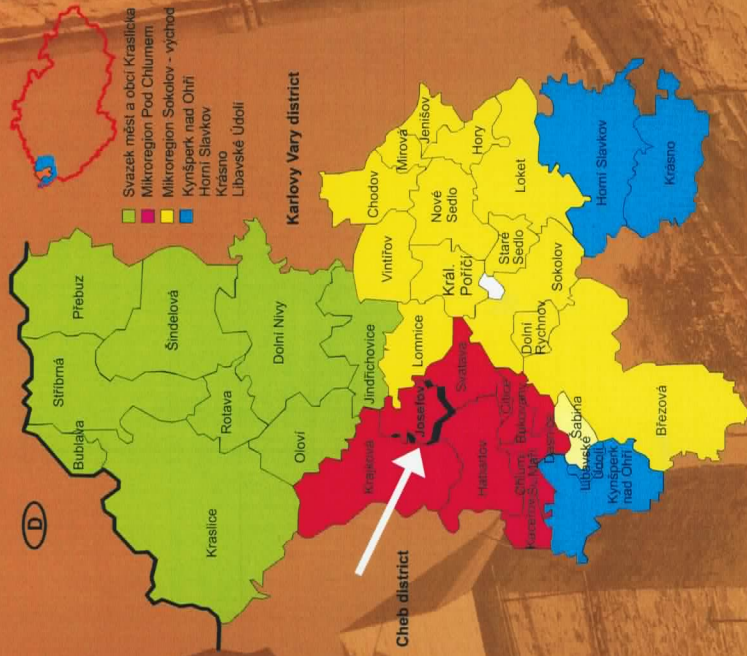


DO NOT MISS IN THE SURROUNDINGS

- A column with a statue of the Virgin Mary by an unknown artist used to stand on an artificial stone terrace (13), above the turn against the chateau, until 1990 when the statue was damaged by vandals and pulled down. It decorates the entry staircase of the Sokolov museum (14) today.
- The church of St. Peter and Paul (15) stands in the village of Krajčková and was first referenced as early as 1357. Count Johan Friedrich from Písnice had a family tomb built there. Later, all owners of the castle were buried in that tomb. The last person buried there was Franciska Auerperková who died on 16th June 1901. The tomb, with the Auersperk's coat-of-arms, was then closed forever. An originally-designed monolith of a wayside shrine (16), which commemorates an unhappy event, stands near the former manor mill by the river.
- In the surroundings of the castle, you can find a spruce tree that is almost 50 m high and one of the three highest pine-trees in Bohemia (17). In addition, a massive elm tree whose perimeter is over 4.5 m and other interesting flora grow there.
- On Svatavský vrch, there are outcrops of conglomerates and sandstone and you can see interesting pseudo-karstic features there including a rock gate and caves.



MAS SOKOLOVSKO

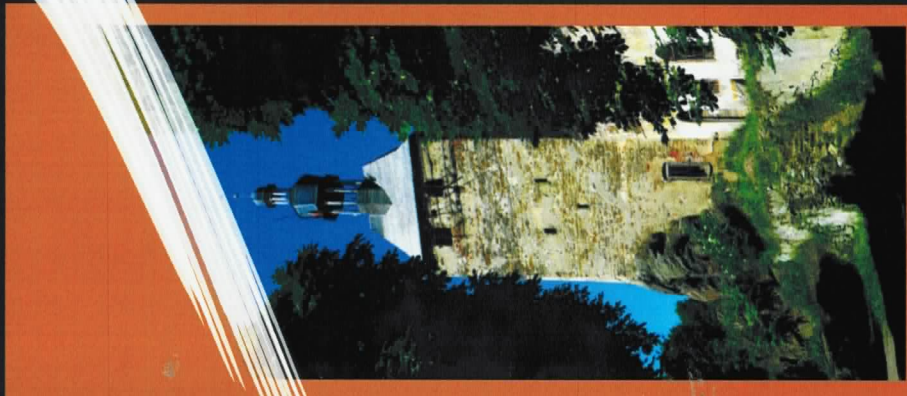


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Project Promotional campaign – Following the beauty of the LAG Sokolov region
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NOT FOR SALE

HARTENBERK



HARTENBERG CASTLE AT HŘEBENY

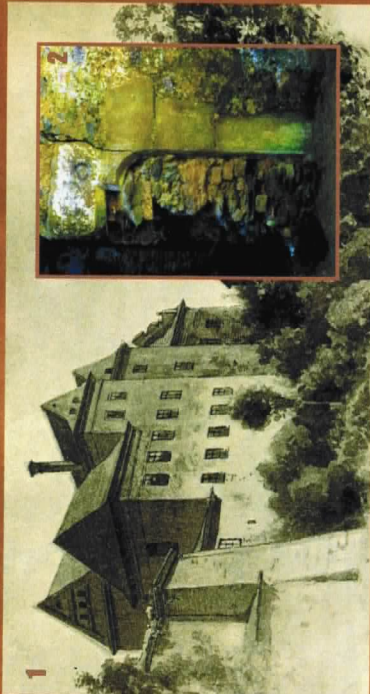
Above a picturesque valley of the Svataava river near Sokolov lays the Hřebený settlement. Below Hřebený, on a rocky promontory we can find a ruin of the gothic castle Hartenberg (1). The castle was built along an important route from Saxony and Thuringia to Bohemia. You can reach it by either taking a steep uphill road from Hřebený railway station or, the more comfortable way, by following a green tourist signs. The first written references to the castle come from 1345. However, some objects found during an archaeological survey provided evidence that this place had been inhabited as early as the first half of the 13th century.

