

HISTORY

Welcome to the state castle in Hořovice that was built at the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries by the Lords of Vrbno and Bruntál. Lords of Vrbno remained in Hořovice until the mid-19th century.

In 1852 they sold the domain to the Hessian Elector Friedrich Wilhelm I, Prince of Hanau (1802–1875), who ruled the sovereign Principality of Hesse in today's central Germany. He bought Hořovice as a gift to his wife Gertrude, who was not of a noble origin. This domain was then supposed to provide her with a new title – Princess of Hanau and Hořovice (von Hanau und zu Horowitz).

The last noble owner of the castle was Heinrich, Earl of Schaumburg, Prince of Hanau, Elector's Great-grandson, who lived here with his family till 1945 when all of his property was confiscated by the state according to Decrees of President Beneš. (*Presidential Act about the loss of citizenship and confiscation of property of citizens who applied for German or Hungarian citizenship during the occupation of Czechoslovakia.*)

In the first months after the war in 1945, the castle had become a hospital, then it was turned into accommodation for two Red Army troops. Unfortunately, Red Army soldiers damaged or took away with them much of the inventory and interior decoration.

Later the castle was used as a post office, museum or state administration offices. In 1954, the first castle exposition opened in five rooms in the southwestern wing. Between 1956 and 1974, the Secondary Technical School of Mechanical Engineering had been here, too. Then the castle was closed to the public due to a state of a technical emergency. In 1985, the state castle with historical exposition opened after renovation works.

SCHAUMBURG CORRIDOR

On the walls of the corridor, you can see portraits of significant relatives of the last owner, some of them became sovereigns. The House of Lords of Hanau is an old German family that derives its origin from Emperor Charles the Great (747-814).

In 1803, they got a very important title of the elector – since the Middle Ages, the electors elected Holy Roman Emperors. Since the 13th century, the Hanau Family were holders of the Landgraf title (*landgrave or earl of the country - a noble title used in the Holy Roman Empire*). However, they lost these privileges after the loss of the Prussian-Austrian War in 1866. As the ally of Austria, Hessen was annexed to Prussia and the Elector Friedrich Wilhelm I. was forced to exile in Hořovice.

In the showcase on the right, you can see pictures of the family of the last castle owners, their private correspondence and personal items such as the princess's fan or diary of 1920 or the prince's altar.

In the lower part, you can see more photos and also a visa for Heinrich of Schaumburg to Brazil, a passport of Maria Theresa Fugger to Germany, and an announcement on the death of one of their ancestors, the son of Elector Friedrich Wilhelm I, Karl of Hanau of 1905.

The other showcase contains plans for the reconstruction and modification of the castle interiors as well as new furniture design plans dating back to the 1920s. In the end, only some of them were carried out.

AFRICAN CORRIDOR

The original baroque castle did not meet the needs of the Elector's residence by its size and layout. Therefore, in the mid-19th century, the Elector sent his court architect Gottlob Engelhardt to Hořovice to design a reconstruction of the castle.

Around 1900, he significantly expanded this part of the castle with the addition of an arcade corridor. Its exterior wall was a glazed gallery made of cast-iron from the princely ironworks in Komárov nearby Hořovice.

The family rooms on the right side of the corridor got renovated after 1922. The rooms furnished with mostly 1920s and 1930s furniture got a new look with typical dark shades of paint.

Other building alterations to the castle took place in 1937 when a cast-iron gallery in this corridor was bricked up due to frigid winters and replaced by simple windows.

Before entering the private rooms, we walk past the hand-operated elevator from around 1900 used for delivering meals and a cast-iron staircase leading to the original castle kitchen.

DISH PREPARATION ROOM AND PORCELAIN STORAGE

This was an operational and technical room. All the meals were transported here from the kitchen by the elevator (in the corridor) in the very containers which they were cooked in. Here, all was put on porcelain and then served in the small or representative dining room behind the opposite door. In the cupboards, there is a part of several family dining services (mostly from the porcelain factory in Březová and from the royal porcelain factory in Berlin) and sets of glass. Other dining services and table textiles were kept in the ground floor rooms (present Games and Toys of Small Aristocrats exposition). At the end of the 19th century Elector's son, Wilhelm had the modern water supply system built, and in 1916 the whole castle was electrified.

You can see here also copies of menus written by the last countess Maria Theresia Fugger in the 1920s and 1930s. The photo next to the door presents the castle servants.

