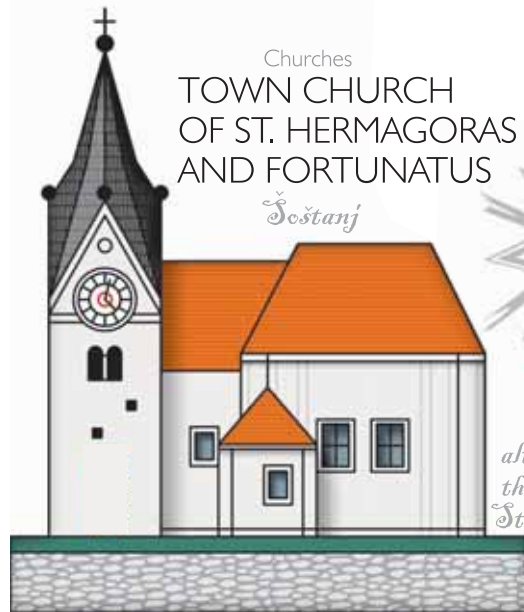


Churches  
TOWN CHURCH  
OF ST. HERMAGORAS  
AND FORTUNATUS

*Šoštanj*



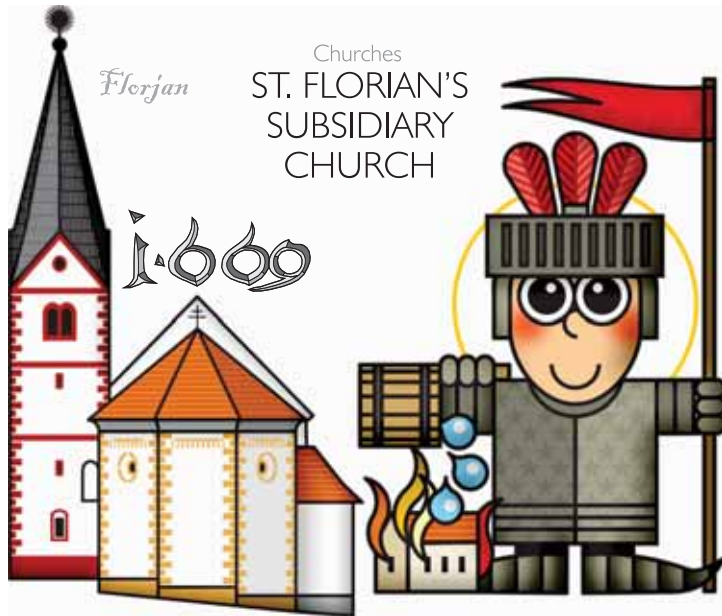
*Two baroque  
altars are from  
the demolished  
St. Michael's  
Church.*



The church probably originated as a proprietary church or a chapel of Šoštanj Castle from the 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century. The presbytery was painted in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, a bell tower was built above it, following Carinthia examples. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the church (except the bell tower) was demolished, and a baroque building with a central arched space was built.

42





*Florjan*

Churches  
ST. FLORIAN'S  
SUBSIDIARY  
CHURCH

43 The church stands on the rock where Kacenštajn Castle once stood. St. Florian's Chapel next to it is the successor of the castle chapel. Deep below the church, the Florjanščica Brook flows through the Šentflorjan Ditch. The church is famous for its painted wooden ceiling — the youngest of its kind in Slovenia — for its Gothic statue of the Pietà, and its Gothic chalice.

*A horse was supposed to determine the place where the church would stand.*

Mary's  
monogram  
from the  
ceiling



*St. Anthony  
"Swineherd"  
is a patron  
saint of cattle.*

Churches  
ST. ANTHONY'S  
SUBSIDIARY  
CHURCH



*Skorno  
at Soštanj*

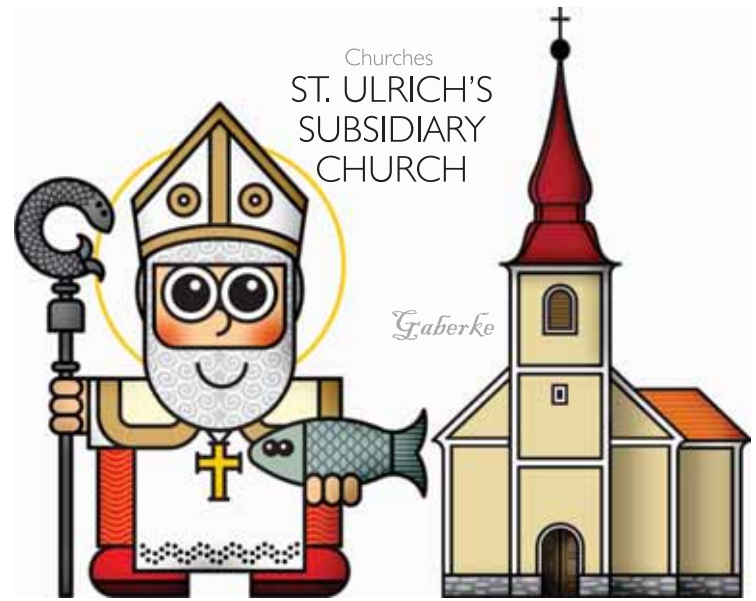


44 The church was supposed to be built on the site where the image of St. Anthony had been found in a pile of bark. It stands on the border of three parishes. In the Gothic, ribbed vaulted presbytery, there is a fine fresco of the Crucifixion from 1526. At the church, the auction of ham takes place on St. Anthony's Day (in January). Fairies are said to live in the caves below the church.





45 The church was first mentioned in 1545. The current building is in a baroque style, and the vaults are decorated with small stucco. St. Barbara and Ursula stand out among the statues on the baroque altar. The church is important primarily as a spatial emphasis of the northern edge of the Šalek Valley. A silver bell from the Forhtenek castle chapel was supposed to be transferred to it.



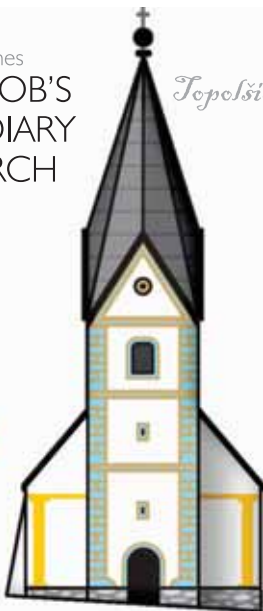
They say: "Where the church stands, the castle of the nobleman Gabriel stood, after whom the village Gaberke is named. In the pond below the castle, the daughter of a Forhtenek nobleman is said to have drowned. He then built the church." Archaeologists have found the remains of a medieval church and ancient buildings under it. The present church — except the bell tower — was rebuilt in the historicist style in 1828.

46

*The sign of  
St. Jacob  
is a Jacob's  
scallop.*

Churches  
**ST. JACOB'S  
SUBSIDIARY  
CHURCH**

*Topolšica*



47 The church stands on the hill above the valley of the Toplica Brook. The characteristic ratios between the length and width of the nave suggest that it may date back to the Romanesque time. The bell tower was added later. People went to beg St. Jacob for bread.

*A famous Gothic fresco  
The Living Cross is in the church.*



*These are  
the keys to  
the kingdom  
of heaven.*

Churches  
**ST. PETER'S  
PARISH CHURCH**

*Zavodnje*



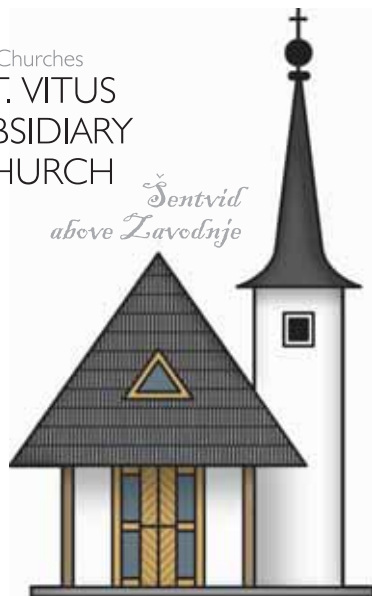
48 The church was probably built as a chapel of Žamberk Castle on the hill above it. It was first dedicated to both leaders of the apostles — St. Peter and St. Paul. It stands in the middle of the village Zavodnje, along the old road from the Šalek Valley to Carinthia. Every year a famous procession takes place here encircling the castle hill along one of the former castle ramparts.



