

BULLETIN

of the Czech–Liechtenstein
Society

autumn | winter 2025



Member Europa Nostra

1. A NOTE ON THE ENCOUNTER

2. LIFE IN THE SOCIETY

3. DO YOU KNOW THIS MEMBER?



1. A NOTE ON THE ENCOUNTER

Dear friends,

In the previous issue of our magazine, I shared with you my growing sense that the Czech-Liechtenstein Society needs a new impulse and a breath of fresh air. As the first sign of this, you can see the new magazine you are now browsing, whose design has been evolving over the past six months. It is characterized by simplicity, clarity, and at the same time a certain lightness.

I believe that you will enjoy the Bulletin of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society as much as I did, and that you will find in it exactly what you think a society magazine should contain.

I will be grateful for your feedback. Please do not hesitate to contact me with your ideas, topics, and unanswered questions.

With wishes for a blessed Christmas and only the best in 2026,

Petr Svoboda, Chairman



The Setting for this year's pre-Christmas gathering? The magical atmosphere of Brno's illuminated Špilberk Castle

A touch of mystery, snowflakes drifting through the air as if on cue, and above all a contagious festive Christmas spirit. It was in precisely this mood that the traditional pre-Christmas gathering of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society took place on Wednesday, November 26, hosted by Brno's jewel – Špilberk Castle.

The landmark of the South Moravian capital, brought to life during Advent by thousands of lights recalling not only its seven-hundred-year history, welcomed guests and their partners together with committee member Zbyněk Šolc, who is also the director of the Brno City Museum, headquartered at Špilberk itself.

The event, carried in a calm and rather contemplative atmosphere, was held in the newly renovated premises of the administrative building. In addition to excellent wine and superb culinary delights, the proverbial cherry on top was the breathtaking view from the terrace over the radiant city of Brno.



2. LIFE IN THE SOCIETY

Colorful Autumn in Styria.

Twenty-five members of the Society visited three Liechtenstein princes

Warm rays of sunshine and nature gradually turning into earthy shades of gold, brown, yellow, and rust welcomed more than twenty members and friends of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society in Austria's Styria. From October 3 to 5, the group set out on a discovery tour of castles and palaces belonging to three Liechtenstein princes: HSH Emanuel, Lucas, and Alfred.

The program, led by the Society's chairman Petr Svoboda, was truly packed. "On the first day we began with a shared lunch at Riegersburg Castle, to which we were invited by HSH Prince Emanuel. We greatly enjoyed the castle tour as well, which was personally guided by the lord of the castle himself," revealed the chairman of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society. The successful afternoon was concluded with an evening social gathering at the restaurant of the Genusshotel Riegersburg.

The following day, the group was welcomed at Frauenthal Castle by HSH Prince Lucas. In addition to the traditional tour, he prepared an unexpected and unusual highlight for his guests: a visit to the historic castle tunnels, where a local entrepreneur cultivates and sells mushrooms.

"Visiting the tunnels was truly a great experience for me. It may sound strange, but the underground tunnels of the castle have a unique microclimate which, as we learned, is perfect for growing first-class mushrooms," Petr Svoboda recounted enthusiastically.

The Schilcherland Pilze farm specializes in cultivating king and oyster mushrooms, as well as shiitake and rare bearded tooth fungi. For those who would like to try this unique process at home, the farmers even offer prepared bags with inoculated mycelium blocks.

Under optimal conditions, future growers can expect up to four harvests.

The final joint stop for the members of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society in Styria was Hollenegg Castle. There, the group was welcomed by HSH Prince Alfred and his wife HSH Princess Sonja with an excellent lunch, followed by a captivating commentary and tour of their estate. The day ended, as is customary in Styria, with dinner at a traditional buschenschank wine tavern.



2. LIFE IN THE SOCIETY

Gifts for the princes?

Hidden photographs from previously unexplored albums

The princes visited by members of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society in October in Styria are descendants of the Liechtenstein branch that owned the castle in Zahrádky near Česká Lípa until its expropriation after World War II. The family lost its property in northern Bohemia. All of their legal, economic, and personal belongings, including photographs, were transferred to the archives.