SMALL DINING ROOM

In the former Small Dining Room, you can see 19th-century paintings. The dominant picture shows a view of the ruins of Valdek Castle, once a part of the Hořovice domain. The other paintings originated in different regions of Germany and used to be a part of the possession of Elector Friedrich Wilhelm I as well as the porcelain service on the table and a buffet with the monogram of F. W., which was made in the porcelain factory in Březová near Karlovy Vary.

Pewter dishes served as decorations. On the buffet, there is also a samovar (self-brewer) - a traditional Russian metal container used to keep drinks heated. The silver coat of arms over it belongs to the princes of Hanau.

The Small Dining Room was used for everyday family dinners, whereas festive dinners were held in the representative dining room in the main part of the castle.

The life of the Hanau family was not always simple, and many family members have extraordinary life stories.

They often married morganatically (*unequally, with partners of other social ranks*) - the Elector Friedrich Wilhelm bought Hořovice and the princely title after he had married Gertrude Falkenstein - Lehmann who was not of a noble family. And his sons followed his example.

His first-born son, Friedrich Wilhelm, was disinherited and expelled from the succession after he married an actress Augusta Birmbaum. His brother, Moritz, had an affair with a singer Louise Liebhardt, and later, after his father's death in 1875, married a low-born woman, Anna von Lossberg. And the youngest son Philip married his former governess Albertina Hubáčková. Two of the Elector's sons died in tragic events. Karl when cutting down a tree in Kassel in 1905 and Heinrich falling down the stairs in Hořovice castle in 1917 shortly after his wedding.

PRINCESS' LIBRARY

The library served Princess Maria Theresia Fugger, the last owner's wife, as a salon. The Princess was very fond of sport (for example, she had a tennis court built in the park) as well as her collection of peonies and roses that she had planted just outside the windows of her private chambers. In the library, the Princess was surrounded by portraits of her loved ones. Around the stove, you can see portraits of her four children – Karl Heinrich, Leopold, Eleonora and Friedrich Wilhelm. They had a nurse, who looked after them and they spent most of their time in the nursery on the first floor.

In the library, you can see a portrait of Heinrich von Schaumburg (between the windows). The last time Heinrich was in Hořovice was in 1942 on the occasion of the municipal swimming pool opening, to which he contributed financially.

In 1943, he was captured as a member of the Marshall Rommel's Army in Tunis. When he got out of captivity, he left Europe and didn't come back till the end of World War II.

Only the Princess and her son Leopold, who was in January 1945 interned by the Gestapo in Kladno for an alleged insult to a citizen of the Third Reich, saw the end of the war in Hořovice. Leopold was soon released, but after the war, they were both as Austrian citizens forced to leave the country and in Austria, they met the rest of the family.

PRINCELY COUPLE'S BEDROOM

Unlike other castles, Hořovice Castle has modern rooms. For example, there are no separate bedrooms of the princess and the prince. At this time, also taking into account the age and modern lifestyle of the last owners, we can see here a conjoined bedroom.

Clothes of the princely couple were in the large wardrobe or in several chests of drawers in the African corridor, seasonal clothes were then stored in warehouses in another castle wing.

And because there was a modern bathroom in the Eastern Tower, there is no toilet corner here so typical for an aristocratic interior.

Numerous close family members' photographs give the bedroom a cosy family mood.

The mirror in a richly decorated silver frame with the coat of arms of the Hanau Family (behind the divider) is an old family treasure.

A commemorative sheet hanging next to the tiled stove is dedicated to the Princess, who was a very active sportswoman, as to an honorary chairwoman of the football club in her hometown of Babenhausen in Bavaria.

PRINCESS' STUDY

The late 17th-century tapestry depicting parting of Roman soldiers leaving for the battle is a dominant piece of decoration of this room.

The painting above the chest of drawers presents Nora Fugger, mother of the last castle owner's wife, who spent her final years at Hořovice Castle.

Nora Fugger was no stranger to high society in her youth. For example, Franz Ferdinand d'Este was one of her friends, and they regularly corresponded.

Pictures on the walls depict views of the city of Babenhausen, the hometown of the Fugger family. The cartoon above the table represents Maria Theresa Fugger.

And on the table, you can see a hash pipe and a copper coffee serving set. Paintings above the door are painted on silk and come from Asia.

HALL IN THE EASTERN TOWER

From the vestibule, we can have a look into one of the castle bathrooms, rebuilt in the 1920s. Towels, bath towels or bathrobes were stored here, and a coal-fired boiler with a water tank provided warm water for the shower. In front of the window, there is a washing table with a marble countertop. Of course, there is also a flush toilet (from the 1920s) and a bidet.