*St. Vitus was boiled in the kettle because he didn't want to renounce Christianity.*



Churches  
ST. VITUS  
SUBSIDIARY  
CHURCH



*Šentvid  
above Lavodnje*

49 The memorial chapel stands near the place where St. Vitus Church stood at the provincial border between Styria and Carinthia since ca. 1500. It burned down at the end of World War II. The place is called 'Raztok' (Two-Side Flow): from here the waters flow on two sides — one into the Drava River, the other to the Sava River. The old path from the Šalek Valley to Carinthia leads here.

*A horse with a human head still rides through vast forests of Šentvid.*

*St. Andrew was crossed on the cross in a form of the letter X — this is Andrew Cross.*



Churches  
ST. ANDREW'S  
PARISH  
CHURCH



*Bela Voda*

The church stands above the source of the 'Bela Voda' (White Water) Brook. People have made a pilgrimage for the right weather here since ancient times. In 1482 the church was endowed with special indulgences by Pope Sixtus IV. The small Gothic bell is the oldest still ringing bell in the Šalek Valley decorated with a frieze of panthers.

50



Churches  
'SVETI KRIŽ'  
(HOLY CROSS)  
PILGRIMAGE  
CHURCHES

*The pilgrimage  
centre stands on the  
1,044-metre-high  
Kriška gora Hill.*

*Big church*

*Small church*

*Holy  
stairs*



- 51 The top of Kriška gora Hill is a pilgrimage centre with two churches, holy stairs, two chapels, a parish house, and a pilgrimage house. The church was consecrated by the Blessed Bishop Anton Martin Slomšek. At large pilgrimage gatherings for Pentecost and St. Anna's Day, more than 11,000 of the faithful attended.

Sacral Heritage

CHRIST ON CROSS  
FROM HOLY CROSS CHURCH



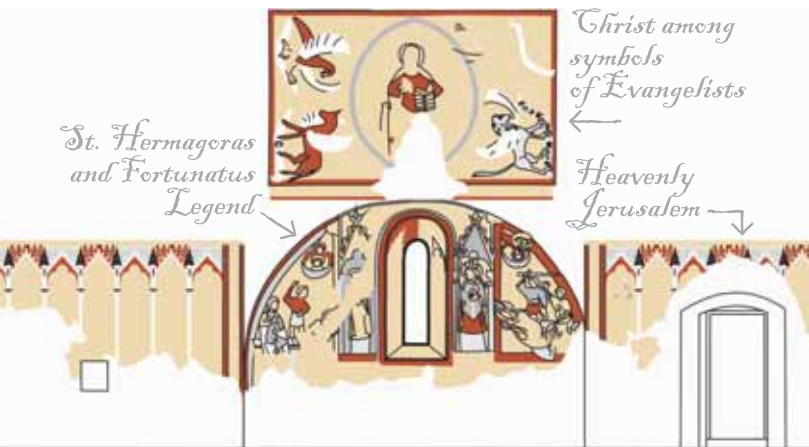
Christ on the Cross from the Holy Cross Church is the only iconographic motif formed in the Šalek Valley. The cross is the middle top of a three-top spruce. An ox, that found a crucifix on such a spruce at the top of the mountain, prays under it — and then the Holy Cross Churches were built there.

52





Sacral Heritage  
**EARLY GOTHIC FRESCOES  
 IN ROMANESQUE PRESBYTERY**



53 A semi-circular vaulted Romanesque presbytery (the place of the altar) from the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> century is under the bell tower of St. Hermagoras and Fortunatus Church. At the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, it was painted with early Gothic frescoes depicting the legend of patron saints, the Heavenly Jerusalem, Christ in Glory, and Mary's stories. These frescoes are among the oldest paintings in Slovenia.

*The space was updated with a painting.*

Sacral Heritage  
**PIETÀ AND GOTHIC CHALICE  
 FROM ST. FLORIAN'S CHURCH**



The Pietà was probably made for the chapel of Kacenštajn Castle and was after the collapse of the castle transferred to St. Florian's Chapel/Church, where it has been preserved for 600 years to this day. The gilded chalice is of late Gothic design engraved with the Evangelists, the Lamb of God, and Christ as the Imago Pietatis. Both works of art are kept by the Velenje Museum at Velenje Castle.

54

Sacral Heritage

## RELIEF OF ST. FLORIAN

*Remnants of the painting are noticeable.*



55 The relief of St. Florian is built into the exterior of the Villa Široko. However, it was once built into the building in Ljubljana. The sandstone relief was created in the second decade of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. A curly-haired saint stands in a profiled frame and extinguishes the fire in the church — two dragons sit on the frame. There were two short inscriptions on the shields.

Urban Buildings  
VILLA ŠIROKO

*The built-in Gothic relief of St. Florian is in the outer wall. There is a restaurant in the building.*



The Villa Široko was built by Herbert Woschnagg, the owner of the Šoštanj tannery, in a mixture of modernism and secession in 1939. It was surrounded by a free (English) park with a swimming pool and a tennis court. The statue of the sculptor Napotnik Young Faun was sitting at the courtyard fountain — a faun lives in the mythical ideal landscape of Arcadia, and the villa with its surroundings was also supposed to be an ideal, unearthly abode.

56

The poet Karel  
Destovnik-Kajuh  
was born here

Urban Buildings  
KAJUH'S HOME PALACE



57 Opposite the railway station in 1892, the long-serving mayor, Franc Rajšter built "the most luxuriously designed small hotel in Slovenian Styria in the 19<sup>th</sup> century". The monumental façade is decorated in the Neo-Mannerism style. There was a cinema in the hotel as well as the premises of the Šalek Reading Room and the Sokol Gym Association.

The depiction is based on old photographs.  
The wooden balcony on pillars (altan)  
next to the building is not preserved.

A protocol object  
of the Municipality  
of Šoštanj

Urban Buildings  
VILLA MAYER



The solicitor and former mayor of Šoštanj Dr. Fran Mayer built a historicist villa with a tower, a wooden balcony on pillars (altan), and a garden with a tennis court on the outskirts of the town. The renovated villa offers historical and art collections, exhibitions, social events, and pedagogical programmes. Children love to play here.

Tree  
roses

58



Urban Buildings  
VILLA MEDIČ

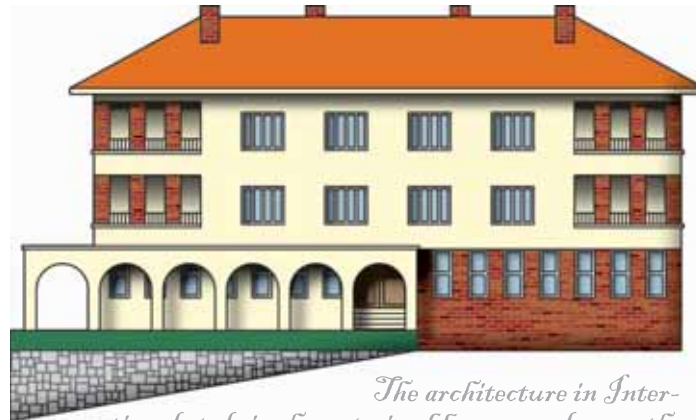


*It is said that Dr. Medič sometimes gave his medical advice right from his balcony – and he also charged for it.*

- 59 The Šoštanj's physician Dr. Medič built a modernist/functionalist villa between the two wars; one of the first houses in the Šalek Valley with a flat roof that is even used as a terrace. It is characterized by a white façade, clean simple volumes, round windows, tubular balcony railings, and an absence of all decorations. The living quarters are to the south, and the entrance is from the north.

The house without later additions is depicted.

