

The Fullness-of-Life Academy Association Kraków, Poland



Newsletter II/2013

June 2013

Introduction

In this issue of the APŻ newsletter we are summarizing Monika and Ursula's visit to Kraków. In five short articles we are presenting the places they saw and the stories they heard.

Kraków is full of legends. There is a story connected to practically every place in the city centre. This is why, in this issue, we present three legends: the legend of Lajkonik, the legend of the dragon and the legend of the two towers of St. Mary's Church. You will find out what Lajkonik is, who killed the dragon and why one of the towers of St. Mary's Church is lower than the other.

We would also like to take you for a walk along the Royal Route, the most important tourist route in Kraków. We will look for some links between Kraków and Germany and finally, when you are tired, we will leave Kraków and go to Ojców and Pieskowa Skała to admire some beautiful views and walk among rocks and trees and listen to the soothing sound of the river. Enjoy!

The legend of Lajkonik



In the 13th century, the southern Poland was permanently invaded by Tatar hordes which harried its terrains. At that time there were many raftsmen settlements close to the Vistula river. One of them, situated on the left side of the river, was called Zwierzyniec. Raftsmen's work was not easy, they floated heavy wooden trunks down the river. It required not only a strong body but also a strong character.





One day a troop of Tatar invaders wanted to conquer the walls of Kraków by the Vistula gate which was open at that time. The trail which they chose ran through the raftsmen settlement. The brave villagers not only defeated the Tartar troop in a strong battle but they also killed their khan. After the battle, one of the raftsmen put on the clothes of the killed khan, mounted his horse and went to Kraków to celebrate the victory. He was followed by other villagers.



The procession walked all the way from Zwierzyniec along the streets of Kraków down to the Main Market Square. From that time every year in the week following Corpus Christi a similar procession takes place. It starts in Zwierzyniec, now a part of Kraków, and ends at the Main Market Square. With time, the tradition came to be known as Lajkonik Pageant. Lajkonik is the raftsman character who "is mounted" on a wooden hobbyhorse and is dressed in richly ornamented clothes resembling those of a Tatar khan. It is believed that if Lajkonik touches you with his wooden mace, you will be lucky all year through.



This tradition is now a major tourist attraction and it is always a lot of fun especially for children.





The legend of the dragon



Long time ago in Kraków reigned the king named Krak. He lived in a defensive castle named Wawel on Wawel Hill. In the hill there were many caves. One of these caves was the lair of an enormous dragon. It appeared by the Vistula River, at the time of dawn and it devoured some cattle and sheep on a daily basis. According to rumour, it was keen on young women, and was particularly fond of virgins. The townspeople became afraid to leave their houses. Soon the whole town was in a permanent state of terror, and some of the settlers started preparing to leave the place.

People were very frightened. King Krak summoned all the mighty knights of the kingdom to defeat the dragon and promised whoever could kill the beast the hand of the princess and the kingdom.

Many knights attempted to defeat the dragon. But no one could do it. People in Kraków were more and more scared.

One day a young shoemaker, Skuba, reported to the king. He said "I really want to marry the princess and I will try to defeat the dragon."

Skuba bought a lot of sulphur and sheep's skins. He sewed the skins all night and then stuffed them with sulphur.



Next day in the morning he carried a giant ram to the dragon caves. The dragon ate the lamb, which he liked.





Sulphur soon began to burn his insides. The dragon ran to the river to drink. But he could not quench his thirst. The dragon drank and drank until it burst and died. The people were very happy. Krak threw his daughter and Skuba a wonderful wedding party and gave him the kingdom as a reward. Skuba ruled long and happily to the people's joy.



The legend of the two towers of St. Mary's Church



Long, long time ago Kraków desperately needed a church. The masters of the town wanted it to be beautiful and magnificent so they ordered it with two towers guarding the front of the church. Two brothers, both gifted builders, decided to take up the challenge.

Each one of the brothers started to build one of the towers and, as it is quite common between brothers, each one of them wanted his tower to be more glorious and breathtaking than the other. So the older brother was hurrying in his work and urging his workmen, believing that if he finishes first, it will prove his superior skills.