The last castle owner Prince Heinrich had a close relationship with his brother Tassilo, who was his deputy at the time of his absence in Hořovice.

Prince Tassilo was also an aerobatic aviator, and that cost him his life in the end. With his red low-wing BFW D-1849 he successfully represented Germany in many air competitions. On Monday, May 16 at 11:55, he flew from Kbely airfield near Prague to Klecany village to visit his friends Max Benies and his wife Mathilde and to lunch with them. After the lunch Prince Tassilo decided to return to Kbely. But before that, he wanted to show some of his aviation skills. In one acrobatic figure, low above the ground, he lost control of his aircraft (probably blinded by the sun) and crashed. He found his death in the shattered aircraft at the age of 31 at 3:13 PM.

Above the bed, is Prince Tassilo's portrait painted later according to his photo that you can see in the showcase. There is also an album with photographs from Tassilo's funeral in Hořovice, his gloves and a hat.

In his room, there are parts of a crashed plane, a parachute (the oldest preserved in the country), an air suit and a part of Prince's wardrobe. On the wall, hangs a copy of his aircraft propeller. The original one had been laid on the coffin with his remains into the family tomb in Hořovice while the other propeller is still in possession of the family. After Tassilo's death, the family kept this room like a memorial.

RECEPTION HALL

The Prince received day-to-day visits here, mainly from domain management and other employees, to deal with various management issues. However, he didn't manage the domain personally. He only supervised the manager and subordinated employees.

The golden-framed painting against the fireplace shows the original seat of the Hanau Family, Wilhelmshöhe Castle near Kassel in Hesse. Other paintings depict its large castle park with many romantic buildings like the artificial ruins of Löwenburg Castle (a picture by the stove), the waterfall or the geyser. The entire castle park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2014.

The showcase next to the stove reminds us of the family's military tradition. There is a portrait of Friedrich Wilhelm in his festive uniform (see the epaulettes) along with military helmets of the Hesse army, medals and decorations.

STUDY

The study is a comfortable and cosy room with wooden wall panelling and windows into the park and the courtyard. As it also faces the East, it was sunny in the morning when the Prince used it most.

He spent his afternoons controlling the domain, supervising various construction works, or riding his horses. Behind the wooden panelling there is a safe in which, along with cash, the family kept jewellery, gold, stocks and other valuables.

The portrait between the windows shows grandfather of the last owner, Friedrich Wilhelm Jr. The portrait on the left (above the safe) depicts Prince's mother Hildegard Almásy von Zsadány und Törökszentmiklós with Hořovice Castle in the background.

In the cabinet behind the desk, you can see documents of Heinrich's lawsuits. He sued the Czechoslovak state about Hořovice after it was confiscated in 1918 when the direct line of Hanau Family died out. Heinrich won the case and got Hořovice in 1921. In the 1930s, he sued Germany, too, to regain the princely title. And he won again.

AFRICAN CORRIDOR AGAIN

In 1934 - 1935, the last owners travelled around Africa and brought a collection of trophies back to Hořovice Castle. Unfortunately, it is not exhibited here anymore.

Now, you can see here deer trophies or the skin of an Asian black bear on the head of the corridor. At the end of the 1930s, Heinrich of Schaumburg had graphics representing the ancestors of the Lords of Hanau displayed here, as well as 80 graphics depicting the ancestors of his wife from the Fugger family (a set of small prints).

DINING ROOM

The Great Dining room is the second largest room after the Main Hall. It is the only room in the castle with the original second-rococo decoration from the period after 1866 with original wooden panelling and inset paintings depicting genre scenes from the Dutch landscape. The ceiling decorated with original stuccos evokes the decoration of interiors from the period of the first owners - the Lords of Vrbno.

The second-rococo stove that dominates the hall is made of unglazed tiles and decorated with stucco. It regained its original green-blue colouring after the last renovation. It was used until the 1920s when replaced with a central hot-air heating.

On the table, you can see a festive porcelain service with hunting motifs. For everyday use, porcelain decorated with a gold line and the letter "H", which we saw in the Dish Preparation Room (the door behind the screen leads there), was designed.

You can also see one of the most beautiful chandeliers in the castle - a crystal glass from our most famous glassworks in Kamenický Šenov.

On the tables between the windows, you can see porcelain bird figures made in Vienna.

LIBRARY

The Library adapted after World War I for the last owner, Heinrich of Schaumburg, from an original ballroom of a rectangular ground plan gained its present oval shape after the installation of bookcases. It was also a room where the whole family used to meet. The cast-iron staircase (in the right window niche) leads to the second floor, where the rooms of the children and the tutors were.