Urban Buildings  
OLD HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT  
IN TOPOLŠICA



*The architecture in International style is characterized by pure volumes, the repetition of elements, the absence of ornaments, etc.*

- 60 During the 1930's, a series of high-quality structures in the architectural style of early modernism was built in Topolšica: the Mladika and Smrečina pavilions, and the hospital management building. In the Šalek Valley, Velenje is considered "a city of Modernism"; however, the architecture in this advanced style had been created in Šoštanj and Topolšica three decades before the one in Velenje.

The building has been renovated and converted into apartments.

Ethnological Heritage  
**KAVČNIK HOMESTEAD**



61 Kavčnik Homestead in Zavodnje is the southernmost preserved alpine smokehouse in Europe. The central, oldest part of the residential house is a more than 400-year-old smokehouse with an open fireplace for cooking and heating. Smoke from the fireplace rolled freely around the room. Other rooms were gradually added to the smokehouse. The homestead is arranged as a museum.

*People and small animals lived together in the smokehouse.*

Ethnological Heritage  
**SLIVNIK HOMESTEAD**  
*Zavodnje*

*High-status farmhouse*



62 Slivnik Homestead was previously said to be called "At the Freeman", which probably indicates its special status. According to tradition there were "prisons and a court". The large homestead consisted of several buildings: a residential house, a barn ('marof'), a roofed double hayrack, a shed, and a garden hut.

A ten-leaf rosette and the year 1736 are engraved on the beam.



Ethnological Heritage  
TELEPEC HOMESTEAD



- 63 The large storey house in Zavodnje has an unusual shape and construction. It was probably built in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century from parts of two smaller wooden houses. The wooden portal in the central, brick part of the house is inspired by stone baroque portals. The house is built at the highest place and controls the area of the homestead.

The building is partially demolished.

Ethnological Heritage  
LESKOVŠEK HOMESTEAD



*Larch  
shutters*

*Stone portal*

- At the time of the settlement (colonization), the high area of Bele Vode was divided into about twenty units — areas of self-sufficient, secluded farms with several buildings (a house, a granary, a barn); almost small hamlets among dense forests. Among the largest is Leskovšek Homestead, where one of the two smokehouses is still preserved in a multi-storey residential house.

64



Ethnological Heritage  
**VINEYARD COTTAGES**

*The parish church lost a vineyard in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, because it did not pay its wine levy.*

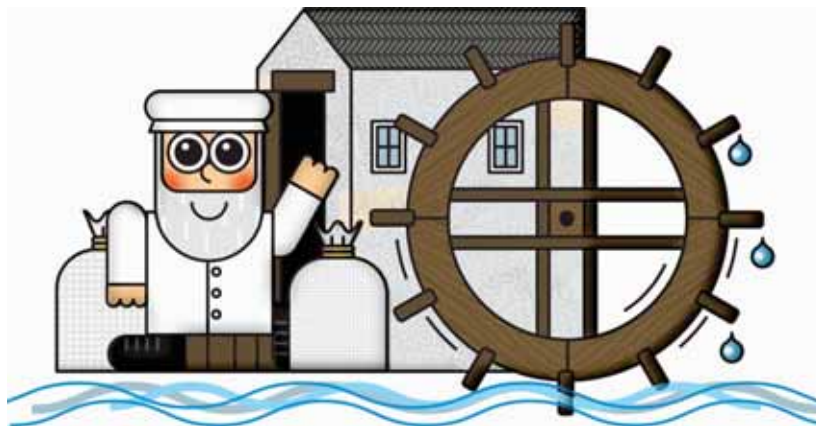


*A vineyard cottage in Lokovica*

65 In the area of Šoštanj, viticulture with special legal relations was developed already in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The noblemen of Šoštanj collected wine tithes from the vineyards in the hills of Lom, Lokovica, Topolšica, Skorno, and Zavodnje. Gorice Hill, above Šoštanj, is supposed to be named after vineyards. Most of the old vineyard cottages have been converted into houses.



Ethnological Heritage  
**MILLS AND SAWMILLS**

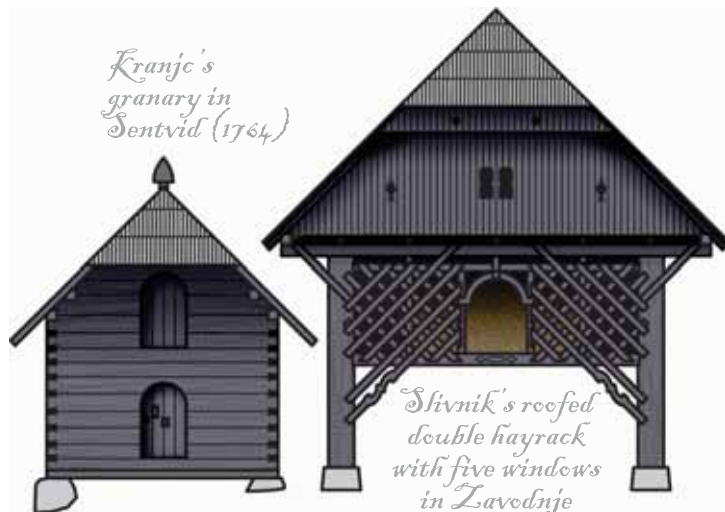


In 1939 there were more than a hundred water plants in the municipality of Šoštanj: mills, sawmills, and smithies. Mills existed already in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Almost every major farm had its own mill. Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, sawmilling became part of the wood industry and mills were almost all abandoned.

66

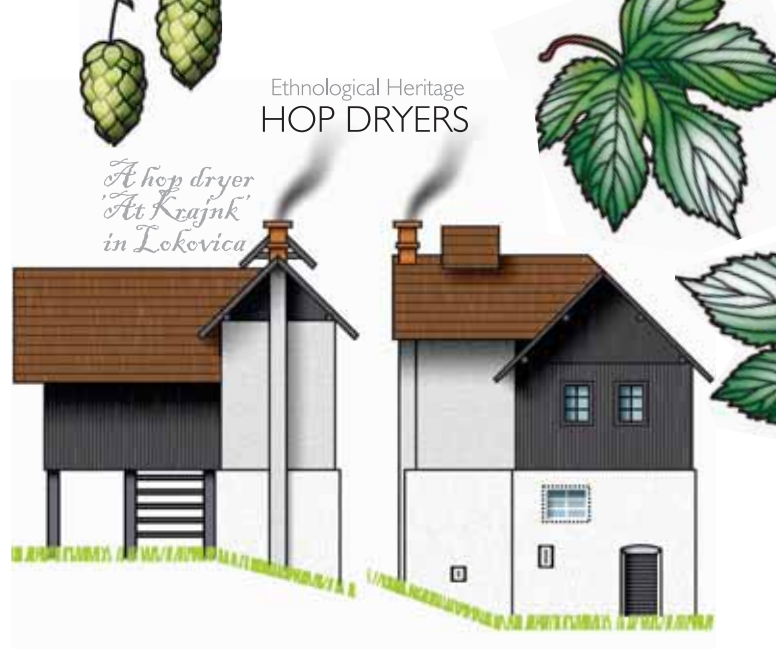
*The mill at the bridge over the Paka in Šoštanj was still owned by the Šoštanj dominion in 1622.*

Ethnological Heritage  
GRANARIES AND HAYRACKS



67 In addition to their utilitarian function, the buildings on a farm had also an aesthetic value — some of them are recognized as possessing a special architectural heritage due to their balanced design, the mastery in technical execution, and the beauty of details. The details come from the skilful use of domestic materials: stone and wood.

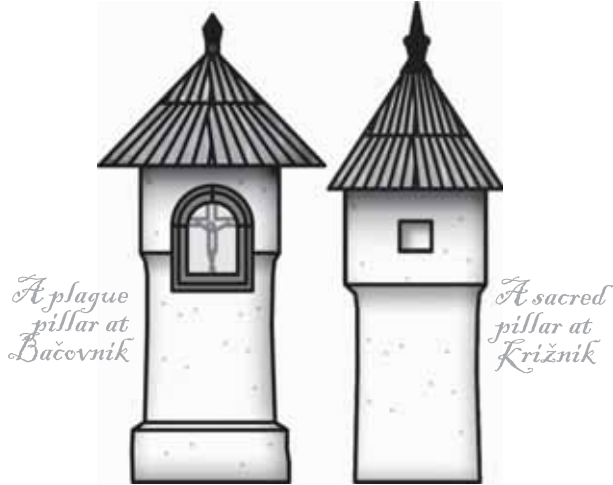
Ethnological Heritage  
HOP DRYERS



68 At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Savinja hops began to be grown in the Šalek Valley. Soon this very profitable crop spread even along the edge of the valley, and farmers set up a multitude of hop dryers. Hop fields were abandoned after World War II. However, a few hop dryers still stand.