Meanwhile the younger brother was building his tower with care and cherish and attention to every detail. He was raising his part more slowly, but day by day it was becoming clear that his work will be a real masterpiece. Obviously it was bothering the older brother deeply, especially that, as it is human nature, people teased him, saying that it was the young one who was the master and artisan. So finally one night a fight between them broke out and ended up badly, as the older brother stabbed the younger one to death.



Lifelong Learning Programme
Grundtvig



Education and Culture DG

Grundtvig Senior Volunteering Project "Frankfurt and Kraków invite seniors" August 1, 2012 – July 31, 2014

The town people, stunned by the sudden death of the talented builder decided to leave the towers as they were. However the older builder, ashamed and hunted by his crime couldn't live with his sin anymore and the day the towers were capped and the bishop consecrated the church, the guilty brother threw himself from the shorter tower. And the towers of St. Mary's Church have stayed unequal forever to remind people of the story of the bad blood between siblings.



Maryla Kacprzycka



Lifelong
Learning
Programme

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein



Germans in Kraków



Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in Kraków

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was born in 1749 in Frankfurt am Main, died in 1832 in Weimar. He was a German poet, dramatist, novelist, in 1775 he moved to Weimar. He fulfilled different duties on the court of the Saxon-Weimar prince. In the years 1791 -1817 he directed the theatre and was a leader of culture and educational institutions of Saxon-Weimar principality.

For two years (since 1786) he stayed in Italy, which had a great influence on his works. Friedrich Schiller was his greatest friend.

In 1790 he accompanied prince Charles August in his voyage to Poland that lasted for 8 days. He visited Tarnowskie Góry, Kraków, Wieliczka, Częstochowa, Wrocław. They stayed in Kraków for three days. He was keen on nature science then. During the walks through Krzemionki in Podgórze he was interested in silicates which could be found in this part of Kraków and its neighborhood and visited the mineral collection in the Jagellonian University. To commemorate his stay in Kraków, a commemorating plaque has been put up on the wall of Józef Bartsch house (at the corner of the Main Market Square and Sławkowska Street).

On this plaque a commemorating note reads: " Goethe was here from 5th to 7th September 1790"

This is the tenement Under The Deer, present address : The Main Market 36.





Veit Stoss

Born in 1448 in Horb near Stuttgart. Died in 1533 in Nürnberg. He was a German sculptor, designer and painter. Up to 1476 he lived in Nürnberg and there he married Barbara Hertz. There Andrew, their first son, was born. He came to Kraków in 1477 to take up the creation of the main altar in St. Mary's Church. The work was completed in 1489. It is a pentaptyc. Its main part presents scenes of falling asleep and the Assumption. At the top of this part of the altar there is a scene of crowning of Virgin Mary in the company of St. Adalbert and St. Stanislaus. There are two sets of altar wings : movable and immovable. After closing the movable wings 12 bas-reliefs appear which show the scenes of two cycles of Mary and Jesus lives.

The second work in St. Mary's church is the crucifix in the south aisle made of limestone (1480-1490). It lies on the silver table covered in the views of Jerusalem.



The other works of master Stoss are:

- -The relief of limestone of the praying Christ in the Mount of Olives. It is now in the branch of National Museum – nowadays in the Palace of Erasmus Ciołek (the work was created in 1480-1485).
- -The reliefs on the sides show King Casimir IV the Jagiellonian's tomb. The tomb is crowned with a canopy (made by Jorg Huber). The two sides of the tomb are sculptured in dark marble. The gravestone is located in the St. Cross Chapel in the Wawel Cathedral.