The library collection contains 4,000 volumes that cover all fields of human activity. The books (most of them in German) come from the mid-17th century to the mid-1940s. Older literature is represented mainly by chronicles and religious literature whereas the younger by novels, travelogues and fairy tales.

The oldest and most valuable book is on the table on the left - a chronicle of Hanau Family from 1663, brought from Hessen by Friedrich Wilhelm of Hanau.

Between 1807 and 1829, Jacob Grimm (b. 1785 in Hanau) worked as a librarian at the princely court in Kassel. Along with his brother Wilhelm (b. 1786 in Hanau), he is a representative of German Romanticism. The work of the librarian provided him with time and space for his literary interests - studying German grammar, collecting folk tales and legends.

The family could rest and read by the fireplace from the 18th century. The portrait of the last lady of the house, Maria Theresia Fugger, you can see above the fireplace.

A massive painted porcelain vase depicting the Sans-Souci Chateaux was made in the 19th century in a porcelain factory in Berlin.

GAMBLING AND HUNTING SALON

The Gambling Salon originated in the period of Moritz of Hanau (1834–1889), the second son of Friedrich Wilhelm, who took over the castle and the domain in 1875, after the death of his father. Prince Moritz was a true gentleman and a man of the world who lived his life to the fullest. He travelled a lot, stayed mostly abroad, very often in Vienna and in Paris for winter.

This Gambling Salon was an essential part of amusement program for the aristocracy that came here for parties from all over the county.

The mid-19th-century billiard that dominates the room is decorated with a second-rococo carving.

The painted canvas wallpapers with hunting scenes gave this room also the other name - Hunting Salon. Hunting was the primary entertainment of the aristocratic society even in the 19th century.

Frames of panelling and wallpapers have no empty wall in between. Additional parts of the wallpapers by another painter prove that the wallpapers were originally created for a different room or even different castle and only later modified for this salon. The hunting scenes were painted according to Johann Elias Ridinger's graphics.

The 18th-century fireplace with profiled marble lining and cartouche in the top has a cast-iron plate with a coat of arms in the rear wall. After the establishment of the hot-air heating (can be seen in the right corner of the room), the fireplace became merely decorative and was used only on special occasions.

GOLDEN LOUNGE

This small room designed for ladies or refreshments is called golden after its gilded third-rococo decoration from the 1920s.

The showcase was used to display small items and especially rare porcelain sets. In addition to solitaire cups, you can see here a tea set with a tiny floral decor, made in Berlin in the mid-19th century, and six figures from the so-called Monkey Band from Meissen porcelain factory (bandleader, guitarist, violinist, trumpeter, flute player and singer).

The wall above the fireplace and the adjoining wall on the right side are decorated in the same way that Countess Maria Nostic captured them in her watercolour drawing in 1942. It is a miniature portrait gallery of the ancestors of the Lords of Hanau who, however, never lived there.

BLUE LOUNGE

The two following rooms are the already mentioned guest suite for the closest family friends.

The Blue Lounge was designed as a study and an anteroom of the bedroom. As it is also next to the Gambling Salon, it was occasionally used as an additional gambling room.

The inlaid furniture in the style of Dutch floral baroque was very popular in its time, especially for its rich floral decor. In this room, you can also admire one of the few preserved original wallpapers made of paper in the 1930s. The paintings on the walls depict Italian port cities such as Naples and Venice.

BEDROOM

The guest bedroom furnished in Biedermeier style from the early 19th century, more in the ladies' style, reminds us of one of its last residents - the talented painter Countess Maria Nostic, whose photo you can see on the chest of drawers. She is the author of six watercolours with the interiors of the castle from the 1940s.

In addition to its main function, this room also served as a morning parlour, washroom and changing room, as evidenced, for example, by the height-adjustable serving table, breakfast service and porcelain wash set.

Above the chest of drawers, is a portrait of the youngest daughter of Elector Friedrich Wilhelm and Princess Gertrude - Princess Mary of Ardek.

BATHROOM AND THE STAFF ROOMS

The first bathroom along with a boiler room for the castle hot-air heating (behind the opposite wall) was built in this room around 1900.

The exotic painted decoration as well as the recessed bath and the floor originate in 1922. The bathroom was intended for residents of the guest suite on the first floor.

It is the last room in the castle that still waits for a renovation to regain its original beauty.

In the other part of the ground floor, you can see rooms of the castle staff – the servants' kitchen (not the main kitchen for the family), the bedroom of a married couple, the assistant cook's room, and the castle manager's study.