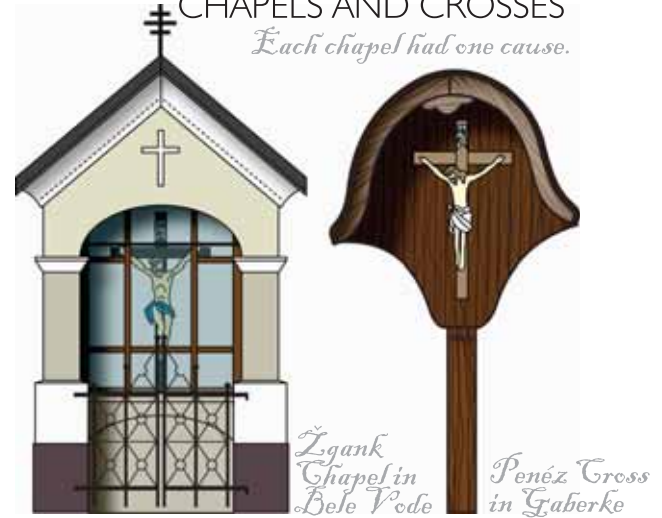
Ethnological Heritage  
SACRED PILLARS



- 69 A sacred pillar from the 18<sup>th</sup> century stands on the pass near Bačovnik Homestead in Bele Vode. A treasure is said to be buried in the vicinity of this sacred pillar. A similar Križnik's sacred pillar stands at the hunting lodge in Šentvid. It is said to have been erected in 1840 because twenty-one people died of disease in the village. Old sacral buildings, designed in this way, are rare.

Ethnological Heritage  
CHAPELS AND CROSSES

*Each chapel had one cause.*



- 70 There are chapels and crosses in special places in the landscape — often erected out of a vow of gratitude or regret where something serious or unusual happened. They say about Penéz Cross in Gaberke, "A tavern At Robida used to be there. Boys got into a fight by the water, but one of them was beaten to death. That's why they erected the cross and it still stands today."



71 Today, the Šalek Valley is mainly associated with coal mining. Earlier, silver ore was mined in the Velunja Ditch and lead and zinc ore in Penk Gorge, where it was also smelted. The smelters ("Schmelzhütten") near Družmirje are marked on the military map from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. An abandoned coal tunnel is below Pristava.



An industrial building like a palace

72 The Vošnjak's Tannery, founded in 1788, developed into a large-scale industry. It covered an area as large as the Šoštanj market town. They made various leathers and were famous for their ironed leather. The tannery helped build workers' flats; founded a fire-fighting and football association and a brass band. The factory was closed in 1999 — most of it was demolished in 2002.

A laurel wreath from the façade of the tannery in Šoštanj



Industrial Heritage  
LAND SUBSIDENCE AND LAKE DRUŽMIRJE

*Half of Šoštanj was supposed to sink. However, these plans were abandoned. The land subsidence has been constantly re-cultivated.*



73 Coal has been mined in the Šalek Valley for more than 145 years. The upper layers collapse into abandoned tunnels and the surface sinks. Lakes were formed on the site of the agricultural land and the settlements. Lake Družmirje is the deepest lake in Slovenia, created due to human activity (anthropogenic) — it is more than 90 metres deep and will be the largest lake in the valley.

Technical Heritage  
WATER RESERVOIR GORICE



74 In 1931, the Water Reservoir Gorice as a part of a 14-kilometre-long water supply network was built. It began at the Tajht spring in Bele Vode. That was the first public water supply network in the Šalek Valley, supplying the town of Šoštanj with drinking water for the period of 1931–1986. It was built in just four months — a remarkable engineering feat for the time.

*To see the interior of the water reservoir, make an appointment at the Villa Mayer.*

Personalities  
KNIGHT SIGMUND OF DOBRNA



*E.g. Herman and Friderik of Celje and Count Dracula were in the Order of the Dragon.*

A crow with a gold crown and a ring is a part of a crest of the coat of arms of Dobrna Nobles.



75 In 1425 the Counts of Celje granted "The Noble and Brave Knight Sigmund from Dobrna in the Šalek Valley" the Forhtenek Castle, north of Šoštanj. Sigmund was a brother of the Archbishop of Salzburg, the head of several castles and towns, the administrator of the estates of Queen Barbara of Celje, a member of the prestigious Order of the Dragon. He has a luxurious tombstone in the church on Ptujška Gora.

Personalities  
IVAN BARON KACIANAR



*In the coat of arms of the Kacianars are cats – in German 'Katzen'.*

Ivan Kacianar was an Austrian military leader in the battles against the Turks. He served as a Carniola provincial governor; he was first tenant (1526) and later owner (1530) of the dominion of Šoštanj — one of the first known by the description of his appearance. Due to the defeat at the fort Sisak, he fell into disfavour and was insidiously murdered in 1539, which is allegorically shown on his tombstone in the Gornji Grad Cathedral.

76

Personalities  
**PETER MUSI**

*"Fruit growing is first pleasant and great,  
 and secondly a very useful art."*



*Peter Musi*

77 Peter Musi (1799–1875) was one of the first Slovenian writers of pedagogical texts and a collaborator of the bishop Slomšek in writing textbooks, a founder of the first school savings bank and the first public library in Šoštanj; Musi was also a fruit grower, a beekeeper, a publicist, an exemplary teacher and principal teaching in Šoštanj for 50 years.



The emperor decorated Musi with  
 The Golden Cross of Merit, capped with a crown.

Personalities  
**BROTHERS DR. JOSIP AND MIHAEL VOŠNJAK**



Their father, Mihael, was the leather master from Šoštanj. They organized savings and loans in Slovenia. The National Assembly member, Josip (1834–1911), participated in political gatherings and promoted the United Slovenia. The railway expert, the engineer Mihael (1837–1920), is credited with building the railway in the Šalek Valley.

78

*Dr. Josip Vošnjak* *Mihael Vošnjak*

Personalities

## KARL EMIL BARON HAEBLER

*The Russian Tsar Nicholas awarded Haebler a large cross of the Order of St. Stanislas.*

*The annual output of Haebler companies: 12–15 million gold francs.*

*Haebler's coachman was not allowed to have a moustache.*



79 Baron Haebler (1855–1934) settled in Gutenbüchel in 1906. He was an honoured citizen of Šoštanj and a benefactor of the city: the school, the kindergarten, fire-fighters, the church, the choir, the poor, etc. He had large factories in Poland (spinning mills, glassworks). In 1921 he and his wife Maria Luisa Baroness Suttner sold the Šoštanj mansion and moved to Belgium.

*K. E. Baron de Haebler*

Personalities

## HANS WOSCHNAGG

K. K. PRIV. BLANK -  LEDERWERKE  
Geprüft 1788  
FRANZ WOSCHNAGG & SÖHNE  
SCHÖNSTEIN STEIERMARK

*The emblem of the tannery was a horse's head that was also used to mark the highest quality leather.*



*“Šoštanj dictator”  
The mayor  
A provincial deputy*

In the time of Hans Woschnagg (1862–1911), the tannery reached an industrial boom and became one of the largest factories in Austria-Hungary. Hans — a model of diligence and ability — decisively contributed to making Šoštanj a city. However, he became Germanized, and under his influence as many as two-thirds of the people of Šoštanj declared themselves Germans.

The Woschnaggs founded an alms-house in 1909 and donated it to the municipality of Šoštanj.