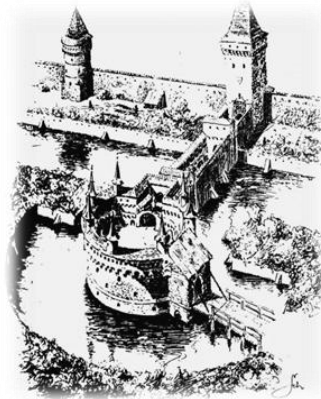
Ewa Kielan



Most interesting tourist attractions in Kraków

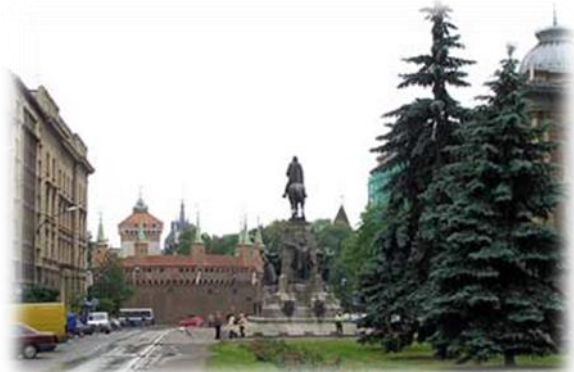
The Royal Route

The Royal Route is one of the most interesting and the most important tourist attractions of Kraków. It is called the Royal Route because it was the way followed by kings of Poland and their eminent guests when they entered the city walls in times when Kraków was the capital of the country, that is from the 11th to the 16th century.



The Route starts at Matejko Square, next it passes through the Barbican, the Floriańska Gate, the Main Market Square, Grodzka Street, Senatorska Street and Kanonicza Street and it continues to Wawel Hill with the Cathedral where Polish rulers were coronated and buried.

We start our walk at the Matejko Square, which used to be the main market square of the town of Kleparz, which is now a part of Kraków. In the centre of the square there is the Grunwald monument commemorating the victory of King Vladislaus Jagiełło over the Teutonic Order in the Battle of Grunwald in 1410.





Our next stop is the Barbican. Through the centuries it was a part of the defensive walls surrounding Kraków, whose construction started as early as the 13th century. At the beginning they were made of earth and wooden ramparts and were later replaced by brick walls, bastions and moats. The Barbican was constructed later on, that is in the 15th century to give more strength to Kraków's fortifications. It was also a Porta Glorise, the Gate of Glory through which kings entered the city greeted by its citizens.



We enter Floriańska Street through the Floriańska Gate. In this street most houses date back to the Middle Ages.

One of them is the Museum of Pharmacy of the Collegium Medicum. The way goes further across the largest medieval square in Europe-the Main Market Square with: St. Mary's Church, Sukiennice-the Cloth Hall, St. Adalbert's Church, the Town Hall Tower to Grodzka Street.



In the Main Market Square over the past six hundred years the bugle call has been played from the higher of St. Mary's Church towers.



In past centuries it was a waking call signaling the opening and closing of the city gates, an alarm during a fire or invasions. This bugle call is one of the symbols of Kraków.



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

Grundtvig

Grundtvig Senior Volunteering Project "Frankfurt and Kraków invite seniors" August 1, 2012 – July 31, 2014

Grodzka Street is a beauty spot with the Romanesque St. Andrew's church, Sts. Peter and Paul's church and a small evangelical church of St. Martin,



important seats of the Jagiellonian University: the Gothic Collegium Iuridicum and Broscianum, this street ends at the feet of Wawel Hill.



Lifelong Learning Programme

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

Grundtvig

Grundtvig Senior Volunteering Project "Frankfurt and Kraków invite seniors" August 1, 2012 – July 31, 2014

Royal Route finishes in Kanonicza Street. It is a small lane which used to host Archdiocesan and Royal court residences near the hill.



We end the walk on Wawel Hill



Lifelong
Learning
Programme

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein

from which extends the view over the Vistula River



and the Manggha Centre of Japanese Art and Technology formed in 1994 on the initiative of Andrzej Wajda and Krystyna Zachwatowicz.

Maria Pająk



Most interesting places in Małopolska

We have many interesting and beautiful places and monuments not only in Kraków but all over the Małopolska region.



If you would like to discover nice places, admire the beauty of nature and relax at the same time, you must go to Ojców and Pieskowa Skała.