The office of the Special Envoy of the Prince of Liechtenstein Foundation, represented by Michal Růžička, a member of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society's committee, managed to examine a large part of previously unexplored archival materials currently held in the State Regional Archive in Děčín.

When members of the Society considered a suitable gift for the princes, they chose these photographs. The selection included captivating amateur snapshots of Prince Alfred Géza, the grandfather of all three current Styrian princes, as well as beautiful portraits of the married couple Marizza and Johannes (their great-grandparents). Each prince received different photographs.



Prince Lucas was presented with four framed photographs of little Prince Alfred from 1907, the year of his birth. The pictures, in which father Johannes is smiling tenderly, were taken at Frauenthal, where Prince Lucas now lives with his family.



Prince Alfred received four framed photographs capturing the first steps of his grandfather Alfred Géza in 1908. These images were taken at Hollenegg Castle.



For Prince Emanuel, the choice fell on romantic portraits of his beautiful great-grandmother Marizza and her husband Johannes, taken in Baden near Vienna in 1906.

Copies of these pages are part of one of six cartons containing fourteen albums from the years 1903–1911. The cartons arrived at the State Regional Archive in Děčín in 2014 from the State Regional Archive in Prague.

3. DO YOU KNOW THIS MEMBER?

Dagmar Vránová

Do you remember how and when you first heard about the Czech-Liechtenstein Society?

About five years ago, I found the Czech-Liechtenstein Society online while looking into whether ties between Czechs, Moravians and Silesians and the Liechtensteins still existed beyond official channels. I was surprised to see they do—kept alive by people who value that continuity, sometimes through their own family roots.

What led you to decide to join?

I was intrigued by the width and depth of the Society's activities, including its contact with the princely family. The opportunity to take part in various discovery trips and thus piece together a mosaic of history and the present.

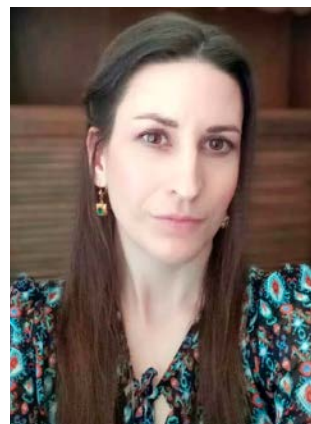
Where are you from? From Moravia, from Brno.

What do you do in your professional life?

For several years I worked at the Moravian Gallery in Brno, which includes the building of the Museum of Decorative Arts, whose patron and donor was Prince Jan II Liechtenstein. At present I work as a teacher at a secondary school.

What interests you most, what do you enjoy?

I try to show younger people the "courage to discover", in fact, we encourage each other (smiles). I enjoy the Enlightenment period. I feel best in gardens at old estates and in the forest.



Zbyněk Šolc

Do you remember how and when you first heard about the Czech-Liechtenstein Society?

I came into contact with the Society's activities when I was managing the newly restored Baroque theatre at Valtice Castle. I was helping to develop cultural programs, which occasionally overlapped with the Society.

What led you to decide to join?

It was precisely the effort to revive interrupted cultural relations and historical ties between regions once administered by the princely family. Today, as a member of the committee, I have the opportunity to devise and carry out joint activities, which I believe will lead to mutual understanding and appreciation of our shared history.

Where are you from?

Two typical Moravian currents mix in me. One is historically Brno-based, the other from the Haná region, which was once administered by the family. Unfortunately, due to the ill will of the communist regime, I was born in what was then Gottwaldov, but today I am back in the Moravian capital, which I love.

What do you do in your professional life?

At present I have the honor of directing the Brno City Museum, which cares not only for the city's most important landmarks, such as Špilberk Castle and Villa Tugendhat, but also for the broken cultural ties between the German and Jewish communities that shaped and formed the city.

What interests you most, what do you enjoy?

Although it goes against all management rules, I enjoy tackling small operational tasks that lead to immediate results. For example, making sure that in the sites we manage the toilets are always clean and fragrant (smiles).