*Hans Woschnagg*

80

Personalities

## DR. FRAN MAYER



*He was one of the founders of the Šalek branch of the Slovenian Mountaineering Association, and the initiator of the establishment of a lower secondary school, open to sports and art.*



81 Dr. Fran Mayer (1866–1940) settled in Šoštanj in 1898 as an independent solicitor. The market town of Šoštanj was the economic and administrative centre of the Šalek Valley. Dr. Mayer built a prestigious villa opposite the courthouse. In 1928 he became the mayor of Šoštanj, and in 1931 he built a water supply system which was the greatest communal achievement in Šoštanj between the two wars.

Personalities

## FRANC HRIBERNIK

*"Šoštanj lies in the western part of the Šalek Valley ..."*



Franc Hribernik (1887–1965) was a devoted principal of the lower secondary school and one of the founders of secondary education in the Šalek Valley. He was a recorder of national treasures, a publicist, a historian, and a chronicler. He self-published a two-part book of the history of Šoštanj — the first attempt to write the overall history of the western part of the Šalek Valley.

82

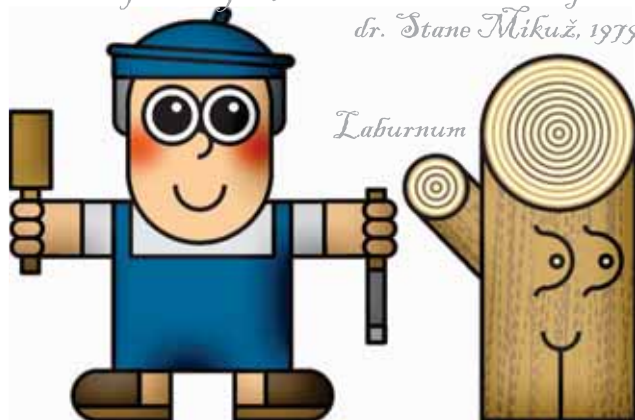


Personalities

## IVAN NAPOTNIK

*"Napotnik appropriated wood with such a degree of mastery like no other Slovenian sculptor."*

*dr. Stane Mikuš, 1979*



83

Ivan Napotnik (1888–1960) was one of the first academically educated Slovenian sculptors. He was a master of wooden sculpture. He was born in Zavodnje above Šoštanj, and after 1940 he created in Šoštanj. His work stemmed from the baroque tradition, to which he added elements of secession and expressionism. His permanent sculptural collection is on display in the Villa Mayer in Šoštanj.

Personalities

## ALOJZ KOJC

*"I would like to collect the most beautiful flowers of the whole world..."*



84

"Artistic and commercial gardener" Alojz Kojc (1898–1945) worked in Šoštanj before World War II. He cared for the natural surroundings of the Villa Široko and the manor in Ravne at Šoštanj. His fully preserved horticultural legacy is on display at the Villa Mayer: a stunning collection of literature, tools, implements for work and research, chemical preservatives, growth regulators, etc.



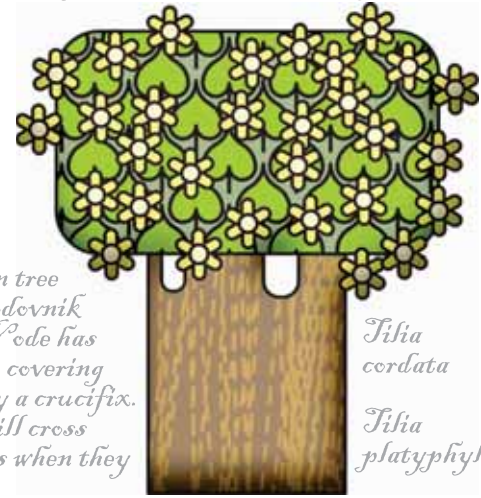


*A Tiny Poem*

*I am a tiny, tiny leaf,  
Given food by a mighty tree.  
That tree grows out from earth.  
And earth is the spring of life.  
And life the spring of humankind.  
And humankind is an oak tree,  
Giving growth to you and me.*

85 The lyrical and partisan poet Karel Destovnik-Kajuh (1922–1944) was born in Šoštanj in the former Austria Hotel (today Kajuh's Home). He joined the partisans, and was the leader of the cultural group of the XIV Division. He was killed in 1944 at Žlebnik Homestead in Šentvid near Zavodnje above Šoštanj. He is a national hero. The primary school in Šoštanj is named after him.

*Kajuh*



*The linden tree  
at Razpodevnik  
in Bele Vode has  
grown up, covering  
completely a crucifix.  
People still cross  
themselves when they  
pass by.*

*Tilia  
cordata  
  
Tilia  
platyphyllos*

86 There are some extraordinary old linden trees in the municipality of Šoštanj; at the homesteads Žlebnik, Gornji Brložnik, etc. A linden tree protects a homestead from lightning that hits the linden tree, protecting the house. The linden tree at St. Anton's Church in Skorno was something special. It is said that girls were banging their heads against the linden tree to get a husband. "It was necessary to bang so hard that the top of the tree hit the girl on her buttocks".

Natural Values

## BEECHES ON THE BORDER OF STYRIA

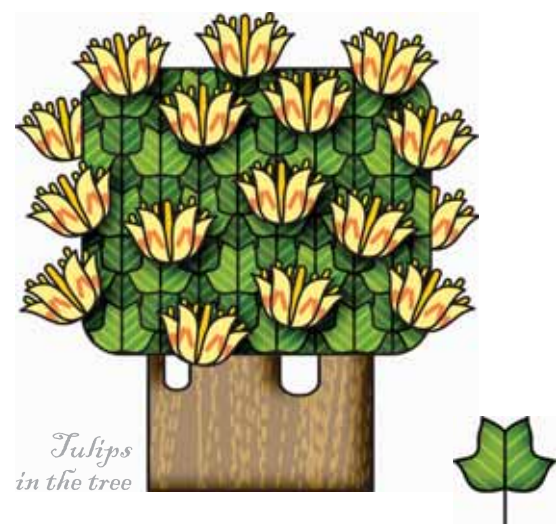


87 On Polovec, on the way from Sleme to Smrekovec, there is a walk of about 500 metres on the ridge along a row of mighty beeches through the middle of a spruce forest. Beeches were planted on the old border between the duchies of Styria and Carinthia. For centuries, goods were smuggled along lonely mountain paths, and men hid there from the military.

Carinthia  
Styria

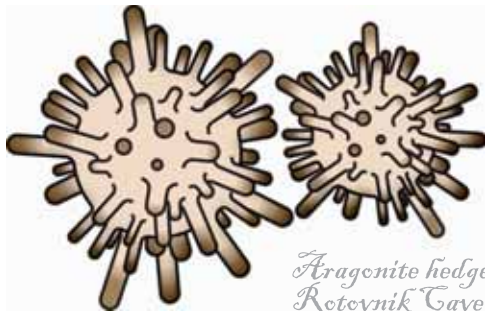
Natural Values

## TULIP TREE NEAR VILLA MAYER



88 Around 1900, a tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) was supposedly planted at the Villa Mayer while arranging the garden. The 22-metre-high tree is one of the oldest specimens of tulip trees in this part of Slovenia. This species is said to have been brought from North America in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and blooms in late May with a multitude of yellow-orange flowers resembling tulips.

## MORN AND ROTOVNIK CAVES



*Aragonite hedgehogs in Rotovnik Cave are very rare natural formations.*

*There are currently 87 registered karst caves in the municipality of Šoštanj, which puts the municipality of Šoštanj in second place in terms of the number of caves in Styria.*

89

Morn Cave is a cave with a large entrance, a 40-metre-long main tunnel, and a 15-metre-long side tunnel. Fairies are said to live here. From the basement of the Rotovnik's house in Penk Gorge, you come to a short underground cave. In addition to stalactites, there are also famous aragonite hedgehogs — crystals of this mineral grow into fragile needles in special conditions and give the impression of a hedgehog.

Rotovnik Cave is not accessible to the public.