To the north east of Kraków stretches the picturesque land of the Jurassic Highland, a limestone Kraków Częstochowa Upland.



It is an extensive plateau covered with rocky monadnocks that are cut through by rocky gorges and deep valleys.



The longest and the most interesting one is Dolina Prądnika /Prądnik Valley/. The protected area of Ojców National Park constitutes its most scenic and precious part. If you travel from Kraków, it is best to go to Ojców, situated 25 km away. Here you can visit the ruins of a royal castle and the chapel on water constructed directly above the waters of the Prądnik River.



Numerous tourist routes lead from Ojców, along the Prądnik Valley, to the feet of many rocky walls and crags, e.g. to Brama Krakowska /Kraków Gate/ and to King Łokietek Cave.



In the northern part of the park you will find the famous monadnock called Mace of Hercules and behind it, on a cliff above Prądnik, there is an impressive castle in Pieskowa Skala.

Housing an interesting museum of changes in art styles from medieval times to 19th century, as well as a gallery of English paintings. The castle with its arcaded courtyard, elegant loggia from the outside and a reconstructed garden is one of the greatest examples of Renaissance architecture in Małopolska.



Lifelong Learning Programme
Grundtvig



Education and Culture DG

Grundtvig Senior Volunteering Project "Frankfurt and Kraków invite seniors" August 1, 2012 – July 31, 2014



On your way from Ojców to Pieskowa Skała you can visit the hermitage of blessed Salome and a small Baroque church in Grodzisko village.



There was a wooden town here in the early Middle Ages and the 13th century saw the founding of the Convent of Poor Clares, whose superior was Salome herself.

Coming back from Ojców through Sąsów and Jerzmanowice it is worth visiting the Wierzchowska Górna Cave which has been adapted for tourists and is the most interesting cave on the Jurassic Highland. You may also go to Bęblo to see an impressive Grodziski Rock /512 m asl/ which is the highest peak in the Polish Jura in the vicinity of Kraków.

Barbara Śladowska



Very interesting place near my flat is **Lasek Wolski**.

It is a place, where many inhabitants of Kraków go for a walk. It is not a large forest but it has an interesting history. Since 1915 its owner has been the City of Kraków and more than 335 ha make up the people's park. The park is one of the largest in Poland. There are some hills for example Sosnowiec, Pustelnik, Srebrna Góra.



They are about 100m higher than Błonia Krakowskie. It is a magnificent green west part of the city. Many footpaths are more than 40 km long. There are cycling paths and horse-riding paths too. It is a very attractive place to rest actively.





Lifelong Learning Programme
Grundtvig



Education and Culture DG

Grundtvig Senior Volunteering Project "Frankfurt and Kraków invite seniors" August 1, 2012 – July 31, 2014



In the centre of this forest there is the Camedule monastery on the Silver Mountain. It is a very important monument. There is Belweder on Przegorzały Hill, which belongs to the Jagiellonian University, and the Piłsudski's mound at the Sowiniec Hill.



In the centre of the forest there is a ZOO. It is one of the most beautiful places. There live many wild animals in conditions resembling natural. It is interesting to visit this place both in the summer and in the winter.

It takes only a moment to get to **Villa Decius.**

It was built by Justus Decius, a secretary of King Sigismund The Old in 1535.





Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

Grundtvig

Grundtvig Senior Volunteering Project "Frankfurt and Kraków invite seniors" August 1, 2012 – July 31, 2014

He ordered to build a suburban villa following the example of a fashionable paradise terrestrial places for meeting and philosophical debate in Italian style. It is located on the eastern slope of Sowiniec, surrounded by an extensive Renaissance garden.



VD
VILLA
DECIUS



Now renovated thanks to the efforts of the City of Kraków, Villa Decius inaugurated The Villa Decius Association in 1996. It has become an important opinion-forming cultural institution of international significance, place for meetings and exchange of ideas between the representatives of various societies, religions, cultures, opinions and areas of interest. The same as at the beginning.

Bogusia Obrocka



Lifelong
Learning
Programme

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein