



Frankfurt Impressions

Newsletter 3 – October 2013

A visit to the Gothic House at Bad Homburg (a city about 20 km from Frankfurt)

On the last day of their stay I invited our two guests Bashia and Bogumila to my birthday party. We made an excursion to the Gothic House at Bad Homburg.

The Gothic House was built in the Gothic Revival style as a hunting lodge between 1823 and 1828 during the reign of Landgrave Friedrich VI Joseph and his wife, Elizabeth, a member of the English Royal Family. Its unusual architecture combines Tudor Gothic and neo-Classical styles. It was never actually used as such, however, since the Landgraves lost interest in the building following a serious accident during construction. The hunting lodge is located at the end of Tannenwaldallee, which establishes a direct connection between the Bad Homburg Castle and the Gothic House and was part of the Landgrave's garden.



Now the building is home to a museum, the town archives of Bad Homburg, and a café. It is a wonderful symbiosis of history and modern cultural life.

The museum offers an interesting look at the history of the town and Landgraviate. A further section is devoted to the medals and coins that were used on Homburg territory.

The hat museum is the only one of its kind in Germany and traces the cultural history of headwear - with, of course, the legendary Homburg hat as its focal point. It's possible to put on hats and, as you can see at the foto, we had much fun, doing it.

Afterwards, we enjoyed the café and then went along the Tannenwaldallee, to visit two restored gardens, the one of the countess and the one of her brother in law.

I hope, that Bashia and Bogumila liked this excursion und took home wonderful memories of their stay in Frankfurt.

Wera Rohowski



The Skyline of Frankfurt

Frankfurt is one of the few European cities with a large cluster of high-rise building in its downtown area. For this reason, Frankfurt is sometimes referred to as "Mainhattan", a portmanteau of the local Main river and Manhattan. Most of Frankfurt's downtown area was destroyed by air bombardment during World War II and only a small number of the city's landmarks were rebuilt. This left ample room for the construction of modern high-rises in the city. The city has now 16 buildings, which rise at least 150 meters in height, more than any other city in Germany. The high-rise setting is seen throughout Europe as a hallmark of the financial city of Frankfurt.

Commerzbank tower →

The tallest habitable building in Frankfurt is the Commerzbank Tower, which rises 259 metres and has 56 floors. At present, it is the 8th tallest building in Europe, completed in 1997. Until 2003, it was even the tallest building in Europe, then it was surpassed by the Triumph-Palace in Moscow by



five meters, others in London etc. followed. The Commerzbank Tower houses nine gardens. Depending on the direction, different flora is planted in each garden. On the west side, there are maple and redwood trees from North America, on the east side Asian bamboo and on the south side Mediterranean olive trees, lemon and rosemary.



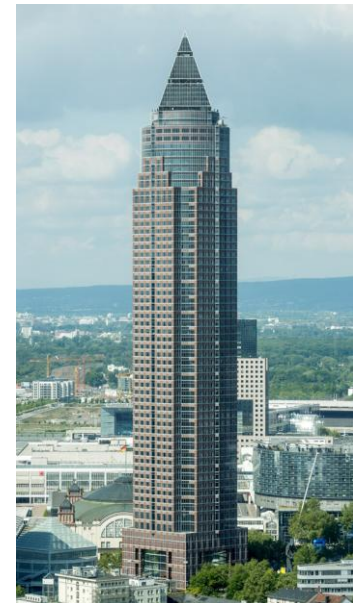
Messturm →

The second tallest building in Frankfurt is the "Messturm" which rises 257 meters tall, has 55 floors and is the 10th tallest building in Europe. It is the workplace for 4,000 people and the only building in Germany with its own zip code. Once a year, there is a so-called "sky run" in the "Messturm". It is the highest staircase running in Europe - 61 floors, 1,202 steps and 222 meters. The winner will qualify for the European Championship. The winner in 2012, made it in 6:30 minutes!



← Main tower observation deck

The "Main Tower" has the only skyscraper observation deck open for everyone, at the top of 200 m, admission is € 5.00.



In contrast to Asia, North America and Australia, the construction of skyscrapers in major European cities is relatively uncommon. Only some major financial centers, such as Moscow, London, Istanbul, Madrid, Warsaw and Paris contain high-rises and can be regarded as the leading cities. Because of the history of European architecture (especially in the Gothic and Baroque), skyscraper construction was not well received in the past due to the value of their historic skylines of spires, steeples and domes, not to forget the great historical value of existing buildings. In cities such as Vienna, Prague, St. Petersburg, Dresden and Cologne, the construction of high-rise buildings in the city center is politically not capable of securing a majority and for urban planning reasons not very desirable.

At irregular intervals, we even have a so-called "Skyscraper Festival" in Frankfurt. The normally inaccessible tower blocks are then accessible to all citizens for a weekend. In May this year 80 000 tickets were issued free of charge. There were myriad activities like bungee jumping from high-rises, façade climbers, parachutists, tightrope slackline performers, motorbike acrobats etc.



Edeltraud Thobe

Historisches Museum Frankfurt

If you want to see how the beautiful city of Frankfurt looked like before the destruction of Second World War you can go to the historical museum of Frankfurt on the Römerberg. There is a room with four models of the city showing different periods of history.

The well-known model of the Old Town before the destruction was built for the *historisches museum frankfurt* by the brothers Hermann and Robert Treuner between 1925 and 1961. Maybe you will find some similarities between Krakau and the old Frankfurt.



◀ Treuner Model of the Old Town , Eva.K.

Another model shows the inner city after the destruction. For me it is a memorial against war. In two more models modern development can be studied. Frankfurt changes all the time.

Also the main building of the museum itself has been torn down two years ago. On the Römerberg side there is presently nothing but a large construction site. In place of the old exposed concrete building of the early 1970s, a modern new exhibition is presently under construction, to be completed in 2017. It is one of the most interesting construction site. During the excavation they found a harbour dating back to the Staufer period. Evidently this is where the king landed when he visited his palace. And in the remaining part of this palace you can visit the **historisches museum Frankfurt** at the moment. The restoration of the historical buildings on the bank of the River Main has been finished. A whole series of newly conceived exhibitions on Frankfurt's history will await you.

Melanie Hartlaub

Paulskirche

On our little tour through the middle of Frankfurt in the afternoon of 26th June with our Polish guests Basia and Bogusia , we passed an important building: the Paulskirche. This church is not only important for Frankfurt but also for the democratic development of Germany.

In my childhood days (born 1946 in Frankfurt am Main) the Paulskirche was next to the building where my father worked! To me, the Paulskirche has always been there. I do not remember it as a ruin, I was probably too small. About the history of the building I knew little. As it happened, I found a book about the Paulskirche at a flea market and used lots of the data as the base for this article: *Die Paulskirche Streiten für Einigkeit und Recht und Freiheit* by Günther Mick.

My son will always remember the Paulskirche as a "landmark" on his way to the fan shop of his favorite football club Eintracht Frankfurt. Now to the history of the Paulskirche:

The first building was erected by the Franziskans as a barefooted church (monastery) by the end of the 13th century. But time took its toll and a new church was built 1476 by the same order in the same place and 1510 a spired chancel was built on to it.

After the reformation to the Lutheran beliefs in the year 1529 the monastery building was only used for worldly events (as a grammar school, monetary press, a place to collect alms as well as a big picture gallery during the art exhibition in the Römer. 1760 Johann Wolfgang Goethe went to school there.



Until 1782 the church was a main church for the protestants. The plan to change the dilapidating barefooted church into an elaborate baroque building was rejected. In the year 1787 the building of a new church began and it took until 1833 until the Paulskirche was inaugurated. It seated almost 2.000 people and 1848 was the meeting place of the first German National Assembly. This was a very important attempt to unite the different German provinces, kingdoms, earldoms etc. and establish a democracy. Renowned German poets like Ernst Moritz Arndt, Ludwig Uhland or people like Heinrich von Gagern, Otto von Bismarck and many more personalities of rank were in the assembly.

From 1852 until 1944 the Paulskirche was used as a church. 1944 the building was hit by bombs and burned down completely. Since the re-erection of the Paulskirche it is mainly used for worldly events. Since 1951 the peace award of the German book trade is bestowed upon special people (1951 it was Albert Schweitzer). The first people to receive the Goethe-award in the Paulskirche were 1948 Fritz von Unruh and a year later Thomas Mann.

On June 25th, 1963 the president of the United States of America, John F. Kennedy, spoke to the German nation here. On October 27th, 1986 the French president, Françoise Mitterrand, was awarded the honorary citizenship in the house of the first German parliament: *The Paulskirche*.

Ursula Marklove

About the Kleinmarkthalle

In 1871 the construction of a municipal market hall by the City Council and it was decided in the period 1877 to 1879 the market hall on a site between Fahrgasse and Hasengasse in a length of 117 and a width of 34 meters was built.

In approximately 4000 square meters of ground floor retail space with 354 booths were available and on a 6 meter wide circumferential gallery were another 114 items to find. For the citizens of the city, the market hall soon enjoyed a great popularity.

In March 1944 the market hall was destroyed by heavy bombing of Frankfurt and the remains were demolished after the Second World War. In 1954, was rebuilt, not in the same place , but about 200 meters to the southwest of the old location , between Hasengasse and Liebfrauenberg, near the Zeil and the Hauptwache.

From the outside the small market hall is still a nondescript building (now a listed building), but you go into it, it's colorful and breathtaking.

On my first visit to the Kleinmarkthalle I can still remember very well. I was then 16 years old, was in my apprenticeship and a colleague took me to lunch on a Gref Völsing (a beef sausage with a long tradition). Out of curiosity and hunger I went because I did not know both. Today it is a dining experience every time for me when I go to the Kleinmarkthalle for shopping and for about 30 years always at the same booth and the same butcher, I already know therefore even 30 years.

Gref-Völsings
Rindsnurst



One can find the freshest delicacies, regional specialties, international and also organic foods of all kinds in some stands and the tasting is announced and also a must, because how else can you get to know delicacies from exotic countries. If one looks for something specific, you can surely find it here.

Meanwhile, the number of booths has decreased, the sales area is only about 1500 square meters, the number of dealers are reduced, but specializes in itself. It will incorporate numerous Imbistände, where you can take a quick something to eat, and



which enjoy great popularity. Very well known among tourists is the status of Frau Schreiber, as they have are excellent sausages, people lined up patiently in the never-ending queue and wait at the bar until they finally can get rid of their order.

And in the queue of waiting you can train your own excellent smalltalk skills.

When Bogusia and Basia visiting us Frankfurt in July, we walked thru the Kleinmarkthalle and enjoyed all the different things you can see and try.

Monika Picka