## EGG COLLECTING CUSTOM

*"Dear Saint Florian, give us girls and eggs!"*



On the Eve of St. Florian's Day (the 4<sup>th</sup> of May), boys go from homestead to homestead and collect eggs. The tour lasts into the morning hours. At homesteads, they sing, make crosses out of blessed branches, and light a fire. If the prepared eggs are an even number, there will be a wedding at the house this year. In some homes, eggs are hidden and boys have to search all over the house. The collected eggs are used for a village celebration — an egg party.

92

Living Heritage  
INTERNATIONAL CARNIVAL



93 The first carnival procession in Šoštanj was organized in 1953 by the owner of the tavern 'Pri Janezu' (At John) in Lajše. To this day, it has grown into a rich carnival — named Šoštanj Carnival — with the international participation of groups of traditional and modern masks, masks on vehicles, and a group celebration in the hall. Šoštanj is a member of the Federation of European Carnival Cities.



Living Heritage  
CARNIVAL MASKS TRESIMIR AND  
ŠOŠTANJ BASKET



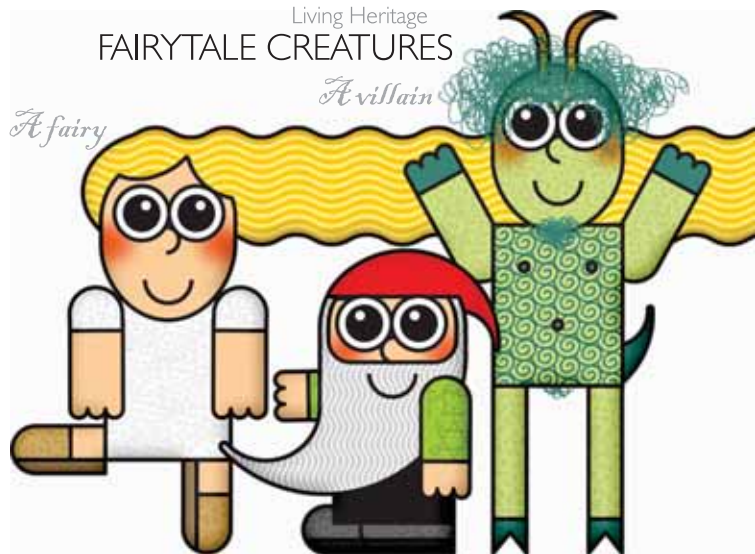
Clap! Clap!

Clapping imitates a nagging wife.

94 The group of both masks represents the carnival city of Šoštanj at carnivals in Europe and the Balkans. According to carnival legends: the Tresimir Mask represents the leader of the Slavic tribe, who founded a settlement in the Šalek Valley, named Tresimir (Družmirje) after him. And the Šoštanj Basket Mask represents a drunken tanner that his wife carries home from the tavern in a basket.

*Šoštanj is decorated with ribbons called 'panksci' during the Carnival.*

Living Heritage  
FAIRYTALE CREATURES



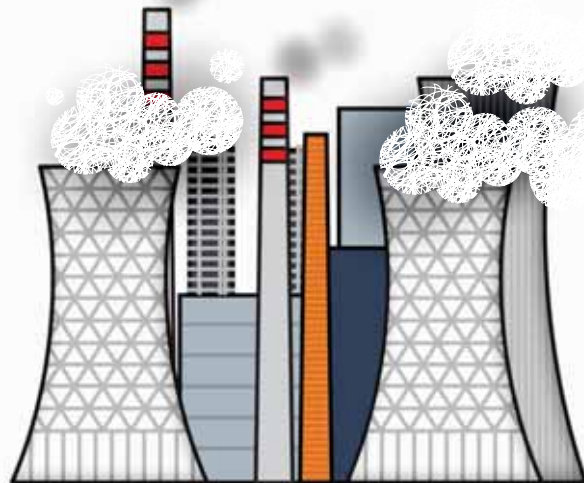
*A fairy*

*A villain*

*A dwarf*

95 On the high edge of the Šalek Valley, many mythical creatures still live according to folk tradition — people still know in which caves fairies live; to which farmers dwarfs made a fortune; where a wild man hunts people; where “a wild hunt” flies; where a villain dances; from which crack devils crawl; and that giants pin a tree to a buttonhole instead of a flower.

Modern Times  
THERMAL POWER PLANT ŠOŠTANJ



Šoštanj was one of the first cities in Slovenia to receive electricity. The Thermal Power Plant Šoštanj is today the largest in Slovenia and can provide a third of the electricity needed by the state. Columnar clouds of steam from the cooling towers of the power plant are visible miles away from the neighbouring valleys.

96

*The chimney of block 5 is 230 metres high and overlooks the nearby hills.*

Modern Times  
HOSPITAL TOPOŤICA

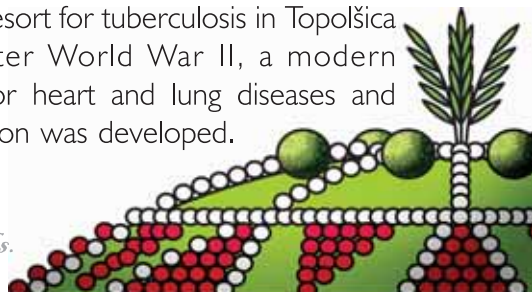
*Until 1945 Catholic  
nuns worked  
as nurses in the  
hospital.*



97

In 1891 people started planning a resort in Topolšica, and in 1899 a thermal bath for natural treatment with water and air baths. The fashionable sanatorium flourished until 1919 — at that time the state established a health resort for tuberculosis in Topolšica — and after World War II, a modern hospital for heart and lung diseases and rehabilitation was developed.

*The spa park was  
famous for its  
various flower beds.*



Modern Times  
THERMAL CENTRE TOPOŤICA



98

In 1983 the Vesna Hotel was built, and the spa and catering business were separated from the Hospital Topolšica as the Topolšica Natural Health Resort. This is a modern spa centre today with a hotel, an apartment complex, an attractive water park, and a wellness area. It delights recreational visitors, vacationers, and those convalescing.



*Come and pamper yourself!*

*Friendly* *Modern* *Safe*  
 Modern Times  
 ŠOŠTANJ KINDERGARTEN



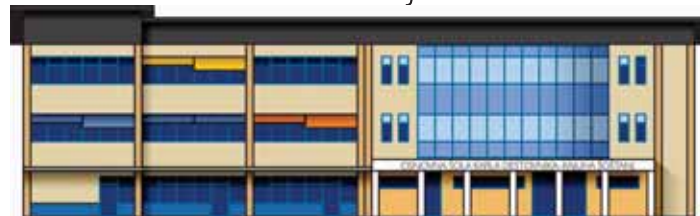
*Happy and healthy children* *Positive self-esteem* *Wealth of experience*



99 Šoštanj Kindergarten has its units in Šoštanj, Topolšica, and Gaberke. In 2014 a modern, low-energy building with an area of more than 3,600 m<sup>2</sup> was built on the site of the old primary school Biba Röck. All former kindergarten units from Šoštanj moved into the Šoštanj Kindergarten, which is presently attended by more than 400 children.

Modern Times

PRIMARY SCHOOL  
 KAREL DEŠTOVNIK-KAJUH  
 ŠOŠTANJ



The first school was founded in Šoštanj in 1777, and in 1822 it was attended by 54 children. By 2005 a new school with a sports hall was built and is attended by more than 700 pupils. Since 1969 the annual exhibition, Children's Art World — a presentation of the artistic creativity of school and preschool children in Slovenia — has been held here. 100

*Busts of important personalities for Šoštanj are in the memorial park in front of the school.*

Modern Times  
MUSIC SCHOOL



101 In 2019 a modern music school was built which was the largest municipal project at the time. The new building has a hall for internal performances, one group classroom and sixteen individual ones. More than 150 children attend the Šoštanj Music School. Also sharing these premises are the 'Zarja' (Dawn) Wind Orchestra, the 'Svoboda' (Freedom) Mixed Choir, and the 'TEŠ' (Thermal Power Plant Šoštanj) Octet.

Modern Times  
ACTIVITIES OF ASSOCIATIONS  
AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

*Villa Lučka*



The Villa of Dr. Wolfgang Kliment — who was a procurator in Woschnagg's tannery before World War II — was later converted into apartments and a kindergarten. Today there is a hostel, and spaces for both performances and various associations (scouts, mountaineers, climbers, a youth centre, an art studio). Locals, on the other hand, socialize in eight local community centres and on many local sports fields.

102



Modern Times  
ELDERLY CENTER  
'ZIMZELEN'  
(EVERGREEN)



103 In 2009 a centre for the elderly was opened in the middle of nature, in the Valley of the Moon in Topolšica. It can accommodate 157 residents. The centre provides social and medical support, has an intergenerational centre, publishes its own newspaper, and connects with locals, schools and volunteers. Many social and cultural events take place here that enrich and give meaning to life.



Modern Times  
TRESIMIR PARK AND  
SPORTS PLAYGROUND



104 The modern children's and sports playgrounds are called after Tresimir. Various playground equipment and climbers are placed among trees; different trees are marked with botanical names, and benches invite you to sit and lie down. Tresimir Park is a popular starting point for walks, roller-skating, inline-skating or cycling along the Šalek lakes.



Modern Times  
WIND ORCHESTRA  
AND CHOIR

105 The 'Zarja' (Dawn) Wind Orchestra has its roots in the Šoštanj tannery, where a brass band was founded in 1925. Already at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was also a choir society in Šoštanj. The 'Svoboda' (Freedom) Mixed Choir was formed from the church youth choir in 1969. The choir and the orchestra are an indispensable part of cultural events in Šoštanj and win the highest awards.

Modern Times  
CULTURAL CENTRE ŠOŠTANJ,  
MAGAZINE 'LIST' (PAPER),  
ŠOŠTANJ GALLERY, ŠOŠTANJ LIBRARY ...



106 In the town of Šoštanj, a quality infrastructure has been established for various cultural events that take place both indoors and outdoors in the town and its surrounding area. In 1974 the first Little Napotnik Sculpture Colony was organized in Zavodnje, which is still the only children's sculpture colony in Slovenia.



*The centre of cultural activity  
in the municipality is  
the Šoštanj Institute of Culture.*

Modern Times  
FIRE-FIGHTERS



107 Fire-fighters have had a long and rich tradition in the municipality — in Šoštanj since 1879, in Lokovica and Družmirje since 1908, in Gaberke since 1930, and in Topolšica since 1931. Each of the four voluntary associations has its own fire station and modern equipment.

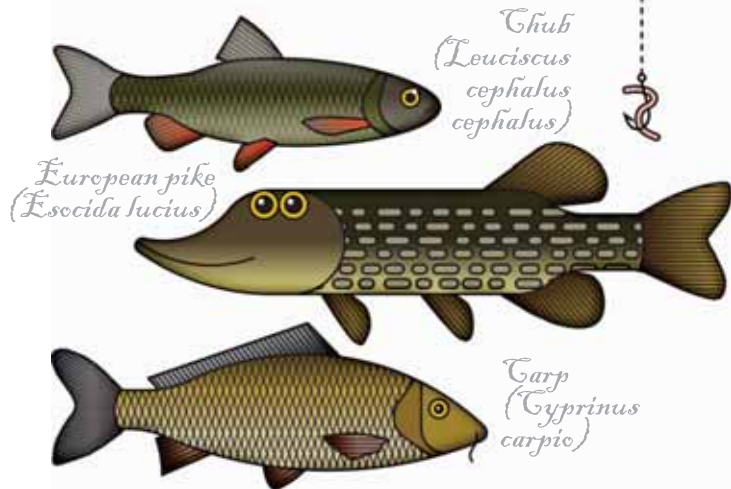


Modern Times  
MOUNTAINEERS,  
SPORTSMEN,  
SCOUTS ...



108 The Šalek branch of the Slovenian Mountaineering Association was founded in Šoštanj in 1904 and still operates today. Other associations have a long tradition as well. Šoštanj is well known for a scouting programme and players participating in handball, volleyball, basketball, football, etc.

Modern Times  
FISHING ASSOCIATION PAKA



109 The Fishing Association Paka Šoštanj was founded in the spring of 1953. It manages the fishing district of the lower part of the Paka, consisting of Lake Šoštanj or Družmirje, the River Paka, and the brooks Velunja, Bečovnica, Toplica, Florjanščica; the Paka was once dead due to sewage and industrial waste. However, it has been revived after the construction of cleaning units.

Modern Times  
ŠOŠTANJ AIRPORT

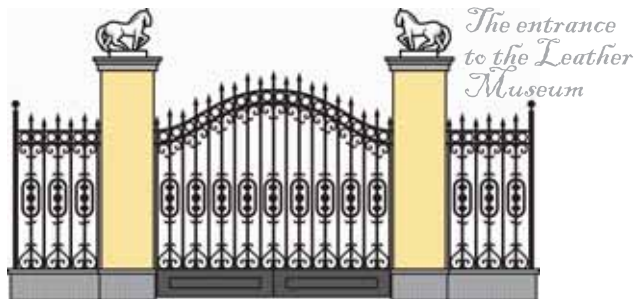


110 The airport in Lajše is located two kilometres north of Šoštanj. The asphalt track is 700 x 18 metres long and can be used by ultra-light, light or small business planes and helicopters. The first plane landed in Šoštanj in 1927, and in 1930 the Czech industrialist Bat'a flew over to the Woschnaggs for talks. The people of Šoštanj also made some planes themselves.

*The operating and calling frequency of the airport is 128.30 MHz.*

Appendix

## AND SOMETHING ELSE FOR THE PURPOSE ...



The Leather Museum in Slovenia has been located in Šoštanj since 2009. Two restored horses from the side entrance to the tannery stand atop the fence.



The Villa 'Mladika' (Sapling) of the Topolšica State Health Resort from 1930. A typical example of modernism — flat roofs, lots of glass surfaces, no added decoration, simple design with repeating elements.

*Jugoslavina*

Architect: Herman Hus, the author of the "Small Skyscraper" in Ljubljana  
The depiction of the Villa Mladika is based on old photographs before the roof was changed.

*Villa Woschnagg  
= Old Medical  
Centre*



A medical centre was in the former Woschnagg Villa above the tannery, and today there are apartments. There was a luxurious fenced garden around the residential villa with clipped trees and a fountain.

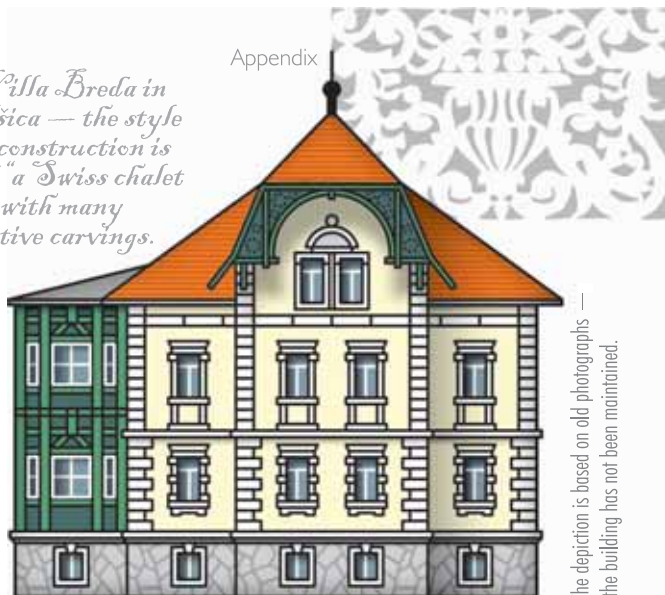


In the palace of the former district court in Šoštanj are presently apartments.

The depiction of the Villa Woschnagg is based on old photographs.  
The façade decoration was removed.