Only the castle's tower survived all the calamities over the years. Researching the castle's history is very difficult. A lot of evidence was destroyed in the past through plundering of the castle during war times, during the collapse of the castle's archive ceiling in 1839, and also quite recently, during transport of archival documents into various repositories after 1945.

The founders of the castle were demonstrably Hartenbergs. They owned other castles and strongholds in the surroundings. They had the emphyteutic, liege and hereditary privileges towards the castle. Charles IV took over the property in 1350, then Wenceslas IV followed by emperor Zikmund. They did not invest into further development of the castle but they did maintain it. During the Hussite era, the castle stayed loyal to Zikmund. In 1426, the castle was allegedly conquered and plundered by Jakoubek from Vřesovice, a Hussite marshal. For a while the desolated castle became a dwelling of bandits who were making expeditions into the surroundings. The first significant reconstructions of the castle were made by Matěj Šlik in 1467 when he gained control of the castle.

During the time when the castle was owned by the wealthy Šlik family, the residential quarters were reconstructed and extended and a new chapel (2) was built. All this was done in late gothic and later renaissance style of Saxon type. The Šlik family owned the majority of Jachymov's mine districts. The castle flourished and reached a degree of importance during the Šlik's reign. The surroundings are interwoven by adits (3) in which lead ores were mined and whose history reaches back to the 13th century. In 1545, King Ferdinand I deprived the Šlik family of the mining privileges. A welcome pretence for the persecution of Krušné hory's important families was the loss of the Schmalkaldic War during which the Šliks took the anti-Habsburg coalition's side. Emperor Ferdinand I had their possessions confiscated and for the castle this meant the beginning of an era of deterioration and a halt to the extensive reconstructions.

In 1597, Emperor Rudolf II sold Hartenberg for 16,000 three-score Meissen groschen to the king's prosecutor, Jindřich from Plisnice. As proper Catholics, the Plisnice family started alterations to the castle in conjunction with the chapel's reconstruction. The new portal is marked 1608. In 1621 when Mansfeld's troops occupied the Loket region the castle was conquered and plundered. In 1668, the castle burnt down and it waited until 1686 for its renewal. From 1761 till 1945, the castle was inherited down female hereditary lines. The only exception was Josef Auersperk who inherited the castle in 1814.



Josef Karel Auersperk, a former president of the Moravian-Silesian appellate court, established an extensive library and mineralogy collection. The poet Johann Wolfgang Goethe stayed with Josef Karel Auersperk several times. They were friends with similar interests. Goethe grandly celebrated his 72nd birthday at the chateau. Allegedly, he wrote his Elegies there. After he was refused marriage to Ulrika von Levetzow, Hartenberg became the last place that he stayed at in Bohemia. He never returned. A memorial plaque remembers the place (4) from where he liked to watch the castle.

At the time of its biggest glory, Hartenberg took pride in its library which contained manuscripts from the 13th century, collections of weapons, Chinese porcelain, paintings of old Flemish masters, a theatre and a brewery (5) with cellars dug into rock and beer that was awarded at prestigious competitions. The chateau was surrounded by a park with neat footpaths and summer houses, greenhouses (6) in which tropical fruit matured, the chateau's lake with an island, manor mills (7), game-keeper's lodges (8), a granary (9), a grange and a school (10).

The chateau underwent significant modernization in the 19th century. Extant invoices bear evidence of the extent of the building modifications. However, from today's point of view, a lot of interferences that damaged the monument were made and many valuable building elements were destroyed beyond recovery. Such reconstructions were, however, entirely common at that time as the owners wanted to live comfortably and modernly. The last owner of the castle was the Kopal family. A significant member of this family was Colonel Karel Kopal, a knight of the Order of Maria Theresa. His sons were raised to the status of baron by the emperor's diploma. Both sons followed in their father's footsteps with military careers. The Colonel's granddaughter Františka Kopalová lived in the chateau until she was forced to move to Germany in 1945.

The current owner, Bedřich Loos, is trying to save the chateau which is one of the oldest monuments in Bohemia.



After 1945, the whole manor came under the control of the state owned agricultural company which, in 1948, even asked for removal of the chateau from the list of monuments wanting to tear it down and use it as building material. Valuable collections disappeared; some equipment and furniture were taken to other chateaus or historical buildings where some have remain till today. The building was deteriorating. The knight's hall became a granary. In 1985 and 1991 the chateau was almost destroyed by fires. In recent years the ruin has attracted visitors by hosting many interesting events. Since 2000, international volunteering camps (11) have been taking place here. Young people from 50 states across the world have taken part in the camps. The castle is one of the very sought-after and popular bases of student volunteering in Europe.

The project for rehabilitation of the castle differs from similar projects by its extent and complexity. Of course, it is difficult to raise finances to fund the project. The Hartenberg Civil Association focuses on environmental and landscaping protection and mainly on saving and restoring not only the castle but also its surroundings which include the chateau's park, the Svataava river's valley and Dolinský creek. The association cooperates with many institutions as well as with individuals and participates in various projects, including educational, cultural, environmental and re-socialization projects (12).