*The Villa Breda in Topolšica — the style of the construction is called, "a Swiss chalet style" with many decorative carvings.*

Appendix

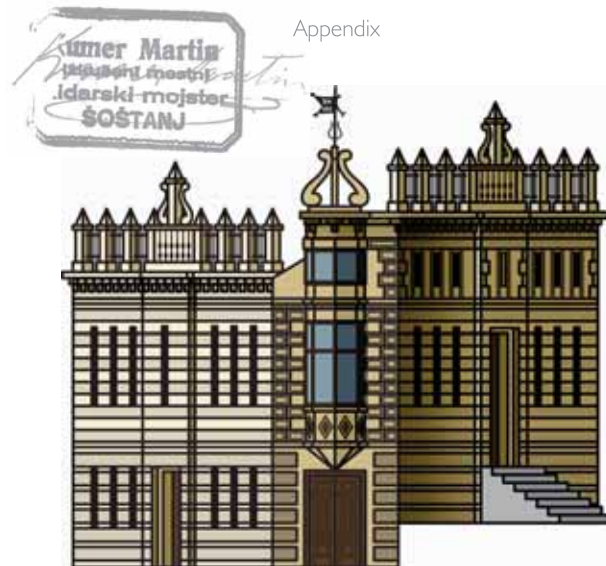


The depiction is based on old photographs — the building has not been maintained.

Until World War I, Topolšica was a fashionable health resort — a resort with many luxurious buildings in the historicist style: hotels, villas, pavilions, sunshades, air huts for sunbathing, the management building, etc. They offered sun, air, and water baths, electric light baths, electrical stimulation, steam baths, massages, gymnastic exercises, trips, etc.

*In 1918 the pioneer of modern architecture, Adolf Loos, jumped somersaults into the pool in Topolšica.*

Appendix



The corner house of the Šoštanj master mason, Martin Kumer, was skilfully adapted to the triangular plot between the two roads. The roadside façades were symmetrical, richly rusticated, and crowned with the decoration above the shallow roof. Each façade had its own entrance. The chapel with a statue of the Mother of God was on the narrow corner façade in the oriel window.

The depiction is based on old photographs — the original object is not preserved in its original form.

Appendix



The greenhouse of the Marof Manor was made in 1899 by the Imperial and Royal Court Workshops for Iron Structures of Ignaz Gridl in Vienna. It is a rare example of this kind of technical heritage in Slovenia.



In 2017 the Kajuh Memorial Building was built at Žlebni Homestead in Šentvid above Zavodnje, where the poet lost his life.



At the Munti Ski Jump under Gorice Hill in Šoštanj, many competitions in ski jumping have been held since the 1950's.

*The record is 22 m  
(Primož Peterka).*

*Marija Karolina  
Countess Thurn-  
Valsassina*



Appendix *Franz Michael  
von Valenzi*



Marija Karolina Countess Thurn–Valsassina (1715–1774), the owner of the dominion of Šoštanj, confirmed in 1754 that her subordinate, Urban Pižorn, could relinquish the land for the construction of a church on 'Gora Oljka' (Olive Mountain).

Franz Michael von Valenzi (1728–1813), born in Šoštanj, studied medicine in Vienna. He was a physician and adviser to Empress Maria Theresa, the first physician of the Moravian-Silesian province, and the oldest physician of Moravia. He was ennobled.

A fire broke out in the Valenci's house in Šoštanj in 1734, after which the square and the market town castle caught on fire.

*Parents of the  
Blessed Anton  
Martin Slomšek*



The father of the Blessed Anton Martin Slomšek, Marko, lived in Družmirje. He worked at the Vošnjak's tannery. There he met his wife Maria, who lived with her relatives, the Zorks in Penk. With his last efforts, Bishop Slomšek consecrated the St. Cross Church above Bele Vode.

Ivan Baron Samonigg (1839–1915), a son of the famous merchant Samonik from Šoštanj, was a reorganizer of the Austrian military education and an army general.

*"The skilful merchant Samonik did not let a buyer go until the merchant had loaded him with as many goods as possible." Dr. Josip Vošnjak, Upwards–Downwards*

*Gutenbüchel*



Lavrencij Vošnjak, a chaplain in Šoštanj (1868–1872). He began to write a parish chronicle in which his drawings of churches as well as castles and records of folk tradition display a special documentary value.

An ardent patriot and entrepreneur Franc Rajšter (1852–1922) was the mayor of Šoštanj for many years. He built the Austria Hotel and is credited with electrification, landscaping, and beautification of the city; an honoured citizen.

Franc Rajšter had a personified Austria with a mural crown depicted on the Austria Hotel.

*Franc Rajšter*





*Davorin  
Ravljen*

Appendix

*Antonija  
Sternad*

*A castle  
sparrow*



Davorin Ravljen (1898–1965), born in Šoštanj. In the story *Dead Volcano* (1944), he describes a sculptor stretched between the mountainous landscape of Smrekovec and Bele Vode and the spoiled city life on the threshold of World War II.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Davorin Ravljen'.

Antonija Sternad (1873–1950) was a famous midwife, the first in Šoštanj, who completed a midwifery school. She helped about 4,000 babies to be born in homes in and around Šoštanj.

Appendix

*Josefine Sirsch*

*Ivan Pirečnik  
Dieter Sirsch*

*Pavla Pirečnik*



Ivan Pirečnik from Šoštanj was the most famous child stolen during World War II. His father, a partisan collaborator, was killed by the Germans. A year and a half old, Ivan was separated from his mother in 1942, and then his identity was changed to Dieter Sirsch. He was adopted by a German family. His mother survived the war camp, and found her son, achieving his return after several internationally acclaimed lawsuits.

*Following Ivan's story, the British feature film *The Divided Heart* was made in 1954.*

Appendix

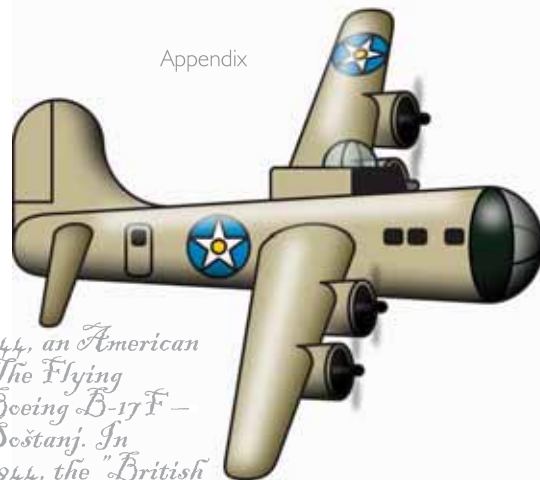


*A zinc griffin from the Marof Manor's staircase – probably a motive from the coat of arms of the then owner Gustav von Eder*



*Stone statues of Agriculture and Viticulture (1927), from the portal of the Marof Manor, made by Ivan Napotnik*

Appendix



*In May 1944, an American bomber – "The Flying Fortress" Boeing B-17F – crashed in Šoštanj. In November 1944, the "British Liberator" crashed in Lokovica.*

Under Gorice Hill there is a memorial in honour of the crew of two Allied planes that crashed in the area of the municipality of Šoštanj during World War II.

*A natural value: Očepek's cornel in Topolšica*



SOURCES AND LITERATURE are listed in the Slovenian edition

Thanks

## THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED MAKE THIS BOOKLET AND TO EVERYONE WHO READ IT



The booklet is a reminder and proof of how rich and diverse Slovenia is for the people of Šoštanj. It briefly presents the findings of many researchers, the stories of the locals, and new observations. The choice of topics is subjective; e.g. natural values, important buildings, ethnological heritage and landmarks are only a few representatives. There is much more of this heritage. **You should explore the municipality of Šoštanj enthusiastically with great pleasure.**

Contacts

### INFORMATION CENTRE



Villa Mayer, Šoštanj  
Topolšica Tourist Office

A door decoration  
in Bele Vode



Colophon

## ONE HUNDRED AND TEN TIMES ABOUT ŠOŠTANJ IN ONE PARAGRAPH

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A rosette engraved  
on the beam at  
Završnik, 18<sup>th</sup> century



A flower  
from the portal  
to the courtyard  
of the manor  
in Šoštanj

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A rosette  
from the  
Villa  
Mayer's  
altan





Volute cartridge

Mascaron

Flower garland

Egg-and-dart  
ornament

Ribbon, bow

Laurel branch

Angel head  
in the medallion

Floral fruit pendant

A neo-renaissance  
decoration from  
the Kajuh's Home Palace

